Unbuilt Chicago: Right Up My Alley

by Barbara Stodola

The exhibition title is a dead give-away. “Unbuilt Chicago” is the stuff of dreams and fantasies, architects’ lofty visions of what might have been. More optimistic than “Lost Chicago.” More entertaining than previews of functional structures that actually go up. This exhibit, currently at the Art Institute of Chicago, allows us to peek at the drawing boards where the architect’s creativity flourishes, unimpeded by the client’s pocketbook.

Little wonder that the exhibition should contain drawings for war memorials and yacht clubs, Magic Mountain and Ziegfield Follies, soaring skyscrapers and buildings that slowly inch their way up. This is the world of dreamland.

As long ago as 1892, an architect named Peter Weber proposed a 400-foot-tall structure for the Chicago World’s Fair that resembled the Leaning Tower of Pisa, except that it didn’t lean. In its famous spiral there would have been an electric railway, winding around and upward and taking visitors to the top of the tower. Instead of this attraction, the Columbian Exposition introduced a giant ferris wheel to Chicagoans -- another way of getting to the top.

Daniel Burnham, grand-daddy of Chicago architects and author of the 1909 Plan of Chicago, has two grandiose schemes in this exhibit: a great, multi-storied, hulking Civic Center with an elliptical dome, and a massive pleasure palace for the Chicago Yacht Club, with Palladian windows overlooking the harbor.

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This proposal for a Civic Center came from The Plan of Chicago drawn up by Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett, Jr., in 1909.

Another Burnham design was this sprawling plan for the Chicago Yacht Club (1928-1930), at which time its membership was the world’s largest. Then came the Depression.
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Worlds Fairs provided special opportunities for architect/dreamers. One of them was Henry Harringer, who proposed a Ziegfeld Fashion Theatre for the 1930 Century of Progress Exhibition, and also suggested that the Ziegfield Follies be brought from New York to Chicago -- as rivals, no doubt, to Sally Rand. Dream on.

A Magic Mountain was drawn up by Alfonso Iannelli for the Enchanted Island at the 1930 Fair. Iannelli, who had earlier completed some projects in Indiana, also collaborated with Bruce Goff on a design for a Chicago War Memorial. Neither structure was ever built.

Another unbuilt memorial was an Eliel Saarinen design commissioned by Kate Sturges Buckingham, the lady who had Buckingham Fountain erected in memory of her brother, Clarence. Kate was an admirer of Alexander Hamilton, and she had a nine-foot statue of him sculpted by John Angel, but the impressive Saarinen setting was never completed. Kate died in 1937, and the plan was shelved after World War II broke out.

Besides bringing some beautiful drawings and architectural models out of the archives, this exhibit does a nice job of explaining the various factors that cause buildings to not be built: wars, depressions, death of clients, political pressures. Often, public structures are the result of competitions, where many entries are submitted but only one design is selected.
One of the most fascinating incidents in Chicago's architectural history was the 1922 competition for the Chicago Tribune building, which drew 250 entries from all over the world, some of them cutting-edge designs, before settling on the neo-Gothic structure that still houses the newspaper offices today. The Art Institute collection contains some large watercolor drawings from actual competitors, as well as some “late entries” from the 1980s -- such as Fred Koetter’s take-off on the Walter Gropius design, where the architect mocks the Gropius scheme by buckling the structure in the middle.

Special niches have been created in the Kisho Kurokawa Gallery to highlight the Chicago Tribune segment. The exhibit was designed for this space by Jun Fujinuma of Wheeler Kearns Architects, and curated by Martha Thorne, curator of architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago.

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The exhibition brings to light elegant drawings by Louis Sullivan and Mies Van der Rohe; Holabird and Root’s concept of developing “air rights” over the Illinois Central tracks, way back in 1928; a proposal for a 1992 Chicago World’s Fair, which never happened; and two proposals for a “world’s tallest” building, one by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, another by Cesar Pelli, who designed the Petronas Towers in Malaysia. Jewel-like models by Helmut Jahn and Bertrand Goldberg are also displayed.

Although most of the pieces reach back into Chicago’s history, retracing well-known territory, some pieces pulled out of the Art Institute’s archives came as a surprise, even to well-informed persons like Blair Kamin, Chicago Tribune architecture critic. Chief among these was Helmut Jahn’s “previously undisclosed 2003 plan for a glassy, highly transparent Harrods department store on Block 37.” The deal fell apart last year, and the space remains vacant today, opposite Marshall Field’s on State street, still waiting for dreams to come true.

The exhibition, “Unbuilt Chicago,” is currently installed in the Kisho Kurokawa Gallery of Architecture, on the second floor of the Art Institute of Chicago. It will remain on exhibit thru January 16, 2005.

MICHIGAN CITY CONNECTIONS

The current exhibition of “Unbuilt Chicago,” now at the Art Institute of Chicago, contains drawings by several architects who also worked in Michigan City. The earliest of these was Alfonso Iannelli, an Italian-born sculptor who was a colleague of Long Beach architect John Lloyd Wright in the 1920s and ‘30s. Iannelli designed the altars at St. Mary’s Church, on 10th Street, sculptural details for Barker Hall and Trinity Episcopal Church, stained glass windows and other details for private homes in Long Beach.

Iannelli’s visions are represented in the Art Institute show by a drawing for “Magic Mountain” in the enchanted island at the 1930 World’s Fair, and a design for a war memorial, done in collaboration with architect Bruce Goff. Iannelli also collaborated with his friend Wright on a 1930 design for a George Rogers Clark memorial bridge at Vincennes, Indiana. This plan also was entered into a competition, and lost out to a more traditional design.

Downtown Michigan City has two prominent modern buildings designed by architects from the Chicago firm, C. F. Murphy & Associates. The Michigan City Public Library was done by Helmut Jahn, and the Horizon Bank Building at 5th and Franklin was done by Robert Novak -- both associates of Murphy. Carter H. Manny, Jr., a third-generation resident of Michigan City, was also a partner in the Murphy firm, and was instrumental in attracting his friends to design these buildings for his hometown.
Louis I. Kahn was one of the world-famous American architects whose designs never made it out to the Greater Chicago/ Michigan City areas. Nor did the personal details of his very private life -- not until this season, when "My Architect," a documentary film made by his illegitimate son, Nathaniel Kahn, has made its appearance.

"My Architect" is a fascinating film. It brings to life a man previously known only from the history books -- an internationally-known architect, a highly secretive individual, a dreamer of great dreams -- who died in Penn Station with altered ID and no clue to his destination. Although Kahn designed monumental structures that altered the course of modern architecture, at the time of his death, in 1974, he was hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. His wife, Esther, tried to prevent his two mistresses and two illegitimate children from coming to the funeral -- but they went anyway and sat in the back.

Nathaniel, who was 11 years old at the time, has reconstructed his father’s life like a puzzle, putting together the pieces of biography, architectural achievement and triple private life that composed the very complex character of Louis I. Kahn. Nathaniel has traveled the globe, interviewing such stellar personalities as Philip Johnson, I.M. Pei, Robert Stern and Vincent Scully. All spoke in glowing terms of their colleague, but knew little of his private life. Scully, for one, had no idea Kahn was married.

Testimonials also came from such diverse sources as the cab driver who drove Kahn around Philadelphia (the architect had no car); construction workers from the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth; students from the University of Pennsylvania; and his two daughters, one by his wife and the other by the mistress who preceded Nathaniel’s mother. The women in his life were intelligent, well-spoken professionals who still speak fondly and emotionally of the man they loved.

The movie is beautifully filmed and edited, with many scenes set in the dramatic buildings designed by Kahn -- most importantly the Salk Research Institute, overlooking the Pacific at LaJolla, and the hugely impressive capital at Bangladesh in Dacca. Both building complexes show how deeply the architect was influenced by ancient Egyptian and Roman ruins.

Nathaniel, now almost 40, leads the tour and conducts the interviews in a probing, though gentle manner. The result is a poignant documentary, lovingly researched and revealing as much as one human being can hope to understand about another.

“My Architect,” the documentary film about Louis I. Kahn’s personal and professional life, will be shown at the Vickers Theatre, 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, MI, at 6:15 p.m. Thursday, April 29 thru Monday, May 3, at 9 p.m. Eastern Time. Phone 269-756-3522 or e-mail www.vickerstheatre.com.
Create a Unique Mother’s Day Card

The Lubeznik Center for the Arts is holding an “Open Studio” to create Mother’s Day cards. Come as a family, bring a friend, or just come alone and let your creative juices flow.

The Center will provide cards for that special lady, or ladies in your life. This event takes place on Sat., May 1st from 10 a.m.-noon, and the cost is only $3 per person.

The Lubeznik Center for the Arts is located at 101 W. 2nd St., Michigan City; phone, 874-4900

Sue Spitler Book Signing

On Sat., May 1, from 1-3 p.m., Sue Spitler will be at The Bookstore, 1203 Lighthouse Place (between Mikasa and Bass at the northern end of the shopping mall). She will be signing copies of her new book 1,001 Low-Carb Recipes for Life (Surrey Books, $19.95).

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Talented Trio to Perform with Symphony

Enjoy an enchanted evening of chamber music by the renowned Castillon Trio as they join the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra at 7:30 p.m. on Sat., May 8 at the LaPorte Presbyterian Church, 307 Kingsbury Av. Members are Andrew Smith, violin, Andrea Mills, cello, and Joseph Bognar, piano.

The trio takes its name from French composer, Alexis de Castillon, who died tragically in the early years of his career. His memory was held dear by a generation of young French composers who remembered him as a founding member of the new French school and the first composer of his generation to devote himself almost exclusively to writing chamber music.

Echoing the music of Castillon, the trio’s repertoire combines classic masters of the form with contemporary and lesser-known composers, from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven to Piston, Shostakovich and Nyman.

The trio members have diverse backgrounds. Like Castillon, Smith has roots in Europe. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music, UK, and received his Doctorate in Performance from the Hartt School. This year, in addition to doing a European tour with the Castillon Trio and being the Artist in Residence with the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, Smith is a music professor at Valparaiso University.

Mills earned her master’s degree at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She has played with such familiar names as Andrea Bocelli, Luciano Pavarotti, Johnny Mathias and Yes. She has been on the faculty of numerous music schools. In addition to being a guest lecturer and orchestral and chamber music coach at Valparaiso University, she leads the cello faculty at the Western Springs Suzuki School.

As a performer-scholar, Bognar also keeps a busy schedule. He performs in dozens of recitals each year on piano, harpsicord and organ from Chicago to Nevada to the International Trombone Festival. Dr. Bognar performs lecture recitals as well as teaching full time at Valparaiso University. He was instrumental in forming the Castillon Trio in 2001.

The trio are also guest artists at the 2004 Stamford International Music Festival, UK.

Tickets for the Castillon Trio Chamber Concert are available online at www.lcso.net or will be available at the door for $15/adults, $12/seniors and $5/students. For more information, phone the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra office at (219) 325-0666 or email info@lcso.net.
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**League of Women Voters Dinner Meeting**

Former Indiana Congressman Tim Roemer, who is one of 10 members of the national 9/11 Commission, will be the speaker at the annual dinner meeting of the League of Women Voters of LaPorte Co. on May 6.

Roemer, who now is a distinguished scholar at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., and president of the Center for National Policy, is a native Hoosier who grew up in South Bend and represented Indiana’s Third District (including LaPorte County) in Congress for six terms, from 1991 to 2003.

It was during the last of his six terms that terrorists hijacked four U.S. planes and flew them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing 3,000 people. Rep. Roemer, a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, served on the bipartisan Congressional Joint Inquiry which issued a report on the Sept. 11 attacks. And he was the key author of the legislation in the House of Representatives to establish the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9/11 Commission). He has served on the bipartisan panel since it was created by act of Congress and signature of the president in late 2002. His topic at the LWV dinner will be “9/11 Commission: A Window Into How Government Works.”

Seating will be limited for the dinner, which will be at the Convention Room of Blue Chip Casino on East U.S. 12 in Michigan City. Make your reservations as soon as possible. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. There will be a cash bar at 6 p.m. Dinners are $30 for members, $35 for non-members. The number to make reservations and indicate dinner choice is (219) 871-0722. The deadline for reservations is May 1.

Ms. Nault said that Roemer has agreed to take questions from the audience following his formal remarks at the League dinner.
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Dunes Summer Theatre Audition Call

The Dunes Summer Theatre, located in Michiana Shores, will be holding auditions for its summer productions of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Sweet Charity, and The World Goes 'Round* on Sat., May 8th and Sun., May 9th from 1-5 each day. At a later date, to be announced, *Fool For Love* auditions will be held.

Please bring sheet music of anything you wish for vocal audition, dance clothes/shoes for dance audition. Bits from each play will be prepared and available for reading.

*The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is a one-of-a-kind quintessential musical experience about a newly engaged couple, a transvestite doctor and his musical buddies whose wild, kooky and kinky adventures have continued to entertain the musical comedy world for over 29 years. The Cast consists of four women; Janet, Magenta, Columbia and Betty Munroe, 10 men; Brad, Dr. Frank-N-Furter, Riff Raff, Dr. Everett Von Scott, Rock Horror, Eddie, The Criminologist, Ralph Hapschatt and the Transylvanians (20+ people). The Rocky Horror Picture Show was originally directed by Jim Sharman and written by Richard O’Brien. Show dates are June 25, 26, 27, July 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11.

Neil Simon’s Play, *Sweet Charity*, with lyrics by Dorothy Fields and Music by Cy Coleman expresses what love is all about! The story revolves around a naive and idealistic nightclub dancer in New York whose love interests and their disappointments, along with her hope and optimism, present an exciting venue for musical drama. The Cast consists of five women; Charity, Nickie, Helene, Carmen, and Ursula, five men; Oscar, Herman, Vittorio, Big Daddy, Nickolsby, the Frug dancers, and lots of singers and dancers. If “Fosse Style” dancing is for you, this is your show! Show dates are July 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31 and Aug. 1.

*The World Goes 'Round* is a musical revue by American composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb. The show depicts life with all its joys, indignities, hopes and dreams through a dazzling outpouring of song and dance. It’s all music -- all the time, with songs from such memorable blockbusters as *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Funny Lady* and more! The five-member cast consists of three women and two men. Show dates are Aug. 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, Sept. 3, 4 and 5.

Sam Shepard’s *Fool For Love* is a passionate story of May and Eddie; two individuals whose intense and often disturbing conversations expose their anger, vulnerabilities and, eventually, what they are both really feeling and thinking. The twists and turns in this drama will hold your interest throughout the run of the show! The Cast consists of four characters, Eddie, May, Old Man and Martin. Show dates are Sept. 10, 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19.

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Polly and Don Gaza used to spend warm days in a small boat cruising along the Galien River, admiring the lots in The Preserve, New Buffalo.
Those days are over. The boat is no longer needed, for now Don and children Maggie and Zachary catch fish on the Galien River from their property at 25 Preserve Way. The home the family finished building and moved into months ago is “a fisherman’s dream,” Polly said. There, the family catches more fish than Don has anywhere else in his travels in the United States and Canada. Those fish are cleaned in the garage at a sink with a disposal.
The home of Oak Field Stone with cedar shake siding is anyone’s dream, especially if the person dreams big. After all, 13 tons of stone make up the see-through fireplace in the great room.

It is a home in which no detail was overlooked. Polly, who was the general contractor, admitted to being obsessive even with little things. But such attention to every aspect of the home paid off. Knowing she had only one chance to get the house she wanted, Polly made sure the doorknobs were of forged bronze, the light fixtures were of alabaster glass with a bronze patina and that inlaid forged iron rosettes were part of the limestone tile bathroom floor.
The Gaza home will be part of the Harbor Nights Adult Enrichment Series housewalk, "Our Favorite Homes." Proceeds from the event will benefit the students of St. Mary of the Lake School. The walk is set for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) May 15. Advance tickets are available for $50 at Whittaker House, New Buffalo Savings Bank and St. Mary of the Lake School. Tickets the day of the event will be available from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Eastern Time) at St. Mary of the Lake School.

As she tells about her home, Polly has a litany of favorite things. She’s glad that she designed the home and acted as the general contractor, that it is on the riverfront so the family can fish anytime and that the back deck is made of concrete. And, of course, she does not mind one bit having a spa in her bathroom. "We have heated floors, stone benches and a steam generator inside the shower," she explained.
It might take quite awhile for the family to find something not to like about the house. With cherry cabinets, Brazilian cherry floors, two cherry staircases, a built-in Miele coffeemaker, Wolf and Subzero appliances, an intercom and a sound channel, it has all the amenities and then some.

"We wanted a nice family home with large rooms, so everyone could spread out," said Polly, the mother of two St. Mary of the Lake students.

Still amazed at the length of the house-building process, Polly said the lot was bought in August 2002, ground broken November 2002 and the move-in date was in February 2004. Considering the research that went into the house, it may surprise some that the home was done so soon. "I'm obsessed with detail. We didn't miss a beat," Polly said. The family made sure that each expectation was met.

Don feels that a large home should have a significant door, so the cherry front door is eight feet high and four feet wide. Polly never liked hearing every upstairs sound while in the basement. A sound channel prevents those in the basement from hearing steps overhead.

Since New Buffalo is a nautical community, the Gazas sought an East Coast look to their home. The Oak Field Stone on the exterior is seen again as a hood to the range and also comprises the fireplace. The heavy look begun on the exterior of the home flows into the home with the brick floor in the entryway from the garage and the kitchen. Those bricks, Polly decided, would give an old-world look to the gourmet kitchen.

Old world is right. The bricks were dug up from European streets. "They came with mud and dirt on them," Polly said. "I was not up for the challenge of cleaning all of them, but I did it anyway." She has not regretted her choice in flooring. "It's pretty indestructible," she said.

Indestructible describes more than the floor. It would be difficult to disturb a concrete deck, especially one supported with flexicore, the same material used in parking garages. And the roof, made of 480-pound shingle, with the valleys filled in with copper, will not be a worry.

The following families are also opening their homes for the tour:

Richard and Carol Shepherd, 4127 Cherokee, Michiana. Architect Heidi Hornaday designed this home to capture views of the surrounding woods. Each room of the 80-foot by 20-foot home has at least two windows from which the colors of the trees and perhaps a deer can be seen. Dining in the screened-in porch allows the homeowners to further take in the outdoors. The spacious kitchen allows guests to gather and socialize while dinner is being made on the indoor grill. The second floor is separated by a balcony, allowing for privacy for guests.

Sherri and Dean Goodwin, 16592 Westway, New Buffalo. Windows on the lake side of this home make the most of views from each room. The decor incorporates family and travels. Quilts made by the couple's grandmothers are displayed, as well as family photos taken on trips to Greece, Nepal and Bangkok. Moroccan and Nepalese rugs, a bedspread from India and Russian dolls are among the treasures brought home from around the world.

Beverly and Paul Fields, 11439 Marquette, New Buffalo. Leaded stained glass doors made by John Goldbaum open to a home with marble and oak floors. Among the treasures in this home are an oak sideboard from the Armour Mansion redesigned for Paul Fields, an antique slot machine and a custom-made granite table.

Lisa Miller, 18 Preserve Way. A maple staircase, different hues of cherry cabinets and panoramic views of the Galien River add to the prestige of this 6,000-square-foot home.

Richar Johnson, Michigan City. The owner, an interior designer whose work has been featured in Architectural Digest and House and Garden, has lightened up the Victorian farmhouse with pastels. Ten acres of meadows and lawns with centuries-old oak and walnut trees surround the home.

For more information on the housewalk, phone St. Mary of the Lake School, 269/469-1515.
MC Concert Assoc. Membership Drive

Westwind Brass will perform on March 18, 2005.

The Michigan City Concert Association, Inc. has been holding its annual membership drive this week-April 26-30. Headquarters are at the Michigan City Public Library, noon-5 p.m., daily. Brochures will be available that give the schedule, program reviews, reciprocity selections, and the mailing information for membership. “Early bird” prices include a $5 reduction for single memberships and a $20 reduction for family memberships.

The four regular programs for the 2004-05 season are:


Nov. 16: Alpin Hong, pianist in concert.

March 8, 2005: “Yesterday–A Tribute to the Beatles.”

March 18, 2005: Westwind Brass.

K of C Tootsie Roll Drive

The Knights of Columbus will be holding their 25th annual Tootsie Roll Drive for the mentally retarded and handicapped. On April 30, May 1 and May 2, K of C members, as well as Notre Dame School and Marquette HS students, will be stationed outside various businesses collecting for this worthy cause.

Organizations who benefit from the drive include: Michiana Resources, Inc.; PAF (Parents & Friends of Handicapped); Share Foundation, Inc.; Therapy Center; MCAS Special Education & Special Olympics; Social & Learning Institute.

For information, phone the Knights of Columbus at 879-5481.

Support those who advertise in the Beacher!
Tell them you saw their Ad!
Chicago-based Flying Leap Radio Players (FLRP) will present an evening of new and vintage radio dramas and comedies at The Acorn Theater on Sat., May 1.

The first half of the evening includes the two vintage radio comedies “Blondie and Dagwood” and “Fibber McGee and Molly.” The second hour of the show features two of FLRP Artistic Director Adam Moe’s original scripts, both of which are written in the style of the classic vintage radio programs. The first, written in tandem with FLRP Musical Director Emily Moe, features the couple’s hard-boiled Chicago detective Jack Belmont in “The Case of the Golden Throat.” The second is a chilling radio adaptation of the famous W.W. Jacobs story, “The Monkey’s Paw.”

“We’re bringing back an evening from about sixty years ago. Then, when families wanted entertainment, they would crowd around the radio...” explained David Fink, co-owner of The Acorn.

According to FLRP, these shows are quite unique in that they are designed to be as entertaining for the studio audience as they are for the listening audience. FLRP does all it can to recreate the feel of live radio programming of the 40’s and 50’s. Cast and crew dress in period clothing and the artists never use recorded sound effects, as long as they can help it. FLRP also use only live music and everything is mixed on the fly.

Adding to the visual interest is Adam Moe, who directs every show like a conductor on a podium, gesturing for each sound and vocal cue.

Flying Leap Players, Ltd. is a non-profit performing arts organization dedicated to producing and presenting professional performances that challenge and stretch the artist, entertain and stimulate the audience and educate the public in performing arts.

In addition to the Moes, other cast members include Gary and Mary Ann Atwood and Jay and Tamera Andersen.

The show begins at 8 p.m. ET. Tickets are $15 and can be reserved by phoning 269/756-3879 or purchased at the door. The Acorn Theater is located in the historic Featherbone Factory at 107 Generations Dr., behind the Three Oaks Post Office on N. Elm Street.
The Office of Continuing Education at Purdue North Central is offering a new class in basic web design. Become Your Own Webmaster will help individuals and organizations get information onto the World Wide Web. Clubs, teachers, and small businesses can also benefit from this information. Dr. David Pratt, PNC assistant professor of education, will be the instructor for this class that meets on Wednesdays, May 12-26, 10 a.m.-noon. The cost is $119. Other fees may be incurred by the student, depending on the web host selected for the webpage.

To register for this course or other non-credit courses available this summer, call the Office of Continuing Education, (219) 872-0527, ext. 5343 or visit http://www.pnc.edu/ce. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations should contact ext. 5343.

“Guys & Dolls, Jr.” at MCJHS

The Michigan City Junior High School Theatre Club will perform “Guys & Dolls, Jr.” on Fri., April 30 and Sat., May 1 at 7 p.m., and Sun., May 2 at 2 p.m. The performance will take place at the MCJHS Theatre, 317 Detroit St., Michigan City. Tickets are $5/adults, $4/students. Family passes include two adult tickets and any children and will be sold for $15. To purchase tickets in advance, phone 873-2030, ext. 369, during school hours.

“Guys & Dolls” is an entertaining musical comedy set in Manhattan in the late 1940s. Nathan Detroit (Brett Sims) runs an illegal floating crap game in the city. When he needs $1,000 to find a place for his game, he makes a bet with big-time gambler Sky Masterson (Troy Hack) that he’s sure to win: Nathan bets that Sky cannot convince the straight-laced missionary, Sarah Brown (Emily Cass), to go to dinner with him. In the meantime, Nathan is constantly trying to avoid getting hitched to his showgirl fiancee of 14 years, the bubbly Miss Adelaide (America Zahn). With great music, memorable characters, and lots of laughs, “Guys & Dolls, Jr.” will be a fantastic night of entertainment.
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1st Annual Samaritan Skeedadle Run/Walk by Janet Basnes

Samaritan Counselling Center’s first run/walk got off to an auspicious start with the help of special guest, Denver Bronco quarterback, Steve Beuerlein. Steve graciously consented to lead the run organized to raise support for the Samaritan Center.

The committee was thrilled that approximately 200 runners/walkers signed up for the event. Coupled with many volunteers and beautiful weather, a great time was guaranteed.

Many local businesses also had a hand in the success of this day by donating prizes and goody bags, food and water. Other community members provided volunteer help to make the day run smoothly.

Volunteers ready to help - Maureen Warren, Sue Callaghan, Liz Bernel, Nick Walz and Stephanie Olson.

Ready to run, Dr. James Callaghan (with his wife Sue), former Notre Dame roommate, Steve Beuerlein, friend Patrick Kruczek, and Samaritan Center’s own Souhaila Wendt, along with several younger participants.

Calling in yet another last minute change to his ad in The Beacher is realtor, Ed Merrion, here with fellow agent Debbie Burke.

Runners’ Jennifer Smith & Sandi McWhirter stretch to warm up for the run.

Mayor Oberlie greets the runners & walkers.

Nin e a.m. and they are off and running... or walking!

Providing much needed water is the Merrion team of Ed, Debbie Burke, John Hayes, Jim Laughtin and Fran Merrion.

NFL star Steve Beuerlein, Sue Callaghan & Mayor Chuck Oberlie.

Walker’s Carol Kalita, Nancy Collins & Elizabeth Andershock have a chat before the event.

Nancy Smith sets up a sponsor display.

Priscbyterian Church pastor, Nancy Kahaiian picks up her “goodies” from volunteer May Lou Linnen.

Waiting to sign up to run is Johnathan Pendergraast, far right with dad Bob. Next in line is Lynnette Weimar.

Offering Luke an apple from the bounty of healthy foods donated by Al’s Supermarkets is volunteer Mary Wendt.

Eager to get started, some of the younger participants join Michigan City Police Department’s Cpl. Kaplan. From left to right: Dakota, Lizzie, Erin, Caroline, Tyler, Luke, Cpl. Kaplan & Isabella.

Members of this family prolonged their visit in order to take part in today’s race.

Volunteers ready to help - Maureen Warren, Sue Callaghan, Liz Bernel, Nick Walz and Stephanie Olson.

Manning (Peopling?) the first aid station Brenda Britton of St. Anthony Memorial Hospital.

Samaritan Center associate, Diana Whay, along daughter Molly, is joined by Bronco’s quarterback, Steve Beuerlein and Center Director, Suzanne Morris.

Presbyterian Church pastor, Nancy Kahaiian picks up her “goodies” from volunteer May Lou Linnen.

NFL star Steve Beuerlein, Sue Callaghan & Mayor Chuck Oberlie.

Waiting to sign up to run is Johnathan Pendergraast, far right with dad Bob. Next in line is Lynnette Weimar.

Nancy Smith sets up a sponsor display.
Historic Reenactment at Lakeshore

Volunteers Laurie and Steve Snaer discussing how natives lived inside the wigwam.

On Sat., May 1 and Sun., May 2 from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., join Eastern Woodland Indian, Western Great Lakes Fur Trader and Voyageur re-enactors for “Gathering at the Calumic”. Visitors will learn about the lifestyles of these people in our region from 1730 to 1830. Demonstrations will include native gardening, toy making, finger weaving, silk ribbon embroidery, pewter molding, hide tanning as well as quill, feather and bead work. This special event will take place at the Bailly/Chellberg area of the Dunes National Lakeshore and is sponsored by the Friends of Indiana Dunes.

There will be several Native American and Voyageur encampments. Musicians will be on site performing French-Canadian tunes and Native American flute music. Historical crafts made by the on-site demonstrators will be available for purchase. An apothecary will be selling a variety of historical items such as teas, herbs, spices, candies, soaps and creams. Activities will also include a Fur Trading Post with many items for purchase. A Kids Trade Blanket will allow the young children to experience this early way of life.

Refreshments will be available for purchase in the parking lot area. Parking fees are $3 per vehicle ($20 per bus). Park in the Bailly/Chellberg overflow parking lot and walk the 0.25 mile trail to Bailly Homestead. For those who prefer to not walk the trail, a free shuttle from the parking area to the Bailly site is available.

Established in July 1982 and incorporated in August 1986, the Friends of Indiana Dunes, Inc. is a non-profit, philanthropic, membership organization working in partnership with the Indiana Dunes State Park and the National Lakeshore. Their mission is to enhance and foster understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the dunes through financial and volunteer support of the educational, interpretive and resource management programs at both parks.

Read The Beacher On Line http://www.bbpnet.com/
**Students Perform Award Winning Play**

The intriguing Pulitzer Prize winning play, “The Effect of Gamma Rays On Man-In-The-Moon Marigolds” by Paul Zindel, is coming to La Lumiere High School on May 1st at 7 p.m., and May 2nd at 3 p.m.

The story follows the journey of Matilda Hunsdorfer as she struggles to survive in a household with an abusive mother while living in the shadow of her older sister. A school science experiment not only demonstrates her ability to conduct scientific research, but also her ability to grow and be beautiful in her own right.

Starring in the performance are Marly Tristano, Sarah Tristano, and Elisse Knoll of LaPorte; Anna de Caneva of Three Oaks, Michigan; and Hillary Guenther of Michigan City.

Kevin Burgun of LaLumiere High School will be directing his sixth play at La Lumiere, assisted by Stephanie Frankle and Jaime Frankle of New Buffalo, Michigan. Come see the play that had New York raving!

Tickets are $5 and can be reserved at (219) 326-7450 or purchased at the door.

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**Congratulations to the Newlyweds!**

Jennifer Pruitt and Michael Grimes were married on Feb. 7th in Scottsdale, Arizona. A reception was held at McCormick Ranch Golf Club and Resort in Scottsdale.

Parents of the bride are Jean and Gloria Suing of Albany, Oregon. Parents of the bridegroom are Jim and Joni Grimes, Long Beach.

Maid of Honor was Amanda Watkins of Seattle, Washington; Best Man was Dave Clancy of Long Beach. The flower girl honor went to Isabel Grimes, niece of the bridegroom, from Lake Forest, Illinois.

Jennifer is a flight attendant with Southwest Airlines. Michael is regional vice president of R & B Inc. The couple is now residing in Phoenix, Arizona.

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**THINK MOTHER’S DAY!**
A recent article on gardens began: “It is very difficult to grow lush green turf in the shadows of tall oaks.” Well, yessss. I put that statement in the class with “We hold these truths to be self evident”. Who with mighty oaks around even thinks in the terms of lush, green turf. Lush and green are words that go with golf courses. With shady oaks, all you dare hope for is a slight haze of some green strands covering the bald, bare bones of the soil. Who even considers bouffant? Who even dreams of lush?

However, the article did go on to suggest a few alternatives to replace the sure to fail task of trying to grow lush, green turf under oaks. Ground covers, that’s the way to go and a few were suggested. Some I knew, like pachysandra; some I had not thought about as ground-covers -- Japanese painted fern and dwarf Chinese astible; and two I was not familiar with at all, epimedium and European wild ginger. Reading on, I figured what the gist of this article was. It was giving suggestions about using, not standard groundcovers, but planting instead some wild flowers that were known to like the company of oak trees, did not cringe at shade, and had learned to grow compatibly in whatever soil resources the mighty oaks cared to give them.

Now I do not attempt to grow grass and have no longings for lush green turf. But I do have oaks and have attempted to grow plants around and under them. There is one that is a particular problem where even hard scrabble myrtle struggles for a foothold. I can almost see its hands grasping at a parched throat and hear its pleading, choked voice that cries, “give me a little more dirt to work with here, please.” So I checked these alternative suggestions out. First off, the Epimedium, a lovely sounding name, like something from Midsummer Night’s Dream. Guess what its common name is: Horny Goat Weed. Seems the Chinese saw some goats getting pretty frisky when they ate this plant in their mountain pastures, and thought if worked for goats, it might work for them as well. So Epimedium began its travels through the ages as an old Chinese herbal remedy for, shall we say, vitality. Today these hardy perennials have morphed into many varieties and are known as Fairy Wings.
They welcome spring with airy flowers, then stay on to provide attractive ground cover foliage all through the growing season. In a genus of 21, *Epimedium brachyrrhizum* is a new clumping species discovered in 1994 in the Guizhou Province of China that has sprays of arching spider-like rose pink flowers; *E. exrubrum* is a more conventional spreading ground cover variety.

Moving along through the list of suggestions for shady spots under oak trees, there was European Wild Ginger, *Asarum europaeum*, with thick, glossy evergreen leaves and purplish-brown flowers usually hidden by the leaves. Not very showy for its blossoms, it is, however, el primo for damp, shaded areas. Chinese astilbe is a little showier in its blossoms, and though it likes a moist soil, it does tolerate dryness. The astilbe grow a little taller and have many varieties from which to choose. I discovered their ground cover qualities by chance when deciding to move a few and found they had spread out into creepers. I moved them under the oak tree and they are surviving, if not thriving, there. Everybody knows about ferns and their growth in woodland areas but a flashy new variety of Japanese Painted Fern called Arthryarian Branford Beauty has just come out, a cultivar of the tougher, native woodland fern. A web site describes it as “magical shimmering silver on red stalks”. Wow! All that from a fern frond.

I looked up the last ground cover/wildflower suggested in that article, Bigroot Cranesbill and found that it is just another name for geranium, *Geranium macrorrhizum*, to be exact, and I’ve had them all along, helped by a generous clump from friend Jan Clark’s garden. These Bigroot Cranesbills are the real geraniums, with dainty flowers and fragrant leaves. The showy plants we all call geraniums moved to the genus *Pelargonium* a long time ago, though I doubt any of us will start calling them that. But adding some bigroot geranium to a woodland bed might be a good idea; they do not like soil that is too fertile. That’s a welcome switch.

So, if areas under oak trees won’t grow grass, make lemonade out of lemons, and plant woodland flowers as groundcover.

And so it is.
**May Fellowship Tea**

All ladies are welcome to attend the 73rd Annual Fellowship Tea Saturday, May 1st, 1:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church located at 9th and Washington Street in Michigan City. Join us and hear Louise Cummings' presentation “Bible Practices in India.” She and her husband Bruce both taught at the Cody Mission School in India. Louise will be assisted in her demonstration of garments & items by friend Janice Casper. Childcare will be provided. For further information call Garnet Williams, 219-874-7000.

**PNC, Library Present Froebel Workshop**

Purdue University North Central, the Michigan City Public Library and the Platt/Coffin Trust Fund will present “The Froebel Kindergarten Workshop: An Introduction to its Influence on Frank Lloyd Wright’s Architectural Art” on Sun., May 2 at 1:30 p.m. in the Michigan City Library.

The event is free and open to parents and children interested in knowing more about the learning tools that influenced architect Frank Lloyd Wright and how they can be used to help children explore their interests.

The three-hour workshop will be led by Dr. Wally Rogers, an educator, interpreter and the author of “Frank Lloyd Wright’s SAMARA: Winged Seeds of Indiana.” He is co-curator of Wright’s home, *Samara*. His workshop will provide directions, sample materials and handouts about the Froebel Gifts, named after Friedrich Froebel, who developed the first kindergarten in Germany in 1837.

Parents are encouraged to bring their children. The ideal age for participation is 9-10 years old. There will be a PowerPoint presentation and hands-on activities that will center on the creative array of “gifts” used by Frank Lloyd Wright’s mother to encourage his appreciation of the orderly beauty of nature and forms that influenced his work. An important part of this learning is the appreciation of creativity and spontaneity, coupled with the use of geometry, primary colors, shapes and spatial relationships.

For more information, or to register for the workshop, stop in at the Michigan City Youth Services Department in the library, or phone Sue at 873-3045. For more information about Samara log onto www.samara-house.org.

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Mother’s Day at the Mansion

In celebration of Mother’s Day, beginning Mon., May 3 and continuing through Sat., May 8, mothers are invited to a complimentary tour of Barker Mansion. Tours begin with an introductory historical video, followed by a guided tour of three floors of the turn-of-the-century mansion. Scattered throughout the house are photographs of Barker family mothers and children, and also featured is a drawing room scene of a mother and her children enjoying a quiet moment.

Mothers, accompanied by another family member, will be admitted free. Regular admission fees are $4/adults, $2/youths 18 and younger. Guided tours are 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. Mon.-Fri., and noon and 2 p.m. on Sat., May 8. The mansion will be closed on Mother’s Day, May 9.

Barker Mansion is a 1905 house museum listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The mansion is located at 631 Washington St., Michigan City. For more information, phone 873-1520.

Potluck Gathering

On Sat., May 1, at 7 p.m., Marilee Snyder and her husband, John Nieciak, will host a Potluck Gathering at Sage Spirit Terra, 9464 North Meer Rd., Michigan City. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Laurel Izard, MFA, local resident and artist, will conduct a Pipe Ceremony. This is a Prayer Circle done in the Native American way. Laurel apprenticed in the Blackfoot way for more than four years with her husband, Edwin Shelton. The theme is New Beginnings: “What Seeds Do I Need to Plant for Myself.”

For more information, phone Marilee at 879-3906 or log onto www.sagespiritterra.org

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**Printablechecklists.com:** I spent a recent afternoon checking most of the forms under the following categories: Household, Parenting; Children & Education, Business & Finance, Fun, Special Occasion, and Miscellaneous.

I was amazed at the number of forms available under each category. Under the “Parenting” category are not one, but 5 forms called “At the Time of Your Birth” for keeping track of a family member’s personal biography. And one of the best forms I found under “Children & Education” is a weekly tracker of your child’s positive behaviors. As a former counselor/facilitator who used to lead Active Parenting groups, I strongly recommend that all parents print and follow this form! Other forms in this category include a child’s pocket i.d. and one called “Today I Learned.” The latter form, when filled out by any family member, could facilitate a nice family dinner conversation.

In the “Fun” category, birders can use a form to keep track of their birding activities. Coin collectors can find a form for their hobby here, too. Online auction management checklists are found here and also in the Business category. Under “Special Occasions, you can print out a September 11 Remembrance Flag, track birthdays, party guest lists, and more.

Shame on me. I forgot to mention another checklist category. Under “Internet,” you will find checklists to keep track of email addresses, auctions (again), Web addresses and registrations, including username and passwords; and affiliates and commissions.

In the “Miscellaneous” category is a helpful form for “when a loved one dies,” listing in order the tasks to be taken care of at the time. Also in this category is a tick identification card to help you prevent Lyme Disease. There is an anger management checklist, a listing of ways to avoid aggressive driving situations, and a series of checklists related to safe schools and crisis procedures.
Some of the above checklists can be created on your own computer using a spreadsheet program, and other checklists, such as those in the “Internet” category, are already available as separate software programs. Nevertheless, chances are you will find at least one checklist among the many at this website worth printing and using.

Printable Legal Documents: Lawsmart.com has both legal forms and legal help at your disposal. Whatever type of legal form you may need, you are likely to find it here. Some of the forms are state-specific. Just indicate what state you need which form for, and you will be given a list to choose from. Lawsmart.com works two ways. You can use it just to download a form, or for a reasonable fee, you can choose a specific legal document, get it reviewed and filed by a legal or business professional, and have the original document sent to you via first class mail within 48 hours. Wills, Copyright, Living Trusts, Landlord-Tenant agreements, Incorporation papers and even environmental regulations are just a small sampling of the types of legal documents you can find here. Lawsmart.com describes itself as an alternative to hiring an expensive lawyer.

(Send your questions, pet peeves, and other comments to cyberscribbles101@yahoo.com).

Tower Student Scholarship Grants

Tower has announced applications are available for the 2004 Tower Student Scholarship Grant.

Along with the annual Tower Scholarship for $1,000 awarded to a high school student, two $500 scholarships will be given courtesy of the Michigan City D.A.R.E. program.

Applications are available at local high school principal offices, or may be downloaded at the web site www.toweronline.org

All applications are to be postmarked by May 10 and recipients will be notified by June 10.

The goals of the grants are to provide financial assistance to students in the public and private Michigan City area school systems, and to promote outstanding education for our young people. Funding for this program comes from proceeds of the Oktoberfest and Tower Run.

Questions may be directed to Barb Amm, 879-1302 or email tower@toweronline.org
**Activities to Explore**

**In the Local Area:**


April 30 — VU Chamber Band Spring Concert. 7:30 pm in the Chapel of the Resurrection on campus of Valparaiso University. Tix $10/adults, $5/sen. cit. & students. 219/464-5162.


April 30, May 1, 8-9 — “The Sound of Music.” Presented by the New Buffalo High School at the NB Performing Arts Center, 1112 E. Clay St., New Buffalo. Curtain Fri & Sat 7 pm; Sun 3 pm (EST). Tix $5/in adv., $6/at the door. $15 for dinner theatre on Sat. only featuring traditional German fare and chance to meet the cast. Children’s menu avail. For tix phone Dawn Fadden, 269/469-7876.

May 1 — “Olson’s Oasis.” Presented by the MCHS Jazz Band. An evening of dancing, big band jazz & tropical delights. 7 pm in the MCHS Cafe. Dress Hawaiian & bring your dancin’ shoes. Chicken salad, fruit cocktail, hors d’oeuvres, cake & punch. Adults $6; students & sen. cit. $4. Adv. tix avail. at 873-2044, ext. 4457.


May 1 — American Red Cross Bloodmobile. Noon-6 pm at St. John’s United Church of Christ, Franklin St. at St. John Rd., MC. Info 800/448-3543.

May 2 — American Red Cross Bloodmobile. Noon-6 pm at St. John’s United Church of Christ, Franklin St. at St. John Rd., MC. Info 800/448-3543.

May 2 — Chinese tenor Yan Sheng Min, a visiting artist at Valparaiso University, in concert. 7:30 pm at the VU Center for the Arts. No charge to attend but...
tix required by phoning 219/464-5162. Yan is known throughout China as the voice of the national TV series Cai Yun Zhui Yue, based on the life of noted composer Ren Guang.

**Places to Visit:**

- **Barker Mansion**, 631 Washington St., Michigan City. Adm. $4/adults, $2/kids 18 and under, free/kids under 3. Guided tours Mon-Fri 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm; Sat & Sun noon & 2 pm. 873-1520.
- **Great Lakes Museum of Military History**, 360 Dunes Plaza, Michigan City. Info 872-2702 or on the web at www.militaryhistorymuseum.org
- **LaPorte County Historical Museum**, county complex in downtown LaPorte, Indiana. Hours 10 am-4:30 pm, Tues-Sat. Adm. free; donations welcome. 219/326-6808, ext. 276 or www.lapcohistsoc.org.
- **Lubeznik Center for the Arts**, 101 W. 2nd St., Michigan City. Tues.-Fri., 10 am-4 pm; Sat. 10 am-2 pm. Phone 874-4900.
- **New Buffalo Railroad Museum**, 530 S. Whittaker St., New Buffalo, MI. Open Mon-Fri, 9 am-5 pm; Sat-Sun, 10 am-3 pm (MI time). Info 269/469-5409.

**Farther Afield:**

- **May 1-8** — 75th Anniversary Tulip Time in Holland, Michigan. Info at tuliptime.org or email tulip@tuliptime.org or phone 800/822-2770.
- **May 5** — Spring Video Series at Krasl Art Center. Noon (EST). This week: “Pastel Techniques with Barry Watkin.” 60 mins. Art instructor Lorie Jesperson will lead a discussion period after each showing as well as an experiment period before the video. Public invited to attend. Free. Bring a bag lunch; coffee will be served. 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, MI. Info: 269/983-0271 or log onto www.krasl.org
On April 29, 1900, John Luther "Casey" Jones, veteran engineer of the Chicago and New Orleans Railway, was killed when his Cannonball Express collided with a freight train near the Mississippi town of Vaughn. His death caused his name to live on in the popular folk ballad "Casey Jones."

On April 29, 1913, Gideon Sundback, of Hoboken, New Jersey, was granted a patent for a "separable fastener." It is now known as the zipper.

On April 30, 1789, George Washington was inaugurated as the first president of the United States.

On April 30, 1803, the size of the nation more than doubled as the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France. The purchase price was $15 million, or about 4-cents an acre.

On April 30, 1812, Louisiana was admitted to the Union as the 18th state.

On May 1, 1825, American landscape painter George Inness, whose work hangs in most of the important art galleries in the United States, was born in Newburgh, New York.

On May 1, 1873, United States post offices began selling the first penny postcards.

On May 1, 1931, New York's 102-story Empire State Building, the world's tallest structure, was dedicated.

On May 2, 1865, the body of President Abraham Lincoln arrived in Chicago to lie in state.


On May 3, 1921, West Virginia imposed the first state sales tax.

On May 3, 1923, Navy Lieutenants Oakley Kelly and John MacReady landed at Corona Beach, California, having completed the first transcontinental air flight.

On May 3, 1975, the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, the world's largest warship, was commissioned by President Gerald Ford.

On May 4, 1626, Dutch explorer Peter Minuit landed on Manhattan Island, later buying it from the Indians for $24.00 worth of trinkets.

On May 4, 1904, the United States took possession of the Panama Canal Zone.

On May 5, 1862, at the Battle of Puebla, outnumbered Mexican troops, under the command of General Ignacio Zaragoza, defeated the invading French forces of Napoleon III. This date is a Mexican national holiday, and is observed by Mexicans everywhere with festivals, parades, dances, and speeches.
MCCMF Presents Amherst String Quartet

The Michigan City Chamber Music Festival will present the Amherst String Quartet in recital. The performance date is Wed., May 19, at 7:30 p.m. The location is First United Methodist Church, 121 E. 7th Street, Michigan City.

The Amherst String Quartet is an internationally known and award winning quartet based out of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI. They have concertized world-wide and made their Carnegie Hall debut in 1994.

The program consists of W. A. Mozart’s Dissonant Quartet, Shostakovich’s 8th String Quartet, and Tchaikovsky’s Quartet in D Major. Admission is free of charge and requires no advance ticket reservation. A “meet the artists” reception will immediately follow the performance. FUMC is accessible to those with dissabilities. For more information, phone (219) 878-1965, or email: icsunnysophia@yahoo.com

Author Talk and Book Signing

Dr. Michael Murray, N.D., will speak at the Holiday Inn, Michigan City, on Tues., May 11, from 6-8 p.m. In this dynamic, fact-filled presentation, Dr. Murray will highlight the latest research on the effective use of diet, lifestyle, nutritional supplements, and natural products that help people lose weight. This is a free lecture, and no reservations are required. There will be a question and answer and book signing after the program.

Dr. Murray is widely regarded as one of the world’s leading authorities in the field of natural medicine. He is a graduate, faculty member, and serves on the Board of Trustees of Bastyr University in Seattle, Washington.

Dr. Murray is the author of over twenty books, including co-author of the best-selling Encyclopedia of Natural Medicine.

This appearance by Dr. Murray is sponsored by Nature’s Cupboard, 1806 US Hwy 20, Michigan City. For more information, phone 874-2335.

The Herb Society of American Meeting

Anyone with an interest in herbs is invited to attend an organizational meeting of a new unit of The Herb Society of America on Sat., May 1, at 10:30 a.m. (EST), to be held at Fernwood Botanical Center, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, MI.

The program will feature Stan Beikman of Beikman Associates Landscape & Garden Design talking about the history of the herb garden at Fernwood which he designed. There will also be a special presentation by national officers of The Herb Society of America discussing the purpose of the organization and benefits of membership.

Herbal refreshments will be served. For more information, phone Barbara Keune, 269/469-8355.
Travels with Charley:
On the Road Again Thanks to Classic Imports
by Charles McKelvy

When you have the weighty responsibility of cranking out weekly travel stories for the world-class *Beacher*, why you simply must be able to trust your car to the very best.

And, due to a colorful process of exploration, that brings me to none other than Mikail and Renee Pinette and their family-owned and operated Classic Imports at 18777 West U.S. 12 in New Buffalo.

“Drive it all you want,” she said way back in December 2002, “and do take it to Classic Imports for service while I’m in Florida.”

Sounded like a sound plan, and so, with more than a little fear and trepidation, we called Classic Imports in January 2003 to make a service appointment for Julie’s Saab. As owners of a mere ‘97 Honda Civic, we figured the only way we were worthy of entering such a posh place was by bringing in our neighbor’s fancy Swedish driving machine for an oil change and service.

Well, what a surprise when Classic’s dapper service advisor, Don Scheidel, greeted us warmly at the reception desk and treated us like long-time customers. He even went so far as to suggest we could bring our humble Honda Civic in for service.

Wow!

We told Don Scheidel we were happy with our current dealer, but would keep Classic Imports in mind. But we certainly had them in mind when they did such a super job of tuning Julie’s Saab and cleaning it inside and out.

Surely, you have seen their large ads in the *Beacher* over the years — the ones that promise owners of European cars “professional auto service you can trust.”

I know I surely have, and I know I have traced the Pinette’s appearance on the Harbor Country business scene from October 1991 when they first leased space in Union Pier and began servicing Mercedes, BMWs, Volvos, Porschess, Audis, Saabs, Jaguars and other rare and exotic cats of the automotive world.

I remember how our summer neighbor, Julie Holmes, had turned in frustration to Classic Imports after her Saab dealer was unable to fix a stubborn electrical problem in her ’94 Saab 900S sedan. Julie, who has traveled the world for the U.S. State Department, decided to travel to Union Pier to see if an independent service center could address her car’s problem.

They did, and they earned a loyal customer for life.

And that’s where Natalie and I come into the picture.

In fact, by the time we entered the wonderful world of Classic Imports, they had moved to their present location between New Buffalo and Michigan City on U.S. 12. For the record, that was on April 15, 2002, and, yes, they own what was once the Grand Beach Boat Company.

Anyway, Julie Holmes in recent years has taken to taking the train, or trains, to Florida for the winter and thus leaving her Saab with us for the duration.
And not so very long after that happy experience came a seminal moment in automotive history:

I was heading into Chicago for a weekend visit with my mother on a particularly nasty Friday afternoon in February of 2003 and was driving Julie’s Saab because — well, because that baby can haul some metal on the Chicago expressways.

I was approaching I-94 from the east on U.S. 12 and was just angling for the entrance ramp when I heard a snapping sound under the hood, smelled burning rubber, and felt the car shudder and shake. All kinds of bright yellow/orange warning symbols appeared on the dashboard, and I thought I was going down for the count.

So I steered away from I-94 and coasted to a stop along U.S. 12 and shut off the engine. Then I turned the key, and the Saab fired up — minus heat, power steering and a whole bunch else. It being before 6 p.m. Michigan time, and I being without a cell phone, I did the next right thing which was to drive slowly and deliberately west a ways on U.S. 12 to Classic Imports where Don Scheidel greeted me with open arms and offered me a phone so I could call Natalie.

While I was telling Natalie of my travails with Julie’s car, one of Classic’s ace technicians was prowling under the hood to see what the matter was. Natalie had appeared from Harbert with our Honda Civic when the gallant technician appeared from the garage holding a broken serpentine belt.

Could they fix it?
No problem.

No trip to Chicago that weekend, but when I did go a few weekends later in Julie’s car to watch the South Side Saint Patrick’s Day Parade, why that old Saab was better than new.

And, to conclude on an even happier note, we finally yielded to Don Scheidel’s repeated invitations by bringing our ’97 Honda Civic to Classic Imports for the best service she has ever had.

Not only that, but we recently got to meet Mikail and Renee Pinette and hear how cars had brought them together in northeast Washington state. Renee, who had tested high for mechanical aptitude in high school, had a car problem, and she knew just the handsome technician to fix it — that dashing fellow from Alaska, Mikail Pinette.

Mikail obviously fixed more than her car, because they were married on September 13, 1981 in Richland, Washington.

They have been since blessed with two children who love cars and working on them: Brandon, 18, and Dina, 16.

On the Road  Continued on Page 40
On the Road  Continued from Page 39

That would certainly make many a Saab, and, yes, even a Honda Civic owner mighty happy.

Limited space has allowed me to only tell a quarter or less of the Classic Imports story, so I suggest you make room in your schedule for a visit with your car — foreign or domestic — to that Bosch Authorized Service Center at 18777 West U.S. 12 in New Buffalo known as Classic Imports.

Phone 269/469-2007, or e-mail them at: classicimports@triton.net, and be ready for some super service and lively and informed car talk.

Renee said her daughter “hates office work, but likes to work with her hands,” and Brandon stopped working on a ‘99 Ferrari 550 Maranello long enough to say he has been working on cars since he was five and expects to pursue a career in the business.

In fact, he and his sister could simply stay at Classic Imports to keep a thriving family business going after their parents retire.

Classic Imports will store and care for your classic car from November through March for between $500 and $600.

Natalie McKelvy picks out her next car at Classic Imports — a rather pricey BMW coup.

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Third Wednesday Rocks turned out to be a fun night for teens. The band, Citrus Nova, MC for the event, filled two hours with Zeppelin, Hendrix, The Doors and The Grateful Dead, along with original music. Some of the audience members were enticed to come up and sing a few songs with the band and plan to have something prepared for next month. The atmosphere was relaxed and playful with lots of laughter.

The Long Beach Fitness Center had a new drop ceiling installed and much of the drywall work is ready for finishing. The hallways received a second coat of paint which makes the area bright and fresh. Additional equipment is being delivered each week and if everything continues as planned, we look forward to a Grand Opening in May.

Lots of “new closets” have joined the Girlfriends’ Sale this spring and the merchandise looks spectacular. We are accepting clothing by appointment April 26-May 3. If you would like to participate, please phone the center at 879-3845 ASAP to reserve a spot for up to 30 items. We will confirm your reservation and schedule a time to process your clothing with a return call. Participants are responsible for filling out inventory sheets, hanging their clothes on our hangers, and placing clothing on a rack in the order it appears on the inventory sheet. There is a $10 fee due at the time of drop off and proceeds from the sale of your clothing will be paid the last week in May.

The sale will take place May 7-8, 15-16 and we plan on accepting Visa and MasterCard this year for purchases. As always, we need help to tag and merchandise the clothing, plus work the event. Volunteers qualify for early bird buying privileges and go straight to heaven.

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EVENTS

CHEROKEE PIPE CIRCLE -- Everyone is Welcome To Come Pray & Sing. 2nd Monday Of Each Month - DEC 12th - 7:00-9:00 p.m. The Michigan City Fish & Game Club, 3091 East Michigan Blvd., Michigan City. No one is refused for lack of donation. Donation is $5.00. Bring a drum or rattle if you have one. Also, a pillow or blanket to sit on. Any questions, call Laura, 219/879-1769

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The Last Crossing by Guy Vanderhaeghe

Although I have recently read and reviewed many good books, I suddenly found myself with “reader’s block.” Nothing I picked up seemed interesting enough to get me beyond the first few pages. Until I picked up this week’s recommendation, that is. This book was a bestseller in Canada last year and as I started reading, I just knew it was what the (book) doctor ordered.

I was raised on Westerns. Whether in movies, books or TV shows, I remember good old rousing tales of cowboys and Indians, the Calvary to the rescue, the cattle drives, the boys at the Longhorn saloon......I wanted to be the next Annie Oakley. Of course, as I grew up my taste in Western stories matured, too. The real history of the Old West and the expansion of our country became more and more important to my reading choices.

While this book doesn’t have the romanticism of The Cisco Kid or the Lone Ranger, it does have the gritty reality of what life was like in the pioneering West of the 19th century—combining fiction with real locations and history.

The story actually starts out in England in 1871, when Henry Gaunt, rich industrialist and brutal father, gets word that his son Simon is missing in North America. It seems the gentle, very religious, Simon had come under the influence of one Rev. Whitherspoon and had gone to America to convert the Indians to Christianity. Now he is lost somewhere in the vast wilderness. Henry calls Simon’s twin brother Charles and his other son Addington and charges them to go and find their brother and bring him back to England.

Three different sons a man never had. Addington, the cruel ex-military man; Charles the artist and Simon, the God-fearing. Addington lets Charles know that he is in charge of this expedition, and the Gaunt brothers head across the sea.

Finally landing in Fort Benton (Montana), Charles puts up dozens of circulars asking for information about his brother. It seems that Rev. Whitherspoon was found frozen to death last winter out on the prairie, but Simon was not with him. Now, all the brothers can do is wait for any information from a passing trapper or rancher or someone who might have word of Simon’s whereabouts. As days pass, Addington finds life at Fort Benton pleasing. “The problem is that for the moment, Addington finds Fort Benton too congenial a place to immediately remove himself. There is game to be had a short ride out of the town, and he and Ayto make frequent visits to the pestilential brothels. He immediately enjoys cutting a figure in the bar downstairs, buying rounds of drinks for men who are only too happy to hear him bray and brag as long as he keeps the whisky flowing.” Mr. Ayto is the American journalist that Addington has hired to write down all his adventures and derring-do.

Then there is Jerry Potts, half Scots, half Indian, who ends up leading the Gaunt party up north to where Simon may have been sighted.

We also meet Custis Straw, middle-aged ex-Union soldier in the Civil War, and Mrs. Lucy Stoveall, the object of Custis’ affection. Lucy’s husband has left her and her sister, Madge, to go sell whisky to the Indians. He seems to have forgotten to come back...And now, Madge has been brutally raped and murdered. Lucy is tight-lipped about the tragedy—does she know who the murderer is? Rounding out the cast of characters is Aloysius Dooley, tavern owner and best friend to Custis.

Circumstances bring all these people together on the trip north to find Simon Gaunt. The trail leads to Fort Whoop-Up in Canada. The author makes you feel as though you’re riding along with the party, feeling the dust on your skin and the sun on your face. The author’s description of places and things is sometimes too vivid, like the Indian village they come across populated by rotting corpses, everyone dead from the one gift that white men left all over the continent: measles.

The Gaunt party is told that a white man is in the camp of the Blackfoot nearby. Will they find Simon? I can’t give away any more of the story! I don’t want to spoil the surprises that are yet to come. Suffice it to say that this is one story you won’t soon forget and will probably recommend to your friends. But, be warned: this story is tough, gritty and down to earth—what a read! It makes me want to read it again...and that’s the highest compliment anyone can give a book.

Till next time, happy reading!
BUILD OR BUY... MAY WE BE OF SERVICE?

BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME on either of 2 building sites just 2 blocks off Lake Shore Drive at Stop 19 in Long Beach! Parcel 23 measures 83.5’ frontage x 153.5 x 126 x 159’. Parcel 25 measures 90’ x 153.5. Soil borings have been taken and a topographical survey is available. Build on top of the dune for the ultimate in privacy or build into the dune for low-care convenience. Call Ed Merrion to hike these dunes! $149,000 each!

THIS IS IT!! The cute cottage on the tip of the dunes with spectacular panoramic views of Lake Michigan and your neighbors far below! From the garage at street level, up the stairs to this 2 bedroom, 1 ½ baths frame cottage on a full basement, this property has been maintained to meticulous perfection. Call John Hayes to climb this stairway to heaven!!! $424,500

MICHIGAN SHORES VACATION HOME! This 3 bedroom, 2 full bath beach cottage has lots of surprises, inside & out! The interior focus is on a Great Room with vaulted ceilings, centered by a wood-burning fireplace and watched over from a balcony leading to 2 guest bedrooms. Deck & screen porch lead to a private back yard with its own sand volleyball court! Main floor master bedroom. Call Jim McGah @ 219) 874-5927 for a peek. $440,000

25 Royal Troon
READY FOR MAINTENANCE-FREE LIVING? Spacious 2-story unit in St. Andrew’s feels like a single family home, but still provides the convenience of association upkeep. Featuring beautiful hardwood floors & new carpeting, a freshly remodeled kitchen with Corian countertops, main floor master suite with a guest bedroom & office loft upstairs. You’ll love the quality & the floor plan! Come see! $298,000

DIRECTIONS: Hwy 12 to Moore Road; north to Birch Tree Lane; west to entry to St. Andrew’s.

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CHARMING MICHIANA LOG CABIN has vaulted beamed ceilings, original 12 inch wide woodwork and screened porch entry. The wood burning stove is on a brick platform and has a brick surround. A wall of windows in the large living room brightens dull rainy days. The large dining room also has a wall of windows with eastern exposure. There are 2 bedrooms, the master with 1/2 bath. A 5 minute walk just around the corner takes you to a great sandy Lake Michigan Beach. $298,000

WARM AND INVITING 1950’S COTTAGE with floor to ceiling fieldstone fireplace and 2 story vaulted paneled ceiling. Skylights and ceiling fans add to the light and airy feeling. Walls of windows in the great room frame woodsly Michiana views. The original pine floors are refinished. Two bedrooms are on the living floor, one with adjoining sitting room. A separate dining room opens to screened porch. The charming balcony overlooking the great room is furnished with an extra bed. Short walk to Lake Michigan beach. $260,000

BATHED IN SPLASHES OF SUNSHINE this like-new Michiana contemporary home, centered among mature trees is planned for style and comfort. Meandering brick paths and surrounding woods encourage leisurely walks. High vaulted ceilings and fireplace in great room. White washed oak cabinets in large airy kitchen. Twelve foot guest bedroom on living floor; master suite on 2nd floor has a balcony overlooking the great room. A small deck at the rear of the master bedroom has a view of the woods. On 2 level lots, 80x120. Garage. Walk to Lake Michigan beach. $269,000

CHILD FRIENDLY describes this home and neighborhood near playground and beach. With over 1900 square feet, there’s room for children to enjoy as well as entertain friends. Two walls of glass in great room open to very private deck. Large open paneled kitchen has many cabinets and work areas. Three bedrooms are on the living floor; downstairs is a large fourth bedroom or family room with many windows and rear access to back yard. A laundry room and separate work shop is here. Rearrange to suit your lifestyle. A large double garage is attached. $332,900