New Traditions for Thanksgiving
by Barbara Stodola

The road to Warm Springs, Georgia, winds through hamlets and gullies, and you know your destination is near when you see pick-ups hauling deep fryers, and the bumper stickers read: “Real Men Fry Turkeys.”

This beautifully forested region has long been a Thanksgiving weekend retreat – for historic and symbolic reasons – and its location in the Appalachian foothills has the added advantage of extending the lingering days of autumn. Families love to spend the holidays here.

The town of Warm Springs is named after the 88-degree mineralized water that gushes from the rock at the rate of 900 gallons per minute. Its therapeutic powers have drawn visitors as far back as the Creek Indians, who brought their wounded warriors to be healed. By the mid-19th century, Warm Springs was a popular resort, advertising: “Cures Rheumatism, Dyspepsia, Stomach Troubles, Nervous Disorders, Liver and Kidney Trouble; dead shot for Insomnia.”

What made Warm Springs famous was the belief that it could also cure polio. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt first visited, in October 1924, he believed his political career was over. He had been a New York state senator, assistant U.S. Secretary of the Navy, and Democratic nominee for U.S. vice-president, and then was crippled by polio at the age of 39. Unable to move his legs, he was carried from the train.

Four years later, in 1928, FDR stood before a crowd of thousands, as newly-elected governor of New York. He ascribed his renewed health and vigor to the therapeutic benefits of swimming in Warm Springs’ water, and came back to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. Eventually FDR bought the resort and spent a good part of his personal fortune establishing a center for the treatment of polio victims. He liked to spend his birthday here, January 30, and the Thanksgiving holidays that gave him so much to be thankful for. In 1931 FDR had a modest six-room house built in Warm Springs. The following year, after his election to the presidency, it became his Little White House.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd president of the United States, was posing for this portrait when he collapsed on April 12, 1945, and died.

The Little White House, FDR’s country home at Warm Springs, Georgia.
Thanksgiving  Continued from Page 1

My son Frank has always been fascinated by presidential lore, and he hopes to transmit this interest to his nephews (my youngest grandchildren), Spencer and Connor. Since they have already been steeped in the plantation life of George Washington's Mount Vernon, and the architectural ingenuity of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the next best place seemed to be F.D.'s Little White House. It is "centrally located," which means our family members came in from three directions - Chicago IL, Corpus Christi TX and Charlotte NC.

Despite my apprehensions (1,000-mile drive for a turkey dinner), it turned out to be a perfect place for Thanksgiving weekend, 2007. My daughter Patty, being adept at transferring internet promises into reality, booked us into the Mountain Top Inn. This is a more-or-less rustic resort, with log cabins tucked into the wooded hills of F.D. Roosevelt State Park. Southern families do indeed bring their own turkey-sized deep fryers and necessary holiday ingredients, but we found the cabins' kitchens and the local grocery stores well-equipped. Patty had the good sense to reserve two nearby cabins for our family, so that Spencer and Connor could spend much energy traipsing back and forth, carrying a coffee pot or colander or jar of mustard, as needed. They were never at an uncomfortable distance from TV or cellphones.

Post-dinner spook stories captivate (left to right) Frank, Connor, Tim and Spencer. The women are evidently cleaning up the kitchen.

Heart-shaped jacuzzis, enjoyed by Connor and Spencer, preserve the thermal water traditions of Warm Springs.

Spencer, age 11, is never too far from phone service.

Late in the evening, Patty relaxes with Connor (left) and Spencer.

After Thanksgiving dinner, 2007, (left to right) Frank, Tim, Connor, Patty, Peter and Spencer relax outside an empty pool.

Hanging out at the log cabin, Spencer (left) and Connor Roche patiently wait for apple pie.
The 1920s practice of “taking the waters” has changed format: now done in jacuzzis, in the privacy of your log cabin – or at motels, in the summertime. You can visit an indoor pool where patients still undergo therapy, but most of the pools fed by the mineral springs have been closed.

In the 1930s, the glass-enclosed pool was a major attraction, revitalizing the economy of Depression-weary Georgia, and bringing new hope to victims of the dread disease. People paralyzed by polio were stigmatized, banned from train travel, excluded from public dining rooms. FDR changed all that. His friend Edsel Ford, seeing FDR’s vision, sent a check for $25,000., which was used to build the pool. The American people followed suit; holding “birthday balls” for the President across the country, and sending the proceeds to his favorite charity. This led to the March of Dimes.

The Georgia Warm Springs Foundation was established for polio victims, most of them children, who came from across the country. The cabins were turned into dormitories. President Roosevelt loved the children, and always insisted that one be seated beside him when he carved the Thanksgiving turkey. They swam together in the thermal waters, the children calling him “Doc” or “Rosey,” and waiting for their chance to dunk the President. Physical therapists were brought in to develop muscle-strengthening exercises.

Local craftsmen were hired to fabricate leg-braces. The President designed his own wheelchair, having wheels put on a kitchen chair. He had his car equipped with hand controls.

The car, a 1938 Ford convertible, is a main attraction at the kid-friendly museum built near The Little White House. A short film narrated by Walter Cronkite sets the tone of a President whose own disability became the starting point for the transformation of an era. President Roosevelt died at Warm Springs. He was having his portrait painted when he collapsed of a cerebral hemorrhage, on April 12, 1945. The portrait remained unfinished, and it too is at The Little White House.

President Roosevelt is still revered in Warm Springs, Georgia. Special events commemorate his birthday, Thanksgiving, and the day he died, as well as other themes plucked from his heritage – the New Deal, Pearl Harbor, Rosie the Riveter, Scottish terriers – the list goes on. Callaway Gardens, at nearby Pine Mountain, has a fabulous Festival of Lights, which only became a possibility after FDR established the Rural Electrification Administration.

Southwest Georgia, a great destination for a family Thanksgiving, offers an educational experience that is “not too much like school.” About 80 miles south of Warm Springs, the town of Plains has the Jimmy Carter Boyhood Farm – but that is yet another story.
Volleyball Champion Achieves Honors

Christiana Hilbrich Gray, middle-blocker/spiker for Indianapolis Cathedral’s Volleyball 4-A State Champions, was presented the Mental Attitude Award by the IHSAA as the outstanding Senior Participant in the state tournament. The award is given for excellence in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability. A $1,000 scholarship was presented to Indianapolis Cathedral High School in Christiana’s name.

Her many honors include being named 1st Team All-State, All-Metro Super Star, MVP of the All-City Team and Indianapolis Star Super Team Player of the Year. She has recently committed to a Duke University volleyball scholarship.

Last summer Christiana was chosen to the IHSAA Role Model and Student Ambassadors Program and is seen on posters throughout the State of Indiana. In this connection, she speaks at Indianapolis area grade schools about staying drug and tobacco free.

Christiana has roots here in Michigan City where she was an early student at Notre Dame Grade School, and a member of the Piranha Swim Team coached by her mother, Ruthanne Hilbrich. Her grandparents, Judie and Jack Hilbrich reside here in Michigan City.

P.W.P. Christmas Dinner Dance

Parents Without Partners ValPorte-City Chapter 193 is planning a Christmas Pot Luck Dinner Dance for Sat., Dec. 6th, 7:30-11:30 p.m. The event will be held at the St. Joe Club, 2002 Franklin St., Michigan City.

Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. For those attending the dinner, bring a covered dish. Meat will be provided. Orientation for new members will take place at 7 p.m.; the first dance is free to new members. Singles and couples are welcome (adults only). Donation for the evening is $7 (may donate one non-perishable food item for $1 off admission). Music by DJ and Da Bear. More information at 219-326-8096.
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1709 Rosamond Avenue
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109 California Avenue
Sheridan Beach • $424,900
3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Many new items throughout including new tile floors in living room, gas ventless fireplace with remote control, ceilings & central air on upper level. Sliders from kitchen to deck with new railings. Excellent rental history. Just steps to the beach.

1 Royal Troon Drive
St. Andrews Village • $299,000

330 Lilac Drive
Fish Lake • $229,000
2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths. Recently re-modeled & upgraded with many newer features in the last 2-3 years including well, roof, furnace, hot water heater and much more. Two bedrooms open to sunroom. Lake front cottage on Fish Lake 8 miles outside of LaPorte. Breath taking views.

Belle Plaine Trail
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Readers Group at Coolspring Library

The Readers Group at the Coolspring Branch of the LaPorte County Public Library will meet on Tues., Nov. 25, 7 p.m. to discuss Song of the Lark by Willa Cather.

The book is about Thea, a loner from Colorado who gets the opportunity to go to Chicago to study piano. The book may be requested for check-out in hardback or paperback.

This is a free program and no registration is taken. The Coolspring Library is located at the corner of 400N & J ohnson Rd. in Michigan City. 879-3272.

Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol”

CTG’s Chicago Street Theatre, 154 W. Chicago St., Valparaiso, presents “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens, adapted by Christopher Schario.

Performances will be Nov 21-Dec 20. Directed by Donna Blanchard, assisted by Lisa Formosa-Parmigiano.

Welcome Christmas Spirits... ALL of them! This unique adaptation unfolds the known story through a contemporary eye. You will experience the terrifying depths and joyful heights of Scrooge's soulful second chance at life!

Focusing on Dickens' powerful language, humor and warmth, this charming version by Christopher Schario simply and directly tells the story of the redemption of a human soul.

Adapted for a small- to medium-sized company, cast members portray multiple characters, moving fluidly from scene to scene.

Performance Dates: Fri, Nov 21, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sat, Nov 22, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sun, Nov 23, 2008 (2:30 PM); Fri, Nov 28, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sat, Nov 29, 2008 (11:00 AM); Sat, Nov 29, 2008 (2:30 PM); Sun, Nov 30, 2008 (2:30 PM); Fri, Dec 5, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sat, Dec 6, 2008 (11:00 AM); Sat, Dec 6, 2008 (2:30 PM); Sun, Dec 7, 2008 (2:30 PM); Fri, Dec 12, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sat, Dec 13, 2008 (11:00 AM); Sat, Dec 13, 2008 (2:30 PM); Sun, Dec 14, 2008 (2:30 PM); Thu, Dec 18, 2008 (7:00 PM); Fri, Dec 19, 2008 (7:00 PM); Sat, Dec 20, 2008 (11:00 AM); Sat, Dec 20, 2008 (2:30 PM).

Cast: Kyrie Anderson – Hobart; Stephanie Naumoff – Valparaiso; Tony Balsamo – Michigan City; Trevor Bruss – Valparaiso; Jay Hill – Chesterton; Arlene Henry– Wheeler.

Rehearsal Assistant-Christina Reinhardt – Valparaiso; Director-Lisa Formosa-Parmigiano – Crown Point; Director-Donna Blanchard – Munster.

Prices: Adults $18; Seniors (62 & over w/ ID) $15; Students (21 & under w/ ID) $15; American Military Veterans $15; Groups (10 or more) $15.

Reservations can be made at 219-464-1636 Monday-Friday, between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. You may also email boxoffice@chicagostreet.org or you may visit the website at www.chicagostreet.org
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Sinai Sunday Evening Forum-Dec. 7

The 2008 season of the Sinai Forum presented by Purdue University North Central will continue on Dec. 7 with best selling author Jeffrey Toobin whose book The Nine was heralded by the New York Times as one of the 10 best books of 2007. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. at Elston Middle School, 317 Detroit St. in Michigan City.

The Nine provides an inside look at the workings of the Supreme Court. Having been given unprecedented access to the “Supremes,” as the justices are called, Toobin’s insights into the often mysterious workings of the highest judicial body and its members provide never before released information.

Toobin has been called “a very serious speaker with a great sense of humor” and has delighted audiences across the country and across the political spectrum.

His appearance is sponsored by Horizon Bank and copies of The Nine will be available for purchase and Toobin will sign copies after the program. For ticket information, phone 219/785-5697 or visit www.sinaiforum.org

Christmas Wreath Fundraiser

The Festival Players Guild and Duneland Lutheran High School have joined in a fundraising project to sell fresh Christmas Wreaths.

The wreaths, offered in three sizes, are from Guse Farms, and made in LaPorte County from fresh boughs from trees grown in LaPorte County. Each wreath is decorated with pine cones and a bright red ribbon.

The 18 inch size is perfect for inside the house and is $15.00. The 22 inch size, priced at $20.00, is just the right size to fit on the front door between it and the storm door, and the largest size, approximately 30 inches in diameter, is perfect for hanging outside on the house and is priced at $30.00. Larger sizes are available on special order.

Orders may be placed by phoning the Mainstreet Theatre Box Office (219-874-4269) or Duneland Lutheran High School (219-874-5103) or on order forms available on the Guild’s web site: www.festivalplayersguild.org

Guild co-chairs, Sue Vail and Sue Zahn state that wreaths will be available for pick up on Nov. 29 or Dec. 6 at the Guild’s Mainstreet Theatre, 807 Franklin St. Delivery is available for an additional $4.00. A limited number of wreaths will be available for those who have not pre-ordered at the theatre on Nov. 29, Dec. 6 and Dec. 13.

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903 Birch Tree Lane $104,900
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2509 Lake Shore Drive $779,000
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Friday & Saturday 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.
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OPEN Wed., Nov. 26 5-10 p.m.
CLOSED Thanksgiving

Last Day for the 2008 Sunday, Nov. 30
See you in the Spring!

“Helping Hand” Food Drive

Whittaker House boutique announces the start of their 2nd annual “Helping Hand” Food Drive running Nov. 22nd thru Dec. 21st.

Now in its second year, the food drive was established by owner Ranae Sales to collect and distribute food to area food banks for local families during the Christmas holidays. Last year, over ten pick up trucks were filled with donated items of non-perishables and canned goods. Both food and monetary donations will be accepted.

With a donation of a canned good or a non-perishable item, donors will receive a 10% off certificate for the store. Whittaker House, 26 N. Whittaker St., New Buffalo, MI. Information: 269/469-0220.

Dunes Woman’s Club Holiday Bazaar

Sat., Nov. 22, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and Sun., Nov. 23, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Dunes Woman’s Club Holiday Bazaar will be held at the Community House (just west of Admin. Bldg. on Broadway in Beverly Shores). The event includes a Mistletoe Market, offering Christmas decor and hand-made items; Holiday Deli, featuring homemade frozen and fresh soups, sauces, entrees, chili; and all kinds of homemade baked goods. Chili lunch served on Saturday, starting at 11:00 a.m.

Veteran of the Year Announced

At the recent annual Red, White & Blue Ball - A Salute to Veterans, the 15th Veteran of the Year Award of The Great Lakes Museum of Military History was given to Tony Sadowski of Michigan City.

The award for Veteran of the Year, which is sponsored by Swanson Center, was made at the ball on Nov. 1st at the Michigan City Senior Center. It was presented by Museum Board President Ruth Mokrycki, 2007 Veteran of the Year Al Davis of LaPorte, and event Chair Ann Welch. The award was developed to acknowledge the important volunteer work done by and contributions to our communities made by veterans.

Tony is an Army veteran and a 38 year member of the American Legion Skwiat Post #451, and a member of Sons of the Legion for 6 years. He is a 5 year member of the Dunes Relief Post #2536 VFW and a 22 year member of the DAV Chapter 23. He is currently serving as Commander’s Representative District Chair of Rehabilitation of Homeless Veterans and Member at Large for the Indiana Veteran’s Home. Tony is also a member of the St. Joseph Young Men’s Society.
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Fall, winter, spring, and summer the Saugatuck Center for the Arts keeps the culture lamps burning in an area where art has long been more than a sometime thing.

Launched in its present configuration in 2003, the Center complements and expands on a tradition of “arting,” antiquing and learning that traces its antecedents to the 1800s. With 23,000 feet of space, the Center has found it possible to present a year-round menu of high-quality, highly diversified arts programming.

The menu items for the final weeks of 2008 leave no doubt that the year’s final weeks will be as entrancing as the year’s first 10 months. As a critical example, the Michigan Watercolor Society scheduled its 61st Annual Juried Exhibition for the period from Friday, November 14 through Monday, December 29, 2008. Visitors are admitted free of charge between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

A note on the exhibit points out that “This traveling exhibition features... a striking array of still lifes, landscapes, portraits, abstracts, and more” by Michigan’s best watercolorists.

Other scheduled attractions for the end of the year period range from a November 20 Knitted Wire Jewelry class to three Culinary Workshops conducted by professional chef Jim La Perriere. The 6th Annual Saugatuck Children’s Film Festival was booked for Saturday, November 22.

Apropos the culinary offering, the SCA premises once housed the Lloyd J. Harriss Pie Company. Providing indispensable assistance in the purchase and renovation of the pie works were grants from the State of Michigan’s “Cool City” Initiative; the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCCA); the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ); the Arcus Gay and Lesbian Fund; the Perrigo Foundation; the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation, and corporate and private donations.

As a recent addition to the Saugatuck cultural scene, the SCA has since its inception worked to develop community ties and include local exhibits and performances on its year-round schedule. As Armstrong comments, “We've formed a collegial relationship with the Oxbow School of Art, a Saugatuck fixture since the early 1900s.

“We also, of course, have different spaces for exhibits of many kinds.” The same is true of open spaces and rooms for classes and lectures, kids’ and adults’ workshops, and various other attractions.

Community Collaboration

Innovation represents another hallmark of the SCA program as it unfolds from month to month. In 2008, for example, exhibits offered for free viewing included a collection of historic signs from the Saugatuck-Douglas area, among them samples from...
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the Saugatuck Chain Ferry, Mt. Baldhead Hotel, and many more.

Information on the show described it as “A distinctive exhibition that reveals both the changing nature of sign design through the decades along with the evolution of our community.”

Several other exhibits covered a broad range:
-- “The Creative Genius of Burr Tillstrom” brought together “images and three-dimensional works representing the artistry--and legacy--of this pioneer of television and puppetry arts.”
-- In the exhibit “Duality,” artist Joohyun Pyune presented “a collection of digital images on layered fabrics which resulted in ephemeral, dream-like oversized works.”
-- Shown through most of the summer, a juried exhibition sponsored by the Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance “celebrated a unique natural treasure. The resource, offering endless views and scenes for Alliance artists, was the outdoor dunes landscape in the Saugatuck-Douglas area.
-- “The world through the eyes of noted artist Frank Gunter constituted the August-September exhibit choice.

Carrying out the motif of diversity, SCA also scheduled a popular “greenmarket” in October; art lessons and a free lecture on “Design for the Garden;” a movie for Halloween--“The Cat and the Canary;” specialty musical performances, and educational classes for kids in primary and elementary grades depending on the subject.

Young Artists at Work
A very popular art program gives the SCA the opportunity to work with the Saugatuck School System to present the “Art a’Loan” competition as a community-wide project.

Essentially a student program for young people attending Saugatuck schools, the 2008 edition began October 1 with a “leasing party” in the SCA’s Reid Exhibition Hall. Patrons interested in “leasing” one or more examples of student art for $100.00 each could make their choices on that occasion.

The patrons were individuals or the owners of public offices, shops, restaurants, or other places of business. Prior to the leasing party the student art undergoes a jury-selection process.

“Art a’Loan always features an array of remarkable works by young artists.” All of them go on display for a year “in an office, shop, restaurant, or common room.” The schools run the program and benefit from the loan arrangements.

To become part of such projects, and to “meet other people who share your interests,” states an SCA bulletin, “JOIN US!--become an SCA member! Whether you’re interested more in the entertainment or the educational aspects of the arts,” it’s simple to join and learn the value of this “natural resource” to the community.

The telephone number is 269/857-2399. The e-mail address is info@sc4a.org.

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Hi! My name is Christian Siewert and I am president of C & A Arborists Inc. I am a certified arborist and have been caring for trees for over 15 years. We work with an environmental attitude and aim to preserve the valuable treescape in the harbor country region. Our services include:

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Footlight Presents “Christmas Belles”

Footlight Players of Michigan City will open “Christmas Belles” Fri., Nov. 28th. Directed by awarding winning actor/director Robert W. Komen-dera, this play tells the story of a church Christmas program spinning hilariously out of control with squabbling sisters, family secrets, a surly Santa, a vengeful sheep and a reluctant Elvis impersonator. But in true Futrelle fashion, the feuding sisters find a way to pull together in order to present a Christmas program the citizens of Fayro will never forget. Their hilarious holiday journey through a misadventure-filled Christmas Eve is guaranteed to bring joy to your world!

This is the second in the ‘Futrelle trilogy, the first of which, “Dearly Beloved” was presented at Footlight last season. The all-star cast includes Christine Wiegand, Cortny Kramer, Diana Hirsch (Michigan City), Greta Friedman, Mary Kay Steele, Liz Matheus, and Mike McCalment (LaPorte), Vickie Cash (Burns Harbor), Steve Rohe (Chesterton), Eric Best, (Portage) and Stephen Sienicki (Valparaiso). Additional performance dates are Nov 29-30 and Dec 5-7.

Friday and Saturday curtains are at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Doors open 15 minutes prior to curtain. Tickets are $10. Reduced rates available for groups of 20 or more. Credit cards are not accepted. Reservations are recommended; phone 219-874-4035 or online at www.footlight-players.org/Reservations/reservations.html.

Reservations will be held until 15 minutes prior to curtain unless secured by the presentation of a Footlight Season Gift Card or by prior payment in full. Footlight Theatre is located at 1705 Franklin St. Presented by special arrangement with Dramatist Play Service.

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**Christopher D. Powers, M.D., FACC**

Dr. Powers' office is located at HealthPartners, 607 Jefferson Avenue, LaPorte, IN 46350

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Too Busy to Bake for the Holidays?

The United Methodist Women will again hold their annual Cookie Walk on Sat., Dec. 13, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the church building, 7th & Pine streets, Michigan City.

You pick the cookies and the ladies will put them in a box and weight them for you for the minimal price of $8 per pound.
Carpenter Dominic Mason died in 1989.

Tomorrow, he’ll renovate the playroom at the local homeless shelter.

As a carpenter, Dominic renovated homes for his clients. As a child, he and his mother found a home in a shelter when times were hard. A counselor there showed Dominic a future filled with opportunity, and he never forgot that life-changing vision. Thanks to a bequest in his will, a few more children will have a chance to build their dreams. Include your favorite cause in your will or estate plan. Contact a charitable organization, attorney, financial advisor or local LEAVE A LEGACY® program to learn how.
Culinary Students Prepare Gala Dinner

Ivy Tech culinary students, Dr. Ken Rottman and Rod Roderick help serve the gala dinner.

Red, White and Blue gala dinner raised money for the American Military History Museum.

Ivy Tech’s Hospitality Program Chair, Chef Terry Zych along with students, Dr. Ken Rottman and Rod Roderick assisted by the Hospitality/Culinary Arts American Regional Cuisine class prepared and served over 150 guests at the Red, White and Blue Gala in Michigan City on Sat., Nov. 1st.

The menu included: Yankee pot roast, Dixie baked chicken, Idaho mashed potatoes, roasted fresh vegetables and for dessert American apple pie and pumpkin pie with fresh whipped cream.

“When we do events of this nature,” explained Chef Zych. “We connect it to a culinary class that covers the same objectives in what is called service learning. The committee from the museum contacted me after hearing that I would be interested in helping. Ivy Tech was the only caterer for the event.”

The gala, held at the Michigan City Senior Center in Washington Park, raised money for the American Military History Museum in Michigan City.

Ivy Tech Community College is the nation’s largest statewide community college system with a single accreditation and the state’s second largest public post-secondary institution with over 110,000 students enrolled annually. Ivy Tech has 23 campuses and nearly 100 learning centers located throughout Indiana.

Little People Fun-and-Learn

A Little People Fun-and-Learn will be held at 9:30 a.m., Thurs., Nov. 20 and the third Thursday of each following month at the Coolspring Branch of the LaPorte County Public Library. Parents and their children ages birth-36 months are invited. There is no charge or registration. More information at 879-3272. The Coolspring Library, corner 400N and Johnson Rd., Michigan City.
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New Veterans Memorial at Swan Lake

On a wet, blustery Tuesday last week, an intrepid group of veterans, officials and members of the community gathered at Michigan City’s Swan Lake Cemetery. The occasion was the unveiling of a new memorial stone in the recently installed Veterans Memorial Garden.

Students in grades eight through twelve submitted artwork to be considered for the new memorial. The winning entry for the front of the stone was done by William Warren, a MC High School junior.

The design on the back of the stone was a collaboration submitted by four St. Paul Lutheran School students (they are now at Michigan City High School): Rebecca Stueck, Megan Daure, Alana Murray and Raeanne Bennett.

The ceremony included various speakers including Mayor Chuck Oberlie and Cemetery Board President Lou Hapke.
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Great Books

Great Books discussion will be back Sun., Dec. 7, 2 p.m. at the Michigan City Public Library. Phone Tom Nazimek for information at 874-7998.
Unwanted thoughts of snow, sleet and ice have been filling my brain these days. With the impending onset of winter, I start feeling a wanderlust. And that’s where the Internet connection comes in handy: in the grip of cabin fever, we can troll the ‘net to find the next exciting place we want to visit. Or plan our next vacation. But this week’s website mentions other subjects, too. Are you a fan of the Sunday comics? Find many of ‘em online. Or get motivated to exercise your critical thinking skills by learning about the harm lack of such skills can do to people. Pardon me for the shorter column this week. Unanticipated real-time activities got in the way of my surfing over the past several days.

Exit Here (www.exithere.net). You won’t find this site mentioned as a link on any of the popular travel sites. Sometimes it’s worth digging deeper to find the gems within this electronic universe. Exit Here is a fun way to take a road trip without using a drop of gasoline, so who can beat that? Start at “A Place to Start” and work your way through the site’s links. I enjoyed learning about out-of-the-way places and towns that I know I’ll never get around to visiting. This site is a road trip around America, so don’t go looking for the leaning tower of Pisa here.

Doll Tours in Europe (www.puppentours). I found the link to this business at an art site filled with links to art excursions worldwide. Serious doll collectors will be happy to know that they can enjoy group tours to Germany and other European countries to visit museum collections, plus old doll factories and such. I’m hoping to write more about these lesser-known types of group travel tours for another column as soon as I finish my research. In addition to art tours, there are DaVinci Code tours, Paris flea market excursions, and who knows what else. The big question is if these companies can survive the current massive slowdown in the economy.

Comics (www.comics.com). I was a huge fan of Opus until Berkeley Breathed decided to retire the column. The good news is that Opus and dozens of other fine comics live on at this site. By that I mean that you can access some gems from the recent past. If they’d only bring back Nancy and Sluggo, the Katzenjammer Kids, and other classics. Surely one can find them on the ‘net if they search hard enough.

What’s the Harm? (www.whatsteharm.com). What happens when you accept iffy information at face value without investigating more deeply? This website will tell you what happens. The information left unquestioned has been sorted into categories, and each link connects to a story in which someone has been harmed for not using his or her critical thinking skills. This website can serve as a reminder to all of us to remember that no question is a dumb question.
New Outdoor Indiana 2009 Calendar

Seems everyone wants to give you a calendar these days. Usually it’s full of stale illustrations of somewhere else that you’ve seen used somewhere else before but you’re not quite sure where.

It’s time to change that tradition and the pull-out calendar in the November-December issue of Outdoor Indiana magazine, available at newstands this week, is the place to for a truly Hoosier calendar.

The 2009 calendar, which documents the magazine’s 75th anniversary, boasts living-color original photos of stirring outdoor scenes from all around your state, as well as a listing of upcoming outdoor events to help you make the most of the coming new year, right here in Indiana.

This keepsake issue of the bimonthly 48-page full-color publication also features editor Phil Bloom’s look at the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Great Depression-era government program (1933-42) whose workers are responsible for many of the features of Indiana’s state parks.

One of those is Pokagon State Park’s Spring Shelter, a modern-day photo of which graces the new issue’s cover.

Fans of Pokagon or people who have ever considered visiting this park in Angola, which features many cold-weather activities, will want to pick up this issue, which also offers a back-cover photo of the same Spring Shelter shortly after its construction, as well as park history in Bloom’s article, and a December calendar shot of the park’s cozy Potawatomi Inn.

Available at most Borders and Barnes & Noble’s stores, the magazine sells for $3 an issue. A subscription costs $12 for one year, $20 for two years. Single issues or the calendar alone, which sells for $10, can be purchased at (317) 233-3046 or OutdoorIndiana.org

Indoor Flea Market in New Troy

New Troy’s Indoor Flea Market returns to the New Troy Community Center on Sat., Nov. 22 and 29. Markets will be held the last two Saturdays of every month through April.

Vendor spaces are available at $10/space. For information or to reserve a space, contact Del Thompson at 269-426-4728.

Doors will be open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. MI time. Admission is free and refreshments will be available for purchase.

Proceeds from space rentals benefit Friends of New Troy, a non-profit organization. The New Troy Community Center is located at 13372 California Road, New Troy, Michigan. From I-94, take exit 12 and go east 2 miles to New Troy. See map on www.friendsofnewtroy.org
Christmas Concert Tickets On Sale

The annual Valparaiso University Christmas Concert, a campus holiday tradition for more than 80 years, will celebrate the Advent season with performances by the University’s premier musical ensembles Dec. 5 & 6 in the Chapel of the Resurrection.

The Christmas Concert, which features approximately 200 student musicians, will take place at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5 and at 5 p.m. Dec. 6. Tickets are $15/adults and $10/students and senior citizens.

Phone the VU Box Office at (219) 464-5162 or visit valpo.edu/arts for more ticket information and to purchase tickets.

Among works of the holiday season featured in this year’s concert are Percy Grainger’s “Blithe Bells,” Carolyn Jennings’ “Ding Dong! Merrily on High,” “Glory to God in the Highest” from “Dona nobis pacem,” Herbert Howells’ “A Spotless Rose,” Emile Desamours’ “Noel Ayisyen (A Haitian Noel)” and portions of J.S. Bach’s “Magnificat.”

Audience members also will be invited to join University ensembles and sing familiar hymns of the Christmas season during the concert, including “From Heaven Above” and “People, Look East.”

The Christmas Concert will conclude with Gustav Holst's “Christmas Day,” a piece that captures the excitement, anticipation, happiness and hope experienced every Dec. 25, and the audience singing “O Come All Ye Faithful.”

Valparaiso’s premier vocal and instrumental ensembles, the Chorale, Chamber Concert Band and Symphony Orchestra, will perform together and individually during the concert. Each of the ensembles has toured across the United States and internationally, and is featured on albums released by Valpo ArtsMedia.

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(reg. $39.95) may be purchased now for only $22.95 when you bring in 5 Non-Perishable Food Items or 1 Unwrapped Toy Expires December 24, 2008

Bookmarks at Noon

This monthly program at the Michigan City Public Library will be held on Fri., Nov. 21. Loving Frank by Nancy Horan will be reviewed by Susan Meyer Nichols. The story is set in 1903. Mamah Borthwick Cheney and her husband commissioned renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright to design a new home. During the construction, a powerful attraction develops between Mamah and Wright and the lovers, each married with children, embark on a course that will shock Chicago society and forever change their lives.

This ambitious first novel combines fact and fiction. Frank Lloyd Wright scholars have largely relegated Mamah Cheney to a footnote in the life of the architect, but author Horan gives full weight to their dramatic love story and illuminates Cheney’s profound influence on Wright.

The program is free and open to the public.

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**Tree Lighting and Santa’s Surprise Party**

Fri., Nov. 21st it’s Santa’s Surprise Party Spectacular and a 21 ft. Holiday Tree Lighting at the Memorial Opera House and Porter County Museum.

Join the party on Fri., Nov. 21st for a one of a kind Santa and Mrs. Claus Arrival. This outside event will be in front of the Memorial Opera House and the Porter County Museum.

This Free event will start at 5 p.m. with the North Pole Kids Club, then Santa’s Surprise Party Spectacular where Santa and Mrs. Claus make their arrival just before 6 p.m. Following their grand entrance, there will be an official lighting of the 21 ft. Holiday Tree which will be between the Memorial Opera House and the Porter County Museum. Immediately after all the outdoor events, which patrons are asked to dress appropriately for, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on the Memorial Opera House stage to visit with kids and pictures.

Other great holiday events include:

Santa and Mrs. Claus “The Official Santa of downtown Valparaiso” will both be at the Memorial Opera House stage Nov. 22-Dec. 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. -- * Saturdays Only *

Children can visit with Mr. & Mrs. Claus, purchase pictures, join in a sing a long, and visit the Porter County Museum next door for stories with North Pole storytellers and more Holiday Fun! Visit www.mohlive.com or www.portercountymuseum.org for more.

A “Twilight” Movie Party will be held at 6:30 p.m., on Fri., Nov. 21, at Dance Tech Studio, 910-1/2 Lincolnway, LaPorte. High school teens and adults who are a Twilighter or a Twihard are invited to come and celebrate the motion picture release of Stephanie Meyer’s book *Twilight*.

Trivia, prizes, refreshments, and fun will be included. There is no charge or registration. The event is sponsored by LaPorte County Public Library and Friends of the Library.

More information at 219/362-6156. Phone 48 hrs. in advance for signing for the hearing impaired.

**Beginning Watercolor Class**

Art instructor Richard Church will teach beginning watercolor classes starting Fri., Nov. 21 from 10 a.m.-noon at the Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St., Chesterton. The weekly Friday morning class is ideal for students who prefer daytime instruction over evening classes.

Fees for the class are $60 for members and $65 for nonmembers. Registrants will receive a list of materials that will be needed for the class.

For more information, phone the Chesterton Art Center at (219) 926-4711. Hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays and 1-4 p.m. weekends.
Preview Memorial Opera Season Free

The Memorial Opera House, Valparaiso, will be hosting a special sneak peak preview night of the 2009 musical season on Sat., Nov. 22nd at 8 p.m. This first time event is free. Seating is limited and reservations are recommended.

The Memorial Opera House was voted 2008 “Cultural Attraction of the Year” by the Porter and LaPorte County Visitor Centers as well as “Best Performing Arts Center” by the Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly Magazine.

The Memorial Opera House is a live entertainment venue that can also be rented for public or private use for wedding ceremonies, business meetings/presentations, concerts and graduations.

This preview of the Memorial Opera House 2009 season of shows will feature music from musicals that have never been seen on the MOH stage and a few will be making their Northwest Indiana Premieres.

For more information you can go to www.mohlive.com or contact the Box Office Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at 219-548-9137. The Memorial Opera House is located at 104 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso.

The Memorial Opera House 2009 Season includes the following musicals: “Ragtime the Musical” - February; “Swing!” - April; “Grease” - June; “Godspell” - October; “Scrooge” - December.

The Cracked Egg Cooking School

Upcoming Classes at The Cracked Egg Cooking School, 2613 E. Hwy 12, Michigan City.
Phone (219) 210-3920 or visit www.crackedeggcooking.com to register.

Make, Bake and Take Thanksgiving Desserts for Grownups - Offered Mon., Nov. 24, noon-2 p.m.; Tues., Nov. 25, 7-9 p.m.; Wed., Nov. 26, 10 a.m.-noon. Cost: $30.

Present a delicious Praline Pumpkin Pie in a gingersnap crust and a spectacular Trifle for your Thanksgiving table! It’s easy and fun. Phone (219) 210-3920 to make your reservation or go to www.crackedeggcooking.com

Kids Holiday Mini Cooking and Crafting Camps - Offered Fri., Nov. 28, 10 a.m.–noon; Fri., Nov. 29, 2-4 p.m.; Sat., Nov. 29, 2-4 p.m.; Sat., Nov. 29, 10 a.m.-noon. Cost: $35.

Santa needs some Gingerbread too! There are cookies to bake and so many crafts to make! Plan to spend a creative time and rev up your HO HO HO!

Luhr Park Nature Center

The Nature Center at Luhr (LaPorte) County Park is closed for the winter starting November 3rd and will re-open on March 3rd.

Teen Thursday at MC Public Library

Join other teens at the Michigan City Public Library on Thurs., Nov. 20 at 3:30 p.m. to play Wii and PlayStation games, including Guitar Hero and Rock Band. Participants must be ages 13 to 19 years old. For more information, phone Marina at 873-3046 or e-mail msantos@mc.lib.org

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**10th Year for Valparaiso Poetry Review**

The Valparaiso Poetry Review, Valparaiso University's online journal of contemporary poetry, will celebrate its 10th year of publication with the release of a fall/winter edition featuring poet Elise Paschen.

Paschen is the author of “Infidelities,” winner of the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize, and “Houses: Coasts.” Her poems have been published in New Republic and Ploughshares, among other magazines, as well as numerous anthologies. She is editor of The New York Times best-selling anthology “Poetry Speaks to Children” and teaches in the writing program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

The new edition of Valparaiso Poetry Review – available online at valpo.edu/english/vpr – features three of Paschen's recent poems and an interview with the poet by Dr. Edward Byrne, professor of English and editor of the Valparaiso Poetry Review.

Valparaiso Poetry Review has been listed by Google as one of the most relevant and highly regarded online poetry magazines and two poems that first appeared in the journal were among works selected to be published in the anthology “Best of the Web 2008.”

Complementing the journal is “One Poet’s Notes,” an editor’s blog by Dr. Edward Byrne, professor of English and editor of the Valparaiso Poetry Review. The blog, online at edwardbyrne.blogspot.com, features regular postings about notable recent books of poetry and general poetry news.

Valparaiso Poetry Review includes a list of recently received and recommended books of poetry, as well as guidelines for poetry submissions. All past issues of the journal and an archive of poems, essays, interviews, reviews and commentaries on art are available on the Web at valpo.edu/english/vpr.

**County Library Holiday Closing**

The main branch of the LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave., LaPorte, and the Coolspring Branch Library, 400 N & Johnson Rd., Michigan City, will close at 1 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 26 for the Thanksgiving holiday, and will remain closed Thurs., Nov. 27. Regular hours will resume Friday.

**Public Stargazing Open House**

The Calumet Astronomical Society invites everyone to explore the wonders of the universe on Sat., Dec. 6, 7-10 p.m. at the Conway Observatory at Buckley Homestead, Lowell, IN. Volunteers will guide visitors in the use of telescopes and astronomical binoculars. More at www.casonline.org.

This is an outdoor program, dress for the weather. Directions to Conway: Take I-65 south; Exit west at Rt. 2 toward Lowell to Hendricks Rd., then south to the “T” at Belshaw. East (left) on Belshaw to the first right (Chase St.) and south for one mile.
American Red Cross Blood Drives

When: Tues., Nov. 25, from 1 p.m. until 7 p.m.
Where: Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G Street in LaPorte.

When: Fri., Nov. 28, from 7 a.m. until 12 noon
Where: LaPorte Hospital in the Auditorium, located at 1007 W. Lincolnway in LaPorte.

Each presenting donor at this blood drive will receive a $3 lunch coupon. Phone 219/326-1234, ext. 7467 to schedule your blood donation appointment.

If you are at least 17 years of age (In Indiana, you may give blood at 16 years of age with written, parental consent), weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and are in general good health, you may be eligible to donate blood. All donors need to present positive identification. For more information or to schedule your appointment, phone 1-800-448-3543.

Audition Classes at Lubeznik

Have you ever considered acting in plays or in film? Peyton Daley, a local union (SAG) actress who acts and improvises locally and nationally is offering two new four week audition classes at The Lubeznik Center for the Arts at 101 W. Second Street in Michigan City beginning Sun., Nov. 23rd.

Monologue auditions will be the focus on Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m., and Monday night classes, beginning on Nov. 24th, will focus on two person scene audition pieces. Memorization is not necessary, and adults as well as teens can attend. The cost is $32 per session. Registration deadline is Fri., Nov. 21st. To preregister or for more information, visit www.lubeznikcenter.org and click on adult classes or phone 219.874.4900.

Julefest at Valparaiso University

“Julefest: Sounds of the Season” will feature the Luce Concert Band and Valparaiso Community/University Band in a salute to the holiday season on Tues., Dec. 2. The concert will be held at 4 p.m. in the VU Center for the Arts on campus. The program is free and open to the public.

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Going Green for the Holidays

**Buckley Homestead** - Sat., Nov. 22
noon-4 p.m.
Phone 219-769-7275 for reservations

Help decorate the farm for Christmas. Enjoy a cup of hot cider in the upper barn while you help make an enchanting green reindeer. Then travel back in time to the pioneer cabin as you help decorate for Christmas Eve and the schoolhouse for the Christmas pageant. Decorate inside and out of the main house with fresh greens. What a pretty sight it will be with the lights shimmering through the windows. Dress for the cold and bring work gloves.

**Directions:** Buckley Homestead is located 4.5 miles west of I-65 just south of Route 2 on Hendricks Road in Lowell. Exit I-65 west at Rt. 2 toward Lowell to Hendricks, then south for 1/4 mile to the visitor center parking lot. The farmstead is a short walk along the trail.

German Band at Box Factory

The 11-member German band, the Strudel Meisters, will perform at the Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, on Sat., Nov. 22 at 8 p.m. MI time. Tickets at the door are $8 general admission and $6 for students and seniors, age 60+. Children under 12 are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.

The band performs traditional and popular German music including folk songs, polkas, waltzes and dances. They have performed throughout Southwest Michigan and Northwest Indiana since 1998. They have been the featured band at Notre Dame for the German club’s “Octdomerfest” for the past four years.

For more, visit www.boxfactoryforthearts.org or phone 269-983-3688 during normal gallery hours of 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Mon.-Sat. or Sun. from 1-4 p.m.

Preschool Storytime

A preschool storytime for ages 18 months-5 years (with an adult) will be held at 10 a.m., Fri., Nov. 21, in Children’s Services at LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave., LaPorte.

The day will feature pilgrim, turkey, harvest, and grandparent stories. Songs and a craft will also be included. There is no charge or registration. More information at 219/362-7128.

Nursery Rhyme Time

Nursery Rhyme Time will be held at 6:30 p.m., Tues., Nov. 25, in Children’s Services at LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave., LaPorte.

Children ages six months to three years and a parent or caregiver are invited to come for stories, finger plays and nursery rhymes. There is no charge or registration. More at 219/362-7128.
On November 20, 1873, the rival cities of Buda and Pest were united to form Budapest, the capital of Hungary.

On November 20, 1942, the Alaska Highway, linking Fairbanks with British Columbia’s Dawson Creek, was officially opened.

On November 21, 1877, Thomas Edison announced the invention of the phonograph, which he described as a “talking machine.”

On November 21, 1964, the “Verrazano Narrows,” linking the New York boroughs of Brooklyn and Staten Island, the world’s longest suspension bridge at the time, officially opened to traffic.

On November 22, 1963, President John Kennedy was assassinated as he rode in a Dallas motorcade. Texas Governor John Connolly, riding in the same car as the president, was seriously wounded.

On November 22, 1977, the supersonic jet “Concorde” began passenger service to New York from London and Paris.

On November 23, 1876, three eastern colleges, Columbia, Princeton, and Harvard, joined to form the first intercollegiate football association.

On November 23, 1889, the jukebox made its debut in San Francisco, at the Palais Royale saloon.

On November 23, 1936, the first issue of Life, the picture magazine created by Henry Luce, was published in Chicago.

On November 24, 1963, in Dallas, Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John Kennedy, was shot to death by Jack Ruby.

On November 24, 1977, an archaeologist said a tomb uncovered near Salonika, Greece, was that of King Philip II of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great.

On November 25, 1952, Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap, which would become the world’s longest running play, opened in London.

On November 25, 2002, President Bush signed legislation creating the Department of Homeland Security, and appointed Tom Ridge to be its head.

On November 26, 1789, the first national Thanksgiving Day in the United States was proclaimed by President George Washington. He asked the nation to observe the day as one of thanksgiving for the adoption of the United States Constitution.

On November 26, 1825, students at Union College (in Schenectady, NY) organized Kappa Alpha, America’s first collegiate social fraternity.
What better day upon which to celebrate a super season of cycling than Halloween itself?
And so Natalie gave me the nod when Halloween 2008 dawned as a bright, warm day with a brisk breeze out of the southwest and suggested we rack the bikes and head to historic Washington Park for a marathon-distance (26 miles) loop around magnificent old Michigan City, home of the Beacher.

And so we did, and so we hope that more unseasonably warm days are still ahead so you can follow our tire tracks and burn off some of those holiday calories in pursuit of 4th quarter splendor.

We certainly found an abundance of it as we spun a 30.04-mile web of Halloween wonder on the streets of Michigan City and the sun-dappled roads of rural La Porte County. Oh, I can account for the extra 4.04 miles: we took a spin around Patriot Park and we took a side tour or two along Lake Shore Drive.
Why not?

And why not seize the next unseasonably warm day and follow this path of our autumnal adventure which began in Washington Park where folks on motorcycles and in cars were gathering to have another look at the lake before the gales of November came slashing?

One of Michigan City's finest gave us a friendly send-off wave as we mounted our Giant-brand bicycles and spun through the splendid park to the foot of the Franklin Street Bridge where the hazard gates were descending to announce the passage of another homeward bound sailboat. We were glad for the break for it gave us time to reflect on all the outdoor gifts we had received in 2008.

The sailors soon passed; the bridge dropped back into place, and we were suddenly cycling south past Lighthouse Place on Wabash Avenue and on across the South Shore tracks into residential Michigan City. We paused to ponder Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church standing majestically on its hill, and then we headed on out of town past that beautiful park at Earl and Hitchcock roads.

A well-timed light took us south across U.S. Hwy. 20 on Hitchcock Road, and we didn't mind the slight headwind one bit because the day was just so dazzling and the road was so smooth and relatively free of traffic.

And we got to see the harvest coming in as we were going out on 400 North toward County Line Road. As major consumers of soy products, we were especially pleased to see that the farmers were combining an abundant crop of those useful little beans.

We waved at motorists on I-94 and thought briefly of continuing west into Porter County on their bikeway, but we were not equipped with the proper map. So we decided to save the promises of Porter County for another season.

Then, as we cycled west on 300 North, we got a wind assist, and, in Natalie's case at least, greetings by a horse and some goats.

“They don't like me,” I complained.
“I'm just more in tune with them,” Natalie said.

That said, we turned into Patriot Park where we used the facilities and watched a Cooper's hawk (or...
was it a Sharp-Shinned hawk) attempt to collect a meal of fresh starling on the wing. The starlings won that one by collecting en-masse in a tree and driving off the predator, but the hawk was still circling when we departed in peace to piece together the remainder of a resplendent ride that took us: north on 850 West, east on 350 North, north a short ways on 700 West, east on 400 North and then due north on 600 West which turned into Meer Road.

We had the wind at our backs and we made it across U.S. Hwy. 20 by repeatedly looking both ways and waiting for a big gap in traffic. There was a brief climb up Meer Road past the La Porte County Convention & Visitors Bureau, but we mounted it just fine, and we soon had a fine view of the air-port, fields, an old barn and the full fall show. And, because it was Halloween, we got to see some great lawn decorations. But no treats because we weren't tricked out enough. We just looked like a couple of old bikers from Michigan, but we sure looked longingly at the lake as we rode those final five miles on Lake Shore Drive.

It was as golden a day as one could hope to cycle through any time of year.

We made it back to Washington Park in plenty of time to see the sun make its dramatic exit for the day, and then we crossed the line to Michigan firm in our resolve to return again before we flipped the calendars to 2009.

“There has to be another good biking day this year,” Natalie said. I agreed, and you should too, because La Porte County's shared bikeways are meant to be cycled all four seasons of the year.

The routes are clearly marked with those color-coded bike route signs you see all over the county, but why not make it really easy on yourself and stop by the visitors center at 1503 S. Meer Road in Michigan City and get a free route map? Or call them at: 1-800-634-2650 or visit their website at: www.bicyclebeachesandbackroads.com.

And then stuff down all the stuffing you want without an ounce of guilt.
Activities to Explore

In the Local Area:

November 20 - Great American Smokeout. Information at state hotline 1-800-QUITNOW


November 20-24 – At the Vickers Theatre: “I Served the King of England.” Rated R. Thurs/Fri 9 pm; Sat/Sun 3:45 & 9 pm; Mon 9 pm. Also showing: “Trouble the Water.” Thurs thru Mon 6:30 pm only. Winner Grand Jury Prize Sundance Film Festival. All MI times. 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, MI. 269/756-3522. www.vickerstheatre.com

November 21 – Bookmarks at Noon at MC Public Library. Loving Frank by Nancy Horan will be reviewed by Susan Meyer Nichols. Free, open to public.

November 21 – Santa’s Surprise party and Tree Lighting at the Memorial Opera House and Porter County Museum, Valparaiso. Begins at 5 pm. Free event. Story this issue.

November 21-23 -- “Cabaret” at 4th Street Theatre, 125 N Fourth St., Chesterton, IN. Curtain 8 pm; Sunday 3 pm only. Tix $15; reserve at 219/926-7875.


November 21-23, 28-30, December 5-7, 12-14, 18-20 – Dicken’s “A Christmas Carol” at Chicago Street Theatre, 154 W Chicago St., Valparaiso. Fri/Sat 7 pm, Sun 2:30 pm (extra performances listed in story elsewhere this issue. Tix: $18/adults, $15/seniors (over 62) & students. 219/464-1636 or www.chicagostreet.org

November 22 – Free preview of Memorial Opera House season. 8 pm. Reservations recommended as seating is limited; phone 219/548-9137. 104 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso.

November 22-23 – Dunes Woman’s Club Holiday Bazaar. Sat 8 am-3 pm; Sun 11 am-1 pm. Community House, Broadway, Beverly Shores.

November 25 – Readers Group at Coolspring Branch Library, 400N & Johnson Rd., MC. Song of the Lark by Willa Cather will be discussed at 7 pm. Free program; no registration. 879-3272.

November 28-30, December 5-7 – “Christmas Belles” at Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St., MC. Fri/Sat 8 pm; Sun 2 pm. Tix $10; reserve at 219/874-4035. www.footlightplayers.org

November 30 – Michigan City Concert Association: “The Trumpet Invasion.” Featuring Rich and Brandon Ridenour. 3 pm at Elston Middle School Theatre, Spring & Detroit streets. Tix $20 at the door.
**December 6-7 -- Christmas at Washington Park, MC. Saturday: Festival of Lights parade 4 pm; Chili Cook-off 4-6 pm; park lights turned on at 5 pm; Zooltide at Washington Park Zoo 5-7 pm (both days). Adm to zoo is $2/adults, $1/kids.**

**Places to Visit:**
- Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St., Michigan City. Adm. $4/adults, $2/kids 18 & under, free/kids under 3. Guided tours: Mon-Fri. 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm; Sat/Sun. noon, 2 pm. 219-873-1520.
- Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St., Chesterton, IN. Gallery hours are 11 am-4 pm weekdays; 1-4 pm weekends. 219/926-4711.
- Depot of Beverly Shores Museum and Art Gallery, 525 Broadway, Beverly Shores, IN. Open 11:30 am-3:30 pm Friday thru Sunday to Nov. 30. www.bevershrsistsoc.org
- Great Lakes Museum of Military History, 360 Dunes Plaza, Michigan City. Open 9 am-4 pm, Tues-Fri; 10 am-4 pm Sat; noon-4 pm Sun; closed Mon. Adm. $3/adults, $2/vets & sen. cit., $1/ages 8-18, and free/under 8 yrs. & active military. 872-2702.
- LaPorte County Historical Museum. 2405 Indiana Ave., LaPorte. Adm. $3/LaP. Co. resident; $5/out-of-county; $3/kids 12-17; free/under 12 yrs. 219/324-6767 or www.laportecountyhistory.org
- Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. 2nd St., Michigan City. Tues.-Fri., 10 am-5 pm; Sat-Sun, 11 am-4 pm. Closed Mon. Phone 874-4900.
- New Buffalo Railroad Museum, 530 S. Whittaker St., New Buffalo, MI. Mon-Fri, 9 am-5 pm; Sat, 10 am-3 pm, (MI time) Closed Sun. 269/469-5409.
- Old Lighthouse Museum, Washington Park, MC. Closed for the season.
- Southern Shore Art Association Gallery, 724 Franklin St., Michigan City. Fri., 4-7 pm; Sat., noon-5 pm; Sun., 1-5 pm. 219-861-0186. www.southernshoreart.org
- Washington Park Zoo, Lakefront, Michigan City. Closed for the season. Will be open for Zooltide and the Festival of Lights Dec. 6 & 7 from 5-7 pm.

**Farther Afield:**
- **November 22 --** Strudel Meisters (11 member German band) in concert at The Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, MI. 8 pm MI time. Tix at the door: $8/adults, $6/students & seniors (60+). www.boxfactoryforthearrts.org
- **Through January 4, 2009 --** International Tree Exhibit, Center for History, 808 W Washington St., South Bend. Mon-Sat, 10 am-5 pm; Sun, noon-5 pm. Adm. $8/adults, $6.50/seniors, $5/6-17 year olds.574/235-9664 or www.centerforhistory.org

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The Archbishop in Andalusia by Andrew M. Greeley

Perusing the book shelves can be a daunting task, what with all the pretty covers and enticing titles authors come up with. But I think it must have been the recent news report of a bad fall suffered by Andrew Greeley that caused my eyes to land on the spine of his latest novel. If you are familiar with the priest/sociologist turned author, you know that he is a prolific writer -- besides a number of nonfiction works, he has written three different series about fictional characters: the Nuala Anne McGrail novels, the O’Malleys in the Twentieth Century, and the Blackie Ryan Mysteries, to which this week’s book recommendation belongs. Title character, Blackie Ryan, a coadjutor archbishop of Chicago, remains one of Greeley’s most lasting and endearing characters. The Midwestern cleric has the wit and wisdom of his Irish ancestors and a penchant for solving crimes.

As the title suggests, Blackie finds himself in Spain, guest of the Cardinal Archbishop of Seville, Diego Sanchez who has decided to give Blackie the Spanish name El Padrecito Negro - “the little priest called Blackie.” Don Diego can’t seem to figure out this American in “black jeans, a black clerical shirt without a collar, a blue and red windbreaker celebrating the Chicago Cubs, whoever they be, and a baseball cap that depicts a fearsome toro, but not one of ours…You do not act like a coadjutor archbishop with right to succession and a distinguished enough philosopher to be invited to a conference in Seville on American Philosophy. Still, I find the whole image charming.”

Blackie was accompanied by his nephew Joseph Ryan and his fiancee, Peggy Anne Nolan, who are only there to do some sightseeing. Blackie’s task is to convince them to set a date for their wedding to take place back in Chicago. Blackie makes many references to Grand Beach, Michigan and Notre Dame, places that author Andrew Greeley knows very well.

A dinner party the night of their arrival in Spain, introduces the Americans to Spanish nobility, a small group with no power, some with money, some poor, but some affection among the Spanish people. Blackie is paired with Dona Teresa Maria Romero, Duchess of Seville, a most beautiful and intelligent woman who even Blackie can’t help but be awed by. Since her husband died (at the hand of terrorists) she has handled the family money wisely, become a generous philanthropist, a writer, tv personality, and what the press has come to call a “national treasure.”

The family fortune might have been left to Dona Teresa, but guardianship of the woman and her beautiful daughter, Dona Maria Luisa, was given to a cousin Dona Inez and her husband Don Marco, a retired general. Convinced on his death bed by the pair that this was the only way to protect the two women, this archaic practice was allowed by the Spanish law which seems to have one foot in today and one foot in the Middle Ages. Dona Teresa hired a lawyer and since her husband’s death, the whole mess has been tied up in the Spanish court system.

To add to the tension, Dona Inez has betrothed Dona Maria Luisa to Don Teodoro Guzman, a most odious man who really only wants the ducal title, and the money, of course. Dona Maria Luisa has promised to kill him if he tries anything with her. All these happy people live together in the family palacio!

The Cardinal Archbishop of Seville tells Blackie that he fears for Dona Teresa’s life. Much is on the line here if she dies. Much to digest, but Blackie has other things to worry about. Back in Chicago, his boss, Cardinal Sean Cronin, Archbishop of Chicago, has suffered another heart attack and now appears to have given up on life and is ready to die. The last thing Blackie wants is to lose his mentor and best friend right now. His obligations in Spain make it impossible for him to return to the States, and, besides, he really doesn’t want to become Archbishop. Friends and family will have to run interference and keep Blackie informed what is happening in Chicago.

As the story comes to a climax, many secrets will be revealed and desperate times will lead to desperate measures for others...

As an armchair traveler, I was intrigued by the descriptive way Greeley took me on a tour of Seville and surrounding countryside. Discussions with the Cardinal and others tell a lot about the history of Spain and especially the area of al-Andalusia. I was impressed that it was told in a conversational way, not boring or uninteresting. It added much to the story by explaining how Spanish ways, buried in traditions that are centuries old, continue to dictate how some people still live today.

And what a look into a prelate’s life--even reading Blackie’s prayers is an insight to the man wearing the clerical collar. Many trials will beset Blackie before the bell tolls--for whom?

An interesting as well as entertaining read.

Till next time, happy reading! Only 35 days till Christmas!
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