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Inside
This
Edition



**Shiawassee
Conservation
District Annual
Report Inside**

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**Daylight Savings
Time Starts
This Sunday!**

Volume 40 ★ Number 76

owossoindependent.com

March 10, 2024

Happy St. Patrick's Day!



There is a pot of Solds at the end of my rainbow

**Shiawassee County's
#1 Selling
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from year 2000 to 2023



ON THURSDAY, Feb. 29 a car drove into the front showroom of Lunghamer Ford of Owosso. The driver had a medical condition, believed to have caused the accident. Thankfully, the salesperson that was sitting at his desk in the showroom got up and moved just before the car crashed through.

(Courtesy Photos)

Books for Teachers Nominations Being Accepted

The Owosso Lions announce their second annual Books for Teachers contest. Community members can nominate a teacher to receive \$50 towards books for their classroom. The contest is open to public, private and homeschool teachers in Owosso or Corunna.

The Owosso Lions Club has been dedicated to community service since they were formed five years ago. Literacy is important to the Owosso Lions and helping to put books in the hands of children is one way they give to the community. “Children having access to books is instrumental in learning, building vocabulary, writing skills and the ability to communicate,” stated Club President Jody Sivyer. “Our Books for Teachers program helps to spread a love of reading while showing appreciation for the hard working teachers in our community.”

Nominations can be emailed to OwossoLions@gmail.com before Sunday, March 31. Nominations should include the teacher’s name and school/contact information, the nominator’s name and contact information and a paragraph describing why the teacher is being nominated. The winner will be contacted the week of April 22.

To learn more about the Owosso Lions Club and how you can get involved, email OwossoLions@gmail.com.

PERRY FFA

Toy & Craft Show

AT PERRY HIGH SCHOOL

Saturday, March 23

8:30am-2pm

2555 W. Britton Rd., Perry

For more information
call 517-625-0030.




Memorial Healthcare Center for Orthopedics Offers New Walk-In Clinic

Memorial Healthcare Center for Orthopedics is thrilled to unveil a new Walk-In Orthopedic Clinic. The newly established clinic is designed to meet the growing demand for immediate orthopedic care. Patients can now receive prompt attention for acute injuries, simple fractures, sprains and other orthopedic concerns, eliminating the need for advance appointments. To ensure accurate and timely diagnosis, the clinic is equipped with cutting-edge diagnostic tools and staffed by experienced orthopedic professionals, Tarah Rakoski, PA-C and Mike Smith, PA-C.

Patients will be seen Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Memorial Healthcare Center for Orthopedics, located in the NOW building, 819 N. Shiawassee St., Second Floor, in Owosso.

Ensure a hassle-free visit by obtaining insurance clearance before arriving by contacting your insurance company. Any insurance co-pays will be due at the time of service and parental consent for minors is required before treatment.

For all chronic injuries (lasting more than one month) or cases requiring a referral, please contact our office at (989) 541-BONE (2663) to schedule an appointment.

For more information please visit, www.MemorialHealthcare.org.

Owosso Parkinson Support Group Meeting

The Owosso Parkinson Support Group is set to meet on Wednesday, March 13 at 5 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Shiawassee Council on Aging, 300 N. Washington St., Owosso. The Owosso Parkinson Support Group meets the second Wednesday of each month, but not with bad weather.

We will be celebrating our 32nd anniversary and we will also be discussing issues our members have been dealing with.

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease, please join us, we provide information, encouragement, fellowship and support. Please call Karen Prussner, Facilitator, with any questions at (989) 723-6901.

Prescription and Medication Vaping

Families against Narcotics presents a free event for parents to learn about the misuse of prescription medication and vaping on Monday, March 18 at 7 p.m. at the Owosso Performing Arts Center.


**Corunna VFW
Post 4005
& Auxiliary**
416 S. Shiawassee St.

Fish Fry Fridays
4-7pm Dine In or Take Out
**989-472-6380 or
989-743-5015**
Dinners include baked potato or
fries, coleslaw and roll.
Free Dine In drinks: Lemonade,
tea, coffee or water

**Easter
BAKE
SALE**

**St. Philip
Lutheran Church**
219 W. Oliver St.
Owosso

Sat., March 23
9am - 2pm
(In the basement, enter
Water St. door)
Proceeds to
benefit the church



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5 pm to ?

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M-F 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

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Team FridgeBot Knocks it Out of the Park at Kettering



CORUNNA High School's Team FridgeBot can be seen with its Judges' Award following the FIRST In Michigan Kettering University Event on Saturday, March 2. (Courtesy Photo)

by Owen McMaster, Team FridgeBot

This past weekend, Corunna High School's competitive robotics team, Team Fridgebot, competed in a district competition at Kettering University. This event kicked off six weeks of competitions and was attended by teams from across the state, including some from the Upper Peninsula. Also in attendance were Shiawassee County teams from Owosso (Sentinels-Owosso Legion), Durand (Railroaders), Laingsburg (Red Thunder Robotics) and Morrice (Cyber Orioles).

At this event, teams experienced head-to-head competition, polished their public speaking skills and developed qualities of leadership and cooperation by helping other teams perform their best. Team FridgeBot was presented with an award after wowing judges by answering in-depth questions about their team structure and robot design.

Over the event's two-day period, Team FridgeBot outperformed expectations by beating older and larger teams during the playoffs. This culminated in the team coming in second after a hard-fought battle for the district win.

The Corunna robotics team is looking forward to its next competition in Midland, which runs from Thursday, March 21 through Saturday, March 23, and then to competing at the FIRST Robotics Michigan State Championship at Saginaw Valley State University from Thursday, April 4 through Saturday, April 6. These events are free to attend and the team would love to have some supporters in attendance.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is an organization that prepares young people for the future through a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages four through 18. Corunna High School's Team FridgeBot is a team that empowers and prepares high school students for the future through FIRST robotics. For more information, or to make a donation, visit FridgeBotFoundation.org.



SHROVE TUESDAYS Club members gathered for a group photo during their yearly meeting. (Courtesy Photo)

Shrove Tuesdays Club Held Yearly Meeting

The 137th meeting of the Shrove Tuesday's Club was held Tuesday, Feb. 13 at the Wrought Iron Grill in Owosso.

The club began in 1887 and has met yearly on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Club members are Catholic women relatives of the original founding members and invited friends.

This year in attendance: Lisa Stechschulte, Ellen Stechschulte, Linda Stechschulte, Ann Trierweiler, Megan Stasa, Lois Durling, Anita Hosler, Jeannette Smith, Ellen Kress and new members Jeanie Honke, Carol Theile, Sue Hittle and Charlotte Hinks.

Lisa Stechschulte led the meeting. We began with prayer. Minutes from last year were read and approved and a short meeting was held. The Zoom option was discussed and decided against. The luncheon consisted of traditional pancakes, an open menu and dessert.

Letters to the Editor

Independent Editor,

So let me get this straight. Joe Biden is so senile that he won't be charged for committing the same crimes that Trump is being charged with, but he is still competent to carry the nuclear football and run the most powerful nation in the world. Both can't be true. If he is too senile to be charged for illegally taking and holding classified documents, then he is too senile to be President of the United States. If he isn't senile then he should be charged with taking top secret classified documents as a U.S. Senator and again as a Vice President which is unequivocally illegal.

For President Biden to be senile enough not to be charged for what Trump is being charged with and yet be considered competent enough to remain in and run again for the office of President simply proves that there is a two-tiered justice system. If Biden is competent to be President then he should be charged with what former President Trump is being charged with concerning classified documents.

Richard Ross, Owosso

Independent Editor,

If you are a veteran and if you are considering voting for Donald Trump you should think again, if Trump is elected he will disparage wounded veterans as being weak as he did with when he attacked John McCain for getting captured and becoming a POW?

Thomas Ford, Owosso

"Old Bay Seafood Steam Pots"
available for a limited time...

crab legs, shrimp, smoked sausage, red potatoes, corn on the cob and lobster tails

FRIDAY NIGHT Crab Fest & Fish Fry Dinners

All Dinners include choice of potato, soup, salad or coleslaw and roll

- Lake Perch • Crab Legs
- Jumbo Shrimp Dinner
- North Atlantic Cod (Baked or Fried)
- Southern Style Catfish • Clam Strip Dinner
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Owosso

Steve Brooks Selected As Owosso Public Schools Superintendent

Following an extensive interview and board discussion at the Owosso Public Schools Board of Education meeting on Thursday, Feb. 29, the Board of Education has offered the superintendent position to Mr. Steve Brooks, pending contract negotiations with the Owosso Public Schools Board of Education.



Durand Railroad Days Crowning

The 49th Durand Railroad Days Crowning Ceremony was held on Friday, March 1 at Durand Union Station with emcee Lion Traci Tribley of the Bancroft Lioness Lions Club. Queen candidates were judged on their application essays, one-on-one interviews, a speech on “what challenges is the Durand Community facing currently,” “what role does volunteering have in helping to address these challenges” and

their ability to communicate, personality, poise and overall enthusiasm for the community and the Durand Railroad Days Festival. Judges for the informal one-on-one interviews held last month were Kristy Wagner, Blair Pancheck, Karen Warner and Candyce Wolsfeld. Judges at the crowning ceremony were Mary Warner-Stone, Deborah Canute, Courtney Jones and Leslie Dietrich. Scores from three rounds were calculated to select the Queen and Attendant. The 2024 Durand Railroad Days Court is comprised of Queen Madison Lanxton, Attendant Malerie Freese, Princess Alara Maynard and Prince Jayce Chapman.

The Independent ★ **Sunday, March 10, 2024 5**

Madison Lanxton is the daughter of Troy Lanxton of Burton and Katy Kirby of Gaines. She is 15 years old and a Sophomore at Durand Area High School. She has two siblings, Tyler and Audrey.

She also has two pugs named Lola and Phoebe that she enjoys taking care of. Madison is involved in many activities such as Student Government, FFA, Art Club, Spanish Club, Competitive Dance and NSHSS. She has received numerous awards including Greenhand Degree, Chapter Degree, Outstanding Greenhand Scholarship, honor roll, as well as placing 3rd in her category at various FFA competitions. She is Treasurer of Student Government and President of the Art Club. Madison enjoys volunteering by cleaning at Kathy’s School of Dance, tutoring students and helping at her mom’s salon cleaning - restocking shelves, greeting customers and scheduling appointments. In her spare time, Madison’s hobbies include fishing, babysitting and dog sitting. Madison is currently working for Kathy’s School of

Continued on Page 15

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REGISTER NOW

April 11th
5-7 pm
April 12th
9 am-2 pm

To Register, Call Bertha Neal at 989-288-2016

Kindergarten: Eligible if the student will be 5 on or before 9/1/24
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Priority will be given to 4 year old registrants

Items to Bring to Registration:
Legal Birth Certificate, Immunization Record, Proof of Residency, Proof of Income (Preschool Only)



DURAND RAILROAD Days held their 49th crowning ceremony on Friday, March 1. Winners are, back row, from left: Queen Madison Lanxton and Attendant Malerie Freese; front row: Princess Alara Maynard and Prince Jayce Chapman.

(Courtesy Photo)

El Potrero
MEXICAN RESTAURANT

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Wednesday \$2.99 Short Domestic drafts
\$3.99 Tall Domestic drafts

Thursday \$3.99 Short Imported drafts
\$4.99 Tall Imported drafts

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Death Notices

The following was updated Thursday, March 7.

Norwood “Kyle” Austin, 77, of Laingsburg, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 28. Services were Monday, March 4.

Mikenna Damman, 24, of Owosso, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 28. Arrangements will be announced at a later date.

Darlene Leddy, 60, of Che-saning, passed away Thursday, Feb. 29. A memorial service was held Wednesday, March 6.

Joan Spindler, 93, of Owosso, passed away Friday, March 1. Services will be held 11 a.m., Saturday, March 9 at First Congregational Church.

Georgia M. Cole, 79, of Perry, passed away Friday, March 1. A Mass of Christian burial will be 11 a.m., Saturday, March 9 at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Morrice.

Elizabeth A. (Fronrath) Williams, 98, of Owosso, formerly of Durand and Bancroft, passed away Saturday, March 2. A private family service will take place.

Ryan Swanson, 48, of Owosso, passed away Saturday, March 2. Arrangements will be announced at a later date.

Travis B. Farris, 89, of Perry, passed away Saturday, March 2. Services will be held 11 a.m., Monday, March 11 at Perry Nazarene Church.

Wanda Wallace, 70, of Owosso, passed away Sunday, March 3. A memorial service will be held 1 p.m., Saturday, March 16 at Nelson-House Funeral Home.

Jack Smith Jr., 87, of Owosso, passed away Sunday, March 3. Arrangements will be announced at a later date.

Richard J. Varco, 67, of Owosso, passed away Monday, March 4. A memorial service will be held 2 p.m., Saturday, March 9 at Watkins Brothers Funeral Home, Owosso.

Betty Martineau, 99, of Corunna, passed away Tuesday, March 5. A Celebration of Life will be held 2 p.m., Saturday, March 16 at Life in Christ Church.

Rachel M. Clayson-Cotes, 61, of Byron, passed away Tuesday, March 5. A Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date.

Shiawassee Community Foundation Boosts Community Cares Fund

The Shiawassee Community Foundation is proud to announce a generous donation of \$3,000 from Horizon Bank to support its Unrestricted-Community Cares Fund. This contribution underscores Horizon Bank’s steadfast commitment to the local communities it serves and reflects the Foundation’s mission of enriching lives in the Shiawassee County region through strong community relationships and responsible stewardship of funds. Horizon Bank is pleased to have a presence in several vibrant communities within Shiawassee County and our continued partnership with ShiaCF provides a well-established means to support a wide range of community initiatives. As a community bank, supporting local missions is at the core of Horizon Bank’s beliefs.

The donation from Horizon Bank will bolster the Foundation’s capacity to address emerging needs in the community through additional grants. Kim Renwick, Executive Director of the Shiawassee Community Foundation, expressed gratitude for the contribution, highlighting its significant impact on improving the quality of life in the community. Renwick emphasized the importance of such commitments from residents and local businesses in driving positive change. “We are immensely grateful for Horizon Bank’s

generous donation and commitment to our community,” Renwick remarked. “This contribution will enable us to make a greater difference in addressing pressing needs within our community. It exemplifies the spirit of collaboration and generosity that is vital for enhancing the well-being of Shiawassee County residents.”


The Shiawassee Community Foundation encourages residents and businesses to learn more about its initiatives and how they can contribute to the betterment of the community by visiting shiacf.org.

For further inquiries, please contact: Amanda Bruner, Program Manager, Shiawassee Community Foundation at amanda@shiacf.org or (989) 725-1093.

For more information about the Shiawassee Community Foundation and its initiatives, please visit www.shiacf.org.



WORSHIP SERVICES DIRECTORY



BANCROFT

TABERNACLE OF HOPE CHURCH
6285 Bancroft Rd., Bancroft
989-634-9024
Sunday Service 10:30am
Wednesday Prayer 6:30pm
Pastor Glen Olson

BYRON

ANTRIM BAPTIST CHURCH
4509 E. Lovejoy Rd., Byron
517-223-3126 • antrimbaptist.com
Sunday School 10am
Sunday Worship 11am & 6pm
Wed. Prayer & Bible Study 7pm
Regular services by phone.
Call 517-518-1100

CORUNNA

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CORUNNA
1120 Legion Rd., Corunna
989-743-5400
fbcorunna.com
Co-Pastors: Tony Moore and Tim Duffield
Sunday Worship 10:15am
Wednesday Bible Study 6pm

JUDDVILLE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
3907 N. Durand Rd., Corunna
810-638-7498
10am Worship
Sunday School is during Worship
Rev. Russell Logston

DURAND

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520 Kent St., Durand
989-932-6126
989-413-9566
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Sun 10am Holy Eucharist at church

OWOSSO CONT'D

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989-723-5407
Sunday School 9:30am
Sunday Worship 10:30am, 6pm
Pastor Jeremy Wittwer

OWOSSO FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1500 N. Water St., Owosso
989-725-2201
firstumc@owossofumc.org
Sunday Worship 10am

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

915 E. Oliver St., Owosso
989-725-5215
Sunday Mass at 9:30am

ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

111 N. Howell St., Owosso
989-723-4277
www.stpaulowosso.org
Saturday Mass at 4:30pm
Sunday Masses at 8am & 11am

ST. PHILIP LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)

219 W. Oliver St., Owosso
989-723-6238
Sunday Bible Study 9am
Sunday Worship 10am
Wed. Bible Study 10am
Wed. Worship 11am

PERRY

FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
12821 Warner Rd., Perry
(517) 675-1567
Sunday Worship 10am
followed by Sunday School
Pastor Coleen Wilsdon
www.wearefaithcommunitychurch.weebly.com

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3100 Ellsworth Rd., Perry
(517) 625-3400
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www.perrynazarene.com
Live Streaming of Worship

SHAFTSBURG

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
7040 W. Beard Rd., Shaftsburg
517-675-7510
Sunday Worship 10:30am
Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Mtg 6:30pm

OWOSSO ASSEMBLY OF GOD

1150 N. Shiawassee St., Owosso
989-725-8219
Sunday School 10am
Sunday Worship 11am

OWOSSO CONT'D

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Sunday Worship 11am



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2023 ANNUAL REPORT

WORKING FOR YOU

Meaningful conservation is a top priority for the Shiawassee Conservation District. We are committed to assisting people across our county in protecting the natural resources we all rely on.

The Conservation District and NRCS are working together to help set conservation goals, work with people on the land, and provide services. We take great pride that our agencies were created out of the dust bowl together and we are committed to putting conservation on the land in partnership.

In 2023, we have assisted many landowners and producers to implement conservation practices through both conservation Farm Bill programs and Conservation District cost share programs. Conservation practices were implemented on nearly 64,000 acres, totaling more than \$1,059,220 for practice implementation through conservation Farm Bill programs. Additionally, Conservation District cost share programs provided \$121,323 cost share assistance to implement conservation practices on 3,000 acres. In total, over \$1,180,500 was introduced to our local economy, beginning with conservation planning assistance through our office. Those impressive numbers were accomplished by participation in voluntary conservation. Producers and landowners worked with us, one-on-one to develop meaningful conservation plans. Those plans were developed to protect natural resources in a way that meets the needs and abilities of the participant.

Each acre of land is unique in its site conditions and uses. This means that the conservation efforts for each site are also unique. A wide variety of conservation practices were installed using technical and financial assistance received through our office. On cropland, our technicians certified more than 2,000 acres of nutrient management, 3,500 acres of cover crops, and nearly 300 acres of invasive species control. Other practices applied in 2023 include forest stand improvement, live-stock watering facilities, conservation cover, and tree/shrub establishment.

32 new EQIP and CSP contracts were approved in 2023. These contracts cover 10,255 acres of land and will bring more than \$975,000.00 in practice implementation dollars over the next five years. In addition to the conservation planned in these contracts, many more acres will be protected by producers and landowners who will utilize our technical assistance to complete their conservation plans without enrolling in a program.

As the Shiawassee Conservation District looks forward and enters another year, we would like to thank everyone – past and present – who have supported our mission of providing care, informed usage, and protection of our natural resources. The District will continue to provide innovative assistance to address natural resource conservation.



The Shiawassee Conservation District is led by a five-member Board of Directors that are **LOCALLY ELECTED** to serve four-year terms. The Directors make all the decision regarding District programs and activities. Pictured left to right: Director Michelle Glass, Treasurer Amanda Martindale, Chair Tom Braid, Vice Chair Duane Leach, Director Larry Lee.

Open House & Elections April 4

The Shiawassee Conservation District will be hosting an Open House and Elections Thursday, April 4, 2024, from 2-4 p.m. at the Conservation office located in the USDA Service Center, 1900 S. Morrice Road, Owosso. The election closes at 4 p.m. and the results will be announced immediately following. The Open House will be a time to meet the Board of Directors and staff and learn what programs and opportunities the District offers.

COLLABORATE • LEARN • FARMER-LED DISCUSSIONS • GUEST SPEAKERS
EARN RUP CREDITS • MEAEAP PHASE 1

 **SHIAWASSEE
FARMER
NETWORK**

CONTINUE THE LOCAL
CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

MARCH 19, 2024 • 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
HOSTED BY FARM LEADERS MICHELLE & JAKE GLASS
8580 LEHRING RD, DURAND

MIDNR Conservation Officer for Shiawassee County will join us
to answer your deer management to mitigate crop damage questions.

RSVP is appreciated but not required.
Request to receive email updates about this, and future
Farmers Network meetings by emailing shiawasseeCD@macd.org.



Leach Running for Re-election

Incumbent Duane Leach, a resident of Bennington Township, is running unopposed for re-election for a seat on the Shiawassee Conservation District Board. He has served on the District Board since 2004. Duane operates Leach Farms and is a Pioneer Seed representative for Washburn Seed LLC.

Leach practices conservation tillage on the approximately 950 acres he farms, raising corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and wheat. He maintains grassed waterways, conservation cover and filter strips to control erosion and protect water quality. Leach also manages a cow/calf beef herd. In addition, he manages his woodlots to improve overall forest health and wildlife habitat.

Conservation District Directors are locally elected and serve four-year terms. They make all the decisions regarding the District's programs and activities. The Director election will take place during the Shiawassee Conservation District Open house on April 4, 2024, from 2pm-4pm. For more information contact the District office.

COMMITTED TO CONSERVATION FOR ALL

Farm Bill Conservation programs offer technical and financial assistance to producers to protect natural resources like soil, water, and wildlife on their working agricultural land including cropland, grassland, and woods. USDA recognizes the need to be inclusive of all people to ensure equitable access to services. So, there are special provisions including specific incentives, waivers, priorities, and other flexibilities for producers who meet the definition for historically underserved producers within USDA programs. The Shiawassee Conservation District wants to ensure that all producers with these unique circumstances are aware of these opportunities.

What does "historically underserved" mean?

Four groups are identified by USDA as Historically Underserved: beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged, veterans, and limited resource. Definitions for each of these groups may differ across USDA agencies and/or programs. The following definitions meet the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) criteria. Please also note that these definitions are not in their entirety. A link to a guidebook can be found on the Conservation District website www.shiawasseeccd.org. A hard copy can also be obtained by contacting the District office.

Beginning Farmer or Rancher: An individual who has not operated a farm, ranch, or non-industrial private forest for more than 10 consecutive years.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher: Members of a group subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of that group without regard to their individual qualities. These groups

are: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; and Hispanic. USDA acknowledges that the term "socially disadvantaged" is not how individuals who fit the definitions listed identify themselves. However, it is used out of necessity as a legal term.

Veteran Farmer or Rancher: An individual who has served in the armed forces, including a reserve component, was released from service under conditions other than dishonorable; and qualifies as a beginning farmer or rancher, or first obtained veteran status during the last 10 years.

Limited Resources Farmer or Rancher: An individual who has direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous 2 years and has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four in each of the previous 2 years, or less than 50 percent of the county median household income in each of the previous 2 years.

Getting conservation on the land is a top priority of the Shiawassee Conservation District. Free and confidential conservation planning services, as well as conservation education are available to anyone who wants to learn how they can do their part to protect the natural resources our communities rely on. The Conservation District is committed to identifying and addressing potential institutional and systemic barriers that prevent underserved customers from full participation and are committed to providing services and opportunities across the county in an equitable way. Contact the Shiawassee Conservation District office at (989) 723-8263 ext. 3 for more information.

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**Arbor Day
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WILDLIFE HABITAT WORKSHOP MARCH 23

The Shiawassee Conservation District is offering a Wildlife Habitat Workshop on Saturday, March 23, from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. The event will be held at the Shiawassee County Fairgrounds Community Center located at 2900 Hibbard Road, Corunna. It is free to attend. RSVP is requested to the Conservation District office by March 18.

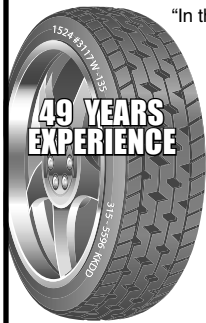
Creating and maintaining healthy wildlife habitat on your property can be fun and rewarding. This workshop is an opportunity to learn about management options and conservation programs available to you. Highlighted topics include making wetlands suitable for ducks, pollinator habitat with a focus on conserving bees, conservation planning, Farm Bill conservation programs, and the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Speakers from Ducks Unlimited and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will join the Shiawassee Conservation District, including members of the Pollinator Task Force's "Bee Squad". They will be bringing bee samples collected from their surveys at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge.

For more information, RSVP, or to request special accommodations, please contact the Shiawassee Conservation District at (989) 723-8263 ext 3.

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Conservation Planning

Not since Hugh Hammond Bennett, the founder of the Soil Conservation Service and father of soil conservation made his impassioned plea to Congress to save our nation's precious soil more than 80 years ago, have Americans become so aware of our vital connection to this living and life-giving resource.

Protecting our natural resources starts with thoughtful conservation plans. Bennett is quoted as saying, "There is no virtue in planning merely for the sake of planning. Unless plans can be translated into action, planning becomes a profitless mental exercise." In other words, we must not only develop the plans, we must put them into action. The Shiawassee Conservation District is tasked with providing technical and financial assistance to do just that.

A conservation plan is a record of a landowner's or operator's decisions in managing the natural resources on their land. Each plan is site-specific and addresses all resources on the property – soil, water, plants, animals, air, people, and energy. "Each field is unique and needs to be considered individually in a conservation plan," stated Tom Wert, SCD Conservation Specialist. The completed plan will include items such as a land use map, soils information, schedule of recommended practices, and maintenance schedules. These items will have been developed with the landowners goals and resource needs in mind.

The Shiawassee Conservation District works with the landowner throughout the entire planning process, so that the end result is a clear plan that meets their individual needs. "Our first step is to visit the property and talk with the landowner," stated Donna Kanan, SCD Conservation Specialist. "We talk about their goals, operations, and issues related to production or natural resources on their land." Together, they will create practical solutions to improve and protect soils, improve water quality and water management, while maintaining the viability of their operation.

The Shiawassee Conservation District works with many landowners to protect natural resources on their agricultural operations, in their woodlots, and in their wildlife areas. Once a conservation plan has been developed, the Shiawassee Conservation District can provide technical and financial assistance to help implement and maintain the scheduled practices. In Shiawassee County, common practices include invasive species control, grassland planting, woodlot management, filter strips, and drainage water management.

Contact the Shiawassee Conservation District to get started on developing your unique, individual conservation plan today!

**"Out of the long list of nature's gifts to man, none is perhaps
so utterly essential to human life as soil."**

*Dr. Hugh H. Bennett. "father of Soil Conservation"
and the first Chief of the Soil Conservation Service.*



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Working For You





Shiawassee Conservation District staff members Melissa Higbee, Andrea Wendt, and Donna Kanan participated in the North Central Region NCDEA's District staff training in downtown Detroit September 2023. Day one of the two-day training focused on DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) strategies and learning to develop a Plan of Work to best meet the needs of all our constituents. Day two ended with a Detroit urban agriculture tour. Pictured is Donna and Melissa with a farmer from the UGAFARM. This farm is supported by Detroit and Ann Arbor's Ugandan community. They grow healthy produce available to the City of Detroit residents including foods commonly used in Ugandan and traditional African-American diets, like collards and okra. Also pictured is the entire group at Pingree Farms. This farm is one of the largest urban farms in the City of Detroit. They are dedicated to neighborhood revitalization and youth education through experiences on their nearly 25 total acres of vegetable and animal production. We at the Shiawassee Conservation District believe that opportunities, such as this training, are opportunities to learn from other Districts and organizations so that we can better serve Shiawassee County. We know voluntary conservation is the key to protecting the natural resources we all depend on.

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CSP Benefits Forestland Owners

Forestry plays a crucial role in Michigan's economy and environment. The state is known for its vast forested areas, which provide numerous benefits such as timber production, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and clean air/water. However, unmanaged, these forests face various challenges, including invasive species, forest stand degradation, wildfires, and unsustainable logging practices.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) aims to address these challenges by providing financial and technical assistance to landowners and agricultural producers. CSP offers opportunities for producers to expand on existing conservation efforts by applying new conservation practices, enhancements, and bundles. These new activities have the potential to help enhance a site's natural resources and improve the owner's overall operation.

Although it is commonly known that CSP offers opportunities for producers to expand existing conservation efforts on agricultural land and farmsteads, it can also be applied to private forest land. Private forest lands make up a large and important portion of the forested land base in Michigan, with nearly 11 million acres, or 57% of Michigan's forested

Continued on Page 7



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Working For You

The National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA) President, Shiawassee Conservation District Executive Director Melissa Higbee, and NCDEA Executive Director Tim Riley

participated in the USDA-NRCS National Leadership Team meeting held in Bloomington, MN last November. They joined state and national leadership from across the country, including USDA Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation Robert Bonnie.



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LOCALLY LED CONSERVATION

Locally led conservation is based on the principle that community stakeholders are best suited to deal with local resource problems. It is driven by the community's natural resource conservation needs and requires involving people and organizations in the planning process and working to successfully execute a long-range plan. The Shiawassee Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) held a Local Work Group (LWG) meeting in September as part of that process. The public was invited and encouraged to attend and participate. The public was also offered the opportunity to take a Natural Resource Assessment Survey.

The Shiawassee Conservation District and NRCS work one-on-one with landowners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit natural resources including soil, water, air, plants, and animals. LWG meetings and Natural Resource Assessment Surveys are a valuable part of the District and NRCS's planning process, providing an opportunity for local land managers, landowners, and colleagues to be part of the collaborative effort to improve natural resource within our County. The community feedback provided helps all of us work towards a stronger, healthier, and more economically viable community and agricultural industry.

The LWG meeting and the survey provided valuable advice to the Shiawassee Conservation District Board and NRCS District Conservationist concerning the implementation of conservation programs in Shiawassee County. Through this process, we learned that our constituents want us to focus on the following over the next five years:

- Top three water quality priorities: 1. Drinking water/groundwater, 2. Farmland surface water runoff, 3. Rivers/streams.
- Top three forest/woodland priorities: 1. Invasive species management, 2. Plant and wildlife habitat, 3. Loss due to housing development.
- Top three agriculture/farmland priorities: 1. Farm chemicals/fertilizers/pesticides, 2. Pollinator/wildlife habitat, 3. Groundwater quality.
- Top three non-farmed land priorities: 1. Invasive species/native plants, 2. Pollinator populations, 3. Wildlife habitat.
- Top three quality of life/human behavior priorities: 1. Hazardous materials, 2. Invasive species/native plants, 3. Recycling/proper garbage disposal.

The locally-led conservation effort is the foundation of the conservation program delivery process. "The Shiawassee Conservation District promotes the responsible land use decisions for the conservation, protection, and improvement of our natural resources," stated Shiawassee Conservation District Executive Director Melissa Higbee. "Feedback from our County residents is vitally important to help decide what services and programs we will offer in the future." The Shiawassee Conservation District appreciates those who participated. Offering programs that best serve the District constituents promotes the voluntary conservation concept that works best to protect the natural resources we all depend on.



The Shiawassee Conservation District held a Beekeeping Basics Workshop in February 2023. This workshop was designed to help beginner beekeepers understand what is necessary to get started in beekeeping. Attendees also learned about conservation programs offered through the District office and how they could complement their beekeeping operation. Pictured are Shiawassee Conservation District staff and workshop presenters.



TREES: WATER QUALITY GUARDIANS

Trees play a pivotal role in improving water quality. There are many ways you can support these amazing plants that protect our planet’s most precious resource.

Trees function as natural filters by capturing and absorbing pollutants from the soil with their extensive root systems. When established next to water, trees protect against polluted runoff. Their network of tree roots reduce erosion and stabilize shores and banks by binding the soil. Trees not only capture sediment from runoff, but they also moderate water temperatures and provide habitat.

Trees play a part in nutrient cycling by absorbing nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus from the soil. This helps reduce issues such as algal blooms in water bodies. Trees also release water vapor into the atmosphere through transpiration. This part of the water cycle increases oxygen levels in surface water and helps aquatic ecosystems.

You can play a role in improving water quality by planting trees. These green additions act as a natural defense by reducing water pollution and fostering a healthier environment. Adopting sustainable practices in your gardening or landscaping is equally essential. Prioritize existing tree cover and be mindful of choices such as the use of fertilizers or pesticides.

Continued on Page 8

Agricultural Incentives Program in the Looking Glass River Watershed 2023 Recap

The Looking Glass River Watershed Restoration Project is part of a grant awarded to the Shiawassee Conservation District (SCD) in fall of 2020 through the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Nonpoint Source Program. The goal of this project is to conserve and protect water quality by helping agricultural producers integrate conservation practices into their operations.

The Agricultural Incentives Program (AIP) is included in the Looking Glass River Watershed Restoration Project. This program assists agricultural producers in the Looking Glass River Watershed improve water quality through voluntary programs. Producers can receive technical and financial assistance to incorporate conservation practices into their operations. Conservation practices available through this program include cover crops, nutrient management, no-till, and filter strips.

Eleven producers enrolled in the AIP, totaling 2,654 acres. The conservation practices applied on these acres reduced sediment by 956 tons, Phos-

phorus load by 15,730 pounds and Nitrogen by 40,300 pounds. SCD staff conducted 37 field visits, developed 6 conservation plans, and helped facilitate the application process for numerous landowners applying for conservation Farm Bill programs.

“It has been a productive year working in this watershed,” stated SCD Conservation Specialist Andrea Wendt, “I’m looking forward to getting more conservation on the ground and reaching more individuals in 2024.” Funds are still available to agricultural producers wishing to participate in the Agricultural Incentives Program. To find out if you qualify, and for more information on how you can make positive changes to help our most precious water resources, contact the Shiawassee Conservation District.

This information is part of a larger project funded by EGLE under the NPS Control Fund and Section 319 of the federal CWA.



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CSP Benefits
Continued from Page 4

land base. Forest management decisions on these lands have important impacts on the nature and level of benefits derived from the land.

CSP encourages the expansion and/or adoption of conservation practices that promote sustainable forestry management. The forest management practices generally implemented through CSP include forest stand improvement, brush management, invasive species control, snags/dens, pollinator and beneficial insect habitat, and forest health management. By implementing conservation practices on their forestland, landowners can enhance the resilience of their forests to climate change, reduce the risk of forest fires, and improve the quality of timber produced. These practices also help to protect and restore wildlife habitat, ensuring the long-term viability of Michigan's diverse plant and animal species.

In addition to the environmental benefits, applying CSP to private forest lands also provides economic incentives for landowners to participate in the program. Through financial assistance, landowners can offset the costs associated with implementing conservation practices. USDA is increasing the minimum annual payment for agricultural producers participating in the Conservation Stewardship Program from \$1,500 to \$4,000 starting in fiscal year 2024. The increase addresses challenges faced by small scale, underserved, and urban producers and improves equity in the program by making participation more financially beneficial for smaller operations. This new minimum payment is available for new and renewed CSP contracts.

Shiawassee County landowner and forester Ben Schram has worked closely with the Shiawassee Conservation District to plan for and implement conservation practices on his property. He and his wife Chelsea are currently enrolled in a CSP contract that includes

several activities within his forested land. When asked what initially got him interested in CSP, Ben responded with, "We had recently completed all the conservation practices outlined in our conservation plan and EQIP contract. We wanted to do more to protect water quality and benefit pollinating insects. CSP was a logical option, especially because of the generous financial assistance associated with participation in the program." Ben and Chelsea are presently struggling with woody invasive species and increasing biodiversity within their woods. Due to these struggles, they are currently implementing brush management and forest stand improvement practices in their woods. We asked Ben how he thought CSP had directly benefited their forested land and/or forestry throughout Michigan and he responded with, "Our forest and adjacent habitats are certainly in better shape since participating in CSP. We have been able to reinvest these funds into combating woody invasives and increasing biodiversity. Our forest is more resilient to a changing climate and the next catastrophic bug, as well as providing a more diverse long-term food source for our beekeeping business. Owning woodlands costs money. There are constant pressures on converting ours' and others' family forests to other land uses, like traditional agriculture or building developments. The money we received from CSP helps relieve those pressures because it pays to keep forests as forests."

The Conservation Stewardship Program is an important initiative that focuses on promoting sustainable agricultural and forestry practices. By providing financial and technical assistance, the program helps landowners and forest managers implement conservation practices that enhance the health and productivity of Michigan's forests. Through this program, Michigan can continue to benefit from its valuable forest resources while ensuring their long-term sustainability.



Working For You



Shiawassee Conservation District staff attended the National Association of Conservation District Annual Meeting held in New Orleans, LA in February 2023. Pictured are the attendees from Michigan. Left to right: Michigan Association of Conservation District President Jerry Miller, Shiawassee Conservation District Conservation Specialist Donna Kanan, Shiawassee Conservation District Executive Director Melissa Higbee, Kalkaska Conservation District Conservation Specialist Renee Penny, Michigan Association of Conservation District Executive Director Dan Moilanen, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Private Lands Forestry Program Manager Ben Schram, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Conservation Programs Manager John Switzer.

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Working For You

Shiawassee Conservation District's newest conservation team member is Conservation Specialist Danner Molnar. Danner is pictured taking soil samples for a pasture management plan. We work with producers and landowners to develop meaningful conservation plans for all land uses including pasture, crops, woods, and idle lands.



TREES: WATER QUALITY GUARDIANS

Continued from Page 6

Raising awareness about the importance of trees for water quality can begin in your own community. Share your knowledge with neighbors through conversations that highlight the functions of trees. Leave a lasting impact right from your doorstep by helping others understand what it means to the environment to plant a tree.

Recognize yourself as a tree steward by understanding the crucial role of trees. Show off your appreciation of trees as they perform their duties of water quality guardians. Trees are truly remarkable as they ensure a healthier and more sustainable environment for generations to come.

The Shiawassee Conservation District is accepting orders for the Spring Tree and Shrub Sale now through April 1. Visit www.shiawasseeccd.org or call the District office for more information.

Corunna FFA & Durand FFA

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March 14, 7pm

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OWOSSO SEA Turtles, front row, from left: Anderson Usher, Matthew Easlick, Juliette Roth, Kingston Koteles, Ethan Bandkau, Molly Riley and Talan Genovese. Back row, from left: Gunnar Garrison, Caleb Jurhs, Olivia Binger, Tyler Jurhs, Aiden DeFrenn, Nick Nidiffer, Blake Binger and Jack Livingston.

(Courtesy Photo)

Owosso Sea Turtles

The Owosso Sea Turtles made waves at the Michigan Team Swim League State Championships on Sunday, capping off a triumphant season. Fifteen talented swimmers took to the pool, hauling in a whopping 26 individual medals and three relay medals - including grabbing the top spot in one individual event and two relays.

The Sea Turtles swim club, open to youth ages 5 to 18 in the area, fielded a 64-member squad for the 2023-24 season from October through February. The team's success at States provided a fitting exclamation point to a season of growth and achievement.

With their standout showing, the Owosso Sea Turtles proved they can compete with the best of the best in Michigan. Their accomplishments in the pool demonstrated the team's depth of talent and tireless training throughout the season. Expect big waves from this rising squad in seasons to come.

Durand Railroad Days Crowning

Continued from Page 5

Dance as a Teaching Assistant. Her future plans are to study business at Clemson University. Madison hopes to someday own her own dance studio and share her passion of dance with younger generations. Madison is sponsored by Model Call in Durand.

Malerie Freese is the daughter of Beth and Curt Freese of Durand. She is 17 years old and a Junior at Durand Area High School. She has two siblings, Tyler and Natalie. Mal-

erie has a dog named Ruby that she enjoys spending time with. She is involved in many school activities including FFA, Student Government, NHS and Prom Committee. She also participates in basketball, golf and softball. Malerie has received an outstanding sophomore award and perfect attendance twice. Currently, she is working as a barista at Stomping Grounds in Durand. In her spare time, Malerie enjoys spending time hunting, fishing and water sports such as wakeboarding, knee boarding and surfing. She also likes to volunteer with park cleanups and assist with Durand Little League. One of the things Malerie loves the most about the Durand Community is that it has created an atmosphere that gives a welcoming environment where anyone can come and experience friendly faces, unique town events and one-of-a kind shops. After Malerie graduates, she plans on attending Michigan State University where she will major in either Labor and Delivery or Anesthesiology to pursue a degree in the medical field. Malerie is sponsored by Stomping Grounds of Durand.

Alara Maynard is the daughter of Cassandra and Shawn Maynard of Swartz Creek. Alara is nine years old and in the 4th grade at Robert Kerr Elementary School. She has one brother named Henry. Alara has a dog named Belle and two cats named Black and White and Winnie. Some of Alara's hobbies include dance, playing with friends, swim-

ming, making friendship bracelets and playing video games with her little brother. Alara is a member of the Competition Dance Team at Kathy's School of Dance. She also enjoys playing Red Cedar basketball and volleyball, as well as AYSO Soccer. Alara is sponsored by Coffield Oil of Durand.

Jayce Chapman is the son of Jamie and Ron Chapman of Durand. Jayce is nine years old and in the 3rd grade at Robert Kerr Elementary School. He has one sister named Adyson. Jayce has cats named Ralph, Daisy, Oatmeal and Uno. He also has four dogs named Annabelle, Mabel, Nova and Ragnar. Jayce also has many pet fish. Some of Jayce's hobbies include amusement rides, playing with friends, video games, Roblox, playing with his pets, bugging his older sister and snacks. Jayce is a member of the Competition Dance Team at Kathy's School of Dance. He also enjoys playing football, basketball and baseball. Jayce is sponsored by Kathy's School of Dance in Durand.

Durand Railroad Days royalty are the ambassadors for the annual Railroad Days Festival, which is held the weekend after Mother's Day. They represent the Railroad Days Festival and the greater Durand community by attending community events and traveling to other festival parades. The royalty are sponsored by Randy Wise of Durand and the Bancroft Lioness Lions.



CASSI BRODIE was named Corunna Public Schools February 2024 Employee of the Month during the Monday, Feb. 19 Board of Education meeting. She is shown here with Jennifer Strauch, Board of Education President.

(Courtesy Photo)

Corunna Public Schools February Employee of the Month

Cassi Brodie has been named the Corunna Public Schools February Employee of the Month. Cassi is a third-grade teacher at Elsa Meyer Elementary. She was honored during the Monday, Feb. 20 Board of Education meeting held at Corunna High School.

Cassi said, "I had the privilege of completing my student teaching with Melissa Whalen and Diane Jacobs at Corunna Middle School. Corunna Public Schools instantly felt like home and I was thrilled when I was able to officially join the Cavalier team. Corunna has a way of making people feel loved, valued and important."

Cassi is married to her husband, Fred. In her spare time, Cassi enjoys fishing, playing video games, reading and playing Dungeons and Dragons.

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GENEVEIVE "GENNY" Jennings is shown with her Quilt of Valor presented to her Sunday, Feb. 25 at the Owosso First United Methodist Church. Genny is a WWII Marine veteran and was nominated by WWII Army nurse Irene Hoskins. Genny is 100 and Irene is 105 years of age, we salute both of you. Genny resides at the Meadows. Refreshments were served after the ceremony. Quilts of Valor is an organization to honor living veterans with honorable discharges. Nominating forms can be obtained on their website QOV Foundation (www.qovf.org). (Courtesy Photo)

Local Student Named Essay Contest Winner

Three students from Salem Lutheran School in Owosso have been named local winners in the 55th annual America and Me Essay Contest, sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance. The three students who earned first place, second place and third place awards for their school are Eeve Forke - first, Nevaeh Rose - second and Meriel Baker - third. All three received award certificates for their achievement. As the school's first place winner Eeve's name will also be engraved on a plaque for permanent display in the school.

Eeve's first place essay now advances to the state level competition, from which the top ten essays in Michigan will be selected. The top 10 statewide winners who will be announced on Thursday, April 11 will each receive a plaque, a medallion and a cash award of \$1,055. Farm Bureau Insurance will also be presenting each top ten statewide school with a \$1,055 check, along with an additional \$555 if the school was sponsored by a Farm Bureau Insurance agent.

The traditional annual America and Me Essay Contest Awards Day is scheduled for Wednesday, May 29 in Lansing. The top 10 Students and their teachers from across the state will be invited to participate in the day-long group recognitions. In the event we are not able to meet in person, the students still receive their awards and recognitions for their commendable achievement.

Several thousand eighth grade students from nearly 200 Michigan schools participated in the 2023-2024 America and Me Essay Contest which was conducted with the help



(Courtesy Photo)

of Farm Bureau Insurance agents across the state. The topic of the 2023-2024 contest was "My Personal Michigan Hero." Eeve should take great pride in advancing to the state level competition.

A team of finalist judges, including a top Michigan government official as well as the sponsoring teachers of last year's top two Statewide winners will determine the ranking of the top ten statewide winners this year.

Started in 1968 and open to all Michigan eighth grade students, the America and Me Essay Contest encourages Michigan youngsters to explore the greatness of America and its people. As a sponsor of the contest, Farm Bureau Insurance has earned 11 national awards from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge.

Shiawassee County Friends of the Fair to Host 'Bringing in the Green'

The Shiawassee County Friends of the Fair will be hosting their annual dinner dance fundraiser, 'Bringing in the Green' event on Saturday, March 16 at Knights of Columbus

in Owosso. Dinner will be from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and the band will play from 7 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$30. The event will feature dancing, a cash bar, silent auction and 50/50 raffles.

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Jeff at (989) 413-4876 or email friendsofshiacofair@gmail.com.

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Correction



A RIBBON cutting was held Monday, Feb. 26 to celebrate the renovation of the Durand Memorial Library. Guest speakers included City of Durand Mayor Jeff Brands, Shiawassee District Library Director Kimberly White and Cameron Horvath, Durand City Manager.

The public is invited to stop by the library to see the many changes from the renovation and library staff is available to show visitors around the new layout.

(Courtesy Photo)

Shiawassee Area Writers Group Writing Contest

The Shiawassee Area Writers Group is pleased to announce an offer to one area high school senior the opportunity to earn a \$1,000 scholarship toward either further education or to be used at a national writing conference of their choice.

The contest is open to all seniors in Shiawassee County. To be eligible to apply for this scholarship, a student must submit an application accompanied with a letter of reference from an English, writing, journalism or school newspaper teacher, and a 2,500 word maximum writing of their choice such as an essay, short story, newspaper article or poem. The application is to be submitted by Monday, April 1.

If interested, contact: Leland Scott, SAW Scholarship Coordinator at (517) 625-7826 or email to lscott@tds.net for an application and more information.

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Durand Railroad Days Graff Chevrolet of Durand Event Tent

Railroad Days 2024 will be here before you know it. Festivities will be celebrated from Thursday, May 16 through Sunday, May 19. Railroad Days, Inc. is pleased to announce that there will be numerous activities this year in the Graff Chevrolet of Durand Event Tent. Graff Chevrolet has been the sponsor of the tent for over 17 years.

On Friday, May 17, the tent will be the place to be for the annual Trivia Contest. Hosted by the Durand Educational Foundation (DEF) and sponsored by Graff Chevrolet of Durand and the Mid-Michigan Chevy Dealers, the "doors" will open at 6:30 p.m. with the contest starting at 7 p.m. Call or text (989) 277-2926 or email durandeducationfdn@gmail.com to reserve your table (there are only 15). The cost is \$10 per person taken at the door (entry fees go to the DEF). No outside beverages will be allowed in the tent. Adult beverages from Burgdorf Winery of Haslett and Right Brain Brewery of Traverse City as well as soft drinks and bottled water will be available for purchase.

Saturday, May 18, the tent will be the location for the annual Kids Que barbeque contest; which is also sponsored by Graff Chevrolet of Durand, the Mid-Michigan Chevy Dealers, as well as Durand Meat Processing. Entry forms are available at www.durandrailroaddays.com. The cost is \$10 per child (8-12 years old). Forms and payment must be received by Friday, May 17. Check in for participants is on Saturday at 3 p.m. for the contest.

On Saturday night, the tent will be the site for Bingo. This will be the second year for this event, which is hosted by the Bancroft Lioness Lions Club and is also sponsored by Graff Chevrolet of Durand. The contest will run from 6 to 9 p.m. The cost per card is \$.25 with the payout being half of the proceeds for each game. Proceeds from the contest will be used to benefit the Durand/Bancroft communities. Again, no outside beverages will be allowed in the tent. Adult beverages from Burgdorf Winery of Haslett and Right Brain Brewery of Traverse City as well as soft drinks and bottled water will be available for purchase.

Sunday, May 19, the tent will be the spot for the annual Kiddie Tractor Pedal Pull which is organized by the Durand Area Lions Club and Acker Agency Insurance. Come and sign your child up to participate in this free, fun event for children 5-12 years old. The first age group starts at 1 p.m. The event is sponsored by local area businesses, civic groups and individuals which are printed on the free t-shirt that each child receives.

Be sure to enjoy these and other fun, exciting events during Railroad Days 2024. More information on these activities and more can be found at the festival website www.durandrailroaddays.com.

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Announcements

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March consignment auction. Over 170 lots! 1996 Ford F-150 XL, generators, tools, knives, pistols, collectables, heaters, antiques and much more! Bidding ends March 25. View catalog at NarhiAuctions.hibid.com. Questions, call 810-266-6474.
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SHIAWASSEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS IN SHIAWASSEE COUNTY: PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Board of Commissioners of Shiawassee County will hold a public hearing on March 13, 2024 at 5pm, in the Board of Commissioners Chambers, 201 North Shiawassee Street, 1st Floor, Corunna, MI 48817, for discussion on the Kerby Road Park Grant. THIS NOTICE is given by order of the Board of Commissioners of Shiawassee County, State of Michigan.

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OFFICERS THAT volunteered their time to help with security training on Saturday, March 2 are, from left: Trent Adkins, Shiawassee County Emergency Manager; Kyle Bawks, City of Perry Police Chief; Shiawassee County Sheriff Doug Chapman; Todd Evans, Shiawassee County Sheriff Department Deputy and Chaplain and Shiawassee County Sheriff Department Deputy Kirt Stechschulte.

A FEW of the items used during the tactical training.
(Independent Photos/Melissa Shepard)

AREA LAW OFFICERS HOLD SECURITY TRAINING

By Melissa Shepard, Editor

Law officers from around the county volunteer their expertise and hold security training for area churches. This includes giving resources to volunteers from local churches, as well as training them to know what to do in certain situations. This program started before the Covid-19 pandemic but was put on hold. An idea formed by former Sheriff Brian BeGole and current Sheriff Doug Chapman, it is now in full force again. The duo figured that since they already performed security training for area schools, churches would be in need also. On Saturday, March 2 there were four churches represented by 13 people, ready to proceed with their Level 2 training. Before meeting at New Creation Church of Owosso, attendees participated in MILO training at Baker College. MILO training is a virtual reality interactive experience to

experience different situations. Participants use controllers to navigate the program, with different situations they may encounter in the real world.

There are three levels in this program: Level 1 includes time on the shooting range and classroom training, Level 2 includes the MILO scenarios and also scenarios inside a church and Level 3 includes participants running through scenarios in their own church.

Sheriff Doug Chapman said, “We never have a shortage of officer volunteers to help with training.” When addressing the volunteer from the churches, Chapman said, “Thank you for taking the time to learn today. This program is very important to me because my first responsibility is the community. This is the best way to keep the county safe.”

20th Annual Celebration of Youth Art Month

The Shiawassee Arts Center is teaming up with Wendy’s restaurant of Owosso for the 20th Annual Celebration of Youth Art Month. The “Under the Sea” paper mache exhibit was created by kindergarten through 8th grade students during the children’s after school art program at The Shiawassee Arts Center. The exhibit will be on display throughout the month of March. Instructors for the project were, Arts Education Director Linda Ruehle, Arts Education Assistant Cora Walby and SAC Board Member Brian Bruff.

Participating students in kindergarten through the 8th grade include: Jolene Arnett, Addison Balzer, Skylar Birchmeier, Michael Dwyer, Amora Ford, Kinsley Friend, Frankie Gauthier, Beverly Kneale, Hank Kneale, Adalynn Osantoski, Ella Osantoski, Owen Osantoski, Arianna Ross, Olivia Ross, Ben Sparks, June Tenoff, Emerson Teremi, Harvey Teremi, Von Turhune and Marrah Zruna.

The Shiawassee Arts Center appreciates Wendy’s Restaurant for providing the opportunity to showcase our youth art in our community.

STUDENTS THAT participated in the 20th Annual Celebration of Youth Art Month with the Shiawassee Arts Center and Wendy’s are, from left: Adalynn (1st grade), Ella (3rd grade) and Owen Osantoski (2nd grade). (Courtesy Photo)

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