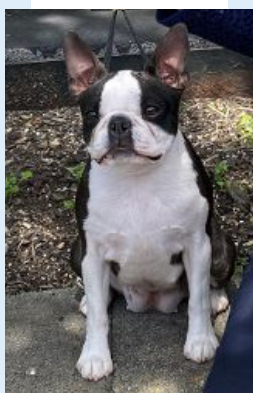




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Lowell Area Schools Sports



page 9, 10, 11 & 14

\$1.00



Riley Carey, a newly published author

By Bill Lee
contributing writer

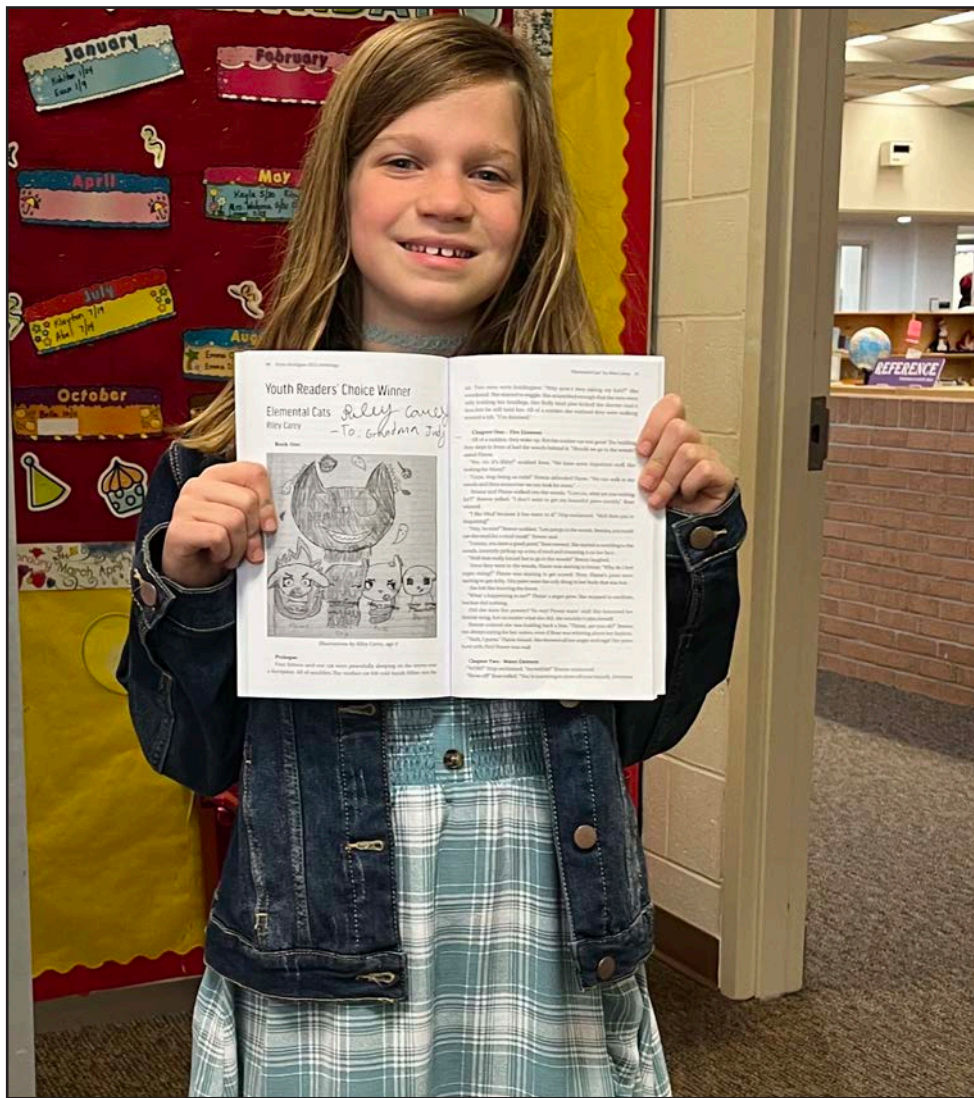
There is a newly published author in the City of Lowell. Yes, Lowell is known for its many artists, musicians and writers, who moonlight as teachers, shop owners, and service workers, but this particular author is a full-time student... in elementary school. Riley Carey, 10 years old and a third grader at Alto Elementary School, recently published her fictional story *Elemental Cats* in this year's Write Michigan Short Story Contest Anthology. The story about four cats looking for their mother in the woods, and then finding out they have special powers, won the Reader's Choice Award for youth fiction. Carey, a resident of Lowell and daughter of Ryan and Rachel and stepmother Kirstie, was thrilled to find out she won the award. "I was so excited," said Riley Carey. Asked how she came up with the idea, Carey responded, "I have a huge

imagination, so I just came up with it."

Carey, who has been writing for many years, is also a talented artist. She plans on putting those talents to use in her upcoming stories. Recently, she finished her second *Elemental Cats* story and is now involved in other projects. "I am working on a comic book called *Beauty* about a girl who is really pretty," said Carey. "Also I'm working on another book called *The Adventures of Gracie and Koda*, about if my two dogs met each other, and I'm working on the third *Elemental Cats* book."

Her third-grade teacher at Alto Elementary has been very impressed with Riley's talent and work ethic. "Riley is a very creative student," said Carla Womba, Riley's teacher. "She is confident in her writing and her art."

**New author,
continued page 2**



2023 Lowell Graduation Section in Next Weeks Edition

Betsy Davidson memorial bench dedicated



Betsy Davidson held a special place in the hearts of the Vergennes Township board and staff. She worked tirelessly in and for the township, not just in business but in truly serving her community. In her honor, the board and staff raised personal funds to purchase a memorial bench to not just offer a place of rest on a trail, but to preserve her memory and encourage future generations to live like Betsy.

The Township of Vergennes dedicated the memorial bench on Saturday, May 20, 2023. The bench is located on the Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trail between Lincoln Lake Ave NE and 4 Mile Rd NE. *Photo courtesy of Bruce Doll.*

City Council approves annual budget

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

The Lowell City Council met on Monday, May 15, 2023 to discuss an agenda full of new items. Among the agenda items discussed by the council were the compensation committee's report, the planning commission's yearly update, and a public hearing for proposed renovations to the water treatment plant and wastewater treatment plant. However, the most important item of the night was to discuss and approve budgets, both for the City of Lowell and Lowell Light & Power.

City Manager, Mike Burns, has discussed over the past several weeks the amount of time he

and his staff have been devoting to the preparation of the 2023/24 annual budget, including a two-hour budget work session with the city council on Monday, April 24, and this only accounts for the work done for the city's budget. It does not include the work that General Manager, Charlie West, did for the preparation of the Lowell Light & Power budget.

Lowell Light & Power expects to generate \$10.6 million in revenue during the upcoming fiscal year, an 8.2 percent increase over the previous year. After expenses are accounted for, West projects over \$500,000 in

**City council,
continued page 3**

New author, continued

She is a very unique student. She thinks about things a little differently, and has a real zest for writing, and is a natural at it. It is really fun to see her put her own voice in her writing. Kids don't come to third grade with that skill, so that has been fun for her to share her writing with the class, and it just amazes some of the kids."

One of Riley Carey's relatives, Leah Morrison, is a professional artist in Grand Rapids and has provided some inspiration.

Riley plans on continuing to write and draw in the future, and may want to make a living from both, when she gets older. "I just want to be a writer, and an illustrator ,because I heard that authors give half of their money to the illustrator, so I want to illustrate my own books so I get all that money," said Carey. Ten-years-old and already has a plan. You can read Riley Carey's story *Elemental Cats* in this year's edition of Write Michigan Short Story Contest.



New author, Riley Carey and her third grader teacher, Carla Womba.

Lowell Senior Neighbors and Gilda's Club relocate to First Congregational Church

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

After over 30 years of tenure at Lowell's historic Hale House, Senior Neighbors and Gilda's Club have moved to First Congregational UCC of Lowell, where operations commenced on Monday, May 22, 2023. Both organizations previously took up residence at a farmhouse, purchased by George and Dorothy Hale, when they moved to Lowell in 1938. George Hale served as postmaster from 1949-1965 and Dorothy worked as a post office clerk. The Hale House will be listed for sale now that Senior Neighbors and Gilda's Club have migrated. Wendy Wigger is the president of Gilda's Club.

"That space was so beautiful and so home-like," Wigger said. However, Gilda's Club did face limitations using a farmhouse to meet the needs of a nonprofit business. "It was challenging to be able to hold as many people, and as many support groups and activities, in that space at the same time, as we would like."

Gilda's Club Lowell is a cancer and grief support organization, and some folks with cancer struggled to get up to the second floor of Hale House seeing as the building does not have an elevator. Senior Neighbors faced similar limitations for their services. Bob Barnes is the president of Senior Neighbors, a nonprofit that serves to enhance the lives of senior citizens.

"It's just not big enough for a senior center," Barnes said. "Senior centers thrive, having multiple rooms and one large gathering room, where you can have a lot of people together."

Though both organizations have loved their tenure at the Hale House, it is clear that the building's residential



Though Senior Neighbors resumed regular activities on Monday, May 22, 2023 at First Congregational, there is still a lot of work to do. Jennifer Kreiner continues to unpack years of important items from the organization's 30-year tenure at Hale House.

limitations have hampered growth for these essential services in the Lowell community. Hopes are high that the move to First Congregational UCC of Lowell will assist both organizations with accomplishing their mission and expanding their reach. Shannon Jammal-Hollemans is the pastor at First Congregational. "We're excited to begin building this partnership," Jammal-Hollemans said. "It just makes sense to work in a shared space."

First Congregational is already the home to Open Table, Lowell Women's Club, Flow Tai Chi, Lowell Pride, and Girl Scouts, and now the campus opens its doors to Senior Neighbors and Gilda's Club. The 19-acre campus features a single-story church with a large gathering area at its front entrance and two wings full of offices, meeting rooms, and a kitchen, checking all of the boxes for Senior Neighbors and Gilda's Club.

Barnes noted that it is a perfect fit for the three organizations to work out of First Congregational because of varying

operational hours. First Congregational does most of its integral work on the weekends, Senior Neighbors on weekday mornings and early afternoons, and Gilda's Club on weekday afternoons and evenings. Right now, there are no foreseeable conflicts, but Jammal-Hollemans is optimistic about the results, if any arise. "We are ready for the bumps that will come," she said. "No change is ever easy."

The three organizations are also on the same page about fundamentals. The United Church of Christ has been an open and affirming organization since 1985, meaning that the church affirms the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ persons in the church's life and ministry. In line with this perspective, Senior Neighbors has committed to nondiscrimination with its services, welcoming everybody who is both 60 years of age or older and a resident of Kent County. Gilda's Club offers a similar open-welcome, holding to the adage, "Come as you are."

The timing for this move could not be better. As baby boomers transition into retirement, a process that will take place roughly through 2029, the need for post-retirement programs, like those provided by Senior Neighbors, is only going to

increase. Furthermore, as the median age of the population increases, so too does the number of people who get cancer. Fortunately, there are fewer people dying from a cancer diagnosis, as well, and these two statistics only increase the need for Gilda's Club in the community.

"Our goal is to significantly grow the number of people we are serving to try and meet that need," Barnes said.

Gilda's Club advertises largely through word of mouth, and Wigger is excited for the opportunities for cross-promotion at the organization's new home in Lowell. Anyone who comes to First Congregational, for whatever reason, a church service, a dinner with Open Table, or a healthy-aging class with Senior Neighbors ,may learn of Gilda's Club's services for the first time. Perhaps a community member thought Gilda's Club was only for people with a cancer diagnosis but learned that the organization also hosts activities for people suffering grief from the death of a loved one. "We're just really blessed to be able to share this with other organizations doing good in the community," said Jammal-Hollemans.

Move, continued
next page



the lowell
ledger

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City Council, continued

net income, which itself, is an increase of 27 percent. The vast majority of this surplus is expected to go into upgrading and replacing all of the infrastructure on the east side of the Flat River, which West noted as a long-term goal that has been delayed due to inflation.

The underlying message of West’s presentation is that nationwide, inflation has affected all portions of the power company’s budget, including the switch from non-renewable to renewable energy sources. Two of Lowell Light & Power’s primary fossil fuel sources of electricity are getting shut-down or converted,

which has put an impetus on the utility to find new sources of energy to meet the community’s needs. Some of these additional energy sources include the MPPA Solar Project and Pegasus Wind Project.

“Right now, some of our most economical power is coming from solar agreements that we have,” West said, noting that the supply of solar energy increases in the summer, along with similarly increasing demands. “What we used to get for about \$42, we’re being priced out at about \$65 right now.”

There are additional hurdles to the utility’s efforts

to decarbonize the city’s power sources. Lowell Light & Power was given notice four years in advance of the shutdown of two power plants, but it takes about eight to ten years to acquire another source of power from brainstorming to full production. Furthermore, solar panels require materials mined and produced in China, which creates delays due to tariff circumvention investigations and child labor investigations. The picture West painted was one of uncertainty for the nation’s energy needs.

“If I had a crystal ball... I wish I did,” West said. “I spend most of my day wishing I had a crystal ball.”

The city expects to generate \$4 million in revenue during the upcoming fiscal year, with about \$63,000 in net income. Some of the new expenditures the city expects to absorb include a number of roadwork projects, from a resurface of Ottawa Street to an infrastructure overhaul on Monroe Street.

The city’s annual budget was listed as a public hearing on the council’s agenda, but only one person came for public comment.



Mayor Mike DeVore requests that City Manager, Mike Burns, thank his staff for their hard work on the annual budget.

This was Perry Beachum, who simply wanted to know if the approval of the city’s annual budget included the approval of the Lowell Light & Power budget. With no further public comment, the council voted unanimously to approve the budget. From there, council members showed their support for City Manager, Burns, and his staff.

“Mike, I hope you’ll extend our thanks to your staff,” said Mayor, Mike DeVore. “I think you do a fantastic job.”

“I would like to thank Mr. Burns for his financial

acumen,” said council member, Cliff Yankovich. “I think the citizens of Lowell can go to sleep knowing their money is in good hands.”

Yankovich also claimed that the budget process gets easier every year. “That’s our goal,” Burns replied. “It ain’t easy for me, but I thought I’d make it easy for you.”

The Lowell City Council meets the first and third Monday of each

month, barring Monday holidays, which often delays the meeting until the following Tuesday. This means the next council meeting will take place on Monday, June 5, 2023 at 7:00 pm. Those interested in watching the May 15th 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.



Lowell Light & Power General Manager, Charlie West, presents the LLP annual budget.

Move, continued

First Congregational UCC of Lowell holds weekly service on Sundays at 10 am. Those interested in attending may do so in person or online using Zoom. First Congregational can be found online on the website lowellucc.org. Senior Neighbors partners with Meals on Wheels to serve food to seniors in need. More information on the wide variety of services provided by Senior Neighbors can be found on the organization’s website seniornighbors.org. Gilda’s Club provides emotional health services for anyone suffering from cancer or death-related grief. The Gilda’s Club Grand Rapids website gildasclubgr.org is a great place to find out more about these services.



Seniors celebrate their first Senior Neighbors activity at the new location by playing cards and drinking coffee in the large gathering area at First Congregational.

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CITY OF
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that the Lowell Planning-Citizens Advisory Commission will hold a public hearing at Lowell City Hall, located at 301 East Main Street, Lowell, MI 49331 on Monday, June 12, 2022, at 7:00 PM. The subject of the hearing will be:

Proposed Temporary Open Air Business,
2153 West Main Street

An application has been submitted by Aaron Prymula on behalf of West Michigan Auto Xchange utilize a portion of 2153 West Main Street, Lowell MI, 49331 (PPN 41-20-11-201-008) for temporary open air business. The applicant is seeking to host a host a used vehicle sales event from Thursday, July 20, 2023, through Saturday, July 29, 2023.

Copies of the application and the City’s Zoning Ordinance are available for public viewing during regular business hours at Lowell City Hall, 301 East Main Street, Lowell, Michigan. Written comments will be received until the night of the hearing.

The City will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon three (3) days’ notice to the City Clerk. Individuals who require such services should contact the City at the address listed above or by telephone at 616-897-8457.



Respectfully,
Susan Ullery
Lowell City Clerk



Worth the Popcorn?

By Justin Tiemeyer

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 is the 32nd film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and the final installation of the *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise. Based on the Marvel Comics series of the same name, the film stars Chris Pratt as Peter Quill/Star-Lord, Zoe Saldana as Gamora, Dave Bautista as Drax the Destroyer, Karen Gillan as Nebula, Pom Klementieff as Mantis, Vin Diesel as Groot, and Bradley Cooper as Rocket. This is writer and director James Gunn's final film with the MCU before taking over as co-chairman and co-CEO of DC Studios.

Will Poulter of *Shameless* fame as Adam Warlock, a cosmic being engineered to be infinitely powerful and wholly perfect. Warlock's appearance was teased as early as 2013, when his cocoon appeared in the Collector's museum with none other than Howard the Duck during a mid-credits scene in *Thor: Dark World*. Having emerged from the cocoon too soon—perhaps to move it where it's actually supposed to be, since Gunn, who directed the mid-credits scene himself, admits that its placement there was a mistake—Warlock is not everything he was promised to be. His powers are amazing, but not that amazing, and he's pretty

reprehensible morally, casually annihilating an alien he was supposed to interrogate.

In fact, in this, the darkest *Guardians of the Galaxy* film to date, everyone is pretty terrible. Quill never really seems present, acting erratically due to the loss of his beloved Gamora (the other Gamora) and the potential loss of his friend Rocket. Rocket is benched for most of the movie, as the talking raccoon lays in a coma, replaying his memories of his tragic origin story aboard the High Evolutionary's ship. The rest of the *Guardians of the Galaxy* have transformed into a hive of murder hobo marauders who revel in the slaughter and evisceration of anyone in their way. The film is pretty messy in terms of plot, characterization, and destruction, until the final act, when Gunn pulls everything together and justifies all the positive reviews.

It makes sense why the *Guardians of the Galaxy* have become so violent. All of them have experienced loss in the extreme. They

wander the frontiers of space civilizations, robbing and pilfering just to get by. It's a game of survival, and they have always seen games, such as this, play out one way and one way only: you have to kill your opponent before they kill you. Add into the mix the fact that the High Evolutionary, expertly portrayed by Chukwudi Iwuji, is a eugenicist who regularly commits genocide in service of an ideal society. Someone might have made a reference to "punching Nazis" if any of the characters were that familiar with Earth history. Even Peter Quill, who was born on Earth, left long before he could take a world history course.

The reason this film is so satisfying is because it underscores the importance of one act of kindness, something that ties all of these problematic anti-heroes together. They may have done terrible things, just as they may have suffered terrible things, but when first exposed to kindness, they each responded in kind. They turned off their rage to notice non-combatants in need of help, or they prevented a would-be enemy from getting killed and, in the process, gained an unlikely ally. This is what it means to be a Guardian of the Galaxy, and this is the principle with which James Gunn completed nine years of character arcs. Eyes that rolled at yet another distracting music number during the first half of the movie, were wet with tears during the second half.



Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 signals a transition for the MCU, from a gaggle of PG-13 films with a bunch of violence, to a franchise that embraces all ratings. Making way for the R-rated film *Deadpool 3*, the film even features the first F-bomb in 15 years of films. During an interview with *Total Film*, Pratt insinuated that the cast and crew knew this might be a problem.

"It's exciting to me that people who were kids, when the first movie came out, are now young adults and will emotionally be ready," Pratt said. "They've matured alongside the franchise in a way."

The *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise now ranges from the kid-friendly Disney+ series *I Am Groot*,

which is close to, if not G-rated, to *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, which is PG-13 leaning toward R. In other words, not all *Guardians of the Galaxy* content is created equal, and parents should be aware of this fact while deciding whether to bring young children to see this film.

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 took its sweet time getting to the good stuff, but the good stuff was good enough to warrant the build-up. In the final act, Gunn effortlessly ties together nine years of character arcs for a deeply satisfying conclusion to the *Guardians of the Galaxy* trilogy. Is this the end for the Guardians? That much is unclear. The film presents a brave path forward for a group with a potentially ever-changing roster, but, in truth, it felt like an ending. Though Gillan, and potentially, Diesel and Pratt are open to future films, the vast majority of the cast is done with Marvel for good, citing either makeup or loyalty to Gunn as their reason. If the Guardians continue, Marvel will have to recast many of the main roles, present their continued adventures as an animated series, or come up with a different lineup. As for the final installment in the series: it was a really fun film with some really memorable moments. It is the best superhero film of the year so far, and it is well worth a watch.

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FOR INFORMATION
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viewpoint



125 years ago The Lowell Ledger May 26, 1898

Decoration Day exercises will be held at Island Park on Memorial Day. After the exercise, everyone will march to the cemetery, headed by the band, where appropriate ceremonies will be held.

At Bay City, Roy Barrett, aged 6, was crushed by a runaway team, and the 5-year-old son of Daniel McMillan, in attempting to get off a milk wagon, fell under the wheels and was instantly killed.

A half-starved man was found in an Erie box car at Ravenna. He said he entered the car in New York State and someone locked him in. He had been five days without food or drink when discovered.

It is expected the school board will select the cops of teachers for the coming year this week.

It is stated that a farmer near Belding has 600 bushels of potatoes, for which he refused 81 cents per bushel, only a few weeks ago. He will probably now set by and see the decay or let go of them at about one half that figure.

100 years ago The Lowell Ledger May 24, 1923

Mistaking for water a glass of acid, used in soldering, and swallowing some, Henry Alexander, aged 37, lies in a critical condition at his Lowell home with the outcome still in doubt this Thursday forenoon.

The electrical storm of Saturday evening played havoc with many lines of the telephone system.

Mrs. John Nash suffered a stroke of paralysis Tuesday. Her right side paralyzed.

Two young men, with two young ladies from Lowell, stopped at the schoolhouse here and assisted the teacher and pupils in having a good time by teaching them some new games with balls. They were touring the country and inviting schools to attend the school festival at Lowell May 25.

75 years ago The Lowell Ledger May 27, 1948

VFW and American Legion plan Memorial Day, Monday, May 31. The parade will start at Richards Park and march, headed by the school band. The procession will pause at the bridge, where a tribute to heroes of navy will be made. An address will be delivered. Patriotic songs will be sung, the firing squad will fire a salute and taps will be sounded.

The better business committee of the Board of Trade announces that Lowell stores will be closed all day, Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

The teams that are entered in the Lowell softball league this summer are: King Milling, A & P, VFW, Ada, Alto, Snow. Schedules will be announced later.

The Lowell merchants will be sponsoring free movies every Friday night, at dark, at the Lowell Airport.

50 years ago Lowell Ledger Suburban Life May 24, 1973

Residents are warned about temporary water, gas or electricity outages, interrupted garbage service and parking problems, as the storm sewer-water separation project works it's way through town.

After much sound and fury, the Rix Robinson memorial rock is returned from across M-21 to the original spot (about where Robinson's house stood).

The Lowell Area Bus Drivers Association objects to the school board decision to go to single runs, which will require more buses and more drivers than double runs.

Lowell City Council votes to help, \$23,000 worth, with new seating for the Showboat.

25 years ago The Lowell Ledger May 27, 1998

Cherry Creek fifth graders discovered that designing a Web page can be fun and a lot of work. The Cherry Creek Elementary Web page will be up and ready for use on Friday. Browsers will then learn the student's Web page is also very informative.

Mike and Judy Tummino and the Ionia County National Bank have come together to present a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the Lowell Area Arts Council on Monday, June 8.

Lowell boys' 3200-meter relay team showed again it is one of the best in West Michigan. The team of Ryan Wittenbach, Jeff Ortowski, Adam Mix and Nate Schoen took top honors at the John Box Invitational with a time of 8:14.8.

Lowell citizens gathered on Memorial Day to honor their local war veterans. Most then traveled to Oakwood Cemetery for a Memorial Observance service.

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to the editor

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

To the editor:

We appear to be bracing for another entirely unnecessarily contentious school board election in 2024.

As a community member, a public school taxpayer, a Lowell Area Schools supporter and former Lowell Education Foundation board member, I'm frustrated and angry that our school board, administrators and teachers are having to endure continual attacks on their character and are being robbed of time, energy and focus on our students to fend off book challenges.

I'm angry that a small group of community members are being led to believe our public school libraries are where students are being "provided pornography," when an entire universe of explicit and horrific material can be explored on the cell phones in their pockets that their parents provide, ironically, to try to keep them safe.

I'm angry that a parent from outside our district is the orchestrator of all this, and that it also has robbed our Lowell Police Department of time, energy and focus on our community that she tried to submit false charges against our Board of Education. That, when she did not get the response she hoped for, she badmouthed a Lowell officer online, then went to the Kent County prosecutor and was told, again, that there is no 'there' there.

Our LAS Board members are our neighbors. They are people we have known for years, often generations. They sit next to us in church and at local restaurants. They volunteer on our children's sports teams and in our community. They are people we have voted for to lead our district in setting policy, guide spending and shape our young people into critical thinkers and empathetic citizens of the world.

I'm tired of the nonsense, and I'm angry that all this time, energy and focus has been spent

**Letters, continued
page 12**

We love to hear from you!

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

The requirements are:

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

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



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

Summer Wonder Teen Crew Orientation
Saturday, May 27, 11 am - noon. Enthusiastic and energetic teen volunteers are wanted to help with Summer Wonder at KDL. Fun times are guaranteed, with the added benefit of service experience. Registration is required via a paper application available at your branch. Spaces are limited; contact your branch for more information. For ages 11-17.

Storytime
Mondays, June 5 and 19, 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: Under the Sea
Tuesday, June 6, 1:30 - 2:30 pm. Calling all merfolk, seafolk and mariners! Take a dive with some ocean-themed STEAM activities. For ages 5-10.

Touch a Truck
Monday, June 12, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Check out big trucks and the amazing operators that keep our community working. Learn and explore together! For ages 0-10.

John Ball Zoo’s Travel Zoo
Tuesday, June 13, 1:30 - 2:30 pm. John Ball will bring the zoo to KDL! Students will learn about wildlife conservation through interacting with live zoo animals in the comfort of your library. For ages 5-10.

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At Your Local Library

ABCs of Lowell history

The ABCs of Lowell History is back for another round. This popular series explores a wide variety of topics in Lowell area history in weekly online articles.

A is for Addorio Technologies, Inc.

Addorio Technologies, Inc. began in 2000 and closed December 31, 2022. While very successful, the story and memory of the company isn’t in its success or longevity. Addorio will always be remembered because of the impact of the founder, Betsy Dommer Davidson.

Betsy started the business in 2000. ‘Addorio’ was named for Betsy’s mother’s Italian family. The company grew quickly, and Betsy brought her brother, Tony Dommer, into the company. Addorio’s success was seen in its high client retention rate.

Vergennes Township was Addorio’s first municipality. In the late 1990’s, Vergennes was looking for an I.T. person to help coordinate a new server/software program project. Betsy’s mother, Denise, mentioned to her friend Mari Stone, then clerk at Vergennes, that Betsy was planning on starting her own I.T. company. When Vergennes began using her services, Betsy spent a considerable amount of her own time, attending meetings and training, to learn the municipal world and the software specific to municipalities. Because of this, she gained expertise and earned trust from municipal clients. This is shown in the fact that 40 percent of Addorio’s business came from municipalities.

She joined Rotary in 2004 and served on the board, beginning in 2008. Betsy loved working for her community and the global community through Rotary.

She joined the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce in 2007 in order to network and discovered her passion for the importance of the chamber’s work. She served as an ambassador, was on the Board of Directors, and chaired the Riverwalk Festival for many years, including the 2007 festival, which celebrated the 175-year anniversary of the Lowell settlement. Many things were incorporated into the festival to share the history of Lowell, another love of Betsy’s. In 2018 she was named the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce’s ‘Person of the Year’.

In her personal life, Betsy loved her husband Matt, her family and helping others. Besides all her community work as a business owner, she served her community as Betsy Davidson, community member. She was a humble person who would work with you, exuding patience and esteem.

The results of her work can be seen nearly everywhere in Lowell and the surrounding areas. She worked behind the scenes with the Tri-Rivers Museum Network to design and publish a guide for their annual ‘Spring Into The Past’ weekend.

In high school, Betsy ran track and cross country. As a high school sophomore, she



earned the “Most Dedicated” individual award for running track. She was voted “Most Valuable” in cross country. Her desire was to make trails available to the community so all could enjoy the love of running, walking and recreation. She was one of the original members of a citizens’ group that started meeting in 1999 to create a railway system to connect the city and surrounding townships. She helped create, and was a charter member, of the Lowell Area Trailway/ Recreation Authority as citizen representative for Vergennes township. Her tenacious dedication to the trails was instrumental to the successful creation of the trails currently in existence, which start in Vergennes at the Wittenbach/Wege Center and run to the Lowell Township Park South. She personally worked tirelessly to secure easements for the trail and volunteers for trail clean-up and work.

Betsy volunteered at the Fallasburg Historical Society and the Lowell Area Historical Museum events, Flat River Outreach Ministry, Relay for Life, served as a Lowell Area

Community Fund Board Member from 2004-2007, Pink Arrow Pride cancer fundraising and support, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, organizing “MS Day at the Lake” for over 10 years, and others.

Betsy loved her community, and her community loved her. Following her death, the Lowell Rotary set up two scholarships in honor of Betsy - The Betsy Davidson Memorial Scholarship (IT/ Computer Science) and The Betsy Davidson Memorial Scholarship (Trade School). In honor of Betsy’s love of trails and her community, the LARA Trailway board had a bench made that will be placed in memory of her. The soon-to-be completed section of the trail in Lowell, from Recreation Park to Foreman, will be named “The Betsy Davidson Trail Section”. In addition, the staff and board members of Vergennes Township donated personal funds to have a memorial bench made that is on the Fred Meijer Rail Trail, between Lincoln Lake and 4 Mile Rd.

Thank you, Betsy, from your grateful community.

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MAY 29

Sue Lindhout, Mike Lindhout, Justin Doyle.

Last Gasp Collective: LowellArts Artist of the Month

by Bill Lee
contributing writer

When Justin “Jay” Jackson founded the band, Last Gasp Collective, over seven years ago, he had a vision to bring a unique form of music to the west Michigan area. With members Jess Ivey (lead vocalist), Jordan Hamilton (cello), Terrence Smith

The good news for Lowell residents is Last Gasp Collective, LowellArts Artist of the Month for May, will be performing the first Lowell Showboat Summer Sizzlin’ Concert on June 15, so the town will get to experience the distinctive sound for itself.

Jackson performed at open mics in the Kalamazoo

vision and current success of the band. All the band members were trained in college and are individually talented with solo careers. But when they come together and play, decisions on what to keep and what to change have to be made. With so many members, the process of creating music could be difficult, but Jackson has a

multiple musicians and puts it together so seamlessly.”

When you listen to a song by Last Gasp Collective, there is a jazz component, where each musician bolsters and feeds off the others, but then plays a supporting role as a background musician. But it’s more than jazz. There is a structure to it, which takes a lot of work and practice behind the scenes. “Their last album, *Our Daily Bread* - 80 percent of it was put together in a matter of a week,” said Watson. “It was a retreat where they spent all this time together and put most of the instrumentation together. The style of the way they create music is like spitball. Everybody plays something and then they will put the piano here and build upon a certain piece.”

In the future, Last Gasp Collective is hoping to be chosen to attend Global Fest, a music conference and festival where chosen bands tour the country representing the program. Also, as musicians, they just want to continue to perform and tour within the State of Michigan and beyond.

“Like any musical artist, they love to perform live,” said Watson. “Music is what they want to do for a living, so getting out and actually doing it, it’s food for the soul. They’re in the zone and where they want to be when they are performing. Honestly, it’s their therapy and they hope people resonate with it.”

You can find Last Gasp Collective’s music on Spotify, iTunes, You Tube, and all social media platforms. Again, you can also see them live on June 15 in Lowell as they open the summer season for Lowell’s Showboat Summer Sizzlin’ Concerts.

outdoors

boating in Michigan

Dave Stegehuis

With over 3,000 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, 11,000 lakes larger than 5 acres, and 300 rivers, it is no wonder that the state is home to over one million registered watercraft. In order to get over half of all Michigan residents out on the water every year, there are over 1,000 boating access sites and 80 public harbors.

A majority of boat owners use their craft for fishing for the many species of fish found in the lakes and rivers. Folks who don’t own a boat can fish or cruise with those that do, sign on with a charter captain, or rent some type of watercraft.

Larger boats ply the Great Lakes between the many safe harbors strung out along the shoreline. Inland lakes have their share of pleasure boats. Public launch ramps provide access to many popular lakes and property owners tie up all kinds of watercraft at their dock. Jet skis have remained popular with the weekend and holiday crowds keeping the water stirred up on most inland lakes. Kayaks are an economical and convenient way to enjoy cruising around or fishing. Old school canoes can be seen on inland lakes and especially scenic rivers.

Paddle boards have become the new craft on the lake. Pontoon boats are becoming larger and more luxurious. They are like a living room on the water. The whole family can go out on the water in comfort and safety. Sailboats fill the bill for hard core sailors.

Boating provides a variety of recreational opportunities for residents, as well as visitors to the state. Public and private campgrounds are generally located on water. Recreational boating generates billions of dollars for the Michigan economy,

Owning and operating a watercraft requires an investment in time and money. Engines need occasional service. Off-season protected storage will extend the useful life of a boat. Boat operators must know and comply with a catalog of rules and regulations to promote safety on the water. Properly maintaining and responsibly operating any type of watercraft are a major part of watercraft ownership.

Whether you own a boat or hitch a ride, spending time on the water, doing what you enjoy, is a great way to take advantage of another Michigan summer. Smooth sailing.



Photo courtesy of Instagram

(drums), Tyler Robinson (bass), and Grayson Nye (keyboards), the band shares a of mix of soul, rhythm and blues, jazz, hip-hop, rap, and other styles to their shows. It is a sound comparable to The Roots or Erykah Badu. “Jay’s goal, from the beginning, was to shake up the hip-hop scene in Kalamazoo,” said band manager, Shayla Watson. “His goal was to be original and unique.”

area, when he first started out, and then met cellist, Jordan Hamilton, to form the initial band. Over time, they added members – some who have stayed and some who have moved on. The present band has strong connections to the University of Western Michigan, where most of them met.

The band’s sound and voice has taken years to develop and Shayla Watson credits Jackson with following through on his

talent for putting the sounds all together. “A lot [of the band members] have played or sang in church, and of course, a lot of them are very well-versed in music, so when it comes to how they play, it is a combination of a lot of things, but at the end of the day, I have to give Jay credit,” said Watson. “He is the producer and puts it all together. There is a certain touch that he has, where he takes the greatness of

business matters



Greenridge Realty, Lowell office announced that Eva Smith received Realtor of the Month, for the month of April.

This award recognizes Seese for his outstanding success and achievements.



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Sparrow — the bad little dog that could

By Cliff Yankovich
contributing writer

2023 is shaping up to be a great year for Lowell-based competitors. While Kate Brim was tearing up the European roadways for Team USA, Sparrow, the Boston Terrier, conquered the Westminster Dog Show. When we last wrote about Sparrow eleven months ago, she had recently emerged as the top of her breed, while showing against hundreds of Bostons. Her victory at the National Show for Bostons in Loveland, CO. was what made her eligible to represent the breed at Westminster, arguably the premier dog show in the United States.

Since last June,

Sparrow competed in the National Dog Show in November. That's the show that is televised on Thanksgiving Day. She won the competition for her breed there, so she and her handler, Candice Waters, were on television together. Candice was not alone in the ring showing Sparrow; she was very pregnant at the time. The next big shows were the Royal Canin shows in Orlando, FL. Sparrow did not take top honors there, but she finished in the ribbons, in every show, and was the only Boston to do so. Owner, Jill Moore remarked, "To give her the benefit-of-the-doubt, she wasn't on her A-game, as Candice was home giving

birth to her baby, Moriah." In January, she stepped back into the ring with Candice at the helm. You might remember that the story of Sparrow included a mention that her father, Jack, while a very handsome dog, was a bit of a rascal when it came to showing. Sometimes Sparrow acts like her dad and the event in Florida was one of those times. Moore summed it up, "In true Sparrow-fashion, there came a series of...hmm....yawn moments. She seemed most intent on vying for Candice's attention with a newborn human....and if that meant peeing on folded laundry, so be it."

As the Westminster event loomed on the horizon, Team Sparrow was pretty much scratching their collective heads. April was "a miserable month" for them with just one tiny two-point win. Jill Moore seems to take it all in stride. She said, "Trying to psychoanalyze Sparrow is akin to herding cats, it just ain't happenin'. She always seemed happy in the ring with Candice, but then there would come a 'Hey, hold my beer and watch THIS' moment where she would charge around the ring or choose a crucial moment to lick her nether regions. But on the off-chance, we purchased our flights and booked the trip [to Westminster]." Moore reported that in order to hedge her bets and make the most of the trip, she also purchased tickets to two Broadway musicals.



Sparrow, with her handler, Candice Waters.

On to Westminster. Moore likens this show to being "the Kentucky Derby of Dog Shows" because all the top dogs in the country find their way there. According to Jill, the weather was phenomenal and the venue for the event was top-drawer. It was the first time for the show to be held at the Arthur Ashe Stadium in Flushing, NY. "I went and sat by myself in the stands and watched about an hour of junior showmanship, trying to steady my nerves," Moore recalled. "When the Bostons first entered the ring, my heart sank a bit because Sparrow was geeked....prancing at the end of the leash, walking on her hind feet, etc. I mean you want SOME animation, but Sparrow had a big smile on her face and was

giving Candice the side-eyed glances, like 'Hoo boy, you better hold on tight girlfriend, cuz things are gonna get wild'". The Boston group started out with twenty-three dogs, all of whom are AKC top-rated and have earned Grand Champion status. They judge males and females separately, at first. Sparrow was among the four females and five males who made the cut. The judge narrowed that group down to three males and two females. "By this time, I can hear my heartbeat in my ears," Jill recalled. "When the judge turned away from the boys and motioned to Candice, you could hear a pin drop. When she said 'This is my breed winner for Westminster 2023', I burst into tears. I'm so grateful

that my sister, niece, and best friend were there to share the moment with me. Breeders strive their entire career to win at Westminster and the little bad dog from Lowell, Michigan did it. Sparrow is not done for the year. She will be leaving Lowell on the 27th for the Boston Terrier National, which is being held in Wilmington, Ohio, this year. There are two pre-shows there, and then "the big one", on Friday, June 2nd. In August, Sparrow will fly to Switzerland to compete in the World Dog Show. The Westminster-win scored her an invitation to Crufts in England, in 2024, so Team Sparrow is considering that trip. Maybe Sparrow will cross paths with Kate Brim at some point, representing Lowell on the International stage.

Showboat Garden Club make downtown beautiful

Lowell's historic district put on its spring and summer finery this past weekend, thanks to the efforts of the Lowell Showboat Garden Club (LSGC). On Saturday morning more than a dozen garden club volunteers gathered to plant the boxes lining the downtown bridge, the large pots along the Riverwalk, and the Showboat's hanging baskets.

Proven Winners Supertunia Vista hybrid petunias in bright pink "Bubblegum" anchor and provide visual continuity among the arrangements. The petunias bloom throughout the warm weather months. They can mound up to two feet in height and will also spill several feet over the edges of their containers by season's end. LSGC Co-

President, Cinny Gould, remarked, "These flowers were courtesy of the Donna Jean Ford fund. Donna Jean's gift to the city will continue to beautify our community for years to come." Gould noted Ford was a long-time garden club member who passed in 2020.

The 11 bridge boxes, which made their debut a year ago, house 80 of the petunia plants interspersed with Creeping Jenny, a trailing plant with golden-green foliage. The purchase of the metal boxes was also made possible through the Ford fund.

The many Riverwalk planters contain not only petunias and Creeping Jenny, but the showy Queen Tut, as well. Queen Tut is a dwarf papyrus growing up to two feet tall. The heads of the papyrus stems



form spidery tufts. LSGC members also prepared the ten baskets filled with pink-ranging and white petunias hanging from Showboat's starboard.

Carol McGregor, a club officer and one of Saturday's volunteers, shared, "These are the community events that we

do as a club, that give us so much satisfaction. We even had a new couple come and join us. Passersby on bikes, walking, or running all

commented on how good things were looking."

Breakfast is served

By Cliff Yankovich
contributing writer

Early Monday morning the garage at the DPW was filled with some very different aromas – the smell of sausage, bacon, toasted English muffins, and hash browns filled the air as the City workers began to show up for their day. Marty Chambers loves to cook and he really enjoys saying “Thank you” to the men and women who work hard to keep our streets, parks, and other public property looking its best all year round.

“I wanted to do this to thank them for all of the hard work the DPW does to keep Lowell looking great,” Chambers said between cooking eggs to order. “They keep our parks tidy and

looking good, empty all the City trash containers, keep our lawns and bushes on City property maintained, and come winter the way they keep our streets free of snow is second to none.”

Chambers also excels at getting people and businesses to help him say “Thank you”. He wrangled money, in kind donations, gift certificates, and donated labor from all over Lowell. The list includes: King Milling, Flat River Grill, Big Boiler, Tap House Boutique, Sabor Mexicano, Elite Auto Body, Red Barn Mercantile, Chimera Design, Fish & Chicken Express, and the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce. They all pitched in to celebrate the staff at the Department of Public Works. Dave Austin, who

lives in Lowell and recently retired from Williams & Works, showed up with pastries and donuts.

In addition to food and prizes, Marty persuaded City Council member Jim Salzwedel, Martha Davis from Tap House Boutique, and a lady some readers might remember – one Liz Baker, to get up at Zero Dark Thirty in order to have the two flat top grills loaded with a great tasting breakfast featuring sausage, ham, and bacon from Gary’s. Egg McMuffins only dream of tasting as good as one of Marty’s breakfast sandwiches - some of which had sausage, ham, bacon, and cheese. Combine one of those with a cup of coffee and a big rectangle of hash browns and the day is off to a fantastic start.

Before handing out Lowell Bucks to everyone and then drawing for a dozen prizes, Chambers told the DPW how much they are appreciated by residents and business owners. Craig Fonger, a Lowell Light and Power Board Member, expressed his appreciation for how well the crews from the DPW worked in concert with the people from Lowell Light and Power. Liz Baker jumped up to tell everyone how much she appreciated each and every one of them for all of their work while she was the Director of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.

Marty Chambers always has something cooking – literally and figuratively. A few weeks



Liz Baker, Marty Chambers, and Jim Salzwedel making sure Brian Vanveelen gets a made to order breakfast.

ago he presided over the grill for the annual Lineman Appreciation dinner he and his wife Laurie spearhead. Looking to the future, Chambers let us in on an event he is cooking up for September.

“On September 24th, we will be having a charity softball game on the ball field at Recreation Park,” Chambers said. “It is going to feature the police department playing the fire department. There will be a requested donation to attend the game and the winning team will donate all the proceeds to the charity or non-profit of their choice.” Apparently there is so much interest in this softball game, that a couple of State Troopers who live in the area who got wind of it are itching to play for the police team. Stay tuned for details on what should be a great day of competition and fun.

We would like to join that they do to keep Lowell Marty in thanking everyone looking great. at the DPW for doing all



Jim Salzwedel, Liz Baker, and Marty Chambers had the grills going by 6:30am.



The trucks were pulled out of the garage and tables and chairs took their place.

Red Arrow

- LACROSSE

SPORTS

Red Arrows score a big win against Caledonia

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Winning when it matters most, that’s what happened for Lowell boys lacrosse as they upset Caledonia as the first round of the MHSAA regional tournament. After losing to Caledonia earlier this season, Lowell turned the tide on the Fighting Scots with a masterful performance at Scotland Yard in an 11-10 win.

“Every single one of you guys here played incredibly tonight,” Head Coach Austin Buckius told the team after the win, as they gathered following the eventful game.

It wasn’t easy for Lowell, who trailed 3-0

to start the game before a Weston Godbold goal kicked things off, with the score in the second quarter eventually back to level terms tied at 4-4. Lowell also would see the other side of a three goal lead, up 10-7 late before three consecutive goals from the hosts brought things even with under a minute to play. It was at that point it seemed Caledonia on a three-goal run had all the momentum in the game, but the good news with just under 60 seconds to play? Lowell was up a man, and they took advantage.

The game winner came at 31 seconds left as Andrew Rogers from behind the net found Weston Godbold

who wristed it from a high angle into the net. It came off a critical face-off win by Case Huisman collected by Connor Lixie for possession, face-offs being a stat that Lowell won 14-10.

In a frantic final 30 seconds, the Fighting Scots went down the field, only to have their shot go wide thanks to the defensive play of Kailen Stokely. They’d get possession back, but Stokely and Conor McDowell held the offense off long enough for time to run out, sending the Lowell team toward goalkeeper Tevin VanderBoon, who had 11 saves on the night, to pile on and celebrate.

In the win, Godbold had

five goals along with two assists. Jackson Roudabush (2), Rogers (2), Lixie, and CJ Steinebach each had goals as well. Rogers and Teige Bredin each had two assists to lead the Red Arrows. Lowell was the only upset in their regional, the six-seeded Red Arrows get two seed Byron Center on the road this Friday, the day after the Lowell Class of 2023 graduates high school. The Red Arrows have a pair of 8-3 losses to the Bulldogs this year, but after losing to Caledonia by four earlier this year, and coming back to beat them on their home turf, the team is embracing the underdog mentality of “why not us” this postseason.



JD Huyser cradles the ball against Caledonia.

Red Arrow

SPORTS

Conference realignment stunner - Lowell to leave OK White

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Since the 1980’s, after Lowell left the Tri-River, Lowell has been a mainstay in the OK White Conference. A division of the Ottawa-Kent Conference, and somehow, someway, through countless additions, subtractions, and realignments, Lowell never left the White; simply staying put, as teams like Northview, Greenville, East Grand Rapids, and even oddball teams, like Jenison cycled in and out. Now, that’s changing. Beginning the 2024-2025 school year, Lowell will join the OK Black Conference, along with current OK White schools Northview and Greenville, then Kenowa Hills and Cedar Springs out of the OK Gold, and perhaps, surprisingly, Muskegon, Mona Shores, and Reeths-Puffer out of the OK Green.

In a 42-6 vote, member schools approved it, well-surpassing the 2/3rds majority needed for the realignment to pass. Those numbers sound rosy, but of the six schools to vote “no”, Lowell was one of them.

“We voted no on this realignment due to travel concerns,” Lowell Athletic Director, Dee Crowley, said regarding the realignment. A bus driver shortage has been a problem nationwide, but particularly for Lowell. The transportation Department at Lowell Area Schools is hiring and utilizing

incentives to try to attract new workers. The trips to Muskegon, Mona Shores, and Reeths-Puffer were the driving factor behind Lowell’s “no” vote.

“The new realignment offers improvements to programs. For example, last year in the OK White, there were only six wrestling teams; four competitive cheer teams; five softball teams. The new realignment offers schools with similar programs. However, the travel distance is a bigger concern due to the lack of bus drivers to transport our teams,” Crowley said.

Overall Outlook and Enrollment Numbers
OK Black:
Mona Shores – 1,231
Reeths-Puffer – 1,150
Muskegon – 1,130
Lowell – 1,078
Cedar Springs – 1,078
Greenville – 1,071
Northview – 1,053
Kenowa Hills – 1,000

It is the second consecutive time Lowell has been in the minority on OK Conference realignment; in 2019 Lowell voted no as well, believing the process used did not follow conference guidelines.

OK Conference Commissioner, Dave Feenstra, specifically addressed the travel concerns that the rest of the new Grand Rapids area OK Black schools had. “The grouping with Lowell, Greenville, Cedar Springs, Northview and Kenowa is just a good mix of schools

there (based on enrollment and proximity), and with the Muskegon schools, there’s only two ways to really address that issue,” Feenstra said. “Do you go up the lakeshore and go that way, or do you go from the north? It is a stretch from Lowell to Muskegon, but it’s also a stretch from Belding to Hopkins (in the OK Silver), which is the farthest trip that anyone has to take, and those schools fit with enrollment very well with each other.”

Still, for Lowell fans, two hours in the car isn’t incredibly appealing, which will start in the fall of 2024 and last for five years. The realignment will be through the 2028-2029 school year.

“We were very happy with the vote, though we do understand some member schools aren’t happy with the alignment. The committee did their best to really make sure this whole puzzle went together and best served a majority of the member schools,” Feenstra said.

Looking at the other divisions
OK Red:
East Kentwood – 2,906 students
Rockford – 2,562
West Ottawa – 2,170
Hudsonville – 1,972
Grand Haven – 1,882
Grandville – 1,752
Jenison – 1,561
Caledonia – 1,431

Nothing changed in the red; it’s a division with the highest enrollments and

stayed that way. Caledonia, as the lowest enrollment school, probably would rather not have it be that way, playing against East Kentwood, double their enrollment. We feel their pain; Lowell and Rockford are frequent pairings in district tournaments. Still this was probably among the committee’s easiest conferences to piece together.

OK White:
Byron Center – 1,324
Wyoming – 1,230
Forest Hills
Northern – 1,142
Forest Hills Central – 1,049
Zeeland West – 1,016
Zeeland East – 988
East Grand Rapids – 909
GR Christian – 754

It would be surprising if Wyoming voted for this. From a competitive standpoint, this is an incredibly challenging conference for the Wolves. Remember that quartet of schools from earlier? They’re pretty strong at athletics, and you add in, up and coming Byron Center, the two Zeeland schools, and it’s quite the difficult draw. This is the best conference in athletics, possibly stronger than the high enrollment-powered OK Red. It is fairly compact, though, outside of the two Zeelands, and the enrollments are relatively close.

OK Blue:
GR Union – 1,924
Ottawa Hills – 1,132
Coopersville – 863
Fruitport – 794

Spring Lake – 784
Allendale – 752
Catholic Central – 584
West Catholic – 484

Enrollment is just a number. Yeah, Union has like four times the enrollment of West Catholic, but they’re a natural pairing with another GR Public School, Ottawa Hills. They also draw from Grand Rapids magnet schools, which factored in. Catholic Central and West Catholic, along with Fruitport and Spring Lake, are also natural pairings. With a mix of public and private schools, this will be an interesting division.

OK Silver:
Sparta – 846
Godwin Heights – 662
Kelloggsville – 621
Belding – 538
Comstock Park – 530
Hopkins – 483
NorthPointe Christian – 333
Calvin Christian – 261

No change here in the Silver. These are mostly

the lower enrollment schools, and similar to the OK Red, this one was probably the easiest. The conference is aware of the travel distance problems with the conference, spread-out pretty far, particularly Sparta, Belding, and Hopkins, but with the lower enrollment schools and competitiveness, there isn’t an obvious solution.

OK Gold:
Thornapple Kellogg – 936
Holland – 930
Forest Hills Eastern – 801
Wayland – 801
Hamilton – 764
Holland Christian – 674
Unity Christian – 662
South Christian – 659

Unity and South Christian are an obvious pairing. Forest Hills Eastern was probably a tough one to place; they could’ve gone with Lowell in the OK Black, the other two Forest Hills schools in the OK White, or kept them in the gold.

Ponchaud punches ticket as Red Arrows close out season

Submitted by Coach,
Paul Judd

The season ended for a host of Red Arrows, as the guys finished in 13th place at the Portage Central regional meet. Ramsey Ponchaud shined on a rainy day, as he tied for second place, going 12-09 in the pole vault, which earned him a spot at the MHSAA state meet in Rockford on June 3rd. Levi Mills capped his Lowell career with a eighth-place finish in the 400m, going 52.84, and anchored the fifth place 1600m relay team, where he was joined by Dylan Polczak, Benjamin Bromley and Ponchaud.

A few of the Arrows will participate in the Metro Health

**R a m s e y
P o n c h a u d**
Photo courtesy of Lowell Track & XC facebook page.



Catching up with Lowell softball Head Coach Matt Dood

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

The Red Arrow softball team hosted the annual Mandy Tichelaar Memorial Tournament this weekend with teams from all over the state; Rockford, Chelsea, and Escanaba. Escanaba went on to win the tournament, Lowell and the Eskymos tied 2-2 in their game.

How did your team perform last weekend?

Coach Dood: “Our team played very well this weekend. To take on three state-ranked teams and to be in every game right until the end was very promising

for this Team. We are making some great improvements each day and the girls continue to work hard. It is great to see the shift to playing high level softball.”

Who are some athletes who should be highlighted for their performances the last few weeks? Lowell recently swept GR Chistian in a doubleheader 18-3 and 13-3.

Coach Dood: “Courtney Witten has been on a tear at the plate the last couple of weeks. She is leading the team in extra base hits the last two weeks and seems to hit the ball hard each and ev-

ery time up to the plate. We have had some great outfield play from Hope Rummelt and Lexi Martin which has really solidified our team defense. They have been great in the outfield with some amazing catches. Megan Lillie and Jordyn McClymont have been very solid for us pitching. They only continue to get better.”

What is the biggest thing you’re looking to work on heading into the postseason? Districts start on May 30th against Cedar Springs.

Coach Dood: “Working on believing we are a good

team. These girls are so close and have the physical tools. As soon as we believe it, we will be a very tough out in the postseason.”

What has been the biggest win so far for the team this season?

Coach Dood: “I would say the biggest win this season was Calvin Christian. They are currently ranked No. 2 in the state in D3. I know we also had a great weekend beating East Kentwood and TC West to win the EK tournament. It was great for the girls to get those wins early in the year!”

Red Arrow

- TENNIS

SPORTS

Lowell takes fifth as three girls earn state meet berth

Submitted by Coach, Paul Judd

The Red Arrows battled both foe and rain at the MHSAA D1 regional meet held at Portage Central.



Lowell was still able to get the job done in the wet conditions, as they scored in eleven events and crowned one regional champion. Annika and Katrina Sandman both hit the AQ mark in the 1600m, as they finished fourth and sixth, respectively. In the 3200m, Annika Sandman pulled away at the mile mark to get the win, going 10:44, while sister Katrina took fourth. Both performances qualified them for the state meet.

Isabel German
Photo courtesy of Lowell Track & XC facebook page.

Isabel German had a great day with a runner-up finish in the 400m, and fourth place finishes in both the 200m and the polevault (11-03 met state meet AQ mark). Seniors Aubriegh Oswald and Ivy McDonald both earned third place finishes in the shot-put and high-jump, while Leah Krieger grabbed fourth in the 100H.

Some of the Arrows will compete at the Metro Health Invitational, hosted by Comstock Park, on Tuesday. The state meet is on June 3, hosted by Rockford.

Team Scores: East Kentwood, 148; St. Joseph, 86; Forest Hills Central, 78; Portage Central, 68.5; Lowell, 57.5; Caledonia, 45; Byron Center, 44.5;

Ottawa Hills, 41; Portage Northern, 35; Kalamazoo Central, 25.5; Forest Hills Northern, 22; Wyoming, 6; Kalamazoo Loy Norrix, 6.

Placing for the Arrows were: Isabel German, fourth 200m, 26.65, second 400m, 59.73 and fourth polevault, 11-0; Annika Sandman, fourth 1600m, 4:59.01 and first 3200m, 10:44.86; Katrina Sandman, sixth 1600m, 5:04.63 and fourth 3200m, 11:04.46; Leah Krieger, fourth 100H, 16.21; Aubriegh Oswald, third shot-put, 33-07, eighth discus, 91-09; Ivy McDonald, third high-jump, 4-08.



Annika and Katrina Sandman.
Photo courtesy of Lowell Track & XC facebook page.

Baker commits to Murray State

By Justin Scott sports reporter

Lowell girls basketball's all-time scoring leader will have a new home come fall of 2024. Current LHS junior, Braxcynn Baker, recently committed to Murray State University for basketball. The Racers compete out of Murray, Kentucky, a city of 17,000 in the Bluegrass State, known for producing plenty of great basketball talent.

Many know Murray State for their recent basketball success, including an NCAA Tournament run, with current Memphis Grizzlies star, Ja Morant.

Much like Lowell, Murray State has a small-town community-feel, which was a priority for Baker. "It's a small town

in the country that receives a lot of support from their community," Baker said of why she committed to Murray State.

Baker will be the first girls basketball player from Lowell, in nearly two decades, to play at the Division 1 level; Kendra Gallert played for Eastern Michigan in the early 2000's, and while many Lowell girls players have found homes at the DII, DIII, and NAIA levels, none have found a home at a D1 school for basketball until Baker. Matt Beachler was the most recent boys basketball player to play at the Division 1 level, playing at Central Michigan.

This summer, Baker is playing AAU basketball for Michigan Basketball Academy, before she'll

return to the volleyball court and basketball court for the Red Arrows this fall.

"It feels good that the recruiting process is over, but at the same time, like the end of an era. I'm gonna miss getting to know new coaches, but it feels great to be able to lock-down to one coaching staff," Baker said of the process.

At 83.22 percent, Baker was among the top ten in free-throw shooting in the state, this last year, and earned first team all-state honors last year from the Detroit Free Press, Associated Press, among other accolades.

She received offers from all three direction Michigan D1 programs; WMU, EMU, and CMU, as well as offers from Bradley, Valparaiso, Depaul, Oakland, Toledo, among other mid-major programs in Division 1. It was Murray State that stood out though.

"I connected with the coaches on a different level. They showed what a true family away from home should be like. They are extremely supportive of me and very confident in my game," Baker told the Ledger about the Racers program.

Murray State competes in the Missouri Valley Conference and finished the 2022-2023 season at 15-16. Lowell, under the senior leadership of Baker and the rest of the Red Arrow class of 2024, are primed for a good season this winter.

Golfers compete at Mona Shores

By Justin Scott contributing writer

Last week was just a single tournament for the Lowell golf team, a little competitive break after multiple weeks of multi-tournament stretches.

The Red Arrows teed-off at the Mona Shores invitational the Monday before this past weekend's PGA Championship. Lowell hoped to go low, but stumbled upon Muskegon Country Club's ninth hole. In an event, where teams

were extremely bunched up, a few strokes ended up being the difference between top five and Lowell's eighth-place finish.

"This event was very competitive. For most of the day, we were in the top three teams, but we fell to eighth for the day, out of 18 teams. In golf, you are playing the golf course with no defense. Our mistakes are what we will focus on, as we move on," Head Coach, Tom Koert said.

Cam Sluss medaled

with a 78, followed by Patrick de Voest (85), Drew Veldman (85), and Trevor Mead (88). Daniel Mitchell was just off the scorers with an 89.

Seventh-place Hudsonville edged out Lowell by just four strokes, and Lowell was just seven strokes in front of tenth-place Portage Central in the 110 player tournament.

The Red Arrows continue to gear-up for regionals on the 31st.



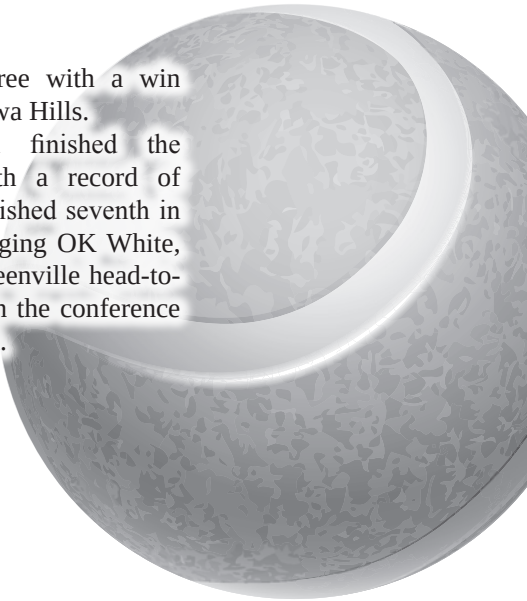
Braxcynn Baker, Lowell junior, recently committed to Murray State for basketball.

Tennis concludes season at regionals

The Lowell varsity girls tennis squad ended their season at regionals last week with three points. The team of Ariana Fredricks and Izzy Mosier recorded Lowell's first point with a 6-1, 6-0 win over Ottawa Hills. Zoey Mierendory and Sienna Berg won a close 6-4, 6-2 battle with Cedar Springs to give Lowell point number two; they played at No. 3 doubles for the tournament. Emma Boston, with a 6-1, 6-1 win at No. 3 singles, gave Lowell point

number three with a win over Kenowa Hills.

Lowell finished the season with a record of 6-9 and finished seventh in the challenging OK White, beating Greenville head-to-head and in the conference tournament.



obituaries

FIDLER

Jillian Fidler, age 23 of Harrison, passed away on Monday, May 15, 2023. She is survived by her mother, Karen Corey; dad, Jeff (Marcy) Fidler; father, Robert Edison; brothers, Breckin Fidler, Christopher Stirling, Jared Edison; sister, Nicole Hart; nephews, Ethan, Caleb, Harrison; niece, Nova; life-long best friends, Shelby, Emily, Nat, Kenzie, Maysen; and furry friends, Cletus, Bowie, and Lacey Mae. Jillian was an all-around athlete; she tried every sport, including Rocket Cheer in grade school, basketball, track, cross-country, and volleyball - her true passion. Jillian graduated high school with honors and scholarships to Alma College for volleyball. She was just a few credits shy from graduating with a BS in Behavioral Neuroscience from Grand Valley State University. Along with her love of sports, Jillian enjoyed traveling, hiking, wakeboarding, snowboarding, and playing Pokémon Go. Visitation will be held from 1pm-3:30pm on Friday, May 26, 2023, at Roth-Gerst Chapel, 305 N. Hudson, Lowell, Michigan 49331, with funeral services starting at 3:30pm. Memorial Contributions can be made in Jillian's honor to Gift of Life, giftoflifemichigan.org.



around athlete; she tried every sport, including Rocket Cheer in grade school, basketball, track, cross-country, and volleyball - her true passion. Jillian graduated high school with honors and scholarships to Alma College for volleyball. She was just a few credits shy from graduating with a BS in Behavioral Neuroscience from Grand Valley State University. Along with her love of sports, Jillian enjoyed traveling, hiking, wakeboarding, snowboarding, and playing Pokémon Go. Visitation will be held from 1pm-3:30pm on Friday, May 26, 2023, at Roth-Gerst Chapel, 305 N. Hudson, Lowell, Michigan 49331, with funeral services starting at 3:30pm. Memorial Contributions can be made in Jillian's honor to Gift of Life, giftoflifemichigan.org.

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...
Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.
~ Lao Tzu

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP

Regular Meeting 7 p.m.
Synopsis of Minutes
May 8, 2023

Motions Approved:

1. To accept the donation of the Grattan School building contingent that the building will be demolished.

2. Spending up to \$2,000.00 in title insurance regarding the donation of 12047 Old Belding Rd.

3. Spending up to \$14,000.00 in grant matching funds towards the demolition of the building.

4. Spending up to \$14,000.00 for grant writing assistance to commence after the July board meeting when surveys are completed.

5. To approve up to \$80,000.00 for onsite generators at GPS3A and GPS2.

6. To approve portable generators for the sewer system.

7. ORD2023-003 amending the zoning ordinance regarding solar panels, solar energy systems and related uses and matters.

8. Door replacements at the Fire Station.

9. Resolution 2023-012 adopting the 2022 Kent County and Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Letters, continued

attacking our school district. No ONE parent has the right to dictate what YOUR children can read. Any district parent can provide their school with a list of books they do not want their own children to check out. That's it; that is, literally, all it takes.

We have several real challenges in Greater Lowell: the cost of food and the scarcity of housing; the quality of our water, roads and infrastructure; the ever-present need for constructive participation of adult community members in our schools; and the fact that children are far more likely to be blown to pieces by someone with a gun than corrupted for life by a word or image they might come across at school. Every one of us should rally around those real challenges.

Morgan Jarema
Vergennes Township

To the Editor:

The debate over books is a national phenomenon. Sadly, the resulting harm is to local communities and neighborhood relationships - as Lowell can certainly attest...

The recent filing of criminal complaints against members of the Lowell School Board, by the leader of Lowell Kid's First, is a disappointing escalation of ongoing attacks on LAS board members and staff. Her (their) stated goal: for the Lowell Police Department to refer members of the school board to the Prosecutor on Felony charges.

We should appreciate the professionalism with which the LPD officer took the report, as well as the prompt response from the Kent County Prosecutor, indicating "It is not the role of the criminal justice system to criminalize policy decisions of an elected body." We can and should also question if this is appropriate use of our public

safety and school resources.

It's accurate to say great effort has been expended on this topic in Lowell:

- Debate for and against censoring books has been ongoing for months.
- The 2021 recall of 3 board members attempt failed.
- Parental ability to restrict access to books is in place.
- A candidate forum was hosted for the last election - community is engaged.
- The 2022 school board election results reflect the wishes of the community.
- Books have been challenged, review committees formed, recommendations rendered.

And, yet... The hurtful conduct continues. For over two years, LAS board members, administrators and many staff have endured sustained attacks, some of them quite personal from the comments (and keyboards) of several members of the Lowell Kids First group. Now, after months of dialog, members of this community are trying to get other members of this community charged with a felony.

Does this community truly want members of our school board arrested? Is this who we are?

I find the Lowell School Board's consistently respectful professionalism in the face of unprecedented, mean-spirited comment to be validation that district voters elected the right people for the job. They have been open and accessible to all sides, thoughtful and measured in their responses, consistent in their adherence to law, policy, and best practices. Throughout these months, their unwavering focus on students' needs has demonstrated they are worthy of our support, and they deserve to be treated respectfully.

I want to thank every member of the Lowell School Board for their service, and for demonstrating remarkable professionalism under truly awful conditions. I see you; I appreciate and value you.

I am also sorry for how you've been treated; you deserve better.

Amy Gless
Lowell

On the go? You can still use Social Security online when traveling

By Hillary Hatch, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

Social Security is here for you when you travel, whether you're in the United States or in another country. Our online services page at www.ssa.gov/onlineservices provides you with a wide variety of self-service options you can use on your mobile phone, tablet, or computer.

Through our online services, you can:

- Find out if you qualify for benefits.
- Apply for Social Security retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits.
- Get your Social Security Statement.
- Request a replacement Social Security card.
- Appeal a decision.
- Do you receive Social Security benefits or Medicare? If so, you can create or log-in to your personal my Social Security account to:
- Get your benefit verification letter.
- Check your information and benefit amount.

Change your address and telephone number.

Start or change your direct deposit.

Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S for tax season.

Report your wages if you work and receive disability benefits or SSI.

Create a personal my Social Security account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to take advantage of these easy-to-use features. Also, please share our online services page with family and friends who need this important information.

LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP

NOTICE OF POSTING OF ORDINANCE ADOPTION

The Lowell Charter Township Board adopted the following amendments to the Township Zoning Ordinances at its meeting on May 15, 2023:

1. Ordinance 01-2023Z to amend Section 18.06 of the Lowell Charter Township Zoning Ordinance to clarify parts D and E, to add Part F, which will regulate home-based business and home occupation signs and add Part G, in which electronic reader board signs will be permitted on all non-residential properties within the AG -1 – Prime Agricultural and AG – 2 – Rural Agricultural Districts in the Township as a use by right.

This Ordinance will become effective seven (7) days after adoption by the Township Board or the publication into a newspaper of general circulation, whichever is longer.

The adopted ordinance is available for review at the office of the Township Clerk, 2910 Alden Nash Avenue, SE, Lowell, Michigan, 49331 during normal office hours on Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday or by calling 616-897-7600. The ordinances are also available on the Township Web Site at www.lowelltwp.org.

Monica Burt, Clerk
Lowell Charter Township

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF KENT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE 23-213120-DE
Judge Avery D. Rose (P-77757)

Court address: Suite 2500
- 180 Ottawa Avenue, NW,
Grand Rapids, MI 49503,
616-632-5440

Estate of WILLIAM WARD LOVETT, deceased. Date of Birth: 22 September 1937

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:

The decedent, WILLIAM WARD LOVETT, died 19 March 2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Alice Marie Geiger, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 180 Ottawa Ave NW, Ste 2500 Grand Rapids, MI 49503 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

May 22, 2023

Alice Marie Geiger
37 South Parsonage Street
Saranac, MI 48881
616-642-9094

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Mon.-Thurs. 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Closed Fri., Sat. & Sun.

classifieds

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CRAFTSMAN - 10 in. table saw and 4" edger-joiner. Both cast Iron. Call 616-897-6957. Ask for Dave.

USED TIRES - Call with size, 616-292-7649/616-295-8820. Rob's Auto - thanks.^{TFN}

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FISH FOR STOCKING - Most varieties, ponds and lakes. LAGGIS FISH FARM, 269-628-2056 days or 269-624-6215 Eves.

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WE DO BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FEDERAL FAIR HOUSING LAW - Equal Housing Opportunity. It is illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin.. Anyone who feels he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint of housing discrimination: 1-800-669-9777 (toll free) 1-800-927-9275 (TTY).

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.

sales

21ST ANNUAL PERENNIAL PLANT FUNDRAISER - Memorial Day Weekend, Sat., 8-3, Sun. 10-3 and Mon. before & after parade. 520 N. Monroe.

misc.

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. Plus 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-866-495-1709

misc.

ATTN: MEDICAL STUDENTS - If you are enrolled in medical school (that grants a M.D. or D.O. degree) or soon to be, and are a graduate of Lowell High School, this is for you. The Donald Gerard MD Honorary Medical Scholarship is granted for your four years of medical education. Please call Victoria Pratt at Lowell High School at 616-987-2908 for an application or for more details. Deadline is June 1, 2023.

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 are meeting at various places for lunch or dinner most Mondays. All are welcome. Questions on location, call Elaine 616-856-8022 for more information.

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.

services

WORK WANTED - Double D's tree service Plus 70' & 40' bucket trucks. Tree trimming and removal, brush chipping, Stump grinding. Free estimates and Insured. Call Dave Delinsky 616-212-3008.^{TFN}

PROFESSIONAL TREE CLIMBER - needs work. Call Dan, 616-970-3832.

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

EMERGENCY ROAD SERVICE - Lowell & surrounding areas. On road repairs. Rob's Towing & Auto Salvage. "CHEAP HOOKER" 616-292-7649 or 616-295-8820.

STUMP GRINDING - Call Dan for free estimates. 616-970-3832.

NEED A DUMPSTER? - Dumpster rental, 10-20 yards. Mention this ad for \$10 to \$20 off. Call or text Doug for estimates at 616-295-6640.^{TFN}

services

DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENDED OR REVOKED? - Don't get sucked into \$100-\$300 evaluation fees...I NEVER charge for your record evaluation & consultation! Driver's license RESTORATION: Flat fees only, no hourly billing. FREE consultation & evaluation of your case. Have a question? Call Attorney Martin Mead (616) 235-0330.

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Red Arrow

- SOCCER

SPORTS

Soccer team readies for districts

By Justin Scott
sports reporter

This Wednesday, Lowell will face-off with Forest Hills Central in the first round of districts. The draw will pit two teams with similar records that ended-up tied, at two goals a piece in their only meeting of the year at FHC.

Last week, Lowell traded results with a loss to state-ranked EGR 3-0, a 7-0 win over Greenville, then a 2-1 loss to Grand Rapids Christian in the OK White Conference Tournament.

Against Greenville, goals were scored by RJ Wagamon (3), Ally Seevers

(2), Gracyn Hamilton, and Olivia Blood. Assists were contributed by Emily Ake (3), Wagamon, and Hamilton. The shutout was recorded by Aubree Lee and Elizabeth Harrington combined.

Also during the week, the JV team, under Head Coach, Mike Lincolnhol, concluded an undefeated campaign.

The winner of this week's district quarterfinal will likely be favored in the semifinal which will take place between Greenville and Ionia. Wednesday's quarterfinal takes place at FHC at 6:00 pm.

Looking ahead, the soccer program is collecting email addresses of alumni players for those interested in playing in the program's annual alumni game, benefiting the Austin Lancaster Memorial Scholarship. This year's winner was announced as LHS senior, Courtney Witten. Alumni interested can visit the program's facebook page, "Lowell Red Arrows Soccer" for the sign-up link.



Emily Ake and the Red Arrows look to make a run, starting this week, against FHC.

Lowell High School names Student-Athletes of the Year



By Justin Scott
sports reporter

Aubriegh Oswald and Carson Grace were recently voted as Lowell's OK Conference Athletes of the Year. Both will be moving on to playing a sport at the Division 1 level.

Grace is a four-time team state wrestling

champion, and finished as state runner-up, two years as an individual. He will be wrestling at Cornell next year, recently announcing his commitment to the Big Reds. The Ivy League school out of Ithaca, New York has seen several Lowell wrestlers go through their wrestling room. Grace

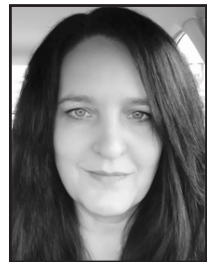
also played football all four years for the Red Arrows.

Oswald is a three-sport student-athlete at LHS, where she played volleyball, basketball, and did field events for track. She will be heading to Eastern Michigan University next year for volleyball, a sport she appeared in two state

championship matches during her time with the Red Arrows.

Both were honored at the LHS Senior Honors Night and their plaques will be displayed in the athletics hallway.

Aubriegh Oswald and Carson Grace were voted as Lowell's OK Conference Athletes of the Year.



Live the Life You Want

With Melissa Spino, MA, LPC, CDMS
Life Transitions Therapy, LLC

Mental Health Month 2023 – Look Within

May is mental health month and Mental Health America's (MHA) focus this year is "look around and look within" for ways to improve and boost your mental health. "Look within" focuses on self-awareness, overall wellness, and self-care. This article will provide a brief overview about some of these factors.

Ways to look within
Self-care is essential for our overall well-being. Yet, it's typically last on our list, and often gets bumped completely, when we get busy. Self-care is the act of caring for our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Knowing how to reduce stress, eat right, exercise,

and enjoy down time helps our overall health and plays a role in being content and happy. Below are some suggestions to get you started.

Practicing self-care
Most of us know the basics, but just as a reminder, they are: getting good restorative sleep, reducing stress, exercising regularly, and healthy eating. If you're not sure where to start, below are some suggestions.

Learn to say no. If you are already stressed, learn to say "no, thank you." Saying yes when you are overly stressed can lead to anxiety, anger, burnout, resentment and/or you shutting down due to feeling overwhelmed.

Get organized. Over the past 20+ years, they

have been studying the effects of clutter. Clutter can increase stress and anxiety because when we have problems finding things, we are less productive and have a harder time focusing. So, cut the clutter and get organized so you can find things easier and reduce stress. There are many books and blogs about getting organized. One of my favorites is "The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up" by Marie Kondo.

Get outside. Being outdoors has been shown to help reduce fatigue, lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and can help you get a better night sleep.

Find a hobby. Spend time on a hobby you love. Lose yourself in it. Whether it is art, gardening, kayaking, hiking, reading, etc.... make sure it is something that feeds your soul.

Spend time with friends and family. Be sure it's with those that you have fun with and not ones that are demanding of your time, drain your energy, or bring you down.

Practice mindfulness.

Focusing too much on the past often leads to emotions of sadness, depression, and even anger. Focusing on the future, for many, produces feelings of anxiety and stress. Happiness and contentment are found in the present, so practice mindfulness.

Pamper yourself. Take a spa day or a long soak in the tub. Get a massage, take a country drive, or just relax and watch a movie. Even spending time alone in a quiet, peaceful location can help you destress.

Schedule regular self-care. Schedule self-care several times a week. Work to increase this time to at least 15-minutes a day. Then guard that time as one of the most important things on your to do list. If you don't, you may end up burned-out and won't be a help to anyone.

Embrace supportive self-talk. Start by evaluating your thoughts. Listen to your self-talk/inner dialogue. Is it supportive or destructive? Has this been a lifelong pattern? You don't have to figure out why you developed a tox-

ic inner voice, thoughts, and emotions, but knowing, may make it easier to stop this harmful cycle. Either way, work to change this self-talk/inner voice to a more positive, supportive one.

Free mental health screening resources.
Screening is an easy way to "look within" and provide insight about possible mental health issues. These screening tools are helpful when you have concerns or suspect you may have a mental health issue. They are all available for free. These tools are not an official diagnosis and should not be taken as professional advice. If you feel you have symptoms of a mental health problem, you can take the results of your screening to a licensed mental health professional for further evaluation.

Mental Health America has several free screenings online for depression, PTSD, bipolar, anxiety, and eating disorders. For the full list of available screenings go to <https://screening.mh-national.org/screening-tools/>

Life Transitions Therapy has a quick free basic depression screening tool at the bottom of the page under "helpful documents". It's based off the DSM in a Word document for downloading. <https://lifetransitionstherapy.biz/>

PsyCom has a 3-Minute depression test. It can be found at <https://www.psycom.net/depression-test>

Help Yourself Help Others is a site that offers an overall mental health screening tool. Go to: <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/hyho>

Positive improvements in any of the above mentioned areas can improve your mental health and overall wellness. There are many positive changes you can make on your own. However, if you are still struggling, you become stuck, or the changes are not working it may be time to get help from a professional mental health counselor. I hope you find this information helpful but it is for informational purposes only. Stay safe!

FUN PAGE

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

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

Guess Who?

I am an actor born in Ireland on May 25, 1976. I was interested in acting since seeing a stage production of “A Clockwork Orange.” I’ve starred in a number of movies, but my role on a television show about a street gang from the late 1800s made me a household name.

Answer: Cillian Murphy

			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							

BURGER JOINT SLANG WORD SEARCH

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

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

Puzzle solutions
on page 13

BURGER JOINT SLANG
WORD SEARCH

ALL-THE-WAY
BLOWOUT
BLUE
BUTTER BURGER

COMBO
DOUBLE MEAT
EAST COAST
FACIAL
HAMMERED
LTO
MID-RARE

MINIBURGER
NO FUN
ON WHEELS
PATTY
PLAIN JANE
RABBIT FOOD
RATIO

SALLY
SEAR
SLIDER
SLUG
SMASH BURGER
SPECIAL SAUCE

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to hamburgers.

T K E U P H C

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

Answer: Ketchup

CLUES ACROSS

1. Wear away by friction
7. Insecticide
10. Elicited a secret vote
12. Beef
13. Disagreement
14. __ Crawford, supermodel
15. Jeweled headdress
16. Digits
17. Trillion hertz
18. Snap up
19. Classical portico
21. Residue after burning
22. Large integers
27. Free agent
28. Where ballplayers work
33. Blood type
34. Scottish city
36. Google certification (abbr.)
37. Serbian monetary unit
38. Make a sudden surprise attack on
39. Wood or metal bolt
40. Relaxing attire
41. Famed neurologist
44. Dullish brown fabrics
45. Member of ancient Jewish sect
48. Griffith, Rooney

49. Lawmakers
50. Government lawyers
51. The arch of the foot

CLUES DOWN

1. Nonflowering aquatic plant
2. Britpop rockers
3. National capital
4. Consumed
5. The habitat of wild animals
6. Sun up in New York
7. Cygnus star
8. Male parents
9. Talk to you (abbr.)
10. A place to clean oneself
11. Southwestern US state
12. South Korean idol singer
14. Pirate
17. Pituitary hormone (abbr.)
18. Mistake
20. Promotions
23. Prepares
24. Partner to flowed
25. State lawyer
26. Patti Hearst's captors
29. Pound
30. Electronic data processing

31. Sports player
32. Treats with contempt
35. Apprehend
36. Excessively talkative
38. Highways
40. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
41. College organization for males
42. Any customary observance or practice
43. Employee stock ownership plan
44. Male parent
45. The 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
46. Female bird
47. Autonomic nervous system

2023

FOOD FIGHT

FROM the heart

NOW THROUGH JUNE 1!



FROM

FLAT RIVER

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Total match has increased!

Total Match: \$43,750.00

Match Used: \$43,750.00

Matching Sponsors













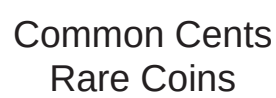












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RESTAURANT BENEFIT NIGHTS

May 30 - Culver's (5-8 pm)

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2023

FOOD FIGHT

FROM the heart



	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	TOTALS
NORTH	15775	23400	15,556	4984	0	59715
SOUTH	13465	34180	13182	5270	0	66097

Fighting Against Food Insecurity

Located at the corner of Cascade and 36th street, Forest Hills Presbyterian may be just outside the Lowell area but their impact here at FROM has been influential. It was the interruption of the church's food program, A.C.C.E.S.S.6 that led them to FROM. Once the church had become involved with FROM and its programs, they were

so impressed and intrigued that they added it to their Mission Committee. Now, 30 parishioners volunteer for FROM helping in our food programs and among other positions.

With its current 300+ members working to fulfill the church's mission, 'Christ-Centered, People Focused, Mission Driven', the church has been involved in many FROM programs. From our Food programs to the Thrift store, From Christmas projects to Backpack distribution and all the in-betweens, Forest Hills Presbyterian has continued to show up and

share their time, energy, and efforts with us.

When asked what motivates the church to stay involved with FROM, it was just one sentence from their pastor that keeps them going. "We need to be Christ in other peoples' lives." With that, the church hasn't stopped seeking ways to show up and serve. Forest Hills Presbyterian shared their experiences with FROM. "We see the impact of FROM every time we go, every time we get the newsletter, every time we man a truck or pack a commodities box. We are so grateful to FROM for allowing us to be a part of this amazing organization." We're glad Forest Hills Presbyterian has partnered with us in such an impactful, empowered way. Gratitude certainly goes both ways!

