

Official Newspaper of Record for the City of Belleville & the Charter Township of Van Buren
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BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

VOL. 32.40

Serving the communities of Belleville, Sumpter & Van Buren

FREE

Thursday, October 1, 2026

Breaking Ground on a New Beginning



PHOTO | EMILY FLESCH

Van Buren Public Schools hosted a groundbreaking for their new operations building Sept. 28. Haggerty School was demolished earlier this year to make way for a building that will house transportation employees, buses, and other non-teaching staff.

VBTPanners Say Goodbye to Departing Commissioner Pahle

Emily Flesch
Independent Reporter

Commissioner Jackson Pahle attended his final meeting with the Van Buren Township Planning Commission on Sept. 23, with his service term ending Oct. 1.

Fellow commissioners thanked him for his service, with Planning Commission Chairman Brian Cullin expressing appreciation for the insights and views Pahle brought to the commission. Commissioner Jeffrey Jahr added a lighthearted moment as he retroactively apologized for kicking Pahle in the ankle to get his attention during past meetings.

While Pahle is leaving the commission, he assured them that he is “not going far” as he still lives down the

SEE PAHLE ON PAGE 7

Sumpter Township Board Approves Masonry Work for Municipal Buildings

Emily Flesch
Independent Reporter

Several Sumpter Township properties will soon receive improvements after the Board of Trustees approved a major masonry contract and a change order for supplemental repairs at its Sept. 21 meeting.

Trustees accepted a \$65,000 proposal from Mechanical Contracting Services (MCS) under Request for Proposals (RFP) #26004 for township-wide masonry restoration, subject to standard contractual terms including a familial disclosure and terrorism affidavit.

This RFP was originally approved by the board in April 2026, then republished in June 2026 to solicit additional bids.

A separate change order adds \$7,822 in upgrades and preventative maintenance to an ongoing contract. These specific upgrades target four municipal properties:

Community Center: Required roof repair and repainted structural beams
Police Department: Installation of a new rear entry door
DPW Building: Repainted window frames
Pavilion-adjacent public restrooms:

Installation of gutters and downspouts

Both the masonry contract and change order will be funded through capital projects.

In other business at the Tuesday-evening meeting, the board:

- Approved the employment agreement for the township manager and scheduled a special meeting for Sept. 30 at 6 p.m. for a transparent review of candidate applications;
- Agreed to seek bids for ADA-compliant handrails along the ramp and stairs at the police department entrance to replace the existing structure that is

completely rusted through;

- Voted to grant \$2,750 to MCS to reduce the fin tube section of the police department evidence room to allow for the installation of the new rear entry door;

- Followed a Planning Commission recommendation and approved a change in verbiage to the wetland protection ordinance, requiring the board to draft a formal letter approving or denying wetland applications.

The board entered into a closed session before adjourning. Trustee Matthew Oddy was absent and excused.

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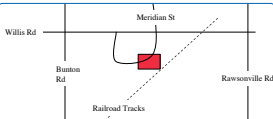
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PAGE THREE



PHOTOS | EMILY FLESCH

Local Food Pantries Bring the Heat in Community Cook-Off

Emily Flesch
Independent Reporter

Volunteers from three local food pantries faced off in a Chopped-style competition at the Community Pantry Cook-Off hosted by the Wordhouse Community Foundation and Faith Community Center on Sept. 26.

The event challenged participants to create a cohesive main course and dessert from a “mystery box” of ingredients, modeled after those distributed to local families each week. In addition to friendly competition and a fun atmosphere for guests, the competition gave local pantries an opportunity to get to know each other and swap ideas while raising awareness about local food insecurity.

Three two-person teams donned aprons and stepped into the Faith Community Center kitchen on Saturday afternoon. They opened boxes containing chicken, rotini pasta, bread, canned vegetables (including pumpkin), Goldfish crackers, rice and cherry tomatoes. Additionally, pantry staples were made available to teams.

Kristen Harsch and LaNae Harsch from Edgemont Neighborhood Community Cupboard served Italian chicken sautéed with tomatoes and mushrooms



alongside spicy Brussels sprouts, with a dessert of pumpkin muffins.

From The Makana Foundation, Natalie Johnson and Marissa Sirghie plated up Goldfish cracker-crusted chicken parmesan with a loaded vegetable sauce and a side of hot honey roasted Brussels sprouts, finishing with pumpkin white chocolate chip cookies.

Representing BE Church Community Pantry, cooks Zena Altabi and Paige Wordhouse prepared roast chicken over pasta in tomato sauce with roasted

Brussels sprouts, tomatoes and onion, with warm pumpkin puree and whipped cream for dessert.

Judges Steve Jones, Melanie and Shane Convery, and Kathleen Springer deliberated for nearly 20 minutes before awarding first place to Altabi and Wordhouse from the BE Church Community Pantry with a score of 8.9 out of 10. They edged out The Makana Foundation, who took home the crowd-sourced People’s Choice award, by less than a point.

Organizer Michelle Wordhouse was very happy with how the event turned out and looks forward to an even “bigger and better” cook-off next year, emphasizing how collaborative events help to remind volunteers and the community that addressing hunger is not something any one organization needs to do alone.

Both the BE Church Community Pantry and The Makana Foundation are currently looking for volunteers to help with their ongoing pantry operations.

Community members who would like to help can also make donations of cash, food, or personal care items. Donations can be dropped off at any of the participating pantries.

More information can be found at the following sites:

- BE Church Community Pantry: bechurchfood.com
- The Makana Foundation: themakanafoundation.org
- Edgemont Neighborhood Community Cupboard: mapping.littlefreepantry.org/pantry/5225
- Woodhouse Foundation: wordhousefoundation.org/
- Faith Community Center: fccenter48111.org/

OPINION

From the Editor

Why has the Denton Road Bridge Been Closed for so Long?

Last week, I wrote about how long the Denton Road bridge has been closed, comparable to how long it took to build the entire Mackinac Bridge from start to finish! A reader who is new to the Belleville area asked if I could explain why



Sarah Rigg
Managing Editor

it has been closed for so long. Here's what I found out.

The Denton Road bridge was built in 1927, so it's nearly 100 years old! It's named after the unincorporated village of Denton which was settled in the 1860s and 1870s and later absorbed by Van Buren Township.

The bridge over Belleville Lake was closed in October 2022 due to severe structural deterioration. Wayne County closed the bridge immediately in October 2022 after an underwater inspection revealed that the underground wooden pilings had eroded and the east abutment was no longer resting securely on its supports.

As the township and county began looking at a budget for repair, they eventually realized a full removal and total reconstruction were in order, with

the cost estimated between \$4 million and \$6.5 million was required.

Van Buren Township and Wayne County had to partner on intergovernmental agreements, secure state funding, and perform detailed design engineering. Project planning also hit a mandatory pause to safely relocate a colony of the American Water-Willow, an endangered plant species found near the construction zone, which required state-monitored relocation plans.

Contractor E.C. Korneffel began major on-site demolition and heavy marine construction (using floating barges and cranes) to build a higher, more durable reinforced-concrete replacement featuring aesthetic stone cladding and upgraded non-motorized paths.

Weather constraints, seasonal asphalt plant closures, and final retaining wall details pushed completion into late 2026.

The bridge is now completed, but while construction was going on, the City of Belleville decided to do additional work at the intersection of Main and Denton as well as repairing concrete at the intersection with Liberty Street. That means the bridge will not open until the concrete is cured and all the finishing touches are in place.

In any case, the City of Belleville planned a special ceremony for the opening of the bridge Oct. 22, so let's hope it's open by then!



Letters to the Editor

MORE LETTERS ON PAGE 5

Local Man Will Perform Biblical Poem Oct. 5

To the editor:

I will be attending the car show Monday, Oct. 5 in my Biblical outfit to recite this original poem, which can be sung to the tune of "Amazing Grace."

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

by Jimmy Pittman

The cross, the cross, the cross of Christ
- I see it every day

From the rising of the morning sun -
til the ending of the day.

In every letter "t" that I see - I see the
cross of Christ

For it was there I was crucified - unto

eternal life.

Oh yes, I glory in the cross - where
Christ hath made me free

To enjoy the blessings here on earth -
And then for eternity.

Oh, thank you, Father, for your Son -
and the cross HE bore for me,

It's foolish to a dying world - but eternal
life for me.

Look to the cross where the Son of
God - hath died to set us free

For through the cross, in the cross
alone - we live eternally

The cross, the cross, the cross of Christ
- I see it every day

I'll never cease to see the cross - til I see
HIM face to face.

Jim Pittman
Belleville

We'd like to extend our gratitude to the Belleville Rotary Club and the Cozadd Foundation! Thanks to a generous grant, printing costs for The Belleville Area Independent are covered for the rest of 2026 and well into 2027.

BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

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- Promote civic engagement and knowledge among the citizens of the Belleville, MI area;
- Support local schools, churches, and non-profit institutions by raising awareness of their activities in the local community; and
- Provide a newspaper of record for local municipal bodies.

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Letters to the Editor

Reader Questions Poor Conditions on Local S-treets

Well, I've been thinking about this for a while and I'm wondering how everyone else feels?

Specifically at the Five Points. Going east on Main and right on main, which turns into Sumpter at the railroad tracks

That patching and re-patching at the turn – it's been rough for a long time.

Wondering why that hasn't been passed correctly so it's smooth?

And then, of course, they must've laid a pipe across Main Street at that same intersection.

Then completed it they only patch the one lane and that's past high and the rest of it is still low so you have to go slow to get across that.

As I mentioned, I'm just curious. Hopefully, we can get some answers or something fixed?

Richard Estermyer
Van Buren Township

Camilleri Shouldn't Have Rolled Out the Red Carpet for Data Centers

To the editor:

A data center can take up hundreds of acres, demand enormous amounts of electricity and water, and operate for decades. Once it is built, the surrounding community must live with it. That should make state officials extremely cautious about incentivizing Big Tech to target our Downriver communities through cushy tax breaks.

Currently, Michigan exempts qualifying data centers from the state's 6% sales and use taxes on eligible construction and equipment. The exemptions can run through 2050, or 2065 for certain sites. Sadly, my opponent, state Sen. Darrin Camilleri, voted for the legislation to make this happen.

For a Downriver family deciding which bill to pay first, that is an extraordinary commitment to make on behalf of a wealthy industry, Big Tech. For the people who may live beside one of these facilities, the tax break is only the beginning of the concern.

Data centers are often described as engines of economic development. They certainly require a great deal of construction. But once the buildings are finished and the servers are running, they do not necessarily employ many people. Michigan's program requires an enterprise data center to invest at least \$250 million while creating at least 30 qualified new jobs. Thirty good jobs matter. They are also a modest return to hold up against a facility's size and its long claim

on local resources.

The electricity question is even more serious. A large data center needs power around the clock. Meeting that demand can require substantial new infrastructure. State rules prohibit a qualifying facility from using an electric rate that makes residential customers subsidize its service costs. That safeguard matters, but residents should not have to accept an assurance on paper. They deserve to see who will pay for every new line, substation and other grid upgrade before a project is approved.

Then there is the issue of water consumption. A proposed facility's expected use, source and effect on other customers should be public knowledge, not details that emerge after a deal has political momentum. The same goes for noise, land use and the demands a project may place on local infrastructure. People who have built homes and businesses in a community deserve a meaningful say before its fabric changes.

These concerns are substantial enough that Michigan lawmakers have proposed new limits and even the repeal of the data-center tax exemptions. The debate is happening after career politicians in Lansing created a powerful incentive for developers to come here. That is backward. Camilleri had a chance to demand stronger answers before voting to extend those benefits – \$90 million worth of taxpayer dollars. Did he do what was right for Downriver when he cast that pivotal vote in the Senate? I don't believe he did, and I intend to hold him accountable for it.

Supporters will say Michigan has to compete for investment. I agree that our state needs family-sustaining jobs and long term growth strategies. But an enormous data center is not automatically a good deal for hardworking taxpayers because a company promises to spend money building it. The public also needs to know how much tax revenue it will forgo, what lasting employment it will acquire and whether the project would have come to Michigan without the favorable tax treatment.

If I'm fortunate enough to earn the great honor and privilege of advocating for our communities as your next State Senator, I would do everything in my power to require those answers in public before offering any further incentive. I would require developers to bear the full cost of the infrastructure they need. And I would give local communities a real opportunity to reject a development project that asks too much of their land, water or power supply. If the Big Tech companies cannot withstand that scrutiny, Michigan should reject their project outright.

SEE DATA ON PAGE 7



PHOTOS COURTESY | MARK ROSENTHAL



Animal Magic Plans Spooky Night of Halloween Fun

Van Buren Township's own Animal Magic, owned by Mark Rosenthal, will offer a free Halloween celebration with free food, candy, and drinks, and an opportunity to win raffle baskets, from 5-8 p.m. Oct. 10. Rosenthal says that, with the closing of local Halloween attraction Skelly's, he expects hundreds of guests at this year's spooky event.



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PAHLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

street and wants to stay involved with the township. He thanked the commission, sharing that he enjoyed serving, learning, and growing alongside them, while extending his gratitude to township residents and consultants.

In other business at the 79-minute meeting, the commission:

- Continued discussion on the proposed Childcare Institution Ordinance and moved to schedule a public hearing at the earliest convenience;
- Reviewed and prioritized upcoming ordinance amendments, with Industrial Uses/Development definition updates

and revisions to the Soil Mining/Pond Ordinance at the top of the list;

- Granted preliminary site plan approval to James Frazier, on behalf of Great Lakes Towing, to remove an existing structure and build a 3,840-square-foot facility to temporarily store vehicles preserved for investigations at 42350 Van Born Road, contingent on a Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) review and approval of a variance for the front yard setback;
- Noted that Chick-fil-A has been managing heavy traffic at its new Belleville Road location very well, fulfilling assurances made during its approval process.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m. All commission members were present.

DATA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Downriver families know what it means to stretch a paycheck and make difficult choices. They are asked to pay their taxes, pay their utility bills and accept the consequences when costs rise. They have every right to ask why Lansing was so eager to ease the tax burden for some of the most powerful companies in the world.

Data centers may be part of Michi-

gan’s future. That does not mean every massive facility belongs here, or that taxpayers should help finance its construction. The people who already call Downriver home deserve to come first. Camilleri owed them answers to the hard questions before he and his colleagues cast their votes. Michiganders should demand those answers now, and insist that every decision going forward puts Downriver first.

Marcie Grzywacz
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Rockwood

Obituaries

MORE OBITUARIES ON PAGE 8



Joseph Orefice

JOSEPH OREFICE
(Dec. 8, 1962- Sept. 16, 2026)

Joseph Orefice, age 63, of Sumpter Township, Mich., passed away peacefully Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at his home, after a courageous battle with kidney cancer. He was born December 8, 1962, in Bay City, MI, son of Dianne K. (Hackett) Thornton.

He was raised in Glennie and attended the Oscoda school system. Joe moved from Chelsea to Belleville. He worked for GFG Instrumentation for 15+ loyal years. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and loved cars. All makes and models. He was a Jeep guy with a 1968 Dodge Daytona Charger and Ram truck. He was very particular and paid attention to detail on everything that he did. He put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into his Daytona, etc. Joe also loved art and music and was in a band for a while.

Joe is survived by his wife Dawn (Lowery) Orefice, daughter Emily Rebecca Orefice (Brad Scott) of Howard, MI, his cherished dogs Cricket & Oreo, three siblings: Annmarie (Mark) Orefice-Wajdowicz of Belleville, Jerome (Barb) Orefice of Glennie, Mich., and Catherine (Les) Rimanoci of Wayne, Mich., sister-in-law Diane Orefice, also numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother Dianne Thornton, also a brother John Orefice.

A Celebration of his Life will be held Sunday, Oct. 18, 2026, from noon until 5 p.m., at the American Legion Post #231, 37060 Huron River Drive, New Boston, MI 48164.

Interment will be in Glennie Cemetery, Glennie, Mich.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to an animal shelter of the donor’s choice and would be appreciated by the family. Thank you for keeping Joe’s family in your thoughts and prayers at this time.

TARA THOMPSON

(January 28, 1967 - September 24, 2026)

Tara Elizabeth Thompson, age 59, of Van Buren Township, Mich., passed away on Thursday, September 24, 2026. She was born January 28, 1967, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, the daughter of Edwin and Christine (Dick) Thompson.

Tara is survived by her husband James “Jimi” Patrick Gondek, Jr.; bonus daughter Sydney (Adam Barren) Gondek of Livonia, Mich.; father Edwin (Elizabeth) Thompson of Aylmer, Ontario, Canada; sister Lana McNamara of Guerneville, California; as well as many extended family members. She was preceded in death by her mother Christine Thompson and her first husband Randy Lansue.

Dignified cremation rites have been accorded. Arrangements have been entrusted to David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville. A celebration of Tara’s life is planned for spring or summer 2027, with details TBA.

JENNIFER LEIGH MOBLEY

(July 26, 1988 - September 20, 2026)

Jennifer Leigh Mobley, age 38, of Shelby Township, Mich., passed away on Sunday, September 20, 2026. She was born July 26, 1988, in St Joseph, MI, daughter of Kenneth Paul & Kyra Mobley.

Jennifer is survived by her mother Kyra Sorenson and her stepfather Brian Sorenson of Belleville, her former stepfather Thomas Longhway of Bay City Mich., her companion Mary Washington of Shelby Township, her siblings Lindsey Longhway of Belleville, Jason (Saidona) Longhway of South Branch Mich., Samantha Sorenson of Bismarck, ND, and Reed Sorenson of Bismarck, ND, as well as extended family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her father Kenneth P. Mobley, her sister Jessica Ann Mobley, her sister Michelle Longhway-Sheldon, her mother’s adoptive parents Raymond McWeeny and Judith Griffiths, her father’s parents Kenneth A Mobley and Delores Hoopcaugh, and her uncle Scott McConeghy.

A Memorial Service is being planned and will be announced, arrangements by David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville.

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Obituaries



Elizabeth Johnson

ELIZABETH JOHNSON

(May 7, 1957 - September 28, 2026)

Elizabeth Johnson, age 69, of Romulus, Mich., passed away on September 28, 2026, at Corewell Hospital with her family by her side. She was born on May 7, 1957, in Ypsilanti, Mich., to Chandious Sr. and Mildred Johnson. After her high school years, she joined the USPS and worked in the Detroit Distribution Center for 30 years. She retired in 2013. Elizabeth enjoyed reading, listening to true crime podcasts and loved to fish. She also was an avid spectator watching her friends compete

in pool tournaments. She will be missed.

She is survived by her siblings Jennifer (Jerry) Lowhorn of Belleville, MI, Pamela (Dennis) Stewart, of Van Buren Twp., MI, and Chandious (Sandy Hodge) Johnson, of Ohio, her nieces and nephews Danielle Arreaza, Bart Sears, Joe Lowhorn, Erik Lowhorn, Jimmy Johnson, and Wendy Barnaby as well as many neighbors and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Harvey Johnson, her sister Jill Johnson, and her sister-in-law, Susie Johnson.

A visitation will take place at The David C. Brown Funeral Home, 460 E. Huron River Drive, Belleville, MI, 48111 on Friday October 2, 2026, from 4 pm until the time of service of 6:30 pm, pastor Doug Valentine will officiate.

If desired in lieu of flowers donation to FMAR Animal Rescue would be appreciated and envelopes will be available in the chapel.

Please keep Elizabeth and her family in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Birthdays

Oct. 2 – Reggie Miller

Oct. 3 – Gene Carrier, Sr.

Oct. 4 – Charles Tackett

Oct. 7 – Bailey Millard

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LOCAL SPORTS

Belleville Boys Varsity Soccer Rallies Past Fordson



Senior Captain Zachary Mitchell prepares to throw the ball back into play.



PHOTOS COURTESY | ADRIANNA GARRISON - BELLEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The Belleville Boy's Varsity Soccer Team comes together after their 2-1 win against the Fordson Tractors

Belleville battled back after Fordson struck first Friday, Sept 25 scoring twice to come away with a 2-1 victory over the Tractors.

The win continues a strong stretch at home for the Tigers, who have now won three of their last four games on their home field. Belleville has scored 14 goals during those four contests, helping improve its season record to 3-10-2, (2-0-1 in league play).



Senior Jackson Green passes the ball upfield to his teammate.

Tigers Improve to 3-2 with a 44-6 Thrashing of Canton

Stewart B. Gotts
Independent Reporter

The Belleville Tigers wasted little time taking control last Friday night, turning a handful of big defensive plays and short fields into a 24-0 halftime lead before cruising to a 44-6 victory over Canton.

Belleville struck on the third play of the game when Davion Jackson intercepted a Canton pass and returned it 10 yards for a touchdown.

After Canton punted on its next possession, the Tigers took over at the Chiefs' 49-yard line. Three plays later, Kendall Franklin connected with Geonte

Morris for a 29-yard touchdown, putting Belleville up 14-0.

The Tigers' defense continued to keep Canton off the scoreboard. Belleville stopped the Cobras on a fourth-down fake punt attempt, taking over at the Canton 17-yard line. The Tigers marched to the 4-yard line before settling for a field goal to make it 17-0.

Canton struggled to find an answer on its next possession, fumbling the punt attempt and giving Belleville the ball at the Canton 26. Four plays later, Trevor Faulkner scored on an 8-yard touchdown run to push the lead to 24-0.

The Tigers added another defensive highlight before

halftime when Morris intercepted Canton on its next possession. Franklin then connected with Charles Britton III on a 42-yard pass that carried the Tigers to the Canton 8-yard line, but Belleville was unable to add to its lead before the break.

The 44 points marked a season high for Belleville, which has now won three straight games while averaging 34.7 points per game during the streak. The Tigers' defense also held Canton to its lowest scoring total of the season.

The win improved Belleville's record to 3-2.

Belleville returns home Friday, Oct 2 to host Novi (0-5) at 7 p.m.

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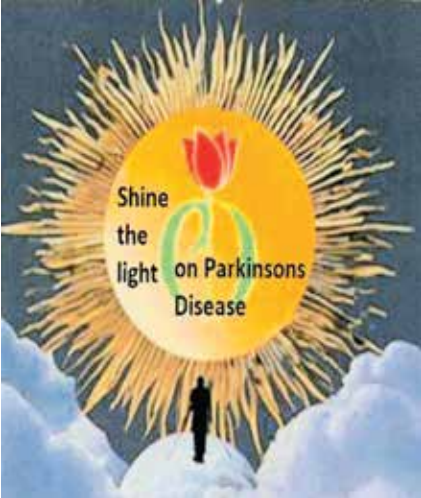
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BELLEVILLE HARVEST FESTIVAL

TRACTOR PARADE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026

Hosted by Brad & Bradley Traskos

Staging area is at 44077 Willis Road in Sumpter Township.
You and your tractor must arrive at the staging area by 10:00am.
Parking is available for trucks/trailers/semis.

Tractors will leave the staging area at 11:00am.
You are welcome to drop off tractors/wagons on Friday evening.

Parade Route: Willis Road to Sumpter Road to Main Street in Belleville.
The parade will stop on Main Street for lunch.
(10 miles round trip)

Tractors must go a minimum of 10mph. All years welcome!

Donation of \$10 per tractor will be given to Gabby's Grief Center.

Weather permitting – dress accordingly!
Door prizes will given away!

Please contact Brad (734-732-6431) or
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WALK APPLICATION

Saturday, October 17, 2026

Name: _____ E-mail _____

Phone _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

1st Dog's Name _____ Breed _____ Size _____

2nd Dog's Name _____ Breed _____ Size _____

3rd Dog's Name _____ Breed _____ Size _____

During the month of October the City of Belleville becomes "BooVille". The Belleville Central Business Community is partnering with Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue (FMAR) to host a **Costumed Monster Mutt Walk** from 12 Noon to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 17, 2026. The Walk will begin and end at 4th Street Place.

The first 40 dogs registered will receive goodie bags; however, registrations will also be taken the day of the event between 12:00 pm and 12:30 p.m. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place award medals in four categories: Scariest, Cutest, Best Mutt, and Family category (family must dress also). In fact, it would be fun for everyone to wear a costume.

The registration fee is \$10/dog plus a can of dog or cat food. Applications may be emailed or snail mailed, with your check made out to Belleville CBC, to my attention at: Belleville Central Business Community, 152 Main Street, Suite 2, Belleville, MI 48111. Payment will also be accepted by Venmo: @BellevilleCBC. If you decide to drop off your application with payment at the Professional Building, **please bring the dog or cat food donation with you to the event** plus the fee if you haven't advance registered.

Monster Mutt Walk Rules

(1) All dogs must be leashed and current on vaccinations;

(2) No aggressive dogs

(3) Owners must clean-up after their dogs (bags will be provided).

(4) No dogs can be left unattended. Owners must keep their dogs in sight & under control at all times

(5) Owners are responsible for their dog's actions.

This event is sponsored by Belleville DDA, I Love Doggos Photography, Belleville Rotary Club & KSpringer Media Management.

For any questions or concerns, I prefer you contact me via my email: jfayemillard@att.net however, you may also call/text me at (734) 558-5368 after 3:30 p.m.

Janet Millard, Event Coordinator, Belleville Central Business Community



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VBPS Safety Efforts Highlighted at Board of Education Meeting

Hannah Borders

Special to the Independent

Director of School Safety Dan Wright presented information about Van Buren Public Schools' safety department goals and purpose to the Board of Education at its regular meeting on Sept. 28. Wright spoke on the schools' evolving methods to handle threats of violence.

The safety department works in partnership with building leadership to prevent threats, be prepared for a threatening situation and to respond rapidly to a given situation. School staff take a Behavior Threat Assessment Management, or BTAM, approach to respond to potential threats.

Wright said statistics show a decline in school violence when BTAM is implemented.

If a staff member sees a potential threat, the BTAM team will meet to assess the situation and decide how to move forward. A BTAM team is made up of one or more administrators, a mental health professional, local law enforcement and possibly another staff member to support the student. If a threat is identified, the team's goal is to monitor the situation and support the student. This is separate from discipline, Wright said.

School staff members receive regular training on how to identify and handle threatening situations. The safety department hosts safety socials, which are an opportunity for staff members to drop in and ask questions about their safety training and other topics discussed within the department.

School safety is an ongoing commitment, Wright said. The safety department is constantly reviewing the implementation of safety systems and evolving the process. Wright's goal is for everyone who enters a VBPS school building to feel safe and comfortable.

Superintendent Peter Kudlak commented that staff debrief and review every situation that comes up, which really helps the BTAM team "sharpen the saw".

In other business at the 49-minute meeting, the board:

- Approved consultation for roof replacement project for Edgemont and Rawsonville elementary schools;

- Heard a presentation from Rob Kakoczki of Plante Moran Realpoint and comments from Director of Plant Operations James Williams about two sinking fund projects. The first project will replace the gym and cafeteria in Edgemont and Rawsonville elementary schools, and the second project will replace the parking lot at Tyler Elemen-



PHOTO | EMILY FLESCH

VBPS Superintendent Peter Kudlak speaks at the groundbreaking for the district's new operations building.

tary, Williams said. They will seek to approve the projects at the next Board of Education meeting on Oct. 12;

- Approved \$3M budget for the purchase of eight electric school buses.

- Approved Board of Education meeting location change. Future board meetings will be held in various buildings in the school district;

- Heard Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jill Marvaso comment on Van Buren Public Schools' STEM day in partnership Discovery Education at Wayne County Community College District Ted Scott campus. Marvaso said 182 families registered for the event;

- Heard Director of Buildings and Grounds James Williams comment that the letter of recommendation for the new operations building will be done in time for the next Board of Education meeting on Oct. 12;

- Heard Special Services Director Julien Frazier comment that he appreciated Wright's presentation. Frazier said the special services office is going to begin shopping for clothes, shoes, winter items and non-perishable food items for McKinney-Vento (i.e., homeless) students;

- Heard Superintendent Peter Kudlak comment that around 50 people attended the groundbreaking for the new operations building, and that the event was nice for the community. Kudlak said he was happy to see families enjoying learning at STEM day.

- Heard Board of Education Vice President Dionne Falconer comment that VBPS sports teams did well this weekend. Falconer said she liked that the marching band and cheerleaders were at the JV football game last week.

- Heard Secretary Derlene Loyer Gerick comment that she is looking forward to the new operations building.

The meeting ended at 7:49 p.m. Board of Education President Amy Pearce and Trustee Victor DeLibera were absent from the meeting.

HARVEST FEST

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026

AT LIBRARY, MUSEUM, & 4TH ST PLACE

11AM - 3PM

Children will enjoy free hands-on old-time activities. Amazing Dawgs and Kona Ice Truck providing food and drinks for a nominal fee. Plus purchase locally made bakery goods and seasonal crafts.

Featuring:

11am - Tractor Parade on Main
11am - 3pm Unlimited DJ
11am - 3pm Harvest Market on 4th St. Place
1pm - 3pm Music by Regis & Friends at the Library
1:30pm @ 2:30pm Lake Erie Hexenbrut on Main
2pm - Nickle Dig at the Library



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Belleville High School Homecoming Court



PHOTO COURTESY | AUBREY BILLINGSLEA AND MALIYA HOLLINS

The homecoming queen and king will be crowned at this Friday's Homecoming Football game during half-time. BACK ROW (from left to right): Axel Williams, Ike Agbaeze, Artrail Green, Jackson Kovalak, Deric Roth, Ryan Music. FRONT ROW (from left to right): Sydney Lasenby, Rylee Ayrrhart, Mia Shrader, Lillian Bryan, Katelyn Smith, Aubrey Volk, Aliyah Topp, Morgann Liggins

Business Briefs for the Belleville Area

The Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with HealthMarkets, hosts a monthly networking session from 8-9 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month at different locations each time. The Nov. 5 event takes place with the Lakeside Singers at Faith Community Church, 894 E. Huron River Dr. The Dec. 3 event is scheduled for Crafted Beanery & Gift Shop, 381 Main St.

David C. Brown Funeral Home recently learned they have been awarded the National Funeral Directors Association's Pursuit of Excellence

award again this year, one of only nine funeral homes in Michigan out of approximately 650. Last year, they were also recognized for achieving the milestone of 25 Pursuit of Excellence Awards. David C. Brown was also one of 10 funeral homes in the entire U.S. that received an honorable mention "for noteworthy programs and services" as well.

The Pumpkin Factory, a local seasonal attraction at 48651 Harris Rd, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The

destination features pumpkins, hayrides go-karts, and other fall activities, as well as donuts and cider and a playground for children.

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ORPHAN OF THE WEEK

GOLDIE



MEET GOLDIE!

Goldie is a very sweet girl who may not be the first kitten to run up and demand your attention, but that doesn't mean she doesn't have plenty of love to give!

Goldie tends to hang back from the action, preferring to quietly lounge on the sidelines either by herself or curled up with a feline friend. She isn't usually the type to seek you out for attention, but once she's comfortable with you and in the mood for some love, she can be quite the little cuddle bug!

Because Goldie is a quieter and more reserved girl, she would do best in a calmer home where she won't feel overwhelmed by a lot of noise or activity. She would also be very well suited to a home with another friendly cat, as she enjoys having a feline companion to relax and snuggle with.

Goldie is going to need an adopter who understands that she may take some time to adjust to a new environment. She isn't going to blossom overnight, but with patience, love, and the time to build trust, we know she has so much potential to come out of her shell. Once she feels safe and comfortable, you'll get to see the sweet, affectionate little girl hiding underneath that shy exterior.

If you're willing to give a quieter kitten the time she needs to blossom, Goldie could be the perfect addition to your family.

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Q&A with Sumpter Trustees: *What’s a Wetland Bank?*

The Sumpter Township board of trustees suggested that *The Independent* run a Q&A column answering questions from township residents about how local government operates or other issues they hear in the news related to Sumpter. This is the first column, answered by trustees James Frazier and Matthew Oddy.

Question: What exactly is a wetland and what is a wetland mitigation bank?

Answer: The State of Michigan defines a wetland as land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh. The definition applies to public and private lands regardless of zoning or ownership.

The State defines a Wetland mitigation Bank as the replacement of wetland functions through the creation or restoration of wetlands. The goal of wetland mit-

igation is to replace wetland functions which provide public benefits, such as flood storage, water quality protection, fish and wildlife habitat, and groundwater recharge.

The key factor for a Wetland Bank creation which occurred last year in Sumpter, is the land used must not be existing Wetland, it has to be Non-Wetland property. In Sumpters case, 55 acres of good quality farmland was turned into permanent wetlands.

In Sumpter, we have the largest Mitigated Wetland Bank in Wayne County, Crosswinds Marsh at 1,050 acres. It is estimated that 19% of Sumpters 38 square miles is classified as wetlands. Although EGLE has the final decision-making authority on what type and where a Wetland bank is sited. Sumpter created an ordinance to try and regulate where they could go including the requirement that the Board must send a letter to EGLE stating the approval or disapproval of the Bank.

After the Wetland Bank issue came up in Sumpter, Rep Reggie Miller began working on amendments to the State Wetland bank regulations to ensure that residents in the community a Wetland Bank is sited would have proper notification of the proposal, the opportunity to provide public comment on the project, and require the local government to make a determination that they approve or disapprove of the project. EGLE still retains the final authority on approving the site, but the amendments are geared toward providing a voice for the community.

Have a question about Sumpter Township that you would like a trustee to answer? Send an email with “Sumpter Township Q&A” in the subject line to editor@bellevilleareanews.org or call us at 699-9020. We will include your question and the answer we receive in an upcoming issue of The Independent.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Monday, Oct. 5** – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Tuesday, Oct. 6** – Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m., with 5 p.m. work/study as needed

■ **Thursday, Oct. 8** - Keystone Academy school board, 5 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Oct. 12** – Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons

■ **Tuesday, Oct. 13** – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Area District Library Board, 7:30 p.m.

■ **Wednesday, Oct. 14** – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Oct. 19** – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, Oct. 20** – Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m., with 5 p.m. work/study as needed.

■ **Wednesday, Oct. 21** – Belleville DDA board meeting, 6 p.m.

■ **Monday, Oct. 26** – Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons.

■ **Tuesday, Oct. 27** – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m. Also, Van Buren DDA board meeting, 3 p.m.

■ **Wednesday, Oct. 28** – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Nov. 2** – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 3** – Van Buren Township meeting canceled due to election.

■ **Wednesday, Nov. 4** – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Nov. 9** – Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 10** – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Area District Library Board, 7:30 p.m.

■ **Thursday, Nov. 12** - Keystone Academy school board, 5 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Nov. 16** – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 17** – Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m., with 5 p.m. work/study as needed

■ **Wednesday, Nov. 18** – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.

■ **Monday, Nov. 23** – Van Buren Public
- Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 24** – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m.

■ **Tuesday, Dec. 1** – Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m., with 5 p.m. work/study as needed

■ **Monday, Dec. 7** – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.

■ **Tuesday, Dec. 8** – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Area District Library Board, 7:30 p.m.

■ **Wednesday, Dec. 9** – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.

■ **Thursday, Dec. 10** - Keystone Academy school board, 5 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 6 p.m. Also, Belleville Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

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INDEPENDENT CLASSIFIED ADS

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NOTICE is hereby given that on OCTOBER 10, 2026 at 12:00 pm FULL HOUSE SELF STORAGE at 7886 Belleville Rd. Belleville, MI. 48111 is holding a public auction. Unit(s) may or may not include the following items: Household items, recreational items, appliances, furniture and other miscellaneous items. H359 JAMES LAYDEN, L516 N817 P756 SUNSHINE INC.,F272 J614 STEPHEN KANTOS, T981 CHANDLER CUTS AND SNOW LLC., L507 BETTY MALKOWSKI, E214 AYISHA BHAVNANI, L500 L501 LISA CLARK, L531 SIMONE MACK, I410 SCOTT WALKER, E216 I418 DEVONA JOHNSON, G458 JAZMENE LONG, G478 KESHA GIBSON, N813 HEATHER MALFITANO, I401 MARY JENKINS

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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Notice to Advertisers – private gun sales:

It is the responsibility of both the classified seller and buyer to ensure they understand all laws applicable to private gun sales in Michigan. The *Belleville-Area Independent* is not responsible for the legal compliance of classified buyers and sellers.

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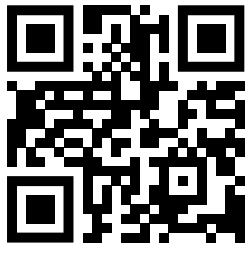
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Musings



Janet Millard
Advertising Director

The Purse Bingo fundraiser for MAAW scheduled for Oct. 4 has been sold out and there won't be tickets at the door.

~~~~~

Sumpter Fire Department has scheduled an Open House on Sunday, Oct. 11 from Noon until 4 p.m. The young and old love the fire trucks, so with free admission you can't go wrong. The Fire Department is also collecting new or lightly used kids coats and winter gear (hats, gloves, etc.). So feel free to bring some with you for their winter clothing drive. I'm assuming you parents have cleaned closets when you brought

new school clothes. If not, now is the time to get that done.

~~~~~

In addition to the merchants downtown passing out Halloween treats on Friday, Oct. 30, the Trunk or Treats are starting to post on Facebook. The first I see is Oct. 25 at Bethany Bible Church on E. Huron River Drive. I'll let you know of others as they are brought to my attention.

~~~~~

The Belleville Central Business Community is gearing up for Boo-ville. This week, please note the second running of the Costumed Monster Mutt Walk application, an ad for Harvest Fest and one for the annual Tractor Parade. The Harvest Market on Oct. 10 will include the 4th Street Square with Young Makers selling their wares. Plus, the very special guests

making their first appearance in Belleville: a dance troupe called the Lake Erie Hexenbrut!

~~~~~

Thunder Over Michigan has announced their date for 2027 July 16-18. Their headliner in 2027 will be The U.S. Airforce Thunderbirds. Mark your calendars now.

~~~~~

Well, Canton HS went the same as Salem, down for the count! Belleville HS 44 and Canton HS 6. Our Tigers are home for the next two Fridays with Novi High School being the next victim. Novi is 0-5 and lost to both Salem & Canton. I'm thinking this will be a romp! Oct. 2 is also Belleville High School Homecoming. Sure would like to see the school do a Homecoming Parade again. Hint - hint.

## Things to do in the Belleville Area

■ **Friday, Oct. 2** – Music Bingo at the Van Buren Eagles #3996, 9961 Beck Rd., 7:30 p.m. Public is welcome, free to play. Karaoke and dancing follows.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 3** – Craft & Vendor Show, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., VFW Post 78 in Romulus, 39270 W. Huron Dr. The first event of this kind at the VFW, featuring local artists & crafters. Limited spaces still available; email pmapourmeart@gmail.com by Sept. 9.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 3** – Sumpter Township October Jam, starting at 4 p.m. at the Sumpter Community Center Pavilion. Featuring music, obstacle course, ax throwing, cornhole, bonfires, food trucks, and fireworks.

■ **Sunday, Oct. 5** – Michigan Against Atomic Waste Designer Purse Bingo fundraiser at 1 p.m. at the BYC. Tickets in advance are \$40 and \$50 at the door.

■ **Monday, Oct. 5** – Farmers Market, 4-7:30 p.m., and Main Street Auto Show, 5-8 p.m. in downtown Belleville.

■ **Thursday, Oct. 8** – Classic movie night at the Belleville Area District Library, 6 p.m. Tonight: 3:10 To Yuma. Also, film discussion with John Monaghan.

■ **Thursday, Oct. 8** – Support group for the blind and visually impaired, Sumpter Community Center, 23501 Sumpter Rd., noon-1:30 p.m. Meet and greet Tyrone, Julie, Ken, Denise, and Victoria and celebrate Tyrone's birthday. Transportation available for Sumpter, Belleville, and Van Buren residents. For rides, call 734-461-9373.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 10** – Van Buren Fire Department Pancake Breakfast, 9 a.m.-noon, Van Buren Fire Station 2. Meet a firefighter, participate in a raffle, eat pancakes and sausages, and celebrate the fire department's 75th anniversary. \$5 tickets include pancakes, sausage links, coffee, juice, or milk.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 10** – HarvestFest, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Belleville Area District Library & 4th Street Place. Tractor Parade, Harvest Market, Food

Vendors, live music, nickel dig, and more.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 10** – Animal Magic Annual Halloween Party, 5-8 p.m., 46110 Judd Rd. Free candy, food, a drink for visitors, opportunity to win raffle baskets.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 10** – Open Arms Lutheran Church's annual Harvest Festival and Trunk or Treat, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Includes a circus performer, 12:30 p.m. helicopter candy drop, and more. The public is invited to attend in a kid-friendly costume.

■ **Monday, Oct. 12** – Farmers Market, 4-7:30 p.m., and Main Street Auto Show, 5-8 p.m. in downtown Belleville.

■ **Wednesday, Oct. 14** – WCCCD hosts College night from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 9555 Haggerty Rd. Get information on more than 40 colleges and universities, as well as the Armed Forces.

■ **Thursday, Oct. 15** – Zion Well instructors host sunset yoga at the Michigan Flight Museum's Roush Aeronautics Center, 7-8 p.m., \$35 per person. Repeats Nov. 19.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 17** – Monster Mutt Walk, noon-2 p.m., starting at 4th Street Place. Registration is noon-12:30. The fee is \$10 plus a can of dog or cat food. First 50 to register get a goody bag. Pet costume contest with prizes, with medals for first through third place in four categories. In partnership with Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue.

■ **Saturday, Oct. 17** – Adult Prom at the Van Buren Eagles #3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Doors open at 5 p.m., catered dinner at 6 p.m. The event includes a DJ and crowning of king and queen. Tickets are \$25 at the bar.

■ **Monday, Oct. 19** – Main Street Auto Show in downtown Belleville, 5-8 p.m.

■ **Wednesday, Oct. 21** – WCCCD hosts a Trick or Treat event on campus from 5:30-7 p.m. at 9555 Haggerty Rd. Trick-or-treating, face painting, crafts, juggling, balloon animals, and more. Free and open to the public.

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BELLEVILLE-AREA  
**INDEPENDENT**

# Tiger Village Roars to Life, Growing From 26 Students to 250

**Sarah Rigg**  
Managing Editor

Tiger Village, a program that encourages Belleville High School students to raise their grades, has grown by leaps and bounds since it was founded two years ago — from 26 students in its first semester to an expected 250 this fall, the program’s fifth semester.

The program lets students choose an adult mentor who meets with them once a week. Students sign a contract with the school built around three requirements: a SMART goal that calls for raising their cumulative grade-point average by 0.4., staying out of trouble, and missing no more than nine days of school per semester. Students already maintaining a 3.4 or 3.5 GPA pledge to maintain their grade point average.

Students who meet their goals earn up to \$250 per semester, along with a free personal pizza from Benito’s and a T-shirt just for joining.

The idea came from Greg Cooper, a 1980 Belleville High School graduate who



A Tiger Village Scholar receives a check at the Fall 2025 banquet for the Tiger Village program.

spent 35 years as a teacher, most of them at John Glenn High School in Westland. Cooper watched a similar effort — the Champions program — take hold in the Wayne-Westland schools and decided to

bring the concept home. “About two and a half years ago, I sat down with [Principal] Crockett and said, ‘I have an idea — let me run it by you,’” Cooper said. “This is my idea, but I want it to be your idea, too. What do you think?” Principal Nicole Crockett said she had already heard about the program’s results at Wayne Memorial High School through Wayne County RESA, the regional educational service agency. “I heard about the results and the posi-

tive culture that was being created in other schools,” Crockett said. “I wanted that positive experience for our students.” Tiger Village started small, with no money behind it beyond good intentions. The first semester drew 26 students. By last semester, 125 students were participating with 54 mentors; this semester organizers expect 250 students — and they need more mentors to keep up. Some mentors work with two or three students each.

Recruiting mentors hasn’t been the hard part, Cooper said. “A lot of people in education are there because they care about young people and want to see them do well,” he said. “You ask them to be part of the program, and it’s amazing how many say yes.”

The program’s real target, Cooper said, is students in the middle — “great athletes, smart kids, kids in the middle” carrying GPAs in the high 1s or low 2s who are having a hard time finding themselves. “Dig deep and challenge yourselves,” he tells them. Students who are already on the honor roll aren’t left out. Those carrying a 3.5 or higher are asked to hold onto their grades while taking on other challenges, such as filling out the FAFSA for college or donating time to the community. The money is only part of the equation.

SEE ROARS ON PAGE 19

## City of Belleville Public Notice

CITY OF BELLEVILLE  
NOTICE OF CLOSE OF REGISTRATION  
FOR THE STATE GENERAL ELECTION  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF BELLEVILLE:

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

The last day to register in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk is  
**Monday, October 19, 2026.**

After this date, anyone who qualifies as an elector may register to vote in person with proof of residency (per MCL 168.492) at the City Clerk’s office, located at  
**330 Charles Street,  
Belleville MI 48111**  
as follows:

- Regular business hours: Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Election Day, Tuesday, November 3rd from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Qualifications for registration are:  
• Applicant is at least 18 years of age  
• City of Belleville resident for at least 30 days prior to the date of the election  
• United States citizen

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the residents in the City of Belleville will be voting on the following:

- Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General
- U.S. Senator and State Senator-4th District
- County Executive
- University of Michigan Regent, Wayne State University Governor
- Michigan Board of Education,
- Justice of the Supreme Court
- Judge of the 3rd Circuit Court, Judge of 34th District Court, Judge of Court of Appeals and Judge of Probate
- Representative in Congress, Representative in State Legislature
- Proposal 2026-1, 2026-2, Detroit Zoo Millage, Historical Museum Authority Millage

Sample ballots are available in the City Clerk’s office, 330 Charles Street, Belleville MI 48111 or on the City’s website: [www.belleville.mi.us](http://www.belleville.mi.us).

Persons with special needs as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the City Clerk’s office: 734-697-9323, extension 7010.

Michelle Bellingham – Interim Clerk/Treasurer  
Published: Oct. 1, 2026

## Important Absentee Ballot Update

**Van Buren Township voters:** Please note an important update about absentee ballots for the upcoming election.

Absentee ballots were mailed beginning September 23rd.

On September 28th Wayne County Elections notified Belleville, Sumpter, and Van Buren Township of a printing error on the ballots.

An omission had been identified involving the Belleville Area District Library Board portion of the ballot. This omission affects all absentee voters in Belleville, Sumpter, and Van Buren. A corrected absentee ballot will be mailed as soon as the new ballots are printed. When you receive a new ballot in the mail, please watch for additional instruc-

tions included with your ballot. The Van Buren Township Clerk’s Office is working to ensure voters have the information they need. We will share additional details, including images to help identify the corrected ballot, as soon as they are available. Please continue to check the Township website and social media pages for updates. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Van Buren Township Clerk’s Office at 734-699-8909. Belleville and Sumpter voters, please contact your Clerk’s Office. Thank you for your patience and attention to this important election update.

## City of Belleville Public Notice

CITY OF BELLEVILLE  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST

In compliance with State Election Law 168, Section 798, a test will be conducted on Thursday, October 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM in City Hall, 330 Charles Street, Belleville, MI.

This test will certify the program used in tabulators that process voter ballots in the Tuesday, November 3, 2026 State General Election. Test will be open to the public and citizens may attend.

The City of Belleville will provide, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations with advance notice to the Clerk’s Office (734-697-9323, extension 7010).

Michelle Bellingham  
Interim City Clerk  
Publish: October 1, 2026

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, September 20:  
1032 Assist fire dept, Sumpter Rd  
1743 Operating while intoxicated, Main St

Monday, September 21:  
0040 Assist other dept, Sumpter Rd  
0136 Disorderly, Breakwater Ct  
0932 Mental subject, Belle Villa Blvd  
1106 Welfare check, Menlo Park Dr  
1322 Leaving the scene property damage accident, Main St/Roys St  
1453 Assist other dept, N Liberty St  
2037 Parking complaint, High St

Tuesday, September 22:  
0324 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Owen Middle School  
0705 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belle Villa Blvd  
0848 Pp pda, Owen St  
0955 Found property/child, Main St  
1309 Juvenile complaint, Carmell St  
1540 Missing person, Owen St  
1755 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Henry St

Wednesday, September 23:  
0053 Assist fire dept, Sumpter Rd  
1147 Suicidal person, Church St  
(missing time stamp) Warrant arrest, Cleophus Pkwy  
1438 Neighbor trouble, Santa zqClara St  
1655 Assault & battery, E Columbia Ave  
1926 Disorderly, Main St  
2050 Welfare check, Church St

Thursday, September 24:  
0956 Ordinance violation, Potter Dr  
1224 Assist fire dept, W Columbia Ave  
1502 Fraud, Main St  
(missing time stamp) Motorist assist, Main St  
1915 Fraud, N Aberdeen Ct  
1946 Welfare check, E Huron River Dr  
2140 Assist citizen, Church St

Friday, September 25:  
1746 Assist citizen, Church St  
2218 Parking complaint, High St

Saturday, September 26 (partial):  
0750 Juvenile complaint, W Columbia Ave  
1331 Domestic, Main St  
1344 911 welfare check, Carmell St  
1523 Mental subject, Church St  
1718 Civil matter, Belle Villa Blvd

These logs also contained 38 traffic stops and 9 property checks, with no miscellaneous complaints.

Van Buren Twp. Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, September 20:  
0011 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Lincoln St/Van Buren St  
0216 Disorderly, S I-94 Service Drive  
0323 Welfare check, Parkwood Dr  
0331 Welfare check, N I-94 Service Drive  
0738 Welfare check, S Ponderosa Trl  
(missing time stamp) Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
0807 Abandoned auto, N I-94 Service Drive  
1109 Larceny, S I-94 Service Dr  
1141 Harassment call, Savage Rd  
1218 Fraud, Belleville Rd  
1223 Property damage accident, Belleville  
1235 Leaving the scene property damage accident, E Huron River Dr/Haggerty Rd  
1238 Threat, Martz Rd

1248 Alarm intrusion, Samuel Barton Dr  
1314 Property damage accident, Haggerty Rd/E Huron River Dr  
1457 Domestic, Ayres Ave  
1543 Juvenile complaint, W Huron River Dr  
1624 Civil matter, Bristol Dr  
1647 Larceny from auto, N Ponderosa Trl  
1658 Threat, Belleville Rd  
1728 Missing person, Quirk Rd  
1744 Assist other dept, Main St  
1954 Parking complaint, Chandler Dr  
2011 Follow up by officer, Savage Rd  
2241 Domestic, Hancock Ave  
2254 Welfare check, Belleville Rd  
2311 Domestic, S Bellridge Dr

Monday, September 21:  
0628 Juvenile complaint, Quirk Rd  
0722 Suicidal person, Brandi Dr  
1005 Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
1022 Domestic, Ivy Dr  
1043 Bank detail-VB only, Belleville  
1051 Abandoned auto, Pebblebrook Dr  
1053 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Harmony Ln/Lilac Ln  
1055 Domestic, Winchester St  
1122 Property damage accident, Michigan Service Dr/Western St  
1131 Welfare check, Lighthouse Dr  
1323 Welfare check, Vine St  
1340 Warrant arrest, Michigan/Holmes (missing time stamp) Fraud, Meadows Ln  
1436 Mental subject, Sadie Ln  
1507 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, N Woodbury Dr  
(missing time stamp) Private property impound, Michigan Ave  
1621 Animal complaint, Quirk Rd  
1631 Sexual assault, Meadows Cir  
1631 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Martz Rd  
1646 Property damage accident, Belleville/Quirk Rd  
(missing time stamp) Welfare check, Belleville Rd  
1743 Assist fire dept, Hanover Dr  
1924 Property damage accident, Belleville Rd  
2112 Traffic offense, Edison Lake Rd/E Huron River Dr  
2126 Missing person, Haggerty Rd  
(missing time stamp) Assist other dept, Tyler Rd  
2319 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, N Woodbury Dr

Tuesday, September 22:  
0119 Prisoner transport, N Telegraph Rd  
(missing time stamp) Repossession, Parkwood Dr  
0205 Property damage accident, Mott/Dellor St  
0709 Animal complaint, Tyler Rd  
0722 Welfare check, Parkwood Dr  
0757 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Haggerty Rd/E Huron River Dr  
0846 Civil matter, N Woodbury Dr  
0933 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Bemis Rd  
1052 Road hazard, E Huron River Dr/Haggerty Rd  
1055 Civil matter, S Bellridge Dr  
1154 911 welfare check, Cobblestone Ct  
1230 Assist other dept, Tyler Rd  
1233 Fraud, S I-94 Service Dr  
1301 Unattended death, Western St  
1355 Property damage accident, Ecorse Rd/Hannan Rd  
1445 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Country Ln  
1504 Property damage accident, W I-94/Belleville  
1511 Trespassing, Bemis Rd  
1609 Bank detail-VB only, Belleville  
1653 Background investigation, Tyler Rd  
1811 Property damage accident, W Huron River Dr/Rawsonville Rd  
1838 Civil matter, Michigan Ave  
2032 Ppo violation, E Huron River Dr  
2041 Welfare check, Charter Club Dr/Tyler Rd

2100 911 welfare check, Kirkridge Park Dr  
2208 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, W Archwood Dr  
2229 Shooting, Martinsville Rd

Wednesday, September 23:  
0007 Warrant arrest, S Huron St  
0028 Warrant arrest, Haggerty Rd/Van Born  
0155 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Holly Ln  
0330 Animal complaint, Sumpter Rd  
0438 Alarm intrusion, W I-94/Rest Area  
0524 Personal injury accident, Ecorse Rd/Denton Rd  
0606 Domestic, Borgman Ave  
0714 Property damage accident, Rawsonville  
0912 Ordinance violation, Ecorse Rd  
1045 Retail fraud, Belleville Rd  
1308 Bank detail-VB only, Belleville  
1320 Trespassing, N I-94 Service Drive  
1350 Warrant arrest, Cleophus Pkwy  
1435 Animal complaint, Endicott Ave  
1537 Assist fire dept, Christina Ln  
1545 Fraud, Rogers Ave  
1550 Retail fraud, Belleville Rd  
1620 Runaway, Riggs Rd  
1648 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Haggerty Rd  
1652 Larceny from auto, Denton Rd  
1719 Larceny from auto, Denton Rd  
1736 Property damage accident, Ecorse Rd/Visteon Way  
1930 Civil matter, N I-94 Service Dr/Belleville Rd  
2018 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Senate St  
2026 911 welfare check, Jeannette Ave  
2058 Disorderly, Denton Rd

Thursday, September 24:  
0008 Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
0018 Domestic, N I-94 Service Dr  
0731 Larceny from auto, Alba Ct  
0753 Assist other dept, Lighthouse Dr  
0754 Larceny from auto, Alba Ct  
0853 Larceny, Belleville Rd  
1135 Larceny, Belleville Rd  
1143 Welfare check, Fairbanks St  
1155 Ordinance violation, Clayton Rd  
1245 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Tyler Rd/Belleville Rd  
1304 Bank detail-VB only, Belleville  
1341 Ordinance violation, Ayres Ave  
1407 Larceny, Westlake Cir  
1416 Suicidal person, Lenmoore Ave  
1441 Animal complaint, Alden Ave  
1516 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Waters Edge Ln  
1544 Alarm intrusion, Jeremy Rd  
(missing time stamp) Private property impound, Holly Ln  
1643 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Sumpter Rd  
1712 Property damage accident, Belleville Rd  
1736 Disorderly, Belleville  
1746 Found property/child, Anna Dr  
1820 Pp pda, Belleville Rd  
1910 Welfare check, Sylvia Dr  
2056 Welfare check, Haggerty Rd  
2132 Larceny, Savage Rd  
2133 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Maple Dr  
2239 Domestic, S I-94 Service Dr  
2315 Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
2339 Juvenile complaint, Jackson Ct  
2342 Domestic, S Ponderosa Trl

Friday, September 25:  
0112 Disorderly, S I-94 Service Dr  
0120 Noise complaint, Lancaster Dr  
0147 Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
(missing time stamp) Repossession, Park Estates Dr  
0546 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Parkwood Dr  
0716 Property damage accident, Belleville Rd/S

I-94 Service Dr  
0717 Background investigation, Tyler Rd  
0742 Property damage accident, Haggerty Rd  
0813 911 welfare check, Haggerty Rd  
1034 Civil matter, Savage Rd  
1131 Animal complaint, Belleville Rd  
1229 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Lighthouse Dr  
1322 Property damage accident, Belleville Rd/Ecorse Rd  
1459 Trespassing, Belleville Rd  
1505 Pp pda, Belleville Rd  
1536 Overdose-Van Buren, S Ponderosa Trl  
1624 Disorderly, Denton Rd  
1829 Runaway, S I-94 Service Dr  
1832 Warrant arrest, Oakwood Blvd  
1844 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Lancaster Dr  
2027 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Landmark  
2050 Unauthorized driving away of automobile, Belleville Rd  
2117 Alarm intrusion, Martinsville Rd  
2240 Welfare check, Rolan Meadows Dr  
2252 Alarm intrusion, Belleville Rd  
2308 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd  
2314 Animal complaint, Sonrisa St

Saturday, September 26:  
0036 911 welfare check, S Woodbury Dr  
0113 Alarm intrusion, Samuel Barton Dr  
0232 Disorderly, Belleville Rd  
(missing time stamp) Assist other dept, Tyler Rd  
0319 Property damage accident, Bog Rd  
0916 Alarm intrusion, N Timberview Dr  
1110 Welfare check, Belleville Rd  
1220 Property damage accident, Rawsonville Rd/Bog Rd  
1240 Animal complaint, Martz Rd  
1349 Welfare check, Belleville Rd  
1504 Lost property/child, Parkwood Dr  
1653 911 welfare check, Coolidge St  
1936 911 welfare check, Rawsonville Rd  
1940 Malicious destruction, W Archwood Dr  
1942 Civil matter, Denton Rd  
2012 Welfare check, Outer Dr  
2029 Leaving the scene property damage accident, Haggerty Rd/Savage Rd  
2126 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Park Estates Dr  
2148 Assist citizen, Michigan Ave  
2324 Suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Stonebridge Dr  
(missing time stamp) Repossession, Parkwood Dr

These logs also contained 110 traffic stops. There were no property checks or miscellaneous complaints.

Sumpter Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, September 20:  
0017 Follow-up investigation, Willow Rd  
0019 Alarm, Willow Rd  
0314 911 hangup, California St  
0833 Animal complaint, Birch Dr  
1050 Welfare check, Mulberry Dr  
1253 Follow-up investigation, Virginia St  
1311 Citizen assist, Sumpter Rd  
1450 Death investigation, Bemis Rd  
1605 Assist fire dept, Wear Rd  
1647 Suspicious circumstance, Colorado St  
1828 Misdemeanor warrant arrest, Judd Rd/Clark Ln  
1957 Suspicious vehicle, Birch Dr/Magnolia Dr

Monday, September 21:  
0356 Suspicious circumstance, Carriage Ln  
0526 911 hangup, Judd Rd  
0745 Alarm, Clark Rd  
1326 Citizen assist, Wear Rd/Martinsville Rd  
1355 Civil matter, Haggerty Rd

1547 Follow-up investigation, Rawsonville Rd  
1649 Citizen assist, Haggerty Rd  
1814 Assist fire dept, Judd Rd  
2013 Suspicious person, Harris Rd/Haggerty Rd  
2021 Mental health call, Rawsonville Rd  
2048 911 hangup, Savage Rd  
2211 Suspicious person, Edgewood Dr  
2302 Suspicious person, Judd Rd/Sherwood Rd  
2314 Juvenile matter, Rustic Ln

**Tuesday, September 22:**

0530 Welfare check, Rawsonville Rd  
0638 Follow-up investigation, Rustic Ln  
1155 911 hangup, Savage Rd  
1213 Suspicious circumstance, Wear Rd  
1805 Juvenile matter, Willis Rd  
1939 Civil matter, Sumpter Rd  
1953 Suspicious circumstance, Birch  
2047 Assist fire dept, Mulberry  
2138 Welfare check, Edgewood Dr

**Wednesday, September 23:**

0223 Noise complaint, Rustic Ln  
0353 Mental health call, Birch  
1046 Civil matter, Sherwood Rd  
1337 Suspicious circumstance, Mulberry Dr  
1534 Citizen assist, Bemis Rd  
1631 Follow-up investigation, Willis Rd/Sumpter Rd  
1646 Suspicious circumstance, Sumpter Rd  
1808 Neighbor dispute, Harris Rd  
1844 Suspicious person, Magnolia Dr  
2205 Missing person report, Rustic Ln  
2308 Suspicious person, Rawsonville Rd/Willis Rd

**Thursday, September 24:**

0026 Follow-up investigation, Rustic Ln  
0935 Animal complaint, Willis Rd  
1050 Citizen assist, Elwell Rd  
1611 Animal complaint, 3rd St  
1756 Suspicious circumstance, Alaska St/California St

1832 Civil matter, Mulberry Dr  
1931 Family trouble, Wyoming St  
2001 Family trouble, Rustic Ln  
2139 Suspicious circumstance, Birch Dr  
2227 MDOP, Magnolia Dr  
2248 Assist fire dept, Creekside Dr

**Friday, September 25:**

0507 Property damage accident, Willow Rd/Elwell Rd  
0621 911 hangup, Delaware St  
0649 Citizen assist, Rustic Ln  
1357 Alarm, Willow Rd  
1447 Recovered stolen vehicle, Wear Rd  
1512 Welfare check, Country Club Blvd  
1522 Welfare check, Sumpter Rd  
1728 Assist fire dept, Judd Rd  
1809 Welfare check, Wear Rd  
1944 Suspicious circumstance, Dakota Ct  
1945 911 hangup, Arkona Rd  
1948 911 hangup, Bemis Rd  
2045 Assist fire dept, Arkona Rd  
2123 Civil matter, Sumpter Rd/Oakville Waltz Rd  
2233 Family trouble, Weimer Dr  
2336 Welfare check, Rustic Ln  
2339 Citizen assist, Willow Rd

**Saturday, September 26:**

0251 Suspicious circumstance, Mulberry Dr  
0331 Assist fire dept, Willow Rd  
0820 Suspicious circumstance, Dunn Rd  
1116 Follow-up investigation, Willis Rd  
1419 Suspicious person, Harris Rd  
1543 Orv complaint, Arkona Rd/Elwell Rd  
1758 Family trouble, Wyoming  
1915 Neighbor dispute, Delaware  
1939 Alarm, Dunn Rd  
2047 911 hangup, Mulberry  
2153 Family trouble, Arizona

*These logs also contained 66 traffic stops, 14 misc. details, and 134 property checks.*

ROARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Genisys Credit Union partners with the program on financial literacy: students can earn a one-time \$50 certificate for turning in a signed account application and another \$50 certificate when they complete it, opening a high-yield account. Genisys representatives visit to teach the students about saving — spend half, save half — and about compounding interest. The credit union is also contributing \$2,000 toward the program’s end-of-year banquet, where students and their families celebrate the semester’s achievements.

Not everyone is sold on the concept. Cooper said someone told him she couldn’t get past the idea of “paying students to do what they should be doing anyway.”

His answer: students don’t get rewarded unless they show improvement — and the program is about more than the check.

“It’s not just the incentive,” Cooper said. “I want to see them succeed in life, not just get the money. We’re working on scholarships now — what are they going to do after high school? I want them to be happy people now, but happy, contributing members of society later.”

Crockett makes a similar case. “We’ve heard people say that we’re paying kids to do what they should already do,” she said. “However, this is not just about getting good grades. This is about helping our students create a habit of setting goals and achieving those goals. This is a skill that even adults struggle with. If we can motivate them to build habits of success, we set them up for future success.”

The results, she said, speak for themselves: the program has grown from seven scholarship recipients to more than 100 in a short time.

Students who have been through the program say it changed how they see school — and themselves. Da’laeja Taylor, now a sophomore, joined Tiger Village as a freshman. She failed algebra first semester; second semester, with the program’s help, she passed with a B.

“It really helped me academically — it helped me stay on track with my grades and made my GPA go up,” Taylor said. “It motivated me to focus more on school.”

She chose her Algebra 1 teacher, Miss Angell, as her mentor. “Every time I had a slip-up or missed an assignment, she helped me get back on track.”

Lauren Robinson, also a sophomore, said the program helped her balance a heavy schedule that included after-school commitments. She worked with teachers during a free period to stay on top of assignments across her classes.

“My experience was great,” Robinson said. “I had a lot of fun, and it helped me stay focused on my classes.”

She started the year with mostly A’s but also three B’s and a C — a C her mother didn’t like — and struggled in algebra. Now, she said, she’s putting her earnings into a savings account for college. She wants to go to medical school.

At the end-of-year banquet, mentors and students take the microphone, and Cooper said their stories say it best. Many students say they used to feel like they had no connections at school, no one who cared about them — and that the program changed that. Others say they left the wrong crowd behind and found a new group of friends pushing them to succeed.

“It’s made a huge difference in the decisions they make,” Cooper said. “It’s about confidence in themselves — thinking about the future differently, thinking about where they might be going in life.”

Looking ahead, Cooper wants to build out the scholarship side of the program and help students plan for life after graduation. The immediate challenge is keeping pace with growth: more students means more mentors and more contributors.

“My hope for this program is that every student can experience the benefits of achieving personal excellence — doing the best they can at each stage of life, and then reaching higher,” Crockett said. “Successful students create success for their communities and beyond. Go Tigers!”

For more information about the program, visit [tigervillagebhs.org](http://tigervillagebhs.org).

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