



What's the buzz at the Bauman house?

Meet a pretty sweet couple inside



Dewey Lake woman tells of Belize trip

Laura Pitock traveled a long way to serve - inside



We have some of our favorite fair entries

Local artists once again shine - inside

Columbia School District

New summer program appears to be an early success

School focusing entirely on literacy to help students

By John Hummer
Editor

A new early elementary academic summer school has been launched at Columbia Elementary School in the Columbia School District. Early results indicate it is a success.

The program is funded by the School Aid Act's Section 31 pot of money for at-risk students.

"We were very strategic with our funds this year and made it work," stated Andrew Parkinson, the district's curriculum director. "We've utilized those funds to supplement instruction for said students."

"I am especially pleased that we started an early elementary academic summer school," said Jim Baker, superintendent of Columbia School District.

Columbia Elementary Principal Derek Jackson explained the reasoning behind the new program. "In my three years of being an elementary principal, one of the nuances is summer break," he stated. "In their eight weeks off, we ask 'what are we able to provide students to ensure that there isn't that phenomena of a summer slide - where [students] end the school reading at a certain level, they come back, and they've slid a couple levels.'"

Jackson explained that students who dropped back to lower levels in reading after

summer break were identified as at risk students. One of the criteria to be considered at risk is performing below a grade level in reading/literacy, he said. That may trigger them being referred to the school's intervention programs. "Then you're playing catch-up," he said.

"The thought was having a summer school program as a springboard into the school year to regain some of those skills, and maybe lower some of their anxiety about returning to school and changing grade levels," he continued. "Would some of those students kind of on that cusp, having what we call that 'summer slide' - be able to maintain their reading level that they left the previous school year with?"

"If they can get that [additional summer schooling], take the diagnostic and perform better, it just gives them a better start to the next school year without feeling that lower self-efficacy moving into the school year," Jackson said.

At the end of the last school year, the staff at CES took students' i-Ready scores (diagnostic assessments that measure a student's proficiency in reading and math) and their F&P levels and identified 20 kindergartners and 20 first grade students needing additional help with reading. Eighteen of each grade level have been consistently participating in the summer school classes,

See *Summer school* page 2



Parkinson



Jackson

Training center reopens

Addison Fire & EMS Training Center getting a fresh start



Addison Fire & EMS firefighters use special tools, including the Jaws of Life, to demonstrate extrication techniques during the Addison Fire & EMS Training Center Open House this past weekend.

Story and photos
By John Hummer
Editor

The Addison Fire & EMS Regional Training Center, on U.S. 12 between Brooklyn and U.S. 127, is beginning a new chapter after a several-year transition period.

With the backdrop of the U.S. 12 Heritage Trail 180-mile garage sale this past weekend, an open house was held at the training center to acquaint the public with the operations of the facility. Live demonstrations were held, visitors could view the training center's apparatus and take a station tour, meet their local firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMT), and purchase refreshments from local vendors.

Serving Lenawee County and beyond, the training center is dedicated to providing high-quality, hands-on training for public safety professionals and community

members alike.

After years of indecision on the part of the Addison Fire Board and even considering selling the facility at one time, Addison Fire & EMS, under the direction of Fire Chief Dave Aungst, hired Advanced Selections, a consulting firm, in 2025 to do a complete analysis not only of the training center, but the full department.

"One of the things they did was look at the training center to see if it was viable," Aungst stated. "The [Addison] Fire Board and I were totally open to hear what they had to say about it. I was expecting anything. If they would have said, 'You need to sell it because you can't make a go of it,' I was prepared to hear that."

"Luckily, they saw a situation here that we can really make something out of this," Aungst continued. "They gave us a bunch of ideas and suggestions. The fire board is

doing a really good job following those suggestions. The suggestion was to keep this [facility], but really push it to be a regional training center. So, that's the route we're choosing to go."

Addison Fire Board President Jeff Wolcott thought highly of the consultant's report. "The deep dive they did looked at everything from the fire board to the administration, employees, vehicles, infrastructure, the best place for our facilities - it was a very comprehensive thing and I think we came away with some really good suggestions that we can just modify a bit."

The facility was a regional training center for several years in the 2010s, but lost momentum, participation, and financial support from first responder agencies that had been previous members.

"We know it's going to cost money to get it revitalized," said Aungst. "All of the train-



Wolcott Aungst Atwood

"If we get the training programs back to where we had them, this [facility] would be more than self-sufficient. It will be a money maker."

Jeff Wolcott
President,
Addison Fire Board

ing trailers need some work. We're working on that. We're going to look at some grants to rejuvenate them."

The facility currently has a forcible entry trailer that teaches firefighters how to breach doors; a FLAG trailer - a flammable liquid and gas trailer - that simulates propane tanks, gas meters that have "run away"; a car burner trailer with an actual car in it designed to be burned that simulates car fires; a big MTU trailer that simulates a home with an opportunity to practice live burns with artificial smoke; and an educational trailer for kids' safety.

The latter is the oldest trailer, being 32 years old. "I do want to replace that at some point if we can get enough money," Aungst stated. "We run thousands of kids through that. It's an excellent educational piece."

All the trailers include kill switches to put simulated fires out right away in the event something goes wrong.

Aungst added that a ladder truck will be part of the training apparatus "so that we always have a functional truck - and not pulling a truck that's in service," he said. "It could serve as a backup if we need it. It's a perfect truck for something like this. It gives us a lot of additional capabilities."

One of the issues with the training center, Aungst noted, is that it is an entity of its own. "It really needs to have somebody that can take the bull by the horns - that this is what they do."

Enter Don Atwood, now the training center director. Atwood came to Addison Fire & EMS from the Grand Ledge Fire Department. "He is



This is the regional mobile training unit with an advanced fire training simulator housed at the Addison Fire & EMS Regional Training Center.

See *Training center* page 3



Home rehab program launched in village



Brooklyn Village Manager Matt Swartzlander stands on Monroe Street in downtown Brooklyn, one of the streets where a good portion of the village’s housing exists.

**Story and photo
By John Hummer
Editor**

A new program is set to kick off that will assist Brooklyn residents with critical home repairs. The program assists income-qualified homeowners with necessary repairs to improve the health and safety of their homes.

The program is for homeowners of single-family homes in the Brooklyn Village Limits with 80 percent AMI (area median income). Program organizers use household size and income to determine eligibility. Renters and people who live outside the Village of Brooklyn do not qualify for assistance.

The Village of Brooklyn’s Homeowner Rehabilitation Program is funded by a

\$400,000 federal grant through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

“This grant provides a great opportunity to help our neighbors improve their homes,” said Village Council President Stella Roberts. “We look forward to all the positivity this program will bring and the work it will do to uplift the community.”

Brooklyn residents can learn more about the program and how to apply by visiting the village website, villageofbrooklyn.com/home-rehab.html. Residents are invited to submit an interest form on the website to get started in the process.

The village is also hosting an informational event on Wednesday, Aug. 19 at the

Village Office, 121 N. Main Street, for interested residents to learn more and find out if they qualify for a home rehabilitation project.

Submitting an interest form on the website will help the process move faster and reserve a spot at the informational event. Organizers will assist residents with appointments from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and accommodate walk-ins from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Each home rehabilitation project selected for funding will receive anywhere from \$1,500 to \$25,000. Village officials anticipate the funding will pay for repairs at 16 to 40 homes, depending on the cost of individual projects.

This work may include general repairs, plumbing, electrical, HVAC (heating/cooling),

roofing, and mold remediation. Only critical repairs that maintain the home’s structural integrity and support the health of the residents will be funded through the program.

Program organizers from the village will be working with local contractors to conduct the approved home rehabilitation projects. There is no cost to homeowners enrolled in the program. Selected homeowners are expected to cooperate with construction crews and village officials. Home rehabilitation funds will not go directly to residents.

Rehabilitation work will start in fall 2026 and take place through Dec. 31, 2027, when the program officially ends.

Jammin’ at the park



The Gospel in the Park band entertained guests during last week’s Grass Lake Music in the Park. At left, Marc Cuddie is on saxophone (also vocals) while at right Casey Mellinger played the bass guitar. Photos by John Hummer.



Summer school success . . . from page 1

Jackson noted.

The summer school is three days a week, Tuesday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon, with free breakfast and lunch and a recess break. Some Columbia Central Junior High students have come in to provide additional one-on-one help to their younger counterparts.

“Our summer school is explicitly literacy-focused,” Jackson stated. “We’re using UFLI Phonics instruction, which is a program approved by [the Michigan Department of Education] as an approved curriculum. So far, the teachers have said they’ve seen some pretty good results from the students – they’re catching on.” He noted that students took a pre-diagnostic test on the first day of summer school and will take a post-diagnostic on the last day to measure their growth.

Results of students’ progress and their summer school files are then forwarded to their new regular school year teacher.

“Granted, it’s nine days and a total of 36 hours of intervention, if you will, but they’re seeing good progress,” Jack-

son said. “We’re trying to get as much support in place prior to the 2027-28 school year when the dyslexia law takes [effect]. (New statewide dyslexia legislation proposed by State Rep. Kathy Schmaltz, which passed in the House, is currently under review in the Senate. A deep look at that legislation will appear in a future issue of the Exponent.)

Parkinson stated that a universal screening tool is used at the start of the regular school year that allows the district to collect baseline data on each student. “We see exactly where the student is at in real time so teachers can make decisions on how they are going to enact their instruction,” he said, adding that teachers can then be strategic in how they teach in their classroom based on students’ grade level competencies.

Parkinson explained that there are three benchmark assessments done to assess students’ progress – one in September, one in December, and one in at the end of April/early May. “They are a great way to monitor

progress and make sure that we’re seeing growth – and if we’re not seeing growth, there needs to be a course of action for that student to support them in whatever deficit they may possess,” he explained.

The district uses the F&P (Fountas and Pinnell) reading assessment tool, a grade-level gradient system. It starts at level zero as a nonreader. It then progresses from letter “A” in kindergarten and goes on through the alphabet as students improve their reading skills and move up grade levels in school.

“Once they take that benchmark assessment and they are showing below grade level, the next step is to meet with a reading interventionist and they’ll provide those diagnostics to get to the root deficit of what the student truly possesses,” Parkinson stated. “They’ll be able to refine what specific skill they’re missing and then hit on that specific skill with

targeted supplemental instruction.” Students are monitored to see what gains are being made, he noted. If they’ve made substantial progress to attain grade level, they are moved into more enrichment-focused course offerings, such as STEM classes.

“We’re doing everything under the sun to be prepared,” Parkinson summarized. “We are collectively organized internally reviewing these processes and programs and looking at them with a fine-tooth comb to make sure they fit the context of our needs and our students’ needs.

“Simultaneously, we’re working with other school districts in the area through the Jackson ISD (Intermediate School District) and a ton of district leaders to really put all hands on deck for strategies on how we’re going to make this work for our students and for our community.”

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Michigan Hydroplane Racing Association (MHRA) – Race Course Map and Markers – 8/22-23/26

Legend

- Race course marker
- Outside course marker
- Milling area course marker (maybe other color than green)
- Approx. 0.9mile race course
- - - Approx. 0.7mile milling area

* No boats in or out of ramp while races are on course. Can go between racing heats/sets as instructed by race committee.

‘Longest sale’



From left: Linda Brindle of Spring Arbor and her friend Tammy Penoes of Jackson were having fun thumbing through some clothing for sale in the big tent area at McCourtie Park last Friday during the annual U.S. 12 Heritage Trail 180-Mile Garage Sale.



From left: Soon-to-be Columbia Upper Elementary School third-grader Asher Brindle, 8, and soon-to-be fifth-grader Cooper Ohm were selling cold bottles of water and chips for a dollar apiece to make money for their Columbia travel baseball team at the big sale at McCourtie Park on U.S. 12. Their bottled water was the big seller of the weekend with temperatures in the mid-80s and high humidity.

Catching up with what’s happening



Historic treasures? From left: Scott Brighton and Glen Lupro of the Columbia Central High School class of 1985 check out 1973 issues of the Exponent they had for sale during the annual U.S. 12 Heritage Trail 180-Mile Garage Sale at McCourtie Park. Photos by John Hummer.

Training center . . . from page 1

heavy into the training,” stated Aungst. Atwood had run a training consortium in that area and brought the same model to Addison Fire & EMS.

“Basically, Don is a full-time firefighter/paramedic for me,” Aungst noted. “Now this is kind of his baby to get it kicked off – let the public know, let others know, we’re going to be open for business.”

“With his credentials being an IC (instructor/coordinator), I think we can make this viable,” Aungst continued. “We’re giving it a shot. We’re going to talk to everybody that we can – specifically we’re looking tri-county – Jackson, Hillsdale, Lenawee counties. That’s really the goal to get started. It doesn’t mean we won’t go farther.”

Aungst hinted that there are some educational facilities that will likely help with the venture, but said it was premature to name them. “We’ve started some preliminary talks of having that cooperative effort,” he said. “We want to work cooperatively with other agencies, not against them. We want this to be the place that we can get some real good education going.” He added that there

are 14 acres of land surrounding the facility that can be used for future purposes.

One goal, Aungst said, is to have current fire training programs around the tri-county area use the facility for training when needed. Lenawee County fire departments already use the building for training.

Wolcott noted that in addition to the training center operating in the facility, there will be a fire truck or two on hand and ready to respond to calls when necessary.

On the financial side, Wolcott explained that the fire board basically approves budgetary items for the department. It does not get much into the operational end of things.

Wolcott said the fire board is made up of mostly new board members within the last year. “There were issues in the past that caused financial issues,” he explained. “But the money issues weren’t so much with this (the training center). There was a smaller group of people that somehow thought this was a huge drain on the fire department budget. Obviously, it wasn’t as big as they made it out to be.”

“The idea of selling – I could never quite understand that,” Wolcott continued. “We have a big asset here that didn’t have a lot of taxpayer money in it.” The one big expense that was under the spotlight eight years ago was the replacement of the facility’s roof at a cost of \$60,000, he said.

Wolcott noted that it takes about \$12,000 a year for utilities, maintenance, and upkeep to run the building. “So, it’s not that much,” he said. “And, there is no money from the fire budget supporting this [facility]. They always expected this to be self-sufficient. The other two stations are supported in the budget. If we get the training programs back to where we had them, this [facility] would be more than self-sufficient. It will be a money maker.”

Wolcott added that with the recent hiring of an additional administrative assistant chief for Addison Fire & EMS who, in part, focuses on EMS billing and insurance payments, they are seeing additional revenue coming in from those sources to help improve the overall budget.

One change that could take place in the not-to-distant future, Wolcott shared, is renaming the fire board to a “fire authority.” “It would actually help us to get some additional funding,” he said.

As the training center gets up and running with a full schedule of classes, those that get trained will pay fees to the training center to help fund its ongoing operations. “Our plan is to offer a multitude of different training options,” Aungst said.

Atwood started full-time directing the operations at the training center in September 2025.

“With the EMS Training Consortium, everyone in EMS has to have continuing education,” Atwood explained. “To have preapproved credits through the state and approved training through the state, having that set up [here] makes that a lot easier.”

Atwood noted he is also able to conduct initial fire education, certifying fire instructors. “The State Bureau of Fire Services has come out with requirements for continuing education for firefighter certification and they’ve really started pushing that the last few years,” he stated. “If people want to be active in the fire service and maintain their credentials, they have to be in class and have proof of that. My fire instructor credentials give me that ability so we can keep all of our people in the region, or anywhere for that matter, current with their fire and EMS training.”

Some fire departments, particularly in larger cities, may have certified trainers in house, Atwood said. If not, there is a short list of places around the state, including the Addison Fire & EMS Training Center, which can conduct fire and EMS training. “You get to these more rural communities, most agencies don’t have access,” he noted. “The sky is the limit as to what we want to offer here.”

Atwood may do some of the training himself, has fire and EMS training personnel working underneath him that may handle some of the instruction, or he may bring in additional certified trainers to help conduct various training programs. He is currently working to build his instructor pool. “We’ve built out a little bit of a command structure for our training side and approved language for a Training Division,” he explained.

Atwood says he has 16 different training programs lined up for this fall, including three American Heart Association courses, which require specialized instructors. Those courses are: Oct. 12 – Basic Life Support (BLS) for healthcare providers; Nov. 14 – Ad-

vanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS); and Dec. 12 – Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).

Aungst noted one new offering that will be held at the training center in conjunction with Lenawee County fire chiefs is an all-female firefighter extrication class at the end of October taught by all female instructors. “I think it’s really special and important because there are more and more female firefighters,” he noted.

“They are going to learn techniques that work best for them to get the job done that wouldn’t be taught in a standard class with guys,” added Wolcott.

“A lot of departments have instructors, they just don’t have facilities like this,” he emphasized. Hence, Addison Fire & EMS welcomes fire departments to hold trainings at their facility. They may need equipment and supplies; the training center can likely provide those as well.

“It’s going to be kind of an ‘a la carte’ – what do you want, what do you need?” Atwood noted. He explained that some training courses are highly specialized and require outside expert instructors, sometimes from private companies. “Having a facility that can offer the footprint that they need to work in gives them a place to be able to administer that,” he says. “It’s not your average classroom.”

Atwood plans to conduct “train the trainer” courses as well at the center. “I can do some ‘train the trainer’ stuff and get more personnel capable and certified to do instruction,” he said. “So, it’s not just Don doing all the training. Many hands make light work. This is very much a group effort. I’d say we probably have no less than a dozen members involved in one way or another with getting this thing off the ground.”

“We have a lot of things lined up – it’s just a matter of the pieces starting to fall in place,” Atwood summarized. “We’ll be offering what we can for now and as funding comes in, we’ll be pulling together a strategy and fixing what we need to fix.”

For more information and to stay up to date on all the course offerings at the training center, find them on Facebook under Addison Fire & EMS Regional Training Center or call 517-547-6776. The facility is located at 16590 U.S. 12, Cement City.

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Primary sets up November for hotly-contested races

**Compiled
By John Hummer
Editor**

The results are in from the State Primary Election held last Tuesday, Aug. 4. The Exponent typically reports results from contested elections and proposals affecting the readership area. An asterisk (*) next to a candidate's name denotes the overall winner in that race.

Jackson County		
Governor (DEM)	Jackson County	Statewide
Jocelyn Benson*	13,872	1,246,854
Christopher Robert Swanson	2,344	251,716
Governor (REP)		
John James*	7,901	466,215
Perry Johnson	5,177	327,910
Mike Cox	2,329	121,027
Aric Nesbitt	237	16,335
<i>DEM Jocelyn Benson will face REP John James in the November General Election.</i>		
United States Senator (DEM)		
Haley Stevens	8,022	726,057
Abdul El-Sayed*	7,597	740,950
Mallory McMorrow	788	61,250
<i>Abdul E-Sayed will face REP Mike Rogers (uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.</i>		
Representative in Congress 5th District		
DEM Christian Vukasovich will face REP Tim Walberg (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.		
State Senate 14th District		
DEM Sue Shink will face REP Tawn Shawnelle Beliger (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.		

Representative in State Legislature 46th District
DEM Randy Davis will face REP Sarah Lightner (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.

Representative in State Legislature 46th District
DEM Jan Maino will face REP Kathy Schmaltz (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.

Representative in State Legislature 47th District
DEM Carrie A. Rheingans will face REP Justin Griffis (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.

Norvell Township - Township Clerk Partial Term Ending 11/20/2028
REP Sharon Pero (uncontested in the Primary) will run uncontested in the November General Election.

Lenawee County		
Governor (DEM)	Lenawee County	Statewide
Jocelyn Benson*	8,211	1,246,854
Christopher Robert Swanson	1,702	251,716
Governor (REP)		
John James*	5,412	466,215
Perry Johnson	2,695	327,910
Mike Cox	1,324	121,027
Aric Nesbitt	154	16,335
United States Senator (DEM)		
Abdul El-Sayed*	5,065	740,950
Haley Stevens	4,410	726,057
Mallory McMorrow	583	61,250

State Senator 16th District
DEM Deandre Barnes will face REP Joseph Bellino Jr. (both uncontested in the Primary) in the November General Election.

Representative in State Legislature 34th District
REP Nancy Jenkins-Arno (uncontested in the Primary) will run

uncontested in the November General Election.

County Road Commissioner Partial Term Ending 12/31/2030 (REP)
Todd J. Brown* 4,913
Tony Simpkins 3,316
Todd J. Brown will run uncontested in the November General Election.

County Road Commissioner (REP)
Mike Slusarski (uncontested in the Primary) will run uncontested in the November General Election.

Rollin Township Clerk
Anna Pedrotte* 204
Holly Terrill 192
Anna Pedrotte will run uncontested in the November General Election.

Proposals	
Jackson County	
Grass Lake Charter Township Fire Protection Millage Renewal	
Yes	1,014
No	509
Lenawee County	
Rollin Township Fire Millage	
Yes	556
No	198
Woodstock Township Fire Protection Services Renewal	
Yes	556
No	167

Family happenings



Hidden Lake Gardens covers 755 acres with multiple walking, hiking, and driving trails along with gardens and exhibits to explore. Photo by Michelle McLemore.

As summer winds down and back to school days loom near, there is still time to make a few unique memories as a family.

Grandchildren's Garden Day Camp
There are two remaining opportunities for a one-day camp for children ages 7-12 at Hidden Lake Gardens. With an adult chaperone the day outing will provide "an insider's look at some of the Gardens' most treasured locations" such as the display gardens and conservatory, natural areas for explo-

ration, guided hikes on trails, a canopy walk, discovery stations, crafting, and other hands-on activities.

The camp runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and costs \$50 for one child and one adult. There are reduced fees for additional children and/or adults. The final two-day camp opportunities are August 14 and August 21.

Contact the Hidden Lake Gardens office at (517) 431-2060 for more information.

Ella Sharp Museum
Community members with a Jackson District Library card may check out an Ella Sharp Museum pass at all Jackson District Library locations. This allows one household of up to three adults and children younger than 18 to enjoy the museum galleries, house tours, and one planetarium show for free. The museum pass checked out from the library is good for one week without renewals. Pass must be returned to the Jackson District Library site where it was checked out.

Marriage licenses

Cierra Sowle, Jackson County Clerk, reports the following recent recorded marriage license applications, below, and business filings (right).

Bethany Joy Weidman, Concord, and Alex James Nelson, Jackson;
Margaret Elise Guadagnini, Jackson, and Ivan Victor Graham, Jackson;
Shaun Michael Cook, Quincy, and Jasmine Rena Griffin, Jackson;
Keynes Marx Miranda Diaz, Grass Lake, and Samantha Lou Burns, Grass Lake;
Edward Lee Homminga, Jackson, and Melinda Ann Lyon, Jackson;
Michael Alan McClusky Jr., Jackson, and Tina Marie Beaver;
Madison Emma Marie Underwood, Leslie, and Liam Michael Dollard, Leslie;
Noah Mitchell Garcia, Horton, and Aly Marie Ackley, Horton;
Sydney Marie Mileschowsky, Munith, and Shane Allen Spiess, Munith;
David Lee Doering, Jackson, and Bridget Marie Spence, Michigan Center;
Brittney Nicolle Weed, Leslie, and Spencer Lane Miller, Leslie;
Julie Ann Cunningham, Hanover, and Ryan Christopher Townley, Hanover;
Andrea Mae Burzynski, Jackson, and Stetson Douglas Diamond, Jackson;
Rosemarie Niswonger, Jackson, and William Russell Niswonger, Jackson;
Taylor Marie Lantis, Clarklake, and Steven Bruce Lowe, Clarklake;
Wendy Robin Wood-Hoard, Grass Lake, and Timothy Raymond Wood;
Alyssa Marie Lindahl, Parma, and James David Akins, Parma;
Howard Bartholomew Uguccione, Grass Lake, and Marecil Refugio Palomo, Grass Lake;
Rachel Marie Kosnik, Rives Junction, and Bradley Joseph Campbell, Rives Junction;
Scott Matthew Maruschak, Jerome, and Melinda Janet Henry, Jackson.

Doing business as

City Crepes: 145 N. Jackson Street, Jackson (Restaurant)
Janice Lane, owner;

Hankrajewel American Art: 4305 Picadilly Court, Jackson (Art) Darryl Murray, owner;

Sisters Outdoor Services: 4054 Brooklyn Road, Jackson (Lawn Care) Haleigh Sanders, owner;

Moss Farms: 6589 Portage Lake Road, Minith, (Farm) James Moss, owner;

Rodriguez & Sonz Detailing: 919 Helena Avenue, Jackson (Detailing) Jose Angel Rodriguez, owner.

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It's YOUR Business

By **Cindy Hubbell, President/CEO**
Irish Hills Regional
Chamber of Commerce
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Well Wise Services Area Agency on Aging is holding its Connection Café on Wednesday, August 12 from 11:30 to 1 p.m. at their offices on 107 Chicago Street in Brooklyn. Join them for "Exploring Art". Includes a boxed lunch for a suggested donation of \$3.50. Call ahead to reserve a seat: Amanda at 517-592-1974.

Hidden Lake Gardens is holding Sprouts and Stories: Storytime in the Garden on Thursday, August 13 from 10:30 am to noon. Join them for a morning of stories, nature, and exploration. This is a free program designed for ages 2-5. For more information, go to ipf.msu.edu/hidden-lake-gardens.

Irish Hills Eagles is holding a Murder Mystery Dinner Interactive Theater on Satur-

day, August 15 from 6 to 10 pm. Join them for this special night of playing along with the actors in a 1920' Gangster Murder; dinner is included in the ticket price. Call Patty at 517-206-3410 for tickets.

Join the **Village of Brooklyn** on Thursday, August 27 for an evening of music, art, local vendors and more. Art in the Park will take place every fourth Thursday until September from 5 to 9 pm.

Historic Baseball will be played at **Cambridge Junction Historic State Park/Walker Tavern** on Saturday, August 29 from 9 am to 5 pm.

The Irish Hills Eagles Fest is taking place on Saturday, August 29 from 10 am to 10 pm. Help them celebrate their 50-Year Anniversary

with vendors, bake sale, a pig roast, live music, beer tent, games, fun, and free entry.

The Wine and Flower Festival is taking place at **Gypsy Blue Vineyards** in Hudson on Saturday, August 29 from 11 am to 7 pm. Enjoy U-Pick Flowers, local artisans, food trucks, music, and more. General Admission is \$10 and includes two samplings of two new Gypsy Blue wines. Go to gypsybluevineyards.com for more information.

Check out the Irish Hills community calendar at Irish-hills.com to find tons of events going on in and around the Irish Hills, including bike nights, live music, classes, family fun events, craft shows, and more!

A natural beauty...



...and the girl is kind of cute, too! All kidding aside, Paige Clark, shown in front of a 1974 Barracuda - many a man's dream car - organized this year's Devils & Round Lake auto show with support of family and friends. In back, Ryan Groth, from Morenci, entertained visitors as they walked through the show. Photo by Michelle McLemore.

OCRC redefined

Wildcat Soccer program kicks off in Onsted

By **Michelle McLemore**
Staff writer

Onsted Community Recreation Committee (OCRC), which has a long history of providing a variety of youth sports in the Onsted park, has birthed a new sub organization: Onsted Wildcats Soccer.

Under the new name the same leadership team will be at the helm with Director Alex Shaffer, Assistant Director Kimberly Barber, Equipment Coordinator Samantha Prestidge, and Fields Coordinator John Echelbarger. Collectively, the team has fifteen years of volunteer work with the former OCRC soccer program. Per Shaffer, "Together,

our volunteer board is committed to providing a fun, affordable, and welcoming soccer experience for local families."

Some community members may question why separate groups are needed for youth sports. Barber and Shaffer collaboratively explained: "Many of the sports that were previously part of OCRC have become independent organizations as they grew. Soccer had already been operating with its own dedicated board and volunteers, so becoming an independent nonprofit was the natural next step."

Shafer continued, "Operating independently allows us

to make decisions more efficiently, respond more quickly to the needs of our players and families, pursue grants and sponsorships specifically for soccer, and focus all of our resources on growing the program. Ultimately, it allows us to better serve the children and families in our community."

In regards to goals for the upcoming season, the soccer directors emphasized that every interested child gets field time regardless of the family's financial situation. The directors are introducing a scholarship program in which sponsors would ensure all youths can be involved. Fundamentals is the youngest program which enrolls three-year-olds. Divisions run up through age 14 and accept children of all skill levels.

Regarding gender divisions, Shaffer explained, "Our younger age groups are co-ed and play 'in-house,' meaning they play against other Onsted teams within their age division. Beginning

with U10, our league is moving toward separate boys' and girls' divisions whenever possible. This provides more opportunities for players while still maintaining a fun, recreational environment focused on development. We travel to Ida, Dundee, Clinton, Blissfield, and Tecumseh."

The administrative team also strives to schedule practices to best accommodate multiple-sport athletes such as those also playing football and volleyball. As a volunteer-run organization, which welcomes families from the greater Onsted area and surrounding communities, Shaffer clarified, "We emphasize player development, confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship, and a lifelong love of the game over wins and losses." For more information, visit www.playows.com.

With this latest refinement of focus, OCRC will now focus solely on the Onsted Little League (OLL) which covers t-ball, baseball, and softball for ages 4-14. Ac-

cording to President Christi Garrett, T-Ball is co-ed and is an in-house program which only plays other Onsted teams. Baseball is available for both boys and girls whereas softball is girls only. Both softball and baseball will travel to other towns for games over a season that begins in April and runs until June.

Garrett explained that though the 2026 season has ended, registration for the 2027 spring season opens in mid-December. "Clinics and possible camps will kick-off once we hit the back-to-school season. We have partnered with our local Onsted HS Varsity Baseball Coach, Holden Branch, and Onsted HS VS Softball Coach, Randy Hutchison to support the growth of the program." Garrett also noted, "Our new [OHS] Athletic Director Laura Klutsarits is aligned in our vision of growth and partnership, so the future is bright for the youth in Onsted."

Beyond athletics, OCRC

consistently supports community events for all ages in partnership with other village groups. A few of the events include Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween Trunk or Treat, the 2025 park festival, and the Brody Fry 5k Memorial Run. "It's creating a culture where people step up for one another," Garrett explained. "I think inclusion deserves to be the headline message."

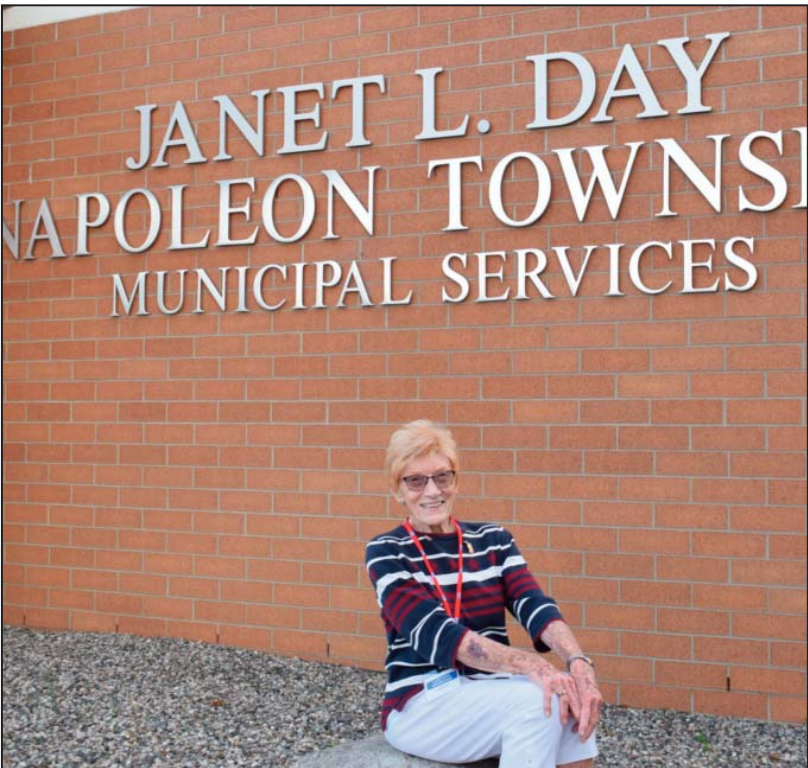
Over its 47 years, OCRC provided multiple sport opportunities for the youth. Other programs that have seeded separately from it include the Onsted Youth Football Organization (OYFO) which oversees the Flag Football program and Sideline cheer. Information for all of the programs will be available at the Onsted Elementary Back to School Picnic August 18 from 4-6 p.m. Other information, including how adult volunteers may become involved, can be found on the OCRC webpage www.ocrc.club.

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92-year-old election worker



Napoleon Township's Janet Day has been serving Napoleon Township in one way or another for more than 50 years. She was township clerk for many years and most recently has been an election worker for many township elections. She was at it again serving as an election inspector for last week's State Primary election. At 92, we're thinking Janet might possibly be the oldest election worker in the state of Michigan. The Napoleon Township Municipal Services building was named after her in late 2024. PHOTO BY JOHN HUMMER

Faith in action

Local Missionary Reflects on Service, Poverty, and Hope in Belize



The mission van's arrival was met with a chorus of "hellos" from area children. Laura Pitock in forefront and Beth, another missionary from Ohio, pose with the children. Photo courtesy of Laura Pitock.

By Michelle McLemore
Staff writer

Anytime one leaves home, let alone the country, there may be hesitation. However, for Laura Pitock of Dewey Lake, three trips to Haiti, one to Kentucky, and her most recent trip to Belize was founded on faith in both the travel plans and a missionary purpose to help communities in need.

Despite a few friends and relatives expressing concern for her safety, Pitock assured that the trip "was thought through thoroughly" by the

Belize Mission Society.

Before leaving July 25, Pitock had to pack her clothes as well as unpack her concerns. She shared, "I did a lot of praying before the trip so my heart would be ready for the task. Haiti was always difficult for me because of the extreme poverty and lack of resources. My heart broke every time I went, but the people there are so friendly and full of joy. Because of my cousin's experience in Belize, I knew it was going to be very similar to a Haitian trip."

Pitock also had to antici-

pate the heat and humidity. "I had to prepare mentally for that as well. In an effort to protect my health from the heat, I packed multiple protein packets and sleeves of powdered Propel, Gatorade, and LMNT (electrolytes), and made sure to drink three or four of them daily along with a great deal of extra bottled water."

The team arrived in Belize on July 25, anticipating a full day to include daily prayer time, breakfast, a head count of all members of the team, and then travel to the village. Altogether, 26 team members were organized into six teams based on their talents and skills. Some served in ministry for local women, men, and children while others were on building and painting crews. Pitock, as a small business painting owner, was there to prepare and paint four classrooms.

Though Pitock says the trip was easier than others because the Belizean people could speak English well, there were other struggles. "For the first two days

I literally couldn't talk to anyone because the poverty level was absolutely heart-breaking, Pitock shared. "I spent the third day's free time photographing positive things I saw so I could pull myself out of the sadness I was feeling. The people there also helped because they are wonderful!"

Because of the time change and Pitock's habit of rising early to work in her vegetable garden, she consistently woke earlier than everyone else. The volunteers had been warned not to leave their rooms alone so she couldn't take a walk. She also had a roommate, so she couldn't turn a light on. Most mornings, she said, she'd read devotionals from the Bible app on her phone while staying in bed and waiting.

A typical day included work from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. followed by lunch and rest. Then work from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Rest and shower time came next, with dinner and daily meetings at 6 p.m. After those there was free time, but Pitock noted, "most of us just went to bed because we were exhausted from the day."

She had several significant interactions with locals who came to the work site or Mission Center drawn by curiosity as well as need. One difficult experience involved a woman who came asking for food. "We weren't allowed to carry money, so I could only give her snacks I'd packed for the day." But in that discomfort was also opportunity. The woman's name was Ashanti. During the school year, she said she was employed as a warden (one who accompanies a child who needs to leave the safety of the classroom and the teacher to go somewhere else—even to the restroom). When school is closed for the summer, Ashanti has no income.

The mission's leader hired the woman for the remaining days to work with Pitock and learn about painting. "In the few days we had together, I taught her as much as I could about painting skills in hopes that she could walk or take a bus to the nearest hotel, restaurant, or establishment and possibly find painting work when school isn't in session."

Pitock praised God for her leader's compassion and the opportunity to meet the woman's immediate and seasonal need.

"This trip, as did my Haiti trips, have reminded me of the vast difference between wants and needs! There are so many things we stress over that literally do not mat-



ter. In a way, they are the lucky ones because they don't have any of those worries. Life is difficult for them, but very simple."

When asked about cost, Pitock shared, "The cost of

the trip was right around \$2,000, but emotionally, it costs any time we leave the country, our families, our comfort zone."



Laura Pitock wrestles a paint bucket open to begin her team's job for the week—painting four classrooms. Photo courtesy of Laura Pitock.



This map highlights the official territory of Belize.



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As a former schoolteacher, Pitock was keenly aware of the stark contrast of room conditions in Belize versus Michigan. Photo courtesy of Laura Pitock.

Faithful Living

By Joe Wagley

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Exodus 20:24b. I like it so much, I used this verse in July's article. Let's expand a bit more with this amazing personal promise. Using the English Standard Version, it says: "...in every place where I cause my name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you." How encouraging were these words to those who heard them after they were first inscribed years ago...including everyone who experiences them today.

We do not have to be inside the four walls of a faith community for God to hang out with us! He is present while we traverse through the most difficult experiences of our lives; He also rejoices with us during those moments when our hearts soar with the eagles. Our God is with us along the entire journey of our lives. There is absolutely no place where we can escape from the presence of the Lord.

I fervently pray that each time any of us speaks the Name of Jesus, that we feel a sense of His abiding peace...during the darkest nights or the brightest days. Despite our present circumstances, coupled with sincere humility, sense and feel His unseen sustaining power poised to utterly overwhelm us with inexpressible joy and calming comfort.

Psalm 139: 7-10 ESV, states "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your

right hand shall hold me." ThoughtCo suggests, "The deepest part of the Earth's oceans is the Challenger Deep, [located] in the Mariana Trench, at 10,994 meters (36,070 feet or nearly 7 miles) below sea level." "Mount Everest would fit inside the Mariana Trench, with over a mile of extra space above it."

According to the WorldAtlas, "The universe is unimaginably gigantic. The observable universe is estimated to be around 93 billion light years across. It is impossible for the human mind to truly grasp just how vast the universe is, and interestingly, space is only getting bigger. One of the most fascinating facts about the cosmos is that space is expanding."

A light year is equal to the distance that light will travel in one year. If light therefore, travels at 186,000 miles/second...the total distance that light will travel unencumbered in one year is 5.88 trillion miles. So, the distance of the diameter of our observable universe is 5.4684 x 10²³ miles.

The exact size our entire universe is unknown but some have suggested that it is in the realm of 23 trillion light years in diameter. Try and put your head around that number. In miles, the estimate would be 1.3524x10²⁸ That is a whole lot of zeros! These approximate calculations are beyond comprehension. How big is God?

Our little blue dot suspended in our Milky Way Galaxy, compared to the expanse of the Heavens, was special enough for our amazing Creator to fashion our earth [and everything else] through His wisdom and

knowledge...by simply speaking it forth. The beginning of all things including our inhabited home, is the magnificent work of the eternal Supreme Architect of the Universe.

All of us can learn and tout the achievements of Einstein's theory of relativity in 1906 and how that relates to the fundamental forces of gravity in the universe. Or scale it down to the discovery of Watson and Crick's double helix expressed as DNA [Deoxyribonucleic Acid] in 1953. These two men identified the building blocks for every living thing – including proteins, lipids, nucleic acids and complex carbohydrates that describe development, growth, function and reproduction.

Why all this buildup? If our God is *omnipresent* [everywhere all the time] as well as being *omniscient* [all-knowing] – although we might want to, there is truly no place we can go to escape God's unconditional abiding love that has been poured out upon us through the shed blood of His Son Jesus on the cross.

Trying to grasp the micro and macro complexity of who God is, we will be blown away, time and time again.

We can't run and we can't hide from the loving arms of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. No matter what you have done in the past or what is on the horizon in your future, you can trust and know that Christ is available through the Holy Spirit, 24/7.

No need to fear. Trust Him today. Call early and often on the mighty name of Jesus. He wants to hear from you! He's got you, dear friends. Rest in that promise today.

Walking on water?



No, the two individuals above were not walking - or sitting- on the water, Rather they were chilling out on a picnic table that someone had dragged into

Wamplers Lake at Hayes State Park. Meadow Fields caught them on her camera, and noted the subjects were "unknown, but posed happily".

Prayer group meeting

Members of the community are invited to Third Thursday Prayer at Brooklyn Presbyterian Church from 10 - 11:30 a.m. each month.

For more information contact Jan Taylor at (734) 358-7544.

Bring the kids out!

A Family Fun Day will be held at Restoration Church on Sunday, August 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be a waterslide and foam party, yard games, crafts, face

painting, food, and fun for people of all ages. The event is being held at Restoration Church, 13191 M-50 (near the U.S. 12 intersection), Brooklyn.

Irish Hills Church Directory

ADDISON

Addison Congregational Church • 202 S. Talbot St.
www.addisoncongregational.com
9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship, Junior Church

New Life Baptist Church • 9856 US-12
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Wednesday mid-week

BROOKLYN

All Saints Episcopal Church* • 151 N. Main St.
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Cornerstone Community Church • 201 Constitution Ave.
www.cccbbrooklyn.com for current services hours and information.
4:00 - 5:45 p.m. Sun. - Step Student Ministries (Jr./Sr. High)
www.cccbbrooklyn.com

First Baptist Church • 402 S. Mill St. • fbcbrooklyn.org
www.facebook.com/BaptistBrooklyn 517.592.2240
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Classes for all ages
10:45 a.m. Worship Service, Children's church
Service on Facebook @ First Baptist Church of Brooklyn
5:30 p.m. Youth group (7th - 12th grade)
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. MOP (Mothers of any school age children)
MOPS begins Sept. 6, is held every other Wednesday 7 p.m. prayer meeting
Pickleball open to community - Mon. - Sat. 9a.m. - 11:30

Heart O' Lakes Church • 7031 Jefferson
www.HOTLStrong.com
9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. Sunday Service
11 a.m. Children's Program

Brooklyn Presbyterian Church • 160 N. Main St.
www.brooklynpres.org
Sunday 10:00 a.m. Traditional Service (Streamed Live on Facebook)
Sunday School During 10:00 a.m. Worship
Ecumenical Community Prayer Group
3rd Thursday of each month 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary We gather to pray for our community and our nation.

CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION

St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church
Cambridge Junction
Website -- stmichaelsaaaa.com
10 am church service Sundays

St. Mark's Lutheran Church • 11151 US-12
10:30 a.m. Worship
9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Youth Hour, Adult Bible Study
Holy Communion - 2nd and 4th Sundays

Crosspointe Church • 13191 M-50
9:10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship

CEMENT CITY

Abundant Life Assembly of God • 14977 Harper Rd
alaog.org
Sunday: 9 a.m.: Adult discipleship classes
10:00 a.m. Refreshments
Celebration service 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday: 6:00 -7:30 Worship and Prayer

Cement City Baptist Church • 16788 Cement City Rd.
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service
7:00-8:00 p.m. Wednesday Services and Youth Group

CLARKLAKE

Fellowship Baptist Church • 3200 Reed Rd.
10:00 a.m. Sunday School • 11:00 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Service
7:00 p.m. Wednesday Evening Service

St. Rita Catholic Church • 10516 Hayes Rd.
4:30 p.m. Saturday Mass.
(5:30 p.m. Memorial Day weekend thru Labor Day)
9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass

Universalist Unitarian Church • 2231 Jefferson Rd.
Sunday Services: 11 a.m.

CLINTON

St. John's Episcopal Church
122 E. Church St.
Clinton
10 a.m. Holy Communion
734-476-4770

IRISH HILLS

St. Joseph's Catholic Shrine • 8743 US-12
Saturday — 5:00 p.m. Mass
Sunday — 8:00 and 10 a.m. Mass

LIBERTY

Liberty Christian Fellowship • 101 W. Liberty Rd.
9:30 a.m. Sunday School • 10:30 a.m. Church Service

Skiff Lake Bible Church • 8277 S. Jefferson Rd.
9:30 a.m. Fellowship
10 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Worship

South Jackson Community Church • S. Jackson/Kimmel
9:30 a.m. Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
10:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School

MANITOU BEACH

Lutheran Church of The Lakes • 8800 N. Rollin Hwy.
at US-223
8:15 • 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
9:40 a.m. Sunday School
9:45 a.m. Bible Study and Catechism

Manitou Road Baptist Church • 175 Manitou Rd.
9:45 a.m. Sunday School • 10:45 a.m. Children's Church
10:45 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Evening Worship

St. Mary on the Lake Catholic Church • 450 Manitou Rd.
9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass

NAPOLEON

Faith Baptist Chapel • Corner of Wheaton Rd. & M-50
9:30 a.m. Sunday School • 10:30 a.m. Worship Service
6:30 p.m. Sunday Evening
6:30 p.m. Wednesday Adult Prayer Bible Study

First Baptist Church • 108 East Ave
10:00 a.m. Sunday School • 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Worship
Wednesday — 7:00 p.m. Adult Prayer & Bible Study •
Teens Soldier 4 Christ

Napoleon United Methodist Church • 210 NottawaSepee
11:00 a.m. Sunday Worship, 10:30 coffee gathering
6 p.m. Monday Bible Study, 10 a.m. Wed. Bible Study
Office hours: Wed. & Thurs. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Napoleonunitedmethodistchurch@gmail.com

New Life Worship Center • 4532 Brooklyn Rd.
10:00 a.m. Sunday School • 11:00 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Evening Service
7:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study & Youth Service

NORVELL

Norvell Community Baptist Church
204 E. Commercial Drive
10:00 a.m. Sunday School • 11:00 a.m. Worship

ONSTED

Gateway Community Church • 268 S. Main St.
9:00 a.m. Sunday School • 10:15 a.m. Worship

Irish Hills Community Church • 9734 Slee Rd.
517-467-7011
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Springville United Methodist Church

10341 Springville Hwy
9:15 a.m. Sunday School for adults
10:15 a.m. Worship

SOMERSET/SOMERSET CENTER

Grace Baptist Church 12240 US-12
10:00 a.m. Bible School • 11:00 a.m. Worship
6:00 p.m. Evening Service
6:30 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting and Bible Study

Somerset Beach Free Methodist Church
9822 Brooklawn Ct. at Somerset Beach Campground off US-12 near Somerset Center
10:00 a.m. Worship (Field House)

Somerset Congregational Church
10449 N. Somerset Rd.
9:00 a.m. Sunday School • 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Somerset Center United Methodist Church
12095 E. Chicago Rd. (US-12)
9:00 a.m. Worship Service • 8:30 a.m. Sunday School

Obituaries

Alice Georgina Westfall

Alice Georgina Westfall, age 89, of Norvell Township, passed away July 29, 2026, at Faith Haven Senior Care Centre. She is survived by her nine children, Wenda (Brian) Boomer of Jackson, Burt (Kathy) Westfall of Napoleon, Melodeene (Henry) Martin, of Tennessee, Grant Westfall of Battle Creek, Homer Huffman of Michigan, Kathleen (Brad) Tompkins of Grass Lake, Sheila (Ron) Ekins of



Alice Georgina Westfall

Olivet, Lorrie Huffman of Jackson, DeAnne (Sam) Rydman of Mount Pleasant; her sister Donna Wood of Napoleon; 25 grandchildren, and many great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband Philip Westfall, granddaughter Rachel, and granddaughter Sarah. She was a retired mail carrier; loved her family, music, playing the fiddle, winters in Florida and puttering

in her yard. At her request, cremation has taken place. A celebration of her life took place at the Jackson County Sportsman's Club, 500 Mantle Ave., Jackson, MI, on Monday, August 10 at 3 p.m. Those who wish, may make memorial contributions to Save the Children.org. Please leave a message of comfort for Alice's family or sign her guestbook at www.EinederFuneralHomes.com.

Kathleen R. Johnson

Kathleen R. "Kathy" Johnson passed away unexpectedly at her home at Wampplers Lake on July 24, 2026. Kathy was born May 10, 1947, in Tecumseh, Mich., the second child of Eugene and Cathryne (Schultz) Johnson. She graduated as valedictorian from Brooklyn High School in 1965. She graduated with highest honors from Justin Morrill College at Michigan State University – Summa Cum Laude in 1969. She began her working career then by moving to Washington DC. There, she began as a secretary in a foreign embassy, earned an MBA Degree from George Washington University, and worked for decades in the nation's capital. She was employed for years as an assistant to the Chairman of the Interior Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Through this position, she reported back to the committee on the status of



Kathy Johnson

government projects around the world. From there, she worked for many years at the Smithsonian Institution before retiring as Assistant to the Director. Kathy was an accomplished traveler for both her work and pleasure. She was a lifelong seeker of knowledge that she readily found through travel. She was very pleased when she accomplished her goal of visiting all of the continents. Kathy is survived by her siblings, Dale and his wife Cherie, and Eric and his wife Pamela; her niece McChelle Johnson and nephew Jeffrey (Janeane) Johnson; grandnieces, Lillian, Amber, Brooke, Autumn and grandnephew Zackary Johnson; several cousins and close friends from Brooklyn Class of 1965; her traveling companions over many years and friends and associates of her Washington years. Kathy

lived her life intentionally and fully and developed her passions for causes and beliefs that she strongly supported. She loved life and its infinite possibilities. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of sharing in her life. A celebration of Kathy's life was held on Thursday, August 6, 2026 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. with a Vigil Scripture Service at 7 p.m. at Eineder Funeral Homes, Brooklyn, Mich. Visitation was from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Friday, August 7, 2026 and her Mass of Christian Burial followed at 11 a.m. at St. Joseph Shrine Catholic Church. Interment was held at St. Joseph Shrine Cemetery. Memorial contributions are suggested to Cascades Humane Society or The League of Women Voters. Envelopes are available at the funeral home. Please leave a message of comfort for Kathy's family or sign her guestbook at www.EinederFuneralHomes.com.

Death notices

Cierra Sowle, Jackson County Clerk, reports the following recent recorded deaths:

Maureen Ann Hoffmaster, 73, Blackman Township; Ishamel Handshoe, 87, Henrietta Township; Billie Jo Hamblin, 62, Jackson; Loren Wingblade, 84, Jackson; Michael Stewart Sieminski, 68, Blackman Township; Roy Henery Rider, 93, Jackson; Robert Lawrence Walton, 92, Jackson; Samuel James Elder, 76, Blackman Township; Sharon Lynn Astran, 78, Jackson; Reta Marie Bunker, 68, Blackman Township; Ronald George Gillis Jr., 66, Blackman Township; Tom Miles, 89, Blackman Township; Brian Lee Smith, 51, Jackson; Keith Brent Kwiecinski, 65, Blackman Township; David Akira Espie, 48, Leoni Township; Clyde Eugene DeVoe, 62, Waterloo Township; Carolly Welsh, 83, Jackson; Richard Lee Bremby, 57, Jackson; Bruce Allen Baxter, 75, Leoni Township; Mark Steven Keplinger, 74, Blackman Township; Jay Dee Brock, 88, Sandstone Township; Helen Moore, 70, Leoni Township; Craig Lee Rockwell, 78, Blackman Township; James Edward Thompson Jr., 73, Jackson; David Ray Babock, 68, Blackman Township; Devon Lynn Lynn, 45, Blackman Township; Robert Wayne Hudspeth, 87, Brooklyn; Glenn Reno Drake, 90, Hanover Township; Michael Thomas Didur, 73, Blackman Township; William George Mcenroe, 84, Blackman Township; Dorothy Ann Powers, 85, Blackman Township; Burl Williams, 85, Blackman Township; Alice Georgina Westfall, 89, Sandstone Township; Joyce Marie Moore, 82, Blackman Township; Judith Ann Walz, 92, Summit Township; Patsy Gail Maloney, 80, Jackson.

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The Back Page

Opinion • By Matt Schepeler

Times, they are a-changin'
Turning pond back to river
is necessary, and telling

I must confess to having mixed emotions while watching the process of re-routing the River Raisin around the mill pond dam in Brooklyn. It's been bittersweet to watch. The bitter is because so many of us have childhood memories of days spent around the mill pond and dam. Back then, we spent much of our time in the summer fishing, and it started at the pond, where the River Raisin and Kedron drain meet before joining with Goose Creek on its way to Monroe and Lake Erie. In Monroe, it seems to be a different river completely from the gentle stream of the headwaters here.

There were no cell phones to look at back then, so we spent our time fishing the banks, from Goose Creek to Clark Lake and the River Raisin west to Vineyard Lake and all the way east to Austin Road, spearing carp and catching crappies and large-mouth bass and the occasional northern pike. We would catch bullfrogs, net shiners and catch crayfish to use as bait, and spent many nights camping at places along the shoreline. It was a time for swimming and sunburns and picking berries while wading through the sand and silt bottom of the rivers, looking for what the next cast held or what was around the next bend.

So it is impossible not to be a little emotional when seeing the shoreline where we once laid and looked at the stars while hearing music blast from the old Log Cabin in the summer nights get dug up by a backhoe. Henry Ford's bowl is now, officially, part of the past. But if change – which often includes saying goodbye to one's youth – can be hard, there is a sweetness about it as well.

For instance, I have found an immense satisfaction seeing nature reclaim its own where the pond once stood. Someone once wrote "Adopt the pace of nature: Her secret is patience," and nature has once again proven their point. Where we once swung out into the water from a rope, the cattails, sedges and milkweed have reclaimed. It is no longer a quiet, bottled up body of pond water, but a thriving ecosys-



A construction worker toes the former dam, which was once made of logs, before Henry Ford bottled the River Raisin waterway with concrete.

tem ruled by peepers, crickets and dragonflies that teems with life, especially on hot August afternoons. Even the concrete bulkhead of the dam is slowly crumbling away, a telltale sign of man's futile attempt at permanence in a world that is anything but. I suppose that's the point. Times change, and if there is anything to be learned from looking back on a passing era, it is that we should do our best to enjoy the ride now, while we are still here. As the song advises, we should row our boats gently and merrily along, going along with life's pace. The big lesson to be learned, I suppose, is that nature wins. It turns out that what is important isn't the mark we leave on the land, but the mark we leave on each other. That, it seems, is what really lasts.

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