

# CITY CHRONICLE

VOLUME 98, NUMBER 39

CASS CITY, MICHIGAN - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2004

FIFTY CENTS

14 PAGES PLUS 2 SUPPLEMENTS

## Back to square one

### Peterson: sale of Owen-Gage school building in Gagetown "won't happen"

The search is on for the Owen-Gage school board. In addition to their duties in finding a new superintendent for the Owendale school, the board will add to their "to do" list locating buyers for the former Gagetown Elementary School building.

Supt. Bob Peterson informed the board that the sale of the 19,000-square foot structure, at an agreed asking price of \$95,000, has stalled.

"Won't happen," said Peterson of the deal struck

recently with a Gagetown couple. "(The buyers) can't come up with the financing. It's not 100% dead, but there is not much hope."

Peterson stated that there is more than just the price of the building to be considered. Improvements and renovations will be needed and that requires capital.

Turning to the superintendent search, the board has hired former superintendent Don Gleeson to head the administrative search at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.

Gleeson presented the board with a search calendar draft and a criteria survey.

Gleeson's timetable suggestions include official announcement of the vacancy at the board's regular January meeting. Gleeson then plans to post the position with college placement bureaus, send advertisements to educational journals and distribute a district brochure to all school districts in the state.

Gleeson feels final contract

negotiations and a motion to hire the selected superintendent should be completed by late May.

To assist in the selection, Gleeson handed the board a criteria survey. The survey seeks input as to the most important attributes for a new superintendent. Gleeson hopes to receive responses from school staff members, township officials, business leaders and students.

"I'll assist you in every step of the process," promised Gleeson, who feels the base salary of the position should pay between \$75,000 and \$80,000 annually.

## Council okays budget

The Cass City Village Council Monday approved a lean 2005 general fund spending plan totaling \$1.25 million.

The budget is down by about \$16,200, or 1.3 percent, compared to 2004 spending. General Fund revenues are set for \$1.258 million, a decrease of \$1,191 from the current fiscal year.

Total village spending in 2005 is projected at \$2.84 million, including some \$370,000 in capital improvements ranging from the purchase of communications equipment for the police department to a replacement dump truck to several street repaving projects.

Aside from the general fund, the village's budget includes a major street fund (\$133,300), local street fund (\$380,843), downtown development fund (\$31,000), wastewater treatment fund (\$551,076), water fund (\$265,440) and motor vehicle/equipment fund (\$227,445).

Village Manager Frank Sheridan is estimating a slight increase (1.3 percent) in the real property values in the village for 2005, and a reduction in personal prop-

erty values, for a net estimated increase of less than one percent in overall taxable value.

The 2005 millage rate is estimated at 18.1387 mills, compared to 18.2746 this year. If those numbers hold true, the owner of a house with a market value of \$80,000 would pay \$5.43 less in village property taxes next year.

Also figured into the spending plan are wage increases, with all full-time employees slated to receive an across-the-board hike of 2.7 percent. The workers' fringe benefit package will remain the same. Most part-time employees will receive no pay increase, with the exception of police officers, part-time DPW crew members and a custodian and secretary at the municipal building.

Although anticipated spending is down, Sheridan says the village's street funds are healthy. "We are building a fund balance for anticipated street and storm drain work," he told the council last month. "We will continue to perform the tasks involved with street maintenance — \$247,176 — and expect to expend about

\$83,000 for street reconstruction."

However, the village's wastewater and water funds will need additional revenue to prepare for continued rising maintenance expenses, especially at the village's aging wastewater treatment plant, as well as the major project of constructing an arsenic treatment plant to meet rougher federal standards for acceptable levels of arsenic in public drinking water supplies.

Under the new budget, the basic monthly bill for a homeowner's sewer service is increased \$1.45, with 62 cents of that due to inflation and the remainder going towards reducing the deficit in the wastewater fund.

Sheridan also increased water service rates by 2 percent, which translates into a basic hike of 14 cents. In addition, he established a monthly "federal mandate charge" ranging from \$3 to \$4.25 to help offset the cost of preliminary work related to arsenic treatment. Most homeowners will see an increased charge of \$3 a month.

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### IN OTHER BUSINESS

The board recognized focus students of the month recipients, which included Luke Retford, Kindergarten; Tyler Roemer, first grade; Sidney Bencheck, second grade; Richelle Scharf, third grade; Brandon Beckrow, fourth grade; Amanda Muntz, fifth grade; Andrew Betson, sixth grade; Christine Schmidt, seventh grade; Stacie Dorsch, eighth grade; Brittany Parks, ninth grade; Frank Abfalter, tenth grade; Whitney Brown, eleventh grade; and Carol Littlepage, twelfth grade.

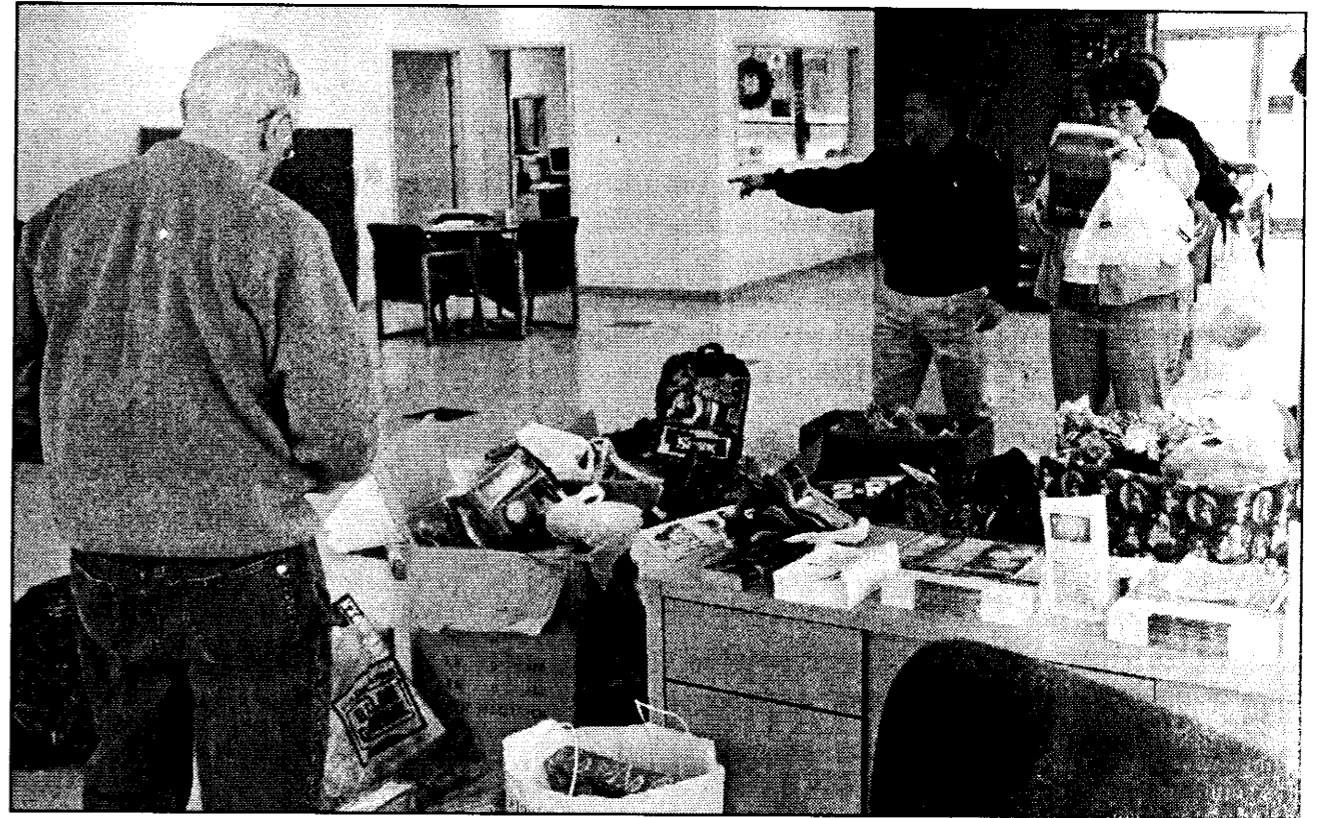
Named Wendy Error "Senior Student of the Month" for December.

Hired Pam Nowaczyk and Nancy Buschlen as Co-Junior Class Advisors.

Approved bills to be paid for the month of December totaling \$73,621.26 and reported a fund balance of \$519,721.26 ending November 30, 2004.

Accepted the resignation of Junior High volleyball coach Ashley Adams, who has taken over as varsity volleyball coach.

Went into closed session regarding contract negotiations.



CASS CITY ROTARY Club members, including (from left) Gerald Prieskorn, Ben Varney and Colleen Langenburg, gathered at Curtis Chrysler in Cass City Saturday morning to sort the first batch of toys collected for the club's Christmas for Kids program. Rotary members expect to serve 130 families this year.

## Rotary expects to help out 132 families this year

The former Toys for Tots program in Cass City has flourished under the leadership of the Cass City Rotary Club, which expects to help more families than ever enjoy a merrier Christmas.

Rotary members called last year's toy drive the most successful ever, with donations topping \$6,000. But it appears this year's effort, known as the Christmas for Kids program since Rotary took over the program 7 or 8 years ago, will be a record breaker.

"It seems to be going pretty good. I think we're right around 130 families this year," said Pat Curtis, who heads up the club's Christmas for Kids Committee along with Mary Cunningham and Colleen Langenburg.

"I think we are higher (in numbers), but I think last year it was a little bit lower

for some reason," Curtis added. "It seems like when we first did this, we were right around the 100 family mark."

Curtis later reported the total number of families this year is 132 so far, "and we usually get a few more in. That's about 421 people. That's the most we've ever had."

The program served nearly 90 families last year and 104 families the year before.

The club relies not only on donations of toys that are collected in boxes throughout downtown businesses, but also cash contributions from individuals and organizations.

"We've had an excellent turnout for toys," Curtis said. "Probably what we need more than anything else right now are cash donations because we have to shop for clothes."

"Any donation is more than welcome. It doesn't matter," he noted. "We don't know what we're going to run into, but we've got a lot of clothes to buy."

Donations can be sent to: Cass City Rotary, P.O. Box 63, Cass City, MI 48726.

Judging by the first toy-sorting session Saturday at the Curtis Chrysler dealership in Cass City, there will be no lack of presents for needy children.

Cunningham noted much of the credit for the first batch of toys goes to area students. "The high school's been one of our biggest supporters," she said, adding middle school students have also been active in the program.

The Christmas for Kids effort kicked off in early October. "We tried to get an earlier jump this year," said Curtis, who indicated volunteers are always quick to lend

a hand. "This is one thing where we don't have a problem getting people involved," he added. "It's a nice program. Everybody gets involved."

Club members will be distributing this year's toys Tuesday, Dec. 21, at Curtis Chrysler in Cass City, located at 6617 Main St.

The distribution day is always a highlight for Rotary members, according to Curtis.

"We get a lot of thank-yous. People will come in in tears saying they didn't know what they were going to do," he said. "So, it's a great program."

**Flu shots available for all now**

Tuscola County health officials are putting out the welcome mat for healthy adults in the area who might have given up on getting a flu shot this year.

Michigan health officials last week lifted an emergency order limiting doses of flu vaccine to high-priority groups only. As of Thursday, anyone could receive a shot, although state officials are recommending that priority still be given to at-risk individuals.

The order lifting the ban was issued by Michigan Department of Community Health Director Janet Olszewski based, in part, on recommendations from several health professional groups, including the Michigan Association of Local Public Health.

Locally, officials at Hills and Dales General Hospital say the area is in good shape. "We've given 70 to 75 (flu shots) since Thursday, so we're going pretty good. We've still got some on hand. We're doing well," Craig Bellew, director of pharmacy.

"I think our community is in good shape. I think we're going to be fine."

Bellew said he's confident all at-risk persons in the area who have sought a flu shot have been able to get one. "I

Please turn to back page.



ELKLAND TOWNSHIP Fire Chief Ron Pawloski presents a certificate to Dylan Johnson and his mother, Karen Johnson, honoring Dylan's dog, Bruce Lee. The family pet died in a house fire after waking the Johnsons. Also pictured are firemen (from left) Jack Hartwick, Dale Tader and Jeremy Somerville.

## Honoring a hero

### Elkland Township firefighters honor dog that saved family

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

Bruce Lee was never a fire fighter, but he saved the lives of his family when flames ripped through the small, 2-story wood frame home they were renting early last month.

A German Shepherd-Rottweiler mix dog named by his owner, 13-year-old Dylan Johnson, Bruce Lee never made it out of the house.

Cass City fire fighters last week honored the family pet by naming him the honorary mascot of the Elkland Township Fire Department. A certificate in recognition of Bruce Lee's sacrifice was presented to Johnson and his mother, Karen Johnson, during a brief ceremony at the fire hall Tuesday night.

"The dog, as you know, woke them up. They got out of the house. The dog didn't make it out, and I guess the boy is still having a hard time with it," Elkland Township

Fire Chief Ron Pawloski said.

"We just wanted to do something to help, and this is what we came up with."

The Nov. 1 fire was reported at 3:47 a.m. Fire fighters arrived at the home at 3441 N. Englehart Rd., about 2 miles southeast of Cass City, to find the structure fully engulfed in flames. Fortunately, both Karen and Dylan Johnson had escaped unharmed.

There were working smoke alarms inside the home, but it was Bruce Lee's barking that first alerted the family of the danger. "That's when she heard the smoke alarm going off downstairs," Pawloski said, "and it (fire) had a pretty good start before they even got out and called the fire department."

Pawloski's investigation revealed the fire ignited in a front living room area, apparently due to an electrical problem.

During last week's ceremony, Johnson described Bruce Lee as a "big baby" that loved Cheetos and just about any other snack Dylan shared with him.

"He (Dylan) got him as a puppy - he was about 6 weeks old - and he was probably about 16 months old," she said.

"That dog was everything to him. They slept together, they ate together, they played together. He was his best friend."

Johnson, a medical assistant, indicated she and her son are continuing to put their lives back together and are now living in the Huntsville Trailer Park in Cass City.

"It takes a long time. It's not something you do right away," she added, noting Dylan still has nightmares about the fire. "With the help of friends and church, we're

Please turn to back page.



**U.S. ARMY PRIVATE Nathan A. Fisher, son of Scott and Deborah Fisher of Cass City, recently completed 9 weeks of basic combat training at Fort Jackson, S.C. He graduated Dec. 3 with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry. He's now in advanced individual training in Maryland, where he will attend the Tracked Vehicle Mechanic Course. Fisher is a 2004 graduate of Cass City High School.**

## Christmas services scheduled

Special Christmas services at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church begin with the

Children's Christmas Program "Savior of the Nations Come" at 7 p.m., Saturday,

Dec. 18.

Sunday, Dec. 19, the adult and children's choirs will present a cantata at the 9:30 a.m. worship service.

The Christmas Eve service is at 7 p.m., and the Christmas morning service is at 9:30 a.m.

The New Year's Eve worship service is at 7 p.m. Members of the community are invited to attend these services.

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## Senior movies Friday

Senior Movies will be shown at Rawson Memorial Library, Cass City, Friday, Dec. 17 at 1:30 p.m.

**Through the Lens:** They defy gravity, brave infernos and endure the most brutal conditions imaginable. All to distill human experience into a single frame. Experience the riveting stories behind the images as we join the photographers as they venture to the brink of molten volcanoes, explore untouched pre-Inca tombs, swim with whale sharks, conquer Everest's killer heights, and much, much more. It's a breathtaking look at some of the greatest adventure photographs and the amazing stories of how they were captured. (50 minutes)

**Rocky Mountain National Park, Spirit of the Mountains:** From the tops of towering mountains to the depths of glacier-carved valleys, this video takes viewers on an unforgettable journey through more than 400 square miles of wild inspiring scenery. Featuring dazzling cinematography, expert narrative and an original music score by composer/musician Todd Hahn, this high-definition film captures the park's grandeur through the 4 seasons. Now you can enjoy the Rocky Mountain's stunning views, wildlife, plant life and awe-inspiring weather as you relive your visit, or plan an adventure in one of America's premier natural treasures. (25 minutes)

Refreshments will be served. This Older Adult Program is offered free of charge.

## It's a boy!



**Brevin Bogart**

Collier Bogart and Melanie Cekuta announce the birth of their son, Brevin Gold Bogart.

Brevin was born Nov. 1, 2004. He weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces and was 21 1/4 inches long.

Grandparents are Larry and Deborah Bogart of Cass City, Brad and Susie Chippi of Cass City, and Bill and Brenda Cekuta of Port Charlotte, Fla.

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**Friday** - Turkey vegetable pie, broccoli raisin salad, vegetable in entrée, bread in entrée, apple crisp.  
**Monday** - Beef macaroni casserole, peas, tossed salad, variety bread, fruit.  
**Tuesday** - Swedish meatballs over egg noodles, tossed salad, corn, fruit.

**Meg's Peg**  
**Christmas music**  
by Melva E. Guinther

As much as I love the Christmas season, I sometimes wonder how store clerks cope with the inflated Santa's "Ho, Ho, Ho" all day every day. I imagine it could get a trifle tedious after a while, as could the constant Christmas music.

Most of the music is appreciated, although I really don't care for the efforts of the artists who try to jazz up old favorites. Don't they know they're tampering with tradition?

There's something tawdry about "O Holy Night, yeah yeah yeah!"

Only a few of the newer songs appeal to me. "Mary, Did You Know?" and "A Strange Way to Save the World" are a couple that I feel have merit.

For the most part, though, it's the old carols that symbolize the meaning of the holiday, and those are best done in moderation.

Even Nat King Cole, one of my favorite vocalists, singing "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire" ceases to have a calming influence when heard 35 times continuously.

One year when I was working in an upstairs office downtown, whoever was in charge of changing the music that came over the town-wide loudspeaker, located just outside the window, must have become preoccupied and the blasted tape kept playing over and over.

It took me quite a while to appreciate Nat after that.

It reminded me of the time we took our cute little preschool brother with us to country school. The teacher asked him to sing "White Christmas."

He did a good job, but unfortunately he couldn't re-

member the ending, and she couldn't get him stopped. He just kept singing his little heart out over and over and over.

Some of you might think you've had your fill of "Winter Wonderland," but here's a version you may not have heard before.

This parody for computer nerds by an unknown Web addict came from the You Make Me Laugh website:

Doorbell rings, I'm not list'nin',  
From my mouth drool is glist'nin',  
I'm happy although  
My boss let me go -  
Happily addicted to the Web.

All night long, I sit clicking  
Unaware time is ticking.  
There's beard on my cheek,  
Same clothes for a week,  
Happily addicted to the Web.

Friends come by; they shake me, sayin' "Yo, man!  
Don't you know tonight's the senior prom?"  
With a listless shrug, I mutter, "No, man;  
I just discovered laugh-a-lot-dot-com."

I don't phone, don't send faxes,  
Don't go out, don't pay taxes.  
Who cares if some day  
They drag me away?  
I'm happily addicted to the Web.

## Calendar of Events

Deadline for submitting items in the calendar is the Friday noon before publication.

### Thursday, December 16

Multiple Sclerosis and Fibromyalgia Support Group meeting, 7 p.m., Northwood Meadows, 6086 Beechwood Dr., Cass City. For more information, call Deb at (989) 872-2121 (ext. 216).

### Friday, December 17

Alcoholics Anonymous, 8 p.m., Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Senior Citizen Movies, 1:30 p.m., Rawson Memorial Library.

### Saturday, December 18

Children's Christmas Craft Session, 10-11 a.m., Rawson Memorial Library.

### Monday, December 20

Christmas Sing-along, 7 p.m., Rawson Memorial Library.

### Tuesday, December 21

Thumb Area Parkinson's Support Group meeting, 1 p.m., Hills and Dales General Hospital.

### Wednesday, December 22

Thumb Retired Officers of Police Service (TROOPS) meeting, 11:30 p.m., Franklin Inn, Bad Axe.

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**An Evening of Christmas Music**  
Dec. 20, 7 p.m.  
Rawson Memorial Library

Don Greenleaf will play the organ and Cathy Sullivan, Scott Mills & Joanne Dzielinski will lead the group in singing favorite Christmas carols.  
Don, Cathy, Scott & Joanne will do solos and duets also.  
Come to listen and join in the fun!

Call the library, 872-2856, if you need a ride to this program.  
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### Red Hawk Talks

by Leah Sherman

The holiday season has everyone wound up, but the elementary school really knows how to display their excitement! It all started with the first snowfall, and the giant snow boulders that the students made on the playground. They now have to come to school equipped with boots, hats, mittens, and snow pants. All of these are necessities when playing outside in the snow. However, some students may be playing, while others are practicing for their futures in architecture and construction, building elaborate forts to shelter them from the cold.

Inside, the students have been working hard to make their school look especially festive. Arts and crafts decorations line the halls. Down the multi-age 1-2 hall there are Santa windsocks hanging from the ceiling. Santa's reindeer are along the halls in the first and second grade hallway. The third and fourth graders have decorated their halls with poinsettias, wreaths and Santas.

Decorating proves to be the elementary school students' specialty. They, along with many other local groups, decorated a Christmas tree for the Festival of Trees, which took place during the Christmas in the Village Extravaganza. Their tree was voted best decorated! Several classrooms contributed handmade decorations to create a fun and beautiful display.

Mrs. LaBerge's art classes have been working on stained glass projects that will be useful for holiday decorating as well.

All of the classes have been planning their holiday parties. Each class has a gift exchange, and students bring in treats from home.

Traditions are a big part of the holiday season, but many people don't realize all of the different traditions that can be found around the world.

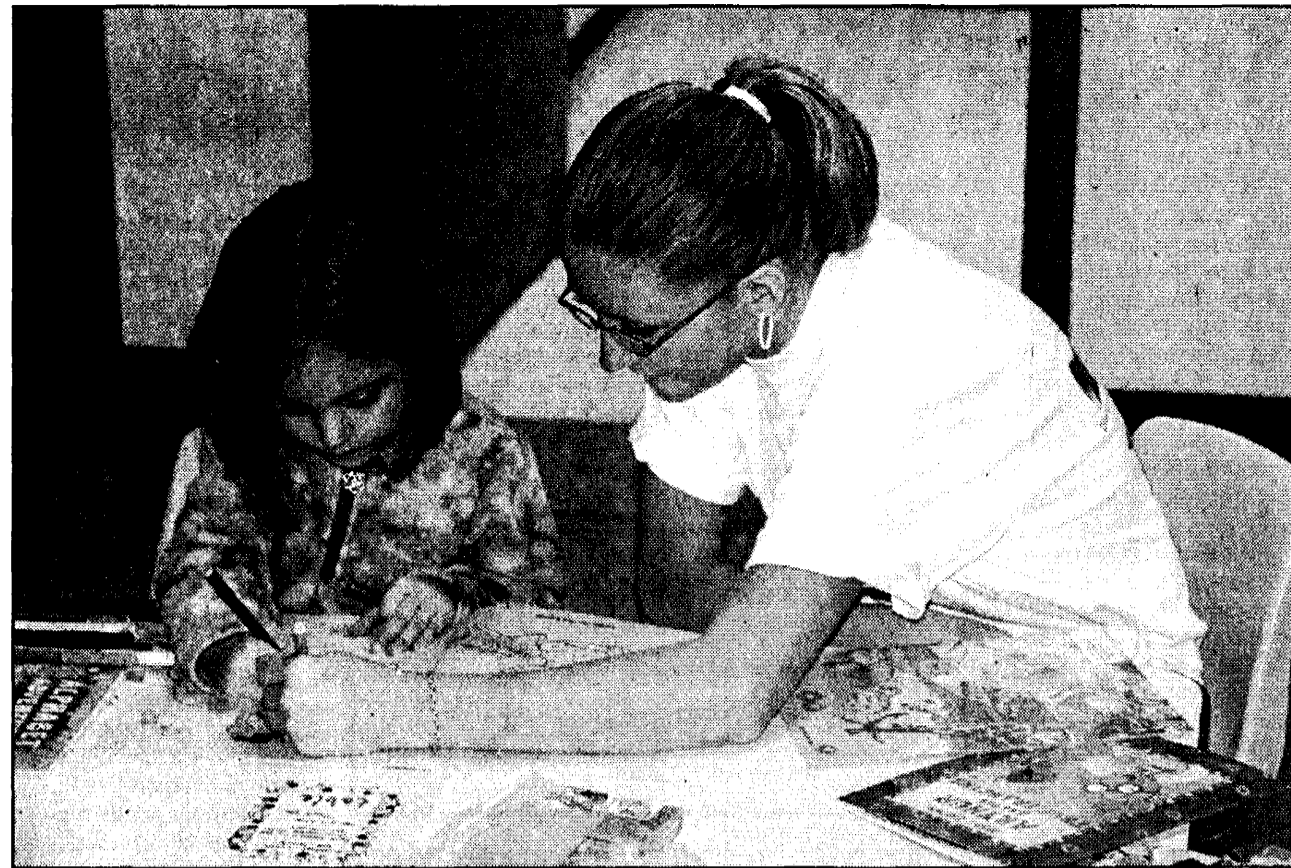
Mrs. Gray's fourth grade class has been studying various cultures' holiday traditions, such as Christmas, Kwanza, and Hanukkah.

Third graders are beginning to research their families' holiday traditions. This information will be added to their family history research projects that they will continue to work on throughout the school year. The research will be made into PowerPoint presentations for their social studies classes. Their final projects will be put on CDs that they can take home and use as a thorough record of their family histories.

Musical entertainment is a huge part of the holiday season, and this Thursday the Cass City High School band will be visiting all of the schools to give concerts for the students. After their concert in the elementary school, they will visit each classroom and demonstrate the different instruments for the students. Not only will this be a learning experience for the younger students, but it will also be a fun time for them to meet older high schoolers, which can always seem pretty exciting.

Speaking of the band, they accomplished an amazing performance at last Thursday's concert. The fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade bands joined the high school concert and jazz bands and choir for a wonderful holiday concert. Each band was featured several times throughout the evening, and there was a variety of music and talent on display.

The band has been performing at various events this holiday season, and there will be several more shows before the holidays. If you haven't witnessed them yet, be sure to call the high school office to find out when you can enjoy a presentation that is sure to get you into the holiday spirit!



CASS CITY EIGHTH grade student Andrea Zimmerman works with Cass City Head Start student Kirsten Popp, 4, Thursday as part of a Junior Achievement project aimed at supporting literacy at an early age. The class, guided by teacher Daryl Iwankovitch, presented the young students with tote bags filled with reading/scholastic aids.



## Several appear on charges

The following people appeared in Tuscola County Circuit Court last week on various criminal charges:

•Michael W. Kern, 23, Vassar, was sentenced to 12 months probation for his plea of guilty to possession of marijuana June 23 in Millington Township.

He was also ordered to pay court costs and fines totaling \$2,340.

•Ronald T. Sieradzki, 46, Cass City, was sentenced to 60 months probation and 270 days in the county jail (120 days deferred), with work release, for his plea of guilty to operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, Sept. 3 in Cass City.

He was also ordered to pay \$2,120 in costs and fines.

•Michael C. Thomas, 31, Fostoria, was sentenced to 180 days in jail for his plea of guilty to absconding or forfeiting bond June 28 in Caro.

He was also ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$520.

•Randall L. Ayers, 45, Bay City, was sentenced to 24 months probation and 90 days in jail (60 days deferred), with work release, for his plea of guilty to manufacturing 20 to 199 marijuana plants May 21 in Arbel Township.

He was also ordered to pay \$1,120 in costs and fines.

•James E. Bearinger, 50, Caro, was sentenced to 15

months to 5 years in prison for his plea of guilty to assaulting a police officer June 26 in Caro, and to being an habitual offender (3 prior felony convictions).

He was also ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$120.

•Francis L. Ratza, 48, Millington, was sentenced to 60 months probation for his plea of guilty to attempted second degree criminal sexual conduct involving a victim under the age of 13 years between August 2002 and August 2003 in Tuscola Township.

He was also ordered to pay \$1,820 in costs and fines plus restitution of \$200.

•Russell A. Powell, 20, Caro, was sentenced to 180 days in jail (170 days deferred) and 24 months probation for his conviction on 2 counts of larceny from a motor vehicle April 4 in Caro.

He was also ordered to pay \$760 in costs and fines.

•Mark A. Morrish, 30, Cass City, pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm by a felon and domestic violence Sept. 27 in Novesta Township.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered in the case and bond was continued at \$10,000. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

•Eric R. Dillon 23, Caro, pleaded guilty to breaking and entering a building with

intent to commit larceny between May 29 and June 1 in Caro and between July 4 and July 7 in Indianfields Township; and to larceny of property valued at \$1,000 to \$20,000 June 30 in Almer Township.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued at a combined \$30,000. Sentencing is to be set.

•Joshua W. Gillespie, 19, Caro, stood mute to 5 counts of retaining a financial transaction device without consent of the device holder Oct. 27 in Caro, and larceny from a vehicle Nov. 24 in Caro.

A pre-trial hearing was ordered scheduled and bond was continued at a combined \$27,000.

•Christopher P. Bolzman, 30, Port Sanilac, was convicted on 2 counts of uttering and publishing involving checks for \$50 and \$100, both drawn on Chemical Bank March 20-27.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered, bond was continued at \$50,000 and the defendant was remanded to the custody of the sheriff's department. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

•Harold Triplett, 25, Saginaw, pleaded guilty to larceny in a building Sept. 5, 2003, in Vassar.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued at \$3,500.

Sentencing is to be set.

•James M. King, 45, Mayville, pleaded guilty to domestic violence, third offense, March 19 in Watertown Township.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued at \$3,000. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

•Mary L. O'Dell, 48, Attica, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, and furnishing altered or false identification to a police officer July 30 in Cass City.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and the defendant was remanded to the department of corrections. Sentencing is to be set.

•Shaundor J. Novak, 19, Caro, pleaded guilty to second degree home invasion June 5 in Wells Township, and to carrying a concealed weapon and 4 counts of assault with a dangerous weapon June 6 in Caro.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered, bond was continued at a combined \$30,000 and the defendant was remanded to the custody of the sheriff's department. Sentencing is to be scheduled.



### Bulldog Beat

by Mary McKee

With Christmas just around the corner, a couple of events happened in the past week to help get everyone in the Christmas spirit. The first event was the holiday band concert and the second was the annual Fun Fair.

As you walked into the gym to the band concert, you saw a Christmas tree and lit decorations that were set up by the band members to get everyone in the holiday mood. There were also 16 red and white poinsettias displayed in the front of the stage, and later raffled off to some lucky winners.

The brass quartet of Josh McLaren and Jason Seibel on trumpets, Mindy Erer on the French horn, and Alec Powell on the euphonium opened up the concert. Then band Director Don Starks took the microphone. He started out by welcoming everyone and giving special recognition to all who made the concert happen.

The first to perform was the sixth grade band. They entertained the crowd with performances of "A Christmas Sketches," and "Joy to the World." Next up was the junior high band. They opened up with "My Two Front Teeth." As a surprise to the audience, Amanda Faust, and Samantha Radabaugh came out dressed as giant teeth. Alisha Kovach followed them and they all sang the song as the band played. The band then performed "Drummer's Christmas Carol," and followed it up with "A Visit From St. Nicholas."

After the junior high finished, it was time for the high school band to take the stage. After another song by the brass quartet, the band performed "Green Sleeves," and "Imani's Faith," A Kwanza Celebration.

After a short intermission, where the poinsettias that decorated the gym were raffled off, the junior high and senior high bands combined to close the night. They performed "A Renaissance Christmas," "O Tannenbaum," and "Once in Royal David's City." Along with some songs that were not so familiar, they also played some Christmas classics that everyone knows and loves, like "Have Yourself a

Merry Little Christmas," "Winter Holiday," "The Christmas Song," "Christmas Sing-a-Long," and "A Christmas Auld Lang Syne." All in all, the holiday band concert was a huge success that entertained everyone who experienced it.

Another event that occurred in the past week was the PTO sponsored Fun Fair. It is an occasion that is fun not only for kids, but for adults as well.

The Fun Fair is like a huge indoor carnival. Crafters from all over the area set up booths and sell their items. Everything is sold at the fun fair, from homemade blankets to jewelry to handmade wood furniture.

The Fun Fair also serves as a great fundraiser for organizations throughout the school. Kids come and buy tickets to play games that were created by different clubs and groups in the school. For example, the Student Council conducted a "Pie in the Face" game, and the sixth grade class had a "Frogger Extreme" game. The kids then win tickets for playing the games and trade them in to get prizes.

Food is served in the cafeteria, and prizes are constantly raffled off throughout the day. There was also a visit by Santa Claus for kids and adults alike to get their picture taken. The PTO did an amazing job putting together another great Fun Fair.

Once again, the Fun Fair and the Holiday Band Concert had a great turnout. Both events were fun for people of all ages, and everyone who attended seemed to have a good time. With each event being focused around Christmas, it helped everyone get a little bit more in the Christmas mood as the holiday approaches.

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## Christmas for kids...

LANGENBURG helps carry donated toys to the Curtis Chrysler showroom to be sorted in preparation for distribution to needy families in the area later this month.

(See story, page one)

# Cass City High Honor Roll

Cass City High School announces the second marking period honor roll.

### Grade 9

All A's: Meleah Auten, Isaiah Battel, Jessica Bessler, Evan Bushong, Ethan Damm, Andrew Deering, Rebecca Doerr, Madeline Dooley, Stephanie Healy, Trey Helwig, Kristie Karr, Adam Kranz, Thomas Parrish, Joseph Rule, Derek Weidman and Megan Woodruff.

B or better: David Acker, Christopher Binder, Ricky

Bolton, Ryan Brown, Samantha Currier, Anna Deel, Ashley Deel, Danielle Delamarter, Robert Erla, Kevin Goniwicha, Travis Hoffman, Zachary Hopper, Darrin Howard, Lauren Hudson, Devin Jamieson, Danielle Johnson, Brittany Karavas, Mark Koepf, Shane McFarland, Lauren Meek, Lacey Morrish, Alyssa Nicol, Stephanie Regnerus, Caitlyn Rickett, Bri Romstad, Brandy Rychlewski, Nicholas Smith, Jeffrey Sparks, Ashlee Spencer, Christopher Zawilinski and Jennifer Zmierski.

### Grade 10

All A's: Ryan Bidding, Jeremiah Fritz, Jennifer Hacker, Lysa Knight, Jessica Lange, Andrew Martin, Laura McComas, Jessica Pratt, Courtney Rabideau, Allyn Richards, Eric Romain, Nicholas Sattelberg, Philip Strong, Kyle Swanson and Adam Wentworth.

B or better: Rebecca Bennett, Dennis Bowen, John Brown, Alyssa Cryderman, Mirrissa Curtis, Terra Czekai, Jill Dillon, James Froede, Courtney Hacker, Jennifer Hadd, Kurt Hanby, Allison Hillaker, Lauren Howard, Stephanie Jamieson, Ryan King, Kathryn Klo, Andrew LaFave, Anthony Langlois, Sara Meeker, Brandon Miller, Thomas Mittlestat, Lindsey Montgomery, Megan O'Dell, Andrew Peruski, Ashleigh Rabideau, Ryan Ross, Bradley Severance, Kyle Sieradzki, Beth Spencer, Kari Spencer, Rebecca Sweeney, Eric Thick, Brent Weaver, Leah Whittaker and Tyler Whittaker.

### Grade 11

All A's: Libby Doerr, Ashley Hendrick, Katherine McIntosh, Steven Meeker, Philip Nahernak, Tara Powell, Chad Sparks, Lindsey Speirs, Jenna Timko and Jeffrey Wills.

B or better: Donna Bushong, Monica Cronk, Aimee Hennessey, Ivy Hiatt, Bradley Langenburg, Dean Little, Nicholas Nanney, Stephanie Nizzola, Ivan Peruski, Ashley Puterbaugh, Rebecca Putnam, Jarod Stoutenburg, Jeffrey

Stoutenburg and Shaun Thornton.

### Grade 12

All A's: Ashley Barrigar, Tasha Bryant, Chad Francis, Samantha Glaspie, Marcel Helland, Bryan Hill, Carrie Hillaker, Paul Hoelzle, Krista Homakie, Lee Hutchinson, Joshua Kilbourn, LaShae LaJoie, Luann Laming, Bethany Langlois, Joseph

McCoy, Timothy Mills, Jesse Rader, Stephanie Richards, Andrew Schinnerer, Leah Sherman, Sara Silipo, Jason Speirs, Angela Stoeckle and Jessie Tuckey.

B or better: Holly Angle, Raechel Babich, Chancy Balk, Jessica Bellew, Corey Brooks, Jerry Crandall, Allison Ellis, Jared Ferris, Caleb Hanby, Gail Hartwick, Michael Havens, Jenna

Hoffman, Jessup Hoyt, Chad Keiser, Rose Krug, Nichole McComas, Sean McFarland, James McKnight, Kayla Morrish, Delores Rabideau, Patrick Reed, Justin Sorenson, Nicholas Stoutenburg, Jeffery Tenbusch, Andrew Whittaker, Tara Whittaker, Jake Wilder, Traci Woodward and Michael Zmierski II.

## Children's musical Sunday

The Novesta Church of Christ Junior Choir will present the children's Christmas musical, "Gettin' Ready for the Miracle" Sunday, Dec. 19, at 6 p.m.

The musical is based on what happens behind the scenes at junior choir practices and what the true meaning of Christmas is. The choir consists of children K-5th grade.

For more information, call the church at (989) 872-3658.

## Library to host singing

Do you enjoy listening to Christmas music and singing carols?

If so, join the fun at Rawson Memorial Library Monday, Dec. 20, at 7 p.m. Local musician Don Greenleaf will be at the organ and Cathy Sullivan, Scott Mills and Joanne Dzielinski will lead the group singing.

Solos and duets will also be performed throughout the evening and refreshments will be served.

This event is sponsored annually by the Cass City Area Historical Society and the Friends of Rawson Memorial Library. Even if you are not a singer, come and enjoy an evening of fellowship and listening to favorite Christmas music.



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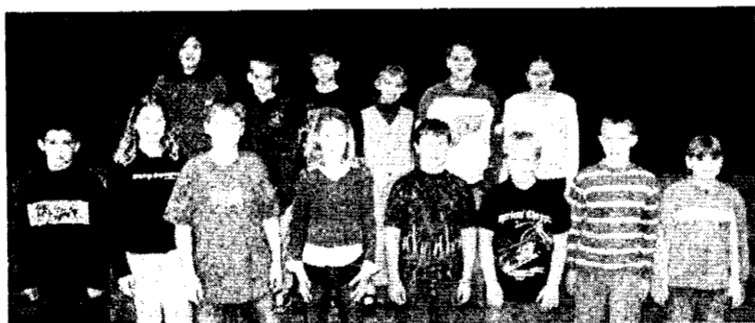
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## Cass City Middle School Student Spotlight


for the second Marking Period

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2. Good grades
3. A positive attitude
4. Regular attendance
5. Shows improvement (academic and/or behavior)




**5th Grade:** (front, l-r) Cody Anker, Tyler Boyne, Angela Braum, Rebecca Hacker, Patrick Henderson, Nick Kappen, Troy Kausch, Nicole Kelley; (back, l-r) Alyssa Lawrence, Jimmy Merchant, Zac Potrykus, Rachael Rule, Travis Schmitt, Ali Smith.



**6th Grade:** (front, l-r) Taylor Forrest, McKensie Parrish, Nick Karavas, Logan Mika, Hayley Peters; (back, l-r) Caitlin Reed, Mary Rivest, Kelsey Russell, Robbie Simpson, Dallas Woodward.



**7th Grade:** (front, l-r) Rachel Auten, Nikki Guigar, Lyle Hutchinson, Steven Rychlewski; (back, l-r) Jenna Sattelberg, Stephanie Steely, Samantha Swiderski.



**8th Grade:** (l-r) Austin Babich, Gregory Leslie, Tyler Tomlinson, Joram Tyson. Missing: Jason Sorenson.

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# Obituaries

## Isabel McCloskey

Isabel Bernice McCloskey, 89, of Cass City, died Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2004 in Covenant Medical Center Cooper Campus, Saginaw. She was born Aug. 22, 1915 in Detroit, the daughter of William and Bernice V. (Brzezinski) McCloskey. McCloskey worked for

many years as a lab technician for the Parke Davis Pharmaceutical Co. She was a member of the St. Pancratius Catholic Church. McCloskey is survived by her sisters: Winifred Doncea and Delores McCloskey, both of Cass City; and many cousins. She was preceded in death by her parents; and a brother, Gerald McCloskey.

Funeral services were held Saturday, Dec. 11, at St. Pancratius Catholic Church, with the Rev. Steve Fillion officiating.

Interment was in the St. Hedwig Cemetery, Dearborn Heights. Memorials may be made to St. Pancratius Catholic Church. Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home, Cass City.

## Meyer calls for hearing

State Rep. Tom Meyer has called a public hearing in Lansing for Tuesday to address concerns about the delay of PA 116 tax returns due to glitches in the state's new automated e-filing system.

The House Agriculture and Resource Management Committee, chaired by Meyer, was scheduled to meet Tuesday at the Anderson House Office Building in Lansing to take testimony from a certified public accountant as well as officials from the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Farmers seeking a PA 116 tax incentive for keeping their land in agriculture must file a separate tax return with the state. This year, the e-filing system that was supposed to handle the returns did not work properly. Residents have had to wait up to 8 months for their returns, instead of the normal timeframe of 4 to 8 weeks.

"Obviously, this new e-filing system has some major flaws and we've got to provide better service to local farmers," said Meyer, R-Bad Axe.

Meyer said many people also have found it difficult to get personalized help from the state because of a shortage of treasury staff. Gov. Jennifer Granholm has initiated a freeze on hiring workers, even to process the returns.

"Many people are becoming frustrated because they can't seem to find a live person in treasury to help them with questions or problems," Meyer said.

and the Rev. Gerald Meyer of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church officiating.

Interment was in the Elkland Township Cemetery, Cass City. Memorials may be made to Our Savior Lutheran Church - School Fund.

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home, Cass City.

## C. William Lovejoy

C. William "Bill" Lovejoy, 88, of Cass City, died Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2004.

He was born July 5, 1916 in Milford, the son of the late W. Scott and Mae Lovejoy. He married Alice Catherine Coe in 1945.

Lovejoy graduated with a B.A. and M.B.A. from the University of Michigan. He worked for 34 years for the General Motors Proving Grounds in Milford, where he retired as administrator of operations and budgets. Lovejoy served on the Milford Village Council and the Huron Valley Schools Board of Education. He belonged to the Milford Rotary Club. Lovejoy served for 12 years on the Cass City Library Board, and was a board member of the Village Bach Festival. He was an active member of the Presbyterian Church, serving in many positions of leadership in Milford and Cass City.

Lovejoy is survived by his wife, Alice; a son, David (Rita) Lovejoy of Traverse City; a daughter, Kay Lovejoy (Randy Piebenga) of Lansing; 4 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; a sister, Barbara (Jim) Smith of Fenton; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and 2 brothers: Scotty and Paul Lovejoy. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 18, at the First Presbyterian Church, Cass City, with the Rev. David Blackburn officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, Cass City, and Rawson Memorial Library, Cass City. Arrangements were made by Thabet Funeral Home, Cass City.

# "Harvest" totals 17 tons of food

The 2004 Michigan Farm Bureau Harvest Gathering collected a whopping 17 tons of food — nearly triple last year's total — to ensure that guests at Michigan's Ronald McDonald Houses have plenty to eat during as well as after their stays.

The total includes 385 pounds collected in Tuscola County, 615 pounds in Huron County and 315 pounds in Sanilac County.

The third annual food drive culminated at the recent Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, held in Acme near Traverse City. There, county Farm Bureaus and staff donated 34,143 pounds of canned goods, pasta and

other non-perishable food products to the Ronald McDonald House organization. Located near major hospitals, Ronald McDonald Houses provide families whose children are hospitalized for extended periods reasonable alternatives to saying at expensive hotels and a "home away from home." Michigan Ronald McDonald Houses are located in Lansing, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids and Detroit.

The Harvest Gathering food drive is organized by the Michigan Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Department and grows exponentially each year, said Deb Schmucker, Promotion and Education Department manager.

"Three years ago the state Promotion and Education Committee decided to undertake the Harvest Gathering project because committee members were interested in

helping the community and thought providing food harvested by the world's farmers was the best way to help others," Schmucker said. "Since then, support for the program has grown yearly.

County Farm Bureaus have become more and more innovative in their collection activities, and volunteers have really taken ownership and pride in outdoing the previous year's work."

## Wanted: seniors to foster cats

The Cass River Pet FriendZ, an area animal rescue and adoption organization, has recently started a new cat fostering program - "Older Cats for Older People".

The idea is to allow senior citizens to foster an older cat, while Cass River Pet FriendZ picks up the expense for any necessary veterinary care.

All cats are altered, up-to-date on vaccinations, and tested for feline leukemia.

Patricia Trisch, head of public relations and the Cat Fostering Program stated, "Sometimes it's a little harder to adopt an older cat, but all a person has to do is provide them with a little love and care. Utilizing orphaned elderly cats, with lots of lap-sitting experience, we can provide foster companion cats to seniors living in the community."

Cass River Pet FriendZ will provide an initial food supply and a litter box with starter litter, and will periodically check on the cat's health. In the event that the animal's caregiver becomes ill or is hospitalized, Cass River Pet FriendZ will provide free boarding services and will also take the cat back if the caregiver can no longer care for it.

Trisch said that an "older cat" is usually considered to be at least 7 years old. This would only be around 46-years-old in human years.

She currently has a 7-year-old, an 8-year-old, a 9-year-old, a 10-year-old and a 12-year-old cat that qualify for the fostering program. Many cats live as long as 20 years.

Foster cats are available to qualified Tuscola County residents over the age of 62.

For more information, contact Trisch at (989) 673-7141.

## Letters to the editor

### Christmas concert wonderful

Re: Christmas Concert

WOW! Too bad the whole village couldn't attend. On the downside, the seats were very uncomfortable. We hope to attend every concert and just maybe we could have a building suitable for such talent (with seats to match). You were great! God bless Cass City!

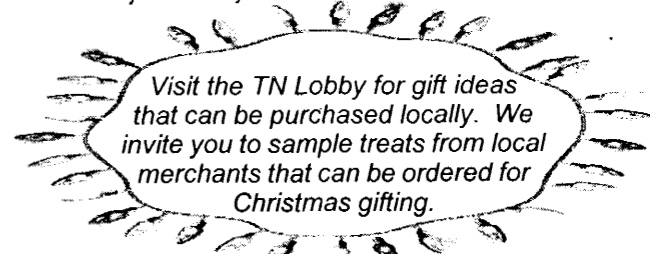
Very truly yours,  
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# Cass City's Christmas in the Village

**Visit with Santa**  
at the Municipal building  
11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Dec. 11 & 18  
(Santa's visits are made possible by Angel's Hair Studio)  
"Take Your Own Pictures"

**Free Saturday Matinee**  
at the Cass Theatre  
2 p.m.  
12 and under FREE  
Teens & adults free with Saturday shopping sales slip  
This week's movie is sponsored by  
**Cass City Gavel Club**

**ENTER TO WIN**  
(in businesses around town)  
**KEYBOARD PACKAGE**  
Last Drawing  
December 18  
The Cass City Chamber of Commerce invites you to visit all of the local businesses and enter often to win one of these great prizes.



### Home & Business Decorating Challenge

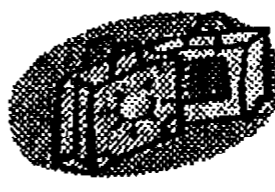
Light up Cass City - you could be surprised with Detroit Edison electric certificates, Cass City Cash or free Chamber business member advertising in Chamber Chat.

**Judges will be out Friday Evening, December 17, 6-10 p.m.**



### Rotary Christmas for Kids Toy Collection

Look For Drop Boxes Around town  
Last date to donate toys will be December 17



### Help Light Up Cass City

Luminary Kits for sale at Chamber office  
12 bags, candles & sand - just \$5.00



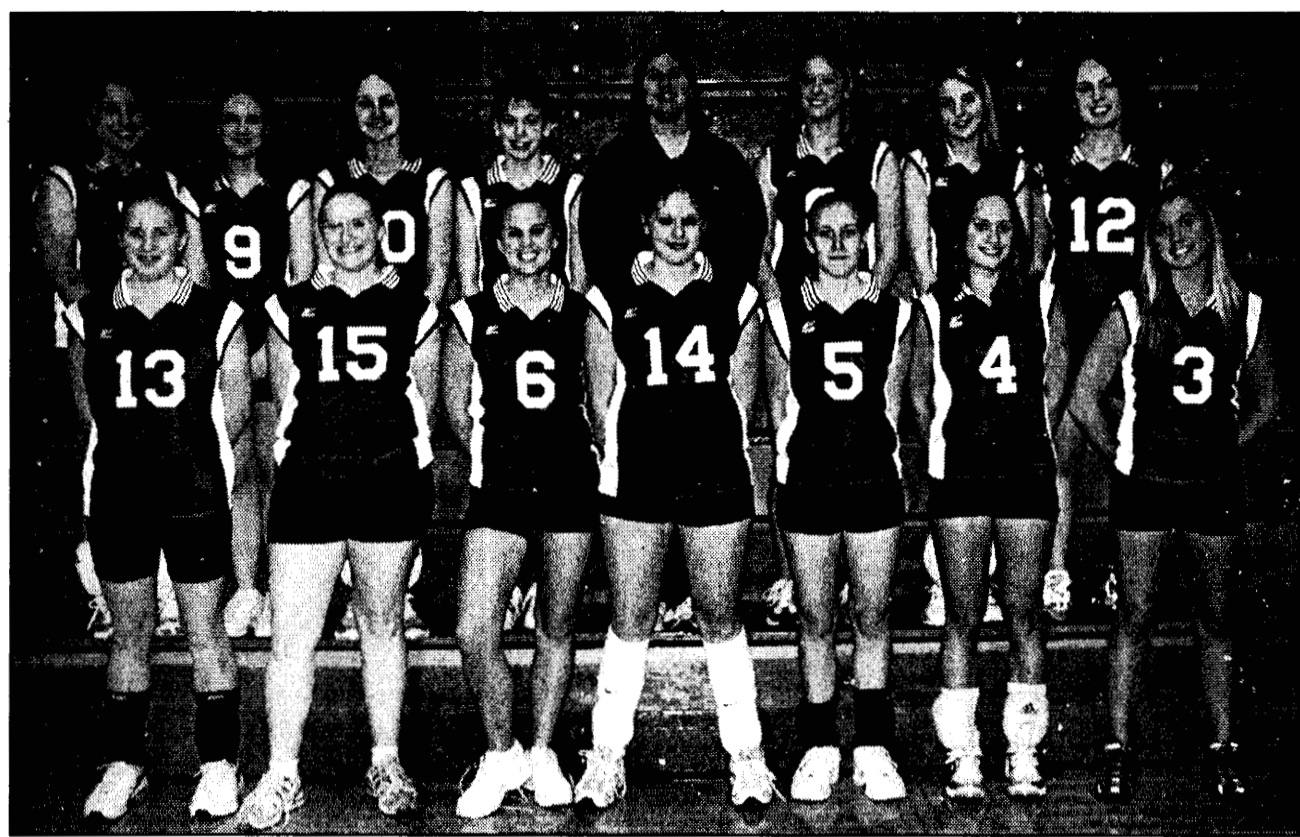
### Christmas Gift Display

at Thumb National Bank  
Great gift and food ideas from your local merchants

### Special Belated Thanks to...

Kris Repshinka, Al Dadacki and Al Patrick for working on the Bean Soup and Hot Chocolate for the "Extravaganza"

This ad has been sponsored by:  
Cass City Chamber of Commerce,  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and the Cass City DDA/EDC.



THE CASS CITY 2004-05 junior varsity volleyball team members are: (front, l-r) Heather Moore, Chelsea McCallum, Megen O'Dell, Beth Ann Spencer, Ashleigh Rabiçeau, Courtney Rabiçeau, Lauren Dillon (back, l-r) Jill Dillon, Andrea Thane, Allie Lively, April Pica, coach Sally Pergande, Madeline Dooley, Danielle Hartel, Lana Silipo.



THE CASS CITY 2004-05 freshmen volleyball team members are: (front, l-r) Amanda Stevens, Heather Baker, Stephanie Regnerus (middle, l-r) Anna Deel, Kristie Karr, Becca Doerr, Jenny Zmierski (back, l-r) coach Amy Cuthrell, Megan Dorland, Brittany Karavas, Erica Darr, Caitlyn Rickett, Alica Osentoski, Brandy Rychlewski.

## Red Hawk grapplers finish 5th at Marlette Invitational

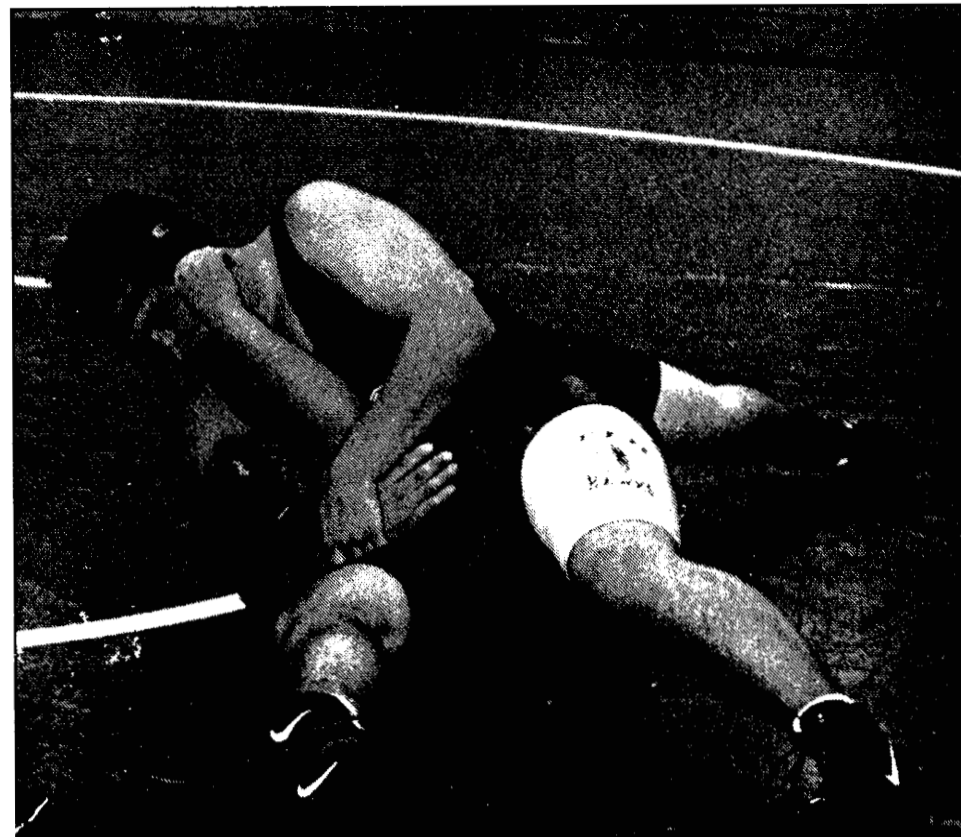
Last week wasn't a good one for the Cass City Red Hawk wrestlers. They lost a double dual meet Wednesday at Imlay City, 46-27, and to host Capac, 50-30. Just 2 Hawks posted 2 wins. Lee Hutchinson (275) and Andrew Peruski (103) chalked up the wins.

Coach Don Markel said that cold and flu took its toll on the team with several wrestlers missing or performing at less than 100 percent. "Nonetheless we are still inconsistent in the way we are wrestling. We have a lot of work to do to get the team wrestling at a high caliber."

Saturday the Hawks were in the annual Marlette Invitational. Cass City placed 5th in the 12-team tournament, won by North Branch with a score of 156.5. Other teams finished in the following order: Imlay City, 144; Marlette, 124.5; Memphis, 117; Cass City, 108; USA, 105; Almont, 87; Brown City, 67.5; Flint Beecher, 61.5; Lakers, 57; Burton Bentley, 41; Sandusky, 25.

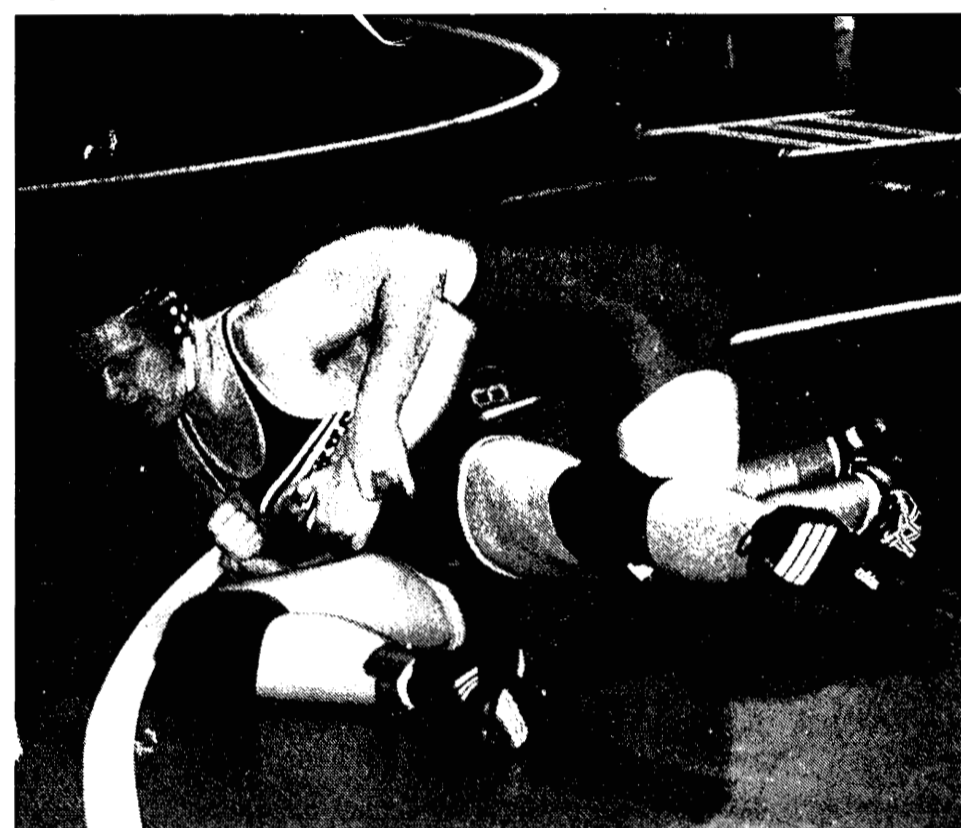
Placing and earning medals for Cass City were Kyle Sieradzki, 145, 2nd; Kyle Reif, 130, 2nd; Marcel Helland, 119, 3rd; Lee Hutchinson, 275, 4th; Wes Becker, 171, 4th.

A junior varsity tournament was held at Marlette, also on Saturday, and the Hawks did well with all 13 participants earning medals.



**WORKING HARD!**

CASS CITY wrestled its way to a 5th place finish Saturday at the Marlette Invitational. Helping the Hawk cause on the day are Jason James (top) and Andrew Klco.



## Cass City Bowling Leagues

### Thursday Nite Trio as of Dec. 9

Jebco Consulting	13
United Building Centers	11
Martin Electric	9
Schmaltz Construction	9
Doerr Landscaping	8
Dairy Queen Brazier-Caro	6
Mycogen Seeds	6

Individual High Games & Series: G. Robinson 211 (614); T. Summers 218 (589); S. Osentoski 220 (581); J. Baker 215; L. Summers 213; O. Beecher 212; W. Laming 210.

Team High Game & Series: United Building Centers 672; Jebco Consulting (1848).

### Merchanettes as of Dec. 9

All Season Video	26
Charlie's Angels	22

Gagetown Cutting Corners	19
Osentoski Realty/Auct.	16
FBI Gals	15
Thumb Octagon Barn	15
Crowley Chiropractic	14
Cablettes	13

Individual High Games & Series: D. Williams 202 (482); C. Brown 198; J. Morell 192 (459); P. Bauer 191-189 (543); D. Sweeney 185 (506); C. Wright 185; L. Hanson 180 (492); G. Wallace 180; J. Koch 175; J. Krol (467); S. Buschlen (459).

Split Conversions: L. Riddle 6-7, 4-10; J. Dickinson 6-7; C. Davidson 5-7.

Team High Game: Thumb Octagon Barn, 889.

Team High Series: Cablettes, 2401.

### Merchants as of Dec. 8

Charmont Lanes	20
Lee Morgan Painting	14
Curtis Chrysler	13
Patrick's Flooring	9

Individual High Games & Series: K. Soper 196-188-212 (596); J. Krol 234-201 (586); T. Lis 206-203 (576).

Special Recognition: K Soper 152 pins over on series.

Thanks for calling 872-2010 with feature story ideas

# OPEN HOUSE



Dr. Liberata Pantig

Hills & Dales General Hospital is having an Open House to welcome Dr. Liberata Pantig to the Cass City Community

Please join us at  
Cass City Internal Medicine and Family Practice  
**Wed., December 22**  
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
6190 Hospital Drive, Suite 106  
Refreshments will be served

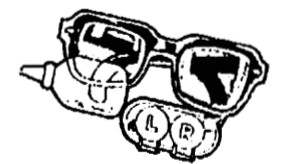
If you have any questions regarding the Open House, please contact Ashley Patrick at 872-5476, ext. 371

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**KINGSTON DAISY Troop 878 has placed 6 Mitten Tree boxes in their community.** The boxes are located at Independent Bank, Kal's Restaurant, Suzie Q's, Beagio's Pizzeria, Kingston Elementary School and the Kingston Insurance Agency. Troop members are (front row, from left) Elizabeth Scott, Jade DeLong, Cira Skinner, Madison Hart, (back row, left) Leader Melissa DeLong, Alexa Goss and Allison DeLong.

## During 85th annual meet F.B. voices opposition to water permitting

Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) policy-makers expressed their strong opposition to water use permitting during the MFB 85th Annual Meeting in Acme.

Concluding Friday, MFB members spent the better part of the week adopting policies on state and national issues that will guide the organization in 2005.

Through the policy process, delegates were quick to recognize the crucial importance of water as a resource, adopting policy stating: "The Great Lakes Basin represents the largest reserve of fresh water in the world. It is a unique resource that should be utilized in a responsible manner and protected for future generations and the future of Michigan agriculture."

At the same time, delegates gave considerable attention to agriculture's many concerns regarding water use.

New language inserted into the organization's existing water use policy resolved to oppose any laws that include water use permitting if they do not provide that "no fees will ever be charged" for agricultural water use, among other provisions.

Delegates also adopted policy that calls for "credible scientific research" for all water use policies. However, they expressed concern over increasing calls for permitting that many feel will harm producers' abilities to operate their farms.

"Consumptive use or

simple withdrawal values do not accurately describe agricultural water use," the policy says. "Michigan Farm Bureau will not accept a water management system that does not balance efficient agricultural water use with the amount of water recovered for groundwater recharge from rain falling on farmland."

"Management and regulation of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin does not require water use permitting. Burdensome regulation is not necessary to protect the Great Lakes and could challenge the competitiveness of Michigan farms."

In other action, delegates voted to:

- \* Support the removal of abandoned and/or neglected fruit orchards and vineyards because they "harbor diseases and insects."
- \* Increase penalties for "individuals who destroy or contaminate agricultural property with the intent to create terror."

- \* Encourage "the expansion of junior high/middle school and high school agriscience and natural resources education programs and FFA chapters as vital tools for educating young people" to "enable the future leaders of agriculture to obtain foundational knowledge that will help shape their careers and ultimately promote the sustainability of the agriculture industry."

- \* Support MFB's "active role to involve members in air

quality education." This new organizational policy urges education for livestock producers regarding the implementation of an Environmental Protection Agency "safe harbor agreement" that provides them with "protection from legal liabilities associated with air emission issues in exchange for a one-time fine and an industry-financed research study to gather air emissions data specific to the industry's production and manure management systems."

- \* Support "the development of research and testing that will enhance the adoption of biotechnology products and processes, and address consumer safety and environmental concerns."

- \* Support "the creation and effective implementation of both temporary and permanent farmland protection tools."

- \* Support the delisting of the Eastern Timber Wolf as an endangered species. MFB members also expressed concern "about the lack of large animal practitioners in the area of veterinary medicine" and adopted policy supporting measures and incentives to recruit future veterinarians.

In addition, they adopted amended policy on agricultural terrorism that states there is a "fine line between being over-reactive and creating unnecessary regulation versus being acutely aware of agriculture's vulnerability." As such, the policy opposes "additional regulation without consultation of the agricultural community and verification that there is a real safety concern or risk."



**THUMB AREA Farm Bureau representatives accepted county Star Awards from Michigan Farm Bureau President Wayne H. Wood during the Farm Bureau annual meeting in Acme.** Pictured are (from the top) Myron Ortner of Tuscola County, Gary Krug of Huron County and Brian Williams of Sanilac County. The awards recognize county program excellence throughout the year.

## Employees raise cash for others

Independent Bank offices throughout the state of Michigan recently raised over \$10,000 for Cystic Fibrosis, topping last year's total of \$2,736.00. The staff at the Caro office topped the effort by raising \$3,351.

"We are proud of all of our offices and their commitment to raising funds for charities throughout the year," said Ron Long, president & CEO of Independent Bank East Michigan. "We commend the team at the Caro office. What an outstanding achievement on behalf of an important cause."

## County MSU Extension offers gardener class

The Tuscola County MSU Extension office in Caro is offering a 12-week Master Gardener course beginning Jan. 11.

The classes will be held at Davenport University in Caro. The course will cover an orientation of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program and the MSU Extension Office, Plant Science, Soils for Plant Growth, Flower Gardening, Lawn Care, Vegetable Culture, Small Fruit Culture, Tree Fruit Culture, Woody Ornamentals, Integrated Pest Management, Indoor Plants, and Household Pests.

In addition to the educational segment, participants have to donate volunteer hours. The program requires annual re-certification, which entails additional education credits and more volunteer hours.

Criminal history background checks are required for all participants as volunteers may work with vulnerable populations. The policy statement for the program has a Standards of Behavior section that every Master Gardener must sign and uphold.

The program is available to all citizens and is designed to develop a pool of willing volunteers trained in horticulture. The objective is to increase appreciation for the use of plants and the knowledge to successfully grow them in an environmentally

sound fashion. It is dedicated to the preservation and enrichment of life.

Those desiring to take the class need a strong interest in horticulture and home gardening. They would need to be available to take the classes and to put in the necessary volunteer time. Ability to communicate and share knowledge diplomatically is also essential. The volunteers need to be willing to support MSU Extension staff in providing consumer horticulture information.

Diverse projects are available so that participants have a variety of choices for fulfilling their volunteer obligations.

It is also the responsibility of participants to document his or her volunteer time in a report to the Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Certificates and name badges are awarded when criteria have been met. At least half of the volunteer hours should consist of MSU-directed projects and the other half should be in activities meaningful to the participant.

Oct. 31 is the cut-off date for applications that will be processed for the cost of the total course. After that, the cost increases. There are only a limited number allowed in the class.

More information is available by calling the extension office at (989) 672-3870.

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