

Early morning crash claims Holly man's life

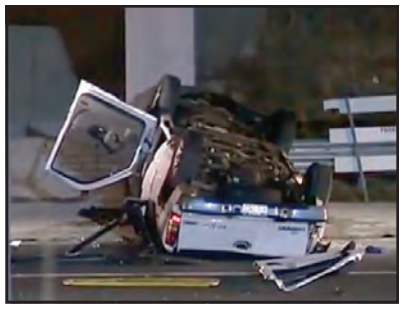
► Driver goes around construction barrels, truck flips and crashes on roadway below

By Yvonne Stegall
ystegall@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

Cody Petzold, 21, of Holly was killed in a crash during the early morning hours of Friday, Dec. 26 in Oakland County. At approximately 2:40 a.m., troopers from the Michigan State Police-Metro Post responded to eastbound 12 Mile Road near I-75 for

a single car crash in Madison Heights. According to the state police, it appears that the driver of a 2005 GMC Sierra pickup truck, identified as Petzold, drove around Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) construction **See CRASH on 6A**

CLICKON DETROIT.COM
Cody Petzold, 21, of Holly, was killed early Friday morning in Oakland County. His pickup truck fell from an I-75 entrance ramp to the roadway below.





SPECIAL YEAR-IN-REVIEW COVERAGE
throughout this edition

Weekend Times

SUNDAY EDITION

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2012 - 2013 - 2014 **NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR**

\$1.00

2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

By Times Editorial Staff
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

The year 2014 is winding down. Here are some of the top news stories of the year in the tri-county area.

CITY OF FENTON

The city's most visible project took form all in 2014, through a nasty winter, and \$800,000 in budget shortfalls.

The four-story, 74,000-square-foot Cornerstone building was essentially built between February and December, with three of the four, first-floor businesses opening early this month. Sawyer Jewelers will be opening Jan. 15. The 20 or so upper floor residential tenants should be able to move in this January. Planning is already underway for a second site.

In June, the city of Fenton joined other Michigan cities like Linden, East Lansing and Ferndale in adopting a non-discrimination ordinance, which now includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people (LGBT). It's an amendment to the existing ordinance, which sets up a grievance process to be handled by the city manager.

See YEAR IN REVIEW on 10A



TRI-COUNTY AREA

NEW BUSINESSES OPEN

By Times Editorial Staff
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City of Fenton

Many changes, both large and small, have occurred in Fenton this past year, with several new businesses opening their doors to be met with a positive response.

"We've had a number of new businesses come to town and they all seem to be doing pretty well," said Fenton City Manager Lynn Markland. "All of these businesses are bringing more people into the community and creating more opportunities for commerce."

Starting in 2014, residents on the south end of Fenton no longer had to drive across town to get

See BUSINESSES on 22A

"We've had a number of new businesses come to town and they all seem to be doing pretty well."

Lynn Markland
Fenton city manager

Criminal cases (and faces) of 2014

► The most newsworthy court cases and criminals

By Sharon Stone
ssstone@tctimes.com

Although the police pages kept the area abreast of larcenies from autos, malicious destruction of property complaints, shoplifting and drunk driving arrests, some of the noteworthy offenses went on to be decided in the

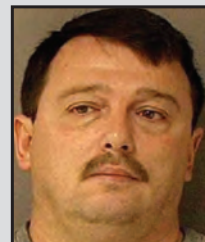
courts, at the district, circuit and federal levels.

Looking back at all of 2014 in the tri-county area, these are the individuals who area police arrested, charged and took to court.

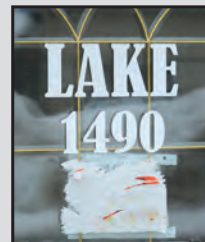
See CRIMINAL on 14A



Chad Cole
producing child pornography



Ronnie Duke
mortgage fraud
attempted jail break



Lake Spa
prostitution and
human trafficking



Eric Gill
videotaping
young children

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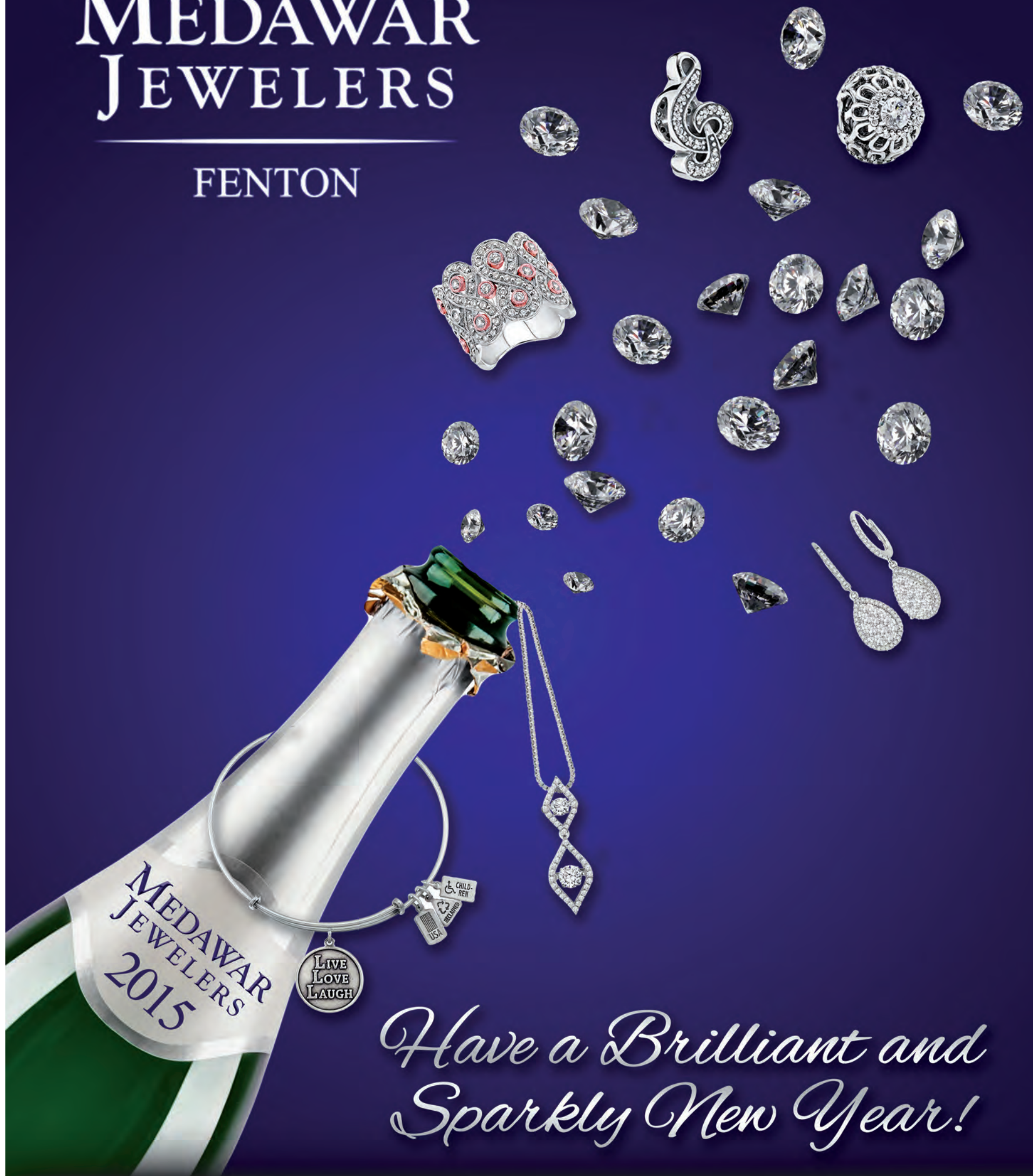
"America is no longer a Christian nation? 'Heaven Is For Real' grossed over \$91 million in theaters. 'God's Not Dead' grossed over \$60 million. 'Son of God,' grossed almost \$60 million. Hollywood may be dying, but Christianity is alive and well."

"As a local merchant my family would like to thank area shoppers for our best year ever. A special thanks to the Times staff for funding and promoting the Shop Local agenda that benefits every single resident. Fenton truly is a great place to live, work and play."

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COMMENT OF THE WEEK

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Sad farewells

Tri-county area remembers loved ones who died in 2014

By Sharon Stone

sstone@tctimes.com; 810-433-6786

As 2014 comes to a close, many families will look back on the year with sorrow as they remember loved ones who have died. Although there were numerous deaths in the area, here are just some of the individuals who made the news pages of the Times with their passing.

Morton "Bud" Stebbins, 79, died Jan. 20 from lung cancer. He will be



Bud Stebbins

remembered for being a Michigan Amateur Softball Association Hall of Famer and for bringing softball to Flint in 1971. He started Grand Blanc Printing in 1968.

Robert Bosch, 31, of Gaines and **Theodore (Ted) Pudvay**, 67, of Argentine Township were killed Saturday, Feb. 15 when the pickup truck they were traveling in was struck by a CN train in Argentine Township.

See **FAREWELLS** on 11A



Robert Bosch



Ted Pudvay



FILE PHOTO



FILE PHOTO



HISTORY.COM

(Left) Harold Krueger isn't sure if feeding birds is allowed under local ordinances. "Nobody said anything," said Krueger. "If they wanna put me in jail over that, have at it." (Center) Fenton High School senior Justin Hang, 18, walks down the red carpet at the Genesys Athletic Club with prom date Allie DeBerry. The Disney star had responded to Hang's "promposal," leading to a fair amount of media coverage. (Right) Dave and Don Wolf pose with their big rig, as part of their truck hunting roles on the History Channel's "Big Rig Bounty Hunters."

The lighter side of the news in 2014

INTERESTING STORIES ABOUT INTERESTING PEOPLE IN OUR AREA

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

Life is happening all around us in the tri-county area, with people making news through work, leisure and heart-warming stories. Here are a few to remember 2014 by:

- **Big shoes to fill:** Three West Bloomfield police officers escorted the late Patrick O'Rourke's three daughters to their Daddy-Daughter Dance at AGS Middle School, a year and a half after O'Rourke was shot in the line of duty. (Story published Feb. 8)
- **Crackers for quackers:** Rose Township's Harold Krueger celebrated his 82nd birthday last March the way he did

every day — by feeding the ducks by the Shiawassee River near Fenton city hall. (Story published March 8)

- **Disney Dream Date says 'Yes!'** to Promposal making national news for Justin Hang, 18, a senior at Fenton High School. He created a YouTube video inviting Disney Channel star Allie DeBerry, 19, to the prom and she accompanied him on May 3 (Original story published April 6)
- **The "gift of life"** connects two best friends forever: Tyrone Township resident Rosie Quinn donated a kidney to her friend Sheila Richter, who was on

dialysis with failing kidneys. Both were nurses together more than 30 years ago, coincidentally working in a dialysis unit. (Story published April 6)

- **TV twin truckers:** Bearded twin brothers Dave and Dan Wolf, Fenton High School graduates in 1976, debuted on History Channel's "Big Rig Bounty Hunters" on May 22. (Story published on May 14)
- **Fenton couple brings** adopted daughter home from Guatemala after eight-year struggle. James and Cinda Rachor welcome home daughter Amelia, 8, at Bishop Airport. (Story published June 4)



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TRI-COUNTY TIMES



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The art of giving gifts

Have you ever received a Christmas or birthday gift you didn't want? Mittens for an adult? A subscription to Foot Odor magazine? One of those ridiculous Russian winter hats that look like a beaver is napping atop your head? Yeah, me too.

But no matter what you were actually thinking, you summon your obligatory 'why didn't I ever think of buying this for myself' look and thank the misguided giver profusely while simultaneously plotting to arrange the disappearance of the gift at the first opportunity.

Don't we all envy that rare individual who consistently gives us a gift we are genuinely delighted to receive. How do

they do that? Here's how:

Note: These tips are purposely provided post-Christmas so as not to provide you with any more holiday angst than you are already experiencing.

Here are four timeless gift-giving tips for all occasions: 1) As Americans most of us can, within reason, buy pretty much anything we want. So, before buying a gift, ask yourself: 'Why don't they already have it?' There are three possibilities. One: They've never thought of it. Two: They don't

think it's worth the cost. Or three: They just don't want it. The primary reason a gift recipient doesn't already own this particular item is (drum roll please): They don't actually want it.



2) Some people are too damn picky. I can't buy gifts for my wife because she is extremely particular. Thankfully, she's perfectly happy for me to give her the money to go buy what she wants for herself. She then gives it to me to wrap, and has the good grace to act surprised when she opens it. If you are not already married, put this on your checklist of spousal must-haves before proposing.

3) The collector gift. Most people are collectors of something, a weakness many gift-givers prey upon. Lacking the nuances of the collector's collection criteria, they nonetheless feel compelled to contribute to the collector's collection. IMPORTANT NOTE: The basic premise of collecting is that the collector collects it. Never give a collector a collected object that the collector hasn't specifically requested to be added to the collector's collection.

4) It's the thought that counts. This

myth (much like 'mute point' and 'should of') needs to be addressed. The thought does not count. The gift counts. It takes a lot of thought to give a good gift. It takes little thought to give a terrible gift. Ergo, rather than the thought being the thing that counts, it's the lack of thought that winds up counting. By the way, no cheating by asking people what they want to be given. If you have to ask, just give them the cash and let them buy it. The real challenge is to not ask and still get it right.

OK, sarcasm and acerbic comments aside, how do you give good gifts? It's simple, do your homework. It's that simple. There is no formula because every relationship and every person is different.

This invaluable — and timeless — gift-giving advice is my gift to you.

You are welcome.

Opinions offered in If I Were King are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Tri-County Times or its staff. Email the King at king@tctimes.com. Some content adapted from the internet.

Hot lines

Submit at: tctimes.com, call 810-629-9221 or text to 810-771-8398

All submissions, if approved for publication, must be 50 words or less and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Tri-County Times. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, length and liability.

I WOULD LIKE to thank the Fenton Kiwanis and the students of Fenton schools and the parents, businesses and the members of the Fenton community that donated to the Christmas boxes. My box was really wonderful and it's going to help me out for a while now. And a beautiful turkey. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I THINK MICHIGAN is doing it all wrong! Why raise the gas tax to repair roads? Why don't they just raise the sales tax to repair the roads? Oklahoma does it all the time and everyone pays into it. The gas prices in Michigan are ridiculous in the first place.

IT'S PURE 'COMMIECRAT,' when a government forces you to buy something you either don't want or don't need. I make my decisions. A government should not be allowed to tell you how to live your life. Healthcare decisions should rest on consumers not government.

TO THE 'FOOL' calling 'Finding Fine Wine' article 'fool's gold,' that same Bible you're quoting from also tells us Jesus turned water into wine. 'Millions of lives changed or ruined' are those who don't do things in moderation. God gave us free will to make the right choices.

FOX NEWS MOST balanced? Interesting statement as studies show their facts are wrong more than 50 percent of the time.

GOVERNMENT HAS GONE mad. The draconian laws that ruin a person's life if they drive after only a few beers and now they want to keep bars open until 4 a.m.? Why? Money, of course. Obviously, they don't care if they increase the risk of more people driving drunk. Hypocrites.

15,000 GALLONS OF sewage dumped in the Shiawassee River, and I fish Lake Pontchartrain a lot. Now all my perch and crappie fishing will be crappy fishing. I hope they fine someone for that. If I did it, I would get fined.

TEARS OF GREAT joy were brought to my eyes as I watched the Salvation Army bell ringer outside of VG's on Silver Parkway. Each time someone dropped money into the bucket she clapped her mittens together, jumped up and down, and wished them a Merry Christmas. God bless her and the Salvation Army.

IS IT MY imagination or has the price of used vehicles gone bonkers? Most people can't afford a new vehicle because they are \$10,000 to \$15,000 overpriced. Now they are trying to destroy the used car market.

WHY ARE YOU worried about these illegals bringing in diseases? We don't have it under control ourselves. The resurgence of mumps

is because nobody is getting inoculated anymore. Michigan has twice the amount of people not being inoculated as anywhere in the U.S. and Traverse City is six times the amount.

ARE YOU TRYING to tell me that Obama and Obamacare were warned about in the Bible? What are you sniffing?

WHY DO YOU think it's a problem for Jeb Bush to release finances? Maybe he hasn't declared yet, but neither has Hillary Clinton and the right wing has been after her for six to eight years.

ABOUT THE TWO young men who died in police custody while they were trying to be arrested. They resisted arrest. I don't care what color you are, if the police officer says you are under arrest you should go with him and fight it in court, not out in the street. If you fight, it you will get hurt, it's just common sense.

THANKS FOR THE election, now screw you. Soon after this article appeared on the Internet, Citigroup lobbyists wrote a bill that went into law making taxpayers liable for all bank bailouts. Then Congress delayed the Volcker Rule allowing failing banks more time. More time for what? Sticking it to the taxpayer?

I HAVE TO agree with the King. What kind of world would we be living in if no one believed? Could you really imagine a world where no one really believed in anything at all? Think about it. It's God's birthday.

See **HOT LINE** throughout Times

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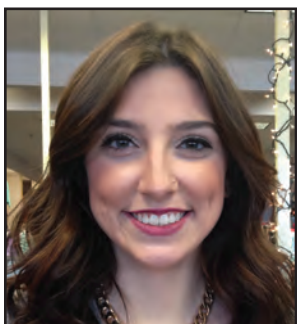


Maryann McConnell
Pre-Planning Specialist

Compiled by Alexei Rose, intern

To you, what's been the most important event in 2014?

streettalk



"Emma Watson did a speech on gender equality. It sparked a revolution."

— Alexis Kelly
Fenton



"My mother and I are adopting a girl from the Ukraine."

— Larissa Nickpon
Fenton



"I got married in September. We were together a long time and it was exciting."

— Jessica Mercer
Argentine Township



"When I went to Cancun for my cousin's wedding."

— Denise Griffin
Fenton



"The potential opening of tourism to Cuba, so my brother-in-law can visit his homeland."

— Laurie Smith
Chase



"Fuel prices in line so far. It helps the economy overall, and if the economy is doing better I am personally doing better."

— David Laboskey, Fenton

Michigan adopts Internet sales tax

►Michigan brick and mortar businesses extremely pleased with 'Fairness' legislation

By Yvonne Stegall

ystegall@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

By law, online shoppers are supposed to voluntarily pay any unassessed taxes from Internet, catalog and telephone-order purchases when they file their state tax returns. When was the last time you did that?

Main Street Fairness is legislation designed to ensure a fair and level field of competition for Michigan's retailers by requiring certain out-of-state online retailers to collect and remit Michigan's sales tax. These retailers have a "physical presence" in Michigan, through subsidiaries, affiliate networks or other persons that have substantial nexus with the state.

According to FAQs from the Michigan Retailers Association, Amazon has a wholly owned subsidiary, Brilliance Audio, located in Grand Haven. Additionally, both Amazon and Overstock use a vast network of affiliates in Michigan to sell products through their online sites.

James Hallan, president and CEO of Michigan Retailers Association (MRA), said in a statement released after the final approval, "We are extremely pleased that lawmakers passed Main Street Fairness legislation, and we look forward to Governor Snyder's signature. On behalf of thousands of Michigan retail businesses and their hundreds of thousands of Michigan workers, MRA thanks lawmakers for stepping up and doing the right thing, the fair thing."

After final approval in the Republican-controlled Legislature last week, 83-27 in the House and 25-13 in the Senate, this bill will take effect in October 2015.

"It enables Michigan retail businesses to compete on a more level playing field with out-of-state merchants selling to Michigan residents," Hallan said. "Remote sellers' such as Amazon will no longer be given an automatic 6 percent price advantage over Michigan businesses. That's fair and it's good public policy."

"Main Street Fairness is good for Michigan's economy, good for our local communities, good for our consumers and good for our retail businesses. It has made no sense for government to give an



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTO

Online retailers like Amazon and Overstock, which have brick-and-mortar buildings in Michigan, will soon be assessed sales taxes, though sales are still occurring online.

advantage, at the expense of companies here in Michigan, to out-of-state businesses that don't invest in this state, don't create Michigan jobs, don't pay local and state taxes, and don't support local communities and organizations."

Approximately \$50 million could be generated from this required tax in a year from Internet retailers that sell to Michigan residents. The state Treasury Department estimates \$445 million in sales and use tax revenue from remote purchases will go uncollected this year, nearly two-thirds of it from e-commerce.

Not everyone is happy about this decision. State representative Joe Graves said, "This is a federal issue, and should have been handled at the federal level."

“This is a federal issue, and should have been handled at the federal level.”

Joe Graves

State Representative (R-51st District)

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ASK THE MECHANIC

Chris Wilkinson,
Certified Mechanic

Q: I am looking at a 2001 Ford E-150 Wheelchair lift van listed on ebay that is in Holly. The van has 59,000 and has been in 2 accidents and has a rebuild/salvaged title. What are your thoughts about buying a vehicle with a rebuilt/salvage title?

A: Robert, Find out where and how extensive the damage to the vehicle was. Sometimes they give salvage titles to cars that have mostly cosmetic damage, but try to find out as much information as possible, as well as the shop that did the repairs. If this was anything to do with water damage, I would stay away from it for sure. Water damage sometimes takes years to show up and seems to last forever with corrosion, etc. in the wiring and electronics. You should also have the vehicle inspected at a reputable collision or repair shop before you make the purchase just to be safe.

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Road funding tax will go to voters next May

►Sales tax increase of 1 percent at center of \$1.3 billion road repair funds

By Yvonne Stegall

ystegall@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792

The proposed change in gas taxes, mostly in an effort to raise money for better roads in Michigan, bounced back and forth between the Senate and House for weeks. One would write a proposal that the other would shoot down, and vice versa.

Last week, the whole thing went in front of a committee to be hashed out. Now, a proposed sales tax hike, which will help improve Michigan roads and still give money to the schools, will be heading to the voters. The resolution would require voter approval at the May 12, 2015, regular election.

This sales tax hike

“Michigan is on the road to recovery already. I don’t think raising taxes helps that.”

Joe Graves
State Representative
(R-51st District)

would change our current sales tax of 6 percent to 7 percent. It is the centerpiece for a hope of raising \$1.3 billion more for transportation infrastructure and at least \$300 million more for schools. The required two-thirds of members in the Republican-dominated Senate backed the constitutional amendment. The House also approved it.

Lawmakers have also passed a significant increase in the state’s per-gallon gasoline tax, but that will only take effect if voters approve the sales tax hike, with the elimination of the sales tax that drivers pay at the pump.

State Rep. Joe Graves said, “Michigan is on the road to recovery already. I don’t think raising taxes helps that.” Graves said he believes it is likely the voters will vote this down and it will end up back in legislature. He said, “We should have dealt with it instead of sending it to the voters.”

CRASH

Continued from Front Page

barrels barricading the entrance ramp from westbound 12 Mile Road to southbound I-75. After driving around the barrels, the pickup truck drove off the bridge where there was a section of roadway missing. The truck flipped over and landed on its roof on the roadway below.

The entrance ramp to I-75 has been

closed since October due to construction, while part of the overpass is being rebuilt due to an accident that occurred in October. According to MDOT, the construction area is properly marked.

The impact killed Petzold. A male passenger in the vehicle was transported from the scene to a local hospital. His condition is unknown at this time. The crash remains under investigation and it is unknown if alcohol was a factor in the crash.

Troopers from the Michigan State Police were assisted at the scene by Madison Heights Fire and Rescue, and the Madison Heights Police Department.

Here is a recap of the plans for this increased sales tax:

- **Eliminate the sales** and use tax on gasoline and diesel fuel used to operate motor vehicles after Oct. 1, 2015.
- **Increase the maximum** sales and use tax by 1 percent.
- **Dedicate 60 percent** of the first 5 percent of the sales tax and an amount equal to 12.3 percent of the first 5 percent of the use tax to the School Aid Fund. (The sales tax earmark currently applies to the first 4 percent of the tax; the use tax earmark would be new.)
- **Provide for the** School Aid Fund to be used exclusively for aid to school districts, public community colleges, public career and technical education programs, scholarships for students attending either public community colleges or public career and technical education programs, and school employees’ retirement systems, as provided by law. (This effectively removes aid to public universities as an allowable use for the fund.)
- **Dedicate 15 percent** of the first 5 percent of the sales tax to be used for revenue sharing with townships, cities, and villages. (This earmark currently applies to the first 4 percent of the tax.)

Source: legislature.mi.gov.

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HOT LINE CONTINUED

PAY ATTENTION, YOU are a living witness to what happens to a great country when they elect a president that’s a wimp. I don’t know what is going to happen. We’ll probably survive it, but let’s learn from our mistakes.

OUR MAILBOX WAS violated on Taylor Lake Road in Rose Township. Our mail was taken and replaced with a small flyer. Later, we checked and our normal mail was delivered. So we were ripped off. Bah Humbug.

A VEHICLE PULLED into the city park in Linden and released another animal from a live trap. People have been abandoning animals down here for a while. Take it to Adopt-A-Pet, or if it’s a wild animal release it out in the wild. It’s cruel.

DID ERIC GARNER break the law? Yes! Did he deserve to die because of it? No! Did Michael Brown break the law? Yes! Did he deserve to die for it? Maybe. Did Rice break the law? No. Did he deserve to die? No!

FOX IS THE only station that tells the truth and all of the truth. We need to start listening to the truth and do something to fix it. With any luck, the Republicans that were just voted in will help straighten out what the current president has messed up. Pray.

I AM SICK of seeing Al Sharpton on the television. To think this criminal is advising our President is ridiculous.

I HAVE NOT seen all the lights in town, but the Fenton Fire Department has some of the prettiest lights going on their building.

Motorcycle crash in Florida claims Holly teen

Shayne Breen, 18, a 2014 graduate of Holly High School, lost his life on Monday, Dec. 22 following a motorcycle crash in central Florida.

The crash occurred when the motorcycle Breen was driving collided with a vehicle that turned in front of him, according to the Highlands Today newspaper in Florida. A 43-year-old Sebring, Florida woman was ticketed in the crash after police claimed she turned left in front of Breen as he drove south along U.S. 27 near Avon Park, Florida.

Breen was in Florida to attend school to become an auto mechanic. Funeral arrangements were pending at press time.

TWO POLICE OFFICERS were assassinated in their patrol car. The New York Attorney General should prosecute the news media for inciting violence. The evening news is ‘yellow journalism’ taken to new extremes.

A NEW STATE law makes it legal for police to confiscate ‘nuisance’ property without filing charges against the owner, selling that property, and sharing in the proceeds. Criminals have a right to due process, but now property owners do not.

MY NEW YEAR’S wish would be to not see one single Hot line all year regarding turn signals or stop signs. I can’t imagine where you drive. I drive all over Fenton and Linden all the time and see everybody using turn signals and stopping at stop signs.

Courts to decide fate of local vandals

By Sharon Stone

ssstone@tctimes.com; 810-433-6786

Multiple arrests were made recently resulting from a string of unrelated acts of vandalism in the Fenton area.

A 23-year-old Fenton male, a 17-year-old Fenton male, two 16-year-old Fenton males and two 14-year-old Fenton area males are facing charges related to a string of vandalism and thefts that occurred during the summer in Fenton, Fenton Township and Tyrone Township.

Matthew Wright, 23, of Fenton was arraigned on Oct. 20 for malicious destruction of property and breaking and entering a vehicle to steal property. After pleading no contest, he was sentenced to 18 months probation. He was ordered to pay restitution of \$3,143, according to court records.

Thousands of dollars in damages was reported to parked vehicles throughout

the Fenton area. Police received more than a dozen complaints from residents near Ellen Street and as far north as South Long Lake Road.

The guard shack for the condominiums off Glenwood Drive was also vandalized when someone used black spray paint to paint the letters "LTN" on the side of the building. Black spray paint was also spotted on a vehicle parked behind the Galleria shopping mall on North LeRoy Street.

Fenton Police Chief Rick Aro said detectives believe one of the 16-year-old suspects did the graffiti on the guard shack. The juveniles have pending cases in probate court.

Details were not released on the juvenile suspects that Fenton police arrested. Det. Dale Rauch, the Genesee County Sheriff's Department and Michigan State Police-Brighton Post developed information leading to the arrests.

White House-commissioned artist at local book signing



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | TIM JAGIELO

Author Michael Monroe of Brighton signs a copy of his book, "Michigan, Great Lakes State," for Amy Scott, who is accompanied by her 6-year-old daughter, Emma, and 9-year-old son, Jack. The book signing took place at Fenton's Open Book on Dec. 17.

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Area Christmas tree pickup schedule

►Window for discarded tree pick up starts right now

By Tim Jagielo

tjagielo@tctimes.com; 810-433-6795

Along with the tradition of cutting down, taking home and decorating a real Christmas tree comes the tradition of undecorating, possibly having to cut it in half and putting it out to the curb for pick-up.

While Christmas tree fires may be rare, when a tree starts dropping its needles, it is becoming dry, and more of a risk of fire. The National Fire Prevention Association reports that for every 40 fires caused by a Christmas tree, one results in a death, compared to one death per 142 house fires.

Generally the window to get the tree out to the curb and be taken away with the regular trash removal service is three weeks from the day after Christmas, give or take a few days.

Each city or township trash customer is different, so read on for what affects you.

Fenton

The city of Fenton, like most surrounding areas, uses Republic Waste Services. They'll pick up your tree between the dates of Dec. 30, and Jan. 16, 2015 on your regular trash pick-up day.

"They have three weeks to get it out there," said Dan Czarnecki, director of the Fenton Department of Public Works, adding that any trees left after, won't be touched.

If your regular pick-up day is Jan. 15 that is the last day you can get your tree picked up — there won't be one more special day just for trees.

Fenton Township

Fenton Township also uses Republic Waste Services, and pick-up follows the same Dec. 30 to Jan. 16, 2015 window. If you miss that window, the crews will not pick up your tree.

Linden

In the city of Linden, customers can place trees to the curb for the first two pick-up weeks in January — Jan. 3 and Jan. 9, 2015.

Randy Rynbrandt with Republic's customer service said Republic will take trees with trunks 3-inches or larger in diameter. Anything smaller will be picked up with yard waste in April. The tree must also be less than 5-feet tall, so cut the trees in half if it's taller.

Argentine Township

Argentine Township's pick-up times are between Dec. 26 and Jan. 15, 2015 at normal Monday pick-up times, using Emterra Environmental. Bundles should be less than 4 feet long, and weigh less than 50 pounds, tied with brush twine. The limbs can't be more than 2-inches in diameter.

Holly, Rose and Tyrone townships

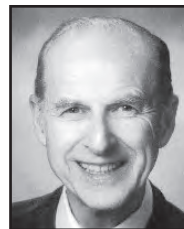
Rose, Tyrone, and Holly Township residents are all responsible for their own trash removal, and each street, neighborhood, or even individual property can be different.

“They have three weeks to get it out there.”

Dan Czarnecki
Fenton DPW Director

Featured columnist

By Roger Campbell



Why give to the undeserving?

Christmas is a season for giving but some refuse to give to those they see as undeserving of their gifts; those who, like the prodigal son, have wasted their money. Why should we give to those who've had their chance and blown it?

Another church once joined with the one where I was the pastor in helping a needy family. The husband and father had just been released from jail where caring men from both churches were eager to help him and his family. Their concerns were shared by both churches and together we supplied food, clothing and lodging for these impoverished ones who assured us that they would soon be able to make it on their own.

As time passed and little progress was made in moving these people to self-sufficiency, I became discouraged; doubting that this man was really trying to find employment. Finally, seeing our efforts as poor investments of our time, effort and money, I voiced my concerns to the pastor of the other church. His response to my small faith has been unforgettable. 'It is better that they fail us than that we fail them,' he replied.

This older and wiser minister had been looking at our giving from a better perspective than mine. He had remembered that we are all unworthy of God's love and yet are the recipients of it. The failure of this floundering family to measure up to our expectations wasn't his primary concern. He just wanted to be sure we

were doing our part.

God gives on the ground of mercy rather than merit. Unlike Him, I had been focusing on the shortcomings of those in need. In spite of our weaknesses and tendencies to failure, God meets us where we are. When poor choices have brought people down, we need to reach out to them, doing what we can to lift them up; especially at Christmas. We're celebrating a birth in a manger; not a mansion.

Shall we look down on people because they don't measure up to our expectations? Shall we Scrooge our way through Christmas, holding tightly to what we have lest it fall into the hands of those we think aren't worthy of our giving?

Not if we're to follow the example of our Lord. In spite of our failures, He keeps forgiving us. And we should be quick to do the same.

In a brief but powerful article titled 'My Eternal Preference,' an anonymous writer sums up the importance of loving the undeserving as follows:

'When we are given our rewards, I would prefer to be found to have erred on the side of grace rather than judgment; to have loved too much rather than too little; to have forgiven the undeserving rather than refused forgiveness to that one who deserved it; to have fed a parasite rather than to have neglected the one who was truly hungry; to have been taken advantage of rather than to have taken undue advantage; to have believed too much rather than too little; having been wrong on the side of too much trust than too much cynicism; to have believed the best and been wrong than to have believed the worst and been right.'

Well said, unnamed one. Your love for others must please the One who loves us all.

Roger Campbell is an author, broadcaster and columnist who was a pastor for 22 years. He can be reached at rcministry@ameritech.net.

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HOT LINE CONTINUED

TWO POLICE OFFICERS assassinated. Who is to blame? Obama, Holder, Sharp-ton — not the general black public.

IN THE PAST, 'yellow journalism' led us into the Spanish American War. In the present, yellow journalism is leading us toward a 'Race War' here at home. Question everything in the news media.

GOD TOLD HIS people to enjoy [wine] at yearly festivals (Deuteronomy 14:26). The

Bible makes a distinction between right and wrong times to consume. So, I will enjoy my Cabernet Sauvignon, while you think of a witty retort.

TO THE PERSON criticizing the AGS concert and flyer saying it needed 'songs about baby Jesus, Christmas tree, Christmas lights' to 'put America first and remember the reason for the season.' The season is about love and good will toward men!

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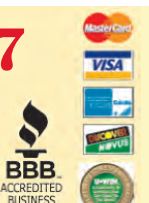
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YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from Front Page

The ordinance covers housing, employment and public services, but it's unlikely the ordinance will be used to bring complaints all that often — cities with long-standing LGBT protections tend to have very few, if any, cases of discrimination on the books. Legitimate cases would lead to mediations, and if not that, a possible civil infraction.

In May, the city of Fenton repealed the prohibition it held on Sunday morning alcohol sales. As Fenton was the remaining hold-out to Sunday morning sales, local shops urged City Council to reconsider, as business was leaving for neighboring communities.

The repeal allowed businesses to purchase permits from the state of Michigan, to sell beer, wine and liquor, whether at a store or restaurant. The repeal took the form of three resolutions — one repealed the prohibition of liquor and mixed drinks to be sold and consumed off premises, the second allowed sales of beer and wine Sunday morning from stores, and the third allowed restaurants to sell alcohol before noon on Sunday.

This set of resolutions essentially reverts Fenton to Michigan law as a default, which allows the sale of alcohol from 7 a.m. Sunday to 2 a.m. Monday. Many local businesses jumped on board, and have seen sales from the extended hours.

This time last year, it was expected the biggest downtown project in 20 years, the Streetscape project, would be mostly complete by now, but administrative delays at the federal government level held the project that will transform streets, sidewalks, lighting and more, until spring 2015.

While city administration had to wrangle with the red tape in 2015, they were able to begin the project with what seemed like a small step — cutting down six trees on Shiawassee Avenue in Dibbleville.

This allowed money that had been obligated for the project to be spent late enough, that the project could begin in the spring. Most of the work will be completed in 2016, which will include new downtown streets, storm sewers, curbs, sidewalks, lighting, trees and street furniture.



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTO

Lead PM Baker Steve Wells of Crust — a bakery in Fenton removes the forms from a tray of cinnamon rolls with PM bakers Bev Raby and Laura White. The downtown Fenton bakery now ships their cinnamon rolls nationally through Williams-Sonoma.

FENTON TOWNSHIP

At the end of 2013, Fenton Township officials were talking about a park that would be located on Thompson Road, near Wiggins Road. The park would be for township residents and students, and is something the township doesn't currently have. The park is still in talks, after the township was turned down for a grant this month. They will be reapplying for the grant, and working on other ways to come up with the funds, in 2015.

In February, the Lake Fenton Polar Plunge raised \$56,000 for the Special Olympics. Dressed in various costumes, 270 men, women and students took the chilly plunge for a good cause.

Phil Smith retired from the Fenton Township Fire Department. He was a 36-year veteran of the fire department. He joined the department in 1978.

In August, it was announced that the 'Mistake on the Lake,' the 12,178 square foot Lake Fenton home that was never occupied after being built in 2007, would be demolished. By Friday, Oct. 24, the

house was leveled. It took the crew one day to tear it down and another day to clean up the rubble.

While many homeowners in the surrounding townships were fighting the ET Rover Pipeline from tearing up their yards, in the next year or two, for most of the summer and fall, Fenton Township found out that they were on the proposed route in early September. Energy Transfer, the company that has proposed the route, will not be applying to the Federal Energy Regulation Committee until mid-January 2015. Fenton Township residents continue to file complaints to keep the pipeline out of the area and out of their yards.

LINDEN

In March, Linden school staff and teachers stood together and shared tears and laughter at the memorial of Linden Physical Education teacher Andrew Kargel, who was killed in a snowmobile accident that month.

That same month, a Hyatt Elementary teacher made headlines on national news sites for serving non-alcoholic beer to students during class. According to Principal Vicki Makaravage, O'Doul's, which has 0.5 percent alcohol content, was used as part of a fifth-grade presentation about the colonial period. Since alcohol was a more common drink than water during that time, the teacher decided a nonalcoholic beverage was appropriate for class.

For many, 2014 was a year of celebrations. Caretel Inns of Linden celebrated its new therapy gym at an open house held at the end of March. City Manager Paul Zelenak celebrated his first year as city manager in April. Linden Mills Days was a successful two-day event. The whole city celebrated the great turnout for Back to the Bricks in August.

In June, work on the mural on Linden City Hall had begun, drawing scrutiny and praise from residents and business owners. Many thought that more effort should have been put into fixing roads, while many just didn't like the art itself. Linden schools art teacher Gemma Amendola and other volunteers created the mural. Amendola explained the meaning behind the images to the paper.

In August, Linden Mayor David Lossing raised \$310 for ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) after being named in an ice bucket challenge.

The year ended with a gasoline release from the Beacon & Bridge gas station, which has affected neighboring business, including Bridge Street Exchange. A new business that was celebrated at the end of last year, Gavin Smith's photography studio, is now empty and up for sale.

HOLLY VILLAGE / HOLLY TOWNSHIP

Holly continues to be a "hot spot" for business, with more than 17 new businesses opening their doors within the village this year. "Holly is booming!" said Main Street Holly DDA Director Andrew Potter.

Holly Village President Ryan Bladzick delivered the first-ever State of the Village address, speaking of the village's accomplishments and vision for the future.

The Village of Holly and Holly Area Schools formed a partnership, which resulted in a move of village administration offices to the former Karl Richter Campus in June.

Fire destroyed an historic Holly home on East Maple Street, with firefighters calling the blaze "suspicious." The fire claimed everything that resident Erika Pezold and her kids, Ana, 16, Carmen, 4 had, and the community rallied around them to provide them with necessities of shelter, clothing, food, etc.

Lifelong Holly resident Suzanne Heiple was appointed to fill the council vacancy left by Jesse Lambert. He resigned to relocate to Kentucky for work.

Holly High School graduate Richard Siersma earned Naval Aviation Wings in February at the Naval Air Station in Meridian, Mississippi. He is a great nephew of Holly war hero Karl W. Richter.

Efforts to recall Village President Ryan Bladzick and council members Chris Rankin, George Kullis and Debra Musgrave failed after the Oakland County Election Commission disallowed all four recall petitions. The citizen's group made the recall effort because of these councilors' support of the June 11, 2013 motion to disband the village's police dispatch center and sell most of the remaining equipment to the Oakland County Sheriff's Office for \$20,000.

The Discovery Channel TV Show "How It's Made" visited Holly's Falcon Motorsports to air a segment on this "super car" manufacturer. These cars are priced between \$295,000 and \$700,000.

The council voted to keep the Battle Alley Car Cruise in downtown Holly, despite some merchant concerns about public safety.

A downtown retailer, The French Flamingo, and the National Honor Society of Holly High School raised \$2,000 for the Fourth of July Fireworks by selling patriotic scarves.

Holly VFW Post 5587 on Airport Road renovated their facility with a new drop ceiling, ventilation for new cabinetry and new appliances.

Holly Protect & Serve returned to Crapo Park after a one-year hiatus, with visitors chatting with local police, firefighters, paramedics, etc.

In an ongoing battle with Holly Township over property ownership, blight and safety violations, Timm and Maria Smith, owners of a 10-acre parcel of property on South Holly Road, won the latest battle when a resolution calling for power services to be maintained at the couple's trailer there was unanimously approved by county officials.

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FAREWELLS

Continued from Page 3A



Andrew Kargel



Bruce Dryer



Richard Homent



Tamara Johnson



Casey Kasem



Nash Schupbach



James Lehmkuhle



Brady Morton

Andrew Kargel, 34, a popular physical education teacher at Linden Middle School was killed in a snowmobile accident in Washtenaw County on Thursday, March 13.

Bruce Dryer, patriarch of the Dryer family, and former owner of Dryer Funeral Home died on March 31 at the age of 85. He was a graduate of Holly High School where he was credited with helping to write the school's fight song.

Richard Homent, 73, of Argentine Township died on May 13 from injuries he sustained in a motorcycle crash in Argentine Township.

Tamara Johnson, 20, died June 1 at her Fenton home, after a 12½-year battle with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Her humor, acceptance and attitude were an inspiration to all around her, including her parents, Greg and Sherry Johnson and four sisters.

American radio legend and voiceover actor **Casey Kasem** died Sunday, June 15. He was 82. Kasem, whose career included hosting American Top 40 and being the voice of Shaggy on Scooby Doo, had numerous family ties to the Fenton area.

Nash Gregory Schupbach, 5 months old, died on June 19. He is the inspiration behind the Facebook page: When Nash Smiled.

Nicolai Bodnariuc, 59, of Fenton Township was killed on July 9 when he was struck by a passing vehicle on Fenton Road, while he was getting his mail. Bodnariuc, a native of Romania, was walking with a friend near the Fenton Market party store.

James Lehmkuhle, 61, of Flushing died July 23. The Fenton Moose Lodge member's body was found in Lake Fenton following a fishing accident.

Brady Morton, 19, of Fenton died Aug. 17. The long-time member of the Silver Lake Ski Team went missing



Taylor Campbell

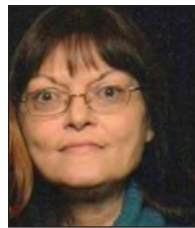


Benjamin Smith

during the Port Huron Float Down, a popular event on the St. Clair River.

Taylor Campbell, 21, of Linden died on Aug. 20 after a courageous battle with cystic fibrosis.

Benjamin Smith, 61, who formerly served on the Fenton City Council, died on Aug. 24 from lung cancer. Smith also served on the Fenton Park Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. He and his wife, Cherie, have been known as community boosters for all the years they lived in Fenton, volunteering together at many events.



Valarie Owen



Jamie Garcia

Valarie Owen, 54, of Holly and formerly of Lake Orion was killed in a hit and run crash in Holly on Oct. 21. Her death remains under investigation with the Holly Police Department.

Jamie Garcia, 21, of Holly died on Nov. 26 as a result of a hit and run crash in Rose Township. The 2011 Fenton High School graduate's death remains under investigation with the Michigan State Police-Metro Post.

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Waterfront

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Jennifer, John, Christian, Rocco & Dahlia Wentworth

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Grand Blanc Schools
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Happy Holidays!

CRIMINAL**Continued from Front Page**

Chad Cole, 46, of Holly will be released in 2034 from federal prison in Cumberland, Maryland. He was sentenced this past January. His conviction came after he pleaded guilty to producing child pornography. The FBI found that he met a 12-year-old girl online and exchanged explicit photos. He admitted to engaging in similar behavior with 10 to 20 other minors.



LakeSpa, which was located on Torrey Road in Fenton, was shut down at the beginning of the year. In late 2013, Fenton police became aware of complaints of prostitution and human trafficking. An investigation by the Genesee County Prosecutor's Office followed. Flint Area Narcotics Group (FANG) worked undercover as spa clients and revealed that prostitution was taking place. Authorities looked into the possibility of connections with organized crime in Chicago. There are no known charges pending, according to the Genesee County Prosecutor's Office.



Jesse Long, 29, of Holly will be spending up to the next 20 years in state prison. On Jan. 19, Holly police officers were dispatched to St. Rita's Catholic Church to investigate a possible breaking and entering. Several windows on the east side

of the church had been broken out but no one had gained access.

Long was taken into custody after a short foot chase. A Holly officer sustained minor injuries, however, Long was not injured. Long was arraigned on Jan. 22 on multiple felony counts. He also serving time for multiple 2012 offenses.



Zachary Parker, 19, of Swartz Creek is lodged at the state prison in Ionia. He was convicted of operating a vehicle while intoxicated (OWI) causing serious injury (2-5 years) and OWI causing death (5-15 years). After consuming alcohol in the evening of Feb. 9, he drove the wrong way on U.S. 23 and struck a car head on in Mundy Township. The crash killed Mariah Bailey-Collins of Mt. Morris. Her husband, Bryan, who was driving, and her 11-year-old son, who was in the backseat, were seriously injured when Parker's car struck theirs.



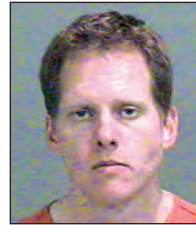
This will be the fourth time that **Ronnie Duke**, 47, of Fenton has made the Times' Year in Review. In 2010, he was named in a federal investigation for one of the country's largest mortgage fraud cases. In 2012, he



pleaded guilty. In 2013, he was sentenced to 13 years in federal prison. Now, he is facing additional prison time for attempting to escape.

Dennis Frederick and his son **Brian Frederick** were each sentenced in September to one year and one day in federal prison in West Virginia relating to faulty welds that their family business, Precision Metal Spinning in Fenton, supplied for the government's Tomahawk cruise missile system. The men cooperated with investigators and an arrangement was made so that they would serve their time consecutively as to keep the business operating and save the employees' jobs.

Marc Liebich, 46, of Fenton Township remains in the Genesee County Jail, awaiting additional court hearings on multiple felonies, including multiple home invasions and breaking into a vehicle that he was arraigned on in May. Genesee County Undersheriff Chris Swanson said detectives believe Liebich's alleged drug problems led to these alleged break-ins and robberies to support his habit.



Gregory Johnson, 45, of Fenton is expected to begin his trial on three felonies after he allegedly shot and injured his neighbor on May 26. He is lodged in the county jail. He is facing charges of assault with intent to murder, carrying a dangerous weapon with unlawful intent and felony firearms. Fenton Police Chief Rick Aro said an ongoing dispute between neighbors escalated to where Johnson allegedly shot his neighbor. The chief said police were made aware of past disputes over lot lines, pets and yard maintenance. If convicted as charged, Johnson faces up to life in prison.



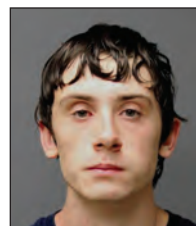
Eric Gill, 43, of Holly was sentenced in August to two to 7½ years in state prison on two counts of recording young children trying on clothing in a private changing room on June 13. Holly police arrested him on June 17. He will also have to register as a sex offender upon his release.



Timothy Ward, 60, of Durand is facing two felony counts of assault with a weapon and one count of felony firearms. His case has been bound over to Genesee County Circuit Court. Argentine Township police arrested him on June 28 for allegedly shooting and critically injuring a Byron man.



Jude Jeney, 18, of Fenton is facing a three-count felony after being arrested for breaking into an ATM in Fenton on Aug. 21. His case has been bound over to circuit court.



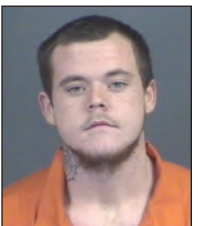
Robert J. Markus, 33, of Brighton pleaded no contest to an amended felony count of home invasion in Genesee County Circuit Court on Dec. 8. Police tracked Markus' cellphone, which he left behind and located at a friend's home in Argentine Township on Nov. 1.



Argentine Township police arrested him on suspicion of breaking into a barn in the 14000 block of Bird Road. The amended count includes another break-in at a residence in the 16000 block of Bird Road. More than \$10,000 worth of stolen items have been recovered and returned to the rightful owners. Police have linked Markus to other break-ins.

His sentencing for the Bird Road break-ins is set for Jan. 5, 2015.

Nicholas Smith, 20, of Holly was arrested for an armed robbery, which took place at the Runyan Lake Food Center on Nov. 14. Store employees told responding police that an unknown man entered the store, approached the cashier, displayed a knife and demanded money.



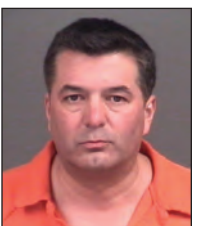
David Stidham, 30, of Fenton was arraigned Dec. 9 in Genesee County District Court with three counts of stealing credit cards and one count of auto theft, following a home invasion that took place Dec. 4 in Fenton. Stidham remains lodged in lieu of the cash surety bond of \$50,000 set on each of the four counts.



Just after 8 a.m. on Dec. 4, officers responded to a home in the 900 block of Briarwood Lane on a report of a home invasion. The homeowner said that sometime between midnight and 8 a.m. someone had entered his home through an unlocked kitchen window while he was home sleeping. Evidence indicated that the suspect even entered the homeowner's bedroom.

Stidham pleaded not guilty at his preliminary exam on Dec. 9 and his case was bound over to Genesee County Circuit Court. His circuit court arraignment has been scheduled for Jan. 5, 2015.

Theodore Ostapchuk, 50, of Fenton will appear in Livingston County District Court on Jan. 16, 2015 for a preliminary hearing. He was arraigned on one count of OWI causing death on Nov. 25 as a result of a crash on U.S. 23 on Feb. 21 in Tyrone Township. Livingston County Sheriff Bob Bezotte said lab results indicated his blood alcohol content was twice the legal limit. While driving just before midnight, Ostapchuk's pickup truck rear-ended a car that was parked in the right lane of the highway with its lights on. The impact killed the driver of that car, Leroy Batson of Mt. Morris. The sheriff said lab results indicated that Batson's blood alcohol content was .277 at the time of impact.



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Gas prices slide under \$2 per gallon

► Increased supply of U.S. oil from shale sources have contributed to \$1.91 per gallon

By Ryan Tackabury

news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

For drivers across the nation who are tired of steep costs to fill up their tank, Christmas came a little early this year as prices dipped below \$2 per gallon in the days leading up to Christmas.

The cheapest gallon of gas in the tri-county area has already dipped well below the \$2 mark, at \$1.91 per gallon. That's the pump price at Beacon & Bridge at Thompson and Torrey roads and Speedway at Grand Blanc Road and U.S. 23, according to Gasbuddy.com as of Friday, Dec. 26.

In Flint, the prices have dipped even lower, to \$1.79 per gallon at the Marathon station at Richfield and Genesee roads.

The Michigan average cost of a gallon of gas is \$2.123, while the national average stands at \$2.336. One year ago, Michigan drivers were paying an average of \$3.239 for a gallon of gas.

The fall in prices is the result of many factors, though one major contributing cause is the fact that the United States has become the largest oil producer in the world, in part due to an oil boom from shale extraction. This has led to an increase in supply, which has helped to lower the price you pay at the pump.

The benefits of cheaper gasoline extend beyond just filling up at the pump — it allows for cheaper transportation of prod-



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | TIM JAGIELO

John Clark, 18, of Mundy Township fills his parents' 2015 GMC Yukon for \$45, instead of the usual \$70, at the Beacon and Bridge station in Fenton Township Friday morning. At \$1.91 a gallon for regular gasoline, he said it was the "cheapest I've ever paid for a gallon of gas."

ucts, which could reduce the cost of spending on goods and services across the board.

Locally, the lower prices are a big win. However, not everyone is impacted positively by these falling prices — in particular, our neighbors to the North. Oil extraction companies in Canada extract oil from the ground, though doing so is costly, requiring high prices per oil barrel for the work to be economically viable. It is predicted that while smaller oil producers will be hit the hardest, as larger companies are able to last longer.

The same is true of other oil production companies in the United States. "A boom in U.S. oil production has helped

sharply reduce dependence on foreign oil, a result of drilling in some of the highest-cost areas on earth.

Drilling in areas of North Dakota and Texas, for example, produces only a slight output per day. If prices fell further, drilling would have to slow because it would no longer be profitable," wrote Gregg Laskoski, a contributor to GasBuddy.com.

It is uncertain as to what the future may hold for gas prices. However, many economists agree that we may be enjoying this price drop well beyond 2014. The Department of Energy predicts that the average price of gasoline in the United States next year will rest at \$2.60 a gallon.

HOT LINE CONTINUED

THERE ARE A lot of really nice lights to look at on Wyndham, especially the lights to music! This is our second year watching/listening to them. Nice additions. Thanks!

IF THE OBAMA supporters would do their research instead of blaming Fox News for their hero's incompetence, they would find out that many independent studies have shown Fox News to be the least biased and most truthful TV news.

ACCORDING TO CNN, ISIS claims beheadings and slavery are part of their religion. Probably started with the right to refuse service to gays based on 'deeply held religious beliefs.' This is why there has to be separation of church and state.

I DON'T BELIEVE 64 percent support the EPA's Clean Plan for Michigan. How many people pay the voluntary green tax on their Consumers or Detroit Edison bill? I'll bet it's lower than EPA says. Global warming is the biggest scam ever.

THE STATE LEGISLATURE passes a law allowing the police to confiscate and sell property from people who have been neither charged nor convicted of a crime? Both of our area senators, Democrat and Republican, voted for this. Doesn't anyone else see a problem? Thanks for the Michigan Votes feature.

THE MAYOR OF a city is important, influential and needs to be a leader. He or she needs to support their law enforcement and those that work for the city. New York Mayor Bill de Blasio is clearly not a leader.

I WAS AT McDonald's on Thompson Road Tuesday morning and the lady in a white van in front of me paid my bill. A heartfelt thank you, may you have a blessed holiday.

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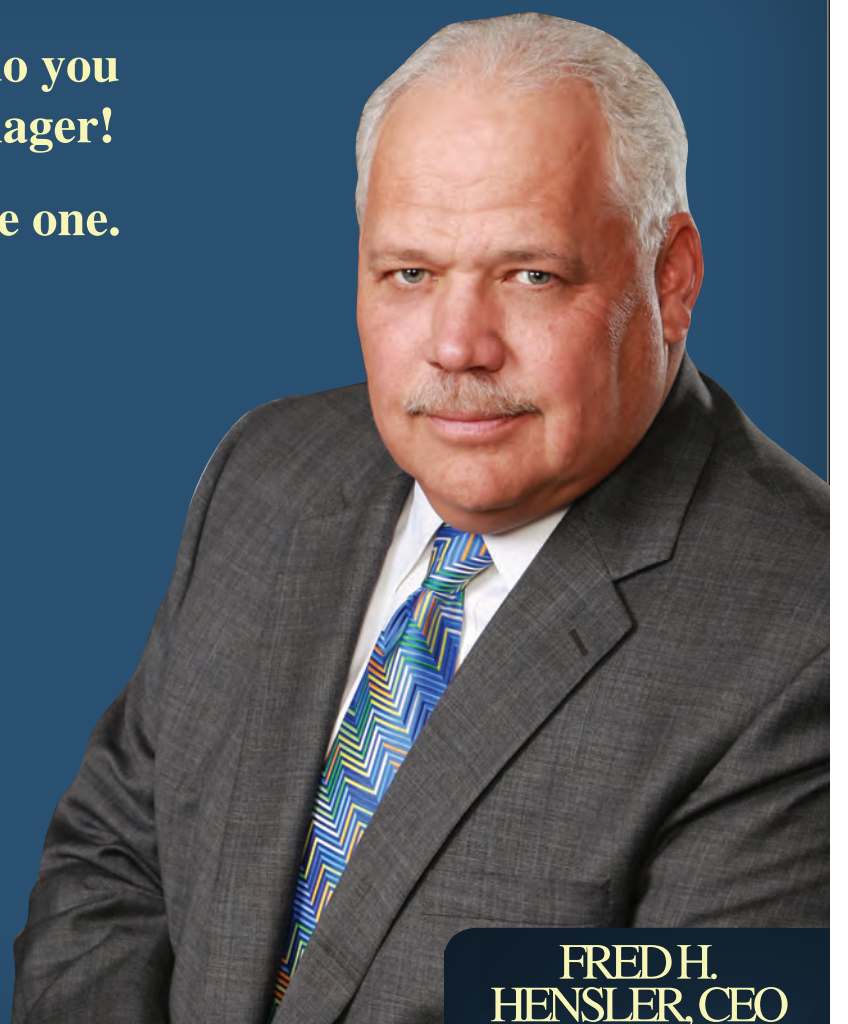
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Most talked about stories of 2014

By Sharon Stone

sstone@tctimes.com; 810-433-6786

Based on the number of Hot lines, views on the Times' website and Facebook page, the editorial staff compiled a list of the most talked about stories for 2014.

Mistake on the Lake

Without a doubt, the demolition of the 'Mistake on the Lake,' was the most talked about event for Fenton area residents.

In a matter of six hours, the massive home on Bayshore Drive, nicknamed "the Mistake on the Lake," was demolished one day in October. The seven bedroom, seven bathroom and four-car garage took years to build, however, without an occupancy permit, no one ever lived there after it was built. Demolition was necessary as the home deteriorated beyond repair. Much of the home's material was salvaged for scrap.

Cornerstone building

Also right at the top of everyone's mind has been the \$4.7 million, 47,000-square-foot Cornerstone building at the corner of North LeRoy Street and Silver Lake Road in downtown Fenton. At four stories, the building is the tallest in the city.

The Cornerstone building was finished enough in December for three of its four businesses on the first floor were able to open up for business. Residents and visitors to the city have welcomed The Rough Draught Coffee and Barroom, Salon 416, and Sagano Japanese Bistro & Steakhouse. In January, Sawyer Jewelers will relocate their shop into the building, as well.

Promposal

After much media attention, Justin Hang, a senior at Fenton High School walked his prom date, Disney star Allie DeBerry up the red carpet for this year's prom at the Genesys Athletic Club in May.

The memorable night was the result of a "promposal" video Hang posted for DeBerry on March 20, which received 1,500 retweets and nearly 15,000 views



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTO

The "mistake on the lake" was a hot topic as it was being built. After completion, the house sat unoccupied for years and was eventually demolished.

on YouTube.

The Times photo reached 8,700 people, with 260 "likes" dozens of comments and 30 shares almost in one day. Most were supportive of Hang, even applauded DeBerry for following through on her promise to attend the dance with him.

Daddy-daughter dance

In February, when area schools typically host their daddy daughter dances, O'Rourke's fellow officers escorted the three daughters of slain West Bloomfield police officer Patrick O'Rourke of Tyrone Township to the AGS Middle School dance.

This came after O'Rourke's daughters Eileen, Mary and Andrea asked three officers in the department months ahead of time to escort them to the dance, each gladly obliged and made it a special evening none would ever forget.

The wacky weather

The weather in 2014 was a common topic of conversation. From the heavy snow and ice that welcomed in 2014 to a extremely wet spring, somewhat of a dry spell during the summer and now a mild December, many speculated as to what would be coming next.

Gas prices

Gas prices have brought smiles to just about anyone that fills up their car's gas tank at the gas stations. Prices averaged \$3.68 per gallon in March, according to GasBuddy.com. Prices went up to an average of \$3.75 per gallon in May and \$3.92 in June.

By the end of October, prices began to slowly drop. Now, most gas stations are posting prices of under \$2 per gallon.

See **STORIES** on 20A

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Lake Fenton wrestling
Is their state trip
in our top eight?
See Page 19A



ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

► Read other recent prep basketball game stories, visit tctimes.com

TRIVIA FOOTBALL

Q When was the last time the Michigan Wolverines won a bowl game on Jan. 1?

A It wasn't too long ago. It was on Jan. 1, 2008 when the Wolverines defeated Florida 41-35 in the Capital One Bowl.

DAVID'S DABBLINGS

'What a great comeback' — these are words we hear quite often in the sports world.

Yet, to me that phrase is one of the most overused and misused comments in the sports world.

I'll use Central Michigan's Bahamas Bowl experience as an example. Central Michigan (my alma mater) was playing Western Kentucky and the Chippewas were getting beat by the Hilltoppers most of the contest. However, amazingly, Central cut what was a 35-point deficit to just one after completing an incredible play involving a couple of laterals for a 75-yard TD. Trailing 49-48, the Chippewas went for two points. They failed and lost by the slim margin.

Most of the talk on TV after the game was about CMU's great 'comeback.' To me, for something to be considered a comeback, you must eventually take the lead, or at least tie the game. Central didn't do either of those things. It was a great attempt. It was fun to watch. But in the final analysis it wasn't a 'comeback.' CMU never tied it or had the lead.

Our eight top moments of 2014

► Prep wrestlers make their presence felt during year

By David Troppens
dtroppens@tctimes.com

The tri-county area seems to produce plenty of championships every year, and 2014 was no exception.

Varsity teams from Fenton, Linden, Holly and Lake Fenton produced 16 league championship squads in 2014, so when it comes to creating a list of the most memorable moments of the last 12 months, that can become a little tricky. We are going to make it a trickier task by cutting down our top moments of 2014 to the top eight. Here they are.

No. 8 - Three diamond teams win district titles: Lake Fenton softball, Fenton softball and Linden baseball all won district crowns in the spring of 2014. Linden baseball won its second straight district title, defeating Durand, Lake Fenton

and then Ovid-Elsie 4-0 in the championship game.

The Fenton softball team won its first district title since 2009, by capturing victories against Hartland, Holly and ninth-ranked Lakeland. The Metro League champion Tigers won the title game 6-4.

Lake Fenton's district crown was, by far, the most dramatic. Lake Fenton opened by defeating Durand in the semifinals, but then came from behind in the seventh to beat Owosso 5-4 in the title game. With nobody on base, no out and trailing by one, the Blue Devils put together a rally in the bottom of the seventh. Kayla Ward and Alexis Melton each singled, setting up Taylor Sheyachich's game-winning single.

No. 7 - The explosion of tri-county based road races: A decade ago, there weren't many other options when it came to races in this area. Now, there is seemingly one every week. There are the big events,

like the Applefest, Bastille Day races and Run Like the Dickens events.

There are also a bunch of other lighter-attended but successful races. In Fenton there's the JingleJog, the Run Through the Flames and the Fenton Tiger 5K Run. Holly also has the Holly Recreation Triathlon. And Linden seems to be adding events as well. This year there was the Run For Hope event, the Linden Airport Runway Run, the Ididarun, the First-Try Triathlon and, of course, the weekly summer event called the Wednesday Night Races. There are others, too.

No. 6 - Lake Fenton wrestling advances to team state meet: The Lake Fenton wres-

See 2014 on 19A



Lake Fenton's Andy Donoho

Photo by:
David Troppens

Holly's defense crushes Linden

By David Troppens
dtroppens@tctimes.com

Holly — When one thinks about Holly boys basketball, offense is the word that comes into one's mind.

If Dec. 19's game at home against Linden was any indication, maybe teams should be a bit more concerned with the Bronchos' defense as well.

Holly held Linden to just 10 first-half points with its

See **HOLLY'S** on 19A

LF's Hilger captures county title

► Three area wrestlers finish runner-up at event

By David Troppens
dtroppens@tctimes.com

The tri-county area produced one country champion and three runner-up performers at the Genesee County wrestling meet.

The area champion had to defeat another area grappler to capture his county crown. Lake Fenton's Trent Hilger

(215) has moved up to 215 during his sophomore season, but he's still proven to be a dominant foe, earning the county title. He defeated Linden's Austin McNeill by a 12-5 decision to earn the championship.

In prior matches, Hilger earned two pinfall wins and a tech fall. McNeill also had two pinfall victories during the tourney.

Lake Fenton and Linden had two others who made

it to the finals. Lake Fenton's Jackson Nevadomski (125) lost to Grand Blanc's Noah Gonser in the finals by pinfall in 1:45. Prior to that match, Nevadomski had three victories, including two by pinfall.

Linden's Dawson Blank (135) lost in his title match to Clio's Mason Smith by pinfall in 1:04. Prior to the championship match he also had three victories, include

See **COUNTY** on 19A

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PREP REPORT

WRESTLING

► **Linden 44, Owosso 28:** The Eagles won their assembly dual at Owosso, capturing victories in nine of the 14 matches. Dawson Blank (135), Cade Dickson (160), Jaylen Steedman (189) and Austin McNeill (215) all won by pinfall, while Luke Zimmerman (112) and Koleton Strauss (119) won by major decision. Other winners were Patrick Kerr (140), Aaron Steedman (171) and Justin Cygnar (103).

BOYS BASKETBALL

► **Flint Southwestern 80, Holly 75:** The Bronchos (3-2) led 41-28 entering the half, but were outscored 52-34 in the second half, including 28-15 in the fourth quarter, resulting in the non-league loss at Saginaw Valley State University.

The Bronchos were paced by Saginaw Valley recruit Jake Daniels' 24 points. Joshua Simms scored 19, while Isaac Casillas and Kyle Woodruff netted 13 points each.

► **Bay City Western 64, Linden 30:** The Eagles only scored as many as 10 points in one quarter, resulting in the loss. Linden trailed 26-12 at the break and were outscored 22-8 in the fourth quarter. Tyler Hoeberling led the Eagles with nine points. Travis Havercamp led Bay City Western with 15 points.

GYMNASTICS

► **Linden co-op hosts meet:** The Linden/Fenton/Lake Fenton co-op squad took second in the four-team meet with a squad score of 129.775. Milford/Lakeland won it with a 131.075.

Lake Fenton's Miranda Stephens took first in the all-around (34.70), placing first on the bars, beam and floor. Linden's Jessica Richert placed second overall (33.45), earning second on the bars. Linden's Macy Mitchell placed second on the floor.

Lady Bronchos' defense stifles Eagles

By David Troppens

dtroppens@tctimes.com; 810-433-6789

Holly — The Holly varsity girls basketball team was one focused squad on Dec. 19.

The Linden Eagles suffered the brunt of that intensity at Holly High School.

The Bronchos' defensive intensity allowed Holly to outscore Linden 34-8 during the middle two quarters, resulting in an easy 54-35 victory.

"I think in the first quarter we were a little slower, but in the second quarter we let the game come to us and definitely took it to them," Holly sophomore Paige Reid said. "It's probably the best defense we've played. It was the teamwork and the amount of fun we were having. We'd get a steal and pat each other. Everyone got some shots off. We really played as a family tonight. I like that."

Linden (0-3, 1-5) was within 14-11 of Holly (2-1, 4-2) after one quarter, but the Bronchos forced steals on each of Linden's first three possessions of the second quarter, resulting in seven Holly points in 35 seconds. Kaitlyn Smith played a huge role in all seven points. First, she hit an 18-foot jump shot. Then she hit a breaking la-

yup. Finally, she earned a steal and dished to Reid who hit a three-pointer. Holly led 21-11 with 7:25 left in the second quarter and never got back into the game.

"That 7-0 run in 35 seconds was a dagger," Linden coach Ben Varner said. "That was hard. We didn't recover from it. We turned the ball over way too much. We didn't do the things we've been doing the last five games."

Smith was a determined offensive player, netting 21 points, all in the first three quarters. She hardly played the fourth, and when she did, she wasn't looking to score. Smith also had four rebounds and three steals. Reid finished with 11 points and four steals. Brooke Jackman netted six points and grabbed six boards. Shayla Lipischak had



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | MARK BOLEN

Linden's Taylor Smith (left) prepares to take a shot against Holly's defenders Michaela Luchow (front) and Paige Reid.

six points. Linden's Megan Kenney netted 11 points, while Sterling DeGayner had nine. Taylor Smith, Linden's usual leading scorer was held to six points.

Tigers stick with game plan, defeat Swartz Creek

By Jordan Climie

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Fenton — Fenton boys basketball coach Tim Olszewski credits sticking to the game plan as the reason the Tigers defeated Swartz Creek, 70-65, even if Fenton took some time to find their shot.

"We prefer not to be doing that," Olsze-

wski said, when asked about the slow start that saw the Tigers down by as much as 12 in the first half. "The way we play, things like that happen. But we don't panic. We keep playing. We give the boys some time to find their plays."

Senior guard Beau LePage, who led the Tigers with 18 points, echoed Olszewski's words when asked about being down by double digits early in the game.

"We just come together, work harder," he said. "Once we get it going we start to click."

And click they did.

Down 28-16 in the middle of the second quarter, with 3-pointers clanging off the rim and layups uncharacteristically rolling away from their intended target, LePage and the Tigers went on a 12-2 run to end

the first half to bring them within two of Swartz Creek.

At halftime however, with momentum on their side, Olszewski didn't change a thing about their game plan.

Fenton came storming out of the locker room. Junior forward Peyton Coffman hit a 3-pointer for the first shot of the second half, taking the lead over the Dragons 31-30.

From there, the Tigers extended their lead to as much as six, but the Dragons remained close thanks to the play of senior guard Heath Henry, who led all players with 24 points.

It wasn't until the final minutes of play in the fourth quarter that the crowd could begin their chants of victory, as the Drag-

See TIGERS on 19A

HOLLY'S

Continued from Page 17A

swarming defense and was as efficient as ever on offense, earning a 60-25 Metro League victory against the Eagles at the Horseshoe.

The Bronchos hit on 50 percent of their shots from the field (19-for-38) with 10 of the field goals being three-pointers. Meanwhile, Linden couldn't get much going against Holly's defense. It was particularly tough in the second quarter, when Linden hit just one field goal — a three-pointer by Jake Zorn with 7:02 left in the first half. The shot cut Holly's lead to 18-10, but that's when Kyle Woodruff got hot for the Bronchos (3-0, 3-1). He scored 12 second-quarter points and the Bronchos capped the period with a run of 22 straight points, taking a 40-10 lead into the break. It was never a game in the second half.

"We work on our defense a half-hour to 45 minutes every practice," Woodruff said. "We like to pressure people. We can get our offense through our defense and if we can get the ball up and down the court, we can swarm them. We played a great defensive game. It was amazing."

Woodruff led all scorers with 21 points,



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | MARK BOLEN

Holly's Joshua Simms (center) tries to dribble around Linden's Kyle Korman during the Bronchos' win.

but scored all 21 in the middle two quarters. Jake Daniels scored 19.

Casillas also had four assists and four rebounds, while Morgan Baylis had three steals and three boards. Linden was paced by Korman's six points, while Zorn and Tyler Hoeberling had five points each.

Editor's note: Go to www.tctimes.com for a more detailed story.

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2014

Continued from Page 17A

ling team had another strong season in 2014, capturing team district and regional championships during the winter. At the regional meet, the Blue Devils had to beat Corunna and then upset fifth-ranked Birch Run with three wrestlers out of their lineup just to make it to the Division 3 state quarterfinals. The Blue Devils did, making it their second trip to the team state tournament since 2011.

No. 5 - Three teams go to the state cross country meet: The area cross country teams proved this fall, once again, why cross country is the strongest sport in the tri-county area.

The Linden girls and the Holly boys captured regional crowns, while the Linden boys placed third and qualified for the state meet as well.

Once at Michigan International Speedway, all three teams did well. The Linden boys had its best performance of the season, placing seventh in Division 2, while the Linden girls took 10th. The Holly boys placed 11th in Division 1.

No. 4 - Flushing joins the Metro League: When the Flushing Raiders were added to the Metro League starting with the 2014-15 academic year, many expected some changes when it came to the competitive flavor of the league.

And, just one-third into the school year, that has happened. Of course, the merging of the two Lapeer schools and their departure from the Metro, opened up a spot for the league. Flushing was given it, returning the Metro to an eight-team league.

Quickly this fall Flushing proved they were going to be a dominant team in many sports. The Raiders captured three Metro League fall season championships (girls cross country, volleyball and girls golf), and finished second in football and boys tennis.

No. 3 - Fenton football has a perfect regular season: The Fenton Tigers entered as the favorites in the Metro League season. When the season was over, the Tigers proved why.

Fenton was the overwhelmingly dominant team in the Metro League, finishing a perfect 7-0 in conference action and 9-0 during the regular season. Fenton finished the Metro season, averaging a 40-13 score a game. Most contests reached the mercy score for some portion of the contest. Only Linden came within a score of the Tigers, with the Eagles losing a tight 35-29 verdict at home.

If there was a downfall to the sea-



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTOS

Hartland student and Fenton resident Austin Eicher (above right) was one of three area individual state wrestling champions in 2014. (Right) Allyssa Copley (right) helped lead the Holly Bronchos to a 20-0 regular season during the 2013-14 school year.

son, it was how it ended. For the second straight season the Tigers lost in the opening round of the playoffs, this time to Farmington Hills Harrison 35-10.

No. 2 - Holly girls basketball finishes perfect 20-0 regular season: Wow, what a season it was. Many expected the Bronchos to have a fine season, most expecting them to be the favorites in the Metro League.

The Bronchos delivered, and more. They finished 16-0 in Metro action and also capped a perfect 20-0 regular season. Led by senior Allyssa Copley, the Bronchos were occasionally challenged, but for the most part proved to be too dominant for their Metro counterparts.

They had a solid postseason as well, capturing a Class A district title by defeating the rival Fenton Tigers in the championship game. The run ended in the regional semifinals, with a 22-1 season record.

No. 1 - Three tri-county wrestlers capture individual state championships: It seems individual wrestlers are always at the top, or near the top, of our list. This year three wrestlers — Drew Garcia, Austin Eicher and Andy Donoho — found themselves finish on the top. Garcia, a Fenton resident and De-



troit Catholic Central wrestler, capped his career with a third straight wrestling championship. Eicher, who wrestles for Hartland and is a Fenton resident as well, overcame injuries to cap his career with his second D1 state championship. Meanwhile, Lake Fenton senior Andy Donoho was an underdog in his D3 171-pound field, but came home with a state championship as well.

All three titles were memorable for their own reasons, making that day at the Palace of Auburn Hills the top moment of the 2014 tri-county athletic season.

TIGERS

Continued from Page 18A

ons were forced to begin fouling Fenton players for a chance to get the ball back and score. The Tigers were near automatic on the foul line, however, with LePage, Coffman and senior guard Dillon Gardner (14 points in the game) leading Fenton to ice the win.

For the Dragons, senior guard Logan Daniels chipped in 12 points in the loss, with junior forward Kenyen Spurlock and senior forward Ashton Mathis adding 11 points each.

Editor's note: Go to www.tctimes.com for a more detailed story.

Girls Basketball Fenton 52, Swartz Creek 51

Emma Evo scored a game-high 20 points and also grabbed nine rebounds, leading the Tigers to the slim home victory extending their win streak to three games.

Sarah Cummings added 14 points, 11 rebounds, four assists and three steals, while Carly Granger had six rebounds and four assists.

Swartz Creek scored the game's first six points, but Fenton went on a 15-2 run to end the first quarter. At halftime Fenton trailed 22-20. However, an 18-point third put the Tigers up 38-35 entering the fourth quarter. Fenton held on to a one-possession lead for a large stretch during the late portions of the game, and held on for the victory.

COUNTY

Continued from Page 17A

ing one by pin.

Linden's Patrick Kerr (140) was the area's only third-place performer, taking it with a 4:27 pin-fall against Carman-Ainsworth's Darien Vaughn.

Earning fourth-place efforts were Lake Fenton's A.J. Geyer (103), Hunter Corcoran (119) and Tristen Nevadomski (160); Linden's Luke Zimmerman (112); and Fenton's Scott Becker (189). Lake Fenton's Devan Melick (130) placed fifth.

The event represented the last major wrestling competition until after the winter break for all three teams.

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2014 Year of wild weather, business disruptions, roller coaster gas prices

►Area residents breathe sigh of relief with milder weather, lower gas prices

By Sally Rummel

news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

From extreme weather to fluctuating gas prices, 2014 was a year of highs and lows, affecting every area of life in the tri-county.

At the start of the New Year in 2014, many residents still had no power after a Christmas snowstorm pounded the tri-county area with snow, ice and arctic temperatures.

The extreme weather continued all winter, with record days of below-average temperatures and above average snowfall. The winter's cold snowy weather was one for the record books, in the top five snowiest winters in recorded history.

The early winter weather was a boon for some businesses like local ski resort Mt. Holly, which reported that season passes were up 30 percent. Snow shovel sales outsold exercise equipment sales, and the wacky weather meant record business for collision shops and towing companies. Bad weather-related crashes made news, too, with 21 reported in one



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTO

Heavy sleet followed by abrupt freezing temperatures led to an unprecedented amount of power outages, due to damaged and fallen limbs last winter.

seven-hour period on U.S. 23 on Jan. 23.

Other businesses didn't fare as well, being unable to even open their doors from two to four days during the worst of the weather. However, most business owners said customers were extremely loyal and kept their revenues up during even the worst of winter's conditions.

Municipalities took the brunt of winter's fury, with the city of Fenton using two-

Summary

► This year took tri-county residents on a wild wacky weather ride, starting with an extremely bitter January to a milder end of the year. Gas prices fluctuated, too, spiking in June and making a steady decline to new lows in December.

thirds of the funds allocated for salt and plowing roads by early February, with months of winter remaining.

Construction projects, like the much-anticipated Cornerstone building, ground to a halt for weeks at a time. Early in the year, news reports still projected a September opening, but cold, wet, muddy spring weather dashed those hopes, too.

The good news was that

people became better neighbors, checking on each other to make sure people were OK, especially the elderly and homebound. The Argentine Police Department began keeping a list of people they were asked to check on, according to one report in the Times.

Even when the calendar approached spring, the weather continued to make news. Cold, wet weather caused a late start for the opening of area golf courses, most reporting they wouldn't be able to open until the end of April.

Snow, rain and hail left thousands without power, reported the Times on April 16. The oldest barn in Genesee County on the Mundy Township property of Scott and Jonie Tarkleson was felled by fierce sheer winds, leaving a hole in area history.

The wacky weather even continued into the summer. A really nice stretch of warm and dry weekends from late spring into summer, gave way to a wet and rainy July, while August was warmer and drier. Heavy thunderstorms were "spotty," so your wet summer experience depended on where you were.

Moving into late fall, November was one of the snowiest and coldest on record, while temperatures flip-flopped in December with warmer than normal averages.

Fluctuations in gas prices were just as unpredictable, starting out the year at just under \$3.22 per gallon and spiking in June at \$3.97 per gallon. Tri-county residents are ending the year breathing a sigh of relief at the pump, paying as little as \$1.91, according to gasbuddy.com.

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STORIES

Continued from Page 16A

Linden's new mural

Another topic of discussion this past summer was the mural, which was officially unveiled on Aug. 6 in downtown Linden. The mural was designed and painted by Linden High School art teacher Gemma Amendola, art students and community members after Amendola was approached by Linden schools' superintendent to include students in community art projects.

According to Amendola, the colorful mural, which many people did not understand tells a story about all of the beauty in Linden. "The colorful person symbolizes all of the people in Linden. The head shaped as a teapot characterizes the hospitality and friendliness of its residents," she said.

Several anonymous community members donated money for the supplies. No public funds were used.

Gasoline leak

Residents and business owners in Linden learned in November that the Beacon and Bridge gas station at the corner of Broad and Bridge streets has been leaking gasoline underground.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Analyst Marjorie Frisch confirmed that Beacon and Bridge gas station

is responsible following an investigation, which began in June.

Kevin Begola, owner of Bridge Street Exchange said the past 4-plus months have been a very stressful time as a property owner due to the situation at hand.

Linden City Manager Paul Zelenak said the city has been working with the DEQ since over a year ago on the matter of ground contamination. He said the DEQ's first tests were inconclusive, but after businesses began smelling fumes earlier this year, they had them come back for more testing.

The city is moving forward with this with the help of the DEQ.

News briefs

HOLLY HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND TO PERFORM IN OUTBACK BOWL HALFTIME SHOW

The Holly High School Marching Band was chosen among a select group of high school bands from around the United States to perform in the Outback Bowl Halftime Show on Jan. 1, 2015. Holly will be performing for a crowd of 74,000 in Raymond James Stadium, and the show will broadcast live on ESPN at 1 p.m. The band departs for Tampa, Florida on Dec. 28 and will be visiting Disney World, Busch Gardens, and various other attractions in Florida during their stay. This is the first college bowl game appearance in the history of the Holly Marching Band.

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2014 Freedom Festival Parade



May floods close roads

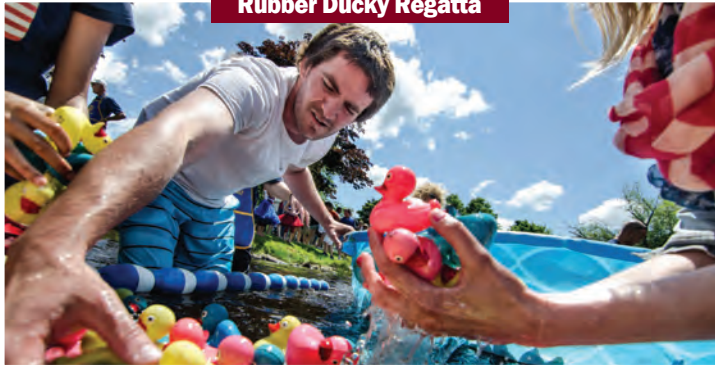


2014 Freedom Festival

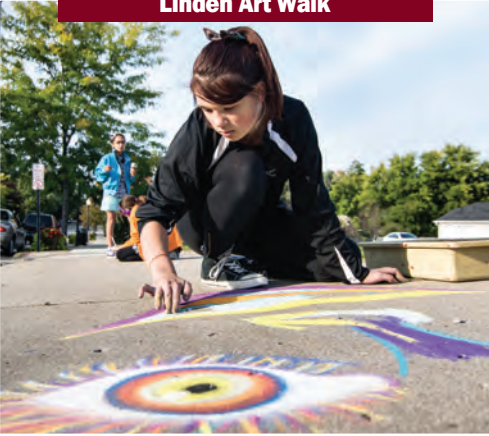


Memorable
PHOTOS
of
2014

Rubber Ducky Regatta



Linden Art Walk



Candlelight vigil for Brady Morton



Holly Dickens Festival



Fenton Protect and Serve Day



Historic lows, historic snows in January



BUSINESSES

Continued from Front Page

an Uncle Ray's shake. It's not all desserts though — with a menu of specialty burgers, utilizing fresh ingredients, there is likely to be something for everyone on the menu at What's Shaken.

Those approaching Fenton from U.S. 23 are now greeted by a new business — The Barn. A renovated interior and eye-catching exterior makes for the newest sports bar addition to Fenton.

For many years, Fenton residents debated what would or should occupy the building where Farmer Jack's once resided in Silver Parkway. This year, the debate ended as Family Farm & Home set up shop, a Michigan-based retailer that provides specialty products for agricultural needs and — just as the name suggests — farm supplies.

The largest change to Fenton's landscape is undoubtedly the Cornerstone building, which has ushered in three businesses to the downtown area in 2014. Café Aroma, an existing coffee shop, moved down the street to occupy the new Cornerstone building. It is now called Rough Draught coffee and barroom with an expanded menu.

Sagano Japanese Bistro and Steakhouse,



TRI-COUNTY TIMES | FILE PHOTO

The Rough Draught Coffee & Barroom was the first business to fully open in the Cornerstone building in early December.

and Salon 416 round out the new Cornerstone businesses that opened up to the public in the tail end of the year.

New businesses appeared in downtown Fenton outside of the Cornerstone as well. Earlier this year saw the opening of La Petite Maison — offering stylish furniture and accessories with a European taste.

An old fixture of downtown Fenton recently changed hands — and changed

names. Red Fox Footwear opened up in April of this year, offering a variety of brands and custom shoe fittings.

"It's been going well so far. My co-owner Nick and I are both from Fenton and it's been nice to see the support we got from opening the store in our own hometown. A lot of people are focusing on shopping locally. It's been a pretty good first year for us," said co-owner Jesse Anderson. "It's an exciting time with the Cornerstone building going up and businesses opening there. We have definitely noticed an increase in business here, with that and the Fire Hall. There are a lot more people walking around downtown."

50 Sips Wine, a new wine specialty store selling a unique wine experience, opened in November in the former Fenton Winery & Brewery location.

Those who enjoy resale and consignment shops have also had a few new options to stop at in Fenton, with the opening of Howard's Hidden Treasures. My Sister & Me Upscale Consignment and Vintage Row, a boutique shopping experience.

The business in activity can be seen as a reflection of the state's economy.

"We have turned a corner on the recession and things are improving. We have a

lot more businesses coming to town, which obviously has increased the number of jobs created over the past year."

While some businesses brought employees with them, they still also created many new positions. Client Financial Services is one example according to Markland, which opened in Fenton this year and employs roughly 160 people.

"These new businesses also bring in a lot more people and opportunities for other businesses too," Markland said. Going into 2015, Markland believes that Fenton will continue to see increased activity.

Fenton Township

Fenton Township is about 36 square miles in size with more than a dozen lakes. It does not have a central shopping district as do most downtown cities. In 2014, several businesses went in front of the Fenton Township Board of Trustees in order to open, or expand their businesses.

Vaporia is located at 14300 Fenton Road. They offer E-Cigarette and Vapor starter kits and supplies for those who want to quit smoking cigarettes.

The Fit Box is located at 14330 North Fenton Road. They provide an innovative, sustainable fitness routine that can include personal training, boxing fitness, and yoga.

Enihcam is a manufacturing sales and training facility with a 7,000-square-foot showroom located at 3061 Thompson Road. They are partnered with worldwide machine specialist SMTCL-Americas. Their showroom displays CNC machines.

Fenton Winery & Brewery is not new to the Fenton area, however they moved from their Fenton city location on North LeRoy Street to 1370 North Long Lake Road earlier this year.

Linden

Located behind the Linden Hotel at 111 South Bridge St., **Ciaravella's** offers traditional Italian brick-oven pizza, plus pasta, subs, salads and breadsticks available for take-out. Toppings are made from traditional Italian meats and vegetables.

Linden Day Spa offers different massage therapies from around the world. They are located at 114 South Bridge Street.

Memories and More is located at 918 North Bridge Street. They sell vintage items, antiques and collectibles. They offer many rooms full of items.

The French Confection is a boutique bakery located in downtown Linden, customizing in tortes, weddings, confections and upscale design.

Earthworks Florist is a full service florist, located at 114 South Broad.

The Steelman Agency is locally owned and operated in Linden. They offer home, auto, and business insurance.

Dr. Nicole Wax, orthodontist, is located at 100 South Bridge St.

Holly

Here's a rundown of businesses that opened in 2014 in the Holly Village, according to the Holly Downtown Development Authority.

Uptown — McDonald's (total renovation), LA Photography, and Real Estate One.

Midtown — Holly Vision Source, Wilkinson Auto Repair, Dollar General, Allstate Insurance, and Hair & Body Works.

Downtown — Shops at 101, Inspiration Arts & Crafts Workshop, Past Tense Books, Renovo, Earthy Origins, Andy's Place, Heads Up Salon, Ghost Town Vintage, and Treasure Alley Boutique.



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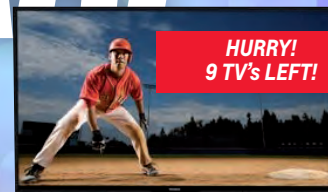
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