



Volume 37, Number 16 Thursday, April 29, 2021

Love Story

by Kim Nowatzke

Talk about beating the odds!

According to Google research, only .0173 percent of people living today made it to 100. Only 17.2 percent of those are men.

Celebrating a 75th wedding anniversary is a reality for fewer than 1 percent of couples. In fact, the milestone is so rare, exact statistics aren't available.



The photo taken on the day they met, Sept. 14, 1943, is a treasured keepsake of the Hoerrs.

Robert ("Bob") John Hoerr (pronounced "Hair") and Marguerite Ann (Beer) Hoerr, who live in Rittenhouse Village at Michigan City, celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary April 14. Bob then celebrated his 100th birthday 12 days later on April 26.

"I truly feel honored to be in the presence of both Bob and Marguerite at Rittenhouse," Stefanie Olson, Rittenhouse's senior lifestyle counselor, said. "Bob amazes me with his continued brilliance on recalling the past like it was yesterday, and how he keeps up on current events in the world. I'm so impressed that he still enjoys being on the computer at 100 years young!"

Ask Bob his thoughts on living for 10 decades, and he'll tell you he "never ever" thought he would reach this milestone.

"As a young man, I never thought of things like that," he said. "There was a war going on. I didn't know anyone 100 years old."

Born and raised in Peoria, Ill., Bob had one younger brother, Wilbur. Bob was drafted by the U.S. Army in May 1944, and just after D-Day on

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After 75 years of marriage, Marguerite still considers herself lucky that her husband, Bob, picked her.



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Love Story

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June 6, he left for basic training. He spent 17 weeks preparing to become a medic at a medical replacement center at Camp Barkley near Abilene, Texas.

The Army sent Bob to Brooklyn, where he became part of a medical complement unit aboard the U.S. Army Hospital Ship Aleda E. Lutz. Battling seasickness and surviving scary scenarios with an enemy submarine and floating mine, Bob would make four round-trip crossings from South Hampton, England, to a home port of Charleston, N.C. The ship brought back approximately 2,400 passengers, and was used as a troop transport to bring back 800 German POWs to Cherbourg, France.

"The Lord put us where He wanted us," Bob said. "In World War II, the general feeling was, 'All gave some and some gave all.' I'm glad I was able to serve."

It was during a two-week furlough in his military service that Bob married the love of his life, Marguerite. He shared the story of how their "match made in heaven" came to be. His mother, Aline Weisser, moved to a family farm in Milford, Ind., when she 9 years old. The rest of her siblings, including her brother, Omar, were born on this family homestead.

Twelve years later, the farm was sold to Marguerite's grandfather. When Bob's grandfather passed away in 1943, the Weissers family traveled for the funeral from out of state. Uncle Omar, accompanied by Bob, decided to stop by the former family home for a birthplace photo. It just so happened 16-year-old Marguerite was coming in from milking the cows. Omar spontaneous-

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Bob and Marguerite Hoerr's wedding photo on April 14, 1946.

ly invited the pretty young girl to take a photo with Bob. Today, the Hoerrs cherish this treasured photo — taken just moments after they met.

When asked why he was interested in the pretty farm girl, Bob quickly replied, "Why was I interested? Why wouldn't I be?"

The oldest of seven children — three younger brothers and three younger sisters — Marguerite noted she had a lot of responsibility and was mature for her age. She was flattered the young man — six years her senior — was paying attention to her. In contrast, the boys she went to school with seemed so much younger.

"I love watching the love between Bob and Marguerite — it reminds me of a true love story," Olson said. "What a wonderful gift to say you still have the love of your life after 75 years of marriage."



Bob is a proud World War II veteran.

That just is not heard of! I think it's the sweetest compliment that when I asked Marguerite how does it feel to be married 75 years to your husband, she said she can't believe it because he is so good looking, and that he picked her and she continued to mumble that she can't believe she got so lucky!"

On a two-week furlough 2 1/2 years later, Bob took advantage of the break to marry Marguerite. Though "unofficially engaged" before Bob was drafted into the Army, the two made it official while he was in active duty.

While Bob finished up his tour of duty, the newly-weds lived in Richmond, Calif., for several months before moving back to Peoria. After 11 years, they made their home in Milford for 44 years followed by New Buffalo, Mich., for 18 years.

After Bob graduated from high school in 1939, he was a foundry patternmaker apprentice at Caterpillar for four years. He returned to that occupation once the Army discharged him on June 9, 1946, and retired in 1987. He has been a member of the American Foundry Society since 1939.

Marguerite's careers span nearly 50 years. She first worked for the Warsaw Soil & Water Conservation District as a secretary for 24 years. Following that, she worked an additional 24 years for libraries in Milford and New Buffalo.



The Hoerrs at Christmas in 1956:
Robert Alan, Marguerite (holding
baby Doug), Becky, Bob and Fred
(in front).

Their active lives contributed to their marital bliss.

"I kept busy and she kept busy, and I think that helped," Bob said. "We didn't have a lot of time on our hands to argue about stuff."

The couple has five children: a daughter and four sons. Becky Pelath lives in



Bob holding son Jeff in 1959.

Continued on Page 4

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Love Story

Continued from Page 3



Bob and Marguerite Hoerr celebrate their 75th anniversary.

Michigan City, while Robert Alan resides in Minnesota, Fred settled in Virginia and Douglas and Jeff both call Illinois home.

"Four are Purdue graduates and one graduated from Indiana University," the proud father noted.

Bob and Marguerite also are proud grandparents to 14 and great-grandparents to six.

One of their secrets to a long, happy marriage is the time they spent together.

"We were just talking the other day, and we both decided that we did a lot of things after the kids were gone," Bob shared. "We went to a lot of fun places and enjoyed going places together. There were a fair amount of places to go to between Goschen and Warsaw where we lived."



Bob and Marguerite are photographed by the cake helping celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary in 2016.



Bob surrounded by Becky, Bob and Fred (looking at camera) in 1954.

Bob believes staying busy has contributed to his long life as well. He shared a story about a curious nurse when he was hospitalized for health issues last year. She told him, "We nurses have been talking and wondering if you have a secret to your longevity. I said, 'I kept busy after I retired.'

"I thought I would keep busy making birdhouses and things like that – and I did a fair amount of those, but that was just the beginning," he continued. "Before we moved to New Buffalo, I had built quite a bit of stuff for my son (Doug), who is a landscape architect."

After his retirement, Bob corresponded with the secretary of The Antique Stove Association. He was interested in Bob crafting a piece for a 1901 Monroe potbelly stove. It ended up launching Bob's business, R.J. Pattern Services, in which he provided iron and plastic antique stove-replacement parts in addition to parts for heavy-duty garden gates and benches, and antique furniture restoration.

"I maintained my foundry career in an unusual way," he said. "I've made hundreds of plastic stove knobs for antique stoves – and that's not an exaggeration."

The couple made Rittenhouse their home in February 2019.

"The Hoerrs are an inspiration to many, and Rittenhouse is blessed to celebrate their special once-in-a-lifetime milestones with them," Olson said. "I know my life has been enriched by knowing and loving them like family."



Marguerite and Bob enjoy a happy moment together.

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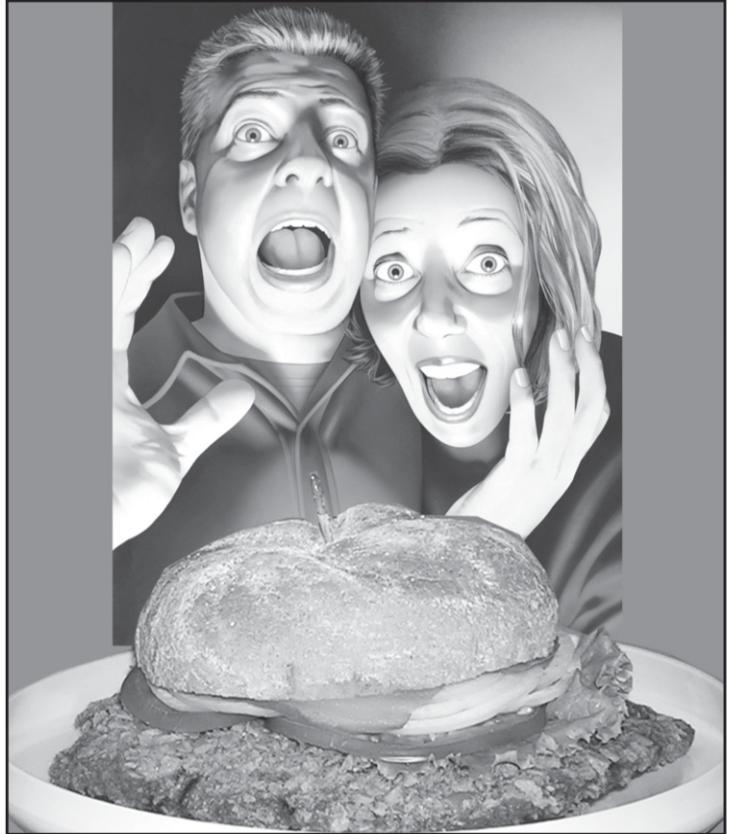
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Carolyn Watson Named LCSO's New Music Director

Carolyn Watson takes the helm as LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's 10th music director on Aug. 1, officially bringing the "Bravo Maestro!" search to a close.

A native Australian who came to the United States to lead the Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra, Watson's conducting credits include Austin Symphony, Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra, Kansas City Ballet, Kansas City Chamber Orchestra and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. In 2017, she was a Dallas Opera Hart Institute Fellow and in the forthcoming season will lead productions at Des Moines Metro Opera and Amarillo Opera.

A committed music educator, she is the director of orchestral studies at The University of Kansas, and still has a relationship with Interlochen, returning every summer to conduct. In 2022, she will lead the All State orchestras in Colorado and Washington.

Watson said in a press release she is delighted by LCSO choosing her as its new music director.



"During my audition visit to LaPorte in 2019, I was immediately impressed with the orchestra's strong work ethic and commitment to presenting an outstanding musical product," she said. "I very much look forward to our journey together."

The conductor search, according to LCSO Executive Director Tim King, was a boost for the orchestra.

"We had six incredibly gifted conductors who brought their talent to LaPorte County and impressed both our musicians and audience," he said. "Carolyn was the unanimous choice of the LCSO musicians, search committee and audience."

"I feel extremely positive about the direction of our orchestra under Carolyn's leadership, as she has the skills and the drive to take our orchestra to the next level. I am very much looking forward to working with her."

Already planning next season, as well as LCSO's 50th anniversary in 2022-2023, Watson's contract extends through the 2023-24 season.

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Region of Three Oaks Museum Opens New Exhibits May 1

Several new exhibits and updates to existing ones are ready for The Region of Three Oaks Museum's season opening from noon to 5 p.m. EDT Saturday, May 1.

Doors open in accordance with the latest COVID guidelines.

New exhibits include "Fire!," a look at area blazes of the past and the teams and equipment that fought them. Along with artifacts from the Tempest Brigade, Three Oaks' first fire company, the exhibit features an acrylic painting by River Valley Senior Brianna Martin depicting the 1871 fire that swept across the fields between Sawyer and New Troy.

In another corner of the museum, the dental office from 103 S. Elm St. has been recreated circa 1935. The scene will be familiar to many local residents with its patient chair, drill, spit stand and tool cabinet. Across the aisle, other familiar tools are featured in the Farm Room, including those used by blacksmiths and the fanning mill.

Still on loan from Michigan State University is the Warren Calculating Engine, possibly the first functional mechanical calculator made in the USA. Invented by local jeweler Fred Warren, this is its first appearance in Three Oaks in close to 70 years.

Other displays include greeting cards sent to and from the area dating as far back as the 1880s, and "Faces from the Past" that visitors are asked to help

identify. Another exhibit features quilts done by the Churchill women at the turn of the 20th century in a period-furnished bedroom.

Several exhibits have been enhanced with addi-



In the museum is a recreation of the dental office, circa 1935, from 103 S. Elm St.

tional narratives through QR code scans.

The museum, located at 5 Featherbone Ave. next to The Acorn, will remain open from noon to 5 p.m. EDT Saturdays and Sundays through October. Call (269) 336-9688, visit www.regionofthreeoaksmuseum.com or email trotommusuem@gmail.com for more details.

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Parent & Child Discovery Days

The program includes arts and crafts, games and snacks. All activities are related to the topic. Programs are appropriate for children 3 to 8, with an adult required to participate. Times are from 6 to 7:15 p.m. at Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. The cost is \$5 per child/program. Pre-registration and payment are required at least one week in advance or until full, whichever comes first. The schedule is:

- April 28 — Flower Power.
- May 12 — Timber.

Nature's Tiny Tots

Designed for parents and grandparents, explore nature with toddlers and preschoolers. Enjoy music, dancing, storytelling and, weather permitting, hiking.

The free program is from 10 to 11 a.m. May 3 at Luhr County Park. Call at least one week in advance to register.

Diabetes Education Q&A

A free Diabetes Education Q&A session is from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 28, at Luhr County Park. Certified Diabetes Educator Clarise Largen will discuss making smart choices. Masks are required.

Pinecone Bird Feeders Make and Take Craft

The free program is from 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 4, at Luhr County Park Nature Center.

All ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by an adult. The craft will be available while supplies last. No pre-registration is required. Masks must be worn.

Healthy Lifestyles

The free social club that emphasizes quality of life meets from 9 to 10 a.m. Wednesdays at Luhr County Park Nature Center. Programs focus on health trends, gardening, medical information and balancing active lifestyles. Call at least one week in advance to sign up (the maximum allowed is 30). The schedule is:

- May 12: "Soil Health, Garden Tools and Pruning 101" by Sacha Gee-Burns.
- June 9: "GERD — New Treatments for Relief of Heartburn & Acid Reflux," Dr. Conn.
- July 14: Nutrition, food groups and labeling, Stephanie Thomas.

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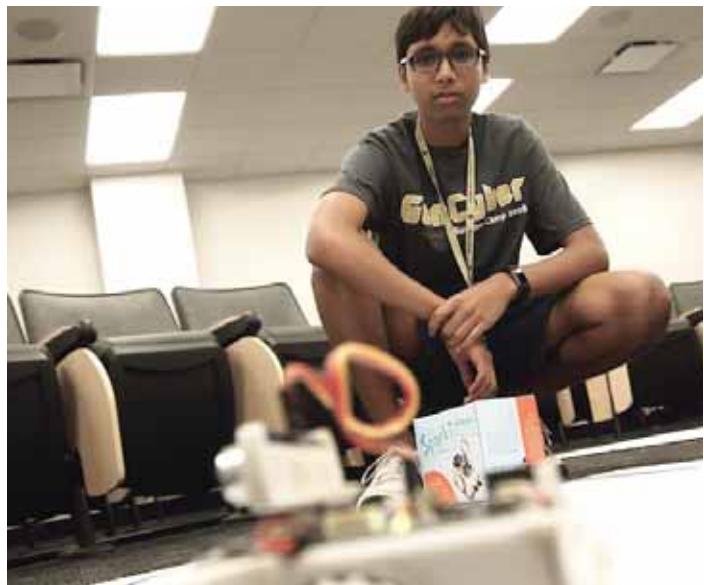
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Virtual GenCyber Camp

High school student Rayhan Zaman participated in the 2018 GenCyber Camp at Purdue University Northwest.

Purdue University Northwest's College of Technology will host a free virtual GenCyber camp from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. July 12-16.

High school students with coding experience from Northwest Indiana and the Chicago metropolitan area can participate. The camps focus on cyber-security fundamentals, GenCyber Six Cybersecurity Concepts, awareness education, and security practices in software, systems, network, application, cryptograph and wireless technology.

Each participant receives a GenCyber T-shirt, Raspberry Pi kit and USB thumb drive containing camp materials. Certificates are awarded after successful completion.

The camp is supported by a grant from National Security Agency and National Science Foundation awarded to Tae-Hoon Kim, associate professor of computer information technology, and Ge Jin, co-principal investigator and professor of computer information technology and graphics. Both are from PNW's College of Technology.

Visit www.pnw.edu/cyber-camp/ for details.

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World Creativity and Innovation Week Includes Poetry Showcase

This year's Northwest Indiana Poetry Showcase, part of World Creativity and Innovation Week 2021, had no official theme.

Instead, the pandemic became the theme on its own.

"From youngest participants to adults, 'isolation' was prominent," poetry contest judge Janine Harrison said in a press release. "From acrostic poems spelling 'COVID-19' to free verse works questioning everything from how best to cope to whether face-to-face or eLearning was the better individual choice, the poems proved resonant."

Harrison is a creative writer, artist and teacher at Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting. One particular poem "really made me laugh," she admitted. In "I Love Chicken," third-grader Dillon Gallagher wrote:

*Chicken, chicken on my plate,
How delicious you will taste.
I like you baked.
I like you fried.
I like you with ranch on the side.*

Bill Halliar, along with Ester of The Nest in Michigan City, founded the poetry contest six years ago. He is a former senior project engineer at TTX Co., a musician, an inventor with multiple patents and a correspondent with *The Beacher*. He chairs the World Creativity and Innovation Week committee, and sits on boards for The Center for Creative Solutions and Old Lighthouse Museum.

Winners read their poems on WIMS radio and on "Arts on the Air," produced by Lakeshore Public Radio. Other "firsts" included adult entries, and the production of a book of winning poems.

The winners are:

Third Grade

- First Place — Dillon Gallagher, "I Love Chicken," Jackson Elementary School, Valparaiso.

Fourth Grade

- First Place — Dylan Nelson, "COVID-19," Queen of All Saints School, Michigan City.
- Second Place — Emiliano, "CORONA," Queen of All Saints School.
- Third Place — Dylan Nelson, Untitled, Queen of All Saints School.

Sixth Grade

- First Place — Rebecca Wellinski, "Coronavirus," Queen of All Saints School.
- Second Place — Grace Bacztub, Untitled, Queen of All Saints School.

Seventh Grade

- First Place — Ashley Rose Bafia, "Cabin Nights," Chesterton Middle School.
- Second Place — Anastasia O'Shea, "TWENTY TWENTY," Queen of All Saints School.
- Third Place — Andrew Hoang, Untitled, Queen of All Saints School.



Grace Bacztub, a sixth-grader and second-place winner from Queen of All Saints School.

Eighth Grade

- First Place — Hannah Adams, "The Man in the Mask," Westville Middle School.
- Second Place — Kylie Sue Currin, "The Outside," Westville Middle School.
- Third Place — Anthony Scott, "Quarantine," Queen of All Saints School.

Ninth Grade

- First Place — Robert Michael Summerville, Untitled, Hebron High School.

12th Grade

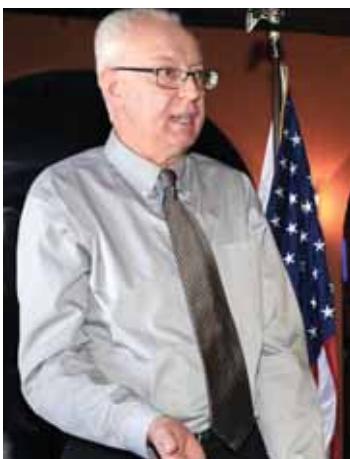
- First Place — Grace Hubbard, Untitled, Chesterton High School.

Adult Category

- First Place — Roy Anthony Summerville, "Introvert."
- Second Place — Jeannie Y. Halliar (Yo), "My Trail."
- Third Place — GN Dobie III, "Puzzles of Life."

The Center for Creative Solutions, along with WIMS radio, are the week's sponsors. Other community partners include The Society of Innovators at Purdue Northwest, "Art on the Air" broadcast on Lakeshore Public Radio, LaPorte County Public Library, The Nest of Michigan City, Lubeznik Center for the Arts, A.K. Smith Career Center and Michigan City Public Library.

CREO! Co-Recipients



Adams



Hong

Earl Adams and Dr. Kuhn Hong are this year's CREO! co-recipients, the honors announced April 16 as part of Northwest Indiana's World Creativity and Innovation Week.

The award, given through The Center for Creative Solutions, stands for Creativity, Regional, Excellence and Originality. It goes to a citizen or organization that encourages creativity and innovation.

Adams, nominated by Keri Marrs-Barron, who serves on the center board, was praised for working with people through LaPorte County Public Library's community programs. Before retirement, he worked in the health care-technology field for more than 34 years. His career began in industry and moved to Indiana University Health-LaPorte Hospital. There, he worked as a biomedical engineer, served as a computer information services department director and at the executive level served as chief information officer. He founded PCCS Inc., a health-care computer services and consulting firm. He also served as a center board member.

Hong is a practicing radiologist. A native of South Korea, he has shared his medical skills with people in Egypt, Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, North Korea, Russia, Thailand, Mexico, Honduras, Chile, Venezuela, Peru, Mauritania, Senegal, India, Ethiopia, Haiti and Tanzania. He also is a respected artist with no formal training, exhibiting in Paris, France, Seoul, Korea, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Chicago and several Illinois suburbs. He was nominated for the award by Dale Cooper, who serves on the center board.

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"Stowaway" is Meatier Than You Might Expect

by Andrew Tallackson

"Stowaway" is not what you expect, which makes it a pleasant surprise...and a little sad, to be honest. But worth the trip.

I realize all that tumbled out into one hodgepodge of a paragraph, but the movie, which just debuted on Netflix, is still rumbling about in my thoughts fewer than 24 hours after seeing it. The story is set in space, but the emphasis is not technology or science. More, a what-would-you-do scenario, and because the cast is so good, the movie stirs something inside you far greater than you anticipated.

The setting is a U.S. spaceship headed for Mars. The always wonderful Toni Collette ("Knives Out," "The Sixth Sense") is Marina, the ship's commander, Daniel Dae Kim ("Lost") is David, the ship's biologist, and Anna Kendrick ("Pitch Perfect") is Zoe, the medical researcher. In the opening scene, Brazilian director/co-writer Joe Penna recreates the sensation of takeoff not with an ambush of effects, but primarily with sound. Extraordinary sound effects, to be clear, that are like an adrenaline rush of sensory overload.

The sequence preps you for action, but "Stowaway" does an about-face and becomes exceedingly quiet. Allows time for us to know the characters: three smart, likable people who work together as a team. In terms of their mission, they're on the same page. Until, that is, the title character surfaces.

Michael (Shamier Anderson) is a launch-plan engineer. Inside the ship during the pre-launch phase, he injured himself in a confined area, suffering a concussion that knocked him out. How much you fall for that, in terms of general movie logic, depends on your willingness to let the explanation slide and roll with it.

But, it's how Michael ends up the unforeseen fourth passenger. It also explains the precarious situation the crew finds itself in: with resources now dwindling, all four won't survive the trip to Mars. One person must go. And by go, I mean sacrifice himself or herself.

Anderson is a Canadian actor whose resume of film and TV credits I am unfamiliar, but he creates an air of mystery about Michael. For the longest time, we are unclear if his presence on the ship is part of a greater scheme or ulterior motive. And be-

cause he is black and the crew white and Asian, we wonder if the film is setting itself up as a metaphor for the issue of race in America.

The answer won't be revealed here. Suffice it to say, Anderson presents Michael with such gentle empathy, he makes the last act of "Stowaway" all



Forced with making a difficult decision in "Stowaway" are Michael (Shamier Anderson, from left), Zoe (Anna Kendrick), David (Daniel Dae Kim) and Marina (Toni Collette).



"Stowaway"

*Running time: 116 minutes. Netflix.
Rated TV-MA for language.*

the more harrowing. It thoughtfully explores the emotional turmoil for everyone on board. How do you choose one life over another? What makes one person more essential than the other? All four actors, especially Kendrick — subdued and believable in a role stripped of her comedic abilities — pour their heart and soul into the movie.

Late in the film, "Stowaway" requires two characters to make a precarious trip outside, and that plot device has become cliché over the years. Cliché in that space walks almost *always* require that something go wrong to jack up the tension, and "Stowaway" is no different.

However, the movie's close drives home the point of this tale, that the boldest act of courage is sacrifice for the greater good. I wouldn't dream of spoiling who rises to the occasion, but "Stowaway" handles it with considerable power. It stays with you long after the screen fades to black.

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"My Octopus Teacher" is Gorgeous, But Incomplete

by Andrew Tallackson



Craig Foster is filmed swimming with a wild common octopus in "My Octopus Teacher," now streaming on Netflix.

"My Octopus Teacher" contains moments of quiet wonder, where you watch in silence for fear of breaking the fragile beauty of it.

It also feels curiously incomplete.

By the time this review goes to press, the Netflix film may have won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature. Why it scored the nomination is no mystery. Most of it was filmed underwater, in a dense kelp forest near Cape Town, South Africa. At the forefront is documentarian and naturalist Craig Foster, who spent a year charting his unexpected "friendship" with a wild common octopus. At one point, he describes the sensation of being in the frigid waters near his home, that it's like entering an alien world. Indeed, that's how it feels, watching "My Octopus Teacher," that we are being offered a rare glimpse into what few experience.

We also suspect that there is more to Foster's story. That filmmakers Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed needed to back off staging arty slow-motion scenes on dry land and instead delve deeper into their human subject.

Extraordinary, though, that "My Octopus Teacher" reflects a 10-year odyssey for Foster and his team. Back in 2010, the filmmaker, burnt out and disillusioned by his career, realized he needed to take time out for himself. So, he headed with his diving gear and state-of-the-art camera to chart the waters of False Bay. It was through those trips that he stumbled across a relatively young common octopus with whom he would forge a remarkable connection.



"My Octopus Teacher"

Running time: 85 minutes. Netflix. Rated TV-G

bled across a relatively young common octopus with whom he would forge a remarkable connection.

Foster initially resists direct contact, instead opting to insert himself daily in the sea creature's life, and I was reminded of the scenes in "Gorillas in the Mist" (1988), where Sigourney Weaver's Dian Fossey rests quietly in the Rwandan jungle, gently asserting herself as commonplace. And when the octopus gently extends one of its tentacles to Foster, caressing his hand, there is a breathless beauty to it, the gorgeous score by Kevin Smuts adding a haunting layer to the imagery.

There are many moments like that. Foster, wanting to preserve the "circle of life" within this underwater existence, backs off from his subject, even when deadly sharks present themselves. At one point, in fact, the octopus comes under attack and loses a tentacle. It not only survives the ordeal, but over time regenerates the lost appendage.

After a year, when Foster realizes the octopus is mating, that its life is near an end, there is a shot of the creature, affectionately curled up against Foster's chest, almost as if in a gesture of thanks and farewell. It is impossible *not* to be moved by the



Filmmakers Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed needed to push harder with their subject, Craig Foster, to get him to open up more about himself. delicate bond between man and animal.

I was not moved so much by Foster, himself. Through the octopus, he comes to appreciate how fragile life is. But really, what happened to this guy? We get the sense, at the start of his journey, that he is a broken man. Eyes hollowed out of emotion. His voice, in fact, has the placid, disaffected lull of stress-relaxation tapes. He mentions early how his behavior affected his family, but I had to look up online to see if, indeed, he still has a wife. Indeed, he does. A documentary filmmaker. She is nowhere present in the film. We see his son, Tom, at the end, but he does not speak. Watching "My Octopus Teacher," it is clear that Foster rules how the film was shaped with an iron fist. But for me to feel something by the end, Ehrlich and Reed, as filmmakers, needed to pose tougher questions. Get Foster to open up about himself. Allow his family to be interviewed so we get a more complete portrait. Foster, for instance, is gone quite a bit from them. How were they affected by his absence? What changes do they see in him now that the year-long experiment is complete?

Maybe it is the journalist in me that wanted more. To share his journey instead of just observe it. Instead, we are supposed to accept at face value that Foster now is a better man. He involves his son more into his personal interests, and he no longer swims alone, having co-founded the Sea Change Project, a nonprofit that protects marine life. He seems at peace.

I guess.

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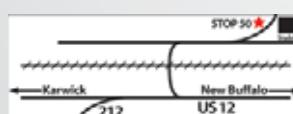
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"Lost and Looking" is an intriguing, yet apropos title for an exhibit, considering our current worldwide situation. Lost jobs, lost homes, lost family or friends, lost sense of "normal," any of which could contribute to the sense of "looking" for answers.

However, I would be amiss in interpreting this theme so simply or only reflective of current times. Rather, the work by 12 artists represented in Lubeznik Center for the Arts' Hyndman, Brinka/Cross and Susan Block galleries is more nuanced and personal, sometimes reflective of past realities, perhaps psychologically impactful, resulting in art that demands contemplation and attention.

The artists include: Labor Camp (Piotr Szychalski), Alison Ruttan, Theaster Gates, Gertrude Abercrombie, Nina Rizzo, Kelly Kristin Jones, Bobbi Meier, Robyn O'Neil, Amy Honchell, the late Suzanne Cohan-Lange, Rick Lange and Rodney Passé.

Entering the lobby at LCA, 101 W. Second St., you discover black-and-white posters by the Polish-born Szychalski — current prints reflecting his views of the recent political and cultural zeitgeist. His choices of limited color, typography and graphic/stylized forms leave a clear visual message, one conveying poignant concerns.



Alison Ruttan's ceramic piece "G.O.N.E."

by pictures of ongoing destruction in one corner of the world or another. This sculpture reminds me once again to be on guard against the desensitization of those caught up in such conflicts. Take your time looking at each work. Read the artist introduction and consider the lost and looking of thousands, if not millions, in similar situations.

Gates presents a single ceramic piece, "Whyte Hole," from the 2010 Whyte Painting Series created while serving as artist in residence at Kohler Foundation Inc. in Sheboygan, Wis. The piece is accompanied by a video presentation featuring Gates speaking at Milwaukee Art Museum as part of a major show in 2010 titled "To Speculate Darkly: Theaster Gates and Dave the Potter."

Dave the Potter (Dave Drake), born into slavery and enslaved for most of his life, produced functional stoneware pottery inscribed with poetic lines. For Gates, he became a vital link and inspiration. After working in clay and struggling to make good pots, he began to question

LOST AND LOOKING

by Linda Weigel



Bobbi Meier's "Conversation Piece" (2017).



"Wishing You Were Here" (center) by Kelly Kristin Jones flanked by paintings from Nina Rizzo.

why he has only been able to study what he calls "these California boys, these Japanese men." He also began to question, "Who are the other potters? What are their names?"

To fully appreciate this piece, read the accompanying artist statement and watch the video. If you want to watch the video beforehand, find it on YouTube under "Theaster Gates Opening Night Lecture, Milwaukee Art Museum." Gates' 12-year exploration of ceramic pots and eventual discovery of Dave the Potter opened up a significant opportunity to "reinterpret his work and make it pertinent to a broader set of concerns about the place of labor and craft in present-day America." This impeccable, modest sized, wall-hung ceramic piece is a sleeper. Behind its creation lies a depth of research, collaboration and a thoughtful, inspiring partnership. Consequently, you might even be interested in pursuing your own research into Drake. I did and found it enlightening, yet deeply disturbing.

Abercrombie is described as a "key figure in mid-century American Surrealism." Psychological, personal, often brooding, her paintings echo the heart and hand of an artist digging deep and revealing an intimate insight into the self. A daughter of two opera singers, she spent most of her life living in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Her home attracted artists, jazz musicians and other creatives, which must have provided a high level of inspiration.

"I am not interested in complicated things nor in the commonplace," according to Abercrombie's artist statement. "I like to paint simple things that are a little strange." Abercrombie's paintings tap into those unconscious things in her unique and individualistic viewpoint of dreamlike visuals.

Rizzo has three large paintings in the show. "Venetian Moon" — a 2019 oil on canvas — offers a nighttime view of the moon reflected on what appears to be water and surrounded by curvilinear, amorphous shapes. "A Midsummer Night's Dream III," another oil painting with a singular glowing, circular form, is surrounded by a darkening background composed of curvilinear and floating shapes. Rizzo's artist statement mentions her paintings "are an investigation of the intersection between representation

and abstraction, image and physical reality." There is a delicate balance at play in her work. The way she physically moves the paint around the canvas, her use of illusionistic space and color choices, she achieves a heightened visual impact.

"Wish You Were Here" by Jones presents just more than 700 digitally manipulated, "healed," historic postcards from across the United



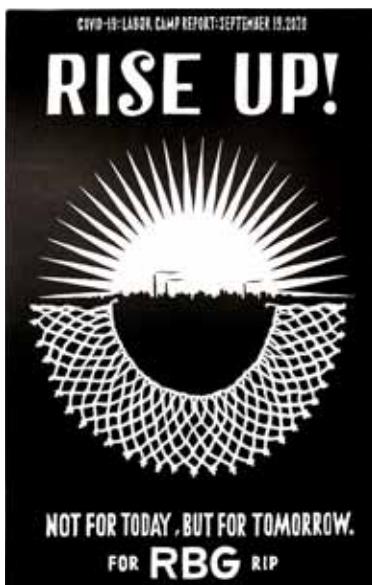
A scene from "Where Are the African Gods?"



"Breaker, Shaft, Shifting Ground 1" (2015) by Amy Honchell.

LOST AND LOOKING Continued from Page 21

States, postcards described as having reclaimed “public spaces from many state-sanctioned monuments that might be masquerading as art.” Sweeping across the curved back wall, the grouping makes a strong statement, enticing the viewer to approach closer, to discover the story.



A poster by Labor Camp.

ly accompanied by a young viewer caught up locating those sites/locations she remembered, I noticed her intense concentration and joy in discovering a remembered place. Some of the healed postcards leave the faintest hint of a ghost-like silhouette of the statue or monument. Others look so seamless as to suggest they'd never been manipulated. It is an intriguing concept, offering something new and potentially important for future considerations.



“Invented Tropical Landscape – American Man Struggling with Lion (After Rousseau)” by Robyn O’Neil.

“Easy Chair/Failed Odalisque” by the Chicago-based Meier is described as a reconstructed chaise lounge Fiberfill, pantyhose and Spandex construction. Originally part of a 2017 group exhibit, the

piece was transformed from a green lounge chaise into an abstracted soft sculpture. All three of her sculpture pieces, including “Conversation Piece” and “Pile Up at the Gates of Hell,” are formed by stretching, manipulating and stuffing a variety of materials, resulting in bulbous, tension-filled shapes sometimes reflective of twisted body forms or parts. The works can be a bit frightening, and at the same time strangely sensuous or perhaps bordering on the grotesque.

O’Neil’s imaginary, monochromatic, graphite landscape drawings, drawings of detached heads and such, feels surreal at times, perhaps a bit strange, dreamlike. Her subtle shading and use of light imbue the works with mystery and questioning. Her piece “Invented Tropical Landscape-American Man Struggling with Lion (After Rousseau)” is meticulous in its detail, inventive in its forms, overall design and quality of execution. Much like Rousseau himself and his many jungle-themed paintings, O’Neil’s natural plant forms are highly stylized and exist in a yet-to-be-discovered unimaginable landscape.



Work by Rick Lange and his late wife, Suzanne.

Honchell was raised in Pennsylvania, a state where coal has been mined for more than 200 years. Growing up in a mining town with little green space and hard, dark and dangerous work, the imprint of those times informs her 3-D sculptural art. Each piece offers a softened, supportive landscape topped



"Venetian Moon," an oil on canvas by Nina Rizzo.

with some sort of dilapidated structure. The landscapes, themselves, are made of layers upon layers of cloth, with the topmost semi-translucent piece revealing the layer underneath. The artist completes the transformation by stitching, bending, rotating and other fiber manipulations to complete her re-invented landscape. In "Breaker, Shaft, Shifting Ground 1," the blending of colors combined with the stitching is masterful. Her six works fascinate, recalling aspects of a lost past and a curated looking at what remains.

Leaving the Hyndman Gallery, proceed upstairs to the Brinka/Cross Gallery to view paintings by Rick Lange and sculptures by the late Suzanne Cohen-Lange.

Rick and his wife were at the center of growth and development at the LCA. Their gallery and studio, Blink Contemporary Art, has brought to Michigan City a high quality of contemporary art: influential and integral to the growth of the Uptown Arts District and quality of life here. Within the execution of their art, both have been moved to express their concerns with humanity's racial and political divide, as well as the environmental decline. Their works in the Brinka/Cross Gallery offer insight into their concerns and a questioning of what has been lost. Be sure to pick up a copy of the special catalogue produced for this showing for additional information and commentary on their art.

At the Susan Block Gallery, view the mesmerizing film by Rodney Passé. "Where Are the African Gods?" is his thoughtful, moving piece based on the

late lyricist-jazz singer Abbey Lincoln's words. It's her own voice that narrates this work "that explores the African-American experience through fathers and their sons." Sitting down and watching alone in the gallery, I found the piece to be heartfelt, loving, touching and thoughtfully powerful.

I would strongly encourage all who visit the LCA to read the introductory statement posted outside the Hyndman Gallery, as well as the individual artist introductions posted near their work. The exhibit runs through June 5. Call (219) 874-4900 to schedule a special tour. Center hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. It is closed Tuesday. Visit www.lubeznikcenter.org for more details.



Gertrude Abercrombie's "Horse and Blue House," an oil on masonite.



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The Tension Mounts to a Killer Finale in HBO Max's "The Head"

by Andrew Tallackson



Arthur Wilde (John Lynch) and Annika Lundqvist (Laura Bach) explore a research facility destroyed by fire in "The Head," now streaming on HBO Max.

Any time a story traps paranoid scientists in the bleak isolation of Antarctica, your mind immediately goes to "The Thing." Which version may depend on your generation, be it old school (1951's "The Thing From Another World") or '80s horror (John Carpenter's iconic remake), but the essential concept is so defined by those films, anything similar can't avoid the comparison.

"The Head," a dynamite limited series on HBO Max, not only acknowledges its forefathers, but is savvy enough to include a clip from Carpenter's 1982 film right off the bat. There are no monsters in this Spanish-made, English-speaking series, but the characters sure behave like them. Ego, greed, desperation and distrust fuel their every move. And while telling the story over six one-hour episodes can't sustain the tension, the breathing room affords ample time to create likable and unlikable characters. That way, by the time things go bonkers in the last two episodes, the series has earned the right to go for the jugular.

The premise is Agatha Christie's And Then There Were None dressed up to resemble "The Thing."

Polaris VI is a research station in the heart of Antarctica, the crew on the cusp of a discovery to fight climate change. For the six months the sun disappears, a skeleton crew calling itself "the Winter-

ers" holds down the fort. A fear among the scientists is that they might succumb to Polar T3 Syndrome, where decreased levels of a thyroid hormone lead to, among other things, mood changes, cognitive impairment and forgetfulness.

Everything seems A-OK...until all outside communication is lost with the station. A team is dispatched not only to find out what happened, but see if there are any survivors. Leading the charge is Johan Berg (Alexandre Willaum), the station's summer commander whose wife, biologist Annika Lundqvist (Laura Bach), decided to remain at the station. When Johan and his crew arrive, they discover the research facility in tact, but no signs of life. No apparent struggles nor bloodshed. Two people, however, do surface: Maggie Mitchell (Katharine O'Donnell), the new doctor, found shell-shocked and hiding in the kitchen; and Arthur Wilde (John Lynch), the biologist whose groundbreaking research with Annika led to the discovery of a bacteria that feeds on CO₂.

So, with two survivors, can Johan piece together what went down? Director Jorge Dorado, working from tight scripts by David Troncoso and brothers David Pastor and Alex Pastor, alternate between past and present, and largely from Maggie's recollections. She and Arthur, well, something isn't

quite right with either of them. Both seem to be withholding information. Maggie, the more sympathetic of the two (Arthur is a pompous blowhard), reveals how, after the summer crew left and the sun set, the Winterers discovered there might be a killer among them. One by one, someone was picking off the crew, with no rhyme or reason to the deaths. And when the station lost communication with the outside world, survival became top priority, specifically reaching an Argentine base about 80-90 miles from them.

The scenario is classic Agatha Christie. First, you have a fear of dying from the elements — winter storms, the staggering cold — plus the mounting dread that everyone isn't safe from each other. Where "The Head" draws its inspiration from "The Thing" is in its "who can you trust?" themes, especially the suspicion and paranoia that settle in, turning some against each other.

And like any good mystery, the more Johan digs into Maggie's memory, the more we learn that Polaris VI was a powder keg waiting to explode. Sins of the past have come to haunt the crew, and the lines between right and wrong are frequently blurred.

The first three episodes mostly serve as an introduction to the characters, so they aren't particularly suspenseful, but they are effective in defining who these characters are: their strengths, weaknesses, pressure points. We get to know them well so by the time the body count starts, we feel the loss, especially for characters we've come to like.

The look of the series is striking. Technology wise, we've come a long way from the rickety shack the scientists in Carpenter's film inhabited. Polaris VI looks like a grounded spaceship, with long, tube-like corridors and frigid underground passages. The flashbacks to the day the sun set have a hyper-real quality: the bright intensity of the sun, the red colors of Polaris VI standing out against the bleak, white landscape.

By the fifth episode, when we're down to the remaining few crew members, "The Head" is quite tense: never gory, but relentless in characters under siege against each other. And by the last episode, when sad, dark truths come to light, the series closes with a big reveal so delicious, well, Agatha Christie is probably smiling from above.

As of now, there are no plans for additional sea-



Suspicions mount among the crew, including Aki Kobayashi (Tomohisa Yamashita, from left), Maggie Mitchell (Katharine O'Donnelly), Ramón Lazaro (Álvaro Morte) and Erik Osterland (Richard Sammel).

sons of "The Head." Then again, how could you? There aren't enough characters left by the end, and, more to the point, the show wraps itself up. That's fine by me. Smart, suspenseful and surprising, it delivers the goods.

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• “Beginning Stained Glass” and “Silk Screen Advanced Glass” classes are on site in May.

Judy Gregurich and Mark Montgomery will offer the eight-week “Beginning Stained Glass” starting Tuesday, May 4, from 7 to 9 p.m. Students learn the art of copper foil stained glass invented by Louis Tiffany. A finished stained glass window will be created. Tools and supplies are included. The cost is \$230 for members and \$250 for non-members. A maximum of six students are allowed due to COVID-19. All students must register and pay before the first class.

Gregurich and Montgomery will offer an eight-week “Silk Screen on Glass” class using enamels starting Tuesday, May 4, from 7 to 9 p.m. The class is designed for students who took a previous stained glass class. They will learn the art of silk screening on glass, then incorporate that piece into a stained glass window they create. Supplies are not included, and a supply list is provided at registration. The cost is \$160 for members and \$180 for non-members. A maximum of eight students are allowed due to COVID-19. All students must register and pay before the first class.

Preventative measures will be taken to keep participants and staff safe. Masks are required. Social distancing, hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes are planned. All students must sign a waiver regarding COVID-19. No make-up days for missed classes are planned due to the pandemic.

• Jennifer Aitchison will teach May’s children’s art classes on Zoom.

All materials are included in the tuition and can be picked up from the center. Students actively participate in learning while studying a major movement of modern art history each month. All classes include drawing in some form and exposure to mediums such as painting, printmaking, sculpture, collage, drawing, weaving and paper arts. On-site classes may be added later when it is safe to do so.

May classes begin Monday, May 3. The focus is pieces celebrating spring, nature and the Ameri-



Participants in a past stained glass class at Chesterton Art Center.

can female artist, including discussions on Augusta Savage, Georgia O’Keeffe and Mary Cassatt.

The schedule is:

- Monday, 1:30-3 p.m., homeschool, 8- to 15-year-olds.
- Monday, 3:30-5 p.m., elementary, 8- to 12-year-olds.
- Tuesday, 1-2 p.m., preschool/K, 3- to 5-year-olds.
- Tuesday, 4-5:30 p.m., 5- to 8-year-olds.
- Wednesday, 3:30-5 p.m., 5- to 8-year-olds.
- Thursday, 1:30-3 p.m., 8- to 15-year-olds.
- Thursday, 3:30-5 p.m., fifth through eighth grades.
- Thursday, 5:30-7 p.m., 13- to 18-year-olds.

Tuition is \$90 per month for high-school, middle-school, elementary and home-school students (the member rate is \$70), and \$75 for preschool and kindergarten students (the member rate is \$55). Preschoolers will need assistance from someone at home. A bag with supplies is included in the tuition and can be picked up from the center.

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The library is open, but with restrictions in place.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday. There is no public seating. The library also follows LaPorte County Health Department's Public Health Order Face Covering Mandate by requiring masks inside the building. Every individual must 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 are 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 accepting donations.

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.

Two new databases are available. Newspapers.

com World Collection contains historical newspapers from the 1700s-2000s, including thousands of well-known regional, state and small local newspapers in the United States and other countries. Visit tinyurl.com/4f8kfo3v and log in with a library card number.

In addition, Fold3, a military records database powered by Ancestry.com, is available. It provides access to military records, including stories, photos and personal documents. Visitors can combine records found there with personal effects to create an online memorial for someone who served. Visit tinyurl.com/58cnu2vn and log in with a library card number.

The following virtual programming is scheduled:

- Graphic Novel Book Club, Zoom meetup, Thursday, April 29. The focus is Noelle Stevenson's *Nimona*. The group is aimed at teens 13-18. Registration is required. Call Jonathan at (219) 873-3045 or email YSonline@mclib.org
- Great Decisions returns through Zoom. Limited discussion booklets are available at the circulation desk. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details.
- Virtual Story Time. A new video will be posted to the website, Facebook page and YouTube channel at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. Each video will be available for two weeks at www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/. Stop by Youth Services to receive the craft project for the week.

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

Bridgman Public Library

Bridgman (Mich.) Public Library will host Larry Martin's Zoom program "World War II: In Their Own Words" at 6 p.m. EDT Tuesday, May 4.

In the one-hour pre-recorded interview, Martin will speak with World War II Navy veteran Bob Applegate, who survived the partial sinking and abandoning of the SS Jean Nicolet. Two torpedoes hit the ship, forcing the crew to abandon it. One hundred men went into the water, only to be picked up by the I-8 Japanese submarine that attacked them.

A question-and-answer period with Martin follows the presentation. The Zoom link is available at www.bridgmanlibrary.com

Bridgman Public Library is located at 4460 Lake St. Call (269) 465-3663 for more details.




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LCSO in the Spotlight

Editor's note — This weekly spotlight, provided by Tim King, LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra executive director, highlights its talented musicians.

An LCSO member for two years, trumpet player Madison Kutch teaches music at Springfield Elementary School.



Madison Kutch.

She also teaches privately at The School of American Music in Three Oaks, Mich.

Kutch is a member of the Windiana Concert Band, Michigan City Municipal Band and LaPorte City Band. Beginning trumpet lessons at age 11, she studied with Chuck Steck, LCSO's interim music director and principal trumpet, for 12 years.

She earned her bachelor's

degree in music from Valparaiso University.

In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, kayaking, fishing and spending time with her family and dogs.

Fernwood Botanical Garden

- **Outdoor Yoga from noon to 1:15 p.m. EDT Friday and Saturday, April 30-May 1.**

Join instructor Deirdre Guthrie for the all-levels class. Visit <https://spore-studios.com/yoga/> for details or to register.

- **Member Dog Days from 8 to 10 a.m. EDT Saturday, May 1.**

Exclusive to members, dogs must be on a lead, and owners must clean up after them. Check Fernwood's Facebook page for a weather status update the Friday before.



Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve is located at 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Call (269) 695-6491 or visit www.fernwoodbotanical.org for more information and to confirm the status of classes.

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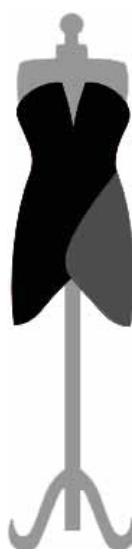
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Mother's Day Plant/Flower Sale

The Michigan City Area Schools Transportation Department's Social Events Committee will host its Sixth Annual Mother's Day Plant and Flower Sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, May 7.

The sale is on the front lawn of the Service Building, 1100 S. Woodland Ave., directly behind Joy Elementary School. It will feature a large selection of potted plants, flowers and hanging baskets grown locally and provided by Mark's Farm Market and Greenhouses of LaPorte County.

The committee, which includes MCAS bus drivers and monitors, raises money so it can support children in need. Other efforts include the annual Howl-O-Ween event at Ames Field, and decorating a school bus to participate in the Michigan City Patriotic, St. Patrick's Day and Snowflake parades.

Contact Dave Hack at MCAS Transportation at (219) 873-2127 or dhack@mcas.k12.in.us for details.

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Catherine & Co. Closing

After more than 30 years in business, New Buffalo's Catherine & Co. is closing its doors, with by-appointment sales ranging from 20 to 80 percent off.

In 1989, owner Catherine Cuddeback began making and selling lampshades at Cameo Industries, a factory near Grand Beach, Mich. Developing a factory outlet store for factory surplus spurred her interest in restoring and shading old lamps. She began collecting and selling vintage lamps at a local antique mall, which led to the company's formation.

In 1999, she bought the building at 900 W. Buffalo St., where the company has continued to service lamp and lampshade needs. Call or text (269) 469-2742 for information.

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

- St. Paul Lutheran Church & School, 818 Franklin St., 1:30-6 p.m. Thursday, April 29.
- LaPorte High School, 602 F St., 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Friday, April 30.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, May 4.

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.

Exchange Club Honors Students



The Michigan City Exchange Club honored three Michigan City High School seniors April 20 during its annual Student of the Year Luncheon. Pictured are (from left) Superintendent Barbara Eason-Watkins, Javant Hodges (accepting the Challenge of Excellence "ACE" winner), Reese Attar (Student of the Year), Josiah Miller (Student of the Year runner-up) and Exchange Club President Phil Freese. Face masks were removed for a few seconds while the photo was taken.

PNW Entrepreneurship Training

The Society of Innovators at Purdue Northwest has partnered with South Shore Arts and social-civic practice artist Samuel Love to offer entrepreneurship training for Northwest Indiana artists through Indiana Arts Commission.



business skills, including: professional coaching to develop business plans or career goals; new connections with potential Indiana supporters, partners or collaborators; and access to special funds.

The program will offer a three-day creative entrepreneurship course in mid-August. Those who complete it are eligible for the On-Ramp fellowship, which includes up to \$2,000 in project funding.

Applications open May 10, but artists may submit a general interest form to receive updates and information about application workshops. Visit www.southshoreartsonline.org for more details.

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curtisflooring@icloud.com**Activities to Explore****In the Area:**

April 29 — Drawing Class for 18, 2-4 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library Coolspring Branch meeting room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

April 29 — Graphic Novel Book Club, Zoom meetup, through Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Registration: YSonline@mclib.org, (219) 873-3045.

May 1 — The Friends of Beverly Shores Benevolent Bazaar, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 100 Brown St., Suite 3, Chesterton. Info: wagnercasa44@gmail.com, (219) 299-6998.

May 1 — Opening day @ Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: (219) 878-9885, www.friendshipbotanicgardens.org, info@friendshipgardens.org

May 4 — Pinecone Bird Feeders Make and Take Craft, 1-4 p.m., Luhr County Park Nature Center, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. Free. Info: (219) 325-8315, www.laportecountyparks.org

Through April 30 — Exhibit, "Inspired/Inspire," Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: www.lubeznikcenter.org, (219) 874-4900.

Through June 5 — New exhibits, "Lost and Looking" & "Pipelines and Borderlines: The Art of Survival," Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: www.lubeznikcenter.org

Through June 30 — "Organic Art," The Legacy Center Gallery @ Queen of All Saints Catholic Church campus, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Viewing hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Info: jessicar@qas.org

Wednesdays — Virtual Story Time, 10 a.m., through Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/

Saturdays — Michigan City Farmers Market, 8 a.m.-noon, Eighth and Washington streets (Uptown Arts District).

Second Saturdays — Free sunset yoga w/ Lauralee Sikorski, 1 hour before sunset (specific time TBD), Long Beach Realty Stop 31 location. Limited parking. Updates: Long Beach Realty Facebook page.

In the Region

April 30-May 1 — Outdoor Yoga, noon-1:15 p.m. EDT, through Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Registration: <https://spore-studios.com/yoga>

May 1 — Migratory Bird Festival and May Day Celebration, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Westchester Migratory Bird Sanctuary, 1050 S. 11th St., Chesterton. Free. Preregistration: www.westchesterbird.org. Info: (219) 252-0888, info@westchesterbird.org

May 1 — Season opening, noon-5 p.m. EDT, The Region of Three Oaks Museum, 5 Featherbone Ave. Info: www.regionofthreeoaksmuseum.com, (269) 336-9688, trotommusuem@gmail.com

May 4 — Bridgman (Mich.) Public Library Zoom program, "World War II: In Their Own Words," 6 p.m. EDT. Zoom link: www.bridgmanlibrary.com

Through April 29 — Art Barn School of Art faculty exhibit, Art Barn, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tue., Thur., Fri./10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. Info: (219) 462-9009, info@artbarschool.org

Through April 30 — "Through the Screen: The Works of the Children's Art Education Program," Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri./10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

Through June 6 — New exhibits, "Boom Bloom" & "The Undetectable Presence: A Selection of Sculpture," Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: www.krasl.org

Tuesdays/Fridays — Open Studios for 18 and older, 1-4 p.m., Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Cost: \$5/day. Registration: tinyurl.com/8hmejvp9

Free Gardening Hotline

LaPorte County Master Gardeners are available through a free Garden Hotline to help the public with home-gardening questions.

The hotline is available from 9 a.m. to noon Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through Sept. 29.

Master Gardeners will answer questions on house plants, landscaping, flowers, fruit trees, vegetables, trees, shrubs, lawns, insects and garden pests. The answers are provided with materials produced by the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service or other regional land-grant universities.

The phone number is (219) 324-9407. Michigan City area residents can call (219) 874-5611, Ext. 2010. Ask to speak with a Master Gardener. Questions also can be emailed to lpmastergardener@gmail.com

Meals on Wheels Shoe Drive

Meals on Wheels LaPorte County will collect new, used and gently worn shoes through May 31.

Michigan City locations include: St. Joseph Young Men's Society, 2001 Franklin St.; St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road; Walgreens, Barker Avenue and Franklin Street; and LaPorte Community Federal Credit Union, 1315 Southwind Drive. LaPorte locations include: Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G St.; LaPorte Community Federal Credit Union, 1800 E. Lincolnway; and Tractor Supply, 71 Pine Lake Ave. Contact Amanda Fowler at (219) 872-9117 for more details.

Want your event listed in Activities?

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As you may know, renting your home for fewer than 30 days is prohibited in the Town of Long Beach. To ensure compliance with this requirement, the Town has contracted with a company called Granicus to assist us with research, data collection and enforcement of this ordinance. Property owners are reminded that violations of this ordinance will result in substantial fines and may lead to additional actions by the Town, including, but not limited to, the initiation of legal proceedings to seek injunctive relief and recovery of costs of enforcement, as well as reporting violations to the appropriate governmental bodies for review of compliance with innkeeper's, real estate and income tax obligations. If you are renting or plan to rent your property for fewer than 30 days, be aware it violates Long Beach Ordinance #2017-01. Questions related to the ordinance or neighbors wishing to report suspected short-term rentals at a nearby property are encouraged to contact the police department at (219) 874-4243 or email Chief Mark Swistek at chief@lpdin.com.

Robert LeMay, Long Beach Town Council President
Mark Swistek, Long Beach Police Chief

LaPorte County Public Library

LaPorte County Public Library has updated its curbside pickup service using meeScan.

New users can download the meeScan app through options such as Apple and Google Play. Then, place holds on items using a customer account. Once at the library, check in using the app and clicking Pickup from the bottom of the screen (or calling the library location). An appointment no longer is needed. Add the parking space on the app if picking up from the main location. Enter information in the instructions box if picking up holds placed on more than one account, or if needing additional assistance.

A staff member brings held items to the vehicle. Customers using the app receive updates as their requests are processed. Returns can be placed in book drops and be checked in within 24 to 72 hours. At this time, there is no limit to the number of items customers can reserve and pick up during curbside.

- 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.).

The following program is planned:

- Drawing Class for 18 and older from 2-4 p.m. Thursday, April 29, in the Coolspring Branch meeting room. The focus is reviewing materials and simple exercises to improve drawing skills. Register through the library website.

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.

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A Notice to Our Readers

The Beacher will continue the following office hours for now

Mon.-Thurs.: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

*Thank you for your patience
during the COVID-19 pandemic*

MCAS Wall of Fame

Michigan City Area Schools is seeking nominations for its 2021 Michigan City Area Schools Wall of Fame.

The annual award, first presented in 1976, honors former employees who made outstanding contributions to MCAS children. Employees from every area are eligible: administrators, custodians, food service personnel, instructional assistants, maintenance personnel, paraprofessionals, teachers, transportation staff and secretarial staff.

To qualify, the candidate must have been employed by MCAS for a minimum of 15 years. Special circumstances may be considered for those not meeting that requirement due to hardship or death. Candidates also must have been retired or separated from the school system for at least five years. Because retirees occasionally are called back to service, the date of separation is considered the official retirement date, not including subsequent employment by MCAS. Employees from schools that were independent before reorganization, as well as those from schools no longer in existence, also are eligible. Death does not make a person ineligible.

All applications remain on file for three years. At the end of that time, candidates must be renominated. Nomination forms and a complete list of past recipients are available at <http://EducateMC.net/WOF>. The deadline is Thursday, May 6.

Contact Betsy Kohn at (219) 873-2000, Ext. 8365, or email bkohn@educateMC.net for details.

Migratory Bird Festival

A free Migratory Bird Festival and May Day Celebration is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 1, at Westchester Migratory Bird Sanctuary, 1050 S. 11th St., Chesterton.

Talk with local experts to learn about birds, water quality, plants and helping the environment. Also planned are an animal tracks and signs scavenger hunt, learning to identify native trees while doing leaf rubbings and making a May Day basket full of flowers.

Preregister at www.westchesterbird.org. Call (219) 252-0888 or email info@westchesterbird.org for more details.



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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

We Begin at the End by Chris Whitaker
(hardcover, \$27.99 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 367 pages.)

"I am one night, one mistake, one reaction. I'm nothing more."

Those self-deprecating words are spoken by a 13-year-old girl with an unusual way of introducing herself —

"I am the outlaw, Duchess Day Radley." And that's all you need to know for now.

Sometimes, book pages read smooth as silk. Sometimes, they're a little rough around the edges like sandpaper. The pages of this book are like running your hand over barbed wire. Every word on every page hits home like a fast ball slamming into your body. If you're looking for "once upon a time" and "happily ever after," then move along, there's nothing here for you to see.

But there might be something here for you to learn. How life is not always nice, people are not always nice, and you have to learn to take the hand you are dealt and run with it, or lay down and die. Yeah, it's a gritty story, but one you won't be able to put down nor forget.

Duchess lives in Cape Haven, a small town along the California coast with her 5-year-old brother, Robin, and their mother, Star Radley. Thirty years ago, the body of Star's 7-year-old sister was found by Star's friend, Walk. A car hit and killed her. A jury found their friend, Vincent King, guilty of her death. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison, but while serving time, he killed a fellow inmate, tacking on 20 years to his sentence.

Now, his time up, Vincent is coming home. A happy reunion? I think not. Walk, that's his nickname, is now Sheriff Walker in the small town. He goes to the prison to pick up Vincent, who is less than thrilled to see him.

Can a man who spent so much time behind bars just walk back into his hometown as if the past years didn't matter? Of course not. Especially one who hides secrets so well — that would be the town, as well as Vincent.

Duchess certainly doesn't want to see him back in town. All she sees in Vincent is a child murderer; she doesn't know Vincent was Star's boyfriend before he got sent up. Duchess has other things on her plate: Robin needs her attention since their mother,

Star, is incapable. Star works at the local dive as a part-time bartender and likes booze and pills a little too much — the 911 operator is used to getting calls from the Radley home.

Duchess is the character everyone else revolves around. We see the world through her eyes — how she decides by age 13 that hope is something she can't afford, and faith is knowing nothing will go right in her lifetime. She tells Walk, *"Free will is an illusion, sooner you accept the sooner you get on."*

Walk is the man who hasn't changed in all his years. He still believes Vincent is innocent of Sissy's death, and he tries to keep an eye on Star, Duchess and Robin. Seems like a full-time job in itself. His hands shake, people think it's the drink, but maybe it's something else...

Not long after Vincent's return, Star is murdered; all eyes point to him. Walk has his hands full with conflicting stories as Duchess or Robin might have been witnesses, but neither will speak. They are sent away to live with a grandfather in Montana they don't even know.

Looks like Duchess' assessment of life is coming true. The grandfather is more than patient, but Duchess is determined to keep up her outlaw persona and let no one get close to her.

Can Duchess find peace in her crazy world? Because this is just the beginning of her journey. There are many miles for her and Robin to travel, and decisions to make, if her brother is to have a future.

"This was her path to perdition. A girl on her way to right a lifetime of wrongs."

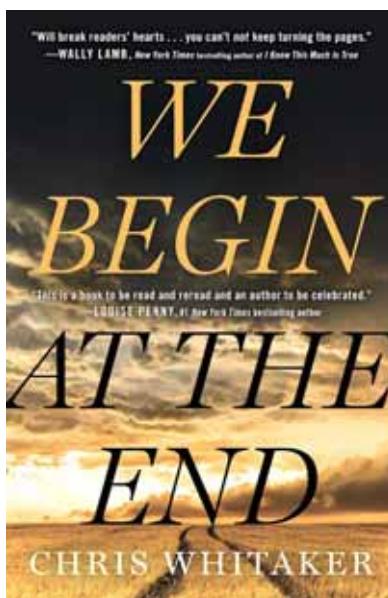
Whitaker's simple, but honest prose paints a picture of endless devotion by Duchess to her brother — and an almost childlike faith in Walk's determination to stand by his best friend, Vincent, proving the town wrong about him.

Other characters will touch your heart, some are disgusting, but they all play their part in determining the path Duchess and Robin will take. They're all here, living at the edge of a rapidly disintegrating California coast the ocean seems determined to reclaim. Maybe the ocean's progress and the town's downhill slide have a lot in common.

Question is, will Duchess complete her mission? And what if she finds out almost everything she thought she knew, she didn't. Mighty hard lesson, but that's what outlaws have to live with.

Sure to be one of the best books of 2021.

Till next time, happy reading!





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