

Rural living different for exchange student

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CASS CITY

VOLUME 85, NUMBER 40

CASS CITY, MICHIGAN - WEDNESDAY

Isabel Wright retires, honored at tea

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ONICLE

FIFTY CENTS

10 PAGES PLUS ONE SUPPLEMENT

In Cass City

Sales hold up despite economy, say retailers

Despite tough economic times, some Cass City retailers are reporting decent sales — at least better than expected — during the holiday season.

The same business owners indicated 1991 as a whole was respectable, considering the recession.

Bud Schneeberger of Schneeberger Furniture and Appliances reported a good year, with sales up some 10 percent. He noted televisions, carpet and appliances all sold well.

"We were hoping to do as good as last year, but we did better," he said. "I don't have all the answers why."

"Cass City is a good place to do retail business. All we need are some more retailers."

Bill Kritzman, owner of Kritzman's Inc. Clothing Store, agreed that filling vacant stores in Cass City

would be a big plus for all retailers. Anything that pulls more people into town will help, he said.

As for 1991, Kritzman remarked, "It was kind of a flat year for us. I was down from last year a little, but I was thinking it was going to be worse. The Christmas season was better than I thought" it would be.

"It wasn't a great year, but it wasn't the type of year that would put us under."

Kritzman acknowledged that layoffs and other woes seen in the automotive industry, as well as increased competition from large chain stores are taking a toll on Cass City. "And it's no different than in any other town."

"At the same time," he remarked, "I think our economy here is a little more steady" because of its diversity, including agriculture,

industry and retail.

At Coach Light Pharmacy, owner Mike Weaver reported he was "generally happy" with sales over the holidays.

"I would still have to be upbeat," he said. "It was a short selling season and, yes, there was more competition, but it was not that bad."

Sales could have been better, Weaver added, "But it wasn't a major crash."

"We did better than we expected," Old Wood Drug owner Tom Proctor commented. "It was a good, steady year. Considering the economy, that's excellent for us."

Proctor said the slow economy has prompted him to buy more cautiously and try to anticipate what merchandise will do well, and at the same time offer a good selection.

Also reporting a good year was Cindy McConkey of

McConkey Jewelry and Gift Shop.

"We ended the year very well, same as last year," she commented. "A lot of jewelry sold, in general, and some variety of gift items."

"I was very pleased with the outcome."

A less optimistic report came from the owners of the Ben Franklin Store.

"Christmas was down moderately," Geraldine Prieskorn said, adding the same was true for 1991 as a whole.

A combination of factors is to blame, according to Prieskorn, who said the effects of increased competition from larger chain stores are being compounded by the recession. The result: fewer shoppers, with those who are shopping spending less.

She added, "I think everyone reads the newspaper and watches the television, and they get a little scared."



THE FIRST BABY of the year didn't take long in arriving at Hills and Dales General Hospital. Pearl Lynn Blakely checked in at 5:05 p.m. Friday, Jan. 3. The new arrival will have a host of prizes from Cass City merchants waiting to be picked up by the proud parents, Linda and Paul Blakely, 1147 E. Dayton, Caro.

Pearl Lynn is the fifth child in the family. Others are: Paul Lloyd, 5, Minnie, 4, Ina, 2 1/2, and Frederick, 15 months.

Second time

Thieves loot Quaker Maid

Cass City police are continuing their investigation of a weekend burglary at the Quaker Maid Dairy Store, 6614 Main St.

The incident marked the second time in as many months that the store has been hit by thieves, and is the latest in a series of 5 burglaries reported by Main

Street businesses since early November.

Quaker Maid owner Kareem Khoury told police that when he arrived at his business Saturday morning, he found the back entrance door open. There was no sign of forced entry to the door or anywhere else in the building, according to re-

ports. An initial list of missing items included 40 cartons of cigarettes, a Super Nintendo game player, 7 Super Nintendo game tapes and 6 cases of beer. No dollar value of the items was available.

It was noted that the store wasn't ransacked and that it

appeared the person or persons responsible knew where to find what they wanted.

Police Chief Gene Wilson said he believes the theft may be related to one or more of the other recent break-ins, with the exception of the Nov. 6 burglary at Please turn to page 6.

Burns resigns to take Friend of Court post

Tuscola County Commissioner Mary Lou Burns, Cass City, resigned last week with plans to accept the position of administrator of the Tuscola County Friend of the Court's office.

She announced her decision during the board's reorganization meeting Friday. Burns, 42, was serving her first 2-year term as the commissioner representing District 2, which covers Elkland, Elmwood, Kingston and Novesta townships. She took over her new duties this week.

Burns remarked Monday that she has enjoyed her

work as a board member, but wanted the Friend of the Court position more. "I've worked very hard as a commissioner and I liked being a commissioner."

She said her greatest challenge now will be the same issue that has been a source of heated debate among commissioners, and which prompted former FOC Administrator Nancy Morarty to resign last fall.

"I think the biggest thing now is that in order for the office to function properly, we need more space," she said, adding the problem of cramped quarters will be

compounded in the spring when a new computer system is installed.

As it is, she continued, "There is no place for people to have privacy when they come up to talk about their business."

Burns, who supported additional office space as a commissioner, indicated she would like to work together with commissioners to solve the problem. However, she acknowledged it may be an uphill battle because of hard feelings harbored by some commissioners over past quarrels with Tuscola County Circuit



Mary Lou Burns

Judge Patrick R. Joslyn. "It really does the county a Please turn to page 5.

Sign a tribute to Lillian Otulakowski

Motorists entering Cass City from the east are being welcomed by a new sign donated to the village in memory of a woman who could "turn the worst tragedy into something that was good."

The sign is the result of a 6-month project embraced by the family of Lillian Otulakowski.

Pat Walsh, along with 2 of her sisters, spearheaded the effort in honor of their mother, a resident of the Cass City area for more than 50 years who was very fond of the community.

"She loved it here," Walsh said, adding her mother had many friends in the area.

The mother of 9, grandmother of 33 and great-grandmother of 33 came to the United States from her native Poland in 1912 at the age of 14. She made her home in the Detroit area before moving to rural Cass City in 1940. She died March 30, 1990.

Walsh described her as the type of person who could

"turn the worst tragedy into something that was good. I don't think she had an enemy in the world," she added. "If they were, she made a friend of them before they left."

Plans for honoring those memories began last summer.

"We started in July. My mother had a little money left, and we were trying to decide, what should we do with it," Walsh recalled. "Basically, it (came down to) doing something for the village. We wanted something that would be permanent."

After checking with village officials and doing some research, the search began for someone to make the sign. While in Marlette one day, Walsh said she saw a good example of the type of sign the family had in mind, and a short while later, Ron Barrons of Marlette, an industrial arts instructor at the Tuscola Area Skill Center, was hired.

The finished product,

made of solid redwood, depicts a country church in winter, nestled amongst pine trees and bordered by a river, with a Christmas Goose in the foreground.

Passersby are greeted with the words, "Welcome to Cass City, A Christmas Village."

Although the sign was erected last month, the project isn't complete; landscaping and lighting are planned, and George Wilson of Gagtown has agreed to make a stained glass window for the church.

The sign is an appropriate memorial, according to Walsh. She explained that her mother lived south and east of Cass City along the Cass River. She was very active in her church, and "had geese for as long as I can remember."

A friendly welcome was among her trademarks.

Whenever someone would stop by to pick up an order for a goose down pillow or a Christmas goose, Walsh said, "it turned into a visit."



STANDING BESIDE the sign donated in memory of Lillian Otulakowski are the family members. From left, Leo Leszczynski, Stanley Otulakowski, Stella Leszczynski, Lillian Gibbard, Gene Otulakowski and Patricia Walsh.

Hills and Dales honors retiring Isabel Wright

The staff at Hills and Dales General Hospital, Cass City, recently honored the hospital's director of support services, Isabel Wright, who is retiring after nearly 24 years of service.

A retirement tea was held in her honor last Wednesday.

The area native has carried many titles, from switchboard operator to newsletter editor, since joining the hospital staff in February 1968.

"I started on switchboard like most people do," she recalled. Wright added she feels fortunate to have been able to work her way up to the administrative level.

She served as office manager for outpatient services and then assistant finance director before being promoted to director of support services in 1981.

As director, her duties have included serving as a member of the administrative team that oversees the housekeeping, maintenance and dietary departments. She also supervised the safety program and person-

nel records, and edited the hospital's newsletter, "The Communicator II," for more than 10 years.

Editing the newsletter was the biggest challenge and among the most enjoyable, according to Wright, who is a founding member and secretary-treasurer of the Thumb Area Writers' Club.

Wright said she's going to miss the camaraderie she's enjoyed at the hospital over the years.

Still, having held a variety of jobs since the age of 16, the mother of 4 and grandmother of 7 noted it will be nice to get reacquainted with her family, and to spend more time with her husband, Harry, who retired 3 years ago from General Cable.

Prior to his retirement, Wright's husband worked afternoons, while she worked days.

"I just think it's time we did some things together," she remarked. Wright indicated she plans to remain active, but hasn't made specific plans.

"We're just going to take it one day at a time for now; take time to smell the roses."



ISABEL WRIGHT, director of support services at Hills and Dales General Hospital, was honored last week by friends, family and the hospital staff. Wright, pictured above with hospital President Ken E. Jensen, is retiring after nearly 24 years of service.

REDHAWK

Student of the Week

Courtesy of Board Chrysler/Plymouth/Dodge/Jeep/Eagle, Inc. - Downtown



Junior
NICOLA KUPERUS

Nicola Kuperus has been contributing her time and talent, for 3 years, repainting the Storyland Christmas Displays.

The displays provide enjoyment for the community and her efforts to make them look their best are appreciated. Nicola is the daughter of Peter and Lillian Kuperus.

The Student of the Week is selected by the Cass City Student Council.

BOARD



6617 Main Street
DOWNTOWN CASS CITY

Advertise It In The Chronicle

In 1992

\$154,000 awarded to help homeless

Nearly \$154,000 in state grants will benefit shelters and organizations serving area homeless people.

The funds are 1992 appropriations accelerated by Gov. Engler and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), according to state Rep. Dick Allen (R-Caro) and state Sen. Jim Barcia (D-Bay City).

"A sluggish economy and a state government in transition have meant hard times for many of our citizens," Allen said. "I'm pleased that the Governor and his housing agency have been able to help those in need with the means to obtain temporary shelter."

"These grants will help homeless individuals to survive the cold winter months," Barcia added. "I am pleased that the state could assist in this process."

Communities and area organizations receiving grants are:

* Huron County - - \$150,000.

* Human Development Commission - - \$3,727.

Three types of grants will be awarded. One will help pay operating costs of shelters and cover security deposits, first and last month's rent, delinquent rent and mortgage payments, utility arrearages or other assistance to prevent homelessness. Another will help pay short-term operating and maintenance expenses for groups that were not previously awarded emergency shelter or comprehensive shelter development grants. A third type of grant will assist shelters that have received money from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development for transitional housing programs.

More than \$1.6 million will be awarded to 90 organizations statewide. The Michigan Department of Social Services also has forged a partnership with the Salvation Army to help prevent homelessness.

Your neighbor says

Designated driver a very good idea

According to reports of traffic authorities, the new, stiffer drunk driving laws had an effect on persons celebrating the new year. They were more careful about drinking and driving.

Your neighbor, Lynn Marker, 44, of Shabbona says he's not sure just how much long-range impact the new law will have. It will be great if it does, considering the statistics. In 1990, 738 persons died in alcohol-related crashes, which is 47 percent of Michigan's traffic fatalities, according to AAA.

So far, the new law hasn't had any effect on Marker. I never go out on New Year's Eve, he grinned. Definitely, he added, having a designated driver is a very good idea.

It's not new. We do it when we go out, he said. Really, it shouldn't take a law to do something that you should have been doing anyway, he feels.

Marker is married. He and his wife, Janet, have 2 children, Denise, 21, and Nichole, 16.



Dry bean meeting set

The Tuscola Dry Bean Growers' annual meeting has been scheduled for Jan. 15 from 7 to 10 a.m. at the Brentwood Restaurant in Caro.

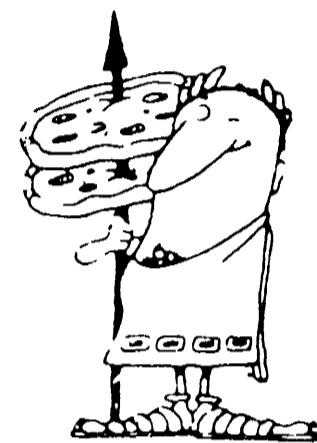
The session will include a breakfast meeting, election

of directors and various dry bean production updates.

The program is sponsored by the Tuscola County Dry Bean Growers' Association and the Tuscola County Cooperative Extension Service.

To Cass City

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One Item	7.84	10.09	13.34
Two Items	8.69	11.19	14.69
Three Items	9.54	12.29	16.04
Special	10.74	13.74	17.74
Double or Extra Items			
Over 3*85	1.10	1.35
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Slice/Slice (Cheese & Pepperoni)	1.99		
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Tuna Melt	2.99
Vegetarian	2.69
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SALADS

	S	M	L
Tossed	1.19	2.39	3.69
Antipasto	1.39	2.89	4.69
Greek	1.39	2.89	4.69