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A Compelling Journey

Larry Lasker Balances Work as Private Investigator With Zeal for Life

by Connie Kuzydym

Private investigator.

What image comes to mind from those two words? Hollywood likely has sculpted public perception, from a sleek Tom Selleck as "Magnum, P.I." to other less savory individuals found in dime-store novels.

Truth is, a man like Larry Lasker of Lasker Investigations in Chicago is not so easily defined. He is simple, yet complex. Humble, yet assured. A master storyteller, to be sure. In a way, he is like a mosaic. Only as the pieces come together do you get a feel for how compelling his life has been.

As work dictates, Lasker alternates between his Chicago condominium and a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired house on his wooded family homestead in Michiana, Mich. Although he has traveled extensively around the world, his heart belongs to Michiana. It is where he summered since he was 4.

"Michiana is a kind of special place," he said. "There are no street lights, no stores, no sidewalks, and yet, the lake is only a half block away and I'm surrounded by woods. The stress of the city leaves when you are here."

How did a youngster whose father was a dentist, who summered on Lake Michigan's shores, come to own one of Chicago's top private detective agencies as an adult?

The answer begins at the end of the Vietnam War, when Lasker was in the U.S. Army medical corp. When his service came to an end, he had a master's



Larry Lasker relaxes by the fireplace in his Michiana home.

degree in biology from Northwestern University and two goals: meet a nice girl and buy a silver corvette. He began teaching, including some junior-high, high-school and junior-college classes. He also worked part time selling cars. A prospective customer, Bob Graham, issued him a challenge. If he could sell him a Lincoln with a certain set of op-

tions and at a certain price, then he was a pretty good salesman. Lasker wanted the sale. He was fine with not making a profit just to show the guy he could sell him the car. What Lasker didn't know at the time was that Graham was a top private detective, one who eventually offered him a part-time job.

The work was far from glamorous. It was more along the lines of serving subpoenas. In some instances, it involved stakeouts to prove adultery, like getting photos on a cold winter night of the alleged mistress in a divorce case.

Back then, Lasker enjoyed the work. He was young, a former football player, confident, cocky and had no fear...until the night he became involved in a criminal defense case involving narcotics. His client's "people" did not know he was working for their boss. They were sure he was a police officer. They

Continued on Page 2



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In Case Of Emergency, Dial

911

Compelling Journey

Continued from Page 1



Lasker shows a collage highlighting his travels and accomplishments over the years that his secretary at Lasker Investigations made as a gift.

bound him to a chair, tied his hands behind his back and stuck a gun into his mouth with the hammer pulled back. Lasker thought his life was over. Fortunately, the person he was working for came through the door and told everyone Lasker was on their team.

Afterward, Lasker still worked on criminal-defense cases, but not the hard-core ones that involved narcotics or murder. He pursued white-collar crimes, such as corporate tax evasion.

Lasker's big break arrived in 1967. Graham was named chief civil investigator in a case involving the murder of eight nurses at the hands of Richard Speck at South Chicago Community Hospital on July 14, 1966.

At the time Graham was hired, he was experiencing health issues. Lasker viewed this as an opportunity to prove himself. He offered to work for free so the gentleman who hired Graham saw what he was capable of.

"Hire me, don't pay me, if you like what I get, you

can pay me," Lasker told the man.

Lasker stayed on the case until the end. It was a landmark settlement case...and the one that ignited his career.

(Speck received the death sentence, but it was overturned based on issues with the trial's jury selection. He served 25 years in prison, eventually dying of a heart attack while incarcerated.)

Today, Lasker Investigations is ranked in the Top 5 percent of Chicago private detective agencies. Lasker holds two licenses in Illinois: one as a private investigator, which allows him to operate individually, and a detective agency license, which allows him to hire people and run his company. He has worked in more than 30 states, as well as internationally. Much of his work is for lawyers and ranges from checking public records and gathering statements to tracking down witnesses and testifying in court.

For obvious reasons, Lasker does not discuss specific details of his cases, and of his role in their

investigations, even years afterward. However, he has been involved in several notorious cases, including:

- serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, who took the lives of 17 men and boys in grisly fashion between 1978 and 1991.
- former Illinois Gov. George Ryan, who served more than five years in federal prison after being convicted of corruption charges after leaving office.
- “Transformers: Dark of the Moon” (2011), in which an extra was seriously injured — her skull was damaged — while filming scenes in Hammond, Ind., in 2010.

For the past 20 to 25 years, Lasker has gravitated toward civil litigation work. Attorneys who specialize in litigation on behalf of their clients hire him. The bulk of his work is casualty cases, where people have been seriously injured or death has resulted.

What makes an individual a top private investigator? According to Lasker, it's not something you can teach in any books. Promptness, timeliness, confidentiality, credibility and respectability are important factors.

“You need to have a thorough knowledge of the law. You have to be a people person,” Lasker said. “I deal with police departments, FBI. I deal with witnesses or potential witnesses. I deal with them in their backyards, in their kitchens, in their neighborhood bars. People from all walks of life, all races — everything. If I go into that situation, I have to get them to smile at me or I'm not going anywhere.”

The toughest part of his job comes in losing, when a case does not resolve itself as it should. It does not happen often, he says, but it does happen.



Lasker while on a cycling trip in Thailand in February 1999.

Continued on Page 4



Lasker was one of the investigators in the George Ryan case.

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Compelling Journey

Continued from Page 3



One of Lasker's many passions is cycling.

"It's tough," Lasker said, "because I'm not a loser. It's happened a few times; it bothers me. The best part are the letters, thanking me for my efforts on their behalf. If someone's life is better than when I got involved, that's enough gratification."

His kindness shows through in the pro bono cases he takes, where victims are severely and permanently injured, unable to defend themselves or recoup any losses because of handicaps.

Speaking with Lasker over the course of a few hours, it's clear the interview only scratches the surface of his remarkable life. He is a fascinating individual. He taught spin class for many years and now cycles for enjoyment. He has a plethora of motorcycles in his garage. He still has the corvette in his garage because it represents a dream he achieved. He also is a certified master diver. He has



Lasker at the memorial to the USS Arizona during a recent trip to Pearl Harbor.

traveled the world over, immersing himself in the local culture on his travels. You glimpse a kindness, yet a toughness about him. He is engaging, always thinking.

His philosophy about life, which he recommends saying to yourself every day, speaks volumes about him: "Yesterday was history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift." The little problems we incur as individuals, he says, are placed into perspective when this is repeated daily.

Lasker would like to one day return to teaching. It's part of his desire to help people. However, he does not see himself ending life as an investigator anytime soon.

"As long as I have (my) health every day, I will never stop," Lasker said. "It's exciting for me. Every day is different. Every time I think I have seen it all, something comes around the corner, I say, 'Geesh,' look at this. What a crazy situation."



Lasker, a certified master diver, pictured here while somewhere in the Seven Seas.



Lasker stands by a monument to the USS Missouri at Pearl Harbor.

Author With Potential Movie Adaptation to Shed Light on Book

by William Halliar

A local author whose book may be transformed into a movie will shed insight into her work at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, at La Porte County Public Library's Coolspring branch, 7089 W. County Road 400 North.



Stephanie Wilson Medlock calls the Coolspring Branch her home away from home.

residence to satisfy her voracious reading habit.

"To write, one must read," she says with a lilt in her voice. "I love telling stories. It has been a part of me for as long as I can remember."

Stephanie Wilson Medlock's book, "The Lives of Things," is the January reading selection for the Coolspring Branch Winter Book Club. Reading the book, then meeting the author in person, will help bring the creative process to life.

Medlock calls the Coolspring Branch her home away from home, and can often be seen carrying armloads of books to her nearby

Medlock recalls an incident from her childhood when her father was walking her to school. She was lagging behind, and her father chided her to step up the pace.

"I can't," she said. "I am telling myself a story, and I must see how it is going to come out."

"The Lives of Things" has been optioned by a movie production company. Medlock was asked to write the screenplay. The story revolves around New York art expert and authenticator Rebecca Katz, who possesses an unusual talent: She can communicate with objects she encounters in her travels. As Rebecca discovers, this can be a gift as well as a curse.

Two love interests, a French art critic and a Miami Florida drugstore clerk, add spice as Rebecca is forced to question the two guiding principles of her life and her unusual gift: Things can be trusted. People cannot.

Whether you have read "The Lives of Things" or not, you won't want to miss this opportunity to meet Medlock, who will discuss her book and the process involved in telling such a story.

It should be an evening of creative discovery.

(*The Coolspring Branch has copies of "The Lives of Things" to check out or purchase. Call (219) 879-3272 for more information.*)



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Ice-Sculpture Demonstrations Kick Off Annual WinterFest

The annual WinterFest, organized by the La Porte Park and Recreation Department, returns this weekend with many of the events enjoyed over the past years, along with a few new twists.

The events kick off with ice-sculpture demonstrations presented by Downtown La Porte, local businesses and organizations. The sculptures will line city sidewalks beginning at 4 p.m. Friday, Jan. 23.

Opening night continues with a special Zumba event from 4:15 to 6:15 p.m. at La Porte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. The free physical activities will be highlighted by a Zumba fundraiser for cervical cancer, with yoga and walking offered as low-impact exercise options. Participants are asked to wear workout clothes, including clean gym shoes.

For creative adults and children, "Family Ceramics" runs from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 24, on the Civic's lower level. Participants can paint seasonal gifts such as snowmen, Valentine's Day boxes and figurines, or think ahead with spring items or Easter eggs. The \$5 cost includes paints and brushes, but not the bisque item for decorating. All children must have a parent or guardian present. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 22 at the Park Office, 250 Pine Lake Ave., or by phone at (219) 326-9600.

Also Saturday, visitors can design and build a person-powered, corrugated cardboard sled capable of withstanding the descent down the Kesling Park Sledding Hill for the WinterFest Cardboard Sled Race from 1 to 2 p.m. The event is free, but registration is required at tinyurl.com/mngh4tn.

For those who enjoy a brisk winter jog, a non-competitive, 3.5-mile Fun Run is at 1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25, in Soldiers Memorial Park. The free event

starts and finishes at Cummings Lodge, followed by refreshments and prize drawings. This is an un-timed event, and no awards will be presented.

Free horse-drawn carriage rides are offered from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25, in Soldiers Memorial Park. After a trot through the park, hot chocolate will be available by the fireplace at Cummings Lodge.

For ages 5 and older, a "Children's Winter Craft Class" is from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25, at Cummings Lodge. The cost is \$2 per child and includes materials. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 22 at the Park Office or by phone at (219) 326-9600.

The Helping Heroes Ice Fishing Derby is Saturday, Jan. 31, beginning with registration at 8 a.m. at Cummings Lodge and the derby at 9 a.m. Cash prizes will be awarded in various categories based on registration fees.

The day concludes with measurements at 2 p.m. at the lodge. The cost is \$15 for adults or \$5 for children if pre-registered by Jan. 30. The cost at the door is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Fays Marina in La Porte is sponsoring the first \$100 in children registration fees. Christo's Family Dining is sponsoring a chili lunch.

The "Snowball Softball" Adult Coed Tournament returns to Lions Field at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 31, and will be held regardless of weather conditions. The double-elimination tournament is limited to the first eight teams to register. National Softball Association coed rules apply. Team awards for first, second and third place and individual awards for first place are planned. The cost is \$165 per team. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 22 at the Park Office or by phone at (219) 326-9600.



Ice-sculpture demonstrations, a popular aspect of WinterFest.

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New South Shore Arts Exhibits to Debut

South Shore Arts will present "Farms, Factories, Tourism and Culture: Works by Indiana Artisans" on Jan. 23 through April 4 at its Crown Point branch, 123 N. Main St.

An opening reception is from noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. Regular viewing hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The exhibit explores Indiana's diverse economies, from traditional sectors of agriculture and industry, to tourism and creative entrepreneurial businesses. Artists, many of whom will be present at the reception, include: Charlene George, Brookville; Carrie Wild, Indianapolis; Rena Brouwer, Delphi; Lynn Retson, Porter; Patricia Rhoden Bartels, Nashville; Joyce K. Jensen, Zionsville; Michael Janosky, Noblesville; Laurie Balla, Mishawaka; and Sara Vanderkleet, Lafayette.

On view at the South Shore Arts Atrium gallery is the solo exhibit "The Artist as Scientist: Works by Orie Shafer" through March 29.

A retrospective representing more than 30 years of work, it includes paintings, drawings and constructions Shafer refers to as "alter pieces."

In his youth, Shafer could not read due to a childhood illness.

"Before I was able to read, I would go to the library and look at all of the books about math, science and history," he said in a press release. "I couldn't read what they said, but I could look at the numbers and pictures and make up my own story about the concepts and equations that they represented."

After graduating from college in 1973, he began



Lynn Retson's graphite work, "Industry."



Thaddeus C.'s oil on canvas, "Exhale."

using numbers and scientific concepts in his drawings and paintings. This is the first time the works have been shown as a complete body of work.

The gallery is located at The Center for Visual and Performing Arts, 1040 Ridge Road, Munster. A reception is from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 1. Regular viewing hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Substation No. 9, the downtown Hammond branch at 435 Fayette St., will present "Icons and Intuition: New Works by Thaddeus C." through March 21. The solo exhibit will progress and grow in size for the show's duration.

Thaddeus Cutler, who co-owns La Porte's Thaddeus C. Gallery of Fine Art, paints in a "project" based way. In 2011, he completed the "99 Bottle of Beer Project" in which he painted a portrait of a

bottle of beer each day for 99 days with no breaks. "Icons and Intuition" will develop in a similar way. Each week, new paintings will be added between the empty spaces between paintings. A culminating reception of all the paintings is from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 12. Live music will be part of the festivities, with Cutler in attendance. Regular viewing hours are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.

Visit www.southshoreartsonline.org for more information on all three exhibits.



Orie Shafer's "Earth Centered Universe 3."



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26th Annual Notre Dame Student Film Festival

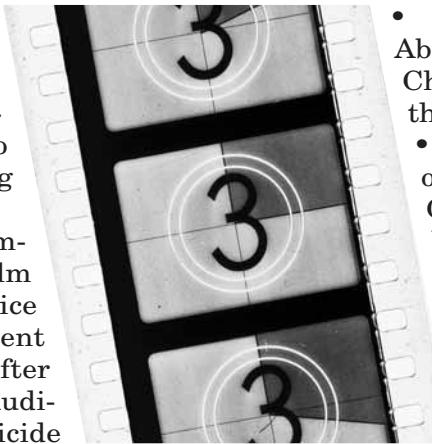
The University of Notre Dame's Department of Film, Television and Theatre will present the 26th Annual Notre Dame Student Film Festival on Jan. 29-31 in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center's Browning Cinema.

As in recent years, audience members can vote for their favorite film by text message. The Audience Choice Award will be presented to the student director(s) of the winning film after the final screening. Last year's Audience Choice Award winner, "The Suicide Disease," won Best Short Documentary at the Sunset International Film Festival in Los Angeles.

An annual launching pad for student filmmakers, the festival has featured the first films of future award winners such as Peter Richardson (2011 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Award winner, "How To Die in Oregon") and John Hibey (2012 Sundance Film Jury Award Winner for Short Filmmaking, "Fishing Without Net"), as well as numerous others. The festival screens films made by undergraduate students during the past year as class projects in the Department of Film, Television and Theatre.

This year's event features 11 films (running times are included after the titles):

- "Cold Open" (7:16), Brian Lach, Lesley Stevenson. Writer's block meets actor's ambitions in a slick trip through a rough draft.
- "The Way Things Were" (10:20), Blake Avery, Zuri Eshun. A teenager's stable world cracks when his desire for a college education forces him to confront the weight of his damaged family, and ultimately his closest friend.
- "Much Ado After School" (15:35), Brian Lach, Nicole Sganga. An ambitious afterschool program brings out the inner Bard in a group of South Bend students.



- "The Night Out" (10:56), Mitchell Abraham, Zachary Ostapchenko, Weibo Chen. There's a party at the house down the street...or is there?

- "Eat Ride Sleep" (15:15), Mikey Nichols, Lauren Josephson. Nine-year-old C.J. Burford hears God's call to ride his bike across America, with the family RV right behind him, and the media tagging along.

- "Metta Johnson's Video Portfolio" (8:18), Will Neal, Nick Desmone. Metta Johnson wants to be a big-time Hollywood director, but has no talent nor creative skills.

- "Love Thy Neighbor" (9:40), Bryan Daly, Jill Chippelley. The girl next door is looking for love in all the wrong faces.

- "Isn't It Pretty to Think So" (16:56), John Rodgers, Carleigh Coyne. After a short stint in a rehab facility, Owen comes home to find that some things never change.

- "Curry & Erin" (9:30), Eric O'Donnell, Maureen Gavin. Stricken with ALS, and blessed with a loving husband, a day in the life of Nashville artist Erin Brady Worsham is like no other.

- "Reparation" (9:26), Anthony Patti, Bryan Dimas. A young woman attempts an escape from a prison-like mental institution.

- "J2K" (12:15), Grace Carini, Hunter Speese. A dermatologist, librarian and grocery store clerk. Not exactly the three wise men, but some pregnancies are just surreal.

Screenings (all Eastern time) are at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 29, and 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 30 and 31. Tickets are \$7 for the general public, \$6 for faculty and staff, \$5 for seniors (65 and older) and \$4 for students. They may be purchased online at <http://performingarts.nd.edu>, by phone at (574) 631-2800 or in person from noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday at the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center ticket office.

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LaLu Seniors Earn Nominations



Munis Tutu (from left), Alex Olesinski, Jalen Coleman-Lands and Drew Cayce.

La Lumiere School announced seniors Drew Cayce, Jalen Coleman-Lands, Alex Olesinski and Munis Tutu have been nominated for the 2015 McDonald's All American Games.

More than 820 players from 47 states and the District of Columbia received nominations, including 22 from Indiana. Between La Lumiere's four nominations and a nomination received by another local athlete, La Porte County received almost a quarter of the state's nominations. The final teams will be announced during the McDonald's All American Games Selection Show on ESPNU at 5 p.m. CST Wednesday, Jan. 28. The tournament is April 1 at Chicago's United Center.

Coleman-Lands, La Lu shooting guard and ESPN four-star recruit, officially signed a letter of intent with the University of Illinois last November. Olesinski, a 6' 9" forward, is considering offers from Gonzaga and Boston College. Point guard Tutu has offers from several schools, including Loyola Marymount. Cayce, a 6' 3" shooting guard, is being recruited by several Division I schools.

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Lubeznik Center Classes

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., has 15 classes for children, teens and adults planned through winter and spring sessions.

One-day workshops are designed for those who don't have time to commit to a full class schedule. Back this winter, for example, is "Daring Derby Hat Making," where Amanda Joyner shows students how to create and trim a unique hat suitable for the Kentucky Derby. In "Fused Glass," also returning this season, students learn the fundamentals of glass while creating a glass tile and jewelry.

Those able to commit to a longer session have six visual art classes from which to choose.

Returning for the third time in a row is "Adult Photography" taught by LCA's administrative manager, Natalie Mills. Students interested in taking better pictures gain an understanding of how to use settings on the camera as Mills covers terminology, techniques and craft. Art enthusiasts who want to gain confidence in discussing contemporary art should register for "Art Appreciation" with Gregg Hertzlieb, director/curator of Valparaiso University's Brauer Museum of Art, who will address the challenges modern art raises in its abstract and conceptual emphases.

Young artists have four different classes from which to choose. "Cookies & Canvas," a kid-friendly version of "Masters & Merlot," involves students as young as 7 learning the basics of mixing, paint application and composition to create their own works. Older students, ages 11-17, who are inspired by Manga comics can create their own in "Cartooning & Manga."

"Memoir Writing" and "Sandcastle Writers" have returned this season. "Memoir Writing" offers students the chance to document memories in their own writing styles and for their own pleasure. For writers interested in fiction, creative non-fiction and poetry, "Sandcastle Writers" focuses on using the Amherst Writers and Artists method through in-class writing, sharing and positive feedback.

Visit lubeznikcenter.org for a full listing of all classes, tuition, instructor bios or to register. Current members can choose their member discount in the drop-down menu during checkout. LCA members receive 10 percent off classes. Call the center at (219) 874-4900 or email artinfo@lubeznikcenter.org for more information.

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Brown Bag Lunch Gardening Series

La Porte County Master Gardeners will present four sessions — two each in La Porte and Michigan City — as part of a “brown bag” lunch and learn gardening series.

All sessions are from noon to 1 p.m.

The first is Wednesday, Jan. 21, at Purdue Extension-La Porte County Office, 2857 W. Indiana 2, La Porte. Two avid gardeners and naturalists, Jan Koss and Barb Merten, transformed a backyard area into a certified Monarch Watch “waystation” for raising and releasing Monarch butterflies. Focused on raising awareness of the Monarch butterfly’s plight, they will share how-to information on types of plants, equipment and housing needed to raise Monarchs.

Having raised and released 130 Monarch butterflies in 2014 at Bench Creek Gardens, Koss and Merten will share their tips, suggestions and information on raising caterpillars. They also received the 2014 Bring Nature Home Award from the Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

Ensuing programs are:

- Wednesday, Feb. 11: “Pruning and Deadheading,” Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Michigan City.
- Wednesday, March 18: “Insect Management in the Vegetable Garden,” Purdue Extension-La Porte County Office.
- Wednesday, April 15: “Learning to Grow (and Growing to Love) Herbs,” Michigan City Public Library.

Participants can take their lunch. The fee is \$5 per session, which includes informational handouts, or \$15 for all four sessions. No preregistration is required.

Call Purdue Extension – La Porte County at (219) 324-9407 for more information, or download a flyer at www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte. Click on the “Garden” heading at the top of the page.

The La Porte County Master Gardener Association is a Purdue Cooperative Extension Service program that trains volunteers to promote good gardening and horticultural practices.

Sarett Nature Center

The following programs are available through Sarett Nature Center, 2300 Benton Center Road, Benton Harbor, Mich.:

- Snowshoe at Allegan State Game Area at 12:30 p.m. EST Saturday, Jan. 24.

The fee is \$10.

- Susan and Michael Wood will present a slideshow highlighting South Africa at 3 p.m. EST Sunday, Jan. 25.

The fee is \$3.

Call (269) 927-4832 to register for either program.

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Local Education Official Praised

Gov. Mike Pence recognized Audra Peterson, the 2014 Career and Technical Education Director of the Year, during his State of the State address on Jan. 14.



Audra Peterson (center), director of La Porte County Career and Technical Education, appears with First Lady Karen Pence and Gov. Mike Pence.

Peterson is the director of La Porte County Career and Technical Education. She was recognized for partnering with NIPSCO to create an Energy Pathway for students in La Porte County.

Pence said opportunities in career and technical education should be made available to more Indiana students. He called for a focus on education during this legislative session.

Peterson attended a reception with many state leaders, spoke with Pence and the First Lady and was a special guest seated in the First Lady's box during the session.



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

Stroller, Baby and You

Aimed at toddlers and preschoolers, programs include music, dance, storytelling and a hike (weather permitting).

The free program is from 10 to 11 a.m. Monday, Jan. 26, Feb. 2 and 9, March 2, 16 and 30, and April 6, 13 and 27 at Red Mill County Park. Call at least one week in advance to register.

Parent & Child Discovery Days

The program includes arts and crafts, games and snacks. All activities are related to the program topic. Programs are appropriate for children 3 to 8, with an adult required to participate.

Programs are from 6 to 7:15 p.m. at Red Mill County Park. The cost is \$5 per child/per program. Pre-registration and payment are required at least one week in advance or until full, whichever comes first. The lineup is:

- Jan. 28 — “It’s Cold Outside.”
- Feb. 11 — “Oh Deer.”
- March 11 — “Insect Insight.”
- April 1 — “Turtle Talk.”
- April 15 — “Spring Has Sprung.”

Senior Lifestyles

Join the free 55+ Club, a social club designed for adults 55 and older to learn and explore various types of nature. Free coffee is served to participants.

The group meets from 9 to 10 a.m. at Luhr County Park Nature Center, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, La Porte. Call at least one week in advance to register. The schedule is:

- March 4 — “Sleep Disorders and Their Effects on Your Health” with Mindi Whittacker.
- April 1 — “Heart Disease Risk Factors — Know Your Numbers” with cardiovascular nurse navigator Nancy Blossom.
- May 6 — “Gardening” with Sacha Burns of Sunkissed Organics.

Daddy Daughter Dance — “Princess Style”

An evening of dancing, refreshments and pictures is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday or Saturday, March 6 or 7, at Red Mill County Park.

The cost is \$15 per couple, or \$5 for each additional daughter. Pre-registration is required at least one week in advance or until full, whichever comes first.

A Win-Win Situation



Jan. 8 proved a triumphant night for the La Lumiere Laker Varsity White Team as it not only defeated Wasatch Academy 71-54, but also helped support cancer research by raising \$2,300 for the Mary Kline Foundation. Alex Kline established the effort, naming it after his mother, who died from brain cancer when he was 10. Kline is the creator of The Recruit Scoop (recruitscoop.rivals.com), an online site for many college basketball coaches who consider his research and reporting when deciding which high-school players to pursue. Kline, 20, is a two-time Forbes Magazine "30 under 30" recipient, joining the likes of LeBron James, Bryce Harper and Usain Bolt. During the Jan. 8 game, the crowd included Head Coach John Calipari from Kentucky, as well as coaches from Loyola Marymount, Butler, American University and Purdue. Kline is pictured holding a basketball in the front row with the La Lumiere team.

Pantry/Thrift Shop Sale

The Harbor Country Emergency Food Pantry and Thrift Shop, 6 S. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich., will have a bag sale Jan. 27-31.

All regular clothing is available to fill a bag for \$2 because there is a need to downsize the winter clothing inventory.

The shop is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday. It is closed Sunday and Monday. All times are Eastern. The shop aids people in need in New Buffalo, Three Oaks, Galien, Weesaw, Lake and Chickaming townships.

Mainstreet Association Meeting

Michigan City Mainstreet Association will have its annual meeting Tuesday, Jan. 27, at Sequel Bar & Grill, 110 W. Ninth St., Michigan City.

The meeting is from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., with lunch starting promptly at noon. The agenda will be posted at www.uptownartsdistrict.org. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

Make reservations at ed@uptownartsdistrict.org or call Diane at (219) 561-6991.

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Zoo Receives \$100,000 Grant



Holding the check for the \$100,000 grant are Zoo Director Jamie Huss and Zoological Society Vice President Johnny Stimley.

The Otto J. and Margaret M. Zack Charitable Trust has awarded Washington Park Zoological Society with a \$100,000 grant for 2015.

The money will help repair the petting barn roof, create a medical treatment area and buy food and medical expenses for the animals.

This is the third year the zoological society has received a grant from the trust. In 2013, it received \$20,000 for animal food. In 2014, \$20,000 went to animal food and \$40,000 to buy a freezer/cooler combination unit.

The Otto J. and Margaret M. Zack Charitable Trust was awarded to the Zoological Society as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Over the past three years, \$272,000 has been contributed to the zoo through grants, donations and fundraisers.

Email ssheldon@emichigancity.com or call (219) 873-1510 if interested in helping the zoo or joining the Zoological Society.



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Michigan City Public Library

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

- **Film screening, "42," at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24.**

The library and Purdue University-North Central are co-sponsoring the showing of Brian Helgeland's sports drama/biopic, which centers on the historic 1947 baseball season when Brooklyn Dodgers General Manager Branch Rickey (Harrison Ford) signed the first black Major League player, Jackie Robinson. Author and PNC professor Jerry Holt will discuss his play, "Rickey," after the movie.

- **Mightiest of Mighty Mic Returns at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25.**

Several years ago, the library, along with the late Richard Fammeree, hosted musicians, poets, dancers and other community members through the open mic forum. Blues guitarist Keith Scott will host the reunion. New and former participants are invited.

- **Yoga with David Kipley at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27.**

Kipley is a recent graduate of Dancing Feet Yoga's Yoga Teacher Program. All levels are welcome. Take a mat and wear comfortable clothes.

- **Knitting Club for All Ages at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28.**

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

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

"New Natural"

Lesley Baker will present the exhibit "New Natural," using ceramics to represent preciousness, raw materials and history, on Jan. 24 through April 5 at South Bend Museum of Art.

Baker is an associate professor at the Herron School of Art and Design in Indianapolis and has taught at University of California, Berkeley, and the California College of the Arts. She earned her master of fine arts at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2000. She has participated in numerous artist residencies, including the Archie Bray Foundation, the John Michael Kohler Arts/Industry Residency, the Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Center in Denmark and the Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen, China. Her work has been published in numerous books, including "The Yixing Effect" and "The Best of 500 Ceramics."

A reception is from 5 to 9 p.m. EST Friday, March 6, with a gallery talk with Baker at 6:15 p.m. EST.

The SBMA is located in The Century Center, 120 S. St. Joseph St. Call (574) 235-9102 or visit www.southbendart.org/ for more information.

Westchester Public Library

The following programs are available through Westchester Public Library:

- **NorthShore Health Center blood-pressure screening from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21, in the Bertha Wood meeting room at Thomas Library, 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.**

The free blood-pressure screenings are offered the third Wednesday of each month. Those interested also can receive help calculating Body Mass Index.

- **Battles of the American Civil War continues from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21, and 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 24, in the Bertha Wood meeting room at Thomas Library.**

History buff and Civil War enthusiast Thomas Murphy will lead the discussion on the first major land battle of the armies in Virginia.

- **Friday Night at the Movies, "Mr. Peabody and Sherman," at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 23, at the Library Service Center, 100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.**

The showing is free. The movie, rated PG, has a running time of 92 minutes.

- **The first Trivia Night at the Museum at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, at Westchester Township History Museum, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.**

No registration is necessary for the monthly program. Teams of one to four people can test their knowledge of 1980s cartoons. Vie for a prize. Refreshments will be served.

- **Bits and Bytes series, "Intro to Facebook," from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, and 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, in the Serials/Automation Department at Thomas Library.**

Registration is under way. Visit or call the Serials Department at (219) 926-7696, Ext. 1125, or register at www.wpl.lib.in.us/. Click on the Bits and Bytes link. The class is free of charge.

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Early morning, April 15, 1912, was bitterly cold. The waters of the North Atlantic lay before the weary travelers, inky and still. The quiet ocean reflected sparkling stars that shone from overhead, making spiraling patterns in the smooth surface of the watery blackness.

At 2:20 a.m., Titanic, the largest and grandest ship ever built, having been stricken by an iceberg and mortally wounded, slid beneath the waves. All that could be heard, in the hush of the early morning, were the distant cries of people struggling in the frigid waters and the whimpering of those huddled, shivering in drifting lifeboats.

Unthinkable disaster had befallen the pride of the White Star Line, and now, all that remained of the 2,228 passengers and crew who set sail with such great hope only five days before were the 705 souls huddled together in numb disbelief and grief in Titanic's lifeboats, bobbing over an empty, obsidian black sea.

The story of the "unsinkable" ship and her terrible fate has been told many times over and never fails to fascinate.



Robert Myers, Berrien County Historical Association curator.

Curiously, two of the greatest disasters in maritime history have links to the Michiana region: Titanic's sinking in 1912 with the loss of 1,523 lives, and the Eastland, headed for a Michigan City dunes picnic, overturning in the Chicago River on July 24, 1915, drowning 844 souls.

Titanic's connection to Southwest Michigan centers around a Dowagiac native son, Sen. William Alden Smith, who chaired the senate inquiry investigating the events surrounding the Titanic disaster, and three area families who were on the ship that fateful night and lived to tell the story.

Myers recounts the story, as revealed by his research, and concludes that Smith did a tremendous job getting to the heart of the sinking and drawing conclusions that led to the setting of new standards for passenger ships to prevent such a tragedy.

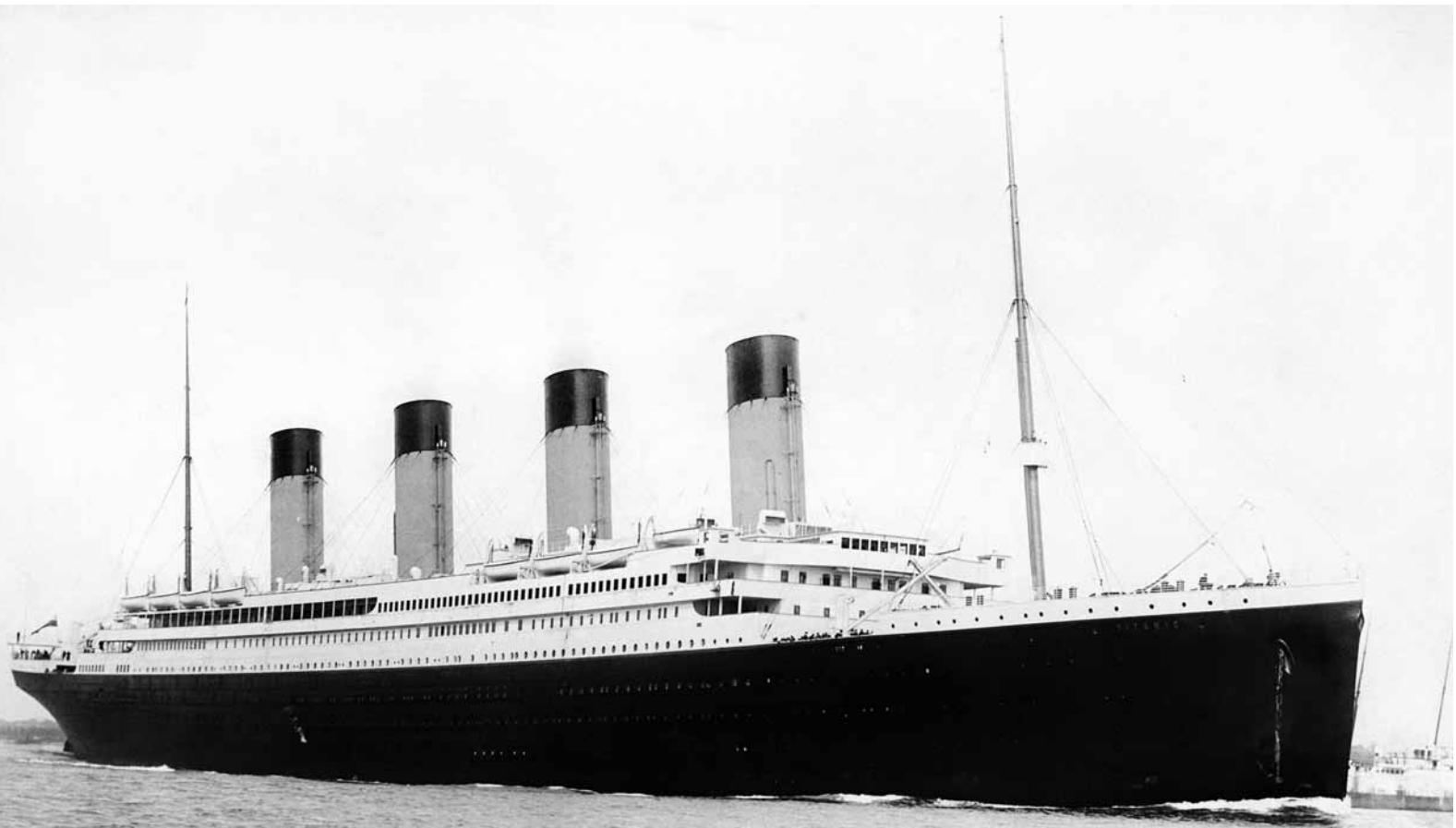


Sen. William Alden Smith chaired the senate inquiry investigating the events surrounding the Titanic disaster.

Tragic Ties

Curator Helps Reveal Southwest Michigan Connections to Titanic Sinking

by William Halliar



RMS Titanic before heading out to sea.

from occurring again.

Smith began the formal inquiry the day after the survivors arrived in New York's harbor, before they could scatter to the four winds. The White

Star Line, Titanic's owners, was headquartered in the United States, and the greatest loss of life was born by Americans. *The Chicago Daily Journal* reported on Saturday, April 20, 1912, that Bruce Ismay, International Mercantile Marine Co. president, was lobbying with the British government to spirit the crew and survivors away for a hearing, to be held on English soil. Smith was quoted as saying "this was one of the reasons the investigation had been started without any loss of time."

A total of 82 witnesses testified at the hearing. They spoke of ice warnings that were ignored, the lack of sufficient lifeboats and of the failure



The influence of Sen. William Alden Smith helped lead to a ruling that there had to be enough lifeboat seats to accommodate every passenger and crew member on board a given ship.

of ships near Titanic that night to respond. The testimony of the survivors was sobering and dramatic.

Myers stresses that the inquiry chaired by Smith was important because of the many safety regulations that came out of it. Some of the new rules included: the ruling that there had to be enough lifeboat seats to accommodate every passenger and crew member on board a given ship; regular ice patrols that were established in the North Atlantic; and regulations for the use of radios in emergency situations, to name a few.

The stories of Southwest Michigan residents who survived that horrible night are interesting as well. There were three families aboard Titanic bound for Berrien County: one in first class, one in second class and one in third.

In first-class accommodations were honeymooners Dickenson and Helen Bishop, heirs to Round Oak Stove Co. in Dowagiac. Although they survived the sinking, their story did not end well. Their marriage collapsed in divorce shortly after the couple returned to Dowagiac. It was suggested the stress Dickenson was under, being one of the few men to make it into the lifeboats, led to the dissolution of his marriage. His wife, Helen, later died in an automobile accident.

Nellie Becker and her three children were berthed in the second class section of the ship. Nellie and her husband were missionaries returning to Berrien County after a long assignment abroad. Before embarking, the family's youngest child became ill and the father decided to stay behind in England with the child until he recovered. This decision probably saved the father's life, since women and children were loaded first into Titanic's lifeboats.

Ruth Becker, oldest daughter of the Becker family, became separated from her mother and siblings in the crowded confusion when the lifeboats were being loaded, but she finally made her way into another boat, apart from her family.

Ruth will be remembered for giving her blanket to one of the ship's stokers in the lifeboat. He'd come up from the boiler room sweating, in only shorts and a T-shirt, and would have died of hypothermia in the frigid night air without any covering. Ruth became a school teacher and died in 1991. In her lifetime, she hardly spoke of her ordeal aboard Titanic.

In third class were Hanna Touma and her children, Maria and Georges, travelling from Lebanon. Her husband traveled to Dowagiac the year before to build a cabin and till the ground in preparation for his family's arrival — a classic immigrant story.

Continued on Page 20

Tragic Ties

Continued from Page 19



Ruth Becker Blanchard, seen here in the back row on the far left, became a teacher and died in 1991. She rarely spoke of what happened on Titanic.

Myers tells these and so many more fascinating stories and details in a presentation and slide show he gives to any group in the area interested in Berrien County's rich history and Titanic connections. More information is available at: www.berrienhistory.org, (269) 471-1202, the museum in the historic Courthouse Square in downtown Berrien Springs, Mich., or by writing Curator Robert C. Myers, History Center at Courthouse Square, P.O. Box 261, Berrien Springs, Mi. 49103

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The Fitness Rebellion

Editor's Note — "The Fitness Rebellion," written by staff at Michigan City's Anytime Fitness, appears every other week in The Beacher. This column was written by Trainer Shannon Rockstad.

One of the main excuses I get about purchasing sessions from a personal trainer is that they can find all the same information on the Internet.

It's a noble cause to try and save a few bucks and get the DIY book on your body. Here's the problem: If we could learn everything from the Internet about our bodies and go about it on your own, doctors would be obsolete, as well as physical therapists and any sort of specialist.

This same is true of trainers. We pay for our certifications and invest a lot of time learning from other trainers and honing programming skills, as well as communication with each individual person. When you hire a trainer, you're hiring someone whose sole job is to be concerned with your goals and progress. We make sure you are there and getting what you paid for: your goals reached. These goals go beyond just the training sessions, which means as a trainer we go beyond that as well. After a session, you are still able to email your trainer questions or ask for motivation. We are there for you and your goals.

What many people don't realize is how hard it is to walk in a gym and immediately know what to do if you've never worked out before. It's good to be proactive and look things up on the Internet or magazines but, ultimately, without someone there to show you if you are doing the exercise correctly, or your diet, then it will take a lot longer to reach your goals. And in the time it takes for you to self-teach, you may get discouraged, injured and/or decide your health is not worth it...until you go to the doctor.

I am always reminding people prevention is the best treatment. It is never a bad thing to come to a trainer before you have injuries instead of after. If you pay for a trainer for one year minimum, listen to everything they have to say, ask questions and learn the exercise forms. Then, you will have done yourself more than years and years worth of training. You have built a solid foundation from which you can build on your own.

Go back to when you decided to get a membership. You had certain goals in mind you knew a gym could help. Instead of going a few times, having a few OK workouts, then falling off the wagon for whatever reason, hire a trainer, get on a program that is designed only for you and dedicate yourself. The reason to join a gym is because we have certain goals in mind. Those goals, no matter what they are, were meant to be achieved. Don't let anything stop you.

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

The following programs are through Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore:

- Learn about nature, and how to explore its beauty on snowshoes, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24, at the Visitor Center.

A brief indoor program is followed by a ranger-led hike on snowshoes through fields and woods. A limited number of snowshoes are available for loan, or participants can take their own. A hike will be offered if there is not enough snow.

- Miller Woods Restoration Days from 9 a.m. to noon the fourth Saturday of each month at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.

Local residents can volunteer their time and expertise, the focus being a black oak savanna restoration project. The day starts with a hike to the site being restored, an informal presentation about the project by Cathy Martin of Save the Dunes, followed by a short stewardship component.

All restoration tools and safety gear will be provided. Dress appropriately for the weather. Contact Ted Winterfeld at (219) 395-1661 or ted_winterfeld@nps.gov, or Rachel Veronesi at (219) 395-1844 or rachel_veronesi@partner.nps.gov for more information.

- The free Junior Ranger Program from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and Paul H. Douglas Center.

A variety of Junior Ranger programs exist, from a short Beachcombers Activity Page to an extensive Junior Rangers Booklet. Complete a program and earn a prize. Stop by the Visitor Center or Douglas Center to pick up a free program booklet.

- "Park in Focus" from 1 to 3 p.m. every Saturday at the Paul H. Douglas Center.

Park staff will host special programs focusing on park resources, hot topics in research, new environmental films or guest speakers.

- "Kid's Rule" from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.

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

The Visitor Center is at 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. The Paul H. Douglas Center is on Lake Street north of U.S. 12 in the Miller Beach neighborhood of Gary. Call (219) 395-1882 for more information.



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Solo Exhibit at Village Gallery



Simpson

The Village Gallery in Valparaiso's Pines Village Retirement Communities will feature a solo exhibit by Desiree Simpson through Feb. 26.

An artist, educator, designer and retired sergeant major in the U.S. Army Reserves, Simpson's love of art emerged while growing up in Chicago. She

earned a bachelor of arts degree in fine arts from the American University in Paris, a master's degree in occupational and vocational education from Chicago State University and a doctorate in education from the University of Illinois. She has more than 20 years teaching experience and is a licensed art educator.

Simpson's artistry takes shape through mosaics, painting and sculpture. As a practicing artist, her art portfolio received acclaim when her watercolor, "The Peacock," was adopted by Indiana State Museum in 2011 as part of the permanent collection. As a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic, she worked with artisans as a designer in the Small Entrepreneur Development Program. She helped local artisans perfect the quality of their craft products, expand their markets locally and internationally and develop marketing strategies.

That humanitarian experience inspired Simpson to open LiveArts Studio in Gary as a cultural art, education and entrepreneurial institution. The studio informs learners of the ways in which art, design and creativity can be employed as viable tools to improve life and enhance one's lifestyle.

The Village Gallery at Pines Village Retirement Communities opened in 2009 and has showcased many artists from around the region and U.S. Located at 3303 Pines Village Circle (off Calumet Avenue just north of Cumberland Crossing), it is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. There is no admission charge. Call (219) 465-1591 for more information.



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MCAS Board Honors Kintzele

The Michigan City Area Schools board last month recognized Jim Kintzele Sr. for more than 20 years of service as a school board member and officer.

Superintendent Barbara Eason-Watkins and Board President Don Dulaney presented him with a framed Michigan City High School "school board varsity letter" in recognition of his five terms on the board.



Honoring Jim Kintzele Sr. (second from right) at the Michigan City Area Schools Board meeting were (from left) Board President Don Dulaney, Melinda Kintzele and Superintendent Barbara Eason-Watkins.

A lifelong Michigan City resident, Kintzele is the Michigan City Refuse Department superintendent, a position he has held for the past 19 years. He served on the MCAS board for 20 1/2 years. For the majority of that time, he held the office of president or vice president.

A longtime public servant, his first elected office was at 21 to the La Porte County Council. He served on the Michigan City Common Council for 16 years and has served on numerous city and county boards and committees.

Polish-American Cultural Society

The Polish-American Cultural Society of Northwest Indiana, Michigan City Chapter, will meet at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, at the former St. Mary School, 321 W. 11th St., Michigan City.

Call Theresa Child at (219) 464-1369 for additional information.

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Service League of Michigan City

Service League of Michigan City met Jan. 13, with President Katherine Brennan calling the meeting to order. The 15 members present approved the November meeting minutes as published.

The Christmas luncheon marked the December meeting.

Two thank you notes were read from Jim Hiss and Phyllis Long. The group thanked Esther Schlegelmilch and Kathi Dean for their memorial donation in memory of Alene Burnside. Schlegelmilch also donated in memory of Robert Fritz and Despina Fegaras.

The group also highlighted memorial donations made in memory of Dorothy Barnett from: Nancy Trainor, Linda Novak, Katherine Brennan, Karen Burnside, Kathi Dean, Ivye Benson, Bruce and Julie Manner, Jim and Betty Fisher, Virginia and Greg Orlowski, Marsha Kenney, Pat Walker, Mike and Judy Kerestury, Don and Dottie Evett, Catherine Kelly, Gerald and Sally Piotrowski, Audrey Hagenow, Richard Dolezal, Linda Milzarek, Thomas Hooper and Crystal Domke.

The League also received donations from Ernest and Beverly Heberling, Richard Cook and Sharon Raab for \$50 each.

Committees shared figures for November, then December 2014, respectively, which is how they are documented below.

The Collections Committee reported sending out reminders to clients to return overdue equipment: First Cards: 20 and 23; Second Cards: nine and 10; and Letters: 0 and 6.

The Equipment Committee reported the League served 88 and 70 patients, loaned 133 and 97 items and too'd one and two items. Three and five donations were taken into inventory.

The Dressings Committee reported the following distributions: 4-by-4 gauze — 6 and 6 packages; 5-by-9 pads — 0 and 7 boxes; chux — 63 and 45 dozen. Patients served — 7 and 6 new; 20 and 17 repeat; for a total of 27 and 23 total patients.

Barker Welfare Foundation was thanked for the grant to help buy a new furnace/AC unit/duct work.

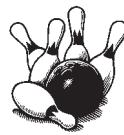
The League is selling Carson Community Days coupon books for \$5. Community Days are Feb. 27 and 28. The books may be picked up at the office, 301 E. Garfield St.

A "Give-Back" night is Tuesday, March 10, at Holly's Restaurant & Pub. Coupons can be picked up at the office or printed soon off the web.

The next meeting is at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, followed by inventory and a luncheon.

The League always needs volunteers. Anyone interested can call (219) 872-1144 or stop by the office between 9 a.m. and noon and 1 and 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

It is closed holidays.



Long Beach Women's Bowling

Jan. 13, 2015

TEAM STANDING	WON	LOST
1. Gutter Golfers	7	0
1. Lady Strikers	7	0
1. Pin Ball Wizards	7	0
2. Striking Beauties	6	1

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES	SCORE
1. Jill Mellen	185
2. June Salmon	179
3. Tammy Vouri	172
4. Lenore Hadaway	158
5. Nancy Kubath	156
6. Ella Parkerson	150

SPLITS

Ann Bogart	2-7-8
Nancy Kubath	4-5-7

Free Exercise Program

Purdue Extension Family Nutrition Program will sponsor a free exercise program at 12:15 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 20 through Feb. 26, at the Madeline and George Smrt Center, 301 Grant St., Michigan City.

Those interested can join at any time. The muscle-toning fitness program is mostly done seated in a chair. Wear comfortable clothes and supportive shoes. Consult a health-care provider before starting. Contact Jody Kutch at (219) 324-9407 for more information.

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Shakespeare Week Returns

Christ College, Valparaiso University's Honors College, will present the second Shakespeare Week on Feb. 2-7 and featuring a weeklong residency by Actors From The London Stage.

Shakespeare Week will showcase performances and workshops sponsored in collaboration with the English and theater departments.

Highlights include:

- Scenes from "Romeo and Juliet" presented by Children's Theatre Works of Chicago Street Theatre at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, in the Christ College Refectory. Free admission.
- "Beauty and Truth and Shakespeare" by Gary Taylor of Florida State University at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at the University Theatre. Free admission.
- "Macbeth" by Actors From The London Stage at 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 5-7, at the University Theatre. Admission is \$15, \$10 for VU students, faculty and staff and \$25 for the general public and to sponsor a student. Call the Center for the Arts Box Office at (219) 464-5162 for tickets.

Contact Kari-Anne Innes at (219) 464-6843 for additional information about Shakespeare Week.

Harbor Country Book Club

Harbor Country Book Club will discuss Kathleen Norris' "Dakota: A Spiritual Geography" at 1 p.m. EST Tuesday, Jan. 27, at The Harbor Grand, 111 W. Water St., New Buffalo, Mich.

The January and February meetings are at 1 p.m. EST. Meetings are open to anyone interested in discussing the book. The Feb. 24 selection is Herman Koch's "The Dinner."

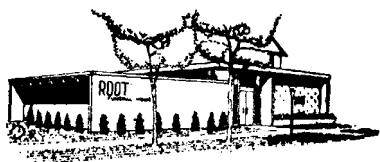
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Unity Foundation Scholarships

Applications are available online for the Unity Foundation of La Porte County 2015 cycle for scholarships and awards.

The submission deadline is April 10. Scholarships and awards ranging from \$250 to \$2,500 are given through more than 50 funds at Unity, the community foundation serving La Porte County. Scholarship opportunities are available for graduating seniors and students already in college.

To make the application process easier for students and school officials, applicants can log into www.uflc.net to complete and submit applications and documentation online. Students are encouraged to begin the process early because transcripts must be downloaded before the application is submitted.

In 2014, more than 100 students from throughout La Porte County received Unity Foundation scholarships totaling \$143,236. That amount was in addition to the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarships, which cover 100 percent of tuition for two La Porte County students for four years of college.

A new scholarship also was added, The Tanber-Blair Golf Scholarship Foundation, which supports high school seniors graduating from La Porte County schools who played on high school golf teams for all four years.

Specialty awards also can be found at www.uflc.net. Some require nominations of deserving students or adults:

- The Jan Nona Environmental Award honors students or "teachers inspiring students" in the Michigan City area who move beyond being an ordinary citizen and become involved in community environmental issues.
- The Diane Kay Bamberth Memorial Award for a graduating La Porte High School senior who demonstrates community service, leadership, humility, courage, tenacity, strength during adversity and strong moral fiber.

Call (219) 879-0327 for more information.

Taltree Winter Classes

Taltree Arboretum & Gardens' 2015 winter class schedule is available online.

The website is Taltree.org. Classes are geared toward all ages and cover a variety of nature, health and recreation topics. They include: indoor yoga, pendant wire wrapping, vegetable and ornamental gardening, Indiana Master Naturalist, birding, ornamental gardening, fossils, rocks and minerals and rain gardening. Classes are located in a heated greenhouse and classroom.

Also posted online is the educational hike schedule. Taltree is located at 450 W. County Road 100 North near Valparaiso.

JROTC Conducts Presentation

The Michigan City High School Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps conducted a presentation Jan. 14 at Barker and Krueger middle schools.

The objective was to familiarize eighth-graders with JROTC prior to scheduling their courses as high-school freshmen. The Marine Corps requires MCHS maintain at least 100 cadets to maintain the program. Current enrollment is 125.

The presentation started with introductory remarks by Senior Marine Instructor Maj. Tom McGrath. He emphasized the JROTC is a leadership program, not a preparation for the military, that can benefit all students. He also provided examples of cadets who have earned advanced promotion in the military and earned ROTC college scholarships worth \$180,000 by participating in JROTC.



Cadet Capt. Alex Wyman commands the Armed Platoon during the presentation.

The cadets did multiple drill and physical training demonstrations to provide examples of activities available to students. Three senior cadets also provided their opinions of the JROTC.

McGrath closed the presentation by telling students, "With our program, as in life, the most important thing you need is a positive attitude. It is your attitude, not your aptitude, which determines your altitude in life."

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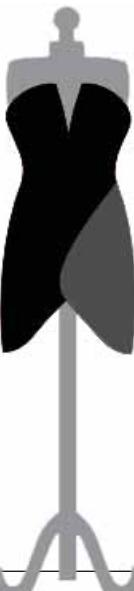
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Activities to Explore

In the Local Area:

January 21 — La Porte County Master Gardeners “brown bag” lunch series, Monarch butterflies, noon-1 p.m., Purdue Extension-La Porte County Office, 2857 W. Indiana 2, La Porte. Cost: \$5. Info: (219) 324-9407.

January 22 — “Thursday Night Noir!,” “Stranger on the Third Floor” (1940), 7 p.m., Valparaiso University Brauer Museum of Art. Free. Info: (219) 464-5761, Gregg.Hertzlieb@valpo.edu

January 23 — Friday Night at the Movies, “Mr. Peabody and Sherman,” 6:30 p.m., Westchester Public Library Service Center, 100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

January 23-25 — Annual WinterFest, downtown La Porte. Info: (219) 326-9600.

January 24 — Michigan City Summer Festival annual Meltdown, 5 p.m.-midnight, Michigan City Senior Center, 2 on the Lake. Cost: \$20. Info: Joe (219) 874-8213, info@mcsummerfest.org

January 24 — Film screening, “42,” 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Includes discussion with PNC professor Jerry Holt. Info: (219) 873-3049.

January 24 — Snowshoe trek, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882.

January 24 — “100 Years of Indiana State Parks,” 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center, 1600 N. County Road 25 East (north end of Indiana 49), Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

January 24-April 5 — “New Natural” exhibit, South Bend Museum of Art, located in The Century Center, 120 S. St. Joseph St. Info: (574) 235-9102, www.southbendart.org

January 25 — Book discussion, “The Reluctant Nazi: Searching for My Grandfather,” 2 p.m., Sinai Temple, 2800 Franklin St. Reservations: (219) 874-4477.

January 25 — Mightiest of Mighty Mic Returns, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

January 27 — Michigan City Mainstreet Association annual meeting, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Sequel Bar & Grill, 110 W. Ninth St., Michigan City. Cost: \$15/members, \$20/non-members. Reservations: ed@uptownartsdistrict.org

January 27 — Harbor Country Book Club, Kathleen Norris’ “Dakota: A Spiritual Geography,” 1 p.m. EST, The Harbor Grand, 111 W. Water St., New Buffalo, Mich.

January 27 — Trivia Night at the Museum, 7 p.m., Westchester Township History, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesertton.

January 28 — The Polish-American Cultural Society of Northwest Indiana, Michigan City Chapter, 5 p.m., former St. Mary School, 321 W. 11th St., Michigan City. Info: (219) 464-1369.

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

Wednesdays — Al-Anon meetings, 7-8 p.m., Long Beach Old School Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail. Info: (219) 716-2690.

Farther Afield:

January 23-25 — Crown Point Community Theatre, "Anatomy of a Murder," Old Lake County Courthouse, downtown Crown Point. Times: 7:30 p.m. Fri./Sat., 2 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$15/general admission, \$12/seniors, students and military personnel with valid ID. Tickets: CPCT.biz, (219) 805-4255.

January 24 — Neil Jacobs, 7:30 p.m. EDT, The Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Tickets: \$10/general admission, \$8/students and seniors, free/children 12 and younger. Info/reservations: (269) 983-3688, info@boxfactoryforthearts.org, www.boxfactoryforthearts.org

January 24 — Miller Woods Restoration Days, 9 a.m.-noon, Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, Lake Street north of U.S. 12 in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1661, (219) 395-1844.

January 24 — Opening reception, "Farms, Factories, Tourism and Culture: Works by Indiana Artisans," noon-3 p.m., South Shore Arts Crown Point branch, 123 N. Main St. Info: www.southshoreartsonline.org

January 24, 31 — Free Indoor Flea Market, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. EST, New Troy Community Center, 13372 California Road. Info: (773) 375-1514, janina@jannariley.com

January 25 — Susan and Michael Wood slide-show on South Africa, 3 p.m. EST, Sarett Nature Center, 2300 Benton Center Road, Benton Harbor, Mich. Cost: \$3. Info: (269) 927-4832.

January 30 — "Dueling Pianos," The Vineland Center, 1155 Vineland Road, St. Joseph, Mich. Buffet dinner/5:30 p.m., cocktails/6:30 p.m., show/7 p.m. All times Eastern. Tickets: \$30 (\$50 with buffet dinner). Reservations/info: (269) 982-4030, www.smsso.org

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**THIS
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HISTORY**



On January 22, 1789, the first American novel, “The Power of Sympathy,” was published. It was a story of lust, seduction, incest, and suicide, and set the pattern for American novels of the day.

On January 22, 1905, in what became known as “Bloody Sunday,” Russian Army troops fired on St. Petersburg workers who revolted against the working conditions.

On January 22, 1938, Thornton Wilder’s play “Our Town” made its debut, in Princeton, NJ.

On January 23, 1977, the popular television mini-series “Roots,” based on Alex Haley’s novel, began airing on ABC.

On January 23, 1992, Freddie Bartholomew, a popular child actor of the 1930s whose name became synonymous with the English boy he played in “David Copperfield,” died at the age of 67.

On January 23, 2004, Bob Keeshan, television’s “Captain Kangaroo,” died at 76 in Windsor, VT.

On January 23, 2005, Johnny Carson, whose three decades as host of “The Tonight Show” made him America’s most-watched comedian, died, in Malibu, CA, at the age of 79.

On January 24, 1848, gold was discovered on the California property of John A. Sutter, leading to the famous “California Gold Rush,” as well as to the infamous “forty-niners.”

On January 24, 1862, American novelist Edith Wharton was born in New York.

On January 24, 1935, canned beer went on sale (in Richmond, VA) for the first time.

On January 24, 1986, photos from *Voyager 2* revealed 10 previously unknown moons were in orbit around Uranus.

On January 24, 1993, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, one of the most influential civil rights lawyers of the 20th century, died at 84.

On January 25, 1890, New York World reporter Nellie Bly received a tumultuous welcome after completing a round-the-world journey in 72 days, beating the fictional 80-day trip of Jules Verne’s Phileas Fogg.

On January 25, 1915, telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell inaugurated transcontinental phone service with a call from New York to San Francisco.

On January 25, 1947, gangster Al Capone died in Palm Island, FL; he was 48 years old.

On January 25, 1949, the new nation of Israel held its first election.

On January 25, 1961, President John Kennedy held the first presidential news conference to be televised live.

On January 25, 2004, NASA's *Opportunity* rover zipped its first pictures of Mars to Earth, showing a surface smooth and dark red in some places, and strewn with fragmented slabs of light bedrock in others.

On January 26, 1784, Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to his daughter, Sarah Bache, disapproved of the eagle as a symbol of the United States. His reasons: "I wish that the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral Character; like those among Men who live by Sharping and Robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. The Turkey is a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original Native of America."

On January 26, 1837, with the signing of a statehood bill by President Andrew Jackson, Michigan was formally admitted as the 26th state of the Union.

On January 26, 1967, the "Great Blizzard of '67" began piling up snow (eventually totaling in excess of two feet), and bringing many Midwest cities, including Chicago, to a virtual standstill.

On January 26, 1983, Paul "Bear" Bryant, the "winningest" coach in college football history, died at the age of 69.

On January 26, 1986, the Chicago Bears won Super Bowl XX, defeating the New England Patriots by a score of 46 to 10.

On January 26, 1988, the Andrew Lloyd Weber musical "Phantom of the Opera" opened at Broadway's Majestic Theater.

On January 27, 1854, the first regularly scheduled trains began rolling on the Canadian Great Western Railway.

On January 27, 1967, at Cape Kennedy, FL, astronauts "Gus" Grissom, Edward White, and Roger Chaffee died in a flash fire during a routine test aboard their *Apollo I* spacecraft.

On January 28, 1807, London's Pall Mall became the world's first street to be illuminated with gaslight.

On January 28, 1878, the first daily college newspaper, the *Yale News*, began publication in New Haven.

On January 28, 1986, before millions of horrified television viewers, the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded over the Atlantic Ocean, bringing death to the seven astronauts (including school teacher Christa McAuliffe) aboard.

On January 28, 2005, consumer products giant Procter & Gamble Co. and Gillette Co. announced a \$57 billion merger.

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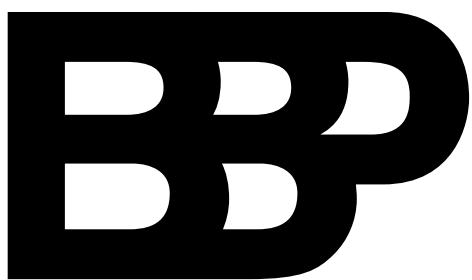
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Indoor Flea Markets

New Troy's free Indoor Flea Market continues from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST Saturdays, Jan. 24 and 31, at New Troy Community Center, 13372 California Road.

Past flea markets included tools, housewares, antiques, photography, jewelry, crafts and books. In addition to the many vendors, the center features the Homeroom Store, which sells used furniture, housewares and books.

Refreshments will be sold. Proceeds from space rentals and Homeroom sales benefit the center, an all-volunteer facility run by the non-profit Friends of New Troy.

Vendor spaces are still available at \$10 per table. Contact Janna at (773) 375-1514 or janna@jannareiley.com for more information.

2015 Rock-N-Bowl

Junior Achievement will host Rock-N-Bowl on Saturday, Jan. 31, at City Lanes, 1901 S. Woodland Ave., Michigan City, or Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Thunderbird Lanes, 1251 Pine Lake Road, La Porte.

To participate, gather a team of five bowlers. Designate a team captain and return the registration form and fee. Encourage each bowler to raise pledges, then arrive at the bowling center to bowl two games to support JA.

Sponsorships are available. If not interested in being a sponsor, a team can bowl for a \$50 entrance fee. Contact Lisa Scheller at (219) 873-3002 or lisa.scheller@ja.org to register or for more information.

JA benefits more than 5,400 young people across La Porte County by building economic knowledge and personal financial literacy.

SMSO Brings Back Dueling Pianos

Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra will present the musical-comedy experience "Dueling Pianos" on Friday, Jan. 30, at The Vineland Center, 1155 Vineland Road, St. Joseph, Mich.

The evening features two sharp-witted musicians with two pianos on a stage, the result described as fast, funny entertainment. The show has sold out the last three years, so people are encouraged to buy tickets early. Tickets are \$30, or \$50 if including the buffet dinner. A table of eight costs \$240, or \$400 if including dinner.

The buffet dinner starts at 5:30 p.m., with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. The show starts at 7 p.m. All times are Eastern.

Contact the Symphony office at (269) 982-4030 or visit www.smso.org for reservations or additional information.

Chamber Membership Breakfast

The Greater La Porte Chamber of Commerce will host a chamber membership breakfast Tuesday, Jan. 27, at T-Bones Pier 11, 1110 Lakeside, La Porte.

The event sponsor is Ancilla College. The cost is \$12 for chamber members and \$17 for non-chamber members. Registration begins at 7:15 a.m., with the meal and presentation at 7:30 a.m.

Registration is encouraged by visiting <http://business.lpchamber.com/events> or calling the chamber office at (219) 362-3178.



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**Off the Book Shelf**

by Sally Carpenter

One Summer by David Baldacci (paperback, \$8 online and in bookstores; also available as an ebook)

What a great title, right? But summer seems a long time away as I look out my window at the first snowstorm of the year. *One Summer* is not Baldacci's newest, but the title and cover made me want to armchair travel to wherever it takes me. Where it took me is somewhere different for Baldacci's usual political thrillers. This time, it's a family in crisis facing loss and major changes.

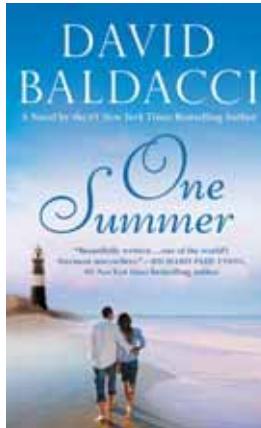
Our story opens in December, just before Christmas. Jack Armstrong is in bed, not because he's sleeping late, but because he's dying. He was an Army Ranger who lived through two rotations in the Middle East and now found himself beaten by a disease. "*His goal was simple: just hold on until Christmas.*"

Jack was married to the love of his life, Lizzie, and they had three children: teenager Mikki, middle-son Cory and pre-schooler Jack. What a horrible strain on such a loving family, but there are no guarantees in life, as we all know. And Jack has accepted his fate.

Baldacci shows his sensitive side as he explores the family dynamics. As the youngest member, Jack Jr. doesn't understand what dying means. Cory just wants to spend as much time with his father as he can. Mikki becomes the sulky teen, retreating to her room and guitar. Lizzie must be the glue to hold the family together, a task not easy to uphold. But can there be family dynamics when the one person most important to them all is dying?

Jack has written Lizzie seven letters she won't find until after his death. Words he can't say now. The letters are located at the back of the book and show a love that transcends death. Lizzie has told Jack she would like to take the children back to the South Carolina coastal city she grew up in and the family home on the ocean that sits next to a lighthouse. Jack hopes the trip will be the healing time needed after he is gone.

What happens when the one you least expect dies? Lizzie goes out late on a snowy night to get Jack's pain meds and dies in a car accident. Spoiler



alert? Oh no, this all happens in the first 25 pages...there's much more to come.

Life for the Armstrong family is thrown upside down as Bonnie, Lizzie's mother, takes control and puts Jack in hospice and the children parceled out to various relatives. But Bonnie didn't think Jack would make a miraculous recovery and, after extensive therapy, go after his family with a singlemindedness that puts Bonnie on the defensive. How far will she go to get her way and take the children away from the man who, she thinks, caused her daughter's death? Problem is, the kids are confused by what is now going on and being uprooted for a second time.

Not long after Jack is fully healed, Lizzie's grandmother dies and leaves the South Carolina house to Jack. He packs up the kids and decides to spend at least the summer there and maybe regain some of Lizzie by living where she lived, walking the beach she walked and exploring the lighthouse of which she spoke so often.

This summer either will be the breaking point or healing point for a man devastated by pain and loss. Just maybe it will bring together the family that lost its way.

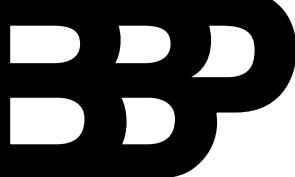
Special thanks to my good friend, Harold Wolf, for recommending this book to me. I give it two enthusiastic thumbs up for a great story and great storytelling techniques from a master.

The Washington Post wrote: "(Fans) will find in these pages a good message and a big heart."

Bestselling author Richard Paul Evans wrote: "*One Summer* is a beautifully written story about family, redemption and hope. Baldacci demonstrates why, regardless of genre, he's one of the world's foremost storytellers."

It's a new year that provides us with an opportunity for great new reading. I have been picking titles from upcoming and recently published works, and I must say, I never fail to be amazed by the variety of subjects available for all reading tastes. I hope I can find something for each and every one of you this year and make this your Big Read Year. Happy 2015!

Till next time, happy reading!



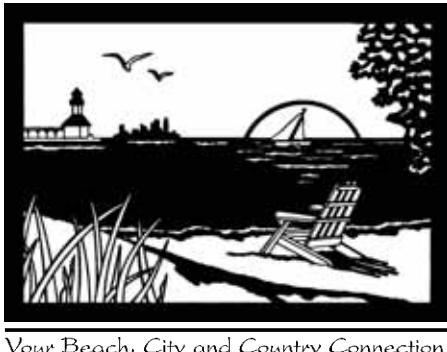
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When Tina isn't helping her clients buy or sell a house, you can find her at the Beach Glass Café, the coffee and ice cream shop she owns with her husband, Peter. Tina also enjoys reading, cooking and traveling and recently returned from a two week sailing adventure in French Polynesia.

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