Belts Rapids to Discuss Beach Purchase

Weekend Weather

Central Lake students construct nesting platforms for local loon population

A Tasty Spring Morning

The Anttrim girls basketball team is on the court this weekend. (Photo/John R. Rasmussen)
**Ellk Rapids to discuss possible purchase of Bech’s factory property**

By Linda Gallacher

**Ellsworth -** In a recent meeting of the Ellsworth Village Council, which was held on Monday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m., Police Chief Mike Rawlings announced that the village manager Bob Pottorf is in talks to negotiate "to purchase "a piece of property," empty mostly of buildings and perhaps containing some type of machinery." The parcel of land, which is not identified by name, is not a disclosure contained in the minutes of this meeting, and was not brought up by any member of the council. However, the Ellsworth Village Council had directed village managers in incorporated villages to appraise the value of "all vacant land found on the upper Chain of Lakes." As a result of these efforts, a total of $41,662 was collected from the three participating villages, and the results have been submitted to the state for the approval of the sale of the land to locals for the purpose of developing property on the upper Chain of Lakes.

"That's a record for northern Michigan," Pottorf said. "And last year, the first time that anyone could recall, there were 110 vacant parcels of land on the lake. When I first got involved in the process, the first time I went to a meeting, I was there for a full clutch of two chicks. Now, that's one of the biggest changes."

In fact, over the past 20 years, the number of residences in the village has increased by the modest amount of 2.3 percent, and the number of homes in the village has increased by 6.1 percent. This figure is even lower than the rate of growth for rural counties, where the number of homes has increased by 7.2 percent. For 7 of Antrim County’s 16 villages, the figure has shown a drop in the number of homes as early as the 1990s. Bloomberg, the website that aggregates property tax data for the state of Michigan, shows that the average home in 1995 was worth $50,000, and now is worth $85,000. In addition, the number of homes owned by residents has increased from 4,982 to 5,949. The number of homes owned by non-residents has increased from 2,686 to 2,783.

The Antrim Review - The Antrim Review reported that the Village Council had directed village managers to appraise the value of "all vacant land found on the upper Chain of Lakes." As a result of these efforts, a total of $41,662 was collected from the three participating villages, and the results have been submitted to the state for the approval of the sale of the land to locals for the purpose of developing property on the upper Chain of Lakes.