TUSCOLA COUNTY

**Accused killer lived, bowled around Caro**

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor
gilchrist@theadvertiser.com

**CARO** — Bentlowood Lanes owner Kenry Beachy remembers Troy J. Bilkovsky, but not in a good way.

“He hasn’t been around here in quite a few years, and that’s all right,” said Beachy, owner of the bowling alley in Caro once frequented by Bilkovsky, 51, accused of first-degree murder in the Feb. 15 slaying of Loomis along Belsay Road near Caro, according to online records.

Bilkovsky, who now lives at a St. Helen address, once lived along West Bliss Road near Caro, according to online records.

Beachy, owner of the bowling alley in Caro once frequented by Bilkovsky, 51, accused of first-degree murder in the Feb. 15 slaying of Loomis along Belsay Road near Caro, according to online records.

Several Tuscola County residents told The Advertiser they recalled bowling with — or against — Bilkovsky — at The Bent.

“I never, ever had any problems with him, but I remember that he wasn’t a very friendly person,” Beachy said.

The Advertiser’s archives indicate Bilkovsky, in 2015 in Tuscola County, was convicted of delivery or manufacture of marijuaana and of possessing or using body armor without written permission.

Michigan State Police say that even after criminal charges were filed last week against Bilkovsky and Colden, “this remains an active and ongoing investigation.”

One online commenter, reacting to the news on Friday when The Advertiser broke the story that Bilkovsky and Colden have been charged, inquired “Where’s the rest of ‘em?”

Detectives ask anyone with information about the homicide to call the state police Flint post at 810-712-1111. Police state that tipsters can remain anonymous by calling Crime Stoppers.

By Mark Hensley | Reporter
hensley@theadvertiser.com

**CARO** — After a year considering other options, and more than two years since the need was raised, the Tuscola County Board of Commissioners now are going back to an old idea: adding 7,500 to 7,800 square feet to the courthouse annex building.

Grimshaw said the county shouldn’t seek bids from architects but just hire whomever buildings and grounds supervisor Mike Miller has used before.

Even if planning is expedited, Miller said, the county would be lucky to get a permit to build within what Grimshaw said could be anywhere from $600,000 to $1.2 million. Before the pandemic, however, when the commissioners considered adding on to the annex, the estimated cost was more than $1 million, which is why the idea never moved forward.

“I have no idea what it is going to cost,” Grimshaw said. “We don’t know what it is going to cost to build it.”

By John Schneider
john@tcadvertiser.com

**REESE —** Police are investigating a threat that occurred Monday at Reese High School.

Reese Public Schools Superintendent Keith Wettens sent a letter Monday evening to district parents explaining that a potential threat was made earlier in the day. He said those responsible for the threat have been identified and removed from school.

School commenced as normal within the district Tuesday. Reese Police Chief Mike Hadd said
Evan Poirier

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The goal of that is safety," Superintendent Josh Hahn said. "It's probably is needed for kids."

The program also will benefit from the agreement because the school resource officer will be available to the village when not on campus, such as during the summer months.

The only issue is the location. The school buildings are outside the village limits, just off M-25, and therefore outside of the police department's jurisdiction.

Instead, if it falls in the jurisdiction of the Huron County Sheriff's Dept. Hahn said the school district would need an agreement that would give the village police jurisdiction only on campus.

"Which would help us tremendously," Hahn said, "because we are on the edge of both counties. Both Huron and Tuscola are great (both) of our departments, but it does take some time to get to us."

The village of Sebewaing wants to provide one.

The board also:

- Approved spending $4,273 with Todd Wenzel, DBM, of Bud's Tree & Lawn for a new food van. The food for both schools is prepared at the high school kitchen. Then the food is delivered to the elementary school in the van. The current food van is 25 years old and is having multiple issues and "probably is not worth fixing anymore," Hahn said. The new truck comes with a 10-foot canopy box and a lift gate.
- Will seek renewal of the district's operating millage at the May 3 election.
- Learned the after-school Patriot Program has completed its run, but will continue to be offered in the 12-week third trimester. The program attracted 25 middle school and 21 high school students. Twenty-three of the middle school students raised their failing grades to passing and 10 of those 23 improved to a C or better. Fifteen of the high school students raised their grades to passing and six of those 15 raised to a C or better. Both the elementary and middle/high school after-school programs helped a lot of students, Hahn said, taking them from failing grades to passing or better. A version of the program will be offered during the summer too, the superintendent added.
- Accepted the resignations of cheer coaches Chastity Hartman and Josh Cryderman and assistant varsity football coach Gary Varnermeyer.
- Approved hiring Fred Peters, Glenn Shrock and Nichol Kilburn as assistant track coaches and Jacob Hick as varsity baseball coach.

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*By Mark Haney | Reporter haney@tcadvertiser.com*

**NOVESTA TWP.** — Novesta Township just filled two openings.

The township board had a special meeting Nov. 15 to appoint a new zoning administrator and fill an opening on the planning commission. Both were created by the resignations of Giuseppe and Shari Boscalia. He’d been the township’s zoning administrator and she’d served on the planning commission.

After accepting both resignations, effectively immediately, the board named Steve Ross as the new zoning administrator and Dan Benta to the open seat on the planning commission.

The appointment, however, created another problem for the township. It would mean having two people — Benta and Dave Little — serving on both the planning commission and the zoning board of appeals. Little agreed to step down from the zoning board of appeals. So the board appointed Mason Copeland to fill that open seat.

The board also voted to have its attorney attend the board’s May session to go over zoning laws and their enforcement, as well as to have Supervisor Chad Daniels get a price on training of board and planning commission members. And the board approved a job description for the zoning administrator.

**HURON COUNTY**

Out of space: USA banners to be shrunk down and replaced

*By Mark Haney | Reporter haney@tcadvertiser.com*

**SEBEWAING TWP.** — The athletic teams from Unionville-Sebewaing Area High School have been a bit too good.

So the district’s board of education decided to shrink them.

Traditionally, any USA team that reached the state finals got a large photo displayed in the gym where the banner hangs in the gym. The banners also include any team that wins a district or conference title and regional, state final crowns.

‘There’s no problem: the high school is running out of space to display all of the photos and the banners. “It’s a good problem to have,” Superintendent Joel Hahn said, but “we’ve run out of room to continue as we have.”

The tradition won’t end, however. Instead, the board approved shrinking the photos, which were taken down during contraction this year. What had been 4-by-8-foot photos now will be resized to 2-by-4-foot photos.

“Which gives us the ability to expand,” said Hahn, “if we’re fortunate enough to win.”

The banners also will be made smaller so more of them can be hung on the rafters in the gym.

What was big, however, isn’t going to be discarded. At least not yet.

The larger banners and photos will be auctioned off in the summer, with the funds to be used to offset the cost of the change.

**FAIRGROVE TWP.** — Finding substitutes has been a challenge this year for school districts around Michigan.

So Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed a bill in late December allowing public schools to use non-teaching staff as substitute teachers for the rest of the academic year. The law was supported by school administrators who say the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated a teacher shortage and left school districts struggling to keep buildings open. The law was opposed by the Michigan Education Association, the state’s largest public employee union. The law lets secretaries, paraprofessionals and other school employees without a teaching certificate — such as library aides, bus drivers, cooks and office workers — work as subs as long as they have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.

Michigan generally requires subs without a teaching certificate to have an associate’s degree or at least 60 semester hours of college credits. There are exceptions for those teaching career and technical education classes, though they usually are required to have a professional license in the field.

The Akron-Fairgrove board of education voted March 15 to allow school staff to serve as substitute teachers. The district already had hired a permanent substitute at the high school and the elementary school, giving the district coverage as long as only one teacher is absent at each school.

“Sometimes, when you have two or three staff out,” Superintendent Diane Foster said, “you need some others. We have not universe.”

Foster said it also helps to have the substitutes be someone who already spends time in the school building.

“A parapro knows when you go to lunch,” she said. “They know how to take attendance. All of those are good things.”

The board also:

- Recognized Kim and Jeff Blankenship as the district’s 2020 Friend of Youth for the Thumb Meet of Champions track meet. The couple, longtime volunteers in the schools, were to be honored at that year’s meet, but COVID-19 prevented the event.
- Selected Rosanne Lotmey as Akron-Fairgrove’s Friend of Youth for this year’s Meet of Champions.
- That appointment, however, created an opening on the board. An attorney was appointed to fill that position.
CARO — Ean Lee started things. Tuscola County’s chief information officer talked about the county commission’s need for more space more than two years ago.

His call a boost during the coronavirus pandemic of 2019-2020, when the virus made the Tuscola County Medical Care Facility the designated site for the county’s emergency operations center – off limits and forced the county to use the Knights of Columbus hall for a second courtroom.

Then Mark Ransford and Damian Dussault took up the cause, offering to lease to the county the former Peoples State Bank building in downtown Caro. A year has passed since that offer was made and, after a delay while Ransford and Wasik surveyed county department heads about their space needs and drew up specifics, there’s been a flurry of developments, then, buying existing buildings. Now, on March 2, the commissioners, buildings and grounds committee – District 4 Commissioner Doug Dussault, and District 5 Commissioner Dan Grimshaw – met to propose another option. Adding on to the county’s courthouse annex building.

This is not a new idea. The idea was proposed back in November, dismissed over the estimated $1 million-plus cost. What’s changed is the county now has $10.1 million in American Recovery Plan Act funds to spend. And while Grimshaw, one, once doubted the county could use ARPA funds to build a community.”

When making the Peoples State Bank building off-limits to the county, Ransford said the county has 1+ million in ARPA funds to expand the courthouse annex building won’t improve Downtown Caro, cut money “or impose those who walk through the door.”

“Don’t allow those who have been an advocate all along for this idea. But this is what changes, the board needs to find a meeting space, something the county doesn’t have. The commissioners could set aside money for construction before allocating any leftover funds.

The size of the space needs have changed since the county sought proposals in the fall of 2020, a 5,000 square-foot or more of space, something brought on by the offer to lease the former Peoples State Bank in downtown Caro, said he likes both the annex building and the downtown Caro.

Bardwell also questioned how much of the ARPA funds could be used to build something, and controller/administrator Clayette Zechmeister said the county hasn’t committed its money to anything yet, and the state also hasn’t let the county know what on its list of options is acceptable and what isn’t.

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ALMER TWP. — Almer Township’s planning commission spent the better part of the past year updating the five-year master plan and reviewing the zoning ordinances.

The zoning ordinance changes and master plan updates then were transferred over to the township zoning maps so they also are up to date.

That was followed by public hearings, where residents were given the chance to comment or raise questions about the changed documents before they were passed and put in place.

That should have covered every possibility, right?

Well, the township board learned differently at its March 8 meeting. A local agriculture producer raised an issue with the height limits. The limit set in the new ordinance is 40 feet. The local grower already has a storage bin that is 100 feet high and wants to erect another, similar, structure.

“We felt like he was asking for something pretty much mainstream for ag producers,” Supervisor Jim Mantey said.

The zoning ordinance, however, exempts farm buildings, Mantey said, so the grower left “happy.” The grower also was spared a $500 visit to the zoning board of appeals.

The updates have resulted in clarity, Mantey said, for both township officials and residents.

“If we have an ordinance we’re not going to enforce, even selectively enforce,” he said, “I’m taking it out of the book. Because that is not fair play.”

The board also:

■ Plans to spend about $14,500 to apply a chip-and-seal (liquid asphalt topped by a layer of crushed limestone) to Remington Road, from M-81 to Elmwood Road. “I can’t even pave a mile of roadway now for that price,” Mantey said.

The board had an extensive discussion, some of it about how to best use the money. Mantey said the costs are lower if the contractor isn’t moving all over the township, doing a mile here and a mile there. The township had identified a different mile of road that needed attention, he said, but decided to move that project to next year and save some money by having the contractor focus simply on Remington Road.

“This gave us the chance to have the contractor give us really a better bid,” he said, “because he can just start and do all of Remington Road.”

We don’t have his costs of set-up and break-down several times.”

■ Had a 2022-23 budget hearing and then approved the budget. The new budget looks much like its predecessor, Mantey said, with only small changes. In the new fiscal year, he added, the township will start splitting its funds between Northern Bank and Frankenmuth Credit Union to diversify its exposure.

■ Approved a land division for a family trust and some Public Act 116 farmland preservation agreements for Don Mantey and Brent Robinson of Paramount Farms.

■ Learned Kaupon Tree Service is donating several trackloads of wood chips for the walking path at Darbee Farm Park.

■ Received a request from Pinecrest Subdivision for tree trimming.

KOYLTON TWP. — Koylton Township finished the 2021-22 budget year by adding some money to its savings account.

The new budget year, however, may eat into some of that savings.

At Thursday’s meeting, the board approved a new contract with the Marlette Fire Dept. The new pact calls for the township’s cost to go from the $13,883 paid last year to $14,616. The Marlette department, however, only covers a portion of the township. The other parts are covered by the Kingston Fire Dept. and Burlington Township Fire Dept.

That change caused Supervisor Doug Kramer to warn residents that a fire run can cost $1,200 to $1,500 so residents need to have their insurance up to date in order to not have to pay these fees.

The cost of township garbage service is going up because Midway Service is passing along a 15 percent fuel surcharge, in light of the recent spike in fuel costs.

The township set aside $98,071 in 2021-22 to cover garbage pickup townshipwide. The new budget year, however, may eat some of that savings.

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The board also:
Bracket Bonanza 2022
WIN A TV, GRILL OR CHEST FREEZER!

Standing through the second round:
1.) Derek Dodge - 42 points
1.) Robert Rockefeller - 42 points
1.) Wally Prusi - 42 points
4.) Dave Green - 41 points
5.) Joe Turner - 36 points
5.) Richelle Ryers - 36 points
5.) Samantha Bishop - 36 points
8.) Todd Squires - 34 points
9.) Bob Tobey - 32 points
10.) Rose D’Alessandro - 28 points
How many stocked steelhead returning to Michigan rivers are still unmarked?

By Daniel O’Keefe | Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University Extension

Since 2018, steelhead stocked in Michigan waters have been marked with an adipose fin clip as part of the Great Lakes Mass Marking Program. Due to the complex life history of steelhead, it can be difficult to interpret what the ratio of clipped to unclipped fish in your catch really means.

Stocked steelhead typically smolt (turn silver) at Age 1, migrating downstream to one of the Great Lakes to feed soon after they are stocked. Wild steelhead can spend one, two, or even three years in streams before smolting and leaving the stream to feed in a big lake environment. Growth is much slower in the stream environment, so biologists draw a distinction between “stream age” and “lake age” when interpreting how age influences the growth rate and size of steelhead.

Michigan steelhead can live for up to eight years, with up to six summers spent growing in the big lake. Steelhead stocked as spring yearlings in 2018 have now spent four summers in the Great Lakes. Steelhead stocked before 2018, which have spent 5 or more summers in the big lake, are mostly unmarked.

For spring 2022, this means the majority of steelhead returning to Michigan streams will have an adipose fin clip if they were stocked. According to Jory Jonas and Ben Turschak, research biologists with Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 24.3% of mature steelhead harvested in Lake Michigan were old enough to be unmarked in summer 2021. Recent models also estimate that 44% of steelhead harvested in summer 2022 will be old enough to be unmarked if they were stocked.

We do not have detailed information on harvest in rivers, but we can assume that the breakdown of fish ages will be similar to that of mature fish in Lake Michigan. Since mortality occurs both as a result of fishing and the stress of spawning over the course of the steelhead run, estimated proportions from the previous summer and next season can be used as a high and low estimates for streams, respectively.

What this means about the steelhead you catch

If you are catching a mix of clipped and unclipped steelhead in your favorite Lake Michigan stream during the spring 2022 season, you can get a rough idea of how many unclipped fish were stocked based on these proportions. For every twenty clipped steelhead you catch, you can expect to catch two to five unclipped steelhead that were stocked but not being marked.

This will change every year, and for the fall 2022 – spring 2023 season you can expect to catch one or two unmarked stocked steelhead for every twenty clipped steelhead caught. Outside the Lake Michigan watershed, these estimates may not be perfect, but they should give you a rough idea of what to expect.

How you can get involved

Michigan Sea Grant launched the Michigan River Steelhead Project in 2020 to allow steelhead anglers to report their catches online. By recording fin clips and lengths for every steelhead you catch, you can help biologists learn more about how natural reproduction and stocking contribute to fishing success in rivers around Michigan.

It is not too late to sign up online and record data for trips taken from now to the end of the spring run. Catches can be recorded using the Great Lakes Angler Database or apps for iOS and Android. A new dashboard feature allows you to quickly calculate %Clipped, catch rate, and expected harvest in rivers around Michigan.
RAYMOND FRANK GRIDER
CASS CITY

Mr. Raymond Frank Grider, age 61, of Cass City, passed away unexpectedly, Monday, March 14, 2022, at his home. He was born Feb. 6, 1961, at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, to the late Leland and Martha (Phillips) Grider. Raymond worked for Michigan Sugar in Sebewaing as a forklift driver and performed other duties, he drove truck for Schneider Trucking and worked at Hugett Seed Farm. He enjoyed fishing with his best friend Ron, he enjoyed watching sports, especially the Detroit Tigers and Detroit Lions, had a great sense of humor, like to read and watch Jeopardy. He was very kind and good to the neighborhood kids. A special thanks to OrthoCare Prosthetics, Cass City for their help and support and to the doctors at Aleda E. Lutz Veterans Hospital, especially Dr. Z from the V A. Raymond was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church (Bach).

BEULAH BURNS
MILLINGTON

Beulah was a 1953 graduate of Millington High School. Less than a year later, on January 30, 1954, she married her high school sweetheart, Lyle Burns. Together they celebrated 65 years of marriage. Lyle predeceased her in 2019. They had four children: Cindy (Dave) Simon, Chris Burns, (Ronald (Kim) Burns, and Amy (John) Louks. They have ten grandchildren: Cherie (Joe) Payne, Dan (Shayla) Burton, Adams (Tammy) Simon, Aaron (Jessica) Simon, Joshua Burns, Gia (Kasey) Burns, Nathan (Lyzann) Burns, Zachary (Rachel) Burns, Tom (Christina) Louks, and Rebecca Grace Louks, and 26 great-grandchildren.

KATHRYN MARIE LOUIS
BAY CITY (FORMERLY OF GAGETOWN)

Kathryn was born in Cass City on March 21, 1944, to Raymond K. and Doris M. (Rockefeller) Nicholas. Kathryn graduated from Cass City High School in 1962. Kathryn married Garrey R. Louis on February 1, 1964 in Uniopolis. He preceded her in death on October 15, 2015. Kathryn enjoyed working the Gary’s on their farm. Kathryn and Gary enjoyed spending half the year at their winter home in Bradenton, Florida, where she enjoyed being outdoors by the water and watching the dolphins. Kathryn also enjoyed gardening, walking, dancing, traveling and being with her family. She was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church (Bach).

Beulah was welcomed home to heaven by her siblings, Ed and Bert. She is survived by her children, Douglas (Sharon) Woem and Mildred (Shawn) Cassoey, granddaughter, Chloe, sons-in-law, Jan (Marie) Woem and Cynthia (Marie) Woem, former spouse, Susan Walker, and many nephews and nieces. Beulah was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Lyle, brothers, William Zimmerman, Raymond Hunt, Paul Hunt, sisters, Dorothy Klier, Doris Toth, Donna Luul and Lelizia Ratza, Wilda Gray. Sister Margaret Gray survives her. She was also preceded by her great grandson, Samuel Simon.

Beulah was a hardworking farm wife, wonderful mother, great cook! But most of all, she was a faithful follower of Jesus. The family would like to invite you for a time of visiting at Hutil Funeral Home, (4823 Main St. Millington, MI 48746) on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The funeral for Beulah will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Richfield Church of the Nazarene. Burial will be at Silver Lawn Cemetery in Sebewaing. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to St. Peter’s Lutheran Church (Bach). Arrangements handled by Juengel-MeLin & Family Funeral Home in Sebewaing. Share a memory at jmfuneralhome.com

The family would like to invite you for a time of visiting at Burns Funeral Home, (2326 W. Huron Ave. Bay City, MI 48708) on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The funeral for Beulah will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Richfield Church of the Nazarene. Burial will be in Silverlawn Cemetery. Cremation has taken place. A memorial service will be held at Ellington Township Cemetery at a later date. Fred’s family will be present at the interment. Fred and his family appreciate everyone’s support with the passing of Fred. Fred was preceded in death by his parents, his siblings, Ed and Bert; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and friends.

Kathryn was a member of the Richfield Church of the Nazarene, the Cass River Camp of the Gideons International, and the Millington-Arlington Historical Society.

Share a memory with Beulah’s family at avanfuneralhome.com

FREDERICK F. SOUTHWORTH
CARO

Fred was survived by his siblings, Leone Wellington, Fishingtown, MI, and Betty Southworth; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and friends. In addition to his parents, Fred was welcomed home to heaven by his siblings, Paula Ott, Ed Southworth, and Margaret Wadsorp.

Fred was a lifelong resident of Caro and a U.S. Army veteran having served in the U.S. Army. Fred was a diehard Detroit Lions and Michigan State football fan. He was an avid gardener, enjoyed going on camping trips, and was an accomplished woodworker. He was a kind and caring man who was always there for family and friends. Fred had a special bond with his nieces and nephews and especially his granddaughter, Chloe. He is survived by his children, Douglas Woem and Mildred (Shawn) Cassoey, granddaughter, Chloe, sons-in-law, Jan (Marie) Woem and Cynthia (Marie) Woem, former spouse, Susan Walker, and many nephews and nieces.

Arrangements were handled by Avram Funeral Home, Caro.

Thomas Lester Woerner, age 61, of Cass City, passed away unexpectedly, Monday, March 14, 2022, at McLaren Lapeer Region Hospital. Thomas was born February 9, 1961 in Margette, MI to the late Lester and Mona (Tests) Woern. He graduated from Gagetown High School with the class of 1979. Thomas worked for Grede Foundry in Vassar, MI for 38 years. He was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church for the Village of Mayville for many years. He was a member of VFW Post 1175. Thomas was a man who liked to socialize and would often have people over to spend time with him in his pole barn. Above all, he loved spending time with his family and being a Grandpa to his granddaughter Chloe. He is survived by his children, Douglas Woern and Mildred (Shawn) Cassoey, granddaughter, Chloe, sons-in-law, Jan (Marie) Woem and Cynthia (Marie) Woem, former spouse, Susan Walker, and many nephews and nieces.

Thomas was preceded in death by his sister, Barbara Atwell.

The family would like to invite you for a time of visiting at Avram Funeral Home, 324 N. Curtis St. Caro, MI, from 10 AM until the time of service Friday, March 25, 2022.

A funeral service will be held at 11 AM, Friday, March 25, 2022 at Avram Funeral Home with Pastor Tim Woern officiating. Burial will be at Ellington Township Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the family in care of Michelle Coccoey. Friends may share an online condolence at www.avanfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Avram Funeral Home, Caro.

W. Frederick S. Southworth was born in Caro, MI on February 1, 1934, in Caro, MI to the late Frank and Lillian (Darbee) Southworth. He graduated from Mayville High School and worked for Grede Foundry in Vassar, MI for 38 years. Fred and his family enjoyed many years together traveling and being with her family.

Fred grew up in Caro and was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, a member of the Richfield Church of the Nazarene, and a member of the Lapeer County Sheriffs Posse. Fred was a man who loved to socialize and always had a story to tell. Fred was a hardworking man who loved to spend time with his family. He enjoyed spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren. Fred was a man who loved to cook and was always ready to help out in the kitchen. He loved to can the vegetables he would grow each year. A favorite pastime of Fred’s was cooking maple syrup with his wife, children, and grandchildren.

Fred was a member of the Richfield Church of the Nazarene, the Cass River Camp of the Gideons International, and the Millington-Arlington Historical Society.

Share a memory with Beulah’s family at avanfuneralhome.com

In keeping with Fred’s wishes, cremation has taken place. A memorial service will be held at Hutil Funeral Home, 2326 W. Huron Ave. Bay City, MI 48708 on Wednesday, March 30, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. at the Ramford Collon Funeral Home in Caro with Rev. Michelle Hite officiating. Inurnment will be held at Ellington Township Cemetery. Fred’s family will be present at the interment.

Friends may share memories, thoughts and prayers online at RamfordCollon.com.
Sybil Coffey, 93, of Mayville, MI, passed away Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at the Covenant Health System of Saginaw by her family and her sister. A funeral service will be held at 12:00 noon, on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at Martin Funeral Home in Vassar. Sybil’s family will be present to receive friends from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm on Tuesday, and again from 10:00 am, until the time of service at 12:00 noon. Expressions of sympathy may be placed on Sybil’s tribute page at martinfamilyfuneral.com.

Sybil was born in Cullman, Alabama, on July 30, 1928, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse and Myrtle V. (Wilson) Foshee. She married the love of her life, Clyde Coffey, on December 11, 1947, Sadly, he preceded her in death on September 19, 2003. In her younger years, growing up in Alabama, Sybil picked cotton until her father moved the family to Michigan to work at General Motors. Fishing in Alpena was one of her favorite pastimes. She also enjoyed watching The Flint Generals Hockey Team. Sybil enjoyed playing bingo and playing scratch-off tickets. She liked crocheting doilies and crocheted each of her children a tablecloth. Reading romance novels was her favorite. She and her beloved husband enjoyed wintering in Florida and traveling in general. Sybil loved her grandchildren and enjoyed spending time with them. Sybil never had much to say about anybody and she never wanted to hurt anyone’s feelings. She will be greatly missed. Sybil’s family would like to extend a special thanks to Jaime in the ICU at Saginaw Covenant Health System for her care and compassion.

Left to cherish Sybil’s memory are her children: Clyde and wife, Kay Coffey, Vassar; Susan Coffey, Allen Coffey, Donna and husband, Carl Hiltman, Lori and husband, Bill Warmuth, Mayville, MI, and Nancy and husband, Ken Tingley. Sybil was preceded in death by her husband, Clyde; her son, Craig; her brother, James Foshee; her grandsons, Brandon, Alex, and John Foshee; and her brother, Robert Foshee. She is survived by her brother, Richard Raymond and wife, Maxine Foshee; sister, Don and wife, Ann Foshee, and her grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; her mother.

A Celebration of Life will take place at Ascension St. Mary’s Hospital in Saginaw, MI with full military honors at a later date. Friends may share an online condolence at martinfamilyfuneral.com.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Ascension Funeral Home.

KENNETH N. DANIELS
VASSAR

Kenneth N. Daniels, 80, of Mayville, MI, passed away Friday, March 18, 2022, at the Covenant Health System of Saginaw.

He was born October 2, 1941, in Nankin Township to Kenneth A. and George (Schade) Daniels. Kenneth graduated from Thomas Cooley High School in Detroit, MI with the Class of 1960 and Saginaw Valley State University in 1967. He married his high school sweetheart, Linda Achille on February 20, 1965, in Livonia, MI. He enjoyed spending time hunting, fishing, gardening, watching the NASCAR races and vacationing up north at Hart Lake in Indian River. Ken has worked at Eaton Corporation in Vassar in the research and development, a pipe fitter, tool and die maker, teacher and merchant. He was a member of the Community of Christ Church in Mayville and a member of the Mormon Mission American Legion Post 181 of Mayville.

Kenneth is survived by his wife of 57 years, Linda; children, Chris (Els) Daniels of Springfield, OH and Michelle (James) Daniels of Cairo, MI; six grandchildren, Melissa (Dan) Cautie, Jaymee (William) Harmon, Slawnie Mattali, Fiana (Tony) Daniels, Harlei Daniels and Maya Daniels; five great grand children, Mia, Weston and Cadyn Casatter and Marylyn and Walker Harmon; brother, David (Linda) Daniels; and sisters, Gail (Jim) Learnt and Claudette O’Connor; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents. In keeping with Kenneth’s wishes, cremation has taken place.

A ceremony to celebrate his life will take place at a later date.

Those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider memorial contributions to Crossroads Community Church in care of Kenneth’s wish.

Affirmation of life is available for Kenneth to celebrate the dignity of their life.

Friends may share an online tributes at tangiernomore.com.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Tuscola County Veterens & Surviving Family Care-Cooper with friends.

TUSCOLA COUNTY VETERANS & SURVIVING FAMILY CARE

Our office can assist with (but not limited to):

• Applying for health benefits
• Getting a copy of your DD214/Military Records
• Resources for financial difficulties
• Applying for livestrong program
• Applying for Survivors Benefits

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• Getting a copy of your DD214/Military Records
• Resources for financial difficulties
• Applying for livestrong program
• Applying for Survivors Benefits

(989) 673-8148

BONG THU-THI “BETH” WHITE
BELDING (FORMERLY OF IONIA)

Bong Thu-Thi “Beth” White, 74, of Belding, MI, passed away Monday, March 21, 2022, after a week-long stay at Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids due to injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Like many other aspects of her life, she fought hard, but was unable to pull through. She was born in Ninh Van, Vietnam on February 2, 1948, daughter of An and The An (Phan) Tran, both of whom preceded her in death. She met the love of her life, George B. White, while he was serving in the United States military during the Vietnam war. They married while he was still in Vietnam and started their family prior to venturing to her new home in the States. Beth quickly completed the coursework equivalent to earning a high school diploma and worked in a factory setting for a short time before she figured out that was not where she wanted to stay long term. She returned to school while still working and completed her cosmetology certification and opened “Beth’s Hair Care” in Iowa, which she owned and operated for many years. Beth kept a great home and loved to care for her children and grandchildren. She enjoyed cooking and it was a daily ritual to have her in her free time, she enjoyed fishing and trips to the shopping mall (or any store) and was a frequent visitor to the casinos. With all her many activities and travels, she also thoroughly enjoyed an afternoon of the card game Skip-Bo with the neighbors. Beth attended St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Ionia.

Memories of Beth will be cherished by her family including sons John A. White of Nicholasville, Kentucky and Robert H. White of Belding; grandchildren Brookse, Troy, Clayton, Zoe, John and Nicholas; brother-in-law, David White of Iowa and several nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Private interment rites are being planned at Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan, where her husband, George is already interred. Those who wish to express sympathy, are welcome to consider memorial contributions to the lives of her children in the charity of their choice. For additional information please call Verdun Family Funeral Home at (616) 794-1300.

HELEN LOUISE PENDLETON
CARO (FORMERLY OF STURGIS)

Helen Louise Pendleton Caro, 88, passed away on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at Heritage Hill Assisted Living in Caro, following a period of declining health. Helen was the youngest of six children born to the late Joseph & Rose (Phan) Tran, both of whom preceded her in death on February 14, 2014. As a young mother, she worked diligently to raise four children and maintain an immediate home before taking a position as a playground aide at Wall Elementary in Sturgis and later at Sturgis Moulded Products. Always independent and active, Helen could most often be found quilting, sewing, and reading, especially Western novels. She loved children, especially babies, and would often stop to admire them. She also enjoyed being outdoors, mowing the lawn, riding her bike, and taking walks.

Left to cherish Helen’s memory are four children and their spouses, Sandy “Sis” & Hank Knier of Caro, Nate “Bud” & Sally Pendleton of Sturgis, Tim & René Pendleton of Sturgis, Bruce Pendleton of Boise, Idaho; eighteen great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents and husband, Helen was preceded in death by her five siblings and one grandchild.

Funeral services were held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, March 21, 2022, at the Colwood Church in Caro with Pastor Randy Carpenter officiating. Helen's family was present to receive friends at the Ranford Coleman Funeral Home in Caro on Sunday, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm and on Monday at the church from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service at 11:00 a.m. Burial followed at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, March 21, 2022, at White Pigeon Cemetery. Those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider memorial contributions to the Alzheimer’s Association. The family was assisted with these arrangements by the Rancord Coleman Funeral Home in Caro.

Friends may share questions, thoughts, and prayers online at RanfordColeman.com.
Sheriff's Office K9 unit assisted Reese which will decide on whether or not to Tuscola County Prosecutor's Office, investigation is completed. “Right now, we’re really looking into the context of it,” Hadd said. “The suspect said. “We understand the anxiety and fear that can arise in these moments and we assure you that the safety of our students and staff remains our highest priority.” This is the second time this month authorities with a threat incident. On March 2, two Caro Middle School students were suspended and are being investigated after school officials discovered a “death note,” which included the names of students and staff and made reference to violence. Zachary Scott Ellis, of Reese, is charged with interfering with electronic communications and domestic violence (third offense). David Scott Anstie III, of National City, is charged with operating while intoxicated (third offense), operating with the presence of a controlled substance (third offense) and operating while license suspended/revoked/denied (second offense). Jay J. Schmidt, of Vassar, is charged with malicious destruction of property or fire property. Jacob Tracey Long, 29, of Mayville, is charged with unlawfully driving away a motor vehicle and larceny from a motor vehicle.

TUSCOLA COUNTY COURT NEWS

DISTRICT COURT

Zachary Scott Ellis, of Reese, is charged with interfering with electronic communications and domestic violence (third offense). David Scott Anstie III, of National City, is charged with operating while intoxicated (third offense), operating with the presence of a controlled substance (third offense) and operating while license suspended/revoked/denied (second offense). Jay J. Schmidt, of Vassar, is charged with malicious destruction of property or fire property. Jacob Tracey Long, 29, of Mayville, is charged with unlawfully driving away a motor vehicle and larceny from a motor vehicle.

CIRCUIT COURT

Jacob Tracey Long, 29, of Mayville, pleaded guilty to fourth-degree fleeing a police officer. A sentencing date will be set.

A12 — Wednesday, March 23, 2022, The Advertiser

Mayville event set to honor Vietnam vets

MAYVILLE — The public is invited to honor Vietnam War veterans at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29 at the “You Are Not Forgotten” Veterans’ Pavilion in Mayville. The ceremony at the pavilion at 2214 E. Olmber Road (M-24) is part of National Vietnam Veterans Day, designed to honor all veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces at any time from Nov. 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975 – regardless of location.

“The men and women were often unrecognized and unappreciated,” according to a flyer promoting the March 29 event.

“Returning veterans did not always receive respectful welcomes upon their return to American soil. They were called unrecognized and unappreciated,”

Reese police investigating threat at high school

Reese police Monday by thoroughly searching school grounds. “A threat to the safety of our students and staff is alarming and unsettling to our families, our staff, and the entire community,” Wettens said in the email. “We understand the anxiety and fear that can rise in these moments and we assure you that the safety of our students and staff remains our highest priority.” This is the second time this month authorities with a threat incident. On March 2, two Caro Middle School students were suspended and are being investigated after school officials discovered a “death note,” which included the names of students and staff and made reference to violence.
Soaring to new heights
Rockets enjoy memorable season, reach quarterfinals

By Scott Rosati | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

REUNA — Despite losing one of its top seniors this past season, the Reese girls’ basketball program enjoyed the most successful season in program history.

The squad finished with a 20-5 record, collected the program’s 18th conference championship and its first regional championship, after losing a 1,000-point scorer Maddi Osantowski to an injury following the Dec. 17 game against Saginaw Arthur Hill.

Osantowski, a Division 3 all-state player in the 2020-21 season, “They adjusted well playing without Maddi,” seventh-year head coach Josh Pickell said. “They are competitors, so even without Maddi, I know we were going to compete in all games because of just their competitiveness alone.”

The season’s first six matchups included games against Division 1 schools Mount Pleasant, Dexter and Bay City Western, and Division 2 Arthur Hill.

“I was very pleased with how the girls worked this season,” Pickell said. “I told them during the summer that the schedule we were playing was no joke and that we were going to lose some games and we wouldn’t be going undefeated, even with the talent we had.”

The Rockets defeated Mount Pleasant, Bay City Western and Arthur Hill, while falling to Swan Valley and Dexter. They also competed against Division 2 opponent Freeland on Jan. 18 in a 46-36 loss.

“We started off during the opening week with, like, four of five practices underneath us before going against Mount Pleasant,” Pickell said. “We had a great game, got a big win and then the next game was Harbor Beach who is strong on the other side of our conference, and we followed that up with Bay City Western. That stretch right there within four or five days of each other was tough to do.”

Reese carried a 4-2 record into the holiday break before returning in a win

State champion setter, Dalak, picks Bluefield State

By Scott Rosati | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

RESEF — Senior Aydan Dalak loves volleyball, but she also is a lover of nature.

A combination of the two drew her to Division 2 Bluefield State College in Bluefield, West Virginia, and on March 11 she committed to continue her education and volleyball career there.

“I’m a nature girl so I really liked how pretty it was around the campus,” Dalak said. “I loved how the sports were all connected, and they all supported each other.”

Dalak noted how the campus gave her the same vibe of being at home in the community of Reese — population 1,379.

“The campus gave me a small-town vibe and reminded me of Reese even though I was really far away. Everyone was nice and close,” she said. “I was at the basketball game and the wrestling, volleyball, baseball, and softball teams were all watching and cheering them on. I loved that so much. It’s a big supportive family and I really wanted to join in.”

Dalak, a setter who helped guide the Rockets to the program’s first volleyball state title, combined for 38 assists in a Division 3 semifinal matchup against Muskegon Western Michigan Christian and the state championship match against Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central.

She will compete in college for the Big Blues under second-year year head coach and Pennsylvania native Savannah Hammond.

“She is super cool and really knows her stuff for only being there a year,” Dalak said. “She seems really energetic and I’m excited to play for her.”

The Division 2 squad competed as an independent program this season after leaving the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in 2013 following the conference’s dissolution.

The Big Blues finished the season with a 12-7 overall record and were runners-up in the United States Collegiate Athletic Association’s Division 1 fall championship, losing to Saint Mary of the Woods 3-0 in the championship match.

“I think the future of the squad is very bright,” Dalak said.

“We are bringing in a few new faces, but there are some seniors coming back, and some older girls who will help lead the way. We are looking good. I also got the chance to play with them when I was there visiting.”

Bluefield State College is known as an HBCU – historically black college or university.
The Reese senior classes have been successful in both boys’ and girls’ sports with a total of three 1,000-point scorers, conference championships for both programs in basketball, the girls’ first basketball regional championship and a volleyball state title.

“The boys’ and girls’ programs always work out outside of practices,” Dalak said. “We are always in the gym trying to get better. We work when no one is watching, and that’s what makes us different.”

“We are a senior-led group, and it’s even more special when you have eight of them around here. Swan Valley and Freeland which is something we don’t see a lot of around here. Swan Valley and Freeland were two great games for us as well.”

Pickell commented about coaching two 1,000-point scorers in one season.

“Was it neat,” he said. “I think the last one to do it was Reyna (Frost), but it was good just to know that we have players like that in the program who we can rely on. I know Maddi got hurt right after her 1,000-point milestone, but it was cool to be a part of both of their milestones.”

Dalak is preparing for next season as this has given the seniors eight structured games into the gym before summer is over. It’s only going to continue like that. We are already has plans to get next season’s schedule prepared them for the playoffs,” Pickell added. “It was neat,” he said. “I think the last one to do it was Reyna (Frost), but it was good just to know that we have players like that in the program who we can rely on. I know Maddi got hurt right after her 1,000-point milestone, but it was cool to be a part of both of their milestones.”

Dalak heads to Bluefield State College.

The Reese senior Aydan Dalak (sitting) was joined at her college signing by members of the girl’s basketball and volleyball teams. Tooname included, from left, Abby Karst, Aydan Welshfinger, Allison Galsterer, Josie Johnson, Cali Blossom, Lydia Palmreuter, Sarah Gray, Nevaeh Keating (squatting), Maddi Osantowski, Jerzie VanOchten and Emma Goka.

The college is now home to 1,246 students.
### AMERICA'S TOP 120

190 Channels

**Shop local for the best entertainment and amazing value.**

Get a free Voice Remote with Google Assistant.

Get a Smart HD DVR included.

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### WEDNESDAY • MARCH 23, 2022 Evening

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**Listings and Highlights for the Week of March 21-27, 2022**

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### THURSDAY • MARCH 24, 2022 Evening

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE**

**TUSCOLA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION**

TUSCOLA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION - 1733 S. MERTZ ROAD, CARO, MI 48723

Sealed bids will be received Thursday, March 31st, 2022, at the office of the Board of Tuscola County Road Commissioners at 1733 S. Mertz Rd., Caro, Michigan for the following item(s) at the time(s) specified:

- **Roadway Project - Bradford Road Over NW Drain**
- **Lane widen - Various Countywide**
- **Guardrail - Various Countywide**

- **Sealed bids will be opened at 8:15 a.m. on Thursday, March 31st, 2022 at the County Commission Building, located at 2791 East Caro Road.**

- **Tuscoid County Road Commission** will be doing Herbicide Applications on various County Primary and Local Roads. This is in preparation for a new asphalt surfacing.

- **Applications are scheduled to start mid-June 2022-depending on the weather. Methods of application by a truck mounted spray unit and is scheduled to be done by Tuscoid County Road Commission.**

- **More information on the spray mixture and/or location of spraying application can be obtained by contacting Jason Root, Superintendent at 989-672-2284 or via email to contact Jason Root, Superintendent at carocity.net no later than April 1, 2022 at 5:00 PM EOE.**

**HIRING NOTICE**

**CITY OF CARO**

**DPW/WWA SEASONAL MAINTENANCE TEAM LEADER**

City of Caro is opening a Seasonal Maintenance Team Leader for 29 hours per week at 12.50 per hour.

- **Bids must be submitted by April 1, 2022 at 5:00 PM EOE.**

**CITY OF CARO**

**NOTICE OF TUSCOLA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION**

- **Sealed bids will be received Thursday, March 31st, 2022, at the office of the Board of Tuscola County Road Commissioners at 1733 S. Mertz Rd., Caro, Michigan for the following item(s) at the time(s) specified:**

- **Roadway Project - Bradford Road Over NW Drain**
- **Lane widen - Various Countywide**
- **Guardrail - Various Countywide**

- **Sealed bids will be opened at 8:15 a.m. on Thursday, March 31st, 2022 at the County Commission Building, located at 2791 East Caro Road.**

- **Tuscoid County Road Commission** will be doing Herbicide Applications on various County Primary and Local Roads. This is in preparation for a new asphalt surfacing.

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- **More information on the spray mixture and/or location of spraying application can be obtained by contacting Jason Root, Superintendent at 989-672-2284 or via email to contact Jason Root, Superintendent at carocity.net no later than April 1, 2022 at 5:00 PM EOE.**
Thursday of the month at 4 p.m. at the American Legion Post #181. Meetings are limited to availability. PLEASE NOTE: COST WILL BE CHARGED A MINIMAL FEE FOR THEIR LISTING. Adjourn at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried. Motion to increase zoning and seconded to ordinances. Motion accepted the adoption and seconded to carried. Motion made Graff, Wilcox. Motion - Mantey, Reavey, Call to order at 7:00 p.m. February 8, 2022. CHARTER TWP. SUMMARY OF FRIENDS OF MUSIC SERIES: AMERICAN LEGION POST #181 We are a family friendly club encouraging young & old enthusiasts alike! We meet the second Thursday of each month at the Methodist Church, Vassar. For more information, call 989-673-6023 or contact Shirley at 989-823-8607 or Diana at 989-673-2756. Weigh in from 8-9 a.m., meetings more information. Thrusdays at 6 p.m. at Bayshire Beauty Family Center. New Days for Lent is held from 6-7 p.m. every Thursday at the Caro Area District Court. This is an opportunity to receive resources and discussion solutions. (VASSA) is held from 6-8 p.m. on the second Monday of every month at the Methodist Church, Vassar. For more information, contact 810-516-5255. MEMORIAL PAGEANTS are available in Tuscola and Huron counties. Kinship caregivers must be 55 or older. No experience is necessary. A training program and the Region VII Area Agency on Aging. Call the Human Development Commission of the Region VII Area Agency on Aging. Call the Human Development Commission at 989-673-4712, ext. 706. A MEMORIAL PAGEANT Memorial Pageant is held the third Wednesday of each month at Cass County Senior Center. Caro 4 p.m. – public welcome. For more information, please contact Sam Dooley, 989-750-7333, Southern Care "Where caring is a way of life". LIVING WITH PARKINSON’S Support Group is held from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the Holiday Inn Express in Bad Axe, 55 W. Main St. For more information, contact Susie at 989-673-4212. LACEY’S – For information, call 1-800-230-4085. STEPPING UP AA Group meets at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday during Lent at the Sacred Heart Parish Building, 910 W. Main St. Caro, MI 48723. The community calendar is available at: TuscolaToday.com Calendar.
Skubal ready to throw curve in Tigers’ plans

By Jason Beck | @beckjason

March 18: Reasigned C Dillon Dingler to Minor League camp

Dingler went 1-for-2 with an opposite-field RBI double in the Tigers’ Grapefruit League opener against the Phillies, then was sent down. With three catchers on the roster and decisions looming on how many can make the Opening Day roster, the Tigers don’t have catcher Tzu-Wei Lin and Dingler in between them in the rotation order. With Michael Pineda now signed and in camp, the Tigers are back to a majority-righty rotation. Skubal and Opening Day starter Eduardo Rodriguez are the southpaws, with right- hander Casey Mize in between them in the rotation order.

March 20: Reasigned RHPs Beau Brieske, Garrett Hill and Joel Stelmaszek to Minor League camp

In a normal Spring Training, this trio of pitching prospects likely would have made another appearance or two before being sent down. But with a shortened Spring Training and several non-roster candidates and recent arrivals, manager A.J. Hinch said, "It's not like we have enough innings left for the prospects." -- Jason Beck on how many can make the Opening Day roster, the Tigers don’t have catcher Tzu-Wei Lin and Dingler in between them in the rotation order. With Michael Pineda now signed and in camp, the Tigers are back to a majority-righty rotation. Skubal and Opening Day starter Eduardo Rodriguez are the southpaws, with right- hander Casey Mize in between them in the rotation order.

Skubal, 23, is a left-handed pitcher who made his major league debut on May 18, 2021, against the Yankees. "It's a really good pitch for me to change pace," he said. "My slider’s pretty firm. My fastball’s pretty firm. If I can just change a little bit of pace and eyesight, especially since I pitch pretty exclusively with fastballs at the top of the zone, if I can get a curveball off that, that’s the reasoning." -- Jason Beck

That Skubal has a better idea of how his velocities play against hitters, particularly with fastballs at the top of the zone, if I can get a curveball off that, that’s the reasoning.

The slider was Skubal’s breaking pitch of choice last year behind his fastball. "My slider feels good," Skubal said. "Physically, I feel good. I’m built up to the day of Grapefruit League play, then Joey Gallo took a called third strike.

Aaron Judge couldn’t catch the ball to strand runners at second and third. Later, Skubal went back to the big breaking ball he took advantage of last season, primarily with fastballs at the top of the zone, if I can get a curveball off that, that’s the reasoning.

My slider’s pretty firm. My fastball’s pretty firm. If I can just change a little bit of pace and eyesight, especially since I pitch pretty exclusively with fastballs at the top of the zone, if I can get a curveball off that, that’s the reasoning.

Skubal’s outing with strikeouts to four of seven percent of the time despite similar numbers, including a 214 expected batting average and a 31-percent swing-and-miss rate. By run value, it was his second-most valuable pitch last year behind his fastball.

My curveball feels good," Skubal said. "I just have to hammer that out in bullpens and get a little bit better feel for it, and I’ll be fine." -- Jason Beck

Hinch liked the idea, but mainly if Skubal can throw the curveball for a strike, which allows him to steal an edge in a count.

““Over the course of the year, if he can land it for a strike, it’ll make it very difficult for hitters,” Hinch said. “It’ll open up a lot of different areas for his fastball, and guys wouldn’t ambush him so much. It adds a new dimension to him.”

Seven of Skubal’s 33 home runs allowed came on the first pitch of an at-bat. Eight others came on 1-1 pitches, a count in which opponents hit .449 (22-for-49) with 15 extra-base hits. A change of speed for a strike here and there could help him not only reduce damage, but also help him get into strikeout situations efficiently.

Skubal has three starts left in this abbreviated Spring Training to continue to work. He says he’s stretched out, and could have faced another batter or two in the third inning before hitting his pitch count.

“Physically, I feel good. I’m built up to go three innings,” Skubal said. "It’s a really good pitch for me to change pace," he said. "My slider’s pretty firm. My fastball’s pretty firm. If I can just change a little bit of pace and eyesight, especially since I pitch pretty exclusively with fastballs at the top of the zone, if I can get a curveball off that, that’s the reasoning." -- Jason Beck

The Tigers pivoted to Pineda as a veteran starter to fill out their rotation in general. With Michael Pineda now signed and in camp, the Tigers are back to a majority-righty rotation. Skubal and Opening Day starter Eduardo Rodriguez are the southpaws, with right- hander Casey Mize in between them in the rotation order. Even after offseason upgrades like Rodriguez, general manager Al Avila said the progress of Detroit’s young talent will determine a lot about where the Tigers finish in the standings. Skubal’s work is a sign of progress, even if it’s a curve.
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Answers
1. Robert Frost
2. “Friday Night Lights”
3. 1776
4. Between the west coast of Italy and the islands of Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica
5. Pork
6. Coca-Cola
7. 20 mph
8. Vincent van Gogh (by actor Kirk Douglas)
9. 1953
10. Ferdinand Magellan

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KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
Gary King, a broker and owner at Real Estate One in Caro, marks his 15th anniversary with that company in May. He has worked as a mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Office in Caro, and as a part-time police officer for Caro.

“King described the current state of home sales as “really good,” adding that its inventory is low. In late January, the Caro office had about a dozen properties listed with about a dozen properties listed with an average time on the market of 30 days.”

“Regarding farms and agricultural properties, King notes that he has sold land parcels, usually to a larger farm. King described the current state of home sales as “really good,” adding that its inventory is low. In late January, the Caro office had about a dozen properties listed with an average time on the market of 30 days.”

“Having spent all of his life in Tuscola County — minus a few years in the Navy — King said he likes the people. “The market isn’t the hottest in the world, but it’s steady,” he said. Real Estate One’s Caro office can be reached at (989) 672-6050.”
Vassar’s Cook GM Super Store aims to grow

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor
gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

VASSAR — The Cook GM Super Store welcomes buyers of new and certified pre-owned cars, and has welcomed in a number of new employees as well, recently.

“We’re trying to add more employees,” said Ken Wolverton, general manager of the dealership at 1193 W Saginaw Road (M-15) in Vassar, and of Mike Young Buick-GMC Inc. at 312 N. Main St. in Frankenmuth.

Cook GM Super Store hired a new used car manager, Chelsea Weaver, “who we came over to Vassar with us from Frankenmuth,” Wolverton said.

“We have a new used car manager that came over to Vassar with us from Frankenmuth, and worked for us in Frankenmuth for a number of years.”

The Cook dealership also has a new sales manager, Chelsea Weaver, “who we promoted from within,” Wolverton said.

Cook GM facilities have been familiar stops on Vassar’s main drag for decades, whether customers are visiting the dealership and its service center or body shop, its certified pre-owned sales lot just east of there, or the budget lot at M-15 and Division Street in downtown Vassar.

“If anything, we’re trying to probably add on,” said Wolverton, who oversees the dealership at 1193 W. Saginaw Road, now managed by Kevin Burk.

Wolverton, with 19 years of experience in automotive sales, began working at Cook GM Super Store in July, joining dealership veteran Gary Pesko, who also serves as the Vassar dealership’s service manager.

While new car inventory on dealership lots has declined in recent months due in part to a global microchip shortage, Wolverton stressed that area customers have come to rely on the Cook sales staff through the years.

“Especially, more challenging, but this new deals a ton of repeat business,” Wolverton said.

“Most of the people that are buying from our sales staff have bought from them in the past. There’s a trust factor there.”

About 90 percent of the dealership’s sales of new cars go to buyers who are GM workers or retirees, or family members of those folks, who receive the GM employee discount price, according to Wolverton.

“Obviously, with the chip shortage and the supply shortage, vehicle prices across the nation have skyrocketed because of supply and demand; however, for new vehicles in the area here, we still have our GM pricing, which provides prices that still are lower than anybody else can (obtain),” Wolverton said.

A customer can “tag” a new vehicle for himself or herself by consulting the Cook sales staff to decide which car to purchase, and then paying a deposit to hold the vehicle for that buyer when it arrives at the dealership.

“You can order it, or if we have one that’s coming in that’s built and not tagged, somebody can put a deposit on it and hold it.”

Corby Vandefifer is the new used car manager at the Cook GM Super Store, based at the dealership’s lot at 1014 W. Saginaw Road where it sells certified pre-owned vehicles.

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CARO — On Feb. 23, 1922, more than 100 Caro business owners and employees formed the Caro Chamber of Commerce. The chamber is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year by expanding its brand, and that’s good news for Caro residents.

With its eye on the future, the chamber — led by Director Melissa Windham — hosted a big to-do on Small Business Saturday (Nov. 27). Dozens of local businesses participated in the event, made more special by prize bags and 50-percent-off gift cards sold to community members to be used at locally-owned businesses.

The December Gingerbread Village festival was also enhanced this year. More than 4,000 toys were given away to local children, thanks to a joint effort between the chamber, Caro St. Christopher Parish and Flint-based Catholic Charities of Genesee and Shiawassee counties.

The festival also featured a “Breakfast with Santa” event, exotic animal show and traditional lighting of the Christmas tree at the empty lot west of Harvest Your Craft café.

Windham is dedicated to making the chamber a joint community affair, and has been working with entities such as the city of Caro and its Downtown Development Authority.

“It’s super great to have everyone working together for the development of our downtown,” Windham said last year.

The easing of COVID-19 restrictions is perfect timing for the chamber’s 100th anniversary. For the first time since 2019, the chamber will host both of its two biggest yearly events — Caro Cars and Crafts and the Caro Citizen of the Year banquet. Each was canceled in 2021, and Cars and Crafts was scrapped in 2020 due to the coronavirus.

Cars and Crafts is scheduled for June 3 and 4 — a Friday and Saturday. Food vendors will occupy Sherman Street between the Tuscola County Courthouse and Continental Home Center, and craft vendors will pop up throughout downtown. This will be the first time the Caro Farmer’s Market — completed in late winter 2021 — will be utilized for Cars and Crafts festivities.

And on Saturday, June 4, a portion of M-81 in Caro will be shut down for a few hours as classic cars and motorcycles are displayed downtown.

The Citizen of the Year banquet is set for April 23.

Windham has also made good on her pledge to give the chamber a stronger social media presence. The Caro Chamber of Commerce Facebook page is updated daily. And a new feature — a business spotlight — highlights a local business periodically.

The chamber presently has 95 members.
By Scott Bolsby | Sports Editor
sports@tcadvertiser.com

RESE — Timbers Golf Club at 7300 Bray Road in southwestern Tuscola County is preparing to open for its 26th season.

The course opened in August of 1996 with nine holes, but soon expanded to 18 holes, and has operated since as a daily fee golf course with season memberships.

Timbers lies in Tuscola County and is only minutes from Genesee and Saginaw counties, but continues to attract golfers from beyond those three primary counties.

“Seventy percent of our golfers live within 25 miles of the golf course,” course General Manager Robert Zientek said.

“We have started to see many new faces from the Detroit, Lansing, and Grand Rapids areas the last couple years. Prior to 2020, individuals and groups coming from Canada made up nearly 30 percent of all our tee times.”

Zientek noted how Timbers is aiming to make scheduling a tee time easier than ever before, with just a few clicks or the tap of your smartphone.

“We have a new point-of-sales system and tee sheet via Golfnow,” he said.

“If paying daily for a round of golf is not your thing, season memberships are available.

“We offer three different membership types,” Zientek said. “’Weekday,’ which is Monday through Friday anytime; ‘Week,’ which is Monday through Friday anytime along with Saturday and Sunday after 1 p.m.; and the ‘Ultra’ which is Monday through Sunday anytime.

“All memberships include golf shop and restaurant discounts along with guest rates.”

New membership prices for the Weekday format are $750 for one person and $1,300 for a couple. A new Week membership is $900 for a single and $1,500 for a couple.

The Ultra membership is $1,350 for a single and $2,150 for a couple.

Zientek mentioned the course has made major purchases in recent years.

“We have purchased new carts and equipment the last two years,” he said.

“We, fingers crossed, are hoping to not make any large purchases this year. But, as the saying goes – ‘Man plans, God laughs.’”

Major changes also are taking place inside the course’s Timbers Grill restaurant,
FROM C5

Wolverton said. “Let’s say it wasn’t pre-ordered, and it’s coming in to us for stock. If anybody wants it, they could put a hold on it with a deposit. “If they don’t take it, the deposit’s refundable.”

Wolverton encouraged buyers to check with a Cook sales staff member to see which vehicles are on the way. “We have a list of incoming units that aren’t sold, or aren’t on hold, and we tell them about that,” he said. “Or if somebody wants to put the order in, we put the order in.”

March is “Truck Month” at Cook GM Super Store, which offers more rebates on sales of new pickup trucks that month. In addition, customers buying four new tires in March can receive up to a $200 mail-in rebate, while rebates also are offered on new brakes, shocks and struts purchased in March.

Demand for used cars has been soaring in recent months, according to online sources. Corby Vandefifer, Cook GM’s new used car manager, said that’s the case at Cook’s certified pre-owned car lot at 1014 W. Saginaw Road, where buyers can view 128 vehicles.

“You used car sales are through the roof, we’re enjoying it,” Vandefifer said.

FROM C4

including an increase of staff by 100 percent that includes old familiar faces and some new ones.

Timbers will pay it back to local communities with the ingredients it uses in the food served at Timbers Grill. “We will be buying meats, breads and buns and vegetables and fruits from local vendors this year,” Zientek said. “It might be a tough summer, so the least we can do is buy from and support other local businesses.”

Timbers continue to gear up for the upcoming season full of outings, scrambles and charity events. “We are booking for the 2022 season,” Zientek said. “We shape all events to what the group or vendor wants. We offer many different meal and golf options. Cost depends on day of the week, time of the year, number of players, and the food package.”

For more information on Timbers Golf Course check out www.timbersgolfclub.com or call 989-871-4884.

Kevin Burk, who began working in December as body shop manager at the Cook GM Super Store, stands next to a 1959 Buick Electra.
The Vintage Greenhouse, 6003 Fulton St, in Mayville, now sells new women’s clothing in addition to offering estate sale services, vintage and handmade items, and crafting and enrichment classes. The store is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.

Tami Roy, employee at The Vintage Greenhouse in Mayville sets up a display inside the store, which opened in the fall of 2019 in downtown Mayville, population 922. The store sells jewelry, along with works offered on consignment by area artists.

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“We Care For Your Love Ones”
New career blooms for buyer of Millington flower shop

By Alex Szwarc | For the Advertiser

TUSCOLA — Karen Nelson looks forward to learning a new skill — as a small-business owner in the flower industry. Since early January, Nelson has owned the Country Mouse Flowers & Gifts Inc. in Millington, at 8409 State Road, north of Main Street. The business, formerly Country Mouse Flower House, has been in operation for more than 30 years.

Nelson, of Vassar, purchased the shop from Clara Mosher.

“It’s kind of music,” Nelson said as she began to explain how she entered the flower industry. “It’s the type of business I’ve always wanted to get into.”

She previously spent more than 30 years in retail sales, working for Meijer Inc. She most recently worked as a food line leader at Meijer’s location on Center Road. Nelson officially opened the shop Feb. 7, in time for Valentine’s Day.

“I wanted to be more one-on-one with customers,” she said. “Working through where customers come in and are feeling grief because they lost loved ones, along with weddings and joyous occasions too.”

Nelson, who lived in Millington before moving to Vassar, noted that she likes utilizing her creative side.

“I recently started with another company after retiring from my first,” she said. “My husband came home and said (the flower shop) was up for sale.”

Maybe it was preordained that Karen Nelson bump into Clara Mosher after that. “I was at a store buying supplies, I turned around and Clara and Gary (Mosher) were standing behind me,” Karen Nelson said. “She looked at me and I looked at her and one thing led to another, and I am so happy, I’m buying,” Nelson said.

Since Nelson and her husband, Todd, noticed the Country Mouse Flower House was for sale in December, Karen Nelson said life has been very fast-paced.

“I’ve been trying to get everything set up in my name and opening business accounts,” she said. “Getting in contact with all of the vendors and knowing who the vendors are. I’ve been working hand-in-hand with the seller who has been very gracious in assisting me and navigating me through the process.”

Since Mosher sold the business “as is,” Nelson indicated she won’t have to completely stock the business.

“I see stock the business. I am purchasing the stock that remains in there from the time she closed,” Nelson said.

She mentioned she has her own ideas of what will be offered that is new, but wants to get her feet on the ground first and offer what was previously offered.

“There hasn’t been a florist in the area for quite some time and a lot of florists that did exist have unfortunately gone out of business,” Nelson said. “I want to build on other avenues like having a local artist corner.”

In regard to how she plans to attract new customers, she said she plans on getting the word out via advertisement, Facebook messages, websites and staying active in the community.

“Knowing what’s going on in the community is very close-knit and welcoming,” she said. “They are good people with a good hometown in a small community,” she commented.

To learn more about the business, email karen@countrymouseinc.com or call (989) 871-2170. It is open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Central Shop Rite doing ‘some pretty cool things’

James Haines, right, owner of Vassar’s Central Shop Rite supermarket, and produce specialist Tammy Silk, welcome customers to the store, equipped with an LED lighting system and a new refrigeration system where food and beverage products enclosed within glass doors to protect food products.

Instead of plucking a package of ground round or yogurt off an open shelf, shoppers now reach inside doors to refrigerated zones housing everything from meat to cheese to eggs to beer.

“We’ve done some pretty cool things here lately, it’s been fun to be able to reinvest into the company,” Haines said of the new refrigeration system.

“There is, absolutely, an energy savings, but the ultimate advantage is for our customer. We are selling a better product. Our customers are taking a better product home.”

Casey Burke, Central Shop Rite’s meat department manager, said many customers have complimented the store at 500 Goodrich St. on the fact its ground beef from round, or store-made bulk sausage, or popular store-made jalapeno cheese brats, now stay cool behind glass doors.

SEE CENTRAL SHOP RITE | C9
Central Shop Rite
puts customers first

A customer named Ed strolls past products behind new glass doors protecting food items and keeping more even temperatures inside the refrigerated cases. "I shop here all the time," Ed said. "This is the only place I go like the store." is always warmer than the product in the back.

"With the doors in place, the temperature changes less than two degrees, and the temperature is the same throughout the case. The doors also protect food or beverage products inside them. "In the world we live in today, with COVID-19 and all the viruses and everything, the doors actually do add some sort of a value of protection - of security," Haines said. "It feels better that you have that barrier there."

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Photo by Tom Gilchrist | The Advertiser

Vassar Public Schools’ new “spring” floor, used by members of Vassar High School’s co-op gymnastics program, features springs beneath padded layers of synthetic material, all of which make athletes’ performances safer and better.

By Tom Gilchrist | News Editor
gilchrist@tcadvertiser.com

VASSAR — Insiders see the Vassar Public School gymnastics program differently these days, according to Suzy Weldon.

“Several coaches have come up to me and said that ‘Wow, Vassar has come a long way. You don’t look like a recreational program anymore,’” said Weldon, coach of Vassar’s co-op gymnastics program involving athletes from five high schools.

“They feel we’re more competitive now. We have beaten teams that were in the top 10 in the state, and Vassar has never done that. Our motto from the get-go is that we’ve always had fun on our team. I told the kids ‘You can still have fun, and there’s nothing wrong with that. I like to have fun, too, but sometimes, winning is fun.’

“I know it sounds terrible, but I said ‘There’s nothing wrong with being more competitive.’”

One year after the program acquired a “spring” floor – which provides extra bounce and safer, softer landings during floor exercises – more students have joined the team hosting meets inside Vassar’s Central Elementary School gymnasium.

“I have 15 girls on the team, an all-time high, and I think it was an all-time high for the program when 14 of my girls qualified for the state regional meet this year,” Weldon said. “That’s the highest number that Vassar has ever had.”

Vassar’s school gymnastics program, founded by coach Walt Purigroski in the 1970s, has expanded to include students from Vassar, Reese, Caro, Frankenmuth and Bay City Central high schools.

Two Vassar students – senior Teagan Wilkinson and junior Haley Strunk – are the Vassar Vulcans on the team. Other members are Kennidie Vrable of Caro; Piper O’Rourke of Frankenmuth; Reese students Courtney Kalkman, Mallory Hughes, Ellymae McCoy, Emma Hughes and Lindsay Dening; and Bay City Central’s Danielle Witbrodt, Natalie Witbrodt, Taylor Nadolinski, Delaney Hopkins, Addy Priest and Addi Sajdak.

Whether her gymnasts grew up in a local youth program or honed their skills in gymnastics clubs, Weldon said the two groups “complement each other, because they both bring strong assets to the program.”

“My Vassar girls came from the youth program – where they’re exposed to high-school rules,” Weldon said. “Where the girls that came from the bigger programs, and the bigger clubs, were taught the (U.S.A. Gymnastics) rules.”

SEE GYMNASTICS | C11
Danielle Wittbrodt, a Bay City Central High School student, competes in a gymnastics meet for Vassar High School’s co-op program. She is also an individualized gymnast for the Michigan High School Gymnastics Coaches and Judges Association. 

Weldon, a Vassar High School student, competed in a gymnastics meet for Vassar High School’s co-op program. The program is growing and its coach, Suzy Weldon, hopes to acquire a building or use of one – as the home for the program and its equipment. Weldon said she’d like to use a building or pole barn in the Richelle and Luke’s Lutheran Church.

## Gymnastics program vaults Vassar schools into limelight

### Weldon a key player in program's growth

Suzy Weldon, coach of Vassar High School’s co-op gymnastics program, was named “Coach of the Year” in 2022 by the Michigan High School Gymnastics Coaches and Judges Association.

### Impact of co-op program

The Vassar co-op gymnastics program provides a unique opportunity for students of Caro, Richville, and Vassar schools. The program aims to expand the gymnastics opportunities available to students in the area.

### Benefits for students

- **Skill Development**: Students can develop their gymnastics skills in a supportive environment.
- **Competition Opportunities**: Students have the chance to compete in local and regional gymnastics competitions.
- **Team Bonding**: Students can form strong bonds with their teammates.

### Challenges forProgram

- **Space Limitations**: The program currently operates in a rented space, which may limit its growth.
- **Equipment Needs**: The program requires additional equipment and space for expansion.

### Future Plans

- **Expanded Facilities**: The program aims to acquire a new building or pole barn for its gymnastics program.
- **Program Growth**: The program seeks to increase its participant base and offer more gymnastics classes.

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**Contact Information**

- **Suzy Weldon, Coach**
  - Phone: (989) 673-6172
  - Email: suzy.weldon@gmail.com

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**Support the Program**

Those interested in supporting the Vassar co-op gymnastics program can mail donations payable to “Vassar Public Schools” and write “Gymnastics” in the memo line. Mail donations to Suzy Weldon, 220 Athletic St., Vassar, MI 48768.

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**Competition Dates**

- **May 22-28, 2022**
- **Location**: Various locations in the area

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**Participation Requirements**

- **Ages 7 to 14**
- **Fees**: $16.67 per $1,000 financed
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**Progress, Education, Community, Civics 2022**

**Event Details**

- **Venue**: Various locations in the area
- **Dates**: May 22-28, 2022
- **Activities**: (6 breakfast, 4 dinners), snacks, games and prizes

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**Colonial America**

- **Visit**: Williamsburg, Jamestown, Yorktown, VA

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**Historic Spanish Colonial**

- **Visit**: San Diego, CA

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6190 Hospital Drive, Suite 107, Cass City, MI
CARO — Tractor Supply announced today the completion of an exciting remodel of the entire store at the Caro location that will transform the shopping experience for local customers.

The enhanced store features an improved layout for convenient and accessible shopping as well as a new Customer Service Hub with upgraded digital tools to help customers find what they need. Additionally, customers can now shop from an expanded assortment of apparel, tools, hardware, pet food, animal feed and more.

“At Tractor Supply, we constantly work to improve the customer experience, from product offerings to in-store features. These exciting upgrades have completely transformed our store, making it an even better option for customers shopping for Life Out Here,” said Lori Dirker, manager of the Caro Tractor Supply store. “We are excited for customers to visit our new space that now features more products than ever before, including our new apparel department, expanded feed and food selection and broader tool assortment. We know that customers will love these upgrades as much as we do, and we hope to share them with both familiar and new faces from the Caro community.”

Additional improvements to the Caro location include a new Tractor Supply Pet Wash for owners and their friendly, four-legged family members. Customers can now pamper their pets with a bath in an easy and convenient washing station loaded with professional-grade equipment and high-quality products. Pet owners will have access to elevated wash bays, grooming tables, specialty shampoos, use of brushes, combs and towels as well as a waterproof apron and professional dryer all for just $9.99. Tractor Supply also carries an assortment of pet accessories for customers to shop for after the bath, including toys, beds, collars, leashes and more.

With these enhancements, the Caro Tractor Supply continues to serve the needs of homeowners, livestock and pet owners, gardeners, hobby farmers, ranchers, tradesmen and others. Tractor Supply customers can shop from a wide range of products including workwear and boots, equine and pet supplies, zero turns and riding mowers, pet food, lawn and garden supplies, power tools, fencing, welding and more.

The Caro Tractor Supply store, at 1255 Cameron Rd, keeps regular business hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday. To learn more about Tractor Supply Company, visit TractorSupply.com. For information on Tractor Supply’s Neighbor’s Club loyalty program, please visit NeighborsClub.com.

*FREE PRESCHOOL, KINDERGARTEN, YOUNG 5’s ROUNDUP
Wednesday, April 13th, 2022
(for qualifying families)

• All students who will be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2022 are eligible for kindergarten.
• All students who will be 5 years old on or before October 1, 2022 are eligible for Young 5’s.
• Students who will be 4 years old on or before December 1, 2022, are eligible for preschool screening. Those accepted in preschool must meet income eligibility requirements. All ages 3 and 4 years can apply for possible programming.

Play Pals
Preschool
Contact: Lauren Henry 989-673-3169, Ext. 4098
Registration: McComb Elementary Room 98 & 99 Wednesday, April 13th 6:30 PM.
What to bring: • Birth Certificate • 2021 Tax Return • Driver’s License

Kindergarten & Young 5’s
Contact: Heather LaBerge or Natalie Hoffman 989-673-3169, Ext. 4001
Registration: McComb Elementary Gym Wednesday, April 13th 6:30 PM.
Kindergarten Clinic: May 23-26 by Appointment
Thumb Cellular transitions to Voice over LTE (VoLTE)

Thumb Cellular, the Thumb of Michigan’s locally owned and operated cellular carrier, is in the process of enabling Voice over LTE (VoLTE) for all active customers. Once fully transitioned, Thumb Cellular customers will experience improved call quality and expanded coverage when traveling outside the Thumb region.

“We’re thrilled to offer VoLTE as a no-cost service enhancement to our customers,” said Tracey Schenk, Thumb Cellular Director. “We’ve been working on preparations for VoLTE for many months and customer transitions are now underway.”

VoLTE, sometimes also called HD Voice, will transition all cellular voice calls from Thumb Cellular’s legacy 2G and 3G networks to its advanced 4G LTE network. With VoLTE, voice calls will have improved clarity and more natural sounding audio, calls will connect faster, and customers will notice improved battery life from their phone. Though VoLTE uses the LTE data network, there are no changes to a customer’s service plan or the way they are billed.

“To make this transition as smooth as possible, we’re asking all customers to make sure their phones are fully up-to-date with the latest software and firmware from their manufacturers,” said Schenk. “A small number of customers using older devices will need to upgrade their phone to one that is VoLTE capable. We will be reaching out to those customers individually to offer them a free device replacement.”

Beginning this month Thumb Cellular began sending batches of text messages to customers with instructions on how to prepare their device and enable VoLTE calls. Official text messages will come from 989-435-4333 and include a link to the company’s VoLTE FAQ webpage.

“VoLTE is a bridge from the past to the future,” said Schenk. “As legacy 2G and 3G networks prepare to shut down nationwide by the end of 2022, this technology is the stepping stone needed to prepare us for further network upgrades and improvements.”

While Thumb Cellular is committed to keeping its legacy networks operating for as long as possible, several roaming partners have already begun decommissioning theirs. For customers who frequently travel, enabling VoLTE now will greatly improve their call coverage when in “extended” network mode.

Customers who have not already been transitioned to VoLTE will be contacted by Thumb Cellular over the coming weeks and months. For those who wish to enable VoLTE immediately, they may visit their local Thumb Cellular office in Bad Axe, Caro, Pigeon or Sandusky, or call 800-443-5057 during normal business hours.

For more information about the VoLTE transition, including device compatibility and software update directions, visit www.thumbcellular.com/volte.