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2020 CHARLEVOIX COUNTY NEWS ALL-AREA BOYS BASKETBALL

DREAM TEAM

Boyne City's Pete Calcaterra selected Player of the Year.
East Jordan's Jackson Raymond selected Defensive Player of the Year.
Charlevoix's Matt Stuck is Coach of the Year.



Pete Calcaterra



Jackson Raymond



Coach Matt Stuck

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY — What another great year of basketball for the Northern Michigan area. When the season was stopped in early March, we all knew it was for a very good reason, but for many coaches, players, parents and fans, the "What if" still remains.

Despite all of that, as we reflect back, there were great things that happened in all corners of our coverage area, Ellsworth captured the Northern Lakes Conference title and were set to make some noise in the MHSAA tournament, Boyne City was poised for another Division 2 District

title, while Charlevoix and East Jordan were set to meet for the crown in the Division 3 District, and not to be outdone, Boyne Falls put together an outstanding turnaround season, knocking off key opponents along the way an opening a few eyes. And don't forget the student cheering

sections, which provided a lot of noise and great support for their respective schools. All of that doesn't happen unless those teams have the right coach leading the charge, and it seemed like;

See **ALL-AREA BASKETBALL** - Page 1B

Governor directs Michiganders to stay home, stay safe through April 30

On April 9, Governor Whitmer signed executive order 2020-42, extending her prior "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order through the end of April. As with the prior order, Executive Order 2020-42 limits gatherings and travel and requires all workers who are not necessary to sustain or protect life to stay home. Executive Order 2020-42 also imposes more stringent limitations on stores to reduce foot traffic, slow the spread of the coronavirus, and save lives. "Michigan has the third highest number of COVID-19 cases in the country, and we're still on the upswing.

We must continue to do everything we can to slow the spread and protect our families," said Governor Whitmer. "Data shows that most Michiganders are doing their part by staying home and staying safe. That's good, but we must keep it up. When we do, we can save lives and shorten the amount of time we're working through this crisis, which will be good for our families and good for our economy in the long-run. We can also protect critical infrastructure workers like doctors, nurses, grocery store employees, and child care workers. Now more

than ever, it's crucial that people stay home and stay safe." "It's clear that staying home is the most effective way we can slow the spread of COVID-19 in Michigan," said Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Chief Deputy for Health and Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh Khaldun. "This aggressive action will help us protect more people and ease the strain on our health care system." Executive Order 2020-42 prohibits all businesses and operations from requiring workers to leave their

homes, unless those workers are necessary to sustain or protect life or to conduct minimum basic operations. Businesses and operations are to designate the workers who meet those criteria, and must adopt social distancing practices and other mitigation measures to protect workers and patrons in the performance of that in-person work. Workers who are necessary to sustain or protect life include those in health care and public health, law enforcement and public safety, grocery store work-

See **STAY HOME** - Page 3A



McLaren Northern Michigan is asking the community to tie ribbons of any color on trees or mailboxes or hang them in the windows of their homes to show support for our community of medical caregivers and first responders. Courtesy photo

Many Ribbons Project

McLaren Northern Michigan has witnessed an incredible outpouring of support every day from the community for our health care heroes. "We appreciate how the community is encouraging our team during this pandemic," stated Catherine Dewey, Public Information Officer at McLaren Northern Michigan. "We are seeking the community's support in establishing the Many Ribbons Project to show their support."

McLaren Northern Michigan is asking the community to tie ribbons of any color on trees or mailboxes or hang them in the windows of their homes to show support for our community of medical caregivers and first responders. This group includes Emergency Medical Services, Public Safety Officers, Fire Departments, Doctors, Nurses, and the entire McLaren Northern Michigan team as we collectively respond to and care for those patients in their time of need. McLaren Northern Michigan is asking community members not to leave their home for material. If you don't have a ribbon, you can print a cut-out version on paper to hang on the inside of your window. Use any material you already have in your home in order to show your support for our Health Care Heroes.

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News

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weather forecast

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
HIGH: 39 LOW: 26	HIGH: 41 LOW: 29	HIGH: 52 LOW: 37	HIGH: 41 LOW: 27

snowfall

2018-19	AMT"	CITY	2019-20	AMT"	CITY
4/15/19	..66.7	.ATLANTA	4/13/20	..51.2	.ATLANTA
4/15/19	..117	.BOYNE FALLS	4/13/20	..78.5	.BOYNE FALLS
4/15/19	..90.2	.CHARLEVOIX	4/13/20	..61.8	.CHARLEVOIX
4/15/19	..82.4	.CHEBOYGAN	4/13/20	..61.4	.CHEBOYGAN
4/15/19	..136.8	.EAST JORDAN	4/13/20	..101.8	.EAST JORDAN
4/15/19	..160.1	.GAYLORD	4/13/20	..129.5	.GAYLORD
4/15/19	..123.8	.KALKASKA	4/13/20	..147.1	.KALKASKA
4/15/19	..77.5	.LEWISTON	4/13/20	..39.5	.LEWISTON
4/15/19	..73.9	.MIO	4/13/20	..51.8	.MIO
4/15/19	..93.8	.ONAWAY	4/13/20	..76.2	.ONAWAY
4/15/19	..147.3	.PETOSKEY	4/13/20	..99.5	.PETOSKEY

record temps

DAY	AVG	LOW	AVG	HIGH	RECORD LOW	RECORD HIGH
APR 16	..31°	...55°	....19°	(1966)..88°	(2002)	
APR 17	..31°	...56°	....20°	(1978)..90°	(2002)	
APR 18	..31°	...56°	....17°	(1949)..84°	(1976)	
APR 19	..32°	...57°	....16°	(1983)..82°	(1987)	
APR 20	..32°	...57°	....16°	(1981)..86°	(1987)	
APR 21	..32°	...58°	....14°	(1993)..86°	(1987)	
APR 22	..33°	...58°	....18°	(1978)..88°	(1980)	
APR 23	..33°	...59°	....19°	(1986)..87°	(1980)	
APR 24	..33°	...59°	....18°	(1956)..84°	(1990)	
APR 25	..34°	...60°	....15°	(1967)..85°	(1990)	

OBITUARIES

SHERRY ELAINE SIRMONS, 58
(DEC. 2, 1961 - APRIL 12, 2020)

Sherry Elaine Sirmons passed away at McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital Sunday, April 12, 2020. A memorial service for Sherry will be held at a later date; Stackus Funeral Home of Boyne City will release more information when it becomes available.

whom he celebrated over 63 years of marriage. Upon growing up on a northern Indiana farm, Allen became a Mennonite Service Volunteer at the School for Severely Handicapped Children, at the State University of Iowa. On November 4, 1956, he moved to White Cloud, MI, and married Marjorie Burkholder.

two grandchildren: Audrey, Jordan, Charity, Dana, Al-isha, Trey, Wilson, Juanita, Richard, Rachel, Sharon, Caleb, Asher, Talia, Anthony, Ashlyn, Tyler, Trent, Cade, Jack, Maggie, and Charlotte; twenty-six great grandchildren; two brothers: Gerald Christner of Mooresville IN and Larry Christner of Niles MI; as well as many great nieces and nephews. Allen was preceded in death by his beloved daughter, Catherine D. Rohrer, wife of Linden Rohrer of Dayton VA, and four siblings: Arnold Christner, Adrian Christner, Marie Christner, and Esther Christophel.

Call) Shields. He was a successful businessman, an MSU fan, an avid boater, a Mason, and a Shriner. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn J. Shields of Advance; three children, David Shields of Anchorage, Alaska, Scott Shields of Boyne City and Caron (Bob) Withers of Charlevoix; four grandchildren, Jennie, Sarah, Steve and Brent; three great grandchildren, Seth, Brody and Giovanna; and one brother, Michael (Delores) Shields of Houghton Lake.

his father, Brian K. Sweet, and his grandparents, William and Marietta Walden. No services are scheduled at this time.

MI and a daughter Kyle R. (Vincent J.) Harr of Houston, TX, eight grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and a brother Doran A. Ditlow of Alpena, MI. He was preceded in death by his parents, Albert & Madeliene Ditlow, as well as a daughter, Kari Leonard. No services are planned at this time.

ALLEN RAY CHRISTNER, 85
(APRIL 4, 1935 - APRIL 12, 2020)



Allen R. Christner of East Jordan died at his home surrounded by his loving family on Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020. He was born in La-Grange, IN on April 4, 1935, the son of the late Monroe and Edna (Hershberger) Christner. Allen was the loving husband of Marjorie (Burkholder) Christner, with

Allen retired as a radiology technician for Munson Medical Center where he worked for 35 years. Following his retirement, he moved from Traverse City to East Jordan where he spent time doing what he enjoyed most: gardening, reading, volunteering, and visiting his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Allen was deeply devoted to God and his wife and family. He always had a scripture, song or prayer on his lips. And now he is enjoying that much anticipated meeting with Jesus.

The family would like to thank friends, caregivers and Hospice who helped Allen at the end of his life. Special thanks goes to Sabrina Redmer for her loving care for Allen which made a world of difference for him in the last two years of his life. Flowers are welcome and may be sent to 00176 N. Ranney Rd., East Jordan, MI, 49727.

Services will be announced at a later date. Entombment will be at Sunset Hills Cemetery, Flint, Michigan. The family was served by the Penzien Funeral Home in East Jordan.

LEONA WINCHESTER
APRIL 12, 2020



Leona Winchester of Charlevoix, passed away April 12, 2020 at Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital.

Memorial contributions may be made to Norwood Community Church, 667 4th St., Charlevoix, MI 49720 or the Bergmann Center, 8888 Ance Rd., Charlevoix, MI 49720. Arrangements are in the care of the Charlevoix Chapel of Mortensen Funeral Homes. Sign his online guestbook www.mortensen-funeralhomes.com

MATTHEW BRIAN SWEET, 33
(JAN. 23, 1987 - APRIL 5, 2020)



Matthew Brian Sweet, 33, of East Jordan and formerly of Covington, Kentucky, passed away on Sunday, April 5, 2020.

A full obituary with service details will be posted in the near future. Arrangements are in the care of the Winchester Chapel of Mortensen Funeral Homes. Sign her online guestbook www.mortensen-funeralhomes.co

JAMES MALEWITZ, 63
(JAN. 2, 1957 - APRIL 9, 2020)

James B. Malewitz, PE of Charlevoix died suddenly on Thursday April 9th on one of his favorite days of the year, the birthday of his beloved wife, Sandra. James truly loved his family, friends and community. He strived to love as Jesus did.

EDWARD "PETE" DITLOW, 86
(JUNE 17, 1933 - APRIL 13, 2020)

Edward "Pete" Ditlow of Charlevoix passed away April 13, 2020 at Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital. Edward was born June 17, 1933 in White Cloud, MI to Albert Ditlow and Madeliene Lynnes.

Due to the coronavirus, a service will be postponed. The family will covet your condolences.

Edward was a 1952 graduate of White Cloud High School, and later attended Michigan Technological University. He served in the Army during the Korean War, during which he met his wife, Thelma D. Ensing. The two married on October 4, 1956 in Fremont, MI. Edward enjoyed photography, playing the guitar, and was an avid reader. He was a member of the Norwood Community Church and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

A complete obituary will be posted in the near future. Arrangements are in the care of the Charlevoix Chapel of Mortensen Funeral Homes. Please sign his online guestbook at www.mortensenfuneral-homes.com

Ed is survived by his wife, Thelma D. Ditlow, two sons Kurt L. (Marygrace) Ditlow of Williamsburg, MI, Kip A. (Barbara) Ditlow of Eastport,

ROBERT WEXSTAFF, 97
OCTOBER 4, 1922 - APRIL 8, 2020 (AGE 97)

Robert Wexstaff of Grand Blanc, passed away on April 8, 2020 at Ascension Genesys Hospital. No services are planned at this time. He will be interred at Brookside Cemetery in Charlevoix at a later date. Arrangements are being handled by the Winchester Chapel of Mortensen Funeral Homes.

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JOSEPH FRANK SHIELDS, 83
(JUNE 5, 1936 - APRIL 9, 2020)



Joseph Frank Shields of Advance died Thursday, April 9, 2020 in Petoskey. He was born on June 5, 1936, in Flint, Michigan, the son of Max and Frances (Mc-

Matthew had the biggest heart and would help anyone who asked for it. He would go out of his way to make sure you smiled and laughed if you were having a bad day. Matthew had managed several restaurants in the Covington, Kentucky area. He moved back to East Jordan in October of 2019. He is survived by his mother, Michelle (Timothy) Hansma of East Jordan and sister, Stephanie Sweet of Grand Rapids and his Grandma Lorraine Janicki. He was preceded in death by

Fire Claims Life of Boyne City Resident

On Tuesday April 7, 2020 at approximately 3:30PM the Boyne City Police, Fire and EMS Departments were dispatched to a fire at a home on Line St in Boyne City. Emergency crews arrived on scene

to find the fire was extinguished and had been contained to one bedroom. An adult male resident of home was found deceased in the bedroom where the fire had occurred.

The Charlevoix County Medical Examiner has ordered an autopsy, which is scheduled to take place in Grand Rapids on April 8th. There is no evidence of foul play and the case remains

under investigation. The name of the victim is not being released at this time.

DNR: leave duck, goose nets alone in wild

Duck nests, particularly mallard nests, seem to pop up everywhere in the spring. Female mallards often build them in landscaping, gardens or other locations that people may find inappropriate, or at least inconvenient. If you spot one, it's best to leave the nest alone and keep pets away from it, too. The hen will lead her young to water soon after they hatch.



that, in Michigan, it's illegal to keep the animal unless you're a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Under the current Stay Home, Stay Safe Executive Order, some wildlife rehabilitators may have had to suspend services; call ahead to see whether they are able to assist at this time.

Canada geese, which sometimes build nests near houses or in parks, also will quickly shepherd their chicks to water. Adult geese are very protective and may hiss and run or fly toward perceived intruders. Try to avoid nesting areas, but if

that's not possible, carry an umbrella and gently scare the bird away by opening and closing it.

On the rare occasion that you come across an animal that is injured or truly abandoned, please keep in mind

Everyone can play a part in successfully sharing space with wildlife in our communities. Get additional tips and information on handling conflicts with wildlife and what to do if you find a baby animal at Michigan.gov/Wildlife.

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News

Char-Em ISD special education millage renewal vote on Tuesday, May 5

Voters will be asked on Tuesday, May 5, to consider a question that would renew and restore the long-standing special education millage for the Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District.

The proposed millage would be for 1.4958 mills generating \$8.7 million in special education operational funding. This represents a renewal of 1.1499 mills combined with the restoration of 0.3459 mills that were rolled back in accordance with the Headlee Amendment to the Michigan Constitution of 1963.

“What this accomplishes is continuing the ability of the ISD to provide special education programs and services for the students of Charlevoix-Emmet ISD, the local school districts, and academies. It was originally

approved in 1981 and has been renewed every 4 years ever since. If passed, this proposal would also restore the erosion of rollbacks back to the original millage rate previously approved by the voters,” said Jeff Crouse, Superintendent of Charlevoix-Emmet ISD.

If approved, the millage would be in place for the next four years. For a home with a market value of \$100,000 it would cost the taxpayer less than \$75 a year. Current special education costs throughout the 11 local districts and 3 academies are about \$18.3 million, so these special education operating dollars fill a great share of that need (roughly 48%), while state, federal, and other local dollars support the remaining costs. Crouse said the funding

from the millage goes both directly to the local schools and academies to reimburse some of their special education expenses, as well as to the Charlevoix-Emmet ISD to support 15 special needs programs operated by the ISD, that serve students with the most significant disabilities.

It is also used for specialized training of teachers in local schools, evaluation services to determine eligibility for special education services, as well as transportation services for students who attend Char-Em programs and have highly specialized transportation needs.

“This millage directly impacts more than 1,200 children with special needs in our service area. That includes all the schools in Charlevoix County, all the

schools in Emmet County and schools in northern Antrim County,” Crouse indicated. “Special education services are provided beginning at birth until age 26 by Michigan law. We provide those children and young adults with special needs the opportunity to achieve at their highest levels.”

Local district leaders understand these specialized education services are legally mandated and without the proposed millage, they would be forced to shift money from other areas of their budgets to cover the potential \$8.7 million hole, Crouse added.

For more information about Char-Em ISD Special Education services, visit www.charemisd.org.

Venetian Festival cancelled for 2020

The Venetian Festival Board issued the following statement on the festival Facebook page on April 10:

“The Venetian Board pledged that safety would be paramount when it took custody of the Venetian Festival from the Chamber of Commerce, in the aftermath of the 1997 fireworks tragedy. Due to the unprecedented threat of the coronavirus to the health, safety and welfare of our community and visitors, the Venetian Board is compelled to cancel the 2020 Charlevoix Venetian Festival.”

“Although we remain hopeful and optimistic that the coronavirus outbreak may soon trend favorably, facilitating the process of reopening our community, the continued health threat posed by mass gatherings is extreme. The population of downtown Charlevoix expands during the traditional

Venetian week to a density similar to that of major U.S. cities. Just one asymptomatic infected person, or the irresponsible actions of just one infected person, could expose hundreds and hundreds of people to the virus.”

“Those Venetian Games and similar activities which may be readily organized and staged, without mass gatherings, remain under consideration. In anticipation of our forthcoming victory over the coronavirus, Venetian may also consider a focused community celebration upon conclusion of the 2020 summer season, subject to community sentiment. We will provide updates in all such regards.”

“We trust that Venetian’s spirit of community will reside in all who hold Charlevoix near and dear, as we come together for the benefit of one another, in this time of crisis.”

STAY HOME

FROM PG. 1A

ers, and more. For a full list of these critical infrastructure workers, click the link to Executive Order 2020-42 at the bottom of this page. To enable these critical workers to get to their workplaces, automobile dealerships will now be allowed to open for remote sales, though showrooms must remain closed.

Under the new order, all public and private gatherings among persons outside a single household remain temporarily prohibited. Though Michiganders may leave the house to get groceries or needed supplies, the new order encourages people to limit the number of household members running errands to the maximum extent possible. As before, people may engage in outdoor activities like walking, hiking, running, cycling, kayaking, canoeing, or any other recreational activity, consistent with remaining at least six feet from people from outside a person’s household and with other restrictions imposed by prior executive orders. The order clarifies, however, that travel for vacations or for any other purpose is prohibited.

A new section of the order imposes restrictions on stores in an effort to reduce crowds. Large stores must limit the number of people in the store at one time to no more than 4 customers for every 1,000 square feet of customer floor space; small stores must limit capacity to 25% of the total occupancy limits (including employees) under the fire codes. To regulate entry, stores must establish lines with markings for patrons to enable them to stand at least six feet apart from one another while waiting. Large stores must also close areas of the store that are dedicated to carpeting, flooring, furniture, garden centers, plant nurseries, or paint.

“This doesn’t mean everything will go back to normal on May 1,” Gov. Whitmer continued. “But based on the data we have right now, this is the appropriate window for an extension. It will take time to safely and responsibly re-open the economy, which is why we will continue to provide critical unemployment support and assistance to our small businesses during this challenging time. We will get through this if we all continue to do our part.”

All individuals who leave their home or place of residence must adhere to social distancing measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including remaining at least six feet from people from outside the individual’s household.

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING, APRIL 6, 2020

Pandemic will have a negative impact on local economy and County departments

By Karen Walker

At the last regular Charlevoix County Commission meeting held Wednesday, April 8th via Zoom, County Administrator Kevin Shepard expressed his concern for possible revenue shortfalls due to the shutdown surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. In his report to Commis-

sioners, Shepard stated that the economic impact on our local economy due to the COVID-19 shut down will be substantial.

He explained that approximately one third of the County’s revenue is generated through departmental services such as the courts, Commission on Aging, and County Transit.

Shepard told Commissioners he felt all these income sources will be negatively affected. He did not have a prediction on how much the revenue shortfall might be without knowing the duration of the shutdown.

Shepard said, “I feel we should take measures now to mitigate going forward and save as much money as possible.” Shepard informed Commis-

sioners he has started the process of determining what it would look like if the County has to start furloughing employees. He pointed out, “By the end of the month, we will have to start making some tough decisions if things keep dragging out.”

Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan survivor services funded



Counselor/Advocate Amy Strohpaal is pictured in the Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan’s Gaylord office at 1030 South Wisconsin Avenue. The agency received a grant to support Otsego County survivor services through the Community Fund of the Otsego Community Foundation. Courtesy photo

Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan (WRCNM) received an \$8,260 grant from the Community Fund, Youth Fund, Amar-Fox Family Fund and Patrick J. McNamara Fund of the Otsego Community Foundation (OCF). The grant supports WRCNM services for Otsego County adult and child survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault, and services provided through the Children’s Advocacy Center. The funds will be used to provide survivors with counseling, advocacy, support and ongoing services to help them overcome trauma and move forward on their healing journey.

During the past fiscal year,

143 Otsego County adult and child survivors utilized WRCNM counseling, advocacy and support services.

“WRCNM Therapists, Counselor/Advocates and staff have assisted Otsego County residents for many years as one of the five northern Michigan counties we serve,” said Gail Kloss WRCNM Executive Director. “We are grateful for this funding opportunity because it will help us continue to provide these life-changing services.”

The Community Grant Program is a collaborative effort made possible by the funding partners. This unique program administered by OCF allows nonprof-

its to complete one grant application which is reviewed and considered by all funding partners. The funding partners granted more than \$125,958 to meet needs and advance opportunities in the community.

To learn more about becoming a community funding partner, contact OCF Executive Director Dana Bensinger at dana@otsegofoundation.org.

To learn more about WRCNM programs and services, call the Gaylord office at (231) 348-7908, the 24-Hour Help and Information Line at (231) 347-0082 or (800) 275-1995 or visit www.wrcnm.org.

EJ Family Health Center awarded a \$50,000 grant

Telehealth technology is critical more than ever to help Michigan residents have access to healthcare, especially during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Michigan Health Endowment Fund fast tracked a total of \$3 million grant dollars to 61 Michigan organizations to ramp up their remote care efforts. East Jordan Family Health Center is proud to announce they received a \$50,000 grant to provide telehealth services through this grant fund.

“Increasing access to health care is our core mission at Blue Cross. We are proud to join forces and help equip safety net providers with the resources they will need to provide quality care during this pandemic,” said

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan president and CEO Dan Loepp. “Now, perhaps more than ever before, Michiganders need safe access to their doctors.” Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is one of several Health Fund collaborators including Ethel and James Flinn Foundation, the Metro Health Foundation, and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation.

The East Jordan Family Health Center plans to upgrade their telehealth capacity with new software and iPads for providers; upgrade the organization’s network to provide HIPAA compliant telehealth visits; and train staff and providers on the software implementation. Introducing telehealth to the health

center’s patients will provide a virtual care option for those needing care during the COVID-19 health emergency and into the future when transportation and accessibility issues arise.

If you have questions regarding the East Jordan & Bellaire Family Health Center, visit our website at www.ejfhc.org for up to date information along with additional services provided at both the Bellaire and East Jordan locations.

East Jordan Family Health Center – (231) 536-2206

Bellaire Family Health Center – (231) 533-8649

Check out our website for information regarding Covid-19 – www.ejfhc.org/2019-novel-coronavirus/

Health Department announces first Charlevoix County COVID-19 death

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan received notice of a death related to COVID-19. The individual was a Charlevoix County male in his 50’s.

“We extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of this individual,” said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. “We know that news of these tragic deaths in our communities hit close to home. We need to continue to stay strong as we work together to slow the spread of this disease.”

Now is the critical time for our residents to continue to utilize our most important tool: social distancing. We cannot reiterate just how im-

portant it is for residents to:

- only leave home for essential needs and as infrequently as possible,
- stay at least 6 feet away and avoid gatherings, if you must go out,
- wash your hands frequently for at least twenty seconds,
- avoid touching your face,
- disinfect commonly touched surfaces,
- check on others – by calling loved ones and neighbors who are most at risk to see how they are doing and if they need help.

We know our close-knit communities are strong and will continue to take care of each other during these uncertain times, even from a distance.

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New 'Warm Help Line' for COVID-19 stress, anxiety, depression

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, North Country Community Mental Health is now offering a Warm Help Line to assist individuals in the community who are experiencing stress, anxiety or depression during the COVID-19 crisis. Anyone in the community may call the Warm Help Line at 1-877-470-7130, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

“We recognize that this is a scary time for many people,” said Dr. Stacey Chipman, Chief Clinical Director for North Country Community Mental Health. “This is why we have begun the Warm Help Line.”

“Increased stress and anxiety related to the current COVID-19 outbreak is normal and expected. While we are hard-wired to like certainty and protect ourselves when things feel threatening, we can feel anxious when we can't control what is going on around us. You may notice that you are more frustrated with others or have trouble focusing. You may feel more on edge than usual, angry, helpless, or sad,” said Chipman.

Chipman advises people to reach out if they are having difficulty through the Warm Help Line. In addition, she advises that there are several things people can do to support themselves and keep coronavirus fears from affecting their mental health:

“Remember that we can always choose our response and if you feel stressed, challenge yourself to stay in the present. When you find yourself worrying about something that hasn't happened, gently bring yourself back to the present moment. Notice the sights, sounds, tastes and other sensory experiences in your immediate moment and name them. Separate what is in your control from what is not. Focus on what you can do. Do what helps you to be calm. It's different for everyone,” said Chipman.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call our Crisis Help Line at 1-877-470-4668. The Crisis Help Line is operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Persons wishing to know more about the agency are encouraged to visit www.norcoomh.org or to access services call 877-470-7130.

Joint statement regarding seasonal residents returning to Upper Peninsula

We fully support the advisories and recommendations recently issued by the medical experts from the LMAS District Health Department, encouraging seasonal residents to postpone their return to the Upper Peninsula, if it is not entirely necessary.

Our medical facilities and resources are limited, and an influx of seasonal residents at this time could cause significant issues in our ability to effectively treat our close-knit communities.

If it is necessary to return to the region at this time, we are strongly urging seasonal residents to adhere to the self-quarantine protocols outlined by the LMAS District Health Department. These critical steps will combat the spread of COVID-19 throughout the region, ultimately preserving the health and well-being of all who love this special place – from permanent and seasonal residents to visiting guests.

MARGARET DOUD, MAYOR, CITY OF MACKINAC ISLAND
CONNIE LITZNER, MAYOR, CITY OF ST. IGNACE

Judge Lasher keeps District Court moving along

It had not yet been a month since the swearing in of 90th District Court Judge Angela Lasher when nearly every aspect of our daily lives was turned upside down.

When the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 prompted Governor Gretchen Whitmer to declare a state of emergency on March 10, the Michigan Supreme Court and the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) began issuing communications to trial courts with directions on how the judicial branch would adjust while also providing essential functions.

Michigan courts have been issued numerous directives over the past month and gone through a series of changes to comply with executive and emergency orders. Judges across the state are now working with administrative and technical staff to find new ways for-



90th District Court Judge Angela Lasher conducts a plea and probation violation hearing for an in-custody defendant using Zoom, a virtual meeting platform, where she interacted on screen with an Emmet County assistant prosecutor, defense attorney and the defendant who dialed in from the Emmet County jail. (Photo courtesy of Amanda Miller)

ward. Judge Lasher, who splits her time between Emmet and Charlevoix counties, was eager to figure out how she could keep the 90th District Court function-

ing during this unprecedented time.

“The court must protect both people’s rights and the health of all involved and Zoom technology allows us

to do this,” said Judge Lasher. “We are expanding the use of virtual court hearings to handle criminal and civil cases and continue to provide support to our sobriety court participants.”

Judge Lasher began using the online video conferencing platform last week for in-custody defendants after she was assigned a license for the Zoom Virtual Courtroom by the Michigan Supreme Court. Though most court hearings have been adjourned to comply with COVID-19 physical distancing orders, the courts are required to hold some hearings in accordance with statute and the virtual courtroom allows that to happen.

With the extension of the stay-at-home order from Governor Whitmer earlier this week, the 90th District Court now plans to expand the use of Zoom for more hearings in both Emmet and

Charlevoix counties. For example, the 90th District Court runs a Sobriety Court, a treatment court for offenders of certain drunk driving offenses where use of Zoom virtual meetings is allowing this program to continue offering intensive support to participants.

District court administrators, Dean Viles and Amanda Miller, credit others who have supported the court’s new direction.

“Emmet County’s IT Department was a huge help in getting our court set up for this,” said Miller. “Corrections officers at the jail have also been amazing in picking up on using Zoom as have prosecutors and local attorneys. Everyone has been accommodating, flexible, patient, and helpful during this process, showing how we are all in this together.”

Local governments are using virtual meetings

BY KAREN WALKER

On March 18th, Governor Whitmer issued an Executive Order temporarily suspending some of the requirements of the Michigan Open Meetings Act. To limit personal contact in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, the order suspends the requirement that public meetings be held in a physical place or that attendees be physically present. But local governments still need to conduct meetings that are fully accessible to the public.

To accomplish this, the Governor’s order temporarily authorizes “virtual” meetings that can take place over the internet and/or by phone, allowing people to share information in real-time without being physically together. Using a virtual meeting format, members of the public are now able to fully participate in public meetings without physically attending, and possibly compromising public health.

To facilitate virtual meetings, many City, County, and other public agencies have turned to online conferencing services such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Slack, and GoToMeeting. These internet based platforms connect individuals using their smartphone, tablet computer, laptop, or desktop computers. Individuals who do not have a webcam or microphone attached to their computer may still listen to meetings and use the service’s chat feature to type in their comments. Most platforms also offer the option to join a meeting using a landline phone.

The video conferencing software Zoom has quickly become a popular service because it is easy to use. However, Zoom has drawn some backlash over privacy and security concerns as well as the presence of hackers interjecting unwanted content. Most of these issues have been recently resolved through use of passwords and other measures to keep meetings running smoothly.

The Cities of Charlevoix, East Jordan, and Boyne City as well as the Charlevoix County Commissioners have all held at least one Zoom meeting since the Governor’s order prohibiting public gatherings.

While virtual meetings may have their shortcomings, they also offer the opportunity for people to participate who cannot easily attend a meeting in person. Meeting notices and procedures required to participate in public meetings can be found on the City, County, or other public agency’s website.

Now that people around the world, regardless of their location, are using video, audio, and text to link up online, many predict the coronavirus pandemic will be a turning point, changing how we work and learn forever. Virtual meetings will likely become part of our new normal as we expand usage of these new tools.

Food Bank Council applauds USDA approval of Disaster Household Distribution request

Federal government approval today of Michigan’s request for an emergency food program eases distribution efforts by the Food Bank Council of Michigan network of food pantries while keeping staff and volunteers safer during the process.

The state Department of Education submitted a request to USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) for a Disaster Household Distribution Program on behalf of the Food Bank Council of Michigan. The subsequent approval waives household verification and income eligibility requirements normally connected to The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) which puts staff in close proximity to clients when asking these questions. This waiver will allow food bank staff, volunteers and National Guard members to more efficiently serve a large number of people in need while also maintaining safety protocols outlined in social distancing guidelines.

“Our partnership with the Michigan Department of Education proved vital in this effort,” said Phil Knight, executive director, Food Bank Council of Michigan. “During this unprecedented time in our history, USDA Food and Nutrition Services has acknowledged that flexibilities are needed on the

ground to safely and effectively distribute food to those in need.”

Many food banks and pantries have implemented drive-through distribution models. The need to capture information from new participants was putting food bank staff and volunteers at risk, especially with the demand for personal protective equipment.

Michigan has experienced a significant demand for emergency food resources as more people find themselves without work during the pandemic. Flexibilities afforded through the Disaster Household Distribution Program waives the need to capture information face-to-face and further promotes social distancing and minimized contact.

“The staff at our seven food banks are working tirelessly to meet the needs of those struggling with job loss or decreased work hours during this pandemic. This waiver will help keep these essential workers safe and allow them to continue providing vital resources especially in communities hardest hit by the virus.”

Learn more about the Food Bank Council’s response to COVID-19 at www.fbcmich.org/covid-19/.

Charlevoix County Commission on Aging Community Mitigation Strategy - Updated 04/9/2020

Charlevoix County Commission on Aging will be complying with Governor Whitmer’s extended “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Executive Order of 4/9/2020. Based on the Executive Order, following is in effect immediately until April 30, 2020 at midnight:

Disaster Congregate Meals – While able

These meals will be available for SCHEDULED DELIVERY ONLY on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday. Seniors wishing to get meals should call the Commission on Aging Office at 231-237-0103 between 9a-2p on Thursdays to schedule the next weeks reserved meals. Seniors may order up to (7) frozen meals once a week. Suggested meal donations remain \$3.00 per meal and we ask that you:

- Mail your donation to the Charlevoix County Commission on Aging office

at 218 W. Garfield, Charlevoix MI 49720.

- Put your donation in a sealed envelope with COA name on it and give it to the driver.

- If you are new to the meal services, you will be asked to complete a NAPIS form to help pay for your meals.

- Meals will only be delivered by Charlevoix County Transit for this Stay Safe, Stay Home timeframe. If you live in an apartment building the driver will call you when they are at your stop for you to pick up your meal at the main door.
- Monday is from the Charlevoix Senior Center
- Tuesday is from the East Jordan Senior Center
- Wednesday is from the Boyne Area Center
- Home Delivered Meals – While able

- These meals will be delivered once weekly. (7) frozen

meals will be delivered on the following scheduled days by Charlevoix County Transit for this Stay Safe, Stay Home time frame. If you live in an apartment building the driver will call you when they are at your stop for you to pick up your meal at the main door.

- Monday is from the Charlevoix Senior Center & Beaver Island
- Tuesday is from the East Jordan Senior Center
- Wednesday is from the Boyne Area Center

- Beaver Island COA Services will remain with the office being open only once a week by appointment only. Home Delivered Meals & Voucher Meals will also be done the same as the initial Stay Home Stay Safe Order plan and any extensions at this time.

- All Charlevoix County Senior Center staff will continue to follow an enhanced

protocol of sanitization to mitigate the possibility of the spread of germs. All Senior Center locations will continue to be cleaned and sanitized daily by professional cleaners.

- In-Home Services These services have been suspended at this time for the duration of the 4/9/2020 extended Executive Order. There is currently not enough Personal Protective Equipment to protect our clients and staff and still provide quality services.

- ALL Charlevoix County Senior Center buildings (Charlevoix, East Jordan, Boyne City), the Charlevoix County Commission on Aging Office will be CLOSED to the public. The Beaver Island County COA office will be open to the Public by appointment only one day a week. ALL Senior Center meeting, programs, classes, activities and serv-

ices are also SUSPENDED including the ones facilitated by the COA on Beaver Island. Foot Clinics in ALL of the Senior Centers will be CANCELLED through the month of April.

- All of this is subject to change per the next Executive Order.

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2 Most Common Problems Keeping You from Buying a Home

Home prices are more affordable than they've been in decades and mortgage rates are at all time lows. There are 2 main reasons why people are not able to buy a home, but there is also hope and the American dream of home ownership might still be within your reach.

You may be one of millions of people who have recently been turned down for a home loan by the bank. One of the most common reasons good people get turned down for a loan is because they have less than perfect credit.

1. Less Than Perfect Credit. If you notice, I didn't say "bad credit." A few years ago, banks were lending to everyone who wanted a loan. Banks were lending to people who had credit scores in the mid 500s just a short while ago. Just recently it was announced that the minimum credit score, yes the minimum for a FHA backed mortgage is 640. But, even if you have a score in the mid to high 600s, you may still be required to put down a hefty down payment. A score of 720 or higher is considered good credit, and is what's required for a low-down payment loan today.

There are many reasons that credit scores can become less than perfect. Maybe you have had a bad event in your life such as a medical emergency or a divorce. These events may be unavoidable, but wreak havoc on a credit score. Maybe you pay your bills on time, but you have had to run up the balances on some credit cards so the bank runs its formula and tells you that your debt to income ratio is too high. Maybe you were a victim of the economic recession

and lost your job, but you've been diligent and found a new job, but because of being out of work you missed some payments on some of your accounts. The banks don't look at your situation and give you a break, they run your credit through their automated system and if the result comes back less than perfect, you don't qualify.

2. Not Enough Cash. Even if you do have perfect credit, 100% loans are hard to come by today. You see, banks got into a lot of trouble with the easy lending standards of the past by loaning too much money on houses. Banks used to loan 90%, 95%, 100% and even more of the value of the home that secured the mortgage, and then when the economy turned and people had trouble making their payments, the banks had to take big losses on these loans. Lending standards have changed, the pendulum has swung far back the other way and banks are more heavily regulated than ever before. If you do not have an extra 5 to 10 grand burning a hole in your pocket and a credit score in the mid 700s, you're going to be hard pressed to qualify for an average, modest home for your family.

You see, no one teaches us this credit game in school, but it is something that affects our entire lives. It is like coming onto the field in the middle of a football game without knowing the rules. It is impossible to win a game you don't know how to play. Once you know the rules, however, you can not only compete, but you can win!

Real Estate Feature Property GORGEOUS CUSTOM HOME WITH LAKE CHARLEVOIX VIEW



BY JIM AKANS

Located in the heart of Boyne City, this gorgeous custom home offers a fantastic view of Lake Charlevoix.

This three bedroom, two bath home has approximately 2,160 square feet of beautiful living space to enjoy on two levels. Interior highlights include an open concept living, dining

and kitchen area with vaulted ceiling, ideal for family living and for entertaining. The kitchen features custom wood cabinetry, wood flooring and a convenient snack bar. The adjoining living and dining areas access sliding glass doors that lead to a wonderful screened porch. It provides a perfect spot to sit back, relax or dine while taking in the spectacular

Lake Charlevoix view.

There is an open deck overlooking the spacious back yard, which has lots of room for yard games and gardening. Mature trees embrace the yard and provide welcome shade during warm summer days. Downtown Boyne City, with an abundance of dining, shopping, entertainment and a public beach, is just a short stroll away.

This gorgeous custom home with a fantastic Lake Charlevoix view is located at 907 North Lake Street in Boyne City and it is listed at \$299,000. For more information or to arrange a home tour, call Jennifer Burr, Realtor, at Coldwell Banker Schmidt, 231 Water Street in Boyne City, at 231-582-6554 or email at jennifer.burr@cbgreat-lakes.com.



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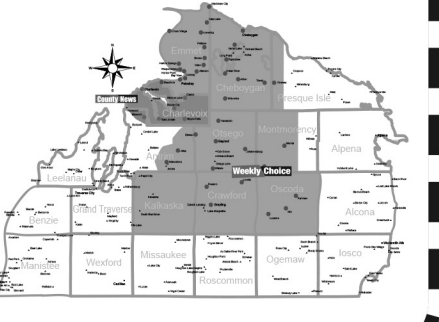
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Great Lakes Energy/Truestream to offer free Wi-Fi Hotspots for students

Beginning this week, Truestream, powered by Great Lakes Energy, will begin offering free Wi-Fi hotspots throughout parts of Emmet and Charlevoix counties for rural students to access online learning.

Truestream, which connects rural, unserved residents with internet speeds up to 1 Gig, is Great Lakes Energy's (GLE) new fiber network. "Our commitment to the communities we serve is stronger than ever," says Shaun Lamp, CEO of Truestream. "We recognize that access to the internet is increasingly crucial, especially for students during these unprecedented times, and that calls for all of us to do what we can to meet the needs of our community."

residents who may be left without access to high-speed internet during the COVID-19 crisis.

Truestream is partnering with local businesses to utilize their parking lot space for the hotspots. Students will be able to access Wi-Fi in the parking lots of the following locations by the listed dates:

- Bliss Township Firehall - 9198 Pleasantview Rd., Levering. Access expected by April 16.
- Stutsmanville Chapel - 2988 S. State St., Harbor Springs. Access is available now.
- Harbor Light Christian School - 8333 Clayton Rd., Harbor Springs. Access expected by April 24.
- Emmet County Road Commission - 2265 Hathaway Rd., Harbor Springs. Access expected by April 16.
- Petoskey Youth Soccer Association Field - 2325 Click Rd., Petoskey. Access is available now. Service is

available from 6 AM - 8 PM.

- Charlevoix Township Stroud Hall - 12491 Waller Rd., Charlevoix. Access expected by April 17.

- Great Lakes Energy Office - west side - 1323 Boyne Ave., Boyne City (old Carters parking lot). Access is available now.

Once in the parking lot, users are asked to remain in the car. Up to 100 devices will be able to connect concurrently to the Truestream network. Users will be prompted to accept the Terms of Service by opening a website browser once a device has connected to the Truestream Wi-Fi. Once connected, devices will be remembered for eight hours before having to accept the terms of service again. The primary purpose of the hotspots is to help local students, but residents who may need to access the internet for working from home are also welcome to do so.

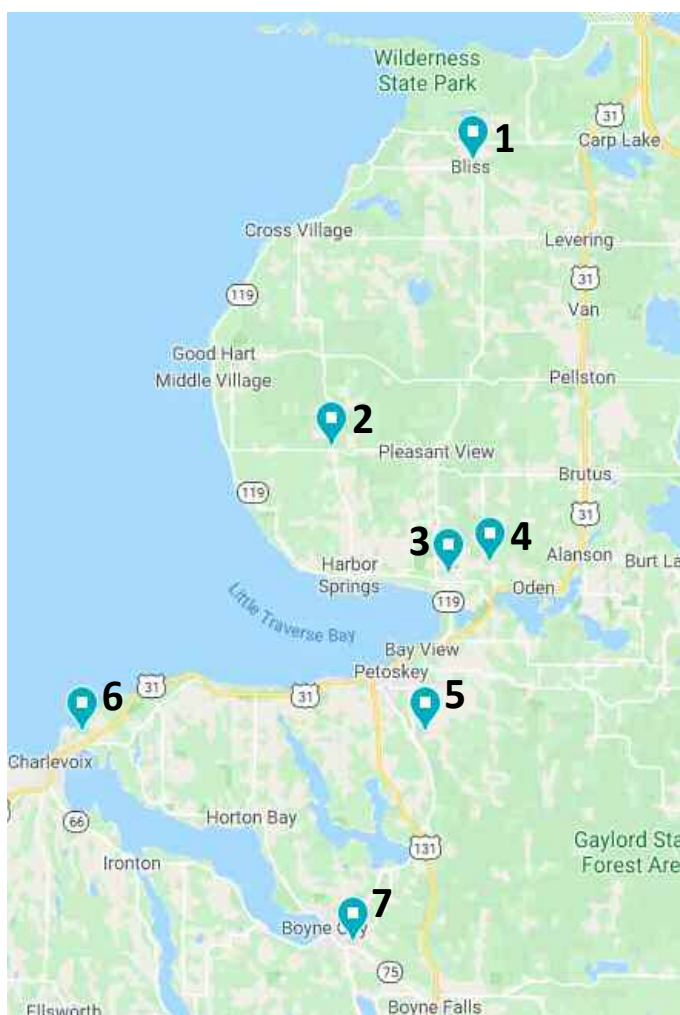
This decision comes on

the heels of other recent adjustments Truestream and GLE have made following the unprecedented shutdown of schools and businesses across the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. Truestream began upgrading current internet customers to 1 Gig speeds for one month at a discounted rate and implementing assisted self-installations to lessen person-to-person contact between customers and technicians.

Truestream/GLE encourages those using the free Wi-Fi to practice social distancing and other precautionary measures as outlined by the CDC.

Truestream's COVID-19 response is online at truestreamfiber.com/news.

Great Lakes Energy's COVID-19 response is online at gtlakes.com/blog.



1. Bliss Township Firehall: 9198 Pleasantview Rd. Levering, MI 49755
2. Stutsmanville Chapel: 2988 S State St. Harbor Springs, MI 49740
3. Harbor Light Christian School: 8333 Clayton Rd. Harbor Springs, MI 49740
4. Emmet County Road Commission: 2265 Hathaway Rd. Harbor Springs, MI 49740
5. Petoskey Youth Soccer Association: 2325 Click Rd. Petoskey, MI 49770
6. Charlevoix Township Stroud Hall: 12491 Waller Rd. Charlevoix, MI 49770
7. Great Lakes Energy: 1323 Boyne Ave. Boyne City, MI 49712

Stick to local forests for spring morel hunting

A sure sign of spring is nearly here: morels! As sunshine and April rains wake up the forests, the annual search for the elusive mushrooms is a great way to enjoy the outdoors. You can find them from late April to early June, and - according to Michigan State University Extension - they're believed to grow in every Michigan county.

Most Michiganders will tell you that the location of a good morel patch is a matter of utmost secrecy. This makes mushroom hunting a perfect chance to practice the 6-foot-minimum social distancing that is such a critical step in slowing the spread of the coronavirus. Mushroom hunters should plan to search locally, too, and only with people who live in their household.

To find morels, target hilly



Springtime in Michigan is a great time for mushrooms, especially the prized morels. It's an activity that can be done with proper social distancing (at least 6 feet between yourself and another person), which is required under the current "Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19. (courtesy of DNR)

areas with plenty of hardwood trees like maple, beech and oak, checking for burn scars where a wildfire or prescribed burn has occurred. Pick a warm day after a rain to start your hunt, when mushrooms are

most likely to have bloomed. When heading to the woods, take a mesh bag for carrying your prizes, a knife (always cut, never pull morels) and a map of your hunting area.

Learn how to find morels, tell a false one from a real

one, prepare them, and boost your odds of success - with a map showing sites of last year's wildfires and prescribed burns - at Michigan.gov/MiMorels.

Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update; 4/14

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan wants to remind residents that we re-issued our Public Health Emergency



Order on Friday, April 10th. The new order extends the previous emergency order and is effective through April 30th, 2020 at 11:59 pm to ensure the safety of our residents and critical infrastructure workers, and to align with Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-42. Please find the new Public Health Emergency Order 2020-2 on our website. Additionally, we are releasing an updated version of our Business Toolkit.

We have also received questions related to the stay-at-home order, specifically directed towards the re-opening of our state. As Governor Whitmer mentioned in her press conference yesterday, recent data shows the increase of COVID-19 in Michigan to be slowing down but more data is needed to make sure this is a common theme across the state.

"We share the public's concern for a better understanding of the timeline we may be facing," shared Lisa Peacock, Health Officer. "We hope that as more data is gathered through testing and contact tracing we will be able to get a better sense of the timeframe and be better able to understand and mitigate the impact of this illness in our communities."

We understand that it becomes increasingly difficult

to stay home. Lifting restrictions within our state and returning to normal activities will happen gradually. The Governor pointed out the re-engagement factors that would be necessary: sustained reduction in case counts, enhanced ability to test and trace, sufficient health care capacity, and best practices for the workplace. This tells us that our local efforts are working in the right direction and we applaud the commitment of our northern Michigan communities to continue to Stay Home, Stay Safe, and Save Lives! Don't forget to share your story and tell us who you stay home for by joining our #UpNorthStaysHome campaign on Facebook!

As of 4:00pm, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is reporting positive COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim - 8, Charlevoix - 11, Emmet - 21, Otsego - 34; and confirmed COVID-19 deaths in the following counties: Charlevoix - 1, Emmet - 2, Otsego - 2. The State of Michigan has reported 27,001 cases and 1,768 deaths.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department jurisdiction by liking and following our Facebook page and visiting our COVID-19 Data Dashboard.

Charlevoix County Transit

Helping Our Communities Stay Home, Stay Safe and Stay Healthy



During the COVID-19 Stay At Home Order, Charlevoix County Transit is providing FREE delivery service for items such as prescriptions, food pantry boxes, groceries and other essential items.

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