



Hundreds  
attend History  
Walk and Ice  
Cream Social in  
Holly  
See Page 3

# Midweek Times

VOL. 28 NO. XXVI

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021

\$1.00

## Holly man bound over for jury trial

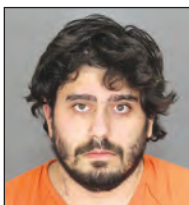
■ Charged with felony murder, first-degree child abuse and torture; cause of death is blunt force trauma to chest

By Sharon Stone

Samual Lester Smart, 30, of Holly, was bound over to Oakland County Circuit Court for a jury trial. He had initially been charged Jan. 4 with torture and first-degree

child abuse following the death of a 3-year-old girl.

On Friday, June 25, a charge of homicide (felony murder) was added during his preliminary exam with Judge Joseph Fabrizio in Oak-



Samual Lester Smart

land County 52-2 District Court. He pleaded not guilty to the charges. The hearing was held in person and live-streamed on YouTube.

Bond was denied and Smart remains lodged at the Oakland County Jail. If convicted as charged, he faces life in prison.

The charges stem from a Michi-

gan State Police (MSP) Metro North Post investigation into the Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020 death of Trinity Chandler of Groveland Township. Smart was the live-in boyfriend of Justine Comstock, Trinity's mother. They lived at Groveland Manor.

See **JURY TRIAL** on 8

### Council approves spending \$520,000 on water system upgrades

■ Neptune meters will allow staff to see water reading in real time

By Hannah Ball

**Linden** — On Monday, June 28, the Linden City Council voted 4-3 to approve spending approximately \$520,735 on new water reading meters and upgrades to its water system.

Ferguson Water Works will install a fixed base water meter reading system, comparable to the software the city owns, with Neptune water meters. The costs will be distributed equally between the water and sewer funds.

The yes votes were Mayor Danielle Cusson, Councilor Ray See **WATER SYSTEM** on 6



In-person meetings resume

Linden City Council held its first in-person meeting at the council chambers, in the lower level of the Linden Mill building, on Monday, June 28. Councilor Aaron Wiens (left) listens to Thomas Trice, interim director of the department of public works, as he talks about the new water meters that will be installed around the city. Photo: Hannah Ball

### Flags on light posts violates city ordinance

■ Dealership removes flags — considers moving them to light posts at its dealership in Fenton Township

By Sharon Stone

During a Fenton Planning Commission meeting Thursday, June 24, planners denied a request to display 55 American flags on light posts at the LaFontaine Chrysler Dodge Ram auto dealership on Silver Parkway.

Planner Carmine Avantini said Shaun Benard, general manager of the dealership, had purchased new American flags to replace older flags for the light posts around the dealership.

See **FLAGS** on 14



“Appreciate Tri-County Times and David Troppens covering the Powers Catholic track team.

So many local kids there, lovely to see them recognized in our hometown newspaper.”

“I like that Fenton will be redoing the downtown area around the gazebo. That’s called being proactive. Would you rather someone get hurt first? I’m seeing some uninformed comments on social media about it, but these improvements will make the area attractive, safe and accessible to everyone.”



“I was just reading the articles on the graduating seniors of 2021. I’d like to wish you all good luck on your new adventures.”





## Introducing:



# MICHIGAN UNITED

— CREDIT UNION —

## BIRMINGHAM BLOOMFIELD CREDIT UNION CHANGES ITS NAME

Birmingham Bloomfield Credit Union will begin operating under a new name and will be known as Michigan United Credit Union effective July 1, 2021.

Over the past two years, Birmingham Bloomfield Credit Union has joined forces with Metro North Credit Union and Lakes Community Credit Union. These mergers resulted in a stronger credit union that is better equipped to serve its membership and surrounding communities.

President & CEO, Andrew Staley states, “Our new name reflects our shared culture and vision as a unified entity whose mission is to enrich our members’ lives and the communities we serve as we move forward together.”

Michigan United Credit Union has over 20,000 members, \$275 million in assets, and six branches located in Birmingham, Holly, Lake Orion, Shelby Township, and Waterford.

**[WWW.BBCU.ORG](http://WWW.BBCU.ORG)**



# Keeping Holly's history alive

## ■ Hundreds attend History Walk and Ice Cream Social

More than 100 neighbors and local residents attended the Holly Museum District History Walk and Ice Cream Social in the 300-400 block of S. Saginaw Street in Holly on Saturday, June 26.

The event, from 12 to 4 p.m., was a self-guided tour of the neighborhood with historical research done on the buildings by Linda Smith, president, and Nicole Edwards Rankin, vice president, of the Holly Historical Society.

The Hadley House Museum was open for docent tours. Ice cream was donated by Ziggy's of Battle Alley, and baked goods were enjoyed on the porch and lawn by the guests.

In spite of a rainy week, the weather cooperated. This was the group's first open house since state COVID restrictions have been lifted and was a fundraiser to benefit the Holly Historical Society's museum.

"It was so nice to see everyone sitting on the front porch," said Marie Robertson, society member. "Visiting with each other; that's the way it used to be in a simpler time."



Society members Worley Smith and Lloyd Bingham greet neighbors at the admission desk.



Society members Susanne Les and Mary Kaye Schmelzer put out tour signs.



On a self-guided tour are Barb Soloko, Kathy Clarke and children in Holly museum district. **Submitted photos**



Hadley House Museum interior with society members (from left) Norma Sizemore, A.C. Alrey, Mary Kaye Schmelzer and Kaye Thorsby.

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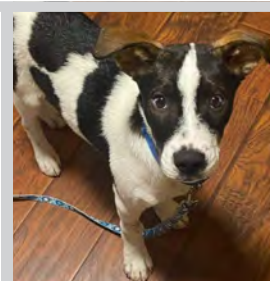
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# Building Brands

## A reunion and a rebrand take me back in time

Recently, my husband Matt and I had the pleasure of attending a high school friend's wedding. The whole weekend was just — I'm going to invent a new word here — a joyfest. Since our 20-year class reunion was canceled last summer, the wedding also served as a mini-reunion. It was really fun to learn what people are up to now, hear about their careers and their children, meet their spouses and find out who they still hang out with from the "old days."

What struck me most from our conversations is how many of us still have the same interests we did 20-plus years ago. Of course, we've all changed in some ways, that's only natural, but for the most part, I feel like the group was pretty on-brand.

This mini-reunion had me thinking a lot of about high school, personal brand and the brands I used in high school. Recently, I've been shopping at a couple of stores I hadn't bought from in years. I'm larger than I was 20 years ago, so the fact that these two brands in particular extended their sizing led me back. But it was something else,

too. They didn't just extend sizes for customers, they did so for models, making their overall branding more inclusive. Seeing someone who looks like you wearing a two-piece bathing suit is pretty liberating, especially since I grew up in the heyday of the one-size only super model. Last week, another brand popular from my high school days and well-known for their one-size only models, landed in the headlines for their on-going rebrand. Victoria's Secret is ditching their Angels in favor of a more diverse line of spokeswomen and models called



Emily Caswell

#TheVSCollective. Reactions online varied. Former Victoria's Secret model and all-around superstar Tyra Banks posted a Tweet saying in part, "To the new collective of badass ROLE models, I may have cracked that door open, but y'all are charging through. Keep on keepin' on until we all LOSE COUNT of how many are breaking through behind you." Others have been critical of the rebrand saying it's too little, too late. They say Victoria's Secret should have made these changes years ago when other retailers began to extend sizes and focus on a more inclusive branding efforts. They also question if it's just a See **BACK IN TIME** on 5

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# Hotlines

Submit Hot lines online at [myfenton.com](http://myfenton.com) 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.

**OH, THOSE INCONSIDERATE drivers.** Not turning on red, not going fast enough, backing out of parking spaces. If these things really anger you, take a deep breath, relax, maybe say a little prayer. You'll get where you're going, even if you are delayed by about 20 seconds.

■■■

**CAN FENTON OFFICIALS** do something about the blight in and around downtown? With sky-high demand for single-family homes, it's sad how rich speculators are allowed to let good homes rot and blight neighborhoods. Should be fixed up with families in them.

■■■

**GET YOUR 'NO' vote ready folks.** Lacking any thought or effort to fix the roads, Fenton leaders are simply preparing another bond (aka: tax) proposal to put before the voters. Guess they didn't get the message last go around.

■■■

**I'M GRATEFUL TO** have Shiawassee Avenue finished and open, but does anyone else get seasick driving on it? I just drove on the part of White Lake Road that was just resurfaced. Now that was a smooth ride.

■■■

Compiled by Hannah Ball, staff reporter — Question asked to Tri-County Times' Facebook followers

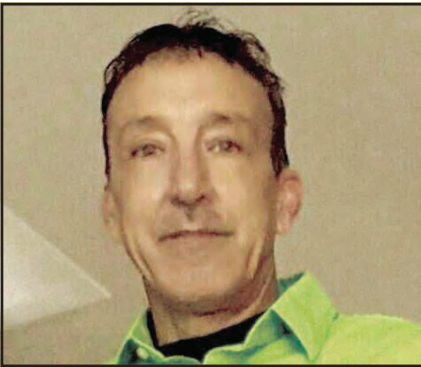
# What qualities do you look for in a friend?

# | streettalk



"Loyalty, humor and kindness."

Heather Hamilton  
Fenton



"Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Paul Anibal  
Fenton



"Loyalty and honesty! And be real. Sick of fake people."

Chad Hardacre  
Tyrone Township



"Loyalty, laughter, honesty."

Coreena Storms  
Fenton



## Holly Foods Supermarket ribbon-cutting



The owners of Holly Foods Supermarket, Dhaval and Brenda Vaishnav (middle), hosted an official ribbon-cutting ceremony with Holly community leaders on Friday, June 25 at the store on N. Holly Road. Here they stand with Oakland County Commissioner Bob Hoffman (right) and Richard Kinnamon (left), executive director of the Holly Area Chamber of Commerce. Brenda said they've made changes to the store based on community feedback, but "their list is never done." They're currently working on a delivery program and other projects. **Photo: Hannah Ball**

## BACK IN TIME

Continued from Page 4

rebrand or an internal change as well. Troubles at Victoria's Secret go beyond non-inclusive branding and I won't rehash that here.

I hear what those critics are saying,

but I don't agree ... yet. Any brand willing to make a massive change should get time to make that change and let it play out before being criticized.

Rebrands happen for a number of reasons. And just like with any change, the first step to making it

## Genesee County courts reopen

### ■ Health emergency declaration has been lifted — no mask requirements

By Sharon Stone

Effective Monday, June 28, the Genesee County 67th District Court, Genesee County Probate Court and the 7th Judicial Circuit Court reopened to the public.

Consistent with Resolution 2021-437 of the Genesee County Board of Commissioners, the health emergency declaration for Genesee County was lifted.

All court facilities will be open to the public.

- There is no mask requirement for entrance.

- Masks are permitted and recommended for those not vaccinated.

Court proceedings scheduled to be conducted via Zoom will continue to be conducted via Zoom unless alternate direction is provided by the Court.

**Please consult the website of the respective courts for further information:**

**67th District Court:**

<https://www.67thdc.com/>

**Genesee County Probate Court:**

<https://gcprobatecourt.com/>

**7th Judicial Circuit Court:**

<https://7thcircuitcourt.com/>

happen is admitting that it needs to happen. I think that's where Victoria's Secret wins for me. For a while, it seemed leadership was doubling down on the not making changes, despite calls to do so. The fact that a rebrand is happening at all makes me hopeful.

I liked the Angels as did a lot of women

(and men), but they have their place in history, just like the class of 2000.

What corporate rebrand do you remember most? Email me [ecaswell@mihomepaper.com](mailto:ecaswell@mihomepaper.com) and let me know.

*Emily Caswell is the Brand Manager of VIEW Group, the branding division of View Newspaper Group.*

## NOTICE OF REGISTRATION FOR THE SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, August 3, 2021 ROSE TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

### TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF ROSE TOWNSHIP:

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that any qualified elector of Rose Township who is not already registered, may register to vote at the office of the Township Clerk; the office of the County Clerk; a Secretary of State branch office, or other designated state agency. Registration forms can be obtained at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote) and mailed to the Township Clerk. Voters who are already registered may update their registration at [www.expressSOS.com](http://www.expressSOS.com).

The last day to register in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk is **Monday, July 19, 2021**.

After this date, anyone who qualifies as an elector may register to vote in person with proof of residency (MCL 168.497) at the Rose Township Clerk's office, located at 9080 Mason St., Holly, MI 48442 at the following times:

- Regular business hours: Monday – Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Saturday, July 31, 2021 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Election Day, Tuesday August 3, 2021, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that a Special Election will be held in the Township of Rose, County of Oakland on Tuesday, August 3, 2021 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00

p.m. for the purpose of Fenton Area Public Schools District Operating Millage Renewal Proposal :

This proposal will allow the school district to continue to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18 mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance. The remaining 1.9195 mills are only available to be levied to restore millage lost as a reduction required by the "Headlee" amendment to the Michigan Constitution of 1963 and will only be levied to the extent necessary to restore that reduction. Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, in Fenton Area Public Schools, Genesee, Livingston and Oakland Counties, Michigan, be increased by 19.9195 mills (\$19.9195 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 9 years, 2022 to 2030, inclusive, to provide funds for operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and 18 mills are levied in 2022 is approximately \$5,850,874 (this is a renewal of millage that expired with the 2021 tax levy)?

Full text of the ballot proposal may be obtained at the Rose Township Clerk's office, 9080 Mason St., Holly, MI 48442, telephone: 248-634-8701. A sample ballot may be viewed at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote).

Persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the Clerk's office.

Debbie Miller, MMC, MiPMC II  
Rose Township Clerk



## HOT LINE CONTINUED

**OWEN ROAD IS** done. Thank you. Driving on it feels like riding on a dirt road. No potholes but my shocks get a workout. Has to be one of the worst new roads I have ever driven on. I would not have that company put blacktop down anywhere. All I can say is whatever was paid was 10 times too much.

■■■■ **I FAITHFULLY DRIVE** the speed limit. This week, a driver crossed a double yellow and zoomed around us at a reckless speed. Thank you to the Genesee County sheriff's deputy who saw the entire thing and promptly pulled them over.

■■■■ **LINDEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**, Board of Education — the 'Good 'ole Boys Club' continues.

■■■■ **TYRONE TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS** organizing to block the asphalt plant was a beautiful example of democracy in action. Bravo. But because they were so successful, the Michigan Legislature, led by State Senator Jim Ananich (D-Flint), plan to strip that local control from residents with Senate Bill 0429 (2021).

## WATER SYSTEM

Continued from Front Page

Culbert, Councilor/Mayor Pro-Tem Brenda Simons and Councilor Pamela Howd. The no votes were Councilor Heather MacDermaid, Councilor Aaron Wiens and Councilor Brad Dick.

The plan includes replacing 925 old water meters with new Neptune meters, which are more efficient, and using upgraded software. Installation is estimated to take about two months.

One of council's main concerns is the capacity and pressure issues in the water system. Thomas Trice, interim director of the department of public works (DPW), said the current meters are old, they're not registering the full water usage, they're not accounting for water loss and they don't discover leaks until weeks after. This often leads to huge water bills for unsuspecting residents.

"The recommended upgrades will make it possible to gather all the reads in a matter of hours. Right now, it takes about two weeks for us to go to the community and get all the reads," he said. "We've got so much outdated

and obsolete reading equipment. The meters are the cash register for the city. That's what provides all the revenue for the water and sewer enterprise funds to work."

Trice said the whole water system needs to be upgraded. Right now, they're relying on technology from the 1970s.

Over the past several years, the city has been replacing old meters and has so far replaced 775, out of a total of 1,700, with Neptune meters and radio readers, compatible with the upgraded Neptune 360 software. Approximately 925 meters still need to be replaced.

Getting into customers' homes and changing the meters will be the biggest undertaking. Trice said it's much faster and more efficient if they hire a contractor to do this work instead of having city staff do it.

"Changing the meters is going to be required whether we pay for it now or pay for it over several years," he said at the June 14 meeting.

With the updated software, the information can be read on command. They'll be able to use handheld devices so they don't have to go into homes to obtain the readings.

"It's a cloud-based system that provides real-time reads, and data stored on reading devices for 96 days, and that's a big plus if you've got an issue with a water bill. We can go back and look at that data over that last quarter and tell you where you used that water or what days you used that water," he said.

The devices can also detect anomalies such as leaks, reverse flows for backflow prevention, misreads and more.

The council was divided on the \$520,735 cost. The 925 water meters, reading devices and installation are estimated to cost \$426,249. Installation costs are approximately \$100 per meter. The annual software fee and hardware will cost \$10,486, the fixed based software fee and training costs \$9,000 and

the three fixed network collectors cost \$75,000.

MacDermaid asked if there is something city personnel could do to save on installation costs. Trice said yes, but it would require all of their people working on it and it would take much longer. MacDermaid said it concerns her to spend this much money on administrative benefit as opposed to saving costs for residents.

Mayor Danielle Cusson said this will allow city staff to work on other things that may have been neglected. "If we've found something that can save three weeks of work each quarter for one employee, that's a lot of work," she said.

City Manager Ellen Glass said this is something they want to move forward on because of the added efficiency and flexibility, and how it will reduce the number of hours city workers

have to spend on the water system.

Dick said they need to work on increasing capacity. He's in favor of building another tower and selling more water to generate more revenue. Trice said he's working on a program and study for a new water tower. He estimates they'll have a new tower by 2023.

Wiens said he's struggling with spending this much money right now when it won't guarantee better water pressure. He wants this project to benefit all residents and doesn't want it to be perceived as only benefiting city staff.

Steve Berra, with Ferguson, said the cost of these meters is about to rise. "The longer you put this off, the more expensive it will become," he said.

Simons said it might be difficult to convince people to trust the meters, and she suggested giving residents options for where they would prefer the meter to be outside their house.

Berra said there are always people who have reservations with radio signals going through their house, and in these situations, usually the municipality will allow an exception.

Trice said there are no health concerns with these meters.

“The recommended upgrades will make it possible to gather all the reads in a matter of hours. Right now, it takes about two weeks for us to go to the community and get all the reads.”

**Thomas Trice**  
Linden Department of Public  
Works interim director

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### Social media and terrorist threats

Social media is used by 223 million people in the United States with 70% of the population having accounts.

They are used to post a wide variety of messages. However if the messages are threats of harm to others, criminal charges can result.

This issue was discussed in *People v Gerhard*, a Michigan Court of Appeals decision released June 24, 2021.

In the *Gerhard* case, the defendant was a student at Lake Superior State University (LSSU), which allows students to bring weapons onto campus as long as they are immediately registered and stored with public safety.

On Aug. 22, 2019, he posted an image on Snapchat depicting an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle with a text stating: "Takin this bad boy up, this outta make the snowflakes melt, aye? And I mean snowflakes as in snow (winky face emoji)."

Two students saw the post and alerted public safety expressing their belief that "snowflakes" referred to either Democrats or liberals with one believing that the defendant was going to shoot liberal students.

The next day, the defendant appeared on campus, checked in his AR-15 with public safety and was questioned by two police officers about his post. He confirmed that snowflakes referred to Democrats, but "melt" meant he wanted to "melt their minds" when they learned he brought his gun to school, and he was not making a threat.

He was charged with making a threat of terrorism under Michigan's statute.

The statute prohibits threats to commit an "act of terrorism"

## Local state rep awarded fellowship

### ■ Will attend Midwestern leadership institute

State Rep. Mike Mueller (R-Fenton Township) is among 39 select lawmakers chosen to participate in a training program that annually identifies and assists promising state leaders in the Midwest.

Mueller will meet with fellow legislators from Michigan and 10 other Midwestern states and four Canadian provinces Oct. 1-5 in Minneapolis for the County of State Governments' 26th annual Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD).

"Being selected as a BILLD fellow is truly an honor," Mueller said. "I'm looking forward to participating in this unique program, networking with other leaders, and swapping ideas about how to better served our states, regions and communities."

BILLD was founded in 1995 to help new legislators meet the demands of increased policy responsibility being shifted to the states and, in many states, term limits and high legislative turnover. These two emerging forces highlight the shortage of training avail-

able to legislators — a void that BILLD aims to fill.

"The Bowhay Institute is one of the premier leadership training programs in the nation," said Iowa Sen. Amy Sinclair, who serves as co-chair of the institute's steering committee. "The legislatures in the region have benefited greatly from the skills their members have gained through this unique educational experience. Many of the graduates now hold key leadership positions in their state."

Since 1995, 876 lawmakers have graduated from the Bowhay Institute. State legislators from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, south Dakota and Wisconsin are chosen to participate through a competitive, non-partisan selection process. Members of the Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan legislative assemblies are selected by their caucuses to take part in the program.



Mike Mueller

and communication of that threat to another person.

An act of terrorism is defined as a willful and deliberate offer to commit a violent felony that is known to the person to be dangerous to human life and intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian.

The issue to be decided by the Court of Appeals was the sufficiency of the evidence of a threat.

The court found that under existing precedent, the question of the post being a true threat or protected speech under the First Amendment was to be decided by a jury and sent the case back to the trial court.

When comments on social media cross the line into possible criminal behavior there can be trouble. The experts say, "Think before you post."

### NOTICE: STREET CLOSINGS IN DOWNTOWN FENTON

Beginning Thursday, May 20 and Friday, May 21, and continuing every Thursday and Friday through mid-October, S. LeRoy Street from Caroline Street to Shiawassee Avenue, and Shiawassee Avenue from S. LeRoy to Adelaide Street will be closed to vehicle traffic from 4 to 9 p.m.

Detour signage surrounding these closings will be posted.

The community is invited to Fenton's Street Experience in downtown Fenton to support our local businesses and stroll the downtown streets, enjoying the numerous planned entertainment happenings, children's games, farmers market, and fun events.

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## JURY TRIAL

Continued from Front Page

Comstock was the first witness to testify Friday afternoon. She testified that Smart was her boyfriend of one-and-a-half years and that he was not the father of Trinity. He moved in with Comstock and Trinity in July 2020. Comstock said Trinity prior to her death was in good health. The young girl wore eyeglasses.

Comstock said she worked as a caregiver for the elderly from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. and Smart would drive her to and from work and watch Trinity when she was working. Smart was not working a job as of October 2020. "It was a good relationship up until the end," she said. She added that the interaction between Smart and Trinity was good but then it changed. She said Trinity's behavior changed in a negative way. She was whiny and she didn't want to be around Smart.

On Friday, Dec. 18, Comstock said Smart drove her to work for her 7 p.m. shift in the van owned by Smart's father. After he dropped off Comstock at work, Smart and Trinity stopped at Smart's brother's home. Smart and Comstock had a 30-second video chat during that visit.

Comstock testified that she called Smart at 6 a.m. to come pick her up from work. At 6:30 a.m., she said Smart called her and said that Trinity

was unresponsive. She said she could hear panic in his voice. She said she told him to call 911 or take her to the hospital. He took Trinity to the Holly Fire Department for help. Smart's father rode with Trinity to Ascension Genesys Hospital while Smart drove and picked up Comstock so that they could both go to the hospital.

By the time Comstock saw Trinity, the young girl was deceased.

When asked what the week of Dec. 14-19, 2020 was like, Comstock said it was a normal work week for her and that Smart watched Trinity when she was gone. She testified that at 10:25 p.m. on Dec. 14, Trinity and Smart were together at her home.

Smart's defense attorney Michael McCarthy asked Comstock if she saw Trinity each day and Comstock said yes. Comstock said she didn't notice bruising on her daughter, but said as a 3-year-old who needed eyeglasses, Trinity would run into things when she ran around the home when not wearing her glasses. She said she did not know how Trinity got a bruise under her eye. She said when she asked Smart and Trinity about the bruise, they both said they didn't know how it got there.

While at the hospital, an MSP trooper

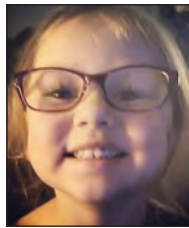
questioned Comstock and Smart and asked for their phones and passcodes. Comstock turned over her phone and passcode to open the phone. Smart refused.

State police obtained a search warrant to get and unlock Smart's phone. Det. Sarah Markel of the Detroit Police Department Homicide Division testified that she was able to use advanced software that would extract a two-minute video on Smart's phone that he had deleted. The software determined the date stamp for the video was 10:25 p.m. on Dec. 14, 2020.

The prosecutor placed a laptop on the judge's desk and played the video for the judge and attorneys. Those watching the hearing live streamed on YouTube could not see the video, but could hear it. There were sounds of a child crying, as well as music playing in the background.

While being questioned by MSP detectives following Trinity's death, a detective testified that on the night of Dec. 18, Smart said he had put Trinity to bed, but she got up complaining of a stomachache and she had vomited. She then went back to bed.

When Smart was driving to pick up Comstock at 6 a.m. Dec. 19, 2020, he called his father who told him to take



Trinity Chandler



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the child to the Holly Fire Department. His father went to the fire department.

The detective testified that Smart said during questioning that Trinity was clumsy and ran into things. The detective said she showed the two-minute video that had been deleted from his phone and asked him if it was his video from a few days prior. He said it was his video. When asked why he took the video, the detective testified that Smart said he did not know why he took the video and that he was an idiot. The detective testified that when she asked Smart if he knew Trinity died, he said he heard. The detective also testified that Smart said he'd be going to prison and that his life was over. The detective said Smart admitted to rough-housing too hard with Trinity.

Dr. John Bechinski of the Genesee County Medical Examiner's Office testified that he did the autopsy on Trinity on Dec. 21, 2020. He said she appeared to have been a normal 36-pound 3-year-old. He listed several contusions (bruises) on her chest, arms, legs, head and abdomen. There also were abrasions on her lip and tongue and bleeding in her eye. A toxicology report came back clear.

Bechinski testified that the two-minute video extracted from Smart's phone correlated to the injuries found on Trinity. He said the cause of death was blunt force trauma to the chest. The medical examiner said the type of injury to Trinity's chest occurred several days before her death. The doctor said the manner of Trinity's death was homicide. "The pressure on the child's chest was enough to damage the heart," he said. "It was consistent with what was on the video."

Smart will be back in court for an Oakland County Circuit Court arraignment July 7 at 1 p.m.

## HOT LINE CONTINUED

■■■■  
**STEVEN LOSEY'S RESIGNATION**  
from Linden's school board was not based upon 'science.' As a former clinical biochemist, his statement that 'age doesn't matter' regarding COVID-19, is false and feckless.

■■■■  
**HONOR SYSTEM. ASKED** if you had two COVID shots. Honorable, if you had two shots and say yes. Dishonorable, if you didn't and say yes.

■■■■  
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## AAA offers advice for air travelers

■Be patient and prepared as airports around the world become busier, have own rules

Air travelers are advised to be patient and prepared as millions of Americans return to the airport for summer trips. Demand has steadily climbed in recent months, as the world reopens to travelers. However, the increased demand, weather issues, and staff shortages have resulted in longer security lines and in some cases, altered itineraries and canceled flights.

“We are witnessing a resurgence in air travel, and the industry is working to keep pace with the soaring demand,” said Debbie Haas, vice president of travel for AAA — The Auto Club Group. “Airlines are restoring staff and adding routes, both of which were reduced during the pandemic. Travelers should monitor their flight status for any changes leading up to their trip, with airline apps being an easy way to stay informed. You should also arrive at the airport 2-3 hours before your flight, to ensure you to get to your gate on time.”

Sunday, June 20, the TSA reportedly screened more than 2.1 million air travelers — the most since the pandemic was declared in March 2020. So far this month, air passenger counts averaged nearly 1.9 million passengers per day. While that average is 32% lower than June 2019 (2,566,092), it’s on pace for a 145% increase from January 2021.

### Tips for air passengers:

- Book early for more options (seat and flight inventory).
- Enroll in TSA PreCheck to get the most convenient experience with the least amount of physical contact in screening. There’s no need for screening bins, shoes/belts stay on, and laptops, liquids, and food remain in the carry-on. In March 2021, 98% of TSA PreCheck passengers

waited less than five minutes.

- Consider flight travel insurance, but read the fine print to understand what it covers.
- Know your rights as an air passenger and review your airline’s contract of carriage for information on their policies for flight delays, cancellations and rebooking. If the airlines change the flight, you may be entitled to a full refund.
- Book your trip with a knowledgeable travel agent. They’ll serve as your advocate in case your flight is delayed or canceled, and can help with any last-minute travel plans.
- Check your airline’s website or download their app to keep up-to-date on your flight status, including one last time right before you leave for the airport. Check these options before calling their customer service number, which may result in a long wait time.

“Potential inconveniences associated with air travel are worth it for those interested in traveling internationally,” Haas said.

“Popular destinations like Rome, Paris and Venice are far less crowded now than they likely will be in the future. River cruises, ocean cruises and guided tours are typically operating with fewer guests, so you’ll have a more intimate experience. Plus, many excellent values are being offered on travel in 2021 as new itineraries become available nearly daily.”

Countries in Europe and around the world each have their own COVID-19-related protocols for incoming travelers. Travelers should seek the advice of their local travel advisor who can help navigate the evolving requirements as they plan and prepare to travel.

Whatever the plans, travel experts urge travelers to consider travel insurance to protect their wallet and health before and during their trip. If there’s anything the pandemic has taught us, it’s that you have to be prepared for the unexpected.

“Popular destinations like Rome, Paris and Venice are far less crowded now than they likely will be in the future.”

**Debbie Haas**

*AAA vice president of travel*

## Genisys Credit Union receives recognition

■Named a ‘Best Credit Union’ in Michigan by Forbes

For the second year in a row, Genisys Credit Union is recognized as a Best Credit Union in Michigan from Forbes in its annual “America’s Best-In-State Credit Unions.”

“Receiving recognition from Forbes as a Best Credit Union affirms our continued efforts to provide service excellence for our members,” said Jackie Buchanan, president and CEO of Genisys Credit Union. “Through personalized services, tailored products, and competitive rates, we work to create an environment where members can focus on their financial health in a way that works for them. We sincerely thank all who make Genisys their credit union of choice.”

Forbes partnered with market research firm, Statista, to survey 25,000

consumers who were asked to rate credit unions at which they have or previously have had checking accounts. The survey looked at trust, terms and conditions, branch services, digital services, customer service, and financial advice in regards to overall satisfaction.

“A cornerstone of community action lies in giving back,” Buchanan said. “We focus on upholding the role of community partner by ensuring each branch in our footprint is supported based on the area’s unique needs, positively impacting the well-being of our community members.”

The credit union partners with local organizations to support events for community members to attend at little or no cost, brings Reality Fairs to schools for students to get hands-on experience with budgeting and financial wellness, and raises funds for non-profit organizations like Lighthouse and the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan.



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Lake Fenton's Christina Lamb is our 2021 Tri-County Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Photo: David Troppens

# Lamb led Blue Devils, now leads our 2021 Girls Basketball Team

By David Troppens

Lake Fenton varsity girls basketball coach Brian VanBuren made a promise to Christina Lamb when she was in middle school.

"I told her I think you will be our first All-Stater," VanBuren said way back then. "She being shy, she made a goofy look to-

ward me."

This season VanBuren reminded her of the conversation, but a year ago Katelyn Siebert made honorable mention All-State, so technically if Lamb earned the same honor this season, she wasn't going to be the first.

"About two weeks into the season, I told her I haven't up-

dated our All-State list, and Katelyn is still not added," VanBuren said as he tried to motivate his senior player to greater things for the 2021 season. "I told her when I put them in, I can arrange it where I put her name up first, and she just laughed."

Lamb did go on to greater things. Leading what was un-

questionably the best basketball team in the tri-county area regardless of gender, Lamb helped what was a young Blue Devils' squad to a Flint Metro League Stars Division title during the winter. She also was very symbolic of the team's overall balance as the Blue Devils finished

**See LAMB on 11**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021 | PAGE 10 | MYFENTON.COM/SPORTS

## Sports Times

# Fenton boys track takes the top spot in Spring Terrific 10 poll

By David Troppens

The spring athletic season had its share of great moments, and now that we are at the top of our Tri-County Terrific 10 Teams of Spring 2021 list, we have some really nice squads to discuss today.

Four squads remain, yet two of these four teams didn't win a league title. In fact, one finished in third. But, ahhh, that team made up for it in the post-season.

That's enough creating of drama. Let's get to our final four.

**No. 4 - Fenton softball:** The Tigers had a slow start, going 3-5-1 in their first nine games. But, then again, maybe a look at the teams the Tigers played had a reason for that. The Tigers split a pair of games with Hartland (29-6) and eventual D2 state champions Owosso within those nine contests, so those look like strong splits now. And after those first nine games, the Tigers were a pretty strong team. The Tigers (15-6 in Metro action) finished third in the Flint Metro League with two of their losses coming to eventual D2 state quarterfinalist Linden and another

to Owosso. The team also finished the regular season with a 21-13-1 overall mark.

Fenton showed its stripes during the postseason. In district action, the Tigers dominated Flushing and tourney hosts Swartz Creek by a combined score of 22-1.

The Tigers then went to regional action and defeated Oxford 12-5 in the semifinal. The Tigers fell just short in the regional championship game, losing to Detroit Country Day 6-5. Fenton finished the season with a solid 24-14-1 record overall.

**No. 3 - Holly girls tennis:** It looked like the Holly varsity girls tennis team was going to have a season to forget early on. In early May, the Bronchos lost a 5-3 dual meet against the Fenton Tigers, representing the first Metro dual loss the Bronchos have suffered since Sept. 15, 1995. Prior to the loss, the Bronchos had gone 129-0-4 in their last 133 dual matches. Holly was just starting its season and already had a loss to Fenton and a tie against the Clio Mustangs.

As the season continued, more blows hit the team. The

squad lost two of its key seniors, including No. 1 singles player Calli Sokolowski, who would've been one of the contenders for the No. 1 singles title at the state meet.

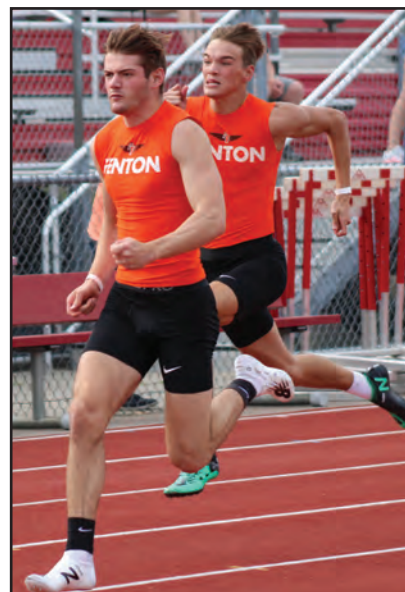
Still, the Bronchos didn't fold. Competing in the craziest Flint Metro League girls tennis race in the history of the league, Holly won the rest of their league duals and entered the league meet in first place. While at the league meet, the Bronchos won the tournament by two points and captured the Flint Metro League championship.

The team didn't stop there. The squad edged out a state meet trip by finishing in a tie with South Lyon East for second place at the regional meet. The two squads edged out Swartz Creek and Walled Lake Western by a point to earn the D2 state spot.

Once there, the Bronchos finished in a tie for 15th place in the 24 team field.

**No. 2 - Linden softball:** The Eagles had the type of season that could land them the No. 1 spot during most springs. Linden won 34 games, finishing

**See TERRIFIC 10 on 12**



When a team gets its own parade (above) through downtown Fenton, it's obvious it was a successful season. The Fenton varsity boys track and field team captured a Division 1 team state championship during the spring. The Tigers were our top team of the spring season. Two of the top athletes (left photo) on the team were Brandon Miller (front) and Noah Sage. Photo: David Troppens



LAMB

Continued from Page 10

the abbreviated season with a 13-2 overall record, eventually capturing a Division 2 District Championship for the second straight season.

Her unselfish play, which eventually created a team of unselfish players, helped earned Lamb our 2021 Tri-County Girls Basketball Player of the Year

award.

On a team that saw seven players average at least 6.5 points a game and eight average playing at least 13 minutes a contest, Lamb emerged as the team's leader, earning BCAM Honorable Mention All-State honors as well as All-Academic All-State honors. She led the team by averaging 10.9 points a game while also grabbing a team-high 5.3 rebounds a game. She also dished

off 1.9 assists a contest while earning 1.9 steals a contest as well. But what her and the other seniors (Aubrey Fray and Macy Phillips) did was establish a level of consistency the program hasn't seen in the 21st century prior to these last two seasons. In fact, many expected the Blue Devils to drop in talent this season due to the loss of a great senior class in 2020.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

ALL TRI-COUNTY GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

Player of the Year	First team	Grade	School
Christina Lamb	Macy Phillips	Senior	Lake Fenton
Class Senior • Team	Emma Tooley	Senior	Holly
	Korryn Smith	Senior	Fenton
Comment:	Amaya Smith	Freshman	Lake Fenton
Lamb symbolized what the Lake Fenton Blue Devils were during the 2020-21 season. They were an eight-player team that worked in unison and it takes the unselfish leadership of seniors who don't care about stats to make that work. She was an honorable mention All-BCAM selection, averaging 10.6 points and 4.9 rebound a game.	Cola Sisk	Soph	Lake Fenton
	Savannah Fellenbaum	Fresh	Lake Fenton
	Adrie Staib	Soph	Fenton
	Paige Leedle	Junior	Linden
	Kerrigan Howdeshell	Soph	Lake Fenton

Pudge's bat sparks hopeful future for Tigers, bats .500 for June in 2004

Editor's Note: Sports editor David Troppens has been a Detroit Tigers' fan from his earliest memories during his childhood. Through the years he's collected historical radio and television broadcasts of Detroit Tigers games. During the summer, he'll be featuring some of these games through his collection based on the actual date of our current publication.



"Tiger baseball is on the air."

June 30, 2004

Detroit 12, Cleveland 5

Network/Announcers: Dan Dickerson and Jim Price on WDFN-FM

Background: The Tigers suffered through not only the worst season in Detroit history but one of the worst in MLB history in 2003, posting a 43-119 record. I attended the final game of the 2003 season, supporting the Tigers as they tried to keep from losing their 120th game of the season. They were

successful in that quest, defeating the Minnesota Twins 9-4.

However, the Tigers made a few personnel moves before 2004 and it changed the dynamic of the squad. The biggest addition was catcher Ivan Rodriguez. Still in the prime of his career, "Pudge" Rodriguez was considered the elite or one of the elite catchers in baseball. If it was all Rodriguez or just a little part of the equation, the Tigers were a much better team in 2004, exciting Tigers' fans as the team competed to finish with a .500 or better record for a long portion of the summer, until eventually fading to a 72-90 record. Detroit had won its fifth in a row the night previous, and the Tigers were trying to win six games in a row for the first time since May 2002.

Game summary: Both teams ex-

See TIGERS on 12

Area athletes perform well at Mott All-Star contests

Tri-County athletes had pretty strong showings at the annual Mott Community College High School Baseball and Softball All-Star Games recently.

In the baseball contest, Holly's Nolan Jenkinson was named the Gold team's Most Valuable Player after getting on base four times. He had two hits, walked twice and scored a run. His performance helped the game between the Gold and Black squads finish in an 8-8 tie.

The softball game finished with an 11-4 victory for the Gold Team, with Linden's Jordyn Hobson earning the victory on the mound.

In the baseball game, the Black team led 7-0 after five innings, but the Gold team answered back. The Gold squad



Holly's Nolan Jenkinson

scored six times in the eighth during the scheduled nine-inning game. Among the offensive producers was Lake Fenton's Mason Cook who had a bases-loaded walk and a three-run double by Fenton's Logan Angel. Angel's hit cut the gap to 7-6.

CONTINUED AT TCTIMES.COM

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## TERRIFIC 10

Continued from Page 10

with a 34-8 record overall, and a lot of it had to do with the team's super potent offense. They scored 448 runs, which ranks ninth all time in the state according to the MHSAA's record book. The Eagles' offense was one to be feared.

However, with all the team's success, they were unable to win a Metro crown for one reason — Owosso pitcher Macy Irelan. She held the Eagles' bats to just one run in the teams' twinbill, resulting in Linden getting swept and having to settle for a second-place finish in the Metro.

However, the Eagles made some serious noise in the post-season anyway. The Eagles defeated Kearsley 17-4, Clio 21-6 and Lake Fenton 7-5 in district action, earning a D2 District title. A week later, the Eagles defeated Imlay City 9-4 and Essexville Garber 4-3 to earn a re-

gional crown. The Eagles were proving why they were ranked sixth in Division 2.

However, the team's run ended in the state quarterfinal. Playing in front of a large pro-Marysville crowd in Marysville, Linden's season ended with a 3-1 loss to the Vikings. Marysville ended up in the D2 state championship game, and guess who they faced? Yup, Owosso. Owosso won the state championship. That means the Flint Metro League had two of the top eight teams in the D2 state quarterfinals.

**No. 1 - Fenton boys track and field:** This was a no-brainer. Just a handful of seasons ago, the Tigers struggled with competing against the Flint Metro League teams in track action. But that's not an issue any more after the Tigers captured the Division 1 State Track and Field Championship this spring.

The Tigers completely dominated the Metro League



teams in dual meet action and at the league meet, earning the Flint Metro League Stripes Division title. At the regional meet, the Tigers were dominant, scoring a 105 points en route the team regional championship. And on the strength of athletes like seniors Brandon Miller and Noah Sage, the Tigers looked to have the talent needed to compete for a state crown. That's exactly what happened.

Miller took second at the state meet in the 100 meter dash (10.84) and 200 (21.36) while Noah Sage placed second in the 400 (47.41). The seniors teamed up with juniors Donovan Miller and



(Top left) The Fenton varsity softball team is No. 4 on our 2021 Spring Tri-County Terrific 10 list. (Immediately above) The Linden softball team finished No. 2 and the Holly girls tennis team (top above) is No. 3.

Evan Koch to place second in the 800 relay (1:28.23) as well. Those performances helped lead the Tigers to 34 team points and the Division

1 Team State Track and Field Championships.

What a truly outstanding season the Tigers had, one that will never be forgotten.

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## TIGERS

Continued from Page 11

changed three-run third innings with Rodriguez providing a two-run double (his 400th of his career) during the stanza for Detroit.

After that, the Tigers gradually blew the game open, with single runs in the fourth and fifth innings, two runs in the sixth and seventh innings and three runs in the eighth. Dimitri Young hit a solo home run in the third inning while Carlos Pena hit a two-run shot in the seventh. Pena finished the game with three RBI, as did Carlos Guillen who went 3-for-3, all singles.

But the real star was Rodriguez. He collected three hits and finished the month of June with a .500 batting average, going 43-for-86 during the month. It marks the first time a Tigers' regular batted better than .450 over the span of a month. Rodriguez was leading the American League with a .381 batting average after the contest.

On the mound, Nate Robertson (7-3) tossed seven innings of three-run and eight-strike out ball to earn the win.

**More on Rodriguez:** Rodriguez had nine doubles and three home runs to go with his 43 June hits. He walked eight times during the month, giving him a .542 on-base percentage. A lot of fans consider Rodriguez's willingness to sign with the Tigers as the symbolic sign that the team was willing to do what it took to win once again. Rodriguez finished the season with a .334 batting average.


The last Major League player to hit at least .500 during a month as a regular was Todd Helton, who hit .512 in May of 2000 for Colorado.

**Only one ball:** Dan Dickerson discussed a game that was played on June 29, 1916 between the Cincinnati Reds and the Chicago Cubs. After a ball was replaced in the game, he mentioned how that contest in 1916 played nine innings with just one baseball.

**Win streak:** The Tigers' win streak ended a day later when the Tigers lost a 7-6 verdict against Cleveland. After the victory, the Tigers were 37-39. In 2003, the Tigers didn't win their 38th game until September 4. That loss started a five-game losing streak for Detroit.




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This Google Earth view shows the American flags attached at the top of the light posts at LaFontaine Chrysler Dodge Ram dealership on Silver Parkway in Fenton. Attaching flags to light posts violates city ordinance.

## FLAGS

Continued from Front Page

The flags had been displayed in the past, as shown in this Google Earth photo, however the dealership was told that the flags attached to light posts violated city ordinance.

According to ordinance, flags are defined as signs and each business is allowed to have up to three flag poles with up to two flags on each. A flag attached to a light post would become a pole sign, which is not allowed in the city.

Avantini told Benard that allowing flags to be attached to light posts would go against the city's design standards. Under the special land use section pertaining to dealerships, flag banners and streamers must be approved by the planning commission.

Avantini said recent Supreme Court decisions prevent them from judging the content of a sign.

"The Planning Commission has to be consistent from one request to another and applications involving freedom of

speech can be quite tricky," Avantini said. "We are looking at ordinance amendments and will likely add this to our list."

Benard of Fenton Township said he's been in his general manager position for 10 months and was attempting to keep fresh American flags on the light posts. He said the city notified the dealership approximately two months ago that they were in violation of the city's ordinance.

Benard anticipated going into the meeting with the intention of keeping the flags fresh and new or working out a compromise and a reduced number of flags. He does not agree that a flag should be defined as a sign. He said he wanted to do what was right. He paid someone to take down the flags.

When asked what he would do with the 55 flags, Benard said he is considering putting them up at the LaFontaine dealership on North Road, adjacent to U.S. 23 in Fenton Township. He said he spoke with the township and believes there will be no ordinance issues.

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FEATURES

Midweek Crossword

ACROSS

1 Choose

4 Scale amts.

7 Diving duck

8 Diner workers

10 Dijon darling

11 Removes, as a brooch

13 Winter Olympics event

16 "— Clear Day"

17 Bolivian city

18 "Ulalume" writer

19 Favorites

20 Roman emperor

21 Driverswith handles

23 Battery part

25 Persia, today

26 "What's — for me?"

27 Lincoln or Ford

28 Accord maker

30 Baseball execs

33 2016 Best Picture nominee

36 Net defender in hockey

37 Separated

38 Island near Java

39 Apple variety

40 Tax form ID

41 Reply (Abbr.)

DOWN

1 Alpha's opposite

2 Lima's land

3 Performer with a baton

4 Candymaker Willy

5 November birthstone

6 Revue segment

7 Tibia's place

8 Points

9 Took potshots

10 Corp. money manager

12 Napper's racket

14 Comestibles

15 Earth (Pref.)

19 Calligrapher's instrument

20 Word of denial

21 007 portrayer

22 Legendary

23 "The King —"

24 Falls on

25 German pronoun

26 Draw a conclusion

28 Big wheels at sea

29 Leek's kin

30 Metric measures

31 Simple

32 Retired jet

34 Lectern locale

35 "Once — a time ..."

the U.S./ Canadian border

German pro-noun

Draw a conclusion

Big wheels at sea

Leek's kin

Metric measures

Simple

Retired jet

Lectern locale

"Once — a time ..."

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Midweek Sudoku

FUN BY THE NUMBERS

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

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8	2		5			9		
5				3			2	
		6			9			4
7			4					2
	6			1			5	7
		5			2	3		
		7			5		6	
4			8	9		1		
	1			2				5

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

Midweek Jumble

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME  
by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CYEDA

TEEVN

HOWSOH

LAPPOR

Answer here:

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Check out the new free JUST JUMBLE app

10

After an exhausting day of frightening people, the legendary horseman was a ---

Horoscopes

For the week of  
June 28, 2021

ARIES

Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, this week your mind may be pulling you in one direction while your heart may be dragging you in another. It can be challenging to choose which one to listen to.

GEMINI

May 22/June 21

Gemini, your modus operandi is working, even if it's somewhat unconventional. Keep on doing what makes you happy, especially if it's producing your desired results.

LEO

July 23/Aug 23

Familiar thoughts are flowing through your mind, Leo, and they seem like a broken record. Do your best to gain a new perspective and clear your mind.

VIRGO

Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, do you feel like you're working hard on something but not making much progress? Change your approach and even seek advice from others.

LIBRA

Sept 23/Oct 23

Every day presents a new start and a chance to try new things, Libra. Learn from past opportunities, but don't get discouraged about mistakes you once made.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, you're skilled at zeroing in on the details and nuances in conversations. Your receptiveness and intuition are skills to be proud of.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, team work is the name of the game this week. Embrace opportunities to work with others and welcome any help that comes your way.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22/Jan 20

A relationship gets all fired up this week, Capricorn. A discussion sparks some heated debate, but things will not get out of control. Each of you is respectful of the other.

PISCES

Feb 19/Mar 20

Have fun this week, Pisces. But make sure that you are professional and polite if the activities involve coworkers or colleagues.

TAURUS

Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, seek the truth and you will find it easily. You have many questions and the answers are just waiting around the corner. You just need to know where to find them.

CANCER

June 22/July 22

Cancer, give your body a good workout this week, especially if you've been letting things slide lately. Expending some energy will give you more energy.

*Happy 4th of July!*

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