Rallying for Toys for Tots in Shiawassee County
Offering Hope in a Tough Year
by Karen Mead-Elford, co-editor

Facing the 2020 pandemic, Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Shiawassee County Coordinator Gerry Alcorn is asking the community to assist in the giving effort. “Everyone has these gifts, but whatever the gifts are, be it time, talent or treasure, look around the world and there are always people substantially worse off than you,” Alcorn shared, encouraging people to step up to help the 2020 Toys for Tots campaign. “With Toys for Tots, that toy as a gift becomes a sign of hope,” he explained. “Someday that person is going to remember someone in my life did something for me. It’s a faith strategy. It’s about hope.”

Alcorn has been the county coordinator for 15 years and has worked with the Toys for Tots organization since 1983. He is asking everyone who is able to help out, even in some small way. “If everyone makes a conscious effort to bring a little time, talent or treasure, the world will be a better place. We are always about this entire county.”

Volunteers for Toys for Tots are not compensated. The Harold R. Cooley Detachment 841, and now Owosso Masonic Lodge 81 members, along with volunteers from all over the county – are instrumental in this annual effort. Alcorn is quick to offer his gratitude for his volunteers. “I really want to thank all of these people over the last 15 years. There is no way for me to personally thank every single person and every individual organization that has in some way helped make this work, but I still offer my utmost, heartfelt thanks.”

“We anticipate, that with COVID, that the need will be substantially higher this year,” Alcorn said. “I always say to anyone, during these difficult times, there are a lot of very good organizations and some that are not, so before you decide to donate, do your due diligence before becoming involved. It’s always wise.”

People interested in Toys for Tots Shiawassee County can find out further information on the Facebook page or by calling (989) 720-8487. The email address is Shiawassee.mi@toysfortots.org. Toys for Tots is a well known charity organization with the goal to provide toys – hope – to children at Christmas. Lance Gilmore is the assistant coordinator and is available to help answer questions, as well.

What’s needed? Alcorn stated it best – time, talent and treasure. Volunteers are always appreciated, even if for just a few hours here and there. Due to the pandemic, monetary donations are also more significant than ever. If mailing in a check, please make it out to Toys for Tots and add Shiawassee County to the memo line to avoid any concerns of scam. The money will go directly in support of the county program. Of course, toys are needed, too, but note that all donated toys must enter into a 5-day quarantine period prior to distribution. This quarantine process has forced Toys for Tots to quickly develop an alternate operating system this year, mindful of keeping everyone safe.

“We follow all protocols,” shared Alcorn. “We don’t want to increase any risk factors.”

Continued on Page 2

Owosso Planning Considers Rezoning
of City Property to Residential
by Karen Mead-Elford, co-editor

The Owosso Planning Commission considered a proposed rezoning of city-owned property at 210 Monroe Street during the Monday, Nov. 23 virtual meeting. The site plan review will go before city council for a final review.

Owosso City Manager Nathan Henne brought the site plan review to the planning commission. The current property is zoned l-1 or light industrial. The parcel is south of Corunna Avenue and just east of S. Washington Street, tucked behind Dick’s Auto Service. Henne is interested in pursuing the rezoning to allow for future, potential residential development – as discussed in the draft of the upcoming city master plan.

Continued on Page 4

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A whole NEW approach to Assisted Living and Memory Care where a Vibrant Life comes first!
INTERIM CITY MANAGER NAMED IN DURAND
by Karen Mead-Elford, co-editor

Andrew Bisaha (shown center), current Durand Director of Public Works, has been named the interim city manager after current manager Colleen O’Toole recently announced she was taking another position in Saline. A special virtual meeting was held Tuesday evening, Dec. 1.

Durand City Council voted 6 to 1 in favor of Bisaha. The only dissenting vote was by council member Matthew Schaefer – the new mayor pro tem – who expressed concern since Bisaha is relatively new as a city of Durand employee.

Council members discussed several city employees they believed were qualified to fill the temporary position, narrowing it down to two possibilities, Bisaha and Durand Clerk/Treasurer Lisa David. The interim director’s duties and contract information will be further considered during the Monday, Dec. 7 council meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Bisaha previously served as interim city manager in Montrose. He has worked in Durand for a short time, approximately 2-months. He will take on the interim manager position beginning Tuesday, Dec. 8.

Durand City Attorney Matt McKone suggested council should be cautious in considering Lisa David for the position, emphasizing she believes her to be a fantastic employee. He wanted council to be aware of placing her in a position that could lead to a conflict of duties. “It’s a matter of checks and balances and having these buffers makes it safer,” McKone advised.

Dr. Brian Boggs moved to appoint Bisaha as manager and was supported by Rich Folaron. “Andrew already has a history as interim manager. I think it would be a good fit,” Folaron said.

David expressed that she was “fully comfortable” with the decision. “I fully support Andrew,” she stated.

Current manager Colleen O’Toole shared she had already provided Bisaha with information on expectations, highlighting ongoing capital projects as the highest priority for the city right now. “He’s going to have a really strong team behind him,” she told council. “He won’t be taking on all these responsibilities alone.”

O’Toole submitted her resignation in early November. She has been working in Durand since January 2017, taking the new job in Saline to be nearer to family.

The city of Durand has hired Walsh Municipal Services to assist with the search for a permanent city manager. Stakeholder interviews, the first part of a lengthy process, will now be undertaken by Frank Walsh of Walsh Municipal Services.

The goal is to have an assortment of candidates available to the council by late February so council members can narrow down the process and officially start interviewing in early March.

Why do we do this? Continued from Page 1

many people are involved and the numerous amount of volunteer hours, and all of it given for free, because the volunteers don’t make a thing. It’s really about seeing the happiness on the faces that come in.”

Harry Wilson, Liaison to the Owosso Masons Lodge 81
“I do it because it needs to be done.”

Megan Zemla
Social media coordinator
“I started doing it last year with my mom. She was doing the toy sorting and stuff, so I would come in after work and help her out. She suggested to me to connect with Lance on helping with social media. It’s been such a great opportunity to give back to the community and it works out pretty well with my work schedule.”

Jessica Maurer
Sign-up coordinator
“I volunteer my time to Toys for Tots to give back and to pay it forward.

I remember as a child thinking that my brothers and I weren’t going to have a Christmas. We didn’t have a tree and it was a very difficult time for our parents. That morning, however, we woke and opened the front door to wrapped gifts on the front steps. I received a Lite Brite and I was ecstatic! I would fall asleep with it on as it served as a night-light and when I would wake at night, I would admire my creations! It was by far my favorite toy as a child.

That toy on the front porch step provided hope. It wasn’t until my adulthood that I discovered that it was from Toys for Tots. I know what it’s like for a child that’s less fortunate to think that they may not have a Christmas, therefore I dedicate my free time to Toys for Tots to continue providing Hope to children. In turn, making the world a better place.”

Lance Gilmore
Toys for Tots Assistant coordinator
“I think about times when I was little and my folks struggled to get me and my brothers presents. Sometimes, we would get stuff, and other times, I wasn’t so lucky. It’s hard to know when your brothers are not going to have something and to watch the disappointment其他玩家 go through. That’s why I volunteer as an assistant coordinator for Toys for Tots. Seeing kids’ faces lights up when they see the gifts, and I love getting to be a part of that experience during the Christmas season.

I volunteer for American Red Cross because I love getting to give back to the community and it works out pretty well with my work schedule.”

“This is my second year volunteering for Toys for Tots. I’m not confused. I’m just well mixed.”

Robert Frost

Rallying for Toys for Tots Continued from Page 1

Toys for Tots Shiawassee County is also interested in working with other interested area nonprofit groups. “We look for other organizations that can do other things than we can do to help people who might need food or coats,” Alcorn said. “We want to connect those resources.”

The group is again using the Shiawassee Readiness Center/ National Guard Facility at 675 W. Corunna Ave., Corunna. “It’s a beautiful building for us,” said Alcorn. “It’s 100 percent handicap accessible and great for our delivery guys.”

Sign-up dates have regularly been available on social media.


State Rep. Ben Frederick, of Owosso, has issued the following statement as the Michigan House prepares to take several measures to address COVID-19:

“As the COVID-19 health crisis continues to evolve, so must our response. The ever-changing needs of Michigan first responders, health-care workers, frontline employees and educators are at the forefront of our minds, and it is incredibly important to us to ensure they have the tools they need to serve our communities well. In the coming weeks, the people of Michigan will see several relief measures, I am hopeful to see them signed by the governor and implemented as soon as possible.”

• HB 5715 eliminates red tape to allow health-care facilities to expand patient care options, such as temporary mobile facilities, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• HB 5724 allows health-care professionals to provide medical services in accordance with their education, training or experience during the COVID-19 health crisis.

• HB 5721 helps give patients uninterrupted access to medications by requiring insurers to cover 60-day emergency refills and up to a 90-day early refill during the pandemic.

• SB 1021 expands health-care services in our state by allowing licensed Canadian health professionals to work in Michigan.

• HB 6448 allows critical energy infrastructure workers to return to work to assist with emerging energy needs if not displaying any primary symptoms of COVID-19.

Continued on Page 3
Owosso Native Faces Multiple Open Murder Charges

On Wednesday, Nov. 25, the Benzie County Prosecutor authorized a 3-count open murder warrant for Robert Michael Freebold, 58, originally from Owosso. Freebold has been charged in the murder of his former wife, Marilyn Freebold, and Malachi Maloney and Robert James Freebold (her adult sons). Marilyn Freebold was originally from Owosso, as well.

According to a Benzie County Sheriff’s Office release, on Friday, Nov. 20 at just after 6 p.m., dispatch received a call from a cell phone. The Benzie Central Dispatch Emergency Communications Specialist was able to establish a geographical location and then able to locate the address based on prior calls from that number. This occurred within minutes of the original call.

Benzie County Sheriff’s deputies were immediately dispatched to a single-family dwelling in Elberta in northern Michigan (near Frankfurt). The first deputy to arrive saw an unconscious male near the main door. A Frankfurt police officer arrived soon after and the two entered the house and located three gunshot victims inside.

The victims identified as deceased are Robert James Freebold, 27, Marilyn Schultz Freebold, 63, and Malachi Andrew Maloney, 21 – who died after transport to Munson Traverse City. Robert Michael Freebold was listed in critical condition at Munson Traverse City while in custody.

A motive has not been formally announced. The 3-counts for open murder carry a possible maximum sentence of life in prison.

Robert James Freebold Sr. is being held without bond in the Benzie County Jail.

The Benzie County Sheriff’s Office was assisted by officers from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan State Police Troopers, Michigan State Police Crime Lab, Frankfort City Police, Benzie EMS and Frankfort Fire Department.

Note: Malachi Maloney is not related to Robert Michael Freebold, per a relative of the family.

Rep. Frederick: Michigan House Continues Open Murder Charges

Continued from Page 2
• HB 4342 helps combat the teacher shortage brought on by the pandemic by temporarily allowing school districts to employ unlicensed substitute teachers who meet certain criteria.

Additionally, Frederick’s HB 4098, which combats the health-care worker shortage by allowing medication aides to provide regular medications to nursing home patients under the supervision of trained nursing staff, will be approved by the legislature in the coming weeks as several other funding and policy measures to assist health-care workers and those harmed by recent shutdown measures are also being pursued.

MSU Extension Offering Fun Online 4-H Options

Michigan State University Extension is offering a large number of fun online programs to 4-H registrants – and participation is free for the 2020-21 program year. The registration fee has been waived. To register, visit https://24honline.com/#/user/sign-in.

Various programs will be offered both locally through the Corunna Avenue Extension office and also statewide. 4-H Program Coordinator Nikki Hersch, along with other coordinators, have been working on some exciting options to offer 4-H participants unable to be active in traditional 4-H events. Some upcoming holiday themed programs are:
• Family Engagement: Holiday Treat Decorating. This online Zoom meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 17 and is a one-night only family program focusing on how to create delicious and creative holiday-themed treats using royal icing, Oreos, Rice Krispie Treats and cookies.
• 4-H Home for the Holidays Activity Sessions. This Zoom program will be offered from noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 22 and Tuesday, Dec. 29. Youth are invited to join in for fun crafts, recipes and games. Registration is available for one or both days.

Safe Santa Visits Offered in Durand

Santa Claus is coming to Durand on Saturday, Dec. 12. In a collaborative effort – keeping safety in mind – between the city of Durand, the Greater Durand Chamber of Commerce Inc. and the Durand DDA, Santa will be stopping at the Durand City Hall circle drive for a drive-thru visit. Each child will be able to speak with Santa via a vehicle window.

The Durand Rotary Club will have a goodie-bag available for each child, as well.

Santa will be in attendance from 1 to 3 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Please enter Clinton Street from Shiawassee Street.

Shiawassee Scholars SAT Test Postponed

Gifted and Talented students from across Shiawassee County are getting geared up to take the SAT test in their effort to become a Shiawassee Scholar. Shiawassee Scholars is a partnership between the Cook Family Foundation and the Shiawassee Regional Education Service District and is over 20 years old. All students that were scheduled to test at the Owosso Middle School on Saturday, Dec. 5 have received an email postponing their registration and payment to the March 13, 2021 test.

Anyone who has not registered yet and would like to register can find all the details at www.sresd.org/District/Department/22-Shiawassee-Scholars/Portal/sat-information. Please register between Jan. 1 and Feb. 11, 2021.

Further questions can be directed to Renee Dotson at Dotson@sresd.org or (989) 743-3471.
**Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020**

### Death Notices

The following information was updated Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Colleen M. Kelby, 48, of Chesaning, passed Monday, Nov. 23. Visitation will be at 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 6 at McGehee Funeral Home, Chesaning.

Carolyn E. MacGillivray, 73, of Swartz Creek, passed Monday, Nov. 23. Memorial services were Monday, Nov. 30.

Louis J. Patterson, 72, of Oakley, passed Tuesday, Nov. 24. Memorial services were Monday, Nov. 30.

Mary Jane Amer, 62, of Chesaning, passed Tuesday, Nov. 24. No services will be held at this time.

Glen I. Rosenberger, 87, passed Wednesday, Nov. 25. Funeral services were Sunday, Nov. 29.

Deloris A. Hansen, 75, of Owosso, passed Wednesday, Nov. 25. Funeral services were Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Shirley A. Thomas, 77, of Owosso, passed Wednesday, Nov. 25. Private family services were planned.

William “Bill” C. Holzhansen, 81, of New Haven Twp., passed Wednesday, Nov. 25. Private family services were planned.

Larry L. Richmond, 85, of Morrice, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. No services are scheduled at this time.

Herbert J. Bohley, 88, of St. Johns, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. Funeral services were Tuesday, Dec. 1.

Mitzi A. (Summers) Brady, 87, of Durand, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. A celebration of life will be held later.

Maxine D. Gallagher, 94, of Swartz Creek, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. Visitation was Sunday, Nov. 29 and burial will be later.

Rebecca D. Pirie, 80, of Lennon, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. Funeral services were Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Odile M. Aagesen, 100, of Swartz Creek, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. Private memorial services were planned.

Debra L. Adkins, 65, of Durand, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. Visitation was Tuesday, Dec. 1.

Mark D. Cornell, 65, passed Thursday, Nov. 26. A memorial service will be held later.

Beverly A. (Bebee) Adelberg, 73, of Maple Grove Twp., passed Thursday, Nov. 26. A Funeral Mass was celebrated Monday, Nov. 30.

Paul “Boots” J. Stichschulte, 68, of Owosso, passed Friday, Nov. 27. Funeral services will be held at a later date.

Marguerite R. Meiers, 100, passed Friday, Nov. 27. Private family interment was planned.

Mary F. (Rhinevault) Putnam, 74, of Perry, passed Friday, Nov. 27. There will be no services at this time.

Janet M. Hunter Michalik, 68, of Swartz Creek, passed Friday, Nov. 27. A celebration of life will be scheduled next summer.

Katherine R. McClain, 81, of Essexville, formerly of Swartz Creek, passed Friday, Nov. 27. Visitation was Tuesday, Dec. 1.

Harvey Walker, 73, of Owosso, passed Saturday, Nov. 28. A celebration of life was Friday, Dec. 4.

Benny Crawford, 67, of Durand, passed Saturday, Nov. 28. Arrangements are pending.

Berminta J. Hall, 91, of Okemos, formerly of Ovid, passed Saturday, Nov. 28. No services are scheduled at this time.

Robert “Bob” T. Maxwell, 72, of Owosso, passed Saturday, Nov. 28. Visitation was Thursday, Dec. 3.

Lori K. (Kohagen) Iken, 53, of St. Charles, passed Saturday, Nov. 28. Memorial services were Friday, Dec. 4.

Lloyd J. Henige, 84, of New Lothrop, passed Sunday, Nov. 29. Funeral services were Friday, Dec. 4.

Ronald L. Adkins, 74, of Durand, passed Sunday, Nov. 29. Visitation was Tuesday, Dec. 1 with private burial at Great Lakes National Cemetery.

David A. Cook, 69, of Chesaning, passed Monday, Nov. 30. Funeral services will be at noon, Saturday, Dec. 5 at McGehee Funeral Homes, Chesaning.

Ellen M. (Shirm) Ablalter, 94, of Owosso, passed Monday, Nov. 30. A Mass of Christian burial was Friday, Dec. 4.

Larry Haughton, 74, passed Monday, Nov. 30. Arrangements are pending.

Phyllis J. (Hawes) Sims, 72, of Oakley, passed Monday, Nov. 30. No services are planned at this time.

Willis Woollston, of Chesaning, passed Tuesday, Dec. 1. Funeral services were Friday, Dec. 4.

Shirley J. Shaw, 85, of Morrice, passed Tuesday, Dec. 1. A celebration of life will be announced.

Andrew W. Porubsky, 54, of Ovid, passed Tuesday, Dec. 1. Graveside services will be at 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 5 at Ford Cemetery.

Barbara J. Rewerts, 76, of Ovid, passed Wednesday, Dec. 2. A Memorial Service will be held later.

**Owosso Planning Considers Rezoning**

Continued from Page 1

It is hoped that the area might someday include townhouse style homes or apartments. In an era when Owosso has a significant housing shortage, the city is seeking ways to accommodate people wanting to live in the area.

Currently, the Monroe Street neighborhood includes a variety of zoning districts – commercial, industrial and residential. An R-2 district would designate the property as residential living alone. Family day care and or foster family group homes would be allowed under certain provisions.

In discussing the history of the property, Henne shared that an underground storage unit was removed roughly twenty years ago, but that soil samples taken since then have shown contamination – meaning the acreage is now part of the Brownfield Redevelopment Study for clean up prior to any construction.

PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenyls) are the primary source of contaminants found on location. PCBs are a broad group of manmade chemicals once domestically manufactured from the late 1920s. PCB burning was banned in 1979.

The Site Plan Review brought before planning commission was to allow commissioners to consider the area as it is connected to the proposed master plan, allowing for consistency in planning efforts.

Under the proposed master plan, the Washington/Monroe street area outlines the city-owned property north of the former GracePointe Church building (now owned by Josh’s Frogs). The site is adjoined to the railroad, is connected to public water and sewer and is primed for adaptive residential reuse – after the clean up process.

The proposed plan states, “It is our belief that this rezoning would significantly improve the neighborhood and would not be in conflict with the overall goals of the master plan, not impact the intent of the zoning ordinance.”

Owosso City Planner Justin Sprague recommending approving the rezoning of the property. Planning Secretary Janae Fear made the motion, supported by Commissioner Dan Law to approve the rezoning. The motion carried 7 to 0 and will now go on to city council.
A NEW MAYOR, two new council members and two re-elected council members accepted the Oath of Office during the Thursday, Nov. 19 Perry City Council meeting. City Clerk Devin Miller (far left) administered the oath to (from left) returning council member Mindy Galbavi, new mayor Sue Hammond, new council member Larry Lambert, returning council member Terry Wood and new council member Bob Porter.

Council members Adam Grass and Kraig Elliott, whose terms will not expire until 2024, joined the new members during their first Perry City Council meeting on Thursday, Dec. 3.

(Courtesy Photo)

Shiawassee County Sheriff’s Office Hosts Food Drive

The Shiawassee County Sheriff’s Office is hosting a food drive to benefit the Shiawassee Hunger Network from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Owosso Kroger location in Caledonia Township. The “Stuff the Truck” event will help supply the 11 pantries within the Hunger Network with needed items to restock their shelves.

Donations should be nonperishable food items, either canned or dry. Needs include vegetables, fruit, peanut butter, jelly, tuna, pasta, cereal, oatmeal and soup.

Births

A boy was born at 3:31 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 19 to Aleena Miller and Michael A. Wrench of Corunna.

A boy was born at 2:52 a.m., Friday, Nov. 20 to Hailey Ergen and Randall Roll of Perry.

A girl was born at 4:04 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 21 to Jenelle Cole Smolenski and Randy Whitten of Byron.

A girl was born at 12:05 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 24 to Brooke White and Jesse Fritz of Owosso.

A girl was born at 8:06 a.m., Sunday, Nov. 29 to Lily Morrison and Dominic Starr of Mt. Morris.

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WALK-INS WELCOME!
THE SALVATION ARMY OWOSSO CITADEL announced on Tuesday, Dec. 1 on social media that the annual kettle campaign is at about 60 percent of the 2020 goal. Just over $37,100 has been raised during the campaign. The goal is $60,000.

Shown assisting with the effort on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 28 is bell-ringer Anita Rehmann. Rehmann was located at the south-facing entrance of Gilbert’s Hardware and Appliance in Owosso.

Year-end Stories Now Being Accepted
Submissions for year-end stories from area churches, organizations and nonprofit groups are being accepted at the Independent Newsgroup. Submissions should be emailed to news@owossonewsgroup.com or karennews4indy@gmail.com. Photos are welcome. Please keep submissions at 1,000 words or less.

Submissions does not guarantee publishing. The Independent Newsgroup reserves the right to edit all submissions for content and clarity.

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CHRIS McDEVITT, of 313 Lincoln St. in Perry, was honored during the Thursday, Nov. 19 Perry City Council meeting as winner of the June 2020 “Mayor Ross De Lau Perry Pride Award.” Mayor James Huguelet (left) nominated and presented a commemorative plaque and gift certificates from Darling Hardware to McDevitt during the meeting. Her name is also engraved on a larger plaque that is displayed in the City Hall lobby.

The focus of the residential award is to recognize the excellence of residents who maintain their home and yard, thus generating “Perry Pride.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the monthly award was not presented during the first part of the program period. Awards for May through September were presented during the Nov. 19 council meeting.

Honorable Mentions for June include the homes of June Benson, 319 S. Madison St.; and Dale and Sharon Richard, 307 E. Second Street.

NOELYNE CRIM, of 530 N. Madison St. in Perry, was honored during the Thursday, Nov. 19 Perry City Council meeting as winner of the September 2020 “Mayor Ross De Lau Perry Pride Award.” Mayor James Huguelet (right) nominated and presented a commemorative plaque and gift certificates from Darling Hardware to Crim during the meeting. Her name is also engraved on a larger plaque that is displayed in the City Hall lobby.

The focus of the residential award is to recognize the excellence of residents who maintain their home and yard, thus generating “Perry Pride.”

Honorable Mentions for September include the homes of Gary Galbavi, 639 N. Watkins St.; Jeremy and Carcen Loos, 105 East St.; and Rashod Wardell and Jessica Kuzdek.

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THE 2020 GLOW OWOSSO CRUISE – an alternate event for the traditional Glow Parade – was held in Owosso on Friday, Nov. 27. With consideration to safety because of the pandemic, Glow Owosso organizers decided on the cruise to allow people to remain in their cars while driving throughout the town to enjoy the lights and festive displays. People were invited to decorate their cars and join in the fun from the comfort of their vehicles. Hundreds participated.

Stationary displays were available in the downtown area where a number of floats were located. Private residences, churches, businesses and nonprofits also participated this year, including featured displays at the Shiawassee Arts Center, Owosso City Church, J&S Tire, DayStar Communications and many others.

Float winners were Theresa Kay’s Time for Flowers/Upstairs Antiques (1st-place), Shiawassee Firefighter’s Memorial (2nd-place) and Bill Cummings (3rd-Place).

Residential winners included 712 Elmwood, 801 Lingle and 1524 Hiawatha. The Owosso High School Robotics Club (Team 5260) had a large display on Oliver Street.

THE BIG MAN HIMSELF, SANTA CLAUS, was available during the Friday evening Glow Owosso Cruise event. This year, Santa had his throne moved to the forward corner of Main and Washington streets. Taking every precaution, Santa had a large, red mailbox on the sidewalk for children to deliver notes and pictures to him – since he was unable to have kids sit on his lap.

A line of masked families waited along the walk for the opportunity to chat with Santa.
The Criminal Justice I class raised the most money. "I combined amount of $826 being donated to the Capital Area who collected the most cans; the results yielded a com-

Students participated in a weeklong competition to see the Automotive, Health Science Academy and the Criminal 

$826. The pop can drive success was the combined efforts of Justice classes.

Baker College and Shiawassee Regional Education Service District (SRESD) students were moved to make a difference Baker College and Shiawassee RESD programs that participated in this Career and Technical Education (CTE) community service project.

Shiawassee RESD Students Raise Funds for the Homeless

Baker College and Shiawassee Regional Education Service District (SRESD) students were moved to make a difference this fall. Led by student leader Nevaeh Ginger of the Criminal Justice II class, students organized a pop can drive that raised $826. The pop can drive success was the combined efforts of the Automotive, Health Science Academy and the Criminal Justice classes.

Students participated in a weeklong competition to see who collected the most cans; the results yielded a combined amount of $826 being donated to the Capital Area Community Services.

The Criminal Justice I class raised the most money. "I want to thank everyone for supporting the Baker/Shiawassee RESD community service project. Despite being in the middle of a pandemic and having numerous restrictions placed upon them because of this, the students collected $826 to be given to those serving the homeless in our community. A population that the students selected. I am proud of all our students,” reported Kristina Marshall.

Students reached out to Capital Area Community Services and surprised them with a “big check” on Thursday, Nov. 5 at the campus of Baker College. Baker College hosts the Shiawassee RESD programs that participated in this Career and Technical Education (CTE) community service project.

AG Nessel Joins Effort to Urge Congress to Pass CARES Act Extension

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel has joined a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general representing 43 states, the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories urging Congress to extend the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economy (CARES) Act funding until the end of 2021. The coalition has sent a letter to Congress urging members to extend the Wednesday, Dec. 30 deadline.

“The CARES Act has provided needed financial support to our communities during this particularly difficult period in our nation’s history, and given the current status of the pandemic, that assistance will be needed well into the new year,” Nessel said. “As our country continues to face the challenges presented by COVID-19, we must make every effort to work together toward recovery, and Congress has the opportunity to do exactly that by extending this deadline.”

With several pending measures, including bipartisan extension measures in both the House and Senate, the attorneys general urge Congress to pass one of these measures to give states and local communities additional time to utilize the COVID-relief resources.

COVID-19 has negatively impacted nearly every facet of American society. In anticipation of unprecedented costs and economic disruption stemming from the pandemic, Congress passed the CARES Act in March. The move provided more than $2 trillion in economic stimulus to state and local governments in an effort to combat the impacts of the pandemic.

One of the restrictions placed on the funding, however, limits the money’s use to expenses incurred between March 1 and Dec. 30. “This time frame likely made sense in late March when the CARES Act was passed, but we have learned a great deal about COVID-19 in the past seven months,” the letter states. “Among other things, we know that the pandemic will continue to challenge communities well beyond Dec. 30 – a deadline that now seems unreasonable.”

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Our Own Smoked Bacon $3.99 lb.

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Legal Notice

Foreclosure Notice

Attention Homeowner: If you are a mortgage service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961. 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or casher’s check at the place of holding the circuit court in Shiawassee County starting promptly at 10:00 AM, January 13, 2021. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater than the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the condition of a certain mortgage made by Peter F. Deroche and Elizabeth Marie Deroche, husband and wife to First Third Mortgage - MFL, Mortgagee, dated January 9, 2002, and recorded on January 15, 2002, in Liber 1005, Page 315, Shiawassee County Records, said mortgage was assigned to First Third Bank, National Association by an Assignment of Mortgage dated September 05, 2019, and recorded September 16, 2019 in Liber 1261, Page 160, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the rate of 7.12500% per annum, said premises are situated in the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan, and are described as: Lot 17, Lot 18, the South 6 feet of Lot 19, Block 2, including half of the vacated alley adjacent thereto, of the Plat of Geo T. Abrey’s Woodlawn Park Additions to the City of Owosso, as recorded in Liber 1 of plats, on page 120, Shiawassee County Records Commonly known as: 839 WOODLAWN AVE, OWOSSO, MI 48867. If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale; the redemption period will be 12.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or MCL 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Deceased whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following: 11/11/2019. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Deceased whose address(es) are unknown and are a military service member on active duty, have concluded less than 90 days ago, or to both the probate court at 110 E. Genesee Street, Gaines, MI or by calling 989-271-8386. President, Sam Stiff, Treasurer Renee Dugas, and Clerk Vicky Sandlin Absent: None. The following actions were taken: The Village of Gaines Council proposed potential projects to submit for application for Community Development Block Grant Program funds. The hearing was open to the public. A full copy of the above minutes can be viewed at the Village of Gaines office, 133 Genesee Street, Gaines, MI or by calling 989-271-8386. Clerk, Vicky Sandlin President, Sam Stiff

AG Nessel Joins Effort

Continued from Page 8

As the pandemic continues to set record infections, states and local communities will continue to incur COVID-related expenses next year. By extending the deadline, communities nationwide will be able to more strategically use the funds of CARES Act funds, the attorneys general said.


Village of Gaines

Community Needs Public Hearing

December 1, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Valerie DeLaurent, Carol Erickson, Barbara Ferris, Diane Nowak, President Sam Stiff, Treasurer Renee Dugas, and Clerk Vicky Sandlin

Absent: None

The following actions were taken:

The Village of Gaines Council proposed potential projects to submit for application for Community Development Block Grant Program funds. The hearing was open to the public.

A full copy of the above minutes can be viewed at the Village of Gaines office, 133 Genesee Street, Gaines, MI or by calling 989-271-8386. Clerk, Vicky Sandlin

President, Sam Stiff

Letter to the Editor

Independent Editor,

In light of the recent announcement that the Shiawassee County Board of Commissioners has hired Ryan Painter as legal counsel, I wanted to write a letter in support of his appointment.

I’ve known Ryan since childhood, and we graduated high school (Owosso Class of 1997) and the University of Michigan together. Afterward he attended a very prestigious law school (the University of Notre Dame) and has spent many years practicing in a variety of capacities in both Indiana and Michigan. His latest role has focused on protecting our elders against abuse throughout the state of Michigan. For these last 25 years, I’ve come to learn he is a loyal friend, a strong family man (he resides in Owosso with his wife and two young children) – also a very talented attorney with great experience and leadership in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Given all of these factors, I have tremendous confidence that he is going to do an outstanding job legally representing Shiawassee County government, and look forward to working with him in the years to come.

Justin Horvath

President/CEO

Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership
The year 2020 will likely be remembered as the year of the pandemic. But it also brought thousands of new puppies and kittens into our homes, and as part of our families, as we looked to them for comfort and companionship. Since the start of the pandemic, Trupanion has noticed an uptick in COVID-related pet names. Since March, people welcoming new pets in their home are giving them names to match the moment with names that include Corona, Rona, Covit and even COVID. Pet owners have also given a nod of approval to Dr. Fauci, as they have started naming their favorite furry friends Fauci, a new trend since the start of the pandemic.

Trupanion, a leader in medical insurance for pets, surveyed its database of more than 530,000 dogs and cats for the top 50 dog names and the top 50 cat names of 2020. The results are in:

The Top 10 most popular dog names of 2020 are (in order) Bella, Charlie, Luna, Lucy, Max, Bailey, Daisy, Cooper, Molly and Lola.

The Top 10 most popular cat names of 2020 are (in order) Luna, Bella, Oliver, Charlie, Lucy, Leo, Max, Milo, Lily and Simba.

To view the complete Top 50 lists of dog and cat names, visit www.trupanion.com

**Submitting Letters to the Editor**

Letters to the Editor may be hand delivered to the Independent Newsgroup at 1907 W. M-21, Owosso (approx. ½ mile west of Cleveland Ave.) or mailed to 112 W. Clinton St., Durand 48429. Letters may also be emailed at news@owossoindependent.com.

All letters are published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Letters must be legible and should not exceed 400 words. The editors reserve the right to edit content for clarity. Every letter must include the legal name of the writer, an address and a phone number. Only the name and city/township will be published.

Submission will never guarantee publishing. Any person identified as plagiarizing will be prohibited from being published. Valid identification must be supplied and will be kept on file. There is no charge to submit a letter to the editor.

**CHANGE IS COMING.... MACHINE TOOL & GEAR, INC. JANUARY 3, 2021**

With the awarding of new business coming to Machine Tool & Gear, Inc. beginning 2021 we will be converting our current “standard work week” schedule to the new “A B C Crew” work schedule.

This modified schedule will allow us to: 1) continue meeting the needs of our customers, and 2) ensuring our employees have time away from the workplace. We anticipate all hourly employees will have 2 - 3 days off per week, depending on our customer volumes.

If this looks like a schedule you want to be working, please stop by our Owosso or Corunna locations and complete an application today. We have immediate openings for: Machine Operators, Hi-Lo Drivers, Machine Technicians and Quality Control.

We offer a wide array of benefits, including: shift premium, suggestion awards, attendance bonuses, 13 paid holidays, paid vacation, employer matching 401K plan, flexible spending, promoting from within, Medical, Dental, Vision and Life Insurances, along with STD & LTD.

### ABC Shift 2021 Manufacturing and Support teams

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**JEWELRY, GIFTS and More Online Auction.** Bid now through 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 16, 2020. Many pieces new in box! Turquoise; Silver; 14K; Siale! Details, photos, register to bid: EstateSaleExperts.com 248-987-0030.

**BUSINESS SERVICES**

**METAL ROOFING regular and shingle style, HALF OFF ON SPECIAL COLORS! Also, lifetime asphalt shingles available. Licensed and insured builders. Quality work for 40 years! 517-575-3695.**
Kylie Hollis Joins Chamber Staff

Kylie Hollis of St. Johns has joined the staff of the Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce as the full-time Member Engagement Specialist. Her primary focus will be membership engagement, event planning, social media and new member recruitment. Kylie brings a diverse skill-set to the chamber including customer service, event planning, marketing, communications, critical thinking, problem solving, and networking. Kylie holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration - Marketing from Davenport University.

“We are excited to add an emerging leader to our staff. Kylie has a passion for interacting with people and cultivating genuine and purposeful connections. She truly wishes to see our member businesses and our region thrive,” said Chamber President/CEO Greg Klapko. “She will be a tremendous resource for our Chamber members,” said Klapko.

Businesses that would like to learn more about chamber benefits and marketing can contact Kylie at (989) 723-5149 or khollis@shiawasseechamber.org.

Perry Christmas Lights Competition

City of Perry residents are reminded to have their Christmas lights displays turned on by 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10. Judges will begin a tour of the city at 7 p.m. that evening. A prize of $200 will be divided among the top three winners.

Last fall, nearly TWICE AS MANY people enrolled in Sparrow Advantage (HMO-POS) than any other Medicare Advantage plan in your area.*

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Medicare annual enrollment ends Dec. 7.

Don’t miss your chance to find a plan that better protects you, your health, and your savings.

Time is running out. Enroll today.

Call 844.908.0046 (TTY: 711) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week.**

Or enroll online at SparrowMedicare.com.

*Based on CMS enrollment data published February 2020 (CMS.gov). Includes Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Montcalm, and Shiawassee Counties.
**You may reach a messaging service on weekends from April 1 through September 30 and holidays. Please leave a message, and your call will be returned the next business day. Sparrow Advantage is an HMO-POS plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Sparrow Advantage depends on contract renewal. PHP Medicare complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATENCION: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia linguística. Llame al 844.529.3757 (TTY: 711).

(Independent Photo/Karen Mead-Elford)

(Courtesy Photo)

Horse and carriage rides were available to the public on Saturday, Nov. 28 during Shop Small Saturday in Owosso. Seating was restricted and masks required, but many shoppers still took advantage of the seasonal opportunity to have some holiday fun. Shown just before they took their ride on Saturday morning are Shana Woodbury and Kristen Rusk with Tait and Liam – both five.