

THE *Beacher*™

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# Enduring Love



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# This Valentine's Day, Julie and Bruce Manner Celebrate 55 Years Together

*By Andrew Tallackson*

**I**t was the summer of 1963. Bruce Manner was running late, arriving to regrettably long lines of recent high school graduates signing up for classes through Community College of Baltimore County. Inching toward the back of the line, he saw a girl he recognized. Margaret. She was using crutches, the casualty of a broken leg. And, she was standing with a friend. Julie.

"I said, 'Hi, Margaret, and I took one look at her (Julie), and I thought, 'Oh my goodness, is she a beautiful girl,'" Bruce recalled. "Margaret introduced us. I was kind of taken aback by her (Julie) at that particular time. We started school, and I tried to sit close to her no matter what class we were in."

And Julie's first impression of Bruce?

"Oh yeah," she says, the moment clear as day for her. "I really liked what I saw. And he was just so darn nice and personable. Just a good looking guy"

Bruce smiles, chuckling. What comes next is wrapped in the same breath of laughter, but harbors a pointed observation about himself. Nodding to his wife, he

declares, "She spent the next 30 years calming me down."

**F**eb. 6 marked the 55th anniversary for Bruce and Julie Manner. To hear Bruce tell it, their union was a case of Beauty taming the Beast. The bad boy redirected in life by the prim, proper,

more sophisticated love of his life. And it is a love that has endured life's ups and downs, heightening the bond between husband and wife.

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, the two relaxed in their longtime home, nestled in a wooded setting not far from Michigan City Municipal Golf Course, sharing with *The Beacher* stories of their life together.

Growing up in Baltimore, the two still can't believe they never met before that fateful day in 1963. They attended rival high schools, often the same parties and school functions. Still, their paths never crossed.

The story of how Julie's family came to America sounds like a Hollywood movie. She was born in Grosseto, Italy. Her grandfather donated his land to the



Bruce and Julie Manner, photographed on their wedding day on Feb. 6, 1966.

U.S. government for use as an airstrip, one regularly bombed by the Germans. Her family also lived at the base of Mount Vesuvius, which erupted in 1944. Julie's father, a G.I., was treated for burns with olive oil by her mother, a peasant girl. It was love at first sight.

But wait, there's more. None other than Nancy Pelosi's father, Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., a U.S. state rep from Maryland at the time and future Baltimore mayor, helped Julie's family gain passage to Baltimore. Julie would grow up to be the oldest of four daughters, her mother becoming a U.S. citizen in 1955.

Bruce, by comparison, grew up in a home with one brother, a homemaker mother and a father who was a World War II veteran, and who worked in the steel industry in Sparrow's Point, an unincorporated community in Baltimore County.

"He was an ornery kid," Julie says. "He was extremely stubborn, and argumentative."

Why so? The answer has nothing to do with his family.



Julie and Bruce, photographed at a performance of Handel's "Messiah" in Michigan City.

"I was bullied at one time in grade school, and I never forgot that," Bruce said. "And, as a result of that, I became a bully. I used to get into a lot of fights. I was a pretty rough kid. I didn't even have to pick fights. I had a reputation as a fighter, so everybody always, when they saw me, they bumped my shoulder or something to egg me on. They wanted to say they kicked my ass."

Bruce erupts with laughter, then Julie dives in to continue the story.

"When we started going together, I told him, 'If

Continued on Page 4

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## This Valentine's Day Continued from Page 3

you're going to do that, we're done. I don't do fights," she said. "And he did. He tried very, very hard."

It must be noted, Bruce and Julie's first date did not go as planned.

"I stood him up. I didn't mean to," Julie says, the declaration riddled with an air of disbelief all these years later.

Turns out, Julie and Bruce intended to meet that evening. Earlier in the day, she had a date with a guy she'd been seeing. The two headed to Washington, D.C., for a college football game, with Julie certain she'd be back in time to see Bruce. And he was beside himself, telling his pals about the amazing date he had planned: "I told all my friends, 'Wait until you see this girl. She is gorgeous, and she is just as nice as she can be.'"

Well, Julie didn't make it back in time to see Bruce. A party after the game, one of which she was unaware, was part of the date.

"I went to her house, knocked on the door. All I heard was dogs barking. There wasn't anybody home," Bruce said. "So I got home and told all my friends, and they laughed like crazy. They got the biggest kick out of that. They teased me for years about that."

Julie, of course, felt terrible. Embarrassed. The next day, she called to apologize. Bruce's father answered the phone. His reaction surprised her: "He said, 'Julie, are you the girl who stood him up? I

want to shake your hand.'"

Thankfully, for Bruce and Julie, the relationship recovered from there. The two often hung out with Bruce's gang of friends, going to movies, attending football games, all while taking liberal arts classes at the community college. Again, it was Julie's calming influence that helped Bruce stick to his schooling.

"I hated school. High school. I couldn't stand school," Bruce said. "I just didn't like the structure of it...I always felt like I was under somebody's thumb. I didn't like that. I was a free-spirit kid."

Julie and Bruce were engaged in November 1965. They were married on Feb. 6, 1966, at the recently completed Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore. The massive Gothic and Art Deco church housed 600 guests at the wedding, including family that arrived from Europe.

Now married, Julie and Bruce were soon to embark on the next phase of their lives.

As husband and wife, the Manners found their lives transplanted to Northwest Indiana. Bruce's father was heavily involved in construction of the then-Bethlehem Steel plant, with Bruce, himself, helping with some of the work. The steel industry giant eventually hired Bruce full time. He would work for the company for 37 years, retiring at the age of 59 in September 2002. Julie would find work as a secretary to two vice presidents at Jaymar-Ruby. She later took time off to raise a family, down the road teaching at St. Stanislaus School before being hired by Memorial Hospital, her favorite position there as director of volunteer services.



Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore, the magnificent site for Bruce and Julie's wedding.



Bruce and Julie photographed with their daughters at Shelley's wedding on Aug. 18, 2019. They are (from left) Stacey, Shelley and Shawn.

Their family – their three daughters – are their pride and joy. Shawn, born in 1970, is a Montessori teacher in Chicago. Stacey, born in 1972, now works for the *Purdue Exponent*, the university's independent student newspaper. Shelley, born in 1976, worked with a group that helps the homeless and homeless veterans. Julie and Bruce praise their daughters as kind, smart, compassionate women whose strong work ethic led them to where they are today.

“Our children,” Julie says, “we’re blessed. We are absolutely blessed.”

Bruce jumps in: “They are all college graduates. And all three are working in their majors, what they studied. We are so proud of them.

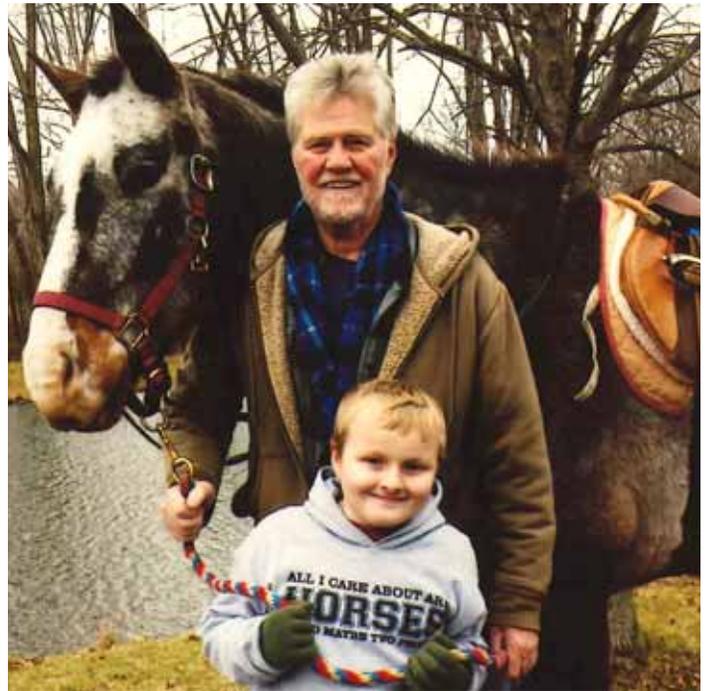
“They care so much about us,” he continued. “They check on us all the time. We are blessed.”

As retirees, Bruce and Julie further plunged themselves into community volunteer work.

“I’m not the kind of person who can sit around and drink beer and bullcrap with guys,” Bruce said. “I gotta be doing something. I gotta have a sense of worth in my life, and I gotta be doing something all the time.”

Between the two of them, the Manners, either together or individually, have devoted time to The Exchange Club, Dunebrook, Reins of Life, Marquette Questers, The Port Authority and performances of Handel’s “Messiah.” They do it not for the notoriety, the proverbial pat on the back, but because of the reward that come from giving of yourself to the community you love.

**B**ruce and Julie have lived in their cozy four-level Michigan City home since 1973. It is their safe haven: country living within the boundaries and amenities of city life. They raised their family here. And the older they get, the more they cherish their time together. They’ve also come to the bittersweet realization that, these days, it’s



Bruce, photographed in December 2014 with a boy he worked with at Reins of Life.

too much home for them. The upkeep, maintenance. As heartbreaking as the decision is, they’ve begun to downsize: the earliest steps in leaving to start a life in a smaller residence. In some ways, doing do

Continued on Page 6



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## CRAZY TIMES

These past two weeks have been mindboggling for me. Sold a house 200 feet from Indiana in Michigan for 30% more than I could have a year ago, with multiple offers significantly over-asking the price between 8 p.m. Saturday night and noon Tuesday. Land values also up 20% right at the border.

But what has taken my breath away are two proposed ordinances. For a welcome change, these are in Michigan, not Indiana. Whew!

The first is the City of New Buffalo, which has already stopped all additional short-term rentals and now proposes an ordinance that will charge second homeowners 4.6 times as much (\$1,275 per year registration and inspection fee versus \$275 for primary residents) for second homeowners to rent. That is an annual fee! No partial property rentals — you cannot rent part of the house. And if you own more than one rental, you must hire a rental company that has been in the business, employs at least three people always available to take complaint calls and is located within 30 miles of New Buffalo. After a year or so under the new ordinance, the City might permit more rentals. It was noted that 40-60% of the properties north of U.S. 12 are rented in prime summer months.

The second ordinance is the Chikaming Township Ordinance that forbids revetments, as well as solid walls, to protect lakefront homes. It only allows sand tunnels (very long bags filled with sand and stacked like revetments), if and only if, the township supervisory approves each one for a year at a time.

A local banker has opined this might make it very difficult for him to offer a loan for a house the owner cannot protect. Makes sense to me!

The lakefront owners (just under 300 in Chikaming) fear their values will plummet when they have to tell the buyer the local township might not permit the new buyer to stop the house from slipping into the lake. Would you buy such a house?

The schools should be concerned because they are totally funded at rates 3 times normal state aid by taxes on second homes and commercial real estate. If property values go down 50% on the most expensive real estate mostly owned by second homeowners, that could be a significant hit on both River Valley and New Buffalo schools budgets, with no way to replace those monies.

As I said, "Crazy Times."

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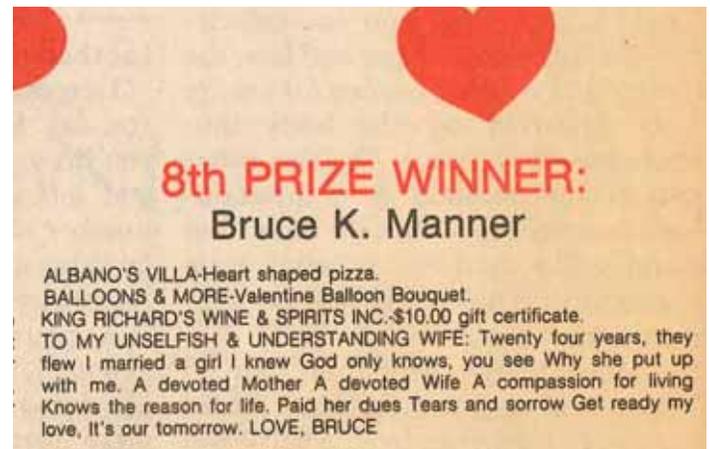
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## This Valentine's Day Continued from Page 5

leaves them heartbroken. Shawn, in fact, is considering buying the place so it stays in the family.

But the decision to downsize reflects how Julie and Bruce have tried to maintain a united front, both as parents and as spouses. To be on the same page wherever life takes them.

"He and I have found a way," Julie says. "We found a way, whatever came up. There is nothing greater than to feel comfortable and safe and loved by your spouse. I think that's the greatest gift you can give each other."



Bruce won eighth place in *The News-Dispatch's* "Valentine Love Lines" contest on Feb. 14, 1990. His entry is included here.

Julie pauses for a moment. Her voice starts to tremble, her eyes rimmed with tears.

"I had a heart attack in June. It was a scary one. I coded even," she said. "My kids and my husband, I can't begin to tell you what they did and how they really brought me around. And they still are. We care for one another. Our daughters blow us away with their kindness, and their caring. We just really appreciate them."

Bruce is silent for a moment. Taking in his wife's comments. Moved by her compassion.

"My wife made me who I am today," he says. "I wasn't as good a person until I met her, and she changed my life, but more so as we got older.

"We grew together. We cared and loved each other enough that no matter what happened in our marriage, we made it. Together."

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

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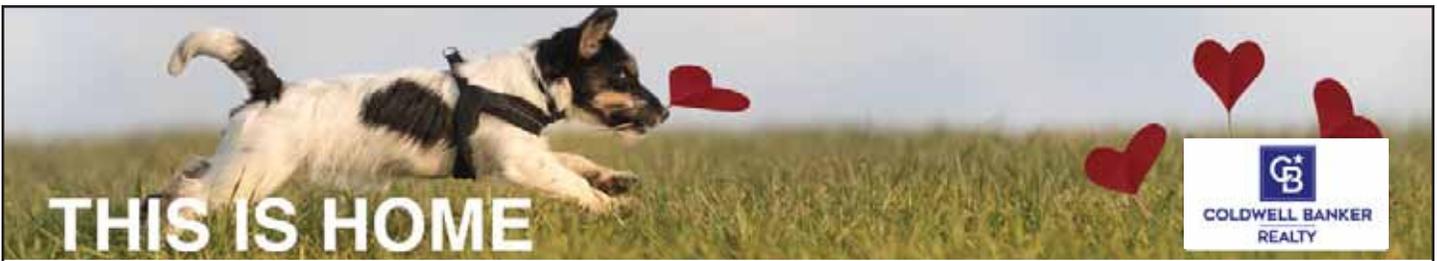
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## Michigan City Public Library

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](http://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 to the site can combine records found there with personal effects to create an online memorial for someone who served. Visit [tinyurl.com/58cnu2vn](http://tinyurl.com/58cnu2vn) and log in with a library card number.

The following virtual programming is scheduled:

- Great Decisions returns through Zoom. Limited discussion booklets are available at the circulation desk. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details.
- "Beary Special" Valentine's Day Craft. Children can create a Valentine's Day bear and bear-hug card. Crafts are available while supplies last.
- 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 on the website for two weeks at [www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/](http://www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/). Stop by Youth Services to receive the craft project for the week beginning on Wednesdays.
- "Get Ready for Mardi Gras!" starts Wednesday, Feb. 10. Pick up a Mardi Gras festivities bag while supplies last.
- Tinkercad Virtual Workshop runs Monday, Feb. 15-Saturday, Feb. 20. Registration is required at [tinyurl.com/19vgzvxe](http://tinyurl.com/19vgzvxe). Participants have six days to design, tinker and submit 3-D creations in the virtual classroom. Mr. Dave can offer help through Zoom. Email Dave at [dfink@mclib.org](mailto:dfink@mclib.org) or call (219) 873-3045.
- Checkers! starts Feb. 15. Color a checker board, follow the instructions and play with checkers made in 3-D printers. Sets are limited to one per family.



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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## Hoosier Star Auditions



Julia Larson, the 2020 Hoosier Star Youth Division winner.  
Photo by Walt Bukva.

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra will hold auditions for the 16th Annual Hoosier Star competition on Saturday and Sunday, March 20-21, at Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G St., LaPorte.

Sponsored by Horizon Bank, NIPSCO, Northwest Health and Duneland Media, the competition is open to amateur singers — individually or as duets — throughout Indiana and Berrien County, Mich.

Times are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Contestants are divided into two age groups: Youth Division (17 and younger) and Adult Division (18 and older at the time of auditions). Ten finalists — five from each age group — advance to the final event for a chance to win monetary prizes and the title of “2021 Hoosier Star Winner.”

The 10 Hoosier Star finalists will perform with LCSO members Saturday, Sept. 11, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium. Audience members and a judges panel choose each age division’s winners. First- and second-place winners in each division receive \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

Audition forms are available at <https://lcsos.net/events/hoosier-star/>. The registration fee is \$20 per person or per duet and requires separate registrations. Contestants are encouraged to preregister for a guaranteed time slot. Applications must be received by March 15 to be eligible and receive a time slot. Walk-in auditions will be available at the end of each day.

Hoosier Star is open to amateur soloists and duets only. No group performances may enter, and both competitors in a duet must be from the same age division. For auditions, applicants may provide their own accompanist, use a CD with no lead vocals, supply a digital MP3-capable device or sing a capella. Email [hoosierstar2018@gmail.com](mailto:hoosierstar2018@gmail.com) or call (219) 362-9020 for more details. Applicants will be notified of their assigned audition date and time within a week prior to auditions.



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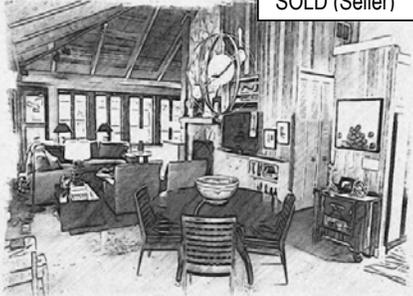
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Donors must be in good general health and feeling well, at least 17 (16 with parental consent) and weigh at least 110 pounds. Call (800) 733-2767 or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) for more details. Visit [rcblood.org](http://rcblood.org)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

## Virtual Preview PNW

Purdue University Northwest will hold virtual "Preview PNW" events from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 27.

The live session, held in a webinar format, allows prospective and transfer students to learn more about the Hammond and Westville campuses. Registration is at [www.pnw.edu/preview](http://www.pnw.edu/preview). Attendees also can learn about undergraduate academic programs, student life and campus housing, financial aid and scholarships, and the freshman admissions process. Current students, faculty and admissions staff will speak, with Q&A sessions available through an interactive chat feature.

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## Barker Middle School Hosts Second Round of STEM Fair

Barker Middle School on Wednesday, Jan. 27, held Round 2 of its ZOOMin' STEM Fair.

Being a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math school, one goal at Barker is that every student complete a STEM Fair project for the second-grading period. Round 1 was held in science classes, with students creating a Google slide-show presentation about their project.

Twenty students qualified for Round 2. Students shared their slide presentations with judges and answered questions. Judging was based on: Scientific Thought; Creative Ability; Thoroughness; Technical Skill; Clarity; and Dramatic Value.

The judges were retired science teachers Greg Kearney and Bruce Starek. The Barker science teachers are: Joyce Murphy, eighth; Charles Krueger,

eighth and seventh; and Val Mecklenburg, seventh. Amy Hamann, STEM teacher and coordinator, is the fair coordinator and Zoom meeting moderator.

Students who advanced to Round 2 are:

- **Seventh Grade:**  
Aralyn Daniels,  
Luke Cogdill,  
Brylee Fugate,  
Alexis Gresham,  
Amaya Harmon,  
Gabe (Carter) Hendricks,  
Sahara Joyce, Paige Merrill,  
Mayzie Orlando,  
Juan Olmos, Olivia Payne, Nicole Robb, Ana'leesa Toney and Alyssa Tracy.



First-place grand champions Alexis Gresham (left) and Paige Merrill.

- **Eighth Grade:** Trevor Ackerman, Lucas Bontrager, Dylon Davis, Hannah Parker, Nick Salcido and Roberto Smiertelny.

The results were:

- **Third Place:** eighth grade, Hannah Parker, Chemical Project, "How Does Water and Vinegar Affect the Solubility of the M&M Color, and if the M&M Does Dissolve, Which Will Make it Dissolve Faster?"
- **Second Place:** seventh grade, Brylee Fugate, Physical Science Project, "How Does the Angle of the Catapult Affect the Distance it Travels?"
- **First Place and Grand Champions (two champions):** seventh grade, Alexis Gresham, Biological Project, "How Does pH Affect the Voltage of Different Foods?," and seventh grade, Paige Merrill, Physical Science Project, "How Does the Satellite Distance Affect the Amount of Stardust Collected?"



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## Gorgeous, Moving “Nomadland” is One of the Year’s Best

by Andrew Tallackson



What defines a community? The literal interpretation is the area in which we live. In a broader sense, it can be people united by a common interest or passion.

Chloé Zhao’s “Nomadland” explores one woman’s solitude amid the great American landscape, but it places her journey within the context of people not tied down to the land. Free to roam at will.

I can see “Nomadland,” which arrives in theaters and on Hulu on Feb. 19, as being divisive. Not because of any controversy, but because many may find it dull. Shapeless and meandering, like its subjects. I found it achingly beautiful. Entrancing in its exploration of a world that is bold and heartbreaking.

The film, which uses Jessica Bruder’s non-fiction book Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century as its inspiration, starts with a fact that somehow slipped past my radar. The U.S. Gypsum plant in Empire, Nev., closed in 2011. The result was financial collapse for the entire community. A year later, Empire’s zip code was eliminated. All that remained was a ghost of the town it once was.

Fern (Oscar-winner Frances McDormand), who worked at the plant with her husband, realizes with his passing she no longer has ties to the area. She places most of what she owns in storage, reconfigures a van to exist as her traveling home and hits the road. Finding jobs wherever she can get it. In one state, she snags seasonal work sealing packages



### “Nomadland”

Running time: 108 minutes. Hulu, in theaters.

Rated R for some full nudity

for Amazon. In the Black Hills, she briefly waitresses at the famous Wall Drug restaurant with a fellow nomad, David (Oscar-nominee David Strathairn). For Fern, it’s whatever is available in whichever community she temporarily calls home.

It is the people Fern meets, the fellow drifters who weave in and out of her life, who make “Nomadland” a powerfully enlightening experience. Real-life “nomads” Linda May, Charlene Swankie and Bob Wells play themselves, or in Swankie’s case variations of themselves, and when they open up to Fern about themselves, the honesty with which they lay bare their souls achieves a near hushed reverence: truths about those society has cast away. These are not indigents or folk who gave up. Many are educated or previously worked in the public and private sectors. They embrace technology, even being social-media savvy.

Linda May, for instance, once contemplated suicide during a dark period in her life, but realized such an act was cowardice. Seeing her two dogs made her think twice. “I looked at my two sweet little trusting dogs,” she says, “my Cocker Spaniel

and my little Toy Poodle, and I...I just couldn't do that to them. And I thought, well, I can't do that to me either."

Swankie's terminal cancer diagnosis inspired her to see the country. The most emotional moment comes from Wells, who took to the roads after his son committed suicide. The people he meets while traveling, he tells Fern, offer a sense of comfort.

"One of the things I love most about this life is that there's no final goodbye," he says. "You know, I've met hundreds of people out here, and I don't ever say a final goodbye. I always just say, 'I'll see you down the road.'"

That sense of community in "Nomadland" is like comfort amid heartbreak. As Fern travels from state to state — the movie was shot across the country — we meet people who show no judgment toward each other. Just acceptance. Supplies, trinkets, necessities are shared, offered for free. Assistance with chores and other responsibilities is offered without second thought. Campfire sing-alongs tighten the bonds between people, warmed by the knowledge they'll see each other down the road.

McDormand ("Three Billboards in Ebbing, Missouri"), who can chew the scenery with the best of them, does not give a showy performance. Instead, she strips herself of all the acting tools at her ready and achieves empathy and sadness. The way she smiles at a fellow nomad's anecdotes or offers com-



The story of real-life nomad Linda May is part of the film's emotional journey.

fort at news of pending loss. It feels genuine. And we realize, Fern's nomadic existence is, in part, to escape the life she once had, but no longer exists. We feel her solitude in those glorious shots of the untainted American landscape, all of which are accentuated by the affecting piano score from Italian composer Ludovico Maria Enrico Einaudi.

"Nomadland" is my introduction to Chloé Zhao, a Chinese filmmaker who works primarily in America. Her previous indie efforts, "Songs My Brothers Taught Me" (2015) and "The Rider" (2017), I will have to track down. This is a filmmaker who knows how to use sights, sounds and deeply human emotions to tell a story. With "Nomadland," she achieves one of the year's best.

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

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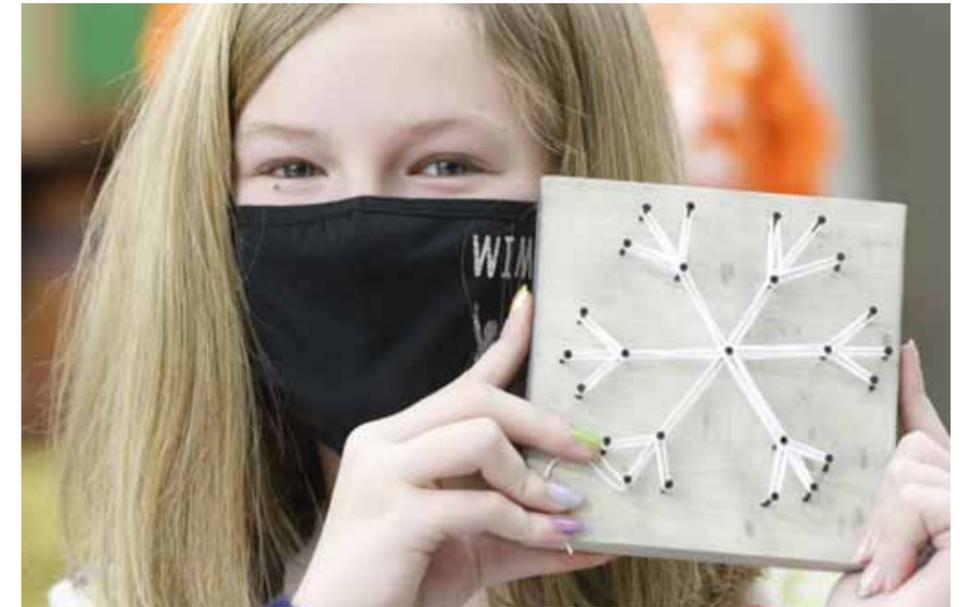
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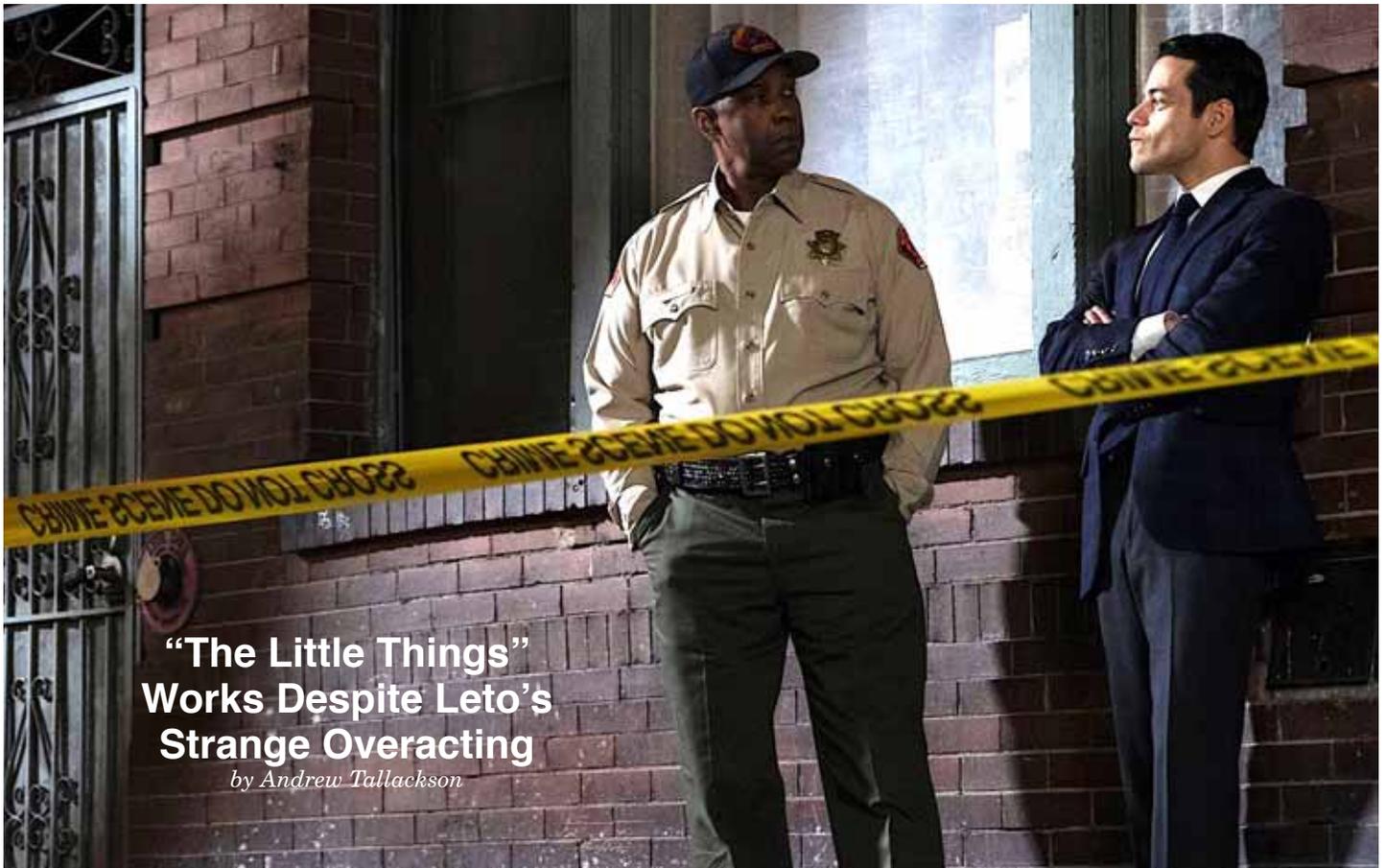
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# Winter Wonders

COVID-19 may still be present in our lives, but that did not stop LaPorte Park and Recreation Department from safely proceeding with a few events for its annual WinterFest. Held Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 30-31, *The Beacher's* Bob Wellinski captured images from the snowman contest and snowflake string art class.





## “The Little Things” Works Despite Leto’s Strange Overacting

by Andrew Tallackson

The familiar air about “The Little Things” is not a sign of laziness. It’s intentional. Writer-director John Lee Hancock (“The Blind Side”) first penned his script in 1993, the likes of Steven Spielberg and Clint Eastwood once attached to direct. And by keeping the action in the ‘90s, the flavor is right at home with character-driven thrillers like “Seven” and “Copycat.”

The selling point, then, of a genre piece like “The Little Things” is its trio of Oscar winners. Two are good actors (Rami Malek, Jared Leto), the third one of our best (Denzel Washington). One comes dangerously close to sabotaging a film whose ambiguous resolution is quite the bold move.

The setup of “The Little Things,” now in theaters and streaming on HBO Max, cobbles together all the key ingredients of pulp serial-killer fiction. Joe Deacon (Washington) was once the golden boy of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department before a tragic mistake cost him everything: a mental breakdown that ended his career and marriage. Now, he’s a deputy sheriff near Bakersfield, relegated to grunt work like transporting evidence to L.A.

It is while Joe is back on his former turf that he encounters the hotshot lead detective who replaced him. Jimmy Baxter (Malek) is your cookie-cutter rookie cop: ambitious, by the book, clean as a whistle, guided by faith. Malek initially brings nothing new to the role – how could he, considering how



### “The Little Things”

Running time: 127 minutes. HBO Max, in theaters. Rated R for violent/disturbing images, language and full nudity

thinly sketched the role is – until Jimmy takes a liking to Joe. Rather than collapse into “Lethal Weapon” redux, Jimmy views Joe as a sage mentor. That twist gives “The Little Things” an air of authenticity. The movie is about the details, the careful eye, that define good police work. *“It’s the little things that are important, Jimmy,”* Joe says. *“It’s the little things that get you caught.”*

The respect these two have for each other – you can see in Malek’s eyes Jimmy’s trust and admiration for Joe – propels “The Little Things” forward. Washington, especially, is uncommonly subdued. We’ve come to expect fireworks from the two-time Oscar winner, but the heartache of his performance here is a man broken by the past. You can see it in Washington’s face, in the way his body sags: A soul in ruin. When his ex-wife shares that observation with him, the way Washington nearly crumbles before her is a powerful piece of acting.

Then...we get to Leto as Albert Sparma, the potential suspect in the serial slayings. No question, this guy can act. His Oscar-winning turn in “The Dallas Buyers Club” (2013) was an astonishing



Jared Leto's performance in the film, in my opinion, does not work. transformation, but since then, that's been his problem. He over-Method acts his way through movies, where you can see him acting, no better example being his overbearing Joker in "The Suicide Squad." It was too much then, and it's too much now. Albert is a supreme kook who loves crime stories and police investigations. He craves attention. He may just be bizarre...or he may just be the killer. Whatever he is, Leto plays him with a robotic weirdness, like he binge-watched 10-12 serial-killer movies and assembled them together for this performance. There is no mystery to the character. He's just icky. And, logic flies out the window during scenes building to his final confrontation with Malek.

Thankfully, Washington, Malek and the thoughtfulness of Hancock's screenplay leap to the rescue. We witness the fallout of the investigation, the toll it takes. "The Little Things" ultimately boils down to two men at different stages of grief: one trying to inspire the other to keep going. That element of the film, I admired.

Leto, not so much.

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



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## “The Dig” Offers a Smart, Gorgeous Look at Sutton Hoo Discovery

by Andrew Tallackson

“The Dig” is a rarity: A movie written, acted and directed for adults. It is a period piece, yes, but not the stuffy bore one might fear it to be. The intention is to honor a man denied the credit he so richly deserved for unearthing key history from the Anglo-Saxon era.

That may sound like dry material, but it’s not. It is an intelligent, beautifully spun movie.

The Netflix production, helmed by Australian filmmaker Simon Stone, is based on John Preston’s 2007 novel that re-imagines what transpired during the 1939 excavation of Sutton Hoo. Not familiar with it? Neither was I, and I should have been. Sutton Hoo, located in Suffolk, England, contained two early medieval cemeteries believed to be from before the Vikings, specifically in the Sixth and Seventh centuries. One site, in fact, included an undisturbed burial ship, complete with Anglo-Saxon artifacts.

The dig, as it is referred to, is initiated by a curious widow, Edith Pretty (Carey Mulligan, wonderful as always), who wants to know what hides beneath two considerable mounds of soil on her property. She enlists the aid of a self-taught excavator and archaeologist, Basil Brown (Ralph Fiennes), who proves more than worthy for the task.

When Basil uncovers the outlines of the burial ship, interest in the dig explodes. Battle for control ensues: Some of the folk are from museums, all are educated, and all deem Basil too much of a local yokel to take seriously.

The dynamics among the key players at the dig are fascinating: an exploration of class, gender and sexuality in one dirt-layered find after another. The treat of the performance by Fiennes – remarkably restrained here – is Basil’s own gradual sense of worth, specifically defined by Edith Pretty’s refusal to dismiss him from the dig. Fiennes has Basil stand with more confidence. He smiles more, shows more compassion to Edith’s younger son, who craves a father figure.

We also have “Downton Abbey” veteran Lily James as Peggy Piggott, who in reality was an experienced archaeologist by this point, but in the context of the film is subject to rampant sexism. Her husband (Ben Chaplin), working alongside her, is secretly gay, and how the movie handles the resolu-



Edith Pretty (Carey Mulligan) and her son watch as Basil Brown (Ralph Fiennes) proceeds with excavation work in “The Dig.”

★ ★ ★ 1/2

### “The Dig”

Running time: 112 minutes. Netflix.

Rated PG-13 for brief sensuality and partial nudity

tion of their marriage conveys a sensitivity uncommon for most movies. We also have Scottish actor Ken Stott, fresh from playing a total creep in the Amazon Prime series “Fortitude,” as lead archaeologist Charles Phillips, an overbearing pig of a man



Ben Chaplin and Lily James play husband-and-wife archaeologists at odds with each other in "The Dig."

with insane control issues.

The relationship between Edith and Basil, blessedly, does not descend into soap-opera theatrics. Instead, it conveys a mutual respect between two individuals. Their scenes together are framed against gorgeous imagery of the Suffolk countryside, with the graceful score by Stefan Gregory a perfect accent to the elegant storytelling.

Some audiences may expect more from "The Dig." A bigger, more emotional finish. The movie does not contain one. Instead, it leaves us with the feeling that we've gotten to know these people well, that we admire everything they accomplished together.

A story that deserved to be told.

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

## 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).

*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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### Indiana Dunes National Park

Indiana Dunes National Park will receive more than \$26,000 this year from the non-profit Friends of Indiana Dunes Inc.

The funding will help with projects and programs such as a Marquette Trail wetland restoration, further expansion of the Little Calumet Water Trail, the annual Indiana Dunes Apple Festival, improvements in the law-enforcement shooting range and the purchase of heirloom seeds for Chellberg Farm.

Friends members also help with everything from resource-management projects to interpretive programs and festivals. In 2020, they volunteered 2,697 hours at the national park.

Established in 1982, the Friends is run by an all-volunteer staff. It also provides funding and volunteer help to Indiana Dunes State Park and Dunes Learning Center. The group recently rehabbed an abandoned building scheduled for demolition by the national park as an office and storage facility. The space will provide a base of operations. Anyone interested in being a volunteer should visit [www.facebook.com/friendsofindianadunes](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofindianadunes) or email [angel@dunefriends.org](mailto:angel@dunefriends.org)

The park is offering virtual ranger chats for teachers and students through a variety of media.

The programs can cover a wide range of topics and grade levels. IDNP educators can customize programs to meet teacher preferences. For example, the park can bring Max, the milk snake, into a virtual classroom to teach about animal adaptations.

No Maple Sugar tours at Chellberg Farm are planned, but a virtual presentation about maple sugaring, complete with activities and connections to the area's history, is offered.

Visit [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu) or [www.facebook.com/IndianaDunesNPS](http://www.facebook.com/IndianaDunesNPS) for a list of programs, then call the scheduling office at (219) 395-1885 for details.

Snowshoes are available for free checkout from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily, with at least a 2-inch snow base required, at The Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.

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*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 or visit [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu) for details.*

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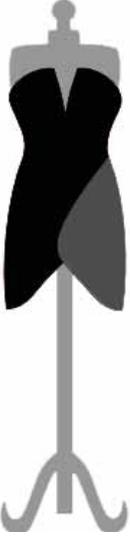
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### Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

• **Beach Glass Wire-Wrapping Workshops on Saturday, Feb. 13.**

Learn the art of wire wrapping to make beach-glass jewelry. Sessions are from 10:30 a.m.-noon and 1-2:30 p.m. The cost is \$7, and pre-registration is required.

• **Love-the-Dunes Hike at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 14.**

The two-mile winter hike heads to the Beach House Blowout and back. A naturalist will share stories about the park's habitats and history. Pre-registration is required.

• **COVID-19 program safety precautions.**

Pre-registration is required for all programs to properly meet gathering guidance restrictions. Social distancing must be practiced by staying at least 6 feet away from others. Masks or other face coverings of the nose and mouth are required.

• **Snowshoe Rentals are available at the Nature Center.**

Snowshoeing is offered as long as 6 inches of snow is on the ground. A driver's license is needed, and the cost is \$5 for the day. (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) Call the Nature Center to ask about snow conditions.

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

### Fernwood Botanical Garden

• **Live Stream Yoga from 10-11:15 a.m. EDT Fridays and Wednesdays through February.**

Deirdre leads weekly sessions to bolster immunity through stretching and meditative movement set in Fernwood's Winter Gardens. If unable to attend the live-stream session, email Deirdre (dguthrie@fernwoodbotanical.org) for a Zoom link.

Visit <https://spore-studios.com/yoga/> for more information and to register.

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

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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.*

Lauren Teykl is in her third season as a percussionist with LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra.

Completing her 10th year of teaching band at Hobart Middle School, she received her Bachelor of Music education degree from Indiana University in 2011. When not teaching, she enjoys playing guitar, running and reading, and recently picked up the game of golf with her husband, Patrick, who is the band director at New Prairie High School.

In the summer, she enjoys performing with the LaPorte City Band, and going to as many Cubs games as possible.

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## Career Network Supports Dunebrook

Embracing the theme "Share the Love," Lakefront Career Network is supporting Dunebrook with a week of give-back opportunities.

A young professionals' chapter of the Michigan City Chamber of Commerce, the LCN selects one local non-profit each year as a "Spotlight Organization." This year, it's Dunebrook.

The week kicked off Tuesday, Feb. 8. Remaining events include:

- The South Bend Chocolate Café, 307 Lighthouse Place, will host a give-back event from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, with 20 percent of all sales benefitting Dunebrook.
- The Boathouse Grill, 701 Washington St., will host a give-back event from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12. For every customer mentioning the flyer available on the Chamber website, Boat-house Grill will donate 20 percent of the sale to Dunebrook.
- The week concludes with a free "Be My Valentine" photo shoot from 1 to 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12, at Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St. The event offers a Valentine-themed photo with the Michigan City Fire Department mascot in front of the Uptown Social's red doors. Every child in attendance receives a Valentine treat.

Visit [www.mcachamber.com](http://www.mcachamber.com) for more details.

## Foundation Offers Scholarships

March 26 is the deadline for students pursuing a degree in health or wellness fields to apply for Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte scholarships.

Scholarship opportunities funded by the La Porte Hospital Auxiliary are accessible through the same application process. A total of \$100,000 will be awarded this year.

Students must be enrolled at an accredited university, college or similar higher-learning institute. Applications must be submitted through HFL's online grant portal prior to midnight Friday, March 26. Visit [hflaporte.org/scholarships](http://hflaporte.org/scholarships) to do so.

*Healthcare Foundation Scholarships requirements include:*

- Be residents or actively employed within LaPorte County.
- Have a college junior standing or higher, or be enrolled in a post-graduate health-care program
- Have a grade point average above 3.0.

*LaPorte Hospital Auxiliary Scholarships requirements are:*

- Be enrolled in the freshman or sophomore year of college
- Be a graduate of a high school in LaPorte County or employed by Northwest Health-LaPorte or Northwest Health-LaPorte Physicians Network. Visit <https://hflaporte.org/scholarships/> for details.

## Music School Receives Grant



The Berrien Community Foundation has made a \$2,500 grant to The School of American Music to support student scholarships. The award, granted last month through BCF's "For Good" program, will provide 10 students with 100 percent tuition for one year. The grant, which can be renewed annually for three years, is available to Berrien County students.

The first students to win BCF scholarship funding began receiving support in January. They range in age from 5 to 18 and are taking lessons in disciplines such as voice, guitar, woodwinds, violin and brass.

## NB Library Community Forum

Friends of New Buffalo Library's Community Forum continues with local historian Bob Myers discussing history myths at 7 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Feb. 16, on Zoom.

Myers, the Historical Society of Michigan director of education, will debunk or confirm history's urban legends. Those attending can judge if the stories are true or false.

Upcoming Zoom programs include:

- March 9 — "Telling Our Stories: Building Local Oral History" by Katha Kissman.
- April 6 — "From Page to Pictures" by Dr. Annette Bochenek.
- April 22 — "Attracting Birds to Your Backyard" by Wendy Jones.

The Zoom link is found under "Events" at [www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org](http://www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org) on the library's Facebook page. Email [new.buffalo.FOL@gmail.com](mailto:new.buffalo.FOL@gmail.com) for more details.

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## Activities to Explore

### In the Area:

**Feb. 13** — Beach Glass Wire-Wrapping Workshops, Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Sessions: 10:30 a.m.-noon, 1-2:30 p.m. Cost: \$7. Pre-registration: (219) 926-1390.

### **Feb. 14 — VALENTINE'S DAY.**

**Feb. 14** — Love-the-Dunes Hike, 10:30 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Pre-registration: (219) 926-1390.

**Feb. 14** — The School of American Music family concert, "A Valentine Serenade," 3 p.m. EDT, Convergence Community Church, 601 W. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, Mich. Free; donations welcome. Reservations: <https://schoolofamericanmusic.com>

**Feb. 15-20** — Tinkercad Virtual Workshop through Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Registration: [tinyurl.com/19vgzvxe](http://tinyurl.com/19vgzvxe)

**Feb. 16** — Friends of New Buffalo Library's Community Forum, history myths, 7 p.m. EDT, Zoom. Info/Zoom link: [www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org](http://www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org)

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

**Through March 31** — Dale Cooper installation (3-D paper flowers), The Legacy Center Gallery @ Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Gallery hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Info: [jessicar@qas.org](mailto:jessicar@qas.org)

**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](http://www.lubeznikcenter.org)

### In the Region

**Through March 7** — New exhibits, Elkhart's Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St. Exhibits: "The Blue Ribbon Collection: The Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival"; "Adam Grant: A Holocaust Remembrance"; "Gabor Peterdi: The Early Works." Info: [www.midwestmuseum.us](http://www.midwestmuseum.us), (574) 293-6660.

**Through March 12** — Student exhibit, Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tue., Thur., Fri./10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. Info: (219) 462-9009, [www.artbarnschool.org](http://www.artbarnschool.org)

**Through March 28** — New exhibits, KAC Members' Show & local ceramist Jennifer Zona, Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. EDT Fri.-Mon. Info: [www.krasl.org](http://www.krasl.org), (269) 983-0271

**Fridays and Wednesdays through February** — Live Stream Yoga, 10-11:15 a.m. EDT. Through Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Info: <https://spore-studios.com/yoga/>

### Unity Scholarship Application

Unity Foundation of LaPorte County is accepting applications for the 2021 cycle of scholarships and awards through Friday, April 2.

Scholarships and awards average \$1,000 each. In addition to graduating high-school seniors and continuing college students, many scholarships are open for adults seeking a professional certificate or associate, undergraduate, graduate or doctoral degree.

The Unity Foundation General Scholarship application allows students to apply for several scholarships through one form that, along with eligibility requirements and additional information, are available at [www.ufc.net](http://www.ufc.net). Applicants should begin the process early, since there are several steps.

Three additional scholarship opportunities requiring separate applications are available for students meeting specific criteria. These applications also are due by April 2, with more information available on the website.

Community members can nominate deserving students or adults for two specialty awards

- Diane Kay Bamberth Memorial Award. Bamberth was dedicated to community service and local events. The award goes to a LaPorte High School graduating senior pursuing a four-year undergraduate degree who exemplifies humility, tenacity and strength of character during adversity.

- Jan Nona Environmental Stewardship Award. Its purpose is to honor students or “teachers inspiring students” in the Michigan City area who, like Nona, become involved in local environmental issues. The recipient must be a resident of LaPorte or Porter counties. The award will be paid to the recipient, or college or university on behalf of the recipient, or to a recognized charity of the recipient’s choice.

Since 1992, Unity has awarded more than \$5 million in scholarships to LaPorte County students.

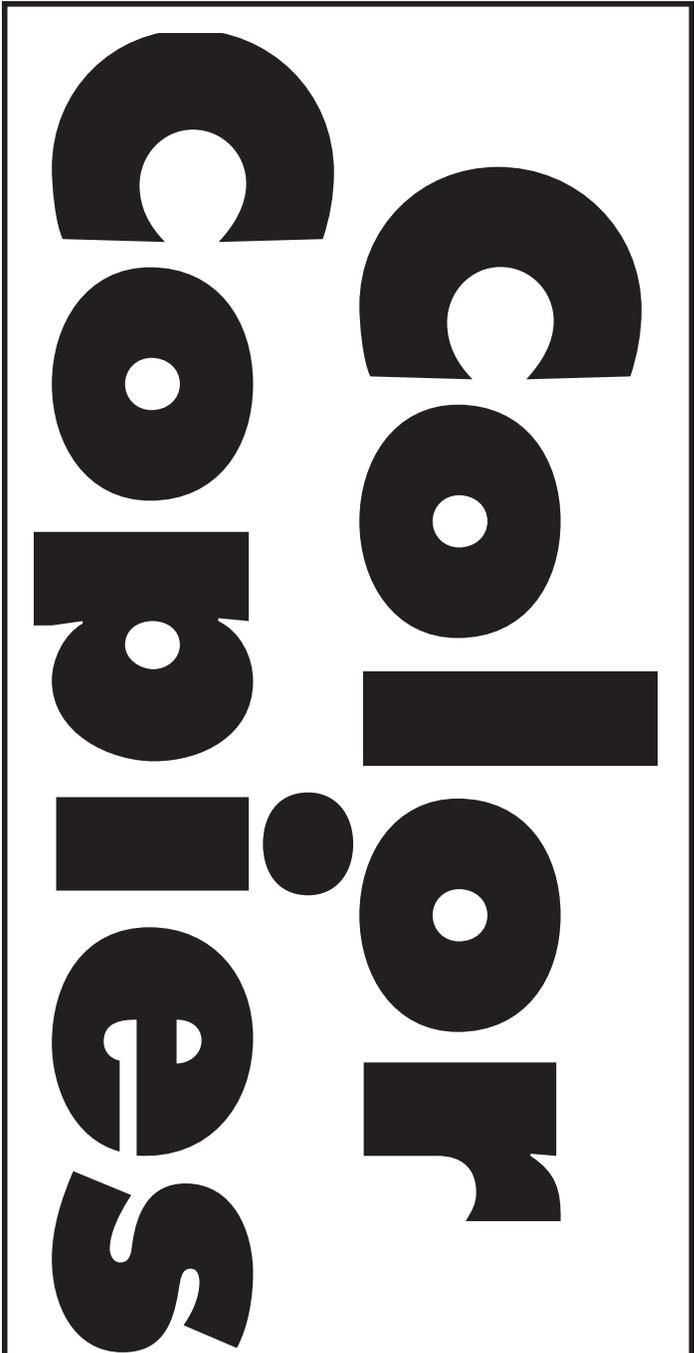
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## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**On February 11, 1752**, America's first hospital, the Pennsylvania Hospital, opened in Philadelphia.

**On February 11, 1808**, in the Pennsylvania town of Wilkes Barre, hard coal was used for the first time as fuel for heating.

**On February 11, 1861**, President-elect Abraham Lincoln left his home in Springfield, Ill., for Washington, D.C.

**On February 11, 1869**, Chicago hosted the Midwest's first women's suffrage convention.

**On February 11, 1937**, a sit-down strike ended at General Motors when the company agreed to recognize the United Automobile Workers as a legitimate union.

**On February 12, 1849**, the Chicago Gas Light and Coke Co. (Chicago's first gas company) received its charter from the Illinois legislature.

**On February 12, 1870**, women in the Utah Territory received the right to vote.

**On February 12, 1909**, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded.

**On February 12, 1940**, the radio play "The Adventures of Superman" made its debut on the Mutual network with Bud Collyer as the Man of Steel.

**On February 13, 1635**, the Boston Latin School, the oldest public school in America, was established in Boston.

**On February 13, 1719**, the first magazine published in America, *The American Weekly Mercury*, was printed in Philadelphia by Andrew Bradford.

**On February 13, 1914**, "Joseph in the Land of Egypt" opened with a new high for admission to a movie: 50 cents per person. Most of the nation's major newspapers headlined moviegoers' complaints about such exorbitantly high prices.

**On February 13, 1974**, newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst said it would be impossible for him to meet a multi-million dollar ransom demand for the liberation of his daughter, Patty.

**On February 13, 1980**, opening ceremonies were held in Lake Placid, N.Y., for the 13th Winter Olympics.

**On February 14, 496**, Pope Gelasius changed the ancient Roman Lupercalia Festival (which was celebrated on Feb. 15) to Valentine's Day, and ordered that it be celebrated on Feb. 14. The name of the day is derived from any one of three Saint Valentines, each of whom — in one way or another — was

associated with Feb. 14.

**On February 14, 1849**, James Polk became the first president to be photographed while in office.

**On February 14, 1876**, Alexander Graham Bell and Elisha Gray both applied for patents relating to the telephone. The U.S. Supreme Court eventually ruled in favor of Bell.

**On February 14, 1886**, the first trainload of oranges left Los Angeles for the East Coast.

**On February 15, 1764**, St. Louis was established as a fur trading center.

**On February 15, 1842**, the first U.S. postage stamps with adhesive on the back were introduced by a private mail service in New York.

**On February 15, 1933**, President-elect Franklin Roosevelt escaped injury in an assassination attempt in Miami. Chicago's Mayor Anton Cermak, however, was killed by the assailant's bullets.

**On February 15, 1958**, the Michigan City area was "clobbered" by the biggest recorded snowfall in history. A slow breeze, picking up moisture over the length of Lake Michigan, dumped its entire load on just a few square miles of land. Three to five feet of snow (depending on who did the measuring) paralyzed the area for several days.

**On February 16, 1923**, in Egypt's "Valley of the Kings," the treasure-laden tomb of Tutankhamen ("King Tut") was opened by archaeologists.

**On February 16, 1937**, Wallace Carothers, a Du Pont research chemist, received a patent for his invention of nylon.

**On February 16, 1948**, the first daily television news was broadcast on NBC.

**On February 16, 1978**, Times Books published The End of Power, a book by H.R. Haldeman in which the former White House chief of staff accused his former employer, President Richard Nixon, of initiating the Watergate break-in.

**On February 17, 1817**, Baltimore became the first America city with gas street lights.

**On February 17, 1876**, Maine's newspapers reported the first sardine was canned at Eastport. While not specifically mentioned, it is safe to assume that the second and third were canned on the same day.

**On February 17, 1897**, the PTA was founded in the United States as the "National Congress of Mothers." It later expanded to include fathers, teachers and other citizens. Today, the official name of the organization is: "The National Congress of Parents and Teachers."

**On February 17, 1904**, Italian Giacomo Puccini's opera, "Madama Butterfly," received a poor reception at its premiere at Milan's La Scala Theater.

**On February 17, 1933**, *Newsweek* was first published.

# ENVELOPES



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**Miller Pizza By the Beach, 1012 N. Karwick Road, is taking applications for employment. Apply within. No phone calls, please.**

**HELP WANTED ALL STAFF!**

**Fish Camp in the old Michigan City Yacht Club**

Seeks dedicated full and part-time employees for re-opening in February, as well as seasonal summer help. Chefs, line cooks, hostesses, servers, buss staff, dishwashers. Will train. Email letter of intent and resume to [FishcampMC@gmail.com](mailto:FishcampMC@gmail.com)

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**SEASONAL PART TIME** – Weekend evenings only – April-Oct.

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Must be 21+.

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**Lovable Siberian male/female pups: born 12/11/20.**

**Please call (219) 879-2364 if seriously interested.**

**Free cat available. Black male cat, 5 months old.**

**Call (219) 210-7015.**

**WANT TO BUY**

**WANTED:** I buy all types of antiques and collectibles, including toys, advertising, military items and more. **Call Matt at (219) 794-6500.**

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RENTALS INDIANA**

**Stop 27 Rental available February-March 2021.** 3BR/2.5BA. A/C, W/D, library, sunroom, fully furnished. \$2,200/mo + utilities + deposit. 30-day minimum. No pets/smokers. View at [bit.ly/lb\\_rental](http://bit.ly/lb_rental). Email [LBrental@snouffer.net](mailto:LBrental@snouffer.net)

**Room for rent (near Ames Field).**

We prefer elderly tenants. Shared bedroom: \$150/week.

Private room: \$200/week. Rent includes:

- room and board.
- all utilities, water, cable.
- most meals.
- on-site laundry facilities.

Common areas are shared with two other elderly people. \$400 deposit required. Must have good references. We will do a background check.

**Call Sue at (219) 874-4891.**

**DARLING MICHIANA SHORES COTTAGE:** 2BR/1.5BA, hot tub. \$200/night, Feb.-March, sec. dep., cleaning fee (2-night min.). Permit No. 2020-02. **Email [Jennifer.willey@hotmail.com](mailto:Jennifer.willey@hotmail.com)**

**1BR apt. at the beach,** 3BR home near beach, individual rooms for rent in nice home. Available daily, weekly, monthly. Furnished.

Available Feb.-May. **Call Barry Tharp at (312) 593-1861.**

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**Greenwood Cemetery plots for sale.** Northwest corner, Section C, block 15, plots 1-6. Upon entrance to cemetery, turn left at circle, first left, plots are in the section on the right. \$1,500 per plot.

**If interested, call (708) 269-9717.**



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**Prayer to the  
Blessed Virgin**

(Never known to fail.)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in

this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.

**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*



## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

**The Scorpion's Tail by Preston & Child** (hardcover, \$29 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 401 pages.)

Do you enjoy mystery novels? How about thrillers? Look no further because Preston & Child will have you salivating for more after you read this, their latest offering. Their stories throw in just enough history and things seen and unseen, cooked up with a bit of folklore...Stories with clues strung out like bread crumbs along a trail, never knowing where it will end...until the very last page.

Let me give you a look into the engrossing and imaginative minds of Preston & Child...

*“Since graduating from the Academy eight months before, Special Agent Corrie Swanson had learned to expect almost anything...As she rode back through the mountains with the rest of the FBI team, she felt relieved that a difficult day was almost over.”*

Silly girl. She's about to find out the end of one day heralds the beginning of the next, and maybe more challenging day — one that could be the end of a short, but promising career. But I digress...

We're in New Mexico this week where the mountains and deserts hold decades-old secrets they do not give up easily.

Two weeks later, sheriff Homer Watts of Socorro, N.M., is on a fishing trip when he spots activity at a local ghost town called High Lonesome. He finds Pick Rivers digging frantically in the basement of one of the remaining buildings. Gunfire erupts and Watts wounds the man. Since he technically is on government property, Watts notifies the local FBI office and Corrie is sent down to investigate.

Rivers was digging up a corpse. Creepy, right? The corpse, which mummified very nicely thank you, appears to be a man about 50 years old.

What's shocking is the position the body presents itself — he's in a fetal position with a look of horror on his face. In his pocket, a most unusual object is found: a heavily encrusted gold cross that appears to be of 16th century Spanish origin. Time to bring in an archaeologist — Nora Kelly of the Santa Fe Archaeological Institute.

Who, what, when, where and why? From Nora and the FBI forensic pathologist, we learn the where, when and what, but who and why are still to be determined.

It's interesting to note that this town is only several miles from the White Sands Missile Range, the

site of the “trinity test” — the first nuclear bomb test. The dead man, determined to have been in the ground about 75 years, would make his time of death sometime in 1945, the exact year of the testing. But that just heightens the mystery of how he gained possession of the ancient artifact and what he was doing on a government testing ground.

Residents of New Mexico, especially Native Americans, know all the ancient legends handed down generation to generation, about the Catholic priests and Spanish soldiers who invaded the region: some looking to save souls, some looking for treasure.

The corpse is finally identified as Jim Gower. His family had a ranch in the area of bomb testing; the government forced them out in the 1940s. This information leads Corrie to Jesse Gower, great-grandson of the deceased. He's a drunk and ne'er-do-well who is only interested if the antique cross now belongs to him. He's no help.

Teaming up with the army at White Sands, headed by General McGurk, doesn't give the women reason to expect help. The general just wants them gone, but he is forced by the FBI to help them, or is it hinder them?

No time for politics, as Nora and Corrie team up to solve this mystery, no matter where it takes them. Little do they realize how far and how dangerous a path they will have to travel.

The mountains, mesas and deserts of New Mexico are beautifully described as jeeps only take the women so far, then they're forced to go on horseback and finally on foot following clues, even native folklore and superstition.

Help comes in surprising ways, and bullets come from those who want to scare the women off...or silence them forever?

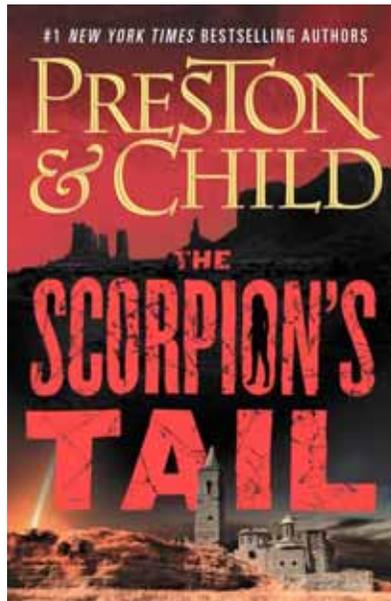
Nora and Corrie find an old parchment, written in Spanish at the Gower's old homestead. Translation shows it to be some kind of map. To a treasure whispered about for decades? Or merely a red herring?

This story is, quite simply, amazing and great entertainment. To sum it up — wow!

Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child go together like bread and butter or burgers and fries. It would take up this whole page to list all their books and achievements.

Follow them on Facebook and sign up for “The Pendergast File,” a monthly “*strangely entertaining note*” on their website — [PrestonChild.com](http://PrestonChild.com)

Till next time, happy reading!



young hearts run free.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

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# Happy Valentines Day!



**Lisa Moore**

219-363-2544  
reos4sale@comcast.net



**Doug Waters**

219-874-5209  
dwaters@longbeachrealty.net



**June Livinghouse**

219-878-3888  
junecl@mail.com



**Sheila Saunders**

219-575-9426  
sheilasaundersmtm@gmail.com



**Zach Baker**

219-878-3325  
zbaker113@gmail.com



**Robin Willoughby**

219-877-8395  
robinwilloughby.realtor@yahoo.com



**Sandy Rubenstein**

219-448-0249  
pruett124@aol.com



**Meghan Maddox**

219-877-5795  
meghane75@yahoo.com

1401 Lake Shore Drive | 219-874-5209.

3100 Lake Shore Drive | 219-872-1432



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