

name to remain



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50 CENTS



Christmas parade lights up holiday spirits

by Sharon Miller
contributing reporter

This year the annual holiday magic that is the Lowell Nighttime Santa Parade was themed “Old Fashion Christmas.” No one took that as literally as River Valley Credit Union who built their float featuring cave men and women decorating a Christmas tree.

First place went to Lowell Area Schools' Bus Drivers' Association; second place was River Valley Credit Union and third place went to Tom Burri.

The Peoples' Choice Award went this year to the Bus Drivers' Association. This award was determined by an online survey sent out by the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.

Other float entries included the Ada/Lowell

Christmas parade,
continued, page 7



Santa and Mrs. Claus made their annual, much awaited arrival Saturday night.

Students participate in service project



Back row, left to right: Joshua Underwood, Sadie Mellema, Brad Sprague (director), Karmen Anderson, Jacob Underwood, Mathea Ismond, Mitchell Strawser, Angie Anderson (mentor), Kelvin Anderson; front and center: Nolan Yahmarkt.

by Kelvin Anderson
Lowell Ledger intern

Last Wednesday the Vergennes United Methodist youth group, which consists of Lowell middle and high school students, went out to help a local family winterize a house. The event was organized by youth director Brad Sprague as a way for the youth to help those around them this holiday season.

Students helped by covering windows in plastic and heat shrinking them to better insulate and lower heating costs. This project was a chance to bring the youth closer together and show them what they could accomplish when they worked together. “It

Service project,
continued, page 12

Three member team from LL&P help restore power on East coast after Hurricane Sandy

by Ellen Mork
contributing reporter

On October 29th, Hurricane Sandy dealt a devastating blow to the northeastern coast of the United States. Damage is

among the worst from any storm and is estimated to cost over \$63 billion.

Workers braced for the impending storm days before

it made landfall and many came to help after. The 2nd of November, only four days after Hurricane Sandy hit, Lowell Light & Power was contacted by SPE Utilities to help with restoration of power. Three workers, Tom Russo, electric distribution manager; Mark Droog, lineman supervisor; and Doug Barnes, generation supervisor; set out to help those in need the morning of November 3rd.

“There was a deep satisfaction knowing that we could help somebody...”

- Tom Russo

They drove 14 hours, taking one of the company's trucks and service bucket trucks. With over 90 percent of Long Island out of power, downed power lines, explosions and fires all over New York and New



Mark Droog, Tom Russo, and Doug Barnes went to the East coast for hurricane restoration work.

Team helps restore power,
continued, page 16

Gilda's legacy to remain in Grand Rapids' area Gilda's Club

by Ellen Mork
contributing reporter

There has been a recent uproar over a proposed name change to Gilda's Club. Proponents of the name change to Cancer Support Society believe the younger generation affected by cancer do not know who Gilda Radner was. They are looking to make the society more inclusive by retiring association with Radner.

Opponents of this switch say that with the advent of Google, not knowing who

someone is, is a reality hard to believe. At the younger generations' fingertips lie volumes of YouTube clips and countless inspiring articles and stories of Radner.

Radner is known for her iconic roles on Saturday Night Live (SNL), such as Roseanne Roseannadanna and Emily Litella. She won an Emmy in 1979 for her work on the show.

Radner was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 1986

and in May of 1989 she passed away.

Gilda's Club is a support community for cancer survivors, family and friends. The Lowell Clubhouse offers workshops, lectures and dinners. Gilda's Club offers ways to remember Radner's legacy. Noogieland is a child care service offered and references the noogies her character received on SNL



photo by J. Boss

The Lowell chapter of Gilda's Club will retain its current name.



along main street



RELAY FOR LIFE

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE

Tree sale runs Nov. 23 through Dec. 18, 677 Lincoln Lake SE, Lincoln Lake Business Park. Mon.-Fri., 9 am – 7 pm, Sat., 9 am – 6 pm, and Sun., 12 pm – 5 pm. Tree netted free for easy transport. Scotch pine, Fraser, Douglas and spruce; also wreaths, centerpieces and tree bags. All proceeds donated to ACS, Lowell Area Relay For Life.

FREE COMMODITIES

Commodities food order for low income families, Thurs., Dec. 6, 9 am – 4 pm has been moved to Flat River Outreach Ministries (FROM), 11535 E. Fulton. Bring proof of income and Social Security numbers for each member of household. Please bring bags. Call Virginia, 897-8754 with questions.

HOLIDAY SOUP LUNCHEON

Green Acres of Lowell will be serving a holiday soup luncheon on Fri., Dec. 7 at 11530 Fulton St. Dine-in or take-out available. Call 987-9115 for more information.

CHRISTMAS IN FALLASBURG

Christmas in Fallasburg on Saturday, Dec. 9 at Fallasburg Schoolhouse, 13944 Covered Bridge Road, north of Lowell, from 6-8 pm. This community celebration is a benefit for the continued preservation of the historic village sponsored by the Fallasburg Historical Society. The 140 year old "Schoolhouse" once again opens her doors with traditional holiday music by the "Hawks & Owls"

...

I care not so much what I am to others as what I am to myself.
~Michel de Montaigne
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band, wine, cheese, cider, coffee and lots of Christmas goodies, plus a roaring bonfire in adjacent Fallas Field to cap off the evening. Suggested donation for adults, \$15.00. For more information call 616-682-0785 or go to www.fallasburg.org

TOBACCO FREE FOR GOOD

Tobacco Free For Good is hosting an informational and support meeting on Tues., Dec. 11 from 6-8 pm, at Lowell Family Medical Center, 2550 West Main Street in Lowell. This is a great way to catch up with fellow graduates and begin the holiday season celebrating the gift of health. This event is also intended as an introduction for anyone who wants to know more about the classes. Free quit smoking resources guides are available. Call 616-446-7058 with any questions.

LOWELL MOOSE KIDS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

Kids' Christmas event on Sat., Dec. 22 from 11 am to 1 pm at Lowell Moose Rec Hall. Open to the public. For information call Brenda Schullo at 616-828-2663.

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.

from Bill Murray. They also host an annual LaughFest, an event with comedians across the United States. The event offers a way for survivors to laugh and be happy and remember the comedic gift that Radner shared with the world.

On the Lowell Ledger Facebook page, people commented saying, "keep the name!" and "It has a personal element when linked to a real person such as Gilda."

Leann Arkema, president of Gilda's Club of Grand Rapids, issued a statement saying, "The national Gilda's Club worldwide operation merged with

The Wellness Community national operation in 2009. The national office assumed a new 'umbrella' name of Cancer Support Community. All local affiliates have had the choice of keeping their name (Gilda's Club or The Wellness Community) or changing to the national name of Cancer Support Community. Gilda's Club Grand Rapids chose to retain the name and will continue to listen to the local constituents to assess as the national organization builds its brand."

Radner's legacy will remain, as the Grand Rapids and Lowell chapters will retain the name Gilda's Club.

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Lowell Area Schools receive honors

by Theresa Heethuis
contributing reporter

A combination of opportunity and hard work have earned Lowell High School a spot on the National AP District Honor Roll for significant

gains in AP (Advanced Placement) access and student performance. Lowell is now among only 539 schools in the nation to be recognized for offering advanced placement courses

to a wider range of students while increasing the number of students who are scoring a three or above on these rigorous college level tests. This allows students to earn

college credit, advanced placement or both before ever entering college.

In speaking with high school principal Amy Pallo, she explained, "Not only

do we have increased kids taking AP courses, we also have an increase in the number of kids doing well."

A total of 13 AP courses are offered to all students at Lowell High School. "Any student who wants the experience can take an AP class," said Pallo. "We don't tell them no."

While increasing the number of students taking any test typically lowers the number of students who do well on it, this is not the case at Lowell High School. Pallo attributes this variation from the norm to, "amazing AP teachers who set high standards and push the kids."

Superintendent Greg Pratt echoes these praises, recognizing and attributing this success to "teachers

who find new ways to dig in and find ways for all students to be successful."

With this new distinguished place on the National AP District Honor Roll, superintendent Pratt is applauding the staff of Lowell public schools at all levels; acknowledging the dedication of all of his teachers from the elementary to the high school level calling it, "A great reason to celebrate."

Pallo also recognizes the hard work and focused effort that has taken place throughout the student's educational career within the Lowell school district. "This is really a district award. If kids do not have the foundation they would not be as successful," said Pallo, "it's a group effort."

Truck reroute among topics discussed at city council meeting

by Ellen Mork
contributing reporter

Many issues arose at the city council meeting Monday night. Of note were the concerns of a citizen regarding Lowell Light & Power, a new copier and a proposed truck route.

During the citizen comments, Arnie Kimball, a Lowell resident for over 60 years, stated he is concerned with the state of the city in regards to the recent Lowell Light & Power negotiations. He believes the workers are excellent, but that nobody cares about them. Kimball said, "There is a big difference between dictatorship and democracy and it seems the city manager favors a

dictatorship." Meanwhile, the council continues to hold closed session meetings to discuss the union negotiations.

Thanks to the Look Memorial Fund and the Lowell Area Community Fund, the city will be receiving a new Canon copier, which will be able to scan public documents to be put online. It will be more efficient and will save the city both time and money when printing.

In an effort to reduce the flow of truck traffic on Monroe Street, the council and the city police proposed a new truck route. Monroe Street was not built to withstand heavy truck

traffic. Turning trucks pose a risk to pedestrians and fellow vehicles because of the difficulty for trucks to make the turn.

The proposed route is Jefferson to Avery for the Main Street businesses. In order for this to occur, parking would be restricted on the southern side of Avery Street. This avoids the dangerous turn onto Monroe. Jefferson Street has been the long-standing truck route, which routes traffic to and from Attwood, as well as several other businesses.

The reroute will require the approval of Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

and the city council. While the city can put routing signs on Main Street, other affected streets are up to the discretion of MDOT.

Police chief Barry Getzen hopes this will fix the traffic issues. Once the reroute is in place, he anticipates a period of time to let the truckers become familiar. Once they are, the police will issue warnings and tickets to truckers who violate the route.

The council approved the proposed reroute of truck traffic. The next step in this process is to discuss the proposal with local business owners and get MDOT's approval for the reroute.

LUNCH MENU



ELEMENTARY MENU
Week of
Dec. 10, 2012

MON: Turkey hot dog on WG bun, oven baked French fries, fruit & veggie bar: romaine side salad, fresh baby carrots, peaches, fresh apple, milk.

TUES: Tony's pepperoni pizza, seasoned corn, fruit & veggie bar: red pepper strips, celery sticks, mandarin oranges, pears, milk.

WED: Italian rotini pasta w/meatsauce, seasoned broccoli, fruit & veggie bar: cherry tomatoes, broccoli florets, pineapple, applesauce, milk.

THURS: Beef & bean chili w/saltine crackers, (WG breaded chicken nuggets offered at Bushnell), mashed potatoes w/gravy, fruit & veggie bar: spinach & romaine side salad, cucumber slices, grapes, peaches, milk.

FRI: BBQ pork ribbie on WG bun, (breaded chicken sandwich on WG bun offered at Bushnell), baked beans, fruit & veggie bar: romaine side salad, baby carrots, peaches, applesauce.

Michigan residents reminded it's not too late for a flu shot

An annual flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu and the flu-related complications that could lead to hospitalization and even death. Dec. 2-8 is National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is recommending that all Michigan's citizens six months and older get a flu shot.

Nationally, flu vaccination coverage

estimates show that roughly 42 percent of people six months of age and older received a flu vaccine last season. Unfortunately, that means that the majority of those who are recommended to receive the influenza vaccination went unprotected. Michigan estimates for flu vaccination coverage are at 38.8 percent, which is even lower than the national average.

"Every year, flu spreads across the country from

person to person, family to family, and community to community," said James K. Haveman, Director of the MDCH. "One of the greatest challenges we face from the flu is the uncertainty of the disease. Flu viruses are constantly changing which is why we need to protect ourselves and our families with an annual flu vaccine."

Remember to get flu shot, continued, page 12

Correction

The article, "Keeping the pantry full at FROM" (Nov. 29, 2012) stated that the Flat River Outreach Ministries (FROM) Food Pantry serves about 100 families per month. According to director Tamela Spicer, the Food Pantry serves 238 families on average with a total of approximately 300 families served by all FROM programs each month. It was also stated that distribution at FROM begins Dec. 15, when in fact, it is a one day event that takes place Dec. 15.

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ask kathryn



Kathryn Denhouter Ph.D.

This is the last article on the series called "What is ASD" (Autism Spectrum Disorder). This article asks the question, "What will the future look like for someone with ASD?" Essentially, the future is very bright for individuals who have been diagnosed with autism. The biggest shift has come about because of the new approach to how the brain functions. This is called neuroplasticity. Previously, scientists believed that brains were incapable of fundamental change. To the contrary, scientists have now found that the brain can change because it creates new circuitry. This is truly groundbreaking because now we know that new learning and change has the potential to go on and on. It is reassuring for those with autism and for their caregivers to realize that there is always potential for change and

more adaptive behaviors. This neuroplasticity is available to all of us, both the neurotypical and the neuroatypical.

The following is a list of reasons of why there is hope for people on the autism spectrum. These are taken from Chantal Sicili-Kira's book, 'What is Autism?'

1. Children are being diagnosed at an earlier age, so intervention can start earlier to help them.
2. Biomedical interventions are available to help those with medical issues.
3. There are more support groups to help families to find out ways they can best help their child.
4. There is more community acceptance and changed attitudes toward differently-abled people.
5. There are more laws in place to protect the rights of individuals with ASD.
6. There are more treatments, therapies and

strategies we can use to help people on the spectrum.

7. Autism advocates are pushing for and getting health-coverage laws passed in many states to ensure that insurance companies will provide for treatment of children with autism. Blue Cross and Blue Shield has recently presented insurance coverage for diagnosis and treatment of autism.

8. More money than ever before is being spent on research into different causes, effective treatments, best practices in education, and the best practices in programs and supports for adults.

9. Nonprofit organizations and state and federal agencies are working together to create and assist with housing and employment for adults.

Although, individuals with autism will be faced with numerous challenges, thankfully, the future looks brighter for those individuals. Next month a new series will start on childhood bipolar disorder. If you have questions about ASD, contact me by email at kathryndenhouter@gmail.com

...
Asking a working writer what he thinks about critics is like asking a lamppost how it feels about dogs.

~ Christopher Hampton



lend a hand

volunteering opportunities

The Literacy Center of West Michigan has scheduled an information session on Thursday, December 13, 2012, for prospective volunteer tutors. This session is held at 6:30 pm and lasts one hour. It allows persons interested in becoming volunteer tutors to find out more about the center and its literacy programs. At the end of the session, there will be an opportunity to sign up for tutor training.

The Literacy Center of W. Michigan is a nonprofit, United Way agency devoted to reducing illiteracy in the community. Based on 1990 census figures, at least 19,000

adults in Kent County cannot read at a functional level. At least 6,000 adults cannot speak or understand English well. By training people to be tutors, the center can offer one-on-one reading help to adults asking for assistance in reading or English as a Second Language (ESL). You do not need to speak another language to tutor ESL.

The information session will be held at the Literacy Center of West Michigan, located at 1120 Monroe Ave., NW, Suite 240, Grand Rapids, MI. Please call 459-5151 (ext. 10) to register.

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viewpoint

to the editor

local paper - an asset for the community

Dear Editor,

I'd like to suggest a great Christmas gift for family and friends. While so many newspapers are going out of business, we have a wonderful, award-winning local paper to keep us informed on all our local happenings.

Living in a thriving

smaller community like ours is such a privilege and we are so fortunate to still have our own local news published. Let's support this wonderful asset through our subscriptions and consider gift subscriptions for family and friends who are not subscribers. This could be

especially nice for students, snowbirds, etc. who might like to stay informed of local happenings. This would also be a great reminder of your love and thoughts every week as it arrives in their mailbox.

Let's stay local with all of our shopping and support our local businesses. We are so fortunate to have so many local, hometown businesses. I was happy to see all the recent publicity and support of small business. We've all

seen recently how quickly we can lose a local, longtime small business.

Throughout the holidays let's all support these wonderful assets which in turn will help Lowell to continue to thrive. Think local business, think local newspaper, think great Christmas gifts. To everyone – Happy holidays and a blessed Christmas.

Peggy Covert
Lowell

reader offended

To the Editor,

In the Buyers Guide dated Dec. 2, your effort to be politically correct when listing the 25 "holiday songs" you failed to include any songs related to Christ,

such as The Three Kings, Silent Night and many others related to the reason for the season.

I have been offended.

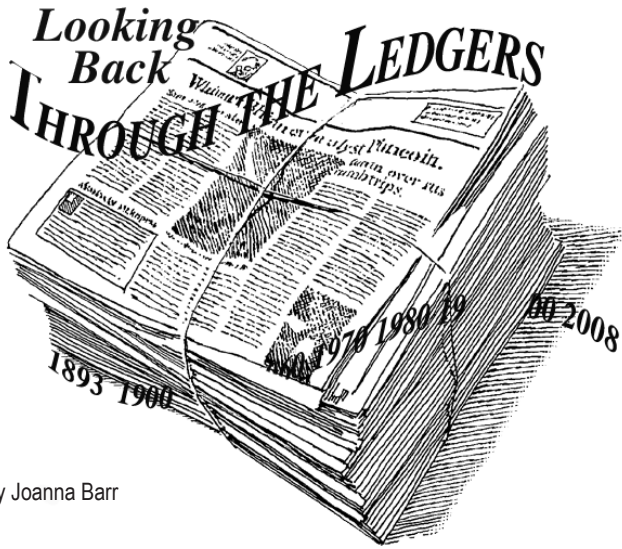
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outdoors

santa outdoors



Dave Stegehuis



By Joanna Barr

140 years ago Lowell Weekly Journal December 11, 1872

The number of teams in the streets of our village last Saturday, caused us to think of the good old times when the epizootic was unknown. We are glad to know that the horse is on the gain.

J. C. Train's addition to Union Block will soon be completed. The new Union Hall will be a great improvement over the old and the broad stairway leading to it will afford much better convenience for ingress and egress than the former. The first floor will be occupied by J. Kopf Esq. and will make a very desirable furniture store. Very pleasant rooms for offices will be found on the second and third floors and in the basement a first-class restaurant. The general appearance of Union Block is greatly improved.

100 years ago The Lowell Ledger December 5, 2012

The woman suffrage victory in Michigan, has, it seems, been postponed by fraud and trickery. If so, the question will be re-submitted and the enemies of honest elections will be watched and perhaps, punished. Thousands of honest men who opposed the equal suffrage cause from pure motives, indignant at the unprincipled action of bad men in politics, are ready and anxious to cast their ballots for decency and fair play. The battle is not lost. It has only just begun, for "Ever the right comes uppermost and ever is justice done."

75 years ago The Lowell Ledger December 9, 1937

A barn and livestock owned by Dan Kalward, located two and one-half miles west of Lowell on M-21 were destroyed by fire Wednesday night. The fire,

which started after Mr. Kalward came into the house after doing the chores was not discovered until about 8 o'clock after it had gained such proportions by the strong west wind that none of the 19 head of cattle and the team of horses could be saved. The barn also contained a large quantity of hay and farm machinery. The Lowell fire department responded to the call but could only stand by and protect the house because of the fire's start and the lack of water to pump.

A water softener system has been installed in the Regent Beauty Parlor and Barber Shop. Proprietor Claude Thorne keeps abreast of the times.

50 years ago The Lowell Ledger December 5, 1962

The loss of 242 gallons of gasoline at the James Roberts' farm, Conklin Road, Route 3, Lowell, early Saturday morning, was the work of a thief (or thieves) who apparently were familiar with the layout of the Roberts' farm. The thief entered a shed on the premises and secured a gas can and went directly to the gasoline tank, which was locked. When the prowler was in the process of cutting the hose on the tank, apparently something scared him and he threw the gas can and made his escape across a field. The tank, which was just filled, drained out through the cut hose and ran down the driveway of the Roberts' residence. Authorities feel that the thief, who was attempting to steal the gasoline, was either completely covered by gasoline when he cut the hose or some noise in the area caused him to run.

Headline: Dismiss death charge against Jack Batey – Jack Batey, 24, was absolved of all charges, Tuesday, in Judge Simhouser's court in the shotgun slaying of Nelson Hoose, 28, on September 2 at a farm home south of Lowell. Batey, charged with felonious assault with intent to do less than murder, had the charge dismissed in a preliminary hearing. It was brought out by Batey's attorney, George R. Cook, that it was justified self-defense and he had no criminal intent.

25 years ago The Lowell Ledger December 9, 2012

It's been a tradition in Lowell for over 130 years. Along the way, dignity, pride and personal attention have become synonymous with the Lowell Granite Company. It was first started by H.J. Englehardt and then purchased in 1982 by Jud Wilterink, who first became associated with the company in 1961...The Lowell Granite Company produces cemetery memorials, consisting of engraving and delivery to the cemetery within a 50-mile radius of Lowell. Wilterink emphasizes that every memorial produced gets personal attention. It was through Wilterink's wife of 39 years that he first became involved with the company. Through Jean's work for Englehardt's, Jud became fascinated with the work. He had tried other fields but chose the Lowell Granite Company for various reasons.

Christmas shopping has gone from a casual seasonal activity to a major commercial offensive. But the underlying tradition and spirit remains the same as we attempt to find just the right gift.

Manufactures and retailers have not missed the opportunity to take advantage of the enthusiasm of those who spend time in the outdoors. Digital technology as well as the development of new fabrics and construction materials created an evolution of products for outdoor people. So, if someone on your Christmas list is involved with outdoor activities, you will find a large selection of products to choose from.

There is some risk, however, in making a choice because the outdoors people tend to see themselves as knowledgeable in their area of interest and are often opinionated and particular about what is suitable gear. Therefore, if you are buying for someone like that, it would be wise to do some research before making a purchase. If the gift is not a surprise, then it is a good idea to just ask the recipient for suggestions. A gift may

also be a way to introduce someone to an activity that you are passionate about and think that person may be interested in getting involved themselves. Some retailers make it a point to hire staff knowledgeable in a particular sport or activity. These people can be very helpful because they are familiar with current products and probably have personal experience to draw from.

Let's not forget our backyard friends who remain with us all winter. Birds and squirrels would enjoy a Christmas treat as natural food becomes harder to find. Be careful about feeding to the point of dependency, or you will have inadvertently taken on the long term responsibility of sustaining the creatures through the entire winter.

Finally, we need to look beyond our immediate circle of family and acquaintances to the wider human community. The true spirit of the season must be extended especially to those in need of essential material things as well as emotional support and encouragement. Merry Christmas.

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.

Letters may be submitted via email to: ledger@lowellbuyersguide.com ("to the Editor" in subject line) or dropped off or mailed to: The Lowell Ledger, 105 N. Broadway, Lowell, MI 49331. Also, our website, www.lowellbuyersguide.com has a link to submit emails on the left side of the page.

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anniversaries

Ketchum

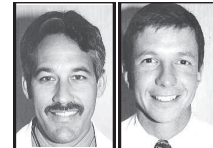


Al and Phyllis Ketchum

Al and Phyllis (Strouse) late Scott Ketchum, Mike Ketchum will celebrate their 53rd anniversary on Dec. 5, 2012. They have four children, Sue and Don Sherwood of Ionia, the

late Scott Ketchum, Mike and Dawn Ketchum of Ionia, and Brenda Schullo of Lowell. They have six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

health



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

cholecystitis

Cholecystitis is an inflammation of the gallbladder. The gallbladder is a small sac that stores acid used to breakdown fat. It is located in the right upper quadrant of the abdomen, on the underside of the liver. Symptoms of gallbladder inflammation are severe/constant pain in the right upper quadrant which can radiate to the right back or shoulder, nausea, bloating and diarrhea. These typically occur within an hour of eating, especially when eating high fat meals. The pain can be very severe.

develop gallstones. The risk increases with age as well.

There are several serious complications that can occur, including infection, a tear or gangrene of the gallbladder.

After the initial physical exam, your doctor may order several tests. These commonly include a blood test to check your liver and an ultrasound of the gallbladder. A separate test called a "HIDA" scan may also be ordered, which tests the functionality of the gallbladder.

Treatment for this condition is usually surgery to remove the gallbladder.

You can decrease your risk of developing gallstones by keeping a healthy weight. Rapid weight loss can also precipitate gallstones, so lose weight slowly.

The most common cause of gallbladder inflammation is a blockage by stones that form inside the gallbladder itself. Rarely, a tumor or scarring can cause blockage as well. Women are more likely to

engagements

Mankel and Abbott

Jessica Mankel and Joel Abbott, both of Walker, will be wed on December 21, 2012. Their parents are Mike and Janet Mankel of Lowell and Paul and Vickie

Abbott of Muskegon. The bride is a student at Grand Valley State University. Her fiancé is a graduate of Grand Valley State University.

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happy birthday!

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DECEMBER 9
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DECEMBER 6
Katie Blough, Kristopher Vezino, Phil Seese, Maria Blough, Christopher DeBold, Marc Wernet.

DECEMBER 10
Bill Fluger, Barbara Decker.

DECEMBER 7
Jennifer Berry, Jeni Buck.

DECEMBER 11
Dave Rhodes, Kathryn Zaleski, Amber Waldron, Mike Kline, Billie Fallstrom.

DECEMBER 8
Mike Cummings, Ellen Miller.

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Christmas parade, continued

5 Theater, Cub Scout Pack 3188, First Congregational Church, Kent District Library, Metron of Forest Hills, ProTrainings and Starbard Farms Feed.

The crowd this year was larger than usual, probably due to the warm temperatures.

It was still cold enough for people to seek out a cup of hot cocoa.

Visiting from Muskegon, Kelli Navarro and her three children, Christopher, Destini and Amonte, really enjoyed the parade. "This is one of the

best parades I've seen," said Kelli.

The winners received prizes of \$150 (first place), \$100 (second place) and \$75 (third place).

The People's Choice winner received \$50 in Shop Lowell gift certificates.

Lowell Chamber of Commerce executive director Liz Baker concluded, "It was an amazing parade, all the entries were creative and fun. The enthusiasm from our entries, volunteers and spectators is contagious, I can't wait until next year!"



The Lowell bus drivers' first-place winning float.



Waiting for the parade to begin.



The Showboat replica is the float for the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.



The Lowell fire engines decked out with a snowflake and lights.



Santa's reindeer, including Rudolph, atop a King Milling semi was a hit with the crowd.



Lowell Cheer marched down Main Street.

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Holiday Gift GUIDE

Festive decorating

Though one of the best parts of winter is getting out of the cool, crisp air and into the cozy, comfort of your home, trendsetting crafters are bringing the beauty of nature inside their houses when decorating for the holidays this year.

“This holiday season, the outdoors are in,” says Nicole Long, Manager

of Inspiration for Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores. “Pine cones, evergreen, moss and grapevine can give your traditional décor a rustic, natural look.”

If you’re having trouble getting inspired, here are some ideas from the experts at Jo-Ann:

- Dress up the entrance of your home with an especially festive look. Wire a small twig wreath to a larger grapevine wreath and then decorate with dazzling embellishments, stems and greenery.

- Give your mantel a cozy makeover by hanging knitted stockings, embellished with berries and leaves. Then fill them with gifts galore!

- Deck the halls with pictures of loved ones and celebrations past. Turn a traditional pine garland of berries and pine cones into a personal keepsake of fond memories by adding handcrafted wire frames of your favorite family photos.

- Paint pine cones red, gold, burgundy and green. Don’t be afraid to add a little glitz with a coat of clear glitter on each one. Showcase them in a simple glass container for a beautiful centerpiece or side table decoration.

- Fashion a hanging basket out of grapevine wreath. Place battery-operated lights within the basket and fill with ornaments.

- For a delicious holiday goodie bag, dip peppermint sticks in melted chocolate and decorate with sprinkles or chopped nuts. Place them in treat bags with ribbon then give to family and friends throughout the season.

- Print Victorian-era designs onto paper, then decoupage onto wood shapes. Glitter the edges and tie on a shiny ribbon to create a lovely, vintage-inspired ornament.

For more tips and directions on transforming your home for the holiday season, visit www.JoAnn.com/projects.

By bringing a bit of nature into your home this season, you can evoke its spirit all throughout the house.

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Great ideas for holiday sweets and treats

Everything tastes better when it’s fresh and made with love -- and the holidays are the perfect time to try your hand at making homemade candy.

Creating your own candy treats is easier than most people realize. Indeed, many experienced bakers don’t know that making homemade candy can be a cakewalk.

“Folks have lost touch with their inner Willy Wonkas,” says Liz Gutman, co-author of the new cookbook, “The Liddabit Sweets Candy Cookbook.” She and co-author Jen King are debunking the myth that creating homemade candy is an insurmountable task.

“For the health-conscious, homemade candy is also a safer bet than the store-bought variety, which often contains endless artificial ingredients,” says King.

Recipe, continued, next page



Recipe, continued

To get started, try out this recipe for “Buckeyes” from Gutman and King’s new book:

Makes about fifty 1 1/2-inch buckeyes

Ingredients:

For centers

- 1/4 cup room temperature cream cheese
 - 1 1/2 cups creamy commercial peanut butter
 - 1 1/4 sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature
 - 2 teaspoons fine sea salt
 - 1 cup almond or peanut flour
 - 3 cups confectioners’ sugar, sifted
- For dipping and garnish
- About 4 cups chopped dark chocolate
 - Coarse sea salt (optional)

• Combine all “centers” ingredients in mixer bowl and beat on medium-high until completely incorporated. Cover and refrigerate the peanut butter mixture until firmed a little (about 30 minutes).

• Roll mixture into balls of 1 tablespoon each and place on prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate for about 30 minutes.

• Prepare 4 cups dipping chocolate: Fill a large saucepan with water to a depth of about 1 inch. Bring to a boil, uncovered, over high heat. Turn off heat and set a bowl on top. Add about two-thirds of the chopped chocolate and allow it to sit for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring only occasionally with a heatproof spatula. Once chocolate melts and reaches desired temperature (it should feel warm) lift the bowl, and place it on a folded dish towel. Wipe moisture off the bottom and side of the bowl. Add reserved chocolate, about 1/4 cup at a time, stirring vigorously and constantly until lump-free and cool. This will take about 15 minutes. Allow to set. Place chocolate in a large bowl.

• Stick a toothpick into a peanut butter ball and dip in the chocolate, leaving the top quarter undipped. Transfer to second prepared baking sheet. Remove toothpick, and cover hole left behind with a few grains of coarse sea salt. Repeat with remaining buckeyes.

• Allow buckeyes to sit until chocolate is firm, about 15 to 20 minutes. Store layered with wax paper in a refrigerated airtight container for up to 4 weeks.

A variety of great recipes can be found in the “The Liddabit Sweets Candy Cookbook.” For more information, visit www.LiddabitSweets.com.

This holiday season; don’t be intimidated by the prospect of candy making. Once you know some basic tricks and techniques, the possibilities are endless!

Honor a loved one this holiday season and support Michigan’s wildlife

This holiday season, Michigan residents can honor friends or loved ones by making a donation to the Michigan Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund in their name. The recipient will be notified of the donor’s generosity with a beautiful certificate and a Living Resources patch featuring one of Michigan’s unique nongame species.

According to the Department of Natural Resources, a donation of \$20 or more makes a world of difference for the fish and wildlife species in Michigan. These tax-deductible gifts benefit species that are endangered, threatened or considered rare in the state, helping to restore rare species populations and also to keep common species common.

Since the Michigan Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund was established in 1983, the program has had three main goals:

- To restore populations of endangered and threatened species through management and protection;
- To maintain present populations of animals and plants; and
- To promote appreciation and awareness of Michigan’s nongame wildlife and endangered species

through education and first-hand opportunities to experience wildlife.

Peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, piping plovers, gray wolves, Kirtland’s warblers, Mitchell’s satyr butterflies, lake sturgeon and common terns are just a few of the hundreds of wildlife species that have benefited from projects supported through the Michigan Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund. For more information on projects that have been supported by the fund, visit www.michigan.gov/nongamewildlife.

The Michigan Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund supports a network of more than 100 watchable wildlife

sites throughout the state.

These sites provide a variety of opportunities to view some of Michigan’s most popular wildlife species. The watchable wildlife program also promotes efforts that teach people how to responsibly photograph and view all forms of wildlife and plants.

Since its inception, the Michigan Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund has raised more than \$9.5 million in support of critical projects for nongame species, but the fund will not continue without donations.

To make a donation in someone’s honor – perhaps as a holiday gift – residents can make out

a check or money order to: State of Michigan, Nongame Wildlife Fund and send it, along with the person of honor’s name and address, to: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, P.O. Box 30451, Lansing, MI 48909.

To get news and information about Michigan’s unique and wonderful wildlife species, sign up for the DNR’s Wildlife Viewing email list – visit www.michigan.gov/wildlife and click on the red envelope.



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Holiday Gift GUIDE

DANI CONE'S CUTIE PIES

You will need your favorite crust recipe, your favorite filling recipe (see Dani's below), rolling pin, flour, nonstick spray, muffin tin

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the chilled dough (right from the fridge) to about 1/4-inch thickness.
2. Cut dough into 4-5 inch circles.
3. Spray muffin tin lightly with nonstick spray.
4. Gently press each circle into a muffin cup, making sure sides and bottom are pressed in, leaving about 1/2 inch overhang above the muffin cup.
5. Fold and tuck: gently fold over the overhang and tuck it back into the muffin tin, just as you crimp a full-sized pie.
6. Crimp the edges, again just as you would a full-sized pie. Start with your thumb and forefinger of left hand and place on edge. With forefinger of right hand, push edge gently between thumb and forefinger of left hand and continue around the Cutie Pie, making about 5 crimps.
7. Fill with your favorite pie filling, top with either mini lattice, a mini flat top or crumb top. If topping with lattice or flat top, brush lightly with egg wash and sprinkle with sugar before baking.
8. Bake at 400 degrees F for about 50 minutes, until crust is deep golden brown and filling is bubbly. Check the bottoms by using a butter knife to gently lift up the Cutie Pie and see that it is golden brown on the bottom, too.

HIGH 5 APPLE PIE FILLING

- 6-8 medium Granny Smith apples
- 4 ounces light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- pinch of ground cloves
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/8 cup raw sugar

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Wash, core and slice apples into 1/2 inch slices.

3. Toss apple slices and all ingredients together in a glass or metal baking pan, at least 1 inch deep. Make sure apples are well coated.
4. Bake apples for 5 minutes, remove from oven and stir.
5. Fill pie crust(s) with apple mixture and top with lattice or flat top. Crimp edges.
6. Lightly brush top with egg wash of one lightly beaten egg and sprinkle with raw sugar.
7. Bake as directed.



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Red Arrow SPORTS

- BASKETBALL

Lady Arrows begin the season with a win

by Karen Jack

In their season opener against Cedar Springs, the lady hoopsters pulled off a squeaker, 47-45.

With only two senior starters, Jessica Montgomery and Danielle Ordway, the team looked like veterans for most of the game. The team never trailed the whole game and was ahead by 12 points late in the third quarter, but turnovers allowed the

Redhawks to make it more of a contest in the fourth quarter.

At the beginning of the game, Cedar Springs took control of the jump ball, but Lowell forced a turnover and took over from there, Katie Holzhueter scored the first two points on Lowell's second possession and then the Redhawks responded with two of their own. That's the closest the Redhawks

would get for the rest of the game. Both teams had a lot of turnovers the first quarter, resulting with the lady Arrows leading after the first quarter, 11-8.

Lowell settled down a little bit after the first quarter and managed to hold Cedar Springs to only six points in the second quarter, but struggled offensively, scoring only nine points in the quarter, with the score being 20-14 going into the locker room.

The lady Arrows came out after halftime with fires blazing. Making the necessary adjustments offensively, the Arrows scored 14 points in the third quarter, to the Redhawks'

eleven points, leading 34-25.

For most of the fourth quarter, Lowell led by a significant amount, but with turnovers and fouls, Lowell opened the door to Cedar Springs with two minutes left in the game. Up by nine points, with the score 43-34, Lowell fouled the Redhawks and being in the bonus, Cedar Springs made a point on the free throw line. Then Lowell responded with two points from Montgomery and Lowell fouled Cedar again, with them making one point at the free throw line. Lowell took possession and missed their shot, then Cedar Springs responded with a three-point shot, making the



Aubreigh Steed takes a shot.



Danielle Ordway waits for her opponent.



Aubreigh Steed goes for the jump ball.

score 45-39. Lowell then fouled Cedar Springs once again, only this time they made two points at the line. Cedar then fouled Lowell and Kate Montgomery made one point at the line, with the score being 46-41. Cedar came back and scored another two points, then Lowell managed to wind 20 seconds off the clock and then turned the ball over. The Arrows fouled the Redhawks and they made two points at the line, with the score now 46-45. The Redhawks fouled Holzhueter and she made one point, with five seconds left to end the scoring.

High scorers were Aubreigh Steed with 12 and Jessica Montgomery with 11. Abby Petroelje led rebounds with nine and Steed had seven. Steed also had eight blocks for the night.

Lowell's new head coach Jake Strotheide said, "Cedar is a great team. Their girls made us work for every

basket, but with our senior leadership in Danielle and Jessica, we were able to pull off the victory." In his first year at Lowell, coming from Wyoming as the JV head coach, he said he's been welcomed with open arms and is very excited about this team. "We're going for it. We had some of our sophomores make great shots, our juniors played like we practiced and our seniors did their thing. I'm looking forward to the rest of the season," he added.

The next game for the girls' team is Friday, Dec. 7, at home against Union High School at 7:30 pm.



History Mystery answer

The following is the answer to last week's History Mystery

This famous urn was once owned by Leona Borgerson who owned an antique business called the "Cranberry Urn" at 208 E. Main Street in the early 1950s until her death in 1973. Leona became a very successful entrepreneur and was probably the largest antique glass dealer in the United States. Her success led many to seek treasures in Lowell and encouraged others to build a business in antiques. This beautiful urn was donated to the museum by Judy Straub for our retailing exhibit. It has been on display since the museum opened. This large cranberry urn with cover is an exquisite example of "Mary Gregory" glass. We know that Mary Gregory was an American woman who lived from 1856-1908. She and her sister painted glass for the Boston and Sandwich Glass Company in Sandwich, Massachusetts,

'till the late 1880s. Even if they had both worked every day of their lives and were still alive now, they could not have produced all the work bearing the 'Mary Gregory' name! Gregory, her sister and possibly others she had trained, used a white paint with ground glass as a paint mixture to paint the glass. 'Mary Gregory' glass can be recognized by the white enamel painting of children playing dressed in typical Victorian 'Sunday best.' This style of artwork on glass continues to this day.



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obituaries

LOMAS

William John Lomas, age 87 of Grand Rapids, passed away Friday, November 30, 2012. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Ruth; children, John (Susan) Lomas, Beth (John) Szymczak, Dan (Carol) Lomas; grandchildren, Alison (Robert) Figueira, Aaron Breland, Evan Szymczak, and Colin Lomas. Bill was a chemist for



Amway, served in the Navy in the Pacific during WW II, he was a choir director at the First United Methodist Church of Lowell, and enjoyed golfing and bowling with his friends. A Memorial Service was held at Clark Retirement Community Chapel, 1551 Franklin St. S.E., Grand Rapids. Rev. Charles Garrod and Rev. Bertran Vermeulan officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to The Clark Foundation, 1551 Franklin Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506



STEISS-RIDENOUR

Beverly Ann Steiss-Ridenour, age 84 of Saranac, formerly of Haslett, entered into Heaven late Saturday, November 24, 2012. Beverly was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, April 25, 1928 the second of five children born to Maurice Steiss and Violet Happel-Steiss. Her family moved to Lansing, Michigan and there she met her future husband, Robert Ridenour, at Michigan Millers Insurance Company. Beverly spent many years working for the Haslett school district, mostly in the elementary library. Beverly and Robert had one daughter Kristy and two grandchildren Kolton and Katie. Beverly is preceded by her husband, Robert; precious granddaughter, Katie; sister, Bonnie, her husband Walter Mansfield, and their granddaughter BonnieLace; brother, Maurice Steiss; brothers-in-law, Arthur Krueger and Edward Vogel. Surviving are her daughter, Kristy (Keith) Bashore; beloved grandson, Kolton; sisters, Diane Krueger, Mildred Vogel; sister-in-law, Grace Steiss; Kristy's bonus sister, Lori Davis Bashore; Kristy's bonus mother and Beverly's dear friend, Alyce Heyboer; also many nieces, nephews, friends, and loved ones. A Memorial Service will be held Saturday, December 8, 11:00 am at South Boston Bible Church, 6958 Kyser Rd., Lowell. Pastor Ron Tuinstra officiating. Visitation Friday, December 7, 2-4:00 pm at Roth-Gerst Chapel, 305 N. Hudson, Lowell. Flowers are fine, please no plants, contributions may be sent to American Diabetes Association, P.O. Box 888877, Grand Rapids, MI 49588-8877.



Remember to get flu shot, continued

Last week flu activity throughout the United States increased. In Michigan, flu activity has been sporadic so far this season, however reports of laboratory-confirmed flu cases have been documented across the state and are starting to increase.

The severity of the flu can vary from mild to severe. When severe, flu complications can lead to hospitalization and in some cases death. Even healthy

children and adults can get sick from the flu. Each year it's estimated that more than 200,000 people are hospitalized because of flu-related complications. People with long-term health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and asthma are at greater risk of experiencing serious health complications as a result of flu. A flu vaccine is the first and best way to prevent influenza and is particularly important in people who are

at higher risk of serious flu complications.

Getting a flu vaccine is more convenient than ever before. Vaccines are available from physicians, local health departments, and at many retail pharmacies. Many employers, colleges and universities also offer flu vaccines. Additionally, the annual vaccine supply continues to grow, helping to ensure that enough vaccine is available for everyone.

"When you're out and about in your community and see signs offering flu shots, or when you visit your doctor for a routine check-up, remember: the flu vaccine is the single best way to prevent the flu," said Haveman.

For more information about flu in Michigan visit www.michigan.gov/flu. To find a flu vaccine near you, visit <http://flushot.healthmap.org>

Service project, continued

gives you a sense of pride to know your doing good and giving a helping hand in the community," said sophomore Mitchell Strawser. While giving a helping hand, students also discovered hidden talents. Some found that they were amazing at heat shrinking the plastic to fit the windows, while others

could apply double sided tape as though they had done it for years. "It gets people involved and makes us work as one," said eighth grader Karmen Anderson, "it makes me feel good that I've helped a family in need." The volunteers were rewarded not only with their accomplishments, but with praises from mentors and

parents. They sealed about eight windows, each one was a learning experience and they were able to practice problem solving and improvising skills that will help them all later in life. The mentors who traveled along, shared the opinion that these projects help those in need while bringing people together and making the community a better place to live. At the end of the project, students and mentors stepped back and

examined their work, each complimenting the other. The project was followed by a lesson that taught the students that their actions define their character and that impacts those around them. All left happy with a feeling of accomplishment that also positively impacts the community. If actions define character, then the community can be very proud of this group of youth and what they have done.

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CITY OF LOWELL

PUBLIC NOTICE
The December Board of Review will meet as follows:
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2012
AT 2:00 PM

ACT 14 OF 1985, being Section 211.53(b) of the General Property Tax Laws, provides for corrections of clerical errors or a mutual mistakes of fact relative to the correct assessment figures, and the corrections of Principle Residence Exemptions, these shall be verified by the local assessing officer and approved by the board of review at a meeting held for that purpose, to be held on any day of the week of the 2nd Monday in December.

On December 11, 2012, a meeting will be called for this purpose at 2:00pm in the City Hall, 301 East Main Street, Lowell, MI 49331, to conduct business as provided for in Section 211.53(b), Michigan Compiled Laws.

City of Lowell Clerk
 Posted December 3, 2012
 Betty Morlock

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LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN
 PROBATE COURT
 COUNTY OF KENT

PUBLICATION OF
 NOTICE OF HEARING

FILE NO. 12-193017-CA,
 12-193018-GA

In the matter of LARRY KIDDER.
 TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including: KIM KIDDER and MATT KIDDER whose address(es) are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

8, 2013, at 9:00 am at 180 Ottawa Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 before Judge David M. Murkowski (P35026) for the following purpose: on the petition of Anna Kaufman for the appointment of a guardian and conservator for Larry Kidder.

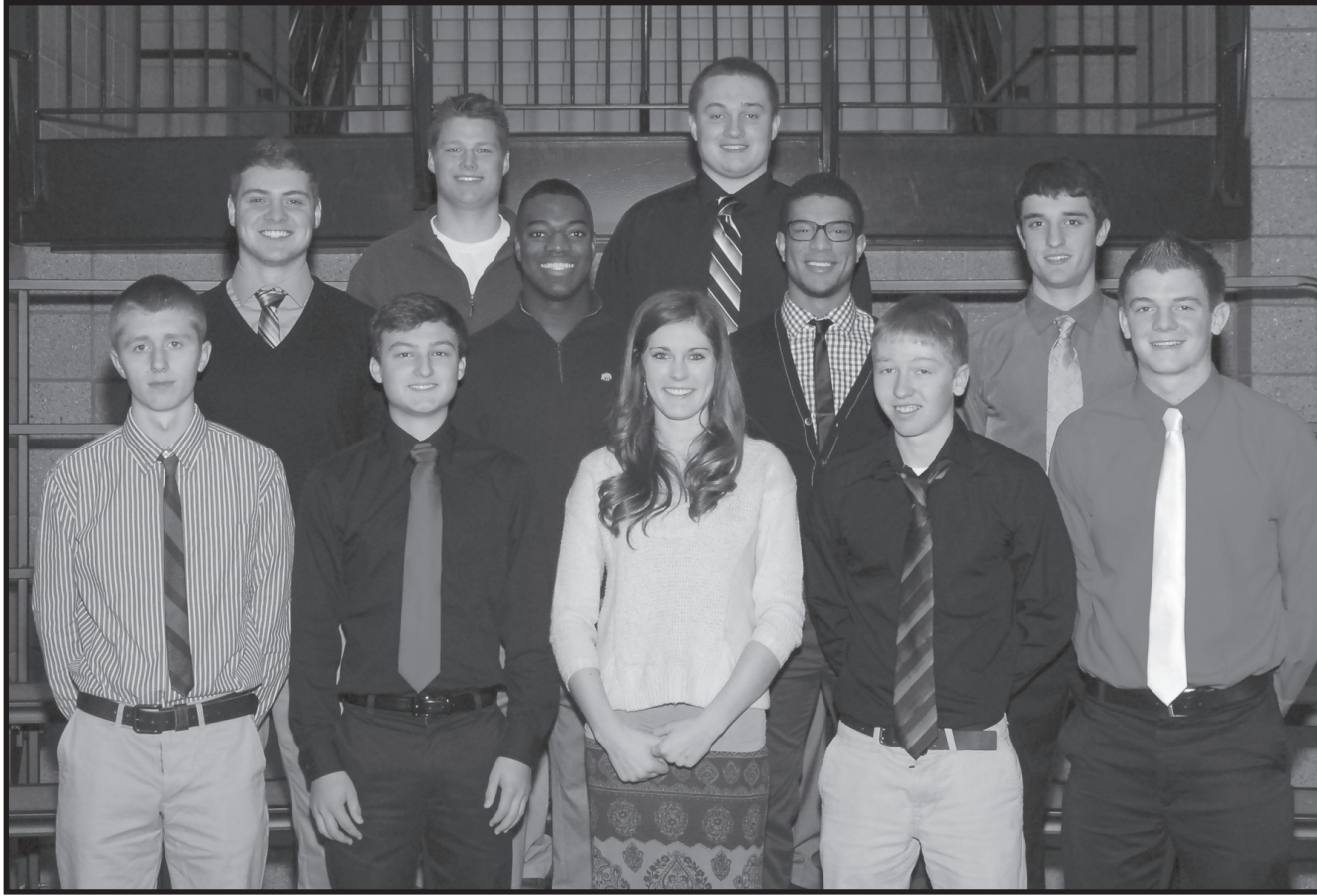
11/30/2012

John D. Flynn (P27413)
 1275 Hawthorne Hills SE
 Ada, MI 49301
 616-897-6632

Anna Kaufman
 121 Franklin SE
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507
 616-826-3611

TAKE NOTICE: A hearing will be held on January

Fall 2012 all-conference athletes named



For football, the all-conference athletes include Dan Dyer, Zach Huver, Shannon Massey, Ryan Schaefer, Reed Stormzand, and Pierce Watson. Liam Kelley and Sean Khodl were named all-conference for soccer. For tennis, Daniel Cowden and Austin Rix were named all-conference and Abby Petroelje was named all-conference for volleyball. Receiving all-conference honorable mention honors were Jessica Graves for cross country, Titan Anderson and Kyler Shurlow for football, Sophie Kohtz for golf, Josh Rocco for soccer, and Micah Babcock and Tony Hanson for tennis.

Front row: Liam Kelley, Daniel Cowden, Abby Petroelje, Austin Rix, and Zach Huver; back row: Reed Stormzand, Ryan Schaefer, Pierce Watson, Dan Dyer, Shannon Massey, and Sean Khodl.

Player Spotlight

Jessica



How long have you been playing basketball?

I've been playing basketball since I was three years old.

What other sports do you play?

I played volleyball through sophomore year, soccer through last year and I ran cross country my junior and senior year.

What is your favorite sport?

Basketball is my favorite sport and it always has been!

Have you received any awards for any of them?

Last year I got all-district for soccer.

Do you have siblings?

I have a sister Megan, who is a sophomore at Northwood University and my little sister, Kate, is a sophomore at Lowell and is on the team with me!

What do you like to do for fun?

For fun I like to hang out with my friends and I love to bake and cook!

What was your personal best in any of your sports?

I actually don't know any of my personal bests, because I don't keep track. After one game is over, I try to focus on the next. But the thing I will remember the most about the sports I've played in high school is the opportunity I've had to be able to play on the same team with my little sister (three times), once for soccer and twice for basketball. Not many people get to experience that and I've really had fun with that.

Do you plan on playing in college? If so, which one?

I mostly plan on playing intermurals in college, but I might play club basketball too.

Do you plan on attending college?

I'm hoping to attend Elon University in North Carolina next fall, if I get my acceptance letter at the end of December. I have my fingers crossed!

Our Spotlight Athletes This Week:

Jessica Montgomery
Team: Basketball
Grade: Senior

&

Austin Bieri
Team: Hockey
Grade: Junior

Austin



How long have you been playing hockey?

I've been playing hockey for twelve years.

What other sports do you play?

How long have you been playing those?

I also play football and have been playing for four years.

What is your favorite sport?

I have a hard time choosing a favorite. I like both equally, so in the fall, football is my favorite and in the winter, hockey is my favorite.

Have you received any awards for any of them?

I personally haven't received any awards, but I have been on teams that have received awards.

Have you broken any records?

Not yet, but I have another year to work on this. I would love to break a record.

Do you have siblings?

Yes, I have a brother, Cody, a senior and a sister, Rochelle, who graduated in 2008.

What do you like to do for fun?

I like doing water sports and other outdoor activities.

What was your personal best in any of your sports?

I guess my personal best was being an assistant captain of the JV hockey team and having the opportunity to play football at the Ford Field as a freshman.

Do you plan on playing in college? If so, which one?

I would love to play either sport in college. I will have to wait and see what happens.

Do you plan on attending college?

Yes, I plan on attending college, but at this time I am undecided on where. It depends on if I can play hockey or football.

Parrish not seeking fourth term as county board chair

Sandi Frost Parrish announced Monday that she will not be seeking a fourth term as the chair of the Kent County Board of Commissioners. Board chair Parrish serves District 5 of Kent County, which covers Bowne Township, Cascade Township, Vergennes Township, Lowell Township and the city of Lowell. She

was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 2007 and selected by fellow commissioners as board chair in January 2010.

Commissioner Parrish released this statement to the Kent County Board of Commissioners today:

Fellow commissioners, I would like to thank you for the honor of electing me to

serve as your board chair for the past three years. While my tenure wasn't without its challenges, it was quite rewarding work. I'm proud of the bi-partisan efforts our board has put forth to resolve issues in an efficient and effective manner and

the structurally balanced budgets the board has adopted the past three years. It is customary for the board chair to serve three years and while two chairs have served four, it is my intention to follow the customary path. I will not be seeking a fourth

term as your board chair and I look forward to continuing to serve the citizens of Kent County as the District 5 commissioner.

The board will select a new chair at its first meeting on January 3, 2013. "The county has been faced

with many diverse issues these past few years," said Daryl Delabbio, county administrator/controller. "Sandi's leadership during this time has helped keep the county moving forward. I truly appreciate her dedication and hard work."

financial focus



Christopher C. Godbold

Time for year-end review of your financial strategy?

Now that 2012 is drawing to a close, you may want to review the progress you've made this past year in many areas of your life — including your financial situation. By going over your investment portfolio and other key areas related to your finances, you can learn what moves you may need to make in 2013 to stay on track toward your important objectives, such as college for your children, a comfortable retirement and the ability to leave the type of legacy you desire.

To get a clear picture of where you are, consider asking yourself these questions:

- Am I taking on too much risk? Although 2012 has generally been a pretty good year for investors, we've certainly seen periods of considerable volatility. During these times, did you find yourself constantly fretting about big drops in your portfolio value? In fact, have you consistently experienced this type of worry throughout your years as an investor? If so, you might be taking on too much risk for your individual risk tolerance. Review your holdings to determine if you can lower your risk level without jeopardizing your overall investment strategy.
- Am I investing too conservatively? Just as you can take on too much investment risk, you can also go to the other extreme by investing too conservatively. If your portfolio contains a preponderance of investments that offer significant preservation of principal but very little in the way of growth potential, you may be endangering your chances of accumulating the resources you'll need to achieve your long-term goals.

sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b), consider yourself fortunate. Your plan has the potential to grow on a tax-deferred basis, and you typically contribute pre-tax dollars — the more you put in, the lower your annual taxable income. Plus, your employer may match part of your contributions. So if you've been under-funding your retirement plan, ratchet up your funding in 2013. At the same time, you may still be eligible to contribute to an IRA; if so, try to "max out" on it. A traditional IRA grows tax deferred while a Roth IRA can grow tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.

• Am I adequately protecting my income — and my family? Over time, you'll experience many changes in your life — marriage, children, new job, new home, etc. Most, if not all, of these changes will require you to make sure you have adequate life insurance in place to help guard your family's future, should anything happen to you. Furthermore, to help replace your income should you become disabled, you may well need to purchase an adequate amount of disability income insurance.

• Do I need professional help? As the above questions indicate, maintaining control of your financial situation can be challenging — especially if you try to do it all on your own. You might benefit from working with a financial professional — someone who can analyze your situation objectively and make recommendations based on your risk tolerance, time horizon and specific goals.

Before the clock runs out on 2012, take the time to ask yourself the above questions. The answers may well spur you to take positive action in 2013.

Even the dark of winter looks brighter at www.socialsecurity.gov

According to The Old Farmer's Almanac, winter arrives at 6:12 am eastern standard time on December 21.

For many people, winter means shorter days, chillier temperatures and more time indoors. There are many ways you can use that extra time inside.

For example, you may want to spend a few minutes checking your earnings history and getting an estimate of your future Social Security benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement, where you can

access your online Social Security Statement.

If you're planning to apply for Social Security retirement benefits, you can do that without going outside or visiting an office. Instead, brew yourself a cup of coffee or tea and sit down at your computer from the comfort of your home to apply online.

Chances are your hot beverage will last longer than the time it takes to apply online for retirement benefits. Our website makes the retirement application

process quick, easy, and secure. In most cases, once your application is submitted electronically, you're done. There are no forms to sign and usually no documentation is required. Social Security will process your application and contact you if any further information is needed.

You can use the online application to apply for Social Security retirement or spouses benefits if you:

- Are at least 61 years and nine months old; and

- Want to start your benefits in the next four months.

So, if you are staying indoors this winter, visit www.socialsecurity.gov. Your time online may brighten even the darkest day of the season.

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.

THE LOWELL LEDGER WEBSITE IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

At this time we are just beginning to get our new website up and running.

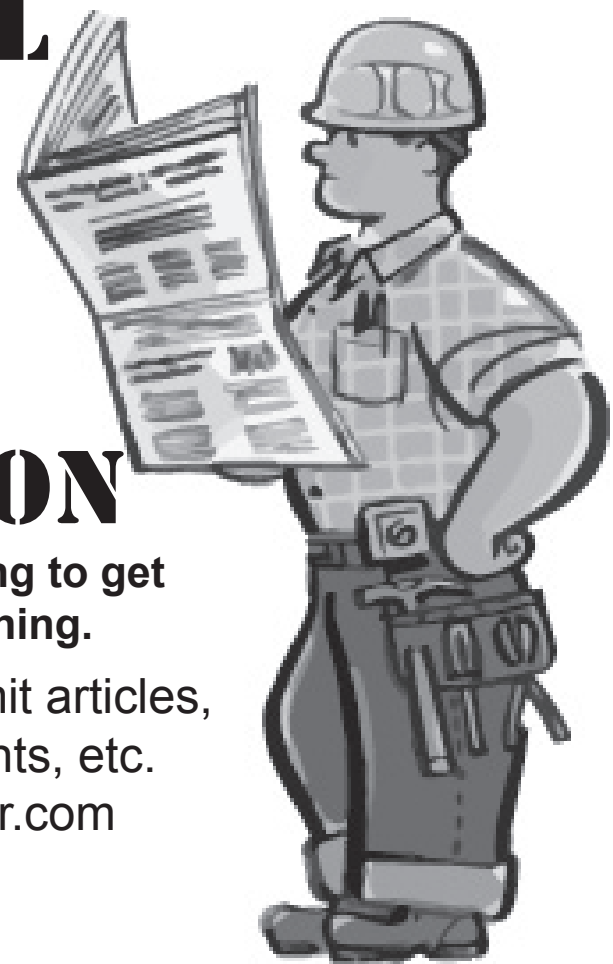
As of now, readers can still submit articles, events, weddings, engagements, etc. through www.thelowellledger.com

Soon you will be rerouted to YourNews.com

When our readers go to this new site and enter the 49331 zip code, they will now have more national and international news AND OF COURSE your Lowell area news!



Thank you for your patience as we attempt to bring you a new and improved website.



Team helps restore power, continued

Jersey, their expertise and experience was invaluable.

Droog, Russo and Barnes spent 12 days re-hanging and replacing residential service drops, re-hanging high voltage

conductors and re-energizing transformers throughout New York and New Jersey. Each morning they would get their work orders from local utility providers, usually Rockwell

and Orange, and spend 16 hours restoring power. "Any time you're out of power for so many days, it's especially bad," said Russo of Hurricane Sandy.

"Our job was to go out there and pick apart those neighborhoods that had power outages because of trees down and lines down," said Russo. They mainly worked where a city had power, but individual houses did not due to the downed wires and damage.

Their first eight days were spent in rural areas where trees and power lines



Tent city in Queens where they stayed three nights.



Barnes and Droog next to a tree torn down in the high winds.



Droog and Barnes restoring power to a house.

were strewn across the road. They worked in New Jersey, near the New York border for this portion of the trip. The next four days the men worked in Queens, where they spent the nights in a tent city sleeping on Red Cross cots and sleeping bags.

Russo credits the crews' success to their expertise. They knew what would be required to finish the jobs and did not need to make trips back to headquarters throughout the day, allowing them to be even more productive.

This is not their first experience helping restore power. Lowell Light & Power is part of a mutual aid program in Michigan, sending crews to help in areas across the state. Barnes had previously helped in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, after the tornado struck in 2011.

For Barnes, he understands how much their work meant to those without power. "I've been without power myself, so I know what it's like and when we can do something and turn somebody's lights on, it's a really good feeling, especially after a few weeks of having no power."

The crew felt their reward simply seeing people so happy after their power was restored, especially with winter coming. Droog never saw anyone who was irate, just grateful and thankful. Their job required them to drive through tollbooths many times a day. Often, once the tollbooth workers saw they were there to restore power, they let them continue without paying as a sign of thanks.

When they first left, they had no idea how long they would be gone. For these men, this trip was not a sacrifice; it was a call to duty, to help those in their time of need. When they did leave on November 14th, 99 percent of the power was back and local utility companies were able to finish the work.

Russo said, "There was a deep satisfaction knowing that we could help somebody and knowing they were appreciative of what we did. If we are ever called again, all three of us would be willing to go and help people out in their time of need."

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