



# STOCKBRIDGE COMMUNITY NEWS

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## Stockbridge Community Thanksgiving Dinner: The spirit of volunteerism is alive



Volunteers look on while Kip Godwin (with ladle) preps gravy. Dave “SmilingSun” Pentescu (holding pot) manages the kitchen on Thanksgiving Day. Photo by Nan Godwin

by Mary Jo David

The Stockbridge Community Thanksgiving Dinner is embarking on its 31st year as a highly valued, local tradition. If walls could talk, the cafeteria at Heritage School in Stockbridge would have many stories to tell about those who partake in this annual meal on Thanksgiving Day. For some, it’s a social time—a time to meet up with local friends before meeting with family later in the day. For those who are alone, it’s a welcome opportunity to spend a holiday in the company of others. And for those who are housebound, this is one day they can count on a traditional holiday meal being delivered to their door.

None of this could happen without volunteers in the community. Some donate money and/or food. Some give of their time.

So who are those who give their time? Surprisingly, the Community Thanksgiving Dinner team is not at a loss for volunteers to help feed upwards of 400 people. Take the Godwins and Lentzes for example.

**The Godwins.** Kip and Nan Godwin have helped with the Community Thanksgiving Dinner since about 2017.

Early on, the Godwins were working, so they focused their efforts on volunteering Thanksgiving Day. Since retiring, Kip also volunteers on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and, when needed, on the Tuesday as well.

*See Thanksgiving on page 13.*

## Stockbridge FFA celebrates a season of growth, learning, and community impact



The Stockbridge FFA Chapter removing invasive species at the Beckwith Nature Preserve. Photo provided by the Stockbridge FFA team

by Klayre Smith, Stockbridge FFA Reporter

The Stockbridge FFA Chapter has enjoyed a busy and rewarding fall season filled with hands-on learning, leadership development, and community engagement. From raising animals and competing in statewide contests to environmental conservation and national travel,

students have truly embodied the FFA motto: Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

**Sept. 6 – A New Beginning: Welcoming Our Feeder Pigs.** The fall season kicked off with the arrival of two feeder pigs—a Yorkshire and a Duroc—for the Animal Science classes. Students are gaining valuable experience in animal care, nutrition, and health management as they raise the pigs from weaned piglets to market-ready hogs.

**Sept. 18 – Apple Cider with Heritage Elementary.** FFA and agriculture students in grades 7–12 partnered with Heritage Elementary’s fifth graders to make apple cider using six bushels of apples from the school orchard. This hands-on project connected students of all ages to the process of food production.

*See FFA on page 3.*

## SPD’s new interim police chief is leading search for permanent chief



Stockbridge’s interim police chief, John Tyler, also serves as police chief in Fowlerville.

by Melissa McPherson

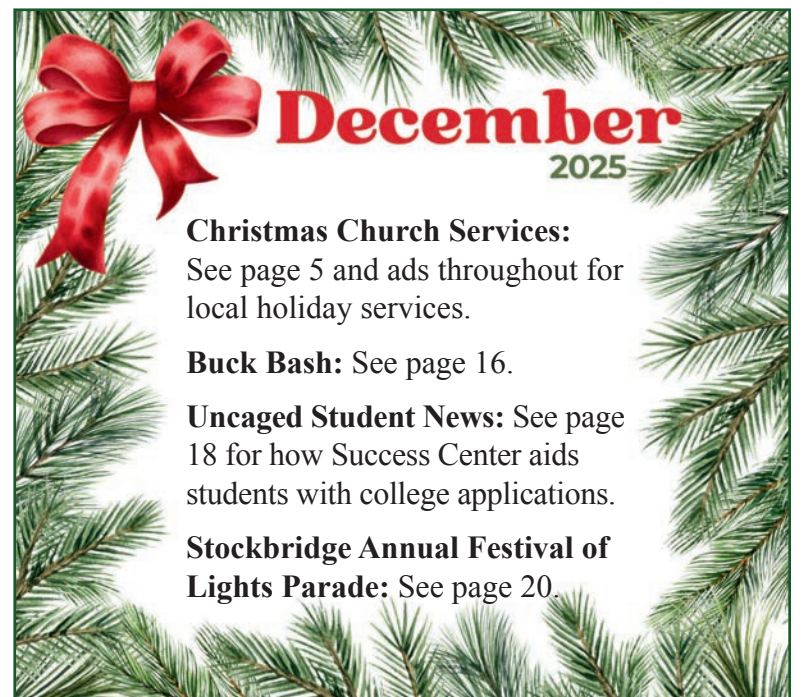
John Tyler stepped into the role of interim chief for the Stockbridge Police Department just three weeks ago, but he is no stranger to small-town police work. He brings with him more than two decades of law enforcement experience and a desire to strengthen the connections in our community.

Tyler has been a police officer for 21 years. He currently serves as chief of police in Fowlerville, a job he's held for over 10 years. In October 2025, the American Legion named him Police Officer of the Year in Livingston County.

Tyler has a master's degree in business administration from Cleary University, where he also teaches business negotiation courses every semester. He initially heard about the interim chief position in Stockbridge through a friend who thought he would be a good fit for the role.

Tyler says his top priority as interim chief is ensuring that the department is meeting all federal, state, and local requirements. His duties include everything from budgeting and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) procedures to internal communications and daily operations. But he is also focused on building connections between the police department and the community.

*See Chief on page 14.*



### Christmas Church Services:

See page 5 and ads throughout for local holiday services.

**Buck Bash:** See page 16.

**Uncaged Student News:** See page 18 for how Success Center aids students with college applications.

**Stockbridge Annual Festival of Lights Parade:** See page 20.

## Rural Perspectives: The garter snake hibernates in groups during winter



Diane Gray Constable

by Diane Constable

The common garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) is non-venomous and one of the most common snakes found in our area. It prefers to live near a water source and can be found in fields, grasslands and lawns. It is cold-blooded, and hibernates during the winter, often in large groups. If frightened, a garter snake will usually flee, or tuck its head and wave its tail around. The garter snake is covered with tiny scales made of keratin (as are our nails, hair and skin) and moves about in an "s" pattern. It also can climb trees and swim.



The common garter snake prefers to live near a water source and can be found in fields, grasslands and lawns. Photo credit Diane Constable

through the first year, and will live two to four years. They will grow up to 3 or 4 feet long, shedding their skin for a larger size as they grow. They face the danger of being eaten by many birds, foxes, raccoons, skunks, other snakes, snapping turtles, and bullfrogs.

The garter is carnivorous, and eats a variety of food, including worms, slugs, frogs, leeches, many types of insects, as well as mice, and other small rodents. The adult garter snake needs a big meal about every two weeks. Because of its diet, it is often thought of as the Gardener's Friend.

Like all reptiles, it is cold-blooded and needs warm temperatures and sunshine to stay warm. It also needs to be warm to digest its food, or the food can rot in its stomach, causing death.

The garter snake is very sensitive to ground vibrations and has the ability to "hear" these vibrations. Its eyesight is good up to about 15 inches. If farther than that, it can see movement or feel the vibrations, so if a prey stays still, the snake cannot locate it.

**Fun Fact:** A garter snake does not smell through its nose. It uses its tongue by flicking it in the air for chemical clues. The information then goes to an organ in its mouth called the vomeronasal organ, which allows it to smell.

*As an avid photographer, Diane Constable regularly puts her formal education in both nature and photography to good use. Diane also enjoys gardening and her dogs. She serves on the board of the Ann Arbor Dog Training Club and is editor of the club's newsletter.*

## Ingham County commission calls for transparency, regulatory framework in data center development

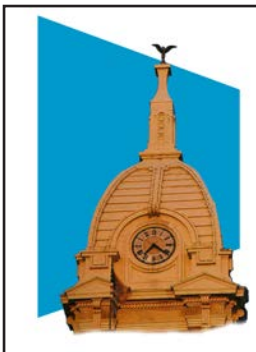
### Information from Ingham County

On Nov. 19, the Ingham County Environmental Affairs Commission passed a resolution urging the Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL), the City of Lansing, and all other relevant local government and electric utility entities serving residents of Ingham County to develop a comprehensive regulatory framework for proposed data centers and conduct projects related to data centers in a highly transparent manner. The EAC also requested that the Ingham County Board of Commissioners consider endorsing their resolution,

and have asked it to be brought before county commissioners at the Dec. 1 meeting of the County's Human Services Committee.

Data centers are specialized facilities that house the computing and networking systems needed to run applications and to store, process, and manage large amounts of data.

*See Data Center on page 19.*





FOOD & PRIZES

**Euchre**  
TOURNAMENT

Proceeds from the night go to Stockbridge High School Wrestling Team

**Tuesday, Dec 16**

Stockbridge High School Cafeteria

**6:30 – 9:30 pm | Play begins at 7 pm**

\$20 – Entry fee  
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Clyde Whitaker

## Clyde's Corner 'But I only wanted a trim!'

by Clyde Whitaker

Probably none of you out there will believe this, but I was a little spitfire when I was young, full of "vim and vigor," a pretty hyper kid. Eventually, I needed to start getting my hair cut. I don't remember much about those early haircuts, but I do remember the drive out with my dad to my Aunt Tennie and Uncle Irving Fletcher's house on Milner Road to get those cuts.

I think I was around 5 or 6 when my dad and I started going out there. Uncle Irving would pull out a metal kitchen chair for me to sit on, then place a towel around my neck to catch the clippings.

In our regular visits to see Aunt Tennie and Uncle Irving, he was always a quiet, patient man, until he tried to cut my hair. I squirmed and moved around a lot, not liking the buzzing of the clippers going around my head. He would get so exasperated, trying his best to finish my haircut as fast as possible. Uncle Irving told my dad that I was the hardest haircut he ever had to do, lol!

I must have worn out Uncle Irving, because Dad eventually started taking me up to Gordon's Barber Shop in Stockbridge. Gordon Nawrock was the owner and the only barber there. He served in the Korean War, and afterward he set up shop where our post office is today. Gordon was a portly man, with gel in his hair, slicked up nice and neat, wearing a white apron and smelling like cheap cologne.

As I was a little older at that point, before he started cutting my hair I confidently told Gordon "I want a trim only." Gordon would just smile, nod his head, then proceed to cut my hair down to my scalp, leaving just a little clump of hair on my forehead!

Naturally, I was aghast when looking in the mirror and seeing all of my hair gone. Gordon called it a "Princeton style." I was not a fan. After pleading with my dad many, many times that I wanted to try a different barber, he finally consented and I ended up going around the corner to see Ridge Owen, and he cut my hair just the way I wanted it.

Gordon Nawrock died in Florida on Oct. 30, 2003. He was a good man who gave you your money's worth—and then some!

*All photos provided by Clyde Whitaker.*

*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.*



Clyde Whitaker with his Princeton-style haircut in the 1970s.



Clyde Whitaker's son Grant with his Princeton cut 20-plus years later.



An old-fashioned barber pole like this one signaled the location of hair-cutting businesses in many small towns.



The site of Gordon's Barber Shop is now the U.S. Post Office on North Clinton Street in Stockbridge.

## FFA page 1

**Sept. 26–27 – Tractor Show Success.** The annual Stockbridge FFA Tractor Show at American Legion Post 510 drew a great turnout and beautiful weather! With more than 60 tractors, a steam engine, toy show, contests, and live music, the event celebrated agricultural heritage and community pride.

**Early October – Beckwith Nature Preserve Project.** Members practiced environmental stewardship by removing invasive species and learning about conservation methods from preserve staff as part of the #SpeakAgMichigan contest. Students saw firsthand how local preservation efforts benefit the environment and community.

**Oct. 8 – Michigan FFA Careers Conference.** Four members of Stockbridge represented the district at the state Careers Conference in Lansing, exploring agriculture and natural resource careers while attending leadership and skill-building sessions.

**Oct. 8–31 – Light Pole Decorating Contest.** FFA students joined the Panther Cub PTO's annual decorating contest, spreading creativity and community cheer. Though not the design winner, FFA was chosen as the recipient of the first-place charity donation—\$138 from the G.U. Crew of Howard Hanna Real Estate—to help the chapter adopt a family for Christmas.

**Oct. 22 – First-Place Finish in Michigan FFA Broiler Contest.** Stockbridge FFA received a first-place state award in the Broiler Contest after weeks of raising, managing, and presenting market-ready chickens. Students demonstrated skills in animal care, record keeping, and ethical agricultural practices.

**Oct. 29–30 – 98th National FFA Convention.** Stockbridge members joined over 73,000 FFA participants nationwide at the 98th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis. Students attended sessions, met agricultural leaders, and were inspired to continue making an impact in their communities and beyond.

**A Season to Remember.** Through leadership, learning, and service, Stockbridge FFA continues to strengthen its commitment to agricultural education and community involvement. This fall's activities not only enriched students' knowledge but also built lasting connections across the community.

**About Stockbridge FFA.** Stockbridge FFA is dedicated to preparing students for careers in agriculture, leadership, and service through hands-on learning, competitions, and community engagement. The chapter is part of the Michigan FFA Association and the National FFA Organization, which serves over a million members nationwide. To follow our adventures, follow us on our Facebook page, Stockbridge FFA!

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## Obituaries

### Patricia Ann Haidler



Patricia Ann Haidler  
July 6, 1954 to Oct. 25, 2025

Following an extended illness, **Patricia Ann Haidler** passed away at her home in Gregory, Michigan on October 25, 2025 with loved ones at her side.

Patty was born on July 6th, 1954, at Tachikawa AFB near Tokyo, Japan, to the late William Bernard and Frances Helen Haidler. She is survived by her sister, Maria Jean (James) Fox of San Jose, California, brother, John William (Laurie) Haidler of Gregory, Michigan, and brother, Robert William (Jill) Haidler of Mandeville, Louisiana, as well as her nieces and nephews, Alexander and Ian Fox, Julia and Henry Haidler, Joseph and Christine Haidler.

Patty was the eldest of four siblings in a US Air Force military family and the trailblazer for her sister and brothers growing up around the US - Raleigh, NC; US Air Force Academy, CO; Tucson, AZ; Montgomery, AL; Gaithersburg, MD; Fairborn, OH; and finally in Michigan, where she attended Michigan State University. She graduated with a BA in English Literature and went on to enjoy a professional career as a marketing and advertising executive in the retail clothing industry. She worked for Macy's, Mervyn's and Miller's Outpost while in Kansas City, KS; Plano, TX; San Francisco and Chino Hills, CA, where she retired in 2000 before moving back to Michigan in 2020.

Patty was a beloved daughter, sister, cousin, aunt, and friend who always had a cheerful disposition and sharp wit. She was one to always lend help where she could and to offer words of encouragement to her friends and family. As a young person, she was an accomplished skier and swimmer. She thoroughly enjoyed reading, late-night movies, fine cooking, and visiting with family and friends. She was well travelled, enjoyed vacations, and saw sights around the world. Her influence and sensitive nature will live on through those that knew and loved her. She will be missed.

A funeral mass was held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 14, 2025 at St. Mary Catholic Church in Pinckney, MI, followed by burial at St. Thomas Catholic Cemetery in Ann Arbor, MI. Donations in memoriam may be made to the Boys Republic in Chino Hills, CA. Arrangements by Staffan-Mitchell Funeral Home, Chelsea.

Boys Republic is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian school and treatment community founded in 1907 for troubled youngsters. On its central school and farm in Chino Hills, California, and in residential and day treatment centers in other communities, Boys Republic and its companion program, Girls Republic, help children in desperate need find within themselves the resources and skills to begin meaningful lives on their own. Gifts may be made on-line via [BoysRepublic.org](http://BoysRepublic.org), by mail to 1907 Boys Republic Drive, Chino Hills CA 91709 or phone 909-628-1217.

### Marvin Woodrow Cook Jr.



Marvin Woodrow Cook Jr.  
Feb. 16, 1940 to Nov. 11, 2025

**Marvin Woodrow Cook Jr.**, age 85, of Stockbridge, Michigan, passed away peacefully on November 11, 2025, at Henry Ford Allegiance Hospice Home in Jackson.

Marvin always said, "I'm an Arkansas Boy, born on the Judd Hill Plantation on the kitchen table!"

Marvin was born February 16, 1940 in Trumann, Arkansas, the son of Marvin Sr. and Hettie (Bushong) Cook. Living many places growing up, his family eventually settled in Dansville, MI where he went to high school and graduated with the Class of 1958.

On November 3, 1961, Marvin married Betty Jean (Salyer), whom he lovingly called "Jeanne." Together they built their life and made their home in the Stockbridge area for over 60 years. He worked for 32 years as a driver/mechanic at Chrysler Proving Grounds, retiring in 1998. He

### David Lee Minix



David Lee Minix  
Dec. 3, 1946 to Nov. 3, 2025

**David Lee Minix**, age 78, of Stockbridge, MI, passed away peacefully on November 3, 2025, with his three loving children by his side at Divine Living Center of Leslie.

Born on December 3, 1946, in Salyersville, Kentucky, David was the son of Edwin and Earnestine (Salyer) Minix. He graduated from Stockbridge High School and spent his life in the Stockbridge community. Throughout his career, he took pride in his work, holding several jobs before medically retiring from Federal Screw Works in Chelsea, Michigan, following a traumatic brain injury that changed his life forever.

David shared 52 years of marriage with the love of his life, Leotta Mae Ramsey, who tirelessly cared for him until her passing in 2022. Their devotion to one another remains a lasting example of love, loyalty, and strength.

He is survived by his three children: Lisa (Troy) Wester, Andrea Minix Aiken, and Chad (Christy) Minix; his two sisters: Carolyn Myer and Donna (Tom) Sussex; and his six cherished grandchildren: Abigail Wester, Alivia Wester, Ally Minix, Riley Aiken, Travis Aiken, and Zac Minix; many nieces, nephews, and cousins; sister-in-law, Ila Minix; David was preceded in death by his wife, Leotta; his parents; his brother, Paul Minix; his sisters, Elizabeth (Clifford) Gerber and Sharon Minix; and his brother-in-law, Jim Myer.

Known affectionately as "Ole Dave," he had a warm personality, a huge smile, and loved being the center of attention. He cherished life's simple joys—peanut butter and jelly, donuts (really, anything sweet and baked), hunting, fishing, collecting pocket knives, and talking with anyone who would listen.

After his beloved wife, Leotta, passed, his children created long-lasting memories with David, taking him on several adventures—shopping at his favorite Goodwill in Mason, visiting Paw Paw for blueberries and Saugatuck for the best fish dinners with his grandchildren, fishing in cousin Mike's stream, listening to Chad's dogs "make music" on hunting trips, and spending weekends at home with family, to name just a few.

In his final days, David resided at Divine Living Center of Leslie, where he received compassionate and thoughtful care. His family is deeply grateful to the staff and Divine Hospice for their kindness, love, and support.

The family received friends at Caskey-Mitchell Funeral Home in Stockbridge on Thursday, November 6, 2025, from 4–8 p.m. A funeral service took place at the funeral home on Friday, November 7, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. Burial followed at Oaklawn Cemetery in Stockbridge.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly asks that donations be made to Divine Living Center of Leslie to be shared among the staff who cared for him with compassion and dedication every day.

enjoyed working with his hands, and was good at working on transmissions as well as general carpentry and woodworking. Marvin was known for his friendly, social nature and he loved to talk. He was a member of the Stockbridge Lions Club, where he enjoyed calling Bingo for many years. He also called Bingo at the American Legion and the Stockbridge Athletic Boosters. Most people will remember him saying, "Any more Bingos! Any more Bingos!" Above all, Marvin loved his family and enjoyed spending time with them.

Marvin is survived by his wife of 64 years Jeanne; three children, Terry (George) Wireman of Stockbridge, Tammy (Ken) Sanchez of Stockbridge, and Audra (Jamie) Salyer of Munith; six grandchildren: Malory Wireman, Kayla (Curtis) Fletcher, James (Shane) Wireman, Samantha Sanchez, Abbey Salyer, and Gavin Salyer; and two great-grandchildren: Amelia and Bennie Fletcher; his siblings: Judy (Jon) Petoskey of Pontiac, Barbara (Warren) Petoskey of Petoskey, Melvin Curton Jr. of Stockbridge, and Brenda (Walt) Meyer of Pontiac. He was preceded in death by his parents, his stepfather, Melvin Curton Sr., and his sister, Linda (Ron) Berry.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025, at the Mackinder-Glenn Post #510 American Legion in Stockbridge from 1 to 3 p.m., with a short prayer service at 3:00 p.m. Memorial contributions may be made to the Stockbridge Lions Club.

# Obituary

## Jamie Elaine Zick



**Jamie Elaine Zick**  
April 8, 1977 to Nov. 23, 2025

**Jamie Elaine Zick**, born April 8, 1977 to Ed and Lori Zick, in Lansing, Michigan, died at age 48 on November 23, 2025.

Jamie grew up in Lansing in her toddler years and then moved with the family to Stockbridge. She was a very fascinating girl, strong willed, very clever, and absolutely a spitfire. She loved books, music, swimming, and her sisters Leah and Julie. She was very busy with her animals—cats, dogs, and bunnies. At age 10, she even had a horse that she entered in the Ingham County Fair. She loved reading and often had several books going at the same time. She excelled in school, becoming one of the top in her grade. She loved playing sports—basketball, softball, volleyball, cheerleading, and even dance.

At the tender age of 13, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. At first it was not able to be removed. After many weeks of radiation, Jamie was declining,

and she was admitted into hospice. God had other plans. God was not done with Jamie. A miracle was at the hand of God, things changed and surgery was performed. Jamie recovered all summer in the hospital, returning to school in the fall. Jamie was able to get her high school diploma.

Life was not easy for Jamie. She also had a mental illness that was severe. Time after time, you could see her faith in the Lord. Her strength and resilience was unwavering. Jamie never was able to be employed, yet she worked for the Lord. She would sing her Christian music over and over. It gave her comfort, yet she was witnessing to others about her love of the Lord. She loved going to church and singing her songs. She struggled in life, yet the Lord used her for his purposes.

She was a loving aunt and spent many hours with her nieces and nephews at home and at one of her favorite places, the family cottage at Houghton Lake. She touched people in ways that we will never know. She will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Jamie is survived by her mother, Lori Zick; sisters, Leah Dalton (Mike) and Julie Weare (Justin); nieces, Kaylee Dalton, Maddie Dalton, Allie Dalton, and Chloe Weare; nephews, Jacob Dalton, Zachary Weare, Lucas Weare, and Josh Weare. She was preceded in death by her father, Ed Zick, and her grandparents, Norman and Beulah Jacobs and Thomas and Margaret Zick.

Visitation was held at the Caskey-Mitchell Funeral Home on Friday, November 28, 2025, from 5-7 p.m., as well as on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service. Funeral services were held at the funeral home on Saturday, November 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., with Pastor Josh Lilly officiating. A private burial will be held at Plainfield Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Hospice House of Mid-Michigan in Lansing or CHUM Therapeutic Riding in Dansville.

## 5 Healthy Towns survey update

### Information submitted by 5 Healthy Towns

The 5 Healthy Towns Foundation continues to ask our community members to take five minutes of their time to complete the 5 Healthy Towns survey. Responses will be collected through Dec. 7.

Anyone 18 and older living within the boundaries of the Chelsea, Dexter, Grass Lake, Manchester and Stockbridge school districts can take the survey, including adults living in the same house. The information collected is not tied to any individual but used to help determine how we can best shift our funding to serve our communities. The 5 Healthy Towns Foundation spends more than \$1 million per year in our five healthy towns. We want to spend it on things that make a difference to our communities.

Anyone who completes the survey can opt in to the prize section of the survey and be entered into a drawing for gift cards to local community businesses. There will be a grand prize drawing for an autographed Penei Sewell jersey donated by the Detroit Lions.

To access the survey, go online with any device to [www.5HFSurvey.com](http://www.5HFSurvey.com).



## Local churches welcome you to Christmas worship services


by Hope Salyer

Several area churches in the greater Stockbridge community are preparing to welcome residents for Christmas worship services. **Highest Praise Worship Center** (page 6), local **United Methodist** congregations (page 7), **Trinity Lutheran** (page 11), **Waterloo Village UMC** (page 13), **St. James and Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian Catholic Churches** (this page) will all offer special services inviting the community to gather and celebrate the joy of Christmas.

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**CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES**  
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7 pm at Sts Cornelius & Cyprian Campus

**CHRISTMAS DAY MASS**  
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**STS CORNELIUS & CYPRIAN: 1320 CATHOLIC CHURCH RD., LESLIE**

## Faces of Addiction

# Season of recovery: A home for the holidays



Tina Cole-Mullins

by Tina Cole-Mullins

*Editor's Note: Faces of Addiction is a continuing series about people who experience drug addiction and the difficulty of recovery. By telling their stories, they hope to help others who are struggling and encourage them to seek treatment and healing.*

December isn't just a season reflecting holiday cheer—it's a mirror. For those in recovery, it reflects what's been lost, what's being rebuilt, and what still aches.

For Samantha (Craft) and her husband David Rosecrants, this December marks three years of sobriety—and the purchase of a home that was once beyond their dreams. It's the kind of home you'd find in a Christmas movie: cozy, glowing, and filled with hope. It's a testament to resilience, partnership, and healing.

But these stories just don't begin with matching mugs and mortgage approvals. They started while surrounded by wreckage—turmoil, chaos, and the tangled grip of codependency and addiction.

### The Rosecrantses' story

Samantha and David met at the peak of her addiction. She had just left a seven-year relationship, and despite the wreckage, she and David became good friends. "And after that, David just...stayed," Samantha said.

At the time, Samantha had two young children who were being cared for by her mother. While Samantha spiraled deeper into the dark world of addiction, her mother became the steady presence Samantha's children needed, holding the family together in the shadows of their mother's absence.

"Homeless, living in a camper, stealing from stores to live, to make sure we had what we needed for our addiction," is how the couple described that time in their lives. Samantha and David weren't partners in romance—they were partners in survival. Their rock bottom wasn't a single moment—it was a slow unraveling. But somewhere in the chaos, they made a choice: to stop running, to stop numbing, and to start over.

The couple didn't just get sober—they married. They had to learn how to live again. They had to start with the basics: how to communicate, how to trust and how to dream. And all their work and effort eventually paid off. Today, they live in a home filled with warmth and recovery. The children are back with their mother—in a new home and with a sense of hope.

Their story is not unique—but it is extraordinary. For every Samantha and David, there are hundreds of couples across Michigan still walking parallel paths of pain, perseverance, and transformation.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, thousands of residents engage in recovery programs each year. And while exact numbers on couple-based approaches are limited, the growing emphasis on joint healing, communication, and rebuilding trust reflects a broader shift in how recovery is supported statewide.

This is part of a larger movement—a culture of recovery—where healing is no longer hidden, but honored. In this culture, homes, families, and communities are rebuilt not just with sobriety, but with connection, accountability and love.

### The Wrights' story

Cody and Marissa Wright have shared seasons of sobriety—years marked by endurance, grief, growth, and quiet strength. They've settled into Cody's grandparents' family home. It's a place that carries the echoes of Christmases past with loved ones now gone. Yet, it also cradles new memories and a peace that doesn't need wrapping paper and other holiday trappings.

In June 2013, Cody's brother, Eric, lost his battle with opioid addiction. His mother, Loretta Wright, shared her family's story in "Faces of Addiction: Not Me, Not My Child, Not the One I Love" in the July 2018 edition of Stockbridge Community News.

Looking ahead, the next story in the series will continue Cody and Marissa's story. Learn how the loss of his brother shaped Cody's journey and continues to influence his sobriety today. The story also will explore how recovery communities across Michigan are building networks of support that extend beyond the household—creating spaces where hope is shared, voices are amplified, and healing becomes a collective journey.

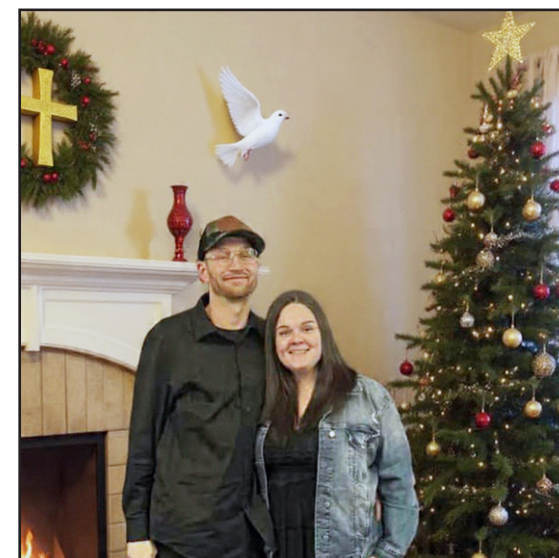
### Seasons of sobriety

The Rosecrantses and the Wrights remind us that recovery is not measured only in years, but in seasons of sobriety. Each one brings its own challenges, lessons, and gifts. December, with its lights and traditions, becomes more than a holiday. It becomes a marker of resilience, of families restored, and of homes reclaimed. Their journeys remind us that the greatest gift is not found under the tree—it is found in the courage to begin again, and in the hope that each new season can shine brighter than the last.

### Resources:

**Andy's Angels, Jackson:** Educates the community about opiate abuse and provides support for families and individuals struggling with addiction.  
Phone: 517-499-9919.

**Author's Note:** In an update on Heidi Mell's story from October "Faces of Addiction," the Mell family won their termination case, and are in the process of reunification for the holidays.



Somehow in the chaos of their past lives, David and Samantha Rosecrants made the choice to stop running, stop numbing, and to start over. Photo provided by Samantha Rosecrants



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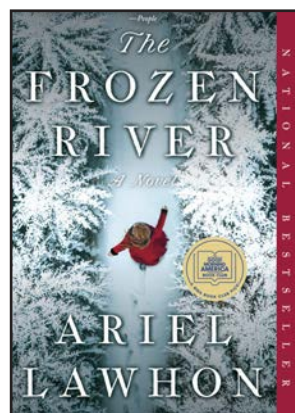
## Reading Between the Lines 'The Frozen River' is part history and part mystery; a great addition for your 'to be read' pile

by Mary Jo David

I admit to being hesitant when I selected "The Frozen River" as my next new read. I don't know whether to blame reader apathy on my part or overhyping by book clubs and book reviewers for the disappointment I've experienced with the last couple of popular fiction books I've read. Even so, I decided "The Frozen River" would be worth a try.

As it happens, my concerns were unfounded. In "The Frozen River," author Ariel Lawhon checked all the boxes in writing a book that would genuinely appeal to me: a historical setting, compelling characters, an intriguing mystery, and overall, an engaging story.

It's easy to miss that this book is loosely based on a real person—Martha Ballard—a midwife in America in the decade following the start of the Revolutionary War. This nugget is very understated on the book's cover. The book begins when Martha is in her mid-50s and has delivered hundreds of babies over her 30-plus years as a midwife. In general, she's well respected, if not quite loved, in the town of Hallowell, Maine. Fun fact: Maine is really a district and not yet a state when this story takes place.



Follow along as midwife Martha Ballard morphs, almost daily, from loving wife to concerned mother to attentive midwife, to irascible neighbor. Photo credit [thriftbooks.com](http://thriftbooks.com)

A lot happens in a relatively short time—about six months from beginning to end. A man's body is found frozen in the Kennebec River, and Martha is the first person with any medical background who is called upon to examine the body. Her finding of murder is refuted by a young, upstart Harvard-trained doctor, but Martha can't let it go. Over the next 400 pages, the reader is treated to glimpses of Martha's family life, her experiences delivering babies and treating medical issues, occasional flashbacks to her life as a young woman, and her stubbornness as she attempts to prove the murder actually happened.

I found it rather amazing that Lawhon could write a story that, on the one hand, had me thinking of Martha as a contemporary, someone I'd hope to be friends with if we were living in the same small town today. On the other hand, I was reminded that she was actually living in a very different time. Unlike many women in the late 19th century, Martha could read, but only because her husband taught her after they were married. She traveled everywhere by horse (a stubborn one, at that) and delivered women of their babies—many with unforeseen complications—without the benefit of all that modern medicine has to offer.

Following along as Martha morphed, almost daily, from loving wife to concerned mother to attentive midwife, to irascible neighbor (but only when her abilities were challenged), keeps the reader attentive and interested. And you can't help being charmed by Martha's husband, Ephraim, and the unwavering love and respect they share.

If I found one fault with the book, it was that it was tough keeping track of all of the characters since she interacted with so many over the course of the story. The book provides a simple map showing the settlements on both sides of the Kennebec River, but I contend a Who's Who list would have been more useful.

The story is rooted in time. Like her recurrent diary entries, each section of the story and each chapter is date stamped. I found it intriguing that, although the story begins about six years after the Revolutionary War ended, the townsfolk of Hallowell seemed to be much more impacted by the French and Indian War, which predated the Revolutionary War by about 20 years. That said, it was also interesting to read about the court system that was in place at the time, when the U.S. Constitution was in its infancy and prior to the establishment of the Bill of Rights in 1791.

The imagery Lawhon conveys throughout "The Frozen River" is primitive, touching, and everything in between, as illustrated by the following passages.

"The contrast of ham hocks dangling from the ceiling and the body sprawled on the table sends a shiver along my spine. ... I take a long breath through my nose, noting scents of lamp oil, onions, and salt, but no blood, no rot, no vomit..."

"It is hard to have an oldest child, but harder still to have a youngest. ... Like all mothers, I have long since mastered the art of nursing joy at one breast and grief at the other."

It bears mentioning that "The Frozen River" is one of only a couple of books in which I've enjoyed reading the Author's Notes at the end as much as I enjoyed reading the story itself, but wait to read these notes until you are done reading the book.

Overall, I'd award 4.5 stars to "The Frozen River"—a story that is part mystery and part history. Upon finishing the book, you may even find yourself asking how far have women really come since the founding of this great country.



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### 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](http://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.

### Our Board of Directors

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### Our Writers

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.

### Email:

[stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com)

Also find us at: [facebook.com/stockbridgecommunitynews](https://facebook.com/stockbridgecommunitynews)  
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## Outreach in Action

# State bipartisan legislation introduced to address water affordability, access

by Jo Mayer and Paul Crandall

*"I can't afford to keep my house."*

Heartbreaking words, spoken by a client to Gwen Reid, Stockbridge Community Outreach director, in early November as the client faced elevated water and heating bills, along with a rise in property taxes.

But some help may be on the way. State efforts are brewing to help low-income households pay for clean tap water and to help communities and utilities stay afloat as well.

According to Rep. Jennifer Conlin, who represents District 48 in the Michigan House, new bipartisan water legislation has been introduced in both chambers. Senate Bills 248-256 and House Bill 4555 address affordability, access and accountability for water providers.

"These measures aim to ensure that every Michigander has continued and equitable access to this vital resource," Conlin said via email. She added that the Senate Bills are awaiting further review in the Senate Housing and Human Services Committee, while the House Bill has been referred to the House Government Operations Committee.



According to a recent University of Michigan study, the inflation-adjusted average cost of water across Michigan has increased 188% since 1980. Photo credit Kyrie Isaac on unsplash.com

The legislation would limit water and sewer bills for eligible households to 2-3% of income and create a permanent fund financed by a \$1.25 monthly meter charge, according to a recent article, "Michigan Lawmakers revive push for income-based water bills," by Garret Ellison of MLive.

The bills would create a program administered by Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services to "reimburse utilities for lost revenue, forgive up to \$3,000 in past-due bills, prevent shutoffs for the medically vulnerable, and pay for minor plumbing fixes," said Ellison in the Nov. 10, 2025, article.

These bills come as water rates continue to spike faster than inflation and while communities struggle to pay for mandated upgrades to their water system infrastructure.

According to a recent University of Michigan study titled "Water Service Affordability in Michigan: A Statewide Assessment," the inflation-adjusted average cost of water across Michigan has increased 188% since 1980, with roughly 7% to 11% of households across the state having trouble paying their water bills.

"I believe that every Michigander should have access to safe, clean drinking water," Conlin said in the email. "With such unbridled access to clean water here in Michigan, there is no reason that anyone in our communities should struggle for safe drinking water."

*See Outreach on page 9.*

### Important Outreach December Reminders

- Dec. 8: Christmas Room opens to qualified families.
- Dec. 12: Gift and food donations due for Christmas.
- Dec. 19: No Pantry appointments.
- Dec. 24: Outreach closed and No Pop-Up.
- Dec. 31: Outreach closed and No Pop-Up.

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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

### Mondays

- Craft Drop In (Ages 8 and up) at the Stockbridge Library
- Walking Group meet-up, 6:30 p.m. at Veteran's Park in Stockbridge

### Wednesdays

- Discovery Storytime (For Babies, Toddlers, and Children), 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library
- Pop-up food distribution for anyone in need, 1 to 3 p.m. at Stockbridge Community Outreach. See page 6 for holiday closures
- Bingo, 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. at the Stockbridge American Legion

### Thursdays

- Coffee chats, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library
- Ladies Night, 6 to 9 p.m. at Trillium Gardens
- Celebrate Recovery, Stockbridge at Crossroads Community Church. A welcoming, community-focused format. Dinner (meal is free) is at 6 p.m. Large Group begins at 7 p.m. Open Share begins at 8 p.m. Fellowship and coffee immediately after [c3michigan.com/celebrate-recovery](http://c3michigan.com/celebrate-recovery)

### Fridays

- Discovery Storytime (For Babies, Toddlers, and Children), 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library
- Keep Calm and Carry Yarn, 1 to 2 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library (Occasional Fridays. Call Library for dates.)

**Dec. 2** - Sons of American Legion Meeting, 7 p.m. at the Stockbridge American Legion Post

**Dec. 3** - Gingerbread Jamboree and Open House, 4 to 7 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 6** - Annual Christmas on the Farm, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Waterloo Farm Museum. See ad on page 19.

**Dec. 7:** Last day to submit survey to 5 Healthy Towns. Go to [www.5HFSurvey.com](http://www.5HFSurvey.com).

**Dec. 7** - Annual Christmas on the Farm, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Waterloo Farm Museum. See ad on page 19.

**Dec. 8** - Outreach Christmas Room opens to qualified families (See holiday schedule on page 6)

**Dec. 8** - American Legion Meeting, 7 p.m. at the Stockbridge American Legion Post

**Dec. 12** - Outreach Gift and food donations due for Christmas (See holiday schedule on page 6)

**Dec. 12** - Family Movie and Craft Night, 4 to 6 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 14** - Stuff a Bus, begins at noon: Gregory Country Pub (noon), Wilson Estate (3 p.m.), Trillium Gardens (6 p.m.)

**Dec. 16** - Stockbridge Jr./Sr. High Wrestling Euchre Tournament, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the High School Cafeteria

**Dec. 19** - Outreach Christmas food and gift distribution (See holiday schedule on page 6)

**Dec. 17** - Holiday Storytime, 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 19** - Holiday Storytime, 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 22** - Winter Break Movie Break, 1 to 2:45 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 23** - Legion Auxiliary Meeting, 7 p.m. at the Stockbridge American Legion Post

**Dec. 24** - Christmas Eve (See ads throughout this edition for holiday church services in the area). Outreach closed and no pop-up for the day.

**Dec. 25** - Christmas Day (See ads throughout this edition for holiday church services in the area).

**Dec. 29** - Winter Break Movie Break, 1 to 2:45 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library

**Dec. 31** - New Year's Eve. Outreach closed and no pop-up for the day.

**For an online calendar of more community events visit:** [www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com](http://www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com).

**To add your community events to our free community calendar, email submissions to** [stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com).

**For a full list of library events, visit** [cadl.org](http://cadl.org) and select the "Events" menu.

## Outreach page 8

Conlin invites those interested in tracking the progress of these bills to use the following link to sign up for committee meeting notices: [legislature.mi.gov/Home/ListServerSignUp](http://legislature.mi.gov/Home/ListServerSignUp)

*This column is sponsored by Stockbridge Community Outreach. Our local food pantry, crisis, and referral center is 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. Contact us at [Outreach49285@gmail.com](mailto:Outreach49285@gmail.com), 517-851-7285, or find us on Facebook.*

# STOCKBRIDGE SPORTS

## Three Panthers compete at D3 State Finals; Gancer earns All-State honors



William Gancer earned D3 All-State honors with a 21st-place finish. Photos provided by Mike Williamson



Emily Satkowiak ran a PR at regionals to qualify for the State Finals.



Lucy Chapman qualified for the D3 State Finals.

by Mike Williamson

The Stockbridge cross country program closed its season on Michigan's biggest stage Nov. 1, sending three runners to the MHSAA Division 3 State Finals at Michigan International Speedway. Under cold winds and a wide-open course, junior William Gancer turned in the best finish of his career to earn D3 All-State honors.

Gancer, who punched his ticket with a strong regional performance at Algonac, stormed through the MIS layout in 16:13.70—good for 21st overall and a spot among Michigan's elite. The run set a personal best and marked one of the fastest Stockbridge state-final efforts in recent memory.

The boys team nearly sent a full squad after a strong showing at regionals, where Gancer placed seventh in 16:29.03. Sophomore Alex Avis followed with a personal-record 18:55.98, while Steven Karowich (21:44.18), Owen Peckham (21:49.39), Wyatt OKoney (23:19.69), and Owen Cipta (29:51.65) rounded out the Panther lineup.

On the girls' side, juniors Emily Satkowiak and Lucy Chapman represented Stockbridge at MIS after powering their way through a deep Algonac regional. Satkowiak delivered one of her strongest championship-level efforts, clocking 21:36.50, while Chapman followed with a steady 22:02.20 to close out her freshman campaign.

At regionals, Satkowiak posted a season-best 21:15.72 to finish 16th and secure her qualifying spot. Chapman wasn't far behind, taking 18th in 21:20.90—also a personal record. JayLee Chapman (24:18.06), Rachel Avis (25:42.10), Shelby OKoney (26:19.16), and Ella Hardesty (28:48.70) rounded out the Panther effort as Stockbridge placed multiple runners inside the top half of the field.

## Panthers volleyball season ends at District Finals

by Mike Williamson

A strong postseason run came to an end Nov. 6 in the D3 District Finals when Lumen Christi defeated Stockbridge 3-0 to end the Panthers season.

The Panthers could not overcome slow starts in all three sets in the loss to the Titans.

Emma Monaghan led the team in digs with 13, while Infinity Bills and Ava Lucas had five each.

Alexa Satkowiak had a team high of eight kills, while Zoey Horstman added seven. Chyanne Lindquist added three kills and Melina Sayre two.

The Panthers opened district play with a straight set 3-0 win over Springport Nov. 3.

Satkowiak had another big night with a team-high 11 kills.

Horstman finished with six kills, while Sayre added four.

Lucas added a team-high nine digs, while Monaghan had six.

On Nov. 5, the Panthers reached the finals by rallying from two sets down to beat Dansville in a five-set marathon.

Satkowiak picked up 17 kills to lead the Panthers, while Lindquist added 12, and Horstman eight.

Monaghan picked up 17 digs, while Justyna Szycka added four kills. Sayre and Bills had three kills each.



Chyanne Lindquist with a kill for the Panthers. Photos provided by Mike Williamson



Zoey Horstman goes for a tip.

## Football team falls to White Pigeon in season finale

by Mike Williamson

The Stockbridge football team closed its 2025 season Oct. 24 with a 38–20 loss to White Pigeon, a game that saw the Panthers hang tough through the first half before the Chiefs used a third-quarter surge to pull away.

White Pigeon led 8–6 after the opening quarter and the teams traded scores in the second, sending Stockbridge into halftime down just 22–20. But the Chiefs broke the game open by striking for 16 unanswered points in the third to build a 38–20 advantage, and neither team scored in the fourth.

Senior quarterback Noah Sandecki wrapped up his Panthers career with a strong all-around performance. He completed five of nine passes for 74 yards and two touchdowns with no interceptions, finishing with a 122.2 quarterback rating.

Both touchdown throws went to senior Jayson Conant, who hauled in four passes for 68 yards, including a 36-yard scoring strike.

See Football on page 19.



Noah Sandecki looks for yards for the Panthers. Photo by Mark Rogozinski

# Adrenaline and vigilance paved the way for Kensington winter fun

by Andrea Stickney

How did we ever find that toboggan hill in Kensington? We didn't. We made it, along with a growing number of winter snow enthusiasts, until the broken arms and legs, not to mention threatened lawsuits, shut it down.

But that was only temporary. Some things are meant to be, and the hill was not to be denied. Thank God for those individuals with a talent for organizing chaos, because, essentially, that is what it had become. Lines of sledders and tobogganers and occasional snow saucer riders (these were very new) gathered early in the morning, and their legions grew hourly.

Then the action began. Once propelled, lines became nonexistent and 360-degree vigilance was a necessity. Arms and legs waved and flew. Screams, both joyful and panicked, ensued. Usually within two or three adrenaline-filled hours, an ambulance arrived to transport the first serious casualty, most often a fractured limb. Sometimes, with a more serious encounter, the hill went still and silent, all eyes focused in one direction, but not for long.

I think it was the beginning of the third winter when the ropes and rules officially came. Those chaos tamers I mentioned found a way to form lines that did not dissolve and separate vulnerable bodies from the more rigid metal, aluminum, plastic and wood of the winter vessels of joy. The process still works to this day, although there is a hefty charge to use the hill now. Probably pays the liability insurance.

Still, when I think back, it was the best, most exciting, most positive chaos I ever experienced in my three quarters of a century. And I wouldn't have traded it for Disney World!



Arms and legs waved and flew on the Kensington toboggan hill back in the 1960s. AI image generated by Google Gemini.

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--	--

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	• 12/9/25	7:00 PM Northwest HS	Away
	• 12/12/25	7:00 PM Mason HS (Mason)	Home
	• 12/16/25	7:00 PM Maple Valley HS	Home
	• 12/19/25	7:00 PM Springport HS	Away
	• 12/30/25	5:30 PM Pinckney HS	Away
	• 1/3/26	11:00 AM Onsted HS	Away
	• 1/6/26	7:00 PM Union City HS	Home
	• 1/9/26	7:00 PM Concord MS/HS	Home
	• 1/13/26	7:00 PM Webberville	Home
	• 1/16/26	7:00 PM Bronson JR/SR HS	Away
	• 1/20/26	7:00 PM Reading HS	Away
	• 1/22/26	7:00 PM Quincy HS	Home
	• 1/26/26	7:00 PM Leslie HS	Away
	• 1/29/26	7:00 PM Maple Valley HS	Away
	• 2/3/26	7:00 PM Springport HS	Home
	• 2/5/26	7:00 PM Concord MS/HS	Away
	• 2/10/26	7:00 PM Olivet HS	Home
	• 2/12/26	7:00 PM Union City HS	Away
	• 2/18/26	7:00 PM Dansville HS	Home
	• 2/20/26	7:00 PM Bronson JR/SR HS	Home
	• 2/24/26	7:00 PM Reading HS	Home
	• 2/26/26	7:00 PM Quincy HS	Away
	• 3/2/26	TBA OPEN	Home

BOWLING			
	• 12/3/25	3:00 PM Pewamo-Westphalia	Home
	• 12/8/25	3:00 PM Portland St. Patrick	Away
	• 12/15/25	3:00 PM Coleman	Away
	• 1/5/26	3:00 PM Central Montcalm	Away
	• 1/7/26	3:00 PM Carson City	Home
	• 1/14/26	3:00 PM Pewamo-Westphalia	Away
	• 1/19/26	3:00 PM Portland St. Patrick	Home
	• 2/2/26	3:00 PM Coleman	Home
	• 2/9/26	3:00 PM Central Montcalm	Home
	• 2/16/26	3:00 PM Carson City	Away
	• 12/6/25	TBA vs Leslie HS	Leslie Invitational
	• 12/13/25	10:00 AM vs Concord	Concord Invitational
	• 12/20/25	TBA vs Maple Valley HS	Maple Valley Invite
	• 1/5/26	6:00 PM vs Springport HS	—
	• 1/10/26	9:00 AM vs Leslie HS	Leslie Invitational
	• 1/12/26	6:00 PM vs OPEN	Jamboree at Bronson
	• 1/17/26	9:00 AM vs Chelsea HS	Chelsea Invitational
	• 1/19/26	6:00 PM vs OPEN	Jamboree at Reading
	• 1/24/26	9:00 AM vs Michigan Center	Michigan Center Invitational
	• 1/26/26	6:00 PM vs OPEN	Jamboree at Maple Valley/ Senior Night
	• 2/2/26	6:00 PM vs OPEN	Jamboree at Quincy
	• 2/6/26	6:00 PM vs OPEN	Home Invitational

VARSITY WRESTLING			
	• 12/3/25	5:00 PM Saline Tri	Away
	• 12/6/25	9:00 AM JAWS Invitational	Away
	• 12/10/25	6:00 PM Quad	Home
	• 12/13/25	TBA Season's Beating Inv	Away
	• 12/17/25	5:30 PM Lumen Quad	Away
	• 12/20/25	9:00 AM Stockbridge Inv	Home
	• 1/2/26	4:00 PM DeWitt Girls Tournament	Away
	• 1/7/26	6:00 PM Tri @ Concord	Away
	• 1/10/26	9:30 AM Napoleon Inv	Away
	• 1/14/26	6:00 PM Big 8 Quad @ Concord	Away
	• 1/18/26	9:00 AM Girls Individual Inv	Away
	• 1/21/26	6:00 PM vs Quincy	Away
	• 1/24/26	9:00 AM Durand Inv	Away
	• 1/28/26	5:30 PM Perry Quad	Away

VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL			
	• 12/3/25	7:00 PM Dansville HS	Away
	• 12/8/25	7:00 PM Vandercook Lake	Home
	• 12/9/25	7:00 PM Maple Valley HS	Home
	• 12/12/25	7:00 PM Springport HS	Away
	• 12/15/25	7:00 PM Fowlerville HS	Away
	• 12/18/25	7:00 PM Union City HS	Home
	• 12/22/25	2:00 PM Homer HS	Home
	• 12/30/25	7:00 PM Pinckney HS	Away
	• 1/3/26	TBA Perry HS	Away
	• 1/8/26	7:00 PM Concord MS/HS	Home
	• 1/12/26	7:00 PM Leslie HS	Away
	• 1/13/26	7:00 PM Bronson JR/SR HS	Away
	• 1/15/26	7:00 PM Reading HS	Away
	• 1/23/26	7:00 PM Quincy HS	Home
	• 1/27/26	7:00 PM Maple Valley HS	Away
	• 1/30/26	7:00 PM Springport HS	Home
	• 2/2/26	7:00 PM Addison HS	Home
	• 2/6/26	7:00 PM Concord MS/HS	Away
	• 2/10/26	7:00 PM Union City HS	Away
	• 2/13/26	7:00 PM Bronson JR/SR HS	Home
	• 2/17/26	7:00 PM Reading HS	Home
	• 2/19/26	7:00 PM Quincy HS	Away

COMPETITIVE CHEER	



Dr. Erin Clifton

## Positive Parenting Why toddlers lie and how caregivers should respond

by Dr. Erin Clifton

I remember when my oldest was 3 years old and told his first lie. I immediately called my sister, excited about this intellectual stage of development. It wasn't deliberate deception, but more of an untruthful

statement.

According to "A Parent's Guide to Lying and Age-Appropriate Consequences" on parents.com, research shows children begin to tell primary lies around ages 2 to 4. At this stage, they may not fully grasp that their version of events differs from what others believe or know to be true; they are simply testing boundaries or expressing a preferred reality.

Why does this happen? Toddlers are building language and executive function skills, and they're also starting to understand that their mind is separate and distinct from their parents'. They are beginning to perceive that they can say something different from what happened and see what happens next.

A 2017 article on "Lying and Children," posted by the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry explains that this is the beginning of the evolution into why children (and adults) lie: to get out of trouble, for personal gain, to impress or protect someone, or to be polite.

What I notice in young children is the propensity to lie in order to not be in trouble. So what can we do to teach children honesty? The biggest thing is to create a safe space in which to tell the truth. Rather than reacting with anger or harsh labeling (for example, calling a child "a liar"), consider that a calm, curious approach can build trust, model honesty, and support the deeper learning we want them to develop: that words matter, and mistakes can be handled responsibly.

Below are some steps for caregivers when a toddler is telling an untruth:

- Stay calm. A shocked or angry reaction may make the child more likely to try hiding or lying next time for self-preservation.
- Acknowledge what you can see factually. ("I see the juice is spilled and the cup is empty.")
- Let kids know they'll be in less trouble when they tell the truth and follow through on that.
- Feel free to walk away for a moment and let them answer again. Sometimes being put on the spot sets up a person to lie due to momentary panic.
- Reinforce the value of honesty: "When we tell what really happened we keep trust and can fix things together."
- Dole out a consequence that fits the crime. I've found it useful to let my children recommend what they think is an appropriate consequence. We discuss how they can "make it right" and follow through.
- Model honesty yourself. Mistakes happen for adults too. Showing you can tell the truth and work to correct things builds real life trust.

See *Positive Parenting* on page 15.



**Toddlers may not fully grasp that their version of events differs from what others believe or know to be true.** Photo credit Rameez Remy on unsplash.com

## Freemasons: A generous organization with a focus on serving the community

by Joan Tucker



Some mystique has always surrounded the freemasons (aka: the masons). For me, it began when my husband Tom talked about his father and grandfather being active members for years. My husband recalls a lot of preparation that went into being a member. What I recall is Pop was very proud of his service and levels of achievement.

He always said, if he needed care when he aged, the masons had a care facility in Alma, Michigan, that he and his wife could utilize. As a family, we blew that off until years later when the need arose. The masonic home-care facility offered many options to folks with different levels of need. Pop went into memory care and his wife went into assisted living. As a retired RN, I can say that the facility provided top-notch care, and in the end, it was free.

I have lived in the Stockbridge area for nearly 50 years and never realized we have our own Masonic Lodge No. 130. No excuse really, just busy working and raising a family like everyone else.

The Masons of Stockbridge have been meeting above what was once known as Brown's Pharmacy and Dancer's Department Store since 1925 when the masons purchased the building space and started holding monthly meetings. Historically, the farmers who were masons would drive their wagons to the meetings, gather, relax, share a meal, and talk about the needs of the community.

According to the definition found on many Mason Lodge websites, "Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest fraternity. It is comprised of adult men (18+) of good character from every country, religion, race, age, income, education, and opinion, who believe in a Supreme Being. It's body of knowledge and system of ethics is based on the belief that each man has a responsibility to improve himself while being devoted to his family, faith, country, and fraternity."

You can't help but admire the moral character of this group. Past members are names we all know: George Washington, Ben Franklin, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, Gerald Ford, Booker T. Washington, Thurgood Marshall, Davy Crockett, Edward Jenner, Count Basie, Lord Nelson, Winston Churchill, and Walt Disney, just to name a few. But most members quietly serve their communities.

What does this mean in Stockbridge? The moral men of Lodge No. 130 continue to serve local people in need as well as the infirm. In 2024, the masons put \$11,644 into our community. They paid for band uniforms, dugouts for the baseball fields, and new library books.

See *Freemasons* on page 19.

*Thank You*

The Stockbridge Community News thanks those in the community who continue to send donations. Special thanks to those listed here whose donations were received in the mail between Oct. 25 - Nov. 24. We truly appreciate the support of our community, and we look forward to continuing to provide a quality, local paper. Donations can be sent to Stockbridge Community News P.O. Box 83, Gregory, MI 48137

• Denise and Larry Allen • Jill Shepherd • Diane Schmidt

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"Dear Gabbie" is written with the simple hope of bringing a few smiles to your day and is not meant to replace the advice of professionals ... especially your mom!

Dear Gabbie,

**I'm pregnant and strangers think nothing of reaching out and touching my tummy. Is this normal, because it sure gives me the creeps!**

Dear Miffed Mama,

Is this normal? Not really. Is this person intending to give you the creeps? Not very likely. Often, these "boundary busters" are moms themselves—women who loved being pregnant, snuggling babies, or maybe have grown children now and your visible pregnancy instantly takes them back to deeply special moments in their own lives. From that perspective, she's just intending to share in your joy, so no harm done.

Again, while her (or his) intention isn't harmful, the impact of the tummy toucher's action can be. Even though this person might see it as a parent-to-parent connection, it's simply not OK for anyone to put their hands on your body.

These awkward situations can be good practice in assertiveness as well as getting comfortable advocating for your little one. (Get ready; there will be other "What-the-heck?" parent moments with strangers in the years ahead... and with folks you know too. Sorry.)

Simply be prepared for those "tummy touchers" in the months ahead. While in public, tune in to others who exhibit enthusiastic body language with a laser-gaze on your belly. Decide, in advance, what your physical response will be. You do have options: Stepping back? Putting your hand out to "stop the feel?" Also, decide what your verbal response will be. It doesn't need to be unkind; just a firm "I'm not comfortable being touched" or some variation should work.

Honestly, just trust your instincts on your next response. It might be kindly engaging in a short chat ("I'd love a quick parenting tip!") or it might simply be walking away after a quick, "Enjoy your day!"

Be gentle with yourself as you learn to navigate this new stage of life. Congrats, and happy parenting!

Gabbie



Brian Friddle

Superintendent's Desk

## Thank you for supporting the bond for Stockbridge Community Schools

Dear Stockbridge Community School District,

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for supporting our recent bond initiative. Your investment in our schools means a great deal to us, and we are committed to using these resources responsibly while meeting the needs of our students and caring for our district facilities.

Our goal is to address immediate needs while also planning wisely for the next ten years. In the coming months, we will focus on projects that can be completed before school begins next fall.

Our most urgent priority is replacing the boilers at Heritage. Following that, we will move forward with replacing the roofs at both elementary schools. We also plan to address plumbing concerns at the Jr./Sr. High School and continue our technology replacement cycle, updating elementary Chromebooks and 20–25% of Chromebooks at the Jr./Sr. High School. In addition, we hope to begin work on the Ag Barn, which will expand opportunities in Ag Science and support more hands-on learning for our students.

We also are planning several additional initiatives and will determine their implementation timeline, with the hope of completing many of them before the 2026–2027 school year begins.

Please keep in mind that these funds are intended to support our district over the next five to ten years. Some needs can wait a little longer so we can make the most of our existing facilities and resources.

We will provide regular updates on our progress. As plans are finalized, we will share a detailed timeline for the first phase of improvements.

Once again, thank you for supporting our school district. We are excited to invest in our facilities, enhance student learning, and create new opportunities for all students. We truly appreciate your continued support.

Brian Friddle, Superintendent of Schools

## Thanksgiving page 1



Phil Lentz takes a selfie while his son Bennett and his daughter Hazel get rolls ready for serving.

when dinner is served. A few years ago, he spearheaded the effort to start recycling the many steel cans, aluminum trays, and cardboard leftover from the dinner prep. After recycling is done, the Godwins return home, rest for a short time, and then enjoy the remainder of the day with their family.

**The Lentzes.** Phil Lentz and his children, 12-year-old Bennett and 9-year-old Hazel, have been volunteering at the Community Thanksgiving Dinners for five years. Phil's wife is a nurse, so while she works Thanksgivings, they've used this opportunity to teach their kids what it means to give back to the community. Phil and his kids work the roll station at the dinner—bagging up rolls for dining in and for meal deliveries.

"Stockbridge is a small town, but a lot of people really care," Phil said. "Volunteering here opened my eyes, and I hope it has opened my kids' eyes to see that people really care about one another. The whole atmosphere is so inviting."

For the first time in many years, Tracie Lentz is not working on Thanksgiving this year. Don't worry, Phil and the kids will still be "on a roll," but this time Tracie will be joining the team.

Both Kip Godwin and Phil Lentz encourage anyone who has considered volunteering with the Community Thanksgiving Dinner to "just do it!" Neither of them has any regrets.

**Passing the torch.** For 12 years, Erin Smith has volunteered with and then led the Community Thanksgiving Dinner effort. Now she's ready to hand off the responsibility to someone new—ideally to a good organizer and people person, and of course, someone who values community.

"I'm hoping we'll find someone willing to take over. I have given up family time for the last 12 years—no regrets—but I'm just ready to pass the torch," Smith said.

If you're interested in finding out more about leading the Community Thanksgiving Dinner, stop in on Thanksgiving Day (between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.) at Heritage School to talk to Erin. Or email [stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:stockbridgecommunitynews@gmail.com) and we'll help to put you in touch with Erin Smith.

Kip's jobs run the gamut, from separating light and dark turkey meat, making bean salad, or mashing potatoes. On Thanksgiving Day, Nan and the others who work "the front of the house," keep a watchful eye for those who may need some company or assistance, while Kip works with others in the kitchen.

"The community support and volunteer network for this dinner are amazing," Kip said. "Erin [Smith] does a terrific job of pulling people together into groups that work really well together. It is run SO smoothly."

Kip's job doesn't end

## Waterloo Village United Methodist Church

8110 Washington St., Grass Lake | Pastor Mary Barrett

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 7 PM

- \* A Sensory Celebration of The Little Drummer Boy & The Shepherds
- \* Candlelight Service
- \* Traditional Hymns
- \* Candy canes for the kids

REFRESHMENTS & SOCIAL HOUR 6 – 7 PM

2nd Saturday  
of the Month  
8 – 10 am

Community Breakfast  
Bottle/Can Fundraiser  
\* JOIN US DEC. 13 \*



# Staff Spotlight: Smith Elementary first grade teacher Corinne Clouse helps her students turn pint-size wins into big wins



Mary Jo David

by Mary Jo David

First grade teacher Corinne Clouse is new to Smith Elementary and new to teaching, but she already feels she's right where she needs to be.

"I love my students at this age. They're still in love with school and it's wonderful to see the light in their eyes when they have one of their lightbulb moments as they're learning something new," Clouse said.

It wasn't that long ago that Clouse thought she was destined for a career in a medical field. But five years of working at a day care reinforced what she'd known for a long time: She really loves working with kids.

After growing up in Chelsea and attending Chelsea High School, Clouse attended Kalamazoo Valley Community College and then Western Governors University.

If she seems to excel at juggling a classroom with 20 six- and seven-year-olds, it might have something to do with the years she spent as a baton twirler, beginning with when she, herself, was attending elementary school. During middle school, she branched out to join the track team, but in high school, most of her extracurricular time was spent in color guard with the marching band.

"I think my students would be surprised to learn how many states and different stadiums I performed in across the country thanks to that color guard opportunity," she said.

In first grade, students must adhere to a pretty rigorous curriculum, so the opportunity to work on fun projects and play silly games is always a welcome break. As she works at inspiring them, they do the same with her. Clouse likes to think there's never a day when she doesn't get at least one big smile out of each of her students.

First grade teachers are accountable for teaching the basics in reading, writing, and math. But they also spend considerable time helping students recognize and manage their emotions and getting daily routines down pat.

As a result, what might seem like pint-size wins to others are big wins to a first grade teacher.

"For example," Clouse explained, "we have days where students are allowed to bring something in from home and tell us about it. I have a student who really struggles when it's time to put that object away. Today, I only had to remind him once to do that. That was huge, so I made sure to let him know how great that was!"

On a more academic note, Clouse conveys how thrilled she was after she administered her first math test to the class this fall. Being a new teacher, she admits it wasn't just the students who might have been feeling some trepidation with that first test.

"I found myself wondering if I had taught the module well enough. Seeing the results boosted my confidence tremendously—the overall scores were really good!"



First grade teacher Corinne Clouse works hard to inspire her students knowing their first grade experiences stay with them throughout their education. Photos provided by Corinne Clouse

Clouse works with a great team of first grade teachers. She thinks they all benefit from multiple perspectives, including input on some of the newer education techniques and strategies that she's brought with her, fresh out of college.

"Our first grade team helps me learn strategies for getting through my first year, but they're also open to the ideas and enthusiasm I bring to the table as a new teacher," Clouse said.

Clouse isn't afraid to let her students know when she's made a mistake, and when she does, she teaches them you just take a minute to sit with that mistake to figure out how you're going to get past it. Her advice for parents is that it's OK to let kids struggle a little bit and watch them try to figure it out before the parents jump in to help.

Her biggest challenge isn't being new. It's classroom management. Clouse contends that you can take all the book learning there is out there on how to be a teacher, but when you step into your own classroom it's a completely different ballgame.

"Learning how to transform that class into a community ... learning how to instill a sense of belonging for the students and the teacher ... turning it all into a well-oiled, functioning engine is a huge challenge," she said, but it's one she feels she's conquering.

Throughout the fun times and the challenges, Clouse says, "Teaching is one of the coolest jobs in the world! I love it, and I know, this is where I'm supposed to be."

All photos provided by Corinne Clouse. See additional photos at [www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com](http://www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com).



First grade teachers—and their families—are never too old for a bounce house, according to Smith Elementary teacher Corinne Clouse (pictured far right).

## Chief page 1

"I've noticed a bit of a disconnect between the police department and the government offices, and also with the people and the school district," Tyler said. "I want to bring us all together into a real cohesive group."

He believes Stockbridge is not far off from achieving this level of connectedness. "Everyone I've met—the school officials, people working in town hall, the police officers, the residents—they're supportive. They want to work together. They just need someone to help tie all the personalities together."

When he is not on the job, Tyler enjoys spending time outdoors. He and his wife, Tammy, own property in Harrison, where he enjoys hunting and owns two bed-and-breakfast rentals. They also love to travel. He recently returned to Italy and plans to travel to Hawaii this Thanksgiving. Tyler has four children. His twins, Alex and Jozlynn, graduated from Fowlerville last spring. Jozlynn is studying nursing at Central Michigan University, and Alex is in Army boot camp in Missouri. Tyler's middle son, Kaiden, is stationed in Poland with the Army, and his oldest son, Dustin, works in Mount Pleasant as an apprentice in construction trades.

As part of his interim responsibilities, Tyler is helping lead the search for Stockbridge's next permanent chief. Though several applications have come in, he says none so far has been the right fit.

"For me, it's about finding someone who wants to be here for the right reasons," he explained. "Not someone looking for a title, but someone who wants to be a part of the community for the long term."

Tyler says he has received a warm welcome and is enjoying his time here in Stockbridge. He looks forward to getting to know everyone and being involved in community events. As he continues his dual role in Fowlerville and Stockbridge, residents can expect to see Tyler out in the community, doing what he can to shape the foundation for the department's next chapter.

All photos provided by SPD Interim Chief John Tyler. See additional photos at [www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com](http://www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com).

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**Bridge to Wellness**

**A holiday reflection for all, compliments of Charles Dickens**



During the holidays, channel Charles Dickens to reflect on the importance of welcoming ideas, love, and aspirations—new and old. Photo credit Ksenia Yakovleva on unsplash.com

by Sarah Wilczynski

As we enter into the holiday season, it's important to reflect on what's most important to us, remember all we are thankful for, and spread kindness to all around us.

To give space for this reflection, take a moment to read this timeless excerpt from Charles Dickens' short story "What Christmas is as we Grow Older."

*Nearer and closer to our hearts be the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness and forbearance! It is in the last virtues especially, that we are, or should be,*

*strengthened by the unaccomplished visions of our youth; for, who shall say that they are not our teachers to deal gently even with the impalpable nothings of the earth!*

*Therefore, as we grow older, let us be more thankful that the circle of our Christmas associations and of the lessons that they bring, expands! Let us welcome every one of them, and summon them to take their places by the Christmas hearth.*

*Welcome, old aspirations, glittering creatures of an ardent fancy, to your shelter underneath the holly! We know you, and have not outlived you yet. Welcome, old projects and old loves, however fleeting, to your nooks among the steadier lights that burn around us. Welcome, all that was ever real to our hearts; and for the earnestness that made you real, thanks to Heaven! ... Let our thoughts, fluttering like butterflies among these flowers of children, bear witness! Before this boy, there stretches out a Future, brighter than we ever looked on in our old romantic time, but bright with honour and with truth. Around this little head on which the sunny curls lie heaped, the graces sport, as prettily, as airily, as when there was no scythe within the reach of Time to shear away the curls of our first-love. Upon another girl's face near it—placider but smiling bright—a quiet and contented little face, we see Home fairly written. Shining from the word, as rays shine from a star, we see how, when our graves are old, other hopes than ours are young, other hearts than ours are moved; how other ways are smoothed; how other happiness blooms, ripens, and decays—no, not decays, for other homes and other bands of children, not yet in being nor for ages yet to be, arise, and bloom and ripen to the end of all!*

In his story, Dickens highlights the importance of welcoming ideas, love, and aspirations, new and old. He encourages us to rejoice in the children in our lives and our community and to recognize the future they carry with them. Slow down. Notice life as it's happening around us.

We wish everyone the happiest holiday season and hope you take time to enjoy the memories you are making in the moments that can seem fleeting.

If you'd like to read the entire "What Christmas is as we Grow Older" story, visit [ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Dickens\\_Christmas.pdf](http://ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Dickens_Christmas.pdf)  
 This column is sponsored by the Stockbridge Area Wellness Coalition (SAWC). Sarah Wilczynski is a SAWC board member.

**Positive Parenting page 12**

**Activity Highlight:** Choose one regular moment each day this week (for example: snack time, toy cleanup time, or after a little tumble) to engage in a mini "honesty check in" with your toddler. Use a calm question: "What happened here?" Then respond with curiosity, fact stating, and collaboration. No heavy punishment. At the end of the week, reflect on how you handled any untruthful responses—what you said, how you felt, and how your child responded. Use this reflection to shape next week's honest talk approach.

*Dr. Erin Clifton DC, CACCP, is a partner in Positively Chiropractic in Stockbridge, Michigan. Her specialty is pediatric, pregnancy and family health care. She is "mom" to two sons and two daughters and leads various health and wellness classes in the Stockbridge area. Dr. Erin has a personal passion for achieving optimal health, while educating and inspiring those in the community to work with the body, not against it.*



1st Place-John Taylor

# BIG BUCK BASH

Nov. 15, 2025

Sponsored by Crossroads Community Church  
Deer scored by points & spread

*Congratulations Hunters!*



Top Youth-Lincoln Sartorius



2nd Place-Jeremy Pilch



3rd Place-Chris Voorhies



4th Place-Cole Tomlin



5th Place-Brian Hildabridle



6th Place-Mike Marshall



7th Place-Robert Schneider



8th Place-Katie Hamel

## Another great year at the Big Buck Bash!

*We had some nice bucks this year!  
Thank you to the sponsors that help to make this event possible.*

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- My Body Shop: youth sponsor gift certificate
- Michigan SANY: 3 Swag bag
- Positively Chiropractic: women's gift basket

*Photos provided by Vickie Richardson on Facebook*



# Active Aging 'Go places and do things': Building a good life in the Stockbridge area



**Go places! Members of the SASC attend a Lugnuts game at Jackson Field in Lansing.**  
Photo provided by SASC

by Alexa Ten Eyck

A loved one frequently shared some simple advice for finding a good life: “Go places and do things.”

The idea is gentle but powerful: A good life is not imagined in a single moment; it’s built by new experiences that encourage engagement with the world.

The five insights below present some discussion of this idea.

Together, they highlight how building a good life is possible in the Stockbridge area.

**Build belonging:** A good life begins with belonging. A warm welcome through simple conversation, acknowledgment, or an invitation fosters this sense of belonging. These actions promote psychological safety and help individuals build lasting connections that enrich daily life.

**Stay connected through local traditions:** Local traditions bring continuity and strengthen ties across all ages of a community. Ties formed at seasonal celebrations, community gatherings, and annual events reinforce an individual's identity within the community. They create opportunities for connection and help individuals stay rooted in something larger than themselves.

**Find comfort in meaningful interaction:** Sharing a meal remains a powerful way to find comfort through connection with others. Moments gathered around tables, filled with conversation, seasonal dishes, and familiar faces, provide meaningful interaction that reduces isolation.

**Bring balance through lighthearted fun:** Balancing responsibilities with joy is crucial in building a good life. The burden of responsibility often leads to playfulness being overlooked in adulthood, yet it plays an essential role in one’s

emotional well-being. Creative activities, themed gatherings, or lighthearted celebrations bring ease and resilience by softening life’s rougher moments.

**Seek out small adventures:** Small adventures refresh the mind by lifting the spirit. Exploring new places provides relief through a change of scenery, encouraging new thoughts and conversations. Trips to new places can stimulate curiosity and foster a sense of connection to the world.

## The real connection is the Stockbridge Area Senior Center

Insights like those listed above are fostered at the Stockbridge Area Senior Center (SASC). In pursuit of its mission to help families in the Stockbridge area, SASC is guided by these insights to accomplish the following endeavors:

*Some of the places we go:*

- Lugnuts ball game day trips.
- Cornwell's Turkeyville day trip.
- “Misery” play outing.

*Some of the things we do:*

- Fundraising: Pancake breakfast, membership bonanza, rummage sale, and golf tournament.
- Creating awareness: Speaking on the radio at SAESA’s radio station business gathering and entering a downtown Halloween light-pole contest.
- Engaging with the community at A Day in the Village.
- Bringing generations together by hosting events like a Halloween costume contest.
- Creating wholesome moments by passing out candy at the Town Square trick-or-treat event.
- Providing shared meals and gathered moments three days/week and hosting a Thanksgiving dinner featuring a craft show.

Together, these insights and accomplishments represent new experiences that build a good life in the Stockbridge area.

**Circling back to the original idea:** A good life is not imagined in a single moment; it’s built. Built through new experiences that encourage engagement with the world, or in the words of a loved one, by “going places and doing things.”

*Alexa M. Ten Eyck is the president of the Stockbridge Area Senior Center (SASC)—a great place to spend time. Visit [stockbridgeareaseniors.org](http://stockbridgeareaseniors.org) or call 517-480- 0353 for information.*



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### STOCKBRIDGE TOWNSHIP MEETING MINUTES November 17, 2025

Stockbridge Township Supervisor CG Lantis called Stockbridge Township Regular Board Meeting to order on November 17, 2025 at 7:001pm at the Stockbridge Township Hall. Members present at the Stockbridge Township Board Meeting; Supervisor CG Lantis, Clerk Becky Muraf, Treasurer James Wireman, Trustee Ed Wetherell, Trustee Terry Sommer Member absent None

Pledge of Allegiance  
Moment of Silence  
Sommer motion to accept the Stockbridge Township meeting agenda as printed Wetherell Second Discussion add on Special Meeting minutes from November 7, 2025, All in Favor Motion Carried  
Citizen’s Comments None  
Sommer motion to approve Stockbridge Township Board Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2025, as printed Wetherell Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
Muraf motion to approve the Stockbridge township Special Meeting

minutes from November 7, 2025, as printed Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
Sommer Motion to approve the Stockbridge Township Financial Report as printed Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
Police update.  
Memorial Wall no updates.  
Old Business  
Muraf motion to table Hall Rental until December 15, 2025, Stockbridge Township Board meeting so that Stockbridge Township Board members can research Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
New Business  
Muraf motion to table the Stockbridge Township Insurance quote for 2026 until Stockbridge Township December 15, 2025, meeting to look at other insurance options and companies  
Sommer Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
Sommer Motion to pay the Stockbridge Township monthly bills in the amount \$42,239.73 Wireman Second All in Favor Motion Carried  
Citizen’s Comments Discussion  
Lantis adjourns the Stockbridge Township regular board meeting at 7:41 pm  
BM

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Published in Uncaged, November 2025

# Students navigate college applications with support from the Success Center

by McKenna Williams, *Uncaged* Reporter

*This article is being reprinted, with minimal edits, from the Uncaged Student News November 2025 edition.*

With the 2025-26 college application cycle opening, many students are struggling to navigate through the many elements of it, according to counselor Sara Oesterle.

Whether it is uploading transcripts through Parchment or navigating the Common App, students have reliable sources in the Student Success Center available to help at any time. Three sources of help in the Student Success Center include counselors Sara Oesterle and Kelly Carling, as well as Debrielle Lopez, who is a media specialist.

Senior Liliana Ramalia said she has not received help from the Student Success Center with her FAFSA application. Sitting at her kitchen table, Stockbridge High School senior Ramalia stared at her laptop screen, scrolling through college essay prompts and application portals. She did not have a counselor meeting scheduled, and she did not have a checklist to guide her. Instead, she was determined to get it done.

“I did my app all by myself,” Ramalia said. “I didn’t even get a meeting with the counselor, but I also didn’t reach out for that help.”

For students like Ramalia, the college application process can feel like a solo journey. Yet school counselors say support systems are in place.

“Stockbridge is doing a good job, but I think it’s something that’s going to continue to improve over time, so there’s always room for improvement,” Oesterle said about the application process.

Kelly Carling described the navigation of the Common App.

“The Common App is a place that you apply once and then all different universities use it, so once you apply there and choose which schools you’re going to, it’s kind of like a universal application,” Carling said. “From the student side, it’s not horribly hard. Parts are a little confusing, but it’s pretty user friendly.”

Once students submit their applications, the next step is sending their high school transcripts to the colleges they applied to. Parchment allows students to send official transcripts electronically.

“Parchment is the best way,” Carling said. “We always have it uploaded there, so anytime after you leave Stockbridge it’s easy to get it to you. Parchment is definitely the easiest.”

Another highly suggested item for students’ checklists is filling out FAFSA. Beyond applications and transcripts, financial aid is a critical step. Oesterle urges all students to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which determines eligibility for grants, loans and scholarships.

“So the FAFSA tells you basically what you are eligible for based on your income,” Oesterle said. “There’s grants and then there’s loans.”

FAFSA is not just for students enrolling in four-year universities but for those looking into community college as well.

“If you want to take advantage of the two-year community college scholarship, you have to fill it out, or else you can’t do LCC, JCC, or Washtenaw for free,” Oesterle said.

Statistics show FAFSA is a crucial step. About 70 percent of Michigan undergraduates and 40 percent of non-resident undergraduates receive financial aid through the program. Some students have said they were unaware that completing FAFSA is required for free tuition at two-year community colleges in the district or for certain scholarships. “I heard of it before from previous seniors, but I didn’t really know how it all worked,” student Rusnock said.

*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. For more information on SAEF, visit [www.panthernet.net/our-district](http://www.panthernet.net/our-district).*



**Look for the display ‘Futures Looking Beautiful’ in Michigan yellow and blue. These documents in front of counselor Sara Oesterle’s door will help students feel successful while navigating their after school plans.** Photo credit Alecia Smith



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## Freemasons page 12

They helped with hotel costs so the journalism class could go to Chicago, and they assisted in purchasing SHS Choir uniforms. Stockbridge Masons also donated money to local organizations such as the Stockbridge Area Senior Center (SASC), the Teen Center, and Stockbridge Area Outreach. During Christmas, the Stockbridge Masons choose five families in need to provide gifts and Christmas cheer. Each year at the Stockbridge High School Honors Night, the masons award five \$1,000 scholarships to community-minded students.

Currently, Masonic Lodge No. 130 has 43 members. To become a member, you need to be at least 18 years old and ask at least two active members to support your nomination. Next comes a vetting process, to make sure the applicant's views align with masonic philosophy. Each member is asked to pay yearly dues as well as participate in fundraising.

In the past, the masons would host a pancake breakfast in Stockbridge to raise money. Now they help run an occasional poker tournament in Westland for charitable purposes. At Michigan International Speedway events, they drive an Americans with Disabilities Act van to transport folks to events such as the races, music festivals, and even the State Championship meet for cross country. On a larger level, Shriners International is a part of the masons' fundraising. This money goes into a General Fund and is distributed accordingly.

Dan Wilson, of Stockbridge, has been a proud member of Masonic Lodge No. 130 for the last 10 years. He quotes one of the masonic philosophies, "To take a good man and make him a better man." Wilson feels that the organization makes him a better Christian, one who loves giving back to our community. He was also told that the Grand Lodge in Alma paid for anti-bullying education for Michigan schools.

Richard Gibson currently holds the chair of Worshipful Master in the Stockbridge lodge. This title is the highest chair, and he is a principal officer. Some of his responsibilities include running the meetings and participating in the Grand Lodge Convention.

Gibson is also proud to be a Freemason, stating "The history is incredible!" He loves being part of an organization that has the community at heart.

If you are interested in becoming a Freemason, with an organization that is steeped in history, and where all men are considered equal and working to become better people, this group may be for you. Reach out to the Grand Lodge of Michigan at [info@michiganmasons.org](mailto:info@michiganmasons.org) or call 989-968-4440. They will contact Stockbridge Masonic Lodge No.130 on your behalf.

Being a Mason is a great way to serve your community.

## Football page 10

Sandecki also led the ground game with 76 yards and a touchdown on nine carries. Senior Brandon Hamlett added 61 yards on 13 attempts as the Panthers combined for 137 rushing yards on the night.

On defense, Sandecki again paced the team with six tackles. Seniors Grant Howlett, Noah Beauregard, and Brandon Hamlett, along with junior Aidan Bradley, each finished with four total stops as the Panthers battled to keep White Pigeon's run-heavy offense in check.

Stockbridge closes the year 4-5 overall and 4-2 in the Big 8 Conference.

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## Data Center page 2

The demand to develop new data centers has been rapidly increasing amid the wide-scale growth of artificial intelligence (AI) and is becoming increasingly more common nationwide and in the state of Michigan. Members of the Environmental Affairs Commission have expressed concerns regarding the environmental, economic, and community impacts of these facilities.

According to the resolution approved by the commission, large-scale data centers typically require tremendous amounts of water and energy, create noise and heat pollution, and other nuisances that negatively affect surrounding neighborhoods. Due to these factors, regulation of data centers should be carefully considered.

Specifically, commissioners expressed concerns regarding the proposed development of a 24-megawatt (MW) data center with developer Deep Green in the BWL service territory.

"I have concerns about how electric bills could be increased by this project. Without safeguards like those being required for data centers within the territories of larger utilities like Consumers Energy, BWL customers could see their bills go up," stated Chris Trubac, Ingham County commissioner and chair of the county's Environmental Affairs Commission.

The Environmental Affairs Commission specifically urged local government and electric utility entities to share detailed plans for proposed data centers including the source of electricity, the amount of water use, safeguards to prevent any utility rate hikes for customers, and other environmental measures.

"I recognize data centers can support growth in our communities and bring new job opportunities to our people, and I want to make sure everyone's voice is heard as we plan for a bright future together," Trubac stated. "Good planning takes time, and it's important that we get this right."

For the full text, see press release at [www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com](http://www.stockbridgecommunitynews.com).

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*Main Street glitters as Festival of Lights  
kicks off the Christmas season*

Photos by Hope Salyer

