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GOOD AFTERNOON

Have a great day!
Jeanette Herring

DEATHS

Evelyn A. Fullriede, 93, Three Rivers
Randy Johnson, 54, Constantine

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Walk-through loan forgiven in exchange for project commitments

BY ELENA HINES
MANAGING EDITOR

THREE RIVERS — The Three Rivers city commission Tuesday approved forgiving the Downtown Development Authority loan for the walk-through to the East Parking Lot, in exchange for the DDA committing to doing an average of \$28,800 worth of projects annually for the next seven years and four months.

Doing this will save the interest expense on the \$190,000 loan.

The vote was 4-1, with Commissioner George Ramsey dissenting and Mayor Ken Baker and Commissioner Elbert Foster absent.

"This wouldn't have been my first choice, but the state changed the rules twice and funneled us into a corner," Commissioner Daryl Griffith said. However, he sees how busy the downtown is thanks to the efforts of the DDA.

"I certainly applaud their efforts and I want to continue them," he said. "It's unfortunate that the state put us in the position where this is really the only way we can do it."

Mayor pro-tem Wendy Shank asked DDA executive director Christy Trammell if they had decided on any projects they would like to complete with the money.

Key is renovating the Mural Mall walk-through that is currently not ADA-compliant, Trammell said. Other goals include completing the north and south end of the East Parking Lot and working on gateway signage. They would like to make the most of their money by utilizing grants and have applied for some to assist with a couple of these projects.

City manager Joe Bippus said they had also applied for a grant for a skateboard park.

Ramsey said that with the needed changes in the city water system, which raised residents' taxes, he didn't see how the city could not be able to ask that the loan be repaid.

In addition, "in light of laying off the people we had to, I don't think we can do it at this time."

Shank said she liked the idea of the DDA becoming debt free but said she would feel better if money was spent on DDA projects the city would have paid for anyway. She

also wondered if money could be put toward police or fire instead.

Bippus said the original money came from leftover East Parking Lot funds; the commission could parcel that back out but most of it had come from sewer, water and street funds.

He noted that the commission would have the opportunity to approve the DDA budget.

In other business, commissioners...

In other business, commissioners approved a change order in the amount of \$25,610 for the water system improvements project.

Approved a change order in the amount of \$25,610 for the water system improvements project. Field changes due to the lack of information regarding the water main locations at the well-field located near the intersection of Arnold Street and Douglas Avenue prompted the need for the change order, according to a report from city staff.

Commissioner Earl Stark expressed great concern about the change.

"Every time they hit something that's not exactly what they anticipated they write a change order, and we get in our pocket and pay more money," he said. "I'm against that kind of engineering — it's not really engineering."

"We need to know for sure where stuff is," he said. "Why you're depending on someone else's treasure map is beyond me."

Department of Public Services director Amy Roth said they had tried to locate the water mains, but at the wellfield everything was under the water table and the equipment didn't get a signal. In their attempt to determine where the mains were, they relied on information from Miss Dig, and a combination of maps and memory of city staff.

Griffith said to find the kind of information Stark wanted they would have to dig.

"It's not possible to plan a project of this scope and not run into something unknown," he said.

Approved a PA-425 agreement (which governs property transfers between municipalities) for the Patel property on Millard Street and the Dairy Queen property. Fabius Township also has to approve these agreements. Bippus and Fabius supervisor John Kroggel continue to work on a template 425 agreement to facilitate

See LOAN, page 3

US flags ordered lowered for West Michigan officer

GRAND RAPIDS (AP) — U.S. flags in Michigan will be lowered in honor of a Walker police officer who was struck and killed by two fleeing bank robbers.

Gov. Rick Snyder ordered the flag lowering for Friday, the day of Trevor Slot's funeral.

The 41-year-old from Grand Rapids was killed last Thursday while laying down spike strips to stop a speeding sport utility vehicle on Interstate 96 in Ottawa County.

Visitation was Wednesday and Thursday at the Third Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. Funeral services will be Friday at the Resurrection Life Church in Grandville.

Derryl LaFave Jr. and Kristopher Cheyne crashed after Slot was hit. They were shot and killed by police when they fired at officers.

The pair had led police on a high-speed chase following a bank robbery in Muskegon County.



Grand Exalted Ruler presentation

David Carr, this year's Grand Exalted Ruler of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, presents a special citation to Kim Adams, Exalted Ruler of the Three Rivers Lodge #1248 in honor of the Lodge's 100th anniversary. Adams is not only the Lodge's 100th Exalted Ruler, but also its first woman to hold that position.

Photos: Commercial-News/Elena Hines

Original Bible, badges

The Elks' original Bible and badges are among the items on display in a collection of historical memorabilia on the Lodge's second floor.



100 years of Elkdom

BY ELENA HINES
MANAGING EDITOR

THREE RIVERS — On July 5, 1911, the Elks' District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler John Noel and the officers from Kalamazoo Lodge #50 came to Three Rivers opera house for the purpose of forming the 1,248th Lodge in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. The lodge was formed by 42 charter members under the leadership of Exalted Ruler John O'Dell. C.W. Wing, the first member, paid his dues of \$4. The first meeting was held in the "Elks Temple" on Sept. 14, 1911.

On Oct. 19, 2011, members of the Three Rivers Elks Lodge #1248 — whose roster now includes 508 — gathered for a banquet and program to celebrate 100 years of Elkdom.

"Lodges have good times and bad times," David Carr, Grand Exalted Ruler of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, told the group gathered for the ceremony at the Lodge on the corner of W. Michigan Avenue and Hooker Street (the same building they've had since the outset). "For a lodge to survive 100 years is terrific — fabulous."

Numerous Michigan Elks Association members and other club dignitaries, as well as past Exalted Rulers of the Three Rivers lodge, were in attendance.

The local organization "has always been community-focused," said Rick Lull, a 21-year member and Past

Exalted Ruler who served as master of ceremonies. "We have provided scholarships, hosted high school dances, participated in the Three Rivers Water Festival." The Lady Elks hosted fashion shows, donated equipment to the Three Rivers hospital and donated to children's charities.

Helping veterans and the handicapped are key focuses of the Elks as well.

During the 1980s, the lodge almost closed. A few dedicated men (women did not join until 2000) kept holding meetings, in their homes, in the JOCO Center, in the local VFW Hall. The social quarters closed for about 18 months, but eventually several members stepped forward and donated funds to reopen them.

"Today's economy presents its own challenges to today's officers," Lull said. "But we are dedicated to continuing the strong traditions that make this lodge the place we all love."

The current leadership of the lodge is Exalted Ruler Kim Adams, Leading Knight Tonya Brundige, Loyal Knight Chuck Gowan, Lecturing Knight Paul Rench, Chaplain Jeff Kinney, Inner Guard Mark Miller, Tiler Terry Kite, Treasurer Wayne Brigman, Secretary Cathy Luttrell, and Trustees Doug Austin, Dave Cook, Mike Lutz and Charlie Riley.

"The dedication these officers show indicates that this lodge can look forward to the next 100 years," Lull said.

Sometimes...
...you just don't need a reason

Ridgeway
FLORAL & GIFTS

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