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Larry Sims' bridge-building legacy lives on through regional youth leadership

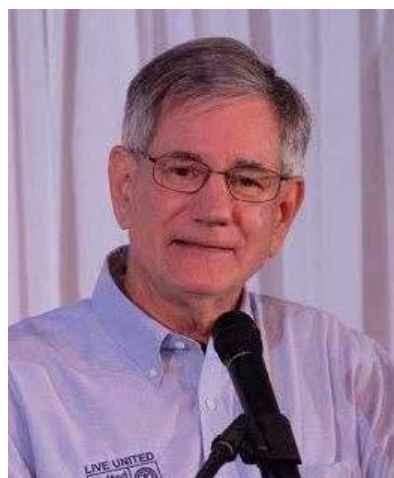
BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — When family, friends and community leaders gathered Sept. 3 to celebrate the life of Lawrence “Larry” Sims, much of the attention was on the many organizations he served during decades of civic involvement.

But one of the clearest examples of his legacy can still be seen in a program bringing young people together across the Great Lakes Bay Region.

More than 30 years ago, Sims and former Saginaw City Manager Joyce Parker helped establish the Bridge Center for Racial Harmony, an organization created to encourage dialogue across racial and cultural lines.

That work later reached into schools and helped create a partnership that continues to influence young



LARRY SIMS (PHOTO | UNITED WAY OF SAGINAW COUNTY)

people today.

Earlier this year, 60 students from 21 high schools completed the Great Lakes Bay Regional Youth Leadership Institute at Saginaw Valley State University. Students from different communities and racial, cultural and economic backgrounds spent the year learning together through leadership development, mentoring and service.

The program traces its

roots to 2005, when SVSU launched the Saginaw County Youth Leadership Institute in partnership with the Bridge Center.

The first class included about 50 juniors and seniors from 17 Saginaw County high schools, along with more than 30 SVSU student mentors. Students were intentionally selected from diverse backgrounds and given leadership training while participating in community projects.

The Bridge Center brought a decade of work focused on race and community relationships to that partnership.

Sims and Parker founded the organization in 1995. By 2001, Saginaw County commissioners had approved an agreement for the center to provide equal opportunity and diversity training to county managers and key employees.

Continues on pg 2, Larry Sims



Three Saginaw teens hospitalized after early morning shooting

YOUTH BANNER, COVER



Delta College marks Hispanic Heritage Month with culture, conversation and art

LATINO BANNER, COVER

FEATURED STORY

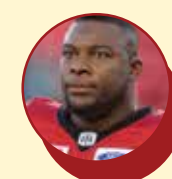
Flint breaks ground on \$17.5 million regional police and fire training campus

COMMUNITY, PG 20



Midland Habitat marks 100th home after 38 years of building

COMMUNITY, PG 22



Saginaw High standout Charleston Hughes headed to Canadian Football Hall of Fame

SPORTS, PG 42

From cover, Larry Sims

Its work also extended beyond Saginaw County. In 2004, Bullock Creek School District contracted with the Bridge Center to help develop diversity training following a racial incident involving a Black student.

A year later, the partnership with SVSU put young people at the center of the organization's work.

The youth leadership program later expanded into Bay and Midland counties and became the Great Lakes Bay Regional Youth Leadership Institute.

Today, students participate in leadership sessions, mentoring, service projects and activities designed to strengthen communication skills and expose them to people and communities different from their own.

SVSU credits Mamie Thorns, now the university's vice president for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, with helping establish the institute. She continues to coordinate the program.

Students who complete the institute and later enroll at SVSU as freshmen are also eligible for a \$1,500 scholarship.

The program celebrated its 21st year in 2026 under the theme "Leadership Is: Stories That Shape Us, Voices That Lead Us."

For Sims, who died July 12 at age 77, the connection is not that he personally created the youth institute. Rather, an organization he helped build became one of the partners that made it possible.

Many of the students participating today were not yet born when the institute began. None were alive when Sims and Parker established the Bridge Center in 1995.

Yet the idea behind the work remains much the same: relationships across differences do not happen automatically. Someone has to create opportunities for people to meet, listen and work together.

More than three decades after the Bridge Center was formed, that work continues through another generation.



THIS DAY IN MICHIGAN HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 16, 1908

On September 16, 1908, General Motors was founded in Flint by businessman William C. "Billy" Durant. The company began as a holding company for Buick and soon expanded by acquiring other automakers, helping establish Michigan as the center of the American automobile industry. GM grew into one of the world's largest automakers, and its Flint roots remain an important part of Michigan's industrial history.



WORKERS GATHER OUTSIDE THE BUICK FACTORY COMPLEX IN FLINT IN 1912, JUST FOUR YEARS AFTER WILLIAM C. "BILLY" DURANT FOUNDED GENERAL MOTORS. BUICK BECAME THE FOUNDATION AROUND WHICH DURANT BUILT THE NEW AUTOMOTIVE COMPANY. (PHOTO | BURTON HISTORICAL COLLECTION, DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY/ WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY, PUBLIC DOMAIN)

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MISSION

The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operate and serve as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities regionally and globally. Furthermore, to serve as a catalyst and a link for cultivating young adults as entrepreneurial and business leaders for the future.

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MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 18



Three Saginaw teens hospitalized after early morning shooting



SAGINAW POLICE AND THE MAJOR CRIMES UNIT ARE INVESTIGATING A SEPT. 10 SHOOTING ON BAY STREET THAT LEFT THREE TEENAGERS HOSPITALIZED. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Three teenagers, including a 15-year-old and two 17-year-olds, were hospitalized after an early morning shooting Sept. 10 on Saginaw's West Side.

Saginaw police were called to the 2300 block of Bay Street at about 3 a.m. after reports of gunfire. Officers arriving at the scene found multiple spent shell casings outside a residence.

The three teens were taken to a local hospital. Police said their injuries were not considered life-threatening and all three were re-

ported in stable condition.

The Saginaw Major Crimes Unit responded to investigate the shooting.

Authorities had not publicly identified a suspect or announced an arrest in the initial days following the incident. Police also had not released information about what may have led to the shooting or whether the teenagers were specifically targeted.

The ages of those injured bring renewed attention to the impact gun violence can have on young people in Saginaw.

At 15 and 17, the victims are at an age when much of life typically revolves around school,

friends, sports, jobs and plans for what comes after high school. Instead, all three began Sept. 10 receiving medical treatment for gunshot wounds.

For other teenagers, violence involving people their own age can also affect how safe they feel in their neighborhoods and while spending time with friends. Incidents involving young people can leave classmates, relatives and peers dealing with fear and questions long after the police tape is removed.

The shooting comes as community organizations, schools and local leaders continue efforts aimed at giving young people safe

spaces, mentoring, recreation and alternatives to violence.

Police have not said whether the teens injured in the Bay Street shooting were students at any particular school, and their names have not been released.

Investigators are asking anyone with information about the shooting to come forward.

Information can be provided to investigators at 989-370-8430. Anonymous tips can be submitted to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-422-5245 or through the P3 Tips app.

The investigation remains ongoing.

Flint begins demolition of former Central High to make way for new school

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Demolition of the former Flint Central High School began Sept. 10, clearing the way for a new high school that district leaders hope will serve generations of Flint students.

Flint Community Schools marked the start of demolition with a gathering outside the former school, where alumni, students, educators and community leaders watched heavy equipment begin taking down portions of the building.

The work is part of a larger plan to transform the former Central-Whittier site into a modern high school campus. District officials said the new building is being designed to support academics, technology, collaboration and changing student needs.

The project is being funded through state dollars and support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, which previ-



THE FORMER FLINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDS BEHIND A "COMING SOON! NEW FLINT HIGH SCHOOL" BANNER AS DEMOLITION BEGINS TO CLEAR THE SITE FOR A NEW CAMPUS. (PHOTO | FLINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS)

ously committed up to \$100 million toward construction of the new high school.

Although much of the old Central building will disappear, one familiar piece is expected to remain. Superintendent Kevelin Jones said the district is working to preserve the original tower and incorporate it into the new

campus.

For students who may eventually attend the school, demolition means something different than it does for alumni remembering the building's past.

De'Ajah Green, an eighth grader at Holmes STEM Middle School Academy, said she is looking forward to a larger school with

new equipment that can help students reach their potential.

Another eighth grader, Mae'son Townsend, is looking even further ahead.

"I will be a part of the first class to make history," Townsend said.

District officials have set a goal of having the new high school ready for the 2028-29 school year.

Central High School has long held an important place in Flint history, with generations of students passing through its classrooms. District leaders said preserving pieces of that history while replacing an aging facility is part of the challenge as the project moves forward.

For current middle school students, however, the biggest change may still be ahead: Some of the young people now watching the old school come down could be among the first students to walk through the doors of the new one.

Flint library offers fall lineup for teens with gaming, STEAM and escape-room programs

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint-area teens looking for somewhere to go after school have several options at the Gloria Coles Flint Public Library this fall, from Pokémon battles and LEGO coding to creative writing and an escape room.

The library's September schedule includes programs aimed specifically at teenagers as well as activities open to teens alongside other age groups.

Pokémon Club met Sept. 15, giving teens and other participants a place to trade cards,

battle and meet other Pokémon fans. Participants could bring their own cards or use cards provided by the library.

On Sept. 16, LEGO Club combines building with coding from 4:30 to 6 p.m. The STEAM program is open to children, tweens and teens and does not require previous coding experience.

Teens looking for a different kind of challenge can try the library's Teen Lounge Escape Room from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Sept. 17.

The activity places participants inside a fairy-tale-themed scenario where they must solve puzzles and follow clues before

time runs out. Unlike some of the library's other activities, the escape room is specifically for teens.

Writing help is also available Sept. 17 through the Rough Draft Café Community Writing Center, a partnership with the University of Michigan-Flint. The program is open to tweens, teens and adults.

The library will continue its LEGO Club Sept. 23, followed by another Rough Draft Café session Sept. 24.

That same day, teens can attend the first meeting of the Flint Zine Club from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. The program is being organized

by people involved with Flint Zine Fest and is open to teens and adults interested in creating independently produced publications.

Beyond scheduled activities, the library maintains a teen area called The Hangout where young people can spend time with friends near the teen book collection.

Teens can also find graphic novels and manga and ask library staff about using the digital studio to create podcasts and videos.

The Gloria Coles Flint Public Library is located at 1026 E. Kearsley St.

Midland Public Schools brings SchoolAI into classrooms for grades 6-12



SCHOOLAI GIVES EDUCATORS A REAL-TIME VIEW OF STUDENT ACTIVITY AS STUDENTS WORK THROUGH AI-GUIDED LESSONS AND QUESTIONS. MIDLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS MAKING THE PLATFORM AVAILABLE IN GRADES SIX THROUGH 12. (PHOTO | SCHOOLAI)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Artificial intelligence is making its way into Midland classrooms, but district officials say teachers — not the technology — will decide how it is used.

Midland Public Schools is introducing SchoolAI for students in grades six through 12 during the 2026-27 school year.

The platform is designed to function more like a digital tutor than a tool that simply hands students answers. Students can ask questions and work through problems while the system prompts them to recall informa-

tion, think through their reasoning and continue working toward an answer.

Teachers are not required to use the platform.

Troy Lynch, the district's instructional technology and media curriculum specialist, told the Midland Daily News that individual teachers have full control over whether they use SchoolAI and how extensively they incorporate it into their classrooms.

Teachers can also monitor student interactions through live dashboards, establish limits on activities and receive alerts.

The district's move comes as schools across the country continue trying to decide how arti-

ficial intelligence fits into education. Programs such as ChatGPT have already become familiar to many students, sometimes before schools have established clear rules about how they should be used.

Christine Brillhart, a science teacher at Jefferson Middle School who served on the committee that evaluated AI platforms, said a district pilot survey found that many students were already using artificial intelligence for schoolwork.

That made teaching students when AI is appropriate — and when it is not — an important part of the conversation.

The district also says student

information in SchoolAI is encrypted and is not sold or used to train public AI models.

SchoolAI allows educators to see student conversations and activity while students are using the system, giving teachers a way to identify where a student may be struggling instead of allowing AI use to happen completely outside the classroom.

Teachers are receiving professional development on the platform as the rollout begins.

Other Midland County school districts, including Meridian Public Schools and Bullock Creek School District, are also examining how teachers and students should use artificial intelligence.

Michigan encourages teens to preregister to **VOTE**

BY MB STAFF

LANSGING, Mich. — Michigan teenagers do not have to wait until their 18th birthday to take their first step toward voting.

The Michigan Department of State used Voter Preregistration Week, observed Sept. 6-12, to remind eligible 16- and 17-year-olds that they can preregister under state law.

Michigan began allowing teens to preregister in 2024 following legislation approved the previous year.

To qualify, a young person must be a Michigan resident, a U.S. citizen, at least 16 but younger than 17½ and not currently serving a sentence in jail or prison.

Teens do not need a parent's permission to preregister.

Eligible students can complete the process online, by mail or through their local clerk's office. Some teens are automatically preregistered when completing an eligible transaction at a Secretary of State branch, such as receiving a graduated driver's license or state identification card.

Preregistering does not mean a 16-year-old can immediately vote.

Once a preregistered teen turns 17½, the state converts the preregistration into an active voter registration. The person still must be 18 by Election Day before casting a ballot.

That means some 17-year-olds who will turn 18 by Election Day can participate in absentee or early voting before their actual 18th birthday.

The state is also trying to bring voter information directly into schools. Michigan law calls for voter registration and preregistration materials to be made available to students in public high schools.

Voting is not the only way teenagers can participate in an election. Michigan residents as young as 16 can also apply to work as paid election workers. Pay varies by municipality.

The next statewide general election is Nov. 3. Early voting is scheduled for Oct. 24 through Nov. 1.



Michigan scholarship helps students with foster care experience pursue college



MICHIGAN'S FOSTERING FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDES UP TO \$5,000 TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED FOSTER CARE AND ARE PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — A Michigan scholarship program is helping young people who have experienced foster care pay for college while highlighting what those students can accomplish when financial barriers are reduced.

The Fostering Futures Scholarship provides eligible undergraduate students with awards of up to \$5,000 for higher education expenses.

More than 500 students who experienced foster care received help through the scholarship during the 2025-26 school year, according to MI Student Aid.

One of this year's featured scholars is Issah Idris, a junior at Western Michigan University who was born in Ghana and experienced foster care after com-

ing to the United States.

Idris has been accepted into Western Michigan University's nursing program and hopes to eventually work as an intensive care unit nurse.

"Our past does not have to dictate our future," Idris said.

The scholarship is intended for students who experienced Michigan foster care because of abuse or neglect on or after their 13th birthday.

Students must demonstrate financial need, complete the FAFSA, have a high school diploma or equivalent and attend an eligible Michigan college at least half time, among other requirements.

The scholarship can help cover tuition, mandatory fees, books, supplies and other education-related costs.

The 2026-27 application

is currently available through the MiSSG Student Portal. Students seeking priority consideration must apply by Dec. 31, and awards are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Beginning with the 2026-27 application cycle, eligible students generally need to submit the scholarship application only once. They must continue filing a FAFSA each year and meet continuing eligibility requirements.

The Fostering Futures Scholarship Trust Fund is administered through the Michigan De-

partment of Treasury and raises private donations to support the program.

Its annual fundraising gala is scheduled for Sept. 18 at MotorCity Casino in Detroit.

The scholarship was created to address a challenge that can follow young people after foster care: figuring out how to pay for and successfully complete education beyond high school.

For students such as Idris, that assistance can help turn plans for a career into a path toward completing a degree.



**FOSTERING
FUTURES**
Scholarship Trust Fund



SAGINAW PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP

*A Promise
Made and Kept!*

Helping families and students plan for and achieve their educational dreams. A scholarship for Students who live in, attend school, and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone. For 15 years the Saginaw Promise has Invested in Saginaw's Future, its Economy, and its students with a "place based" Scholarship!

 \$1,515,062 has been awarded to over 804 scholars!	 2026/27 academic year awards: \$4,000
 Available for 2 years	 Apply Annually

▶ BACKGROUND

The Saginaw Promise is an economic initiative that is working to change a community, its economy and lives through information and a postsecondary education scholarship. The Saginaw Promise scholarship is both a benefit for and incentive to retain and grow the population while assisting students to earn a program certificate or degree from a technical/trade school, college, or university, which will provide an educated workforce to support local business and attract new businesses.

▶ WHO IS ELIGIBLE

Students who live in, attend school and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone.

▶ WHAT IS THE SAGINAW PROMISE ZONE?

The Saginaw Promise Zone is the geographic area that consists of the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District).

▶ HOW MUCH IS THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The scholarship award for the 2026/27 academic year is \$4,000. The scholarship is available for two years and must be applied for annually.

▶ WHEN TO APPLY?

Senior year of high school

▶ HOW TO APPLY?

Students must complete the online Saginaw Community Foundation Scholarship Application and FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Saginaw Promise scholars have up to six years to use their scholarship.

▶ PLANNING A MOVE

Contact the Saginaw Promise office to confirm if you will still be in the Saginaw Promise Zone. **Important Note:** To be eligible for the Saginaw Promise Scholarship, a student must reside in, attend school and graduate from a high school within the Saginaw Promise Zone.

VISIT [SAGINAWPROMISE.ORG](https://saginawpromise.org) FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

Saginaw Promise / 1 Tuscola St., Suite 200, Saginaw, MI 48607 / (989) 607-3428



Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

Delta College marks Hispanic Heritage Month with culture, conversation and art

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Delta College is opening Hispanic Heritage Month with a series of programs extending from September into December, bringing together culture, education, student experiences, mental health, food and local art.

The college announced its 2026 Hispanic Heritage Month programming Sept. 15. Events will be held at Delta's main campus and its Downtown Saginaw Center.

Programming begins Sept. 16 with the Latino/Hispanic Cultural Festival from 4 to 8 p.m. at Delta College. The festival serves as the kickoff to the college's Hispanic Heritage Month observance.

On Sept. 17, Delta will hold two programs examining Hispanic and Latino identity and education.

A Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion professional development session on Hispanic and Latino cultures will run from noon to 1:30 p.m. in room N007 on the main campus. The discussion will examine the complexity of cultural identities and how they affect belonging and connection among students, employees and the broader community.

Later that day, Delta's El Camino program will bring the conversation to downtown Saginaw.

"Why Should I Go to College?" will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in room 101 at the Downtown Saginaw Center. The program centers the experiences of Hispanic and Latino students while remaining open to everyone. Delta staff members, current students and alumni will participate in a panel

HHM 2026
Hispanic Heritage Month

K?Onda! Festival: Fiesta K?Onda!
SVRC Marketplace | September 11-13 | 4-8pm
Join us at Fiesta K?Onda! located at 203 S. Washington Avenue in Saginaw, where we will have a booth to celebrate the kickoff of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Hispanic/Latino Culture Festival
Downtown Saginaw Center Room 120 | September 16 | 4-8pm
Experience food, music and culture from across different parts of Latin America at the Hispanic/Latino Culture festival.

BEDI PD Session: Hispanic/Latino Cultures
Main Campus M007 | September 17 | Noon-1:30pm
This session will focus on the complexity of cultural identities across Hispanic and Latino cultures. We will explore the impacts on building a sense of belonging and connection for students, faculty, staff and community members.

El Camino Session: Should I go to college?
Downtown Saginaw Center Room 101 | September 17 | 5-6:30pm
El Camino centers the experiences of our Hispanic/Latino students. We will hear from Delta staff, current students and alumni in a panel focused on "Why should I go to college?". Snacks will be provided.

Latino Mental Health Panel
Downtown Saginaw Center | September 24 | 6-7:30pm
This panel discussion will focus on mental health in the Latino/Hispanic community. The talk will touch on addressing access, representation, stigma and support. Panelists include Ángel Gomez, Velencia Mejia and Sevia Reyes with the event moderated by Monica Hernandez-Alaniz.

Choppin' It Up in the City: Tortilla Making!
Main Campus Mezzanine | September 30 | 5-6pm
Choppin' It Up in the City and Delta College are hosting a tortilla making session in the Mezzanine near Red Brick Café. Join us to learn how to make tortillas from scratch and explore this cultural tradition.

Lunch and Learn: Robert "Carlos" Fuentes
Downtown Saginaw Center Room 101 | October 12 | 6-7:30pm
Main Campus M007 | October 14 | Noon-1:30pm
Join us for an Author Talk Lunch and Learn with Robert "Carlos" Fuentes. Fuentes's book *The Vacation* focuses on the experience of a teenage migrant farmworker in Michigan.

Hispanic/Latino Art Exhibit
Main Campus S Wing | October-December 2026
An art exhibit featuring local Hispanic/Latino artists will be on display in the S Wing on main campus.

DELTA COLLEGE IS MARKING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH WITH PROGRAMMING THAT INCLUDES A CULTURAL FESTIVAL, STUDENT AND MENTAL HEALTH PANELS, FOOD TRADITIONS, AUTHOR TALKS AND AN EXHIBIT FEATURING LOCAL HISPANIC AND LATINO ARTISTS. (PHOTO | DELTA COLLEGE)

discussing reasons for pursuing college and their experiences in higher education.

Mental health will take center stage Sept. 24 when Delta hosts a Latino Mental Health Panel from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Downtown

Saginaw Center.

Panelists will discuss mental health in Hispanic and Latino communities, including access to care, representation, stigma and support.

The schedule continues Sept.

30 with a tortilla-making session on Delta's main campus. Choppin' It Up in the City and Delta College will show participants how to make tortillas from scratch while exploring the cultural tradition surrounding the food.

October programming will include two appearances by author Robert "Carlos" Fuentes. Fuentes will participate in an author talk and question-and-answer session from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Oct. 12 at the Downtown Saginaw Center. He will also lead a Lunch and Learn from noon to 1:30 p.m. Oct. 14 on the main campus.

Fuentes' book, *The Vacation*, focuses on the experiences of a teenage migrant farmworker in Michigan.

Visual art will extend the celebration beyond Hispanic Heritage Month itself. Delta plans to feature work by local Hispanic and Latino artists in an exhibit in the main campus S Wing from October through December.

Chris DeEulis, Delta's director of Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, said the college's programming will include community partnerships and opportunities for faculty, staff and students to share their experiences.

Hispanic Heritage Month is observed nationally from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

Additional information about Delta's events is available through the college or by emailing diversity@delta.edu.

Michigan marks Hispanic Heritage Month as Latino population continues to grow

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan entered Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15 with a Hispanic and Latino population that has become an increasingly important part of the state's demographic growth — including in communities across the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II proclaimed Sept. 15 through Oct. 15 Hispanic Heritage Month in Michigan.

Michigan counted 564,422 Hispanic or Latino residents in the 2020 census, representing 5.6% of the state's population. That was up from 4.4% in 2010.

More striking was the role Hispanic residents played in Michigan's overall growth. According to the state proclamation, Hispanic

Americans accounted for more than 66% of Michigan's population increase between 2010 and 2020.

That growth is visible across Mid-Michigan.

The U.S. Census Bureau's current QuickFacts profile lists Hispanic or Latino residents at 9.7% of Saginaw County's population, making it one of the larger Hispanic population shares in The Michigan Banner's coverage area.

The current profiles list Hispanic or Latino residents at 6.4% in Bay County, 5.8% in Isabella County and 3.9% in Midland County. Genesee County's profile also shows a Hispanic and Latino population of roughly 5% of county residents.

Those percentages represent communities with different histories and experiences, from

long-established Mexican American families and migrant farm-worker roots to newer residents arriving from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes Americans whose ancestry connects to Spain, Mexico, Central America, South America and Spanish-speaking nations of the Caribbean.

The observance begins Sept. 15 rather than at the start of the month because Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua celebrate their independence on that date. Mexico's Independence Day follows Sept. 16, and Chile celebrates Sept. 18.

The observance began as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 and was expanded to a month two decades later.

Nationally, the Hispanic pop-

ulation reached an estimated 70.1 million people as of July 1, 2025, according to the Census Bureau. That represented about 21% of the U.S. population and made Hispanics the nation's largest racial or ethnic minority population.

Michigan's proclamation recognizes contributions by Hispanic residents in business, agriculture, education, technology, arts, government and other fields.

Across Mid-Michigan, the month will be marked through festivals, lectures, college programs, art exhibits, business gatherings and cultural events extending into October.

Hispanic Heritage Month concludes Oct. 15.

Hispanic/Latino Commission confirms Saginaw site for Sept. 25 meeting

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan has confirmed the location for its upcoming Saginaw meeting, providing a local opportunity for residents and organizations to connect with the state panel.

The commission will meet from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25, at Delta College's Downtown Saginaw Center, 319 E. Genesee Ave.

The location had not yet been announced when the September meeting was first placed on the commission's statewide calendar.

A virtual option will also be available through Microsoft Teams for people unable to attend

in person.

The 15-member Hispanic/Latino Commission operates under the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity. Commissioners are appointed by the governor to three-year terms with the advice and consent of the state Senate.

The commission advises the governor and Legislature on programs, policies and issues affecting Michigan's Hispanic and Latino population. Its responsibilities include recommending changes to state programs and policies, identifying priorities affecting Hispanic and Latino communities and helping secure recognition of Hispanic and Latino contributions to Michigan.

State law also requires the commission to hold at least six meetings each year, with meetings scheduled in different parts of Michigan to maintain contact with Hispanic-led organizations, community leaders and residents.

The Saginaw meeting continues that traveling schedule.

The commission met in Detroit in March and Lansing in April before holding a June meeting at the Latinx Technology & Community Center in Flint. Commissioners met in Grand Rapids Aug. 28. An October meeting is scheduled in Adrian.

Saginaw County is represented on the commission by Angel Gomez. Current commission

leadership includes Chair Floren시오 Hernandez of Ingham County, Vice Chair Aurora Saucedo of Genesee County and Treasurer Juan "Johnny" Rodriguez of Ottawa County.

The commission traces its origins to the Michigan Advisory Council for the Spanish-Speaking established under Gov. William G. Milliken in 1974. State lawmakers created the Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs the following year. The name was changed to the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan in 2010.

For the Sept. 25 virtual meeting, the Microsoft Teams meeting ID is 238 048 733 231 99 and the passcode is ER2g49gi.

Hoyt Library program to explore Hispanic families' impact on Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The history of Saginaw's Hispanic community will be the focus of an upcoming program at Hoyt Main Library examining the families, businesses and generational stories that have helped shape the area.

Christiana Malacara will present "The Hispanic Community's Impact on Saginaw" from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 3, in the Hoyt Library Auditorium, 505 Janes Ave.

The free program is part of the Public Libraries of Saginaw's Hispanic Heritage Month programming.

Malacara plans to discuss the contributions of Hispanic families and businesses, local history, community influence and stories that have been carried through generations. The presentation is open to adults and teens.

Malacara is a Saginaw-area journalist, broadcaster, entrepreneur and community leader whose work spans local media, La-

HISPANIC
HERITAGE MONTH

**The Hispanic Community's
Impact on Saginaw
with Christiana Malacara**

Hoyt Library Auditorium
Saturday, October 3
2:30-3:30PM

Register at
saginawlibrary.org/events

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SAGINAW JOURNALIST, BROADCASTER AND COMMUNITY LEADER CHRISTIANA MALACARA WILL LEAD AN OCT. 3 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH PRESENTATION AT HOYT MAIN LIBRARY EXAMINING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF HISPANIC FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES TO SAGINAW'S HISTORY. (PHOTO | PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF SAGINAW)



CHRISTIANA MALACARA (PHOTO | FB/THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID, RADIO SHOW WITH CHRISTIANA MALACARA)

tino advocacy and community development.

She is a news reporter for WSGW and Connoisseur Media and creator and host of the award-winning radio show and podcast That's What She Said with Christiana Malacara, which features conversations with women from throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Malacara is also a television host and producer with Delta College Public Media, where she hosts Somos Hispanos, a PBS program highlighting Hispanic people, culture, community issues and events.

Outside of broadcasting, Malacara is an active member of LLEAD Saginaw — Latino Leaders for the Enhancement of Ad-

vocacy and Development — where she has worked on Latino civic engagement, voter participation, education and community development. She is also owner of Third Eye Marketing, a digital media and marketing business.

A Saginaw Township native, Malacara began her college education at Delta College and later earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Western Michigan University.

Her Oct. 3 presentation comes during Hispanic Heritage Month but will focus specifically on the history and influence of Hispanic residents in Saginaw.

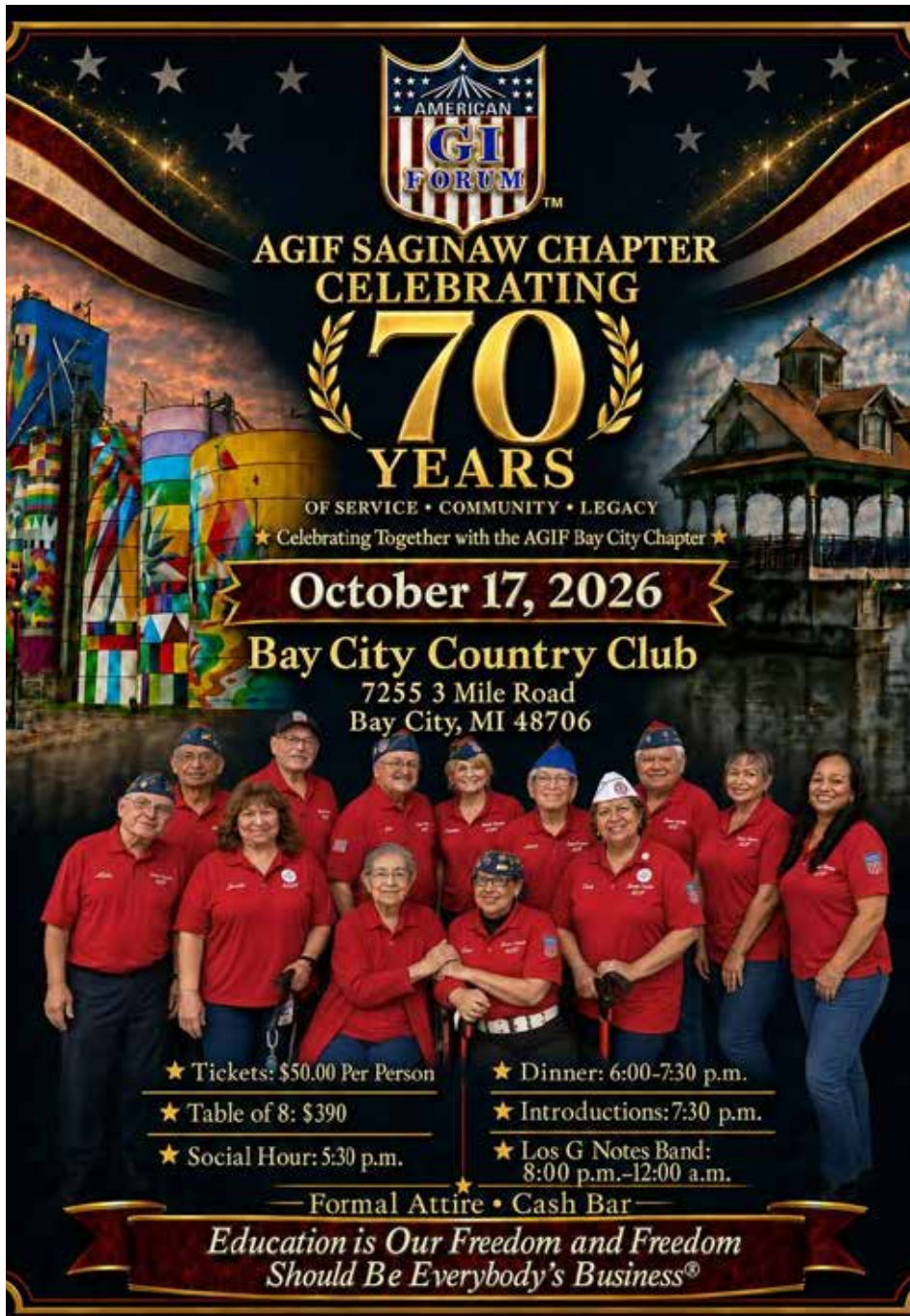
Saginaw's Hispanic community includes generations of families whose stories are connected to agriculture and migrant labor, manufacturing, churches, small businesses, neighborhood organizations and civic leadership.

The library program will examine that history through the people and institutions that helped

establish and sustain the community, including contributions that may not always appear in traditional accounts of Saginaw history.

Registration is required and will remain open until the program begins unless capacity is reached.

The event is free and open to the public.



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MAC Center ARPA spending draws scrutiny; city says funding remains compliant

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Mexican American Council is facing new questions over hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal pandemic-relief funding used at its Saginaw headquarters after a television investigation raised concerns about the organization's tax-exempt status, construction spending and contractor records.

The scrutiny intensified during the week of Sept. 8 after WNEM-TV5 reported that the Internal Revenue Service revoked the Mexican American Council's federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status in May 2023 because the organization had failed to file required federal tax returns for three consecutive years.

The Mexican American Council, commonly known as the MAC, operates the MAC Center at 1537 S. Washington Ave., a historic former Catholic bishop's residence across from Hoyt Park.

Between 2023 and 2024, Saginaw City Council approved a total of \$620,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding for the organization, including money for youth and workforce development and capital improvements at the center.

The city's position, however, is that the organization remains eligible and its use of the federal funds remains in compliance.

City Manager Tim Morales addressed questions about the MAC during the Sept. 14 City Council meeting. Morales said the Mexican American Council remains a non-profit corporation in good standing with the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and that federal ARPA rules did not require an organization receiving the money to hold federal 501(c)(3) status.

State nonprofit corporate status and federal tax-exempt status are separate classifications.

The city reported that \$532,550.18 of the MAC's \$620,000 allocation had been disbursed as of June 30.

That explanation differs from questions raised by WNEM's investigation into the process the city used to select community organizations for ARPA funding.

WNEM reported that Guidehouse, the consulting firm hired by Saginaw to help administer and monitor the city's ARPA program, initially reviewed the MAC and cleared it for funding in February 2023.

The IRS revoked the organization's tax-exempt status several months later.

Former Guidehouse project manager David Sernick told WNEM that the city should have revoked the MAC funding once the organization lost its federal tax-exempt status. The city has maintained that the organization remained eligible and that its expenditures have continued to be monitored.

Questions also have emerged over how the money was spent.

WNEM reviewed invoices, bank records, bids and other documents obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests. The station reported discrepancies involving invoices for construction work at the MAC Center.

Among them was a roof invoice listing a \$93,000 down payment for which WNEM said it could not identify a corresponding payment in the financial records it reviewed.

The investigation also identified documents appearing to describe similar work on the center's front porch ramp more than once.

WNEM reported that 18 invoices from one construction company totaled slightly more than \$294,000, while financial records showed the MAC paid the

company more than \$300,000.

Questions also were raised about window replacement costs.

MAC ARPA finance director John Ayala told City Council in April 2024 that unplanned window replacement was expected to cost between \$18,000 and \$35,000. WNEM later reported that the organization paid a roofing and remodeling company at least \$104,000 for window work, while some older windows remained at the building.

The investigation also reported that the MAC hired an unlicensed and uninsured individual to perform second-floor renovation work under an \$18,000 agreement. Records reviewed by WNEM showed at least \$12,000 had been paid. The station reported that some of the work listed in the agreement remained incomplete when reporters toured the building.

The condition of the historic structure has complicated the renovation project. Previous reports about the MAC Center have documented unexpected costs associated with mold, lead, asbestos and other rehabilitation needs.

MAC representatives previously told City Council that the scope of the restoration grew significantly after work began.

The television investigation also prompted a change on the

organization's board.

Angel Gomez resigned from the Mexican American Council board following publication of the first report. In his resignation letter, Gomez said the information that had been released made it difficult for him to continue serving effectively.

Former MAC volunteer Andrea Paschall and founding member Minnie Rosales also expressed concerns to WNEM about the organization and the renovation spending.

The Mexican American Council declined WNEM's requests for an interview about the investigation. Contractors identified in the report also did not provide responses to the station.

Despite the questions, the MAC Center has continued hosting community activities. Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works partnered with the organization for an outdoor job fair at the South Washington Avenue property Aug. 26.

The city's ARPA program remains under federal spending deadlines. Saginaw received approximately \$52 million through the American Rescue Plan Act, with remaining obligated funds required to be spent by Dec. 31, 2026.

The city says it will continue monitoring the MAC's expenditures for compliance.





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COMMUNITY

Saginaw launches new referral system to connect residents with food, housing and other help

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Health care and community organizations across Saginaw County now have a shared system designed to make it easier to connect residents with food, housing, transportation, health care and other assistance.

The Saginaw County Health Department announced the launch of the Saginaw Information System, or SIS, Sept. 10 after several years of planning and development.

The electronic community information exchange allows participating organizations to send referrals to one another, coordinate services and track what happens after a referral is made.

That means a patient who tells a health care provider that transportation is preventing them from getting to appointments, for example, could be referred through the same network used to connect someone with food assistance, housing support, utility help, benefits or behavioral health care.

The system is integrated with 211 and was designed to reduce duplicate work among organizations while giving providers a way to see whether a person successfully connected with the service to which they were referred.

The Health Department previously described SIS as a single point of entry where participating organizations could see available programs, determine what services a resident may qualify for and follow referrals so people are less likely to fall through gaps between agencies.

Partners involved in the project include 211 of Northeast Michigan, Covenant HealthCare,



Navigate Services. Connect People. Improve Lives.



THE SAGINAW COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS HAVE LAUNCHED THE SAGINAW INFORMATION SYSTEM, WHICH ALLOWS PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS TO COORDINATE AND TRACK REFERRALS FOR SERVICES INCLUDING FOOD, HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION AND HEALTH CARE. (PHOTO | BWELL SAGINAW)

CMU Health, Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority, Saginaw Intermediate School District and Saginaw Community Food Club & Kitchen.

Earlier development work also involved MyMichigan Health, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, the Saginaw County

Commission on Aging, United Way of Saginaw County, Saginaw County Community Action Center and other community partners.

The project has been in development since at least 2023, when the Health Department reported beginning the first phase of a community information ex-

change focused on social factors affecting health.

The system is intended primarily for participating health care and social-service providers rather than as another directory residents have to navigate on their own.

Learn more about SIS at <https://bwellsaginaw.org/sis>.

COMMUNITY

Saginaw prepares for fall Team Up to Clean Up

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Volunteers will spread across Saginaw Sept. 18 for the city's fall Team Up to Clean Up, a community-wide effort to remove litter, tackle weeds and prepare neighborhoods and downtown areas for fall.

The cleanup will run from 9 a.m. to noon, beginning outside the Public Services building, 1435 S. Washington Ave.

Registered volunteers will gather for opening remarks and a light breakfast before being divided into groups and sent to designated locations around the city.

Work will include picking up litter and debris, weeding, edging and other beautification projects.

The fall event will also put additional attention on downtown Saginaw, where volunteer groups will assist businesses with clean-up efforts.

The city provides participants with trash bags, work gloves and other necessary tools and sup-



SAGINAW MAYOR BRENDA MOORE USES A MEGAPHONE TO DIRECT VOLUNTEERS DURING A PREVIOUS TEAM UP TO CLEAN UP EVENT, PART OF THE CITY'S ONGOING EFFORT TO BEAUTIFY NEIGHBORHOODS AND PUBLIC SPACES. (PHOTO | CITY OF SAGINAW)

plies. Volunteers will return to the Public Services building at noon for lunch and a wrap-up.

Team Up to Clean Up is organized by the city's Inspections Division and members of Saginaw City Council. The program began in 2021 and is now held twice a year.

Mayor Brenda Moore, who has helped organize the effort, said the fall cleanup is intended to build on community activity throughout the summer and encourage residents, businesses and neighborhood organizations to take responsibility for the appearance of the city.

The city had asked participants to register by Sept. 15.

Team Up to Clean Up is one of several volunteer-driven beautification efforts that have brought neighborhood organizations, businesses, city employees and residents together to work at sites throughout Saginaw.

Saginaw to celebrate \$872,000 Riverfront/Iron Belle Trail improvements at Wickes Park

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A newly improved stretch of Saginaw's riverfront trail is ready for walkers, cyclists and other visitors following an \$872,000 project at Wickes Park.

The City of Saginaw will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18, for improvements to the Saginaw Riverfront/Iron Belle Trail. The ceremony will take place near Fordney Street at the south end

of the trail on Wickes Park Drive.

Work completed during the spring and summer included crushing, reshaping and paving approximately 1.5 miles of existing trail along the east side of the Saginaw River.

The improvements extend from Wickes Park to Ojibway Island and include another section between Holland Avenue and Emerson Street.

Crews also constructed a new connection leading from the Center Avenue Bridge at Hess Av-

enue down to the existing trail and added trailhead parking at the north end of Wickes Park and south end of Ojibway Island.

Saginaw City Council accepted funding for the project in August 2024 through a DNR Spark grant agreement with the Council of Michigan Foundations.

The local pathway is part of Michigan's larger Iron Belle Trail, a statewide network extending from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula.

Public Services Director Phil

Karwat said the improvements give residents and visitors another way to use the riverfront while connecting Saginaw to a much larger statewide recreation network.

Wickes Park encompasses more than 90 acres and already offers opportunities for fishing, kayaking and other outdoor recreation.

The improved trail adds walking and biking to the ways residents can experience the park and Saginaw River.

The Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce presents:

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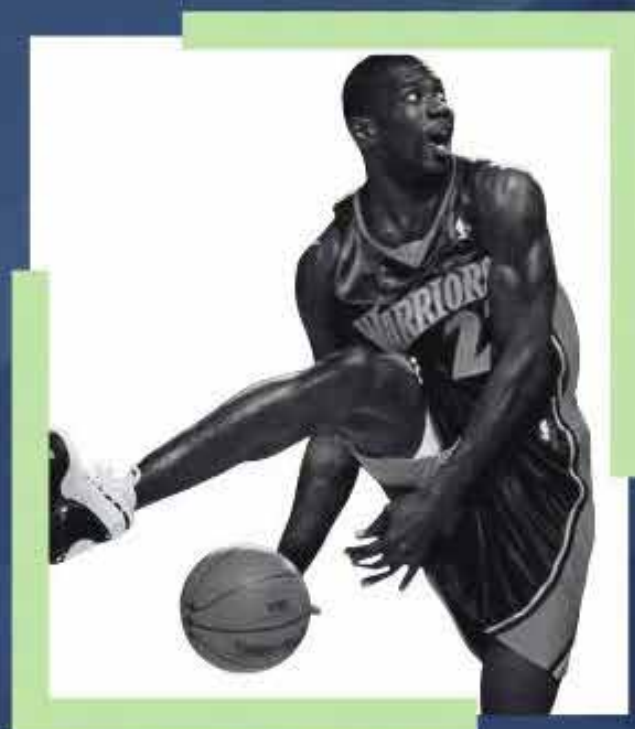
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COMMUNITY

Flint recycling reaches record high after 253% increase



FLINT MAYOR NEELEY AND GENESEE COUNTY LEADERS JOINED MICHIGAN DEPT. OF EGLE ON SEPT. 14 TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE CITY IS RECYCLING MORE THAN 2,200 TONS OF MATERIAL ANNUALLY, A 253% INCREASE FROM BEFORE ITS CITYWIDE CART PROGRAM BEGAN. (PHOTO | CITY OF FLINT)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint residents are recycling more than three times as much material as they did before the city switched to rolling recycling carts two years ago, pushing the city's recycling total to its highest level on record.

City officials announced the milestone Sept. 14 alongside representatives from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy and Genesee County.

A 2026 analysis found Flint is now recycling more than 2,200 tons of material annually, compared with 624 tons before the citywide cart program began.

That represents a 253% increase.

The change follows Flint's 2024 distribution of more than 68,000 free trash and recycling carts to more than 34,000 households.

The wheeled carts replaced an earlier system and gave households larger, covered containers for curbside recyclables.

City officials credit the carts with making recycling easier to use while also reducing loose waste and improving working conditions for sanitation crews.

Mayor Sheldon Neeley said the increase shows what can happen when residents are given easier access to recycling.

The city is now looking toward another potential expansion of recycling infrastructure.

A proposed Genesee County Recycling & Education Center, supported by state EGLE funding, would provide additional

regional recycling capacity and public education.

Waste Services Coordinator Heather Griffin joined Neeley, EGLE Director Phillip Roos, county representatives and neighborhood recycling advocates for the Sept. 14 announcement.

Rollingwood Neighborhood Association President Annette Reynolds was among the neighborhood representatives attending the event.

Flint contracts with Priority Waste for residential waste collection.

COMMUNITY

Flint breaks ground on \$17.5 million regional police and fire training campus



FLINT OFFICIALS BROKE GROUND SEPT. 10 ON A NEW REGIONAL POLICE AND FIRE TRAINING CAMPUS AT STEWART AND INDUSTRIAL AVENUES. PLANS INCLUDE AN INDOOR SHOOTING RANGE, FIRE TRAINING AREAS AND A BURN TOWER. (PHOTO | CITY OF FLINT)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint has broken ground on a regional police and fire training campus designed to give first responders from throughout Genesee County a place to train for emergencies year-round.

City leaders, police and fire officials gathered Sept. 10 at Stewart and Industrial avenues to mark the beginning of the project.

Plans call for a roughly

19,300-square-foot public safety campus with separate police and fire training components.

The police side is expected to include a 50-yard indoor shooting range and space for simulated tactical training.

Firefighters will have access to training areas and a burn tower designed to simulate real-world fire conditions. An existing fire station at the site will also be renovated for training use.

Project plans list an estimated cost of \$17.5 million.

The facility is intended to serve more than Flint's own police and fire departments. City officials said emergency responders representing more than 30 governmental units across Genesee County could ultimately use the campus.

That regional approach would allow departments that may later respond to the same emergency to train together before an actual crisis occurs.

Flint Police Chief Terence Green, Fire Chief Theron Wig-

gins, Mayor Sheldon Neeley and Chief of Staff Ed Taylor participated in the groundbreaking.

Officials said the site itself has also undergone changes as blighted structures were cleared in preparation for the project.

Wiggins said the training center will give firefighters opportunities to practice making decisions in conditions that more closely resemble the emergencies they encounter on the job.

Current plans call for the campus to open in early 2028.

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COMMUNITY

Midland Habitat marks 100th home after 38 years of building



SUPPORTERS GATHERED SEPT. 10 FOR MIDLAND COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S ANNUAL HOUSE PARTY FUNDRAISER, WHERE THE ORGANIZATION CELEBRATED CONSTRUCTION OF ITS 100TH HOME. THE MILESTONE HOUSE IS BEING BUILT THROUGH HABITAT'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GREATER MICHIGAN CONSTRUCTION ACADEMY. (PHOTO | MIDLAND COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Midland County Habitat for Humanity marked a major milestone Sept. 10 as supporters gathered around a house still taking shape inside the Greater Michigan Construction Academy.

It is Habitat's 100th home in Midland County.

The nonprofit celebrated the milestone during its annual House Party fundraiser at the construction academy, where students are building the house before it is moved to its permanent site.

Midland County Habitat was incorporated in 1988 and built its first house the following year.

The 100th house is also the ninth home built through a partnership between Habitat and the Greater Michigan Construction Academy.

Habitat supplies materials and construction support, while academy students gain hands-on experience building the structure. The partnership allows Habitat to add an additional house to its construction schedule each year.

The current home is being assembled inside a pole barn at the academy on West Wackerly

Street.

Once the structure reaches the appropriate stage, a professional house mover will transport it in one piece to 100 Wane-tah Drive. The move is expected in June or July 2027.

Habitat CEO Jennifer Chappel said the milestone comes as Midland County faces continued demand for affordable housing.

The organization generally works with households earning between 30% and 80% of area median income. Habitat homeowners do not receive houses for free; they purchase the homes through affordable mortgages

and participate in the building process.

Chappel said rising property appraisals have made it more difficult to keep newly constructed homes within reach for households at the lower end of Habitat's income range.

Habitat has responded to changing housing needs by considering a broader mix of homes, including two-bedroom and multifamily options.

The organization's mission has remained centered on affordable homeownership even as the types and costs of housing have changed.

COMMUNITY

The Arc of Midland moves closer to first permanent home in 70-year history

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — After more than 70 years of serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc of Midland is preparing to own a building of its own.

Midland City Council voted 4-0 Sept. 14 to approve a conditional land use permit allowing the nonprofit to move into a former child care center at 5114 Jefferson Ave.

The organization currently rents office space on Louanna Street.

Executive Director Laurel Bucci told council members purchasing the Jefferson Avenue building will give The Arc an asset in its own name for the first time while providing enough accessible space for its staff.

The 2,243-square-foot building formerly housed Early Explorers Child Care and Learning



THE ARC OF MIDLAND IS PREPARING TO PURCHASE ITS FIRST PERMANENT HOME AFTER MORE THAN 70 YEARS OF SERVING PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES. (PHOTO | THE ARC OF MIDLAND)

Center and has been vacant since the end of 2021.

The Arc plans to purchase the property and renovate the interior without significantly changing the layout of the site.

The organization provides advocacy, financial management, educational advocacy, guardian-

ship and other support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Bucci also addressed questions raised about the proposed use of the property, telling council members The Arc does not provide residential housing and

has no plans to house people at the Jefferson Avenue location.

One issue discussed during the approval process involved a shared driveway with a neighboring home.

Bucci said she has been communicating with the neighbor about installing a fence or landscaping to create separation and address traffic and safety concerns.

The neighboring homeowner told council members he supported The Arc's move but wanted a physical barrier between the properties.

Mayor Maureen Donker was absent from the meeting.

The Arc's website says the organization has spent more than 70 years advocating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and promoting their participation and inclusion throughout Midland County.

United Way launches Impact Academy for Midland community leaders

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Nine local professionals are getting a closer look at the challenges facing Midland County through a new leadership program launched by United Way of Midland County.

United Way announced its inaugural Impact Academy cohort Sept. 15.

The six-session program is designed to move participants beyond general awareness of community issues by giving them firsthand exposure to nonprofit

organizations, community needs and the work being done to address them.

Sessions will include presentations from regional experts, visits to United Way partner agencies, community projects and conversations with local leaders.

The curriculum is built around United Way's four impact areas: Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security and Community Resiliency.

Participants will also examine ALICE — households that are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed — along with advocacy and other issues affect-

ing Midland County residents.

The first cohort includes professionals representing Dow, Members First Credit Union, Midland Public Schools, Case Systems, Tri-Star Trust, Wealth Enhancement Group, DuPont, Garber Chevrolet and SYM Financial Advisors.

United Way Community Engagement Manager Andrea Plouff said the program was created to help participants better understand local challenges and consider how they can use their own roles to contribute to solutions.

The inaugural class was

drawn from employees nominated by United Way's Top 25 Companies That Care.

United Way CEO Holly Miller said the organization hopes the first class becomes the beginning of a larger network of community and philanthropic leaders.

The program will continue through the winter and conclude with a simulation and graduation in February.

United Way said it hopes to expand Impact Academy to additional members of the community in future years.

COMMUNITY

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POLITICS

Brinks, Greene hear Saginaw residents' concerns about rising costs



DEMOCRATIC LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR NOMINEE WINNIE BRINKS, LEFT, AND STATE SEN. CHEDRICK GREENE MEET WITH SAGINAW-AREA RESIDENTS SEPT. 14 AT FIRST WARD COMMUNITY CENTER DURING A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON RISING COSTS FOR HOUSING, UTILITIES, HEALTH CARE AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES. (PHOTO | CHEDRICK GREENE/FACEBOOK)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Rising costs for housing, utilities, health care, food and transportation dominated a Sept. 14 discussion at Saginaw's First Ward Community Center as Democratic lieutenant governor nominee Winnie Brinks and state Sen. Chedrick Greene met with area residents.

Brinks, the Michigan Senate majority leader and running mate of Democratic gubernatorial nominee Jocelyn Benson, joined Greene, D-Saginaw, for a roundtable centered on affordability. Greene represents the

35th Senate District, which includes portions of Saginaw, Bay and Midland counties.

Greene said listening directly to residents is an important part of representing the district, describing the people attending the meeting as neighbors rather than simply constituents.

Pastor Marcelle Smith of Historic Second Baptist Church in Bay City told the officials that he sees cost of living as one factor pushing younger residents to leave the region. Retired clinical social worker Pat Parker Person discussed the greater effect rising prices can have on households living on lower or fixed incomes.

Electricity costs were also part of the conversation. Brinks said she supports limiting how frequently major utilities such as Consumers Energy and DTE can seek permission from state regulators to increase rates.

The discussion touched on a statewide proposal that will appear on Michigan's Nov. 3 ballot involving campaign contributions from regulated utilities and certain large government contractors. Brinks said she favored allowing voters to decide the proposal rather than having the Senate pass alternative legislation that could have kept the initiative off the ballot.

Brinks told reporters after the meeting that the discussion reinforced concerns she has heard about the combined pressure of food, energy, housing and transportation expenses.

The roundtable featured Democratic officeholders and candidates and did not include representatives of the Republican gubernatorial ticket. The event therefore reflected the perspectives of the participants and residents who attended rather than a debate between the competing campaigns.

Michigan voters will choose a new governor and lieutenant governor Nov. 3.

POLITICS

Delta College to bring regional clerks together for election security panel

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Election officials from Saginaw, Bay and Midland counties will come together at Delta College next month to explain how local elections are administered and what safeguards are used to protect ballots.

“Democracy’s Front Lines: Local Clerks on Election Security in Michigan” will begin at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, in Delta College’s Lecture Theater, G160, at the main campus in University Center. The program is free and open to the public.

Panelists will include Saginaw County Clerk Vanessa Guerra, Bay County Clerk Kathleen Zanotti, Midland County Director of Elections Ann Manary and Midland County Deputy Clerk John Keefer.

The discussion will focus on ballot integrity, election security and the procedures local officials use to make sure ballots are properly cast and counted. The clerks will also address questions and concerns voters may have about Michigan’s election process.

Delta College political science professor Lisa Lawrason will moderate the panel.

The program comes less than a month before Michigan’s Nov. 3 general election and at a time when election administration is again receiving significant public attention. A Gallup Democracy for All/Kettering Foundation survey conducted this summer found nearly three-fourths of Americans expressed at least a fair amount of concern about multiple aspects of the election process, according to information released with the Delta event.

Local clerks handle many of the mechanics voters encounter directly, including voter reg-



(TOP LEFT) SAGINAW COUNTY CLERK VANESSA GUERRA, BAY COUNTY CLERK KATHLEEN ZANOTTI AND (BOTTOM LEFT) MIDLAND COUNTY ELECTION OFFICIALS ANN MANARY AND JOHN KEEFER WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN OCT. 6 PANEL AT DELTA COLLEGE EXAMINING BALLOT INTEGRITY AND ELECTION SECURITY. (PHOTOS | COURTESY OF DELTA COLLEGE)

istration records, absentee ballots, polling locations, election workers and the tabulation and reporting processes used at the local level.

Lawrason said the event is intended to give residents an opportunity to hear directly from the people responsible for ad-

ministering elections in their communities rather than relying solely on national political discussion about election security.

The panel is part of a broader week of election-related programming at Delta. The college calendar lists Election Engagement Week activities beginning

Oct. 6, including a mock election with Bay County election clerks, an Issues & Parties Day and programming about the statewide initiatives appearing on the November ballot.

The Oct. 6 clerk panel is scheduled to run until 11:30 a.m.

POLITICS

Rogers declines FOX 2 debate; El-Sayed appears alone

BY MB STAFF

DETROIT — Michigan's two major-party candidates for an open U.S. Senate seat did not meet face-to-face as planned Sept. 15 after Republican Mike Rogers declined a FOX 2 Detroit debate hours before it began, leaving Democratic nominee Abdul El-Sayed to participate alongside an empty podium.

FOX 2 and the Michigan Debate Committee invited both candidates Aug. 5, one day after the primary election. El-Sayed accepted the following day. FOX 2 said Rogers' campaign acknowledged receiving the invitation but had not committed by the station's Sept. 1 deadline. His campaign formally declined on the morning of the event.

Rogers' campaign said he would not participate because of what it characterized as bias by



DEMOCRAT ABDUL EL-SAYED, LEFT, AND REPUBLICAN MIKE ROGERS ARE COMPETING FOR MICHIGAN'S OPEN U.S. SENATE SEAT. ROGERS DECLINED A SEPT. 15 FOX 2 DETROIT DEBATE, WHILE EL-SAYED PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENT ALONGSIDE AN EMPTY PODIUM. (PHOTO | U.S. CONGRESS; KENNETH C. ZIRKEL/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

moderator Roop Raj. Communications Director Alyssa Brouillet pointed to past comments Raj made about El-Sayed and said the campaign did not believe the setting would provide a fair debate. Those are allegations from the Rogers campaign, not an independent finding of bias.

Raj rejected the characterization, saying FOX 2 asks difficult questions of Republicans and Democrats and does not try to take sides.

The station proceeded with the hourlong program. El-Sayed answered questions on health care, education, artificial intelligence data centers, U.S. foreign policy and his relationship with political streamer Hasan Piker.

On health care, El-Sayed continued advocating for a Medicare for All system. Asked about large data centers being proposed around Michigan, he called for federal requirements involving union employment, utility rates,

water use, power reliability and local negotiations. He also said local and state moratoriums should remain an option until broader federal standards are established.

El-Sayed also repeatedly criticized Rogers for not attending. Because Rogers was absent, viewers did not hear his responses to the same questions during the FOX 2 event.

The missed appearance does not mean the candidates will not debate before Election Day. Rogers' campaign says he has committed to debates hosted by WOOD TV8 and WXYZ-TV. Both Rogers and El-Sayed previously agreed to the WOOD-TV debate scheduled for Oct. 8.

They are competing for the seat being vacated by Democratic U.S. Sen. Gary Peters, who is retiring at the end of his term. The general election is Nov. 3.

Supreme Court keeps USPS mail-ballot rule blocked for November election

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan election officials can continue preparing for the Nov. 3 election under the state's existing absentee-voting procedures after the U.S. Supreme Court declined Sept. 14 to allow a new U.S. Postal Service mail-ballot rule to take effect this year.

The court denied the federal government's request to pause a preliminary injunction blocking mandatory implementation of the rule. The underlying lawsuit remains unresolved, meaning the decision applies to whether the rule can be enforced while the case continues.

The USPS rule would require

states to provide the Postal Service with information on voters eligible to receive mail ballots and would establish new standards for ballot envelopes. The Postal Service could decline to deliver ballots to people not appearing on its lists or ballots sent in envelopes that did not meet the new requirements.

The federal government argued that the requirements fall within the Postal Service's authority to establish rules for preparing and delivering mail and would help ensure election mail reaches its intended recipient. Michigan and 24 other states challenged the rule, arguing that it intruded on state authority over elections and was being imposed too close to Election Day for elec-

tion officials to implement safely.

The Supreme Court's brief order said the government was unlikely to succeed in its challenge to the preliminary injunction and had not shown that the factors required for emergency relief favored allowing the rule to take effect.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote separately that he believed there was at least a possibility that the Postal Service has statutory authority to adopt such a rule. He concluded, however, that implementing it for the 2026 election would be unreasonable because state and local officials did not have enough time to make the required changes. Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas dissented and would have allowed

the rule to take effect.

The timing is particularly important in Michigan. Clerks must begin sending ballots to eligible military and overseas voters by Sept. 19, and absentee ballots must be available to other Michigan voters beginning Sept. 24.

Mail voting represents a substantial share of Michigan participation. In the 2024 general election, 2,232,721 Michigan voters cast ballots by mail, accounting for about 39% of all ballots cast statewide.

The federal lawsuit will continue, leaving open the possibility that courts could eventually decide whether USPS has the authority to impose similar requirements in future elections.

HEALTH

MyMichigan Saginaw launches fall wellness lunch series



MYMICHIGAN MEDICAL CENTER SAGINAW WILL BEGIN ITS FALL WELLNESS WEDNESDAY LUNCH & LEARN SERIES OCT. 7, WITH PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON HEALTHY AGING, FALL PREVENTION AND LIFESTYLE MEDICINE. (PHOTO | MYMICHIGAN HEALTH)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Healthy aging, fall prevention and lifestyle approaches to chronic disease will be the focus of a three-part fall education series at MyMichigan Medical Center Saginaw.

The Wellness Wednesday Lunch & Learn Series begins Oct. 7 at the Health Education Center on the medical center campus, 800 S. Washington Ave.

Doors will open at 11 a.m., with each program running from

11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The first session, “Young at Heart, Wise in Spirit: The Aging Journey,” will be presented Oct. 7 by Jennifer Root, a board-certified specialist in oncology physical therapy with MyMichigan Health.

The discussion will examine aging from a whole-person perspective and focus on ways physical, emotional and other aspects of wellness can contribute to balance and quality of life.

Fall prevention will be the focus Oct. 14 during “Look Be-

fore You Leap (and Walk): Think First to Prevent Falls.”

Kelli Jankens, trauma injury prevention manager at MyMichigan Health, will discuss practical steps people can take at home and in the community to reduce fall risk. The session will also examine the roles exercise, nutrition, vision and medications can play in staying steady and independent.

The final program, “Lifestyle Medicine: Hands-on Approach to Managing a More Healthy Life,” is scheduled Oct. 28.

Jennifer Felten, a registered nurse with MyMichigan Health community education, will discuss six areas of lifestyle medicine that can help people prevent or manage chronic conditions and improve overall well-being.

The session will include a live cooking demonstration and recipes participants can take home.

Individual sessions cost \$10, or participants can register for all three for \$25. Advance registration is required.

HEALTH

Flint plans three days of suicide prevention events and training

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint residents will have three days of opportunities to learn how to recognize suicide warning signs, respond to someone in crisis and connect people with mental health resources when the city hosts a suicide awareness and prevention initiative Sept. 24-26.

Activities will be centered at Flint City Hall, 1101 S. Saginaw St., beginning with an eight-hour Suicide Awareness Training from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sept. 24 in the City Hall Dome.

The training will be presented through SOUL Shop, a program

facilitated by Genesee Health System. Participants will learn how to identify signs that someone may be struggling, begin difficult conversations and help connect a person with appropriate support.

The training is open to the public and is intended for everyday community members, not only mental health professionals.

Programming continues from 4 to 7 p.m. Sept. 25 on the lawn behind City Hall with community speakers, workshops, entertainment, food trucks and information from local organizations.

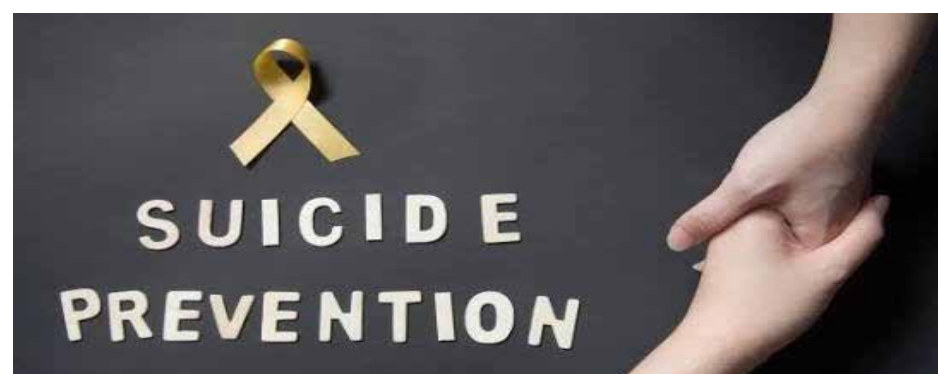
The final day, Sept. 26, will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and include panel discussions, enter-

tainment, food trucks and additional community resources.

Mayor Sheldon Neeley said the events are intended to encourage residents to recognize that suicide prevention can begin with connection and a willingness to ask someone how they are doing.

The three-day effort comes during Suicide Prevention Month, observed nationally each September.

People experiencing a mental health or suicide-related crisis can call or text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The service is available 24 hours a day.



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HEALTH

Mid-Michigan doctors highlight postpartum mental health warning signs

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Mid-Michigan physicians are urging families to recognize the difference between common emotional changes after childbirth and more serious postpartum mental health conditions that may require professional care.

The issue received renewed attention this month as physicians discussed postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis following national coverage of a high-profile Massachusetts criminal case involving severe maternal mental illness.

Dr. Alane Laws-Barker, an obstetrician and gynecologist with University of Michigan Health-Sparrow, and Dr. Octavia Cannon of Alliance Obstetrics and Gynecology discussed the issue with WILX.

Many new mothers experience what is commonly called the “baby blues,” which can include mood swings, anxiety, crying, irritability and trouble sleeping during the days immediately following childbirth.



HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ARE ENCOURAGING FAMILIES TO LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS AND TO SEEK HELP WHEN SYMPTOMS BECOME SEVERE OR PERSISTENT. (PHOTO | FILE PHOTO)

Those symptoms generally improve within about two weeks.

Postpartum depression is more serious and can include persistent sadness, severe mood changes, difficulty bonding with a baby, withdrawal from family and friends, exhaustion, anxiety, feelings of hopelessness or difficulty completing everyday tasks.

Symptoms can begin during pregnancy or develop during the first year after childbirth.

Postpartum psychosis is much less common but is con-

sidered a medical emergency. Symptoms can include severe confusion, hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, extreme agitation and thoughts or behaviors that could place the mother or baby in danger.

Health professionals recommend contacting a medical provider when symptoms persist beyond two weeks, become more severe or interfere with a parent's ability to care for themselves or their child.

Immediate help should be

sought when a person experiences thoughts of harming themselves or their baby.

Mid-Michigan families can also access behavioral health services through local hospitals, community mental health organizations and perinatal support programs.

Anyone experiencing a mental health or suicide-related emergency can call or text 988. In an immediate emergency involving danger to a parent or child, call 911.

Bay City senior expo offers free screenings and community resources

BY MB STAFF

BAY CITY, Mich. — Seniors and their families can connect with health professionals, community organizations and government services during a free senior expo Sept. 16 at the Bay County Community Center.

Great Lakes Bay Healthcare Connect is hosting the event

from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the community center, 800 John F. Kennedy Drive.

Free health screenings will include hearing, vision and blood pressure checks, along with other wellness services.

Organizations serving older adults will also be available to provide information about programs intended to help seniors remain healthy, active and

independent.

The Michigan Secretary of State Mobile Office will participate, allowing attendees to handle certain services such as driver's license renewals without making a separate trip to a branch office.

Food and door prizes will also be available.

Great Lakes Bay Healthcare Connect brings together profes-

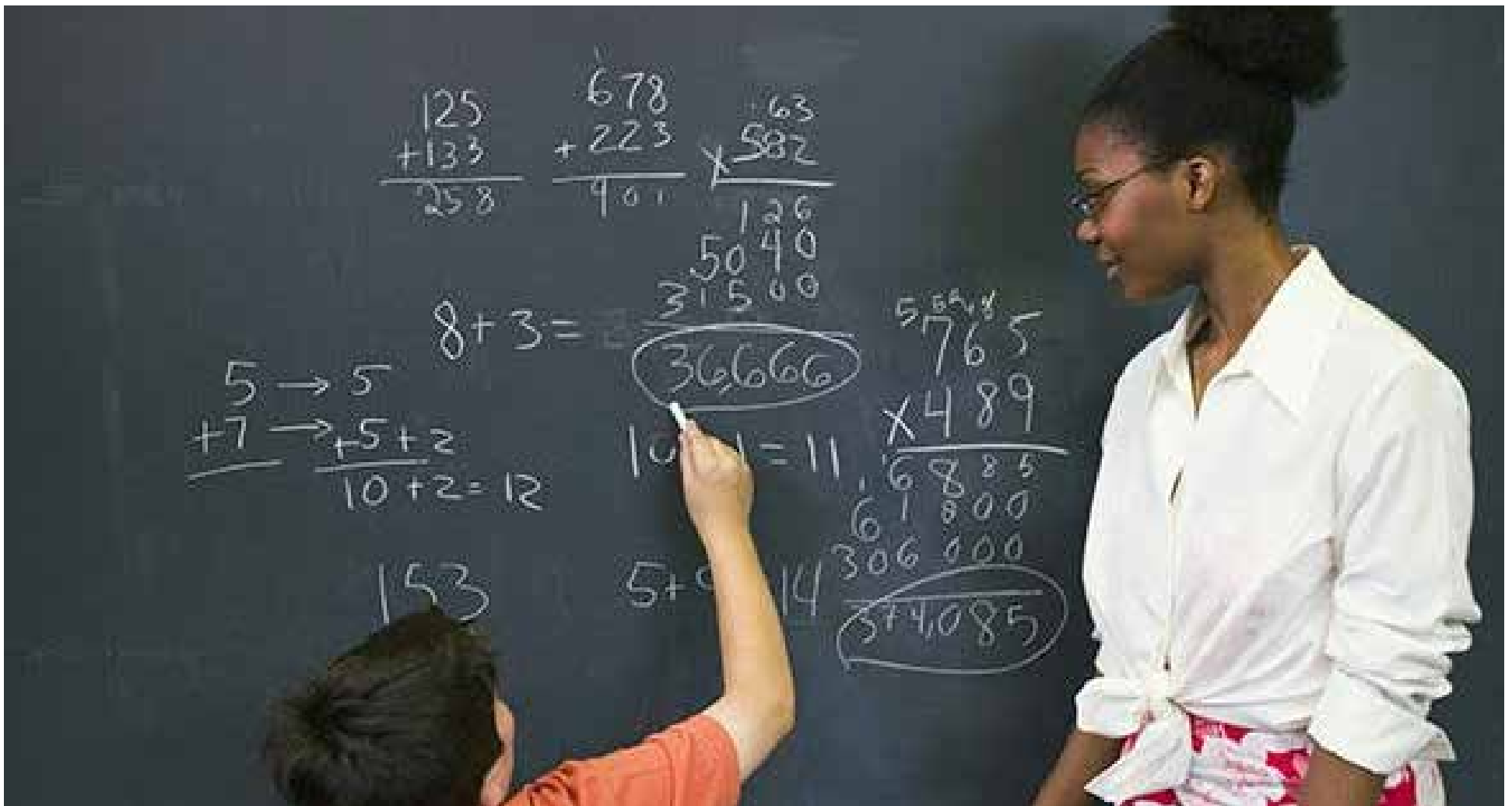
sionals and organizations involved in senior care, health care and related services throughout the region.

The expo gives residents an opportunity to ask questions in person and learn about services they may not know are available.

The event is free and open to seniors, caregivers and family members.

EDUCATION

Michigan unveils new mathematics framework for schools



THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS INTRODUCED A NEW STATEWIDE MATHEMATICS FRAMEWORK DESIGNED TO GIVE EDUCATORS PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR TEACHING THE STATE'S K-12 MATHEMATICS STANDARDS. (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan educators are getting a new statewide resource designed to provide more consistent guidance on how mathematics is taught from the earliest grades through high school.

The Michigan Department of Education unveiled the 2026 Michigan Mathematics Framework during the State Board of Education's September meeting.

The framework does not replace Michigan's K-12 mathematics standards, which establish what students are expected to know. Instead, it is intended to

help teachers and districts determine how those standards can be taught effectively through curriculum, classroom instruction and assessment.

The interactive digital resource will include sections covering a shared vision for mathematics education, curriculum, instruction and coordinated systems. A "Grab N Go Toolkit" will also provide materials for educators, students, parents and community partners.

MDE identified six characteristics it says should be part of meaningful mathematics instruction, including helping students think mathematically, recognize connections between

mathematical concepts, develop confidence in their ability to use math and understand how mathematics applies to the world around them.

The department is initially conducting a limited launch of the framework so educators and other stakeholders can provide feedback before the final version is approved and rolled out statewide.

Professional development and technical assistance are expected to accompany the broader rollout.

The new framework comes as Michigan continues trying to improve student mathematics performance.

State assessment results released earlier this month showed that proficiency levels across many subjects remained relatively flat compared with 2025. MDE has identified mathematics improvement as one of several priorities alongside literacy, science and social studies.

The framework is also intended to give districts common guidance while still allowing teachers to make instructional decisions based on the students in their classrooms.

Once the feedback period is complete, the full framework will be available through the Michigan Department of Education website.

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EDUCATION

Delta College marks 65 years with regional open houses

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Delta College is celebrating 65 years of serving the Great Lakes Bay Region with a series of community open houses in Midland, Saginaw and Bay City.

The college announced the anniversary events Sept. 11 as it reflects on a history that began when Delta opened in 1961.

Nearly 70,000 students have graduated from Delta during the

past 65 years, entering careers throughout the region or continuing their education at four-year colleges and universities.

The anniversary also comes during a leadership transition for the college.

New Delta College President Michelle Allmendinger will attend the three open houses, giving community members an opportunity to meet her while visiting Delta's regional centers.

The first event will be held

from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21, at the Downtown Midland Center, 419 E. Ellsworth St.

Delta's Downtown Saginaw Center, 319 E. Genesee Ave., will host an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. Sept. 28.

The final gathering will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 15 at the Downtown Bay City Center, 100 Center Ave.

Refreshments will be available, and no advance registration is required.

Delta has grown considerably since its early years, with its main campus in University Center supplemented by learning centers in each of the region's three urban communities.

The college now offers more than 140 programs covering university transfer, health care, skilled trades, public safety, business, technology and other career fields.

The 65th anniversary events are free and open to the public.

Delta dedicates Carlyon Gym in honor of longtime president and wife

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — A familiar Delta College gathering place now carries the names of two people whose connection to the college dates nearly to its beginning.

Delta dedicated the Carlyon Gym Sept. 11 in honor of the late Donald J. and Betty Carlyon, recognizing their decades of involvement with the college and surrounding community.

The facility was previously known as Pioneer Gymnasium.

Don Carlyon joined Delta in 1960, before the college welcomed its first students and before construction of the main campus had been completed.

He was Delta's third employee.

Carlyon became president in 1964 and remained in the position until retiring in 1992, making him the longest-serving president in Delta College history.

During those years, the college expanded its academic programs, facilities and role throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region.



(L TO R) DR. MICHELLE ALLMENDINGER, ERIC BRAEUTIGAM, SUZIE CARLYON, DAVID CARLYON, RICK CARLYON, RON BRAEUTIGAM, JAN BRAEUTIGAM, MICHELLE CARLYON AND SCOTT CARLYON PICTURED ON SEPT. 11 FOR THE DEDICATION OF CARLYON GYM IN HONOR OF LONGTIME DELTA PRESIDENT DONALD J. CARLYON AND HIS WIFE, BETTY. (PHOTO | DELTA COLLEGE)

Betty Carlyon also became closely associated with campus life. Delta remembers her for welcoming students, employees, alumni and visitors and describes her as the college's unofficial first lady.

The couple also had a long-standing connection to Delta athletics.

They frequently attended

athletic events and were known for welcoming visiting athletes and coaches into their home, making the gym a fitting location for the permanent tribute.

Members of the Carlyon family joined Delta President Michelle Allmendinger and other college representatives for the Sept. 11 dedication ceremony.

The Carlyon name was al-

ready part of Delta before the gym dedication. The Donald and Betty Carlyon Endowed Teaching Chair, first awarded in 1994, supports faculty members pursuing professional projects and educational initiatives.

The renamed gym provides another permanent connection between the Carlyon family and the college they helped shape.

EDUCATION

The importance of a strong start



STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM (GENERATED IMAGE)



BY CRAIG DOUGLAS

The opening school bells have sounded, and routines are being firmed up. The point I am making here is simple: Starting the academic year strong is important.

Here are some considerations. Parents can focus upon

giving consistent support. A start is the supper table question, “How was school today?” Beyond that, it is important for parents to closely monitor classes. This includes reviewing assignments (e.g., spelling words for the week) and looking at papers (e.g., tests taken and scored). Also, learning how to log into school software to look at grades posted online and inquiring about anything below a B or B-. If there is a C or D grade, what happened? What went wrong?

These early “look-ins” can help monitor and, if need be, adjust studies. Most would agree the work starts “easy” and gains

increases in difficulty. If early work is a challenge, it is a warning signal. The academics will not get easier!

Furthermore, parents can set the stage for the student by creating an environment where the student can concentrate and study. This may mean a desk, lamp, and supplies. It could involve a computer, depending upon the age of the student and the expectations established by the school.

The bottom line is to keep a good attitude while maintaining reasonable high expectations. Parents should not settle for low grades; students should know

that grades of B or higher should be the norm.

This is personal for me because as a college freshman I failed my first college test. While it did not defeat me, it put me behind and made the entire semester a lot harder than it should have been. Get off to a strong start is MUCH more strategic and positive for long-term success.

I wish all students well in the first part of the 2026-27 school year (and beyond!).

Resource:
<https://tguskey.com/wp-content/uploads/ASCD-Express-2021-Success.pdf>

EDUCATION

Midland Public Schools details 10-year sinking fund proposal

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Midland Public Schools is holding a series of community information sessions as voters prepare to decide a proposed 1.5-mill sinking fund intended to address school security, building repairs, transportation and technology.

The proposal will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot and would authorize the district to levy up to 1.5 mills annually for 10 years, from 2026 through 2035.

One mill equals \$1 for every \$1,000 of taxable property value. Under the proposal, the maximum levy would equal \$1.50 for each \$1,000 of taxable value.

MPS estimates the proposal

would generate approximately \$4.57 million in its first year and about \$46 million over the 10-year period, although collections could change as property values change.

The district has identified school safety and security, repairs to aging facilities, transportation and technology as priorities.

Potential projects include secure building entry systems, security cameras, roof repairs and replacements, heating and cooling improvements and playground safety work.

The fund could also be used to replace school buses, technology and certain vehicles and equipment used to maintain district buildings.

Unlike a traditional school bond, a sinking fund allows a district to collect property taxes and use the money for legally authorized capital expenses without borrowing the entire amount upfront.

Superintendent Penny Miller-Nelson discussed the proposal during the first of seven scheduled informational sessions Sept. 9 at Northeast Middle School.

The proposal follows the defeat of a \$285 million school bond request in May 2025.

MPS subsequently formed a community steering committee to examine facility needs and potential funding options. The district says an independent assessment identified approximately \$550 million in facility needs

over the coming decade.

District officials have emphasized that the sinking fund would not address every project identified in that assessment.

The average MPS building is approximately 65 years old, and nine district buildings were constructed between 1950 and 1970.

The Board of Education unanimously approved placing the sinking fund proposal on the November ballot.

The district has scheduled additional informational sessions ahead of Election Day and says annual independent audits would be conducted if the proposal is approved.

Voters will decide the measure Nov. 3.

SVSU joins Lansing Promise, expanding college options for students

BY MB STAFF

LANSGING, Mich. — Lansing students receiving Promise scholarships now have another four-year university option after Saginaw Valley State University joined the Lansing Promise program.

Lansing Promise and SVSU signed a memorandum of understanding Sept. 8 allowing eligible scholars to use their scholarship benefits at the university beginning immediately.

The agreement expands the list of postsecondary choices available to students who live, attend school and graduate within the Lansing School District boundaries.

Eligible Lansing Promise scholars can receive up to \$20,000 toward tuition and

mandatory fees at an approved four-year university. The program also provides scholarship options for students attending Lansing Community College, approved skilled-trades programs and the Douglas J Aveda Institute.

To qualify for the full Lansing Promise Scholarship, students generally must live within Lansing School District boundaries, attend a school within those boundaries continuously from ninth through 12th grade, graduate from an eligible school and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid each year.

SVSU Vice President for Enrollment Management Ken Fetting said the partnership reflects the university's effort to make a college education accessible to students who are willing to work

toward a degree or credential.

The agreement also extends SVSU's relationship with Michigan's network of place-based Promise scholarship programs.

In 2025, SVSU received the inaugural Chuck Wilbur Promise Keeper Award from the Michigan Promise Zones Association and Michigan College Access Network for its work supporting Promise Scholars.

The concept is familiar in Saginaw through the separate Saginaw Promise program, which has provided scholarships to local graduates since 2012.

Saginaw Promise serves eligible students who live within the Saginaw Promise Zone and graduate from an eligible high school within the zone. Its boundaries include the cities of Saginaw and Zilwaukee, Kochville Township and the portion of Buena

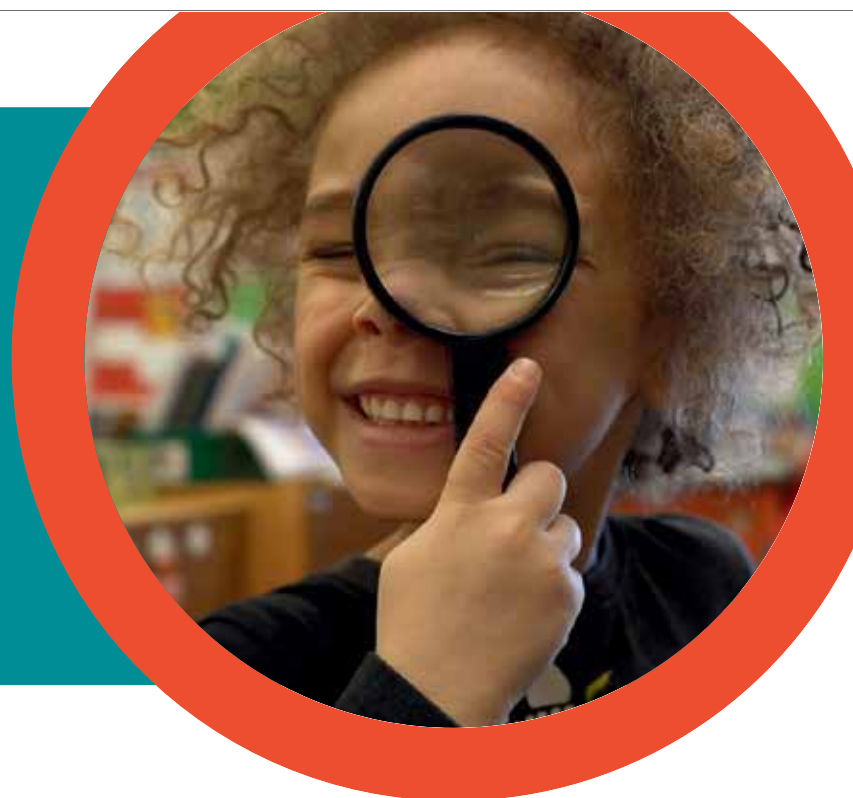
Vista within the Saginaw Public School District.

For the 2026-27 academic year, the Saginaw Promise Zone Authority approved a maximum scholarship award of \$4,000. Eligible scholars can use the assistance at qualifying colleges, universities and technical or vocational schools in Michigan.

The Lansing and Saginaw programs operate separately, but both use place-based scholarships as a way to reduce financial barriers to education after high school while investing in their communities.

For Lansing students considering SVSU, the Sept. 8 agreement adds another pathway for using those scholarship dollars toward a bachelor's degree in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

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**Administration for Children and Families: Children's Learning and Development Benefits from High-Quality Early Care and Education: A Summary of Evidence*



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989-752-2193 for more information and apply today!

BUSINESS + FINANCE

SVSU employment fair opens doors to students and community job seekers



JOB SEEKERS CONNECT WITH EMPLOYERS DURING AN EMPLOYMENT FAIR AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY. SVSU'S FALL ALL-MAJORS EMPLOYMENT FAIR IS SCHEDULED FOR SEPT. 25 AT THE RYDER CENTER. (PHOTO | SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY)

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Saginaw Valley State University will bring employers from a variety of industries to campus Sept. 25 for its largest

employment fair of the fall semester.

The Fall All-Majors Employment Fair will run from noon to 3 p.m. at the Ryder Center, 7400 Bay Road.

While the event is held at

SVSU, it is not limited to university students. Alumni and members of the community who are looking for work are also invited to attend.

Employers will be recruiting for internships, cooperative edu-

cation placements and part- and full-time jobs across multiple industries and academic areas.

SVSU Career Services recommends that job seekers dress professionally, bring several copies of their résumé and be prepared to discuss their work experience, education and career interests directly with recruiters.

The university holds several specialized employment events during the academic year, but the all-majors fair is designed to bring together a broader range of employers and job seekers.

SVSU's Career Services office also offers résumé and cover-letter assistance, career-readiness guidance and other professional-development resources for students and alumni.

The Sept. 25 fair comes as employers throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region continue recruiting workers for positions ranging from manufacturing and health care to business, government, technology and professional services.

Admission to the employment fair is open to the public.



BUSINESS + FINANCE

Fire & Pita brings familiar Middle Eastern flavors back to Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Nearly three years after Falafel Hut closed inside SVRC Marketplace, owner Nawal Hamd is back in the kitchen with a new business and a different format.

Fire & Pita Mediterranean Street Food is serving many of the dishes customers knew from Falafel Hut from a food truck based at 402 N. Michigan Ave. in Saginaw.

Hamd opened Fire & Pita June 3. The business received renewed attention this month as customers lined up for falafel, shawarma, hummus and other Middle Eastern dishes made



NAWAL HAMD HAS RETURNED TO SAGINAW'S FOOD SCENE WITH FIRE & PITA MEDITERRANEAN STREET FOOD, A FOOD TRUCK SERVING MANY OF THE RECIPES CUSTOMERS REMEMBER FROM HER FORMER FALAFEL HUT RESTAURANT. (PHOTO | FIRE & PITA MEDITERRANEAN STREET FOOD)

from recipes used at her former restaurant.

Falafel Hut operated for five years before closing Sept. 29, 2023. At the time, Hamd said she was stepping away from the

restaurant to devote more time to her family.

Her return keeps much of the old menu while changing the business model.

Fire & Pita serves chicken and

beef-lamb shawarma in wraps and on fries or pita chips. Falafel, fresh hummus and other familiar items are also on the menu, with food prepared to order.

Hamd chose a new name for the truck in part because she wants to preserve the Falafel Hut name for a possible future brick-and-mortar restaurant.

The food truck is normally stationed at Saginaw Suits and Alterations, 402 N. Michigan Ave., from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, although it also travels to community events. Fire & Pita is scheduled to appear Sept. 17 at Clock & Candle Brewatorium in Midland.

Catering is also available.

Makin' Bacon food truck, trailer and SVRC café listed for \$150,000

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — One of Saginaw's longtime mobile food brands is on the market, with Makin' Bacon's food truck, trailer and SVRC Marketplace café being offered together for \$150,000.

The business-for-sale listing includes a drivable food truck, a 16-foot towable food trailer and the Makin' Bacon Market Café and commissary kitchen inside SVRC Marketplace, 203 S. Washington Ave. in downtown Saginaw.

The package also includes equipment, inventory, recipes, the company website and email address, training and support for a new owner and the business's existing book of cus-



MAKIN' BACON'S FOOD TRUCK, TRAILER AND SVRC MARKETPLACE CAFÉ ARE BEING OFFERED TOGETHER FOR \$150,000. (PHOTO | MAKIN' BACON)

tomers and events. A regional commercial property database continued to list the business as available for sale as of Sept. 15.

Makin' Bacon was founded by Nick and Barbara Christophilopoulos in 2014, beginning with a single food truck built

around bacon-inspired dishes. The couple expanded into SVRC Marketplace when the downtown market opened in 2018.

Over the years, the business has become familiar at festivals, community events and farmers markets throughout the Great

Lakes Bay Region. Its menu includes breakfast burritos, burgers, macaroni and cheese topped with bacon, pulled pork dishes and catering options.

The sale listing describes both mobile units as fully licensed and self-contained with electrical, plumbing, propane, cooking equipment and fire-suppression systems. The SVRC kitchen also functions as a retail location and commissary for the mobile operation.

The listing does not indicate that Makin' Bacon has closed. Its website continues to promote the Market Café, food truck and catering services while the business is being marketed to a potential new owner.

Century 21 Signature Realty is handling the sale.

BUSINESS + FINANCE

Raising Cane's opens first Saginaw County restaurant

BY MB STAFF

KOCHVILLE TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers opened its first Saginaw County restaurant Sept. 8, adding another national restaurant chain to the busy Bay Road commercial corridor.

The restaurant is located at 5015 Bay Road near Tittabawassee Road in Kochville Township.

The Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce joined company representatives for a grand-opening celebration and ribbon cutting before the restaurant opened to customers at 10 a.m.

Raising Cane's specializes in a limited menu centered on chicken fingers accompanied by crinkle-cut fries, Texas toast, coleslaw and its signature Cane's Sauce.

The company has been expanding rapidly in Michigan. Its current state locations include Ann Arbor, Canton, East Lansing, Grandville, Kentwood, Novi, Portage and Saginaw.

The Saginaw restaurant is open from 10 a.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday and from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

The company was still advertising positions at the new location this month, including restaurant crew jobs. A recent Raising Cane's posting listed starting hiring pay for cashiers at \$15 an hour.

The opening adds to continued restaurant and retail development near the Bay and Tittabawassee roads intersection, one of Saginaw County's busiest shopping areas.



RAISING CANE'S CELEBRATED THE OPENING OF ITS FIRST SAGINAW COUNTY RESTAURANT SEPT. 8 AT 5015 BAY ROAD IN KOCHVILLE TOWNSHIP. (PHOTO | SAGINAW COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE)

Happy Donuts opens first Michigan location in Midland

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — An Ohio family-owned bakery has chosen Midland for its first Michigan location.

Happy Donuts opened this month at 144 Ashman Circle, taking over the former Enjoy! Bakery space and bringing a mix of donuts, breakfast foods, pastries and specialty drinks to downtown Midland.

Owner Mayana Yim said the business has operated a location in Zanesville, Ohio, for about six years. Midland is the company's second location and first venture into Michigan.

The shop makes its baked goods in-house each day, with employees beginning preparations as early as 2 a.m.

Along with traditional and



HAPPY DONUTS HAS OPENED AT 144 ASHMAN CIRCLE IN MIDLAND, MARKING THE FAMILY-OWNED BAKERY'S FIRST MICHIGAN LOCATION. THE BUSINESS ALSO OPERATES IN ZANESVILLE, OHIO. (PHOTO | HAPPY DONUTS)

specialty donuts, Happy Donuts serves breakfast burritos, bagels, biscuit and croissant sandwiches, coffee, smoothies, lemonade and fruit and milk teas.

One of the less familiar offerings for many Midland customers has been the kolache, a Czech

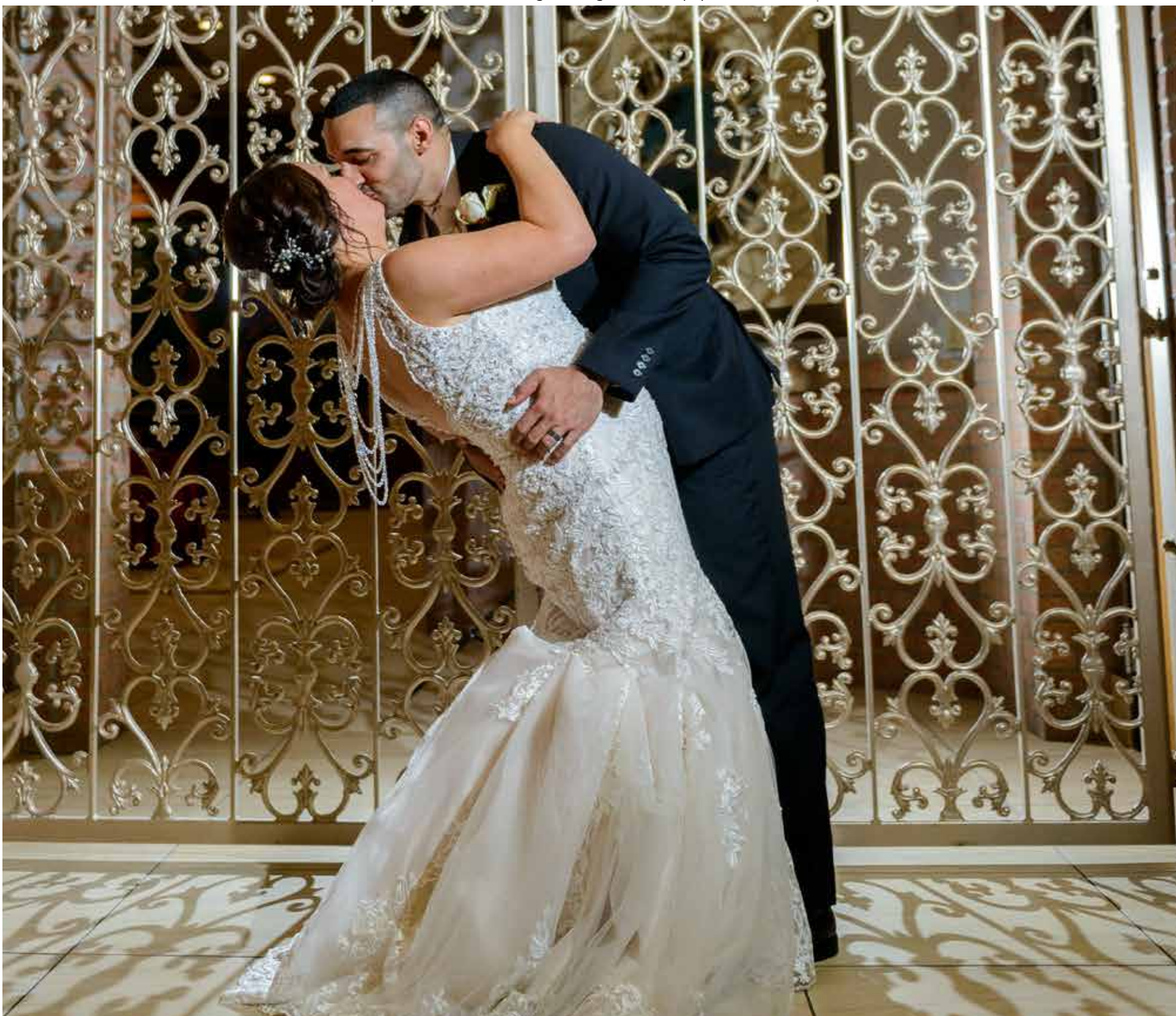
pastry that can be prepared with sweet or savory fillings. Happy Donuts offers versions filled with fruit as well as meat.

Yim said the menu will rotate regularly rather than relying on the same selection each day.

Happy Donuts is open from

4 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

The opening fills a bakery space in Ashman Circle and adds another independently operated food business to downtown Midland.



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SPORTS

Northwood wins third straight Axe Bowl, returns to national Top 25



NORTHWOOD UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL PLAYERS CELEBRATE AFTER DEFEATING SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY 35-28 IN THE AXE BOWL ON SEPT. 12 AT HANTZ STADIUM IN MIDLAND. THE WIN GAVE THE TIMBERWOLVES THEIR THIRD STRAIGHT VICTORY IN THE RIVALRY AND HELPED PROPEL NORTHWOOD INTO THE NATIONAL TOP 25. (PHOTO | NORTHWOOD UNIVERSITY)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Northwood University followed its third consecutive Axe Bowl victory over Saginaw Valley State University with another milestone this week — its first appearance in the national coaches poll in 20 years.

The Timberwolves defeated SVSU 35-28 on Sept. 12 at Hantz Stadium in the 51st meeting for the Axe, improving to 2-0 and keeping the rivalry trophy in Midland for a third straight season.

Northwood quarterback Ethan Hamby completed 37 of 45 passes for 391 yards and two touchdowns while adding a rushing score. The Timberwolves finished with 468 yards of total offense.

SVSU quarterback Connor Wolf answered with 351 passing yards and four touchdowns. Three of those scores went to Braden Hill, who finished with six receptions for 135 yards.

The teams repeatedly traded scores before Wolf connected with Hill for a 34-yard touchdown that tied the game at 28

with 4:29 remaining.

Northwood responded quickly. Hamby connected with Mitch Rivard for a 56-yard touchdown to put the Timberwolves ahead 35-28.

SVSU drove into Northwood territory on its final possession, but Alex Olenik recorded a third-down sack before the Cardinals failed to convert on fourth-and-12 with 39 seconds remaining.

The victory gave Northwood its first three-game Axe Bowl winning streak since the Timberwolves won three straight from 1998 through 2000. Attendance

at Hantz Stadium was 3,734.

Two days later, Northwood entered the American Football Coaches Association Division II poll at No. 25. It is the program's first AFCA Top 25 ranking since 2006.

Northwood is also ranked No. 17 by FloSports and No. 23 by D2Football.com.

The Timberwolves will host Hillsdale at noon Sept. 19 in the second annual Riepma Cup. SVSU, now 2-1, travels to Kentucky State for a 2 p.m. game the same day.

SPORTS

Saginaw High standout Charleston Hughes headed to Canadian Football Hall of Fame

BY MB STAFF

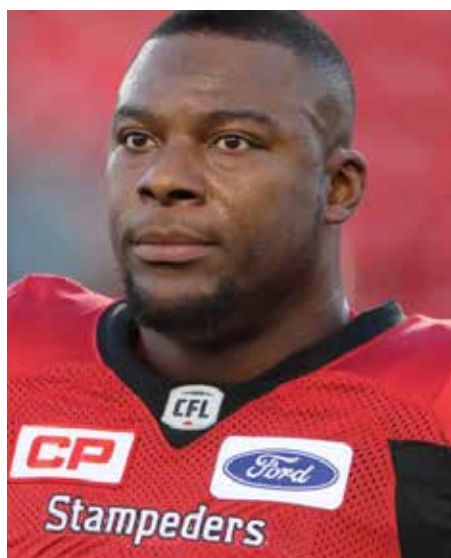
SAGINAW, Mich. — A football career that began in Saginaw and developed at Northwood University will receive one of Canadian football's highest honors this week.

Former Saginaw High standout Charleston Hughes will be formally inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame on Thursday, Sept. 17, in Hamilton, Ontario, as a member of the Class of 2026.

Hughes, 42, built a 14-season Canadian Football League career that established him as one of the league's most productive pass rushers.

He finished with 136 career sacks, ranking fifth in CFL history, while recording 526 defensive tackles, 52 tackles for loss and 16 defensive takeaways in 202 regular-season games.

Hughes led the CFL in sacks five times and earned six All-CFL



SAGINAW NATIVE AND FORMER SAGINAW HIGH AND NORTHWOOD UNIVERSITY STANDOUT CHARLESTON HUGHES. (PHOTO | CALGARY STAMPEDERS)

selections and eight divisional All-CFL honors. He spent most of his career with the Calgary Stampeders, later playing for the Saskatchewan Roughriders and Toronto Argonauts.

With Calgary, Hughes won Grey Cup championships in 2008 and 2014. His 99 sacks as a Stampeders remain tied for the most in

franchise history.

Long before his Canadian football career, Hughes was part of a particularly talented era at Saginaw High.

He was a member of the Trojans' 1999 Division 2 state championship football team, which defeated Birmingham Brother Rice 14-7 in the title game. That Saginaw High roster produced an unusual number of future professional athletes, including LaMarr Woodley, Charles Rogers, Roy Manning and several others who went on to play college or professional football.

Hughes continued his career close to home at Northwood University in Midland.

Playing linebacker for the Timberwolves, he finished his college career with 372 tackles, 11 sacks and six interceptions. He earned All-America recognition in 2006 and was part of Northwood's 2004 Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship team.

Hughes entered the CFL with Calgary in 2008 and quickly became part of the Stampeders' defense. By the time he retired following the 2022 season, he had become one of the most accomplished defensive players of his era.

The Canadian Football Hall of Fame announced Hughes as a 2026 inductee in July. He joins Brandon Banks, Jim Evenson, Sean Millington, Calvin Tuggle and builder Frank "Pop" Ivy in this year's class.

The group will be formally welcomed into the Hall during the Sept. 17 induction ceremony and recognized the following night during the annual Hall of Fame Game between the Montreal Alouettes and Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

For Hughes, the honor adds another chapter to a football journey that stretches from Saginaw High to Northwood and more than a decade of professional football in Canada.

MCTV to livestream Midland-Dow rivalry games this fall

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Fans who cannot make it to several Midland and H.H. Dow sporting events this fall will have another way to follow the action.

Midland Community Television Network has partnered with Midland Public Schools to livestream selected high school sporting events and make them available for on-demand viewing.

The broadcast schedule begins Sept. 16 with the Midland-Dow boys soccer rivalry at 7 p.m.

MCTV will also carry the H.H. Dow High School homecoming football game Oct. 2 and Midland High's homecoming game Oct. 9.

The Midland-Dow rivalry will return to the broadcast schedule for volleyball Oct. 8 and football Oct. 23. Each contest is scheduled for 7 p.m.

The Oct. 23 football match-

up is one of the most anticipated events on the local high school sports calendar, bringing the Chemics and Chargers together for their annual crosstown rivalry game.

Games can be viewed through MCTV's Community Messages channel on Charter Spectrum channel 189 and DIRECTV Uverse channel 99.

Online viewers can watch through the MCTV Network web-

site. Free MCTV Network apps are also available for Roku, Apple TV and Amazon Fire TV, while mobile users can watch through the Cablecast Community Media app.

Each broadcast will remain available on demand after the live event.

MCTV, a service of the City of Midland, operates from the lower level of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library.

SPORTS

Loons' playoff run ends in decisive Game 3 against Dayton

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — The Great Lakes Loons' 2026 season ended one victory short of the Midwest League Championship Series after the Dayton Dragons won the final two games of their best-of-three playoff series.

Great Lakes opened the East Division Championship Series Sept. 8 with a 6-0 victory at Dow Diamond.

The Loons struck early with three home runs. Eduardo Quintero and Emil Morales homered in the first inning before Mairo

Martinus added another in the second. Great Lakes pitching kept Dayton off the scoreboard to take a 1-0 series lead.

The series shifted to Dayton, where the Dragons answered with a 3-1 victory Sept. 10. Great Lakes managed five hits and left seven runners on base as Dayton forced a deciding third game.

Dayton completed the comeback the following night with a 5-0 win at Day Air Ballpark.

Loons starter Cam Leiter worked three scoreless innings before Dayton broke through for four runs in the fourth. Damian

Ruiz delivered the biggest hit with a three-run double.

Great Lakes had opportunities but went 0-for-8 with runners in scoring position and stranded 11 runners. Morales recorded two of the Loons' five hits.

The loss ended a season in which Great Lakes finished 75-54 and won the Midwest League East second-half title to earn its postseason berth.

The Loons will now turn toward a milestone year at Dow Diamond.

The franchise will celebrate its 20th season in 2027. Great

Lakes begins the season April 2 on the road against Dayton before its home opener April 6 against the Fort Wayne TinCaps.

The organization plans to announce additional 20th-anniversary promotions in the coming months.



Saginaw Spirit acquire Braidy Wassilyn in trade with London

BY MB STAFF

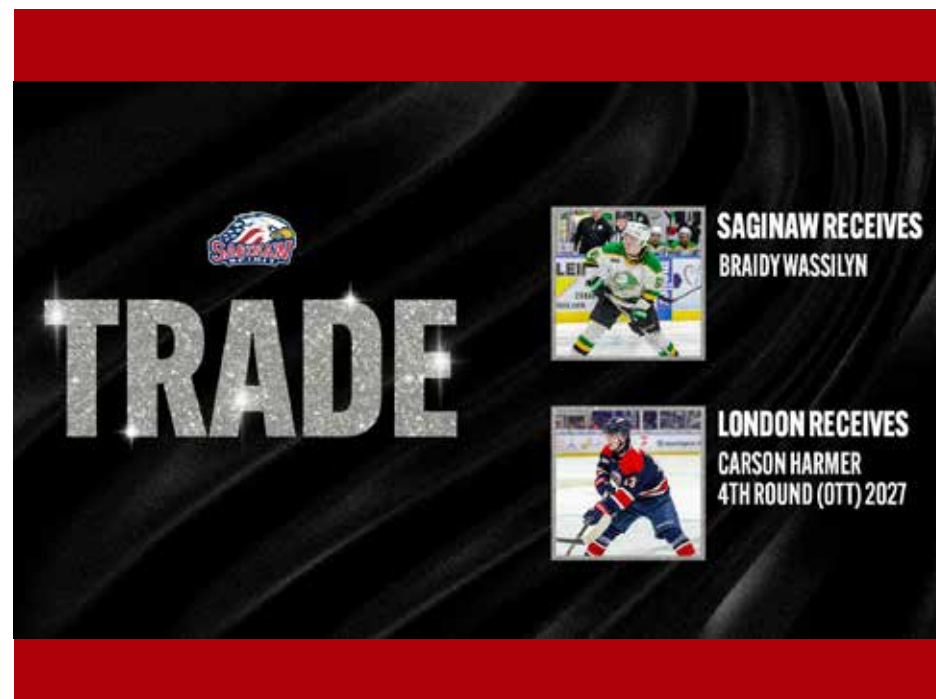
SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw Spirit added another offensive weapon days before the start of the regular season, acquiring forward Braidy Wassilyn from the London Knights.

Spirit General Manager Dave Drinkill announced the trade Sept. 13.

Saginaw sent forward Carson Harmer and a 2027 fourth-round Ontario Hockey League draft pick to London in exchange for Wassilyn.

The 18-year-old left-handed forward from Campbellville, Ontario, spent most of last season with the Knights after being traded from the Niagara IceDogs.

Wassilyn recorded 19 goals and 27 assists for 46 points in 62 games during the 2025-26 season. He finished fourth in team



THE SAGINAW SPIRIT ACQUIRED 18-YEAR-OLD FORWARD BRAIDY WASSILYN FROM THE LONDON KNIGHTS ON SEPT. 13 IN EXCHANGE FOR CARSON HARMER AND A 2027 FOURTH-ROUND DRAFT PICK. (GRAPHIC | SAGINAW SPIRIT)

scoring for London and established career highs in both goals and assists.

He was originally selected

fourth overall by Niagara in the 2024 OHL Priority Selection.

As a rookie in 2024-25, Wassilyn recorded eight goals and

31 assists for 39 points and finished among the OHL's top rookie scorers. He also represented Canada Red at the World Under-17 Hockey Challenge.

At the time of the trade, Wassilyn was participating in Montreal Canadiens rookie camp. He will wear No. 66 with the Spirit.

Harmer leaves Saginaw after appearing in 134 games for the Spirit. He recorded 41 goals and 53 assists for 94 points, including 50 points during his rookie season in 2024-25.

The move comes as Saginaw prepares to begin its 25th season.

The Spirit open the regular season Sept. 18 on the road against the Soo Greyhounds before returning to the Dow Event Center for their home opener against the Flint Firebirds at 7:05 p.m. Sept. 19.

FAITH IN FOCUS



MINISTRY WITHOUT WALLS - 3783 MANNION RD, SAGINAW, MI 48603

Ministry Without Walls expands vision with community-focused mission

BY PASTOR JOHN DUNN

Ministry Without Walls has recently returned to its location at 3783 Mannion Road with a renewed vision, shaped by recent global events and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeking divine guidance, the organization has embraced a broader mission: to make the church an integral part of the community.

The new direction for Ministry Without Walls is centered around the theme of "Breaking Down Walls." This initiative aims to bridge gaps between spiritual life and community service, uniting church members, volunteers, and local professionals in a shared mission.

The organization's vision includes several key objectives:



PASTOR JOHN DUNN

- Creating a space where the spirit, soul, and body can achieve wholeness.
- Providing resources to those in need.
- Fostering collaboration

between the church, volunteers, and community professionals.

- Ensuring a welcoming environment where love prevails and judgment is absent.
- Maintaining privacy and prioritizing safety.
- Emphasizing the importance of the whole person.

Ministry Without Walls will continue to offer various teachings and seminars on topics such as outreach, spiritual growth, mental health, healthy living, finding purpose, financial management, entrepreneurship, and more. These programs are designed to address diverse needs and support personal development.

Recognizing that the mission field is close to home, not far

away, the organization is committed to a collaborative approach, knowing that achieving this vision will require the collective effort of many. Ministry Without Walls is dedicating its resources, talents, and connections to dismantle barriers and connect with the community more deeply.

Those interested in learning more or getting involved are encouraged to visit the church on Sundays at 11:00 AM. This offers an opportunity to meet Pastor John Dunn, ask questions, and experience the ministry's mission firsthand.

For more information, visit Ministry Without Walls at 3783 Mannion Road, Saginaw, MI 48603.

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I believe God has specifically ordered us to adopt the neighborhoods surrounding New Birth and to prayerfully declare the areas in the vicinity of **SHERIDAN, WEBBER, and WILLIAMSON** to be **GOD'S PROPERTY!**



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SUNDAY SCHOOL

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9:30 A.M.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship, praise, preaching, and fellowship.

11:00 A.M.



WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Go deeper in Scripture and grow in faith together.

6:00 P.M.

*There is a place for you
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WE ARE
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Bishop Larry D. Camel
SENIOR PASTOR

*Come expecting a blessing.
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FAITH IN FOCUS

SERMONETTE SERIES

The Unchanging Promise: Finding Rock-Solid Certainty in a Changing World

Numbers 23:19



BY MINISTER
CAROLYN CARTER TOWNSEL

We have all been there. A friend cancels at the last minute, a contract falls through, or a trusted promise is broken. In our daily lives, human reliability can feel like a moving target. People let us down—not always out of malice, but simply because we are human, fragile, and limited. It makes you wonder: Is there anything, or anyone, we can truly lean on when life gets shaky?

The answer is found in a beautiful, grounding truth from Numbers 23:19: "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"

This verse isn't just ancient poetry; it is a lifeline for your chaotic mornings and sleepless nights. It reminds us that God doesn't operate

the way we do. He doesn't have "bad days," He doesn't get overwhelmed, and He never makes promises He can't keep. His character guarantees His truthfulness.

If you are navigating a season of waiting, holding onto a prayer, or feeling anxious about tomorrow, take a deep breath and let these three truths settle into your heart:

He speaks total truth: God never exaggerates, half-promises, or changes the terms later. What He says to you is exactly what He means.

He doesn't change His mind: Human love can fluctuate based on moods and circumstances, but God doesn't wake up and feel differently about you or His commitments to you.

He always follows through: If God spoke a promise over your life, He has both the desire and the absolute power to make it happen. He won't leave you hanging.

This truth invites us to look in

the mirror and ask a hard question: Are we actually living like we believe Him, or are we still consumed by worry, trying to control every outcome ourselves? Trusting God at His word means surrendering our backup plans and stepping out in bold obedience, even when the path ahead looks completely impossible. If God cannot lie, then our anxiety isn't just stress—it is a sign that we are doubting His integrity. It's time to stop treating the Creator of the universe like a unreliable human, lay down our doubts, and finally take Him at His word.

Beloved, when we anchor our hearts in Numbers 23:19, the exhausting weight of "what if" begins fade and ultimately lift. You can finally stop worrying about the future and rest deeply in the certainty that God is good to His word. In a fragile world, His love and His promises are the only anchor you will ever need.

Blessings to All,
Carolyn

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stpaul2@yahoo.com



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FUNDRAISING GOOD TIMES

When does a fundraising campaign begin?



BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW

It's that time of year again – time to ensure that you as a nonprofit leader or volunteer know what needs to be done to reach your fundraising goals by the end of December. If you are new to this column, it is all about helping people who work with nonprofits – those that are large and established, and those that are emerging.

Most – if not all – depend on fundraising to help ensure they have resources to deliver on their mission and bring their vision to life. Many receive the largest number of gifts in December. With this column we share suggestions to help ensure your fundraising is on track.

First, look at your data. Whether it is in an excel spreadsheet, an online giving platform, or CRM system, look at who has given in the past, who gave last year but not yet for this year, and who has already given for this year. We recommend starting with those who gave last year but haven't yet given this year, especially those who gave what you consider a large gift. Here's a tip – don't hide behind automat-

ed communication. Take time to pick up the phone and reach out personally to thank them again for giving last year, to update them on your organization's work, and to ask for current year support. Sure, people don't answer the phone, but it doesn't hurt to try. Another approach is to send a personal email from your own email account – don't depend solely on automated methods.

Second, consider who will do the actual work of fundraising. Who will be responsible for what? For example, if you are running an online campaign, who will design it and manage it? If you are hosting an event, who is doing what? When it comes to personal one-on-one solicitations, who will talk with who and what are they asking for. Be sure to ask your board members to become involved – there is something that each member can do that is in line with their

skills, comfort level, and available time. Related to this, ensure that you have enough prospective donors to reach your goal. Look at the names of who you want to engage, consider how much you believe each could give, and then ask yourself – if everyone made a gift, would you reach your goal? We recommend having a pool of donors that is three times your fundraising goal. That's because while people may support your work, this may not be the right time for them to give. You want to ensure a pathway to your goal.

Third, make sure your communications plan is in place. That includes things such as knowing what you want to communicate: what you are raising money for; how much you are raising; and what methods of communication you will be using. When you know what you want to communicate, then you can work on messaging and images that are appropriate to the different methods you will use.

Finally, make sure you are ready to say thank you!



FILE PHOTO

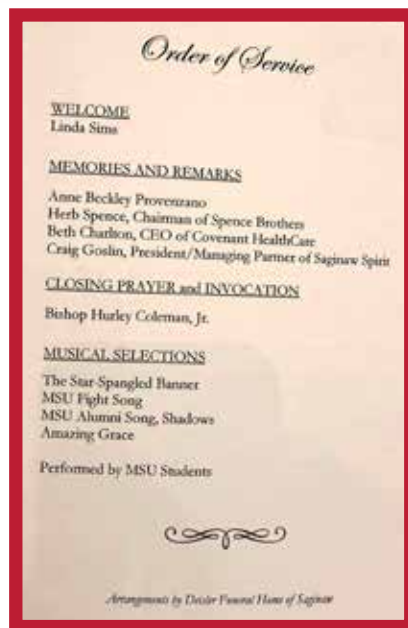


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PICS OF THE WEEK

Family, friends and community leaders gathered Sept. 3 at Apple Mountain in Freeland to celebrate the life of longtime Saginaw civic leader Lawrence "Larry" Sims. The gathering reflected on his decades of service, leadership and commitment to strengthening the Saginaw community.





Nathan Hankerson
Senior majoring in
Pre-Medicine/Biology

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