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—Charles F. Browne

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EddieAlexanderHomes@gmail.com

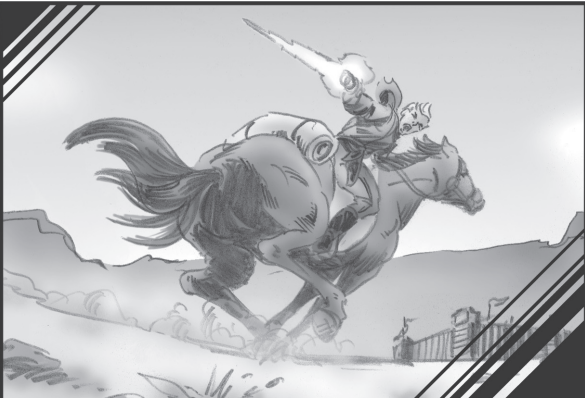
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Tim Holtrop - Illustrator: tim@timholtrop.com
Lin Holtrop - Writer / Editor: lin@timholtrop.com
Kate Holtrop - Writer / Editor: kate@holtrop.net
Calvin Holtrop - Writer / Editor: calvin@holtrop.net
Collin Holtrop - Illustrator: collin@holtrop.net
Caleb Holtrop - Graphic Artist: caleb@holtrop.net
Kaerlyn Holtrop - Graphic Artist: kaerlyn@holtrop.net
Independent contractors with reasonable rates.

Weekly meals for students

By Maribeth Clarke, Administrative Assistant

Many of Fruitport Community Schools' families rely on free or reduced meal service throughout the school year.

When Governor Whitmer signed Executive Order 2020-35, which ordered all K-12 school buildings to close for the remainder of the school year, the district knew there would be a need to provide meal service for their economically disadvantaged families.

Putting this service together on short notice had some issues that were quickly resolved. On March 23rd, the district's food service employees,

process, meals were packaged for students and ready for pick up. This process took tremendous effort on the part of the district's food service program.



Superintendent, Bob Szymoniak and Food Service Director, Zach Zost quickly realized this process was not sustainable and began looking for alternatives. A partner with the district's food service program became the obvious choice.

Fruitport Community Schools now provides 900 students with weekly meals for breakfast and lunch. That equates to over 12,000 meals per week! The district is reaching approximately 33% of their economically disadvantaged population.

"Thank you so much. My kids loved it. The boxes were full of amazing goodies for them," remarked an Edgewood parent.

We are proud to serve our Trojan Nation a nutritionally balanced meal program during these unprecedented times.



with the help of a few volunteers, began making sandwiches, bagging breakfast items, and putting together lunches. Through an assembly line

HealthWest Nurses Begin Testing for COVID-19 in Congregate Living Facilities

Muskegon County's congregate living facilities have received a boost in their fight against COVID-19 thanks to a unique partnership between HealthWest, Public Health – Muskegon County, and Mercy Health.

HealthWest's specially-trained nursing staff has begun testing for COVID-19 in the county's congregate living facilities, including adult foster care homes, group homes, and room and boards.

Nurses began testing on April 22, and so far tested more than 30 individuals. More than half of these tests have been positive for COVID-19.

"Individuals living in these types of facilities are at an increased risk for contracting the disease and are much more likely to experience severe symptoms," said HealthWest Integrated Health Clinical Services Manager Suzanne Beckeman. "Early intervention can limit the spread of the disease and save lives."

So far, the testing program identified three people who were experiencing severe symptoms, which required hospitalization. All three of those individuals have survived.

Roughly a dozen HealthWest nurses volunteered to join the specialized COVID-19 testing team, and six were selected to participate after being trained on how to administer the tests properly. A lack of adequate-fitting personal protection equipment has limited the number of

nurses eligible to join the team.

Mercy Health is providing training and testing materials.

"We know that it is very important to test our at-risk populations in order to reduce transmission," said Gary Allore, president of Mercy Health Muskegon. "We are grateful to be able to support the Muskegon health community in this way as it embodies our mission to be a transforming, healing presence in the communities we serve."

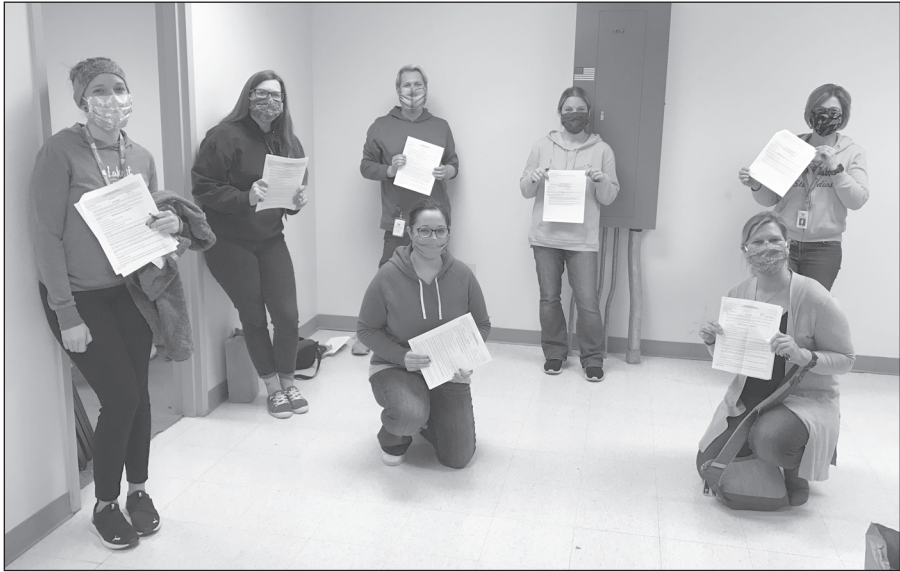


photo by HealthWest

Testing individuals in these facilities provides many unique challenges. Still, HealthWest nurses can conduct testing inside the living facilities, and many have previously-established relationships with those being tested.

HealthWest nurses typically work in the agency's Integrated Health Clinic or are embedded in teams serving individuals with behavioral health or substance use issues in the community.