



January 2022

NEWS

■ **Local:** Reporter John Hummer wrote this as part of *The Exponent's* front page article in its December 28 issue:

Three juveniles, ages 15-17, all reportedly from Grass Lake, have been charged with felonies after threatening a student at Grass Lake High School on Nov. 19, said Jackson County Deputy Darren Shackelford in his report to the Grass Lake Village Council on Tuesday, Dec. 21. They were charged on Monday, Dec. 20.

"Three juveniles sent a Snapchat video to a student at the high school with an [air] gun that they had taken the tip off that looked like a real one and said 'We're coming to get you,'" Shackelford said. He stated that the Snapchat video was then reported to the school, and officials there contacted him. Shackelford is the assigned deputy to the Village of Grass Lake and Grass Lake Charter Township.

The suspects proceeded to walk from Simpson Street to the high school area, Shackelford noted. "They never actually entered the campus but they were on the grounds and were told to leave by the principal and assistant principal. Shackelford caught up with them on South Street.

"Two of them were in possession of BB guns," he said. "One of them had a Glock that looked just like what I carry on my hip. Had he pointed it at me - you know what I mean."

Shackelford noted that in Michigan, the law was recently changed so 18-and-over are now charged as adults. Those 17 and under are now considered juveniles. Seventeen-year-olds were previously charged as adults.

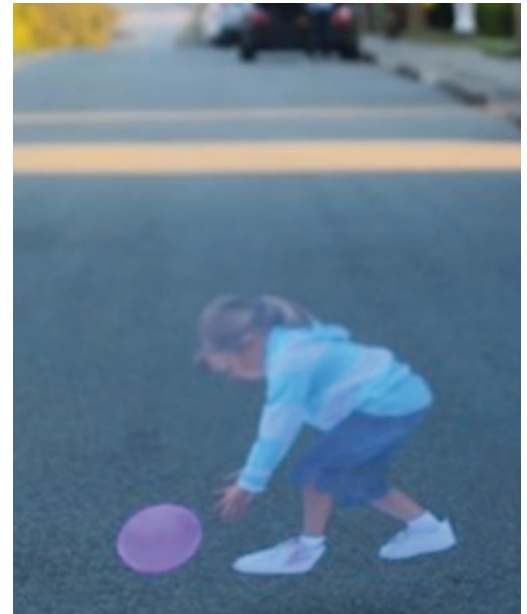
Shackelford reported that another incident occurred at Grass Lake Middle School on Dec. 15 when a threat was reported. "That was not an actual valid threat but a threat was reported," he said. "We had three deputies at the middle school for a child that allegedly made a threat that he was going to 'shoot the school.'"

Both the high school and middle school cases are still open, Shackelford said.

GOVERNMENT

■ **Snow & parking:** Support DPW team efforts to quickly handle snow and ice on Village roads/lots by not parking overnight on the main streets. Tell your friends and visitors too. Snow plows need the space clear of cars to address the roads properly in early morning.

■ **Grass Lake Village speed limit is 25 mph:** Violators raise ongoing concerns and law enforcement cannot constantly patrol our streets. Council is considering "outside the box" ideas. Pavement Patty, an image of a girl printed on weatherproof, skid-proof vinyl, is designed to morph into a 3D optical illusion when drivers are a few feet away is one item. Signage such as, "In a rush at a school zone? Seriously?" may help. But the *most effective* and *least expensive* solution is for everyone to comply with the lower speed in town, and where Grass Lake's children travel to school. Not all drivers are locals, but residents - as observed by Deputy Shackelford - should give greater attention to keeping speed at 25 within the Village interior. *Please share this idea with your neighbors.*



■ **School Safety:** Deputy Shackelford reported that because the assigned safety officer is away until January 2022, he now positions himself at the High School during lunch time.

■ **EGLE inspections for drinking water:** State statutes allow EGLE to request inspections at any time; it recently asked our DPW for a site review, including a water tower inspection and copies of latest test records. DPW is responding. Grass Lake DPW is proud of how well it monitors our water, is in compliance with all regulations and, shares water quality reports with residents each July. Meanwhile, the Village must bear all costs involved with the EGLE random request.

■ **Reappointments:** Council reappointed Rich Rabeler, as chairperson for the Planning Commission at its December 21 meeting. Rabeler has served as chairperson since 1994 and we are grateful to retain the services of this knowledgeable commissioner.

■ Council agreed to hire the firm of Fahey, Schultz, Burzych, and Rhodes to act as our official **Village Attorney;** establishment of a legal resource for advice and to act on behalf of the mu-

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■ **Connect with the Village anytime at www.villageofgrasslake.com** ■



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municipality is encouraged by Michigan Municipal League.

■ **LRUA update:** The latest version of the Southern Regional Intercept agreement (SRI) reached over the Jackson County lawsuit with Leoni Waste Water Treatment plant was emailed to the Village. This agreement holds the non-litigants—including Grass Lake Village and the Township, free from paying any fees due from the lawsuit. Council voted to adopt this revised agreement, but all parties must act for it to be finalized.

■ **Marijuana:** Council adopted a Chapter 96 Marijuana Caregivers Ordinance, much in line with the Township's ordinance, to define necessary practices, expectations and enforcement policies within the Village. The application form was also approved along with a \$300.00 filing fee.

■ **The FY Budget for 2022:** Between now and February 15, Council is working to produce a budget that is in keeping with Villages needs and plans for the future. Expected decreases in state funding are somewhat balanced by American Rescue Plan Act federal funds recently made available.

■ Council adopted amended **Rules and Procedures** at its meeting in December; these spell out the way its meetings are to be conducted. This document is available from the Clerk.

■ **Council Meetings.** The Work Session/meeting trial period was extended until March 31. A work session is scheduled for will take place **January 4 @ 7pm**, with a budget workshop on **January 11 @ 2pm**, and Council's Regular Meeting on **January 18 @ 7pm**. All meetings take place at the Village Hall as open to the public, "in-person" meetings.

■ **Village Hall improvements:** Council approved the bid for replacement of the deck/stairs which are greatly deteriorated and a safety issue.

■ **Community needs:** After the 12/21 Council meeting, many in attendance openly discussed the topic, "what can be done in our community to help stop gun violence and help the mental illness issues that might arise?" Sobering facts in the news as well as

local news led to recounting what has been done to promote mental health responses at the schools, possible inclusion of gun safety courses, and a general agreement to be alert to troubling issues.

The Township Supervisor, John Lesinski, offered that the Township, being aware of increasing enforcement demands, has contracted with the County for additional police officer presence, starting in May of 2022.

COMMUNITY



■ **"Living Nativity":** The Pius Union of Shrine of Saint Joseph presentation of the Nativity story – presented on December 18 in Grass Lake – was quite successful and has been applauded by locals ever since. The animals, including a camel, delighted on-lookers as well. Those who missed it may still encourage the church planners to make it an annual tradition.

■ **Name Change:** Farmers State Bank of Munith is now The State Bank.

■ **New Years Resolution:** Check out <http://grasslakeseniors.org/#aboutus> for all

the benefits of joining the Grass Lake Senior Center.

What does "membership" mean?

Yes of course it is a commitment, one made for our local center's success and operations, plus one comes with personal benefits. A membership helps with everything from newsletter mailings to the insurance premiums to keep the doors open, and its financial support funds programming, trips, activities, information and more. Please think about a basic membership at just \$25 per calendar year.

■ **Our Village DPW is now on Facebook: www.facebook.com/VillageofGrassLake** ■