



STOCKBRIDGE COMMUNITY NEWS

Promoting our common good and shared well-being

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Staff Spotlight: High school teacher Ben Kruse has teaching experience from around the globe



In Alaska, Ben Kruse assures the photographer that everything is fine, even with a grizzly bear off in the distance. Photo provided by Ben Kruse

by Don Porter

Ben Kruse is in his fifth year of teaching at Stockbridge High School; this year he is teaching math and science. In addition, he has found time to coach football, girls soccer, and wrestling and has provided weight training opportunities for students. And because he likes to stay busy, Kruse also is pursuing his master's degree in coaching.

Kruse grew up in Port Huron, where both of his parents were teachers. He has an older brother and younger sister along with three foster brothers and sisters. Until fifth grade,

he was home-schooled; after that, he attended a small private school of about 80 students. Later, he attended Port Huron High School, which, at the time, had an enrollment of about 1,200 students.

According to Kruse, those three very different educational experiences were beneficial in his quest to becoming a teacher.

See Staff Spotlight on page 23.

From CADL Stockbridge

Join the Winter Reading Challenge during the cold winter months



Track your reading during the Stockbridge Branch Library's Winter Reading Challenge to win prizes. The event runs through Feb. 29. Photo credit Seven Shooter via unsplash.com

by Head Librarian Sherri McConnell

I'm writing this as Stockbridge is experiencing the coldest winter blast of the season. This is a time to stay safe and warm inside. What do you do when you're tired of jigsaw puzzles and watching sports? Capital Area District Libraries has just the thing for all ages!

Until Feb. 29, you can join the Winter Reading Challenge and win prizes.

Read and participate in cold weather activities like watching a movie, playing a board game, and visiting your library to earn a candy treat. Pick up a bookmark reading log at CADL Stockbridge or any CADL branch or sign up and track your reading and activities on our Beanstack website, cadl.org/wrc.

Once again, the library is doing Blind Date with a Book, February 1-18. Try your luck selecting a wrapped book tied with a bow. Maybe you'll find a favorite author or maybe you'll find a genre you've never tried before. Some books also will contain a surprise!

Capital Area District Libraries' Stockbridge Branch is located at 200 Wood St. For more information, call 517-851-7810 or visit cadl.org.

SCN needs your help

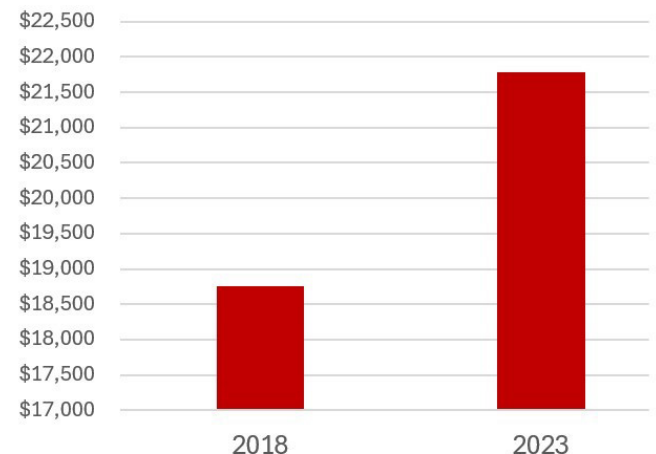
Rising costs and decreased revenue are deeply concerning. At the Stockbridge Community News, we are primarily a volunteer staff and are working hard to be sustainable, but all of our expenses have increased, especially postage.

If you appreciate having a local newspaper delivered free to all homes in the area, please consider sending a small donation or placing an ad to support the Stockbridge Community News.

Questions: stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com

Mailing address: P.O. Box 83, Gregory, MI 48137

Mailing costs have increased



♥ FEBRUARY ♥

Special Features

♥ INSIDE ♥

Matters of the Heart: Every February, SCN celebrates couples who have been married 50 years or longer. This year, we are pleased to share six stories of area couples who have set amazing examples of longevity. See pages 3 through 7.

Community Resource Guide: This issue contains an updated list of the groups and resources that enrich our community. See pages 13 through 16.

Rural Perspectives: Horned larks fly low across the fields in our area



Diane Gray Constable

by Diane Constable

The horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris*) is our only lark species. They are found throughout the continent and stay in our area year-round. They live in the farm fields and short grassy areas.

Horned larks flock up in winter and are most likely to be seen flying low across the fields or walking (rather than hopping) in the fields and road edges looking for food. The male is easily identified by the black feathers that stick out on the top of his head and resemble a horn. It also has a high-pitched trilling song. The females are a bit duller in color than the males.

In early spring, the horned larks pair up, and the females make their nests in short grass fields or bare ground. They find a shallow spot or dig one individually to about 1.5 inches deep using their feet and bills. The female horned larks make their nests with grasses and line them with soft fur and feathers, where they can lay up to five eggs.

The eggs hatch in about 11 days, and 10 days later the chicks leave the nest. Both parents feed the chicks various insects and caterpillars, worms and sowbugs. The chicks will grow to about 7



The male horned lark has black feathers that stick out on the top of his head and resemble a horn. Photo credit Diane Constable

inches long, about the size of a large sparrow, and will weigh a bit more than 1 ounce.

As adults, horned larks prefer seeds and can be seen perching on stems to get to the seeds. They can live up to 7 years.

Fun Fact: The female horned lark will gather small clods and pebbles and place them almost like a path around the outer edge of the nest, possibly to help protect the nest from wind or predators.

Diane Constable is an avid photographer. She serves on the Unadilla Township Planning Commission and is a member of the township's Parks and Recreation Committee. Diane also enjoys her dogs and gardening.

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2024 WINTER MARKET: 2/10, 3/9, 4/13

First Presbyterian Church CE Bldg.

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For more information: stockbridgemarket.org/

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SERIOUSLY

Matters of the Heart

Jean and Marty Bliss overcome adversity together in a strong, 55-year marriage

by Judy Williams

Life hasn't always been easy for Jean and Marty Bliss of Stockbridge, but their strong love for each other helps them get through the difficult times.

Their story started in 1968, when Jean Hardt and Marty Bliss met at work. Jean, a lifelong resident of the Stockbridge area, first met the love of her life at Bob's Blazes Inn in Jackson. She was working as a waitress and Marty, a Jackson resident, was the bartender.

"It was love at first sight," stated the petite Jean. She was quick to add, "He was interested in me and told everyone else to stay away."

On Nov. 2, 1968, just eight months after that first meeting, the couple were married in the Stockbridge Presbyterian Church. Jean and Marty have lived their entire married life in Stockbridge, where they raised three children: Martin, Jennifer and Brian. They have been blessed with four grandchildren: Martin Ross, Brandon, Quinton, and Megan and five great-grandchildren: Madison, Roman, Heven, Lily and Milly.

Through their more than 55 years of marriage, the Blisses have had to deal with many obstacles. The first test of their strength came in 2006, when Jean received her first diagnosis of lung and liver cancer. Over the last 16 years, she has experienced several reoccurrences of this disease. Currently, she is being checked every six months.

In 2007, the plant where Marty had worked for 46 years closed, and Marty was left without a job. Due to the unexpected financial hardship, this was a time the Blisses think of as one of the most difficult of their married life. In the same year, their oldest son, Martin, was diagnosed with brain cancer. He passed away just over a year later.

See the Blisses on page 6



Through all that life has handed them, Jean and Marty Bliss have found strength in their love for each other. Photo provided by the Blisses

Dan and Mary Wilson: A good friend's instinct has led to a 50-year commitment

by Mary Jo David (as shared by the Wilsons)

Before the advent of online dating, couples often met through friends or mutual acquaintances. Such was the case with Dan Wilson and Mary Niehaus back in 1973. A mutual friend, Amy Weddon, set them up on a blind date when Mary was 19 and Dan was 23.

"She thought we would be good together," Mary recalls, "and Amy was right."

Mary grew up in the Chelsea area and Dan grew up in Stockbridge. After dating for just under a year, Dan and Mary Wilson were married on Aug. 24, 1974, at the Stockbridge United Methodist Church. Two years after they were married, they moved to Stockbridge, where they've lived ever since.

In 1976, they welcomed their first child, a son, Nathan Robert. Their daughter, Penny Marie, was born the following year. The couple have been blessed with four grandchildren: Kailey, Aiden, Noah and Mason. They also have two great-grandchildren, Kiara and Amira.

The Wilsons are a close family and enjoy spending time together. But in their case, it isn't easy. Nathan, whose wife is from Australia, has lived in Adelaide for 14 years. Mary and



The Wilsons are committed to always doing what it takes to keep their relationship going strong. Photo provided by Dan and Mary Wilson

Dan have crossed the globe a number of times to visit them. Luckily, Penny and her family live locally, in Henrietta Township and Jackson, so the Wilsons don't have to book travel to spend time with that branch of the family!

Looking ahead to their 50th anniversary in August, the couple are planning a family-centered occasion with their children and grandchildren in Michigan's Mackinac area.

See The Wilsons on page 6.

Matters of the Heart

Mike and Marge Turner: 52 years of swaying to the music together

by Mary Jo David (as shared by the Turners)

Michael ("Mike") Turner and Margaret ("Marge") Jeruzal met on a blind date in the summer of 1970. A member of the Michigan Camaro Club at the time, Mike agreed to join a friend—a fellow club member—and the friend's wife who were going out to celebrate their recent nuptials. Likewise, Marge's girlfriend, the recent bride, convinced Marge to go along for the celebration.

When the evening was over, Mike went home and told his mom he'd met the girl he was going to marry. When Marge got home, she told her family she wouldn't be going out with Mike again because all he could talk about was cars!

Following that blind date, Marge told Mike he should only call if he had something to talk about besides cars. Mike proceeded to phone Marge every night for a week to read her articles from the newspaper!

Over time, they learned they had a lot in common, and a year later, in June 1971, they were married at St. Sebastian Catholic Church in Dearborn Heights.

The Turners were gifted with two children—a son and a daughter. Their son, Michael, was named after his dad. Marge explained that since she is a Virgo (an "earth child"), she named their daughter "Terren" after the earth. Terren and her husband, Gerald Backus, live nearby in Fowlerville.

At the age of 15, young Michael was diagnosed with ALS, the same disease that had taken Marge's mother's life when Marge was just a baby. At that time, the couple determined the Stockbridge school system was a good fit for Michael's needs, so they moved to Gregory.

"All the while he attended school in Stockbridge, the district was sensitive to Michael's needs," Marge explained. "We were overwhelmed by the caring the school showed to us and our son," she added. Sadly, Michael passed away when he was 18.

Prior to retiring, Mike worked as a machinist. After Terren started college, Marge went back to school to study design, at which point, her career shifted into high gear. She worked in management at Home Depot, then helped start a custom frame shop at JOANN. That led to running a home-based framing company for 15 years, after which, she trained and started a manicure business.

See *The Turners* on page 6.



For 52 years, the Turners have relied on their love for each other, their faith in God, and a shared respect for honest communication and laughter. Photo provided by the Turners

Campbell and Fran Laird: A love story that began 'across the pond'

by Mary Jo David (as shared by the Lairds)

Campbell and Frances ("Fran") Laird may be living in the Stockbridge home Fran grew up in, but their love story had its start more than 60 years ago and 3,700 miles away.

"My family knew a professor friend in England who had a Ph.D. student—Campbell—who was going to be starting his career by traveling to the U.S. to work in a Ford lab in Dearborn," Fran explained.

Campbell, who grew up in the Western Highlands of Scotland, was studying metallurgy at Cambridge. He had the good sense to accept his professor's invitation to meet Fran and her sister who were visiting England at the time.

After an enjoyable time in England, the Beckwith sisters returned to Michigan. When Campbell arrived in Dearborn, he and Fran rekindled their friendship. Although Campbell's abilities were more aligned with the sciences and Fran had a degree in art history from the University of Michigan, the young couple did find they had a lot in common. For example, they both loved nature, books, music, and travel.

A year later, on June 20, 1964, Fran and Campbell were married at the Presbyterian Church in Stockbridge. Afterward, they moved to Dearborn to be closer to Campbell's job. Although they were living outside of Detroit, their first daughter, Kate, was born in Jackson, where Fran's father, Dr. Beckwith, was working.

The couple's other children, Andrew and Lucy, were born in Pennsylvania, where the family moved when Campbell was offered a professorship in materials science at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to teaching and research, he also spent years serving as an expert witness providing testimony when machinery or infrastructure broke down resulting in personal injuries.

After raising their children, Fran worked as a guide in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

See *The Lairds* on page 7.



Fran and Campbell Laird celebrate her 80th birthday with daughter-in-law Polly Gibbins and granddaughters Laura (left) and Bonnie (right). Photo provided by Andrew Laird

Matters of the Heart

Kaye and Merlin Batdorff, of Fitchburg, married for more than 70 years

by Clyde Whitaker

Ed. Note: In early January, Clyde Whitaker had the pleasure of interviewing Merlin and Kaye Batdorff for SCN's 2024 Matters of the Heart feature. Sadly, Merlin passed away a week after the interview. With permission from Kaye and their daughter Dawne, Stockbridge Community News has chosen to move forward with publishing their anniversary story to honor this long-wedded couple.

On a cold and snowy Saturday, Jan. 6, this writer made the trek over to Fitchburg to interview Merlin and Kaye Batdorff about their long-time marriage. At the time, their 71st anniversary was fast approaching on Jan. 30.

Merlin and Kaye shared the story of how they first saw each other at a play at Stockbridge High School, where Kaye was performing.

Merlin found out that Kaye was working at Bentley's Ice Cream parlor on Lansing Avenue in Jackson, and he made many subsequent trips out that way to visit—and eat ice cream.

On Jan. 30, 1953, they were married at Saints Cornelius and Cyprian Church in Bunker Hill. The best man was Larry Poxson, Kaye's brother, while the maid of honor was Connie Dysert.

The couple had four children, Steve (now deceased), Dawne Batdorff Salow, Jamie Batdorff and Shane Batdorff. They also have five grandchildren: Travis Wayne, Lauren, Grant, Brodie and Chase.

Kaye was a substitute teacher in Stockbridge for about 10 years, in addition to being a homemaker and helper on the farm. Merlin worked his farm, which was several hundred acres. He also drove a semi-truck in the winters for Baldwin Farms, hauling onions down to Cleveland, Ohio.

When asked about their hobbies, Merlin quickly chimed in and said "work," with a laugh, and Kaye responded with cooking, reading and making flower arrangements.

Looking back on special moments the two of them had together, they recalled their 24th wedding anniversary, when they took a trip to Hawaii. After Merlin retired, they went on a three-week cruise in Alaska. In between these events, they traveled to West Palm Beach in Florida during the wintertime, because they had a house there.

When prompted to share any amusing anecdotes they had as a couple, Kaye recalled one time when she was helping Merlin unhitch a trailer from the tractor. Kaye was to pull the disconnect pin from the hitch, while she stood on the trailer. Well, when Kaye pulled out the pin, the trailer flipped up, throwing Kaye head over heels to the ground. Merlin thought this was quite funny. While Kaye was not hurt, she wasn't happy either.

It's always interesting to learn from happily married couples who have stood the test of time, "What is the secret to a long marriage?" In Kaye's case, she responded thoughtfully with, "You work on it, you have to."

For his part, Merlin said with a laugh, "You fight it out."

One thing is clear after spending time with Kay and Merlin Batdorff: Whatever their secrets to a long-time marriage may be, they have worked for this couple for more than 70 years!



Together, Kaye and Merlin Batdorff cut their cake on their wedding day, Jan. 30, 1953. Photo provided by the Batdorffs



In early January 2024, Kaye and Merlin Batdorff talked with Clyde Whitaker about their more than 70 years of marriage. Photo credit Clyde Whitaker

Matters of the Heart

The Wilsons page 3



After dating for just under a year, Dan and Mary Wilson were married in August 1974. Photo provided by Dan and Mary Wilson

Dan's big passion, which he juggled with his work in animal care and research at Pfizer, was coaching. He spent years coaching track and basketball in Stockbridge. While their kids were in school, Mary was a teacher's aide. Later, she worked for 20 years as the Stockbridge Township clerk.

Dan and Mary have faced a number of difficulties in their lives but they've always worked together and stayed strong, relying on their patience and faith to help them get through trying times.

"Sometimes we just have to stop and remind ourselves to appreciate what we have and move on," Dan said.

In their 50th year together as husband and wife, the Wilsons have some sage advice they can share with others.

- Do plenty of activities together

but let yourselves enjoy time on your own as well. For example, Dan enjoys golfing and is active at the Mason Lodge in Stockbridge, and Mary enjoys gardening and spending time cooking and baking.

- Don't let little things become big problems.
- Sometimes you have to agree to disagree but work out a solution you both can live with.

One thing is certain from the Wilsons' perspective: Marriage is a work in progress and they are committed to always doing what it takes to keep their relationship going strong.

The Blisses page 3

The year 2014 brought another challenge to the Bliss family, when their daughter Jennifer was diagnosed with breast cancer. Jennifer continues to battle cancer, which has metastasized to her brain.

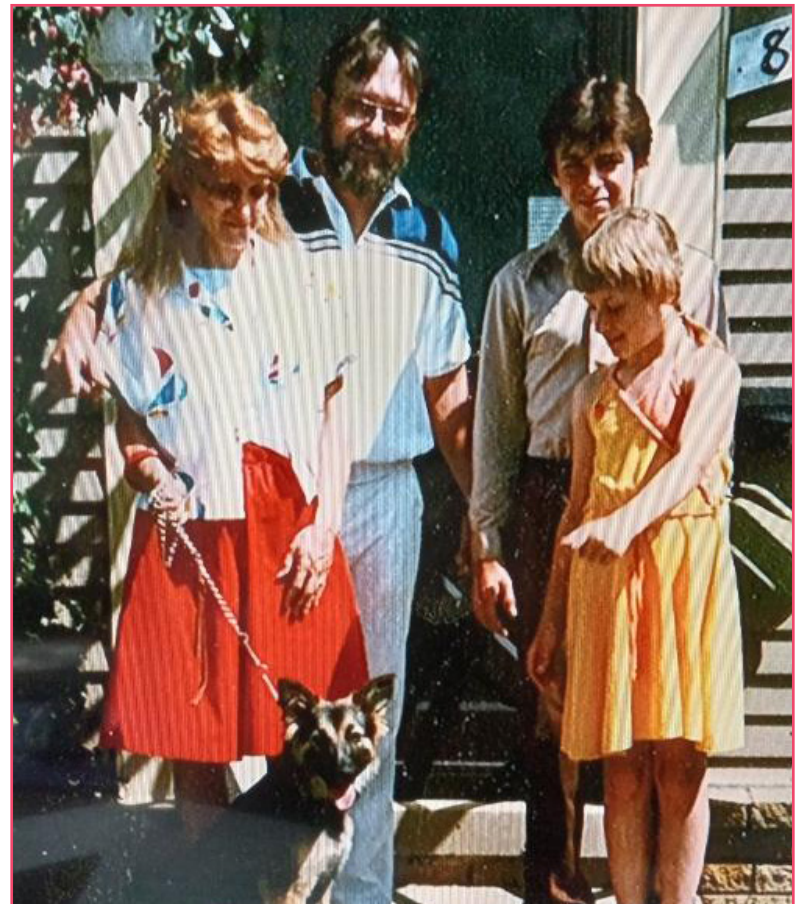
Through all of these many challenges, the couple have found strength in their love for each other. They also share similar interests. Camping is one of the many things they enjoy doing together.

Marty had some words of wisdom for sustaining a long and happy relationship. "Simply say 'yes, dear,'" he said. "That's my way of avoiding an argument."

Jean, getting the last word in, said, "Never go to bed mad. You never know what tomorrow will bring and you may not have a chance to tell someone how much you love them."

Jean requested that we end this article by mentioning a story about them waking up on a Sunday morning to their front porch covered with hay. Apparently, this has a hidden meaning for Jean, Marty and friends, but she chose not to go into the detail. All others are welcome to make up their own story using this little bit of information Jean has shared. For now, we'll just leave it with "Hay, Jean!" and "Hay, Marty!"

The Turners page 4



The Turner family, including their pup Lucky, in earlier times, posing for a picture before heading out for the day. Photo provided by the Turners

Although Mike gave up his Camaro fairly early in their marriage, Marge admitted she was surprised to find the couple shared an appreciation for motorcycles. All these years later, they still ride one together. Aside from their need for speed and an interest in home improvement projects, the couple pursue separate interests; Mike is an avid hunter and fisherman, and Marge enjoys gardening, landscape design, and interior decorating. Oh, and don't forget shoe shopping!

Through their ups and downs, the couple have relied on their love for each other, their faith in God, and a shared respect for honest communication and laughter.

"I admire Marge's tolerance," Mike explained. "After all, she puts up with me," he said with a laugh.

Marge appreciates Mike's strength and honesty.

"When things get difficult, Michael turns to me, swoops me in his arms, and says, 'Dancing is allowed,'" Marge explains. And together they gain strength from each other as they sway to whatever music is in their hearts at that moment.

Clearly, in 52 years of marriage, the Turners have come a long way from the days of needing to share a newspaper to have something to talk about!

Matters of the Heart



The Pietilas have been married 53 years. They wed in September 1970, when Jim was just 20 and Paula was 18. Photos provided by the Pietilas



Early days with the Pietila family: Paula and Jim with their daughters (l-r): Jamie, Vicky and Mary.

Jim and Paula Pietila: A marriage that began in Hell is still going strong!

by Mary Jo David (as shared by the Pietilas)

Although they went to school in Pinckney, it took a high school dance in Stockbridge to bring Jim Pietila and Paula Wright together. Paula's cousin, Donna Biehn, invited Paula to attend the dance. Donna's date, Phil Tanner, asked Jim if he wanted to attend. As fate would have it, both couples later married and have remained close to this day.

In Pinckney, Jim was a senior and Paula was a sophomore. Having moved from Sandusky, Ohio, Paula had not yet met Jim until the Stockbridge dance. From then on, the couple began dating and, on Sept. 12, 1970, they married at the United Methodist Church in Williamston. Paula was just 18, and Jim was 20.

They spent their early married life in Hell—literally—Hell, Michigan, where they lived in a log cabin until 1973. They moved to Bunker Hill when their oldest was still a baby. Paula recalls one of her first encounters with the mailman at their new home:

"I guess I must have looked pretty young, because he asked me to go get my mom, and I had to tell him, 'I am the mom!'"

The Pietilas raised three daughters—Vicky, Mary and Jamie—and are the proud grandparents of eight grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Jim spent 35 years working in the commercial printing industry and later learned the plumbing trade. Paula retired from the Chelsea Wellness Center and helped open and run the Stockbridge Wellness Center, which she considers the best job of her life.

While raising their family, the Pietilas camped all around the state of Michigan, graduating from a tent to a pop-up and then to a fifth wheel RV. Eventually the couple ventured farther afield—to Florida and then to the Caribbean, twice, via cruise ships.

Although they enjoy traveling, they find plenty to do closer to home. The couple especially likes taking their pontoon boat over to Bruin Lake, where they enjoy traversing the chain of lakes. Jim spent part of his childhood growing up on Patterson Lake, so he has a natural affinity to the area.

Throughout their many years together, the Pietilas have faced plenty of obstacles, like the 1970s recession and even Michigan's worst blizzard. But by far, their most difficult time was losing their daughter Vicky in 2016 after she valiantly fought a seven-year battle against inflammatory breast cancer.

"That was the worst thing we've been through, and it was enough," Paula recalled. Jim added, "By comparison, everything else has been just normal ups and downs."

Looking back, Paula can recall a few differences between her and Jim, the biggest being that she was much more intent on starting a family earlier than Jim was. But over time, Jim thinks the two of them have become more and more alike.

That's a good thing, considering that the Pietilas' advice for other couples is, "Don't try to fix or change each other."



In June 1964, Frances Beckwith donned her wedding gown and Campbell Laird his kilt for their wedding ceremony at the Presbyterian Church in Stockbridge. Photo provided by Andrew Laird

The Lairds [page 4](#)

She became interested in the Reagan era peace movement and earned her master's degree in Russian language and literature. She wrote two books (a third is in process) translating the works of Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. In 1988, she traveled to Ukraine to participate in the Soviet American Peace Walk from Odessa to Kiev.

The couple returned to Stockbridge in 2005, after Campbell retired. They moved into the family home Fran grew up in. During retirement, Campbell's focus has been on building, fixing, and gardening. Meanwhile, Fran's interests tend toward reading, cooking, and pursuing her ongoing interest in Russian poetry.

Their three children grew into successful adults and had children of their own. The Lairds are now the proud grandparents of six grandchildren: Rory, Julia, Jane, Bonnie, Laura, and Hildy.

Until recently, the Lairds didn't feel they had been challenged with many obstacles they couldn't handle. But then their daughter Kate was killed in a horseback riding accident about a year ago.

"The most difficult thing we've ever had to face was the death of our daughter," Fran said. "Learning to live with that sense of grief and loss has been extremely difficult."

The challenges of aging and physical wear and tear are also relatively new to this couple. Unfortunately, all of Campbell's years of experience studying fracture and fatigue in the world of metallurgy have not helped them to discover the secret to avoiding the physical limitations of aging.

But when it comes to sustaining long, happy partnerships, the couple do have advice to offer those who are just starting out. According to Campbell and Frances Laird, the best think you can do is apply the "Two Fs" to those relationships—forgiving and forgetting.



Who We Are

Founded in 2016, the Stockbridge Community News is a Michigan nonprofit organization, IRS-licensed to operate as a 501(c)(4) organization (# C4-4001565).

An unpaid, volunteer board of directors oversees all SCN operations.

Our monthly, printed newspaper is free and mailed at no-cost to members of the local community. Complementary printed copies are also made available at strategic locations in the community. Print subscriptions are available for a fee to those outside SCN's postal distribution boundaries.

Articles are posted online throughout the month and are available to view for free at stockbridgecommunitynews.com

Our Mission

To promote the common good and shared well-being of residents in the greater Stockbridge area through the collection and publication of local news and useful community information.

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Stockbridge Community News depends on our team of talented, local writers who regularly volunteer their time to ensure we deliver newsworthy content each month. Writer names are reflected in the bylines that appear with each story.

Editor-in-Chief Emeritus

Patrice Johnson, an SCN founder and first editor-in-chief (2016-2021)

We would love to hear from you!

Please share any article ideas or community events you think SCN readers would be interested in. You are also encouraged to contact us with your advertising questions or for information about volunteering.

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John and Theresa
Kightlinger

Ask an Expert Finding a reputable auto body shop you can trust

by John and Theresa Kightlinger

It's important to find an auto body shop that is reputable. Being able to trust the business that you bring your car to is essential. Luckily, it's easy to find out if a body shop is reputable or not. There are certain things to look for when it comes to finding the most prestigious auto body shop. The following can help you determine if an auto body shop is right for you.

Reviews. The first thing you should do when searching for a body shop in your area is to look at available reviews. Often, when somebody has either a good or bad experience with a business, they will write a review online that details their experience. These reviews are a great resource for you when you're searching for a body shop. If an auto body shop is highly reviewed and seems to have many satisfied customers, this may be a good indication that you will have a good experience there, as well.

Qualifications. When researching possible body shops to patronize, make sure to look at the qualifications of the technicians who are employed at the shop. Often, this information can be found on the body shop's website. You want to be sure that the technicians who work on vehicles are trained in the latest technology and are highly qualified in vehicle maintenance and repair. If an auto body shop employs experienced technicians, you can feel confident that your car will be properly cared for.

Word of mouth. It's usually a good idea to ask people you trust about the experiences they've had with local auto body shops. If you have friends or family in your area, consider asking them if they have had experience with the auto body shop you're interested in. Their experiences can tell you a great deal about what you might be able to expect. If they've had positive experiences and were happy with the services they received, chances are that you will have a good experience, as well.

Certifications. Often, auto body shops hold certifications in certain areas of vehicle maintenance and repair. Before choosing to work with an auto body shop, check to see if they have certifications. This may tell you something about the level of training that they require for their technicians. A prestige auto body shop's certifications also may reveal something about the standard to which they hold their work.

Communication. When it comes to quality service and customer care, communication is key. A good auto body shop will communicate clearly about the repair and maintenance to be completed on your vehicle. They also will communicate clearly about the estimated cost for repairs. Making sure that you get an estimate in writing is important. This allows you to be sure that there's transparency throughout the process.

John and Theresa Kightlinger own My Body Shop at 401 N. Clinton St., Stockbridge. The couple have lived in the area and raised their children here over the past 20 years. John has been in the auto body business since 1985, and Theresa began work at General Motors after high school. Between the two, they have been working on cars for more than 75 years.

**STOCKBRIDGE
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Emma Smith Elementary

KINDERGARTEN ROUND UP

Thursday, March 14

Session 1: 9:30 – 12:00 Session 2: 1:00 – 3:00

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What's New? Host a virtual party or fundraiser with me!



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Stockbridge Athletic Boosters brings back Panther Draw Down fundraiser with dinner, prizes and fun



Information provided by the Stockbridge Athletic Boosters

Back by popular demand! Stockbridge Athletic Boosters is holding its Panther Draw Down fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 24, at the Stockbridge Activity Center (old middle school), Stockbridge. Event starts at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$100 each, (one ticket includes one raffle entry, and dinner for two prepared by our All-Star Sponsor, Smokehouse 52

BBQ). Beer and wine will be available to purchase. Draw Down cash prizes include a first prize of \$2,500; second prize \$1,000; third prize \$500; and four \$250 cash prize drawings. There also will be multiple 50/50 raffles and other prizes to win throughout the evening!

Gordie Kunzelman will be the emcee for the evening, and music will be provided by DJ, Bill Moran. Come on out and join us for this great event to support our athletes and athletic programs, while enjoying fantastic food, fun, and community! Only 100 tickets will be sold, so don't wait! They will sell out fast! For more information on the event, tickets, sponsorships, or how to donate, please visit us on Facebook @stockbridgeathleticboosters or email us at stockbridgeathleticboosters@gmail.com. Go Panthers!

Stockbridge Athletic Boosters is a not-for-profit organization.

Our purpose is to raise funds to support, promote and encourage athletics within the Stockbridge community.

Rock 'n' Roll Trivia

Where to find the song 'Old Days' by Chicago

by John Robinson

Q: What album is the Chicago song "Old Days" on?

A: The 1975 album "Chicago VIII." Chicago member James Pankow, who wrote the song said: "It touches on key phrases that, although they date me, are pretty right-



John Robinson

in terms of images of my childhood. 'The Howdy Doody Show' on television and collecting comics and baseball cards." Lead vocalist Peter Cetera did not like or appreciate "The Howdy Doody Show" even when he was a kid and never looked forward to singing "Old Days" in concert because of this. "Old Days" peaked at No. 5 in 1975.

Q: Do you remember a song by The Hollies called "Jennifer Eccles"? Was that a real person? Like a groupie or something?

A: "Jennifer Eccles" (No. 40, 1968) was named after the wives of two Hollies: Allan Clarke's wife's name was Jennifer; Graham Nash's wife's maiden name was Eccles.

Q: Whenever I hear the Steve Miller song "Jet Airliner" it sounds so familiar, like another song. What's the other song that has the same guitar at the beginning?

A: The opening guitar riff of "Jet Airliner" is strikingly similar to the one on Cream's "Crossroads" (No. 28, 1969). "Jet Airliner" was written by blind folk singer Paul Pena in 1973. After hearing Pena's unreleased song, Steve Miller decided to record and release it himself (No. 8, 1977). Lyrically, it was coincidental that Miller recorded this at a time when he was reflective and thinking about what a drag touring was becoming.

See Rock 'n' Roll Trivia on page 23.

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Published in *Uncaged*, December 2023

A Helping Hand

Kelsey Jeanette takes over special ed program

by Joey Ballagh, *Uncaged* Reporter

This article is being reprinted, with minimal edits, from the Uncaged Student News December 2023 edition.

After spending many years helping kids in foster care and also being a teacher, Kelsey Jeanette has taken over the Department of Special Education in the school. She knew that she wanted to be a teacher because she loved helping kids and her past influenced that decision even more.

"I wanted to be a special ed teacher because I worked in foster care for kids who had disabilities," Jeanette said.

Jeanette had previously worked at Howell High School. However, she bought a new house in Stockbridge. Because of this, she quickly jumped at the opportunity to work in the same town that she now lived in.

Jeanette has had many favorite memories of teaching throughout her years, but one particular moment stuck out to her.

"During the Howell fair, before they had opened anything up [to the public], they opened a day early so my students with disabilities in a wheelchair were able to access the rides," Jeanette said.

One of Jeanette's main goals is to get more involved with the community. She especially wants to be able to help some of her students who struggle the hardest.

"My favorite part about Mrs. Jeanette is that she takes things easy, she doesn't go too fast through lessons and she's a good teacher," senior Paul Baird said. Jeanette is already a favorite to many of her students such as senior Dustin Whitney.

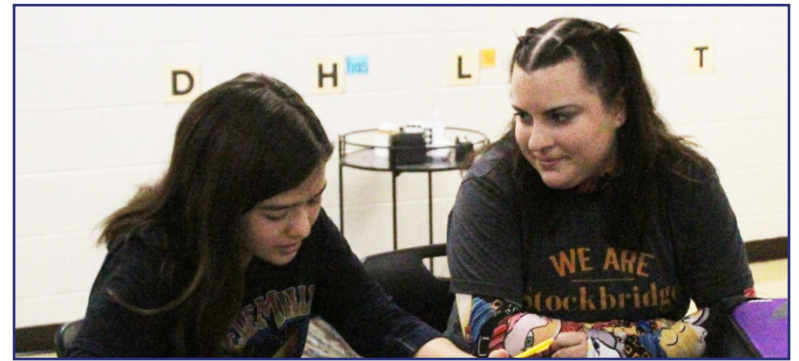
"I really like Mrs. Jeanette as a teacher," Whitney said. "She is really understanding and helpful and she is one of my favorite teachers."

In her free time, Jeanette enjoys a variety of things such as gardening, crocheting and being involved in the Special Olympics.

For more information about Stockbridge's award-winning student newspaper, go to <https://uncagednews.com>.

Uncaged articles are sponsored by The Stockbridge Area

Educational Foundation. SAEF is currently looking for new board members. For more information on SAEF, visit www.panethernet.net/ our district.



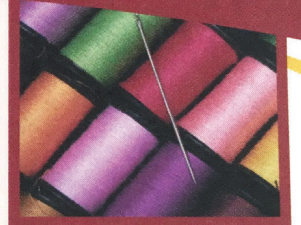
With patience comes progress and with Jeanette supporting each student in the room, they are sure to grow. Photo credit Olyvia Hoard

SEWING AND ALTERATIONS

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Salvatore Vanadia is a Financial Advisor with The State Wealth Advisors, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC in Fenton, MI. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 11 years. Contact Sal at <https://www.ameripriseadvisors.com/s.vanadia/>, 810.593.5567, 175 N. Leroy St, Fenton, MI 48430.

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Reading Between the Lines 'The Beatryce Prophecy': A young person's tale stimulates the imagination

by Joan Tucker

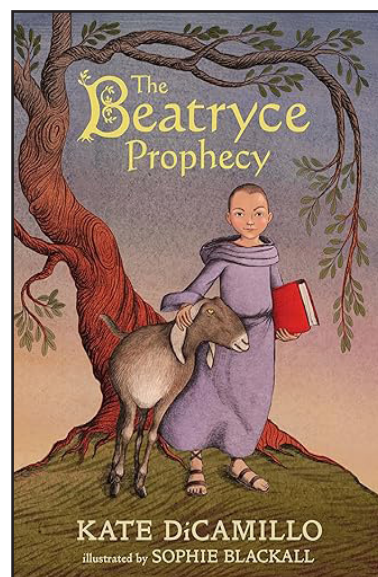
"The Beatryce Prophecy," written by Kate DiCamillo and published in 2022, is an imaginative tale in children's literature that is sure to capture a young reader's interest.

The prelude sets the stage for this children's epic:

"It is written in the Chronicles of Sorrowing that one day there will come a child who will unseat the king. The prophecy states that this child will be a girl. Because of this, the prophecy has long been ignored."

The tale begins with Answelica, a tricky and canny goat who would just as soon kick the backside of someone he doesn't like. That said, Answelica quickly befriends Beatryce—a 10-year-old runaway girl.

Brother Edik, from the Order of the Chronicles of Sorrowing, discovers Beatryce when he goes out to feed the goat. Beatryce is lying in the stall, curled up sleeping next to Answelica, holding its ear. Brother Edik is terrified that the goat may harm the girl, only to discover that the stubborn goat is fiercely protective of Beatryce and won't leave her side. As the young girl wakes, Brother Edik learns she has a fever and is very ill. He carries Beatryce inside the



With her brilliant knack for developing unusual characters, Kate DiCamillo's "The Beatryce Prophecy" is an imaginative tale sure to capture a young reader's interest. Image credit Amazon.com

monastery, which causes a great stir with the other brothers, especially because the stubborn goat insists on going along.

As Beatryce's health improves, a few things unfold. Beatryce doesn't know where

she comes from or who her people are. She also discovers that she can read, a very dangerous skill for a girl at a time when only monks, tutors, counselors and kings are permitted to read. Others who read are put to death. As a result of this discovery, Brother Edik decides to remove Beatryce's hair and dress her like a young monk. But the other brothers are fearful she might be discovered, which would subject all of them to punishment from the king.

Enter Jack Dory, a young boy who just lost his parents to a bad soldier in the dark woods. Fortunately, he found Granny Bespeak who cared for and provided shelter for Jack over the next few years. Jack seems happy and full of life, but he dreams of avenging his parents' deaths. He was sent to the Brothers of Sorrowing with a message that someone is needed to write a soldier's confession. The task is assigned to Beatryce by those at the monastery. Jack takes her to the inn where the soldier is dying, but he is instructed by the brothers not to bring her back. Soldiers in the village are looking for her.

The adventure continues. They enter the dark woods to meet up with other characters—some good, some bad. On the journey, Beatryce regains her memories and, with her new friends, sets a plan to talk to the king.

Throughout the novel, young readers discover how all the characters help Beatryce reach her goal, one where goodness prevails.

This delightful tale shouldn't be missed.

Kate DiCamillo's describing words offer young readers a way to figure out their meanings, occasionally having to look them up. The author's creative touch of providing a small bolded section at the end of most chapters adds intrigue, as she shares snippets of conversation taking place at the king's castle. These provide the reader with clues as to why Beatryce left her home and insight into the thinking of the current kingdom.

See *Reading Between the Lines* on page 17.

SAVE THE DATES!
March 10th-16th

Festival of Tables

Save the Dates!

March 10-16, 2024 for the annual on-line Festival of Tables fundraiser auction. All proceeds benefit the Stockbridge Area Educational Foundation, and are used to support the community. The online auction will start on March 10 and end on March 16 at 9 p.m.. Item pickup will be March 17 from noon to 4 p.m. at Heritage School.

To register to bid, scan the QR code below or visit
<https://ourschool.auction/BidForEducation>
Items can be paid online via credit card, or cash at pickup.



The Stockbridge Area Educational Foundation serves the community of the Stockbridge School District. Our mission is to fund programs and projects that create or enhance educational opportunities available to area residents.

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2024 • COMING HOME



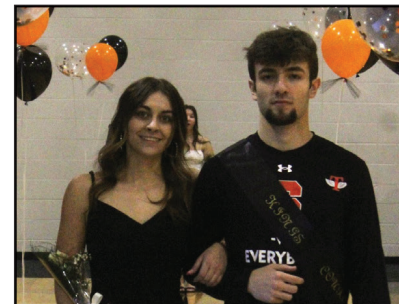
*2024 Senior King Drew Robinson
and Escort Melanie Satkowiak*



*Senior King Joey Ballagh and
Escort Annie Borowy*



*Senior King Brady Cole and
Escort Chloe Suter*



*Senior King Kegan Collins and
Escort Amber Knoll*



*Junior King Ethan Bradley
and Escort Miley Moser*



*Senior King Jason Gruber and
Escort Kaden Carpenter*



*Senior King Nick Phillips and
Escort Antonio Argento*



*Senior King Zane Whitt and
Escort Macy Cipta*



*Sophomore King Brandon Hamlett
and Escort Shelby Okoney*



2024 Coming Home Court



*Freshman King
Timothy Clark and
Escorts Brooke
Kunzelman and
Michaela Hill*



Senior Kings and Escorts



Underclassmen Kings and Escorts



*Underclassmen Kings - Junior Ethan
Bradley, Freshman Timothy Clark,
Sophomore Brandon Hamlett*

All photos by Mike Williamson



Groups and resources that enrich our community

The local area is home to a wide array of nonprofit and charitable organizations, all for the benefit of local residents. The information below represents Stockbridge Community News' best efforts to compile descriptions and contact information.

Not listed or notice an error? Please accept our apologies and email corrected information to Stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com or snail mail the NEWS, P.O. Box 83, Gregory, MI 48137. Also, if your organization has an event to advertise or announce free of charge in our "Community Calendar," please contact the email above.

American Legion Mackinder-Glenn Post 510. Founded in 1947, the Mackinder-Glenn American Legion Post 510 continues to be one of the pillars of the Stockbridge community. The post was named for two local residents who were killed in action during World War I. These hometown heroes were Russell Mackinder and J.T. Glenn. Property for the post's site was donated by William Domine, which caused the local Legion to purchase the balance of the land where the Legion stands at 830 S. Clinton St., Stockbridge. The post consists of Legion Members (Veterans), SAL (Sons of the American Legion), ALR (American Legion Riders, a motorcycle group) and The Auxiliary. Over the years, the post has sponsored a variety of activities ranging from baseball to oratory competitions as well as Poppy Day sales for disabled veterans and veterans having difficulty getting assistance from other sources or a hardship is placed upon them. They can be depended upon to provide memorial honor guards as needed for veterans' funerals. They also host an annual Ceremony for Disposal of Unserviceable Flags every June. The legion does not march in the light parade, but they do have a trailer leading the parade. On Memorial Day, they have a program at the post and members then march to the cemetery, where a roll call of deceased veterans is done. For the past few years, SAL has prepared a meal for veteran members and spouses on Veterans Day. Also the Legion, SAL, ALR and the Auxiliary provide scholarships for relatives of members. Ongoing social activities include: bingo, euchre, an annual Chili Cookout, Fish Fries, several times during the fall, winter and spring and Thursday night specials that rotate between tacos, sliders, chicken wings and Coney dogs. Local members participate in the Homecoming Parade in Stockbridge as well as in the Gregory Fourth of July Parade. Since July 2019, any honorably discharged veteran who served after Dec. 7, 1941, is now able to join the American Legion and all our welcomed to do so. Wartime service was previously required. The "Legion Act" as it is named was signed into law in July 2019. Everyone is welcome to attend the games and the meals and to participate in any of the other activities provided throughout the year. Phone 517-851-8445.

Boy and Cub Scouts. Camping, archery, BB gun shooting, bottle/can drives, car washes, Pinewood Derby races—these are a few of the activities that Cub Scouts has to offer. Come join the adventure. Interested? Want info? Contact Mike Stoffer at phone 734-355-3070 or email at mikestoffer8@gmail.com.

Churches: The Stockbridge area is home to a wide assortment of churches and religious organizations. Currently recorded churches in our area are:

- **First Presbyterian**, 101 S. Center. Contact Linda or Kate at 517-851-7015.
- **Stockbridge United Methodist**, 219 East Elizabeth. Contact: Elizabeth, 517-851-7676.
- **Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian Catholic**, Catholic Church Road. Contact Bonnie at 517-589-8492 or bonnie@saintsjcc.org.
- **Gregory Community Church**, 126 Church St., Gregory. 734-498-2541.
- **Trinity Lutheran**, Pinckney.
- **Stockbridge Church of Christ**, 4783 S. M-52, Stockbridge. 517-851-8141.
- **Highest Praise Worship Center**, 5107 Clinton, Stockbridge. 517-851-7758.
- **Crossroads Community Church**, 950 S. Clinton, Stockbridge. 517-851-7075.
- **First Methodist Church of Waterloo**, Territorial Road, Stockbridge. 517-851-7287.
- **Good Shepherd Mission**, 5050 E. M-36. 517-851-9800.
- **Jeruel Baptist Church**, 11400 Plum Orchard Road, Munith. 517-596-2128.

- **Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses**, 15800 Graves Road, Gregory. 734-498-2601.
- **Millville United Methodist Church**, 1932 N. M-52, Stockbridge. 517-851-7853.
- **Munith United Methodist**, 122 N. M-36, Munith. 517-596-2441.
- **Plainfield United Methodist Church**, 17845 M-36, Stockbridge. 517-851-7651.
- **Southwest Church of Nazarene**, 1455 Holmes Road, Gregory. 734-498-2682.
- **Trinity Pentecostal Church**, 4935 Freiermuth Road. 517-565-3310.
- **Unadilla Presbyterian Church**, 20175 Williamsville Road, Gregory. 734-498-7114.

The Stockbridge Community News is pleased to allocate special sections of the December and March print editions to numerous holiday activities underway in these organizations. Please see our online and print "Community Calendar" for specific church activities and events each month.

Friends of the Stockbridge Library. Is a nonprofit organization. We are always looking for new members. Our goal is to raise money to support library programming at the local level. We also provide additional funds for summer reading prizes as well as library equipment. We are all library lovers who enjoy helping our local library. We organize the annual Silent Auction and help with book sales. The Friends help with programming and purchasing needed items for the Stockbridge Library. For info, contact P.O. Box 802 or email eileenconti50@gmail.com.

Girl Scouts. Enjoy field trips, camping, cultural studies and more. For info, contact Kate Wigent at 517-742-4741, or contact Membership Specialist Callie Frey with the Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan at 517-742-4741.

Happy Hustlers 4-H. Interested in 4-H? Happy Hustlers meet generally once a month. Any youth 5 years or older may join. The goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership responsibility and life skills of youth through positive learning programs. Whether you are interested in crafts, photography, or animals, you can discover these programs through Happy Hustlers 4-H Club. If interested, please ask to join our Happy Hustlers 4-H page or call Carrie Zeitz at 517-204-1336 or Holly Whitaker, 517-937-9547. Meetings are held at Heritage School on the second Sunday of the month, 6 p.m. Check us out on Facebook.

Munith Rod & Gun Club. Spring through fall, daytime and under the lights, the nonprofit MR&GC sports club sponsors American Trapshooting Association (ATA) events and fun shoots. The trapshooter club welcomes all adults and accompanied minors on Friday nights at 5 p.m. for trapshooting practice April through October. Location: 11455 Fitchburg Road, Munith, Michigan. Contact: 517-745-3783.

Munith/Stockbridge Community Pay It Forward Group. A local online outreach project solely aimed at helping our community and neighbors at the micro level. Though the local economy has improved since PIF's founding in 2012, the mission to bring aid to those in need remains. With neighbors helping neighbors throughout the surrounding communities, the group's format and guidelines are simple: If you are in need of help, it doesn't matter what it is, post it. Not comfortable asking publicly? Contact one of the administrators privately and confidentially. Know someone in need? Post for them. Someone will see it and help. Your kid needs a winter coat? Good chance someone on this page will have one. Public Announcements, Lost and Found Pets and Employment Opportunities. This is not a "For Sale" page and all items must be donated freely. Have an item you no longer want or need? Post it. Chances are a neighbor will want or need it. Need a ride to work because your car broke down? Post it. Maybe someone on here is going that way. Can't pay the light bill? If we can't help here, we will put you in contact with someone who can.

Now, if you see someone post something and you can help them, times are hard and we have all been there. Some are blessed with more than what they need, and others don't have enough. Connect with us on Facebook at Munith/Stockbridge Community Pay it Forward Group or email us via our sister group at wakeupstockbridge@gmail.com.

Open Air Market of Stockbridge. A 501(c)3 Farmers Market held every Friday from 4 to 7 p.m. on the Stockbridge Township Square from first Friday in May through October. Local and regional musicians perform in the gazebo between 5:30 and 7 p.m. May through September. Our products include local honey, eggs, jam, granola varieties, maple syrup, bread, pies, coffeecake, zucchini bread, cookies, cupcakes, and more.

Continued on page 14.

Groups enrich community page 13

Open Air Market of Stockbridge cont. Produce and fruits include fresh corn, tomatoes, potatoes, beans, squash, broccoli, cauliflower, peppers, garlic, herbs, greens, rhubarb, apples, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries and melons. In the spring we have bedding plants and flowers and in summer we have cut flowers. Artisan crafts include handmade soaps, candles, herbal lotions and sprays, baskets, knitted items and art. We welcome other nonprofit organizations to set up booths for free. Off season, the event continues indoors on select dates. The Market has four winter markets in the Presbyterian Church Hall on the second Saturday of January, February, March, April (dates can change) from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., with local musicians from noon to 2 p.m.. Contact information: OAM, P.O. Box 382, Stockbridge, MI 49285, suznort@juno.com, and we are on Facebook.

Panther Cubs PTO. A 501(C)(3) nonprofit comprised of parent volunteers, teachers and administrators. The mission of the PTO is to support the needs of the staff and students of Stockbridge schools. Funds raised by the group pay for teacher supplies, field trip transportation, movie licensing, special assemblies, playground equipment and more. The PTO also organizes events such as family fun nights, dances for students and teacher appreciation lunches. Meetings are held at Heritage Elementary the first Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m. Additionally a parent volunteer meeting will be held the third Tuesday of the month at Heritage at 6 p.m. Want to receive our monthly newsletter? Want more information? Interested in being a part? Check us out on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/panthercubspato/>

Shop Rat Foundation. Founded in 2004 by manufacturing entrepreneur Chris Salow, the Shop Rat foundation promotes and provides learning opportunities for youth enrolled in grades 6-12 to gain a better understanding of the manufacturing industry through participation in Shop Rat Education Program offerings. The Foundation's mission is "to ignite interest in manufacturing careers among youth through innovation and outreach." Its educational program incorporates hands-on, project-based curriculum modules focused on machining, welding, engineering, construction and modern manufacturing (including mechatronics and additive manufacturing). The program currently is facilitating after-school classes, in-school partnership activities and summer camps in Jackson, Livingston, Eaton, Hillsdale, Ingham and Lenawee counties. Facilities are located at 11855 Bunkerhill Road, Pleasant Lake, MI 49272. Can be found at www.shoprat.org. Contact Kelly Burr Kofflin at: shopratfoundation@gmail.com for information.

SRSLY (text language for "seriously"). SRSLY's mission is to empower and equip youth to reach their full potential by remaining substance-free. SRSLY promotes positive family, school, and community involvement. We also work to limit youth access to alcohol and other drugs and to reduce parental and peer approval of youth drug use. We focus on primary prevention, which means we aim to stop substance use before it ever starts. That's why we focus our efforts on youth ages 10-15, but our coalition is open to anyone interested in promoting a more positive and healthy community. For more information or to volunteer, email srslystock@gmail.com or call 734-593-8089. Visit srslystockbridge.org or follow SRSLY Stockbridge on Facebook and Instagram.

Stockbridge Area Arts Council (SAAC). Is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to providing opportunities for area residents of all ages to participate in and enjoy the performing arts and cultural events in our community. Since its inception in 1990, the SAAC has improved the aesthetics of the Township Hall by contributing funds for a new stage curtain and audience seating, purchasing a new sound system, purchasing and providing ongoing maintenance of the grand piano, and improving the lighting system. The SAAC sponsors an annual art show in the Township Hall, offers an annual scholarship for a selected Stockbridge student to participate in a summer arts program, and sponsors performances by the Stockbridge Festival Chorus. SAAC meets in Room 108 of the Stockbridge Activity Building (former middle school). New members are welcome. For more info, please find us on Facebook or email: stockbridgeareaartscouncil@gmail.com.

Stockbridge Area Chamber of Commerce. Focuses on helping businesses and residents succeed by making our community a better place to work, live, dine, and play. We are organized to achieve the objective of: promoting growth, community, and volunteerism to the communities of Gregory, Munith, and Stockbridge by supporting other local groups or individuals for the common good and organizing events to attract and retain businesses and residents. Website www.stockbridgeareachamber.org/

or visit our Facebook page.

Stockbridge Area Educational Foundation. SAEF was founded in 2000 as a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization affiliated with the Jackson County Community Foundation. SAEF offers many benefits to the Gregory, Munith and Stockbridge areas through the generous donations of community members and participation in its primary annual fundraiser, the Festival of Tables. SAEF enhances the educational opportunities available to all its citizens through quarterly grants and scholarships. Donations offer educational support to community members and organizations, contributing to a more positive and enriched future. For more information, call 517-851-7188 or visit www.panthernet.net/our-district/saef.

The Stockbridge Area Garden Club. First established in 1984, serves the greater Stockbridge area. Its 20-plus members seek to beautify public areas, educate people on the how-to's of flower gardening, and support civic projects. Among other undertakings, the garden club decorates the Township Hall and Square, weeds and waters the cemetery flag garden, and helps families in need through Stockbridge Community Outreach. Meetings are usually held the first Monday of the month generally at 1 p.m. All interested are invited. Contact risnerco@gmail.com or mail the Stockbridge Garden Club, P.O. Box 612, Stockbridge, MI 49285.

Stockbridge Area Genealogical/Historical Society (SAGHS). Is dedicated to preserving and promoting genealogical and historical information throughout the greater Stockbridge area. SAGHS offices are located in the Stockbridge Town Hall on the lower level. P.O. Box 966, Stockbridge, MI 49285. For info about general public meetings, please check our website: www.stockbridgeareaghs.org. Contact stockbridgeareaghs@hotmail.com.

Stockbridge Area Senior Center (SASC). At your Stockbridge Area Senior Center, we encourage and support the overall wellness, health and connectivity of older adults. We share a warm gathering space and an inclusive culture with enriching activities, events, education and a whole lot of fun! At SASC, we believe in lifelong learning, keeping our bodies and minds active, and sharing fun and laughter often. The Tri-County Office on Aging helps us provide lunches. We welcome visitors, guests and members from Stockbridge and the surrounding communities. Consider joining SASC today. Or, stop by to see what we're all about. Address: 219 W. Elm St., Stockbridge. Mailing Address: P.O. Box 511, Stockbridge, MI 49285. Phone: 517-480-0353. Email: SASC49285@gmail.com. Hours: Tuesday – Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Stockbridge Area Wellness Coalition (SAWC). Was created by the 5 Healthy Towns Foundation (5HF) to help improve the overall wellness of the area served by the former Chelsea Hospital. 5HF is a tax-exempt, private charitable foundation governed by a volunteer board of directors. The mission of the 5HF is to cultivate improvements in personal and community wellness. SAWC aims to serve all those within the Stockbridge school district, focusing on four pillars of health identified by 5HF: making healthy connections, eating better, moving more, and avoiding unhealthy substances. One of the first projects undertaken was to establish the Stockbridge Wellness Center, but other interventions include improving the trail systems, building and improving playgrounds and parks, helping to build the Heritage pavilion and community greenhouse, supporting the Open Air Market and Outreach's Tide Me Over, establishing SRSLY Stockbridge and planning for wellness improvements for the future. All are invited, encouraged, and welcome to join SAWC. Other communities involved with 5HF are Chelsea, Dexter, Grass Lake, and Manchester. To learn more about the Stockbridge Area Wellness Coalition and 5HF, visit www.5healthytowns.org or www.facebook.com/stockbridgewellnesscoalition or email jormayer76@gmail.com.

Stockbridge Athletic Boosters (SAB). Is a nonprofit organization that brings parents and community members together, dedicated to encouraging and supporting athletes and athletic programs in the Stockbridge Community School District. This is done through various fundraising opportunities such as event concessions and larger community events such as the Harlem Wizards fundraiser last spring, which helped purchase equipment for the new weight room in the Jr/Sr High School. SAB is always looking for volunteers to help work concessions and fundraising events, students may even work to cover pay-to-play fees. To find out more, find us on Facebook @Stockbridge Athletic Boosters. Stay tuned for news on our next big fundraising event this spring! Go Panthers!

Continued on page 15.

Groups enrich community page 14

Stockbridge Community Education. This department of the Stockbridge Community Schools oversees community use of the school buildings and property and also organizes enrichment and recreation programs for the district for all ages. Offices are located in the Jr/Sr High School, 416 N. Clinton St., Stockbridge. Phone 517-710-4122, website <http://panthernet.net/departments/community-education/> and Stockbridge Community-Education on Facebook. Volunteers are always needed to teach a class, coach a team, or help at events.

Stockbridge Community Greenhouse. Is up and running. A few community members have shared their gardening tips with our students, and we encourage others to contact Heritage School, 517-851-8600, if they would like to share information or use some of the space in the greenhouse for their gardening needs.

Stockbridge Community News. Is a volunteer-run, nonprofit, public information service operated by volunteers. Our mission is to serve as a hub of quality, consistent local information to build a stronger community. As an IRS 501(C) (4) organization, we depend on the support of donors and sponsors. Over the course of our first three years of existence, the News has grown from a four-page newsletter to a full-fledged public information organization. Our website (stockbridgecommunitynews.com) and Facebook page regularly serve more than 30,000 viewers each month. Our print edition, mailed monthly to more than 9,000 households in the Stockbridge School District, reaches an estimated 19,000 residents in the Stockbridge, Munith, Gregory and Fitchburg area and portions of White Oak, Grass Lake, Leslie, Pleasant Lake, plus portions of Washtenaw and Jackson counties. As you plan your gift giving for the beginning of the year, we hope you will keep us in mind, and we always need and welcome volunteers in a variety of areas. The News may be reached at P.O. Box 83, Gregory, MI 48137 or through email at stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com.

Stockbridge Community Outreach. Was organized during the fall of 1981 because local churches had become unable to handle the volume of requests for help. The first food pantry was in a room in the basement of a church. We are now located in the old Middle School (now the Stockbridge Activity Center), 305 W. Elizabeth, Room 120 and are open three days a week. We currently offer assistance with food (once monthly), utilities, housing, transportation, and prescriptions. We have clothing and small household goods—all free to the public. We coordinate the Tide Me Over food program for kids and families who are on the free or reduced lunch program. We participate in Fresh Food Distribution, held in the Jeruel's parking lot, that is monthly on the second Monday of the month from 4-5 p.m.. We have a weekly Wednesday curbside distribution in the parking lot outside our office from 1-3 p.m. open to anyone who needs food. Our facilities are used for government food distribution, and at Thanksgiving and Christmas we offer special food and gift programs. We make referrals to other agencies for specific needs. Our hours: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 1 to 3 p.m.. We also provide emergency assistance to those living in the Stockbridge School District. For info, call 517-851-7285 or find us on Facebook. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 682 - Stockbridge Activity Center, Stockbridge, MI 49285.

Stockbridge Library. Is a branch of Capital Area District Libraries serving the Stockbridge area community including all students of Stockbridge Community Schools who receive free library cards. The library offers public computers, free Wi-Fi, and faxing, copying, and printing. An external Wi-Fi point provides internet access to the municipal parking lot across the street. The library also offers books, magazines, DVD and Blu-ray movies, music CDs and books on CD for checkout. There are many more CADL services available with a library card; to learn more go to www.cadl.org. We offer programs for all ages including literacy-based storytimes for preschoolers, book discussion groups for adults, craft programs and special speakers and events. The Friends of the Stockbridge Library offer an ongoing used book sale, Recycled Reads, within the library during open hours. A Little Free Library is in front of the building and has a variety of community-sourced free reading material. The library is located at 200 Wood St., Stockbridge and the phone number is 517-851-7810. Our open hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday noon to 4 p.m. We're closed on Sunday during June, July, and August. Find more information about the Stockbridge Library at www.cadl.org/about/our-locations/stockbridge.

Stockbridge Lions and Lioness Clubs in Stockbridge. The Stockbridge Lions Club provides ongoing financial support to a wide range of organizations, events and foundations, including Stockbridge Community Outreach, Waterloo Farm Museum, Stockbridge Area Arts Council, American Diabetes Association, Bear Lake Camp, Stockbridge Day in the Village, Gregory Fourth of July Celebration, and Stockbridge Area Educational Foundation. The Stockbridge Lions Club has awarded more than \$250,000 over the past years to graduating seniors of Stockbridge High School to help further their educations. The group meets the first Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Presbyterian C.E. Building. Anyone interested in joining or contacting the Lions Club may call Norm Landis, Lions president, at 734-498-2380.

Stockbridge Masonic Lodge. Is a charitable organization that supports many causes in the Stockbridge area, including scholarship programs at the high school, sponsoring teams through Community Education and raising funds and sponsoring Adopt-A-Family for Stockbridge Community Outreach. A Mason is a member of the oldest and largest goodwill fraternity in the world, known as Masonry or Freemasonry. Masonry teaches that each man has a duty to make life better, not just for himself, but for everyone. They are in all likelihood the oldest continuing group within our community, having established themselves by 1862 in Stockbridge. Their meeting hall is located on the second floor of the building, which now houses Hometown Pharmacy. You can see their insignia on the door between the two Hometown Pharmacy doors. Their charter does not permit the solicitation of members, but they are always happy to include new ones. Their history in the community is a long and active one. Contact Greg Uihlein at 734-905-0990 or greguihlein@howardhanna.com.

Their Guardian, Their Voice. Is a small group of community members connecting in an online forum working together to offer help with short-term assistance for families in crisis and struggling to feed or care for their pets and/or livestock. Their Guardian, Their Voice also will try to assist with placement, adoption, general medical care, and the occasional emergency medical care when funds are available. We are not a wealthy community and resources are limited and the list is long but we do our best to meet immediate needs. Our end goal is always to make sure any animal doesn't go hungry or suffer. If someone is not comfortable asking publicly for assistance, they can contact one of the administrators privately and confidentially. Coverage area is Ingham County, Jackson County and immediate surrounding counties. For more information, contact Heather Walling at guardiansvoice@hotmail.com or connect with us on Facebook at Their Guardian, Their Voice. Ongoing donations can be made at [paypal.me/guardiansvoice](https://www.paypal.com/guardiansvoice).

Tide Me Over. A backpack program that is part of Outreach, works to stave off hunger among grade K-12's most vulnerable students by sending food home with children to tide them over the weekend. Currently, the program provides weekend meals to more than 100 Stockbridge elementary students, pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Donations may be made c/o the TMO program to Stockbridge Outreach, located in the Old Middle School, Mondays and Fridays (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and Wednesdays 1 to 6 p.m. Mail to Stockbridge Community Outreach, P.O. Box 682, Stockbridge, MI 49285. Questions or comments? Email 56Hollowayc@gmail.com.

Town Hall Players. Our hometown community theater group is always looking for new members: actors, musicians, technical directors, designers, backstage and front-of-house crew, and other volunteers. THP relies on the generous support of local businesses, groups, and individuals to continue to produce good local theater. See our Facebook page, Stockbridge Town Players. If you would like more info or to sponsor a show or the complete season, please find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/stockbridgethp/. We can be contacted at stockbridgethp@gmail.com.

Wake Up Stockbridge & Surrounding Communities. An online forum and movement of like-minded individuals with the mindset of community unity and pride.

Its goals include making our community inviting for all near and far, coming together as a community united rather than divided, and addressing the harder issues and concerns surrounding us.

Continued on page 16.

STOCKBRIDGE TOWNSHIP MEETING MINUTES

January 15, 2024

Stockbridge Township Supervisor CG Lantis called the Regular Stockbridge Township Board Meeting to order on January 15, 2024 at 7:30pm at the Stockbridge Township Hall. Members present at the Stockbridge Township Regular Board Meeting; Supervisor CG Lantis, Clerk Becky Muraf, Treasurer James Wireman, Trustee Terry Sommer, Trustee Ed Wetherell Member absent None Pledge of Allegiance Moment of Silence Sommer Motion to accept the agenda as printed Wetherell Second All in Favor Motion Carried Citizen Comments: None Wetherell Motion to accept the Stockbridge Township Board meeting minutes for December 18, 2023 as printed Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried Muraf motion to table the Stockbridge Township Financial Report as printed until February 19, 2024, James Second All in Favor Motion Carried Village of Stockbridge Police Chief Bartus was president and went over his vision for the future of the Stockbridge Police Department Old Business Lantis is going to get quotes for the library walls and the wooden bookshelves to be painted later this summer when CADL will be doing renovations to the Stockbridge Library along with quotes to install an ADA door access. Memorial wall update. Lantis is reaching out to have this completed. Sommer motion to adopt the Stockbridge Township revised Blight Ordinance Wetherell Second Roll Call vote Sommer Yes, Wetherell Yes, Muraf Yes, Wireman Yes, Lantis Yes, All in Favor Motion Carried New Business Wireman motion to adopt the Tax Resolution Payment reduction Program from Ingham County Muraf Second

All in Favor Motion Carried Muraf motion to accept the Stockbridge Township Board meeting dates as followed with the new time of 7:00PM Stockbridge Township Board Meeting Dates 2024 Time is 7:00PM Jan 15, 2024, Feb 19,2024, March 18, 2024, April 15, 2024, May 20, 2024, June 17, 2024,July 15, 2024, August 19, 2024,September 16, 2024,October 21, 2024,November 18, 2024,December 18, 2024. Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried Stockbridge Township Budget Meeting is March 21, 2024, at Noon at the Stockbridge Township Hall and the Stockbridge Township Budget Hearing is March 28, 2024 at Noon at the Stockbridge Township Hall Stockbridge Township Planning Commission next meeting is April 10, 2024, at 7PM Muraf motion to approve the Stockbridge Township office holiday closures to follow the Ingham County Holiday Closures for 2024 Sommer Second All in Favor Motion Carried Muraf motion to receive written appeals at the Stockbridge Township March Board of Review Wiremen Second All in Favor Motion Carried Sommer Motion to pay the Stockbridge Township Board monthly bills in the amount of \$51,709.16. Wetherell Second All in Favor Motion Carried Citizen Comments Sommer motion to close open session and open closed Session Muraf Second All in Favor Motion Carried Sommer motion to close close session and open open session Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried at 9:01PM. Wireman motion to approve the discussion that was discussed in closed session Sommer Second Roll Call Vote Wetherell Yes, Wireman Yes, Muraf Yes, Sommer Yes, Lantis Yes All in Favor Motion Carried Lantis motion to adjourn the Stockbridge Township Regular on January 15, 2024 at 9:03PM BM

Groups enrich community page 15

Wake Up Stockbridge & Surrounding Communities cont. Wake Up Stockbridge, which started as a Facebook group to discuss community goals, is a positive entity that welcomes different points of view and opinions. Working closely with its sister group Munith/Stockbridge Pay It Forward to make the simplest of needs to larger of needs meet as best it can, to ease economic burdens. The group has grown into local gatherings that host community projects. It conducts various types of activities and initiatives for young and old, resident or not. Although Wake Up highlights Stockbridge as the central point, we are an all-inclusive group helping overlapping communities and neighbors. "After all, it does not take a village, township or district to make a community. It takes like-minded people who simply care," Tina Mullins said.

For more information, contact Tina at wakeupstockbridge@gmail.com or via Facebook at Wake Up Stockbridge & Surrounding Communities.

Waterloo Farm and Dewey School Museums. Located at 13493 Waterloo-Munith Road, Grass Lake, MI 49240 is maintained and staffed by volunteer workers and members of the Waterloo Area Historical Society (WAHS). We have operated as a community service since 1962, giving tours, living history interpretations, demonstrations, educational meetings, and craft classes. To volunteer, see our website or Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WaterlooFarmMuseum. Contact WAHS at P.O. Box 37, Stockbridge, MI 49285, email: waterloofarmmuseum.org, or call the Farm Museum at 517-596-2254 to leave a message. See our Facebook page. Open for weekend tours starting the first weekend after Memorial Day and ending the weekend before Labor Day.

Waterloo Natural History Association. Since 1981, the Waterloo Natural History Association (WNHA) has been helping people enhance their experiences with nature in the Waterloo Recreation Area. The WNHA is a 501(c)3 charitable organization whose purpose is to provide both educational and recreational opportunities for people visiting the park. The association is composed of concerned citizens who want to support environmental education and help promote the area as a valuable community resource. Everyone is welcome to become a member. The WNHA and the Department of Natural Resources have a unique partnership. As a support organization for the Waterloo Recreation Area and the Eddy Discovery Center, the WNHA sponsors projects, offers weekend public programs, maintains the gift shop, and provides services which supplement and complement those offered by the DNR. Whether you explore the dark, tangled recesses of the black-spruce bog, or enjoy listening to the chorusing of woodland frogs, the WNHA will help you discover the natural wonders of the Waterloo Recreation Area. The Eddy Discovery Center is the nature center for the park and is located at 17030 Bush Road, 3 miles west of downtown Chelsea. A recreation passport for your vehicle is required for entry. Visit the website at www.wnha.org to learn more about the organization, program schedules, and memberships, or call the Eddy Discovery Center at 734-475-3170.

Waterloo Needlework Club. This group has continued making needlework quilts, knitting and crocheting for people in need since 1911. The club has supported a number of different charities through the years, including making bandages for injured soldiers during World Wars I and II. WNC supports a number of current charities with quilts or money and will be demonstrating our crafts at Pioneer Day in October at the Waterloo Farm Museum. We appreciate donations of good cotton fabric, batting, or money to buy these items. We meet the second and fourth Thursday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Munith United Methodist Church. Anyone wishing to learn how to quilt, knit, or crochet, are welcome to join us in the church basement on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. For info, call Jan, 517-769-2172, powelljanice02@gmail.com or Mary Myer, 517-851-8752. Leave a message, and we'll get back with you.

UTPD Activity December 1-31, 2023

Friday 12/01 - Property Damage Accident-Wasson Rd/Bull Run Rd., Citizen Assist-Doyle Rd./VanSyckle Rd., Citizen Assist-San Luray Dr./San Souci Ave., Citizen Assist-Church St./Webb St.
Monday 12/04 - Welfare Check-Walnut Ln./Bowdish Rd., Property Damage Accident-Dutton Rd./M 106
Tuesday 12/05 - Unknown Accident-Wasson Rd./Bull Run Rd.
Wednesday 12/06 - Fraud-Gregory Rd./ Linda Ray Ln., Structure Fire-Stockbridge ST./Cass St., Follow up-Van Syckle Rd./Doyle Rd., Domestic Physical-Stockbridge St./Cass St.
Friday 12/08 - Trespassing-Dutton Rd./Dexter Trl.
Saturday 12/09 - Larceny-Donohue Rd./Spears Rd.
Monday 12/11 - Intimidation- M-106/ M-36, Assist EMS-Williamsville Rd./San Luray Dr., Property Damage Accident-Wasson Rd./Bull Run Rd.
Tuesday 12/12 - Hit and Run Accident-Tamara Dr./Kaiser Rd., Welfare Check-Weller Rd./Dutcher Rd.
Wednesday 12/13 - Hazard- Williamsville Rd./Holmes Rd.
Thursday 12/14 - Animal Complaint-Williamsville Rd./Holmes Rd.
Saturday 12/16 - Lost/Found Animal-Livermore Rd./Doyle Rd.
Monday 12/18 - Animal Complaint-Hadley

Rd./Barum
Tuesday 12/19 - Assist EMS-Deep Valley Rd./Dutton Rd. Wednesday 12/20, Citizen Assist-Webb St./Church St., Assist EMS-Tamara Dr./Kaiser Rd., Animal Complaint-Weller Rd./Wasson Rd., Hazard-Williamsville Rd./Orlando Dr., Citizen Assist-Webb St./Church St., Suspicious Situation-Pleasant Dr./Woodside Dr.
Friday 12/22- Fraud-Berkshire Dr./Gregory Rd.
Saturday 12/23 - Suspicious Situation-Worden Rd./Bowdish Rd. Suspicious Vehicle-Worden Rd./Bowdish Rd., 911 Hang up-M-36/Dexter Trail, Property Damage Accident-Gregory Rd./Wasson Rd. Hazard-Gregory Rd./Berkshire Rd.
Tuesday 12/26 - Patrol Information-Doyle Rd./Worden Rd., Missing Person/Run-A-Way- Rose Hill Rd./Spears Rd.
Wednesday 12/27 - Citizen Assist-Webb St./Church St., Patrol Information-Kaiser Rd./Woodside Dr. **Thursday 12/28**, Medical Assist-Twin Ponds/W M-36, Larceny-Bullis Rd./Bird Ln.
Friday 12/29 - Larceny-Cass St./Ovit St., Citizen Assist-Webb St./Church St., Assist EMS-Deep Valley Rd./Dutton Rd., Property Damage Accident-Doyle Rd./Templar Ave.
Saturday 12/30 - Animal Complaint-Walnut Ln./Bowdish Rd., Shots Fired-San Luray Dr./San Marino Ave.
Sunday 12/31 - Welfare Check-Stockbridge St./Cass St.

Chief David S. Russell
Unadilla Township Police Department



Kelsey Rasmussen

Positive Parenting

The art of asking questions: Listening is secret ingredient

by Kelsey Rasmussen

Children often learn the adage that we have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen twice as much as we speak. One of the first things I learned in teacher training is called wait time. It refers to the practice of giving your students time to process your question before moving on. I was taught to wait a full eight seconds for someone to raise his/her hand. For anyone who has done public speaking, you know eight seconds can feel like an eternity! When it feels awkward or we get impatient, we often fill that silence and miss an opportunity for students to think or contribute.

As a parent, I'm learning that wait time with infants and toddlers contributes to their language development, ability to concentrate, and positive self-concept. "The Montessori Toddler" by Simone Davies lists the top 12 things parents need to know about toddlers, and two of the top 12 are recognizing a toddler's need to communicate and giving them time to process what is said to them. When we slow down our speech and listen, we show our child respect. In contrast, when we assume the child can't understand or answer, or we repeat ourselves more loudly and closer to a child's face, we show our child disrespect and interfere with their developing attention span.

Listening is the secret ingredient in the art of asking questions. Janice Armstrong will present about "Love and Logic" during the first Parent University meeting at Smith Elementary on Feb. 7 at 6 p.m. Part of the "Love and Logic" approach is for parents to share control and thinking with their children. When we give children real choices within safe limits, and when we exercise enough patience to observe their responses, we strengthen children's sense of control, and positive self-image. Guidelines for giving choices using the "Love and Logic" method, include the following:

1. Give 99% of choices when things are going smoothly.
2. Provide choices only on issues that are not dangerous and don't create a problem for anyone else on the planet.
3. Always offer two options, each a choice that makes you happy.
4. If the child doesn't choose in 10 seconds flat, choose for the child.

"Love and Logic" authors say, "The beauty of these choices is that little children love them. They make these choices excitedly and feel they've gained some control in their lives."

Shifting our language from commands to two-choice questions is powerful, and can be as simple as:

- "Put your socks on," becomes "Will you wear yellow socks or blue socks?"
- "Let's go," becomes "Do you want to walk to the car or be carried?"
- "It's bedtime," becomes "Do you want to hear a story before bed, or no story?"

Young children can respond to questions and make decisions. Even infants do this non-verbally. It's never too early (or too late) to train ourselves to pause and count two or three breaths while we wait for our children to think and answer. Please join us to learn more about Love and Logic at Parent University on Feb. 7. Register using this link: <https://bit.ly/PantherParentU> or scan the QR code shown below:



Sources:

- "The Montessori Toddler," Simone Davies.
- "Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood," Fay and Fay, pp. 84-85.

Kelsey Rasmussen is a mother of twin toddlers and teaches computer science part time at Stockbridge High School. She and her husband moved to Stockbridge from Colorado in 2022 to raise their children in a small town near family.

Activity Highlight: Make Valentine's Day cards together

Fold a sheet of paper to fit an envelope. Use markers to write a message, and let your toddler decorate with crayons and/or stickers. Talk about the shapes and colors as you go, trace his/her hand, or encourage older children to write messages themselves. Send these love notes to family or friends to make their day!



Encourage children to give homemade valentine notes to family or friends. Photo credit Kelsey Rasmussen

Knights of Columbus donates to Stockbridge Community School District



by Clyde Whitaker

Brian Friddle (left), superintendent, Stockbridge Community Schools, accepts a check for \$655 from Clyde Whitaker on behalf of the Knights of Columbus, Father Gerald F. Chapman Council No. 13516 (Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian Church). The check will be used for supporting the efforts of students with intellectual disabilities in the

Stockbridge school district. The same K of C Council made similar donations of \$655 to the Dansville School District and the St. Louis Center in Chelsea.

Reading Between the Lines page 11

Gifting books at Christmas has always been one of my favorite things to do. Sharing my passion for reading is a way to connect with my grandchildren and can often lead to great conversations about life. I bought "The Beatryce Prophecy" for my two 9-year-old grandchildren who live in different states. At times, when the reading became a bit challenging for the children, their mothers got involved by reading with them. After reading along with her daughter, my daughter Laura shared that the author, DiCamillo, is brilliant at making up unusual characters.

Fortunately, I also bought a copy of the book for myself. Familiarizing myself with the story led to some of the most delightful phone conversations with my grandchildren. We talked about the words that were new and, of course, the story of Beatryce, Answelica, and the evil kingdom.

Happy reading to young and old alike, and be sure to look for other books by Kate DiCamillo.

Joan Tucker is a lifelong learner who appreciates books she can share with family and friends. She enjoyed her career as a registered nurse of 40 years.

Clyde's Corner

Ralph 'Buster' Myer: Still open for business after all these years

by Clyde Whitaker

I was out the other day, doing what I love, taking pictures of the great outdoors, when I came upon the place of business of an old friend, Ralph "Buster" Myer.



Clyde Whitaker

I have known Buster, as most of us who went to school with him called him, since back in the '60s. Buster was a proud 1970 Stockbridge High School graduate; while in high school, he participated in football and wrestling.

After graduation, Buster served in the armed services until the end of his service in 1974. Buster had a keen interest in firearms and decided in 1976 to enroll in a 2-year gunsmith course in Denver.

In 1977, Buster married the former Carol Schoonover in the Unadilla Presbyterian Church. That year, Buster also began his gun repair business, starting out in his basement. Buster still works full time, but now he "commutes" from his house to his outside workshop, repairing, refinishing and selling guns and accessories. Carol often is working with him.

Buster has customers calling from all over the United States, including New York, Florida, Illinois and Ohio.

I asked Buster if he had any unusual stories he could share with me. He said he had a few, but one stood out in particular. He told the story of two hunters who came from the Detroit area to hunt rabbits on the old Wilber Tisch farm. Apparently, every time they shot one of their guns at a rabbit, the barrel would go flying off in one direction and the rabbit in another. Finally tiring of chasing after the gun barrel, they came in to see Buster to find out if he had a solution. Buster looked the gun all over and determined that all it needed was a magazine cap to keep it all together. The hunters were elated!

Carol and Buster have eight grandchildren, and some are learning the trade. I asked Buster how much longer he would continue with his business. He said as long as he enjoys it, he "will keep on keeping on," and Carol nodded her head in agreement.

Thanks, Buster, for 47 years of service to our community and beyond. You are certainly one of a kind.

Clyde Whitaker is a 1973 Stockbridge graduate. He and his wife, Mary, raised four children in Stockbridge, and they still reside in the Stockbridge area.

The Cannon & The Quicksand: The legends of Nichols Lake in Stockbridge

by John Robinson

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As a kid, a few of my buddies and I would pack a knapsack with a little food and head out to Beckwith's Woods, now known as the Beckwith Preserve. Stopping along the creek that ran thru the woods, we'd stop and have something to eat, sometimes fish, catch crawdads, and once went swimming.

Another thing we did was to make a raft so we could float it up to Nichols Lake, just a tad upcreek from the Beckwith Preserve. Why? Because we were curious. We heard a couple of legends about the lake and we just wanted to head out into it. One legend says there is an old Civil War cannon buried at the bottom of the lake. There doesn't seem to be any substantiated proof of this, and I always wondered why someone just couldn't scuba dive in the lake, scout around, and see for themselves? Reason: after well over 150 years, it probably sank into the murky lake floor, which leads us to Legend #2.

The bottom of Nichols Lake is all quicksand. Is that for real or simply a speculation? All I know is that as kids we were told not to swim, fish, boat, or even visit Nichols Lake...it was too dangerous. But how accurate was Stockbridge's elder community in telling us this? And for that matter, just what do we know about Nichols Lake?

A third legendary rumor says the lake is bottomless (due to the quicksand, maybe?).

The lake was named after the owner of the surrounding property, William C. Nichols. When his grandfather, Jacob Steffey, died in 1858, William inherited the 150 acres of land that also encompassed the lake. Now that he was a landowner, William married Mary Westfall (whose family also owned land near the lake) in 1859 and they made their home on the property. William and Mary were soon the parents of George Walter Nichols, born in 1861.

According to Stockbridge Community News, in 1898 George was making money by selling salt pork for seven cents a pound. The lake was also used for ice harvesting, with 12-inch thick squares being cut and used for refrigeration.

By 1912, George and his wife Ella May had expanded the land to 160 acres. Atlases show that in 1914, the land was owned by George's brother, William J. Nichols thru the 1930s. It's also written that George and Ella May's daughter Edna owned the land for a while after George passed in 1933.

Nice family history, but that doesn't answer the questions about the Cannon and the Quicksand: true or not? We're still waiting for someone with knowledge about these legends to give us some insight.....and a scuba diver.



Ralph "Buster" and Carol Myer still operate their 47-year-old business, Ralph's Gun Shop, in Stockbridge. Photos provided by Clyde Whitaker



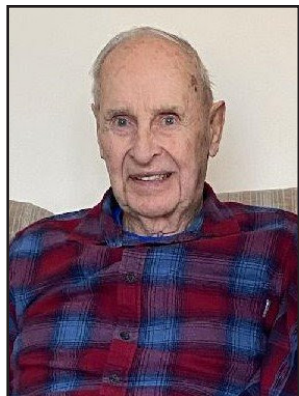
Ralph "Buster" Myer repairs, refinishes and sells guns and accessories in Ralph's Gun Shop in Stockbridge.



Nichols Lake in Stockbridge, Michigan. Image from Google Maps

Obituaries

Merlin Batdorff



Merlin Batdorff
Sept. 11, 1932 to Jan. 9, 2024

Merlin Batdorff, of Stockbridge, MI, age 91, passed away on January 9, 2024 in Jackson, MI. Merlin was born on September 11, 1932 in Stockbridge, MI to Irving Smith and Vida (Holland) Batdorff.

Merlin was born, raised, farmed, raised his family, and lived in Stockbridge, MI all his life. He married Kaye M. Poxson on January 30, 1953 in Bunker Hill, MI. Merlin was a farmer and always a hard worker. You could usually find him outdoors working in the fields picking up rocks, pulling weeds, and planting the crops. He was a proud member of the FFA organization. Merlin was a John Deere man. He loved his John Deere tractors. He had a few hobbies that took his interest off of work. One was flying, a hobby he loved, the other was snow skiing on Blind Lake.

Merlin will be missed by the love of his life, Kaye, and they were married for over 70 years; his children, Dawne (Carl) Salow of Pleasant Lake, Jamie Batdorff of Munith, Shane (Kim) Batdorff of Stockbridge; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; his sister-in-law, Phyllis Batdorff of Chicago. He was preceded in death by his son, Steve; brothers, Rolland and Myron; sisters, Onalee Hartley, Charlotte Teachworth, and Monadden Bradbury.

Cremation has taken place and a Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions may be made to SAESA or Ingham Co. Meals on Wheels. Arrangements by Caskey-Mitchell Funeral Home.

Earl "John" Love



Earl "John" Love
March 13, 1941 to Jan. 15, 2024

Earl "John" Love, of Stockbridge, MI, age 82, passed away on January 15, 2024 at home. John was born on March 13, 1941 in Jackson, MI, the son of William H. and Luella M. (Wirick) Love.

John lived in the Stockbridge area most of his life, graduating from Stockbridge High School in 1959. He proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1959-1963 and then transferred to the Reserves. He worked for DANA Corporation for 30 years, retiring in 1995. He was very active in the Stockbridge Community. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Stockbridge and the Stockbridge American Legion Mackinder-Glenn Post 510. John enjoyed the many friendships he made over the years playing golf, attending various sporting events, and morning coffee at McDonalds.

On April 18, 1964, he married Ella Louise (Howard) in Vandercook Lake, MI, and they enjoyed nearly 60 years of marriage. Surviving are his wife, Ella, two children, Tony (Lois) Love of Ann Arbor, and Tammy (Aileen Longfellow) Love of Reno, NV; two grandchildren, Elizabeth (Andrew) Blanchard, and Anna Love; a sister-in-law, Lena Howard of Stockbridge, and brother-in-law, Larry Howard of Richmond, VA.

A Memorial Service was held on Monday, January 22, 2024, 11:00 a.m., at the First Presbyterian Church of Stockbridge, where the family received friends from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service. Burial followed the service at Oaklawn Cemetery, Stockbridge.

Memorial contributions may be made to the First Presbyterian Church of Stockbridge or Stockbridge Community Outreach. Arrangements by Caskey-Mitchell Funeral Home.

Death Notices

If you wish to have a death notice included in a future edition and posted on the SCN website, please contact Stockbridge Community News.

There is no charge for this public service. Full obituaries are available for a fee.

- Paul Amiel Gailey, of Stockbridge, passed away Dec. 5, 2023
- David C. Mitchell, of Stockbridge, passed away Dec. 14, 2023
- Frances Helen Haidler, of Gregory, passed away Dec. 18, 2023
- Judith Ann Bilinski, of Gregory, passed away Dec. 31, 2023

Donna Jean Lukenich



Donna Jean Lukenich
March 16, 1925 to Jan. 21, 2024

Donna Jean Lukenich, age 98, of Jackson, MI, passed away on January 21, 2024. Donna was born on March 16, 1925 in Fitchburg, MI, the daughter of John and Wilma (Parman) Huffine. Donna had lived in the Jackson area all of her life. She was a member of Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian Catholic Church in Bunkerhill Twp. She worked at Variety Die and Stamping in Dexter for many years, retiring in 1987.

Donna enjoyed spending time outdoors and found joy in gardening, fishing, and camping. She also enjoyed bowling, and throughout the years she traveled throughout the country, exploring various destinations. One of her favorite places to travel was Alaska. She enjoyed spending time with family, especially her grandkids.

On March 14, 1944, she married Paul S. Lukenich, and he preceded her in death in 1981. She is survived by a daughter, Theresa (Donald) Byrd of Stockbridge, and a son, Michael (Marlene) Lukenich of Bear Lake; three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; and a sister, Kathleen Frey of Georgia. In addition to her husband, Paul, she was preceded in death by a son, Paul Stephen Lukenich Jr. in 1948, a daughter, Carol Ann Lukenich in 2000, a grandson, Jeffrey Paul Lukenich in 2020, two brothers, Boyd Huffine and Beryl Huffine, and her special companion, Berwin Seitz in 2021.

Visitation was held on Monday, January 29, 2024, from 5-7 p.m. at Caskey-Mitchell Funeral Home, Stockbridge, with a Rosary at 6:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 11:00 a.m., at Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian Catholic Church in Bunkerhill Twp., with Fr. Robert Irish presiding. Burial will follow at Fitchburg Cemetery. The family also received friends at the church on Tuesday from 10-11 a.m.

Memorial contributions may be made to the charity of one's choice.

Marcella Agnes Suojanen



Marcella Agnes Suojanen
Apr. 20, 1938 to Jan. 25, 2024

Marcella Agnes Suojanen, age 85, of the Upper Peninsula, MI, Pinckney, MI, and Stockbridge, MI, passed away on January 25, 2024 surrounded by her family at Chelsea Hospital in Chelsea, MI.

Marcella was born April 20, 1938, the daughter of George and Emma (Davis) Grandchamp in Portage Twp, MI in the Upper Peninsula, where she lived with 13 siblings for many years. She moved to Stockbridge to be closer to family, where she lived for approximately 15 years. Marcella enjoyed fishing, reunions, traveling, playing bingo, and going to the casino.

She married Harry Suojanen, and he survives. Also surviving are four children: Betty (Scott) Thompson of Unadilla Twp., Barbara (John) Litzner and Harry Jr. (Butch) Suojanen, all living in the Upper Peninsula, and William (Kimberly) Suojanen of Stockbridge, MI; nine grandchildren, many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, a sister, Rita Ricchi of Lapeer, as well as many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by a grandson, Andrew Rogers III, and great-grandsons, Eddie Tulppo and Lincoln Rogers.

The family will have a memorial at a later date.

STOCKBRIDGE SPORTS

Panthers roll to five wins in six games



Zach Fletcher works inside for the Panthers. Photos provided by Mike Williamson



Shannon Henderson recorded a triple-double against the Blackhawks.

by Mike Williamson

The Stockbridge varsity boys basketball team moved its record to 10-4 overall after winning five of six games recently.

The lone loss came Jan. 9 in overtime to Lansing Eastern 66-64.

The Panthers trailed for most of the game, but rallied in the fourth and tied it up with a basket by Drew Robinson in the final second to send it to overtime tied at 61.

Eastern outscored the Panthers 5-3 in the overtime period to pull out the win.

Kegan Collins had a big night with 27 points including five triples on the night.

Robinson finished with 10 points and Zach Fletcher seven.

Brock Rochow chipped in with six points, while Jacob Dalton and Joey Ballagh each had five. Shannon Henderson added four points and Foster Pybus two.

Reading On Jan. 19, the Panthers outscored Reading 38-18 in the second half and cruised to a 72-42 win.

Collins had another big game with 19 points, while Henderson added 10 to lead the Panthers.

Dalton, Ballagh, and Robinson scored nine each, Fletcher eight points, Rochow and Evan Sandecki three each, and Pybus two.

Grass Lake Stockbridge pulled away in the second half by outscoring the Warriors 40-22 for a 62-39 win Jan. 17.

Henderson and Robinson led the way with 12 points each, while Dalton added 11.

Fletcher, Ballagh, and Pybus scored six each, Rochow five, and Collins four.

Chicago Butler Prep On Jan. 6, the Panthers pulled out a 63-60 win over the visitors from Illinois.

Collins led the way with 18 points for Stockbridge.

Ballagh added 10 points, while Fletcher and Pybus had eight each. Rochow and Henderson chipped in with seven points each and Dalton five.

Leslie The Panthers trailed by four at halftime and rallied in the second half to beat rival Leslie 52-42 Jan. 5.

Henderson had a monster night with a triple-double of 18 points, 12 rebounds, and 10 blocked shots. He was a force inside and outside for the Panthers all night.

Fletcher also had a big night inside with 15 points for Stockbridge.

Dalton, Ballagh, and Collins scored five each, while Rochow and Pybus scored two each.

East Jackson On Dec. 21, Stockbridge jumped out to a 25-8 lead after one quarter and cruised to a 65-38 win over East Jackson.

Fletcher led the way with a double-double of 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Ballagh had a big night with 13 points and eight boards, while Collins and Dalton scored 10 each.

Pybus chipped in with nine points, Henderson five, and Rochow three.

Panther girls basketball team wins six of seven, improving to 6-4 on season



Melina Sayre drives for two against Leslie. Photos provided by Mike Williamson



Maddie Dalton leads the break against Leslie.

by Mike Williamson

After a slow start to the season against some tough competition, the Stockbridge varsity girls have bounced back by winning six of seven games to improve to 6-4 on the season.

The Panthers' three opening losses to start the season were against a pair of state-ranked teams: D3 third-ranked Michigan Center and D4 second-ranked Fowler. The third loss was to Grass Lake, which was in the Top 10 earlier this season.

They since have bounced back, including handing unbeaten Bronson Bronson a 64-50 loss Jan. 18.

The Panthers had a strong effort from the whole squad with a balanced scoring attack.

Gracee Robidou had a big night with 23 points, eight rebounds, and three assists to lead Stockbridge.

Maddie Dalton had a strong all-around night with 10 points, seven assists, and four rebounds, while Taylor Lockhart added seven points, four rebounds, and three assists.

Melina Sayre and Emma Monahan both had nice games with eight points each with Monahan grabbing four boards, and Sayre the rebounds and two assists.

Alaina Kellenberger was again a force underneath with eight points and 15 rebounds for the Panthers.

Union City On Jan. 16, the Panthers rolled to a 64-16 win over Union City by a pair of double-doubles by Kellenberger and Lockhart.

Kellenberger had a big night with 18 points and 19 rebounds. She added six steals and four assists.

Lockhart also had a big night with 14 points, 12 rebounds, and four steals.

Robidou had a strong all-around game with 11 points, seven steals, six assists, and five rebounds, while Sayre scored a career high nine points and grabbed three rebounds.

Monahan moved up to varsity from the JV team and had a big night with seven points, three assists, three steals, and two rebounds, while Dalton had three points and three assists, and Madeline Topping two points for the Panthers.

Fowlerville A huge night by Kellenberger pushed the Panthers past Fowlerville 49-21 on Jan. 9.

The Panthers held the Gladiators scoreless in the first and took control with a 13-0 lead after one and never looked back.

Kellenberger had a monster night with a double-double of 25 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Panthers. She also had six steals and three blocks on the night.

Lockhart also had a double-double for the Panthers with 12 points and ten boards.

Robidou had nine points and five rebounds, Sayre three points and three boards, and Dalton four rebounds.

See Girls basketball on page 21.

STOCKBRIDGE SPORTS

Panther wrestlers continue to battle



Cameron Stratton picks up a pin for the Panthers. Photo provided by Mike Williamson

by Mike Williamson

The Panther wrestling team continues to have a rough time with its small numbers, but the team keeps battling as the season goes on.

Perry Quad The Panthers dropped a pair of matches at a Perry quad, falling to Leslie 48-18 and Saranac 45-18.

Cameron Stratton went 2-0 on the night to lead the Panthers.

Jayson Conant and Marcus Pikur picked up pins against Leslie, while Jason Porzio and Mateo Ortiz-Martinez each earned wins against Saranac.

Dansville The Panthers fell to Dansville 30-21 at

Jayson Conant and Stratton picked up wins for the Panthers.

Napoleon Invite Stockbridge finished 18th at the Napoleon Invitational.

Pikur went 2-2 on the day before bowing out in the consolation semis for Stockbridge.

Jayson Conant, Porzio, and Chris Conant picked up one win each for the Panthers.

Springport The Panthers fell to Springport 50-18.

Alex Mugg and Pikur picked up wins for Stockbridge.

Portland Duals The Panthers went 0-5 at the tough Invitational.

Mugg and Stratton picked up two wins each, while Remi Samek had one win.

Battle of M-52 Stockbridge dropped matches to Perry and Laingsburg.

Porzio picked up a win against Perry, while Jayson Conant, Samek, Chris Conant, and Pikur won matches against Laingsburg.

Girls basketball page 20

Leslie The lone setback in the last seven games for Stockbridge came Jan. 5 as the Panthers struggled from the floor all night and fell to the rival Blackhawks 46-33.

Robidou led the Panthers with 11 points and four rebounds.

Kellenberger added nine points and seven rebounds, while Lockhart had six points and seven rebounds. Sayre chipped in with five points and Dalton, two points, five rebounds, and two assists.

Pinckney A late free throw by Lockhart Dec. 21 lifted the Panthers to a 40-39 win over Pinckney.

The Panthers trailed the Pirates by four heading into the fourth, but outscored Pinckney 12-7 in the final period to pull out the win.

Robidou led Stockbridge with 15 points, five rebounds, and four steals.

Kellenberger had another double-double with 10 points and 10 rebounds, while Lockhart had eight points, including the game-winning free throw and seven rebounds. Dalton chipped in with one point, three steals, and two rebounds.

East Jackson The Panthers led by just one heading to the fourth but outscored the Trojans 14-8 in the final period to pull away for the win Dec. 20.

Robidou led the way with 16 points, three assists, and two steals.

Another big night for Kellenberger with a double-double of 15 points and 12 rebounds. She also had four assists and two blocks.

Dalton scored a season high 13 points to go along with six steals, four rebounds, and three assists. Lockhart chipped in with seven points and 12 boards, while Sayre had three rebounds, five steals, and two assists.

Real Estate News & Views

Buyers and sellers: Now is the time to spring into action

by Jackie Scheller

Are we there yet? 2023 was a definite roller coaster ride in the real estate market. Both buyers and sellers encountered previously unseen scenarios. Lawrence Yun, chief economist for the National Association of Realtors, indicated the following in January 2024:

"With inflation calming, we can be confident of at least a few interest rate reductions in 2024."

Bob Yopko, a local lender in Chelsea for First Equity Residential Mortgage, Inc., has had years of success helping buyers with initial mortgages and refinancing. Recently he offered advice for real estate clients who are weary of waiting to make a move.

"Interest rates are in the sixes, depending upon program and parameters. Now is a great time to buy. Rates are likely to decline, but with the ease of refinancing, borrowers can lock in today's home price and rates and then take advantage six-nine months from now, when the rates drop again."

It is time to spring into action!

Sellers: Get organized. Set your goals. Meet with a licensed Realtor or two; remember to discuss the commission rate and know it is negotiable up to a point. Then, clean, clean, clean. Inventory is needed. Prices are stable. The local real estate boards are continuing to report home sales within 98% of the list price.

Unless an unforeseen circumstance occurs, you should be able to close within 120 days at the price your Realtor has indicated, usually by providing you with comparable home sales ("comps") in the area. The time on market is a bit longer and the rural average is for 17-20 showings to connect with your purchaser. This is an average, and we all have heard of sellers getting a buyer on Day One. We hope for that too!

First-time buyers: Get your credit report and clean up anything that may negatively impact your credit score. You will need proof of employment, pay stubs, and sometimes copies of tax returns. Be ready to clarify more questions than you can imagine. Student loan status, medical collections, and credit collections are possible showstoppers.

Get your act together before approaching a lender. Just because you punch a few numbers in online and receive an email that you should be approved for a mortgage does not mean that you can buy a home. Online folks are often farming for leads and give you a response that seems too good to be true because it is. Local lenders are a great resource and often offer competing mortgage programs. Be honest with your lender and set goals for yourself for having your credit issues cleared up and paid off. Limit any major purchases and continue to save.

Hire a Realtor to represent you as soon as you can. They can help you with the lender questions, too. As a team, you will be more successful achieving your goal of home ownership.

See Real Estate News on page 22.



Jackie Scheller



Jennifer Matthews

Bridge to Wellness

Valentine hearts are a reminder to pay attention to your own heart

by Jennifer Matthews, RN

It's February and you're likely seeing hearts everywhere—hanging in windows, on T-shirts, on the cards we will send, and on the crafts our kids bring home. Cupid isn't the only reason to be focusing on hearts in February. February is also National Healthy Heart Month.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. About 695,000 people in the United States died from heart disease in 2021.

So, what is heart disease? And how can you protect yourself?

The term "heart disease" can describe a variety of different heart conditions. The most common is coronary artery disease or CAD. The coronary arteries supply blood directly to the heart. Diseased arteries can cause decreased blood flow to the heart, resulting in heart attack.

Heart disease is commonly referred to as a "silent" condition. Often, it's not diagnosed until after an event has occurred. Early detection and treatment can make a big difference in disease management. Therefore, it is important to know the signs and symptoms of a cardiac event.

- **Heart attack:** Symptoms can vary but can include chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea and/or vomiting, extreme fatigue, upper body discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath.

- **Arrhythmia:** Feels like a fluttering feeling in the chest. Also referred to as palpitations.

- **Heart failure:** Shortness of breath, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, abdomen or neck veins.

Although there are genetic links to heart disease, it helps to pay attention to certain preventable risk factors:

- **High blood pressure** and **high cholesterol** are risk factors. Routine physician monitoring of blood pressure and cholesterol is recommended for the majority of adults.

- Being **overweight or obese** is a risk factor. Taking steps to maintain a healthy weight can work wonders for your overall health.

- An **unhealthy diet** can contribute to heart disease risks. Diets high in fat, preservatives, and sodium can contribute to unhealthy arteries. Pay attention to food labels and the amount of added sugar, sodium, saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol in food. Consuming heart healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can improve overall health and protect your heart.

- **Being physically inactive** can increase your risk of heart disease. Physical activity can benefit your body in many ways, including by preventing heart disease. Physical activity helps prevent unhealthy weight gain, reduces the risk of many chronic diseases, helps reduce feelings of anxiety, improves sleep, and improves bone and musculoskeletal health.

- **Drinking too much alcohol** can put you at risk. Heavy drinking is defined as eight or more drinks per week for women, and 15 or more drinks per week for men. Limiting alcohol intake can help prevent heart disease and many other chronic conditions.

So, as you start to notice hearts around town for Valentine's Day, let it be a reminder to think about and promote the health of your own heart.

This column is sponsored by the Stockbridge Area Wellness Coalition. Jennifer Matthews, RN, is a registered nurse in the Stockbridge School system.

She has worked as a community nurse for the last eight years and is an active volunteer within the Jackson County foster care system. Jen has a passion for helping individuals advocate for their health and learn to navigate the health care system.



Real Estate News page 21



Don't sit on the sidelines in 2024. Spring into action to begin the process for buying or selling a home.
Photo credit Maria Ziegler on unsplash.com

Experienced buyers: For those wanting to buy up, move a parent, move to another area or move into a new build, it is a great time to get into the market. Your equity in your existing home will help to determine what next steps are needed.

We are fortunate to have outstanding Realtors in our area. Contact a reputable Realtor today for a no-obligation consultation and get your questions answered. Some experts in the field are predicting that 2024 will outperform 2023, and you no longer need to sit on the sidelines. Instead, spring into action today!

Jackie Scheller is a licensed Realtor/real estate broker, local business owner, entrepreneur, and retired business teacher. She holds a master's degree in education from Wayne State and a bachelor of arts from Eastern Michigan University.



Cupid isn't the only reason to be focusing on hearts in February. February is also National Healthy Heart Month. Photo credit Jamie Street via unsplash.com

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Staff Spotlight page 1



A few years before arriving in Stockbridge to teach, Ben Kruse taught at a boarding school in Australia and made time for some snorkeling. Photo provided by Ben Kruse

His parents were great role models, both for teaching and for learning how to run a busy home. In fact, it is their examples that motivated him to become a teacher.

While attending school, Kruse participated in a variety of sports, including basketball, track, soccer, football and wrestling. It's no surprise, then, that he has made time for coaching Stockbridge students in addition to his teaching responsibilities. He also is musically inclined and played a wide range of musical instruments in his youth.

His parents loved to travel in the summer, and as a family they visited 49 of the 50 states. Those trips were something special for Kruse and led him to further adventures.

Upon graduating from high school, he attended Saginaw Valley State University where he earned a teaching degree with concentrations in math and science. Toward the end of his college career, he had the opportunity to travel to Australia where he taught in a boarding school. His previous student-teaching had taken place in Saginaw public schools, and he found that teaching in Australia was a really different experience.

After he received his teaching degree, Ben retraced one of the family trips and went back to Alaska. While there, he taught elementary students and high school math for two years in Quinhagak. This was a small village with a population of about 700, the majority of whom were Alaska Native people. For Kruse, his time and work in Quinhagak offered exposure to a whole new lifestyle and the chance to really expand his skills.

A desire to return to Michigan to be closer to home resulted in Kruse applying and being hired as a teacher in Stockbridge in July 2019. Thus began another phase of his life teaching in another type of community.



Don Porter

Ben has a strong base in his faith, and it has helped him as he works with students to encourage them to develop good values and a strong work ethic. In his view, while course content is important, it is more critical for students to focus on using the learning process to become successful and positive adults.

Don Porter is a former Stockbridge Schools deputy superintendent. He also served as assistant principal at the Jr./Sr. High School, and then principal at Smith Elementary, Katz Elementary, and Heritage School. He and his wife, Tammy, live in Stockbridge and enjoy fly fishing, golf, traveling, and working in the yard.

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Rock 'n' Roll Trivia page 9

Q: Did the Dave Clark Five have any No. 1 hits? Any in America?

A: Just one each in America and Great Britain: "Glad All Over" (1963) in England (No. 6, 1964 in America) and "Over and Over" in America (No. 4 in England), 1965. "Over and Over" was written by Robert Byrd, who recorded and released the song under the stage name "Bobby Day." His version only made it to No. 41 in 1958, around the same time another rendition by Thurston Harris barely squeaked onto the charts at No. 96.

Q: Sly & The Family Stone seem to be underrated. How many hits did they have?

A: They had a total of 18 Billboard chart songs of which 10 made the Top 40. Of those 10, five made the Top Ten. Of those five, three made it to No. 1: "Everyday People" (1968), "Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)" (1970) and "Family Affair" (1971). Sly Stone wrote "Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin)" as a message. He was upset that the record-buying public and audiences weren't paying attention to song lyrics. He felt he had something to say about racial harmony, since his band was interracial. In that song's lyrics, he mentions three of his other big hits by name: "Dance to the Music" (No. 8, 1968), "Everyday People" and "Sing a Simple Song" (No. 89, 1969).

John Robinson grew up in Stockbridge and graduated from Stockbridge High School in 1969.

He's been an author, TV host, columnist, actor, producer, emcee and radio broadcaster. Robinson's favorite music of all time includes surf, psychedelia, garage bands, Motown and just plain ol' good-time rock 'n' roll. To read more rock 'n' roll trivia, "Paranormal Michigan" stories, and lots more, check out Robinson's books on his author page at facebook.com/johnrobinsonauthor.

Outreach in Action

Serendipity and the goodness of community make special Outreach moments

by Jo Mayer and Paul Crandall

Past installments of this column have cast a spotlight on some of the countless organizations and individuals who help make Outreach successful. But present in everything we do are also less tangible elements: faith, goodness, and serendipity.

At Outreach, we are awed every week at how things we need often seem to arrive just in time, both on an organizational level and on a personal level for our clients.

Having faith in the goodness of our community and believing that "things will work out" accompany the many serendipities we see.

Just looking at the past couple of months, we have seen a number of donated items appear and then immediately go back out with folks who stopped in looking for just that sort of item. These include things like a microwave, a coffee pot and curtains.

Our clients look out for one another, too. In early December, we were handing out food during our weekly Wednesday food distribution, serving folks who were lined up in dozens of cars waiting for their groceries. This particular week, we were also handing out diapers to people who had signed up with the Chelsea Diaper Bank's program. As we were putting a bag of diapers into one car, the woman in the car behind that one flagged us to ask, "Does she need baby food, too? I have some here I was bringing in to donate." Indeed, the woman in the first car did need baby food, and the handoff was made. We were amazed at how that worked out. Smiles all around.

Another December example: A donor brought in a couple of artificial Christmas trees and some decorations. We put them near our food distribution table to take care of later, but within minutes, someone pulled up in line and mentioned that they and the other family in their car didn't have a tree or decorations. Before we knew it, our task had become their treasure.

We offer a place for the exchange of goods, but also for the exchange of good wishes, good advice, good feelings and just a general impulse of wanting to "do good." These things may be hard to define or quantify, but we'd be hard pressed to offer what we do without them. This community makes it easy for us to "keep the faith!"

Thanks to all who helped in big and small ways throughout 2023 and into the new year!

This column is sponsored by Stockbridge Community Outreach, our local food pantry, crisis, and referral center located in the Stockbridge Activity Center (old middle school) near Cherry and Elm streets in Stockbridge. Office hours are 1-3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and by appointment. Outreach49285@gmail.com, 517-851-7285, or find us on Facebook.



Thanks to Outreach supporters in the community and at Chelsea Hospital, over 100 families were adopted for Christmas 2023. About a dozen others shopped the Outreach "Christmas Room" filled with gifts from Stuff-a-Bus, the Bev Penix toy drive, and donations from individuals, churches and other organizations. Photo credit Jo Mayer

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Public Accuracy Test Notice— Waterloo Township—Feb. 20, 2024

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that The Public Accuracy Test for the February 27, 2024 Presidential Primary has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. at the Waterloo Township Hall, 9773 Mt. Hope Road, Munith, MI. The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to determine that the program and the computer being used to tabulate the results of the election count the votes in the manner as prescribed by law.

Janice Kitley, Waterloo Township Clerk



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Active Aging

Take care of your devices to ensure longer technology life

by **Kenny Minger**

Did you know your device's batteries typically drain faster in the winter? Did you also know keeping your phone plugged in overnight can cause the battery to lose life?

With so many wires and little pieces to your computer and phone, the world of technology can seem intimidating, especially when you encounter problems and things that go wrong. That's why it's important to learn little facts about technology to help you care for your devices and, potentially, extend their lives.

The biggest piece of advice for taking care of devices is to occasionally get your device cleaned, especially laptops and computers. Dust and hair from either you or your pets can build up in your devices, which is not good because the buildup can cause components like the fans or charging ports to not work properly. The fans are especially important. If they fail, your computer or laptop will not get proper air flow through it and it will overheat. Overheating can cause the device to shut down by force, or even cause damage to other parts inside of the computer.

So what can you do? It's as simple as opening up your device and using compressed air in short bursts to get as much of the hair and dust out as possible. Don't know how to open the device or not confident enough to do it yourself? That's OK! Caution shows that you care about your device enough to make sure it's done properly. You can find local technicians or go to places like Best Buy, where they know how to break into the case and give your device a proper cleaning. While this will cost you some money, keeping your device dust-and-hair-free is important to keep it functioning for a long time. Another option: Stockbridge Area Senior Center has scheduled its next Tech Tuesday for Feb. 13, and I will gladly help our community's older adults during that time, without charge.

Using caution when browsing the internet is another extremely important means for taking care of your device. Those pop-up ads you see on your screen when reading news articles, downloading an image or other file, or installing a program or application are more predatory than ever. Make sure you take time—slow down for a moment—and pay attention to exactly where you are clicking or tapping. Accidentally clicking or tapping on the wrong thing can cause a number of headaches.

Always be aware of what button you are clicking. If you're downloading a program, odds are, there will be as many as 20 different buttons that say "download." This is another situation where you should slow down and take a moment to make sure you click on the right button. Many of the "fake" download buttons have a little box in close proximity that says it's an ad, and sometimes it can be really easy to miss. You don't want to click a download button that is an ad. One thing you can watch for: Does the style of the download button match the rest of the webpage.

Also keep in mind that if you are using a web browser (example: Chrome, Firefox, or Edge) and you see a message from Microsoft in your browse, it's likely just a scam and you can safely close the browser to get rid of it.

These little pieces of advice are some of the most overlooked or underutilized practices with technology and are great places to start when it comes to keeping your technology humming.

Kenny Minger is the Tech Tuesday specialist, administrative assistant, and bookkeeper at Stockbridge Area Senior Center—a great place to spend time. You may reach Kenny at kmingersasc@gmail.com or 517-480-0353. Visit SASC online at stockbridgeareaseniors.org or call 517-480-0353 for more information.



Tech specialist Kenny Minger shares tablet advice with Vaughn Russell at the Stockbridge Area Senior Center.



Tech specialist Kenny Minger shares laptop advice with Bob Cunningham. Photos provided by Dana Blaszkowski

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Woah Nellie!

'Brown Bread' jumps off the page, into the oven and bakes up faster than Nellie suggests

by Mary Jo David

Settling in after the holidays, I started looking through the February 1924 issues of old Stockbridge Brief-Sun newspapers to determine what 100-year-old Nellie Maxwell recipe to try this month. As I came across a few recipes that I recalled seeing last year, I got a little perturbed with Nellie for trying to put one over on her readers by repeating recipes just months apart.

Then I realized I was being a little hard on Nellie. At the Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal in Virginia, the oldest Nellie column they had on file was in a 1916 issue. That paper continued printing her recipes until Nellie died in 1936—that's 20 years of Nellie columns! Clearly, she was a standout in her day—not too many women could boast of authoring a syndicated column that ran in newspapers across the country in the early 1900s. And newspapers that ran Nellie's recipes were probably pulling them from an extensive archive of her columns, so perhaps it was the publishers—not Nellie—who were responsible for repeating recipes just months apart.

Nellie columns were unusually sparse in the February 1924 weekly editions of the Brief-Sun. I really struggled to find a recipe I deemed worthy of making this month. (I think you can forgive me for skipping over Salmon Salad with Coconut!) I was almost desperate enough to try her Puree of Pea Soup recipe (neither my husband nor I eat peas), when I landed on a Brown Bread recipe that looked suspiciously like a recipe that ran in one of last year's Brief-Sun editions. I didn't make it then because I couldn't find graham flour locally. I still couldn't find the flour, but this time I googled and found that unbleached whole-wheat flour is an acceptable substitute for graham flour.

Now I was ready to bake!

To her credit, Nellie's "Brown Bread" recipe (see clipping in sidebar) provided the necessary quantity for each of the ingredients. Since I'm only baking for two, and I don't like to waste ingredients if the recipe is a flop, I decided to cut the recipe in half. To make the sour milk, I simply added a tablespoon of white vinegar to regular milk and let it sit for a little while.

It's always tough to cut a single egg in half, but for that I use my handy-dandy little OXO Good Grips Mini 2-ounce measuring cup. Once I whisk the egg in the cup, the ounce-and-tablespoon markings on the sides help me measure out half of the egg.

The rest of the recipe assembly was without incident until I had to determine what size bread pan to use. Nellie's recipe called for "pans" (plural) and mentioned leaving plenty of room for the bread to rise. Since I was only making a half recipe, I decided to go with two 8-by-4 inch loaf pans, and, as it happened, I probably could have gotten away with one pan. Nellie does not mention greasing the pans, but as an experienced baker, I decided I would not only grease them, but also line the bottoms with waxed paper to guard against the bread sticking to the bottom of the pan.

My biggest beef with Nellie's "Brown Bread" recipe is that she didn't specify an oven temperature. Usually, she gives us something to go on, maybe specifying a "hot oven" or a "moderate oven," but this month we got nada—no temperature suggestion at all. I decided to go with a moderate 350-degree oven.

Warning: This recipe bakes up much faster than the hour and a half that Nellie suggested. Within 25 minutes, I was taking the bread pans out of the oven, and I daresay even at a lower oven temperature or using a single, bigger pan, I would never have baked this for an hour and a half. If I had, I'd still be airing my house out from the smell of burned bread!

Having made brown breads in the past, I know they run the gamut from super sweet to barely sweet. I knew this one was going to be barely sweet, so I took the liberty of adding a tablespoon of brown sugar to the batter before filling the second pan.

The final product was tasty, if just slightly drier than I would have liked it. I probably should have cut the baking time to 20-22 minutes. During the taste test, it was the loaf with the additional brown sugar that appealed to us more, but that goes without saying since my husband has a sweet tooth the size of Texas!



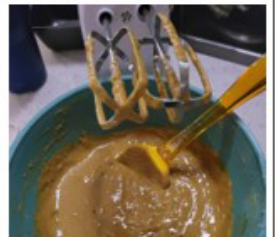
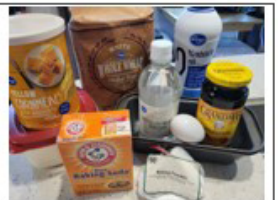
The year's book's closed and sealed,
at last,
Nor can I alter what is past;
My griefs, my pleasures, thoughts and
acts,
Are all on record as plain facts.
But here before me pure and white
Are the pages now on which to write.
I've but to choose 'twixt joy and sor-
row,
And start my future from tomorrow.
—Lloyd.

Brown Bread.—Mix in a bowl two
cupfuls of sour milk, one teaspoonful
of soda, one cupful of molasses and one
egg beaten. Add one and one-half cup-
fuls of graham flour, one and one-half
cupfuls of white flour, one cupful of
corn meal and a teaspoonful of baking
powder. Beat well and bake for an
hour and a half in bread pans, allow-
ing plenty of room to rise.

Nellie Maxwell

Stockbridge Brief-Sun • February 22, 1924

Use your own judgment when baking "Brown Bread" from Nellie's recipe. The loaves baked in less than a quarter of the time the recipe called for. Other than bake time, this recipe has withstood the test of time.



Cindy Anderson,
DVM

Paws and Claws

February is National Pet Dental Health Month

by Cindy Anderson, DVM

February is designated as National Pet Dental Health Month to recognize the importance of dental health for our pets. It is sponsored by the American Veterinary

Medical Association (AVMA) as a subtle reminder to keep an eye on Fido's and Fluffy's teeth.

Our pets' dental health is vital for their overall health and quality of life. A diseased or painful mouth can prevent your pets from enjoying daily activities, reduce their appetite, and even lead to more serious health conditions. But most dental disease is preventable with regular, at-home maintenance and professional dental cleanings.

Pets are part of the family, and like any other family member, we strive to keep them as healthy as possible. However, even the most conscientious owners can easily overlook important things regarding their pets' dental care.

According to the American Veterinary Dental Society (AVDS), 80% of dogs and 70% of cats will manifest some form of dental disease after they reach the age of 3 years. Periodontal disease, a gum disease caused by plaque and tartar buildup, is the most common condition for dogs. This easily can be prevented with regular checkups and visits to the veterinary clinic. Home monitoring is of great importance, too.

A comprehensive oral examination may necessitate the use of a general anesthetic. Your veterinarian will scale and polish your pet's teeth with equipment, removing tartar and plaque buildup that could cause dental problems.

See Paws and Claws on page 27



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Community Calendar

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays – Prepared Meals for Seniors, noon to 2 p.m. at the Stockbridge Area Senior Center

Wednesdays – Family Storytime (Ages up to 6), 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library

Wednesdays – Pop-up food distribution for anyone in need, 1 to 3 p.m. at Stockbridge Community Outreach

Thursdays – Coffee chats, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library

Occasional Fridays (Call Library for dates) – Keep Calm and Carry Yarn, 1 to 2 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library

Feb. 1 - Beginning of Blind Date with a Book at the Stockbridge Library

Feb. 4 - Winter Orienteering, 2 to 4 p.m. at the Eddy Discovery Center

Feb. 6 - Sons of American Legion Meeting, 7 to 8 p.m. at the American Legion Mackinder Glenn Post 510

Feb. 7 - Parent University at Smith Elementary, 6 to 7 p.m. at Smith Elementary School

Feb. 10 - Fishville Farms Love is in the Air Craft Show and Diaper/Baby Supply Drive, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Chelsea Fairgrounds - Green Sports Barn (See ad on page 9)

Feb. 12 - American Legion Meeting, 7 to 8 p.m. at the American Legion Mackinder Glenn Post 510

Feb. 13 - Tech Tuesday at the Stockbridge Area Senior Center

Feb. 18 - Last Day of Blind Date with a Book at the Stockbridge Library

Feb. 18 - Vernal Pool Patrol, 2 to 3 p.m. at the Eddy Discovery Center

Feb. 20 - American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Meeting, 7 to 8 p.m. at the American Legion Mackinder Glenn Post 510

Feb. 24 - Stockbridge Athletic Boosters Panther Draw Down, 6 p.m. at the Stockbridge Activity Center (See ad on page 23)

Feb. 25 - Nature in Winter, 2 to 3 p.m. at the Eddy Discovery Center

Feb. 29 - Last Day of Winter Reading Challenge at the Stockbridge Library

For more community events visit: www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com. To add your community events to our free community calendar, email submissions to stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com.



Paws and Claws page 26

A professional tooth cleaning for your dog or cat may be recommended by your veterinarian once or twice per year, or as needed.

Your veterinarian also may recommend tooth extraction in cases of severe oral illness. Depending upon where you reside, you also can discover dental facilities that provide inexpensive dental cleanings.

Taking care of your pet's dental health provides long-term benefits. Furthermore, some studies suggest that good oral hygiene might extend your pet's life by up to five years!

Good oral hygiene is essential for pet health, as pet dental problems can lead to serious health issues. Pet owners should be aware of common pet dental problems such as gum disease, bad breath, and tartar buildup that can cause pain and discomfort for their pets, if left untreated

The most common symptoms of dental disease in pets are red and swollen gums, brown or gray teeth, bad breath, bleeding gums, pawing the face or rubbing the mouth against objects and reluctance toward hard food or hard toys.

Proper dental hygiene and regular veterinary checkups can maximize the quality and quantity of your pet's life. When necessary, take your pet for professional dental cleanings. Please contact the staff at Lakelands Trail Veterinary Clinic at 517-655-5551 for additional assistance with your pet's dental health. We are located at 4525 S. M-52, Stockbridge, MI 49285.

Cindy Anderson, DVM, is a graduate of MSU Veterinary College (1992) and has practiced veterinary medicine for over 28 years.

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The board of the Stockbridge Community News would like to thank the people who have sent us donations during 2023. These donations add up and help us to cover the cost of printing and mailing the Stockbridge Community News. The people listed above have donated \$15 to \$400.

We are grateful for the encouragement and support of all who have helped bring the Stockbridge Community News to light. While those who have contributed their time and effort are too numerous to mention here, the News gratefully wishes to recognize our Charter Sponsors (Donated startup money November 2016 – May 2017) for their monetary donations.

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