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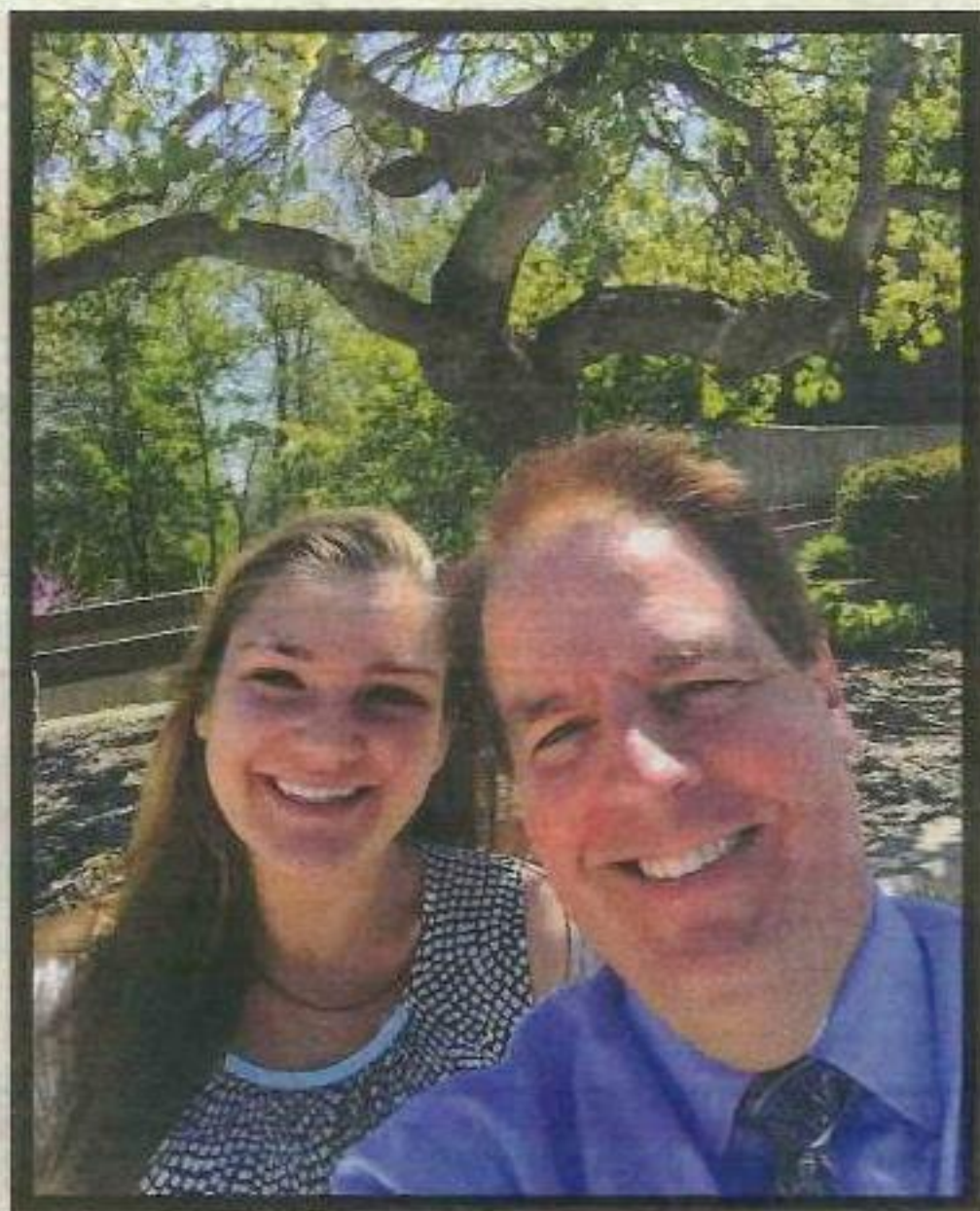
Shelby - Utica News



**SHELBY WANTS YOU
TO TAKE A SELFIE/3A**

**EISENHOWER
ADVANCES TO
REGIONALS/6A**





Shelby Township community relations intern Elena Simopoulos, left, and Supervisor Rick Stathakis, right, take the first official #ShelbySelfie in front of Shelby Township Hall, 52700 Van Dyke Ave.

Photo provided by Brad Bates

Take a selfie with a tree

SHELBY LAUNCHES SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO ENGAGE YOUNGER AUDIENCE

BY SARAH WOJCIK

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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — With selfies and social media synonymous with a younger generation, and trees synonymous with Shelby Township, the township's latest community relations intern concocted a plan to unite the two.

Elena Simopoulos, 20, a Shelby Township resident and political science major at the University of Michigan, said she saw

See **SELFIE** on page 16A

Selfie

from page 3A

an opportunity with Instagram, a photo-sharing social media platform.

“We lack outreach to the younger ages for Shelby Township, and Instagram is really popular. I use it all the time,” Simopoulos said. “People think Shelby Township is kind of lame, but there are really good things here. (The campaign) is a good way to show off some of the cool sights in Shelby Township.”

The name of the initiative is #ShelbySelfie.

To participate, take a selfie in Shelby Township with your favorite tree and post it to Instagram during the month of June. Make sure to include “#ShelbySelfie” and “#WhereAmI in @theshelbytw” in the caption.

Simopoulos encouraged users to include the location of their #ShelbySelfie so that other followers could discover their favorite trees.

The township’s official Instagram account, @theshelbytw, will repost the photos to share with other users. Photos will only be seen and reposted if the users’

accounts are public rather than private.

After the month of June, Shelby Township will announce another theme for #ShelbySelfie. A new theme will be announced at the beginning of every month to spark users’ creativity.

“We have a very proud community, and it’s a community very involved on social media,” Supervisor Rick Stathakis said. “We’ve had a lot of very meaningful conversations with residents via social media, and this new campaign will help us share our local pride with the region, nation and world.”

The first #ShelbySelfie featured Stathakis and Simopoulos with Stathakis’ favorite tree in front of the township municipal building, 52700 Van Dyke Ave.

“This is a fun way to appeal to more residents, especially young residents, to become involved in our community,” Stathakis said. “I can’t wait to see all the residents’ smiling faces in front of their own favorite trees.”

Simopoulos brainstormed the initiative during the first week of her internship.

“The township has done a tremendous job building a following on Facebook for the 35- to 50-year-old demographic, and

Instagram will address the lack of participation we have from the 18- to 34-year-old population,” Simopoulos said.

She said her favorite tree is a large oak near a creek in the backyard of her Shelby Township home, where she has resided for 14 years.

“It’s pretty cool, especially in the fall when the leaves change,” she said. “There used to be a tire swing. I always go there.”

The township’s Instagram account is intended to capture the lighter side of government, while its Facebook and Twitter accounts are geared more toward news updates and events in Shelby Township.

“Sharing these pictures for a public audience is a quick and easy way for residents to explore places or sights of Shelby Township they may not have ever seen before,” Simopoulos said. “We hope to get as many people involved as possible.”

Selfies should be appropriate for all viewers. Those deemed inappropriate will not be reposted by the township account.

For more information, call the Supervisor’s Office at (586) 731-5154.

Call Staff Writer Sarah Wojcik at (586) 498-1029.