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Restless Viking



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Lowell Area Schools Sports



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50¢



Christmas through Lowell ushers in holiday spirit

By Emma Palova
contributing writer

Ho, ho, ho. Hot cocoa bombs, vanilla bombs, Cozy Cabin spiced cranberry hard cider, punch, cookies and thousands of unique homemade gifts await you on the 30th Annual Christmas through Lowell tour, starting this Friday through Sunday. Put on your shopping hat and boots and head out into the holiday magic brought to you by more than 300 artists and crafters, organized by the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.

The tour covers individuals, businesses and organizations in the greater Lowell area, from the northernmost boundary with location no. 1 Red Barn Market, to the southernmost boundary location no. 43, Swisslane Farms south of the I96 freeway.

Start from one of the municipal parking lots and make your way through

**Christmas,
continued page 8**



Quinne Duhr, of Quinne & Canvas, location no. 6 on this weekend's Christmas Through Lowell.

Winter weather insurance tips

It is Winter Hazards Awareness Week in Michigan, and the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) is reminding Michiganders to review their insurance documents while taking steps to prevent winter-related damage. Winter storms and freezing temperatures can damage your home or vehicle, but understanding your insurance coverage can help you ensure you are financially protected if severe winter weather strikes.

"Dealing with winter-related damage to your home or vehicle is stressful and the prospect of financial loss only increases the burden residents face during the winter months," said DIFS Director Anita Fox. "We encourage Michiganders to review their insurance coverages before experiencing a loss to make sure they

understand the rights and responsibilities they have under their insurance policies. If you are unsure of what your policy covers, contact your insurance agent or company for help."

Understanding how your insurance policies work and what they cover is key to a quick recovery. Here are a few tips that can help give you peace of mind this winter:

Tips for Home Owners:

H o m e o w n e r s insurance policies usually cover damages resulting from things like burst pipes, ice dams, wind, or a building collapse caused by the weight of ice or snow, but will often exclude coverage for damages resulting from power outages, unless the

**Tips, continued
page 3**

Dutcher Snedeker: LowellArts Artist of the Month

by Bill Lee
contributing writer

"The modern musician has to wear a lot of hats," said Dutcher Snedeker, November's LowellArts Artist of the month. As a solo pianist, session musician, writer, blogger, podcaster, and member of three bands, Snedeker symbolizes this statement. The Grand Rapids musician has been a steady presence in the West Michigan music scene since his college days at Grand Valley State University ten years ago. His contributions to the scene, in various ways, has allowed him to be a full-time musician and given him some recognition in the area, including Lowell. "I appreciate what LowellArts is doing," Snedeker said. "There's a feature but then there's so much follow up. There's intention behind it."

Snedeker grew up in a musical family and remembers seeing his uncles being very involved in



Dutcher Snedeker

different genres of music, and credits his family with influencing his own musical style. "I've always been interested in different genres," said Snedeker. "I grew up with Motown and blues and Ray Charles. I think my first words were 'Hit the Road Jack.' In high

school I picked up a guitar and learned all the rock riffs, and progressive and metal. It's kind of a mixture of wanting to play these songs that I've enjoyed hearing and not really caring about

**Artist, continued
page 2**

Artist, continued

where they came from, and also coming from a musical family. It shaped my thought process going into school; I wasn't going to be one thing."

After high school, he entered Grand Valley State University, expecting to major in music education. His professors saw something else in him and helped guide Snedeker

in a different direction - performance. Snedeker's time at GVSU was, in a lot of ways, life-changing. He became a member of the Grand Valley New Music Ensemble, a nationally recognized chamber music group that commissioned composers to write about experiences around national parks. Snedeker was fortunate to perform

at Capital Reef, Zion, the Great Sand Dunes and the Grand Canyon, as a college undergraduate. These experiences were fantastic, but even more important were the ways GVSU taught him how to become a professional musician and how to collaborate with others. "GVSU is kind of the first time it felt like I was doing work as a professional and learning skills through different types of work," said Snedeker. "In the program, you are learning how to teach, how to play, learning how to accompany other instruments, and how to play in ensembles."

As he got to know more people and collaborate with more musicians, Snedeker started to do some gig work in the Grand Rapids music scene. His background, with liking, understanding, and playing different musical genres, allowed him to play with various musicians and got him more work. In the beginning, he was working with trumpeter Brad Fritcher and also the

band Hannah Rose and the Gravestones for a few years, and these experiences helped him become the great collaborator he is today. Presently, he is a member of three bands - Earth Radio, Normal Mode, and the Mark Lavengood Band. With the pandemic easing in 2022, Snedeker also became busy as a live performer, with his bands and as a solo musician. He played in over 15 music festivals this summer and is about to release a couple of albums in 2023 with Earth Radio.

Also, his work outside of playing - podcasting, writing, blogging - has given Snedeker a unique window and inside look into what is happening in the Grand Rapids music scene. Recently, he has noticed there are new venues to play and a lot more access and opportunity for musicians, especially now that Covid has eased. It is an exciting time to play music in West Michigan. "One thing I've seen and have heard from a lot of people is there is a

lot of accessibility in the Grand Rapids scene, and there's never a time when there was ever a barrier," said Snedeker. "There's a lot of cross-pollinating and collaborating and that's a really cool aspect to the scene. There are a lot of different places to play. The DAAC (Division Avenue Arts Collective, a music venue/art gallery) is back and Skelletones is back. From someone who has been in the scene for a while, there is great community. In terms of trying to build a scene that is robust, there's definitely an effort from a lot of people in Grand Rapids."

As busy as he is, Dutcher Snedeker is really looking forward to his future. Recently, he turned 30, and with that has come some reflection as a person and musician. "I'm happy, overall, with the work I've done and the work I've done with people, and being able to have some cool opportunities, especially this year," said

Snedeker. "The things that I'm always trying to strive for and improve, I think that will always be present. I'm full-time music, so I have to get my hands dirty playing with different groups and traveling... I'm hoping to have a lot of experiences, finding a good work-life balance, where I'm able to indulge in some of the other hobbies and interest I have."

Snedeker will be returning this winter to West Shore Community College in Ludington for his third time. The college puts a few musicals together every year, and he will be working with the casts and crews and will play in the pit band with all the shows. Besides that, he will continue to work with his three bands, along with his writing and podcasting. He is also looking forward to doing some producing in the near future. For more information about Dutcher Snedeker's music, performances, and other projects, you can visit his website at dutchersnedeker.com.



November Students of the month

Junior Ella Todd and freshman Maddy Parker, are the Lowell High School November Students of the Month.



Maddy Parker

In order to be eligible for this honor, a student must be nominated by a teacher. All the nomination forms for the month are then reviewed and voted on at the monthly department chair meeting. Students are selected, based on academic achievement, character, and work ethic. There are 1,200 students eligible for nomination, so this is quite an accomplishment. The students receive a \$20 gift card and a certificate.

Todd was nominated by Nick Blough and he writes, "Ella has all the trademarks of an outstanding student. She is consistently prepared for class, meticulous

with her written work and eager to contribute to the class discussion. Academically, Ella goes above and beyond the call of duty on a daily basis!"

Phil Beachler nominated Parker and she writes, "Maddy's willingness to learn and outstanding work ethic in Algebra had earned Maddy, Student of the Month recognition. She comes to class always prepared, homework completed, participates in all class activities with a great attitude and is often found working ahead. Maddy is a positive leader and sets a fine example for other students at Lowell



Ella Todd

High School. We really appreciate Maddy's efforts and wish her continued success."

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Against government spending? A reality check

By Cliff Yankovich
contributing writer

In the last few weeks and months, there has been an awful lot of talk against government spending. The key word in that sentence is “talk.” There are a couple ways to introduce my point here. One is to quote the phrase from the “Jerry McGuire” movie: “Show me the money.” The other one is to quote the phrase, “Money talks and BS walks.” Choose your favorite of the two or apply both equally.

Are people and business owners in the Lowell area really all dead-set against rampant government spending and government handouts? I will say this in response – if it were not for government handouts during the initial onslaught of COVID, the Lowell zip code would be in dire financial straits. Let me say that again – the Lowell area would be in terrible financial condition if not for a massive influx of government money. Money given away by the government contributed in a huge way to the relative prosperity Lowell is enjoying. The same can be said for many, if not most, of our neighboring communities, but I live and own a business in Lowell, and therefore, will stick to our zip code.

Full disclaimer: Thanks to hiring a new accountant in 2019 and our dealing with a medium size bank that looked out for its customers, Julie and I – aka, Chimera Design – received a total of \$31,800.00, in totally forgiven government money in the two PPP funding cycles. We followed protocol and closed in 2020, and we are very happy to have had this money made available to us, because without it, our store might not have made it to celebrate 20 years this year. Many Mom & Pop stores like ours were not able to secure any PPP money and closed or went through very challenging economic times. We took the money, stayed afloat, and were and remain, grateful for this assistance from the government.

We get a wide variety of people in our store, and we have heard time and again, people badmouthing the government give a ways that are ruining our country. Well, it is time to apply the two quotes that I opened with: “Money talks....show me the money.” Here we go.

The PPP loan program is an open book. The recipients of this massive government program are

all listed publicly on the internet. There are many ways to get a look at businesses and individuals who live and/or operate a business in our area and see how they really feel about government freebies. Saying how terrible they are loses some of its argumentative punch if you find out that the person(s) making these statements happily cashed their PPP checks and took full advantage of the program and never paid back the “loan”.

For those who don’t know, when you received a PPP Loan you were allowed to fill out paperwork demonstrating the hardships from COVID on your business that would get the loan forgiven. For Chimera Design, it was pretty straight forward because we were closed for 6-7 weeks and the economic impact was easy to see in our financial records. Again, we are very thankful for the help and might not be open had we not received it.

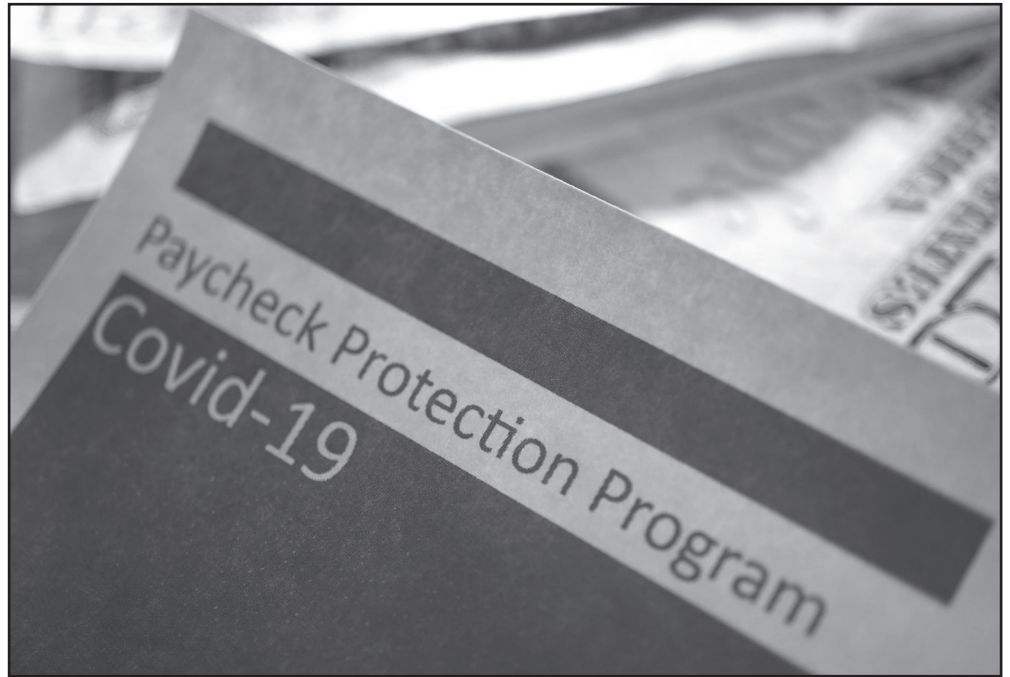
Here is a fun fact – I added up the 12 largest, totally refunded, PPP loans that came to businesses in our zip code. The total was Six Million, Five Hundred Eighty-Four Thousand, Five Hundred and Ten dollars. \$6,584,510.00. That was only the twelve largest ones that I scanned and the list was only of the first 100 PPP loans that were given to our area. Since no one trusts the press, here are some places you can check for yourself.

Pro Publica has the list of the first 100 PPP loans to the 49331 zip code here:

<https://projects.propublica.org/coronavirus/bailouts/>. Simply go to this web address and you can plug in any zip code to see who received what amount of money. I would encourage you to take a few minutes and take a look around. Again, my point is that we might like to pay lip service to hating government bailouts and assistance, but when push comes to shove, those checks were cashed and spent.

You say you don’t trust Pro Publica? Great, well then I would invite you to check with the website full of information that was released by the Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBA administered the PPP program. You can do a search here by zip code, business name, or by someone’s name: <https://ppp-loan.info/>. The PPP money given to Chimera Design, LLC, was actually paid to my wife because she is the listed owner of the LLC. That is the case with many of the PPP loans in small amounts; they were given to sole proprietor or other micro businesses.

It is also worth mentioning that the banks that facilitated the loans were paid to do so. They were paid a percentage of the actual loan amount. It was a sliding scale with 5 percent paid-for loans under \$350,000, 3 percent paid for loans between \$350,000 and two million dollars and 1 percent paid on those over two million. That is why



many small businesses did not receive help from their banks, especially if they dealt with a large bank. Our bank was paid \$1,590.00 to facilitate our \$31,800.00 PPP loans. Larger banks had bigger fish to fry, so they would ignore the Mom & Pops, preferring to help big companies, and therefore, make more money. It is worth noting here, that many banks and people in the

banking business badmouth government programs, but they happily made millions while facilitating the biggest government program to hit in decades.

As mentioned above, the total of just the 12 biggest government handouts, to our zip code alone, was over six and a half million dollars. I have not taken the time to find the total economic impact of the PPP money

on our area, but maybe one of you can do it. My point is to remind everyone that some government programs are beneficial. The Lowell area was spared terrible economic woes by the influx of millions and millions of dollars in free money. For us to pretend otherwise is, at the very least, disingenuous and possibly full out hypocrisy.

Tips, continued

outage was caused by a covered peril such as wind, ice, or snow.

Home owners should review their insurance policy and take the following steps to help prevent winter damage:

Keep your home heated to at least 65 degrees to prevent frozen pipes. If you are away from your home for an extended period of time, have someone check your home to catch any burst pipes as soon as possible.

Keep gutters clean to prevent ice damming, which occurs when melting ice backs up under roof shingles before freezing again.

Remove trees that have died or are rotting to prevent branches from falling under the weight of snow or ice.

Tips for Automobile Owners:

Driving in winter weather can be hazardous, even if you are driving carefully. Coverages you may consider purchasing, or confirming you currently have, include:

Collision Coverage provides coverage for damage to your vehicle while driving, should your vehicle collide with another vehicle or hit a tree or utility pole from loss of traction due to ice and snow.

Comprehensive Coverage provides coverage when your vehicle has sustained damage that did not result from a collision. Examples include damage

from falling tree limbs, hail, or vandalism.

Property Protection provides coverage for damage unintentionally caused to another person’s property, for example, if you slide off the road and damage someone’s mailbox. This coverage is one of the three mandatory coverages required to drive legally in Michigan.

For more tips on preparing your family for winter, visit the Michigan State Police’s Emergency Management & Homeland Security Division preparedness website at Michigan.gov/MIReady. For questions or concerns about your insurance, contact DIFS 8 am to 5 pm Monday

through Friday at 877-999-6442, or file a complaint by visiting Michigan.gov/DIFScomplaints.

The mission of the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services is to ensure access to safe and secure insurance and financial services fundamental for the opportunity, security, and success of Michigan residents, while fostering economic growth and sustainability in both industries. In addition, the Department provides consumer protection, outreach, and financial literacy and education services to Michigan residents. For more information, visit Michigan.gov/DIFS

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Managing holiday stress

Many find the holiday's stressful and every year there are a slew of articles listing ways to manage your stress. While holiday stress isn't unusual, it's often worse for those already struggling or diagnosed with anxiety and/or depression. Below are some practical suggestions to help you, not just manage holiday stress, but hopefully make them more enjoyable.

Tips for managing holiday stress:

Create a plan. Schedule days/times for shopping, cleaning, cooking, wrapping gifts, self-care, and for connecting with friends and family. You may even want to have an extra gift card or two on hand for any shipping delays or unexpected guests.

Saying no is okay. We don't have to say yes to

every holiday invitation. Sometimes you have to say no for your well-being. If you don't take time to take care of yourself and recharge, then how can you be there for others? So, if you find yourself feeling stressed it's okay to turn down invitations. Those that care about you will understand.

Be careful about agreeing to favors. It might only take someone a minute to ask for a favor but how much time will it take you to accomplish it? This is not being selfish because there is only so much time in a day and we can become stressed when we say yes to too many things.

Self-care is important. Sometimes we feel like we can do it all but let's be realistic, just because you

have a spare hour, it doesn't mean you have to fill it. Sometimes doing nothing is exactly what we need. Don't just make time for yourself but eat healthy and get good sleep too. Take a little time and do something that's just for you, that you enjoy. It will help recharge you so you can enjoy the holiday season.

Let good be good enough. Things don't have to be perfectly decorated or a huge meal prepared with several food and beverage choices. Be realistic and do what you can. Simplify your plan.

Ask for help. It's okay especially with all the extra things that need to be done around the holidays. Have your partner, the entire family, or others pitch in and help. Ask those close to you to help with cleaning and decorating, meal prep, etc. Make it fun. If you don't have time to shop in-person for gifts, food, etc., shop online or use a service like Shipt (they do have purchase limitations). Just remember that shipping is typically delayed around the holidays. Now that you have

help cleaning, decorating, wrapping, and with the meal, you can spend more quality time with friends and family, having fun.

Stick to a realistic budget. I've never understood spending so much for the holidays that it takes months to pay off the debt. If food, decorations, and gifts cost that much, maybe it's time to reevaluate and come up with a more realistic budget. As suggested above, have others bring food or beverages to share. If you have a large family & gifts are getting too expensive, try a gift exchange so you don't have to purchase a gift for everyone, but instead, just one person. You may also want to set a limit on how much to spend on each person/gift.

Don't isolate yourself. Instead, reach out to those close to you and talk about your feelings. If you don't have time to get together in person you can try video chat, a call, or a text.

If you start associating high levels of stress, being overwhelmed, sadness, or



anxiety with the holidays, you may start to dread this time of year. After trying these suggestions, if you find yourself still struggling with holiday stress or high levels of anxiety, it may be

time to seek out help from a counselor. This article is not meant to treat or diagnose. I hope everyone stays safe, healthy and has wonderful holiday season!

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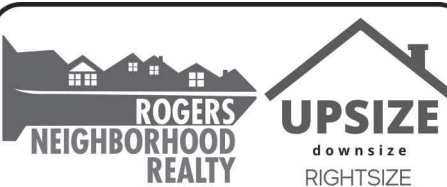
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Auto crashes involving deer on the rise in November

The cool breeze and falling leaves are good reminders for Michigan drivers to be on the lookout for deer, as most auto-deer collisions typically occur in November.

In 2021, 1,449 people were injured, and 10 people were killed in 52,218 crashes involving deer in Michigan, according to the Michigan State Police. That's up from 2020, when 51,103 vehicle crashes involving deer resulted in 5 deaths.

The Detroit Free Press recently reported that warmer temperatures and fewer hunters across the state have pushed Michigan's deer population to an estimated 2 million

deer – significantly higher than the 300,000 deer the state had 10 years ago.

More than 9,000 auto accidents involving deer occurred in November 2021, and those collisions were most likely to occur between 6-9 a.m. and 6-9 p.m. on weekdays. Michigan's firearm deer season officially runs Nov. 15-30.

The counties with the most reported vehicle crashes involving deer in 2021 were:

- Oakland County (1,853)
 - Kent County (1,810)
 - Jackson County (1,544)
 - Ottawa County (1,391)
 - Lapeer County (1,355)
- “As we head into

November, we urge Michigan drivers to be on the lookout for deer,” said Erin McDonough, executive director of the Insurance Alliance of Michigan (IAM). “Injuries and fatalities from collisions can be avoided, if drivers are alert while driving, and follow some safety tips.”

IAM recommends the following safety tips:

Watch for deer, especially at dawn and dusk, when they are most active. If you see one deer, approach cautiously, as there may be more out of sight.

Deer often travel single file, so if you see one cross a road, it's likely more are nearby waiting to cross. When startled by an approaching vehicle, deer can panic and dart out from any direction.

Slow down when traveling through deer-populated areas.

Always wear your seat belt.

If a crash with a deer is unavoidable, don't swerve. Instead, brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel with both hands, come to a controlled stop and then proceed to steer your vehicle off the roadway.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The **MAXINE M. KROLIK Trust**

Re: **Maxine M. Krolik, decedent, Date of Birth 7-30-1925**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Maxine M. Krolik, who lived at 829 Garfield Ave., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504, died 10-1-2022.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the deceased or the trust will be forever

barred unless presented to Gerald L. Krolik, Trustee, of 829 Garfield Ave., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

November 2, 2022

John D. Mitus, Attorney (P31244) 410 Bridge, NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504 616-774-4001

Gerald Krolik, Trustee 829 Garfield Ave. NW Grand Rapids, MI 49504

viewpoint



125 years ago The Lowell Ledger November 18, 1897

The township board, at a meeting held Saturday last, voted to buy the bone crusher that has been in operation during the week in Walker's woods. The work of the machine takes great loads of hard heads being chewed up tiny, splendid road material in a few brief moments.

The people of Lowell were imposed upon last week by one, John Eaton, an old man of 82 years, who goes from door-to-door pleading poverty and asking for help. This same John Eaton has \$300 in the Lowell State Bank, money in the Grand Rapids Bank, and owns valuable real estate in Grand Rapids, also draws a pension of \$12.00 per month.

At the request of many clients, Dr. Rickert is again administering gas for the extraction of teeth. By the use of his new apparatus the danger formerly attending the use of gas is said to have been eliminated.

100 years ago The Lowell Ledger November 23, 1922

Some amateur highway men nearly caught a Tartar when they attempted to hold up Village Marshall, Pat Bowes near Ionia a few nights ago.

J.B. Wolf, of Freeport, took dinner Wednesday at the home of Ozi Pardee. The two men missed their annual deer hunt this year, and, of course, they had to get together and console each other.

Mrs. Kate Sweet is slowly recovering from a severe attack of rheumatism.

Advertisement: The very latest popular copyright books, 75¢ the copy at Henry's Drug and Book store.

The Clyde Kinyon home on Monroe Avenue was damaged Tuesday by a fire in the roof and by water used in extinguishing the fire, which was confined to the roof. House and contents were insured. The family will make their home with Mrs. Kinyon's mother, Mrs. Jack Callier, while repairs are being made.

75 years ago The Lowell Ledger November 20, 1947

Arch Wood, of McCords, suffered a neck fracture and head bruises, while enroute north on a hunting trip with three other men, last Thursday morning. He was taken to a Big Rapids hospital where he remained until Sunday, when he was brought to his home by his daughter and son-in-law. He was then taken to Blodgett hospital Wednesday, where he will be placed in a cast, after which he will return to his home.

In mailing Christmas greetings, the postmistress,

Mrs. Mabel Bibbler, warns that correct street address must be used in the village to insure prompt delivery. Mail on rural routes should bear only the route number, no street address.

We hear there have been at least fourteen deer shot near here so far. Bob Ford and Bill Condon were the first lucky enough to get deer on Saturday.

Mrs. Ira Sergeant has received communications from her daughter, Mrs. F.A. Schwab, who arrived Tuesday at Las Angeles. She and three friends made the drive in two weeks, taking the extreme southern route and did a considerable amount of sightseeing while enroute.

50 years ago Lowell Ledger Suburban Life November 16, 1972

The disputed removal of the marker stone and bronze plaque commemorating Rix Robinson, which has caused an uprising among Ada area residents and Amway Corporation has been settled. It will be returned.

Tuesday morning, area motorists found their cars heavy-laden with a white blanket of that oh-so-very-wonderful stuff called "snow." The situation found many complaining, some shoveling, and others shrugging their shoulders as they mumbled "it's here!"

The former Lewis Electric building on East Main Street is being renovated into a new beauty shop for Doris Myers and her staff.

License plates for all vehicles are sold at the Western Auto Store on East Main Street. Get your '73 plates early and avoid the last-minute rush!

Cherry Creek Nursing Home, North Center Street in Lowell, opened its doors officially last Friday when the first ten patients were admitted. More are expected daily, according to How Ramjet, administrator.

Lowell votes in Liquor-by-the-glass and Veterans' bonuses. In record voting, most areas report 80-85 person turnout. Nixon is in.

25 years ago The Lowell Ledger

November 19, 1997

Lowell people pondered important needs of the community and discussed which ones should be address by the Lowell Community Fund at a Lowell community forum. The money became available, when it was announced by the Grand Rapids Foundation in June, that Englehardt had left the Lowell community \$12 million.

Bernie Anderson Jr. has opened Endurance Products Sales & Service at 11390 E. Fulton. The new shop services snowmobiles, motorcycles, ATVs, watercrafts and boats, they also see snowmobiles, boats and dirt bikes.

Joe Wisner, 14, on his first year out, hit his mark on opening day for hunting deer with firearms. Wisner was The Lowell Ledger's First Buck contest winner.

to the editor

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

Dear Editor:

I'm proud to say that Lowell Township experienced a red wave, but wasn't enough for state results. That being said, I am happy and proud to know that my neighbors believe in a voice for the voiceless, the unborn children. I'm glad that they're wise enough to know government overreach and vote accordingly. I'm grateful that they understand the unintended consequences of the awful proposals and again voted appropriately.

It is what it is, but regardless of party and regardless of yesterday's outcomes, we must ALL still hold our representatives accountable and hold their feet to the fire!

I worked 16.5 hours yesterday. Precinct 2 experienced an electronic

pollbook crash early afternoon. Our team immediately jumped to the paper back up and didn't hold things up too much. The problem was corrected, but reoccurred early evening. Precinct 1 experienced the same system crash. These were solely software issues that IT and the developer thought had been resolved from the August primary. Again, our great teams worked diligently to keep processing voters, and in the end, all of our numbers balanced. I am grateful for our clerk and deputy clerk, as well as the other poll workers. I am happy for the voter turn-out and their patience as we worked to get everyone in and out in a timely manner.

*Nancy Stroosnyder
Lowell Township*

Eat. Shop. Explore.
LOCAL

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.

Mahjonn

Fridays from 1-3 pm. American Mahjonn, 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.

KDL Lab Experience

Friday, Nov. 18, 1- 3 pm. Drop in and allow children to think creatively, tinker, explore and collaborate while engaging in a variety of hands-on activities based on STEM concepts. For ages 5-10.

ABCs of Lowell history

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

Address: 311 E. Main
Date Built: early 1920s
1st known business:
Little Racine Restaurant

Lucius H. "Root" Racine came to Lowell in 1920 and married Elsie Godfrey. Their daughter, Alice Lou, was born in 1921. They operated the Little Racine Restaurant together from 1924 to 1932, when Mr. Racine passed away.

"Root" was a showman. He had a partition between the counter and kitchen with a pass-through window. He would take the order, relay the order by shouting through the window, go around to the kitchen and cook the meal, set it out on the counter, come around to the dining area and serve it with flair. His one-man



Little Racine Restaurant about 1927. Mrs. Elsie Racine, daughter Alice Lou, and Mr. Louis Racine posing in front.

operation gave an illusion of a larger operation. During the Depression, Louie served meals to the hobos who came into town on the train; Harold Englehardt quietly reimbursed him. Following his death, the Lowell Ledger said of him, "He was not

blessed with much of this world's goods, but he had something in him of far greater value than material wealth, and that was a sympathetic and generous heart. It's safe to say that there wasn't a day of his life that he did not do something for someone in need. He fed the hungry and the unfortunate, and otherwise, shared with others when he could ill afford to do so." Mrs. Elsie Racine continued operating the restaurant for ten years after her husband's death.

M. D., joined Dr. McKay's practice here in 1961 after serving his internship at Butterworth Hospital. Dr. Marilyn Hunter joined in 1968. The doctors all moved to their new building on N. Hudson in 1969.

From 1975 to 1984, Frederick E. Althaus, Jr., Attorney and Wholesale Philatelic Supply businesses were here. From 1986 to 2007, it became the law office of Attorneys Tummino and Tummino, a husband and wife team.

Grand Valley Ventures worked in this building (c. 2011-2018). Since 2019, the front half of the building has been home to the Farm Bureau Insurance office of agent Michael Curtis. BCG Construction Company bought the building in Jan. 2022 and works out of the rear half. Curtis' agency now leases the front and the two businesses enjoy a common kitchen area in between.

Dr. Harold R. Myers, an Osteopathic physician and surgeon, had his office here from 1944 to 1954. In 1954, Dr. Orval McKay, M. D., purchased the building and remodeled the interior. He also added the brick front and changed the windows to glass cubes so that it was more difficult to see who was in the waiting room from the sidewalk. Dr. Donald Gerard,



Notice that the one-story building has small glass block windows when it was home to doctor's offices. The 3-story building to the right was torn down in 1974.

THIS AD FOR SALE!

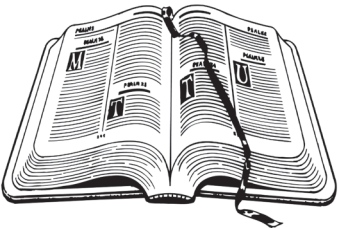
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www.cnaads.com *Kantar Millward Brown, Feb. 2018

area churches



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

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

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**

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 - Mondays7 PM
 Barrier-Free

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 3:30-4:30 pm
 Prayer & Adoration: Wednesdays 9 am to 4:45 pm
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 897-5938
 www.lowellumc.com • Barrier Free Entrance

WORSHIP
 Traditional Service: 9 am
 Contemporary Service: 10:30 am
 Sr. Pastor - Brad Brillhart

happy birthday

NOVEMBER 17
 Scott MacNaughton,
 Cory DuBridge, Tyler Shindorf,
 Mary Schutts,
 Anastasia Barnes, Ali Wernet.

NOVEMBER 18
 Brent Noskey, Lindsey Sherman.

NOVEMBER 21
 Michael Hewitt,
 Tammy Gildner.

NOVEMBER 22
 Carla Briggs, Andrea Richmond,
 Karrie Burt, Joshua Gerard,
 Dylan Olin, Arlene Sytsma.

NOVEMBER 19
 Ken Mulder, Jamie Zoodsma,
 Marlene Nash, Lewis Powell,
 Betsy Maki.

NOVEMBER 20
 Brian Brown, John Butler Sr.,
 Michelle Wernet.

NOVEMBER 23
 Trisha Propst, Sherri Vezino,
 Gregory Duiven, Mike Harding,
 McKinsie Rice, Dave Thompson.

City Council discusses line shack, Kent County Youth Fair contract and new John Deere Gator

Jake Bates
contributing writer

On Nov. 7, during City Council's latest meeting, City Council member, Cliff Yankovich recused himself from a vote on the Line Shack building. The resolution would have authorized the sale of the property at 115 Riverside Drive to Main Street Development of Lowell, LLC for a total of \$150,000.

Yankovich cited conflict of interest concerns

with the owner of Main Street Development of Lowell, LLC. "Greg made a point of bringing up that he had hired someone with [Paycheck Protection Program] money, and he had spread PPP money to businesses in Lowell and I received both of those things. And since he was using that as an argument to support this case, I don't know how I could possibly vote for this."



Lowell City Council, discussed the line shack at the Monday, November 7 City Council meeting.



Bill Zasko spoke on behalf of the Kent County Youth Fair.

City Attorney, Jessica Wood, expressed her doubt that there was any conflict of interest. She stated that to pass, this resolution would require all four yes votes. Ultimately, Yankovich decided to abstain from the vote. An alternate resolution was presented to accept a bid at \$130,000 and passed with four yes votes. Council member, Yankovich, voted no on this motion, due to concerns regarding construction completion time of the buyer.

The City Council passed a resolution to join the West Michigan Health

Insurance Pool (WMHIP) in the previous meeting. This week, City Council voted to confirm participation in the plan for three years. This resolution also appointed City Manager, Michael Burns as Trustee to represent the City of Lowell with the WMHIP board.

The Kent County Youth Fair presented a request to City Council to extend their lease on the fairgrounds for an additional year, until Dec. 2024. Representatives cited concerns with how long it takes to tear down the buildings and relocate them to the new fairgrounds.

Lowell resident, Perry Beachum, expressed concerns that the city, or its citizens, may experience issues holding events at the fairgrounds under the current lease. City Council expressed they are not opposed to allowing the Kent County Youth Fair additional time to remove the buildings, but not under the current terms in their lease. There was no motion presented to extend the lease.

Public Works Director, Daniel Czarnecki, took the podium to recommend the

City Council approve the purchase of a new John Deere Gator at a cost of \$36,622.18. It comes with all required safety equipment to travel on public roads. City Council approved the motion to approve purchase of the requested equipment.

Czarnecki provided an update on Gee Drive construction. At the time of the City Council meeting, construction was scheduled to be completed by the end of the day, Wednesday, Nov.

9th. City Manager, Michael Burns, updated City Council on the BLDI soil sampling, regarding the front street property. The toxic materials in the soil never made it into the ground water or the Grand River.

The next meeting of the Lowell City Council is on Monday, November 28, at 7 pm, at Lowell City Hall.



Cliff Yankovich recused himself from a vote on the line shack as Jim Salzwedel looks on.

Got a Great Local News Story?

Tell us about it today!

Call or email the Lowell Ledger Crew!
Phone: 616-897-9261
email: ledger@lowellbuyersguide.com

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP

69 Lincoln Lake Ave NE, Lowell Seeking Applications for Board and Commission Appointments

Vergennes Township is accepting applications for the following Board and Commission positions; Board of Review, including alternates, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, LARA citizen representative and Construction Board of Appeals.

Application forms and a summary of job descriptions may be obtained on the township website www.vergennestwp.org (left column 'Quick Links' click on 'forms and applications' then 'Application to Boards, Commissions & Committees'), by emailing the clerk at clerk@vergennestwp.org, or at the township offices located at 69 Lincoln Lake Ave NE, Lowell, MI 49331.

Deadline for application submission is Thursday, December 14, 2022 @ 12 p.m. Applicants will be considered at the December 19, 2022, meeting of the Vergennes Township Board.

Shantell Ford
Vergennes Township Clerk



christmas toy store & food basket



REGISTER NOV. 1 - DEC. 1

ONLINE: scan the QR Code or visit: www.fromlowell.org/christmas-distribution

OR
BY PHONE: 616-897-8260

Open to those living in the Lowell Area School District. Learn more online or by phone.



Continued from page 1

the historic downtown, with lamp posts all decked out for Christmas. Enter through the majestic arch to the Riverwalk, with the Showboat VI as your anchor, you can't get lost. Wander into the chamber office on Riverwalk with the Lowell Women's Club at the helm.

You may even catch chamber director, Liz Baker, on the opening day of the tour on Friday, Nov. 18.

"We hit another record for our locations," Baker said. "Shoppers will have 61 locations to choose from. For three days, Lowell becomes a bustling little town."

Bustling little town, indeed, with all the local restaurants serving up a storm from woodfired BBQ to handmade gourmet pizzas, tacos and craft brews.

"The main purpose of this event is to bring economic stimulus to our community," Baker said.

"The chamber has done that over the years. It is Lowell's largest shopping experience."

The event revolved around deer hunting with the opening of the firearm hunting season on Nov. 15, it gave an opportunity for gals to shop, while the guys were away hunting. "While the guys were away, the gals created a shopping event," Baker said.

The chamber took over the event from the Haybarkers in 2004, although the actual CTL event started in 1992 as the Home Holiday Arts and Crafts Show. It became Christmas through Lowell in 1994.

After the chamber takeover, it started promoting the inclusion of businesses, as the early version of CTL were only homes; later it went from homes to include churches and a handful of businesses. "Today we have homes, businesses, churches and organizations," Baker said.

Baker attributes the enormous growth of CTL to early planning, impeccable organization and marketing. "The chamber spends a lot of time with organization and marketing," Baker said. "We push our locations to do their best and look their best. People come to CTL for the experience." The tour brings in shoppers from all over Michigan and even from out of state.

For Baker, CTL this year is bittersweet. "This will be last Christmas through Lowell for me," she said. "It's bittersweet. At the same time, I feel very relaxed to pass the torch of this well-oiled machine to new staff."

CTL is handled solely by chamber staff, which devotes many hours of preparation to this event. It starts in May when the location applications are available. The deadline for locations to apply is late July. From there the chamber works on creating the 12-page official tour brochure



The Ladies of Mount Crumpit: Adilynn Bruce, Chris Peden, Emma Clark, Cody Clark, Brian Childs, Sarah Clark, Eden Rhodes, Stephen Rhodes, Chelsea Childs, Jeff Lambert, Natalie Lambert, Ali Lambert, Amelia Bruce, Courtney Peden, Bette Gannon, Cora Teifke, Ava Teifke, Avery Childs, Geoffrey Bruce, Atreyu Rhodes, Rocklyn Rhodes, Reagan Lambert & Charlotte Lambert.



The only remaining wish for Baker is to find a way to have all the locations participate all three days. "This is just not possible," she said. "Sunday shopping is a bit laid back compared to the first couple of days, but it still provides shoppers with a great experience."

In the spirit of the season, Baker is hoping for light snow and chill in the air and for great sales at all the locations. "Most importantly, locations and shoppers have fun," she said.

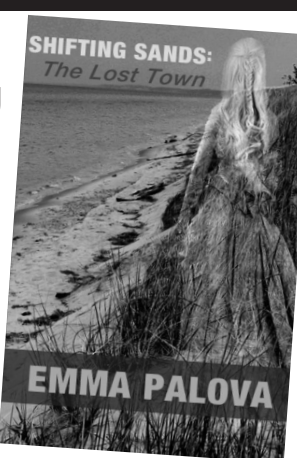
Let's enter the magic kingdom of CTL 2022 with featured artist blacksmith, Frank Leasure, of Tuckertown Forge, who first started out on the tour with booths at the Methodist Church and at other houses.



Ladybug Farm, on 4 Mile Road, is location no. 2 offering vintage items, handcrafted items, home decor and doll house furniture.

Lowell Author Emma Palova at LAHM

Lowell author Emma Palova will be signing her books during Christmas through Lowell at the Lowell Area Historical Museum, station K, located at 325 W. Main St. from Nov. 18 through Nov. 20. Stop by to pick up a signed copy. For more info go to <http://emmapalova.com>



that contains all the location ads, business sponsor ads and events. The chamber is responsible marketing, which includes official tour brochure, newsprint ads, direct mail, and social media advertising.

"The locations from year-to-year bring shoppers back, with quality items for sale, customer service and ambience," Baker said. "The Haybarkers believed we could take the event to the next level. I feel we have done that. My wish is for the next executive director and chamber staff to have the same passion and commitment for this event, taking it even to higher level."



Location 27 will have many different handcrafted items.

Continued from previous page

In 2014, Tuckertown Forge signed up to be a house stop on CTL. This year he is location no. 27, at 2880 Pratt Lake. His craft items range from yard art, home decor to outdoor cooking tools. The most popular item this time of year are the boot and mitten combo drying racks and fire pokers. Among the items for sale are Christmas stars that can be hung on the side of your home or garage.

"I enjoy taking old tools or other recycled metal items to create

sculptures," he said. "Most of the products I make are upcycled from materials that were on their way to the scrap yard."

There will be four other crafters at the location: wife, Laura and daughters, Teresa, Patti and Mary, who quilt, knit and paint. They will have pillowcases, table runners, baby quilts, reusable face scrubbies, painted canvas, dish cloths and Christmas ornaments made out of wine corks and canning lids.

"The event brings

people from all over the state and is a great way to showcase the wonderful artists of Lowell," he said. "We really enjoy all the shoppers and the energy they bring when they are at our location! People look forward to this event all year."

Every year Tuckertown Forge releases a new product at the start of CTL, which is posted on Facebook page Thursday night.

Studio 506, location no. 31 on Lafayette Street, with Nancy Raymor has been a mainstay of the event throughout the years. This year, three generations will be selling their wares.

"I am a 'maker'," she said. "I was born and raised in Lowell. My favorite thing to make is glass, stained glass and beads, fusing and lamp work."

Since Raymor hasn't been working since 2010, the hobby has become full time. Together with her husband, Terry, the couple has completed a mosaic guitar with pieces of glass glued over a guitar. Ava Boruta, Raymor's granddaughter, has made Morse-code bracelets and she is a sticker designer. Becky Boruta, Raymor's daughter, makes decorative signs and Lilly Raymor has painted pictures. The price range is from \$2 for stickers to \$50.

"I like to meet people," Nancy Raymor said. "We're hoping for a good flow of people and to be successful."

The tour welcomes newcomers, The Ladies of Mount Crumpit location no. 11 on Carmen Oak Drive, with Eden Rhodes. "There's a whole bunch of us participating as a



Tuckertown Forge owner Frank Leasure is located at location no. 27 on Pratt Lake Rd.



Hot Cocoa Bombs available at The Ladies of Mount Crumpit, location no. 11



Studio 506, left to right: Ava Boruta has made Morse code bracelets and is a sticker designer. Nancy Raymor, glass artist and maker of many things. Becky Boruta makes decorative signs. Lilly Raymor has painted pictures.

neighborhood," she said.

Rhodes moved, with her husband, to Lowell in 2020 and found out about the tour. "It's become a tradition," she said. "We used to come up from Georgia. It's something I've always wanted to do." They will have handmade items, ornaments, candles, vanilla and cocoa bombs and much more. "Come and see what we have," she said. "We might even have a special guest appearance."

Sue McKinney, of Ladybug Farm, on 4 Mile Road, is location no. 2. She will be offering vintage items, antique and handcrafted items, home décor, doll house furniture all at a price range from \$1 to \$30. "I have shopped CTL for as long as I can remember," she said. "It's time for me to sell, rather than buy. It's a great event. I hope that everybody who comes has a great experience."

Quinne Duhr, of Quinne & Canvas, location no. 6 on Alden Court, had been considering joining the tour, but took the leap in 2022. "I recently completed undergrad, so it felt like the perfect time to tackle this exciting event," she said. "My family, friends, and I have attended the annual CTL tour a number of times, as long-time residents of Lowell."

People most often seek her decorative signs to give as holiday or wedding gifts. "I love that so many different styles of art and craft are showcased. I truly believe there's something for everyone's taste," she

said. "This being my first year, I'm mainly looking forward to seeing lots of

smiling faces and sharing my art with the community in this small way."



Mosaic guitar on display at Studio 506, location no. 31.



The Restless Viking
The World Less Traveled
With Chuck & Martha Hayden
www.restless-viking.com

~ sputnikfest

by Martha Hayden



DaViking, my husband, Chuck, and I found this spot two years ago. This brass ring, embedded on 8th Avenue in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, caused us curiosity. What happened here? Join me as I attend Sputnikfest! (September 10, 2022) This annual festival celebrates the first space craft to reenter Earth's atmosphere, well actually, it arrived in pieces. I just had to return and witness the event in person!

Meeting locals, volunteers and the coordinator, Greg Vadney, gave me insights and plenty of smiles. I spent time with three magical daughters of

Scouts to Bankers." Edward A. Halbach, an engineer, enjoyed his astronomical hobby as the acting Director of the Milwaukee Astrophysical Society. On the September night, these men observed the sky until 9:30 pm, when clouds moved into the area, preventing any sightings.

Into the early hours of September 5th, Mr. Gail V. Highsmith, a Moonwatcher, diligently continued his viewing through his homemade theodolite instrument. At 4:49 am, he noticed red and orange objects separate in the northwest sky. Several

the item was metal and went to remove it from the road. They noticed it was hot to the touch, but managed to get it onto the grass.

What? This Is A Piece Of Sputnik IV?

Francis J. Lallansach, at the Manitowoc Police Headquarters, had read in the Milwaukee Journal that reports and observations of debris was being collected. So Lallansach asked Kenneth Gevers, a salesman, who was heading back to Milwaukee, if he could deliver this space

shards were located and laid out on Edward Halbach's kitchen table in Milwaukee.

The 5K Art Walk / Run I had traveled from Ludington, Michigan, by car ferry, The Badger, which had pulled into it's nearby port at noon. As I walked around the block from my parking spot to 8th Avenue, a rock band's tunes pulsed, cheers rose from the pair of officers and volunteers, as runners and walkers crossed the finish

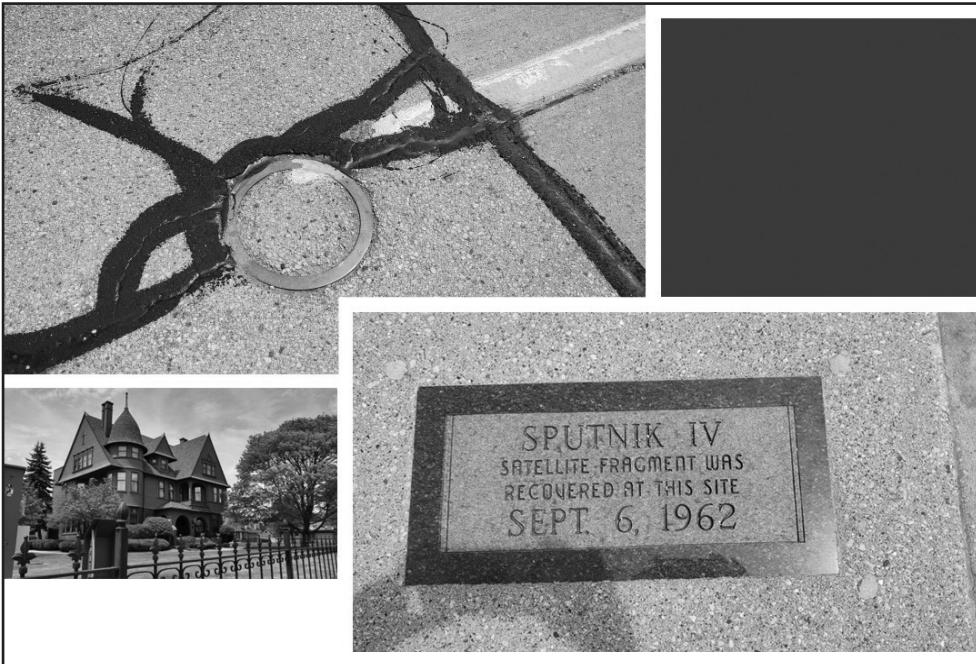
Star Wars characters, who were about to make an appearance. I followed to see the cluster of characters lining up alongside the museum.

Space Characters Everyone had the opportunity to take some amazing pictures with their favorite spacemen. These volunteers added a flavor to the festivities.

The Kid's Art Area Bustling activity drew my attention to the Kid's Art

giggled, "Donald. Although he up and disappeared one day." I asked if a coyote was the culprit. "Oh, no. I think he was our supper, but my folks would never admit that!" I bought some raffle tickets for their fundraiser and headed passed the food trucks to the main tent for the Cosmic Pet Contest.

The Cosmic Pet Contest Eight pets competed in the Cosmic Pet Contest, including a bunny, Kyler, and a cat, Pumpkin, who



The brass ring in the center of 8th Avenue, alongside the Rahr-West Museum, marks the spot where a fragment of Russian space debris fell on September 5, 1962. The recovery took place on September 6, 1962.

Ed Halbach. He had played an integral part in the story of the Sputnik IV's space debris. In addition, I was a contestant in the Miss Space Debris Pageant. Please join me as I take a look behind the curtain of Sputnikfest!

Sputnik Fragment Location

Curiosity has bubbled in me for two years. I was giddy at the opportunity to witness this 'wacky, tacky festival.' Since our last visit, a double yellow traffic line had been painted over this site. But, what's the full story of this brass ring?

Moonwatchers

A group of dedicated volunteers, Moonwatchers from Milwaukee (81 miles south of Manitowoc,) had been notified by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory that Sputnik IV's orbit would be overhead on September 4, 1962. Moonwatchers had consisted of a vast array of volunteers who held interest in astronomy, "from Boy

individuals in the rural areas confirmed witnessing 'flaming objects pass overhead', as well.

What Was Sputnik IV?

The Russian spacecraft had been launched in May 1960. The Russian government claimed that only a suited dummy was on board. After two weeks, the space probe was suppose to return to Earth, however, a thruster sent the five-ton craft in the wrong direction. Twenty-eight months later, pieces of the craft reentered Earth's atmosphere. Glowing fragments fell over Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Finding Sputnik On Patrol

At 5:30 am, 81 miles north, in Manitowoc, Officers Ronald Rusboldt and Marvin Bausch drove down 8th Avenue and noticed what they thought was a piece of cardboard in the middle of the street. When they drove by again at 7:00 am in the morning light, the pair could see that

debris to Edward Halbach, Director of the Milwaukee Astrophysical Society.

The Hole Was Patched, But Manitowoc Wasn't

This Russian fragment ,fragmented the town of Manitowoc. Strong feelings about embracing or ignoring this unusual finding came to light. William Wollum, one alderman, had stated, "I cannot see paying tribute to a piece of aerial garbage made in Russia." Another felt that Manitowoc shouldn't have anything to do with communism. Yet, many were thrilled with the prospect of the piece of Sputnik dropping into their town. It wasn't until 2007 that Sputnikfest, a fundraiser, came to be.

Hunting For More Fragments

Mr. Walter Munn from the Meteorite Recovery Program at the Smithsonian arrived in Wisconsin to search for additional fragments. Fifteen to twenty



Angie and Brianna ran this course in record time! They had come out last year, too!

line at the Sputnik debris site. The race had started at 12:00 pm so participants were just completing their fun run / walk as I arrived at Sputnikfest.

Why Sputnikfest? How Did It Start?

It wasn't long before I spotted Greg Vadney, the Sputnikfest Spearhead. I just had to know, "How did Sputnikfest start?" I asked after introducing myself and requesting a quick interview.

"Well, the idea came from watching 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?' (TV game show) when they had a question about Sputnik, we all thought, 'Why not make it fun and celebrate?'" Greg explained. "I think it started 14 years ago, before my time."

I requested a photograph, which Greg happily obliged. Then, he was off to monitor the

Area. I watched kids create a variety of pieces with the help of many volunteers. As a retired teacher, I had to remind myself that I wasn't part of the yellow t-shirt brigade, and just observe. Seeing art in action always makes me smile!

Mary and Becky

At another booth, I met Mary, who had volunteered to walk around with her cleverly made space/alien costume. Becky was running the silent auction and raffle booth for Masquers, Inc., the theater group.

Becky shared, "I was six years old when Sputnik fell here. We came as a family to see this sight." Becky's laugh was contagious. "We got a dog and named him Sputnik, Spuddy, for short. We got a duck, too, that year." I couldn't help myself and asked, "What did you name the duck?" Becky

took first prize. The runner up was Ziggy Stardog. Fritz came home with third place. All the pets were given treats from the sponsor.

The Cosmic Kids' Contest

Next was the Cosmic Kids' Costume Contest. I was impressed with the creativity of the costumes and each child's back story for their character. Greg interviewed each youngster. Three judges conferred.

It would have been difficult for me to choose the top three characters, as they were all unique! I believe the decision had a lot to do with the story the whippersnappers had relayed. (I should have noted the children's plan to have a detailed tale so I could have been better prepared for the

Continued next page



Kenneth Gevers, a salesman, holds the piece of Sputnik IV. (left). This fragment was twenty pounds with a diameter of 15.1 centimeters. A replica of the fragment is on display at the Rahr-West Museum. (right)

Continued from previous page

upcoming adult costume contest.)

Edward Halbach's Daughters

Greg took a moment to announce that Edward Halbach's daughters had come to be a part of this 60th celebration! I needed to go over and meet them! The trio welcomed me into their story and shared artifacts as well as their unique memories of the Sputnik piece sitting on their kitchen table.

Betsy had been 8 years old and remembered her father, Edward A. Halbach, pacing and rattling that this piece must be Russian because it was "in metric" (units). "He made four casts of it! He used a cement pillar form to make the mold. One is in the museum here!"

Mary, poor Mary. It had been her 12th birthday and all anyone seemed to care about was this piece of metal from space. Years later, the family celebrated a "make-up 12th birthday" for Mary. All's well. From the photos that were shared, I could easily surmise that this family knows how to have FUN!

Joanne was just 6, but remembered the piece on their kitchen table. She said they told her to, "go out and play, but don't tell people."

Together, the sisters recalled the fragments being laid out on their kitchen table, as their father tried to reconstruct a loose model of the spacecraft's remnants. As these first-hand memories spilled out, creating images in my brain, a chill of goosebumps ran across my arms. How incredible to be able to hear their personal observations of history!

Remember the telescope that Edward Halbach had designed? He and his 12-member team had built it in his friend's backyard. That telescope was later updated and moved to an observatory in the city, New Berlin. It is still in operation today!

Edward A. Halbach lived an amazing life! He continued to pursue knowledge and FUN until he passed in 2011. He was two weeks away from celebrating his 102nd birthday.

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory

The specimen had arrived in Cambridge on September 6, 1962 and was examined with diligence. Measurements were made and radiation tests revealed that the fragment had been in orbit above the Earth's atmosphere for at least one month. Wustite and Akaganeite metals were

detected, which had been created by the heat and friction of re-entry. NASA and Smithsonian Institute officials confirmed that this fragment had come from the Russian satellite, Sputnik IV. A tiny sliver was shaved off the piece and kept by the Smithsonian. The original specimen was returned to the Soviets, after Edward Halbach made four replicas.

The Alien Drop!

Back at Sputnikfest, the Alien Drop was about to begin. Rhythmic beeping droned as the fire department's ladder truck was backed up adjacent to the Sputnik landing site. Numbered tickets could be purchased for \$5.00 each, which corresponded to numbered aliens. This fundraiser supports the programing at the Rahr-West Art Museum.

The Halbach sisters were nearby and we chatted as we watched the firetruck get into position. We retrieved our tickets from our purses and held them with hope. It was precious to be part of their excitement!

Following the crowd's countdown, a firefighter dumped the bucket of rubber aliens over the brass ring. The alien closest to the center wins the 50/50 raffle.

After Greg announced the winner, number 118, the children were allowed to collect the toy aliens. One sweet girl willingly gave Betsy, Mary and Joanne each an alien from her collection. "I have one more I could give, 'cause I want to keep one of each color," she announced to no one in particular. "I would love to have one, if you're willing." I questioned with my eyebrows. She handed me the green guy, pictured above. THIS was a wonderful memento! I thanked the young lady, as she skipped off with her Mom toward the food vendors.

Miss Space Debris 2022 Pageant

As the sun crawled across the sky, creatures emerged toward the main stage for the Miss Space Debris contest. I had decided to bring a costume and enter the pageant. I had made a quick change at my car. Betsy, Mary and Joanne willingly agreed



In anticipation of my trip, I had created a space debris costume, complete with a Sputnik disc hat.

to take some photos of me as I joined the lineup of contestants.

I'd been the first to register, so I was the first one 'interviewed.' I should have tuned into the kids' creativity and had a dramatic story prepared, but alas, I didn't. When asked my alter ego's name, I gave "Poppins." Then when Greg asked where I'd come from, my answer was less than dazzling. I did ask for a round of applause for the volunteers. Then, another rousing cheer for our dedicated coordinator, Greg. He pointed out, "Shouldn't you, ah, ask for a hand, for the judges? That would be a really good move." He smirked. I agreed. I was relieved when my turn was over!

The other contestants were amazing! One lady wore a t-shirt, "Perfect Earth Specimen," (pictured bottom left). She carried an umbrella 'spaceship'

and told how she'd been abducted. The gentleman (center), spoke in a robot reporter voice and told an intricate tale. He earned first place!

When the competition ended, a 90's band played into the evening; (top left). One of the judges posed for a selfie with me.

Sputnikfest Is A Must-

See Event!

What an experience! I was so impressed with the creative residents who came out for Sputnikfest and the Rahr-West Art Museum's dedicated volunteers. It warmed my heart to see how the arts are valued in the Manitowoc community! Plus, I was able to hear, first-hand, history from Betsy,

Mary and Joanne, as well as Becky at the Masque, Inc. booth. Sputnikfest is a must-see event!

- Resources:
- Rahr -West Museum, Manitowoc, WI 920-686-3090
- Rahr West Museum - About Sputnik
- Edward A. Halbach article "Death of Sputnik" Civil Service Journal 1963 article
- Sputnickfest Facebook Page
- NASA "Space to Ground" reports

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obituaries

WHEAT

Monnie (Yeiter) Wheat, born January 11, 1956, went to her final resting place on October 30, 2022. She was preceded in death by her parents Kenneth and Cora Yeiter, husband Morgan Wheat, brother-in-law William Wheat and brother Micheal (Mike) Yeiter. Surviving are her children, Nicole, Bre-Ann, Sarah, Billie and Morgan Wheat, son-in-law Chuck Maybee, brother-in-law Jon. Cherished grandchildren James, Kenneth, Logan, Grace-Ann, Chucky, Izzy, Natalie, William and Chance, siblings Terry (Charlene), Jim (Shirley), Craig (Chris), Bill, Bruce (Michelle), David (Becky) Yeiter, Lori (Mark) Dibble, several nieces and nephews and many, many cousins. She worked hard for her family and nothing meant more to her. She will be greatly missed. Private services will be held at a later date.



TIMMERS
Leon E. Timmers, age 85, of Caledonia, went home to be with his Lord and Savior on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. He was preceded in death by his wife of 48 years, Marie; sister, Lois Passage, brother, Lowell (Butch) Timmers; sister-in-law, Gloria Timmers; brother-in-law, Jim Seeger. He will be lovingly remembered by his sons, Mike and Rhonda Timmers, Doug and Tina Timmers; grandchildren, Haleigh and Brad Moore, Ryan Timmers, Lawrence Timmers, Lisa Timmers, Janessa Timmers; 3 great grandchildren; sisters and brothers, Lorraine and Bill Rude, Linda Seeger, Les and Judy Timmers; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Howard and Mary Heacock, Dick Passage; many nieces and nephews. Leon proudly served his country in the United States Army. He was on the Kent Co. 4-H fair board for many years. Leon loved to hobby farm.



Funeral services will be held 1 pm, Monday, November 14, 2022 at Matthyse Kuiper DeGraaf Funeral Home, 616 E. Main St. SE, Caledonia, with Rev. Christine Beaudoin officiating. Burial will be held at Bowne Center Cemetery. Relatives and friends may meet the family Sunday from 2-5 pm at the funeral home and one hour prior to the service on Monday. Those who wish, may make memorial contributions to the Kent Co. Youth Fair or to Faith Hospice Trillium Woods. Condolences may be sent online at www.mkdfuneralhome.com.

SMITH

Jack W. Smith, age 58 of Lowell, MI, went to his heavenly home on November 12, 2022, surrounded by family. He was preceded in death by his father, James N. Smith. He is survived by his daughter, Karah R. Smith; son, Kyle J. (Kailey) Smith; grandson, Hudson J. Smith; brother, James N. Smith Jr; mother, Rose Smith; and many beloved aunts, uncles, and cousins. Jack was born in Grand Rapids, MI and graduated from Lowell High School. He was an excellent athlete playing baseball and football throughout grade school and



high school. He worked for Amway and later, for Nestle-Gerber as a product manufacturer. Jack had a continued love for sports and was a devoted Lions fan. He was an avid outdoorsman and passed down this love for nature to his children. He spent much of his time in their childhood teaching them about the outdoors, hunting, fishing and how to truly respect the nature God placed on earth. A Mass of a Christian Burial will be held at 11AM, November 18, 2022, at St. Patrick Catholic Church, 4351 Parnell Ave NE, Ada, MI 49301, with visitation one hour prior. Fr. Thomas Cavera officiating. Interment St. Patrick Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. Patrick Educational Fund and/or Our Hope Association, 324 Lyon St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

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LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING STATE OF MICHIGAN

The Probate Court for the County of Kent

IN THE MATTER OF:
SHANTIKA DANIELS,
Guardianship
File No. 22-212,316-GA.

Court, 180 Ottawa NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, Courtroom 9C in person and via Zoom before Judge David M. Murkowski (P35026) for the following purpose: Appointment of a Guardian.

Dated: November 11, 2022.

Adult Protective Services, DHHS, Petitioner
121 Franklin St., NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
(616) 401-6081

VAN ESSEN and ASSOCIATES PLLC, Attys. for Petitioner by Amanda Van Essen Wirth (P75001)
109 E. Main St. Suite 11
Zeeland, MI 49464
Phone: (616) 633-0196

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including her mother, Shane Morgan, father, and unknown children and heirs, whose address(es) is/are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

TAKE NOTICE: A hearing will be held on December 21, 2022, at 1:30 PM at Kent Co. Probate

COVID-19 vaccine boosters authorized for children over the age of five

To continue fighting the COVID-19 omicron variant, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has amended an Emergency Use Authorization for bivalent COVID-19 vaccine for booster doses to include children starting at five years of age. The bivalent boosters are authorized for administration at least two months following completion of primary or booster vaccination in adults and children over the age of five years.

Individuals may choose to receive either the Pfizer or Moderna bivalent booster, regardless of which primary series vaccine or original booster dose they had previously. Influenza vaccines, which are now available in Michigan, can also be co-administered with the COVID-19 bivalent booster doses.

"This is great news for children in Michigan as we head into the fall and winter, when we expect cases of seasonal respiratory viruses,

including COVID-19, to increase," said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) chief medical executive. "The bivalent booster will help fight the omicron subvariants, which are predominately circulating around the state. COVID-19 vaccines remain our best defense against the virus, and we recommend all Michiganders stay up-to-date."

The Moderna and Pfizer bivalent boosters target two strains of COVID-19 – the original strain of the virus and the currently circulating omicron variants (BA.4 and BA.5). Individuals, ages 5 years and older, who have completed any FDA-approved or -authorized monovalent primary series (Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax or Johnson & Johnson) or previously received monovalent booster doses, are eligible to receive one age-appropriate bivalent (Pfizer for those aged five years and up; or Moderna for those aged six years and up) COVID-19 booster.

All eligible Michiganders can receive the bivalent vaccines, which are currently available at vaccine providers across the

state. To find a vaccine near you, visit VaccineFinder.gov. Monovalent COVID-19 boosters are not authorized as booster doses for persons 5 years and older.

To date, over 6.8 million Michiganders, ages 6 months and up, have gotten at least their first dose of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. Eligible Michiganders are encouraged to stay up-to-date on vaccinations, which includes booster doses that provide extra protection. Persons who live or work in settings where COVID-19 outbreaks can spread quickly (like long term care facilities) are especially encouraged to stay up-to-date.

MDHHS also encourages Michigan residents to pay attention to local guidance, as some communities may be at a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission.

To schedule a primary or booster dose of the COVID vaccine, visit vaccines.gov.

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine, visit Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine.

For more information about COVID-19 in Michigan, visit Michigan.gov/coronavirus.

CITY OF LOWELL CITY COUNCIL

5-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

TO THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF CITY OF LOWELL, AND OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

THE CITY OF LOWELL has prepared a draft Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan and invites the public to view the plan. The plan is available starting on Wednesday, November 16, 2022.

The draft plan is available for review on the City's website: lowellmi.gov. A printed copy of the draft plan is available at the City Hall, located at 301 E. Main Street, Lowell MI 49331.



All interested persons are invited to submit their comments to the City Clerk, Susan Ullery at the address listed above or to the sullery@ci.lowell.mi.us

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING STATE OF MICHIGAN

The Probate Court for the County of Kent

IN THE MATTER OF: LARRY WALL, Guardianship
File No. 22-212,228-GA.

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including his unknown children and heirs, whose address(es) is/are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

TAKE NOTICE: A hearing will be held on December 6, 2022, at 9:00 AM at Kent Co. Probate Court, 180 Ottawa NW, Grand Rapids,

MI 49503, Courtroom 9C in person and via Zoom before Judge David M. Murkowski (P35026) for the following purpose: Appointment of a Guardian.

Dated: October 26, 2022.

Adult Protective Services, DHHS, Petitioner
121 Franklin, NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
(616) 401-7113

VAN ESSEN and ASSOCIATES PLLC, Attys. for Petitioner by Amanda Van Essen Wirth (P75001)
109 E. Main St. Suite 11
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HALL FOR RENT - Lowell Veteran's Center, 3100 Alden Nash. Newly remodeled, smoke-free, private, great location & great rate! www.VFW8303.org. Feb, March & April Veterans Potluck at 2 pm on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Call John at 299-0486 or 897-8303.TFN EDW

WHISTLE STOP MINI STORAGE - 12661 Vergennes, N. of Lowell. 5x10; 10x10; 10x20; 10x30; 12x40. Fenced lighted, key code entry. Call for more information, 897-8872.

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ATTN LOWELL WIDOWS - We have a widows luncheon on the last Friday of each month. Starts promptly at 1 pm. All are welcome. Questions on location, call Elaine 616-856-8022 or Jenn at 616-490-9970.

TOPS (TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY) WEEKLY MEETINGS - Tuesdays, 6:30 pm at Schneider Manor Community Room, 725 Bowes Rd., Lowell. Cost \$37 per year and \$5 per month... start losing weight TODAY

ATTN LOWELL WIDOWS - We have started widows coffee time Monday mornings at 9:30 at Keisers, west side. Questions call Jenn at 616-490-9970.

wanted

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Grid of puzzle solutions with words like DICTIONARY, ENCOURAGE, STAIRS, DEB, DEISM, SAMI, DYN, ATM, ET, AB, HARP, DAMNS, ARUI, ITS, DONORS, ANAS, DOUCHE, ASCRIBE, SPORADICAL, TONICS, SKYE

Grid of numbers for a crossword puzzle solution

Vertical words: NYVVYCVVOASIXNNSDAFM, COYNFC EAUP, MURYNXSPIR, OYLIESEEHNL, REATGTCSR, BVICAGNVNO, IIDE MHEIAY, DTODFTT SIRT, ISTURYE IDO, TISYUTPOR, YSUUDIMNA, ASCDYLOPUM, XATSPIC HGA, ERPTMCBPI, VTPCAAPDU, IYUAHFEXDD, VVUCAXNRC, XSGDAYRGO, OROTCNVAXM

Take advantage of savings on new health plan choices during open enrollment

Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, and Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) Director, Anita Fox, are reminding Michiganders that the annual Health Insurance Marketplace open enrollment period begins today and runs through January 15, 2023. With savings still in effect, making health insurance more affordable for more Michiganders, new grants for free local help, and more plan options than last year, shopping for health insurance has never been easier.

“Every Michigander deserves access to high-quality, affordable health care for themselves and their families,” said Governor Whitmer. “That’s why I have been working to lower the cost of coverage and expand access for years, to ensure every family has access to care at an affordable price. We need to work together to lower the cost of health care so people can have more money in their pockets and better health outcomes, especially as they face rising costs on other essentials. With these subsidies, Michiganders have more time, more support, and more resources to get covered. I will work with anyone to build a healthier Michigan where anyone can thrive.”

“Many people may not sign up for health insurance because they think it is too expensive or too complicated, but several recent changes have brought down the barriers so every Michigander can

get the health insurance they need for themselves and their families,” said DIFS Director Anita Fox. “We know that comprehensive health insurance leads to better health outcomes for individuals and families, so it is important to sign up for a plan during Open Enrollment to take advantage of newly extended subsidies to get low- or no-cost coverage. Call DIFS at 877-999-6442, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or visit Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance for more information on getting started.”

Open Enrollment on the Health Insurance Marketplace runs from Nov. 1, 2022 through Jan. 15, 2023, and there are several new policies that

Michiganders should be aware of, including:

The Inflation Reduction Act extended increased health insurance subsidies through the end of 2025. These subsidies help more middle-income Michiganders afford comprehensive health insurance. In 2022 more than 85% of Michiganders who enrolled in a plan qualified for a subsidy, with many paying as little as \$10 a month for their health plan. Expanded subsidies have helped reduce the national uninsured rate to an all-time low of just 8%. Before applying, Michiganders can visit HealthCare.gov/Lower-Costs to estimate whether they may qualify for subsidies and other savings.

Recent federal action has fixed the so-called “family glitch.” Since the Affordable Care Act took effect, subsidies have been available to help Michiganders who do not have access to “affordable” employer-based health coverage. Previously, “affordable” was determined based on the cost of covering just the employee and not all family members. In many cases, spouses and other family members could not afford employer-based coverage but did not qualify for a subsidy. Fortunately, the U.S. Treasury Department has recently taken action to redefine “affordable,” enabling family members stuck in this “family glitch” to qualify for a subsidy

to purchase an affordable, comprehensive Marketplace Health Plan.

\$4 million in Navigator grants have been awarded to three Michigan organizations, an increase of more than \$750,000 over last year. These grants will help expand access to qualified Navigators who provide free assistance to consumers who need help signing up for health coverage. For assistance, visit HealthCare.gov or call 800-318-2596.

While shopping for a health plan during Open Enrollment, Michigan consumers can choose from 233 health plans on the Health Insurance Marketplace, which is available at HealthCare.gov or by calling 800-318-

2596. In total, including off-Marketplace plans available directly from insurers, Michiganders are able to choose from 308 plans, 52 more options than last year. Michigan remains one of the least expensive states in which to purchase health insurance. Overall final rates have an average increase of approximately 5.5% for 2023, which is significantly lower than national trends, with many states experiencing increases in excess of 10% or more due to increases in utilization rates and supply costs. Michigan has the 4th-lowest benchmark rates in the country and has consistently been in the 10 lowest states since 2016.

For questions about health coverage, visit Michigan.gov/HealthInsurance or call DIFS 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 877-999-6442.

Doctors: Know who’s at Thanksgiving table as RSV continues to surge



With RSV and other respiratory viruses packing doctors’ offices and hospitals this year, doctors are asking Michiganders to add a few things to their holiday checklists.

Think “vaccine first, turkey second,” said Dr. Kimberly Monroe, pediatrician and interim chief clinical officer at University of Michigan Health C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital in Ann Arbor.

On Thursday, the hospital reported “capacity strains” leading to pediatric bed shortages and longer ER wait times. It has logged 259 respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, cases this season — a 46 percent jump over 2021.

Mott also has postponed at least 30 nonemergency surgeries for a day or more, as incoming patients struggle to breathe, including those in “significant respiratory distress” — their nostrils flaring and neck and rib

muscles contracting as they struggle to breathe, Monroe said.

In all, 78 children with RSV or some other respiratory virus have spent 272 days total in Mott’s pediatric intensive care unit since September 1, Monroe said.

Mott’s was the latest announcement in a string of pleas from U.S. and Michigan hospitals that in recent weeks experienced a surge in young patients sick with RSV and other viruses.

Even at holiday

gatherings, children pick up good habits, such as hand-washing, doctors said. (Bridge photo by Robin Erb)

To be sure, RSV infections for most people are little more than a common cold. But for some, including older Michiganders and the immunocompromised, RSV can be deadly. There is not yet a vaccine.

Earlier this month, a 6-year-old Michigan child died from RSV.

Adding to the

circulating ailments is the seasonal return of rhinovirus and adenovirus that cause the common cold, and doctors worry about a particularly severe flu season elsewhere that seems to be heading toward Michigan.

Meanwhile, COVID still lingers. While Michigan cases declined 14 percent this week to 7,966 new confirmed cases, the

**RSV, continued
page 16**

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FUN PAGE

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Level: Advanced

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!

Puzzle solutions on page 13

Guess Who?

I am an actress born in California on November 15, 1991. As a young star, I appeared opposite Harrison Ford and was nominated for a Young Artist Award. I am best known for a role on an ABC Family show about teenagers.

Answer: Shailene Woodley

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CAREGIVER WORD SEARCH

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X S G D A Y R G O C O R G V I G C U Y O
O R O T C N V A X M P I H G H N A F X N

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

CAREGIVER WORD SEARCH

ACUTE
AGENCY
ASSISTIVE
CARE

CHRONIC
COMORBIDITY
COMPANION
COMPETENCE
CUSTODIAL
DIRECTIVES
DISABILITY

DISCHARGE
FACILITY
FAMILY
GUARDIANSHIP
HOME HEALTH AIDE
HOSPICE
INDEPENDENT

INFORMAL
MEMORY
MOBILITY
PROXY

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to caregiving.

A H L T H E

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

Answer: Health

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Greek mountain
- 5. One dependent on something
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. Glazed ceramic ware
- 15. Paddling
- 18. Step
- 19. More greasy
- 21. Upper-class young woman
- 23. Light beige
- 24. Belief in a supreme being
- 28. Indigenous people of Scandinavia
- 29. A beloved princess
- 30. Transfer property
- 32. Field force unit
- 33. Automated teller
- 35. When you hope to get there
- 36. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 39. Politicians Fischer and Conroy are two
- 41. Blood type
- 42. Stringed instrument
- 44. Curses
- 46. Barbary sheep
- 47. Belonging to a thing

CLUES DOWN

- 49. Supporters
- 52. Leaf-footed bug
- 56. A shower of water
- 58. Attribute to
- 60. Intermittent
- 62. Soda waters
- 63. Scottish island
- 26. Witness
- 27. The spreading of a disease to another part of the body
- 29. Father
- 31. Touch gently
- 34. Licensed for Wall Street
- 36. Herring-like fish
- 37. Lute used in N. Indian music
- 38. Mirabel shouldn't talk about him
- 40. Atomic #62
- 43. Religious
- 45. Silvery-white metal (abbr.)
- 48. Influential civil rights organization
- 50. Acknowledgment (abbr.)
- 51. Turn away
- 53. Kidney disease (abbr.)
- 54. Smooth-feeling fabric
- 55. Competently
- 57. Sea eagle
- 58. General's assistant (abbr.)
- 59. It helps you see
- 61. Emerging technology

RSV, continued

state reported 141 deaths — a particular concern for elderly holiday guests.

At Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids last month, Kelsey Gonring watched the brightly lit hallway bustle outside the sliding glass door of her daughter's ER room.

Children — wrapped in blankets and struggling to breathe — filled the ER at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids last month, when 9-month old Vi was admitted with RSV, her mother said.

Respiratory therapists rushed back and forth. A nurse hurried by with equipment. Worried parents carried babies in blankets.

In the waiting room were about two dozen parents, most of their children were sniffing, coughing or "curled up and moaning," she said.

"The ER staff was fantastic, but they were inundated," said Gonring, a pediatric psychologist at DeVos.

Vi has since recovered, Gonring said, but it has made her even more conscious of staying away from sick relatives and friends over the holidays and beyond.

"It will be awkward, but I'll want to know — Who's ill? Who's not feeling good?" she said.

Know the guest list That's good advice, doctors told Bridge Michigan.

The key is "who's going to be at your table," said Dr. Eric McGrath, of Wayne Pediatrics. Does it include, for example, older adults — those in their 80s and 90s — or those who are immunosuppressed or have serious respiratory issues, such as COPD or emphysema? he said.

Newborns and children with uncontrolled asthma, too: "These patients are going to be hardest hit by all these respiratory viruses."

"If you have a sick kid, maybe this is the year you skip going or, if you can, postpone everything by a week" if "medically-fragile" guests will attend, McGrath said.

It's a shift in thinking, said Calandra Green, Oakland County health officer.

As RSV packs hospital pediatric wards, dismissing symptoms as allergies or an annual inconvenience could endanger vulnerable children and others, said Calandra Green, Oakland County health officer. (Courtesy photo)

"We tend to minimize our symptoms and say 'Oh, it's just my allergies or I get this every year,'" Green said.

But with the high spread of RSV, "I don't think we can afford to minimize anything. We have to take everything at face value... (We) need to do the right thing," she said.

Even then, sniffly holiday gatherers may still appear. What may be a sniffly nose for them could be harmful to, say, a newborn, McGrath said.

For at-risk patients

or their parents, Wayne's McGrath said, "if there's an overtly ill person at the party, keep your distance, even if it's awkward."

1st on the to-do list: Vaccinate.

While there is no vaccine for RSV, vaccines for the flu and COVID are available for children and adults.

Early increases in the seasonal spread of influenza are being seen in other parts of the U.S., with the highest levels in southeast and south-central states. That's pushed flu-related hospitalizations to some of the highest levels in 10 years, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Flu and COVID vaccines take about two weeks to be fully effective. A shot this week means just enough time to build immunity before the turkey goes into the oven.

Back to basics It's basic, but it's one of the single best ways to stop the spread of germs.

Wash your hands. Properly.

"I know people don't want to hear (about) hand washing, but think about the amount of bacteria that is spread when people don't wash their hands," said

Green, the health officer.

There are 3,200 different types of germs, on average, on hands—some of which can cause infection, according to Pfizer, which offers a primer on proper handwashing. (Two tips: It doesn't matter the temperature of the water, but a basin of standing water can do more harm than good.)

Even if you're not sick, it's crucial for holiday revelers to soap up as they drift from bathroom to counter to table and from home to home. The influenza virus, for example, can survive up to 48 hours on hard surfaces, such as plastic or stainless steel, according to the CDC.

Mask up in risky situations.

Short answer: Masks work.

In fact, masking - along with other social protocols - all but zeroed out the 2020-2021 flu season, along with the spread of several respiratory viruses, several doctors told Bridge. Few people are masking these days, but the practice remains important around those who are vulnerable.

"I feel like most of us know that, it's just hard to do it," McGrath said. "But

look, it works."

Urgency vs. emergency And if you do get sick, Michigan's doctors and hospital leaders have asked patients to first seek care at primary care doctors or urgent care clinics, unless it's a true emergency.

It not only relieves pressure on hospital emergency rooms, but children who aren't in immediate life-threatening danger may get to see a doctor faster through a regular doctor's office or urgent care than in a backed-up ER, Mott's Monroe said.

Still, here are some signs to get your child to the hospital:

Visible respiratory distress or using additional muscles to breathe - flared nostrils, visible neck muscles

Blueness in the face or lips

A fever of more than 100.4 degrees in babies less than 60 days old

A decrease in wet diapers or other signs of dehydration.

If in doubt, go.

"If their gut says they need to bring their child in for attention right now, they should follow that instinct," Mott's Monroe said.



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