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Minds, like parachutes, only function when they are open ~ Thomas Dewar

Vol2025:25 -
December 26, 2025

Cop Shop event - Friday, December 19, 2025



By Mike Kent

December 19, 2025 - Police officers from Kalkaska and firefighters from Grand Traverse County got to shop with the toy experts tonight at Meijer in Acme to help families in need this Christmas. The emergency responders teamed up with kids and shopped for Christmas gifts using donations from Meijer and Toys for Tots. This is the fourth year of the program. Kalkaska Chief of Police Aaron Popa said they work with the schools to select the kids who can help with the toy shopping. The Toys for Tots campaign has officially ended in the Traverse City region, however toy drop-off boxes will remain up until Christmas Eve at Fox Grand Traverse, Serra of Traverse City, and Traverse City Tourism.

Final Sort - Toys-for-Tots - 2025



By Mike Kent

December 15, 2025 – Traverse City - With the help of Traverse City Young Professionals (Near left, second row), Traverse City Central lacrosse team (far left, second row), and other volunteers, we sorted and prepared for distribution nearly 4,000 toys. This was our last sort, and the campaign is winding down. Most toy drop-off locations have been pulled; however, the campaign will keep boxes up at Fox Grand Traverse, Serra of Traverse City, and Traverse City Tourism until Christmas Eve. The campaign is responsible for Grand Traverse, Benzie, Antrim, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties, but other Toys for Tots campaigns are active throughout northern Michigan. The final results on how the campaign did won't be known for several days, but organizers say that while this has been a challenging year, they believe they have met the toy requests in the region. More information is available at www.ToysForTot.org.



All photos courtesy of Toys-for-Tots

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 taartisansguild@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

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

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

James Michael Brake

June 8, 2012 ~ December 6, 2025

As many of you may have heard, Jimmy, along with his older brother, Johnny Brake passed away in an accident over last weekend.

James was an 8th grader with a huge personality and presence at Kalkaska Middle School. He was well-liked by his classmates, and his absence in the building is already deeply felt by all.

Jimmy is the son of William and Angela (Komisar) Brake of Kalkaska.



The Brake family invited the community to the memorial service of Jimmy and Johnny, that was held on Saturday, December 13th at 2:00 pm visitation at Unified Ministries for Christ, 2525 Beebe Road NW, Kalkaska. The funeral service began at 3:00 pm.

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

Johnathan Miles Brake

June 3, 2003 ~ December 7, 2025

The Brake family suffered an unimaginable tragedy when Johnny and Jimmy fell through the ice on Island Lake. The ice gave way beneath them, leaving no chance to escape the freezing water. Johnny was recovered on the evening of the 6th, and Jimmy on the morning of the 7th.

Their family is grieving the loss of two sons, brothers, and a father.

Johnny is the son of William and Angela (Komisar) Brake.



The Brake family invited the community to a memorial service for Johnny and Jimmy that was held on Saturday, December 13th at 3:00 pm at Unified Ministries of Christ, 2525 Beebe Road NW, Kalkaska with visitation beginning at 2:00 pm.

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

Marjorie A. Brunett

February 26, 1945 ~December 7, 2025

Marjorie "Marge" Brunett, 80, of Roscommon, passed away on Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City. She was born on February 26, 1945 in Kalkaska to the late Kenneth and Alice (Brewer) Hall.



recently St. Michael Catholic Church in Roscommon to name a few.

Survivors include her husband, William Levi of Roscommon; her children, Mark (Iola Christensen) Brunett and Kendra (Steve Hayes) Steeby all of Fife Lake; and her brother, John Hall of Lewiston.

Marge was preceded in death by her first husband, Rodney Brunett; her beloved grandson, Tyler Steeby; her siblings, Roberta Kleeman, Charles Hall, Rosalie Martinson, James Hall, and Rebecca Cole.

Visitation was on Friday, December 12th from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm with the rosary at 7:00 pm at Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home. The Mass of Christian Burial was on Saturday at 11:00 am at St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Fife Lake with visitation beginning at 10:00 am. Burial will be at St. Aloysius Catholic Cemetery in the spring.

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

Marge was a registered nurse and devoted her entire life to helping her patients. She began her career around the age of 20 working at the State Hospital in Traverse City until it closed in 1989. She moved on to Michigan Veterans Homes in Grand Rapids and finished at Kalkaska Memorial Health Center-LTC.

Marge married Rodney Brunett and he passed away in 2006. She later married William Levi. Together they enjoyed dancing, fishing, playing cards and traveling all over the United States and the world.

Marge was a member of the American Legion in South Boardman, Red Hatters in Kalkaska, St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Fife Lake and most

Clifford L. Tracey

February 26, 1935 ~ December 11, 2025

Clifford L. Tracey, 90, of Kalkaska, passed away after a brief illness on December 11, 2025, at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City. He was born to the late Henry and Ethel (Moses) Tracey on February 26, 1935.

Clifford married his sweetheart Shirley Bishop in April 1956 in Kalkaska. As his family would fondly say, "Dad was a very loving father who loved family, his greatest love was his wife Shirley, then his kids." Clifford was well respected by all.

Clifford was a self-made man, running multiple successful businesses. If you asked Clifford about his life he would go on for hours telling everything from being a kid hauling hay with his siblings to cutting ice out of Mill Pond and delivering it to everyone in town for refrigeration. Clifford delivered groceries, started his own logging company, driving semis across the country, a car salesman to owning his construction company in Oklahoma. He enjoyed working at the Elks and Moose Lodges as the kitchen manager after he retired.

Clifford loved celebrating the holidays and tried to make sure everyone came to family functions. He enjoyed having family dinners, sitting around a



campfire and talking. Clifford was known for his special steak seasoning recipe that he did not divulge to anyone. Clifford and Shirley traveled several years in a motor home to see the country.

His survivors include Shirley, his wife of 69 years; his children, Craig (Pam) Tracey of Marion, Sheryl (Dale) Christenson of Cadillac, Pam (Fred) Bartel of Grosse Pointe, and Keith Tracey of Kalkaska; grandchildren, Erin, Kristen, Justin, Juliana, David, Jessica; great-grandchildren, Briana, Dylan, Lucas, Leeland, Calan, Lauren, Eleanor, Anna, Audrey, Autumn, and Jacob; seven great-great-grandchildren, numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family.

He is preceded in death by his siblings, Virgil Tracey and Esther Campbell and two grandsons; Rick Christensen and James Kregear. We will miss him forever and always.

A memorial service was held on Wednesday, December 17th at 11:00 am at Evergreen Bible Baptist Church with visitation beginning at 10:00 am. Pastor Bill Kuiper officiating.

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

Rupert H. Farabaugh

March 22, 1957 ~ December 17, 2025

Rupert H. Farabaugh, 68 of Kalkaska, passed away on Wednesday, December 17, 2025 at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City. He was born on March 22, 1957 in Spangler, Pennsylvania to the late Clair and Marita (Springer) Farabaugh.

Rupert graduated from Kalkaska High School. He then attended a trade school for electronics. Afterwards Rupert went to work for IBM in New York and in North Carolina, until he came home to help take care of his father. Rupert enjoyed cooking, flying drones, playing chess, and shooting guns. He also enjoyed making up jokes and telling them.



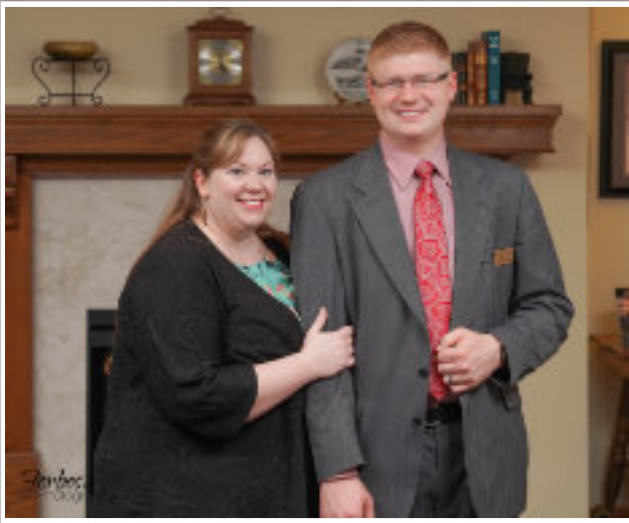
Rupert is survived by his siblings, Cathy Poppy of Bowling Green, KY, Lisa (Jeff) Hartzell of Kalkaska, and Jeff Farabaugh of Kalkaska; and many nieces and nephews.

Rupert was preceded in death by his brother and sister-in-law, Bill and Robin Farabaugh, twin nephews Christopher and Jason Farabaugh; brother-in-law, Norman Poppy; and niece, Lacey Poppy.

Cremation has taken place per Rupert's wishes.

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

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Gregory Todd Irish

July 25, 1966 ~ December 8, 2025

Greg Irish, 59, of Cadillac, passed away on December 8, 2025. He came into the world on July 25, 1966 to Micheal and Sharon (Smith) Irish.



Greg grew up in East Jordan and Kalkaska. After graduating from high school, he joined the US Army. His superior officer said he was a good soldier for 4 years. Greg was proud of serving in the US Army.

Suffering from PTSD and other mental problems affected his mind. Greg was around 50 when he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior, from then on he ministered to people in his assisted living home and whenever he was out and about. He was the only one in his assisted living place that was physically able to help with the laundry, clean up the dining room after everyone was done eating, shovel the sidewalks and take out the garbage.

Greg will always be remembered as a good soldier for our Lord and Savior and his country by those that knew and loved him, especially his family.

Greg is survived by his father, Micheal (Sue) Irish, daughter, Caitlin McDonald; grandsons, Stephen, Cooper and Cannon; step-mother, Elinor Irish; brother, Jeffrey (Wendy) Irish, sisters Sarah (Michael) Palmeri and Katie (Scott) Wassmer;

Preceding Greg in death was his mother; Sharon Irish; step-mother, Judy Irish; his grandparents, Mike and Audrey Irish; and grandmother, Myrtle Smith.

Cremation has taken place. Burial of cremains will take place in the spring at East Jordan Cemetery.

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

James Allen Sherriff

July 9, 1954 ~ November 30, 2025

James Allen Sherriff, 71, of Mancelona, MI, passed away peacefully on Sunday, November 30th, 2025, at Munson Medical Center. James was born on July 9th, 1954, in Wayne County, MI, to Charles Sherriff and Grace Wilkerson. Jim loved his family -- his boys always #1, and all extensions of his family, in his many quiet ways. He loved deer hunting and prepping for it, ice fishing and prepping for it. He loved bird hunting trips and the walks, and he dearly loved every dog along the way. He loved giving, and helping people when he could. Using the tool of a drilling rig, he loved drilling through the earth's surfaces for its natural resources. From oil to water, he was a driller for the past 50 years. He loved seeing people happy and working hard to help make that happen. He loved his land and improving the natural

habitat for wildlife. He loved making things happen and gittin-r-done, and he loved popcorn =).

Hearts that will be mending include his wife of 38 years, Billie Jean (Bernecker) Sherriff; son Stevie (Angie) Sherriff; grandson Jamie Allen Arden Sherriff; brother Jerry (Jug) Sherriff; sisters Robin (David) Fisher, Jackie (Chip) Grody, and Lori Sherriff. He was preceded in death by his parents Charles Sherriff and Grace Wilkerson; son Jamie Allen Sherriff, Nick Harvey (one of his boys); brothers Dennis (Butch) Sherriff, Dwight (Mike) Sherriff, and sister Darlene Lorenzo.

He loved a lot - we loved him more. He will be dearly missed, but never missing from our hearts. A celebration of life will be held on his land at a future date.

Additional Obituary on page 8

Northwest MI

VOICE

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- Marker & Monument Sales
- Cremation & Traditional Services



Mark Douglas Dobson

October 16, 1951 ~ December 12, 2025

Mark Douglas Dobson, 74, of Yuma, Michigan, passed away December 12th, 2025, at his home. Mark was born October 16th, 1951, in Kingsley, Michigan, to the late John and Carol (Hertz) Dobson.



maintain his garden as well, growing a large one for the past 40+ years.

Mark will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 31 years, Brenda Marie (Dow) Dobson; his daughters, Jody (Carl) Woodcox, Nicole (Jamie) Mullin, and Angela Dobson; his 17 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren; and siblings Diane (Jeff) Hanna, and Joe Dobson. He was preceded in death by his parents John and Carol (Hertz) Dobson; sister Laurie Babcock; grandchild Michael Woodcox; and grandparents John and Pearl Dobson. A celebration of life will be held at a later date, with a date & time to be determined.

Mark grew up in Kingsley, MI, later graduating from Kingsley High School. He served honorably in the Army, spending time in Vietnam. He worked at Leelanau Fruit for over 50 years. In 1994, he married the love of his life Brenda Marie (Dow) Dobson in Traverse City, MI, spending the majority of their time in Yuma, MI. Mark was an avid hunter, and fisherman. He was always happy when he could be in the woods or out on the lake. In his spare time, he loved to

Verna Dee Stephens

July 30, 1943 ~ December 19, 2025

Verna Dee Stephens, 82, of Kalkaska, ended her long battle with Alzheimer's Dementia on December 19, 2025. She was born on July 30, 1943 in Pontiac, Michigan to the late Vernon and Naomi (McLain) Frye. She spent the majority of her life in Kalkaska with her husband of 51 years, James "Bill" Stephens. Verna led a quiet life, marked not by loud achievements, but by steady love and gentle talent. A humble, self-taught painter, she found joy in creating new works of art, never seeking praise, but simply sharing them with friends. She also crocheted and knitted countless pieces, each one a small act of care and patience. You could often find Verna out riding her bike or taking small walks. She was content in life's ordinary tasks. Above all else, Verna was devoted to her family. There was nothing she wouldn't do for them,



no sacrifice too great, no request met without pure kindness. Her love was constant. Her presence was reassuring. Her heart was endlessly generous. Verna will be remembered for her quiet strength and the deep, unwavering love

she gave so freely. She will be forever missed by her two children Todd (Kim) Stephens and Darci (Mike) Fitch. Verna cherished her family, especially her grandchildren: Morgan (Jacob) Hersha, Alaina (Caleb VI) Horton, Mackenzie and Alison Luck. She was also blessed with three great grandchildren: Caleb Horton VII, Brynlee Horton, and Quincy Hersha. A graveside service will take place in the spring at Evergreen Cemetery in Kalkaska. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home.

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HEALTH

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Chandler Williams, NP, Joins Munson Healthcare Hospice and Palliative Medicine

Munson Healthcare is pleased to welcome Chandler Williams, NP, to the Hospice and Palliative Care team.

Chandler chose a career in medicine because it allows her to care for people. She has always been drawn to palliative medicine and the importance of providing an additional layer of support for patients with serious medical conditions.

“I value my patients being heard and getting to know them, including what brings them joy or gives their lives meaning. This helps me create treatment plans that align with their personal goals,” she says.

Chandler earned her graduate education from Walden University. She is board certified as an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Chandler has a young child and a dog. In her free time, she enjoys outdoor activities, especially skiing, jogging, and gardening.

Learn more at munsonhealthcare.org/FindADoctor.



Munson Medical Center Granted \$2.5 million by HRSA for Street Medicine Residency Expansion Project

Funding will help support medical outreach to the unhoused across four counties

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded a \$2.5 million grant supporting a five-year project to enhance street medicine training to medical students enrolled in Munson Healthcare’s (MHC) Family Medicine Residency Program.

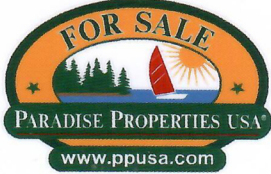
One of only 24 such grants awarded nationwide, the funds will be used to launch the Rural Street Medicine Residency Expansion Project to train the next generation of primary care physicians in delivering care to individuals experiencing homelessness. This project will help expand research, establish an advisory board (to include community members experiencing homelessness), and support Munson, Traverse Health Clinic and Goodwill in their Street Medicine partnership serving Benzonia, Cadillac, Rapid City, and Traverse City. “These are among the most vulnerable people in our region, and this grant is going to help ensure they have access to care, where they are,” said Munson Healthcare’s David Klee, MD, Community Assistant Dean for the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine Traverse City Campus. “Over the next five years we will be implementing a comprehensive strategy to expand, enhance, and formalize a Rural Street Medicine Residency.” This new curriculum within Munson’s Family Residency Program through Michigan State University will integrate core competencies to equip physicians with the skills necessary to practice in complex care environments, including:

- Primary care.
- Behavioral health with instruction in psychiatric medication stabilization.
- Addiction medicine including MOUD (Medications for Opioid Use Disorder) initiation and induction.
- Medical-legal advocacy (legal aid or medical-legal partnerships).

Additionally, residents will be required to dedicate 5-8 hours per month providing clinical care through mobile medical units (MMUs), shelter-based clinics, and encampment outreach. “As this new curriculum takes root, we plan to build upon it with a Rural-Urban exchange program, opportunities for mentorship, and a ‘Grow Your Own’ street medicine development model,” added Klee.


The Street Medicine partnership between Munson Healthcare, Traverse Health Clinic, and Goodwill Industries began in 2020. The initiative received the 2024 American Hospital Association (AHA) Dick Davidson NOVA Award for hospital-led collaborative efforts to improve community health. The program has seen 1,000 visits from 400 unique patients in Traverse City alone this year.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY




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- Home Improvements -

- Siding - Decks -

- Garages -

CALENDAR

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

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.



January 2026

January 1, 9am-4pm, Torch Area Artisans Guild New Year’s Day Sew-In. Working on charity quilts and other projects. Newcomers are always welcome! For more info, email: taartisansguild@gmail.com or Facebook: facebook.com/TorchAreaArtisansGuild. Sponsored by Alden District Library and held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.

January 3-30, Vintage Pyrex Dishware Display. Come visit Alden District Library and see Karen Movsesian’s collection of vintage Pyrex dishware. The display can be viewed during normal library hours. Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri 9:30a-5p, Tue 9:30a-6p, Sat 9:30a-2p. The library is located at 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318. Free Event.

January 8, 3:30pm, Books ‘n Brie Book Club. Enjoy the company of fellow book lovers while discussing “My Friends” by Frederik Backman. Free Event. Sponsored by Alden District Library and held at Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Rd, Alden, 231-331-4318.

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

January 26, 4pm, Data Safety Crash Course. Join the Kalkaskalibrary for this FREE presentation from our tech services librarian on how to protect your private information on the internet. Even if you’re a total tech novice, you can make sure your personal data is safe! Located at the Kalkaska County Library. Contact the library at (231) 258-9411 or at info@kalkaskalibrary.org for more information.



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.

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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

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DEAL ME IN

By Mark Pilarski (reprinted with permission of the author)
*9/6 machines, soft 17s and one hard rule,
under the harvest moon*

15 September 2003

Dear Mark,

Thanks to your column, I pay close attention to the video poker payout schedule. It took some looking, but I found full-pay (9/6) machines most of the time. In my searching, I found many 9/6 machines that paid the same for two pairs as for one pair (one credit). Is this a new payout scheme or did I just not notice it before? Hal M.

Unfortunately, Hal, your question is scant of some vital information, most notably, the rest of the pay-table story.

When you find a full-pay Jacks or Better game machine that pays 9 coins for a full house and 6 for a flush, you'll know you're in the fast lane with a return rate of approximately 99.5%, making it an excellent wager.

Keen video poker players understand the difference between full-pay and partial-pay machines. The full-payers shell out the maximum for each winning hand; the partials don't.

In your example, Hal, a standard Jacks or Better full-pay machine returns 9-for-1 on a full house, and 6-for-1 for a flush. But keep reading. If the machine pays only 8-for-1 on a full house, it would be considered a partial-pay machine. Obviously, we both know which is the better play. But there's a slight aroma of equation-warpage behind your question, Hal. The full-versus-partial equation changes when the machine only pays 1-for-1 for two pairs. Odds-on, you were probably playing on some hybrid Bonus Poker machine, where the payoff bonus for four-of-a-Kind is reduced to 1-for-1.

If the pay table looked anything like this, royal flush 250-for-1; straight flush 50-for-1; four aces 80-for-1; four 2s, 3s or 4s 40-for-1; four 5s through kings 25-for-1; full house 9-for-1; flush 6-for-1; straight 4-for-1; three-of-a-kind 3-for-1; two pair 1-for-1; pair of jacks or better 1-for-1 - TAKE A DEEP BREATH - you could be giving the house an extra 5% on your play.

Reducing the return on two-pair hands penalizes the player too far, even with the increased payoffs on fours-of-a kind. But again, Hal, without knowing the complete pay table, I cannot give you an unequivocal answer. Meanwhile, keep looking for those full-pay 9/6 machines where you are paid 2-for-1 for two pair, and scoff at any machine whose pay table remotely resembles the one sketched out above.

Dear Mark,

Some casino dealers hit their soft 17s, other don't. My brother says that it's better to play on a game where the dealer hits a soft 17. Is he right? Ben R.

Bzzzt! Wrong, Ben!

When the dealer hits a soft 17, you are giving the house an additional two-tenths of 1% advantage. Watch my hands: with a soft 17, the dealer's hand improves with any one of ace, 2, 3 or 4, or stays the same with a 10, jack, queen or king. Therefore, eight of every 13 cards either improve the dealer's hand, or keep it the same. Got it? And if any of the other five cards is drawn, the dealer still has a chance to escalate his hand-value with another draw.

Dear Mark,

What is the house advantage, if any, if I use a never-bust system against the dealer? I generally play on shoe games that either have six or eight decks. Hank R.

Big no-no, Hank. I do not recommend ever using the never-bust strategy, which gives the casino a 5% advantage. By using strict basic strategy, which recommends hitting plenty of stiff hands, you cut the house edge to a half of 1% on the six- or eight-deck games. Use it (basic strategy), or lose it (contents of your wallet) with the never-bust system.

=====

Gambling quote of the week: "The lowest pool hustler in the business is four times more respectable than some of those humbugs in Washington." - Minnesota Fats



Sudoku Puzzle
December 26, 2025

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

Solution on page 15

Additional Obituaries on pages 4, & 5

Gene LaVerne Woodhams

January 19, 1926 ~ December 17, 2025

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our beloved Mom and Grandmother Gene LaVerne Woodhams, 99 of Fife Lake, Michigan. Gene gained her Angel wings at her home surrounded in love with family. Gene was born in South Boardman, MI on January 19, 1926. She was the oldest daughter and fourth of six children of Seymour James and LaVerne Eliza Ryckman (Jenkins).

Gene graduated from Kalkaska Public Schools in 1942 and went on to Central Michigan University where she graduated with her Bachelor of Science Degree and later went on to complete her master's degree in education. Gene LaVerne Ryckman married the love of her life Victor James Woodhams Sr on June 19, 1949 in Lansing, MI. They were married for over 50 years before Victor gained his angel wings in 2000. During that time, they had one child, they bought what turned into the family farm on Shippy Road, where they spent the rest of their lives together. Their shared passion for farming and family built the foundation of generations to come.

Gene started her career at Springport Public Schools, from there going to Merrill Public Schools before moving to Fife Lake, MI where Gene taught briefly at Fife Lake School before spending the remainder of her teaching career at Kalkaska Public Schools. Gene taught Business, Home Ec, and English. After retirement from teaching, Gene spent her time tending to gardens, growing beautiful flowers, instilling life lessons in her Grandchildren, and hosting



wonderful family get together. Gene was a member of the East Boardman United Methodist Church, Red Hat/Purple Dress Association, Kalkaska Education Association, National Education Association, Michigan Education Association, and while in college was part of the Delta Kappa Gamma Sorority House.

Gene was preceded in death by her parents, husband of 50 plus years, Victor J. Woodhams Sr, Grandson Josiah Woodhams and brothers Devere, Seymour, Willard, and Clesson Ryckman. Gene will be forever remembered by her son Victor J. (Carolyn) Woodhams Jr of Fife Lake, MI; Grandson Victor J. (Charlotte) Woodhams III of Delton, MI, Granddaughter Eliza (Ray) Cummer of Fife Lake, MI, Granddaughter in Law Nikki Woodhams of South Boardman, MI; Great Grandchildren Rowynn Eldridge, Colt, Lennon, and Bodie Woodhams, Ray Cummer III, Victor IV, Clifford, and HeatherAnn Woodhams; sister Virgil Uitylugt; as well as many extended family and friends.

Visitation was held at the Kalkaska Funeral Home on Monday, December 22nd from 5 to 8pm with the funeral being held on Tuesday, December 23rd at 11am, final visitation began at 10am, also at the Kalkaska Funeral Home with a luncheon following at the Fife Lake American Legion Post 219. Burial will take place in the spring at Lodi Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Kalkaska Funeral Home.



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Growth, Meaning and Self-Mastery Part 1.

Growth

Here's a harsh truth: Indecision will cost you more peace than making the wrong choice.

Life pays you dividends when you are decisive. When you make a decision— even if it turns out to be the wrong one — you gain a life lesson. These are the currency of growth. You learn what doesn't work, which is just as essential as discovering what does.

1. If you find yourself walking the wrong path: Pivot quickly
2. Make the next choice
3. And move forward with purpose.

Each decision, right or wrong, becomes a step toward greater clarity and self-trust.

Over the years, I have connected with some people in my life that eventually no longer aligned with my values. We simply grew in different directions.

I could have stayed connected to them for years — feeling drained, frustrated, and stuck — but I chose my own alignment instead. I stepped away, and in doing so, I gained something far more valuable than control: I gained myself back.

The key to moving forward is being decisive, learning and growing.

Meaning

Let's say, just for a moment, that you're absolutely right about everything that's wrong in your life. How does complaining about it—or doing nothing—help you heal or grow? In truth, it doesn't. It only serves to reinforce your pain, cement your narrative, and keep you circling the same mountain.

Instead, you can choose peace, purpose, and resilience.

You want to up your mental health, instead ask the question I return to over and over: "What would the highest version of myself do?" And then I do that.

Your higher self always knows the way.

Self-Mastery

There are four core influences that are regularly and quietly shaping the person you're becoming:

1. You'll become your thoughts/what you give your precious focus to.
2. You'll become the people you spend the most time with.
3. You'll become what you watch and listen to. For some of us, this does not look like the life we say we want.
4. You'll become what you consume—mentally, emotionally, and physically.

We benefit most when we choose wisely. There is an old mathematical law: Garbage in/Garbage out. The opposite is also true. When we embrace our own power to shape a life that mirrors the highest version of ourselves, we continue to 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.

LIFE'S WORK CLINIC




In true holiday spirit and community generosity, the Bellaire Ladies' Literary Club donated 15 children's books to the Library today. These books each have personal meaning to the donors and will become part of the Children's Library Section.

The Bellaire Ladies' Literary Club was founded in 1905.

Thank you for this wonderful gift to the Library!

Pictured here is Bellaire Ladies' Literary Club member, Sarah Juntune, with all the donated books.





FOREST AREA FCU RAISES \$60,000 FOR LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

Fife Lake, MI, December 10, 2025- The Forest Area Federal Credit Union (FAFCU) annual food drive in November has raised a record-breaking \$60,000 to benefit community food pantries surrounding their 7 local branches in Grand Traverse, Missaukee, Wexford, and Kalkaska Counties.

FAFCU's annual food drive raised \$60,000 to be distributed to 13 community food pantries in

December. This new FAFCU food drive fundraising record dwarfs the previous 2024 record of

\$39,000. Each year the credit union's branch locations offer food pantry "bucks" for any type of donation and "sell" window and door space to local businesses for additional donations. This year the FAFCU Board of Directors agreed to increase the matching contributions to \$3,000 per branch, up from \$2,500, for a total match of \$21,000 toward the totals for each branch. Alex Lutke, CEO of FAFCU, said, "At FAFCU, our mission goes beyond financial services. When families in our communities are making tough choices, we want to be part of the solution. Reaching this new record of \$60,000 is a powerful reminder of what's possible when our members, employees, and community partners rally together to support local food pantries."

For this year, FAFCU set a fundraising goal of \$50,000. Thanks to the outstanding generosity of members, communities, and employees, the credit union far exceeded that goal at a time when local food pantries need the support more than ever.

About Forest Area Federal Credit Union

Founded in 1983, Forest Area Federal Credit Union is a member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative with corporate headquarters in Fife Lake, MI. FAFCU's fundamental responsibility is to actively serve people within their field of membership and the communities in which they live. FAFCU currently has seven branches: Cadillac, Fife Lake, Manton, Mesick, Kalkaska, Kingsley, and Lake City.

For more information about Forest Area Federal Credit Union, or the food drive, please contact Jason Grant at jgrant@forestarea.com, visit www.forestarea.com, or call 231-879-4154, ext. 1013.



Kalkaska Substance Free Coalition

Eliminating Stigma • Providing Education • Connections • Support

Live Well Teen Christmas Project – Bringing Holiday Cheer to Local High School Students

KALKASKA, MI – December 20, 2025 – The Live Well Teen Christmas Project, organized by the Live Well Kalkaska Substance Free Coalition, provided essential support to high school students in need at Forest Area High School and Kalkaska High School, including the Kalkaska Alternative Program (KAP) during the holiday season.

Originally funded at \$1,200, the project was planned just over a week before Christmas break and expanded quickly after two anonymous donors stepped forward—one matching the original amount and another contributing an additional \$600—bringing total funding to \$3,000. Despite the tight timeline, funds were used to provide gift cards, winter clothing, food, and other necessities to students in need.

At Forest Area High School, 15 students received \$100 gift cards. School staff guided purchases to ensure students met essential needs while allowing choice for small gifts for family members.

“Students set out shopping this week thanks to the generosity of local donors, and their excitement was evident from the start,” said Konrad Molter, principal at Forest Area High School. “Many focused on essentials, with one student saying, ‘I really needed new boots for winter, and now I won’t have cold feet walking to school.’ Others wanted to give gifts to family, like a student who said, ‘I bought a small gift for my younger brother because I wanted him to feel special too.’ Allowing students to choose what mattered to them gave them dignity and showed them they are valued by this community.”

In Kalkaska Public Schools, high school students at Kalkaska High School and KAP received winter clothing, pillows, blankets, personal hygiene items, food, and other essentials. Local businesses contributed, including hair care products from Timberlies Salon Studio and winter hats from the Country Surplus.

“It was an incredibly generous donation that will have a huge impact on our students,” said Josh England, Dean of Students/Special Education Teacher, Kalkaska Alternative Program/Kalkaska High School. “Seeing the kindness and love extended to kids who don’t always experience that reminds them that this community sees and values them. As winter sets in, knowing that warm clothes and food are available helps alleviate some of the stress students and families face during the holiday season.”

Approximately \$250 worth of food was purchased, some of which was assembled into take-home bags for students over the holiday break.

The Live Well Kalkaska Substance Free Coalition is a community prevention organization and an initiative of Catholic Human Services - Up North Prevention, providing education, connections, support, and healthy activities for youth, families, and the broader Kalkaska community.

Article submitted by Suzanne Prentice



SUV filled with items purchased for the Live Well Teen Christmas Project.

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
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
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
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

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

Wrap Up

December 26, 2025

Looking back over this year as it draws to a close seems to be a worthy endeavor. So much has happened, some of it absolutely wonderful and some of it really terrible.

There are still wars going on and military undertakings, many of which challenge our fundamental sense of humanity. There are acts of inexplicable rage happening that tragically take the lives of some and destroy the lives of others.

There are also excellent humanitarian campaigns running, such as Toys-for-Tots and the Salvation Army's Red Bucket. Local churches and civic groups support food banks to feed the hungry and coat drives to warm the cold and needy. While those of us blessed to have enough to share with others, see it as our honor and duty to help those who do not, we do know for a fact, that we can never be certain to be so secure that we will not ever be the ones in need.

In all the religions I know anything about, there is the guiding principle to care for those in need. Even in secular ethics, we see it as enlightened self-interest to treat others with the same kindness we would hope to receive should we find ourselves in a desperate situation.

It was enlightened self-interest that the United States was practicing through the USAID foundation. For an amount of money reported

to be significantly less than one percent (0.33%) of our national GDP, we managed to be saving lives, feeding children, healing illness – even nearly eliminating some diseases – around the world. It is my heartfelt hope that we will soon return to that excellent work and rebuild the global goodwill that once was ours.

The case I would make for America to continue helping to eradicate diseases around the world is simple: diseases do not recognize national borders. When we help others to defeat disease, we also help ourselves.

That philosophy is at work, I believe, when the St. Jude hospitals speak of sharing their cancer research around the world. They can see the benefit of everyone working on the problem and sharing what they know. That can only help to speed up the progress in defeating the universal enemy that is cancer – especially in children!

Here are two things that I would dearly love to see my government address: 1) In the richest nation of the world, how is it possible for us to accept people being homeless? Could we not figure out a way to make sure everybody has a home? 2) In a nation that produces more food than we can eat, so that we actually need export markets, how can we tolerate that some of our own people are hungry? Isn't there a way for us to feed hungry Americans?

Having made it the mission of this paper to "celebrate the good news below the bridge," it

is not my intention to focus on everything that makes my heart ache or causes me to fret about my nation. Everyone can see those things as well as I can. Instead, I want to lift up the gifts and graces that I witness happening here in this little corner of northern Michigan. In the last few editions of the Voice, you have seen the work of the Alden Men's Club, the food pantries of Antrim and Kalkaska Counties, the generosity of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, the work of the Toys-for-Tots drive, the Kampout for KAIR, the music of the Antrim County and Elk Lake Community Choirs as well as the work done out of the funds raised by their concerts, the environmental stewardship promoted by the Three Lakes Association's summer internship program, the sense of community spirit engendered by the Rapid City Heritage Festival, the Kalkaska Trout Festival, the Mancelona Bass Festival – and, yes, there are many more – all right here where we live. Whenever I feel tempted to go into despair over all that is wrong with the world, I call to mind the wonderful efforts of my neighbors, friends, and family members. Then I know that eventually, love and goodness will prevail. I do believe that!

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

Shalom

Tina Norris Fields
Editor

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) Where in the Constitution is the "writ of habeas corpus" referenced?

2) What does the Latin phrase "habeas corpus" mean?

3) How is the writ of habeas corpus used?

4) Why is this important?

Citizenship Corner

Answers to last issue's questions

1) What is the exception to the President's power of federal pardon?
A. Per Article II, Section 2, paragraph 1: "... he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pa dons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment."

2) Can the President unilaterally make treaties?
A. No. Per Article II, Section 2, paragraph 2: "He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur."

3) What specific duty does the President have with regard to the law?
A. Per Article II, Section 3: "he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed."

4) In addition to being a natural born citizen of the Unite States and at least thirty-five years old, what is the residential requirement to qualify to hold the office of President?
A. Per Article II, Section 1: the candidate must also have been "fourteen Years a Resident within the United States."



Everything
in this paper
is important
to somebody



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



Electrical • Audio/Visual • Networking

Security • Home Automation



HOME OR BUSINESS



Electrical

Custom homes - Commercial - Industrial

Generac Generator Stand By Power Systems

Lighting Control and automated Blinds

Lutron HomeWorks - Lutron RadioRA2

Audio / Visual

Prewire to final hook up

Installation of TVS and sound equipment

We provide quality brands of all equipment

Security

Security systems - Camera systems

Networking

Wifi systems - Hardwired systems

A HOME AUTOMATION SYSTEM CAN ALLOW
YOU TO CONTROL YOUR HOME FROM
ANYWHERE AROUND THE GLOBE

231-331-7122

6323 Rapid City Rd. NW, Rapid City, MI 49676

admin@morrisonelectricinc.com

morrisonelectricinc.com



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

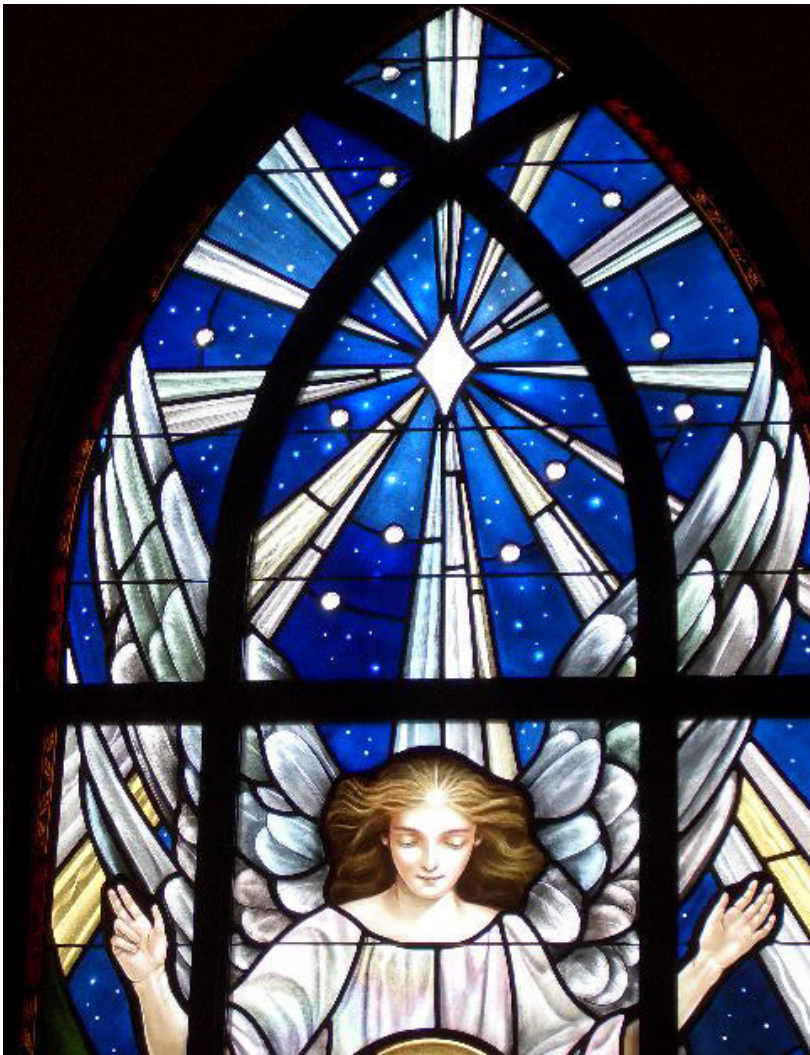
Deliverance, Kalkaska Baptist Church, 1651 Co Rd 612, Kalkaska, faith-based support for all addictions, contact Heath 231 564-3715
When: Fri, 6:00 pm

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



WALK SLOWLY WITH PURPOSE

Christmas

By Dominic Fortuna

RAPID CITY -- The night was dark and still in the small town of Bethlehem, the only sound being the soft rustling of leaves in the gentle winter breeze. It was a night like any other, yet it was a night that would change the course of history forever.

In a humble stable, Mary, a young maiden, lay on a makeshift bed, her eyes fixed on the tiny bundle in her arms. Joseph, her husband, sat beside her, his hand gently stroking her hair. They had traveled far and wide, seeking refuge, and finally found this quiet place.

As they marveled at the miracle before them, a radiant light filled the room. An angel, resplendent in glory, stood before them, his voice like thunder, yet gentle as a whisper. "Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God. This child will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Most High."

The angel's words echoed in their minds as a multitude of the heavenly host appeared, singing praises to God. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

In the fields nearby, shepherds kept watch over their flocks, their hearts filled with wonder at the sudden appearance of the angels. They listened, transfixed, as the message was revealed to them. Without hesitation, they set off for the stable, eager to witness the miracle for themselves.

As they arrived, they found Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus, just as the angel had described. They gazed in awe, their hearts filled with joy and wonder.

'Twas the night before Christmas, a night that would be etched in the annals of history forever. The shepherds returned to their flocks, spreading the news of the Savior's birth. The news spread like wildfire, and soon the town was abuzz with excitement.

Fast forward to Christmas 2025. The world has changed in ways both big and small, but the message of that first Christmas remains the same. We have the choice to keep our Christmas traditions and compassion alive for another 2025 years.

As we celebrate Christmas in 2025, let's remember the true meaning of the holiday. Let's strive to spread love, kindness, and generosity, just like the shepherds and the angels did on that first Christmas night.

The story of that night has been passed down through generations, inspiring countless acts of kindness, charity, and love. It's a reminder that even in the darkest of times, there is always hope.

Imagine a world where people came together, putting aside their differences, to spread joy and kindness. A world where love and compassion knew no bounds. That's the world that Christmas promises, and it's up to us to make it a reality.

As you celebrate this Christmas, take a moment to reflect on the true meaning of the holiday. Think about the tiny bundle in the manger, the love that surrounded him, and the hope that he brought to the world.

Let's make a conscious effort to spread love, kindness, and generosity, not just on Christmas Day, but every day. Let's keep the spirit of Christmas alive, and make the world a brighter, more loving place, one act of kindness at a time.

The story of the first Christmas is a testament to the power of love and hope. It's a reminder that we are not alone, and that there is always hope for a better tomorrow. As we look to the future, let's hold onto that hope, and strive to make the world a better place, one small act of kindness at a time.

In the end, it's not about the gifts, the decorations, or the festivities. It's about the love, the kindness, and the compassion that we share with others. That's the true spirit of Christmas, and it's up to us to keep it alive.

So as you walk slowly with purpose through the Christmas season, stay in the moment, and enjoy your family..

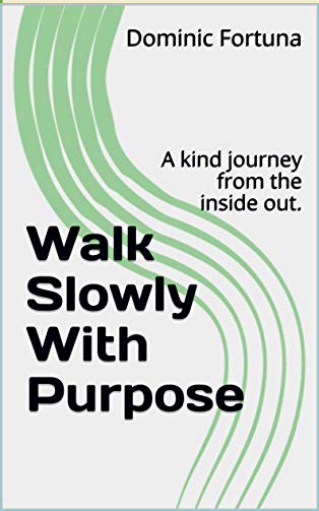
Merry Christmas to all
And to all a good night!



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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

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

Sudoku Puzzle Solution
December 26, 2025

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

Puzzle on page 8

COMMUNITY

By Tina Norris Fields

Rapid City - December 17, 2025 - We hear a lot about the big acts of charity, how one organization or another does great things. And they do - and that's all good. But, it's often the smaller acts of kindness and generosity that spring from the hearts and spirits of individuals - and that are likely to go unnoticed or unreported in the news media - that actually act like glue in the community and really help out at the local level. So it was with the Rapid City saga of the crocheted mittens.

A couple years ago, Becky Norris was asked if she would crochet mittens for a Traverse City area school project. She set about designing her own pattern for the mittens, and made several pairs for that project. Thinking they might be needed again this year, she made several pairs in different sizes and contacted the lead person of the earlier project, but it didn't seem as though the same project was taking place this year.

Aha! What about our own school, right here in Rapid City? So, a phone call to the office and off we go. Robyn Czuk greeted us and led us down to Mrs. Wodehouse's kindergarten class. The bag full of mittens was emptied onto the carpet and the young students lined up and went one by one to select a pair of mittens from the pile.

Next, we went out into the main hall to take a picture in front of the Christmas tree.

The mittens will be put to good use, right here in our own home town, at our own little school, for the children of our own neighbors and friends. And, isn't that the way things are supposed to go?



Mrs. Wodehouse's kindergarten class with their first selection of mittens. At lunch time, selections were adjusted for better sizing.



Mittens, mittens, mittens!



Choosing a pair of mittens



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