

**QUARTERLY ISSUES
AND
PROGRAMS REPORT**

**WNEM TV5
WNEM-DT
BAY CITY/FLINT/MIDLAND AND SAGINAW**

JANUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2023

PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

OVERVIEW

Based on WNEM's ascertainment of community leaders and from data gathered from community organizations, the highest-ranking problems and needs of the Bay City/Flint/Midland and Saginaw markets are:

1. Jobs/Economy
2. Crime
3. Weather
4. School/Campus
5. Politics

ISSUES AND PROGRAMS REPORT

OVERVIEW

The following is the quarterly “Issues and Programs” Report placed in the public file of WNEM at the open of business day April 10th, 2023. The report covers the period from January 1st through March 31st, 2023. The report is based on significant problems and needs determined by WNEM’s community ascertainments. Below each problem/need is a brief description of some news segments broadcast during the quarter designated to call attention to or address the problem or need.

WNEM

BAY CITY/FLINT/MIDLAND AND SAGINAW

January 1 through March 31, 2023

DATE/PROGRAM ISSUE /TITLE SOURCE

1. JOBS & ECONOMY

1/13/2023 – 5:30p – Rising Egg Prices Impact Local Restaurants – Local

Runtime: 2:35

A bad case of the bird flu has been causing the price of eggs to increase across the nation, and local restaurants have been feeling those prices. “Everything just keeps inflating. It’s just hard to deal with,” said David Hilbrandt, the owner of Tony’s restaurant on State Street in Saginaw. “I have not raised breakfast prices, even with the eggs going up, and I try not to, but sometimes you just don’t have a choice,” Hilbrandt said. He has raised the cost of other menu items, but only in bite-sized amounts.

1/27/2023 – 6:00p – Keits Greenhouse to Close After 167 Years in Business– Local

Runtime: 2:12

Keits Greenhouse and Floral Center in Bay City is closing its doors for good on February 1. The greenhouse, which has been in business for 167 years. The owner is retiring with no plans for anyone to take it over.

2/6/2023 – 6pm – Whitmer Proposes Plan to Lower Costs for Taxpayers – Local – Runtime 2:21

Michigan Taxpayers could be receiving a \$180 “inflation relief check” from the state if the Governor’s proposed “lowering MI Costs” plan becomes law.

2/7/2023 – 5p – Consumers Experts Warn Buyers About Buy Now, Pay Later Loans – Local – Runtime 3:55

Buy now, pay later loans (BNPL) have been on the rise in recent years, allowing shoppers to buy something online and then divvy up the cost of the purchase over a few weeks or months. Companies like Apple and Amazon are the latest to join the trend. Consumer experts warn buyers to beware of the hidden risk. “It’s a great tool. The problem is it’s overused by far,” said Jim Frego, owner and Partner at Frego & Associates Bankruptcy law office.

3/7/2023 – 6pm – Feet on the Street to Make a Comeback in 2023 – Local – Runtime 2:24

A pandemic-era program in Bay City is making a comeback. Feet on the Street began in 2020 as a way to help restaurants server more people while dealing with capacity limits. City leaders voted in November 2022 to end Feet on the Street, but the Board of Commissioners have voted to bring it back to one city block this summer. Businesses along Saginaw Street say they see a lot of additional foot traffic including an increase of people from out of town.

3/14/2023 – 6pm – Midland Proposes Plan to Reconstruct Downtown Riverfront – Local – Runtime 2:17

The Midland Downtown Development Authority has proposed a plan to reconstruct the city’s riverfront into a destination stop for residents. In the proposal are plans to redevelop the area between the old

farmers market and splash pad into a track, with lights, and an area that can be transformed in to an ice skating rink in the winter. The area would also host night time concerts.

2. CRIME

01/10/2023 – 6:00p – Suspect with Filed Teeth was Running “Gang of Rapists”, Sheriff Says – Local - Runtime: 3:38

Disturbing new details were released surrounding “serial monster” Michael Barajas and what Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson called his “gang of rapists.” Barajas, 36, was arrested on Dec. 8, 2022 when [G.H.O.S.T. operatives rescued](#) a 20-year-old human trafficking victim after she was taken to Hurley Medical Center for a medical emergency. After further investigation into the case, Swanson said Barajas had been building out a gang called the Massad Squad and training people in the organization to find vulnerable females, take them to a human trafficking headquarters for other people to come in and sexually assault the victims.

01/18/2023 – 11p – Mother Still Looking for Answers Years After Sons’ Murders – Local Runtime: 2:12

It has been two years since Barbara Roberson’s oldest son, Donald Patrick Jr., was shot and killed in the parking lot of the Hooters restaurant on Bay Road in Saginaw County’s Kochville Township. Patrick was shot as he was leaving work. “I kind of feel like it’s fallen by the wayside if I’m telling the truth,” Roberson said. “I pray for the Lord to you know, move on the detectives and you know, touch their hearts.”

A sentiment that comes with a deeper sense of tragedy for Roberson, whose youngest son, Stone Roberson, was murdered in 2013. A crime that has also gone unsolved.

2/03/2023 – 11pm – Crime-fighting Kiosk could Help Solve Cold Cases – Local – Runtime 4:18

Crimestoppers is rolling out a new tool to help ease the fear of giving tips in cold cases. A Kiosk has been placed in Flint’s Berston Field House, that displays unsolved crimes and wanted fugitives. The hope is that the display will catch the eye of someone walking by who could be holding a crucial clue to help solve a case.

2/14/2023 – 11pm – Criminal Profiler Discusses Motive of MUS Gunman – Local – Runtime 1:57

As investigators continue to piece together the motive of a mass shooting on the campus of Michigan State University that left 3 students dead, WNEM speaks with a former FBI profiler about the 43-year-old gunman Anthony McRae, who ended up taking his own life. With no connection to the school, what could be the reasons he targeted the school campus.

3/15/2023 – 5pm – Police chase After Marijuana Store Burglarized Ends in Crash – Local – Runtime 2:01

Five people were arrested after police say they broke into a Bay County marijuana stores and took off. A chase with the Bay County Sheriff’s department ended when the vehicle with the five people inside crashed into an MSP cruiser.

3/20/2023 – 11pm – Local Activists Push for Proposal to Create Animal Abuse Registry – Local – Runtime 2:45

Activists throughout Michigan are joining together to offer protection to pets. Protect MI Pets aims to create a statewide registry for convicted animal abusers. State police report animal abuse has more than quadrupled since 2016.

3. WEATHER

01/12/2023 – 5p – ‘Bringing Back the Ice’ Needs Ice – Local - Runtime: 2:00

The warm winter weather is preventing ice skaters in Saginaw from enjoying what should be a skating rink at Hoyt Park. Bringing Back the Ice at Hoyt park in Saginaw was scheduled to begin Saturday, but there is currently water where the ice should be. “Bummed out,” said the president of Friends of Hoyt Park Larry Brethauer. “This is the warmest we’ve had ever since we started doing this in 2013.”

01/18/2023 – 5p – World Class Snow Carving Competition Canceled for Zehnder’s Snowfest – Local - Runtime: 1:58

Due to the warm winter weather, the world-class snow carving competition at Zehnder’s Snowfest in Frankenmuth has been canceled. “Snowfest is going to happen. We’ve had to make a couple adjustments, it’s fluid, but mother nature hasn’t been cooperating,” said John Shelton, the vice president of sales and marketing for Zehnder’s.

The unseasonably warm weather has brought a lack of snow to the area for the annual festival that kicks off Jan. 25.

2/21/2023 – 6p – Driving on Dickey Roads During a Winter Storm – Local – Runtime 2:05

With back-to-back winter storms that created icy roads throughout Mid-Michigan, The Grand Blanc Township police are urging drivers to slowdown during icy conditions. Officers responded to 16 crashes along I-75 in the previous storm, and one of their officers was hit in his patrol car, by a car that driving too fast on the icy road conditions.

2/27/2023 – 11p – Consumers Energy Handling Power Outages After Back-to-Back Storms – Local – Runtime 2:33

Just as Consumers Energy was making headway on power outages following last week’s storm, the snow and ice on Monday added more outages to their list.

“We have about 45,000 customers across the Greater Mid-Michigan area without power,” said Brian Wheeler, media relations manager for Consumers Energy.

Monday afternoon’s winter storm brought a wintery mix of snow and freezing rain, bringing down powerlines across the region and leaving some Consumers Energy customers without power.

3/2/2023 – 11p – Local Grocery Store Prepares for Rush Before Storm – Local- Runtime 1:37

People are stocking up and preparing as Mid-Michigan braces for another snowstorm after severe weather left thousands without power across the state. At Jack’s Fruit and Meat market in Saginaw County it’s all hands-on deck.

3/3/2023 – 5p – MDOT Crews Preparing for Another Storm – Local- Runtime 1:51

State, county, and local road commissions have been getting ready to take on the winter storm. Early Friday afternoon, an MDOT spokesperson said crews are in for a busy night. “Mother nature reminding us that we still do live in Michigan,” said MDOT spokesperson Jason Garza. With the arrival of another winter storm, the TV5 First Alert Weather Forecast is calling for snow and wind throughout most of the night. Garza said his staff will be there every step of the way.

4. EDUCATION/SCHOOLS

01/11/2023 – 6p – Loaded Gun Brought to Pinconning Middle School, 13-Year-Old Arrested – Local Runtime: 2:22

Michigan State Police are investigating after an eight-grade student brought a loaded gun to Pinconning Middle School. Superintendent Andy Kowalczyk said administration was made aware of a student with a possible weapon about 1:45 p.m. and the student was immediately removed from class. Staff discovered a loaded .22 handgun and extra magazine with ammunition in the student’s possession, Michigan State Police said. Kowalczyk said the student told other students he had it, keeping it in his locker most of the day before bringing it to his fifth-hour class. The student told school administrators he forgot to remove the gun from his bag after a weekend stay with a parent.

01/17/2023 – 5p – School Districts Receive Funding to Hire School Resource Officers – Local - Runtime: 2:23

School districts across the state will receive funding to hire school resource officers to help keep students safe. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced nearly \$25 million to hire 195 school resource officers at school districts across the state for the next three years. “It’s exciting for the future of our schools and the safety of our staff and students,” said Matt McRae, the superintendent of the Swan Valley school district. The program will improve safety and security for more than 334,000 students in the state.

2/15/2023 – 6pm – Local Colleges Evaluating Campus Safety in Wake of MSU Shooting – Local – Runtime 2:50

In the wake of the deadly shooting on the campus of Michigan State University that killed three and injured 7 others, colleges and community colleges around Mid-Michigan are evaluating safety on their campuses. The schools already have safety procedures in place but are looking to add more. One measure that is off the table is guns in classrooms.

2/28/2023 – 5pm – Beecher Community Schools Plans to Renovate, Reopen High School – Local – Runtime 2:36

New life for an old school. Nearly 20 years ago, the bell rang for the last time at Beecher High amid declining enrollment and budget shortfalls. Now there are plans to reopen the school in Mount Morris Township with the hope of bringing more students back to the district. Richard Klee, superintendent, said in an announcement that they are starting, “an exciting and important new project at Beecher Community schools.” He said they want to reopen the high school that was for so many years, the heart of the community.

03/1/2023 – 6p – Schools Undergoing a Nurse Shortage – Local – Runtime 2:09

We often hear about the teacher shortage and the bus driver shortage, but there is one other shortage affecting schools across Mid-Michigan. A school nurse shortage. With children facing more chronic health issues and illness, school nurses are in high demand. Mt Pleasant schools recently hired a new school nurse and the Genesee Intermediate school district already have nurses throughout the district, but are looking to add more after receiving \$1 million in federal funding to expand school based health services.

3/15/2023 – 11pm – Saginaw Public Schools Revising Open Enrollment Policy – Local – Runtime 2:33

The Saginaw Public Schools Board is revising the district's open enrollment policy, affecting those in grades six thru 12. Under changes approved Wednesday night by the board, all students in grades six thru 12 will attend school according to their official home address

5. POLITICS

1/16/2023 – 11pm – First State Legislative Bill Introduced Includes Repeal of “Right to Work” – Local - Runtime 2:16

Ten years after a republican led legislature passed the “Right to Work” law, all eyes are now on Lansing to see if the new democratic majority will repeal it. This comes after bills were introduced in the state house and senate that include the proposal. The law bars labor contracts from requiring workers to become union members or to pay dues as a condition of employment. It was a law so controversial that when it passed in December 2012 hundreds of union supporters gathered at the capitol in protest. If the legislature votes to repeal “right to work”, Michigan would be the first state in 60 years to do so.

1/25/ 2023 – 11pm – Governor Whitmer Delivers 2023 State of the State Address – Local - Runtime 2:16

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer laid out her plans for the state for 2022, including plans to fix the roads, help for small business and schools, as well as lower the cost of insulin.

2/1/2023 – 11p – Lawmakers Discuss Repealing 3rd Grade Reading Law – Local – Runtime 2:01

As state lawmakers discuss repealing the “Read by Grade Three” law, a former teacher spoke about why this might be beneficial to students. The “Read by Grade Three” law prevents students from moving to the fourth grade if they aren't reading at the preferred level. “We get asked for a lot of help, especially around third grade. We see a lot of very stressed-out parents who come in who are really worried about it,” said Beth Lasky, a former teacher and current children's library assistant at Butman-Fish Library in Saginaw. Lasky said the potential repeal of the “Read by Grade Three” law will help ease pressure on children and parents.

2/8/2023 – 5pm – Lawmakers Hope to Pass ‘Human Right to Water’ Act – Local – Runs 2:38

Michigan lawmakers are hoping to pass the “human right to water” act to ensure all Michiganders have access to safe, clean, affordable water. Between infrastructure, PFAS, and water shut offs, safe water has been hard to find in parts of the state, especially in mid-Michigan due to the Flint Water Crisis. If passed the proposed “human right to water” act is set to give everyone a source of clean water.

3/17/2023 – 11pm – Genesee County Proposes Ballot Initiative to Protect Pets – Local – Runtime 2:00

Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson and other public officials are proposing a new statewide initiative to protect pets. The Protect MI Pet Animal Abuse ballot proposal will allow Michigan voters to decide whether to create a public, statewide, searchable registry of convicted animal abusers.

***3/22/2023 – 11pm – Bills Reintroduced to Improve Road Work Zone Safety – Local – Runtime
2:20***

Two state House Bills have been reintroduced that are aimed at making road work construction zones safe. If passed, the Bill would allow Michigan State Police and the Department of Transportation to implement automated speed cameras in road work zones. Driver would be ticketed for going 10 miles over the posted speed limit while workers are near the roadway and not protected by barriers or guardrails. The bill didn't pass previously because the legislative session ended.