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Expo in pictures



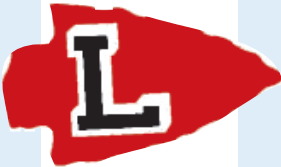
page 8

Paws with a cause



page 16

Lowell Area Schools Sports



page 10 & 11

\$1.00



Liz Baker surprised by a literal boat load of people



Photo courtesy of Bruce Doll

By Cliff Yankovich
contributing writer

If facial expressions, shouts, tears of joy, and tons of hugs are any indication, then the Top Secret Plan, to surprise Lowell Chamber of Commerce Director, Liz Baker, with a farewell party on the Showboat, was a smashing success. Baker's

family came and took her out of the office to Sneaker's for an early dinner, in the late afternoon, last Thursday. Party attendees were instructed to be on the Showboat by no later than 5:45 pm. Co-conspirators, Erica Ross-Baker and Teresa Hoffman, were in constant contact as things progressed.

Erica, Liz's daughter-in-law, was with the family at Sneakers. Teresa Hoffman, a Chamber Ambassador and former Board member, was on the boat and kept everyone informed. There was a false start at 5:50 or so, but then the entire Baker family rounded the corner on the Riverwalk to

the delight and cheers of the gathered throng, visible on the Riverwalk and the top two decks of the Showboat. Lowell's unofficial Official Photographer, Bruce Doll, was ready to capture the event with his camera.

A tent had been positioned on the Riverwalk for the Doak Dean fundraiser

so folks were "hiding" in the tent, as well as on the Showboat. The crowd waiting patiently so that everyone could have an opportunity to thank Liz for steering the Lowell Chamber

**Liz, continued
page 9**

LowellArts Artist of the Month

by Bill Lee
contributing writer

When you speak with Sierra Skye Baker, you can't help but be entranced with her calm and soft-spoken demeanor. Introverted and shy by nature, Baker admits that performing in front of audiences took some time to get used to. But she also knew that she was born with a gift - the ability to sing and

play guitar - and she made sure she was going to use it. "I forced myself to perform over and over again," said Baker. "It really is true that [repetition] made it easier, and finding different ways to ease my anxiety, if it came up. I did a lot of praying personally. That is something that has helped me but doing it over and

over has definitely made it easier. I am still learning. There is a lot I would like to do and when I can, get through a performance and say, 'wow I was surprisingly comfortable.' The way my mentality is, definitely makes a difference with the whole performance and navigating that."

Her first time she ever came to Lowell was when she was a teenager to audition for a songwriting contest at the 4H Fair. Then last year, attended the Great Lakes Music Camp and was introduced to Sue Clement, LowellArts Board Member, who told Baker about the Artist of the Month. Many months later, Sue Clements wrote an article about Sierra Skye Baker and named her



Sierra Skye Baker is LowellArts Artist of the Month. Photo courtesy of Sierra Skye Baker.

**Artist, continued
page 2**

Sen. Albert schedules local office hours

State Sen. Thomas Albert has scheduled in-district office hours to meet with the public at two locations on Friday, March 31.

The times and locations for the office hours are:

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Biggby Coffee, 11826 Fulton St. E. in Lowell.

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Lake Odessa Community Library, 1007 Fourth Ave. in Lake Odessa.

Office hours are open to district residents to talk about issues related to state government or to request assistance with a state issue.

No appointment is necessary, but space may be limited at some locations. Local office hours in other parts of the Senate's 18th District will be scheduled at a later date. The 18th District includes Barry County and portions of Allegan, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Kent, and Ionia counties.

Residents unable to attend office hours may contact Albert's Senate office via email at SenTAlbert@senate.michigan.gov, by calling 517-373-1734 or by calling toll-free at 855-347-8018.

Visit Albert's website at SenatorThomasAlbert.com for more information.

Artist, continued

March's LowellArts Artist of the Month.

Music has been an integral part of Baker's entire life. Growing up in Grand Rapids, her mother introduced her to different genres of music, but Baker still can't pin down her own particular style. As an "older" listener, one can hear some of the original folk guitarists like Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell and Judy Collins in Baker's music. Some modern influences for her as well are Alicia Keyes, Nora Jones, and Joss Stone. One of her first memories of wanting to be a singer happened in a parking lot. "I have a specific memory of listening to a Joss Stone album in a Best Buy parking lot and thinking, 'wow I sound pretty good; kind of like Joss Stone a little bit,' recalled Baker. "Also, I have memories of a kid pretending to be an opera singer. I don't think I took it seriously until I started realizing that I had a gift, and then I started playing guitar, and I enjoyed doing that and then writing songs came after that."

From there, she started playing in talent shows in middle and high school, but it wasn't until attending college, at Cornerstone University, did she get serious about music as a career. The highlight of her college experience was spending a semester off-campus, through the Contemporary Music Center at Cornerstone. She chose to spend her time in Nashville, pursuing one of three music tracks: Artist, Business, or Technical. Baker chose the Artist Track but spent a little time in the Technical Track too. The experience, ultimately, changed how she viewed music, as she not only learned through a hands-on approach, but she also made many connections. And even better, in Nashville, there was live music everywhere. "We had different classes and we'd meet up and do a songwriting class, and then at the end of the week, we would take turns performing the original song we had been working on. We'd get a band together, and there was a stage in the facility itself, and people could come in from wherever and watch the performance. At the end of the semester, they chose people to perform their song on the tour, so we

took a bus, and the business trek planned the whole thing and the tech trek did their thing. It was a pretty cool experience."

Also, along the way, Baker realized that she had a love of teaching through music. She had always been attracted to the idea of using music as therapy. Then as a freshman, she took a personality test that revealed what she had already known about herself: she loved to help people. Recently, she has put that unselfish trait to work by being part of a program called, Artists Creating Together. ACT sends artists and musicians to public school classes to use their specific skills to help students with disabilities. Presently, Baker is working with a class at Apple View Elementary School in Grand Rapids, where she sings and plays her guitar while students attempt to fulfill certain academic tasks. "The one-hour long class that we had together, the teacher at the end said, 'wow, she [the student] is following directions really well,'" said Baker. "She was able to be opened up through the connection with the music and putting the instruments away, and doing regular things, but in a fun way. It can change the setting in such a way where you can work on specific goals and tasks, like following directions or sharing things, or contributing in certain ways in the classroom, or just being creative, in general. There are so many ways where music can open up abilities in people that they might have struggled with before."

Sierra Skye is just beginning to emerge as a musician on the Grand Rapids scene. She plans on releasing an EP in the future and spending more time performing at various venues. One of her regular gigs, every weekend, takes place at the restaurant, Amore Trattoria in Grand Rapids. Her love of the Italian culture and language (which she learned during the pandemic) has been welcomed by the audience there, especially when she sings in Italian. This, along with recently being selected as a singer for the Bluewater Kings, a high-profile wedding band, will keep her involved this year.



Photo courtesy of Sierra Skye Baker.

The future looks bright and busy for Baker. "Touring is on the list and even going to Italy, and hopefully, making connections to maybe do music over there," said Baker. "Definitely getting a recording out, an album or EP out, so I can have more opportunities through that."

And just collaborating. I'd love to collaborate more with musicians in Michigan and around the world."

You can find out more about Sierra Skye Baker on her Facebook page and on Youtube.

Getting two SSI payments in one month

By Hillary Hatch,
Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

For most months in the year, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients get their SSI payment on the first day of the month. But when the first day of the month falls on the weekend or a federal holiday, you receive your SSI payment on the last business day before the first day of the month. That means you may get two SSI payments in the same month.

We do this to avoid putting you at a financial disadvantage and make sure that you don't have to wait beyond the first of the month to get your payment. It does not mean that you

are receiving a duplicate payment in the previous month, so you do not need to contact us to report the second payment.

Here's how this will work in April 2023. April 1, 2023, falls on a Saturday, so we will issue your SSI payment for the month of April on March 31, 2023. In this example, you get two SSI payments in March.

The first March payment, on March 1, is your regularly scheduled payment for March. The second March payment, on March 31, 2023, is your SSI payment for the month of April.

On our website, we



provide a Schedule of Social Security Benefit Payments for the current year at www.ssa.gov/pubs/calendar.htm.

Securing today and tomorrow starts with being informed. Please share this information with your friends and family.

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BOWNE TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
PLANNING COMMISSION

On Tuesday, April 18, 2023, the Bowne Township Planning Commission will hear public comments about the following Zoning Ordinance amendments. The public hearing will be held at 6:00 P.M. at the Alto Elementary School, located at 6150 Bancroft Ave SE, Alto, concerning the following:

1. Amendment to Section 2.05(d), Article 3.47, Section 5.04(r), and Section 14.05Z of the Bowne Township Zoning Ordinance to add Utility Anaerobic Biodigesters

The Bowne Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to add a new Section 3.47 to Article 3 – General Provisions and amend Section 2.05(d) – Definitions, 5.04(r)- Agricultural (AG) District Special Land Uses, and 14.05Z – Special Land Uses of the Bowne Township Zoning Ordinance. This amendment would permit the installation of utility anaerobic biodigesters for private third-party entities on farms in the AG – Agricultural Zoning District. This amendment would allow a third party to use resources from the farm to generate natural gas to be piped off-site into the utility distribution network. A utility anaerobic biodigester is proposed to be permissible as a special land use only in the district. As a special land use, any applicant would have to seek approval from the Township Planning Commission before any utility operation could commence.

The Draft Ordinance is available for review, inspection and purchase, and written comments will be received by 4:00 P.M. Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at the Bowne Township Hall, 8240 Alden Nash Avenue SE, Alto, Michigan 49302. All interested parties will be heard at the meeting.

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Council votes to add 990 N. Washington to Scout Park

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

The Lowell City Council called to order their Monday, March 20, 2023 meeting with all council members present. Though the agenda was relatively slim, with discussion of a library storage shed and an update from Republican State Senator, Thomas Albert, the meeting lasted almost two hours, including a recess. This is largely because of continued public forums on two-hour parking on Main Street in downtown, and the community’s preferred use for 990 N. Washington.

At the March 6 city council meeting, the council resolved to do some more community research regarding solutions to the

community. For example, Owosso has two-hour on-street parking, with lots varying from four to 72 hours. This is all enforced by a 92-year-old parking attendant, who is retiring soon, forcing the city to have to change their entire strategy. Burns has been vocal about the feasibility of hiring a parking attendant in Lowell, noting that revenue from a small city like this will never be enough to support such a plan.

Burns also provided Regis overlay maps, comparing the parking in downtown Lowell with those of the 28th Street Meijer, Lowell Meijer, Centerpoint Mall, and Woodland Mall. The council had also committed to review footage to determine their

have already been resolved. The city council has taken steps to make the overnight parking restriction seasonal and to shore-up numerous issues with the permitting process. What remained to be discussed was how downtown Main Street parking spots ought to be labeled. The initial proposal, floated by the council, was a four-hour uniform parking regulation on Main Street and one loading zone per block. The council ultimately agreed to restore two-hour parking instead.

“Well, we already have the two-hour signs,” council member, Cliff Yankovich, said.

The prevalent opinion on loading zones was two loading zones per block, each on opposite sides of the street. However, this was tabled due to a lack of consensus on how long cars should park in a loading zone, what the loading zones should be called, and how they should be labeled.

Much like the parking discussion, the public comments on the future use of 990 N. Washington largely rehashed discussions from previous meetings. Based on the sample of the community who attend city council meetings, the general consensus is that the property ought to be annexed and added to the existing Scout Park premises. Notably absent from public discussion has been any support for affordable housing, despite concerns expressed by representatives of local nonprofit agency, Flat River Outreach Ministries, at other meetings regarding low-income housing shortages in Lowell and the surrounding communities. In this final public forum for 990 N. Washington, the conversation turned to



Cliff Yankovich 01: Council member, Cliff Yankovich, supports using existing two-hour parking signage.

a symposium of what the park might look like with the property incorporated.

Following public comment from Jake Davenport, who suggested renaming Scout Park in honor of Bill Nowak, the first scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 102, the council and public discussed renaming Scout Park in earnest. Council member, Marty Chambers, echoed Davenport’s idea, but suggested that it ought to be named after community legends, Ivan and Jane Blough.

“Ivan was just as much a part of that scout cabin, and I miss him dearly,” Chambers said. “I think it’s important that we honor that family for all they’ve done.”

Blough built and maintained the Lowell showboat and was famous for not actually wanting fame and fortune as a result of his actions. Chambers reminisced about Blough coming down the hill on that mower and never coming back. Peggy Covert, who has been critical of the council’s plans for 990 N. Washington, claiming that it was earmarked as part of the park as far back as

2007, united with Chambers on this issue.

“Ivan Blough,” Covert said, “he literally gave his life to that area. I was up there when he died.”

Perry Beachum commented that he was present when the park, once referred to as North Washington Property in municipal meetings, gained the name, Scout Park. He explained the naming convention as a matter of convenience. The park needed a better name and there just happened to be a Boy Scout building on the premises. Beachum voiced a concern that many on the council supported that the park was never intended to be just for the scouts, and the name, Scout Park, may limit which community members feel comfortable using it.

“I think it’s a great idea to change it,” Beachum said.

Council member Chambers had some ideas about what the newly annexed park property will need, including a single unisex restroom, a drinking fountain, a parking lot, and some security cameras to prevent vandalism, but that,

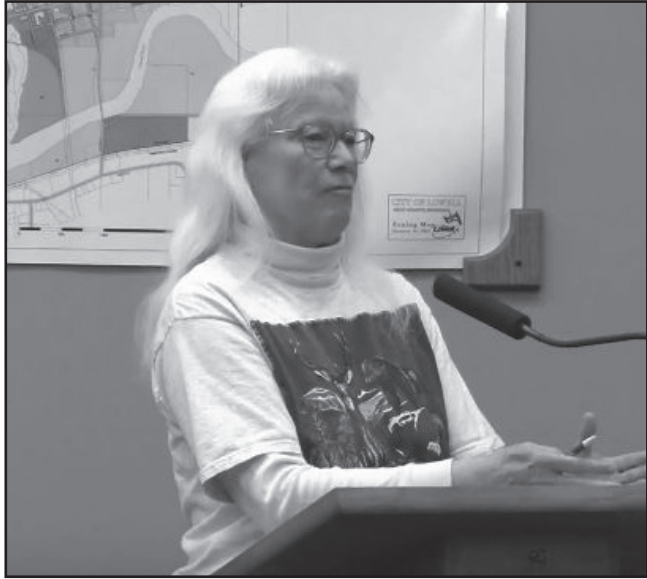
too, was a discussion tabled for future meetings. The city council approved 990 N. Washington’s addition to Scout Park to the resounding applause of those present.

“Have we ever gotten applause?” asked Yankovich, to which council member Chambers responded, “Yes, we did get applause when we closed down the biodigester.”

Chambers took a moment to step outside the intention of the meeting and address the aggrieved former resident of 990 N. Washington, Gary Dietzel, who was evicted from the property after 43 years of living there. Chambers is pushing to restore a wind chime Dietzel designed, on the park premises with a plaque in his honor. Dietzel noted that he is still angry, and that no plaque was necessary; the windchime, belongs to the community.

The council adjourned the public meeting in order to switch to closed session for labor negotiations for police and city employees.

**City, continued
page 7**



Peggy Covert reflects upon Ivan Blough, as the council discusses renaming Scout Park after him.

downtown parking dilemma and come back ready to make a decision. City Manager, Mike Burnsm reached out to sixteen communities, regarding their downtown parking practices, and received responses from seven.

“Everyone does it differently,” Burns said. “Every community does it based on their needs.”

Burns noted specific details about each

reasoning behind restricting overnight-parking on Main Street, outside of the November 1 through April 1 provisions practiced city-wide. However, nobody spoke to the results of any such analysis, likely because council members are no longer interested in backing the year-round clause.

Of the three parking concerns raised by the community, Mayor, Mike DeVore, noted that two

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GRATTAN TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting 7 p.m.
Synopsis of Minutes
March 13, 2023

Motions Approved:

1. 40% down payment for roof repair in the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget.

2. Quote from Grand Renovations for gutter repair.

3. Ordinance Amendments 2023-002 Rezoning property from A-1 to A-2, 13331 Belding RD.

4. Resolution 2023-007 General Appropriations Act.

5. Budget for 2023-2024 Fiscal year.

6. Resolution 2023-009 Closing Old Belding Rd for Memorial Day.

7. Revision 11 to the Administrative Policy.

Invites you to join...

Good Friday

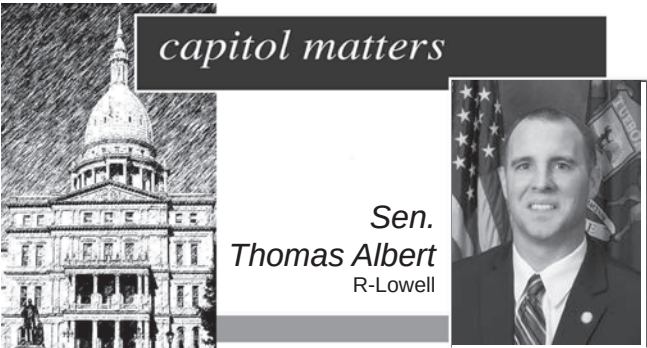
Cross Walk

Friday, April 7, 2023 @ NOON

This year's easy walk will follow a cross carried from Lowell United Methodist Church (621 E Main St.) along Main St. to Hudson St. and back to the church.

There will be various stops along the way for readings of Holy Scripture, prayer, and singing as we contemplate the Lord Jesus' death that brought forgiveness and salvation to those who believe. Programs will be provided. In case of inclement weather, a program will be held at the Lowell United Methodist Church. Those interested can join for lunch at Keiser's following the walk (at your own expense).

Questions, call Pastor Ryan Landt at 616-745-4924



Failed policies are reminiscent of Michigan’s ‘Lost Decade’

The start to the new legislative term has Michigan moving in the wrong direction. After years of progress, we have taken several steps backward, in just a few months. Gov. Whitmer’s irresponsible state budget proposal and reliance on failed policy threaten to send our economy into a tailspin. It’s as if she has not learned the lessons of Michigan’s Lost Decade of the early 2000s — when we had the nation’s highest unemployment rate, median household income plummeted, and our state budget imploded. The first major issue relates to the governor’s reckless spending

proposals. Just a few months ago, Michigan state government had a budget surplus of more than \$9 billion. If Gov. Whitmer gets her way with the upcoming state budget, all of that money would disappear — and then some. A recent update from the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, for example, estimates Whitmer’s executive budget proposal spends at least \$400 million more than would be available. That may be a conservative estimate — other projections that I have seen are higher. That’s not allowed by the Michigan Constitution, which mandates the state

have a balanced budget. Her proposal will be pared down one way or the other. And common sense dictates the state should keep a substantial amount of money in reserve, just in case an already wobbly economy worsens. Excessive government spending, across the nation has been the cause of historic inflation — which is still quite high, as anyone going to the grocery store or gas station knows. Higher interest rates, implemented by the Federal Reserve to reduce inflation, likely contributed to the recent collapse of two U.S.-based banks, including Silicon Valley Bank in California. Here in Michigan, major tax revenues fell about 10 percent in February, compared to a year ago. One month does not make a trend, but we must remain cautious. We should deposit more money into savings and further reduce debt, which would put the state budget in a better financial position moving forward. Our state was not careful enough in the 2000s — and it led to disaster. Funding for schools and

other essential programs was slashed and did not stabilize for several years. We must learn from past mistakes and make sure the state can keep its funding promises made, through the budget. Gov. Whitmer is doubling-down on her risky budget proposal with policy decisions that could cause further damage. The Strategic Outreach and Attraction Reserve Fund (SOAR) program started in late 2021 with a \$1 billion deposit. The state has committed that cash and added even more to the fund, despite the fact, we have no track record to indicate whether it’s anywhere near worth the cost. Again, it’s as if we have learned nothing from the past. Michigan has failed time and time again with economic incentive funds — including the film industry incentive program launched in 2008. It cost taxpayers up to \$186,519 for each direct job created, according to a 2010 Senate Fiscal Agency analysis, and was eventually abandoned. Democrats also have passed legislation to repeal the state’s Right to Work law, which was enacted a decade ago to offer freedom to Michigan workers and help the state continue emerging from the Lost Decade. Right to Work status put Michigan in play for several economic development projects that would not have considered our state otherwise. Repealing Right to Work will cross us off the list for some employers and hurt our economy — and from a worker’s perspective, it

simply is not fair. Fundamentally, this is an issue of freedom and individual liberty. No one should be forced to associate with an organization unless they freely choose to do so — especially to put food on the table and support their families. We cannot allow Michigan to lose the positive momentum built over the past several years. I will continue to fight for a fiscally responsible state budget and policies that give our families and communities an opportunity to succeed. State Sen. Thomas Albert represents the 18th District, which includes Barry County and portions of Allegan, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Kent, and Ionia counties.

outdoors

wonderland Dave Stegehuis

Michigan has over 3,000 miles of Great Lakes coastline, 11,000 inland lakes, and 36,000 miles of streams. Most of this water resource is managed for commercial and recreational fishing. Some kind of fishing is accessible to state residents and visitors year around. There is always open season for something near urban and rural areas across both peninsulas. There is a large variety of catchable species. Fishermen tend to have their favorite species. There are generic tackle setups that will be effective for catching

most species of fish. When targeting a specific species, dedicated equipment and tackle may be employed to up the odds for catching a particular fish. Depending on the species and the time of year, there are many different methods of fishing. Big boats, small boats, and more recently, kayaks, will get one to where the fish are biting. Docks at family cabins and resorts provide a handy platform to fish from. One day last summer, the lake was too rough for the boat, so my wife, Gwen, caught fish off the dock.

Fishing piers in cities have become popular, as well as, breakwalls and piers at Great Lakes ports. Wading rivers and streams provides up-close and personal access to whatever swims there. Fishing from the bank is a simple and effective method, where it is allowed and safe. Although fishing can be considered a consumptive activity, it is not necessary, or required, that one keep the catch. Catch and release is becoming increasingly popular. Bass fishermen usually release fish when fishing for fun and always during tournaments. It has been many years since I have killed a stream trout. There is satisfaction in meeting the challenge of catching and landing a fish. It is up to the angler on whether to keep or release a legal fish. Fishing presents an opportunity to engage directly with nature as a participant instead as an observer. Fishing provides motivation to get active outdoors and enjoy, what the throwback Michigan license plate advertises as, the Water Wonderland.



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MARCH SCHEDULE GR Expo special, March 14 Betty Passick, The Black Bag of Dr. Wiltze, Murder on the Prairie, March 17 Lori Hudson, Ghost on Beale Street, March 24 Matt Lubbers-Moore, ReQueered Tales, March 29 Preethi Saravanakumar, March 31 Lori Hudson, Ghost on Beale Street, April 7

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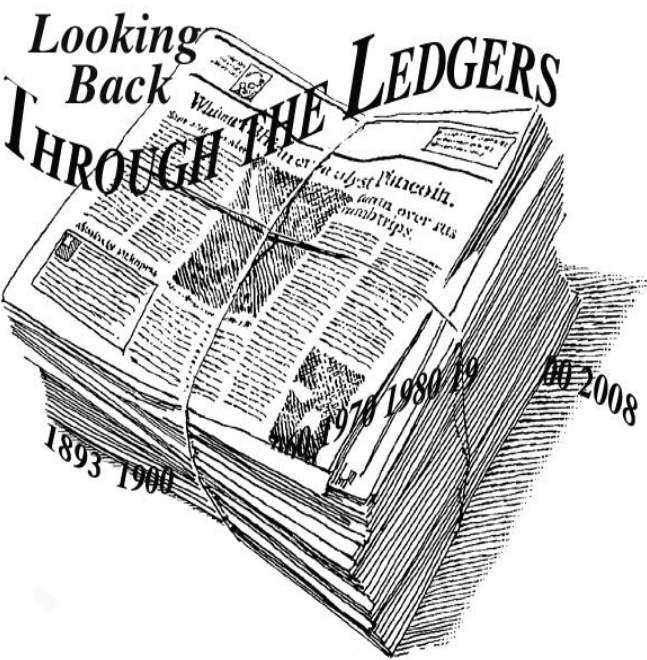
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viewpoint



125 years ago The Lowell Ledger April 7, 1898

We understand that two or three parties in this town purchased packages to keep lamp chimneys from smoking, paying as high as \$1.00 a package for some of them, which could be bought at any store, by the barrel for 90¢. We advise those parties to look out for swindlers.

Last week Tuesday, when Harry Hittle, of Ada township, was on his way to Lowell when his team got frightened at some boys near Crosby's. They jumped to one side, tipping the wagon over, the box falling across Mr. Hittle's back, hurting him quite seriously. The team ran about three miles and were stopped by George White. Crosby took Mr. H. To Lowell to see a doctor, who decided he had a broken rib.

100 years ago The Lowell Ledger April 5, 1923

For the pleasure of those who may be interested in the success of our public library, we submit the following report for the month of March: total attendance 1,485; total number of books checked out 1,034; total number of magazines checked out 211.

About three years ago a sickness caused Glenn Conklin to lose his leg. T.B. followed, and his friends thought he would not recover. Now after fourteen months stay at the City hospital, Grand Rapids, where he has taken mechanical drafting along with his curative treatments, he has an artificial limb, is walking with a cane, and is ready for his life work.

The State Veterinarian was at Dan Miller's the latter part of last week testing their herd. They took a cow that had already been tested before and his Holstein bull had to go.

75 years ago The Lowell Ledger April 1, 1948

Around 1,500 attend the spring 4-H Achievement Day at Rockford. Pat Hesche and Darold Seeley of Lowell receive awards as 4-H archery state champions.

"If it thunders in March, you will have plenty of corn for the threshers" is being tested, as the recent high water subsides. Last Saturday's sleet, turning to 4" of snow, added to the interest.

One of the interesting sights seen during the high water of last week was that of a well-known Lowell lady, wading in the water nearly to her knees, gathering her canned fruit.

They say that the Eickhoff girls, Ruby and Marie, stuck to their home during the flood until they heard

the rising waters lapping the floor beneath their feet. The girls will probably be mad about this item.

50 years ago Lowell Ledger Suburban Life March 29, 1973

The persons buying license plates are warned of long lines between now and the March 31 deadline.

The Michigan Jaycees sell jars of jelly during their "Jelly Week" to raise \$250,000 for Michigan's disadvantaged children.

Senator Phillip Hart authors the new law, forbidding used-car sellers from tampering with odometers.

Lowell Firemen were called to a home on North Monroe Street last Wednesday morning to distinguish a fire, which did considerable damage to the house and contents.

Freddie R. Briseno, Jr., of Clarksville, was killed Saturday night when his car hit a train at a crossing, one half mile west of Clarksville.

Four Lowell High School students received excellent to superior ratings last Saturday at the State Solo and Ensemble Festival, held at Grand Valley State College. Those students are: Janet Bieri, Ron Krebs, Sue Christensen and Barbara Sterzick.

25 years ago The Lowell Ledger April 8, 1998

The Lowell City Council approved a new ordinance regarding the enforcement of dishonored checks. The new ordinance would allow the Lowell Police Department to pursue collections of a check for less than \$50 and would be a misdemeanor in the city code. It would also allow the city to collect, on any cost to recover the money owed on a dishonored check, from the person or party who wrote it.

For the second time in a year, a decoy-buy sweep was completed of Lowell's five liquor places licensed for take-out. Three, of the five, sold liquor to minors. The two that did not were One Stop and Family Fare.

Seven new honorees will have their names inscribed on a brass lease of the Tribute Tree that is prominently displayed at the high school. Recipients of the honor this year were: Amanda Tichelaar, Harold Englehardt, Don Fizer, Steve Idema, John and Alice Blanding, King Doyle and Norm Byrne.



to the editor

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

Dear Editor,

I would like to compliment you on continuing to publish an excellent local weekly paper. I have been reading *The Ledger* since I was a child and I am now 75. I was born and raised in Grand Rapids, but often visited my relatives in Lowell. My Uncle, Donald (Mac) MacNaughton ran *The Ledger* presses for decades and my Aunt Maggie worked in the office. I still have a piece of linotype my uncle gave me from the days when each line was cast in metal before going to the printing bed. Once a month, I would visit Lowell to play with my cousins, and each summer, I would spend the whole Showboat Week there. My cousin, Roger, still sends me Ledgers because he knows how I love local papers.

I have worked for eight local papers since high school, doing writing, photography and illustrations. I spent 20 years at the *High Springs Herald*, here in Florida, before starting the monthly *Observer*, which folded in 2022 after 19 years in business. It is hard these days for newspapers to survive, one of the reasons *The Ledger* is so wonderful.

The Ledger is long-lived, but its quality is most amazing. You print a variety of interesting articles, not just coverage of local events, like the Chamber dinner and new businesses, but items like book and movie reviews, and Melissa Spino's column, "Live the Life You Want" or Justin Tiemeyer's recent "Funny Book Forum" and "A Visit to the Detroit Zoo."

I also love "Looking Back Through the Ledgers," since life was much different 125, 100 and 75 years ago. I have a file of those saved pieces. The history of Lowell buildings is fun too, since I once visited some of those places.

Beyond the content, your layout is clear and easy to read, and even the ads are fun. I want you to know how much many of us still appreciate a newspaper that we can hold in our hands to read, with no batteries required. I thank you for the joy you've brought me over the decades and wish you well in the future.

Larry Behnke
High Springs, Florida

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



Kent District Library programs at Alto Branch, 6071 Linfield Ave SE. For additional information call 616-784-2007.

At Your Local Library

Storytime

Mondays, 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.

KDL Lab Experience: Art Party

Tuesday, April 4, 1-2 pm. There’s no party like an art party, because an art party has so many fun activities you’ll never want it to end. Let your creativity flow! And when the fun does have to stop, you can keep creating at home. For ages 5-10.

Minecraft IRL

Wednesday, April 5, 1-2 pm. Leave the controllers at home, unplug at the library and join us for Minecraft IRL! Bring the fun of the gaming world into real life as we create, explore and craft with Minecraft-inspired activities. For ages 5-10.

Spring Craft Extravaganza

Thursday, April 6, 1-2 pm. Celebrate spring with crafts and activities for the whole family! For ages 0-10.

Fantasy Festival

Friday, April 7, 10:30-11:30 am. Explore wonderful wizardry for the whole family, making potent potions, flying through the obstacle course, or creating your very own adorable mandrake. For ages 5-10.

Wild Mushroom Identification

Tuesday, April 11, 6:30 - 7:30 pm. A state-certified Wild Mushroom Expert will share a brief overview of the terminology, skills and resources needed to accurately identify many of the 2,500 mushroom species in Michigan. The class will focus on the more easily identifiable and choice edible species, as well as resources for identifying toxic species in Michigan. For ages 18+

KDL Lab Experience

Wednesday, April 12, 4-5 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

Address: 202-206-208
W. Main (200-204-210 today)
Built: 1866
Builder: Colonel H. H. Vinton for Jarvis C. Train
Building name: Train’s Opera House

This building consisted of three storefronts. The building owners, Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis Train, operated the Opera House on the 3rd floor. Many different types of entertainments, including dances, parties, political speeches and club events, were held here. After a fire in 1909 destroyed the third floor, Mrs. Train had it rebuilt, enlarging the stage, adding scenery and prop rooms, and increasing the seating capacity to 400. From the 1980s-2000, the Flat River Antique Mall had consignment booths upstairs. In 2003-04, Main Street loft condos were completed on the second and third floors.

The basement could be entered from a stairway outside, along the east wall of the building. It was occupied by businesses such as Blume Bros. Cigar Factory (1895), Hoffman’s Plumbing Shop (1908-1920s), Will Stone, Dry Cleaning (1920), dealers of Hudson and Essex Autos and most recently, Flat River Antique Mall vendors.

In 1873, Ambrose Mitchell advertised her Train’s Block Restaurant. Meals of meat, potatoes, butter and bread, 25c. Tea or coffee, extra.

202 (200 today): The Lowell Journal was published on the second



Train’s Opera House, 1893. The first storefront on the left would have held a Restaurant/Billards; the center a tailor shop and the third a saloon.

floor, almost since its founding in 1865, until 1909. The first floor occupants were Charles Althen Clothing, 1874-1890; Charles Bush’s Restaurant and Billiards, 1890s; Wm. S. Godfrey Clothing, 1899-1906; the Star Theatre in 1907-1912, followed by the Idle Hour Theatre, 1912-1920s; O. J. Yeiter Furniture Co. with the Funeral Chapel in the east corner, 1927-1934; F. Earle Haner Undertaking, 1935-36; W. A. Roth Furniture and Undertaking, 1937-1959; Beachum’s Furniture, 1960s-1975; Lippert Pharmacies offices, 1970s-80s; The Buyers Guide office, 1978-1987; and Flat River Antique Mall, 1986-2006. The Antique Mall boasted it had “4 floors of antiques” and was West Michigan’s largest antique store. It was

the Puppy Tub, 1989-2002, and most recently Bella Grace Boutique.

Note the word “Chapel” in the storefront glass dating from the days when it was a funeral parlor.

206 W. Main (204 today): The middle storefront was a bookstore in 1885; McPherson’s Bazaar, 1888; Martin Bros. Tailor Shop, 1893; then Ed. Alexander’s Saloon until 1902. W. S. Godfrey cut an archway and expanded his clothing store from next door into this store, 1902-1906. Next it was Frank Gould’s saloon and pool room; a meat market, 1918; Yeiter’s Rugs, 1929-1938; Haner Furniture; Roth and Sons Co. Furniture with Fridgidaire appliances, 1941-1960; Beachum’s Furniture, 1960s-1975; Lippert Pharmacies offices, 1975-1985; Flat

River Antique Mall, 1986-2006; EJA Hair Salon; and Lavender and Lace Boutique.

208 W. Main (210 today): The western storefront was H. B. Church’s boot & shoe in 1885, Jim Hanlin’s saloon in 1892 followed by the VanArsdale Saloon which was here at the time of the 1909 fire. There were two saloons side by side at the same time. Yeiter sold furniture from this storefront, 1929-1938, followed by Roth and Sons Furniture, Beachum’s Furniture, Lippert Pharmacies offices, and Flat River Antique Mall which also had a lunch/snack business in the front northwest corner, Fuze, and Fandangled Custom Apparel.

area churches

Riverside Fellowship of Seventh-day Adventists

"Praying and studying together"
Saturday service begins at 10:30 AM

10300 Vergennes St. SE, Lowell
616-987-0567
www.lowellriverside.com
Pastor Darrel le Roux

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

CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF LOWELL

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

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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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

865 Lincoln Lake SE • lowellucc.org
Pastor Alyssa Anten
Pastor Shannon Jammal-Hollemans
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Open Table (No-cost meal) - Thursdays 5 - 6 PM
Open & Affirming • LGBTQ+ Inclusive
616-897-5906

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LOWELL

CHRIST-CENTERED, KINGDOM-FOCUSED HOMES
2275 West Main Street - (Barrier Free)
897-7168 • www.fbcloowell.org
Pastor Jon Pickens • Lead Pastor
Pastor Andrew Bolkcom • 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**

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

happy birthday



MARCH 30

Deb Maxim, Erin Wade, Delores Ellison, Laurinda Horsley, Patrick Drake.

Chris Rittersdorf, Blake Bergy, Nicole Wilcox, Alex Hazard.

APRIL 3

Hayleigh Borton, Jamie Barnes, Darwin Lambert.

APRIL 4

Troy Pethers, Nick Corbeil, Janet Kelley.

APRIL 1

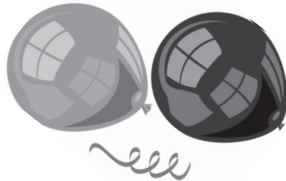
Christopher Vollink, Denny McClure, Kurt Wernet.

APRIL 5

Doug Klahn, Alexandra Moore.

APRIL 2

Kyle Geldersma, Ron Metternick, Alec Newhouse,



The State v Loomis Case: Sentencing bias and Artificial Intelligence

City, continued

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

In 2013, Eric Loomis, a Wisconsin resident, was arrested for his involvement in a drive-by shooting. He was sentenced to six years in prison and five years of extended supervision, based on the recommendation of a tool called COMPAS, developed by a private company called Equivant. COMPAS is an algorithm used to predict the likelihood of someone committing another crime after they have been released. However, critics argue that the algorithm is biased against black defendants, and Loomis' case was brought to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, in 2016, in State v Loomis.

The debate surrounding State v Loomis centers on the use of algorithms to make decisions about a defendant's life. While some argue that using data and analytics is more objective than human judgment, others point out that the data used to train the algorithms might contain systemic biases that reinforce existing inequalities in the criminal justice system.

required human judgment.”

The use of algorithms in the criminal justice system is not limited to Wisconsin. In 2019, a study found that a popular algorithm used by judges in the United States to predict recidivism was racially biased, and that black defendants were far more likely to be classified as high risk. The study, conducted by researchers at Dartmouth College and Stanford University, concluded that “any algorithmic tool used for risk assessment should be formally and independently validated to ensure that it is fair and accurate.”

Equivant’s software, which includes COMPAS, has come under scrutiny for its alleged bias against minority groups. Equivant defends its software, stating that it “has been thoroughly tested and validated by independent third-party researchers and has consistently been shown to be accurate and fair.”

The company also pointed out that the use of risk assessments is not new and that many jurisdictions have been using them for

decision-making. Algorithms are often developed using complex mathematical models, making it difficult for non-experts to understand how they arrive at their decisions. This lack of transparency can lead to suspicion and mistrust of algorithmic decision-making, especially when it results in negative outcomes for certain groups. Additionally, the lack of transparency can make it difficult to identify and correct errors or biases in the algorithm.

Accountability is another important ethical consideration in the use of algorithms. Who is responsible when an algorithm makes a decision that harms someone? Is it the developer of the algorithm, the organization that implemented it, or the algorithm itself? It is important to establish clear lines of accountability for algorithmic decision-making to ensure that those who are harmed by algorithmic decisions can seek redress.

In conclusion, this article was written by ChatGPT, and it has opened up a can of worms in regards to AI in journalism. As AI technology continues to advance and play a larger role in the field of journalism, it is important to consider the ethical implications and potential consequences that may arise. Justin Tiemeyer intends to delve deeper into this topic in an upcoming article, and it will be interesting to see what insights and perspectives he brings to the conversation. As AI continues to shape the way we receive and consume news, it is crucial that we remain aware and informed of its impact on the field of journalism.



Wisconsin resident, Eric Loomis, was sentenced to six years in prison, based on the recommendation of COMPAS, an algorithm used to predict the likelihood of someone committing another crime after they have been released.

Critics of algorithms, like COMPAS, argue that they are a modern-day form of phrenology, the practice of measuring someone’s skull to determine their likelihood of committing a crime.

In Loomis’ case, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ultimately upheld his sentence, but the decision was not unanimous. Justice Rebecca Bradley, writing in dissent, argued that the use of the algorithm violated Loomis’ due process rights. “This is a dangerous development in our law,” she wrote, “and one that I fear will only grow as we turn more frequently to machines and computers to answer questions that once

decades. “Risk assessments provide judges with critical information that helps them make more informed decisions about pretrial release and sentencing,” Equivant’s statement reads. “Without this information, judges would be forced to rely on guesswork, which is not in the best interest of defendants or society.”

Equivant’s response to the State v Loomis case comes at a time when the criminal justice system is under intense scrutiny for its treatment of minority groups. Many critics argue that risk assessments, like COMPAS, perpetuate racial bias by relying on data that reflects past patterns of discrimination.

Equivant acknowledges these concerns but insists that its software is not biased. “Our algorithms do not take into account race, gender, or any other protected characteristics,” the company’s statement read. “Instead, they are based on objective data such as criminal history and age.”

The company also noted that its software is constantly being updated and improved to ensure that it remains accurate and fair. “We take our responsibility, to ensure the integrity of the criminal justice system, very seriously,” the statement read. “That’s why we are committed to ongoing research and development to make sure that our software is the best it can be.”

The use of algorithms in various fields, such as healthcare, finance, and criminal justice systems, is increasing at an unprecedented rate. While the potential benefits of AI are numerous, it is important to consider the ethical issues that arise when algorithms are used to make decisions that impact people’s lives. One of the major ethical problems is the potential for algorithms to perpetuate social inequalities.

Algorithms can perpetuate social inequalities when they are developed using biased data sets. If the data set is biased towards a particular group, the algorithm may make decisions that favor that group over others. For instance, facial recognition technology has been found to be less accurate in recognizing people with dark skin tones, leading to disproportionate misidentifications and wrongful arrests. Moreover, algorithms can also perpetuate inequalities by reinforcing existing patterns of discrimination. For instance, if an algorithm is used to make hiring decisions, it may continue to hire people who are similar to those already employed, which can lead to a lack of diversity in the workplace.

Another ethical problem is the lack of transparency in algorithmic

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Per the city website, the Fraternal Order of Police represents the city’s full-time police officers and sergeant; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers represents public works and water treatment employees,;and even city manager Burns is an at-will employee with a labor agreement with the city.

The city council returns for their next regular session meeting on Monday, April 3, 2023. Before that, the council will meet on Tuesday, March 28, for a special meeting to approve bids on N. Monroe Street construction. Those interested in watching the March 20th meeting can find it on the City of Lowell YouTube channel, @cityoflowell. The agenda can be found at the City of Lowell home page, lowellmi.gov.



City Manager, Mike Burns, describes how different communities do downtown parking differently.

RED ARROW SPRING
SPORTS SCHEDULES

VARSITY SOFTBALL

** Denotes a home game at LHS softball field*
3/25 at 10 am Kenowa Hills * - doubleheader
3/27 at 4:15 pm at Cedar Springs - doubleheader
3/29 at 4:15 pm Lakewood* - doubleheader

GIRLS VARSITY TENNIS

** Denotes a home game at LHS tennis courts*
3/27 at 4:15 pm at Ionia
3/29 at 4:15 pm at Lakewood

BASEBALL

** Denotes a home game at LHS baseball field*
3/25 at 10 am Kenowa Hills*
3/27 at 4:15 at Cedar Springs
3/29 at 4:15 pm Howell* - doubleheader

GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER

** Denotes a game at LHS North Athletic Complex*
3/24 at 6:45 pm Thornapple Kellogg*
3/27 at 6:45 pm Forest Hills Eastern*
3/29 at 6:45 pm Portland*

GIRLS VARSITY LACROSSE

** Denotes a home game at LHS North Athletic Complex*
3/24 at 6 pm at Northview
3/27 at 6 pm at Hudsonville

BOYS VARSITY GOLF

** Denotes a home meet at Arrowhead Golf Course*
4/12 at 3:30 pm OK White meet at Brookside Golf Course

BOYS & GIRLS TRACK

** Denotes a home meet at Red Arrow Stadium*
3/27 at 4 pm at Sparta
4/11 at 4:15 pm at Forest Hills Northern

Lowell Community Expo celebrates 25 years



All photos courtesy of Bruce Doll



Liz , continued

for three decades. There were more than enough hugs, kisses, laughter and tears, in the aftermath of Baker arriving, to make one draw comparisons to a Greek Wedding. People representing every aspect of the Lowell community took turns in offering their appreciation to Liz for all that she has done in the 29 years since she accepted the offer to be the first paid employee of the Lowell Chamber of Commerce.

At the recent Gathering of the Chamber Membership, where she was awarded the Person of the Year, Baker took a look back at her first

they decided to hire me.” Baker started her career in the little building at 526 East Main. The former Drake gas station was owned by Elmer Layer, who donated the space for the Chamber to use. Liz was a little surprised to find out that she was not going to get any training for her new responsibilities, but she did receive an awful lot of help from business owner, Bonnie Grooters. The Chamber had around 65 members, at the time. Once she was fully equipped with a desk, some files, a computer, and a phone line, she got busy growing the Chamber.

it spurred her to create activities, classes, and community events that would allow anyone to see the value in becoming a Chamber member. Her efforts certainly made an impression on Mike Sprenger; he became one of the Chambers most active and involved members, serving on many committees and boards over the years. Fun Fact – even though his store is closed and he no longer has any business ties to Lowell, Mike continues to be a member and donates his time and energy to the Chamber’s Marketing Committee.



days working to promote Lowell as a great place to raise a family or open a business. She shared how her Aunt Betty saw a help wanted ad in *The Ledger* looking for a secretary for the Chamber. “She looked me straight in the eye, as she handed me the clipping, and said, ‘You must apply for this position’,” Baker recalled. “Of course, I couldn’t do anything else but say ‘yes’ to Aunt Betty. Well, long-story short, I did apply and after a few deliberations,

Baker’s first attempt at recruiting was with Springrove Variety owner, Mike Sprenger. She introduced herself, made a presentation about joining the Chamber and then Sprenger asked a question that should be etched in the walls at the Chamber, “Well that is all nice, but what is the Chamber going to do for me?” While she was initially lacking in an answer for Sprenger, Liz is grateful for his question because

Now we get to the fun part, where we get to examine what the Lowell Chamber, under Liz’s direction, has done for all of us. As I am typing this story, the 25th Annual Lowell Expo is happening at the High School. This collaboration between the Lowell Schools and the area businesses has been copied all over West Michigan by other communities. When the Sizzlin’ Summer Concerts started in collaboration with Lowell Arts (whose long-time director, Lorain Smalligan, is also retiring this year), the idea of hosting local and regional bands, and presenting them in free concerts, was cutting edge. These days, there is hardly a small town in West Michigan that does not offer some weekly concert. The Chamber has been the driving force behind lots of other events that attract people to Lowell. The Riverwalk Festival is a high point of the summer with all the food, family-centered activities, and the car show. The loyalty of people who attend Girls Night Out in Lowell can be demonstrated by the fact that ladies come from all over West Michigan, no matter what the weather conditions might be. How about a few more:



All photos courtesy of Bruce Doll



Harvest Celebration, Spring Fling, Market on Main Street, Lunch and Learn events for business owners, the Santa Parade and Santa Visits, Christmas Through Lowell, and Lowell Bucks. Liz Baker and the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce either started them or have strong ties to all of these events that residents and business owners, in and around Lowell, look forward to every year. We mentioned the Marketing Committee earlier, and it is worth mentioning it again, because the Committee was started at the Chamber offices by Liz Baker and Mike Sprenger. The benefit to the Lowell community, over the years, has far exceeded the relatively small annual

the date and times of all the Chamber events, but you can also find links to other events, local non-profits, a listing of Chamber members, and a calendar chock full of everything Lowell. It is an amazing resource that is open 24/7/365 to let people know about Lowell. When you add all of these things together, it is almost hard to believe that they were accomplished by the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce and Liz Baker. It is important to note that Liz has been the only full-time employee of the Chamber, to date. Yes, she has benefited from one or two part-time paid assistants over the years, but when you boil it down, Liz Baker was the Lowell Chamber. In her acceptance

behalf and all those that have helped to shape me, inspire me, believe in me, allowed me freedom to be creative and granted me this awesome opportunity,” she said at the dinner. “I request that you stand with me tonight...give yourself a pat on the back for an exceptional job well done! With all my heart, thank you for this incredible journey to serve this community and all of you.” Great leadership inspires people to give of their time, energy, talents, money, and creativity. The Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce has been under the leadership of Liz Baker for thirty years – we are sincerely grateful for everything she has done to make Lowell better. The dinner, where Liz was



budget they have to work with. The Committee started with a splash when the upside down billboard promoting Lowell got attention from most of the media outlets in West Michigan that garnered attention far beyond the impact of one billboard. The Chamber’s website (www.LowellChamber.org) is another shining example of the great things that have happened under Baker’s leadership. There are not too many small towns ,the size of Lowell, with websites as comprehensive as this one. Not only can you find

speech at the annual dinner, Liz gave heaps of praise to her husband Mike, their sons, Jake and Nick, and even their grandchildren for allowing her the time away from them as she worked to build the Chamber over the years. She is also very quick to praise the massive amount of volunteer hours, given by members of the community, to help her dreams of promoting “the next place to be” become a reality. “As I humbly acknowledge this award, I can only accept it on your

honored, was sold-out, and the Showboat was full of people, who gathered in secrecy, to pay their respects to her. The love she has for Lowell was reflected back to her from the community she has served so well. Thanks very, very much Liz. In closing, we should all express our thanks to Aunt Betty for clipping out the advertisement and making Liz apply for the job. She was one smart lady, right?

Red Arrow

- SOCCER

SPORTS

Soccer opens season with a win

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Thornapple-Kellogg started the season fast, a quick-scoring chance against Lowell, just 30 seconds into the game.

They were the second fastest team on the field on Friday night, though, outdone by the pace of Lowell over 80 minutes at the Red Arrow North Athletic Complex.

Lowell goalkeeper Aubree Lee, would save that chance, the first of many on a cold early spring night. Soon, Lowell would take the lead. In the 8th minute, a poor first touch by one of the Thornapple Kellogg central defenders fell to the feet of one of Lowell’s fastest

players, incoming forward, RJ Wagamon. She took her chance, shooting from the left side of the box, with the ball palmed away by the Trojans goalie, only to go into the back of the net.

Lowell made it 2-0, with just a minute to go before halftime; working the ball right to left, Wagamon found Gracyn Hamilton in the middle of play, who slotted it over to Emily Ake, who put a first time shot in the upper left corner to double the Red Arrow lead. It was one of two assists for Hamilton on the night.

Wagamon closed the scoring off a first timer of her own, assisted off a free kick with 20 minutes to go from Abby Hewitt.

It wasn’t one-way traffic, though. The Trojans would have their chances, goalkeeper, Aubree Lee, recording 19 saves. Of those, three were pretty big saves, including a shot palmed over the goal in the 20th minute, and a diving save in the second half.

LHS is now 9-4, historically, against the Trojans, bouncing back from a two-game skid the last two years.

The Red Arrows had two home games this week, Monday against FHE, and Wednesday against Portland, before getting some time off for the spring break holiday.



Sophomore, RJ Wagamon, scored two goals in Lowell’s season opening win.

- WRESTLING

Wrestling team closes season with end-of-year banquet

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Keep the flame going strong. That was the mantra Lowell wrestling coach, R.J. Boudro, discussed during the program’s end of year banquet, on Sunday, in Alto.

The program, which had 52 wrestlers and 10 coaches this season, finished as state champions for the 10th consecutive year.

“This doesn’t happen without a great community,” Boudro told parents and wrestlers, following a potluck dinner brought by parents.

“I think sometimes we take it for granted how lucky we are for the crowd we had there,” Boudro added.

Coach Boudro also discussed the future, a bright one, considering Lowell’s youth program had nine MYWAY state champions; a sizable number. “Continue to give your best in everything you do, and the flame will continue to burn for years to come,” Boudro concluded.

During the banquet, awards were given out, coaches addressed different classes, and 13 Lowell seniors would give speeches.

One of those seniors was Landon Miller, the team’s scholar-athlete, with a 4.096 GPA. On a team with an average GPA of 3.91, scholar-athlete is an impressive feat. Boudro

mentioned Miller and teammate Easton Lyons, specifically, for their high character in dealing with challenges this season. For Lyons, he was one of five-ranked wrestlers who couldn’t compete at individual states, and with him being a senior, it made for a very tough decision, one which Lyons handled admirably. Miller had to end his season in the blood round of the state tournament.

“Those losses are hard,” Boudro said. “We felt for our guys who lost at states. The losses are hard, but those guys who lost were more than okay. They were talking later about how they want to continue to improve ,both in wrestling and in life.”

“We’ve got a lot of kids in this freshman class who have never wrestled, then there are some guys out there contending for state titles. It’s a good mix,” Coach Josh Cooper said of his freshman class, of which, 19 were present.



Steve Skinner is given the Gary Rivers Award at the 2023 Lowell wrestling banquet.

The Gary Rivers award is awarded to the student-athlete who most embodies what Lowell wrestling is. That award went to Steve Skinner, interested in a career in education, something Coach Rivers took pride in.

“Steve is a quiet leader,

and worked very hard over four years. Gary would be proud of him,” Boudro said. Skinner was involved in plenty of wins with Lowell B this year. Him, along with Never Yield award winners, Jack Meier and Jace Blakely, helped lead the B team to five wins over ranked teams.

Most improved wrestlers went to Juan Acosta and Ari McFarland. Acosta is one of 11 sophomores on the team. Coach Max Pennock said, of the sophomores he was looking forward to watching, it was this group grow as leaders when they become upperclassmen next year.

McFarland is part of

a small group of juniors. “They’re not the biggest class,” Coach Brian Boudro, brother of R.J., said of the juniors. “They’re an important group, though; they’ll be leading by example next year, just as they did this year.”

During senior speeches, many seniors recalled fond memories at Boudro Boot Camp in St. Ignace, or team-bonding trips to Montana over summers. A senior tribute video concluded the event.

“Those trips, our time at state tournaments, building relationships with those guys that will last for life - it’s really a special program,” senior, Jace Blakely, concluded.

Lillie shuts out Wolves in opener

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

The Lowell softball team got off to a perfect start last week, beating Wyoming in non-conference action 4-0.

Megan Lillie, on the mound, recorded the seven inning shutout. Taylor Clark hit a two-run home-run that gave Lowell the go-ahead runs.

Like their counterparts on the baseball diamond, just a few hundred feet away, the softball team

went 2-0 on the week, beating Kenowa Hills 7-1 the following day. Jordyn McClymont got the win pitching and added three RBIs in the victory.

The wins put Lowell at 3-5 (Wyoming) and 21-8 (Kenowa Hills), historically, against both programs respectively.

Lowell plays Lakewood and Cedar Springs to round out their March portion of the schedule.

ALTO AMERICAN LEGION POST 528.

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Red Arrow

- BASEBALL

SPORTS

Opening week joy for baseball

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Nothing says spring like hearing a ball off a bat. The noise from the dugouts; the sound of a cleat hitting a base. Those noises are music to our ears, and certainly to the Lowell baseball program, entering year 19, under the direction of varsity head coach, Juston Miller.

This year's squad scored a pair of non-conference wins this past week to move to 2-0 on the young season. Wins came against Wyoming and Kenowa Hills.

Against Wyoming, Lowell shutout the Wolves

6-0 in the season opener on Thursday. Aidan Dennings brought in the first run, in the first inning, on a single. A three-run inning in the fourth broke the game open, with a triple by TJ Hollern and double by Gus McDonald, contributing to the scoring.

Peyton Teachworth got the win pitching, with Will Johnston and Aidan Dennings closing the game out of the bullpen. Teachworth also went 3-4 batting.

The following day, Lowell knocked off Kenowa Hills 5-3. Gavin Mazarka started things off for Lowell with two scoreless innings

pitching and two strikeouts. Ty Wasilenski got the win pitching; he pitched three innings; with four strikeouts and allowed one run. Kevin Topolinski threw two innings in relief, out of the bullpen.

Hollern, Mazarka, McDonald, Dennings, Johnston, Nolan Jannenga, and Colton Byrne each had a hit in the win.

The Red Arrows take on Cedar Springs and Howell this week before Spring Break.

Colton Byrne, fresh off ski season, records a hit against Wyoming.



- LACROSSE

Successful road trip for boys lacrosse to start season

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Non-conference is fun in just about any sport, as Lowell teams get to travel or compete against teams they don't usually play.

How often does Lowell travel on a Wednesday night to Harper Creek? Located in south Battle Creek, BC Harper Creek is known as the Beavers. Think Oregon State's logo with blue instead of orange.

A new location, but a welcome start to the season as the boys lacrosse team jumped out to a 3-0 lead and rode that momentum to beat Harper Creek in the season opener.

Connor Lixie started the scoring off in the first quarter, making a run from his midfield position and slotting the ball in the top of the net.



Andrew Rogers scores a goal at Harper Creek.

"Connor will be a big impact player this year," head coach, Avery Buckius, said. "Additional impact players this year include Conor McDowell at close defense, along with some juniors that are entering their third year on varsity, Andrew Rogers and Teige Bredin."

CJ Steinebach and Andrew Rogers scored goals before the Beavers responded with two of their own. Rogers netted Lowell's next two goals, including a difficult running shot across his body, to make it 5-2.

"JD Huyser will also be one to watch, being a freshman and showing some very promising skills up on varsity," Buckius said of Huyser, who plays club lacrosse for True National, one of the nation's premier

youth lacrosse organizations.

The Red Arrows would end up cruising after that, finishing the game, only giving up one more goal, and a 12-3 scoreline in Lowell and Harper Creek's first time facing each other in boys lacrosse. Lowell later defeated Grand Rapids Christian on Friday to move to 2-0.

Two teams important for the program are both teams that changed tiers recently. "Caledonia and Mona Shores will be exciting games this season. Last year Caledonia was in tier one, and just dropped to tier 2, so that's always a cool matchup. Mona Shores is up from tier 3, so we'll see how they stack up."

The program hosted a cornhole tournament fundraiser on Saturday at Cedar Rock Sportsplex. The event was well-attended, stocked with silent auction items, apparel, food, and fun. After two wins to start the season, it was certainly a party-like atmosphere.

The program is looking forward to seeing the team compete at home, following the two away wins. Students get in free to all boys lacrosse home games.

"We would love for them to come out and support our guys. We have a good run of home games right after spring break," Coach Buckius concluded.

- TRACK & FIELD

Girls take first, boys take second at Snowmelter Invite

submitted by Paul Judd

The Lowell boys track and field team finally got to race outside as they competed at the Sparta Snowmelter Invitational, Monday night. This meet was new for all members of the team as the last time mother nature and pandemics allowed us to compete there was 2018. The meet uses the MITCA style scoring, which allows three members from each team to score in an event. So, with six teams, a first place finish will earn 18 points and it goes down from there. Lowell approached the meet as both practice and a meet, as we are still looking for where the best fit is for many of the student athletes.

Sparta won the meet with 705.5 points, which outdistanced the Red Arrow's 557.5 points. Lowell snagged two wins in the hurdle events, as Ramsey Ponchaud won the 110HH with a time of 17.19 and Christopher Wigger captured the 300H in 44.69. Levi Mills took first in the 400m dash with a time of 53.97 and was part of the winning 800m relay team, joined by Xavier Young, Wigger, and Wyatt Baker, as they got the stick around in 1:38.20.

Second place finishes were: Xavier Young 100m, 11.90 (PR); Dylan Polczak 400m, 56.58; Ramsey Ponchaud 300H, 44.76; Isaac Graham discus, 123'11"; Noah VanLaan high jump, 5'4"; 1600m Relay (Polczak, Simmet, Schmidt, Mills), 3:54.90; 3200m Relay (Simmet, Morrell, Byrne, Iakiri), 9:56.10

Third place finishes were: Chris Wigger 110HH, 18.28 and Isaac Graham shot put, 38'3"

The Arrows will be off for spring break and will open the OK White Season at FHN on April 11th.

It took five years, but the Lowell girls track team defended their 2018 Snowmelter title with a team score of 653.5 which outdistanced runner-up Sparta by 50 points. It took five years as the Snowmelter was cancelled due to both weather and the pandemic in the years in between. The meet was the first time the 2023 team was able to compete outside and was also the first time the girls were in a meet that used the MITCA scoring system in which three athletes from each team score in every event; thus, eighteen people score with a six-team field.

Lowell took advantage of multiple first place wins in the field events to start the ball rolling and built on it with six wins on the track as well as two first place finishes for relays. There were multiple events where Lowell either went 1-2 or where we had a 1-3 finish in events which help build the point total quickly. Multiple

event winners were Annika Sandman (800, 1600, 3200), Isabel German (PV, 100,200, 400mrelay), and Aubriegh Oswald (shot put, discus). Five girls hit the AQ (automatic qualifying) mark to earn their varsity letter.

Finishing in the top three were: Isabel German, 100m 13.50; first 200m, 29.31, pole vault, 9'6"; Annika Sandman first 1600m, 5:19.41; 3200m, 10:52 (School Record); third 800m, 2:29.53; Aubriegh Oswald firstshot put 33'11/2", first discus 85'11"; Katrina Sandman second 800m, 2:27.96; second 1600m, 5:20.17; second 3200m, 11:22.28; Leah Krieger first high jump, 4'7"; second 100H, 18.4(PR); second 300H, 58.09 second long jump, 14'3"; Brooklyn Braun third 100m, 14.59; Kailyn Gustin third 200m, 31.37; third long jump, 13'11"; Anna Seddon third 100H, 19.6.

First place relays were: 400m Relay (Seddon, Gustin, Annika Huhn, I. German), 56.37; 800m Relay (Seddon, Isabella Kuntz, Huhn, Gustin), 2:04.3.

Second place relays were: 1600m Relay (Braun, Kuntz, A. Sandman, K. Sandman), 4:52.04; 3200m Relay (Jadyn Young, Maree Perfitt, Audrey Latchaw, A. German), 11:37.22

The Arrows will be off for Spring Break and will open the OK White Season at FHN on April 11th.

obituaries

LEWIS

Lila Faye Lewis, age 89 of Salem, passed away on Saturday, March 25, 2023 at SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital in Centralia. Lila was born on December 23, 1933 in Patoka, the daughter of Alfred and Helen (Caldwell) Donoho. She married Kerroll Oscar Hays in 1950 and he preceded her in death in 1956, she later married Chester Lee Lewis in 1961 and he preceded her in death. She is survived by her three sons, Kerroll Edgar “Ed” Hays Sr. and wife Deb of Salem, Mark Stephen Hays and wife Karen of Ada, MI, and Jon Hays of Salem; one step-son, Donald Lee Lewis of Forest City, AR; seven grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren; eight great-great grandchildren; and one brother, Billy Joe Headley of Salem. She was preceded in death by her father, Alfred Donoho; mother, Helen Peddicord; step-father, Kenny Peddicord; husbands, Kerroll Oscar Hays and Chester Lee Lewis; and siblings, Loren Donoho, Delilah Hays, Patricia Rotemeyer, Alice Bringle, James Headley, and Janice Sullens. Lila was a faithful member of the Harvey’s Point Christian Church in Kell. She worked as a beautician, for Brown Shoe Company, for her brother Loren, at the Starlight Restaurant, and as a dietician for Cherry Creek Nursing Home. Funeral Services for Lila Faye Lewis will be held on Friday, March 31, 2023 at 10:30 am at Harvey’s Point Christian Church in Kell with Steve Bratton officiating. Burial will be in East Lawn Cemetery in Salem. Visitation will be held on Thursday, from 5:00 pm until 7:00 pm at Crouse Funeral Home in Salem. Memorial contributions can be made to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and can be received at the funeral home. Online condolences can be left at www.CrouseFH.com



STILES

Jean Stiles, formerly of Lowell, MI, passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 21, 2023, in Ionia, MI. Born on June 9, 1928, in Grand Rapids, MI, the youngest of 8 children to Adrian and Jessie Felix. She was preceded in death by her son, Robert Stiles; grandchildren, Roxann Seese, Steven Stiles, and Michelle Stiles. Survived by daughter, Dawn (Danny) Huff; son, Mike Stiles; daughter-in-law, Kim Doyle; grandchildren, Lisa (John) Clarke, Shelly (Brian) DeYoung, Beckie Seese, Chris Huff, Amanda (Eric) Ives, April (Wes) Wright, John Stiles, Bobbie Stiles, Jeana Stiles, Melissa Stiles, Kenzie Stiles, Alex Stiles, and Tyler (Vikki) Lautzenheiser; many great grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and good friends, Terry & Lis Grooters. For several years Jean could be found managing the variety store in Clarksville, MI and clerking the auction in Alto, MI. She enjoyed spending time with her family, caring for her furry four-legged friends, and watching the wild birds while indulging in her favorite dessert- ice cream! She will be dearly missed by those who knew and loved her. Funeral services were held at 11 am on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at Roth-Gerst Funeral Chapel, 305 N. Hudson Lowell, Michigan, 49331, with visitation one hour prior. Rev. Dennis Wilcox officiating. Interment Chapel Hill Cemetery.



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Cliff's By Cliff Yankovich Riffs



Don't let anyone tell you jewelry is an investment

I would like to poke a bear: The alleged “investment value” of jewelry and/or diamonds. Over the 27 years in the jewelry business in a wholesale and retail capacity, I have always told customers that with the exception of Rolex watches, vintage designer pieces or something with provenance linked to someone famous, the jewelry that regular people purchase is just like anything else that is used; the value decreases. I am convinced that members of the jewelry industry have done a disservice to people if we even imply that some piece of jewelry we sell will hold or increase in value.

The general definition of an “investment” is an asset or item acquired with the goal of generating income or appreciation. Please pay close attention to those last words, “generating income or appreciation.” If we invest our money in a savings account or Certificate of Deposit, we have the backing of our government that we will get back what we put in, plus some interest – even if the bank or credit union was robbed or collapses. We all know that the value of the shiny new vehicle we just purchased takes a big hit the minute we drive it off the lot at the dealership. Almost any piece of jewelry, purchased at a retail store, experiences the same financial impact when you cross the threshold of the

store on your way out.

The easiest way to make my case is to examine the Estate or Pre-owned jewelry that most independent jewelry stores sell. (“Estate jewelry” is a nice way of saying “used jewelry.”) Some of the larger jewelry chains are now selling pre-owned items. While many people are hesitant to purchase used jewelry, because jewelry is seen as a very personal item and an expression of who they are, many others love estate jewelry because they can get a lot of bang for their shopping dollar. They might find a watch, ring, or gold chain in excellent condition that is selling for 40% to 60% of the price of a new equivalent. If jewelry were really an investment, then estate cases, or the pre-owned pages of big box retailers, would be full of used jewelry priced the same, or actually higher, than the new jewelry. This does not happen, except in a very few cases, mentioned above.

A subset of the jewelry as investment discussion would be diamonds, in general, and diamonds mined from the Earth versus diamonds grown in a laboratory. There are people in the jewelry business planting the idea that mined diamonds “hold their value” compared to lab grown. If someone at a jewelry store begins to sing this song, pose these questions to them: Suppose someone buys

a \$7,000 mined-diamond engagement ring from you today; after the divorce in 11 months, how much are you going to give them for their mined diamond investment? And I do not mean allowing them full value on a trade-in if they are doubling their investment; I mean how much are you willing to pay them for their \$7,000 ring? What is the amount of return they can expect? You can expect to hear a lot of sputtering and double-talk, at this point.

For even more fun, ask anyone, expounding on the investment value of jewelry, how a person might track the value of their birthstone ring, diamond earrings or pendant? We have ways of tracking the value of stock and bonds. We can track the prices of oil, precious metals, and even pork-belly futures – What index do you recommend we follow to track the value of so-called investment jewelry?

I sell both lab-grown and mined diamonds with equal enthusiasm. I do not get anywhere near, even hinting, that either “holds value,” and I firmly believe that anyone who does that is misleading the customer and contributing to the overall perception that jewelry salespeople are less than truthful. I tell people, jewelry is something to express love and/or celebrate some kind of milestone; it is not an investment.

We need to tell people the truth as an industry. With few exceptions, used jewelry is like any product that is used – you might re-sell it for half price or slightly more. For anyone expounding on the investment value of jewelry, may I ask how the customer might track the value of their birthstone ring, diamond earrings or pendant? What index do you recommend people follow to track the value of their investment

jewelry?

I have taken a bit of heat from people in the jewelry industry who balk at my suggestion that we abandon giving customers the impression that their bracelet or earrings represent some kind of investment. I have broached my point of view more than once in online discussion groups of people in the jewelry industry. One argument was, “Well, at least the piece of jewelry will be worth something.” To me, that is an attempt to re-define “investment” and is extremely weak. A guitar, computer, or piece of furniture will usually be “worth something” after you have owned and used it for a while and decide to sell it and get something new. Is anyone selling a couch or computer suggesting it is an investment?

One person responded, using the logic that because the price of things, in general, has gone up, that would help jewelry hold value. In other words, the ring you purchased for \$800.00 ten years ago now costs \$1,075.00 to replace, so that illustrates the value. First, this equation ignores the fact that inflation over the 10 years is the driving force behind the price increase, and as a kicker, it ignores the fact that if you attempted to sell the ring you bought for \$800.00 ten years ago, you will probably sell it for 40 percent to 60 percent of the price of a new one, if it is in nice enough shape to re-sell. Many pieces of used jewelry people bring to me to sell are not in salable condition because they have been worn. Which serves to bring us full circle back to this truth: The vast majority of jewelry purchases are expressions of love or a celebration of some kind; they are not an investment.

Now, can I interest any of you in some crypto currency or NFTs?

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING STATE OF MICHIGAN

The Probate Court for the County of Kent

IN THE MATTER OF: DONNA LANNING, Guardianship File no. 23-212,953-GA, Conservatorship File No. 23-212954-CA.

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including her son: Eric Mitchell, and any other 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 April 27, 2023, at 1:30 PM 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. and Appointment of a Conservator.

Dated: March 24, 2023

Adult Protective Services, DHHS, Petitioner
121 Martin Luther King Jr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507 (616) 690-7116

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

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

HALL FOR RENT - Lowell Veteran's Center, 3100 Alden Nash. Newly remodeled, smoke-free, private, great location & great rate! www.VFW8303.org. Jan., Feb, March & April Veterans Potluck at 2 pm on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Call John at 299-0486 or 897-8303.^{TFN EOW}

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.

misc.

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 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.

NEED AN AL-ANON MEETING? - Al-Anon is a fellowship of families and friends of alcoholics. Join us Sunday-Saturday at 10:30 AM and 7 PM on Zoom. Come learn the Steps, Traditions & Concepts of living and coping, in Serenity, with alcoholism. There are no dues or fees for Al-Anon. For Zoom meeting ID & Password, please call Joy at 616-901-7779.

STEAK DINNER - Fri., March 31, 5-7:30 pm. Alto American Legion, Post 528, 6056 Linfield Ave, Alto. Public Welcome.

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2022 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR CITY OF LOWELL AND LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Is my water safe?

We are pleased to present this year's Annual Water Quality Report (Consumer Confidence Report) as required by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). This report is designed to provide details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

Do I need to take special precautions?

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/ Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Water Drinking Hotline (800-426-4791).

Where does my water come from?

Your water comes from 4 groundwater wells, each over 87 feet in depth, and drawing from the Grand River watershed. They are located at 1596 Bowes Road in Lowell behind the water plant.

Source water assessment and its availability

The state performed an assessment of our source water in 2003 to determine the susceptibility or the relative potential of contamination. The susceptibility rating is on a seven-tiered scale from “very-low” to “very-high” based primarily on geologic sensitivity, water chemistry and contaminant sources. The susceptibility of our source is moderate.

Unit Descriptions	
Term	Definition
ppm	ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)
ppb	ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)
positive samples/month	positive samples/month: Number of samples taken monthly that were found to be positive
positive samples	positive samples/yr.: The number of positive samples taken that year
NA	NA: not applicable
ND	ND: Not detected
NR	NR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.

Important Drinking Water Definitions	
Term	Definition
MCLG	MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
MCL	MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
TT	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection level goal. The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
MRDL	MRDL: Maximum residual disinfectant level. The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

Why are there contaminants in my drinking water?

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- **Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from

a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.

- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.
- **Organic Chemical Contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

How can I get involved?

We invite public participation in decisions that affect drinking water quality. Lowell City Council meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7:00pm in the Council Chambers at Lowell City Hall, 301 E. Main, Lowell, MI. Lowell Township meetings are held at 7:00pm on the first and third Mondays of each month at the Lowell Township hall, 2910 Alden Nash s.e. Lowell, MI. For more information about your water, or the contents of this report, contact Brian VanVeelen at 897-5234. For more information about safe drinking water, visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov/safewater/.

Variance and Exemptions

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2022 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1 to December 31, 2022. The state allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year,

Additional Information for Lead

Infants and children who drink water containing lead could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. City of Lowell is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

The City of Lowell water supply has 0 lead service lines and 431 service lines of unknown material out of a total of 1302 service lines.

Significant Deficiency

On August 25, 2021, the City of Lowell was issued a Significant Deficiency, for not meeting the firm pumping capacity for the Lowell Township water system. The city of Lowell is upsizing the pumps that provide water to Lowell Township. The firm pumping capacity was 0.576 million gallons per day (MGD) and will be increased to 1.153 MGD. This project will be

completed by April 30, 2023.

Water Quality Data Table

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. Although many more contaminants were tested, only those substances listed below were found in your water. All sources of drinking water contain some naturally occurring levels; these substances are generally not harmful in our drinking water. Removing all contaminants would be extremely expensive, and in most cases, would not provide increased protection of public health. A few naturally occurring minerals may actually improve the taste of drinking water and have nutritional value at low levels. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not vary significantly from year to year, or the system is not considered vulnerable to this type of contamination. As such, some of our data, though representative, may be more than one-year-old. In this table, you will find terms and abbreviations that might not be familiar to you. To help you better understand these terms, we have provided the definitions below the table.

For more information, please contact:
Water Plant Superintendent:
Brian VanVeelen
Address: 1596 Bowes Rd. Lowell, MI 49331
Phone: (616) 897-5234
E-Mail: bvanveelen@ci.lowell.mi.us

Contaminants	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL, TT, or MRDL	Your Water	Range Low	Range High	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
Disinfectants & Disinfectant By-Products								
(There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants)								
ITHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb) City of Lowell	NA	80	16.5	NA	19.9	2022	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
ITHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb) Lowell Twp.	NA	80	10.9	NA	10.9	2022	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Haloacetic Acid (ppb) City of Lowell	NA	60	2.00	NA	2.0	2022	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Haloacetic Acid (ppb) Lowell Twp.	NA	60	2.98	NA	2.98	2022	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine (as Cl2) (ppm) City of Lowell	4	4	.516	0.40	0.62	2022	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorine (as Cl2) (ppm) Lowell Twp.	4	4	.49	.39	.63	2022	No	
Inorganic Contaminants								
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	1.2	1.1	1.3	2022	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Arsenic (ppb)	0	10	<1.0	NA	<1.0	2020	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.71	0.0	0.85	2022	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Sodium (optional) (ppm)		MPL	15.5	13.0	18.0	2022	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching
Microbiological Contaminants								
Total Coliform (positive samples/month)	0	0	0	NA	NA	2022	No	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal coliform/E. coli - in the distribution system (positive samples)	0	0	0	NA	NA	2022	No	Human and animal fecal waste
A violation occurs when a routine sample and a repeat sample, in any given month, are total coliform positive, and one is also fecal coliform or E. coli positive.								
Radioactive Contaminants								
Alpha Emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	ND	NA	NA	2022	No	Erosion of natural deposits

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)							
Regulated Contaminant	MCL, TT, or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Level Detected	Range	Year Sampled	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source of Contaminant
Hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA) (ppt)	370	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities utilizing the Gen X chemical process
Perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS) (ppt)	420	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; stain-resistant treatments
Perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS) (ppt)	51	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Firefighting foam; discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA) (ppt)	400,000	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Firefighting foam; discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA) (ppt)	6	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; breakdown of precursor compounds
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) (ppt)	16	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Firefighting foam; discharge from electroplating facilities; discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) (ppt)	8	N/A	ND	ND	2022	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; stain-resistant treatments
Inorganic Contaminant Subject to Action Levels (AL)	Action Level	MCLG	Your Water ¹	Range of Results	Year Sampled	Number of Samples Above AL	Typical Source of Contaminant
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb) City of Lowell	15	0	0	0 to 2	2022	0	Lead service lines, corrosion of household plumbing including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper - action level at consumer taps City of Lowell Copper (ppm)	1.3	0	0	0.0	2022	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb) Lowell Twp.	15	0	0	0 to 2	2022	0	Lead service lines, corrosion of household plumbing including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper - action level at consumer taps Lowell Twp. Copper (ppm)	1.3	0	0	0.0	2022	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

¹ Ninety (90) percent of the samples collected were at or below the level reported for our water.

FUN PAGE

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

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!

SPRING BREAK WORD SEARCH

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

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

Puzzle solutions
on page 13

SPRING BREAK
WORD SEARCH

BEACH
BEVERAGES
BREAK
CELEBRATE

COLLEGE
CONTEST
CROWDS
ESCAPE
FRIENDS
MUSIC
NOISY

OCEAN
PARTY
REFRESHMENTS
REVELRY
SEMESTER
SOUTH
SPRING

SUNSHINE
SWIMSUIT
TRAFFIC
TRAVEL
VACATION
WARM

Guess Who?

I am a singer born in Oklahoma on March 28, 1955. I was in a family singing group as a child and was discovered during a performance at a national rodeo event in college. I have had many #1 country singles in my career.

Answer: Reba McEntire

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to spring.

N U S Y N

--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Sunny

CLUES ACROSS

1. It's all over the beach
5. A cirque
8. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
11. Influential report author
13. Satisfaction
14. Recurring only at long intervals
15. Islamic calendar month
16. Neither
17. Gelatinous substance
18. American electronic music producer
20. Old computer system
21. Professional organization
22. Malaria mosquitoes
25. Not composed of matter
30. It's in the ocean
31. Peyton's little brother
32. French commune
33. Eyelashes
38. Equal (prefix)
41. Quality of little or no rain
43. One who beheads
45. Sung to
48. Influential punk artist
49. Amount of time
50. Polio vaccine developer
55. Abba __, Israeli politician
56. Job
57. Flat-bottomed sailboat

59. Japanese wooden clog
60. Folk singer DiFranco
61. FL city
62. Naturally occurring solid
63. Language of indigenous Asian people
64. Dark brown

CLUES DOWN

1. Soviet Socialist Republic
2. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
3. Venomous snake genus
4. Uninteresting
5. Straightforwardness
6. Expression of wild excitement
7. Arrange in order
8. East Indian cereal grass
9. Hillsides
10. Bird beak covering
12. Baseball stat
14. Edge of a surfboard
19. Wrapping accessory
23. Express approval
24. Deduce
25. Similar
26. Born of
27. Automobile
28. Obligated to repay
29. Live in

34. Influential journalist Tarbell
35. Set aflame
36. OJ trial judge
37. Scottish town
39. African nation
40. Egg-shaped wind instrument
41. Mimic
42. Frees
44. In slow tempo
45. Sword
46. Related on the mother's side
47. Mars crater
48. Plant of the lily family
51. Suitable in the circumstances
52. Hillside
53. Metrical foot
54. Amazon river tributary
58. Adult male human

1	2	3	4				5	6	7			8	9	10
11					12			13				14		
15								16				17		
	18					19		20				21		
					22	23					24			
25	26	27	28	29										
30								31						
32										33	34	35	36	37
					38	39	40		41	42				
					43			44						
	45	46	47											
48						49				50	51	52	53	54
55						56				57				58
59						60				61				
62						63					64			

Paws With A Cause assistance dogs help those with disabilities regain independence

By Molly Macleod
Hastings Banner copy editor

Paws With A Cause, a non-profit organization based in Wayland, Mich., has made a name for itself in the service dog industry. In 1979, Michael D. Sapp Sr. was delivering commercial paper to loading docks across the Grand Rapids area. He and his wife, Candye, befriended Marty Jansen and his wife, Dianne, through Sapp's delivery route.

Though Sapp's 9-to-5 job was delivering paper, he trained dogs on the side, mostly for his own enjoyment. Jansen caught wind of this fact and approached Sapp on the loading docks one day. Jansen and his wife were both deaf and had just adopted a deaf child. With no other resources to help them at the time, the Jansens were left wondering how they would hear their young child's cries.

Paws With A Cause (PAWS) Director of Advancement Carrie Simmons recalled the story of her organization's founding, saying Jansen asked Sapp to train a dog to alert him and his wife to their child's cries. Sapp was reluctant at first, but with the help of his wife, he trained the very first PAWS dog: CRYSTAL, a Cairn Terrier.

Though Sapp expected CRYSTAL's training to be a one-off, the Jansens showed up at the Sapp house one night with a crew of their friends. The Jansens were so impressed with CRYSTAL that many of their deaf and hard-of-hearing friends wanted Sapp to train dogs for them, too.



MADGE, shown here, is Paws With a Cause's official ambassador and demonstration dog. MADGE began her PAWS career as a seizure response dog. After her owner passed away, MADGE returned to PAWS and travels with PAWS representatives for demonstrations.

"Forty-four years later, we've placed over 3,200 assistance dogs," said Simmons. Since its foundation in 1979, PAWS has moved its headquarters from Grand Rapids, Mich. to Wayland. PAWS has also expanded from training only hearing assistance dogs to offering four different types of assistance dogs, along with facility dogs for schools or hospitals.

TYPES OF PAWS DOGS

The four types of assistance dogs PAWS offers today include general service, hearing and seizure response dogs in addition to dogs for children with autism.

Service dogs at PAWS are trained to help those living with physical disabilities of all kinds, offering assistance with day-to-day activities, while hearing dogs alert their owners to important sounds they wouldn't otherwise hear, such as an alarm clock or smoke detector.

"We have a client who was living independently but every time she dropped something, she didn't want to call her mom to come pick it up. So she would just wheel around things for a whole week ... and then her mom would come over on Saturday or Sunday and pick up all of her stuff," said Simmons. "She felt like she didn't want to burden her mom every single day to come over and get these things — so it really impeded her life. But now, she has her assistance dog, and he can pick (items) up for her immediately."

"It is pretty impactful," Simmons added.

Seizure response dogs are trained to alert help and offer comfort and assistance during a seizure. While these dogs are not trained to protect from, or alert people to, oncoming seizures, many of the dogs will pick up over time warning signs of an oncoming seizure in their owners.

"The last type of dog that we started training about 12 years ago is service dogs for children with autism. And that is a program that is pretty amazing," said Simmons. "Obviously, all of our dogs serve our clients with a disability, but these dogs in particular have a huge impact on the entire family."

PAWS dogs that work with children with autism help the children reduce their anxiety and improve socialization, among other things.

"Just yesterday, we had a mom here and her 10-year-old daughter has autism. It wasn't until they received their PAWS dog that the mom finally got to sleep through the night after 10 years," said Simmons.

Though PAWS is known across the country for their top-notch dogs and charitable work, all that success did not come without some growing pains.

"Early in the early days, Mike (Sapp) was rescuing dogs and trying to train them. He was only getting about a 1-in-12 success rate," said Simmons.

Because PAWS could not always know if a rescue dog had temperament or physical issues before investing in their training, the organization switched to breeding their dogs in-house about 20 years ago.

THE PATH OF A PAWS PUPPY

All Paws With A Cause dogs are bred in-house at the Wayland headquarters, with "mama" and "papa" dogs fostered by families within a 45-minute drive of the organization's home. PAWS uses four different breeds of dogs: Labrador retrievers, golden retrievers, poodles and papillons.

After the puppies are born, they stay with their mother in her foster home until they are eight-weeks-old. After that, the puppies are brought to the PAWS headquarters for about a week to be vetted and checked over.

The next stop for PAWS puppies in training is to another foster home until they are 12- to 18-months-



Carrie Simmons, director of advancement for Paws With a Cause, said her organization relies on private donations to keep providing its services. One PAWS assistance dog costs \$35,000, on average, to raise and train.

old, where foster owners will teach them basic obedience. Then, it is time for the adolescent dogs to return to the PAWS headquarters for more vetting and training.

After receiving their first round of formal assistance training, the dogs are then sent to one of five prisons in Michigan to live with, and be trained by, inmates for five months. Simmons describes this program as a "win, win, win" situation, because it benefits the dogs, the inmates and the prisons themselves.

"(The inmates) love it. They treat our dogs like you wouldn't imagine. They are very well-loved and cared for in prison," said Simmons.

Only non-violent offenders with zero incidents on their records are allowed to interact with the dogs. If an inmate working with the dog has any type of behavioral incident, they will immediately be barred from seeing the dog. This arrangement has resulted in entire wings of prisons with PAWS dogs showing improvements in behavior overall.

After completing their tour of foster homes, the PAWS dogs finally return to the Wayland headquarters one last time for final training. This training usually takes around four months.

"We have master-level trainers that have journeymanships through the U.S. Department of Labor that certifies them as assistance dog trainers," said Simmons. "They're teaching our dogs to open doors, turn on and off lights, push elevator buttons, pull the covers back over a client if the covers fall off the bed at night. You know, those

kinds of tasks that are really high-level."

From there, the dogs are placed with their clients, who must live within 90 miles of a trained field representative for PAWS, who will serve as a liaison between the client and Paws With A Cause to ensure a fruitful placement of the dog. PAWS dogs are sent all over the country, but most are placed in the organization's home state of Michigan.

PAYING FOR PAWS

Simmons said raising one PAWS assistance dog costs about \$35,000 on average — and over two years of training. For a facilities dog, like those used in school counseling offices, it costs about \$26,000.

Despite the massive costs incurred for each dog by the organization, all PAWS dogs are provided to their clients at no cost.

Simmons said no medical insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, cover any of the costs of an assistance dog. As such, donations are crucial to PAWS continuing to provide their services to those in need across the country.

"Ninety-five percent of our budget comes from philanthropy, and that means that it comes from people just like you and me. That is the bulk of where we get our money," said Simmons. She said there are some small family foundations that donate to PAWS and some grants the organization receives, but overall, it is small, individual donations that drive the nonprofit's funding.

"Some organizations charge their clients for the dog, we're still very lucky to be in a position where we can provide our dogs at no cost," said Simmons. "Most people

with disabilities are on fixed incomes. They can't afford a \$35,000 dog. So how do you make that happen? Donors and individual contributions make it happen."

Paws With A Cause receives around 400 applications each year from potential clients seeking assistance or facility dogs. Of these, around 50 dogs each year are placed with their new owners.

HOW TO HELP

Simmons said PAWS is always looking for foster homes, both for the puppies and their parent dogs. For many families, fostering a puppy can be a great "project" to undertake, said Simmons.

Additionally, PAWS has an Amazon wish list where anyone can buy needed supplies for the program, like Kong toys and peanut butter. The wish list can be found at amzn.to/2vmUXS6.

Paws With a Cause provides several ways for people to contribute money to the organization, with all the options detailed on its website, pawswithacause.org/waystodonate

For those who don't want to donate online, PAWS allows phone donations by calling 616-877-7297. Checks can be made payable to Paws With A Cause and sent to the Paws With A Cause National Headquarters, 4646 Division, Wayland, MI 49348.

Readers can download Zappar, an app for smartphones that will allow them to scan the code shown alongside this story. The Zappar app will take readers to a video that describes the impact PAWS has on its clients.