



MERRY CHRISTMAS

CASS CITY CHRONICLE

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School's daycare director updates officials Monday

by Tom Montgomery
Editor

The Cass City Public Schools Daycare Program is continuing to operate smoothly under the direction of Wendy Guinther, who was appointed to her current position in late August.

Guinther offered members of the Cass City Board of Education an update during a brief monthly meeting Monday night, saying the program currently has four infants, 13 toddlers and 35 pre-school children enrolled, with Please turn to page 4.

Anonymous Huron County donations now top \$6,600

by Tom Montgomery
Editor

As it did last year, the generosity of a few has prompted others to join in an effort to make the holidays a little brighter for some Huron County residents.

Huron County Sheriff Kelly J. Hanson recently announced that some anonymous donors had come forward with money and requested that the sheriff's department distribute the gifts in cash and gift certificates, at its discretion, to individuals or families that are having a hard time making ends Please turn to page 10.



CASS CITY Rotary Club members (from left) Emily Phillips, Mary Cunningham and Colleen Langenburg fill bags filled with toys and clothing at the Curtis Chrysler dealership in Cass City, where the club distributed the gifts to more than 90 area families Friday in conjunction with this year's Christmas for Kids project.



BETTE BERRY (from left) Georgia Hammett, Shirley Strickland and Juliet Patterson are all part of the 48-member Hills and Dales General Hospital Auxiliary, whose members organize various fundraisers that contribute thousands of dollars worth of equipment to the hospital annually. The group operates the hospital gift shop and donates countless volunteer hours each year.

Small group, BIG IMPACT

Hospital auxiliary donates thousands of dollars, hours

by Tom Montgomery
Editor

Ask Hills and Dales General Hospital officials about the hospital's auxiliary, and chances are good they'll describe it as a small group that has made a big impact.

They'll tell you the auxiliary membership has been faithful and diligent over the years, contributing countless volunteer hours and running a host of fundraisers, which combined have enabled the organization to contribute thousands of dollars worth of equipment — ranging from blanket warmers to specialized medical furniture to automatic sliding doors — to the local hos- Please turn to page 6.

Gift campaign serves 184 kids

by Tom Montgomery
Editor

Members of the Cass City Rotary Club, bolstered by generous donations of toys and cash from the community and volunteers ready to lend a hand, completed the club's 17th annual Christmas for Kids project with the distribution of bags filled with clothing, toys, books and games to area families Friday.

Emily Phillips, in her second year as chairman of the toy collection campaign for the local Rotary Club,

reported 91 families — 184 kids in all — were served during this year's effort.

The figures represent an increase from the 2014 Christmas for Kids project, which served 84 families, including 186 youngsters and teens.

"I think things went really well this year," commented Phillips, who credited the Rotary Club's past Christmas for Kids leadership, in part, for that success. "We have quite a good system in place to meet the needs of 184 children," she added.

The annual effort targets families residing in the Cass City School

District who are struggling financially. Most of the referrals are provided by the Tuscola County Family Independence Agency and local school officials.

Phillips pointed out the campaign owes its ability to meet all of the needs to a variety of sources, especially all of those individuals and businesses who contribute to the cause.

"Donations were up this year. We still had toys contributed, but cash donations were up," she said, noting Rawson Memorial District Library is among the faithful contributors of Please turn to page 6.

Michigan Sugar: '15 record year for beets, yields

Michigan Sugar Company officials recently announced this year's harvest has wrapped up and a record crop was delivered by sugar beet farmers across the region.

Total production during the 2015 growing season topped five million tons of Michigan-made sugar beets, with yields also setting a new record at 31.6 tons per acre.

"A record harvest means a record processing campaign, and Michigan Sugar is on track this year to get the job done," said Mark Flegenheimer, CEO of Michigan Sugar. "We're laser focused on processing this year's harvest, and we're proud of the economic benefits the harvest creates every year in the communities in which we are located."

Michigan's annual sugar beet harvest is processed at four Michigan Sugar facilities located across the Thumb. Processing begins in the fall and runs through the following spring. At every Michigan Sugar facility, hiring and activity ramp up during harvest and processing.

Annually, during the peak of harvest and processing, Michigan Sugar will employ more than 2,300 full- and part-time workers, with more than 1,100 employed at its flagship facility in Bay City alone.

"Every year, we ramp up hiring of local workers to receive the crop, process, package and ship sugar," said Ray Van Driessche, director of community and government relations for Michigan Sugar. "A stronger harvest means a stronger processing campaign, which allows our company to continue to invest, Please turn to page 6.



DANIELLE LAMING'S art students at Cass City Junior-Senior High School are annual contributors to the Chronicle's Christmas edition, and this year's artwork submissions were outstanding. Above, Alexis Mazure, a tenth grade student, created a colored reindeer. Readers will find more student artwork on pages 11 through 16 and 20.

Inside This Week

- Owen-Gage School officials honor their "students of the month" **Page 2**
- Some Thumb students in hot water over pot **Page 4**
- A few Christmas wishes on my list this year. **Reporter's Notebook, page 5**

Wright nets 40 points in Owen-Gage victory

The Owen-Gage boys' basketball team will hit Mackinac Island with a perfect 3-0 record.

After defeating Flint Michigan School for the Deaf in Owendale last Wednesday, Coach Brian Wright and his undefeated Bulldogs were to have played Monday on the Lake Huron Island, before traveling to Kalkaska on Tuesday to face Northport.

Against the visiting Tartars, Owen-Gage senior Jacob Wright put on a show for the home team fans. Wright led the hosts to a 63-39 victory with an array of shots en route to recording 40 points.

Wright poured in 20 points in the opening half to help Owen-Gage to a slim 31-27 edge at the intermission. Wright would match his first half point total after the break that proved fatal for the visitors, but his impressive outburst isn't what caught the eye of Coach Wright.

"We had a nice defensive game,"

he said.

Wright also chipped in 16 rebounds, while Dan Good finished with seven points and 13 rebounds. Kaleb Jones led Flint MSD with 20 markers.

Also last week, Owen-Gage clipped Burton Faith High School on Monday.

The Bulldogs started quickly and led 17-2 after the opening 8 minutes and increased the margin to 24-6 at the half point.

Owen-Gage outscored Burton 35-28 in the final half to produce the 59-34 decision.

David Binder, Dan Good and Wright all recorded double-doubles for the winners. Binder and Wright had identical numbers that included 17 points and 10 rebounds. Good finished with 10 tallies and a dozen rebounds.

"Everyone had a chance for some good minutes," said Wright.



THE CASS CITY 2015-16 girls' junior varsity basketball team members are: (front, l-r) Dakota Cook, Kacey Haire, Layna Mathewson, Jalene Krol (back) Brianna Mester, Kelly Ziegler, Katie Autry and DeeDee Haley. The Lady Hawks are coached by Dave Weiler.



BIG BODY BUCK. Dustin Spencer, Cass City 14-year-old, shot this nice 7-point buck on Dec. 18 in Tuscola County. The trophy was Spencer's second 7-pointer of the 2015 season and fourth of his short hunting career.

Schneeberger's ATHLETE of the WEEK

Schneeberger's choice for this week's "Athlete of the Week" award goes to Seth Osentoski.

The Cass City grappler has started his junior season without missing a beat after collecting Greater Thumb Conference all-conference first team honors in 2015.

Osentoski went undefeated over the weekend at the Cross-Lex Team Tourney to lead the Red Hawks to a third place finish with a 5-0 mark in the 135-pound weight class.

Also last week, Osentoski was a double winner in conference play against Greater Thumb Conference newcomers Mayville and Ubly.

Seth is the son of Daniell and Chris Osentoski.



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THREE MORE anonymous donors have come forward with \$2,200 in cash gifts to be distributed to individuals and families in Huron County who are having a difficult time making ends meet, according to Sheriff Kelly J. Hanson, who said the gifts to-date exceed last year's total by \$1,600 so far.

Anonymous donors give \$6,600 in Huron County

Continued from page one.

meet or have been set back due to some type of circumstance this past year.

The same sort of anonymous gift-giving took place last year and, as was true in 2014, residents are still approaching the sheriff's department with additional money to distribute to those in need.

"Last year's effort was very much appreciated and was displayed in the numerous thank-you cards and messages that I received from the many who we reached out to. Some...may recall there were five families last year that dropped off a total of fifty \$100 bills (\$5,000)," said Hanson, who earlier this month announced that seven families had dropped off a combined total of \$4,400.

"Since the original (announcement) last Friday (Dec. 11), three more families have come in with another \$2,200, making the grand total \$6,600," the sheriff reported last week. "This exceeds last year's contribution total."

Members of the county's law enforcement community along with local clergy, school officials and community leaders are lending a hand by helping the sheriff's department select recipients for the gifts based on need, according to the sheriff, who noted deputies have already started delivering Christmas cards containing a \$100 bill or a gift certificate equivalent to the recipients.

"As I said before, we're very proud of those who are coming forward, and we are doing our best to make sure their gifts will be properly utilized by deserving families," Hanson said. "These acts of kindness certainly say a lot about the county we live in."



OWEN-GAGE SCHOOL students and staff continued a holiday tradition this year by hosting its Santa's Workshop for elementary students to buy gifts for their families. "Every item is donated to the school and all the proceeds are used towards field trips for the students," said Mary Ann Minkler, Owen-Gage administrative assistant. "The children are all excited and happy to buy the perfect item for their loved ones," she added. "High school students and parents volunteered to help them pick things out and wrap them." The district also recently hosted its annual Christmas concert.



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