

THE LANSING JOURNAL

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Governor Pritzker signs SB1970 at TF North Thornton Fractional District 215 students and teachers “got it done”

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

CALUMET CITY, Ill. (January 22, 2020) – “Thank you for hosting us here,” said Governor JB Pritzker as he took the podium following an introduction by TF North Principal Brian Rucinski. “And for whatever magic you’ve got in the classrooms at Thornton Fractional that inspired these students to take their ideas to Springfield—I just wanna say, ‘Wow’ and ‘You won!’ You got it done. Well done.”

Governor Pritzker chose TF North (755 Pulaski Road, Calumet City) as the location for the signing of Senate Bill 1970 at the urging of Illinois Senator Elgie Sims. Sims participated in a Parade to the Polls at TF North and TF South High Schools in November of 2018 and helped students overcome obstacles typical for first-time voters. He connected with students during that experience, and was inspired to sponsor legislation that would authorize student absences during the school day for voting. Sims invited several students to testify in Springfield in support of the bill, which passed in the Senate and the House in nine months. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen anything move quite as fast as the legislation that you all put together!” commented Pritzker to the students gathered in the TF North library on January 22 to witness the signing of the bill.

A press release from Senator Sims explained, “Senate Bill 1970 amends the Election Code to allow students who are 18 or older to leave school for up to two hours to vote in a primary, general, or any other election in the state that requires a popular vote. The school can decide which hours students can be absent to vote. The plan is modeled after current rules for employers and employees.”

The online version of this story includes video of Governor Pritzker addressing the students and Senator Sims explaining why “there was no place else we were going to sign this bill than at TF North.” (Email subscribers received the news the morning after it happened. Subscribe—for free—at thelansingjournal.com/news/subscribe.)

Lansing resident and District 215 School Board Vice President LeeAnn Revis is passionate about encouraging first-time voters. Having students involved in the passage of SB1970, and having Governor Pritzker come to TF North to sign the bill was “a dream come true,” she said.



Illinois Governor JB Pritzker (seated) signs SB1970 into law while Senator Elgie Sims (far left) and Markeis Horace (bow tie) look on. Horace was one of the students who testified in Springfield about the need for the bill. (Photo: Victor Herrera, TF North student journalist)



Left: Illinois Senator Elgie Sims (center) relied on testimony from TF South students Hailey Stepp (left) and Kyla Johnson to get SB1970 through the Senate. Right: Tiara Bullock, a Features and Human Interest writer for TF North’s student newspaper, the Thorntonian, interviews Governor Pritzker after the signing. (Photos: Melanie Jongsma)



“I think this is a first step toward creating a culture in schools that says, ‘We celebrate voting. Let’s get this 18–24-year-old voting block active,’” said LeeAnn Revis while Gov. Pritzker applauded. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

In a Facebook post about the bill, Revis wrote, “It is my hope that schools will, like TF North, organize voting field trips where they can support their students as they navigate the process. At the end of the day, our students participated in the legislative process, they tweeted, re-tweeted and hashtagged. They traveled and they testified. And on Wednesday, they [saw] that Civic engagement matters!”

Lansing Bakers Square among 9 closings in 4 states

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

LANSING, Ill. (January 27, 2020) – “The hardest thing when we closed,” said long-time Bakers Square employee Lynette Reid, “was thinking about our customers. Because our customers are more like family. We never thought of them just as customers.”

The sudden shuttering of the restaurant located at 3545 Ridge Road left patrons as well as staff stunned. Reid was scheduled to open on Saturday morning, January 25, but when she pulled into the parking lot, representatives from corporate were already there to let her know the store was being closed. Instead of cooking breakfast, making



Staff spent Saturday, January 25, clearing out the building after learning that the Lansing location would be closed permanently. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

coffee, and greeting customers, most of the shift was sent home, while a few stayed to begin cleaning out the building.

In spite of steady business and faithful patronage in Lansing, rising operational costs contributed to a

See “Bakers Square,” page 5

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Lansing residents to receive census invitations next month

Census specialist Kimberly Garrett comes to Lansing Library to encourage and inform

BY JENNIFER PALLAY

LANSING, Ill. (February 2020) – Making sure everyone is counted in the upcoming Census is important to the future of Lansing, and local and regional Census representatives have been working to spread the word about just how important it is.

Census counts determine local funding, planning for hospitals and schools, state and federal representation and local resources.

These were some of the topics covered by U.S.

Census partnership specialist Kimberly D. Garrett when she spoke to Lansing residents Jan. 21 at the Lansing Public Library. The purpose of the talk was to educate, encourage, and inform the Lansing community of the census and why it's important, Garrett said.

INVITATIONS ARRIVING SOON

Invitations to complete the Census will arrive at Lansing homes between March 12 and 20, according to Lansing's Complete Count Committee. Every

household will have the option of responding by mail, phone or online. Those who respond right away receive no further requests. Those who do not respond will receive follow-up postcards, letters and visits from census takers.

The U.S. Constitution requires a Census be completed every 10 years, Garrett said. "We count everybody one time, only once, and in the right place."

ACCURATE COUNTS ARE IMPORTANT

Illinois loses \$1,400 of federal funding for every person not counted, as the funding is distributed

based on the number of people living in the state. The most common people who are not reported are children 5 and younger, college students, millennials, snowbirds, the homeless, and immigrants, Garrett said. Yet those people still use the state's resources.

In addition, Illinois is in jeopardy of losing two seats in the United States House of Representatives.

CENSUS JOBS AVAILABLE

Garrett also spoke about the need to hire 100,000 Census 2020 workers across the country and encouraged attendees to consider applying. In addition to supporting the community, census jobs offer great pay, flexible hours, and paid training, she said.

The Census bureau is currently hiring people who are 18 and older, are a U.S. citizen, have a valid social security number, and have an email address. The pay in Cook County is \$18 to \$25 per hour and full-time, part-time, and flexible hours are available. Positions include clerk, IT, leasing, numerators, census takers, specialists, and managers. To apply, visit 2020census.gov/jobs.

2020 CENSUS WORKERS

"We are trying to get the word out and asking the community to help by working—who better to service your area than you? Who cares more about

Lansing than the people who live there?" Garrett asked.

Employment with the Census Bureau continues through September 2020.

Subscribe to The Lansing Journal's Daily News email for regular updates about Census 2020: www.thelansingjournal.com/new/subscribe.



Volunteers from a variety of Lansing networks form the Complete Count Committee. Back row, from left: Ernst Lamothe, Veronica Reyes, Melanie Jongsma, Rick Pierce, Bert Rivera, Darvel Stinson, Miguel Gutierrez, Richard Podgorski, Mike Fish. Front row: Vivian Payne, Kim Morley, Karen Adams, Martha Vargas. Not pictured: Debbie Albrecht. (Photo: Cory Stevenson, Census Bureau)

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THE LANSING JOURNAL

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| RIDGE/TORRENCE | RIVER OAKS DR/WENTWORTH | MEMORIAL/WENTWORTH | BUS ARRIVES | TRAIN DEPARTS | TRAIN ARRIVES |
| 5:21AM | 5:30AM | 5:37AM | 5:48AM | 5:56AM | 6:31AM |
| 6:06 | 6:17 | 6:22 | 6:32 | 6:39 | 7:13 |
| 6:23 | 6:34 | 6:39 | 6:49 | 6:56 | 7:30 |
| 6:39 | 6:50 | 6:55 | 7:05 | 7:14 | 7:51 |
| 6:53 | 7:04 | 7:09 | 7:19 | 7:27 | 8:08 |
| 7:19 | 7:30 | 7:35 | 7:45 | 7:54 | 8:31 |
| 7:44 | 7:55 | 8:00 | 8:10 | 8:18 | 8:52 |

WEEKDAY SOUTHBOUND

| SOUTH SHORE LINE | | | | CHICAGO MILLENNIUM STATION | |
|------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| TRAIN DEPARTS | TRAIN ARRIVES | BUS DEPARTS | MEMORIAL/WENTWORTH | RIVER OAKS DR/WENTWORTH | RIDGE/TORRENCE |
| 3:15PM | 3:57PM | 3:57PM | 4:00PM | 4:11PM | 4:28PM |
| 4:02 | 4:40 | 4:52 | 5:01 | 5:06 | 5:19 |
| 4:28 | 5:05 | 5:09 | 5:18 | 5:23 | 5:36 |
| 4:57 | 5:33 | 5:39 | 5:48 | 5:53 | 6:06 |
| | | | 6:11 | 6:16 | 6:19 |
| | | | 6:27 | 6:28 | 6:41 |
| | | | 6:48 | 6:53 | 7:06 |

Pace Bus Route 355 Wentworth Limited needs increased ridership to survive

“At the end of the day, we want to save this route.”

BY JENNIFER YOS

LANSING, Ill. (February 1, 2020) – When Lansing resident John Gehring heard rumors last summer that Pace Bus Route 355 was on a watch list, he decided to take action. Knowing that other Lansing residents like him depend on Bus Route 355 Wentworth Limited for their livelihoods, and believing that for some it is the only affordable connection with the rest of the public transit system, Gehring spoke to Lansing Mayor Patty Eidam, and he began an online petition requesting that Pace increase service on the currently limited route. Gehring’s premise is that a more generous timetable will promote increased ridership and safeguard the route’s sustainability.

Currently the 355 timetable offers riders:

- Seven weekday-only northbound rides along Ridge Road and Wentworth Avenue in Lansing, between 5:21am and 7:44am
- Seven weekday-only late afternoon/early evening southbound rides to Lansing, between 3:57pm and 6:39pm

The morning rides travel through Lansing, Calumet City, and Burnham, ending at the South Shore Line Hegewisch Station, where many riders connect to the city via bus or train. The late afternoon/early evening rides begin at the Hegewisch Station and travel through Burnham and Calumet City back to Lansing.

Gehring and others would like to see more rides offered between the 8:00am and 4:00pm time gaps—122 supporters signed Gehring’s online petition in favor of an increased timetable.

WORKING TOWARD SOLUTIONS

In response to Gehring’s concerns, Mayor Eidam arranged for Pace’s Community Relations Representative Jessica Rybarczyk and Chief Communications Officer Maggie Daly Skogsbakken to attend the Village Board’s January 21 Committee of the Whole meeting. Gehring was present for the meeting as well.

Village Administrator Dan Podgorski introduced the topic in his Village Administrator’s report: “One of the benefits of having Mayor Eidam on the Mayors and Managers Transportation Committee is she gets to interact with a lot of the Regional Transportation planners and liaisons. And a couple of months ago the Mayor came back from one such transportation committee meeting with some information from Pace regarding one of the two routes that serve Lansing. Pace serves us with Route 355, which is called a limited route, and also Route 358 Torrence Avenue.... Our numbers for the Route 355 are...declining...and starting to cross over into some benchmarks that cause Pace to take a harder look on whether or not it makes sense to continue that route.”

Podgorski continued, “We know that there are Lansing residents who depend on that route, and rather than just kind of wring our hands and send out an email blast, we thought, well, let’s do something about this. Let’s try to promote the declining ridership on that Pace route and see if we can’t generate some information that maybe causes some people to take a second look at it.”

Village Communications Director Ken Reynolds shared a presentation outlining facts about both of Lansing’s bus routes—data show a 35% drop in Route 358 Torrence ridership since 2010 and a 45% drop in Route 355 Wentworth Limited.

RIDERS AND DOLLARS

John Gehring, Pace, and Mayor Eidam all agree that promoting and increasing ridership is necessary if the route is to survive. A catch-22 seems to exist, however: Gehring believes an increased timetable is needed now in order to increase ridership, but Pace needs the recovery ratio (percentage of operating costs covered by passenger revenue) to be 30-40% before they can consider investing in an increased time schedule. Currently

See “Pace,” page 15



Above: The Pace Route 355 Wentworth Limited timetable as of January 2020 shows the limited number of routes available each day. (Photo: Jennifer Yos)

Left: Lansing resident John Gehring depends on the 355 Wentworth Limited bus route. He started a petition suggesting Pace expand it. Gehring attended the January 21 Village Committee of the Whole meeting along with representatives from Pace. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

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Lansing Presbyterian Church to close Feb. 23

Farewell celebration scheduled for 10:30am

BY JENNIFER PALLAY

LANSING, Ill. (January 30, 2020) – With a rich 65-year history in Lansing, Lansing Presbyterian Church (2625 Ridge Road) is closing its doors on February 23. The church's fate amid a shrinking congregation has been an ongoing discussion for the past few years, according to the church's ruling elders.

LACK OF NUMBERS

In 2019, they lost six members to death, said Lori Siegfried, a ruling elder and clerk of sessions. These days, 8–10 members typically attend a Sunday service.

"When you consistently lose people, it is hard to keep numbers and the building going," she said.

The church's last full-time minister left in May, and elders have used pulpit supply, having different ministers come lead worship on alternating Sundays each month.

"This helped us financially and allowed members to go to other congregations and see what is available," said Siegfried, whose husband Jim was the last person baptized in the church's original building in the early 1960s.

Russ Loquist, a ruling elder and the first person baptized in the current church building, said, "February 23 is when the building will be decommissioned as a church and they dissolve the congregation. The building will be sold. It will be our 65th anniversary."



The church held an annual arts and crafts fair and many other community-oriented events. (Photo provided)

COMMUNITY ROOTS

The church was founded in 1955 by the Rev. James Peterson, who went door to door in Lansing seeking out Presbyterians to join a new church.

"There was not a Presbyterian church in Lansing at that time," said Loquist, whose father, uncles, and other family members were all founding members.

The congregation first met at Coolidge School, then moved to the former Methodist church on Ridge Road (current Assembly of God Church). Groundbreaking for the current Lansing Presbyterian Church at 2625 Ridge Road took place in April 1962.

UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE

The new building was designed by Edward Dart (1922-1975), who designed more than two dozen custom churches in Illinois and Indiana. He died while completing the commercial development Water Tower Place.

"He was very much wanting to bring man to God, so most of his designs have points and reach to the sky, pointing to heaven. Most of his churches at the time had the tall steeple pointing to God," Siegfried said.

Lansing Presbyterian received awards for its design from the American Institute of Architects, the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry, and the American Association for Church Architecture.

"There is nary a square corner in this building. Everything is wedge-shaped, and the roof slopes from one side to the other," Loquist said.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Lansing Presbyterian Church was heavily involved in the Lansing community, said Siegfried.

The church was well known for an annual craft show on the lawn, French toast breakfast, mission garage sale, and



Lansing Presbyterian Church received awards for its design from the American Institute of Architects, the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry, and the American Association for Church Architecture. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

community dinners that brought out many residents. The church has also been involved in many mission groups, including Hearts in Motion in Schererville, which empowers volunteers to serve those living in poverty around the world, and the Jones Memorial Community Center in Chicago Heights, which helps strengthen family ties in the local community. Other missions included support of Feed My Starving Children and the Lansing Food Pantry, and a program called Laundry Love, where church members would take laundry of nearby apartment residents and wash it at the laundromat in Lansing.

FINAL CELEBRATION

A final celebration has been planned for 10:30am Feb. 23 at the church. Two of the church's former ministers, two former student ministers, and a former youth minister plan to return for the celebration. The church elders would like to invite current and past church members and those who were involved with the church over the years to attend the service.

"We've been very blessed to serve the community of Lansing and have had a longstanding relationship with it, and we are very sorry to be leaving," Siegfried said.

What's on Your Plate?

Saturday, February 22, 2020
9:30 a.m. - Noon

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A series of workshops will be held starting in February with Healthy Food Choices.

This fun and informational workshop, presented by the Divine Health Warriors, will cover "Healthy Food Choices that Taste Great" along with a variety of other tips for healthier choices.

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OBITUARIES

BOHNEY

A funeral Mass for Doris E. Bohny (nee Reiplinger) was held Monday, February 3, 2020 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Schererville, IN, with Rev. Marty Dobrzynski officiating.

Mrs. Bohny was born October 8, 1927 and passed away January 28, 2020. Wife of the late Victor R. Bohny. Mother of Barbara Bohny, Linda Bohny, Patty Bohny, Carol Bohny, and Donald Bohny. Grandmother of six. Sister of the late Raymond (late Dolores "Boots") Reiplinger, late James (late Lea) Reiplinger, late Robert (Betty) Reiplinger, Carl Reiplinger

and Lorraine Reiplinger.

Interment was at St. Michael Cemetery, Schererville, IN. Arrangements entrusted to Smits Funeral Home, Dyer, IN.

STOB

A funeral service for Clara Stob (nee Wichers) was held Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at Smits Funeral Home in Dyer, IN with Rev. Charles Mitchell officiating.

Wife of the late Garry Stob, Sr., mother of Clara Lou (Kenneth) Jager, Loralie (Dennis) Mitchell, Garry (Jeanne) Stob, Jr., Tom (Denise) Stob, Michael (Donna) Stob and David (Ruth)

Stob. Grandmother of 21 and great-grandmother of 48. Sister of three brothers and five sisters.

Interment was at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood, IL. Arrangements were entrusted to Smits Funeral Home, Dyer, IN.

The Lansing Journal publishes full obituaries with photos for \$100 in our monthly print edition. You can work with your funeral director to submit the information, or contact us directly: info@thelansingjournal.com

Bakers Square, from page 1

decision not to renew the building's five-year lease when it was up.

Other locations closed on the same day include Bakers Square restaurants in Alsip, Libertyville, Orland Park, and Springfield, Illinois; Merrillville, Indiana; North Olmsted, Ohio; and Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

American Blue Ribbon Holdings, the parent company of Bakers Square, filed a petition on January 27 for voluntary Chapter 11 reorganization with the US Bankruptcy Court of Delaware, according to a prepared statement. "Once approved by the Court, this filing will allow the Company to continue operation of its businesses and service to its customers in the ordinary course while it works through the important elements of a plan of reorganization," the statement explained.

A news release taped to the front door of the closed Lansing restaurant assures the public, "It is important to



The Bakers Square at 3545 Ridge Road in Lansing, Illinois, was one of nine that closed on January 25. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

note that all team members will be relocated to another nearby location or provided a severance package." Reid confirmed that she and several others will most likely transfer to the Schererville Bakers Square. She considered accepting the severance package, but she has enjoyed her work for nearly 40 years and would like to continue. She'll be meeting with management in Schererville tomorrow, January 28, to discuss specifics and options.

"We want our customers to know that we love them and miss them," said Reid. "We're gonna be OK, but all of us—the Bakers Square Lansing family—will miss everyone in Lansing."

"Moving to Lansing from another state was a big decision, not knowing the town, people, or values. However, ...through reading The Lansing Journal I have come to see and know how wonderful Lansing and the people here are." -Betty Burley, Mt. Zion UFL

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White tear drop store shelving, 54" high, 48" long with two 15", 17", 19", 22" shelves per unit with white peg board backing, \$20 a section. Bob 708-339-1708

Estate Sale: Furniture: dining room \$300; sofa \$75; occasional chairs \$50 ea; wood tv stand \$50; tables \$20 ea; coffee table, leaded glass \$75; recliner. 708-717-6134

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For sale: Baby stuff newborn carseat \$10; newEvenflo baby carseat 2yrs. & up, \$20; baby walker, \$7; baby saucer/bouncer, \$7. 708-394-3431

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Ethan Allen old sofa \$100 obo; Ethan Allen wing back chair \$70; heavy duty universal bed frame \$15; large over the dresser mirror \$15. 708-481-6907

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White Sox official icing beverage bucket, new \$25; Sears steel meat grinder, old \$35. 708-645-4245

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BY DR. WES MOLENAAR

My father began practicing optometry in 1934, I joined the practice in 1964, and my son joined in 1994, so we are 3 generations at the same address (3546 Ridge Road) providing for the eye care needs of Lansing. I was born and raised in Lansing and am glad to be a part the Lansing business community.

I used to go over to the [original] Lansing Journal late at night when the presses were running, and I would work on bundling and stacking the finished editions as they came off the big presses. It was a cool job to have as a high schooler. I lived just a block away on Ridge Road where we still have our optometry office.

We have missed The Lansing Journal print newspaper for a long time and are really glad to see this new email version that Melanie has established to fill the void. I subscribe to The Lansing Journal email because I am very much interested in local Lansing news and events, things our patients might be involved with here in Lansing that we might otherwise not be aware of.

I would recommend everyone subscribe to The Lansing Journal email.

I quit my subscription to The Times a few months ago due to ongoing problems with delivery over the past 5 years. The only reason we subscribed was to not miss death notices of any of our patients, but now we can get this on the internet very easily.

I do miss reading Blondie & Dagwood cartoons among others, plus I miss the Monday and Tuesday crossword puzzle. Other than that, I'm hundreds and hundreds of dollars ahead not having to pay the high cost of The Times subscription for an ever-shrinking daily rag with virtually no Lansing news.

You are doing a great service to the Lansing Community!! Keep up the good work.

Maybe you could get an e-version of crossword puzzles! lol.

Dr. Wes Molenaar
Lansing, Illinois

The Lansing Journal is a community newspaper, and we depend on the support of our community. If you value the community news we provide—in print and online—there are three ways you can show your support:

1. *Make a financial contribution to help cover the cost of printing, postage, online hosting, email delivery, and a small stipend for our journalists. It doesn't have to be hundreds and hundreds of dollars—even \$5.00/month is a big help to us.*
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3. *Sign up for the free Daily News email. By increasing our digital circulation, we can qualify for help from organizations that are interested in helping community newspapers: thelansingjournal.com/news/subscribe Lansing Voices is our version of "Letters to the Editor." The opinions posted here are those of the writer, and posting them does not indicate endorsement by The Lansing Journal. We welcome input from fellow residents who have thoughtful things to say about topics that are important to our community. Send your submissions to The Lansing Journal with "Voices" in the subject line.*

All God's Children Preschool hosts family literacy night

Children and parents enjoy games and emphasis on reading and literacy

BY JOSH BOOTSMA

LANSING, Ill. (January 24, 2020) - The basement of the First United Methodist Church was abuzz with activity on a Friday night as parents and children of All God's Children Preschool played games, read books, and learned about the Family Literacy Program offered by the school.

Started by the school's director Judy Koch, the Family Literacy Program has been actively involving children and their parents in literacy-related activities since it started eight years ago. The January 24 event was intended to inform families about the program.

"The goal of tonight is to involve the parents and have them learn and understand the importance of reading and the importance of stimulating their children in many ways to learn to read and to write," Koch said during the event.

The Under-the-Sea-themed night started with Koch providing parents with an overview of the purpose and goal of the program while the children watched a movie. Following the overview, families were split into three

groups and rotated between three rooms in the school where they could play games, make crafts, and participate in other activities. Leaders also read books to the students, and each student was allowed to take a book home.

Every other week, children of families involved in the literacy program will bring home one of 50 literacy bags for their family to work through. The bags contain books, games, and other activities to help the child learn reading and writing skills. The activities are designed for the whole family to be involved. Once completed, the bag can be exchanged for a new one.

The program instructions in each bag say, "This program will, at no cost to you, provide you with quality educational materials that are fun. Because you spend more time with your child, and we have the resources, we hope this will be a collaboration that will enhance

your child's love of reading and prepare him/her to be a lifelong learner."

Koch also emphasized the importance of environmental print, "like reading McDonald's and Burger King and all those things that are in your environment—children read those, even at [age] 2. And if you cut pictures out—ads and things like that—and put them in a book, children will read that as young as [age] 3. And that really stimulates their love to learn and wanting to read."

More information can be found at www.fumclansing.org/preschool. First United Methodist Church is located at 18420 Burnham Ave.

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Oak Glen Elementary kicks off 'Hoops for Heart' with special 'Heart Hero'

Juan Deleon shares his heart's story

BY JENNIFER YOS

LANSING, Ill. (February 1, 2020) – Oak Glen Elementary School kicked off its annual "Hoops for Heart" American Heart Association fundraiser on Thursday, Jan. 30, for its 3rd-, 4th-, and 5th-grade students.

The special assembly began with a multi-media "Kids Heart Challenge" presentation starring "Team Heart" cartoon characters promoting positive physical and emotional habits that maintain heart health—Move more! Add color to your diet! Be prepared and avoid stress! Avoid vaping and tobacco! Be Kind! Help Others!

The presentation included Lansing's very own "Heart Hero," special guest speaker Juan Deleon, who shared with the students his personal experiences leading up to and following his 2018 heart transplant. Deleon's son Anthony, a 4th-grade student at

Oak Glen, was in attendance for his father's talk, as were Deleon's wife and sister.

Students who choose to participate in the Hoops for Heart fundraiser and who individually raise \$5.00 or more donations from family and friends will be eligible to attend Oak Glen's Hoops for Heart basketball event scheduled for Friday, February 21, 1:30–2:30pm in the school gym. Participants will interact on the court with members of the South Suburban College basketball team.

Money collected from the American Heart Association "Hoops for Heart" fundraiser will be used to help children with heart problems. According to the American Heart Association, more than 82 cents of every dollar donated is spent on research, education, and



From left: AHA Youth Market Regional VP Stefani White, AHA Youth Market Director Whitney Smyser, 4th-grade teacher Cheryl Barbaro, Principal Michael Earnshaw, Guadalupe Deleon (Juan's wife), 4th-grader Anthony Deleon (Juan's son), Heart Hero Juan Deleon, Superintendent Dr. Nathan Schilling, and Evilina Cuevas (Juan's sister). (Photo: Jennifer Yos)

community outreach.

Oak Glen Elementary School is located at 2101 182nd Street in Lansing.

Two Lansing school districts score 100 on Health/Life Safety Inspection

BY ERIN NAUTA

LANSING, Ill. (February 3, 2020) - Two Lansing school districts, District 158 and District 171, were among only 12 out of 146 school districts to score a full 100 on their annual Health/Life Safety Inspections.

Each year, the South Cook Intermediate Service Center inspects the facilities of every member district. The rigorous process takes several teams—including members of district building and grounds and South Cook Intermediate Service Center staff—about four hours to thoroughly inspect everything.

Dave Fortin, Director of Building and Grounds for District 158 said, "We take it very seriously because it's about the safety of the children in the district."

No closet is passed over, no nook or cranny is ignored as the teams check off hundreds of items on

a seven-page document. Not only must everything be up to local building and safety codes, it must also be in good repair, clean, and well organized. Is the air filtration system functioning, and with the proper filters? Are emergency lighting, sprinkler systems and fire extinguishers all in working order? Does the cooking lab have a stove vent? Are there welding glasses in the metal shop? Are stairs and rails in good repair? Are there vapor-proof lights in the swimming pool area? Are stage curtains fire resistant and hung securely? Is the ceramics kiln properly wired and insulated? Is there anything, anywhere, that could cause a tripping hazard or block pathways? From the building structure

to how crayons are stored, it is all inspected for safety and functionality.

Superintendent Dr. Nathan Schilling joined District 158 two years ago, and is proud that the district has achieved a perfect inspection score in both years. "This is the second consecutive year of no violations in any of the District 158 buildings. The District 158 community should be very proud of this outstanding accomplishment! It illustrates the district's commitment to being safe and providing positive learning environments for its students."

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| MONDAYS Senior Discount Day | TUESDAYS Thank You First Responders | WEDNESDAYS 50% Off Clothing & Knick Knacks | THURSDAYS 15% or More Off Furniture | NEW EVERYDAY 75% Off Clothing Tag | EVERYDAY 25¢ Clothing Rack |
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LJWC spaghetti supper raises money for Veteran Appreciation Dinner

Left: "Mama Rosalie" Putignano spends days in the kitchen preparing for the annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser, and she is still smiling after all the cooking and clean-up is finished. Her homemade spaghetti sauce makes the event both authentic and fun. (Photo: Melanie Jongsma)

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

LANSING, Ill. (January 26, 2020) – On Friday evening, January 24, the Lansing Junior Woman's Club hosted their annual spaghetti supper at First United Methodist Church (18420 Burnham Avenue). At \$10 per ticket, the spaghetti supper is a fundraiser for the Veteran Appreciation Dinner that LJWC organizes every spring.

The Veteran Appreciation Dinner has grown each year, and the May 2019 event hosted nearly 300 veterans and guests for an evening that included an abundant meal, entertainment, presentations by elected officials, and tables full of raffle prizes.

The Lansing Junior Woman's Club describes themselves as "a group of dedicated ladies who want to make a difference in their community!" New members are welcome. Contact info is provided in the caption below.



Above left: The Lansing Lions Club presented a donation to the Lansing Junior Woman's Club in support of the 2020 veterans dinner. President Jocelyn Farris (front row center) and Vice President Gloria Chavez-Gomez (in pink) accepted the giant check. Above: Village Trustee Maureen Grady-Perovich is an advocate for veterans, encouraging them to sign up for Honor Flight. She attended this year's LJWC spaghetti dinner and was a speaker at last year's Veteran Appreciation Dinner.

Right: For more information about joining the high-energy women of the LJWC, call 708-466-5503, email lansingjuniorwc@gmail.com, or visit Lansingjuniorwc.webs.com. (Photos: Melanie Jongsma)

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Living Word offers Grace and Truth, and Mercy, and community

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

LANSING, Ill. (February 5, 2020) – More than 100 members and friends of Living Word Church filled Theater #3 at Lansing Cinema 8 on Tuesday, January 28, for the 7:00pm showing of *Just Mercy*. The 2019 movie stars Michael B. Jordan and Jamie Foxx in the true story of Bryan Stevenson and Walter McMillian and their appeal of McMillian's murder conviction. The film is based on Stevenson's 2015 memoir of the same name.

Living Word rented the theater so their multi-cultural church family could view the movie together. "We believe the themes of justice and mercy are central to our faith," explained the event description on the church's Facebook page, "and want the Living Word Church community to share the experience of this redemptive story."

The event was the idea of the church's Grace and Truth ministry, which is a discussion group that offers "a safe place to talk, pray, and seek a biblical response to issues of racism and injustice." This year the group has 18 members representing a variety of ethnicities, cultures, and accents.

Michelle Smith and Jeni Fischer are co-leaders of Grace and Truth, and their first thought was for *Just Mercy* to be one of their group activities. When another group member suggested opening it up to the whole church, they made arrangements to rent the theater.

They started by booking Cinema 8's 50-seat theater, but interest soon outgrew that. So on the Tuesday night of the event, church members and friends paid \$5.00 for a ticket and \$6.00 for a popcorn/soft drink deal and filed into a 140-seat venue.

Smith and Fischer knew there wouldn't be much time for discussion following the 2-hour-17-minute film, but they asked a few Grace and Truth members to be prepared to give a two-minute testimony about what impacted them. As the credits rolled and the lights began coming up, Living Word's Pastor Dave Prince started the discussion by asking audience members to call out some one-word reactions to what they had seen. After a variety of words were shared, Prince explained, "When you see something like this and you take it in,

it's normal to have a lot of reactions.... And I think it's important just to process through it, because all of us see it from different places and different experiences. It's very healthy to try to put a word on it or to be able to talk about it."

Prince then invited the selected Grace and Truth members to each come up and share their thoughts.

Twelve-year-old Armaan Sen, son of a Grace and Truth member, was impressed with the movie and amazed that the injustices depicted were so recent. "This was only 30 years ago," he said. "That's not even that long ago. And it's still going on today—in schools, workplaces. We need to step up and speak for those who are being bullied just because of their skin color."

"I'm super glad that I'm a part of a church that celebrates diversity and that we have a group like Grace and Truth," began Sabrina Flemming. "I'm super happy that we can all just be in this space together." But then tears welled up as she thought about the unfairness of having to warn her children, "You're gonna have to be extra careful, because of the color of your skin. It's just not fair. Justice exists, but not as much as it should."

Pamela Pals shared a story about a robbery she and her husband experienced a few years ago: "The policeman came to the door and said, 'Would you please, please, please not press charges. This is a good boy from a really rough area—he's never been in trouble before, but if you press charges he's going to go down a road that will lead to nothing good. By not pressing charges, you'll give a young boy a chance in life.' Well, you can want justice—I want my stuff, and that kid shouldn't have done that!—but...sometimes we have to realize what privilege we have in life. There's a time to understand what privilege really is, and a time to show grace, and a time to stand alongside a young boy who doesn't have a dad or a young girl whose mom works all day."

(More quotes and photos are available in the online version of this article, which will be emailed to subscribers this week. Subscribe for free at thelansingjournal.com/news/subscribe.)

As co-leaders of Grace and Truth, Smith

and Fischer were encouraged by the movie night. It was encouraging to fill a movie theater, and it was encouraging for their group members to have a chance to speak, and it was encouraging to feel the support in the room as people wrestled with their own emotions while giving space to others.

"If you don't have a space that you feel is safe," said Fischer later, "then you just kick the can down the road and not deal with it." She says Grace and Truth is all about giving people a place where they can experience healthy cross-cultural conversations, so they are equipped to then create those spaces for other people. "That's how you get past [racism]—talking to people, spending time with them, proximity."

While Smith is inspired by the life and work of Bryan Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative he founded, she hopes people will realize "you don't have to be a lawyer from Harvard to help others, or make a difference in someone else's life. And you don't have to be black or brown to take the lead in speaking on issues of racism."

Both Smith and Fischer realize that both grace and truth are necessary for building community within diversity. A commitment to truth allows people to ask honest questions, express raw feelings, and admit mistakes. And the commitment to grace reminds people to continually extend forgiveness—to themselves and others. Those truthful, grace-filled conversations are happening at Living Word Church more intentionally as the congregation's diversity increasingly reflects that of the broader Lansing community. Rather than ignoring their demographic changes, the church is exploring, embracing, and celebrating them.

"So next time we do something like this [movie night discussion]," hopes Fischer, "we'll get an even bigger crowd"—a crowd that includes a diversity of races, ages, beliefs, and backgrounds, a crowd from Living Word as well as greater Lansing.

Living Word Church is located at 2248 186th Street in Lansing, Illinois. Sunday services are at 10:00am.



Local women attend fourth annual Women's March in Chicago

Chicago march inspires increased local participation

BY KATIE ARVIA

CHICAGO, Ill. (January 30, 2020) - For the fourth year in a row, thousands of protesters filled the streets of Chicago for the annual Women's March on January 18, 2020. The yearly protest began in 2017, the day after President Donald Trump's inauguration, in support of an array of issues, with women's rights at the forefront. Millions of people across the country participated, making the 2017 Women's March the largest single-day protest in American history.

LOCAL WOMEN PARTICIPATE AGAIN

Among the thousands of people braving the cold and rain were several local women, including Dominique Newman, Erin Roper, and Emilia Oldaker, all of whom have participated in past Women's Marches. Newman, Roper, and Oldaker are all members of the League of Women Voters Homewood-Flossmoor chapter.

This year, the League of Women Voters celebrates 100 years of women working together for a better democracy. The League works to register people to vote and keeps voters informed about political issues and candidates.

IMPORTANCE OF THE MARCH

Newman said there are several reasons why participating in the march is important, including the encouragement of seeing like-minded people banding together

and the fact that it serves as a "tangible reminder to elected officials that there are a lot of citizens committed to being informed, holding them accountable, and refusing to be silent about injustices."

"My attendance symbolizes my personal commitment that I won't be complicit or silent when I witness people in power making decisions or policies that are unethical," Newman said.

"Being involved in the march is now an annual event that raises consciousness about issues that affect all women nationwide," Oldaker added. "There was no way of knowing that the 2016 election would cause unprecedented outcry, involvement, and organization among women all over the United States, but it has, and the march is certainly a symbol of continued devotion to the issues and values that I and millions of other people want to raise awareness of and devote energy to."

Oldaker said she marches yearly to show her support not only for the movement but for organizations such as the League of Women Voters, Planned Parenthood, ACLU, Women Employed, Moms Demand Action, and Indivisible, among others.

KEEP THE TRADITION GOING

While the Women's March has certainly faced opposition, the general consensus among participants is that the tradition should be kept alive.

"[This year's] experience was another totally positive one! I especially appreciated that participants encompassed such a diverse group of not only females of all ages and ethnic backgrounds, but also many men," Roper said. "I loved seeing so many creative signs. I especially appreciated seeing several mothers marching down the street carrying their babies. What commitment! Yes, I'll be there next year."

Both Newman and Oldaker agree that they plan on participating again in 2021. Oldaker describes her experience as "always positive," and she enjoyed the "unique and inspiring" format of this year's march.

While Newman's experience was equally positive, it was bittersweet at the same time. Newman is usually joined at marches by her daughter Jady, who went away to college this past fall: "I missed having my daughter march with me this year because she is away at college, but it was so meaningful to know she was marching with her friends in Washington, D.C. I'm so proud that taking her for the years when she was in high school has led her to feeling compelled to attend on her own, now that she is away at college," Newman said.

LOCAL PARTICIPATION IS KEY

Looking ahead, Newman, Roper, and Oldaker all



Dominique Newman marched in Chicago while her daughter, who went off to college last fall, marched in Washington D.C. (Photo provided by the Homewood-Flossmoor chapter of the League of Women Voters)

agree that they would like to see increased local participation and emphasize the importance of staying informed.

"I would hope that more people than ever will commit to making democracy work in their communities," Roper said. She encourages residents to participate in the 2020 Census, educate themselves on issues that impact the community, stay informed about the candidates running for office, and vote in both the March primaries and the November general election.

Oldaker said that since the 2016 election, she has seen "more involvement than I can even keep track of" in both the south suburban community and the Chicago area at large. Increased participation in activities such as postcard parties, candidate meet-and-greets, phone banking, and organizing rallies, vigils, and protests have been on the rise for the past three and a half years.

"It's inspiring for me daily, and it's not going to stop," Oldaker said. "As people keep telling each other: this is not a moment—it's a movement."

More information about the Homewood-Flossmoor chapter of the League of Women Voters can be found on their Facebook page. People interested in joining the Homewood-Flossmoor chapter do not need to be Homewood or Flossmoor residents to join.

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Birthday wishes to Lansing Leaplings

BY JENNIFER YOS

LANSING, Ill. (February 1, 2020) - Born on February 29, 1980, Lansing resident Layton Wood is a "Leapling"—one of approximately 205,000 U.S. citizens who are able to celebrate their actual birthday—February 29—only every fourth year, during Leap Year. When Wood turns 40 on February 29, 2020, she will have seen her actual birthday only 10 times.

February 29 or "Leap Day" is an extra day added to the calendar every fourth year—Leap Year—because the earth actually takes 365 and 1/4 days to rotate the sun each seasonal year. After four years, those quarter days add up to one whole day that needs to be taken into account in order for our calendar to stay in sync with the seasonal year. Superstitions and traditions associated with the day have developed since Julius Caesar first introduced Leap Year to the calendar. For example, a not-so-21st-century tradition has been to consider Leap Day the only acceptable day a woman can propose marriage to a man.

Is being born on February 29 a blessing or a curse? Some Leaplings find it a blessing to have a unique birthday with a certain mystique. Having a less frequent birth date offers Leaplings some flexibility in yearly birthday celebrations, choosing either February 28 or March 1 in the off-years. To be legally one year older, however, Leaplings must rely on March 1st as the one-year benchmark. Would you find this out, much to her disappointment, when she turned 21 in 2001 and had to wait one more day—until March 1st—to be of legal drinking age. To add insult to injury, she waited the required extra day to celebrate and didn't even get carded.

Which birthday will it be? Her 40th? Or her 10th? Lansing resident Layton Wood will celebrate her 40th year on what will be her 10th birthday. (Photos: Jennifer Yos)

According to Wood, her birth due date was February 19, but her mother was adamant that she would be born on the 29th. Her mother's instincts were correct, and she was delighted to birth a Leapling. Wood, however, finds her February 29 birthday more of a curse than a blessing. "It is one of the most miserable birthdays!" she says. Why?

"Nobody remembers! Growing up, my best friend's birthday was two days before mine. She would forget my birthday! My parents would remember, but most of my friends would completely forget. Even now with Facebook...half the time—this year it might say the 29th – but every other year, depending on who's looking at it, it will say the 28th or the 1st."

Some of the jokes on a Leapling's birthday can get a little old, too, especially by the time one reaches 40. Someone will inevitably tell Wood, "You're not old enough to drink!" and her birthday is still often celebrated with child-themed birthday decorations that reflect the number of her Leap Years as opposed to her actual biological years.

Yet, it hasn't been all bad having a Leap Day birthday for Layton. "My Mom tried to make it so that I always celebrated. And the nice thing was, growing up in this area, the first Monday in March is Pulaski Day, so I always got a three-day weekend for my birthday!"



Dolton, Homewood nursing homes on 2019 quarterly violations list

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY IDPH

SPRINGFIELD, Ill (January 28, 2020) – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has posted the 2019 Fourth Quarterly Report of Nursing Home Violators on its website. The report includes information about two local "A" violations. An "A" violation pertains to a condition in which there is a substantial probability that death or serious mental or physical harm will result, or has resulted.

Countryside Nursing and Rehab (1635 East 154th St., Dolton), a

197-bed skilled and intermediate care facility, was fined \$25,000 for failure to notify a resident's physician of increased aggressive/delusional behaviors, monitor a resident after a psychotropic medication was discontinued, notify the psychiatrist after a resident to resident physical assault, ensure supervision was provided, and protect a resident at high risk for physical abuse.

South Suburban Rehab Center (19000 South Halsted St., Homewood), a 259-bed skilled care facility, was fined \$25,000 for failure to have adequate staff for a resident requiring extensive staff assistance.



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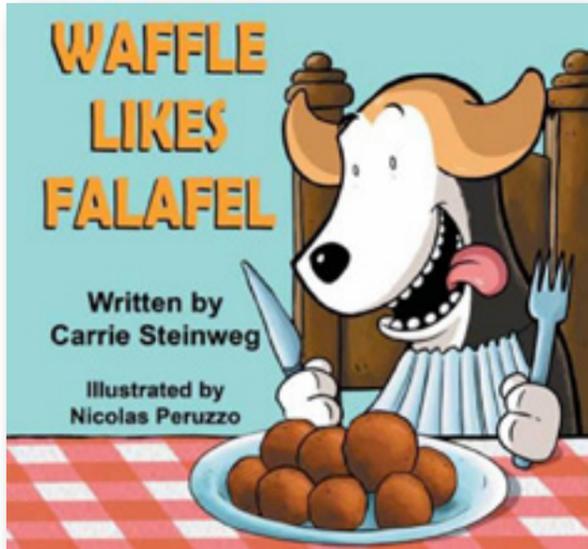

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Three Lansing authors release new books

Carrie Steinweg, Katie Larson, and Crystal Farmer write various messages for kids

Carrie Steinweg (*Waffle Likes Falafel*) to hold book-signing at The Simple Greek in Munster

BY MELANIE JONGSMA



MUNSTER, Ind. (January 29, 2020) – If you don't know Lansing resident Carrie Steinweg from her work with the Lansing Historical Society, or her volunteer service with Civil Air Patrol, or one of her three blogs, or her articles here at The Lansing Journal and other local newspapers, maybe you know her from the seven books she's authored. Steinweg has published books about history and parenting as well as three children's books, the most recent of which—*Waffle Likes Falafel*—came out last month.

Waffle Likes Falafel is the story of a dog named Waffle who refuses to try new foods. When he is introduced to falafel, he gives it a try because it sounds like his name. After Waffle tries falafel—and likes it—he becomes much more adventurous, with food and in life.

Steinweg's real-life dog is named Waffle, and perhaps her own experiences as a foodie and food blogger made a book about trying new foods a natural choice.

Since publication, Steinweg has visited local classrooms to read the new book to students, and she would like to do more of this. Teachers who are interested in having her visit a classroom and read to the students can contact her directly at cstein@yahoo.com.

Steinweg's upcoming book-signing event is scheduled for February 22 at The Simple Greek in Munster, Indiana. Attendees can stop in between 12:00 and 3:00pm to meet Steinweg, purchase *Waffle Likes Falafel*, and enjoy complimentary samples of The Simple Greek's falafel, a staple on their menu. The Simple Greek is located at 9611 Calumet Avenue. "It's one of my favorite local eateries," says Steinweg. She encourages parents to come out with their children, giving them an opportunity to follow Waffle's example and try the free falafel samples. Her other two children's books—*Into the Night* and *Old 104 Rides Again*—will also be available for purchase.

All of Steinweg's children's books are available for order by contacting the author (cstein@yahoo.com). Cost is \$10 per copy plus \$2 for shipping.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A freelance writer for the past two decades, Carrie Steinweg's work has appeared in dozens of local and national print and online publications. Travel and food are two of her interests, and she writes a weekly travel column for the Northwest Indiana Times and manages three blogs—Chicago Foodie Sisters, Midwest Family Traveler, and Adventures in Motherhood.

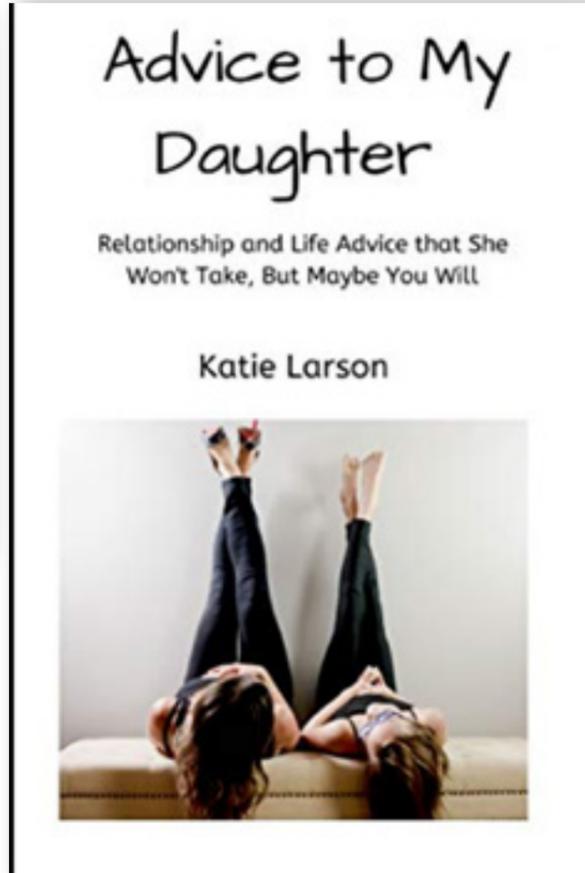
To learn more about *Waffle Likes Falafel* events, follow the "Waffle Likes Falafel" Facebook page.



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Katie Larson (*Advice to My Daughter*) says her book is not just for girls

BY MELANIE JONGSMA



MUNSTER, Ind. (January 21, 2020) – Katie Larson has been adding to a Google doc since her daughter Elle was two years old. It started out as a simple list of "things I want to tell my daughter one day," but last year when Larson learned about a workshop on self-publishing, she signed up and decided to use her Google doc as a working project.

She spent a year writing and organizing, and then used Amazon's self-publishing program to turn her Google doc into actual printed books. The book is now available as a paperback and a Kindle version:

As a third-grade teacher at Lansing's Oak Glen Elementary School, Larson sees a variety of issues, interactions, learnings, and teachable moments. She organized *Advice* into three main categories: Advice for Dealing with Boys, Advice for Dealing with Girl-friends, and Advice for Life. Chapter titles include:

- Sometimes You Get Dumped
- Learn Which Friends You Can Trust
- Laugh at Yourself Often
- Don't Make Excuses

Larson estimates the content is appropriate for children 12 and older.

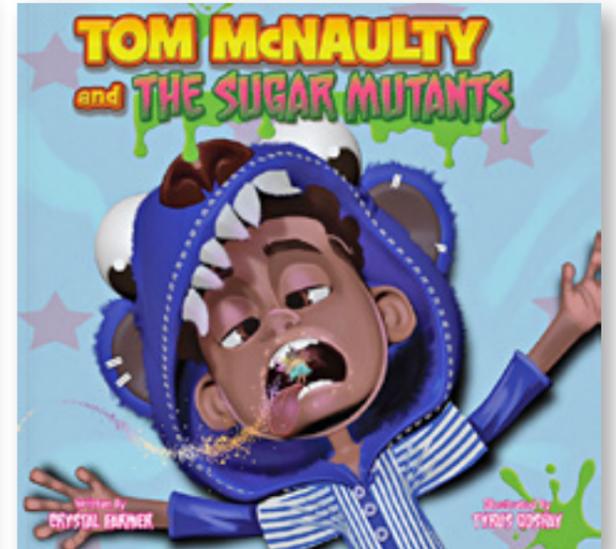
Though Elle has not yet read the book herself (she's only 9), Larson is getting good feedback from other readers. "My friend's niece, a senior in high school, reached out to me," said Larson. "She read it and told me she loved it.... She highlighted parts of it! It's all worth it if just one person can read it and get something from it."

For more information about *Advice to My Daughter* and upcoming book-signing events, and to support a local author with feedback and encouragement, join the open "Katie's Book Launch" Facebook Group created for the book launch.

Advice to My Daughter is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

Crystal Farmer releases *Tom McNaulty and the Sugar Mutants* in time for Dental Health Month

BY KATIE ARVIA



LANSING, Ill. (February 3, 2020) – Crystal Farmer's new children's story, *Tom McNaulty and the Sugar Mutants*, teaches children about the importance of good dental hygiene.

Farmer, a mother of four children, has years of theater experience as an actress and a playwright.

"When I was in kindergarten, my teacher cast me in *The Lion and the Mouse*. It wasn't like I had interest [in theater] at age 5; however, my teacher saw something in me, and ever since then, I have been in almost every school play," Farmer said. Her other acting credits include *Fame the Musical* and *Working*. She continued acting until her college years.

It was on the stage that she found her inspiration for writing. "When I am on that stage, I become alive," Farmer said. "So alive that I figured, 'Why not create my own stories and make them come alive?'" She began writing her own scripts, mainly for her local church.

Cast as Gretel in a South Suburban College production of *Hansel and Gretel* in 2005, Farmer gained a deeper love of children's theater and began writing scripts and original songs for children.

Her next endeavor was to write a children's book. *Tom McNaulty* tells the story of a young boy who wants to eat his favorite snacks all the time. After visiting the dentist, Tom comes face-to-face with the Sugar Mutants, which are named after a real bacterium called streptococcus mutants. Tom's story tells children about the importance of taking care of your teeth.

In her next book Farmer hopes to address kids' mental health, giving children tools for making healthy decisions.

Tom McNaulty and the Sugar Mutants is available on Amazon and at crystaljfarmer.com.



Lansing Police Dept. is currently accepting applications for the position of probationary police officer.

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- Valid POWER test card due at orientation. Power test card is considered valid only if dated after February 28, 2019. Applicants who do not have a valid POWER test card should contact NIPSTA @ www.nipsta.org (847) 998-8090, or Joliet Junior College @ www.jjc.edu/fitness-center for testing dates.
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 - or - Two years of full time experience as a state certified law enforcement officer.
- Residency within the Village of Lansing within six months after completion of the 12-month probationary period.
- Successful completion of all phases of testing process.

A Mandatory Orientation session will be held at the Eisenhower Center (2550 178th St.) on Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 11:30 a.m. followed by the Written Examination at 12:30 p.m.

Application packets are available at www.resourcemgmtassoc.com

For more information contact Resource Management Associates at 708-444-2326

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Lansing sweethearts share memories and advice

Karl and Judy Koch celebrate 51 years of commitment

BY CARRIE STEINWEG

LANSING, Ill. (January 31, 2020) – Karl and Judy Koch of Lansing were married June 22, 1968. “If you remember from history, it was quite a tumultuous year,” said Judy. “Martin Luther King had been assassinated earlier that year, and Bobby Kennedy has just been killed. The Chicago Riots happened that year. It was a terrible year in history.”

It was also the year that the couple knew that they couldn’t live apart any longer.

GROWING UP APART

Judy grew up mostly in Lansing (her family moved here when she was 9), and Karl grew up in Woodstock, Illinois. The two were in their mid-20s when they first met. Karl had attended college at Ohio Northern University and served in the U.S. National Guard. Judy had graduated from MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois, and had been teaching at TF North High School.

Karl’s sister and Judy had become friends in college, and when Judy attended her friend’s college graduation, she met the whole family, which included Karl. Judy didn’t remember much about that first meeting because it was a large family gathering and there wasn’t any individual time together.

The second time she met him was when she went with her friend (and future sister-in-law) to the hospital to pick up Karl, who had been in a car accident and suffered a broken leg. After he got to know her a little, Karl said she had a fun personality and was easy to talk to. And the first thing he noticed about her was her hair. “I was a redhead and she had dark hair,” he said.

COMING TOGETHER

Soon Judy and Karl’s sister became roommates. Karl’s sister had gotten a job in Lansing, giving Judy an opportunity to see Karl more. For their first date they took a drive up to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, which is where Karl worked in the summer.

“We just spent time together,” said Karl. “We went out to dinner, and I showed her around the area, and we drove back home.”

After they had been dating a while, Karl moved to Chicago Heights, where he had found a job and they could finally be closer to one another. But in February of 1968, his company transferred him to Rockford, Illinois, so the couple was again separated by a long drive. After just a few weeks apart, they decided they needed to be together for good.

“I think we just decided we’re better together than apart, and when we were apart, we didn’t like it,” Karl explained.

They talked about marriage and went together to pick out an engagement ring at a jewelry store at Woodmar Mall in Hammond, Indiana. “We got engaged on April Fool’s Day and then got married in June,” said Judy. “I was teaching, so we had to wait until the school year was over.”

TYING THE KNOT

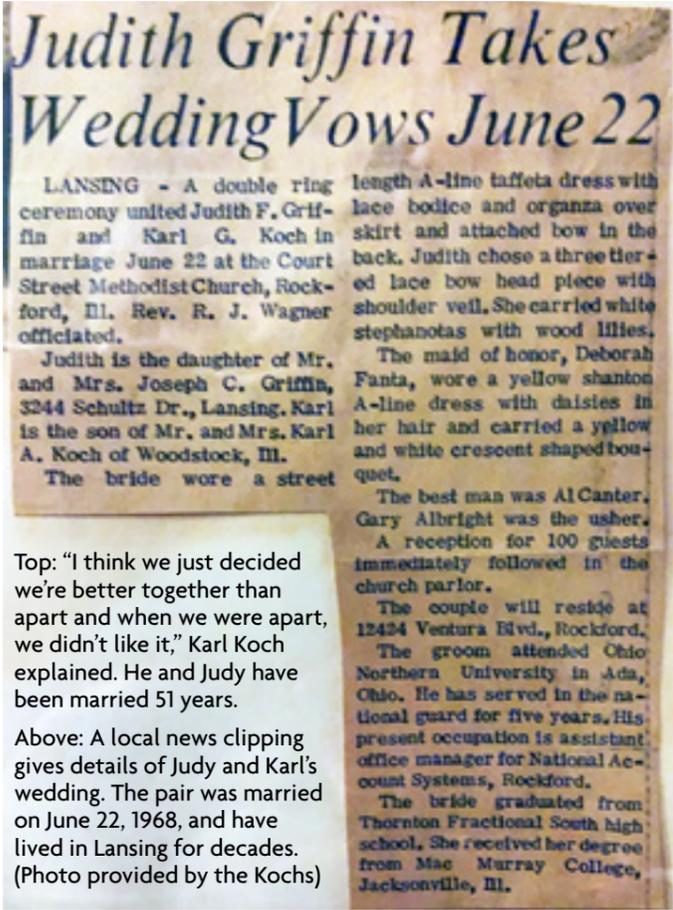
They married in Rockford after that short engagement and settled there. Karl continued working for National Account Systems, a credit and collections business and Judy taught at Rockford East High School. They rented the basement in the home of an elderly widower who became a stand-in grandfather to them. “We were very close to him,” Judy explained. “He was alone, and his wife had died, and we’d go places together and watch television together, and it was a great situation for us because we didn’t have any family there.”

The wedding took place at Court Street Methodist Church in Rockford with a reception immediately following at the church. They honeymooned at the Wagon Wheel Resort in Rockton, Illinois, a swanky getaway spot that had been visited by Bob Hope, Gene Autry, and Ronald Reagan.

LIFE AND CHILDREN TOGETHER

In 1971, the couple welcomed a daughter, Jenny, and the following spring they relocated to Lansing where Karl opened his own debt collection business and Judy

See “Sweethearts,” page 14



Top: “I think we just decided we’re better together than apart and when we were apart, we didn’t like it,” Karl Koch explained. He and Judy have been married 51 years.

Above: A local news clipping gives details of Judy and Karl’s wedding. The pair was married on June 22, 1968, and have lived in Lansing for decades. (Photo provided by the Kochs)

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The Lansing Journal *journeys*

Hard Rock Hotel

SUBMITTED BY PAM AND LEANNE PATLAK



"My sister travels a bit," explained Pam Patlak, who works at the Lansing Municipal Airport. Both Pam and Leanne live in Lansing, so Leanne grabbed a copy of The Lansing Journal for her recent trip to Las Vegas. She stayed at the Hard Rock Hotel for three weeks before it closed for extensive remodeling. (Photo: unknown fellow hotel guest)

Bradenton birthday

SUBMITTED BY JIM AND JUDY FRIESEMA



Keep those Journals journeying!

The Lansing Journal is a community newspaper, and we look for opportunities to involve our community in its pages. The Lansing Journal Journeys is an award-winning feature that showcases people bringing The Lansing Journal to creative locations.

Email your photos to info@thelansingjournal.com with the following three pieces of information: (1) the names of any people in the photo, (2) the name of the person who took the photo, and (3) information about the location or situation.

Jim and Judy Friesema and family celebrated Shooter Friesema's 90th birthday in Bradenton, Florida. Family came in from California, Montana, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Florida for the big event.

Sweethearts, from page 13

did bookkeeping at home and cared for Jenny. Jenny started preschool at Lansing Nursery School, and Judy started working there. She continued working there for the next 30 years and ended up owning the school, first located in the First United Methodist Church and later moved inside of Lester Crawl School, where at one time there were 400 preschoolers enrolled and 7 classrooms. In 1977, the couple welcomed a son, Brian.

Looking back, Karl would have preferred not to work jobs so far from home. His long commute meant that the kids were still in bed when he left and then in bed when he got home, and he recognized the burden it put on Judy to be doing so much on her own.

There were a lot of ordinary days of doing everyday things, but with bits of romance sprinkled in here and

there, like when Karl surprised Judy by upgrading to an engagement/wedding ring set with a larger stone and having her original rings set into a necklace.

Judy encourages younger couples today to keep going and working at their marriages. "Times are so different now with technology, and some marriages may not work because people are so distracted," she said. "Pay attention to your marriage and your children and what's going on."

51 YEARS OF COMMITMENT

"I think our marriage has lasted because of our dedication to each other and our family," said Judy. "It's lasted because we've been working hard to stay together and take care of each other."

Karl agreed. "It's a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly effort," he said. "You've got to be able to talk to each other and have conversations and communicate. It doesn't seem like it's been over 50 years!"

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Pace, from page 3

Route 355's recovery ratio is at 14.3%.

Complicating the ridership/recovery ratio factor is the "subsidy per rider" dollar amounts. Many 355 riders are in the free-ride or reduced-fare programs, and according to Pace's Chief Communications Officer Maggie Daly Skogsbakken, Pace is no longer receiving state reimbursement for these programs.

Community Relations Representative Jessica Rybarczyk emphasized Pace's willingness to work with Lansing to "promote Pace services, to grow ridership, and keep these routes around." She explained that Route 355 has been operating since 1985, and at one time it did operate all the way from downtown Lansing to downtown Chicago. The route was restructured about ten years ago and services were limited.

"Route 355 has fallen into what we call 'Code Yellow' for many years," said Rybarczyk. "We are seeing approximately 50 people riding this bus on a total of seven trips each way. That does not mean that these are all Lansing residents—they certainly could be boarding in Lansing, they could be boarding in Calumet City, or in Burnham."

"The more people riding throughout any of those communities is better for the health of that route as a whole," said Rybarczyk.

Rybarczyk told the Village Trustees that public transit ridership is declining in communities across the nation, due to a variety of factors—telecommuting, flexible work hours, increases in car ownership when the economy goes up, and the emergence of ridesharing options. "We are certainly trying to work better with rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft for those last mile connections," she said, "instead of working against them."

WORKING TOGETHER

To help Lansing promote bus route ridership, Rybarczyk listed the following ideas. Pace can:

- Create and print Lansing-specific fliers to be included in water bills and new resident packets.

- Provide content for the Village newsletter, the Village website, and Village social media platforms.
- Provide hard copies of bus schedules for residents to pick up at whatever locations we determine are most visible—Village Hall, the Lansing Library, and the Lan-Oak Park District, for example.
- Create and print large poster-sized pieces of information to be displayed throughout town.
- Participate in community events such as resource fairs and job fairs.
- Provide a Pace bus for parades and Touch-a-Truck events, along with demonstrations about how residents can put their bikes on a bus.

Rybarczyk said Pace is also happy to entertain other ideas Lansing residents and officials present to them. She commended Lansing for reaching out to Pace and for actually wanting to do something about the ridership decline, and she thanked Mayor Eidam for paying attention.

"WE ARE TRYING"

Mayor Eidam responded, "For me, everything that Jessica [Rybarczyk] gives to the South Suburban

Mayors and Managers' Transportation Committee every month started to make sense to me when one of our very own residents that lives on Route 355 depends on that route to get him to work every day. I had the opportunity to talk to John Gehring over the summer at Fox Pointe, and he began to tell me his concerns."

Eidam relayed those concerns to Rybarczyk, and was sympathetic to Pace's dilemma as well. "Pace only has so much money; Lansing only has so much money," said Eidam at the meeting. "So for me, it's been good to be in touch with John [Gehring] and at least let him know that we're trying on his behalf."

"And so here we are tonight, John, and we are trying, not just for you, but for all of our residents, and we're trying to help Pace as well, because I understand the monetary constraints that they're under."

Pace's Chief Communications Officer Maggie Daly Skogsbakken added later, "Communities that are willing to partner with us—that is something we have found is beneficial. They know their constituents and their residents better than we ever will. And they reach them in ways that we cannot. At the end of the day, we want to save this route. If we cannot, there are alternatives we can explore that keep accessibility in the community."

Lansing Little League to accept Cal City ballplayers

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY LANSING LITTLE LEAGUE

LANSING, Ill. (January 29, 2020) - Lansing Little League has received permission from Little League International to register kids from Calumet City. All children living in Calumet City south of Sibley between Torrence Ave. and State Line Rd. are invited to play Little League baseball with the ballplayers in Lansing.

According to Lansing Little League President Ray Nommensen, because Calumet City kids weren't able to play Little League last year due to a lack of a "charter," Lansing and South Holland Little Leagues agreed to split the neighboring municipality's children between them. Children living in Calumet City outside of the parameters described above can be part of South Holland's Little League, according to Nommensen.

Lansing Little League's first registration will be Saturday, Feb. 22 at Nathan Hale School, 19055 Burnham Ave. in Lansing from 10:00am until 2:00pm. The second registration date is Saturday Feb. 29 at the Calumet Memorial Park District, 626 Wentworth Ave. in Calumet City from 10:00am until 2:00pm.

Boys and girls ages 4 to 12 are welcome to join. Registration is also available on those dates for girls softball, volleyball, and Babe Ruth baseball.



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The Village of South Holland, Illinois, is currently seeking applicants for the position of Police Records Clerk. The Village has a workforce that embodies high ethical standards and responsiveness, with a relentless pursuit of greatness. Individuals joining our workforce are those with a commitment to integrity, professionalism and respect, and who are self-disciplined with a servant's heart.

Position Qualifications/Physical Requirements: Minimum of 18 years of age, High School diploma, one (1) year clerical or records management experience and/or equivalent combination of education and experience. Must obtain L.E.A.D.S. certification within 90 days of hire. Customer service, organizational skills, and ability to multitask are essential. Must possess a valid driver's license. Work environment may require extended computer monitor usage, standing for prolonged periods of time as well as repetitive motions such as typing.

*For full details and requirements of this position,
please visit the Village website, www.southholland.org.*

Applications for Police Records Clerk are available with the Personnel Services Department, 16226 Wausau Avenue, South Holland, IL 60473.

Application and resume due by 5:00pm, February 28, 2020

EOE

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We are a community of faith, family and future with a workforce that embodies high ethical standards, responsiveness and a relentless pursuit of greatness.

Applications for Lateral Police Officer with the South Holland Police Department are available online or with the Personnel Services Department, 16226 Wausau Avenue, South Holland, IL 60473.

For requirements, application and testing process details please visit our website at www.southholland.org.

Application and required documentation due by 5:00pm, March 6, 2020.

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Lansing Area Chamber announces new parade route

Good Neighbor Day parade will be shorter, safer in 2020

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

LANSING, Ill. (January 27, 2020) - Lansing's traditional Good Neighbor Day Parade is always scheduled for the first Saturday in May. So this year's event will kick off at 2:00pm on Saturday, May 2.

The 2020 Good Neighbor Day Parade will begin at the same location—Wentworth Avenue and Ridge Road—but it will end at TF South High School (18500 Burnham Avenue) rather than Lan-Oak Park.

In order to avoid traffic on Torrence, which has become increasingly oblivious to parade participants, Lansing Area Chamber Director Amy Todd began working with Lt. Scott Bailey of the Lansing Police Department to find a new route for parade day. After considering several alternatives, they decided to reroute the Good Neighbor Day parade south on Burnham instead of continuing west on Ridge. The TF South parking lot will have ample room for vehicles, floats, and marchers to convene, and Todd is hoping the Lansing Lions Club will serve hot dogs to participants just as they always have.

The new route is shorter by about a mile, and Todd believes that a shorter route helps with safety issues as well. The length of the previous route often caused

large gaps, particularly toward the end of the route. Those gaps contributed to safety issues as Torrence drivers would pull out into the gaps, assuming the parade was over.

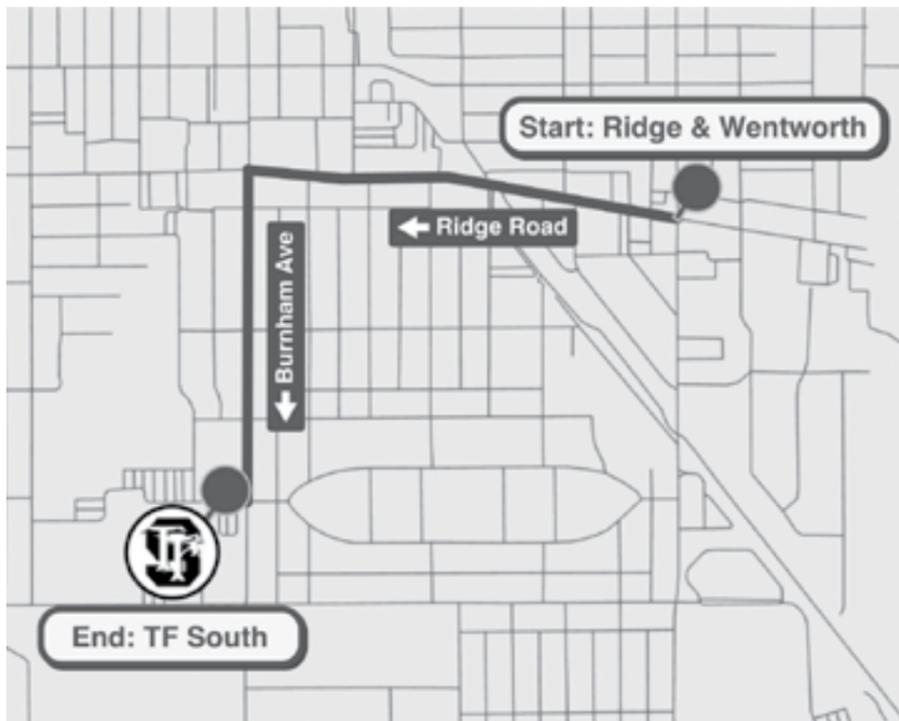
The new route also allows Lansing to keep one of the three main traffic arteries (Wentworth, Burnham, and Torrence) open on a busy Saturday afternoon, as Torrence will no longer be affected by the parade.

Though Lansing residents who live between Burnham and Torrence may have to change their parade-viewing traditions, residents who live along Burnham Avenue between Ridge and TF South have already expressed excitement about being able to watch the parade from their front lawns.

This year's Good Neighbor Day Parade theme is

Superheroes. Registration forms are available from the Chamber office at 18155 Roy Street in Lansing.

Entering Lansing's Good Neighbor Day Parade is free for all members of the Lansing Area Chamber. Non-members may also join the parade for an entrance fee of \$50.



The route for the 2020 Good Neighbor Day Parade has been shortened and redirected. Paraders will still line up on Wentworth Avenue and head west on Ridge Road, but they will turn left on Burnham Avenue, ending in the parking lot of TF South High School. (Graphic: Josh Bootsma)

nartoon by Jim Siergey

REIGNING CATS AND DOGS

Lansing Journal readers are personally invited by artist Jim Siergey to attend the Artist Reception for "It's Surreal Thing" on February 21, 6:00–8:00 pm, at the Towle Theatre, 5205 Hohman Avenue in Hammond, Indiana.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3x3 box includes all digits from 1 through 9.

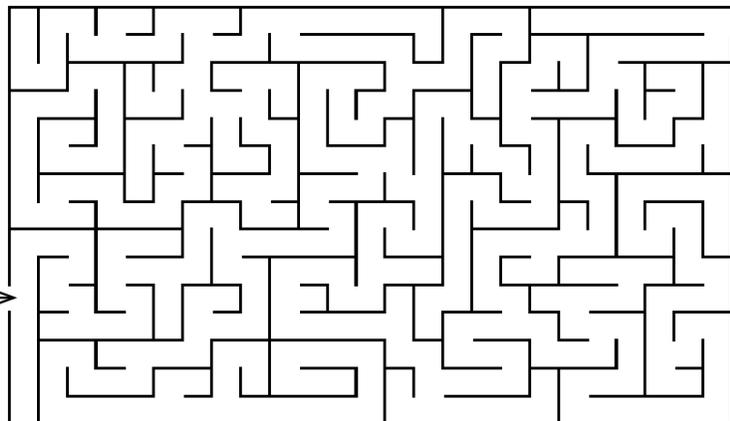
WORDSEARCH

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Roman Mythology

| | | | |
|----------|---------|------------|----------|
| Aequitas | Flora | Mars | Saturn |
| Apollo | Fortuna | Mercury | Silvanus |
| Aurora | Genius | Minerva | Sol |
| Bacchus | Janus | Mithras | Somnus |
| Bellona | Juno | Neptune | Tellus |
| Ceres | Jupiter | Orcus | Venus |
| Cupid | Liber | Pluto | Vesta |
| Diana | Luna | Proserpina | Vulcan |

SOLVE THE MAZE



CROSSWORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 28 | | | | | | | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | | | |
| 32 | | | | | | | 33 | | | | | 34 | 35 | 36 | | |
| 37 | | | | | | | 38 | | | | | 39 | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | 43 | | | | | 44 | | | | |
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| 49 | | | | | | | | 50 | 51 | 52 | | | | | | |
| 53 | | | | | | | 54 | 55 | | | | | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 |
| 60 | | | | | | | 61 | | | | | | 62 | | | |
| 63 | | | | | | | 64 | | | | | | 65 | | | |

ACROSS

- 20
- Jargon
- Used to make whiskey
- Financial examination
- A nocturnal ungulate of southeast Asia
- Star Wars' Solo
- Too soon
- Old age (archaic)
- Agreed
- Furthest planet
- Sailors
- Medicine man
- High blood pressure
- Give a speech
- A memorial mound of stones
- Delete (abbrev.)
- Type of cereal grass
- Not dead
- Sharpen
- Golf ball support
- A wild dog of South America
- Bread from heaven
- Crotchet
- Bodyguard or date
- Liveliness
- Chocolate substitute
- Medical pictures
- Neckwear
- Hardships
- How old one is
- Pretence
- Connecting points
- Father
- Modifies written material
- Bestow

DOWN

- Drain of strength
- Mongrel
- Lyric poem
- Flange
- Open shelves
- Counterfoil
- Roman household god
- Mimicked
- Zero
- Winged monster
- Genus of rhubarb
- A Ukrainian resort city
- With the end toward the observer
- Shade
- Local Area Network
- Not tall
- Lofty nest
- Rapidly
- Allot (archaic)
- The founder of a family
- Acclaim
- Nigerian monetary unit
- A month in the Jewish calendar
- One who gives
- Boredom
- The smallest amount
- Parental sister
- Large stringed instrument
- Scraps
- Creating disorder
- Murmur lovingly
- Used to unlock things
- Outer
- A Eurasian goat-like antelope
- Doctrine
- Seventeen in Roman numerals
- Repose
- God of war (Greek mythology)
- Flop
- A prominent rock
- Anagram of "Aid"
- Even (poetic)
- Super Sonic Transport

You know the drill

Meaning you know what is expected. Originally "drill" referred to a procedure that is often repeated, such as a military drill or a drill in sports, so the sense was "you know what to do, I don't need to explain."

SOLUTIONS

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

Announcements are free and run in The Shopper each week. They are accepted by e-mail at general@myshopper.biz, or at the front counter. Deadline is Friday at 4:00 p.m. for the following Thursday's edition. The Shopper reserves the right to edit all content.

John Denver comes to Munster February 13

Theatre at the Center announces cast for *Almost Heaven: John Denver's America*

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
BIG SPLASH PR

MUNSTER, Ind. (January 17, 2020) – Theatre at the Center Artistic Director Linda Fortunato has cast Shannon McEldowney, Steven Romero Schaeffer, Andrew Mueller, Sara Geist, and Tommy Malouf in the musical revue *Almost Heaven: John Denver's America*. The show will launch Theatre at the Center's 30th Anniversary Season.

The cast will be joined on stage by musicians William Underwood, Malcolm Ruhl, and Alison Tatum. Fortunato will direct, and William Underwood will serve as Music Director. Previews begin on February 13 with an Opening Night on February 16 and a continued run through March 22.

According to Variety, "The show pays tribute to an artist who remains great at making people feel good."

ABOUT THE SHOW

Almost Heaven: John Denver's America is a musical tribute and intimate celebration of John Denver's life and career. From growing up in a military family to his emergence on the 1960s folk scene, the climb to 70s superstardom, and his later career of the 1980s and 90s, John Denver's story is brought to life in this Chicago-area premiere through hits such as "Country Roads," "Rocky Mountain High," "Annie's Song," and "Sunshine on My Shoulders." The original concept for the show came from Harold Thau, Denver's longtime manager and friend.

ABOUT THE CAST

Shannon McEldowney returns to Theatre at the Center (TATC) after her work swinging in *The Pajama Game*. Other credits include *Elf* and *Young*

Steven Romero Schaeffer stars in *Almost Heaven: John Denver's America* at Munster's Theatre at the Center. (Photo: Guy Rhodes)



Frankenstein at Little Theatre on the Square, *Mama Mia* at Drury Lane Oakbrook, and *Disaster* at Chicago Theatre Workshop.

Steven Romero Schaeffer returns to TATC after performing in *Big River* in 2017. His Chicago credits include roles in *Always*, *Patsy Cline* at Firebrand Theatre and *Into the Woods* at Writer's Theatre. He has also toured with Troupe America in *Pump Boys and Dinettes*.

Andrew Mueller is making his TATC debut. Other Chicagoland credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Lyric Opera, *Rent* at Paramount Theatre, *Shakespeare In Love* and *As You Like It* at Chicago Shakespeare, *Man of La Mancha* at Marriott Theatre, and *Big River* at BoHo Theatre. Off Broadway roles include *Peter and The Starcatcher* and *Alice By Heart*.

Sara Geist, making her debut at TATC, began her professional career at age 12 in *The American Girl Revue*. Since then she has performed with

Mason Street Warehouse, Emerald City Theatre, Intrinsic Theatre Co., Windy City Performs, and Next Theatre, as well as on TV in *Chicago Fire*.

Tommy Malouf returns to TATC where he last appeared as Johnny Cash in *Million Dollar Quartet*. Other Chicago credits include work with Remy Bumppo, The House Theatre of Chicago, Jackalope, and Steep.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

The creative team for *Almost Heaven: John Denver's America* includes Scenic Designer and Head of Production Ann Davis, Lighting Designer G. "Max" Maxin IV, Sound Designer Joe Palermo, Costume Designer Brenda Winstead, and Prop Designer Melissa Geel. Stage manager is Jessica Banaszak. Linda Fortunato is teamed with TATC General Manager Richard Friedman.

ABOUT THE VENUE

Founded in 1991, the 410-seat Theatre at the Center is a year-round professional theater at its home: The Center for Visual and Performing Arts, 1040 Ridge Road in Munster, Indiana. TATC is an accessible venue with plenty of free parking.

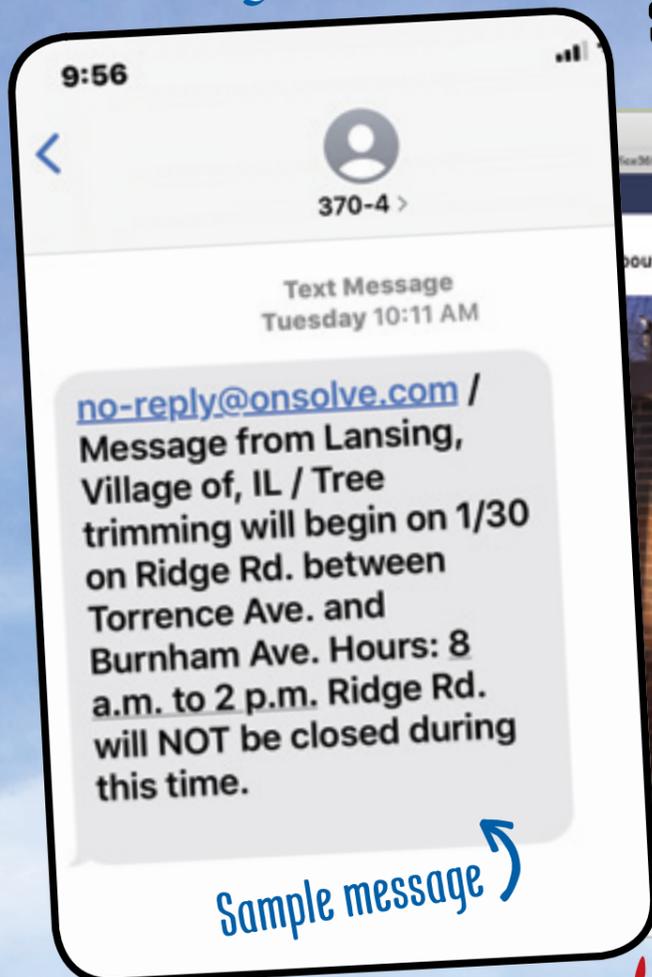
Performances are:

- Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2 p.m.
- Fridays at 7:30 p.m.;
- Saturdays at 3:00pm and 7:30pm
- Sundays at 2:30pm

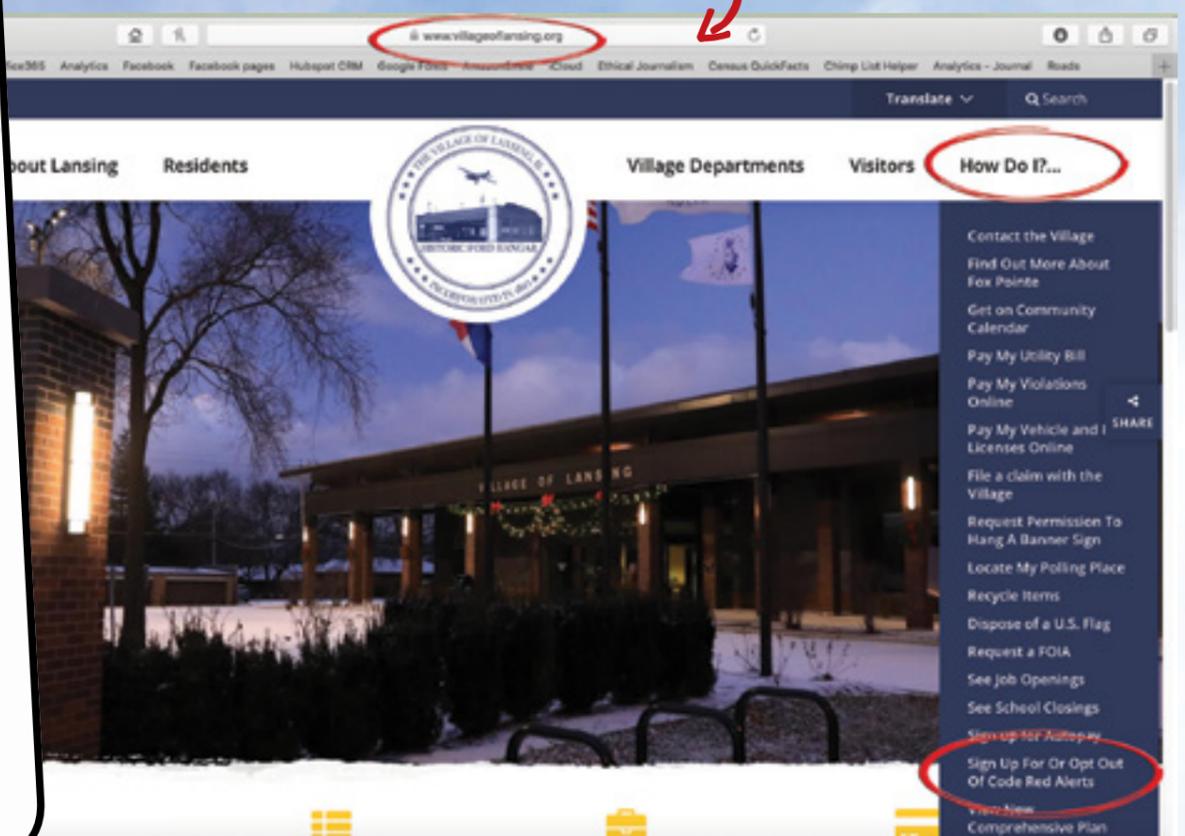
Individual tickets prices range from \$42–\$46. To purchase individual tickets, call the Box Office at 219-836-3255. Group discounts are available for groups of 11 or more. Student tickets are \$20, and gift certificates are also available.

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Sample message



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South Suburban College head basketball coach John Pigatti earns 400th win

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE

SOUTH HOLLAND, Ill. (January 22, 2020) – South Suburban College Men’s Basketball Head Coach John Pigatti won his 400th game Tuesday night in a 74-67 victory over Olive Harvey. In his 14th season at the college, Pigatti’s record is now 400-78, an .837 winning percentage.

“It’s a tremendous accomplishment and a tribute to some great players who have come through here at South Suburban,” said Coach Pigatti. “Our players have really bought into our program and are committed to working hard on and off the court. We have been proud to have two Player-of-the-Year recipients and 10 First Team All-Americans, but more importantly countless players who have earned their degrees and transferred on to four-year programs.”

Coach Pigatti has won nine Region IV Championships, his teams have been to nine NJCAA Division II National Championships and have at times been ranked #1 in the country. Currently ranked sixth in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division II Men’s Basketball Top 20 Poll, the Bulldogs are 19-3 this season and have won ten consecutive games. The team has been ranked in the top ten every season since Pigatti has been at SSC.

For more information, contact Coach Pigatti at (708) 596-2000, ext. 2524, or email jpigatti@ssc.edu. SSC is located at 15800 South State Street, South Holland, Illinois.

2020 Roundball Classic begins Thursday, February 6, at Memorial Junior High School

BY MELANIE JONGSMA

LANSING, Ill. (February 1, 2020) – The 11th annual Roundball Classic opens on Thursday. More than a fifth-grade basketball tournament, the Roundball Classic builds community by awarding trophies for sportsmanship and success in the food drive, and by donating proceeds to Lansing charities. Sponsorships from local businesses and individuals cover the costs of the tournament.

Coolidge, Lansing Christian, Oak Glen, Reavis, and Heritage will compete in the following schedule:

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

G1 6:00 Reavis vs. Lansing Christian
G2 7:00 Coolidge vs. Heritage

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

G3 6:00 Oak Glen v. Lansing Christian
G4 7:00 Reavis v. Heritage
G5 8:00 Coolidge v. Oak Glen

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

G6 11:00 Heritage v. Lansing Christian
G7 12:00 Reavis v. Oak Glen
G8 1:00 Lansing Christian v. Coolidge
G9 2:00 Heritage v. Oak Glen
G10 3:00 Coolidge v. Reavis

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10

6:30 Award ceremony for all participants
7:00 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME
Lansing schools and community raised more than \$5,000 at last year’s Roundball Classic and brought in

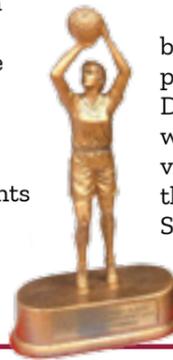
more than 5,000 food items for the Lansing Food Pantry. The Coolidge Cougars won the basketball tournament, and Jessica Campuzano of Oak Glen won the girls’ Hot Shot contest.

Memorial Junior High School is located at 2721 Ridge Road in Lansing, Illinois.

The Lansing Journal will be covering the Roundball Classic and will post photos and videos online.

Daily News subscribers will receive notifications via email. Subscribing to the Daily News is free.

Scan the QR code or visit thelansingjournal.com/news/subscribe



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**Friday, February 21
10 AM to Noon**

**Senior, Youth & Family Services
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**For more information call
708-596-6040 ext. 2020**



**Frank M. Zuccarelli
Supervisor**

