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West Branch celebrates 150 Years



Photo by Laura Bender

Michigan State Representative Mike Hoadley (l) presented West Branch Mayor Paul Frechette and committee member Robert Romps with a signed proclamation to commemorate the city's 150th birthday. For more photos, see pages 8 and 9.

BY LAURA BENDER

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the city of West Branch, Mike Hoadley, Michigan State Representative of the 99th District, read this proclamation:

“In the heart of Ogemaw County, where the west branch of the

Rifle River winds through forests and fields, lies the City of West Branch - an enduring symbol of resilience, charm, and community spirit. As we celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2025, we pause to honor a century and a half of rich history, steadfast growth, and

the remarkable people who have shaped its legacy. This sesquicentennial marks more than a date on the calendar - it is a celebration of the Civil War veterans laid to rest at Brookside Cemetery, the merchants who built the town's iconic

CELEBRATES continues on page 14 »

Rose City Community Center plans underway

BY LAURA BENDER

An exciting new project is underway for Rose City and the surrounding townships of Rose, Hill, Klacking, and Cumming. If all goes well, the former junior high school, which has been vacant for 13 years, will become the new Rose City Community Center.

“My husband and I graduated from there when it was a high school. I taught there when it was a junior high school. I hate to see it deteriorate,” said retired schoolteacher Cathy Curtis. “It’s a dream of mine to turn it into a community center.”

To date, a purchase agreement has been approved, and the title work has been done. The city attorney has drawn up a contract which Rose City and two townships have already signed. The last two will be ready to sign by June 30, allowing the project to move forward.

Although the recreation program has used the second floor every summer, that space and other sections of the building will need to be renovated. The plan is to complete those in two phases. Phase One will include the gym, shower room and four classrooms. In the summer, these are already used four days a week, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Phase Two will require more extensive work, as much of that area had been stripped of items that could be used in other buildings. This area includes the cafeteria, kitchen, three classrooms and the library. When this is complete, the Rose City Library will move from its present location at 107 W. Main St. to the new community center.

Until resources are available to address the issues of the solid, but aging north wing built in 1942, it

PLANS continues on page 13 »

West Branch woman celebrates 100th birthday



Photo by Lois Bergquist

Retired West Branch physician, Dr. Jackie Hanifin, celebrated her 100th birthday on Saturday, June 14. A party in her honor was given on June 18, at the Victorian Trails in West Branch. Happy Birthday, Jackie!

Fourth of July festivities across the county

Fourth of July weekend is right around the corner and there are plenty of events scheduled across Ogemaw County to celebrate our country's independence.

In the city of West Branch, the annual parade is scheduled for Friday, July 4, at 6 p.m. through downtown. This year's theme is “City of West Branch Sesquicentennial Celebration.”

The parade route starts at S. Valley St., and heads west on Houghton Avenue, to the Ogemaw County Building. To register to be in the parade, call the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce at 989-345-282, visit online at www.wbacc.com or stop in the office, located at 422 W. Houghton Ave., West Branch.

Fireworks, courtesy of West Branch Township, are also



scheduled for July 4 at dusk, behind Walmart.

The Mills Township/Skidway Lake fireworks will be at dusk July 4, in Newman Park.

The annual parade is scheduled for Saturday, July 5, at 11 a.m. The parade route begins at Skunk Hollow Rd., and travels down to the Skidway Lake Chamber of Commerce (C.O.C.) building.

There's still time to register to be in the parade. If interested,

you must register with the C.O.C. Registration forms are available there or at the township hall by Monday, June 30.

On the evening of July 5 at dusk, Lake Ogemaw will host its annual display.

Rose City has lots to see and do for the holiday.

Beginning at noon on Thursday, July 4, the Kids Fishing Derby, for ages 14 and under, is scheduled. Registration begins at 10 a.m. at the back pavilion in the Rose City Park.

There will be games for the kids and food vendors set up in the park throughout the day. The parade is scheduled to begin at 4 p.m. and fireworks will light up at the sky at dusk.

Happy Independence Day, everyone. Enjoy and be safe!



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With everything changing daily, if not hourly, we would advise that you call ahead to be sure the event is still scheduled.

Ongoing
Mondays – Disabled American Veterans meet the third Monday, 5 p.m. at the VFW/American Legion Post 496 E. Houghton Ave. in West Branch. Call 989-473-3416.
Mondays – Rose City Lions Club meets the second and fourth Monday, 6:30 p.m. at the Log Cabin in the Rose City Park. Call Ed 989-387-0609.
Mondays – (Second of each month) **Coalition of Hope** 9 a.m. Meeting virtually. Suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention. Call 989-345-5571.
Monday – (Third of each month, April-Dec.) **Ogemaw County Genealogical and Historical Society** 12:30 p.m. at the Trinity Episcopal Church, 100 E. Houghton Ave., West Branch. Call 989-701-2525.
Tuesdays – Kiwanis Club of West Branch meets at noon at China Inn, 601 W. Houghton Ave. in West Branch. Call 989-345-0978.
Tuesdays – Rose City Area Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., April through November, except August. Meet at the Rose City Lions Club Cabin. Call Cathy 989-345-5659.
Tuesdays – T.O.P.S. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) **weigh in** at 1-1:30 p.m., meeting starts at 1:30-2 p.m.

Ogemaw Hills Free Clinic, 2106 S. Gray Rd. in West Branch. Call Robin 989-343-0592.
Tuesdays – (First of each month) **West Branch Creative Arts Association meeting**, 7 p.m. located at 124 N. Fourth St. in West Branch. Call 989-345-1451.
Tuesdays – (First of each month) **West Branch Area Retail Merchants Association meeting**, 6 p.m. Held at the West Branch City Police Department. Call 989-345-5226.
Tuesdays – (Second of each month) **Christian Motorcycle Association** 6 p.m. for food and fellowship, 7 p.m. business meeting at G’s Pizzeria, 200 W. Houghton Ave. in West Branch. Call Gary 989-343-9876.
Tuesdays – (Fourth of each month) **Rifle River Quilt Guild** 9:30 a.m. at the K of C Hall, 601 Columbus Dr. in West Branch. The meeting will be followed by a Show and Tell, mini-classes, quilting tips, demos and time to sew. Bring your sewing machine, a project and your lunch. Any level of quilter is welcome. Call Diane 989-345-7206.
Tuesdays – (Third of each month) **Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake.** Third Tuesday 5:30 p.m. at Café International, 4761 Sage Lake Rd. in Prescott. Call Janet 989-387-2640.
Tuesdays – (Second of each month)

Survivors of Suicide Support Group 6:30 p.m. Call Vicki 989-510-0911 or *info@coalitionofhope.net* for location. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255 or text 741741.
Tuesdays – (Fourth of each month) **Ogemaw County Democratic Party** 5pm at China Inn downtown West Branch. Call Ken at (989) 345-1066.
Tuesdays – (Fourth of each month) **Ogemaw County Republican Party** meeting 5:30 p.m. at G’s Pizzeria in downtown West Branch. Call Kristine 989-343-5120.
Tuesday – (Last of each month) **Diabetes Support Group** 1-2 p.m. Medical Arts Center, diabetes education conference room. Call 989-343-3276.
Wednesdays – West Branch Area Business and Professional Women’s Organization meets the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. Different locations each month. Call 989-745-4067 for information.
Wednesdays – (First of each month) **Veterans coffee hour** 9-10 a.m. Held at the Ogemaw County Commission on Aging, 1528 S. M-33 in West Branch. Call 989-345-3010.
Wednesdays – (First and third) **Grief Support Group** 6:30 p.m. Faith Alive Church, 2945 Hansen

Rd. in West Branch. Open to the entire community. Call 989-345-5440.
Thursdays-GriefShare Support Group. 2-4 p.m. Fresh Start Community Church, 690 Campbell Rd., West Branch. March 7 through May 30. \$20 for workbook. Scholarships available. Call Brenda 989-312-0105 for registration or info.
Thursdays – (First and third of each month) **Newborn Parent Support Group** 6-7:30 p.m. MyMichigan Health - West Branch in the executive dining room. Call 800-999-3199.
Thursdays – Northern Blend Sweet Adelines meets every week 7 p.m. at Logan Township Hall, 4507 E. M-55, Prescott. Call Ellen 989-345-0978.
Thursdays – (Second and fourth) **Sit & Knit**, 1 p.m. Knitting, needlework, and friendship. Whatever you craft. Ogemaw Commission on Aging, 1528 S. M-33 in West Branch. Call Alicia 989-345-3010, ext. 201.
Thursdays – (Third of each month) **Rose City/Lupton Chamber of Commerce meets** at 6:30 p.m. at the Rose City Council Chambers. Call Carl 989-473-3268.
Thursdays – Optimist Club of West Branch meets at 7 a.m. at the Loggers Depot in West Branch. Call 989-942-6608.

Thursdays - The Ogemaw County Fair board meets the first Thursday of each month in the main building at the fairgrounds. Call 989-345-5393.

July 12
58th Ogemaw County Rural Schools Reunion, Saturday, July 12, noon, Logan Township Hall, 4507 E. M-55, Prescott. For more information, contact Lois Bergquist at 989-915-8597.

July 13
Fun in the Sun, sponsored by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake, Sunday, July 13, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Elbow Lake Park.

July 16
Golf for Life, sponsored by the Life Choices Resource Center, Wednesday, July 16, Nightmare Golf Course, 5745 Old 76 (M-55) West Branch. Registration begins at 7:45 a.m., \$90 per person.

To place your event in the Community Happenings, email information to deanna@superior-news.com

FAITH & WORSHIP

God is love

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
—Romans 8:37-39 NIV

God is love. And He loves us all no matter where we are in life. God’s love is unconditional. God’s love is without limit. God loves us so much and his love is so deep that nothing can change his love or stop him from loving us.

God loves us in all seasons of life. God loves us every second of everyday. God loves us. God’s love is permanent. God’s love can never fade away.

God loves us and because of his love he cares for us. God Himself his love. God is full of love.

When I am waking up it’s God loving me, God loves me in every situation and his love is always present in our lives. Even when I am not feeling well, his love is still there and yes I am not feeling well but that does not stop God from loving me, God does not want me to be in pain but his love is present to heal me of the pain. When I feel disappointed God loves me.

When I have failed God loves me. We need to start believing and accepting that God is love and he loves us deeply.

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Morning Worship 10:30
www.gladwincornerstone.com
Pastor Scott Bradstreet

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(corner of State and Morrison roads)
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Worship & Children’s Sunday School: 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Helen Alford

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Sunday Evening Service - 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
Youth Group - 6:30 p.m. • Awana - 6:30 p.m.
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Pastor Tom Teall • Youth Pastor Josh Pierce
www.cbcbw.org

Edward’s Community Church
4520 Greenwood Rd., West Branch
989-345-4227
Pastor Jon Scott

Sunday School 10 a.m.
Worship Service 11 a.m.
(Greenwood Rd. west of S. M-30)

Hale Methodist Church
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Groups meet at the Faith Alive Event Center
601 Progress st.
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Hope to see you there!



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West Branch author inspires hope in debut novel

BY LAURA BENDER

Are there times when you feel you are just surviving, but not thriving? Sometimes all it takes is a reminder of your best self and a bit of support to turn things around. In her debut novel, "Comes Around," West Branch native Michelle S. Morris weaves a tale of the human connections that magnify strength, resilience and hope.

"I love impressionist art because even when there is darkness on the canvas, the artist is able to bring out the light. That's what I like to do with my writing," Michelle said. "No matter what happens in life or how dark it seems, there is always hope."

In "Comes Around," Michelle tells the story of fiercely independent and successful Halley who returns to her small Michigan hometown in shame after her life implodes in San Francisco. As escalating anonymous threats, betrayal, and secrets plague her, she has to decide who to trust and turns to her estranged multigenerational family and their extended motorcycle club dynasty. It's a journey of resilience, self-discovery, the enduring power of home, and transformation, of falling down and getting back up.

"Writing and telling stories has always been part of my life," Michelle said. "As a young girl, I used to go to Brookside Cemetery and sit at my great-grandparent's grave to write."

One of the fifth generation of the Richardson family who helped settle West Branch, Michelle graduated from Ogemaw Heights High School in 1981. She received a bachelor's degree in English and Political Science from Albion College, as well as a concentration in Public Service

from the Gerald R. Ford Institute in 1985. As part of her studies, Michelle spent a year at the University of Sussex in England.

Michelle began her career at the White House, first as an intern in the press office, then full time in the Office of Management and Budget. In 1987, she worked as a consultant for George Bush's campaign in Michigan. Her first position in the corporate world was at Dow Chemical, where she wrote speeches for the CEO and strategic communications for a variety of initiatives.

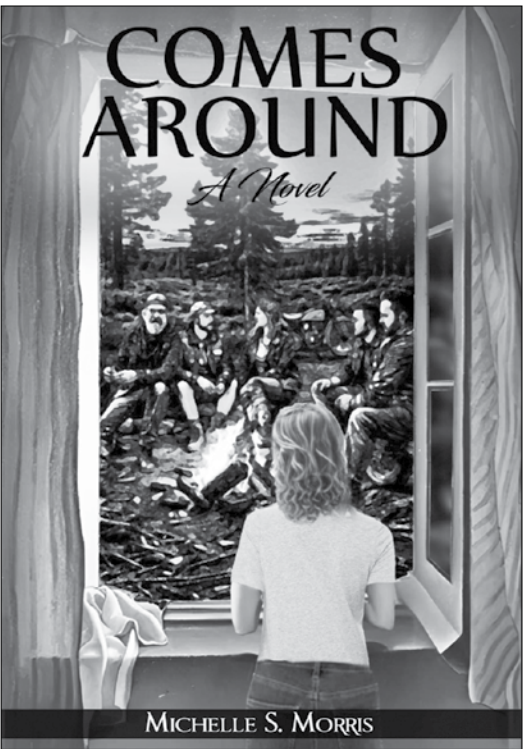
"Specializing in the art of leadership, the power of ideas, and the words to express those ideas, I have advised and written for political figures, CEOs, and heads of major corporations in several industries, where my focus was to influence and have a positive impact," Michelle said. "I served as a speechwriter and ghost writer, developing the unique voice of the leader, and conceived and implemented strategic plans meant to advance businesses and connect leaders to the people who walk with them. I handled global crisis communications, internal communications, including writing a book on the power of strategic internal communications called The Power Within, public relations, public affairs, and reputation and image management."

In 1987, Michelle married Gerard Cowan, an Irish musician from Dublin. In 1989, the couple

welcomed triplets. Gerard became the stay-at-home dad, caring for their children and maintaining the home-front while Michelle pursued her executive career. In 2000, doctors diagnosed Gerard with a brain tumor. To provide for her family and Gerard's medical needs, Michelle continued working while watching the man she fell in love with slowly disappear. When Gerard died in 2009, Michelle became a single mother of triplets whose job took her around the world. Managing home and career, she continued working until 2020.

"My time as an employee with some of the world's largest corporations served a purpose. It kept the lights on, fed my triplets, provided what my husband needed during his battle with a brain tumor, gave me a challenge, and took me all over the world, where

AUTHOR continues on page 13 »



MICHELLE S. MORRIS

Fourth Street Artists Gallery photographer receives award

BY LAURA BENDER

Mark Winslow, a photographer associated with the Fourth Street Artists Gallery in West Branch, was honored on June 6 at the 2025 Artfest55 Awards Reception in Midland. Mark received the first-place blue ribbon and \$100 prize for his photo entitled Recapturing a Moment in Time.

"My father took the original photo of me on a street in Standish when I was 12," Mark said. "He worked at Whipple's Photo. I guess I get my love of photography from him. Over the years, I've thought about that photo and decided I needed to do something with it. I like the artsy side of photography more than just snapping pictures of things around me."

Mark took the photo of himself as a boy and merged it with a photo of himself as an adult. He even added a miniature photo on the camera screen to create the illusion of photographing himself across time. The result is a story told in one scene.

"The boy will always remain in the heart of this man who strives to capture special moments with his camera," said Linda Clark, West Branch Creative Arts



Mark Winslow recently won a photography award at an art show in Midland.

Association secretary.

Mark has other photos on display at Fourth Street Artists Gallery. Each is more a work of art with a story to tell than just a beautiful scene. Stop by to see his inspirational pieces. Besides creating with photos, Mark enjoys reading about the history of photography and its early devotees. He also collects vintage cameras.

Mark's award-winning photo Recapturing a Moment in Time will be on display at the Creative

360 Gallery in Midland through mid-July. Artfest 55 is a celebration of imagination, experience, and talent for Michigan creatives age 55 or older. If you want to learn more about the contest for visual artists and creative writers, visit <https://www.becreative360.org/>. For more information about the Fourth Street Artists Gallery, 124 N. 4th Street, West Branch, call 989-345-1451, email wbc-aa2013@gmail.com or visit <https://fourthstartistsgallery.com/>.

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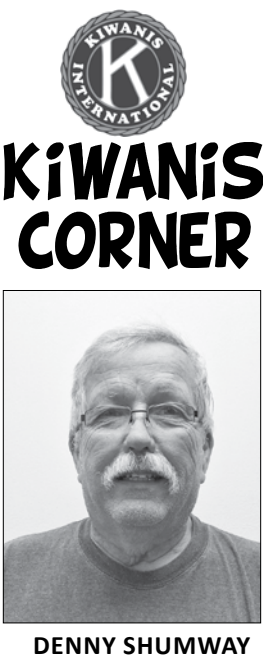
KIWANIS OF WEST BRANCH
Our annual 1-2-3 Lottery Winners are picked weekly. Flags are up downtown until after Labor Day. Looks too nice to take down.

Come be a part of our team. The Kiwanis Club meets at noon on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at G's Pizzeria. Anyone interested in learning about our organization is welcome to attend. If you would like to be a guest speaker to show us what you do, call JoLin at 989-873-4532.

AKTION CLUB
The Aktion Club continues to collect bottles and cans. You can call 315-725-1199 and make arrangements for pick up or drop off locations.

RED Pin Bowling at Ogemaw Lanes was fun for all that came. We worked at the 150th Anniversary watching the Bounce House. What fun we had. We will also have our annual carnival on July 19. This year it will be at the parking lot at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Fairview and State roads. Watch for the flyers.

This club supports numerous organizations in Ogemaw County. Those with special needs interested in joining our club, come on the second



DENNY SHUMWAY

Wednesday of the month at noon at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Fairview and State roads.

OGE MAW COUNTY FOOD PANTRY
Looking for donations of food or money to help us with the influx of families. You can add to your grocery bill at Meijer Store with a card found at the checkouts or customer service. We will take donations every Wednesday of the month from 8:30 to 11 a.m. We are located in the outreach building behind the Trinity Episcopal Church, 100 E. Houghton Ave., PO Box 543, West Branch. We want to thank those that have donated. If bad weather, call ahead at 315-725-1199 to see if we are open. We are open every Wednesday from 9-11 a.m. or until we run out of food. Families can come once a month. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FOOD TRUCK
The monthly food truck will be at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Fairview and State roads on Friday, Aug. 22. Line-up at 9 a.m. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. There will not be a food truck in July.

Questers host Old Fashion Hat Day

BY SALLY REA CURATOR
Late in May, Dottie, a member of our local “Questers Organization,” called me to see if I would be interested in doing a presentation on some of the old hats we have in our artifacts at their next monthly meeting on June 10. She told me that Pastor Helen Alford of the Trinity United Methodist Church and her daughter, Elizabeth, would be on the program first, displaying and talking about their hats.



SALLY A. REA
HISTORIAN AND
CURATOR

Dottie came to the museum,

and we picked out hats, beaded purses handmade by many of our local ladies many years ago, nylon gloves, and old hat boxes. Pat Sciotti helped me pack up all of these items in the old hat boxes. Everyone was to bring their own lunch in a paper bag. Dottie and Evelyn Delaney put together three delicious desserts, coffee, iced tea, and lemonade. We ate our lunch first and had a short meeting. Most ladies attending the luncheon wore a hat. Pastor Helen's hats were represented from many years ago with so many different

materials, sizes and shapes. Her presentation was very interesting including the Jackie Kennedy famous pill box hat. Then it was my turn, and I only brought about 12 hats from Thelma Reetz Brick's collection, which most of them she made. Jan Wilkinson, via Joyce Neland, also brought in a few hats and an old hat box. Thelma is Joyce and Jan's aunt. I brought two of the Roaring '20s hats and Helen did not have this kind of a hat. I also brought a fur piece that once belonged to Lou Schulty. Between the two collections, I believe everyone had a great time. What a great group of ladies we had. They will be coming to visit our museum on July 8.

News from the Skidway Lake area

BY APRIL HARKEY-MASON
Skidway Lake area just finished its yard sale weekend, and it was a success. There was a yard sale sign on just about every street.

The heat is on. We complained about the cold nights, and now as I type this on the 17th of June, we got what we asked for. Our tomato plants are growing fast now with the warm weather and lots of water.

Before you know it, fireworks will be going off. Mills Township/Skidway Lake will have fireworks on July 4 at dusk in Newman Park. The Mills Township parade will be on Saturday, July 5, at 11 a.m. If you wish to be in the parade, you must register by June 30 with the Skidway Lake Chamber of Commerce. There is a parade registration form to fill out. You can go to the Skidway Lake Area

Chamber of Commerce Facebook page and find the registration form there to print.



APRIL
HARKEY-MASON

The lineup is at 10:30 a.m. at Skunk Hollow Road. The parade will start there at 11 a.m. It will travel to the Skidway Lake Chamber of Commerce where there will be participation badges passed out to all that were in the parade.

Saturday night, the Lake Ogemaw fireworks will go off at dusk so we can see both this year. Next year we will go back to normal and have the fireworks and parade on the same day.

The Skidway Lake Library Reading Schedule 2025: “Color Our World” will be Tuesdays in July at 1 p.m. at the Skidway Lake Library, 2196 Greenwood Rd.

July 1 - The Color of Freedom.

July 8 - Colors in Bloom. July 15 - Shades of Nature. July 22 - Cool Colors of Summer, and July 29 - Color Me Surprised. Please register so they know how many to plan for by calling 989-873-5086 or stop in. This is a great way to keep your children interested in reading through the summer.

The Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake will host the annual “Fun in the Sun” at Elbow Lake Park in Skidway Lake on July 13, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. There will be bikes to win and free hot-dog lunch for the kids, free ice cream from the Black Bird ice cream trailer, and free games and prizes. It is a great time for all. The Cardinal Optimist Club has organized this event for years and they always have a good turnout and a great time.

Remember to share any news you have with me, call or text me at 989-578-8768.

Until next time, God Bless.

Ogemaw County Superior News

The *Ogemaw County Superior News* is published the second and fourth Saturdays of the month and distributed in West Branch, Rose City, Prescott, Lupton, Alger, Skidway Lake and Hale. It is available at newsstands for 75 cents per issue or annually for \$50.

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Fostering a culture of safety

At MyMichigan Medical Center West Branch, we are deeply committed to the safety and well-being of our patients, staff and community. I am pleased to share with you an initiative that underscores our dedication to maintaining the highest standards of patient care - our daily safety briefings.

Every day at 9:30 a.m., without fail, key leaders from our Medical Center gather to discuss one of the most critical aspects of health care: patient safety. These 15-minute briefings, held 365 days a year, serve as a cornerstone of our efforts to identify, address, and resolve safety issues promptly. Our commitment to safety is not just a protocol; it is a culture we strive to foster throughout our organization.

Fostering a Culture of Safety
As I often say, “A key component in improving patient safety in any organization is to foster a culture of safety.” Our daily briefings provide a platform where departments impacted by safety issues can hear firsthand about

concerns and carry this vital information back to their teams. This practice has been a part of our routine for several years and continues to yield positive results for our patients. In fact, our dedication to safety has been a reason our Medical Center received an “A” grade from The Leapfrog Group.

Led by senior leadership, representatives from each department convene in a conference room, and a roll call begins. This practice ensures that every area's safety status is reported and addressed. The meetings are concise, allowing for immediate follow-up discussions and problem-solving among departments, saving time and enhancing efficiency. We also accommodate offsite facilities, such as home care and urgent care, by providing a conference line for those unable to attend in person.

A System-Wide Commitment
Our commitment to safety is shared across all MyMichigan Medical Centers, including those in Alma, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Mt. Pleasant, Saginaw, Standish, Tawas and Towne Centre. This system-wide approach

ensures that safety protocols are uniformly applied, benefiting all patients under our care. The sheer ability to have face-to-face contact eliminates the need for multiple emails and voicemails, often wasting vital time. By meeting daily, we resolve issues swiftly, fostering transparency and empowering our employees to prioritize safety at all times.

Our Commitment to You
No issue is too small to be addressed. By maintaining a transparent and open culture, we encourage our staff to share concerns without fear of reprisal. The daily safety briefings have become integral to proactively preventing risks at every level, significantly impacting the safety and quality of health care we deliver.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in MyMichigan Medical Center West Branch. Together, we are making strides toward a safer, healthier community.

Warm regards,
Ray Stover

President
MyMichigan Medical Centers
in West Branch and Gladwin



RAY STOVER

Cardinal Optimist Club and IRESA hold ‘special’ art contest

BY LADONNA SCHULTZ

The Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake recently partnered with the Iosco Regional Educational Service Agency (IRESA) to offer a Special Communications Art Contest to their students.

“IRESA students have special needs due to physical, mental or emotional disabilities, making it hard for them to compete with other students in our traditional essay contests,” said Janet Smith, president of COCOSL. “Our club decided this unique group of students also needed an opportunity to participate and express their thoughts on the topic of the year, ‘How Optimism Has Paved My Road to Success’.”

The competition was run similarly to our current Optimist Essay Contest, but because the needs of students with disabilities are so different, the Special Communications Contest included multiple communication mediums. Students could express their thoughts on this year’s theme by using a variety of different



LADONNA SCHULTZ

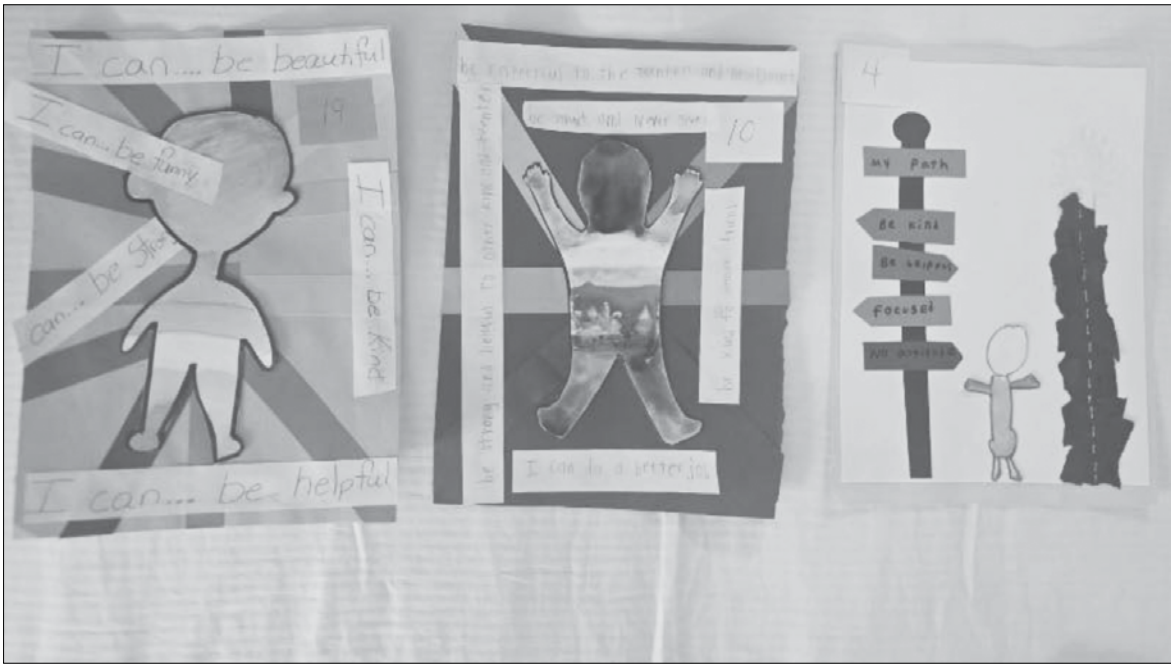
methods such as painting, drawing, decoupage and dioramas.

The response by the students was heartening. Overall, 19 students entered exhibits. Their work was judged on nine different metrics including theme relatability, creativity, harmony of composition, and rule adherence, just to name a few. Judges were superintendents within the ISD who volunteered their time to assess the students’ works.

“I was impressed by each student’s entry,” the event chairperson Chuck Synder said. “Every art piece was colorful and strong visually.”

Winners were awarded cash prizes donated by COCOSL at a special award ceremony attended by students, parents, teachers, administrators and club members. Haley from Hale School District won first place and \$300. Will from Tawas School District won second place and \$200, and Alaina from Whittemore-Prescott School District received third place and \$100.

The smiles on the students



Courtesy photo
The Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake, along with the Iosco Regional Educational Service Agency, recently held an art contest for special needs students. Pictured are the top three winning submissions.

faces shown with pride of their accomplishment. One mom approached an Optimist member to thank them for sponsoring this event. She commented on how she often goes to various award ceremonies for her enabled children. This time she was pleased to come to an event in which she was able to see her special needs child honored for her achievements.

The Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake is proud to sponsor events like these that help contestants develop self-esteem and confidence. It is keeping with our mission to focus on personal growth opportunities for children around the world. If you would like to join us in this cause, become a member. We meet the third Tuesday of the month at the Café International in Prescott.

We’d love to welcome you into our hardworking, but gratifying club.



OPTIMIST
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Optimist Updates



JOE BELL
PRESIDENT

The Optimist Club of West Branch meets every Thursday morning at 7 a.m. Loggers Depot in downtown West Branch hosts our meeting and feeds us a great breakfast with many menu options to choose from. We would love to have you come and join us for breakfast and let us show you what the Optimist Club is working on next to benefit the children of our community and the world.

Our club members come from all walks of life and have diverse backgrounds. Many have been members for over 30 or even 40 years. Our special communications project really required a large amount of work and was chaired and developed by Alan Doss with a huge amount of input from the staff at the COOR Intermediate School District. It will be featured in the regional Optimist newsletter

coming out soon.

Steve Zdon is a newer member who is trying to develop a junior Optimist Club in cooperation with the West Branch-Rose City Area Schools. Membership in the club helps develop leadership and community service skills. It also teaches the value of the optimistic way of living life, which I have found to be a very worthwhile pursuit.

We close each meeting by reciting the Optimist Creed part of which states: “Promise yourself to great every living creature you meet a smile.”

What a great way to approach your life! Bye for now.

Letter to the editor policy

The Ogemaw County Superior News encourages all readers to submit letters to the editor for possible publication. Please limit letters to 200 words or less.

The author must include a daytime phone number as they will be contacted prior to publication. Unsigned letters will not be published. We reserve the right to edit and/or reject any letter.

Letters can be submitted via email to deanna@superior-news.com or by traditional mail to P.O. Box 603, West Branch, MI 48661.

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Bike Bash 2025 welcomes bikers to fairgrounds



Courtesy photos
Hundreds of motorcyclists converged upon the Ogemaw County Fairgrounds, June 20 and 21, for the 2025 Bike Bash. There were many events that took place during the two days, including a blessing of the bikes, loud pipes contest, motorcycle rodeo, a fun run to benefit Special Olympics, live entertainment and much more.

Despite morning rain annual Fly-in draws large crowds



Photos by Emily Reed

Despite early morning rain showers, the West Branch Community Y31Airport Fly-in/Car show drew large crowds on Saturday, June 21. Attendees were treated to a pancake breakfast and the candy drop was very popular with the kids. Visitors were also able to take airplane rides and tour the airport.



Aria Galea, 1, plays with one of the plane gliders that we're given to children during the event.



Pilot Kevin Finnerty gives flight lessons to aspiring pilot, Scarlett Squires and Eliana Reed.



West Branch knows how to throw a party



Music in the Park kicks things off

The West Branch 2025 Music in the Park was a big hit on Thursday, June 19. Motor City Memories took to the stage and entertained guests with songs from the 1950s to 1980s. It was the perfect way to kick off the West Branch 150th Birthday Celebration. Future shows include July 10 with Jedi Mind Trip; July 17 with Kait Rose & Co; July 24 with 23 North Band and July 31 with Slick Jimmy Band. All concerts are free and run from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in Irons Park in West Branch.

Photos by Laura Bender



‘Classy Chassis’ on display

Over 100 classic cars lined Houghton Ave., in downtown West Branch, for the annual Classy Chassis car show on Friday, June 20. It was a festive night as attendees checked out all the cool cars and visited with friends and family.

Photos by Deanna Surbrook



‘Come and knock on my door’

The Dirty Mitten in downtown West Branch held its ever popular “Mrs. Roper’s Romp” on Friday, June 20, the second night of the birthday celebration. If you remember correctly, Mrs. Roper was a character in the popular 1980’s television sitcom, Three’s Company. “Oh, Stanley.”

Photo by Laura Bender



Happy 150th Birthday West Branch



The Northern Blend Chorus performed during the celebration.



First one in is a rotten egg.



Current West Branch City Manager John Dantzer visited with Pat McGinnis, the longest serving city manager in the history of West Branch.



Former Mayors Denise Lawrence and Bill Ehinger were recognized during the festivities. Unfortunately, former Mayor Todd Thompson, who was the longest serving mayor in West Branch history, was unable to attend as he is currently battling cancer.



The Cornhole Tournament was a big hit.



Lumberjack shows took place throughout the day.



The bouncy houses, provided by the West Branch Kiwanis Club, kept the kids busy and happy.



City Councilmember Lois Bergquist, (l) displays photos of the remnants from the time capsule buried 50 years ago.



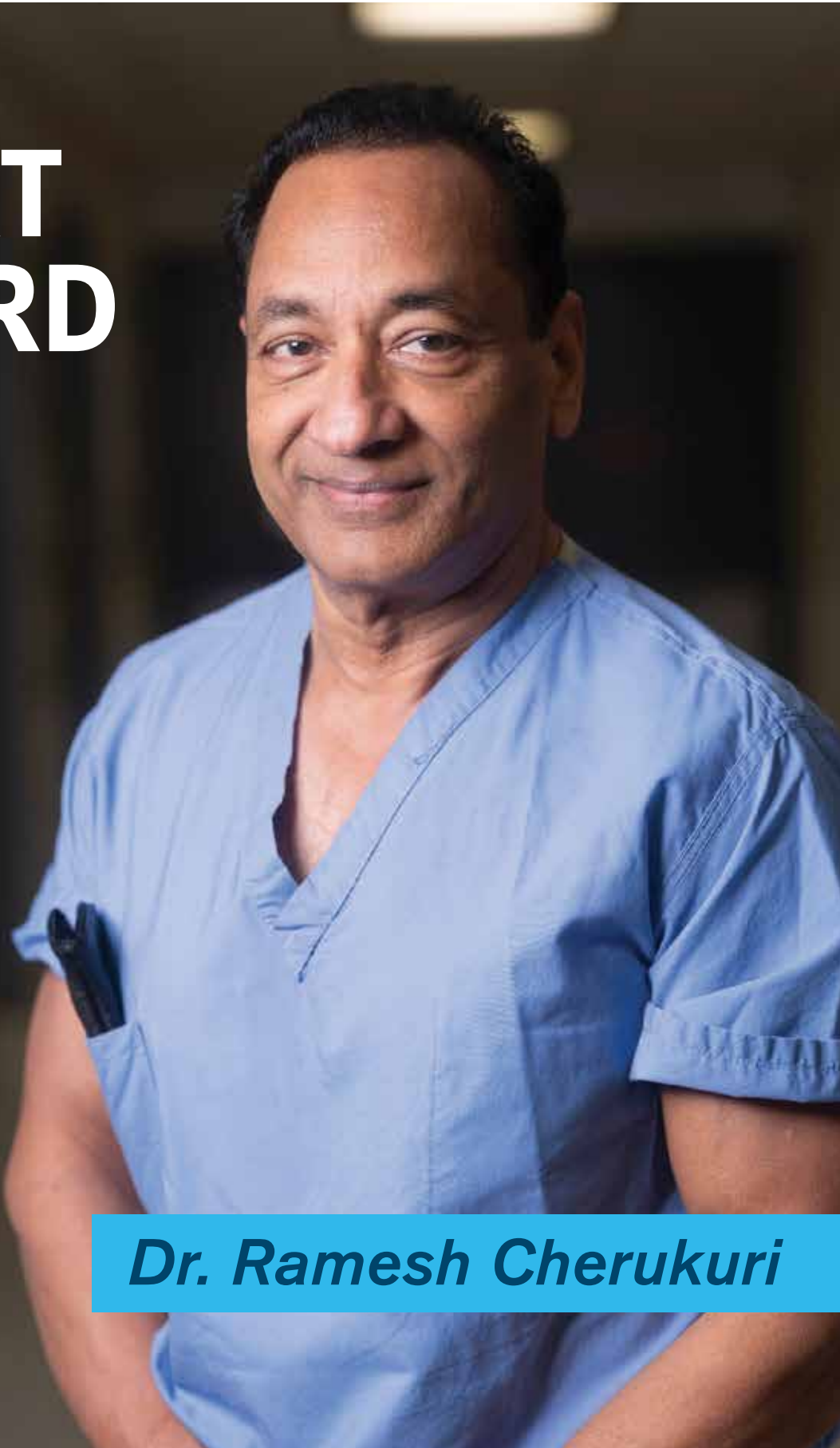
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Learning the rules of the road in Skidway Lake



About 40 kids participated in the first Bike Rodeo on Saturday, June 14, in Skidway Lake. Kids learned valuable bike safety skills and 10 bikes were raffled off. The event was sponsored by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake, My-Michigan Health, Ogemaw County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Michigan State Police, Ogemaw County Child Protection Council, Ogemaw County Sheriff's Office, Ogemaw County 4-H and Rosati's Marketplace. Organizers are hoping to make this an annual event. "Bike safety is so important, and the rodeo is a fun way to impress on the kids the rules of the road," said Ogemaw County Prosecuting Attorney LaDonna Schultz, who is also a member of the Cardinal Optimist Club. "Organizers got together and brainstormed on how to make it bigger and better next year."

Courtesy photos



WB Township water tower gets a makeover



Photo by Deanna Surbrook
Members of the community recently gathered for a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the improvements to the West Branch Township water tower. Pictured (l-r) Township Supervisor Jim Morris, Clerk Jeremy Hickmott, Treasurer Diane Philbrick, Trustee Mike Durfee and Mike Killackey, who assisted with the project.

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Lessons in local history



Courtesy photo
Summer school students from Surline Middle School visited the Ogemaw County Historical Museum on Thursday, June 12. Students had the opportunity to tour the museum and ask questions about local history.

Ogemaw County

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West Branch BPW installs 2025-26 officers



Courtesy photo
The West Branch Area Business and Professional Women's Club installed the officers for the 2025-26 year at their last meeting. Those installed were (l-r) Pam Hilts, president; LaDonna Schultz, vice president; Kathy Taylor, secretary, and Sandi Osterland, treasurer. If you are interested in joining this organization or for more information, please call Pam Hilts at 989-745-4067.

Author

« Continued from page 3

I met people and saw things that will provide great fodder for future books," Michelle said. "The last week of my husband's life, he made me promise to leave the world of suits behind and write books, as I was supposed to do from the beginning, until life got in the way."

When Michelle writes about building resilience and finding the strength and hope to thrive, even in the darkest moments, she is speaking as a woman who had to do just that.

"Strong women play a big part in what I write, and sometimes the men and women who

stand beside them, Michelle said. "Multi-generational family, both blood and chosen, feature in much of what I write. And there is an element of suspense and mystery. Timely and timeless issues often make an appearance. Regardless of what happens, you should always feel an uplift and hope. Resilience is an incredible thing and realizing you have it changes the game we call life."

Michelle S. Morris' debut novel "Comes Around" is available on Amazon <https://a.co/d/cVef0da>. To learn more about Michelle, and her current and future novels, visit <https://michellesmorris.com/>.

Plans

« Continued from page 1

will be sealed off.

"Many people in our community have a heartfelt connection to this building," Cathy said. "We

hope that in the future, people will sit and chat in the community room, walk or play pickleball in the gym, hold events in the cafeteria and activities in the

classrooms. The plans we have for it are wonderful. Working together on this shows the solidarity we have in our area, especially for things that benefit our kids."

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HAGGADONE, BREEANA
HAMILTON, ISABELLE
HARTFIEL, HENRY
HINES, NOLAN
HUGHEY, HARLEY
JONES, DUSTIN
KAISER, KALE
MARTIN, SARAH
MCCLUSKY, CARTER
MCDANIEL, CONNOR
MCDONALD, EMMA
MONROE, MARISSA
MORRISON, MORGAN
PFEIFFER, COLTON
POTTER, ANGEL
QUALLS, ANNIKA
ROCK, MALAKAI
ROSE-BUZZARD, MASON
ROUGH, ELIZABETH
SALYERS, ALYXIAH
SHORTRIDGE, MADISON
SIKORSKI, JOSHUA
SULFRIDGE, MICHAEL
SYMONS, MADISON
WANGLER, CAYDEN
WANGLER, PHILLIP
WEBSTER, KAITLIN
WELLS, KAYDENCE
WHITE, HANNAH
WILLIAMS, LUKE
ZETTLE, LANDEN
ZIMMER, LUCIUS

CLASS OF 2025 3.50 - 4.00
HIGH HONORS

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BEEHLER, HANNAH
BELANGER, MEGAN
BREWER, REESE
BRINDLEY, CALEIGH
BRUDER, JACK
BUHLMAN, KENNEDY
CAIN, SULLIVAN
COLLINS, TAYLIN
DANTZER, AALIYAH
DEVINE, JOSIAH
DINGS, ISAAC
DOWELL, NATALIE
FRANTZ, LOGAN
GIBSON, AIYANA
GLASSER, CHARLEIGH
GORMAN, NYC
HOCK, ROBERT
HOLTON, EMILY
ILLIG, RAYNA
INGLESON, JOURNEY
JOHNSTON, LYDIA
KARTES, ADYSEN
KRUSZYNSKI, CAMARENA
LEATHORN, ANNABELLE
LEIBLER, EMILY
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SISCO, ISAAC
SOMERFIELD, NATALIE
STINSON, AVA
SWIETYNIOWSKI, LUCAS
SZUCH, BROCK
TROMBLEY, CHLOE
VALLEY, CHARLEE
VELAM, SAI
WALBY, ADRIENNE
WANGLER, TAYLEE
WARD, ALLI
WEAVER, KALEK
WEISEND, KYLER

CLASS OF 2026 3.00-3.49
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BARTH, PRESTON
BERG, OLIVIA
CARRIERE, FINN
FREEMAN, PEYTON
GLORIA, LAELYANNA
HILL, COLTEN
HODGE, LONDON
JONES, EION
KUJAWA, JAZMIN
LAHAR, MADISYN
MATHEWS, CALI
MONTAGUE, AIDEN
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REVORD, LANEY
ROZNOWSKI, KAMERON
SIERRA, NICHOLAS

SMITH, CADEN
THORSON, ARCHER
VAUGHN, LONDON
WILES, LUCAS
YEAGER-PYSZORA, MAT-THEW
YOUNG, WYATT
ZETTEL, KHLOE

CLASS OF 2026 3.50 - 4.00
HIGH HONORS

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AGREN, TEAGAN
ANDRASIK, ELIZABETH
BALL, FELECIA
BRONSON, MIKAELA
BROWN, SHELBY
BRUDER, CHARLES
BUZZIE, HAILEY
CARLSON, ETHAN
CHARLES, NATALIE
DANE, KLOE
DAVID, GRANT
DAVID, MADISON
DAVIDSON, JASMYN
DESHANO, LAUREN
DUNN, MORGAN
FRANCIOSI, ROMAN
GREZESZAK, KOLBY
GUOAN, GARRET
HALL, LUCAS
HEINTZ, HADASSAH
HENNARD, PETER
HOCK, ETHAN
HOSTED, NADIA
HOSTED, NAOMI
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HUPCIK, MONIKA
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MYSLAKOWSKI, NATHAN
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PETERS, JACE
ROSE-BUZZARD, NOAH
SCHLEICHER, MALLOREY
SCHUMAKER, KAYDENCE
STEPHENS, SADIE
SYERSON, SADIE
THORNTON, BREONA
TIERNEY, BRIANA
TROUT, COLLIN
VAUGHN, WYATT
WANGLER, KEARA
WEBER, CONRAD
WHISMAN, ABIGAYLE
WINTER, LANE
WRIGHT, NICHOLAS
ZETTEL, HUNTER

Look for Class of 2027 and 2028 Honor Roll in the next issue

Celebrates

« Continued from page 1

Victorian charm, the families, farmers and civic leaders whose contributions continue to shape West Branch today. It is a reflection of the past and a promise to the future - that West Branch will remain a place where people come not only to live and work, but to belong.”

Mr. Hoadley’s words aptly described the ambience at venues around town this weekend as folks gathered to admire vehicles at the Classy Chassis Car show, sing along with Motor City Memories at Irons Park, challenge friends at corn hole, and wander along Houghton Avenue on Saturday, where there was something for everyone to enjoy. Wherever crowds gathered, friends shared laughter, hugs, and conversation, a testament to what it means to belong in West Branch.

The three-day sesquicentennial celebration welcomed lifelong residents, newcomers and folks

from surrounding communities to look back at our history and remember those upon whose shoulders we stand. It also served as a challenge to those who will take up the mantle of leadership to create a shared future worthy of all that has come before. Looking at how well the community worked together to create the celebration, we are well on our way to that future.

During the opening ceremony, Carol Adair, chair of the planning committee, read a list of those whose efforts made the event possible: Committee members John Dantzer, Lois Berquist, Sally Rea, Amy Winter, Vicki Seltz Barnes, LuAnn Zettle, Josh Erickson and Heather Neuhaus. Also, city staff Rob Romps and Michelle Frechette, along with City Clerk Lori Ann Clover-Gambrel. Corn hole subcommittee was Jim Lucas and Denny Turow. Entertainment providers: Erin and Ethan Resteiner,

Moonwalk Man, Jackpine Lumberjacks, Northern Blend Chorus, Carol Ann’s Dance Studio, Will and Kat and Delilah DeWilde. Organizations: The Ogemaw County Historical Society, the Farmer’s Market, the Crafter’s Market and the Creative Arts Association.

Carol also singled out a few folks for special thanks: “The West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce for its invaluable assistance, Kathy Collins and the Ogemaw County Superior News for a superior promotion, Sherry and Office Central, Kelsey at 313 Designs and Ann at the Dirty Mitten for sharing my vision, Steuernol and McLaren for the next time capsule, Scott Bell at Lapham and Associates for my really big maps, and special thanks to my daughter, Kathy Morin. I could not have done it without you.”

“It’s all come together,” Carol said. “I’m really pleased.”

The one disappointment of the event was the 1975 time capsule whose contents had been mostly destroyed by groundwater.

“The opening of the capsule and seeing what was buried 50 years ago was an exciting event that we were all looking forward to,” City Manager John Dantzer said. “The seal on the cement vault must have failed... the contents were found to be severely affected with most of them being completely destroyed.”

Despite the damage, the salvageable contents had been carefully digitized and printed in a binder for event goers to peruse. Many who knew their family had contributed items, stopped by the Sesquicentennial booth to view what remained.

“I was 12 when they placed the time capsule,” attendee Michelle Morris said. “I remember wondering if, 50 years into the future, anyone would even know it was

there. A lot of people from the community gathered to see what was going in it.

“I wasn’t thinking about what life would be like when it was opened. Instead, I was thinking about my grandfather and what he thought 1975 would be like when he was a kid,” she added. “That time capsule made me think about my ancestors and what they would have thought of their descendants and the town they made. I can’t remember the items placed in the capsule, but I remember the community was there.”

We may not have had all the 1975 items intact, but during West Branch’s Sesquicentennial Celebration, there was an enduring commonality with those who set the time capsule in place. Like those West Branch folks 50 years ago, we, too, have a vital and involved community. Now that’s a legacy worth celebrating.

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