F.A.R.R. faces new obstacles

Local resale shop struggles while facing competition

By Ryan Tackabury
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Fenton — While its acronym may suggest otherwise, the Fenton Area Resource & Referral thrift shop is focused on matters close to home.

For more than 15 years, the thrift shop has served the Fenton, Linden, and Holly communities by selling donated items and using the profits to help individuals in need. However, the resale market is nowhere near cornered. The recent arrival of Goodwill and other thrift stores in the area has provided tough competition for F.A.R.R.

With multiple options now available for people looking to donate some of their extra belongings, F.A.R.R. has seen a decrease in donations.

See F.A.R.R. on 11

January economic indicators: more growth

Progress could be affected by European debt crisis, Iran conflict

By Tim Jagielo
tjagielo@tctimes.com; 810-433-6795

In January, unemployment dropped slightly, more jobs were created than expected, and consumer confidence grew. These numbers take into account the post holiday fall that happens every year.

See GROWTH on 8

“The new numbers are looking up, the trend’s in the right direction.”

Christopher Douglas
Assistant Professor of Economics, UM-Flint

Gas prices reaching record highs

Experts predict $4.25 per gallon by April

By William Axford
axford@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

On Monday, gas prices averaged $3.56 a gallon. A year ago on the same day, the average price for a gallon of gas was $3.16. The 40-cent increase makes 2012 the most expensive February ever for gas. From January to February of this year alone, gas has increased 25 cents or 9 percent.

See GAS PRICES on 2

Hunting to continue on Tupper Lake

DNR declines to make no-hunting recommendation after hearing

By William Axford
axford@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

Fenton Twp. — After a public hearing with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and residents, Tupper Lake will not receive a recommendation for a controlled hunting ordinance.

Jack Willington, who lives on Tupper Lake, requested the Fenton Township

See HUNTING on 8

Where’d you say that tuna’s from?

Grocery stores not always sure where products originate

By William Axford
axford@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

Weaving through the grocery aisles Monday night, Linden resident Cathy North examined various items from the shelf. North admitted grocery shopping is a bit of a guessing game since she can’t always tell where some items originate.
**GAS PRICES**

Continued from Front Page

Industry leaders predict the price of gas will increase significantly throughout 2012, with estimates reaching $4.25 a gallon by April. The current record for the highest price for a gallon of gas was $4.11, set in July 2008.

One reason for the increase in price is Iran decreasing its exports. According to national reports, Iran announced earlier this week that oil would not be exported to French and British companies due to sanctions placed by the United Nations.

The threat of less oil has caused other distributors worldwide to increase their prices. Whatever the cause, gas prices traditionally increase whenever speculators forecast a possible situation where oil prices will increase.

“Normally when the analysts say the price is going to go high, the gas companies make their prices high,” said Doug Smith, owner of Smith’s Exit-80 Sunoco. “It’s impossible to tell if prices are going to be high by year round.”

A barrel of oil is currently valued at over $100 and there isn’t an indication of when prices will decrease. Smith said people buy gas more frequently when prices are higher but they do not completely fill up their gas tank. Credit card use also becomes more frequent, increasing overall credit card debt.

“People don’t have the money to spend $80 a week to fill up their gas tank,” Smith said.

**Don’t Expose Yourself!**

Shred your important documents for $1 per pound

The UPS Store

17195 Silver Parkway
810-750-2820

**KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP AT LF**

Lake Fenton Community Schools is asking parents or guardians of potential kindergarten students to register their children for kindergarten.

Kinder-gart-en Roundup is from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1. Children who will be 5 years of age on or before Dec. 1, 2012 can be registered. Parents or guardians are required to provide their child’s state issued birth certificate, immunization record, proof of residency and vision and hearing screening.

Lake Fenton offers full-day Kindergartens and full-day Young 5s (for students with birthdays that fall between June 1 and Dec. 1). Residents outside of the Lake Fenton school district interested in registering may pick up a School of Choice application at Administrative Services, 11425 Torrey Road or call (810) 591-4141.

**Spend it here. Keep it here.**

**SHOP LOCAL. INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY.**
SMART SOLUTIONS

1 Make a scorched coffee pot look new

Make a scorched coffee pot look new again. Instead of scrubbing away the burn marks, use this trick: Once the pot has cooled, fill it halfway with ice, add 1/4 cup salt, and swish it around for a minute or two. The friction created by the cubes and crystals dislodges stains leaving the pot super clean!

2 Clean picture frames

Use a clean empty spray bottle to dust intricately carved picture frames or any little nooks and crannies. Just direct the nozzle toward the fuzzy stuff and pump out air until the small particles blow away.

THE RETURN OF VINYL RECORDS

New and used records making a comeback

By Tim Jagielo

Ben Curtis, 15, works at Tri-City Trading Post in Fenton, and is in 10th grade at Fenton High School. He skipped cassettes, vinyl, and even mostly CDs in purchasing his music. He downloads everything onto his iPod, and said he has more than 1,200 songs stored in the pocket-sized device. When Michael Absher of Flint had his entire vinyl collection, the untold amount took up half of a room. As a DJ, he has used cassettes, vinyl CDs and now, downloaded music. But a shifting tide in vinyl records might bring these two generations together. Whether buying or selling, vinyl is moving in 2012, with bands pressing the 180-gram records hoping to tap into a very niche market, and resale shops are ramping up their vinyl sales.

Ben’s mom, Michelle Curtis, owner of Tri-City Trading Post is one rare individual who enjoys the sound of an antique Victrola record player. This is the one with the horn sticking out of it. “It’s very grainy,” she said. “I like it.”

She has dedicated vinyl fans that come into her store, but she doesn’t have many herself. She has also seen a resurgence in records being sold to her store, something she credits with the economic climate. “It makes me feel bad, it’s something they’ve passed down from their parents,” she said. Absher is a true audiophile, hosting weekly DJ sets at Churchill’s in downtown Fenton.

See VINYL RECORDS on 12
I FULLY UNDERSTAND why movie rentals have fallen now that the fore-
ground music is so loud. We can’t understand or even hear what the
actors are saying. The music industry must want to put the movie
industry out of busi-
ness. What good are to-
day’s movies anyway? Waste of time.
I THANK GOD every
day for my won-
tiful mother. I love you and I don’t
know what I’d do without you. Family is a blessing, and you should
appreci-
ate them always.
NEW NEIGHBOR LADY: did you ever
hear of picking up your backyard?
You’ve got toys all over the place,
shouldn’t have to wake up every
morning and look at that, it’s ridicu-
lo. So either pick it up, or have your
kid do it, it’s disgusting.
I WAS IN a car accident on Owen
Road leaving Wal-Mart on Monday af-
ternoon, and two passersby stopped to help me get out of the car. One of
them even got a chair for me. I just
would like to thank you. I don’t know
who you are, but I hope you read this
and know that I am very grateful. God
bless.
SO THE CAR companies paid back
their loans. You’ve got to watch
because a small portion was a loan
and the rest was a takeover. Fifty-one
percent of Chrysler is owned by it’s
founder’s mother. If she still owns 27 percent
of GM and I’m not even sure how much the
UAW owns of that.
I UNDERSTAND BOTH sides of the ice
rink issue, and I hope the neighbors can settle it har-
moniously. I did however drive by it, and it is such
an example that I would not want to look at it across
the street from me or hear the commotion all day
long.
I JUST WATCHED the accident that
happened on North Long Lake Road.
I want to ask the sheriff why they won’t sit there
and write tickets up for all these people who won’t
slow down. What good is to-
day’s police force if they don’t do their job?
REGARDING THE SIDEBAR stating that you would have a hard time explain-
ing to your boss about pictures posted
partying: It is not in the business of theirs what you do on your off time if you are com-
mitting no crimes and doing it off the
clock.
INTERESTING THAT Mr. Dedivanaj is
going to get an opportunity to open an
other restaurant but please not another
medioocre sports/pizza bar. Fenton has
enough of that type of restaurant. We
need a Golden Corral, Red Lobster or
Olive Garden in this town.
TO THE KIA neighbor, I too lost my job
due to real dedicated Americans like you
buying foreign. I have a better idea —
move to that country that you are support-
ing and take your KIA with you. Only
in America.
KIA OWNER YOU should be proud of
your vehicle, it was built here in the U.S.
by U.S. workers. Union morons may
complain that because it wasn’t made
in Michigan it was a right to work state.
I JUST listened to your radio show the
day you were on. It was very
poor. You have no idea what the
rest of the show is like.
I’M SORRY that you are not with us
anymore. I hope you find a good job,
and that you are happy with your choice.
I’M SORRY for the loss of your job
and that you are trying to support your family
by taking on a second job.
I’M SORRY you have lost your job but
please do not blame it on the government
that was in charge at the time.
I’M SORRY you have lost your
job and that it has been so hard
for you and your family.
I’M SORRY for the loss of your job
and that you have been struggling to
make ends meet.
I’M SORRY you are not in a position
to help others, and that you have had to
make sacrifices.
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Four year old fighting cystic fibrosis assured of chance to live past the age of 30

By William Axford
atford@tctimes.com 810-433-6792

A 4-year-old boy in Linden is a testament to a breakthrough in medicine. Broderick Richards is one of few cystic fibrosis patients that has been approved for Kalydeco, a drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Jan. 31. The drug ensures Broderick will be able to live past his 30s, the usual age most people with cystic fibrosis die.

“Kalydeco wasn’t supposed to be approved until April 8. It’s one of the fastest drug approvals by the FDA,” said Chrsissy Richards, Broderick’s mother.

Cystic fibrosis is a chronic disease that affects the lungs and digestive system. The disease affects about 30,000 people in America and 70,000 worldwide, according to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Only 4 percent of people with cystic fibrosis are approved for Kalydeco because the drug only works with a rare mutation of the disease. Broderick is one of the few that has the rare mutation.

Getting Kalydeco approved for Broderick wasn’t an easy process. The drug is only approved for people 6 years old or older. Both Broderick’s doctor Sonya Nasr and pharmacist Robert Hall had to persuade health insurance companies to cover the costs of Kalydeco. The battle however, was well worth the fight.

“He’s going to be the first cystic fibrosis kid that I’ve had that will live past 30,” said Hall, who works at Rite Aid in Linden. “I’ve had health problems with cystic fibrosis during my career as a pharmacist and almost all of them don’t live past 25.”

Kalydeco is being referred to as a wonder drug for treating cystic fibrosis because it helps patients produce salt and sodium chloride effectively. The drug costs about $12,000 a month. Chrsissy said salt and sodium chloride deficiencies often lead to excess mucus and frequent lung infections. Most people with cystic fibrosis die from scarring within the lungs and need frequent lung transplants.

“It’s the first drug ever created to treat the cause of cystic fibrosis at the cellular level,” Chrsissy said. Broderick is already on a variety of different drugs to keep healthy.

Hall admitted getting the drug approved by the insurance company was daunting but says the real credit goes to Dr. Nasr. Hall said the usual method for treating cystic fibrosis was trying to prevent patients from getting infections, which was ineffective.

“The best part is that he’s instantly reacting to the drug,” Hall said.

Dr. Nasr did not respond before press time.

What is cystic fibrosis?

Cystic fibrosis is an inherited chronic disease that affects the lungs and digestive system of about 30,000 people in America. The disease clogs the lungs and causes life-threatening lung infections. It also stops natural enzymes from helping the body break down and absorb food. Symptoms include frequent lung infections, poor weight gain and persistent coughing.

1200 block of Darci Drive reported that the window of her Toyota had been broken by a BB pellet. Police have no suspects.

DISTURBANCE AT RESTAURANT
At 9 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 19, Fenton police responded to a restaurant in the 1400 block of North LeRoy Street to investigate a disturbance. A caller said a man, possibly intoxicated, was attempting to drive away with his young daughter after he had been in a verbal confrontation in the parking lot with two people. Police located the vehicle, which witnesses described and spoke with the driver, a 31-year-old Linden man. Police learned that he was drinking with a suspended license, prompting a traffic ticket. Police also learned that the man had five outstanding arrest warrants and turned him over to Northville Township police. The man’s 6-year-old daughter was released to her mother who responded to the location of the traffic stop.

CATALYTIC CONVERTOR STOLEN
On Saturday, Feb. 19, Fenton police responded to the Silver Lake Road carpool lot to investigate a larceny of a catalytic converter complaint. Lt. Jason Slater said the window of her Toyota had been broken and police observed a BB pellet between the panes of the window. The second complaint was filed at 9:45 p.m. This time a 41-year-old woman in the
**HOT LINE CONTINUED**

**AUTOMOTIVE LOSER, KIA-Georgi-a, Nissan-Tennessee, Toyota-Indiana. Why? This is Michigan, the state with the greatest automotive history ever. Why weren't those plants built here? Why aren't new GM, Ford or Chrysler plants being built here? Everyone knows, though some won't say. They are "Right to Work" states and we are not!**

**BARNEY FRANK ADMITS: ObamaCare kills seniors. ObamaCare Independent Payment Authorization Board (IPA) will cap the total amount of money senior recipients will receive for care. Reach that cap and medical services stop. This is the true ObamaCare death panel.**

**CHRISTIAN AND YOU Vote Demo-cratic? You must be joking. If that is true then you must support abortion and gay marriage. Nice Christian beliefs!**

**PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT IB does not cost $800,000 a year. That is simply incorrect. Also, understand that IB positively impacts all children in FAPS, not just the IB diploma stu-dents. The bond is simple. We need buses, new technology, corrections to traffic flow, and security. Be an informed voter.**

**THANK YOU** whoever is respon-sible for having the eyesore yellow house torn down on Main Street in Fenton. City of Fenton, if you’re going to have fancy dancy signs put up to announce you’re in Fenton, you need to have the eye appeal to match!

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**PRODUCTS Continued from Front Page**

Originated. If it were up to her though, North would buy Michigan made prod-ucts more often, even if the items were slightly more expensive.

“I prefer to buy locally,” North said. “I always support local farmers.”

Interest in a product’s origin should only increase among consumers. The U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics report food prices increased 0.2 percent in January and 2.9 percent over the last year. With gas forecasted to remain record highs this year, food prices will most likely con-tinue their trend of increasing. Although local grocery stores say they try to work with Michigan farmers as much as they can, it’s not always pos-sible or feasible to use Michigan made products. Grow seasons and economic im-pace interfere with a grocery store’s ability to provide in state grown or pro-cessed food.

“We used to get our meat from slaugh-terhouses in Detroit,” said Norman Yono, owner of Alpine Market Place. “We have some local products but that accounts for only 5 percent of our store. About 20 years ago, there were more local companies but now everything is about convenience and huge products.” A majority of Alpine Market Place’s products come from Spartan, a distributor based in Grand Rapids. Yono said that it is not always possible to know where Spar-tan gets their food. All Yono hopes for is that Spartan uses their best judgment and sends the best products available.

In the winter, a majority of the fruit comes from Chile while vegetables come from Florida and other southern states. Yono said fruit and vegetables are all American from May until the end of summer, the peak of the American grow season. Beef, according to Yono, is produced both in and out of the U.S. The Iowa Beef Processors is amongst the biggest distributor in America and often sells its products to Spartan. Tuna is almost always packed outside of the U.S. as the fish are processed and canned right on the boat, hours after being caught. Although gro-cery stores depend on a distributor for a majority of their food, some stores have at least a limited ability to select where their food comes from. VG’s is a Spartan store that runs a Michigan’s best items program that pro-motes locally grown food and products. “We’re seeing resurgence in loyalty from a customer’s standpoint for Michigan products,” said Brian Haaraoja, se-nior vice president of VG’s Grocery. “Some people say that items are locally grown but it’s really from the same or an-other state. We’ll use posters showing where the produce is from, with pictures of the farmer and where the grow fields are located.”

May through early September is Michigan’s grow season and the best time to get in state produce. Companies like Kellogg’s and Faygo are Michigan based and sold throughout grocery stores in Michigan. Yono said grocery stores will provide locally grown products if the demand is present. “It boils down to the price of what people are willing to pay,” Yono said. Spartan stores did return comment before press time.
Slippery roads cause collisions

Mike Slater of Holly checks on the vehicle his wife Tammy drove, after their vehicle slid off Grange Hall Road in Holly Township and struck a tree before coming to rest in the ditch. No one was hospitalized for injuries. This was one of several collisions that happened during the snowfall on Tuesday morning.

A driver lost control of their car on Lahrning Road, just west of Torrey Road in Fenton Township, causing minor injuries.

HOT LINE CONTINUED
WHERE ARE ALL the Democrats who cried about gas prices under President Bush? Your man Obama is setting record gas prices and you don’t complain. Could it be you have a double standard to only criticize Republicans?

Y’ALL CALL the Hot line on a phone made in China, but it’s not good to drive a car made in Korea. You’re all a bunch of hypocrites.

HELLO FENTON, TO all you people whining about where the Kia is manufactured and built or purchased from — why don’t you put your iPod down the garbage disposal, because those aren’t made here either. You silly, silly people.

HELLO, AMERICA, in order to save America, we should all stop shopping at the ‘Wall of China Mart.’

A LOT OF people are complaining because we are not buying American. Did you ever stop to think that maybe a lot of Americans can’t afford to buy American?

WHAT’S THE DEAL? General Motors’ hourly employees got a $7,000 bonus, but the retirees had their bonus cut by $700. Doesn’t sound right.

IF THE CHICKEN lady can have chickens, can I have an ostrich? It’s a big bird that lays eggs, only a little bigger than a chicken.

GOSH, SO THEIR beliefs are different from yours.

TO THE PERSON who said that having no co-pay on birth control is not interfering with our freedom of religion — you are misinformed and delusional. Whom do you think pays for the doctor visits? Taxpayers, for one. Also, churches are required by law to contribute a certain amount to these expenses.

THIS IS TO the person who doesn’t like the cigarettes hitting their car. I just read your answer, and I took no offense by it. I don’t smoke in my car, so I have nothing to do with it. You’re right. There was nothing hypocritical about it.

MY WORK ROUTE takes me down our side streets. There’s only one stop sign, and I’m faithful to it. But many times, I encounter the same older gentleman walking out in the road, who refuses to use the sidewalk. I hate going into oncoming traffic to avoid him.

LEAVE THE CHICKEN lady alone. Why come along and take a perfectly happy person and give them trouble when they’re not hurting you at all?
**GROWTH Continued from Front Page**

Things are looking up, and President Barack Obama’s approval rating reflects that, but how sustainable is the progress made in growing the U.S. economy, and what do the numbers mean in the big picture?

“It’s hard to know what the sustainability is,” said Christopher Douglas, assistant professor of Economics at the University of Michigan-Flint. He said if nothing bad happens, the recovery can continue, albeit slowly.

By “bad things,” he means the European debt crisis affecting the U.S., or a conflict between Iran and Israel raising the price of oil, but no gas. “Near term is pretty dependent on those two,” he said.

Overall, job creation was better than expected in January, with 220,000 jobs being created. “Things look good now, compared to the past,” he said. Douglas said more than 120,000 jobs need to be created to accommodate population growth.

The unemployment rate did drop by 0.2 percent, and 3 percent since August, but Douglas said these numbers count people that are either employed, or are actively looking for work. He said it does not count people that have given up on trying to find work. The number of jobs created is a better figure to study, he said.

The more jobs created also means that more young people can find jobs recently held by adults, which will boost discretionary spending.

Douglas also said that watching the stock market numbers everyday is not an accurate picture of how your money is doing, because the numbers fluctuate so quickly, and react to the same information consumers hear about the economy.

The number of jobs created is the good news. The bad news is that to get employment back up to pre-2008 levels, the economy would need to create 10 million jobs immediately, said Douglas.

This would bring the general ratio of jobs to people back up to 63 percent, instead of the 57 percent the U.S. is at now. “Really, the job growth we saw is not enough to close that gap immediately,” said Douglas.

Closing that gap would take a major technological breakthrough, like the computer technology and e-commerce boom of the 90s, that created economic activity. The recession is over, meaning the economy stopped shrinking, but there is still a long way to go. “The new numbers are looking up, the trend’s in the right direction,” said Douglas.

In another week, the results for February will come out, and give another clue as to how the growth is going.

**HOT LINE CONTINUED**

**THIS IS THE** Christian Democrat. My main beliefs, I stick to, but one of my main beliefs is letting you have your beliefs. I do not interfere with the way you believe, so I don’t see why you should tell me how I should believe.

**ONE WOMAN WALKING** through the neighborhood saw the chickens, and made a fuss. One person living in the neighborhood made a fuss? Can’t people ever mind their own business?

**HERE’S A HELPFUL** hint that you always told your children. Especially in bad weather, before you leave work, go. You never know when there is going to be a traffic back up, or you’re going to slide into a ditch and wish you had gone. I’m not taking from experience. I just know.

**WOULD THE MAN** with the white truck who was inquiring about a white German Shepherd on Linden Road please return it, because it does belong to somebody.

**WHAT EVER HAPPENED** to people minding their own business? Why do you care so much about what the people around you are doing? No wonder the world is such a miserable place anymore. You’ve so much more concerned with making other people miserable that you have no energy left to focus on making yourself happy.

**I LOVE GOD.**

**Cretaceous encounter**

Haydon Johnson, 8, of State Road Elementary School checks out the animatronic T-Rex at the Discover Dinosaurs exhibit at the Sloan Museum in Flint on Friday. The exhibit is open through May 6.

**HUNTING Continued from Front Page**

Board of Trustees investigate hunting on the lake since houses and residents on the lake are often hit with shotguns. Residents were not able to cite specific damage from the close proximity of hunters however, leaving the DNR unable to recommend creating an ordinance.

Factual incidents involving public safety issues and other such evidence or documentation that a safety problem exists must govern the department’s recommendation for a Hunting Area Control ordinance,” Lt. Andrew Turner wrote to the township board on Feb. 6. “No testimony or evidence of substantive incidents was provided during the public hearing or during the investigation subsequent to the hearing which would warrant a Hunting Area Control.”

Residents who were for hunting control were concerned about the safety of their families and hunters trespassing on private property. Those who opposed regulations said ordinances would continue to evolve to make Tupper Lake more exclusive. Overall, the hearing attracted about the same amount of residents in favor of hunting control as residents against it.

“This effort to close Tupper to hunting succeeds, I believe it will be a slippery slope into the residents of Tupper pushing for the lake to be a closed/private lake – with anchoring and noise restrictions in place,” said Erin Conkin, who attended the meeting.

Marl and Silver lakes in Fenton Township currently have ordinances prohibiting the discharge of firearms. Hunting migratory waterfowl with a firearm is prohibited on Byram Lake.

Even though the DNR could not recommend making an ordinance, the board still has the authority to enforce hunting on Tupper Lake if need be.

“We can still do whatever,” Operations Manager Thomas Broecker said during an Oct. 17 board meeting. “It’s up to us to make an ordinance.”

Supervisor Bonnie Mathis said residents should still feel safe during hunting season, even if an ordinance is not adopted. Mathis urged residents to call police personnel if they felt threatened by hunters.

“No testimony or evidence of substantive incidents was provided during the public hearing or during the investigation subsequent to the hearing which would warrant a Hunting Area Control.”

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Show support with Gift of Life license plate

Gleason, an organ recipient, applauds legislation and plate

Senator John Gleason (D-Flushing) applauded the passage of legislation that would create a charitable Gift of Life license plate. Similar to other fundraising plates, this plate would collect funds for the administration and maintenance of the registry program.

Gleason, the recipient of a kidney transplant in 2001, has long been a promoter of organ and tissue donation. Senate Democratic Leader Gretchen Whitmer offered an amendment to have the act named as the John J. Gleason Gift of Life Plate. “For the decade since his transplant, John has been an outspoken supporter for organ donation awareness,” said Whitmer. “He has impacted thousands of lives through his work to signify organ donation on driver’s licenses and include organ donation to the driver’s education curriculum.”

“I am deeply humbled and honored that my colleagues chose to name this act after me. There is no gift more precious than organ donation,” said Gleason. “There are more than 100,000 people in the United States waiting for an organ. I hope the creation of this plate and fund will help to educate the public and save more lives.”

According to the Mayo Clinic, one donor can save or improve the lives of as many as 50 people. Michigan currently allows citizens to designate their desire to be an organ donor through the Secretary of State’s office. Potential donors receive a sticker to place on their driver’s license to indicate their wishes. Those who would like to learn more can visit www.giftoflifemichigan.org.

Summary

Legislation passed in Michigan, which would give motorists in Michigan an opportunity to show their financial support for the Gift of Life program through a vanity license plate.

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HOT LINE CONTINUED

THE GEORGIA MANUFACTURING plant is owned by Kia and builds the Sorente, its midsize crossover model. Thousands of jobs were created when Kia hired locals to staff factory and administrative positions, with hundreds perhaps thousands of additional jobs created or preserved due to the plant having been built.

OBAMA’S HEALTHCARE PLAN demands that American taxpayer-funded insurance programs and all employer-provided insurance provide free birth control and abortion pills to all women. That includes employers whose religion prohibits those treatments. That demand is clearly not Constitutional. We are losing our Constitutional rights.

THERE ARE MANY empty buildings and former retail spaces that could be used for all kinds of development. People in Fenton have some wonderful ideas. But for now, this country is still a capitalist nation and that kind of development belongs in the private sector, not the public.

TAG LINE, JUST for fun: “And on the eighth day, He created Fenton, and it is good.”

Looking for some paint?

There are nine paint stores in Fenton, Linden and Holly.

SHOP LOCAL. INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY.
CREATIVE
Continued from Page 3

Saving the music from its old medium is the top priority. Rip-
ing is a relatively new technique that records music from record albums and copies it into a digital file. With the right equipment, an album complete with cracking inconsistencies can be rerecorded in as little time as it takes to play it.

With the advent of Internet sales, local record stores have been all but run out of business. This leaves many record owners wondering what to do with their old albums. Al Steele, owner of Wyatt Earp Records said, “I’m not really buying records these days, I usually tell people to try eBay.”

Selling records forces the owner into one of two different options. Large collections are often sold as one bulk item, which lowers the overall value considerably, but offers the owner a lump sum to go with a newly cleared space. The alternative is to price each record individually, and depending on the size and desirable of the collection, it can be very time consuming.

To get the most money for a record, it is common practice to grade its condition, using either an online guide, or even better, having a trained professional appraise it for you. Be warned, however. Unless the album is very valuable, selling records this way is often more trouble than it’s worth. Rare and expensive records attract album fanatics who have their own idea of what a record is worth and they oftentimes disregard any perceived value by that of the seller as being the ill-informed opinion of a novice.

With springtime just around the corner, a neighborhood garage sale is a great opportunity for the backyard haggler to make the best deal for their albums. Swap meets and flea markets are also a good option for those with a lot of records and the time to unload them.

Because the overall price of records is on the decline, many people have started repurposing their albums into decorations, apparel, and even makeshift canvases for their artwork. The old-fashioned tradition of mounting and hanging old record albums has also made a comeback. Designers and artists scoop them up by the dozens, to be cut, bent, melted, and stretched into endless sea of creative possibilities.

With convenient drop zones and donation bins available, donating albums to Goodwill or the Salvation Army may be the most hassle-free approach to getting rid of them. But if you’re looking to do the most good, or to give your records the best chance of ever getting played by someone who will appreciate them, consider donating them to a local aspiring DJ.

“I’m not really buying records these days, I usually tell people to try eBay.”
Al Steele
Owner, Wyatt Earp Records

F.A.R.R.
Continued from Front Page

in the amount of contributions that they received. This has a very large impact upon the success of store. “When donations are down, that means sales are down,” said F.A.R.R. Manager Mickey Wright. “Right now money is tight for us.”

What sets F.A.R.R. apart from other resale shops? Wright likes to make the point that the staff is made up entirely of volunteers. “We have nobody on payroll,” she says. Without employees to pay, costs of operation are reduced to the bills that need paying to keep the store running.

Once the bills for keeping the organization running are taken care of, all of the money left over then finds its way back into the community. Wright conducts interviews to find people who need financial assistance. Electric bills, medical bills and rent are just a few examples of what they use their funds to help people with.

These benefits of F.A.R.R. are not without some drawbacks, though. F.A.R.R. is not open every day, and at times keeps shorter hours than similar shops. While they will make pickups for large items, being staffed by volunteers makes this difficult to do consistently. While this can pose quite a challenge, Wright manages to keep a sense of humor about it. “Our family and friends and neighbors won’t even answer their phones anymore when they see it’s us,” she joked. “They know what we want.”

The donations F.A.R.R. receives come in nearly every shape and size. “We accept household items, furniture, toys, sporting equipment, lawn mowers,” Wright said. “Knick knacks go over very well.” Holiday items and tools also tend to be items that customers pick up quickly. Not all donations are created equal though. Wright cites big console televisions and stereos, computer equipment, and exercise equipment as items that garner little interest.

Clothing items, on the other hand, are easily the most popular item in the store. Wright believes that those who can benefit greatly from F.A.R.R. are parents and children, as clothes of all sizes make up the majority of their donations.

Even though the thrift store has been around for some time and receives new donations daily, many people are visiting for the first time. “There are a lot of people who still don’t know that F.A.R.R. exists,” Wright said. “They come in and say ‘Well I saw your sign out front but really didn’t realize what you were.’”

When asked how she would feel if the time came when F.A.R.R. may not be able to stay open, Wright said, “It would be sad if the store closed. We really do help a lot of people.”

HOLLY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FEBRUARY 15, 2012
REGULAR MEETING SYNOPSIS

Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Supervisor Lambert, Clerk Winchester, Treasurer Freeman, Trustee Leslie and Trustee Ruth.

Approved: Consent Agenda As Amended.

Present: Daughter of the American Revolution.

No Action: Proposed Grant for Oakhill Cemetery.

Approved: Playful City USA Sign Funding Request.

Approved: Recycling Program.

No Action: Township Properties Overview.


Approved: Assessing Resolution 2012-03.


Approved: Postage Meter Lease Agreement.

Approved: Economic Development Task Force.


Karim S. Winchester, CMC
Holly Township Clerk

Jesse Lambert
Holly Township Supervisor

TRI-COUNTY TIMES
SUBMITTED PHOTO
Artist Paul Villinski, of New York, sacrificed his own private collection of records to create Vinyl Butterflies.

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Record album facts

- **German record company** Odeon pioneered the “album” in 1909 when it released the “Nutcracker Suite” by Tchaikovsky.
- **Beginning in the 1920s**, bound collections of empty sleeves, similar to a photograph album, were sold as “record albums” that customers could use to store their records.
- In 1938, Alex Steinweiss from Columbia Records was credited with inventing the concept of album covers and cover art, replacing plain covers, which were previously used.
- **By far the Beatles** have the most desirable records in the rock genre. A record by them when they were still called the Quarrymen sold recently for £150,000 or about $237,465.
- The first double album was Benny Goodman’s Live at Carnegie Hall, released by Columbia Records in 1950.

**Vinyl Records**

Continued from Page 3

Flint, and posting on Facebook about music frequently. An interesting phenomenon he has witnessed are vinyl listening parties that area teenagers have set up. They will gather friends around their parents’ records, and record collections, for a listen. “It’s become kind of a cult thing, now,” he said. He calls these young fans, “vinyl hounds.”

What Absher, and a lot of vinyl fans think, is that the medium offers a warmer sound than a digital format. This is in part because when songs were recorded to tape in the ‘80s and converted to digital, the music was not remastered. The original recordings were done for vinyl, and simply recorded to CDs without changing the sound to fit that medium. As a result, the sound suffered. “Motown CDs sounded terrible,” he said. Absher said that is where remastering came from. Albums recorded for vinyl were remastered to sound better digitally.

Absher still has half a dozen records, and doesn’t even own a turntable — but this trend may force him to buy one. He has friends in bands that are only releasing their music on vinyl. “I have been yearning for vinyl,” he said.

One band that has released vinyl is Sisters of Your Sunshine Vapor, from Detroit. Bass player Eric Oppitz said their dark, psychedelic sound is perfect for the vinyl format. They sell CDs and downloads and have a strong following in Europe. Oppitz is also a graphic designer, and screen prints the colorful and striking 12-inch covers with his band. He describes the record itself as “Sunny D” colored. The imperfect pressing process yields small differences in each individual piece.

They printed records because they wanted to hear their music the same way they heard their favorite bands growing up. “Our influences were all pressed on vinyl,” he said.

His band also wanted to have a solid, collectible and tangible item to sell. They’ve sold nearly all of their first run of records of their new album, “Spectra Spirit” since November and plan to order another set.

Ron Samek is owner of three Jellybeanz used music and collectibles stores with locations in Flint, Owosso, and Grand Blanc Township. He has been in business for 35 years, and has seen the gamut of different media from vinyl, to CDs and now, back to vinyl. “People want them, there is a big retro movement on,” he said.

Samek worked in his Owosso location on Monday. This store discontinued selling records a few years ago, but because of the demand, he is bringing it back, and is even going to sell turntables.

As a business owner, he probably has upwards of 1 million vinyl record collections within his three stores and warehouse. Vinyl has become a hot item, again, and he’s a little surprised. “It’s good for business, it is a cool situation,” he said. “They have something tangible to hold onto.”

When Samek got his first CD, he recalls saying, “this thing is no fun.” It lacked the space for artwork that the 12-inch records have. He guesses he sells about 5,000 records per month, online and in the store. As for the future of vinyl, Samek expects his sales to only increase, and Absher doesn’t see records going anywhere. “I see CDs going away before vinyl,” he said.

**Summary**

Vinyl records are increasing in sales, driven by younger music fans who grew up in the digital era. Record shops are experiencing increased sales, and musicians are also taking advantage of the trend.

**COMMUNITY EXPO**

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**Strong start for pond hockey event**

Organizer, players pleased with tourney’s inaugural season

By David Troppens
droppens@tctimes.com; 810-433-6789

Lake Fenton — Sean Lapham was sorer Monday.

It was a good sore.

After the cancellation he had worries that his Lake Fenton Winter Classic Pond Hockey tournament may not happen a second time just hours before the event was about to start.

“It was Saturday at 5:30 in the morning, I woke up really scared and worried about the ice conditions,” Lapham said. “I was worried, wondering what we were going to do if we did not play.”

But Lapham got his own little miracle. Despite other bodies of water suffering from thin or disappearing ice, his pond, located behind The Fireplace Bar and Grill, was in perfect condition.

Thirty-four seven-player pond hockey teams competed at Saturday and Sunday’s Lake Fenton Winter Classic Pond Hockey tournament.

“We went out to measure the ice and we had five inches all over,” Lapham said. “We needed four inches to be safe, and we made the perfect condition.”

**Sixth-ranked Bronchos given seventh seed for team wrestling state meet**

By David Troppens
droppens@tctimes.com; 810-433-6789

Lake Fenton — For most of the prep wrestling season, the Holly Bronchos have been ranked sixth in the state.

In fact, the last time Holly wasn’t ranked sixth was in the preseason polls. Since matches have taken place, the Bronchos have been rated sixth.

Yet, when MHSAA Division 2 Team State Wrestling pairings came out recently, the Bronchos were posted in the seventh seed, below sixth-seeded Stevensville Lakeshore, a program the Bronchos have been rated higher than since Christmas.

And where that ranking changes things the most is when the Division 2 team meet begins on Friday at 7:45 p.m. in the quarterfinals. Instead of facing third-seeded Allegan, the Bronchos now must face Lowell, a squad ranked third in the state regardless of division.

In short, the Bronchos first-round match at Battle Creek’s Kellogg Arena has gotten much tougher.

“We are not happy with our draw with Lowell,” Holly coach Don Pluta said. “We are not sure why we got the seventh seed instead of the sixth, but we have to be prepared for the state tournament.”

Holly and Linden are hosting district tournaments next week.
Holly, Linden hosting girls basketball districts next week

By David Troppens
droppens@tctimes.com; 810-433-6789

Holly varsity wrestling team not only has its squad going to Battle Creek on Friday for the Team State Wrestling Meet. The squad also has five wrestlers headed to the Palace of Auburn Hills for the MHSAA’s Individual State Wrestling Meet. The Bronchos had five of nine wrestlers make it out of its Division 3 regional in Tecumseh. Two came out regional champions.

Shawn Scott (215) remained undefeated for the season by winning his title by default. Before the final, he earned a pinfall win in 28 seconds, and a technical fall victory in 4:53.

Scott (47-0) placed second a year ago at 171 and placed fourth his sophomore season. The only opponent he has lost to over the last two years, Greenville’s Jordan Thomas, isn’t in his weight class.

Meanwhile, the Bronchos’ only other previous state champion, Anthony Gonzales (130), also won a regional championship. Now a junior, Gonzales defeated Warren Lincoln’s Bryan Jones for the third time in two weeks. Gonzales won in the finals 3-0. Before that match, Gonzales (38-2) won matches by a 13-1 major decision and by technical fall in 2:48.

See HOLLY on 15

Holly wrestling qualifies five for individual state tournament

By David Troppens
droppens@tctimes.com; 810-433-6789

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See HOLLY on 15

POND
Continued from Page 13
decision to go play.

“It’s sore today, but I’m doing good.”

And from all reports, fun was had by all 34-7-2-2-2 player teams that competed in the four divisions. And the ice? It remained perfect for both Saturday and Sunday’s action.

“We were really questioning it with the weather,” hockey player and Fenton resident Ed Firmanczyk said. “We just didn’t think it was going to come off, but we came out here on Friday after work. They were working on the rinks out here and skating around. I called my teammates and told them, ‘It’s on.’

“And it’s great. It’s truly surprising with the weather. You couldn’t ask for better weather. It’s not too cold, not too hot.”

“It’s been great,” Highland player Jason Chaldecott said. “First and foremost, it’s amazing the lake is even frozen. We had a great time. It’s definitely a different game than hockey for sure.”

The games looked like traditional hockey but for a few changes. First off, teams had only four on the ice at a time and seven players on a side. The rinks are about one-third the size of a regular rink, and were bordered by 2-by-4s that helped keep the puck in play. The goals were only about 4 inches high, enough space to get a puck into the slot for a goal. And games were intense. There was only a five-minute break in between 20-minute periods. Action is non-stop. Even after a goal, play resumes immediately.

Scores got pretty high, with 30 goals being scored by a side not being all that uncommon.

“This is great. It gets back to the root of the sport,” Firmanczyk said. “It’s not all about winning. It’s just about getting out here with friends and having a little bit of friendly competition.”

Winners were named in each division. And one of the winners was Lapham’s team, which included his two brothers.

“It was the first time I was able to play game at 6 p.m., while Fenton plays the winner of the Clarkson-Holly contest. The finals will be at 7 p.m. on March 2.

In Class B action, Linden is hosting a district with two teams that have a reasonable shot at earning a title. The tournament host Eagles (9-9) open on Monday with a 7 p.m. contest against Fowlerville (2-16). Linden will be the favorites to win that contest.

However, the team that might be considered the favorites faced them at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Stockbridge (11-7). Lake Fenton (13-5) opens on Wednesday at 6 p.m. against South Lyon East (8-9). The winner of the two semifinal contests play in the district championship contest on March 2 at 7 p.m.
**HOLLY**

Continued from Page 14

Gonzales won his title at 112 pounds his freshman year. He placed fifth at 119 last year. In his three seasons at Holly, he owns a 135-10 record.

The final Holly regional champion was Mason Cleaver (125). Cleaver won his first two matches by technical fall and by a 14-1 major decision. Then, in the finals he earned a technical fall against New Boston Huron’s Joe Ferguson in 5:26. Cleaver enters the meet with a 47-1 mark. Cleaver will be making his third appearance at the state meet, placing seventh and fifth the other two seasons.

Andrew Scott (145) made it to the finals, but lost to New Boston Huron’s Logan Ritchie by pinfall in 2:39. He won his other two matches by pinfall.

The Bronchos’ only other wrestler headed to the state meet is Tyler Gibson (119). Gibson defeated Warren Lincoln’s Riwan Hormiz 6-3 for a third-place finish.

Gibson is making his second trip to the state meet. He did not place last year.

The state meet begins on March 1. All wrestlers will compete for one match on that day. In order to place in the top eight, a wrestler must win two of his first three matches.

**Fenton & Linden at Regionals**

Two Fenton wrestlers and a Linden grappler are headed to the state meet.

Fenton’s Chase Roney (130) advanced to the finals, but lost to Jackson Northwest’s undefeated wrestler Jake Klingsman. He improved to 32-9 at the tournament.

The Eagles also had a wrestler place second. Jeff Fisher (189) advanced to the championship match before losing to Battle Creek Harper Creek’s Matt Hueckel in the finals. Fisher is now 36-6.

Finally, Fenton’s Preston Wetzol (152) placed fourth.

**BRONCHOS**

Continued from Page 13

deal with it and go from there.”

And that’s what the Bronchos have to do. If they want to advance to the Saturday’s 11:45 a.m. semifinal round, Holly must find a way past Lowell, a team with 12 wrestlers qualified for the individual state tournament. Regardless of opponent though, the Bronchos have proven a lot this season.

With this year’s team state tournament bid, the Bronchos have earned back-to-back state trips for the first time in school history. However, the Bronchos have never won a match at the state meet.

Last year the Bronchos lost to Greenville 37-23 in the quarterfinal round. So that’s what the first goal is on Friday.

“I didn’t think we came prepared,” Holly wrestler Mason Cleaver said. “This year we are a lot stronger. We practice a lot more and we go a lot harder in the room. I think we are more ready to go this year.”

“Last year, going to team states everyone was kind of, ‘Oh, we made it,’” Holly wrestler Anthony Gonzales said. “But this year we know we could make it. We know we have the talent, so we just have to push ourselves a little bit harder.”

Shawn Scott, who is considered one of the favorites to compete for an individual state championship at 215 pounds, thinks this year’s team is different as well.

“I think we have more dedication,” Scott said.

“Last year I don’t think our team was as dedicated as we are now. As far as learning, I think our confidence level is good — we know that we are good. … I think we have a better mindset than we had last year.”

The Bronchos made their first trip to the team state meet in 2005, losing to Utica Ford 39-29 in the quarterfinals. St. Johns enters the tourney as the top seeds, and face Mason during the Division 2 quarterfinals on Friday. The other quarterfinals are Tecumseh against Greenville and Allegan against Stevensville Lakeshore.

The winner of the Holly match will face either Allegan or Lakeshore on Saturday in the 11:45 a.m. semifinal match.

The winner of that match will advance to the Division 2 team state championship match at 4 p.m.
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Virginia Pearl Baxter 1939-2012

Virginia Pearl Baxter was age 72 of Gains, went to be with the Lord on Saturday, February 18, 2012. Funeral Services will be 12 PM Thursday, February 23, 2012 at Fenton United Methodist Church. Surviving are her loving husband, Donald, three sons, Scott, and Gail; and Lois (Rigstad) Quirk. She was predeceased in death by her mother, Mary; and two brothers, Robert and Dave. She is survived by two sisters, Mary and Myrtle J. (Smith) Geiger. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Michael Raymond Quirk 1948-2012

Michael Raymond Quirk was age 63, died Sunday, February 19, 2012. Quirk was born in Detroit on May 10, 1948, the son of George and Lois (Ross) Quirk. He served with the US Army in infantry combat during the Viet Nam War. He lived and worked in many places. Surviving are his wife, Linda; two sisters, Mary and Laurel; 13 nieces and nephews; and a dear friend, Lucy Quirk. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Answer in this Sunday’s edition of the Tri-City Times
Below are some interesting facts about recycling:

- Each person creates about 4.4 pounds of trash per day.
- In the US, 33.4% of solid waste is either recycled or composted, 12.6% is burned in co-combustion facilities and 54% makes its way into landfills.
- In 2007 99% of local lead acid batteries were recycled, 44% of yard trimmings are recycled and 35% of metals were recycled.
- The recycling of 2007 saved the energy equivalent to 185 gallons of gasoline.
- Approximately 8,600 curbide recycling programs exist in the United States.
- There are 1,510 community composting programs.
- Disposal of waste to landfills has decreased from 89% in 1960 to 5%. 
- Recycling 1 ton of aluminum saves energy equivalent to 1,665 gallons of gasoline.
Beyond the classroom

Adults and kids benefit from enrichment courses

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

Whether you’re a student brushing up on sports skills before the big season or an adult looking to learn something new, community education programs in the tri-county area create many opportunities.

Do you want to learn the sport of fencing? It is one of the more unique offerings of the sports/fitness programs provided by Southern Lakes Parks & Recreation, which serves residents of the city of Fenton, Fenton Township and Linden and Fenton, Lake Fenton and Linden school districts.

Would you like to learn how to learn special cooking techniques from a local baker, like Dee Burch of Sweet D’s in Linden? Burch will be offering a “Cookie with Mixes” class in March, through Linden Community Area Schools Community Ed program.

Going “beyond the classroom,” these enrichment classes offer a new element of learning for both young people and adults. You’re never too old to stop learning, and you might find something new that you can turn into a hobby or a career.

“Our programming is similar to many community education programs, but it is funded by a millage in each of the townships,” Linden Community Area Schools Community Ed Director Darla Thomas said.

By Sally Rummel
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While the job market in the U.S. is still sluggish, with unemployment hovering around 8.3 percent, there are pockets of good news.

Here’s where the most opportunities are now, according to CNN Money Market.

1. Information technology. A new survey by tech job site Dice.com shows that about 65 percent of hiring managers said they hope to add tech staff in the first half of 2012. More than 27 percent said they want to expand their IT headcount by more than 20 percent.

Openings for software developers who specialize in applications will rise by more than one-third by 2018, said Peter Bock, jobs for the 21st Century, a new book by job market analyst Laurence Shatkin. The Bureau of Labor Statistics says that developers of systems software, for instance, earn an average of $94,180 per year.

2. Health care professionals. Partly due to the aging of the U.S. population, health care has been hot for a while now, and the trend shows no sign of slowing. Shatkin’s research says the U.S. will need 130,900 more registered nurses every year (average salary: $64,690) well into the next decade, along with 7,860 new physical therapists per year (average salary: $76,310). Demand for dental hygienists is up too, with a projected 36.1 percent growth in job openings between now and 2018 (average pay: $68,250).

3. Healthcare management and support staff, including general management, finance, marketing, human resources, etc.

4. Engineers. A whopping 88 percent of employers in a new poll by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) bemoaned the difficulty of finding enough engineers to hire. Civil engineers are in demand, too: Shatkin’s analysis of BLS data shows a 24.3 percent spike ahead in jobs for people who design roads, bridges, and other infrastructure projects (average annual pay: $77,560).

5. Industrial skills. More than two-thirds of employers in the SHRM survey pointed to a shortage of qualified new hires to replace people retiring from the skilled trades: electricians, carpenters, welders. There’s also an increase in industrial hiring in logistics, supply-chain management, and plant management.

6. Life sciences and biotech. Medical innovators ranging in size from huge pharmaceutical companies down to biotech startups are hiring: a 40 percent jump in job openings for research scientists is predicted between now and 2018 (average salary: $76,700). As with health care companies in general, these employers will also need managers and support staff.

7. Salespeople. Selling is almost a recession-proof career, because they are the ones who bring in the money for companies. Almost three-quarters of employers in the SHRM survey said they can’t get enough salespeople now.

8. Accounting and finance. Demand for accountants and finance professionals, particularly forensic accountants and compliance specialists, has been climbing steadily for the past several years. U.S. colleges are still not turning out enough grads in these fields to fill the available openings. The SHRM survey found that more than half of employers would hire more accountants and finance experts if they could find them.

9. Discount retailers. Big national discount store companies have flourished during this recession, and most of them are hiring managers as well as in-store personnel.

10. Private equity firms. Recruiters report that private equity firms are actively seeking management talent for their portfolio companies across all industries and all functional areas.
Wednesday, February 22, 2012

Virtual Classrooms bring education to the student

By Sally Rummel
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Education has begun to build a name for itself outside of the brick and mortar of the traditional school building. Today’s students have many technological options, from taking online classes through Michigan Virtual University’s menu of 150 different courses, to the GenNET experience offered by the Genesee Intermediate School District. Wherever there’s a computer, students can take classes and explore careers online from school or home.

High school and middle school students throughout Michigan have the opportunity to take more than two online courses at a time, including a full-time online schedule, through the Genesee County Seat Time Waiver (STW) Program. Courses must be scheduled through the Genesee Network for Educational Telecommunications (GenNET) online portal.

GenNET online courses allow for scheduling flexibility, allowing students to continue their studies outside the traditional classroom environment.

Wayne Wright, superintendent of Lake Fenton Community Schools, appreciates the flexibility and enrichment opportunities that come from the GenNET program. “If we have enough interested students in our district to join with other districts to offer, for example, a Calculus V program online, then it can be done through GenNET,” said Wright. “Our students can also take advantage of specialized classes like sign language or Japanese.”

Students at Fenton Area Public Schools may have the option of taking online courses on a limited basis through MVU’s Michigan Virtual School. “A handful of our students are taking classes online, when they’re having trouble fitting needed classes into their schedule,” said Doug Busch, executive director of finance and personnel.

MVU’s online courses feature streaming audio and video, computer animations, discussion boards and more. Available for year-round learning, there are courses for middle school and high school students.

When taking online courses, Busch emphasizes that it’s important that a school counselor speak with a student ahead of enrolling in the program, so that it can be determined that the student’s learning style will work with an online format. “Students have to be self-directed and self-motivated to successfully learn in an online setting,” said Busch.

Linden Community Schools use a variety of non-traditional approaches to maximize the educational experience for all students. In the Linden Advancement Academy, kids who need to catch up on credits while honing their work-related skills through the school’s co-op program take on-site online courses aided by two certified teachers.

“Those kids like having a separate environment for learning, but still need the structure and social time. We’ve got 24 students and a waiting list for this program,” said Linden Superintendent Ed Koledo.

Linden schools also offer after-school opportunities to make-up work in a virtual classroom environment through Epic Learning. Interactive lessons and video professor lectures provides students with access to professors and learning opportunities from all over the world.

“It opens up hundreds of different course opportunities for our students,” said Koledo.

TECHNOLOGY... AT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS’ FINGERTIPS

“‘At Patterson Elementary School, we use technology in a variety of ways to communicate with parents. All teachers have highly functional Internet-based phones in their classrooms with conference calling, savings and other functions. Teachers also have an individual website and e-mail address where they can post classroom updates, routines, resources and even video mini-lessons. Websites have a private and confidential elements for parents who choose to register with us. Our school also uses a calling system where we can call all families, just a class, just a grade level, just staff or any number of ways, creating groups for communication. I am able to contact parents within minutes with a phone and Internet in case of a school closing or other immediate need to inform them. As principal, we have our entire community at our fingertips on iPhones or iPads, allowing us constant contact. Soon, parents will be able to view progress at the elementary level along with electronic report cards, online bill paying for lunch, for example, and see a student’s testing history. We post our weekly newsletter on our website along with our calendar and other important documents and resources.’”

Dennis Inhulsen
Principal
Holly’s Patterson Elementary School

Where there’s a computer, there’s an opportunity for learning

Patterson Elementary School teacher Peggy Hursley assists Drew Cutchev, 11, with a citation assignment on Tuesday. These sixth-grade students used an online converter to change information from a publication into APA format.

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TRADITIONAL TEXTBOOKS

Are they fading out of the classroom?

By Sally Rummel
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With the popularity of e-books on tablets like the iPad, Kindle and Nook, will traditional textbooks become a thing of the past?

Apple Inc. recently announced the company will be joining Amazon and Barnes & Noble as a major player in the electronic textbook business. Apple made deals with textbook companies to sell electronic copies of books for grades K-12 for $14.99 or less.

Since many college students spend hundreds of dollars each quarter on textbooks alone, e-books are a cheaper alternative to hard copy versions. Because of some of the current limitations of the amount of data that can be downloaded to a tablet, e-books have yet to become mainstream on most college campuses.

At the University of Michigan Flint, bookseller giant Barnes & Noble is contracted to operate their student bookstore. A representative from the company stated that digital textbooks are catching on, as more and more students embrace the technology, but what’s even more popular right now is textbook rental. Rental saves the student about 40 to 50 percent of the normal cost of buying textbooks.

According to Undergraduate Admissions and First Year Experience predictions, the average student will spend $1,317 on textbooks every year. The Barnes & Noble spokesperson said that students use whatever means is the cheapest way to get textbooks, and that’s why rentals have become so popular. “The digital textbook market is a very small part of what we do right now,” she said. “It’s definitely moving that way, though. Overall, digital has a few more years before it will totally catch on.”

At the high school level, e-textbooks are likely in the future, but because not all students have access to electronic media, the use of e-textbooks is not yet mainstream. “I do believe that e-textbooks will be coming in the future, at least as an option to use in the classroom,” said Wayne Wright, superintendent of Lake Fenton Community Schools.

“We’re approaching it cautiously as we evaluate how well they will work in the future for our students,” said Doug Busch, executive director of finance and personnel for Fenton Area Public Schools. “We need to know what the pricing structure will be, whether the costs of the e-books will include one-time use or licensing for ownership of the downloaded copy. We also need to know that all students would have access to the technology.”

While these decisions may be a few years away, what’s happening now is a hybrid use of traditional textbooks with an online website component. “There is a ‘middle ground’ in textbook technology, and that’s what we’re using right now,” said Busch. “Most textbooks that we’re purchasing now have a website and online capabilities that provide updates for new information and the ability for students to log in and use links for additional study.”

One example are U.S. government textbooks that obviously don’t have information about the 2012 Presidential Election, but publisher resources will provide an updated chapter after it takes place, according to Busch.

Cheryl Thomas, curriculum director at Linden Community Schools and principal at Central Elementary School, said that most new books published since 2006 are available online, and that students who have the technology do use it. “Students can log on to the textbook while they are studying at home,” said Thomas. “This is definitely more popular at the secondary level.”

Some of the advantages of the e-textbooks, or e-books in general, is the convenience of being able to easily carry a tablet, rather than lugging all the heavy textbooks around. It can easily access chapters and searches for words, concepts, etc. Some of the disadvantages include the current inability of most tablets to receive the huge amount of downloaded copy that some textbooks might require. Some disciplines of study might work better with digital than others, i.e., literature rather than accounting.

CLASSROOM

Continued from Page 21

these areas,” said Robin Baker, facility scheduler for Southern Lakes.

Adults who take classes through Southern Lakes can learn new skills on the guitar, at the piano or can even take acting classes or meditation. Fitness programs like Zumba and Pilates are very popular, as are the computer classes that teach adults new skills.

There’s even a table tennis class for those who like to compete in a fun, indoor sport.

Much of Southern Lake’s programming is geared toward youth, who can participate in recreational or competitive sports to hone their skills for an upcoming season. Enrichment courses like guitar and drama are also open for area young people.

Classes run continually, either as a six-week series or by the season. Southern Lakes publishes and distributes three brochures per year — in the fall, winter and spring/summer.

The Fenton Area Public Schools’ Community Education departments offers their own long-standing Community Education program, headed by Debbie Brindle since 1999. “Our most popular classes are our men’s basketball and co-ed volleyball classes,” said Brindle. “This year, Linden’s Community Ed program added several cooking classes, which were especially popular in the fall.”

Carol Schuler of Sweet Variations in Fenton will be demonstrating “A Decadent Chocolate Treat” on Thursday, Feb. 23 at 6:30 p.m. at Linden Middle School. Dee Bunch of Sweet D’s Confections in Linden will demonstrate “Cookies With Mixes” on Thursday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m. Both classes will take place at Linden Middle School, and pre-registration is required by calling (810) 591-0415.

Due to budget considerations, Holly Area Schools had to cut its Community Education programming, but many students and adults participate in activities through Springfield Parks and Recreation.

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Fitness classes are a popular choice of community education programs.

“Our most popular classes are our men’s basketball and co-ed volleyball classes. This year, Linden’s Community Ed program added several cooking classes, which were especially popular in the fall.”

Debbie Brindle
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