

## Lowell High School class of 1965 gathers



The Lowell High School Class of 1965, gathered September 24 for a 75th birthday party. Those attending included (back row): Phil Nauta, Mike McMahon, Gene Boyce, Jim Gauw, Dan Hoffman, Sharon Meines VanTimmeren, Ed VanTimmeren, Mike Bergin, Tony Myers, Sharon Jones Turnquist. Middle row: Kerry Tap, Ken Beimers, Ernestine Smith Bundy, Pam Wright Pinckney, Jim Goggins, Barry Knooihuisen, Kathy Tapley Dyer, Duane McIver, Maija Peltonen Ronkainen, Rick Fonger, Dick Rollins, Rick Leeman, Joe Mitchell. Front row: Susan Doyle, Pat Tompkins LaDue, Liz Reynolds, Tonya Knight Johnson, Charlene Graham Kooistra, Gloria Hale Organek, Sue Ford Phillips, Roger Keech, Sue Thaler Martens, Marlene Koewers, Carol Weemhoff King.



page 6

Meet the School Board Candidates



pages 8, 9 & 14

Girls Night Out



page 16

Lowell Area Schools Sports



page 10 & 11

## Equestrian rides to reserve championship

By Justin Scott  
sports reporter

It's been an annual tradition in October, as the cold descends upon us and the leaves begin to fall, the Lowell Equestrian team is riding their way to another run at a state championship.

This year they were ever so close, tying for second place with Bullock Creek, with a score of 318. Second place in equestrian is known as the reserve champion. Bay City Western won class B with a score of 359 over the four-day event. Bay City Western, last year's reserve champion, won their first ever state equestrian championship.

This year, the team consists of the two seniors, Alyssa Woern and Delaney Huizinga, along with Rylee Nichols, Paige Kreps, Natalie Bray, Gavin Rinks, Brianna Huisman, and Remington Christensen.

"One of the big performances would be our last event, which was the two-person relay. We had senior Alyssa and freshman Brianna running as a team and they had the two fastest runs in our division, bringing home two first places and



The Lowell equestrian team with their reserve state championship (runner-up), which they tied with Bullock Creek for.

giving us the points we needed to tie for second," Lowell Equestrian head coach, Emma Hancock, said to the Ledger, following the conclusion of the competition on Sunday.

Equestrian is scored in a way so first place in an event gets the team 10 points, second place is 9

points, all the way down to 1 point for tenth place.

"We only get a certain number of slots and each team is strong in different areas, so I will put more kids in our strong classes, like showmanship, and speed over our weak classes, such as saddle seat," Hancock explained.

Huizinga, in her last go around at states, won the sportsmanship award. Another highlight for the team was the "homecoming dance" put on by the MIHA at the event. Many schools' homecoming events conflicted with the state competition held in Midland, so riders would

miss the homecoming festivities back home.

"It is very normal for homecoming to fall on state. This is a difficult task that we face every year, but in order to make up for it, MIHA held a homecoming that our team attended so they still got the experience and memories," concluded Coach Hancock.

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# Lowell School Board meets before midterm vote, parents clash over library issues

By Michelle Smith  
contributing writer

The Lowell Area Schools Board of Education met for its regular meeting, Oct. 10, at the Administrative Offices building.

Like many local school boards across the country during the final months before the midterm elections, the LAS Board has been hearing public comments from parents regarding library policies. The main issue is whether the school system is doing enough to make sure inappropriate materials are being kept away from students, and also, what constitutes "inappropriate" for a public school.

With three open seats on the Board being voted on Nov. 8, there is uncertainty over this issue since some parents consider the current system inadequate. Several people running for the school board are of this opinion. Others support the current policies and direction of Lowell Area Schools.

Steve Gough, principal of Lowell High School, addressed this issue, by making a presentation regarding the Children's Internet Protection Act, a federal law enacted by Congress in 2000. The presentation outlined the requirements of CIPA and how Lowell Area Schools are complying. It also told how internet safety relates to the libraries and materials.

CIPA requires the school system to implement internet safety policies that block students from accessing inappropriate materials and provide safety when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communication. It also prevents hacking by minors online and unauthorized use of personal information.

Gough said LAS is complying with CIPA through an "iBoss" web filter, a program called "Bark for Schools," which monitors online activities, and by educating students thoroughly regarding online safety.

Gough said there is nothing in the LAS library that meets the definition of "child pornography," which is defined as "any visual depiction of a minor under 18", nude and/or engaging in a sexual act. He said a material selection process is in place that ensures there is nothing in the library that is "harmful to minors" or "obscene."

Gough said the library material selection process is based on "industry standards" and is done by a highly-qualified, well-trained staff. Parents can request to approve materials their own children access, as well as prohibit certain texts.

The CIPA applies to materials in the resource center only and does not apply to individual

classroom libraries.

In an action item, the Board voted unanimously to accept a \$500 gift from Ann Marie Miller to the LAS library to purchase new materials.

During the public comments section of the meeting, Stefanie Boone handed out materials she accumulated on alternate standards for choosing books from a Facebook group, of which she is part. Boone recommended the Board consider her materials as a possible resource on how books can be assessed using "widely accepted community standards."

Boone said her goal in speaking out about the school libraries is to protect young, impressionable minds from content which many parents deem inappropriate for their children.

"I have been called a liar. I have been asked to stop with my mic drop moments. I have been called disingenuous, and have been accused of not working with you all in good faith. But I have yet to see one of you show concern with the actual content of the books I show you," she said.

Mark Blanding disagreed with Boone's viewpoint. He said at past meetings the library issue

has been fabricated for shock value.

"To me, this was a set up, and it was designed to stir the pot. And it was designed to disparage individuals and this school system. If my grandchild came home with a book, an ebook from the school, I would say 'good.' Reading is good. Banning books is not good."

"My advice to those parents who would like to limit what their kids read is don't do it. Let your kids' minds work. Let them learn to make their own judgment. Don't ban our books," Blanding said.

Parker Liu, LAS Board candidate, thanked Christine Beachler, director of Library Media Services for her work

"We are so fortunate to have a true media specialist in our district, and I'm happy that Lowell has continued to invest in that and to understand that value," Liu said.

Carey VanderBoon agreed with Boone that there are inappropriate materials currently in the libraries. She encouraged those in charge of approving library materials to revisit the current policies and consider a different standard.

"Are your resources trustworthy? I feel like these concerns fall on deaf

ears. Why are you fighting so hard to keep these books in our school libraries?" VanderBoon said.

"Let me make it clear that we are not trying to ban books or spread misinformation, like some would like to think we are. We have plenty of proof that these books are in our media center. We can give you a list of over 100 books. Our goal is find a better screening process for our media centers

During the Board Communications portion of the meeting, Laurie Kuna, Board vice president, addressed Boone and VanderBoon directly.

"We are a public school. We are obligated by law to educate every group that comes into our district, regardless of their race, creed, political stance, sexual orientation, whatever condition they enter our buildings. Part of being a public school are public libraries."

"I think that whole idea that parents are trying to stick up for other parents. That's not your job. Your job, as a parent, is to dictate what your children are reading and learning as you interpret it, but you don't get to tell me what my own kids get to read,"

Kuna said. "You've been doing this for months. You are committing fraud. You are going behind, trying to overcome our systems, to make us look bad. You are going on social media and disparaging our library specialist by name. You are disparaging us in the media, and you have no right to do that."

Boone answered Kuna, "Laurie, we're not the only school. This is nationwide, statewide."

"I don't care. We're talking about Lowell Area Schools," Kuna said.

Superintendent, Nate Fowler, ended the meeting by reiterating that LAS follows "industry standards" regarding the libraries, and that he does want parents to have a voice in what their children are reading.

"We do want to work with parents, and if there are concerns about book titles, we're going to continue to follow the processes that we have in place," Fowler said.

Fowler also gave a reminder that there is a "non-homestead restoration" on the ballot for voters, Nov. 8, and encouraged attendees to be educated about candidates and proposals.

## UMC holds Halloween Festival

The BLAST Youth Group from Lowell United Methodist Church is holding its first annual Halloween Festival on Oct. 30, from 4-7 pm, at the church, 621 E. Main Street, Lowell.

The youth group is excited to put on a large outreach community event

that is different from the Trunk-or-Treat around town. This will be a free event, but donations are welcome to help support our youth group Mission Trip to Chicago in the Summer of 2023.

This event will have Halloween-themed carnival

games, a scavenger hunt, Halloween bingo, and photo opportunities with The Grinch, Princesses and other characters. There will be light snacks and appetizers, from 5-6 pm.

The event is for all ages. Dressing up in a costume is encouraged, as a Best Costume Prize will

be awarded. The winner will receive \$25 in Lowell Bucks.



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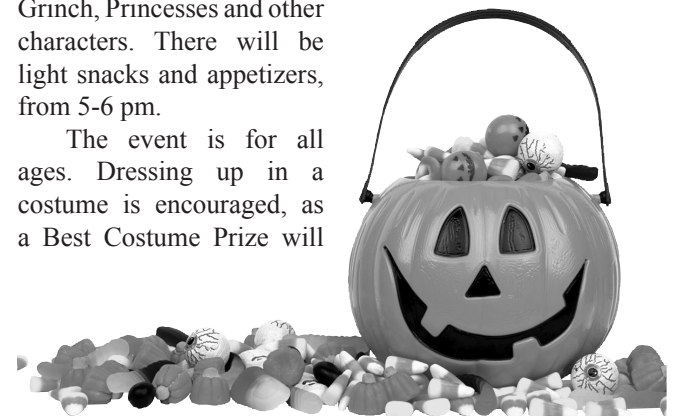
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# 2022 Voting – Proposition 3

by Cliff Yankovich  
Contributing writer

At first blush, Proposal 3 is a quagmire that might be left alone by any journalist wishing to avoid a massive headache. The question of the right to an abortion is one of the most divisive in our nation. If the issue were not so divisive, then Congress would have taken the Supreme Court's initial decision, handed down in Roe v. Wade 49 years ago in 1973, and crafted some form of national legislation. Instead this very hot potato was left alone nationally and it was left to the states to deal with.

Here in Michigan, no such legislation has been crafted and passed in almost five decades. However, since the Supreme Court reversed the ruling on Roe v. Wade earlier this year, we now have a ballot proposal that seeks to incorporate the right to seek and obtain an abortion into our State Constitution. A brief flyover of the reactions to Proposal 3 makes it easier to understand why Lansing has avoided crafting such legislation in the past. I would suggest it might have been easier to do so when the Roe v. Wade decision had not been overturned,

but hindsight is always 20/20. One can understand the reticence of Lansing to take on such a volatile issue.

Since the SCOTUS decision, many states have ballot proposals and/or have legislators who have crafted laws and regulations regarding the termination of pregnancy in their state. Here in Michigan, we have Proposal 3 on the ballot.

Here is the ballot language of Proposal 3:

“A proposal to amend the state constitution to establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make all decisions about pregnancy and abortion; allow state to regulate abortion in some cases; and forbid prosecution of individuals exercising established right.”

This proposed constitutional amendment would:

- Establish new individual right to reproductive freedom, including right to make and carry out all decisions about pregnancy, such as prenatal care, childbirth, postpartum care, contraception, sterilization, abortion, miscarriage management, and infertility;
- Allow state to

regulate abortion after fetal viability, but not prohibit if medically needed to protect a patient's life or physical or mental health;

- Forbid state discrimination in enforcement of this right; prohibit prosecution of an individual, or a person helping a pregnant individual, for exercising rights established by this amendment;

- Invalidate state laws conflicting with this amendment.

Should this proposal be adopted? Yes No”

The result of my attempt to research and present Proposal 3 in the same manner as I did for Proposals 1 and 2, resulted in the aforementioned quagmire-induced headache. There are all kinds of opinions and claims made about what would happen should Proposal 3 pass or fail. As with anything today, much of what is written about it is simply untrue. All of my efforts to find a way to present both sides of the issue, as I tried to do with the other two, found me extremely frustrated.

As far as the language of the Proposal being too

vague or open ended, this was not upsetting to me because the reason we have legislators in Lansing is to adapt the will of the people as expressed by their votes on such ballot proposals into laws and regulations. The latest one that comes to mind is the state-wide legalization of adult-use (recreational) marijuana. The measure passed by a wide margin and then rules and regulations were settled and then tweaked and tweaked again. They might even be further modified in the future.

My desire to present both sides of the argument still had me performing mental gymnastics. Then, in a moment of mental calmness and clarity, the realization hit me that a deep dive into both sides of the issue is not needed. The reason I say this is that no amount of examination of this issue is really going to provide anyone with a decision that they have not already arrived at.

For voters who always vote “Pro-Life”, there really is nothing to consider. This was made clear to me years ago by friends who are adamantly in this camp.



For some, it is the single-deciding factor for all of their voting. No candidate who is not against abortion in any form can be considered, no matter how compelling he or she might be on other issues. This is not a criticism of these voters, just a statement of fact.

On the other hand, those who are adamantly “Pro-choice” and who believe that the decision to terminate a pregnancy is best left to the pregnant person, and/or their family and partner, are equally committed to voting in a manner consistent with their values. I am not criticizing them either, just stating that they are firmly

committed, as are the first group.

It was then I realized a synopsis of Proposal 3 is really quite simple. Those who are against allowing abortion to happen legally in Michigan will vote “no”. Those who support the option to seek and obtain a legal abortion in our state will vote “yes”.

I would like to add one caveat. Just because I came to the conclusion that an examination of Proposal 3 is much simpler than I initially thought it would be, I am not suggesting that the subject of abortion is an easy issue to tackle.

# The Music of Detroit – Part One

By Cliff Yankovich  
contributing writer

In addition to providing motorized vehicles to our nation and many parts of the rest of the planet, Detroit is the birthplace of a wide variety of music and musicians. Just as the effects of the mass production of cars and trucks touched and influenced most of the civilized world, so did the many forms of music represented by many genres and musicians that were born and nurtured in Detroit. In addition to the first and foremost example, Motown Records, we want to examine and celebrate other styles of music and the Detroiters who made them happen.

Before we celebrate

Motown, I have to share something. Most times when I write, I have instrumental music playing in the background. As I began to type this first article about the global musical impact of one of my favorite cities, a great tune by a master bass player came up on my play list: “Detroit” by Marcus Miller. No kidding. It was as if the Musical Universe was patting me on the head in appreciation of the subject matter. (Well, that is how I am going to interpret the event.)

Motown is synonymous with Detroit, probably because its very name was Barry Gordy's inspired combination of “motor” and “town”. For many Michiganders, the word

“Motown” is used equally as a reference to the record label and the extensive amount of musical talent it brought to our ears, as well as the geographic location of the biggest, baddest, coolest city in Michigan.

The story of Motown is another true tale of the American Dream. Founder Barry Gordy, III was the grandson of a man who was the son of a plantation owner and a woman he enslaved. Gordy's father came north to Detroit and worked his tail off in true entrepreneurial fashion. Barry grew up in the burgeoning middle class of Detroit, thanks to his father opening a grocery store, owning a plastering business, a carpentry

business and a printing shop.

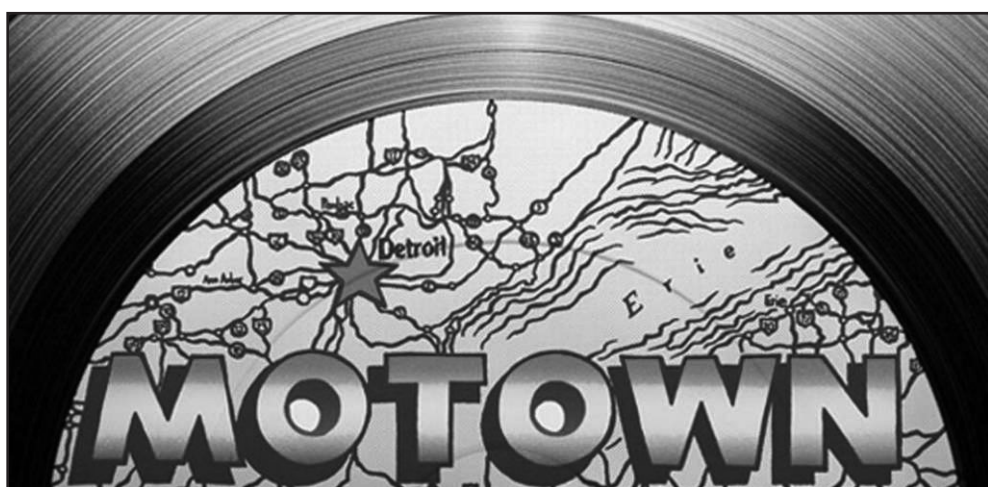
Even with all those options before him, Barry did not see his future in any of the endeavors started by his dad. He dropped out of High School with dreams of becoming a professional boxer. Thank goodness that when he returned to Michigan after serving in Korea, he focused on song-writing and later record-producing. We must also all appreciate the fact that his family had enough faith

in him to loan him eight hundred dollars to kick start his dream of owning a record company. The company was called Tamla Records, at the outset, in 1958 and then two years later, Tamla was merged into the Motown record label. Fun Fact – I was born a week after the Tamla Record Company was.

For those of us of a certain age, we only have to close our eyes and reflect a bit to see the distinctive

Motown record label, which featured eye-catching colors and graphics that include a map, which marks the Motor City with a red star. Growing up in the 60's and 70's, every memory of listening to music at home or a friend's house or at a school dance includes seeing multiple 45s and LPs with the Motown label on them.

**Music,  
continued page 4**



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# Medusa, gone but not forgotten

by Bill Lee  
contributing writer

My daughter made me put away the moving head of Medusa this year. My favorite of all of my Halloween decorations, Medusa and her snakes move wildly and her eyes beam a bright green when you press a button - all while she is cackling, "If you look into my eyes, I will change you forever... to stone!"

My daughter was having none of it, so I put Medusa away in a safe place. "Where's Medusa?" she asked for many days after.

"Don't worry, honey. She is not coming out this Halloween," I replied. Just like the Lions and Tigers, maybe next year!

At least she is allowing me to keep out my decapitated New York Yankee, though. The other day she decided to inspect the gory rubber head a little closer.

"What is this stuff on his neck?" she asked.

"That's his spinal cord and some blood."

"Blood?"

"Yes, everyone has blood inside their bodies. Did I really just go there?"

"Is he still alive?"

"No, he's dead. Well, he's pretend, but if he were alive he'd be dead because people need their bodies to live. You can't live without a body." Oh boy, here we go...

"Am I going to die?" she asks.

Pause. Think, Bill, think!! Can't turn back now! "Well, yes, but not for a long time. All humans eventually die. But you don't have to worry about that right now."

Existential discussions with my three-year old. I guess this is the price I have to pay for decorating our yard for Halloween.

I'm sure over the years you have been asked "What are your favorite holidays?" When I am asked, people are sometimes surprised.

For me it is Thanksgiving, Independence Day (July 4) and Halloween. I've never been a Christmas guy, as overall, I think it has lost its meaning a long time ago and has since, turned into a capitalistic free-for-all, sort of like that first hour of WalMart's Black Friday opening. Chaos and plunder. Anyway... I digress. Thanksgiving is an easy one because it involves family, friends, football and food - all the best concepts the letter "F" has to offer. July 4th is a great day, as it celebrates our country, the greatest in the world still, even with all of our issues, and it is the official day of summer filled with parades, cookouts, fireworks, and nice weather. Halloween is the one that people will look at me sideways sometimes, when I mention it as a favorite.

For many reasons, it is a fun holiday for me. For one, I am a closet-costume wearer. I think I got it from

my father, who long ago dressed up as Tarzan when he took me and my brothers out for the night. I remember the picture of him with his leopard skin toga, with his bright white long-johns underneath to protect him from the cold night. The stark contrast of the white long-johns and the leopard print remains burned in my memory.

Also, I love to decorate my house with ghouls hanging from our crab apple tree or skeleton heads hiding in the bushes. As an avid Red Sox fan, I even have what I call "The Dead Yankee" - a decapitated ghoulish (the one already mentioned above) whose body sits in a chair with his New York Yankee uniform on. I usually text a picture to my friends (who actually support the evil empire) each October, hoping it jinxes

the Yankees in the playoffs. I would say that the homegrown curse has worked all but one time since the beginning of this century. Now, I'm not one of those dads who goes over-the-top with decorations - life-sized skeletons, ghosts, witches and gravestones filling their front yards - but I do bow down to those who do, as my daughter is captivated by your efforts.

She has been wearing her Halloween costume for three weeks now, so I'm hoping that the Halloween gene has been passed down to her. Maybe I'll get Medusa back next year. She is dressing-up as Belle from The Beauty and the Beast, and her yellow gown is beginning to turn brown from all the indoor and



Medusa Halloween decoration

outdoor play. No, I won't be dressing up as The Beast, as I'm sure it would be somewhat cumbersome, but I will be dressed up. There's a good chance you might see me as one of my favorite singers. Look for the big hair, gem-studded white jumpsuit, and blue suede shoes. Happy Halloween, everyone!

"Trick or treat, smell my feet, give me something good to eat!"

## Music, continued

Gordy first earned money from music when he co-wrote half a dozen songs for the up and coming singer, Jackie Wilson, including the chart topper, "Lovely Teardrops".

The miracle that fired the rocket of Motown Records would have to be the group The Miracles, and their velvet-voiced frontman, Smokey Robinson. Gordy discovered the group in 1957 when they were called "The Matadors". Two years later, under his guidance, they blasted to national fame with a series of hits that really put Motown on the musical map. Gordy acknowledged that without the band, Motown, as we know it would not exist. The Miracles first smash, "Shop Around", took the top spot in the R&B chart and sat at number two on the Pop chart in late 1960. The following year, "Please Mr. Postman", by the Marvelettes, topped both charts.

The next superstar to come into the fold was Mary Wells. She benefitted from her association with Motown and Smokey Robinson when he wrote her first three hits, including "My Guy". The

list of talent given to the world by Motown Records, just in the first ten years it existed, includes The Supremes, Marvin Gaye, The Temptations, Jimmy Ruffin, The Contours, The Four Tops, Gladys Knight & the Pips, The Commodores, The Marvelettes, Martha and The Vandellas, Stevie Wonder and the Jackson 5. Gordy's ability to find and fine-tune musical talent was off the charts. He was able to guide them in a manner to maximize their musical impact on Detroit, the USA, and a good deal of the entire planet that seemingly had an insatiable appetite for the music coming from Detroit.

Gordy moved operations to Los Angeles in 1972, where he kicked things off by producing "Lady Sing the Blues", a bio-picture about Billie Holiday, starring Dianna Ross, Richard Pryor, and Billie Dee Williams. Other movies produced by Motown include, "Mahogany", "The Last Dragon", and "The Bingo Long Travelling All-Stars & Motor Kings". Once it moved to Los Angeles, Motown was not the dominant force in music

that it once was for a variety of reasons. That being said, the L.A. version of Motown still brought us music from The Commodores, Lionel Richie, and Rick James, as well as continuing to produce hits from Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson and The Jacksons.

Gordy sold Motown to MCA records in 1988, a few days on the plus-side of 30 years after starting Tamla records. He held on to the musical rights of the roughly 15,000 songs in the Motown catalog for a little longer. It should be mentioned that he wrote or co-wrote 240 of those songs. The song rights were held by Jobete Music - the publishing company he named after three of his children; Joy, Berry, and Terry. Polygram paid over 330 million for the rights to the Jobete Music collection.

Gordy has been inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame, as well as the Songwriters Hall of Fame - who awarded him the first ever Pioneer Award. He has also received other accolades, including an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Michigan earlier this year. He is 92 years old.

Just reading the names of the artists found and promoted by Gordy and Motown records speaks volumes about the global impact of music from Detroit. But wait - there's more.....

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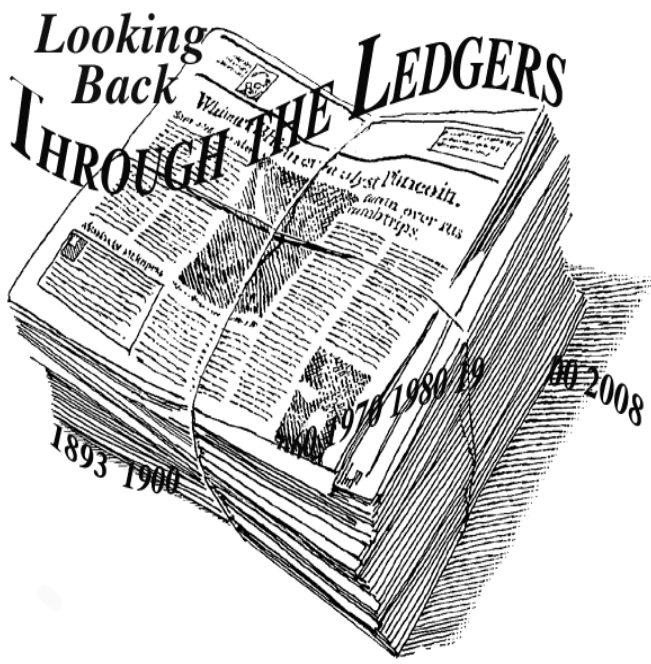


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# viewpoint



## 125 years ago The Lowell Ledger October 21, 1897

The residence of Hiram Shepard was entered by burglars last Friday night and plundered to the event to a few dollars in change and a good watch, which had been in Mr. and Mrs. Shepard's possession for many years. Entrance was made by breaking into the cellar. At last accounts, there was no clue to the perpetrators.

We are sorry to learn that the proprietor of the Alton flour mill has changed his mind about getting a gasoline engine. We hear they will miss it, for there would then be grinding enough to keep them running all the time. J.H. Davis is a first class miller and has given universal satisfaction, but for want of sufficient power, will be unable to remain.

Wm. Pullen & Son's store has been wired and is now lighted by the municipal plant.

## 100 years ago The Lowell Ledger October 26, 1922

Robert Raimer, formerly of Lowell, died Friday last at 3 am, aged 28 years. On Sunday, Oct. 15, Robert, his father and two brothers were hunting. While Mr. Raimer was unloading his gun, the last shell accidents exploded, the charge passing through the son's knee. The young man was rush to a Lansing hospital, where everything possible to save him, but to no avail.

Kent County board of supervisors voted down the proposal to reopen the county work farm and employ jail labor.

Traveling at a greater speed than any human being ever before attained, Lt. R. L. Maughan, a United States Army pilot, Monday, set a new world's aeroplane speed record by covering a one kilometer course, at the rate of 248.5 miles an hour.

## 75 years ago The Lowell Ledger October 23, 1947

Last real obstacle to introduction of driver-training in Lowell high school has been removed. Charles B. White, Lowell teacher, will return home Friday after being graduated from a five-day Driver-Training Institute at Bay City.

There were more fans from Lowell at the football game at Rockford Friday night than there were Rockford people. This fact should inspire the boys on the home team to live up to training rules in every respect.

Some of the boys who were cleaning up one of the barns for the Guernsey show beat a hasty retreat when they saw a skunk occupying the premises as

big as life. The boys returned to their work - after the skunk had taken his departure.

Lowell airport, two miles north of the village, was designated a Class I airport by inspectors from the State Aeronautical Department, Tuesday. The local airport, consisting of 55 acres, was given to the village by C.H. Runciman and L.W. Rutherford, nearly two years ago.

## 50 years ago Lowell Ledger Suburban Life October 19, 1972

Funeral services for Michigan State Police Trooper, Steven B. DeVries, 32, of the Niles post, were held Saturday at the Fulkerson Park Baptist Church in Niles. DeVries was fatally shot Thursday, Oct. 12, when he had made a patrol stop of a suspect linked to an armed robbery. DeVries was a 1959 graduate of Lowell High School and served in the Navy. He joined the State Police in February, 1965, and after two years at the Jackson Post, was transferred to Niles in May, 1967.

A rock throwing incident, following Friday night's Sparta-Lowell football game is under investigation by the Lowell Police Department. Three Sparta football players were injured when a rock was thrown through the side window of their bus. Two players were showered with flying glass and the third was hit in the head by the rock. A doctor was summoned to the scene, and the players were treated.

Lowell, Sparta and Greenville finished in a deadlock for first place in the final Tri-River conference golf standings last Wednesday, when Sparta and Lowell won matches. Sparta blanked Cedar Spring 5-0, while Lowell, receiving 39's from Rick Price and Kim Schwacha, shut-out Coopersville.

## 25 years ago The Lowell Ledger October 22, 1997

Lowell School District's fiscal year started with an adopted deficit budget of \$327,000. Lowell superintendent, Bert Blake, said cuts will be made.

The district wants to make cuts in its budget so that its deficit spending is no more than \$200,000 and its fund balance is not reduced below \$1.6 million.

Lowell's Zoning Board of Appeals turned down a request for a zoning variance for a local business to have a horse on its roof. Turn West owner, William Bolt, tried to convince the board that the variance was necessary since Bolt did not enjoy the same privileges as other businesses by having adequate signage.

Gene and Betty Calton have opened a clothing store in downtown Lowell at 209 E. Main. It sells jackets, T-shirts, shirts (country prints, craft design and southwest design), sweatshirts, Carhartts, sports clothing and jerseys.

## to the editor

*Letter writer opinions are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this publication.*

Dear Editor:

Shame on the city of Lowell for their treatment of two long time senior citizen residents, Gary Dietzel and Sandy Bartlett. After almost 45 years of renting the house at 990 N. Washington from the city, they are now faced with an eviction notice. I don't think that the current council has any idea of the past history of these people.

Gary was working for the city of Lowell in 1979, when he approached the City Manager, Ray Quada, about renting the old abandoned house on 990 N. Washington Street, owned by the city. The house was in very bad disrepair, had a piece of plywood nailed over the opening for the front door and was full of mice. There was a handshake agreement between Ray and Gary to rent the house for \$75 a month, with the understanding that the city would pay for materials if Gary provided the work to fix it up. Things were much simpler around Lowell then and this was how many agreements were made.

Gary, Sandy and her daughter moved in. They went to work making the house habitable and their home. Since the house was in need of paint on the outside, he went to the city to get some white paint. Being that the council had to approve his request, it took awhile for Gary to get the paint he needed. From that point on, Gary decided to just buy what he needed to fix and maintain the house himself. Over the years, he painted it several times, put a new roof on, painted the inside, replaced plumbing, rebuilt the front porch, fixed windows and many more things that a house over 100 years old needed.

Gary and Sandy then immersed themselves into the community. They joined up with the newly formed arts council and became very active creating art projects. Sandy, being a Kendal Art School graduate, became a teacher at the Arts

**Letters,  
continued page 12**

## We love to hear from you!



*The Lowell Ledger welcomes letters to the editor from readers, but there are a few conditions that must be met before they will be published.*

The requirements are:

- All letters must be signed by the writer, with address and phone number provided for verification. All that will be printed is the writer's name and community of residence. We do not publish anonymous letters, and names will be withheld at the editor's discretion for compelling reasons only.
- Letters that contain statements that are libelous or slanderous will not be published.
- All letters are subject to editing for style, grammar and sense.
- Letters that serve as testimonials for or criticisms of businesses will not be accepted.
- Letters serving the function of "cards of thanks" will not be accepted unless there is a compelling public interest, which will be determined by the editor.
- Letters that include attacks of a personal nature will not be published or will be edited heavily.
- "Crossfire" letters between the same two people on one issue will be limited to one for each writer.
- In an effort to keep opinions varied, there is a limit of one letter per person per month.
- We prefer letters to be printed legibly or typed, double-spaced. We have a 500-word limit.

**Letters can be sent to emailed to  
ledger@lowellbuyersguide.com  
Deadline is noon on Mondays**





## At Your Local Library

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

### Teen Zone

Mondays, 3 - 4 pm. Teen-only fun for you and your friends at the library! Stop by for activities that may include board games, food and more. For teens 11-17.

### Toddler Time

Tuesdays, 6:30 - 7:30 pm. Nurture your toddler's love of books through music, movement and stories while helping to develop their language, motor and social skills. For ages 0-5

### Storytime

Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Nurture your child's love of books and build early literacy skills through stories, rhymes, music and movement. For ages 0-5.

### Mahjongg

Fridays from 1-3 pm. American Mahjongg, a game of skill, strategy and calculation. All skill levels welcome.

### Family Yoga

Saturdays, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Space is limited; first come, first served. Doors open 15 minutes before the program begins. Family yoga is an all-ages activity with a focus on the benefits of mindfulness. Together we will engage in fun poses, learn how to breathe, be creative with yoga activities/games and relax.

### Glow-in-the-Dark Party

Thurs., Oct. 20, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Family fun featuring glow-in-the-dark activities and crafts. For families with children. For all ages.

### Open Craft Lab

Sat., Oct. 22, 1-3 pm. Stop in and try something new or bring in your own project! For adults 18+

### Spooking Storytime

Thurs., Oct. 27, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Bring the whole family, enjoy some not-too-spooky stories. Costumes welcome! For children 0-5.

### Night Owls Book Discussion

Wed., Nov. 2, 6:30 - 7:30 pm. Join a fun, informal discussion of great books. This month, we'll discuss *Crying in H Mart* by Michelle Zauner. For adults 18+

# ABCs of Lowell history

The Lowell Area Historical Museum is introducing a new weekly series. Each week we will explore the history one of the buildings in the downtown Historic District.

Address: 301 E. Main  
Date Built: Built 1909-10  
Architect: George L. Stone  
Builder:  
Wright & Pratt of Ionia  
Building name:  
Lowell City Hall

The Pullen barn was built in 1867 and was later connected to the brick building to the east of it, via a double door on the 2nd floor, because that was home to the William Pullen family. In 1873, Wooding and Fuller's draught horse and harness business was in the barn. From 1874-1893, Robertson & Son Boot and Shoe operated a shoe store, opening onto Main Street, with a cobbler shop behind it. Next, a corner of it was a barber shop and the remainder the Livery of D. H. Watters.

The wooden Pullen barn burned to the ground in March, 1909. Pullen had smoke and water damage in his apartment but was able to save his 3 horses, a



City Hall, Lowell, Mich.

The City Hall was dedicated on June 2, 1910, with much fanfare. Palms and ferns were rented for the occasion. Those posing in front were the Village Council: D.G. Look, W.S. Winegar, J.A. Mattern, A.H. Peckham, E.D. McQueen, H.S. Taylor, R.E. Springett, T.A. Murphy, F.J. McMahon, and Chris Bergin.

cow, fat steer and vehicles. By July, the Village Council had plans to build a city hall and had bonded the village for \$13,500. The plans included: a council room, vault for village documents, committee room, library room, toilets, band room, Fire Dept., hose tower, jail with four cells in the rear; on the second floor: an auditorium with 500 seats plus additional seating in a gallery at the south end,

a stage, property room, dressing rooms, and kitchen.

On Oct 12, 1909, the cornerstone was dedicated. In spite of fierce wind and snow, a huge procession of people paraded down Main Street to the site, headed by the Lowell Band. Groups walking were: Masons, Oddfellows, Grand Army, Maccabees, Woodmen, Foresters, Eastern Star, Rebekahs, Lady Maccabees and finally, the school children (schools were closed for the day). The copper box that was buried contained lists of people in all the then current organizations, churches and schools, plus a copy of the Lowell Journal and the Lowell Ledger.

On June 2, 1910, the new City Hall was dedicated. There were refreshment booths, potted plants and a flag given by the Cutter Company covered

the table on the stage. The ceremony was held in the auditorium with singing and speeches. Village President, D. G. Look, accepted the building. An evening ball was held with Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Hooker leading the event. It was hoped that the City Hall would become the social center of the village, as well as home to the village business offices, fire, police and library facilities. Musicals were performed on the stage in the auditorium. The fire tower was used as a space to hang the linen fire hoses up to dry after each fire. The police and the Rod and Gun Club used a room upstairs as a firing range.

The City Hall was completely renovated and rededicated on July 12, 2003. It no longer houses the fire department or the library but has retained much of its historical charm.



Stage on the second floor as it was just before the remodeling of the City Hall in 2002.

# area churches

## CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF LOWELL

897-7060  
Pastor Ryan Landt  
1151 West Main Street, Lowell, MI  
Website: calvarylowell.org  
Morning Worship..... 10:00 AM  
Weekly Prayer Meeting - Mondays ....7 PM  
Barrier-Free

## GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

10305 Bluewater Highway  
(Missouri Synod)  
Halfway between Lowell & Saranac on M-21  
Sunday Services - 10:30 am  
www.gslc.church

Richard Boshoven, Pastor 897-8307  
All facilities are wheelchair accessible

## St. Mary Catholic Church

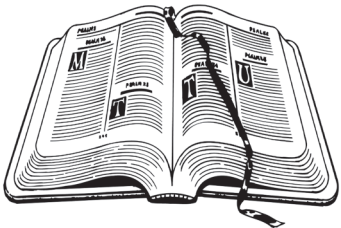
402 Amity Street • 616-897-9820  
Website: www.stmarylowell.com  
Weekend Masses: Sat 5 pm; Sun 10:30 am  
Confession: Saturdays 3-4:30 pm  
Prayer & Adoration: Wednesdays 8 am to 7 pm  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN TO ADULTS

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LOWELL

CHRIST-CENTERED, KINGDOM-FOCUSED HOMES  
2275 West Main Street - (Barrier Free)  
897-7168 • www.fbclowell.org  
Pastor Jon Pickens • Lead Pastor  
Pastor Andrew Bolkom • Pastor of Discipleship  
Christi Swain • Director of Children's Ministries  
SUNDAY WORSHIP.....9:30 AM (Nursery provided)  
LIFE GROUPS..... 11:00 AM (Nursery-Adult)  
Awana (K-5 during school year) Wednesday, 6:15 PM

## LOWELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

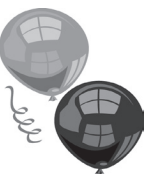
discover. grow. share  
621 E. Main Street  
897-5938  
www.lowellumc.com • Barrier Free Entrance  
WORSHIP  
Traditional Service: 9 am  
Contemporary Service: 10:30 am  
Sr. Pastor - Brad Brillhart



## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

865 Lincoln Lake SE • lowellucc.org  
Pastor Alyssa Anten  
Worship Service - Sundays 10 AM  
Open Table (No-cost meal) - Thursdays 5 - 6 PM  
Open & Affirming • LGBTQ+ Inclusive  
616-897-5906

# happy birthday



**OCTOBER 20**  
Bob Hildenbrand,  
Michael V. Johnson.

Greenfield, Don Miller,  
John DeVries, Lynn Perrien.

**OCTOBER 21**  
Andrew Mercer,  
Madison Hacker, Jessica  
Alberts.

**OCTOBER 25**  
Diane Pretzel,  
Bill Ellison, Amanda  
Stoutjesdyk.

**OCTOBER 22**  
Troy Abel, Aamir  
Ismail, Donna Potter, Devin  
Falk.

**OCTOBER 26**  
Ray Jones, Mike  
Ray, Kait Cummings, Joe  
Wilczewski, Thomas Cook.

**OCTOBER 23**  
Bill Stouffer, Melody  
Kastanek, Lyle Morrison,  
Rachael McIntyre.



**OCTOBER 24**  
Brian Ray, Tanja



# The Old Theater begins its winter schedule

by Bill Lee  
contributing writer

It was something David and Lisa Reed of Lowell had been thinking about for a while. They had both been members of a band and Lisa had been involved in theater and plays in the past. So when the theater at 315 West Main Street in Lowell was up for sale last year, they decided to buy it, renaming it The Old Theater. "I've always been excited about the idea of opening a theater," said David Reed. "And the idea of having shows and bands and things in Lowell we can get behind, and the community would hopefully get behind and want to come see."

Opening in 1928 as the Strand Theater, the building has gone through a few transformations – a movie theater, furniture store, and part of Larkin's Restaurant (now The Junction Bar and Grill). When the Reeds bought The Old Theater, they had a vision of a place where the Lowell community could enjoy a variety of entertainment. Since November, The Old Theater has hosted a number

of unique performances. In the spring, Haywood Banks (comedian/musician) performed to a great audience, and earlier in the summer, they had about a hundred people enjoy an Elvis impersonator. Then the micro wrestlers came to town a couple of weeks ago. "We just had the micro wrestling show that was really good," said Reed. "Right after the fact, I was kind of stunned but after thinking about it, I was pretty happy about it. It wasn't my thing, but the people who came were screaming and yelling and having a great time."

Now the Reeds are ready to set a regular schedule for performances that people will know about in advance. Starting this month, and continuing through the winter, The Old Theater will host a "Clean Comedy" show that will take place every second Saturday of the month and highlight more family-oriented language and topics. Local comedian Mike Chambers, who has now since moved his show to Ripple on every third Saturday of the month,

previously had his show at The Old Theater. The Reeds decided they just wanted to go in a different direction. "There was a great demand for clean comedy; however, it takes a little bit of time for that reputation to change over," said Lisa Reed. "I appreciated him (Mike) picking a different Saturday because it was his second Saturday of the month program that had been running at the theater for the last eight years. We're super geeked about getting the message out, and how this is not a spite factor or competition, but that this is a different avenue and crowd."

Other regular monthly performances, the Reeds hope to host in the near future, are classic and B-movie showings, live music and dances for the public. On Saturday night, Glad All Over, a 60s tribute band, will be performing. "Glad All Over is fun to listen to and high-energy," said David Reed. "They have good costumes and do a great show. We saw them at the Ionia Theater in August, and they were really

professional." In November, the Reeds will be hosting a barn dance (11/5) and a comedian, Dobie Maxwell (11/12). Lisa Reed is very excited to introduce different styles of dances to the Lowell community. "We have a dance caller who plays old-timey music and calls square dances, circles and halls, so there is teaching involved, as well," said Reed. "It is an old style

and public functions like family parties, events for children and teens, and other creative ventures. The 3600 square foot performance and viewing area, that holds two to three hundred people, is bigger than Lowell Arts but smaller than the high school auditorium, a sweet spot they hope for all types of activities and performances. Also, the outdoor marquee area can be, and has been,

see this be a success," said Lisa Reed. The Old Theater has been a fun venture, and the Reeds are looking forward to bringing more shows and community gatherings in the future. "We've enjoyed it so far," said David Reed. "And this kind of project, we're not in it to make a zillion dollars. We're kind of stewards of this old building, and someday, somebody else is



Lisa and David Reed in front of an old film projector and seats from The Strand Theater.

## sharing the vision



LAS Superintendent Nate Fowler

### Non-Homestead Restoration

On Tuesday, November 8, 2022, voters in the Lowell Area School District will be asked to vote to restore the operating millage. This tax is levied only on "non-homestead property" which includes all taxable property other than principal residence, qualified agricultural property and certain other property classifications. Most non-homestead property taxes are levied on industrial, commercial, business and rental properties and second homes. This millage does not affect the rate on homeowners primary residences. Voters last approved a renewal in 2016.

This restoration will raise more than 3.7 million dollars each year for Lowell Area Schools. This millage is an 18-mill tax levy on business, industrial, and rental properties within a given school district. It is not a tax on homeowners. A mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of taxable valuation (TV). For example, the TV on a \$150,000 property would be approximately \$75,000 and 1 mill would be worth

\$75.00. You might ask, "Will my home property tax rates increase?" The answer is no, your primary residence tax rate will remain the same. In fact, for both homeowners and businesses alike, nothing will change. Homeowners do not pay this millage and businesses will simply continue to pay the millage rate they have already been paying.

One might then wonder if home property taxes will go down if this is defeated. The answer is no, your home property tax rate will remain the same; the rate will drop only for industrial, commercial, business and rental properties. However, the direct loss of this funding would adversely affect educational programs. For homeowners and businesses alike, nothing will change if this millage restoration passes: homeowners don't pay this millage anyway and businesses will simply continue to pay a tax they've been paying all along. For the Lowell Area Schools, a YES vote will mean not only a continuation of more than

3.7 million dollars' worth of direct local funding, but also the opportunity to continue current educational programs. A no vote will mean a vote to lose more than 3.7 million dollars in direct revenue.

While the non-homestead property tax falls mostly on small businesses, we can all do our part by supporting small businesses in our community. When you shop at a small business, the money spent stays in our community. It supports local families, and it gives our community the character that makes Lowell and Alto desirable places for people to live, work, and do business.

Please vote Tuesday, November 8, 2022. Voting will take place at your city or township precincts, and absentee ballots are available at your city or township clerk's office. Please visit our website at [www.lowellschools.com](http://www.lowellschools.com) to view more information about the upcoming election.

that younger kids find quite humorous, but there is an older generation who grew up on it so it's a nostalgic blast from the past. We're hoping to have different genres represented."

It has been an exciting time for the Reeds but they admit that owning a theater hasn't been easy. They are still making many renovations and repairs to the building, and getting the word out about performances, has had its challenges. "We're not old seasoned theater hands that have this all figured out and know exactly what we're doing," said David Reed. "We don't have our full year schedule set and we're working on it as we go. And it's only the two of us, so we only have so many hours in the day."

They are hoping to inform and show the people of Lowell that there is another cool space for community events – private

rented for anyone wishing to present a message, a concept that has brought on some scrutiny in the past, especially in today's social and political climate.

Opening the theater was a risk for them, but Lisa and David Reed have been working hard since last year to bring something new to the Lowell community – a small to medium space for unique performances of all kinds. "We're looking for sponsors and partners – people who also want to

going to want it." For more information about future shows at The Old Theater or to contact the Reeds, please go to their website [theoldtheater.com](http://theoldtheater.com) or to their Facebook page.

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the lowell ledger

**897-9261**

## CITY OF LOWELL

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST OF THE IMAGECAST TABULATING EQUIPMENT FOR THE NOVEMBER 8, 2022 GENERAL ELECTION

Notice is hereby given that the public accuracy test of the Imagecast Tabulating Equipment for the November 8, 2022 General Election will be conducted on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at the Lowell City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 301 East Main Street, Lowell, Michigan.

Susan Ullery




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[www.cnaads.com](http://www.cnaads.com) \*Kantar Millward Brown, Feb. 2018





# Meet the Lowell Area School Board Candidates

*In the next few weeks we will feature all candidates for the Lowell Area School Board.*

*There are three positions open on the board this year. All information is courtesy of SupportLAS*

## Candidate's Corner



**Jennifer  
Dougherty**

Dougherty is a fifth-generation resident of the Greater Lowell area. The farm where she grew up has been owned by her family since 1885. She and her family members have served the community in various ways, including on the Bowne Township/Alto Fire Department, Lowell and Bowne Township boards, church boards, as school volunteers and 4H leaders.

A 1992 graduate of Lowell High School, where she was senior class president and co-valedictorian, Dougherty earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Michigan State University and has worked as a civil engineer doing bridge design for 26 years. In 2009, she started her own engineering firm in Alto, working for bridge owners, bridge contractors and other design consultants. Her husband, Phil, is a full-time turkey farmer, and she works part-time on the farm.

They have four children: two in college, one at Lowell High School, and one entering Lowell Middle School. "I am a Red Arrow for life," she said. "I am proud of our school and our community. I feel that I was well-prepared for college and life beyond, and I know that my children will be as well."

"I want to do my part

to continue providing a quality education that prepares all of our students for life after high school."

Dougherty decided to run for the school board when member Gary Blough announced he would not seek another term. "Gary's retirement would have left the southern half of the school district with no direct representation on the school board," Dougherty said. "It is very important to me that Alto Elementary and the area south of the Grand River be represented."

Dougherty has served on the Bowne Township/Alto Downtown Development Authority for 14 years, and has been DDA treasurer for nine years. She started the Alto Community Blood Drive in 2012 and has coordinated six blood drives annually for blood donors in the Alto/Lowell area. She has been a 4H group leader, volunteered at Alto Elementary, served as a parent representative for high school girls lacrosse, and served on miscellaneous local committees in Alto and Lowell.

She and her husband have delivered for Meals on Wheels Western Michigan for two years, and she has been a board member of Conquering CHD – Michigan since 2012, an organization that provides support to families

dealing with congenital heart defects. Dougherty enjoys watching her children's sporting events and concerts, morning walks, audiobooks and spending time with her family.

Jennifer Dougherty Survey Responses:

**What do you think are the 2 biggest successes/strengths of Lowell Area Schools, and what are the district's 2 biggest challenges?**

I think that the Lowell Area School district's biggest strength is how well our students are prepared for life after graduation. Our graduates are prepared to attend college, learn a trade or find their place in the workforce. They know how to learn new skills, they are prepared to continue their education

and they know how to work.

I believe that the relationship between Lowell Area Schools and the community of Lowell is one of our greatest strengths. The community supports the school with volunteers, mentors, employment opportunities and financial and emotional support. The schools – including students, staff and administrators – raise funds and provide volunteers for local organizations, perform community service projects and teach our students the value of being involved in their community.

In my opinion, our biggest challenges are to stay focused on the work of educating our students and preparing them for life after graduation. It is important to avoid focusing too much time and energy on

one or two hot-button issues, while ignoring other issues that are essential to providing a quality education. Another challenge that we face is to make sure that the methods that we use to communicate between the board of education, administrators, teachers, staff and families is open and constructive. It is imperative that we not just talk at each other, but that we speak, listen and work together to solve problems and continually improve our district.

**If you could have an impact on our school district's curriculum, what changes would you make?**

What would you keep the same? From a parent's perspective, I think the curriculum of the school district is very strong and I am happy with the education my children have received

and are receiving. They have a strong foundation in their core classes, while having the opportunity to take electives that interest them and provide them with other beneficial skills. At the high school, there are ample opportunities for students to challenge themselves and earn college credits in Advanced Placement classes or to learn technical skills through the Kent Career Tech Center. As a school district, we should always be making sure our students have the skills they need to succeed in the current workforce. At times, it may be necessary to adjust the curriculum to provide any needed skills that we are not providing.

**Dougherty,  
continued page 14**

## Candidate's Corner



**Christopher  
German**

German moved his family to Lowell from a neighboring community 10 years ago, and one of the big reasons for moving from their hometown for generations, he said: Lowell Area Schools. Their oldest graduated this year.

Most of German's community involvement has centered on his children's activities and those of his church, Impact, where he is facilities manager. "I have always loved and supported

education as a whole," he said. "I even attended GVSU to get my elementary education certificate after high school. Unfortunately, that did not pan out for me. I felt, because of my passion for education and our future generations, running for the school board seemed to be the best fit for me to get involved."

Shortly after the coronavirus pandemic began, part of German's job at Impact was to "try to keep an eye on the pulse of the community — in person, on social media and through community and school meetings — to see where we could help serve best as a church," he said. "The amount of divisiveness that is within our country, let alone our community, was sad at best. We have allowed differing of opinions to turn into a bit of hatred toward each other. The ability to communicate without becoming irate has all but disappeared. Seeing all of this is why I decided to get involved at a higher level."

German volunteered at

his four daughters' schools since the oldest was in first grade, initially, with reading skills and eventually, as a weekly all-around classroom helper. At Impact, he has participated in Love Week activities, such as replacing playground equipment at Stoney Creek Park, and for nearly a decade in the KidsHope program, where he was paired with a student in kindergarten and has mentored since. He also leads a mens group that has visited Unity High School weekly to cook and have breakfast with students, and has coached sports; at Grandville High School, his daughters' soccer club and middle school track team, and now, at Lowell High School.

"Currently most of my hobbies revolve around my kids," he said. "Having four daughters, ages 13 through 18, keeps me plenty busy... Fortunately all four of them run track, so I get to do something that I love with them. I also really enjoy sports photography, so at their events, you will most likely see me with a camera in hand. I've also been officiating high school football for 22 years. That has been a great way for me to stay in touch with the first sport I fell in love with."

Christopher German Survey Responses:

**What do you think are the 2 biggest successes/strengths of Lowell Area Schools, and what are the district's 2 biggest challenges?**

Having my oldest graduate last year, I was super happy with the district in

how they were able to help prepare her for the next stage of life. She was on the fence of higher education or joining directly into the agricultural work force. Our district was able to prepare her in a way that with either choice, she was set-up with a foundation that will allow her to be successful. With guidance and help from her counselors, she ended up finding a dual-enrollment program, through MCC and Michigan State, that has allowed her to do both. The fact that we have not pushed one form of education over another (college vs trades), speaks volumes to me as to the awareness of our district in each of our students uniqueness. I've also appreciated, for my kids the diversity in extra curricular activities that are available for all students. I'm a firm believer in the lessons that are learned from being a part of something bigger than just you are hard to find outside of being on some form of a team. Lowell offers such a large variety, that most of our students can find something that suits them.

A battle that I think will forever be ongoing is technology and how we keep up-to-date with it, how we manage the safety and usage of it, and how we make sure that our students are well-trained in it. Technology is changing at a clip of speed that is hard to imagine and we need to be diligent in trying to keep up with that pace. The next problem that I've noticed pop up in the last couple of years is the divisiveness between groups that have dif-

**German, continued  
page 14**

22<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
**Taste of Vegetarian**

**Sunday, November 13  
4:00 - 6:00 PM**

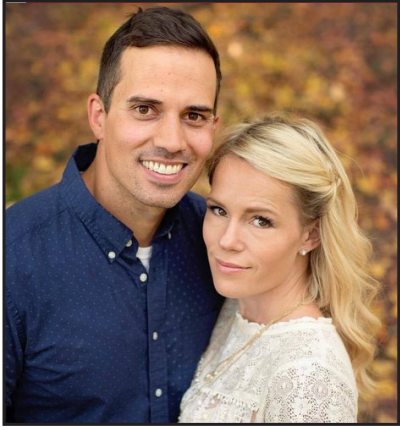
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Please call 616.987.0567 to place a reservation or leave a message if you have any questions.



## Candidate's Corner



**Kyle Hoff**

Hoff and his family moved to the Lowell Area Schools district from Rockford in 2018 after they began attending Impact Church here and had made many friends in the community. "We loved the close-knit community and small-town feel of Lowell and decided it would be the perfect place to raise our family," he said.

With four children in the district, Hoff said he is choosing to run for the Board of Education "out of a desire to become more actively involved in helping shape their education."

"I want to serve the community and be a voice for the students and parents, while being an open-minded person who's willing to listen to all sides. I am focused on maintaining neutrality in the schools when it comes to any potential political agendas, along with a strong emphasis on academics and literacy.

"Additionally, I want to ensure that Lowell schools are a safe place for all, especially in the light of recent school shootings in our country. I support the board and its critical role in helping shape our schools. By creating a culture of academic excellence, my goal is to give our kids the skills and knowledge they need to prepare them for success in life."

Hoff currently works for medical device manufacturer, Medtronic. He holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education from St. Olaf College, and earned a teacher certification, after completing student teaching at Lincoln Park High School in inner-city Chicago.

He has been actively involved in community-service projects through Impact Church, serving in the music ministry there, and coaching his children's sports teams. He enjoys spending time with family, traveling, music and physical fitness.

Kyle Hoff Survey Responses:

**What do you think are the 2 biggest successes/strengths of Lowell Area Schools, and what are the district's 2 biggest challenges?**

The 2 biggest successes/strengths of Lowell Area Schools include: Preparing students for success after high school and giving students the opportunity to be involved in an amazing selection of extracurricular activities. Lowell students graduate prepared for college (via Honors and AP courses) or a trade (via Lowell's partnership with KCTC) and our strong athletics, music, theater, and other programs set Lowell schools apart by helping students become well-rounded human beings and citizens.

The 2 biggest challenges for Lowell Area Schools right now include: Closing the learning gap that took place due to the Covid shutdowns and mental health recovery of students due to those shutdowns. These are the biggest issues I hear from current teachers and administrators when I ask them this question. Some students missed almost an entire year of school, due to school shutdowns/remote learning, and getting them back up to grade standards is a huge priority. Likewise, for some students who were stuck at home during that time, they had to deal with the mental health challenges stemming from that period. Looking for creative ways to partner with mental health experts and other resources to help provide those students with assistance is key.

**If you could have an impact on our school district's curriculum, what changes would you make? What would you keep the same?**

Lowell schools do a good job providing our students with a variety of options for learning. We have classes and learning opportunities for college-bound students, as well as opportunities for those students to learn a trade via our KCTC programs. In addition to these, I am a fan of providing more of a well-rounded classical education, making students self-reliant and responsible through studying core academics like literature, math, history, the sciences, fine arts, languages, and physical education. Placing a focus on these core subjects, and giving students the ability to critically think about the material and the world

around them, helps prepare them to tackle any obstacle that comes their way in life.

**How well do you think the district meets the needs of our special education students and their families, and what would you improve upon?**

The special education program in Lowell is not something I have a lot of first-hand experience with, but one of my children struggled with reading at the early elementary age, and his teacher and the reading interventionist at his school identified it right away, immediately stepping in to provide him with additional reading help and extra attention. I was so impressed with how they handled it and his reading ability and test scores improved greatly because of it. I do know that giving special education students the ability to participate in non-special education classrooms, in addition to more specialized classes, is a huge benefit to their success. Helping cater the teaching style and methods to fit each student's learning style is also so important for their learning. Lowell Area Schools are required by law to provide each student with a complete education, so ensuring that our special education programs are well funded is also an important job of the Board of Education.

**What role do you think standardized tests should play at Lowell Area Schools?**

Standardized tests can provide a great benchmark for tracking student progress and comparing our schools to other schools in the area, but they shouldn't be the be-all-end-all for determining student success. Some students are better test-takers than others and some students excel in other ways. That being said, tests are important and having experience taking standardized tests is important for college-bound students specifically, as they will be taking lots of them as they continue their education. Additionally, standardized test scores are a helpful metric for determining where the BOE should focus efforts and allocate funds to improve learning gaps and to see what educational programs are working and what are not working.

**How do you think Lowell Area Schools could make schools a safer place for students and staff?**

Keeping our schools and students safe and secure is the number one responsibility of the BOE, administrators, and staff. I think Lowell does a good job of providing physically secure schools, overall, but we need to do everything in our power to support systems that prevent not only active-shooter type situations, but also deter any other forms of physical

violence. Partnering with local law enforcement and developing creative-funding opportunities to provide the right security is critical, as is also identifying any gaps that may exist. Having the right staff in place who are trained to recognize, prevent, and de-escalate violence is also important. I would even consider the possibility of having an armed security official (current or former law enforcement or veteran) on staff in each school as part of a security team that oversees this.

**As the district continues to grow more diverse, how can it best meet the needs of all students?**

Lowell is actually a surprisingly diverse district, but not in the way most people think of diversity. We have a great deal of diversity of economy, thought, experiences, and backgrounds which all play into making up a diverse culture. I went to college to be a teacher (I changed courses after graduating and went into the corporate world) and did my student-teaching in inner-city Chicago. I had the opportunity to experience a great deal of diversity first hand there, which was super cool and very fulfilling. Ultimately, it taught me that although we may have differences, when we respect each other and seek to unify around the things we have in common, it creates an amazing culture and environment for learning.

**What programs will you work to build and/or expand that support career readiness?**

Lowell does a great job, overall, preparing students for life after high school.

There are opportunities for college prep (AP, Honors classes) and our partnership with KCTC gives students the opportunity to learn a trade and go into the workforce immediately after graduating. Continuing to fund and expand these programs to provide students with these opportunities is important. Something that Lowell currently lacks that would be a huge benefit to career readiness is a language-immersion program. My son was part of Rockford's Spanish-Immersion program before we moved to Lowell and was conversationally fluent in Spanish by 3rd grade. Currently, only Rockford and Forest Hills have Spanish Immersion programs in Kent County, but after seeing first hand how beneficial they are, I would be interested in exploring what it would take to create an immersion program in Lowell.

**What mental health supports, services and classes do you think are needed at Lowell Area Schools? What will you do as a school board member to support student and staff mental and emotional health/well-being?**

Ensuring our students are mentally healthy is critical to their success. I want to support our counseling staff and interventionists who can help identify those students who need additional support, and creatively, partner with mental health experts in the community

to get them the help they need. Covid and the Covid shutdowns did a lot of damage to the mental health of many students, teachers, and staff, and identifying and funding programs that show promise or have proven to be successful is key to helping them recover and thrive.

**What should be our school district's top spending priorities? Alternatively, if school funding is reduced, what programs/budget items should be less prioritized?**

With a budget surplus of over \$6.5M, Lowell Schools are currently in a healthy place financially. By utilizing conservative spending policies, we can keep that fiscal health in the event that we experience a period where other funding sources go away. We want to be able to afford great teachers and staff and to fund the programs that have shown to be successful at improving student achievement. In the event that cuts would need to be made, typically, I would advocate for cutting any non-essential, non-learning related expenses first. Additionally, there are many grants available that Lowell has utilized to fund programs and other expenses that I would continue to apply for to fill in any funding gaps that could occur in the future. Ultimately, we want to spend our money wisely on the things that have shown to be effective and have the most value.



**ALL HALLOW'S EVE SAINTS & CANDY CRAZE**

**Monday, October 31**

**St. Mary Church, 402 Amity Street, Lowell**

5:30 pm - All Hallows Eve Celebration Mass  
 6:45 - 8 pm - Pizza, cider & donuts (inside)  
 Trick or Treat at all of our tables outside  
 (30 candy stations)

*(if inclement weather tables will be inside the parish life center)*



Red Arrow

- FOOTBALL

## SPORTS

## Pioneers risk pays off against Arrows

By Justin Scott  
sports reporter

Desperation is not a word one might think of when East Grand Rapids Football comes to mind. The Pioneers have had their fair share of success over the past few decades, and well, that's being generous. Desperation though, is exactly what the Pioneers were dealing with Lowell as they came into Bob Perry Field on Friday night for Lowell's homecoming game.

They were 2-5, and likely needed to win for just a chance at a playoff berth. A sparse Pioneer crowd braved the cold to watch. So when the chance came to tie the game or go for glory, they did the latter and it paid off as the Pioneers beat Lowell 15-14 on a late two-point conversion to win the game.

The night got off with LHS football alumnus Jordan Moore singing the National Anthem. Moore graduated from Lowell in 2003, and was a part of the 2002 LHS football state championship team. He is a rising country music singer recently featured by People Magazine.

Lowell got the football game off to a good start, forcing a punt on the first possession of EGR. Disaster struck on a muffed punt taken into the endzone by the Pioneers. Football rules

dictate a muffed punt can't be advanced however. EGR did take over at the LHS 20-yard line and was able to take advantage of the short field, scoring on a two-yard quarterback keeper.

The Red Arrows responded quickly on a short touchdown pass from quarterback Jackson Reisbig to Brendan Wittenbach for the score and a 7-7 tie. EGR got a big special teams play toward the end of the first half on a field goal block, and carried some momentum into the break.

It was a big night at LHS. It was homecoming, and there were the annual festivities including the parade, homecoming king and queen crownings, the dance on Saturday. It was also a night where Lowell would honor the 1997 OK White championship football team and the 2002 state championship team on their 25th and 20th anniversaries respectively. Additionally, coaches Noel Dean and Mark Russell were inducted into the Lowell High School Athletics Wall of Fame along with both teams. Both served the Lowell community through coaching spanning decades at LHS.

Dean, currently head football coach at Tift County High School in Georgia, made the trip up with his wife Jill for the occasion.

Dean's plaque reads: "Noel Dean served as the Head Coach of Lowell Football for 22 years comprising a 219-42 record. His Red Arrow teams won 3 MHSAA State Championships (2002, 2004, 2009) and finished runner-up 3 times (2010, 2011, 2015). His record includes 13 MHSAA district titles and 9 Regional crowns. Coach Dean believed in service to the community and founded the Pink Arrow game in 2008. The lessons he taught on the football field served many young men in preparation for a life of caring and service to others."

Mark Russell passed away in 2020 and was represented by friends and family at the ceremony, his plaque reads: "Mark Russell started teaching in Lowell in 1979 after graduating from Olivet College. He taught elementary PE and coached baseball and coached Lowell football over five decades from 1979 to 2019. Mark meant so much to the Lowell community. He was a great friend, mentor, teacher, colleague and coach, but most importantly, Mark was a great person. Anyone who spent time around Mark was a better person because of his influence and character."

The Wall of Fame can be viewed on the north end of Bob Perry Field.

On the field, Lowell ran



Lowell hosts Northview in the regular season finale this week.

for 167 yards on the ground on 46 rushing attempts and a touchdown during the game. Reisbig threw for 106 yards, one touchdown, and one interception. He scored the go-ahead score midway through the fourth quarter on a quarterback keeper to put Lowell up 14-7.

The Red Arrow defense was fantastic over the course of the night, holding the Pioneers to just 130 yards of offense. Aidan Fitzpatrick had three tackles, two pass defends, and an interception to go along with a 33-yard reception on offense. Ethan

Krieger had five tackles and a tackle for loss.

When they most needed something they couldn't do all night, which was put a long drive together and come away with a touchdown. As they lined up for the extra point to tie the game, a Lowell offside put EGR at the 1-yard line. There, they opted to go for two and the win.

When everybody expected a run, EGR went with a play action pass and found a receiver in the back of the endzone for a two-

point conversion and a one-point lead. Lowell would have some time to make something happen, but were stopped on fourth down. Todd Parcheta went two-for-two on extra points for the game.

Lowell will play host to the Wildcats of Northview this week for the regular season finale. Northview is 3-5 on the season. After that, all eyes will be on MHSAA's Selection Sunday show where Lowell will find out their playoff fate.

- SOCCER

## Miracle goal spurs Lowell past Greenville

By Justin Scott  
sports reporter

History repeats itself. So the saying goes. That's what Lowell soccer was feeling on Monday night, as after dominating the game and throwing shot-after-shot at the Yellow Jackets, it was again Greenville who scored late, this time in the 78th minute, to all but assure a second 1-0 victory over the Red Arrows this year. Except this time, Lowell through a bit of hustle and a bit of magic, came away with the most unlikely of goals to tie the game, send it to overtime, and ultimately, come away with the win on penalty kicks.

Following the Greenville goal, Lowell won a free kick from 23 yards out on the right side of the field with just eight seconds left. After a long delay, Bryce Thompson sent a low ball zipping into the box,

requiring a diving stop from the Greenville goalkeeper, who could only parrie it to the middle of the box. There, defender Noah VanLaan, had made a run and blasted it into the top of the net. Delirium ensued on the Lowell bench and the Lowell crowd as they tied the game with mere seconds to spare.

"When we practice free kicks, I'm not usually on the attacking side," said VanLaan. Due to the nature of the time left, there was no reason for Lowell to have any defenders back, so even goalkeeper, Aiden Ottinger, came up to put as many bodies forward.

"I lined-up with Greenville's defense and just kind of hoped for the best. I was not expecting a rebound, but I was ready if there was. When Jack (Greenville's goalkeeper) deflected the ball, it came right to me and I just kicked the ball

in. Honestly I just got really lucky, but I will remember that moment forever," VanLaan concluded.

The two teams played an overtime, with few chances presented on either side, and after 100 minutes, we were going to penalties. Each team gets five chances, best of five wins, then sudden death until a winner is decided. Both teams were stellar in the shootout. Greenville would go first and hit their first four. Lowell would respond each time, from Avery Miller, then Jace Dixon, David Foster, and Bryce Thompson. On Greenville's fifth attempt, Lowell goalkeeper, Aiden Ottinger, stayed home in the middle of the box, where a shot went toward his head and was palmed away, meaning a Lowell penalty conversion would win them the game.

Senior, Jack Schaedig, would go up and went for

accuracy instead of power, chipping it into the right corner and completing an improbable OK White conference tournament victory for the Red Arrows.

As the Lowell players went to celebrate with the student section, who braved the cold to come out, coach Jeff Sweet came to give a pat on the back to Greenville goalkeeper, Jack Boyer, who had played an admirable game in a loss. To lose in penalties can always be difficult for goalkeepers to bear, given the spotlight on them.

The Yellow Jacket soccer program has not historically been strong. Lowell's record going into this year against Greenville was a lopsided 38-2. With Lowell's updated historical

Soccer, continued  
page 12

- CROSS COUNTRY

## Lady Arrows take third Saturday

submitted by Paul Judd  
girls cross country coach

Lowell got a second look at the Gainey course, but this time, they had to deal with standing water and a muddy track. The Arrows did not let the conditions stand in the way, as most of the girls all ran considerably faster than they did back on September 7, at the first OK White Jamboree.

Leading the Arrows and taking medalist honors was Annika Sandman, as she put the hurt to the course with a time of 18:23. Lowell had three other medalists, as Katrina Sandman finished sixth (20:00), Claire O'Boyle finished 14th (20:45), and Keira Sandman

finished in 18th (21:10). Closing out the varsity were Evie Deur in 42nd (22:50) and Audrey Latchaw in 47th (23:10).



Annika Sandman



Red Arrow

- GOLF

# SPORTS



## Golf team places 11th at state championship

By Justin Scott  
sports reporter

The golf team concluded a memorable season at the MHSAA Division 2 state golf tournament on Friday and Saturday.

The setting was Forest Akers East, home of the Michigan State University golf program, and in a tough course with cold, windy conditions, Lowell fell out of first place contention in the first round. The Red Arrows were unable to keep pace with the state powers that led the field. By falling out of contention, the team opted to start younger members of the team on day two, to give them a chance to experience participating in a state final.

With the Red Arrows rotating golfers, it meant Lowell would sacrifice perhaps a couple spots in their final placement, but what is the difference between 11th and 9th

place compared to getting experience to your younger golfers?

Lowell's 11th place finish was their best finish at a state tournament since 1991-1992, when Lowell finished in third place.

Elle Sluss was the only golfer to play both days, shooting a 193 over two days. Stephanie Spinella (91), Leah Krieger (93), Rylee Jannenga (106), and Emma Jo McCormick (93) were the other golfers for day one. On day two, other golfers were Sophia Flickenger (100), Hannah Flickenger (107), Elyse Veldman (110), and Ellery Ostrander (114). Sluss and Hannah Flickenger each carded a birdie over the weekend.

Farmington Mercy won the state tournament with a 684 shot over two 18-hole rounds. They were followed by South Lyon, Forest Hills Northern, and Byron

Center in the top four spots. Mercy outpaced South Lyon by nearly 30 strokes, so there was little drama at the course in terms of who would be champion.

Where there was drama was who would win the MHSAA individual championship, won by Byron Center's Macie Elzinga, who finished with a 4-over par 76 on the weekend. It was the Bulldogs first-ever individual state title. Elzinga won by five strokes over South Lyon's Gabriella Tapp.

Grosse Pointe South, Mason, Coopersville, Portage Northern, DeWitt, and South Lyon East all paced behind Byron Center and beat Lowell. Lowell beat out Gull Lake, Dexter, Petoskey, Midland Dow, Swartz Creek, Ypsilanti Lincoln, and Gibraltar Carlson.



The nine lady golfers who competed at states. (Photo courtesy of Melissa Spinella)

- VOLLEYBALL

## Seniors honored as volleyball team downs Northview

By Justin Scott  
sports reporter

Lowell sports teams and tough schedules are the oldest of friends, well-acquainted each year across plenty of Red Arrow sports. Volleyball is no different, and this year is probably the toughest for them.

"According to MaxPreps.com, our team has the toughest schedule in the state of Michigan. We have 18 losses on the season, but 14 of those losses have come against ranked opponents in the state and we have taken sets

in many of those matches." LHS girls volleyball head coach, Jordan Drake, said of his team this season.

On senior night, Lowell got a reprieve from their difficult schedule in a matchup with Northview. In front of a large student section and home crowd, the Red Arrows powered their way past Northview, using a series of Aubrieh Oswald service games to take command of the first set, and rode that wave to an easy win in three sets.

The Red Arrows celebrated seniors, Aubrieh

Oswald and Kadence Tiede, with a pregame ceremony, which included speeches from their teammates and framed senior jerseys. The two have been important members of a young team battling through a challenging schedule.

On the court, Lowell beat East Grand Rapids earlier in the week, as well. Oswald, along with Piper Risdon and Braxcynn Baker, all also girls basketball players, have been a big part of Lowell's successes this season.

"Piper, Aubrieh

and Braxcynn have been carrying our offensive attack for us and have really started to perform at a high level in the last couple of weeks. Annalise Clark and Rylie Barriger have been really good pieces for us, as of late, as they gain more experience in their freshman seasons. Throughout the last couple weeks, our whole team has really come together and done a great job playing their roles to the best of their abilities," Drake said.

Risdon (.303) and Oswald (.238) lead the team in hitting percentage. Oswald also leads the team with 304 kills on the season. In the service game, it is Risdon (36), Barriger (35),

and Oswald (33) leading the way. Barriger, the team's setter, paces Lowell with 525 assists. Taryn Jackson has 246 assists so far this season.

In last week's Lakewood Tournament, the Red Arrows beat Harper Creek and Essexville-Garber 2-0, but lost to Lakewood and Caledonia 2-0.

Defensively, Risdon (40), Oswald (39), and Jordyn McClymont (28) are leading the team in blocks. Tiede (264), Annalise Clark (225), and Oswald (202) lead the team in digs.

"We have a pretty young team this year with four freshmen, one sophomore, four juniors,

and two seniors, so it has been a great learning experience as the season has progressed. We will have a tough two weeks ahead of us, with again facing a lot of ranked opponents, and are looking forward to the challenge as we head into the postseason. We have been playing some really good volleyball, as of late, and hope to continue to peak as we head into playoffs," Drake concluded.

This week, the team starts OK White Tournament play before hosting the East-West Challenge on Saturday, featuring some of the state's best volleyball teams.



Seniors, Aubrieh Oswald and Kadence Tiede, were honored before the Northview win.

- CROSS COUNTRY

## Harriers place fifth Saturday

submitted by Clay VanderWarf  
boys cross country coach

A brisk autumn day greeted the Red Arrows Saturday at the Kent Ottawa Invite at Gainey Athletic Complex. Lowell placed fifth with 91 points. Forest Hills Northern took top honors with 48 points, followed

by Grand Rapids Track Club, 51 points, and Rockford third with 81 points.

Ben Bromley took medal honors with a fifth place finish at 17.14. Levi Mills also grabbed a medal with a eighth place finish at 17.51. A pack of Arrows came in with Rhys Sandman leading the way at 25th, 18.13

followed by Braylon Iakiri, 26th, 18.28, and Dannion Simmet, 27th, 18.30. Mason Saylor, 32nd, 18.36 and Antonio Casarez, 38th, 18.43 completed the varsity team.



# to the editor

## Continued

*Letter writer opinions are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this publication.*

Council and taught the children of Lowell art. (My son, who is 32 now, was one of her students.) Sandy took a part-time job with the city, reading the water meters, and still holds that job today. They both participated in helping put on the Fallasburg Arts Festival for a number of years. Gary got to know many of the senior citizens around town and helped them out when they needed things done around their homes. Some of those people had small incomes and couldn't afford to pay Gary much, but that didn't stop him from helping them. I worked with Gary on many jobs in which he paid me, and I'm not so sure he was always getting paid. When the old schoolhouse in Fallasburg was being fixed up, Gary was there to finish the floor in it.

Over the years, people would abandon their cats at the end of Washington Street and they soon found a caring couple to take them in. Gary also took it upon himself to buy pounds of bird seed over the years to keep the birds around there well-fed. Just about all the mature trees around that house, Gary

planted over 40 years ago. The boy scout cabin at the end of Washington Street was subjected to vandalism over the years. Gary ran off many of the young vandals and saved the building from more destruction.

Both Sandy and Gary were products of the 60s and always lived a bohemian lifestyle. Money was never important to them. Helping people and community far outweighed making money. They always made just enough to get by. The fact that their rent was never increased all those years lies totally on the city. Sandy paid their rent in cash every month, so the city was well aware of what they were paying during those years.

They are 73 years old now, live off very little social security and Sandy's part-time job with the city. They made that old house their home for all that time, and are now being thrown out, with no place to go. Nobody should be treated like this, especially people that gave so much to their community.

**Michael Jernigan,**  
*Twenty-five year resident of Lowell, now living in Arizona*

Open letter to the Lowell community:

The Lowell Area Schools libraries are the learning hubs of our district. They are busy places where students can go to relax, hear a story read aloud, work individually or in groups, get tutoring, use technology resources, find a book, read, or any number of activities. They support academic achievement, while helping students become lifelong learners and lifelong readers. Libraries help develop this love of reading by providing safe places for all to feel valued, welcomed and represented, where they can find books that specifically match their interests. The dedicated LAS library staff works hard to inspire, motivate, entertain, encourage, and challenge Lowell students by choosing books which represent all areas of interest, reading levels, learning styles, and curricular needs.

With almost 4000 LAS students and over 125,000 library books, maintaining book collections containing something for everyone is a complicated balance. A book may be the perfect fit for one student but not appropriate for another, either in terms of content or reading level. Our library staff continually studies the district's collections and updates them based on the newest curricular topics,

newest best sellers, student and teacher suggestions, and various book-reviewing sources. LAS library staff also utilize several criteria for rating the appropriateness of books available in the collections. The industry standard which results in most K-8 grade-level titles being rated Juvenile and most 9-12 grade-level titles rated YA (Young Adult). In addition, all book choices must fall within LAS School Board policies which follow the standards for public school districts. Board policy also offers parents the opportunity to restrict their student's access to any book, topic, genre or material they believe conflict with their beliefs or values. Parents also have a mechanism to formally challenge a book title they do not feel belongs in the school library collection. Anyone interested in reading the Board of Education's policies regarding curriculum, materials and books can find them on the LAS website. All of this information has also appeared in each LAS school building's newsletter and makes it very clear that parents have complete control over the books their children check out from LAS libraries.

In spite of these clearly-stated policies, there remains a small group of parents who claim the district's library

collections contain obscene and even pornographic materials that are readily available to every LAS student. These accusations are patently false, but members of this group have been stridently outspoken at Board Meetings, in the media and on social media platforms, attacking district staff, administrators and school board members by name. To date, not a single book has been challenged via the district's established book review procedure. Yet, this group's accusations remain.

Instead of utilizing LAS policies to officially challenge district library materials, the group members use public comment time at board meetings to read the most salacious excerpts they can find from books in the district's collection. They misrepresent which libraries the books are in, which students have access to these books, and ignore the fact that in order to be considered obscene, a work must be taken in whole, not in part.

The parent group seems to be pushing a particular political agenda and want everyone to believe that only their definition of what constitutes appropriate reading materials should be used in Lowell schools. Under the guise of wanting to "protect all children,"

they insinuate that they alone are qualified to review and rate the district's collections and decide for ALL LAS stakeholders which books are appropriate. Despite the fact that the district uses its trained library staff, industry standards and book review experts to guide the selection and placement process, the parent group seems to believe all other parents, students and staff should trust them to guide the process instead.

We felt the need to respond to these baseless attacks in order to support our school board, administration and staff; good people who have dedicated their time, energy and expertise to benefitting the students and families in the Lowell school district. These professionals deserve to be treated respectfully and with a tremendous amount of gratitude for jobs well done. The inappropriate social media behavior and mean-spirited comments from this small group of parents are counterproductive to our educational goals of putting students first and instilling the love of reading. We feel it is time to concentrate on teaching and learning and turn the focus back to educating students.

**Steve Gough,**  
*LHS Principal*  
**Christine Beachler,**  
*LAS Library Media Director*

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## Soccer, continued

archive and these records now public, these play into the psyche of the game. For Greenville to sweep Lowell would be a tremendous boost for their program. The Jackets have put together a good season, but the OK White is tough, and their record didn't reflect the caliber of a team they have put together this year and the direction of their program, once an easy 8-0 mercy for Lowell, but no more.

The game, on its own, was for seventh place in the conference tournament. The stakes were admittedly low in terms of placement, but for both teams who struggled in the conference, it meant a lot to the kids. In a tough season, when things haven't gone their way, it meant everything to them.

From one outstanding

goalkeeping to another, in the district quarterfinal against Ionia, Lowell couldn't find their way past an outstanding performance by Ionia goalkeeper Kyle Jones. In a game where the records were flipped, the schedules both teams played were very different from the other. The game was called the best of his career by the Ionia coaching staff, and he made seven saves on the night, in the downpouring rain that lasted most of the match. Lowell came closest to scoring when Avery Miller's shot hit the crossbar in the first half, but Lowell had numerous chances in a toss-up type game. Ionia improved to 14-4-1 and advanced to play East Grand Rapids this week in the district semifinal, Lowell ended the season at 3-15-1.

To the Editor:

Being a grandparent is even better than being a parent! Just ask one.

But you generally have to be a parent first. That said, you could lose your parental rights to help your child make a life changing decision. We need to make changes to abortion laws in this state, but not rush to pass a "carte Blanche" bill.

National statistics show that more than 500,000 abortions happen annually, more than 25 million since 1973. More than double the population of Michigan. How many unborn people would have made someone a grandparent?

Regardless of how you justify abortion, at some point prior to birth, a fetus

is becoming a human, being capable of living outside another human body. A baby that could give someone an opportunity to be a parent or grandparent.

Shouldn't we find a way to save as many babies as possible? I have 5 cousins that were adopted; they are all now parents and grandparents, wonderful people with wonderful lives. Dr. Carol Swain became an Ivy League Professor after earning a PhD and an MLS, while raising 3 children as a poor woman from Virginia.

Abortion could be an exception, not the rule. Vote "No" on the abortion proposal. We need a better, more defined proposal.

*A Grandparent,*  
**Veronica Blough**  
*Lowell*

Dear Editor:

My husband, Arthur M. Bieri, served as a middle school teacher here for nearly 38 years. I still receive gratitude from local persons, whenever I visit here. I lived in Lowell for 61 years, I also taught here and worked for Attwood Corp. for 12 years.

I now live at Porter Hills Retirement Village in Grand Rapids. When I attended the last 4H Fair, I was approached by three persons who expressed

gratitude for Art's positive influence in their lives. At a recent Thursday night Showboat concert, a young man ran up, hugged me and told me how Art respected him and taught him to catch, clean and cook fish! Art was severely injured in a freak car accident just two months after his retirement and died after five months in a coma. He is still greatly missed by family and friends. He would be 90 years old on Oct. 17, 2022.

**Janet Bieri**  
*Grand Rapids*

Dear Ledger, in order of import:

The historical articles you run are fascinating. More over, last year the paper reproduced the Declaration of Independence which is still taped to our kitchen wall.

Before me is a very recent flyer from Senator Hildenbrand in his quest for County Commission. "More Freedom" is a campaign promise. Now "freedom" is mighty important to we white

males, especially freedom to starve. His platform is attractive, but please move beyond Reaganesque *bon mot*. It is getting old. As commissioner, what do you want to cut, enhance, reform, abolish completely, for "freedom"? Be specific. An experienced legislator must have had opportunity to formulate a check-list and hit list. No singing "The Star-Spangled Banner".

**G.M. Ross**  
*Lowell*





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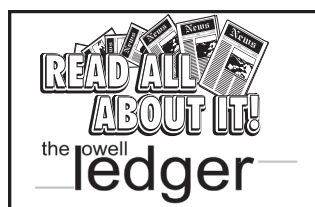
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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Grid of puzzle solutions with words like SEND, ROM, VARIED, POLING, ICEBERG, BATISTE, ARCTENNISCOURT, LUTE, GUESSES, SEA, MORT, STEW, DEE, ROOT, SCORED, DRY, STRIG, PEERED, DORR, POD, ONUS, TEEES, ERR, SAMAS, ELEA, DECAPITATED, INN, ASININE, EERIEEST, MENACE, SALVES, TEST, BLEED

Grid of numbers for puzzle solutions, ranging from 1 to 9.

Vertical text containing puzzle solutions: Y H R T H R S W Q E N P F G X R B R B D, X S I M E S C P P I A S P P M E F Y A W, D K N O O A B F I T M R O O I U E E H I, I A L S D L R Y I N S Y T U R Q B O O A, P T I I R C A R O P O Q H G K I I S C T, P I N G A H K L I I G U L G T N P E W C, I N E A B O E N S H D A T C B H T Y K W, N G M R F W D Y C N N O K A D C H W N I, G N W D R Y H I U O O A L Y D E T Y I Q, C H W T O D B E I Q U A C N O T X K R L, R P E M B A W S Q S N Y C D P F E D E L, S E M L C S S Q T C B K U S E U E L E D, A U X N B E K O E R K C D E O E X E H Q, F U U I F P P D E O U R B H S U E Y T N, E S I O N P P D G U A N O E D B Y C B T, T P R H E G I E N W N Q C G N U O P U Y, Y P U R F D A O K E H A O Y E I M O T K, S L F S C R R C W T L E S F I N C C T E, M S Q G H N A W O O P R B W R P F O T S, T P O G Y B U U K N P L Y G F I I S O G



Advertisement for 'Litho & Printing' featuring a magnifying glass over the text 'LOOKING FOR A PRINTER?' and contact information for Lowell Litho & Printing.



## Dougherty, continued

**How well do you think the district meets the needs of our special education students and their families, and what would you improve upon?**

Based on our family's experience, Lowell Area Schools could make the process of getting students evaluated for additional help easier. When teachers and parents are in agreement that students are struggling, the district should work to help families understand their options and get the assessments they need.

I do not have experience with the special education programs at Lowell Area Schools, but my goal would be for students to be challenged to reach their full potential while making goals that are attainable and realistic. I also think it is important to actively look for and create ways to include students with different abilities in more school activities and throughout our community.

To get a better feel for the special education services that Lowell provides, I have asked parents of students in special education if they feel that the district is meeting the needs of their children. The biggest concerns I heard were that when kids don't fit the traditional educational profile, we need to step back and look at the entire picture to see what will work best for each individual and for the classroom as a whole. Special education

teachers are being asked to educate students that may be similar in age, but very different in needs and abilities. This may require staffing and supports above and beyond what we are providing. The other common concern was that it was important for students in special education to be included in traditional classrooms, elective classes during the school day and extra-curricular activities.

**What role do you think standardized tests should play at Lowell Area Schools?**

A local school district does not always have the final say as to the type and amount of standardized testing required. For testing that is not specifically required, I think it is important to look carefully at the costs versus benefits of the testing. Is the data collected being utilized for a constructive purpose? Does the testing take up significant time that would be better used for instruction? Are there better ways to measure performance? Is a classroom teacher better suited to determine if a specific test is beneficial for their students? Is testing necessary for all students, or just certain groups? If the benefits do not clearly outweigh the costs of a particular test, I believe that we should err on the side of less testing and allow teachers and students to use that time more effectively.

**How do you think Lowell Area Schools could**

**make schools a safer place for students and staff?**

The issue of school safety is a very difficult one. If there were easy answers, we would not still be dealing with violence in our schools. I believe that we need to be on the lookout for new ideas, keep open minds and be watching to see what works and what doesn't work. I feel it is important to provide main entrances that are monitored, but teachers need to have the leeway to open windows and doors in their classrooms and not be in a constant state of lockdown. It is important to train teachers, staff and students on what to do in an emergency situation, but school still needs to be a place where students and staff can be comfortable.

**As the district continues to grow more diverse, how can it best meet the needs of all students?**

I believe that it is important to try to understand other's perspectives and for people to realize that not everyone has the same background and life experiences. It is easy to think that if we feel safe, secure and in control of a situation, everyone else will feel that way too. When we learn about life experiences that are different from ours, we are better able to identify situations that might make others feel uncomfortable or vulnerable. When given the opportunity to see dif-

ferent perspectives, teachers will better be able to understand their students and students will be better able to understand their classmates and future coworkers.

**What programs will you work to build and/or expand that support career readiness?**

Lowell Area Schools provides some excellent opportunities that support career readiness. The Kent Career Tech Center focuses on career exploration and career education. Clubs like FFA, Interact, National Honor Society and Student Council offer students the opportunity to develop leadership and organizational skills. The high school offers classes in business, engineering, architecture, video production and computer programming. If a student has already found employment, there is an option to integrate that employment into their education through work-based learning. It is important that we value and support these educational opportunities and continue to evaluate whether there are additional ways to prepare our students for future careers.

**What mental health supports, services and classes do you think are needed at Lowell Area Schools?**

What will you do as a school board member to support student and staff mental and emotional health/well-being?

The public school system is in a unique position to help address

mental health concerns because of the amount of time that students and staff spend in contact with the school system each day.

Based on my experiences, two of the biggest issues that make getting help difficult are the stigmas related to mental health concerns and the difficulty getting access to help. I believe that Lowell Area Schools can provide help to our families by letting students, families and staff know that they are not alone if they are experiencing mental health challenges and that there are many options that can help make things better. Giving our students and staff, even the ones that are not struggling, tools that they can use when they are experiencing mental health issues and letting them know how to access the resources that can provide additional help can make mental health concerns seem more manageable. Finding quality therapy in a timely manner can be incredibly difficult. In the past, Lowell Area Schools had an agreement with a local therapy practice to provide services for students that were unable to access mental health care. Providing programs like this and making sure that our families and staff know it is available can help remove some of the hurdles that stand in the way of getting help.

**What should be our school district's top spending priorities?**

Alternatively, if school funding is reduced, what

programs/budget items should be less prioritized? Our district's top spending priorities should be:

Priority 1 – Preparing all Lowell Area Schools students for life after high school and helping them develop the tools they need to be successful in whatever path they choose

Priority 2 – Attracting and retaining quality teachers and staff because a business or organization is only as good as its employees

I have not yet studied the school budget in depth, but my understanding of the current budgeting process is that Lowell Area Schools has been very careful in preparing our school budgets to deal with fluctuations in school funding. This has allowed the school district to avoid having to make cuts when funding levels drop. I believe this cautious approach puts our district on very solid footing.

If funding levels drop to a point where our cautious budgeting is not enough, I feel that the first priority for reducing funding should be on items that do not directly impact classroom education or staff compensation. Our first priority should always be to prepare our students for life after high school and we need quality teachers and staff to do that. After those two goals are met, we would need to sit down and analyze areas where cuts were possible and weigh the impact those cuts would have on our students.

## German, continued

fering opinions in how and what should be allowed or taught within our district. My hope is that if I get elected to the board, I can help calm the tone down a little through truly listening to people's objections and complaints. In my 44 years here on Earth, the one thing that I know to be true is that I don't know everything. I also know that there is typically truth hidden somewhere in the middle of differing sides. My life experiences have led me to have a more conservative viewpoint but they have also shown me there are always two sides to a story.

**If you could have an impact on our school district's curriculum, what changes would you make? What would you keep the same?**

I actually think that the district is doing a great job with it's current curriculum. There is a good coverage of the basic, and also, a ton of opportunity for our kids to push themselves in areas that other districts don't have available. I do think that we constantly need to make sure that we are paying attention

to the world around us, and make changes accordingly, to make sure that our kids continue to get an education that promotes a healthy and successful life beyond Lowell.

**How well do you think the district meets the needs of our special education students and their families, and what would you improve upon?**

The base education and programs that Lowell offers to our special education students is pretty good. The one knock that I would say against it, making sure that all of the teachers buy into, or at minimum, pay attention to, provisions that are given to said students. One of my children has dyslexia and has provisions written for her that have helped her not only succeed in the classroom but also excel. Unfortunately, there have been a small handful of teachers that either didn't see, ignored or fought back against some of them.

**What role do you think standardized tests should play at Lowell Area Schools?**

While I understand the desire to assign numerical

data to the proficiency of our students, I typically find these numbers to be faulty. There are so many variables that can go into test-taking, that can skew the outcome, that it's hard for me to trust their accuracy. Unfortunately, my understanding is that the state sets or mandates what test we must administer as a district. If our educators and administrators found testing that they believe in and feel is worthy of taking, I would buy into that. I trust that they want to know that what they are doing is effective, and if there is testing out there that can help show us areas that we are doing well in and areas that we need improvement, I could easily back it.

**How do you think Lowell Area Schools could make schools a safer place for students and staff?**

It's super unfortunate that this even has to be a question asked. Our students should not have to worry about their safety - ever; least of all, while in school. I think we continue to work with local and state police and emergency personnel to make sure that we have the best policies and procedures in place to maintain the safety of our

children. This is definitely an area that we defer to the experts. So far, I do think that our district has done a good job of this, and I would make sure that it continues.

**As the district continues to grow more diverse, how can it best meet the needs of all students?**

Acknowledging that we are actually quite a diverse district is the first step to ensuring that all of the students needs are met. Diversity comes in many forms, social economical, racial, cultural, religious beliefs, political and so on. Our teachers and administrators (and community) need to be able to understand that their experiences are most likely very different than most of the students/parents that they get to work with. Once they have that understanding, it is much easier to help them where they are at, which in-turn, creates a productive educational environment. There is a danger in overcorrecting in areas of acceptance, though. We do have to be careful and try to stay in a neutral position within the schools so not to make other groups then feel ostracized.

**What programs will you work to build**

**and/or expand that support career readiness?**

Our district really is doing a good job with this currently. The partnership with KCTC and some of our "in house" programs give our students a wide variety of career paths to explore. I would like for us to continue to keep an eye on expanding opportunities, when available.

**What mental health supports, services and classes do you think are needed at Lowell Area Schools? What will you do as a school board member to support student and staff mental and emotional health/well-being?**

It seems like the emotional health and well-being of our staff and students is at an all-time low. I don't have any sort of data to back that, but through the conversations that I have had with many teachers and students, there is no doubt that this is a problem. We can help our families out by making sure that they know of the systems that are available, both within and outside of our district. We have done a decent job hiring and maintaining top-notch counseling staff that are available to the students. If the needs contin-

ue to rise, I would be in full support in hiring more. If our students aren't healthy, both mentally and physically, they will have an extremely difficult time learning.

**What should be our school district's top spending priorities? Alternatively, if school funding is reduced, what programs/budget items should be less prioritized?**

We need to continue to make preparing our students, for wherever life takes them after high school, our top priority. I believe in a variety of career-readiness programs will do that and the budget should reflect this in the programs we invest in. I think one of the toughest jobs that the school board could have to tackle would be budget cuts and that programs we would have to eliminate or reduce funding to. I hope to be a part of a board that believes in being fiscally responsible in a way that we can prepare for less funding but still maintain a high level of educational opportunities. Without looking deeper into our current spending, I really can't give an informed answer as to what I would cut or reduce funding to, if needed.



# FUN PAGE

## SUDOKU

	9				7		4	
						6	9	
1					6	3		
		5				9	7	
		8	4					
				7		5		3
	2	3	6	4				
9								
	6			3	1			9

Level: Intermediate

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

# ROLLER RINK WORD SEARCH

Y H R T H R S W Q E N P F G X R B R B D  
 X S I M E S C P P I A S P P M E F Y A W  
 D K N O O A B F I T M R O O I U E E H I  
 I A L S D L R Y I N S Y T U R Q B O O A  
 P T I I R C A R O P O Q H G K I I S C T  
 P I N G A H K L I I G U L G T N P E W C  
 I N E A B O E N S H D A T C B H T Y K W  
 N G M R F W D Y C N N O K A D C H W N I  
 G N W D R Y H I U O O A L Y D E T Y I Q  
 C H W T O D B E I Q U A C N O T X K R L  
 R P E M B A W S Q S N Y C D P F E D E L  
 S E M L C S S Q T C B K U S E U E L E D  
 A U X N B E K O E R K C D E O E X E H Q  
 F U U I F P P D E O U R B H S U E Y T N  
 E S I O N P P D G U A N O E D B Y C B T  
 T P R H E G I E N W N Q C G N U O P U Y  
 Y P U R F D A O K E H A O Y E I M O T K  
 S L F S C R R C W T L E S F I N C C T E  
 M S Q G H N A W O O P R B W R P F O T S  
 T P O G Y B U U K N P L Y G F I I S O G

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Puzzle solutions on page 13

ROLLER RINK WORD SEARCH

DERBY DIPPING

LACES PROFESSIONAL

SLALOM SPIN

BACKWARDS

DRAG

REXING

SPINOUT

BALANCE

FEET

RINK

STOPPER

BOOT

FRIENDS

SAFETY

TECHNIQUE

BRAKE

GEAR

SALCHOW

TOE

INLINE

SKATING

## Guess Who?

I am a rapper born in California on October 21, 1995. I have a love for cats, and that love inspired my stage name. My brother's rapping motivated me to follow suit, and one of my songs inspired memes that went viral in 2018.

Answer: Doja Cat

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to roller skating.

**S E A T K S**

--	--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Skates

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	
9					10		11			12
13					14		15			
16				17			18			
19			20		21					22
	23			24		25			26	
		27			28		29		30	
			31			32		33		
		34				35		36		37
	38				39		40		41	42
43					44		45		46	47
48			49	50				51		52
53						54			55	
56							57			
	58							59		

### CLUES ACROSS

- A way to communicate
- Historic city
- Not the same
- Hitting a horse to clear a jump
- One hurt the Titanic
- Fine dense cloth
- Architectural structure
- Where Serena works
- Stringed instrument
- Estimate
- Where sailors work
- Popular Terry Pratchett novel
- Popular slow cooked dish
- Twisted Sister's Snider
- "Office Space" actor Stephen
- Put the ball in the net
- Ancient Greek city in Thrace
- High school math subject
- Looked into
- Rhode Island rebellion
- A pea is one type
- You can put it on something
- Where golfers begin


### CLUES DOWN

- Make a mistake
- Semitic Sun god
- Ancient Greek City
- Beheaded
- A place to stay
- Inanely foolish
- Most unnatural
- "Dennis" is one
- Soothes
- Exam
- Leaked blood
- Triangular bone in lower back
- Building toy
- Pointed end of a pen
- Insect repellent
- College army
- Highly spiced stew
- Exploited
- Main course
- A bottle that contains a drug
- The most worthless part
- Everyone needs one nowadays
- Japanese wooden shoe
- Antelopes
- A way to cut
- Brooklyn hoopsters
- Gradually receded
- Ripped open
- College grads get one
- Amino acid
- Unruly gathering
- Legislative body
- Resembling pigs
- Russian assembly
- Take over for
- Put in advance
- Satisfy
- Felt
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- Witnesses
- Some build hills
- de Armas and Gasteyer are two
- Ancient people of Scotland
- Cheerless
- Unwell



# It was a groovy time at Girls Night Out last Thursday

All photos courtesy of Bruce Doll

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