

Obituaries

RUBY COLE

Ruby Lena Cole, 96, of Northville died June 25 at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City.

She was born Feb. 13, 1896, in Novi to Lester and Nellie Dodge Lyke. Her husband, Harley, preceded her in death.

Surviving Mrs. Cole is her son, Robert Cole of Mancelona; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

A homemaker, she lived her entire life in the community. She was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Post 147 of Northville.

He funeral was June 27 at Casterline Funeral Home in Northville. Dr. Douglas Vernon of the First United Methodist Church of Northville officiated the service. Interment was at Rural Hill Cemetery in Northville. Arrangements were by the Casterline Funeral Home.

ESTHER PEARSON

Esther L. Pearson, 90, of Northville died June 24 at Garden City Hospital, Garden City.

She was born March 31, 1902, in Goteborg, Sweden to the late Karl and Selma Lundberg Rundquist.

She married Algot Pearson April 21, 1928. He preceded her in death in 1985.

Survivors include her son, Gilbert (Sally) Pearson of Plymouth; her daughter, Sonja (Jay) Windisch of Northville; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

The oldest of three daughters and the only one to make it to the United States, she worked as a governess for the Morgan family of Grosse Pointe. She enjoyed needlework, was known for her Swedish cooking, and was very active at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Detroit. She was also a member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northville.

A memorial was held June 27 at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Northville. Pastor Lawrence A. Kinne officiated. Interment was at Glen Eden Memorial Park in Livonia. Arrangements were made by Casterline Funeral Home of Northville.

Memorials may be sent to St. Paul's School.

MICHAEL PETERSON

Michael R. Peterson, 21, of Detroit died in Northville on June 26.

He was born Jan. 6, 1971 in Meadville, Pa.

Surviving are his parents, Suzette Habing of Redford and Robert Peterson of Saegertown; his brother, Christopher Mays of Redford; his sister, Rojean Pierce of Redford; and his grandparents, Rojean Massard of Northville and Paul and Virginia Peterson of Erie, Pa.

He worked for Highland Lakes Condominium of Northville as a groundskeeper. He graduated from Northville High School.

He was drummer for the band

Pirate Love, which plans a benefit show to be held in his memory.

The funeral was June 29 at the Vermeulen Trust 100 Funeral Home, Plymouth. The Rev. Rocky A. Barra officiated. Interment was at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield. Memorials may be sent to Alcoholics For Christ (envelopes at funeral home).

HOWARD SMITH

Former Detroit resident Howard F. (Smitty) Smith, 71, of Apache Junction, Ariz., died June 9 at the home of his sister, Kay Van Renterghem, in Northville following a long illness.

He was born June 5, 1921, in Detroit to Stanley P. and Elma (Buckner) Smith. He was an Army veteran who served in Europe during World War II. He moved to the Upper Peninsula in 1950 where he owned and operated Smitty's restaurants in Negaunee and Ishpeming until retiring in 1974.

His wife, Ruth, preceded him in death, as did his sons James and Donald and his brothers Stanley and Paul. Survivors include his mother, Elma (Buckner) Jasper; his son Stanley of Waverly, Tex.; his daughter Cathy Schmitz of Fond Du Lac, Wisc.; his sisters Kay Van Renterghem and Marion Babala; his brother Larry Jasper; his cousin Jack McGaffey; 10 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at Ishpeming, Mich. A memorial service was held July 1 at St. Colette's Church in Livonia. Memorial contributions may be sent to Angela Hospice Home Care Inc., 36995 Five Mile Road, Livonia 48154.

FIRMIN WILKINSON

Firmin Wilkinson, 78, of Northville died June 26 in his home.

He was born June 28, 1913 in Westview, Ill. to the late Martin and Margaret McGregor Loudon Wilkinson.

He was a flight instructor for the Detroit City Airport and moved to the Northville area in 1981 from Detroit. He was a member of the Jefferson Lodge No. 53 F & AM.

His wife, Grace M. Eakes of Northville, survives with their son, Steven (Terrie), of Livonia; daughter, Evelyn M. Larabell of Belleville; and their grandchildren, Marc and Laura Wilkinson and Christopher Larabell.

Services were June 29 at the First Presbyterian Church of Northville. The Rev. James Russell officiated. Burial was at Rural Hill Cemetery. Visitation took place Saturday and Sunday from the Ross B. Northrop Funeral Home, Northville. Arrangements were by the Northrop Funeral Home.

Memorials to the First Presbyterian Church of Northville or the Ann Arbor Hospice would be appreciated by the family.

Wixom businessman eyes House



James Ash

Editor's note: Beginning today and continuing up to the primary election Aug. 4, each issue of The Northville Record will feature interviews with candidates in one of the local races.

On the next three pages are interviews with the people running for the state House of Representatives in the new 38th District. It includes the part of the City of Northville in Oakland County (north of Baseline Road) as well as Nott and much of the rest of southwest Oakland County.

By CRISTINA FERRIER
Staff Writer

Jim Ash is a Wixom businessman who, along with Milford resident John Riley, is challenging incumbent Willis Bullard for his seat in the Michigan House of Representatives. If Ash wins the August primary, he will face off against Democrat Robert Havery.

This is Ash's first major bid for public office. He has previously served on Wixom's charter revision commission. He is the owner of a computer repair business.

What made you decide to run for office?

Elected officials haven't done too much for the state in the past decade. A prime example is, to run a business in this state it takes a lot of taxes from you and a lot of businesses are leaving the state because of the tax structure.

I felt that possibly they should have some people up there who have gone through this recession, depression — that are involved in it. I have not heard any elected official come up with a plan to create jobs or how to help senior citizens or the health care that keeps going up and you can't afford it.

What's your proposal?

There are three things that you really need to do. First, you have to make a good place to do business for industry in the state, and the only way you can do that is to beat out the southern states that pull our industry down there. They offer all kinds of packages so that people will come down there.

We here give tax abatements to businesses for, say, 12 years. Well, if you can give an abatement to a company for 12 years, they'll come in, they'll make some money, and then they'll leave. That does happen a lot and I figure that if that's the case, we can create a business atmosphere where we guarantee tax breaks in this state, where the incentives are good enough for them to come in and employ people, then they would stay here.

What plan do you have for cutting property taxes?

Basically what I'm running on is statewide casino gambling. I'm putting the figures together now for how much revenue that would generate

Detroit-run system. What do you think of that proposal?

I've heard people say that it's the taxes and the people who pay for it. But then again, Detroit actually built it. They're supplying the service. They're trying to upgrade it. I don't think you can just go in there and take it from them.

You don't take other people's property; you have to discuss it and see if you can come to an agreement.

Do you believe that voters should support the constitutional amendment to limit terms in the Nov. 3 election?

I think approximately a decade as an elected person to either the Senate or (House of) Representatives, state or federal, is about enough that a person can really do, due to the fact that you get burned out.

It seems like politicians figure you're working for them, and that really bothers me. I figure if you elect someone, you're paying their salary, you put them in office, and you expect something.

You work for the voters, period. There's no other way of looking at it. You have to come back and see what your people need. I have stated that I will spend one day a month in the communities that I represent. I will schedule a time for each community, one day a month, and people will know that they can come and talk to me at that time.

To be more accessible?

You've got to be. You've got to be. You can get up there and lose track of the people down here. In my youth, I was once told by a politician that he doesn't have to know what his people want, that he knows what's best for them. And we got into a little discussion over that. That's totally wrong. That's totally wrong.

Term limitation, yes. Ten years is about max.

Should the state tie welfare benefits to school attendance, or job training or community service?

Well, if a person's ill, or has very young children... Unless they can make it convenient for the people, I don't see how they can.

But welfare is basically for when you have a hard time, and you need some help. I think the state and businesses should get together and try programs to give people the education and the knowledge to acquire jobs.

Do you think that the state should move toward a 200-day school year?

I think on the west coast they have it all year long, don't they? I see nothing wrong with 200 days, I really don't.

It seems like, for the last 10

years or so, the state and the state's agencies have raised fees rather than raise taxes. They've raised fees for driver's licenses, college tuition, park fees, but they haven't raised taxes. Do you support this method?

Well, actually it's a user's fee, right? I imagine you do have to pay to use something. I don't think it would be fair to say we need this much more when you don't use it.

There are certain things that have to pay for, anyway. But if a person doesn't use a state park, why should they have to pay taxes for it?

This morning the Supreme Court announced its decision on the abortion issue. They didn't overturn Roe vs. Wade, but they upheld a number of restrictions including a 24-hour waiting period and parental consent. Do you support such restrictions? What are your views on the abortion issue?

How can you legislate a morality issue? How can you?

So you don't believe abortion should be legislated?

No. Nor do I believe anyone should face any kind of punishment for it. It's the individual's decision. My Lord, it's like telling you you can't be a member of a certain church or you can't believe in this or that. Morality is nothing for politics.

You go by what you believe. No one can make that decision for you.

I'd like you to tell me about what you consider to be your major accomplishments. What has you done that you're the most proud of?

Marrying my wife, seriously. She is a great help to me and I've had a lot better life with her. Other accomplishments is I have a nice son and he's my friend. I only have so many friends and they are just like me — if they need something I do it and they do the same for me.

I've traveled all over the world and I've enjoyed that, and I work well around machines. I like being a businessman, even with all the headaches. I'm sort of independent in my thinking.

I believe in doing things right and if I commit myself, if it's on a committee or anything I've ever done, I've always done it the best I could and if I didn't think it was right I'd ask somebody. And if they showed me a better way, I would do it. There's always people smarter than you out there, they know a lot more, and if you listen to them you benefit.

Anything else?

I favor a sales tax increase, 1 cent. Use that to help senior citizens get their breaks, because we're losing them. We can't afford to lose them.

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