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# Living the Artistic Life

by Linda Weigel

*Editor's note — This is the latest in an ongoing series that profiles women artists in the region.*

*“Art does not reproduce what we see. It makes us see.” — Paul Klee*



Laura Krentz says she values having been surrounded by art all her life.

Laura Krentz creates art that reminds us of the beauty of the surrounding world. Art that is based on a life fully immersed in the creative spirit.

Her range of talents spans the musical, 3-D metal works, art conservation, art education and *plein air* paintings. Born in LaPorte, her parents, Bob and Gerree Zimmermann, moved here from Oak Park, Ill., after World War II. Along with five siblings, she grew up in a busy, highly creative household. Hers was a home that valued the performing arts and visual arts.

“My father loved acting and had a wonderful singing voice,” she said. “After retiring, he began painting in watercolors and created some great works.”

Each of her five siblings displayed creative talents as well. Ginna was a singer, actress and songwriter and Judy an excellent seamstress, knitter and designer of original garments. Kathy is a writer. Pete plays guitar and writes reviews for food and beverage publications. Bob is a great storyteller and master of languages. And when she was joined by brothers Pete and Bob, musical theater became a shared experience for the trio.

“My mom was a great tap dancer, with a wonderful sense of humor which came in handy when dealing

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with six children,” Laura recalled. “All of us kids were required to study piano or some type of musical instrument. I was fortunate to study piano with Florence Andrew for 10 years, and she instilled in me a passion for all kinds of music, from Schubert and Chopin, to Gershwin and Kabalevsky.

“Preparing for piano recitals every June was agonizing for me because I was very shy,” she continued, “but Florence built my confidence with patience and love. She and I became close friends for the rest of our lives. I have also managed to conquer my stage fright through performing in musicals, and even have experienced the opportunity to sing with the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra on several occasions.”

With such an emphasis on musical performance, how does an interest in visual arts evolve? As a youngster, Laura discovered drawing was the perfect outlet for her interest in bringing stories to life. She began drawing horses that were “inspired by living across from the county fairgrounds, where the sulky racing horses were boarded.”

In eighth grade at St. Peter Catholic Church, a makeshift art studio was created in the basement of the nuns’ home.

“It was then that I got my first taste of painting and completed a copy of a Currier and Ives winter scene that actually won a blue ribbon in our school’s inaugural art show,” she said. That recognition encouraged her to take art classes in high school, along with choir, “because I wanted to learn everything I could about art and music.”

Later, Laura was encouraged and challenged by

high school art teacher John Carnell, especially his drawing and jewelry design classes.

“He encouraged me to continue in art going forward,” she said. “I also have to give credit to my father for encouraging and requiring me to work in his paint store and decorating business during my high school and college summers.

“It was there that I learned so much about color theory in mixing paint and choosing wallpapers for customers that really helped me later on in my college art studies.”

Laura was fortunate to have those experiences as she segued into college studies. Upon graduating from high school, she began her college career at St. Mary of the Woods, where she looked forward to the art curriculum. Because of the small student body, however, she soon realized she would have the same art professor all four years. That would not provide

her with the variety of coursework and depth of instructional voices critical to her artistic development.

“That didn’t seem like the best plan because the art professor, again, a nun, was into large-scale needlepoint artworks that were approximately 5x10 feet in size and took an incredible amount of hours to create,” she said. “She would give us our assignments and then head back to her studio to work. The amount of instruction we received was not enough to really propel me forward, and I needed more.”

That need to make a change led her to Indiana University. It was there she found her place, her home, in the art department, taking drawing and silversmithing courses.

“The two classes flowed seamlessly into each other. The drawing professor, Bonnie Sklarski, was precise in her style of drawing, demanding that we,



Laura enjoys the experience of being a member of Duneland Plein Air Painters.

too, become very precise and detail oriented in our drawings,” Laura said. “My silversmithing professors, Jacqueline Fosse, Jon Stein and the legendary Alma Eikerman, demanded clean, strong forms and unfussy details that embraced the Scandinavian style of design work.

“I learned to form pots, chalices, boxes and jewelry from flat 14-gauge sterling silver and copper, hammering and stretching the metal and learning the temperament of metals under pressure and soldering large seams with gas torches when dictated by the designs. Alma Eikerman was a force of nature, an innovator in silversmithing education, and I felt very lucky to be mentored by her. She would gather us to critique our work and always knew what to suggest, to make your work better, and she was a font of knowledge in brainstorming solutions in technical issues.”



Laura's sterling silver chalice.

Such impactful educational exposure to techniques and quality led Laura in her junior year to enter the competition “Statements in Sterling,” a silver-design competition sponsored by the International Silver Co. Her silver chalice was included in the winners’ exhibition at the Lever House in New York City.

With such a positive outcome, Laura was especially encouraged by the national recognition, which led her to consider working for a silver-design company or jewelry studio. The award-winning chalice was elegantly balanced, serene and meticulously crafted. It’s no wonder she won such recognition.

However, life took another turn. She decided upon graduation to marry her fiancé, Mark Krentz. They returned to LaPorte for his work. She shelved the decision to continue in silversmithing to teach art at LeMans Academy in nearby Rolling Prairie.

“At that time, it was not required to have a teaching degree to be hired to teach in a private school, and so I learned to teach on the job,” she recalled. “It was another character-building experience for me. The school was a Catholic military boarding school for boys in fifth through ninth grades. The boys came from all over the United States, Mexico, Thailand and other countries. I spent three rewarding years there teaching Spanish and music appreciation in addition to 2-D and 3-D art.

“We started our day with platoon inspection,

“Statements in Sterling,” a silver-design competition sponsored by the International Silver Co. Her silver chalice was included in the winners’ exhibition at the Lever House in New York City.

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## Living the Artistic Life Continued from Page 3

Mass in the chapel and then the school day,” she continued. “I felt a little like Mrs. Chips to all these small boys who missed their families and needed so much attention and a gentle voice in the midst of a military atmosphere.”



This photo shows Laura teaching at LeMans Academy in the 1970s

Laura remains in touch with one of the boys from Mexico who went on to become an architect.



*“Art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can be explored only by those willing to take risks.”*

Mark Rothko

As her family expanded, Laura grew her artistic world, taking risks working on freelance signs and logo designs for local businesses, along with being an advertising layout artist to a publishing company. Eventually, another challenging job position became available at Thanhardt-Burger Co. in LaPorte. It was a picture-frame manufacturing company known for hand-carved, gilded frames. It later featured embellishments created in centuries-old wooden molds acquired when Thanhardt-



This undated photo shows Laura at Thanhardt-Burger Co. in LaPorte.



Laura's rendition of the Old Lighthouse Museum in Michigan City.

Burger acquired the much-older Newcomb Macklin Frame Co. in Chicago, moving the manufacturing processes to the LaPorte facility on Washington Street. The sister company of Thanhardt-Burger was W.T. Burger Co., the branch of the business that offered paintings from artists across the globe. These pieces were sold wholesale to interior designers and furniture stores, and were framed in Thanhardt's frames.

“It was there that I apprenticed with a woman who was their painting conservation artist for 40 years, and she was ready to retire,” Laura said. “Over a six-month period, she had taught me everything that she'd learned in doing painting restoration, and I then took over. I found the work fascinating, and enjoyed getting into the mind and brushwork of the artist who had created the work, and brainstorming how to repair tears in the canvas or cracks in the paint layer, or years of yellowed varnish.

“I also tried to remember the most important tenets of restoration: Do the minimum that you can repair-wise to ensure that the artist's work remains as original as possible, and that any and all repairs that you do must be reversible so that a future restoration can be successfully done.

The work was challenging. Often painstaking.

“I was alone in a small room in a very large frame manufacturing building doing my thing,” she said. “I had been there for almost 13 years when it occurred to me that I might be ready to begin a new artistic adventure.”

In August 1998, Laura answered a phone call to interview at LaPorte

High School for a teaching position. She accepted and received an emergency teaching license, thus beginning her second art-teaching experience. After agreeing to pursue her certification and license, she taught during the day and traveled to Valparaiso University for night classes. She received her teaching certification and stayed 18 years at LPHS, specializing in 2-D art, drawing, painting and visual communications.

“It was really great working with high school students after the middle-school cadets of my earlier experience,” she said. “They were funny, bright, imaginative, quick to offer their opinions on everything, and kept me on my toes. I am in touch with so many of my former students, and a great number of them have gone into teaching art, graphic design, freelance artwork and related fields. I love keeping up with their whereabouts and their careers.”

As a seasoned art educator, I asked Krentz what recommendations she would have for aspiring young artists. Her response centered on two major goals:

- 1) Get a good foundation in all or as many art



Laura Krentz and her husband, Mark, have been active in the community for years.

disciplines as you can.

2) Learn and understand the principles of design and elements of art to translate that into a multitude of job opportunities, whether it be painting, interior design, architecture, graphic design, animation, tattoo design or any related field.

“It might mean college or a technical school, or an employer who is willing to mentor you and pay for your training,” she said.

*“You can’t use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.”*

Maya Angelou

Upon retiring from teaching at LPHS in 2016, Laura began to actively and creatively pursue painting — a discipline from her college years — and to become more involved in the local art scene.

Continuing to hone her skills, she joined the Duneland Plein Air Painters in 2017 and has enjoyed not only developing her technical skills, but also the camaraderie of the group.

“I have learned so much from them during our

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## Living the Artistic Life Continued from Page 5

critiques, which are held at the end of our outdoor painting sessions,” she said. “Because of my silver-smith training and realistic drawing experience in college, my work tends to be realistic in style.”

Working outside — *en plein air* — inspires and motivates her by helping “to heighten my senses and awareness of color, light and shapes.”

To accomplish her goals, Krentz first begins by moving around a location until she locates an appealing and good compositional viewpoint. She prefers to combine the elements of the natural world with a man-made structure whenever possible, because “the interplay of organic forms versus man-made forms creates great contrast,” she said. “Sometimes, one is gradually winning over the other in the scene in front of you.”

Her choice of painting media depends on the time and place, resulting in paintings executed in either acrylic or watercolor. Once settled on a spot ready to begin, she first takes good mental notes of the various elements, followed by a few quick black-and-white reference photos, enabling her to more readily break down the light and dark values. Next, if working in acrylics, Laura prepares her canvas with a layer of cadmium red light paint or orange, followed by sketching out the forms/shapes using brown umber. Watercolors, however, require a different approach. In that case, she just sketches the scene very lightly in pencil before adding paint.

Due to the nature of *plein air*, she works small in order to complete a work in three hours. “Lighthouse Museum, Michigan City” is a fine example of her growing reputation, also reminiscent of the work of the American realist painter Edward Hopper...and one of my personal favorites.

With the difficulty of meeting as a group outside and safely distanced amid COVID-19, and with the weather getting colder, another alternative was

sought. It isn’t just landscapes that fascinate Laura, but also a growing interest in birds, especially for what she describes as “whimsical bird portraits and little scenes featuring birds.” The joy of direct observation of our feathered friends is something that anyone can easily participate in by simply looking out a window. In Laura’s case, the opportunity to expand her technique and subject matter was, I expect, rather freeing.

“While in lockdown, I realized that birds continue to fly, sing their songs, build their nests and go about their freedom that they represent,” she said. “I admired and was inspired to keep my head up and focus on the feeling of freedom that they represent. I am loosening up in my painting style as a result, but I want to get looser still!”

In addition to painting, Laura’s interest in the regional arts has found her involved in several visual and performing arts organizations.

She is a founding member of the visual artists’ group Land of Lakes Art Alliance begun by her father in 2004. She also is a member of Lubeznik Center for the Arts and Chesterton Art Center. While serving as a docent at LCA, she helps lead tours of school children. She found incorporating special art activities based on their tour especially rewarding. Laura says students’ enthusiasm for the art and their bright questions are one positive aspect of her involvement. She is already looking forward to the time when she can again lead student tours.

It seems you can take the teacher out of the classroom, but never completely. Additionally, she taught a drawing fundamentals class for the City of LaPorte Parks & Recreation Department and is hopeful to expand offerings later in 2021.

She and her husband, Mark, have been active in LaPorte Little Theatre for more than 40 years, both as performers and by serving on the executive and trustee boards. In more recent times, both joined the Visual Arts Council of LaPorte, formed as a non-profit advisory group that most recently helped raise funds for the expansive downtown mural featuring the city’s history.

“I feel that public art really enriches the cultural life and civic pride that a community needs to uniquely express itself in a visual way,” she said.

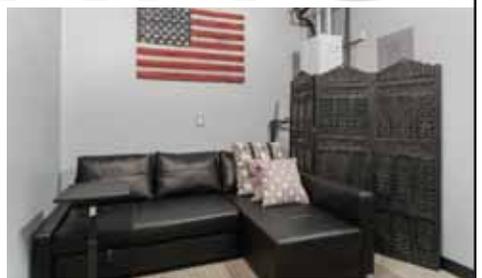
This opportunity afforded Laura time to watch the artists at work on the mural. She is hopeful the VAC will see more planning and placement of future public art.

“I feel fortunate to have been surrounded by art and artists my entire life,” she said. “What I enjoy about contemplating my future in art is that I never know what is just around the bend, but I am ready to embrace the opportunities as they unfold.”

*(View Laura Krentz’s work on Instagram @laurakrentzart.)*



Laura and Mark appear together in LaPorte Little Theatre Club’s 1992 production of “Bells Are Ringing.”



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## WinterFest Returns; Some Events Canceled Due to COVID-19

LaPorte Park and Recreation Department will present the annual WinterFest on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 30-31.

Some events will not be held because of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, several offerings remain available to the public.

### SATURDAY, JAN. 30

Kicking off WinterFest is a snowman contest from 9 a.m. to noon at the Kesling Park Walking Trail (18th Street entrance). Participants can build their snowman at a designated spot along the trail, registering in one of three categories by submitting a participation form to the park office, 250 Pine Lake Ave., or by email to pcarroll@cityoflaporte.in.gov. Judging is from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Winners are chosen in each of the three categories:

- Individual Builder – 12 and younger.
- Individual Builder – 13 and older.
- Family (up to five builders), with a Best in Snow awarded.

Next up is a Snowflake String Art class from noon to 1 p.m. in the LaPorte Civic Auditorium Ceramics Room, 1001 Ridge St. The make-and-take art project for children 8 and older includes all supplies and instruction. Parties on the Gogh Owner Kristi Chadderdon is the instructor. The fee is \$10, and pre-registration is required. Call the park office at

(219) 326-9600. Class size is limited to eight participants, and attendance is limited to the instructor and participants. Enter the Civic through the outside door at Woodward and Plain streets. Masks and social distancing are required.

Chadderdon also will head the “Let It Snow” wall hanging art project from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Civic Ceramics Room. The fee is \$35, and pre-registration is required, with a limit of eight participants. Register with a credit card by calling the park office. Enter through the outside door at Woodward and Plain streets. Masks and social distancing are required.



Chadderdon

The new “Glow in the Dark Scavenger Hunt” is at 5 p.m. at Fox Park, with participants searching the area for clues to an assigned riddle. The park will serve as a template for glow-in-the-dark letters that, when combined, allow people to successfully complete the challenge. Wear boots and take a flashlight.

### SUNDAY, JAN. 31

Another new event is “Frosty’s Frozen Bike Ride,” in which participants are asked to be outside Cummings Lodge at 2 p.m. The pop-up event requires no registration. Wearing layers of clothing is recommended, along with taking a helmet.

Call (219) 326-9600 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays for registration and information. Additional details are available at [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest)

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### New Exhibits to Debut at Lubeznik Center for the Arts

Two new exhibits, "Lost and Looking" and "Pipelines and Borderlines: The Art of Survival" debut Jan. 30 and run through June 5 at Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St.

Located in the Hyndman, Brinka/Cross and Susan Block galleries, the artists involved consider the effect of place and loss, pasts and futures.

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

"Pipelines and Borderlines," located in the NIPSCO Art Education Studios, is a grassroots non-profit that educates people through art about risks and hazards of unsustainable energy use. The group has produced three print

portfolios, curated by artist Beverly Keys, Oak Park, Ill., that feature artists from the U.S., Mexico, Canada and Central America. Working with a technique in printmaking media called relief, their collaborations juxtapose global effects of environmental calamities with justice attained through education.



"Invented Tropical Landscape-American Man Struggling with Lion (After Rousseau)" by Robyn O'Neil, which is included in "Lost and Looking."

In conjunction with the exhibit, portfolio artist Corey Hagelberg will give a live talk and printmaking demonstration broadcast live on Facebook at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 27.

As part of a community engagement initiative through "Pipelines and Borderlines," Hagelberg

also will honor Just Transition NWI, a sustainability champion and environmental justice organization, with an original print of his own.

Visit [www.lubeznikcenter.org](http://www.lubeznikcenter.org) for more details.

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# Recreation and Rescue Exercises

*The Beacher's* Paul Kemiell discovered LaPorte's Stone and Pine lakes on Jan. 13 to be a mix of recreation and readying for rescues. On Stone Lake, ice fishing was clearly visible to passersby. One angler told Kemiell the ice was 3-5" thick. His patience paid off after a five-hour wait in catching a 20" bass.

Meanwhile, on Pine Lake, Kemiell captured members of the LaPorte Fire Department as they held an ice-rescue exercise. The practice included breaking ice and simulating rescues in the frigid waters.





## “Herself” Quietly Delivers an Emotional Discovery of Self-Worth

by Andrew Tallackson



Sandra (Clare Dunne), joined by family and friends, works to build her dream home in “Herself, now streaming on Amazon Prime.

Its story has been told by many a filmmaker before it. An abused wife leaves her brutish husband, only to discover he will not back off. The formula thrived as TV docudrama (“The Burning Bed”), and it succeeded as slick trash in theaters (“Sleeping With the Enemy,” “Enough”).

“Herself,” a new Irish film streaming on Amazon Prime, adheres to the same formula, but treats it as a character study. One that builds to scenes of tremendous power as it has the courage to see its housewife discover her own self-worth.

The driving force behind the film is Clare Dunne, a Dublin-born actress with experience in theater, but who, as co-writer and star, has considerable screen presence. A quiet strength that can’t be crushed.

She plays Sandra, mother to two adorable girls who, in the opening scene, is brutally attacked by her husband, Gary (Ian Lloyd Anderson). Clearly, it is not the first time for such an assault. Fearing violence is about to erupt, Sandra sends her eldest daughter, Emma (Ruby Rose O’Hara), to the local grocery, the child presenting a message, hidden inside a lunch box, asking someone to call police.

A few months later, Sandra is on her own with the girls. Moving from one hovel to the next. Balancing two jobs: one as a waitress, the other as a



### “Herself”

*Running time: 97 minutes. Streaming on Amazon Prime.*

*Rated R for language and some domestic violence*

housekeeper and caretaker for Peggy (Harriet Walter), a doctor recovering from surgery. Peggy seems a bit of an ogre, barking commands left and right, but there is a history between the two women. Sandra’s mother worked for Peggy before her passing.

Sandra realizes the only way to create a new life for herself and her daughters, one grounded in stability, is to build her own home, watching Do-It-Yourself videos that suggest she can achieve her goal for only \$35,000.

Now, “Herself” could go one of two ways: Gaelic warm and fuzzies...or a more realistic take on one woman’s odyssey of self-discovery.

The film chooses Door No. 2. And in director Phyllida Lloyd (“Mamma Mia!,” “The Iron Lady”), who directed Dunne in theater productions, the camera is like a silent observer, diligently following Sandra as her dream home becomes reality. Coming to her aid are local contractor Aido (Conleth Hill) and

several of her friends who help out weekend after weekend, piece by piece, in erecting the house.

The heart of the picture emerges through the unexpected friendship between Sandra and Peggy. You've seen Walter in a slew of period pieces, from "Downton Abbey" to "The Crown." This is a rare contemporary role for her, and she is absolutely wonderful. As Peggy heals from surgery, she softens. Noticing that Sandra used her laptop to Google Search DIY projects, Peggy blindsides Sandra by asking, "Why didn't you just ask me?" And by that, she means for help. Peggy not only lends Sandra the money, but also permits her to build the home on her property. Peggy takes Sandra into her home, becoming a surrogate mother to a woman scrambling to discover her place in the world.

Gary, however, is a problem. He admits to seeking treatment, but brief flashes of anger suggest he is incapable of changing. At the risk of sounding like a dumb American, I could not understand 90 percent of Anderson's dialogue. His working-class dialect is so thick, he's largely unintelligible. Suffice it to say, he seeks custody of the girls, claiming Sandra has denied him contact with his youngest daughter.

Court cases are nothing new in domestic dramas. Hollywood films treat them as give-me-an-Oscar showcases for their stars. "Herself," however, features a scene between Sandra and Peggy in a ladies restroom, Peggy wrecked by Gary's attempt to discredit her in the courtroom. Peggy's encouragement, woman to woman, emerges as an act of solidarity between the two, and I was incredibly moved. Walter, whose voice nearly cracks with emotion here, deserves a Best Supporting Actress nomination for this scene alone, while Sandra's ensuing testimony on the stand, in a perfect world, would guarantee Dunne a Best Actress nod.

"Herself" earns its title from the nickname Aido gives Sandra as they break ground for the new home. It also applies to Sandra's gradual ability to define herself on her own terms, not through her ex-husband. All the characters, in fact, embark on their own journeys, including Aido, who later admits that some of the best projects in life benefit not



Harriet Walter, a veteran of period pieces such as "Downton Abbey" and "The Crown," delivers the most powerful scene in "Herself."

himself, but others.

The movie does not end as we suspect it will. It throws us a curve ball. Then again, it is what separates "Herself" from others like it. Sometimes, the film argues, happy endings arrive not in easy resolutions, but in having the courage to keep going in the face of adversity.

This is one of the year's best films.

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



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## Brosnahan Leaves “Maisel” Behind With Satisfying “I’m Your Woman”

by Andrew Tallackson



Rachel Brosnahan stars as a housewife on the run after her husband disappears in “I’m Your Woman,” now streaming on Amazon Prime.

Some actors inhabit a role so soundly, it defines them. You can’t picture them in anything else.

For me, that’s Rachel Brosnahan. As the star of Amazon Prime’s “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” the actress *is* Midge Maisel. Her stylized look, her brisk chatter, her speedy gait: Brosnahan throws everything she’s got into the comedy series, playing a woman whose mind is her greatest asset.

“I’m Your Woman,” now streaming on Prime, proves there is life after Midge. It is a wise departure for Brosnahan, who is stripped of everything Maisel and plunked into a story that defies easy explanation. You could call it a thriller, or a female-driven “Goodfellas.” Closer to the truth, it is a quiet, character-driven period piece set on slow burn, where the tension takes time to build. Better yet, it proves Brosnahan has the acting chops to carve out a career for herself beyond “Maisel.”

Directed and co-written by Julia Hart, the film is set in the late 1970s and introduces us to Jean (Brosnahan), a housewife married to Eddie (Bill Heck), a guy we can tell is up to no good. Just what, exactly, we aren’t sure. Maybe the Mafia, possibly just a shady crook. Jean’s knowledge of his “work” is sketchy, but she is more consumed with the fact that they cannot have children. They’ve tried, but the miscarriages convinced Jean being a parent is not in the cards.



### “I’m Your Woman”

*Running time: 120 minutes. Streaming on Amazon Prime.*

*Rated R for violence and language*

Eddie arrives home one day carrying a toddler, almost like a present. The baby is theirs for the keeping. Just how he’s come across a baby, we don’t know. Jean is equally curious.

Soon after, her life is thrown into chaos. A friend of Eddie’s arrives. Desperate. Tossing money and clothes for Jean into a bag. They have to leave. Now, Eddie is missing, and she’s in danger.

At its core, “I’m Your Woman” is a crime-wife-on-the-lam tale, but for those seeking a violent, hyper, excessive thriller, the movie will disappoint. In fact, they likely will find it dull, too leisurely paced. Hart is not interested in transforming Jean into a female Rambo: a mechanical, revenge-fueled vigilante. Instead, it introduces Jean to Cal (the dynamite British actor Arinzé Kene, achieving a flawless American accent) and, eventually, his family, which includes his tough-as-nails wife Teri (the wonderful Marsha Stephanie Blake), all of whom have experience living in hiding.

It is here the unexpected happens. Cal’s family becomes Jean’s family. The past links them togeth-



The bond between Jean (Rachel Brosnahan), her protector (Arinzé Kene) and his family drives the second half of "I'm Your Woman."

er. And we realize something. Hart has done such an expert job giving her cast the tools to create real characters, we care about them. Brosnahan, who up until this point has played Jean as shell shocked, carefully modulates the performance into Jean's discovery of her own strength. She's far more enduring than she realizes. Brosnahan does tough, bold work, particularly as Jean and Teri head out to track down a missing Cal. The "Maisel" actress, in the final 15 minutes, achieves physically exhausting work.

Hart, as director, knows how to stage quietly agonizing moments, the centerpiece being the scene where Jean realizes intruders have entered her hideout. The only sounds are the footsteps below, and Jean's labored breathing as she tries to call for help. The term "edge of your seat" gets bandied about too often, but it is appropriate for how Hart spikes the suspense without resorting to overkill.

The last 15 minutes, in fact, are an exhaustive, relentless mad dash for survival. They are emotional, too, because we realize we've invested so much empathy for Jean, Cal and Teri, all we want is for them to be OK. And we practically hold our breath waiting to see if they do.

That is how effective "I'm Your Woman" is.

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

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# 2020: A Look Back at the Best in Television

by Andrew Tallackson

One day, when COVID-19 hopefully is but a faint memory, 2020 will go down as the year television became our self-isolation savior.

And I'm not referring to Netflix's craptacular "Tiger King."

As the pandemic wormed its way into our existence, forcing us to hunker down and, curiously, depleting global toilet paper supplies, we turned to television – streaming in particular – as a respite from a world growing stranger by the minute.

And it delivered.

Before the pandemic, I was never a slave to my smart TV. I was more of a movie guy. A bibliophile. But now, with more time on our hands, my family and I plunged into the world of bingeable TV. So, having compiled lists of my favorite films each year, it seemed appropriate to now produce one for the best television has to offer.

When sharing such plans with my wife, she chuckled, then asked, "Are you including 'Tiger King'?" You remember, the true-crime documentary series that introduced us to human trainwreck Joe Exotic. That convinced everyone big-cat conservationist Carole Baskin offed her husband. That drew nearly 35 million viewers during its first 10 days of release. Looking back now, the sole benefit of "Tiger King" was to reassure us how relatively normal our lives were. Otherwise, uh, no, "Tiger King" would not land anywhere near this list.

So, here we go, my favorite moments in television for 2020.



## 1. "The Queen's Gambit" (Netflix)

The show that stole our hearts. A story worthy of Dickens. Characters whose struggles and tri-

umphs left us cheering in our living rooms. And in the end, a word-of-mouth smash that became Netflix's most-watched scripted miniseries. Ever. "The Queen's Gambit," based on Walter Tevis' 1983 novel, reminded us must-see TV still can mean a good, old-fashioned story with heart. And in Beth, a female chess prodigy and orphan, Anya Taylor-Joy finally landed her career-defining role: a smart, determined young woman who finds her place in the world. The icing on the cake? Marielle Heller as Beth's adoptive mother, a woman who becomes more friend than parent.



## 2. "Ted Lasso" (Apple TV+)

What could have been a flimsy, one-joke sitcom – cheery American Ted Lasso (co-creator Jason Sudeikis) coaches a rough-and-tumble British soccer team – emerged as streaming's smartest, most heartfelt comedy. With each episode, the series was less about treating Ted as a country bumpkin and more about how his positive outlook wins over everyone. Kindness trumps ugliness. By the end of the season, these characters are not the same people. They've grown, which is rare for TV comedies. Characters have one personality trait, and they stick to it. But in watching Ted soften others, especially new team owner Rebecca Welton (the smashing Hannah Waddingham), we witness people with nothing in common who become a family. With moments that make you laugh and cry, often in the same scene, "Ted Lasso" became Apple TV+'s highest rated comedy, renewed for two more seasons after only its first three episodes.

## 3. "The Last Dance" (ESPN & Netflix)

A monumental achievement that won the Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Documentary or Non-fiction Series. Sports journalism at its best, the series documented Michael Jordan's final season with the Bulls, also charting his rise within the team

from the beginning. This will go down as the definitive account of these years, and an unflinchingly honest one at that. Director Jason Hehir wasn't afraid to ask the tough questions. Rather than place Jordan on a pedestal, he revealed the man as a remarkably competitive athlete, flaws and all. The thoroughness of the series, and the cooperation of so many people in the interviews, achieved time-capsule storytelling at its best.



## 4. "Unorthodox" (Netflix)

Only four episodes, but wow, what a ride. Israeli actress Shira Haas, who in my opinion gave the performance of the year, stars as a woman who grows up in an ultra-Orthodox community, is married off to a man she doesn't love and who eventually sneaks off to Germany. The series delves into a way of life shielded from modern practice, but ultimately, this is about a woman who restarts her life. We watch Haas, as Esther "Esty" Shapiro, emerge like a butterfly from its cocoon, and the process is emotionally exhaustive. Her final audition at a German music school sees the actress digging deep within, defining herself through song. As the viewer, you feel as if you've just witnessed greatness.

## 5. "The English Game" (Netflix)

Reassurance there *is* life after "Downton Abbey" for writer Jullian Fellowes. Period pieces can be stuffy bores, but "The English Game" delved into a world rarely explored by British television: the moment when football (soccer, to those of us across the pond) stopped being a game solely for the wealthy. In doing so, Fellowes remained true to his "Downtown" roots. Here was another case where the line between the haves and have-nots started to blur. In the process, Fellowes portrayed real-life people

from all walks of life who realized they had more in common than they suspected.

## 6. "Mrs. America" (Hulu)

More fiction than fact, but compelling none the less. The miniseries by "Captain Marvel" directors Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck explored the battle to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, told from the perspective of key women who fought the good fight. Gloria Steinem. Shirley Chisholm. Bella Abzug. Betty Friedan. Each embodied by superlative actresses. The most fascinating was Oscar-winner Cate Blanchett in full tsunami mode as conservative anti-ERA activist Phyllis Schlafly. Here was a fascinating woman who publicly denounced everything the ERA stood for, yet embodied the very spirit of the legislative struggle. You couldn't take your eyes off her. It was a hypnotic performance.



## 7. "The Mandalorian" (Disney+)

Detractors dismissed Season 1 as excessive "Star Wars" fan service. With Season 2, creators Jon Favreau and Dave Filoni sent naysayers packing, each episode growing bolder, more ambitious. A tricky balance between advancing the story, deepening the characters and allowing the action to pump our adrenaline. The standout was the Filoni-directed episode "The Jedi": a visually glorious ode to Akira Kurosawa. And the most unforgettable? The return of a beloved character, achieved through CGI and voiceover work, that reduced us to stunned silence...and a blubbering mess. Hats off to Favreau and Filoni. Thanks to them, the "Star Wars" saga is alive and well.

## 8. "The Flight Attendant" (HBO Max)

A rare case where the TV show is better than the book. Cassie (Kaley Cuoco, in a ferocious comic performance), a flight attendant and reckless alcoholic, wakes up in a hotel room bed next to the man she

Continued from Page 19

met the previous night. His throat slit, the sheets soaked in gore. A Hitchcockian premise, but what felt on the page like a slickly packaged ripoff of “The Girl on the Train” is reinvented as a dark comedy. A comedic paranoia thriller where Cuoco’s world spins increasingly out of control. This is rare television to feature a largely female cast, where women call the shots, even as they dip into treacherous waters. Fine comic support by Zosia Mamet as Cassie’s best friend and Michelle Gomez as the assassin Miranda elevates episodes to black comedy heaven.



### 9. “Little Voice” (Apple TV+)

I had my doubts. A TV show loosely inspired by singer-songwriter-actress Sara Bareilles, and dipping into her catalog of songs. Yes, clichés exist – breaking into the music industry is hard: well, *duh* – the series emerged as a wise family drama involving a struggling musician (the winning Brittany O’Grady) and her autistic brother, Louie (Kevin Valdez, who is autistic in real life). Casting real actors with disabilities as the members of Louie’s group home was a stroke of genius. It rang of truth and moments of tender hilarity. But as sister and brother navigate their own personal struggles, “Little Voice” finds its soul, with Bareilles’ songs perfectly accenting the drama.

### 10. “The Crown” (Netflix)

Netflix’s historical-fiction hit about the British monarchy bounced back from a lackluster, often dull third season, emphasizing the human elements that made it engrossing in the first place. Yes, the fraught-from-the-start marriage of Charles and Diana takes center stage, but Olivia Colman settles into the role of Queen Elizabeth with more impact than she did before. The queen’s tenuous relationship with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (a phenomenal Gillian Anderson) yields some of this

season’s most electrifying moments. Anderson has never been better. The moment Thatcher vents her frustration at the queen’s lack of support is a wrenching example of hurt and betrayal.

## Five Honorable Mentions



- **“Dead to Me” (Netflix)** — Better than the first season, this bitchy dark comedy finally discovered what’s likable about its characters, ushering them through one wild crisis after another.
  - **“Hunters” (Amazon Prime)** – The year’s most divisive entertainment, a pulpy look at Nazi hunters that pushed every button possible. A dynamite ensemble, with Carole Kane’s dream reunion with her son, who died in the Nazi death camps, haunting me to this day.
  - **“Little Fires Everywhere” (Hulu)** – An impressive adaptation of Celeste Ng’s bestseller that enriched the characters beyond the page, affording the cast room to achieve stellar performances.
  - **“Never Have I Ever” (Netflix)** — Mindy Kaling saved the teen dramedy from Snooze City with this snarky, hilarious series from the perspective of an Indian-American teen.
  - **“Raised by Wolves” (HBO Max)** – Super-smart sci-fi, exploring what defines being “human.” Robots raise human children after humanity wipes itself out on Earth, the machines at conflict with their directives as they take on more human qualities. Not for all tastes, but worth the trip.
- Contact Andrew Tallackson at [drew@thebeacher.com](mailto:drew@thebeacher.com)

com

## The Best Films of 2020

I was a bit premature, in the Jan. 14 *Beacher*, by stating my list of the best films of 2020 would appear Feb. 4. It appears a few more Oscar contenders will be released in mid-February, so look for my compilation to appear in the Feb. 25 edition.

## “One Night in Miami” is Sensational Entertainment

by Andrew Tallackson

Believe the hype. “One Night in Miami...” is compelling, sensationally acted and superbly told.

Streaming on Amazon Prime and based on Kemp Powers’ 2013 one-act play, the film concocts a fictional evening with Malcolm X, Cassius Clay, Sam Cooke and Jim Brown. The exchanges unfold in a decade long past, but they sadly could not be more relevant.

Oscar-winner Regina King (“If Beale Street Could Talk”), in her directorial debut, shows extraordinary confidence behind the camera, allowing the unfortunate truths these men reveal to emerge from her astonishing young actors.

Powers, who adapted his own work, opens up the material so we’re not confined to the hotel room where these four men meet. The first half hour, in fact, introduces them in their own worlds. In February 1964, Cassius Clay (Eli Goree), not yet Muhammad Ali, has just won the fight that declares him Heavyweight Champion of the World. Pro football player Jim Brown (Aldis Hodge) is about to shoot his first movie, yet is only allowed on the porch, not through the front door, of a long-time white family friend (Beau Bridges). Sam Cooke (Leslie Odom Jr.) realizes his dream of performing at the Copacabana, yet is treated with indifference by the white audience. And Malcolm X (Kingsley Ben-Adir) is becoming disillusioned with the Nation of Islam.

The four converge at the Hampton House hotel, where a meeting of the Nation of Islam is under way. The talk between these men is amiable at first. Playful teasing, laughter, celebratory of Clay’s victory. But as the evening draws on, the pleasantries give way to slippery tension, especially when Malcolm takes on Sam for not advancing the cause of black men and women

through his music.

And it is here the dialogue stings, drawing clear parallels to the past 10 years. And it does so because King, as director, doesn’t take the lazy way out, planting her camera in front of the cast as if photographing a play. She weaves throughout the hotel room, moving from actor to actor to capture

their reactions: their anger, frustrations and disbelief. She moves the action outside, to the roof of the hotel and nearby parking lot.

And in a cast of largely unknowns, she delivers four actors who disappear into these men with salt and vinegar. Goree, as Clay, beautifully captures the rhythmic cadence of the fighter’s voice, moving in the boxing ring as if dancing on air. Odom Jr. (“Hamilton’s” Aaron Burr) achieves silky smooth vocals that would do Cooke proud. The stunned look on Hodge’s face, as Bridges stops him from entering his home, is the brutal equivalent of a kick to the gut.

The most remarkable of the four, to me at least, is Ben-Adir as Malcolm X. The British actor not only resembles the late activist, but captures the prophetic flow of his voice. And when anger and disgust emerge — black men dying in the streets, black entertainers treated to the industry’s “scraps”— the bile is real. Blistering.

That is what makes “One Night in Miami...” extraordinary. King, in telling her story, does not

sentimentalize these men. They are vulnerable, but that vulnerability is not perceived as weakness. And her film, like these men, holds no punches. It says what needs to be said. Back then...and now.

□

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Leslie Odom Jr. beautifully captures the silky smooth vocals of Sam Cooke in “One Night in Miami...,” now streaming on Amazon Prime.



“One Night in Miami...”

Running time: 114 minutes. Streaming on Amazon Prime.

Rated R for language throughout.

## Thanks to \$24,000 Grant, Krasl Art Center Reopens With New Updates

Krasl Art Center has reopened to the public with set hours, as well as a new look thanks to a 2020 Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs grant.

The \$24,000 grant, which supports KAC's general operations, came through the MCACA peer-review process, one of 597 applications to compete for fiscal year 2021 funding. Organizations receiving a grant must match those funds with other public and private dollars. KAC's matching dollars include individual donations and corporate sponsorships.

The grant helped make possible lobby updates and a new community lounge. And because of the grant, KAC was able to source many items locally.

The community lounge is a multipurpose space featuring flexible furniture that allows visitors to comfortably work remotely, participate in a workshop or meet with friends. For such a multi-use space, KAC also needed art-supply storage in the tables to easily adjust the room for any kind of activity. Through the grant, KAC purchased mobile tables (complete with built-in storage and display racks) and chairs, and adjustable-height, custom-built bistro tables for small groups and independent work.

In light of COVID-19, the KAC introduced new seating for conversation and quiet reflection. Reaching out to the Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium for recommendations, KAC found new seat-

ing designed specifically for support, cleanliness and durability. New sofas have arms that double as a work surface.



Mobile tables now contain art-supply storage for visitors.

The KAC is located at 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT Friday through Monday. The next exhibits, which run Jan. 30-March 28, are: KAC Members' Show: "Inspired By..." in the main galleries, and local ceramist/KAC teaching artist Jennifer Zona in the artlab.

Visit [www.krasl.org](http://www.krasl.org) or call (269) 983-0271 for more details.

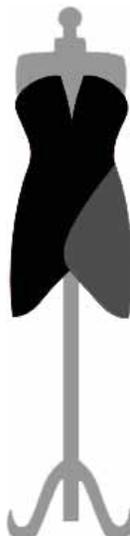




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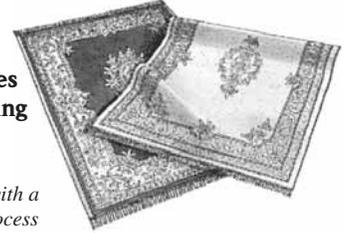
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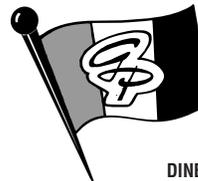
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**Dunes Summer Theatre**

Classes for teens, youth and children are planned this summer as part of dunesARTS Youth Theatre.

Acting classes with Tito Sanchez-Williams targets pre-teens and teens as a way to expand and enhance theatrical skills. The course offers an introduction to conservatory type training.

Sanchez-Williams, who has a Masters of Fine Arts, will cover popular acting techniques, including: script analysis; scene work; monologue work; voice projection; blocking; acting techniques; and improvisational exercises.



Sanchez-Williams

"Music Theatre Techniques" with Amber Zangari is aimed at pre-teens and teens as a way to expand skills in singing, dancing and acting through song. Songs used through instruction will hail from shows like "Hamilton," "The Greatest Showman" and "Dear Evan Hanson."

The course is appropriate for beginners and intermediate students. They will learn proper vocal technique, character analysis of breaking down the song and dance moves.

Ultimately, these two classes provide a means to recruit youth for future DAF productions.

The four-week "Making Magic with Masks" with Zangari targets youth ages 5-8, combining crafts and make-believe. Students will learn about the history of building a theatrical character with a mask, creating a new mask each week based on themes from classic Greek drama. Themes include: heroes; villains; animals; birds; and/or mythological characters. After making the masks, students create their characters in short scenes and monologues to be performed in class.



Zangari

Dunes Summer Theatre is located at 288 Shady Oak Drive, Michiana Shores. Visit [www.dunesarts.org/youth-theatre-classes](http://www.dunesarts.org/youth-theatre-classes) to register or for details.



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# American Red Cross

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

- Northwest Health LaPorte (formerly LaPorte Hospital), 1007 W. Lincolnway, noon-5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2.
- Sacred Heart Church, 201 Bach St., LaPorte, 12:30-5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3.

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

## Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Full Moon Hike at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29.**

Meet at the Nature Center for a short presentation about the moon, followed by a hike to Lake Michigan and back. Pre-registration is required.

- **Reptile Rendezvous from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31.**

Meet a naturalist at the Nature Center to see live turtles and snakes, the emphasis being how they survive the cold winter months.

- **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.

## Bridgman Public Library

Bridgman (Mich.) Public Library will host a Zoom event, "The Real Mae West," at 6 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Feb. 2.

Educational entertainer Martina Mathisen portrays the icon. The library is located at 4460 Lake St. Call (269) 465-3663 for the Zoom link or more details.

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### New County Historian

Bruce Johnson is the new LaPorte County historian, following in the footsteps of Fern Eddy Schultz, who held the position for many years.

Johnson holds degrees in education from Ball State and Valparaiso universities and has been a guest lecturer at Purdue University-Northwest. He taught Indiana history to fourth-graders for 25 years, and organized annual field trips to visit the Indiana Statehouse and Indianapolis museums.



Johnson

He serves on the boards of the LaPorte County Historical Society and Carmel Cemetery Association, and was a charter member of the LaPorte County Genealogical Society. He has presented programs on "Famous Hoosiers" in literature, film, inventions, flight and sports throughout the state. In 2008, he researched, wrote, narrated and co-produced the documentary "The Guinness Mystery."

Johnson is the recipient of many awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from People to People International, the Historian of the Year from the LaPorte County Historical Society and Educator of the Year from the American Legion of Indiana.

### Reins of Life Variety Benefit

Feb. 1 is the deadline to reserve VIP packages for "Serve Up & Spread Love!," a cooking/variety show to benefit Reins of Life.

The live-streaming event is from 6 to 7:30 p.m. EDT Saturday, Feb. 13. It features Chef April Howell of Martin's Supermarket and WBST's Bob Montgomery. Those interested can tune in for free.

VIP packages include inclusive ingredients needed, a bottle of wine paired by Chef April Howell to the meal, dessert and automatic entry into VIP prize drawings. Packages can be picked up at Reins of Life, 9375 W. County Road 300 North.

Visit [www.reinsoflife.org/loveconquersall](http://www.reinsoflife.org/loveconquersall) or call (574) 232-0853 for details.

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to make a contribution

## Activities to Explore

### In the Area:

**Jan. 28** — Michigan City Public Library Online Graphic Novel Club, Alex Sanchez's You Brought Me the Ocean. Zoom meetup. Registration: (219) 873-3045, YOnline@mclib.org

**Jan. 29** — Full Moon Hike, 7 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Registration: (219) 926-1390.

**Jan. 30** — LaPorte Park and Recreation Department WinterFest: snowman contest, 9 a.m.-noon, Kesling Park Walking Trail, LaPorte. Info/registration: [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest), (219) 326-9600.

**Jan. 30** — LaPorte Park and Recreation Department WinterFest: snowflake string art class, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium Ceramics Room, 1001 Ridge St. Fee: \$10. Info/registration: [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest), (219) 326-9600.

**Jan. 30** — LaPorte Park and Recreation Department WinterFest: "Let It Snow" wall hanging art project, 2-4 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium Ceramics Room, 1001 Ridge St. Fee: \$35. Info/registration: [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest), (219) 326-9600.

**Jan. 30** — LaPorte Park and Recreation Department WinterFest: "Glow in the Dark Scavenger Hunt," 5 p.m., LaPorte's Fox Park. Info: (219) 326-9600, [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest).

**Jan. 30-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)

**Jan. 31** — LaPorte Park and Recreation Department WinterFest: Frosty's Frozen Bike Ride," 2 p.m., Cummings Lodge, LaPorte. Info: (219) 326-9600, [www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest](http://www.cityoflaporte.com/450/WinterFest).

**Jan. 31** — Reptile Rendezvous, 2-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**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)

### In the Region

**Jan. 30-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

**Through Jan. 31** — "Series 6," annual holiday Berrien Artist Guild exhibit, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Viewing hours: noon-4 p.m. EDT Fri.-Sun. Info: (269) 449-2167, [www.boxfactoryforthearts.org](http://www.boxfactoryforthearts.org)

**Feb. 2** — Zoom event, "The Real Mae West," 6 p.m., through Bridgman (Mich.) Public Library.

Zoom link/info: (269) 465-3663.

**Feb. 4** — “Meet the Greats: Fernwood Virtual Lecture Series,” 7-8 p.m. EDT. Through Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Cost: \$40, \$32/members. Info/registration: [www.fernwoodbotanical.org](http://www.fernwoodbotanical.org), (269) 695-6491.

**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/>

**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)

### VIP Visits Available at Museums

South Bend’s The History Museum and Studebaker National Museum are offering VIP Visits for groups of 20 or less that include exclusive two-hour access to their galleries.

Available times are (all times Eastern) from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8 to 10 a.m. or 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Fridays and 10 a.m. to noon Sundays. Reservations can be made by calling The History Museum at (574) 235-9664. The cost is \$100, or \$80 for members, and payment is required to reserve a time.

Studebaker National Museum exhibits include “South Bend: Then and Now, Part III” and “Disco Decade Rides: Cars of the 1970s.”

History Museum exhibits include “World Famous: The Olivers and the American Dream,” “Votes for Women, Ticket to Run: Campaigns in History” and “Full Circle: Shakespearean Culture at Notre Dame.” Tours of the Oliver Mansion are not included in the offer, nor are the museums’ children’s areas, which remain closed because of CDC guidelines for social distancing. In accordance with the St. Joseph County Ordinance, all guests are required to wear masks while visiting the museums. Catered meals or other similar events are not permissible.

The museum is located at 808 W. Washington St. Visit [www.historymuseumSB.org](http://www.historymuseumSB.org) or [www.studebakermuseum.org](http://www.studebakermuseum.org) for more details.

Want your event listed in Activities?  
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## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**On January 28, 1878**, in New Haven, Conn., the first telephone switchboard went into operation.

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

**On January 28, 1915**, the Life Saving Service and Revenue Cutter Service were merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard.

**On January 28, 1916**, President Woodrow Wilson appointed Louis Brandeis to serve on the Supreme Court, becoming its first Jewish member.

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

**On January 29, 1894**, Detroit's C.B. King received a patent for a pneumatic hammer.

**On January 29, 1900**, baseball's American League was organized. It consisted of teams from Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

**On January 29, 1936**, Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Honus Wagner, Christy Mathewson and Walter Johnson were elected as the first members of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

**On January 29, 1954**, Oprah Winfrey was born in Kosciusko, Miss.

**On January 29, 1963**, the first members of the Football Hall of Fame were announced in Canton, Ohio. They consisted of Sammy Baugh, Bert Bell, Joe Carr, Dutch Clark, George Halas, Mel Hein, Pete Henry, Cal Hubbard, Don Hutson, Curly Lambeau, Tim Mara, George Marshall, John Blood McNally, Bronko Nagurski, Ernie Neavers and Jim Thorpe.

**On January 30, 1798**, a brawl broke out in the House of Representatives, meeting in Philadelphia, after Matthew Lyon of Vermont spat in the face of Roger Griswold of Connecticut.

**On January 30, 1815**, Congress authorized purchase of Thomas Jefferson's library, making it the nucleus of the Library of Congress.

**On January 30, 1933**, the first episode of "The Lone Ranger" was broadcast on Detroit's radio station WXYZ.

**On January 30, 1948**, Mohandas Gandhi, spiritual and political leader of India, was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic while on his way to attend a prayer meeting in New Delhi.

**On January 30, 1962**, two members of the famed Flying Wallendas high-wire act died when their seven-member pyramid collapsed during a performance in Detroit.

**On January 31, 1606**, English conspirator Guy Fawkes was executed for his part in a "Gunpowder Plot" to blow up Parliament.

**On January 31, 1835**, Illinois authorized the village of Chicago to establish a police force.

**On January 31, 1865**, the House passed a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery.

**On January 31, 1931**, Ernie Banks, the Hall of Fame infielder and Cubs power hitter who would become known as "Mr. Cub," was born in Dallas.

**On January 31, 1949**, television's first daytime soap opera, "These Are My Children," was broadcast from Chicago's NBC studios.

**On February 1, 1790**, the U.S. Supreme Court met in New York's Royal Exchange Building for its first official session.

**On February 1, 1865**, the signing of the 13th Amendment to the American Constitution marked the end of slavery in the United States.

**On February 1, 1892**, *The New York Times* published the names of the 400 guests invited to Mrs. William B. Astor's society ball, making the term "the 400" synonymous with high society.

**On February 2, 1675**, the first recorded observance of Groundhog Day took place in Germany. In the United States, the official observance takes place in Punxsutawney, Pa. (At least that's what they say in Punxsutawney). There, crowds gather to wait for a groundhog to emerge from his burrow. If he sees his shadow there will be six weeks more of winter. No shadow — spring has definitely arrived.

**On February 2, 1876**, the "National League of Professional Baseball Clubs" was formed at an owners meeting in New York. The new league consisted of teams from Chicago, Boston, Cincinnati, Louisville, New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis and Hartford.

**On February 2, 1893**, a cameraman at Thomas Edison's New Jersey motion picture studio took the first close-up picture in the industry's history. The picture was of comedian Fred Ott sneezing.

**On February 3, 1690**, Massachusetts issued America's first paper money, using it to pay soldiers fighting a war against French Quebec.

**On February 3, 1809**, an Act was approved in Congress creating the "Illinois Territory." Prior to this date, the present state of Illinois was included in the vast area known as the Northwest Territory.

**On February 3, 1836**, the "Whig Party" held its first state convention in Albany, N.Y., nominating William Henry Harrison for president.

**On February 3, 1894**, "America's artist" Norman Rockwell was born in New York City.





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**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**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)

**FOR SALE**

**Lovable Siberian male/female pups: born 12/11/20.**  
 Please call (219) 879-2364 if seriously interested.

**Rarely used, no-longer needed HP 5600 fax and color printer. Asking \$60. Call (269) 469-3097**

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**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)**

**REAL ESTATE FOR SALE**

**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.**

**Unity Scholarship Application Online**

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.



**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.



## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

**The Diplomat's Wife by Pam Jenoff** (*hardcover reissue (2020) \$28.99; original 2008 release available in paperback \$16.99 in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 362 pages.*)

Pam Jenoff wrote The Diplomat's Wife back in 2008, but it was reissued, likely because of the success of her other six novels, the most popular being The Lost Girls of Paris, The Commandant's Girl (the prequel to this one) and The Orphan's Tale, which I reviewed in 2017. It was such a heartfelt read, I was intrigued to read this book. I wasn't disappointed.

Explored here are the years following the end of the war — the late 1940s — when the map of eastern Europe changed again, when Nazis were replaced by Communists and diplomacy was filled by spies and counter-spies. It also poses an interesting question — we all know about diplomats, but what about their wives? How much do they know? Would they ever get involved in their husband's work? Jenoff latches onto something significant: The possibilities are intriguing.

The story begins in April 1945 in a concentration camp in Germany:

*"No, not dead. Not yet, but soon. I can take no more...Did I talk? No, a voice within me replies. You said nothing. You did well."*

Marta Nederman is a Polish Jew captured by the Gestapo after she kills a Nazi Commandant to save her friends. They were part of the resistance movement. The Nazis find her, arrest her and take her to the camp at Dachau, where she is starved and beaten, yet never reveals the names of her group.

Months later, the war ends, the Allies capture the camp and a kind American G.I. — he says his name is Paul Mattison — finds Marta and takes her, half dead, to a hospital at an Austrian refugee camp for treatment from wounds and starvation. Recuperating in the hospital, Marta makes friends with a nurse, Dava, and Rose, another patient from a Nazi camp.

A shock for Marta comes the day Paul shows up at the hospital. They talk and walk, he rows them in a boat and...well, do I really have to explain what happens next?

Rose, meanwhile, has a blood disorder making her too weak to fight her starvation. She and Marta become close, and when she dies, Marta feels she's lost a member of her own family. Before Rose died, she arranged for Marta to get her passport, mon-

ey and a ticket to London to her aunt's house. She wanted Marta to have a chance at the life she knew she would never have.

Paul is shipped out soon. Marta thinks she has seen the last of him, but the couple surprisingly meet in Paris and make plans to do so again in London and marry. Ah, the best laid plans...

As fate would have it, the lovers are denied their meeting — Paul fails to show up in London — and Marta is left pregnant and alone. What to do? The aunt offers her a home for as long as she needs.

Marta meets Simon Gold, a British diplomat in the intelligence office. He's looking for an assistant who can translate. Their relationship quickly evolves into a marriage proposal, even though Marta feels no real love for Simon. But, it is security for her and her daughter. The baby is born "premature," so Simon thinks it was his child.

I wondered why Jenoff glossed over Marta's wedding to Simon and the birth of her daughter, Rachel, but as they say, stick around, the best is yet to come.

Marta sits in on meetings and takes notes for her husband. One day, she is startled to hear a name from her work with the resistance. Marek Andek had the code for a list giving names of those working with the Russians that would reveal a spy in the British office. No one could

recognize this man...except Marta.

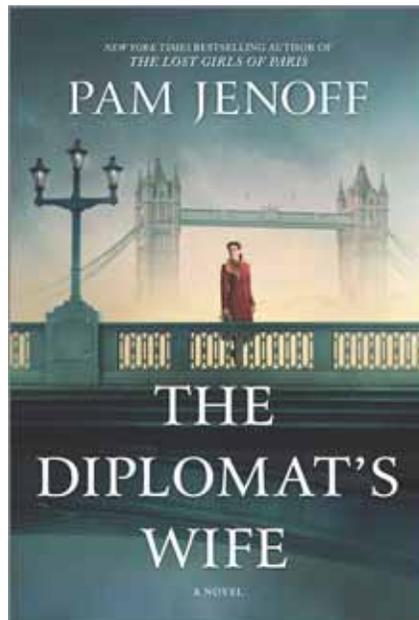
Despite Simon's protests, Marta volunteers to go to Germany and find him. Now, the story really begins...

Communism is rearing its ugly head in eastern Europe, and while Marta has many reservations about revisiting the horrors of her past, she is determined to find Andek, following a dangerous path to find her former resistance compatriot. Her attempt to find Andek soon turns into a cat-and-mouse game not unlike her resistance work. The race is on, and there's no turning back.

Plenty of action, plenty of heartbreak and plenty of good reading.

Jenoff holds a degree in international affairs from George Washington University and a degree in history from Cambridge, and a Juris Doctor from University of Pennsylvania. Her novels are inspired by her experiences working at the Pentagon, and as a diplomat for the State Department handling Holocaust issues in Poland.

Till next time, happy reading!





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