



*Wishing you a*  
Santa letters & student artwork galore!  
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# Merry Christmas

# CASS CITY CHRONICLE

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

VOLUME 114, NUMBER 42

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## Board gives Hartel best possible grade

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

For the third consecutive year – in spite of the many challenges brought on by a global pandemic that has turned K-12 instruction upside down in 2020 — the Cass City Board of Education has given local school Supt. Jeff Hartel an especially strong vote of confidence.

Following an annual job performance evaluation, board President Alice Zaleski announced during Monday night's regular meeting that the board has rated Hartel as being "highly effective" – the highest grade possible — in the job he's held for nearly 11 years now. Zaleski said Hartel received an overall grade of 96 percent based on his job performance over the past 12 months.

As a result, the board again approved a resolution extending Hartel's three-year revolving contract by one year. He will also receive a pay increase of 1.5 percent – the same amount awarded to other administrators in the district.

Michigan law requires local and intermediate school district boards of education to evaluate school superintendents each year. Boards must then assign the administrator a rating of highly effective, effective, minimally effective or ineffective, taking into account a variety of measures, including student growth and assessment data.

Hartel later acknowledged the board's evaluation of his efforts.

"I'm just very appreciative that the board feels I'm doing a good job. We're in tough times and things have been different," he said, noting he's worked along with the entire staff to deal with each challenge with an eye on doing what's best for the students in their charge.

Hartel's career in education spans nearly 33 years, including 29 years Please turn to page 5.

## Thumb lawmakers balk at extended restrictions

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) officials Friday updated the department's ongoing pandemic restrictions, reopening some businesses and activities but continuing a ban on indoor dining at restaurants and bars.

The decision, announced two days before previous restrictions were slated to expire over the weekend, was met with swift criticism from Thumb lawmakers.

The new order, in effect through Friday, Jan. 15, allows for indoor activities where Michiganders can remain masked and comply with social distancing recommendations, including in-person learning at high schools and indoor entertainment venues. Casinos, bowling centers and movie theatres have also been allowed to reopen (concessions are to remain closed) with total capacity capped at 100.

The ban on indoor dining at bars and restaurants across Michigan will remain in effect another four weeks as state officials continue efforts to reduce COVID-19 illnesses and deaths.

Lawmakers, including 31st District state Senator Kevin Daley (R-Lum), say the governor and MDHHS continue to go it alone in making these decisions and are causing irreparable harm.

"For months, lawmakers and residents alike have repeatedly asked the governor to share the information she is using to take hold of everyone's lives. Unfortunately, these calls have gone unanswered," said Daley, whose district includes Tuscola County.

"Restaurants have been crushed by the heavy-handed, blanket orders that have come down from the administration. Now, as we find ourselves in the peak of the holiday season, she is again asking restaurants to make concessions as they barely hold their heads above water.

"This order seems like salt in the wound to those in the industry," Daley added. "Big box stores and chains have been able to operate this whole time, and now casinos, movie theaters and bowling alleys are able to open, but restaurants still remain left behind. Not only

is this an incredibly unfair standard, but it places both an unfair and undeserved appearance of danger on the backs of our local business owners.

"This order tells folks it's safe to go spend a night at the casino, but you better not stop in at the local diner down the street for a meal with your family," he said. "People are being forced to close the door on their life's work without so much as a chance to show they have made the investments to meet safety protocols.

"This country was founded on the idea of working hard to build a future for yourself. Unfortunately, folks are now being prevented from earning a living because of government mandates. That is patently against every value we as Americans stand for."

Senator Dan Lauwers (R-Brockway Township), whose 25th district includes Huron and Sanilac counties, agreed.

"While (the governor) acknowledges that the spread of the virus is trending in the right direction in the state because Michiganders are taking responsibility and doing

Please turn to page 8.



## Another successful Christmas for Kids...

THE CASS CITY Rotary Club's annual Christmas for Kids campaign ended Thursday with distribution of toys, clothing and other gifts to 66 local families, helping to ensure a bright Christmas for about 117 children. "It was another successful year," said club member Emily Lascski. "We live in such a wonderful community. Donations — cash and items — were great, considering the circumstances." At right, Rotary Club members AlexSandra Karr and Kevven Dorland bag up toys for families in preparation for last week's distribution.



## Covid vaccine on way to Thumb

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved emergency use authorization for a second COVID-19 vaccine from Moderna last week, just days after giving the thumbs up to the first approved vaccine developed by Pfizer-BioNTech.

The decisions translate into shipment of millions more doses to hospitals and nursing homes across the country, but local health department officials say they are expecting modest shipments ini-

tially.

Those vaccines will go to high priority groups such as frontline health care workers and nursing homes. Vaccinations for the general public aren't expected to become available until late spring.

In the Thumb, Ann Hepfer, health officer for the Tuscola and Huron county health departments reported Thursday that the local health departments had not yet received their shipment of Moderna vaccine.

"We expect shipment (this) week — Tuscola, 300 doses, and Huron, 200 doses. We should receive

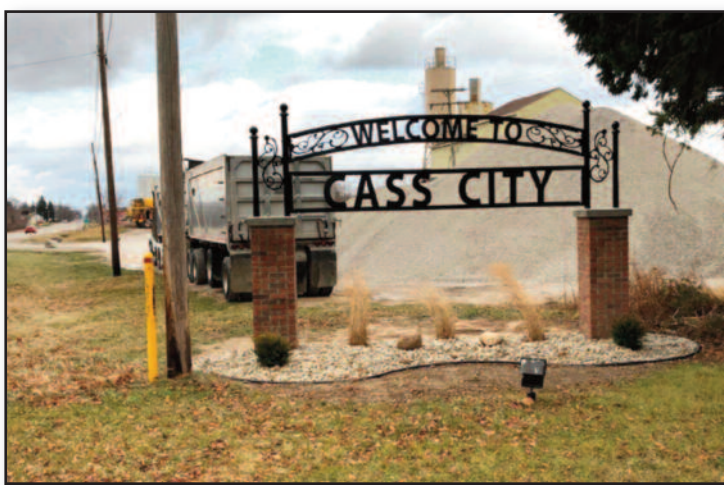
weekly shipments, but just these small amounts until the supply line picks up," Hepfer said.

Michigan has prioritized vaccine allocation within CDC phases, with an emphasis on both ensuring the continuing functioning of the health care system and essential services in the community and protecting people at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

The phases are:

Phase 1A — includes paid and unpaid persons serving in health care settings who have direct or

Please turn to page 4.



THE VILLAGE of Cass City's new welcome signs, located at the east and west ends of town, were recently completed, thanks to contributions by a number of organizations, according to Cass City Chamber of Commerce Administrator Judy Keller. Among them, she said, are the Pinney Foundation, the Michigan Placemaking grant committee, Creative Concrete, CLS Release Management and Mike Stolicker, Sandusky. See story, page 6.

## Holiday drunken driving campaign now underway

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

There may be fewer holiday parties and large family gatherings this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but health experts say alcohol and drug consumption have been on the rise for months — also due to the pandemic — which could prove deadly when combined with driving.

Law enforcement agencies will be out in force, looking for motorists who drink and then get behind the wheel this holiday season.

Among them will be the Michigan State Police (MSP) post in Caro, where commander First Lt. Brian McComb says there will be additional troopers on the road.

Also on board are Tuscola County Sheriff Glen Skrent and Sanilac County Sheriff Garry Biniecki, who both support the annual campaign. And for good reason.

"The price you pay for being drunk and driving is very high. I am not talking about court fines, either," Skrent said. "I am talking about the cost of how it affects your family and how it affects other innocent citizens being involved in a crash you may cause.

"The effects last a lifetime and, like a bullet fired from a gun, you can't take it back."

"If you plan on drinking, plan on not driving," Biniecki said. "Re-

Please turn to page 8.

## News briefs

### Bill limits emergency orders

LANSING – State Rep. Phil Green (R-Millington) last week voted in support of a measure to provide legislative oversight of Michigan health orders issued during a pandemic or similar emergency.

The measure would limit emergency rules issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to 28 days and require legislative approval for an extension, aligning it with a 1976 law requiring legislative approval to extend a state of emergency declared by the governor beyond 28 days.

“The Michigan Supreme Court made it clear that even during times of emergency, the Legislature and the governor should be working together to do what’s best for our state,” said Green, who represents the 84th District (Tuscola and Huron counties).

“The current law related to health rules doesn’t have a time limit for legislative approval to kick in – but it should, and it should mirror our state of emergency law. The governor can’t extend a state of emergency beyond 28 days without legislative approval, and a governor’s department head should not be allowed to do so either.”

Green said the plan would also “restore balance by reining in the broad authority the DHHS currently has when issuing emergency health orders. It would prohibit state government from forcing a business to close if it is complying with health and safety precautions.”

Senate Bill 1253 was expected to advance to the governor for her consideration.

### Whitmer approves appointments

LANSING – Gov. Gretchen Whitmer last week announced several appointments to various Michigan committees, and a trio of Thumb residents is among them.

Named to the Michigan Bean Commission were Ted W. Bauer, Reese, and Stephen J. Ewald, Unionville.

Bauer is owner of Laracha Farms and chairman of the labor board for Bayside Beans. He will represent District Two growers for a term starting Jan. 1, 2021, and expiring Dec. 31, 2023. Ewald is the president of Ewald Farms, Inc., and is chairman of the Organic Farmers of Michigan Board, a member of the Farm Produce Insurance Authority and chairman of the Bean Commission Production Research Advisory Board. He will serve as a member-at-large. Both of their terms will start Jan. 1, 2021 and expire Dec. 31, 2023.

The Michigan Bean Commission is headquartered in Frankenmuth. There are more than 1,100 growers and related agri-business associates registered with the organization who are dedicated to bringing consumers the highest quality dry beans.

In addition, Deborah Beers, of Sebawaing, was appointed to the Michigan Board of Behavior Analysts. She is a board-certified assistant behavior analyst and chief financial officer for Thumb Area Psychological Services, LLC. Her term begins Jan. 1, 2021 and expires Dec. 31, 2024.

### Nessel: beware of DTE scams

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel is urging Michigan residents to beware of imposter scams related to DTE Energy.

DTE Energy reported that it recently became aware of calls being made to customers by someone claiming to be a DTE employee. The scammer was notifying customers of a power shutoff and requesting payment by bitcoin or preloaded money card to avoid shutoff.

When a return call was made to the number shown on the customer’s caller ID, the customer was greeted by a convincing spoof of a DTE employee who would appear to help the customer avoid a shutoff. In fact, that impersonator would then take advantage of the customer by getting personal information and/or cash.

While consumers are targeted by utility imposter scams every day, this year is worse as a result of COVID-19. Attorney General Nessel is urging residents to recognize potential bad actors posing as utility workers, whether it be in-person, by phone, text or online.

“Some bad actors are using the ongoing pandemic to their full advantage to scam Michigan residents,” Nessel said. “It’s important to remember that utility companies will never call, email, or show up unannounced to demand payment or threaten shutoff. Don’t give in to the bullying or threats of a scammer – call your utility company directly from a phone number available on their website or listed on your utility bill.”

Scammers can be convincing and often target the most vulnerable, including senior citizens and low-income families. With so many struggling during the pandemic, all utility customers should learn to detect and report these predatory scams.

Anyone who suspects they have been contacted by an imposter is encouraged to call 800-477-4747 to speak to a customer service representative, who can confirm the status of their account.

Residents can also file a complaint online with the attorney general’s consumer protection team or call 877-765-8388.

### Animal shelter offers pet gifts

CARO — For those who are still looking for that perfect gift for the hard-to-buy-for person, the Tuscola County Animal Control Shelter has the answer.

The shelter has a wide selection of gift items for sale for fur babies. There are wooden hooks for a dog’s leash, coasters, bandanas that go over a dog’s collar for a stylish look, ornaments, signs with sayings, and can koozies to keep beverages cold.

All proceeds go to benefit the care of animals at the shelter, which is generally open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. Call (989) 672-3863 to be sure.

The Tuscola County Animal Control and Adoptable Pets Shelter is located at 2738 W. Caro Rd. (M-81), Caro.

### 4-H creative arts workshop set

MICHIGAN — Registration is now open for the 2021 Michigan 4-H Creative Arts Celebration Workshop to be offered virtually February 19-21.

Prompt registration at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/2021-virtual-creative-arts-celebration> is encouraged, as the sessions are limited. More information is available by logging onto [https://events.anr.msu.edu/admin/eventdata/creativearts21/Schedule\\_-\\_10652\\_-\\_Creative\\_Arts.pdf](https://events.anr.msu.edu/admin/eventdata/creativearts21/Schedule_-_10652_-_Creative_Arts.pdf).

Participants will be able to virtually connect with instructors and work together on projects, have fun doing a “goose Chase”, reconnect or make new friends virtually, be creative and increase emotional health.

The virtual Michigan 4-H Creative Arts Celebration is open to teens, 4-H members and non-members ages 13 (by Jan. 1, 2021) and older. This first-time workshop is also open to 4-H staff, adult 4-H volunteers and adults who work with youth in a variety of educational settings.

Compiled by Mary Drier and Tom Montgomery

## Law enforcement mourns loss, addresses county jail protocols

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

The Tuscola County Sheriff’s Department joined officials across the state in acknowledging and mourning the death of Wayne County Sheriff Benny Napoleon, who succumbed Thursday after a weeks-long battle with COVID 19.

Napoleon, a former Detroit police chief, died at Henry Ford Hospital. He was 65.

“Besides the Sheriff himself, they have lost other officers and inmates to Covid since the beginning of the pandemic, Tuscola County Sheriff Glen Skrent noted in a Facebook post Friday. “It is a reminder that no matter how great your stature in life is, or how well liked and respected you are, Covid favors no man.”

Skrent pointed out the pandemic has impacted every community, including law enforcement agencies everywhere.

“Your local jail is always a snapshot of your society. As with everyone else, Covid is here,” he said. “We have inmates with Covid right now. Our 55-year-old jail does not facilitate well for having segregated cells nor negative air pressure rooms. We quarantine those with Covid as best as possible (and) our contracted medical company treats the inmates.”

“We, with help from the courts, have reduced the number of inmates as much as possible and still keep the public safe,” Skrent said. “Every incoming prisoner gets tested for Covid.”

The sheriff said his department started using PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests as soon as the state made them available. Correction deputies administer the test, and the tests are shipped overnight to a lab. However, it still takes four to 10 days to get the test results back.

“We (also) had to implement Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) regulations to... test any inmate sentenced to prison within 72 hours of them being transported. Since the PCR tests take too long, we have acquired the ‘quick test’ to use. All these tests are paid for and supplied by the state,” he added, noting deputies can also be tested onsite.

Even the county jail’s food service program has been adjusted due to Covid, with all meals placed in Styrofoam containers and disposed of after each meal.

“Through a grant, we have acquired sanitizing equipment (that utilizes UV light). We also use spray disinfectant frequently,” Skrent continued. “Everyone, no matter who, has to get their temperature taken and answer the Covid questions. Everyone wears a mask. Many jail services have been curtailed to stop Covid from coming in.”

“We have several deputies off with Covid and they are doing

well,” he said. “As I said, we are no different than the community we work in. We strive to keep everyone here safe and have been stringent about safety protocols since March.”

“It is hard on everyone that

works here. We are very proud of our staff for suiting up, coming to work, doing the job — no one here complains about it. This county should be very proud of all the deputies here for doing the job when the going gets tough.”



A NUMBER OF protocols have been established at the Tuscola County Jail to monitor and reduce the spread of COVID-19, including the use of sanitizing equipment – purchased with grant funding – that utilizes UV light to fight the virus.

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# In Our OPINION...

Clarke Haire  
Publisher

Tom Montgomery  
Editor

## Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

Eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of New York's Sun, and the quick response was printed as an unsigned editorial Sept. 21, 1897. The work of veteran newsman Francis Pharcellus Church has since become history's most reprinted newspaper editorial, appearing in part or whole in dozens of languages in books, movies, and other editorials, and on posters and stamps. We present it again to our readers for their enjoyment.

Dear editor,

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in THE SUN it's so.' Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlon  
115 West Ninety-fifth St.

\*\*\*\*\*

VIRGINIA, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except [what] they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no VIRGINIAS. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the super-natural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, VIRGINIA, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood

## Drier Humor

by Mary Drier

Christmas spiders



When I'm not feeling well, it is difficult to feel inspired to be creative to write a column.

While I was waiting recently for inspiration to strike, I thought about my mother. She was a quiet woman who kept to herself, didn't talk much, and I can't remember her smiling much either. I had never thought about her character much until after she had passed, and I started wondering why.

She was the oldest and the only girl in a family of seven brothers. Their father was a bridge builder, so they traveled around a lot. If I remember right, she said that each child had been born in a different state.

With that many children and traveling around, looking for work, I don't think the family had much, and she wasn't much of one to put a lot of store in acquiring things just to have them.

Anyway, while I was feeling down and thinking about my mother, I got out her silver box and looked through it. The box is where she kept sayings, poems, clippings that she liked. I've dipped into the box from time to time for some columns.

At one time or another I've used about all of them for something to write about.

At the bottom of the box was a very old, yellow and brittle piece of paper with faded writing on it. I carefully laid it out and read it. It was so old and had been folded and unfolded so many times it was difficult to read, but I was able to read enough of it to understand what it was about.

It made me smile.

It was the legend of the Christmas spider. It had a black ink drawing of a spider web with a spider dangling down from it.

From what I was able to read, the paper explained that:

A long time ago in Germany, a mother was cleaning for Christmas so the spiders fled to the attic to escape the broom.

After the cleaning, when things settled down, the spiders came down from the attic. They saw a beautiful green tree inside the house.

They were so excited and delighted to have a tree in the house, they climbed all over the tree, enjoying the bright lights and pretty decorations. In their travels over the tree, they added a dusting of gray cobwebs.

When Santa arrived later with some gifts, he saw how the tree was covered in cobwebs. He knew how upset the woman would be to see her lovingly decorated tree covered with webs.

So, Santa turned the webs into beautiful strands of silver.

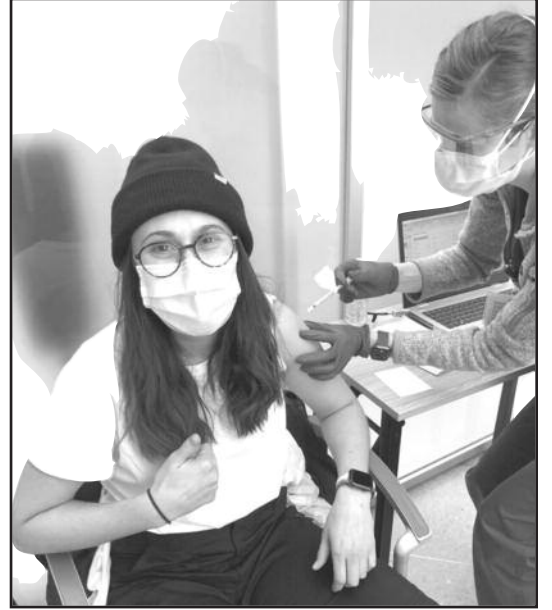
That is the story of how tinsel on trees came to be, and why every tree should have a Christmas spider in its branches (by Jai Moore Designs).



### Rabbit Tracks

by Clarke Haire

(And anyone else he can get to help)



M.D. Morgan Potter, a 2012 graduate of Cass City High School, is shown above receiving a dose of the Covid-19 vaccination. Morgan is an emergency room doctor at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York and chances are high one of the first to get immunized among her former Red Hawk classmates.

Morgan is the daughter of Bill and Paula Potter of East Lansing and the granddaughter of Paul and Barb Burdon of Gageton.

\*\*\*\*\*

Lawmakers late in the day Sunday released a long-awaited \$900 billion coronavirus relief bill that was expected to be passed by Congress on Monday, December 21 and signed into law by President Trump. The bill, according to this article from The Hill, includes...

\* Paycheck Protection Program: Will be refueled with \$284 billion in funds. Businesses that already received a PPP loan will be eligible to get a second one under the new terms. Some of the PPP funds will be set aside for the smallest businesses and community-based lenders.

\* Stimulus checks: A second round of direct payments to Americans — up to \$600 per adult and per child. Also the bill will allow U.S. citizens who are in households that also include non-citizens to receive the payments.

\* Unemployment benefits: Two expiring CARES Act programs — the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation — were extended for 11 weeks. Also, Congress will add \$300 to all weekly unemployment benefits. Workers who rely on multiple jobs and have lost income will also be eligible for a weekly \$100 boost as well.

\* Plus housing assistance, educating, testing and other benefits.

The first round of the Paycheck Protection Program helped keep the doors open at the corner of Oak and Main Streets in 2020. A second PPP loan would certainly do the same in 2021.

\*\*\*\*\*

With winter now (officially) begun, many anglers will soon be heading out to the ice for some frozen fishing fun. It's important to make safety your top priority any time you're on the ice. Remember: there is no reliable "inch-thickness" to determine when ice is safe.

Your safety is your responsibility, so always make sure you're prepared. Dress warmly and bring a life jacket, ice picks and a cell phone that will have signal while you're on the ice. Avoid areas of ice with protruding debris and areas with weak ice, which will appear milky.

Never fish alone (but make sure to practice proper social distancing of at least 6 feet if you're with people who don't live in your household), and always tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.

Use extreme caution if temperatures begin to rise or fluctuate during the season. Repeated thawing and refreezing of ice weakens its integrity, decreasing its ability to support additional weight of people, snowmobiles, ORVs and shanties. Deteriorating ice, water currents and high winds increase the probability of pressure cracks, which can leave anglers and others stranded on ice floes or at risk of falling through the ice.

Visit Michigan.gov/IceSafety for more in-depth tips, including what to do if you fall through the ice.

\*\*\*\*\*

Merry Christmas Y'all.

It's ironic that the annual celebration falls on Friday this year, providing most of us a 3-day weekend to enjoy. However, the pandemic has spoiled the idea of spending extra time with loved ones for many of us.

Still, one of my Christmas wishes remains the same as in past years — stay happy and healthy.

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.

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## Covid vaccine on the way

Continued from page one.

indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and are unable to work from home, as well as residents of long-term care facilities.

\*Phase 1B — includes some workers in essential and critical industries, including workers with unique skill sets such as non-hospital or non-public health laboratories and mortuary services.

\*Phase 1C — includes individuals age 16 years or older who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness due to underlying medical conditions, and people 65 years and older.

\*Phase 2 — this is a mass vaccination campaign for all individuals aged 16 years or older.

"It is important to note that vaccination in one phase may not be complete before vaccination in another phase begins," Hepfer said. "There may be vaccination of individuals in different phases that occurs simultaneously. The timing of the start of vaccination in a phase is dependent on the supply of vaccine from the manufacturer, how vaccine is allocated from the federal level to Michigan, and the capacity to administer the vaccine to populations."

Testing, meanwhile, continues to be an integral part of the local health department's focus on the pandemic. The number of new cases is starting to level off, but Hepfer reported Thursday that the region is not out of the woods yet.

"Tuscola County is reporting 165 positive cases of COVID-19 for this week (Dec. 10-17) for a total of 2,100 cases since the start of the pandemic. The seven-day average on the positivity of the tests is at 16 percent. Total of 76 deaths — that is up 9 from last week," she said.

"Huron County is reporting 117 positive cases of COVID-19 for the week for a total of 1,171 cases since the start of the pandemic. The seven-day average positivity rate is still 16 percent, (with a) total of 33 deaths, up 13 from the previous week.

In Tuscola County, testing options include the health department, which will offer tests from 9 to 11 a.m. today (Wednesday) at the mosquito abatement building in Caro.

"There will be a state-run 'pop up' testing site on Dec 30 — more information will be forthcoming, along with registration information. It will be held at the same location and time," Hepfer noted, adding residents can find additional testing sites online at [www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus).

In Huron County, testing is continuing to be offered at the Great Lakes Bay Health Center, 876 N Van Dyke Rd., Bad Axe, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon. Residents can get updates by calling (989) 284-0076.

### The latest numbers

Monday's statewide total confirmed cases reached 463,403, with a total of 11,532 deaths — that's an increase of about 25,418 cases and 780 more deaths compared to a week ago, when the totals were 437,985 cases and 10,752 deaths. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) officials estimate roughly 284,731 Covid patients have recovered statewide to-date.

In the Thumb, between Monday, Dec. 14, and Monday, Dec. 21, the number of combined confirmed cases in Tuscola, Huron and Sanilac counties increased by 397 — from 4,344 to 4,741 — with the three counties' combined death toll increasing by 25 to 166 fatalities.

According to the latest data (Monday afternoon), Tuscola County has now recorded 2,195 confirmed cases, an increase of 174 cases compared to a week before, and 77 deaths (an increase of six).

In Huron County, meanwhile, there are 1,235 confirmed cases (an increase of 120 from a week earlier), with 35 deaths (an increase of eight), and Sanilac County has a total of 1,311 confirmed cases, up from 1,208 cases a week earlier, and 54 deaths (an increase of 11).

The latest statistics available in the Chronicle's coverage area (as of Thursday) revealed 253 confirmed cases, up from 233 cases a week earlier, in the Cass City zip code. State officials are reporting 153 recoveries in this area.

The only county zip codes reporting higher numbers of cases are Caro (512 — an increase of 61 cases over the previous week, with 291 recovering), Vassar (347 cases — an increase of 38 cases, with 224 recoveries), and Millington (264, an increase of 24 cases, with 170 recoveries).

Over the same week-long period, there was an increase of six active cases (for a total of 115) in the Unionville zip code, where there have been 89 recoveries; Deford has 51 (an increase of eight cases) and 25 recoveries; Gageton, 13 cases (an increase of two) and eight recoveries; Kingston has 70 cases (up from 66) and 48 recoveries; Ubyly has 57 cases (an increase of nine) and 21 recoveries; and Owendale, 30 cases (an increase of six) and nine recoveries.

## Circuit court proceedings

# Several appear on felony charges

*Editor's note: The Tuscola County Circuit Court staff, like all governmental agencies, has faced multiple challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, making it difficult to provide the media with updated criminal (felony) information as cases are adjudicated in the local court system. In the past, the Chronicle staff has collected this information each week in person, but the pandemic has made that routine impossible with the closure of county government offices starting in the spring. However, the court staff has gone out of its way to update us on various cases as time has allowed, and we appreciate their efforts.*

The following people appeared in Tuscola County Circuit Court over the past several weeks on various criminal charges:

\*Daniel C. Trisch, 35, Columbiaville, pleaded no contest to larceny of cash/property totaling \$1,000 to \$20,000 between June 6 and Aug. 20, 2015, in Unionville. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (one prior felony conviction).

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered in the case and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

In a separate case, Trisch pleaded no contest to attempting absconding or forfeiting bond Dec. 28, 2015, in Caro.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Ronny A. Schmitt, 49, Unionville, was sentenced to 10 years to 15 years in prison following his convictions on charges of unlawful imprisonment, assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder or by strangulation, assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault), and domestic violence May 13 in Akron Township.

He was also ordered to pay court costs and fines totaling \$444.

\*Edward D. Carlisle, Jr., 56, Vassar, was sentenced to 365 days in the county jail following his conviction on a charge of operating while under the influence of liquor, third offense, May 27 in Juniata Township. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (three or more prior felony convictions).

In addition to jail time, he was placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,258.

\*Carl L. Tucker, Jr., 59, Caro, was sentenced to 270 days in jail following his conviction on a charge of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, third offense, July 21 in Wells Township.

He was also placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$758.

Tucker was also convicted of operating while intoxicated, third offense, in another case stemming from his arrest March 15 in Caro.

He received a concurrent jail term of 270 days and was placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,258.

\*Robert J. Palmer III, 25, Birch Run, was sentenced to 365 days in jail following his conviction on a charge of fleeing a police officer July 16 in Tuscola Township. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (one prior felony conviction).

In addition to jail time, he was ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,008.

\*Henry R. Geisz, 49, Fairgrove, was sentenced to 365 days in jail following his conviction on a charge of domestic violence, third offense, July 31 in Wisner Township. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (three or more prior felony convictions).

In addition to jail time, he was placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,008.

\*Donnie J. Jones, 46, Otisville, pleaded guilty to a charge of retail fraud, second degree, March 24 in Millington.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Justin W. Hetzel, 29, Millington, pleaded no contest to charges of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder or by strangulation, carrying a weapon with unlawful intent, assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault), and domestic violence, second offense, Sept. 20 in Arbela Township.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered, bond was revoked and the defendant was remanded to the custody of the sheriff's department. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Terrence M. Blogg, 64, Vassar, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, July 18 in Vassar.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Dylan L. Harkness, 21, Burton, pleaded no contest to charges of domestic violence, third offense, and interference with electronic communications March 4 in Vassar.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond (personal recognizance) was set at \$10,000. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Dennis O. Thomas, Jr., 33, Vassar, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, June 12 in Vassar.

A pre-sentence investigation was

ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Alfredo T. Vazquez, 43, Caro, pleaded no contest to charges of carrying a weapon with unlawful intent and domestic violence Aug. 24 in Caro.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Brian C. Loeffler, 33, Pigeon, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, Aug. 6 in Unionville.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Shaquala T. Harris, 24, Vassar, pleaded guilty to operating a motor vehicle while her license was suspended or revoked, and no contest to charges of fleeing and eluding a police officer and assaulting, obstructing or resisting a police officer Aug. 1 in Vassar.

A pre-sentence investigation was ordered and bond was continued. Sentencing is to be scheduled.

\*Kristy A. Collins, 49, Cass City, was sentenced to 90 days in jail following her convictions on charges of fleeing a police officer and operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, second offense, March 10 in Novesta Township.

She was also placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,308.

\*Randall H. Vincent, 64, Vassar, was sentenced to 365 days in jail following his convictions on charges of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, and fleeing a police officer June 11 in Vassar. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (one prior felony conviction).

In addition to jail time, he was placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to complete 480 hours of community service and pay costs and fines totaling \$1,576.

\*Eric D. Albrecht, 43, Vassar, was sentenced to 30 days in jail following his conviction on a charge of killing/torturing a dog, third degree, Feb. 28 in Vassar Township.

He was also placed probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,258.

\*Donald A. Sousa, Jr., 28, Caro, was sentenced to 365 days in jail following his conviction on two counts of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder or by strangulation, and one count of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, May 22 in Kingston. He was also convicted of being an habitual offender (two prior felony convictions).

In addition to jail time, he was placed on probation for 60 months and ordered to pay costs and fines totaling \$1,894 plus restitution of \$806.34.

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## Reporter's notebook

### A few Christmas wishes on my list

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor



I've been blessed in my lifetime, so it's not surprising I've reached a point where it's difficult to come up with wonderful Christmas gift ideas for myself.

That doesn't mean I don't take a few mental notes of things I'd like to find wrapped up nice and neat and placed under my tree.

Unfortunately, most of the items I'm thinking of these days can't be wrapped up and decorated with colorful paper and a bow, largely because they involve good health along with far less anger and stupidity in the world. And some personal effort.

It would be nice to see how a few simple changes (and who doesn't like change?) might improve our outlook on life, not to mention how we see our family, friends, neighbors – even the strangers we've never met yet.

Okay, so I realize "peace on earth" is a pretty unrealistic goal in these times – heck, I can't even imagine peace in this state or nation anytime soon.

Before the era of COVID-19 was ushered in here last spring, one of my wishes was that we would all spend far less time on cell phones, iPads, tablets, etc., and more time talking to each other, face to face. Of course, now, it's that same technology that enables us to safely communicate and enjoy some sense of closeness with others.

In any event, I wonder how many of our readers have any of these on their Christmas lists, too:

\*I wish folks would focus more on how grateful they should be for all they have, rather than wasting time concentrating on and pursuing what they don't have but think they really need to make them happy.

I can't count the number of times I've chased something I just had to have, only to be disappointed by a "thing's" inability to satisfy what I thought I really needed.

\*I wish it were easy to prioritize our lives in such a way that spending more time keeping in touch with family members and friends always trumps stressing about work and other issues that really aren't going to amount to a hill of beans when we take our last breath.

\*I wish everyone would take another look at the wrongs committed by others against them. I'm talking about the wrongs that remain unforgiven, keeping those who were once close far apart now. Time is precious, folks, and if you're really honest with yourself, you'll agree there's no way to justify wasting even one second.

Besides, resentment is like cancer, not to mention a monstrous waste of time and energy.

\*I wish more Americans would set at least as much time aside thinking about and praying for the men and women defending this nation in the armed services – same goes for our local law enforcement officers and medical first responders — as they do bickering and debating about politics.

\*I wish we would all pray more. About everything. Period.

\*I wish we would take the time to learn about the people we meet in life, long before making all sorts of judgments about them or get into arguments over issues that eventually won't matter. I wonder how many times I've done that and missed out on getting to know a really wonderful person.

\*I wish we lived in a society where we could feel comfortable sticking to our own beliefs and personal opinions, but at the same time listen to those with differing views without resorting to name-calling and labeling those who disagree with us as haters. Unfortunately, that's what politics on every level has become.

\*I wish we could all put more effort into walking away from petty arguments that keep us from focusing on what makes living in the Thumb great: a sense of community that is all about caring, compassion and working together for the good of everyone.

Finally, I wish all of our readers a really wonderful Christmas season. Enjoy every moment with your loved ones – in whatever form that may take this year — and embrace the spirit of giving this season brings.

# Down Memory Lane

by Tina Pallas



## 5 YEARS AGO (2015)

Dear Santa, This is Corbin Forster and I would like to thank you for all the gifts last year! I am going to leave you milk and cookies. This year I am 7 years old and I would like 2 dirt bikes, 1 four wheeler, and a go cart and Hot Wheels car boosters for my cars. Santa make sure to take some cookies back to the North Pole for Mrs. Claus! Thank you Santa for all the toys that you bring for me! Love, Corbin Forster, 7.

Dear Santa, This Christmas I would love a new race track for all my cars to race on. I would also love an easy bake oven so I can cook just like mommy does. I really enjoy drawing and coloring now that I am learning how to write my name and letters. Mommy says I am growing way too fast but will always be her little baby bear. Merry Christmas Santa. Love, Jake Green.

## 10 YEARS AGO (2010)

Dear Santa, We have been extra good this year. When you come to our house, we will have cookies and milk waiting for you. Our Christmas tree is beautiful this year! We love to look at all of the lights and ornaments - especially the ones that we are allowed to touch - Snoopy, the M&M guys, and the baby Jesus. We love Thomas the Tank Engine, Little Einsteins, and Elmo. We are very excited for Christmas this year, not only to open our presents, but

also to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus. Love, Brett and Darrin Haag, 2 1/2.

## 25 YEARS AGO (1995)

On Nov. 17, Senior Chief Boatswainmate William S. VanAllen, son of Douglas and Hilda VanAllen of Cass City, successfully completed 20 years of Naval Service. VanAllen is a 1974 graduate of Cass City High School and is presently serving at the Norfolk Naval Base in Norfolk, Va. He is scheduled to join the Fleet Reserves (retire) June 1, 1997 and return to Michigan.

## 35 YEARS AGO (1985)

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Geiger and son Scott will have their family with them for a belated Christmas dinner Saturday, Dec. 28. Guests will be Mr. and Mrs. Mart Hyzer, Lori and Dan of Caseville, Mr. and Mrs. John Spencer, Josiah and Nathaniel of Williamston and Mr. and Mrs. Ken Schott, Ben and Kevin, Cass City

## 40 YEARS AGO (1980)

Mr. and Mrs. Garrison Stine and sons, Scott and Randy, had with them Sunday for a belated Christmas dinner, Dean Stine of Hastings, Miss Jackie Casto of Delton, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Nicholas and children of Kawkawlin, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Marker and children of Bay City and Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Stine.

## 50 YEARS AGO (1970)

Born Friday, Dec. 4, to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Koch, a five-pound, one-ounce baby girl at Bay City Osteopathic Hospital. They named her Janet Erma. The grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Louis Meyer of Frankenmuth and Herman Koch of Bach. Janet Erma has a brother 13 years old.

## 75 YEARS AGO (1945)

When the ship upon which Petty Officer 3/c Bruce Bartle was serving stopped at a port in the Hawaiian Islands Dec. 8, he was very much surprised to meet his brother, Pvt. Leonard Bartle. The boys had the privilege of spending two days together. Leonard has been in the Army one year and Bruce in the Navy for two years. They are the sons of John Bartle.

## 100 YEARS AGO (1920)

C.L. Graham, Wm. Hurley, Alex Henry, R.D. Keating, Glen Moore and Ernest Croft have entered into a solemn compact to grow moustaches and the first one who allows his upper lip to be shaved clean within the specified time must buy new hats for the whole bunch. None of the sextette poses as a matinee idol; in fact, there is plenty of opportunity for improvement among the bunch, especially among the married ones, and the women folks are hoping that the hirsute appendage may result in a betterment of the facial landscape.

## Board gives Hartel top evaluation grade

Continued from page one.

in the Cass City Public Schools, where he started out as a teacher and was later promoted to then-middle school assistant principal/athletic director and, later, middle school principal before being hired as superintendent.

Turning to Cass City's ongoing bond extension-funded capital improvement program, Allison Zimba, the district's chief financial officer, provided an update to the board regarding plans for the second series of projects, scheduled for completion in 2021.

The upgrades, expected to cost an estimated \$1.9 million, include installation of air conditioning in both the elementary and daycare buildings, as well as new ceilings and lighting throughout the elementary school, according to Zimba, who noted school officials will be requesting bids for the work in early January.

In 2019, the district originally set a budget of \$2,458,900 for the first round of capital improvements. That total was later trimmed down significantly, thanks to some bids coming in under budget, leaving roughly \$600,000 for some additional projects planned for 2021 or 2023.

Last year's upgrades included installation of an updated heating and cooling system at the high school (the old steam heat system has been replaced with a forced-air system), new entrances at the high school and elementary building to enhance security, and replacement of the aging clock/fire alarm system at the high school.

In October 2019, the board of education approved several additional upgrades using the \$600,000 windfall left over after the summer projects were completed under budget.

As a result, school officials were able to install new ceiling and

lighting in some junior-senior high building hallways, incorporate a fresh coat of paint, and pay for three new buses. Much of the remaining funding went to replace the aging elementary school boilers.

Also tackled were resurfacing of the elementary school gymnasium, replacement of the elementary school's main entrance doors, and the purchase of one new school bus. Crews were also able to apply a new coat of paint to virtually every classroom and corridor at the high school. In addition, the district installed a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system in the junior-senior high and administrative offices last year.

Those combined projects marked the first phase of three sets of capital improvement projects in the district, all paid for by a voter-approved millage extension that is generating funding over a five-year period.

Cass City voters overwhelming supported the \$8.68 million bond extension proposal in the spring of 2018, paving the way to generate enough funding for a number of upgrades designed to provide students with a safer, more secure and energy efficient learning environment.

The final phase of capital improvement funding, which will be available in a couple years, will be used to upgrade chemistry labs at the high schools long with installation of new cabinets in all high school classrooms.

### In other business

In other business during the final regular meeting of 2020, the board:

\*Approved a half-step pay increase for teachers. The hike was built into the latest Cass City Education Association contract

based on enrollment numbers.

\*Hired Mandy Haag for a half-day virtual GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) position. The program prepares at-risk four-year-olds for kindergarten.

\*Heard virtually from a handful of teachers, who were asked to briefly discuss the challenges they've faced in balancing in-person and virtual instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The educators offered a mixed bag of comments, with most indicating it's been a learning curve. Most also agreed they have appreciated the board implementing half-days of instruction on Fridays, giving teachers adequate time to comply with the required personal (online) contacts with students who have opted for virtual classes, as well as providing time to offer additional assistance to students.

Roughly 30 percent of Cass City Public School students currently are receiving instruction online, according to Hartel, who noted that in-person learning, which has been shut down in Michigan high schools in recent days due to the pandemic, will resume for all students along with virtual instruction starting Jan. 4.

\*Accepted "with regret" the resignation of veteran junior-senior high school Principal Chad Daniels

\*Acknowledged the district's food service team, which along with the help of volunteers has served a whopping 127,545 meals to local students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

\*Recognized Trustee Janet Richards for her service to Cass City Public Schools as a school board member. Richards opted not to seek reelection in November. Filling the vacant trustee seat will be her husband, Scott Richards, who ran unopposed.

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# New village signs completed

by Tom Montgomery  
Editor

Years of planning for new signs welcoming visitors to the village of Cass City have come to fruition with completion of the project, Cass City Chamber of Commerce Administrator Judy Keller announced last week.

The effort began in earnest earlier this year with demolition of old dilapidated signs at the east and west village limits.

Keller says the replacement signs are not only more attractive, but also fit in with architectural designs already in place in the community, including the entrance sign at Rotary Park along Main Street.

The signs feature brick pillars and black metal wording. Jason Mester of Creative Concrete, Cass City, handled construction of the pillars, while Mike Stolicker, Sandusky, was hired to take care of the metal sign work.

Unlike the previous signs, the new ones do not feature the names of local businesses, although the Pinney Foundation and Cass City service club emblems are expected to be featured.

The total budget was estimated at \$14,000 to \$15,000, including landscaping. The chamber will also be responsible for a \$200 annual permit fee to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

"This is something the chamber

has wanted to do, but when we first started (planning the project three to four years ago), we had to keep putting it on hold because of the money," said Keller, who noted funding has come from a variety of sources, including an \$8,000 gift from Cass City's Pinney Foundation. The village and chamber each chipped in \$2,000, and an I-69 Placemaking Grant brought in another \$2,000.

Plans for lighting the sign are still up in the air, as DTE officials have put off projects like this one due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Keller said the chamber will be re-applying for a \$3,000 grant next year. In the meantime, she added, the chamber is considering solar lights.

## Novesta officials making adjustments

by Mary Drier  
For the Chronicle

With a new treasurer elected in Novesta Township, operating procedures will be done a little differently, township board members noted during a recent monthly meeting.

Supervisor Chad Daniels explained the financial statement will now be presented by Clerk Pennie Rienas, and in a new format.

Financial reports were previously presented by the treasurer.

Rienas explained the financial statement looks different now and will be called the "Novesta Township Bank Reconciliation" with accounts for waste collection, general operations and taxes now reflecting outstanding checks presented as separate accounts.

With the changes that were made, some outdated checks were identified.

"Two outstanding 'stale-dated' checks from Nov. 9, 2019, in the amounts of \$43.44; one check of \$310.97 from Feb 4, 2020; and a more recent check of \$1,139.92, for an ending balance at \$7,080.06," explained Rienas, who suggested writing off the stale-dated checks. The board agreed.

In other financial matters, during a review of finances in the general fund account using the QuickBooks program, a number of discrepancies in deposits were found dating back to January 2020, according to Rienas, who along with new Treasurer Deidra Zdrojewski worked to identify and correct.

Rienas said she isn't sure how the discrepancies occurred, but it may have stemmed from the transfer of the program on a flash drive.

"This is why the checks and balances need to be in place. This could have been cleared up a year ago," she added.

Rienas was given the authority to post journal entries in the Quick Book program to clear up discrepancies to balance the bank statement, which now shows a balance of \$209,891.

The board then approved paying bills totaling \$22,537.

"I love this (new) report - it's so clear. Good job," said Daniels. "On this you can track the income as well. It's very nice."

Although at the time of the meeting, Zdrojewski had been the township treasurer for less than a month, she said she feels she is

getting a handle on finances, even though some records appeared to be missing.

Among the missing items include 2013 and 2014 summer and winter tax rolls, the 2015 and 2016 summer and winter tax rolls, and 2019 winter tax roll, along with some receipts for bills paid from January to June of 2019.

However, Daniels had just given her some folders that could contain some of the missing information.

In other business, the board:

\*Reappointed Dale Churchill, Antoinette Stachura and Dave Robinson to the township's board of review. Their terms end Dec. 31, 2022.

In addition, Lyle Clark is scheduled to continue serving on the Rawson Memorial District Library Board until Dec. 31, 2024; and Dan Bera and Dave Little were appointed to the zoning board of appeals, with terms ending Dec. 31, 2022.

\*Accepted "with regret" Arlene Paladi's letter of resignation from the zoning board of appeals.

\*Approved continuation of a contract with Susan Jensen as the township's assessor for four years at a cost of \$12,960 per year. The

new contract goes into effect Jan. 1, 2021.

The contract notes township officials have options under the Assessing Reform Law should it be necessary. The document outlines those options should the township fail the Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirements (AMAR), which is done every five years.

The township can put in place a corrective action plan or hire a new auditor. If the problem is not resolved, the township can be forced to take a state-designated auditor, or Tuscola County Equalization Director Angie Daniels could take over as an alternative auditor.

\*Zdrojewski authorized the zoning administrator to collect for payments permits, the cemetery sexton to collect payments for cemetery, and the assessor to accept payments for splits, combinations and assessments.

\*Approved the following regular meeting dates for 2021: Jan. 4, Feb. 1, March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, July 12, Aug. 2, Sept. 13, Oct. 4, Nov. 1 and Dec. 6. The regular meetings begin at 7 p.m.

The township's planning commission is scheduled to meet Jan. 26, March 30, May 25, July 27, Sep. 28 and Nov. 30.

## Tuition deadline approaching

With the Futures for Frontliners application deadline approaching, frontline workers are encouraged to take the next step in their educational journey and apply for free college tuition towards an associate degree or industry-recognized certificate at a community college - even if they have not completed their high school diploma.

The deadline to apply is Thursday, Dec. 31.

"Our frontline workers put their lives on the line every day to provide crucial support to our families during this pandemic, and they deserve support long after this crisis is over. That's what the Futures for Frontliners program is all about. I encourage everyone who is eligible to take advantage of this free path to a degree or skills certificate they've been dreaming about," Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said.

"This initiative is not only a way to say, 'thank you,' it's an opportunity to provide a pathway to better paying jobs."

Since the program launched in early September, 100,000 essential workers have applied and will soon be on their way to completing a tuition-free degree or skills certificate - putting them on a path to fill one of the state's most in-demand careers.

"By closely following the labor trends in our state we've learned that prioritizing the talent needs is essential to economic growth and prosperity for all," Kerry Ebersole, Office of Sixty by 30 director said.

"Creating equal access to education opens doors to develop skills that put hardworking Michiganders in a high-demand career, increase pay and fulfill dreams for those seeking a better quality of life for themselves and their families."

Interested frontline workers should visit michigan.gov/Frontliners to explore statewide and regional in-demand career opportunities and get started on their application.

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### Cass City Missionary Church

4449 Koepfgen Rd., Cass City, MI 48726 • 989-872-2729

Worship Service 8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

Pastor: Phil Burkett

www.casscitymc.org



### Cass City United Methodist Church

5100 Cemetery Rd., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-3422

Worship: 11:00 a.m. (Summer 9:30 a.m.) • Sunday School - Sept.-May 9:30 a.m.

Community Dinner - Monthly (2nd Wed. at noon)

Pastor: Bob Demyanovich • www.casscityumc.org



### Community Baptist Church (Independent Fundamental)

4446 Ale St., Cass City, MI 48726 • 989-872-4088

Sunday School 9:45 a.m. • Worship Service 11:00 a.m.

Afternoon Service 2:00 p.m. • Wednesday - Pray/Bible Study & Youth Group 6:00 p.m.

Pastor: Rev. Nathan Whipple



### Deford Community Church

1392 N. Kingston Rd. • 872-4055

(1/4 mile south of Deford on Kingston Rd.)

Sundays - 10 a.m. | Wednesday - 7 p.m.

Pastor: David Cooper • Associate Pastor: Ross Foley

DefordCommunityChurch.org

### Evangelical Free Church of Cass City

6430 Chestnut Blvd., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-5060

• Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. • Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Midweek Bible Studies

Pastor: Jim Allred • Like us on Facebook!



### First Baptist Church

(Independent, Fundamental)

Barrier Free

6420 Houghton St., Cass City, MI 48726 • 989-872-3155

Sunday School All Ages 9:45 a.m. • Sunday Morning Worship Service 11:00 a.m.

Sunday Evening Service 6:00 p.m. • Wednesday Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

AWANA Clubs 6:15 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday - Kids4Truth Club - Teen Club 6:15 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Pastor: Christian Wright • Website: www.fbccc.us



### First Presbyterian Church

Barrier Free • State & National Historical Registry

6505 Church St., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-5400 • Worship Service 10:45 a.m.

Exercise Program: Mon., Wed. & Fri. at 9:00 a.m.

After School Adventure (K-6) - Call for winter schedule.

### Fraser Presbyterian Church

3006 Huron Line Rd., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-5400

• Worship Service 9:30 a.m.

www.fraserchurch.org



### Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

6820 E. Main St., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-2770

Worship Service 9:30 a.m. • Bible Class & Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

Pastor: Steve Bagnall

www.goodshepherdlutherancasscity.webs.com



### Living Word Worship Center Church of God

Pentecostal

6536 Houghton Street, Cass City, MI 48726 • 989-872-4637

Worship Service: 11:00 a.m.

Family Training Hour: Wednesday 7 p.m.

Pastor: Jephtha Bryant



### Mizpah Missionary Church

4631 N. Van Dyke, Cass City, MI 48726

Sunday School: 10 a.m. • Sunday Service: 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday Prayer Group 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. • Wednesday Kids' Club 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.

Pastor Dale Bullock 989-872-2828

### Novesta Church of Christ

"the friendly church that cares"

2896 Cemetery Rd., Cass City, MI 48726 • 872-3658

• Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

• 1<sup>st</sup> Worship Service 9:00 a.m. • 2<sup>nd</sup> Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Senior Minister: Brad Speirs

Associate Minister: Austin Keller at Ubyly & Student Minister: Don Mecomber

Visit our website at: www.novestachurch.org

### Our Lady Consolata Parish

4292 S. Seeger St., Cass City, MI 48726 • 665-1027

Office: 4618 South St., Gagetown • 665-1027

Mass Times: Saturday 4:00 p.m. Nov. 1 thru Mar. 31

Saturday 5:00 p.m. April 1 thru Oct. 31

Cass City - Sunday: 8:00 a.m. • Sebawaing Holy Family Site - Sunday: 10:30 a.m.

Priest: Fr. Theo Nnabugo



### Potter's House Christian Fellowship

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• Find us on Facebook:

Potter's House Church of Cass City

• Sunday: 11:00 a.m.



**Cass City United Methodist Church will Reopen for Sunday,  
Worship on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 11:00 am**

**We will continue to Wear our Masks,  
Wash our Hands and Social Distance  
along with showing our service online  
and also you can listen in our Parking Lot.**

*Merry Christmas and a Happy & Safe New Year!*

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# Obituaries

## Anita Loomis

Anita Ilene Loomis, 88, of Cass City, died Monday, December 14, 2020 in Northwood Meadows Medical Care Unit, Cass City.

She was born February 27, 1932 in Gagetown to Frank and Gladys (Zellar) Weatherhead.

She married Donald Howard Loomis

August 2, 1952 in Salem United Methodist Church, Cass City.

He died November 14, 2018.

Anita graduated from Cass City High School with the class of 1950.

As the mother of five children she was always working. She ran a large farm home masterfully, and one gift she was known for was baking. Homemade bread and what we refer to as "Mom's World Famous Cinnamon Rolls" were a staple. When her youngest began school, she wanted to "go to work". Anita worked part time at Kritzman's Store in Cass City for twenty-seven years. She ended her working career at the age of seventy-three at the Cass City Hospital in the MARC, working there for seven years. Anita opened the center for the early work out crew. She had a love of fitness. Before her time at the MARC she was known to walk the four-mile square the farm sat on and could complete this in under one hour. She completed her first 5K with some of her children and grandchildren at the age of 80.

Anita was committed to remaining close to all her children and grandchildren even while spread across the country. As grown-ups, she talked to all of her children weekly; sharing the news she had learned from talking to her other children. She was her children and grandchildren's biggest cheerleader. Anita would get her phone chain activated whenever someone needed encouragement or prayer. Prayer is the most important legacy she has left our family. We have countless calendars and devotionals that are her yearly prayer journals that chronicle her faithful petitions for her loved ones.

Anita is survived by her children: Becky (William) Dornbush of Sartell, MN, Debbie (Henry) Cooklin of Monticello, IL, Sally (Michael) Scott of Cass City, Thomas (Valorie) Loomis of Petoskey and Kay (Ethan) Ware of Columbia, SC; grandchildren: Brianne Dornbush (Matt Malarkey), Ariel Dornbush, Joshua (David) Dornbush, Aaron (Ingrid) Cooklin, Amy (Bernard) Bell, Angela (Kyle) Cresap, Ian (Nicole) Scott, Bryce Scott, Joseph Loomis, Benjamin (Megan) Loomis, Hannah Loomis, Peter Loomis, Rachel Loomis, Malachi Ware, Jackson Ware, Noah Ware and Julia Ware; great-grandchildren: Nora Bell, Eli Bell, Kaden Cresap, Kolter Cresap, Kaia Cresap, Ekko Scott and Lucian Scott; sister, Elaine (Dick) Hendrick; sister-in-law, Barbara Weatherhead; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; brothers: Kenneth Weatherhead and William Weatherhead.

A graveside committal service was held Friday, December 18.

Interment was in Elkland Township Cemetery.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Memorials may be made to Upstate-Carolina Adaptive Golf, serving disabled veterans and individuals with physical, cognitive, or developmental challenges, or Northwood Meadows.

Family and friends may share memories, prayers and photos with the family at [www.kranzfunderalhome.com](http://www.kranzfunderalhome.com).

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.

## Duane "Spud" Warner

Duane Arthur "Spud" Warner, 88, of Deford, died Tuesday, December 15, 2020 in McLaren Bay Region, Bay City.

He was born August 7, 1932 at home in Deford to Lloyd and Effie (Cuer) Warner.

He married Mary Jane McNally May 24, 1952 in the Novesta Baptist Parsonage, Decker.

Duane was given the nickname Spud by his brother Glen, when he was very young. He graduated from Cass City High School in 1949 and eventually went to work for GM Flint Buick for thirty years.

Duane enjoyed spending time in northern Michigan, deer hunting and elk watching. Duane loved playing baseball, especially in his later years, with his grandchildren. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Cass City and bowled on their church league.

Duane is survived by his wife, Mary Jane; sons: Clinton (Janice) Warner of Deford and Jeffery Warner of Deford; grandchildren: Amanda Warner and Tyler (Kathleen) Warner; great-grandchildren: Jayce Hill, Brody Warner, Lilly Warner; step-grandchildren: Randy Sommer and John Sommer; nephew, Scott Warner; and niece, Linda Walker.

He was preceded in death by his parents; infant brother, James Warner; brother and sister-in-law, Glen and Dorothy Warner; sister, Harriet Warner; grandson, Lee Sommer; niece, Karen Craft; and daughter-in-law, Tanya Warner.

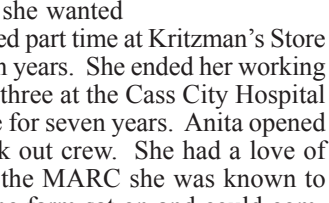
A funeral service was held Saturday, December 19, in Kranz Funeral Home, Cass City with Pastor Christian Wright of First Baptist Church of Cass City officiating.

Interment was in Novesta Township Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church of Cass City.

Family and friends may share memories, prayers, and photos with the family at [www.kranzfunderalhome.com](http://www.kranzfunderalhome.com).

Arrangements were made by Kranz Funeral Home of Cass City.



# CLASSIFIEDS

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### Real Estate For Rent

CASS CITY Apartments, an elderly community (elderly being defined as 62 years of age or older; disabled regardless of age) located in Cass City, MI is currently accepting applications for 1 Apartments. Units of barrier free design may also be available. Rent based on income, starting at \$499. For affordable housing call (989) 872-2009. Free Heat & Water! Pet Friendly! "This institution is an equal opportunity provider" TDD/TTY #711"  
4-9-9-1f

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### Facilities For Rent

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LET ME BE YOUR SANTA CLAUS! Specials now until Christmas! Do you want your carpets to be clean & free of dirt and dust? Try our new 100 year anniversary vacuum sweeper. Manufactured in Cleveland, Ohio. This carpet sweeper is made and built in the USA ensuring quality, reliability and performance. Used Vacuums - Kirby, Eureka, wet & dry, Sears, tank, Oreck etc. Warranty 90 days. KIRBY VACUUM OF BAD AXE (located across from the Franklin Inn on the East end of Bad Axe) or call 989-269-7562, 989-551-7562 for repairs, parts or service. 8-12-17-1f

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# Legal Notices

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judiciary 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 the 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): Grace Davis, a Single Woman Original Mortgagor; Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagor, 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 Judiciary 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 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 313768 12-9-4

made by Ronald F. Stevens, a single man, of 9698 Edward Road, Fostoria, Michigan 48435 ("Mortgage"), to ChoiceOne Bank, a Michigan banking corporation, of 109 E. Division, Sparta, Michigan, 49345, successor by merger to Lapeer County Bank & Trust Co., a Michigan banking corporation ("Mortgagee"), dated April 24, 2007, and recorded with the Tuscola County Register of Deeds, State of Michigan, on May 4, 2007, in Instrument No. 200700895408 (the "Mortgage"). The sum claimed to be due and owing on said Mortgage as of the date of this Notice is Twelve Thousand Eleven and 80/100 Dollars (\$12,011.80) including principal and interest. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Thursday, January 28, 2021, at 10:00 a.m., local time, said Mortgage will be foreclosed at a sale at public auction to the highest bidder at that place where Circuit Court is held in Tuscola County of the premises and land described in the Mortgage, or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the amount due on the Mortgage, together with interest, legal costs, and charges and expenses, including the attorney fee, and also any sums which may be paid by the undersigned necessary to protect its interest. Said premises are situated in the City of Fostoria, Tuscola County, Michigan, and are described as: PART OF THE NE 1/4 OF SEC 34, T10N, R9E, DESCRIBED AS BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE E LINE OF SEC 34 WHICH IS NO 01 DEG 06' 53" W 550.00 FT FROM THE E 1/4 CORNER OF SEC 34; THENCE CONTINUING ALONG THE E LINE OF SEC 34, N 01 DEG 06' 53" W 150.00 FT; THENCE AT RIGHT ANGLES TO THE E LINE OF SEC 34, S 88 DEG 63' 07" W, 264.00 FT; THENCE S 01 DEG 06' 53" E 150.00 FT; THENCE N 88 DEG 53' 07" E 264.00 FT TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING, SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS AND EASEMENTS OF RECORD. PPN: 79-021-034-000-0400-00 Commonly known as 9698 Edward Road, Fostoria, Michigan 48435 The redemption period shall be six (6) months from the date of such sale unless determined abandoned in accordance with 1948 CL 600.3241 or 600.3241a, as the case may be, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judiciary Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judiciary 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 a.m., on January 28, 2021. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the 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. Dated: December 15, 2020 ChoiceOne Bank Mortgagee Ingrid A. Jensen (616) 608-1107 Attorney for Mortgagee Clark Hill PLC 200 Ottawa NW, Suite 500 Grand Rapids, MI 49503 12-23-4

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# Drive drunk, get pulled over

Continued from page one.

member that it is never acceptable to drink and drive, even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage. If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact central dispatch or your local police. Do you have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

"Together, we can make the holiday season a happy and safe one." Before and during the Christmas and New Year's holidays, law enforcement officials throughout Michigan are participating in the "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign, which kicked off Dec. 11 and will continue through Jan. 1, 2021, with zero tolerance for those who drive impaired.

Throughout 2019, there were 9,787 alcohol-involved crashes in Michigan, with 295 alcohol-involved fatalities statewide.

"Drunk driving is deadly and illegal. Getting behind the wheel of a vehicle after you've been drinking endangers you, your passengers, and everyone else on the road," said Michael L. Prince, Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) director. "Even if your travel plans are different this year, and you're just making short trips near home, always drive sober."

December has been proclaimed as Impaired Driving Prevention Month in Michigan to remember those who have lost their lives due to impaired driving, and to remind residents that preventing impaired driving deaths and injuries is every driver's responsibility.

The National Association of Drug Court Professionals recognizes December as one of the most dangerous months because of an increase in impaired driving.

According to the latest Michigan Annual Drunk Driving Audit by the Michigan State Police, nearly 42 percent of all fatal crashes that occurred in 2019 involved alcohol, drugs or both.

During this month's campaign, officers are focusing on motorists who are driving while under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Impairment of any kind while driving is illegal. If a person chooses to drive while impaired, they can be arrested for a DUI (driving under the influence) and could face jail time.

The Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign is supported with federal traffic safety funds provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and coordinated by the OHSP.

This year's effort comes after months of heightened stress across the nation. Officials with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say the economic fallout caused by the pandemic and the isolation resulting from stay-at-home orders and social distancing requirements may be exacerbating the impaired driving problem, especially for repeat offenders.

In fact, the purchase and consumption of alcohol has increased significantly in the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic, with alcoholic beverage sales rising a whopping 55 percent in the week ending March 21, which was the first week many stay-at-home orders were put in place.

Various polls have since suggested that roughly 16 percent of adults have been drinking more during the pandemic.

According to an August University of Michigan survey of Michigan adults, about 18 percent of current alcohol users at the time, and 13 percent of drug users, reported increasing their use during the pandemic.



NATIVITY SCENES depicting the birth of Jesus Christ are a common sight throughout the area as Christmas Day approaches. This scene was set up on the west side of M-53 at Deckerville Road.

## Lawmakers balk at extended restrictions

Continued from page one.

the right thing — wearing masks, social distancing, taking the proper sanitation measures — she at the same time shows contempt for job providers trying to make ends meet by extending the shutdown," Lauwers said Friday. "The governor does not trust Michiganders to act responsibly. Though the data does not indicate that restaurants are prominent sources of virus spread, the governor — inexplicably — has shut down restaurants again," he said. "The health department's own data indicates that, of the COVID-19 outbreaks that have occurred, only 4.3 percent can be attributed to restaurants.

"She is unable or unwilling to tell small businesses what level of infection or hospitalization rate Michigan must achieve for them

to reopen safely. Instead, workers, business owners and job providers are left waiting for press conferences, only then to simply be told they need to remain shuttered."

Lauwers added, "Indoor dining at restaurants has been banned for more than 100 days throughout this year and counting. This has resulted in the loss of billions of dollars in sales and the laying off of most of the state's restaurant workforce."

The latest order allows outdoor group fitness classes and outdoor, non-contact sports to resume. However, indoor sports, indoor group fitness classes and contact sports —with the exception of professional sports — are still not permitted.

State officials acknowledged that recent daily confirmed Covid case numbers, hospital in-patient num-

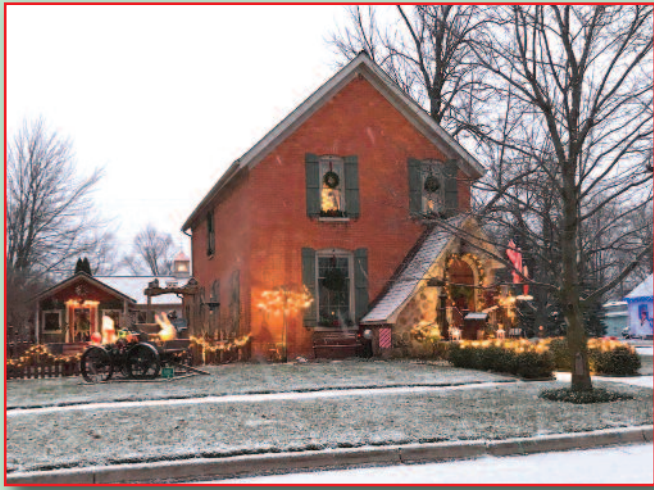
bers and testing positivity rates have begun to fall.

"We have made some progress in our fight against this pandemic, and this was a historical week as we started to distribute life-saving vaccines," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, MDHSS chief medical executive.

"(But) it is important that everyone continues to do their part. Start planning for when you will get a vaccine when it is available to you, and let's avoid a surge in cases after the holidays by avoiding gatherings, wearing our masks, and continuing to socially distance."

As of Friday, Michigan had recorded a total of nearly 455,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since March, with 236,369 people having recovered from the virus. The state's combined Covid death toll stood at 11,274 lives.

## Decorating contest winners...



CASS CITY Chamber of Commerce officials recently congratulated the winners of this year's holiday decorating contests, including residential winner Rob Piaskowski, whose work is pictured above.



THE WINNER of this year's Cass City Chamber of Commerce decorating contest in the business category was SugarHouse Sweets and Gifts.

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### CLASSIC CHARMER!!!

This lovely home features newer windows, plumbing and electrical plus both baths and kitchen have been remodeled. Beautiful original woodwork throughout home is in beautiful condition. Fenced in yard for children or furry family members a definite plus. This is not a drive by. 123-20-0044



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