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Ogemaw County Veterans Museum board elects new curator



Photo by Deanna Surbrook

Laura Bender, West Branch resident and retired Navy veteran, was recently voted in by the Ogemaw County Veterans Museum Board as the new curator. As the curator, Laura is responsible for acquiring, researching, preserving and exhibiting artifacts, while also acting as the storyteller, interpreting stories and sharing with the community. The curator position is a volunteer position and Laura has spent a great deal of time over the past year working on digitizing items in the museum. She is also a writer for the Ogemaw County Superior News.

BY JAMIE STOUT-SHIRKEY
 The community takes a walk back in time while visiting the Ogemaw County Veterans Museum located within the Ogemaw County Fairgrounds and Laura Bender hopes to preserve the

memories of all of those who sacrificed.
 The museum officially opened back in August of 2006, and has since become a time capsule for veterans and family members to share stories and tangible

evidence of the hardship faced. The building is filled with photos, medals, journals, military gear, uniforms, and so many other items, some of which date back to the Civil War.

CURATOR continues on page 9 »

RC's Music Festival keeps toes tapping



Photo by Laura Bender

Fine weather brought out the crowds for Rose City's Music Festival in the park on Saturday, Aug. 2. The concert opened at 4 p.m. with classic rock tunes expertly performed by The Bentleys, a four-man band we are lucky to call local. At 7 p.m., the Stone Street Revival took the stage to keep the celebration going with pitch-perfect harmonies and classics featuring their horn players. Even those who didn't venture down the hill to dance near the stage had a hard time keeping still in their lawn chairs. The annual event organized by the Rose City-Lupton Chamber of Commerce had many sponsors whose generosity made the evening possible, including: Rose City Ace Hardware, The Faull Inn, Beef-A-Roo, Willard's Equipment, Delt Forge Inc., Rose City Café, Tom's Trenching, Huron Community Bank, Rose City RV, Kirtland Insurance, Fernelius Chevrolet, Ogemaw County Superior News, Sunrise Café, Parkview Acres, Happy Acres Real Estate, The Daily Cup, Lovewell's Corner Store, Christi Neubecker State Farm and Rose Valley Winery. See more photos on page 3.

Faith Alive Church hosts back-to-school event Aug. 20

BY DEANNA SURBROOK
 “And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” - Hebrews 13:16 (NIV)
 Getting your kids ready to go back to school can be expensive, but Faith Alive Church (FAC) in West Branch is helping ease a little bit of that burden with gift cards for shoes, free haircuts and school supplies. All the while, showing your kids a really good time and most importantly, the opportunity to learn about Jesus.
 On Wednesday, Aug. 20, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., FAC is hosting its first Back-to-School Community Outreach.
 “We are led to show love through helping and serving the community,” said Director of FA Groups and Leadership Development Rich Casanova. “We love God, love others and serve the world. We wanted to not only provide for the tangible needs of our community, but also for the spiritual needs of our community and this allows for

both.”
 Outside activities include carnival type games, inflatables, photo booth and live worship music. Free hot dogs, chips and a drink will also be provided.
 There will also be inside activities. The first 400 children will receive a punch card, like a treasure map. The first station is for a \$25 gift card for shoes from Famous Footwear in West Branch, who Rich said has been “awesome to work with.”
 After they receive the gift card they will follow through to stations where they will receive information and a school supply at each one. The stations showcase some of what the church has to offer.
 Haircuts, courtesy of local

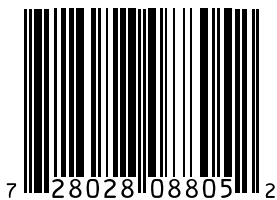
SCHOOL continues on page 8 »

West Branch Jeep Jam rolls back into town

BY PETER FABBRI
 On Saturday, Aug. 23, the streets of downtown West Branch will be trails end for Jeeps of all types when the annual West Branch Jeep Jam takes over town. Jeep lovers from across the region will gather for this “static” show, where rows of rugged rigs - from vintage classics to tricked-out trail beasts and family rides - line the newly remodeled streets, gleaming under the summer sun.
 But the Jeep Jam is more than just a show of steel and suspension - it's a celebration of community and the revitalized spirit of downtown West Branch. Recent improvements have transformed the historic district into a walkable, welcoming destination packed with personality. The fresh streetscape creates the perfect backdrop for the event, inviting guests to explore not only the Jeeps, but the town itself.
 As you stroll past the show-stoppers, you'll hear the pulse of live music echoing through the streets, courtesy of local favorite

band ZANG. Their high-energy performance will fuel the festive vibe, mixing rock, pop and country and a whole lot of fun. Whether you're a Jeep enthusiast or just here for the tunes, it's the kind of night that brings everyone together.
 While you're downtown, take time to discover unique boutiques, artisan shops, and one-of-a-kind finds that make West Branch a hidden gem. Browse stylish clothing, handcrafted goods, home furnishings, or locally inspired gifts, all while enjoying the friendly, small-town hospitality that makes this place shine.
 When hunger hits, West Branch delivers with an impressive lineup of eateries and tasting spots - from full menu restaurants and

JEEP continues on page 8 »



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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. My-Michgan 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.

victorianartfair.com.

Aug 12

2025 Ogemaw County Fair, Aug. 12 to Aug. 16, Ogemaw County Fairgrounds, 2300 Rifle River Trail, West Branch. For more information, *visit* www.ogemawcountyfair.org.

Aug 23

Jeep Jam, Saturday, Aug. 23, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., downtown West Branch. Jeep Show and live music. Call 989-345-5226 to register. www.westbranchevents.com.

Aug 24

All Free Teen Fun Day, sponsored by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake, Aug. 24, noon to 4 p.m., Cole Canoe Base Boy Scout Camp, 1356 E. Greenwood Rd., Skidway Lake. Zipline, kayaking, wall climbing, swimming and more. Free lunch provided at noon. Open to kids aged 13 to 18 or still in high school. To sign-up, call or text April at 989-578-8768.

Aug 9

45th Annual Victorian Art Fair, Irons Park, West Branch, Aug. 9, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Aug. 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit www.victorianartfair.com.

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.
— www.SermonCentral.com

Gladwin Cornerstone Baptist Church
3925 Round Lake Road, Gladwin, MI 48624
989-426-6897
Sunday School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:30
www.gladwincornerstone.com
Pastor Scott Bradstreet

Churchill United Methodist Church
501 E. State Rd.
(corner of State and Morrison roads)
989-685-2350

Worship & Children’s Sunday School: 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Helen Alford

Calvary Baptist Church
235 Minzer Ct. • West Branch
989-345-1651

Sunday School - 9:45 a.m. all ages
Sunday Worship 11 a.m. • Youth Group - 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Evening Service - 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
Youth Group - 6:30 p.m. • Awana - 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 7 p.m.
Pastor Tom Teall • Youth Pastor Josh Pierce
www.cbcwb.org

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

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(Greenwood Rd. west of S. M-30)

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Join us at Faith Alive Church Event Center for fellowship with other Christian singles. We will be studying God’s word and exploring what God has to say about this season of your life, and about your place as a single person in the church. Periodically, there will be separate group activities such as community events, outdoor activities, and other fun outings. Open to Christian adult singles of all ages, you do not have to go to Faith Alive to attend.

Groups meet at the Faith Alive Event Center
601 Progress st.
West Branch MI. 48661
At 6:00-7:30 PM on Thursday nights.
Hope to see you there!



faith alive

Love God. Love Others. Serve the World.

RC Music Festival

« Continued from page 1



Photos by Laura Bender



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News from the Skidway Lake area

BY APRIL HARKEY-MASON

With the hot weather we have been having I am sure you have found one of our beaches or the river. God has blessed us with these beautiful natural resources to enjoy. I hope you leave these areas better than they were when you arrived. We need to keep them looking nice and clean; please take all your garbage with you and if someone else has left something behind do a good deed and clean it up please. Some people were not raised right, but I am sure you were.

Good news from the Mills Township Board, they are working on a website and that is great for all our people to stay informed about what is happening in our township. It will take a while to get it all set up, but I will let you know as soon as it is live. In the future when the board moves into the new hall, they will also have the meetings on Zoom. If you have used Zoom before you know how awesome it is. The timeline for that is approximately spring/summer 2026.

Our parks and recreation workers will be installing a net at the Skidway Lake beach behind the one basketball hoop to stop the ball from going over the fence and into the neighbor's yard. That will make having a fun basketball game more enjoyable.



APRIL HARKEY-MASON

If you have seen the yellow signs on certain properties in the area, those are properties that are up for sale because the owners did not pay the land tax. The auction is on Aug. 28 online at Michigan Public Land Auction Tax-sale.info where you can bid on the property. The bidding is from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. There may be one next to you that you could buy and have a bigger yard. On the site "Tax-Sale.info" it will tell you the minimum bid and what the value of the property is at this time.

Whittemore Prescott Area Schools will be starting soon. Aug. 18 is the first day of school. Registration online is open for the 2025-2026 school year; log into your family Skyward account and complete the forms. Stay connected to their Facebook "Whittemore-Prescott Area Schools" to keep informed on open houses. If you call the school and no one answers, please leave a voicemail and one of the secretaries will get hold of you. The secretaries will be back full-time on Aug. 4, Monday to Friday. If your student needs a sports physical, call 989-654-2491 and select option 1 for school-based health centers. Official practice starts Aug. 11. Go Cardinals.

Remember to share any news you have with me, 989-578-8768. Until next time, God bless.

Remembering the Helca Cement Plant

BY SALLY A. REA AND ROLAND BUNTING

Dear Readers,

At the West Branch High School Reunion, I talked to Roland Bunting about the Helca Cement Plant at Edwards Lake. He sent me some pictures right away that he had taken in 1978. He said that the bottom portion of the structure has been enclosed by the company that had been using it for their business.



SALLY A. REA HISTORIAN AND CURATOR

The marl was dried by rotary kilns and fed by bucket elevator at the west end of the bin. A conveyor running along the top, where the windows are, distributed the materials the length of the bin. Slide gates at the bottom then discharged the material to specially built wooden boxcars with openings down the center of their roofs. Apparently, the materials were still hot enough that occasionally the cars would catch on

fire.

You can see the date 1902 on the east end of the structure along with the name HELCA. No doubt it is the oldest reinforced concrete structure in Michigan.

Looking back in time, the Helca Cement Plant started in the early 1900s. It only lasted a little over a year and three-quarters. It was located in Edwards Township and was known as the "Marl Plant" at Edwards Lake. The Helca Company came into the Edwards Lake around the turn of the century.

It was probably the most expensive project ever attempted in Edwards Township. The idea was using the marl beds of Edwards Lake for processing fertilizer. The company had built eight dwelling houses, service buildings, and a large boarding house south of the lake, up on the hill. They erected a water tower and pipelines. They

also had their own power lines. At one time you could see the decaying pipes and water lines. The company at one time had close to 100 men living in the houses and shacks that were scattered along the railroad right of way. The huge concrete bin and dryer were built in 1902 and still stands by the lake and is about 80 feet tall.

This was the last buildings built for the Helca Plant. By this time, there was a street running between the eight houses and two businesses. Joe Fournier ran a store across the street and Bill Gray had a men's wear clothing store.

Trains brought coal into the plant and the marl they dug from Edwards Lake was heated, dried and elevated into the big bin and then loaded on the train cars. Many railroad cars were set on fire from the excessive heat from the marl. A lagoon was dug by men and horses, south of the lake, lowering the level of the lake's water by six feet. But, for some reason or another, this project was doomed for failure. The operation closed in 1903.

Cardinal Optimist Club hosts 'TEEN FUN DAY'

BY LADONNA SCHULTZ

Shortly the school bells will start ringing, signaling an end to summer vacation and the start of a new school year for Ogemaw County kids. Before the workload and homework starts piling up, the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake is offering one last summer hurrah in the form of a "TEEN FUN DAY" on Aug. 24. Along with our co-sponsor, the Cole Canoe Base/Boy Scout Camp, teens ages 13 through 18 (or still in high school) can enjoy a variety of activities the camp has to offer.

And the Cole Canoe Base has A LOT to offer. Students will be served a delicious lunch, after which the kids can explore the camp and choose to participate in ziplining, kayaking, gaga pit, wall climbing or swimming. There is



LADONNA SCHULTZ

also outdoor bowling, cornhole, and for those who like a little intellectual stimulation, outdoor giant chess. Kids can pick one activity or try them all, there is no charge for this event due to the generosity and kindness of the Cole Canoe Base. All you have to bring is a swimsuit, towel and dry clothes.

Parents can be assured that their kids will be well supervised by COCOSL members and Boy Scout Leaders. The camp is open only to those who pre-register to be part of this Optimist event. To sign up – call or text April at 989-578-8768. Let her know your name and age. It is that simple.

April Mason, the Optimist chair for this event, has been organizing "teen fun day" for the past five years.

"A lot of clubs have activities

for kids 12 and under, this leaves older teens out," she said. "I think all kids should be celebrated. This event lets teen know we think they are important too."

The event will be held on Aug. 24, from noon to 4 p.m. at the Cole Canoe Base/Boy Scout Camp, located at 1356 E. Greenwood Rd., Skidway Lake. It is designed for students to relax, play and explore at their own pace. We invite kids to take advantage of this opportunity before they become submersed in academia, extracurricular activities and social events.

And to help kids have a little spending money in their pocket at the beginning of the school year, the Optimist Club will give away a \$100 bill to four participants who enter to win an onsite raffle. So come say goodbye to summer at the camp. You will have great time, and you might just leave \$100 richer!

Ogemaw County Superior News

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Publisher Deanna Surbrook deanna@superior-news.com 989-482-7695	Marketing & Sales Director Kathryn Collins kathy@superior-news.com 989-450-6163
Copy Editor Nancy McLaughlin	Circulation Lois Bergquist
Writer Laura Bender laura@superior-news.com	Historical Writer Sally Rea sallyrea2184@gmail.com
Special Contributors Jamie Stout-Shirkey	Newspaper Pagination Emily Reed

Contributors
April Harkey-Mason, Joe Bell,
Peter Fabbri, and LaDonna Shultz

P.O. Box 603
West Branch, MI 48661
Ph. 989-482-7695

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Optimist Updates

BY JOE BELL

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.

This week the Optimist Club had a presentation from Kiwanis and Optimist Club member Deny Shumway about the struggles

JOE BELL, PRESIDENT

of the West Branch Kiwanis Club. They are having a hard time maintaining membership, as are most service clubs in our area. It has been hard to attract younger members who are interested in serving their community as part of a club. It takes a lot of time and energy to keep these clubs achieving their goal of serving the children of our community. The Kiwanis Club has been great partners for several of our projects

including the Halloween party, and our annual Camel Race fundraiser. Both clubs have been active supporters of the Salvation Army, having the bell ringing fundraiser during the Christmas holiday.

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 help 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 be too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble."

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



Obituaries

Marlene Joyce Bamfield

Feb. 1, 1933 – July 26, 2025

Marlene Joyce (Lucas) Bamfield, age 92, passed away peacefully Saturday morning, July 26, 2025, in West Branch, Mich. Marlene was born Feb. 1, 1933, in Standish, Mich., to the late Sherman and Martha (McClarty) Lucas. She lived her entire life in West Branch. She graduated from West Branch High School in 1950, where she was a cheerleader and named both homecoming and prom queen.



After graduation Marlene worked as a telephone operator for Michigan Bell Telephone in West Branch. Marlene then met William Bamfield of Curtisville, Mich., who at the time was working in her father’s automobile dealership, “Sherm’s Sales and Service” in West Branch. Marlene and Bill were married June 7, 1952, in West Branch; they enjoyed 50 years of married life before Bill’s passing Dec. 6, 2002.

Bill raised beef cattle on his own farm as a side job. Bill gave up his beef cattle and farm after being married for a few years to Marlene. She was a “city girl” and somehow Marlene and cow manure did not mix well! Marlene later worked side-by-side with her husband in the lawn and garden implement business she and Bill owned in West Branch. They had a broad customer base from a large radius due to their ability to provide high quality and friendly customer service. She later retired from State Savings Bank of West Branch as a long-time customer service/loan officer.

Marlene was a caring and loving woman of faith. She was a life-long active member of Trinity Episcopal Church in West Branch where she taught Sunday School and was treasurer for the church for many years. Marlene was a member of Job’s Daughters and the Order of the Eastern Star. She was a devoted and loving wife, mother and grandmother who demonstrated the values of hard work and perseverance. Marlene was strong, determined, selfless, humble and kind. She had a great sense of humor and positive attitude about life in general. She shared many words of wisdom.

She was a very private person, especially in her later years. As peace surrounds Marlene in the glory of heaven, here on earth she will be deeply missed and dearly loved. She leaves behind a legacy of cherished memories.

Marlene loved her family and friends dearly. She is survived by her loving daughter, Dr. Martha Bamfield and son-in-law Luke Stefanovsky of West Branch. Marlene is also survived by her only grandson (the apple in her eye) the Rev. Derek Stefanovsky and his wife Dr. Katherine Vaillancourt, and great-grandson Theodore “Theo” Stefanovsky of Stamford, Conn. In addition, she leaves behind sister Carolee (Lucas) Poling, numerous nieces and nephews, as well as many friends. Marlene was preceded in death by husband Bill; her parents, and siblings Sally (Lucas) Devries, Donald Lucas, and David Lucas.

Cremation has taken place. A funeral service will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church in West Branch on Saturday, Aug. 23, at 10:30 a.m. Family will receive visitors at the church beginning at 9:30 a.m. A luncheon will be served immediately after the service.

The family would like to express their sincere appreciation to The Brook of West Branch for their support in caring for Marlene since January 2024. Marlene truly adored all of the loving caregivers who helped her with the activities of daily living. The family also wishes to thank Compassus of West Branch Hospice Care, especially her nurse Alexis, and the Rev. Victor Schreffler, for providing loving care to Marlene in the last few weeks of her life.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution to the Ogemaw County Christian Fellowship (OCCF) Food Pantry, P.O. Box 531, West Branch, 48661.

Online condolences can be shared at www.steuernolmclaren.com.

May Marlene now rest in peace and rise in glory!

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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Third annual National Night Out in Prescott

The Village of Prescott buzzed with excitement for three hours on Tuesday evening during their third annual National Night Out and Resource Fair, sponsored by the Ogemaw District Library. A record 1,253 people wandered among the displays highlighting resources, goods and services available to the community. Smiling children sporting face paint learned about bee keeping, fed goats and jumped about in the bounce house in the warm evening air. A wonderful night for all!



Photos by Laura Bender



Ogemaw County Fair Youth Livestock Auction

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Bowling for dollars



Photo by Kathy Collins

Ogemaw Lanes in West Branch recently hosted its 51st Annual Best Frame Bowling Tournament. There were 1,197 entries, with a total of \$27,800 paid out. First place winners of the event were Brandon Fox (I) and Larry Grissom, both of Lansing.

‘Women on the Move’



Courtesy photo

Pam Hilts (I), president of Business and Professional Women of West Branch, presented Ann Colclasure, owner of Ann's Hair Affair, with a certificate, "Women on the Move." This certificate is to recognize and honor Ann as a woman business owner in our community. Ann's Hair Affair is nearing 44 years of service to women and men in our area.

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School

« Continued from page 1

stylists, will also be provided and will be on a first come, first serve basis.

“They (stylists) have been so kind in their volunteering...” Rich said. “People can expect not only the giving but also the true outreach and welcoming from our church family. It doesn’t matter whether they are attendees, we just want to reach out.

“We are so excited to see as

many people from our community as we can,” he added. “Come on out and experience a welcoming, giving community within our community. Be blessed and let us experience the blessing of serving you. Hope to see you all on Aug. 20 from 6 (p.m.) to 8 (p.m.).”

Faith Alive Church is located at 2945 Hansen Rd., off M-30, in West Branch.

Falcon pride at the county fairgrounds



Photo by Deanna Surbrook

An extraordinarily large sculpture of a falcon, the Ogemaw Heights High School mascot, was recently installed at the Ogemaw County Fairgrounds. The sculpture, created by Scorpion Custom Fabrication, is the new archway into the carnival area. It was donated to the fairgrounds thanks to generous sponsors throughout the community. Full story coming up in a future issue of the Ogemaw County Superior News.

Jeep

« Continued from page 1

pizzerias to a wine tasting room and microbrewery - offering something for every craving. Grab a bite, raise a glass, and soak in the lively, social atmosphere that defines this annual summer highlight.

Whether you're rolling in with your Jeep or just coming to soak up the scene, the West Branch Jeep Jam promises an unforgettable evening of unusual vehicles, entertainment and pure Michigan charm. But make sure you don't

wear your good clothes - you just might get mud on them!

The event is Aug. 23, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. If you have a Jeep you want to bring to the show please call 989-345-5226 for more information and free registration.

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Curator

« Continued from page 1

While originally from New York, Laura retired and moved to Ogemaw County in 2019, where she quickly took an interest in becoming involved with the veteran organizations, especially the Ogemaw County Veterans Museum.

“My husband’s grandparents owned a cottage in Skidway Lake, so we had been coming every year for 15 years – I just always loved driving through the area and thought it was so beautiful,” she said.

Laura, a veteran herself, has devoted a lot of time over this past year to the Ogemaw County Veterans Museum preserving the history and various war artifacts by scanning and digitizing every item in the museum.

“I just brought it up to the board that one flood or fire could erase all of that history,” she said.

The museum board is made up of members from all the local veteran organizations within the county and at their May meeting, board member John Bennett threw Laura’s hat in the ring for the position. She said Bennett brought up she was already doing the job so he voted her in and just hoped she would accept.

It seemed like a natural fit for the board to vote her in as the new curator, responsible for acquiring, researching, preserving and exhibiting artifacts, while also acting as the storyteller interpreting stories and sharing with the community.

As an active-duty chaplain in the Navy for 20 years and the first



Photo by Deanna Surbrook

female chaplain to have been in combat, Laura understands firsthand the importance of sharing the stories and experience of war with others.

“It is important to give them an understanding of what war was really like,” she said.

Laura indeed accepted the position as she has always had an interest in genealogy and "person-to-

person history."

“I am very interested in maintaining and preserving the stories of those who have served – it’s very important and we don’t want to lose those stories of service,” she said.

The curator is a volunteer position and with the help of museum board members and fellow veterans, John Bennett and Rich Ladd,



LAURA BENDER

There were several reasons Laura suggested digitizing the items in the museum; the first, and most obvious would be a loss of items in the event of any kind of damage to the building; the second was so family members could actually retain some of their items if they chose; and another reason is for ease of searching their loved ones in our database.

“I eventually want to have the museum items digitally available

they have successfully digitized over 30,000 items which was hundreds of hours devoted to preserving the history of the veterans of Ogemaw County.

“It was a lot of work – we took photos of each item including the actual photos in the museum, which most had to be removed from frames or albums and photographed individually,” Laura said.

While committing to this project they were able to identify 4,200 Ogemaw County veterans from the items and photos they preserved. Of the 4,200 veterans, they were able to identify 78 of which were women in Ogemaw County.

online, so everyone has access to view the items,” Laura said.

In the meantime, the Ogemaw County Veterans Museum will be open during fair week from Aug. 12 to Aug. 17, and the community is welcome to visit and search for a veteran amongst the digitized items.

Outside of the Ogemaw County Fair week, the museum is open for tours by appointment only. If anyone would like to schedule a group tour, please contact Laura Bender at 989-390-0614.

The Ogemaw County Fairgrounds is located at 2300 Rifle River Trail in West Branch.

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Going PRO Talent Fund awards \$16 million in grants to support worker training across the state

Ace Electric in West Branch is among the almost 300 businesses across Michigan to receive a Going PRO Talent Fund Award in Cycle 2 of the competitive process. They received \$1,650 to help upskill employees.

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) has awarded \$16 million in Fiscal Year 2025 Cycle 2 Going PRO Talent Fund grants to 297 businesses across the state. Businesses will use the funding to train 4,691 current employees and 3,227 new hires, including 1,788 Registered Apprentices.

Also receiving awards in the Michigan Works! Region 7B service area were: ATD Engineering and Machine (\$12,795), Houghton Lake Cooperative Preschool in Houghton Lake (\$12,322.50), Lear Corporation in Farwell (\$35,960), Mid Michigan Community Action in Farwell (\$6,000), and Top Notch Electric in Prudenville (\$16,416.66).

Grants through the Going PRO Talent Fund are awarded in partnership with Michigan Works! agencies. Employers are encouraged to work closely with their local Michigan Works! Service Center to identify key training needs and develop customized plans to fill workforce gaps. All training programs must result in industry-recognized credentials



Courtesy photo

Ace Electric in West Branch recently received a grant for \$1,650 to help upskill employees. Pictured (l-r) are Cody Nahs, Ace Electric; Micah Sage, Ace Electric; Brett Hughey, Ace Electric; Mark L. Berdan, Executive Director, Michigan Works! Region 7B; Pam O’Laughlin, Chief Operating Officer, Michigan Works! Region 7B and Penny Payea, Ogemaw County Director of Business Services and Economic Development, Michigan Works! Region 7B.

that enhance workforce mobility and flexibility.

“Partnering with Michigan Works! Region 7B to submit a successful Going PRO Talent Fund application is a smart, strategic move for businesses in our communities,” said Michigan Works! Region 7B Executive Director Mark L. Berdan. “We’re grateful to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, as well as our legislators, for their continued investment in building a stronger workforce and helping our local businesses grow and thrive.”

The innovative training grant program continues to benefit Michigan small businesses. Of the 297 award recipients, 86 percent (258) are small businesses with fewer than 500 employees — and 58 percent (172) of all businesses receiving funding have fewer than 100 employees. More than half of all successful cycle 2 applicants are receiving their first Talent Fund award in the last six grant cycles.

Since 2014, the program has provided training for approximately 225,000 Michigan workers and supported more than 7,400

businesses. Going PRO Talent Fund covers a variety of employer-driven training programs, including classroom instruction, on-the-job training for new employees and apprenticeships that lead to industry-recognized credentials. Workers who complete training supported by the Talent Fund see an average hourly wage increase of 7.2 percent.

“The Going PRO Talent Fund is a powerful example of how we’re investing in people and the future of Michigan’s economy,” said LEO Director Susan Corbin. “By connecting workers to training that leads to good-paying, secure jobs and helping businesses develop the talent they need to grow, we’re creating real opportunity across every region of the state.”

The Going PRO Talent Fund supports short-term, employer-driven training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials ranging from classroom instruction to on-the-job training and Registered Apprenticeships. This cycle alone will support nearly 1,800 Michiganders enrolled in Registered Apprenticeship programs. Michigan is home to the fourth-highest number of active Registered Apprentices in the nation with more than 22,000 participants and over 850 unique programs.

“Michigan’s economy relies on a strong and skilled workforce, and the Going PRO Talent Fund remains one of our most effective tools to meet that need,” said Stephanie Beckhorn, deputy director of LEO’s Office of Employment and Training. “This program opens doors for workers to secure meaningful careers and provides businesses with the talent they need to grow and adapt.”

The Going PRO Talent Fund is a key part of LEO’s broader All-Access Michigan approach, aimed at removing barriers and providing opportunities for businesses and workers alike. Research shows Michigan provides employment services to more participants than any other state in the Midwest and is no. 3 in the nation for helping adults get employed.

To learn more about the Going PRO Talent Fund, its impact and the full list of awardees, visit Michigan.gov/TalentFund.

If you are interested in partnering for an upcoming cycle of Going PRO Talent Fund, contact your local Michigan Works! Region 7B Business Services Representative. In Ogemaw County, that is Director of Business Services and Economic Development Penny Payea, 989-345-1090 or email ppayea@michworks4u.org.

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Bill Brandel & Luke Reiger
Christine Cooper & Joe Rodriguez
Kyle Patterson & John Antrobious
Lindsay Friday & Christopher Becker
Leah Smith & Ryan Smith

Concert band welcomes new members

Courtesy Photo

BY LAURA BENDER

Did you enjoy playing in your high school or college band? That experience doesn’t have to be just a fond memory. The Tawas Community Concert Band is welcoming new members this fall as the band begins its 45th season.

Membership is open to adults, and also to high school students with a recommendation from their band director. Musicians must have their own instrument and be able to read music. Performance pieces vary from grade two to grade four on the state music festival scale. Most band members live in Iosco, Ogemaw and Arenac counties.

Rehearsals are Monday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Tawas Area High School band room on M55. Fall rehearsals begin on Monday, Sept. 8. The first concert will be on Oct.

13. Other concerts will be on Dec 1 and March 16, 2026. During the summer, the band will play concerts in the East Tawas City Park every Monday night from June 15 through Aug. 10. All concerts begin at 7 p.m. You don’t have to play at every concert to be in the band.

Dues are \$20 per semester. The first semester includes fall through Christmas. The second semester is spring through the summer concerts. Dues cover the use of the band room, concert spaces and the director’s stipend.

For more information, contact band president Mona Friske: ml-friske76@gmail.com.

The Tawas Community Concert Band’s last concert in the park in 2025 is Monday, Aug 11 at 7 p.m. Come enjoy the music and the warm summer breeze on the shore of Lake Huron!

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Students who are now currently 'schools-of-choice' in WBRC Schools need NOT reapply, as the original application remains active as long as they are enrolled.

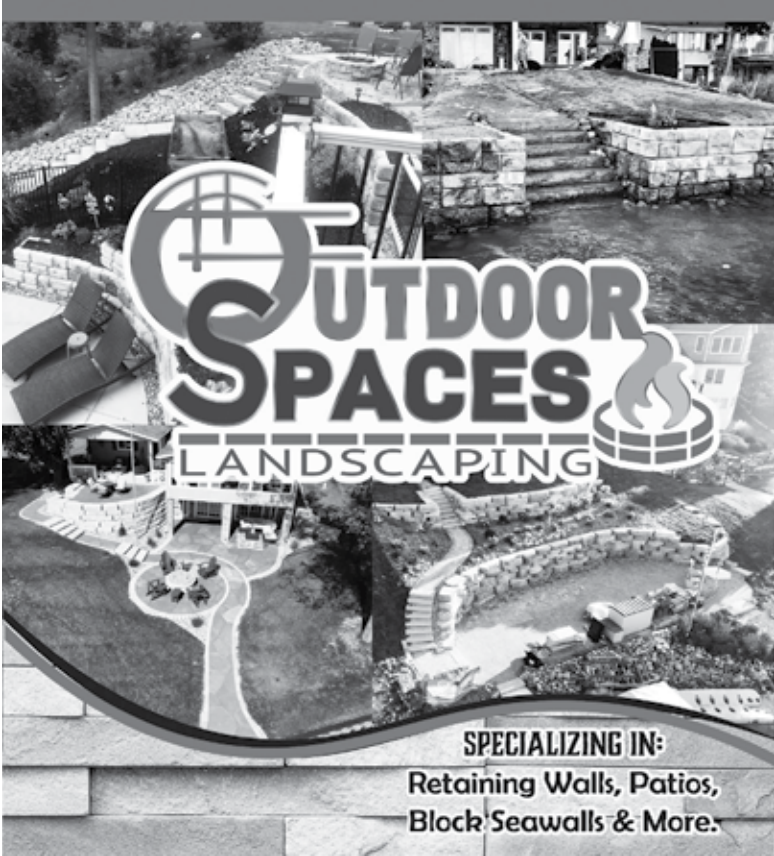
For an application, please contact the superintendent's office (343-2001) at any time, or contact the building offices after August 4th. The application is also available on our website at www.wbrc.k12.mi.us, under 'Our District' > 'Schools of Choice'.

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