



BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

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Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren

FREE

Court Watching:

White forgets check, given until Friday to come up with \$25,000

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

Thomas A. White, Belleville's disbarred attorney who is charged with 20 felonies that took at least some \$1.9 million from his clients, was in Wayne County Circuit Court Tuesday morning for sentencing.



But, White has announced he has changed lawyers and he "forgot" to bring the cashier's check for \$25,000 in earnest money.

Judge Dalton Arnold Roberson gave him until Friday to come up with the \$25,000. If he does, he will be given something like another month to come up with the rest of the \$900,000 he promised to produce.

That money would be divided among the victims on a percentage basis, Michigan State Police Detective/Sergeant Joseph White told the victims gathered outside the courtroom. He said it is three-quarters of what he took.

He said the new attorney White has was not prepared to go forward and so Judge Roberson gave him a few days to get prepared. White's former attorney was Michael Vincent.

"This is how the wheels turn," Det./Sgt. White said to the frustrated victims of defendant White's embezzlement and criminal enterprise, all from the Belleville area.

White was charged with the first five felonies on Sept. 4, 2013 and the next 15 in December 2013. The 20 felonies were combined in the spring of 2014. He pled no contest to 20 felonies on Nov. 3, 2014, the day his jury trial was to begin. The no-contest plea is treated as a guilty plea.

When the victims asked how much time



Independent photo by Bob Mytych

On Monday morning, after a snowfall of some 17 inches, the sun came out on a snow-covered city of Belleville. The roads were passable because the DPW crews did their final passes beginning at 3 a.m. The Van Buren Public Schools, Keystone Charter Academy, Sumpter Township Hall, and Van Buren Township Hall were closed because of the snow, but Belleville City Hall was open with employees helping people solve their problems.

White will get, Det./Sgt. White said it will be 2-3 years if he comes up with the promised money.

It will be 30 years in prison if he doesn't, Det./Sgt. White said.

He said if White turns up on Friday without any money, he will be immediately taken to jail.

"The only person being accommodated is Tom White," said one of the victims. "The rest of us are getting screwed."

"Judge Roberson is not happy right now," Det./Sgt. White said.

Earlier he said there is no way to tell what Judge Roberson will do.

One victim said, "I trusted this man. I've known him since he was 15." The man had been a school teacher at Belleville High School and defendant White had been his student.

"You can see how well I did with him," he said ruefully. He said it took him an hour and a half to get to court from Belleville that morning because his tires were low on air and he had to pull over. Then, the freeway traffic was snarled. He was very frustrated.

Another man, one of the ten victims present, showed his anger, saying he had to take off work to come and now it's postponed again.

The victims started waiting in Judge Margaret Van Houton's courtroom where the sentencing had been scheduled. After about an hour of waiting, they were directed up a floor to a courtroom used by Judge Roberson, the retired judge who had presided over previous court sessions for White while Van Houton was out having knee and foot surgery.

Shortly after they were seated in his courtroom, Judge Roberson told the victims the case had been adjourned until Friday. Det./Sgt. White gathered the victims together in the hall to talk to them. Many of them had hoped to make victims' statements

before the judge pronounced sentence.

Charges against White include 15 charges of embezzlement, four of those over \$100,000 each. He also was charged with forging a check and two counts of identity theft, along with larceny by conversion.

White, 47, a lifelong Belleville resident, also was charged with conducting a criminal enterprise while embezzling millions of dollars from trusting clients and their families.

He currently is renting a house in Sumpter Township and lives with his two sons and two dogs. About two months ago JaniKing terminated White's franchise.



Wayne County Commissioner Abdul "Al" Haidous, D-Wayne, at left, is given the oath of office by his wife Balassem "Mary" Haidous at the commission's organizational meeting Jan. 8. Haidous, who previously served as mayor of the city of Wayne, is serving his first term on the commission. He's representing the 11th District, which covers the cities of Belleville, Romulus and Wayne; Huron, Sumpter and Van Buren townships; and part of the city of Westland.

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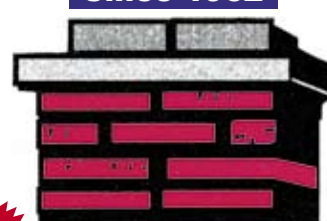
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SECOND FRONT PAGE

VBT DDA revises employment agreement for Assistant Exec. Dir.

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Van Buren Township Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Susan Ireland explained the situation that had her requesting a future raise and a training class for her newly hired assistant.

At its regular meeting on Jan. 27, Executive Director Ireland explained that she recently learned that the township no longer



Lothringer

provides for payment "in lieu of health care" which she had put into the contract for her new Assistant Executive Director Lisa Lothringer.

She said in lieu of health care, the contract approved paying \$2,000 a year. She doesn't take the township's health care.

"In the spirit of support, I would ask that the DDA Board consider payment in an amount of \$1,750 to Monroe Community College to obtain OMPC (Online Marketing Certified Professional) certification and after satisfactory completion of this course work and subsequent certification that the DDA Board approve a merit increase of \$998 for an annual salary for calendar year 2015 of \$49,998," she wrote in a Jan. 20 memo.

At the meeting, Ireland said, "It would be a benefit in taking the class. It's not right to have an increase in pay. It's more like a merit thing."

The board approved Ireland's proposal for the class and the pay increase and approved Addendum 1 to Lothringer's employment agreement that took out the paragraph on the Employee Benefits Plan.

Ireland said the OMCP certification is a comprehensive overview of online marketing. All of the courses must be completed within six months and upon successful completion, application can be made for certification.

Lothringer began work on Jan. 5 at an annual salary of \$49,000. She has a Bachelor of Business Education degree with a concentration in marketing. The OMCP work is being considered continuing education.

In other business at the Jan. 27 meeting, the DDA heard reports from Ireland on:

• **Belleville Road and I-94 North Service Road sidewalks.** Ireland said Wayne County is again reviewing the sidewalk plan which includes a French drain north of Tyler Road. She said it is still anticipated construction will occur this spring. Dave Nummer of Wade Trim engineers said that the plan with the French Drain at the mobile home park has a backup plan that the county wanted. If the

French drain doesn't work, they will have to put in ditching and culverts, with about a 6" bump in the driveways to go over the culvert. DDA member Ron Blank, who owns the mobile home park at that part of the sidewalk, said that he couldn't vote for this because he would file a restraining order if that is being done because he can't have the only ditch on Belleville Road at his property. Nummer said he asked the county, "We have to fix your problem, your road, your right of way?" and the county said, "Yes." Nummer pointed out the DDA is buying right of way to allow the county to widen Belleville Road. DDA member Mark Laginess pointed out the French drain would be a short-term fix for the drainage there. No vote was needed on this project at the meeting. Nummer said, "I don't think you'll ever see a drop of water out there ... There was never water there before";

• **Belleville Road Signalization Project:** This project is essentially closed out, but the State of Michigan will keep the file open for about 24 months to make sure nothing extraordinary materializes. The county said they always had just yellow traffic signals and so they will replace the black signals at their cost, but may ask the DDA to pay a very small amount;

• **Belleville/Ecorse Road Landscape:** The final landscape plans have been submitted to Wayne County for approval. The county has a concern with the area in front of Stack's. Because of safety concerns, the county was requiring that the DDA include MDOT Special 99 fencing from the guard rail on the east, to the entrance to Stacks on eastbound Ecorse Road (about 218' of chain link fence with reinforced wiring running through the fence, at a cost of \$4,360). The goal of the fencing is to prohibit vehicles from exiting Stack's directly onto Ecorse Road. The DDA voted unanimously to instead pay \$10,900 for a decorative, wrought iron type fence, 3' high, that the county approves of;

• **Winter Holiday Decorations:** The new decorations were very nice, but there was a problem with the electric service. When it rained or snowed, the ground-fault circuit interrupter would blow and the electrician would have to be called out to replace the GFI. It is apparent some electrical upgrades will have to be done this spring/summer. Also, Ireland would like to see the lighted figures spread out because she thinks they were too bunched together;

• **Region Detention Pond:** Wade Trim has completed the final draft of the preliminary analysis. A meeting with Wayne County for comments has been requested and a meeting has been held with the RV dealership property owner. The property owner supports the project but doesn't want to lose frontage on the North



Helen Foster, left, and Chris Brown are new members of the Van Buren Township Downtown Development Authority.



I-94 Service Drive. The pond has been proposed to be built along the county drain east of his business. The drain easement is 50' wide now and the pond plans would make it 100-200'. From there, the drain shoots under the freeway heading toward Belleville Lake. Wade Trim has earned the \$30,000 approved by the DDA for preliminary work on the regional pond, so the DDA approved another \$20,000 for Wade Trim only if Wayne County says the project is possible. The extra work would be postponed until they get a yes from the county, Laginess said;

• **Communication Associates:** Assistant Director Lothringer and Ireland met with Communication Associates, the DDA's public relations contractor, to review what has been done and make suggestions for the future with regard to the web site, social media, etc., since this will be a primary responsibility of Lothringer. She has reviewed their initial proposal and has begun investigating in order to begin formulating a plan with goals and objectives. Ireland said they hope to come up with something "a little more solid";

• **DuPont Imprelis Claims Resolution:** Ireland said she has spent many, many hours on this. A few trees planted by the DDA died as a result of the Imprelis spray, but Imprelis cannot send the \$715.30 to the DDA because they are not the property owner of record. They have to send it to Applebee's. Ireland received a call from Applebee's Corporate not understanding why they were being contacted. Ireland said she told them what had occurred and told her if they did get a check for \$715.50, they could endorse it and forward it to the DDA. She said she has heard nothing since that conversation. DDA member Ron Blank told Ireland, "If Applebee's signs over the check, fine, otherwise don't spend any more time on it";

• **Emergency Sirens:** Van Buren Township is moving forward with the installation of emergency sirens throughout the township. Besides the DDA, the project is being funded through CDBG funds in the low to moderate income area, and the Van Buren Civic Fund. VBT Supervisor Linda Combs

said they have run into some electrical problems and need to upgrade the service in a few locations; and

• **Property Acquisition:** The DDA is now owner of 10101 and 10151 Belleville Road. The Harris family is pleased that the DDA acquired the property and it would not be turned into a commercial business. Supervisor Combs and DDA member Carol Bird volunteered to be on a subcommittee to work out where the DDA might like to go with this project. Combs said it is "a nice piece of property." Ireland said the honeysuckles on the property are 100 years old.

Ireland also asked for a subcommittee to assist in project prioritization and a review of budget allocations. Volunteers were DDA members Mark Laginess, Craig Atchinson, and Helen Foster.

A request by Ireland for \$1,000 to pay for her registrations to two workshops and a Lansing Day conference by the Michigan Downtown Association was unanimously approved. Ireland serves on the board of the MDA.

Eighteen VB Township employees honored for years of service

Eighteen employees were honored for their years of service at the Jan. 13 meeting of the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees.

Honored for 25 years were Police Sgt. Michael Moening and Assessment Coordinator Linda Stevenson.

Honored for 20 years were Water Worker III Joseph Strickland, Police Sgt. Jeffery Gueli, Police Officer Mark Buxton, Fire Chief Dan Besson, and Police Sgt. Bart DeVos.

Honored for 15 years were Water Worker III Bradley Hine, DPW IIIs Ryan Drotar and Michael Burgor, Account Clerk Tina Grishaber, and Fire Fighters David Schuler and Richard Hamill.

Honored for 10 years were Fire Fighter Charles DeWitt, Deputy Clerk Joanne Montgomery, and Ordinance Enforcement / Animal Control Officer Robert Queener.

Honored for five years of service were Fire Fighter Patrick Laskaska and Police Officer Matthew Raschke.

Seven of those honored came to the lectern to receive their certificates. Montgomery did not come forward and stayed at her post at the board table where she serves as recording secretary. The other 10 honorees did not attend the meeting.

OPINIONS

Editorial

Unfunded liabilities cast shadow on Belleville finances

After the Plante Moran consultant gave a summary of Belleville's financial audit of \$2.2 million for last fiscal year, done by Alan C. Young, she raved about how good the findings were.

She said there were "no findings, no suggestions for improvement ... It was very good." The fund balance is at 35% of the budget which is excellent, she said.

Actually, she was praising the work of her own firm, Plante Moran, which does the financial work for the city, along with city employees who are watching their pennies.

Planning Commissioner Mike Renaud, who keeps an eye on city finances, said from the audience that he didn't want to put a damper on things, but he wanted to know about the city's \$7 million in unfunded liabilities for retirees' pensions and health care that keeps on growing.

The consultant said those liabilities are set off to the side now, but will be coming more and more to the forefront. She said it's a common problem for municipalities and no one has any solutions.

Mayor Kerreen Conley said in negotiating the union contracts, they are looking at what long-term liabilities come with any changes in the contract.

Things look really bright when you just look at the city budget. But, if you step back with Renaud and look at the whole picture, the picture is not so bright.

Somebody's going to have to come up with a solution.

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

Everybody seems to have a story to tell about how they got out of their driveways and streets on Monday. There are lots of "heroes" in those stories. Those are the people who bundled up and moved forward with their snow blowers and plows to help their neighbors.

Both Van Buren Township Hall and Sumpter Township Hall were closed on Monday, but city hall in Belleville was open. People in the city are close enough to walk to city hall and so it's never closed for snowstorms. The council meeting was held as usual Monday night.

On Monday, school was closed in seven counties, I'm told, including ours. More snow on the way.

Punxsutawney Phil, the most famous groundhog for Monday's Groundhog Day, predicts six more weeks of winter.

Last November, the voters in the City of Belleville turned down a proposal to do away with the Civil Service Commission on a vote of 725 No to 321 Yes.

But, the mayor has yet to appoint the three commission members, meaning there is no commission. To heck with what the voters want.

I talked to two city voters on Monday and they were concerned that their votes meant nothing.

One asked why the mayor doesn't do what she's supposed to do – uphold the city charter voted in by the people.

I told them the people of the city must demand their public official follow the charter or else sue her or remove her from office. It's up to the people who live in the city of Belleville if they want their vote to

...By Rosemary K. Otzman



count.

Some have told me that Mayor Conley, who once was Belleville City Manager, wants to be city manager again after Diana Kollmeyer retires in the next few years. We're told Conley doesn't want to have to deal with the Civil Service Commission, which removes some of the city manager's power. (We're told by those who wrote the city charter that that's why the CSC was put in place: to assure checks and balances in city hall.) Whether the mayor wants to be city manager or not remains to be seen.

Last week I ran a story about a defendant at district court that couldn't stop talking. I thought this defendant had been arrested by Van Buren Township Police, but it was Romulus. My apologies to VBT Det. Ken Toney for implying it was his case. It still made a good story.

At Monday's city council meeting, they were talking about how officials alerted the public that Sunday/Monday was a snow emergency and people had to get their cars off the street for plowing.

This was the first snow emergency declared since the council passed the ordinance.

City Manager Diana Kollmeyer said they contacted four TV stations, but only one ran the information – TV 62. Two radio stations ran the information. It was on the website and the community events sign.

She said they will work on the protocol in the future. Kollmeyer said when a snow emergency is declared, any state office in the city is closed. In Belleville that means the Secretary of State office.

Councilman Tom Fielder said it's only common sense to get off the street so the city can plow. And, most of the people did move their cars, I'm told.

I asked if there were any parking violations in Harbour Pointe on Feb.

1, the first day of the park-on-one-side-of-the-street ordinance. DPW Director Keith Tackett said there wasn't a single violation. Of course, Feb. 1 coincided with the big snowfall and people had to get their cars off every street anyway for the plowing.

One of our readers brought in another scam report. He said he was shocked to get a call from Publishers Clearing House saying he won \$3 million and a car. He said, OK, and then his wife in the background said something. He said he had put on the speaker phone so she could listen.

The Publishers Clearing House guy got all upset, asking who is that listening in the background? The "winner" said it was his wife. The caller told him to go into a room where they could be alone and the "winner" hung up. Knew it was a scam.



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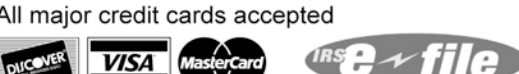
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Letters

Environmental Comm. chairman responds

To the Editor:

In the Jan. 29 *Independent* you published an article about the VBT Environmental Commission cancelling their January meeting and using the time to tour and become more familiar with the hazardous waste landfill operation in our township.

The commission was unfairly and inaccurately portrayed as some sort of covert operation, having secretive meetings out of the public's sight. US Ecology (formerly EQ) extended an invitation to us to tour their site and there is only so much "public" that you can pile into an eight-passenger SUV for the trip.

Commission members are appointed, not elected. They are not employees of the township. We are a group of volunteer residents who have a passion about the environment providing input and making recommendations to the Township Board on a wide variety of environmental issues.

The community is fortunate that our township has such a commission. We do frequently cancel meetings for lack of agenda, quorum, or to take the opportunity to broaden our knowledge of operations in our community.

As for your comment about cable TV, our meetings are always open to the public even though we historically have little or no audience.

We meet in a smaller room that is more conducive to the size of our group and number of guests. Sitting around a table face-to-face makes for much better interaction and more productive meetings than sitting in the board room and wasting township resources.

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Whether we are televised or not is a township decision. I wish the Environmental Commission had a large number of interested viewers and participants that would necessitate the use of a larger room with media support. Either way, I would prefer to have concerned residents attend and actively participate in our meetings rather than just view them from their sofa.

Concerning your quote, "meets for pizza and general discussion before its posted meeting time": Like many groups in our community, we do celebrate the Christmas holiday by having a get-together one half hour before we begin our formal agenda at our December meeting. It has become an annual part of the fellowship of our commission members. Regular meetings are not monthly "pizza parties" as your article implies.

I suspect that your spite for the commission may stem from the fact that the January cancellation was not properly posted, and that you made the trip in vain on a snowy day.

If that is the case, I understand your disappointment. The township communicates changes or cancellations for any commission meetings, but I'm not sure why ours did not get posted. For that I apologize. I hope this does not discourage you from attending future meetings and reporting on all of the good works of the Environmental Commission. We value your participation and your publication's contribution in raising awareness and involvement in the environment.

David Brownlee, chairman
VBT Environmental Commission

Editor's Note: The Environmental Commission is not just a group of volunteers. The members are officially appointed by the township board and thereby must function under the Open Meetings Act. Also, they each get paid \$25 per meeting for their service, except for the chairman, who gets \$30. There is no "spite" for the commission.

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-- Albert Einstein

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More Letters

Author Beverly Jenkins speaks at the Library

To the Editor:

Local author Beverly Jenkins thrilled the African American Book Club at the Belleville Library last Thursday. She discussed "Night Hawk" and how she researched the story which took her deep into the archives of the 1800s and into the lives of African Americans in the building of the Old West.

So many twists and turns of history long shelved away in the annals of history, pleading to be found and brought into the lives of readers in the 21st century.

Her stories are well-researched and depict actual events, people and places. It shines on the lives of people who had great strength to endure hardships, yet becoming successful professionals in a myriad of occupations. Ms. Jenkins gives bibliographic information whereas the reader can research her sources. Ms. Jenkins highly recommends that her readers do research the information and become familiar with untold historical stories that you may not find in American history books.

The book club had to move out of their regular meeting room due to the overflowing audience. Thus with such programming it is vital to have a 21st century library that can accommodate large crowds in a comfortable setting.

On behalf of the African American Book Club, we say thank you, Ms. Jenkins for giving such an invigorating talk and opening up a new world of the Romance Writer.

P.S. The Book Club meets the last Thursday of each month at the Library and is open to the public.

Marian Caldwell
Van Buren Township



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Obituaries



Evelyn S. Alatalo

EVELYN S. 'MIDGE' ALATALO

(June 25, 1936 - January 29, 2015)

Evelyn Sophia "Midge" Alatalo, age 78, a lifelong Romulus resident, passed away Thursday, January 29, 2015 at St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia, MI. She was born Thursday, June 25, 1936 in Romulus, MI., daughter of the late Alexander & Sophie (Snyr) Falatine.

She is survived by sister-in-law Vivian Falatine; two nieces Georgia (Michael) Yost and April (Larry) Dalrymple; nephew Michael Falatine; five great nieces & nephews; Alexander, Cherokee, Alexyia, Cheyenne, and Gage; a great-great-nephew Adam; and the Falatine, Snyr, and Falatyn Families.

She was preceded in death by her husband Richard Alatalo, brother Alfred Falatine, and parents.

Evelyn was a dance teacher for over 50 years influencing many. She enjoyed politics, the Detroit Tigers, but most of all spending time with her family.

Visitation was Monday, February 2, 2015 from 4-8 P.M. and Tuesday, February 3, 2015 from 1-8 P.M. at David C. Brown Funeral Home, 460 E. Huron River Drive, Belleville, MI. A funeral mass was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 11:00 A.M. with Father John Hedges officiating. Visitation was one hour prior at St. Stephen Catholic Church 18858 Huron River Dr., New Boston, MI 48164 with interment following.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Stephen Catholic Church. Please sign her on-line guestbook and share a memory for her family to treasure at www.davidcbrownfh.com.

KAREN 'KATIE' LYNNE BURNS

(February 13, 1951 - January 31, 2015)

Age 63, of Romulus. Survived by her husband David, daughter Melody, son Jason, step-son Dustin; 5 grandchildren. Memorial service 11 a.m. Saturday at First United Methodist Church. David C. Brown Funeral Home.



Carol Lorraine Dyke

CAROL LORRAINE DYKE

Carol Lorraine (Carter) Dyke, 71, died January 30, 2015 in Arizona after a brief illness. Carol lived in New Boston until moving to Arizona in 1981.

Carol is survived by her present husband Charles Dyke; her two daughters Joyce Ann Trumbull Jacobs and Dori Kaye Trumbull Deaton and their children; her 3 brothers David (Rose), Jim (Linda), and Rick (Sue) Carter; and many great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Clay and Elizabeth Carter, and one daughter, Toni Lynn Trumbull.

Cremation rites were accorded in Arizona.

NORMA JEAN FOURNIER

Norma Jean Fournier, age 79, of Belleville, died January 29, 2015.

Beloved mother of Sherri (Fred) Radloff, Don (Tamie) Meffer, Dawn (William) Klumpp, Julie (Scott) Rushlow and Terry Fournier. Proud grandmother of Melissa, Tricia, Freddy, Eric, Kevin, Jennifer, Heather, Aimee, Justin, Kyia and Cierra and great grandmother of 10. Dear sister of Lenora Wilson.

Visitation was Tuesday 3-7 p.m. at Husband Family Funeral Home in Westland (734) 331-3349. Funeral Services were Wednesday with a 10 a.m. gathering followed by 11 a.m. service at Plymouth Church of the Nazarene in Plymouth. Interment at Cadillac Memorial Gardens West.

Planners OK rezoning for Denton/Michigan development

By Rosemary K. Otzman

Independent Editor

At its Jan. 28 meeting, the Van Buren Township Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend rezoning of 1.99 acres from C (Local Business) to C-1 (General Business).

The two parcels are located at 49230 Michigan Avenue and 5825 Denton Road, at the northeast corner of Denton and Michigan.

The applicant, Denton Partners LLC, proposes a new fueling station with convenience store and a drive-through restaurant on the site.

Tom Demond of Voss Engineering, representing Denton Partners, at a previous meeting said they would tear down the old Willow Run Market as part of the project.

The recommendation to rezone will now go to the township board for a final decision.

The commission also discussed a proposed addition to Section 12.02 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit outdoor dining and table service in the C-1 district.

Commissioner Carl Johnson asked if this would be added to the ordinances that are being updated as an overall project.

Patrick Sloane, a planner from McKenna Associates, said this amendment would be put in place as soon as possible because Belleville Development planned an outdoor eating area in its project on the former Big

Boy site.

The amendment was introduced at the Jan. 14 meeting. Sloane said he would take it back for more updates, including which parts would be approved administratively and what would trigger a return trip to the planning commission. Also, they would address parking, including whether the new seats in the outdoor dining area would need to be included in the numbers that determined the number of parking spaces required.

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God, in His Wisdom, saw the road was getting too hard. He closed your eyes and took you home. We all miss you, your smile, your special cooking skills, and your love. You will always be in our hearts and never forgotten.

Love, Don, Ron, Pattie, Blake, Gerald, Jeri

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More Letters



Thank you to hero neighbor Tom Sayers

To the Editor:

I would just like to give a shout out to (a hero neighbor) Mr. Tom Sayers of Belleville.

On Monday morning, after our huge snowstorm, Tom fired up his snow blower and went to work digging out neighborhood sidewalks and neighbors in need.

Thank you Tom! You're the best!

Gary & Judy Dapprich
Belleville

Thank you, thank you for moving the snow

To the Editor:

Thank you, thank you to my wonderful neighbors for snow blowing off my driveway, my walk and porch. Without your kindness and help I would not have been able to get out of my house.

Thank you Steve, Dennis, and Jim from the bottom of my heart.

Mary Talaga
Belleville

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Heartwarming to see Democrats crying

To the Editor:

It is heartwarming to see that even long-standing Democrats are beginning to see the failures of our President and the Democrat members of both Houses. After six years of the Democratic rule in the Senate and Presidency, and two years of controlling everything, they have not been able to do anything to improve your issues.

Now in the first month of Republican control of both Houses, you are crying out for help from the House Speaker. I wonder if you wrote letters like this to Nancy and Harry. I don't think you did, but help is on its way. History has always proven this true.

A. S. Kuchta
Longtime resident of Belleville
Now in Florida

Editor's Note: This is in response to CeJay Marshall's letter to the editor published Jan. 22.

Birthdays

Jan. 28 – Pastor Jim Lockard
Feb. 1 – Ryan McArthur
Feb. 4 – Shane Howard
Feb. 5 – Zachary Sloan, Cheryl Martin
Feb. 6 – Ashley Hubbard, Woody Sloan
Feb. 10 – Eric Howard

Do you have a birthday in February? Does anyone you know have a birthday soon? Call the *Independent* at 699-9020 and let us know. We'll list it in this column ASAP following your call. There is no charge.

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Library's 'Books-on-Wheels' brings volumes to the homebound

Are you unable to access the Belleville Area District Library in person?

The library has a "Books-on-Wheels" program that can help. This effort targets senior apartments, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and private residences.

Any person of any age in the Belleville, Sumpter, or Van Buren area who would like the library services, but is homebound, can participate.

Call Michelle during library business hours at (734) 699-3291.

This program also is in need of volunteers with their own transportation to deliver books to participants. Call Michelle for that, too.

Happy Birthday!

Love, Sis!



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<p>New Listing!</p>  <p>1708 Weeping Willow, Superior Twp \$140,000— 3 bedroom, 2 1/2 baths, 1543 sqft, ranch w/ open kitchen & dining area, master suite & more!</p>	<p>REDUCED!</p>  <p>59 N. Edgemont, Belleville \$123,000— 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 1544 sqft 2 story home in quiet a Belleville sub. C/A, fenced yard & more!</p>	<p>REDUCED!</p>  <p>48245 Bayshore, Belleville \$154,900— 2 bdrm, 1.1 bths, 1318 sqft lakefront condo! Living rm w/ frplc & balcony, full finished walk-out bsmt w/ bar, 1 car att garage & more!</p>	 <p>1656 Parkwood, Ypsilanti Twp \$80,000— 2 unit duplex— 2 bdrm, 1 bth each, new roof, spacious back-yard, great income opportunity!</p>	<p>New Listing!</p>  <p>425 Burton, Ypsilanti \$50,000— 3 bedroom, 1 bath, 864 sqft ranch w/ new windows, fenced bkyrd, new flooring & paint, new furnace & hot water tank & more!</p>
<p>New Listing!</p>  <p>45230 Greenbriar, Belleville \$183,100— 4 bedroom, 2.1 baths, 2378sqft, fam rm w frplc, lrg deck, full pre-plmd bsmt, office, loft, newer kitchen, & dining room. ***To be auctioned on Homeseach.com***</p>	<p>PENDING!</p>  <p>7424 Natalie, Ypsilanti Twp \$165,000— 2 bdrm, 2 bths, 1202 sqft ranch w/ mstr ste, deck, foyer w/ hrwd flrs, 1st flr laundry, partially fnshd bsmt w/ family rm & more!!</p>	 <p>45883 Purplesage, Belleville \$70,000— 2 bdrm, 2 bath upper unit condo. Updated kitchen, covered balcony, master ste w walk-in closet.</p>	<p>New Listing!</p>  <p>19681 Somers, New Boston \$34,900- Corner lot! Home on .41 acres, 1 1/2 story home, det 2 car garage, 3 bdrm, 1 bath, 1072 sqft.</p>	 <p>42537 S. I-94 Service Dr, Belleville \$155,000— Waterfront Property!!! Belleville Lakefront vacant land— .87 ACRES!!! Paved road, city water & sewer at the street.</p>



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Walmart hiring 80 additional associates for expanded Ypsilanti store

Walmart is hiring for the expanded Walmart slated to be completed this spring in Ypsilanti.

This hiring process usually results in about 80 additional jobs. A temporary hiring kiosk has opened inside the current store located at 2515 Ellsworth Road, Ypsilanti.

Applications will be accepted 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Interested applicants may also apply online at <http://careers.walmart.com>.

Through Walmart's Veterans Welcome Home Commitment, the company will offer a job to any qualified veteran who has been honorably discharged within the past 12 months. Veterans must be within 12 months of active duty and meet Walmart's standard hiring criteria.

Interested veterans may find out more at <http://walmartcareerswithamission.com>.

According to store manager Conrad Lutz, the store will be hiring both full- and part-time associates.

"We are working hard to prepare our store to better fill our customers' needs, and that includes finding great new employees to join our team," said Lutz.

Walmart provides a benefits program to eligible full- and part-time associates. For example, it provides a variety of affordable health and well-being benefits including health-care coverage with no lifetime

maximum. Walmart also offers eligible associates matching 401(k) contributions of up to 6% of pay, discounts on general merchandise, an Associate Stock Purchase Program and company-paid life insurance.

Additionally, eligible associates receive a quarterly incentive based on store performance.

The majority of new associates will begin work this February to help prepare the store for its grand opening.

Caution tape to mark sidelined vehicles checked for emergencies

Winter driving conditions are often a challenge for drivers in southeastern Michigan. When a car breaks down or runs off the road, passing drivers wonder if the driver is OK. Some concerned drivers call 9-1-1 to alert emergency personnel of the potential hazard.

To put passing drivers' minds to rest this

winter, Huron Valley Ambulance and other public safety agencies will once again be using caution tape on vehicles that have been abandoned or slid off the road. The caution tape indicates that the vehicle has already been checked and there is no emergency.

"We take the time to mark the vehicle because people often call 9-1-1 when they see a vehicle off the road," said Paul Hood, HVA vice president. "By marking the vehicle with caution tape, we are letting people know that we have already been to the scene and no one needs assistance."



Clerk Leon Wright

NEED EXTRA CASH ?????

I would like to personally invite the Citizens of Van Buren Charter Township to honor their Civic Duty for the upcoming 2015 Special and 2016 Presidential Elections. We are accepting online applications for precinct inspectors.

Complete the fields and hit the submit button.

Please read the Important Information section on the second page prior to signing the form.

Go to www.vanburen-mi.org/officials/clerk and click Election Inspector Application.

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Scott Borgman loved the Belleville Christmas Tree so much that his family took a picture of him standing next to it. The picture was on his birthday cake to honor his 51st birthday on Jan. 24. Scott is a lifelong resident of Belleville.



Scott Borgman



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Belleville Rotarians to host 7th annual 'Fat Tuesday' Italian Buffet

The Belleville Rotary Club is again inviting the public to its Italian Dinner Buffet on Fat Tuesday, Feb. 17, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Van Buren Eagles, 9961 Beck Road.

The Rotarians are cooking up a host of Mediterranean delights for diners. This pre-Lenten meal features Italian Wedding soup, salads, a pasta bar with several sauces including meat and vegetarian, featuring Ginger Bruder's Turkey Tetrastini.

Soda and paczki also will be available – sold separately. Tickets at \$12 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and under can be purchased from any Rotarian, or at the door. Carry-outs will be available.

Proceeds from the dinner and fun raffles support local Rotary Club projects which benefit the Belleville, Sumpter, Van Buren tri-community, Van Buren Public Schools, the Salvation Army, and other local charities.

The club also annually provides

scholarships to graduates of Belleville High School.

Van Buren Eagles to present 'Mardi Gras Around the World'

Tickets are now on sale for "Mardi Gras Around the World" to be held at the Van Buren Eagles on Friday, Feb. 27.

Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door, if available.

The tickets cover an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner – soup, salad, three entrees (including fish), with all the trimmings and dessert. Social hour is from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Paul Keller "At Sundown" Quintet will be playing the sounds of Mardi Gras.

Adults only; open to the public. Cash bar. An assortment of beads will be available for purchase. Guests are urged to wear their favorite masks.

Tickets are available at the Van Buren Eagles, 9961 Beck Road, Van Buren Township. For information and reservations, call Keith and Ginger Bruder at (734) 461-2498.

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VBT Board holds special work/study to go into closed-door session

The Van Buren Township Board of Trustees held a special work/study session at 4 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, so it could vote to go into closed-door session.

The closed-door meeting, that lasted two hours, was called to discuss an attorney's written communication concerning Visteon.

Clerk Leon Wright had added a Public Comment agenda item on the agenda, before the Unfinished Business part and reportedly had alerted the board about this a week in advance.

At the Jan. 26 meeting, before going into Closed Session, the board discussed and agreed upon having Public Comment on both agenda and non-agenda items in a different part of the agenda, after New Business.

John Delaney commented from the audience that he was in favor of this change, although in the past Supervisor Linda Combs had always let Delaney comment at length at the end and during the middle of work/study sessions.

-- Rosemary K. Otzman, Editor

Yankee Air Museum elects Stout, DeLoof to Board of Directors

The Yankee Air Museum announced on Jan. 22 that Ellsworth "Ells" Stout of Adrian and Peter DeLoof of Ann Arbor have been elected to its Board of Directors.

Stout is a graduate of Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science degree. He started with the John Hancock Insurance Co. as an agent and quickly turned to management, where he worked for 20 years. He then joined the Gleaner Life Insurance Society where he worked for 25 years and ultimately ascended to be president and CEO in 2008 until his retirement in 2012.

Ann Arbor attorney DeLoof is a senior partner of DeLoof, Hopper, Dever & Wright, PLLC. He is a graduate of Wayne State University and was admitted to the State Bar of Michigan in 1967. DeLoof, Hopper, Dever & Wright is a law firm providing counsel to businesses and individuals throughout southeastern Michigan.

Stout and DeLoof, and all members of the Yankee Air Museum Board of Directors, serve without compensation.

Boys & Girls Clubs of SE Michigan earn grant to fight bullying

The Allstate Foundation has awarded the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan a \$50,000 grant for their Youth for Unity program, which helps children ages 6-12 better understand cultural diversity.

The program teaches them to become increasingly tolerant and accepting of others and prevents attitudes that can lead young people towards acts of bullying.

It was developed exclusively for Boys & Girls Clubs with support from The Allstate Foundation.

One of the Boys & Girls Club is located

at Edgemont School in Belleville.

"The Youth for Unity program serves as a vehicle through which Boys & Girls Clubs can encourage young people to appreciate diversity and respect other people from all walks of life," said Len Krichko, Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan's president and CEO.

"In today's increasingly diverse world, it's important that children learn to get along with other people regardless of their race, religion or background."

Youth for Unity has several different focus areas with activities that help the students understand more about diversity.

The \$50,000 grant brings the Allstate Foundation's total contribution to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan to \$400,050 since 2006.

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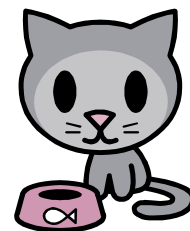
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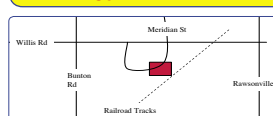


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Sumpter Board gets demonstration of new fire dept. turnout gear

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

The Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, plus a number of people in the audience at the Jan. 27 board meeting, got a demonstration of the new, recently purchased fire department turnout gear.

"It's nice to see where some of our tax dollars are going," said Supervisor John Morgan.

Fire Chief Joseph Januszyk said since the fire department got delivery of \$20,000 worth of new turnout gear they thought fire fighters should show the township what it bought.

Chief Januszyk first showed the old turnout gear that was manufactured in August 1995 and has holes in it that can't be fixed. He said they no longer will fix gear with 7-10 years of use.

He showed the old, plain, rubber boots that have steel toes which make your feet feel like they are in a vice. They are not comfortable, he emphasized.

The helmet he held up is three years old and still serviceable.

Trustee Bill Hamm, who has been a paid per call fire fighter for eight years, got up from his place at the board table and went into the front of the audience with Januszyk to show off his new equipment.

Chief Januszyk showed the drag strap hidden in a pocket between Hamm's shoulders on the new suit that can be used to

pull an injured fire fighter out of a building. It also can be hooked to a helicopter line to pull the fire fighter up from a problem location.

Hamm showed the new leather boots that have arch supports, good traction, and are comfortable.

The brand-new helmets are equivalent to what Van Buren and Augusta Township fire fighters wear, Hamm said. There is a light on the helmet that pierces the smoke, he said.

Januszyk said when the light is on it also allows a partner to see where a firefighter is inside a smoky house. Each light is powered by two lithium batteries.

Hamm said he has worn used equipment for the past eight years and it is exciting to get the newest equipment.

He showed where his name is on the back across the bottom of his jacket, so it won't be covered by his breathing tank on his upper back.

The colors are yellow and silver stripes on light tan suits, so they can tell their Sumpter fire fighters from those in other departments at a fire scene.

In other business at the Jan. 27 meeting, the board:

- Held a public hearing on use of the \$101,824.06 in 2015 federal Community Development Block Grant funds and then approved the budget during the regular

meeting. The budget includes \$49,566.03 for demolition, \$26,270 for housing rehabilitation, \$15,505.62 for senior services (grass/snow), and \$10,182.41 for administration. Joan Hennessey is the consultant helping the township with CDBG funding;

- Approved the hiring of part-time civilian employee Sue Dufrane in the police department office. Dufrane, a former dispatcher, came in to help when Jewell Leonard had to be off for medical treatment and now Leonard is back but still has doctor appointments to keep, so Dufrane is needed to help with the paperwork;

- Approved holding the 2015 Sumpter Country Fest over Memorial Day week end;

- Heard Trustee Don Swinson report that the food vendors are lined up for the festival and the festival committee is working on other details. He also read a letter from a parent thanking the township for the children's Christmas party and the presents. Also, Trustee Swinson, said Supervisor Morgan did a fantastic job in speaking about Sumpter at the Chamber of Commerce's recent luncheon;

- Heard Trustee Hamm announce that the Public Service Credit Union, now open in the Community Center, will close. Its last day open is March 6. Treasurer Alan Bates clarified that just this branch is closing. They are not going out of business, he said. "They tried to make it work and it just didn't work," said Supervisor Morgan;

- Heard Supervisor Morgan say that the library reminds everyone to fill out a library survey, so the library board will know what the public wants;

- Heard Trustee Matthew Oddy report on the committee work on the marijuana provisionary centers ordinance. The committee also has been asked to look at the 2011 Caregivers ordinance to make sure it's being applied in the way it was written. He said they hope to have something on

provisionary centers to present to the board by March so they can put it in place in the township. Attorney Rob Young said people are welcome to attend the meetings which are every other Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at the township. The township currently has a moratorium on provisionary centers;

- Heard Mary Ban ask about giving financial support to the museum. Supervisor Morgan said he has talked to other board members about it. If Sumpter gave \$10,000 to match the city of Belleville's donation that still wouldn't be enough to keep the museum going. He said Van Buren Township said it gives \$32,000 a year. "We're willing to help, but don't know if our help will be enough to keep it going," Supervisor Morgan said. Trustee Oddy said they had talked about using library funds for a spot for books about Sumpter in the museum. Attorney Young said the previous library millage has some funds left and that has to be expended for library purposes. "Can we take a corner of the museum - I don't want to call it a branch, that's got a ..." he paused. "We're working on it";

- Heard Ban ask if the police vehicle accident on Jan. 16 caused the power outage in her area that night. Hamm said the power pole snapped right in half and was dangling from wires. "I thought it would be a day and a half to fix it," Hamm said, noting he was amazed when DTE brought a machine in, propped up the wires, and then by the next morning there was a brand new pole in place. Ban said she was glad all the people involved were safe, especially the township's police woman; and

- Heard Ban talk about license plates with pink on them like in other states for breast cancer awareness. She said a truck driver has seen them in other states and wondered why Michigan didn't have them. Ban said she contacted former Sen. Bruce Patterson because his wife was in charge of the Cancer Care Center at University of Michigan. He told Ban that Michigan does have a license plate with a pink ribbon and it can be ordered through the Secretary of State.

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McNulty, Mushenheim get NHA Diamond Awards for teaching

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Michelle McNulty, a fifth-grade teacher at Keystone Charter Academy, and Jackie Mushenheim, a fourth-grade teacher at Keystone, are recipients of National Heritage Academies' new Diamond Award.

The Diamond Award recognizes teachers who are in the top quartile for student growth over a three-year period. Eighty-eight teachers out of 3,500 total teachers in 42 NHA schools received the award.

Todd McKee of NHA said in a memo, "We call it The Diamond Award because the Greek word for diamond means 'unbreakable.' Diamonds are formed under great pressure and heat. We understand the pressures of our 2020 Goal – that 90% of students that have been with us for three years or more will be on the path to college readiness in reading and math by the year 2020 – and know the work being done under that pressure will produce a beautiful result."

In announcing the awards at the Keystone Academy School Board meeting on Jan. 15, Keystone Principal Keturah Godfrey said the two teachers now are nominated as finalists for the Teacher of Excellence awards. She said McNulty has received a Teacher of Excellence Award every year she has taught.

Principal Godfrey also said she is very impressed with the quality of the teachers at Keystone this year.

In other business in the Jan. 15 meeting, the board:

- Approved the reappointment of Carol Manley to serve an additional board term of three years to expire in June of 2018. This reappointment has to go through the NHA steps for approval. Manley was not present to officially accept the reappointment;
- Heard Board Member Amy Gusfa say there is a very good chance this year she will be moving out of state. Her husband has a good job offer in Cincinnati but he won't accept it until she also has a good job offer there;
- Approved the reappointment of Plante Moran as the audit firm for the 2014-15 fiscal year;
- Approved the 2015-16 Offered Seats Schedule, which is the same as the present school year. Seven hundred and sixty-eight seats will be offered and include seats that will be filled by reenrolling students;
- Reviewed the board calendar set for the 2015-16 school year, with meetings at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month;
- Tabled the Wellness Policy Update on the agenda for discussion because the board attorney wishes to look at changes;
- Heard a quarterly progress report for schools identified as Focus Schools, as required by the state. Keystone is among the schools identified by the state as having

too great a gap between the lowest and highest ranking students;

- Heard Principal Godfrey say they set an English Language meeting for parents of students who need help with English or speak no English, but no parents showed up. She said Keystone has 31 Romanian students and most of the parents are not English-speaking and English is not spoken at home. She said a few students came to school this year speaking no English at all, but most come with some English. She said perhaps the parents are too embarrassed to come to a meeting and they are looking at several options to work with them;

- Heard NHA representative Chris Caulk say new NHA charter schools will be built in Novi near the corner of Wixom and Grand River and another in North Grand Rapids. He said they looked at building a charter school in Saline, but decided it was not viable. He said they are looking at building another school Downriver in 2016;

- Heard Godfrey report that Keystone no longer has students from Canton since now there are enough charter schools there. Caulk said there are 66% free and reduced lunch students at Keystone and the statewide average is 48%; and

- Reviewed a pie chart showing where the Keystone students originally come from: Van Buren Public Schools, 63%; Lincoln Consolidated School District, 21%; Romulus Community Schools, 4%; Airport Community School District, 3%; and School District of Ypsilanti, 2%.

Things to do in the Belleville area...

- **Friday, Feb. 6** – All Free Friends Family Theater Movie Night at 7 p.m. at the Youth Center, 7890 Tuttle Hill Road, at Bemis Road, Ypsilanti. Bounce House at 6:30 p.m. "Veggie Tales in the House, 2014, 12 minutes. Also another feature film about IF you think your day was bad, 2014, 81 minutes.. Questions? (734) 482-5074

- **Saturday, Feb. 7** – Used Book Sale at the Belleville Area District Library, noon to 3 p.m. Members of the Friends group can come at 11 a.m.

- **Thursday, Feb. 12** – At 7 p.m. 34th District Court Judge David M. Parrott will give a presentation on the court system in the Belleville Area District Library Program Room.

- **Friday, Feb. 13** – All Free Friends Family Theater Movie Night at 7 p.m. at the Youth Center, 7890 Tuttle Hill Road, at Bemis Road, Ypsilanti. Bounce House at 6:30 p.m. "Finding Her" is the movie, 2014, 10 minutes. Also, a film looking into being yourself, 2014, 99 minutes. Questions? (734) 482-5074

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Court Watching:**‘Good deal’ on PlayStation gets VBT teen in serious trouble**

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

What a Van Buren Township teenager thought was a “good deal” on a low-priced Sony PlayStation 3 brought him a world of trouble. And, it didn’t even work.

Ladale Combs, 19, was charged with receiving and concealing stolen goods less than \$1,000 and was tried on the misdemeanor charge before 34th District Court Judge Tina Brooks Green on Jan. 28. Judge Green found him guilty.

There were four witnesses, including the original owner of the PlayStation, the store manager from Belleville Exchange, a police officer and Combs.

After all the testimony was in and Judge Green called the parents forward to talk to them, she made her decision.

“It was just a stupid mistake,” Judge Green said, after sentencing Combs to one year of non-reporting probation and payment of \$400, which included court costs and restitution.

“When it seems too good to be true, *it is!*” Judge Green emphasized to him.

It all started at about 2:30 a.m. on Oct. 25 when Michael Holdstraw answered his door on Ash Drive in Van Buren Township. He said a man asked for his son and then pushed his way into his home.

He said three or four males came into his home and told the people in the home to get on the floor. Besides Holdstraw at home were his two sons, their friend, and Holdstraw’s fiancé.

He said two men were masked and one wasn’t. They took two iPhones, two Galaxies, a laptop, a PlayStation 3 with a game inside, and a wallet.

Under questioning by Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Blair Moody, Holdstraw said police gave him a lineup of pictures and he said he recognized one and pointed him out. It wasn’t Combs.

VBT Det./Sgt. Jeff Gueli said that Shelby Valentine earlier that day had waived his preliminary exam in that home invasion and was headed to circuit court in Detroit on Feb. 11. Valentine is charged with four

counts of armed robbery, a charge of home invasion first degree, and a weapons charge. He was lodged in the Wayne County Jail on \$10,000 bond, but has posted bond and is out.

Holdstraw said he did not recall seeing Combs at the home invasion.

Holdstraw did say his fiancé bought the white PlayStation 3 for him as a gift. It was a special edition and he still had the box for it, which contained the serial number.

The next witness was Det./Sgt. Gueli, who said he has been on the VBT Police Department for 27 years. He said he was assigned the home-invasion case for follow-up and Holdstraw provided him with a box for the PlayStation 3 that had the serial number in it.

Det./Sgt. Gueli said on Nov. 7 he entered that serial number into LeadsOnline and found that the stolen PlayStation 3 was sold to Belleville Exchange by Combs on Oct. 28 at 4 p.m.

He said he went to Belleville Exchange and they produced the PlayStation 3 and paperwork that showed they gave \$60 cash for it to Combs. They had Comb’s driver’s license number, his home address on Madison Drive, and his thumbprint.

Gueli explained that he uses LeadsOnline two or three times a month to check on stolen items. He said LeadsOnline is open to law enforcement or anybody else who is interested as a way to try to reduce the sale of stolen goods.

“It’s a very reliable source,” Gueli said, noting you don’t need the serial number, but just the type of object.

He said after he retrieved the PlayStation 3 from Belleville Exchange and put it in the police property room, he and Det. Mark Buxton went to Combs’ home to talk to him about it. Combs came to the door and they asked him to come to the police department to talk about the PlayStation, but he said he had to get to school within an hour. He said he would come after 2 p.m. to talk about the item, but he didn’t come. So, they sought a warrant for Combs’ arrest.

In cross examination, Comb’s court-

appointed attorney Jeff Bowdich asked if Combs was one of the suspects in mind for the home invasion and Gueli said Combs was not a suspect in that case.

The next witness was Ahmad Nasideh, manager of the Belleville Exchange store. He said it is a buy, sell, trade shop. He said a person brings an item in, and they determine what the store can sell it for and make a little bit of money and then buy the item. It is put in back for 15 days before being put up front to sell.

They enter the item into LeadsOnline to make sure it is clear and not stolen, he said. Nasideh said he took the PlayStation 3 in for cash, paying Combs \$60. The sticker from the store was still on the white PlayStation 3 that was entered into evidence in the trial and identified by Nasideh.

“I would not take the item if I know it’s stolen,” Nasideh said. “As soon as we got the message from LeadsOnline that it was stolen, it was the same day the Van Buren

Police came.”

When asked if he recognized Combs when Combs was in his store, Nasideh said he did. Nasideh said he used to work at Belleville High School and he remembered Combs as a student there. He said he also remembered Combs’ face linked with the PlayStation 3.

When Prosecutor Moody asked about the worth of the PlayStation, Nasideh said it was worth \$200 to \$250 brand new, in October it was worth \$100 to \$125, and now it’s worth \$75-\$100. He said October was just before the new PlayStation 4 came out.

Holdstraw said he had the receipt for the item and it cost \$299.99, purchased new.

Defense attorney Bowdich called Combs to the stand to testify on his own behalf. Combs said he is a graduate of BHS and is taking two classes at Wayne County

(continued on page 19)



Sumpter Township Public Notice



Sumpter Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes January 13, 2015

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by J. Morgan, Supervisor, showing present: Supervisor Morgan, Clerk Hoffman, Treasurer Bates, Trustees, Hamm, P. Morgan, Oddy. Swinson - Excused. Also present: D. Bowman, Attorney Young and approximately 13 residents.

3. Agenda: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the agenda for the January 13, 2015 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

4. Public comments only on agenda items: None

5. A. Motion by Hoffman, supported by Bates to approve the regular board meeting minutes of December 9, 2014 as presented. Motion carried.

6. A. Warrants: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Bates to approve warrants totaling \$542,942.98. Roll call vote: Yes: J. Morgan, Hoffman, Bates, Hamm, P. Morgan, Oddy. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously.

7.- 12. Motion by Bates, supported by Hoffman to receive and file all Department reports as presented. Motion Carried.

12. Motion by P. Morgan supported by Hoffman to concur with the recommendation of the Township Attorney to accept the property from Jerry Pattah, on Sumpter Road, Parcels 82 81 038 01 0004 000 and 82 81 038 01 0005 001. Motion Carried.

13. Board Response - None at this time.

14. New Business

A. Motion by Hoffman supported by Bates to approve the Animal Sheltering Agreement between Sumpter Township and the Michigan Humane Society as presented. Motion Carried.

B. Motion by P. Morgan supported by Hoffman to approve the reappointment of the Board of Review members for the year 2015 – John W. Morgan, Jennifer Massel, Karen Woodington and Brenda Burkis. Motion Carried.

C. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to accept the 2013-2014 Wayne County Parks Grant for \$20,000.00, which was approved by Wayne County November 20, 2014. Motion Carried.

D. Motion by Hoffman, supported by Bates to approve going out for sealed bids to remove the old roof, of the Fairgrounds pavilion, and replace with a new steel roof. Motion Carried.

E. Motion by Hoffman, supported by P. Morgan to set a Public Hearing for January 27, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. for the 2015 CDBG Budget. Motion Carried

F. Motion by Hoffman, supported by Bates to appoint

Jay Bardell to the Planning Commission, to fill Matt Oddy’s term, term to expire June 22, 2015. Motion Carried.

15. Announcements.

John Morgan, Supervisor, advised the residents the Belleville Community Chorus is looking for singers. For more information contact Lori Day 734-660-0797. Supervisor Morgan stated he has been contacted by the Belleville Library to determine what Sumpter Township would like for a Library. Van Buren Township’s Supervisor has asked Sumpter Township for support for the Belleville Historical Museum. Supervisor Morgan asked Board members to bring back suggestions for the next meeting.

Supervisor Morgan stated there are serious heating problems at the Police Department. Chief Pierce advised the Board they would like to install a roof system to heat the Police Department and two of the class rooms. Bids were received last year and the contractor has agreed to honor that bid.

15a. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to contract with Keep It In the 70’s to install a heating system at the Police Department at a cost of \$11,750.00 Motion Carried.

15. Joe Januszyk, Fire Chief, stated Sumpter Township will be hosting the Western Wayne Fire Chief’s meeting January 14, 2015.

16. Open Op 16. Open Floor:

Mary Ban – Comments regarding the new furnace at the Police Department. Ms. Ban asked the Board to try and find some funds to help the Belleville Museum.

Mary Sherwood asked that the Board allow the departments to make oral reports.

17. Adjournment: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to adjourn at 6:57 pm. Motion carried. Respectfully submitted,

Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk of Sumpter Township, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of minutes taken at a Regular Board Meeting of the Sumpter Township Board of Trustees on January 13, 2015 at 6:30 pm at the Sumpter Township Hall, 23480 Sumpter Road, Belleville, MI 48111, County of Wayne, and that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meeting Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be available as required by said act.

Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk

Published: February 5, 2015

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Village Park ponds to have bubbles instead of water fountains

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

The fountains of water in the retention ponds at Victoria Commons subdivision and Village Park in Belleville are pretty and, since the water splashes, noisy, too.

There is a more efficient way to aerate the ponds than squirting water up in the air, but it's not as pretty.

This is what Department of Public Services Director Keith Tackett told the Belleville Downtown Development Authority at its Jan. 21 meeting.

He was responding to the ongoing problem of the pond aerators that keep breaking down and needing costly repairs. This has been discussed by the DDA since fall of 2011.

After Tackett got done explaining why he was recommending diffuser equipment for the ponds instead of fountains, DDA members unanimously agreed and approved going out for bids for diffusers.

He said the fountains in the ponds now work only in the top one-third of the water. The diffusers he favored pull up the water from the bottom of the pond, oxygenates the water, and mixes the water to prevent stratification.

"Stratification occurs when the sun heats the surface water while deeper water remains cool," said a report Tackett presented from Clemson University's Cooperative Extension Service.

"The warm and cool layers do not mix. While the warm surface water receives oxygen from the atmosphere and from photosynthesis of aquatic plants and phytoplankton, the cooler bottom layers become depleted of oxygen because of decomposition.

"Stratification is a significant threat to fish health in small ponds because it creates a layer of oxygen-depleted water.

"Under the right conditions this low oxygen water can mix rapidly with the

surface waters and dilute the oxygen, an event commonly referred to as a 'turnover.' Severe turnovers often result in fish kills because the fish 'suffocate' from lack of oxygen.

"A properly designed circulation system can prevent stratification and turnover events. Circulation systems also can help manage nutrients in the pond by balancing the trophic state and reducing nutrients available to algae and aquatic weeds," the report stated.

Diffusion systems circulate water most efficiently and that's what Tackett recommended.

"It just looks like bubbles," he said of the diffusion process, noting it pulls water up from the bottom.

He said it is just moving water and you don't get a lot of water loss from going up in the air in a fountain and it improves the health of the water, fighting weed growth.

Tackett also said the diffusion process speeds up deterioration of leaves and other things that fall into the pond. That's means the nasty smell that sometimes comes from the ponds would be gone.

And, he said, the equipment is unlikely to clog. He said the city has all the infrastructure in place and all you'd have to do is switch units and plug in.

To give the DDA an idea of the cost involved, Tackett got a sample quote for \$1,899.98 per system plus a cost per month of \$28.98 (24/7) for electricity. He said the bids may bring lower prices than that. There are three ponds and the large pond that bends would need three units.

City Manager Diana Kollmeyer asked if there was a benefit for leaving the diffusers on year around.

"Absolutely. It keeps the water open for geese and ducks," Tackett said.

Kollmeyer said Ford Lake has bubblers around the docks and, "It never, never, never freezes."

DDA Coordinator Carol Thompson said there is money in the budget for maintenance of the fountains and so they could go out for bids and see "what we have to do to the budget," as far as transferring money from the fund balance, if necessary.

"We should get the diffusers and do it the right way," agreed DDA chairwoman Rosemary Loria.

In other business at the Jan. 21 meeting,

the DDA:

- In the annual election of officers elected Rosemary Loria as chairwoman, replacing John Hoops who asked not to be reappointed to the DDA because he was closing his business, the Belleville Mill, and no longer qualified to sit on the DDA as a business owner. Reelected to their past positions were Gary Snarski as vice chairman, Sabrina Richardson Williams as treasurer, and Jim Higgerson as secretary;

- Approved continuing to meet during 2015 at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month;

- Approved going forward with a new TIF plan and development plan as recommended by the DDA attorney Kevin Kilby, since the last plan ends with the year 2015. Thompson said to save costs they will have Spicer Group do the planning process and Kilby do the final legal review. It should cost about \$6,000 to \$8,000 from Spicer. Thompson said the procedure for a new plan is to try to seat a citizen council, among other things. The last time the DDA did this it was about a nine-month process. Thompson will begin the process and bring a letter of agreement with the Spicer Group. Thompson said, "We can't do anything that's not in the plan." Chairwoman Loria added to DDA members, "If you have big dreams, it's time to put it in the plan";

- Took the one old Streetscape bench left off the Follow-Up List since it needs a lot of TLC. They thought they might be able to do something special with it;

- Heard Thompson announce the Belleville Soup Project tentatively is set for Thursday, Feb. 26, but the BHS cafeteria still needed to be confirmed. The project is a partnership between the DDA and the BHS New Tech classes; and

- Noted at the next meeting at 6 p.m. Feb. 18, the DDA will get reports from the Museum and the Chamber of Commerce on how they used the grants from the DDA and they will open the bids for construction of the Kayak Launch.

Upcoming Meetings

- Thursday, Feb. 5 – Belleville Zoning Board of Appeals, 5:30 p.m., consider variance for setback at 193 Potter Dr.

- Tuesday, Feb. 10 – September Days Endowment Committee, 11 a.m. Also, Van Buren Township Recreation Committee, 5:30 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township workshop at 6 p.m. and regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Also, Belleville Area District Library meeting at 7 p.m.

- Wednesday, Feb. 11 – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m.

- Thursday, Feb. 12 – Keystone Academy School Board, 6 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 7 p.m.



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Understanding the Law

By Jason Goldman, Esq.
and Bryan Suliman, Esq.

This article is a general explanation of Michigan’s No-Fault Act without all of the details and exceptions. Please raise any questions with your attorney about the law or procedure that applies to your claim.

The Michigan No-Fault Act provides certain benefits to a person injured in a motor vehicle accident without regard to who was at fault in the accident. No-fault benefits are similar to health and disability policies. They generally follow the person who bought the insurance rather than the motor vehicle that is insured.

The No-Fault Act requires that the no-fault insurer pay all reasonable charges for necessary products, services, and accommodations for an injured person’s care, recovery, or rehabilitation arising out of a motor vehicle accident.

This can include medical expenses payable for life and unlimited in amount. Medical benefits include such things as hospital bills, doctor’s visits, medical tests, physical therapy, prescriptions, appliances, transportation to and from medical care, vans, wheelchairs, home modifications, and home or residential care, including attendant care provided by family members.

The No-Fault Act also requires that the no-fault insurer pay for benefits such as wage loss, replacement services, medical mileage, funeral expenses, and survivor’s loss benefits.

If you find yourself in the unfortunate situation of being injured in a motor vehicle accident and in need of help, we urge you to speak with your attorney who can help you better understand your rights and get you whatever relief that you are entitled to under the law.

Goldman Suliman, PLLC, is a Belleville law firm that was started by Jason Goldman and Bryan Suliman in order to serve the Belleville-area community. In this and future articles they will cover legal issues commonly faced by Belleville-area residents. Their goal is to help you better understand the law.

GOLDMAN | SULIMAN, PLLC
ATTORNEYS

287 INDUSTRIAL PARK DRIVE
BELLEVILLE, MICHIGAN 48111
TELEPHONE (734) 699-7360
FAX (734) 699-7365

Belleville Blood Drive

Monday, Feb. 23, 1-6:45 p.m., St. Anthony Catholic Church, 409 West Columbia Ave., Belleville

Van Buren Township Police Dispatch Log

The following are selected calls for VBT Police.

- Sunday, Jan. 25:**
- 0041 – water leak found, Denton Rd.
 - 0259 – disturbance, Kirkridge
 - 0500 – agency assist, W. I-94/rest area
 - 1321 – agency assist, Carmell
 - 1342 – private property accident, Belleville Rd.
 - 1342 – assault & battery, Jackson
 - 1417 – suspicious vehicle, Lake Villa Dr.
 - 1523 – personal injury accident, EB I-94/Belleville
 - 1655 – juvenile complaint, Merle Ct./Denton Rd.
 - 1722 – E-911 hang up, Arborview Ln.
 - 1724 – fraud, Belleville
 - 1948 – suspicious vehicle, Sandlewood Dr.
 - 2050 – suspicious person, Violet St./Daisy Blvd.
 - 2158 – disturbance, Belleville
 - 2222 – assault & battery, Village Green Ln.
 - 2354 – suspicious person, Quirk Rd./Belleville
 - 2356 – suspicious vehicle, Elwell Rd./Martz Rd.

- Monday, Jan. 26:**
- 0013 – robbery, John’s Hot Spot
 - 0020 – malicious destruction of property, Elwell
 - 0038 – suspicious person, Belleville
 - 0121 – suspicious person, Rolan Meadows Dr.
 - 0837 – assault & battery, Birch Dr.
 - 0956 – private property accident, Valero
 - 1021 – private property accident, Vernon St.
 - 1052 – assault & battery, Parkwood Manor
 - 1232 – private property accident, Maurice Dr. / Rogers Ave.
 - 1240 – noise complaint, Hardwood Dr.
 - 1246 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
 - 1511 – larceny, Denton Rd.
 - 1639 – disorderly conduct, Richard Run
 - 2142 – disbursement, Belleville Rd.

- Tuesday, Jan. 27:**
- 0034 – assault & battery, Denton Rd.
 - 0114 – assault & battery, Alba Ct.
 - 0710 – property damage accident, Martz/Hoeft
 - 0813 – operating while intoxicated, Bemis Rd. / Martinsville Rd.
 - 1405 – motorist assist, Belleville Rd.
 - 1355 – E-911 hang up, Belleville Rd.
 - 1509 – assault & battery, Lake Villa Dr.
 - 1606 – assault & battery, Country Walk
 - 1630 – property damage accident, EB/bypass
 - 1651 – E-911 hang up, NB I-275
 - 1733 – suicide or attempt, Hardwood Dr.
 - 1802 – mental, Belleville Rd.
 - 1847 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
 - 1921 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
 - 1948 – suicide or attempt, S. I-94 Service Dr.
 - 2223 – suspicious situation, Edison
 - 2240 – suspicious vehicle, Savage/Country Pond
 - 2303 – suspicious situation, Super 8

- Wednesday, Jan. 28:**
- 0042 – larceny, W. Huron River Dr.
 - 0051 – suspicious situation, Martinsville Rd./ E. Huron River Dr.
 - 0642 – unauthorized driving away of auto, Sumpter Rd.
 - 0907 – assault & battery, Oak Blvd.
 - 1159 – larceny, Oak Ln.
 - 1223 – harassment call, Old Michigan Rd.
 - 1355 – suspicious person, Beck
 - 1440 – property damage accident, Tyler/Hannan
 - 1656 – breaking & entering, Arborview Ln.
 - 1659 – disturbance, Lighthouse Dr.
 - 1710 – private property accident, Belleville Rd.
 - 2027 – juvenile complaint, Van Buren Ct.
 - 2122 – suspicious vehicle, Savage School
 - 2315 – juvenile complaint, Martinsville/Fret

- Thursday, Jan. 29:**
- 0058 – retail fraud, Belleville Rd.
 - 0743 – property damage accident, Ecorse/Beck
 - 0837 – personal injury accident, WB I-94 / Belleville Rd.
 - 0855 – property damage accident, Ecorse/Hannan
 - 1536 – noise complaint, Sumpter Rd.
 - 1623 – property damage accident, Tyler/Parkwood
 - 1623 – harassment call, N. Bellridge Dr.
 - 1737 – personal injury accident, N. I-94 Service Dr. / Hannan Rd.
 - 2140 – larceny, Hannan Rd.
 - 2152 – disturbance, Beck

- Friday, Jan. 30:**
- 0006 – disturbance, W. Huron River Dr.

- 0208 – loud party complaint, S. Bellridge Dr.
 - 0831 – private property accident, Ecorse Rd.
 - 0921 – fraud, Farm Rd.
 - 1015 – property damage accident, Rawsonville Rd. / W. Huron River Dr.
 - 1036 – mental, E. Archwood Dr.
 - 1235 – property damage accident, South Service Dr. / Denton Rd.
 - 1519 – disorderly conduct, Dollar General
 - 1547 – fraud, S. I-94 Service Dr.
 - 1738 – disorderly conduct, Belleville Rd.
 - 1956 – fraud, Dartmoor Cir.
 - 1957 – fraud, Belleville
 - 2150 – sexual assault, Quirk Rd.
 - 2331 – operating while intoxicated, Haggerty/ Huron River Dr.
- Saturday, Jan. 31:**
- 0324 – suspicious person, Ecorse Rd./Marlowe Ave.
 - 1256 – private property accident, Van Born
 - 1319 – found child, Ironwood Dr.
 - 1505 – disorderly conduct, TCF Bank
 - 1543 – traffic hazard, Haggerty/I-94
 - 1833 – suspicious person, Western St.
 - 1912 – property damage accident, Village Green Ln.
 - 2118 – noise complaint, E. Archwood Dr.
 - 2229 – private property accident, Belleville Rd.
- Also on this week’s log are 172 traffic stops, 19 of them on the I-94 and I-275 freeways.

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

- Sunday, Jan. 25:**
- 0024 – welfare check, N. Aberdeen Ct.
 - 0135 – property damage accident, Main St.
 - 1252 – robbery alarm, Edison Ave.
 - 1328 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
 - 1402 – assist fire dept., Anaheim St.
 - 1739 – property check, Biggs Ave./E. Huron River
 - 1835 – civil matter, Main St.
 - 2241 – suspicious person, E. Columbia Ave./S. Liberty St.
- Monday, Jan. 26:**
- 0549 – assist fire dept., San Carlos St.
 - 0614 – malicious destruction of property, Carmell
 - 0911 – assist fire dept., Wexford Ave.
 - 1322 – civil matter, N. Aberdeen Ct.
 - 2029 – assist fire dept., Roland St.

- Tuesday, Jan. 27:**
- 0736 – intrusion alarm, N. Liberty St.
 - 1010 – private property accident, W. Columbia
 - 1325 – parking complaint, W. Columbia Ave.
 - 2316 – E-911 hang up, Belle Villa Blvd.

- Wednesday, Jan. 28:**
- 0709 – welfare check, S. Edgemont Ave.
 - 0903 – misc. complaint, Belle Villa Blvd.
 - 1149 – misc. complaint, Light Tower Ct.
 - 1430 – mental, Harbour Pointe Dr.
 - 1631 – shots fired, Menlo Park Dr./Belle Villa Blvd.
 - 2302 – assist fire dept., W. Columbia Ave.

- Thursday, Jan. 29:**
- 0421 – intrusion alarm, Main St.
 - 0830 – assist fire dept., Santa Clara St.
 - 1447 – welfare check, N. Liberty St.
 - 1727 – assist fire dept., High St.
 - 1748 – hospice, Sumpter Rd.
 - 1917 – warrant arrest, Rawsonville Mobil
 - 2214 – suspicious person, Main St.

- Friday, Jan. 30:**
- 0920 – parking complaint, W. Columbia Ave.
 - 1108 – miscellaneous complaint, Potter Dr.
 - 1227 – disorderly conduct, South St.
 - 1653 – fraud, Main St.
 - 1927 – assist fire dept., W. Columbia Ave.
 - 1930 – mental, Harbour Pointe Dr.

- Saturday, Jan. 31:**
- 0010 – property damage accident, S. Liberty St.
 - 1205 – welfare check, W. Columbia Ave.
 - 1221 – harassment call, Biggs Ave.
 - 1309 – civil matter, Mobil
 - 1413 – intrusion alarm, Camell
 - 1627 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
 - 2238 – follow up, Martinsville
- Also on this week’s log are 48 traffic stops.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

- Sunday, Jan. 25:**
- 0027 – warrant arrest, out of township
 - 0055 – suspicious vehicle, Judd/Karr
 - 0402 – suspicious vehicle, Karr/Arkona
 - 0831 – alarm, 21000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 1047 – personal injury accident, Sherwood/Judd
 - 1507 – larceny, 8100 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
 - 1614 – mental health commitment, 49000 bl. Arkona

- 1741 – found property, 24000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
- 1741 – civil dispute, 48000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1900 – assist other agency, out of township
- 1947 – family trouble, 18000 bl. Savage Rd.
- 2237 – fire dept. assist, Arizona

- Monday, Jan. 26:**
- 1227 – animal complaint, Martinsville/Arkona
 - 1315 – identity theft, 26000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
 - 1428 – property damage accident, Elwell/Arkona
 - 1451 – noise complaint, 22000 bl. Fenster Rd.
 - 1558 – suspicious incident, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.

- 1704 – property damage accident, Sumpter/Willis
- 2250 – trespassing complaint, 23000 bl. Sumpter

- Tuesday, Jan. 27:**
- 0622 – fire dept. assist, Carriage Ln.
 - 0753 – property damage accident, 49000 bl. Bemis
 - 0902 – well-being check, 17000 bl. Lohr Rd.
 - 1032 – animal complaint, 22000 bl. Fenster Rd.
 - 1520 – trespassing complaint, 28000 bl. Sherwood
 - 1540 – fire dept. assist, 39000 bl. Wear Rd.

- Wednesday, Jan. 28:**
- 0613 – assist other agency, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 0836 – abandoned vehicle, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 1412 – civil dispute, 8200 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
 - 1421 – citizen assist, Colorado
 - 1443 – citizen assist, Sumpter/Willow
 - 1549 – suspicious incident, 26000 bl. Sherwood
 - 1803 – harassment complaint, 12000 bl. Rawsonville Rd.

- 1816 – fire dept. assist, 24000 bl. Karr Rd.
- 2250 – suspicious vehicle, 28000 bl. Haggerty Rd.

- Thursday, Jan. 29:**
- 1128 – larceny, Nevada
 - 1129 – suspicious incident, Nevada
 - 1417 – 911 hang up, Brookview
 - 2259 – warrant arrest, OUTU
 - 2326 – suspicious incident, 51000 bl. Willis Rd.

- Friday, Jan. 30:**
- 0630 – fire dept. assist, 26000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
 - 0826 – death investigation, 26000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 0948 – malicious destruction of property report, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.

- 1057 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Karr Rd.
- 1230 – animal complaint, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1232 – animal complaint, 42000 bl. Bemis Rd.
- 1613 – animal complaint, 40000 bl. Harris Rd.
- 1930 – suspicious incident, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.

- 1936 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Sherwood Rd.

- Saturday, Jan. 31:**
- 0101 – alarm, 21000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 0219 – malicious destruction of property report, 51000 bl. Willis Rd.
 - 0339 – alarm, 21000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 0643 – death investigation, 6400 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.

- 1014 – disorderly person, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
- 1030 – well-being check, Edgewood
- 1133 – assist other agency, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.

- 1156 – malicious destruction of property report, 23000 bl. Haggerty Rd.
- 1349 – fire dept. assist, 43000 bl. Bemis Rd.
- 1557 – reckless driver complaint, Rustic Ln.
- 1706 – malicious destruction of property report, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1858 – alarm, 28000 bl. Clark Rd.

- 1900 – reckless driver complaint, California / Wyoming
 - 1915 – alarm, 21000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 2019 – alarm, 42000 bl. Willow Rd.
 - 2125 – reckless driver complaint, Rawsonville / Willis
 - 2246 – disorderly person, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- Also on this week’s log are 10 follow-up investigations, 39 miscellaneous details, 123 patrol checks, and 41 traffic stops.

PlayStation

(continued from page 16)

Community College.

Combs said he told his friends he was looking for a PlayStation 3 and Milly, a friend of a friend, called him. Combs said he didn't know Milly, but he bought the PlayStation 3 from him for \$50. He said he tried it and it was broken so he took it to the Exchange and sold it for \$60.

He said he didn't know it was stolen and he never saw Milly before or since.

Combs said he wanted to buy a PlayStation

3 but didn't have the money. He put out the word he was interested.

Judge Green said if Combs bought the item at a store and it was broken, he would have a warranty and could call the store. She asked why Combs didn't call Milly at once.

Combs said Milly wouldn't answer his phone.

Judge Green said if the item was worth from \$150 to \$200 and Combs could buy it for \$50, "You should have known it was stolen."

He said he put a game disc in the machine

and it made noises. He said he only tried one disk. It didn't work.

"I didn't think it was stolen. I thought I got a cheaper price," Combs said.

Moody asked who he told he wanted a PlayStation 3. Was it Shelby Valentine? Combs replied, "Yes." Was it Torry O'Bannon? "No." Valentine was the one arrested for the crime.

Defense attorney Bowdich asked if when Combs met Milly somewhere to get the PlayStation, was the item wrapped or boxed? Combs said it wasn't.

"So, you knew it wasn't new," Bowdich said and Combs said that he knew it wasn't new.

Prosecutor Moody said Combs knew or should have known the item was stolen. And, he paid \$50 for something worth much more. Although it is a circumstantial case, he said Combs should be found guilty of receiving and concealing stolen merchandise less than \$1,000.

Defense attorney Bowdich said his client thought he got a good deal.

Judge Green said Combs didn't ask any questions because he knew or should have known it was stolen.

Bowdich said they're not sure if Milly bought it from someone else who stole it.

Judge Green pointed out police can't find Milly.

Bowdich said his client, "... could have been a buyer in good faith."

Judge Green found the defendant guilty and called his parents up to the front of the courtroom to find out what was going on in his life. They told her their son graduated from BHS and had good grades and now he was going to WCCC. The parents live together and their son lives with them.

Judge Green said she would use HYTA (the Holmes Youthful Trainee Act) to defer the sentence for a year and if he got in no trouble, the charge would be dismissed. She said she didn't want him to have a criminal record.

"He's a kid who did something stupid," Judge Green said.

The original owner of the PlayStation, Holdstraw, said he had no problem with the sentence, since he is a father of sons, too.

Court Watching:

Defendant who drove ORV on Main Street gets his vehicle back

On Jan. 28 before 34th District Court Chief Judge Tina Books Green, Michael Woody pled guilty to operating his Off

Road Vehicle (ORV) on Main Street in the city of Belleville on Dec. 18.

Woody told Judge Green that Sumpter Township told him he could drive on the street as long as it was inside the white line and he was wearing a helmet.

Judge Green asked if he was blaming Sumpter Township and Woody said he wasn't. He noted didn't have the required ORV sticker on his vehicle.

Woody said J&T Crova Towing had his ORV and he didn't have the money to get it out and he wanted to know if he could sign his vehicle over to help pay the costs.

Judge Green decided to take this into her own hands. "Sometimes you have to get creative," she said.

She called John Bokon, owner of J&T, and talked to him. The ORV had been at his place since Dec. 18 at \$45 a day and Woody owed some \$1,800. She said Bokon said he couldn't release the vehicle since Belleville PD wouldn't sign off on it because of the sticker.

Judge Green said Bokon agreed to reduce the cost to \$600 so Woody could get his vehicle back. Judge Green signed off on it and the ORV was to be released that day.

Judge Green said the ORV was worth several thousand dollars and Woody was willing to give that up just to settle his debt.

Madeline Ryan Coffman

Madeline Ryan Coffman waived her preliminary exam and was bound over to circuit court on charges of delivery / manufacturing of drugs and larceny from a building. Her arraignment on the information will be Feb. 11 at the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice. She posted her \$5,000/10% bond. Det. Mark Buxton was the officer in charge.

Gregory Joseph Buege

Gregory Joseph Buege pled guilty to breaking and entering into a vehicle in Sumpter Township on Aug. 4, 2012 and the charge of using a finance transaction device under false pretenses was dropped. Judge Green deferred his sentence for a year and if there is no further problem, the charge will be dismissed. Fines were assessed. Sumpter Township Police Sgt. John Ashby was the officer in charge.

Kuntie Jamar Robinson

Kuntie Jamar Robinson waived his preliminary exam on charges of receiving and concealing a stolen vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle, and unauthorized driving away of an auto in VBT. Judge Green bound him over to circuit court to face the charges on Feb. 4. He was lodged in the Wayne County Jail on bond of \$10,000/10%.

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