

MLICA Scoop

LAND IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS ~ MICHIGAN CHAPTER

2023 ISSUE 4

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From the Lead Plow, Russ Talaski, President MLICA

First of all, I would like to inform you that the plans for the Winter Convention are coming along great. We will be allowing more time for the membership to visit with the associates and more educational seminars to meet your needs. But to do that, we need to hold it for two days. Again, we need auction items for Monday night; it helps fund our organization's cause.

I want to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a successful New Year, the way I was taught to say. Also, Happy Holidays as you may celebrate it. No matter how you celebrate, be with the ones that mean so much to you, and remember it is a time to be kind to others. I once had someone say that I enjoy more of the little things in life than the big accomplishments. How true! Do something little this season for someone and watch their reaction. Like stopping to ask a jogger if they need a ride or telling a joke to the young

waitress who is so nervous to relax them. Or go down your phone contact list and call someone you haven't talked to in a long time, or give some kid you don't know some money for just taking care of their brother or sister while their parent is busy shopping. These are examples of small things; you know what makes others happy. The holiday season is a time to share and be happy yourself, so embrace it and enjoy it.

I have been in MLICA since 1996. I have met so many friends and people I call family that have helped me grow as an individual and better my business. LICA's philosophy: first your family, then your business, then LICA. See if you can find the time for LICA, and I feel that you will find the benefits.

Thank You for letting
me serve you.

Russell Talaski



FEATURES

DIARY OF AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GPR IN AGRICULTURAL DRAINAGE | WHY LICA

NATIONAL HAPPENINGS: BIGIRON QUARTERLY FOCUS AUCTIONS

NATIONAL HAPPENINGS: 2024 WINTER CONVENTION IN VIRGINIA BEACH

RECIPE HIGHLIGHT: ONE-POT SALSA BEEF SKILLET

SMALL BUSINESS BULLETIN: YEAR-END HR ACTIVITIES

SAFETY MATTERS: WORKING SAFELY IN COLD WEATHER

EDDIE KELLOGG OBITUARY | CLASSIFIEDS

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FARM SAFE 

Diary of an Executive Director

The past few months have been a total whirlwind! From getting that fall newsletter out to dealing with dues renewal notices and wrangling the 2024 advertising contract, it's been non-stop. And let's not forget the convention chaos – new schedules, revamped info and forms – it's a lot, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

And then there's the personal stuff – squeezing in my daughter's sports events, 4-H meetings, and the fall orchestra concert. Oh, and did I mention the holiday family gatherings? Yeah, those too! Life is a juggling act, but man, it's a good one.

I've got to give a shoutout to my friends and family. They've been my rock through all this craziness. Whether it's lending a hand or cheering on my daughter at her games, I'm surrounded by awesome people. Even though it's hard at times, it's a blessing to have such a lively and fulfilling life.

As I tackle this winter newsletter, I'm feeling grateful for the support and ready to take on whatever the next few months throw at me. Bring it on!

UPCOMING EVENTS

MLICA WINTER CONVENTION & ANNUAL MEETING

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JANUARY 8TH - 9TH, 2024

NATIONAL LICA WINTER CONVENTION

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FEBRUARY 13 -17



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Discovering the Power of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) in Agricultural Drainage

Submitted by : Will Word

In our last newsletter, I shared my exploration into Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and its potential for our line of work. Well, I'm excited to update you—I've recently purchased a GPR unit from US Radar and put it to the test on a substan-

tial project involving the splitting of an old system dating back to the 1970s.

Let me start by saying, it's impressive! The GPR unit has proven its worth, especially in certain conditions. We encountered challenges in locating tiles in the worst possible soil types—dense clay—but found that it excelled in lighter, sandier soils. In our experience, the performance varied, and some issues might have been due to our methods. For instance, the system worked better when crossing tile lines perpendicularly, while our parallel approach might have caused some hiccups. This drainage system had unexpected twists and turns, which added complexity.

Given our time constraints, we used the GPR selectively, focusing on areas where we faced difficulties pinpointing anything. David Kelly, the salesman and trainer, emphasized trusting the machine—an advice that held true. Sometimes, letting the technology do its job, flagging areas, and then analyzing the data made all the difference.



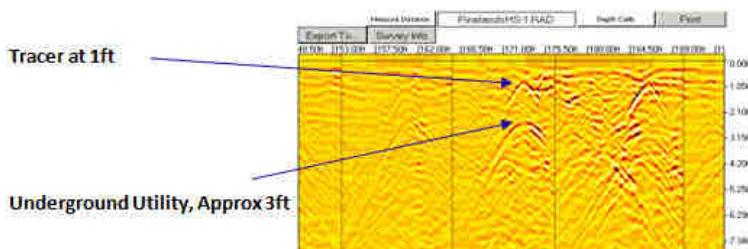
In practice, the unit operates by either manually pushing it, or towing it behind a side-by-side vehicle at a slow pace. The screen displays real-time underground signatures, representing contrasting densities as inverted U-shaped indicators. Shallow

laterals were easily discernible and well-defined, while deeper lines presented a bit more challenge. Like anything new, our interpretation of the data will improve with continued use.

Here's how it works: as you travel the field, the system records signatures, allowing you to mark spots in real time, creating a 2D GPS map. Alternatively, post-processing enables grid-based marking for comprehensive mapping. For larger areas, I've experimented with multiple grid approaches and overlapping sections to gather more data points, especially in areas with more potential targets, such as a main that follows a valley.

The Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) unit has demonstrated its efficiency in supporting our drainage projects, particularly in terrain conducive to its optimal performance. While it encounters limitations in specific soil conditions, honing our proficiency in its operation and interpretation has proved immensely valuable. I am enthusiastic about the technology's potential to enhance our workflow efficiency and precision in locating existing drainage systems.

In the upcoming weeks I plan to do some large scale locating and mapping for a solar project. I will update you on the success of that project at the Michigan LICA convention in January!



Why LICA?

I'm a part of LICA because my grandfather and dad were. It's just been a part of our business. We benefit most by using the free Petrocon membership.

~ Adam Auernhamer,
MLICA Board Member

I joined LICA to interact with fellow members, to share ideas and new technologies, and be active on new legislation that govern our industry.

~ Keith Cottrill, MLICA Board Member

I joined LICA to meet people in the tiling industry and continue my membership because of the friendships I have made and to keep up on new products.

~ Nate Payne, MLICA Board Member

I joined because of my family's involvement in the organization and have continued because I feel the knowledge gained from other contractors and their experiences is invaluable.

~ Ben Cook, MLICA Member

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- Easy access to LICA auction equipment inventory
- Additional marketing with no added fees
- Full service - we handle everything
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LICA FOCUS AUCTIONS

DECEMBER 2023

MARCH 2024

JUNE 2024

SEPTEMBER 2024

For additional Member
benefit information

CONTACT TIM KIPPER
402.802.5028

NATIONAL HAPPENINGS

BIGIRON QUARTERLY FOCUS AUCTIONS

National LICA has collaborated with BigIron Auctions to introduce a new advantage for LICA members: the LICA Member Auction Benefit. From December 2023 to 2024, BigIron Auctions will conduct quarterly Focus Auctions, offering exclusive rates to LICA members without additional fees.

BigIron Auctions specializes in online auctions, ensuring owners get fair market value for their equipment and assets. They promote transparency by facilitating direct communication between buyers and sellers, enabling potential bidders to reach out to the previous owner with any inquiries.

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NATIONAL HAPPENINGS

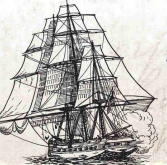
2024 WINTER CONVENTION IN VIRGINIA BEACH FEBRUARY 13-17

Virginia Beach's allure spans all seasons, with its rich history, local cuisines and array of both indoor and outdoor attractions to experience. National LICA has exciting plans in store for the LICA Family this coming February.

Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront | \$149/night (plus Taxes & Fees)

The Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront is right on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk, steps away from entertainment and dining. Neptunes' Park, Beachside Social & craft beers.....just to name a few!

The hotel itself has Catch 31 onsite, which is some of the best food and views on the coast. In the mood for a more unique dining experience? Make reservations 21 floors up at Virginia Beach's ONLY rooftop igloo experience. Enjoy an exclusive and intimate lounging experience in a heated igloo that includes a private server, hand-crafted food and cocktails, and memories you can't find anywhere else at the beach.



2024 National LICA Winter Convention
Virginia Beach, Virginia - February 13 - 17th


Tours

Tuesday, February 13 - 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Military Aviation Museum & Nauticus Maritime Museum and USS Wisconsin

Located in Virginia Beach the Military Aviation Museum is home to one of the world's largest collections of flying vintage military aircraft. Tour guides will take members though the purpose-built airport facility includes over 50 aircraft from the World War I and World War II-era.

Nauticus is a maritime-themed science center and museum, also known as the National Maritime Center. Battleship Wisconsin (BB-64), an Iowa-class battleship, was the second ship of the United States Navy named in honor of the 30th state. Battleship Wisconsin is one of the largest and last battleships ever built by the U.S. Navy. Explore its deck through a self-guided tour. **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN.**






Wednesday, February 14 - 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Guided Tour of Colonial Williamsburg & Merchants Square

Join us for America's largest living history museum. From 1699 to 1780, Williamsburg was the political, social, and cultural capital of Britain's largest, wealthiest, and most populous colony. It was here that George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and other Virginia Patriots debated the Ideas - liberty, independence, and personal freedoms - that led to the founding of American democracy. Interaction with costumed interpreters of varied age, race, and social position provides a first-hand view of life when the town was the capitol of the Virginia colony.

Members will shop and have lunch on their own at Merchants Square, an 18th-century style retail village with more than 40 shops and restaurants. The shops offer everything from traditional and designer clothing to handmade candies, antique quilts, folk art and a variety of exclusive Williamsburg reproductions. The restaurants on Merchants Square offer choices from a quick sandwich to the freshest seafood, steaks, or contemporary American regional cooking. **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN.**


2024 National LICA Winter Convention
Virginia Beach, Virginia - February 13 - 17th

Agenda

Please note:
The Winter Convention Agenda has changed.
National LICA Committees are now Thursday.
Seminars & Associates' Night are Friday.

Tuesday, February 13

8:30 am - 3:30 pm	Aviation Museum/ Nauticus Tour
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Wednesday, February 14

8:30 am - 3:30 pm	Tour of Williamsburg
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Executive Committee

Thursday, February 15

7:00 am - 5:00 pm	Committee Meetings
12:00 pm	Opening Lunch

Friday, February 16

8:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Educational Seminars
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Executive Directors' Meeting
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Associates' Night (Exhibition)

Saturday, February 17

8:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Delegates' Meeting
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Board Meeting
12:30 pm	Lunch
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Reception
7:00 pm	Awards Banquet

What does Registration Include?
Winter Convention registration includes all meal functions, Associates' Night, Educational Seminars, Committee Meetings, and the Board & Delegates' Meetings. All registered members will receive meal tickets, a name badge, and a program when they check-in on site and are welcome to attend any of the Committee Meetings and the Board Meeting. For a list of committees and their functions, visit LICANational.org.

Tours
Those who pre-register for any of the tours will receive an admission ticket to those events when they check-in on site. Tours leave promptly at the listed time.

Attire
The attire for our Winter Convention is mostly casual. Members do wear "dressier" attire for the Awards Banquet Saturday evening. Slacks, dresses, and nice shoes are often worn, but not required.

Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront
LICA members will be soaking in the views of the Atlantic Ocean right in the middle of the Virginia Beach Boardwalk this February. The Boardwalk has a plethora of restaurants and activities just minutes from the Hilton. But you don't even need to leave the hotel for a bite to eat. Dine next to the Atlantic Ocean at Catch 31, for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Located on the first floor of the Hilton.

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2024 National LICA Winter Convention

Virginia Beach, Virginia - February 13 - 17th
Educational Seminars & Associates' Night

Educational Seminars Friday, February 16

New Opportunities in Water Management

Presented by: SWRT Solutions, Inc.

Millions of acres of sandy textured soils do not produce profitable yields for your customers because they lack the ability to retain mobile crop nutrients and moisture in the root zone. SWRT Solutions Inc. is a new company with a subsurface membrane technology developed at Michigan State University which increases in water use efficiency up to 6 times, retains more inputs keeping them available to crops and dramatically increases biomass and crop yields. Attendees will learn how membranes work and how to make subsurface membrane installation available to their existing customers as well as many new customers who need this long lasting and low maintenance soil improving technology.

Associates' Night (Exhibition) : "LICA's American Revolution" Friday, February 16 - 7:00 pm - 10:00pm

The theme of the Winter Convention is "LICA's American Revolution." Attendees and exhibitors are encouraged (but not required) to dress in theme on Associates' Night (exhibition).

Though no major battles took place in Virginia Beach, there is a consensus among historians that the Battle of Yorktown was strategically won right off the coast of Cape Henry. Until August of 1781 the British controlled the waterways of Virginia. But that changed after a two-day sea battle, when the French Fleet de-

Mental Health Awareness: Depression & Suicide

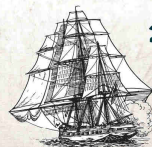
Presented by: Virginia Beach Dept. of Human Services: Behavioral Health & Prevention Services

Many adults suffer from depression and even thoughts of suicide. Unfortunately, in the construction industry this is not talked about enough. Many people don't even know the signs of depression and others might be ashamed to ask for help.

In this seminar members will gain the knowledge and understanding about depression, suicide, and issues relating to mental health. Attendees will also learn how to get help for themselves or someone else suffering from depression or suicidal thoughts.

feated the British. The Chesapeake was no longer controlled by the British and their army was left without reinforcements and supplies, forcing them to surrender on October 19, 1781.

LICA can celebrate that victory by dressing as: blue coats, red coats, commoners, wealthy landowners or even famous historical figures. Costume or not - exhibitors and contractors can network while enjoying a dinner buffet and a refreshing drink.



2024 National LICA Winter Convention

Virginia Beach, Virginia - February 13 - 17th
Fun on Your Own!

Walking Distance...

Virginia Beach Surf & Rescue Museum

2401 Atlantic Avenue Virginia Beach, VA
- Maritime History

- History of Coastal Communities

[Click here for complete info](#)

Beachside Social

2728 Atlantic Ave. Virginia Beach, VA

- Enjoy games while dining & enjoying cocktails.

- Shuffleboard, Bocce Ball, Boardgames

- Open 5 pm - 10 pm (12 am on weekends)

[Click here for complete info](#)

Virginia Beach Craft Beer Trail (Multiple locations)

Smartmouth Brewing (walkable)

313 32nd Street, Virginia Beach, VA

Bunker Brewpub (walkable)

211 21st Street, Virginia Beach, VA

[Click here for the complete Trail](#)

Virginia Beach Guided Beach Horseback Ride

26th & Atlantic Ave. Virginia Beach, VA

- 30 minutes or 1 hour tour(s)

- No experience required

[Click here for complete info](#)

Monuments & Parks

Neptune's Park

31st and Atlantic Ave Virginia Beach, VA

- Outdoor park with King Neptune's Statue

Naval Aviation Monument Park

25th Street & 2500 Atlantic Ave, Virginia Beach, VA

- 9 bronze statues depicting early local naval history,

WWII & the modern day.

By Car...

Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center

717 General Booth Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA

- Sharks, Sea Mammals, Reptiles, Fish & More!

- Whale Watching Boat Tours

- Buy tickets online.

[Click here to buy tickets & more info.](#)

Cape Henry Lighthouse

583 Atlantic Ave, Virginia Fort Story, VA

- 4th Oldest lighthouse open to the public

- Open 10 am - 4 pm (Winter Hours)

- Must have a valid ID

[Click here for complete information](#)

Historic Homes

- Multiple homes that are a part of American history

- Thoroughgood House, Lynnhaven House, Francis

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[Click here for complete list & locations](#)

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- Local Golf Courses open year-round

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skill level.

[Click here for complete information](#)

Rudce Tours (Wildlife watching, fishing)

200 Winston Salem Ave. Virginia Beach, VA

- Whale watching

- Fishing

- Several trips daily

[Click here for complete information](#)



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One-Pot Salsa Beef Skillet

Submitted by Sarah Cook

From Kraft Food & Family Fall 2005

Prep: 5 min.

Total: 27 min.

Ingredients:

1 lb. lean ground beef (or venison)

2 cups water

1 cup *Taco Bell Home Originals* Thick 'N Chunky Salsa

1 pkg. (14 oz.) *Kraft Deluxe* Macaroni & Cheese Dinner (or 2 cups pasta & 1/2 lb Velveta)

2 cups frozen corn

1/2 cup *Kraft* Shredded Mexican Style Cheese

1 green onion, chopped *optional*

Directions:

Brown meat in skillet; drain. Return to skillet.

Stir in water, salsa and Macaroni. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover.

Simmer 10 min. or until Macaroni is tender; stirring twice. Add corn and Cheese Sauce Mix; cook 2 min. or until heated through and blended. Ladle into bowls. Sprinkle with shredded cheese and green onion.

This recipe says it makes 4 servings, but they are LARGE servings. I make this when I know I am going to have a busy week because it is great as left overs.

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Small Business Bulletin

DECEMBER 2023

Year-end HR Activities

The last months of the year are a great time for small businesses to ensure they're prepared for everything that needs to be done. It's also an opportunity to evaluate which HR processes organizations want to take forward into the new year and which to leave behind. While certain HR compliance activities must be completed by the end of the year, small businesses can also use this time of preparation to focus on tasks that will set their organizations on the right course for next year. This article provides an overview of general, compliance-related, and employee compensation and benefits activities small businesses may need to tackle at the end of each year.

General Activities

The end of the year is usually a busy time for small businesses. They must accomplish a lot in a relatively short period to close the year and prepare for the upcoming one. These tasks may include:

- Completing annual performance reviews
- Asking employees to update their personal and contact information
- Backing up HR data and personnel files
- Establishing an annual budget and allocating resources
- Reviewing recruiting and hiring processes
- Creating plans for new hires
- Update succession plans and job descriptions

Compliance Activities

Year-end is an excellent time to review how well an organization is complying with current laws and regulations. To ensure organizations follow all applicable laws and regulations, small businesses can conduct a compliance audit. Common items reviewed during a compliance audit include the following:

- Employee classification
- Personnel files
- Employee handbook
- Employment policies
- Employment and labor law posters

As part of its audit, small businesses can update organizational documentation and policies yearly. They can also review employee documents, such as tax forms or beneficiary designations, to ensure they're completed properly and signed, if necessary. Before the end of the year, organizations can confirm employees have completed all required training and move terminated employee personnel files to storage. If issues are discovered during an audit, small businesses can ensure they're corrected before the start of the new year.

Compensation and Benefits Activities

Organizations often review employee compensation and benefits at the year's end. Small businesses can compare employee salaries to the market average and consider making cost-of-living adjustments to stay competitive. It can also do the same for its benefits offerings. By conducting employee benefits surveys, small businesses can learn what benefits employees want and value most and then update or tailor benefits packages to enhance their attraction and retention efforts.

Employer Takeaways

Year-end activities can seem limitless, which may leave small businesses feeling overwhelmed, and some tasks can be easily overlooked. By preparing early, small businesses can wrap up this year properly and set their organizations up for success next year.



Safety Matters

Provided by: Prins Insurance, Inc.

Working Safely in Cold Weather

Workers exposed to extremely cold conditions are at risk of serious health problems, including hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration and muscle injuries. Frigid temperatures can also cause additional pain for those who suffer from arthritis and rheumatism. To prevent injuries and illness as a result of winter weather, it's important to learn about the causes, symptoms and safety considerations to take so you are prepared to handle winter's worst.

Causes of Cold Weather Injuries

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), there is no exact temperature at which the environment becomes hazardous. Instead, factors such as low temperatures, wind speed and wetness contribute to cold-induced injuries and illness.

- Exposed skin freezes within one minute at -20° F when the wind speed is five miles per hour (mph), and will freeze at 10° F if the wind speed is 20 mph.
- When skin or clothing is wet, injury or illness can occur in temperatures above 10° F, and even above freezing (32° F).
- When the body is unable to warm itself, hypothermia and frostbite can set in, resulting in permanent tissue damage and even death.

Signs of Injury and Illness

If you or a co-worker have any of the following symptoms, get indoors and alert your supervisor or call for medical attention if they do not subside:

- Uncontrollable shivering
- Slurred speech
- Clumsy movements
- Fatigue
- Confused behavior
- White or grayish-yellow area(s) of the skin
- Skin that feels "waxy"
- Numbness

It's important to note that many people suffering from the warning signs of frostbite do not notice because the tissue is numb. Therefore, it is wise for employees to check on each other periodically.

Safety Considerations

To reduce the risk of cold-induced injuries:

- Layer clothing to keep warm enough to be safe, but cool enough to avoid perspiring excessively. It should also contain the following:
 - Inner layer – a synthetic weave to keep perspiration away from the body
 - Middle layer – wool or synthetic fabric to absorb sweat and retain body heat.
 - Outer layer – material designed to break the wind and allow for ventilation, such as GORE-TEX®.
- Wear a hat. Almost 40 percent of your body heat escapes from your head. If you wear a hard hat, add a winter liner that covers your neck.
- Place heat packets in gloves, vests, boots and hats to add heat to the body.
- Watch out for the effects of cold temperatures on common body functions, such as:
 - Reduced dexterity and hand usage
 - Cold tool handles reducing your grip force
 - The skin's reduced ability to feel pain in cold temperatures
 - Reduced muscle power and time to exhaustion



This safety matters flyer is for general informational purposes only, and is not intended as medical or legal advice.

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Eddie Kellogg Obituary



Edward D. "Eddie" Kellogg, age 82, of Edon, Ohio, passed away at 12:01 A.M. on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, in his home after an extended illness. Mr. Kellogg was a 1959 graduate of Edon High School and was a drainage

contractor, operating Ed Kellogg Farm Drainage from 1959 to present. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, watching NASCAR, Ohio State football, and spending time at the lake. Most of all he enjoyed working his business.

Edward D. Kellogg was born on December 3, 1940, in Manchester, Michigan, the son of Donald and Hattie (McGee) Kellogg. He married Dianna L. Petre on July 22, 1967, in Metz, Indiana, and she survives.

Surviving in addition to his wife are three sons, Scott (Jenny) Kellogg, of Bryan, Ohio, Steve (Rachelle) Kellogg, of Montpelier, Ohio, and Stacy (Kirby) Kellogg, of Edon; twelve grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and his siblings, Doris Bechtel, in Texas, Lyle (Evelyn) Kellogg, Carol Mason, Fred Kellogg, John (Shelly) Kellogg, JoAnn Kellogg, all of Edon, and Howard Kellogg, of Hillsdale, Michigan. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Visitation was held on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from 4:00-7:00 P.M. at the Krill Funeral Home, Edon. Services were held on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 11:00 A.M. at the Krill Funeral Home, Edon, with Pastor John Winright officiating. Interment followed at Columbia Cemetery.

Memorials are requested to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or the Shop with a Cop program.

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