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CLINTON TWP.

TECH GLITCH PUTS MALL SHOOTING CASE ON HOLD

One defendant sees bond lowered; proceedings set for July

By Mitch Hotts
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A technical glitch concerning evidence related to the November shooting at Partridge Creek has prompted a delay of a court hearing that was scheduled for Friday.

The snafu involves two so-called "phone dumps" of calls made between one of the shooting suspects and his parents that were obtained by Clinton Township police, said Macomb County Assistant Prosecutor Richard Nelson during a 41B District Court hearing Thursday held via Zoom. The dumps contain a "very large chunk" of information, he added.

"The dumps are in the range of about 150 gigabytes," Nelson said. "This is a lot different than uploading pictures of somebody's birthday party."

According to county prosecutors, the technology glitch comes when officials are attempting to gain access to information in the phone calls. Once the calls are down-

loaded, prosecutors and defense attorneys are unable to open the files.

It's important they be turned over to the defense attorneys before a preliminary exam is held so they can prepare for the case, officials said.

But two of the three defense attorneys are asking for the case to be heard as soon as possible to advance it up to Macomb County Circuit Court for trial. The two are also seeking a lowered bond amount

for their clients. The judge agreed to adjourn the matter to July 17.

Despite the delay, more information on the shooting and suspects came to light Thursday.

Three suspects — King Payne, Christian Griffin, and Terrence Brown — are being held on various charges in connection with the Nov. 23 shooting of a 17-year-old male at

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ROMEO

HERD OF MOWERS

Goats visit church to clear invasive foliage

By Susan Smiley
FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

If you thought you saw a herd of goats at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Romeo last Saturday, you were not imagining things.

The goats were brought courtesy of Michigoat with the purpose of clearing church property of poison ivy and invasive shrubs. The stewardship project is a collaboration between Green Space Romeo, St. Paul's, Lake St. Clair Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA), and Michigoat to revive about 11 acres of church property as a community green space.

The land was gifted to the church in the early 1960s and has undergone a few incarnations over the years.

"There has been a huge community garden, a meditation trail and we have this area that was overrun by weeds and invasives are choking out the nice stuff," said Kristin Brewer, a member of St. Paul's and Green Space Romeo. "Green Space was looking for another project and I was trying to get energy going on restoring the woods so it worked out."

Green Space Romeo chair Donna Folland reached out to CISMA and brought them on board.

"This lovely partnership kind of materialized and the church was open to doing the right thing for their land," Folland said. "This is the work Green Space Romeo wants to be doing and I think this is a good, positive start so we can build our capacity and do more of these kinds of projects."

Folland says they have a five-year restoration plan for the property and envision something the entire community can enjoy.

CISMA Director Amanda Ruffini said her organization has developed a management plan for the St. Paul's acreage that will restore the property to its "pre-settlement" state.

"This area used to be a very large oak hickory forest, but as things got developed, that diminished and we started getting a lot of invasive species," said Ruffini. "This couple acres of property doesn't seem like a lot, but this is how we start making a difference."

While goats are not large, they can eat a vast amount of foliage. Ruffini said they can consume honeysuckle — one of the first things to start growing in the spring — as well as other pesky plants.

"Goats can do their goat-scaping and can eat thorns and poisonous plants and are able to clear out a large area much faster than a group of volunteers," said Ruffini.

Ruffini said if human volunteers have to use equipment to take out vegetation it often means disturbing the soil, which can in turn spread seeds from invasive plants and worsen the problem. Goats can eat seeds and even when they pass them, their digestive tract renders the seeds useless. The goats are really much more effective than a tractor.

Saturday's visit from the Michigoat plant trimmers is expected to be the first of many as the St. Paul's property takes shape and is transformed into a viable community gathering greenspace. Green Space Romeo hopes to bring the goats to St. Paul's twice a year going forward.

"The goats are doing what they know, they're doing what goats do," said Brewer. "It is just a win-win all the way around and



Donna Folland of Green Space Romeo with a goat from Michigoat at St Paul's church in Romeo. PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREEN SPACE ROMEO



Michigoat herd munching on invasive species at St Paul's church in Romeo as part of a project to restore several acres of church property for community use.



Volunteers from St Paul's church, Green Space Romeo and CISMA helped oversee the work of Michigoat goats on the property.

at some point, we hope to replace some of the invasives with trees, but one step at a time."

Ruffini said CISMA is thinking long-term with the St. Paul's project and says the amount of community involvement bodes

well for its success.

"The church wants to welcome the whole community to enjoy this property," said Folland. "I remember when they had the community gardens there and that might be something they want to do again."

MOUNT CLEMENS

Cost of registering a business to double

First time registration fees were increased in 14 years

By Mitch Hotts
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The cost of having a business in Mount Clemens is going up.

City commissioners on Monday night voted to raise the application fee from \$25 to \$50 for businesses to register annually with the city clerk's office.

Registering a business is required by ordinance so the city can keep records of the types and locations of businesses and activities, as well as to make sure adequate municipal services can be supplied by the police, fire and department of public services departments, said Clerk Cathleen Martin.

"I think it's reasonable," said Mayor Pro-Tem Laura Fournier. "It's not a money-making scheme as it does take some work by the city clerk's office."

Last month, the commission

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MACOMB TWP.

Driver crashes into Immanuel Lutheran School

No injuries were reported to either the driver or students

By Mitch Hotts
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Learning was disrupted Thursday at a Macomb Township school when a motorist crashed through a wall of the building, according to a school official and police.

The incident took place at Immanuel Lutheran School, which is affiliated with a church of the same name, at Romeo Plank and 21 Mile roads.

There were no injuries reported to any students or staff at the facility, or the driver, according to the Macomb County Sheriff's Office.

"It happened at our preschool computer classroom, which fortunately was unoccupied at the time," said the Rev. Chad Foster, the senior pastor at Immanuel Lutheran

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WEATHER FORECAST

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SUN. H: 59 L: 38
MON. H: 54 L: 36
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