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Once showers cleared, early fall colors came out for more than 400 cyclists in Saturday's Lakeshore Harvest Ride.

Lakeshore Harvest Riders outlast rain

More than 400 riders were undeterred by early morning showers Saturday, venturing out to enjoy the 14th annual Lakeshore Harvest Ride fundraiser for the Friends of the Blue Star Trail.

Once the rain abated mid-morning, cyclists were able to more fully embrace the scenic rolling lakeshore countryside between Saugatuck-Douglas and South Haven.

Participating riders opted to follow marked routes of 15, 25, 45 or 60+ miles beginning at either Schultz Park in Douglas or the Kal-Haven Trailhead in South Haven.

Along the routes they could visit participating vineyards, a cider mill, art studios, farm stands and more. There, they could make purchases and use the complimentary concierge service to deliver goods back to their starting points.

Riders also enjoyed a wholesome lunch at one of three locations, a selection of snacks and water at various stops along the routes, SAG mechanical help and enthusiastic support for the riders along the way.

"We are thankful," said LHR chair Jack Eisinger, "for the riders, the army of more than 125 volunteers, and certainly our lead sponsor Cottage Home, primary sponsors the Saugatuck Douglas Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and Meijer, and 40 additional sponsors who made this event financially successful.

"Our early estimates indicate we raised more than $50,000 — a new record — in support of the Blue Star Trail."

Excess sandwiches, fruit and snacks, Eisinger noted, were donated to We Care Community Resource Center in South Haven and Christian Neighbors in Douglas.

"I love riding this," said LHR

■ see **Ride**, Page A2

Township OKs 30-home Singapore Retreat

By Scott Sullivan
Editor

Neighbors did not back down from opposing the proposed Singapore Retreat development.

But the Saugatuck Township Board Sept. 10 approved granting applicants Koetje Builders LLC and Exxel Engineering PUD (planned unit development) approval to build 30 homes on 8.97 acres south of 135th Avenue 700 feet east of Blue Star Highway anyway.

Nearby residents voiced concerns about increased traffic at the 5-way Blue Star/135th Avenue/65th Street intersection, noise, overcrowding, strain on infrastructure, disruption of the area's peaceful character and construction dirt runoff into nearby Goshorn Creek.

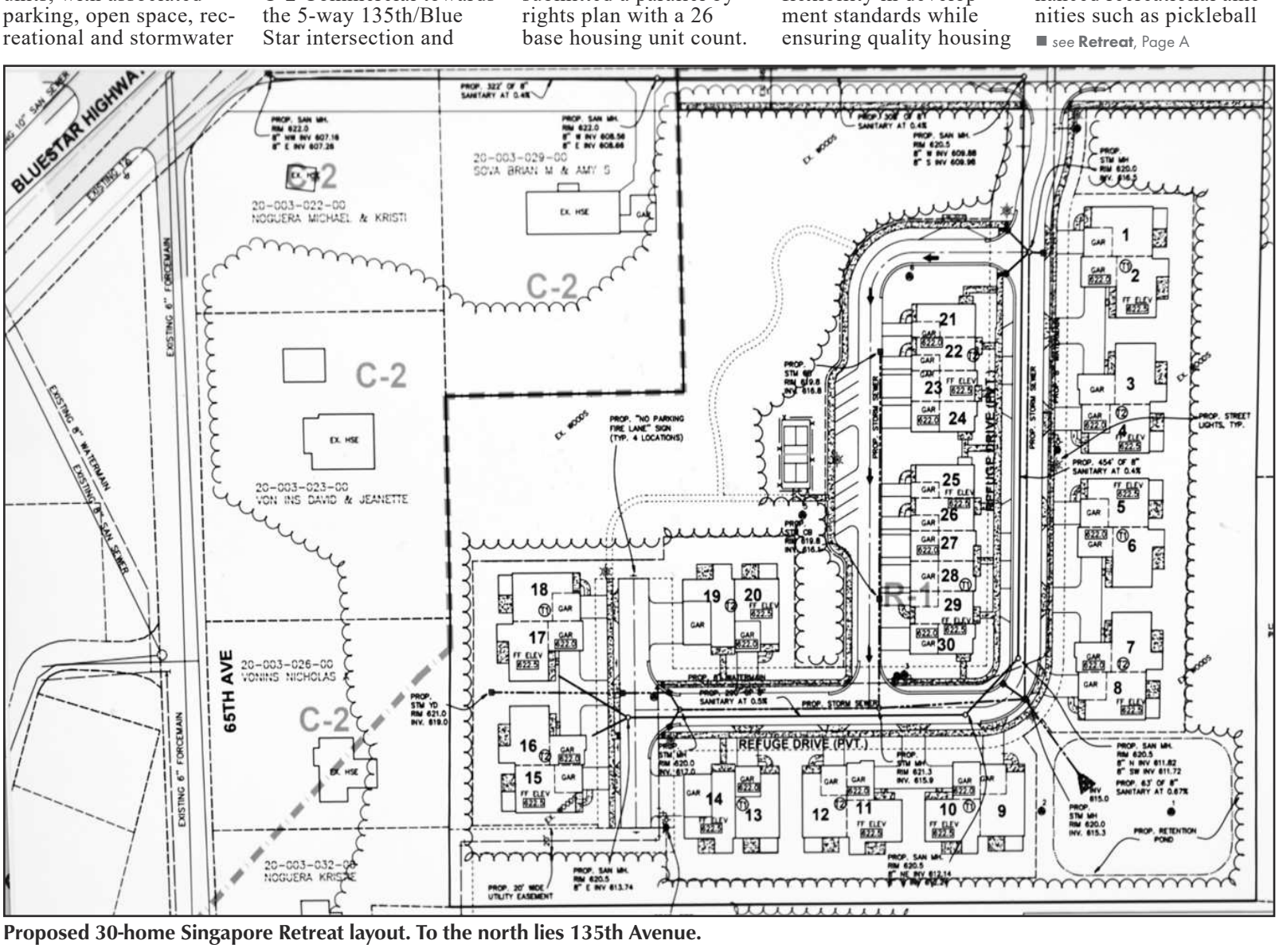
But board members noted township planning commission voted 6-1 June 24 to recommend the board to approve the request if it met conditions including providing open space, trails, wooded buffers, maintaining private roads and sidewalks and not allowing short-term rentals.

Plans for Singapore Retreat include a combination of residential uses consisting of 10 duplex buildings (20 units total) and 2 townhome buildings (10 units total) for a total of 30 residential units, with associated parking, open space, recreational and stormwater management facilities.

The land now is zoned C-2 Commercial towards the 5-way 135th/Blue Star intersection and R-1 Residential on its remainder. Developers submitted a parallel by-rights plan with a 26 base housing unit count.

The applicants sought PUD zoning to provide flexibility in development standards while ensuring quality housing that preserves natural features and provides enhanced recreational amenities such as pickleball

■ see **Retreat**, Page A



Proposed 30-home Singapore Retreat layout. To the north lies 135th Avenue.



Tour stop Summerhouse Lavender Farm provided tents and a respite from early rain.

Ride from Page A1

marketing manager and participant Kim Redlin. "We waited until the rain ended, then took our time riding 25 miles with multiple stops and tastings along the way.

"What a special event — with good friends and smiling faces, and it all benefits the Blue Star Trail that will connect us all," she said

"We are so happy," said Friends president Clark Carmichael, "to organize the Ride which attracts visitors to our beautiful area from all over the Midwest, creates economic benefit for our communities and generates funds needed to support ongoing construction of the Blue Star Trail."

The north section of the Trail is substantially funded he added. Now it awaits resolution by the Michigan Department of Transportation of concerns raised by the Gun Lake Tribe, he went on, "which we anticipate will occur yet this year."

When complete, there will be more than four miles of contiguous trail running from Douglas north to connect to the Beeline Trail through Laketown Township on north through Holland.

"Significant progress," said Carmichael, "has been made for the next section going south from Douglas, which will add three more miles of trail from Wiley Road to M-89. MDOT recently notified us of tentative grant approval for this section.

"We expect to learn in November if the Van Buren County Road Commission receives conditional approval of a Transportation Alternatives Program grant to help fund a new Trail section from the Kal-Haven Trail north to Baseline Road in South Haven," he said.

The Friends are a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting and funding construction of the Blue Star Trail (a 20-mile paved recreational trail connecting people and communities between South Haven and Saugatuck), in partnership with local communities.

The group raises money for engineering, local match funding required for state/federal construction grants and ongoing maintenance.

Municipalities along the route apply for state/federal matching grants and will own the sections of the Trail within their borders.



Retreat from Page A1

courts, trails and open space. They noted a PUD for a Goshorn Woods development on the land was granted in 2006 but has since expired.

The developer still has conditions to satisfy before submitting a final building plan said township manager Daniel DeFranco after last Wednesday's 4-0 approval.

These include obtaining permits from the Allegan County Health Department, Saugatuck Township Fire District and other agencies.

Should the building plan be approved, developers could start construction as soon as 2026 and at least some structures occupied by 2027, township manager Daniel DeFranco said.

"They have indicated market pricing, with I'm guessing town houses starting in the $400,000s and duplexes in the $500,000s to $600,000s," he said.

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Chevy Cruze was engulfed in flames, but driver and passengers were out by the time first responders arrived. (Photo by STFD Assistant Chief Mike Betts)

Blaze cooks car, corn field saved

By Scott Sullivan
Editor

No one was hurt in a Saugatuck Township car fire Friday, but this white Chevy Cruze was a total loss and a breeze threatened to carry flames into a nearby corn field at 6378 127th Ave.

The Saugatuck Township Fire District responded to a Cruze's driver stating the car had a full tank of gas and its front end was engulfed in flames, reported STFD IT Director Erik Kirchert.

Firefighters reached the scene at 4:48 p.m. and extinguished the blaze using 680 gallons of tank water and 2.2 gallons of foam from Engine 2110, he said.

Assistant chief Mike Betts used two personal extinguishers from a private vehicle on the surrounding grass to stop the fire from spreading into the corn field. Allegan County Sheriff's deputies assisted. No brush truck was needed, Kirchert said.

The driver told first responders he saw the overheating dash light come on, saw smoke, pulled over, opened the hood, saw fire, then closed the hood and removed the children from inside to a safe location.

Both lanes of 127th were blocked during extinguishment then reopened once safe. Ray's Towing removed the vehicle, Kirchert said.

Firefighters cleared the scene at 6:14 p.m.

Douglas to sell township wastewater capacity

By Scott Sullivan
Editor

Douglas City Council agreed Monday to sell 55,000 gallons per day (gpd) of unused wastewater treatment capacity to neighbor Saugatuck Township for $252,340.

The township, nearing its allotted capacity at the Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority wastewater treatment plant, has enough sewer infrastructure to *carry* wastewater there, but due to contractual terms growth lacks ability to *treat* it.

At present, the treatment plant is operating at 47 percent of its 1 million gallons per day capacity, noted township manager Daniel DeFranco Sept. 10, making substantial treatment space unused.

"The township's immediate challenge is straightforward," he went on. "Projects already approved or pending will raise our flow to roughly 98,617 gpd within the next 18 to 24 months.

"Beyond committed capacity, we project a need for an additional 36,575 gpd for parcels' previously reserved capacity that have yet to connect and parcels that will have sewer access upon an extension of the sewer system to serve a new residential development.

"Per the existing Tri-Community Sewer Agreement," DeFranco continued, "once a community exceeds 75 percent of its sewer allocation, a good faith effort must be made to secure additional capacity from a municipality with unused excess capacity.

"To stay ahead of that threshold, the township secured a 14,000 gpd lease from the City of Saugatuck — raising our total capacity to 104,000 gpd — but leasing is a temporary measure.

"Douglas currently owns 496,000 gpd of treatment rights, yet the plant is running at 47-percent utilization. Transferring 55,000 gpd to the township would satisfy its immediate capacity needs and provide a modest buffer to accommodate existing properties with reserved capacity while the feasibility of a plant expansion is studied.

"After the transfer, Douglas would retain 441,000 gpd, supporting its long-range growth forecasts," DeFranco said.

"Capacity is valued at $45,879.85 per 10,000 gpd or $252,340.00 for 55,000 gpd," he went on. "We believe this proposal puts existing infrastructure to work, lowers long-term costs for Douglas residents, and supports balanced regional growth," he said.

"It should be noted," city manager Lisa Nocerini apprised council Monday, "that this request reflects a decrease from the township's earlier request.

"Following a reevaluation of near-term development projects, the township reduced its capacity request to reflect a more cautious, measured projection of its needs," she went on.

"Douglas' engineering review confirms that while the request is scaled back, Douglas has sufficient capacity to meet this need and still protects its own long-term growth projections," Nocerini said.

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SAUGATUCK



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SOUTH HAVEN



Boat Slip #27, 40 N Bailey Ave • $26,000
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Kim Laaksonen • 616-836-0132

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Although it officially doesn't turn fall until Monday, Sept. 22 at 2:19 p.m., it sure felt like Indian Summer last week at Saugatuck's Oval Beach. (Photo by Scott Sullivan)

Blue Star

By Scott Sullivan
Editor

Wild Thing

A girl raised by apes has been found in northern India. The press there likens her to Mowgli, the wild boy in Rudyard Kipling's novel "The Jungle Book," which has been spun off into films, comic books and sessions of the United States House and Senate.

The New Indian Express reports woodcutters in the Katraniaghat forest range alerted authorities after spotting the girl, perhaps 10 years old, ringed by primates.

When a policeman approached her, the monkeys surrounded the girl, protecting her as one of their own, and attacked an officer while the child screeched at them. After "rescuing" the reluctant girl, he sped away in his patrol car, the monkeys chasing him.

When the girl arrived at a hospital in Bahraich, she had wounds all over her body and her nails and hair were unkempt, like monkeys. She could walk on her feet but often dropped down on all fours and scuttled around, using only her knees and elbows. She threw food on the ground and ate with her mouth directly from there, not lifting it with her hands.

We need to civilize these wild creatures. I suggest we launch cruise missiles at the monkeys to deter them from raising future House and Senate leaders. Or journalists, for that matter. Jack Sheridan sent me the following headlines, with photo captures from other newspapers, showing fake news is



no match for bad copy editing:

• Diana was still alive hours before she died
• Lady Jacks off to hot start in conference
• Republicans turned off by size of Obama's package
• Tiger Woods plays with own balls, Nike says
• Statistics show teen pregnancy drops off significantly after age 25
• Marijuana issue sent to joint committee
• Homeless survive winter; Now what?
• Federal agents raid gun shop, find weapons
• Homicide victims rarely talk to police
• Worker suffers leg pain after crane drops 800-pound ball on his head
• City unsure why sewer smells
• Meeting on open meetings is closed
• Man accused of killing lawyer receives new attorney
• Barbershop singers bring joy to school for the deaf
• Man with 8 DUIs blames drinking problem
• New sick policy requires 2-day notice
• Starvation can lead to health hazards
• Parents keep kids home to protest school closure
• Bra celebrates two historic milestones
• Miracle cure kills fifth patient

Speaking of which, Your Healthy Life sent me a "Hack Your Brain" email recently that linked to a Fox News story claiming "Donald Trump Credits $4 Billion Empire to This Pill."

When I clicked "Claim Yours Here" it pulled up an interview wherein the President told Dr. Oz, TV's Great and Powerful, that using a tiny "smart drug" had given him "the mental and physical stamina that won me this election."

The supplement InteliGEN, said Your Healthy Life, doubles IQ, skyrockets energy levels and connects brain areas that weren't previously connected.

"I'll buy this and have a higher IQ," I told my wife. "Double or nothing."

"Double *your* nothing?"

"*Or*," I corrected her.

"Stop speaking with your mouth open."

"Don't you mean *chewing*?"

"No. When was the last time you combed your hair? Cleaned your nails?"

"I'm too busy copy editing to let hygiene bother me."

"Like when you wrote the headline, 'Conservancy fights invasive *plans*'?"

"You'll be sorry," I warned, "when my energy skyrockets and I start ordering missiles fired at, ahem, parties who displease me."

"Sez who?" she asked.

"Sez *me*!" Dr. Oz said, "Quack-quack."

"Tell that duck to shut up," the Doctor ordered. "Do you know the cut I get when we sell these pills?"

"No."

"Buy and already you'll have learned something," the Doctor said

Letters to the Editor

Ideas to address downtown parking

To the editor,

John Thomas wrote here last week offering his concerns about downtown Saugatuck parking issues that have been festering for years.

As far as solving those problems, l have no magic remedies. But I offer some possible solutions as at least food for thought that can built upon.

John mentioned concerns about shop owners and their employees arriving before their businesses open and taking up parking spaces for the entire day.

As a possible solution, I would ask council member Gregory Muncey if it is feasible to run a dedicated bus from the high school parking lot, perhaps starting at 9 or 9:15 a,m., to deliver owners and employees to their places of business.

A second bus would make a return run at the shift change and be available to bring second-shift employees from the parking lot to their workplaces.

Where it gets tricky is having a bus available to return second-shift employees back to their cars. This will a be a bone of contention if you arbitrarily try to force the second shift not to park in town.

This is a genuine concern voiced by several restaurant owners about their female employees having to walk to high school late at night.

Another possibility may be turning Water and Butler streets into one way while instituting diagonal parking. Hopefully this may increase the number of parking spaces.

Are any of these perfect solutions? No. What l hope is they may help to start a dialog receiving input from all interested parties.

Joe Leonatti
Saugatuck

Live with, don't control nature

To the editor,

What was done to the wooded area on St. Peter's Drive in Douglas was a travesty. What good plan or design would totally annihilate all that makes a site beautiful?

Our two towns settle among extraordinary natural resources. If we are not careful we will eliminate what makes our area so special.

Let's start living with nature instead of controlling it.

Mike and Ruth Johnson
Saugatuck

Life as Performance Art

By G.C. Stoppel



My late wife Pat told me often one thing she loved about her father was the first thing he would say in the morning. "Great Day! Wonderful Day! Great Day!

That couldn't have been easy for him because he was saying this in the depths of the Great Depression. As a dentist, sometimes he had to take goods in trade for his services.

Pat's mother was a Chicago publish schoolteacher, and like others received promissory notes and scrip instead of a paycheck. Her father continued saying it even when he was suffering from MS and needed help getting out of his wheelchair.

Some may remember the area's beloved mail carrier, Marv Voss. Ask him how he was doing and he had just one answer: "GREEEEAAAAAT!" as if he were Tony the Tiger. A mutual friend continues the tradition to honor Marv.

Recently their enthusiasm came to mind along with a flashback to the morning after the 2016 election. That day, I walked down to the post office to collect my mail and said a quiet "good morning" to someone I passed on the sidewalk.

She turned on me with a fury and shouted it was not a good morning and there would not be one for the next four years, maybe longer. Clearly, she was not happy with the election outcome.

I was led to this memory when I heard the spiritual "Great Day! Great Day! The Righteous Marchin'" on the radio. The song originated in the South during the era of legalized slavery. It was a song of defiance then and remained so during the worst of the Jim Crow years.

When the Ku Klux Klan came into being during Reconstruction, then again a century ago, the song was a symbolic way of shaking one's fist at the oppressor. Sadly, it's making a comeback, not out of nostalgia but necessity.

Unless someone explained the words to the oppressors, they were probably clueless, believing it was another spiritual about going to heaven after death. That was completely wrong.

The song was about that great day in the present tense: right here, right now, even when it appears everything is wrong. It is no futuristic pie-in-the sky theology, but about current events. The singers were determined to grasp the day and make it a great one.

Those of us of a certain age remember the 1946 Disney movie Song of the South" where James Baskett sang "Zippity Doo Dah." The words "what a wonderful day" are repeated several times.

However, take a look a Mr. Baskett. His hat is in tatters, as are his clothes, so we know he has had a rough life. Even so, he smiles, sings and animals (all cartoon) come up to him like they did to St. Francis of Assisi.

The movie has been pulled from circulation because it did not fit someone's agenda and they decided the song had racial connotations. That is unfortunate, because it too is a song of defiance.

We have a long history of such songs. During the dark days of World War II, Spike Jones and his City Slickers led the Allies with the song, "In D' Fuehrer's Face" — complete with a few Bronx raspberries stirred in for good measure. It was one of many such songs as well as cartoons that made fun of Tojo, Hitler

■ see Stoppel, Page A?

Correction

Last week's story about the Mt. Baldhead Challenge misidentified the youngest finisher in the 7-mile race. It was Rory Gold, 12, of Ann Arbor/ Saugatuck. Congratulations, Rory!

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Father's painful choice shows true honor

By Mike Wilcox
Publisher

Many of us are grieving the assassination of TPUSA founder Charlie Kirk. It's unimaginable to me that a person debating students at an outdoor rally in Utah would be murdered.

The assassin has been named as Tyler Robinson, 22. He drove 300 miles to climb a building rooftop, prepare his 30-6 rifle and scope, and fired a single bullet from 150 yards away that killed Kirk instantly.

I'm not here to debate whether Kirk was an American hero or not, however through this tragedy I couldn't help think of the courageous deed the assassin's father committed by turning his own son into the police.



On the surface, it seems unimaginable. Parents are wired to protect. From the time our children are born, we do everything in our power to keep them safe.

But there comes a time, in rare and tragic situations, when love takes a different shape. This father faced one of those moments. Given the knowledge that his son had committed a grave crime, he made the most painful decision a parent can make.

Some will say this was betrayal, other it's proof that today's world has gone cold. But here in our community, we ought to see it for what it truly is: an act of honor, integrity and faith in something bigger than ourselves.

The Bible tells us in Proverbs that "the Lord delights in those who are truthful." Truth, even when it cuts to the bone, is the foundation of justice.

By refusing to cover for his son, this father placed truth and justice above personal comfort. He showed that blind loyalty is not the same as love. Real love means guiding someone — even your own child — back toward accountability and, hopefully, redemption.

We should also remember what this means for the community. Too often, crimes are hidden because family or friends stay silent. "It's not my place," they say, or, "blood is thicker than water."

But silence in the face of wrongdoing doesn't protect anyone, it allows hurt to spread, and it denies victims and their families the justice they deserve. This father's courage shows us another way. He set an example not only for his family, but for all of us.

And perhaps most importantly, he set an example for our young people. In an age where shortcuts and excuses are easy to find, this choice reminds us that doing the right thing often comes at a cost.

Honor isn't about comfort. Integrity isn't about convenience. These values are about standing firm in the truth, even when your heart is breaking. Our kids need to hear that message, and they need to see adults living it out.

Here in our community, we know the importance of accountability. We teach it in our churches, schools and homes. And while none of us prays to face the choice this father did, his example reminds us that justice is not just the job of courts and police officers — it starts with ordinary people making hard, honest choices.

This father did not betray his son. He gave him the only chance left — to face what he had done, accept the consequences and perhaps find forgiveness. In doing so, he also gave all of us, a lesson in what true integrity looks like.

May we learn from it. And may we have the same courage, if ever we are called upon to place truth above comfort and justice above silence.

And may we learn from this tragedy, that violence is not the answer for disagreements. Kirk always provided those with opposing views a forum, a debate. That is what our founding fathers wanted when they shaped America, not killing those with opposing views.

Dalton's Bend: the sex recession

By Bill Dalton

(Scene: Hastily called news conference at the White House)

Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt: Thank you all for coming on such short notice, no pun intended.

As you are probably aware, the Institute for Family Studies recently found that the number of Americans having sex has dropped to record lows. Fewer than half, or 37 percent, are having sex weekly, compared to 55 percent in 1990.

What's worse, the fertility rate is projected to average 1.6 births per woman over the next three decades, well below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman required to maintain a stable population without immigration.

Our president, the virile Donald J. Trump, is here to announce the steps this Administration will be taking in the coming weeks — again no pun! — to address the sex recession crisis.

Trump: Thank you, Karoline, and I appreciate you wearing an extremely low-cut dress today showing off your ample bosom in keeping with our new initiative, and thanks for taking off that crucifix which, in my opinion, is a real turn off. She looks hot today, don't you think everybody?

Leavitt: *(Blushing)* Thank you Mr. President, under his eye.

FOX News reporter: Mr. President! So please tell us, how do we have more sex? And will we have to pay for it?

Trump: Some of you will, you know who you are, but no sex tariffs yet, although I'm not ruling it out. But for everyone else, today I'm signing an Executive Order requiring all females in the United States — above the age of consent of course, I'm not making that mistake again! — to have sex at least once a week regardless of whether they feel like it or not. Or whether they find the man attractive or not. Or whether he's rich enough, or leans to the right, and I'm not talking about Peyronie's disease, I'm talking politically.

NPR reporter: But Mr. President, some women might find such an order offensive and demeaning. And how do you intend to enforce it?

Trump: If they love their country, they'll love their man. I know many MAGA women will agree, if a man is willing to lay down his life for his country, he ought to be willing to lay down his wife for his country. As for enforcement, a special squad of ICE agents will be redesignated HOT agents, one for each household, to assure compliance.

NBC News reporter: But the problem isn't the women, Mr. President, it's the men. Testosterone levels have been declining for years. No one knows why. Some experts suspect too much social media.

Trump: That's a hoax, fake news perpetrated by the United Nations Population Fund, which just wants to raise the global birth rate so there will be more illegal immigrants to sneak across our borders. My testosterone levels have never been higher, just ask JD Vance. I can't keep my hands off him! Right JD?

Vance: *(Suddenly stops applying eye liner and winces)*

CBS News reporter: But if American men aren't "up" for the task because of their low T levels, Mr. President, wouldn't it be a good thing for immigrants to pitch in to help boost our population?

Trump: Sick minds think alike, that's why I'm also announcing a special visa — a sex work permit if you will — for our beautiful Latino men to service our women if their men are too tired from Making America Great Again. Melania already has graciously offered to sponsor Sex Worker Zero — or "Zorro" as she likes to call him for some reason.

ABC News reporter: Mr. President, all of this smacks a little of the Handmaid's Tale, a Gilead like society where women are reduced to nothing more than breeders. How do you plan to sell this to the American people?

Trump: Here we go, ABC News, always refusing to see the upside. I was just going to announce that instead of wasting money on Covid vaccines the federal government will provide free Viagra for all Republicans who need it. I hear it works — right Bobby? — although I wouldn't know.

RFK Jr.: Yes, Mr. President, but Health and Human Services will only provide free ED drugs for those who voted for you in the last election. Any man capable of an erection, of course, probably voted for your opponent.

(Gasps ripple through the press corps)

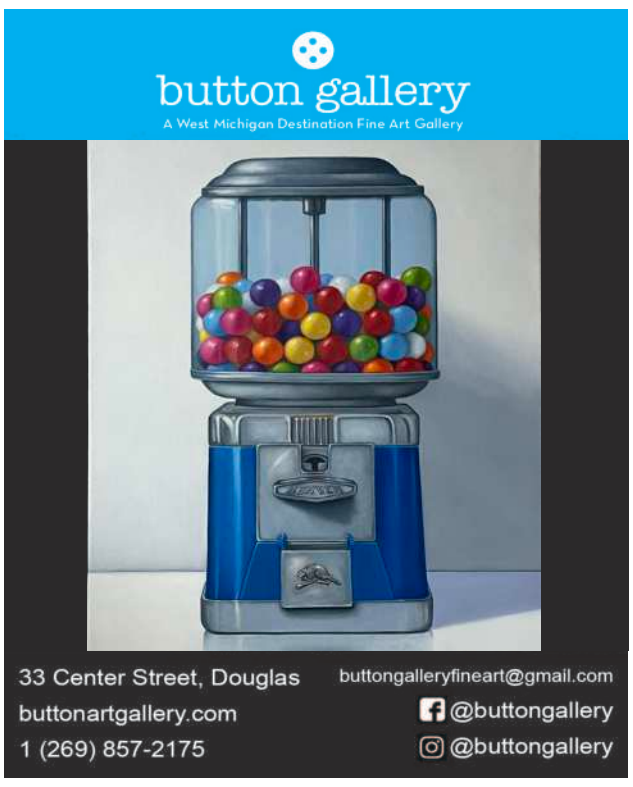
Trump: You find that funny? Go screw yourselves — or for a change — someone else.

Bill Dalton is a former reporter and editor for The Kansas City Star and spends summers on the family farm near Fennville raising his testosterone levels. His new book "Dalton's Bend" is available from Amazon. Also free on Substack!









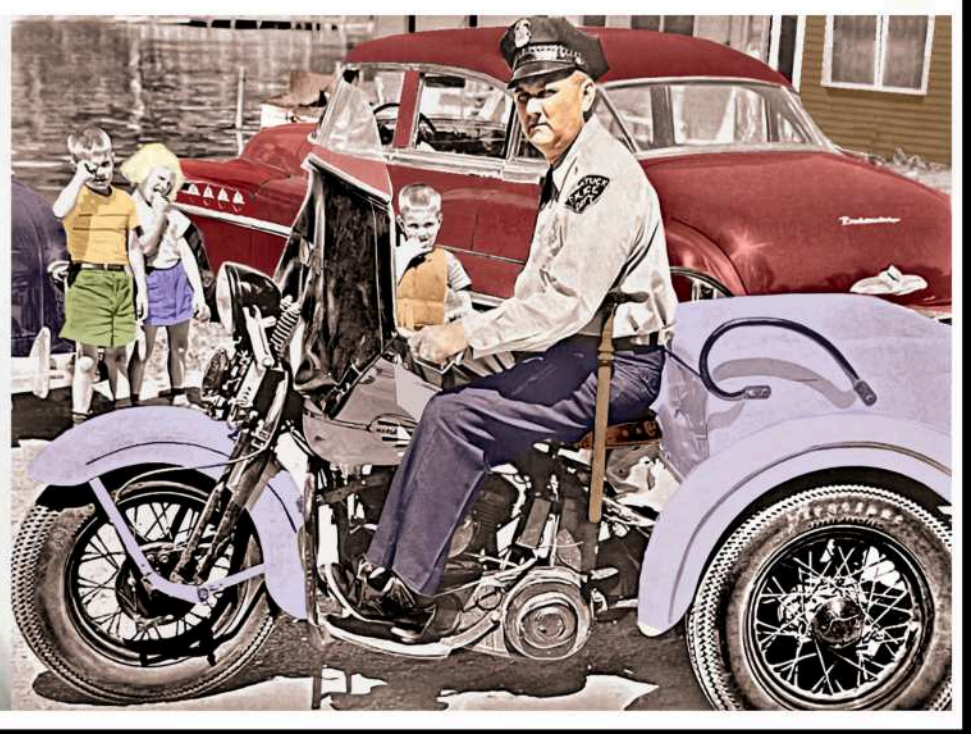




History Mystery Rewind

Henry Hungerford 1913-1976 was an outstanding community leader, musician, church organist and choir director, policeman, and SYC commodore. He lived on river in the large brown house on the corner of Water and Main.





Maggie's Pantry

By Maggie Conklin

Stewed Tomatoes

My ancestors canned vegetables every summer to feed them throughout the winter. Every other year I go to a local farmer and ask for a half bushel of "ugly tomatoes," you know, the ones that aren't all pretty, polished and perfect. The ones meant for stewing and canning.

I usually get my half bushel from Latchaw Farms at the Saugatuck Center for the Arts Friday farmer's market. I loved that the two women there were interested in talking to me about hunting too.

The next morning I got out a couple large pots for stewing and reducing down the tomatoes, a third large pot of boiling water for blanching and peeling the tomatoes, and a medium pot of water for boiling and cleaning the jars. That's a lot of steam, so we turned on the above-the-stove fan.

My dear husband helped by continuously stirring and mashing the stewing tomatoes while I cored, blanched and peeled them.





To peel them, I core out the top and cut a shallow cross in the bottom of each tomato, setting them aside. I place three tomatoes at a in the boiling water at a time because it takes as much time for them to blanch as it takes me to peel three tomatoes out of the boiling water. Once peeled, they go into the stew pot.

Peels and cores go out into the compost pile, and we let the tomatoes reduce at least an inch from where they started in the pot. That's at least an hour, so go rest up, you deserve it.

When it's ready, boil clean canning jars and new lids, then carefully fill each one. Wipe off the rim with a clean paper towel before placing the hot lid and screwing on the ring. Set aside and wait for the pinging to begin.

I don't add any salt or spices to my stewed tomatoes because I can always do that later, when they go into goulash, chili, spaghetti sauce, tomato soup or my Bahamas peas and rice.

The yield for me was 2 quarts and 17 pints.

Enjoy!

Stoppel from Page A4

and Mussolini.

More recently, a group of older southern women have written and sing their own songs of defiance against the current oppression of minorities and immigrants.

No one expects them to rise in the popularity charts, much less change the world. That doesn't stop them from expressing themselves. They are doing what they can do, and for them that's enough.

I like that attitude of standing up to oppressors of all colors and stripes. Even the popular song "Singing in the Rain" is a way of shaking a fist in defiance at weather other people might find miserable.

In 1942 Viktor Frankl and most of his family were kidnapped and shipped off to Nazi concentration camps. There he watched as thousands of Jews were ordered into the gas chambers, including members of his own family.

Each day he watched as more prisoners died from disease, starvation and the cold. Many of his fellow prisoners, he observed, had given up their will to live.

As a trained and highly acclaimed psychologist, Frankl found great truth in Nietzsche's teachings that "He who has a *why* to live can endure almost any *how*."

In short, we must fight, push, wrestle and defy those who seek to restrain us, much less destroy our will and belief system. If we lose that personal battle, we lose it all.

The news media has always wanted to shovel out the bad news. Be it the latest gun violence, dire economy forecast or natural disaster, it is the day's news leader. Increasingly, if it is a slow news day, some unscrupulous media member will create something bad or spin a story to make it worse. The reason is simple: bad news sells.

The only publication that printed only good news was GRIT magazine, first published in 1880. Its popularity was in small towns of the Midwest and, surprisingly, its numbers kept increasing throughout the Great Depression and World War II. Each edition had useful information on everything from economic meals to poultry raising to good news articles gleaned from around the nation.

Not only did GRIT serve up a big potluck of good news, much of it was practical, helpful articles that could make a positive difference in the lives of readers. That was the key to its success.

Combine "Great day!" with the cheerful lyrics of "Zippity Doo Dah" and fold in the practical side by GRIT, we have an unbeatable recipe for sheer defiance. The weather may be filthy, the economy staggering, politics disgusting and the future looks bleak, but guess what? No one, nowhere, not no-how can change my attitude. Only you have that power but it is strictly limited to your life.

There is next to nothing you and I can do to fix all the problems in the world. But we can make an intentional decision whether those things are going to interrupt our joy of living.

Edward Jones
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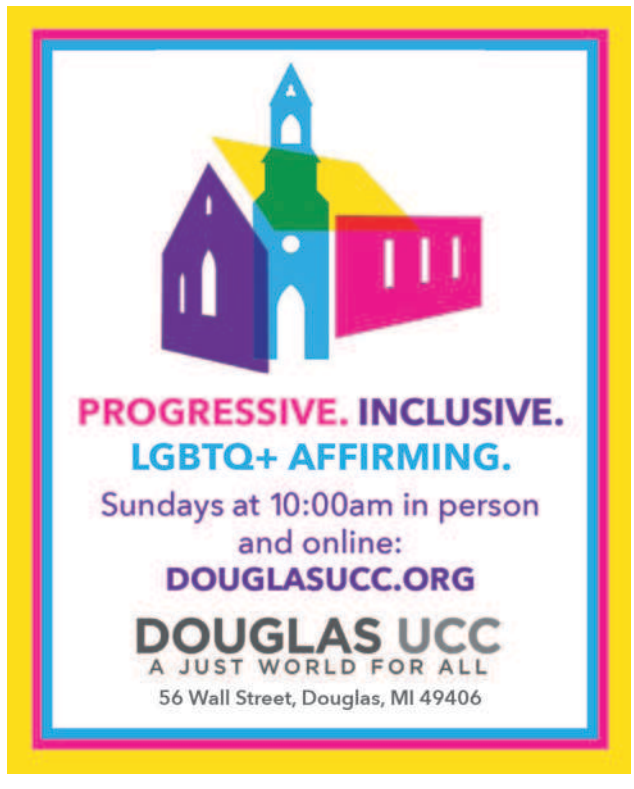
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filler



Looking into Rado Kirov's Douglas 'Pyramid' is like beholding a fun house mirror. (Photo by Scott Sullivan)

On moving a 'Pyramid' ...

By Scott Sullivan
Editor

The Douglas "Pyramid" has moved down Center Street from the police station lawn to the corner of Main and Center.

Rado Kirov's brightly-reflective stainless steel sculpture, dedicated to the city in May 2023, had to be relocated due to sale of the 47 W. Center St. station building to Ufuk Turan, said city manager Lisa Nocerini. The $452,000 purchase closed last week.

The city plans to use sale of it and other parcels deemed surplus to offset costs of relocating police, city hall and public works offices in the 18,000-square foot building former Douglas Professional Center on 7.8 acres fronting Wiley and Blue Star Highway.

Council April 24 agreed to sell its 1870s-built former church, most recently used by the Saugatuck-Douglas District Library, at 130 Center St. to Ox-Bow Art School for $430,000.

The city is also eyeing bids on its current city hall, the former 1875-built Dutcher Lodge at 86 Center. Council placed restrictive covenant stipulations Aug. 18 on sale of the building, which appears on the Natural Register of Historic Places, after in investment group backed down from its $650,000 purchase agreement July 21.

That offer is now off the table and city realtor Bernie Merkle has put the property back on the market with a $599,000 asking price. "We have no current offers on it," city manager Lisa Nocerini told The Commercial Record last Friday.

Council also Aug. 18 approved a nonbinding 6-month memorandum of understanding with Mosaic Development to create attainable housing on 17 acres at 6825 Wiley Road once home of the Miro Golf Course. No price terms have been set.

The city June 2 further signed a nonbinding letter of intent with the Saugatuck Township Fire District to allow the latter to occupy the southern 5,200 square foot portion of the Wiley building as a second fire station.

The STFD, which would maintain its current station at 3342 Blue Star Hwy., would add a 3-bay, 6-vehicle garage attached by a breezeway to the building space last occupied by Holland Hospital and Dr. Jason Myers offices. That plan is still being pursued.

The hand-forged, highly-polished Kirov "Pyramid" was bought by the Maryjo Lemanski-led nonprofit Saugatuck-Douglas-Fennville Arts Initiative from Water Street Gallery.

It showcases the 1955-born artist's "Mercury Effect," developed largely when and where he now lives in South Africa, and was dedicated, with its pedestal to the city on Memorial Day weekend two years ago.

"Similar to a room of mirrors in a fun house," said Lemanski then, "the sculpture twists and changes, making the image distorted and intriguing. His work draws the viewer into the magic of the reflections.

"The pyramid shape symbolizes the strength of the Douglas community," she went on, "as the foundation is solid and stable.

"The upward movement of apex represents the positive direction the city is heading by creating a rich, vibrant, art-focused community," the donor said.





Fox tapped as new Laketown manager

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent

Stephanie Fox will become new Laketown Township manager starting Sept. 29. She signed a 2-year contract to do so with township supervisor Steven Ringelberg Sept. 4.

"I am honored to serve as the next Laketown Township manager," Fox said. "I am eager to work collaboratively with the board, staff and residents to accomplish township goals.

"Laketown Township is a wonderful community, and I look forward to ensuring it continues to thrive," Fox said.



Stephanie Fox

The contract sets her annual salary at $110,000 with the possibility of a bonus of up to $15,000 if she meets agreed-upon objectives set by the board in her first 30 days.

The proposed contract also includes added vacation days requested by Fox and evaluations of her performance after 90 days and 6 months in its first year.

The search for a manager began after 30-year manager Al Meshkin announced his retirement plans on July 3, 2024. His last day was Jan. 3.

The board hired Ryan Cotton of the firm MGT in August 2024 to guide the process. The first attempt to hire a replacement ended after the finalist withdrew on Jan. 28.

The board paused its search in an effort to learn how to better work together, going through training sessions. In June, members agreed to restart the search.

Fox was chosen as a finalist from a field that started with 45 applicants and was narrowed to four for interviews July 15.

The board voted July 21 to begin contract negotiations with Fox pending a review of her references. She was called back for a third interview on Sept. 2, after which the board voted to offer her a modified contract with the added evaluations.

Since Meshkin's departure, Ringelberg has been serving as manager. He will do a transition and hand off the role to Fox during the week of Sept. 29.

"Laketown has a very good staff to support the manager. I have enjoyed my time as manager, enjoyed getting to know and work with the staff, and enjoyed meeting and working with many residents over the past nine months," said Ringelberg.

"I will continue to be involved in improving recycling, trash, and yard waste services in Laketown, and obviously I will continue as supervisor. Miss Fox is going to have the support of a strong staff as she learns the job of manager and about Laketown, its residents, its challenges and its assets."

Fox will leave her current position as executive assistant to the Kentwood city mayor. She was previously administrator of Ionia County, which is east of Kent County and has a population of more than 66,000.

Laketown looks to extend Interurban link

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent

The trial period for Interurban Transit Authority service in Laketown Township might be extended for three months though the cost for using the bus could increase on Oct. 1.

The township board agreed Sept. 10 to extend the trial period from its original end on Oct. 31 to Jan. 31, 2026, to continue gathering data on bus use. The extension is subject to agreement by the Interurban board.

To minimize the cost to the township, the board decided to raise the rates individuals pay. Until Sept. 30, adult riders pay $1, while children, senior citizens and disabled riders pay 50 cents. The township is then billed $7 for each pickup or departure in the township.

Starting Oct. 1, adults will pay $4 and children, senior citizens and disabled riders will pay $2. The township's share then drops to $4 for each pickup and departure in the township. The financial change are also subject to the Interurban board agreeing.

Township board members did not want to stop the service but felt users should pay more so the taxpayers did not have to subsidize the rides.

In March, the board approved spending $21,000 for the trial period from May 1 to Oct. 31. The service has been so popular that the budget was surpassed this month. Supervisor Steven Ringelberg asked the board on Sept. 10 to add another $10,000 to finish the agreed-upon 6-month trial period.

The board instead voted to add up to $26,000 to run the service with the modified fares through Jan. 31, bringing the total budgeted amount to $46,000, more than double the original amount of $21,000.

Since the trial began in May, the Interurban has handled 2,857 Laketown riders, according to its executive director Becky Carten-Crandell.

Of that, 659 were children, 1,685 were adults, 430 were senior citizens, and 83 individuals reported disabilities.



Interurban bus pays call on Laketown Township Hall. (Photo by Jim Hayden)

About the Service

People who want a ride call (269) 857-1418, set a time for a bus to pick them up at their location and then take them to another spot in Laketown, Saugatuck Township, the cities of Douglas, Saugatuck or Fennville and the wineries in Ganges Township.

The Interurban also provides prescription delivery services from Saugatuck Drug Store, 201 Butler St., for $2 and food delivery services from many Saugatuck-Douglas restaurants for a $3 charge.

Regular bus service hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For more on costs and other information, visit https://www.saugatuck-interurban.org/.





WMLAR community, advocacy and impact members joined police loading sheriff's department boat with more than 100 life jackets July 15.

Realtors donate 100+ lifejackets to police

The West Michigan Lakeshore Association of Realtors donated more than 100 life jackets to the Allegan County Sheriff's Department this summer.

Last year marked the deadliest on record for Lake Michigan, with 44 drownings reported. Drowning remains the second leading cause of death among young children — a sobering statistic that inspired local realtors to take action.

Through their ongoing life jacket drive, the Association has donated more than 500 jackets to Allegan County alone since the program began five years ago.

The partnership with the sheriff's departments in Muskegon, Allegan and Ottawa counties ensures that donated life jackets reach children who need them most. By providing new, U.S. Coast Guard-approved vest-style jackets in sizes ranging from infant to adult, the association hopes to make every trip to the lake a safe one.

This year's effort was made possible by the hands-on dedication of Community, Advocacy and Impact Committee member Wendy Ryder, who, along with fellow committee members Sue Bladek and Ed Karasek and plus local realtors Tammy Kerr and Kevin Schippa, were seen loading the Sheriff Department's boat at the Union Street Launch Ramp in Douglas July 15.

The donation was accepted by county Sgt. Todd Wagner, and Deputies Rob Martin and Tom Achterhof.

Karasek emphasized the community's role in keeping children safe. "Together, we can make a difference. Together, we can save lives," he said.

Laketown keeps steady millage rate

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent

Laketown Township's 2025 millage rate is remaining at 4.0 mills. The board had the option to collect another almost half mill, but unanimously decided not to Sept. 10 after voters supported an expanded fire millage in the August election.

Members set the following rates to be collected in the winter taxes due in February:

1 mill: Operations of the township. The board had the option to collect up to 1.0167 mills but kept it at its current rate.

• 1.5 mills: Fire, Road, Drains and Bike Paths. This levy was originally 2.0 mills, was last approved by voters in 2024 and expires on Dec. 31, this year. The board could have approved up to 1.976 mills for the winter levy but reduced the millage to 1.5 mills.

• 1.5 mills: Fire department. The voters approved this millage in August and it expires Dec. 31, 2029. The maximum allowable levy possible was 4.4927 mills.

Voters approved two realigned millage requests in the Aug. 5 election. Before the ballot, 2 mills went to Fire, Roads, Non-Motorized Paths and Drains and 1 mill for Fire Safety and Emergency Services for a total of 3 mills.

The approval in August reallocated the 3 mills to 1.5 mills for Roads, Non-Motorized Paths and Drains in 2026 and thereafter, and 1.5 mills for Fire Safey and Emergency Services.

In other business, the board:

Confirmed that the supervisor will remain the board of trustees representative on the Friends of the Felt Estate board of directors that oversees the Felt Mansion and property. Supervisor Steven Ringelberg has been serving on the Felt board as acting township manager, a post he leaves at the end of September. Clerk Jim Delaney will remain on the Felt board as a representative as well.

Approved the supervisor appointing Lynn Kobes and Dale Burkett to the zoning board of appeals.

Instructed the supervisor to continue negotiations for cell towers at Farview Park and Sanctuary Woods Park. The towers would help improve cell service in parts of the township.

Agreed to start each township board meeting with The Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge has not been recited at board meetings since April 10, 2019. Before that, it was standard practice for decades to recite the oath at the start of meetings.

Respite to show respect for elders sharing gifts

Respite Cappuccino Court will observe Respect for the Aged Day Sunday, Sept. 21, by preparing and delivering gift boxes to residents of Douglas Cove.

Each will include a beverage, fresh cookie and note of appreciation. In addition, the Douglas coffee shop will deliver bouquets of flowers to residents between ages 90 and 100 honoring their resilience through the Great Depression and World War II.

"Respect for the Aged Day," said Respite owner Renee Waddell, "is an opportunity for us to pause and acknowledge the lives and legacies of those who came before us.

"Our team is proud to bring comfort, joy and gratitude to the residents of Douglas Cove in a way that reflects the values of our café and community.

"Respite baristas will volunteer their time to assemble and distribute the gift boxes, continuing the café's commitment to community connection beyond its doors," the owner said.






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Children First Lakeshore board member and delivery driver Glen McNeil shows off new van.

CFL has new wheels for meals

Children First Lakeshore, the Douglas-based 501c3 nonprofit that furnishes area children meals, recently purchased and decaled a new van.

Volunteers will drive the van weekly to pick up food from Feeding America in Grand Rapids and deliver more than 300 bags of it to students at partner schools in Fennville, Saugatuck and the InnoAcademy Allegan Campus.

This is made possible by Community Church of Douglas, which provides food storage and a packing facility, plus volunteers to do the work.

"Our goal is simple:" said volunteer Birdie Wester Holley, "to provide nourishment for children who would otherwise go hungry until Monday through our weekend and summer meal programs.

"Our delivery process is now more efficient and visible," she said.

To learn more and/or donate, visit www.childrenfirstlakeshore.org.

Library to host 'Through the Lens' authors



Wendy Gronbeck



Priya Parrish



Alison Swan

The Saugatuck-Douglas District Library will host three local authors for "Through the Lenses" series this fall.

From deeply personal reflections on end-of-life care to sustainable investing to poetry shaped by the Lake Michigan shoreline, sersions will explore how local voices are engaging with universal themes in powerful ways On tap:

• Wendy Gronbeck will present "Gifts From the Edge of Life: Reflections of a Grateful Nurse" Thursday, Sept. 23 starting at 6:30 p.m.

She will share stories from her moving collection that honors the wisdom of those facing life-threatening illnesses. Drawing on decades of nursing experience, Gronbeck reflects on the deep humanity revealed in life's most fragile moments.

• Investor and educator Priya Parrish will present "Impact Investing: Aligning Finance with Purpose Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 6:30 p.m.

She will discuss how impact investing integrates modern portfolio theory with strategies that address today's pressing social and environmental challenges.

• Award-winning poet and environmental advocate Alison Swan will offer "Poetry of Place: Writing the Lakeshore Sunday, Nov, 16 at 2 p.m.

Swan will read from her work and discuss how the wild edges of the Great Lakes have shaped her creative voice and commitment to conservation.

Registration is not required but space is limited.

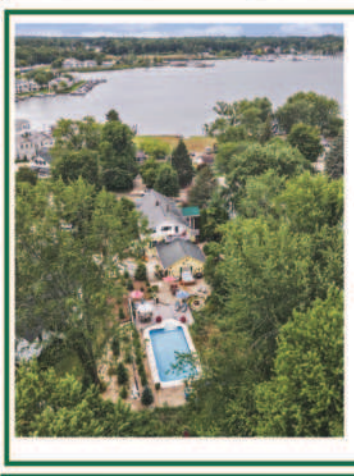
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Volunteers show care clearing Huyser Farm Park

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent



Kyle Bainbridge grabbed a saw and didn't hesitate to dive into the overgrown blueberry bushes at Huyser Farm Park last Friday. With help from Diglia Sanchez and Julian Kratochvil, he soon emerged with the sapling in tow.

"I grew up on a farm," Bainbridge said, looking over the cleared area. "Nothing big."

Nine volunteers from Fifth Third Bank tackled overgrowth at the Laketown Township park, removing unwanted saplings and vines as part of the Day of Caring coordinated by the Heart of West Michigan United Way.

Hundreds of volunteers from around West Michigan helped nonprofit organizations through the event.

Township parks commissioner Mary Jo Bertolino directed the volunteers. Laketown facilities operator Jeff Partyka supplied the volunteers with rakes, saws, loppers and other equipment.

In past Day of Caring events, volunteers painted the Old Township Hall and spread woodchips on trails at Farview Park in 2023, and cleaned sand off the stairs at Laketown Township Beach in 2022.

Huyser Farm Park, at 4188 64th St. is 102 acres with trails, a creek and diverse plant and animal habitats. There are 6.5 acres of organic blueberries as well.

History Center to unveil fall art show

Fall will bring a new "Collecting the Lakeshore: Storied Art at the History Center" exhibit to the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, 130 Center St., Douglas starting Friday, Sept. 26.

It will explore stories embodied in art and artifacts of the lakeshore, collected by the Center over more than 30 years.

The nearly 40 original works will invite guests to go deeper into the region, asking what's remained the same and what has changed over more than a century.

Though worthy of study individually, the exhibit also sets these artifacts into conversation with one another.

The display, curated by SDHC executive director Eric Gollannek, showcases paintings by founding Ox-Box artists Francis Chapin, Frederick Fursman and Edgard Rupprecht; subjects featuring maritime life, domestic scenes and still lifes, landscapes of river, lake, dune and town scenes.

Guests can experience Saugatuck's working waterfront, historical hotels, quiet interior spaces and the Big Pavilion through sculpture, oil paintings, pastels, etchings, lithographs and watercolors.

The center will host a VIP preview cocktail hour Thursday, Sept. 25 for Lifetime Members and will open to the public starting the next day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

While the summer season comes to a close, the History Center will remain open throughout the year. For more information about the SDHC and upcoming fall events, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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What You Need to Know About...

LAKESHORE DRIVE

What's The Cost to You?



In the last two issues of *The Commercial Record,* we discussed how Allegan County Road Commission (ACRC) and Saugatuck Township (ST) want to relocate Lakeshore Drive (LSD) away from the scenic shoreline from 126th Street north to Wiley Road with 55-mph speeds and estimated traffic counts of 2,000 cars a day (per Prein & Newhof study).

Basically, creating a 3rd highway running alongside 196 and Blue Star Hwy.

This week we'd like you to be fully aware that there are no plans in place for how to reconnect any of the homes in the areas where ACRC and ST plan to abandon LSD. This affects homes both north and south of the washout.

In many cases it will require you to turn around your driveway to the back side of your property. Where you may have a pool, or a garage, or simply not enough room to drive around your home. And, the best part of their plan? This reconnection is **ENTIRELY AT YOUR EXPENSE AND YOUR EFFORT.**

Additionally, there is this issue of a redundant bike path, which Friends of the Blue Star Trail says is unnecessary, because they're already planning a trail that runs along Blue Star Hwy and is the reason the overpass in Douglas has an extra lane. ST manager, Daniel DeFranco, when asked about it, said "if we don't ask for it now we can't ask for it later." But the redundant trail, per Prein & Newhof, adds $1M to the project BEFORE you add wetlands mitigation, legal fees, and land acquisition costs. Also it would condemn more of the beautiful nature the bicyclers would want to ride past. And, what happened to turning LSD into a bike path, like ACRC originally told the community in its first meeting about this? Where is that funding?

Actually, does any of this sound like a good use of money? Let's face it, Allegan County is technically a very poor county, so if you had $9M, is this the best way to spend it? What if...instead of this one-bullet solution (build another highway)...what if we break the concerns apart and solve them separately?

Home access in the cases where LSD may erode and washout again
Emergency access for people south of the washout

Solve the issues individually, not a bad idea, right? Clearly ACRC doesn't have the funds to pick up the hundreds of deer carcases along the existing roads and expressways, but they have time to seek funds, sue land owners, and condemn property? You also need to know that they plan to resubmit their grant request as-is, so we can't leave it up to ACRC and ST to solve this problem themselves. **The community must pay attention and help find better ways. This situation is too important and make no mistake, Saugatuck and Douglas, this affects all of us; traffic, developments, and speeds.**

Contact County Commissioner, Brad Lubbers, and Road Commissioner, Craig Atwood and tell them:

Stop the 3rd highway plan and seek alternatives.

blubbers@allegancounty.org | catwood@alleganroads.org

Contact Todd Needham for more information
todd@matrixconstructioninc.com

Further details in next week's *Commercial Record*.

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Felt Estate fall tours begin

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent

Scores of people walked around the Felt Estate and through rooms in the historic mansion as part of the final Free-For-All tour event of the season Sunday, Sept. 7.

Tours with admission fees continue through December. Halloween events are ahead in October.

One special visitor was Constance Lochridge, great-granddaughter of Dorr and Agnes Felt. Lochridge and her husband Scott, who live in Tennessee, were touring the Midwest and stopped at the mansion to share historical Felt family photos.

The Free-For-All events, the first Sunday of the month during the summer, started in 2024 as a way to share local history and thank the community for its support in the restoration process.



Felt Estate fountain makes a great place to stop and catch your breath. (Photo by Jim Hayden)

Tours with admission charges are still available throughout the fall and early winter. Self-guided tours are $10 for adults, $8 for seniors (60 and older), $5 for children 8 and older and free children under. Tickets may be purchased upon arrival. No advance res-

■ see **Tours**, Page B5

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Hopkins to celebrate First Annual Vikings Day

By Jordan Wilcox
Assistant Publisher

The Village of Hopkins is preparing for a spirited new celebration when the First Annual Viking Day makes its debut on next Saturday, September 27. The Village Park, at 128th Avenue and Franklin Street, will serve as the backdrop for an afternoon of family-friendly games, a chili cook-off, and an evening bonfire.

The festivities begin with the Viking Family Games at 3 p.m., featuring challenges such as Planko, the Sucker Tower, and Viking Ducks. These games promise fun for children and adults alike while setting a lively tone for the rest of the day.

At 4 p.m., the Viking Ship Race begins. Crews of four are tasked with building a "Viking ship" to carry bed-race style across the lawn of the Village Square. The race is a thrilling contest of speed, stamina, and perhaps a bit of flair, culminating in the winner being crowned Best Viking — although prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third places.

From 5 through 7 p.m., the Hopkins Fire Barn will host the Hopkins Organization of Parents & Educators' (H.O.P.E)

Chili Cook-Off. For only $5, participants can purchase a flight of chili, oyster crackers, and two voting tickets to crown the best chili in town. All proceeds raised will directly benefit the students and teachers of Hopkins Elementary, and the best chili cook will win a basket full of Vikings spirit wear.

Simultaneously, the event shifts toward evening with a Community Bonfire starting at 5 p.m. and continuing through 9 p.m. Hopkins residents are invited to gather around the fire for warmth, conversation, and the closing moments of what organizers hope will become a meaningful tradition.

Viking Day is the product of collaboration among Hopkins Hometown Celebrations, H.O.P.E., Acclaimed Catering, S&S Bailey's, Hopkins Public Schools, and other local partners. Additional details, including entry or participation requirements and any updates, are expected to be shared through the event's Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/events/2586915608314981/?active_tab=discussion

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SYNOPSIS MINUTES

LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

Supervisor Ringelberg called the workshop meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Jim Delaney, Jim Johnson, Mike Koeman, Steven Ringelberg, Mark Timmerman ABSENT: None

The following motions were made, supported and carried:

To approve the minutes of Sept. 3, 2025.

That the supervisor continue to be the representative of the Board of Trustee on the Friends of the Felt Estate board of directors.

That the supervisor appoint Lynn Kobes and Dale Burkett to the zoning board of appeals. To approve the expenditure report for August 2025.

To continue to have the supervisor negotiate for a cell signal tower in Farview Park. To continue to have the supervisor negotiate for a cell signal tower in Sanctuary Woods.

To adopt ride payment on the Interurban of $4 for adults, $2 for seniors, children and disabled, so as to reduce the Laketown Township payment to $4 per ride, eU'ective October 1, 2025 to the end of January 2026.

To increase the budget allocation for the Interurban by not more than $26,000 to cover the Interurban extended trial period.

To approve the millage allocation as presented in the L-4029 with millage rates of 1.0 operating, 1.5 Fire, Road, Bicycle, Drain and 1.5 Fire for a total of 4.0 mills rather than the full 4.4927 authorized by the voters and by law.

To begin each meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance after Call to Order, to be led by the supervisor or his delegee.

To adjourn at 8:23 p.m.
Jim Hayden
Public Information Coordinator

Tours from Page B4

ervations are required.

A self-guided tour generally lasts about an hour guided by a booklet including architectural and historical details about the estate. Tour times vary by season and are listed on the event calendar. For more on tours, visit https://www.feltmansion.org/visit.

Tickets are now available for the popular "Hauntings & History Nights" Oct. 24, 25 and 30 at 7, 8 or 9 p.m. Each session accommodates 30 people. No tickets at the door. Tickets are $32. For more information, visit https://www.feltmansion.org/halloween

Guests embark on a journey through time as the estate's rich history and supernatural phenomena intertwine. This year's experience begins in the chapel where those who have personally confronted the spectral mysteries share their encounters.

Step into a realm cloaked in darkness, illuminated by the glow of candles. Explore the estate's hidden corners.

During this 90-minute self-guided expedition, guests can access areas rarely revealed to the public. Those with a penchant for mingling with the ethereal can arm themselves with an EMF detector, infrared thermometer, or REM Pod and partake in your own ghostly quest.

On Oct. 31, elementary school goblins and ghouls can visit the mansion for indoor trick-or-treating from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. This is a no-cost event, but donations are encouraged.

Guests are welcome to wear costumes (no winter jacket needed) and visit after school to explore the mansion while collecting candy and other goodies.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources from Saugatuck Dunes State Park will host carnival games in the party tent.

Construction of the mansion began in 1925. Felt's wife Agnes died in 1928 after the house was complete. Dorr died a year-and-a-half later.

After his death, the estate became a seminary for the Augustinian order attended by Pope Leo XIV. After the seminary closed, the land became a state prison and Michigan State Police post before it was purchased by Laketown Township.

The mansion has been restored and is a top historical and educational site as well as a wedding and event destination.

Shore Acres bikers have new sign unto them

By Jim Hayden
Correspondent

A new informational sign installed Aug. 21 explains the Shore Acres Bike Park Skills Area at Shore Acres Park, 6602 138th Ave., in Laketown Township.

The site is complete and includes tracks for beginners, advanced and areas for expert jump-lines. The sign also shows parts of the 1.9-mile cross-country bike loop.

It highlights rules for the skills areas, noting the area is for non-motorized use only, riders should always yield to foot traffic and respect all trail users.

Volunteer Dan Remondino of Michigan's Edge Mountain Bike Association, the group that oversees the area, installed the sign.

The 40-acre Shore Acres park owned by Laketown Township includes a disc golf course, the biking course and trails, hiking trails that link to Saugatuck Dunes State Park and Lake Michigan, and the Felt Estate.



Volunteer Dan Remondino of Michigan's Edge Mountain Bike Association installs a new informational sign at the bicycle skills area at Shore Acres Park.

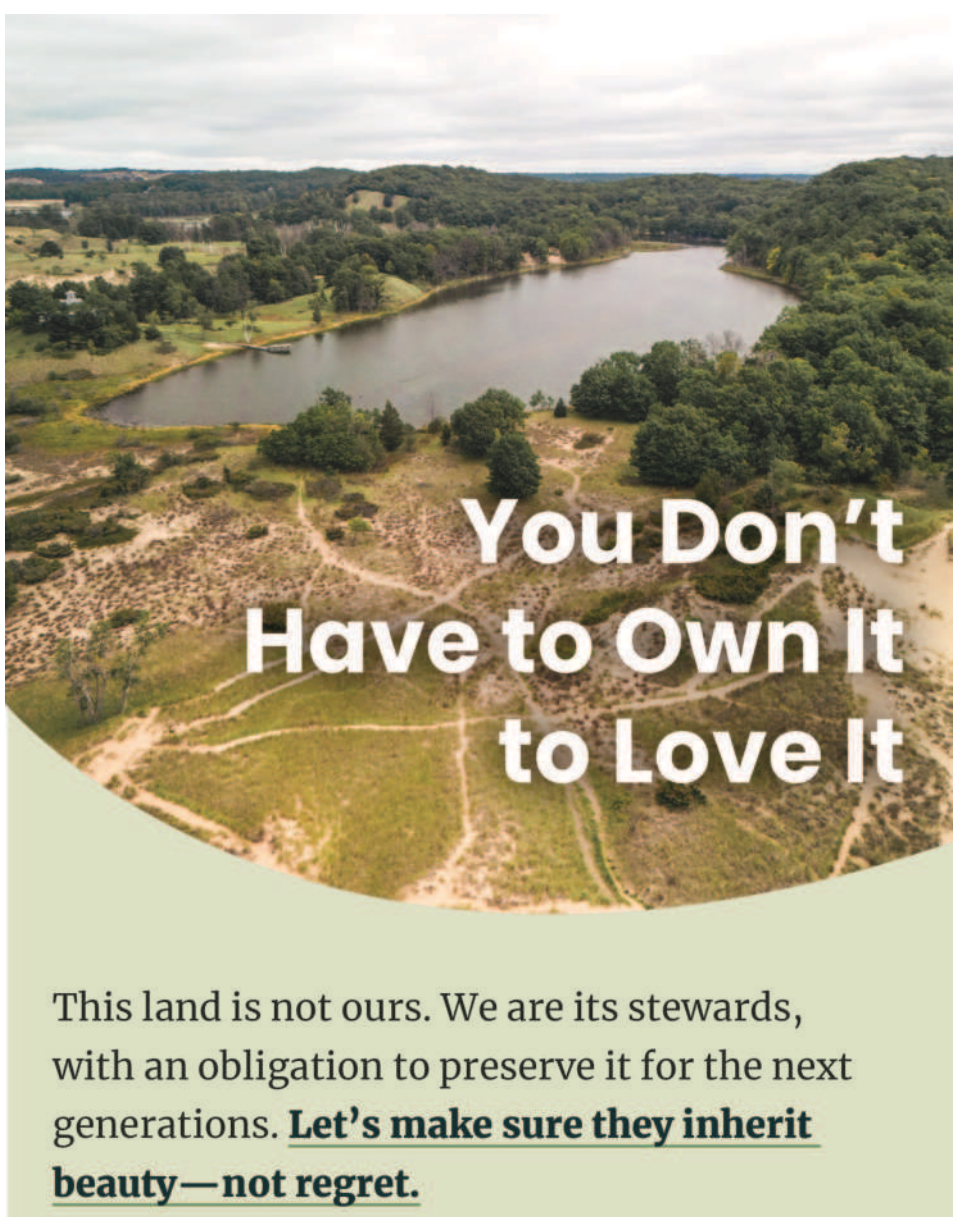
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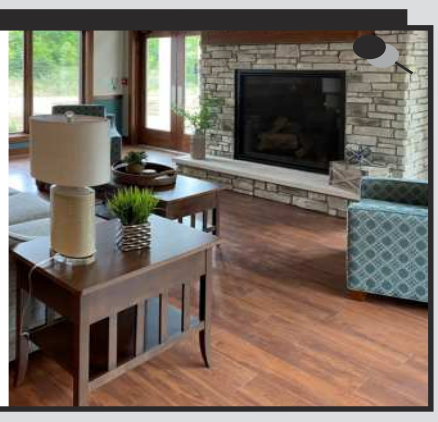
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Saugatuck cross country teams place second at Holly

By Jason Wesseldyk
Sports Editor

HOLLY—Under the leadership of the husband/wife team of Rick and Angelina Bauer, the Saugatuck cross country team has never shied away from tough competition.

Case in point: the Trailblazers moved up a Division at the Holly Duane Raffin Festival of Races on Saturday, Sept. 13, in order to compete against some bigger schools they don't otherwise have the opportunity to race.

The result was runner-up finishes for both the Saugatuck girls and boys teams in a field comprised largely of Division 2 teams.

Saugatuck is in Division 3 for MHSAA classification, with both ranked second in the most recent state poll.

"I could not be more proud of how our runners rose to the challenge today," Rick Bauer said. "Second place (against this level of competition) is no small feat.

"Both our boys and girls went up against top-ranked teams and showed tremendous heart, discipline and teamwork."

The Saugatuck girls finished with 67 points, putting them just 13 points behind winner Ann Arbor Father Gabriel Richard, which is ranked 13th in Division 2.

"We purposely opted up a division at Holly to see the better competition," Angelina Bauer said. "(The strong finish) is a reflection of the hard work all summer and season—early mornings, tough workouts and believing in one another."

A trio of Saugatuck runners earned top-10 finishes: Kamryn Sixberry was sixth at 19:51, Alina Martinson was seventh at 19:55 and Livia Curtis was 10th at 20:22.

Ellyse Heyser was 20th at 21:11 and Savannah VanDenBerg rounded out Saugatuck's scoring runners, placing 27th at 21:26.



Members of the Saugatuck boys cross country team are seen at the start of the Holly Invitational. (Photo provided)

"This is such a fantastic group of hardworking and fun girls," Angelina Bauer said. "They know how to have fun, but they know how to focus as well."

The Saugatuck boys, meanwhile, finished with 84 points. Only Flint Powers Catholic—the second-ranked team in Division 2—fared better, checking in with 32 points for the win.

Hillside Academy—ranked second in Division 4—was third with 87 points.

Marcus Silva paced Saugatuck, checking in at 16:39 to place eight. Fellow junior Grant Rehkopf joined him in the top 10, placing 10th at 16:44.

Sophomores Ira Brown (17:07) and Jackson Bowman (17:18) placed 13th and 17th, respectively, while senior Sammy Gamboa was Saugatuck's fifth and final scoring runner. He placed 36th at 17:57.

Page leads Trailblazers to one-sided win over Brandywine

By Jason Wesseldyk
Sports Editor

NILES—Back when Dan Patrick was a regular anchor on ESPN's "SportsCenter," one of his catchphrases was "you can't stop him, you can only hope to contain him."

Well, the Niles Brandywine defense definitely wasn't able to stop Saugatuck senior running back Max Page on Friday, Sept. 12. And the Bobcats didn't do much to contain him, either.

Page torched Brandywine for 203 yards on 15 carries—a 13.5-yards-per-carry average—with five rushing touchdowns to lead the Trailblazers to the 64-18 win.

The victory was the second in a row for Saugatuck following a season-opening loss.

"This was a big win on the road with a huge night by Max Page," Saugatuck coach Bill Dunn said. "Max is one of our senior captains, and he did a great job."



Jack Drummond, seen in an earlier game, returned an interception for a TD against Brandywine. (Photo by Scott Sullivan)

Not that Page accomplished that feat alone.

"It was another excellent job upfront by the offensive line," Dunn said.

Page started the scoring with a 4-yard run in the first quarter. He added a 3-yard scoring run in the second quarter, before finding the end zone three times in the third stanza on runs of 59, 20 and 25 yards.

In addition to Page, two other Saugatuck players—Will Soule and Alek Diaz—found the end zone on the ground. Soule (56 yards on six carries) scored on a 3-yard run in the second quarter, while Diaz (46 yards on two carries) scored on a 43-yard run in the fourth quarter.

Saugatuck quarterback Walt Bos also got into the scoring act, finding older brother Sam Bos for a 35-yard touchdown.

Saugatuck—which led 7-0 after one quarter, 22-0 at halftime and 40-12 after three quarters—also got a defensive score from Jack Drummond on a 30-yard interception return in the final quarter.

"The defense did a great job of containing Brandywine's most explosive player, Kaeden Warfield, and creating turnovers that were converted into points," Dunn said.

Dunn couldn't find much about the game he was unhappy about.

"We did a great job in all three aspects," he said. "The offense took care of the ball with no turnovers. The defense created four turnovers that the offense was able to convert to points and Dante Holley and our special teams play was outstanding."

Holley was a perfect 7-for-7 on extra-point kicks. He also threw for a 2-point conversion in the first quarter following a bad snap on a PAT attempt.

Page racked up a team-best eight tackles, with Drummond going for five. Bos had 4.5 and Nolan LaLonde chipped in with four.

Mason Leslie joined Drummond with an interception, while Soren Peterson and Carlos Perez each recovered a fumble.

Saugatuck outlasts Coloma

By Jason Wesseldyk
Sports Editor

Emma Gosler and Tali Laskowski combined for 19 kills and 30 assists for the Saugatuck volleyball team against visiting Coloma on Tuesday, Sept. 9.

That effort helped carry the Trailblazers to the 22-25, 25-18, 27-25, 23-25, 15-12 victory.

"The girls played great tonight, coming together and digging back after a deficit," Saugatuck coach Christina Lewis said.

Gosler paced Saugatuck with 11 kills and 16 assists. Laskowski had eight kills and 14 assists.

"Emma and Tali were beasts on the net," Lewis said.

Laskowski also had 19 digs, which was one better than teammate Gabbie Cochran.

"Tali kept a level head and really led the team on the court tonight," Lewis said.

Jocelyn Johnson added a team-best four aces to go with five kills.



Saugatuck's Gabbie Cochran serves during the match with Coloma. (Photo by Scott Sullivan)

Trailblazers tie Fennville in boys soccer

By Jason Wesseldyk
Sports Editor

FENNVILLE—The boys soccer showdown between archrivals Saugatuck and Fennville on Monday, Sept. 15, ended in a 1-1 tie.

The Blackhawks started the scoring, getting a first-half goal from Angel Villalobos. Saugatuck got the equalizer in the second half when Chase Seeley found the back of the net off an assist from Dante Holley.

And that's where the game ended.

Henry Gannon made 16 saves for the Trailblazers.

On Wednesday, Sept. 10, Saugatuck cruised to a 7-0 win over Hart. Holley and Charlie Robison led the way with two goals and an assist each, while Justin Crawford, Grady Gross and Nicoli Viten-Johansen each scored once.

Tommy Bullinger had two assists, while Gannon, Quinn Rodewald and Davidson Nieuwsma each had one assist.

On that same day, Fennville best Black River 4-2.

Villalobos and Josue Bahena each scored twice for the Blackhawks. Chava Carranza was credited with two assists, while Ethan Coffindaffer had one assist.

Saugatuck girls take first at SAC jamboree, boys take second

By Jason Wesseldyk
Sports Editor

GRAND JUNCTION—The SAC cross country jamboree at Warner Camp on Wednesday, Sept. 10, has special meaning for members of the Saugatuck boys and girls teams.

The Trailblazers dedicated the races to the memory of Brett DeMond, a longtime supporter of the program who passed away last month.

DeMond was a driving force behind the Town Crier Races, which serve as the primary fundraiser for the Saugatuck cross country and track programs.

"Our athletes ran with both purpose and gratitude today," Saugatuck girls coach Angelina Bauer said. "We're proud to honor Brett's legacy through our effort and commitment on the course."

The Saugatuck girls won their race with 33 points—28 points better than runner-up Hackett—while the Saugatuck boys were second with 68 points.

Black River won the boys race with 41 points.

"We were very pleased with our performance," Bauer said. "We know that there are some pretty good teams in our league, so we are happy to have the competition and go after reclaiming the title."

The Saugatuck girls had a streak of 13-straight conference title that was snapped in 2020. The Trailblazers have been trying to get back to the top of the standings ever since.

"We've have been clawing our way back to where we were, and it feels great to be back in the position where we can be competitive with the top again," Bauer said. "Our girls have put in the work and have worked extremely hard to revive and restore traditions that were killed during the COVID seasons.

"Those traditions had helped us to many championships and top-10 finishes (at the State Finals), and these girls brought them back without having seen an example. They understand our program's history and are focused on making their own history. They're living in the moment, enjoying the ride and loving racing."



Alina Martinson placed second at the SAC jamboree.

Saugatuck's Alina Martinson was second overall in the girls race with a time of 19:19, with teammate Kamryn Sixberry close behind in third at 19:20. Lyvia Curtis was broke the 20-minute mark, placing sixth at 19:54.

Ellyse Heyser was 10th at 21:13 and Savannah VanDenBerg was 12th at 21:15.

In the boys race, Saugatuck got a fifth-place effort of 16:56 from Grant Rehkopf. Ira Brown (12th at 17:34), Sammy Gamboa (16th at 18:06), Ashton Skinner (18th at 18:21) and Sawyer Monroe (20th at 18:36) also scored for the Trailblazers.

This was the first of three league jamborees. The jamboree scoring system weighs the first two meets at 25 percent each, with the final jamboree deciding 50 percent of the overall standings.

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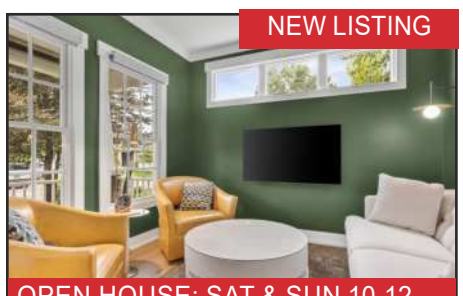


Bill Underdown 313-824-2000

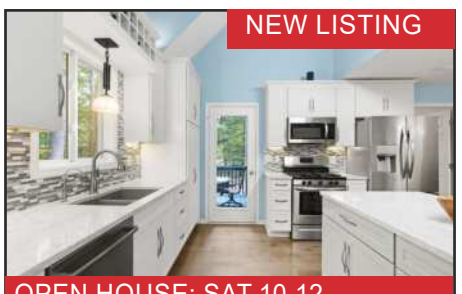
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FEATURED LISTINGS

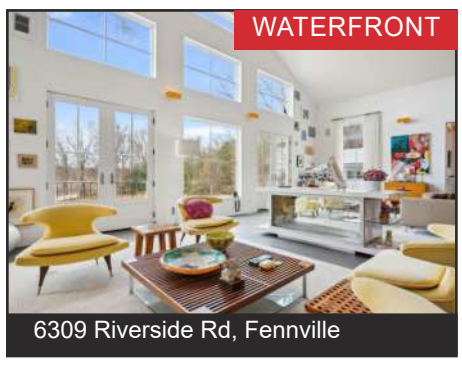

NEW LISTING
OPEN HOUSE: SAT & SUN 10-12
6528 Old Singapore Tr., Saugatuck


NEW LISTING
OPEN HOUSE: SAT & SUN 10-12
6528 Old Singapore Tr., Saugatuck

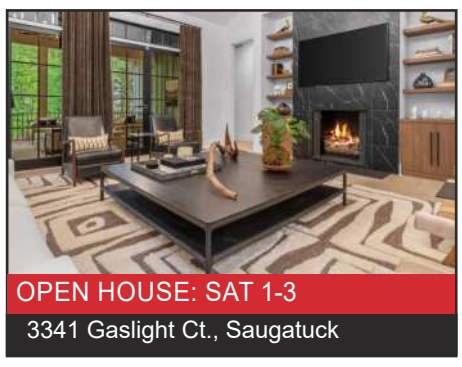

NEW LISTING
OPEN HOUSE: SAT 10-12
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NEW LISTING
OPEN HOUSE: SAT 10-12
2339 Forest Trail Circle, Fennville


WATERFRONT
6309 Riverside Rd, Fennville


WATERFRONT
6309 Riverside Rd, Fennville


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OPEN HOUSE: SAT 1-3
3341 Gaslight Ct., Saugatuck


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Erica Shirey 616-610-6549

Heather Conley 269-599-9193

David Isljamovski 616-298-4851


WATERFRONT
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PENDING
450 Summer Grove, Douglas


COMMERCIAL
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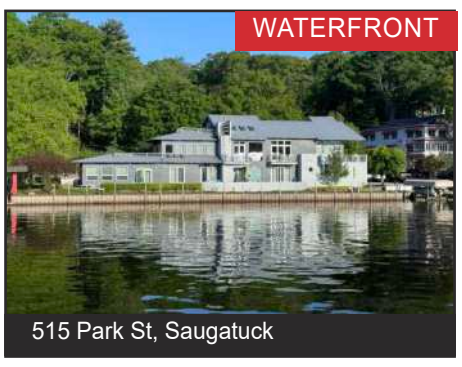

CLOSE TO BEACHES
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PENDING
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259 North St, Saugatuck


VACANT LAND
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