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CASS CITY CHRONICLE

Complete coverage of the Cass City community and surrounding areas since 1899

VOLUME 114, NUMBER 41

CASS CITY, MICHIGAN - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020

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Council approves tax break for firm, new budget

by **Clarke Haire**
Publisher

A string of four public hearings kicked off Monday night's virtual Cass City Village Council meeting, laying the groundwork for tax abatements for a local manufacturing business and approval of the village's 2021 millage rate and operating budget.

The first public hearing on the evening called for the creation a Plant Rehabilitation District for Mi-Tech Tooling, Inc., Cass City, a family-owned company founded in 2004 by current president, Joseph Langenburg.

The move enables the manufacturer of carbide inserts, currently located at 6215 Garfield Ave., to qualify for an Industrial Facilities

Exemption Certificate, which will provide tax savings on its new, soon-to-be company headquarters inside the former TI Automotive building, 4260 Doerr Rd., Cass City — just west of the present location. Company officials reported they have been working to purchase the TI Automotive building for two years and finally have a purchase agreement signed.

"Mi-Tech Tooling, Inc., has grown out of our current facility," says company representative Colleen Langenburg, who noted the building was purchased in 2012.

The new location is 20,000 square feet — twice the size of the company's current building, according to Colleen Langenburg, who said "there are many things

that we need to do to the building to get it ready for our needs."

The biggest projects on tap involve the filtration system and air conditioning, which alone total roughly \$275,000, while total building upgrades are estimated at \$400,000 and include updating the electrical and lighting systems, a new phone system, new bath-
Please turn to page 10.

Commissioners balk at business fines for violating Covid rules

by **Mary Drier**
For the Chronicle

For nearly three hours during two meetings last week, Tuscola County commissioners reviewed and debated the Tuscola County Health Department's authority related to COVID-19 restrictions, and the possibility of making funding changes to the department.

Commissioner Dan Grimshaw lead the charge of criticism over COVID-19 restrictions imposed by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) on small businesses, questioning the state's authority as well as the local health department's role.

Ann Hepfer, health officer for both the Tuscola and Huron county health departments, fielded a myriad of questions from the commissioner.

It's Grimshaw's contention that the MDHHS and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer don't have the authority to impose restrictions on business operations.

The courts earlier this year ruled that Gov. Gretchen Whitmer didn't have the authority to issue executive orders enforcing restrictions related to the pandemic. But with the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths increasing daily, the MDHHS issued similar orders, under the public health code, placing restrictions on some businesses as well as schools in an effort to try to control the spread of the virus.

"Orders are not law. What is being done is not in the constitution, or laws from Legislature," Grimshaw said.

The MDHHS can levy fines of up to \$1,000 per day for health code violations.

Grimshaw referred to the restrictions and fines as a sword hanging over the heads of business owners.

"If they violate the health department, they are going to be assessed \$1,000 a day for trying to make living. We need to take away that sword," said Grimshaw, who recommended changing the fine from \$1,000 to \$1.

To-date, no businesses in Tuscola County have been fined \$1,000, and it is the state that imposes and sets fees — not the local health department.

"I think we are trying to fix a problem that has not happened. No one in the county has been fined \$1,000, and if we take fines away it would not just impact COVID; it would impact other public health services," Commissioner Mark Jensen pointed out. "By messing with the fine structure, you are going to have people doing things we don't want done to our food and our health.

"We have to let our department heads run their departments."

Although commissioners cannot directly control the county's health
Please turn to page 10.

Vaccine on the way as virus takes heavy toll

by **Tom Montgomery**
Editor

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the United States' first COVID-19 vaccine via an emergency use authorization Friday, triggering the first shipment of nearly three million doses to sites across the country.

The initial shipment, including doses earmarked for Michigan — roughly 84,000 doses — will go to the highest priority recipients, including front-line health care workers, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

The news came during a week in which the number of people in the United States who have died from COVID-19 — more than 291,000 — exceeded the number of Amer-
Please turn to page 8.



JOHN HUNTER (left), executive director of the Tuscola County Community Foundation, presents a check for \$3,148 to Cass City Deputy Police Chief Jim Freeman Friday. The local police department was awarded a grant through the William A. and Ruth Janks Fund to assist the department with the purchase and installation of an in-car video system.

Fall foundation grants top \$90,000

by **Tom Montgomery**
Editor

Area local law enforcement agencies and a Cass City youth athletic club are among those sharing in more than \$90,000 in grant funding recently awarded through the Tuscola County Community Foundation (TCCF).

John Hunter, TCCF executive director, last week announced the list of fall 2020 grant recipients.

"We were sorry that we could not host an awards ceremony due to the pandemic conditions," Hunter

said. "A total of \$94,432 has been awarded to the various non-profit projects."

The following grants were approved:

William A. and Ruth Janks Fund — \$4,607 to the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department (to purchase two ballistic shields for road patrol); \$2,346 to the Tuscola Technology Center (to purchase a track burner for the welding program); \$3,148 to the Cass City Police Department (for an in-car video system); \$14,700 to the Caro Area District Library (to create an educational and recreational "story walk"); \$3,000 to the Good Samaritan Fund of Tuscola County Churches (to provide emergency food, utilities, transportation and medical assistance); \$2,000 to the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn (to provide a tool box of supplies); \$1,230 to the Tuscola Intermediate School District — Pioneer Work and Learn

Center (to purchase eight folding tables and a storage/transportation cart); \$6,000 to the Great Start Tuscola Imagination Library (to purchase books given away free to county children from birth to age five); \$4,064 to the Tuscola Technology Center (to purchase insulated food and beverage carriers and musical instruments); and \$9,500 to the Caro Fire Fighters Association (to purchase four rescue stabilizers four rescue jacks and a rescue rope).

Claude and Etta Andrews Fund — \$1,000 to Camp Pine Acres, Inc. (to purchase 10 storm windows); \$3,000 to the Great Start Tuscola Imagination Library (to purchase children's books); \$6,436 to The Fowler Center (to purchase four new automated external defibrillators); and \$4,495 to the Tuscola Technology Center (to purchase a MILO Advanced Training System/Simulator).
Please turn to page 8.



THE HONORABLE Amy Grace Gierhart (left), chief Tuscola County judge, administers the oath of office to Sheriff Glen Skrent Friday in front of the courthouse in Caro. Also pictured above (standing on steps) is Tuscola County Clerk Jodi Fetting. (See story, page 4.)

Promise kept

Group set to roll out education savings accounts for local pupils

by **Tom Montgomery**
Editor

A fledgling program designed to help Cass City students pay for their post-high school training/educations has felt its share of impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the area of planned fundraisers. However, organizers are gearing up to initiate the first stage of their promise to make a difference in the educational futures of all local students.

"The 'Red Hawk Nest Egg' program of the Cass City PROMISE is on track to roll out in February 2021. Following the formal student count in mid-February, all full-time Cass City Public Schools students, grades kindergarten through twelfth, will begin a savings account to be used for postsecondary — after high school — educational endeavors; college, trade school, etc.," said Janet Richards, secretary of the Cass City
Please turn to page 12.

Owen-Gage officials announce December students of month

The focus for Owen-Gage's students of the month for December is being a "Cooperative, Collaborative Worker". A student who is a cooperative, collaborative worker communicates without bias, accepts and involves all members of a group, and is able to function as a leader and/or a follower. They also can move effectively from one group to another and demonstrate loyalty and trust

in a group. The following students have been chosen: Charli Youngblood, second grade (elementary level), daughter of Mark and Dannie Johnson, Natalie Wood, eighth grade (junior high level), daughter of Brandon and Kathleen Wood, Isaac Miller, ninth grade (high school level), son of Christopher and Melissa Miller and Jameson McKnight, twelfth grade (senior student), son of Todd and Rebecca McKnight.

member of the 3.0 Honors Club. He has been a member of the Robotics team each year. As a sophomore, McKnight represented his class as a snowball court member. He has been a member of the Huron County's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) since his sophomore year. As a senior, he serves as the yearbook editor in which he has been a member of each year. McKnight has attended the Huron Area Technical Center the past two years where he has been enrolled in the mechanical/architecture, engineering and design (M.A.E.D) program.



Charli Youngblood

Special recognition goes to the "Senior Student of the Month", Jameson McKnight. McKnight participated in basketball and golf all four years of high school and was a member of the Cross-Country team this year. He has also been a member of the band each year, in which he plays the trombone.

As a sophomore, McKnight was inducted into the National Honor Society. He currently serves as the chapter's vice-president. McKnight has been on the honor roll each marking period throughout high school and therefore is a

McKnight has been an employee at Ace Hardware since he turned 16 years of age. He has been involved in his church's activities, such as playing the guitar for the Worship Team. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting and fishing.

McKnight will be making the decision to attend either Lake Superior State University or Michigan Tech next fall to earn a degree in mechanical engineering with a focus on robotics and automation.



Natalie Wood



Isaac Miller



Jameson McKnight

Owen-Gage Schools announce first marking period honor roll students

3rd Grade:
Chloe Forman*
Aaron Fritz
Cassilynn Hux
Brooklynn Mozden
Genavieve Rabun
Jazzmine Renn*
Kelson Smith*

Madalyn Rabun

6th Grade:
Jessica Bowers*
Wynter Brinkman*
Hunter Hoppe*
Rylin LaCroix
Mya McCreedy*
Faith Morrish
Jessie Rolston
Ava Sheufelt

Isaac Miller
Karlle Morrish
Alesia Oswalt
Hannah Wood*

10th Grade:
Rian Chatfield
Dagon LaCroix
Kevin Lopez
Erin Morrish
Emily Schultz*

4th Grade:
Derek Bowers
Axton Hellebuyck
Brotey Hewitt*
Autumn Hoppe
StarAnn Miller
Tianna Morrish
Alexander Nutt
Olivia Sheufelt*
Kobain Smith.

7th Grade:
McKenzie Baker*
Aubrey Hellebuyck*
Brooklyn Hunt.

11th Grade:
Haden Gruehn
Kendall Lusk
Dana Morrish*
Levi Wendland
Luke Willerton

5th Grade:
Niomie Beeman
Hailey Forman*
Nolen Gruehn
Cailum Hewitt
Hunter Mihacsi*
Sierra Miller*

8th Grade:
Jayce Hill
Danielle Hunt*
Lucas McKnight
Lily Willerton
Natalie Wood

12th Grade:
Katriana Curtoys*
Boyd Evans*
Clay Evans*
Jameson McKnight*
Libby Ondrajka*
Alivia Roehrig
* Denotes all A's

Hey kids! It's time to write letters to Santa

Hey kids, get busy writing those letters to Santa.

Everybody knows Santa has a subscription to the Cass City Chronicle, and he checks each issue closely

this time of year in search of Christmas lists from children in the Thumb area.

All you have to do is write

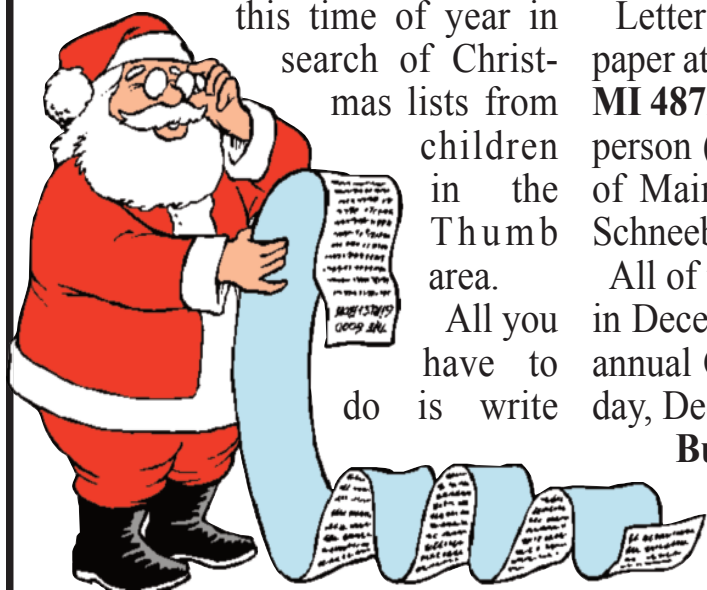
your letter and send it to us. The easiest way is to have mom or dad e-mail your note along with a photo of yourself to:

sales@ccchronicle.net.

Letters can also be mailed to the paper at: **6550 Main St., Cass City, MI 48726**, or drop them off to us in person (we're located at the corner of Main and Oak streets, next to Schneeberger's).

All of the letters will be published in December - most of them in our annual Christmas edition, Wednesday, Dec. 23.

But get started now because the deadline is: Thursday, Dec. 17.



SUDOKU

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

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

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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In Our OPINION...

Clarke Haire
Publisher

Tom Montgomery
Editor

Michigan physicians: Be prepared, careful

COVID-19 has proven itself to be not only highly contagious, but also unpredictable in its impact from one person to another.

However, no one has to go it alone.

Michigan physicians recently released a COVID-19 preparedness “toolkit” to help residents better prepare and protect themselves from the virus in the safety of their home, as cases across the state continue to rise.

“We have learned a lot about COVID-19 since the pandemic began earlier this year,” said Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, president of the Michigan State Medical Society. “Our understanding of the disease has become clearer and the ability to care for and treat our patients has become more effective.

“The COVID-19 Preparedness Toolkit can help residents be more prepared to protect themselves from this virus that continues to plague our state.”

Both the Michigan State Medical Society and the Michigan Academy of Family Physicians urge those diagnosed with COVID-19 to monitor their health at home using the following items:

**A thermometer to monitor for fever, which is defined as 100.4 degrees or higher.*

**A pulse oximeter to measure the oxygen levels in your blood. A level between 95 and 97% is considered normal by the American Lung Association.*

**Over-the-counter medications such as fever-reducers, cough suppressants and saline nose spray. If you have children, make sure you have appropriate medicine for them, as it may differ from what adults need.*

**Have an emergency contact list of family, friends, neighbors, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources. If you live alone, arrange to check in with a friend or relative regularly.*

**Be sure to communicate with your physician about any fevers, drop in oxygen levels, or other symptoms of worsening infection. Don't hesitate to seek emergency care for severe symptoms.*

Michigan's physicians, along with local health department officials across the state, also recommend that everyone continue to follow safety precautions to protect themselves from COVID-19, including:

Cover your nose and mouth with a mask or other face covering when in public or around others who don't live in your household, avoid close contact with people outside of your home, wash your hands often, cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid close contact with those who are sick, and monitor your health and be alert for symptoms.

“Unfortunately, the pandemic isn't going away, but there are ways to monitor your health and recover at home without needing inpatient care if you do contract the virus,” said Dr. Mark Hamed, president of the Michigan Academy of Family Physicians. “That's why we created this guide — so that residents can track their health and communicate with their doctor to ensure they receive the necessary treatment.”

Unfortunately, there is no lack of unqualified individuals and groups dispensing “expert” advice about COVID-19. It's our hope that all area residents will heed the advice of legitimate medical sources and do all they can to be safe and take the necessary precautions to protect one another.

Drier Humor

by Mary Drier

A Christmas tradition



I have finally found a Christmas tradition that I think is a wonderful idea, especially for someone who is rather difficult to buy for.

Although gift giving is not the real reason for the season, it seems like over the years more and more emphasis is placed on getting the most gifts, or the most expensive gifts, or the biggest gifts, or the cutest gifts, etc.

While surfing the Internet, I came across a wonderful holiday tradition from another country.

In Iceland, books are exchanged on Christmas Eve as presents. After the gifts are exchanged, the receiver of the book or books spends the rest of the night in bed reading one of the books and eating chocolate. It is a national tradition.

That Iceland tradition is part of the season called “Jolabokaflokkur,” which means “Christmas Book Flood.” That is a great name because that little country publishes more books per capita than any other country, according to a website I found.

And the most books are sold between September and November because people are preparing for Christmas, and reading is also a wonderful pastime during the winter months.

I'm an avid reader, so I'm all for this.

Even the way the books are wrapped up as a gift is neat. The picture along with the post I read shows a book wrapped up in classic white paper with speckles. Tied with twine is a small branch from a pine tree with an acorn attached.

Also, for those who are unsure of what the person likes to read, a gift card to a bookstore is an option.

One Christmas, my sons gave me a gift card to a Barnes and Noble bookstore. I spent a couple of hours checking out all of the books before making a selection. I ended up spending a little more than the amount of the gift card, but it also allowed me to explore some new authors' books that I normally wouldn't have read.

After I paid for the books, I went to the coffee shop in the store for a drink and a donut. I normally hate shopping, but that experience is a memory of one of the best days and gift.

However, I admit I have since gone to the “dark side” of book reading, having broken down and bought a Kindle a few years ago. I love it. I can make the print larger for easier reading. Plus, if I want a certain book, it is downloaded in a matter of seconds to read. A Kindle also has a built-in light, so I do not have to have another light on to read.

The one big drawback I found is that the battery always seems to die just when the book is getting to a good part. So, in the middle of the night, I have to get up and wander around, looking for my charger and extension cord to plug it in so I can keep reading.

Anyway, I totally embrace Iceland's Jolabokaflokkur tradition of giving a book to read on Christmas Eve in bed.

And, tied into that tradition is eating chocolate in bed when reading. Who doesn't like chocolate? Being able to relax in bed and eat chocolate — it doesn't get any better than that, even if the book isn't all that interesting.

Rabbit Tracks

by Clarke Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)

COVID-19 has hit many sectors of our community, state and world in indescribable ways. We can't thank our healthcare professionals enough for their sacrifices on the front lines, along with all of the emergency response professionals and hospital staff members who contribute to the care of the victims of this awful virus.

The same goes for all essential workers who continue to risk their own health in order to make it possible for all of us to purchase groceries, fuel and other necessities.

Members of all these groups have paid for their dedication with their lives, as have police officers across the country, as evidenced by some sobering statistics recently shared by Tuscola County Sheriff Glen Skrent.

According to the Officer Down Memorial Page, Skrent says, in November 2020, 18 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty nationally, and of those 18, 14 died as a result of COVID-19. Three died from gunfire and one died due to drowning.

The year-to-date total for line-of-duty deaths stood at 271 at the end of November, an 83 percent increase from the same time last year.

Re-appointed to the Cass City Downtown Development Authority Monday, with a term ending May 1, 2024, are Lambert Althaver, Eric Brown, Robert Books, James Kranz, Jon Ligrow and Geraldine Prieskorn.

The tireless community servants also agreed to serve another term on the Cass City Economic Development Corporation, which too expires on May 1, 2024.

Please thank these individuals, along with Steve Wright, who volunteered again to serve on the local library board until January 2025.

We enjoy having Steve on the Board, wrote Rawson Memorial District Library Director, Ruth Steele, in a letter to the Village of Cass City.

Let's also thank the scientists, trial participants and public health experts across our country that helped approved Pfizer's COVID-19 Emergency Use vaccine. The vaccine is being manufactured here in Michigan and will play an important role in saving lives.

But that's only if the public actually is willing to take advantage of the Emergency Use Authorization, granted by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

You won't have to ask me twice to roll up my shirt sleeve once the vaccine is distributed and my turn for inoculation comes to be.

Rep. Phil Green has voted yes in support of HB 6440 that would remove notices from newspapers.

For some reason I find it particularly appalling that someone who has many quality publications in his district would want to hurt them... especially someone who supposedly supports small businesses.

I can recall hosting gatherings in my home for his dad, Mike Green, when he first sought political office many, many years ago — and now this.

This issue may come up for a vote again in the near future. I urge you to phone Rep. Green and express your disappointment in his lack of support for small business and ask for him to reconsider keeping public notices where people notice.

You can contact him at philgreen@house.mi.gov or by calling (517) 373-0476.

Looking for the perfect gift for the outdoor enthusiast on your holiday shopping list, or maybe for yourself? The DNR Outdoor Skills Academy can help.

Offering in-depth, expert instruction, gear and hands-on learning for a range of activities — from fishing and hunting to finding wild mushrooms — 2021 Outdoor Skills Academy classes are now available for purchase online.

“Wondering what to get the hunter, angler or nature lover who has everything? Send them to an Outdoor Skills Academy class!” said Ed Shaw, interpreter at the Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center and originator of the OSA program. “Our classes offer more than just a brief taste of outdoor activities — we spend a full day or more teaching the needed skills to get out and confidently try them.”

Classes in the New Year include: Bear Hunting Clinic, Fly Fishing Clinic for Beginners, Hard Water School (ice fishing class) and Advanced Hard Water School, Steelhead Clinic, Trapping Clinic, Walleye Clinic, Whitetail Food Plot Clinic, Wild Turkey Hunting Clinic and Wild Mushroom Clinic.

Cost for most of the classes is \$25-40. All of them will take place at the Carl T. Johnson Center, located inside Mitchell State Park in Cadillac. Classes at other locations around the state may be added to the calendar throughout the year.

For class dates, detailed descriptions and registration information, visit Michigan.gov/OutdoorSkills.

Letters to the Editor

Say no to politicians

Editor,

First and foremost, regarding the very well written and necessary letter to the editor last week by Stephanie Spencer; I believe she speaks for most of us, at least those of us with some degree of common sense.

Ann Hepfer's comments were rather insulting to the small businesses that are simply trying to survive this fabricated shutdown. To suggest that, because of their actions, “they don't care about us” is easy to say for someone guaranteed a government paycheck at taxpayer's expense, without interruption. Unfortunately, many of the small businesses that have been forced to shut down will not reopen thanks to a tyrant wannabe who people mistakenly elected for governor.

I, for one, will go out of my way to frequent the businesses of owners who choose to stay open to help their employees as well as their own families, in addition to providing services for local residents, and I will do so without a mask that has zero effect on Covid. Criticizing the local hardware or auto repair shop for violating the “guidelines” proves Ms. Hepfer's elitist attitude. I want her to show us the evidence that proves these particular businesses have “contributed to the community spread of this infection.”

I do not believe there is a law requiring shutdowns or mask wearing. They're simply orders from the governor, orders which some, myself included, choose to not obey. I am a free citizen, not her subject. These are arbitrary orders not based on science or public safety.

It is the opinion of many that we are being manipulated by lies based on fear. A few months ago, during one of their rare media slips of the tongue, the CDC admitted that only 6 percent of the claimed deaths due to Covid are actually due to Covid. This information has since been deleted, from everything. They later revised their claims to 15 percent, also deleted. Common

Please turn to page 8.

CASS CITY CHRONICLE

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(USPS 092-00)

Thumb farmers eligible to apply for loans related to heavy rains

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is making Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million available to eligible small businesses, agricultural cooperatives and non-profits impacted by excessive rain and flooding that occurred between Aug. 16 and Sept. 9, 2020.

Loans are available to farmers in the Thumb.

"This support will provide small businesses in Huron, Sanilac and Tuscola counties with critical re-

sources and federal assistance to address hardship caused by this severe weather in the region," said Josh Hundt, chief business development officer and executive vice president at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov>. Applicants should apply under SBA declaration

#16804. They may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information.

Applications are due to SBA no later than Aug. 2, 2021.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is the state's marketing arm and lead advocate for business development, job awareness and community development with the focus on growing Michigan's economy.

Info superhighway targets Deford

by Mary Drier
For the Chronicle

The internet's information superhighway may soon be running through Deford.

Air Advantage, an internet provider based in Frankenmuth, has expressed interest in providing service to some of the other areas

of the community that currently do not have Internet service.

The state has Connecting Michigan Communities grants available for expanding broadband internet service in the state, and a third round of grant funding is being offered. The state has provided about \$30 million to significantly expand broadband into rural areas.

"I know in Novesta (township) and the Deford area we could do a better service of providing Internet for. One of ways broadband would improve in part of the township is bringing fiber (service) to more homes," explained Air Advantage spokesman Scott Zimmer.

"There would be no financial commitment from the township. We would provide all of the necessary funding," he added. "There are some matching funds (for the grant). We -- Air Advantage -- would provide that."

The company already has Internet fiber optic service going into the tower at the Tuscola County Road Commission garage in Deford.

"We have some equipment on that tower. That equipment could use some updating and that would be part of this. Upgrades to the tower would help reach out to the surrounding area with a better signal," said Zimmer, noting the plan is to add about a mile of fiber optics for more service. "It would cost about \$150,000 to do that, but again, there is no cost to the township."

The only thing Zimmer is asking of township officials is support in favor of applying for the grant, and some help with demographic information of the area and the addresses of people involved on this route. The Novesta Township Board has endorsed the effort.

Aside from funding, moving forward with the project also depends on the number of people who would sign up for the service. Zimmer estimates there are about 50 to 100 homes in the service area that is being planned that could receive Internet service.

If the project moves forward, the infrastructure would be there to expand service later.

The service would be a benefit for more people to be able to work remotely from home, for students doing remote learning, and for homeschooling, he pointed out.

In order to gather the necessary information to gauge interest, an Air Advantage representative may be going door to door to contact residents.

The deadline to apply for the grant is Jan. 4.



TUSCOLA COUNTY Sheriff Glen Skrent is encouraging county residents who are renting storage units to check them and make sure they have not been victims of theft. "Detectives have been working diligently on the thefts from local storage facilities as posted previously," Skrent noted in a Facebook post last week. "With the assistance from the Saginaw County Sheriff's Office, a search warrant was conducted and some property was recovered from a home in Saginaw County. After the suspect broke into storage units, he would replace the lock with one of his own. This would make it appear to anyone else (that) the storage unit had been untouched. Investigators feel that there could be many storage units in Tuscola, Genesee and in Saginaw County, where the owners still don't know that their unit was broken into."



THE KINGSTON Police Department recently welcomed a \$500 check from the Tuscola County Community Foundation to help purchase a body camera. Above, foundation Executive Director John Hunter (left) presents the gift to Police Chief Albert Pearsal.

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County officials sworn in

Tuscola County officials elected or reelected to office in the November general election took their oaths of office Covid-style during a ceremony Friday on the steps of the county courthouse in Caro.

With officials wearing masks and maintaining recommended social distance, Tuscola County Chief Judge Amy Grace Gierhart administered the oath of office to the following officials:

Mark Reene, prosecuting attorney; Glen Skrent, sheriff; Jodi Fetting, county clerk; Ashley Bennett, county treasurer; John Bishop, register of deeds; Robert Mantey, drain commissioner; John Laurie, road commissioner; David Kennard, road commissioner; Tom Young, county commissioner (District one); Thom Bardwell, county commissioner (District Two); Kim Vaughan, county commissioner (District Three); and Douglas DuRussel, county commissioner (District Four).

"Unfortunately, Daniel Grimshaw, county commissioner (District Five) was unable to attend the ceremony, due to a prior engagement, and will be administered the oath at a later date," said Fetting, who noted Gierhart administered the oath of office to Tuscola County District Court Judge Jason E. Bitzer during a ceremony held later in the day.

The county-wide officials who were elected are scheduled to serve terms of four years in office, while commissioners are elected to two-year terms. The district court judge is elected to a six-year term.

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Reporter's notebook

'20 has been
a wild ride...

by Tom Montgomery
Editor



Heading into the final stretch of 2020, I was hoping the future would look a little more settled than it does right now.

Who knew COVID-19 would take such a terrible toll, leaving many friends, neighbors – and strangers — dealing with unimaginable, profound losses? Or that even after nine months, we would still be living under a dark cloud of uncertainty while navigating a world we don't recognize anymore?

Sure, there are some people who still deny the existence of a pandemic, instead determined to spread all manner of crackpot conspiracy theories and baseless claims touted by Facebook "influencers" Youtube expert wannabes and others. Ignorance really is bliss, I guess.

But for many others, there's a certain hope that when the dust finally settles, many of us are going to be better human beings than we were before this virus struck.

Only time will tell, but that's what I choose to believe.

Meanwhile, life has gone on in Cass City and in a myriad of other small (and larger) towns and cities across the country. I can't speak for my more urban brethren, but I'm comforted by almost daily reminders that this community, although filled with people with diverse lives and opinions, has managed to hang on to its sense of community.

We've lost the sort of regular human contact we all need, including gatherings guaranteed by a host of local celebrations, festivals and events most of us look forward to each year.

And, yet, we haven't lost our will to help one another out.

Residents, organizations, clubs and churches have gone out of their way to help meet the needs of others, including organization of food distributions and efforts to provide Christmas gifts to families struggling financially. Many businesses continue to help where they can, in spite of the effort it takes to keep up with restrictions designed to slow the spread of the virus.

It hasn't been easy. Some business owners have welcomed and been grateful for some financial assistance from state and federal agencies along the way, while also facing the economic reality that their lifetimes of work may not survive this pandemic in the end.

However, for now, every day of work is a blessing, at least that's how I view it from the corner of Oak and Main (virtually, of course – my office at home has been my headquarters since the pandemic took hold of the nation).

Before we were forced to rely mostly on phone calls, email, Messenger, Zoom and other virtual means of communications and conducting interviews, I really never realized how much the day-to-day personal contact with others made this job so enjoyable (most of the time).

Like other businesses, we've had to adapt in order to continue producing a newspaper every week. Yes, there are fewer pages these days (which coincides with the fact that fewer businesses are advertising these days), but we haven't lost sight of our mission since the Chronicle was established more than 114 years ago.

I've been in the newsroom here for 34 of those years – okay, so "newsroom" is overkill in word usage. I mean, even before COVID-19, the Chronicle's newsroom also served as our reception area, display and classified advertising department, complaint department, etc.

Anyway, in those three-plus decades of working at the paper, I can't remember any period of time that was more uncertain than that brought on by COVID-19. I also can't remember a time when I've been more in awe of my co-workers, who haven't missed a beat (or an issue), in spite of the obstacles we've faced.

Don't get me wrong; we get on each other's nerves now and then. However, we haven't changed course in our dedication to produce a decent edition of the Chronicle each week, and we continue to appreciate our faithful readers, who have stuck with us throughout this crazy year.

It's been a wild ride, to be sure.

Here's hoping that the last two weeks of 2020 bring a little more peace — and hope — into all of our lives.

Down Memory Lane

by Tina Pallas



5 YEARS AGO (2015)

There's a winner in the Cass City's Lions Club 50/50 raffle held in conjunction with the local Christmas in the Village celebration, according to club member Earl Volmering. It's Rich Witherspoon, who pocketed \$621 for the lucky ticket drawn after the Lighted Christmas Parade. Not a bad haul for being a civic-minded person.

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 Cros-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 Ubyly. Seth is the son of Daniell and Chris Osentoski.

10 YEARS AGO (2010)

Several members of the Owendale-Gagetown/Caseville varsity football team were recently honored at their Fall Sports Banquet. They are Ben Good, freshman, Ron Good Most Improved Player Award; Tommy Kennedy, sophomore, Honorable Mention All Conference; Mike Mandich, sophomore, Eugene Mitchell Outstanding Interior Lineman Award; Clyde Rhodes, senior, Captain Award, Defensive Player of the Year Award and 1st Team All-Conference; Hunter Champagne, junior, Assistant Captain Award, Duane Ziehm Most Valuable Player and 1st Team All-Conference; Jordan Kain, sophomore, Offensive Player of the Year Award and 2nd Team All-Conference; Bryan Buschlen, senior and Danny Jeffery, sophomore, Don Cummings Oil Can Award.

Lady Bulldogs receiving awards in volleyball at the annual Fall Sports Banquet included Lacie Prich, junior, Honorable Mention All-Conference; Christin Harris, junior, Most Valuable Player, Sportsmanship Award and 1st Team All-Conference; Amanda Muntz, junior, 2nd Team All-Conference; Kayla Montreuil, sophomore, 2nd Team All-Conference; and Lauren Mandich, senior, Most Valuable Player.

25 YEARS AGO (1995)

Dear Santa, My name is Mason. I'm 4 years old. I have been trying to be a good boy. For Christmas this year I would like a farm set, a game and a cassette player. My sisters, Christina and Melissa, would like something left under the tree for them. And I will be waiting for you with a treat. Thanks for the gifts you left last year. Merry Christmas. Love ya, Mason Doerr

Dear Santa, My name is Nicholas Smith. I'm 6 years old. I have tried to be good this year, mom and dad say I'm a good helper. For Christmas I would like a Mary Kate and Ashley movie, a Barney movie, some new clothes and a game. My sister Alexandria is 1 1/2 years old, she has also tried to be good. For Christmas she would like a new baby doll, some new PJ's and a doctor set. We will leave milk and cookies for you, and apples and carrots for your reindeer. Have a safe Christmas. Love Nicholas and Alexandria.

Cass City Red Hawk Students of the Week are Rachel Hoard, 10th grade, daughter of Dave and Christina Hoard, and Mandy Chappel, 9th grade, daughter of Paul and Susie Chappel. Both Rachel and Mandy are being recognized this week in appreciation for the fine job they do each school day in bringing the announcements to the staff and student population. These girls are also involved in many other activities including sports, church

youth groups, and programs such as F.E.T.C.H., Toys for Tots and band. A swell job girls.

35 YEARS AGO (1985)

Mr. and Mrs. Garrison Stine were dinner guests Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Nicholas at Kawkawlin when the 15th birthday of their daughter Tammy was celebrated. Other guests were Mr. and Mrs. Ken LaPraire of Bay City.

Cass City Girl Scouts who sold the most Girl Scout cookies in 1985 are Andrea Cooper, Wilma Mayer, Missy Shagena, Ann Marie Lynch, Barb Kelley and Crystal McKnight. Barbara Kelley of Troop 414 sold 260 boxes of cookies, the most sold by any scout in Cass City. Wilma Mayer of Troop 958 sold 173 boxes. Crystal McKnight of Troop 642 sold 156 boxes of cookies, the most of any Brownie. Missy Shagena of Troop 915 sold 156 boxes. Andrea Cooper of Troop 923 sold 95 boxes. Ann Marie Lynch of Troop 239 sold 126 boxes of cookies, the most of any senior Cadette.

40 YEARS AGO (1980)

Lloyd Damm was the third oldest of 13 children. His wife, Dolores, was the oldest of 11. It therefore is understandable that they like children. They have four of their own. Paul and Andrea (pronounced aan-dray, he's a he), both 9. Maelin, 7, and Mark, 3, are adopted. Mr. and Mrs. Damm, 46 and 41 respectively, celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary in Dec. Their home is at the corner of Hoppe and Jacob Roads, southwest of Gagetown. Paul was the first child they adopted. He arrived Feb. 4, 1972, when he was 2-1/2 months old. Before that, Mrs. Damm said, "The Lord led me to Holbrook Baptist church in 1971, and I was saved." Not too long after that, in answer to their prayers, she and her husband received word that they could adopt Paul. "Before that, I could pray and my prayers bounced off the ceiling." Andrea came next, 18 months later. Ironically, he was born 11 days after Paul. Two children were going to be it, but Mrs. Damm received inspiration in church that they should adopt another baby and when they saw Mark for the first time, "you're not about to turn him down." He arrived in May, 1978. Maelin is the girl of the family. She was born in Korea. She arrived at the Damm home May 31 of this year. She had been in the United States a year.

Pvt. Jeffery S. Hallock, son of Mr. and Mrs. Howard J. Hallock of Owendale, has completed basic training at Fort Sill, Okla. During the training, students receive instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, first aid, and Army history and traditions.

Naomi Smith of Caro, was one of two winners of \$250 in Lucky Bucks Saturday in the final Christmas drawing sponsored by the Cass City Retail Committee. The other winner was Willis LaBlanc of Cass City.

50 YEARS AGO (1970)

It's not certain whether or not David Moody, 28, of rural Deford has avoided dishpan hands by using one of the popular easy on the hands soaps or whether he avoids the telltale rough, red and chapped hands because his skin is tougher than a woman's. Whatever the reason, the youthful Moody doesn't have them and he does do the dishes five days a week as well as most of the rest of the household work for his family of four. The women's liberation movement would love Moody. He keeps house while his wife works. It wasn't always this way, but circumstances alter cases. In his relatively short working career, Moody has had a variety of jobs and training, none of which qualify him for his latest fling: farm-

ing. Before he and his wife, the former Janet Peck of Cass City, moved to their 80 acres on Deckerville Road, 2 1/2 miles east of Cemetery Road, Moody was a printer. He worked for American Seating Co. in Grand Rapids. He became a printer after a year studying electronic engineering at Fort Wayne. A canvass of the area revealed that jobs for printers in the Thumb are scarce, but jobs for registered nurses are easy to come by. Mrs. Moody is a registered nurse and when she applied at Hills and Dales General Hospital was quickly snapped up as operation room supervisor. She can make more money as a nurse than I can in any job that I can get around here, Moody said with a grin, so she works and I stay home. I probably shouldn't say this but keeping house is lots of work.

Mrs. Keith Murphy was guest of honor at a pink and blue shower Sunday afternoon at the home of Mrs. Jack Esau. Cohostesses were Mrs. Gerald Romig and Mrs. Lewis Tibbits. Out-of-town guests were Mrs. Irvin Kritzman and three daughters of Kawkawlin, Miss Lillian Dunlap of Caro and Mrs. Bruce Kritzman of Decker. Thirty guests attended. Prizes in games went to Mrs. Orion Cardew, Jane Kritzman and Mrs. Don Koepfgen. The table from which refreshments were served was decorated in keeping with Christmas.

Sgt. Ronald B. Cybulski, son of Mr. and Mrs. Steve Cybulski of Cass City, was discharged from the Army Nov. 29 and arrived home Nov. 30. He graduated from Cass City High School in June, 1967. He entered the Army Apr. 29, 1969, and took his basic at Fort Knox, Ky. While there he won two awards, High Marksman and Outstanding Trainee. He then received eight weeks of AIT at Fort Polk, La. After spending a 15-day leave with his parents, he went to Fort Bliss, Tex., where he completed a three-week "Redeye Gunner's" course and was awarded a certificate. Oct. 25, 1969, he left for Korea where he has spent the past 13 months. While in Korea he was awarded the Good Conduct medal.

75 YEARS AGO (1945)

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Holmberg will entertain Christmas eve Mr. and Mrs. Willis Campbell and daughter, Miss Mary Jane, and Mr. and Mrs. John McGillvray. Mr. and Mrs. Holmberg and children will spend Christmas day with Dr. and Mrs. E. C. Swanson at Vassar.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Seeger entertained at a 5:30 dinner Tuesday evening in honor of the golden wedding anniversary of Mrs. Seeger's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Simeon Bardwell, Mrs. Isabelle Bardwell, Mrs. Lyle Bardwell, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Helwig, and Mr. and Mrs. George Seeger. Open house was held later in the evening for friends of Mr. and Mrs. Bardwell.

Robert Kirkpatrick, S 2/c, writes his mother, Mrs. Leo Kirkpatrick, that he is doing mess cooking now aboard his ship, the P.C. 1230. He was at Pearl Harbor but expected to head for the State soon. He says he would give two months' pay if he could come home to see his brother, Bud, whom he hasn't seen for two years.

100 YEARS AGO (1920)

Mr. and Mrs. Sim Bardwell celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Saturday, Dec. 18. One o'clock dinner was served to twenty-seven guests. Mr. and Mrs. Bardwell received many beautiful silver gifts. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Fred LePla of Ubyly, Herman Wright of Detroit, Mr. and Mrs. John Barnes and Grover Keys of Gagetown, and Mr. and Mrs. Will LePla and family, Mr. and Mrs. Harry LePla and family, Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Copland, and Levi Bardwell and two daughters, all of Cass City.

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Newly elected Sanilac officials slated to be sworn in this week

by Mary Drier
For the Chronicle

This year will mark a facelift of sorts in Sanilac County government, with a number of key officials closing out lengthy and distinguished public service careers.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way local governments conduct business, including the process of swearing in newly-elected officials.

That's the case in Sanilac County, where officials are scheduled to take their oaths of office this week.

Normally, all of the newly elected county officials would take the oath of office, administered by a judge, in the Sanilac County Circuit Courtroom. However, in order to comply with social distancing recommendations, the process will be completed in two segments at different times due to limited seating capacity.

The ceremonies are slated for

Thursday, Dec. 17, and Friday, Dec. 18.

Sanilac County Circuit Judge Donald Teeple will minister the oath of office and conduct the swearing-in ceremonies.

The task will be one of Teeple's last duties, as he is retiring at the end of the year after 30 years of service to the county.

Because of the limited seating that is being imposed as a safety measure, residents will be offered the opportunity to view the ceremonies via the Zoom App. The ID for the meeting is 667 685 013 (call 646-876-9923 and reenter the same ID).

The ceremony for commissioners, county clerk, county treasurer and register of deeds will begin at 2:30 p.m. Thursday Dec. 17. The oaths of office will be administered to the probate judge, prosecuting attorney, drain commissioner and road commissioners at 3 p.m.

Also on that day, the new Sanilac County Circuit judge, Timothy Wrathell, will be sworn in.

At 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18, new Sheriff Paul Rich will take the oath of office.

Teeple was first elected as a judge in 1989. After graduating high school in 1967, he attended St. Clair County Community College, and then he attended the University of Michigan. After graduation there, he attended the Detroit School of Law in 1974.

Teeple is not the only veteran Sanilac County servant to be leaving at the end of the year.

Veteran Sheriff Garry Biniecki will be retiring after 44 years of service, Undersheriff Brad Roff is leaving after 25 years of service, Prosecutor James Young is also retiring after 42 years, Drain Commissioner Greg Alexander is leaving after 12 years of service, and the prosecutor's office manager, Lucy Higgins, is retiring.



KNIGHTS OF Columbus Council 8892 recently presented a donation of about \$843 to the Cass City Rotary Club's Christmas for Kids program. The money was raised during the 20th Annual K of C Potato Sale. Above, K of C member Adam Dorland (right) presents the check to his brother, Kevven Dorland, Cass City Rotary Club President.

Ubyly addresses feral cat numbers in town

by Mary Drier
For the Chronicle

The village of Ubyly will be conducting a "catch and release" program of sorts in the coming days.

The community, like many others, has a number of feral cats running at large. The free-range cats breed, which in turn makes even more feral cats, so the cycle keeps repeating.

Because of the number of cats, village officials decided in April to take steps to address the issue by reviewing the TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) Program.

The village approved participating in the program, which involves live trapping feral cats, having them spayed or neutered by a veterinarian, and then returning them to the areas where they were captured.

TNR is viewed as a humane approach to addressing community cat populations. It saves cats' lives and is effective in addressing community concerns, reduces complaints about cats, and slows the breeding cycle as it slowly reduces populations over time.

To establish a local TNR program, officials earmarked \$500 towards expenses, which is expected to be enough to take care of about 20 cats, including administering rabies vaccinations.

The first six appointments to start the program are scheduled for Jan. 6.

The village is accepting donations to help cover the costs of the program.

Residents who have a problem with feral cats or questions about the program are encouraged to send an email to ublytnr@gmail.com.

In other business, the council discussed park upgrades, which will be a little more costly than projected.

There were additional costs due to rerouting an area of a path, and extra asphalt and plumbing and lighting upgrades that cost \$6,840, explained Clerk Barb Butch.

The park improvements include creation of a walking path in the park that would connect Main Street with Pike Street. The path starts out by the veterans memorial and winds through the park, across the river and back to Pike Street. It's about three-eighths of a mile long.

Another project involved repairing an existing pavilion and building new handicap accessible restrooms as well as adding handicap accessible parking. The pavilion repair work called for new posts and the new bathrooms had lighting upgrades.

Signs will be posted at all entrances to the walking path, stating no motorized vehicles are allowed. And, benches have been installed along the walking path.

Also, the council is considering some technology-related changes. Due to some confusion on email accounts, the village will be looking into having .gov emails, explained Butch.

Butch was asked to contact IT Right to obtain pricing and information on the proposed change, and to report back to the council at its next meeting.




KNIGHTS OF Columbus Council 8892 recently held its 20th annual potato sale at three locations in the Cass City area, rather than door-to-door, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2000, K of C members Ron Rutkoski, Keith Pobanz, Jim Smithson, Ken Zdrojewski and LaVern Rutkoski met with Leonard Walther about their potato sale fundraiser idea, and the event was born. For two decades, Walther Farms has supplied the potatoes free of charge. Above, Grand Knight Rick Kloc (left) and Warden Chris Pawloski prepare to sell potatoes in front of Rotary Park.


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SNAPSHOTS, like this one south of Cass City, are a nature lover's dream.

Showcasing the DNR

The art and magic of being there

BY JOHN PEPIN
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

When asked, hunters – like anglers, hikers, campers and others who enjoy the outdoors – often say the richness of their experiences in the woods is created merely by “just being out there.”

This notion, while seemingly simple, is in fact quite profound.

It may be the best attempt to put into words the peacefulness of the forest when it snows or the sweet smells of the leaves and the trees, the talking songs of the birds and the river, the warm feeling of sunshine, cold winds drifting across your face or seeing your first black bear or moose up close.

Maybe what it's like to just sit still and listen to the woods?

Ever really try to explain to someone what the clear, starry night sky looks like, or what it feels like to see it?

What about the experience of hiking a trail under hemlocks and pines, or looking down from a rocky ledge to see the shimmering lake below on a sunny afternoon?

Maybe the sights and sounds of watching a campfire into the morning hours or the startling experience of flushing a grouse?

Those who try to talk or write about these things they've experienced will often admit their descriptions fall short, no matter how accurate they may be.

I am among them.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, it should also be said there are countless things a camera cannot capture, no matter how great the lenses, the lighting or the photo post-production tools are.

To truly capture certain outdoor experiences or some of the most important intrinsic beauty of plants, animals, places and many kinds of natural phenomena, it certainly takes more than a thousand words, or one picture.

I think the elusive, missing ingredient in all the efforts to duplicate or convey these encounters is the human experience.

Whatever aspect of nature we are trying to photograph, write about or tell others about can often connect us so personally to nature, the world and the universe.

In many cases, these experiences are truly singular, personal and real – written indelibly on our souls. They will no doubt come to mind for years and years to come.

A storyteller, whether a writer, photographer or hunter, angler, skier, trapper or hiker, will never be able to truly convey the totality of those beautiful moments – no matter the medium.

I've found the best bet is to try to have as many of those incredible, personal outdoor experiences as I can, conceding I will never fully capture them in words or pictures.

I am reminded of very creative and capable people I've heard try hard to tell others about something that happened to them but eventually, they throw up their hands in futility saying, “I guess you had to be there.”

These days, even despite an uptick in participation attributed to the quarantined nature of the novel coronavirus pandemic, there are lots of people concerned about the increasing loss in the numbers of people having valuable outdoor experiences with nature.

There are consequences computers and digital technologies have created, especially when it comes to keeping many adults, and especially children, indoors or disengaged from personal and intimate experiences with the natural world.

On a recent trip to Crystal Falls in Iron County, I read a trailhead sign the Michigan Department of Natural Resources put up that I had never seen before. It's located not more than a few steps outside the department's field office there.

The author, whoever it was, understood this concern.

The sign titled “Planet Earth, Our Home” read:

Our earth is a very forgiving planet – to a point. Many of us know more about ‘surfing the net’ than we do of the natural resources that sustain our lives, yet we go on pretending that technology will always quench our thirst, fill our bellies and run our cars, while retaining our quality of life.

As you walk this trail use all your senses to see, hear, smell, taste and feel life, and think about in which direction you would like to see mankind travel. What can you do to make this happen?

I once had a paddler friend who likened himself to the character in Michael Martin Murphy's song “Boy from the Country,” from his 1972 album, “Geronimo's Cadillac.”

This friend of mine looked like a mountain man. His blond hair was worn shaggy and dirty, and his flannel shirts and blue jeans were slept in.

He talked about the animals of the forest speaking to him, his isolation from much of society and his love for paddling his canoe over the rivers and lakes of this rugged region.

Murphy – who also wrote and sang the 1975 hit “Wildfire” – wrote:

Because he called the forest brother
Because he called the earth his mother
They drove him out into the rain
Some people even said the boy from the country was insane

I think about my old friend every now and then, especially when I hear that song. I hope he's still out there somewhere paddling his canoe silently past a beaver lodge, over a school of spawning trout and under the skies cast red by the setting sun.

I hope he's found many more friends along his journey, people able to look beyond his gritty, disheveled exterior to glimpse the soul of nature and life in his heart.

When I picture him, I see him always paddling his canoe, heading somewhere around the river bend up ahead, looking for that next experience that will draw him even closer to nature.

In my own way, I'm traveling with him, looking for the purest experiences the natural world can offer, teaching me the truths concealed in the hearts of birds and animals, knowing all the while my greatest fulfillment will always come from “just being out there.”



**Support businesses
that supported us**

by Senator
Kevin Daley

Working hard and putting in the effort to start your own business is a textbook American dream story. Many Michiganders have successfully pursued this dream after years of hard work, breaking even, long hours, government regulations and other hoops small business owners must jump through to survive.

Despite these challenges, many Michiganders clenched their fists and grinded through the tough times to make their business thrive. There are countless examples, just in my district, of people who have given everything they have to make their business successful.

Unfortunately, because of a foreign virus causing a global pandemic, many of these people have had their life's work taken from them without so much as a chance to survive. The idea of someone else, with no stake in your future and who has put in none of the effort to get your business to where it's at, making decisions that result in you potentially closing your doors, is heartbreaking to say the least.

I cannot begin to put into words the sadness and frustration I feel for the people who had to go through the experience of locking their doors one last time because they just couldn't meet the burdens anymore; for the employers who were forced to round up their employees, many who are like family, and tell them they won't be coming to work tomorrow; and for the families who, right before Christmas, will see their pay taken away from them yet again.

We need to do our part to mitigate this disaster and keep our communities thriving — this starts with supporting local businesses. Local businesses have supported our schools, children's sports teams and community events, among other things, and now it's our turn to give back and lend them a helping hand.

Mom and pop businesses need our help more than ever and, especially going into the holidays and another unpredictable shut-down, they most certainly deserve it.

If you are able to, and to do so safely, I kindly ask that you join me in doing our part to keep businesses in our communities alive. For years small businesses have been there to provide excellent service and are calling on us to return the favor.

So be sure to shop at your local supermarket or order your favorite meal from the restaurant down on the corner. Our service is the difference between the cashier, waitress or hardware store owner making rent or buying Christmas presents for their children.

In the meantime, my colleagues and I in the Legislature are doing everything we can to fight back against the governor's unilateral policies that place a significantly higher burden on restaurants and small businesses.

Michigan's restaurants and small businesses have made countless sacrifices and invested thousands of dollars to keep employees and patrons safe. While my colleagues and I continue to fight for Michigan businesses in Lansing, we should also be putting our full support behind them right now and helping them keep their doors open.

I have made an effort to personally call and listen to each business owner who has contacted my office, so I can fully understand the struggles the people in my district are facing.

If you would like to talk to me, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office at (517) 373-1777 or senkdaley@senate.michigan.gov.

Senator Kevin Daley represents the 31st state Senate District, which is comprised of Tuscola, Bay and Lapeer counties.

Cass City Red Hawk ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Senior Noah Zaleski is Knights Insurance Agency choice for Cass City Red Hawk Athlete of the Week honors.

Noah was instrumental in Cass City's gridiron team run to the Greater Thumb West championship and Division 7 district honors before COVID-19 restrictions put a halt to the Red Hawk season after winning their first 9 contests. A hard running back and ferocious hitting linebacker, Noah improved with each game, earning first team

Greater Thumb West all-conference honors on offense and second team Greater Thumb West all-conference honors on defense.

Up to this point in his final season, Noah has rushed for 532 yards on 83 totes, including four touchdowns and five 2-point conversions. He also has caught five passes for another 69 yards, including one TD and one 2-point conversion.

On defense, Noah has recorded 14 solo tackles, assisted on 10 tackles and notched four tackles for losses. He also has a fumble recovery for the Red Hawks.

Noah is the son of Steve and Alice Zaleski.



NOAH ZALESKI

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Huron County bags two grants

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board last week recommended funding for 76 recreation development projects and land acquisitions totaling \$37,789,600 in 2021.

The successful grant projects include two in Huron County — an acquisition grant of \$96,600 for Sebewaing Riverside Park, and a \$217,000 development grant for improvements to Lighthouse County Park, which is located six miles north of Port Hope.

The trust fund board this year considered a total of 136 applications requesting more than \$60 million in funding. In a competitive process, all eligible applications were evaluated based on scoring criteria approved by the board.

The board's mission is to recommend funding to both state and local agencies for development projects and land acquisitions that will further access to public outdoor recreation.

This year, the board recommended \$27,289,600 for acquisition grants and \$10,500,000 for

development grants. There were 26 acquisition grants awarded to local units of government for a total of \$20,805,400, while four acquisition grants went to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for projects totaling \$6,484,200.

The trust fund board also recommended a total of \$9,300,000 in 42 development grants be awarded to local units of government, while four DNR projects garnered a total of \$1,200,000.

"This year's grant recommendations represent a broad range of land acquisition and outdoor development projects that will make a real difference," said DNR Director Dan Eichinger. "With the results of Proposal One this fall, it's clear that Michigan's residents support this program and its continued investment in projects that speak to the recreational needs of communities across our state."

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund is a restricted fund that was established in 1976 to provide funding for public acquisition of lands for resource protection and outdoor recreation, as well as for

public outdoor recreation development projects. It is funded through interest and earnings on funds derived from the revenues of state-owned oil, gas and minerals.

Over the past 44 years, the trust fund has granted more than \$1.2 billion to state and local units of government to develop and improve recreation opportunities in Michigan.

"Under the challenges of gathering with friends and family this year, outdoor spaces and public recreation played a major component in people's lives," said trust fund board Chairman Bill Rustem. "This program's ability to continue to acquire and develop parks and green spaces is more important now than ever to ensure that every Michigander has access to the state's natural resources."

The trust fund board's recommendations will go to the Michigan Legislature for review as part of the appropriations process. Upon approval, the Legislature forwards a bill to the governor for her signature.

Vaccine on way as virus hits hard

Continued from page one.

icans who died during combat in all of World War II.

The nation continued to break records last week in the number of new cases of virus and for the most Americans hospitalized in one week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In Michigan, state health officials reported last week a rate of 514 cases per million people, per day, a number that has been gradually declining, although the testing positivity rate remained very high at 14 percent.

In Tuscola County, the latest seven-day test positivity rate average was even higher — 18.2 percent — compared to six percent in May, according to Ann Hepfer, health officer for the Tuscola and Huron county health departments. Hepfer noted the positivity rate during the same period in Huron County was 16 percent, compared to one percent in May.

The latest numbers

Monday's statewide total confirmed cases reached 437,985, with a total of 10,752 deaths — that's an increase of about 33,600 cases and 805 more deaths compared to a week ago, when the totals were 404,386 cases and 9,947 deaths. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) officials estimate roughly 236,369 Covid patients have recovered statewide to-date.

In the Thumb, between Monday, Dec. 7, and Monday, Dec. 14, the number of combined confirmed cases in Tuscola, Huron and Sanilac counties increased by 538 — from 3,806 to 4,344 — with the three counties' combined death toll increasing by 38 to 141 fatal-

ities.

According to the latest data (Monday afternoon), Tuscola County has now recorded 2,021 confirmed cases, an increase of 183 cases compared to a week before, and 71 deaths (an increase of seven).

In Huron County, meanwhile, there are 1,115 confirmed cases (an increase of 219 from a week earlier), with 27 deaths (an increase of 11), and Sanilac County has a total of 1,208 confirmed cases, up from 1,072 cases a week earlier, and 43 deaths (an increase of 20).

The latest statistics available in the Chronicle's coverage area (as of Thursday) revealed 233 confirmed cases, up from 213 cases a week earlier, in the Cass City zip code. State officials are reporting 106 recoveries in this area.

The only county zip codes reporting higher numbers of cases are Caro (451 — an increase of 49 cases over the previous week, with 238 recovering), Vassar (309 cases — an increase of 33 cases, with 183 recoveries), and Millington (240 — an increase of 28 cases, with 140 recoveries).

Over the same week-long period, there was an increase of 10 active cases (for a total of 109) in the Unionville zip code, where there have been 65 recoveries; Deford has 43 (an increase of four cases) and 15 recoveries; Gagetown, 11 cases (an increase of three) and eight recoveries; Kingston has 66 cases (up from 60) and 28 recoveries; Ubyly has 48 cases (an increase of nine) and 17 recoveries; and Owendale, 24 cases (an increase of nine) and two recoveries.

Testing continues to be available each week in Tuscola County at the mosquito abatement facility in Caro. Upcoming dates are Thurs-

days, Dec. 17 and Dec. 23, from 9 to 11 a.m. Testing will not be offered Dec. 31.

In Huron County, the health department offers testing on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon at the Great Lakes Bay Health Center, 876 N Van Dyke Rd. Bad Axe (drive-through hotline is 989-284-0076).

Residents can locate additional testing sites by visiting the website www.michigan.gov/coronavirus.

Available resources

Hepfer reminds area residents in need of various assistance that help is available from a host of agencies.

"The executive committee of the Tuscola Human Services Coordinating Council met this week and we wanted to make sure that residents are aware of the resources that are available. We all collectively understand the impact the COVID-19 has had on residents and those that currently find themselves unemployed, for perhaps the first time in their lives," she said.

"All the community-based organizations are still open, even though our doors might be locked the services are open. Many of us can assist with answering your MI-Bridges questions, (and) assist with applying for MI-Bridges assistance that includes Medicaid, Mi-Child, housing, food and utilities.

"If we do not have a service for you, we will diligently work to find someone who can help," Hepfer added.

"The Human Development Commission can help with rent, mortgage assistance and water bill payment for households that have been affected by COVID-19. These funds are available for households who have lost their jobs due to Covid, are essential workers, or are vulnerable or immune compromised," she explained. "There are income requirements; as an example, a household of four can have a monthly income up to \$4,306 and be eligible."

Those services are available in Tuscola, Huron and Sanilac counties by calling a toll-free hotline at 1-800-843-6394, Monday through Thursday, to schedule an appointment.

Residents can apply for cash assistance or help with medical care, food or emergency services on the MDHHS website at www.michigan.gov/mibridges. In Tuscola County, more information is available by calling (989) 673-9100.

Thumb health departments, meanwhile, can help residents who need to apply for various benefits, including WIC, family planning, children's special health care services, immunizations. In Tuscola County, call (989) 673-8114, in Huron County, call (989) 269-9721, and in Sanilac County, (810) 648-4098.

"If you don't know who you should call, please reach out to 211 — they should be able to connect you to what you are looking for. Google 211 Northeast and you can search for resources in our community," Hepfer noted.

Letters to the Editor

Say no to politicians

Continued from page 3.

sense dictates that the real number falls somewhere in between. Consequently, more and more experts who disagree with government scientists have finally received some media attention. If anyone doubts this is a total scam, the actions of some governors, mayors and other politicians suggest otherwise. They don't seem to be bound by their own "laws," proving the obvious disdain they have for us mere mortals. When they're caught, they seem to escape with an excuse, an apology or a simple denial while we receive fines and jail time for the same activities. They are actually laughing at our ignorance and our gullibility.

Whistleblowers have shown that this virus was intentionally created in a lab in China possibly with some financial backing from the Obama administration via Dr. Fauci. It doesn't take a genius to determine that the reason it was released on the world during an election year was to destroy President Trump's economy — the best in history and by a non-politician no less — as well as providing the excuse to institute mail-in ballots which are subject to fraud, and subject they did on a grand scale.

This was biological warfare from China. If the Democrats were just opportunists who took advantage, or were in on the plan from the beginning is a question that has yet to be answered. But in my 55 years of monitoring politics and my experience with the establishment, my money is definitely on the latter.

We go to other countries to help secure their elections. I know that was part of our job in Vietnam. On election days, some infantry and military police would go to the election areas and make certain the VC didn't threaten or intimidate the voters. I never imagined we would be facing similar problems in the U.S., but in 2012 in Philadelphia, Black Panthers stood outside the voting places with clubs to intimidate, not only voters, but also election workers, without fear of repercussion as was proven by then Attorney General Eric Holder who chose to not prosecute any of the violators for obvious felonies. And here we are in 2020 with proven widespread voter fraud assisted and covered up by MSM and Fake News, now shown to be the obvious enemy of the people, exactly as President Trump stated.

President Trump has shown, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that establishment politicians are irrelevant and incompetent by doing that which Obama and others said could never be done. His successes could not and would not be tolerated by the Deep State.

The fact that many politicians, with the help of MSM, have politically weaponized this pandemic speaks volumes to anyone who actually knows how to listen and also confirms my suspicions and allegations. We have, on a daily basis, viewed situations wherein certain businesses have been selectively shut down while similar businesses have remained open, again, with a total disregard for science, common sense or the well-being and survival of the businesses being shut down.

There's another thing that really bothers me about this whole situation, other than the fact that we have possibly allowed our presidential election to be stolen: the snitches, who could also be considered useful idiots and who, for some reason, feel compelled to squeal on store owners, businesses or individuals who won't comply with these arbitrary orders. Am I living in a nightmare? Did I wake up in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union or Communist China? Some of these snitches are obviously disturbed and apparently don't understand what is necessary for a free society to survive. It's not them, but they are necessary for the success of tyrants and dictators.

If everyone refuses to comply, there's not much the Gestapo can really do and the snitches will then be irrelevant just like the establishment politicians. When they want you to shut down your business or wear a mask that has no effect on anything other than violating your rights and making you an obedient servant, grow a pair and just say no. Just — say — no!

Bob Papovich
Snover



Andy Gray

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Fall grants top \$90,000

Continued from page one.

Future Youth Involvement (FYI) Fund — \$1,000 to the Cass City Talons Youth Wrestling Club (to purchase wrestling mat); \$726 to the Caro Community Schools (to purchase a webcam/microphone combo and a gooseneck clamp/light combo); \$7,930 to The Fowler Center (to purchase two ADA model paddle wheel boats); \$17,500 to the Tuscola Technology Center (to purchase a MILO Range Advanced Training System/Simulator); and \$250 to the USA Area Student Council (to support council activities).

"TCCF has now granted more than \$6 million dollars since the organization was incorporated in 1997," Hunter noted.

The Tuscola County Community Foundation was formed in 1996 when nine community-minded volunteers met to determine requirements to establish a community foundation.

"Part of their motivation was a challenge grant issued by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to match \$1 — up to \$1 million — for every \$2 raised by a community foundation," Hunter said. "To meet the grant requirements, they also had to form a youth advisory council (YAC). TCCF's YAC is Future Youth Involvement (FYI)."

The TCCF met the Kellogg challenge and received the grant money in two installments — \$900,000 in November 1998 and \$100,000 in August 1999.

Hunter estimated TCCF's total assets at just over \$14 million in a combined 108 funds at the end of 2019.

"Recently, the Tuscola County Emergency Needs Fund was established to address unexpected needs in the community. Currently, the priority area considered for grant requests would be from non-profit organizations addressing emergency food, clothing and shelter needs of residents in Tuscola County," added Hunter, who noted Revive Ministries of Cass City received a \$500 grant from the fund last spring.

Anyone interested in donating to the TCCF may do so by sending a check to: TCCF, P.O. Box 534, Caro, MI 48723, or by donating online via PayPal's secure network on the foundation's website at www.tuscolaccf.org.



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Obituaries

Renae "Nae" Janssen

Renae "Nae" Marie Janssen, 29, of Cass City, died peacefully Saturday, December 5, 2020 in Covenant Healthcare, Cooper Campus from Covid-19 related pneumonia.

She was born October 21, 1991 in Huron Memorial Hospital, Bad Axe, the middle child born to David and Denise (Francis) Janssen.

Against doctor's predictions, Renae received her diploma and graduated with the class of 2010 at Cass City High School. During her Junior and Senior years, she also attended the Caro Tech Center for Administrative Assistant classes. Renae's academic achievements earned her a place in the National Technical Honor Society. She enjoyed keeping journals, listening to music, reading, and crafts; most of the time simultaneously. Nae was Jesse McCartney's biggest fan, she fulfilled her dream of meeting him in early 2019. She was brutally honest, in the way that we all needed to hear. Renae's thoughtfulness shined through in her writing and art that she shared with others. She was her siblings' biggest cheerleader. Renae loved spending time with her friends, family and extended family at Social U and classes in school. For the past year and a half, she was employed and enjoyed working with her new co-worker friends at McDonald's in Cass City.

Renae lived her life to the fullest. She danced without a care. Her many loves included: reading, drawing and painting, anything purple, everything Harry Potter, dolphins, mermaids, unicorns and all things Halloween. Renae was always eager to play a game; her favorites were Yahtzee and Uno. Whether she was fishing with her Dad, shopping for new books, or spending her rightly earned money, Nae would also make lists of new things to add to her collections. Nae was a French fry stealer and connoisseur of fine ranch dressings and dill pickles. Some even called her "Pickle". She was the most kind hearted, helpful and joyful person. Renae's smile brightened the cloudiest of days and her giggles would always start an avalanche of laughter. She was the epitome of a "beautiful soul".

Renae is survived by her parents, David and Denise; brother, David Janssen, Jr. of Moscow, ID; sister, Angie (Alex Peruski) Janssen of Saginaw; grandmother, Cheryl Lester of Saginaw; aunts and uncles: Colleen (Darin) Scott of Saginaw, Joe (Cory) Janssen of Owendale, Todd (Jennifer) Kernaghan of Richmond, George (Deanna) Janssen of Bad Axe, Rob Lester of Kingston, Paul (Kim) Lester of Las Vegas, NV, Brad (Andrea) Lester of Omaha, NE, Debra (Juan) Medrano of San Antonio, TX, Donna (Richard) Hartwick of Cass City, William (Linda) Francis of San Antonio, TX and Dr. Deb (Jeff) Blue-Decker of Monrovia, IN; many cousins including her cousin by blood, but sister by heart; Ylee Janssen; her pup nephew, Walt the Australian Shepherd and many close friends.

She was preceded in death by her grandparents: Elmer and Janet Francis and Robert Lester; uncle, Fred R. Francis; cousins: Ryan Hartwick, Jason Medrano, Curt Medrano, Jenny Medrano and Alexis "Lexi" Smith.

Cremation has taken place. Right now we are celebrating Renae's life apart, so that we can celebrate together later.

Friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at www.kranzfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



Ellen Lockwood

Ellen Irene Lockwood, 81, of Cass City died peacefully, Sunday, December 13, 2020 in her daughter's home.

She was born May 14, 1939 in Huron County to Nicholas and Alma (Rogers) Decker.

She married Elden Paul Lockwood April 24, 1981 in Cass City.

Ellen worked at Snover Stamping for many years and later with her husband, Paul, at the Cass City Chiropractic Center. She was a member of the Cass City VFW Ladies Auxiliary. Ellen's favorite pastimes were watching wildlife in her backyard, autumn color tours up north, car rides around the lake and going for ice cream. She also enjoyed spending time with her family, camping, gardening and fishing.

Ellen is survived by her husband, E. Paul; daughters: Connie Dempsey of Deckerville, Marilyn (Robert) Bulgrien of Snover, Jane Lewis of Pigeon and Marjorie (Jim) Russel of Fairgrove; seven grandchildren: Steven, Erin, Lindsey, Jayce, Carrie, Trevor and Caylee; ten great-grandchildren; brothers: Nick Decker of Cass City and Alonzo (Helen) Decker of PA; sisters: Mary (Bob) Roe of Midland, Lillian Decker (Virgal) of Frankenmuth and Carol Decker of IL; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her brothers: Clarence Decker and Philip Decker; sister, Patricia Brooks; sons-in-law: David Lewis and Bill Dempsey.

A private family graveside service was held in Almer Township Cemetery, Caro with Pastor Phil Burkett of Cass City Missionary Church officiating.

Memorials may be made to Huron County Medical Care Facility, c/o Activity Department. Friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at www.kranzfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



Dorothy Mantey

Dorothy Elaine Mantey, 92, of Cass City died peacefully, Friday, December 11, 2020 in Northwood Meadows Assisted Living Medical Care Unit, Cass City.

She was born June 7, 1928 in Cass City, the first child born to Charles Luke and Evelyn D. (Doerr) Tuckey.

She married Carl Edward Mantey March 4, 1950 in Salem United Methodist Church, Cass City. He died August 27, 2008.

Dorothy graduated from Cass City High School in 1946 and Saginaw General School of Nursing in 1949. She

worked as a registered nurse for several hospitals and doctor's offices. Dorothy organized the candy strippers at Caro Community Hospital and was involved in many area health boards. She was a charter member of the Tuscola County Mental Health Board and served as Vice President of the 14 County Council. Dorothy was awarded Citizen of the Week by WKYO on June 15, 1974 and Caro Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 1983.

She was crowned the 1949 Tuscola County Bean Queen, where she first met Carl. Dorothy was a member of Cass City United Methodist Church. She was an avid painter, particularly on china and using watercolors. Dorothy and Carl traveled extensively to all fifty states and all over the world. Above all, she loved her family and was proud of every one of them.

Dorothy is survived by her sons: Charles (Mary Jo) Mantey of Pt. Austin and James (Anita) Mantey of Greenville; seven grandchildren: Katie Carter, Becky Mantey, Timothy (Nicole) Mantey, Andrew (Lori) Johnson, Kimberly Johnson, Erin (Chris) Winkler and Jason (Elise) Mantey; twelve great-grandchildren; brothers: Charles (Iris) Tuckey of Cass City, Dr. Donald (Kathlyn) Tuckey of Frankenmuth, William (Sylvia) Tuckey of Cass City and Roy (Kathleen) Tuckey of Cass City; sister, Eunice Kaufman of Cass City; sisters-in-law: Barbara Tuckey of Cass City and Delores Tuckey of Cass City; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband; daughter, Pamela Ann Mantey; brothers: JD Tuckey and Robert Tuckey; brother-in-law: Donald Kaufman; in-laws: Edgar (Rose) Mantey, Leslie (Crystal) Hegman, Glen (Anne) Tinker and Glen (Frances) Alles.

A private family committal service was held in Indianfields Township Cemetery, Caro with Rev. Bob Demyanovich of Cass City United Methodist Church officiating.

A celebration of Dorothy's life will be held later when we can all gather safely. Memorials may be made to Cass City United Methodist Church or Compassus Hospice of Cass City. Friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at www.kranzfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



Donna "Joan" Little

Donna Joan Little, 89, of Cass City, died Wednesday, December 9, 2020 in Northwood Meadows Assisted Living Medical Care Unit, Cass City.

She was born April 24, 1931 in Flint. Her adoptive parents were Lloyd and Francis (Smith) Atkin.

She married Harold Lee Little June 10, 1955 in Novesta Church of Christ, Cass City. He died November 24, 2017.

Joan graduated from Cass City High School in 1949 and attended County Normal to earn her teaching certificate. She taught classes in a one room country school, worked as a stay at home mom, and then as a school bus driver for 26 years. The wife of a farmer, Joan maintained a huge garden with which she canned enough vegetables to sustain the family all year. She loved to bake and made perfectly excellent pies, cookies and breads. At any church or family gathering the question was always, "where is Aunt Joan's potato salad"? She was a life member of Novesta Church of Christ, Cass City.

Joan is survived by her children: Carol (Ron) White of York, South Carolina, Kurt (Melissa) Little of Evanston, Illinois and Suzanne (Michael) Grimmer of Vicksburg, MI; grandchildren: Matthew Little, Kayla Little, Anna Little, Melanie White, Megan White, Leise Rosman, Alison Park, Mitchell Grimmer and Suzanne Grimmer; four great-grandchildren; brother-in-law, Keith Little of Cass City; sisters-in-law: Lota Hartel of Caro, Joyce Young of South Carolina and Hazel (Murray) Caister of Pt. Huron; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband and brother, Bob Atkin.

A funeral service will be held at a later time. Private burial was held with interment in Novesta Township Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Novesta Church of Christ. Friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at www.kranzfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



Ronald Pettinger, Sr.

Ronald Dale Pettinger, Sr., 82, of Snover passed away peacefully Tuesday, December 8, 2020 in Northwood Meadows Assisted Living Medical Care Unit, Cass City.

He was born April 28, 1938 in Cass City to George and Verna (Lowe) Pettinger.

He married Sally McGrath December 7, 1957. On April 19, 1964 he married Virginia Herr. She died December 26, 2000.

Ronald was employed by General Cable in Cass City. He was a farmer and raised cattle for many years. Ronald enjoyed Detroit Tigers baseball and watched football on television, including both college and NFL games. One of his favorite past times was taking morning driving tours around the homestead, checking on the property and cows, making certain everyone was safe.

Ronald is survived by his children: Ron (Cindy) Pettinger of Snover, Kimberly Pettinger of Filion and Cari (Bob) Baker of Cass City; grandchildren: Rachel Pettinger of Warren, Sara Pettinger (Paul Noel) of New Haven, CT, Andrew Crickon of Filion, Kandace Crickon of Filion and Dylan Crickon of Filion; great-grandson, Joshua Scouten of Warren; brother, Harold Pettinger of Ubyly; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife of thirty-six years, Virginia; sister, Ardis Dean; and sister-in-law, Velda Pettinger.

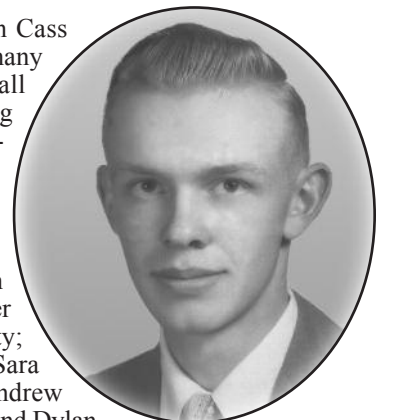
A private graveside service has been held and a public service will take place at a later date.

Interment was in Elkland Township Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Pettinger family c/o Ronald Pettinger, Jr.

Friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at www.kranzfuneralhome.com

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



**Have a concern? A complaint?
Just want to voice your opinion?**

**The Cass City Chronicle
welcomes letters
to the editor.**

Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. The latter is in case it is necessary to call for verification, but won't be used in the newspaper. Names will be withheld from publication upon request, for an adequate reason. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity.

We will not publish thank you letters of a specific nature, for instance, from a club thanking merchants who donated prizes for a raffle.

Commissioners balk at fines

Continued from page one.

officer, they control the funding for health department operations.

Grimshaw reviewed the public health code and indicated he believes the county only has to fund the department at the level set back in 1978. He wants to find what that amount was, which could be a substantial deduction in funding.

Health departments provide a wide variety of services.

Aside from COVID-19 testing, the department helps with filling out Medicaid forms, giving childhood vaccinations, flu shots, provides a food program for expectant mothers and children, inspecting well and septic systems, and more.

“And, from what I found, the county has the authority to change the \$1,000 fine. If the health department wanted to assess that without board approval, you can’t,” Grimshaw asserted.

Hepfer countered that it’s the state health department that imposes fines.

“Then they would have to enforce it. The way I read this, if there is an assessment by the health department, the appeals process winds up with us. Tuscola commissioners can say yes or no on the assessment. That is a process in the statute,” Grimshaw said. “We are the governing entity.”

Commissioner Kim Vaughan, who serves on the county health board, noted each health department is part of the local government and separate from the state health department.

“Under Michigan’s guide to public health statute, you don’t have to be their right arm. That is up to you,” said Vaughan. “You are under the local governing body of the county. You are under local government and not state. You have the option to opt out.”

Hepfer pointed out that she is liable if she doesn’t follow the regulations.

“My concern was for everyone to understand that if a business is given a \$1,000 assessment, they have the right to appeal to the board of commissioners and we can turn it down. We don’t have to go along with it,” Grimshaw said. “If a business feels they are wronged, then they can follow the appeals process. They can bring it to the county commissioners for us to make a decision.”

“I have to be careful. I cannot put the county in a predicament where we don’t do something and it comes back on us,” Hepfer said.

The commissioners questioned if Hepfer was making decisions she didn’t have to, and if changes had been made to fees without the county board’s knowledge.

Grimshaw then demanded to know what the fees for services were, why they had changed, and how they were established. “Somewhere along the line fees were modified. There were fees added, and by whom?”

Hepfer explained some fees are set according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

“Each time we added a fee, (it was) brought to board of health to review and then to the board of commissioners,” Hepfer said. “What we don’t bring forward is when (it involves) environmental health. That is set by the Detroit CPI,” she explained.

“All of the others were brought to commissioners. The last major fee schedule change was in 2009...and was approved by the board of commissioners.”

Grimshaw continued to reiterate how he felt the local health department should operate, and when Hepfer tried to respond, he repeatedly talked over her.

“I do have to follow these orders or the health department or we could be held liable. I could also be liable if I did not do my job,” Hepfer said. “Look what just happened in Flint when people did not do their jobs. I just want everyone to know that I will do my job as it is required in the public health code. It is my job to follow the state orders — that is not a local decision to make.

“It’s my job and the public health code requires me to follow the orders and laws. I do not get to decide which ones I see fit to follow. I cannot pick and choose.”

Questioning regarding the health department came minutes after Hepfer reported on increasing COVID-19 cases and deaths in the county.

“We lost someone very young in Cass City the other day, and we lost two in Unionville,” Hepfer said. “This will be giving me post-traumatic stress I’m sure.”

But at no point during the discussion focused on limiting health department authority did board members refer to those numbers.

“The decisions that are being made are killing businesses. Businesses are dying under this,” said Vaughan. “Businesses know how to operate safely, so let them.”

After a lengthy discussion, Vaughan acknowledged that Hepfer has gone the extra mile to help businesses and is doing a good job. For her part, Hepfer made it clear she is also concerned about local businesses and the economy, but she pointed out that helping the situation is up to federal and state lawmakers. “Call your representatives and push them to create a relief package for businesses — to make them accountable,” she said. “I’m doing what I can to push them.”

News briefs

O-G School officials adjusting

OWENDALE — School districts continue to adapt to changing state regulations, and Owen-Gage Schools is no exception.

During a recent board of education meeting, Owen-Gage officials approved the district’s updated preparedness/response learning plan, with students grades nine through 12 doing remote learning in compliance with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) orders.

The latest order extended various restrictions through Friday, Dec. 18. “The board will meet again to go over our attendance data, but I would suspect, that as long as we continue to remain healthy, we will continue to have our PK-8 (students) learning in-person and our nine-12 students remotely,” said school Supt. Terri Falkenberg.

“There will then be a break, and as long as the order is not extended even further, all grades, including our high school, will be able to return (to in-person instruction) on Jan. 4.

Pop-up pantry set in Gagetown

GAGETOWN — A pop-up drive-through food distribution will be held Wednesday, Dec. 23, at 10 a.m. at the Elmwood Township Fire Hall in Gagetown.

The giveaway, sponsored by the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, is free and open to all on a first come, first served basis.

VA meeting schedule approved

CARO — With the start of a new year just weeks away, meeting schedules are being set.

The Tuscola County Veteran Affairs Committee set its 2021 meeting schedule as follows: Jan. 26, March 23, May 25, July 27, Sept. 28 and Nov. 23.

All meetings will be at 5 p.m.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, until further notice the office will be doing all meetings electronically, according to Tuscola County Veteran Affairs Director Mark Zmierski.

To attend the meeting, a person needs to notify the Tuscola County Veterans Affairs office and receive acknowledgement of their desire to attend the session electronically before noon on the day of the scheduled meeting. To do that, call (989) 673-8148 to get the information needed to call in via phone conference.

The veteran affairs office is located at 1309 Cleaver Rd., Caro, on the north side of the Tuscola County Health Department.

Treasurer’s office remains open

CARO — Although access to most Tuscola County offices remains restricted, there is one still allowing for public access.

The Tuscola County Treasurer’s office is open to accept tax payments. The office is located in the Purdy Building at 125 W. Lincoln St., Caro.

Other departments housed in that facility include the drain office, the register of deeds, equalization, and the county controller-administrator. The doors to the other offices in that building will remain closed to the general public, but appointments can be made for service from those other departments.

According to county Treasurer Ashley Bennett, winter tax bills have been sent out.

“For those who have not received their new tax bill, they should contact their local township treasurer,” Bennett said. “The Tuscola County Treasurer’s Office does not collect any winter taxes, (so) we are unable to accept payment for these tax bills.

“Please refer to your bill for instructions on how to pay, and contact information for your treasurer.”

Compiled by Mary Drier and Tom Montgomery

Beware of Covid scams

Would-be scam artists have wasted no time in trying to make a buck by preying on the fears of residents in the midst of a global pandemic.

“Scammers are lurking under every rock and behind every corner waiting to take advantage of unsuspecting people,” said Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel.

Nessel recently issued a consumer alert, reminding residents to be on the lookout for false claims, products and services that promise to cure, treat or prevent COVID-19. Vaccines, treatments, test kits and clinical trials are all examples of what scammers may be offering.

“We are working with our state, federal and local partners in preparing for distribution of the life-saving COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, MDHHS chief medical executive and chief deputy director for health. “However, Michigan residents should keep in mind that a vaccine has not yet been approved, so they should be extremely wary of anyone who offers them a vaccine now.”

“When the COVID-19 vaccine does become available, it will be in limited quantities, and people should look to trusted resources for information such as their local health department or their doctor. MDHHS will share this information widely and will provide regularly updated information on our website.”

The Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Homeland Security and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have all issued similar warnings.

“We all want this devastating virus to go away,” said Nessel, “but until a vaccine is approved for distribution by the FDA, if someone offers you a COVID-19 vaccine, do not take it.”

To report fraud or make a consumer complaint in Michigan, contact the attorney general’s connection to consumer protection online or at (517) 335-7599.

Council approves tax break

Continued from page one.

room, and office space renovations, for a total investment of about \$600,000.

The tax breaks will help to retain 17 jobs, and company officials expect to add three new jobs over the next two years.

Jim McCloskey, a Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation representative and one of roughly 15 who participated in the 60-minute virtual meeting, explained the tax break is for 12 years, following completions of the improvements, and basically freezes the new building’s state equalized valuation (SEV) at pre-improvements levels.

“We have appreciated the help and support we have received from our village manager, local and county EDC during our planning process and look forward to many more years in the future,” said Langenburg, adding, “We are a family-owned business and the succession plan is for our children, Brad and Amanda, to continue on with the future of Mi-Tech.”

New spending plan

Turning to financial matters, after setting the village’s 2021 millage rate of 18.1387 mills, the council passed next year’s spending plan, penciled in at \$5,359,695 — slightly higher than the original 2020 budget of \$4,923,166.

The millage remains unchanged, as it has for the last several years, and is comprised of 12.4625 mills for general operations, 4.9162 mills for streets, .08 of a mill for landfill testing assessment, and .68 of a mill for community promotions.

Increased spending in the new budget is due to an aggressive capital improvement plan. Also, there was a negotiated cost of living increase (1.5 percent) for village employees in 2021, excluding the village manager.

General fund revenues in the coming year are slated to increase \$26,170, partly the result of a welcome increase in residential property values and commercial investments.

Village Manager Debbie Powell described the spending plan as a “conservative budget (that) follows the philosophy of spending tax dollars to improve Cass City now, while those who are paying taxes can reap the benefits, with a primary focus being to take care of what we have and look to grow in the future.”

Highlights of the 2021 budget include capital improvements of \$1,676,700. The monies will purchase new plant equipment, support street work, and purchase a new pickup truck, dump truck and leaf vacuum truck.

Funding for the local street budget is set at \$250,000, while the major streets budget totals \$70,000. The 2021 street projects include work on South Seeger Street, Third Street and Woodland Street. The Seeger Street project will begin in 2021 with the replacement and upgrade of waterlines across South Seeger, followed by repaving. The waterline replacement is funded by a USDA/RURAL Development bond.

Additionally, \$50,000 has been budgeted for sidewalk installation and repairs that include a new sidewalk on Hill Street from Hospital Drive to Church Street, while making repairs to the sidewalk on Fourth Street, and spot repairs to sidewalks throughout the village.

In other business

Also during the final regular monthly meeting of 2020, the council renewed its insurance policy with Decker Agency in the amount of \$44,086 for the 2021 fiscal year. The policy is a public entity insurance package through the Michigan Township Participating Plan and provides property, liability causality and vehicle coverage.

The premium reflects a slight decrease — \$153 — from the current year, with the first semi-annual payment (\$24,052) due Jan. 15 and the second semi-annual payment (\$20,034) due June 1.

Finally, the council approved Trustee Mick Kirm’s motion for payment to Michigan Agribusiness Solutions (MAS) for hauling biosolids this fall.

Records show the Cass City Wastewater Treatment Plant had MAS haul biosolids to local farm fields to help fertilize the soil. In 2020, MAS hauled 187,000 gallons of biosolids at a cost of 48 cents per gallon. The cost for the fall haul was \$8,976.

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Legal Notices

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Tuscola County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on January 14, 2021. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Michael Arends III, single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): PennyMac Loan Services LLC
Date of Mortgage: September 7, 2018
Date of Mortgage Recording: September 10, 2018
Amount claimed due on date of notice: \$53,409.89
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Cass City, Tuscola County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 2, Block 1 of Pinney's Addition to the Village of Cass City, according to the plat recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, Page 60, now being Page 6B
Common street address (if any): 6742 Main St, Cass City, MI 48726-1528
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: November 25, 2020
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334 (248) 642-2515 1425392 11-25-4

Common street address (if any): 3312 River St, Kingston, MI 48741-9701
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: November 25, 2020
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334 (248) 642-2515 1425140 11-25-4

tems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Quicken Loans Inc., its successors and assigns Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Quicken Loans, LLC Date of Mortgage: September 21, 2018 Date of Mortgage Recording: September 25, 2018 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: \$82,279.18 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Village of Cass City, Tuscola County, Michigan, and are described as: Lot 4, Block 3, Plat of Jesse Fox Addition to the Village of Cass City, according to the plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 15 of Plats, Page 277, Tuscola County Records. Commonly Known as: 6407 Church St., Cass City, MI 48726 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 12/09/2020 Pate-tivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 313768 12-9-4

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Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Ruyard K. Fay, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Financial Freedom Senior Funding Corporation, a subsidiary of Indy Mac Bank, F.S.B.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as Trustee for Mortgage Assets Management Series I Trust
Date of Mortgage: March 12, 2005
Date of Mortgage Recording: April 20, 2006
Amount claimed due on date of notice: \$114,145.14
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Kingston, Tuscola County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 3, Block D, Legg's Addition to the Village of Kingston, according to the

Cass City group keeps its promise to students

Continued from page one.

PROMISE Board.

“Each savings account will be opened with a \$50 deposit from the PROMISE, with \$10 deposited at Thumb Bank and Trust and \$40 reserved at the Sanilac Community Foundation,” Richards explained.

“In future years, the PROMISE — along with Cass City Public Schools, Thumb Bank and Trust and the Sanilac Community Foundation — will work on helping students ‘grow their accounts,’ set goals for the future, explore career options, and develop financial skills.”

Thanks to generous donations and support from current and former community members, Cass City Public Schools alumni, local businesses, local civic organizations, and foundations, the PROMISE has been able to secure enough funds to implement the first portion of the Cass City PROMISE, in spite of the challenges brought by a global pandemic, Richards said.

“While numerous fund-raising activities and events were planned for the summer and fall of 2020, almost all were put on hold due to Covid,” she added. “Thankfully, articles in the Chronicle, presentations to local civic organizations, and a letter-writing campaign garnered enough interest and financial support to begin the PROMISE’s first phase of programming.”

“We’re so thrilled we were able to keep that promise, it’s like a light at the end of the tunnel, a spark of hope for the future.”

Families in the Cass City School District can expect to hear more about the beginning of the project and related savings accounts from school Supt. Jeff Hartel in early 2021.

In the meantime, Richards said those interested in learning more about the program or who would like to donate should check out the Cass City PROMISE website at www.casscitypromise.com.

The PROMISE explained

The plan — to lay the groundwork for a program that promises to arm students not only with the habits they’ll need to build bright futures for themselves, but also financial assistance to help turn their career goals into reality — is ambitious, to be sure. But it’s doable, according to the Cass City PROMISE Team, which last fall unveiled its preliminary plan and campaign to establish and build a college/trade school savings account for every Cass City student.

The team’s mission is two-fold; first to promote a community-wide culture in which local students and their families focus on, prepare and save for post-secondary (high school) education — whether that involves a college degree, certificate or specialized career training — and secondly to provide some financial support for every student.

In the process, backers say, the Cass City PROMISE program will improve more opportunities for students, increase local enrollment, and enhance economic growth and development in the community by attracting business and increasing the number of well-trained workers.

“It’s not just about students; it’s about revitalizing the whole community,” Richards has said. Unlike scholarship programs, she explained, participation in the local “promise” program will be offered to every Cass City student, including new students enrolled in subsequent years.

The Cass City PROMISE is the brainchild of two longtime Cass City residents who have remained active in and worked to better the community for decades.

“During the spring of 2019, Geraldine Prieskorn and Ben Varney... rekindled a conversation they had shared over the past several years... a desire for the establishment of a Cass City PROMISE,” Richards said. “Knowing that (it) would stimulate a positive community transformation and provide a post-secondary culture and financial support for all Cass City graduates, Geraldine and Ben believed that hard work on a ‘promise’ would yield life-enhancing dividends.”

Since the introduction of the Kalamazoo Public School District’s Promise Scholarship Program in 2005, public school districts across the country have announced similar initiatives, offering college scholarships for students who attend their public schools for a set period of time.

Promise programs seek to transform communities by making a long-term investment in education through scholarships for local students. They work to expand access to and ensure success in higher education, deepen the college-going culture in both the K-12 system and community as a whole, and support local community economic development.

Currently there are 80-plus promise programs across the country, including about 20 in Michigan. And while a number of those programs have been established in urban areas, there are also successful examples in smaller communities.

Today, the Kalamazoo Promise program — created by anonymous donors to provide every Kalamazoo High School graduate of the district with a scholarship (full tuition for students who have attended the district for their entire K-12 education) — has paid out more than \$117 million, sending roughly thousands of students to four-year universities or community colleges.

Cass City program

The Cass City PROMISE program is modeled loosely on the Kalamazoo program, although on a much smaller scale to start.

In a nutshell, the Cass City PROMISE program will incorporate two funding mechanisms, including the Red Hawk Nest Egg savings accounts, which required an initial investment of about \$50,000.

While ongoing fundraising will be an integral part of the effort in order to ensure a start-up savings account for upcoming kindergarten classes as well as new students to the district, the students themselves will also be expected to take an active role. However, rather than focusing on selling products, those activities will emphasize service projects within the community, according to Richards, who said the motivation for students will be earning incentive donations that will grow their accounts.

Students are also expected to qualify for incentive funding by donating to their own deposit-only promise savings accounts.

Richards acknowledged the start-up \$50 education savings account doesn’t sound significant, but she cited studies showing that children with just \$500 or less saved for college are three times more likely to go to college or enter other specialized training, and four times more likely to graduate than those without savings. Parents and children with early savings also have greater expectations for post-secondary education plans, she noted.

The second component of the Cass City PROMISE is a scholarship fund to be shared by all Cass City graduates. Named the Red Hawk Flight program, details of the scholarship component will be ironed out in the future as the fund is established and grows to the point of awarding grants.



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