



BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

Vol. 19.52 Thursday, December 26, 2013 Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren **F R E E**

Court Watching:

MSP adds 15 felony charges to disbarred attorney's criminal case

By Diane Madigan
Independent Court Reporter

After months of investigation by Michigan State Police, on Dec. 18 another 15 felony charges were brought against disbarred attorney Thomas

Andrew White, 46, of Van Buren Township. In his new case, in Count One, White is accused of conducting a Criminal Enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity.



Thirty-five instances White were cited in the warrant for a total of more than \$940,000. On this charge, if convicted, White could be sentenced to 20 years in prison and/or a \$100,000 fine.

Also in this warrant, White is accused of 14 felony embezzlements, which are four charges of embezzlement over \$100,000, five cases of embezzlement of \$50,000-\$100,000, two cases of embezzlement \$20,000-\$50,000, and three cases of embezzlement \$1,000-\$20,000.

If convicted, White could be looking at many, many years of prison time, and imposed fines of three times the value, some \$2,820,000.

On Dec. 18, White was scheduled for a preliminary examination on a 2004 case in which he is accused of uttering and publishing, larceny by conversion (\$20,000 or more), embezzlement - agent or trustee (\$20,000 or more), and two counts of identity theft.

The victims in this case were Judith Ann and the late Leland Jordan, who White represented in a land sale. White is accused of taking \$73,800 from them by counterfeiting their signatures. Michigan State Police filed this case before the others because the statute of limitations was about to expire.

Leland Jordan died in 2008 at the age of 72 but was alive at the time of the alleged crimes.

White could face 44 years in prison if convicted of all the charges in the Jordan case.

The preliminary examination on the Jordan case had been adjourned / postponed three times as the court waited for more warrants.

Wayne County Prosecutor Daniel Williams signed the warrant early the morning of Dec. 18 and White, his attorney Michael Vincent and Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Latoya Willis waited for the warrant to be electronically transferred to Romulus' 34th District Court.

Once the warrant was transferred White stood with attorney Vincent before Judge
(continued on page 3)



Independent photo by Rosemary K. Oztzman

Belleville Mayor Kerreen Conley, left, honored City Clerk/Treasurer Lisa Long at the Dec. 16 city council meeting with flowers and praise. After a long, concerted effort, on Dec. 3 Long earned the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk. She has been with the city for 26 years.

Jackson arraigned on first-degree murder charge

By Rosemary K. Oztzman
Independent Editor

Richard Elmer Jackson, Jr., 39, of Van Buren Township was arraigned Thursday at 34th District Court on one count of premeditated, first-degree murder in the death of his wife Travisteene Jackson, 38.

His preliminary exam was set for 9 a.m. Jan. 2 at 34th District Court.

Jackson is being held with no bond due to the nature of the charge against him and the administrative criminal laws, said VBT Police Lt. Kenneth Floro.

On Tuesday, Dec. 17, at about 3:37 a.m., VBT Police were dispatched to Greenwood Court for a "suicidal male subject" after receiving concerned calls from Jackson's friends and relatives.

A news release from Lt. Floro said the officers arrived at the residence and were

unable to get anyone to answer the door.

Lt. Charles Bazy established telephone contact with a male at the residence and persuaded him to open the front door and speak with the officers.

When the homeowner opened the door, police became concerned for his safety and the safety of the other residents in the house because of the inappropriate way the man was dressed and some blood on his clothes.



Jackson

The officers secured the male and entered the home to perform a welfare check on the other residents and found the body of the man's wife covered with a blanket.

Police took Jackson into custody and got a warrant to search the home.

The Wayne County Medical Examiner did an autopsy on Travisteene Jackson and ruled the death a homicide.

The two children of the couple were away for the evening.

On Thursday, the children's grandparents advised Van Buren Public School officials that the children – one a student at Tyler Elementary and one a student at Owen Intermediate School – would not be returning to classes until after Christmas break.

(continued on page 3)

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Socks for First Step

Marian Caldwell of Van Buren Township, left, and her alter ego Mr. Mouse held a recent drive to gather warm socks for participants in First Step, an organization that helps those who are abused and subjected to violence. The socks were collected at Trinity Episcopal Church and delivered to a staff member of First Step at right. "Cold feet will be warmed by your generosity," Caldwell said, speaking to all the donors.



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SECOND FRONT PAGE

White felonies

(continued from page 1)

Brian Oakley. Vincent asked to waive the reading of the new charges and asked to consolidate the new case with the current case on a personal recognizance (PR) bond, stating White is not a flight risk.

Vincent said this is the third or fourth time White has been to court on this case and, “He is not a threat to society.”

PR bonds do not require the defendant or a third party to pay money to the court, unless the defendant later fails to appear.

Assistant Prosecutor Willis, who was filling in for Assistant Prosecutor Daniel Williams, said she would leave the bond decision up to the court’s discretion.

Judge Oakley ordered White to swear if he failed to appear for future court proceedings he would he would forfeit \$100,000.

Judge Oakley ordered White’s two cases to track together and his current \$20,000/10% bond be converted to \$50,000 PR bond, plus bond on the new file to be \$50,000 PR.

Vincent said he and the Michigan State Police want to consolidate the files on both cases to be one case, to save the MSP time for fingerprinting and a mug shot again. Judge Oakley was reluctant to do so before checking with the court clerk to find out what that kind of move would do to the court.

White is scheduled to appear at 34th District Court in Romulus on Feb. 26 for preliminary examinations on both cases.

White was an attorney with offices at 35 Main Street, Belleville, for 20 years until he was disbarred July 15 for stealing from his clients. He declared Chapter 7 bankruptcy a few days later.

Count	Embezzlement Charges	
	Victim	Amount
Count 2	Maria Sienko and/or John Sienko	\$100,000 or more
Count 3	Alisa Renier	\$100,000 or more
Count 4	Guy Mostoller	\$100,000 or more
Count 5	Heather Grey and Anna Dziubek	\$100,000 or more
Count 6	John McDonald	\$50,000 less than \$100,000
Count 7	James McCann and/or Estate of Robert Devine	\$50,000 less than \$100,000
Count 8	James McCann and McVon Lowe	\$50,000 less than \$100,000
Count 9	Danny Fisher	\$50,000 less than \$100,000
Count 10	Peggy Manners	\$50,000 less than \$100,000
Count 11	Joseph Ratcliff	\$20,000 less than \$50,000
Count 12	Karen Forster	\$20,000 less than \$50,000
Count 13	Dwayne Branun	\$1,000 less than \$20,000
Count 14	Betty Pendleton	\$1,000 less than \$20,000
Count 15	Dianna Arquette	\$1,000 less than \$20,000

Thompson: \$120,700 MDNR grant is gift to Belleville community

The City of Belleville Downtown Development Authority’s (DDA) funding request for a universal design canoe/kayak launch and boat slips at Horizon Park has been recommended for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant in the amount of \$120,700.

Belleville DDA Coordinator Carol Thompson said the City of Belleville and its DDA are delighted to have their request recommended for full funding.

She said it is especially noteworthy that the Belleville application received the highest score in the state; 103 applications for outdoor recreation projects were submitted, with five state and 39 local projects recommended for funding.

The next step in the process is the DNR must receive legislative and Governor approval for appropriation of funds for these projects.

Thompson said the DDA hopes to receive the grant in time to bid the project this spring for early summer construction.

“The funding and project are a wonderful gift to the Belleville Community this holiday season,” Thompson said in a news release.

Thompson said the Belleville DDA wants to create opportunities for boaters to stop and enjoy downtown, and to offer residents

new ways to enjoy the lake.

The DDA applied last spring to add floating docks with five slips for boaters and an ADA-accessible canoe/kayak launch to Horizon Park.

The request also includes an accessible picnic table pad, signage, landscaping and resurfacing the parking lot.

The total project cost is estimated at \$172,400, with a 30% cash match from the DDA of \$51,700 and the MNRTF grant covering 70%. The DDA contracted with Spicer Group to prepare the grant application, and engineer the project.

A key component of the proposed project

is linking Horizon Park to the Huron River Water Trail. The Huron River Water Trail, an effort of the Huron River Watershed Council, is a 104-mile inland paddling trail connecting people to the river’s natural environment, its history and the communities it touches.

As a Water Trail Partner, the City of Belleville and the DDA are participating in the River Up! Program, a collaboration of communities along the Water Trail to promote economic development.

The project application received local support from Van Buren Township Supervisor Linda Combs, State

Representative Dian Slavens, and the Central Business Community (CBC) and the Belleville Area Council for the Arts – both organizations which produce annual events at Horizon Park.

Chris Casteel of the Amputee Coalition of America and co-founder of the Metro Detroit Adaptive Kayak Council provided valuable input on the project’s universal design.

The MNRTF program provides funding assistance for local units of government and DNR recreation needs including the development of outdoor recreation facilities.

Sumpter Police arraign second suspect in Ace Hardware theft

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Two chainsaws, worth about \$600 each, were stolen by two men from the Ace Hardware store in Sumpter Township during business hours on Oct. 12, 2010.

Then, the next day, at about the same time, two men returned and tried to do it again, but the hardware store owners had chained down the saws this time and the thieves were unsuccessful.

Over the past three years, one suspect was arrested and adjudicated and last week the second suspect was in court.

On Dec. 18, Jackie Vasher, 29, stood before 34th District Court Judge Brian A. Oakley for his preliminary exam on a charge of first-degree retail fraud. He waived his preliminary exam and was bound over to circuit court in Detroit for an arraignment on the information on Dec. 27 with court-appointed attorney David Lankford.

Vasher was in custody on \$10,000/10%

bond and Judge Oakley granted him personal bond with a GIS tether.

Judge Oakley pointed out the record shows Vasher also has a Sept. 10 violation for speeding and no proof of insurance.

At the time of the theft in 2010 surveillance photos taken by Ace’s cameras were very clear and the *Independent* published them hoping to help police get a lead.

Sumpter Township Police Detective John Toth said he believes Vasher left the state after the 2010 theft and possibly went to prison.

Detective Toth said the week before his court appearance Sumpter Police had Vasher in custody and he feigned an attack of appendicitis. Police took him to urgent care, where the doctor confirmed it was appendicitis and sent him on to a hospital.

The hospital didn’t agree with the diagnosis, but operated and took out Vasher’s appendix, Det. Toth said.

After surgery, “He ripped out all this tubes

and went running,” Det. Toth said, noting Plymouth Police then arrested him.

Toth said Vasher has been stealing all over the place and has two more cases pending in Plymouth, one from 2010 for first-degree retail fraud and one from Dec. 6 for first-degree retail fraud, larceny in a building, and organized retail crime.

Vasher was labeled an habitual offender in 2010.

A woman seen in the car during the Sumpter theft was never found, Toth said.

Jackson charged

(continued from page 1)

School officials said Jackson was very active at his children’s schools, taking part in many activities.

Lt. Floro said Jackson had suicidal tendencies and told police he had a couple of failed suicide attempts. Lt. Floro said suicide certainly was in Jackson’s initial thought process.



OPINIONS

Editorial

Here are our hopes for Tri-Community

Within a few days we will be in the new year. Here are some of our hopes for the Tri-Community in 2014:

- We hope the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees comes up with a second in command to help Public Safety Director Greg Laurain – whether it turns out to be a chief of police or the not-so-good choice of a unionized captain. Director Laurain was promoted from captain – and left the union and froze his pension – to become director. Now, he needs an assistant that could quickly step into his shoes, if needed.

- We hope Belleville property owner Sam Kassab can get the city planning commission members the details they want and the plans they can welcome, so the first block into Belleville can become a warm welcome to visitors this year. It's a sad looking block now and not at all inviting. Hope abounds.

- We hope Sumpter Township Supervisor Johnny Vawters heals from his recent medical problems and gets back to leading the township. He is greatly missed. He knows how to make people feel welcome at meetings and how to listen to them tell their problems. We miss you, Johnny.

- We hope the Van Buren Public Schools can boost their student count so more state aid flows into the coffers for education. Too many taxpayers are feeling ripped off for paying for a bigger school when there are fewer students. There is a lot of teaching energy and new programs. Now, we need more students.

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

...By Rosemary K. Otzman

A reader called to ask if the newly approved Van Buren Township general fund budget tells how much the township is raising the rates for providing dispatch and lockup services to the City of Belleville Police Department.

I know last year there was some hubbub at a VBT Board meeting when trustees learned Belleville didn't get a rate boost from the year before.

Because of that upset, Belleville was expecting a raise in rates this year. But then there was silence on the subject at public meetings and nobody mentioned any negotiations.

So, I checked the township budget approved on Dec. 17 and, guess what?

Belleville's rates are the same for 2014 as in 2012 and 2013 -- \$145,600.

That's good news for Belleville, which is trying to keep costs down, but what about VBT PD and all their increased expenses they talked about at the budget sessions? Hmm.

Charles Tackett of Van Buren Township would really like to see a forensic audit of the Visteon bonds because he is sure it will tell that the bonds were not sold in accordance with the state Public Act for LDFAs (Local Development Finance Authority).

Charles is a builder and has experience in finance and many other fields and he knows the difference between "on-site" – foundations, pilings, buildings – and "off-site" – roads, utilities, and other things used by the public.

His attorney says VBT spent bond money on "on-site" items that were not permitted under the law and practically built the



Visteon complex. That's using public money for private business.

Charles has urged VBT officials to read the LDFA Public Act, but they rely on attorneys to tell them the Visteon bonds were handled properly. There are many in this area today who say they have been robbed by disbarred attorney Tom White. Their trust in attorneys is nil.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation website explains LDFA:

"The Local Development Financing Act (LDFA), Public Act 281 of 1986, as amended, allows a city, village or urban township to utilize tax increment financing to fund public infrastructure improvements. The tool is designed to promote economic growth and job creation. Communities across Michigan have utilized this tool to extend sewer and water lines, construct roads, service manufacturing, agriculture processing or high technology operations..."

If you have some spare time over the holidays, maybe you could read the Public Act on LDFAs and see if you agree with Charles and his attorney.

VBT has pledged its full faith and credit to pay off the bonds.

VBT taxpayers could end up paying six or seven mills on the Visteon bonds when the Visteon tax income falls short in 2016.

LDFA and VBT officials are meeting behind closed doors to figure out what to do about the bonds. So far, no progress.

Kay Atkins received a post card from Walmart/Target last week that they she has an unclaimed reward of \$100 in gift savings. She was told to contact them at the toll-free number to claim her reward.

"There were red flags that popped up while I talked to the person at the 855-644-5415 phone number and they insisted I give them my credit card or debit card number to process the \$1.95 charge to get the \$100 gift savings to me," Kay said. "I am old, but not stupid."

She offered to send a check, but that was not acceptable. She called Walmart in Bentonville, Arkansas, and was asked to call the Federal Trade Commission who in turn asked her to call the Michigan Attorney General's office, which she did.

She said the Attorney General office rep said she googled "Walmart postcard scam" and found something.

"I hope the word gets out before people are scammed," Kay said. "Let's catch them!"

My son, Jim, who does all the production work and bookwork around here, not to mention helping me deliver on Thursdays, is back at work after surgery last week. He had laparoscopic gallbladder surgery and is mending nicely.



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**BELLEVILLE - AREA
INDEPENDENT**

Established Dec. 3, 1994 First Edition Jan. 5, 1995

The Belleville-Area Independent is a free, weekly newspaper published each Thursday in Belleville, MI.

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Belleville, MI 48111
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Member: Michigan Press Association

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Letters

**Give Nasser a chance to
upgrade his gas station**

To the Editor:

On Wednesday, Dec. 11, we attended a very interesting and informative meeting of the Van Buren Township Planning Commission.

One of the things we learned was there is a new or relatively new tool in the tool kit of the township to facilitate making the re-zoning possible of parcels of land that previously would have had some obstructions to logical uses.

This is important because as a township that is facing a bond issue that will affect all of us paying taxes, it permits an expansion of the tax base by bringing in new business that might not have been possible before due to land-use issues.

This new tool is called "Re-zoning with Conditions."

That being said, it is important that we as a township become more business friendly so as to expand our tax base so that we don't find ourselves in the same position as Allen Park in having to pay off a failed bond issue on the backs of the residential taxpayers.

The agenda at the planning commission meeting dealt with two requests. The first request was from Mr. Joe Nasser, the owner of the gas station at the corner of Sumpter and Hull. This is the agenda item that is of interest to my husband and myself. Mr. Nasser has been asking the township for the last five years for permission to replace his present building with one that meets the township's ideal.

Mr. Nasser's presentation included the information that he is willing to pave Hull Road from the center of Sumpter Road for 210 feet, which will improve 100% of that intersection. The building would meet or exceed all the township requirements as to

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appearance and landscaping according to his plan.

The conditional zoning comes in as to setbacks and some other property issues which I admit I did not research. My approach is more along the logical lines of, if you can make it happen within reason of this zoning law, and Mr. Nasser is willing to work with the township on those conditions, MAKE IT HAPPEN. That gas station is going nowhere, it has been there for over 40 years, and Mr. Nasser is willing to spend the money to improve the property, pay more tax for the improved building, and make that whole corner much better functionally that it is now.

Another person at the meeting on this proposal stated that her rights were being violated if this Rezoning with Conditions is allowed.

My question is: What about Mr. Nasser's rights to rezone within the requirements as it is now written?

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas and Judy Bell
Hull Road, Van Buren Township

Editor's Note: Rezoning with Conditions is part of a state law that was passed in 2006. Since then, VBT had one other Rezoning with Conditions application, but the other applicant failed to follow through.

Thank you for supporting your town

To the Editor:

To all who enjoyed the "Winter Fest" in Belleville, a big Thank You for supporting your home town.

We at Main Street Flowers would like to thank the following restaurants who donated food for our Wine Tasting.

Vinter's Canton Winery supplies their custom wines every year.

The Lunch Box, Dos Pesos Mexican Restaurant, Bayou Grill, Bone Heads Bar BQ and Benito's Pizza donated trays of their delicious foods.

It was a great success and we look forward to next year.

Ron and Jane Vesche and staff of
Main Street Flowers
Belleville

A big Thank You to Police Chief Taylor

To the Editor:

My family would like to thank Belleville Police Chief Gene Taylor, who thinks of us all year-round.

Thank you from the Zmierczak Family
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DTE should expand its Fermi 2 evacuation site

To the Editor:

For almost three years now, I have been following the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear station. The Unit 4 reactor is still being stabilized, and the troubles are not over. Our country's west coast is being contaminated by all the radioactive materials going into the ocean from that reactor.

Those Fukushima reactors are Mark I's, built by General Electric. Fermi 2 is the largest Mark I reactor in the world, bigger than all four of the Fukushima reactors put together. Mark I's store their waste on upper floors of the reactor building instead of ground level.

One thing we learned from this disaster is that people were evacuated from a 12-mile radius, and farther in wind direction. DTE Energy's evacuation plan for Fermi 2 only covers a 10-mile area. So, what are those of us within a 50-mile radius (which takes in Detroit, Toledo, Windsor, and surrounding communities) supposed to do in case of a Fermi 2 melt-down and the wind blowing in our direction?

In DTE's Fermi 2 Emergency Preparedness booklet, there are Potassium Iodide (KI) vouchers for people within the 10-mile radius of Fermi 2. KI protects the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine. I'd say considering the size of Fermi 2, DTE should provide KI tablets to everyone with at least a 25-mile radius, if not a 50-mile.

God forbid a disaster would occur at Fermi 2, but to be on the safe side, we should be as prepared as possible. I call on all our political leaders to urge DTE Energy to extend their evacuation zone to a more realistic radius.

Sincerely,

Jessie Pauline Collins
Sumpter Township



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Obituaries

ROSE MARIE BANOTAI

Rose Marie Banotai, age 84, of Belleville, died December 19, 2013.

Beloved wife of the late Frank. Dear mother of Helen (Jim) Borener, Beverly (Greg) Gill and Frank John (Mary) Banotai. Dearest grandmother of Daniel, Lisa, Andrew and Christopher. Dear sister of Wilma (the late Joe) Blandino, Mildred (the late Thomas) Barnes, Ignace (Mary) Ban Jr. and Helen (the late James) Deming. She was preceded in death by her parents, Ignace and Julia Ban.

Funeral Mass was 10 a.m. Monday, December 23, at St. Anthony Catholic Church in Belleville. Visitation was Sunday, 1-8 PM, at Michigan Memorial Funeral Home (next to Michigan Memorial Park) 30895 Huron River Dr., Huron Twp., 734-783-2646. Interment was in Michigan Memorial Park. Memorial contributions may be made to the Kellogg Eye Center or the Kidney Foundation.

www.michiganmemorialfuneralhome.com



FRANK TARR

(July 1, 1922 - December 19, 2013)

Frank Tarr, age 91, of Holland, MI, formerly of Belleville, MI, passed away at the Hospice House of Holland, MI. He will be buried in Hillside Cemetery next to his wife and sons. David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville.



Helmut M. Preis

HELMUT M. PREIS

Helmut M. Preis, 69, of Belleville, passed away on December 21, 2013. Helmut was born November 10, 1944 in Wels, Austria. He was the son of Emil Preis and Olga (Knittel) Preis. Helmut was the owner/operator of Preis's party store in Willis, MI on Oakville and Waltz Road.

To cherish his memory he leaves his wife Connie L. Preis; mother Olga Preis; one son Michael H. Preis; one daughter Anna L. (Anthony) Navarre; two brothers Alfred (Judy) Preis and Peter (Linda) Preis; and one sister Ingrid (Rick) Utley.

He was preceded in death by his father Emil Preis. Friends gathered from 2 to 8 p.m. on Monday December 23, 2013 at Crane Funeral Home, 36885 Goddard Rd., Romulus, MI 48174, (734) 941-9200. The Romulus VFW Post 9568 Honor Guard was there at 6:45 p.m.

Those who wish may contribute to the Wounded Warrior Project online at www.woundedwarriorproject.org, or by mail at Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, Kansas 66675. Online guests may leave condolences, share a photo, or light a memorial candle by visiting www.cranefuneralhome.net.



John Philip Queener

JOHN PHILIP QUEENER

(July 31, 1960 - December 23, 2013)

John Philip Queener, age 53, of Canton, MI, formerly of Belleville, MI, passed away Monday, December 23, 2013 at his home. He was born July 31, 1960 in Ann Arbor, MI, son of John Paul & Phyllis Ann (Tuttle) Queener. He was a 1979 graduate of Belleville High School. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Army from 1982-1985. John enjoyed hunting, fishing, working on engines, and most of all, he loved spending time with his kids and grandkids.

Survived by wife Kim of Cunningham, TN; son Jonathan Joseph Queener of Southside, TN; daughter Merissa Leann Queener of Cunningham, TN; two granddaughters Kandice and Brianna; his mother Phyllis A. Queener of Canton; two brothers Bob (Patricia) Queener and Steve Queener, both of Belleville; also seven nieces and nephews and many friends. He was preceded in death by his father, John Paul Queener in 1993.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Memorial contributions may be made to his children. Please sign his on-line guest book and share a memory for his family to treasure at www.davidcbrownfh.com.

MARSP Wayne Metro donates \$200 to Toys for Tots Christmas charity

The Michigan Association of Retired School Personnel, Wayne Metro Chapter Area 27, donated \$200 to the Toys for Tots Christmas charity this week.

Toys for Tots is a program run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve which distributes toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas.

Area 27 MARSP Director Lois Mida Zilka, formerly of Belleville and now of Canton, said the vote to donate was taken at the group's recent meeting. This is the second year the group has donated to Toys for Tots.

Zilka delivered the check to the *Belleville-Area Independent* office, one of the drop-off locations for Toys for Tots.

Zilka said Area 27, with about 2,000 members, is one of four MARSP areas in Wayne County. Larry McConnell is Assistant Area 27 Director.

Area 27 is made up of 13 school districts: Crestwood, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights #7, Garden City, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Huron, Inkster, Romulus, Van Buren, Wayne County R.E.S.A., Wayne-Westland, and Westwood.

Things to do in the Belleville area...

• Now through Saturday, Dec. 28 – The Belleville Area Museum is presenting its Festival of Holiday Trees. The museum is open Tuesdays from 3 to 7 p.m. and Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, noon to 4 p.m.

• Tuesday, Dec. 31 – Friends Family Theater Movie Watch Night Celebration at the Friends Youth Center, 7890 Tuttle Hill Road at Bemis in Ypsilanti. Movies to be announced. Information: 734-482-5074.

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Linda Stevenson

VBT Assessor Linda Stevenson appointed to serve as MAA President

Linda Stevenson, Assessment Coordinator for Van Buren Township, recently was sworn in as the 2014 President for the Michigan Assessors Association (MAA).

"I am honored to serve as president for this professional organization and to engage with my esteemed colleagues in this capacity," Stevenson said.

Stevenson was appointed to the MAA Board of Directors in 2008.

She also served on the Wayne County Assessor Association of Officers as president in 1999 and the South East Chapter of the MAA as its president in 2005.

The MAA is a statewide, non-profit educational and resource organization that was established in 1959 to improve the standards of assessment practice, to provide a clearing house for the collection and distribution of useful information relative to assessment practice, and to promote justice and equity in the distribution of the tax burden.

Stevenson has worked for VBT for 24.5 years and always has had a hand in property tax assessing.

"It's not something you want to become, a property tax assessor, but that's what I've done," Stevenson said.

She was hired as a confidential secretary to Supervisor David Jacokes, but three or

four months later assessor Stephanie Soja retired and Stevenson and Susan Ireland took over the assessing.

Stevenson is married to David and they have two daughters, Melissa and Angela. They also have two "wonderful grandsons - they are my joy," she said.



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VBT board ponders what to do about second in police command

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Van Buren Township Public Safety Director Gregory Laurain has been working without a second in command since he was named to this position on July 17. There are 37 sworn officers in the department.

Before that, he and Ken Brooks were captains, and were second in command to several different public safety directors. Then Brooks retired and Laurain was the lone captain for a year and then promoted.

Laurain left his union which required freezing of his pension to take the administrative position. That was the POLC Command Officers Union.

He said after he was promoted, Supervisor Linda Combs told him to put his second in command on hold since they were looking at going in a different direction, to have a police chief or assistant chief as a non-union position.

But he's still wearing two hats five months later, which puts a lot of instability in the police department, he said.

Laurain said the department has 25-30 officers that the township has spent from \$2.5 to \$3 million each in individual salary and training that are ready to move upward. But, he said, because of a flawed pension system, anyone who leaves the union for any reason has his pension frozen. He said it's a real hardship for the individual.

Laurain said the township needs to get a squad pension system first. As of Nov. 26, that second in command position was removed from the 2014 budget.

He said three are eligible for that position, but it needs to be posted first.

At the Dec. 16 39-minute work/study session to discuss the "Police Captain vacant position" there was a bare quorum of board members, with Treasurer Sharry Budd and Trustees Phil Hart and Brenda McClanahan absent.

"We have three people absent. Greg needs help," said Trustee Jeff Jahr, naming his

concerns. "The opportunity is now to reach a resolution on how we're going to go."

He said the board has to look forward to a good solution for the future. He said he doesn't like the "union vs. non-union" part of the problem, but, "I personally think the person in command shouldn't be paid overtime."

He said the fire chief goes out without overtime and Laurain goes out without overtime.

He said the second in command should be a management position. He said internal candidates feel they can't afford a management position.

"It's not a glass ceiling. It's a solid ceiling," Trustee Jahr said. "... We can't promote from within."

He said the organizational chart should be made without regard to personalities and that position should be management.

Jahr said if Laurain leaves in four years, a captain below him couldn't afford to take over the position. He said it's not only the pension, but it's the blended rate some get for fire fighter work and it's the overtime they get.

"We need to train a police chief able to move up," Jahr said.

Laurain said he's talked to people in the department and they have no second thoughts about salary loss, but they would have to freeze 10 years of pension.

Jahr referred to the 2004 Kelly & Stone report on the department that said there should be no deputy or chief of police and said he doesn't like pulling out a 10-year-old report to justify current decisions.

He said the board talked about having a public safety director, fire chief, and police chief.

"We have a chance to fix it now," Jahr said. "Not because Greg needs help. Not because of personalities. But what makes sense with the organizational structure. Now is the time to address some of these problems."

Trustee Reggie Miller had asked for a

discussion on the captain's position, along with Budd and McClanahan, but she was the only one present at the meeting on Dec. 16, so she led the discussion.

She asked how much the position would cost the township.

Laurain said the township has never had a chief of police before.

Supervisor Combs said it is estimated that \$130,000 would cover a salary of \$80,000 plus benefits for a chief of police. She said she didn't know what union captain wages are.

Trustee Miller said to Laurain that he needs help, but the board has to figure it out.

Supervisor Combs said she supported the position of captain. She said Public Safety Directors Jerry Champagne and Carl McClanahan had union captains as second in command and it worked out well.

"The buffer has to be a person you can trust ... someone who is here," Combs said

of a second in command. "Greg says he can control the overtime ... Let him do his job and make him accountable for the consequences if he can't control he overtime."

Laurain said trust is a huge factor and the second in command needs to have the same ideas, know the department, and have stakes in this community. He said the township hired outside people in the past and they stayed 1, 2, 3 years and left.

"I have people who can start running right now," Laurain said. "Do we want to go out when we have people right here?"

Miller said she would like to think about this issue and others agreed, so it was not put on the next day's meeting agenda.

"If we choose a captain, we put it in the budget. Or, if it's a police chief, we need a job description," Jahr said. "The decision comes down to: How are we gonna pay for it?"



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VBT Board approves 2013 amended, 2014 proposed budgets

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

The regular meeting of the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees on Dec. 17 lasted only 16 minutes after the board was evacuated from its regular meeting room to

the Sheldon Room across the hall.

The problem was a strong odor of natural gas and high CO2 readings.

The main item on the agenda was approving the balanced, amended 2013 budget of \$13,172,461 and the proposed

2014 budget of \$13,657,027, which board members did, with Trustee Reggie Miller voting no.

There was no change to the documents since the last meeting when the budgets were reviewed and action was postponed since Trustee Brenda McClanahan wanted more precise information on the police salaries.

Trustee Jeff Jahr, who made the motion to approve the two budgets, said, "We cannot afford to continue expending from the landfill fund. I do not consider the landfill a rainy day fund. After the first quarter, we should sit down and discuss this."

Trustee Jahr said the intention of that fund was for the benefit of the residents to compensate them for having a landfill in their community, such as building a community center or something else. He said he thinks the board ought to be looking at that in the future.

"The same is true of the funds now coming from EQ and the former supervisor planned to have some special purpose to benefit the residents," Jahr said.

"I don't agree with the spending in this budget and will vote no," Trustee Miller said.

The new township fee schedule also was approved, with Miller voting no. She explained she thought residents should not get free notary service, as they have done in the past, because the township needs funds. The new fee schedule carried no charge for residents and \$5 for non-residents.

Currently the township handles about 469 notary requests a year, but people haven't been checked for where they live since it was free for everyone.

Clerk Leon Wright had proposed a \$5 fee for residents and a \$10 fee to non-residents for notary service, but at a recent work/study session Treasurer Sharry Budd said a charge would be a hardship for township seniors.

Trustee Jahr said a lot of places don't charge, such as banks for their customers.

"We don't want to encourage people to come in for free notary service," he said.

The fee schedule also shows a 2% hike in water and sewer bills in 2014, plus changes to plumbing, building, mechanical, and

electrical fees.

Amendments to the Industrial Facility Tax Exemption Guidelines were approved unanimously.

Linda Stevenson, township assessment coordinator, said it has been seven years since the guidelines were updated. The new version is based on the language and regulations of PA 198 of 1974, as amended, and has been reviewed by township attorney Patrick McCauley.

In other business, the board:

- Approved the supervisor's appointments of Medina Atchinson as an alternate member of the Board of Zoning Appeals, Terissa Wardwell and Lianne Clair as full members with terms to expire Dec. 1, 2016, and appointment of Edward Miller from alternate member to full member with a term to expire Dec. 1, 2015. Member Karren Glass resigned her position effective Nov. 12 due to moving to a new home outside of the township, and member Angela Nettro chose not to pursue reappointment;

- Postponed to a future meeting a planned presentation by Green Zone Initiative and service awards to 14 employees because of the gas odor;

- Announced the township offices would be closed between Christmas and New Year, but those wishing to pay their taxes may use the drop box in front of township hall or in the police department; and

- Announced there will be only one township board meeting in January and that would be at 7 p.m., Jan. 14, with the work-study session at 4 p.m., Jan. 13.

Absent and excused from the Dec. 17 meeting were Trustees McClanahan and Phil Hart.

Owen Intermediate students, staff help Sumpter Goodfellows

Owen Intermediate School students helped the Goodfellows of Sumpter Township this holiday season by participating in their food drive and collecting more than 2,700 items of canned or boxed food and personal items. The drive was coordinated by teachers Jenny Dudick and Sue Kapsia and ran Dec. 9-16.

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Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 17, 2013

Supervisor Combs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor Combs, Clerk Wright, Treasurer Budd, Trustee Jahr and Trustee Miller. Absent and excused: Trustee Hart and Trustee McClanahan. Others in attendance: Planning and Economic Development Director Mullen, Assessing Coordinator Stevenson, Secretary Cline and an audience of nine (9).

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of Ralph Nodwell who recently passed away.

Jahr moved, Miller seconded to recess the Board of Trustees meeting at 7:02 p.m. due to elevated levels of carbon monoxide in the Board of Trustees room.

Supervisor Combs resumed the Board of Trustees meeting in the Sheldon room at 7:22 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Miller moved, Jahr seconded to approve the agenda as amended removing under Correspondence the presentation by Green Zone Initiative and service awards to employees to the next Board of Trustees meeting. Carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: Wright moved, Jahr seconded to approve the Consent Agenda [Work Study Minutes December 2, 2013; Closed Session Minutes December 2, 2013; Regular Board Meeting Minutes December 3, 2013; Board of Zoning Appeals appointments of Medina Atchinson as alternate member, Terissa Wardwell and Lianne Clair as full members with terms to expire December 1, 2016 and the appointment of Edward Miller from alternate member to full member with term to expire December 1, 2015; Voucher List of December 17, 2013] as presented. Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Jahr moved, Wright seconded to adopt the 2013 Amended General Fund Budget and the 2014 Proposed

General Fund Budget, as outlined in Supervisor Combs memo dated November 26, 2013, noting items A through G inclusive. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Jahr, Budd, Wright and Combs. Nays: Miller. Absent and excused: McClanahan and Hart. Carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Budd moved, Jahr seconded to adopt Resolution 2013-21 the 2014 Fee Schedule. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Jahr, Budd, Wright and Combs. Nays: Miller. Absent and excused: Hart and McClanahan. Carried.

Wright moved, Jahr seconded to approve the amendments to the Township's Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate (Tax Abatement) Guidelines PA 198, adopted 9-2-97, amended 9-5-06 and the PA 328 Guidelines effective September 2010. Carried.

REPORTS: Supervisor Combs received and filed the November 2013 Budgetary Report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Supervisor Combs stated the Wayne County Roads telephone number is 888-762-3273 for any problems with county roads including snow removal.

Treasurer Budd stated for those residents who wish to pay their taxes in 2013 during the holiday closure of Township Hall there is an ADA drop box in front of Township Hall and a drop slot in the Public Safety Department lobby.

Clerk Wright announced the Township Administrative Offices will be closed December 24th, 25th, 26th, 30th, 31st and January 1st for the Holiday Season. Also, there is only one scheduled Work Study and Board of Trustees meeting in January on January 13th and January 14th respectively.

AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items): The Board of Trustees wished all a joyous holiday season and a happy new year.

ADJOURNMENT: Jahr moved, Wright seconded to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Wright, Township Clerk

Linda H. Combs, Township Supervisor

Publish: Dec. 26, 2013

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Library Board hears plans for 3 library design options

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

Design plans are being firmed up for a proposed new library building on the lake.

At its regular meeting on Dec. 10, the Belleville Area District Library Board heard detailed descriptions of three options for the design of the proposed new library building on the DNR site just north of the Belleville Bridge.

Architect Dan Whisler showed the options and explained how the library building would be as close to the lake as possible and the windows would face down the middle of the lake towards Five Points, instead of directly across the lake, for a better view.

Other windows would be in place to the west for patrons to watch the sunsets over the lake. There are lots of windows in all of his designs, including windows so those in the teen room can watch who's coming and going from Belleville Road, where the main entrance faces.

Whisler discussed the designs for an hour and a half, noting he will be consolidating the three into one favorite building with input from the library board.

That's when they will be able to estimate how much it will cost.

Whisler will be at the general meeting of the Friends of the Library at 2 p.m., Jan. 25, to show the public his latest sketches and site plans for a proposed new library. The session is called: "New Year – New Library!"

Whisler told the library board at its Dec. 10 meeting that he still didn't have the topographic information from Spencer Engineers, but he hoped to have it by the end of the week. He said he needs it to start conceptualizing the building.

The details of everything at the library won't be worked on until voters pass a bond issue, he said. The library question is expected to be on the August ballot.

Whisler planned a two-story building in all three options. The café, audio-visual area, and computers are on the first floor and the adult and teen areas, group study rooms, local history room, and administrative staff on the second floor.

Outside the doors toward the lake, Option A has a fireplace, tiered area, outdoor terrace, and plants on the roof of the entry.

Option B has huge glass windows and group study rooms in glass boxes and a rectangular, angled design down the middle.

Option C has a sunset view over the lake to the west and computers on the first floor and rounded designs.

"I'm in the process of getting feedback," Whisler said. "By early January, I'll narrow it down to one preferred design."

Then, he said, they can put the budget together and get it to the voters. The board is expected to approve language for the ballot in April.

Barbara Miller asked from the audience about whether the site is in the floodplain. She said she called Van Buren Township and was told it was and, "What does being

in the floodplain mean?"

She said her house was in the floodplain map that FEMA released last February and it cost her \$1,500 to "squeak out" of the floodplain designation.

"My information is that this is not in the floodplain," Whisler replied. "It touches the floodplain."

Miller asked if he didn't think it was imperative to get a commitment about the floodplain information. She said her insurance went from \$1,700 a year to \$3,000 a year when she was put in the floodplain.

Whisler said when he gets the topographic information from Spicer the floodplain boundary shouldn't be hard to obtain.

"What I found should raise no alarms," Whisler said, referring to the site "touching" the floodplain.

Miller asked about how many computers Whisler was designing the new library to hold, stating Canton library has 130.

Whisler said there will be roughly 36 adult computers, 12 in the computer lab, 12 in the teen area, 12 in the children's area, plus one for every staff work station and short-term usage computers to go online for public access to book catalogues.

Also, he said, in all three options wherever they plan seating they will have electrical outlets for recharging.

In all three designs, the DNR-required restrooms for fisher folk are in the main building close to the lake.

Discussing parking, he said he has 190 spaces on his plans, but a Van Buren Township ordinance requires about 220. He said he will negotiate with the township.

Whisler said at the library board's next Building Committee meeting, he will make his first stab at the design of the Sumpter Township library site in its community center.

In other business at the more than three-hour meeting on Dec. 10, the board:

- Heard a lengthy report from Susan Kennedy, a consultant hired by the board to do studies of the library district and help the board come up with a mission statement. She suggested: "Our mission: Engage. Empower. Enrich." This was accepted unanimously by the board and is expected to be used on promotions for the bond/millage election to build a library. She was paid \$6,000 for her work;

- Heard Ron Traskos present results of the annual financial audit, with the complete audit report set for the Jan. 14 meeting. He noted, "It's always good to end the year in the black." He said he is keeping a running tab of what has been spent on the proposed library and that will be rolled into the bond and reimbursed to the general fund after the bond passes. He also presented a budgetary quarterly report ending Sept. 31, as requested by Treasurer Elaine Gutierrez;

- Heard attorney John Day report that the next step in the library project is for the DNR to find financing for its part of the design. He said the library is doing the design work. He said in January Whisler will have drawings to take to the DNR to talk about funding

sources. Also, they will be contacting MDOT for grant money possibilities for a traffic signal. Day said they met with Van Buren Township Downtown Development Authority representatives and they were very receptive and willing to participate in the library project. The DNR would be working on outside amenities "that they can use for additional community assets";

- Heard Joy Cichewicz report on tours of area libraries made by members of the library board, including libraries in Novi, Redford, and Ferndale. John Juriga reported on the Ypsilanti library on Whittaker Road;

- Approved paying the option payment equal to 2013 taxes for the Spencer property, with \$4,468.50 for summer and \$2,683.83 for winter, by Dec. 15 as provided in the agreement on the land. The Spencer property is proposed to be part of the library site. The payment came out of the library fund balance;

- Approved an agreement with the Library Network for Download Destination Participating Library service of OverDrive; and

- Approved raising salaries for desk clerks from \$9-\$11 per hour to \$10-\$13.50 per hour; custodian from \$8-\$9 per hour to \$9-\$10 per hour; and shelving page from \$7.40 to \$7.40-\$8.65 per hour. The board also approved travel reimbursement for employees attending library meetings, plus \$50 per day for meals and non-alcoholic beverages.

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Van Buren Township Police Dispatch Log

The following are selected calls for VBT Police.

Sunday, Dec. 15:

0020 – suspicious person, Van Buren Park
0053 – disorderly conduct, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0701 – property damage accident, EB I-94/Ryznar
1039 – unauthorized driving away of auto, s. I-94 Service Dr.
1054 – larceny, Ross Pl.
1424 – sexual assault, Borgman Ave.
1429 – malicious destruction of property, Ashbury
1622 – suicide or attempt, S. I-94 Service Dr.
2158 – property damage accident, Belleville/N. I-94 Service Dr.

Monday, Dec. 16:

0743 – disorderly conduct, Woodbury Dr.
1128 – property damage accident, W. Huron River Dr. / Rawsonville Rd.
1159 – animal bite, no location given for this log
1318 – malicious destruction of property, Harmony Lane
1418 – malicious destruction of property, Price Rd.
1440 – personal injury accident, Ecorse Service Dr. A / Denton Rd.
1537 – assault & battery, Village Green Ln.
1603 – juvenile complaint, Bemis Rd.
1754 – property damage accident, Belleville
1759 – property damage accident, W. Huron River Dr./Ormond Dr.

1810 – property damage accident, Michigan / bypass
1818 – robbery, Parkwood Dr.

Tuesday, Dec. 17:

0056 – unauthorized driving away of auto, no location given for this log
0459 – property damage accident, S. I-94 Service Dr./Juniper
0628 – property damage accident, Belleville / Ecorse
0716 – property damage accident, Belleville / Ecorse
0722 – property damage accident, Rawsonville / Grove
0744 – personal injury accident, WB I-94 / Belleville
0804 – property damage accident, Haggerty/E. Huron River Dr.
1048 – property damage accident, I-94 Service Dr. / Camping World
1222 – property damage accident, Ecorse / Belleville

1222 – assault & battery, Rogers Ave.
1340 – fraud, Harmony Ln.
1341 – property damage accident, Haggerty Rd.
1359 – unauthorized driving away of auto, Meadows Circle
1726 – trespassing, Hull Rd.
1735 – private property accident, Belleville Rd.
1809 – PPO violation, Lighthouse Dr.
1819 – water leak found, Lancaster Dr.
1846 – fraud, Madison Dr.

2058 – operating while intoxicated, WB I-94 / Rawsonville Rd.

2102 – property damage accident, Ecorse / Belleville

Wednesday, Dec. 18:

0148 – fight, N. I-94 Service/Rawsonville
0508 – property damage accident, Martinsville / Savage
1050 – property damage accident, Elwell/W. Huron River Dr.
1125 – personal injury accident, W. Huron River Dr. / Rawsonville Rd.
1125 – personal injury accident, S. I-94 Service Dr. / Textile Rd.
1212 – private property accident, Westlake
1457 – fraud, Sawgrass Ct.
1521 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / S. I-94 Service Dr.
1537 – property damage accident, Savage Rd. / Country Walk Blvd.
1540 – domestic assault, Ventura Dr.
1545 – property damage accident, Rawsonville Rd.
1649 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / N. I-94 Service Dr.

2012 – retail fraud, Rawsonville

Thursday, Dec. 19:

0622 – larceny from auto, Camden

0658 – larceny from auto, N. Cumberland Dr.
0827 – larceny from auto, Country Walk Ct.
1105 – larceny, Hull Rd.
1310 – mental, Sadie Ln.
1347 – agency assist, Five Points
1525 – malicious destruction of property, Reedgrass Ln.
1615 – larceny from auto, Archwood
1625 – property damage accident, Ecorse/I-275
1634 – disturbance, Michigan Ave.
1647 – trespassing, Hull Rd.
1731 – larceny from auto, Hanover Dr.
1742 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / N. I-94 Service Dr.

2012 – breaking & entering, Milton Dr.
2149 – disorderly conduct, E. Huron River Dr.
2333 – ATV/ORV complaint, Lauren Ct./Elwell

Friday, Dec. 20:

0210 – larceny, Parkwood Dr.
0753 – property damage accident, Belleville / Westlake
1045 – harassment call, Borgman Ave.
1443 – disturbance, Ecorse Rd.
2057 – assault & battery, S. I-94 Service Dr.

Saturday, Dec. 21:

0031 – assault & battery, Redwood
0219 – suspicious situation, Hull Rd.
0235 – suspicious situation, Country Walk Ct.
0252 – property damage accident, Estrada
0410 – malicious destruction of property, Barnwell
0544 – property damage accident, EB I-94 / Belleville
1130 – private property accident, Coolidge St.
1200 – assault & battery, W. Archwood
1253 – property damage accident, EB I-94 / Belleville Rd.
1256 – breaking & entering, Maurice Dr.
1345 – hospice, Lenmoore Ave.
1434 – narcotics crime, Denton
1714 – disorderly conduct, E. Huron River Dr.
2141 – operating while intoxicated, Rawsonville / Bemis

Also on this week's log are 88 traffic stops, 17 of which were on the I-94 freeway.

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Dec. 15:

0034 – noise complaint, Henry St.
0100 – agency assist, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0108 – suspicious situation, Lakeview
0204 – disturbance, Henry St.
1301 – civil matter, W. Columbia Ave.
1302 – assault & battery, W. Columbia Ave.
1302 – fraud, Main St.
1636 – private property accident, Third St.
2214 – neighbor trouble, Carmell St.

Monday, Dec. 16:

1105 – welfare check, Breakwater Dr.
1200 – animal bite
1519 – alarm intrusion, E. Huron River Dr.
1522 – background investigation, Main St.
1556 – trespassing, Henry/W. Columbia
1850 – agency assist, Lauren
2348 – animal complaint, Potter

Tuesday, Dec. 17:

0205 – assist fire dept., N. Liberty St.
0230 – parking complaint, Carmell St.
0501 – agency assist, S. I-94 Service/Juniper
0751 – traffic complaint, South/E. Davis
0805 – assist fire dept., W. Columbia Ave.
1003 – domestic assault, N. Liberty
1154 – assist citizen, Roland St.
1557 – assist fire dept., N. Edgemont Ave.
1753 – traffic complaint, Belleville/Denton
1758 – property damage accident, Sumpter/Owen
1815 – E-911 hang up/investigation, Robbe St.

Wednesday, Dec. 18:

0042 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
0528 – suspicious situation, Sumpter Rd.
0629 – assist fire dept., Carmell
0920 – parking complaint, N. Liberty/Main
1130 – assist fire dept., Belle Villa Blvd.
1520 – suspicious person, E. Thornhill Ct.
1627 – property damage accident, Main/First
2103 – property damage accident, Main/First

Thursday, Dec. 19:

0016 – domestic assault, Carmell St.
1027 – disorderly conduct, W. Columbia Ave.

1027 – disorderly conduct, W. Columbia Ave.
1027 – disorderly conduct, W. Columbia Ave.
1256 – animal complaint, Savage/Madelon
1345 – intimidation threat, J&T Tow
1733 – vehicle lockout, Loza Lane
2013 – agency assist, Milton

Friday, Dec. 20:

0101 – liquor violation, Main St.
0105 – liquor violation, High St.
0108 – liquor violation, Main St.
0846 – civil massing, J&T
0913 – assist fire dept., Sumpter
0938 – assist fire dept., Sumpter Rd.
1304 – parking complaint, First/Main
1318 – civil matter
1746 – all other traffic, Sumpter/Industrial Park
1900 – suspicious vehicle, San Carlos St.

Saturday, Dec. 21:

0224 – agency assist, Hull
0238 – agency assist, Country Walk
0425 – suspicious vehicle, Main/Fourth
0657 – property damage accident, Main St.
0940 – larceny, N. Biggs Ave.
1250 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
1957 – warrant arrest, Main St.

Also on this week's log are 39 traffic stops.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Dec. 15:

1355 – accidental damage report, 40000 bl. Willow
1429 – abandoned vehicle, 19000 bl. Crandell Ct.
1539 – shots fired, 46000 bl. Willis Rd.
1615 – well-being check, Birch
2037 – property damage accident, 24000 bl. Sherwood Rd.

2050 – civil dispute, 44000 bl. Harris Rd.

Monday, Dec. 16:

0951 – fire dept. assist, 46000 bl. Wear Rd.
1116 – fire dept. assist, Rustic Ln.
1129 – fire dept. assist, 45000 bl. Judd Rd.
1139 – animal complaint, 19000 bl. Clark Rd.
1242 – fire dept. assist, 20000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
1352 – alarm, 43000 bl. Clay Rd.
1406 – alarm, 24000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1431 – civil dispute, Rustic Ln.

1512 – property damage accident, Rawsonville/Willis

1708 – civil dispute, 18000 bl. Savage Rd.

1758 – operating while intoxicated arrest, E. Arizona

1810 – warrant arrest, out of township
1900 – property damage accident, 44000 bl. Judd
1927 – unauthorized driving away of auto, Oregon
2126 – assist other agency, 25000 bl. Karr Rd.
2204 – alarm, 45000 bl. Willis Rd.

Tuesday, Dec. 17:

1002 – suspicious incident, 41000 bl. Wear Rd.
1051 – well-being check, 24000 bl. Elwell Rd.
1305 – warrant arrest, 45000 bl. Willow Rd.
1350 – suspicious vehicle, Utah
2303 – fire dept. assist, 19000 bl. Clark Rd.

Wednesday, Dec. 18:

0213 – fire dept. assist, 26000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
0359 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Elwell Rd.

1253 – civil dispute, 41000 bl. Wear Rd.
1531 – citizen assist, 41000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1601 – larceny, 23000 bl. Elwell Rd.
1832 – suspicious incident, 21000 bl. Fenster
2012 – well-being check, 45000 bl. Willow Rd.

Thursday, Dec. 19:

0029 – animal complaint, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
0127 – family trouble, 43000 bl. Willow Rd.
1126 – found property, 29000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
1321 – civil dispute, Sumpter/Bemis
1419 – fire dept. assist, 23000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
1454 – breaking & entering report, Texas
1835 – threats complaint, Rustic Ln.

Friday, Dec. 20:

0414 – animal complaint, Rawsonville/Oakville

Waltz

1014 – warrant arrest, out of township
1103 – fire dept. assist, Washington
1259 – mental health commitment, California
1342 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1445 – family trouble, 21000 bl. Wilmot Rd.
1509 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1542 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1953 – traffic hazard, 42000 bl. Judd Rd.
2150 – animal complaint, 40000 bl. Harris Rd.
2254 – warrant arrest, 44000 bl. Willis Rd.

Saturday, Dec. 21:

0153 – suspicious incident, 19000 bl. Sumpter
0330 – family trouble, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
0426 – missing person report, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
1020 – civil dispute, 21000 bl. Wilmot Rd.
1051 – fire dept. assist, 43000 bl. Willow Rd.
1215 – assault, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
1339 – juvenile complaint, 22000 bl. Martinsville
1450 – fraud complaint, 23000 bl. Carleton West
1528 – suspicious vehicle, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz
1537 – suspicious vehicle, Willow/Sumpter
1559 – fraud complaint, 23000 bl. Carleton West
2055 – suspicious incident, 42000 bl. Willis Ct.
2211 – assist other agency, 17000 bl. Savage Rd.

Also on this week's log are eight follow-up investigations, 32 miscellaneous details, 76 patrol checks, and 31 traffic stops.

Greg Laurain is chairman of Western Wayne Mutual Aid Task Force

Gregory Laurain, Public Safety Director of Van Buren Township recently was named chairman of the Western Wayne County Mutual Aid Task Force for the Western Wayne County Chiefs of Police.

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

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Members of local groups delivered donations of "Toys for Motts" Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. Collecting the donations for the children were Play it Again Sam in Sumpter Township, Willis Market, Iron Coffins of Washtenaw County and Detroit, Devils Disciples, Milan Road Angels, Bikers United of Sumpter Township, Huron Valley Night Hawks and the Kick Stand Bar in Romulus. They all want to thank the people who donated to the children.

School Board announces Schools of Choice, sets organizational meeting

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

At a six-minute, special meeting on Dec. 9, the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education met to take care of two items that needed to be voted on before the end of the year.

The first item was a resolution announcing the second semester Schools of Choice

program. The window for registration is Jan. 6-20, prior to the beginning of the second semester.

The second item was to vote on a date for the official organizational meeting of the board. Although it had already been set as 7 p.m., Jan. 13, at the Belleville High School Commons, by law the board has to vote on the date – so it did and then adjourned.

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