



Decorating contest on for Onsted

Onsted Village residents are invited to compete for the best decorated home for the holidays in the annual contest hosted by private resident Sally Humphrey-Hazen.

"You have until the evening of December 21st to get your decorating done," Hazen announced. First place will receive \$125, second place \$75, and third \$50. Hazen hosts the annual contest for residents within the village limits to inspire holiday spirit in town.

Brooklyn Gives Back

The Village Peddler Gift Shoppe in Brooklyn is accepting items to help local children at both Columbia and Ezra Eby elementary schools. See the list of items needed as well as when and where to drop them off in their advertisement on page 9.

Live nativity returns to Grass Lake



The fifth annual Live Nativity: The Story of the Birth of Jesus, with live animals and beautiful music, will be on display this Sunday, Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. at Pious Union of St. Joseph in Grass Lake. Children can pet the sheep and donkey after the program. Hot Chocolate and cookies will also be served. Pious Union of St. Joseph is located at 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake. Contact the church office at 517-522-8017 for more information. Courtesy photo.

Christmas Craft Show scheduled in Onsted

The annual Christmas Craft Show will take place this Saturday at The Mill in Onsted from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Mill is located at 230 N. Main St. in the village.

Holiday open house at WellWise Services

WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging invites the community to stop by and celebrate with them at a Holiday Open House, Thursday, December 11, from 3 to 5 p.m. at their offices in the American 1 Credit Union Community Room 107, Chicago Street, Brooklyn. For more information, call (517) 592 1974.

Holidays in Harmony at Adrian College

Adrian College is hosting a Christmas concert of timeless seasonal favorites, Holidays in Harmony, for the whole family on December 13, at 7:30 p.m. at the Dawson Auditorium, 240 S. Charles St., Adrian. For more information, call 517-264-3121.

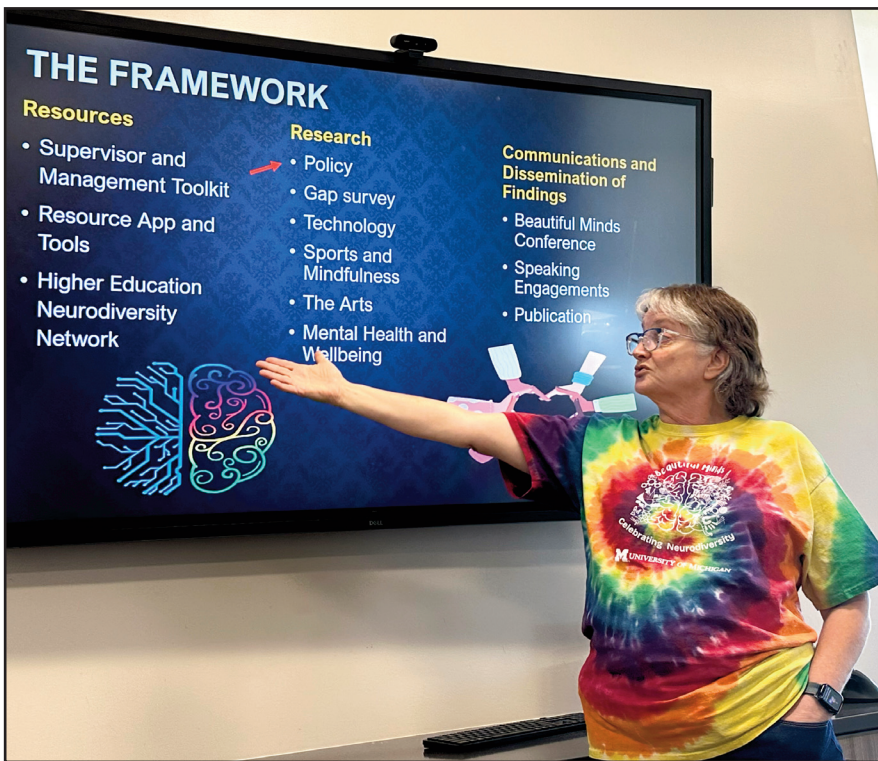
EXPONENT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2025

SINCE 1881

Beautiful minds

Celebrating Neurodiversity



Kathleen Ignatoski, Ph.D., research lead for the Neurodiversity Project, explains the framework of the project.

Neurodiverse: It's okay to be and think differently

Story and photos
By John Hummer
Editor

Autism. Intellectual disability. ADHD. Antisocial Personality Disorder. Downs Syndrome. Genes bipolarity, and so many others...all these syndromes and disorders deal with neurocognitive functioning. They are terms that highlight how millions of people worldwide are wired differently, with unique neurological differences. They have recently been recognized as being under one common umbrella: They are the neurodiverse population.

Kathleen Ignatoski, Ph.D., from the University of Michigan is the research lead behind a relatively new initiative called the Neurodiversity Project. She came to the Jackson District Library — Brooklyn Branch and Grass Lake Branch recently to spread the word about the project, while continuing efforts to educate the public about the neurodiverse population and actions being taken to recognize and destigmatize them.

The mission of The Neurodiversity Project at the University of Michigan is to help employers understand neurodiversity and how to interact appropriately with the neurodiverse workforce. "Part of our goal is to educate the public on the types of neurodiversity, the mental health and unemployment aspects of neurodiversity, and ways to empower neurodiverse people. We feel that community partners and advocates can aid in this mission," the mission reads.

"This is really grassroots — it's not all University of Michigan — although they have granted us space and said



we can use their logo," said Sandy Zalmout, business development director and project lead. "We don't have funding. We don't get paid for this. For us, it's a passion project — getting communication out and working with community partners. The more the conversation is taking place and active, the more interest there is. But to destigmatize the environment [surrounding the neurodiverse population], you have to talk about it."

And that's exactly what Ignatoski did. "Most people think neurodiversity is just autism spectrum disorder or maybe ADHD or ADD," she stated. "Neurodiversity is an umbrella term that describes how people think differently than what is considered 'normal' or 'neurotypical.'"

Ignatoski said in the United States there are alarming statistics pertaining to the neurodiverse population. "Twenty percent of the adult population worldwide is neurodiverse," she noted. "Forty percent of neurodivergent adults are unemployed or under-

School officials close to making bond request

Preliminary projections have district seeking \$14.8 million



Baker



Creech

By John Hummer
Editor

At its Monday meeting, the Columbia School District Board of Education unanimously approved an Application of Preliminary Qualification of Bonds for filing with the Michigan Department of Treasury.

If approved, the application will allow the district to move forward with its bond initiative to put a bond proposal on the May 5, 2026 ballot.

"Assuming that everything is deemed to be appropriate, then the state will reach back out to us and give us the clearance that we can move ahead with a May 5, 2026 initiative," stated Superintendent Jim Baker. He noted that the bond proposal will be approximately \$14.8 million, though final financial details are still in process. He added that it will be a "no tax increase" bond and said more details will come out in January.

In general, Baker said the bond will be "for renovations, for major work at the elementary campus; we'll be looking at [the junior high/high school] building — concentrating on classrooms, the auditorium; some of our playing fields — baseball and softball; we want to take a look at the soccer complex. Again, just trying to make sure we're staying ahead."

"For example, we've already

See *Bond request* page 3



Santa arrives in style



Santa and Mrs. Clause arrived in Onsted via convertible, just in time for caroling and a community celebration where residents lit up trees. For the story, see page 7.

Neurodiversity . . . from page 1

employed – that’s a big number, almost half – while 85 percent of new college graduates with autism are unemployed or underemployed. That is pretty much unacceptable, we believe.”

“But unfortunately,” she continued, “These types of issues that people have that are unemployed or underemployed lead to co-occurring mental health conditions. Things like anxiety disorders, or depression, of lashing out – things like that occur in up to 80 percent of people who are neurodiverse.

“The other issue we see is that about 30 percent of autistic adults have access to mental health resources,” she said. “That means 70 percent don’t have access. Most clinicians that they do see only receive less than two hours of autism training. So, 80 percent of people who went to therapists reported that they had a poor experience with the clinician. So, we do need access and competent people to help our neurodiverse population.”

Moreover, Ignatoski stated that stigmas associated with neurodiverse people often leads to exclusion. Neurodivergent staff feel undervalued. “People look at them and say, ‘You have autism – you can’t possibly handle this big project, where if you did you might get that promotion.’ This is a problem we see at the University of Michigan and other places where neurodivergent staff are employed.”

However, she said, “We have heard from a variety of sources that neurodiverse people are better at jobs that require thinking outside the box, analysis of data, and minutia. These people have very, very good skills – we call them superpowers.”

The “superpowers” Ignatoski said that are valuable traits of the neurodiverse population include: pattern recognition – seeing connections others miss; hyperfocus – deep concentration on topics of interest; out-of-box thinking – novel solutions to complex problems; and unique perspectives – creativity and alternative viewpoints. “We need

to give the neurodiverse population a voice,” she remarked.

Further, she noted the mental health and wellbeing impact on the neurodivergent population include sensory overload, burnout, increased stress levels, anxiety, depression, and an increased suicide ideation and suicide level. “This is because people have to mask all day so that people don’t know that they are neurodivergent, or maybe just think that they are just a little odd and not really odd,” Ignatoski said. “This leads to burnout and overload and every-

ture assessment on neurodiversity. Research is being conducted on neurodiversity policies at both the federal and state levels, including what the Americans with Disabilities Act includes and does not include for the neurodiverse population. And much

And it is not a silo effort based at the University of Michigan. There is a Higher Education Neurodiversity Network that includes several major universities in the state of Michigan that together are working on neurodiversity problems and solutions. It also includes partner universi-

ties including Stanford University, the University of Melbourne, and others.

Work and findings of the project are being spread through conferences, speaking engage-

ments such as those at the JDL locations and other community outreach efforts, a webinar series, an annual conference, and various online publications.

Technology, including AI, is being assessed on how it can help in this space. eSports/Gaming is another area being looked at as a coping mechanism. The University of Michigan is creating an eSports area and a university team, including how Minecraft may be a coping mechanism. They are currently recruiting subjects. Contact Mikhail Schoonhoven-Hussain; mrsh@umich.edu.

Ignatoski noted that another area being assessed for the neurodivergent population’s coping mechanisms is the arts – including art, theater, and music. Music therapy, for one, uses music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship with a credentialed professional. It utilizes patient-based modalities including listening, playing, music analysis, and composition. “Music therapy provides a medium through which one can express the emotions that they may not be able to verbally articulate,” she explained.

For more information, contact Kathleen Ignatoski at 734-764-6109; kwi@umich.edu or Sandy Zalmout at szalmout@umich.edu.

“Twenty percent of the worldwide population is neurodiverse.”

Kathleen Ignatoski
Research lead, Neurodiversity Project.

thing else because it’s really hard to mask.”

So, what is the ideal world for the neurodiverse population? Currently, and unfortunately, in the real world, it is still marked by exclusion. “You are not welcome here,” Ignatoski said of how many employers and organizations treat such people. Then there is tolerance. Among these employers or groups, they may have a culture of “You are disliked, but you can be here.”

However, true cultural transformation requires organizations to move from exclusion and tolerance to acceptance and belonging. With these employers or groups, first there is acceptance. “I accept you even though you are different.” Finally, there is belonging. “I embrace you for whoever you are.”

Hence, the vision of the Neurodiversity Project: Differences in brain functioning are normal and should be embraced, rather than stigmatized. “Our vision is to cultivate a workplace culture that embraces neurodiversity and prioritizes the support and empowerment of neurodivergent community members so that all may thrive and succeed.”

Ignatoski reviewed how her team is working to implement this vision. They are developing various resource applications and employer toolkits. They have conducted a campus cul-



Columbia Charter Fire Department Report

November 27
Rescue: Oakwood Avenue; Eagle Point Drive; Monroe Pike

Jefferson Road/Ocean Beach Road; Golfview Drive

Brooklyn Road/Crego Road; Jefferson Road

November 28
Rescue: Potter Street; West Mill Pond Drive; Fire: North Main Street/Chicago Street

November 30
Rescue: Wamplers Lake Road; East Mill Pond Drive

December 2
Rescue: Hewitt Road; Cement City Road (2)

November 29
Rescue: Hawthorne Drive; Water Street;

December 1
Rescue: South Main Street; North Lake Road/Broadway Street (2); Castlewood Drive;

December 3
Rescue: Hewitt Road; Constitution Avenue/Tiffany Street; Fire: North Main Street

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Adrian woman killed in M-50, M-52 crash

**By John Hummer
Editor**

On Saturday, Dec. 6 at 4:29 p.m. Lenawee County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to the area of M-50 and M-52 (North Adrian Highway) for a crash with injuries involving two vehicles.

The deputies' investigation indicates a silver 2017 Toyota Prius was traveling southbound through the intersection after the traffic light cycled to green for southbound and northbound traffic on M-52. A white 2010 Chevrolet Silverado was traveling westbound on M-50, disregarded a red traffic light, entered the intersection, and struck the Toyota Prius.

The Prius was being driven by a 54-year-old female from the Adrian area who was transported to Henry Ford Jackson Hospital where she died from her injuries.

The Chevrolet Silverado was

driven by a 20-year-old male from the Traverse City area with a 23-year-old female from the Traverse City area as a passenger. Both occupants of the Silverado were transported to Toledo Hospital with minor injuries.

Seatbelt use is unknown due to the prompt response by fire rescue personnel. Drugs and alcohol do not appear to be a factor.

This crash remains under investigation by the Lenawee County Accident Investigation Team. Assistance during the incident was provided by the Tecumseh Fire Department, Raisin Township Police Department, Adrian Township Police Department, Tecumseh Police Department, Madison Township Police Department, Michigan State Police, and Lenawee Community Ambulance units.

Ballet Chelsea to perform 'The Nutcracker' at JC

Ballet Chelsea proudly presents The Nutcracker, a holiday classic taking place December 12 at 7 p.m., Dec. 13 at noon and 5 p.m., and Dec. 14 at 2 p.m. at the Potter Center on Jackson Community College campus, 2111 Emmons Road, Jackson. For more information, go to www.balletchelsea.org/tickets/

Future Farmers are golden



The Lenawee Tech Center FFA chapter agronomy (the science of soil management and crop production) team represented Michigan well. From left to right are Ella Mishka, Emileigh Johnston, Holly Mitchell, Carson Garrison and Advisor Matt Hensley. Not pictured is alternate Ben Isaly.

The team earned a gold ranking, which put them among the top 10 in the nation. Holly Mitchell and Carson Garrison both received golds individually and earned a Crop Consultant Advisor certification. Ella Mishka received a silver individually and Emileigh Johnston received a bronze.

The nursery and landscape team also represented Michigan well by earning a silver ranking. That team included advisor Johanna Lentz, Myra Parker, Lillian Helinski, Cera LaRatta, Rileigh Hoffman, and alternate Paige Luck. Lillian, Myra, and Rileigh received silvers individually and Cera received a gold individually. Courtesy photo.

Bond request from page 1

had to use two emergency days this year while other districts haven't when we had the well issue (earlier this fall) and had to give that attention," he continued. "That's exactly what will continue to happen if we're not careful and we're not staying updated. This community has done a wonderful job to make sure that we're doing our due diligence to identify, to correct, to make sure we're progressive – to stay within that plan – but at the same time, make sure we're giving what we need to give so the community of students here have what they've been used to over the years – a top-shelf program of learning areas, buildings that are not in disrepair, and athletic facilities that are right up there with everybody else's. It means a lot to make sure those things are being offered."

So, what is next if/when the Application of Preliminary Qualification of Bonds is approved by the state?

"We're looking forward to letting the community know what is and what is not involved [in the bond proposal] – holding community events, awareness events," said Baker. "We really want others to see that we see this as a necessity to move forward and stay ahead of the curve. If you wait too long, then we're being reactive in nature and not being progressive in nature – where we've got to be."

Columbia School Board President Tim Creech was beaming after the board meeting to be pursuing the bond propos-

al. "We're very excited by the improved financial health that our district is in that has allowed us to make a really strong application with the underwriters of the bond," he stated, adding that the district has worked through some financial challenges. "We're back into a solid financial position."

"The reason that we're very excited about it is that we know this is a one-time opportunity for the voters of Columbia," Creech

the value in what we're doing. This is a great story unfolding. We're not just a great community to live in – we're a great community for kids to grow up in."

In other business, the board unanimously approved October 2025 Thrun (the district's law firm) policy updates. Thrun released policy updates to ensure consistent language across Title IX and Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA). The changes include updating the student handbook and applicable forms.

In other notable news, Creech introduced Joe Niehaus as the incoming athletic director and dean of students for Columbia School District. He will replace Ryan Hackworth who has been serving in that capacity for the last few years.

"We're so hopeful that our community supporters will come along with us and see the value in what we're doing."

Tim Creech
Columbia school board president

continued. "When I say "one-time" it's because the way the current bond is issued, we only have one opportunity to come in with it being a net-zero impact to taxpayers – meaning that it's not any new mills – it's just a re-finance, if you will, of our existing bond and re-amortizing it out so that we can access capital to do some much necessary, needed updates without having any increase to our taxpayers."

Creech noted the importance of being good stewards with the funds. "That's why we've worked so diligently to make sure our financial health is in great condition," he said. "We believe we have gotten the school district well-positioned to be a leader of the school districts in our area going forward. We're so hopeful that our community supporters will come along with us and see

has been serving in that capacity for the last few years.

"I'm excited, honored, and feel very fortunate to be coming into the Columbia School District," Niehaus said. "It was a job opening that I was very excited to apply for. My family and I couldn't be more excited that I got the job. I'm ready to get my feet wet and get on board." Niehaus is finishing out the calendar year at his current job as athletic director at East Jackson Community Schools.

The Exponent will feature more on Niehaus after he officially takes his position with Columbia School District on Jan. 1, 2026.

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B.C. Pizza finds its way to Brooklyn



Brooklyn B.C. Pizza co-owner Autumn Moore stands by the garlic and cheese bread bar in the seating area of the restaurant. Below, the restaurant offers a full salad and pizza bars as well.



Devin and Autumn Moore

Story and photos
By John Hummer
Editor

Devin and Autumn Moore opened Brooklyn's B.C. Pizza nearly a year ago on Jan. 13, 2025.

"B.C. Pizza is a franchise founded in Boyne City, Michigan by brothers Chris and Wayne Nelson in 1988," Devin explained. "They're common in northern Michigan. I think there are 35 locations right now. It's a small franchise."

So, how did they end up bringing B.C. Pizza to Brooklyn? "We went up north once and tried it in Gaylord – one time," Devin said. "We absolutely fell in love with the pizza, and wanted to bring it south. We are the only location in Southeast Michigan."

In addition to the B.C. Pizza's up north, Devin noted they can also be found on the west side of the state, with the furthest south franchise being in Kalamazoo. "They go as far north as St. Ignace," he explained.

With all of the pizza competition in the Brooklyn area, what makes B.C. Pizza stand out?

"I would say where we're unique and where we might stand out a lot more is that all of

our meat that we use we actually cut in house," Autumn stated. "Our cheese we shred in house – you can notice a difference with the cheese compared to other places, too. I would say the majority of our stuff is homemade. So, it's not like where we're pulling it out of the freezer or it's being shipped in and we're just using it out of a bag. We actually have to work hard for our good ingredients that we're using."

B.C. Pizza has homemade burritos as well. "We actually hand roll our burritos," Devin noted. "We make our own taco meat; we cut our vegetables in house. We shred the cheese. When you shred your cheese in house, you don't get the anti-clumping agent in your cheese. It doesn't melt the same way once that anti-clumping agent is there."

"There are a lot of different fresh ingredients," Devin continued. "You think about quesadillas – you get to choose what you have in them. We make them in house."

Another unique aspect of B.C.

Pizza is its involvement in the local community. "We do all the pizzas for the schools now – sporting events, etc.," Devin noted. "It's more just about giving back to the schools because the schools are what shape children today and the schools are a huge part of the community."

"We work with Heart of the Lakes Church quite often. We've built a relationship with Village Creamery, and now we offer their ice cream to go in our store. It's about building relationships within the community and giving back to the community. And yeah, we're still in our first year, but we're going to continue to give back and work with other businesses and just try and support local."

In addition to their wide selection of pizzas, B.C. Pizza offers subs, salads, and a scrumptious smokehouse mac and cheese. They also carry appetizers, like their spirals, which are like little pepperoni rolls or chicken rolls. And they have wings! "I actually really, really like our wings," Devin shared.

"We went up north once and tried it in Gaylord – one time. We absolutely fell in love with the pizza, and wanted to bring it south."

Devin Moore,
Co-owner, Brooklyn B.C. Pizza

Devin also noted they carry pastas. "I think they are a really hidden-type menu item," he said. "A lot of people do order them and once they find them, they don't stay away. They absolutely love them because we do make our pastas. You can build your own or you can choose one of our specialties, like the smokehouse mac and cheese. We also even do a lasagna."

B.C. Pizza offers dine-in, carry-out, and delivery. They have a spacious dining area that seats close to 60 people and includes a couple big screen TVs and a children's play area.

They have a very large delivery area that goes west to U.S. 127, north to the Napoleon area, east to Evans Lake, and south to the Onsted area. Their delivery charge is dependent on location.

Devin said the hardest thing they have experienced getting across to the community is that they are a locally-owned business. Devin noted that he worked previously in the pizza industry through his college years and after, so he's no stranger to the business.

"Pizza was fun back then, and it still is today," he said. "There's a little bit more stress and a little bit more work when you own the place, but it's still a fun job and, you know, we do our best every day to do everything right. We plan on doing it for a long, long time."

As for Autumn, she says, "I just never thought I'd be called the pizza lady, but...I'll take it. It's been fun meeting new families and friends – people that probably weren't supposed to be in our lives will always be now. It's really been nice."

Devin grew up in Brooklyn. He

went the school-of-choice route and graduated from Tecumseh High School in 2012. Autumn grew up in Tecumseh and graduated from Tecumseh High School in 2010.

He and Autumn now live in their own home on Onsted Highway. They have one very independent three-year-old daughter named Maylee.

B.C. Pizza is located at 168 Wamplers Lake Road in Brooklyn. Call 517-592-5555 to order, or you can order online at bc.pizza/locations/Brooklyn. Hours are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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Craft Fair

Saturday, December 13, 2025

9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

\$2 Adults, Kids 10 & Under Free

Napoleon Middle School
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Sweets for a treat



Brittany Ostrowski, a realtor with ERA Reardon Realty in Grass Lake, displays a couple panfuls of cookies she gave out during the Grass Lake Festival of Lights & Cookie Tour Saturday. One is being sampled happily by her son. More photos of the community gathering are on page 10.

Norvell Township

Improvements continue at Ahrens Park, cemetery

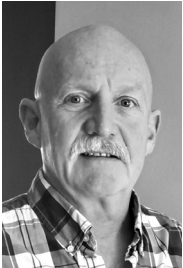
By John Hummer
Editor

The Norvell Township Cemetery and the township's Ahrens Park both continue to see improvements to make the two properties safer and better for those that use them. At its Nov. 17 meeting, the township board approved work at both properties.

The board approved a quote from Irvine's Tree Service for \$3,375 for trimming and removal of deadwood from trees throughout the township cemetery. Though it was more than another quote obtained, it included more tree work, noted Township Supervisor Bill Sutherland. "It's anticipated that this is actually going to save us in the long run," he stated.

In other needed tree work, the board approved the removal of five black walnut trees at Ahrens Park, at a cost of \$925 (via another quote from Irvine's Tree Service), that obstruct the line of sight for vehicles exiting the park, creating a safety concern.

"The board felt that it was a significant safety issue, and after the recent Trunk-or-Treat event, it was confirmed that we



Sutherland

had still not addressed the sight line issues," said Sutherland. "They're very close to the road." He added that there is no commercial value to the trees slated for removal. Two trees had previously been removed along the north drive of the park prior to the event.

A new sign for Ahrens Park, in the amount of \$2,663, was also approved by the board to make the park more visible to the public.

A landscaping proposal for the planting of four dogwood trees and 15 shrubs (plus four yards of mulch) in the amount of \$7,410 for the turn-around area at the park from Wilcox Lawn & Landscape was not approved by the board. "We're thinking instead of bushes we're just going to get some nice shade trees that are suitable for a park and some native plants," Sutherland noted, adding that he will be coming back with new proposals sometime next year.

In other business, the board approved a revised Inspectors Agreement for any inspector who the township contracts with for services rendered to the township.

The 2026 board meeting schedule was approved with changes. The January meeting is being moved to Tuesday due

to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The February meeting is being moved to the ensuing Tuesday due to Presidents' Day.

The board approved adding three days between Christmas and New Years Day as paid holidays for township employees. Employees will receive 20 hours of holiday pay for the three days, in addition to the holidays already specified in the township's Personnel Policy. "We've traditionally closed on those days and it was felt that it wasn't fair for employees to have to use PTO (paid time off) to cover that when it was the township board that had decided we would not be open," explained Sutherland.

The board also approved first quarter budget amendments and Region 2 Planning Commission annual dues in the amount of \$756. Lastly, the board approved an expenditure of \$675 for a one-year membership to SAM (System Award Management) to file the township's final report for ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) monies received from the federal government during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A keyless entry system for the new township hall was tabled as the board requested further information.

Aww, nuts!

Onsted Kiwanis has their popular mixed nuts for sale at various places in the community, including Yoder's, Hubbard's Auto, Decker Insurance, TC's Hardware, Bank Michigan-Onsted and Brooklyn, The Springs, The Exponent, Cut Loose Hair Salon, and Lasting Image Salon.



It's YOUR Business

By Cindy Hubbell, President/CEO
Irish Hills Regional
Chamber of Commerce

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The Eagles Nest Bar and Grill is holding a brunch buffet and bloody Mary bar every Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Go to eaglesnestclarklake.com for more information.

Adrian Center for the Arts will be hosting a Holiday Market through December 23, open daily from noon to 6 p.m. with extended hours on December 17, from noon to 8 p.m. For more information, go to adrian-centerforthearts.org.

YMCA Storer Camps is holding Parents Night Out on Friday, December 12, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Drop your kids off for an evening of camp-style fun while you enjoy some well-deserve you time.

Hidden Lake Gardens is holding Under the Silver Moon on Friday, December 12 and Saturday, December 13. Join them for a magical evening as you follow a glowing trail of luminaries through Hidden Lake Gardens. Only pre-registered guests will be permitted, so register at ifp.mse.edu/hidden-lake-gardens.

The **Mill Sports and Event Center** in Onsted are holding a Christmas Craft Show on Saturday, December 13, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join them for crafts, lunch, and Santa.

Join **Harold's Place** for Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 13, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. They encourage you to dress in your best Christmas attire for breakfast, fun, and photos.

Join **Chateau Aeronautique Winery** for their Christmas Market on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, December 14, from noon to 6 p.m. Explore unique finds from local artisans and

crafters, visit Saint Nick, browse festive decorations, enjoy music and entertainment, family-friendly activities, food and drink. Go to chateauberonautiquewinery.com for more information.

Lane View Farms invites you and your family to their Christmas Festival at Meckley's Flavor Fruit Farm on Sunday, December 14, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person and includes a visit with Santa and his sleigh, a live reindeer exhibit, Winter orchard wagon rides, cozy fire pits, animal exhibits, horse drawn wagon rides and tons of kids' activities. Tickets are available at the door with kids under three free.

The **Irish Hills Roots and Strings Music Series** will be at **Jerry's Pub & Restaurant** on Thursday, December 18, from 6 to 9 p.m. featuring Loren Kranz & Co. This music series is a fundraiser for the **Brooklyn Food Pantry**. For seating reservations call Jerry's Pub at 517-467-4700.

For more Irish Hills Holiday Happenings, go to our community calendar at IrishHills.com.

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Wed. Dec. 17 – 7 p.m. - Advent Midweek Service – Blue Christmas Service

Sunday Dec. 21 – 10 a.m. Worship and Choir Cantata "Journey of Promises" by Joseph Martin

Wed. Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve worship with Communion and Candlelight at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

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Napoleon’s early bands

Cornets a cornerstone of early town life



This is most likely Napoleon’s community band as members cover a wide age range, and the drum’s marking. Karen Cox identified her uncle, Leonard Watkins, of Napoleon, as the second man from the left in the front row. Clothing and facial hair styles suggest circa 1870s. Photo courtesy of Melissa C. Landers.



Above, This group of musicians was labeled Napoleon school’s first marching band by historian Dan Cherry. The center drum sports the initials “NHS” despite the fact that two of the members appear much younger than high school age, and one or two others appear possibly older than eight. Clothing and hairstyles suggest circa 1930s or 1940s. The entire photo can be found in The Best of The Brooklyn Exponent Attic.

At left, This Napoleon band photo was dated circa 1902. Women as well as children are involved. The gentleman in the center of the back row sporting the Spartan mustache is in the earlier photo as well. Photo courtesy of IBEW Brass Bands Historical Resources online, located by Melissa C. Landers.



Attic & Hearth

~A Look Back~

By Michelle McLemore



One mark of “civilization” in villages was the establishment of local cornet bands. The earliest media mention I found to build context for the fascinating photos of Napoleon Cornet Bands was from 1872, and the band’s involvement on Dedication Day (aka Memorial Day) in Napoleon.

A reporter unabashedly commented, “Let me say right here that our cornet band is a fine combination, well worthy of the pride and sustenance of our place. Professor White, of Jackson, is a teacher and has trained the band to a degree of proficiency truly remarkable, considering the time it has been under his tuition.”

Ten years later, the Napoleon Cornet Band made the papers again when they held a musical picnic fundraiser on August 21 at O.R. Palmer’s grove in Napoleon.

In March of 1880, the Napoleon Cornet Band gave a concert in South Jackson to raise money for a church organ fund. In February of 1881, they gave a concert in Grass Lake, assisted by Professor L.F. Boos (another Jacksonian musical educator). An article in the Manchester Enterprise noted that despite high-quality music, “The last concert at Brooklyn was not a success financially for our band. Paying all expenses

and getting only half the proceeds doesn’t pay.”

By May 17, 1881, the group had grown to 14 pupils under Professor Louis Boos. They performed in front of the Brooklyn House on Main Street, directed by Mr. E.A. Harrington, for a “Champion” harvester manufacturer demonstration and delivery. In July, the group performed in the Napoleon Fourth of July parade at 10 a.m. However, by October, an article stated, “The Napoleon Cornet Band is no more. The tuba player got a job in the Jackson band, and that broke up the Napoleon band.” However, as dire as that sounded, in the following year, a new Napoleon Cornet Band performed for the eighth annual Jackson County Pioneer Society parade and gathering.

They continued performing in 1887 for the Farmer’s Club at E.A. Harrington’s home in Napoleon, in 1889 for Decoration Day, in 1889 at the Baptist Church, and in 1891 at the Napoleon Town Hall social. “All joined in a jolly social and concluded by partaking of hulled corn and milk.” The last mention of the group in the Citizen Patriot neighborhood news columns was in 1891, when the group performed at the State Farmers’ Institute January 28-29.

Another photo surfaced in The Exponent files with a front drum

initialed “NHS,” suggesting it was the Napoleon High School band. Fascinating to me is the range of ages, the post-flapper era women’s hair styles and hemlines, the incorporation of string instruments, one’s graduation attire, and the serious gentlemen in uniform. That’s the great thing about photographs — there are always mysteries to unravel.

If you have photos, scrapbooks, postcards, or other historical items that may be shared, we would love to see them. Contact The Exponent office to arrange a time or email unique photos with any information you have about the content to exponews@theexponent.com. In the subject line, please note “Attic & Hearth” or “For Michelle” and include your name and contact information in the message.

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Onsted lights ‘em up!

Onsted High School's choir and Key Club contributed holiday background music as the Clauses greeted kids (young and old alike) on the Onsted park stage before the tree lighting ceremony.

It's the most wonderful time of the year...for a tree lighting!

**Story & Photos
By Michelle McLemore
Staff writer**

The Onsted Village Park came alive with caroling, Christmas greetings, colored lights, sweet treats, and joyful fellowship on Saturday, December 6, as the village council and associates threw the first Christmas celebration of its kind.

Planning began early, with businesses and organizations invited to adopt a pine tree for decorating in the park. They, along with a large pine tree brought in by Steve Robinson and Brent Woerner, were lit as part of the Saturday night festivities. Attendees voted on their favorite decorated tree, and by

majority vote, the "Best Tree" was the OCRC Soccer organization and the "In memory of Mary Desjardins and Herb Hall" family tree. Both may claim their \$50 Visa Gift Card at the Village Office.

A "Giving Tree" was also set up in the park, adorned with donated hats, gloves, and socks for anyone in need to use. Others could donate by attaching items with available zip locks to the tree.

At 5:30 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived chauffeured by Jeff Hubbard in a classic convertible, and they led a round of "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer" before beginning a meet, greet, and photo opportunity at the park stage. They

were also joined by the Onsted choir and Key Club members for continued caroling.

Hot beverages and baked good vendors provided refreshments for warming the insides, while campfires helped warm the outsides near pavilion gatherings. Onsted Kiwanis was on site offering wreaths and nuts for their annual fundraising drive.

Village President Robert Schaefer, in festive attire, conducted the tree lighting and expressed gratitude to all community helpers who worked to make the night successful for what may become a new annual tradition.

Santa and Mrs. Claus shared a few moments with celebration goers, by sharing hugs, and taking photos with attendees

Jay Best helped keep the fires burning for visitors to warm up between events at the Onsted Tree Lighting Celebration.



Kiwanis Korner

By Chris Holbert
President, Brooklyn Kiwanis



It's been another great month serving the community through the Kiwanis Club of Brooklyn. We kicked things off with a phenomenal turn out at our monthly Bingo game to raise more than \$700 for the food pantry. We delivered dictionaries to the third graders at Columbia Upper Elementary and Ezra Eby in Napoleon. We had representatives from Key Club and Builders Club accompany Mrs. Claus in our holiday parade. And finally, I was thrilled to have 10 of our Kiwanians supporting Columbia Schools robotics programs this past weekend as judges and workers. It is such a great program and we are proud to be one of their biggest supporters.

Things are slowing down a little this month. Please join us for Bingo on Wednesday, December 17th at the American Legion. Doors open at 5 pm and

the games start promptly at 6 p.m. As we head into the Christmas season and the new year, keep Kiwanis in mind. Our flags are a great Christmas gift idea, helping you check a few people off your list while supporting a program that helps the kids and families in the community. As we head into the new year, think of Kiwanis while you make your resolutions too. Are you looking to make new friends? Support your community? Kiwanis is a phenomenal organization and we always need help putting the "fun" in fundraising with programs like our flags, bingo and trivia and supporting community through events like our tree lighting or robotics competitions. Our next daytime meeting is Tuesday, January 6 from 11:30 - 12:30 at the American Legion. Come on in and have lunch with us and learn more. We'd love to have you.

A Christmas Gala!



Lisa Bressi, a new member of the Irish Hills Eagles, displays a gingerbread man that was part of one of the silent auction baskets at the annual Oh These Irish Hills! Christmas Gala this past Saturday. The large wreath on the wall was also up for auction. It probably ended up going for a couple hundred dollars. We will feature more photos from the Christmas Gala in this year's Christmas issue.

Columbia Charter Township police report

By John Hummer
Editor

On Saturday, Dec. 6 at 4:29 p.m. Lenawee County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to the area of M-50 and M-52 (North Adrian Highway) for a crash with injuries involving two vehicles.

The deputies' investigation indicates a silver 2017 Toyota Prius was traveling southbound through the intersection after the traffic light cycled to green for southbound and northbound traffic on M-52. A white 2010 Chevrolet Silverado

was traveling westbound on M-50, disregarded a red traffic light, entered the intersection, and struck the Toyota Prius. The Prius was being driven by a 54-year-old female from the Adrian area who was transported to Henry

Ford Jackson Hospital where she died from her injuries. The Chevrolet Silverado was driven by a 20-year-old male from the Traverse City area with a 23-year-old female from the Traverse City area as a passenger. Both

occupants of the Silverado were transported to Toledo Hospital with minor injuries. Seatbelt use is unknown due to the prompt response by fire rescue personnel. Drugs and alcohol do not appear to be a fac-

tor. This crash remains under investigation by the Lenawee County Accident Investigation Team. Assistance during the incident was provided by the Tecumseh Fire Department, Raisin Township Police

Department, Adrian Township Police Department, Tecumseh Police Department, Madison Township Police Department, Michigan State Police, and Lenawee Community Ambulance units.

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Village of Brooklyn Talkin’ the walk

Wayfinding, signage, sidewalks get full council support

By John Hummer
Editor

The Brooklyn Village Council approved several items at its November meeting that, when implemented, will improve wayfinding, signage, and sidewalks throughout the village.

The village’s Corridor Improvement Authority recommended a wayfinding/entry point signage package for the council’s consideration. “The CIA has been working really diligently the last several months with the Johnson Sign Company to develop a variety of signs,” noted Abie Baldwin, chair of the CIA.

The package, Phase 1 of the project, includes four parts. The council unanimously approved the full CIA package.

The first part includes signage for the main entry points of the village at the north and south limits of M-50 and the east village limit of M-124. This part, at a cost of \$50,657, will be paid for with CIA funds. The Michigan Department of Transportation will determine specific locations for the signage.

The second piece encompasses secondary entry point signage at the village limits on Marshall Street, Tiffany Street, and Case Road. These signs will cost \$14,850 and will be paid for by the village’s Major and Local Street Fund.

The third part will consist of three large wayfinding signs that will be placed on southbound Main Street between Marshall and Michigan streets, on northbound Main Street near Taco Bell, and westbound Wampers Lake Road before Main Street. The cost of the three signs is \$15,975 and will be covered by CIA funds. More specific locations will be determined by MDOT.

The fourth and final part of the plan includes four guerilla (smaller, lighter weight) wayfinding signs whose locations and specific signs will be on a seasonal rotation on village streets near intersections with Main Street. These smaller signs will cost \$1,725 and will be paid for with CIA funds.

Phase 2 of the signage/wayfinding plan will include more specific local vehicle and pedestrian traffic signage at strategic locations around the village.

“The Corridor Improvement Authority has worked really hard on this for quite a while now, so we’re really excited to have something that we can implement now,” stated Village Manager Matt Swartzlander.

Swartzlander noted in a memo to the village council that all expenditures for the signage are accounted for in the village’s current fiscal year budget, adding that there will be limited additional costs associated with installation.

The village has chosen Johnson Sign Co. for the signage work which will include designs that were created during the village branding process over the past year. Swartzlander added that the new signs will likely start to be installed in the



Nestor



Swartzlander

late winter after they are built and the approval process with MDOT is completed. “I would say by early spring we will have all of this accomplished,” he said.

Walkability Committee is off and running walking

Bea Nestor, chair of the village’s new Walkability Committee, provided the council with an update on the accomplishments and plans of the committee over its first few months.

The theme for our group is, “Small steps build big change – what’s doing and achievable now,” she said.

Initial wins she highlighted included the repainting of crosswalks throughout the village, the identification and mapping of “hotspots” on village sidewalks that will be prioritized for early repairs and replacement, conversations with MDOT for traffic calming in downtown Brooklyn, and various forms of communication used to get the word out about what is being done.

Regarding sidewalk repair, Nestor explained, “It’s a complex problem because there are a lot of sidewalk problems and there are only so many dollars, so how do you prioritize it? I think we’re doing a great job in talking through that.”

After Nestor’s report the council unanimously approved three items requested by the committee: purchase of a sidewalk grinder for sidewalk edge maintenance and life extension – a budgeted expense of the Internal Service Fund; striping and signage, including bollard placement, of the three crosswalks on Marshall Street – to be covered by the Street Fund; and a downtown striping plan to calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety.

“It’s not perfect, but it will certainly help reduce tripping hazards while we also look at full-scale replacement and extension of other [sidewalks],” Nestor said of the sidewalk grinder. “It will certainly be dollars well spent in terms of being able to repair a lot of sidewalks and focus our dollars on a few hotspots.”

Regarding the striping plan, Swartzlander noted, “In the conversations with MDOT, they were very supportive of all of these as traffic calming measures that will assist with prioritizing the pedestrian foot traffic that is ever-increasing downtown with new businesses. I’m really excited for the look and how sharp this is going to be for downtown.”

Swartzlander also noted that the CIA and Walkability Committee have discussed a crosswalk at the north end of the Village Square in the Village Creamery area. “That is going to happen in a separate step

because we’re going to have to put in ADA-compliant leads for the crosswalk and paint it – all of that has to happen at the exact same time, so that will be a separate piece that we will do in the spring once all this [other] stuff is done,” he said.

“We’re going to continue to build habits and change habits as the pedestrian and foot traffic continues to increase and we prioritize that equally with vehicle transportation,” Swartzlander summarized.

In other related business, village resident Diane Smith was unanimously approved as a new member of the Walkability Committee and Tanya Ortega was unanimously approved as a new member of the village’s Parks Board.

More news from the village council meeting will be covered in next week’s Exponent.

Brooklyn Gives Back

December 2 - December 16

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Grass Lake Festival of Lights & COOKIE TOUR



Joslynn Cole, 6, of Grass Lake, is happy to see Santa at the Whistlestop Depot in Grass Lake. Joslynn might be wishing, “All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth, my two front teeth! . . .”



Grass Lake Lions Club members were selling prize basket raffle tickets at the Whistlestop Depot Saturday. From left: John Brier, Linda Brier, and Nancy Memmer.



The Dawson family came all the way from Fowlerville (near Lansing) to join in the fun at the Grass Lake Festival of Lights & Cookie Tour Saturday. From left: Jennifer, Willow, 1; Mavery, 4; and Matt.

Story and photos by John Hummer

The 2025 Grass Lake Festival of Lights & Cookie Tour had an excellent turnout this year as the weather warmed above 30 degrees for the day during this unusually cold early December day. There was a nice layer of snow on the ground to evoke a “White Christmas” feel to the day.

The event is a long-standing community favorite that transforms downtown Grass Lake into a winter wonderland.

Highlighting the daytime activities was the popular cookie tour where participants collect cookies from businesses and organizations around town. Other activities included creating Christmas ornaments with the Grinch and Cindy Lou, free wagon rides, the ever-favorite Season Keepers Craft Sale complete with food from the Grass Lake Senior Center; pictures with Santa, a prize baskets raffle auction, hot chocolate, and more cookies at Whistlestop Depot. The day culminated with the spectacular Light Parade in downtown Grass Lake.

The annual celebration brings together neighbors, businesses, and families from all around the area for a day (and night) full of joy, music, lights, and community spirit. The festival not only brings joy to families but also shines a spotlight on local businesses and organizations that make Grass Lake “a great place to call home.”

Coordinator Patricia Simpson was pleased with the festival and said it was a tremendous success!

On the lanes



Zach Schultz of Columbia Central High School watches his bowling ball head down the lane during a match at JAX 60 last week.

Boys Bowling
Vandercook Lake 23, Addison 7: Steven Fair finished with a high game of 207 for VCL.

Napoleon 23, Michigan Center 7: Peyton Thorne rolled a 501 series to lead Napoleon. Aaden Burdge finished with a 196 for the Cardinals.

Madison 28, Onsted 2: Jayden Valasek rolled a 221 game and

Alex Dolson finished with a 178 game for Onsted.

Napoleon 29, East Jackson 1: Dominic Hemry finished with a 160 for the Trojans.

Columbia Central 22, Hanover-Horton 8: CCHS won the second Baker game in the contest. David Bielby is 4-0 for CCHS this season.

Michigan Center 29, Grass Lake 1

Hudson 16, Onsted 14: Matt Jeffreys finished with a 183 striking out in the tenth frame for Onsted.

Columbia Central 17, Homer 13: The Golden Eagles swept the Baker games for a 10-0 lead. David Bielby and Zach Schultz won matches for CCHS to pull out the victory.

Girls Bowling
Vandercook Lake 28, Addison 2: Carrin Sims finished with a personal-best game of 124 for the Jayhawks.

Michigan Center 21, Napoleon 9: Jada Gallagher rolled a 219 game for Napoleon. Abby Smith rolled a 204 for the Cardinals.

East Jackson 26, Napoleon 4: East Jackson earned the win at Suburban Lanes Wednesday.

Hanover-Horton 26, Columbia Central 4: Kayleigh Molnar and Alexis Henry won matches for the Golden Eagles.

Grass Lake 30, Leslie 0

Homer 26, Columbia Central 4: Kayleigh Molnar and Alexis Henry won matches for CCHS in the contest. Molnar rolled a high score of 213 and Henry 169.

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High flying Wildcat



Rylan Henagan soared during Onsted’s thrilling overtime win against Hanover Horton last week. Photo by Paul Snyder.

High school sports schedule Dec. 8-30	
Boys Basketball	
Dec. 8	Vandercook Lake at Stockbridge 7 p.m.
Dec. 9	Hudson at Onsted 7 p.m.
Dec. 10	CCHS at Michigan Center 7 p.m. Addison at Napoleon 7 p.m. Homer at Grass Lake 7 p.m. VCL at East Jackson 7 p.m.
Dec. 12	Columbia Central at Addison 7 p.m. Grass Lake at East Jackson 7 p.m. Napoleon at Michigan Center 5:30 p.m. Jonesville at Vandercook Lake 7 p.m. Onsted at Madison 7 p.m.
Dec. 15	Quincy at Napoleon 5:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	Onsted at Clinton 7 p.m.
Dec. 17	Manchester at Addison 5:30 p.m. Leslie at Columbia Central 7 p.m. Grass Lake at Hanover-Horton 7 p.m. Napoleon at Vandercook Lake 7 p.m.
Girls Basketball	
Dec. 8	Springport at Vandercook Lake 7 p.m.
Dec. 9	Grass Lake at Gabriel Richard Hillsdale at Napoleon 7 p.m. Vandercook Lake at Litchfield 7 p.m.
Dec. 10	Central Academy at Onsted 6 p.m.
Dec. 11	Columbia Central at Addison 6 p.m. East Jackson at Grass Lake 6 p.m. Michigan Center at Napoleon 7 p.m. Vandercook Lake at Jonesville 7 p.m.
Dec. 12	Blissfield at Columbia Central 7 p.m. Onsted at Quincy 7 p.m.
Dec. 13	Grass Lake at Rockford 1 p.m. Napoleon at Union City 1 p.m.
Dec. 15	Sand Creek at Addison 6 p.m.

Dec. 16	Addison at Napoleon 7 p.m. Michigan Center at CCHS 7 p.m. Grass Lake at Homer 7 p.m. VCL at East Jackson 7 p.m. Clinton at Onsted 7 p.m.
Wrestling	
Dec. 10	Napoleon at Quincy Quad 6 p.m. Lumen Christi at Onsted 2 p.m.
Dec. 13	Addison, Onsted at Leslie Invitational 9 a.m. Columbia Central at Fowlerville Invitational 9 a.m. Grass Lake at Riverview Invitational 9 a.m. Napoleon at Brighton Invitational 9 a.m. Vandercook Lake at Sand Creek Invitational 9 a.m.
Dec. 17	Addison at Napoleon 5:30 p.m. Columbia Central at Manchester 4:30 p.m. Vandercook Lake at Grass Lake 5:30 p.m.
Competitive Cheer	
Dec. 8	Hanover-Horton Invitational 6 p.m.
Dec. 12	Onsted at CCCAM Invitational 6 p.m.
Dec. 13	Concord Invitational 9 a.m. Columbia Central at Paw Paw Invitational TBD Grass Lake Invitational 9 a.m. Napoleon at Novi CCCAM Invitational 9 a.m. Onsted at Hillsdale Invitational 10 a.m.
Dec. 16	Cascades Jamboree (VCL) 6 p.m.
Bowling	
Dec. 8	Columbia Central at Addison (Hudson Lanes) 3:30 p.m. Dundee at Onsted (10 Pin) 4 p.m.
Dec. 9	East Jackson at CCHS (JAX 60) 3:30 p.m. Vandercook Lake at Hanover-Horton (JAX 60) 3:30 p.m.



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Boys Basketball

Onsted, Columbia Central start strong



Columbia Central’s Nolan Schiel brings the ball upcourt during last week’s win over Hanover Horton. Schiel scored a career-high 28 points in the win.

Napoleon Pirates

Bath 46
Napoleon 39

The Napoleon Pirates fell to the Bath Bees 46-39 in their season opener last Tuesday (Dec. 2) at Bath.

Tyler Nall and Gavin Davis scored 12 points apiece to lead the Pirates in scoring. Nall also pulled down six rebounds and made two steals. Davis grabbed three rebounds and dished out three assists. Tristen Russell grabbed seven rebounds, and Brady McLain chipped in with four points, four rebounds, and four assists.

Manchester 61
Napoleon 55

The Napoleon Pirates dropped their Cascades Conference East Division opener to the Manchester Dutchmen 61-55.

Tyler Nall scored 24 points, grabbed four rebounds, made four steals, and had three assists to lead the Pirates. Gavin Davis scored 11 points, dished out eight assists, and had five rebounds. Jayden Servis scored nine points, snared 10 rebounds, and blocked two shots. Tristen Russell chipped in with seven points and five rebounds.

The Pirates will try to get on the winning track this Wednesday when they host the Addison Panthers in their home opener.

Addison Panthers

Vandercook Lake 57
Addison 50

The Addison Panthers fell to the Vandercook Lake Jayhawks 57-50 in their 2025-26 season home opener last Tuesday night at Addison.

The Panthers rallied from 10 down early in the fourth quarter (46-36), with a 10-0 run to tie the game at 46 all with 3:03 left in play, and trailed by only two points (52-50) with little less than a minute left in play, the Panthers couldn’t catch the Jayhawks. Vandercook Lake secured the win, going 5-8 from the free throw line to secure the Jayhawk win.

The Panthers had three players who scored in double figures: Quincy Smith with 21 points, Braylen Klein with 12 points (3 - three-pointers in the fourth quarter), and Austin Wilson with 10 points.

Columbia Central

Columbia Central 55
Hillsdale 48

The Columbia Central Golden Eagles opened their 2025-26 Basketball campaign last Tuesday night (Dec. 2) with a 55-48 home opening win over the Hillsdale Hornets.

David Munro scored 14 points, and Conor Rentfrow had 13 points to lead the Eagles. Nolan Schiel and Dylan Penix contributed seven points apiece, and Trent Troyer chipped in with six points.

Columbia Central 53
Hanover Horton 39

Nolan Schiel scored a career-high 28 points, helping the Columbia Central Golden Eagles to a 53-39 Cascades Western Division Conference win over the Hanover-Horton Comets.

The senior guard scored all of Columbia’s 14 points in the second quarter to put the Eagles up 24-16 at halftime and seven points in the third quarter as the Eagles pulled away, outscoring the Comets 18-8 in the third quarter.

David Munro contributed 12 points, and Brody Denning scored five points as Columbia improved to 2-0 in the first week of the season.

Grass Lake

Quincy 43
Grass Lake 27

The Grass Lake Warriors fell to the Quincy Orioles 43-27 in their season opener Wednesday night at Grass Lake.

Brayden Gilbert scored nine points and grabbed five rebounds to lead the Warriors. Connor Sherwood chipped in with five points and three rebounds.

Leslie 64
Grass Lake 27

The Grass Lake Warriors fell to the Leslie Blackhawks 64-27 at Leslie.

Connor Sherwood scored seven points and pulled down three rebounds to lead the Warriors. Domingo Decoster-Elizondo scored five points, made two rebounds, and had two steals. Evan Norris scored four points and grabbed four rebounds.

Onsted Wildcats

Onsted 75
Hanover-Horton 73

The Onsted Wildcat’s Bryson Sutherland sank two free throws with 7.5 left in overtime to give the Onsted Wildcats a 75-73 opening season win over the Hanover-Horton Comets last Tuesday night.

The Wildcats rallied from seven points down (62-55) with less than four minutes to go in the fourth quarter, making a 9-0 run to take the lead on a basket by Sutherland (64-62), only to have Hanover-Horton’s JJ Russ tie things at 64 all with less than a minute in regulation to force overtime.

Seniors Cole Well and Mason Chesser lead the Wildcats with double-doubles each. Wells scored 28 points and grabbed 16 rebounds. Chesser hit for 22 points and pulled in 10 rebounds. Sutherland finished with 11 points, while Rylan Henagan and Sean Symington chipped in with nine points apiece for the Onsted win.

Onsted 52
Quincy 43

The Onsted Wildcats improved to 2-0 early in the season with another hard-fought road win at Quincy, as the Wildcats took down the Quincy

Orioles 52-43.

Onsted had three Wildcats score in double figures, led by Cole Wells with a double-double of 11 points and 11 rebounds. Rylan Henagan also scored 11 points to go with three assists and two steals. Mason Chesser had 10 points and made four steals, while Bryson Sutherland chipped in with nine points and pulled down seven rebounds.

The Wildcats will host the Hudson Tigers tonight (Tuesday, Dec. 9) in their LCAA Conference opener and have another tough game Friday night when they travel to Adrian Madison to take on the Trojans.



At right: Addison’s Landon Hughes walkst he ball upcourt as he looks over Vandercook Lake’s defense. Photo by Paul Snyder.

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David Alan Bendele

David Alan Bendele, 66, of Brooklyn, Mich., passed away on Monday, December 8, 2025, surrounded by family at his home. David's family and friends will gather from 10 a.m. to noon, on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at Eineder Funeral Homes – Brooklyn Chapel. His funeral service will follow at noon at the funeral home. Pastor Ned Bernstein will officiate.

David was born on September 14, 1959, in Bad Axe, Mich., to John and Margurite (Bolda). He graduated from Columbia Central High School in 1978. David married the love of his life, Pamela Jeanne Elrod, on December 30, 2002, in Brooklyn, Mich. He spent 20 years working at Bailey Excavation and 21 years working at Bendele Excavation, both as an operating engineer. David enjoyed the outdoors, where he would go fishing, hunting, boating and more! mushroom hunting. He loved playing the guitar. David delighted in watching NASCAR racing, especially when Dale



David Bendele

Ernhardt was in the race. He is a former member of the Eagles Lodge. David cherished his family more than anything and he loved being a grandfather.

David will be missed by his wife, Pam Bendele; his children, Julie (Jeremey) Cooper, Jennifer Bendele, Nicole (Chris) Champanois, Amanda (Mike) Hood and Tiffany Gelia; his siblings, Bernadette (Mike) Frost, Mary (Keith) Frost and Joe (Laura) Bendele; his grandchildren, Jeremy Jr., Jenna, Jensen, Jersey, Anthony, Marlayna, Lexi, Casey, Emma, Gracie, and Tyler; his great grandchildren, Lexi; his mother-in-law, Shirley; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Margurite; his grandson, Noah; and his father-in-law, Bob Elrod.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to the American Great Lakes Cancer Society. Please leave a message of comfort for David's family or sign his guestbook at www.EinederFuneralHomes.com

Donald Charles Oswald

It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of our father, Donald Charles Oswald, on November 9, 2025, at Cambrian Memory Care.

Don was born May 11, 1939, at home in Riga Township to Verne L. Oswald and Myrtle W. (Gautz). A 1957 graduate of Tecumseh High School, he married Karen L. Pennington on January 21, 1961, with whom he shared three daughters and sixty-three years of getting stuff done.

Don's life was a testament to hard work, determination, and love of his family. He modeled self-sufficiency and a strong work ethic from childhood, as evidenced by winning a brand new 1954 Buick after garnering the most subscriptions in a paper drive for the Tecumseh Herald before he was old enough to drive. Don didn't let rules or "limits" stop him; he always found a loophole or way through. He was a toolmaker at Tipton Tool & Die before joining Ford Motor Company and becoming a mechanical engineer at the now closed Ypsilanti plant, retiring after thirty-four years. Retirement was just the beginning for Don, who then had time to focus on gardening, carpentry, hunting, fishing, chopping wood, remodels galore, and helping his daughters/neighbors/friends with anything needed. A talented carpenter, Don was always working on projects at home and for others.

Over the years he and Karen remodeled their centennial farmhouse. No repair was too daunting nor a project too impossible for Don to tackle. Karen dreamt it; he created it. Armed with his pencil and tool pouch, Don would methodically work a project to perfection with the Tigers Radio playing in the background. His bluebird and wren houses were Christmas favorites. Don taught his girls to be self-sufficient, from how to service and maintain their own



Don Oswald

lawnmowers to appliances, car care and more. He also instilled kindness and neighborly values in his children. His kindness and generosity extended to anyone who needed "a bit of help."


Karen and Don traveled for antique and casino runs where Don would hit the all you can eat shrimp buffets and dollar blackjack tables like the bargain champion he was.

A quiet card shark and Hoyle loyalist, Don was usually the one you had to beat in euchre and Texas Hold 'Em. He proudly taught his girls how to shuffle, deal and count cards, all the while with his mischievous grin. After forty-three years of farm living in Tecumseh, Don and Karen moved to Vineyard Lake for their last home renovation. For twenty years they enjoyed lake life, hosting friends, and family, rooting for the Lions, Tigers, and Wolverines. Many card games and stories were shared at Vineyard, always with his trademark "smirk." A legacy of hard work, dedication and love will live on in the hearts of those who knew him. He was a hero to his daughters and will be greatly missed.

Don is survived by his daughters, Mary (Dwayne) Norton, Suzy (Mike) Snyder, and Donna (Tim Stephens) Oswald; his brothers, Duane Oswald, Leo (Virginia) Oswald, Robert (Gail) Oswald; and nieces and nephews. Don was preceded in death by his wife, Karen, his parents, and his sisters-in law, Judy and Virginia Oswald.

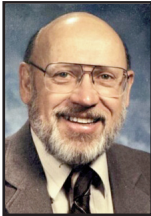
In keeping with Don's wishes, he will be cremated and laid to rest next to Karen at the Macon Cemetery in May of 2026, following a private graveside ceremony for immediate family only. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Salvation Army. Arrangements are under the care of the Tecumseh Chapel of Handler Funeral Homes. Online condolences may be made to the family at www.handlerfuneralhomes.com

Richard Harvey Raby

 Richard Harvey Raby, 93, entered his heavenly home on November 30, 2025, surrounded by his loving family.

Richard was born in Norvell, Mich., to the late Harry and Wilma Raby. He graduated from Napoleon High School in 1950, where he was active in basketball, cross-country, and music. Richard continued his education at Taylor University, where he met the love of his life, Pat, his devoted wife of 71 years. After graduating in 1954, Richard proudly served his country when he was drafted into the U.S. Navy. Richard served the Admiral's staff of the Pacific 7th Fleet.

Richard's life was one of service, compassion, and faith. He shared his love of learning as a high school music and biology teacher before earning his master's degree from Eastern



Richard Raby

Michigan University. He then went on to become a high school counselor. He was deeply devoted to helping others – always kind, gentle, and willing to listen. His words and warmth made others feel valued and loved.

Music was a lifelong joy for Richard. He directed and sang in church choirs, sharing his deep faith through song. Richard played his baritone horn with great pride. He performed with the Napoleon Lions Club Band for 42 years.

Outside of music, Richard loved farming, gardening, and caring for the barn swallows that made their home in his barn. His love for God's creation could be seen in the way he tended his land and cherished every tree and flower.

Richard is survived by his beloved wife, Pat; daughters, Sharon (Tim), and Becky (Kevin); grandchildren, Nathan, Hannah (Jonah), Abby (Mike),

Rachel (Jean), and Katie (Tyler); and nine great-grandchildren who brought him endless joy.

A memorial service will be held at Brooklyn Presbyterian Church (160 N. Main St., Brooklyn) on Saturday, December 13, 2025, beginning at 11 a.m. with Pastor David Weber and Pastor Dennis Ladd officiating. The family will receive friends for visitation on Saturday from 10 a.m. until the time of the service at the Church.

In honor of Richard's lifelong love of trees and nature, the family invites you to plant a tree in his memory - a living reminder of a man who gave so much love, laughter, and grace to all who knew him. In lieu of flowers, please make memorial donations to Brooklyn Presbyterian Church (160 N. Main St., Brooklyn, MI 49230).

Please visit www.hamptonfuneralhomes.com sign the guestbook and/or send a condolence to the family.

James Reynolds

James Reynolds, 81, passed away on November 27, 2025. Cremation has taken place. James leaves behind his loving wife of fifty-two years, Lucy, and many friends and family.



James Reynolds

He was preceded in death by his brothers, Fred Reynolds (Spike), Richard Reynolds, and Jon Reynolds (Butch). He worked for the Jackson County Road Commission for 38 years.

He was a volunteer fireman for Columbia Township and Summit Township for a total of 35 years. Graveside services will happen later in the spring with family and friends. He will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him.

Suzanne Veronica Simmons-Otness

Suzanne Veronica Simmons, 80, was the second of three girls to parents Norma and Harry Simmons. Suzanne was raised in Brooklyn Mich. She graduated from Manchester High School with honors in 1963. She received a scholarship to attend Michigan State University, where she thrived in the fast-paced college atmosphere.

She moved to Southern California in 1967, to support her younger sister Carol, and to seek a more exciting lifestyle. Her jobs included factory work as a production specialist and quality control, associate executive positions in municipal government for the City of Hermosa Beach, and as a receptionist for local newspaper, *The Easy Reader*.

Suzanne gave birth to her son Ron in November 1970. As a single mother, she was a loving, caring mom who promoted an amazing life for the two.

In 1973 she bought a Rolleiflex 35mm camera, and photography became a life-long hobby. It must be noted that while in the South Bay area, she had a circle of wonderful friends, who were extremely thoughtful and supportive to both.

Leaving Hermosa Beach in 1976, they moved to Michigan where she was the general manager for a major moving company. She was able to use this experience to transfer to Seattle in 1978.

Upon arriving in Seattle, she was introduced to her soulmate, Marvin Otness a Seattle fire-



Suzanne Simmons-Otness

fighter. The trio settled in the North Admiral neighborhood of West Seattle. In December 1982, the family welcomed daughter Oriana into their lives.

As the mother of a young child, she earned a degree in horticulture at South Seattle Community College while working full-time as a manager. Suzanne took on the challenge of director at the Junction Community Food Bank, of which she was highly regarded.

In 1992, the couple and their daughter bought a house on acreage near the town of Greenbank, on Whidbey Island, Washington.

Suzanne took courses through Washington State University to become a Master Gardener, a very demanding title which requires hundreds of hours of community service. She maintained this status for more than a decade.

In her 60s she needed another challenge and became a licensed massage therapist.

As an animal lover, she was a pet mom to many dogs and cats, and flocks of chickens throughout her life. Her poodle Golda Mae was a beloved companion during her final days.

Granddaughter Charlotte was born in August 2020 to Oriana and SIL Mark and was the apple of her eye. She spent as much time as possible doting on her.

Suzanne passed away peacefully at around midnight on October 15, 2025. She is survived by her children, Ron and Oriana; granddaughter, Charlotte; sister, Bonnie and many nieces and nephews and their children and grandchildren.

Suzanne may be gone physically from this world, but she lives on in our hearts and daily thoughts forever.

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WATERLOO TOWNSHIP

Summary of Waterloo Township Board Meeting
November 25, 2025

A regular meeting of the Waterloo Township Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:00pm. The following motions were made and passed: approval to adopt the consent agenda as presented, a modification of the mileage re-imbursement policy for the zoning enforcement officer, approval of a boundary line adjustment submitted by the Waterloo Area Historical Society for the Dewey School parcel on Territorial Road, acceptance of a bid from AJ's Complete Lawn Care to plow and salt the township parking lot and sidewalks for the 2025/2026 winter season pending clarification, and approval to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Complete minutes can be found on the Waterloo Township web-site. (https://waterlootwpmi.gov/meeting-minutes/).

Bill Richardson,
Clerk

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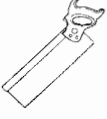
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VILLAGE OF GRASS LAKE

VILLAGE OF GRASS LAKE
JACKSON COUNTY, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION TO DISSOLVE LEONI REGIONAL UTILITY AUTHORITY (LRUA)
RESOLUTION NO. 12-02-2025-1

19

At a meeting of the Grass Lake Village Council, Jackson County, Michigan, held at the Village of Grass Lake Hall on December 2, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Jane Fitzgerald, Gina Lammers, Cindy Popovitch, Jennifer Stanton, Matt Swank, and David Keener. **ABSENT:** Wes Shemwell

The following resolution was offered by Gina Lammers and supported by Jennifer Stanton.

WHEREAS, the Village of Grass Lake is one of eight Constituent Municipalities which is located in Jackson County, which incorporated the Leoni Regional Utility Authority ("LRUA") under Act 233 of Public Acts of Michigan of 1955, as amended ("Act 233") and was voted on August 19, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the authority as stated in the Articles of Incorporation is "to acquire, own, construct, improve, enlarge, extend, maintain, and operate Sewage disposal systems and water supply systems, or a combination of systems; and

WHEREAS, in its 24 years of existence and despite repeated attempts, the Leoni Regional Utility Authority has been unable to accomplish the purpose for which it was created; and

WHEREAS, the Leoni Regional Utility Authority remains unable to accomplish that purpose today; and

WHEREAS, the cost to continue its existence, especially for the mandatory annual audits, has become prohibitive.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Grass Lake Village Council, Jackson County Michigan, that as of December 2, 2025 being a constituent member of the Leoni Regional Utility Authority, voting in a scheduled regular meeting of the Village of Grass Lake, do hereby declare that the Leoni Regional Utility Authority should be dissolved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that upon approval of dissolution by the bodies of all eight constituent municipalities a final audit be conducted and paid for, after which any remaining funds in proportion to the number of REUs each has paid dues for.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any municipalities who are not constituent municipalities but have paid dues, also be included in the distribution back of remaining funds in proportion to the number of REUs each has paid dues for.

Upon roll call vote:

Aye: 6

Absent: 1

Resolution carried.

The Village of Grass Lake President declared Resolution 12-01-2025-1 adopted

David Keener

David Keener Village of Grass Lake President

A talented crew



PHOTOS COURTESY COLUMBIA ROBOTICS

The Columbia Central Junior High Silver Sprockets took home the Reach Award for their extensive community outreach. From left: Coach Howard Bartlett, Evalynn Gaitan-Mansour (8th grade), Lynken Laverty (8th grade), Oliver Smith (8th grade), Addison Schiel (8th grade), Anthony Radcliff (7th grade), and Coach Mark Holbert.

The Columbia Central Junior High School robotics team, the Silver Sprockets, brought home a coveted award – the Reach Award – from this past weekend’s South Central League Competition. The Reach Award goes to a team that does many great outreach activities in their community. The Silver Sprockets just missed qualifying for the state competition.

The Columbia Upper Elementary team, the 4D Diggers, also had a great competition with great robot and presentation scores. They earned first place in the robot design category and took the Robot Design Award. The younger elementary students also participated in an expo showcasing their research projects and dioramas.



Ashton Knapp and Greyson Ahrens work on their robot runs for the match.



Columbia Central Junior High eighth grade students gather in the robotics competition field. The three Columbia students pictured here are Oliver Smith (far left), Lincoln Laverty (second from left), and Addison Schiel (far right, closest). The boy second from right is an onlooker from another team.

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