


## Board of Health Will Evaluate Program

 Posted on Wednesday, February 20th, 2019 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.



Liz Braddock



Marcus Cheatham

### **By Rosemary Horvath Herald Staff Writer**

Winter weather deep-sixed three attempts for the Board of [Health](#) to have a January organizational meeting in Montcalm County.

Since January turned out to be a dud, the annual organizational business of the Mid-Michigan District Health Department has been added to the regular Feb. 27 meeting agenda.

But even then, Health Officer Marcus Cheatham sounded skeptical all the agenda items could be covered.

Moving through organizational business may not leave enough time for Cheatham and Environmental Health Director Liz Braddock to outline their new proposal to address water quality issues in the health district's three

counties: Gratiot, Clinton and Montcalm.

The Feb. 27 Board of Health meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Clinton County District Health Department, 1307 East Townsend Road.

Cheatham told the Herald last week the board will have two new members: Gratiot Commissioner Chuck Murphy and Montcalm Commissioner Adam Petersen.

For them to catch up with regular business matters and the history of E.coli bacteria in rivers and problematic septic systems throughout the health district, the discussion could carry over to the March meeting, he said. A proposal introduced last year to add teeth to existing environmental health regulations never got off the ground.

Public sentiment against the measure erupted at several public hearings.

Cheatham said he and Braddock took the criticisms into account and reviewed recommendations from consultants and a citizens stakeholders committee.

They ditched the idea of an amendment and settled on recommending a Surface Water Program within the Environmental Health Division.

This would entail hiring an Environmental Health Specialist to manage the program.

The Board of Health would have to condone the program, as would the three county boards of commissioners as it would mean increasing their annual appropriations to fund it.

Three areas would be the main focus of the program. It would target inspections of properties likely to have non-compliant disposal systems. It would investigate avenues of financial assistance for households on limited incomes. And it would investigate other sources of contamination besides septic systems such as land application of septage and animal waste.

Relates to organizational business, the Board of Health will elect a new chairman and vice chairman on a rotational basis. This means, Gratiot County Chairman George Bailey is next in line for the chairmanship. Montcalm County Commissioner Betty Kellenberger is next for vice chair.

The other members on the 6-member board are Clinton County Commissioners Bruce DeLong and Dwight Washington.

## **New Prescription for Health Program Teaches Healthy Eating Habits**

Thanks to a strong community collaboration, a new health education program is helping low-income patients with chronic illnesses learn healthy habits. Prescription for Health, a six-week course, is teaching healthy eating behaviors and how to plan a nutritious diet.

“The need for better nutrition education has been highlighted by recent health statistics from the region,” said Shanna Hensler, community health specialist, Mid-Michigan Health. “The Community Health Assessment completed by Live Well Gratiot in 2015 found that 69.6 percent of adults in Gratiot County are either obese or overweight. The same study found that 85.9 percent of adults in the county do not eat enough fruits and vegetables each day to support their overall health. Unhealthy weight can be especially problematic for people living in low-income situations or suffering from chronic diseases.”

To address this concern, last year,

MidMichigan Health established a partnership between MidMichigan Medical Center – Gratiot, Alma Family Practice, Alma Transportation, Gratiot/Isabella RESD, the Mid-Michigan District Health Department, MSU Extension and the St. Louis Farmer’s Market to develop a local nutritional program. This endeavor was funded by the Gratiot County Community Foundation. Their first trial of the new program, named Prescription for Health, ran from June through October 2018.

Prescription for Health consists of six weekly nutrition education classes. Participants interact with the instructor and their classmates as they learn how to choose nutritious foods, plan a healthy diet and prepare healthy meals. During each class, the instructor shares evidence-based nutritional advice and brings an example recipe that participants sample. Each participant also receives coupons for the St. Louis Farmer’s Market so they can put their new food-selection knowledge into practice.

Marshall Lombard of Alma learned about Prescription for Health from his family doctor who helped him sign him up for the pilot program. As a former certified food safety technician, Lombard felt that the course was a bit like a refresher for him but says that it would certainly be very helpful for somebody without any previous knowledge of food and nutrition. For him, the benefit came from learning more about how to put this knowledge of nutrition to use in his daily life. “We started learning about how to take care of ourselves, and how to choose better and eat better, more nutritious food,” Lombard said.

Ithaca resident Rebecca Fawcett was also signed up for Prescription

for Health by her family doctor. She had just received a high test result for her hemoglobin A1c level - an indicator of high long-term blood sugar. While in the program, she learned several techniques for managing her blood sugar through her diet and lifestyle. An avid baker, through the program, Fawcett learned how to bake with Splenda and reduce the amount of sugar she puts into recipes. She also discovered healthier alternatives, such as fat-free, sugar-free whipped cream. In addition, the program incorporated ways she could improve her metabolism with regular exercise, such as 20-minute walks three to four times per week.

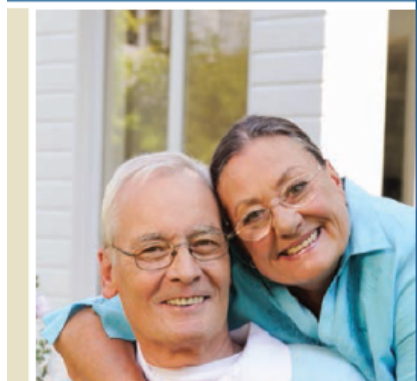
Both Lombard and Fawcett feel that the greatest asset of the course was their instructor, Bonnie.

“Bonnie has a wonderful way of helping you out. She is so informative,” said Fawcett. Lombard agreed, saying, “She was really helpful, really nice and polite and professional.” Both also say they are looking forward to participating in the program again this coming year and have been recommending the program to others.

After participants complete the program, they fill out a health assessment to see how they have improved since the beginning of the program. Lombard reports not feeling as hungry, and selecting better foods when he shops at the supermarket. Likewise, Fawcett says that she and her husband now make conscientious decisions both when eating out at restaurants and when cooking at home. Fawcett is glad to say that her A1c level has improved as a result.

Those interested in learning more about the Prescription for Health program may call Hensler at (989) 466-3661.

### **Long Term Guest Care**



**SEVILLE TWP.**

# Mallory elected supervisor

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**By Greg Nelson***gnelson@medianewsgroup.com*

Tish Mallory has never been one to simply sit around doing nothing.

The 1982 Alma High School graduate, who earned an associate's degree from Montcalm Community College, is the owner of the Cutting Edge hair salon in Elwell, a real estate agent for New Horizon's Realty in Alma and the co-owner of Unique Boutiques, also in Alma.

**Mallory**

Mallory, 54, was also elected as a trustee to the Seville Township board in 2016.

However, before even making it through her first four-year term she is now the township's supervisor

Mallory and fellow trustee

**MALLORY » PAGE 2**

# Mallory

FROM PAGE 1

Marlin Brush both sought to succeed former Supervisor Dave Owens, who resigned in January.

During a special meeting earlier this month the board chose Mallory to fill the post by a 3-1 vote.

Clerk Teresa Frisbie and Treasurer Ashlee Gibson both cast their ballots for Mallory, while Brush and Mallory each voted for themselves.

"I've always liked to keep busy," said Mallory, who started working at her parent's store, the former Walsh's Grocery in Elwell, at the age of 8. "What else are you going to do. I'm not one to just sit around."

She will fulfill the remainder of Owens' term, which runs through Dec. 31, 2020.

"I plan to give it my full commitment," Mallory said. "It's the right thing to do."

She's been a Seville Township resident since 1975 and calls it "a great community."

"I want to try and make the world a better place," Mallory said. "I like to help people."

However, she's going to wait and see how the job goes before deciding whether or not to run for the post in 2020.

"There's no better way of finding out then by doing it," Mallory said.

Now the board has 45 days to fill her vacant trustee position.

"I know of four people who are thinking about (applying)," Mallory said.

In the meantime, the board has a couple of major issues its facing.

One is adopting an ordinance to regulate the installation of wind turbines in

**"We're not creating an ordinance for the turbine companies. We're creating it for our residents and make it safe for people. We are researching both sides. The pros and cons."**

— Tish Mallory, Seville Township Supervisor

the township.

Board members are looking at something a bit more strict that what the county and other townships have in place, Mallory explained.

"We're not anti turbines," she said. "Other townships have to keep updating or amending their ordinances. We need to get it right in the first place.

"We're not creating an ordinance for the turbine companies. We're creating it for our residents and make it safe for people. We are researching both sides. The pros and cons."

The board's other con-

cern is that its facing an order from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality that could result in the installation of a sewer system in the community of Riverdale.

"It's been an ongoing problem for years," Mallory said. "Back in 1980 they were talking about a new sewer system for Riverdale but nothing was ever done."

Now, according to the MDEQ, a number of private septic systems have failed and discharging into the Pine River.

In 2015, the township did have the Spicer Group do an

engineering study to determine what could be done to rectify the problem, Mallory said.

Officials are working with the MDEQ and the Michigan Rural Water Association to determine the best option.

"We're trying to do what we can to get grants and loans to help those people out," Mallory said.

The septic systems in the area will be dye tested by the MRWA.


"All we will have to pay for is the dye," Mallory noted. "We want to look at everything to make it as feasible as possible."

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## Health Department's Phone Number Spoofed

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The Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department (MMDHD) has learned that some residents are receiving calls from someone claiming to be with the Health Department or Medicare. In both instances, the caller is asking for confidential, personal information. These calls are coming from scammers, not the Mid-Michigan District Health Department.

The scammers are using a technique called caller ID spoofing. They falsify information transmitted to your caller ID to hide their identity. They tend to use a local number or a number from a trusted business, to increase the likelihood that you'll answer the phone. In this case, they are using one of MMDHDs numbers (Clinton County: 989-224-2195, Gratiot County: 989-875-3681, Montcalm County: 989-831-5237).

If you receive one of these calls, simply hang up. If you get a message on your answering machine, do not return the call. And most importantly, never give out personal information over the phone, such as account numbers, Social Security numbers, your mother's maiden name or passwords to an unsolicited caller or if you are at all suspicious.

Other tips to avoid becoming a victim of spoofing:

Don't answer calls from unknown numbers.

If you answer the phone and you are asked to hit a button to stop getting the calls, hang up.

Do not respond to any questions, especially those that can be answered with "yes" or "no."

If you get a call from someone who says they represent a company or government agency, and you are suspicious, hang up and call the number in the phone book, or on the company's or agency's website.

Use caution if you are pressured for information immediately.

CMU

# Professor conducting an oral history of PBB exposure

**By Greg Nelson***gnelson@medianewsgroup.com*

Since 2011, researchers from the Atlanta, Ga.-based Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University have been studying the long-term health effects of PBB exposure on Michigan residents.

Now a Central Michigan University professor is taking a different approach regarding gathering information on the PBB disaster that occurred at the former Velsicol Chemical Co. plant in St. Louis in 1973, when the fire-retardant PBB was mistakenly mixed with animal feed and shipped to farmers and feed mills statewide.

The mix-up wasn't discovered until a year later and people throughout the state were exposed to PBB by eating the contaminated food that had been consumed by cattle, pigs and chickens.

Dr. Brittany B. Fremion, an assistant professor of history at

**Fremion****PBB » PAGE 5**

# PBB

FROM PAGE 1

CMU, wants to not only hear those stories but record them.

She began developing the Michigan PBB Oral History Project in the spring of 2018, after individuals expressed an interest in documenting “their memories and experiences.”

Fremion and her students have traveled the state audio and video taping interviews with individuals to create a collection that can be used by researchers, educators and the community.

“We have interviewed 18 people and collected almost 30 hours of audio,” she said. “In some instances, we have interviewed participants more than once. Our goal for the current grant project are 40 interviews or 80 hours of audio, whichever comes first.

“Beyond the current grant work I intend to continue collecting interviews over the coming year. To date, we have approximately 100 who have signed up or expressed an interest in being interviewed.”

Emery University researchers, members of the Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force and the PBB Advisory Board “have played an important role in providing feedback on the project and helping recruit participants,” Fremion added.

A grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences has provided much of the funding for her work. When completed the oral histories will be donated and preserved in a special research collection at the Museum of Cultural and Natural History at CMU.

“We aim to document a wide variety of personal recollections and experiences with PBB contamination in Michigan since the 1970s, including but not limited to farm families, chemical workers, political officials, state agency representatives. research-

ers, medical professionals, veterinarians, journalists, attorneys, activists and consumers,” Fremion said.

“Interviews can take anywhere from 50 minutes to two hours. It depends on how much information a participant is willing and able to share.”

Although funding is due to end this spring that won’t stop her from moving forward with the project.

“I intend to continue interviews over the next year,” Fremion said.

“It’s hard to put an end date on a project that is designed to document such a wide variety of perspectives and experiences, especially when so many people were affected by the PBB mix-up.”

She and her team of students will be at St. Louis City Hall on Saturday, March 16 to conduct more interviews.

If anyone is interested in

participating, wants more information, or to sign up for a future date, they can call Fremion at 989-774-1094, or email her at fremil1b@cmich.edu.

## Pine River Township Planning Commission Public Hearing Scheduled Rezoning Issue March 14, 2019

The Pine River Township Planning Commission has requested a Public Hearing in regards to re-zoning approval of parcel 29-12-021-014-10, in the M-46 corridor from Light Commercial to Heavy Commercial as required in the Pine River Township Zoning Ordinance, due to clerical error.

The Public Hearing is scheduled for Thursday March 14, 2019 at 7:05 pm at the Pine River Township Hall located at 1495 W Monroe Road. If you wish to comment regarding the above, please attend the meeting on March 14, 2019 or submit your comments in writing to Planning Commission, c/o Andi Whitmore, Twp Clerk, 1495 W Monroe Road, Saint Louis, Michigan 48880. These comments must be in the Township Clerk’s possession no later than 11:59 a.m. on March 14, 2019.

**Andi Whitmore, Clerk  
Pine River Township**

Published February 28, 2019

## PUBLIC NOTICE OF STATE-OWNED OIL AND GAS RIGHTS TO BE OFFERED FOR LEASE AUCTION

Lands under consideration for oil and gas leasing include acreage in the following counties: **ALPENA, ARENAC, GLADWIN, GRAND TRAVERSE, ISABELLA, LAKE, MASON, MIDLAND, AND WEXFORD.**

On May 7, 2019 the **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** will offer, at an oral-bid public auction, approximately 4,130 acres of state-owned oil and gas lease rights in those Michigan counties indicated herein. More detailed information regarding location of the nominated parcels is available at [www.michigan.gov/minerals](http://www.michigan.gov/minerals), under *Maps*, select *Mineral Lease Nomination Maps*; or by calling 517-284-5844.

Written comments from interested parties relative to the classification of any description must be received by **Office of Minerals Management (OMM)** at the address specified herein NO LATER THAN April 9, 2019. Final approval of proposed classification will be set at the sole discretion of the Director of the DNR.

**Registration of bidders** will begin at 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 7, 2019, and continue throughout the auction. Registration will be at the **Lansing Center**, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI. Bids may be submitted by individuals of legal age, a partnership, corporation, or other legal entity qualified to do business in Michigan. Prospective bidders will be required to submit a valid government-issued photo identification (ID) which may be retained by DNR staff until bidder cards are returned and all successful bids are paid in full. In addition, if the bidder is not on the authorized bidder list, they will be required to submit a security deposit in order to register. The security deposit must be a cashier’s check or money order in the amount of \$5,000 made payable to “State of Michigan.” The security deposit will be returned to the registered bidder after their bidder card is returned and all successful bids are paid in full. **Prospective bidders can contact Ms. Kimberly Venne at 517-284-5912 or [vennek@michigan.gov](mailto:vennek@michigan.gov) prior to the auction** to confirm they are on the authorized bidder list. (In order to be placed on the authorized bidder list, the individual must have been a successful bidder at a previous State of Michigan Oil and Gas Lease Auction; not have an outstanding balance owed; and not be on the DNR Hold Action List.)

**Offering of lease rights** will begin at 9:00 a.m. at a minimum bid of \$10 per acre and will continue until all descriptions have been offered. Additionally, at the auction’s end and at the option of the DNR, parcels for which no bids are received may be re-offered at a minimum bid of \$2 per acre.

**The total bonus** must be paid at the time of check out for all lease rights which receive successful bids. Prospective bidders who do not have an established credit rating with the DNR through prior leasing of state-owned minerals, must pay at least one-half of the TOTAL bonus bid by cash, certified check, cashier’s check, or money order. A credit rating may be established by filing with OMM three letters of reference, acceptable to the DNR, one of which must be a bank. In no instance will the DNR accept “site drafts,” even if noted as a “zero-day site draft.”

An auction catalog showing the legal description of the lands proposed to be offered and parcel classifications will be available after April 11, 2019, at [www.michigan.gov/minerals](http://www.michigan.gov/minerals), select *Oil and Gas*; or by contacting staff at DNR-OMM, P.O. Box 30452, Lansing, MI 48909; [DNR-Minerals@Michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-Minerals@Michigan.gov); or 517-284-5844.



**The Daily News**  
Monday, March 4, 2019

# Free Dental Health Night



On Wednesday night, Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative, Alpha Family Services, Michigan State University Extension office and EightCAP Inc. sponsored a free dental health night at Flat River Community Library. Children of all ages were treated to healthy snacks, dental games, stories, healthy nutrition choices and time with the Tooth Fairy and Mighty Molar. — Submitted photos



**Waterways such as the Flat River in Montcalm County have been known to contain large amounts of E. coli, potentially due to issues with septic systems; however, little progress has been made legislatively over the years to address the issue. — DN Photo | Cory Smith**

## **Lower, Outman focus on future septic systems legislation**

**CORY SMITH**

csmith@staffordgroup.com

LANSING — When it comes to the issue of better regulating septic systems and eradicating E. coli from Michigan's rivers, lakes and streams, legislatively, little progress has ever been made.

Dating back to the late 1990s, efforts have been made on both sides of the aisle in the Michigan House and Senate to better

regulate and improve inspection and maintenance of septic systems. Last year the focus reached a local level, as the Mid-Michigan District Health Department attempted to introduce a three-county ordinance to reduce human sewage in local rivers.

The concerns have come forward more aggressively in recent years as high levels of E. coli have been discovered throughout the state — specifi-

cally determined to come from human waste — in area waterways, such as the Flat River in Montcalm County.

But despite all the concerns and efforts, nothing has worked, as legislative efforts have seldom made their way through both the House and Senate, bogged down by disagreements from private interest groups and environmental organizations, as well as con-

**Continues on Page 2**

# Lower, Outman focus on septic systems legislation

Continued from Page 1

cerned residents who fear changes could result in new permit fees and increases in inspection costs.

Considering all of that information, two legislators — Rep. Jim Lower, R-Cedar Lake, and Sen. Rick Outman, R-Six Lakes, are hoping to work together within the current two-year legislative term to find a solution.

Beginning his first term as a senator following six years as a representative, Outman finds himself chairing a legislative committee for the first time in his tenure — the Committee on Environmental Quality.

As chairman of that committee, Outman said he will be placing a specific focus on septic systems and E. coli.

“I’m a stakeholder with this. My front yard is the Flat River — it cuts my farm in half — so it’s important to me,” Outman said. “I know it exists in the rivers through testing, and we know by and large it is coming from humans. I want people to know that this is an important issue to me as well.”

Additionally, Lower, having introduced bipartisan legislation last year to address septic tank failures, only to see it fail to make its way out of the House, is determined to aid Outman as best he can to see potential new legislation be favorable to Representatives and Senators alike.

“These issues are nonpartisan, but they tend to get politicized by one side or the other for whatever reason, but what we are trying to do is come up with a solution that just makes sense, generally speaking. That’s the goal, but we’ve got a lot of work to do,” he said. “So we’re hoping to come together with a new version of the legislation that can pass, as well as preserve private property rights and also solve the issue. We want to find a way to get the E. coli out of the lakes, rivers and streams without burdening the homeowners as much as possible, and I think we will make a good team on it.”

Both legislators pointed to specific test results as a reason to take the issue seriously and work together:

Michigan has a total body contact water quality standard of 300 E. coli per 100 milliliters (ml), meaning if a water sample tests over that amount, you shouldn’t swim in that body of water.

Tests at 14 of 32 sites on the Flat River in 2018



Rep. Jim Lower, R-Cedar Lake, left, listens as Sen. Rick Outman, R-Six Lakes, shares his thoughts on addressing the presence of E. coli in Michigan waterways such as the Flat River, during a joint interview with the Daily News Monday at Silk City Saloon in Belding. — DN Photo | Cory Smith

revealed water quality results ranged from safe levels of 23 ml to levels eight times the standard at 2,420 ml.

Other rivers, such as the Upper Pine River, have shown results as high as 127,550 ml, more than 425 times the standard.

Under current state law, Michigan doesn’t define the malfunction or failure of an onsite wastewater treatment system, which only allows the problem to continue without consequence.

Lower and Outman described their tandem as one that will be a two-pronged approach, with Outman working “on the ground” with the issue while Lower will focus on working with partners in Lansing.

“Right now for me, I’m talking to a lot of the septic installers around the area, picking their brains, trying to come up with a solution that they see would solve the problem,” Outman said. “Coming from my background, being an excavator, if you’re going to hire me to do something like this, with the proposals I’ve seen, I can tell it’s not going to solve the problem yet. You might catch a few of the septic systems causing the problem, but not the majority of

them, because you’re looking for a needle in the haystack, especially when someone is circumventing the rules we have in place now.”

“A lot of what I’m doing is managing the different interest groups — the realtors, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, environmental groups, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s administration, the House and Senate — trying to manage the political end of it, because there’s a lot of political landmines to navigate,” Lower added. “While I do that, Rick is on the ground, and we’re going to bring the two elements together ideally, and hopefully come up with a proposal to solve this in an efficient way.”

While no legislative bills have been introduced as of yet, Lower said that’s no cause for concern, as with legislation failing so many times in the past, he and Outman don’t want to propose anything without a solid foundation.

“It’s an issue that we both care about, and it has to go through both the House and Senate, so it’s good that we work together,” Lower said.

“I don’t want legislation for legislation’s sake,” Outman added. “If we can’t solve the issue, then I’d rather not do anything. Right now we are still looking for a solution.”

# The Daily News

## Tuesday, March 5, 2019

### MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT PUBLIC NOTICE

of

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE AND REGULAR BOARD OF HEALTH MEETINGS FOR 2019

*Finance Committee meetings held at 8:30 a.m. and Regular meetings held at 9:00 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of every month, except for December)*

February 27th	Organizational Meeting, Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns
March 27th	Gratiot County Branch Office, Ithaca
April 24th	Administrative Offices, Stanton
May 22nd	Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns
June 26th	Gratiot County Branch Office, Ithaca
July 24th	Administrative Offices, Stanton
August 28th	Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns
September 25th	Gratiot County Branch Office, Ithaca
October 23rd	Administrative Offices, Stanton
November 27th	Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns

Finance Committee at 9:30 a.m., Regular Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

December 18th Gratiot County Branch Office, Ithaca

This meeting is open to all members of the public under Michigan's Open Meetings Act. The Mid-Michigan District Board of Health will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired, interpreters, and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon one (1) week's notice. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Mid-Michigan District Board of Health by emailing, writing or calling:

Cynthia M. Partlo, Board Secretary, Mid-Michigan District Board of Health

615 N. State Street, Stanton, Michigan 48888-9702, (989) 831-3610

E-Mail: [cpartlo@mmdhd.org](mailto:cpartlo@mmdhd.org)

# The Daily News

## Wednesday, March 6, 2019

### Food summit Saturday in Edmore

Submitted by MSU Extension

EDMORE — Montcalm County is known in Michigan for its agriculture production — it is one of the major producers of potatoes and, as of 2012, had nearly 230,000 acres in agricultural production. While many people depend on agriculture for livelihoods in the county, much of what the county produces is processed and consumed elsewhere. The result is that many local residents do not have access to healthy, affordable local foods.

This is a challenge that Healthy Montcalm is aiming to address.

Healthy Montcalm is a countywide initiative focused on improving the overall health and well-being of Montcalm County residents with the goal of fostering an empowered community where people are engaged in leading healthy, active lives. To this end, the Steering Committee has spent much of the last two years exploring the local food system in Montcalm County and now aims to create deeper connections between farmers and consumers to foster a healthier community. The committee has been engaging producers and buyers in plans to develop a regional food hub in Edmore, Michigan. This food hub would provide a new market for local growers and aggregate

products for larger customers, such as restaurants, school food service, senior centers, and other institutional purchasers.

On Saturday, Montcalm County farmers, buyers, and community members are invited to come together at the Montcalm Food Summit to learn about the local food system and explore the potential for increasing access to local food through a county Food Hub. The Montcalm County Food Summit will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Four Seasons Market Place, 544 E. Forrest St. Edmore. Anyone interested in learning more about the local food system is invited and encouraged to attend. RSVP is encouraged but not required to attend. RSVP to Mary ZumBrunnen at [mary@one-communityconsulting.com](mailto:mary@one-communityconsulting.com) or Rex Hoyt at [rhoyt@mmdhd.org](mailto:rhoyt@mmdhd.org). There is no cost to attend. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The day will provide opportunities to learn from different actors in the food system, celebrate over meals featuring local food, and connect buyers and producers to increase the amount of local food transactions in the county. Educational sessions include food equity, scaling up for farmers, a look at food hubs throughout the state, and more. For more information, visit [msue.msu.edu](http://msue.msu.edu).

**LEGAL NOTICES**

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of  
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Cynthia M. Partlo, Board Secretary  
Mid-Michigan District Board of Health  
615 N. State St.  
Stanton, Michigan 48888-9702  
(989) 831-3610  
E-Mail: cpartlo@mmdhd.org

**GRATIOT**

## Environmental experts to address state lawmakers on PBB and more

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**By Greg Nelson***gnelson@medianewsgroup.com*

Some local experts will have the opportunity to address state lawmakers regarding past, current and future environmental concerns.

The legislative event, titled, "From PBB to PFAS: Policy Lessons from Widespread Contaminations in Michigan," will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, March 21 at the Capitol in Lansing.

Only state policymakers and invited guests are allowed to attend.

It is a combined effort of Central Michigan University, the University of Michigan, Atlanta-based Emory University, the Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force, Mid-Michigan District Health Department and the PBB Citizens Advisory Group.

A grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences is funding the event.

Among the local speakers will be Dr. Brittany Fremion, an assistant professor of history at CMU

**PBB » PAGE 2**

# PBB

FROM PAGE 1

who is currently conducting the Michigan PBB Oral History Project, and retired Alma College professor Dr. Ed Lorenz, a founding member of the Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force.

Also addressing lawmakers will be Dr. Al Fransblau of the UM School of Public Health, and Dr. Michele Marcus of the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, who has been studying the long-term effects of PBB exposure on Michigan residents since 2011.

Fremion plans to share some of the research she has conducted with state lawmakers.

“We plan to present a portion of the interviews we’ve already collected to state policymakers to provide insight into the PBB episode,” she said.

“Our hope is that in discussing the lessons learned from PBB we can offer some practical solutions to state representatives that help them to better address on-

going, as well as new and emerging environmental and human health crisis in Michigan.”

One of the new concerns is PFAS, a family of chemicals that include perfluorooctanis acid and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, which has been found in 64 municipal water supplies throughout the state.

PFAS have also been discovered in a former landfill once operated by the city of Ithaca a couple of miles west of town.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has ordered the city to cleanup the property.

The chemical is found in firefighting foams, stain repellents, nonstick cookware, waterproof clothing, and food wrappers, among many other household products.

PFAS do not break down in the environment, move easily through water and can cause chronic disease, according to health experts.

The legislative event will tie in the PBB disaster at the former Velsicol Chemical Co. plant in St. Louis in the early 1970s, to recent problems such as the Flint water

**“Our hope is that in discussing the lessons learned from PBB we can offer some practical solutions to state representatives that help them to better address ongoing, as well as new and emerging environmental and human health crisis in Michigan.”**

— Dr. Brittany Fremion, assistant professor of history at CMU

crisis and PFAS contamination, Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force Secretary Jane Keon said.

“Our experience with PBB showed a failure to respond even though the evidence of Velsicol’s mishandling of chemicals had been well in view for years,” she explained. “We are hoping that the event will help us with our problem with the State Health Department, which is not fully cooperating to give access to Emory University with the records they need to perform comprehensive health studies of PBB exposure.

“In a sense, we are a case study as to how not to handle a contamination crisis.

The problem was ignored until it was too late.”

Lorenz added that working with universities and other agencies from around the state may give the group of environmentalists “potential power to make change.”

His address to lawmakers will focus on policy decisions and the repeated failure of state legislators “to pay attention to evidence from scientists and citizens.” The slide show Lorenz will present consists of excerpts from news articles, letters and scientific reports that illustrated the many problems the Velsicol plant had long before the PBB mistake took place.



**ST. LOUIS**

# Researcher to gather local PBB histories on Saturday

## Contamination among worst in U.S. history

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**By Morning Sun staff**

Some 40 years later, the chemical contamination that hit Michigan and polluted the waters, air, soil and people of St. Louis still stands among the worst chemical tragedies in U.S. history.

More than just a memory, the PBB contamination remains in the water and soil of the Gratiot County town, and in the bodies of many exposed to it through direct contact and contaminated food.

On Saturday, a researcher wants to hear the memories, impact and histories of those still living with the aftermath.

People throughout Michigan were exposed to the flame retardant chemical PBB between 1973-1978 from the food they ate when farm animals were poisoned by the accidental mixing of PBB into their feed.

People in St. Louis, Michigan

**PBB » PAGE 2**

# PBB

FROM PAGE 1

were exposed through their food, and also in the air they breathed and the dust of PBB that touched their skin from the manufacturing of PBB in their town.

Studies on PBB exposure conducted by researchers at the Rollins School of Public Health showed blood sample levels highest among former workers at Michigan Chemical/Velsicol, followed by their family members.

The chemical factory was the largest employer in St. Louis from 1936-1978, which meant many workers and their families were exposed.

The PBB Oral History Project, funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health, is gathering personal experiences from the time of the PBB Disaster.

Former chemical workers, truckers who dumped the leftover PBB, farm families, and people who lived in St. Louis during that time are encouraged to tell their stories.

Dr. Brittany Bayless, a history professor from Central Michigan University, and other interviewers are holding a special interviewing event in St. Louis this



MEDIANEWS GROUP FILE PHOTO

Jane Keon, a founder of the Pine River Superfund Task Force and author of the book "Tombstone Town: Left for Dead, Marked with a Tombstone, a Toxic Town Fights Back", stands with the tombstone marking the contaminated area. It has since been moved from the site to the St. Louis Historical Society.

Saturday, March 16 at St. Louis City Hall, beginning at 10 a.m.

Bayless can be contacted at (989) 774-1094, or [Fremilb@cmich.edu](mailto:Fremilb@cmich.edu)

# Daily News

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

## Edmore Market Place's future called into question

**BRANDON SCHREUR**  
bschreur@staffordgroup.com

EDMORE — It was at the one hour and 45-minute mark of a three-and-a-half hour Edmore Village Council meeting when council members lost their cool. The flared tempers, which mostly stemmed from discus-

sions about the Edmore Market Place, resulted in Village President Gloria Burr attempting to shut Monday's entire meeting down during the middle of a hectic debate.

The meeting got off to a shaky start when Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director Phil Garcia gave his annual DDA

report.

While Garcia was excited to tell council members about the food summit the DDA hosted at the Edmore Market Place this past weekend, the conversation quickly took a turn.

Councilman Tom Colburn

**Continues on Page 3**



From left, Edmore Village Council members John Moore, Tom Colburn and Bonnie Ashbaugh discuss the future of the Edmore Market Place during Monday's meeting. — DN Photo | Brandon Schreur

# Edmore Market Place's future called into question

Continued from Page 1

had a long list of concerns regarding the Market Place.

"The floors are in horrible shape," Colburn said. "We're talking about hosting wedding receptions and dances with alcohol in there — it's an accident waiting to happen with all those floors and kids running around. I understand we have an umbrella policy that covers that, but there are a couple of things that go along with that. If the insurer is smart, there is going to be some kind of gross negligence clause in there. Secondly, we don't want people to get hurt whether we get sued or not. I'm a little concerned about having these events in there until this is rectified.

"The other thing is that the whole purpose of (the Market Place) was to get businesses in there," he said. "Not events, but businesses. If we have someone come along who wants to rent some space and we have these events booked for the next couple of months, how are they going to do it? How can they come in and reconfigure the place to the way they want it?"

Garcia said he understood these concerns and he would bring these matters up to the DDA the next time they meet.

Later in the meeting, Colburn again brought up the topic of the Edmore Market Place by making a motion to stop the building from hosting any events effective immediately.

"I'd like to stop any further investment in the bag factory (the Market Place) other than what's contractually bonding or necessary to public safety," he said. "That includes canceling all weddings and similar events, and making any that cannot be canceled sign a full lease of liability for any known safety issue."

Councilman Aaron Hadley pointed out some individuals within the village were using the building for free without any liability and didn't seem to have any problem with the floor. Burr responded by saying the Personnel Committee was already looking into things with Garcia to try and remedy the issue.

"The Personnel Committee met with Phil Garcia?" Hadley asked.

"Yes," Burr responded.

"Who's employed by the DDA?" Hadley again asked.

"Yes."

"To talk about the bag building's safety?"

"Yes."

"That makes no sense whatsoever," Hadley said. "That doesn't make sense to anybody ..."

"That's enough," Burr interrupted while slamming her gavel down. "You said that ..."

"No!" Hadley retorted while slamming his fist on the table in an even louder manner. "You cannot stop me from making a statement. I'm a member of this council and I have the right to have this discussion. Why can I not ask a legitimate question or make a legitimate statement?"

As Hadley attempted to continue his point, Burr decided to try and put an end to things altogether.

"Meeting is adjourned!" she declared.

Hadley furiously grabbed his coat and attempted to leave before Burr called the meeting back into session. She then put the council in a 10-minute recess so everyone could calm down.

Returning with cooler tempers, Hadley made a sub-motion to postpone Colburn's motion until next month so the DDA and the general public would be aware these discussions were taking place.

"What about people who do have weddings booked, for instance?" Colburn asked. "Wouldn't it be good to let them know we're having these discussions so they can offer their perspective? What about the prom that's scheduled to be there?"

"I can't wait to tell the high school kids what's happened!" Garcia sarcastically added from the audience.

Garcia also added that anyone who rents the building is made well aware of the state of the floor before signing any documents.

"Anyone who has walked through that building has walked on it and stepped on the floor. They didn't just call without proper visitation," he said. "... I took my time on Saturdays and Sundays to walk through all

the floors with them. They didn't have any problems with the floors and they understood why they were getting, so don't make it sound like I didn't do my job."

Hadley's sub-motion failed in a 5-2 vote, with Burr, Colburn, Jerry Rasmussen, Chet Guild and John Moore once again voting "no."

Guild then moved the conversation away from the building's floors and once again brought into the question the original purpose of the Edmore Market Place.

"I remember, Phil, the day they interviewed you ... my question to you was if you were going to set this up as a banquet room for weddings, receptions or arts and crafts shows. You said no. What have you done to market the place? To get a business in there?" Guild asked Garcia.

Guild said he's gone to a number of markets across the state to search for vendors or buyers to come into the place.

"And nobody is interested?" Guild asked.

"Well," Garcia said. "No."

Hadley reminded council members the Edmore Market Place was designed to create economic development not just for the building itself, but for the entire village.

"Let's say there's an event there," he said. "People are going to come to the wedding. They'll get gas, they'll get a hotel, they'll get beer and they'll get food. Hopefully, there are some options for catering locally. Here is an opportunity to bring people from other cities — Cadillac, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Kalamazoo — into Edmore to shop locally at our businesses. Tom's proposal tells all those people to stay out of our town and go find somewhere else. These people already have their wedding date planned. They're not going to change that; they'll just find another venue in another town."

After several more minutes of discussion, Colburn's motion was brought to a vote and failed 5-2 with Bonnie Ashbaugh, Hadley, Burr, Rasmussen and Moore voting "no."

The Village Council then went into closed session to discuss "ongoing litigation" for nearly an hour before adjourning at 10:30 p.m.

**GRATIOT COUNTY**

# Humans, pigs and cows are to blame for pollution in the Pine River

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**By Rick Mills***rmills@medianewsgroup.com**@rickmills2 on Twitter*

With plenty of day-to-day variations and exceptions, it appears that humans are the most prevalent source of E-coli and bacterial contamination in the Pine River.

Pigs and hogs are ranked second and cows third.

Horses - with direct access to bodies of water - are a distant fourth.

Molly Rippke with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality spoke to the Healthy Pine River group and outlined the results of studies conducted over a five week period in 2017, along with a few more tests in 2018.

Julie Spencer administrator of the Gratiot Conservation District is the one however, who ranked the sources from data she gathered.

The DEQ tests showed varying degrees of contamination at 13 sites in Gratiot County - from god-awful to one site that actually met all the state's safety

**RIVER » PAGE 2**

# River

FROM PAGE 1

standards - but there was some other good news too.

Despite the oxygen depleting contamination, both cold water and warm water fish have enough oxygen to thrive, Rippke said.

Some days during the testing period were dry and other days were wet, Rippke said.

In very general terms, she said that when the water levels are low, E-coli contamination is usually high.

She pointed out that

high water levels generally dilute the contamination.

Even so, Rippke said that there were some sites like Cedar Creek at Fremont Road where the E-coli levels were always high, rain or shine.

Other sites had high levels too but not as high as Cedar Creek, she said, while still more sites had higher levels of E-coli after it rained than before the rain.

"Obviously, there is a constant source of E-coli coming into the river," she said.

Before the lab tests were completed, one way to determine the source was to

look around the area.

Was there a CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) for example, upstream?

Rippke singled out three CAFOs as likely sources at three of the test sites.

She also had pictures of a path used by horses when they came to a creek or stream to drink as well, along with flooded pastures.

And, she showed a picture of a clearly failed septic system.

Marcus Cheatham, director of the Gratiot, Montcalm and Clinton Counties District Health Department, said it is his under-

standing too, that with the data available, human contamination is the most prevalent source.

He said the health department believes that there are about 4,000 homes in the district that have no septic system at all.

That doesn't include the failed systems.

Several homeowners don't even know if they have a system or not, he said.

Many of these residents are low income and do not have the thousands of dollars needed to install a new system, he said.

So, one of the goals in

the three county wide district is to create a water program to deal with all of the issues, including the septic systems and CAFOS, Cheatham said.

He's been talking to the counties to help "step up to fund the program to give (homeowners) financial help," he said.

There have been no proposals from the counties yet, but he noted that the county commissioners are aware of the water quality problems and most want to help solve the problem, as do several of the homeowners.

The Maple River, he noted after the meeting,


is in fact, worse than the Pine in terms of contamination.

For her part, Spencer told the group that on some days, the contamination levels showed cows or pigs to be the the number one source of contamination but humans were overall deemed to be the most prevalent source.

"But we found all of them (human and animal contamination) at all of the sites," she said.

The Gratiot Conservation District would be developing a new watershed management plan with a priority list of issues to tackle, she said.

## Velsicol EPA Update

 Posted on Wednesday, March 20th, 2019 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

### **In-place Thermal Treatment**

The design for the in-place thermal treatment for Area 2 is under development. Due to the size of Area 2 (3 acres) and the large amount of electrical power that is required, the cleanup will need to be completed in two phases. The drilling of the heaters and extraction wells to remove both vapor and groundwater will begin the week of March 25, 2019.

The same pollution cleaning equipment for the vapor and groundwater employed in Area 1 will be used. Drilling is expected to take most of the summer and soil heating for the first phase is set to begin sometime in October 2019. Heating of soil for the second phase is expected to begin in August 2020 and the project is expected to be done in October 2021. The necessary funding to complete this project is available, including the state's 10 percent cost share.

EPA expects to have a public meeting sometime in May to discuss the Area 2 in-place thermal treatment system.

### **Downstream Pine River Investigation**

Sampling of Pine River stream banks near the high school athletic fields, just downstream from the St. Louis dam, is complete and the results show DDT contamination along the bank area. EPA expects to receive the results from the downstream ecological study from Michigan State University sometime this summer. We are waiting to receive an answer from EPA's Office of Research and Development if they will fund a pilot study evaluating the use of carbon-based materials to remove DDT in floodplain soil.

### **Velsicol Burn Pit**

The design for the in-place thermal treatment system continues. Funding has not been made available to begin this project, and electricity demand for the in-place thermal treatment system will not allow us to begin until after Area 2 is completed on the Velsicol Chemical Plant. The design for the hook-up of 11 homes to city of St. Louis drinking water continues.

## STATE

# Cases of H1N1 flu on the rise in mid-Michigan

*Morning Sun staff reports*

Winter is slowing leaving us, but some parts of flu season are still hanging on stubbornly.

For the week ending March 9, cases of that strain of flu pushed the total number of cases to seasonal highs.

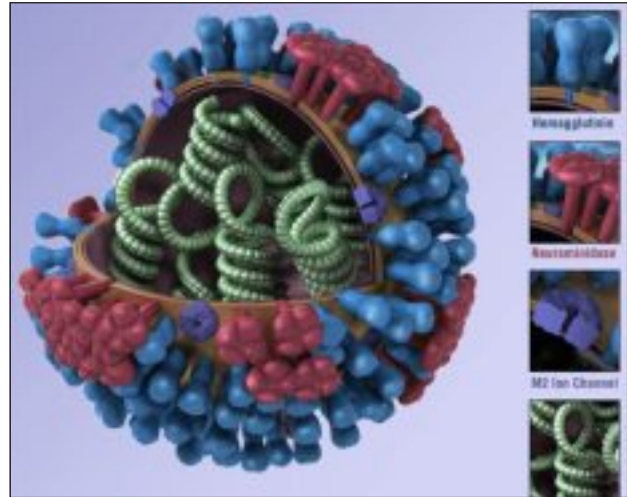
Regionally, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported cases of H1N1 were occurring at a moderate rate with increases in some places.

That tracks with most of the rest of the Lower Peninsula.

The rates for the other cases remained low or slightly elevated.

The state has also seen a seasonal high for flu-based hospitalizations in a sample catchment area including Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Genesee and Washtenaw counties. For that area during the week ending March 9, there were 60 hospitalizations.

Nationally, flu activity remains widespread everywhere but Texas, Tennessee, Vermont and the District of Columbia. In those places, flu activity was reported as regionally high.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL

There are high rates of flu-based hospitalization regionally.



## GRATIOT COUNTY

# Program to discuss impacts of PBB

By Greg Nelson

[gnelson@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:gnelson@medianewsgroup.com)

Local residents will have the opportunity to find out what lessons have been learned, and what the health and economic impacts have been following the 1970s PBB disaster.

The program will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday at St. Louis City Hall, 300 N. Mill St.

The event will include an update on PBB health-related research and a look at the decades of warning signs leading up to 1973 when the fire-retardant PBB was mistakenly mixed with animal feed. Both products were manufactured at the former Velsicol Chemical Co. plant in St. Louis.

Dr. Michelle Marcus from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga. will be on hand to talk about the long-term health effects of PBB exposure and provide the latest on her research.

She has been studying the matter since 2011 when Emory started maintaining the Michigan PB Registry.

Since then Marcus and her team have held several community meetings throughout the state, including a number in Gratiot County, taking blood samples to conduct additional studies.

In addition to hormone-related health effects, PBB exposure has been known to cause an increase in breast cancer, miscarriages, earlier than normal pubertal development and thyroid problems.

It has been discovered that it can be passed on to children born years later who may have been exposed in their mother's womb or through breast-feeding.

Studies currently being conducted include a clinical trial with a substance that may help the body eliminate PBB, and an epigenetic study with families of three generations to determine if exposed fathers can pass on PBB-re-



MORNING SUN FILE PHOTO

Jane Keon, a founder of the Pine River Superfund Task Force and author of the book *Tombstone Town: Left for Dead, Marked with a Tombstone, a Toxic Town Fights Back*, stands with the tombstone marking the contaminated area. It has since been moved from the site to the St. Louis Historical Society.

lated epigenetic marks to their children and grandchildren.

The meeting will also include a presentation by retired Alma College Professor Edward Lorenz, a founding member of the Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force,

He will talk about the lessons learned from the PBB disaster, that if applied now, would improve the handling of present-day contamination events such as the Flint water crisis and groundwater being contaminated by PFAS, a family of chemicals that include perfluorooctanic acid and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, which have been found in 64 municipal water systems around the state.

The final speaker will be Dr. Brittany Fremion, an associate professor of history at Central Michi-

gan University, who will discuss the interviews she has collected so far from her Michigan PBB Oral History Project.

Those who attend will also be given an update on the presentations all three speakers made before state legislators and policymakers on Thursday.

In addition, the event will feature a poster display detailing the after-effects of the PBB disaster on farmers and the Velsicol plant, the biological accumulation of contaminants in the human body and a timeline from 1973 to present regarding the PBB saga.

## Members Firs