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December has the clarity, the simplicity, and the silence you need
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~ Vivian Swift

Vol2025:25 -
December 12, 2025

Alden Men gather in grateful celebration

By Angeni Fields Smith

December 6, 2025 - This morning was the Alden Men’s Club Annual Holiday Brunch — a tradition where members and their families come together to share a meal, celebrate the year, and reflect on everything we’ve accomplished as a community.

That cool guy standing next to me in the photo is the President of the AMC. Fun fact: he’s also my dad!! Watching him lead such a meaningful cause fills me with so much pride.

The Alden Men’s Club is a small but mighty 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to supporting local food pantries across Antrim and Kalkaska Counties. Their biggest fundraiser—the annual Rummage Sale—raises thousands of dollars each year for families in need right here at home.

This club has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. It has been a part of Alden and surrounding communities for decades, working quietly but powerfully to support local food pantries in Alba, Rapid City, Bellaire, Mancelona, Central Lake, and Ellsworth.

Even though it’s called the Alden Men’s Club, it’s always been a family effort. Wives, kids, and generations of helpers have been part of the mission since day one.

If you’ve ever wanted to get involved in something that truly helps our local communities, this is it.

You can join, volunteer, or donate here: aldenmensclub.org OR message me (<https://www.facebook.com/angeni.fields>) and I can get you in touch with the President.

Let’s keep this tradition of kindness going. After all, community is better when we build it together.



RAPID CITY – On Saturday Morning, December 6, 2025, the Alden Men’s Club families gathered for a celebratory brunch. Following brunch, President Brad Fields gave a run down on how the year went. In 2025, the club gave \$17,400 in monthly stipends and grants to food pantries in Antrim and Kalkaska Counties.

I was going to write more about it, but Angeni did it perfectly in her facebook post which is reproduced above.



Food, food, food! There was plenty to enjoy.

Alden Men’s Club Officers, left to right: Norm Neuenschwander (Vice President), Brad Fields (President), Dan Bean (Secretary). Not pictured Stew Martin (Treasurer)

OUT & ABOUT

Editor’s note: *This space is free to community organizations to promote events which are of benefit to the residents in and around Kalkaska County. Email your information to tina.fieldsmedia@gmail.com Please include date and time of the event, a contact number or email address. We prefer that you not include prices.*

SENIOR & COMMUNITY MEALS

Senior Lunch Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, no reservation required for dine-in, carry out meal (w/o salad bar), all ages welcome, contact 231 258-5030
When: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Salad bar at 11:30 am, Meal served at 12:00 pm

Senior Lunch Antrim County COA, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, dine-in or carry out, 231 533-8703
When: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm for dine-in, 11:30 to 12:00 pm for carry out (site is open 8:30 am to 4:00 pm)

Senior Lunch, Mancelona Senior Ctr, 122 E State St, dine-in available, RSVP the day before to Marianne at 231 587-9131
When: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Salad Bar 11 to 11:45 am, Lunch served 12:00 to 12:30 pm (site is open 9:00 am to 1:30 pm)

Senior Lunch, Central Lake Meal Site, 1622 N. M-88, Central Lake, dine-in available, RSVP the day before to Lois at 231 544-6687
When: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri 11:30 to 12:00 pm (site is open 10:00 am to 12:30 pm)

KAIR’s Ladles of Love, 107 W. Third St, free community meal, everyone is welcome, contact 231 258-7836
When: Mon, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Senior Lunch (Kalkaska COA), Garfield Township Hall, 0466 W. Sharon Rd, Fife Lake, dine-in or pick-up, RSVP by 9 am to Marci at 231 360-7697
When: Mon, 12 noon to 12:30 pm

Senior Meal, Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, Fife Lake, reservations must be made at the previous meal or 24 hours in advance, contact 231-922-4911
When: Tue, 11:45 am

Community Meal, Mancelona United Methodist Church, 117 W. Hinman, Mancelona, canceled if Mancelona schools are closed for inclement weather, 231 587- 8461
When: Tue, except holidays, 5 to 6 pm

Senior Lunch (Kalkaska COA), Bear Lake Township Hall, 198 E. Bear Lake Rd, dine-in or pick-up, RSVP between 8:30 and 9 am to Iola at 941 270-1549
When: Tue, Thu, 12 noon to 12:30 pm

Senior Lunch (Kalkaska COA), South Boardman Senior Center, 5503 Boardman Rd SW, dine-in or pick-up, RSVP by 9 am to Marci at 231 360-7697
When: Tue, Thu, 12:30 to 1:00 pm

Kalkaska Baptist Community Meal, Kalkaska Baptist Church, 1151 CR 612, open to everyone, 217 871-5700
When: 2nd and last Tue, 5 to 7 pm

Senior Meal, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, reservations must be made at the previous meal or 24 hours in advance contact 231 922-4911
When: Wed, 11:30 am

Senior Lunch (Kalkaska COA) Clearwater Township Hall, 5440 River St NW, Rapid City, dine-in or pick-up, RSVP by 8:30 am to Pam at 231 564-2794
When: Wed, 12 to 12:30 pm

Community Meal, Kalkaska United Ministries for Christ, 2525 Beebe Rd, curbside pick-up or dine in, donations accepted, contact 231 258-2820
When: Wed, except holidays, 5 to 6 pm

Community Meal, Kingsley United Methodist Church, 113 Blair St, Kingsley, contact 231 263-5278
When: 3rd Wed, 5 to 6:30 pm

Easy Meals Fundraiser for American Legion, Dale H Wheeler American Legion Post 219, 10283 M-113, Fife Lake, dine-in or drive-thru, contact 231 879-4475
When: Thu, 5-6 pm

Veterans Dinner, South Torch Lake Fire Department, 8765 Helena Rd, Alden, free dinner for Veterans and their families, contact 231 331-4204
When: 3rd Thu, 5:00 to 7:00 pm

Red Apron Community Dinner, Bellaire Community United Methodist Church, 401 N. Bridge St, Bellaire, everyone is welcome to this free meal, 231 533-8133
When: Last Thur, 5:00 to 6:00 pm

Senior Omelet Breakfast, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, build your own omelet, alternate available each week, no reservation required, all ages welcome (may not be served on certain holidays or if special luncheons are scheduled), contact 231 258-5030
When: Fri, 8:00 to 9:00 am

Senior Breakfast, Antrim County COA/Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, menu changes weekly, 231 533-8703
When: Fri, 8:00 to 9:00 am

Pasties & Pot Pies for Sale, Coldsprings Excelsior Township Area (CETA) Hall, 6615 County Rd 612, (to confirm dates and availability, call 231 258-9912)
When: Fri, 1 to 3 pm

Fish Fry, Dale H. Wheeler American Legion Post 219, 10283 M-113, Fife Lake, dine-in, \$15 all-you-can-eat, age 5 and under is free, contact 231 879-4475
When: 1st Fri, 4:30 to 7:00 pm (or until sold out)

Free Breakfast, Bear Lake Christian Church, 221 E. Bear Lake Rd SE, Kalkaska, sausage, eggs, and pancakes breakfast, open to the community, contact 231-258-6107
When: 3rd Sat, 8:00 to 10:00 am

Pancake Breakfast, Bellaire Masonic Lodge, 4905 Stover Rd, Bellaire, pancakes, eggs, sausage, biscuits & gravy, coffee, and orange juice, \$10 plate, contact 713 665-4100
When: last Sat, 7:00 to 11:00 am

VFW & Central Lake AmVets Monthly Breakfast, Central Lake AmVets, 1840 S. Main St, Central Lake, serving pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, sausage gravy & biscuits, hash browns, toast, beverages, 231 544-6455
When: 1st Sun, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Family Meal Distribution, The Orchard Church, 3903 Voice Rd, Kingsley, drive thru pick-up of a day’s worth of meals for a day (breakfast, lunch, dinner) for a family of six, open to all, contact 231 263-8267
When: Last Sun, 4:30 to 6:00 pm

Swiss Steak Dinner, Bellaire Masonic Lodge, 4905 Stover Rd, Bellaire, includes dessert and beverages, proceeds to help with the Masons scholarship activities and help within the community, contact 231 377-7156
When: Last Sun, 4:30 to 7:00 pm

FARMERS’ MARKET

Bellaire Winter Farmers’ Market, 102 Maple St, Bellaire, inside the ASI Community Center, 231 350-8835
When: Fri., 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (through May ’25)

FOOD PANTRIES

Little Free Pantry, Alden United Methodist Church, 9015 Helena Rd, Alden, located in front yard of the church
When: available anytime

Fife Lake Community Church, 206 Boyd St, call 231 879-4270
When: hours by appointment only

Share Shack Free Food Pantry, Bear Lake Christian Church, 221 E. Bear Lake Rd SE, Kalkaska, located in the parking lot, 231-258-6107
When: available anytime

KAIR Food Pantry/Thrift Store, 324 S. Cedar St, Kalkaska, available to Kalkaska and Antrim County residents, curbside pickup only, call 231 258-0060 ext 4 by 2:45 pm to make an appointment
When: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Bellaire Food Pantry, 205 E. Broad St, 231-533-8600
When: Mon & Thu 10 am - 4 pm, Sat 10 am - 12 pm

ACTS (Acme Christian Thrift Store & Pantry), 8925 M-72 East, Williamsburg, serving Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, & Antrim counties, by appt, 231 267-3002
When: Tues 5 - 7 pm, Wed 1 - 4 pm, Sat 10 am - 1 pm

Mancelona Food Pantry & Resale, 201 N. Maple St, Mancelona, 231-676-1686
When: Tues, Wed, Thu, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Central Lake Community Food Pantry, 1875 Main St, Central Lake, 231-544-6878
When: Tue 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Fri 3:00 to 5:00 pm

Kingsley United Methodist Church, 113 Blair St, Kingsley, call 231 263-5278 for appt if you are unable to come during open hours
When: Wed & Fri, 9 am to 12 pm

Rapid City Area Food Pantry, 9456 Valley Rd NW, Rapid City, donations accepted, contact Christine at 231 331-6246
When: Fri, except holidays, 11 am to 1:30 pm

Kingsley Baptist Church, 7511 Blackman Rd, Kingsley, call Jessica at 231-263-5650 for apt if you are unable to come during open hours
When: 2nd & 4th Fri, 1:00 to 3:00 pm

HEALTH AND FITNESS

Yoga, Fife Lake Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, with Peggy Williams, restorative yoga, suggested donation of \$5-10 per class, contact lakesidetherapeutics@gmail.com, to register, email kspratt@tadl.org
When: Mon, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Yoga, ASI Community Center & Park, 102 Maple St, Bellaire, with Daryl Allison-Busch, licensed instructor, contact 231 564-0010
When: Mon, 12:30 pm (Gentle) and 2 pm (Hatha)

Bootcamp Class, Kaliseum Recreation Complex, 1900 Fairgrounds Rd, included in Kaliseum membership or \$10 drop-in fee, Instructor Nickey Torrey, 231 258-5913
When: Mon, 7:00 to 7:45 pm

Yoga, Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, contact 231 331-4643
When: Mon, Wed, Fri 8:30 to 9:30 am

Let’s Get Moving, Bellaire Community United Methodist Church, 401 N. Bridge St, Bellaire, 30-minute “Body Groove” video for all levels (can be done in a chair, too) lead by Cherese Villareal, contact 580 471-7778
When: Mon, Wed, 11:00 to 11:30 am

Chair Exercise, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8703
When: Mon, Wed, Thu. 10 to 10:45 am

Aerobic Exercise with Weights, (Kalkaska COA) Senior Center, 303 S. Coral St, bring small hand weights or two cans of soup, contact 231 258-5030
When: Mon, Fri, 10:30 to 11:30 am

Lyrical/Contemporary Dance for Adults, ASI Community Center, 102 S. Maple St, Bellaire, \$10 cost, contact 231 572-2518
When: 1st Tues, 5:45 to 6:45 pm

Wii Bowling, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8703
When: Tue, 12:30 to 1:30 pm

Line Dance, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, all skill levels welcome, contact 231 258-5030
When: Tue, 1:00 pm

Table Tennis, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, contact 231 258-5030
When: Tue, 2:00 pm

Line Dancing, Fife Lake Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, equipment provided, focused on seniors, 231 922-4911
When: Tue, Thu, 10:00 am

Yoga for Seniors, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, contact 231 258-5030
When: Tue, Thu, 10:00 am

Cardio Drumming, Fife Lake Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, equipment provided, focused on seniors, contact to register 231 922-4911
When: Tue, Thu, 10:00 am

Fitness Over Fifty, Fife Lake Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, contact to register 231 922-491
When: Tue, Thu, 10:30 to 11:30 am

Chair Yoga, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, class size is limited, advance registration is required, 231 922-4911
When: Wed, Fri, 9:15 am

Senior Exercise Class, Bear Lake Township Hall, 198 E. Bear Lake Rd NE, open for all seniors, mixing yoga, light impact aerobics, strength training, contact 989 330-7538
When: Wed, 9:00 to 10:00 am

Taekwondo, Kaliseum Recreation Complex, 1900 Fairgrounds Rd, included in Kaliseum membership or \$10 adults/\$5 child or senior drop-in fee, ages 6 years +, Instructor Mr. Allan, 231 258-5913
When: Wed, 4:30 to 5:30 pm

Strong Nation Class, Kaliseum Recreation Complex, 1900 Fairgrounds Rd, included in Kaliseum membership or \$10 drop-in fee, Instructor Lanae Bump, contact 231 258-5913
When: Wed, 6:00 to 6:45 pm

Hand & Foot, CETA Hall, 6615 CR612 NE, 231 587-9475
When: Thu, 10 am - noon

Wii Bowling, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, COVID guidelines observed. contact 231 258-5030
When: Thu, 1:00 pm

Pound Class, Kaliseum Recreation Complex, 1900 Fairgrounds Rd, included in Kaliseum membership or \$10 drop-in fee, Instructor Nickey Torrey, contact 231 258-5913
When: Thu, 6:00 to 6:45 pm

Video-Lead Yoga, Fife Lake Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, adult/senior video lead beginner friendly, low impact yoga, no registration needed, yoga mats available to borrow, contact 231 879-4101
When: Fri, 9:00 to 10:00 am

Bootcamp Class, Kaliseum Recreation Complex, 1900 Fairgrounds Rd, included in Kaliseum membership or \$10 drop-in fee, Instructor Nickey Torrey, contact 231 258-5913
When: Fri, 9:00 to 10:00 am

BINGO, CARDS & BOARD GAMES

Antrim County Duplicate Bridge Club, ASI Community Center & Park, 102 Maple St, Bellaire, 231 590-7293
When: Mon, 12:45 pm

Penny Bingo, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, all are welcome, \$1 donation, play with pennies, win pennies, bring lots of pennies or purchase from COA, contact 231 258-5030
When: Mon, 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Euchre, CETA Hall, 6615 CR612 NE, 231 587-9475
When: Mon, 6 pm

Beginning Bridge: Sign-up is now occurring for this ten-week course that is being held at Helena Township Community Center in Alden. Cost: \$10 for book and \$5 suggested donation per lesson. Come, have fun, and meet some bridge players! Lessons, taught by Judy Kuiper, an ACBL Best Practices certified bridge teacher. To sign up, contact Judy at jkuiper@learnselfcompassion.com or 616-581-4668. Sponsored by Alden District Library and the Antrim County Bridge Club.
When: Tue 10 am - noon

Mah-Jongg,, People of all skill levels are invited to play. Free Event. Sponsored by Alden District Library and held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.
When: Tue, 1 to 4 pm

Euchre, (Kalkaska COA) 303 S. Coral St, \$5.00 buy-in, 231 258-5030
When: Tue, 1 pm

Euchre, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, \$5.00 buy-in, contact 231 533-8703
When: Tues, 6:00 pm

Piggit Hoggit, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, euchre taken to the next level, \$1, contact 231 922-4911
When: Wed, 9:15 am OR 12:00 pm????

199er Bridge Game & Free Lessons: Free lessons at 11:30am. Lunch (bring your own) and bridge talk at Noon. ACBL-sanctioned bridge game for \$5.00 at 12:30pm. For more details, contact Lou Slyker at 248-770-6152 or ljslyker@gmail.com
When: Wed 11:30 am except 3rd Wed each month (May 7 - Oct 29)

Jackpot Bingo, (Kalkaska COA) Senior Center, 303 S Coral St, fundraiser for the Senior Center, community welcome, must be 18+, contact 231 258-5030
When: Wed, seating begins 4 pm, warm ups at 5 pm, regular games at 6 pm

Bingo, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, \$1, contact 231 922-4911
When: Wed, Fri 10:15 to 11:15 am

Billiards, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, enjoy a game on a first-come, first-served basis, all equipment provided, contact 231 922-4911
When: Wed, Fri 9:15 am to 12:15 pm

Pinochle, CETA Hall, 6615 CR612 NE, 231 587-9475
When: Wed, 6 pm

Mah-jongg, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8703
When: Thu, 12:45 pm

Euchre, Rapid City Community Center (Red School House), 5407 River St, Rapid City, 231 331-6249
When: Thu, 1 pm

Bingo, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8703
When: 3rd Thu, during Birthday Dinner at 11:30 am

Bingo, ASI, 102 S. Maple St, Bellaire, community welcome must be 18+, contact 231 350-8835
When: 2nd & 4th Thu, Doors open 4 pm, play 5 pm

Euchre, The Rock, 115 E. Blair St, Kingsley, single player with individual scoring, experience is necessary for team play, lessons available, contact 231 922-4911
When: Fri 10:15 am to 12:15 pm

Pantry Bingo, Kalkaska Sr Center303 S. Coral St, all are welcome, play for pantry items, \$1 donation 231 258-5030
When: Fri, 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Bingo, American Legion Hall, 9850 S. Front St, Mancelona community welcome, must be 18+, 231 499-2364
When: Sat, doors open at 4 pm, play begins at 6 pm

Pool, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, open to anyone who wants to play, must contact 231 258-5030 with your name and number
When: Sat, 6 pm

Crafts & Hobbies

Small Crafts Groups, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, bring a personal small craft to work on while socializing, many are willing to teach basics of crochet, knitting, embroidery, etc, 231 258-5030
When: Mon, 9:00 to 11:00 am

Wood Carvers, Kalkaska Senior Center 303 S. Coral St, all levels of skill, teaching available, 231 258-5030
When: Mon, 6 pm

Torch Area Artisans Guild (TAAG): This artisans’ group has been creating art and contributing to the community for over 40 years. Newcomers are always welcome! For more info, email taartisanguild@gmail.com. Sponsored by Alden District Library and held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.
When: Tue, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm (except Dec 16)

Quilters Corner, Antrim County COA, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, bring your own project, 231 533-8703
When: Tue, 12:30 to 2:20 pm;

Juniper Garden Club, Clearwater Township Community Center, 5407 River St, Rapid City, contact 231 629-2498, new members welcome
When: 1st Tue, 1:00 pm

Alden Knitters & Crocheters, All skill levels welcome! For info, contact Sue Archer at 231-944-0013. Sponsored by Alden District Library, held at Helena Township Community Center & Library, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.
When: Tue, 2:00 to 4:00 pm (except Dec 23)

Knitting - Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St,
When: Thu 10 to noon

Group Painting, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga St, Bellaire, 231 533-8703
When: Thu, 10:30 am

Fiber Arts Group, Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Ln, Fife Lake, bring your own lap project and craft with others by our warm fireplace, not lessons, contact 231 879-4101
When: Thu, 3:00 to 4:30 pm

Kasky Kwilters, (Kalkaska COA) Senior Center, 303 S Coral St, come see what we are doing! 231-384-0595
When: 1st Thu, 4:00 pm

Great Lakes Scale Modelers, Traverse City Area District Library, 610 Woodmere Avenue, Thirlby Room. Plastic models, any scale, trains, planes, automobiles. Whatever floats your boat. Contact Bruce, 231-620-1767 or Frank, 231-228-3474
When: 2nd Sat, 1To 4 pm

Antrim/Kalkaska Paper Crafters, First Presbyterian Church in Elk Rapids. Soup and Salad Potluck lunch. Bring any handheld craft and work on your own project. Contact Beth Shuster at beth_scraps1960@sbcbglobal.net
When: 3rd Sat, 9am - 5pm

Children’s Activities

Tot Time, Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Ln, Fife Lake, contact 231 879-4101
When: 1st Mon 10 am

STEAM Club - Central Lake District Library, 7900 Maple St., Central Lake. For Elementary age kids 8 years old and up. Class size is limited, registration required. Contact 231-544-2517
When: Mon, 3:15 to 4 pm

Story Time with Miss Diane- Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, open to children ages 0-5 and their caretakers, stories, crafts, snacks, 231 533-8814
When: Tue, 10:00 am

Story Time, Mancelona Township Library, 202 W. State St, Mancelona, stories and crafts, 231 587-9451
When: Tue, 10:30 am

Wigglers Preschool Story Time, Kingsley Branch Library, 213 S. Brownson, Kingsley, children from birth to pre-kindergarten are welcome, stories, music, and movement, contact 231 263-5484
When: Tue and Wed, 10:30 am

Story Time with Miss Diana, Central Lake District Library, 7900 Maple St., Central Lake, with crafts, songs, stories, songs, and snacks, contact 231-544-2517
When: Wed, 10:30 am

LEGO Club, Central Lake District Library, 7900 Maple St, Central Lake, available to children ages 5+, drop-in club, registration required, call 231 544-2517
When: Wed, 3:15 to 4:00 pm

5toOne Playgroup, Kalkaska Early Head Start Classroom, 424 S. Cedar St, activities for children, resources for parents, music & movement, registration is encouraged, <https://bit.ly/EHSKaRegistration>
When: 2nd and 4th Wed, 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Teen Dungeons & Dragons, Kingsley Branch Library, 213 S. Brownson Ave, Kingsley, teen-led D&D campaign, everything needed is provided, refreshments, too, free activity and open to teens ages 13-19 years, parents are welcome, contact 231 263-5484
When: 1st and 3rd Thu, 3:30 to 6:45 pm

5toOne Playgroup, Rapid City Elementary, 5258 River St, Rapid City, child-led playtime, healthy snack, and story, registration is encouraged, <https://bit.ly/PlayinRapidCity>
When: 2nd Thur, 8:45 to 10:00 am

Teen Challenge Board Games, Central Lake District Library, 7900 Maple St, board games galore for teens age 12 and older, free with snacks provided, 231 54343-2517
When: 4th Thur, 3:15 to 4:00 pm

Central Lake Community Playgroup, First Congregation Church, 8066 W. State St, fun activities and lunch provided, meet in lower level. 231 347-0067
When: Fri, 10:00 to 11:30 pm

Baby & Toddler Storytime: Kalkaska County Library. Stories, music, movement, & crafts to promote literacy from birth to kindergarten. FREE. Includes 5toOne playgroup. Contact Kalkaska County Library at (231) 258-9411 or info@kalkaskalibrary.org for info.
When: Fri 10:30 am

Story Time, Mancelona Township Library, 202 W. State St, Mancelona, contact 231 587-9451
When: Fri, 3:30 pm

5toOne Playgroup, Mancelona School’s Early Childhood Space, 203 Grove St, child-led playtime, healthy snack, and story, registration is encouraged, <https://bit.ly/PlayMancelona>
When: 3rd Fri, 12:00 to 1:30 pm

O&A - continues on page 11

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OBITUARIES

Richard Kevin Spires

April 19, 1957 ~ December 1, 2025

Richard (Rick) Spires 68, of Mancelona journeyed home on Monday, December 1, 2025 at Meadow Brook MCF following a long, hard 13 year battle with Frontotemporal Dementia.



Rick was born on April 19, 1957 in Kalkaska, MI to Leslie and Vivian (Stratton) Spires.

He was a 1975 graduate of Mancelona High School. He had worked many years in the automotive industry, followed by his "favorite job" -at Mancelona Public Schools (where he was known to many as "Uncle Rick")-, and eventually retiring from Northwestern Michigan College.

Rick was passionate about life and made sure to live it to the fullest. He made everyone feel that they mattered. His smile, laugh and energy were contagious. He loved people and they were naturally drawn to his light which made him the center of attention in every situation. Family was important to him and it brought him great joy when he was able to provide a place for the family to circle the campers for weekends/holidays.

Rick was a memory making machine. If he wasn't in the woods hunting, hiking, mushroom hunting, berry picking, fishing, camping, rock hunting, on a ballfield, or on a golf course, you could bet he'd turn up somewhere with somebody, getting into something. He would make

memories alone, or with whoever wanted to tag along. He wasted no time and made sure to have no regrets.

Rick was preceded in death by his parents. Brothers: Samuel (Helen) Spires, Leslie (Elaine) Spires Jr. Sister: Martina (Harry) Sutter. Brother In-laws: Thomas Healey, and Harry Sutter.

Rick is survived by his wife of 37 years Jane. Sons: Richard (Audra) Spires Jr., Shawn Spires. Sisters: Zila (Tom) Healey, Gertrude (Ken) Westcott, Edna (Norm) Lanning, Sheryl (Dave) Miller, Bonnie (Orlo) Wildfong, and Jeanne (Eric) Hoogerhyde. Grandchildren: Mallorie Spires, Collin (Kadence) Spires. Bonus Grandchildren: Dustin Micheal, Darren Michael, Alyiah Grody. One Great Granddaughter: Josie Spires. Many nieces and nephews.

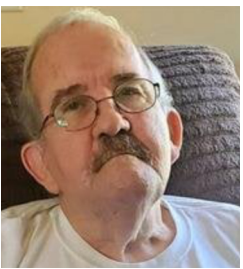
The family would like to extend their gratitude and appreciation to the staff at Meadow Brook for the excellent care he received during his stay. Even as his light was dimmed by the FTD he made his presence known by warming hearts with his infectious personality. -Your efforts truly went above and beyond.

Rick's life will be celebrated on: April 19, 2026, 12-4pm at the Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd. Alden, MI 49612. Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

Gerald Wayne Hoogerhyde

February 23, 1943 ~ November 28, 2025

Gerald W. Hoogerhyde, 82, of Buckley, passed away on November 28, 2025 at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City. Born on February 23, 1943 in Dearborn, the son of the late Donald and Ella (Chaboude) Hoogerhyde.



Gerald is survived by his wife, Pamela; son's William Hoogerhyde of Traverse City, Kenneth (Sheryl) Hoogerhyde of Grawn and Donald (Kathleen)

Hoogerhyde of Reed City.

Preceding Gerald in death re his brothers, Wesley Hoogerhyde and Russell Hoogerhyde.

Cremation has taken place and a Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date.

Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

Stuart R. Brintzenhoff

July 10, 1964 ~ November 25, 2025

Stuart R. Brintzenhoff, 61, passed away peacefully at his home in Kalkaska, Michigan, on November 25, 2025. Born July 10, 1964, in Fredericksburg, Virginia, to Earl D. Brintzenhoff Sr. and Myrtle L. (Elgin) Brintzenhoff, Stuart lived life full of laughter, stories, and a big heart.



He loved hunting, fishing, bonfires, smoking, having a drink, and spending time with family and friends. His dog Jack was always by his side for every adventure. Stuart was a proud roofer and union man, hardworking, dependable, and always ready to help a friend. He was also a huge sports fan, especially football, and nothing made him happier than cheering for his beloved Michigan State Spartans. Go Green!

Stuart is survived by his children, Mariesa (Dan) Hill and Josh Jones; his grandsons, Noah and Brayden Hill; his siblings, Earl Brintzenhoff

Jr., Sandra (Bill) Allen, and Bonnie (Curt) Reinhold; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews. He is preceded in death by his father, Earl D. Brintzenhoff Sr., his brother Paul, and his nephew Blake.

A true family man, Stuart loved life, loved a good laugh, and lived it to the fullest. He was always up for an adventure, a joke, or a game, and he had a way of making even ordinary moments feel special. He will be missed by many, but his stories, humor, and spirit will live on in the hearts of those who knew him.

Funeral services were on Monday, December 1st at 1:00 pm at Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home with visitation beginning at 11:00 am until the time of service. A spring burial will be planned later at Evergreen Cemetery.

Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

Winona Edna Sleight

June 9, 1933 ~ November 12, 2025

Winona Edna Sleight, 92, of South Boardman, passed away on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. She was born on June 9, 1933, in Lansing, Michigan, to Cecil and Bertha (Johnson) Green. Winona grew up in Lansing, where she met the love of her life, Donald E. Sleight. The two married and shared 63 wonderful years together. Early in their marriage, they made their home in South Boardman, where they lived for many years. Winona spent her career as a nurse, caring for others with compassion and dedication. She had a love for animals, especially her cat, and found joy in watching the birds outside her window. A sweet little



lady, Winona loved the Lord and faithfully attended church. She read her Bible daily and was known for her wisdom and the heartfelt advice she gave to those she loved. Creative and talented, Winona enjoyed crocheting and crafting, especially making handmade cards. She also loved to draw, with flowers being her favorite subject. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at Victory Baptist Church in South Boardman, Michigan, with Pastor William McQueen officiating. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Dorothy Ann Wielkerwicz

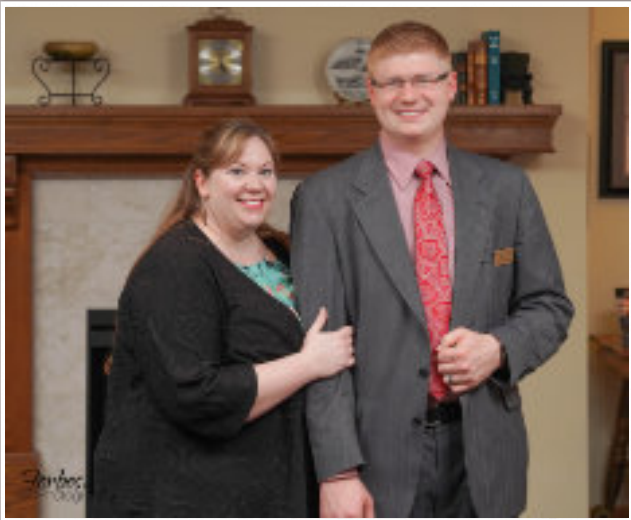
September 27, 1942 ~ November 24, 2025

Dorothy Ann Wielkerwicz, 83, of Fife Lake, passed away on November 24, 2025, at her home with family by her side. She was born on September 27, 1942, in Dearborn, to the late Adam and Helen (Ryder) Seweski. Dottie loved the outdoors—especially mushroom hunting, fishing, watching wildlife, and tending to her flowers. She enjoyed cooking, trips to the casino, and always approached life with a positive outlook. She was generous, trusting, and had a keen eye for detail. Highly organized and naturally curious, Dottie was an avid reader who loved learning new things. She is survived by her children, Sharon Karczewski and Thomas



Wielkerwicz; her grandchildren, Jennifer Wielkerwicz, Sarah (Richard) Hunter, Hollie Wielkerwicz, Jimmy Wielkerwicz, Beth Wielkerwicz, and Nicole Wielkerwicz; 11 great-grandchildren; her brothers, Danny (Carol) Seweski and Doug (Michelle) Seweski; as well as many nieces and nephews. Dottie was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, James Wielkerwicz; her son, James Wielkerwicz; and her granddaughter, Christie Wielkerwicz. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

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Lois Mary Buckler

November 3, 1927 ~ November 29, 2025

Lois Mary (Nicholson) Buckler, 98, of Kalkaska, MI, formerly of Newberry, MI, passed away on November 29th, 2025. Lois was born on November 3rd, 1927, in Hodgeville, Saskatchewan, Canada. Lois was the oldest daughter of the late Norman and Bertha (Baker) Nicholson.



Lois was preceded in death by her parents, Norman and Bertha (Baker) Nicholson, husband of 67 years, Billy Buckler and a great granddaughter, Ella Gould.

Lois will be lovingly remembered by her three sons; David (Joyce) Buckler of Kalkaska, Paul (Sherry) Buckler or South Boardman, Lyle (Jen Liepa) Buckler of Alaska; grandchildren Jennifer (Ken) Gould of Belding, MI, Logan Buckler of Kalkaska, MI, Gena Buckler of South Boardman, MI, Jennifer (Scott Veltman) Lewis of Kalkaska, MI, Kristina (Kate Robinson) Mason of Midland, MI; great grandchildren Kenny and Joey Gould, Jayden Buckler, Aiden Mason, Grace and Gabby Robinson, Owen and Cole Lewis; sister Meryl Kingren; brother Lorne (Darlene) Nicholson; as well as many family and friends.

A memorial service will be held at Kalkaska Funeral Home on Monday, December 15th beginning at Noon. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at 11AM. Memorial contributions may be made to the 1st Presbyterian Church, 113 W John St, Newberry, MI 49868, Kalkaska Memorial Assisted Living, 509 S. Birch Street, Kalkaska, MI 49646, or Heartland Hospice, c/o The Gentiva Foundation, 3350 Riverwood Parkway, Suite 1400, Atlanta, GA 30339.

Lois graduated Morse High School in Morse, Saskatchewan, Canada, in 1945, and continued her education at Business School in Calgary, Canada. She worked as a bookkeeper for the Ford Garage in Morse, Saskatchewan, Canada. Then went on to Providence Hospital Nursing School in 1947, where Lois graduated as a Registered Nurse in 1950. She worked at Moose Jaw General Hospital in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada. Lois applied for a visa in 1953 and moved to Gaylord, MI where she worked at Otsego Memorial Hospital for 3 years.

Lois married the love of her life, Billy D. Buckler on December 4th, 1954, in Gaylord, MI at the Methodist Church. They then moved to Norway, MI until moving to Marquette, MI, having three sons before moving to Newberry, MI. Lois continued work at Newberry Helen Joy Hospital until her retirement in 1987. Lois and Billy spent their winters in Zapata, Texas until 2016 before living full time in South Boardman, MI.

Barbara Jo Ross

November 25, 1947 ~ November 23, 2025

Barbara Jo Ross, 77, of Fife Lake, passed away at her home on Sunday, November 23, 2025. She was born on November 25, 1947, in Flint, to the late Ernest and Hazel (Batten) Ellis. Barb had moved to Fife Lake over 50 years ago and has loved all that northern Michigan has to offer. Family was everything to Barb, she has been the matriarch for her family whom she cared about so deeply. Although she could be a bit feisty at times, her selfless heart always shined. When she wasn't outside tending to her flowers, she could either be found at the Casino or watching the Hallmark Channel. She was a loving mother, grandmother, and a very enthusiastic great grandmother. Barb is survived by her daughter Kimberly Ross;

grandchildren: Christopher Ross, Nickolas Storm, Timothy Ingersoll Jr., Faith Fields, and Zachary Karpinski; great grandchildren: Hendrix Ross, Alayna Ingersoll, Cole Ingersoll, Winston Fields, and Adeline Fields; her siblings: Linda Benton, Roger Ellis, and Jerry Ellis. She was preceded in death by her son William "Billy" Ross, husband Maurice Cole, brother Rodney Ellis, and sister Carol Harwood. Visitation was held from 12pm-1pm on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at Kalkaska Funeral Home. The funeral service began at 1pm following visitation in the Chapel of Kalkaska Funeral Home. Burial took place in Boardman Township Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home.

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A Village of Helpers

By: Alison Neihardt, LPC

We have all heard the phrase "it takes a village." We have a wonderful little village here in Kalkaska. Our small town looks out for their neighbors and friends. We help each other on good days and not so good days. This is what makes Kalkaska a special place to live.

We now have a village of helpers. A group called Kalkaska Helpers has been formed to help collaborate and provide services and help to our community. This group is made up of counselors, ministry helpers, community resource providers, and others who just care about our small town and the people who call it home.

The goal of our group is to collaborate with resources and see where our group can be of assistance to our fellow neighbors. We would like to be involved in the community in any way we can by offering support and resources to those in need. Whether that is mental health services, crisis counseling, physical needs, or other supports we are here to help.

We meet on the first Friday of the month at Life's Work Clinic 103 3rd Street Suite E, across from the post office at 9:30 AM.

If you would like to be part of the Kalkaska Helpers group please reach out to Alison Neihardt with Helping Kids Counseling, LLC at 231-590-4812 or email hkupnorth@gmail.com. Or Life's Works Clinic with Adam DeVaney 231-620-7977 or email adam@lifesworkclinic.com



Northwest MI

V O I C E

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John 14:2 - In my Father's house, there are many mansions.
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I go to prepare a place for you.

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GT Crisis Center Offers Help During its First Holiday Season

Those struggling during the holidays have 24/7 access to mental health resources.

There is now a new resource for those in Northern Michigan silently struggling with stress, loneliness, or loss this holiday season as the Grand Traverse Mental Health Crisis and Access Center (Crisis Center) welcomes people 24/7.

According to research, 89% of U.S. adults report stress during the holidays, with 41% feeling an increase in stress (American Psychological Association), while 66% of people say they experience sadness or loneliness (National Alliance on Mental Illness).

“Travel, social obligations, finances, and the pressure to create a ‘perfect’ holiday can create a lot of stress and anxiety for people,” said Terri Lacroix Kelty, Munson Healthcare Executive Director of Behavioral Health. “Strained relationships or loss of a loved one are often felt more deeply this time of year which is why we traditionally see an increase in mental health crisis.”

Some studies cite this to be even more prevalent in the week following a holiday, indicating a 10-15% increase in behavioral health related Emergency Room visits. Many of the people who may have previously sought care in an ER, can now receive care at the Crisis Center, which is open 24/7 and also includes a Psychiatric Urgent Care open Monday-Friday, 8-5pm.

“We’ve seen a steady increase in visits since opening 24/7 in July and that trend seems to be rising as the holidays approach,” said Micheal

Corby, Crisis Center Behavioral Health Director. “We want to encourage anyone experiencing a mental health crisis to come to The Center so we can either provide care directly or connect them with the level of care they need.”

While an Emergency Department is the most appropriate setting if there is an immediate risk to life due to disorientation, aggression, or serious medical concern, The Crisis Center can serve people with acute behavioral health needs that are not immediately life-threatening, which can include:

- Imminent risk of harm to others (e.g., threats with a clear plan and intent).
- Escalating symptoms of depression, anxiety, or mania without immediate danger.
- Suicidal ideation with or without a plan and intent.
- Behavioral changes that are concerning but do not pose an immediate safety risk.
- Need for timely medication adjustments, crisis intervention, or short-term stabilization.

The Crisis Center wants to remind the community that they can help a friend, neighbor, family member, or loved one who may be struggling with their mental health by:

- Reaching Out with Compassion - A simple text, call, or invite can help someone feel less alone.

- Listening Without Judgment - Validate feelings with phrases like “That sounds really hard,” or “I’m here for you.”
- Offering Practical Help - Help with errands, childcare, or meal prep to reduce stress.
- Encouraging Self-Care - Suggest breaks, exercise, mindfulness, and healthy routines.
- Setting Realistic Expectations - Remind them it’s okay if the holidays aren’t “perfect.”
- Supporting in Seeking Professional Help when symptoms seem severe or persistent.

The Grand Traverse Mental Health Crisis and Access Center, open 24/7/365, welcomes patients of all ages and accepts all forms of insurance. The Center is located on the campus of Munson Medical Center at 410 Brook St., Traverse City, MI 49684 (above the helicopter pad, near Munson Hospice House) and can be reached by phone at (231) 213-1050. For more information, visit gtmentalhealth.org.



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DECEMBER 2025


December 3-30, Southwestern Christmas Display Come visit Alden District Library and see Virginia Anderman’s collection of Southwestern Christmas Décor. The library is located at 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318. Free Event. At a later date, a video of the display can be viewed on the library's You Tube channel youtube.com/@Aldenlib.

December 13, 10am - 3pm, Friends of Fife Lake Library Cookie Walk at the Fife Lake Library, for the general public.

December 13, 10am, Story Time with Miss Bri. Miss Bri will be reading stories with a Holiday-Christmas theme and doing a simple craft with the kids. This program will be held in the library located at 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.

December 18, 9:30am social time & 10am meeting time. Friends of the Library Monthly Meeting & Christmas Luncheon. Held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden. 11:30am lunch at Shorts Brewery in Bellaire. RSVP by Dec. 16th by calling Alden District Library at 231-331-4318. Anyone interested in supporting the library is always welcome. Held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.

December 20, 10-11am, LEGO Creation Event. Kids of all ages are welcome to this free event. Come see what you and your imagination can create! Completed Lego Creations will be displayed in the library. Sponsored by Alden District Library and held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.



TRAVERSE AREA
DISTRICT
LIBRARY
KINGSLEY BRANCH LIBRARY

Everyone Has a Story: Storytelling Community Circle

Join The Kingsley Folk School at Kingsley Branch Library for a relaxed, no-prep storytelling community circle. Inspired by NPR’s The Moth, the Everyone Has a Story series invites you to simply show up and share—no scripts, no pressure. Just real moments from your life, told in the moment.

Together, we’ll listen, laugh, reflect, and connect with neighbors through the power of spontaneous storytelling. Participants are welcome to speak for up to 5 minutes, or simply come to enjoy the stories and sense of community.

This gathering happens on the second Thursday of every month from 5:30–7:00 p.m. at the Kingsley Branch Library.

Event is free and open to all, with no registration required. For more information or to request reasonable accommodations, please call the Library at 231-263-5484 or follow us on Facebook.

Job Winslow Chapter, NSDAR welcomes new member



L-R: Jeanne Cotanch (Membership Chair), Joy Garwold (Chaplain), Barbara Romine (new member), Jan Scheiwe (Regent)

- Alden**

Alden United Methodist Church
9015 Helena Rd, Alden
Sunday morning:
9:00 am - Worship Service
10:30 am - ACE (Adult Christian Education)
Thursday morning:
10:00 am - Prayer Group

Boardman Township

East Boardman Community Bible Church
2080 Boardman Rd,S Boardman
Sunday morning:
9:15 am - Sunday School
10:00 am - Worship Service
10:30 am Junior Church

Central Lake

Central Lake United Methodist Church
8117 W Old State Rd, Central Lake
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Worship Service

East Jordan

Grace Bible Church
999 W Old State Rd, East Jordan
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Worship Service

Fife Lake

Fife Lake Community Church
206 Boyd St, Fife Lake
Sunday morning:
10:00 am - Worship Service

St. Aloysius of Fife Lake
403 East Merritt St
Sunday morning:
9:00 am - Mass

Kalkaska

Calvary Baptist Church
815 W Dresden St, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
9:45 am - Sunday School & Adult Bible Class
10:45 am - Worship Service

Cornerstone Community Bible Church
6821 Co Rd 612 NE, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
10:00 am - Worship Service

Church Alive Church of God
2305 US 131 North, Kalkaska
Sunday morning
10:30 am - Worship Service
Wednesday night
5:30 pm - Prayer Meeting
6:00 pm - Bible Study

Church of Christ at Spencer
4761 Western Ave SE, Kalkaska
Sunday
9:30 am - Sunday School, all ages
10:30 am - Assembly Hour
6:00 pm - Evening Assembly
Wednesday
7:00 pm - Bible study - all ages

Kalkaska Church of Christ
1725 W Kalkaska Rd, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
9:00 & 10:30 am - Worship Service
9:00 &10:30 am - Kids’ programs, birth - 5th grade
10:30 am - Faith Training
- Middle & High School

Kalkaska Church of the Nazarene
1367 W Kalkaska Rd, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
9:45 am - Sunday School all ages
10:45 am - Worship Service

Kalkaska Peoples Church
Bible Based
216 S Cherry St, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Worship Service

Kalkaska United Ministries for Christ
2525 Beebe Rd, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
10:00 am - Worship Service

Many Rivers Church
2305 N 131, Kalkaska
Saturday evening:
6:00 pm - Worship Service
Tuesday evening:
6:00 pm - Worship Service

St Mary of the Woods of Kalkaska
438 Co Rd 612, Kalkaska
Saturday afternoon:
4:00 pm - Mass
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Mass

St Paul Lutheran Church
2470 Beebe Rd, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Worship Service

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
2004 Birch N Birch St, Kalkaska
Saturday morning
9:30 am - Bible Study Time: Children & Adults
11:00 am - Worship Service
Tuesday evening
6:30 pm - Prayer Meeting

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
1128 N Cedar St, Kalkaska
Sunday morning:
10:00 am - Sacrament meeting

Mancelona

Antrim Church of Christ
10228 South US 131, Mancelona
Sunday morning worship
11:00 am - Sept - May
10:00 am - Jun - Aug

Mancelona Baptist Church
609 N Jefferson ST, Mancelona
Sunday
10:00 am - Sunday School
11:00 am - worship service
6:00 pm - Bible Preaching
Wednesday
7:00 pm - Bible Preaching & Teen Group

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
211 E. Hinman, Mancelona
Sunday morning:
9:00 am - Worship Service

Rapid City

Rapid City Church of Christ
7964 Rapid City Rd, Rapid City
Sunday morning:
10:30 am - Worship Service

Torch Lake Assembly of God
9456 Valley Rd, Rapid City
Sunday morning:
11:00 am - Worship Service

Williamsburg

True North Vineyard Church
6517 Bates Rd, Williamsburg
Sunday evening:
5:00 pm - Worship Service

Williamsburg United Methodist Church
5750 Williamsburg Rd, Williamsburg
Sunday morning:
9:00 am - Worship Service

If you would like your church to be listed, please send an email to tina.fieldsmedia@gmail.com

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DEAL ME IN

By Mark Pilarski (reprinted with permission of the author)
Yankless, coinless, clueless, staffless, tipless, hapless. Is playerless a-comin'?!

8 September 2003

Dear Mark,

Why are so many slots today being converted to coinless machines? Are you a fan of them? Beth R.

No aficionado in these shoes, Beth. I treasure the clanking sound of coins falling into the tray. I wonder about the rationale behind the switch to coinless machines. Casino operators of my acquaintance have long understood the value of "the sounds of winning," so much so that they install "loud drop bowls," those metal trays that catch the slugs in a payoff and give clangorous voice to someone's good fortune.

The song of these deeper pans implies that people are winning big. Hmmm... well, personally, the fun factor of yanking a handle and the happy-finger scooping up of the loot somehow tends to obscure its meagerness. Today, approximately 20% of the 700,000 plus slots in North America are now coinless. Casinos' marketeers claim players want the coinless machines because they are weary of waiting for slot personnel to pay off their jackpots. They also reckon standing in the cashier's line with 30 pounds of winnings in a cup ain't any fun. Yeah, right. ...still, many of us find it downright blissful to have that problem.

In actuality, the backroom guys with the green eyeshades point out that casinos are cashing in big-time on the cashless machines. They reduce the labor bill to repair the jam-ups, fill hoppers, empty the machines of coins and bring them to the count room, and to count the players' winnings at the cashier's cage. In addition to the resultant higher slot machine uptime, these coinless electronic marvels can keep track of how much money is in play at any time.

And feel, like I do, for the cocktail waitress, Beth, exiled to the Nickel Hell section of the casino. Dollars to donuts her tips are down, with no nickels clattering into the tray. Definitely another column for another day.

Dear Mark,

While watching either the World Poker Tour or the World Series of Poker, on the screen they identify each player's chances of winning after they receive their first two cards. Do you know what software they use to figure those percentages out? I figure something like that would help my play. John H.

Specifically, what software do they use...? Haven't a clue. But, John, there is one slick program, Pokalyzer, they could be using, as could anyone with a home PC using Windows, to figure out those same percentages. Pokalyzer allows you to derive the exact odds for any Hold'em situation. You simply input up to 10 players' Hold'em starting hands (optionally, flop and turn cards can also be added), and out come the exact odds for each player. You specify the cards, John, and the Pokalyzer analyzes all possible remaining board card combinations for the true mathematical odds. Also, by using the Heads Up Analysis feature, you can see how any two cards perform against all other two-card combinations.

Other options are the "Hand Hits" analysis, showing which cards make which hands and how often; and the "Pokalyzer Quiz," a randomly generated poker quiz that will continually test your (improving) knowledge. Because it is randomly generated, no two quizzes are ever the same.

"Pokalyzer" retails for \$29.95 and is worth every penny of it. Their website is: <http://www.any2cards.com>. (No, I'm not on their payroll, don't even know anyone there. Maybe I should.)

Hope to see you, John, a cum laude graduate from using this program, at the final table.

=====

Gambling quote of the week: *"The only decent people I ever saw at the racecourse were the horses."* -- James Joyce



Sudoku Puzzle
December 12, 2025

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

Solution on page 15

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New AWE Children's Literacy
Stations at Alden District Library

ALDEN – Alden District Library, in conjunction with the Friends of the Library, recently purchased the latest version of two AWE Children's Literacy Stations for their children's area.

The Platinum All-in-One touchscreen units include After School Edge programs, as well, enabling kids up to age eleven to learn while discovering new information and creative activities.

The devices feature nearly 250 educational titles, including STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading and Writing, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) -aligned content such as coding, handwriting, and eBooks.

The AWE stations also contain homeschooler and programming resources.

The units are not connected to the internet; all the educational applications are contained in the desktops. Awards for the AWE Platinum version 3 that Alden District Library purchased include CODiE Awards, EDDIE Awards, Learning Magazine's Teacher's Choice Award for the Classroom, and Editor's Choice for Excellence in Design - Children's Technology Review.

Any child may use the computers when the library is open; parents and children don't need to have an Alden District Library card, but they can inquire about getting one at the circulation desk.

For more information, call the Library at 231/331-4318.

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= MENTAL HEALTH CORNER =

The 3 Questions to Win at Life

This is the third and final column of our 3-part series on the questions and answers that inform our lives.

The third question is: Where Am I Going?

Have you ever felt lost or like you just couldn't find your direction? When we lose this guiding force, we suffer from increasing symptoms of anxiety, attention deficit, apathy and even despair. This column is about how we find our direction.

There is no short cut in creating the direction of our lives. I have spoken a lot about being intentional about life, and when it comes to knowing where we are going, we need to be able to hold both reality and imagination in our hands at the same time. The direction of your life is based in hope, but this is not wishful thinking. It takes a strategy.

Many of the most successful people in life practice what is called "future-self theory." They understand that their lives and their mental health improve significantly when they have a clear and grounded vision of who they are

becoming and where they are going. This includes important areas such as physical health, personal/emotional development and relationships. Many of us focus a lot on careers of financial goals, but this is only one part of a whole life.

Successful people also understand that even though they are intentionally creating and designing their future, there is no way from our limited, Earthly perspective to truly be able to predict exactly what the future will hold. People who are winning at life instead emphasize being flexible and being able to course-correct their direction as they go. This grounds them in reality and increases their resilience.

Here are a few practical applications of this process:

1. Ask: "What's one thing my future self will thank me for?"
2. Set micro-goals tied to meaning, not pressure (especially time pressure)
3. Embrace Hope: Think of the future intentionally.

From a mental health perspective, having an intentional direction gives the mind stability. A grounded vision for our life guides us in our choices, relationships and identities, and this is how we win at life.

-Adam DeVaney, LCSW, CECF

Adam DeVaney is a clinical social worker and therapist with over a decade of experience working with clients with a diversity of challenges from addiction and anxiety to overcoming trauma and helping people to learn what it takes to live their best lives. Along with his wife, Mandi, he founded Life's Work Clinic in Kalkaska, Michigan, and Life's Work Coaching with a local and global footprint. Adam has dedicated his life to serving others and walking with them on their healing journeys.



Santa Can Help with Anxiety

It is so hard when you watch a child struggle with anxiety. As parents and caregivers, you just want to fix it. You want the anxiety to go away. Children with anxiety often have meltdowns for no apparent reason. They have crying fits or anger outbursts and parents are just at a loss as to how to help these children.

How to help a child who struggles with anxiety can be a real struggle for parents. Holidays can make anxiety worse because of change in schedules. As well as having extra things to go and do, and the general busyness of the season.

Things to be aware of for your child who struggles with anxiety. For starters, be aware of their triggers. What triggers their anxiety? Is a certain person or group of people? Be aware of this. Was there a traumatic event that happened around the holidays? Like a death or some sort of abuse. Is it going out in large crowds like a big busy store? Observe your child and their reactions and ask questions. Also, do not dismiss them when they say "nothing" or "I don't know." Just because they do not know does not mean there is not something going on.

Do not pressure your child to hug and kiss everyone they come in contact with. Respect their boundaries. If they do not want to hug or kiss someone then do not pressure them and do not let others pressure them either. Ask if they want to hug or kiss someone. If they say no, then

leave them alone about it.

Now, to help the child with anxiety in your life. Let Santa help! Yes, Santa can help with anxiety. How may you ask?

One of the things that I and many other child therapists suggest for children with anxiety or other emotional issues is making them a "cool down kit."

Well, this is how Santa can help! Santa can bring items for their "cool down kit." These things could be quiet activities that help a child relax and calm themselves. Things that can help your child relax in a few minutes to get their emotions back in check.

Ideas for a "cool down kit":

Puzzles, art supplies, books, music, play dough, a journal, a special stuffed animal, bubble bath, lotion, and other such items. When picking items think about the five senses.

As a parent you can help you child put their kit together after Santa brings these items and help your child learn when to use them. Keep them in a special place so that your child has easy access to them when they need them. For example, next to their bed. Help your child learn to use them when they are having a hard time. The best way to do this is to practice having regular down time or quiet time so they can understand

using these items to help them.

Help your child discover their triggers and recognize their emotions and when they may be heading for a meltdown. Then direct your child to using their kit to help them calm down. With some time and practice it will help your child be able to keep their emotions in check better.

The purpose of a "cool down kit" it to help your child learn how to calm themselves down when they get overly upset and anxious. The kit can also help when a child is just having a bad day all together and just need to relax after a long day.

This can work for all ages of children and teens, just modify it for your child's needs!

Teaching your child self-care and how to control their emotions are some of the best gifts you can give them!

Merry Christmas!

Alison Neihardt, LPC, NCC

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Alison Neihardt is a local child therapist at her private practice Helping Kids Counseling Services, LLC located in Kalkaska, MI. Reached at 231-590-4812 or email hkupnorth@gmail.com



COMMUNITY

Thanksgiving Dinner at the Kalkaska Commission on Aging Senior Center



Chrissie Feike reports they had a great turnout for the 1st year offering this Thanksgiving dinner. In addition to in-person eating, they also provided carry-out meals for those that requested. Combined, they served about 80 plates, and with what was left, they made 107 servings for Meals on Wheels for our Community. Chrissie's family members (Husband, Father and Mother In-Law, Sister and Brother in-law and nieces and nephews) were there to assist, along with Josh Fournier and his wife (Jess) and Mother (Mary) and Chris Helberg, as well as Deb Perkins, Lindsay Arsnoe, Brenda Henriet, and Melissa Poli. Without the generosity of Jodi at the COA, the folks behind the scenes and the support of our community, this would not have been possible.

Chrissie says, "I plan to continue this effort for next year and beyond, God willing."

Article submitted by Chrissie Feike



O&A - continued from page 3
Kids’ Coding Club, Bellaire Public Library, 111 S. Bridge, Bellaire, an opportunity for kids to explore the world of computer coding at their level, ages 8-13 welcome, registration required, call 231 533-8814
When: 3rd Sat, 10:00 to 11:00 am
Meet and Eat, Youth Event, Mancelona United Methodist Church, 117 W. Hinman, Mancelona, planned by youth for youth including a meal, music, pastor’s message, games & fun, grades 7-12, 231 587-8461
When: 4th Sunday (3rd if 4th is a holiday weekend) 7:00 to 8:30 pm

Miscellaneous

Monday Tech Help 1-on-1 Kalkaska County Library, 247 S. Cedar St, If you need some help setting up your new phone or laptop, troubleshooting tech problems, or just want to learn more about using the internet safely, then contact us to get 30 minutes of personalized support from our tech services librarian! Contact (231) 258-9411 or info@kalkaskalibrary.org to sign up!
When: by appointment Mon 10am-4pm & Thu 1-5pm
Love Locker Project, 449 W. State St at Fife Lake, Baptist, 49633 Free seasonal clothing, hygiene products, and blankets available 24/7
When: available anytime
Love Locker Project - Kalkaska 1972 Saunders Rd SE at Evergreen Bible Baptist, Free seasonal clothing, hygiene products, and blankets available 24/7
When: available anytime
Love Locker Project- Rapid City 7964 Rapid City Rd at North Light Ministry Free seasonal clothing, hygiene products, and blankets available 24/7
When: available anytime
Stroke Recovery Group, Antrim County COA/Sr Meal Site, 308 E. Cayuga, Bellaire, must register prior to each session, please call 231 533-8703
When: 3rd Mon, 3:00 to 4:00 pm
Tech Tuesdays with Gabe, Bellaire Public Library, 111 S. Bridge St, contact 231 533-8814
When: Tue, 11 am to 3 pm
Kalkaska County Breastfeeding Support Group, Blue Fish Early Learning Center, 405 E. Dresden St, contact District Health Department 10 at 231 258-8669
When: 1st & 3rd Tue, 10:00 to 11:00 am
Kalkaska Baby Pantry, Kalkaska Church of Christ, 1725 W Kalkaska Rd, Clothing, diapers, wipes available (donations of such are accepted), serving children to size 4T, contact 231 258-9441
When: 2nd & 4th Tue, 9:30 am to 1 pm.
Girlfriends Social Hour, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, grab a friend and enjoy a coffee or juice, and time with other ladies, senior and nearly senior women are welcome, contact 231 258-5030
When: Wed 10 am
Tech Tuesdays with Gabe! Bellaire Public Library, 111 S. Bridge St, 231 533-8814
When: Wed, 11 am to 3 pm
Spanish Speaking Cohort, Bellaire Public Library, 111 s. Bridge St, 231-533-8814
When: Wed, 4 pm
Thursday Tech Help 1-on-1 Kalkaska County Library, 247 S. Cedar St, If you need some help setting up your new phone or laptop, troubleshooting tech problems, or just want to learn more about using the internet safely, then contact us to get 30 minutes of personalized support from our tech services librarian! Contact (231) 258-9411 or info@kalkaskalibrary.org to sign up!
When: Thu, 1:00 to 5:00 pm
Everyone Has a Story, Kingsley Branch Library, 213 S. Brownson Ave, join with the library and the Kingsley Folk School for a storytelling community circle, you are welcome to share your personal stories with others to create connections in our community, 231 263-5484
When: 2nd Thur, 5:30 to 7:00 pm
Antrim County Baby Pantry, St. Anthony’s Church, 209 Jefferson Ave, Mancelona, providing food, clothing, diapers, and other items for children from birth until their 6th birthday (donations accepted), masks optional, one shopper per family and children are welcome but must remain with their parent, new families, please arrive by 2 pm for paperwork and bring valid ID, 231 492-7426
When: 2nd & 4th Thu, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
Dance, Mancelona Senior Center, 122 E. State St, Mancelona, \$7 admission, bring a dish to pass, contact Cheryl at 231 587-9131
When: 1st and 3rd Fri, 6:00 to 9:00 pm
Fruit of the Womb Baby Pantry, Kalkaska Baptist Church, 1651 County Rd 612, contact 231 258-5409
When: Sat, 9:00 to 11:00 am

Rock n’ Jam, The Rock of Kingsley, local musicians are welcome to come jam and the public is welcome to come listen, tap their toes, dance, contact 231 263-7000
When: 2nd Sat, (through Oct) 5:00 to 8:00 pm
Simply Delicious with Chef Tom, Kingsley Branch Library, 213 S. Brownson Ave, a quick and inspiring cooking class, learning tips and techniques while exploring global cuisine and spices, contact 231 263-5484
When: Last Saturday of the month, 10 - 11 am
Veterans/Active Duty
MWR (Morale, Welfare, & Recreation), Belay My Last Barracks, 5210 E. Boardman Rd, South Boardman, veterans are welcome to hang out and enjoy a meal, use the rec room, gym, or theater, peer support specialist is also available, contact 231 631-5372
When: Mondays, 6:30 pm
Kalkaska VFW Land-O-Lakes Post 8684, VFW Post 408 Hyde St, Quartermaster: Joe Graff, Commander: Luke TenHopen
When: 1st Mon, 6:00 pm
Mancelona American Legion Post #0264, 9850 S. Front St, Commander: Benjamin Zerod, Adjutant: Tamara Hunt
When: 1st Mon, 6:00 pm
Antrim County Veteran Coffee Talks, 118 Bridge St, Elk Rapids, contact 231 533-8499
When: 3rd Mon, 9 am
Vets Coffee Time, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, free coffee and donuts, hosted by American Legion Post #480, contact Darel at 231 258-9445
When: 2nd Wed, 9:00 to 11:00 am
American Legion Post 219, 10283 M-186, Fife Lake, Commander: Cameron Wojoie, Adjutant: Craig Heckert, contact 231 879-4475
When: 2nd Wed, 6:30 pm
Coffee Talk for Veterans, M88 Morning Grind, presented by Antrim Co Veterans Affairs, contact 231 533-8499
When: 3rd Wed, 8:30 am
South Boardman American Legion #463 and Auxiliary Meeting, South Boardman Legion Hall, 5479 Boardman Rd (at the tank), South Boardman, Commander: Lindarae Radtke, Adjutant: Elwin Hall, contact 231 369-2944
When: 1st Thu, 6:00 pm
Kalkaska American Legion Post 0480, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S Coral St. Commander: Jim Brown, Adjutant: Stephen Bloomfield, contact 231 384-0762
When: 3rd Thu, 1:00 pm
M88 Monthly Muster, M-88 Morning Grind, 614 Cayuga St, Bellaire, coffee talk for Antrim County Veterans and their families to connect and share in much needed military camaraderie, contact 231 632-9155
When: 1st Sunday, 12:00 pm
BOOK CLUBS
The Bookies Book Club, at host’s home, contact 231 879-4101 or flpl@tadl.org for location and details
When: 3rd Tue, 7:00 pm
The Last Tuesday Book Group- Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8814
When: last Tue, 1:00 pm
Monthly Book Club, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St, new book each month to be announced at previous meeting or contact 231 258-5030 for info
When: 2nd Wed, 1:00 [m
The Page Turners Book Club- Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, registration appreciated, contact 231 533-8814
When: 2nd Wed, 7:00 pm
Nature Book Club, Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, led by members of the Antrim Conservation District, contact 231 533-8814
When: 1st Thu, 9:30 am
Kingsley Afternoon Book Club- Kingsley Branch Library, 213 Brownson Ave, Kingsley, does not meet in Dec, June, July, or Aug, contact 231 263-5484
When: 4th Wed, 2:00 to 3:00 pm
Fife Lake Library Book Club-Take 2, Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, Fife Lake, 231 879-4101
When: 4th Wed, 2:30 pm
Mindfulness Book Club- Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8814
When: last Wed, 4:00 pm
Books ‘n Brie Book Club, Presented by Alden District Library, Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, enjoy snacks and beverages while discussing the month’s book, free of charge, sponsored by the Alden District Library, contact 231 331-4318
When: 2nd Thu, 3:30 pm
T.T. Nooners Book Club, Kalkaska County Library, 247 S. Cedar St, 231 258-9411
When: 3rd Thu, 12 to 1 pm, except December

Teen Book Club - at the Kalkaska County Library. Teens ages 14-18 are welcome to join us to read and discuss books with friends. Snacks will be provided! Contact (231) 258-9411 or info@kalkaskalibrary.org for more info.
When: 3rd Thu, 3:30pm
The Rory Gilmore Book Club, Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, Fife Lake, contact 231 879-4101
When: Last Sat, 4:00 pm
Organization Meetings
Kalkaska Democrats, contact Gary at 231 590-3397 for current meeting location
When: 1st Mon, 6:00 pm
Kingsley Friends of the Library, Kingsley Branch Library, 213 S. Brownson, Kingsley, open for ages 0-5 years, contact 231 263-5484
When: 3rd Mon, 5:00 to 6:00 pm
Kalkaska Conservation District Board of Directors, District Office, 406 S. Cedar St, Suite A, Kalkaska, contact Mark, 231 258-3307
When: 3rd Mon, 5:00 pm
National Trout Festival, Trout Town Tavern & Eatery, 306 Elm St, 231 384-1509
When: 4th Mon, 5:30 pm
Kalkaska Republicans, Kalkaska COA/Senior Center, 303 S. Coral St
When: Last Mon., 7:00 pm
Kalkaska Kiwanis Meeting, Kalkaska Senior Center/COA, 303 S. Coral St
When: 2nd and 4th Tue, 12:00 pm
Friends of the Central Lake District Library, Central Lake District Library, Conference Room, 7900 Maple St, contact 231 544-1144
When: 3rd Tue, 10:00 to 11:00 am
Friends of the Kalkaska County Library, Kalkaska County Library 247 S. Cedar St, downstairs
When: 4th Tues., 4:00 pm
Friends of the Fife Lake Public Library, 77 Lakecrest Lane, Fife Lake, contact Denise, 734 444-2484
When: 2nd Wed., 11:00 am
Chain of Lakes Genealogy Club, Central Lake Library, 7900 Maple St, 231 544-2517
When: 3rd Wed, 6:00 pm
BIGG (Genealogy Group), Bellaire Public Library, 111 S Bridge St, Bellaire, contact 231 533-8814
When: 1st Thu., 10:30 am
South Boardman American Legion #463 and Auxiliary Meeting, South Boardman Legion Hall, 5487 Boardman Rd (at the tank), South Boardman, contact 231 369-2944
When: 1st Thur., 6:00 pm
Knights of Columbus, St Joseph the Worker Council #7419, St Mary of the Woods Catholic Church, 438 Co Rd 612 NE, Kalkaska, contact Dave at 231 587-4328
When: 1st Thu, 7 pm
Friends of the Alden District Library, Helena Township Community Center, 8752 Helena Rd, Alden, 231 331-4318
When: 3rd Thu, 9:30 am social time, 10:00 am meeting
Alden Men’s Club, Alden United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 9015 Helena Rd, Alden. Come see what we are all about, “Helping others in need,” contact 603 540-3581 or visit www.aldenmensclub.org
When: last Saturday of the month , 8:00 am (except July and November), no meeting in December.
SUPPORT GROUPS
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Alden United Methodist Church, 9015 Helena Rd, Alden
When: Sun, 7:00 pm
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Central Lake VFW Hall, 1805 S. Main St, Central Lake
When: Sun, 7:00 pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Sportsmens Club, 6095 Garfield Rd, Kingsley
When: Sun, Tue, 8:00 pm (Sun only May-Sept Mayfield Pond Park)
Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Living in Harmony, United Methodist Church, 2525 Beebe Rd, Kalkaska
When: Mon, 7:00 pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Fife Lake Methodist Church, 206 Boyd St,
When: Mon, 8:00 pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Hope Lutheran Church, 2680 S. M-88, Bellaire
When: Mon, 8:00 pm
Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), St Anthony Catholic Church, 209 Jefferson Ave, Mancelona
When: Mon, Wed, Fri 7:00 pm

REFLECTION

Editor's note: Op-Ed pieces and Letters to the Editor are welcome. Discussion of ideas and issues is one of our fundamental rights and duties, as well as being essential to the advancement of all people. The main requirement for acceptance is that they maintain civil discourse. Articles or letters that engage in ranting or ad hominem attacks will not be published. An extra long article or letter may be edited for the sake of space. Email your article or letter to tina.fieldsmedia@gmail.com, or send it via the USPS to Editor, Northwest Michigan Voice, PO Box 28, Rapid City, MI 49676

Giving Gripe

December 12, 2025

I'm giving you fair warning. This one is a gripe.

Recently, we had a specified "Giving Tuesday" that is the centerpiece of my gripe. I lost count of how many emails I received soliciting my donation. And not just soliciting, but in many cases, demanding, and urging me to hurry up. Some were scolding me for being already too close to the deadline. They acted as though I had some obligation in the matter. I didn't and don't have any obligation to give money to any charity whatsoever, unless I have previously agreed to do so.

Email subject lines like "Before 11:59 p.m.!" did not get a favorable response from me. Reflecting on how that experience went down, I find that I am very grumpy at the attitude I discerned coming from those reaching out for contributions. They acted as though they were in charge and I was supposed to spring to attention, salute, and obey them.

Boy, do they have that wrong! A gift is from the generosity of the giver. Those receiving the gift are properly grateful for the gift. It is improper for them to behave as though they were entitled to the gift.

It reminds me of a call I had a few years ago from a student attending a university that I had attended, and that I have made donations to when I am able. We had a lovely chat and I agreed to support the school with a gift of \$50. Then, she told me to be sure to send the money by the deadline date. "Deadline?" I asked. "What deadline is that? Do you mean that if I

don't send the money by then, you don't want it?" Of course, that wasn't what was meant. At issue for her was that the fundraising campaign had an ending date. It was actually her deadline for securing gifts. But, it was said to me in a manner that implied I had a deadline.

Where I am going with this is that many organizations seeking funding, seem to have lost their minds and their good manners and are acting as though they are entitled to our generosity, and they get to set the rules about our giving.

Well, no, they are not entitled to our gifts, and they don't get to direct our giving. We get to choose whether we will give, what we will give, when we will give, and to whom we will give.

Not only have the Giving Tuesday folks been rude and demanding. There's another practice that is extremely annoying. Let's say you make a gift to a cause you value and in a few days you receive their response, which is a generic Thank You accompanied by a request for more. That is followed up with many requests from the same organization over the next several weeks or months. Good grief! How much of the gift you gave is being spent on postage rather than on the worthy cause you were trying to support? That's enough to convince some of us to stop donating to such organizations altogether.

Here's one more piece to my gripe. Some years ago, I received a request from a national organization whose cause I found worthy, to just mail solicitation materials to a couple

dozen addresses in my neighborhood. My contribution would be the postage and the actual trip to the Post Office. Yeah, that seemed like something I was willing to do. About a week after I did the mailing, I got a phone call from the organization pressing me to go out into the neighborhood and canvass all the residents to check on whether they had sent in a donation, and to try to collect money from any who had not yet responded. Now, I had not signed up for that and I said as much. The caller then attempted to shame me into doing this extra work and to take responsibility for the money – going so far as to press me to make up for whatever the mailing did not produce. Not a chance! I was pretty angry, and you can believe I have never again been willing to do anything of the sort for any organization, and I have never again donated to that particular organization. I mean – HOW DARE THEY?

It has long been a practice for members of my family to figure out, near the end of the year, what funds are available to donate to charities we consider worthy. Frankly, when those charities come back to us with "reminders" that they are looking for more. Some even go so far as to send what amount to dunning letters "Did you forget your renewal gift?". Whoa!

Again, I say: HOW DARE THEY?

Well, that's what I've been thinking about.

Shalom

Tina Norris Fields
Editor

Citizenship Corner

Answers to last issue's questions

- 1) What is the oath of office the President must swear or affirm during inauguration?
A. In the final sentence of Article II, Section 1: I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.
- 2) What oath do all federal workers have to take?
A. I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the ____.
- 3) What is the oath of enlistment American enlisted military personnel take?
A. I, ____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.
- 4) Are all legislators and jurists constitutionally bound to an oath of office?
A. Yes, Article VI, paragraph 3 states: The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

Citizenship Corner

These questions may require some research on your part. Thank you for making that effort. The answers will appear in the next edition of the Voice.

- 1) What is the exception to the President's power of federal pardon?
- 2) Can the President unilaterally make treaties?
- 3) What specific duty does the President have with regard to the law?
- 4) In addition to being a natural born citizen of the United States and at least thirty-five years old, what is the residential requirement to qualify to hold the office of President?



Everything
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is important to
somebody

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Email: tina.fieldsmedia@gmail.com

or call: 231-322-2787 or 231-645-0244



COFFEE TIME for VETERANS

Free coffee & donuts

Second Wednesday Each Month

9 to 11 am

Kalkaska Senior Center

303 S. Coral St

Hosted by American Legion Post 480

Contact-Darel at 258-9445



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O&A - cont. from page 11

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Forrest Home Township Hall, 351 Bridge St, Bellaire
When: Mon, Wed, 12:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Forrest Home Township Hall, 351 Bridge St, Bellaire
When: Mon, Thu, 12:00 pm

TOPS #1304 Meeting, Kalkaska United Ministries for Christ, 2525 Beebe Rd, Kalkaska, contact 231 384-2154
When: Tue, 9:00 am weigh ins, 10:00 am meeting

Al-Anon Family Group, Stepping Toward Serenity, on ZOOM: login information on meeting list at Alanon-d39.org
When: Tues, at noon.

Al-Anon, Al-Teen Meeting, (Kalkaska COA) Senior Center, 303 S Coral St, contact Linda 231 384-3227
When: Tue, 7:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Kalkaska Senior Center, 303 S Coral St
When: Tue, 8:00 pm

Secular Sobriety Group, AA of Traverse City, meets on ZOOM, ID#447 584 8945 PW 628608, more info at secularAAinMichigan.org
When: Tues, Thu, 7 pm, Sun, 12 pm (also in person)

Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings (AA), Kalkaska United Ministries for Christ, 2525 Beebe Rd
When: Tue, Thu, Sat 12:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Fife Lake Village Office, 616 Bates Rd
When: Wed, 7:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Central Lake VFW Hall, 1805 S. Main St,
When: Wed, 8:00 pm

Grief Support Group, (Kalkaska COA) Senior Center, 303 S Coral St, all ages welcome, contact 231 258-5030
When: 2nd and 4th Wed, 10:30 am

Antrim Co Parkinson Support Group, Bellaire Family Health Center, 4955 S M-88, Bellaire, 231 633-1237
When: 3rd Wed, 2 pm

Grief Support, Kalkaska Church of Christ, 1725 W. Kalkaska Rd, faith-based grief support, contact 231 258-9441
When: Thu, 6:00 pm

S-Anon Support Group - Calvary Lutheran Church, 10180 Elk Lake Rd, Elk Rapids. For family and friends affected by someone else's sex addiction. Contact: miplaceofpeace@gmail.com, 231-714-4099
When: Thu, 7:00 pm

All Recovery Meeting, Ursula House, 8099 West Old State Rd, Central Lake, peer led support group for people in recovery and/or their family members, 231 266-4412
When: Thu, 8:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), St Paul's Lutheran Church, 2470 Beebe Rd, Open Meeting
When: Thu, 8:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), The Rock Youth Center, 115 E Blair, Kingsley
When: Thu, 7:00 pm

Weight Management Support Group, Kalkaska Memorial Health Center, 419 S. Coral St, Classroom A, contact Ashley Snyder, 231 258-3613
When: 2nd Thu, 3:00 to 4:00 pm

Diabetes Support Group, Kalkaska Memorial Health Center, 419 S. Coral St, Classroom A, contact Katie Daman, 231 258-3091
When: 4th Thu, 3:00 to 4:00 pm

Deliverance, Kalkaska Baptist Church, 1651 Co Rd 612, Kalkaska, faith-based support for all addictions, contact Heath 231 564-3715
When: Fri, 6:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Surrender Today Coldsprings Fellowship Church, 532 S. Cedar St, Kalkaska
When: Fri, 7:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Fife Lake Village Office, 616 Bates Rd,
When: Fri, 8:00 pm

Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Mill Pond Pavilion, Hyde St, Kalkaska
When: Sat, 7:00 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting (AA), Bellaire United Methodist Church, 401 N. Bridge St, Bellaire
When: Sat, 8:00 pm

Merry Christmas

Each kid gets an ornament

PANCAKE BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

RAPID CITY TOWNSHIP HALL

GIFTS FROM SANTA: 10AM-2PM

VENDOR HOURS: 9AM-4PM

Enjoy a breakfast fundraiser, a gift from Santa and some Christmas shopping!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.Rapidcityheritagefestival.org
or call: (231)-320-0121

Breakfast hours: 10am-3pm
Meal includes:
2 Pancakes, 2 Sausage Links, Eggs and Drinks
\$7 per person
Children: 5yr and under FREE.



WALK SLOWLY WITH PURPOSE

December is a beginning?

By Dominic Fortuna

RAPID CITY -- In a world where change is the only constant, the adage "when one door shuts, another one opens" has become a mantra for the brave and the bold. But what happens when the door that shuts is the one we've been holding onto for dear life? Do we get stuck in the doorway, lamenting the loss, or do we take a deep breath, dust ourselves off, and start searching for that elusive key to the next door?

For many, the answer lies in embracing the unknown, in living life with eyes and ears open, and in being willing to take the leap of faith. After all, as the great poet once said, "life is what happens when you're busy making other plans."

Take, for instance, the story of Sarah Johnson, a 45-year-old marketing executive who lost her job in the latest round of corporate layoffs. At first, Sarah was devastated. She had given her heart and soul to that company, only to be shown the door like yesterday's trash. But as she sat in her empty office, staring at the blank walls, something shifted inside her. She realized that she had been living on autopilot, stuck in a job that no longer fulfilled her.

With a newfound sense of purpose, Sarah started her own marketing consultancy, using her skills to help small businesses and non-profits tell their

stories. She began to see the world in a different light, to notice the beauty in the mundane, and to cherish the connections she made along the way.

"I was so caught up in the daily grind, I forgot to live," Sarah said, beaming with pride. "Losing my job was the best thing that ever happened to me. It forced me to take a step back, to reevaluate my priorities, and to pursue my passion."

Sarah's story is just one example of the power of resilience and the human spirit. When life gives you lemons, as the saying goes, make lemonade. And then, go out there and share that lemonade with the world.

But it's not just about personal growth; it's about community, connection, and leaving a mark on the world. As we navigate life's twists and turns, we have a choice: to let our experiences harden us or to use them as a catalyst for growth, for love, and for inspiration.

Take the case of Tom Harris, a retired teacher who spent his life educating generations of young minds. Even on his deathbed, Tom was teaching, sharing stories, and imparting wisdom to his loved ones. His family recalls his final words: "Keep learning, keep growing, and never stop exploring."

Tom's legacy lives on, a testament to the power of a life well-lived. As we go about our daily lives,

let's take a cue from Tom and Sarah, and from the countless others who have shown us that every day is an opportunity to love, to change, to inspire, and to mentor.

So, go chase your dreams, help a friend in need, and give life to the bereaved. Comfort and listen, and remember that you never know when that other door will open. But rest assured, it will come, and when it does, be ready to take the leap.

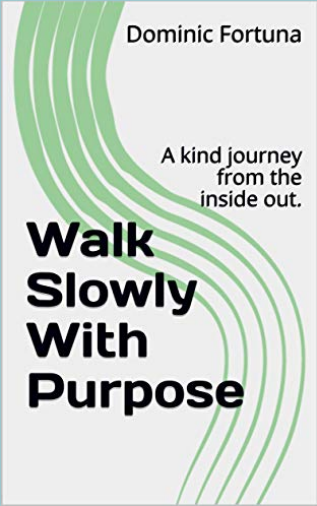
As we close this chapter and embark on the next, let's hold onto the words of wisdom etched on a humble wall: "We come into this world alone, but we meet many in a lifetime. Give all you have until the end of life to teach – teach those around you, even on your deathbed. Teach, for it all leads to a door we wanted open for a lifetime, which has shut. Now the real fun begins – it shut for a reason, and life just got interesting again."

HAPPY DECEMBER TO ALL..



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Munson Healthcare to Host Winter Solstice Gatherings

Candlelight ceremonies to take place in Traverse City and Cadillac on Dec. 15 and 17

Munson Healthcare Hospice Bereavement Services invites the community to join candlelight ceremonies to acknowledge the pain and loss of the last year and the heaviness that can accompany holiday joy.

The Winter Solstice Gatherings are an opportunity for individuals to come together to light the way with hope and healing during the longest night of the year.

"This annual ceremony is held during the holiday season and is a special way to remember and honor those loved ones who are no longer with us. It is a celebration of light and unity, a time to share fellowship with others, reflect on cherished memories, and find comfort as a community," said Shari Wilson, President Post-Acute Care.

Two gatherings are scheduled:

- Monday, December 15, 5:30 pm: The Filling Station, 642 Railroad Pl., Traverse City
- Wednesday, December 17, 5 pm: Cadillac Senior Center - 601 Chestnut St., Cadillac

Learn more about Munson Healthcare Hospice Care at munsonhealthcare.org/hospice.

Government Meetings

Kalkaska County Townships:

Bear Lake Township,
Bear Lake Twp Hall, 198 E Bear Lake Rd NE, Kalkaska, 231-258-4871
When: 2nd Tue, 7 pm

Blue Lake Township,
Blue Lake Twp Hall, 10599 Twin Lake Rd, Mancelona, 231-587-8354
When: 1st Wed, 7 pm

Boardman Township,
Boardman Twp Hall/Fire Dept, 4855 Pine St, South Boardman, 231-369-3336
When: 3rd Wed, 7 pm

Clearwater Township,
Clearwater Twp Community Center, 5407 River St, Rapid City, 231-331-6249
When: 3rd Thu, 7 pm

Coldsprings Township,
Coldsprings Twp Hall, 6515 County Road 571 NE, Mancelona, 231-587-8633
When: 2nd Mon, 5 pm

Excelsior Township,
Excelsior Twp Hall, 987 County Road 571 NE, Kalkaska, 231-258-6108
When: 1st Mon, 5 pm (on major holiday the Tue after)

Garfield Township,
Garfield Twp Hall, 0466 W Sharon Rd, Fife Lake, 231-369-2483
When: 2nd Thur, 7 pm

Kalkaska Township ,
Kalkaska Twp Hall / Fire Department, 209 Laurel St, 231-258-9305
When: 1st Tue, 7 pm

Oliver Township,
Oliver Twp Hall, 5472 Kniss Rd SE, 262-339-2239
When: 2nd Tue, 6 pm

Orange Township,
Orange Twp Hall, 28 Boardman Rd SE, South Boardman, 231-369-3457
When: 2nd Mon, 7 pm

Rapid River Township,
Rapid River Twp Hall, 101 Phelps Rd, Kalkaska, 231-258-2943
When: 2nd Tue, 7 pm

Springfield Township,
Springfield Twp Hall, 5253 Ingersoll Rd SW, Fife Lake, 231-879-4541
When: 2nd Tue, 7 pm

==+++=++==

Village of Central Lake, Central Lake Governmental Building, 1622 N. M-88, Central Lake, 231 544-6483
When: 2nd Wed, 7:00 pm

Central Lake Township, Central Lake Governmental Building, 1622 N. M-88, Central Lake, 231 544-6687
When: 3rd Wed, 7:00 pm

Village of Bellaire:
Village Offices, 202 N. Bridge St, Bellaire, 231 533-8213
Village Council-
When: 1st Wed, 7:00 pm
DDA- When: last Wed, 8:00 am

Village of Mancelona:
Village Offices, 120 W. State, Mancelona, 231 587-8331
When: 2nd Tue, 6:00 pm
Mancelona DDA, Antrim County Title, 504 S. Williams, Mancelona, 231 58-833
When: 2nd Mon, 5:30 pm

Mancelona Township:
Township Offices, 9610 S. M-88, Mancelona, 231 587-8651
When: 3rd Mon, 6:00 pm

Village of Fife Lake:
Village Hall, 616 Bates St, Fife Lake, 231 879-4291
Village Council-
When: 3rd Mon, 6:30 pm
DDA-When: 3rd Tues, quarterly Jan, April, July, October, 6:00 pm

Fife Lake Township:
Township Meeting Room, 134 Morgan St, 231 879-3963
When: 4th Thur, Jan-Oct, 6:00 pm

Village of Kingsley:
Village Offices, 207 S. Brownson, 231 263-7778
Village Council- When: 2nd Mon, 6:00 pm
DDA- When: 3rd Tue, 6:00 pm

Paradise Township:
Township Hall, 2300 E. M-113, Kingsley, 231 263-5251
When: 2nd Wed, 6:00 pm

Helena Township:
Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231 331-4643
When: 2nd Thu, 7:00 pm

Village of Kalkaska:
Village Offices, 200 Hyde St, Kalkaska, 231-258-9191
Village Council-
When: 2nd Mon, 6 pm
DDA-
When: 1st Tue, 5:00 pm

Kalkaska County:
Kalkaska County BOC Chambers, Administration Building, 605 N Birch St, 231-258-3349
Board of Commissioners-
When: 3nd Wed, 5 pm

Standing Committees-
When: 2nd Wed, times below
Judiciary & Public Health- 9 am
Health & Welfare- 10 am
Public Works- 11 am
Personnel/Interview- 1 pm
Budget & Finance- 2 pm (also meets the Tue before, 5 pm)
County Affairs/ IT & Computer- 3 pm

The Northwest Michigan Voice is delivered to these locations every other week:

Alden
Alden Bar & Grille
Alden State Bank
Alden District Library
Higgins Store
Paradise Properties
The Muffin Tin

Bellaire
Applesauce Inn
Bellaire Public Library

Central Lake
Central Lake District Library
Mary's Market

Fife Lake
Fife Lake Public Library
Forest Area Federal Credit Union
The Upper Bar & Grill
Village Market

Kalkaska
Advanced Office Supply
All Seasons Hotel & Resort
Birch Street Dental Care
Carter Lumber
Earth's Garden
Family Fare
Forest Area Federal Credit Union North
K.A.I.R.
Kaliseum
Kalkaska Commission on Aging

Kalkaska County Building
Kalkaska County Library
Kalkaska Funeral Home
McLean's Hardware
Midas
Northland Foods
Rodeway Inn
The Shopping Basket
Trout Town Tavern & Eatery
Voice Motors

Kingsley
Kingsley Branch Library
Kingsley Village Offices

Mancelona
Habitat for Humanity ReStore
Iron Skillet
KMH - Mancelona Campus
Mancelona Public Library
NAPA Auto Parts
The Hen's Den

Rapid City
Absolute Shear Shack
Johnny's Torch Riviera
Township Hall
Village Market

South Boardman
Yankee Boy

It is also delivered to several of the local churches, to the schools (during the school year) , and the Emergency Department of KMH, as well as to select senior living facilities.



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or call: 231-322-2787 or 231-645-0244

Sudoku Puzzle Solution
December 12, 2025

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

Puzzle on page 8

School Board Meetings

Kalkaska Public Schools,
Board of Education room, 315 S Coral St Kalkaska , 231-258-9100
When: 3rd Mon, 6 pm

Forest Area Community Schools
Band Room, Forest Area High School, 7661 Shippy Rd SW, Fife Lake 231-369-4191
When: 2nd Mon, 7:00 pm

Crawford School, Excelsior District #1
Crawford School 5621 M-72 NE, Kalkaska 231-258-2934
When: 3rd Wed, 4:00 pm



Mancelona Public Schools
Media Center, Mancelona Middle School, 1122 St Johns Ave, Mancelona 231-587-9764
When: 2nd Tue, 4:30 pm
Central Lake Public Schools,
8190 W. State St, Central Lake, 231 544-3341
When: 2nd Mon, 6:30 pm
Bellaire Public Schools,
204 W. Forest Home Ave, Bellaire, 231-533-8015
When: 3rd Mon, 6:30 pm
Kingsley Area Schools,
High School Library, 7475 Kingsley Rd, Kingsley
When: 2nd Mon, 7:00 pm

COMMUNITY



Christmas Lights

**PRESENTED BY THE
ANTRIM COUNTY & ELK LAKE
COMMUNITY CHOIRS
and SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

Directors: Dorothy Clore & Cheryl Knight

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025, 4 p.m.
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
404 SPRUCE STREET
ELK RAPIDS, MI

&

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025, 4 p.m.
CHURCH IN THE HILLS
6401 SHANTY CREEK RD
BELLAIRE, MI

Admission is free. Free will offerings will be collected
for the benefit of local nonprofit organizations.

The Elk Lake Community Choir and the Antrim County Community Choir blended their efforts again this year to give Christmas concerts in both Elk Rapids, at the First Presbyterian Church, and Bellaire, at the Church in the Hills. Directors Cheryl Knight, Dorothy Clore, and John Dickinson shared duties leading different musical pieces. Cheryl Knight and Steve Stargardt wowed everybody with a couple of four-hand piano accompaniment to favorite Christmas Carols.

Young musicians who are being assisted with scholarship monies to pursue their art offered their pieces at the beginning of the concerts.

Following the two concerts o December 6 and 7, some members of the Antrim County Community Choir gathered at Meadowbrook on Monday, December 8th to sing for the residents and family members. Featured on the program were five selections from their recent concert and a group sing-a-long of familiar carols and secular Christmas music. Dorothy Clore directed the choir; John Dickinson accompanied on the piano and flute music was provided by Carol McLeod.

If you enjoy the sounds of joyous Christmas music as well as some serious classical music, watch for these two choirs to bring their Christmas Concerts to our community again next year u December.



Most of the combined choir gathered for a photo before singing at the Church in the Hills, in Bellaire.



Left: getting ready for the concert at the First Presbyterian Church in Elk Rapids. Right: singing for the residents of Meadowbrook.



Sales:

Monday 8 am - 8 pm
Tues-Fri 8 am - 6 pm
Sat 9 am - 3 pm
Sun CLOSED

Service & Parts:

Mon - Fri 7:30 am - 5:30 pm
Sat & Sun CLOSED

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