

# Lakeview Area News

Northern Montcalm and Southern Mecosta Counties' News Source

Thursday, February 22, 2018 (989) 352-5111, (989) 352-8146 Fax: (989) 352-8286 lakeviewareanewspaper.com Price \$1.00

## TOWN TOPICS

Lakeview Winterfest is this Saturday. Some activities have been moved or cancelled because of the warmer weather. However, there are many great events still taking place. Turn to pages 8 and 9 for the updated schedule.

Author John Kovak will be at Tamarack District Library tonight at 6 p.m. to discuss his book, *Through the Eyes of Rose*.

We miss Jack Newberry from Jack's Tire. We wish him the best of luck in his retirement. He retired the end of last year.

Construction is continuing on Little China. Their projected reopening is the end of April.

## VFW Pancake BREAKFAST



**SUNDAY - FEB. 25**  
9 AM - 11 AM  
**LAKEVIEW VFW**  
**POST #3701**  
8968 N GREENVILLE RD

ADULTS \$6 - 10 & UNDER \$4

& SHOWING OF  
**"MY DAYS IN VIETNAM"**  
WITH DENNY CRAYCRAFT  
**AT NOON**  
DONATIONS WILL  
BE APPRECIATED

**QUESTIONS**  
VFWPOST3701@GMAIL.COM

## Winter Forecast

Partly sunny skies for Thu. (H: 37; L: 24). Then there is a 30% chance for rain showers for Fri. (H: 40; L: 25); 80% chance for Sat. (H: 45; L: 35); and a 60% chance for Sun. (H: 42; L: 35) Partly to mostly sunny skies end the week, Mon. - Wed. (H: 45; L: 32).



## Seniors Roberts and Wood Taught Science to LMS Students



7th graders learn the anatomy of a fetal pig.

By Todd Barton

Two Lakeview High School (LHS) students lead an anatomy lesson with Lakeview Middle School students. Eve Roberts and Kenna Wood are two LHS seniors who enjoy challenging themselves in an academic setting. Both students have excelled tremendously in the science classroom as they progressed through high school. Their drive to

continuously learn, grow and develop urged them to step out of their comfort zone and take learning into their own hands.

Both students elected to undergo independent studies at LHS. Kenna is currently enrolled independently in Anatomy and Physiology under the guidance of LHS science teacher Mr. Todd Barton, while Eve is independently enrolled in Advanced Biol-

ogy under the guidance of LHS teacher Mr. Joel Orr. "It's not very often you find a senior that wants to push themselves academically, but these girls were happy to do so. It's a lot of work for us as teachers to offer an independent study, but well worth it when we see students becoming great leaders like this." commented Mr. Orr.

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## Looking Forward to a Great MIP Season

By Linda Huckins

It may still be winter, but summer is just around the corner. One of the best things about summer in Lakeview is the Music in the Park (MIP) series every Wednesday evening from July 11 through August 29. All you have to do is bring a lawn chair, sit back, and enjoy. Concerts start at 7:00 p.m. in Lakeside Park and are free.

Brothers Lou and Dallas Lincoln co-chair MIP and have booked this year's talent. Lou has hired several of the best touring groups and local favorites. The 2018 MIP Concert schedule is as follows:

July 11 - **Mulebone** is a MIP favorite. This will be their 10th performance in Lakeview, sponsored by The Winter's Corp. They are a traditional blues duo consisting of roots music specialist Hugh Pool and multi-instrumentalist John Ragusa.

July 18 - **The Fitzgeralds** is a family group consisting of fiddling and step dancing siblings Tom, Kerry & Julie Fitzgerald. They are from

just outside of Canada's renowned Ottawa Valley.

July 25 - **Guinness Brothers** is a five-piece, horn-driven classic rock, soul, blues and variety band based in West Michigan. Together for over two decades, The Guinness Brothers bring the best music from the last 40 years to their concerts.

August 1 - **The Appleseed Collective** is a progressive string swing group consisting of guitar,

violin, mandolin, washboard, percussion, upright bass and vocals. They are from Ann Arbor.

August 8 - **Free Flight** is a local band and a favorite of MIP audiences. They play a variety of music including oldies, classic rock, and blues.

August 15 - **Steel & Wood** specialize in acoustic rock reborn, rock, folk-rock, and world music. They are from Eugene, Oregon.

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Mulebone is opening this year's MIP concert series on Wednesday, July 11

## County Files Suit

By Joe Tilton

The accounting firm that Montcalm County Commissioners hired for audits and routine bookkeeping has been sued by the commissioners. Abraham & Gaffney, P.C., along with Dale Abraham, Michael Gaffney, Eric Glashouwer, Steven Kirinovic, Alan Panter, Aaron Stevens and William Tucker IV, are all named in the law suit claiming damages to the county for their actions that resulted in the financial fiasco that left the county virtually broke.

The lawsuit dated February 15, demands a jury trial and Montcalm County as the venue for the trial. The court will set the date for the trial.

Although having several closed-door meetings with attorneys for Abraham & Gaffney, the commission was not satisfied with the result and negotiations broke down. The next option is to let a jury decide. Financial damages claimed in each of the six counts "exceeds \$25,000 exclusive of interest and costs." Such damages are claimed for each of the charges. The bottom-line amount will be up to the jury.

The suit claims that the accounting firm was hired in 1996 as an auditing firm to generate reports required by Michigan Law. Furthermore, the suit claims, "This action is a direct result of the Defendants' failure to perform their auditing duties in accordance with their professional responsibilities and obligations to Montcalm." It goes on to show that the county hired Chris Hyzer from Abraham & Gaffney as the County Controller-Administrator. Because of the close relationship, "the Defendants failed to comply with the appropriate accounting and auditing standards, failed to properly review Montcalm's books, ledgers, and records, and acted with such reckless disregard of its responsibilities that their actions essentially amounted to no audits at all."

Believing Hyzer, as one coming from an auditing firm, would be qualified, the commissioners relied on his statements and conduct as reality for the county. So, the suit also alleges, "the Defendants appear to have merely rubber-stamped Montcalm's Financial Statements due to their close and friendly relationship with Hyzer."



Dale Abraham

Chris Hyzer is not named as a defendant in the suit.

What appears to be the crux of the suit is the paragraph that reads, "Although the Financial Statements were filled with errors, omissions and inaccuracies, as well as misleading representations, the Defendants, nevertheless, continued to issue reports that validated the Financial Statements and Hyzer's practices and never met with the Board of Commissioners."

The suit lists "injuries" caused by the accused, such as the laying off a significant number of employees, closing the Animal Control Unit, being forced to enlist volunteers to staff parks and recreational units, stop conferences and travel for employees, lost programs, suspend capital improvements and large sums to investigate the cause of the accounting issues.

Chris Hyzer, according to the suit, "previously worked as a senior auditor for Abraham & Gaffney." A charge is included that "he was not a certified public accountant and was staffed on the Montcalm audit team while an employee at Abraham & Gaffney." After Hyzer's hiring as Controller in 2007, he was "required to prepare the annual county budget, monitor all county financial information, and make recommendations on funding levels for departmental budgetary requests and "coordinate independent auditing services."

Hyzer's actions are further explained with charges that "Shortly after Hyzer began working as an employee for Montcalm in the position of Controller, the Defendants stopped presenting the results from annual audits to the Board of Commissioners. Prior to this, they would meet with the Board of Commissioners and walk through the audit and provide any relevant or material information.

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