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# A Champion for the Arts

by Andrew Tallackson

You couldn't find a more vibrant champion of the arts than Dale Cooper.

Consider the many jewels within the local arts scene, and you'll likely find her imprint on them:

- Art displays at Visit Michigan City LaPorte tourism bureau.
- Serving on the boards of Lubeznik Center for the Arts, Michigan City Public Art Committee and The Center for Creative Solutions.
- Appearing in a NIPSCO commercial that in part outlines her "Growing Up Green" endeavor.
- Serving on the committee to honor Naomi Bowman Talbert Anderson — African-American suffragist and Michigan City native — with a sculpture, mosaic or mural in the city's Charles R. Westcott Park.

On Oct. 13, Cooper kicks off Michigan City Art League's 88th year of fall classes, now held at the Queen of All Saints Community Center, which will afford more room to take social distancing into account. By leading the course, titled "Art of Decoupage," she again aims to enhance the quality of life in our community, even amid these strange days of COVID-19. And when it comes to

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Dale Cooper is photographed by *The Beacher's* Andrew Tallackson in her Michigan City apartment, relaxing on a bench she upholstered.



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## A Champion...

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art, that mission applies to everyone: adults and children.

“Artists are important to Michigan City. Point blank,” the Rogers High School graduate said. “We need people who are out there creating things, and most artists create because they have to. There is something in them that they are able to create, and having them be able to display their art in different places, especially at the visitor center, it gives people a chance to admire their art, to see what is possible for people to do.”

That love of art, of creating, has been part of Cooper’s life since childhood. She was born in Alabama, but moved here with her family when she was 4. It was a large family, what with four boys and three girls. Her father could draw and play piano. One of her brothers, James, was gifted at making hats. By the time she was 6 or 7, she was drawing, painting, crocheting. Anything she could get her hands on to keep her active.

“I liked doing something with my hands,” she said. “Even now, if I’m sitting watching TV, I’m making paper flowers or crocheting. I just like to be creating something.”

“I had a wonderful childhood here,” she continued. “Michigan City was a great place to grow up. I’m still friends with people I went to grade school with. I still see a lot of them. It was an idyllic childhood. And, I remember being in high school and going to the beach and painting. I *always*



Even as a child, Dale says she always needed to be doing something with her hands, like crocheting, which she still engages in today.

Photo by Andrew Tallackson

loved art. I can’t believe I kinda have a career still in art, and that I still love it.”

Cooper attended Riley Elementary School (now home to the Michigan City Area Schools administration building), then Krueger Middle School and finally Rogers High School. One local artist she admired was Neil Kienitz, who remains a vital

presence in today’s Michigan City arts scene. At one point, Cooper recalls, she even helped Kienitz sell artwork while it was on display at Marquette Mall.

“I’m not a fan of art where you can’t tell what it is,” she said with a chuckle. “I like to know what it is, and I think Neil (Kienitz) captured that for me. I’m still friends with him. I’ve had his paintings here (the tourism bureau). We sell his South Shore paintings.”

After graduating from Rogers, Co-



In this undated photo, Dale Cooper sports a hat made by her brother, James.

per attended The University of Alabama because she had family in Birmingham and could stay with them while pursuing her degree. Ironically, while her minor in college was art, she majored in computer science. Why that field of study?

Cooper laughs.

“I thought it would be a good career,” she explains, “but I just didn’t find it interesting enough to pursue it.”

After college, she briefly returned to Michigan City, then worked in Chicago for 18 years, first for Nordstrom, then by operating a boutique in The Apparel Center in the city’s River North community. When her parents became ill in 2001, she returned to Michigan City to help care for them. She briefly found work with Horizon Bank before joining the tourism bureau, answering the phones on a part-time basis.

The agency, then known as the LaPorte County Convention & Visitors Bureau, was located on Meer Road. Cooper says she suggested to her colleagues they move operations to the current Franklin Street location near U.S. 20, which affords the staff increased space — 4,000 square feet — more parking and better visibility to the public. And as tourism bureau staff considered the potential for new space during their earliest visits, the wheels were turning as well for Cooper.

“I noticed this really long wall, and I thought it would make a great art gallery for artists who had no place to display their work,” she said. “So, I started reaching out to artists. We started showing their work, and we used the gift shop to sell their works, too.”

Through the tourism bureau, Cooper says she basically invented the type of position that catered to her interests, which is how she became not only its office manager, but also its curator. The bureau’s gallery space has featured everyone from Kienitz and Anneke Dekker to Michigan City Art League and Land of Lakes Art Alliance.

Continued on Page 4



In this provided photo, Dale Cooper is photographed with Betty Thomas during a Michigan City Art League class.

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Cooper also saw her love of art branch out into other avenues. Like serving on the board of Lu-beznik Center for the Arts, through which she says she's helped raise a substantial amount of money — \$40,000, to be precise — so children can attend art classes.

“Being creative helps you in every single job that you have as an adult,” she said. “It helps with problem solving, and that’s what I like most about artwork and art classes. That’s what I find most rewarding about being on the board.”



Dale's pieces here were part of a paper flower class she taught through a Michigan City Art League class.

Through the Michigan City Public Art Committee, Cooper is part of a team that identifies sculptures, leasing them for two-year-periods, to place in the city's Uptown Arts District. That entails what's called “Sculptfusion,” which includes an app that guides individuals to each piece of art throughout the city.

Cooper also is part of the Naomi Anderson project. Michigan City Mainstreet Association, in fact, was awarded \$40,000 to create the sculpture, mosaic or mural in Charles R. Westcott Park. The effort reflects a partnership between LCA, the NAACP LaPorte County Branch—Unit 3061 and Unity Foundation of LaPorte County. Anderson, born in Michigan City in 1843 to free black parents, was not only a significant suffragist, but also a civil rights activist, orator, poet and writer. A celebration for the proposed artwork, Cooper says, is set for June-teenth 2021.

“I feel really blessed to be on that committee,” she said.

NIPSCO also spotlighted Cooper in a commercial and flyer celebrating her Growing Up Green program, which brings student gardens to local schools.

Has COVID-19, with its emphasis on social distancing and self-isolation, dampened Cooper's spirits? True, she says, 2020 has been tough. Fraught with challenges. Staff at the tourism bureau worked remotely from home until July 6. The office now is open, but by appointment. Masks must be worn by all who enter the building. Visitors hoping to pick up a brochure or obtain other information can be buzzed in by staff. A community recovery team at the bureau, Cooper says, has been keeping close tabs on LaPorte County businesses, from hotels, to gardens, to orchards. That entails calls, visits, efforts to help market them further. The bureau even has teamed with local radio station WIMS to promote businesses, attractions and individuals on Mondays and Thursdays.

Cooper remains optimistic. The reason why, though, catches you off guard. It speaks to something far more resilient, heartbreaking and inspirational.

You see, Cooper is the only member of her immediate family alive today. Her parents, brothers and sisters — all preceded her in death. Four succumbed to cancer. That she just turned 61 is not something she hides from others. On the contrary. She celebrates it.

“Only one brother lived to 61, so the fact that I'm here, that I'm 61, that is a blessing from God and I will shout it from the rooftops,” she said.

And the pandemic?

“I am not discouraged. I'm hopeful,” she said. “Everything changes. This is just one of those changes. I'm just moving forward. That's kind of how I feel about everything.

Even with the death of my family, I'm still here and I still have things to do. If I can get through all of that, then this pandemic isn't that bad to me.”



Boxes Dale created for a friend through decoupage.

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## In Pushing for Change, “Kiss the Ground” Offers Plenty of Hope

by Andrew Tallackson



Woody Harrelson (center) narrates “Kiss the Ground,” which is streaming on Netflix.

The problem with most documentaries about climate change and the environment is, they do half their job. They scare the crap out of you, and rightly so, but then do a lot of finger wagging. The Blame Game, essentially. But where are the solutions?

The new Netflix documentary “Kiss the Ground,” by contrast, may be the first such film that leaves you with a rare sensation.

Hope.

The film is a rallying cry for change, where we meet people on the frontlines, bold visionaries embracing, ironically, some of the simplest practices staring everyone in the face. The driving forces behind the picture are husband-and-wife filmmakers Josh and Rebecca Tickell. Rebecca, it must be noted, was the child star of local director John Hancock’s 1989 Christmas classic “Prancer,” along with appearing in his subsequent films, “A Piece of Eden” and “Suspended Animation.”

The overriding theme of “Kiss the Ground” is regenerative farming practices that restore topsoil vitality, aid biodiversity and ecosystems and fight against climate change.

So how do the Tickells, as documentarians, drive home that point without alienating or boring their audience? First, they interview scientists and activists who speak in layman’s terms. So, for example, when one speaker suggests we have 60 years of harvests left before viable topsoil is depleted, the thought of it chills the soul.

The Tickells also invite famous faces passionate

★ ★ ★<sup>1/2</sup>

### “Kiss the Ground”

Running time: 84 minutes. Streaming on Netflix.

about the environment to speak. Woody Harrelson narrates “Kiss the Ground,” with star-power support from Tom Brady, Gisele Bündchen, Rosario Dawson, Jason Mraz, Ian Somerhalder, Patricia Arquette and David Arquette.

Where “Kiss the Ground” derives its true power is from those setting effective practices into motion. People like conservation agronomist Ray Archuleta, who travels the nation speaking to farmers. And Gabe Brown, a powerhouse of a regenerative rancher who not only speaks on promoting soil health, but whose vibrant property is proof farmers can make a strong living with these practices. And the Markegard family in California, whose vast acreages of regenerated land is like Eden incarnate.

Compelling as well are urban and metropolitan areas that embrace composting, like Detroit and San Francisco, where discarded food from homes and restaurants eventually ends up back in the soil.

By the end of “Kiss the Ground,” we are reminded saving the planet does not have to be a pipe dream. We are moved into believing we have it in us to strive for better.

□

Contact Andrew Tallackson at [drew@thebeacher.com](mailto:drew@thebeacher.com)



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## Walk to End Alzheimer's Planned in Michigan City

Taking COVID-19 into consideration, this year's Walk to End Alzheimer's, planned for Saturday, Oct. 10, will take on a new format.

Instead of a large gathering, the Alzheimer's Association Greater Indiana Chapter is encouraging participants to walk as individuals or in small groups on sidewalks, tracks and trails.

Keeping the event going is especially important this year, organization officials said.

"In just the first few months of this pandemic, our chapter provided more than 100 education programs and caregiver support groups online and by phone – free of charge – to residents across the state," Natalie Sutton, Alzheimer's Association Greater Indiana Chapter executive director, said in a press release.

Money raised through the walk helps provide care and support to families.

Time-honored components of the Walk to End Alzheimer's are being replicated. On walk day, an opening ceremony will feature local speakers, and a presentation of Promise Flowers to honor personal reasons participants join the effort, all delivered to participants' computers. A small group of Alzheimer's Association staff and volunteers will create the Promise Garden in a "view only" format on walk day

at the You Are Beautiful sculpture along Michigan Boulevard in Michigan City.

New features are being added to the Walk to End Alzheimer's mobile app. Participants can use it



Participants in the 2019 Walk to End Alzheimer's in Michigan City.

and the new "Walk Mainstage" to track their steps and distance, follow a virtual walk path, manage Facebook fundraisers and access information and resources from the association and walk sponsors. A new audio track is available to encourage participants along the way, and congratulate them when completing the walk.

Visit [www.alz.org/Indiana/walk](http://www.alz.org/Indiana/walk) to register and receive updates.



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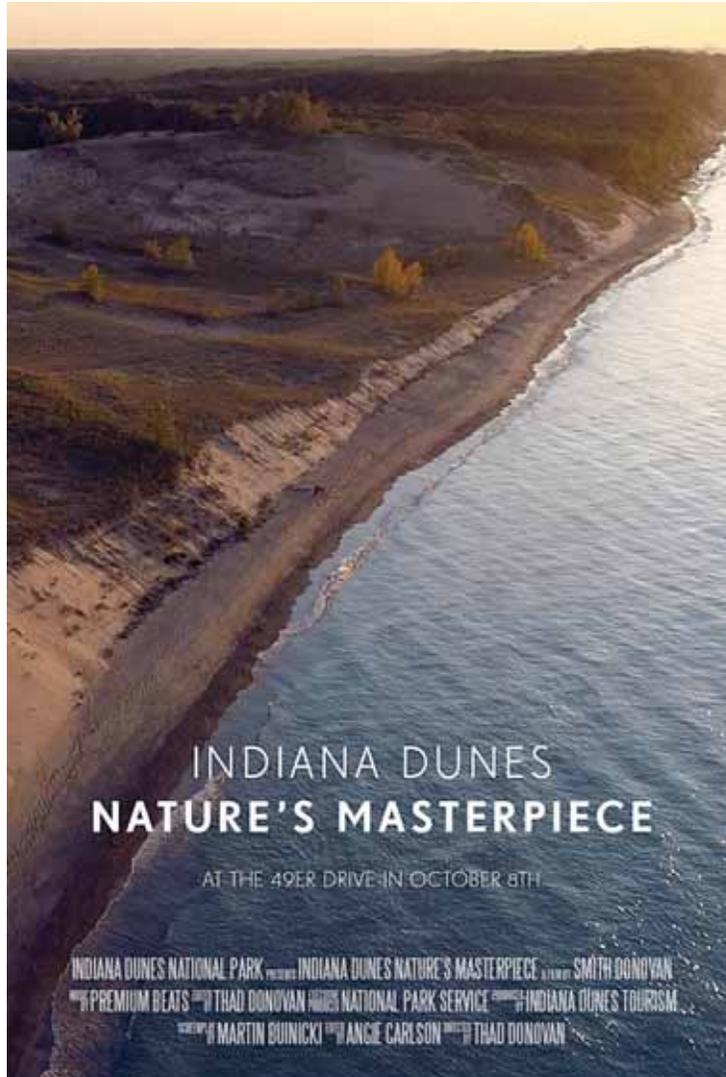
## Indiana Dunes to Premiere New National Park Film at 49er Gala

Indiana Dunes Tourism and Indiana Dunes National Park will host a nature-themed outdoor movie-night fundraiser on Thursday, Oct. 8, at the 49'er Drive-in, 675 N. Calumet Ave., Valparaiso.

The gala celebrates the premiere of the national park's new film, "Indiana Dunes: Nature's Masterpiece." The 24-minute documentary-style film is followed by "America Wild: National Parks Adventure," a 45-minute documentary narrated by Oscar-winner Robert Redford. The outdoor event will include a snack box, popcorn and cash bar. Local musician Johnny V has donated his time to present live music. Lorelei Weimer, Indiana Dunes Tourism executive director, and IDNP Superintendent Paul Labovitz will provide a short introduction. NPS rangers will answer questions.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with the first film starting at 6:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$35. Reservations are required through Eventbrite.

"Indiana Dunes: Nature's Masterpiece," filmed by Chesterton's Thad Donovan, leads viewers on a tour of the Indiana Dunes, showcasing views of Lake Michigan and its surrounding dunes, trails, forests



and other habitats. NPS rangers take the viewer to various locations, highlighting examples of plant and animal biodiversity. This includes pitcher plants, cacti and some of the more than 350 species of birds that live in or travel through the dunes area. Local historical sites and areas of geological interest also are explored.

"The film was made to welcome visitors to the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and introduce them to the amazing features of our parks," Labovitz said in a press release. "It showcases the Indiana Dunes' staggering amount of natural and cultural features, which will surely lead to extended trips for visitors."

The second film, "America Wild: National Parks Adventure," offers a tour of legendary national parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Glacier National

Park, Redwood National Park, the Everglades and Arches.

Taking COVID-19 into consideration, food will be provided at the door so guests can remain in their vehicles. Health and safety protocols, including frequent sanitation and social distancing, will be implemented. The concession stand will be closed, but restrooms will be open.

Ticket sales will be limited to 225 cars due to local regulations. Proceeds will help fund needed enhancements at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49.

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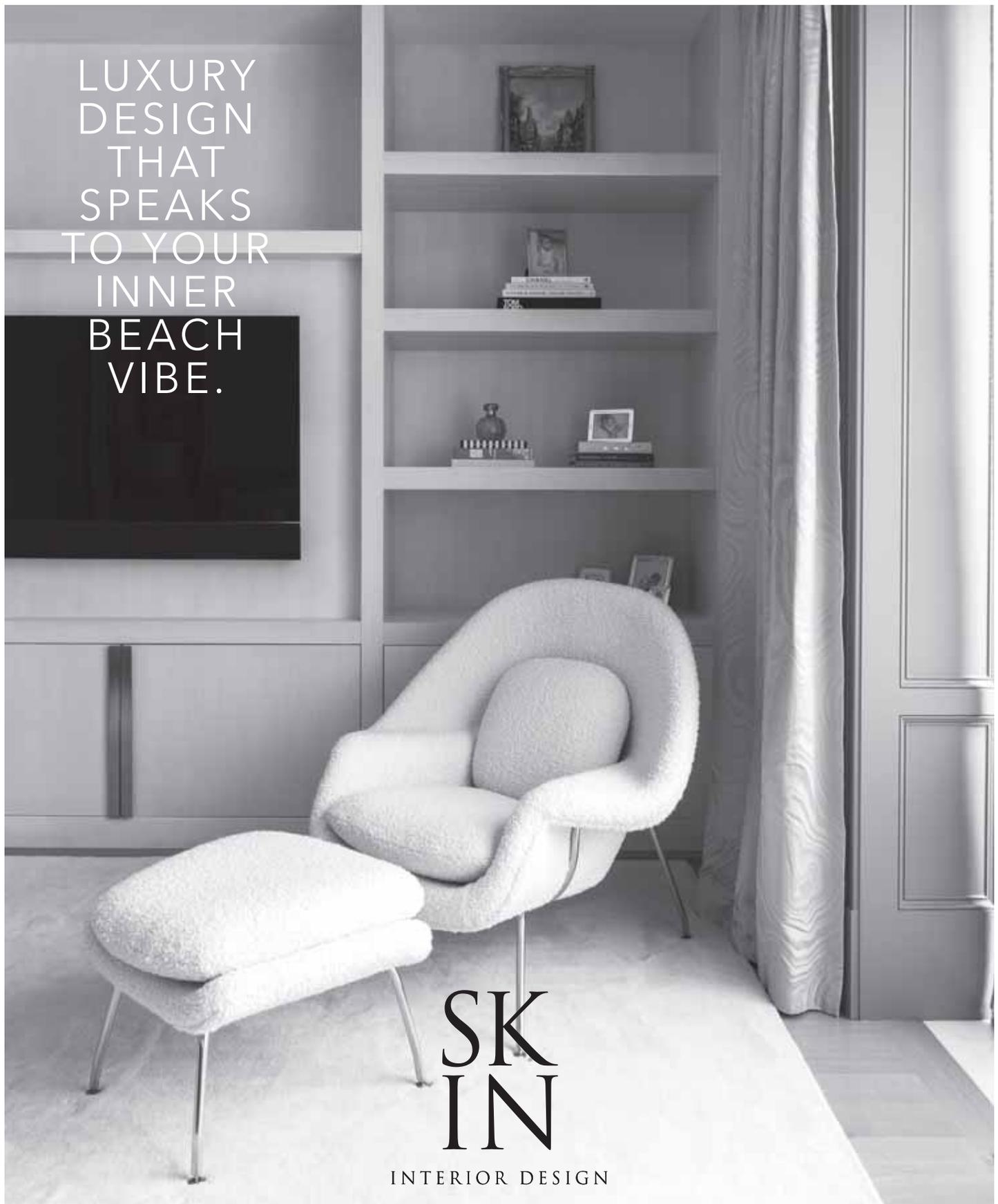
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## “A Perfect Likeness” Traveling Exhibit on Display at LaPorte Museum

Indiana Historical Society’s traveling exhibit, “A Perfect Likeness: Care and Identification of Family Photographs,” runs through Tuesday, Nov. 3, at LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave.

The display, also sponsored by the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film, focuses on how families can preserve 19th century processes and formats such as the daguerreotype, tintype, ambrotype, cabinet card and *carte de visite*.

Joan Hostetler, a historic photograph consultant, served as the exhibit’s guest curator.

“Although there is an established profession dedicated to conserving photographs, much of the research does not trickle down to the average person with cherished family photographs,” Hostetler said in a press release. “The goal of this exhibit is to bridge the gap by relaying information to the public on identifying, dating and caring for their photographs.”

Historical societies, museums, libraries, schools and other nonprofit groups in Indiana can book this and other traveling exhibits through IHS’s Local History Services department. Exhibits may be borrowed for approximately four to five weeks at a time. Contact Karen DePauw at (317) 233-3110

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or [localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org](mailto:localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org), or visit [www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org) for more details.

The museum is operating under reduced hours, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Masks are required of all visitors. Contact the museum at [info@laportecountyhistory.org](mailto:info@laportecountyhistory.org) or (219) 324-6767 for more information.

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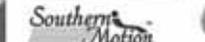
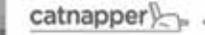
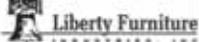
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# Don't Let the Title Deter



Alba Baptista (second from left) stars as a woman inadvertently drawn into a group known as the Order of the Cruciform Sword in "Warrior Nun," now streaming on Netflix.

by Andrew Tallackson

It was the title that kept me at bay.

I mean, seriously. "Warrior Nun." Sounds like half the Netflix database, right at home with all the half-breed vampires, horny teens and thrift-store budget alien invasions.

But my boss, Tom, kept pushing it. "Bad title, good series," he stressed. Sounded to me like he was hopped up on meth...but his frequent badgering wore me down.

Turns out, Tom is pretty savvy when it comes to bingeable TV. I scarfed down the entire 10-episode Netflix show in about a week. "Bad title, good series," indeed. "Warrior Nun" is the kind of show you need now and then: pure escapism. It is downright silly, but everyone in the cast knows it. They take the material just seriously enough, with frequent winks to the audience, letting us know they, too, are in on the joke.

The concept is pure hokum. Based on Ben Dunn's 1990s Canadian comic book series Warrior Nun Areala, it introduces 19-year-old Ava Silva (Portuguese actress Alba Baptista, making her English-speaking debut), who starts the series dead. Yep, a stiff on a slab, having lived much of her life unable to walk from a childhood injury. Her death is shrouded in dubiousness, her corpse resting in a church where, for reasons too complicated to explain, a holy object in the shape of a halo is placed on her back, melting into her body and bringing her back to life. She can

walk, too, but the how and why of the matter are a curious puzzle.

Subsequently exploring the city, she befriends a group of millennial squatters. Entitled brats, really. They plant themselves in homes of the insanely wealthy, moving on shortly before these folk return. But Ava doesn't stay with them too long. Her path crosses with the Order of the Cruciform Sword, nuns whose mission is to protect the holy object and fight off demons. And, they can open a can of whupass when under attack.

Now, I know what you're thinking. *Really?* This is what you've chosen to review this week? Hear me out.

A show like this sinks or swims based on the actress cast as Ava. Do we like her? Is she a character we root for, one we hope survives each new crisis hurled her way? Baptista, without question, has the goods. In fact, this is a career-making performance, one of enormous good humor and savvy street smarts. In a way, she is the audience surrogate, reacting to supernatural events with you've-got-to-be-joking cheekiness. And by keeping the order of nuns stoned-faced serious throughout the mayhem, the dynamic between Baptista and her fellow actresses emerges as deadpan hilariousness, like the moment Ava asks a nun if they've stepped into the plot of Liam Neeson's "Taken." The nuns, of course, have no clue what she's referencing.

The story surrounds Ava with a host of compelling characters. Like Toya Turner as Sister Mary/

# You: “Warrior Nun” is a Blast



**Above:** Toya Turner (left) and Lorena Andrea costar as members of the Order of the Cruciform Sword. **Below.** The gorgeous village of Ronda in southern Spain is featured late in the series.



Shotgun Mary, a key member of the Order of the Cruciform Sword who reluctantly treks after Ava when she flees the city. Turner is a fierce presence: emotion rarely penetrating her defenses...until Ava gradually brings out the maternal side in her.

We also appreciate a subplot involving a scientist, Jillian Salvius (Dutch actress Thekla Reuten), whose experiments may have dark repercussions. The show, however, finds an intriguing way to humanize her, to make her smart enough so she may be a potential ally for the nuns.

Again, all of this pure hogwash, but the series is so forcefully told, by a slate of directors that range from Polish to German to

American, you quickly buy into the premise and embrace it as pulp fantasy. Each episode moves briskly, with nifty fight scenes that are exceptionally choreographed.

Oh, and did I forget to mention, the show is set in Spain? “Warrior Nun” takes advantage of its glorious locations. Immense churches that dwarf the sizes of their inhabitants. The countryside of southern Spain is crisply photographed in oranges and yellows. The most spectacular sight: the village of Ronda in the Málaga province and included in *Sierra de las Nieves* Natural Park. At first glance, I thought it was a set reminiscent of “The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.” But no, this city, perched in a mountainous area, contains remarkable views and a bridge over a deep canyon that takes your breath away.

This, in many ways, is why you watch a series like “Warrior Nun,” because it visits exotic settings that wow you at every turn. And by the time Ava preps for breaking into the Vatican, complete with figuring out how to walk through walls for an extended period of time, the show has so fully roped you in, the outrageous premise no longer is a detriment. It is the selling point.

The last 10 minutes of the 10-episode season contains a twist I didn’t see coming, along with propping the door wide open for more since our heroines find themselves in a dangerous pinch. Thankfully, Netflix won’t leave us hanging. It renewed “Warrior Nun” a little more than a month after it debuted.

Whenever Season 2 debuts, I’ll be there. Plunked down on my sofa. Ready to devour whatever the show throws our way.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at [drew@thebeacher.com](mailto:drew@thebeacher.com)

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# National Public Lands Day

by Paul Kemiell



Seventy volunteers joined cleanup efforts during National Public Lands Day on Saturday, Sept. 26, at West Beach in Indiana Dunes National Park.

During a three-hour period, volunteers collected 160 pounds of trash in the dunes and along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

Individuals and groups involved in the effort included: James Whitenack, IDNP volunteer program manager; Sarah Sherwood, IDNP community volunteer ambassador; Mermaid Straw, a Valparaiso-based company co-founded by Lisa and Adam Harrington that produces metal cups and reusable drinking straws; and Dig the Dunes, founded by Eve Wierzbicki.



## “The Boys in the Band” Can’t Escape Stage Origins

by Andrew Tallackson



Reprising their Broadway revival performances in “The Boys in the Band” are (from left) Jim Parsons, Robin de Jesús, Brian Hutchison and Andrew Rannells. The film is streaming on Netflix.

With “The Boys in the Band,” what’s being touted as a bold Oscar contender in actuality is the Netflix equivalent of fingernails on a chalkboard.

I have not seen Mart Crowley’s 1968 play, nor William Friedkin’s 1970 film adaptation. What I do know is that theater and movies are two entirely different beasts. An approach that succeeds on stage must be reinterpreted on film so it feels natural, propelled by the breath of life.

This Netflix update features the entire cast from the 2018 Broadway revival, including: Matt Bomer, Charlie Carver, Robin de Jesús, Brian Hutchison, Jim Parsons, Zachary Quinto, Andrew Rannells, Michael Benjamin Washington and Tuc Watkins. It is a rare instance where openly gay actors are playing gay characters, and they dive into the material with considerable intensity.

But the director lets them down. With a background primarily in theater, most notably “Wicked,” Joe Mantello hasn’t figured out how to envision this material on film. His version of “The Boys in the Band” is a photographed stage play, where the actors don’t appear to be talking, but reciting extensive monologues.

★ ★ 1/2

### “The Boys in the Band”

Running time: 121 minutes. Streaming on Netflix. Rated R for sexual content, language, some graphic nudity and drug use

The story unfolds over the course of one long evening, in 1968 New York City, as a group of friends — all gay, some more open about it than others — meet at a high-rise apartment for a birthday bash. What begins as a relatively agreeable night takes a dark turn in large part due to the host, Michael (Parsons). An old college roommate of his turns up, Alan (Hutchison), and he is largely appalled by what he sees, taking it out on Emory (de Jesús) with an act of violence. That prompts Michael to initiate a game: Everyone has to call someone they secretly loved, but never had the courage to tell, revealing their true feelings. The one who makes the best progress scores the most points and wins the game.

Save for the introductory passages and a handful of flashbacks, “The Boys in the Band” does not leave Michael’s apartment. Now, confining characters to one setting, particularly a film lifted from a stage

play, is not exactly a drawback. Take, for instance, James Foley's classic 1992 take on David Mamet's "Glengarry Glen Ross." Set largely in an insurance agency, Foley rounded up Hollywood's finest to operate at the top of their game, finding visually intriguing ways to make the material feel cinematic.

The direction by Mantello, however, is static. Flat. The camera largely stays put, as if observing the cast on a stage set. And the screenplay, credited to Crowley and Ned Martel, should have pared down the dialogue so there isn't so much of it. So it doesn't feel stilted, overly written. That is particularly true of Parsons, whose overstuffed dialogue is recited so quickly, it feels designed more for the stage than a movie.

There also is an inconsistency to the performances. Some, like Watkins and Washington, aim for low-key realism. Others go about the drama as if still on stage. That is particularly true of Quinto, whose performance as Harold is so overtly theatrical, so robotic, the character never once feels like a real person. We are constantly aware it is a performance. And de Jesús recites every "zinger" as if he knows the lines will get a laugh from the audience, but the punch lines frequently fizzle.

Michael's "game," as a storytelling device, is designed to bring out inherent truths within everyone in the room. Issues of fear, insecurity and self-loathing. Ultimately, it feels like a cruel prank on Michael's behalf, and when all is said and done, and Michael breaks down, again, the dialogue feels stilted. Soapbox talk.

Maybe some plays cannot exist on film. By design, their vitality is only within a stage setting. You feel like an ogre, too, for criticizing material that, more than 50 years after it debuted, remains relevant because of today's renewed climate of hate.

But by the end of "The Boys of the Band," I was not particularly moved. Just glad the constant chatter finally came to an end.



Contact Andrew Tallackson at [drew@thebeacher.com](mailto:drew@thebeacher.com)

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### Chesterton Art Center

“Through My Eyes,” 2-D and 3-D works by Linda Ligocki, runs through Nov. 9 in both Chesterton Art Center galleries.

A retrospective and current work, “Through My Eyes” entails years of observing a particular viewpoint compiled into surreal watercolors on rag, watercolor and acrylic on canvas, ink drawings, a published book, layered oil drawings on archival transparent vellum and sculptures. The works juxtapose color phenomena and social commentaries.

The show is broken into two categories. The entry exhibit is about color, line, form and abstraction. The larger gallery space will show work that expresses social commentaries, from daily journaling ink drawings to large works on paper and canvas. Included is a series of the daily processing of 6x6 formatted watercolor/acrylic on board that represents visual responses to emotional moments. Executed in 2020



Linda Lee Ligocki is shown with her mixed-media installation “Tribute to the Grammar of Architectural Ornamentation” that was chosen in 2018 for ArtPrize in Grand Rapids, Mich.

is the interactive “Hopeful Heart” sculpture.

Ligocki’s accomplishments include having a piece selected in 2018 for ArtPrize in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Regular CAC hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.

*Chesterton Art Center is located at 115 S. Fourth St. Visit [www.chestertonart.com](http://www.chestertonart.com) for more details.*

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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-Saturday.

There is no public seating. The library also follows 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 circulation and reference desks will have masks available for \$1.

The following services have been temporarily suspended: public programs and meetings; literacy tutoring; MakerSpace/3-D printing; study rooms; homebound service; interlibrary loan; puppets; puzzles; blocks and children's AWE computers in Youth Services; Ellison die cut machine; public faxing; microfilm use; magazine/book sale; and acceptance of donations. Writing Out Loud and the Fall Film Series on DVD are canceled.

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.

The following virtual programming is scheduled:

- The library in October will celebrate Eric Carle, author of The Very Hungry Caterpillar and illustrator of Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Families can pick up a weekly craft/activity kit. The schedule is: Week 1 — Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?; Week 2 — From Head to Toe; Week 3 — The Very Hungry Caterpillar; Week 4: Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me; and Week 5: Mister Seahorse.
- Storytime and Crafts to Go at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. A new storytime video, aimed at children through age 5, will be posted on the website at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. Each video is available for two weeks at the following link: [www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/](http://www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/). New take-home crafts are available Wednesdays to accompany the virtual storytimes. Visit the Youth Services desk to get them. Contact the Youth Services department at (219) 873-3045 for more details.

*Michigan City Public Library is located at 100 E. Fourth St. Visit [www.mclib.org](http://www.mclib.org) for more details.*

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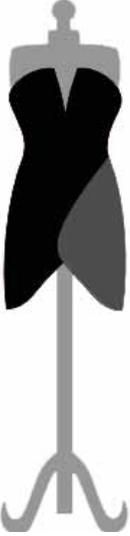


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*The following programs are available:*

- **A free online Family Day at 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10.**

Families can pick up a Family Day Art Kit to create three projects through live, guided instruction. The focus is drawings of inspirational women or words, learning to embroider like artists in the exhibit and creating a postcard that will be mailed back to LCA for a special installation.

The kits are available at the front desk during regular business hours, or call to make arrangements for curbside pickup.

- **The online maker worship "Wearable Circuit" from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 17.**

An instructional video will be emailed in advance, and the workshop is a live Zoom session with Jessie Sexton for step-by-step instruction. All materials are included and available for pickup beforehand from LCA.

*Lubeznik Center for the Arts is located at 101 W. Second St. Call (219) 874-7900, email [artinfo@lubeznikcenter.org](mailto:artinfo@lubeznikcenter.org) or visit [www.lubeznikcenter.org](http://www.lubeznikcenter.org) for more details.*

### Indiana Dunes State Park

*The following programs are offered:*

- **Scarecrow Making from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10.**

Meet Drama in the Dunes artist Jerry Jascoviak at the campground ring to create a scarecrow. Take ratty clothes if having them; however, materials will be provided. The program is free thanks to an Indiana Arts Commission Arts in the Park grant. Pre-registration is required by calling the Nature Center.

- **J.D. Marshall Shipwreck History Hike at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10.**

The one-mile flat accessible hike describes one of Lake Michigan's shipwreck stories.

- **High Dunes Hike at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 11.**

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

*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.*

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### Elkhart Juried Regional

Midwest Museum of American Art will host the 42nd Elkhart Juried Regional Art Exhibition on Oct. 10-Dec. 20.

The all-media competition was open to artists 18 and older from Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Fulton, Huntington, Jasper, Kosciusko, Lake, LaGrange, LaPorte, Marshall, Newton, Noble, Porter, Pulaski, St. Joseph, Starke, Steuben, Wabash or Whitley counties in Indiana, and Berrien, Branch, Cass or St. Joseph counties in Michigan.

Awards are more than \$20,000, selected by the jurors and Purchase Award patrons. The jurors are: Karen Bondarchuk, professor and area coordinator of Foundation Art at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, and Condessa Croninger, art director at 20 North Gallery, Toledo.

Masks are required to enter the museum, and social distancing will be observed. Hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The museum is located at 429 S. Main St., Elkhart.

Email [info@midwestmuseum.us](mailto:info@midwestmuseum.us) or call (574) 293-6660 for more details.

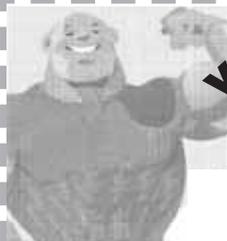
### Harbor Country Hikers

Harbor Country Hikers will explore trails at Love Creek Country Park in Berrien Center, Mich., at 10 a.m. EDT Saturday, Oct. 10.

The park has about 170 acres of meadows, forests, marshes and creeks, as well as cross-country skiing and bicycle trails.

A park naturalist will lead the two-hour hike rated moderately difficult. Members and guests should dress for the season, wear sturdy shoes or boots, and take insect repellent and water. The group observes Michigan social distancing guidelines, so face masks are required.

Visit [www.harborcountryhikers.com](http://www.harborcountryhikers.com) for more information or directions to the park. Membership is required; however, the public is invited on hikes, including children if accompanied by an adult.



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### Indiana Dunes National Park

Nature Exploration Backpacks, designed for families to keep in touch with nature, are available for daily checkout from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, each backpack, and all of its contents, are thoroughly sanitized before being made available. The backpacks contain scientific instruments, such as binoculars and bug boxes, that can be used to explore the oak savanna and pond habitats on the trail around the center. Families can use other items, such as guides, books and nature games, to instigate play and creativity on their hike.

The free backpacks are loaned out on a first-come, first-served basis. Families are encouraged to explore the trails around the center and Nature Play Zone with the backpacks.

Visitors also can help feed the center’s resident fish, turtles, snakes, toads and frogs with a ranger, and while practicing social distancing and wearing face masks.

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

### Give-Back Day

Spring Creek Horses Help Foundation and Williams Orchard will host a U-Pick Give-Back Day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, at the Rolling Prairie orchard, 9456 N. County Road 500 East.

In addition to picking apples or buying those already picked, the event includes photos with a pony, pony rides for small children, a petting zoo, scavenger hunt, s’mores, cider and apple doughnuts. Some activities may be limited depending on the weather and COVID restrictions in place.

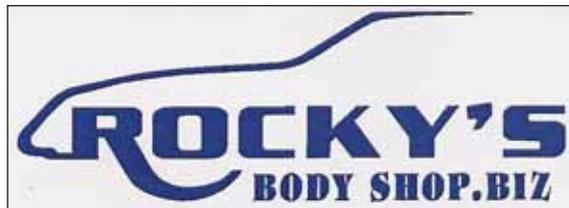
The foundation will receive a percentage of apple sales. Photos and pony rides will have suggested donations of \$5 and \$15, respectively. Foundation apparel and notecards will be sold.

The foundation raises scholarships to provide local, low-income and special-needs children and adults an educational program on horse behavior, barn and horse care, and riding skills.

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**Salvation Army Day**



Responding to the need caused by COVID-19, Mayor Duane Parry issued a proclamation declaring Sept. 28 as “Salvation Army Day.” It recognizes ongoing efforts by the corps’ employees and volunteers to help the community during the pandemic. Pictured is Parry with Dale Simmons of The Salvation Army.

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**Westchester Public Library**

Westchester Public Library has curbside pickup at its Thomas and Hageman branches.

Use a library card or go online to place holds on up to 10 items, including DVDs and CDs. Once notified the items are available, park in specially-numbered spaces at each branch during pickup hours.

While parked, call the library phone number posted on the numbered space sign, tell staff your library card number and he/she will check out the items and take them to a table at the parking space and walk away. Patrons then can step out of their vehicle to retrieve them. Curbside hours are Monday-Friday (1 to 6 p.m. at Thomas and Hageman) and Saturday (11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Thomas and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at Hageman).

For patrons with materials checked out before COVID-19 restrictions were in place, return them to the building drop boxes. Do not return them in bags. Do not return board games; those can be returned at a future date. Return eReaders into the Audio/Visual drop.

*Hageman Library (219-926-9080) is located at 100 Francis St., Porter. Thomas Library (219-926-7696) is located at 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton. Westchester Township History Museum (219-983-9715) is located at 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton. The Baugher Center is located at 100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.*

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# American Red Cross

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

- South Central Junior-Senior High School, 9808 S. County Road 600 West, Union Mills, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 12.
- Trinity Lutheran Church, 907 Michigan Ave., LaPorte, 12:30-6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13.

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 [red-crossblood.org](http://red-crossblood.org) for more details. Visit [rcblood.org](http://rcblood.org) together for more details.

## Private Blackout Tours

Local folklore, from Diana of the Dunes to the haunted lighthouse, take center stage during Barker Mansion's "Private Blackout Tour: Myth, Lore, and Legend."

The tours, conducted with the lights off, are from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 23 and 24, at the mansion, 631 Washington St. Emphasizing safe, social distancing, tealights and glowsticks illuminate the darkened rooms as each private tour group is guided through the mansion.

The tours are recommended from age 10 and older, and masks are required. Advance group tickets are required, as walk-ups are not permitted. Timed entry tickets are every 15 minutes. Reservations for time slots are \$50 for a group of up to six in a quarantine circle.

Tickets are available at [www.barkermansion.com](http://www.barkermansion.com) or by calling the mansion at (219) 873-1520.

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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 will be published after the favor is granted.





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## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

**The First Actress: A Novel of Sarah Bernhardt** by C.W. Gortner (hardcover, \$28 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 416 pages.)

She was known as “The Divine Sarah” to audiences around the world. While her name has faded from the annals of time, her life story of heartbreak, loss, adversity and pure determination remains a testament to her indomitability.

She was called the first actress for modern times. She became an international sensation. She was adored, followed and cheered wherever she went. She even transitioned from the stage to moving pictures in the early years of the 20th century.

She was truly a woman born before her time...

Gortner’s novel does not cover Sarah’s whole life. To do so would require a very large book. As with all historical fiction, conversations are invented to follow known incidents; however, everything has been written to follow Sarah’s life as faithfully as the genre allows and the author has researched.

I cannot emphasize enough how this story moved me. I knew of Sarah Bernhardt before this book, her accomplishments and mesmerizing stage presence. However, I never read anything that showed the incredible life she led...until now.

People sometimes made fun of how thin she was. After all, most 19th century actresses were more voluptuous. Still, she came to be photographed and painted by the most famous professionals of the time. Even Alphonse Mucha made several beautiful posters of her. Her fame was bound to leave the confines of Paris — first to England, then other parts of Europe and, of course, America. But it didn’t start out that way, and some said she would never amount to anything but a courtesan...

While a thumbnail description of a person’s life can be easily looked up, it’s the search for the flesh-and-blood person, their struggles and triumphs, that makes historical fiction so popular. On to “the Divine Sarah”...

The story begins with an 8-year-old Sarah in 1853 and follows through to 1896. She was born to Jewish parents in 1844. Her mother was never married, and Sarah never met her real father, although he is said to have provided money for her upbringing. Julie Benard, Sarah’s mother, was a famous woman in her own way — she was one of the most popular courtesans of Paris. Back then, these women of beauty and talent actually held wildly popular

salons in their apartments. The rich and famous courted her “affections” and repaid her with enough for a healthy living. It might have come in the form of money, jewels or furs. The thing that amazes me is how this way of living was looked down upon, yet tolerated in some bizarre way. It was two sides of the same coin, to be sure.

By 9, it was off to a convent school for Sarah. It was run by nuns Sarah found to be kind and helpful. They knew she was a Jew and were surprised when she told them one day she wanted to convert to Catholicism and someday become a nun!

That all changed when she was part of a school play. The words, the emotion touched her. Julie laughed, saying an actress was less likely to succeed than a courtesan. No way, Sarah said, so off she went to acting school and eventually a job at the Comedie-Francaise.

She was naive enough to not realize the theater was full of malicious gossip and envy. Sarah’s inability to bow down to accepted acting techniques or the politics accruing behind the curtain soon had her moving on to another theater and another until she was forced back to her mother’s side, reluctantly taking up the family business...until she gets pregnant. No one at that time, least of all Julie, had any sympathy for an unwed mother, and Sarah had to depend on the few friends she had for help. She kept the baby and named him Maurice.

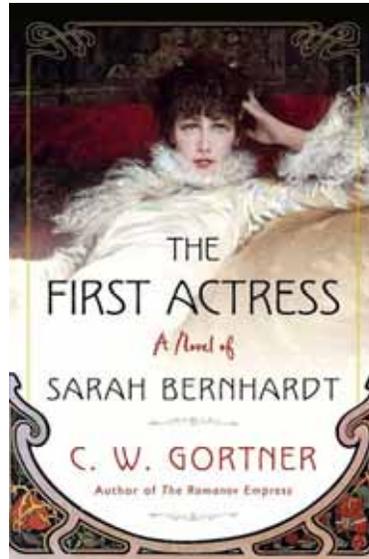
Setback after setback would have broken any woman, but not Sarah. She is soon back at the theater until the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. She ran a hospital out of the theater, nursing wounded soldiers and assisting with surgeries. She goaded her rich friends into giving money for food and supplies, horrified when the French surrendered.

She became friends with Oscar Wilde, performed the plays of Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo, and brought audiences to their feet: cheering, crying and sighing over her performances. The struggles with the politics of the theater were enough to make anyone scream, but Sarah was a quick study, and her sometimes outlandish actions only endeared her to her adoring public.

There’s simply not enough room here to highlight this amazing woman. For art’s sake, just get the book and read it! You won’t be disappointed.

Gortner has written 10 previous historical novels about famous women. More at [cwgortner.com](http://cwgortner.com); FB: CWGortner; Twitter: @CWGortner

Till next time, happy reading!





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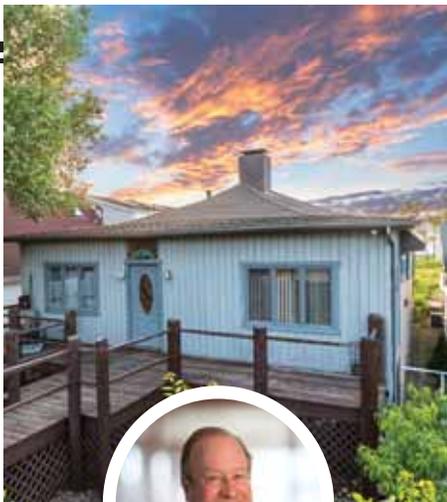
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