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#### **About the Cover**

Betty Thomas has created several Christmas covers over the years, so this time, I presented a challenge: Capture *The Beacher* as it might appear on a snowy Christmas day. I do believe Betty rose to the challenge. The end result is absolutely charming. Thank you, Betty! — *Editor Andrew Tallackson* 

### Shining Through by Connie Kuzydym

youthful light is shining brightly at Barker Mansion & Civic Center, the stately manor that graces the Haskell and Barker Historic District.

Almost six months

ago, Emily Reth was named the mansion's director. Speaking with her at the time, I encountered an enthusiastic young woman whose aura reflects a wise soul. Her easy laugh, positive attitude, excitement and ideas shine through when describing her goal to continue and expand the vision she shared with former director Jessica Rosier.

Reth's journey to Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St., began in 2015, at the end of her senior year at Valparaiso University, where she studied historical preservation, public history and music. Unsure what the immediate future held, she needed an internship. By happenstance, Barker Mansion was seeking an intern. It was unpaid, but she took it to gain the experience. By the end of the summer, she was asked to stay on as curator.

This was an exciting opportunity. During the winter months, she worked solely alongside her boss, helping implement a new plan for Barker Mansion. The vision: Continue the Christmas tradition, but also provide multigenerational events and tours throughout the year. By doing so, she gained invaluable hands-on experience. Her curator title also changed to heritage interpreter, which aligned her with what she was actually doing. She was encouraged to become certified by the National Association for Interpretation, which gives such individuals a

network and means to share ideas.

As the months went by, Reth was encouraged by Rosier to pursue a master's degree. At the mansion, she had a variety of opportunities to help decide what



Barker Mansion Director Emily Reth is photographed by *The Beacher*'s Paul Kemiel at the mansion Dec. 1, the night of the open house for the Christmas season display

avenue she wanted to pursue: conservation, preservation or interpretation. Ultimately, she chose a two-year graduate studies program in public history at Wright State University, Fairborn, Ohio.

"At that time, I wanted to do exhibit design education, so we could use multiple learning styles within one exhibit and multi-generational things here in the mansion," Reth said. "I fell in love with the program. I liked all the professors. They were in the field at different museums or historical sites in the Dayton area."

Through her graduate experience, she worked at various local museums, gaining an invaluable network, and hands-on experience in conservation, archive and events. All of this gave her a strong base for what she is doing now.

This past spring, she graduated from Wright State, and like pieces in a puzzle, her future locked into place. She accepted the director's position, and the transition from Rosier to Reth flowed smoothly. Rosier's last official day was Memorial Day. Reth started the following day.

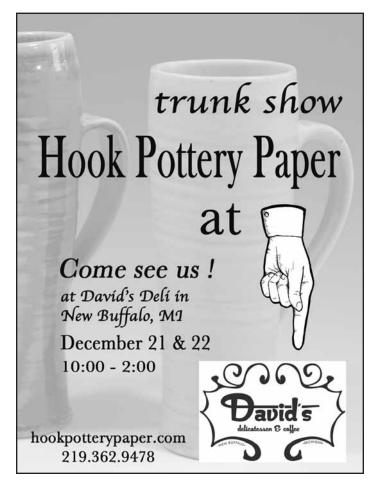


Visitors pass through Barker Mansion on Dec. 1, casting votes for their favorite decorated Christmas trees.

"I felt very in my element," she said. "Working in a place where I knew half of the staff...really helped. It was a whirlwind at the beginning. I felt like I just graduated...and here I am in a place that's familiar, and it feels like home, and I'm actually having a paid gig. It's just great. It was just happiness...it felt like coming home again."

Reth and Rosier share the same vision, that Bark-





#### Shining Through Continued from Page 3

er Mansion will always be a Christmas destination, but the idea is for it to become a year-round venue.

"People should be having events here, people should have meetings in our basement that was just remodeled," Reth said. "We are definitely an integral part of Michigan City. We're an integral part of their heritage, for sure...We don't want to become outdated. We don't want to become this old decrepit house that sits on a corner. We want someone to say, 'I want to hang out, there's always something new'.

"We're not just about tours, we're more than that. That is something that really changed when Jessica came on board. We are making it more accessible"

Looking back on how she arrived at this point, Reth credits her mother's love of history and music as having an impact on her. She recalls being in sixth grade, on a family vacation to Colonial Williamsburg's Governor's Palace and seeing a room that was not historically accurate.

"From what I remember...it looked like a hunting den with lots of taxidermy...on tour they said, 'This



Emily Reth leads a tour through Barker Mansion during the Christmas open house.

is what we think it looked like, but it's really not accurate, so we have depicted...what we think.' For some reason, that really grinded me," Reth said.

"Who are we to say what the past was like? We should be looking at what they leave behind and figuring out from that perspective. As a sixth-grader, I already had this passion for trying to find the accuracy and saying, 'I can't make up what I think this could have looked like or what I want it to look like.' From a young age, I was a researcher."

Even though Emily chose a historical career path, she is not tied to a specific time period. Rather, she prefers social history, which considers how people are affected by current events.

"A social historian is looking at timelines and what events happened, and how that coincides with this sort of a raindrop effect," Reth said, "how everything is conscious from a very local level to a very national or international level."

Her senior paper in college, for example, was

based on World War I and World War II propaganda posters in Great Britain. She questioned how iconography played on the heartstrings of people signing up for the war. She wondered how a national issue affected people on a local level. In graduate school, she pursued research working with food rationings and how it affected people trying to make dinner every night.

So how does one take that line of thinking and apply it to Barker Mansion. Simple.

"It's all about the storytelling," Reth says. "Everything has a story, whether it's the iron that we have. So, who touched this iron, whose clothes are we trying to mend or iron. We have a lot of stories we can tell either about the family, the people who walked in the doors, the staff, and we can also talk about the factory."

"It's...trying to figure out...are we telling a narrative about financials, are we telling a narrative about women's rights, are we telling a narrative about industrialism and working its way from Chicago into the rest of the Midwest? We try to figure out what is the best way to bring that across to the

public. We weave them into one large narrative of what the Barkers were about. And that is a really difficult thing to do sometimes."

Interpreters, of course, cannot tell every story. However, they can choose how to deliver the story and the multitude of details accompanying it, and using a variety of tools. To pull the past into the present, the staff is in the process of producing podcasts and blog posts to share numerous mansion stories. There also are specialty events, such as the successful 21-and-older lecture where the mansion partnered with Zorn Brew Works.

To ensure these stories or presentations are factually accurate, they must always be cognizant of their own biases or perceptions.

"When you are doing research for an event or an object, you have to try and eliminate that as much as possible," Reth said. "It will always be there. We are always human. But look to see what the facts tell you, rather than assuming about what they are going to say. In our research process, we have been told a lot of things about the mansion or about the family, and when we go back and research to see if they are true, we find some of the stories are more folklore or rumor than our archives or records show. It's been kind of a fun process of re-researching and bringing the family alive again."

Listening to what Reth and her staff do, you realize they not only are historians and interpreters, but also educators who love to teach in an environment different from a classroom.

"It's very personal. You have that eye contact, you have the ability to show people, or to say this is our normal tour...but you're really interested in this or let's interact, let me ask you questions," Reth said.

With any job, there are challenges. The biggest one, Reth says, is the mansion itself.

"The house itself is an artifact," she said. "You can never figure out what's going to happen with the weather or climate control...because although you try really hard to preserve it, you have people going in and out of it every day."

One of the things Reth has learned during her first six months on the job is the need to be flexible. Having been a heritage interpreter, Reth has a unique insight as to what her close-knit staff goes through and how to support them. She really enjoys her job, but also admits, at times, it can be stressful.

The Christmas season is a massive undertak-

ing for all of them, as it entails not only tours and events, but also decorating the mansion.

"We had a lot of groups to help decorate...this year, from looking at photos from previous Christmases, we are trying to focus on viewing the mansion vs. how extravagant can we be," Reth said. "This is a historic house museum; the artifacts still belong to the family, so we are actually very respectful of that conservation-wise...Some people will notice we don't have the garlands up so we don't scratch the wood. We don't have a lot of glittery items. That way, it doesn't get into the carpets or scratch some of the wood floors...the groups that have come in are respectful of that and have grasped on to that...while they've decorated the places beautifully."

Although this is her first Christmas as director, technically, it is her second Christmas at Barker Mansion. She is getting comfortable with what her position entails, which includes working with the city, balancing what her board and foundation want, as well as understanding the conservation and marketing needs of the mansion.

"I'm finally hitting my stride," Reth said. "The staff has been very supportive. The public and our board have been very supportive...It's been a learning curve, but I've enjoyed it immensely."

(Visit www.barkermansion.com or Barker Mansion & Civic Center on Facebook for more details.)





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#### Save for Emotional Finale, Eastwood's "The Mule" Lacks Urgency

by Andrew Tallackson



Clint Eastwood plays a man inspired by the late Leo Sharp in "The Mule."

Fair to say, we've all been anxious to see how Clint Eastwood, with "The Mule," depicts one of the more notorious incidents in recent Michigan City history.

We are, of course, referring to the late Leo Sharp, who in 2011 was arrested on Interstate 94 near Ann Arbor, Mich., caught with nearly \$3 million in cocaine in his Lincoln pickup. The 87-year-old Michigan City daylily farmer had been channeling drugs from Mexico to Detroit for a powerful cartel.

How did an 87-year-old get caught up in the drug trade? That's a story ripe for the telling, but "The Mule" is 90 percent Hollywood fabrication on behalf of Eastwood and his "Grand Torino" scribe, Nick Schenk. Keeping that in mind, then, how does "The Mule" stack up as a vehicle for Eastwood? Save for the expertly staged, admittedly emotional finale, everything about "The Mule" feels like the character Eastwood plays: old and tired. From the pace-bedamned approach, to the sinister rent-a-thugs, to Arturo Sandoval's wispy jazz score that feels lifted from some other movie, there is no urgency here: no sense of irony or danger.

Many an Eastwood film is about redemption, about repairing past wrongs. The fictional backstory concocted for "The Mule" is that his character, Earl Stone, is a failure to his neglected family: a weary ex-wife (Dianne Wiest); a furiously resentful daughter (Eastwood's own daughter, Alison); and a supportive granddaughter (Taissa Farmiga, in the film's only lively performance). A chance encounter links Earl with hoodlums who suggest he can make money by driving "goods" from Point A to Point B. Earl is unaware, at first, that he's ferrying drugs for a dangerous cartel boss, played by Andy Garcia in

a paycheck-cashing performance, the actor having done enough of these roles to know better.

We also meet three Drug Enforcement Agency officers, all played by good actors (Bradley Cooper, Michael Peña, Laurence Fishburne) who do their best with cardboard-cutout roles.

And what to make of Eastwood? Can we empathize with a character who swears like a sailor, delights in the company of hookers and, when helping a stranded black family on the roadside, insults them by calling them "Negroes"? For much of "The Mule,"we can't. The script doesn't give Eastwood the tools to do so, nor does the actor, at 88, give Earl's saltier dialogue the husky Eastwood snarl. The drug runs, for the most part, are staged so matter-of-factly, there never really is any uncertainty or danger.

Until the end.

The turning point arrives when the DEA agent played by Cooper – Eastwood's "American Sniper" star – unknowingly dines next to Earl at a road-side cafe. The conversation they share, namely about priorities, is the first honest exchange in "The Mule," a rare glimpse into what drives Earl at this stage in the game. The ensuing arrest is elaborately crafted by Eastwood, and acted to perfection: sad in how it reveals Earl's exhausted embrace of the fate dealt him.

Eastwood, as a director, was on a roll, not just with "American Sniper," but also the criminally underrated "Sully." Those films crackled with intensity. Not here. The true, and bizarre, story of Leo Sharp waits to be told, by filmmakers with a real fire in their bellies to do it justice.

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#### "Roma" is Brilliantly Told, But Emotionally Detached

by Andrew Tallackson



The one truly emotional moment, a selfless act of bravery, in "Roma."

In "Roma," all of Alfonso Cuarón's extraordinary gifts as a storyteller are on display. The film hums with the beating heart of truth, from the performances that don't *feel* like performances to the achingly beautiful black-and-white imagery.

So why did the film, now streaming on Netflix and generating Oscar buzz, leave me so frustratingly cold?

A new film by Cuarón, the Oscar winner for "Gravity" (2013), carries high expectations. He is that rare storyteller – bold, daring, visually inventive – who never repeats himself, whether it be dabbling with wizards ("Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban") or exploring bleak worlds ruptured by hope ("Children of Men").

"Roma," which unfolds over the course of one year – 1970-1971 – is set in Mexico City's Colonial Roma district and partly based on Cuarón's upbringing. It moves at an intentionally deliberate pace so the viewer can observe the daily rituals of a family and its domestic servants. For a film that is this slow, yet never dull, we suspect our patience will be rewarded, but the rewards, to me at least, are too little, too late.

This is a world that rarely gets depicted on film. A middle-class Mexican family, living in their homeland, with a Mexican maid who is far wiser, and more observant, than they give her credit. Sofia (Marina de Tavira) and Antonio (Fernando Grediaga) live in a nice home with their four children and Sofia's mother. We sense a strain in the marriage. We have our suspicions, which are confirmed. The children are your typical youngsters: lively, rambunctious.

And in the middle of it all is Cleo (Yalitza Aparicio), one of two maids who is the only constant presence: fulfilling her duties without fail, never questioning what is demanded of her.

Inside the home, Cuarón plants his camera in one spot, then allows it to scan left and right as Cleo cleans, cooks, serves meals, puts the kids to bed. Outside are Cuarón's remarkable tracking shots as he keeps pace with the family, particularly amid the political unrest erupting in the country.

But for a film this meticulous in documenting the people it explores, we remain curiously detached. The father is a distant figure, the mother a tad more sympathetic. We don't get to know the children well. There are times, in fact, when we're not sure which one is which. Cleo is a remarkable individual: unflappable even in moments when Sofia takes out her own frustrations on her.

We expect, however, that during exchanges between Cleo and Sofia, and the children and Cleo, that there will be moments of tenderness that endear them to each other, and we, as the viewer, to them. We don't get that. A film as quiet as "Roma" requires what I call "minor miracles," scenes that stir the heart and build on each other so that the big moments – Cleo's brave, selfless act at a beach, right after experiencing a devastating loss of her own – have the dramatic weight they deserve.

I admired "Roma," but wasn't moved by it. Maybe, as the final scene implies, I was simply willing to accept that life goes on, then move on to something else.

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#### Harbor Country Opera Returns With "Christmas at the Acorn"

by Andrew Tallackson

Harbor Country Opera's "Christmas at the Acorn" has become the equivalent of seasonal comfort food for opera aficionados. Without it, they say, a key ingredient to better embrace the spirit of the holidays goes missing.

What is the secret to its enduring appeal? Many

would say it is the festive tone of the program: the carefully chosen musical selections, the mulled wine or hotbuttered rum.

Or, Harbor Country Opera Founder Robert Swan suggests, it is the way the performers make the music accessible to all audiences.

"They all love singing with each other," he

says. "They're really good, and they're really nice. We're all approachable. People often chat with us afterwards. It's not just the Christmas show, but every show we do."

Swan adds with a chuckle, "We have a no-attitude zone. Nobody gets to be a diva in our show."

Whatever the reasons for its success, "Christmas at the Acorn" repeatedly sells out. This year marks the 14th anniversary with a performance at 8 p.m. EST Saturday, Dec. 22, at The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich.

The goal each holiday is to present a merry blend of the familiar and the obscure. Last year, for instance, the Shaker hymn "Star of the East" slipped into a mix that included "We Three Kings," "Silent Night" and "White Christmas." So well-received was

it that Swan decided to include it again this year.

Handel's "Messiah" was a favorite during the concert's early years, but Swan says he and his fellow performers eventually backed off of it. Now, however, a few selections from the beloved oratorio are back, including "He Shall Feed His Flock" and

"Come Unto Him."

Back for her 10th season is harpist Ramona Kim, who performs on her own, and provides accompaniment along with pianist Anatoliy Torchinskiy. The singers include tenor Emanuel Caraman, soprano Martha Cares, baritone Warren Moulton and contralto Dominique Fri-

go, whose stirring rendition of "You'll Never Walk Alone" from "Carousel" returns this year. Nate Herman of Chicago's famed Second City also returns with John Lennon's "So This is Christmas" and an original comedic piece, "Climate Change Christmas."

So for those who attend "Christmas at The Acorn" year after year, and there are those who have not missed a single performance, Swan says they won't be disappointed.

"I'm looking forward to seeing everyone back," he says. "I feel like we've been sharing this together all this time."

Tickets are \$25, or \$35 for café seating. Visit acorntheater.com or call (269) 756-3879 for reservations.





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## Harry J. Pierans

Dear Friends and Family,

A time to reflect and thank you, our Northwest Indiana neighbors, friends and clients for another successful year! A theme of this year for our office is a play on a favorite quote, "though she may be little, she is fierce." We are 14 agents strong, but holding our own among the "big boys" of real estate. We have continued to be a Top 5 [a Porte County Agency, specializing in Michigan City and the beach from Sheridan Beach to Michiana Shores We cannot do it without you. Thank you for your support.

Jane Cooley, The Hat Lady, Top Transaction Sold Volume Producer, a Multi-Million Dollar Producer is an incredible resource doing what she does best, selling real estate. Cari Adams, Top Residential Volume Sold Producer, a Multi-Million Dollar Producer & Social Media Director, offers tools to the agents in the office to grow in this technological world, as well as represents clients in both Sales and Property Management for seasonal and long term rentals.

Our two 40+ year experienced real estate veterans, Rose Pollock and Marge Skwiat-Gloy, have had an incredible year of selling in Northwest Indiana, both recognized as Multi-Million Dollar Producers for 2018. Rose Pollock sells everything from beach homes to bank owned properties. Marge Skwiat-Gloy amazes her clients (and us) at her dedication to selling residential (and commercial) Town, Country, Beach.

Danelcy Patterson, Million Dollar Producer, offers her clients cutting-edge marketing and is fluent in multiple languages. Diana Hirsch, Million Dollar Producer, has had a great year in real estate spanning both La Porte and Porter counties serving buyers and sellers achieve their real estate goals. Betty Sams was voted The News Dispatch Reader's Choice Best Realtor and is an office regular assisting our clients with up to date information on beach, town or country listings.

Cindy Hernandez handles her prosperous real estate career with ease, working mostly from her home office and reveling in Grandma time. Gail Mathews juggled her full-time career and multiple sales in a Porte and Porter Counties. Jane "Regie" Palella's commitment and initiative as a Real Estate Broker reflects her accomplishemnts in this busy Northwest Indiana real estate market. Erica Miller had a successful year of selling residential real estate in our town, beach and country markets, and looks forward to serving you in 2019. Deb Vance joined our office in 2018 and immediately hit the ground running, listing and selling multiple homes in Michigan City and beyond.

Our leader, Owner/Broker, Tricia Meyer, a Multi-Million Dollar Producer, leads us through her professionalism, talent, vision and work ethic. We continue to grow our team of dedicated real estate brokers that support one another and our community. We are always looking for members to join our team atmosphere. If you have ever been interested in a real estate career or are looking to grow your business, call us to learn the Merrion Realty difference.



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#### Footlight Players to Showcase Jacob Griffin in Holiday Concert



Above: Members of The Footnotes. Below: Jacob Griffin.

The Footnotes will present the annual holiday concert, "Holiday Memories," at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 29, at Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St.

The concert also features Jacob Griffin, the Hoosier Star youth division champion. He has frequently performed at Footlight's open-mic nights.

The vocal ensemble is directed by Robert Komendera, with accompaniment by Lee Meyer. The program includes "Blue Christmas," "Sleighride" and "We Need a Little Christmas Now."

Members include Candace Archer, Debbie Bartholomew, Emma Blanchard, Joy Davidson, Pat Kuntze, Paulette Lisak, Christine Long, Marsha Markle, Jan Rice, Susie Richter, Kathy Chase, Linda Didelot, Laura Meyer, Deb Topolski, Emil Cripe, Tom LeDonne, Jane Ryszka, Gary Bartholomew, Joe Blanchard, Komendera and Randy Shermerhorn.

The theater lobby will feature artwork by John Ryszka of The Rising Phoenix Gallery. As part of the theater group's annual food drive, those attending are asked to take any non-perishable, non-expired food items and/or toiletries. All items will help fill local food-pantries.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and younger. Call the box office at (219) 874-4035 or visit www.footlightplayers.org for reservations.









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#### Sears: Store Closings and the Wish Book

Editor's note — Duneland Beach resident Julie McGue submitted this article. She officially joins our staff as a columnist in spring 2019.

New York (CNN Business) reported: "Landlords across America are cheering Sears' bankruptcy...telling Sears: Don't let the door hit you on the way out."

I hated seeing that headline.

The news of Sears' decline and fall is not a surprise. For years, the once great retail giant has been battling to be relevant and hold its market share, failing on all fronts. The eye-catching banner is unpleasant not because I'm in real estate or banking. Not because I have a stake in market exit strategies, bankruptcy negotiations or supplier payout plans. The demise of Sears tarnishes the pleasant memories I have from childhood.

Sometime around Halloween, our letter carrier would drop the Sears Holiday Wish Book through

the mail slot of our front door. For my family of eight, there was a collective gasp and a rush to nab it for the first look. The inch-thick, soft-cover catalogue really was a collection of smaller catalogues. Sears sold everything to everyone: toys, clothes, shoes, housewares, tools and appliances.

For a child in the '70s, the Sears' holiday big book signaled the true start of the holiday gift-giving season.

When I was growing up, besides operating retail stores where it influenced fashion, Sears offered innovative concepts such as phone ordering and parcel pickup/returns, and layaways. For the burgeoning middle class, we flocked to the retailer for an alternative to Mom 'n Pop stores. Our desire to be "in vogue," and to hold onto our newly acquired status of the middle class, was at the heart of Sears' popularity in the 1960s and 1970s.

For a child in the '70s, the arrival of Sears' holiday big book signaled the true start of the holiday gift-giving season. The Wish Book indicated it was time to dream, to hope, to desire something special. When the Sears catalogue made its way into the busy household of my childhood, we clamored to put our wants on paper. My siblings and I knew that the sooner we handed our parents our Christmas gift suggestions, the sooner our requests could be ordered and fulfilled from the limited catalogue inventory. While we may have glanced through the Penney's mailer, the Sears book played the key role

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in the formulation of our Christmas lists.

My five siblings and I each took our turns with "the book." We'd slide onto the stool at my mother's kitchen desk, where the sole family rotary dial telephone and its block-length curly cord occupied a substantial corner of the desktop's real estate. We'd dog-ear the pages that piqued our fancy, then revisit them and cull our desires. We'd fill a sheet of looseleaf paper from our school pack with item descriptions and codes, corresponding page numbers. In the margins, five-point stars and pleas of "PLEASE, PLEASE" indicated how badly we thought we needed that item. Operating with a No. 2 pencil and an adequate eraser was key in crafting our lists. Crossouts and scribble-overs only confused our harried

mother/Santa.

If you weren't the first with the Wish Book, the sections on toys or clothes would undoubtedly be decorated with suspicious stains. The texture and color of the stains signaled which sibling had perused "the book" last. Dark

brown, the shade of chocolate pudding, meant one of my two brothers had been flipping the pages. A strawberry, sticky residue meant my younger sister had licked her lollipop while noting her wishes for Santa. The green slime of Dippity-Do and crimpededged tape that held curlers in place disclosed my twin and me had studied the catalogue.

Regardless of who perused the book and left their calling card, the result was the same. My mother was left with a monumental task. First, she had to scrutinize our imagined desires and weigh those against the reserves in her household budget. Secondly, in between caring for my younger siblings and her roles of washwoman, car-pooler and short-order cook, she had to get through the eternally busy Sears order call-in lines. Undoubtedly when it was her turn to place the budget-buster orders, she'd discover items that would already be out of stock, on back order or discontinued. No wonder the cocktail hour began at 5 and included a dry vermouth Manhattan and Scotch on the rocks.

While the bankers, debtors, real-estate brokers and financiers are clamoring about Sears' exit from the retail marketplace, some of us are lamenting their downfall. With the failure of Sears to remain competitive, their leave-taking jostles the well-being of Baby Boomers like me. I already miss the Sear's Wish Book. I can't help but wonder if there's a decent copy floating around on eBay. If I can locate one, then my grandkids will know what life was like in the old days. While I'm at it, perhaps I'll search for a rotary phone, too.

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#### **Battle of the Mayors**

Mayor Ron Meer has agreed to participate in the \$20 on the 20th" campaign to help raise funds for

The Salvation Army's "Fight for Good."

Meer will compete against La-Porte Mayor Mark Krentz in the inaugural Battle of the Mayors on Thursday, Dec. 20. Each will represent The Salvation Army in his respective city by ringing a bell with friends and family, competing to see who raises the most money in a red kettle.

Meer, his family and friends will ring at the Al's Supermarket in Karwick Plaza from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Krentz will be stationed at the LaPorte Kroger.

The Salvation Army has a tradition of encouraging supporters to donate "\$20 on the 20th" when it comes to red kettles. Maj. Dale Sim-



Meer



Krentz

mons, who oversees the local Salvation Army with his wife, Maj. Becky Simmons, said the boost in donations could help The Salvation Army of Michigan City reach its \$160,000 Christmas campaign goal.

Call (219) 874-6885 for details.

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#### **Michigan City Public Library**

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

#### • Graphic Novel Club for Teens at 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 27.

The group is aimed at teens 13-18. The focus this month is "LumberJanes." Stop by Youth Services for more information.

#### • Holiday closings.

The library will close at noon Friday, Dec. 21. It also will be closed Monday-Tuesday, Dec. 24-25, and Dec. 31-Jan. 1.

#### • Learning Center Volunteers Needed

The Learning Center needs volunteer tutors for children and adults. Students need assistance in: reading, math, high school equivalency and English as a Second Language. All supplies and training are provided. All that's required are two hours a week. Contact Jessica Hoffmaster at (219) 873-3043 or stop by the center for more information.

П

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

#### **New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball**

The History Museum will present its first New Year's Eve party, a masquerade ball, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. EST Monday, Dec. 31.

Planned are a buffet, dancing to music by a DJ and performances by a lighted hoop dancer and aerial yogist. The exhibit "CUT! Costume and the Cinema" will be open, showcasing cinematic couture through actual costumes worn by Keira Knightley in "The Duchess," Kate Winslet in "Finding Neverland," Colin Farrell in "The New World" and Johnny Depp in "Pirates of the Caribbean." Guests are welcome to dress in costume.

The event is 21 and older because there is a cash bar and free champagne toast. Tickets are \$75, or \$60 for members. Reservations are required at historymuseumSB.org or by calling (574) 235-9664, Ext. 233. The museum is located at 808 W. Washington St., South Bend.





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#### Dear Santa Claus

A beloved tradition returns to The Beacher with letters to Santa Claus from Notre Dame Elementary School second-graders, presented to you just as the children wrote them. Thanks to second-grade teacher Sara Conn for helping us out. Enjoy!

Dear Santa,

How do you want your cookies? Do you want them chocolate, caramel, or sugar mini cookies? I'll cook them now. I can say what I want: Five Nights at Freddy, a football, a basketball, and a hover board that has the color flaming red.

Your Buddy, Ky'Lon

Dear Santa,

Dear Santa,

Hi, how are you? What is your favorite cookie? How are the reindeer? I would like a laptop and a stuffed dog for Christmas. Please tell Mrs. Claus I said hi.



Dear Mom and Dad,

I am really good in school. I would like

- 1. More PS4 games.
- 2. Nintendo switch.
- 3. I phone 10
- 4. Ps4 Controller.
- 5. Hoverboard
- 6. Clothes
- 7. Smart watch

Mom, you are the best mom in the world. Dad, you are the best dad in the world. Thank you!

Love, William

Love, Clark

From,

Lauren

Dear Santa,

How are all the reindeer? How are you? You are so amazing and cool! I will give you four cookies with milk. I want the Nintendo Switch, Bendy the stuffed animal, the iPhone X Max, and three Nintendo Switch games. Thank you!

How is your day? I always have a

really good day when it's Christmas!

How are the elves? I would like a cute

puppy, please. I would like candy for

Dad. I would like ice cream, dinosaur

toys, and games and nerf guns for my

brother, Rocky. Of course, I will give

you cookies. You are nice, thoughtful,

awesome, cool, and incredible.



Love,
Dominic Godfrey



Dear Santa,

How are you? How are the reindeer? How is Mrs. Claus?

I want a Nintendo Switch. I would like to have a video game, Mario Cart Eight.

You are the best!

From, Bryson



Dear Santa,

Do you like coke? Please circle Yes or No. Are the elves ok?

I would like,

- 1. Stranger Things action figures.
- 2. Stranger things blind box.
- 3. Drum pad and a Nintendo Switch.

Thank you for the gifts!

From Jeffrey, Your Friend

Dear Santa,

What is your favorite cookie? I can make them! How is Chocolate Fingers, my elf? Ha, ha, ha! Can I please have Pokemon cards? Please, please, please with a

cherry on top may I have a hoverboard? I promise I have been the best!

Your Friend, Oliver

Dear Santa,

How are you and Mrs. Claus? I will give you 2 chocolate cookies and a Coke a Cola.

May I please have

- 1. Gymnastics bar.
- 2. Gymnastics Mat.
- 3. A big gummy bear
- I have been pretty good! How are the reindeer?

From, Andrea

Dear Santa,

I'm going to leave my cookies out for you. I've been good this year!

This is what I want for Christmas, an iPod, Alexa, Smart watch, Ps4, X Box1, X Box 360, Suction ball, fake money printer, Incredibles 2 movie, Nintendo Switch, and an iPad. You're the best to me.



Love, Dominic Wadle Dear Santa,

How are the reindeer and the elves? What is your favorite Christmas song and movie? When you come, I'll give cookies and ice cream sundae. It will be in the freezer.

I would like a little kitty cat, iPhone, iPhone watch, Barbie car, Barbie dream house, and camera film. I would also like the gymnastics Barbie that has bendable arms, legs and feet, LOL dolls, an Box, and a mini drone.

P.S. I've been good!

Best Wishes, Ella

Dear Santa,

How are you and your reindeer? I hope you are ready for Christmas. I want a Nintendo Switch, Abercrombie clothes, and a Capybara. Are you having a good time in the North Pole? Have a good time in the North Pole! Please, really please, can I have DIGIMON?

Your friend, Jackson

Dear Santa,

How are you? How's Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and Rudolph? You're the best in the world. I will give the reindeer a feast of carrots. I would like a PS 4, Madden 19, and an I Max camera please. Save some cookies for the elves. They've been working hard all year.



From, Henry Dear Santa,

How are you and Mrs. Claus? Is Mrs. Claus making cookies? Can I make you cookies and whip cream? I would like a black semi-truck and a slime set. Thank you, Santa!

Your Friend, Joey

Dear Santa,

How are you? How is Dasher? I love Dasher. He is so cute. You know, Santa you're so nice! I will leave cookies and milk. These are what I would like for my presents:

- 1. Hover board
- 2. Dasher stuffed animal.

Thanks, Santa!

Your Friend, Everly

Dear Santa,

How are you and your reindeer? If you like pop, please circle yes or no. I would like:

Mystery Inc. pen

Barbie doll

Baby doll

Hatchimal

Thank you! Please tell the elves hi for me!

From, Lucy

Dear Santa,

How are you and Mrs. Claus? What is your favorite kind of cup? Do you want me to put out a Christmas cup? I love you, Santa! Can I please have a LOL doll house, LOL dolls, and a gymnastic bar? I would a phone and a computer and a Barbie air plane. Can I have a baby alive? And can I have a game called Greedy Granny? And Twister? Can I have some Hatchimals?

Thank you! You are the best!

Love, Rosalie Johnston Dear Santa,

How are you, Mrs. Claus, and the reindeer? How about the elves, too? All year I have been a little bad and good. What I would like for Christmas is some matching clothes for me and my AG Doll, a phone, a slime set, and a little live dog/ I would also like some Pokemon cards. For my sister, I would like a big abominable snow monster. For my brother and my sister, please give them a little live dinosaur. Thank you!

Love, Riley

Dear Santa,

I hope you, the elves, Mrs. Claus, and the reindeer are doing well.

I want Pokemon cards, a fidget spinner, an invisible ink diary, and candy canes. Thank you! You are awesome!

> Love, Cameron

Dear Santa,

How are the reindeer? What is your favorite cookie and pop? How is Mrs. Claus? My brother wants to know your favorite candy. Can I have a horse and LOL dolls?

Wishing you the best!

Lilah

Dear Santa,

How are you? I want a toy cheerleading elf, toy reindeer, Santa, and a teeny toy for Christmas. May I also have a black girl Labrador puppy? Thank you, Santa!

Love, Paige





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The Beacher staff wishes you and yours a Holiday Season filled with joy, peace and love and a New Year that promises even more.

An Extra Special Thanks to all the advertisers. 2018 was another great year!

And, of course, to you, our dear and faithful readers, thanks and see you next year!

The Beacher takes a two week holiday now and will return on January 10.

"Happy Holidays to All and to All a Good Night"

----Drew Tallackson



was the night before Christmas, when all through the house Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

he children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced through their heads;
And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

way to the window I flew like a flash,

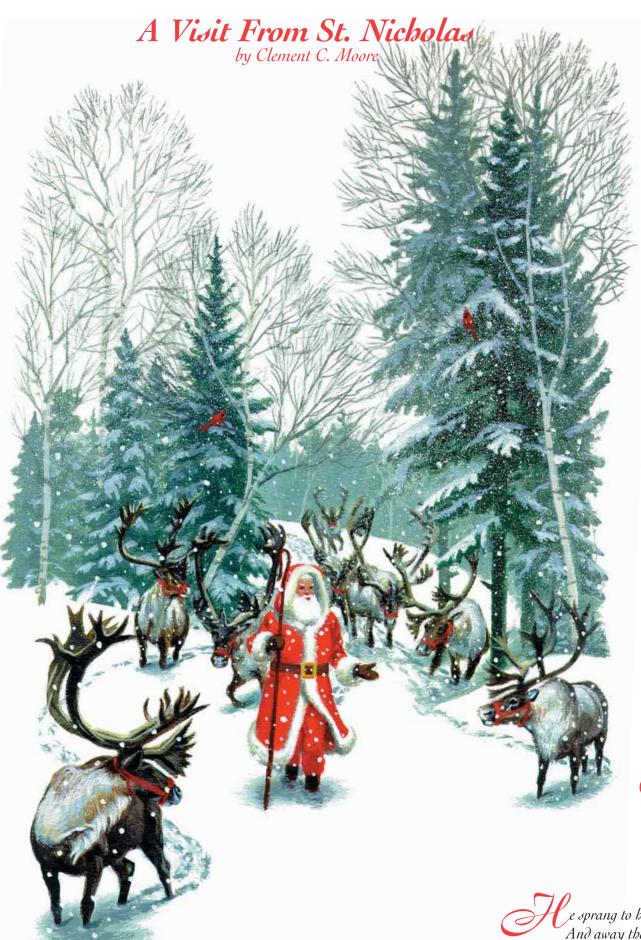
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

he moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

ore rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer! and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!

s dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleighful of toys, and St. Nicholas too.

nd then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.





e was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot:
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back.
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

is eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath.

e had a broad face, and a little round belly that shook, when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.

e was chubby and plump - a right jolly old elf And I laughed, when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

e spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.

e sprang to his sleigh, to the team gave a whistle, And away they all flew, like the down of a thistle, But I heard him exclaim, e're he drove out of sight, "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"



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#### **Westchester Public Library**

The following programs are available:

• An old-fashioned Christmas party for children 3-12 from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22, at Westchester Township History Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.

The open house-style event includes making ornaments and playing games. Santa visits from 2 to 3 p.m. Registration is not required, but a parent or guardian must be present.

• Noon Year's Eve Party for children 6-12 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 28, at Hageman Library, 100 Francis St., Porter.

Activities, crafts and snacks are planned. Registration is required by calling (219) 926-9080.

• Minecraft Meet-up at 4 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 2 and 16, at Thomas Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

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.

• Cupcakes and Canvas from 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 2-3, at Westchester Township History Museum.

Children 6-12 can paint step-by-step with Museum Educator Susan Swarner. No art experience is necessary, and all supplies are provided. Participants should wear clothes that can get messy. A parent or guardian must accompany each child.

Registration is necessary because each class size is limited to 12 children. Parents may register by visiting the museum or calling (219) 983-9715 during museum hours.

• Make N Take Kids Craft Time on Saturday, Jan. 5, at Thomas Library.

Children can stop by the Children's Department anytime during the day (while supplies last) and make a snowman.

• Popular Books at 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 7, at the Thomas Branch Bertha Wood Room.

The focus is David McCullough's' "The Wright Brothers."

• Holiday closings.

Thomas and Hageman branches, The Baugher Center, Westchester Township History Museum, Chesterton Adult Learning Center and Westchester Township Trustee office will be closed Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 24-25. Regular hours resume Wednesday, Dec. 26.

Library facilities also will be closed Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 31-Jan. 1. Regular hours resume Wednesday, Jan. 2.

#### The Beacher

Your Community Connection!

#### "Oklahoma Cabaret Concert"



Metamorphis Traveling Theatre has scheduled performances of its "Oklahoma Cabaret Concert." They are: Trail Creek Place, 1300 E. Coolspring Ave., at 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21; and 2 p.m. EST Friday, Dec. 28, at Caretel Inns of Lakeland, 3905 Lorraine Path, St. Joseph, Mich. Dana Chartier, Judith Joseph, Doug Moon and Helen Williams make up the acting/singing/dancing ensemble, with Janet Lustick directing. Call (219) 872-4813 for details.



Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee,

O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.





#### A Beloved Tradition Returns

by Andrew Tallackson



It is the crown jewel of the Christmas season: performances of Handel's "Messiah" at First Presbyterian Church, 121 W. Ninth St.

The 54th season features a full orchestra, a 100-member chorus and four guest soloists, all conducted by Phil Bauman. The soloists are:

• Soprano Sarah Gartshore, whose performances have drawn rave reviews from *The Chicago Tri*-

bune, The Sun-Times and The Times-Dispatch.

- Mezzo Kristin Gornstein, who made her Carnegie Hall debut this past spring, winning third place in the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio Competition.
- Tenor Matthew Daniel, who is in his 12th season with Lyric Opera of Chicago's chorus.
- Bass David Govertson, a professional singer for 15 years and an alumnus of the Ryan Center at





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Lyric Opera of Chicago.

The public is invited to a public dress rehearsal at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 22. The official performance is at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 23.

Tickets can be reserved by calling the church office at (219) 879-4501 or visiting www.mcmessiah. com. Tickets are held in Will Call unless picked up prior to the event.

A free-will offering will be taken each day to help defray costs. Sunday's performance is expected to sell out, so reservations are recommended.

This year's performance also sees the "Messiah" steering team bestowing founding conductor Dan McNabb with the title of conductor laureate.

McNabb and the late Dale Truex, his First Presbyterian music department teammate, began the presentations 54 years ago with just singers from their own church choir. McNabb has remained active since his retirement, serving as a consultant and singing bass with the chorus. Sarah McNabb, his wife, continues to sing alto in the chorus.

(All photos by Bob Wellinski.)











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#### La Porte County Parks



All registrations/questions go through the Red Mill County Park Administrative Office, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, La Porte. Call (219) 325-8315 or visit www.laportecountyparks.org for more details.

#### **Nature's Tiny Tots**

Designed for parents and grandparents, explore nature with toddlers and preschoolers. Enjoy music, dancing, storytelling and, weather permitting, hiking.

The free program is from 10 to 11 a.m. Jan. 14 and 28, Feb. 4 and 11, March 4 and 18, and April 1 and 15 at Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West. Call (219) 325-8315 at least one week in advance to register.

#### Parent & Child Discovery Days

The program includes arts and crafts, games and snacks. All activities are related to the topic. Programs are appropriate for children 3 to 8, with an adult required to participate. Times are from 6 to 7:15 p.m. at Luhr County Park. The cost is \$5 per child/per program. Pre-registration and payment are required at least one week in advance or until full, whichever comes first.

The schedule is:

- Jan. 16 Terrific Trees.
- Jan. 30 Owls and More.
- Feb. 6 A Raccoon's World.
- Feb. 27 Catch The Sun.
- March 6 Bug Fun.
- March 20 A Hopping Good Time.

#### Breakfast with the Birds

The free, all-ages program is from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 26, at Luhr County Park Nature Center.

Guests explore birds and enjoy breakfast treats while watching the birds feed at the nearby station. No pre-registration is required. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

#### **Teachers-Groups-Scout Leaders**

Free environmental education programs are offered to groups throughout the year. Programs last one hour or longer depending on the group size and age. Programs can be scheduled at Creek Ridge, Luhr, Bluhm or Red Mill parks. Call (219) 325-8315 for more information or to make a reservation.

#### **Shelter and Hall Reservations**

Call (219) 325-8315 to make reservations for one of many picnic shelters at any of the four county parks, or Pat Smith Hall at Red Mill County Park for a family function.







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#### Out of the Ashes and Into the Light

by Linda Weigel

Winter has arrived and Christmas shopping consumes many of us; however, please consider a break from the hubbub and enjoy this month's art scene.

Pictured in the Area Artists' Association Gallery at Lubeznik Center for the Arts, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, Tom Brand's "Burnt Offerings" inspires hope and recovery for anyone who has suffered a loss of property or security.

This past May, an arsonist set fire to his garage. He and his wife, artist Carol Stodder, lost a lifetime of artwork. I cannot fathom the depth of such a loss – absolutely devastating.

Joyfully, however, some works were salvaged and renewed without a hint of the tragedy they sustained.



"Recovery," an oil on panel by Tom Brand.

"This show reflects my effort at recovery, at least materially, in a small way what could be done," Brand states. "Some works sustained damage around their edges with their central sections still salvageable. Since they were painted on wood panel, it became possible to cut away the bad and keep the good; this required artistic judgment and sometimes additional painting to create new works from the old."

The results are stunning. Tom's strong, abstract compositions and intuitive sense of color shine. Viewing the paintings as a group, one senses a unity of rhythm, shape and weight flowing between and across each work, linking them harmoniously, evidence of a true master of the art of abstraction.

The NIPSCO Art Education Studios opened "New Perspectives," marking the 11th year LCA has celebrated "creative achievements of artists from The Social and Learning Institute and Paladin Inc."



Student mask designs.

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Additionally, a special family celebration was held Dec. 11 in conjunction with the exhibit. It is obvious from the youthful artworks, so carefully presented, that solid thought and educational success is at the core of the projects. Each art form brings a special way of seeing the world, of mentally organizing and then retrieving information, using critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The proof rests with the resulting student efforts.

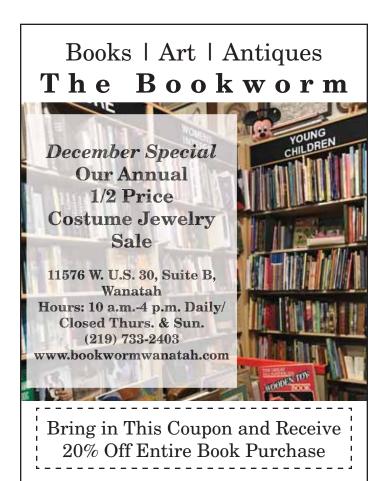
Based on studies of worldwide mask traditions, "students designed and created their own sculptural masks out of foam and found materials. This project asked students to pay close attention to facial expressions, color, form and various sculptural and fastening techniques."

Both exhibits close Jan. 12.

"Holly Jackson's Winter Show" opened Dec. 7 at Ellen Firme Gallery, 92 U.S. 12 in Beverly Shores, featuring a selection of acrylic paintings from this past year.

Jackson graduated from Herron School of Art and Design with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and now occupies Holly Jackson Art Studio & Gallery, 2013 S. Second St., Chesterton. Her use of bold colors and strong, gestural-like lines enhances the space and patterns prevalent in many of the works.

Her exhibit continues through January. Call (219) 874-3455 for more details.





"Flowers for Today," Holly Jackson's acrylic on canvas.

As 2018 draws to a close, recharge yourself before moving forward into the new year with a visit to these fine art establishments.



#### **Christmas Comes to the Uptown Arts District**

Families turned out to experience the Snowflake Parade on Saturday, Dec. 8, in the Uptown Arts District. The procession started at 10th Street and headed north on Franklin Street to Michigan City Public Library for the tree-lighting ceremony.

Michigan City firefighters served hot chocolate and cookies. Visitors also were encouraged to take

canned goods for the Northern Indiana Food Bank, while Michigan City letter carriers collected letters for Santa. Youngsters also could visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus at his chalet.

The holiday light display also can be viewed in Washington Park.

All photos by Paul Kemiel

























#### Photographer in the Spotlight



An article celebrating Paul Kemiel's storied career in photographing Offshore, Unlimited Hydroplanes and Formula One Tunnel boats posted Dec. 8 in www.offshoreonly.com. The article, "Here's Lookin' At You" by columnist Bobbye Miller Kenyon, reveals how Kemiel became interested in the sport, and over the years developed a respected reputation in the field. Kemiel, a Michigan City native, is a photographer with The Beacher. Photos by him can be seen in this week's edition, specifically in the story on Emily Reth and coverage of the Snowflake Parade. The Offshore Only article can be accessed at https://www.offshoreonly.com

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#### **Chesterton Art Center**

The following programs are through Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St.:

• Dick Church will offer a six-week Beginning/Intermediate Watercolor Class starting from 10 a.m. to noon Friday, Jan. 4.

Church will lead students through a variety of watercolor techniques. The cost is \$95, with members receiving a \$20 discount. Supplies are not included. Church will discuss supplies with beginners to start the class.

• The five-week Monday Night Ceramics starts from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 7.

Beginning students develop fundamental wheelthrowing techniques, while returning students refine techniques to create more complex forms.

Instructor Tom Cernius will perform short demonstrations while assisting students to improve throwing skills. Hand-building and sculpture are encouraged. Students also can try slab-building, pinch-pot hand-building and basic sculptural techniques, including figurine/small statue construction.

Cost is \$135, members receive a \$25 discount. The cost of clay is an \$15, payable to the instructor the first day of class. All other supplies are included.

Call the center at (219) 926-4711 or visit www. chestertonart.com for details.

#### Whole Kids Workshop

A Whole Kids Workshop is from 2 to 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 4, at Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso.

The program for pre-teens 10 and older emphasizes yoga, mindful meditation and a vision board activity. Light, healthy snacks are planned.

The cost is \$35 per child. Register by calling (219) 462-9009, or email adavis@artbarnschool.org





#### **JROTC Finishes Second at Drill Meet**

The military drill team of Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps finished second in the Purdue University drill meet Dec. 8 in West Lafayette.

The winner was East Aurora, Ill., which has the largest JROTC in the country with 700 cadets. Michigan City has 100.



Cadets are photographed with the second-place overall trophy and first-place Unarmed Platoon trophy.

The Unarmed Platoon, commanded by Cadet 1st Sgt. Zach Benedict, earned a first-place trophy. Other units that competed well were: the Armed Platoon, commanded by Cadet Gunnery Sgt. Danny Walker; the Armed Exhibition Platoon, commanded by Cadet Capt. Tyler Stockley; the Armed Squad, commanded by Cadet Gunnery Sgt. Connor Gresser; and the Color Guard, commanded by Cadet 1st Sgt. Griffin Wyatt.

MCHS' next competition is Jan 19 at East Aurora, then the MCJROTC Regional Championship in Reading, Pa., on March 3. If the Wolves qualify, they will compete at the MCJROTC National Championship in Washington, D.C., on April 13. Both trips would be at no expense to MCHS nor the cadets, instead funded by the Marine Corps.

Cadets also will perform many hours of community service, which includes assisting The Salvation Army during the holiday season.



## 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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#### **Indiana Dunes State Park**

The following programs are offered:

## • Hike to the Governor's Cottage from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 22.

Join a naturalist at the Nature Center for a moderate hike to explore the remains of Gov. Jackson's cottage near the lakeshore.

## • Home for the OWL-idays from 2 to 2:45 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22.

Join a naturalist in the Nature Center auditorium to learn about owls that call the dunes home in winter.

## • "Shell" abrate Turtles from 10 to 10:40 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 23.

Meet in the Nature Center auditorium to see turtles up close, and learn what they do in winter.

## • Beach Discovery Hike from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 23.

Meet a naturalist at the beach pavilion for an exploratory walk along the state park beach.

## • Christmas Eve Morning Stroll from 10 a.m. to noon Monday, Dec. 24.

Meet naturalists at the Nature Center to explore winter life and dunes beauty, then enjoy a campfire with holiday treats and hot cocoa provided by the Friends of the Indiana Dunes.

## • High Dunes Hike from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 29.

Meet a naturalist at the nature center for a hike to the summit of the state's highest sand dune. Wear hiking shoes.

## • The J.D. Marshall Shipwreck from 2 to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 29.

Meet at the Nature Center to learn about the sinking of the J.D. Marshall just offshore of Indiana Dunes State Park.

## • Breakfast with the Birds from 10 to 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 30.

Join naturalists at the Nature Center for coffee, hot chocolate and donuts, then help put out seeds for the birds.

## • Reptile Rendezvous from 2 to 2:45 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 30.

Meet a naturalist at the Nature Center to see live turtles and snakes, the emphasis being how they survive the cold winter months.

## • First Day Hike from 10 a.m. to noon Tuesday, Jan. 1.

Meet naturalists for a special 3-Dune Challenge covering 1.5 miles. At the end, volunteers serve warm drinks and snacks, with a campfire provided by the Friends of the Indiana Dunes. Through Porter County Indiana Dunes Tourism, completing participants earn a 3-Dune Challenge sticker.

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.

#### **Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore**

The following programs are available:

• The Save the Tunes Council performs from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, 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.

• Winter Solstice Hike from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, on Dune Ridge Trail.

Catch the sunset, rising full moon and views of the Great Marsh, then gather around a campfire to celebrate the shortest day of the year. Meet at the Kemil Beach parking lot, one mile north of U.S. 12 on East State Park Road (County Road 300 East).

The National Park Service is seeking one food service vendor for the Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk Pavilion concessions area for the 2019 summer season.

Minimum required hours — at least Memorial Day through Labor Day — are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, but the vendor can extend hours and available days.

Federal regulations require any individuals or groups selling food or other items in a national park to obtain a Commercial Use Authorization permit. The permit will be issued specifically for the Portage Lakefront Pavilion for the 2019 calendar year. Completed permit applications must include \$100 to cover processing costs and a brief business plan that includes a proposed list of menu items with prices.

Applications are due no later than Jan. 25. The selected vendor must pay 3% of gross receipts, minus the \$100 application fee, at the end of the season. Also, vendors must comply with county and Federal health regulations, and clean up guest generated garbage.

Call Amber Siewin at (219) 395-1859 or email amber\_siewin@nps.gov for an application or more details.

The Visitor Center is at 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. The Paul H. Douglas Center is at 100 N. Lake St. in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Call (219) 395-1882 for more information.



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#### **Activities to Explore**

#### In the Area:

**Dec. 21** — Winter Solstice Hike, 3-5 p.m., Dune Ridge Trail. Meet @ Kemil Beach parking lot, 1 mile north of U.S. 12 on East State Park Road (County Road 300 East). Info: (219) 395-1882.

**Dec. 21** — Save the Tunes Council, 7:30-9 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882.

**Dec. 21-27** — Vickers Theatre, 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. *Now showing*: "Mary Queen of Scots." Rated R. Times: 6 p.m. Fri.-Sun., closed Christmas Eve, 6 p.m. Tues.-Thur. *Also*: "Can You Ever Forgive Me?" Rated R. Times: 9:15 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 3 p.m. Sat.-Sun. & Wed.-Thur. All times Eastern. Info: vickerstheatre.com

**Dec. 22** — Hike to the Governor's Cottage, 10-11:30 a.m., Nature Center @ Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Dec. 22** — Old-fashioned Christmas party for children 3-12, 1-4 p.m., Westchester Township History Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.

**Dec. 22** — "Christmas at the Acorn," 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$25, \$35/café seating. Reservations: acorntheater.com, (269) 756-3879.

**Dec. 22-23** — Handel's "Messiah," First Presbyterian Church, 121 W. Ninth St. Public dress rehearsal: 10:30 a.m. Dec. 22/official performance: 3 p.m. Dec. 23. Reservations: www.mcmessiah.com, (219) 879-4501.

#### Dec. 24 — CHRISTMAS EVE.

**Dec. 24** — Christmas Eve Morning Stroll, 10 a.m.-noon, Nature Center @ Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Dec. 24** — Christmas Eve Chimes Concert, 3 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church bell tower, Sixth & Franklin streets.

#### Dec. 25 — MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**Dec. 27** — Graphic Novel Club for Teens, 5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**Dec. 28** — Noon Year's Eve Party for children 6-12, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Hageman Library, 100 Francis St., Porter. Registration: (219) 926-9080.

**Dec. 29** — The Footnotes, "Holiday Memories," 7:30 p.m., Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St. Tickets: \$15/adults, \$10/children 12 & younger. Reservations: (219) 874-4035, www.footlightplayers.org

**Dec. 31** — "Rockin' New Year's Eve! Featuring Memphis Underground," 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$40. Info: www.acorntheater.org, (269) 756-3879.

#### Jan. 1 — HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jan. 1 — First Day Hike, 10 a.m.-noon, Indiana

Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Jan. 2-3** — Cupcakes and Canvas, 10 a.m.-noon, Westchester Township History Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton. Registration: (219) 983-9715.

**Jan. 4** — First Friday Open Mic Night, 5-8 p.m., Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: (219) 874-7900.

**Jan. 4** — First Friday, 5-8 p.m., Old Lighthouse Museum, Washington Park.

**Jan. 7** — Popular Books, David McCullough's "The Wright Brothers," 2 p.m., Westchester Public Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

**Saturdays in December** — Glowing Lights Night, 4 p.m., Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St. Cost: \$8/adults, \$5/youth or seniors. Reservation: Eventbrite.

**Through Jan. 4** — Holiday Artisan Market, Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: www.lubeznikcenter.org

**Through January** — Duneland Plein Air Painters exhibit, Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Info: www.chestertonart.com

#### In the Region

**Dec. 31** — New Year's Eve masquerade ball, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. EST, The History Museum, 808 W. Washington St., South Bend. Tickets: \$75, \$60/members. Reservations: historymuseumSB.org, (574) 235-9664, Ext. 233.

**Through Jan. 17** — Laurie Schirmer Carpenter's "Midwestern Soliloquy," Valparaiso's The Village Gallery, 303 Pines Village Circle. Info: (219) 465-1591.

#### Support Groups

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

Mondays, Fridays — Overeaters Anonymous, 7 p.m. Mon./Franciscan St. Anthony Health, 301 W. Homer St., 9 a.m. Fri./First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St. Info: https://oa.org, (219) 879-0300.

**Wednesdays** — Alzheimer's/Dementia Support Group for Caregivers, 2 p.m., third Wednesday of each month, Rittenhouse Senior Living, 4300 Cleveland Ave. Info: (888) 303-0180.

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



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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.



On December 20, 1803, in a ceremony in the heart of New Orleans, the flag of France was replaced by the flag of the United States, symbolizing the official transfer of the lands making up the Louisiana Purchase. This purchase of more than a million square miles, for a price of about \$20 per square mile, was one of the biggest real-estate deals in history.

On December 20, 1813, Congress established the internal revenue system to raise funds to run the government.

On December 20, 1928, when the Ethel Barrymore Theatre was opened in New York, she became the first living actress of the United States to have a theatre named after her.

On December 20, 1946, the Frank Capra film "It's a Wonderful Life" had a preview showing for charity at New York City's Globe Theatre, a day before its "official" world premiere.

On December 21, 1620, the Pilgrims, who crossed the ocean on the Mayflower, first set foot on American soil at what is now Plymouth, Mass. "Forefathers Day," observed mainly in New England, is in commemoration of this landing.

On December 21, 1913, the Sunday supplement of *The New York World* contained the nation's first crossword puzzle.

On December 21, 1937, Walt Disney's animated cartoon, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," which was based on a Grimms' fairy tale, was shown in Los Angeles for the first time.

On December 21, 1968, the Apollo 8 spacecraft, with three astronauts aboard, was launched to make man's first orbit of the Moon.

On December 22, 1864, during the Civil War, Union General William Sherman sent a message to President Lincoln from Georgia, saying, "I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah."

On December 22, 1941, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill arrived in Washington for a wartime conference with President Franklin Roosevelt.

On December 22, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, U.S. Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe reportedly replied "Nuts!" when the Germans demanded Americans surrender in the World War II conflict.

On December 22, 2005, astronomers announced the discovery of two more rings around Uranus, the first additions to the planet's ring system in nearly two decades.

On December 23, 1928, the National Broadcasting Co. established a permanent coast-to-coast radio hookup.

On December 23, 1975, Congress passed the Metric Conversion Act. It declared the International System of Units will be the country's eventual system of measurement, and established the United States Metric Board with responsibility to plan, coordinate and implement the nation's voluntary conversion to metric. (Little or nothing has been heard of it since).

On December 23, 1995, actress Butterfly McQueen, who portrayed the slave Prissy in "Gone With The Wind," died at 84.

On December 23, 2003, the federal government announced the first suspected case of Mad Cow Disease in the United States.

**On December 24, 1851**, in Washington, D.C., fire swept through the Library of Congress, destroying more than 35,000 priceless volumes.

On December 24, 1871, Verdi's spectacular opera "Aida" had its world premiere in Cairo, Egypt. The Khedive of Egypt commissioned the composer to write the opera, which was to be part of the festivities celebrating the opening of the Suez Canal.

On December 24, 1951, the first opera written expressly for television, "Amahl and the Night Visitors," by Gian Carlo Menotti was performed on NBC.

**On December 25, 336**, the first recorded celebration of Christmas on Dec. 25 took place in Rome.

On December 25, 1776, General George Washington's troops began crossing the Delaware River for a surprise attack against Hessian forces encamped at Trenton, NJ.

On December 25, 1818, "Silent Night" was performed for the first time at the Church of St. Nikolaus in Oberndorff, Austria.

**On December 25, 1973**, the astronauts aboard Skylab 3 began a record setting 7-hour space walk.

On December 26, 1776, during the Revolutionary War's "Battle of Trenton," the British suffered a major defeat when General George Washington's troops captured 1,000 Hessian soldiers.

**On December 26, 1917**, during World War I, the United States government took over the operations of the nation's railroads.

On December 26, 1931, an enthusiastic audience was on hand at New York's Music Box Theatre for the opening of George Gershwin's musical "Of Thee I Sing." Besides being a smash hit, this was the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize for drama.

On December 26, 1934, Japan's first professional baseball team, the Yomiuri Giants, was founded.

On December 26, 1941, Winston Churchill became the first British Prime Minister to address a joint meeting of the United States Congress.



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\$2,100/wk. WiFi. W/D. No smoking/pets. 4-min. walk to beautiful beach.
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## American Red Cross

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

- Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St., 12:30-4:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 20.
- Anytime Fitness LaPorte, 59 Pine Lake Ave., 3-6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 26.
- Anytime Fitness, 4112 Franklin St., 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 26.
- Franciscan Health-Michigan City, 301 W. Homer St., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 28.
- LaPorte Hospital, 1007 W. Lincolnway, 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31.
- St. Joseph Church, 109 C St., LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 4.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 8.

Donors must be in good general health, at least 17 (16 with parental consent) and weigh at least 110 pounds. Visit redcrossblood.org for details.

#### LONG BEACH WOMEN'S BOWLING



Dec. 4, 2018

End of the season. Matches resume Jan. 8

- **First Place** Alley Katz (Lenore Hadaway, Holly Dres, Cindy Beck) won 36, lost 16.
- **Second Place** (tied) Striking Beauties (Tammy Vouri, Ann Bogart, Nancy Kubath) won 33, lost 19.
- **Second Place** (tied) Lucky Lefties (Jean St. Peter, Kathy Angelo, Sarah Blank) won 33, lost 19.

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES	SCORE
1. Debra Smith	187
2. Tammy Nelmar	180
3. Sue Labovitz	176
4. Susie Lutz	175
5. Cindy Beck	165
6. Barb Macudzinski	158
7. Mary Lou McFadden	157
7. Kathy Osborne	157
8. Lenore Hadaway	154
9. Sue Luegers	153
10. Peggy King	152
11. Anne Bogart (series)	429
12. Nancy Kubath (series)	405
SPLITS	
Polly Fletcher	3-10
Nancy Klausner	5-6-10
Dottie Brinckman	3-10
THREE STRIKES	

THREE STRIKES

Cindy Beck, Debra Smith

More bowlers are invited when teams meet at 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays at City Lanes.

#### Genealogist of the Year

Harold Henderson was named Genealogist of the Year during the LaPorte County Genealogical Soci-

ety Christmas Dinner on Dec. 11 at Round the Clock, LaPorte.

The award, now in its ninth year, recognizes a living person who promotes genealogy in LaPorte County through publications, programming and/or assisting others.

Henderson, a Certified Genealogist, has served the society as an officer and committee member. As La-Porte County genealogist, he lends assistance when needed. He also has



Henderson

publications in genealogical journals and a blog.

Robin Kohn of Michigan City Public Library will speak at the January meeting about the library's \$1.6 million remodeling project.



#### Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

Mr. Dickens and His Carol by Samantha Silva (hardcover, \$24.99 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 271 pages.)

"Marley was dead: to begin with."

Who among us doesn't recognize those opening words from Dickens' immortal classic, The Christmas Carol? But had you heard the reason behind him writing that book? Me neither. In her notes, Samantha Silva explains that while the story is a work of fiction: "It is spun out of threads from the lives of Charles Dickens, his family and friends, and even a nemesis or two...it is a playful reimagining of how the second most beloved Christmas story in the world (after the original) came to be."

Here's what we do know about the circumstances that required Dickens to write a book just before Christmas 1843. Fact: There was a need to satisfy his publishers, who threatened to deduct his pay if he couldn't come up with a new moneymaker. Apparently, Martin Chuzzlewit was not well-received by the reading public at the time. He also was overextended and constantly hounded for money by creditors and relatives, especially his own father, as well as many charities he generously gave to in the past.

What's a man to do?! There's also the big house filled with five children, a wife and housekeeping staff. Wow. That's enough to make any man lose his Christmas spirit. What author could possibly write a warm,

fuzzy holiday tale under those circumstances? Impossible!

The need to write reaches critical mass when his wife, fed up with his moping and constant chastising of the children, packs up and goes to stay with relatives in Scotland. Dickens finds the house to be a vast, empty tomb with no laughter from his children. He takes his leave in search of a muse...

Here's where Silva shines: She has an uncanny way of writing that mirrors the mid-19th century. She gives us the whole spectrum of humanity, from gangs of ragged, homeless children to lords and ladies in fur and finery, from smoke-filled pubs to hawkers selling their wares in foggy streets.

A feeling of the coming Christmas is in the air, but not in Dickens' heart. Verbal pictures of that London swirled in my head as Dickens walks across the city trying to find something to inspire him. He finally ends up at Furnival's Inn, where it all

started for him. He is surprised to see a sign above the clerk's office that says, "Dickens slept here." The clerk doesn't recognize him and offers the room for a reduced price if tourists can tour the room from time to time! As a young man, he lived here and once dreamt of becoming an actor, instead finding out he had a knack for writing. His fame grew along with the family he and Catherine made, and he became the rock star of his time — "The men who smelled of drink...knew him no less than those who smelled of rank."

Time is running out for Dickens. Less than a month to Christmas and his publishers have set a date for printing and a public reading before the holiday. No pressure!

Dickens wanders the area around Furnival's, trying to remember when life was happier. This would be a good time for a muse to make an appearance and inspire Dickens to write what his publishers want. Said muse appears in the form of a woman whose beauty and demeanor catch his eye — Eleanor Lovejoy.

Like the Scrooge in the book he doesn't know he will write yet, Dickens is encouraged by Eleanor to take a look at life, love and money in a whole new way, reaching back in his past to find that period of time when life was full of promise, not disappointment, creditors and relatives needing money. Her son reminds him of his own children, whom he now misses terribly.

Mission accomplished, after a few fits and starts. Dickens writes furi-

ously...<u>A Christmas Carol</u> is finally born, with little time to spare. A public reading is held two days before Christmas, and the book immediately sells 6,000 copies, an unheard of number for the time. But what has happened to Eleanor? The ending will surprise you as it did me.

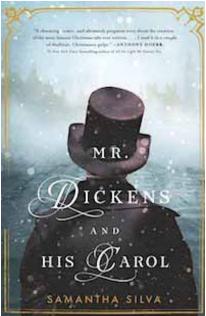
Silva even has a little fun with authors who are Dickens' competition, men like Thackeray and Collins.

Carol bells will ring, garlands will be hung by the fireplace, wide-eyed children will make Christmas wishes and one man will discover what he lost and now has found: the real meaning of the season.

What a perfect way to end the year! God bless us. Every one!

Till next time, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and happy reading!

(Editor's note — Coming in the Jan. 10 edition, Sally reveals her favorite books of 2018).







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