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Vol. 3, Issue 4

Your source for positive community news!

Feb 28 - Mar 13, 2026

OHHS wrestling team wins Regional Championship



Courtesy photo

On Monday, Feb. 23, the Ogemaw Heights High School wrestling team won back-to-back Regional Championships.

For the first time in school history, the Ogemaw Heights High School Falcons wrestling team won back-to-back Regional Championships, following a dominating victory over Gladstone on Monday, Feb. 23.

Jackson Ziegler had a come from behind win and Carder Bennett pinned his opponent for a big

win that elevated team morale for the Falcons.

The team heads to Kalamazoo on Friday, Feb. 27, to face off against the #3 seed Yale as the Falcons are the #6 seed in MHSAA Division 3. If they win on Friday, they will advance to the semi-finals and then the finals on Saturday, Feb. 28.

This is the first time in school history that the Ogemaw Heights Falcons Wrestling team have won back-to-back Regional Championships.

It's been the stellar year for OHHS sports, with three Regional Championships in volleyball, football and wrestling.

A new way to experience West Branch: 'The Twisted Tour of Tales'

BY LAURA BENDER

So, you think you know West Branch? To test your familiarity with local lore, check out the new "Twisted Tour of Tales" sponsored by the West Branch Visitors Bureau. This fun activity will take you to eight sites around Ogemaw County to hear stories available on demand from the newly installed, eco-friendly Crank Boxes. Just wind the handle to energize the box, then push the button for the story you want to hear. Each box contains four pre-recorded tales about that location.

The West Branch Visitors Bureau received a grant from the Michigan Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus to purchase the boxes. MACVB is a non-profit membership organization of Convention & Visitors Bureaus whose mission is to serve as the advocate for the travel industry and provide leadership to its

members through education and communication. In addition to the sites listed below, other entities that have collaborated on this project include the City of West Branch, West Branch Township, and the Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club.

You can find crank boxes at the following locations:

- The West Branch Visitors Bureau and Chamber of Commerce
- Irons Park
- West Branch Little League
- West Branch Commons
- Ogemaw County Fairgrounds
- Frank Alley Memorial Park
- Rifle River Recreation Area
- Ogemaw Nature Park

You will hear familiar voices sharing stories and local lore at each site. But make sure you check back often, because the stories will change periodically.

TALES continues on page 6 »

Sacrifice remembered and dedication recognized: Local businessman receives 'Quilt of Valor'

BY JAMIE STOUT-SHIRKEY

For decades, lifetime West Branch resident Joe Clark has been a familiar face in the community through his furniture business, Morse Clark Furniture, and also his dedication to his community.

Recently, at the Morse Clark Furniture establishment, Clark was presented with a Quilt of Valor in honor of sacrifice and service in the military.

According to the Quilts of Valor Foundation (QOVF), these high-quality, hand-made quilts are "awarded to U.S. service members and veterans touched by war, symbolizing gratitude for their service, sacrifice, and valor." The goal is to provide a sense of comfort and healing while also honoring the commitment to serving their country.

"It was a surprise," Clark said.

QUILT continues on page 6 »



Photo by Kathy Collins

Joe Clark is not only wrapped with gratitude, but also the beautiful, hand-made Quilt of Valor presented to him in honor of his military service.

Coaches vs. Cancer inspires competition, compassion and community support

BY LAURA BENDER

On Feb. 13, the Ogemaw Heights High School girls and boys varsity basketball teams competed, not for points, but for a cause close to their hearts. Each wearing the name emblazoned on their uniform of a loved one who had experienced cancer, the players joined together to raise awareness about the importance of cancer prevention, early detection, and healthy lifestyle choices. They also held a friendly competition to see which team could raise the most money for the National Cancer Society.

This event, called Coaches vs. Cancer, began in 1993 when University of Missouri basketball coach, Norm Stewart, a survivor of colon cancer, challenged fans to pledge money to the American Cancer Society for every three points made by his team during the season. At Stewart's urging, the ACS and National Association of Basketball Coaches adopted the concept and expanded it

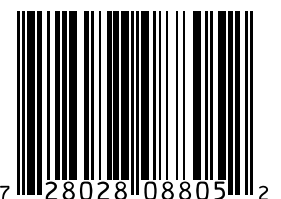
nationwide, raising \$45 million to date.

Jeffrey Erickson, owner of the Erickson Family Agency, who had lost his mom to cancer, sponsored the competition at OHHS. Jeffrey supplied jerseys and warm-up suits to the players as well as a pizza party to the team that raised the most money.

Fundraising efforts by the teams included a 50/50 raffle, a bake sale, a can drive, individual donations and a "Miracle Minute," where a member of each team raced through the stands to see who could collect the most money in one minute.

So, who won the pizza party? The boys' team by raising \$2,136.24. The girls' team made

COACHES continues on page 7 »




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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 - (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.

Feb 28
 Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club Open House and Vintage Snowmobile Show and Ride, Saturday, Feb. 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Frank Alley Park Trailhead parking lot, 2846 N. Fairview Rd. event is free to attend.

Mar 21
 West Branch Optimist Club 17th Annual Camel Races, Saturday, March 21, Columbus Hall (formerly K of C), West Branch. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call Chuck Snyder, 989-942-6608.

Apr 14
Fourth annual 'Nite at the Races,' hosted by Max-Well Therapy Center, Saturday, April 11, 5:30 p.m., Knights of Columbus Hall, 601 Columbus Dr., West Branch. Max-Well's goal is to enhance the lives of kids through the use of animal assisted activities. For more information, visit www.maxwelltherapycenter.org.

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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 Pastor Scott Bradstreet

Churchill United Methodist Church
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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

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 Emeritus Tom Teal
www.cbcwb.org

Edward's Community Church
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 Sunday Service - 9 a.m.

Racing for a cause: 17th annual Camel Races benefit kids

BY LAURA BENDER

Sahara you doing? Ready for the 17th Annual Camel Races sponsored by the West Branch Optimist Club?

On March 21, 36 camelus dromedarius will race to the finish line to see who can get over that hump the fastest. Who will it be? You'll have to stay calm and camel on until race day when this fun and goofy event will surely put a smile on your face!

What will the best-dressed camel be wearing this season? Sandals? Camel-flage? Who will be this year's "Best in Show?" Show up and find out!

The competition, as always, will be fierce. But don't get too close to the competitors because, well... spit happens.

Proceeds from the annual Camel Races support programs for the children of Ogemaw County. Among these are seasonal events such as the Easter Egg Hunt, the



Photo by Laura Bender

The 17th annual Camel Races, sponsored by the West Branch Optimist Club, is scheduled for March 21, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in West Branch.

Trout Derby in June, and a Halloween party at Surline Elementary. The West Branch Optimist Club also provides two Ogemaw Heights High School scholarships, math and science grants for five area schools, and sponsorship of the West Branch Little League.

Tickets for the Camel Races are \$20 each. You may purchase yours at Morse Clark Furniture, Culligan of West Branch, or by calling chairperson Charles Snyder at 989-942-6608. If you buy 10, your guests will have their

own table. Finger food will be served and BYOB is allowed. The West Branch Optimist Club will raffle a few items, and there will be a 50/50 and a few other games of chance. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Racing starts at 6:30 p.m. Come join the fun on March 21 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 601 Columbus Drive, West Branch. To learn more about the West Branch Optimist Club, visit <https://www.facebook.com/wboptimistclub>.

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County employees compete for gold



Courtesy photo

Ogemaw County employees recently turned their lunch hour into the 2026 Winter Olympics competing for gold in fun "minute to win it" games. Some of the events were finger football, chop stick pick-up and the cotton ball challenge. The competitive spirit was fierce and team work was perfected by the pictured medal winners.

Something for everyone at the 2026 Business Expo and Home Show

BY LAURA BENDER

Looking for local business services? Curious about volunteer opportunities and non-profits? Searching for new employment?

The West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce's (WBACC) Business and Community Expo and Job Fair on Tuesday, March 31, will help you find what you need. New this year, the annual event will also include a Home Show featuring design and remodeling trends and resources.

The Expo, held at Surline Elementary School from 5 p.m. to 7

p.m., is free to the public. During the evening, there will be speakers on stage providing valuable information, and lots of giveaways and promotional materials will be available.

"We're excited to showcase the businesses and organizations, their talent, and the services they provide to our community," said WBACC Executive Director Heather Neuhaus. "We hold the Expo each year to strengthen relationships and support those we serve all in one place. People enjoy the chance to network

and gather information from each vendor. Of course, they also like the drawings and giveaways. Our business expo is where connections turn into opportunities."

Add the WBACC Business and Community Expo, Job Fair and Home Show to your calendar, and join your friends and neighbors for this informative and fun event!

Vendors may register through the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce's website: www.wbacc.com. For more information, call 989-345-2821.

Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club offers \$1,000 scholarship

This is the eleventh consecutive year that the Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club (OHSC) is offering a scholarship to a graduating high school senior from Ogemaw Heights High School. This year's \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a student who meets the following requirements:

- Has shown an interest in snowmobiling as a recreational activity
- Plans to further their education in an accredited university, state college, technical or trade school. (This does NOT have to be related to snowmobiling)
- Has a GPA of 2.0 or "C" average

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Include a photo of yourself (preferably your senior picture) and a photo of you and your snowmobile if you have one. This is not required but encouraged.

One letter of recommendation from a school administrator, teacher, counselor, coach, or employer. (Only one letter needed)

Be available for a scholarship presentation at the OHSC clubhouse - Fairview Road, West Branch, in May.

Applications are due March 16, 2026.

Scholarships will be given to

the winner regardless of other grants or scholarships that the student may also receive.

Note: The OHSC Scholarship Award will be in the form of a check sent directly to your school of choice with your student account number for the fall term. You must be able to provide your student number.

Non-attendance at the program will result in forfeiture of the scholarship.

Application forms are available at OHHS or on the club website: ohsonline.com.

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Update on the County Historical Museum

BY SALLY A. REA

Even though the Ogemaw County Historical Museum is closed until May 21, there is a possibility that you can get access to the museum. Just call our curator, Sally Rea, at 989-343-0177. If you need our RADA cutlery, Driving Tour books, Prescott History book, West Branch Girl's Basketball team, First Landowners, Centennial Farms book plus all the paperwork to apply for the plaque, Selkirk History, and Damon History, we can make an appointment for you.

January and February have really been cold. I have been trying to get some changes in the glass

cases and just finished one case with West Branch High School memorabilia and I still could add a few things. The second glass case I have changed is artifacts from the old State Savings Bank with a lot of interesting items. With the cold weather I don't get in as often as I should. The furnace keeps our building nice and warm and a joy to walk into.

Barry Wilkinson is working on getting the outside

of the building repainted. He is seeking some bids. Barry does a wonderful job on the upkeep of our museum. Thanks, Barry.



SALLY A. REA
HISTORIAN AND
CURATOR

We are looking forward to our spring and summer with "Music on the Porch" and finding new events to utilize the porch.

I am working with several townships on history and pictures.

Remember we will be reopening on May 21, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hope to see you!

News from the Skidway Lake area

BY APRIL HARKEY-MASON

We had a wonderful turnout for the 989 Raceway's Frozen Fury that was held Feb. 7 on Skidway Lake. There were 33 registered racers and around 300 spectators throughout the day. The numbers would have been larger if the day was not so cold. Everyone had a great time despite the cold. Next year's plans are hopefully to expand to an all-out ice carnival with inflatable rides and games for kids and a fishing tournament. Possibly even a two-day event.

There were mowers, go karts, minibikes, quads, snowmobiles and more and 16 different classes. The Something Different food trailer was offering awesome food. The Cardinal Optimist Club was there selling coffee and hot cocoa. Project Graduation from Whittemore Prescott School also had a bake sale. The 989 Raceway organized this event out of the goodness of their heart. No admission was charged for anyone. Registration was charged for entering the races and that money went to purchase trophy plaques

for the event and advertising.

The 989 Raceway sponsors both private and professional for the community. We are lucky to have people like Glen Stellwag and Samantha Young in our area. It is hard to find people willing to do all the work of setting something up like this for free. Thank you to both and their crew for all your hard work.

The Mills Township Board is hoping to make our Independence Day celebration an all-day event this year. They want people to come watch the parade and go to Newman Park after the parade and enjoy the day with all kinds of activities. These activities would entertain everyone through the afternoon and into the evening and then they would be there for the fireworks at dusk. There was discussion on having a petting

zoo, craft show, beer tent, bounce house, food trucks and other activities.



APRIL HARKEY-MASON

Everything is in the beginning stages now and the Mills Township Board and the Skidway Lake Chamber of Commerce will be discussing plans. If you have any ideas, call the Mills Township Hall at 989-873-4411 and share them with the board.

The Whittemore Prescott High School is planning a Career and College night on March 11 from 4:30 p.m.-7 p.m. They are hoping for lots of businesses, groups, and organizations to participate. If you are interested in participating, contact Mr. Jakubik at the high school 989-756-2501, extension 550.

Remember if you have any news to share with me, call or text 989-578-8768. Until next time, God Bless.

MSU Extension education for farmers in northeast Michigan

BY JULIE DARTON

Farmers and local businesses that use pesticides can gain important safety skills this spring when MSU Extension offers a Pesticide Training and Certification test in West Branch on March 17. The Extension office, 205 S. Eighth Street, will host a Pesticide Training and Certification review session and test that day.

This training is delivered in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The program helps people learn how to use pesticides in a safe and responsible way. It also helps them understand the rules that protect people, animals, and the environment. Passing the test allows participants to earn the credentials needed for the purchase and application of restricted-use pesticides in many types of work.

The session in West Branch is part of a larger series of

agriculture meetings offered through MSU Extension this winter and spring. Other events in March and April include Beef Quality Assurance Training, a forage and grazing conference in Clare, and dairy reproduction workshops later in the month. For more information, please contact Phil Durst, MSU Extension, at 989-387-5346 or durstp@msu.edu.

MSU Extension staff will be available to answer questions and guide participants through the process. Those who wish to take part should contact the MSU Extension office for more details or visit MSU Extension website www.canr.msu.edu/outreach.

Certification Test – West Branch
March 17

Beef Quality Assurance Training and Testing – West Branch
March 19

Great Lakes Forage and Grazing Conference – Clare
March 21

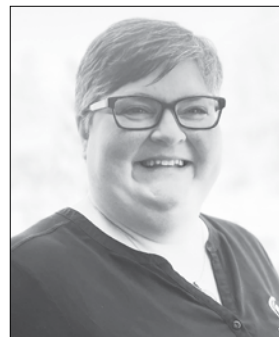
MSU-Michigan Cattleman's Association Bull Sale – Remus
March 23

Dairy Reproduction Workshop – Lake City
March 26

Dairy Reproduction Workshop – Kingston
March 31

Farm Succession Workshop – West Branch
April 25

Bull Breeding Soundness Exam Clinic – West Branch



JULIE DARTON
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
MSU EXTENSION

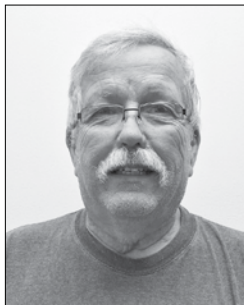
March 17
Pesticide Training and



KIWANIS OF WEST BRANCH

If you want to help, 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, text Denny at 315-725-1199. If you want to help the children of West Branch and around the world, we are here.

KIWANIS CORNER



DENNY SHUMWAY

OGEMAW COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

We are 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 cards found at the checkouts or customer service. We will take donations every Wednesdays of the month from 8:30 to 11a.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, phone 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. We want to thank those individual donors for their generosity at this special time. We also have several businesses to thank, Star Bucks, General Dollar stores of West Branch and St. Helen, and last but not least, KFC. 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, West Branch, on March 13. Line-up at 9 a.m. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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.

Our Valentine Dance was a success. Our next event is Red-Pin Bowling at the Ogemaw Lanes noon-4 p.m. on March 8. Text Denny at 315-725-1199 for more information. We are planning on many activities this year. On Facebook search for Aktion Club West Branch.

Those with special needs interested in joining our club, you have to be over 18 and completed school. Come on the second Wednesday of the month at noon at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Fairview and State roads.

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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Updates from West Branch Optimist Club



**BY JOE BELL
VICE-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.

On Thursday, Feb. 19, we had a presentation by representatives for Kirtland Community College. Kirtland Foundation Executive Director Heather Appold spoke about the scholarships



Courtesy photo
Representatives from Kirtland Community College recently attended a West Branch Optimist Club meeting regarding the scholarships awarded to students. Pictured (l-r) club President Larry Watson, KCC President and Optimist member Gary Roberts, student Utah Gusa, and KCC Foundation Director Heather Appold.

awarded to 125 students for the current school year and how they are funded. These scholarships ranged in size from \$500, \$1000, or \$1,500. Fifteen of these student scholarship recipients were from Ogemaw County. Handouts for the presentation showed the financial impact of the school locally and throughout the region.

Student representative Utah Gusa described his student life at Kirtland as a multi-sport athlete and scholarship recipient. Competing at the college level sounds very challenging in cross country and track and field events.

Every year in March the Optimist Club holds a Camel Race

OPTIMIST continues on page 6 »

Cardinal Optimist Club makes a difference

BY LADONNA SCHULTZ

At our last meeting, members of the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake conducted "regular business" working through the agenda. On the schedule were various requests for financial support. Our club voted to pay for transportation so the Whittemore-Prescott bowling team could compete in a state competition, a spot they earned through hard work and skill. They agreed to buy a placard to support the new swine barn the Ogemaw County Fair Board is erecting. We voted to purchase four belt buckles for the Ogemaw Agricultural Society to be given away at the county fair for equestrian excellence. The club budgeted funds to support a poetry contest at the Whittemore-Prescott High School. In addition, we agreed to purchase a camel to support the

outreach programming of our brothers and sisters in the West Branch Optimist Club camel race.

On my drive home from the meeting, I started to think about the content of this article. What was I going to write about this month? We do not have a major event planned in the month of February to report on or publicize. Our standard meeting was very typical and not "newsworthy."

Then it struck me, while our club does hold major events like Breakfast with Santa, Fun in the Sun, and the Bike Rodeo which all make great informative articles, but just as important are the simple things we do that make a difference in our community.

The votes to help the Whittemore-Prescott bowling team, the Fair Board, the Agricultural Society and the West Branch Optimist Club may be simple and in the big picture a small gesture; however, added to the many "small gestures" made by similar clubs or patrons in the community really does make a difference. Every little bit

really does count. I was proud to attend this "typical" COCOSL meeting and combine my vote with my fellow Optimists to help fund these great causes. It is a reminder that small actions done with good intentions can change the world.



LADONNA SCHULTZ

WBRC Schools honor Heather Kearns for dedication 'Above and Beyond'

**BY GAIL HUGHEY
SUPERINTENDENT
WEST BRANCH-ROSE CITY
SCHOOLS**

The West Branch-Rose City Area School Board has announced Heather Kearns as the latest recipient of the "Above and Beyond" Award, the district's highest honor.

Since 1989, the Board of Education has recognized staff, students, and community members who leave a positive impact on the district. The "Above and Beyond" designation is considered the "ultimate" award; one not granted lightly and reserved for those whose merit is deemed truly outstanding after significant board deliberation.

Kearns was honored for volunteer work and contributions, defined by leadership, generosity, and an unwavering commitment to the student body. Her involvement has spanned many areas

across the district, including serving as school board president, volunteer volleyball coach, classroom volunteer, popcorn parent, committee chair, and teacher appreciation organizer.

Kearns' primary mission has remained steadfast: to leave the district better than she found it. Her leadership was particularly vital during the planning and construction phases of the 2022 Bond

Project. As these projects reach completion, the physical and educational landscape of the district stands as a testament to her vision and the community's support.

The West Branch-Rose City Area Schools remain committed



Courtesy photo
Heather Kearns (l) was presented the prestigious "Above and Beyond" Award. She is pictured with West Branch-Rose City Area Schools Superintendent Gail Hughey.

to its mission of educational excellence, reminding residents that "Your future begins here."

The district extends its deepest gratitude to Heather Kearns for her years of selfless service.

The Heart of 4-H: Why our community needs volunteers more than ever

BY STEPHANIE STEPHENS

Across Michigan and the nation, youth programs are feeling the strain of shrinking volunteer numbers, and 4-H is no exception. While the need for youth development opportunities continue to grow, the number of adults able to step forward and support these programs is not keeping pace.

Volunteers have always been the backbone of 4-H. Caring adults can serve as club leaders, mentors, instructors, chaperones, and positive role models. MSU Extension provides volunteers with ongoing support, training, materials, and even funds for clubs or events. Local volunteer, Elton L., said he "enjoys seeing youth learn new skills and watching these skills progress with age."

Without volunteers, our local youth are unable to have access to hands-on learning experiences that teach confidence, leadership, responsibility, and community involvement.

We need you! Amazing things happen when caring adults share their talents. We'd love to offer more hands-on opportunities for youth to learn life skills such as sewing, cooking and nutrition, vehicle maintenance, and so much more.

Do you have a skill, hobby, or passion you'd be excited to share? Your knowledge could spark confidence, creativity, and lifelong skills in a young person right here in our community.

Let's make it happen together. Call the MSU Extension office at 989-345-0692 or email steph544@msu.edu to learn more.



STEPHANIE STEPHENS

Honoring Ken Anderson for his work of restoring guitars for veterans

BY LAURA BENDER

When I sit down to write, the first thing I do is turn on instrumental music to help me focus. When I make a long drive, I listen to tunes that keep me energized. If I get stuck in traffic, I use music to manage stress, so I don't invoke my "inner New Yorker," which is a real problem for someone born in Brooklyn. You likely rely on music for many of these same reasons.

Since we were children, my husband Ken and I have played musical instruments, usually as part of a group. Currently Ken plays baritone, and I play bass clarinet in the Tawas Community Concert Band. Those of you who sing or play an instrument know how making music can improve mood, keep negative thoughts at bay and even help you think better. Music is a language that speaks to the soul.

Because music has the ability to improve focus, mood, and cognition, and when done in groups, can provide healthy social interactions, it is an excellent tool for helping military veterans who struggle with the effects of their service. You can't have intrusive thoughts while playing or singing. Focusing on tone quality and instrumentation takes the attention

off physical ailments. Even managed breathing or repetitive movements can have a calming effect.

Knowing how powerful music can be, the Bay Veterans Foundation, 1009 North Madison St., Bay City, created a program to teach veterans how to play the guitar. The program is open to any veteran from any county. The lessons are free, and if a veteran completes ten, they are given a free guitar.

When Jim Blankenship introduced this program at a meeting of the Mid-Michigan Mental Health Advocacy Council, of which I am a member, I knew this endeavor would interest my husband.

Ken has a long history of blending his musical abilities with his military service. A retired Redford

ANDERSON continues on page 9 »



LAURA BENDER



Photos by Laura Bender
Ken Anderson, of West Branch, receives a plaque from Jim Blankenship of the Bay Veterans Foundation to thank him for his support of the Guitars2Vets Program.

Tales

« Continued from page 1

There are also fun contests planned that you can only win if you listen to the current recordings.

“I am excited about this collaboration with our community partners,” Heather Neuhaus, executive director of the West Branch Visitors Bureau, said. “I look forward to the different ways we can use these to showcase our unique local attractions.”

As the warmer weather approaches, check out the various Crank Boxes with your family and friends. Out-of-town guests

stopping by for a few days? Don’t fret about what to do with them. Take them on the Twisted Tour of Tales to introduce them to the place you call home.

For more information or to learn about new locations, visit www.visitwestbranch.com, call 989-345-2821 or stop by the West Branch Visitors Bureau at 422 W. Houghton Ave. Rack cards announcing the Twisted Tour of Tales can also be found in MDOT Welcome Centers throughout Michigan.

The West Branch Visitors Bureau Board of Directors pose for a photo in front of the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce office, where one of the crank boxes is located. Pictured (l-r) Heather Neuhaus, Ramona Elliott, Samantha Defour, Emil Rousseau and Michelle Frechette.



Photo courtesy of WBACC

Quilt

« Continued from page 1

In order to be considered as a Quilts of Valor recipient, the individual must first receive a nomination, which then goes through a review process by the QOVF. After receiving the nomination, the QOVF verifies eligibility as the nominee must be an active-duty service member or living veteran with honorable or general discharge who has been touched by war. Next, they prioritize the nominees by service era, conflict, and conditions of war.

Clark was drafted by the U.S. Army in 1967 where he served two years during the Vietnam War. This war lasted from 1955-1975 and resulted in over 58,000 United States Military casualties.

Upon receiving a Quilt of Valor for his service, Clark was then made aware it was another local veteran and area resident, Barry

Wilkinson, that nominated him for this honor.

“It’s a nice gesture and nice to be honored,” Clark said.

The hand-made quilt was presented to Clark in his place of business in December by the QOVF Michigan State Coordinator, Lynn Lebeck.

The quilt Clark received, stitched in bold red, white, and blue fabrics and patterned with stars, reflects both the patriotism and care that went into every piece.

“It is a very large quilt, and they don’t want you to just fold it up – they want you to use it,” Clark said.

The recognition of military veterans and those in active duty has increased over the past several years and it brings a feeling of appreciation, he said.

“It’s nice to be recognized and know that people appreciate what you did,” Clark said.

After just receiving a Quilt of Valor in recognition for service in the military, Clark was then honored again by receiving the Grange Bell Dedication to the Community Award. This award given by the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce and recognized by the State of Michigan.

Clark was selected as the 2025 recipient for his continuous involvement, generosity, and genuine dedication to the West Branch community.

As written in the State of Michigan Tribute document presented with the award, “His unwavering dedication serves as a testament to the power of selflessness and the profound difference one individual can make.”



Photo by Lois Bergquist

Joe Clark, joined by his wife, Clara (r), receives the Grange Bell Dedication to Community Award presented by Kathy Collins (pictured left) on behalf of the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce and the family of Grange Bell.

Optimist

« Continued from page 5

fundraiser at the West Branch Knights of Columbus Hall. This year's event will be on March 21, and it is the highlight of our year. Thirty-six camels compete on the tabletop racetrack, and you bet on each race using camel bucks that are purchased at the event. The camels are all decorated by their sponsors who compete to win the best-looking camel prize. It is a great way to support the kids in our community because all of the money raised that night

is invested back to our children through scholarships and all of the children-focused events that we put on each year. So, shake off those midwinter blues and come join us for an exciting night of racing.

We close each meeting by reciting the Optimist Creed part of which states: "Promise yourself to greet every living you meet with a smile!" What a great way to approach your life! 'Bye for now!

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Coaches

« Continued from page 1

a good showing, too. They raised \$1,356.20. Special recognition goes to Eion Jones, who raised \$500, the largest amount for an individual player, and Lehner's Collision, which was the largest business contributor.

Through the combined efforts of players, donors, and sponsor Jeffrey Erickson, the true winner was the American Cancer Society, whose vision is to end cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. Thanks to the Ogemaw Heights High School girls and boys varsity basketball teams for their combined donation of \$3,588.44 and their effort to raise awareness of an issue that touches all our lives.

The Ogemaw Heights High School girls and boys varsity basketball teams competed against each other in Coaches vs. Cancer to raise money for the American Cancer Society.



Courtesy photo

West Branch youth bowls perfect game



Courtesy photo

Congratulations to Caleb Tennant, 13, of West Branch, for bowling a perfect game in the Jameson Memorial 9-pin Tournament on Sunday, Feb. 22, at Ogemaw Lanes.

Aktion Club hosts Valentine's Day dance



Courtesy photo

The West Branch Aktion Club entertained about 40 guests on Friday, Feb. 13, at the First United Methodist Church. Bob was the DJ for the dance. Food was provided as part of the entry price. Fun was had by all that attended. The group's next event is Red Pin Bowling at Ogemaw Lanes on March 8, from noon to 4 p.m. Pictured front row (l-r) members Violet, Second Row Bob, Ronnie, Malorie and Jordan. Back row (l-r) Jake, John, Heather, Jennifer, Catherine and Sue.

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Businesses partner with Michigan Works! Region 7B for Going PRO Talent Fund applications

More than \$500,000 has been awarded to businesses in Michigan Works! Region 7B service area.

Seven businesses in the Michigan Works! Region 7B service area will soon be upskilling employees using Going PRO Talent Fund training dollars. Among the successful businesses was Mid Michigan Plastics and Tooling with \$13,923.60.

Grants through the Going PRO Talent Fund are awarded in partnership with Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs). Participating employers play an integral role in defining their key training needs, then work with their local MWA and other partners to develop and implement strategic training plans.

“When businesses receive Going PRO Talent Fund training dollars, it’s more than an investment in skill development — it’s transformational,” said Mark L. Berdan, Executive Director, Michigan Works! Region 7B. “These dollars help employers fill critical gaps, give workers the chance to grow into higher-skill, higher-wage careers, and strengthen the entire community in the process.”

In addition to Mid Michigan Plastics and Tooling, the following businesses in the Michigan Works! Region 7B service area also received awards:



Courtesy photo

Mid Michigan Plastics and Tooling’s Sassan Tarahomi and Teresa Tarahomi (holding check) pose, along with American Playworks employees, at their recent ribbon cutting at sister company American Playworks in Rose City. They were also joined by Michigan Works! Region 7B Executive Director Mark L. Berdan (fifth from left), Michigan Works! Region 7B Ogemaw County Director of Business Services and Economic Development Penny Payea (fourth from right), and Michigan Works! Region 7B Chief Operating Officer Pam O’Laughlin (third from right).

Arenac County, Au Gres Fire-
place and Chimney (\$5850) and DBK’s Concrete (\$5995); Clare County, Miller Logging (\$40,500) and Northern Logistics (\$166,656); Iosco County, Kalitta Air (\$242,500), and Roscommon County, Lear Corporation (\$74,874.86).

Michigan Gov. Whitmer joined Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) recently to award \$25 million in this latest round of Going PRO Talent Fund grants to 449 businesses across the state. Businesses

will use the funding to train 8,657 current employees and 4,165 new hires, including 3,097 registered apprentices, ensuring Michigan employers have the talent they need to grow while helping more workers succeed in high-demand fields.

Employers who received grants in this cycle represent a diverse cross-section of Michigan’s economy, including advanced manufacturing, construction, clean energy and healthcare. Award recipients are using the funds to up-skill employees, implement new

technologies and retain workers in a competitive labor market.

The Going PRO Talent Fund supports a range of employer-led training options, including classroom instruction, on-the-job training for new employees and registered apprenticeships that lead to industry-recognized credentials.

Of the 488 total awards this cycle, 88 percent (428) are small businesses with fewer than 500 employees, and 56 percent (272) of all businesses receiving funding have fewer than 100 employees.

The Going PRO Talent Fund supports the goals of the Michigan Statewide Workforce Plan. The 2024 Employment and Training Annual Report shows that Michigan helps more people access employment than any other state in the Midwest, leads the nation in adult credential attainment and ranks No. 3 nationally for helping adults get jobs.

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

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Anderson

« Continued from page 5

police officer and United States Navy Reservist, he has provided "Taps" at military and police funerals for over 30 years, at a rate of at least one each week. Do the math. To quote Ken, "No one who has served their country should be buried without 'Taps' played live at their funeral."

My last duty station was the Naval Nuclear Power School, where brilliant sailors earn three quarters of a bachelor's degree in nuclear physics in one year of classroom time. To help manage their stress, Ken created a concert band for students and faculty. The band, with over two dozen musicians, provided concerts at both military and civilian venues in and around Charleston, S.C. One of Ken's tasks was maintaining the instruments. His specialty was brass restoration. When we retired and moved to West Branch, he transitioned to wooden instruments, specifically guitars.

When I told Ken about the Guitars for Vets program, within days, guitars began appearing at our home. Each afternoon, Ken sat in his workshop restoring and restringing them, always having a few for me to take to the next meeting. Perhaps it's not a good idea for Ken to have a Goodwill app on his phone. At one-point last spring, I counted 28 restored guitars in our living room. I guess sitting on the couch pales in comparison to helping local veterans.

One guitar Ken restored was a Franciscan, a simple acoustic

known for its full-bodied sound. Instead of giving that guitar to a specific veteran, the Bay Veterans Foundation offered it and a beautiful veteran-made wooden stand to the chapel at the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw.

On Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2026, veterans, hospital administrators and staff, and representatives of local veteran organizations gathered in the chapel for a dedication ceremony.

"We are dedicating this guitar to be used by anyone who comes to the VA and wants to have some quiet time," Mike Jamrog of the Bay Veterans Foundation said. "It's meant to help veterans quiet their minds and think good thoughts instead of negative ones." During the ceremony, Ken received a plaque which said:

"With gratitude to Kenneth Anderson for his remarkable gift of guitars to the Bay Veterans Foundation Guitar Program. Your generosity has given veterans the healing power of music, the joy of learning, and the strength of community. Thank you for making a lasting difference."

When I wander into Ken's workshop and see him re-lacquering a guitar's surface or sanding away a scar, I know these acts of restoration are part of his commitment to honor veterans and be part of their restoration as well.

If you would like to participate in this mission by donating a guitar, you can email Ken at mac_0192@yahoo.com. If you

are a veteran interested in free guitar lessons, classes are held on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon and Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Bay Veterans

Foundation. Contact Jim Blankenship at 989-270-1181 to join.

I am proud and thankful for my husband's sustained support of military veterans, including me.

It's good we are in agreement on this issue since there are already four guitars in our living room ready to go!

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Maude Jessie McDaniel

May 5, 1924 – Feb. 14, 2026

Maude Jessie McDaniel passed away on Saturday, Feb. 14, 2026, at Sherman Glen Manor in National City, Mich., at the age of 101 with her family by her side. She was born on May 5, 1924, in Stittsville, Mich., to Charley and Mary (Hays) McLeod. She married the love of her life, Douglas McDaniel, on March 8, 1947.

Jessie survived by her daughter, Karen (Randy) Reasner, and son Hubert (Jean) McDaniel. She is also survived by 11 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, and



six great-great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her parents, Charley and Mary McLeod; her husband, Douglas McDaniel; and Maude also mourned the loss of her children, Linda, Edward, Chuck (Trudy) McDaniel; her brothers, Rex, Alvin, Hubert, and sisters Minnie and Wilma.

Maude was cremated per her wishes.

Arrangements were handled by Steuermol & McLaren Funeral Home in West Branch. www.steuermolmclaren.com.

Roger Edward Gildner

April 7, 1943 – Feb. 11, 2026

Roger Edward Gildner, age 82, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026, at MyMichigan Medical Center in West Branch. He was born on April 7, 1943, in Detroit, to Clifford and Doris (Cool) Gildner. Roger lived in West Branch his entire life.

Roger graduated from West Branch High School in 1961 and then enlisted in the United States Navy, serving honorably in Vietnam. After returning home, he dedicated himself to his career at the West Branch Concrete Block Company, where he worked tirelessly and eventually became a co-owner.

In addition to his business career, Roger had a deep passion for cattle farming on the family property. He spent countless hours putting up hay and working at Hillcrest Farms alongside his family. Known as a jack of all trades, Roger could always be counted on to lend his skills wherever they were needed.

Roger was a member of the Knights of Columbus No. 2022, where he proudly held the title of a 3rd Degree Knight. His passion for serving others extended beyond his job, as he also volunteered as a firefighter with the Ogemaw Fire Department, continuing the service he began during his time as a firefighter on the USS Waldron.

In addition to his career and service, Roger had a passion for the great outdoors. He enjoyed fishing and hunting, often embarking on memorable trips to Colorado and Canada. He cherished the thrill of racing cars in his early years at the West Branch Speedway and was one of the original members of the Frank Alley Snowmobile Club. These interests brought him immense joy and allowed him to forge lasting



memories with family and friends.

Roger's legacy lives on through his loving wife of 22 years, Linda Gildner, and his children: Julie (Roger) Harger, Roger (Stacy) Gildner, Gail Gildner, Kari (Charles) Davenport, Mathew Gildner, Gregory (Rebecca) Brown, and Theresa (David) Jones. He was a proud grandfather to Kevin (Jill) Harger, Jonathon Harger,

Courtney (Marc) Brock, Stephanie (Josh) Fales, Steven (Brooklyn Elenbass) Guntzville, Hailey (Eric) Queener, Kelly (Andrew) Arbour, Mallore Guntzville, Jackson Guntzville, Ahrion Davenport, Alexander Davenport, Arabella Davenport, Harrison Gildner, Sophia Gildner, Justin Brown and Matthew Jones. Roger was also blessed with 13 great-grandchildren, who brought him endless joy and love.

He is preceded in death by his beloved parents, Clifford and Doris Gildner; his sister Joyce Alley, and his brother, Alan Gildner.

A visitation was held on Monday, Feb. 16, 2026, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., followed by a Rosary service at 7 p.m. at the Steuermol & McLaren Funeral Homes in West Branch. Visitation also preceded at St. Joseph Catholic Church in West Branch on Feb. 17 with military honors at 10:45 a.m. and the funeral service at 11 a.m. Father Al Pillarelli officiated and burial took place at St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery.

Roger Edward Gildner will be remembered as a man of integrity, compassion, and unwavering loyalty to his family and community.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Gary Sinise Foundation.

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

Norman Henry Krock

June 6, 1948 – Feb. 9, 2026

Norman Henry Krock, a cherished father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend, went to his heavenly home on Monday, Feb. 9, 2026, in East Lansing, Mich. Born in Chicago, Ill., on June 6, 1948, to Earl and Mary (McLeod) Krock, Norman was a bright and loving presence in the lives of all who knew him. Norman had lived in East Lansing since 2008, formerly of Indianapolis, Ind., in 1975 and West Branch in 1994.

Education played an important role in Norman's life. He graduated from Crete-Monee High School in Illinois and later earned an associate degree from Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana. His pursuit of knowledge laid the groundwork for his distinguished career. Norman worked for the Ed Sherman Moving Company in Indianapolis, Ind., as a supervisor from 1975 to 1994, embodying dedication and hard work. He then transitioned to a role as a bus driver for West Branch-Rose City Schools, where he touched the

lives of students daily with his warmth and care.

Beyond his professional pursuits, Norman was actively involved in his church and dedicated his time to SOWER (Servants on Wheels Ever Ready) and AWA-NA. His passions included playing with his great-grandchildren, traveling in his RV, tinkering, auto repairs, and helping those in need, all of which reflected his kind-hearted nature.

A devoted family man, Norman found immense joy in spending time with his children and grandchildren. He is survived by his son, Darren Krock (Jane De Los Santos) of West Branch, and his daughter, Kathryn Krock of East Lansing. Norman's legacy will live on through his granddaughter, Brianna, and great-grandchildren, Winston, Jayce, and Genesis, who brought him boundless happiness. Additionally, he will be missed by his sisters, Grace (Wayman)



Thompson of Kincaid, Kan., and Flora (Gerald) Oler of Albany, Wisc., and numerous nieces and nephews who shared in many fond memories with him throughout their lives.

Norman was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Sandra Krock, whose memory he cherished dearly.

He was also preceded by his parents, Earl Krock and Mary Culy, as well as his brother, Richard Krock, and sisters, Becky Warmouth and Earlene "Cookie" Krock.

As we remember Norman Henry Krock, we celebrate a life well-lived, filled with love, serving his Lord and Savior, and a commitment to family and friends.

Memorial contributions can be made to Lake Lansing Baptist Church in East Lansing, Mich.

Arrangements were handled by Steuermol & McLaren Funeral Home in West Branch, Mich. www.steuermolmclaren.com

Russell Roy Warren

Nov. 1, 1965 – Feb. 24, 2026

Our beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend went Home to his Lord and Saviour Jesus. On May 18, 2025, just before his massive brain bleed forever changed his earthly life, Russ said calmly that 'there is nothing home can't fix' and now his ultimate healing has taken place in Heaven.

Russ was born on Nov. 1, 1965, to James and Caroline Warren. He was fondly nicknamed "Beaver" as he never knew when to quit working whether at work or at home. His first real job was being a caddy at the age of 11 at the West Branch Country Club. Russ always had a project going and took pride in everything he worked on. By trade he was a master electrician, both residential and commercial. He excelled at troubleshooting electrical and mechanical breakdowns and was a valuable asset to the many companies he worked for in his career. Russ's electrical panels and wiring were efficient works of art. He always took the time necessary to finish well and never rushed a job without counting the cost of a job well done. He was a natural perfectionist in all he touched.

Russ's favorite job of all was that of being a family man and being son, husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend to many. Russ married his high school sweetheart and the love of

his life, Ginger Ray, in 1984. Together they 'built a life you don't need a vacation from' with their

two beloved children, a son and daughter. Later they gained a son-in-law, and two precious grandsons and countless pets. In their home, the ordinary became extraordinary whether it was having picnics on the trails, karaoke in the garage, garden parties in the summers, No Rules Golf Tournaments or holiday wreath parties at Christmas. Russ lived for the simple joys in life where family and friends gathered together. He often told anyone who would listen that being his grandson's Papa was his favorite job in all the world.

Russ's many hobbies included fishing, camping, motocross, CB radio, riding his Harley Davidson Sportster, bowling, stargazing, ATV trail riding, and golf. In later years, he greatly enjoyed building memorial gardens, collecting rocks, making trails and his John Deere tractor.

Russ is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Ginger Warren; their beautiful daughter, Caitlin (Chris) Baird; grandsons, Luke and Theo Baird and beloved dog Journey. He is survived by his brothers, Michael (Connie) Warren; Tony (Kathy) Warren, sister-in-law Bonnie Warren, cousin



Deb Foulcher, who was fondly revered as the sister he never had. Also, his treasured in-laws, James

and Mary Warner, Kevin and Angel Milligan and several nephews and nieces. Russ is also survived by his best friend and heart brother, Norman Kline, and many beloved friends that he loved dearly as

brothers.

He was preceded in death by his beloved gram, Viola Warren; parents, James and Caroline Warren; brother, Vernon Warren, and beloved son, Robert James Warren.

The family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the staff of Compassus Hospice for their excellent care and compassion while caring for Russell.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, Feb. 28, at Steuermol & McLaren Funeral Home in West Branch, officiated by Rev. Victor Schreffler and music led by Rebecca Schreffler. Dinner was served afterwards at Edwards Township Hall in West Branch.

The family requests contributions in memory of Russell Warren can be made in supporting his amazing friends at Area 4 Michigan Special Olympics, 198 Pine Bluffs, Roscommon, MI 48653.

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20th Annual

Kurt Jameson Tournament



A tremendous and heartfelt Thank you! From Dennis Jameson and family, Chris Illig, and the entire staff at Ogemaw Lanes. Thank you to each of the participants in the 20th Annual Kurt Jameson Memorial Tournament on Feb. 14th, 2026. It was a great success, and we believe everyone really enjoyed the day. Many of the participants are already counting the days until next year's tournament!

Also, a big Thank You to all the friends and family that volunteered their time to help make the day go so smoothly. And not to forget a huge Thank you to Howie Hanft for being such a great auctioneer and voice for the tournament.

Dennis, Chris and everyone involved would like to thank all the fabulous sponsors for their

fantastic gifts and donations.

The prizes donated for the raffles were absolutely wonderful! The winners were truly excited and stunned at the generosity of our great local retailers. Again, we want to thank every one of the Sponsors, we truly appreciate all that you have given in the past, but also for stepping up and donating so much again this year. You make us proud to be your neighbors, friends and customers. Dennis Jameson has once again made the 20th Annual Jameson Memorial Tournament one for the record books. Youth bowling will benefit greatly from the donations and proceeds from the raffles.

The following is a list of the many things that are made possible by our community's big hearts. All Ogemaw County Youth Sanc-

tions Paid:

- Ogemaw Heights and Whittemore Prescott High School Bowling Teams Donations
- Free Tournaments for Youth in Ogemaw County (Youth 9-Pin & Youth/Adult Best Frame)
- State Tournament in Bay City, MI (all Fees paid)
- Scratch (Pepsi) Tournament in Kalamazoo, MI (Fees Paid for qualifying bowlers)
- Each Ogemaw Lanes youth bowler receive awards, trophies and certificates at their year-end party with food, drinks, and prizes.
- Support for our 2026 Junior Gold Youth Bowlers qualifiers - Caleb Tennant and Dallas Zettle.
- Leslie Jameson Educational Support Fund that was established by Dennis in honor of his lovely

daughter who lost her battle with a heart ailment in the prime of her life. This will aid deserving graduating students that are planning to go into a medical field of study. Thank you to our community, bowlers, volunteers, sponsors, and to the Dennis Jameson Family for everything they have done to make this year such a gigantic success! We are humbled by your generosity.

Below is a list of this year's sponsors. If you have a chance, stop by and personally thank them for their incredible generosity.

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