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# Alcona County Review

\$1.25

VOL. 153 No. 52 December 27, 2023 1 Section *Serving Alcona County Since 1877* Harrisville, Michigan 48740

## Special needs residents receive gifts from Harrisville Lions Club

By Mary Weber  
Staff Writer

Special needs adults, characterized by a childlike mindset, are often stigmatized by society. Their innocence, trapped in an adult body, makes it difficult to navigate the world.

Many are often encumbered with additional handicaps such as difficulty or the complete inability to walk and talk, which makes it problematic for the outside world to understand or relate. They are too old to fit in well with children whom their thought process associates with, nor do many adults relate to their pure-hearted, sometimes awkward, approach to life.

Because of the care they need, special needs adults often live in group homes, rarely getting the opportunity to venture out into society. "If they do go out, they are stared at and sometimes mocked," Marcie Redlawsk said.

Redlawsk is a member of the Harrisville International Lions Club and has special needs adult family members, which is why she challenged the club to find a way to surprise local individuals with a gift for Christmas.

She explained special needs adults are typically sweet, young-minded individuals who have no idea of how to tell a lie, but they know they are different from others when people stare at



George and Marcy Redlawsk, Donald and Gail McKenzie, Jeanne Meskus, and Kathy Laatz, all members of the Harrisville International Lions Club, gather to wrap Christmas gifts the club purchased to give to local special needs adults. *Photo by Mary Weber.*

them. "These people have hearts and feelings. Sadly, they also have a lot of loneliness.

"Because of their group home situation, most of them have nothing of their own and get so excited when someone brings them anything. They see joy in the simplest of things," Redlawsk said.

The Harrisville International Lions Club, which is fueled by both female and male members, chipped in \$450 to buy Christmas gifts for local special needs adults. That pot was sweetened a bit by other community members who donated, and the club purchased gifts for over a dozen special needs adults.

Redlawsk explained each special needs person received a wrapped sheet set adorned with either their favorite licensed characters, such as Batman, their favorite color or their favorite animal.

The gifts were then distributed with a visit from a Princess, portrayed by Lion member Gail McKenzie, and just one other volunteer, so as not to overwhelm the individuals.

"All the gifts were gratefully received. They absolutely loved it and were so happy. Having a princess deliver the gifts was extra special for them. Gail con-

Continued on page 3

## School district extends break due to water leak

By Mary Weber  
Staff Writer

Many Alcona Community School students were overjoyed last week to hear their holiday break will be extended another week. The extension was caused due to a water leak repair that turned out to be a much bigger job than originally planned.

Superintendent Dan O'Connor said the school learned about the leak a few weeks ago when there was an issue with the boiler and water pressure dropped.

"We brought in plumbers and originally thought it would be a one or two-day fix, but they would not be able to work on it until the water was shut off, so we strategically waited until the holiday break when the students would be off school," O'Connor said.

He explained once the water was shut off, they found the leak was in a tiny crawl space over 100 feet under the oldest wing of the high school.

"Unfortunately, as happens when dealing with buildings nearly 70 years old, they no longer make the piping the size needed and it will have to be custom-made.

"Additionally, there is asbestos in there, so an asbestos abatement team will have to go in and remove it," O'Connor said.

He is confident the work will be completed the first week in January and school will resume January 8.

"The asbestos abatement team will be in this week and we will utilize this opportunity for them to remove as much asbestos as possible, over and above what is needed for the project. Then the confined space piping team will come in just after the first of the year to make the repair," O'Connor said.

Once the water is turned back on it will have to run for a fixed amount of time before test samples from various locations of the school can be collected and sent to the health department. Upon its approval of the test water, classes will resume.

O'Connor said there was no apparent structural damage occurring from the leakage and they were pumping out the excess water while school was in session.

Although the repair does not affect the elementary school, it will also be closed due to the school not being able to meet the attendance threshold.

The original holiday break for this year was one of the shortest Alcona Community School has ever had so as not to cut into too many snow days. The extended days off will eat into four of the school's nine allowable snow days. "We still have some wiggle room. We will have to see what the weather brings us in the next three to four months. It is what it is," O'Connor said.



# God Bless America



# Americanisms



“Last year’s words belong to last year’s language. And next year’s words await another voice.”

—T.S. Eliot

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## SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

### RECREATION PLAN FOR ALCONA TOWNSHIP

The Alcona Township Board of Trustees will hold a Special Meeting and Public Hearing, on the draft Alcona Township Recreation Plan, on January 16, 2024 at 6:00 pm, at the Alcona Township Hall located at 5576 N US 23, Black River, MI 48721.

The public hearing provides an opportunity for the public to participate in the final development of the recreation plan. The recreation plan contains goals, objectives, and action items pertaining to recreation in Alcona Township for 2024-2028. The draft plan may be reviewed at: <http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/recreation.asp>. Written comments may be submitted to Nico Tucker, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments, P.O. Box 457, Gaylord, MI 49734; or by e-mail at [ntucker@nemcog.org](mailto:ntucker@nemcog.org).

# Alcona County Review

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## Calendar of Events



### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

The Sunrise Community Food Pantry is open from 1 to 3 p.m. at Hubbard Lake Bible Church. Clients are asked to come only one time per month and must be present to receive food. Recipients must remain in their vehicle for curbside pickup and follow volunteer traffic control. The pantry accepts clients regardless of county residence. Identification is required. Bring a box or bag. The church is located at 13508 Hubbard Lake Road, Hubbard Lake. Call (989) 727-3443 for more information.

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

The Community Walking Club for Everyone will meet in the parking lot of the Harrisville branch of the Alcona County Library at 9 a.m. Call (989) 724-6796 for more information.

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

There will be a children’s craft activity and story time at 10:30 a.m. at the Harrisville branch of the Alcona County Library. See the library’s Facebook page for

updates and information about each week’s book and craft activity. For information, call (989) 724-6796.

CrossRoads Recovery, a faith-based addiction program, will meet at 7 p.m. at Greenbush Community Baptist Church, 2430 S. State Street, Greenbush. For more information, contact Paster Caincross at (989) 569-1298.

### 2024

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 2

The Alcona County Baby Pantry is open from 4 to 6 p.m. at St. Raphael Church, 2531 E. F-30, Mikado. Alcona County residents with newborns through age four are eligible and welcome. This is not an income-based program. There is free formula, diapers, toys and new and gently used clothes and shoes. Layettes are available in the eighth month.

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

The Alcona County Baby Pantry is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Raphael

Church, 2531 E. F-30, Mikado. Alcona County residents with newborns through age four are eligible and welcome. This is not an income-based program. There is free formula, diapers, toys and new and gently used clothes and shoes. Layettes are available in the eighth month.

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

Alcona County’s Golden Grocery Giveaway will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Lincoln Senior Center, 205 Church Street, Lincoln. (If schools are closed due to weather, distribution will be rescheduled.)

*(Editor’s Note: Entries for Calendar are always welcome. The deadline is Friday at noon. They will be published in chronological order as space allows. Entries should be turned in at least two weeks prior to the date of the event. Events sponsored by businesses or individuals to make a profit or governmental units for meeting notification are not eligible for this free public service. Sorry, bingo, garage sales, raffle ticket sales, or political campaigning information is not eligible.)*



## Local Notes



### Senior Menu

The following meals will be served at 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday at the Lincoln Senior Center, 207 Church Street, Lincoln. Reservations are required by 11 a.m. each day by calling (989) 334-3466.

- Monday, January 1, 2024: Closed.
- Tuesday, Jan. 2: Spaghetti and meatballs, peas and onions, peaches.
- Wednesday, Jan. 3: Chicken stew, biscuits, three-bean salad, pears.
- Thursday, Jan. 4: Pork chop and apple sauce, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, mandarin oranges.

All meals include milk, bread and butter according to guidelines. Menu is subject to change due to food availability. A donation of \$6 for folks under 60 and \$3 for those over 60 is welcome. For home delivered meals, call by 8 a.m. Monday through Thursday.

### Cub Scout Recruitment

Cub Scout Pack 913 of Alcona County welcomes boys in kindergarten through fifth grade to join. Meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday each month at 6 p.m. at the Alcona Masonic Lodge 292, 316 East Traverse Bay Road, Lincoln. Contact Shawn Bineau, Cubmaster, (248) 303-4454.

The pack raised money this year by selling popcorn, bottle and can recycling and individuals and families made donations. All of which are much appreciated by the scouts and helped fund their activities and training pro-

gram for adults to become leaders and contributors to their community, while having fun.

### Paper Airplane Contest

The Great Sunrise Side Paper Airplane Contest will be held at the Kalitta Aircraft Maintenance Facility on the grounds of the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Community Airport on Saturday, Dec. 30. The competition is from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Top prize is \$100, second place is \$50, and third place is \$26. Each winner also gets a free airplane flight.

• Competitors must be present to win and must have submitted an entry form, signed by a parent or guardian to “OYES” at 206 East Park Street, Oscoda, Mich. 48750, not later than Friday, Dec. 29. Forms may be mailed, or hand delivered to the old-style box in front of 206 East Park Street, Oscoda, Mich. 48750.

• Competitors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, or another adult holding a legal power of attorney to supervise the competitor at the competition.

• Competitors will be provided with an 8.5 by 11 inch sheet of paper to fold into a paper airplane. Only the paper provided may be used.

• No additional materials may be included in the paper airplane, the paper may only be folded and cannot be cut, glued, taped, or torn. Planes will be marked.

• Competitors may launch up to two paper airplanes.

• Competitors may only launch the airplanes they

have constructed.

• Airplanes will be judged solely on the straight-line distance achieved from the launching line (not from the actual point of launch).

Applications may be requested from [mapesni@aol.com](mailto:mapesni@aol.com).

### Youth Council Grants

The Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan (CFNEM) Board of Trustees recently approved \$24,641 in a new round of youth-related NEMYAC grants covering a four-county area that includes Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Presque Isle counties.

New NEMYAC grants awarded to Alcona County are as follows:

• Alcona Community Schools received \$1,800 to support the Alcona High School ESports program.

• Alcona Community Schools received \$780 to support the Alcona Community School weight room equipment updates project.

• Alcona Community Schools received \$500 to support the Alcona Dungeons and Dragons project.

• Alcona Community Schools received \$500 to support the Alcona Toolcats 5525 Robotics Team project.

• Alcona Community Schools received \$420 to support the GNS1 - American S•

The next opportunity for grants is through the CFNEM Community Impact Grants and the next cycle of the NEMYAC Grants. Applications for both grant opportunities are due on January 15, 2024, and can be found at [cfnem.org](http://cfnem.org).

# Tigers get blowout wins over Tawas, Joburg

**By Ben Murphy**  
Sports Writer

Playing in their final contest of the calendar year, the Alcona varsity boys basketball team got lopsided home win over Tawas on Thursday, Dec. 21.

The Tigers took down the Braves in the non-league battle, 66-29.

"Excellent defensive effort lead to a nice win to start Christmas break," said head coach Alex Cole. "I am proud of the work that these guys have put in at that end to the court. Offensively, Garrett Somers could not be stopped. He had a very efficient night with great shots in the flow of the offense."

Somers buried two threes in the first quarter and had eight points in the frame. Jacob Renschenski added four points in the stanza, as it was 17-5 after one.

In the second quarter, Somers had a three-pointer and an and-one play, while David Sharboneau added four points, as it was a 33-18 Tiger advantage at the half.

Sharboneau, Collin Walker and Somers all had four points in the third quarter, with Alcona claiming a 47-27 lead entering the fourth.

Somers hit four threes on the night and finished with 25 points. Sharboneau net-

ted 10 points. Walker put in nine. Jordan Benac scored seven. Evan Borsvold tallied six points. Renschenski had five points, and two points each for Carter Upper and Cayden Hebert.

On Monday, Dec. 18 Alcona won a non-league game at Johannesburg-Lewiston, on a score of 53-34.

"After a very slow start and a poor shooting night, the guys were able to dig deep on defense and get a win," Cole said. "Our big guys, Evan, Jake and Collin, could not be stopped inside which helped carry us to the end."

After a woeful first quarter, Alcona was behind 14-4. Renschenski had a pair of and-one plays in the second and hit for eight points. Ricky Schott drilled a three in the frame as well, as Alcona was able to take a 24-18 lead at the half. They held on to that advantage entering the fourth, 40-24.

Renschenski finished with 14 points. Borsvold added 13 and Somers scored eight. Sharboneau made seven points. Benac added four, Schott scored three points and, getting two each, was Walker and Sam Johnston.

Alcona (6-3 overall) returns to play on January 5, 2024 for the North Star League Big Dipper opener at Whittemore-Prescott.

## Gifts

Continued from page 1

fided that one individual just stole her heart by how enamored she was with her," Redlawsk said.

To protect their privacy, their location or the name of the homes are not mentioned to the public.

The Harrisville International Lions Club, formerly a men's club, began accepting women members about a year and a half ago. Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month, except for January when it is held on the second Monday at The Red Fork Restaurant in Greenbush. For more information about the Harrisville International Lions Club call Ken Chamberlain, (989) 724-6462.

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### Super Crossword

**Answers**

NSFW	SHIV	OLDPRO	DUDE
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PERFORMAN	CEPIECE	DOGG	
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ETD	CENTRAL	DIVISION	
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DOUBLE	PORTION	BLEU	
MATEYS	USA	SOUTERI	
STS	SUN	SLIGHT	TESTBIT
RALPHS	ACME	ALOFT	
ELECTRONIC	COMPONENT		
EXILE	AIDE	SPENDS	
SPEAKING	PART	TAB	PRE
POST	NAY	TIRS	BAYRUM
INTS	MARKET	SEGMENT	
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- Brenda Weaver

Sources: [garden.org](http://garden.org), [davesgarden.com](http://davesgarden.com)

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### Writing Letters to the Editor

The Alcona County Review welcomes Letters to the Editor so readers can express their opinion or draw attention to local, regional or state issues. However, letters on national topics will not be accepted.

- Letters to the editor must be signed with a first and last name and include an address and phone number where the author can be reached for confirmation or questions during regular business hours. **Unsigned letters will not be published.**

- Letters must address the editor -- not government, the community, organizations or the authors of previously published letters.

- **Letters should be no longer than 300 words.** Inappropriate content will be deleted and letters will run on a space available basis.

- This forum is not intended as a thank you section for groups and organizations. **Thank yous are considered personal messages and therefore advertising.** Drop off letters to the Alcona County Review office at 111 Lake Street, Harrisville; mail to P.O. Box 548, Harrisville, Mich. 48740; or e-mail using plain text format to [editor@alconareview.com](mailto:editor@alconareview.com).

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# The season of procrastination

**By Gregg Schefferly**  
*Outdoor Writer*

Here we are with the end of the year just around the corner. Motivation this time of year for the outdoorsman isn't always the easiest. The shorter, overcast, dreary days certainly don't help.

If you didn't get a buck, but want to put some meat away for winter, the clock is ticking with the end of year looming.

When I was younger, I'd go out to shoot a deer, and when the opportunity presented itself, I'd shoot a doe and get after it. I've found that as I age, there are times when I have a deer in front of me and start thinking about all the work that'll result from squeezing that trigger; and I let the deer pass. Putting it off for another day, on which I'll feel up to the work at hand.

In addition to time and mood, we also have to consider the weather. Who would have thought we'd have to consider that in December. Whether you process the deer right away or like to leave it hang for a few days, I always look at the weather forecast before I go hunting to put up meat for winter.

While some hunters bagged some incredible bucks this past gun season, it wasn't in the cards for my wife and me. The opener was a bit strange with temps in the 50s and the sun shining, it was a beautiful day to be in the woods, just not the best conditions for bagging a big buck. Even though I didn't bag a buck, my experience on the opener was incredible and very satisfying.

I hunt from an elevated stand overlooking a marsh, which provides opportunities to see some pretty cool stuff. This year was no exception. Looking to the north, I saw not one, but three, otter headed in my direction porpoising in unison. Before I could get my camera turned on, the otter dove and split up, entering the pond as they started fishing.

While trying to get some pictures or video of them, the otter decided to harass a bunch of mallards out in front of me. As I was posed to snap a picture of the first otter to surface, I was surprised to see two bald eagles swoop down on the flock of ducks. This time my camera was ready and I managed to get a



## Exploring the Outdoors

*By Gregg Schefferly*

few cool pictures of the eagles and ducks. (No ducks were harmed during the filming.)

If that wasn't incredible enough, about 45 minutes later, I looked out in front of the blind at an abandoned beaver lodge and there were all three otter sunning themselves. This time I was able to get a couple minutes of video. This, along with seeing the eagles attempt at a mallard dinner, made for an unforgettable opener.

So, here we are, late December, and we still need venison for burger and salami. One thing we must be conscious and careful of is that the bucks start losing their antlers this time of year. Nothing can hurt future opportunities more than shooting one after it's lost its antlers.

I've heard of a few successful hunters who hung in there and managed to bag a late season buck with the smoke-pole. One of which was my nephew, Cody Franklin, who

spent a lot of time doing pre-season scouting and locating a trophy buck on public land. He hunted it during the rifle season to no avail, almost gave up on it, but decided to give it another shot and good thing he did.

He bagged this beautiful trophy 10-point whitetail buck during the muzzleloader season.

If you need a late season doe, the window is closing on the 2023 season, so stop procrastinating, it's now or never. Get out and get yourself some healthy table fare, while the getting is good.

Good luck and happy New Year!

*(Gregg Schefferly grew up and spent the majority of his life in northeastern Michigan. With the lakes and forests as his playground, he has spent more than 40 years hunting, fishing, and trapping. Feel free to contact him or send him pictures at northwriter@hotmail.com.)*



Pictured with this beautiful 10-point buck is three generations of hunters, on the left is Cody's father, Terry Franklin, Cody, and his grandfather, Dick Schefferly.

## Americanisms



"Wisdom is never on the menu, you have to own the restaurant."  
—Carrie Latet

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# Viruses are on the rise again locally, across Michigan

**By Mary Weber**  
Staff Writer

'Tis the season to be sneezing, or so the saying goes.

This year, however, the number of viruses affecting Alcona County and residents throughout Michigan is rising, particularly COVID and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

Alcona Health Center Associate Medical Director Bernie O'Brien, a physician assistant, said currently their clinics in Alcona and Alpena are requiring masks to be worn in their facilities due to the rise in viruses.

He explained that RSV is a very common virus that makes its way through communities every year. "Normally, we all get RSV by the time we are two years old, and we can get it again and again throughout our lives. Typically, the symptoms are

mild similar to the common cold with stuffed up nose, cough, and fever," O'Brien said.

He said most of the public recovers from RSV but for infants, health-compromised individuals and the elderly the virus could turn deadly.

District Health Department No. 2 Medical Director Dr. Mark Hamad, explained all viruses are on the rise this year, as compared to last.

"COVID gets more people hospitalized than RSV. Both are airborne respiratory viruses, so they have the same transmission through coughing and sneezing," Hamad said.

He explained that while they haven't seen a rise in hospitalizations with RSV yet, the number of cases is rising throughout Michigan, especially from the thumb area up through District No. 2 which

includes Alcona, Iosco, Oscoda and Ogemaw counties.

"Right now, we have triple the amount of cases for COVID hospitalized as compared to last year. I'm an ER doctor too, so I'm seeing that directly," Hamad said.

Hamad said similar common-sense protocols that were used during the first outbreak of COVID in 2020 should be reinstated such as washing hands often, staying home when sick and wearing a mask if you must go out while ill.

"It worked amazingly well. The first of 2020 we saw very little RSV, strep throat and influenza because everyone was staying home doing what they were supposed to be doing. Now, we let our guard down and it is back to full force," he said.

Luckily, vaccines are also in place for COVID and RSV for babies, pregnant mothers and the elderly.

"The RSV vaccines are relatively new, but they are safe and effective and could save lives," Hamad said. He explained most health departments, hospitals and major pharmacies carry the vaccines, although some may have a limited amount of the newborn and pregnant mothers' vaccine.

"I see it all the time in the ER. Previously healthy young kids coming down with RSV. A lot of it starts at school and day cares where it gets spread. Little kids hug each other, it happens, and it's all innocent. The thing is to keep a child at home if they are sick.

"It's scary stuff. Symptoms

of RSV can vary. Sometimes just a fever or some breathing issues. It's rare, but sick children after any viral or bacterial infection are at risk for multisystem inflammatory disease syndrome where their whole body is inflamed, and their system begins to shut down.

"In adults and older children, symptoms of RSV can

be as mild as a runny nose. Most children get through RSV just fine, but their siblings may not fare so well through it, especially very young babies whose lungs are not developed yet.

"It affects the elderly (hard), especially those with chronic lung issues such as COPD or

Continued on page 12

## Local toddler recovers from RSV scare

**By Mary Weber**  
Staff Writer

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) can come on suddenly with mild flu-like symptoms, but it can escalate quickly and significantly in vulnerable populations including infants/toddlers, along with health compromised and elderly individuals.

The effects of it left one local family reeling after almost losing their one-and-a-half-year-old toddler to RSV. Thankfully, quick thinking action by the child's father, a 9-1-1 operator and some motherly intuition, Mylah Clink is happily dancing and giggling today.

Leslie and Rob Clink, parents of four children, never saw it on the horizon that RSV would affect their family so devastatingly, especially in Mylah. According to Leslie, of all her children Mylah has always been the healthiest.

"I noticed the day before she was tested when I was bathing her that she just wasn't herself. She seemed tired, she wasn't laughing and playing with the bubbles like she normally does. When I put her down for the night, she had a slight fever.

"We gave her Tylenol and the fever would go down. The next day her fever shot up again, so we went to the doctor. She tested positive for RSV. She had no other symptoms at all except for the intermittent fever. I was advised that RSV is highly contagious and since I work for the school system, I should go home with her and stay there for five days," Leslie said. Leslie is an assistant teacher at Alcona Community School.

On her way home from the doctor, Leslie called Rob to inform him of the diagnosis. Rob, who is a police



Mylah Clink resting during the Emergency Room visit. *Courtesy photos.*

officer for Iosco Township (Oscoda), said he was thinking about going home too because he wasn't feeling well. Leslie asked him to get tested first, which he did. Rob did not test positive for RSV, instead, he tested positive for COVID. Two very different viruses. He was advised to go home.

"I brought Mylah home and gave her more Tylenol. She was tired. I normally put her to bed for her naps, but something told me to hold her in the recliner instead," Leslie said.

While holding her, Mylah began to shiver. Leslie thought it was a result of fever, but then Mylah began to convulse. "Her eyes were in the back of her head and she had bubbles coming out of her mouth. I called 9-1-1. I was really losing it, I was screaming and crying, but the 9-1-1 operator kept informing me what I needed to do. The seizure stopped but Mylah was lifeless, she wasn't breathing and her lips were turning blue. "I thought my baby was gone. It was the scariest moment of my life. Luckily that was when Rob got home," Leslie said.

Having joined an Alcona County fire department in

Continued on page 12

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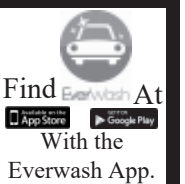
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# What is the retirement saver's credit and how does it work?

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you explain to me how the retirement saver's tax credit works? My wife and I are in our fifties and are looking for creative ways to boost our retirement savings beyond our 401(k). Is this something we may be eligible for?

Struggling to Save

Dear Struggling,

If your income is low to moderate and you participate in your employer-sponsored retirement plan or an IRA, the Retirement Savings Contribution Credit (aka "Saver's Credit") is a frequently overlooked tool that can help boost your retirement savings even more. Here's how it works.

If you contribute to a retirement-savings account like a traditional or Roth IRA, 401(k), 403(b), 457, Thrift Savings Plan, Simplified Employee Pension or SIMPLE plan, the Saver's Credit will allow you to claim 10, 20 or 50 percent of your contribution of up to \$4,000 per year for couples or \$2,000 for singles.

Keep in mind that a credit is not the same as a tax deduction – it's better: While a tax deduction just reduces the amount of your income that is subject to taxes, a tax credit reduces your actual tax bill dollar-for-dollar.

To qualify, you must also be at least 18 years old and not a full-time student and were not claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax return. And your adjusted gross income (AGI) in 2023 must be below \$73,000 or less as a married couple filing jointly, \$54,750 or less if filing as head of household, or \$36,500 or less if you're a single filer. These income limits are adjusted annually to keep pace with inflation.

To get the 50 percent credit, you'll need to have an income below \$43,500 for married couples filing jointly; \$32,625 if you're filing as head of household; and \$21,750 if you're a single filer in 2023.

The 20 percent credit rate applies to couples earning between \$43,501 to \$47,500; for head of household filers it's \$32,626 to \$35,625; and for individuals it's \$21,751 to \$23,750.

And the 10 percent rate is for couples with an adjusted gross income between \$47,501 and \$73,000; for head of household filers \$35,626 to \$54,750; and individuals it's between \$23,751 and \$36,500.

Here's an example of how this works. Let's say that you and your wife earned \$75,000 in 2023. Over the course of the year, you contributed \$4,000 to your employer's 401(k) plan. After deducting your 401(k) contribution, your adjusted gross income (AGI) on your joint return is now \$71,000. Since your AGI puts you in the 10 percent credit bracket, and you've contributed the \$4,000 maximum that can be considered for the credit, you are entitled to a \$400 Saver's Credit on your tax return.

It's also worth mentioning that the Saver's Credit is in addition to any other tax ben-

efits you get for your retirement contributions. So, in the previous example, not only would you be entitled to a \$400 credit, but you would also be able to exclude the \$4,000 401(k) contribution from your taxable income. So, if you're in the 12 percent tax bracket, this translates to an additional \$480 in savings, for a total of \$880.

## How to Claim

To claim the Saver's Credit, you will need to fill out Form 8880 (see [IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8880.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8880.pdf)) and attach it to your Form 1040 or 1040NR when you file your tax return.

For more information on the Saver's Credit, see IRS Publication 590-A "Contributions to Individual Retirement Arrangements" ([IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p590a.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p590a.pdf)).

The IRS also offers an online quiz you can take to help you determine if you qualify for the Saver's Credit. To access it go to [IRS.gov/Help/ITA](https://www.irs.gov/Help/ITA) – click on "Do I Qualify for the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit?" under the "Credits" tab.

Dear Savvy Senior,

I'm interested in contributing to a health savings account to help boost my retirement savings but would like to better understand how they work. What can you tell me?

Almost 60

Dear Almost,

A health savings account, or HSA, is a fantastic financial tool that can help you build up a tax-free stash of money for medical expenses now and after you retire. But to qualify, you must be en-

rolled in a high-deductible health insurance plan. Here's an overview of how they work and how you can open one.

## Health Saving Account Rules

HSAs have become very popular over the past few years as the cost of health care continues to skyrocket, and because more and more Americans have high-deductible health plans.

The great benefit of a HSA is the triple tax advantage that it offers: Your HSA contributions can be deducted pretax from your paycheck, lowering your taxable income; the money in the account grows tax-free; and if you use the money for eligible medical expenses, withdrawals are tax-free.

And if you change jobs, the HSA moves with you.

To qualify, you must have a health insurance policy with a deductible of at least \$1,500 for an individual or \$3,000 for a family in 2023. In 2024, the deductible rises to \$1,600/individual or \$3,200/family.

This year, you can contribute up to \$3,850 if you have single health insurance coverage, or up to \$7,750 for family coverage. Next year (2024) you can contribute significantly more – up to \$4,150 for single coverage or up to \$8,300 for family coverage. And people age 55 and older can put away an extra \$1,000 each year. But you cannot make contributions after you sign up for Medicare.

The money can be used for out-of-pocket medical expenses, including deductibles, co-payments, Medicare



Savvy Senior

premiums, prescription drugs, vision and dental care and other expenses (see [IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p502.pdf), page 5, for a complete list) either now or when you retire for yourself and your spouse as well as your tax dependents.

Unlike a flexible spending account, an HSA doesn't require you to use the money by the end of the year. Rather, HSA funds roll over year to year and continue to grow tax-free in your HSA account for later use.

In fact, you'll get a bigger tax benefit if you use other cash for current medical expenses and keep the HSA money growing for the long term. Be sure to hold on to your receipts for medical expenses after you open your HSA, even if you pay those bills with cash, so you can claim the expenses later.

There's no time limit for withdrawing the money tax-free for eligible medical expenses you incurred any time after you opened the account.

But be aware that if you do use your HSA funds for non-medical expenses, you'll be required to pay taxes on the withdrawal, plus a 20 percent penalty. The penalty, however, is waived for those 65 and older, but you'll still

pay ordinary income tax on withdrawals not used for eligible expenses.

## How to Open a HSA

You should first check with your employer to see if they offer a HSA, and if they will contribute to it. If not, you can open an HSA through many banks, brokerage firms and other financial institutions, as long as you have a qualified high-deductible health insurance policy.

If you plan to keep the money growing for the future, look for an HSA administrator that offers a portfolio of mutual funds for long-term investing and has low fees. Some of the top-rated HSA providers in 2023 are Lively, HealthEquity, OptumBank, Fidelity, HSA Bank and Bank of America.

After setting up your HSA plan, adding money is pretty straightforward. Most plans let you do online transfers from your bank, send checks directly, or set up a payroll deduction if offered by your employer. To access your HSA funds many plans provide a debit card and most allow for reimbursement.

(Send your senior questions to: *Savvy Senior*, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, Okla. 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](https://www.SavvySenior.org).)



## Buggy Rides



### Former Alcona boy now police chief

Son of Hawes Farmer Heads Duluth Force

**December 27, 1923** ~ Many readers of the Review will be interested in the appointment of E. R. Barber, son of Eustache Barber of Hawes Township, to the important position of Chief of Police of the city of Duluth, Minn.

Leu. Barber's advancement came as the result of a general shake-up in the city's police department during which the commissioner of public safety and the chief of police resigned.

The city council at once elected a new commissioner, who immediately appointed the Alcona County boy to the head of the force.

A Duluth newspaper says, "The appointment of Lieut. E. H. Barber as chief of police appears to meet with satisfac-

tion among citizens. This feeling of satisfaction is wholly apparent among the members of the police force, because of the elevation of one of their own numbers to the head of the department."

Chief Barber is not a native of Duluth but has spent most of his life in the city. He was born in White Lake, Ont., on January 26, 1879. He became a member of the Duluth police force April 5, 1902, following two years of service on the Duluth street railway system as conductor. His police career follows: Transferred to mounted patrolman, June 1, 1902; transferred back to patrolman Feb. 1, 1903; promoted to sergeant, June 12, 1909; appointed to headquarters' desk Dec. 1, 1913; promoted to lieutenant, April 16,

1914; detailed to the detective squad Jan. 1, 1916; assigned to command of the West Duluth station, Aug. 1, 1920; transferred to headquarters in command nights, Dec. 1, 1920; placed in command of purity squad, Aug. 15, 1921; transferred to detective squad, June 7, 1922; appointed chief of the department, Dec. 20, 1923.

He and his wife have a family of four boys and live at 1117 East Tenth Street.

"What's going to happen?" The new chief echoed a question. "We'll just 'saw wood' and attend to this job of policing the city of Duluth just as any good, efficient police force would do. No drastic changes in the force or anything spectacular—just good police."

### Children enjoy Lions Club party

**December 23, 1948** ~ About 150 children gathered at the Harrisville Auditorium Wednesday night for the Lions Club annual Christmas Party. A full program of fun had been planned for the kiddies. Pictures were shown by H. S. Cuyler, and four comic reels were shown by Mr. Frechette. J. Russell Hughes gave impersonations in a guessing contest, and the assembled group sang Christmas carols with S. K. Erickson directing and K. L. Fisher at the piano.

Hot dogs and rolls, pop and ice cream - all they could eat were served by Lions Club members. Santa also arrived and gave each child a box of candy nuts and peanuts. A happy time was had by both young and old.

Dan Quick, Owner,

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Fax: 989-471-2291

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# Trivia Test

By Fifi Rodriguez

1. **GEOGRAPHY:** In which city is the Brandenburg Gate located?
2. **TELEVISION:** Which 1990s TV show catapulted actor George Clooney to fame?
3. **MOVIES:** Which department store is featured in the 1947 holiday film, "Miracle on 34th Street"?
4. **LEGAL:** What kind of legislative body is bicameral?
5. **FOOD & DRINK:** What is the main ingredient in guacamole?
6. **LITERATURE:** In "The Night Before Christmas" poem, how many reindeer does Santa Claus have?
7. **CHEMISTRY:** Which chemical element's symbol is C?
8. **HISTORY:** Who is the first female chancellor of Germany?
9. **MUSIC:** Which female French singer had a hit song with "La Vie en Rose"?
10. **SCIENCE:** When did the Krakatoa volcano have its last major eruption?

Answers: 1. Berlin, Germany.; 2. "ER."; 3. Macy's.; 4. A legislative body with two chambers, like House and Senate.; 5. Avocado.; 6. Eight.; 7. Carbon.; 8. Angela Merkel.; 9. Edith Piaf.; 10. 1883. (c) 2023 King Features Synd., Inc.

## Moments In Time

By The History Channel

- On Jan. 8, 1310, near the beginning of the Little Ice Age, when average temperatures around the world dropped by as much as 3.6 F (particularly in Europe and North America), the Thames River in London froze so thickly that bonfires were lit on it.
- On Jan. 9, 1768, British former cavalry Sergeant Major Philip Astley staged the first modern circus after discovering that if he galloped in a tight circle, centrifugal force would allow him to perform seemingly impossible acts on horseback. He drew up a ring and invited the public to watch him wave his sword in the air while riding with one foot on his saddle and one on his horse's head.
- On Jan. 10, 1845, poets Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning began the correspondence that would eventually lead to their secret courtship and marriage, which Elizabeth's father disapproved of so strongly that he disowned her. The couple then fled England for Italy, where they would live for 15 years until Barrett's death.
- On Jan. 11, 1915, Jacob Ruppert and Colonel Tillinghast Huston purchased the New York Yankees for \$450,000. Ruppert put up his share of the sale in cash, and within a decade had built Yankee Stadium, acquired baseball legend Babe Ruth, and won the first of the franchise's World Series titles.

- On Jan. 12, 1948, pacifist and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi began his final fast. Eighteen days later, he was assassinated by Hindu nationalist Nathuram Godse while on his way to address a prayer meeting.
- On Jan. 13, 1976, American inventor Ray Kurzweil and the National Federation of the Blind debuted the Kurzweil Reading Machine, the first omnifont optical character recognition system, which converts print to speech.
- On Jan. 14, 2004, the national flag of Georgia, also known as "the five-cross flag," was returned to official use for the first time in five centuries. Originally a banner of the medieval Kingdom of Georgia, it became popular again in the late 20th and early 21st centuries during the country's national revival.

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## Strange But True

By Lucie Winborne

- In 1837, Thomas Saverland took Caroline Newton to court for biting off part of his nose after he forcibly kissed her at a party.
- The original Xbox had sound snippets of real space missions.
- Korean college students once launched a protest against the amount of air in potato chip bags by building a raft out of them and sailing it across a river.
- When Michael Orchard broke into his neighbor's burning home to rescue their dog, his heart was in the right place but his timing wasn't: The house fire was merely his LSD-induced hallucination.
- Frozen cow manure was the first-ever puck used in a hockey game.
- The word "thug" comes from 1350s India and the Hindi word "thag," which means "deceiver" or "thief" or "swindler."
- Ten thousand light years away from Earth, a huge cloud 1,000 times larger than our solar system's diameter contains enough alcohol to fill 400 trillion pints. To drink it all, everyone on Earth would have to drink 300,000 pints each day for 1 billion years.
- A violin known as "the Blackbird," carved entirely from stone, produces sound comparable to traditional wooden violins.
- Research has shown that people born in September, October and November are more likely to live 100 years or longer.
- Much like humans, chimpanzees use strategic high ground for reconnaissance on rival groups during "chimp warfare."

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Every day the clock resets. Your wins don't matter. Your failures don't matter. Don't stress on what was, fight for what could be." -- Sean Higgins

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## CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: X equals T

VLXXLSI ILZX XP NMSR QULVVLSI  
MAPBX WPSILI XWMX IXPJ MZQ  
SLNBIL XP FLLJ UMFVHZT:  
AMVF RMHV.

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## Super Crossword

### FORGET THE WHOLE THING

- |   |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p><b>ACROSS</b></p> <p>1 Warning about a racy web pic</p> <p>5 "West Side Story" knife</p> <p>9 Seasoned vet</p> <p>15 Bro</p> <p>19 French for "yours"</p> <p>20 Treat for feet, for short</p> <p>21 Pope after Marcellus II</p> <p>22 Scads</p> <p>23 RFORM</p> <p>26 Rapper Snoop —</p> <p>27 Variety show hosts, e.g.</p> <p>28 ACLU interests: Abbr.</p> <p>29 Farming unit</p> <p>31 Pasty luau food</p> <p>32 Flight takeoff abbr.</p> <p>33 NTR</p> <p>38 "Peek- —!"</p> <p>40 Classic comic Martha</p> <p>41 Uplifting poems</p> <p>42 Place full of video games</p> <p>43 UBL</p> <p>46 Chicken cordon —</p> <p>47 British chums</p> <p>48 Stars and Stripes' nation</p> | <p>49 —'wester (certain storm)</p> <p>50 "Oh, God!" actress Garr</p> <p>54 Cousins of aves.</p> <p>55 Name of some newspapers</p> <p>57 GHTE</p> <p>62 Actors Fiennes and Macchio</p> <p>65 Very top</p> <p>66 Flying</p> <p>67 TRONI</p> <p>72 Cast out of the country</p> <p>73 Official helper</p> <p>74 Pays out</p> <p>75 EAKI</p> <p>79 Diner check</p> <p>80 Start for existing</p> <p>83 Name of some newspapers</p> <p>84 Vetoer's vote</p> <p>85 U.S. tax org.</p> <p>88 Aromatic aftershave liquid</p> <p>90 QBs' blunders: Abbr.</p> <p>92 RKE</p> <p>96 Person doing a crossword puzzle, e.g.</p> <p>99 Outer limit</p> | <p>100 Chimney grime</p> <p>101 Great serves</p> <p>102 HEER</p> <p>105 2000-15 CBS series</p> <p>106 Writer Rand</p> <p>107 Blood type, in brief</p> <p>108 Total</p> <p>109 Wakes up</p> <p>112 Writer Uris</p> <p>114 NTEN</p> <p>119 Peel, as fruit</p> <p>120 Excited response to "Who wants ice cream?"</p> <p>121 Cozy corner</p> <p>122 Pierce player Alan</p> <p>123 Cast off hair</p> <p>124 Swan constellation</p> <p>125 Forest sight</p> <p>126 Saclike growth</p> | <p>8 Wine merchants</p> <p>9 Unlock, in poems</p> <p>10 Resting place for a napkin</p> <p>11 Drinker's hwy. offense</p> <p>12 Implores</p> <p>13 Christina of "Bel Ami"</p> <p>14 Put too high a price on</p> <p>15 Papa</p> <p>16 Perfect world</p> <p>17 Be charitable</p> <p>18 Gas guzzler</p> <p>24 Multivolume U.K. lexicon</p> <p>25 Chicago winter hrs.</p> <p>30 Blarney Stone's land</p> <p>33 Mushroom feature</p> <p>34 King, in Lyon</p> <p>35 Hubbub</p> <p>36 Novelist Deighton</p> <p>37 Runs furtively with short, quick steps</p> <p>38 Heads of fleets: Abbr.</p> <p>39 Regatta entry</p> <p>40 Upshot</p> <p>44 Evan of figure skating</p> <p>45 Univ. helpers</p> <p>46 Web automaton</p> | <p>49 Brother of Moe and Curly</p> <p>51 Deep black, in poems</p> <p>52 Break in friendship</p> <p>53 Hairy TV cousin</p> <p>56 "Science Friday" ailer</p> <p>58 Person tying shoes</p> <p>59 Onetime transportation agcy.</p> <p>60 Foods created by biotech</p> <p>61 Flood-prevention sack</p> <p>62 One sharing your blood</p> <p>63 Songwriter Carmichael</p> <p>64 Salon noise</p> <p>67 Large-scale public show</p> <p>68 Untrue tales</p> <p>69 Neighbor of Mont.</p> <p>70 Caress</p> <p>71 How money may be lost</p> <p>72 Sci-fi gift</p> <p>76 Belonging naturally</p> <p>77 "One Mic" rapper</p> | <p>78 "— ToK" (#1 hit for Kesha)</p> <p>80 On the nose</p> <p>81 Viking letter</p> <p>82 Rescue crew VIPs</p> <p>86 Occupant</p> <p>87 Represented</p> <p>89 Peruvian singer with a wide range</p> <p>91 Notorious emperor</p> <p>92 OR workers</p> <p>93 Rust may be a sign of it</p> <p>94 DVR remote abbr.</p> <p>95 Cain, to Eve</p> <p>96 Hair-raising sites?</p> <p>97 "Is that so?"</p> <p>98 Poe's "radiant maiden"</p> <p>99 Yuletide quaff</p> <p>103 Destitute</p> <p>104 Tic- — -toe</p> <p>105 Gear tooth</p> <p>109 Yard tool</p> <p>110 Outer limits</p> <p>111 Sports datum</p> <p>113 TV neighbor of Homer</p> <p>115 Pewter, mostly</p> <p>116 Univ. website suffix</p> <p>117 Vetoers' votes</p> <p>118 Rival of Wade</p> |
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# Kovels: Antiques and Collecting

By Terry and Kim Kovel

## Utilitarian art

Collectors know that the line between artistic and utilitarian objects is not always clearly drawn. This large, glazed earthenware plate with two stylized faces in profile sold at a Rago auction for \$3,120. At that price, it's more likely to go on display than on the dinner table!

The plate was designed by Viktor Schreckengost for Cowan Pottery in Rocky River, Ohio. Schreckengost worked for Cowan in 1930 until the pottery closed in 1931. He designed Cowan's famous Jazz Bowl with blue and black art deco designs that create a stylized New York cityscape.

The Jazz Bowl is an art piece, but Schreckengost created plenty of practical and utilitarian items, too. He designed dinnerware for Limoges China Company, Salem China Company, Onondaga Pottery and others. Beyond ceramics, he designed chairs, vehicles, toy pedal cars, oscillating fans, radar for pilots and more.

Q: I have my late grandfather's old trumpet. It's engraved "Emperor, Made by Boosey & Hawkes, London, Made in England." Where can I get someone to tell me what it is worth?

A: Boosey & Hawkes started in 1930 when Boosey & Company and Hawkes &



Viktor Schreckengost worked Cowan briefly and created some of their most memorable designs. This earthenware plate shows the art deco style of the early 1930s. Photo Courtesy of kovels.com

Son merged. Both companies made musical instruments and were music publishers. Boosey & Hawkes made musical instruments until 2003, when it sold that part of its business to The Music Group. The company still publishes music. The value of the trumpet depends on the desirability of the instrument, the type of metal, tone quality and condition. Take the trumpet

to a music store that sells used musical instruments to see if they can give you a value. If you intend to sell the trumpet, it's a good idea to take it to more than one music store to get the value. Remember, they will offer you less than what they can sell it for since they need to make a profit.

TIP: Old clocks should be

oiled every four to six years and cleaned every six to eight months.

\*\*\*

### CURRENT PRICES

Toy, cement mixer, metal, bright yellow, red slide, green wheels, crank with rope lowers chute, decal, Buddy "L," 8 inches, \$150.

Lamp, pendant, Symfoni Origami style, black and white sheet iron diamonds, Preben Dal for Hans Folsgaard, Model P-018, labeled "Made in Denmark," 14 x 15 inches, \$515.

Marblehead pottery vase,

etched stylized flowers and stems, blue glaze, tapered, flared rim, marked "MP" with ship symbol, c. 1915, 3 3/4 x 4 1/2 inches, \$1,060.

Jewelry, pin, reverse painted glass, fox's head, yellow gold spiral frame, glazed compartment on reverse, Victorian, 1 7/8 inches, \$1,500.

Candy container, football player, composition, painted features, jointed arms, cloth jersey and quilted pants, black boots, holds original football, 19 inches, \$4,300.

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## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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Ads may be brought in to our office at 111 Lake St., Harrisville Cost per ad is \$5 for the first 10 words and 20¢ for each word thereafter.

Boxed ads are \$5 per column inch. Ads and payment must be received by 4 p.m. Monday.

## Call 989-724-6384

### LEGAL NOTICES

**State of Michigan  
Probate Court  
Alcona County  
Notice to Creditors  
Decedent's Estate  
Case No. 23-6413-DE**

Court address  
106 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Harrisville, Mich. 48740  
Court telephone No.  
(989) 724-9490  
Estate of Margaret Ann Cowdin  
Date of birth: March 7, 1940  
To all creditors:  
Notice to creditors: The decedent, Margaret Ann Cowdin, died August 19, 2023.  
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to William Andrew Cowdin, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 106 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Harrisville, Mich. 48740 and the personal representative within four months after the date of publication of this notice.  
Date: December 27, 2023  
David H. Cook, P40560  
Attorney  
5466 M-72  
Harrisville, Mich. 48740  
(989) 724-5155  
William Andrew Cowdin  
Personal representative  
34508 Ramble Hills Drive

**State of Michigan  
Probate Court  
Alcona County  
Notice to Creditors  
Decedent's Estate  
Case No. 2023-6412-DE**

Court address  
106 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Harrisville, Mich. 48740  
Court telephone No.  
(989) 724-9490  
Estate of Michael Edward Hubert,  
decedent  
Date of birth: September 21, 1941  
To all creditors:  
Notice to creditors: The decedent, Michael Edward Hubert, died November 12, 2023.  
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kelly Scotti, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 106 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Harrisville, Mich. 48740 and the personal representative within four months after the date of publication of this notice.  
Date: December 27, 2023  
Steven E. Hall, P28299  
Attorney  
21800 Haggerty Road, Ste. 218  
Northville, Mich. 48167  
(248) 349-6203  
Kelly Scotti  
Personal representative  
352 Prairie Knoll Drive  
Naperville, Ill. 60565

### BIDS WANTED

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
NG 911 Call Handling  
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Alcona County Central Dispatch is seeking bids for a NG 911 Call Handling System for a 2-3 position emergency communications center. Proposed system must be able to integrate current admin SIP lines from a Mitel business phone system, support a singular headset relay system to be utilized with radio and telephone functionality, have an internal IRR playback system, support touchscreen and Genovation keypad functionality, seamlessly integrate with all other utilized systems (Interact Caliber CAD, Textty and RapidSOS), have at minimum a 5-year life span and offer remote and onsite support. No bids for cloud-based NG 911 systems are able to be entertained at this time.

Bids must include all hardware, software, training, installation, maintenance and yearly contract details and all other necessary components required to operate and maintain a 24/7/365 911 call handling system. Questions concerning IT and facility set-up can be directed to 911 Director Kathleen Bell at 989-724-0911. Sealed bids may be sent to Alcona County Central Dispatch, Attn: Director Kathleen Bell, 212 W Main St, Harrisville, MI 48740. All bids must be received by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Alcona County Central Dispatch reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularities in any proposal, and to make the award as appears to be in the best interest of Alcona County Central Dispatch. Alcona County Central Dispatch Kathleen Bell, 911 Director

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Monday at 4 p.m.  
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## Viruses Continued from page 7

asthma that may have scarring in their lungs," Hamad said. He recommended a mask be worn by elderly people in crowded places.

The best way to stop the spread is to stay home if you are sick. He also suggested people sick at home should open a window to let fresh air in to keep the virus from spreading to others.

"I'm optimistic about RSV. Right now, COVID is the one I am worrying about. The respiratory COVID I am seeing right now we don't have a lot

of antibodies for. There is triple the number of people this month on ventilators as compared to last month. This is very different from last year.

"We were worried about the triple threat last year, RSV, influenza and COVID and never got it, but I think we may be seeing it this year," Hamad said.

MyMichigan Medical Center pulmonologist Dr. Daniel Maxwell agreed with Hamad saying they were seeing a significant uptick in influenza-like illnesses which includes

Influenza A, Influenza B, RSV, COVID and other undefined viruses. He also agreed that common sense practices should be used. However, the problem with standard masking is that while it protects others around you, it doesn't protect you.

"During the entire pandemic, my office enforced a 100 percent masking rule. If everyone in the environment is wearing a mask, even a surgical mask, that's roughly the same efficacy as you are wearing an N95 mask.

"When someone doesn't wear a mask, you've broken the circle. If you are at increased risk of respiratory disease, such as lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, or kidney disease, it makes sense to wear a KN95 mask or a KA94 because those will provide a margin of protection," Maxwell said.

He cautioned the use of a standard N95 mask like health professionals wear because if the wearer hasn't been properly fit tested, it won't be as effective.

According to Maxwell there has been an increase in the school district proper, which includes not just the school children, but the adults who work at the schools. "With RSV, as with COVID, people can be minimally symptomatic and not realize they are transmitting infection," Maxwell said.

He explained that while all respiratory viruses may have similar symptoms they are separate viruses and those having COVID would only transmit the COVID virus and not transmit RSV or influenza.

"We see around 225,000 to 250,000 adults with RSV in a year in the United States. Influenza numbers are anywhere from 150,000 to 500,000. COVID is a different animal because of the timing of it.

"In terms of danger, about

15,000 people in the U.S. will die from RSV pneumonia per year. That compares with 30,000 to 65,000 that die from influenza.

"We haven't settled down on what the annual number of COVID infections is going to be. We do know that immunity has spread significantly against COVID. The mortality rate is progressively dropping and the severity of illness in general is improving.

He said because a large number of the population has been infected or vaccinated to about 99 percent we have begun, to some degree, to decrease the lethality of the virus. "That's why I think we are seeing a decrease in the severity of the virus, even though we keep seeing changes in the virus. We won't beat the virus with vaccines, we won't beat it with (herd immunity) antibodies, because it changes itself on a regular basis, we will probably always be seeing it," Maxwell said.

Symptoms that could mean hospitalization for anyone who is sick with RSV, COVID or influenza are difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, worsening cough and dehydration.

O'Brien said Alcona Health Center will continue to monitor the cases of viruses in their clinic districts and adjust masking protocols weekly as necessary.

## Toddler Continued from page 7

2006 and graduating from the police academy in 2009, Rob had the training necessary to know exactly what needed to be done. He quickly began grabbing cold water rags and draping them over his daughter.

"Between Rob doing that and the 911 operator, they had me sitting Mylah up and rubbing her chest. They told me to keep doing that and talking to her and it worked. She started coming back and making babbling noises.

Within minutes friends who are first responders and deputies were on the scene with an ambulance following close behind.

In the emergency room, Leslie was advised that al-

though Mylah was doing better and would be released, she still had RSV and her symptoms may get worse. Luckily, they didn't, and the child appears to have made a full recovery.

"I totally lost it when she began turning blue. It was truly the scariest moment of my life as a mother. I cannot thank the 9-1-1 operator enough who was able to understand me through my screaming and sobbing. I thank God for Rob coming home when he did and having the training and the ability to keep his wits about him while staring at our lifeless baby. I thank God for the others who came just seconds and minutes later and



Mylah resumes her cheerful demeanor.

helped. Having friends like that is why we love living here," Leslie said.

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