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Fly-In celebrates aviation, veterans and America's 250th Anniversary



Courtesy photo
C-47 "Hairless Joe" wows the crowd at the 27th annual Experimental Aircraft Associations Fly-In Saturday, June 20, at the West Branch Community Airport. Pictured right, Everly Bowen, 4, of West Branch, plays with her foam glider.

The West Branch Community Airport and Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1253 hosted their 27th Annual Fly-In on Saturday, June 20, bringing together aviation enthusiasts, veterans and families for a day of

aircraft displays, community activities and patriotic celebration.

This year's featured attraction was the C-47 Hairless Joe from the Michigan Air Museum. The historic aircraft offered rides

FLY-IN continues on page 7 »



Photo by Emily Reed

Rooted in Prescott is the Brown's Centennial Farm

BY LAURA BENDER
For five generations, the Brown family has farmed their land in Prescott. This year, their farm on Brown Road has been designated a Michigan Centennial Farm by the Historical Society of Michigan. To receive this honor, a property must be a working farm of ten or more acres, continuously owned by the same family for at least 100 years.

The Brown Farm was established by Neil Brown, who purchased 80 acres from Charlie and George Prescott on May 18, 1911, the day after his 27th birthday. Since half the land had already been lumbered off, Neil began by clearing away the stumps. Then he built a small log barn for the few animals he had. Once the livestock had a place to call home, Neil turned his efforts to creating one for himself. With the help of friends, Neil erected



Courtesy Photo
Bessie and Neil Brown, the original owners of the Brown Farm, purchased in 1911.

his two-story hip-roofed house. Then, to turn it into a true home, on April 14, 1914, Neil married Bessie Near.

Neil continued to improve and farm the land. He erected a large hip-roofed barn, then a chicken coop. He raised horses, cows,

FARM continues on page 10 »

Red, White and 250: Ogemaw County honors historic Independence Day



Photo by vecteezy

BY LAURA BENDER
On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In honor of the semi-quincentennial, Ogemaw County is set to celebrate this historic milestone with gusto! West Branch, Rose City and Mills Township events will fill your week with patriotism, entertainment and hometown spirit. To make sure you don't miss a moment, here are the main events in date order:

Friday, July 3rd
Kick off the celebration at 11 a.m. in Mills Township. The parade starts

in Skidway on Greenwood Road at Skunk Hollow. It ends in Newman Field, where at noon you can join your neighbors for the all-day First Annual 4th of July Festival. The festival will include a petting zoo, 989 Raceway's toy show, live bands at 4 p.m.

4TH OF JULY continues on page 8 »



Bike Bash roars into area for weekend of riding and community spirit

The roar of motorcycle engines filled the air as riders from across Michigan and beyond gathered at the Ogemaw County Fairgrounds for the 2026 Bike Bash, held June 19 to 20.

The annual event attracted hundreds of motorcycle enthusiasts for a weekend filled with scenic rides, live entertainment, food, vendors and camaraderie among fellow riders.

In addition to organized rides, attendees enjoyed a variety of activities throughout the weekend, including the Blessing of the Bikes, bike displays, contests, vendor booths and evening entertainment.

One of the weekend's highlights was the popular "Show Off Your

BIKE BASH continues on page 10 »



Courtesy photo

The 2026 Bike Bash at the Ogemaw County Fairgrounds drew large crowds to the area. Pictured, we wouldn't suggest doing this at home.



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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 G's Pizzeria in downtown 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 from 9:40 a.m. to 10:20 a.m., meeting from 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.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 517-304-6971. We do not meet in the month of December.
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 the Ogemaw County Annex Building in 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. 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.

July 3
“Fun in the Sun,” sponsored by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake, Skidway Lake Chamber of Commerce, 2777 E.

Greenwood Rd., Skidway Lake, Friday, July 3, noon to 2 p.m.
Mills Township first annual 4th of July Festival, Friday, July 3, kicking off with parade at 11 a.m., beginning at Greenwood Road and Skunk Hollow. Following the parade, gather at Newman Park for a bevy of activities. Fireworks at dusk.

July 4
West Branch **Independence Day Parade**, Saturday, July 4, 6 p.m., downtown West Branch. Starts under the Smiley Tower, and continues along Houghton Ave., to Eighth Street.
Rose City Independence Day parade, Friday July 4, 4 p.m., along M-33 through town. Following the parade, family-oriented activities and food at the park. Fireworks at dusk.

July 10
Civil War Encampment, Friday, July 10 and Saturday, July 11, Irons Park, West Branch.

July 11
West Branch Area Fireworks, Saturday, July 11, at dusk.

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
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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 Emeritus Tom Teall
www.cbcbw.org

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

Sunday School 10 a.m.
Worship Service 11 a.m.

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

Hale Methodist Church
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Sunday Worship - 10am

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201 W Main/Esmond, Hale; 989-728-9522
FB & IG: Hale Methodist Church

New Beginnings Lutheran Church
960 S. M-33, next to Ogemaw Heights High School,
West Branch, MI
Pastor Daniel Jansen
989-836-6133
Sunday Service - 9 a.m.

Firework safety starts at home



Courtesy Photo

As families gather to celebrate Independence Day weekend, fireworks are often a favorite part of the festivities. While fireworks can create memorable experiences, they also pose serious risks if not handled properly. Taking a few simple precautions can help keep celebrations safe and enjoyable for everyone.
According to fire safety experts, thousands of people are injured each year in fireworks-related accidents, with burns to the hands, face, and eyes being among the most common injuries. Children are especially vulnerable and should always be closely supervised around fireworks.
Homeowners who plan to use consumer fireworks should first check local ordinances to ensure they are permitted in their area. Fireworks should only be used outdoors in a clear, open space away from homes, vehicles, dry grass and other combustible

materials.
Safety officials recommend the following tips:
Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose nearby in case of fire.
Never allow young children to handle fireworks.
Light only one firework at a time and move away quickly after lighting.
Never attempt to relight a malfunctioning firework.
Avoid using fireworks while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
Keep spectators at a safe distance from the launch area.
Soak used fireworks in water before disposing of them.
Sparklers, often considered harmless, can burn at temperatures exceeding 1,000 degrees and can cause serious injuries. Parents are encouraged to consider glow sticks or other safer alternatives

for young children.
Pet owners should also take precautions during fireworks displays. Loud noises can frighten animals, causing them to run away or become anxious. Keeping pets indoors in a quiet, secure area can help reduce stress and prevent escapes.
In addition to personal safety, residents should be mindful of their neighbors, especially veterans, older adults, and families with young children who may be sensitive to loud noises. Being courteous with the timing and location of fireworks can help everyone enjoy the holiday.
By following basic safety guidelines and using common sense, families can celebrate responsibly and reduce the risk of injury, fire, and property damage. A safe celebration ensures that the memories made are happy ones that last long after the final firework fades from the sky.

North Country Community Outreach has decades of building access and hope

BY LAURA BENDER

Leaving the house is simple as long as you can balance yourself and take a few steps. A handrail makes the process even safer. But what if you are wheelchair user?

North Country Community Outreach has been helping mobility-challenged local residents answer that question for 30 years.

“We do ramp projects for people in need,” Rich Colvin said. “We’re not enhancing someone’s deck. These are medically necessary ramps for people who can’t get in or out of their home after surgery or because of a disease that prevents them from walking. We build ramps so they can get to a doctor’s appointment, a worship service, or visit with family and friends. The ramp also ensures they can get out for life safety reasons, like a fire or a medical emergency. For many ramp recipients, it also assists the caregiver, who because of age or size may find it impossible to push a loved one in a wheelchair up a flight of steps.”

North Country Community Outreach began as a program shared by many churches in Ogemaw and surrounding counties.

“Over the years, the number of churches involved dwindled to three, and their budgets are stretched as well,” Rich said. “I’ve applied for two different grants, and we’re looking into a couple more, but we haven’t heard back yet. We always hope for financing from individuals and corporations who’d like to sponsor a ramp. Occasionally,

someone who needs a ramp has the resources to pay for it. They just need someone to build it. We’re completely volunteer. All our tools are privately owned by us. There is no overhead. It’s a pretty quick turnaround from the time we get the request until it’s completed. The actual build is usually a one-day event.”

North Country Community Outreach’s team of seasoned volunteers builds and installs about ten ramps each year. Each is made to the same specs, so if a recipient no longer needs the ramp and wants it removed, the salvaged sections are easily transferred to the next build.

“To meet code, for every inch above grade, we have to go a foot long,” Rich said. “If the entrance is 20 inches above ground, the ramp will be 20 feet long, with handrails at 39 inches and a chair rail at about four inches so a wheelchair or an electric scooter can’t drive off the ramp. Depending on the location of the driveway, we may need to make a platform up at the house, too. On average, the cost of materials for a 20-foot ramp is close to \$2,000. The longer the ramp, the more expensive it is to build. Financially, we are strapped so we try to weigh out the more urgent needs. Currently, we have three ramps that need to be done, but we have no money to do it.”

Colvin enjoys not only ensuring that wheelchair users can safely enter and exit their homes. He also enjoys the company of like-minded volunteers with whom he works.

“I’m retired, and retirement’s not what it’s thought to be. I like

helping people, and I think this is not just a way to reach people in need, but it’s also a way to bond with others with the same mind-set. There’s never been any argument or disparity on a job. We all get along. Our goal is to help people. The Lord’s given me skills, and this is one of them.”

Colvin knows firsthand how important a ramp is to someone with mobility challenges.

“My mom was a polio victim who had been in an iron lung for a long time because she couldn’t breathe,” Rich said. “I was two years old when she got out of the hospital. She was in a wheelchair, 90 percent paralyzed, from age 20 on. She had six children. I’m the oldest, and everywhere we went, there was a wheelchair in the car. Since there were no handicapped ramps, we carried her upstairs and did for her whatever had to be done. We made sure she was included in every event. I think that is really important for people who are shut-ins. When they can’t get out of their house, they can’t be part of the community. My care for wheelchair users and the desire to help them participate in the community and have a full life started with my family early on, and it has kind of stuck.”

If you or your business or organization would like to support this mission to serve your neighbors in need, or if you would like to inquire about getting a ramp built on your home, contact the Salvation Army 989-345-4690, First United Methodist Church 989-345-0210, or Ogemaw Hills Free Methodist Church 989-345-2260 to make the connection.

BPW swears in new officers



Courtesy photo

During its June meeting, the West Branch Business & Professional Women swore in their new officers. Pictured (l-r) President LaDonna Schultz, Vice-President Pam Hiltz, Treasurer Sandy Osterland, Secretary Kathy Taylor and Nancy McLaughlin, who administered the oath. BPW organization has been a long-standing part of the West Branch community, supporting women through professional development, networking, advocacy, scholarships and community service. The local club is affiliated with the statewide organization, Michigan Business and Professional Women, whose mission is to achieve equity for women in the workplace through education, advocacy, and information.

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Ogemaw County Historical Museum has “Driving Tour Books”

BY SALLY A. REA

It is so funny that every time I write a local story on history in the West Branch Area, it brings a lot of memories back to me. Once again on horseback, my mom, Doris Diebold Rea, my sister Nancy Rea Griffin, and myself would ride our horses out to the Ogemaw Springs and the Old Flowing Well.



BY SALLY A. REA
HISTORIAN AND
CURATOR

The Ogemaw County Museum, at 135 S. Second St., has four wonderful “Driving Tour” booklets to sell at the price of \$10 each or all four for \$35. They are wonderful booklets and

it’s fun to take a picnic and enjoy the history of Ogemaw County. Tour One is called “Ghost Towns and Legends,” Tour 2 is called “Barons, Bosses and Scoundrels,” Tour 3 is called “First People - An Ancient Journey,” and the last tour is “Architectural Jewels.”

For more information, call the museum at 989-701-2525. We are open on Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We have other great books written by local people for sale; plus, we have RADA Cutlery (knives) for sale.

In Tour Book 1 it has the

history of the Ogemaw Springs and it even has GPS directions on how to get there. We have an old water bottle at the museum that George Bray found along the Rifle River many years ago from the company in Bay City who bottled this pure water to sell. Be sure to stop at the museum and see this water bottle.

We are looking for “new members” and also “greeters.” For more information call 989-701-2525.

Don’t forget about our Civil War Encampment starting on Friday, July 10, Saturday, July 11 and wrapping up on Sunday, July 12. There will be an area of tents and reenactments on the site at Irons Park. There will also be a cannon demonstration.

News from W-P Area Schools

BY APRIL HARKEY-MASON

I know it is not what you want to think about this time of year being on summer vacation from school, but making registration easy is a great thing to hear. The Whittemore Prescott area schools has online registration open now for the 2026-2027 school year. On the link you can



APRIL HARKEY-MASON

do it all. <https://www.wpas.net/enrollment-registration-records/registration>

You can update your students’ information. Complete required forms. Submit registration online. You will be all set and can enjoy

the rest of your summer. No standing in line to get into the office when it is time to go back to school. If you still need help, please contact your school office for assistance. High school offices will be staffed part time throughout the summer. Elementary school will return Aug 1. Please leave a message so staff can reach back out to assist you. We look forward to welcoming our students back for an amazing 2026-2027 school year.

Another great opportunity Whittemore-Prescott Area

Schools is bringing back is cross country for our student athletes. We have several students that have excelled in track and field and have asked for cross country to return. Mrs. Dewell will be the head coach.

As of July 1, Whittemore-Prescott Area Schools has a new superintendent, Mrs. Hannah Wanks. Everyone is looking forward to her leadership and direction she will take our school to. Mrs. Wanks will be available to meet you at the Mills Township parade and celebration to follow at Newman Park on July 3. She will be happy to see you and answer any questions you may have.

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

Celebrating America’s 250th anniversary with pride, progress and small-town spirit

BY PETER FABBRI

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, communities across the nation are reflecting on their history, resilience, and the values that have shaped generations. In the heart of Northern Michigan, the city of West Branch stands as a shining example of a community that has embraced its past while confidently stepping into the future.



PETER FABBRI

Rooted in a rich rural heritage, West Branch was built by hard-working families who valued faith, community, and the promise of opportunity. Those same values continue to define the city today. For generations, farmers, loggers, small business owners, and local families have helped shape the character of this welcoming community, creating a place where neighbors know one another and visitors quickly feel at home.

Over the years, West Branch has evolved into one of Northern

Michigan’s favorite vacation destinations. Located near beautiful forests, lakes, rivers, and trails, the area offers abundant recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. Visitors can enjoy camping beneath the stars, fishing, boating, hiking, ORV adventures, hunting, and countless opportunities to experience the natural beauty that makes this region so special. A variety of hotels, campgrounds, cabins, and lodging options make it easy for travelers to stay and explore everything the area has to offer.

At the center of the community is West Branch’s vibrant downtown, which has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. The newly renovated, walkable downtown features expanded sidewalks, attractive streetscapes, outdoor restaurant seating, unique shops, local dining destinations, and gathering spaces that encourage residents

and visitors to linger and enjoy the atmosphere.

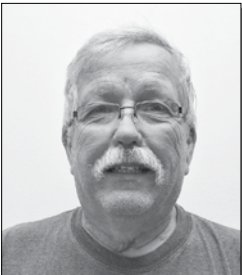
Adding to the excitement is the city’s social district, which allows patrons to enjoy adult beverages from participating establishments while strolling through designated areas of downtown. The district has helped create a lively and welcoming environment during parades, car and Jeep shows, art walks, and community celebrations, bringing people together in a way that strengthens both local businesses and community pride.

As the nation commemorates 250 years of freedom, innovation, and perseverance, West Branch offers a reminder of what makes America special. It is a community that has stood the test of time —honoring its rural roots while embracing growth and new opportunities. With its patriotic spirit, thriving downtown, natural beauty, and strong sense of community, West Branch continues to write its own chapter in the American story, proving that the best of small-town America is alive and well in Northern Michigan.

KIWANIS OF WEST BRANCH

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
DENNY SHUMWAY

who come to help pack and distribute boxes of food to 55 to 75 families each week. I would like to thank them for their assistance. We’re looking for donations of food or money to help us with the influx of families; we had over 230 families in May. You can add to your grocery bill at Meijer Store with a card found at the check-outs or customer service. It is only \$10 added to your bill to help someone in need. We will take donations every Wednesdays of the month from 8:30 to 11 a.m.

We are located in the outreach building behind the Trinity Episcopal Church, 100 E. Houghton Ave., PO Box 543, West Branch. We want to thank those that have donated. If bad weather, text ahead to 315-725-1199 to see if we are open. We are open every Wednesday from 9-11a.m. or until we run out of food. Families can come once a month. We want to thank those individual donors for their generosity. We also have several businesses to thank, Starbucks, 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 Holy Family Catholic Church on Peters Road, off M-33 on July 8, from noon to 1 p.m. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Use them. If you have a box, bring it there.

AKTION CLUB

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

Our next event is approaching fast. We are planning on many things this year: selling water at Music in the Park starting June 25. On the 4th of July we will be holding a corn-hole tournament in Rose City Park starting at about 11 am. On July 17 we will have our annual garage sale, located at 385 W. M-55 from 9 to 4; hope to see you there. Look for the ads and help us support organizations in West Branch.

Those with special needs interested in joining our club, you have to be over 18 and completed school. Our members range in age from 20 to over 60. Come on the second Wednesday of the month at noon at the United Methodist Church on the corner of Fairview and State Streets.

OGE MAW COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

We have around 12 people

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, and Skidway Lake. It is available at newsstands for 75 cents per issue or annually for \$50.

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Optimists join in ‘Walleyes for Warriors’



BY JOE BELL
VICE - PRESIDENT

Recently, I gave a presentation on an event that occurs annually in Linwood called Walleyes for Warriors. Over 100 boat captains like myself donate our time and fishing vessels to take veterans fishing on Saginaw Bay. As many as 300 veterans catch hundreds of walleyes in a day of fishing, then return to Linwood Beach Marina and show everyone some of their fish. All participants are provided a great meal at the end of the day and the veterans receive a bag of freshly cleaned walleye to take home with them.

Bill Weber and I have been part of this event for 15 years and several other West Branch residents bring their boats and help get the veterans out on the water. It’s very rewarding to see how much the veterans feel appreciated, and it’s an honor to have them on-board our boats,

The Optimist Club of West Branch meets every Thursday morning at 7 a.m. at Loggers Depot in downtown West Branch.



Anglers take part in the veteran’s program, Walleyes for Warriors. Pictured (l-r) are local veterans Mike Schultz, Bill Weber and Geoff Schultz.

Please 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.

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!

Courtesy photo

4-H SPIN Clubs offer formats for learning opportunities

BY JULIE DARNTON

Michigan 4-H continues to offer flexible, engaging learning opportunities for youth through SPIN Clubs, or “Special Interest” clubs. Designed to fit busy schedules and diverse interests, SPIN Clubs provide a short-term, hands-on way for young people to explore a specific topic while building important life skills.

Unlike traditional 4-H clubs that may meet year-round, SPIN Clubs are structured to meet for a limited time, typically five or more sessions over a two- to three-month period, totaling at least six to eight hours of learning. This flexible format allows youth and families to participate without a long-term commitment while still benefiting from the positive youth development model that 4-H is known for.

Each SPIN Club focuses on a specific topic driven by youth interest. Topics can range widely, including science, technology, gardening, arts, and life skills. Clubs are led by trained volunteers or MSU Extension staff who guide youth through active, hands-on learning experiences. Participants “learn by doing” as

they create, experiment, build, and explore new skills in a supportive group environment.

Ogemaw County 4-H is bringing these opportunities to local youth with several new SPIN Club offerings. One example, the Spring Sewing SPIN Club, is meeting at the MSU Extension office and providing a chance to learn practical textile and design skills. In addition, a 4-H Crafty Clovers Club will introduce youth ages 5-14 to cre-

ative projects while helping them prepare exhibits for the county fair, building both artistic ability and confidence in presenting their work.

These SPIN Clubs reflect the broader mission of 4-H to help young people discover their interests, gain real-world skills, and connect with their community. With short-term, focused learning and supportive mentorship, SPIN Clubs offer a great entry point for new participants and a meaningful experience for returning members alike.

For more information, call the Ogemaw County Michigan State Extension office at 989-345-0692.



JULIE DARNTON
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
MSU EXTENSION

COCSL finds an enduring message of the Optimist Creed

BY LADONNA SCHULTZ

In a world often shaped by uncertainty and rapid change, a simple yet powerful set of principles continues to resonate across generations: The Optimist Creed. More than a motivational passage, it serves as a personal code of conduct embraced by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake and individuals seeking resilience, positivity, and purpose in daily life.

At its core, the Creed is not about ignoring life’s difficulties, but about choosing how to respond to them. It opens with a bold personal commitment: “Promise Yourself...”—a phrase that shifts responsibility inward, framing optimism as an intentional practice rather than a passive feeling.

Among its most cited lines is the pledge “to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind,” a statement that reflects a disciplined approach to emotional

stability. Rather than promising an absence of hardship, it emphasizes inner strength as a foundation for navigating it.

The Creed continues with a focus on interpersonal conduct, urging individuals to “talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet” and to ensure that friends feel valued and seen. In this way, optimism extends outward, becoming a social force as much as a personal mindset.

It also calls for perspective: “to look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true,” suggesting that outlook can actively shape outcomes. This theme is reinforced throughout, particularly in the encouragement to “think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.”

Yet the philosophy is not limited to positivity alone. It includes discipline and humility — advising readers “to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the



LADONNA SCHULTZ

prefers hiking, biking, or swimming, there is something for everyone just a short drive away. Rifle River Recreation Area is perfect for a full day of camping, fishing, or kayaking along the scenic water trails. Rose City and West Branch Parks are ideal spots for an afternoon picnic and playground fun. Ogemaw Hills Pathways is beautiful for hikers and cyclists.



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While enjoying the great outdoors, safety should always come first. Summer is the perfect time to remind children of the bike and water safety tips they learned during school presentations.

Another fantastic family activity is to try out new recipes together. Cooking encourages the real-world application of math skills. As children measure out ingredients, they are getting practice with fractions, which can be a tough skill to master.

So, even though children are not in school, there are opportunities for learning all around us this summer! Enjoy!

If you would like to enroll your children in the West Branch-Rose City Area Schools, please contact 989-343-2001. We have openings in all schools: Rose City, Surline, and Ogemaw Heights.

Promise Yourself...

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind
To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet
To make all your friends feel that there is something in them
To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true
To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own
To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile
To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble

Kids reel in fun at 10th Annual Free Fishing Derby in Skidway Lake

Young sportsman gathered on the boardwalk in Skidway Lake on Saturday, June 13, for the 10th Annual Free Fishing Derby, sponsored by the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake.

The popular community event welcomed 28 children and their families for a morning of fishing, friendly competition and outdoor fun. Participants cast their lines in hopes of landing the biggest catch and the most fish while enjoying a day on the water with friends and neighbors.

The derby, which has become a local tradition over the past decade, encourages children to experience the joys of fishing while learning patience, sportsmanship and an appreciation for the outdoors. Volunteers from the Cardinal Optimist Club were on hand throughout the event to assist young anglers and help make the day a success.

Adding to the educational aspect of the event, Michigan Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officer Jeff Goss spoke with participants about fishing regulations, water safety and outdoor stewardship.

Prizes were presented to participants for their catches, and many children proudly displayed their fish while posing for photos with family members. Whether



Courtesy photo

The Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake remains committed to providing positive activities for local youth. They recently hosted the 10th Annual Kids Fishing Derby in Skidway Lake.

they reeled in a trophy-sized fish or simply enjoyed their first time fishing, every participant left with lasting memories.

The winners in the six and

under age group were Westyn Caverly with the biggest fish at 14-and-a-half inches, and the most fish went to Amelia Reminder.

In the seven to 11 age group, there was a tie for the biggest fish. At eight-and-a-half inches, the winners were David Reminder and Lacey Henderson, while Payton Westmoreland caught the most fish at six.

Finally, in the 12 to 16 age group, the biggest was a whopping 16-and-a-half inches reeled in by DJ Duguay and Alisha Reminder caught six fish.

Chairman of the event Mike Bowers expressed his appreciation to the volunteers and sponsors who have supported the event throughout its 10-year history. Co-sponsors of the event were Dean's Bait Shop, Rosati's, Cabela's, Sterling Sportsmen Association and Bass Pro Shop, who provided the prizes.



Chairman Mike Bowers presented a prize to Amelia Reminder in the six and under group, who caught the most fish in that age group.



DNR officer Jeff Goss spoke to children about the rules of fishing in Michigan.



Josh Boyd and Grayson Elkins, 9, of West Branch said they enjoyed their day on the water.



Photos by Deanna Surbrook

Volunteer Rich Mason helped a first-time angler with a tangled line.



Josh Pope Jr., 3, of Skidway Lake reeled in several fish during the one-day event.

Fly-In

« Continued from page 1

throughout the day, including complimentary flights for several area veterans made possible through the generosity of local sponsors.

The event also featured a strong tribute to military service. Representatives from the local Veterans Administration were on hand with a mobile outreach station to provide information and assistance to veterans, while members of the local VFW displayed military vehicles for visitors to explore.

Numerous general aviation aircraft were on display, giving attendees an up-close look at a variety of aircraft. Aviation enthusiast Dr. Bill Shortt thrilled spectators with several high-speed low passes in his L-39 jet and provided a static display of the Cold War-era aircraft.

Guests enjoyed a popular pancake breakfast featuring sausages donated by Klemmer's Processing and real maple syrup donated by Mason's Maple Syrup.

Children were treated to several

special activities throughout the day. Mid Michigan Asphalt and Paving sponsored free foam gliders for young visitors, while Team Hodges delighted kids with a candy drop from a helicopter.

Classic car enthusiasts were also well represented, with one of the event's largest displays of local cruisers and vintage vehicles drawing crowds throughout the day.

Adding another unique attraction, the Gladwin RC Club showcased an impressive collection of scale-model jet aircraft. Club members invited the public to return to the West Branch Community Airport the following weekend for demonstrations of the flying scale jets.

The West Branch Community Airport and EAA Chapter 1253 were proud to host an event that celebrated aviation, honored veterans and commemorated the 250th anniversary of the United States of America.



Photos by Emily Reed

Hayley Cooper, 6, and Lydia Cooper, 4, are all smiles as they prepare for their first flight at the Fly-In event.



Local dentist, Dr. Bill Shortt, flies into West Branch Airport on his Aero L-39 Albatross aircraft, which was developed during the cold war era in Czechoslovakia.



Courtesy photo

COOR ISD cosmetology instructors Sarah Kay Rondo and Kayla Sturgeon recently spoke at the COOR ISD Board of Education meeting.

Cosmetology Instructors Sarah Kay Rondo and Kayla Sturgeon shared highlights from this year's Skills USA competitions at the COOR ISD Board of Education meeting on May 13. This is the second year that students from the COOR Advanced Technical Innovation Center have competed at Skills USA. This year, 27 students competed regionally and 14 advanced to state competitions, representing their schools well and earning several top placements.

Seth Bridget placed second in the state for Automotive Maintenance and Light Repair, while Elisa Muraida earned first place in Esthetics and qualified for the national competition in Atlanta

alongside classmate and model Elizabeth Ostrowski. Instructors noted that students demonstrated growth, professionalism, and maturity throughout the experience, while also gaining valuable leadership, networking, and career opportunities. The COOR board voted to allow finalist Elisa, her model Elizabeth, and the instructors to travel to Atlanta, Ga. to compete at National Leadership and Skills USA Nationals June 1-5.

For more information, please contact Mike Evans at CAT-IC, evansm@coorisd.net or 275-9536. Seth may be from HLCS, Elisa is from CASD and Elizabeth is from HLCS.



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4th of July

« Continued from page 1

and 7:30 p.m. and fireworks at dusk.

You can also check out the Cardinal Optimist Club of Skidway Lake’s Fun in the Sun Family Day from noon until 2 p.m. which will include games, goodies, and a bike raffle for children 12 and under. This fun event will take place at the Skidway Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, 2777 E. Greenwood Rd. While there, visit the two-day craft show sponsored by the Chamber. The show will run from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday and will also be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

Saturday, July 4th

Head to Rose City for the 4th of July parade along M-33 through town, which begins at 4 p.m. Following the parade, join your neighbors at Rose City Park for family-oriented activities and

food while you wait for the fireworks to begin at dusk. Since Rose City is the only one in the immediate area displaying fireworks on the 4th, there will probably be a larger-than-usual crowd, so expect that parking and traffic could be more challenging.

The West Branch Independence Day Parade begins at 6 p.m. under the Smiley water tower and continues along W. Houghton Avenue through downtown to 8th Street. The parade’s theme is Stars, Stripes, and Sparkles Celebrating America: 250 Years.

Saturday, July 11th

The 250th anniversary celebration continues at West Branch Commons with a day chock-full of events. Start the morning at the Freedom Market where local vendors will have a variety of great items for sale. Open from 9

a.m. to 5 p.m., registered vendors will not be required to pay a fee for their space that day. As the Freedom Market is wrapping up, grab a seat in the pavilion from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. to listen to country music artist Blake Hinson. A Mid-Michigan favorite, the Midland Daily News Readers' Choice Awards named Blake the Best Local Musician in 2025.

During the concert, the Rose Valley Winery will be open, and food trucks will be on site with delicious meal options. At dusk, look skyward to view the West Branch Area Fireworks Show, a stunning way to close out our semi-quincentennial celebration.

For more information on any of these events, or to register as a parade participant, visit the Facebook page for that town.

West Branch BPW Spotlights “Women on the Move”



The West Branch Business and Professional Women (BPW) organization continues its mission of supporting, mentoring and recognizing local women through its “Women on the Move” program. At the June meeting, Joanna Kartes (l) is pictured accepting the honor from BPW vice-president Pam Hiltz.

Courtesy photo

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Cecil Vincent Zettel

June 1, 1926 – June 15, 2026

Cecil Vincent Zettel, age 100, passed away on Monday, June 15, 2026, in West Branch at his home surrounded by his family. Born on June 1, 1926, Cecil lived a life marked by dedication, resilience, and a generous spirit.

A proud native of West Branch, Cecil was known for his unwavering commitment to his craft and his community. Throughout his life, he built many homes in West Branch and the surrounding areas, leaving a lasting legacy in the very foundations of the town he cherished. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to buy Franklin Septic Tank & Service, which he later renamed Franklin Trucking & Excavating, expanding the business's reach and impact. Even



as he spent his winters in Venice, Fla., Cecil continued his passion for building and constructing homes, including one for the late Fr. Richard Seifferly.

Cecil's service to his country is a testament to his character. He proudly served in the United States Army during the Korean War, embodying the values of duty and sacrifice. His military experience was a defining chapter in a life characterized by hard work and perseverance.

Beyond his professional achievements, Cecil enjoyed many hobbies that brought him joy. He was an avid gardener and took pride in maintaining his lawn with great care.

His love for hunting endured

well into his 80s, reflecting a life-long connection to the outdoors. A favorite pastime was visiting the casino to play slot machines, where he found entertainment and leisure. He enjoyed pheasant hunting in Aberdene, South Dakota, during the baseball World Series, where he watched the game with his hunting buddies after the hunt. Additionally, Cecil treasured fishing trips to Canada with his good friend, the late Clifford Gildner, moments that enriched his later years.

Cecil married Mildred Dantzer in 1955; she passed away in 1996. In 1997, he married Betty Lee in West Branch.

Cecil was a member of the St. Joseph Catholic Church and the Knight of Columbus No. 2022, both in West Branch.

Family was at the heart of Cecil's life. He is survived by his beloved wife, Betty Zettel. He leaves behind his son, John Zettel, daughter, Rosanne (Michael)

Cox, and step-son, Ron (Teresa) Lee Jr. He also leaves behind his granddaughter, Nicole Lee. Cecil's extended family includes numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who remember him fondly and with great respect.

Cecil's life was also marked by the memory of those who preceded him. He was predeceased by his first wife, Mildred Zettel; grandchildren Christina Lee and Candy Jo Lee; his parents, Donatus and Lucinda (Gildner) Zettel; and siblings Eugene (Arlene), Alfred, Jenny (Al) Kruch, and Roseann (Lomer) Davis. He was also preceded in death by his in-laws, Anita Zettel, Kathy Zettel, and Edwin "Ozzie" Ostrander; great-grandson Preston Cruz; his brothers, Jerome, Kenneth, and Wayne (Mary) Zettel; his sister, Yvonne Ostrander, and sister-in-law Loretta Zettel.

Cecil Vincent Zettel's enduring contributions to his community, his unwavering commitment to

his family, and his zest for life's simple pleasures leave an indelible mark. His legacy will live on in the homes he built, the lives he touched, and the many stories of kindness and determination that will be told for generations to come. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered.

Visitation was at Steuernol & McLaren Funeral Home in West Branch on Monday, June 22, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a K of C Rosary at 7 p.m. The funeral service and military honors were held at St. Joseph Catholic Church in West Branch on June 23. Visitation preceded the church service before Fr. Al Pillarelli officiated.

Memorial contributions can be made to St. Joseph Catholic Church.

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

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Farm

« Continued from page 1

sheep, and chickens. To supplement their income, Neil also sheared sheep for local farms and helped build the dam in Mio, Michigan. Neil and Bessie had two children, Viola Mae (born May 4, 1915; died Dec. 1, 1975) and Joseph Clifford (born Jan. 14, 1921; died May 9, 2009).

Neil died in 1941 at age 57 from lung disease, leaving the farm to his wife, Bessie, and his children, Viola and Joseph. Viola moved away after getting married, but 20-year-old Joseph decided to stay to help his mother. He farmed the land and raised animals as his father did, and paid off what was owed on the farm loan from the federal land bank.

On Dec. 14, 1949, Joseph married Margary Mae Thompson. They first lived in the farmhouse with Joseph's mother, Bessie, then in a travel trailer nearby. After the birth of their daughter, Kathy Lynn, on Oct. 21, 1952, Joseph built a house for his young family next to his mother's home.

On May 20, 1960, Bessie Brown and Viola Brown Bortle deeded over their ownership of the farm to Joseph and Margary. Bessie continued to live in the farmhouse until she passed away on Dec. 25, 1969.

After his mother's death, Joseph continued to work the farm. He completed an addition to his home, grew crops, raised cows, sheep, and chickens, built a new chicken coop and a small building on skids for pigs. He sold wool and milled wood from his forest. Like his father, Neil, Joseph also

worked outside the home hauling oil, shearing sheep, and as a foreman on road crews.

Margary and their daughter Kathy did farm chores, grew a large garden and canned everything they grew. Kathy Brown had two daughters, Tina Michelle Brown, born in 1974, and Saidona Mary Brown, born in 1984. Both were raised on the family farm.

When Tina married Ronald Oliver on July 15, 1995, they were given five acres at the eastern end of the farm for their home. Ron and Tina worked with her grandfather Joseph until his death in 2009. Today, they continue to farm the land and raise cows, goats, lots of chickens, and three ducks.

Tina and Ron have two sons, Chase and Dillon. Chase lives in Gladwin. Dillon loves to farm and continues to work with his family cutting hay and raising livestock. Last fall, when Dillon married, he chose to hold the wedding in front of the barn his great-grandfather built.

"He cleaned up the area better than I'd ever seen it," Tina Oliver



Courtesy photo
Bessie and Neil Brown, the original owners of the Brown Farm, purchased in 1911.

said. "He also refurbished his grandfather's 1956 Moline tractor to haul the wedding party to the barn."

Although qualifying as a Centennial Farm means 100 years of family ownership, it really means much more. It means that generation after generation has been willing to commit themselves to something that began before they were born. It entails a willingness to live with the land, not just on it; where time is measured by the ebb and flow of the seasons and the responsibilities each brings. Five generations of the Brown family have done just that. Neil and Bessie would be so proud.

Neighbors helping neighbors with help from Ogemaw County United Way

For over four decades, a quiet lifeline has been operating in Ogemaw County. Since the 1980s, the Ogemaw County Community Support Team (CST) has stepped in to lift the weight of unpaid medical burdens from the shoulders of local residents. As a dedicated nonprofit organization, CST ensures that financial hardship never stands between a neighbor and their health.

The philosophy of CST is simple: if a medical need is unaffordable, they will do everything in their power to cover it. Healthcare costs extend far beyond hospital bills, and the nonprofit specializes in catching the hidden expenses that traditional insurance often ignores.

Over the years, CST has provided gas cards to ensure patients can afford the drive to critical doctor appointments; hotel rooms for families needing to stay near out-of-town hospitals; specialized medical equipment, such as orthotic braces for shoes; direct assistance with various unpaid medical bills and prescriptions, and countless other medical assistance.

Serving approximately 15 needy families each year, the impact of the organization is deeply personal. "We help people with low wage jobs whose employer doesn't offer health insurance, or seniors who can't afford supplemental insurance," says Dwight McIntyre, a member of CST. "We aim to make sure our neighbors

are getting the care they need."

CST operates through the generosity of the local community. The nonprofit keeps its mission alive through three primary funding sources: Local fundraisers organized throughout the year; Direct donations from compassionate residents and businesses; and an annual grant from the Ogemaw County United Way.

Every dollar raised stays local, directly benefiting families living right here in Ogemaw County. By focusing resources on vulnerable individuals, the organization strengthens the entire community. As McIntyre notes, "CST fills a gap in our community and helps our county as a whole be a happier and healthier place to live."

If you or someone you know is struggling with medical expenses, getting help is a straightforward process. CST operates out of an office located within St. Vincent de Paul in West Branch. To apply for aid visit St. Vincent de Paul in West Branch to pick up a paper application; fill out the form with your contact and medical need details and submit the application at the office. Once received, a representative from the Community Support Team will review the file and contact you directly to discuss how they can help.

Ogemaw County United Way is proud to fund this important community non-profit and assist them in their important mission. Just another way your OC United Way dollars are at work.

Bike Bash

« Continued from page 1

Chrome" event, which filled downtown West Branch with an impressive display of motorcycles. Residents and visitors lined the streets to admire the wide variety of bikes on display.

Motorcycles of every style and era were represented, from vintage classics and

custom-built machines to modern touring bikes.

As riders departed Sunday afternoon, many were already looking forward to returning next year for another weekend of riding, friendship and community spirit in Ogemaw County.



Motorcycle enthusiast Kathleen Baker, of Hale, and her niece, RJ, participate in a highlight event of the weekend, "Show off your Chrome," in downtown West Branch.



Several food vendors were on hand to feed the hungry bikers.

Courtesy Photos



Motorcyclists had fun during the loudest pipes contest

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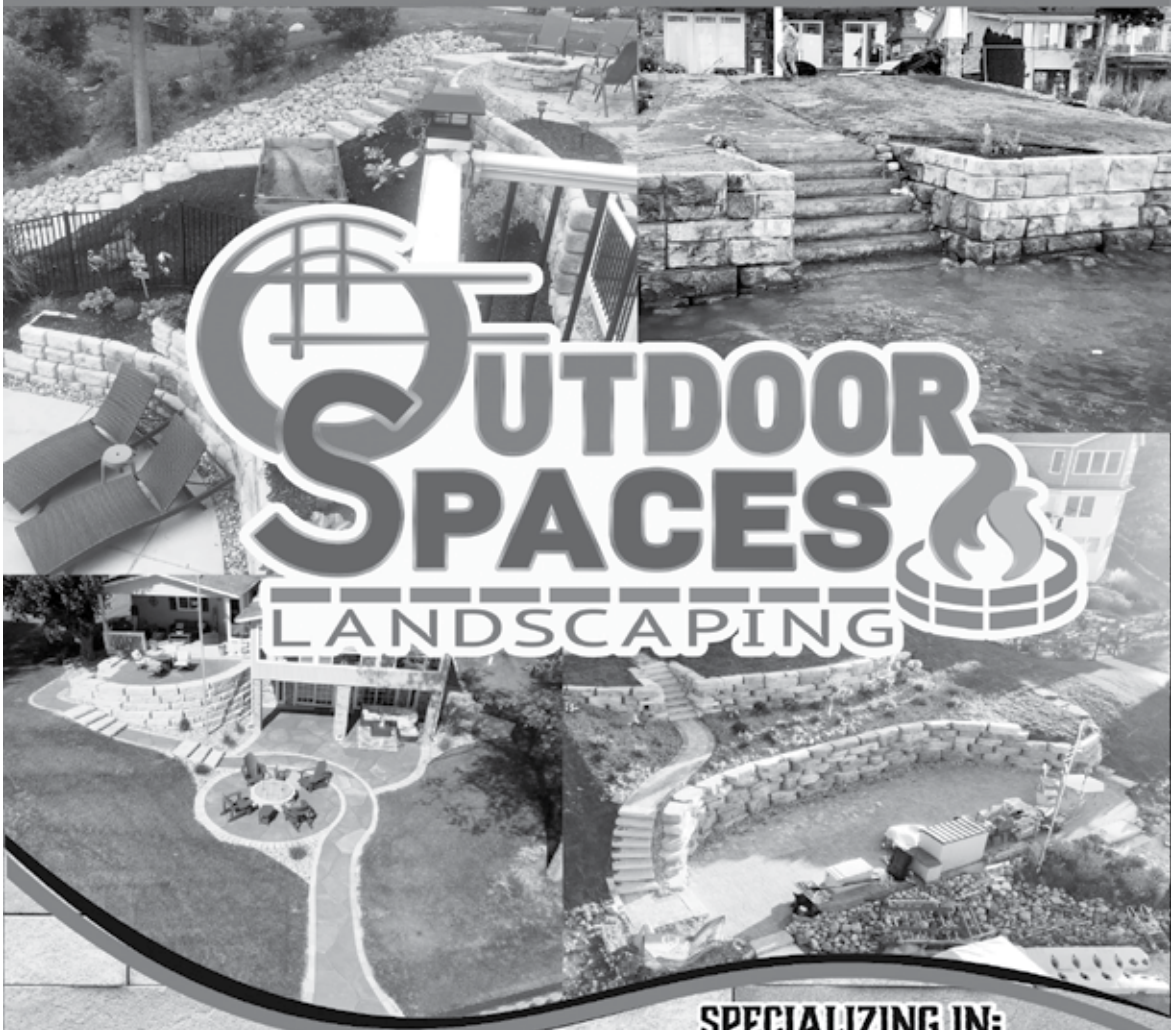
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For more information, including a detailed job description and required skills, please submit your resume and cover letter to: Publisher Deanna Surbrook at deanna@superior-news.com.

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Help Wanted

Help wanted, Active 86 year old female looking for friendly Homecare assistant 2 to 3 days a week for about 4 hours 11-3 p.m. Near Melita and Maple Ridge Roads. 989-836-2657

Ogemaw County Help Lines

District Health Dept. No. 2	989-345-5020
AuSable Valley CMH	989-345-5571
Caring Pregnancy Center	989-345-3909
Dept. Health and Human Services	989-345-5135
Ogemaw County Clerk	989-345-0215
Probate/Family Court.....	989-345-0145
Emergency Shelter	989-217-0973
Friend of the Court.....	989-345-5520
Healthaccess.....	989-343-3608
Ogemaw Commission on Aging	989-345-3010
Options Resource Clinic	989-345-7398
Ogemaw Public Transit.....	989-345-5790
Children's Assmt. Center	989-275-7145
Salvation Army	989-345-4690
Community Food Pantry	989-345-0493
MSU Extension/4-H.....	989-345-0692
Ogemaw County Prosecutor	989-345-5700
Michigan State Police	989-345-0956
Ogemaw County Sheriff	989-345-3111
West Branch Police	989-345-2627
Rose City Police.....	989-685-3051

National Help Lines

Adult & Child Protective Services.....	855-444-3911
Domestic Violence	888-554-3169
Food Assistance (WIC)	800-504-2650
Catholic Human Services.....	800-356-5755
National Suicide Prevention	800-273-8255
American Red Cross	800-691-6059
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