

ABC'S
OF LOWELL

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Lowell may soon have seven more baseball fields

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

Mike Minier loves little league baseball. His children played, he played, and he's currently the vice president of Lowell Little League. However, it is likely, as the president of Lowell Youth Sports Foundation that he will make his greatest impact on the sport, as the organization was deeded 20 acres of land by the Wege Foundation for development into a Lowell Youth Sports Complex.

The proposed site for the Lowell Youth Sports Complex is near the corner of Foreman Street and Alden Nash Avenue in Vergennes Township, across from the recently constructed Maple Ridge Manor retirement-living facility. The complex will feature seven baseball fields and a parking lot on its campus, snuggled between the Cooper Woodland Preserve and the Eastbrook home development.

"We're running out of space with all the growth in the area for the kids," Minier said. Currently, Lowell Little League uses Rec Park by King Milling and Creekside Park for all of its local games. However,

An aerial view rendering of the proposed Lowell Youth Sports Complex by Grand Rapids engineering firm Progressive AE.

when factoring in the needs for practice and competitive play for kids from Alto and Murray Lake schools area, Saranac, Belding, Clarksville, Ada, and Forest Hills, the existing facilities are not sufficient to meet the community's demands.

Teams often have to double up, stepping on one another's toes, sometimes quite literally, in order to participate in the sport. With the new facility, each team will have all-day access to a field, and Minier believes Lowell Little League may

be able to expand the little league season.

According to current estimates, the Lowell Youth Sports Complex is a \$7.5 million project. The Lowell Youth Sports Foundation is currently in the campaign phase of this lofty project,

using designs by Grand Rapids engineering firm, Progressive AE, to build excitement in the community and round-

Sports complex,
continued page 2

The Grand will open for Youth Fair at new location

By Emma Palova
contributing writer

The Grand Agricultural Center of West Michigan, dubbed The Grand, opened last Wednesday in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to serve as the home of the Kent County Youth Fair.

The Kent County Youth Agricultural Association (KCYAA) purchased 140 acres of the former Deer Run Golf Course in 2018, having outgrown the city-owned lot near downtown Lowell. It was the recurrent flooding that intensified the

need to move, according to KCYAA officials.

The Grand campus, which sits off Cascade Road and close to I-96, will

The Grand,
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LAS Board Discusses Summer Maintenance, Budget Issues

By Michelle Smith
contributing writer

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

The Board approved a request to accept a donation of artwork, which is valued at \$350. Board Vice President, Laurie Kuna, donated the artwork. Superintendent, Nate Fowler, said the artwork would be displayed in the central office.

The Board also approved a bid from J.A. Ryan Construction to maintain several school parking lots. The job will include filling cracks and sealing the lots. The lots that will be worked on

are the four elementary schools, the high school, bus garage, central office, Yeiter Learning Center, and the Wittenbach Center. The job will cost \$110,604 and is expected to be completed by the beginning of school classes, Aug. 22.

Director of Human Resources, Dustin Cichocki reported he had made three new hires, including an intern psychologist. He also said a contract negotiation was successful with the Lowell bus drivers to secure a contract through June 2026.

Cichocki also

School Board,
continued page 3

Sports complex, continued

up funding. Though many members of the community have invested hours already, seeking grants and private funding, it is still too early in the game to name donors. Suffice it to say that Minier is confident they will meet their funding goal. “We’re all volunteers,” Minier stressed, “We want to give these kids what they deserve.”

The Lowell Youth Sports Complex has received endorsements from many of Lowell’s most recognizable names, including City Manager, Mike Burns, City Council member, Leah Groves, and Lowell Township Supervisor, Jerry Hale. It should come as no

surprise that members of the community believe this is not just a great thing for the children of Lowell, but an attraction that can bring revenue into the city. Tournament players and families are likely to eat at Lowell restaurants, shop at Lowell stores, and spread the word of what Lowell has to offer to others they meet.

As long as funding pans out, the Lowell Youth Sports Complex is slated to be completed by 2026, with children playing on the seven fields that very year. Ironically, Minier will no longer have kids in the little league system at that point, proving that this is a labor of love, above all other things. “This is for the community,”

Minier said. “It’s for the kids.”

Lowell Little League acquired the property in question from the Wege Foundation over a decade ago, and this project has been a priority for several Lowell Little League presidents before Minier. It was not until recently that the organization met a threshold of passion, vision, and work required to get the Lowell Youth Sports Complex going. “Little league teaches kids more than just how to play a sport,” Minier said. “It teaches them a work ethic and gets them outside.”

Lowell Little League was not immune to the COVID-19 pandemic;

masking and social-distancing standards caused challenges for the continuation of the program. However, as the world has begun to open up again, many adults have found that youth athletics are all that more important for the children of the community. For example, Lighthouse Family YMCA Child Care Director, Tyson Hoffman, recently suggested that outdoor social interaction, with a strict “no screen time” policy, has done wonders to correct post-isolation behavior issues in the children he has worked with.

Whether or not the therapeutic nature of outdoor team sports factors

The Lowell Youth Sports Foundation has taken a creative approach to fundraising. Individual or corporate donors at different levels can earn the right to name a field, a concession stand, a dugout, or even the Complex itself. Furthermore, because over a quarter of students in Lowell Area Schools are economically disadvantaged, the project will likely benefit from a number of grants that a traditional sports complex would not have access to. Those interested in financially supporting the Lowell Youth Sports Complex need only navigate to the webpage lysfi.org/ support.

The Fallasburg Village Celebration will bring the past to life

The Fallasburg Historical Society invites everyone to their second annual Fallasburg Village Celebration! The celebration will be held on Saturday, July 29th from 11 am to 5 pm in the historic Fallasburg Village, nestled in the eastern end of Kent County at 14029 Covered Bridge Rd NE in Lowell.

The Fallasburg Village Celebration has been under development by the Fallasburg Historical Society Board of Directors for the past year. The goal of the celebration is to raise awareness about the amazing historical resources that comprise the village, educate the public on the history of the area and to

fundraise for the Fallasburg Historical Society so that they can continue to revitalize and maintain the land and buildings that comprise the Fallasburg village.

The celebration begins at 11 am in the Fallasburg Village. Highlights of the day will be a vintage car show at the Misner House, where you can admire automobiles from pre-1980. The antique tractors will be on display in the backyard of the Fallas House and you can see some steam-powered farm equipment on display also. While meandering from museum to museum, which will all be open for tours, treat yourself to the wonderful harmonies of eight different groups of musicians.

Civil War reenactors may be practicing drills while marching through the street. Demonstrations throughout the village will include blacksmithing, timber framing, weaving, barn building, glass blowing, ice cream making and more! A juried artisan market, featuring fiber products and other high quality handmade items, will be in the side yard of the Fallas House.

Children of all ages can participate in old-fashioned games in the gaming area, sit through a school lesson



The Easy Idle String Band will perform at 11:30 AM on the Tower Farm Stage. The Easy Idle String Band specializes in bluegrass, old time, old country, and gospel music. The Easy Idle Band has been together over 18 years and performs throughout West Michigan.

in the schoolhouse, pet the pygmy goats and mini horses and maybe even enjoy a mini horse cart ride! A \$5 hot dog or walking taco meal will be available on the grounds. Parking, located in the old Fallasburgh Flats ball field, is available for \$5 per car. Please access the celebration from McPherson Road; access to the Celebration from the bridge will be limited to walking.

One can listen to music and wander the village all day. All funds raised will assist the Fallasburg Historical Society in revitalizing the village.

The Fallasburg Village was declared a historic site and placed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 31, 1999. The village is approximately 20 acres in size and contains several homes that date back to the settling of Fallasburg.

The Fallasburg Historical Society owns the 20 acres and many of those buildings including: the Fallas House, the Misner House, the Tower House and Barn, the Fallas Schoolhouse and the Fallas Barn. The Fallasburg Covered Bridge is part of the village, but is property of the Kent County

Road Commission. The bridge was listed with the Michigan State Register on February 12, 1959. It was awarded a Michigan Historical Marker on September 10, 1971. The bridge was listed with the National Register on March 16, 1972.

For a full schedule of the Fallasburg Village Celebration, volunteer to help or become a member of the Fallasburg Historical Society, visit www.fallasburg.org or their Facebook page at Fallasburg Village Celebration.



Denning & Johnson will perform at 11 AM on the Schoolhouse Stage. Tana Denning and Fred Johnson have been playing as a duo for over seven years. They found common ground in the music they play and delight in sharing it with audiences at festivals, workshops, dances, farmers markets, and more.

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School Board, continued

said LAS Director of Technology, Eric Stanek, has resigned after serving for 25 years, effective July 28. A replacement director will be sought, after the job description has been evaluated and updated.

LAS Chief Financial Officer, Sonia Hodg, reported the State of Michigan’s recent budget approval revealed the per student foundation allowance will be \$9,608, which is an increase of \$458 from last year.

Hodge also reported the State is amending how enrollment totals are calculated this year. This is being done to help districts across the state weather declining enrollment. Instead of the usual formula of taking 90 percent of the fall’s estimated count and combine it with 10

has been added in the state budget, though the specifics of this aid has not yet been determined. She said, due to the size of our district, we should expect some State aid due to this new funding. The district is estimated to have a \$300,000 deficit. Hodge said this number may seem high, but it is actually lower than expected.

The State also recently approved the Universal School Meals program for all Michigan schools, which will include breakfast and lunch for the 2023-24 school year. Hodge said definitive budget numbers will be available in October at the earliest.

Director of Curriculum, Dan VanderMeulen, said 28 LAS staff members will be attending a three-day professional learning

During the public comments section of the meeting, Thomas Nemcek expressed concern about student enrollment and low SAT scores. He said LAS enrollment is down 10 percent, according to statistics from the website mischooldata.com.

Stefanie Boone brought up several concerns regarding how the Board meetings handle public comments and also how they are made accessible to the public. Boone said, in the past, the public was allowed to yield any unused speaking time, which is three minutes per speaker, to another person. She also said, in past meetings, she was allowed to speak at both “Public Comments on Agenda Items,” at the beginning of the meeting, and the general “Public

taken away from us with no reason or discussion about why that happened,” she said.

She said meetings should be recorded and shared with the public, in addition to them being live-streamed, so the public, who cannot attend in person, can see and hear what is being decided on at the meetings, and she asked that report handouts given at the meetings should be made available along with the minutes posted.

Jeff Larsen, Wendi Vogel, and Kim Lum spoke positively of their recent experiences with LAS students, teachers, and staff.

Superintendent Fowler addressed some of the public comments during his report. He said declining enrollment is not only happening in Lowell, but is a county-wide problem. He said he hopes to



LAS parent, Stefanie Boone, speaks at July Board meeting.



find strategies to stabilize enrollment, as well as check into the statistics Nemcek presented in his comments.

Addressing Boone’s comments, Fowler said the Board is working toward having meetings recorded on a regular basis, and it is the Board’s policy to have a member of the public speak only once at each meeting. He said this has not always been enforced, which may be a cause of confusion.

Fowler said the lighting at the high school football stadium has been installed, and the parking lot lighting

is almost complete. The middle school construction continues on budget and on schedule, minus the locker rooms, which will not be ready in time for the start of school. There will be a date announced for a building dedication for the new learning spaces.

Kuna reported that LHS Spanish teacher, Sarah Ellis, was awarded the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classroom Award. Kuna said Ellis is an example of the high quality of teachers in the LAS district.

percent of the past spring’s count, to come up with a “blended” count, there will be a new way of calculating enrollment.

For the 2023-24 school year, the formula will be based on 50 percent of last year’s blended enrollment with 50 percent of this year’s enrollment numbers. It is estimated LAS will have an increase of 15 students, which translates to \$144,000.

Hodge said a transportation-aid line

conference near Chicago, late July. The conference focuses on “learning, teaching, and collaboration” within the school setting.

Comments” section. Boone said, she was told recently she needed to pick one or the other. “That has been



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Michael Kutch: making art out of junk

by Bill Lee
contributing writer

Tin, copper, old wood doors... you name it, Michael Kutch probably uses it for his art. Kutch creates salvage art – art that is crafted from rejected or recycled materials. The

materials he finds guides his creative process and the pieces he creates. “It changes every year, as it depends on the materials I have to work with,” said Kutch. “For example, right now I have a bunch of

roofing copper that came from off an old church. I’ve been cutting up copper and making fish and sandhill cranes out of copper.”

It is something he has been doing since he was a high school student. “About 15 years ago I started out in antiques and I sold at some shows, and fell into taking old architectural pieces and making them into signs,” said Kutch. “I worked my way into doing art shows, at that point. I had enough pieces that I made throughout college – that’s what I did over the summer, making pieces out of old junk.”

Art has always been a passion project for him and he does most of his work during the summer. He makes some money, here and there, but actually pays his bills as a 7th grade Language Arts teacher at Lakewood Middle School in Woodland, Michigan. Originally from Hastings, Kutch moved to Minnesota and resided there for seven



Michael Kutch, of Lowell, creates salvage art.

years, until last year, when he moved back to Michigan, now residing in Lowell. It has been a great move for his wife and two young children. “We’re happy to be back in Michigan,” said Kutch. “We love it here. Michigan is such a cool state.”

Kutch is a very creative person and likes to stay busy at all times. Being a full-time teacher has been a nice creative outlet, but he really has no time to work on his art during the school year. Summer is when he makes that happen. “I love to keep busy and creating, and I’m an industrial person,” said Kutch. “I don’t sit down to relax. I relax by making things or fixing things. This is how I chill-out over the summer.”

What he enjoys, and subsequently, what his customers enjoy about his art, is the unique nature of it. Recently, his work made an impression at the Lowell Riverwalk Festival. Whether he is making sandhill cranes out of copper, succulent plants out of tin, Up North signs out of repurposed wood and metal, or the Edmund Fitzgerald out of tin and old wooden doors, Kutch’s work catches people’s eyes. “It’s unique and something different,” said Kutch. “A lot of people say they’ve never seen anything like this. It’s a breath of fresh air from what you normally see at art shows, maybe. Also, it’s constantly changing. If I come up with some new material, it’s going to change what I make, so I’m flexible

with the pieces that I make.”

He attends five to six art shows each summer and also has an online presence to display his work. He prefers that you come see him in person, as he really enjoys meeting people at the art shows. “I enjoy being at the shows, interacting with people and meeting people,” said Kutch. “Hopefully people will come out and see things in person. I like talking to people... also, we’re going to try to get some online stuff going with the smaller pieces that can be shipped. We’re pushing the website this summer.”

He’ll find materials just about anywhere, but recently, found some cool things at an estate sale. “When I’m out at an estate sale, I can find an interesting piece of junk, like a letter for a sign. Right now, I’m into cutting tin. I take old doors and cut them up into blocks and use that as the background to nail cut pieces of tin onto. I make anything from ‘salvage succulents’ like cacti and whatnot. I’ve been making Great Lakes freighters this summer and old Air Stream campers, little designs and what-not.”

If you can’t make one of the art fairs he attends, you can find his art on his website barnbridgehill.com. Also, he is on Facebook and Instagram. He also makes custom art for those who are looking for something special for a loved one.



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JULY SCHEDULE

Jacob Bullen, *Assassinating The Godslayer*, July 15
Joan H. Young, special episode Author & hiker finishes NCT twice, July 20
S.W. Raine, *The Elemental's Guardian*, July 21
Jan Leland, *After the Before-Times*, July 28
Special episode, 50th Grand Ledge Island Art Fair, TBA

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Barn Bridge Hill Salvage Art's booth at the Riverwalk Festival. Photo, courtesy of Barn Bridge Hill Salvage Art's facebook page.

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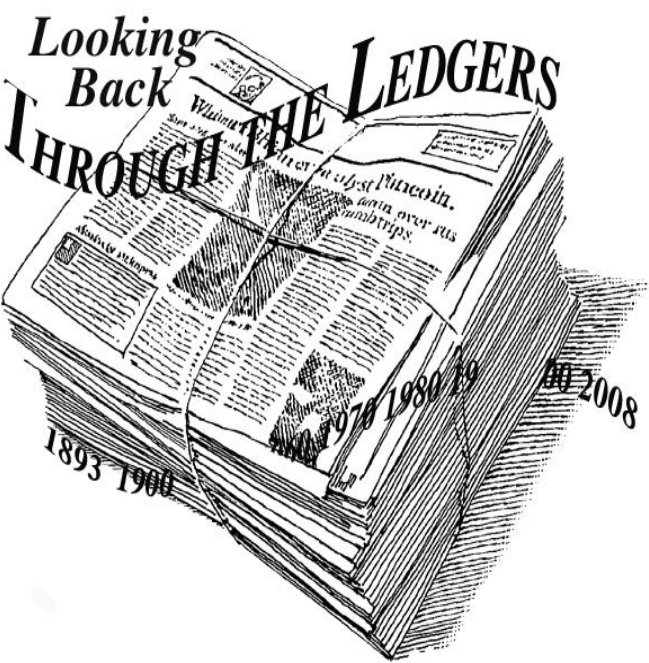
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viewpoint



150 years ago The Lowell Journal July 16, 1873

“A new backbone and several ribs have been put into Flat River bridge. Other necessary repairs are being made.”

Mr. E.R. Craw of Lowell has invented and built a Middlings Purifier. It’s needed in every flour mill.

It’s hot and wet; bad for wheat, good for other crops and loafing.

Saturdays are farmers’ nights to come to town.

Abel Avery lost his pocketbook on the 4th, with about, \$6.00 in it.

125 years ago The Lowell Ledger July 21, 1898

Santiago, Cuba, surrenders after a long series of truces, and the troops take off immediately for Porto Rico.

Harvesting in very hot weather is made more difficult by much lodged grain and very heavy straw.

Dorus Church, of Alto, killed three large hawks, the largest with a wingspan of 4 feet, 4 inches.

The 32nd Michigan stationed at Tampa is plagued by continuous rain, then typhoid and malarial fevers. They are moved to Fernandina, Florida, where conditions are much better.

100 years ago The Lowell Ledger July 19, 1923

Webster Morris, founder of the Lowell Journal in 1865, returns for a visit to the family gravesite. The 83-year-old is entertained by a dinner at the Hotel Waverly by a group of Lowell leaders.

In the chase after bootleggers, an “ordinance-appearing individual” (oai), who keeps asking where he can buy a couple of quarts, turns out to be a federal agent.

The State Fair at Detroit will have a Dog and Pony Show - and some mules too.

75 years ago The Lowell Ledger July 15, 1948

Showboat will hold another jumping-frog contest for the pre-show this year, but will make it a hop, skip and jump instead of a single leap.

Gerald R. Ford, Jr., Grand Rapids lawyer and navy veteran, will run again Bartel J. Jonkman for the Fifth Congressional District nomination for U.S. Representative.

Veterans may reinstate lapsed insurance policies before July 31, 1948.

Showboat Chorus is the largest ever, 97, to go with the new and larger showboat.

Philip Bonenfant, 50, of Lowell, gave an unidentified 15-year-old boy a lift to, what he thought was, his home near the end of Michigan St, NE, Grand Rapids; he was dragged from the car by the youth and two other young assailants. He was badly beaten and robbed of a purse containing about \$10 and valuable papers.

50 years ago Lowell Ledger Suburban Life July 19, 1973

Parents are warned about children playing in the sewer tiles piled along the streets.

Police chief, Barry Emmons, again reminds business men to be sure to lock doors, and especially windows, for the night.

Another caution for businesses: downspouts on some buildings may be connected to the sewer system and need to be unhitched while construction goes on.

The uncertain chicken market, added to torn-up streets and attendant dust, causes the cancellation of the Congregational Men’s Club barbecue.

Congressman, Gerald R. Ford, will be a Showboat guest next week, July 26.

25 years ago The Lowell Ledger July 22, 1998

Gary Rivers, 62, Lowell’s Hall of Fame wrestling coach, died of a massive heart attach on Tuesday, July 14, leaving a collective lump in the throat and an ache in the heart of the many lives he impacted.

City agrees to discuss possible water-rate increase with Lowell Township.

At their July 20th meeting, the board approved the use of the roads in Lowell Township for the Youth Fair 5K Run, August 15 at 8 am. The run circles the area of Alden Nash, Segwun, Emery, Lowell View and Grand River. Those roadways will be blocked off for the duration of the two-hour race, due to a permit through the Kent County Road Commission.

Jim Sowle, an airport board member since 1992, and an adjoining property owner to the facility, has been appointed the new Lowell City Airport manager. The city council’s approval pending his certification from the state.

outdoors hunt preparation

Dave Stegehuis

During the long hot days of summer, deer hunting may be the farthest thing from the minds of those who hunt whitetails. However, there are a few tasks that should be addressed well before the season opener.

Selecting a hunting location is easy for people who own or have access to a specific area. Public land hunters have plenty of options to consider. Gaining permission to hunt private land should be addressed early, out of respect for the landowner. Finding and leasing hunting land will take time and effort.

Once a huntable area has been identified, it is time to scout the habitat for signs of deer movement. Time in the field should be limited, so as not to alert deer to human presence. Runways, rubs, scrapes, and browsed vegetation will tell a story about the habits of resident deer. Glassing whitetail activity from a distance, on foot or from a vehicle, provides an opportunity to identify individual animals. Trail cameras gather lots of information. Some cameras send pictures and videos to a phone or other device in real time. Hunters now have to

reconcile the use of technology with the concept of fair-chase hunting. People who don’t hunt can enjoy scouting by getting out and observing and photographing wildlife in their natural habitat.

Private land hunters may spend time managing the land for habitat improvement. This may involve cutting and planting trees and maintaining open areas to encourage native plants and grasses. Planting wild-life food plots on private land has become popular across the state. Thoughtful habitat management can benefit all wildlife species.

Serious practice with archery gear and firearms is necessary to hone the skills required to make a clean and humane kill. These skills should be maintained year-around, but starting now and practicing regularly can make up for lost time. Besides, shooting is fun and those who don’t hunt can also participate in a variety of shooting sports.

Harvesting an animal or bird is a very small part of the hunting experience. Ethical hunting involves a lot of preparation, so mid-summer is not too early to start planning for the season.

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.

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All Aboard! Book Club

Thursday, July 20, 10:30 - 11:30 am. Join a fun, informal discussion of great books. This month, we’ll discuss *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. For adults 18+

Tom Plunkard’s Amazing Adventures

Tuesday, July 25, 1:30 - 2:30 pm. Brace yourself for a truly amazing and hilarious magic show. This fantastic 45-minute, high-energy presentation will appear to last only as long as it takes you to say, “Abracadabra! For all ages.

Swordsmanship - Pirate Cutlass

Tuesday, July 25, 4-5 pm. Instructors from the Swordsmanship Museum and Academy will teach the fundamentals of historical swordsmanship. Learn how high seas swashbucklers and scallywags would make the most of combat, squeezing their opponent for every bit of gold they could! Space is limited; first come, first served. Doors open 15 minutes before the program begins and you may save one seat for a friend. For ages 11-17.

Gemini Circus Up in the Air

Tuesday, August 1, 1:30 - 2:30 pm. Gemini Circus features twin sisters that provide entertainment through the aerial arts. This show includes both beautiful artistry and thrilling performances. For all ages

business matters

Greenridge Realty announced that Joshua McCracken received Realtor of the Month for the Lowell office in June.

This award recognizes McCracken for his outstanding success and achievements.



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. *Items submitted by Lowell Area Historical Museum.*

H is for Hermit “Hermit of Devil’s Peak”

Lowell had its own Hermit. He was known as ‘Flat River Jim’ and ‘The Hermit of Devil’s Peak’.

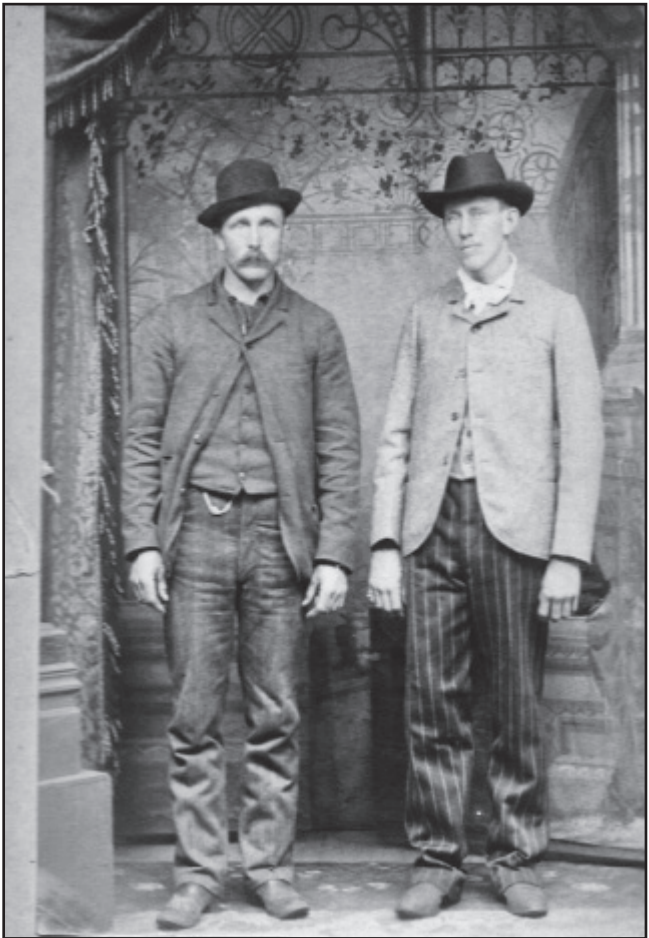
James Burnett, ‘Flat River Jim’, lived in a shack along the Flat River. Though called a hermit, he was not what you would envision. It was true enough that he lived in solitude. Jim lived in a tiny shack that he had built near Devil’s Peak. He had a narrow bed on one end, and the walls were his head and foot boards. He also had a chair, small table, and little iron stove. His front ‘yard’ was the slope down to the river. He decorated his home with a set of bird charts that had been sent to him by an oil company.

It was said that he knew the Flat River like Thoreau knew Walden Pond. Fishermen joked that he could call every bass by its maiden

name. Jim received a government pension check and occasionally worked on a neighborhood farm to supplement his funds. He also sold fish and grew his own veggies that he planted randomly around the cabin. But ironically, the ‘Hermit of the Hills’ or ‘Hermit of Devil’s Peak’ was most remembered for his social interactions. The children of town remembered how Jim gave a wave when walking past their house, as he walked to and from town. Boys remembered that as they fished, Jim would clean their catch one by one as they were getting the next one. He was known for being kind. The children said animals weren’t afraid of him, coming right up to him. He also predicted the weather for the Showboat festival. In twelve years, he only missed one night!

Jim spent 40 years as Lowell’s hermit. There was speculation that perhaps a love affair gone wrong was to blame. While this may be true, these family events also need to be considered.

Jim was born in 1871. His mother died in 1888. In 1890 his father Albert entered the Michigan Soldier’s Home.



The Burnett brothers

In the December 9, 1891, edition of the *Lowell Journal*, an article announced that Jim was living with his brother Charles, and “took poison last night with suicidal intent. He came home about six o’clock and remarked that he would be dead before morning and in a short time began to cramp and suffer intense pain. Antidotes were given him and the prompt measures together with the small amount of poison taken saved his life. It was a deliberate attempt at self-destruction, for when he was suffering most he begged for a knife or razor to finish the job.”

In 1900, Charles is shown living in Lowell during the census. By 1910 however,

he had moved to Muskegon, where he remained until his own death. During this time Jim had built and began living in his shack in the woods and earning the title, ‘Flat River Jim the Hermit of Devil’s Peak’.

Jim Burnett died of natural causes in 1946. Though he was gone, he left an impact on Lowell. In 1991, years after his passing, the grateful children who had been the recipients of his kindness, now older adults, replaced his gravestone in Oakwood Cemetery. The new marker used the name everyone knew him as, Flat River Jim Burnett 1871 - 1946, the Hermit of Devil’s Peak.



Devil’s Peak

area churches

CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF LOWELL

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

Riverside Fellowship of Seventh-day Adventists

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

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

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

10305 Bluewater Highway
(Missouri Synod)
Halfway between Lowell & Saranac on M-21

Sunday Services - 10:30 am
www.gslc.church

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

St. Mary Catholic Church

402 Amity Street • 616-897-9820
Website: www.stmarylowell.com
Weekend Masses: Sat 5 pm; Sun 10:30 am
Confession: Saturdays 3:30-4:30 pm
Prayer & Adoration: Wednesdays 9 am to 4:45 pm
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Thursdays 5:30 - 6:30 PM

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Pastor Andrew Bolkcom • Pastor of Discipleship

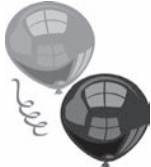
SUNDAY WORSHIP.....9:30 AM (Nursery provided)
LIFE GROUPS 11:00 AM (Nursery-Adult)
Awana (K-5 during school year) Wednesday, 6:15 PM

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

happy birthday



JULY 20

Cara Thaler, David Thaler III, Maureen Pawloski, Beth Berry, Amber Brown, Jerry Taylor.

JULY 23

Dave Fosburg, Nathan Swift, Heather Pretzel, Robert Jahnke.

JULY 24

Nathan Bush.

JULY 26

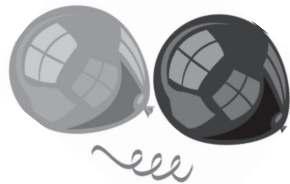
Elaine Gregersen, Eric Baird, Josh Geldersma, Ellen Dilly.

JULY 21

Dara Anchors, Stephanie Wade, Carolyn Mercer, Jeff Gurney, Kelly Tulecki, Alexander Stiles.

JULY 22

Kelly Marie Roth, Laurie Fonger, Eric Shear, Noreen Myers, T.J. Butler, Allie Stuckey.





Live the Life You Want

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

The powerful benefits of gratitude

You may have heard the quote “Gratitude changes attitudes” but can something so simple be that powerful? Yes! Psychologically, gratitude boosts happiness and positive moods, shifts attention away from negative emotions, fosters healthier relationships, reduces stress, increases life satisfaction, and reduces ruminating (central to depression). Physically, people that are grateful tend to feel less pain, sleep better, and have stronger immune systems. Studies even show that grateful people tend

to do better professionally and academically. These are only some of the benefits. Gratitude is being thankful for what you have. It’s an emotion, a mood, or personality trait that makes us feel happier. Some are more inclined to feel grateful, but even if you are not naturally inclined to feel grateful, you can tap into its power by making it a daily habit.

Increasing gratitude

- Keep a journal that, in some way, notes the joys of daily life.

- Get out of auto pilot. If you are living on auto pilot, it’s tough to feel grateful or happiness because you are just going through the motions of life. Also, what tends to get your attention, when in auto pilot mode, are negative situations.
- Create a list of items for which you are grateful every day. When I feel “off” or “out of sorts”, I reach for my list. I seldom have to go beyond the first five items. I don’t just read the list, I feel the emotions behind the statements. The first thing on my list is: “I opened my eyes this morning.” I think about how many people may not have and that is powerful. This is a gift for which I am grateful and it never fails to shift my mood to a more positive one.
- Write thank-you notes, appreciation notes, or love notes to others.
- Think about people who have inspired you

and why. Then try and do something similar.

- Find your purpose. If your purpose is not connected to your job or a hobby, consider volunteering in an area you are passionate about. If you are struggling to find your purpose, it’s time to explore. Just be sure to set boundaries and practice self-care.
- Practice random acts of kindness. I feel so much gratitude when I can help others. Help an elderly or disabled neighbor, share food from your garden, run errands for someone that can’t, share knowledge and skills, anonymously pay for someone else’s order.

I’m grateful to be a lifelong resident of this community and that I’m able to give back. Let’s all work together as a community to be supportive of one another and to lift each other up. Work to



tap in to all the benefits gratitude brings. I hope you find this info helpful but it’s not intended to provide advice, diagnose, or treat. Be safe and well!



Financial Focus

With Christopher C. Godbold
Edward Jones
Serving Individuals Investors Since 1871

Retired? Consider benefits of part-time work

After spending decades in the workforce, you might look forward to the day you retire. But if you decide, for one reason or another, that you’d like to redefine “retirement” to include part-time work or consulting, you could enjoy exercising your skills and meeting new people. But you can also receive some key financial benefits.

Specifically, bringing in some paychecks in your retirement can help you in these areas:

- You could contribute more to your IRA. During your working years, you may have contributed regularly to an IRA, but once you retired, you might have thought those days were over. But there’s no age limit - if you have any

earned income, you can contribute to an IRA and boost the financial resources you have available for retirement.

- You could potentially lower your withdrawal rate. Once you’re retired, you will likely need to rely on your investment portfolio to provide you with some - or maybe most - of your income. Consequently, you’ll need to establish an appropriate withdrawal rate - a percentage of your portfolio that you can take out each year without running the risk of potentially outliving your money. Income from part-time work or consulting may lower your dependency on investment income, thereby reducing your annual withdrawal rate and extending the overall

longevity of your investment portfolio.

- You could add to your grandchildren’s 529 plans. When you invest in a 529 education savings plan, the earnings and withdrawals are federally tax-free, provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. As a grandparent, you can contribute to a 529 plan with your grandchildren as beneficiaries. And a 529 plan can be used for more than college – it can fund some programs at trade schools and K-12 expenses in some states. So, by putting some of your earned income to work in a 529 plan, you can help improve your grandchildren’s prospects.

You could reduce your debts. By the time you reach retirement, you may or may not have retired your mortgage, but you might have other debts on your books. If you can apply some of your earned income to these debts, you can improve your cash flow and possibly avoid dipping into your retirement accounts for short-term needs.

Of course, you’ll also have to consider some

issues if you end up working in retirement, particularly if you bring in a sizable amount of money. For example, if you’re earning income and collecting Social Security before you reach your “full” retirement age - which is likely between 66 and 67 - your monthly benefits will be reduced. (However, these “lost” benefits will be restored once you do reach your full retirement age.) Also, the added income could push you into a higher tax bracket or even cause you to pay the Medicare premium surcharge or the 3.8 percent surtax on net investment income, if your income reaches certain levels. So, before embarking on any



employment that may yield a large additional income, consult with your tax advisor.

Overall, though, the financial benefits of part-time employment income during your retirement years may be worth it – so give some thought to “unretiring.”

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

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collectibles, sheet music & much more.

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The Grand, continued

accommodate the projected traffic from all over the Midwest.

Mark Anderson, Lowell Charter Township Trustee, local business owner, and co-chair of the Construction Ad Hoc Committee for The Grand, envisions exciting potential for the future. “The Grand is an amazing addition to the Lowell community and our entire donors, area foundations, public funding sources, volunteers, and friends. The Grand has received private and public support from funding partners, such as the Consumers Energy Foundation, Lowell Area Community Fund, and the Peter C. & Emajean Cook Foundation, along with county, state, and federal funds.

our volunteers, and our supporters.”

The campus masterplan encompasses seven buildings, all new utilities, parking, and primitive campsites. The modern campground is in the planning stages and has not been constructed yet. “We knew it was going to be a challenge to have The Grand open for the 2023 Kent



Barn raising.

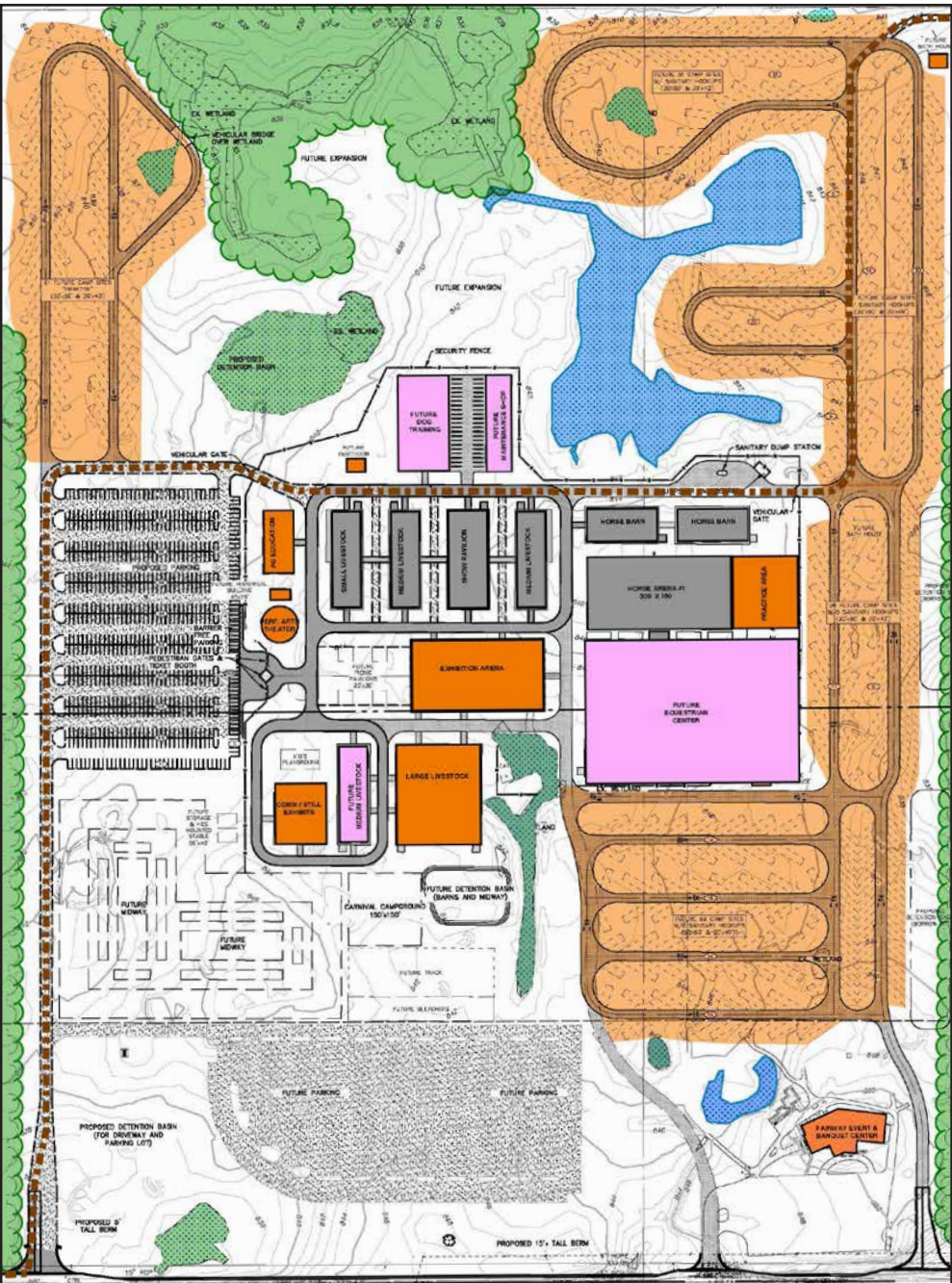
state,” said Anderson. “The Grand will become a premier destination, drawing visitors from around the region, across the state, and throughout the Midwest, especially for large agricultural shows and equestrian competitions.”

The capital campaign, “Raising Barns, Building Youth,” has raised more than \$19 million from individual

“The whole campus wildly exceeded my expectations,” said KCYAA President Bill Zaske. “The project is not only on schedule and on budget, but we were also able to add two buildings and a lot of additional site work to the project, due to the extraordinary partnership and work with our construction team,

County Youth Fair,” Zaske said. “I am happy to report, we will be ready for it.”

The first buildings to open will be two horse barns, one outdoor horse arena, a covered show pavilion, one practice horse arena, three livestock barns, and primitive campsites. The campsites have been leveled and grass planted. The Grand will eventually expand for



Site plan. Photo, courtesy of KCYAA.



year-round programming, including school field trips, and large-scale agricultural and equestrian shows, as one of only three sites in Michigan.

The KCYAA is building on nearly 90 years of creating opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills, cultivate character traits, and nurture interest in the sciences through agricultural projects and experiences. “We are proud of the role we play in creating our next generation of leaders in all industries, but especially the complex world of agriscience,” said Morgan Doyle, Executive Director of the organization. “Through The Grand, we have the opportunity to expand this vision to many more youth and adults from around our entire county.”

The first event to be held at the Grand Agricultural Center of West Michigan will be the 88th annual Kent County Youth Fair, from July 30 through August 5. The fair draws 50,000+ visitors annually and attendance is expected to grow exponentially with

be able to offer more rides, games, and food.”

The big picture is to accommodate modern equestrian and livestock shows with all the needed amenities. “We have the space to host trade and training events, as well as, offer a place to showcase their products,” Zaske said. “We are really excited to see how the agricultural community starts to use these new grounds.”

As the second phase of construction wraps up, the next phase will begin as soon as the Kent County Youth Fair is complete on Aug. 5. This phase of the masterplan will include Four-Season Exhibition Building, Modern Campground, Agricultural Education and Community Building, and much more.

A ribbon cutting was held on Wednesday, July 12 with the following speakers: Bill Zaske, KCYAA President; Dave Hildenbrand, Co-Chair Construction Ad Hoc Committee, Kent County Commissioner, and former State Senator; Morgan

of the ribbon, followed by a “family-friendly” celebratory toast with milk and an ice cream social.

The Grand project was divided into several phases. In Phase 1 the campaign raised close to \$4 million that allowed to secure the land. KCYAA purchased 140 acres of the former Deer Run Golf Club, located at 13955 Cascade Rd SE in Lowell Township, approximately three miles from Interstate 96 and less than five miles south of the current fairground location in downtown Lowell.

The land includes the Fairway banquet facility that can accommodate both Youth Fair needs and continue serving our community as a venue for social functions. The new campus will not only host the annual Kent County Youth Fair every August, it will also be a destination spot for equestrian and livestock shows, large festivals, expositions and events of all kinds.

In Phase 2, a master site plan has prioritized construction to allow for a



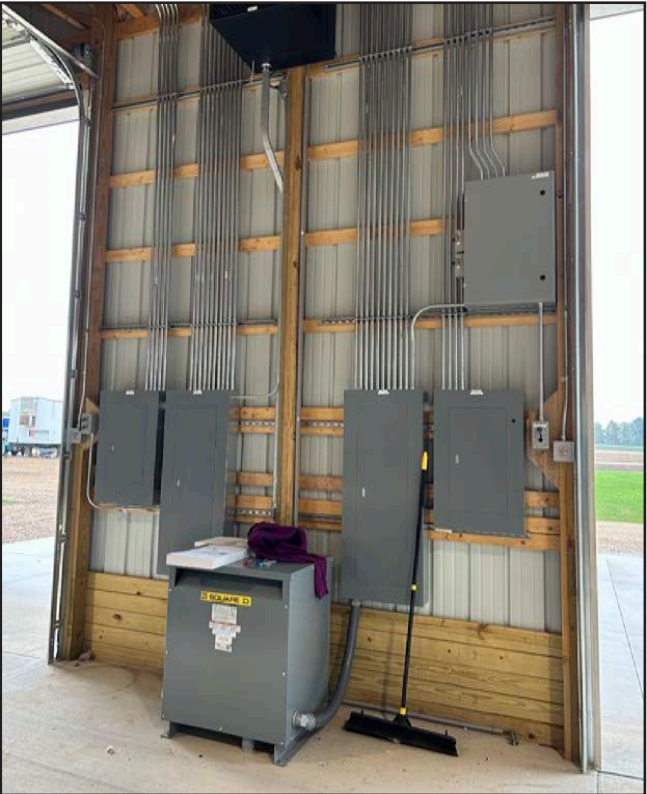
the expanded space and new facilities. The visitors and exhibitors for this will notice more space on the grounds, as the project increased the usable acres from 19 to 140. “The grounds will offer more space for everyone,” Zaske said. “We have a new carnival this year that will

Doyle, KCYAA Executive Director and John Schut, Executive Director for the Michigan Association of Fairs & Exhibitions and long-time KCYAA board member. Youth members representing different age divisions, who participate in the Kent County Youth Fair, conducted the actual cutting

continuous build-out of the full campus. The current campus is operational with a mix of new, permanent buildings and temporary tents, ready for the upcoming fair.

For more info go to: [www. https://www.kcyf.org/](https://www.kcyf.org/)

More photos of The Grand





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

~ Feodor Protar

by Martha Hayden

Who has left a permanent impression on your life? Well, Feodor Protar had made a lasting impact on the islanders who have called Beaver Island their home. His log cabin has been made into a museum and stone walls stand guard over his gravesite. A century after his passing, Feodor Protar is still revered on Beaver Island by the 600 year-round residents. We had to learn more about Feodor Protar! Join my husband, Chuck, and I on a chilly Easter weekend, as we investigated “The Saint of Beaver Island.”

Feodor Protar’s childhood- Europe

In 1838, when Feodor Parrot had been born, his

Feodor Protar – United States

In the early spring of 1874, at 36 years old, Feodor had arrived in the United States. He had secured an acting position in St. Louis. Later he taught at a German-American Institute in New York. In 1882, driven with passion for the German language, Protar had purchased the bankrupt newspaper, Volkszeitung, on Rock Island, Illinois. This island bustles in the Mississippi River, 170 miles west of Chicago.

Over the eleven years Protar had worked to bring the Volkszeitung newspaper back to life, he would often travel to Beaver Island for

meaningful, self-sufficient lifestyle. With Protar’s standing knowledge of natural remedies, food preservation in addition to his caring manner, Feodor Protar had earned the name “The Saint of Beaver Island” and had been referred to as “Dr. Proctar.”

Nestled among pine and birch trees, along Sloptown Road, sits Feodor Protar’s cabin. This log home is now a museum on Beaver Island. We crunched across the speckled, snow-covered ground, knowing that the tourist season had yet to begin, so we could only peek through the windows at the

proper warm clothes.

Dr. Protar

Islanders had once flocked to see “Dr. Protar.” Even though Feodor had never received a medical degree, he had been sought for answers on a vast array of questions. I found a photo at the historical museum, where an individual had labeled it, “Dr. Protar, Beaver Isld.”

Feodor Proctor’s passing 1925

Upon Feodor Protar’s passing, having aged 87 years, a tomb had been lovingly constructed by the residents, complete with a plaque. Later, a book, “The Saint of Beaver Island”, had been written.

Leaving a legacy

Feodor has left a legacy on Beaver Island. His dedication to others had been admirable! Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all of us could reach out to others with a helpful heart? I feel that this world would be a better place if we carried Feodor’s mindset.

Island life

Islanders, even today, give a wave and readily lend-a-hand to others. We’ve found a real kinship present on Great Lakes islands, as we’ve traveled. Many residents we’ve spoken with ‘wear many hats’ and carry a ‘can-do’ attitude when they are presented with any task.

This hard-working resourcefulness has been readily witnessed. As we were purchasing provisions, the grocery store clerk introduced herself and her long list of responsibilities. She happened to be a board member of the Beaver Island Historical Society, as well as the Community Center. “We’re restarting the newspaper, too!”

“We stopped by the community center for the Easter celebration.” I commented, “The decorations and activities were impressive.” She smiled as she shared, “We had filled 2,000 plastic



Feodor Protar, Beaver Islander from 1893-1925.
Photo Credit: Beaver Island Historical Museum

eggs for the Island Easter Egg Hunt today. They’d all been found in just 15 minutes!” Her eyebrows jumped above the rim of her glasses. I responded, “We had wanted to witness the Easter Egg Hunt, but when we’d arrived, the playground had been cleared and people were already heading to their vehicles carrying full baskets. The kids all had huge smiles!” I added. “A man stopped as I opened our car door. He held out a basket of eggs. ‘You’d missed it. Here take some,’ He had offered. That had been so kind.” Islanders continue to impress me with their generosity!

Angel and Paul Welke

We had the pleasure of meeting Paul Welke and his wife, Angel, owners of Welke Airport. They are the lifeline to the mainland! The airport team has had to medivac islanders, saving their lives. The pair transport packages and supplies, as well as regularly fly residents

to and from the mainland. Their dedication to their community goes beyond a 9 to 5 workday!

In fact, Paul and Angel had graciously invited us for a tour of the airport, as well as their home, where they’ve displayed a museum of military memorabilia. Angel brought out snacks and we visited for hours on Easter Sunday.

Islanders

Meeting islanders has been a favorite part of our travels! Living without typical constraints from society, residents of islands are nourished with a complete sense of belonging and are able to grow into their full personalities! Spending time with islanders today, I now hold a better understanding as to Feodor Proctor’s desire to live on Beaver Island and nurture his neighbors.

Resources:
Beaver Island Historical Society



Notice how putting on the ‘storm door’ had been included. In January, there’s mention of “no mail 4 weeks.”

scientific parents had already been dedicated to improving lives of serfs and peasants through modern farming and preservation techniques. The people of their hometown, Dorpat, Livonia (now Tartu, Estonia), had been eternally grateful to the Parrot family for sharing their knowledge. (At some point Feodor had changed his last name from Parrot to Protar. Perhaps, when he’d moved to the United States.)

Feodor had reportedly been frequently ill during his childhood and had struggled in school. However, he had excelled in theatrics and became the Artistic Director at the Riga City Theater in Latvia.

In 1874, as the Baltic government began creating restrictions and threatening jail-time on individuals using the German language and books written in the forbidden script, Protar had decided to relocate to the United States.

respite. Contrary to his city-life successfulness, Protar had wished for a simpler, more meaningful life-style. His reading of Tolstoy had nourished this desire, too.

Absorbing history

As I read through these facts, I can see how bias and racism has been a long-standing trait of cultures around the world. In reflection, I am always impressed with the full lives people had lived over 100-years ago. Their employment, relationships, wishes and desires had been fully formed. I’m astonished by how readily they had coursed great distances, too!

Feodor Protar’s Beaver Island home

Protar had been a successful newspaper editor and actor when he had made the decision to relocate to Beaver Island in 1893. At 55 years old, this spiritual quest had been a search for a more

island saint’s residence. Protar had instructed islanders on methods of preserving food: canning, salting, smoking and drying collected crops, as well as meat.

Feodor Protar’s planting and harvesting chart

On a nearby post stood an annual chart holding a wealth of information about planting and harvesting schedules, as well as weather reports and the islanders’ communication schedule.

Farming and food preservation had been Protar’s focus. He had been known for trading meals for work on his property. Protar’s natural remedies had been trusted to cure ailments of his island neighbors. These salves had worked well! During the harsh winter months, Feodor had generously distributed hats and mittens, which he’d made, to those without



Auto insurance shopping tips to Michiganders

The Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) is offering tips to Michiganders to help them shop for auto insurance that works for their needs and budgets. This is especially important as auto insurance premiums nationwide are impacted by higher costs and an increased number and severity of crashes.

“Shopping around is one of the most important ways for Michigan drivers to ensure they get the most for their auto insurance dollar, and following a few simple shopping tips can help make the process more efficient and more effective,” said DIFS Director Anita Fox. “If you need help understanding how auto insurance works,

you can call DIFS at 833-ASK-DIFS, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or visit Michigan.gov/AutoInsurance.”

Shopping for auto insurance can be an important step in getting the right coverage for your situation and budget. Important tips include:

Shop Around: Call more than one company or agent to compare prices and coverages. Be sure to deal only with licensed agents and companies. DIFS offers a Locator that can help you find licensed insurance professionals in your area.

Get Insurance Quotes Before Buying a New Car: Ask for insurance quotes on the particular year, make, and model car you are considering. Having the

VIN number of the vehicle you are looking at can make this process easy. Knowing the cost of insurance before you purchase a vehicle is important because the cost can vary greatly from car to car.

Ask About Discounts: Many insurers offer discounts for safety devices, such as anti-theft devices or anti-lock brakes, or for having more than one type of policy with the same company. You may also be eligible for a discount or lower rate if you are an employee or member of certain organizations. Discounts vary by insurer, so you may consider asking your agent or company if you qualify for any of the policy discounts they offer.

Consider Increasing



Your Deductible: A deductible is the amount of money you must pay out of pocket before your insurer will pay for damages. For example, a \$500 deductible on a collision policy means that you must pay the first \$500 in repair costs before your insurer pays up to the policy limit on the covered loss. No matter what deductible amount you choose, it is important to make sure you have a plan, such as a dedicated savings account, for paying this cost.

Ask About Your Coverage Choices: Consumers with older, less valuable vehicles, or those who do not have a finance or lease agreement that requires comprehensive or collision coverage, may wish to consider dropping these coverages to save money if they do not owe money on the vehicle and if they are able to pay out of pocket to repair or replace the vehicle if it is damaged. Be sure to read your policy, including your declarations page, after you receive it to make sure it reflects the coverage choices you made with your agent during the sales process.

PIP/BI Coverage Level Choices: In addition, you may choose the coverage levels for Personal Injury Protection (PIP) and Residual Bodily Injury Liability (BI) that are appropriate based on your needs and budget. PIP covers your medical expenses if you are injured in an auto accident. The BI coverage level you choose is the amount your policy will pay if you’re held legally responsible for another person’s death, bodily injury, or damaged property in an accident. You should consider your choices carefully as these choices will have financial consequences. You may wish to consult with your insurance agent or obtain legal or financial advice to ensure your assets are adequately protected before changing your coverage limit.

Educational resources to help drivers learn more about auto insurance, including publications and instructional videos, are available at Michigan.gov/AutoInsurance. In addition, DIFS continues to operate its dedicated, no-fault hotline with calls being answered Monday

through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drivers can call 833-ASK-DIFS (275-3437) or email AutoInsurance@michigan.gov for assistance. Consumers may file a formal complaint by visiting Michigan.gov/DIFScomplaints.

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

college news

The Academic High Honor and Honor lists (Dean’s lists) for the past spring semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato have been announced by Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs David Hood.

Included on the High Honor List is Josie Dorf, of Ada.

Among 3,434 students, a total of 1,081 students qualified for the High Honor List by achieving a 4.0 straight “A” average, while 2,353 students earned a 3.5 to 3.99 average to qualify for the Honor List.

To qualify for academic honors, undergraduate students must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours for the semester.

Minnesota State Mankato, a comprehensive university with 14,482

students, is part of the Minnesota State system, which includes 26 colleges and seven universities.

Sierra Hieshetter of Lowell has been named to the Kalamazoo College Spring 2023 Dean’s List.

Dean’s List recognition is earned with a grade point average of 3.5 or better.

Kalamazoo College, founded in 1833, is a nationally recognized residential liberal arts and sciences college located in Kalamazoo, Mich. The creator of the K-Plan, Kalamazoo College provides an individualized education that integrates rigorous academics with life-changing experiential learning opportunities. For more information, visit www.kzoo.edu.

Chris Harper from Lowell, earned a degree from the

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater at spring commencement, held May 13, 2023.

More than 1,500 students crossed the stage to receive their degrees at the ceremony, held at Kachel Fieldhouse in the Williams Center.

Harper graduated with the following degree: Business Administration - Doctor of Business Administration

Included in the graduates are 98 students who are veterans, 9 international students and 180 nontraditional undergraduate students, defined as undergraduate students who are 25 years of age or older. In addition, 167 self-identified students with disabilities received degrees. Eight graduates of the university’s LIFE Program, which provides a complete college experience for young adults between the ages of 18-25 who have an intellectual disability, earned an advanced certificate.



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obituaries



ESTES
Kathleen (Kay) C. Estes, born July 28, 1941, passed away September 4, 2022. Please join family and friends of Kathleen Conard Lescohier Vaughn Estes to celebrate her life and first birthday in heaven. Friday, July 28, 2023, from 4:30 - 8:00 pm, at Cascade Township Park, 3810 Thornapple River Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan, under the Gazebo. Bring your human and pet-friendly four-legged friends. Come as you are. Some refreshments will be served.

ROUDABUSH
Carmen June Roudabush, age 93 of Lowell, passed away peacefully on June 19, 2023. A Celebration of Life will be held July 29, 2023, at King Building, 225 S. Broadway St., Lowell, MI 49331, from 1-4 pm. Memorial contributions, in lieu of flowers, can be made to Schneider Manor of Lowell, 725 Bowes Rd., Lowell, MI 49331.



**KETTNER**
Michael Bernard Kettner, loving husband, father, and grandfather of Grand Rapids, Michigan, passed away peacefully at home on July 8, 2023. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, and raised in Lowell, where his family moved when he was a young boy, and graduated from Lowell High School. Michael enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served for two years as a Yeoman in the Engineering Department on the USS Vermilion, based out of Norfolk, Virginia, until his honorable discharge. He was employed by the Kent County Probate Court for 30 years until his retirement. Michael married the love of his life, Diane, at Faith Lutheran Church and celebrated 51 years together. They have one son, Chad. They enjoyed traveling the world together. He also enjoyed gardening in his spare time. Michael was such a wonderful, gentle, and kind-hearted man. He will be remembered for his caring and thoughtful ways and generous spirit, always putting others before himself. He had a wonderful sense of humor that could brighten your day. Above all, Michael enjoyed spending family time with his loving wife Diane, his amazing son Chad

and sweet wife Kellie, and his two awesome grandsons Zachary and Christopher. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends. Michael was preceded in death by his parents, Harold George and Greta Alida (nee Hunter) Kettner, and his brother, Harold Grant Kettner. He also was predeceased by several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and cousins. Michael is survived by his wife Diane, son Chad and wife Kellie, grandsons Zachary and Christopher, and sister-in-law Elizabeth Kettner. In addition, he is survived by several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and cousins. Funeral arrangements by Gerst Funeral Care. A private funeral and graveside service will be held for his immediate family with interment at Oakwood Cemetery in Lowell. A Celebration of Life open house for family and friends, to share memories, will be held on Friday, July 28, from 4-7 pm, at Roselle Park, 1010 Grand River Drive NE, Ada, Michigan 49301. In lieu of flowers, please consider a contribution to your favorite charity.



SCHARASWAK
Elmer Eugene Scharaswak Sr, aged 83, of Belding, went to join his family in heaven on July 14th, 2023. He was preceded in death by his son Gary Wayne Scharaswak, daughter Carol Ann Scharaswak, and daughter in law Angie Scharaswak. He is survived by his wife, Martha Scharaswak Sr, and his sister Ruth Badder; his children Sharon (Jim) Annable, Marie (Thomas) Spickler, Elmer E Scharaswak Jr., and Marti Scharaswak; his grandchildren Amy (Doug Carney) Scharaswak, Heather (Jeff) Perry, Cora (Jacob) Wielinga, Greg



(Katrina) Scharaswak, Matthew Spickler, and Allison (Steve Endres) Annable. He was also loved by his best friend in life, George Rinard, and many dogs, including his current, Dexter. Elmer enjoyed spending time outside, doing activities like wood splitting, drinking coffee on the porch with his dogs, and working on cars and tractors. He also enjoyed picking on his wife, kids, and grandkids. He spent his life working on farms, as a milwright at King Milling, and as a mechanic at L&A RentAll after he retired from the mill. His children fondly remember family road trips where they would be rewarded with sandwiches and Milky Way Candy bars, a lot of joking and laughing and fun times. Dad shared a lot of knowledge which they still use in their lives, especially mechanically. They also recall times when the family went camping, and he shared his love of animals with his children. Cremation has taken place. A private graveside service will be held for immediate family. Interment at Oakwood Cemetery.



...
You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.
~ Mae West

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Fraudsters never go on vacation

By Hillary Hatch, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

Fraudsters will never take a break. While you are out enjoying fun and sun this summer, they are working hard to find new ways to scam you. Seniors and younger people are particularly vulnerable to scammers who claim to represent Social Security. To protect you and your loved ones, you can:

- Visit our Protect Yourself from Social Security Scams webpage at www.ssa.gov/scam for information on what tactics scammers use and how to report them
- Check out the Federal

Trade Commission's page at consumer.ftc.gov/scams for additional scam-related information

Here are some tips to follow when you identify a potential scammer:

- Hang up right away or ignore the message
- Never give personal information or money
- Report the scam immediately to our Office of the Inspector General at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report/>

If you owe money to Social Security, we'll mail you a letter with payment options and appeal rights. We only accept payments electronically through Pay.gov or Online Bill Pay, or physically by check or



money order through our offices.

We will never do the following:

- Threaten you with arrest or legal action because you don't agree to pay us money immediately
- Promise a benefit increase in exchange for money
- Ask you to send us gift cards, prepaid debit

cards, wire transfers, internet currency, cryptocurrency, or cash through the U.S. mail

There are no vacations for fraudsters, so you need to stay informed of the latest Social Security-related scams. For more information, please visit our blog at www.blog.ssa.gov. Please share these useful resources with your loved ones.

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SATURDAY, JULY 29
5:30-7:30 p.m.
BBQ 1/2 Chicken, potato, veggies, roll & desert
\$14 per person
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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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

Health centers need medical staff. How one program is helping



She never considered patient care as a career.

Blood? Needles? Just the thought made Shanice Wyatt shutter.

“To be honest, I was terrified,” the newly-minted medical assistant said, chuckling at her former fears.

Wyatt is among the first batch of graduates from a new Health Centers Careers Training Program. On-the-job training offered Wyatt a clear career track to becoming a medical assistant at Western Wayne Family Health Centers near Detroit, a role she’d never considered until the program. And because the program paid for her training, she didn’t incur debt to qualify for the position.

Wyatt and others in the Health Centers Careers Training Program are helping fill gaping holes throughout the state’s federally funded community health clinics.

In a state wracked by health care workers shortages in recent years, medical assistants and dental assistants are among the most in demand, according to MHC Insight, a research and data center at the health care research nonprofit, Michigan Health Council.

Over the next decade, Michigan will need nearly 19,000 dental assistants, who in Michigan made about \$18 an hour in 2021, and 39,000 medical assistants, (about \$18/hour), the council’s analysis found.

In the past year, Michigan employers posted more than 15,000 openings for medical assistants and dental assistants, according to the council’s research. That’s in part due to significant churn in these jobs. The council reports that two-in-three workers in these positions leave in a given year.

Michigan’s shortage is mirrored elsewhere.

Nationally, the need for both positions is projected to grow faster than the average of all other occupations through 2031 — 8 percent for dental assistants and 16 percent for medical assistants, according to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Fewer workers can strangle access to care.

Medical assistants are the “quarterback of the health team,” said Rachel Ruddock, director of workforce and health professions training at the Michigan Primary Care Association, which launched the on-the-job training program. The association represents community health centers, or federally qualified health centers, throughout the state. The centers largely serve under- and uninsured patients with primary and dental care and specialty services.

Medical assistants escort patients to exam rooms, check vitals, review medications and medical histories, ask about allergies, and communicate that medical intelligence to the doctor.

“They are in many ways the eyes and ears of a provider. They drive efficiency on the teams. Without them, the team comes to a grinding halt,” Ruddock said.

At Western Wayne’s Taylor and Inskter clinics, where Wyatt works, an even larger career goal has crowded out any lingering uneasiness she had about drawing blood, giving shots, or being within a breath’s distance of patients.

“I never was the kind of person who thought I’d want to be hands-on. But once you get into the practice of doing it, of being there for your patients, you realize it’s a skill, and it’s a skill I’m good at — talking with patients.”

“It’s making my dream expand. It has me thinking about being a nurse,” 34-year-old Wyatt said.

It’s difficult to overstate the need for more people like Wyatt.

“We had centers that wanted to hire physicians, and there were physicians available, but we couldn’t hire them because we didn’t have the support team,” said Ruddock of the primary care association.

The shortage isn’t limited to the network of community health clinics that serve more than 715,000 Michiganders each year.

The Kalamazoo Family Medicine Residency Clinic, which trains doctors from Western Michigan University, has just two medical assistants to support nine resident physicians, rather than the previous four medical assistants, said Dr. Lauren Piper, the clinic’s medical director.

That forces the medical residents to “room patients,” execute finger-prick tests and other tasks usually executed by medical assistants,

Other WMU clinics facing similar shortages are booking more time for appointments or blocking out appointment times so the residents, now doing medical assistant tasks as well, can catch up.

“At any rate, it’s the same net result: decreased access, decreased availability for patients,” Piper said.

Pay, not debt
The MPCA training program launched a year ago with a \$7.6 million grant from federal American Rescue Plan funds that streamed through the state as part of a \$300 million line item to help build out Michigan’s health care workforce.

The program covers online coursework and in-clinic, hands-on training costs for medical and dental assistants. Training usually takes five to eight months, Ruddock said. The program also trains pharmacy technicians, medical billers and coders, medical administrative assistants, medical records specialists, community health workers and doulas at Michigan MPCA clinics, Ruddock said.



Dental assistant Hazel Vaca Rodriguez prepares to take an X-ray of a patient at Hackley Community Care in Muskegon. The on-the-job training cemented the former store clerk’s interest in the health care field. (Bridge photo by Chris duMond)

Hazel Vaca Rodriguez had been toying with career choices, including being a flight attendant.

But during a dental appointment last year at Hackley Community Care in Muskegon, someone mentioned the new program to the Muskegon Community College student.

“I was hesitant,” she recalled.

In her first week training as a dental assistant, she had to observe a tooth extraction. Vaca Rodriguez was unsettled again: Would she get sick at the sight of blood? Worse, would she pass out?

Instead, as she watched the smooth, intuitive motion of a well-practiced team exchanging instruments, assessing the patient for discomfort, and repositioning their bodies around trays and equipment, Vaca Rodriguez realized she had crowded closer, hovering, even as the dentist expertly withdrew a tooth.

With its gleaming root, it seemed shockingly oversized to the new recruit.

Vaca Rodriguez has thought of that day many times since.

“I was amazed... In a sense, it sped up my career choice,” she said.

Game changer
Each MPCA health center sets its wage scale, and pay varies among positions and depends on geography, too, with starting pay for medical and dental trainees ranging from \$12.50 to \$21 dollars an hour, Ruddock said.

The state funding helps clinics cover wages and costs of supplies, in addition to the tuition, she said: “The funding completely changed the game.”

For recruits, on-the-job training replaces the specter of thousands of dollars in student debt from classroom learning with an immediate paycheck and the promise of a full-time job.

Employees begin training from Day 1.

“I was able to come to work, do my hands-on training, do my online learning, and get my information that I’m supposed to have,” said India Johnson, who earned her medical assistant certificate at the Nottawaseppi Department at the Pine Creek Indian Reservation southwest of Battle Creek.

Johnson is a single mom, who had a baby and a 5-year-old when the pandemic first gripped Michigan. It forced her to abandon her training at Kellogg Community College to be a nurse.

Medical training at the Nottawaseppi clinic enabled Johnson to train in the clinic and get her online classwork done in a quiet room there. That, in turn, allowed her to pay her bills and open more of her evenings to spend with her children.

And her dream of a nursing career? She said she plans to resume one day and maybe even continue her work at the center as a nurse: “I’m halfway to where I want to be.”

There’s this benefit, too: The training program enables health centers to diversify their workforce to better reflect the communities they serve by recruiting new staff from the immediate community — stay-at-home moms ready to reenter the workplace, for example.

“They’re not only growing their workforce, they’re growing a workforce that reflects their communities, matching the patient population that they serve,” Ruddock said.

Centers also might recruit current workers who otherwise hadn’t considered patient care as a career choice — turning a front office receptionist into a dental assistant, for example.

Over the past year, 92 people have been trained or are in training at 22 health centers across the state,

Ruddock said.

In return, the centers may require a two-year work commitment at the facility. Those retention contracts can be important, given the high turnover rate among medical and dental assistants.

Trainees in the MPCA program who leave before the contract is up are required to repay the covered tuition.

The goal is to train 300 new workers for MPCA clinics by the end of 2024, Ruddock said.

The program also offers experience in underserved areas. That, in turn, may woo young staff that otherwise might have been drawn only to the bright lights of urban centers.

A posting for the training program on the Indeed jobs website offered 22-year-old Brendan VanDeWeghe a paycheck and a brightly lit path to his career goal in dentistry.

The 22-year-old, who grew up near Grand Haven, is intrigued both by personal relationships between dentist and patient and cutting-edge technology such as 3D printing and dental milling machines.

He was applying to dental schools, he said, when he saw the job listing.

His training at the Hackley clinic allows him to build experience before dental school, which remains his primary goal. But VanDeWeghe said it has also deepened his interest in serving those who might otherwise go without dental care because of lack of insurance. And that, in turn, has him considering spending his time as a dentist in Michigan’s underserved communities.

“The small community atmosphere is amazing. It’s like a small town — everyone knows each other and there’s this comradery,” he said



Dental assistant trainee Brendan VanDeWeghe is using his training at Hackley Community Care in Muskegon as a stepping stone to becoming a dentist. (Bridge photo by Chris duMond)

FUN PAGE

SUDOKU

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

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 a model born in Brazil on July 20, 1980. I was recruited as a model while shopping. I am an international superstar and have appeared on many magazine covers. I also was a former Victoria's Secret Angel.

Answer: Gisele Bündchen

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		
11				12							13	
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46								47		48		
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	56					57		58				59
				60				61				
				62						63		

SAFE & SOUND PET WORD SEARCH

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

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

Puzzle solutions
on page 13

SAFE & SOUND PET
WORD SEARCH

CARE
CAT
COLLARED
COMPANION

CONTAIN
DOG
FENCE
HEALTH
EMBEDDED
LATCHED
LEASH

LOCATE
LOST
MICROCHIP
OWNERSHIP
PRECAUTION
PROTECT
REGISTER

SECURITY
SHELTER
VETERINARIAN

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to pets.

ODVEL

--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Loved

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Commoner
- 5. Tea leaf
- 11. They save you a table
- 14. Submissions
- 15. Secretly revealed
- 18. Personification of the sea (Norse)
- 19. Unreal
- 21. No seats available
- 23. Bangladeshi currency
- 24. Leaders
- 28. Famed garden
- 29. Denotes past
- 30. Not living
- 32. Midway between south and southeast
- 33. Small island (British)
- 35. Woman (French)
- 36. Wife
- 39. Two-toed sloth
- 41. Blood group
- 42. Soaks
- 44. Biu-Mandara language of Cameroon
- 46. Japanese prefecture
- 47. Place to be during a rock concert
- 49. Fully grown humans

CLUES DOWN

- 52. Emaciation
- 56. Sparkling
- 58. Fruits you peel
- 60. Derived from a noun
- 62. Popular items to grill
- 63. Port in Yemen
- 1. Before
- 2. Actress Dunham
- 3. This (Spanish)
- 4. Director Peter
- 5. Dominant
- 6. English artists' society (abbr.)
- 7. NY Giants legend
- 8. It's in the ground
- 9. No No No
- 10. Pesky insect
- 12. Danish-American muckraking journalist
- 13. Kids love to do it
- 16. Good Gosh!
- 17. Fakes
- 20. A citizen of Denmark
- 22. Mystic syllable
- 25. Commercial
- 26. Letter of the Hebrew alphabet

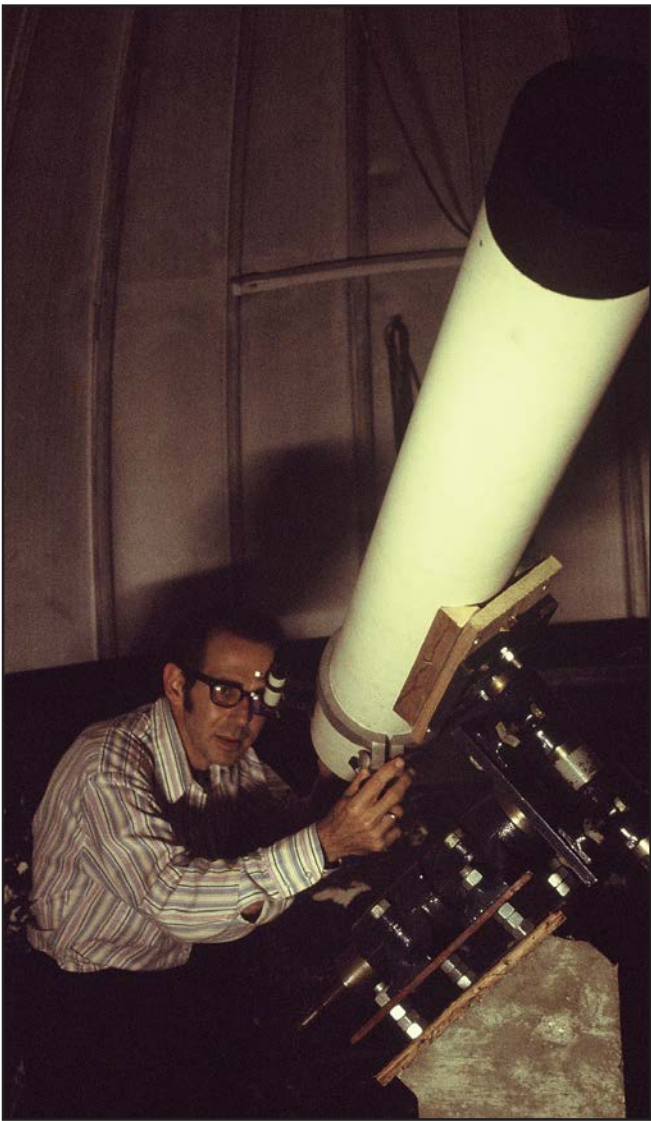
- 27. Helpers
- 29. Water (French)
- 31. Young woman
- 34. Red-brown sea bream
- 36. Messenger ribonucleic acid
- 37. Comprehends
- 38. Walk with confidence
- 40. Home of the Flyers
- 43. Appetizer
- 45. News organization
- 48. Source of the Nile
- 50. A way to march
- 51. Soluble ribonucleic acid
- 53. Egyptian bull-god
- 54. Children's author Blyton
- 55. Baseball pitching stat
- 57. Rude young person
- 58. Table napkin
- 59. Monetary unit in Asia
- 61. One-time AL MVP Vaughn

Away from the Spilling Light: The James C. Veen Observatory Story

By Justin Tiemeyer
contributing writer

The Grand Rapids Amateur Astronomical Association (GRAAA) was founded in 1955, by the observatory’s namesake, James C. Veen, and a number of other hobbyists, who gathered just off the East Beltline where the Knapp’s Corner shopping center currently exists. Dave DeBruyn is a current member of the GRAAA Board of Directors, and though he did not join the organization until 1964, he remembers those days fondly. “Knapp’s Corner is an example of encroaching commercialism that didn’t exist in 1964,” DeBruyn said, “but over time we observed a lot of light from the city spilling out that way.”

From very early on, GRAAA members dreamed of having their own observatory, out in the country, where deep sky phenomena would not be drowned out by light pollution, and massive fixed telescopes could supplement the personal telescopes, members brought out to the fields, alongside the Beltline. Veen, in particular, dreamed of a facility such as this, but he died in the late ‘50s, well before the GRAAA was able to start on the project.



Jim Marron leased property to the GRAAA for the Veen Observatory until the organization purchased it for themselves in 2016. Here, Marron can be seen observing celestial objects using the original east dome telescope in the early ‘70s.

In addition to GRAAA membership, DeBruyn is a longtime director of the Chafee Planetarium at the Grand Rapids Public Museum. In the ‘60s, his involvement with both organizations served as a bridge, helping the observatory project to finally get off the ground. With the GRAAA aligned with a recognized and respected organization like the museum, it became easier to gain the trust of donors. Instead of a bunch of hippies out in a field, members were seen as amateur scientists and educators.

In 1970, primary construction of the James C. Veen Observatory was completed. Tom Good is the current Vice President of the GRAAA. “The place was built with a lot of sweat equity,” Good said. “Most of the construction was done by members, including some very young members, at the time. We’re talking about teenagers.”

GRAAA members raised money for materials and skilled services, like pouring and leveling concrete, and they were fortunate to have a retired carpenter and retired electrician as members, but the majority of work was done by amateurs with

little to no experience in construction. “I laid a lot of the blocks in that building,” DeBruyn said, “and I never laid a cement block in my life before that.”

Older members of the GRAAA were amazed, as Good noted, to see teenagers giving up evenings and Saturdays, to work on the project, mixing mortar and laying blocks with unwavering vigor. DeBruyn noted that teenagers, like current GRAAA Secretary, Jack McCarthy, grew up with the project. McCarthy was only 14 when he joined the GRAAA. His eighth grade science teacher helped him discover an interest in astronomy, and he joined the organization at what he describes as a fortunate time. They were two years out from completing construction, the structure was already up, and McCarthy devoted himself to painting, laying tile, and generally, finishing up the inside of the building. “That’s what I’m proudest of,” DeBruyn said, “the fact that I was able to help and mentor some highly successful people. I don’t want to take credit for what they’ve accomplished, I just want to take credit for giving them opportunities.”

Jim and Evelyn Marron were the original owners of the property where the observatory now resides, and their names are spoken with the same level of reverence that GRAAA members practice toward Veen himself. The lease agreement between the GRAAA and the Marron family lasted for decades, ending only when the GRAAA, under DeBruyn’s leadership, purchased the 16 acres of property around the observatory in 2016. Early GRAAA members had fought for decades to secure this special facility; DeBruyn was not interested in ruining it by allowing a housing development to go in next door. “We value the cooperation of our neighbors to keep lighting to a minimum,” DeBruyn said, “and their efforts to help protect this unique facility that lies in their midst.”

Continued upkeep and improvements on the observatory have been possible, thanks to generous donations from the Lowell Cable TV Fund and the Lowell Community Foundation. With these funds, the GRAAA has been able to enhance the properties with hiking trails and a picnic area.

Though many of these



Astronomers gather for the James C. Veen Observatory dedication and Grand Opening event on June 21, 1970.

long-time members have had an on and off relationship with the GRAAA, while pursuing other careers, dedicated individuals like Tom Good, Dave DeBruyn, and Jack McCarthy seem strangely tethered to the James C. Veen Observatory. Their time staring at the sky has unlocked a profound understanding of the Universe and their place in it, and not only from looking through a telescope. McCarthy shared two deeply powerful anecdotes from his 54-year tenure with the GRAAA.

In May of this year, a couple contacted McCarthy to schedule a private night at the Veen Observatory with an astronomer. They had just lost their son the prior year, and they named a star after him in memorial. With the one year anniversary of his death coming up, they were anxious to see his star for the first time. It seems that this event was ordained by fate, because McCarthy was able to schedule them for the exact date of the anniversary, the sky was clear, and he had no trouble finding the star for them to observe.

Three or four years ago at a public night just like any other, McCarthy met a couple in their 50s accompanied by an older woman. It was not yet dark enough to observe, so McCarthy engaged them in conversation. What brought them to the observatory? What were they looking forward to seeing? The older woman chimed in, telling a story about seeing Jupiter for the first time, when she was eight or nine, using her parents’ small telescope at a local park. “I’m out here tonight to see Jupiter for the last time,” she said, to which McCarthy responded that the planet would be

visible for several months, and there would always be next year. “No,” she said. “This is going to be my last time. I’m coming down with macular degeneration in my eyes, and I want to see Jupiter before it makes it impossible to see.”

The GRAAA and James C. Veen Observatory both have a long and storied history, and the continued

opportunities take place at an observatory dreamed of in the ‘50s by amateur astronomer, James C. Veen, built in the late ‘60s by teenagers, like Jack McCarthy, and operating to this day. The next public night is Saturday, July 22, 2023, if the skies are clear, and the observatory is doing an all-nighter on Saturday, August 12, 2023,



The James C. Veen plaque at the observatory of the same name. Sadly, Veen did not live long enough to see the completion of the observatory from his dreams.

dedication of amateur astronomers makes it possible for new wonders to happen each day. For Dave DeBruyn, there is always another young hobbyist to mentor, someone with a great deal of passion and potential just looking for some guidance. For Jack McCarthy, there is always another heartwarming story to be told. The common denominator is that these

in celebration of the Perseid Meteor Shower. Those interested may check for updates at graaa.org, on the organization’s social media pages, or by calling 616-897-7065 for an informative phone message.