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The Man Behind the Mic

by Connie Kuzydym



Ric Federighi is photographed by *The Beacher's* Bob Wellinski in the WIMS studio.

A simple, but enthusiastic "oh yeah" chanted into a microphone at any event Ric Federighi emcees easily energizes a crowd. His persona is larger than life. The dynamism he exudes, whether it be on the radio as general manager/owner of WIMS 1420AM or at local special events, is palpable, making it impossible *not* to get caught up in the moment.

Anyone who has met Ric knows he is high energy. So, who is the man heard on "Mornings with Ric"

airing weekdays in the 6 to 9 a.m. time slot?

Ric exudes all the characteristics of a fun, pragmatic, kind person of faith. By no means is he a pushover, though, as he emanates the confidence and knowledge from years in the Chicagoland broadcast industry.

"I love life," Ric told *The Beacher*. "I thank the good Lord every day that I'm alive. Thank you woohoo! I always say I'm going to be on the air and I'm going to be doing a traffic report or a break and just fall over, and that's OK."

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Throughout his career, Ric's goal was to own a radio station. Many people laughed, apparently overlooking his drive and determination.

From the time he was young, he worked, delivering papers, shoveling driveways at a local pizzeria. He wanted to attend college. Knowing he would need to pay for his education, he worked hard and saved his money.

At the start of high school, the opportunity to deejay presented itself. Working for three separate companies, he was booked solid. It occurred to him that instead of being paid while making money for others, he could work for himself, earning all the income to help pay for his schooling. Thus was born Gerard Productions. Still in operation today, its deejay services and voice work are in high demand.

His passion for music came from playing the guitar for pleasure and at church Masses. Growing up in a house where his parents and older siblings all had their own tastes in music, Ric developed his own appreciation for a variety of genres.

"Music has always been in my blood... music is my love," Ric said. "The arts are my love: theater, art, music, of course. I always knew that I wanted to do something within that realm."

And so, he has. His work ethic, values and faith have carried him through life.

Prior to arriving in Michigan City 15 years ago, Ric could be heard on a variety of Chicago radio and TV stations. He began in small market radio. Attending North Central College in Naperville allowed him to be on air at the award-winning collegiate station WONC-FM during freshman year.

While there, Ric applied and received the coveted



Ric's tenure with WIMS comes after years with Chicagoland media outlets.
Photo by Bob Wellinski.

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broadcast internship at WBBM FM B96 in downtown Chicago. Hands-on experience helped him learn about broadcast media through radio jobs like street reporting.

While in college, WONC celebrated its 25th anniversary by inviting famous alumni to campus. One of them, Nancy Schaffer, worked at WMAQ's Shadow Traffic. While interviewing her, Ric expressed his desire to work there. Through that connection, he was invited to meet the Shadow Traffic management team. Gary Lee and Rick Sirovatka ultimately hired him as an intern.

It is interesting to note, his professor, John Mardomo, had emphasized the following point to his students: You may get an opportunity one day in your professional career, something that may just happen to you out of the blue, and it could make or break your career. Those words rang true one night while Ric was interning at WMAQ on the 94th floor

of the John Hancock Center. What happened that evening ultimately helped launch him into Chicago radio and TV for 22 years.

"WMAQ was doing traffic on the ones. They were the originators of traffic on the ones. A young lady who was working with me failed to show up. Pat Cassidy said, 'Let's go to traffic on the ones, let's go to...' That person wasn't there," Ric said. "So, I ran over. I flipped the switch

and said, it's Ric Federighi blah blah blah. I started running with reports. That evening, my bosses and bigwigs on WMAQ were listening."

That evening was surreal for Ric, who made sure to record those segments. Without hesitation, he immediately was brought in to do afternoon work.

"It catapulted my career into mornings with Pat Cassidy, Jay Congdon and Pam Reesemeyer on WMAQ for years," Ric said.

Fourteen years, to be precise. Ric had achieved what many people told him was impossible, to be on Chicago radio straight out of college.

"Not only did I get down there, that's where I started, stayed and saved money," Ric said.

Throughout the years, his radio and TV career were intertwined. He was both an on-air talent and worked in management. Along with his team, they serviced 70 radio stations and approximately five TV stations daily. Part of his job in the mornings was doing traffic on the ones. A typical morning would start at 3:30 a.m., preparing for an hour and hitting the airwaves shortly thereafter. He easily did between 60 to 70 reports per shift, going from one station to the next. In some instances, he was an "element" where he was on for only 30 seconds. In others, he was "talent," doing the traffic report, then staying on with the show hosts.



One thing Ric says he's missed during COVID-19 is covering big events, where he gets to interact with the community.

He ran Metro Traffic and Traffic Pulse, was a jock for Chicago's Loop, the host of Chicago Street Talk and Spazz on Rock 103.5. He also became an award-winning reporter, garnering a Chicago Air Award for Best Morning Show on a Music Station. Along the way, he was fortunate to have fantastic individuals he learned from, like Greg Sulk, who ultimately gave him the opportunity to do Chicago Street Talk.

Fortuitously being in radio and TV, he met the "who's who" of the entertainment industry. Sammy Hagar, Meat Loaf and Bono, for example, he praises for being amazing artists and conversationalists,

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The Man Behind...

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extremely smart and incredible songwriters who chose not to lead a rock-star lifestyle. He also worked with great disc jockeys like Dick Johnson, John Landecker and others.

Ric enjoyed what he was doing, but he continually kept any eye out for an available radio station. That day came 15 years ago in the form of the defunct WIMS. Acquiring the station, Ric says, was "legendary." Strong emotions well up to this day when he thinks about it.

With partners, they purchased WJOB in Hammond and WIMS in the early 2000s. The partnership split shortly thereafter. Gerard Media LLC was formed. WIMS had found a new family.



This family photo shows Ric (back, left), with his brothers Scott and Marc. The front row is (from left) his sister, Tara, mother, Dorothy, sister, Lisa, and late father Sil.

"Having my brothers (Marc and Scott) as my partners has been nothing but absolutely epic," Ric said, "because we listen to each other. They allow me to be me, and I basically run the show. They give me their input, but it's all about what is best for us and the community."

The award-winning WIMS came on air in 1947 doing local news.

"They had a lot of cool things going on through the years," Ric said. "I hear cool names thrown out all the time. Whether it's a Roger Juby, whether it's some of the engineering. These are legendary names in radio, in the country, not just here."

Over the years, undergoing different owners, the local flair eventually disappeared at WIMS...until Gerard Media purchased the station. Ric followed his instinct, going back to the station's local news roots.

Since then, the once defunct station has burgeoned. Two additional signals, 95.1FM, then 106.7FM out of Valparaiso, have been added. The company also acquired WHFM 1060AM, licensed in the twin cities of Benton Harbor-St. Joseph, Mich., which came back on air in 2013. WHFM also is heard on 102.5 FM.

"The way we are allowed, we simulcast. So, we use the three signals," Ric said. "So, any partner that comes aboard with us if they're heard on AM 1420, they're heard on 95.1FM, they're heard on 106.7FM, and they're heard on the tune-in app and the stream at the same time. So, it's kind of value added for them, a bonus. Same with WHFB. When you're on the radio up there, you're on a couple of radio signals as well."

This allows for a broad audience. AM 1420 can hit Chicago during the day along with Newton, Jasper, Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties, and goes into Southwest Michigan; 95.1's range is from Burns Harbor to Benton Harbor, while 106.7 strictly is Valparaiso. Using the tune-in app has allowing them to stream around the world to new listeners, as well as those who keep abreast of what's happening in their hometown.

WIMS weekdays begin with local programming, then moves on to music. After lunch is the syndicated show by financial guru Dave Ramsey. At the top of every hour, award-winning CBS news is presented. Local news is heard a couple times an hour, as well as breaking news, as it happens. Late night brings classical radio theater — a popular addition to their lineup.

Another huge hit is "Farm Progress America." Three times each morning Ric is on with the legendary radio and TV talent Max Armstrong (WGN), whom he has known, and worked with, for decades. For years, Armstrong has presented pieces covering the agriculture industry for farmers and ranchers.

Gerard Media's second station, WHFB Benton Harbor-St. Joseph, has been challenging. At one time, its placement was huge. Today, a variety of radio stations between South Bend, Southwest Michigan, Indiana and Chicago all vie for the same audience. True to form, Ric chooses to view this challenge positively. He considers the station a work in progress.

It seems WHFB has found its niche, airing an oldies format branded "Motown and More." Showcasing local musicians in studio has listeners tuning in and partners wanting their content heard on WIMS and WHFB.

As for clients, Ric takes a soft approach, referring to advertisers as partners, in part because they work to form a personal bond. Being a small business owner, himself, he understands how to help his partners attract business.

"We truly believe partners, people that we work with, are not just numbers," Ric said. "These are people that we care about. They're friends. They're people you get to know and love."

As part of the process, WIMS is in conversation with advertisers so they can learn more about their business. They create numerous opportunities to promote their clients, from traditional radio ads, to developing event activities that can be sponsored, to

social media. He creates a unique synergy in studio by showcasing partners and spotlighting what they are doing in the community.

Over the years, Ric has honed his interviewing skills. Prior to airing, he asks his guests what they want emphasized. During the interview, he covers the necessities, but also gets them talking about themselves. This drives the conversation to an entirely new level, giving the listeners a more in-depth perspective about the guest behind the business or organization.

Many partners are involved in fundraising events and volunteering. Ric emcees many of their events, helping raise money for a variety of causes. Partners also have their own programs that air on WIMS.

His most rewarding moments arrive when he feels he is making a difference in the community. At the end of the day, that is what it's all about for him.

For instance, there is the Senior Harvest Ball where 300 seniors are invited.

"We invite community pillars to come and dance... with these men and women that have their own cool stories, in their own cool life, and now they're in a time of their life where they're seniors and they're in different villages and communities," Ric said. "We raise a ton of money with local support from local community pillars, and we're able to give to the RSVP group which helps seniors...or we give a portion of the money to Meals on Wheels...or to the



Ric is pictured with his wife, Norma, and daughters, Devyn (left) and Karli. Senior Center to help fund the programs for the seniors.

"I'm all about giving back," he continued. "I have always been about that. Our whole family has been about that."

Ric also has a passion for live broadcasts of events such as the Great Lakes Grand Prix races. He also is a huge supporter and sponsor of Hoosier Star, the annual LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra fundraiser. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has seen many of these events canceled.

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The Man Behind...

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"If you were to ask me, what do you miss, like, right now, I would say I miss the events," Ric said. "I miss having people in here for three months...I want people to bond with. Like, I want the studio full."

Ric lives in the Schaumburg area with the love of his life, Norma. They have been married for 29 years. Meeting in high school, they helped each other through college and are still going strong after 37 years of knowing each other. His wife, according to Ric, is totally cool and laid-back.

"She's the complete opposite. She's a documentation specialist engineer," Ric said. Very, very intelligent woman. Love her to pieces. I think why it works is she allows me do my thing, and she supports me 110 percent, as I do with her and what she does. We both have great families, and it works for some people, and others, it's a different journey. But it works for us."



Ric's high energy is what endears him to people who meet him. Photo by Bob Wellinski

Their two daughters are nearby as well, as are his mother, both sets of in-laws, their brothers and sisters. Everyone pitches in to help.

"We all need to be there," Ric said. "That's how our family is."

His religion is part of his fiber. He says his prayers and the Rosary daily. Even on the radio, he has prayed the Rosary. Entering WIMS, a striking icon plaque from St. Iakovos Greek Orthodox Church in Valparaiso hangs on the wall in appreciation for the station's help. On air, he works with all religious denominations. He openly praises and gives thanks for the blessings in his life.

"I'm a family guy. I'm about the good Lord first and foremost: God and my family first. I'm obviously all about the community, I'm all about this. But I wouldn't have this if I didn't have that (faith). That's it. There's nothing else to it."

Down the road, would Ric consider leaving radio

for TV? Ric admits he would love to be a game or TV show host. Not being a political person, he would love to meet and work for Ellen DeGeneres, someone he feels is a phenomenal interviewer. She gives back and makes a difference. The same holds true for Oprah Winfrey.

Indeed, Ric could easily write his ticket back into the Chicago market. Instead, he is enjoying the dream he worked hard to achieve. Even though it entails a 1:40 a.m. wakeup, followed by a 97-mile commute each day, he comes this way. A morning person by nature, the routine suits him for now.

On his drive to and from work, he takes advantage of technology, which allows him to do a variety of tasks. When he returns home, though, he wants down time with his wife and family. He balances his home/work life like so many, by multitasking. So, what exciting things does he do with his free time? The normal things: yardwork, playing his guitar, concerts, theater, enjoying family, friends, taking walks and cycling with his wife.

What advice does he have for the next generation

of radio broadcasters?

Today is different from when Ric started. He encourages young people who are interested in pursuing such a career to be diverse, recommending they try four or five different things at once.

"Learn to be a multitasker," Ric said, "so when they are looking at who to cut, it won't be you because you're good in so many areas. Maintain a great attitude, give it a 110 percent. Everybody has bad days. Don't bring in your bad stuff to work."

His outlook on life is equally positive.

"I really appreciate life. I really appreciate just living," Ric said. "I know that people have a lot of things going on. I feel if you keep things positive, it keeps things a little easier...I live it one day at a time...I enjoy it because I have people say, 'Dude, you never sleep.' And this is morbid, I say I'll sleep when I'm dead. Come on, let's be honest here. I want to enjoy every minute."

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Documentary Shines Light on Lin-Manuel Miranda, Freestyle Hip-Hop

by Andrew Tallackson



The cast of "Freestyle Love Supreme" performs as part of its 15th anniversary celebration.

"We Are Freestyle Love Supreme" reaffirms Lin-Manuel Miranda as a national treasure, but it also achieves something far more significant. It makes you appreciate just how talented, and *intelligent*, performers are who make freestyle hip-hop appear effortless.

The new Hulu documentary is a captivating case of striking while the iron is hot. Earlier this month, Miranda's landmark Broadway musical "Hamilton" debuted on Disney+, the impeccably filmed live stage adaptation experienced by more people in the comfort of their own homes than they did on stage. Miranda, now more than ever, is a household name.

But "We Are Freestyle Love Supreme" is not a puff piece, an egotistic pat on the back. It explores the family of performers Miranda amassed — including a few familiar "Hamilton" faces — whose love of rap and hip-hop brought them together through the improv comedy troupe "Freestyle Love Supreme." The documentary is an absorbing glimpse into the creative genius of these guys, and how it eventually translated into Broadway success.

Director Andrew Fried documents a 15-year stretch of the group's history, revealing how the concept for "Freestyle Love Supreme" flourished during rehearsal breaks for Miranda's "In the Heights." Miranda and his crew found they all loved the artistic freedom, the creative expression, of rap, hip-hop and beatbox. "Freestyle Love Supreme" subsequently emerged as sort of the hip-hop version of a night at Chicago's The Second City. No performance is the same as the last. The guys get on stage, rap whatever's on their mind and feed off each other from there. They also incorporate audience mem-

bers into the show, having them suggest words on which they can riff.

The film documents the show's 15th anniversary performances, including a Broadway run, in 2019-2020. It also overlaps with Miranda's blossoming success as "In the Heights" and, of course, "Hamilton" became word-of-mouth sensations.

We meet each member of Miranda's troupe, like Anthony Veneziale, Chris Sullivan, Utkarsh Ambudkar and Chris Jackson. All bring something astonishing to the table. Miss one cog in the wheel, and the full effect of "Freestyle Love Supreme" is incomplete.

What we take away from Miranda is an incredibly humble, intensely generous performer who not only welcomes input from colleagues, but eagerly embraces any moments for them to shine. And what he and the entire troupe possess is the ability to not just think quickly, but quickly translate those thoughts into comedy and music. This is as much a tribute to being smart as it is raw talent.

That Miranda found a way to fuse hip-hop with traditional musical theater — guided by longtime friend, "Freestyle Love Supreme" collaborator and "Hamilton" director Thomas Kail — in a format the mainstream embraced makes you admire these guys all the more.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

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"The Outpost" Offers Harrowing Depiction of The Battle of Kamdesh

by Andrew Tallackson



Caleb Landry Jones is a standout as Spc. Ty Michael Carter in Rod Lurie's "The Outpost."

"The Outpost" is based on fact, but feels like a B-movie western. At first. Then the climactic ambush arrives, a harrowing 45-minute assault on the senses, and the film emerges as a stirring tribute to American bravery amid impossible odds.

I was not familiar with the Battle of Kamdesh. In eastern Afghanistan on Oct. 3, 2009, 300-400 Taliban descended on American Combat Outpost Keating. The installation contained only 53 U.S. soldiers and two Latvian military advisors; nonetheless, the unit Bravo Troop 3-61 CAV emerged as one of the conflict's most decorated.

Director Rod Lurie, a former movie critic-turned director ("The Contender," "The Last Castle"), can't sidestep all the clichés in Eric Johnson's and Paul Tamasy's script, but he is unflinching in his portrait of courage under constant fire.

The film is based on Jake Tapper's 2012 non-fiction book The Outpost: An Untold Story of American Valor. It was slated to debut March 14 at the South by Southwest Film Festival, which was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. And with theaters still shuttered, it now is available through Video on Demand and streaming services like Amazon Prime.

When you consider where American Combat

★★★½

"The Outpost"

Running time: 123 minutes. Rated R for war violence and grisly images, pervasive language and sexual references

Outpost Keating was located, it is all the more miraculous that any soldiers survived the 2009 ambush. It was a deathtrap: situated at the bottom of three skyscraping mountains, affording the Taliban a constant advantage over American troops. In essence, they were sitting ducks. And in introducing the setting, Lurie places his camera at the lowest angle possible, conveying the intimidating expanse of the surrounding mountains.

The outpost's initial goal was creating community ties, earning the trust of the locals. But by 2006, as the movie begins, nerves are fraying under constant Taliban assault. Everyone basically is functioning in survival mode.

The movie populates itself with actors inhabiting real-life soldiers stationed at the outpost. Technically, the "star" is Scott Eastwood as Staff Sgt. Clint Romesha, but the actor has yet to deliver a performance that defines him beyond being "Clint's son." He's efficient, without being especially memorable.

The same holds true for many of Eastwood's costars, which include Orlando Bloom as Capt. Benjamin D. Keating, for which the outpost subsequently was named. The many actors tend not to stand out. Many, in fact, resemble each other, spouting the type of salty military banter that is not as colorful as Lurie would like to believe.

The script also resurrects that tired false-hope trope from so many war movies. You know what I'm talking about. A soldier discusses his hopes and dreams, then dies five minutes later in combat. It strips the early sequences of suspense because we know these individuals are not long for this earth. Lurie also treats the early battles like John Ford westerns, where we only see the Taliban at a distance: through binoculars and gun scopes. The enemy, thus, is little more than video-game targets.

That all changes during the 45-minute depiction of the Battle of Kamdesh. Taliban soldiers descend from the mountains, breaching the outpost's barriers. Lurie stages the ambush as a brutally immersive experience. His camera never leaves the soldiers' sides. We hear every bullet, every mortar blast in ear-shattering detail. Lurie's handheld camera trails the soldiers, barely dodging the carnage. By the time the Taliban retreats, the viewer is exhausted, barely able to catch his/her breath. Like "Saving Private Ryan," this is war as a visceral trip into the mouth of death. And while we may not be able to identify each individual soldier, it is their collective bravery, their unwillingness to back down, that affects us.

There is one standout: Caleb Landry Jones as Spc. Ty Michael Carter, who would go on to receive the Medal of Honor after the outpost ambush. Jones has done solid work in indie pictures like "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" and "The Dead Don't Die," and here, he creates a soldier who marches to his own beat. On the surface, oddly detached, quietly challenging authority. But during the ambush, he rises to the occasion on every level. Jones, though, doesn't treat Carter as a super hero. His final scene, in which he has trouble holding it together, is undeniably powerful. A reminder that while soldiers physically may survive combat, their souls take a horrific bruising.



The movie effectively conveys how American Combat Outpost Keating was a deathtrap, situated at the base of three mountains.

Those who lived to tell of the ambush have heaped praise on "The Outpost." Capt. Stoney Portis, portrayed in the film by Trey Tucker, called what Lurie achieved "part of the healing." Other surviving soldiers have noted the accuracy of the ambush and the look of the base itself.

That attention to detail in "The Outpost," combined with the all-consuming nature of its second half, bypass the familiarity of the early scenes. This was a battle that deserved to be told, and it honors those who survived and perished with exceptional skill and power.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

WEDNESDAY PIPE ORGAN CONCERT SERIES

Regional musical artists will be featured organists at the noon Wednesday Pipe Organ Concert Series at the First Congregational Church of Michigan City, Indiana. The Church is home to an 1891 Roosevelt tracker pipe organ. The church is located at 531 Washington Street. The noon concerts begin at 12:15 pm central time.



The 19th season concert series runs from July 8, 2020, through Aug. 26, 2020. Performing organists include Matt Gerhard, Carol Garrett, Lee Meyer, Kent Jager, George Karst, Oliver Rzycki, Mark Sudeith and Ann Dobie.

Information 219-608-4719.

The portrait of Ann Dobie was painted by Michigan City artist Connie Kassal.

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Friendship Botanic Gardens Virtual Gala Proves Big Success

Editor's note — The following column was written by Friendship Botanic Gardens staff.

Friendship Botanic Gardens hosted its first virtual gala Thursday, July 23, on Facebook Live. The gala, organized by the FBG board, staff and volunteers, was an evening devoted to preserving and developing the local attraction.

"Friendship Botanic Gardens is one of our true treasures," Mayor Duane Parry said. "Founded almost 100 years ago, this is a place for people of all nationalities, of all backgrounds and of all lifestyles to come and relax and enjoy everything that it has to offer."

"It is just a wonderful place to bring your families. It is a trip that will never be forgotten."

The virtual gala featured musical entertainment from Cripple Creek, a local band that plays original music and covers country, gospel and oldies. It

also included testimonials about the Gardens from Parry, LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody, John Leinweber, Richard Houck III, Line Mullins, Marissa Stapleton, Kenzi Carmel, Jared Veldheer, Mary Beth Rebedeu-Warden and Jeffrey Baumgartner.

Auction items ranged from luxurious trips — nationally and internationally — to smaller packages such as wine, gift cards to local restaurants, artwork, event tickets and furniture.

Thank you to the event and year-round Garden sponsors: Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte; Barker Welfare Foundation; Dekker Vacuum Technologies Inc.; Horizon Bank; Marquiss Electric; NIPSCO; Purdue University Northwest; Fifth Third Bank; Captrust; and Newby Lewis Kaminski & Jones LLP.

"We can't thank you enough for your support during these trying times," Leinweber said. "It is such a privilege to live in a community that supports worthwhile endeavors. It makes all of our volunteers and staff feel good when so many individuals are enjoying the Gardens. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without the community's support."

Ten percent of contributions went to LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, another wonderful cultural attraction. If you missed the event, but still wish to donate, visit <https://friendshipgardens.org/donate/>

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We need your help to keep our stops clean

Visit longbeachin.org for more information and to subscribe to e-alerts

The Long Beach Town Council has voted unanimously to phase out all garbage bins at beach stops for the following reasons:

1. Beach trash bins are being overfilled on a regular basis with trash from the beach and from private homes.
2. To raise awareness about generating less waste, using more reusable containers, increasing recycling efforts, and taking better care of our stops.
3. To set a good example for our kids regarding taking accountability for our actions.
4. This is the right thing to do to protect our environment.

Phase Out Schedule:

- **Starting Now:** Begin communication regarding the new Carry In/Carry Out policy.
- **Late Fall 2020:** Remove garbage bins and enclosures, replacing them with temporary signage.
- **Early Spring 2021:** Bins will no longer be at the beach stops as we continue to communicate the new rule.



What can you do?

- Voice concerns and give feedback regarding the new rule to The Town Council.
- Voice opinions for how we implement new rules to The Parks and Recreation Board.
- Pass this information along to residents and visitors.

Chesterton Art Center

Chesterton Art Center will present "Captured Moods: A Robert Hoffman Retrospective" starting with an opening reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 2.

Robert's wife, Wilma, and daughter, Barb Knuckles, are curating the exhibit of work depicting various locations, weighted toward the Indiana Dunes first and Brown County second, and representing different techniques: pastel, oil and a few acrylic.

Robert grew up in Gary, where he attended Tolleston High School and distinguished himself with drawings and cartoons. While working as a brick layer at Inland Steel, he took classes at the Chicago Academy of Fine Art while supporting himself and his family.

In 1972, he started teaching classes and outdoor workshops. His analytical teaching style helped break down his art knowledge and skills into sequential components.

In 1981, he chose early retirement and became a full-time artist. He worked in mostly oils and pastels, showing his work at local art fairs and regional shows. He preferred to work *en plein air* (outdoors) whenever possible. In his Merrillville studio, he painted still lifes, florals and portraits. He enjoyed group painting excursions to Monhegan Island, Maine; Sedona, Ariz.; Taos, N.M., and Cedar Key, Fla.

Robert suffered from dementia in the last decade of his life. He passed away in 2017, just a few weeks before his 87th birthday.

The CAC exhibit runs through Saturday, Aug. 29. Guests are required to wear a mask and practice social distancing at the reception.



Chesterton Art Center is located at 115 S. Fourth St. Visit www.chestertonart.com for more details.



This undated photo shows Robert Hoffman displaying one of his works of the dunes landscape.

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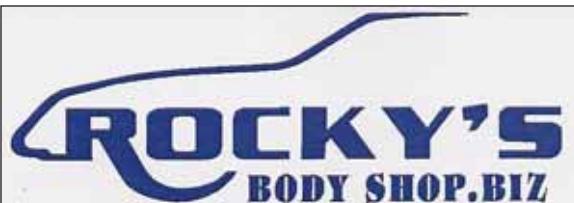
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Dolly Fund Scholarships

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., is accepting applications through the endowed Dolly Fund to provide scholarships for art education at the LCA.

Paul Marshall created the fund in honor of his late wife and former LCA director, Dolly Marshall, to offer learning opportunities for students, regardless of their ability to pay.

Requirements are:

- Applicants must be between ages 7-18 at instruction time.
- Applicants must show financial need by completing a simple form.
- The maximum grant request is \$200 per individual per year.
- Applicants must attend all classes and complete a final report.

The scholarship funds LCA classes that have an available opening. Priority goes to those who have not received prior LCA scholarships.

If the application is approved, tuition payment goes directly to the LCA, not the applicant. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Return the application to: Scholarship Fund, Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., Michigan City, IN 46360, or email Hannah Hammond-Hagman at hhammond@lubeznikcenter.org

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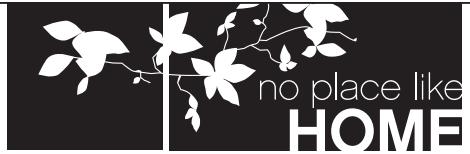
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Fun in the Sun

It was hot, indeed. But even with temperatures hovering near 90 degrees, visitors to Indiana Dunes State Park still arrived to participate in the 23rd annual Sand Sculpture Contest. *The Beacher's* Bob Wellinski was there to photograph all the fun.





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Roosevelt Pipe Organ Series

The Roosevelt Pipe Organ Series continues Wednesday, Aug. 5, at Christ Church, 531 Washington St.

All concerts are free and begin at 12:15 p.m., with seating at noon. Local organists, as well as those from the greater Chicago area and even Poland, will perform on the 1891 Roosevelt pipe organ. Those attending are asked to wear face masks and practice social distancing. Safety precautions, along with protocol established by Christ Church for Sunday worship, are in place.

The Aug. 5 recital is by George Karst, who enjoys playing hymns and organ literature at the pipe organ. He teaches music theory, music history and piano at Indiana University-Kokomo, and provides organ music for Chesterton United Methodist Church. His new avant-garde compositions have been played in New York City, Florida and the Midwest. He also is working on an abstract composition for chamber instruments, organ and electronic voices.

Donations are accepted. The church is air-conditioned. Call Ann or George Dobie at (219) 608-5358 for more information.



Karst

 **American Red Cross**

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

- Golden Living Center, 1700 I St., LaPorte, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, July 31.
- St. Paul Lutheran Church & School, 818 Franklin St., 1:30-6:30 p.m. Friday, July 31.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 4.
- Sacred Heart Church, 201 Bach St., LaPorte, noon-5 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 5

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



Five Tips for Taking Care of Your Trees

1. Don't "top" your trees. Topping is the removal of large branches to reduce the height of the tree. This causes decay that leads to large branch failures in the future.
2. Don't "spike" your trees. Spiking causes wounds that lead to infection and tree decline. Anyone who spikes trees is causing long-term damage to the trees.
3. Avoid damage to the roots. Large trucks cause soil compaction and digging up roots cause frayed wounds that can't heal and create access points for pathogens (fungi) that start root rot and weaken the trees structural stability. Lawn mowers can also cause damage to the root flares.
4. Protect the roots out to the drip line from any activity other than foot traffic. The drip line is simply the outside edge of the canopy. On a mature open grown oak, it can be a circle of 60 feet in diameter.
5. Consult an ISA Certified Arborist before doing anything to your tree.

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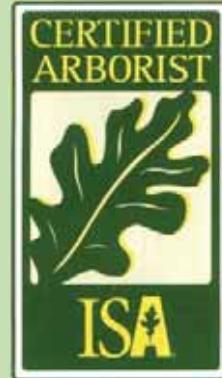
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A Free and Easy Walking Tour of the Windy City

Aunt Edna and Uncle Ralph are coming to town, and they would just love you, and I mean *you*, to take them on a walking tour of the Windy City.

Without, of course, breaking the bank.

What they have in mind is a South Shore trip into Chicago, then a closer look at all that famous architecture. You know, buildings by the likes of Daniel Hudson Burnham and Louis Sullivan, domes by luminaries such as Louis Comfort Tiffany and lobbies designed by no less than Frank Lloyd Wright.

For some reason, Aunt Edna and Uncle Ralph think you're the expert on Chicago architecture. They are counting on you to take them to the promised landmarks, even to buildings by more recent architects such as Helmut Jahn. All in a day, mind you, with time out for lunch at some funky downtown restaurant only you know about.



Our family is quite familiar with walking tours of the Chicago Riverwalk. Hope to see you out there.

Too much to comprehend?

Nah, don't sweat it. I've been there and done that dozens of times for the Florida, Oregon and Pennsylvania sides of the family. And, I am happy to report, they would all file favorable reviews of my tours, if you were but to ask.

OK, so where to start, and which way to walk from there?

Let's just assume you'll be riding in on the South Shore to the final stop at Millennium Station. Here's what I have done, and I know it will work for you. Ready?

Travels With Charley

by Charles McKelvy



Lace up your most comfortable walking shoes and follow closely:

For starters, make sure everyone takes a potty break at Millennium Station. You will find "facilities" along my route, but not in abundance, so take the opportunity before you leave Millennium.

Then, lead your party up the stairs to Randolph Street and up into the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. (yes, there are entrances on both ends of the building), where admission is free,



and where you will be dazzled by two magnificent stained-glass domes, as well as free music, dance and theater events, films, lectures, art exhibits and more than enough to keep you busy the entire day.

In fact, when I was a student at Morgan Park High School from 1964-1968, a friend and I on Saturdays would take the Rock Island downtown to study at what was completed in 1897 as Chicago's first central public library. In so doing, we learned the building was designed to prove Chicago had arrived on the national stage. According to the Chicago Cultural Center's website, "*The country's top*



You will find the world's largest, stained-glass Tiffany dome in Preston Bradley Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center.

architects and craftsmen used the most sumptuous materials, such as rare imported marbles, polished brass, fine hardwoods and mosaics of Favrlie glass, mother-of-pearl and colored stone, to create an architectural showplace."

And it is in this architectural showplace's stunning Preston Bradley Hall — on the Washington-Street end of the building — where you can enjoy free weekly concerts under the world's largest, stained-glass Tiffany dome.

When we lived in Chicago, we attended almost weekly — from 12:15 to 1 p.m. Wednesdays. We enriched our cultural lives immeasurably by getting there early and claiming front-row seats, better to watch some amazing musicians in action.

So, consider conducting your walking tour of the Loop and environs on a Wednesday, and do visit www.imfchicago.org for a listing of forthcoming Dame Myra Hess concerts.

Speaking of the Loop, you might well want to lead your party to the CTA's dazzling new elevated station, the Wabash/Washington station, and board an outbound Orange-Line train. Yes, you will have to pay the going CTA fare, which is \$2.50 per person, but it is a bargain considering the amazing ride you'll get.

Consider the ride I took recently from Wabash/Washington on an outbound Orange-Line train. As is my custom, I took a seat on the starboard side, which is the right side as you face the front of the train from the inside. I settled in for a scenic ride to say, the Halsted station, where I intended to cross the platform and return to the Loop on an inbound train. But the elevated views of the rail yards, tracks and activity made me keep my seat all the way to Midway Airport, where I did, indeed, cross the platform and board a waiting inbound train, paying no extra fare. *Trains Magazine* has rightly called Chicago "America's Railroad Capital;" there is no better proof of that than through the CTA's Orange-Line.



An inbound, Orange-Line train enters the famous Chicago Loop.

So, you decide how far out the line you want to ride, but do include it in your tour. It will give your out-of-town visitors a dramatic sense of why poet Carl Sandburg called Chicago a "player with railroads and the nation's freight handler."

Oh, be sure to sit on the starboard side of the train when you return to the Loop: You can see all the neighborhoods, factories and expressways you missed heading out of town.

Once back in town, exit the train at the Harold Washington Library station over Van Buren Street

Continued on Page 26

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Walking Tour

Continued from Page 25

and, by all means, check out the central library named for Chicago's first black mayor. Then lead your party a bit west to Dearborn Street, where you will encounter jewels in the Windy City Crown such as the Monadnock Building at 53 W. Jackson Blvd. Designed by Burnham and Root, the 16-story "skyscraper" began its rise to the heavens in 1891.

To properly experience the wonders that are the Monadnock, you must walk its lobby from the Van Buren Street entrance on the south to the Jackson Boulevard entrance on the north. As you do, do some serious window shopping at places you simply won't find anywhere else.



Even the bridge houses are photogenic.
You'll find this one at the foot of the Adams Street Bridge.

Consider what Finis Farr said about the Monadnock in his definitive book, *Chicago: A Personal History of America's Most American City*: "*Montgomery Schuyler, the country's leading architectural critic, approved of its walls that 'are real walls that carry themselves, and that may be properly thickened at the base,' thus enabling Root to give an inward curve of the exterior at the top of the first story, which he answered with an outward curve at the parapet 215 feet above.*"

That might be too much information for you and your tour, but I am sure you all will be as impressed by the mighty Monadnock as we are every time we

visit. Oh, I must confess a certain travel writer does like to give his credit card a workout every time he chances upon a certain hat shop in the lobby of said building.

So, I have said a lot about walking/riding tours of Chicago when there is so, so much more to see, such as the Rookery Building on LaSalle Street; the three amazing public works of art along Dearborn Street by Calder, Chagall and Picasso; and the Chicago Riverwalk, which now extends the entire length of the main channel of the Chicago River, from the locks to where the river divides at Wolf Point.

And, I said nothing of food. Well, that's up to you and your party. Downtown Chicago abounds with fascinating food options; I know you'll find one to your mutual satisfaction, perhaps even from one of the food trucks that line certain streets, such as Clark Street, at lunchtime.

You might want to begin your tour at the Chicago Architecture Center, 111 E. Wacker Drive, which is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Alas, they do charge admission: \$12 for adults, \$8 for students with ID and free for children 5 and younger, but you would be wise to spend the money and time there to conduct a truly informed tour of Chicago.

And, the best part is that a South Shore train will be patiently waiting for you at Millennium Station to transport you around the lake, back to Michigan City.



Food options abound in the Loop, especially at lunchtime.

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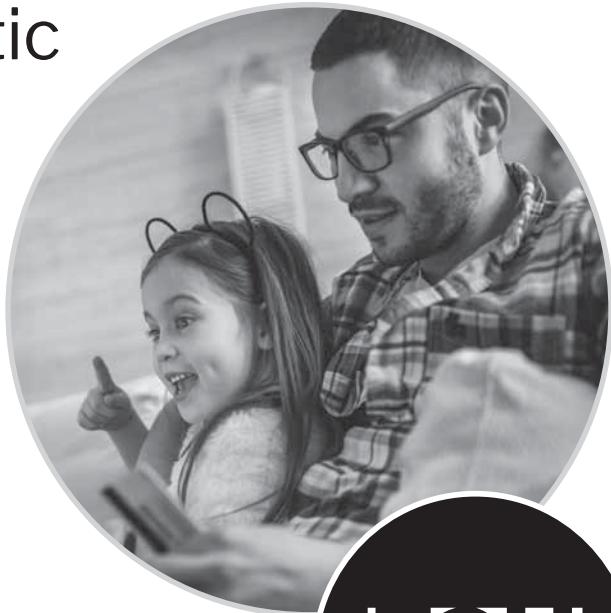
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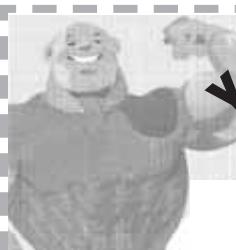
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Indiana Dunes State Park

The following program is offered:

- **Park Plays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 30.**

Park Plays, presented through Northwest Indiana Excellence in Theatre Foundation, features local theater groups presenting shows and excerpts from classic Shakespeare, to contemporary musicals, to improv. Take a blanket or beach chair to the west side of the pavilion.

On July 30, the program is "Wildwood Flower" — traditional and original folk music by Cory Goodrich and special guest Supercharged Trio. Goodrich is a Jeff award-winning actress-singer-songwriter from Chicago, having appeared in "Ragtime," "Ring of Fire," "The Addams Family," "The Christmas Schooner" and "An American in Paris."

In light of COVID-19, guests are asked to maintain 6 feet of distance between their party and neighboring guests, wear masks, wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer.

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

Michigan City Farmer's Market

The Michigan City Farmer's Market is open from 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays through October at Eighth and Washington streets.

Following advice from Gov. Eric Holcomb and health officials, the following restrictions are in place:

- No open food. All items must be pre-packaged and fully labeled.
- No sampling food items.
- Home-based vendors can sell items.
- Social-distancing guidelines must be followed.
- No cooking or food preparation on site.

Everyone is encouraged to wear proper masks. Portable handwashing stations will be available.

Market organizers want to create a craft market on the north side of Eighth Street later this summer or in spring 2021. Surveys are planned to determine what customers would like to see in such a market.

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Michigan City Public Library

The library is open, but with restrictions in place.

Until further notice, hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The public is asked to wear masks and abide by social-distancing recommendations. Meeting-room spaces will remain closed for now.

There is no public seating. The library also will follow the LaPorte County Health Department's Public Health Order Face Covering Mandate by requiring masks inside the building. Every individual must properly wear a face covering over his/her nose and mouth at indoor areas open to the public. The original order statement is available at www.mclib.org and printed out in the library. The circulation and reference desks will have masks available for \$1.

Access is limited to the computer lab: One session (up to one hour) per person per day is allowed. Due to social-distancing guidelines, only one person at a station at a time. Children are not allowed in the computer lab with parents/guardians.

One computer is reserved for genealogy research, with time limited to one hour per person per day.

Four charging tables allow a limit of 30 minutes per use (no seating is available at these stations).

WiFi is available throughout the building and exterior/parking lot.

Also, a Zoom discussion on Ijeoma Oluo's book, So You Want to Talk About Race, is at 10 a.m. Friday, July 31. The library has copies available for checkout at the circulation desk donated by Michigan City Common Council member Dalia Zygas. Deborah Beien will moderate the discussions. Contact Robin Kohn at (219) 873-3049 or rkohn@mclib.org for details.

Michigan City Public Library is located at 100 E. Fourth St. Visit www.mclib.org for more details.

Correction

The correct spelling of an artist's name in "Well Behaved Women: Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage" is Anoush Bargamian. An article about the new Lubeznik Center for the Arts exhibit appeared in the July 16 edition.

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LaPorte County Public Library

LaPorte County Public Library has resumed its curbside pickup service.

Hours for locations in *The Beacher's* readership area include:

- Coolspring Branch: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Main Library: Tuesday/Thursday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Saturday (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Place holds on materials using an online account or by calling (219) 362-6156, Option 1. Then, select a pickup location. Notifications will come by email, text or phone. There is no limit on the number of requested items at this time.

Two parking spots will be labeled at each location. When arriving, a staff member will greet people outside. If no one arrives, call (219) 362-6156, Option 3, or the direct number for the branch location. A staff member will bring the reserved items to vehicles in a brown paper bag.

Returns can be placed in book drops and checked in within 24 to 72 hours. All library materials are quarantined between customers for 24 to 72 hours, per CDC and IMLS best practices. Materials are cleaned when needed. Library patrons can disinfect materials after arriving home.

Check laportelibrary.org and follow social media for updates.

LaPorte County Public Library is located at 904 Indiana Ave. The Coolspring Branch is located at 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Visit www.laportelibrary.org for more details.

LaPorte Farmer's Market

The LaPorte Farmer's Market is open Saturdays starting at 8 a.m. through October in the Lincolnway parking lot next to Mucho Mas.

The event is run by Angela Rose, LaPorte Economic Advancement Partnership downtown director, and Lindsay Jongkind, LEAP marketing and membership director.

Vendors are organized in a straight line on both sides of the area. Customers are asked to stand behind the marked line (3-feet distance) and maintain at least 6 feet between each person in line.

Market managers will be posted at the entrance and limit attendance to 50 people at a time.

All produce and goods will be prepackaged and handed out in bags. Seniors and at-risk individuals are encouraged to shop from 9 to 10 a.m.

More information is available at www.laportepartnership.com or on the Farmer's Market Facebook Page. On Thursdays before the market, a weekly list of vendors and produce is posted on the Facebook page. Call Rose and Jongkind at (219) 324-8584 for more information.

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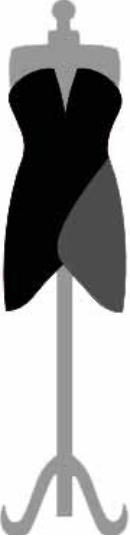
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Park COVID-19 Safety Tips

Indiana Dunes National Park has begun a COVID-19 social-media campaign.

The emphasis is how people can still catch the virus outdoors, on a crowded beach, if they are not wearing a mask or properly socially distancing. The campaign, "Think Before you Beach — Crowds spread COVID...Even Outside," features social media posts and video, along with signs located throughout the 15,000-acre park.

The park has developed safety tips based on guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and state public-health officials:

- Wear a mask when you cannot stay 6 feet from other visitors.
- When going to the restroom or in common-space areas like the concession stand, wear a mask.
- On the beach, spread out. Keep your beach towel 6 feet or more away from others.
- Before arriving, consider the best time to visit. Late afternoons and early mornings are less crowded. Weekdays are less crowded than weekends. If the beach area has a line of cars or is already full, take a hike on a well-shaded trail or have a picnic in a shelter. Go back to the beach later in the day when it is less crowded.

Visit www.nps.gov/indu and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/IndianaDunesNPS for details.



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Second — Linda Wilson, Joan Carey.

Putts — Joan Carey, Kathy Kenefick.

Flight C

First — Ginny Hogan.

Second — Sarah Blank.

Putts — Barbara Beardslee.

Birdies

Ginny Hogan — Hole 10.

Sunken Approaches

Ginny Hogan — Hole 10.

Barbara Beardslee — Hole 17.

Joan Carey — Hole 17.

Military Veteran Stand Down

Due to COVID-19, a Stand Down, which helps veterans and their families experiencing financial obstacles, will be a drive-through event from noon to 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 7, at LaPorte County Fairgrounds, 2581 W. Indiana 2.

Two ways are planned to enter the event. The most preferable option is for veterans to remain in their vehicles and drive through. They will have access to most of the services from past Stand Downs. A pedestrian service tent will be available for those unable to access the event by driving through.

Upon arrival, a volunteer will check in the person, who then proceeds through the event by vehicle and stops at stations to pick up items. For pedestrians, volunteers will assist with giveaways. Free items include survival backpacks, hygiene kits, clothing items and a free meal To-Go. Take a DD214 or military ID.

Instead of the vendor fair, local agencies and businesses are asked to provide information for veteran resource folders. Contact Jill Powers at JPowers@Goodwill-NI.org or (574) 400-5487 for details.

Veterans are asked to preregister for the event at www.tinyurl.com/y3qdpnou

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Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.

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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

Home Before Dark by Riley Sager (hardcover, \$27 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 384 pages)

"Every house has a story.

"Ours is a ghost story.

"It's also a lie."

"And now that yet another person has died within these walls, it's finally time to tell the truth."

OK, it's not October, not close to Halloween, but this book was just released and I couldn't wait to get my hands on it and tell you about it. I have read Sager's first three books and am always impressed by these twisty tales, and how each book grabs your interest at the first page.

Maggie Holt is the narrator of as strange a tale ever told. Alternating chapters are from a book her father, Ewan Holt, wrote some 20 years earlier — "House of Horrors." Fiction or non-fiction? That's the question on Maggie's mind now that she's not a 5-year-old girl with a spotty memory of her family's mere 20 days in the house called Baneberry Hall. That's right, Maggie and her parents moved in on June 26 and fled on July 15, leaving behind all their belongings.

The house is an impressive, three-story Victorian outside of Bartleby, Vt. With her mother's inheritance money, the Holts could finally have the spacious home they could never afford. The real estate lady, however, was hesitant to talk about the history of the house built in 1875. Its former owner, Curtis Carver, killed his daughter, Katie, then committed suicide. But that's only the tip of the iceberg — other unexplainable accidents and deaths happened over the years. So maybe some strange things have happened at the house, but isn't that just gossip?

After the Holts fled Baneberry Hall, Ewan wrote the book that became an instant bestseller. As Maggie grew up, she told everyone the book was just fiction, but her father always said it was all true. Telling the truth? Or just a good salesman? Maggie's assumption has always been, if she didn't remember what happened according to her father's book, then it didn't happen.

Now, her father is dead, and his will leaves Maggie Baneberry Hall and all proceeds from the sale of the book. Say again? Her dad never sold the house in the past 20 years? Guess she didn't know him as well as she thought she did.

In his book, Ewan tells of asking Hibbs, the care-

taker, to tell him the truth about the house: "You want the truth? I'll give it to you. Things have happened in that house. Tragic things...And all those things, well, they...linger."

That brings up an interesting question: Can a house retain memories? Maggie's about to find out. Years ago, going against her father's wishes, she earned a degree in designing instead of English Lit. Now that the house belongs to her, she decides to do some remodeling and sell the place once and for all. When her mother finds out, she begs Maggie to stay away from Baneberry Hall. Coincidence that that's exactly what her father told her on his deathbed? Her parents divorced years ago and now, Maggie wonders what the real reason was — did the divorce have anything to do with Baneberry Hall?

One thing's for sure — the residents of Bartleby aren't thrilled to see Maggie back in town. They don't appreciate the notoriety her father's book brought to their quiet community.

Maggie was ridiculed as a child because of the book: "...the freaky girl who once lived in a haunted house" — and now the need to know the truth is stronger than ever. How could she forget telling her parents about Mister Shadow, Miss Pennyface and the girl with no name? Were they just part of her father's imaginative writing?

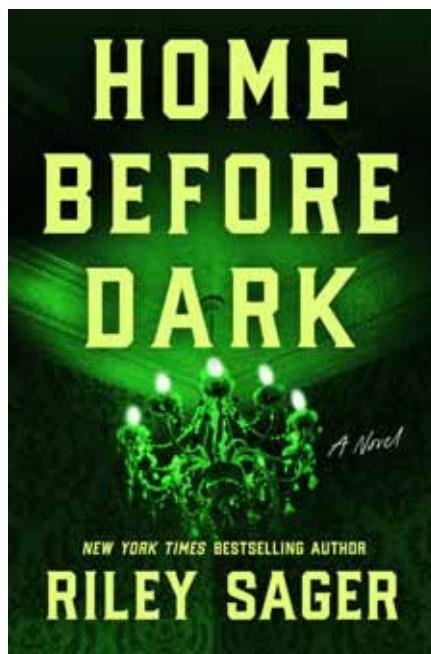
Old houses make noises, right? Wind rattles the windows, mice in the walls skitter along...but a chandelier that seems to turn itself off and on? Things that go missing? Shadows in the woods outside the house? Questions, questions! Will Maggie find the answers she needs? One thing's for sure — there will be other things happening that will make the hair on your arm stand up or make you snicker at Maggie's naiveté. It could go either way.

Other, more hideous things come to light...like there might have been more than two deaths in the house, and continual happenings that make no sense — a weakened kitchen ceiling collapses and drops more than just building material...

This is one twisty tale! The end of each chapter makes you salivate for whatever is coming next. In any case, Holt's book and Maggie's need to discover the truth come together in a climax that will show that things aren't always what they appear to be.

Another hit for Sager. As the song says, "Nobody does it better."

Till next time, happy reading!





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