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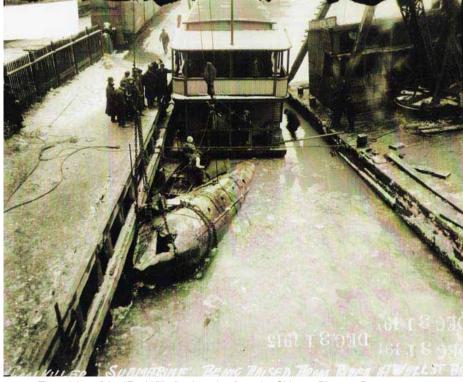
The Mystery of the "Fool Killer"

by William Halliar

For centuries, the dream of exploring the bottom of the sea remained just that: a dream. Many tinkerers toyed with plans and models, yet none succeeded. The publication of Jules Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" (1870) lent fuel to the fire, telling of enigmatic inventor and philosopher Captain Nemo and his fantastic invention, the Nautilus, describing adventures beyond the imagination of mere mortals on the bottom of the sea.

Could undersea exploration be done? Some say the rigors of the undersea environment are more tortuous than outer space. As is so often the fact, science-fiction led the way, and dreamers with a more practical bent caught the dream.

Enter Lodner Darvontis Phillips, Michigan City resident, humble shoemaker and son of cobblers for four generations. While Phillips sat

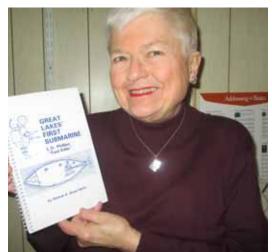


The raising of the "Fool Killer" submarine from the Chicago River on Dec. 31, 1915.

at his wooden bench swinging a hammer, nailing heels and gluing soles, plying the trade of his father and his father's father, his fertile imagination wandered far afield, and inspired, perhaps, by the heady and intoxicating aroma of the hot glue pots, or by the rolling waves of nearby Lake Michigan, he began to dream about undersea travel. In his mind, he created a ship to fulfill his dreams.

As is often the case with new ideas, perhaps in this case fueled by stories like Verne's fantasy, the ideas for building a submarine flowed through the collective creative consciences of American inventors because around the same time, many began working on the problems that would be involved with undersea travel.

Inspired by the stories of Phillips, and fueled by intellectual curiosity, Patricia Harris, author and former director/curator of Michigan City's Old Lighthouse Museum, began collecting information and articles about Phillips and his inventions so that, in her words, "Lodner Phillips and his submarine will not be forgotten." Her book,



Pat Harris holds a copy of her book, "Great Lakes' First Submarine." Many of the photos that appeared with this article were taken from her book.



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Fool Killer Continued from Page 1

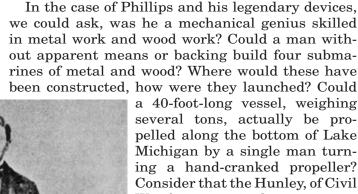
<u>Great Lakes First Submarine, L.D. Phillips Fool Killer,</u> can be found at Michigan City Public Library or the Lighthouse Museum gift shop.

According to Harris in her book's preface, "Every known book, newspaper article, public record, etc. concerning Lodner Phillips and his works has been included in the bibliography... research has shown that information on Phillips and his submarines and other inventions is scattered in bits and pieces in many libraries and public records in the United States, England and France." Copies of all the references cited in Harris' book are filed in the Lighthouse Museum archives, making the book and the archives the largest repository of history on Phillips and his invention. The book is considered the quintessential source of such information.

In spite of all of the curious articles, tantalizing family tails and legends of Phillips' successes, even the mysterious discovery of an ancient vessel of some sort on the bottom of the Chicago

River in 1915, no working drawings, model or any part of his undersea crafts have been discovered. Of the artifact brought up from the Chicago River in 1915, Harris states, "It does not prove definitely that the submarine 'Fool Killer' (if indeed this is what was actually discovered) found in the Chicago River in 1915 and put on exhibition in 1916 was or was not Lodner Phillips' second submarine (it is said that he built four)...The reader will have to draw his own conclusions until proven otherwise."

So the legend of Phillips and his inventions remain a curious mystery. The problem of engineering, too, as it moves beyond mere invention, conjecture and idea is that "the devil is in the details," and it is often in the little things that an idea is hung up and becomes impossible to bring to fruition.



Michigan by a single man turning a hand-cranked propeller? Consider that the Hunley, of Civil War fame, required seven men to crank its propulsion device. Who made the layouts and mechanical drawings that made a reality from Phillips' dreams? Could a shoemaker have bent pates of steel 3 inches thick and welded them into a watertight hull and built four such machines in his short lifetime?

In December 1915, a strangelooking object was dredged up from the bottom of the Chicago River. It had been buried in the muddy bottom until it was discovered by William Deneau, a diver of some local celebrity who was helping lay cable along the river bottom. Photos published in newspapers of the time show a cylinder pointed at each end



A photograph believed to be that of Lodner Phillips.

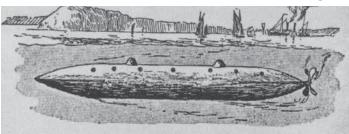
that could, with some stretch of the imagination, resemble a submarine.

Deneau claimed it was the "Fool Killer" owned by one Peter Nissen, who gained the reputation of being a "spectacular Mariner" for his feats of twice taking a boat over the cascade of Niagara Falls and surviving. Nissen had designed the boats for this feat and named them Fool Killer 1 and 2. Legend has it Nissen purchased a submarine from Phillips and sank it in a failed test in the Chicago River.

Nissen may have been a clever boat builder, but his flair for naming his unusual craft "Fool Killers" left something to be desired. According to *The Chi*cago Reader's Cecil Adams, "In the voluminous press coverage of Nissen's stunts over the years, there is no mention of his ever having owned a submarine." Nissen, whether a serious scientific investigator and inventor or not, was a showman and shameless promoter of his efforts. In the end, he was found washed up on the western shore of Lake Michigan in December 1904, the ruins of his latest "Fool Killer," strangest yet of his inventions scattered around him, the victim of extreme exposure and over confidence in his own inventions and schemes.

Deneau, a snake oil salesman himself — ever notice how many men of note in the early years of Chicago's history were showmen? — claimed to have found two skulls in the strange vessel from Chicago's river bottom. He secured permission from federal authorities to raise the craft and put it on display for paying customers in Chicago's Loop. Whose skulls were discovered was never determined, but the boat, or whatever it was, was put on display and opened for public viewing in 1915. It was called "Fool Killer" in honor of Nissen, or perhaps to lend credence to the mystery and hype.

In Harris' history, she continues the saga of this particular "Fool Killer." After having rung all of the nickels and dimes out of the rubes of Chicago, it was sold to Charles W. Parker and became an attraction in "Parker's Greatest Shows," a traveling carnival. No known photos were taken of it on display, and no drawings were made to record its dimensions and details. Some say the Fool Killer ended up scrapped somewhere in Iowa. Others claim it made its way back to Chicago to be displayed at Riverview, but eventually disappeared without record. Only the oral history of the Phillips family remains to make the claim that it was the second sub of his design.



An exterior view of Lodner Phillips' submarine as it appeared in the London Illustrated News.

Did Phillips invent and build a submarine? Did anyone actually witness tests and publish results? From Harris' book, according to Lt. F.M. Barber U.S.N., who lectured on the subject, Phillips' design was "the most complete invention of its kind with which I am acquainted." Continuing Barber's lecture on Phillips' claims, "it was cigar shaped, 40 feet long and 4 feet in greatest diameter and in the course of a few years he has so perfected his arrangements for purifying air, etc., that on one occasion he took his wife and two children with him and spent a whole day in exploring the bottom of the lake."

But beyond family traditions and such tales as Barber's, where is the proof of Phillips' work? Where are the detailed engineering drawings, photos or

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Fool Killer Continued from Page 3

records of experiments, number of dives, depths achieved and distance traveled? Apparently, they do not exist. Phillips was awarded Patent 9389 for Steering Submarine Vessels on Nov. 9, 1852, and at the time probably submitted a model to prove his device could work. The patent drawings still exist, but the model does not.

sel, as well as an article in Frank Leslie's Illustrated News Paper, a popular publication of the day that stated, "That he has succeeded no unprejudiced person acquainted with the facts can doubt hundreds having seen the boat and witnessed his experiments in it."

Who were these hundreds of people, and where is the record of what they saw besides these two articles? Most of what we know of Phillips and his



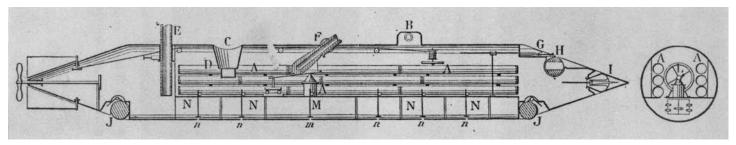
A Chicago Daily News advertisement from February 1916 promoting the Fool Killer exhibit, with admission only 10 cents.

In April 1852, Phillips wrote a letter from Michigan City to the U.S. department promoting his invention. In it he wrote, "I have made application for a submarine boat which I invented in 1847...I have experimented to the satisfaction of all who have seen me operate, I went down in the depth of water 20 feet and for which I have travelled underwater at the rate of 4 miles an hour by use of Screw Propeller... and now have a machine of the same kind which I am confident can go down with safety 100 feet."

Such claims by Phillips are backed up in an article published in the eighth volume of *Scientific American* for 1853 describing the submarine ves-

submarine are from stories passed down through family history and lore.

Several claims, though, are tantalizing and add credence to the stories and legend. There is an account of the launching of his first boat told by a great nephew, Addison Phillips, as told to him by his father, Lodner Phillips' older brother: "The hull was covered with sheet copper. It had no apparatus for propelling it except a pole to push it along the bottom of the lake. The boat sank in some 12 feet of water about where the harbor now is – pretty near the old light house" (the present location of the Old Lighthouse Museum). This boat, according to leg-



An illustration from Lt. F.M. Barber's 1875 lecture showing drawings of Lodner Phillips' 1851 submarine.

end, was shaped like a "white fish."

Sometime later, Phillips launched a second submarine in the Chicago River. Addison Phillips claims this is the artifact found in the Chicago River in 1915. Although its discoverer dubbed it "Fool Killer," Phillips' own name for is creation was "Marine Cigar."

Yet another mysterious account was penned in The Cleveland Herald and reprinted sometime later in The Detroit Advertiser. The writer of the article claims, "We saw, yesterday, at the Railroad Freight House a curious looking structure of wood and iron, shaped something like a paddle wheel at one end and an iron flanged steering paddle at the other. On the sides are small Bull's eye windows, filled with very thick glass." This eyewitness account goes on to state that whatever was seen crated at the freight station in Cleveland was said to be

Phillips' "Sub Marine Propeller," and it was on its way to attempt to dive on the wreck of the steamer Atlantic, which sunk on Aug. 20, 1852, in Lake Erie.

No written accounts of Phillips' attempt to dive



William Phillips, son of Lodner Phillips, dressed in his lighthouse keeper's uniform.

on the wreck have been found. But it is remembered by his son, William, as being a failed attempt resulting in, and explosion of, a steam boiler and loss of the sub.

The most complete records of Phillips' existence, and life aside from his several patents, are of his debts and lack of ability to pay them back. It seems there were numerous warrants placed for him. Perhaps this is the reason he moved from Michigan City to Chicago and finally to New York, where he died in 1869.

In the end, he was a scoundrel when it came to paying back money owed. Harris assumes he spent the money perfecting his inventions, but according to accounts of relatives, "Fine clothes were becoming to him. As soon as he accumulated a little money by work, he would lay off and invest his earnings in clothes of the latest

fashions (Such as) French calf skin boots, the leather imported from France."

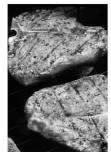
Phillips never did sell his idea to the U.S. govern-Continued on Page 6

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REFLECTIONS ON INDIANA REAL ESTATE 2015

This article has been bouncing around in my head for several weeks. It is always dangerous to generalize from a couple of experiences, which is what I am about to do. But I was at the Chamber meeting the other night and a REALTOR® just came out with what I am about to say from a different perspective without any prompting by me, so I decided to just say what I think is right.

I closed two sales in the same week in November. Both in Indiana. Both closed fewer than 4 months after being listed. I loved both houses so I was biased about what the houses were worth.

One house I listed for \$359,000. I really thought that it would sell for \$325,000 TO \$335,000. But we got no Zillow or Trulia traffic, and we got only two showings. So, hat in hand, I told the sellers I had made a mistake and to reduce the price to \$339,000. Nothing. \$329,000. Nothing. \$319,000. Nothing. \$309,000. Sold guickly for \$300,000. 97% of last asking price.

The second house, I was more accurate because I knew the seller wanted to be gone before the snow started. I started at \$699,000. We got 4 showings the first weekend and the Seller convinced me we were underpriced. We raised the price all the way UP to \$825,000, which is where the owner had wanted to start. I blinked and upped the price. Dead. Nothing. Dropped \$20,000 every two or three weeks until we got back to \$700,000. Sold in two weeks for \$675,000. 96.5% of last listed price.

CONCLUSIONS: There are buyers. They understand price. They ignore even slightly overpriced properties. You have to be within 5% of the right price to get an offer. Buyers quickly buy right priced properties for at least 95% of the asking price. If you have had a property for sale for more than 2 months without a good offer, the price is wrong and the only solution is to get the price right. All the other "blah, blah" about sales techniques is useless. Unless the price is right, you will not sell.

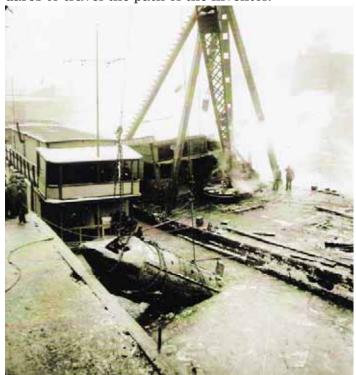
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Fool Killer Continued from Page 5

ment nor the French, nor did he, if his vessels were indeed a success, receive the glory or money he must have sought for his efforts. To be fair, it should be noted it was many years after the Wright Brothers flew their plane over the sand dunes at Kitty Hawk that people actually took them seriously and believed they had flown a heavier-than-air craft. Credit was given to others by the U.S. government, and Wilber had to fight until the end of his days for the recognition he and his brother deserved.

Such is the fate, and often the life, of one who dares to travel the path of the inventor.



The bow of the submarine rests on the quay at the Chicago River.

In the end, the first submarine receiving credit for being a success was an invention of Julius Kroehl, a German-American inventor built in 1866. It was proven to cruise below the water and emerge to the surface again under its own power, something Phillips, according to family legend and other contemporary accounts, accomplished many years before.

What happened to the submarine "Fool Killer" that was found in the Chicago River? Was it a machine designed and built by Phillips? Whose skull was found in it when it was brought up from the murky depths? Did Phillips cruise the bottom of Lake Michigan with his family?

The mystery continues, and more questions arise. One thing is for sure, the shoemaker and his family lived and worked right here in Michigan City, and his dream and first experiments came to fruition here on the shores of Lake Michigan and in Trail Creek, within view of the Old Lighthouse Museum where now rests the greatest repository of collected information of the life, times and work of Lodner Phillips.

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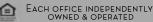


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I'm Not My Brother, I'm Me

by Kim Ward

Editor's note — The Beacher continues its partnership with iRock Jazz to provide Art+Times, which highlights how art and culture intersect today.

On Dec. 31, 2015, as the world anxiously awaited the new year, the family of singer Natalie Cole was saying goodbye to the 65-year-old singer.

"It is with heavy hearts that we bring to you all the news of our mother and sister's passing. Natalie fought a fierce, courageous battle, dying how she lived...with dignity, strength and honor," her sisters, Timolin and Casey Cole, and son, Robert Yancy, said in a statement. "Our beloved



Mother and sister will be greatly missed and remain UNFORGETTABLE in our hearts forever."

Among the many mourning the iconic singer is her uncle, Freddy Cole, brother of the late Nat King Cole and a talented musician in his own right. Cole has been a mainstay in the jazz industry for more than 50 years. The Chicago native began playing piano at 6 and at 84 is still playing, recording and performing. He started his music education at Roosevelt University in Chicago. From there, he went on to study at the Juilliard School of Music in New York before completing his master's degree at the New England Conservatory of Music. In 2012, he received an honorary doctorate from the conservatory. He has recorded numerous albums, with his 2010 release, "Freddie Cole Sings Mr. B," earning him a Grammy nomination for Best Jazz Album.

Art+Times asked Freddy Cole to talk about his experiences in the music industry over the years, his views on music today, his legendary brother and what it was like growing up on Chicago's South Side when jazz was at its high-

est point in this country.

Art+Times

so many outlets and so many different avenues to travel down. These cats that you mention are doing somewhat different things than, say, when Tommy Flanagan and Hank Jones and the likes of those — my brother —and different people that played that style of piano. And that was different from Fats Waller and Jelly Roll Morton and those guys...so it keeps evolving.

A+T: Speaking of your brother, Nat, did you guys know

growing up that you would make such an impression on the music world?

FC: Not really. When I was growing up, you know, Nat was a few years older than me. He was kind of halfway established then. He was playing professionally then at the time. But no, we didn't have that kind of an idea. But he was a real strong man, and he persevered and made it on through.

A+T: How challenging is it to be a sibling of such an iconic musician, and coming up and establishing your own identity? Is it difficult?

FC: Well, I wouldn't say it was difficult, and I wouldn't say it is easy. It all depends on how the cookie crumbles, you know. Sometimes, you



Freddy's brother, the late Nat King Cole, left an indelible mark on the recording industry.

A+T: Mr. Cole, you are

81 years old this year. Congratulations! You've seen a lot over the years. What is your take on modern-day jazz pianists, and how does their music line up with your perception of what jazz is?

FC: Well, you know, jazz is so many things. You just can't finger point and say, well, this is jazz or that is jazz. It's so many things, and that's the great part about being a jazz musician. You have

get lucky, sometimes you don't. But through it all, the main thing is for you to keep on doing what you are doing, and if you have faith in what you are doing, then your faith will carry you through.

A+T: There are a lot of musicians from the Chicago area like Willie Pickens, Herbie Hancock and yourself. How would you describe the Chicago sound?

FC: Well, I don't know if there is a Chicago sound.



Freddy Cole praises Willie Pickens as one of the jazz greats.

You can mostly tell the guys that are from the rhythm section. I used to be able to do that. There are a lot of great drummers out of Chicago...bass players and piano players. It's hard to distinguish one style from another. But those guys you called out, Willie Pickens and them, they can flat out play, you know.

A+T: What was it like growing up in Chicago?

FC: Man, Chicago, years ago when I grew up was the greatest because you had so much jazz. On every corner, there was a tavern or something that had a bar in it, and they had guys playing music and they were playing jazz music all over the South Side. And it was really slick. You could go from one joint to another. And they had some fantastic musicians at the time. There was one piano player out there named Willie Jones — a great piano player. And Norman Simmons — Norman was fantastic. There were so many guys out there. I can't call them all out because I'll miss somebody. (Laughs) But there were so many of them. If you went down 47th Street, they had joints down there, then you go up to 61st, they had a joint on 61st and Evans...you know just all around. So if you wanted to go out and hear some music, you could hear it in Chicago on the South Side. There is a song that I do called "On the Southside of Chicago" — fancy girls are working, the honky tonk's a blaze. (Laughs) Chicago was really fun then. It was really hip. I would like to see those days come again, which I'm sure they won't.

A+T: A lot of musicians are leaving their

home states and heading to New York to make a living. Do you think local musicians can make it at home?

FC: Well, if you can't make it where you are, you are either going to leave the business or move. It's as simple as that. A lot of them leave and think they are going to be big and famous in New York, but that's not the case. You gotta go and pay some dues wherever you are. I went through it. A lot of people have gone through it, but where there is a will, there is a way.

A+T: Who were your influences growing up?

FC: Growing up in Chicago, I had so many people to listen to that I couldn't say that one person dictated the way that I would go into the business because I was a John Lewis fan. I loved the way John played and spaced his chords and all, and I've always liked Ahmad Jamal. Ahmad Jamal and I have been good friends for years. There are so many different piano players out there that I've missed that I know could play. John Young was a world class piano player.

A+T: If you had to predict the direction of music today, where do you see it going?

FC: You've got some young musicians that can really play, man. We just closed up at Dizzy's a couple of weeks ago, and I had a chance to go and listen to several cats, and the music will be fine. Jazz will be fine

A+T: Jazz isn't as popular today as it was when you were growing up. What do you think changed, and how can we bring it back?

FC: Jazz is really popular, but unfortunately we live in a society that we have so much on the table that we can do and are doing, that jazz is just one of the things on the table. So this is why I say through it all jazz will be OK.

A+T: To date, what is your proudest moment, musically?

FC: I have so many. I'm very proud, a couple of years ago, of getting my honorary doctorate degree from the New England Conservatory, my old school. I've had so many that it would be really difficult to pull one thing out of the air. Let's say I've enjoyed life.

A+T: Any advice to young musicians?

FC: Practice, practice, practice. And learn something about the business. It's still called show business. Learn something about it.

Ted Perzanowski, M.Div., B.A.



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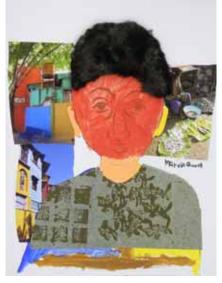
For the fifth year, Southern Shore Art Association is exhibiting the talents of young-adult art students with special needs, "Perspectives from Extraordinary Students," at its Franklin Street gallery.

A Michigan City Enrichment Corp. grant enabled the budding artists to explore an eclectic mix of techniques and media. A 10-week art program, taught by SSAA members, resulted in the exhibit of landscapes, drawings, abstract art, collage and photography. This year, students learned new skills in a glass art and sandcasting class. A shorter spring program also was offered.

During the instructional program, students gained confidence in their artistic talents and, in the process, became friends.



Flowers by Austin.



A self portrait by Marvin.



Shell-sandcasting by Kevin.



A self portrait by Libby.



"Glass Face" by Isaiah.

"Red House" by Arica.

The exhibit can be viewed from noon to 4 p.m. Friday through Sunday, Jan. 15-17, at the gallery, 724 Franklin St., Michigan City. Visit www.SouthernShoreArtAssociation.com for more information.



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PNC Hosts Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Events

Purdue University-North Central will host the 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration Breakfast on Monday, Jan. 18, in the Library-Student-Faculty Building cafeteria.

The day's theme is "Speak and Live the Dream."
The event, sponsored by the Martin Luther King
Jr. Community Celebration Committee and hosted
by PNC, is free and open to the public. Doors open
at 7:15 a.m. Breakfast is served at 7:30 a.m., with
the program starting at 8 a.m. Reservations are not





The keynote speaker is Monique Nunes, associate director for the Valparaiso University Office of Multicultural Programs.

Nunes speaks and sings across the country and abroad on topics related to women, children and faith. She has a master's degree in Human Resource Development and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Her best friend and life

coach also is her husband, John Nunes, who was the keynote speaker at the 2015 Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration. He is president-elect of Concordia College-New York, and Monique Nunes will be the director of International Programs at Martin Luther School in New York effective July 1.

The program's emcee is Michigan City High School Principal Wendel McCollum. The Michigan City Youth Choir, directed by Cornell Burton, will perform.

Also, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Family Strengthening Programs is sponsoring a family seasonal wrap drive. Guests are encouraged to donate new or gently used hats, gloves, socks, scarves, coats, sweaters and other seasonal wraps that will be given to local families in need.

Following the breakfast, guests can participate in the PNC debut of the sculpture "Rosa Parks Bench" by sculptor Jim Gallucci. This is the most recent addition to the PNC Odyssey Arts and Cultural Events Series. The bench commemorates Parks' historic bus ride and serves as a daily reminder of her place in history. It is an interactive piece, and visitors are invited to sit on the bench to rest and reflect.

Students in the PNC Department of Education will welcome area children ages 3 to 12 at Michigan City Public Library from 10:30 a.m. to noon for age-appropriate, hands-on activities that focus on King's life.

Contact Laura Odom, PNC Office of Institutional Equity associate director, at (219) 785-5545 or odoml@pnc.edu for more information.

Dr. King's Birthday

Editor's note — The following poem was submitted by George V. Neagu

The history of man clearly Shows of those who lived There are men of special birth Whom we regard with special worth.

Unique in this small tribe of men We offer our high salute, In solemn joy recalling once again, What Dr. King did then.

With giant heart he led the fight For social justice in our land, With bravery he lit the light That brought our conscience into sight.

With power-packed words did he reveal The essence of the Cause, In sonorous tones he made us feel That America was still unreal.

With dedication from the soul He braved the bottles and the bricks, With love he sought to make our nation whole And would not stop until he reached his goal.

Frequent jailings could not restrain The Soul Force of this man, Nor could water hose or club detain Beliefs and ideals of his brain.

The Drum Major lives on, as we pause To join birthday celebration, To honor the man and his cause, So deserving of applause.

Yet those who knew him would agree The greatest birthday gift of all, Is social action where need be To end injustice that you see

So let our song be from a grateful nation Happy Birthday, Dr. King!!! Let us sing with great elation In honor of your creation!!!





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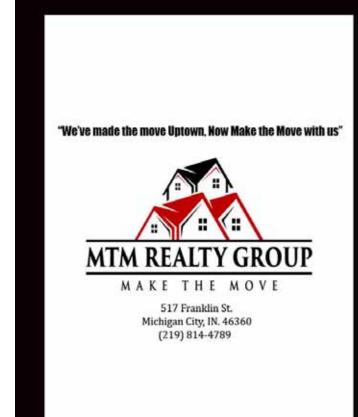
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For more information or to download an application, visit www.NewBuffaloLions.org or call (269)405-5466





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We will also tour *Sun Studio*, "the birthplace of rock 'n' roll" and the studio of several of Elvis' early recordings. While in Tennessee, we will also tour the *Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum* to learn first-hand the complete history of Memphis music!

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"Intimate Illinois Landscapes"

The Purdue University-North Central Odyssey Arts and Cultural Events Series will present "Intimate Illinois Landscapes," which features the work of artist Charlotte Rollman, through May.

Free and open to the public, the exhibit is in the first-floor north study area of the PNC Technology Building. Building hours are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday during the school semester; otherwise, the building is closed Sunday.



Four of Charlotte Rollman's watercolor landscapes are on display at PNC.

The four watercolor landscape paintings were donated from the estate of Lawrence Schlam, professor emeritus of Northern Illinois University School of Law. They are part of a larger collection owned by Schlam, a collector of Rollman's work.

Rollman primarily is known as a regional landscape watercolorist. Her paintings are achieved in three layers. The lighter hues are painted first with a lot of energy and emotion. Darker hues are applied in the second layer, creating more substantial forms. Lastly, lines are applied with a wet tip of the brush.

Rollman is a professor of art emeritus at Northern Illinois University. Her work has been exhibited across the Midwest and in New York City. She has provided art for book illustrations and CD covers.

Contact Judy Jacobi, PNC assistant vice chancellor of Marketing and Campus Relations, at (219) 785-5593 for more information.

Do You Have a Leap Year Story to Share?

Were you born on Feb. 29?

Do you celebrate a special anniversary or milestone on that date?

Or did something memorable happen on a leap day many years ago?

If so, we'd like you to share your story with us for an upcoming article in *The Beacher* celebrating 2016 as a leap year. Contact Editor Drew Tallackson at (219) 879-0088 or drew@thebeacher. com by noon Monday, Jan. 25, if interested.



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Local Photographer Honored

Michigan City photographer Paul Kemiel was in the top 14 percent of more than 10,000 people who submitted photos into a worldwide contest based in Santa Barbara, Calif.

The result is that Kemiel's photo, taken of Michigan City's lighthouse during the Oct. 31, 2014, wind storm, has been published in the "Best of Photography 2015," a hardbound coffee table book.



Paul Kemiel's photo that appears in "Best of Photography 2015."

"I was aware of the pending weather front and made the trek to the lakefront with the goal of capturing the crashing 25-foot waves against the lighthouse from the 50 mph winds," Kemiel said in a press release. "Putting my camera and lens in a plastic bag to guard from moisture, I used one of the stone pillars on the sidewalk leading to the pier as a protective barrier for my well-being, and for a stable base for the camera from the buffeting winds.

"As I was editing my photographs," he continued, "this particular image stood out due to the raw power and peak action from Mother Nature's impact that was captured in that moment in time."

Kemiel is excited that Michigan City will gain international exposure thanks to the lighthouse's presence in the book.



Michigan City Public Library

The following programs are available at Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St.:

• Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20 and 27.

Children birth to age 5 and adults will enjoy stories, songs and crafts. Arrive a few minutes early to receive a name tag.

• Knitting Club for All Ages at 6 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 13, 20 and 27.

Take size 9 straight knitting needles, worsted yarn and tape measure (optional). Contact Joanne Hale at joeyAB1971@yahoo.com or (219) 814-4398 for more information.

• Duneland Stamp Club at 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14.

New members are invited.

• Historical Art by Local Artist Robert Smith at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 17.

Born and raised in Beverly Shores, Smith attended The Art Institute of Chicago. After a stint in the Army, he did drafting in cartography, hydrology and geologic studies in the San Francisco area. He returned "home" and focused on his art. His ink and pencil drawings have been exhibited in Northwest Indiana art galleries and centers. While much of his earlier work was centered on railroad stations, he now focuses on drawing historical structures in the Chicago area.

• Talk to a Lawyer Today Free from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18.

The Indiana State Bar Association, Northwest Indiana Volunteer Lawyers Inc., the Pro Bono Committee of the First Judicial District and local bar associations will sponsor a walk-in site open to anyone who needs legal help, but can't afford an attorney. Volunteer attorneys will provide referral information if further legal assistance or social services are needed. No appointment is necessary. The project, now in its 13th year, honors the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and his dream of access to justice for everyone.

• Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration for Kids at 10 a.m. Monday, Jan. 18.

Purdue University-North Central education students will lead activities for children, including games, coloring, story times and crafts, in the library lobby near Youth Services.

• S.T.E.A.M. Ahead: Hovercrafts at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20.

Build a hovercraft using a balloon and paper plate. All materials are provided. The program is aimed at children 5 and older.

Contact Robin Kohn at (219) 873-3049 for more information on library programming.

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Westchester Public Library

The following programs are available:

• NorthShore Health Center free blood-pressure screenings from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, at Hageman Library, 100 Francis St., Porter, and 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Jan. 20, in the Bertha Wood Meeting Room at Thomas Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

Interested patrons also can receive help calculating Body Mass Index.

• Music at the Museum from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, at Westchester Township Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.

The Flashbacks will perform. Members are: Suzanne Keldsen, playing guitar, recorders and fiddle; Julietta Raby, playing fiddle, mandolin and guitar; Nancy Cairns on dulcimer and ukulele; Paul Mache playing guitar and banjo; and Marti Pizzini on autoharp, dulcimer and guitar.

• Graphic Novel Book Club from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, in the Bertha Wood Meeting Room at Thomas Library.

The focus this month is Robert Kirkman's "The Walking Dead Volume 1." Register in person with the IT department or by phone at (219) 926-7696.

• Kids Science Explorer Club at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at the Thomas Library Children's Department.

Duneland School Corp. teacher Kim Stahura leads the science-based program for children 6 and older. The focus this month is making and testing bungee cords. Registration is required in person or by calling (219) 926-7696.



• Saturday Morning Children's Movie: "Shaun the Sheep" at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, at the Thomas Library Children's Department.

Take snacks and a pillow or blanket. Children 8 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Free popcorn will be available.

Historical Architecture Through Ink

Drawings from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, in the Bertha Wood Meeting Room at Thomas Library.

Local artist Robert Smith will present his colored ink drawings of historical South Shore stations and other train stations in Porter County.

• Battles of the American Civil War from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, at Thomas Library's Bertha Wood Meeting Room.

History buff and Civil War enthusiast Thomas Murphy will discuss the Battle of Manassas/Bull Run.

• Resolving to Clear the Clutter in the New Year from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 17, in the Bertha Wood Meeting Room at Thomas Library.

Certified Professional Organizer Wendy Taddeucci will provide hints on cutting back the clutter.

• Bits & Bytes series, Computer Basics, from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, and 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, in the Serials/Automation Department at Thomas Library.

Registration is required by visiting or calling the IT Department at (219) 926-7696, or registering at www.wpl.lib.in.us. Click on the Bits & Bytes link.

• Learn About Medicare from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 19, in the Bertha Wood Meeting Room at Thomas Library.

Roy Alford, a 1979 Loyola University of Chicago graduate, has been involved with insurance plans for individuals and groups since 1984. Registration is necessary by contacting the Thomas Library Reference Department at (219) 926-7696.

• Minecraft Meet-up from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at Thomas Library.

Registration is required and must be done in person. The WPL Gaming Policy and Rules of Conduct must be signed upon registration as well. Parents are welcome to attend, but required for youth 10 and younger.

• Word Games for Adults from 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at Thomas Library's Bertha Wood Meeting Room.

Adults 18 and older are invited.

• Pokemon League from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays through May 24 at Thomas Library.

The program is aimed at children in first grade and older. Attendees learn to make decks of 60 cards. They don't need to take anything unless wanting to take a starter pack of cards.

• Children's Crochet Club from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Wednesdays through June 29 in the Children's Department at Thomas Library.

Attendees learn beginning crochet from instructor Sadie Steciuch. Children should take a size G crochet hook and skein of medium weight yarn. Register by calling (219) 926-7696.

What's New at Barker Mansion

New this winter at Barker Mansion, the public can become a member of Mrs. Barker's Club, which pays tribute to Katherine Barker's involvement in planning the mansion's menus and parties.

Serving as a fundraiser for the mansion, 631 Washington St., meeting dates are from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 21 and 28 and Feb. 4 and 11, with refreshments served.

Katherine, the wife of freight-car industrialist John H. Barker, lived at the mansion until her death in 1910.

Each session of the club will feature one dry soup or bread mix that members will assemble in mason jars. Each week also will feature a craft project, with the idea that the recipe and craft could inspire a meal or party at home.



Katherine Barker

The menu includes mixes for cream of chicken and potato soups, cornbread and chocolate chip banana bread. Scheduled craft activities are tea cup candles and potted herbs, and painted vases and spoons.

A fee of \$100 per adult and \$90 per child under 18 applies and covers all four sessions. Advance registration and payment are required by calling (219) 873-1520, Ext. 4. The deadline is Jan. 18. A minimum of 10 participants must be met for the club to be launched.

Also, marbles, jacks, pick-up sticks and checkers will be among the games available to the public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16.

While adults may remember playing these games during their childhood, many kids today are unfamiliar with them. The games were common during the time Catherine Barker lived at the mansion.

The casual program is planned in the mansion's ornate drawing room. Popcorn and cocoa, also popular during Barker's era, will be served.

The cost is \$2 per person, and reservations are not necessary. Participants of all ages are welcome.

Visit www.BarkerMansion.com for details.



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A longtime friend, one with a storied career that comprises stage and screen, suggested to me that the phenomenal success of the new "Star Wars" picture has nothing to do with whether it's any good.

Episode VII of the enduring franchise is well on its way to becoming the first movie to gross more than \$1 billion domestically, eclipsing James Cameron's "Avatar" (\$760.5 million) in basically three weeks.

Chalk up the film's pedal-to-the-accelerator success, my friend says, to a "mob mentality," legions of "Star Wars" fans hellbent on purging themselves of the cinematic acid reflux George Lucas produced with his joyless prequels.

In the 12 months leading up to the December release of "Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens," the fans, he continued, bathed in a tsunami of hype, with distributor Disney and director/co-writer J.J. Abrams carefully spoon-feeding nuggets of casting decisions, conceptual art and teaser-trailers to the public.



Daisy Ridley stars as Rey in "The Force Awakens."

The question, my friend posed, is this: Are "Star Wars" fans so relieved "The Force Awakens" isn't crap that they are blinded to its flaws?

Ooh, that's a tough one.

I adore my friend — we have spirited conversations, sometimes weekly, about contemporary film — and he may be on to something. However, he was posing this question to a "Star Wars" die-hard, one who in the 1970s saw the original picture, "A New Hope," about eight times at Michigan City's Dunes Plaza Cinema. A true-blue nerd who has what's considered the "holy trinity" of the "Star Wars" saga — "A New Hope" (1977), "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983) — on VHS,



Who still has the Kenner action figures, the comic books, the posters...

laserdisc, DVD and Blu-ray.

You catch my drift.

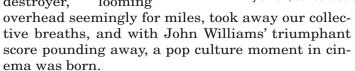
To answer his question, geek out with me, if you will, and let's take in some historical perspective.

"Star Wars" arrived in theaters in 1977, two years after Steven Spielberg's "Jaws."

Is "THE FORCE AWAKENS" Legitimately Good... or Fan Wish Fulfillment?

Film historians cite the two movies as the beginning of the end: the symbolic "death" of the old Hollywood system. From now on, the focus for studios was that opening weekend gross. Could they pack 'em in during that first weekend? Then, would the movie have "legs"? Could word of mouth, marketing and merchandising — toys. clothes, books, posters — carry the picture into the territory of bona-fide smash?

The original "Star Wars" trilogy saw Lucas pay tribute to the swashbuckling serials of his youth, but with state-of-the-art fects. We hadn't seen visuals quite like that before. The image of the belly of that star destrover. looming



The next two pictures, "The Empire Strikes Back" and "Return of the Jedi," saw Lucas' vision dubbed a "space opera." In a way, it's fitting. For all its emphasis on technology, what Lucas had created was a family saga, one with secrets, lies, hidden pasts and sudden revelations. Soapy or not, that human thread gave the stories their soul.



"Star Wars: Episode V The Empire Strikes Back."



Kylo Ren, surrounded by stormtroopers, in "The Force Awakens."

Save for his involvement in the "Indiana Jones" sequels, Lucas fell off the grid, resurfacing 16 years later in 1999 with "Episode 1: The Phantom Menace," the first of three promised prequels about Darth Vader's past.

Twentieth Century Fox, which released all six of Lucas' films, treated "The Phantom Menace" as if it was the Second Coming of a box-office Messiah. I was entertainment editor at The News-Dispatch at the time, and the process of physically getting into the advance screening was a journey of ridiculously epic proportions. Two hours before show time, you called a phone number and gave a private code number sent by

mail. Upon doing so, you learned of the secret location where the movie was being shown. At the theater, two forms of identification were required upon admittance. After the screening, it was mandatory to sign a release form stating you would not speak to any reporters circling the theater like buzzards swooping down on a kill. The final straw? If any critic published his/her review before the indicated release date, said critic would be banned from future Twentieth Century Fox screenings.

It was as if Dan Brown — he of the clue-fetish su-



"Star Wars: Episode 1 The Phantom Menace."

perthriller "The Da Vinci Code" — had been hired to mastermind the film's advance marketing. And as we all know, the hype backfired. Hell hath no fury like a "Star Wars" fan scorned. Within an hour into the advance screening I attended, the rabid enthusiasm, the kinetic energy circulating throughout the room, began to wane. Something had become distressingly clear. Lucas had forgotten how to make a "Star Wars" movie. The opening scrawl, complete with perplexing talk of trade routes and taxations, set an awkward tone for what amounted to a sluggish, pokey tale with wooden performances, laughable dialogue — complete with talk of an immaculate conception — and special effects so drenched in CGI (computer generated imagery) they resembled cartoons. The audience stumbled out of the theater that night feeling cheated. One hapless soul near me exclaimed, "We waited 16 years for that?



"Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones."

Three years later, it became irritatingly worse with "Attack of the Clones" (2002). The last thing you want out of a "Star Wars" movie is people standing around debating politics...and badly, but that's was Lucas treated audiences to, capped off by a love story resplendent with dialogue so dippy, one might argue it was penned by monkeys with crayons.

(I began gathering my things, hopeful the end credits would arrive soon to administer a sufficient mercy killing, after Natalie Portman's Padme told Hayden Christensen's Anakin, "I'm not afraid to die. I've been dying a little bit each day since you came back into my life.")

The silliness continued three years later with "Revenge of the Sith" (2005), although the second half contained an undeniable power as everything the older films eluded to now unfolded with a tragic sense of fate. Ironically, though, the movie's most spectacular set piece, the volcanic showdown between Anakin and Obi-Wan, was not directed by Lucas, but by his old pal, Spielberg, who gets no mention of it in the credits.

In any event, the point is that by 2005, "Star Wars" fans were left bewildered, disenchanted

THE FORCE AWAKENS Continued from Page 21



J.J. Abrams.

All of that changed, though, when Disney announced in 2012/2013 that it secured the rights to Lucasfilm, which entails not just "Star Wars," but also the "Indiana Jones" franchise, for a cool \$4 billion. The goal, Disney stated, was to not just fulfill Lucas' original vision of producing Episodes Seven, Eight and Nine — without Lu-

cas' involvement, mind you — but also standalone films. And with Disney wrestling ownership of Marvel Studios ("The Avengers," "Iron Man") out of Paramount Studios' hands, the studio birthed by the invention of Mickey Mouse now seemed, well, a rather greedy enterprise. Even the announcement that Abrams would direct Episode VII sent the geek world into a tizzy. After all, he'd helmed the 2009 reboot of "Star Trek," a lively film no doubt, but you don't mix "Star Trek" with "Star Wars," lest you want single men in their 40s and still living in mom's basement to spontaneously combust.

Now, the hype is over, the movie soaring in theaters. Is it legitimately good, or will the true indicator be how the movie stands up years from now?

For someone like me who prefers to live in the now, "The Force Awakens" is wonderful...and for all the right reasons. Why? Because it gets back to the basics. The story is simple. In a nutshell, Luke Skywalker is missing. The First Order, bent on picking up the slack now that Darth Vader is long dead, wants Skywalker found. General Leia sends out members of the Rebel Alliance to track him down before the First Order does.

That's it. Gone is any talk of trade federations or taxation. Gone, for the most part, are the fake CGI worlds and in their place real, exotic locales. New characters mix with beloved ones (Harrison Ford, returning as Han Solo, hasn't been this lively since, well, since the last "Indiana Jones" picture).

The movie's detractors, and there are many, say the movie is just a rehash of "A New Hope," and a poorly written, acted and plotted one to boot.

Abrams is no Spielberg, who gives his images a



poetic beauty, but he is an economical director. He knows how to tell a story and tell it swiftly. There is rarely a lull in "The Force Awakens," and the ones that do exist advance the story enough so when the action scenes arrive, you are prepped and ready for large-scale excitement.



"Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope."

And let's be honest. Do you go to a "Star Wars" movie expecting the crackling dialogue of David Mamet? A performance that heralds the next Meryl Streep? Of course not. All you want to do is cheer the good guys, boo the bad guys, applaud the rousing heroics, weep at unexpected losses and marvel at how technology has evolved over the years.

What's comforting with "The Force Awakens" is that the "Star Wars" franchise is still a family saga. The repercussions of the past have great impact on decisions of the present. And with Daisy Ridley's Rey, "The Force Awakens" creates the greatest female heroine since Sigourney Weaver's Ripley. She is neither overly feminized nor excessively masculinized. She conveys strength, wisdom, heart and courage: Everything we want out of a "Star Wars" character.

And how exciting is it, the debate over Rey's past? Is she Luke Skywalker's daughter, Obi Wan Kenobi's granddaughter, Kylo Ren's sister? The fact that a female movie character is stirring so much debate, so much public discourse on social media, is a reminder that movies have the power to generate healthy discussion.

Time will tell whether "The Force Awakens" is great moviemaking. For now, it is good, old-fashioned fun. Nothing more, nothing less.

And that's good enough for me.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



Harrison Ford as Han Solo and Peter Mayhew as Chewbacca in "A New Hope" (left) and "The Force Awakens" (right).

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

The following programs are available:

• The Save the Tunes Council performs from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.

The group preserves folk songs in the traditional way, using guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, banjo, harmonica, bagpipe, penny whistle, hurdy gurdy and other obscure instruments.

• Learn about nature in winter, and how to explore its beauty on snowshoes, during the ranger-led program from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 16 and 30, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.

A brief indoor program on winter and the use of snowshoes is followed by a chance to try them out on a ranger-led hike through fields and woods surrounding the center. A limited number of snowshoes are available for loan, or visitors can take their own. A hike will be offered if there isn't enough snow.

• Kids Fishing Tackle Series from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, at Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.

Children make fishing tackle under a park ranger's guidance. Parents must remain with their children during the program. The class maximum is 20 children. Those interested must register by calling (219) 395-1882.

• Find Your Park Film Series on Saturdays and Sundays.

Explore a different National Park Service site through films shown at 2 p.m. Saturdays at the Paul H. Douglas Center and 2 p.m. Sundays at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center. Call the park's information line at (219) 395-1882 for this week's film.

• Open House at the Douglas Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.

Family friendly activities include the chance to borrow cross country skis if there is enough snow. Visitors also can feed the center's resident turtles and fish, or just explore the center's exhibits.

• "Kid's Rule" from 1 to 3 p.m. Sundays at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.

Join a ranger in the Visitor Center's activity room for stories and activities. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

The Visitor Center is at 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. The Paul H. Douglas Center is on Lake Street in Gary. Call (219) 395-1882 for more information.

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Taltree Dayan Qigong Classes

Taltree Arboretum & Gardens will present an advanced level, six-part series on Qigong, China's emerging martial and healing arts system.

Also known as the Wild Goose, or Dayan, system, its largely obscured 1,700-year history was discovered, and has been studied, for the past 35 years.

Brian Hill, a 6th-degree black belt in Ryukyu Kempo and 2nd-degree black belt in Shuri Ryu, will lead the class. He has studied and taught karate for more than 35 years.

Set in the Visitor's Center Depot, class members will study the Chinese internal art amid a natural setting, participating in standing and seated meditations, energy work and martial training. Sold as a sin-



gle unit, classes are from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Jan. 14, 21 and 28, and Feb. 4, 11 and 18. The cost is \$45. Visit tinyurl.com/gsjqynk or call (219) 462-0025, Ext. 3, for more information and to register.

Taltree is located at 450 W. County 100 North near Valparaiso. Visit Taltree.org or follow Taltree on twitter at @TaltreeArb and facebook at facebook. com/Taltree for more information.



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LOK Foundation Awarded

The Lindsey O'Brien Kesling Wishing Tree Foundation recently accepted the Outstanding Philanthropist Award through the Northwest Indiana Chapter of American Fundraising Professionals.

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., which nominated the foundation, has partnered with it since 2013 to bring dance, music and visual art classes to area school children, including violin lessons, hip-hop dance classes or photography instruction. The students then showcase their works in an arts expo each June at LCA that includes an exhibit, musical and dance performances.

Dot Kesling created the foundation in honor of her daughter, Lindsey O'Brien Kesling, who passed away from carbon monoxide poisoning.

The organization also partners with The Boys & Girls Club and The South Shore Dance Alliance to remember Lindsey through the arts, while also ensuring those who participate are more educated about the dangers of carbon monoxide and the importance of



Dot Kesling

having effective detectors at home.

LCA Education Director Janet Bloch said Dot Kesling was nominated because "she has been able to turn her deepest sorrow into hopeful determination. Her resiliency and faith have transformed her unconditional love for Lindsey into a legacy that is meaningful to hundreds of children and families throughout the region."



MLK Day Volunteers

Celebrate the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service on Monday, Jan. 18, by signing up to volunteer at an Indiana State Park.

From maintaining trails, to entering computer data, to helping in nature centers, Hoosiers can help state park properties by donating their time and talent.

Visit stateparks.IN.gov/2443.htm for more information, then download an application and return it to the state park or lake of interest. Applications also can be sent to jheaston@dnr.IN.gov if having no preference.

Jan. 18 is a state holiday, so property offices and most nature centers will not be open. Self-directed service such as walking trails and picking up litter on that day is welcome.

Volunteers can take a photo and share it with Indiana State Parks on facebook at facebook.com/INdnrstateparksandreservoirs.

Teen Writer's Workshop

New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St., will present a free teen writer's workshop, conducted by Indigan Storyteller, from 1 to 5 p.m. EDT Saturday, Jan. 16.

Indigan Executive Producer Roger Batton will lead the program aimed at youth 11 to 16 and structured in a lecture/breakout format. Students will listen to each lecture, then breakouts will be organized by age. Each group will have a facilitator. Teens will learn to write a story for presentation and receive an Indigan Storyteller workbook. A beverage/snack service will be provided as students take a writing break.

The workshop is free to local residents and second home owners. Contact New Buffalo Township Youth Services at (269) 469-2933 or newbuffalokids@gmail.com for more information.

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Fruits of their Labor



Students at St. Paul Lutheran School have learned how one good deed inspires another. Back in October, Williams Orchard, Rolling Prairie, donated apples for use by local soup kitchens and homeless shelters. Members of St. Paul took the apples home to make baked goods, which were sold the following weekend. The money raised benefitted St. Paul's mission that involves a soup kitchen and men's Friday night homeless shelter. Purchased with the proceeds were aprons. Pictured are St. Paul students and teacher Catherine Murray serving supper for men at the Friday night shelter.



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Waste District Educator Embarks on Unique Project

How would your life change if you couldn't throw anything away for an entire year?

Alicia Ebaugh, La Porte County Solid Waste District educator, is about to find out for herself.

Ebaugh, who teaches children and adults across the county about recycling and waste reduction, is collecting all the waste she creates this year to educate herself and others about the effects of waste production.

"We live in a very disposable society. It's so easy just to throw something in the trash can. In our minds, it simply disappears after it's taken to the curb," she said. "But nothing you throw away ever truly goes away. It just goes somewhere else."

Through posting pictures of her own waste and blogging about it, she's already begun to learn interesting lessons about how her habits influence the types of waste she creates.

"When I'm at work, I don't always bring lunch from home, so a few times a week I find myself getting fast food," she said. "Each time, I end up with at least a bag, a few wrappers or containers, a napkin, maybe a ketchup packet or two. It doesn't seem like a lot, but it adds up over time.

"The bag is the only recyclable item there. If I want to avoid hanging onto the rest of that stuff, I'm going to have to plan to bring lunch from home every day."

Ebaugh also hopes her efforts will help people connect the things they throw away to the use of resources from which they are made.

"Theoretically, we all know that paper is made out of trees and that a plastic water bottle is made from crude oil, but these items are usually of no value to us after one use," she said. "It helps to be mindful that the things we are using came from the earth.

"Do we really want to say that the materials for this water bottle or plastic fork were extracted from



Alicia
Ebaugh, La
Porte County
Solid Waste
District
educator,
poses with a
week's worth
of waste she
collected last
year as a test
run for her
2016 project.

the earth, shaped by several people over a period of time and shipped, sometimes halfway around the world, so we could use it once and throw it away?"

Ebaugh said she will only keep items that are considered trash, not those that are recyclable or compostable as these methods put resources to use again. Recycling already is popular in La Porte County, Ebaugh said, as it is provided to all residents through the district's programs. She composts food, yard waste and other products at home in a designated space behind her garage. But it will all be included in the collection process, as her personal goal during this project is to focus on reducing all the waste she creates.

"Recycling is great, but I want to practice what I teach," she said. "I always say the three Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle – are in that order for a reason. If I use less stuff and reuse or repurpose things I already have, I will use fewer resources in the first place."

Those interested in Ebaugh's project can follow her posts on the Solid Waste District's blog at http:// lpcorecycling.tumblr.com/. Posts also will be shared on facebook at www.facebook.com/LPCoRecycling/

Visit the Solid Waste District website at www.solidwastedistrict.com to get a visual guide to home recycling, curbside recycling collection calendar and more.





Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs are offered:

Friday, Jan. 15

• 6 p.m. — Indiana Dunes Birding Festival Birds and Brews.

The park and Indiana Audubon Society host these free monthly gatherings of bird enthusiasts at The Craft House, 711 Plaza Drive, Chesterton. This month's theme is bird art as the official Indiana Dunes Birding Festival commemorative poster is unveiled.

Saturday, Jan. 16

• 10 a.m. — Feed the Birds.

Join a naturalist outside the Nature Center for the daily feeding. Get close views of chickadees, cardinals and woodpeckers.

• 11:30 a.m. — Indiana Dunes Geocache Adventure: A Hot Cocoa Affair.

The annual geocaching event lets geocachers in the tri-state area compete, ending with a chilidump at the Nature Center. Visit geocaching.com and search zip code 46304 to register or for more information.

Sunday, Jan. 17

• 10 a.m. — Snowshoe Shuffle to the Governor's Cottage.

Meet guest interpreter Jessica Rosier in the Nature Center for an introduction to the mode of winter transportation. Guests then jump on a pair and take a steeper dunes trek through the winter woods to the old governor's home near the beach. A hike will be offered if there isn't enough snow.

• 2 p.m. — 100 Years of Indiana State Parks.

Meet at the Nature Center auditorium for the 50-minute documentary produced in 2009 by PBS.

Indiana Dunes State Park is at 1600 N. County Road 25 East (the north end of Indiana 49), Chesterton. Call (219) 926-1390 for more information.

Creativity Knocking

Creativity reigned supreme at Pine Elementary Magnet School for the Arts during the holiday season as teachers and students collaborated on a door-decorating contest. Categories included: Most Imaginative; Funniest; Best Movie/TV Theme; and Best Literary Theme. Photos provided by Betsy Kohn









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A Super Bowl Connection



Michigan City High School recently received a commemorative golden football from the National Football League. In celebration of the Super Bowl's 50th anniversary, the NFL is providing golden footballs to all former pro players who played in Super Bowls, and for them to present to their high schools. Elston graduate Tom Nowatzke, Class of 1961, is one of those players. By the time he finished his senior season at Elston, he had earned All-State and All-American honors. He went on to play for Indiana University, where he was an All American, then turned pro, playing for the Detroit Lions and Baltimore Colts. He scored a touchdown for Baltimore in Super Bowl V. The NFL golden football he presented to Michigan City High School is now displayed by his photograph in Heritage Hall.





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Wine and Cheese Soiree

The Miller Garden Club Annual Winter Wine and Cheese Soiree is Saturday, Jan. 16, at Marquette Park Aquatorium, 6918 Oak Ave. in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood.

Social time is at 6:30 p.m., followed by a program at 7 p.m. that includes a presentation by Michigan art curator Susan Wilczak, whose is dedicated to bringing visual art to the public. She has worked with well-known artists such as Richard Hunt and Dale Chihuly, along with Michigan and regional artists. She studied French and anthropology at Central Michigan University and Universite du Quebec at Chicoutimi, Quebec, and received a master's degree in art history from Michigan State University.

While working on the Smithsonian Institute's Save Outdoor Sculpture initiative, she received a public-awareness award for her conservation efforts in Berrien County, Mich.

Reservations are required, along with a \$5 donation per attendee. Call Corya Channing at (219) 938-8532.

Handgun Shooting Course

Michigan City Rifle Club, 4801 E. U.S. 20, will host an eight-hour NRA Basic Handgun Shooting Course at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 16.

The class introduces students to the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to safely own and use a handgun. Fees range from \$175 to \$125, depending on if participants take handguns and ammunition or use club equipment. The cost includes light refreshments and lunch.

Class size is limited, and preregistration with deposit is required. Email jotto32@gmail.com or call (219) 369-3577.



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Museum Curator's Report

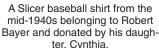
La Porte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave., La Porte, has released its December curator's report.

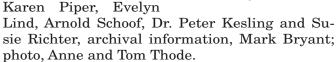
Visitors came from 13 states, eight counties and Norway. Events included "A Visit with Santa" on Dec. 5. A large chorus wandered through the museum singing Christmas carols. Holiday decorations included 16 elves placed around the museum. The theme was "No 'Elf Control." Visitors took forms and tried to find all the elves.

Donations included:

- Panoramic photo of the 50th reunion, La Porte High School class of 1947, Roger Alban.
- Playskool wooden alphabet blocks belonging to Barry Sigle, Evelyn Lind.
- Hatbox with two hats from 1948, purchased at Levine's, Nancy Opperman Giesler.
- Sheep shearer with blades used at Harry Schoof farm, early 1900s, Arnold Schoof.
- La Porte public school books, late 1800s, children's magazines, Tone Cardinale.
- Panoramic photo of the 50th reunion, LPHS class of 1949, La Porte Slicer baseball shirt from 1945 belonging to Robert Bayer, Cynthia Baker.
- Book, "Inspiring the Youth of America," Pioneer Edition, includes donor, Elizabeth Wiegand.
- Two plastic paper clips advertising Smitty's Restaurant, Elizabeth Siefker.
- Restaurant, Elizabeth Siefker.

 Items for the sale table,





This year marks a change in membership dues and admissions. Adult admissions are \$5 regardless of county of residence. Seniors 60 and older are \$4. Kids 18 and younger are free. Call (219) 324-6767 for new prices and incentives for Historical Society memberships.

The Indiana Bicentennial Project, "Prominent People of La Porte County," will be on display for the entire year. The 2016 calendars are available and cost \$12. A new display, "Wedding Gown of the Month," debuts this month.

Read The Beacher On Line http://www.thebeacher.com/

November R.O.S.E. Winner



Jamie Budak is Visit Michigan City La Porte's November Recognition of Service Excellence winner.

Budak owns Lil Q's Coffee Shop & Bakery, La Porte, a family run bake shop featuring hand cut donuts and cupcakes, as well as custom cakes.

"I started baking in my home for friends, but started to get more recognition and I needed a bigger space," Budak said. "I love being here in La Porte on Lincolnway just across

from the La Porte County Courthouse. I was born and raised in this area, and I have lived in La Porte for seven years. I like to tell my guests about the local parks and the unique shopping we have here in La Porte."

This is what the nominator wrote about the service people receive from Budak: "BEYOND WORDS: I just wanted to express how appreciative I am for this restaurant's customer service. It is such a rarity for businesses these days to truly focus their attention on the customer and not the profit. The owner went out of her way to make me one of her specialties. This to me goes FAR and BEYOND incredible customer service and deserves all of our local business!

"I cannot praise this business enough! I am proud to have such an incredible business in downtown La Porte and hope it has a very long and profitable stay here. TOTALLY IMPRESSED!!! (Coming from someone who is not easily impressed)

Budak received a framed certificate, rose corsage and \$100 bill. She will be invited to the annual R.O.S.E. luncheon in May and be nominated for Indiana's Hoosier Hospitality Award.

Visit http://bit.ly/RoseNomination to nominate someone for the award.







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Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in

this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.



WEEK HISTORY



On January 14, 1870, in a cartoon by Thomas Nast in *Harper's Weekly*, the Democratic Party was represented for the first time by a donkey.

On January 14, 1900, Puccini's opera "Tosca" received a mixed reception at its world premiere in Rome.

On January 14, 1914, Henry Ford started the assembly line that reduced the time of putting together a car from over 12 hours to 93 minutes. This contributed to lowered automobile prices, smog, energy shortages, traffic jams, fast food restaurants, and Arab dominance of the oil market.

On January 14, 1926, Midway Airport was conceived when the Chicago City Council voted to build an airport at Cicero Avenue and 63rd Street.

On January 14, 1952, the *Today* show, featuring Dave Garroway as host, premiered on NBC.

On January 14, 1964, in her first public statement since the assassination of her husband, Jacqueline Kennedy went on television to thank the 800,000 people who had sent her messages of sympathy.

On January 14, 1967, in the nation's first Super Bowl, the NFL's Green Bay Packers defeated the AFL's Kansas City Chiefs. The score was 35-10.

On January 15, 1929, Martin Luther King, who would become a preeminent black civil rights leader, was born in Atlanta.

On January 15, 1947, a grisly, still-unsolved homicide came to light in Los Angeles as the mutilated remains of 22-year-old aspiring actress Elizabeth Short, known as the "Black Dahlia" for her dark outfits, were found in a vacant lot.

On January 15, 1967, the Green Bay Packers of the NFL defeated the Kansas City Chiefs of the AFL in the first Super Bowl, 35-10.

On January 15, 1974, "Happy Days" (which was to become one of the longest running sitcoms on TV) premiered on ABC.

On January 15, 1987, Ray Bolger, best remembered for his role as the scarecrow in the 1939 MGM musical "The Wizard of Oz," died at the age of 83.

On January 16, 1920, America went "dry" (so to speak) as the 18th Amendment to the Constitution took effect (one year after ratification), and Prohibition became the law of the land.

On January 16, 1964, the stage show "Hello Dolly," starring Carol Channing, began a run of 2,844 performances.

On January 16, 1967, a fire destroyed Chicago's McCormick Place.

On January 17, 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that the private use of home VCRs to tape TV programs didn't violate federal copyright laws.

On January 17, 1997, an Irish court granted the first divorce in the nation's history.

On January 18, 1882, English author Alan Alexander Milne, who would write such famous children's books as "Winnie-the-Pooh," "Christopher Robin," and "Piglet," was born in London.

On January 18, 1975, the situation comedy "The Jeffersons," a spin-off from "All in the Family," premiered on CBS.

On January 19, 1809, Edgar Allan Poe, "Master Teller of Tales," who is recognized throughout the world as one of America's greatest authors, was born in Boston.

On January 19, 1853, *Il Torvatore,* an opera by Verdi, premiered in Rome.

On January 19, 1918, Dr. Herbert Kalmus was granted a patent for filming motion pictures in color. It was first used in a film titled "The Gulf Between."

On January 19, 1937, Howard Hughes set a transcontinental air record when he flew across the United States in slightly more than 7 hours and 28 minutes.

On January 19, 1983, the American Psychiatric Association urged a "tightening up" of rules for use of the insanity defense in criminal trials.

On January 20, 1896, comedian George Burns was born Nathan Birnbaum in New York.

On January 20, 1954, "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial," a play by Herman Wouk based on part of his novel "The Caine Mutiny" opened on Broadway.

On January 20, 1961, John F. Kennedy took office as the 35th president of the United States.

On January 20, 1982, George Hallas named Mike Ditka to be the new head coach of the Chicago Bears.

On January 20, 1986, Martin Luther King Day was observed as a federal holiday for the first time.

On January 20, 1993, Audrey Hepburn, who was beloved for her charm, elegance and aristocratic bearing in such films as "Roman Holiday," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," and "My Fair Lady," died at 63.

On January 20, 1996, space shuttle *Endeavor* landed after a nine-day mission that included snaring a Japanese satellite.

On January 20, 2004, The Salvation Army announced a donation likely to exceed \$1.5 billion from the estate of Joan Kroc, widow of McDonald's founder Ray Kroc.

On January 20, 2005, President George W. Bush was inaugurated for a second term.

On January 20, 2008, Barack Obama was formally sworn in as president of the United States, becoming the first African-American to be elected commander in chief.



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Activities to Explore

In the Local Area:

Jan. 14 — Music at the Museum, The Flashbacks, 2-3:30 p.m., Westchester Township Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.

Jan. 14 — Graphic Novel Book Club, 6-7:30 p.m., Westchester Public Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

Jan. 15 — Indiana Dunes Birding Festival Birds and Brews, 6 p.m., The Craft House, 711 Plaza Drive, Chesterton.

Jan. 15 — Save the Tunes Council, 7:30-9 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882.

Jan. 15-17 — "Perspectives from Extraordinary Students," Southern Shore Art Association, 724 Franklin St. Gallery hours: noon-4 p.m. Info: www. SouthernShoreArtAssociation.com

Jan. 16 — Throwback Games, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St. Cost: \$2. Info: www.BarkerMansion.com

Jan. 16 — Indiana Dunes Geocache Adventure: A Hot Cocoa Affair, 11:30 a.m., Nature Center @ Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Jan. 16 — Battles of the American Civil War, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Westchester Public Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

Jan. 16 — Historical Architecture Through Ink Drawings, 10 to 11 a.m., Westchester Public Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

Jan. 16 — Open Mic Night with Host Waterhouse Express, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. No cover. Info: www.acorntheater.com, (269) 756-3879.

Jan. 17 — Snowshoe Shuffle to the Governor's Cottage, 10 a.m., Nature Center @ Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Jan. 17 — Historical Art by Local Artist Robert Smith, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Jan. 18 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration for Kids, 10 a.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Jan. 20 — S.T.E.A.M. Ahead: Hovercrafts, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Jan. 21 — Northwest Indiana Green Drinks, 6:30 p.m., Shoreline Brewery, 208 Wabash St., Michigan City. Suggested donation: \$5, \$2/students. Info: (219) 874-6809.

Mondays — Codependents Anonymous (CoDA), 6 p.m., Franciscan Alliance-St. Anthony Health. Info: (219) 879-3817.

Wednesdays — Al-Anon meetings, 6-7 p.m., Franciscan Alliance-St. Anthony Health. Info: (708) 927-5287.

Farther Afield:

Jan. 15-17 — "Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike," Elkhart Civic Theatre @ Bristol (Ind.) Opera House, 210 E. Vistula St. Times (Eastern): 7:30 p.m. Fri./Sat., 3 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$19/adults, \$17/students & seniors 62+. Reservations: (574) 848-4116, www.elkhartcivictheatre.org

Jan. 16 — Kids Fishing Tackle Series, 1-3 p.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, Lake Street north of U.S. 12 in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882.

Jan. 16 — Miller Garden Club Annual Winter Wine and Cheese Soiree, Marquette Park Aquatorium, 6918 Oak Ave. in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Social time/6:30 p.m., program/7 p.m. Cost: \$5 donation. Reservations: (219) 938-8532.



The American Red Cross La Porte County Chapter will sponsor the following bloodmobiles:

- St. John Kanty, 7012 N. County Road 600 East, Rolling Prairie, 1 to 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 18.
- Purdue University-North Central Library Student Faculty Building, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20.

Donors must be in good general health and feeling well, at least 17 (16 with parental consent) and weigh at least 110 pounds. Call (800) 733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org for more information.

Beginning Clown Classes

Michiana Clowns will teach beginning clown classes Feb. 16 through May 3 at First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St., Michigan City

Participants receive a supply list during the first class. Graduation is May 3.

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Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail.)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in

this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.

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Photography/Photoshop Seminar

The Purdue University-North Central Office of Graduate and Extended Learning will offer a seminar on basic digital photography and Adobe Photoshop from 5:15 to 8:45 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, at the Westville campus.

The instructor is PNC limited term lecturer George Kassal, Long Beach. Participants will review basic camera controls for adjusting exposure, white balance, flash and shooting modes. Hands-on experience is planned with Adobe Photoshop, navigating menus, using tools and layers, and managing image files in Photoshop and Windows.

The workshop will bring learners up to speed if wanting to join the Intermediate Digital Photography and Adobe Photoshop Workshop offered from 5:15 to 7:15 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 28-March 3.

Registration is \$89 and includes all materials. Special rates are available for PNC and PUC students, alumni and employees. The registration deadline is Jan. 19.

Registration for the intermediate workshop is \$189, with special rates available for PNC students, alumni and employees. The registration deadline is Jan. 21.

Visit www.pnc.edu/gel/ or contact Cassandra Boehlke, Graduate and Extended Learning coordinator, at (219) 785-5200, Ext. 5343, or cboehlke@pnc.edu to register or for more information.

Northwest Indiana Green Drinks

Nicole Barker, Save the Dunes executive director, will speak at the next Northwest Indiana Green Drinks meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at Shoreline Brewery, 208 Wabash St., Michigan City.

Barker will discuss projects under way that benefit the Indiana dunes.

The suggested donation is \$5, or \$2 for students. Call (219) 874-6809 for more information.



Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail.)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in

this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.



Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

The Means by Douglas Brunt (paperback, \$15.99, available in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook)

Happy New Year! 2016 means the presidential race ramps up — only 11 months to go — with a new round of rallies, speeches, claims and counterclaims, name calling and who knows what else. Let's take a break from reality and read about politics from a different perspective.

Brunt is the author of Ghosts of Manhattan, a book about the Wall Street meltdown of 2005 that I reviewed last year. His writing style made for a well-written, well-plotted

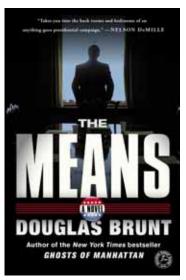
story. So when I picked up this book at Barnes & Noble, I was intrigued to see if he could surpass himself. The author is married to Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly. Maybe that's where he finds inspiration? Who cares, because this book features maneuvers and machinations on both sides of the aisle, as well as high-profile political rivals and media commentator all rolled into one fascinating story with a Hitchcock-type ending I didn't see coming.

Brunt excels at introducing and building his characters, one by one, so you get a sense of what they're about. You know these three main characters will have to meet and interact at some point, but it's the getting there that makes for an exciting read.

First up is Samantha Davis, hotshot lawyer for an important firm now considering a career switch to TV commentator. A step down in pay, surely, but she was a child star on TV. Getting back in front of the camera, breaking news stories, it seems like what she is destined to do.

Picked up by a cable news channel, Samantha gets her first break on a sensational murder featuring a Hollywood star in a Florida cabana. Her investigation propels her to become the media darling, and maybe a little too cocky. Looking for more dirt on the murder, she approaches two men, one a policeman who has nothing to say, but introduces her to the other man. Is it fate or her good investigative sense that leads her to Connor Marks, a retired Miami policeman now in business for himself as a self-proclaimed "fixer." He gives her information on the victim and his girlfriend that pans out, and it isn't long before he gives her a lead on another story that will assure her continued popularity. Hmmm. So what's in it for him?

Meet Tom Pauley, high-flying lawyer approached by the Republican party to run for governor in his home state of North Carolina. He's a clean slate,



well respected and the perfect candidate to run against the incumbent. He finally agrees to enter the political arena and soon finds the whirlwind of speeches and rallies exhausting and exhilarating. He wins the election and settles smoothly into the position. Three years later, guess what? The party wants him to run for president!

Third person in our complicated triangle is the president of the United States, Mitchell Mason. He is married, three daughters — seemingly the ideal American father and husband. Maybe. Maybe not. He comes from a driven father who pressed his son to strive for greatness. Thing is, he's doing a pretty

good job for the country. But what about the man inside the office? Believing you're right all the time can make for some fawning "yes" men and some vindictive enemies. Soon, it's time for the next campaign, and Democrat Mason faces off with Republican Tom Pauley.

Now comes the fun part. The behind-the-curtain goings on: endless bus trips around the country, late-night strategy meetings — all the elements of a presidential campaign you never hear about.

And that story Connor promised Samantha? The woman he sends her to, Monica Morris, says she had an affair with President Mason that ended one night...I'm not saying more! Can Samantha believe this woman? She thinks she has covered her bases as the story is introduced to the TV audience and all hell breaks loose. Will this stain on Mason's past influence voters on the present ballot? We all know the power of the media—how will it handle this information? And what can Mason's team pull out on Pauley? It's an interesting look at how we hear, process and finally decide what's real and what's not. But, as Mason tell his wife: "We live in a great mirage, Evelyn. There's no substance to anything, there's just what your brain gets tricked into believing. That's what matters more than what's actually true."

Oh, and did I mention that Tom Pauley and Samantha Davis both worked at the same law office? Oops, my bad.

Bestselling author Nelson DeMille wrote: "I love this book...This is a taut, thoughtful and totally believable story of American politics at its best and worst."

Political strategist James Carville wrote: "<u>The Means</u> is a must read for even the casual political observer."

Till next time, happy reading!



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