



2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

INSIDE THIS EDITION



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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2019

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Semi hauling pickles crashes into Owen Road overpass

■ Driver of truck reports steering wheel stiffened causing him to veer from highway

By Sharon Stone

Fenton — At 1:28 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 26, Fenton police and fire departments responded to a semi truck hauling pickles

See SEMI TRUCK on 17A



Photo: Tim Jagiello

Swanson of Fenton Township is interim sheriff

■ Sheriff Pickell's last day is Jan. 5, 2020, new sheriff will be elected November 2020

By Sharon Stone

Genesee County Undersheriff Christopher Swanson of Fenton Township was named interim Genesee County sheriff on Monday, Dec. 23. A new sheriff will be elected in November 2020.

See SHERIFF on 17A



Christopher Swanson

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“Let me think about this — \$10,000 plus interest for 15 years or \$2,000 plus interest for five years. That would be the same as \$6,000 for 15 years. Plus, if I sell my house I have a smaller assessment to pay off. What am I missing here on Margaret Drive assessment?”



“I wish to thank the Linden Presbyterian Church for helping me in my time of need. Merry Christmas.”



“May I encourage everyone on both sides to think for yourself and not rely on single media sources. I think that 95 percent of TV/radio network and cable news lies through commission or omission of information.”



COMMENT
OF THE WEEK

“I would like to say ‘thank you’ to our law enforcement and first responders and a very Merry Christmas.”



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2008 GMC Envoy SLE..... \$4,488	2012 Chevrolet Cruze LS..... \$5,690	2008 Chevrolet Avalanche 1500 LT LT2..... \$7,695	2012 Chrysler 200 Limited..... \$8,895
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2007 Chevrolet Equinox LS..... \$4,495	2008 Ford Edge Limited..... \$5,795	2007 GMC Sierra 1500 Classic WT..... \$7,895	2011 GMC Terrain SLT-2..... \$8,995
2000 Chevrolet S-10 LS..... \$4,695	2009 GMC Acadia SLE-1..... \$5,797	2009 Buick Enclave CXL 3RD Row..... \$7,973	2009 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 LT..... \$8,995
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Gone, but never forgotten

■Lives lost during 2019

By Vera Hogan

Although each year the Times obituary pages are filled with the names of loved ones who lost their lives, there are many whose deaths resulted in a news story. This year, there were 16 of those deaths



Alberta Martin

as opposed to 24 lives lost in 2018 and 35 in 2017.

They are, in order of the date of their deaths:

A l b e r t a Martin, 95, of Fenton Township, died Jan.

1 of natural causes. She was a long-time Lake Fenton school board member.

See **LIVES LOST** on 9A

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

The lighter side of the Times

■People make the news interesting, entertaining and heartwarming in 2019

By Sally Rummel

Front page news is usually filled with accidents, tragedies and crime, but there’s more news inside the Times that tells you about your friends, neighbors, co-workers and interesting events going on around you. We call it the “lighter side of the Times,” and here are a few samplings from 2019 that made headlines:

See **LIGHTER SIDE** on 20A



David Nickels of Holly Township has sailed since age 13. His father was the first of four generations of Nickels in the Fenton Sailing Club. *Times* file photo

Notable court cases in 2019

■Crimes range from embezzlement, fraud, sexual assault to homicide

By Sharon Stone

For our annual year in review, the Times summarizes newsworthy court cases in the tri-county area over the past year. These cases are in alphabetical order.

Abdu Akl

After more than two years, the murder trial of Abdurrahman “Abdu” Ahmed Akl was to begin

Tuesday, Oct. 1 in Genesee County 7th Circuit Court. However, Judge Richard Yuille set a new date to

See **COURT CASES** on 11A



Abdu Akl



Doug Fairbanks



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Words with Hannah

Returning to the '20s

I want to go to huge parties with live bands and cocktails. I want a giant closet with beautiful shirts and dresses galore.

Most importantly, I want to live in a mansion and watch a symbolic green light from across the water.

Like every American, I read "The Great Gatsby" in high school. I loved it. It was daring. Fun. Heart-breaking. A bit ostentatious, but not the kind that made you angry. Learning about the American Dream and the '20s was always a bit surreal in high school, because children usually grow up thinking they can do anything and be anything they want.

It's a bit ironic that two of the greatest classics, "Gatsby" and "Death of a Salesman," are about how becoming obsessed with the American Dream can lead to your downfall. On the surface, it seems like maybe not the best lesson to teach kids, but both are excellent cautionary tales.

One of my favorite things in "Gatsby" is the point of view. While the main characters and the main conflict

is between Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan, the story is told through the eyes of Nick Carraway, Jay's neighbor and Daisy's cousin.

It may appear strange that the story isn't told through the eyes of the main character, but the type of story deserves an outside perspective to analyze behavior.

Endless parties. A show of wealth meant to be elegant. But it's all hollow. Money buys fake friends. After the parties end, people are alone. This sort of happiness is fleeting.

We're headed into a new

decade, which is as wild as Gatsby's fictional parties.

I want many things in life, and this book (plus the amazing movie) helped me shape my goals as a teenager. These lessons are worth repeating.

Wealth, to a certain point where you're not struggling financially, can only buy you so much fulfillment. Party hard, but not to the point where you end up dead in a pool.

The book also helped me realize the importance of personal goals and projects. Goals that solely rely on you to accomplish build independence and discipline. Trying to impress others only gets you so far.

See **HANNAH** on 15A



Hannah Ball

Lost Female Cat

Her name is **CLEO**

She has long brown and white rag doll hair, declawed, no collar. Near Oregon Circle and Jeffers Lane.

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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.

GOVERNOR WHITMER, WHEN are you going to fix the damn roads and lower car insurance? I think you're a fraud and lied to get in office.

■■■
IF ARTICLES OF impeachment are not presented to the Senate, no impeachment has occurred. I think Nancy Pelosi has put the Democrats in a very strange position.

■■■
SLOTKIN IS NOT a Socialist in the slightest bit.

■■■
WE ARE LEARNING that Obama led one of the most corrupt presidencies in history (criminal FBI, CIA, NSA, etc.; 2) Fox News ratings trounce CNN and MSNBC; 3) Trump remains strong against Russia, China, Iran, etc., (remember Obama apologizing for American greatness) and 4) Trump is getting record-breaking contributions.

■■■
TWO INVASIVE SILVER carp have been caught in southwestern Minnesota after essentially sneaking into the state through the back door, marking the first confirmed discovery of the jumping fish in that area.

Compiled by Tim Jagielo, media editor

How has your life changed in the past decade?

| street talk



"It changed quite a bit. I got married, got a house, had two kids, lost two kids. I just surprised my wife with a puppy yesterday."

Derek Jinks
Flint Township



"I graduated from Holly High School, graduated from college, moved to North Carolina and got married. I became a teacher."

Katie Davis
Charlotte, North Carolina



"We became empty nesters, snowbirds, two of our children are married. We downsized and bought a condo and a place in Florida."

Debbie Bommarito
Fenton



"It's gotten twice as long, technically speaking. I've gone from not having much to do to having almost too much to do; it's stressful but rewarding."

Chase Pronger
Milford Township



"I bought the bookstore. My husband passed away. I moved into a condo. I'm on (the) Beautification (Commission). We're doing okay."

Karen Piacentini
Fenton

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2019 saw major growth in city of Fenton

■ Road conditions continue to be a problem, especially with added new traffic

By Vera Hogan

If two words could best describe what happened in the city of Fenton in 2019, they are “explosive growth.” In all corners of the city, there have been new buildings erected and existing facilities renovated.

The following is just a sampling:

The eagerly anticipated Horizon Building at Silver Lake Road and N. LeRoy Street was completed and now houses the popular Andiamo restaurant, featuring Italian fare.

The third floor is occupied by Serra Automotive personnel, and the second by The Horizon Group of Raymond James Financial Advisors.

Just down the street, 111 LeRoy Place is currently under construction. Although there were several delays, the new building will be open for residential and retail uses some time in 2020.



Construction projects such as 111 LeRoy Place are indicators of Fenton's continued development. *Times file photo*

At least two of the historic buildings in downtown Fenton were repurposed in 2019. Jason Warda, owner of The Barn Restaurant on Torrey Road opened the Fenton Pub on S. LeRoy Street. Ciao

Italian Bistro and Wine Bar opened on the same stretch nearby, giving patrons another Italian food option.

Preferring a downtown location, REJUVE AVE Skin Spa moved from its S. LeRoy Street location to its newly constructed building at the corner of Mill Street and Adelaide.

Across town, a new development was constructed where the Big Boy and Pizza Hut once stood. This new development houses a Verizon store, Jersey Mike's sub shop, a Thai restaurant, Sports Clips haircuts and Starbucks.

The Meeting Place restaurant is now open where the Bob Evans Restaurant used to be and around the corner on Silver Parkway, the big Kmart renovation project is now complete. It houses TJ Maxx, Skechers and Five Below. In the spring of 2020, Oshkosh B'Gosh/Carters and Michael's will locate in the same complex.

Further down Silver Parkway a major facelift took place where Sally Beauty Supply, the UPS Store and other retailers are located. A courtyard was added and more improvements are expected.

ROADS

With all the new restaurants and stores that have come to the city, it appears that the economy is alive and well in the city of Fenton, unlike the city's roads. Voters rejected paying 5 mills for 10 years in November of 2018, and officials and

administrators have yet to find a way to fund much-needed road repairs.

In the meantime, the Department of Public Works worked on a new road-patching program. They started on major streets first before moving on to residential streets.

ROUNDBOUT

While it was the subject of many complaints, the new roundabout at Torrey and North roads was completed in 2019, and it appears to have aided in regulating a once-difficult intersection.

The cost for the entire project was \$1.34 million. It opened to traffic in early November — finishing touches will be completed in the spring of 2020.

FAILED PATHWAY

Citizens in the three municipalities that make up SLPR (Southern Lakes Parks and Recreation) were asked to amend the SLPR charter to include a levy and collection of 1.2 mills for 10 years, from 2019 to 2028, to provide funds for non-motorized recreational paths and facilities in Fenton, Fenton Township and Linden.

The millage was expected to raise just over \$1.4 million in the first year. The estimated cost of the pathways is almost \$14 million.

In May, the ballot question failed in all three communities. In order for the proposal to pass, each municipality would have had to have approve it. The reasons for failure were many, including people who claimed they want their roads fixed first. Others still said they simply could not afford another millage.

Organizers vow to keep at it and find a way to fund the pathway.

ELECTIONS

Fenton City Council elections resulted in two incumbents being ousted in November. Nancy Draves and Cherie Smith lost their seats on the council, while former councilman Brad Jacob, newcomer Sean Sage and incumbent Pat Lockwood were elected.

Although Mayor Sue Osborn was challenged by long-time former Councilwoman Cheryl King, Osborn was re-elected. She has served more than 20 years as mayor.



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Holly area — progress and exciting projects

■ Village and townships experience growth in unique ways in 2019

By Tim Jagielo

The Holly area might be enjoyed and known as a sleepy “bedroom” community for residents, but the area comprised of Holly Village, and the townships of Holly, Rose and Groveland, have been anything but sleepy in 2019.

This area continues to grow along with their neighboring cities like Fenton and Grand Blanc.

Big changes came to Holly Village as a new police chief was hired. Chief Michael Story resigned suddenly in August. Lake Orion Police Chief Jerry Narsh was hired and his first day was Dec. 9.

The Holly Fire Department moved to a new location in midtown with official occupancy in October. The project cost just under \$500,000 and is twice the size of the former Broad Street location.

“We accomplished a lot and made progress on so many projects,” said



Perhaps one of the most high-profile Holly-area projects is the Holly Oaks ORV Park. This photo was taken at a private event in spring of 2019. It's set to open in summer 2020. *Times file photo*

Katy Golden, Holly Downtown Development Authority director and assistant village manager.

Holly Village acquired a \$150,000 grant for the Union Depot project. The DDA offered matching funds to refresh the look of several downtown properties.

Ongoing projects in Holly Township achieved milestones, such as the heritage farmstead structural work that was needed before development could continue.

Less visual and exciting projects are nonetheless important and clear

“We’re not going to be a sleepy little burg anymore.”

George Kullis

Holly Township supervisor

the way for more projects to come. “We’ve spent time with new ordinances, for the wind and solar, agro tourism,” Supervisor George Kullis said. “Holly’s growing.”

Some policies and procedures need to be updated to allow for growth to come, such as in the Dixie Highway corridor project. “We’re not going to be a sleepy little burg anymore,” Kullis said.

The first resident in Riverside Gardens, of the Pulte subdivision moved in this October. Kullis said approximately 15 homes are under construction in the previously stalled subdivision.

Kullis said numerous meetings have been held to rebuild North Holly Road. They’re also working to make it easier for residents to divide and sell land.

See HOLLY on 19A



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If there are more applicants to enroll in a specific grade than there are spaces available, students shall be selected using a public lottery process.

The lottery, if necessary, is scheduled to occur on Friday, March 20, 2020 at 9:00am.

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Dr. Nicole Wax of Dr. Wax Orthodontics is constructing a new building that will serve as an anchor for downtown Linden. **Times file photo**

Many changes for downtown Linden

■ From Dr. Wax building to proposed changes at corner gas station to hiring of new clerk

By Hannah Ball

In 2019, Linden City saw dramatic changes in the downtown area. Construction started on the new two-story building owned by Dr. Nicole Wax of Dr. Wax Orthodontics at the northeast corner of Bridge and Broad streets. When it's completed in 2020, it will

be home to three businesses and Dr. Wax Orthodontics. Included in the plans are about two dozen new parking spaces.

Right across the street from the new building could be the new Beacon & Bridge gas station and market. Owners Quick-Sav Food Stores are working on plans to rebuild with the market at the intersection. The property currently has four pump stations on the north end of the property and a 2,240-square-foot convenience store on the south portion.

The owners wish to expand to eight pump stations and a 2,592-square-foot convenience store, with the gas station located south of the building. The plans involve tearing down the current gas station and the vacant building at 111 S. Bridge St.

Another significant change in 2019 were the efforts to monitor and clean up the underground gasoline leak discovered in 2014 with the installation of 22 monitoring wells. The wells connect to an underground piping system that will remove contaminated groundwater and soil gas as corrective action.

The public restroom at Eagle's Wooden Park was finished in 2019.

The Linden City Council hired Ellen Glass as city manager, relieving Police Chief Scott Sutter who took over as interim. The city also hired a new clerk, Tessa Wightman, following the departure of former clerk Erica Armstrong.

In May, voters shot down a millage that would have collected funds for a non-motorized pathway through Linden, Fenton and Fenton Township.

In April, a motorist struck the side of Linden City Hall, damaging the side of the building. The damage has not yet been fixed.

When it comes to events, Linden saw thousands of participants. In November, while the city was adorned with Christmas decorations along the streets, volunteers held a tree lighting ceremony for the first time called Cocoa and Carols.

In December, the 2019 Linden Holiday Happening attracted more than 5,000 to the Frosty Parade, fireworks, and a chance to meet Santa.

In June, the annual Gus Macker basketball tournament was a huge hit with thousands of participants.

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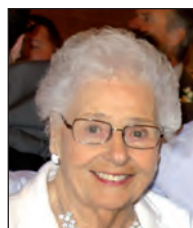
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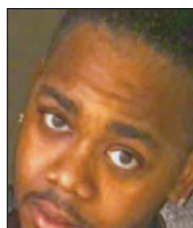
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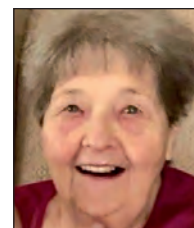
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Stephen
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LIVES LOST

Continued from Page 3A

Robert "Stan" Lee, a 37-year veteran of the Fenton Fire Department, died Jan. 15 in Fenton Township. He was 76 years old.

DuWayne D. Stratman, 77, of Fenton Township, died March 5 after a brief illness in Sun City, Arizona. He was the founder of the Fenton Township Fire Department and first fire chief since 1975 and retired as assistant chief in 2000.

Bobbie Sue Hall, 52, died as a result of a Rose Township house fire on March 20.

Nancy Petruska, 89, of Fenton, died in Novi on June 15 of natural causes. She and her husband Edward H. Petruska started the Fenton Education Foundation's Nancy and Edward Petruska Lifetime Achievement in Education Award.

Clarence Coleman, 27, of Flint died in a vehicle crash on Owen Road at U.S. 23 on July 12. A 25-year-old Mt. Morris driver survived the crash.

Jack Williams, 61, of Byron died as a result of a motorcycle crash at

Torrey and Grand Blanc roads on July 14. He was the president of the Barons Motorcycle Club.

David Osborn, 69, of Fenton, lost his battle with pancreatic cancer at home July 27. He was the husband of Fenton's long-time mayor, Sue Osborn.

Viola Ward, 80, of Fenton, died Aug. 18 of natural causes. She was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, and was a life member of the VFW Auxiliary #3245. She was active in the organization up to her death.

John Ely, 52, of Tyrone Township was traveling east on White Lake Road on a 2005 Harley-Davidson on Aug. 29. His motorcycle veered off the right side of the roadway and he was killed.

Parker Dagenais, 20, of Fenton, was killed in a traffic crash on I-75 in Cheboygan County on Oct. 13. He was on his way back to Lake Superior State University where he was a junior.

Sebastian Alexander Tyll, 20, of Fenton, died Oct. 18 as a result of a car crash at MSU in Lansing.

Maureen LaFontaine, 73, died suddenly Oct. 28. She was the matriarch of

the LaFontaine automotive group.

Daniel Morgan, 49, of Tyrone Township died Wednesday, Oct. 30 following an automobile crash at U.S. 23 and Highland Road in Hartland Township. The crash may have been caused by Morgan experiencing an unknown medical issue.

Ron Lockwood, 77, of Fenton, lost

his battle with cancer Nov. 5. He was the husband of Fenton Mayor Pro Tem Patricia "Pat" Lockwood.

Stephen Bale, 52, of Fenton died Nov. 25 after he was struck in his wheelchair on Owen Road near Speedway in Fenton.

Bruce Dorland, 89, died Nov. 29. He served as the Fenton City Fire Chief from 1964 to 1969.

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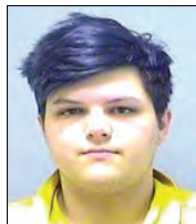
COURT CASES

Continued from Page 3A

hear this case for Dec. 3, which was adjourned. No new court dates are scheduled. Akl is charged with the fatal shooting of Brady Alan Morris on March 4, 2017 at Akl's family home on Lake Fenton in Fenton Township.

If Akl is found guilty as charged, "He could be sentenced to life without parole or he could be sentenced to a term of years with 25-40 years as a minimum," said John Potbury, deputy chief assistant prosecutor for Genesee County on Monday, Sept. 30.

Akl, now 18, was 16 when the shooting occurred. Morris also was 16. Akl was arrested the night of the shooting and with bond denied, he has been in custody at the Genesee Valley Regional Center ever since.



Eric Scott
Andrews Jr.

Eric Scott Andrews Jr.

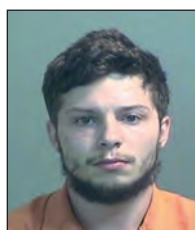
Eric Andrews Jr., 21, of Grand Blanc, was charged earlier this year with recording five coworkers in the Fenton Tim Horntons bathroom. He pleaded guilty to three of the 26 felony charges against him for six different crimes. The plea deal was in exchange for dismissing the remaining 23 charges. On Nov. 22, he was sentenced to 36 to 240 months in prison.

The Michigan State Police said Andrews illegally videotaped coworkers. He also videotaped his best friend and her boyfriend in the bathroom at Andrews' grandparents' home in Grand Blanc Township without their knowledge.

Stephanie Blackburn

Along with paying restitution of \$5,000, Stephanie Suzanne Blackburn, 41, of Argentine Township, was sentenced July 17 to pay court fines of \$770 and be on probation for one year. She also wrote an apology letter to the victims. She was arraigned in Genesee County 67th District Court on one felony count of embezzlement (agent or trustee) of an amount between \$1,000 and \$19,999. She pleaded no contest.

She entered a plea agreement in May, which reduced the charge to a misdemeanor. She paid the full restitution amount May 31.



Floyd Blalock Jr.

Floyd Blalock Jr.

Floyd Blalock, 22, accepted a guilty plea on a manslaughter charge and felony firearms charge in Genesee County 67th District Court in March for the Sept. 22, 2018 shooting death of Christopher Baldwin, 28.

Blalock shot Baldwin in an apartment in the 16000 block of S. Seymour Road in Argentine Township on Sept. 22, 2018. Argentine Police Chief Daniel Allen said police were told that Blalock removed the magazine from the weapon and believed the gun was unloaded when he aimed it at his friend. The police chief said, despite pulling out the magazine, a bullet remained in the chamber.

Frank Borge Fell III

Frank Borge Fell III, 73, of Linden has two court cases involving child pornography in Genesee County. One court case dates back to June 2017 with Argentine Township Police Department. The second court case dates back to February 2018 with the Michigan State Police-Flint Post (MSP).



Frank Borge
Fell III

With the Argentine case, Fell faces 10 felonies related to possessing child sexually abusive material and using a computer to commit the crime. With the case investigated by MSP Computer Crimes Unit, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, he faces 20 felonies related to possessing child sexually abusive material and using a computer to commit the crime. A combined jury trial is set for March 17, 2020.

Robert Abraham Clark

Robert Clark, 31, of Fenton, was arraigned Nov. 7 in Genesee County 67th District Court on five charges including malicious destruction of a building, larceny from a building, indecent exposure and two counts of resisting/assaulting a police officer.

The charges stem from incidents in



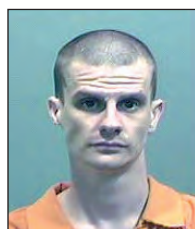
Robert
Abraham Clark

downtown Fenton in the early morning hours of Sunday, Sept. 22. Fenton police obtained arrest warrants from the county prosecutor's office. On Dec. 11, Clark pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of malicious destruction of property. He was given credit for 38 days served in the county jail and the case was closed.

Clark also faces pending charges of burglary, criminal damage to property, concealing identity, falsifying title and registration (altering), and resisting, evading or obstructing an officer in Roswell, New Mexico stemming from an Oct. 1 incident.

Frederick Clark, Christian Lee Lover and Mataya Delores Shaw

The three individuals charged with premeditated, first-degree homicide and conspiracy to commit murder in the death of Austin Culkins, 20, were scheduled to begin a jury trial in Genesee County Circuit Court on April 30. It didn't happen.



Frederick Clark



Christian Lee
Lover



Mataya Delores
Shaw

Clark and Lover's jury trials were set to begin Nov. 19, however, the court postponed the start of the jury trial to March 10, 2020.

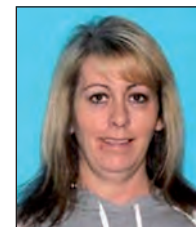
Shaw pleaded

guilty to an amended charge of second-degree murder and to deliver a controlled substance causing death. She could be sentenced 25 years to life. Her sentencing date is set for March 27, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

Shaw pleaded

Angela Cockerham and Russell Cockerham

Russell Cockerham, 49, of Highland Township, was sentenced June 11 to two to 40 years in prison on drug and weapons charges. He was arrested Aug. 2, 2018 during a raid at a senior care facility run by his wife, Angela Cockerham.



Angela
Cockerham



Russell
Cockerham

Angela Cockerham was charged with felony possession of cocaine. On Aug. 8, 2018, she turned herself in and was released on bond. Court records show no further information regarding her arrest or subsequent action.

Leonard Cwiklinski

Leonard Cwiklinski, 67, of Fenton Township was arraigned Oct. 5 on one count of false report or threat of terrorism in Genesee County 67th District Court. The charge is a 20-year felony if convicted. Fenton police said the manager of a bank in Fenton called police to report a threatening voicemail left for bank employees. A man, later identified as Cwiklinski, left the message allegedly saying he was upset with bank services and wanted to withdraw his money.

During a court hearing Oct. 30, the Cwiklinski was referred for a competency evaluation. A review hearing is set for Jan. 6, 2020.

Elena Danishevskaya

Elena Danishevskaya of Davisburg, a former Holly police chief, pleaded guilty April 25 to two misdemeanor counts of willful failure to uphold the law in Van Buren County Circuit Court. As part of her plea agreement, 15 related felonies were dismissed by the court.

CONTINUED on Page 13A



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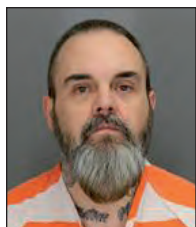
Continued from Page 11A

Elena
Danishevskaya

She was sentenced to community service on the misdemeanors. She also must permanently relinquish her license to be a police officer in Michigan.

Jeremy Michael Heath

Jeremy Heath, 43, formerly of Holly Township was arrested on an outstanding warrant in August in Wyoming.



Jeremy
Michael Heath

He's a suspect in a homicide in Holly Township nearly a decade ago. Authorities in Gillette, Campbell County, Wyoming picked up Heath on an outstanding arrest warrant out of Michigan for assault. He was transported back to Michigan. He is currently lodged in the Oakland County Jail facing assault, receiving stolen property, contempt of court and a probation violation.



Bruce Holder

Bruce Holder

Bruce Holder, 47, of Fenton Township, was sentenced Oct. 10 to two years in prison after pleading no contest to two counts of felony firearms and one felony count of assault with a dangerous weapon related to a road rage incident Dec. 19, 2018. Upon release, he will have three years of probation.

Chanell Flemming, KK Lavon McGilary and Marquis Raekwon Boykins

Chanell
Flemming

The three suspects who were charged with unarmed robbery of a Fenton jewelry store May 23, 2018 are in prison.

Chanell Flemming, 30, of Detroit, was sen-



KK Lavon
McGilary

tenced April 12. She will serve up to two years for her part in a smash-and-grab robbery that occurred at Kay Jewelers. She had similar but unrelated charges in Macomb County, where she was sentenced to up to three years in prison.

KK Lavon McGilary, 29, of Detroit, will serve three to 15 years in prison for his part in the smash-and-grab. He, too, had similar but unrelated charges



Marquis
Raekwon
Boykins

in Macomb County, where he had already been sentenced to three to 15 years in prison.

Marquis Raekwon Boykins, 19, of Detroit, was sentenced to two to 15 years in prison.

Charles Elmore Jones III

Charles Elmore Jones III, 23, of Fenton was arraigned March 1 on two counts of assaulting, resisting, and obstructing a police officer causing injury, a four-year felony. He also was charged with one count of attempting to disarm a police officer, a five-year felony.

While police were talking with Jones, police said he became more irate and allegedly assaulted the officers. A struggle ensued with the two officers before additional backup arrived. During the struggle, Jones allegedly attempted to grab the firearm of one of the officers.

On Oct. 15, he pleaded no contest to an amended charge of assault/resist/obstruct a police officer. During his Nov. 25 sentencing hearing, he was sentenced to 24 months of probation and to pay all court fees.



Michael Dennis
Pollard

Michael Dennis Pollard

Michael Dennis Pollard, 44, of Flint, formerly of Fenton Town-

ship, was charged with two counts of criminal sexual conduct (CSC), which allegedly occurred in Fenton Township on May 27, 2018. Pollard was arraigned in December 2018 in 67th District Court on one count of first-degree CSC and one count of second-degree CSC. A pretrial hearing has been set for Jan. 9, 2020 at 10 a.m.

David Rollins

David Christopher Rollins, 17, of Linden pleaded guilty as charged during his arraignment May 15 in Oakland County Circuit Court. He faced one felony count of carrying a concealed weapon and one count of receiving and concealing a weapon. On Aug.

7, he was sentenced to 120 days in the Oakland County Jail, with credit for 45 days already served. Released, he is on probation for two years. In a separate 2018 Genesee County case, Rollins was sentenced Dec. 9 to two years of probation after he pleaded guilty Oct. 16 to one felony count of breaking and entering with intent to steal.

Michael Todd Sackrider

On, May 9, 2018 two criminal sexual cases against Michael Sackrider, 53, of Fenton Township were bound over to Genesee County Circuit Court for trial. He's facing one count of first-degree CSC and one count of second-degree CSC.

With the second case, he was charged with one felony count of third-degree CSC with an incapacitated victim. This alleged incident took place in July 2017, according to court records. A jury trial is set for Jan. 8, 2020.

John Tomlinson

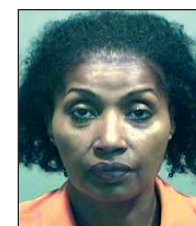
John Tomlinson, 57, of Flint, faces six charges of CSC related to three women alleging that he took advantage of them at his hypnotherapy office in Grand Blanc. He was arraigned on one count of first-de-



John Tomlinson

gree criminal sexual conduct, one count of unlawful imprisonment, and one count of assault by strangulation for an alleged incident that took place on April 17, 2017.

He was arraigned in June 2017 in two cases. According to Deputy Chief Assistant Prosecutor John Potbury, additional charges were filed, including four counts of CSC second-degree, involving two new alleged female victims who came forward after news broke of the first case. Those incidents were alleged to have occurred between March 2013 and August 2015. A jury trial is set to begin Feb. 26, 2020.



Jacquelyne Fay
Tyson

Jacquelyne Fay Tyson

Jacquelyne Fay Tyson, 57, of Grand Blanc, was sentenced to life in prison Aug. 8. She was found mentally ill and guilty of second-degree murder and other

charges in the Genesee County 7th Circuit Court, nearly three years after she fatally shot Lyric Work, 20, formerly of Linden, and Tamara Johnson, 45, from Mt. Morris.

Tyson also was found guilty and mentally ill beyond a reasonable doubt on three other counts, including two counts of felony firearm and one count of premeditated murder in the first degree.



Douglas William
Walsh

Douglas William Walsh

Douglas Walsh, 62, formerly of Linden, faces six criminal sexual conduct charges in Genesee County Circuit Court. Each count involves a person under the

age of 13. The offenses date back to 2012, according to court records. If convicted, he could face up to 15 years in prison, according to the Michigan Penal Code. A trial is set to begin Jan. 29, 2020.

CONTINUED on Page 15A

Most viewed stories of 2019

■ Crashes, fires, pranks and one unauthorized drawbridge

By Hannah Ball

In 2019, the Tri-County Times had nearly three million page views at myfenton.com. Car crashes, online scams, fires, and a missing teen and weapons, were some of our most read stories.

1. Icy roads result in fatal car crash, 45,000 views

On Thursday, Nov. 7, a 40-year-old Flint man was killed and a 45-year-old Fenton woman was hospitalized in serious condition following an automobile crash in Rose Township. The incident happened on Hickory Ridge Road near Pellet Drive.

2. Home of The Rock Church pastor destroyed by fire, 42,000 views

On Saturday, May 18, the home of Wes Morris, pastor of The Rock Church in Fenton, was destroyed by a fire. Morris and his wife, Erin, were in Cuba when it

happened, and their five children were at home with a babysitter. Everyone got out okay and no one was hurt.

3. Unauthorized drawbridge installed on Lobdell Lake, 39,000 views

On Monday, July 8, an unauthorized drawbridge was installed from Whitehead Drive to Turtle Island on Lobdell Lake. What followed was weeks of complaints from neighbors and lake riparians. The drawbridge was taken out in August.

4. Exploding grill causes house fire on Lake Farms Court, 34,000 views

On Monday, May 27, six fire departments responded to a house fire on Lake Farms Court, off Silver Lake Road, in Fenton Township. An exploding grill caused the fire.

5. Gabapentin now classified as controlled substance, 29,000 views

In January, In an effort to continue to



A 40-year-old Flint man was killed in early November when his car collided head-on with another car on Hickory Ridge Road in Rose Township. **Times file photo**

combat the opioid epidemic in Michigan, the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) modified its Pharmacy Rules to categorize Gabapentin as a Schedule 5 controlled substance.

6. "It's just been really overwhelming," 21,000 views

On Wednesday, Oct. 9, a Linden couple's house went up in flames after electrical issues. Linden Fire Chief Brian Will was on scene first, followed by the fire departments of Linden, Fenton City, Fenton Township, Argentine Township and Mundy Township.

7. Linden teen arrested in Holly, 20,000 views

Area schools were placed on secure mode Tuesday morning, March 12, while several police departments investigated a report of an unaccounted Linden teen and four stolen weapons.

David Christopher Rollins, 17-year-old Linden male, was taken into custody and arrested several hours later in Holly. In August, he was sentenced to 120 days in the Oakland County Jail.

8. Injury crash on U.S. 23 involves jackknifed semi and minivan, 18,000 views

On Friday, July 26, emergency personnel responded to a crash on U.S. 23 under the Thompson Road overpass. At least two people were hurt.

9. Fenton schools superintendent reacts to senior prank, 16,000 views

Superintendent Adam Hartley responded to an incident that took place Thursday, May 17, in which a small number of students and a staff member wore "Cholo Day" attire.

10. Social Security benefits to increase in 2020, 15,000 views

On Dec. 3, Social Security Administration (SSA) announced that 69 million Americans will see a 1.6-percent increase in their Social Security benefits and SSI payments in 2020.

Stories with the most Facebook engagement

• **75,298 people reached on March 22** — The Times helped spread information about a missing dog, which was returned to its owner.

• **65,933 people reached on March 12** — A student took four weapons from home and failed to show up for school. This was the start of the David Christopher Rollins, 17, case.

• **57,091 people reached on Nov. 4** — The Argentine dam broke.

• **55,027 people reached on Nov. 30** — The son of a Fenton Township family enlisted police to help him propose to his girlfriend. The video appeared on Good Morning America and received traction from local readers.

• **46,142 people reached on Nov. 29** — The story about a Fenton doctor who could spend two years in prison for her role in a healthcare fraud case that caused an approximate \$8 million loss to Medicare and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan drew more than 40,000 views.

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Continued from Page 13A

**GENESEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE -
GENESEE HUMAN OPPRESSION STRIKE
TEAM 'GHOST' INVESTIGATIONS**Kevin Robert
Choma**Kevin Robert
Choma**

Kevin Robert Choma, 57, of Fenton, was arraigned June 24 on three felonies, including one count of accosting children for immoral purposes, one count of child sexually abusive activity and one count of using a computer/internet to commit the crime. His arrest came after an investigation by the Genesee Human Oppression Strike Team (GHOST), a newly formed task force within the Genesee County Sheriff's Office. A jury trial is set for Jan. 8, 2020.



David Pfenning

David Pfenning

David Pfenning, 49, of Davisburg was charged with three felonies involving child abusive communication activity, accosting children and using a computer to commit the crimes. His jury trial is set to begin Feb. 4, 2020.

HANNAH

Continued from Page 4A

The next decade will bring change. I don't know if F. Scott Fitzgerald anticipated the kind of advancements we have now, but one reason his book is still relevant is because people haven't changed much. There will always be Jay Gatsbys in the world. Same with Daisys and Nicks.

Coming into the '20s, my goal is to emulate a bit of each — Daisy's fun-loving spirit, Nick's introspection and trustworthiness, and Jay's optimism and fierce ability to love.

However, I think I'll skip the dying-in-the-pool part.

Welcome to the '20s.

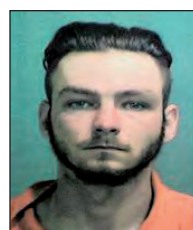
Opinions offered in this column are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Tri-County Times or its staff. Email Hannah Ball at hball@tctimes.com.



Carl Spradlin

Carl Spradlin

Carl Spradlin, 59, of Holly Township also faces charges following a GHOST investigation. He was charged with three felonies involving child abusive communication activity, accosting children and using a computer to commit the crimes. He has a pre-trial hearing Jan. 17, 2020 at 8:15 a.m.



Kurtis Statler

Kurtis Statler

Kurtis Statler, 25, of Fenton Township was charged with three felonies involving child abusive communication activity, accosting children and using a computer to commit the crimes. He has a pre-trial hearing Jan. 31, 2020.



Patrick Tulip

Patrick Tulip

Patrick Tulip, 51, of Gaines, was charged with three felonies involving child abusive communication activity, accosting children and using a computer to commit the crimes. He has a status conference Jan. 27, 2020.



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The Times 2019 photos of the year



Emotional reunion

By Tim Jagielo

The Times photos of the year were selected by me, Tim Jagielo, media editor.

Photos are selected based on visual appeal but also whether they depict important events of the year. These don't have to be hard-hitting or tragic news events. In reality, there are few "news" photos selected this year.

It's not that fires or crashes didn't happen, but none of the photos stood out against these selections.

Most of the photos were taken by yours truly, but photos by staff reporter Hannah Ball, and drone photographer (and chief technology officer) Fred Moses were also included.

Feature photos (see online)

Some photos are just plain fun and were selected for their color and energy, like the parachute photo at Fenton's World of Wonder Early Childhood Center.

Others are about locals trying to make a difference internationally — like the World Vision 6K race in Flint.

Hannah Ball covered events designed to bridge understanding with

students, like her Down Syndrome Awareness Day photos (right).

News Features

Such photos included a family waiting for a verdict in a criminal sexual conduct case.

A small town conflict over an illegal bridge on Lobdell Lake drew national attention and was captured by both Moses and Ball.

Others involve emotional reunions between Editor Sharon Stone and Pam Powell, the recipient of her son Brad's lungs embracing at his namesake golf outing.

Ball also reported on NARCAN anti-opioid overdose training in Holly; a reflection of our times.

A portrait of Times General Manager Jennifer Ward and Publisher Wes Smith at Michigan Web Press, where the Times is printed each week, marked the beginning of a new relationship with The View Newspaper Group.

At the end of the year, it's good for anyone to review their personal photos and see where they've been and what they've accomplished.



Down Syndrome Awareness Day



NARCAN training



Waiting for verdict



View Newspaper Group



Ramadan celebration



Illegal drawbridge



Cornerstone building flood damage

Fenton Township man faces 14 felonies

■ Arraigned Dec. 20 on charges related to possessing child sexually abusive materials

The Michigan State Police (MSP) Computer Crimes Unit, Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force announced the arrest of Robert Allen Langdon, 53 of Fenton Township, for possession of child sexually abusive materials and using a computer to commit a crime.

Langdon turned himself in following an investigation in which digital evidence was seized from his home.

The investigation was initiated when it was learned that Langdon was viewing child sexually abusive materials on the internet.

Following a forensic examination of the digital evidence, Langdon was charged with seven counts of possession of child sexually abusive materials and seven counts of using a computer to commit a crime.

Langdon was arraigned in 67th District Court on Friday, Dec. 20.

The MSP Computer Crimes Unit encourages parents to speak to their children about the safe use of the internet. There are many resources available to parents to assist in keeping children safe online. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children provides a comprehensive list of resources on their website at missingkids.org.

The MSPICAC Task Force provides resources at michiganicac.com.

If you have information regarding possible child sexual exploitation, report it at missingkids.org/cybertipline.

SEMI TRUCK

Continued from Front Page

that caught fire at the Owen Road overpass of southbound U.S. 23. Fenton Township Fire Department responded with a tanker.

The highway and Owen Road were shut down while firefighters extinguished the flames. Motorists were urged to avoid the area.

The driver of the semi, a 63-year-old Jackson man, was able to get out of the truck and was treated for non-life threatening injuries. No other injuries were reported.

Lt. Jeff Cross of the Fenton Police Department said the driver reported that while he was traveling southbound on U.S. 23, the steering wheel of his truck became stiff to the point that he could not steer the truck. He braked and the truck veered to the right and up the embankment, where the truck hit the Owen Road overpass.

Cross said gawkers and stop-and-go traffic caused numerous secondary crashes in the area.

Just after 4 p.m., a tow truck equipped to handle this size of crash used a crane to lift up the damaged semi and remove it.

Representatives with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) were on site so that they could inspect the Owen Road overpass once the debris was cleared.

Westbound Owen Road, from the east side of U.S. 23 to the west side of the highway was closed through the afternoon.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

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ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL AND MCLAREN HEALTH CARE OFFICIALS SIGN LETTER OF INTENT

St. Luke's Hospital and McLaren Health Care, Grand Blanc, have signed a letter of intent to define ways that the two organizations will work together to best meet the needs of the communities they serve. McLaren Health Care is a fully integrated health network with 14 hospitals,

ambulatory surgery centers, imaging centers, 490 employed primary and specialty care physicians, commercial and Medicaid HMOs, home health and hospice providers serving Michigan and Indiana. They operate Michigan's largest network of cancer centers and providers, anchored by the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center. As part of the potential integration, McLaren Health Care plans to make significant investments in St. Luke's Hospital to enhance services.

SHERIFF

Continued from Front Page

Sheriff Robert Pickell announced in October that he would retire after nearly 50 years in law enforcement. His last day on the job will be Jan. 5, 2020. Swanson will fill the sheriff role until the November 2020 election.

Swanson was competing for the title

with retired Michigan State Police command officer Phil Hart of Flint and Gerald Joseph Parks Jr., of Davison, who is a retired Genesee County sergeant.

An appointment committee, comprised of Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton, Chief Probate Judge Jennie Barkey and County Clerk John Gleason, selected Swanson.



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HOT LINE CONTINUED

■ ■ ■
TO THE NON-Trump supporter. I laugh all day when people like you post. You are very brainwashed and do not even realize it. How sad. Tell me during the eight long years Obama was president do you remember seeing all these help wanted signs around? No we didn't.

■ ■ ■
CALL ALL THE witnesses to testify under oath and let the chips fall where they may.

IF YOU DO not need the great economy we have now please donate your money to the nearest charity. You will never open your eyes to reality and that is a real shame because you will continue to be in the dark.

■ ■ ■
MAYBE REPUBLICANS CAN try to explain why nine of the last 10 recessions were under a Republican president, and the 10th was only five months of Obama's first term. Nice job Republicans; keep ripping the Dems.

'Pig out' on New Year's Day for good luck!



PIG OUT!

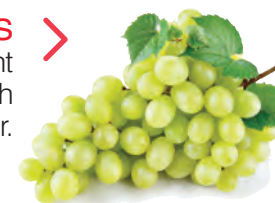
The Pennsylvania Dutch, as well as many other cultures, believe eating pork on New Year's Day brings good luck because pigs root around with their snouts in a forward motion. We want to move forward, not backward in the new year. They eat sauerkraut with the pork because it is cabbage, and cabbage is green like money (purple cabbage doesn't count).

Compiled By Vera Hogan
New Year's Day is when everyone should "pig out!" Seriously, eating pork on New Year's Day has long been considered to be lucky.

MORE GOOD LUCK TRADITIONS

GOOD GRAPES >

In Spain and Mexico, it is tradition as the clock strikes midnight to pop a grape in your mouth for each strike of the hour. Each little grape represents good luck for each month of the new year.



< SLURPING IS GOOD

If you want a long life, you should eat noodles on New Year's Day, a tradition in many Asian countries.



SOUTHERN-STYLE LUCK >

Black-eyed peas, leafy greens and a slab of cornbread are thought to bring prosperity in the new year. Peas represent coins, greens resemble paper money and corn bread symbolizes gold. It's a Southern New Year's Day tradition.



DON'T EAT THIS!

< FLY AWAY, LUCK

Chickens and turkeys scratch backward and we all want to move forward in the new year so skip the poultry. Also, anything with wings will fly away and take your luck with it.



SEA, IT'S NOT GOOD >

Don't eat lobster or crabs on New Year's Day. They can swim backwards and sideways and as we mentioned before, you always want to move forward in the new year.



< EAT YOUR COLORS

In Chinese culture, all white foods — eggs, white cheese, tofu — all are unlucky on New Year's Day because white is thought to symbolize death. No one needs that, so eat a lot of color Jan. 1.



AT A STAND STILL >

Skip the beef on New Year's, too. Cows eat standing still and that doesn't move you forward in the New Year.



Source: Mccall.com

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Things I want to 'go away' in 2020

We are a few days past the Christmas season — you know, the season when we should be celebrating peace on earth, goodwill toward men. Do we really take that to heart? I sometimes wonder.

To that end there are some things I would like to see end in 2020. First and foremost is the great divide among friends and family regarding President Donald Trump. Love him, hate him, whatever. Is anyone as sick of hearing about his every move as I am? Not just him, Nancy Pelosi and the gang, too!

I personally am saddened witnessing friends and families bickering over Trump. Perhaps bickering isn't the right word. What I mean is downright fighting. It's a terrible thing when you see a friend or family member you haven't seen in a while and have to reluctantly whisper, because you're afraid of the answer, "Are you a Trump fan, or ...?"

And I am sick of turning on the TV news in the morning only to find out what good or bad thing Trump did overnight. Enough already!

Americans have the right to choose their government leaders. But it used to be that our votes were private. No more. It's in your face every day. I am right and you are wrong is what everyone seems to be saying. Please stop!

Whether you like the man or not,



VERA HOGAN

there is nothing any of us can accomplish by arguing over whether the Republicans are right or the Democrats. What you can do is exercise your right to choose your leaders during the next elections. In the meantime, let these people in office do their jobs. If they don't, vote them out.

The next thing I would like to change is the social media comments by the haters, many of whom are downright rude for no apparent reason. My mom always said if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all. Here's a tip. If you would not say what you think to someone's face, don't post it at all. Simple as that. You are entitled to your opinion but trust me most people will just say, "Wow, that was rude," and move on.

Upset with how your local governments are run? There are many opportunities to get involved. Run for office, apply to serve on a board or commission. Or just volunteer your time for a cause that means something to you. It's very easy to whine and complain but if you really want something to change, do something about it.

Peace on earth, goodwill toward men — let's try again and make it happen in 2020. Happy New Year!

Opinions offered in Just Sayin' are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Tri-County Times or its staff. Email Vera at vhogan@tctimes.com.

HOLLY

Continued from Page 7A

The Holly Oaks ORV Park is set to open in the summer of 2020 in Groveland Township. Administrative and on-site work continued in 2019, with the official name being chosen, and public and private events held on site.

There were several important projects in Rose Township that were either finished or made progress in 2019, according to Supervisor Dianne Scheib-Snyder. Milford Road was completely repaved inside Rose Township and a new culvert was installed.

The hill at Mason Street at the Rose

Township Hall was paved to prevent erosion. It was funded by the county, township and road commission.

The township acquired property at the back of the original town hall. This will clear the way to use the hall for an assembly building, much like a community center. "We don't have anything like that in Rose Township," Scheib-Snyder said. "This will probably be the big project for this year."

In 2019, the Township's Board of Trustees approved the creation of a conservation committee to preserve the township's rural features.

HOT LINE CONTINUED

TAKEAWAYS FROM THE

Democratic debate: Increase taxes on all Americans; ban private health insurance; disastrous New Green Deal; free college; free health care for illegal aliens; open borders/sanctuary cities; ban fossil fuels; enforce same-sex marriage to churches; no limits abortions; identity politics. Socialistic government.

HUNGER IS A problem across the U.S., with 37 million people suffering from food insecurity. That means roughly one in 10 Americans are hungry and nearly one-third, or 11 million, are children.

WHY DOES THE city of Fenton allow the place at Torrey and S. Long Lake Road store all that stuff outside? It looks like a junk yard. Just because it's not in our beautiful downtown doesn't mean it should be allowed to look like that.

TO THE 'CHRISTIAN' who doesn't like seeing same-sex commercials on Hallmark channel. It shows two people in love with each other. If you can't deal with that are you really a loving 'Christian'?

FOR ALL OF those that complain about the huge U.S. military budget. Remember the other small budgets wouldn't exist if it weren't for that huge budget. And, by the way, it is that huge budget that allows you to snivel and whine about that huge budget.

LF VARSITY BB coach: How do you expect a team to be a team when you wear out your starters and don't play your bench? We need good legs especially in the fourth. You need your bench involved; use all of your team.

PEOPLE WHEN YOU go to the bank ask for smaller bills other than 100s and 50s this will help smaller stores from constantly being asked for change. Please have some consideration.

TO THOSE WHO think that the Democrats are the haters, I suggest that they read the President's tweets. Anyone who disagrees with the President is called names or worse. Anyone remember 'little Marco' or 'lying Ted,' and they are members of his own party.

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LIGHTER SIDE

Continued from Page 3A

Jan. 20 — The fast pace of an emergency room nurse

She has been vomited on, urinated on and has treated a patient with his head split wide open. For Jami Skinner, 37, an emergency room nurse, it's all part of her everyday work at Hurley Medical Center in Flint.

Feb. 3 — Snow day fun hits a new note

Local school districts make school cancellations fun with vocal parodies, snow day challenges, etc.

Feb. 3 — The sky's the limit for teen weatherman

Lake Fenton High School junior Joel Robinson doesn't have to flush ice down the toilet, put a spoon under his pillow or wear his pajamas inside out to make a snow day happen. He can predict it himself throughout his own weather forecasting and science.

March 10 — Sisters make spring training a family tradition

Tri-county sisters Denise Ketchmark and Debi Koch have gone every year to Lakeland, Florida for spring training since 1986.

March 31 — Long-time Fenton leaders happen to be ladies

The city of Fenton's mayor Sue Osborn, Mayor Pro Tem Pat Lockwood and Fenton Township Supervisor Bonnie Mathis make up a "powerhouse" trio of women who have worked tirelessly as community leaders for decades.

April 7 — Fenton High School Ambassadors celebrate 40 years of award-winning performances

This local vocal group debuted in 1979 and planned celebratory concerts for the public on May 10 and 11.

April 14 — Friendship starts at the top

Fenton Police Chief Jason Slater and Fire Chief Bob Cairnduff have been best friends since meeting for the first time at a lunch table at Fenton Middle School. Together, they have more than 50 years of experience in protecting city residents.

May 12 — 'Sugar & Spice' TIMES five

Featured in honor of Mother's Day, local first grade teacher Carrie Keech is mom to five daughters, from age 6 to 14.



The inaugural View Newspaper Group Bottles Brews & News sold out of tickets and raised \$6,000 for Fenton Area Resource and Referral (FARR). *Times file photo*

May 15 — Andiamo chef wins 2019 Chef Showdown

Two points decided the winner of the third annual Chef Showdown at The Freedom Center on May 9. Head chef Matt Scitney took the top prize, defeating Chef Jody Brunori of The Laundry, El Topo, CRUST and Relief & Resource Co., all in Fenton.

June 2 — Sailing connects four generations

The Nickels family of the Lake Fenton Sailing Club is on their fourth generation of sailors, starting with Herman Nickels who passed away in 2007 at age 91. No other family has such a lineage with the club.

June 16 — Family patriarch is prime example

In honor of Father's Day, this story features Roger Sharp Sr., patriarch of one of the most well known and respected families in the tri-county area. He is the owner of the family owned and operated Sharp Funeral Homes with chapels in Fenton, Linden, Grand Blanc Township and Swartz Creek.

July 3 — Murals become more popular in local community

Local mural artist Kevin Burdick has seen his artistic spin on murals on the Ivory Loft building and El Topo, both in downtown Fenton.

Aug. 18 — 60-year-old local man swims Mackinac Straits

David Casadonte, 60, of Fenton Township, completed a 4.04-mile swim in the chilly waters of the Straits of Mackinac for the 2019 Mighty Mac Swim on Aug. 11, coming in 94th out of 400 swimmers.

Aug. 25 — Local water skier takes first at nationals

Whitney Burnash, 32, won first in state, regional and national water ski competitions through the American Water Ski Association, after a four-year break from national competition. Burnash is the daughter of Jeff and Patti Smith, owners of Silver Spray Sports in Fenton.

Sept. 8 — Times media editor debuts documentary

"The Seventh Fire," a documentary by Times Media Director Tim Jagielo about the preservation of history and culture of the Bay Mills Indian Community in the Upper Peninsula, debuted Sept. 8 at the Royal Starr Film Festival at the Emagine Theater in Royal Oak.

Sept. 8 — Resident walks all of Fenton's streets.

Fenton resident, Dan Taylor, walked every street in the city beginning in June, totaling about 107 miles. He described the experience to the Fenton City Council. His motivation was to lose weight, but in the process, he learned first-hand, "we live in a really great city."

Sept. 18 — FHS grad cruises as 'piano man'

Colin Hodgkin, a well-known local performer with Fenton Village Players, is spending the next four months on a Holland America cruise ship, performing as a dueling piano player while traveling in the Mediterranean, Europe and the Caribbean.

Sept. 22 — Sisters who drove buses retire after 30 years

Phyllis Hoffman and Priscilla James are sisters who both started driving Lin-

den school buses in 1989. Both are now retired, following a small party Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Oct. 13 — 'But I know I love you'

Camre Curto, 31, of Tyrone Township, gave birth to son Gavin on Oct. 9, 2012, but a rare, life-threatening pregnancy complication, pre-eclampsia, erased her lifetime of memories. Their struggles to build new memories as a family resulted in a book penned by her husband, Steve Curto, "But I know I love you."

Oct. 30 — One ringy-dingy

Fenton City Councilman Scott Grossmeyer recalls his years of working as a telephone operator in a female-dominated industry, beginning at age 16.

Nov. 10 — Creating the gift of mobility

A workshop at Price's Airport in Linden is one of five locations of Mobility Worldwide that makes the body of mobility pull carts for disabled people in third world countries. Over the past decade, 1,000 carts have been shipped to 28 countries.

Nov. 17 — View Newspaper Group 2019 events raise more than \$36,000 for area nonprofits

The Bottles, Brews & News craft beer and wine fest on Sept. 28 in Fenton was one of a number of events that raised money for local organizations. A check for \$6,000 was presented to FARR (Fenton Area Resource and Referral Network, Inc.) after wrapping up the 2019 roundup of events.

Nov. 20 — Coloring within the lines

Gary Savoie, 65, a resident at Fenton Healthcare Center, spends his days drawing works of art in intricate designs from pages in adult coloring books. His artwork now numbers about 130 hand-colored pictures.

Dec. 22 — No need to hit Times Square for New Year's Eve

Jonah Wolford, a 2019 Lake Fenton High School graduate, transformed his bedroom into "Times Square," a near-exact replica of what travelers will see in New York City on New Year's Eve. He'll broadcast his New Year's Eve show, "Prime Time Rockin' New Year's Eve 20" from there, and you can catch it on Facebook Live on New Year's Eve.

Spencer remaining perfect is our No. 3 story of year

By David Troppens

The tri-county's most recognizable professional athlete continued to turn heads in 2019, and whenever he fought, Joey Spencer was assured he'd have plenty of area fans watching his bouts on television.

That's because despite the fact

he's still a teenager, Linden's Spencer won four more bouts in 2019. The number of rounds were increased during 2019, and Spencer wasn't always overwhelmingly dominant as he was in 2018 but he still went undefeated and remains one of the top prospects in profes-

sional boxing regardless of weight class.

Spencer, who is a super welterweight, began 2013 with a knock out victory of Brandon Harder.

CONTINUED AT
TCTIMES.COM



Expansion creates new vibe to Flint Metro League

By David Troppens

Maybe the only constant in the Flint Metro League's history can be represented with one word — change.

When the league began in 1968, there were six squads within the organization. Of those six, only Fenton and Holly have been members every single year. Swartz Creek left during the mid-1970s, only to come back during the 2000s.

Many changes have happened over the decades, but never has one happened that took place before this school year.

The Flint Metro League grew to 12 teams, and for the first time ever has two divisions for a variety of sports. It also represents the first time that all four tri-county area squads are in the Metro League as well. For those reasons, the changes in the Metro League rank as the No. 2 story in the tri-county area sports scene during 2019.

The 2019 fall season was the first to experience the expansion. It created a thrilling boys soccer race with Fenton, Linden and new member Goodrich each earning a share of the league crown. In football, there were divisions and the two division winners were Fenton (Stripes Division) and Goodrich (Stars Division). It set up the first-ever cross-over Metro League championship when the Tigers traveled to Goodrich.

The title game at Goodrich received plenty of hype, but it eventually became evident that the Tigers would win the contest.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2019 | PAGE 21A | MYFENTON.COM/SPORTS

Sports Times

Olsen's two state title day is top effort of 2019

By David Troppens

She's won three individual state titles, earned runner-up status in another individual event and has helped the Fenton varsity girls swim team earn All-State honors in two relays.

Yet, Gracie Olsen prep career has only begun. The Fenton standout swimmer has only finished her sophomore season with the Tigers' squad.

Olsen became the first-ever swimmer in Fenton history to win two individual state titles at the same state meet when she won the 200 yard freestyle (1:48.98) and the 100 butterfly (54.62) at November's Division 2 MHSAA Girls State Swimming and Diving Championship at Oakland University. Her performance also made Olsen our top sports story in the tri-county area of 2019.

Olsen began the meet by helping the 200 medley relay team earn All-State status with a fifth-place finish (1:49.19).



Fenton's Gracie Olsen's two individual state championships in the 200 yard freestyle and the 100 butterfly was the tri-county's top story of 2019. Photo: David Troppens

She also made sure the Tigers ended the meet with a bang, by giving Fenton the lead in the final race of the night — the 400 freestyle relay. The squad held on to take third place, the highest placing

in Fenton school history in a state relay event (3:34.55).

"The relay was the best part of the entire meet," Olsen said.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

Both Fenton soccer teams had great tourney runs

By David Troppens

Fenton's varsity boys soccer team had a season to remember during the fall of 2019.

First off, the squad earned a share of the Metro League title with Linden and Goodrich.

But as strong as the team was during the regular season, it wasn't until the postseason that the Tigers truly began to turn heads.

Fenton ended up advancing

to the Division 2 state semifinal round for only the second time in school history.

The tournament run began with an easy 5-0 victory against Owosso, but that win set up a district title game against the Linden Eagles. The Tigers had lost to their tri-county rivals twice during the season, 2-1 and 2-0. However, this time the Tigers edged out Linden with a shootout victory. Fenton

won the shootout 5-4.

The Tigers advanced to the regional round and earned what ended up being only their second D2 regional crown in school history. The best part was Fenton won the title on its home field. First, the Tigers beat Madison Heights Lamphere 7-3 in the semifinal. In the regional title game, the Tigers defeated Detroit Country Day 2-1.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM



Fenton's Ben Chapple scores a goal during the Tigers' 2-1 Division 2 regional championship victory against Detroit Country Day. Photo: Mark Bolen

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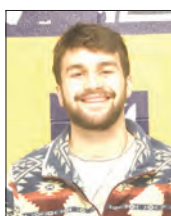
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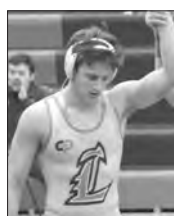
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Tigers show their claws in final three quarters vs. Holly

By David Troppens

Fenton — For a quarter the Holly varsity boys basketball team looked like a squad poised to possibly post a big road victory at Fenton on Dec. 20.

The Broncos' defense was strong, holding the Fenton Tigers to just 1-of-11 shooting from the field during the first eight minutes. Meanwhile, Holly was getting field goals from four of its starters, resulting in an 11-5 first quarter lead.

However, then came the second quarter. The Tigers hit on 9-of-13 shots, with six of those field goals being three-pointers. Addison McIntosh led the way with four of those field goals and 11 points. By the time the quarter was over, Fenton had scored 25 points and enjoyed a 30-23 halftime lead. Holly would make a couple of runs in the second half, but would never take the lead again as the Tigers won a 64-54 verdict.

"We have the ability to shoot the three," Fenton varsity boys basketball coach Chad Logan said. "In the first quarter, I don't think we took terrible shots, but we were dribble-happy. In the second quarter we hit a couple of shots. Maybe they game-planned us in the first quarter — it was a good job by their



Fenton's Braden Moore (right) blocks a shot attempt by Holly's Hunter Jackson. **Photo: Mark Bolen**

coach getting them ready to play. But in the second quarter we made a bunch of shots and we got the lead."

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

PREP REPORT

WRESTLING

► **Linden at Tri-County Championships:**

The Eagles had the flu bug go through the team, but the squad still had some strong performances at the meet. Bryce Shingleton (119) went 4-0 with three pinfall victories, defeating two ranked wrestlers in the process. Meanwhile, Uziah Delgado (171) and Colton Powell (189) each had 3-1 records. Delgado was a runner-up while Powell placed third.

In JV action, Logan Ethington (112) and Jase Gundry (160) each earned first-place finishes while Adelia Carr (119), Josh Brennen (125) and Garrett Parker (215) had second-place finishes. Louis Goble (135) and Aleah Piet (152) each placed third.

BOYS BASKETBALL

► **Linden JV 65, Corunna JV 22:** The Eagles had 13 players score double-digits, resulting in the easy win. Carson Pekarek had 14 points while Lance

Barkholz had 11 points. Brandon Green added nine points while River Meckstroth had six points.

► **Flushing JV 72, Linden JV 59:**

Lance Barkholz led the Eagles with 21 points while Brandon Green had 11 points and Aiden Krueger had 10 points.

► **Flushing freshman 50, Linden**

freshman 31: Bryson Phillips led the Eagles with 14 points while Colin Weiss had 10 points.

► **Fenton Freshman 45, Holly Freshman 29:** The Tigers' (4-0) top scorer was Isaiah Plumley.

HOCKEY

► **Milford 6, Fenton/Linden 3:** Ethan Hutchings scored a goal just 36 seconds into the contest, but the Griffins trailed 3-1 after the first period. Nick Temple scored the squad's other two goals.

Tigers respond to practices, beat Bronchos

By David Troppens

Fenton — It's been a tough start for the Fenton varsity girls basketball team.

The squad opened with four straight losses, and was unable to score more than 36 points in any of those four contests.

But under the leadership of varsity girls basketball coach Becki Moore, the Tigers didn't accept the start and worked hard in practices this week. It has paid off.

Fenton defeated Owosso in overtime Tuesday and defeated Holly 50-44 at home Dec. 20, earning the squad two current victories. Unfortunately, Moore was unable to see the performance due to another issue during the school day. But, her players were more than

willing to discuss how her presence was felt at the game through those practices.

"We started off rough and coach Moore really helped us in practice this week because we had a really good practices this week," said Korrin Smith, who finished with a team-high 18 points. "(Despite her absence) we were able to pull through it because of the strong practices we had this week."

"We are working on being a lot more disciplined at practice now," said Samantha Whaling. "It was a huge wake-up call to be more disciplined. It helped to do what she said and to follow through with it."

**CONTINUED AT
TCTIMES.COM**



Holly's Hunter Weeder (right) battles with Fenton's Mallory Lehmann for a ball in the Tigers' victory against the Bronchos. Photo: Mark Bolen

Lund sparks Eagles by Flushing

By Dale M. Smith

Fenton — The Linden varsity boys basketball team opened its 2019-2020 season on the road at Holly recently.

They started that game slow and trailed for a good part of it. On Dec. 20, there was no repeat as they ran the visiting Raiders from Flushing off the floor, 73-35.

Linden began the game with a 5-0 run courtesy of a Seeger DeGayner steal and a bucket from Blake Lund. The Eagles set the tone early on the defensive end with five steals in the first quarter alone.

Leading only 10-6 after the first quarter, sophomore Reichen Lund and senior Brenden Miller dropped in consecutive 3-pointers early in the second. Blake Lund then made a couple of threes of his own to portend what would happen for the rest of the game. He had 23 points in the first half alone. He finished with 39 despite limited minutes towards the end of the game.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

2019 had many other great moments

By David Troppens

It's hard to make a list of the top stories.

How are they rated?

The sports staff uses a lot of factors. The popularity of a sport can come into play. The historical impact of a performance can also have big meaning.

But while it's a tough job, we're up to the task. The top four moments have their own stories. In this one, we'll list the best of the rest.

No. 5 - Fenton baseball wins regional title: The Fenton Tigers haven't had much success since going the Division 1 route in the postseason, but that changed during the spring.

Fenton opened the tournament with a 6-3 victory against Milford, but then had to face the team that has knocked them out of many district events — Hartland. The Tigers found a way by the Eagles, earning a 6-5 district title victory at Hartland High School, Fenton's first district crown since 2001.

The Tigers' run continued with a 3-2

victory against Walled Lake Northern and then a 6-1 regional title victory against Detroit Catholic Central. However, their run ended in the super-regional with a 9-1 loss to Brother Rice.

No. 6 - Holly coaches Don Pluta and David Hall retire their positions: Two long-time Holly varsity coaches called it quits after their 2018-19 seasons.

Holly varsity wrestling coach Don Pluta began coaching at Holly in 1978 and left the program in March 2019. His last match he coached was Nathan Young's state championship bout at the state wrestling meet.

Pluta led the Bronchos to 660 wins, eight league titles and 12 team district championships. The team qualified for the team state tournament three times.

Hall began coaching the Holly varsity girls basketball team at the turn of the century and the Bronchos have been a Metro League contender throughout the second half of his tenure as coach.

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 Sunday: CLOSED

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 Stk# 14145317A



2017 CHEVROLET TRAX LS
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 Stk# 180761



2018 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN SE
\$15,383
 Stk# 1807555



2017 CHRYSLER PACIFICA TOURING-L PLUS
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