





Moody on The Market

Pat **Moody**

St. Joseph Commissioners indicate conditional support for proposed development downtown

It's very early in the game, but a South Bend developer is stepping forward with a concept that might lead to development of the former YWCA property along Lake Boulevard in downtown St. Joseph. The spot that many refer to simply as 'The Empty Lot" has sat undeveloped for years after several commercial/residential combo plans failed to attract financing that would make them economically feasible. Even during a period of historically low interest rates, nothing happened, and with rates up recently, there's been little hope of anything happening soon on the site. That MIGHT be changing!

Now, the property, which is owned by the locally based Monte family, is being eyed for a new commercial-residential combo project being envisioned by a South Bend developer, The Rienks Group. Rienks proposes to combine the YWCA lot with the city-owned parking lot to its South, to make a project that's big enough to make the numbers work. Very tentatively, the several story building would have commercial space on the street level, apartments or condo's above, and an underground parking garage that would not result in any parking spaces being lost.

City commissioners on Monday heard from Peter Rienks of the Rienks Group, which has expressed an interest in purchasing a cityowned lot at the corner of Lake Boulevard and Broad Street. The project would involve the privately-owned former YWCA lot at 508 Pleasant Street and the city's adjacent parking lot. Rienks told commissioners what his firm has in mind would be transformational for the city.

"The project would include 32 high-end condominiums, 68 market-rate apartments, over 12,000 square feet of commercial space, a modern event venue, and 157 underground parking spaces," Reinks said.

Those 157 parking spaces would mean no spaces would be lost downtown, something stressed by City Manager Emily Hackworth.

Reinks said the residential units would be for full-time residents, and of the market rate units, he estimated the rents would be around \$1,300 to \$2,000 per month. They would have to be close to the community's median income because he plans to pursue some state housing

Continued on page 14





Paul **Knapp**

Executive Director, ^{St. Joseph Today}

Waves of Brilliance: The Lake Bluff Stairway Blooms Again

Here at St. Joe Today, we believe that a vibrant community isn't just about bustling businesses and beautiful beaches; it's also about enriching the soul through art. We've long been committed to fostering a thriving arts scene right in Southwest Michigan and nowhere is that commitment more colorfully evident than on the lake bluff stairway. As you descend towards the beautiful waters of Lake Michigan, you're not just taking steps; you're stepping into a masterpiece.

This year, we are absolutely thrilled to welcome back the incredibly talented Kim Wood for her second year as our featured artist on the stairway mural. Kim's unique

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Inserts & Promotions

- Dollar General
- Family Fare
- Family Farm & Home
- Martins Super Markets
 Rural King
- Slumberland Furniture

Inserts may vary by zip code

Page 2 June 28, 2025 MailMax **Knapp** *Continued from cover*

vision, once again, transformed what was once a utilitarian concrete structure into a breathtaking canvas. Her ability to capture the essence of our lakeside community, to infuse it with joy and vibrancy, is truly remarkable. We were so impressed with her work last year, and the outpouring of positive feedback from residents and visitors alike confirmed what we already knew: Kim is a treasure, and her artistic voice resonates deeply with the spirit of St. Joe. We are honored to collaborate with her again and witness her artistic evolution unfold right before our eyes.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the steadfast and unwavering support of the Schalon Foundation. Their dedication to bringing art to our community is not merely financial; it's a profound commitment, a genuine zeal that mirrors our own. For years, St. Joe Today has enjoyed a fruitful collaboration with the Schalon Foundation, and their impact on the cultural landscape of St. Joseph is immeasurable. They understand that art isn't a luxury; it's a vital component of a healthy, thriving community, sparking conversation, inspiring wonder, and fostering a sense of shared identity. Their passion for art education and accessibility aligns perfectly with our mission, and we are incredibly grateful for their partnership. Their generosity has allowed us to dream bigger, to envision public art projects that might otherwise remain just that dreams. The stairway mural stands as a testament to their foresight and their enduring belief in the power of art to uplift and unite.

This year's mural offers a fresh perspective while maintaining the captivating charm that makes Kim's work so popular. The mural bursts with life! This year's mural captures the essence of a sunny day by the lake, with swirling patterns evoking the movement of water and wind. The details are intricate, inviting viewers to explore the rich textures and hidden gems within the design. It's a piece that encourages lingering, and ultimately, leaves you with a profound sense of appreciation for both the artist's skill and the beauty of our surroundings. Each time I walk down those stairs, I discover a new detail, a subtle nuance I hadn't noticed before, and I'm reminded of the incredible talent we're so fortunate to showcase.

So, as the days grow longer and the summer air beckons. I extend a heartfelt invitation to all of you. Come to downtown St. Joe. Stroll our charming streets, enjoy our unique shops and delicious eateries, and then make your way to the lake bluff. Take a moment to truly experience Kim Wood's magnificent mural on the stairway. And while you're here, be sure to explore our vibrant Farmers Market, plan a visit for the always impressive Mike Yore Memorial Car Show, or unleash your inner artist at Chalk the Block. It's more than just paint on concrete; it's a testament to collaboration, creativity, and the enduring power of art to bring joy to us all. We look forward to seeing vou there!

VOUR GOOD NEWS PAPER FOR 25 YEARS

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Guts and Glory Fresh Catch from the St. Joe: Eagle Eats Local. **Photo by Linda Burk**

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Allen Comfort Advisor **Boss Services**

Fun Facts About Alligators: Why They Loathe Cold, Dry Places

Tyler

Alligators are fascinating reptiles that capture our imagination with their toothy grins and powerful tails, but did you know they're total divas when it comes to cold, dry environments? These swamp-loving creatures thrive in warm, wet habitats, and here are some fun facts about why chilly, arid places just don't suit their scaly style.

First off, alligators are ectothermic, meaning they rely on external heat to regulate their body temperature. Unlike us warm-blooded humans, they can't shiver or sweat to stay comfy. In their ideal habitats-like the steamy wetlands of Florida or Louisiana's bayoustemperatures hover between 82°F and 92°F. perfect for basking on sunny banks or floating in toasty waters. When it gets below 70°F, alligators start to sulk. Their metabolism slows, they become sluggish, and they'd rather nap than chase dinner. In fact, during rare cold snaps in the Southeast, alligators can enter a state called brumation, a reptile version of hibernation, where they chill (literally) in muddy burrows or under water, barely moving until things warm up.

Dry environments? Total alligator turnoff. These reptiles need water like we need

Wi-Fi-constantly. Their skin, though tough, dries out without regular dips in swamps, rivers, or marshes. Alligators even dig "gator holes" in wetlands, creating personal pools to keep hydrated during droughts. These holes aren't just for them; they're ecosystem MVPs, providing water for fish, birds, and other critters. In arid places like deserts, alligators would be as out of place as a snowman at a barbecue. Fun fact: baby alligators are especially vulnerable to dryness, needing shallow, warm waters to grow safely.

Another quirky reason alligators shun cold, dry spots? Their love for a good bellow. In warm, wet springs, male alligators let out deep, rumbling roars to woo mates and claim territory. These bellows vibrate the water around them, creating a splashy spectacle. In cold weather, their vocal cords are less enthusiastic, and dry environments lack the water needed for their signature splash. No splash, no swagger-dealbreaker!

Alligators also have a surprising diet quirk tied to their warm, wet homes. They munch on fish, turtles, and even the occasional snack of fruit (yes, they're omnivores!). Cold, dry areas lack the lush food webs of wetlands, leaving alligators hungry and grumpy. Plus, their powerful jaws-capable of 2,000 pounds of bite force-need juicy prey to stay in top shape.

So, next time you're slogging through a swamp and spot an alligator lounging in the sun, remember: they're living their best life in that muggy, muddy paradise. Cold, dry places? They'll pass, thank you very much. With their love for heat, water, and a good bellow, alligators remind us that even prehistoric predators have their preferences!



It's Not About Me

Love . . . is not self-seeking. 1 Corinthians 13:4,5

It was not a very long piece on the TV news. I don't even recall the mother's name. But what she does and why she is doing it, I will not soon forget.

The news piece is about this disastrous earthquake in Haiti and its aftermath. It centers on a mother and her young children. Their small house is now rubble. The mother does not know what they are going to eat. She does not know what they are going to drink. She does not know where they are going to live. And she finds herself surrounded by thousands of people who are wondering the same thing.

At present she and her children are living in the open, sitting and resting on a blanket. But as she sits with her children, the mother is doing a strange thing. She's continually smiling and talking cheerfully.

Someone from the news crew finally asks her why she's smiling so much. Her response is sober and direct. "It's for my children," she says.

Footage like that quickly reminds us of what love is. Love is not about me. It's not about my needs. It's not about indulging my fears, fulfilling my dreams, or protecting my self-esteem. It's about others.

The old, sinful self inside me does not like that. It does not like that one bit. Left to my own instincts, my life would be all about me until there was nothing left but me. And ultimately, there I would exist isolated, alone, and in the outer darkness of hell.

But Jesus came. He came for me. He lived a perfect life for me. He suffered and died for my every failure. And now he lives for me. Because of him, my life is different. I am different. My slavery to self is done. And now I can really love because, through Jesus, it's not about me. It's about others.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, love is not about me. It's about others. Forgive my failures. Empower me to love as you have loved me. Amen.

Submitted by Pastor Josh Bishop Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Joseph Originated by: www.What AboutJesus.com







Dave **Ramsey** Financial Expert

The Ramsey Show

Dave Says It Takes Courage to Cry

Dear Dave,

My wife and I are on Baby Step 7, and we have a household income of \$127,000 a year. We have an older dog who has had some very expensive vet bills recently. It has us both wondering how far, financially speaking, we should be willing to go to keep him alive. We both really love our dog, so we would appreciate your thoughts in the event we have to make a really hard decision somewhere down the road. Jeff

Dear Jeff,

Wow ... You're really trying to get me into trouble, aren't you? First of all, let me say this: I. Love. Dogs. I really do. I've had several during my life, and right now, I have one I like more than most people I know.

That being said, this little animal that I love like crazy is still ... a dog. It's not one of my grandchildren, and it's not one of my kids. If you were to ask me how much money I'd spend to keep one of my kids or grandkids alive, the answer is simple – all the money I've got. Everything. I've started over from nothing before, and I could do it again. But there's your answer.

Now, here's something that's going to be hard for a few folks to hear. With some people who love their animals as much as I do, what I've observed is that the whole relationship can become more about the human than the animal. I've seen people spend tens of thousands of dollars to keep their pets alive, even though the animals were still suffering. At that point, it's not fair to the animal. And unfortunately, that's what often ends up happening with this kind of situation.

Listen, I understand this. I'm not bad-mouthing anyone, because I've experienced these kinds of feelings, too. I've had to have animals put to sleep, and I'll be 100% honest with you: I've sat there and cried – I mean flat-out sobbed – while it happened. And in my mind, that's a better path to take sometimes, rather than selfishly letting the animal spend its last weeks or months in pain just because you don't want to go through something difficult.

Now, if you can fix the animal — if you can give it a more-or-less normal, pain-free life by spending some money and actually correcting the problem — then, sure. Do it. There's no rule of thumb or percentage on something like this. If you actually have the money, let's get them fixed up. But if it takes going deep into debt, wrecking your finances or leaving your family scrambling to make ends meet as a result – then, no. I'm sorry. You should honor and love that wonderful little animal well enough that you don't make them suffer for you.

I hope you understand this, Jeff, and that it makes sense to you. God bless you all, and God bless that old pup. I hope you'll have many more happy days together.

- Dave

* Dave Ramsey is a nine-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of "The Ramsey Show." He has appeared on "Good Morning America," "CBS Mornings," "Today," Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions.



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Sarah farm som the

Regional Director, SMR Chamber

Benton Harbor Fruit Market

As we wrap up the month of June and officially enter the second half of the year we are excited to share information about one of our newest members, the Benton Harbor Fruit Market. Growing up on my family's small farm, I have very distinct memories of heading to this historic landmark in Benton Harbor and to this day smile every time I drive past it.

As one of Michigan's oldest and most iconic agricultural institutions, the Benton Harbor Fruit Market, is proud to announce the opening of its 165th season under the leadership of new owner Mark Vanderboegh. The Market will officially open for the 2025 season on June 27, 2025 at 6:00 a.m.

Founded in 1860, the Benton Harbor Fruit Market has been a critical hub for Midwest agriculture for more than a century and a half. Spanning 20 acres, the State Historic Site is strategically located within a four-hour drive of a quarter of the U.S. population and sits in the heart of the Midwest Fruit Belt. While it ships produce to major metropolitan areas, the Market also plays a vital role in the Southwest Michigan community, where it has become a local institution deeply woven into the region's history and economy.

As the heart of the Michigan Fruit Belt, we are second in agricultural diversity of what we grow and harvest, with the number one location being that of Napa Valley. Many of the communities that make up the

Tri-County area are made up of different farming-based families and likely have some of the same memories that I do of the Benton Harbor Fruit Market.

After having a conversation with Mark, I was excited to hear many of his goals are to build on the Market's legacy with renewed energy and a dedicated strategic vision.

"This is more than a marketplace – it represents Michigan's agricultural strength and community spirit," said Vanderboegh. "We're excited to support local farmers, strengthen the food system and provide fresh produce to underserved residents."

As preparations continue, the Market is currently finalizing vendor arrangements and encouraging all current and prospective lessees to secure their spaces for the June 20 - November 1 term. Leasing opportunities are available, and interested growers, wholesalers, and vendors are encouraged to reach out promptly.

For more information about the Benton Harbor Fruit Market, leasing inquiries, or media interviews, please contact: Nick Krosnicki

nick@bentonharborfruitmarket.com, 269-849-8839, or head online to BentonHarborFruitMarket.com.

I hope you are equally as excited as I am about the possibilities of what Mark's new ownership, his ideas and his strategic plan for the revitalization of this key part of our history in Southwest Michigan could potentially bring.

If you're interested in learning more about some of our members such as the Benton Harbor Fruit Market, upcoming events, or how we can help your business head to our website smrchamber.com. Connect with me directly at sspoonholtz@smrchamber.com or 269-932-4040. See you around Southwest Michigan!



Olson, Licensed Medical Aesthetician/Certified Laser Practitioner Glow from Within:

Meagan

The Benefits of LED Therapy

I have been using Red/Blue Light and Infrared Light Therapy for 19 years now and here's why: it is backed by thousands of clinical studies, most people only know about the benefits for the skin, I explain in my treatments why it's much more than that. It supports thyroid health by restoring energy at the cellular level. It supports what labs often miss: the actual energy your body runs on.

It reduces inflammation - the root of most chronic symptoms. Inflammation doesn't always scream — sometimes it whispers through symptoms you've normalized (brain fog, joint pain inflammation, etc.) Sport injuries- this was my go-to for my kids, who all played several sports. It enhances hormone balance by supporting detox and circulation. Balanced hormones need a calm nervous system, open pathways, and steady flow. Red light helps with all three. It improves sleep quality and circadian rhythm. More deep sleep = better recovery, hormone health, and mood.

It boosts collagen production - for skin, joints, and tissues. Yes, it helps give you a

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glow... but it also helps you move with ease and feel more supported from the inside out. It supports gut health by reducing inflammation and strengthening immune function. The gut-brain-skin connection? Red light supports all three

It speeds up healing and recovery inside and out. From workouts and injuries to burnout and fatigue, red light helps your body bounce back faster. It boosts mitochondrial energy – the spark behind every healing process in the body.

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Moody Continued from cover

development funding, and that brings with it certain standards.

"What makes this development truly significant is that it will be the first large-scale development project of its kind in St. Joseph in over two decades. It's thoughtfully designed to enhance the character of our beautiful city while meeting the modern demands of residents, businesses, and visitors alike."

Reinks was seeking a "resolution of conditional support" for the property's sale, indicating commissioners are on board with the idea but don't have to commit to anything yet. Turns out they are on board, and all five voted in support of the resolution.

Commissioner Michael Sarola said this project "checks every box" in terms of what the city needs, while Commissioner Tess Ulrey noted this would create "workforce housing."

Reinks said more details about the plan, like how many stories this building would be, will be forthcoming now that he's gotten a warm reception from commissioners.

The Rienks Group website lists more than a dozen Michigan or Indiana projects they've been involved in over the past several years. None appears to be of the magnitude of this one, which is dubbed 'The Marquette' in an internal communication that was shared with MoodyOnTheMarket.com. Rienks lists the remake of a couple of downtown St. Joseph

the

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buildings on their success page: The Rice Building (Jimmy John's & upstairs apartments) and 'The Hamilton' (a luxury apartment upstairs over FuzzyButz Pet Bakery), both on State Street. Rienks also has done a couple of major construction projects for Berrien RESA, the county's educational services agency located in Berrien Springs and a list of building re-makes in South Bend.

The Rienks Group was founded by CEO Peter Rienks in 2017.

SJ Commissioner: paid parking pause being used to improve the program

Now that the St. Joseph City Commission has officially paused the downtown paid parking program, it can't be restarted without another vote of the body.

Commissioner Michael Sarola made the motion Monday night to formally pause the program, a couple of weeks after City Manager Emily Hackworth paused it for legal reasons. Sarola tells us that pause is being used for more than just getting the pay stations ADAcompliant. So, when will the pause end?

"I think there's been no decision reached as to when or if it will be unpaused," Sarola said. "First and foremost, we have to address ADA compliance issues. Obviously, that was the official reason to pause them, but you will note that at the same time, our city manager also made





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note that there needed to be a lot more community engagement and we wanted to make sure we had the buy-in from major stakeholders downtown and more residents."

Sarola says there are a lot of questions to be asked.

"Getting a better understanding of what the stakeholders downtown want and need out of a potential paid parking program. We are gathering information on what missed the mark and what still maybe has some promise as part of some type of paid parking."

Sarola says the goal of the paid parking is to get more parking rotation downtown so there aren't cars just left in the lots all day taking up space while shop customers and visitors are trying to park. He notes the parking problem goes back decades, while talk of a paid parking program began several years ago.

City leaders are hoping to restart the program in a way that won't be a burden for downtown businesses and residents.

Alex Mandarino Foundation announces \$75.000 donation to cancer research center

The Alex Mandarino Foundation in St. Joseph has made a \$75,000 donation to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York to help support childhood cancer research.

Foundation President and co-founder Tony Mandarino tells us the organization was founded to help honor his son, 5-year-old Alex, who died from cancer in 2013 after a courageous battle. Through their experience with Alex, Tony and Katie Mandarino learned most pediatric cancer treatments have not significantly improved in the past 30 years.

"Through our journey, when Alex was diagnosed, we found how underfunded pediatric cancer research is," Tony said. "So from kind of humble beginnings, we decided to kind of do our part."

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The Alex Mandarino Foundation has been raising money to help ever since. After careful consideration, it selected the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center as the recipient of its latest grant. Tony says Alex was treated there. 'It's probably the kind of premier center, if

you will, for neuroblastoma and literally families from the entire globe come to Sloan Kettering for that type of treatment."

The Alex Mandarino Foundation raises funds through word of mouth and through community events. Perhaps most well known is Alex's Duck Duck Run, which was just held Father's Day weekend in St. Joseph. They also release a special beer each year with North Pier Brewing Company.

> Pat Moody Publisher, MoodyOnTheMarket.com moody@wsjm.com (269) 925-1111



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Lifting Ein Stein to Einstein

Today's column toasts Albert Einstein, a subject that my wife says "Even you can't dumb down." We'll see about that!

Einstein's on my mind lately because my father-in-law loaned me his CD version of an Einstein biography. It must be a pretty long book, because there are a lot of CDs; 3.3166247904², by my calculations.

It's a timely time of year to consider Einstein, because it was on June 30, 1905, that his famous Theory of Special Relativity was first published. It was his fourth groundbreaking paper in a 3.3166247904-month period, wherein he generated new concepts of space and time, established the existence of atoms, and identified 9 of the 11 secret herbs and spices in Kentucky Fried Chicken.

I sometimes wonder if Einstein's legacy is still fresh among our youth. I once asked a few youths - No. 5 son, who was 12 at the time, and his friends - about Albert. Interestingly, they spoke of him in the present tense. Now THAT's fresh. One friend said, "He's a nerdy inventor," and another said, "He's the smartest person in the world." Oh, and they both said that he's got cool hair. As for No. 5, he said Einstein is okay, but that Obi-Wan Kenobi's intellect makes Albert look like SpongeBob SquarePants.

Einstein wrote his history-making 1905 papers while working a day job as a Technical Expert, Third Class at the Swiss Patent Office in Bern, Switzerland. He quickly became famous, and his bosses were so impressed that they promoted him. A year later. To Technical Expert, Second Class. Really.

That Patent Office is now probably named after Einstein, like so many other things are. For example, there's an element on the periodic table called "Einsteinium." It's a man-made element, discovered in the debris of the first hydrogen bomb test. Einsteinium has no known uses, which No. 4 son says reminds him of certain weekly newspaper columnist, though he didn't say which one.

In March, 1973, Einstein's name was attached to a heavenly body, and I'm not talking about Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. It's an asteroid, originally called "Asteroid 2001." (Behind the scenes fact: several asteroidologists refused to participate in changing the name of "2001" after receiving threatening phone calls from someone named "HAL.") www.MailMaxOnline.com

Ha-ha, a little film humor there, tossed in to set up this paragraph: Einstein has been portrayed many times on celluloid, including interpretations by Walter Matthau, Robert Downey, Jr., and somebody named Yahoo Serious, who starred in a film called "Young Einstein," and like Albert himself - made the cover of <u>Time</u> for it. Seriously.

Someday, I hope we'll see Einstein played by the actor/writer/director Albert Brooks, whose actual name is – actually – Albert Einstein.

I wonder if Albert the actor understands Albert the physicist's Special Theory of Relativity? It's been said that in 1905, only 12 other people in the world actually did. But nowadays, even a yahoo like me can relate to it, thanks to this explanation, said to have been uttered by Einstein himself: "You spend 30 minutes with a beautiful girl, it seems like a moment. You spend a moment sitting on a hot stove, it seems like 30 minutes. THAT'S relativity." TakefiveT5@yahoo.com

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