Fire drives Wells Twp. man from home

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

WELLS TWP. — A good neighbor and a police officer — taking turns using a garden hose — helped prevent fire from destroying a Wells Township home, firefighters said.

The blaze Sunday night at the home of Robert McIntosh, 1818 Foote Road north of Beverly Road, damaged the home's roof, attic and ceiling, according to Kingston Fire & Rescue Chief 3 Cory Skinner, an assistant fire chief.

"It was a good knockdown, with the neighbor and the Kingston Police Department (Chief Albert Peasull) getting it knocked down with the garden hose," Skinner said. "But then it ran up into the eaves and into the attic.

"Both our department and the Caro Fire Department did a great job of knocking it down when we arrived there, though."

No one was hurt due to the fire, and McIntosh exited the home without harm.

SEE FIRE | A4

Kingston Schools mulling change in COVID-19 plan

By Mark Ramsey | Reporter ramsey@tcadvertiser.com

KINGSTON — The wave of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases has crashed on Kingston Community Schools. And that has district leaders considering some significant changes in the district's COVID-19 response and preparedness plan.

The district's board of education considered the potential changes at Monday's session and gave them qualified approval. The changed policy will go into effect Jan. 31 if the district's staff agrees with it.

The wave of new cases already has caused one change. The district used to test students Monday through Friday. "It just got to where there were days last week where we tested 80 kids on Monday and 85 kids on Tuesday," Superintendent Matt Draker said. "But then we were down to about a dozen. But we've also found positives every single day."

The district had 20 new positive test results on Jan. 17 and 10 on Jan. 18 and six on Jan. 19, Draker said, "and then the

SEE KINGSTON | A6

City invites input on master plan, community goals

By John Schneider john@tcadvertiser.com

CARO — The city of Caro is hosting a community visioning session Tuesday, and all community members are invited to share their ideas.

The city is set to construct a new master plan, and Caro residents, business owners and stakeholders are encouraged to share their community goals at the meeting, which is scheduled to last from 6 to 8 p.m. at Midway Hall, located in the city at the Tuscola County Fairgrounds at 188 Park Drive.

"This process is meant to get as much

SEE CITY | A4

SANILAC COUNTY

Paul Zimmerman, 73, right, and his son, Jason, 43, are shown at the scene of a fire that destroyed their barn in Sanilac County's Evergreen Township, about 12 miles southeast of Cass City. Twenty-five calves were lost due to the blaze. The Zimmermans belong to Bethany Mennonite Church, and said free will offerings from church members will help pay for a new building.

SEE BIBLE OF FIRE | A4

Ball of fire: Blaze destroys barn, calves

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

EVERGREEN TWP. — Along the flat, virtually treeless fields of Sanilac County, Lyle Ramer eyed trouble in the darkness.

"We could see the flames from probably eight miles away," said Ramer, Argyle Township Fire Department chief, who was sent to a barn fire at 1:54 a.m. Monday. "It was a ball of fire upon arrival."

The blaze at the barn of Paul Zimmerman, at 3683 Leslie Road in Evergreen Township about 12 miles southeast of Cass City, destroyed the wooden structure, damaged a tractor inside it and killed animals in the building, Ramer said.

"There were about 30 baby calves in the building," Ramer said. "We did get a few of them out, but they had inhaled so much smoke that they ended up having to be put down."

The fire, which Ramer believes began accidentally due to an aging electrical system, caused about $250,000 in damage to the barn and contents, according to the fire chief.

SEE "BIBLE OF FIRE" | A4
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Library to give teens chance to be teens

By John Schneider

carol@carollibrary.org

CARO — As a common courtesy, folks who spend time inside a library know to keep it quiet.

But when teenagers gather, that rule can sometimes be broken.

Staff at Caro Area District Library is working on a solution — a closed-off area that will allow young people to be themselves.

The library, 840 W. Frank St. in Caro, originally contained a small teen section near the front of the building, but there were some problems.

“We had a couple of issues with that,” said library director Erin Schmandt. “Adults always wanted to sit there, even though it says ‘Teen Area’ in huge letters. So we put really uncomfortable furniture in there, and that helped a little.”

But hard plastic chairs didn’t solve the problem.

“After school we’d get tons of kids over here from (Caro Middle School),” Schmandt said. “And they could get kind of loud, and the other people don’t always like it.”

So, Schmandt and staff thought about ways to make the library experience more enjoyable for everyone.

“It’s something we’ve been talking about for a while, looking for a solution,” Schmandt said. “We had a lot of time during COVID, and we figured it out.”

Library officials decided to move the magazine and newspaper section to the area that was once the teen area, and move the teen area to the larger section once filled with newspapers and magazines.

And as for the noise, staff figured out a way to fix that too. Thanks in large part to (Caro Middle School),” Schmandt said. “After school we’d get tons of kids over here from (Caro Middle School),” Schmandt said. “And they could get kind of loud, and the other people don’t always like it.”

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A fire Sunday night damaged the rear of this home owned by Robert McIntosh, according to Kingston Fire & Rescue personnel. No one was injured, though the home isn’t habitable.

“Fortunately, the garden hose already was hooked up on the back side of the house, and they were squinting water on it when we got there,” said Skinner, noting the water from the hose “helped tremendously.”

No evidence of fire at the home is visible from Freoole Road, as the damage is on the back side of the house, Skinner said. “If you just drive by, you won’t be able to tell,” Skinner said. “It burned through the roof and ran up the back side of the house and got into the eaves and then into the attic, and it ran the attic. That’s where the majority of the fire was.”

Firefighters from the Caro, Elkland Township and Mayville departments assisted at the scene, as did the Kingston Police Department and the Tuscola County Sheriff’s Office, and Mobile Medical Response personnel.

“We’re still investigating to confirm a cause, but it appears to be accidental,” according to Skinner.

“McIntosh ‘took in a little smoke, and they took him to the hospital early Monday,’ said Ramer. “We’re still investigating to confirm a cause, but it appears to be accidental,” according to Skinner.

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Mayville Schools to get new windows, doors

The district also is talking with other food companies due to issues with food shortages and food quality with its current suppliers.

The board also:
- Elected officers – president Ron Johnson, vice president Cindy Cone, treasurer Carline Emmons and secretary Sherry Richards – with all of them reelected except Richards, who replaces Heather Meldrum. For school board recognition month, each member received a travel mug sporting graphics by student Grace Hrabcak.
- Placed fifth-grade teacher Joshua Cahoon on second-year probation.
- Approved the fall NEOLA policy update.
- Conduct a comprehensive review and completely writing the plan from scratch. "This is the time to truly shape the vision for Caro’s future," said City Manager Matthew Lane. "We are looking for the maximum public input as we can," said Caro City Manager Matthew Lane. "We are conducting a comprehensive review and completely writing the plan from scratch. That has not happened in decades so now is the time to truly shape the vision for our city’s future.”

The survey, which will help inform city leaders on how the community feels about various topics such as housing, the economy and transportation needs, as well as city services, is also available in paper form at the Caro City Hall, located at 317 S. State St. and the Caro Area District Library. Library director Jennifer Amormino told the Caro Community Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CAROCOMMUNITYSURVEY.

COLUMBIA TWP. — Users of the Columbia Township Library are getting some new technology. The Library will be getting five new Microsoft Surface laptop computers, a programming laptop, a green screen backdrops, a microphone, a webcam and a wacom tablet, thanks to an Mi-83 Technology, Libraries and Communities Project Grant through the Library Network. Library director Jennifer Amormino told the township board about the $5,076 grant at the board’s Jan. 18 session. The grants are part of the Library of Michigan’s American Recovery Plan Act funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

City invites input on master plan, community goals

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-American News

Grant helping library add new tech, including laptops

The survey, which will help inform city leaders on how the community feels about various topics such as housing, the economy and transportation needs, as well as city services, is also available in paper form at the Caro City Hall, located at 317 S. State St. and the Caro Area District Library. Library director Jennifer Amormino told the Caro Community Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CAROCOMMUNITYSURVEY.

COLUMBIA TWP. — Users of the Columbia Township Library are getting some new technology. The Library will be getting five new Microsoft Surface laptop computers, a programming laptop, a green screen backdrops, a microphone, a webcam and a wacom tablet, thanks to an Mi-83 Technology, Libraries and Communities Project Grant through the Library Network. Library director Jennifer Amormino told the township board about the $5,076 grant at the board’s Jan. 18 session. The grants are part of the Library of Michigan’s American Recovery Plan Act funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
Kingston Schools mulling change in COVID-19 plan

numbers started declining to where we just had four or five today.

Under the proposed changes, masking will still be strongly recommended but not required. Another change would roll back testing of students to only if parents request it.

“This is a pretty big jump from what we were doing,” Drake said.

And, instead of calling the parents of each contact-traced student, the district is trying to send texts to the cellphones of parents of affected students. Right now, Drake said, district staff is spending all day chasing down close contacts as well as doing all of the testing and contacting the Tuscola County Health Dept.

“It has been an all-day, every-day job for one employee,” Drake said, “at least for the past few weeks.”

Until the plan changes, the district is contact-tracing every student after a positive case presents itself. Those people then are asked to wear a mask for 10 days in school. COVID-19 positive cases are allowed to go back school after a five-day quarantine but they have to wear a mask for the five days they are away. And the school district tests students on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays if they were a close contact over a 10-day period.

“We have tweaked it a little every month trying to make it as least cumbersome as possible,” Drake said, “while still allowing us to keep as many COVID-19-positive people out of the school district as possible.”

Drake said, “It probably is a fair statement to say that we are doing and we have been doing a little more testing and little more required quarantining of our students,” Drake said, “than some of the other area schools.”

While the board members were in favor of the changes, they asked Drake to present the proposed changes to the staff and get feedback before instituting them. If the staff agrees, the changes could go into effect on Jan. 31. “We may or may not implement this,” Drake said, “in full force or in half force.”

That the plan may change is not new, for Kingston or for other districts. The plans are subject to major revisions.

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SEBEWAING — A pair of experienced bankers, known for community involvement, lead the new Sebewaing branch of Frankenmuth Credit Union at 41 E. Main St.

Amanda Weisenbach and Sue O’Neil are graduates of Unionville-Sebewaing Area High School and “offer a wealth of experience and unmatched customer service to FCU’s members,” according to a press release from the credit union.

Weisenbach brings 10 years of banking experience to Frankenmuth Credit Union. Outside of work, she has served as a board member for the Sebewaing Chamber of Commerce since 2015, organizes the Sebewaing Easter Egg Hunt, and organizes the Sugar Slicer Golf Outing for the Michigan Sugar Festival.

O’Neil has been in the banking industry for 34 years. She serves on the planning committee for the summer combined-class reunion of the USA High School classes of 1976 and 1977 during Sugar Festival weekend. She also regularly supports the Unionville Farmers’ Market.

“Frankenmuth Credit Union is pleased to have Amanda and Sue on our Sebewaing team,” said Vickie Schmitzer, chief executive officer of Frankenmuth Credit Union.

“They are both stars of the banking industry who have deep roots in the Unionville-Sebewaing area. They are passionate about serving their hometown, and we are blessed to have them at FCU.”

Frankenmuth Credit Union was organized in 1964 by the employees of the Carling Brewery and Star of the West Milling Co. to serve the brewers and millers of the Frankenmuth area.

FCU now counts 60,000 members, with branch locations in Shiawassee, Saginaw, Tuscola, Genesee, Bay, and Huron counties. Frankenmuth Credit Union notes that it provides financial services for consumers and businesses, and offers “insurance, trust, and investment solutions.”

ADELPHI, Md. — Morgan Fritzler of Vassar earned a Bachelor of Science in Investigative Forensics from University of Maryland Global Campus. More than 8,000 students from all 50 states, four U.S. territories, and 26 countries earned UMGC degrees worldwide in fall 2021.

Celebrating its 75th anniversary, University of Maryland Global Campus is a world leader in innovative educational models, with award-winning online programs in disciplines including biotechnology, cybersecurity, data analytics, and information technology that are in high demand in today’s increasingly technical, global workplace.

With an enrollment of some 90,000 students, UMGC offers open access with a global footprint and a specific mission to meet the learning needs of students whose responsibilities may include jobs, family, and military service. The university offers both undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs, as well as doctoral programs.
Today!

— Saturday, January 29, 2022, The Advertiser

Gas prices rise across the state as average price is up 9 cents since last week

CARO — Gas prices in Michigan jumped 9 cents, setting a new 2022-high. Michigan drivers are now paying an average of $3.24 per gallon for regular unleaded. This price is 11 cents more than this time last month and 96 cents more than this time last year.

Motorists are paying an average of $48 for a full 13-gallon tank of gasoline, an increase of about 3% from when prices were their highest last November.

According to a new data from the Energy Information Administration (EIA), total domestic gasoline stocks rose by 5.9 million bbl to 246.6 million bbl. On the other hand, gasoline demand rose slightly from 7.91 million bbl to 8.22 million bbl. The small increase still puts gas demand in a typical range for the winter driving season, which was 8.11 million bbl in mid-January 2021. Typically, pump prices decline due to low gas demand and a rise in total stocks, but continued growth in the price of crude oil has helped to elevate pump prices.

At the close of Thursday’s formal trading session, WTI decreased by six cents to settle at $86.90. Although crude prices ended the trading session, WTI decreased by 41 cents to settle at $85.14. Although crude prices ended the day down due to weather-related demand concerns, prices generally rose last week despite IEA reporting that total domestic crude stocks increased by 500,000 bbl to 413.8 million bbl, domestic crude prices mostly increased last week as market confidence about economic growth prospects for the year grows. Additionally, the current crude stock level is approximately 15 percent lower than in mid-January 2021, contributing to pressure on domestic crude prices.

“Despite an increase in gasoline stocks, higher crude oil prices helped put pressure on Michigan pump prices pushing them to a new 2022-high,” said Adam P. Woodland, spokesperson, AAA-The Auto Club Group. “As crude prices continue to climb, pump prices will likely follow suit.”

Compared to last week, Metro Detroit’s average gas price held steady. Metro Detroit’s current average is $3.21 per gallon, the exact same as last week’s average and 90 cents more than this same time last year.

Most expensive gas price averages:
- Marquette ($3.31), Lansing ($3.28), Jackson ($3.27)
- Least expensive gas price averages: Sandusky ($3.20), Metro Detroit ($3.21), Benton Harbor ($3.22)

The nation’s top 10 largest weekly increases: Kansas (+9 cents), Michigan (+8 cents), Texas (+7 cents), Missouri (+7 cents), South Dakota (+7 cents). Oklahoma (+6 cents), Iowa (+6 cents), Nebraska (+5 cents) and Arkansas (+5 cents).

The nation’s top 10 most expensive markets: California ($4.64), Hawaii ($4.54), Washington ($3.96), Oregon ($3.92), Nevada ($3.80), Alaska ($3.76), Arizona ($3.56), Washington, D.C. ($3.53), Idaho ($3.53) and Pennsylvania ($3.52).

■ Least expensive gas price averages:
- Benton Harbor ($3.22), Ann Arbor ($3.20), Metro Detroit ($3.21), Jackson ($3.27)
- Most expensive gas price averages:
- Arizona ($3.56), Washington, D.C. ($3.53), Idaho ($3.53) and Pennsylvania ($3.52).

At the close of Friday’s formal trading session, WTI decreased by 41 cents to settle at $85.14. Although crude prices ended the day down due to weather-related demand concerns, prices generally rose last week despite IEA reporting that total domestic crude stocks increased by 500,000 bbl to 413.8 million bbl. The current crude stock level is approximately 15 percent lower than in mid-January 2021, contributing to pressure on domestic crude prices. For this week, crude prices could continue to climb if IEA’s next weekly report shows a decrease in total inventory.

Oil Market Dynamics

Quick Stats

- The nation’s top 10 largest weekly increases: Kansas (+9 cents), Michigan (+8 cents), Texas (+7 cents), Missouri (+7 cents), South Dakota (+7 cents), Oklahoma (+6 cents), Iowa (+6 cents), Nebraska (+5 cents) and Arkansas (+5 cents).
- The nation’s top 10 most expensive markets: California ($4.64), Hawaii ($4.54), Washington ($3.96), Oregon ($3.92), Nevada ($3.80), Alaska ($3.76), Arizona ($3.56), Washington, D.C. ($3.53), Idaho ($3.53) and Pennsylvania ($3.52).

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Cass City

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Breaking Bundle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY Items</th>
<th>$69.99</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 # Bulk Sausage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Sausage links</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 # Bacon | | **FREE 1 dozen eggs!**

**BONUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY Items</th>
<th>$69.99</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 # Chicken Leg 1/4’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Split Chicken Breasts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 # Boneless Chicken Breast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Chicken Thighs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 3 # Whole Chicken | | **FREE Jimmy Z Seasoning!** 5 oz.

**BONUS**

<table>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # English Roast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Boneless Chicken Breast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Jimmy Z’s Brats original, beer, or cheese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 # Kooch’s Southern Hot Dogs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 # Ground Chuck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Boneless Pork Chops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Chicken Leg 1/4’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 # Cube Steak | | **FREE 5 oz. Seasoning! + 20 oz. BBQ Sauce!**

**BONUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY Items</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 # Ground Chuck</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 # Bacon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 # Bulk Sausage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10 # Chicken Leg 1/4’s | | **FREE Jimmy Z Seasoning! 5 oz.**

**BONUS**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 # Country Style Pork Ribs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Pork Steak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 # Bacon | | **FREE 5 oz. Seasoning! + 20 oz. BBQ Sauce!**

**BONUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 # Ham Portion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 # Chuck Roast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 # Boneless Pork Chops | | **FREE Jimmy Z Seasoning!** 5 oz.

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[Image 35x53 to 829x1006]
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Traverse City Location: 4040 Beacon St, Kingsley, MI 49659

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810-589-4334, 211-031

GREGORY H. BRINGARD
Attorney at Law

Good Luck Caro Tigers!

989.672.2400 • g_bringard@hotmail.com
367 N. State St., Caro, MI

Juniors. Pictured from left to right, back to front: Noah Reno, Mark Phillips, Jessica Syms, Caydence Sturtevant.

Caro Tigers! Pictured from left to right, back to front: Dale Skinner, Tyrese Beedle, Tyler Miller, Lexi Johnson, Baylee Smith, Lyndsey Root, Lily Stewart.

Not Pictured: Blake Spencer

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Freshmen
Pictured from left to right, back to front: Christian Samuelson, Evan Langmaid, Scarlett Fischer, Cailey Ball

Sophomores
Pictured from left to right, back to front: Logan McGarry, Cody Gregor, Kennidie Vrable, Akara Long

Caro Coming Home 2022

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TigerS!

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ROCKETS withstand Red Hawks in tight battle

By Scott Bolsby | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

REESE — The Greater Thumb West conference has proven itself to be one of the toughest conferences in the Thumb area and Reese coach Josh Pickell knows each night will be a battle.

The latest battle for the Division 3 honorable mention was a 43-40 win over Cass City.

“It was no secret that this was a very big game tonight,” Pickell said. “I was worried we’d come out tight. That wasn’t the case tonight and we came out hard and played our normal game.”

The Rockets held a 10-8 lead in the first quarter and the two teams repeated that score in the second quarter to give Reese a 20-16 lead at halftime.

The third quarter wound up being the lowest scoring frame for both teams as the game against Bridgeport Baptist. The Fostoria Baptist Academy boys’ basketball team dropped a 57-37 contest to Bridgeport Baptist Academy on Tuesday. The Crusaders (2-6) were led by Zach Kennedy and Carter Henry who scored 13 points each while Colton Cooper helped with six points.

The fourth quarter made the score 18-8 at halftime. Junior Bailey Gormley led the Broncos at halftime with 10 points and scored a game-high 20 at the conclusion of the Blue Water Area Conference matchup.

“I don’t know why, but it has,” he said. “We had trouble, but they hung in there better than we did, but they hung in there better and kept composed.”

North Branch put Cros-Lex into a 10-point deficit by leading 12-2 at the end of the first quarter and a 6-6 second quarter made the score 18-8 at halftime.

Junior Bailey Gormley led the Broncos at halftime with 10 points and scored a game-high 20 at the conclusion of the Blue Water Area Conference matchup.

“Last year we had a lot of guards and this year a lot is on her,” Tim Gormley said. “She is pretty much our main point guard and ball handler. She is a junior, third year on varsity and is taking on the leadership role.”

North Branch did a great job defending the Broncos and took the win.

Fibromyalgia Society of America

For more information about Fibromyalgia, visit fibroaware.org.

By Scott Bolsby | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

NORTH BRANCH — Close games have become all too familiar for the North Branch girls’ basketball team this season.

Most of those games haven’t been in the Broncos’ favor, but Thursday’s 31-25 victory over Crowell-Lexington was a welcomed difference for coach Tim Gormley and crew.

“Third quarters have been tough for us, I don’t know why, but it has,” he said. “We stuck with our starters in the third and still had trouble, but they hung in there better and kept composed.”

North Branch put Cros-Lex into a 10-point deficit by leading 12-2 at the end of the first quarter and a 6-6 second quarter made the score 18-8 at halftime.

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North Branch did a great job defending the Broncos and took the win.

Fibromyalgia Society of America

For more information about Fibromyalgia, visit fibroaware.org.
North Branch building chemistry and wins

North Branch’s Natasha Bickel (white jersey) battles with Cros-Lex defender Olivia Brunk for the loose ball. Bickel scored 10 points in the 31-25 Broncos’ win.

FROM B1

“I’m happy with her performance throughout the whole year, she keeps the team together on the court and keeps them focused quarter by quarter.”

The Pioneers came out of the gates quick in the second half with an 8-0 run that was stopped by a North Branch bucket with 3:35 remaining in the quarter.

North Branch still had a 10-point cushion leaving Cuthrell and Krueger open, but that’s beside the point, teams realize she is big in the paint, and they adjust to it, but we also have to have other girls step it up.”

“They are a different feeling.”

“They double teamed her, but she needs to finish hard,” Gormley said. “There were some calls I thought weren’t called, but that’s beside the point, teams realize she is big in the paint, and they adjust to it, but we also have to have other girls step it up.”

Thursday’s game marked the halfway point for North Branch in BWAC competition, currently sitting 4-4 and fourth overall in the conference. Gormley isn’t so much looking for miracles this season but laying the groundwork for next season. That’s obviously a long-range goal, but we are just trying to get the chemistry going this year with the girls and be prepared to be a league contender next season.

“They have a different feel about them,” he said. “We knew we were going to be young and have some ups and downs this year with the girls and be prepared to be a league contender next season.”

North Branch building chemistry and wins

Rockets withstand Red Hawks in tight battle

Johnson finished the game with 14 points while Aydan Dalak chipped in with 12. Cass City freshman Shelby Ignash, who stands six-foot-tall, posed a problem for Reese but Pickell noted how his post players were able to battle against her and limit her on the scoresheet.

“andi reinert and calli blossom did a great job on her,” he said. “our main priority was keeping her off the boards and honestly we did an average or below average job of that. the big thing for us was our guards pressuring, if our guards can pressure and contain at the same time, there is no way she should be able to get that ball. we did for the most part, but we broke down some leaving cuthrell and krueger open, but other than that our guards did a great job.”

Cuthrell led Cass City with 17 points and Ignash added 11.

“I’ve been doing this seven years now and this is the most talent I’ve seen in the conference,” Pickell said. “It’s also the most size and athleticism I’ve seen in this conference. There is not a night off and our girls know that.”

Reese and Cass City both scored wins on Thursday at the Rockets defeated Unionville-Sebewaing 66-20, and the Red Hawks were victorious 50-26 over Laker. The wins moved Reese to 10-3 overall and 5-0 in the Greater Thumb West while Cass City moved to 4-2 in the GTW and 9-2 overall.

The two teams meet for the rematch in Cass City on Feb. 22.
Montgomery would frequently call me on the phone to relate his bowhunting experiences, ask more questions, and when he knew me he knew we were in very little deer action near the fringe of the dense cover, I recommended that he go in a bit deeper. Montgomery about a blind, use the wind and simply blend in with what is at hand. The following might be of interest to you at home and excitedly let me know he had arrowed a large doe which was tagged, field-dressed and ready to dress, but darkness was setting in, and Montgomery realized he was a little bit short some help getting the deer out. He asked if I would be available in the morning to lend a hand, and yes, folks, I'm still interested in deer hunting, and I truly enjoy sharing the excitement with new hunters when they bag their first deer.

Early the next morning found us centering in, and Montgomery had followed my advice, and gone “deep”, very deep indeed. His fact was actually pretty close to Mud Lake, a notable body of water located smack in the middle of that dense swamp. He had chosen his spot well, as it was surrounded by crossing deer trails and I was very impressed at how he went directly to the downed doe by simply using landmarks in the very dense cover he had memorized. I’ve been known to get a tad turned around, and never venture into the “boonies” without having a dependable compass on hand. Montgomery had remembered that I had mentioned to keep a newspaper now. The hunter tagging it. He was a mature dandy, too, a genuine “swamp cow” that easily dressed out to at least 175 pounds. Although that might not seem like a lot of weight for a mature female, it definitely was a two-person job dragging that big doe out to our vehicle. Montgomery was very frequently chided with “shain-tangle” blues, and he didn’t have the manliness to cut the trees to negate. When we got the doe out to our vehicle, there wasn’t a hair left on the side of the body she had been field-dressed. It was a Jewish tradition, which was tagged, field-dressed and ready to dress, but darkness was setting in, and Montgomery realized he was a little bit short some help getting the deer out. He asked if I would be available in the morning to lend a hand, and yes, folks, I’m still interested in deer hunting, and I truly enjoy sharing the excitement with new hunters when they bag their first deer.

Several years ago, Montgomery let me know he was settling in, and ready to drag out, but darkness was setting in, and Montgomery realized he was a little bit short some help getting the deer out. He asked if I would be available in the morning to lend a hand, and yep, folks, I’m still interested in deer hunting, and I truly enjoy sharing the excitement with new hunters when they bag their first deer.

The doe was a mature dandy, too, a genuine “swamp cow” that easily dressed out to at least 175 pounds. Although that might not seem like a lot of weight for a mature female, it definitely was a two-person job dragging that big doe out to our vehicle. Montgomery was very frequently chided with “shain-tangle” blues, and he didn’t have the manliness to cut the trees to negate. When we got the doe out to our vehicle, there wasn’t a hair left on the side of the body she had been field-dressed. It was a Jewish tradition, which was tagged, field-dressed and ready to dress, but darkness was setting in, and Montgomery realized he was a little bit short some help getting the deer out. He asked if I would be available in the morning to lend a hand, and yes, folks, I’m still interested in deer hunting, and I truly enjoy sharing the excitement with new hunters when they bag their first deer.

The third antler on the Montgomery Buck is located on the right antler, featuring its own separate pedicle and bur. The third antler on the Montgomery Buck is located on the right antler, featuring its own separate pedicle and bur. The third antler on the Montgomery Buck is located on the right antler, featuring its own separate pedicle and bur. The third antler on the Montgomery Buck is located on the right antler, featuring its own separate pedicle and bur. The third antler on the Montgomery Buck is located on the right antler, featuring its own separate pedicle and bur.

The property is also surrounded by farm fields used primarily for producing corn and alfalfa hay, offering safe food sources for deer. Montgomery’s property represents a secluded island of habitat in a sea of farmland. At the very least, it would provide a constant pass-through area for deer. I made recommendations as to where to place elevated deer stands and gravel roads, and let Montgomery know I was quite optimistic he would have some excellent deer hunting opportunities, practically in his backyard.

Montgomery had been using his pump 12 ga shotgun during the firearms deer season. Due to the new Limited Firearms Zone law, he eventually purchased a scoped, Ruger bolt-action rifle in .450 Bushmaster, and had great confidence in putting deer down for the count. He had bagged some does on his ground, and considered a 3-point buck, as a genuine trophy, not only because it was the first buck shot on his property, but because he considers any deer as being a trophy in the eyes of the hunter tagging it. When the 2021 firearms deer season arrived with a Monday morning opener, Montgomery was hard at work petting the local newspaper together which was due to come out the following day. That afternoon he arrived home with only a couple blueberries and a heart. He almost didn’t go out, but fortuitously managed his heart attack and mentioned to his wife he was feeling a typical 8-point buck into a 9-point.

The antler. Featuring its own separate pedicle and bur, it had been rubbed and polished when the deer was a mature dandy, too, a genuine “swamp cow” that easily dressed out to at least 175 pounds. Although that might not seem like a lot of weight for a mature female, it definitely was a two-person job dragging that big doe out to our vehicle. Montgomery was very frequently chided with “shain-tangle” blues, and he didn’t have the manliness to cut the trees to negate. When we got the doe out to our vehicle, there wasn’t a hair left on the side of the body she had been field-dressed. It was a Jewish tradition, which was tagged, field-dressed and ready to dress, but darkness was setting in, and Montgomery realized he was a little bit short some help getting the deer out. He asked if I would be available in the morning to lend a hand, and yes, folks, I’m still interested in deer hunting, and I truly enjoy sharing the excitement with new hunters when they bag their first deer.

Landing you, the tools to grow.

GreenStone Farm Credit Services provides fast, flexible financing and services tailored to your business.

Our customized solutions include:
- Equipment loans
- Construction loans
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GreenStone Farm Credit Services provides fast, flexible financing and services tailored to your business.
1. ANATOMY: How many ribs are in the human body?

2. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of animal is a flying fox?

3. GEOGRAPHY: In which body of water does the island of Malta lie?

4. U.S. STATES: What animal is featured on the state flag of Louisiana?

5. TELEVISION: What was the name of the fictional airline whose jet crashed on an island in "Lost"?

6. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president ran on the slogan “Vote Yourself a Farm and Horses”?

7. MOVIES: What is the name of Thor’s hammer in the earlier “Avengers” movies?

8. FOOD & DRINK: The “Iron Chef” TV cooking show originated in which country?

9. HISTORY: In what year did the Cold War end?

10. SCIENCE: What weather condition is measured in millibars?

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Answers
1. 24
2. A type of bat
3. Mediterranean Sea
4. A pelican
5. Oceanic Airlines
6. Abraham Lincoln
7. Mjolnir
8. Japan
9. 1989
10. Atmospheric pressure

Posting Date: January 24, 2022
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HAY-ROUND BALES
4x5 net wrapped. Grass $68/ bale.
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CULTIVATORS CRUSHED AS- PHALT $100/ ton, YELLOW SAND $1.50/ ton, Screened Black dirt $1/ton, 21A Driveway crushed stone $3.50/ ton, Truck Loads Orb Loading 7:45 AM, Eger's Sand gravel 4275 Sheridan Road, Omena 989-695-5205.

FURNITURE
A KING PILLOW TOP MATTRESS SET now in plastic, slightly dam- aged in shipping, cost $2,200, sell for $350. Call 832-922-1091.

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Amish top beds, Dressers, Rustic Table and Chairs, Mattresses for Cabin or Home. Lowest price in Michigan! dandantheMattressMan.com 989-622-1278.

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Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Scheduled a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 10% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-844-392-2501.

GENERAC Standby Gen- erators provide backup power during utility power outages, so your home and family stay safe and comfortable. Prepare now. Free 7-year extended warranty ( Есть валет). Reserve a free quote today! Call for additional terms and conditions. 1-866-950-6757.

TUSCOLA PEER CENTER IS HIRING:
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careers.tuscolegov.com

Applications accepted online.
Send letter of application and resume with refer- ence to Joner@frunfoundation.org.

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LEA ACCOUNTANT: The full time, year-round job posting is available at careers.tuscolegov.com. Employment Opportuni- ties, Compensation, benefits, and retirement through the Michigan Office of Retirement Ser- vices available upon a signed letter of application and resume with refer- ence to Joner@frunfoundation.org.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: This position is responsible for the support staff of the TUS- COLA PEER CENTER. Duties include: Socialization with other peers, assisting directors with operational duties, and janitorial duties. Call 989-923-1278 for details.

TO APPLY: Send resume, cover letter, and references to Joner@frunfoundation.org.

DUTY REGIONS: Tuscola Peer Center located at 406 W. Frank St., Caro. Must have past or present experience with Behavioral Health Systems.

QUALIFICATIONS: Must have past or present experience with Behavioral Health Systems. Must be able to pass a background check. Must have past or present experience with Behavioral Health Systems. Must be able to pass a background check. Duties include: Socialization with other peers, assisting directors with operational duties, and janitorial duties. Call 989-923-1278 for details.

TO APPLY: Send resume, cover letter, and references to Joner@frunfoundation.org.

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Tuscola Today.com — Saturday | January 29, 2022 — 87

DEALS

FARM EQUIPMENT

CULTIVATORS CRUSHED AS- PHALT $100/ ton, YELLOW SAND $1.50/ ton, Screened Black dirt $1/ton, 21A Driveway crushed stone $3.50/ ton, Truck Loads Orb Loading 7:45 AM, Eger's Sand gravel 4275 Sheridan Road, Omena 989-695-5205.

FURNITURE

A KING PILLOW TOP MATTRESS SET now in plastic, slightly dam- aged in shipping, cost $2,200, sell for $350. Call 832-922-1091.

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MEETINGS/EVENTS

AMERICAN LEGION POST 181 meets the first Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at 248 W. Main St., Mayville. CARO AMERICAN LEGION POST 7 meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

CARO CHAPTER 276 Royal Arch Masons meet the second Thursday of each month in the Masonic Temple, 156 S. State St., Caro.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY CENTER — CARO meets the second Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Brentwood. Membership applications available. Call 989-673-5588 for more information.

TOPS M1 6221 chapter meets Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Bayshore Beauty Academy. Call 258-546-3671 for more information.

TOPS CLUB 1212 VASSAR meets Wednesday at 4 p.m. at Vassar Middle School, 5300 N. Norris, Vassar, and Thursday at 3 p.m. at 5302 S. State St., Caro. (V ASSAR) meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, 709 S. Main St., Caro. (V ASSAR) meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at Bayshire Beauty Academy, 311 W. Michigan Ave., Caro. Call 989-673-4121 for more information.

CARO VETERAN TO VETERAN (VET) meetings are held the second Thursday of every month at 5 p.m. at the VVH's plaza next to Ace Hardware in Caro. These meetings provide a chance to talk to other veterans about their experiences and bring veterans together to learn about available benefits. Refreshments are provided. For more information, call 989-673-6248.

TUSCOLA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

Calendar of Board Meetings

2022

January

Tuesday, January 11th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

January

Tuesday, January 18th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

February

Tuesday, February 1st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

February

Tuesday, February 8th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

February

Tuesday, February 15th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

March

Tuesday, March 1st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

March

Tuesday, March 8th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

March

Tuesday, March 15th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

March

Tuesday, March 22nd — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

March

Tuesday, March 29th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

April

Tuesday, April 5th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

April

Tuesday, April 12th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

April

Tuesday, April 19th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

April

Tuesday, April 26th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

May

Tuesday, May 3rd — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

May

Tuesday, May 10th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

May

Tuesday, May 17th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

May

Tuesday, May 24th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

May

Tuesday, May 31st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

June

Tuesday, June 7th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

June

Tuesday, June 14th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

June

Tuesday, June 21st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

June

Tuesday, June 28th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

July

Tuesday, July 5th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

July

Tuesday, July 12th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

July

Tuesday, July 19th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

July

Tuesday, July 26th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

July

Tuesday, July 31st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

August

Tuesday, August 2nd — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

August

Tuesday, August 9th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

August

Tuesday, August 16th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

August

Tuesday, August 23rd — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

August

Tuesday, August 30th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

September

Tuesday, September 6th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

September

Tuesday, September 13th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

September

Tuesday, September 20th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

September

Tuesday, September 27th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

September

Tuesday, October 4th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, October 11th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, October 18th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, October 25th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, November 1st — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, November 8th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, November 15th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

October

Tuesday, November 22nd — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

November

Tuesday, December 6th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

November

Tuesday, December 13th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

November

Tuesday, December 20th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

November

Tuesday, December 27th — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro

December

Tuesday, January 3, 2023 — 5:30 p.m. Board Meeting, Caro
Kingston handles Genesee in road contest

By Scott Bolsby | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

.MONDAY –

The Marlette girls’ basketball team struggled to find offense in a 23-16 Greater Thumb Conference East Division loss to Ubly on Tuesday. The Beavers led 6-4 after the first quarter, 16-14 at halftime and 16-13 entering the fourth quarter. Bethany Ketchum led all Marlette (5-8, 3-2) scorers with five points while Hottie Hartwell and Olivia Findlay scored four points each. Gabby Martinez led the way in rebounding with eight and Findlay pulled down seven.

North Branch gallows by Lapeer

LAPER – A 14-0 first quarter propelled the North Branch girls’ basketball team to a 40-29 victory over Lapeer on Tuesday. The Broncos (6-6) led 21-4 at halftime and 36-16 at the end of the third.

Natasha Rickel led the Broncos with 11 points, Bailey Gormley chipped in with nine and Tracy Ladeshker helped with six.

Patriots no match for Rockets

RESE – The Reese girls’ basketball team found itself in the win column for a Greater Thumb Conference West Division victory.

Madison Furey had eight points, Jenna Gleeson added 11 and Emilee Kowalchak provided 9 points.

North Branch capped a 33-17 victory over Reese (6-6) in the fourth quarter.

Vikings clipped by Warriors

FAIRGROVE TWP. – Akron-Fairgrove trailed 15-11 at halftime in a 53-16 loss to North Huron on Tuesday. Bailey Diehl has a team-high eight points and six rebounds while Gloria Diehl added five points.

The Vikings (3-9, 3-2) plays host to Burton Breconley on Monday.

Mariette falls on road to Harbor Beach

HARBOR BEACH – Mariette stumbled down the stretch in a 21 nonconference win over Ubly.

The Red Raiders trailed 17-16 at halftime and came outscored in the second half 10-8 losing to the Pirates 47-24.

Hollie Hartwell led the Red Raiders with nine points while Lexi Penable added eight points and pulled down a team-high 10 rebounds.

Mariette (5-8, 3-2) travels to Capac on Tuesday GTE matchup.

Lapeer holds on to win against Harbor Beach

LAPER – A 14-0 first quarter propelled the North Branch girls’ basketball team to a 40-29 victory over Laper on Tuesday. The Broncos (6-6) led 21-4 at halftime and 36-16 at the end of the third.

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By Scott Bolsby | Sports Editor

EAGLES SILENCE PANTHERS IN TVC 8 BATTLE

TuscolaToday.com Saturday January 29, 2022, sports@tcadvertiser.com

TRENT CIESA led Franklin with 14 points as they defeated the Vassar Vulcans in a Tri-Valley Conference 8 Division game. The Eagles jumped out to a 10-8 lead in the first quarter and extended the lead to 40-15 at halftime and 53-28 entering the fourth quarter. 

KINGTON FALLS DOWN THE STRETCH

GENESEE — Despite leading three out of four quarters, the Kingtons boys basketball team fell 59-42 in a Blue Water Area Conference game against Imlay City here on Saturday.

LAKER TOO MUCH FOR VULCANS

VASSAR — Despite leading after the first quarter, the Vassar boys basketball team dropped a Greater Thumb Conference West Division game to Laker 59-27 here on Wednesday.

RESE TOGS CAGERS DOWN RED HAWKS

REESE — The Reese boys basketball team kept its conference record blemish free with a 75-41 win over Cass City here on Wednesday.

MILLINGTON GRAPPLERS EARN WIN AT MLS TRI-MEET

SAGINAW — Scoring 117 points in just two matches, the Millington wrestling squad earned the win at Michigan Lutheran Seminary on Wednesday.

McLAREN CARO REGION HAS EXPANDED ITS SERVICES TO INCLUDE WORLD-CLASS CANCER CARE.

KARMANOS CANCER INSTITUTE

McLaren Caro offers a Cancer Care Program featuring radiation oncology, medical oncology, surgical oncology, and nurse practitioners. This program offers patients a comprehensive approach to cancer care.

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SOMDEV ROY, MD

Oncologist

DAVID BERGMAN, MD

Radiation Oncologist

KATIE LANGE, FNP-BC

Nurse Practitioner

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Some infusion options may be available in Caro, with full-service infusion centers conveniently located in Bay City and Bad Axe.

Karmanos also provides treatment options at its Radiation Oncology Centers. David Bergman, MD, provides expertise in radiation oncology located in Bay City.

Get the latest cancer care news and important information from Karmanos. Visit KARMANOS.ORG/CARECLOSETHOME or follow us on social media.
Richardson has roots in Caro, and with Farm Bureau Insurance

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor
gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

CARO — Sondra (Sayers) Richardson could talk about Farm Bureau Insurance long before she began working for a Caro office that sells its products.

“It’s pretty much the only insurance company I’ve ever known, growing up. I’ve always trusted it because I grew up with it,” said Richardson, 43, an agent at the Sayers Richardson Agency, 1701 W. Caro Road, owned by Richardson and her father, Wayne Sayers.

“I know the products, I know the people and it’s a good company to work for. I was in my teens when my dad started the insurance business, and he has 28 years in. He’s still an active agent and even once he’s ready to retire, I don’t think he plans on leaving the building anytime soon.”

Richardson, a 1997 Caro High School graduate, sang in the choir while in school.

“In fact I went to college at Central Michigan University to be a vocal performance major, and that didn’t quite work out,” said Richardson, who in the past year has become an approved Farm Bureau Insurance agent.

She has worked for her father in the insurance office for 14 years.

“I kind of fell into this business to start out with, when I started out I had gotten into the adult foster care line of work for a short time, and Wayne (Sayers) needed an assistant, and I was looking to get into something else,” Richardson said.

“I ended up working for him and absolutely loved it. I fell in love with the job of insurance agent, like that of a sports agent,” Richardson said.

“Some of these insured (customers) I grew up around, and some of them, I got to know in the 14 years that I was a staff person here,” she said. “I like the idea of carving on the book of business and making sure they still recognize the faces and names of the people who are fighting for them.”

Chuck and Marie Steele once operated the office, later manned by Sayers and Dave Soper, who continues working as an agent based there.

“The agency has been in this location for more than 50 years,” Richardson said.

The agency sells home, life, auto, business and commercial insurance policies.

Richardson has learned that having the right insurance coverage is important and trusting your agent is key. Go with an agency that knows your community and the people in it.

Sondra Richardson is an approved Farm Bureau Insurance agent. She and her father, Wayne Sayers, operate the Sayers Richardson Agency at 1701 W. Caro Road.

Having the right insurance coverage is important and trusting your agent is key. Go with an agency that knows your community and the people in it.

THE SAYERS RICHARDSON AGENCY

Bay-Thumb Region | Farm Bureau Insurance
1701 W Caro Rd., Caro | Phone: 989-673-5588

WE OFFER INSURANCE FOR:
• Home • Business • Auto
• Crop • Farm • Health • Life
As well as Retirement Planning

MEMBER BENEFITS INCLUDE
Health Related - Health & Dental Insurance, Prescription drug discounts, RxOnline and more.
Savings - Money saving benefits and services on purchases through partnerships with other organizations.
Travel - Roadside assistance, Hotel and Car rental discounts, discounts on local entertainment venues.
CASS CITY — The prospect of end-of-life planning for a loved one isn’t a welcome thought. But Cass City law firm Biddinger & Estelle, PC is there to help shoulder the burden.

“We talk to not only our clients, but their kids, nieces and nephews and whoever else so everyone has a full understanding of the situation,” said Rachel Estelle, an attorney with the firm.

The law firm specializes in estate planning and elder law. It was founded in 1990 by Michelle Biddinger. Estelle joined the firm in 2013. “Estate planning is an umbrella term for wills and trusts,” Estelle said. “And elder law is essentially long-term-care planning.”

There is a lot involved when a family is tasked with placing a loved one into a care facility. And most people have to face the difficult decisions at least once in their life. “The reality of the situation is 70 percent of Americans are going to need some kind of long-term care, whether it’s assisted living or in-home care,” Estelle said. “If you can’t really afford to pay for care, what are the options? And what are the best choices if you can afford to pay privately for care? Being prepared to make those decisions is what we help with.”

Biddinger is Caro High School graduate who has been practicing law in the area for 34 years. There are five Biddinger & Estelle offices in the Thumb, with the main office located at 4415 S. Seeger St. in Cass City. Another office is in Caro, at 1205 E. Caro Road. The business employs about 20 people. A former attorney at the firm — Jason Bitzer — is now Tuscola County District Court judge.

Estelle is from the Novi area. She recently received elder law attorney certification. “There are only 20 attorneys in Michigan who have this certification,” she said. “You have to meet certain requirements. I had to take another bar-style exam and continuing legal education to receive it.”

Estelle said most of the firm’s clients are from the Thumb area, but some come from her neck of the woods in metro Detroit. In addition to elder law and estate planning, the law firm works with local farming businesses to form a succession plan.

Biddinger & Estelle is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to noon Friday.

The law firm aims to educate, assist folks with estate planning

By John Schneider | john@tcadvertiser.com

CASS CITY — The prospect of end-of-life planning for a loved one isn’t a welcome thought. But Cass City law firm Biddinger & Estelle, P.C. operates five offices in Michigan’s Thumb region.
Thumb Cellular is the ‘Talk of the Thumb’ for more than just cellphones

Thumb Cellular has a reputation for doing things differently. Known as the local cellular carrier serving Huron, Tuscola and Sanilac counties, it’s the local option in a crowd of national carriers like Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile, not to mention the slew of mobile virtual network operators like TracFone, Boost Mobile and Cricket Wireless.

SO, WHAT MAKES THUMB CELLULAR STAND ABOVE THE COMPETITION?

If you were to start with Thumb Cellular’s customer care staff, they’d likely reference their affordable plans, wide selection of smartphone and tablet devices and superior cellular coverage. But that’s only a fraction of it.

For starters, Thumb Cellular has a 30-plus year history of serving the Thumb Region. It’s also family-owned and local to the community. Perhaps most important is the quality of the business’ leadership and staff – a predominantly women-based team of 32.

Since the beginning Thumb Cellular recognized the importance of women in the workplace. As one of the four original employees in 1991, Tracey Schenk began as the sole customer care representative, eventually rising through the ranks as Customer Service Manager and today serving as Thumb Celluar’s Director. She’s joined by Connie Emming, who hired on in 1995 and currently serves as Business Development Manager. Of Thumb Cellular’s four retail locations and including their administrative department headquartered in Pigeon, the business’ staff is 90 percent female. Comparatively, Verizon, AT&T and Sprint only hover in the mid 30 percentile when it comes to hiring women.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR CUSTOMERS?

SIMPLY PUT – BETTER SERVICE IN EVERY RESPECT.

“Our team works together beautifully,” said Schenk. “The majority of our customers walking through our doors are women. They’re either handling accounts for their households or places of work, and our Customer Care team can easily relate with them. We have a gentler, personable approach to customer service and it really sets us apart from our competitors.”

Schenk also attributes her team’s charisma to successful growth. Comprised of four Key Account Managers and a Sales Executive, the all-women sales team has accomplished making Thumb Cellular the top cellular provider in the region. In fact, the company has been voted The Advertiser’s ‘Readers Choice’ for best cellphone store for multiple years in a row. Opened in the mid-1990s, Thumb Cellular’s Caro location has made several Moves around the city, settling in at 660 N. State Street, just north of the railroad tracks on M-81. The office is home to Key Account Manager Corky Dean, who’s been with the Caro office since its opening, and Customer Care Representatives Angie Souva (Team Leader), Debbie Abell, Debbie Langlois and Heather Bailey. Sales Executive Tanya Rubin also frequents the office as a convenient place to meet with new customers.

The Caro Office staff has more than a combined 150 years of experience in understanding mobile technology and helping customers with their cellular needs. As mobile technologies continue to evolve, it’s important to have a team of friendly and knowledgeable neighbors who are there for you.

See what all the talk is about by visiting Thumb Cellular for yourself.
By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor
gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

CARO — Three years ago, Lisa Putman helped bring new jobs to a vacant storefront in downtown Caro.

Generations of Beauty, a salon at 119 N. State St., has weathered the storm.

“The Putmans renovated the building’s storefront to open Generations of Beauty salon in November of 2019,” said Putman, an accountant who, with her husband, Scott Putman, owns the salon.

“We were able to survive it and we’re still there, and we plan on keeping it there.”

Six workers, Lisa Putman included, staff the salon, which provides hair styling, pedicures and manicures, tanning services and sells hair products, tanning lotions and skin-care lotions.

Eimi Maguire of Flushing, with 27 years of experience as a cosmetologist, and Morgan Avery, with six years of experience, have worked at the business since it opened in November of 2019.

Kirsti Turner, who has logged 32 years as a cosmetologist, also works there, along with Laura Valdez, who brings 27 years of experience, and Kasia Giddings, with three years on the job.

“At home it’s just staff and me,” said Putman.

“I was a little worried when we had to close down in March of 2020 for COVID-19, only four months after we opened, but we were able to make it through,” said Putman, an accountant who, with her husband, Scott Putman, owns the salon.

“The business is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, catering to men, women and children. Customers can make appointments by calling 989-672-1515, though the business accepts walk-in customers.

“The salon is paying off to close down in March of 2020 for COVID-19,”" said Putman, an accountant who, with her husband, Scott Putman, owns the salon.

“Six workers, Lisa Putman included, staff the salon, which provides hair styling, pedicures and manicures, tanning services and sells hair products, tanning lotions and skin-care lotions.

“Generations of Beauty, a salon at 119 N. State St., has weathered the storm.”

“Kayla and her husband, Scott, renovated the interior of a formerly vacant Caro storefront to open Generations of Beauty salon in November of 2019.

“My aunt, Joyce Hormel, has passed away, and she did hair, and this was just something I wanted to do to follow in her footsteps,” Maguire said.

“The business is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, catering to men, women and children. Customers can make appointments by calling 989-672-1515, though the business accepts walk-in customers.

“Demand for use of the salon’s three tanning beds and two stand-up units increases in January and February, as area residents seek to acquire tanner skin before winter trips to Florida, Mexico and warmer destinations, according to Maguire.

“Others, however, simply seek to improve their mood via occasional wintertime visits to the tanning salon.

“Have you been thinking about tanning your face or your body? Stop in and tell me today! There are a lot of people coming in on the weekends because they’re trying to get on track for the spring season.”

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“Have you been thinking about tanning your face or your body? Stop in and tell me today! There are a lot of people coming in on the weekends because they’re trying to get on track for the spring season.”
The client is the boss at Mayville real estate agency

By John Schneider | john@tcadvertiser.com

MAYVILLE — A local real estate company has a bright outlook on helping customers buy and sell homes.

“We believe that the No. 1 thing that all real estate agents should do is guide and counsel clients,” Sherie Thomas said. “We do this every day and are ready for just about anything. But it can be scary for buyers and sellers.”

Thomas runs the aptly named SunShine Real Estate Co., 2220 E. Ohmer Road in Mayville, where, despite having the title of owner, the seller is always in charge.

“I want sellers to understand they are always the boss,” Thomas said. “Sellers sometimes think they need to ask the agent about something. No, no, no. Everything is up to the seller, and we like to make sure they know they are the boss during the entire transaction.”

Thomas, who is from North Branch, has been a local real estate agent for 34 years. She founded SunShine in 2012. The agency employs 10 agents.

Her staff, Thomas said, is key to the company’s success.

“I’m very blessed to have the good strong team that I have, because you don’t always have that,” Thomas said. “I always want to make sure I take care of my employees so they don’t want to go to another company.”

Thomas added that she and her staff have been busy.

“The market is very solid,” she said. “Prices have leveled out and activity for buyers is high. People want to buy homes right now.”

SunShine tackles real estate agendas throughout the Thumb, “from Lapeer County on north,” Thomas said. Thomas wishes to dispel the misinformation that real estate is a cut-throat business.

“Competitor does not mean enemy,” she said. “We all work together, and for the most part, we all enjoy and respect each other. That’s important to know.”

The most important partner at SunShine doesn’t have an office or business cards.

“By the grace of God, our business is excelling,” Thomas said. “He’s my partner in everything I do.”

SunShine is open from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and closed Saturday and Sunday. But agents are available to meet with clients at almost any time, even if the business is not officially open. To schedule an appointment, call 989-635-0588.
CARO — Caro features a mother-daughter team of optometrists at a business that has served the community for almost three decades.

But many changes have taken place at Star Vision Center, 170 N. State St., since it opened in 1993 in the heart of downtown Caro.

These days, Dr. Carol Starling and her daughter, Dr. Claire Starling, focus on conducting diabetic medical examinations, treating and managing glaucoma, and providing dry eye therapy — along with routine vision care.

They also fit all types of contact lenses and tout a large selection of “in-demand” eyeglass frames to fit all ages and styles.

Dr. Claire Starling said she has learned something after working with her mom for almost three years.

“Even though she does a really great job at taking care of people’s eyes, her technical mastery isn’t really what impresses patients as often as what I expected,” Claire Starling said.

“What people care about the most is that they know she cares. At first, that was almost a little frustrating for me, because I had so much awareness of the level of expertise and skill it took to get a patient to see clearly and comfortably — I was just so proud of her work.”

The Starlings strive to be accessible for their patients, noting they are “available to schedule convenient appointments as well as see emergency patients.”

To that end, the business has expanded its hours, operating from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to noon Saturday.

Claire Starling believes she knows what keeps the optometrists from experiencing the “burnout” that has afflicted many health-care professionals dealing with realities and restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I have wondered a lot about what could possibly be the ‘secret sauce’ that continues to spare us from the burnout,” Claire Starling said. “I think the biggest responsibility we have and the biggest gift we have are actually the same, and the answer to that question.

“The reciprocity we feel every day from patients who, I think, truly trust that we deeply care about them and will do whatever it takes to do the best and right thing for them — that’s been our secret sauce.

“We are so lucky to not be burned out, and are happy to continue taking the best care of our patients that we can.”

For more information, visit visionsource-starvision.com or call the business at 989-672-7827. Customers will find a staff exhibiting true concern for patients in addition to their optometric expertise, according to Claire Starling.

“As I’ve settled in more, I’ve gained a little different perspective and have been able to experience the even better, more humbling gratification than solving the puzzle of a patient,” she said.

“The old line of ‘People don’t really care what you know, until they know you care’ is so true.”
Hills & Dales General Hospital has added two new family nurse practitioners to its staff in recent weeks.

Ashlee Pierce, family nurse practitioner, began seeing patients at Kingston Family Practice in late December. Jennifer Jones, family nurse practitioner, will start seeing patients in late January at Cass City Family Practice.

Pierce works with Dr. Melanie Kramer and nurse practitioner Erica Knoerr at Kingston Family Practice. Pierce earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Michigan-Flint’s School of Nursing in April 2021. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Saginaw Valley State University’s School of Nursing in December 2012.

Before becoming a family nurse practitioner, Pierce worked at Hills & Dales General Hospital as an emergency room registered nurse. She also gained experience working in the emergency room at Covenant HealthCare hospital in Saginaw, and in the intensive care unit at McLaren Thumb Region hospital in Bad Axe.

“The experience she has will be a wonderful benefit to our patients and we look forward to having her on our medical staff,” said Jean Anthony, former president and former chief executive officer at Hills & Dales. “The experience she has will be a wonderful benefit to our patients and we look forward to having her on our medical staff.”

To make an appointment with Pierce at Kingston Family Practice, call 989-683-8063.

Jones is set to work in late January with Dr. Eric Shoemaker and nurse practitioner Marie Havercamp at Hills & Dales’ Cass City Family Practice.

“I’ve been seeing patients in the Thumb area for a few years now. When the opportunity came up to practice at Hills & Dales, I knew it was the right time to make a change,” Jones said. “My roots started at Hills & Dales as an ER RN. I worked in various roles at Hills & Dales and now it feels like I am going back to where it all began. I couldn’t be more excited.”

Andy Daniels, president and chief executive officer of Hills & Dales General Hospital, adds that “Jennifer will bring great experience to Cass City Family Practice. The patients will enjoy getting to know her and she will complement the care of Dr. Shoemaker and Marie. We look forward to having her start.”

To make an appointment with Jones, call Cass City Family Practice at 989-872-8303.
Michigan Farm Bureau 2021 Young Farmer Achievement Award winner Ashley Kennedy is being recognized for her accomplishments as she advanced to the top 10 finalists for the national award at American Farm Bureau Federation’s annual conference in Atlanta.

The Young Farmer Achievement Award recognizes successful young farmers who derive most of their income from an owned production agriculture enterprise and showcases their achievements in the business of farming.

Kennedy milks 240 head alongside her husband Eric at their farm outside Bad Axe, which also boasts about 600 replacement heifers, 60 steers and 240 acres of corn and hay.

In her 28-page application for the award, Kennedy shared all the details of her operation, including a deep dive into her farm’s finances, which are a key aspect of the judges’ review.

Kennedy handles everything from herd care and employee management to recordkeeping and field work. Technology plays a big role in the operation’s prosperity, with four robotic milkers and automated feeding systems.

“Building the feeder barn meant completely changing how we manage calves,” Kennedy said. “I hope that my story can show that automation can help small- and medium-size farms keep operating.”

The farm is a study in measured generational transition, with Kennedy and her husband gradually taking ownership one component at a time, along with taking on equipment investments and building projects.

Future goals include further diversification and moving toward more direct-to-consumer marketing of niche products like heirloom beans and Wagyu beef.

“I’ve learned so much through this process, and it’s truly an honor to be considered with so many other talented farmers from across the country,” Kennedy added.

As the state winner, Kennedy received a Kubota tractor; a $1,000 AgroLiquid gift certificate; up to $1,000 of business/estate consultation from Clark Hill; and an all-expense paid trip to the AFBF Annual Meeting to compete in the national competition, sponsored by the Michigan Foundation for Agriculture.

Huron County farmer recognized as AFBF Young Farmer Achievement Award finalist

Photo courtesy of Emily Tenbusch | The Advertiser

Ashley Kennedy milks 240 head alongside her husband Eric and their youngsters Calli and Adeline

Ashley Kennedy milks 240 head alongside her husband Eric and their youngsters Calli and Adeline

Photo courtesy of Emily Tenbusch | The Advertiser
Increased acreage and higher yields for corn and soybeans led to record high soybean production and near-record high corn production, according to the 2021 Crop Production Annual Summary released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

U.S. corn growers produced 15.1 billion bushels, up 7 percent from 2020 and the second highest on record. Corn yield in the United States is estimated at a record high 177.0 bushels per acre, 5.6 bushels above the 2020 yield of 171.4 bushels per acre. Area harvested for grain, at 85.4 million acres, is up 4 percent from 2020.

Soybean production for 2021 totaled a record-high 4.44 billion bushels, up 5 percent from 2020. With record high yields in 21 states, the average soybean yield is estimated at 51.4 bushels per acre, 0.4 bushel above 2020 and the second highest on record.

For 2021, all cotton production is up 21 percent from 2020, at 17.6 million 400-pound bales. The U.S. yield is estimated at 489 pounds per acre, up 2 pounds from last year’s yield. Harvested area, at 9.97 million acres, is up 20 percent from last year.

Also released today were the Winter Wheat and Canola Seedings and Grain Stocks reports. The Winter Wheat and Canola Seedings report provides the first indicator of this year’s winter wheat acreage. Planned area for harvest in 2022 is estimated at 34.4 million acres, up 2 percent from 2021.

In the Grain Stocks report, corn stored as of Dec. 1, 2021, was estimated to be up 3 percent from a year earlier. Soybean stocks were up 7 percent from a year earlier. Corn stored in all positions totaled 11.6 billion bushels, while soybeans totaled 31.5 billion bushels. All wheat stocks were down 18 percent from a year earlier. All wheat stored in all positions on Dec. 1, 2021, totaled 1.52 billion bushels.

On December 1, 2021, Michigan corn stocks totaled 264 million bushels, 3 percent higher than a year earlier, according to Maria D. Johnson, Director, USDA NASS, Great Lakes Regional Office. About 66 percent of the corn was stored on farms.

The first quarter indicated disappearance was 16 million bushels, compared with 85.0 million bushels a year earlier. Soybean stocks on December 1, 2021, were 78.3 million bushels. That was 7 percent higher than stocks in the same year’s first quarter. Farm stocks of soybeans were 35.0 million bushels. The first quarter indicated disappearance was 6.76 million bushels, compared with 41.6 million bushels a year ago. Wheat stocks on December 1, 2021, totaled 1.6 billion bushels, 13 percent above a year ago. Second quarter indicated disappearance was 4.70 million bushels, compared with 4.41 million bushels a year ago. Wheat stored in all positions on Dec. 1, 2021, totaled 3.15 billion bushels, 7 percent from December 1, 2020. Of the total stocks, 7.23 billion bushels were stored on farms, up 3 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, 4.41 billion bushels, were up 4 percent from a year ago. The September – November 2021 indicated disappearance was 4.70 billion bushels, compared with 4.14 billion bushels during the same period last year. Soybeans stored in all positions on December 1, 2021, totaled 3.15 billion bushels, 7 percent from December 1, 2020. Soybean stocks stored on farms totaled 1.52 billion bushels, up 16 percent from a year ago. Off-farm stocks of 4.63 billion bushels, were down 1 percent from last December. Indicated disappearance for September – November 2021 totaled 1.54 billion bushels, down 10 percent from the same period a year earlier. All wheat stored in all positions on December 1, 2021, totaled 1.39 billion bushels, down 18 percent from a year ago. Off-farm stocks of 1.12 billion bushels, were down 8 percent from last December. Indicated disappearance for September – November 2021 indicated disappearance was 304 million bushels, 16 percent below the same period a year earlier.
Rise of Plant-Based Milk & its Role in the Industry

According to the USDA, Economic Research Service’s (ERS) food availability data, Americans have been drinking less and less fluid cow’s milk on a per person basis since the mid-1940s. However, the rate of decline has increased recently. Between 1995 and 2019, ERS data show that the per-person U.S. supply of cow’s milk available for consumption fell at an average annual rate of 1.0 percent. From 2010 to 2017, per capita availability fell at an average rate of almost 2.3 percent.

Plant-based milk alternatives may play a role. Grocery store shelves and refrigerated cases offer a variety of non-dairy beverages with package labels that include the word “milk.” Industry statistics show almond- and soy-based products are the most popular. Also available are cashews, pea, soy, and rice options.

ERS researchers used National Consumer Panel data from the private market research company IRI for 2013 through 2017 to investigate whether sales of plant-based milk and milk alternatives are increasing at the expense of cow’s milk. Households participating in the panel report their food purchases after each week. Panel data from the private research company IRI for 2013 through 2017 to investigate whether sales of plant-based milk and milk alternatives are increasing at the expense of cow’s milk.

ERS researchers confirmed that cow’s milk remains a staple food item. At some time during 2017, for example, 92 percent of American households bought cow’s milk. However, the researchers also found that sales of cow’s milk fell over time, while sales of plant-based options rose. Weekly average purchases of cow’s milk declined 12 percent from about 0.41 gallon per household per week in 2013 to 0.36 gallon per household per week in 2017. By contrast, purchases of almond, soy, and other plant-based products increased 16 percent from 0.028 gallon to 0.038 gallon per household per week.

A statistical model’s estimation further showed that increased sales of plant-based alternatives are negatively affecting households’ purchases of cow’s milk. The rate of replacement is estimated to be about one-to-one in recent years. In other words, every gallon of plant-based product bought by a household could be replacing an equalized size by dairy supplies. Even so, the increase in sales over 2013 to 2017 of plant-based options is one-fifth the size of the decrease in Americans’ purchases of cow’s milk. Therefore, sales of plant-based milk alternatives are contributing to—but not a major driver of—declining sales of cow’s milk.
Managing nutrients to minimize cost of production, retain farm profits

By Jojoins LaPompa | MSU Extension

As producers turn their attention toward the 2022 growing season, there are increasing concerns about input prices and impacts to farm profits. Questions about availability of key inputs and what they will cost are largely unknown. Despite uncertainties, farms can position themselves to minimize costs of production and retain farm profits. Minimizing costs starts with understanding current market conditions, including inputs and commodities.

You need to know what expected prices are before you can identify options to minimize costs. Once identified, you need to analyze which options are best for your farm.

Understanding market conditions

In order to maximize prices received, understanding market conditions now and into the future is needed. Many economists agree that current prices for commodities will continue favorably into next year’s harvest. However, once we reach harvest, prices are expected to decline as global supply and demand moves toward pre-2021 norms.

The USDA estimates corn producers will receive an average of $4.80 per bushel for grain harvested in 2022 and sold throughout 2023. A similar trend exists for soybeans as the USDA expects a $10.50 per bushel. For more information, visit USDA Economic Research Service.

Knowing expected prices of key input purchases

As you think about how declining commodity prices will affect your farm’s profitability, it is important to understand another important trend about prices. If commodity prices are trending upwards, input prices tend to follow quickly.

A higher demand for a product often brings with it an equally higher demand for inputs needed to produce it. However, when commodity prices decline, input prices are not as quick to follow. Consider current retail prices for U.S. No. 2 diesel compared to historical averages. As of November, diesel prices rose to $5.77 per gallon. During the ethanol period, prices hovered around $4 per gallon while corn peaked at $6.89 per bushel.

Once ethanol demand began to fall, commodity prices declined rapidly while diesel prices remained strong for almost two years. By the time diesel fuel reached $5 per gallon, corn prices had fallen to $3.70 per bushel. Farm inputs are expected to remain high in 2022, but how high is still unknown. Factors affecting prices are commodity markets, global supply and demand, and domestic supply chain constraints leading to uncertainty about product availability.

These factors have led fertilizer retailers to hesitate releasing spring prices or limiting quantities to as little as 20%-30% of a farm's previous year purchases.

Similar concerns on product availability may reach into other input purchases, such as chemicals. Supply limitations of fertilizer and glufosinate have many farmers looking to alternative products to meet their needs. Producers should also prepare to discuss current uncertainties and strains on farm profits with landowners. Landowners tend to follow commodity prices and often have similar expectations as input suppliers when demands are higher for their inputs to farming.

Is planting more soybeans an option?

When fertilizer prices are high, many producers consider a second or third year of soybeans. Soybeans require less investment than corn or wheat, but that does not always mean more profit. Potassium fertilizer has had significant increases in prices the past few months. Since spring of 2020, potassium has increased 115% compared to urea at 99%. Price increases since spring 2021 have seen a 77% increase for potassium compared to 55% for urea.

Before deciding soybeans are a viable option, consider nutrient requirements from soil testing and potential profits from consecutive soybean years. If a significant amount of potassium is needed, your original planting intentions may be more profitable.

Keep planting intentions but give yourself some credit!

Your farm’s current intentions for planting can be strengthened by accounting for available nutrient credits. Consider practices or alternative nutrient sources already in place to reduce fertilizer costs. One option is nitrogen available from last year’s legumes, such as soybeans or alfalfa. At current nitrogen prices, a 30-pound nitrogen credit is worth almost $36 per acre. Using USDA's corn price of $4.80 per bushel, that’s over six bushels of corn!

Manure applications may offer costs savings as well. Even at a charge of $0.81 per gallon, an application of 3,500 gallons could save an additional $20 per acre. That's another four bushels of corn added on to the nitrogen credits! A nutrient analysis is recommended to ensure a true comparison of savings against commercial fertilizer. Incorporation timing is also important to minimize volatilization and increase nutrient retention. For more information, visit Michigan's Right to Farm homepage.

Analyze best options for your farm

Knowing what options you have available is one part of minimizing costs. The key is deciding which options will work best for your farm and its current situation.

To find which options are best for your farm, start with your soil. If sampling is critically important to reducing fertilizer costs, you need to know what you’ve got to work with before considering any other decisions.

As you think about yield goals, consider how reasonable those goals are to meet. Are they based on historical trends or wishful thinking? It is always best to focus on a goal that is within your farm’s potential. Remember, you are basing your cost planning on what yield you want to achieve.

Consider all options including changes in planting intentions, renting out acres, or adopting new practices to reduce fuel or chemical usage.
**DEADLINE March 31, 2022**

Pickup is April 21-23 at Daylight Farms 280 S. Ringle Rd., Fairgrove, MI 48733

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**FRUIT TREES**

**APPEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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**SHRUBS**

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<tr>
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**CONIFERS/EVERGREENS**

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**CONIFER TRANSPLANTS**

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<tr>
<td>Balsam Pine</td>
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<td>$30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway Spruce</td>
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**CONIFER HUSKY TRANSPLANTS**

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<td>Balsam Pine</td>
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**SHRUBS**

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<td>Serviceberry</td>
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2022 break-even prices for corn and soybeans headed to record levels.

Cost and soybean production costs will increase to record levels in 2022 due to high commodity prices, inflationary pressures, and supply disruptions. But by far, the costs with the most significant increase will be fertilizer, with the level of fertilizer prices for spring unknown at this point. Break-even prices to cover total costs for 2022 are projected at $4.73 per bushel for corn and $11.06 per bushel for soybeans. Compared to historical levels, these break-even prices are very high. While current fall bids are above break-even levels, the high break-even levels present risks.

Figure 1 shows total costs for corn produced on high-productivity farmland in central Illinois. Historical data comes from Illinois Farm Business Farm Management (IFBM). Bars for each year show non-land costs, which equals total costs minus the cost of land.

Historical yields from 2000 to 2021 are used to calculate a projected yield for 2022. The projected trend yield for 2022 ($25 bushels per acre for corn and $71 bushels per acre for soybeans) is used to calculate break-even prices. For 2022, the projected break-even price to cover total costs is $4.73 per bushel ($1,064 total cost / 225 expected yield).

For 2022, total costs for corn are projected at $1,064 per acre, with $785 in non-land costs and $279 in cash rent. Total costs are projected at record levels, exceeding 2021 costs of $915 by $149 per acre and rising above $1,000 per acre for the first time.

High break-even price levels highlight the risk associated with crop production in 2022. Current fall bids — $5 per bushel for corn and $12 for soybeans — are above break-even levels. However, commodity prices will need to remain at historically high levels for profitable crop production to occur. Pricing some grain at current levels would be prudent.
By Kevin Gould and Kable Thurlow | Michigan State University

Agricultural industries are not immune from supply chain hiccups. Just as other industries and consumers are experiencing supply chain interruptions, farmers and ranchers are in the same boat. All sectors are experiencing this frustration in the supply world in areas of product availability, manufacturing delays, and price increases. Agriculture producers need to prioritize input needs and put a plan in place to secure those inputs. Procrastination is something that most of us are guilty of at some point in time; however now is not the time to delay in acquiring the inputs we need to operate and prepare our products for market.

In a recent article, University of Nebraska Lincoln professor Erkut Sönmez indicates these supply chain issues will not be going away anytime soon. This may require you to become more aggressive at sourcing inputs and supplies. Most have experienced issues in marketing the past 21+ months as packers could not harvest and process cattle to meet industry demand. We are still facing these challenges, especially at local packers across the country.

Currently, fertilizer, vaccines, and cattle identification products, have been affected by our supply chain challenges. Fertilizer prices have skyrocketed, vaccines are often on back order or not available, and cattle tags continue to be delayed just about all of the 2022 calf crop. This link can be utilized to compare fertilizer pricing options. The Fertilizer Cost Comparison Tool provides farm producers with the ability to consider nutrient needs and fertilizer product costs. Limited supplies of key agricultural inputs could really limit our management alternatives. Here are some options to help avoid these challenges.

**Purchase supplies early. Do not wait until you need the product before ordering.**

*Recently, ear tag suppliers have sent out communications notifying customers of delays of up to 2 to 3 months.*

Do not cancel your order with one vendor and reorder through another vendor. In many cases, vendors purchase from the same supplier. When you place an order, you are put on a waiting list, if you cancel with one vendor and order with a different one, you are only putting yourself farther down that list.

*Purchase all the needs for the entire year or longer if feasible. Make a list of your yearly activities and start prioritizing orders now.*

Consider working with neighboring farms to acquire needed supplies. Often, working together saves both money and time. It is highly likely that these supply chain hiccups will continue through 2022. Now is the time to act. You may not need fertilizer, vaccines or ear tags until spring, but waiting with your order could leave you without. There are many other input items that fall into this category, do not cancel your order of delays of up to 2 to 3 months. Do not wait until you need the product before ordering.

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**Now is the time to act.** You may not need fertilizer, vaccines or ear tags until spring, but waiting with your order could leave you without. There are many other input items that fall into the short supply problem.

As of Dec. 1, there were 74.2 million hogs and pigs on U.S. farms, down 4% from December 2020 and down 1% from Sept. 1, 2021, according to the Quarterly Hogs and Pigs report published today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Other key findings in the report were:

- Of the 74.2 million hogs and pigs, 68.0 million were market hogs, while 6.18 million were kept for breeding.
- Between September and November 2021, 33.7 million pigs were weaned on U.S. farms, down 4%, from the same period one year earlier.
- From September through November 2021, U.S. hog and pig producers wanted an average of 11.19 pigs per litter.
- U.S. hog producers aimed to have 2.94 million sow farrows between December 2021 and February 2022, and 3.01 million sow farrows between March and May 2022.
- Iowa hog producers accounted for the largest inventory among the states, at 23.8 million head. Minnesota had the second largest inventory at 8.99 million head.

To obtain an accurate measurement of the U.S. swine industry, NASS surveyed roughly 6,300 operators across the nation during the first half of December.
 Sharing a joint interest in what was Northern worked together since the early 1980’s, Charlotte-based Citizens LLC. by Star of the West in recent weeks. The two companies have served our respective President of Brown Milling, Inc. “Our West Milling Company,” said Ron Brown, Brown Milling, Inc. in the hands of another agriculture and careful consideration by the that Brown Milling Co. has been known for farmers and to our employees. Today’s announcement positions Star of the West Milling Company. “Brown Milling and CEO of Star of the West Milling said Jim Howe, president and West while further expanding key capabilities for Star of the agriculture supplier headquartered of the West Milling Co. today announced it is acquiring Brown of the West while expanding into another business, growing it over the years as a family enterprise and expanding into the fertilizer business in 1970 at its Delwin location. The acquisition of Roubush Feed & Grains in 1983, Superior Fertilizer in 1987 and Spartan Elevators in 1991 positioned Brown as the go-to agricultural services provider in Central Michigan.

“Brown Milling has strived to be the best full-service farm supply provider for our customers while also providing the finest service, and I have no doubt Star of the West will carry forth this tradition,” said Brown. “Our family is proud of our company’s legacy, with Ed Brown purchasing a little mobile feed business and growing from there. He started a family journey that has been both challenging and rewarding. We are sure that he would be happy with the choice we have made here.”

Star of the West is a 151-year-old company with headquarters in Frankenmuth, Michigan. It began as a flour mill, and now operates five mills in four states including Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and New York. The company has expanded from its flour roots to include five agronomy locations, thirteen elevators for receiving crops, dry bean and food-grade processing facilities.

Brown Milling started in 1965 when Ed Brown acquired a mobile feed grinding business, and now serves as the best full-service farm supply provider for our customers while also providing the finest service, with blocked stocks would be unable to exceed their FY22 marketing allotment, a phenomenon known as “blocked stocks.” Absent action by USDA, beet processors with blocked stocks would be unable to market their entire FY22 beet sugar supply. Action item (3) was undertaken on Nov. 23, 2021 to add more raw cane sugar to the U.S. market.

In Summary, the fiscal year 2022 (FY22) Overall Allotment Quantity (OAQ) USDA is increasing the FY22 OAQ to 10,802,657 STRV, an increase of 197,508 (4,931,413 STRV, an increase of 54,3 kg). The resulting beet sugar supplies in the U.S market given the supply chain disruption. Pursuant to Section V.B.4.a of the Agreement Suspending the Countervailing Duty Investigation on Sugar from Mexico, as amended on January 15, 2020 (“CVD Agreement”), requested that the Department of Commerce (DOC) increase Mexico’s Export Limit by 150,000 short tons raw value of Other Sugar to be exported no later than March 31, 2022. Accordingly, DOC increased Mexico’s Export Limit as requested, effective Nov. 23, 2021. Also, consistent with the definition of Other Sugar in the CVD Agreement, the additional sugar must have a polarity of less than 99.2 degrees, as produced and measured on a dry basis. We note that the restrictions set forth under Section V.C. of the CVD Agreement do not apply to this additional sugar.

Star of the West set to acquire Brown Milling, Inc. USDA announces 2022 sugar program actions
By Jerad Jaborek | Michigan State University

Michigan ranks fourth in total U.S. sugar beet production, producing 4,758,000 tons in 2020. In the most recent October 2021 sugar beet production projections made by the USDA Economic Research Service, estimates 4,758,000 tons of sugar beets to be harvested this season in Michigan - a 9.17% increase from last year.

Recently, Michigan Sugar announced that they are instructing Michigan sugar beet producers to leave up to 5% of their sugar beet acres unharvested due to the anticipated record yield (36 tons per acre) of the 2021 sugar beet crop and an opportunity to participate in a voluntary buyback program for an additional 5,000 acres. With about 163,000 acres of sugar beets planted in 2021, this would result in 8,150 acres plus the 5,000 acres possible in the buyback program, for approximately 473,400 tons of unharvested sugar beets.

Instead of letting these sugar beets rot in the field, why not use them for cattle feed? Whole sugar beets have a high moisture (20-30% dry matter) and energy content (81% TDN, 6.10 Neg, Mcal/lb), but relatively low crude protein content (3.7%). Remember to have a feed analysis completed to determine the nutrient composition of your sugar beet crop before feeding. This year has been particularly wet and has likely altered the nutrient composition of the sugar beets to an extent (i.e., less sugar). Sugar beets can have a relatively high ash content depending on the amount of soil that remained attached, so washing may be necessary.

Regardless, sugar beets offer an excellent energy source in the diet of cattle. Beware, whole sugar beets must be processed to reduce their size and prevent chocking by cattle. Processing sugar beets to reduce the size and possibility of choking can be done by running the sugar beets through a wood chipper or forage harvester. Sugar beets can also be driven over on concrete or allowed greater mixing in performance. Sugar beets can be ensiled with chopped straw, or other dry ingredients, to prevent chocking by cattle. Processing sugar beets can also be done by running the sugar beets to a smaller size. After processing, sugar beets can be ensiled with chopped straw, or other dry ingredients, to prevent sugar beet chocking. Dry ingredients should be added with the chopped sugar beets to achieve the appropriate moisture content (45%) needed for ensiling.

In a Journal of Agricultural Studies paper from McGregor and others, a 56-day beef steer growing trial used chopped sugar beets to replace rolled barley at 15, 30, or 40% of the diet on a dry matter basis. The four diets varied significantly in dry matter percentage (84.7, 74.9, 64.7, 57.3%) due to the substantial moisture in the sugar beets. Average daily gain and feed efficiency were similar. As-fed feed intake increased linearly with the addition of more sugar beets (18.0, 22.6, 25.8, 27.9 pounds per day). However, on a dry matter basis, feed intake was greater for the 15 and 30% sugar beet inclusion rates (16.9 and 16.7 pounds per day) versus zero and 45% (15.7 and 16.0 pounds per day).

The addition of sugar beets may have increased diet palatability and dry matter intake at 15 and 30% sugar beet inclusion levels; however, the greater moisture content of the diet with a greater inclusion of sugar beets at 45% may have caused physical limitations on how much dry matter they could consume. Therefore, chopped sugar beets showed that they can be supplied up to 20 to 30% of the diet without negative consequences on feedlot cattle performance.

Wilke and others published a study in Applied Animal Science where they ensiled sugar beets with straw and offered this beet silage to gestating beef cows, growing crossbred beef steers, and finishing crossbred beef steers. Replacing dry rolled corn with 20% beet silage resulted in no differences in body weight or body condition score for cows. Feeding sugar beet silage (72% sugar beets and 28% straw) at 61% of the diet compared with corn (39%) and straw (17%) to growing crossbred beef steers resulted in a reduced dry matter intake, but a slight improvement in feed efficiency.

During the finishing phase, replacing corn and straw with sugar beet silage at 21 and 42% reduced average daily gain, feed efficiency, and carcass fat deposition (back fat and marbling), but increased dry matter intake. A possible answer for the reduction in performance and carcass fat deposition with sugar beet silage inclusion could be due to the diets being formulated. The 21 and 42% sugar beet silage diets offered during the finishing phase had a greater amount of detergent fiber content (20% and 37%) when compared with the control corn and straw diet (22%).

A greater fiber content reduced diet digestibility and

Excess sugar beets from the 2021 harvest may be an opportunity for great cattle feed

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Making air travel more sustainable with soy-fuel

Scientists at the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) in Peoria, Illinois, have developed a way to make a jet fuel biofuel from soybean oil. Fatty acids from soybean oil can be turned into an array of industrial products normally made from petroleum, including fuel, oil and paints. One appeal of plant-based products is that they recycle carbon found in the atmosphere. This makes plants a far more renewable resource than petroleum and other fossil fuels, which add carbon to the atmosphere as they are extracted from the earth and used.

However, soy jet fuels developed to date contain insufficient amounts of “aromatic” compounds, which impart desirable density to fuel and help keep jet engine seals and fuel lines working properly. The current shortcoming of aromatic levels in the soy jet fuel means it can be blended with conventional jet fuels derived from petroleum, explained Ken Doll, a research chemist with the ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria.

Blends using biofuels are one of the ways the aviation industry is working to reduce its “carbon footprint” or total emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide (which amounted to 905 million tons in 2018).

One approach to making soy jet fuels relies on the use of a precious metal called ruthenium to catalyze reactions that chemically modify the structure and form aromatic compounds, which impart desirable density to biofuel and help keep jet engine seals and fuel lines working properly.

The researchers are now looking for an industry partner to scale-up the process and evaluate its commercial potential further. Their research also supports a broader effort at the ARS center in Peoria to develop new, value-added uses for agricultural commodities or their waste byproducts, as well as to create sustainable new methods for processing them. Ideally, for example, the inulin used to create soy jet fuel could be combined with other carbohydrates from crops besides soy to make biofuels.

The advance, which the team recently reported in an online issue of the International Journal of Sustainable Engineering, opens the door to increased use of biofuels in airplanes. This makes plants an appealing and promising biofuel from soybean oil.

In growth-chamber experiments in Peoria, Illinois, they’re subjecting more than a dozen varieties of this important staple cereal crop to a one-to-two punch of stressors. The first comes from exposure to carbon dioxide (CO2) levels of up to 1,000 parts per million—an atmospheric concentration of the greenhouse gas that’s projected for the turn of the century absent mitigation measures. The other stressor is fungus infection by an insidious fungus known as Fusarium graminearum. The fungus, which thrives under warm, wet conditions, causes Fusariun head blight, a costly disease of wheat, barley and corn.

The team also is studying how the fungus itself behaves in wheat plants exposed to CO2 levels, observing that the severity of blight and production of mycotoxins like deoxynivalenol—the fungus itself—and wheat grain on the same genetic sources of resistance to blight—outbreaks of which are expected to worsen as global climate change conditions become more pronounced. The second course of action is to screen existing collections of wheat germplasm or wild relatives of the cereal crop for traits that could be passed into affected varieties to bolster their climate-resiliency, preserving desired grain nutrient levels and blight resistance.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists are practicing “tough love” when it comes to preparing wheat for the climate challenges ahead.

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