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Local Flavor

by Edmund Lawler

Listen to radio at its grassroots, and you're likely to hear just about anything. Gospel, country, jazz, rock, soul, talk, storytelling, comedy, community meetings, even elementary school children reciting poetry. If that's not to your taste, there's also blues, bluegrass, classical, ethnic and holiday music.

It's an eclectic mix that hits home in small towns and rural areas through low-power, non-commercial radio stations like Radio Harbor Country, which this year celebrates its 15th anniversary. The 100-watt station in Three Oaks, Mich., that broadcasts on WRHC 106.7 FM and WRHZ 93.5 FM can be heard in western Berrien County from New Buffalo north to Stevensville. Listeners elsewhere can stream it at www.radioharborcountry.org or on its mobile app.

Orchestrating Radio Harbor Country's quirky cornucopia of content is Dave Repetto, the station's program director and board chairman.

"The purpose of these low-power FCC (Federal Communications Commission) licenses is to promote community involvement, whether it be enter-



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Dave Repetto orchestrates the programming mix at Radio Harbor Country.

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Delivery**Local Flavor** Continued from Page 1

tainment, information or education,” Repetto says, noting that large commercial radio stations don’t speak to the rhythms of small communities.

“For example, we have a program called Harbor Country Arts Scene, which is a one-hour show during the summer season hosted by Dave Knoebber that highlights the different activities in the community, including the studios, art galleries, museums or what is happening at the Vickers or the Acorn theaters.”

The FCC requires holders of low-power, community-based, non-commercial radio stations to produce at least 56 hours per week of original programming. But the little all-volunteer station in Three Oaks doesn’t settle for the minimum. It ambitiously produces 85 hours of original programming every week.

Two of those hours are served up each week by Fred Lange and his son, Dylan. On the air, they’re known as Edgar Wilbury and Dylan The Dude, hosts of “All Over the Planet,” the station’s most popular program. It’s live from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. EDT Fridays.

“We get to play any music we want. We talk and we laugh, and it’s just a great way to start the weekend,” says the 57-year-old Lange, who manages the warehouse for a Benton Harbor food company when not broadcasting or singing for his eponymously named rock band, the Edgar Wilbury Experience.

But the fun, fast-paced two-hour show takes some work, says Lange, who researches fascinating backstories about the bands or music he presents on the show. He may sound like he’s in the moment on

the air, but he admits he scripts nearly every line. Dylan, 23, a recent communications grad from Ball State University who edits some programs for NPR stations, is more impromptu and much savvier with the technology powering the show.

Edgar and The Dude each select about a dozen classic rock or alternative rock songs to play on the show. Each song comes with its own backstory — either about the artist, the song itself or both. Father and son share a lively rapport during the show, which has been on the air for seven years. They recently broadcast show No. 429, underwritten by Greenbush Brewing, Journeyman Distillery and Timothy’s Restaurant, the show’s regular sponsors. They’ve done remote broadcasts from the beer garden at Greenbush and from River Valley High School. They hope to get back on the road again once the COVID-19 pandemic leaves town.

The show even scores some occasional coups.

“Fred Winston, the legendary WLS DJ, called me out of the blue one day,” Lange says. “He said he listens to our show and heard through a mutual friend that we possibly wanted to have him on the show. Fred said he would love to come on.”

Lange couldn’t believe his good fortune.

“I asked him to give me the names of nine artists he has good stories about,” Lange says. “I told Fred I’d write up a script and then pose questions to him about the artists. We spent about two hours on the phone planning the show.”

During that time, Winston, who retired to a farm in Berrien Springs, told captivating stories about artists like Burton Cummings of The Guess Who, Jim Morrison of The Doors, Joan Jett and Frank



Former WLS radio personality Fred Winston sits in on “All Over the Planet” hosted by Edgar Wilbury and Dylan The Dude.

Zappa of the Mothers of Invention.

That 2018 program was a hit and played to a studio audience of 45 friends of "All Over the Planet." They got an up-close look at one of the nation's most famous radio personalities who spun rock 'n' roll hits from Chicago all across the Midwest in the 1970s and beyond. The audience spilled into the studio's adjoining lounge, which looks like the annex of Pee-wee's Playhouse. It's appointed with old-timey radios, vintage theater seats, random furniture, colorful murals of scenes from Harbor Country and a wall scrawled with signatures of the station's guests and hosts from the past 15 years. In the studio itself is a floor-to-ceiling rock wall fountain, a remnant from the days when the building on the western edge of Three Oaks' Watkins Park was a health spa.



The whimsical rock wall fountain in the studio at WRHC.

Winston, by the way, even agreed to sit in on the drums for a Rolling Stones song when he joined the Edgar Wilbury Experience for a gig at a local venue.



The manager for Wilco frontman Jeff Tweedy agreed to let Radio Harbor Country play a recording of a two-hour performance on "All Over the Planet."

And then there was Jeff Tweedy, frontman for the Grammy-winning rock band Wilco. A Chicagoan with a second home in Union Pier, Tweedy performed a solo benefit concert at The Acorn in 2016 for local restaurateur Ibrahim Parlak, who's been wag-

ging a long battle against deportation. Lange, who was at the show, couldn't coax Tweedy to be a guest on his show, but his manager agreed to let Lange play a recording of the two-hour performance on "All Over the Planet."

The exclusive live recording played well all over

Continued on Page 4

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the planet, according to a printout of listeners that Repetto shared with Lange. The Tweedy show drew listeners from across the United States and several foreign countries. On their regular show, Lange fields listener texts from Florida to Washington state and many places in between.

“I’d like to think we bring a lot of joy to people,” Lange says.

Emily Horak is one of about a dozen original program hosts at the station. She, her brother Joe and their friend James Hoover — all River Valley High School students — launched a show called “Triple Threat” on the new station in 2006. The three teens debated the merits of trending movies and TV shows. They were encouraged to propose a show on the new station by Gary Lange — Fred’s older brother — who knew the students when they were at River Valley Elementary School. Gary Lange, the school’s principal, retired in 2010. She recalls attending the station’s first organizational meeting at Vickers Theatre.

When Hoover moved out of state after about three years, it was just Emily and Joe. They rebranded the show “Double Feature.”

“After James left, it was more a sibling dynamic along the lines of Siskel and Ebert — a sister talking smack to her older brother,” Emily says with a laugh “We recorded about 520 episodes over the course of eight or nine years.”

But then Joe got married and moved across the big lake to Wisconsin. Emily, who’s on staff at the State of Michigan Welcome Center on Interstate 94 in New Buffalo, figured her broadcasting career was over.

“Joe was moving on with his life, and I was happy for him,” she said. “I was OK closing the book on the show.”

That was, until her father, Glenn, stepped in.

“I thought Emmy was going to miss doing the show too much,” he says. “So I offered to attempt to fill in.”

Glenn claims no expertise on cinema and TV,

but he knows rock ‘n’ roll; Emily, not so much. Her tastes range across the musical spectrum — from metal to show tunes. Yet, they thought a half-hour show about classic rock and the artists behind the hits could work. Emily, now 29, and Glenn, now 62, concluded they could bridge popular music’s demographic gap and launched the show in 2018 on Sunday mornings called “Pop n’ Em.” Glenn, who grows corn and soybeans on the family’s farm outside Three Oaks, found the early going a challenge.

“The preparation for the show got to be quite a bit, and Joe was never at a loss for words,” he said. “But as the show went on, I opened up more and was no longer afraid of the mic. The show just started to flow a lot better.”

He saw it as an opportunity to introduce Emily to artists like Harry Chapin and Bob Seger. And Emily grew to appreciate a different musical genre.

“You could say my tastes toward rock are more forgiving than most people my age,” she says. “I found I didn’t mind listening to Paul Revere and the Raiders or the Dave Clark Five.”

Harbor Country Radio is much more than rock ‘n’ roll, of course. For the politically engaged, there’s host John Smietanka’s “With Respect.” A former U.S. Attorney, guests on his talk show have included former FBI Director Robert Mueller, who appeared on the show in 2015, prior to being named special counsel overseeing the investigation into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Illinois Gov. James Thompson, who had a second home in Buchanan, granted Smietanka a two-hour interview. Thompson died in 2020.



Writer Gail Isaacson hosts a WRHC comedy show called “Cheaper Than a Shrink.”



Yo La Tengo in 2019 performed during a benefit concert for Radio Harbor Country.

For listeners in need of a laugh, there’s a comedy show called “Cheaper Than a Shrink,” hosted by writer Gail Isaacson, Repetto’s wife. Former Mercury Records producer Robin McBride serves up jazz on “Robin’s Roost,” and Joe Puleo, who manages the celebrated New York-based indie rock band Yo La Tengo, hosts a show on music that ranges from the familiar to the bizarre, including music he’s discovered while touring internationally with the band.

Puleo, who lives in Benton Harbor, hosted a benefit concert for Radio Harbor Country in his backyard in 2019 featuring Yo La Tengo. The band, which was

in Chicago for a concert, graciously motored up to Benton Harbor on its off day. Seventy-five people each paid a \$75 admission for the backyard concert, according to Repetto. The unscheduled show's proceeds bolstered the station's bank account. But the budgetary cushion was washed away in 2020 when the pandemic put the brakes on the station's biggest annual fundraiser, Bike n' Brunch.

On the first weekend in June, the station invites up to 150 bicyclists to ride routes of 30 or 45 miles around Harbor Country, then enjoy a gourmet brunch of locally produced foods at a local farm home. The donation is \$50 per rider. Repetto says Bike n' Bruch contributes more than a third of the station's \$20,000 annual budget. The balance comes in the form of memberships, underwriting of programs and donations. He encourages the station's supporters to visit the station's website, click the "About" page and then click on the "Donate" button. A Bike n' Brunch is planned for this year, although the exact date

depends on the state of the pandemic, he says.

Running a non-profit radio station is largely a labor of love for Repetto, who doesn't mind the job's occasional headaches. It's certainly nothing he ever imagined doing when he was majoring in aeronautical engineering at the University of Illinois. The aeronautics industry took a nosedive about the time he was graduating in 1970. Repetto wisely switched gears and became a manufacturing engineer, charting a long career at Wilson Sporting Goods in Chicago. But his career there ended suddenly and un-

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Bike n' Brunch riders gather at a local farm after pedaling around Harbor Country. The event is the station's biggest fundraiser.

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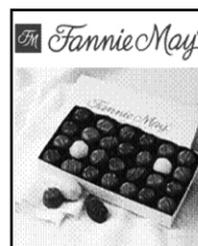
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expectedly when he was 57. Forced into retirement, he and his wife moved full time to the second home they bought two years earlier in Sawyer. He wondered what he was going to do for the rest of his life. But it didn't take him long to reinvent himself.



The father-and-son radio duo of Fred and Dylan Lange.

He learned of the new community-based radio station being launched in Three Oaks and attended the organizational meeting. He figured it was an opportunity to meet new friends and pitch in, even though he knew absolutely nothing about how a radio station operates. But his spirit was willing.

"The meeting was like a game of musical chairs in which I was the last person standing," Repetto says with a chuckle. As the last man standing, a variety of tasks quickly fell into his lap. But he rolled up his sleeves and applied his well-honed organizational and engineering skills, leading the station forward.

A year after the station's successful launch, Wilson brought Repetto back as an engineering consultant. The man with too much time on his hands was now busier than ever, but grateful for both roles. He recently stepped away from his consultant's job at Wilson, but he has no plans to dial back his responsibilities at Radio Harbor Country. The FCC recently renewed the station's license through 2028, and Repetto eagerly looks forward to the road ahead.

"The story here is that it's charming, and it's creative," Repetto says. "It should be fun, and it is."



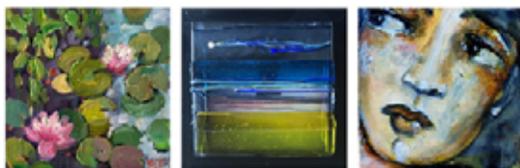
The Radio Harbor Country office located in Three Oaks, Mich.

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Dunes Summer Theatre Gala Set to Celebrate 70th Anniversary

Dunes Arts Foundation will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding at a gala celebration from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, June 26, at Barker Hall at Trinity Episcopal Church, 600 Franklin St.

“Dunes Through the Decades” is designed as an evening of dinner theater featuring songs from 1950-2020 Broadway hits, such as “My Fair Lady,” “Cabaret,” “Chicago,” “Les Miserables,” “Rent,” “Wicked” and “Hamilton.” DAF Resident Guest Director Steve Scott is the master of ceremonies. The ensemble features six Dunes Summer Theatre season 2021 performers. One is Caroline McKinzie, a 2021 graduate of Lyric Theatre at Illinois. She will play Hermia in “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” and teach Dunes’ summer musical theater and mask-making classes.

Gala tickets, which are \$100 per person, include

a sit-down dinner, silent auction and cash bar. Some COVID restrictions may apply, such as social distancing and masks.



McKinzie

The event will be live-streamed for ticketholders who want to contribute, but cannot attend in person. Auction items will be available to ticketholders starting June 15 at www.dunesarts.org. An eight-person table for \$800 can be purchased by calling the DAF box office at (219) 879-7509.

Two outdoor performances are scheduled for the 2021 season at the Michiana Shores theater, 288 Shady Oak Drive.

“Forever Plaid: The Musical” is June 4-20 (Friday-Sundays, from 6-7:30 p.m.). Then, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” is July 9-25 (Friday-Sundays, from 6-7:30 p.m.). As thanks to the community for its support, performances are free, and donations are encouraged.

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Krasl Art Fair on the Bluff to Return as In Person Event

With COVID safety precautions in place, the 2021 Krasl Art Fair on the Bluff will proceed in person Saturday and Sunday, July 10-11.

The St. Joseph, Mich., event, one of the nation's top-ranked juried art fairs, attracts 50,000 visitors, 200 artists and more than 500 volunteers. Last year's event was canceled due to the pandemic.

Following recommendations from a community task force in January and February, KAC's board unanimously voted to proceed with this year's fair. It received City Commission approval in late February. The event has a volunteer chair, Gayle Olson, and co-chair, Heather Shelby, to guide plans.

Olson founded Smooth Jazz at Sunset, an annual concert at Silver Beach typically on art fair weekend, as well as the Y-Country Summer Jam. Shelby has 20 years experience as an artist, educator and



entrepreneur.

Taking COVID-19 into consideration, all guests must secure a timed ticket in advance. A limited number of timed tickets are available for each time slot. Tickets are \$5, or free for 2 and younger. They will be available online later this month.

Lake Bluff Park will be gated to the north and to the south of Broad Street. Cloth or

paper masks are required. Increased hand-sanitizing stations are planned. Only artist vendor booths are scheduled. It is hoped the block party returns in 2022.

In 2020, artists already were juried in before shelter-in-place orders were given. When the board canceled the fair, it returned all 2020 artists' booth fees. This year's event will feature those artists previously accepted.

Visit tinyurl.com/2bzfyjpy for details.

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HOW GOOD IS THIS MARKET?

I keep on saying two things: This Market is unlike anything I have experienced in 40 years of selling real estate. This feels terribly like and unlike 2003. This column is my attempt to unpack those two statements in numbers for the "Indiana Lakefront," about which I usually report.

I just learned I can compare "expireds" (properties listed that did not sell during their listing: failures for specific time periods), so I will start there.

From April 1, 2019, to April 30, 2020, there were 89 "expireds" with a total value of \$65 million and a \$509,000 median list price. In the same timeframe for 2020 to 2021, there were 52 "expireds" having a total value of \$38 million, with a \$620,000 median list price. That 42% drop in number of properties that did not sell and 42% drop in dollars not earned definitely is positive news.

Number of sold properties and total \$Volume also have improved. In the 2019-2020 period, we had 171 residential sales. In the 2020-2021 period, we had 217 residential sales. That is a 17% increase in number of sales year over year. The \$Volume went from \$82 million to \$116 million: a 41% increase.

Finally, the median sold prices changed from \$509,000 to \$620,000. That is a 21% increase in market value for one year. While that does not translate into saying your house is worth 21% more this year than last year, it does mean the totality of all the houses in our "Indiana Lakefront" real estate is worth 21% more in 2021 than in 2020, using the end of April and 13 month periods to create our comparisons.

That means the overall value of real estate would double in five years if we keep going at this pace. That is exactly what I have been feeling.

Now, back to the 2003 comparison. The reason for the dramatic increase in value is not based on giving loans to buyers who could not afford the properties as in 2003, but that the top 10% of the population — the people who buy our properties — has had boom years of income and chosen to escape to a more appealing tourist environment within a couple of hours drive by car, not plane. *History repeats itself.*

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St. Stanislaus 5K Run and Walk

St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church, with co-operation from the Town of Trail Creek, will host the Ninth Annual "St. Stanislaus 5K" at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 5 at Trail Creek's Nelson Park.

Race proceeds fund needed repairs to the church.

Plaque awards are given in eight different age divisions for women, men and children, the top three overall female and male runners and top female and male walkers.

Entry forms are available at St. Stanislaus School, Robert Tylicz Appliance and local fitness gyms. Mail a completed entry form with payment to St. Stanislaus Parish, 109 Ann St., Michigan City, IN 46360. Those interested also can enter at www.RunSignUp.com, then enter the key word "St. Stans 5k." Those who want to register in person can do the following:

- St. Stanislaus Church Hall from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, June 4: \$20 (includes a T-shirt), or \$15 for children 13 and younger.
- Day of Event, June 5, from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m. at Nelson Park: \$25, but due to limited quantities, there is no guarantee of a T-shirt.

Contact St. Stanislaus Church at (219) 879-9281 or race director Patrick Kroehler at pjk226@yahoo.com

"High School Musical" Auditions

LaPorte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St., will hold auditions for "High School Musical" on Sunday and Monday, May 16-17.

Times are 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, May 16, and 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, May 17. The cast requires actors 12 and older, with two non-singing adults needed. The script calls for skaters, thespians, jocks and cheerleaders.

Those seeking a main role should prepare 30-60 seconds of a song. For those interested in the ensemble, small group auditions may be held. Individuals can sing a capella or to a device, or take sheet music. Dress comfortably and conservatively. Choreography is planned, so do not wear flip-flops.

The directors are Katy Gartland and Holly Welsh. Erin Imer is the vocal director, Andrew Tallackson the musical director and Kyle Liedtke the drumline director. Performances are July 23-25 and July 30-Aug 1. Rehearsals are from 7 to 9 p.m., and not every night.

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Chesterton Art Center

• **Long Beach's George Kassal will teach a four-session Adobe Lightroom Class from 6-8 p.m. Thursdays, May 20-June 10.**

Lightroom has become the industry standard image-processing software for digital photography.

Each student should take his/her laptop with the latest copy of Lightroom Classic installed, but two people who register together may share the same laptop. Some sample images will be provided for demonstration, but students should have some of their own available for individual projects. The class limit is eight students.



Kassal

The cost is \$130 for members and \$150 for non-members. Masks are required. Hand sanitizer will be available, and social distancing will be practiced. The classroom will be cleaned and sanitized upon students' arrival. All students will be asked to sign a waiver regarding COVID-19. There are no make-up days for missed classes due to the pandemic.

Chesterton Art Center is located at 115 S. Fourth St. Hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. Call the center at (219) 926-4711 or visit www.chestertonart.org for more details.

NB Library Community Forum

"Lifestyles of the Mich(iana) and Famous" marks the next virtual presentation through the New Buffalo Friends of the Library Community Forum.

The Zoom program is at 7 p.m. EDT Tuesday, May 18. Nick Bogert, a Region of Three Oaks Museum board member, will discuss personalities such as a Supreme Court judge, a TV legend who fought with officials about potholes, and an older Union Pier stroller who, according to a press release, might be the greatest athlete of his era.

The Zoom link is available under Activities/Events on either the library's Facebook page, its website at www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org or email new.buffalo.FOL@gmail.com.

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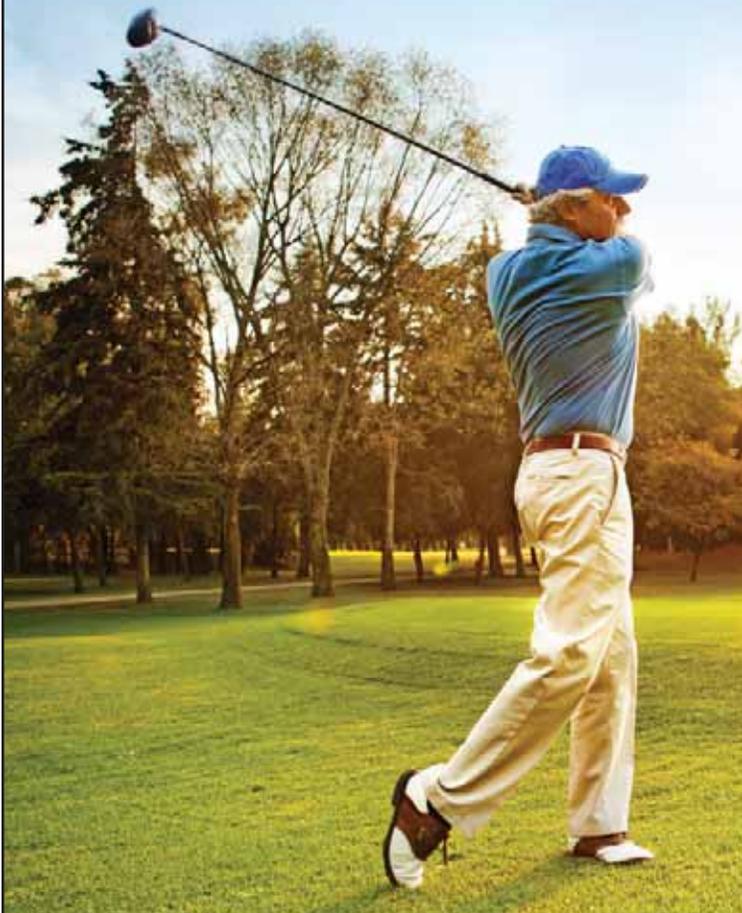
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My Mother's Words

I hug my mother hard.

In our lingering embrace, I notice that Mom's perky, salt-and-pepper bob has become a cap of bluish white; the pink skin at her part more evident than I recall. I'm reluctant to pull free, so instead my fingers massage the sweet spot between her stooped shoulders.

"It's been too long," I say, and she lifts a warm palm to my cheek.

Mom doesn't need to say another word – her satisfied smile says it all: We made it through "The Year Like No Other," and now it's safe to celebrate.

I situate my 88-year-old mother into the passenger seat of my Tahoe and help her locate the seat-belt receptacle. Sliding into the driver seat, I squeeze her hand, quieting a fresh batch of the innocent tremors that crop up without warning.

Mom quizzes me, "Where are we going, dear?"

I start to answer, but she waves off my reply, chuckling to herself.

"Never mind. It doesn't matter. What's important is that after all these months, we're healthy and together."

During the pandemic-prescribed months of social isolation, I talked to my memory-challenged mother nearly every day. Mostly, I called to entertain her with my children's and grandkids' latest escapades,

That Girl, This Life

Julie Ryan McGue

but sometimes I phoned just to hear her voice. From our conversations, I assessed the impact of the quarantine on her morale and knew when I should rally my siblings to give her an extra boost. And by reading Mom's voice, I assured myself that she was still healthy, and the dreaded virus had not infiltrated her tiny apartment.

Of course, my over-zealous efforts hadn't fooled Mom. "Oh, honey. You mustn't worry about me so much. I'm well cared for by the assisted living staff. If, and when, I get the virus is really up to the powers that be."

When Mom muttered that phrase – the powers that be – I giggled. My amusement had nothing to do with COVID-19 or the capable senior living staff. The powers that be is a well-oiled phrase of my mother's.

When my five siblings and I were growing up, Mom used the powers that be to satisfy our angst surrounding a myriad of uncertainty. Like whether I'd make the cheerleading squad. Or, whether the gathering thunderstorms would rain out my brother's baseball playoff game. For the longest time, I thought the powers that be must be a corps of unnamed saints charged with the formidable task of handling uncertain circumstances or challenging situations.

As an adult, I realize my mother uses this saying to explain away the unknowable or to end difficult conversations. While Mom's expression is not much different than my favorite catchphrase – "let's just see how this plays out" – my mother's words, the powers that be, possess a soothing, mystical quality. It suggests there is a higher power keeping tabs on the events in our lives. And something about this adage is more appealing than my nebulous go-to response: let's just see.

"Here's the restaurant, Mom," I say, pointing to the nondescript building anchoring a strip center.

As the two of us navigate the potholed parking lot, hand in hand, we chat about the history of the bistro I chose for our first, post-vaccine reunion dinner. When my folks were raising our family of six, a dinner out at Johnny's Italian was a treat that happened only once in a while. Usually, Grandma Mimi instigated the excursion and picked up the tab, too.

At the check-in counter, Mom fiddles with the strap of her handbag, while I lean in and whisper to the hostess, confirming we will be a party of four.

Above her wire-rimmed glasses, my mom's gray eyebrows arch. "Who's joining us?" she asks.

My eyes crinkle with the idea of surprising her. "You'll just have to wait and see."

While my mother might remember that my son

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and his girlfriend planned to move into the neighboring village, due to the pandemic's need to continually reorder our lives, Mom has lost track of the timing of things. We are studying the familiar Italian menu when my son's large frame looms table-side. Stooping over his grandmother, Danny's hug consumes her shoulders, and then he plants a loud smack on her beaming face. Mom's pleasure at seeing yet another family member tickles my insides.

"Remind me where the house is again, honey?" Mom asks Danny. "Just a few blocks from here, Grandma. A 10-minute walk from you!"

When Dan explains all of this, Mom marvels at how the next generation has landed within a few miles of the home where my folks raised my five siblings and me. As my son and his girlfriend update my mother on their jobs and ideas to decorate and landscape their new home, another one of my mom's favorite phrases pops into my head: "Remember where you come from."

Of course, it's not hard to remember where you come from when your mother and son live within minutes of your childhood house and stomping grounds. But whenever my mother uttered these words to my sisters and brothers, her intent was not for us to take her literally. No, we all knew from Mom's raised voice, cautionary tone and pointer finger fiercely stabbing the stale kitchen air that she was prompting us to keep in mind the values which she strove to ingrain. To be respectful, courteous and kind. To be humble, generous and grateful. To give without expectation, and to ask forgiveness when committing a wrong.

Quite simply, remember where you come from meant wherever you go and whatever you do, be the person I have taught you to be.

As I watch my son interact with his only living grandparent, and I reflect upon the challenges of the past year, I'm not surprised that Mom weathered all of it as she did. While I can attribute some of Mom's luck in evading the virus to the powers that be, her survival has more to do with her attitude and values. My parents' generation understood delayed gratification, deemed frugality a virtue and believed saving for a rainy day would have a meaningful payoff. They worked hard, lived by the strong values they imparted, and to them, family was everything. I took all of this to heart in raising my own family, and hope I did as good a job as she.

As Mother's Day nears, I'm grateful. I'm thankful the virus spared my mother's life, and we can add tonight's celebration to the rich bank of family memories. And I'm appreciative. For the well of meaning behind my mother's pet phrases. For the strong core values she and Dad imparted to my siblings and me, and for the opportunity tonight to gather with three generations of family. I can think of no better time for the next generation to glean wisdom from my mother's words.

(Julie McGue is a Duneland Beach resident.)



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Meet the Winners of our “Beat the Editor” Oscar Contest

by Andrew Tallackson

Monday morning, April 26, I arrived at work with my head hung low. Embarrassed.

Another year of bombing Oscar predictions for our annual “Beat the Editor” contest. Only four of the eight categories correctly guessed. More surprises and upsets. Surely, reader ballots would make mincemeat out of my awards forecast.

Turns out, it was a tricky night for readers as well. Seven tied with me, correctly predicting only four categories. Only one individual trumped us, but with only five accurate choices.

Jamie Edwards, our frequent tough-to-beat contest champ, is this year’s first-place winner. Her accurate predictions for Best Picture, Director, Screenplay, Actress and Supporting Actor catapulted her to the top of the heap. The seven readers close behind her with four correct choices were Brittani Boyd, Patrick Cannon, Amanda Keeton, Joe Keeton, Tim Koenning, Lori Richardson and Beth Tonsoni. Those ballots were placed into a drawing, and Richardson came out the second-place winner.

Edwards received a \$25 gift certificate to Fiddlehead, our generous contest sponsor, and a \$25 AMC gift card. Richardson received a \$25 AMC gift card.

□

The April 26 Oscar telecast, in terms of ratings, marked an all-time low with 9.85 million viewers — down 58 percent from the previous year. Reflecting indifference due to the pandemic, the ceremony’s attempts to pull off a live event, to class it up with the intimate setting at L.A.’s Union Station, failed to generate any interest.

The ceremony made sure to spread the wealth. “Nomadland” ruled the night with three wins for Best Picture, Director and Actress. Two Oscars each went to “The Father,” “Judas and the Black Messiah,” “Mank,” “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom,” “Soul,” “Sound of Metal” and “Tenet.”

The decision to present Best Picture before Best Actress and Actor proved a disaster. The show’s producers took a gamble, that the final award of the night — Best Actor — would pay emotional tribute to Chadwick Boseman with a posthumous Oscar. The late actor was assumed a shoe-in for the prize. Turns out, Anthony Hopkins surprised everyone by winning for “The Father.” The actor, absent from the festivities, thanked the Academy the following morning, heaping praise on Boseman for a career

cut short by cancer.

It’s a tough call. Hopkins, in my opinion, along with co-star Olivia Colman, gave the year’s best performances. *Period*. Boseman turned in a career best. A posthumous win was the closure we needed to bid farewell to this extraordinary talent. What’s the answer? I don’t have one. A tie, maybe?

What did our “Beat the Editor” winners think of the ceremony? The two liked that the winners had



Jamie Edwards (left) and Lori Richardson.

more time to speak. But other than that?

“I was disappointed in it,” Richardson, who is the head of Youth Services at Michigan City Public Library, said. “It moved too slow. I missed having the songs in the program.”

(The nominees for Best Original Song were performed before the telecast.)

Edwards was disappointed Glenn Close did not win Best Supporting Actress for “Hillbilly Elegy.” The “Fatal Attraction” star ties with the late Peter O’Toole for scoring eight nominations and no wins.

Richard and Edwards both were happy Daniel Kaluuya took home the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his electrifying turn in “Judas and the Black Messiah.”

Through him, Edwards said, “you got to know more about Fred Hampton, and what he did in the community,” Edwards said.

Both winners cited Aaron Sorkin’s “The Trial of the Chicago 7” as their favorite of all the nominees. The acclaimed Netflix film, however, went home empty-handed.

“I liked the acting, the pacing, the writing, the staging — I liked everything,” Richardson said.

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“The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” Dares to Explore Race in America

by Andrew Tallackson

“I feel it. The stares, the judgment. And there’s nothing I can do to change it. Yet, I’m still here. No super serum, no blond hair or blue eyes. The only power I have is that I believe we can do better.”

Sam Wilson

Go figure. The most pointed discussion about race in America isn’t on PBS or CNN, but in a Marvel show on Disney+.

At the end of “Avengers: Endgame” (2019), Captain America/Steve Rogers (Chris Evans) called it quits, passing the torch to fellow Avenger Sam Wilson/The Falcon (Anthony Mackie), and entrusting that longtime pal Bucky Barnes/The Winter Soldier (Sebastian Stan) would have his back. But leave it to Marvel not to stop there, to pat itself on the back for such a grandiose gesture. It makes good on that promise, using a six-episode Disney+ series to explore for Sam what it means to be black in America before he can consider stepping up as this country’s most beloved super hero.

That social commentary may not sit well with those who prefer their Marvel tales as slam-bang action only. The show, itself, gets off to a rocky start, the first three episodes crammed to the cracking point with new characters, character exposition and conspiracy theories. But in the last three episodes, the storytelling simplifies, distilled to Sam and Bucky coming to terms with themselves, and their country, as they pony up against mounting threats.

The result is thrilling, invigorating, challenging, sometimes hilarious and, in the last 15 minutes of the final episode, lump-in-the-throat powerful.

The show opens like any Marvel outing. Sam takes to the air to thwart a terrorist group that hijacked a plane with hostages over Tunisia. TV spinoffs of popular movies tend to be the Kmart versions of their sources, but Marvel spares no expense. The opening chase, helmed with grand skill by Kari Skogland (“The Walking Dead,” “House of Cards,” “The Handmaid’s Tale”), is what the studio does best: eye-popping visuals, breathless editing and ingeniously choreographed stunts. And it is after this rescue that Sam officially declines Steve Rogers’ offer to replace him, instead donating his shield to the government to place in a museum.

Bucky, meanwhile, is pardoned and through therapy trying to make amends for his misdeeds as the Winter Soldier, moving through a list of people he must apologize to as part of the healing process.

What reunites the two is a new terrorist group calling itself the Flag Smashers. They don’t care for how life is now after “the blip,” that five-year gap when Thanos snapped his fingers and half the



Anthony Mackie (left) and Sebastian Stan return to their beloved Marvel roles in “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier,” now streaming on Disney+.

planet disappeared. They feel called upon to show the world their disapproval.

What’s intriguing about the Flag Smashers is that, essentially, they’re Bucky: super soldiers created by a serum and designed to produce chaos and destruction. But the leader, Karli Morgenthau (Erin Kellyman), is barely out of her teens. Idealistic, but in all the wrong ways. The heart of “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” is that, through Kellyman’s electrifying presence, she isn’t a cartoon caricature, but a fully fleshed out individual. A child wronged by the world, but driven by motivations too dark for her own good.

We appreciate, too, the way the show gives Mackie and Stan their due. These two were pivotal to the Marvel franchise, but always on the peripheries, never taking center stage. “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” reminds us that, one, these two are good actors, two, they can tackle difficult scenes like pros and, three, they have a relaxed, Butch-and-Sundance vibe that cements itself firmly here.

The first three episodes, though, maneuver through an insane amount of material. We have:

- Wyatt Russell (son of Kurt) as John Walker, cho-

sen by the government as the new Captain America. He’s wrestling with his own ego, and lack of support from Sam and Bucky.

- Bad guy Helmut Zemo (Daniel Brühl), incarcerated at the end of “Captain America: Civil War” and recruited by Sam and Bucky to track down the terrorists.
- Former S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Sharon Carter (Emily VanCamp), on the run.
- A mysterious “Power Broker” who may be the link between terrorist factions.

Unless you’re someone who knows every Marvel movie backward and forward, “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” ask a lot of viewers, to recall too many people and too much information that may not readily be at their disposal. And in some respects, the flow of the show gets lost, trying to balance all these story threads.

Enter Episode Four.

“The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” boils down to Sam and Bucky against an increasingly unstable John Walker, all as the Flag Smashers prep for a devastating act of terrorism. And in the process, we get an exhilarating moment in which Walker gets

his ass handed to him by Wakanda’s all-female special forces, a cameo by an actress who shows how it’s done when making a killer entrance, and explosive sixth-episode action that takes to land and air.

What stays with you, though, is Sam’s contemplation of America’s past and future, and how it defines whether he steps up as Captain America. That includes his discovery of the first black super soldier, Isaiah Bradley (an exceptional Carl Lumbly), a Korean War veteran experimented on and imprisoned for 30 years. He has no love for this country. The same applies to Sarah Wilson (Adepero Oduye, superb). In the film’s most telling dialogue, she admits she can’t get worked up about any “mascot” for a country like the United States that, she feels, doesn’t care about black people.

Sam, himself, in the final episode, has an extended speech that could be dismissed as soapbox talk, but in Mackie’s careful hands has so much to say about America and where we are now as a country. How, Sam argues, can he be Captain America when he knows half the people who see him wear the suit are angered by him doing so, solely based on the color of his skin?

Hefty arguments, indeed. Series showrunners Marcus Spellman (“Empire,” Apple TV+’s wonderful Octavia Spencer series “Truth Be Told”) and Derek Kolstad, who created the “John Wick” franchise, aren’t afraid to “go there.” And near the end of the final episode, there is a scene in a museum that, in its own quiet way, humbles you to tears, as will how the series changes its own name as it fades to black at the end.

As Marvel fans, we needed “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier.” Almost like a catharsis. We needed Sam and Bucky to confront, and cast aside, their demons before they can stand tall as Avengers.

And they do. Unforgettably so.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



Wyatt Russell plays John Walker, recruited by the government to fill the shoes of Captain America.

“Boys from County Hell” Offers Fresh, Hilarious Take on Vampire Legend

by Andrew Tallackson



“Boys from County Hell” culls many of its laughs from the offbeat characters who make up the road crew plowing through the countryside.

“Boys from County Hell” is Ireland’s answer to “Shaun of the Dead,” but with vampires. That description either stopped you right there, disinterested, or it whet your movie-geek appetite.

“Shaun of the Dead” (2004) is the gold standard of 21st century horror-comedies, using its zombies as clever commentary on its slacker heroes, who want nothing more than to nurse a pint at the local pub. “Boys from County Hell,” which is streaming exclusively on Shudder, goes for the same laughs, specifically how its offbeat characters react to the supernatural. In so doing, the movie is a rarity: a fresh twist on stale material.

In fact, writer-director Chris Baugh is brazen enough to credit his source. Longtime pals Eugene (Jack Rowan) and William (Fra Fee) loiter at the local pub, appropriately named The Stoker, after “Dracula” scribe Bram Stoker, scamming travelers with “authentic” tours exploring vampire legends. The script avoids clunky exposition by having Eugene and William reveal the county’s secrets to Canadian tourists, that Stoker was from Ireland, not England, that he learned of a local creature that drained the living of blood, dressing it up as his own literary invention. And, that the remains of the creature are buried beneath a cairn that must not

★ ★ ★^{1/2}

“Boys from County Hell”

Running time: 88 minutes. Shudder. Not Rated.

be disturbed.

We wouldn’t have a movie, of course, if said cairn was *not* destroyed. But the comic inspiration is that Eugene’s cranky father, Francie (Nigel O’Neill), whom no one in town seems to like, heads the road crew plowing through the countryside, preparing the land for a new interstate. He’s lured Eugene, William and their pals, Claire (Louisa Harland) and SP (Michael Hough), to help.

How the cairn is accidentally demolished, I won’t spoil. Needless to say, it is, and vampire mayhem results. Baugh reinvents what we know about these creatures. No bats, wolves or mist. Means of killing it – sunlight, stakes in the heart, beheading – that doesn’t work. So what’s left? Well, in an unusual, visually striking twist, whenever the vampire is close by, blood starts to drain from its prey. And the only way to kill it? I’ll save that surprise for you.

Like “Shaun of the Dead,” the characters would rather just chug a few pints at The Stoker than put up with all this. Eugene is smart enough to call the



The source of all the vampire mayhem is a cairn protecting its buried remains.

local constable (David Pearse), but their exchange yields the movie's biggest laugh-out-loud dialogue. And Francie, it seems, can't resist annoying his crew, especially Eugene, who never seems to match his father's expectations.

The success of "Boys from County Hell" comes not only from how good the cast is, but by how they play it straight. The actors don't behave as if they realize they're making a comedy. The humor, the fun, of the picture is that its characters would prefer to work out their family dysfunctions, but keep being disrupted by that pesky vampire. And the dialogue has the cast turning to the kind of outrageous profanity used more overseas than here. Try not to laugh, in fact, when one of the characters laments he's about to die a slacker death like his father predicted: on the couch, watching TV, with a pint in hand.

"Boys from County Hell" is the kind of picture that alienates casual moviegoers because they see it as "dumb" or "stupid." But for those who get what Baugh aims to achieve, this is comic gold.

(Editor's note – The working-class Irish accents in "Boys from County Hell" are thick. So much so, I had to go to the settings option on my TV to turn on the close captioning for subtitles. Doing so did not spoil the experience. In fact, it enhanced it. The dialogue is laced with share-with-your-friends gems.)

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Travel by Land

You knew where this was going to land, right?

Of course, I would conclude my travel trilogy: "Travel by Water," "Travel by Air" and "Travel by — Land." Yes, "Travel by Land."

We are land-based mammals, and our natural means of locomotion is walking. Upright and on two legs. Our ancestors were hunter-gatherers who would have starved to death had they not been able to walk upright through forests and grasslands, gathering plants and stalking prey. They didn't take immediately to travel by water because that involved learning to swim and making boats. Not natural activities for land-based mammals. We don't have fins or gills, or blowholes like whales and dolphins, so we really don't have much business in the sea. But to sea we finally went, and as citizens of Lake Michigan, we certainly love to take to the big water in the summer, in all manner of craft and by swimming all kinds of crazy strokes.

As for air? The lair of birds?

Well, our ancestors certainly must have envied the birds for their ability to swoop and soar above the Earth. We got on it, eventually figuring out how to lift our heavier-than-air carcasses off the warm embrace of Mother Earth. Up, up and away, right?

Right. This time, I'm all about our natural proclivity to walk. I know I took to walking at an early age — 3 or 4 — because my late mother always said I was a willful child who was always running this way and that, and even all the way



A wintry walk in the woods. It works just as well in spring, summer and fall.



Travels With Charley



by Charles McKelvy

to the zoo.

Yes, when I was probably 3 years and change, I ran away from our apartment in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood bound for Lincoln Park Zoo, where I'd been taken many times. I knew just how I would go from 73rd and Yates to that zoo at Fullerton and the lakefront. I was heading north on Yates toward the lakefront when my fleet-footed mother intercepted me and my little red wagon bearing the stuffed animal I called "Pandy." Mom demanded to know where Pandy and I were headed. Telling her I was going to live at Lincoln Park Zoo with my friends in the lion house, she said I never would have made it that far.

"But, Mommy," I remember myself saying, "I was well on my way."

And so I have been well on my way ever since.

I once walked from Lincoln Park Zoo to Evanston, just to say I did it. I did some serious marching in 1974 at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center when I was a boy in blue. Then in late 1975, when I had a fleeting opportunity to land a job at the late, great City News Bureau of Chicago, I quick marched from

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my job at a bank at Madison and Halsted streets to the City News office at 188 W. Randolph St., in less than half an hour, no less. And, yes, I impressed the managing editor sufficiently to land the job at City News. And, yes, I wore out more than two pairs of shoes pounding the pavement of the Windy City as a police and fire reporter for City News. That was especially true when covering fires, for one did not find parking anywhere near an extra-alarm fire.

In fact, I was hoofing back to the car I borrowed from the night-desk editor when Fire Commissioner Robert J. Quinn, himself, had his driver pull over next to me, asking if I needed a lift. Hey, it was a bitterly cold night on the West Side and, yes, I was grateful for the ride and extra information Quinn offered. Commissioner Quinn is remembered as an innovator and leader. I am forever grateful to him for giving me a ride on a wickedly cold night.

Oh, and we should remember I worked at City News in 1976 when there was no such thing as a smartphone. So, I was forever walking to and fro from a crime or fire scene in search of a pay phone.

Now that we are a pair of gracefully aging septuagenarians, Natalie and I walk all around our hometown of Harbert, Mich. Natalie is such a famous walker, she is known in the neighborhood as “the Mayor of Harbert.” Harbert, of course, is an unincorporated settlement in Chikaming Township, Mich., but if it were ever to have a mayor, Natalie

would be the one, because she walks up one side of Prairie Road and down the other in search of what she considers the perfect exercise — walking.

Walking.

Ah, yes, the way we were meant to travel. I would end this discourse on travel by land by lauding the outing I took in January on my pair of Tubbs Wilderness 30 snowshoes on the entire trail system at Chikaming Township’s nearby Harbert Road Preserve.

I had the place to myself, that morning after a decent snowfall, and I was up for a walk in the wintry woods and savanna. A human and large canine had preceded me on the trails, and I followed their tracks, but never did spot them. What I did spot was a flock of over-wintering robins. I told them it was their duty to winter over as they are the state bird of Michigan. “Can’t have snowbirds for our state bird,” I said.

They just flew off, as did some male cardinals in pursuit of a female cardinal.

All that and a close encounter with Interstate 94 where the trail through the mesic savanna brushes up against the busy interstate. But that was all right, because I was enjoying my walk on my trusty snowshoes. Really, folks, if you haven’t tried snowshoeing, all I can say is: Why the heck not?

My snowshoe expedition around the preserve that winter morning was as wonderfully invigorating as all the walks I had taken in my 70+ years.

Now, as I look serious at 71, I am thinking maybe I should go back by South Shore to complete that walk to Lincoln Park Zoo.

I should do it before my brain clouds over and I forget the way.



Natalie is always up for a walk, any time of the year.



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Area College Student Honors Knapp Teacher Through “Realizing the Dream”

Several first-generation Indiana college students are getting a boost to their education funds, reconnecting with influential educators who helped along the way after being named “Realizing the Dream” recipients by Independent Colleges of Indiana.

One such individual, Samarah Williams, who attends Bethel University, honored Camellia Dabagia, a Knapp Elementary School teacher.

Supported by a Lilly Endowment Inc. grant, the scholarship program annually recognizes 30 first-generation college students from ICI’s private, non-profit colleges and universities. Students are selected for the \$3,000 award for outstanding achievement during their freshman year as they work toward completing their bachelor’s degrees.

The program historically honored recipients,



Camellia Dabagia is photographed in her classroom.

their families and influential educators at an annual event. However, due to the current pandemic, organizers created individual videos of each student describing what it means to them to be a first-generation college student, and thanking the influential educator they chose to honor.

Videos can be found at www.icindiana.org/rtd.

The influential educators also receive \$1,000 in professional-development grants.

Williams joined Dabagia’s third-grade classroom a few months after the 2009–2010 school year started.

“She was such a friendly student to all of her classmates,” Dabagia recalls. “I

remember her sitting in the front row on my carpet and having the biggest and sweetest smile on her face while I would read stories. A lot of the stories that I selected to share with the students related to the theme of my classroom: ‘The Future Belongs to Those Who Believe in the Power of Their Dreams.’

“I am particularly delighted that Samarah took to heart that lesson of following her dreams to attain success. What really stood out to me the most about Samarah was that no matter what unique circumstances she faced as a small child, she persevered through all of her obstacles. She was raised by her dearly beloved grandmother, who was her primary support system. I am glad that I was able to be another adult in her life who was able to encourage her never to give up.”

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Unity Foundation Reveals Teacher Grant Recipients

Unity Foundation of LaPorte County has announced recipients for the 2020-2021 cycle of small grants for Michigan City educators.

The grants help teachers find innovative ways to make learning possible for students, particularly during the pandemic. Since the mid-1990s, three programs have awarded grants to more than 1,000 teachers.

The Michigan City Education Foundation makes funds of up to \$350 for local public and parochial schools grades K-8. Teachers may use the money for hands-on or virtual activities in any academic area or life skill. The foundation started in 1994 through the Michigan City Chamber of Commerce, Mary Lou Linnen and Bud and June Ruby.

This year's recipients are:

- Bruce Parker, Barker Middle School, "Virtual Vision Viewing."
- Angela Dydo, Coolspring Elementary School, "On the Write Track."
- Leanna Smith, Edgewood Elementary School, "COVID Classroom Supplies."
- Teresa Pavloff, Edgewood Elementary School, "T is for Trees."
- Sheri Tuesburg, Edgewood Elementary School, "Astonishing Authors."
- Jamie Mullenhour, Knapp Elementary School, "Prep for the Step to 7th Grade."
- Erica Ackerson, Krueger Middle School, "Project School Wellness."
- Ryan Labis, Krueger Middle School, "Healthy Minds."
- Laura Charpentier, Lake Hills Elementary School, "NASA Mission: Europa Encounter."
- Susan Shell, Marsh Elementary School, "Resilient Kinders at Work Here!"
- Brigid McKee, Notre Dame Catholic School,

"STEM in Preschool."

- Kate Bobillo, Notre Dame Catholic School, "Bounce Kick Catch and Play."
- Christine Kiser, Pine Elementary School, "B.I.O. (Be in Optimal) Regulation."
- Laura Wassilak, Pine Elementary School, "If You Can't Breathe, You Can't Function."
- Lexa Allison, St. Paul Lutheran School, "One Block at a Time."
- Melissa Bushnell, St. Paul Lutheran School, "Holding Science in My Hand with MERGE Cubes."

The Barbara A. Carmen Memorial Endowment Fund honors the late, former Michigan City kindergarten and first-grade teacher in public and parochial schools. It makes grants up to \$400 for items that enrich curriculum or enhance a teacher's ability to meet student needs. This year's recipients are:

- Erin Colvin, Barker Middle School, "Building a Diverse Library."
- Sara Conn, Notre Dame Catholic School, "Let's Get Writing!"
- Sara Rathbun, Notre Dame Catholic School, "Junior Scholastic."
- Christine Kiser, Pine Elementary School, "The Resilient Heart Trauma Sensitive HeartMath Certification."
- Robin Krassow, Pine Elementary School, "Move Mindfully and Zones of Regulation."

The Teacher Innovation Fund is a small grant program for Michigan City High School and LaPorte County Career and Technical Education/A.K. Smith Career Center teachers and professionals. It supports educational professionals to reach their students, especially during COVID.

MCAS Superintendent Barbara Eason-Watkins and former Michigan City Mayor Chuck Oberlie provided the idea and seed money from personal funds for the program. Grants can be used to buy equipment, supplies and tools for special programs. This year's recipients are:

- Laura Daly, Michigan City High School, "Audio for Inclusion."
- Cheri Whitler, Michigan City High School, "A Bridge Between Film and Digital."
- Amy Wojasinski-Labis, Michigan City High School, "Healthy Culture."
- Adam Goebel, Michigan City High School, "Backyard Stoichiometry": This award is supported by the chamber in memory of Joe Mellen, A.K. Smith graduate and longtime Horizon Bank employee.

The next round of small grants opens this fall. All LaPorte County teachers are eligible to apply for Unity's Community "Power for Good" Grants. The application period opens in mid-May. Contact Shannon Walker at (219) 879- 0327, email swalker@ufc.net or visit www.ufc.net for more details.

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LaPorte County Public Library

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

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

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

- Coolspring Branch: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Main Library: Tuesday/Thursday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Saturday (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).
The following programs are planned:
 - Drawing Class, "The Figure," from 2-4 p.m. Thursday, May 5, in the Coolspring Branch Meeting Room. Aimed at 18 and older, the class will review drawing materials and simple exercises. All ability levels are welcome. Register through the library website.
 - Teen Anime Club from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday, May 10, at the main library. Meet other teen anime fans through the club. Register through the website.
 - Estate Planning Today, Prepare for Tomorrow from 6-7 p.m. Monday, May 10, online. Aimed at 18 and older, attorney Anthony Novak will discuss wills, limited power of attorney, health care power of attorney and advanced directives. Register through the website.
 - Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, May 11, in the main library Study Cafe. Refreshments will not be served, but guests can take coffee or tea.
 - Healthy You: Foam Rolling, Stretching and Your Breath from 6-7 p.m. Wednesday, May 12, at the main library. Aimed at 18 and older, participants learn easy techniques to relax and breathe with foam rolling. The class is suitable for all fitness levels. Social distancing will be enforced.
- LaPorte County Public Library is located at 904 Indiana Ave. The Coolspring Branch is located at 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Visit www.laportelibrary.org for more details.*



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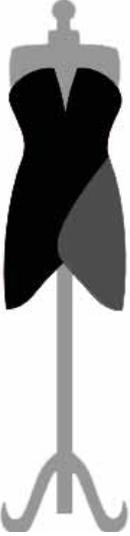
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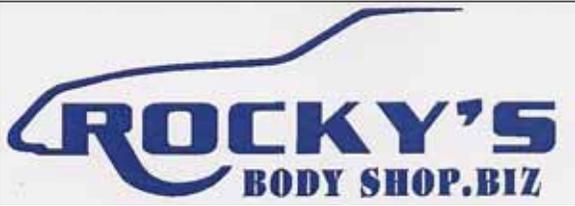
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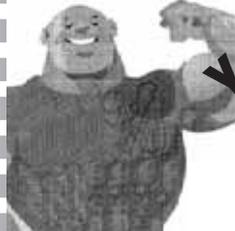
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Under the Shady Tree – Story Time

Pre-schoolers through elementary schoolers, along with siblings, are invited to the free program at 10 a.m. Monday, May 10, at Luhr County Park.

Take a blanket to sit under the tree. After the story, families can stay for self-guided playtime, or take a snack for family time. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Masks are required.

Free Family Fishing Nights

All ages are invited, with a limited number of poles and bait provided, from 5-7:15 p.m. Monday, May 10 and 25, at Luhr County Park's pond.

No fishing licenses are required, and children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is required at least one day before each program.

Parent & Child Discovery Days

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

- May 12 — Timber.
- May 26 — Scat and Tracks.

Healthy Lifestyles

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

- May 12: "Soil Health, Garden Tools and Pruning 101" by Sacha Gee-Burns.
- June 9: "GERD — New Treatments for Relief of Heartburn & Acid Reflux," Dr. Conn.
- July 14: Nutrition, food groups and labeling, Stephanie Thomas.
- Aug. 4: Sleep disorders and their health effects, by Mindi Whittaker, Northwest Health LaPorte.
- Sept. 1 — Fall garden cleanup and separating plants, Gee-Burns.
- Oct. 6 — Pulmonary health, Patti Solona, Northwest Health LaPorte.

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Post-COVID World Virtual Series

Purdue University Northwest continues its series of virtual conversations with PNW scholars and community experts on the subject “On the Other Side: PNW Examines the Post-COVID World.”

The next program, “Tourism and Hospitality,” is from noon to 1:15 p.m. Monday, May 10. This field is one of the largest industries in the world, one devastated by COVID-19. PNW’s Hospitality and Tourism Center researches and examines the radically changed environment, identifying opportunities for recovery and growth, as well as career placement for students.

Panelists include Godwin-Charles Ogbeide, director of PNW’s White Lodging School of Hospitality & Tourism Management; Speros Batistatos, president and chief executive officer of South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority; Amanda Cecil, professor and director of the Event and Tourism Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; and Dave Montose, chief executive officer of Janko Hospitality LLC.

The free event is through Zoom, and registration is encouraged. Full details and the link are at www.pnw.edu/other-side. Rachel Clapp-Smith, academic director of The Leadership Institute at Purdue Northwest and interim associate vice chancellor for Academic Affairs at PNW, will moderate. The program also is livestreamed by WJOB through Facebook Live at @WJOB.1230.



American Red Cross

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

- Northwest Health LaPorte, 1007 W. Lincolnway, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, May 7.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, May 10.
- American Legion, 107 N. Flynn Road, Westville, noon-5 p.m. Tuesday, May 11.

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 for more details. Visit rcblood.org/ together for more details.

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Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

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

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LCSO in the Spotlight



Kristen Hughes.

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

Kristen Hughes is in her fifth year with LCSO and can play in either the violin or viola sections.

She started violin lessons at 3 with the Betty Haag Suzuki Academy. She received her Bachelor of Music Education degree from Northern Illinois University and her Master of Music Education degree from Vandercook College of Music. She has performed all over the USA, Canada and Europe with various orchestras and ensembles.

Hughes also performs with the South Shore Orchestra, as well as for churches, weddings and other functions. She is the orchestra director at Robert A. Taft Middle School with the Crown Point Community School Corp. In her spare time, she enjoys being with her family, playing with her two dogs and two cats, riding her motorcycle, traveling, fishing and swimming.

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Activities to Explore

In the Area:

May 5 — Drawing Class, “The Figure,” 2-4 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library Coolspring Branch, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

May 10 — Under the Shady Tree – Story Time, 10 a.m., Luhr County Park, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Free. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org, (219) 325-8315.

May 10 — Free Family Fishing Nights, 5-7:15 p.m., Luhr County Park pond, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org, (219) 325-8315.

May 12 — Healthy You: Foam Rolling, Stretching and Your Breath, 6-7 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Registration: www.laportelibrary.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

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

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

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

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

Vickers Theatre — *Now showing:* “Nomadland.” Rated R. Times (all Eastern): 2:45 p.m. Fri. & Sun., 6 p.m. Sat. *Opens May 7:* “The Courier.” Check www.vickerstheatre.com for times. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: (269) 756-3522.

In the Region

May 7 — Outdoor Yoga, noon-1:15 p.m. EDT, through Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Registration: <https://spore-studios.com/yoga>

May 8 — Harbor Country Hikers, 2 p.m. EDT, Miller Woods, 100 N. Lake St., Gary. Social distancing, face masks enforced. Info: www.harborcountryhikers.com

May 8 — Spring Retreat, 1-4 p.m. EDT, Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Registration: <https://spore-studios.com/yoga/>, d.sporestudios@gmail.com

May 10 — Zoom program, “On the Other Side: PNW Examines the Post-COVID World,” noon -1:15 p.m. Free. Focus: “Tourism and Hospitality.” Link/info: www.pnw.edu/other-side

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

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

Fernwood Botanical Garden

• **Outdoor Yoga from noon to 1:15 p.m. EDT Friday, May 7.**

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

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

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

• **Spring Retreat from 1-4 p.m. EDT Saturday, May 8.**

The workshop includes sensory walks (forest bathing), exploring micro-environments, creating mandalas and appreciating poetry inspired by natural elements. It ends with seasonal reflective meditation in constructive rest.

Registration is required 24 hours before the retreat. Visit <https://spore-studios.com/yoga/> or email d.sporestudios@gmail.com. Students will be notified by 9 a.m. EDT the morning of the event if it’s canceled and receive a full refund.



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

MCAS Transportation Open House

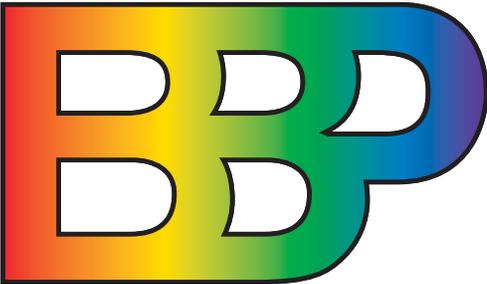
The Michigan City Area Schools Transportation Department will hold an open house for anyone interested in learning about driving a school bus or working as a bus monitor.

The event is held in conjunction with the transportation department’s annual Mother’s Day Flower and Plant Sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, May 7, at the transportation department, 1100 S. Woodland Ave.

Visitors can tour the facility, see a bus up close and speak with transportation staff.

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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On May 6, 1840, the world's first postage stamp, "The Penny Black," was introduced in England.

On May 6, 1851, Dr. John Gorris, Apalachicola, Fla., patented a "mechanical refrigeration machine" that produced a very cold temperature by compressing air in a cylinder immersed in a chamber of cooling water.

On May 6, 1889, the Paris Exposition formally opened, featuring the just-completed Eiffel Tower.

On May 6, 1915, Herman "Babe" Ruth, pitching for the Boston Red Sox, hit his first major-league home run.

On May 6, 1937, while attempting a landing in Lakehurst, N.J., the hydrogen-filled German dirigible Hindenburg exploded, killing 35 of the 97 people on board, and a Navy crewman on the ground.

On May 7, 1763, Ottawa Indian Chief Pontiac rose up against the English garrison in Detroit, laying siege to it for five months.

On May 7, 1789, the first presidential inaugural ball, honoring George and Martha Washington, was held in New York City.

On May 7, 1840, Russian composer Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk, Russia.

On May 7, 1963, the first Telstar2 Communication Satellite was launched.

On May 7, 1983, Sunny's Halo won the 109th running of the Kentucky Derby.

On May 8, 1879, George Selden, of Rochester, N.Y., filed for the first automobile patent.

On May 8, 1886, an Atlanta pharmacist, John Styth Pemberton, invented a syrup for a beverage that was to become known as "Coca-Cola."

On May 8, 1944, the first eye bank was established in New York City.

On May 8, 1987, front-runner Gary Hart, unable to satisfactorily explain his relationship with model Donna Rice, withdrew from the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

On May 9, 1502, Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain on his fourth, and final, voyage to the New World.

On May 9, 1754, the first cartoon appeared in an American newspaper. Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* carried an illustration of a divided snake, each section symbolizing one of the colonies. The caption read, "Join or Die."

On May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Mothers Day to be a public holiday.

On May 9, 1926, U.S. Navy Commander Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett became the first people to fly over the North Pole.

On May 9, 1994, South Africa's newly elected parliament chose Nelson Mandela as the country's first black president.

On May 9, 1996, in dramatic video testimony to a hushed courtroom in Little Rock, Ark., President Bill Clinton insisted he had nothing to do with a \$300,000 loan at the heart of the criminal case against his former Whitewater partners.

On May 10, 1775, during the Revolutionary War, Americans gained one of their first important victories over the British when the Ethan Allen's "Green Mountain Boys" captured Fort Ticonderoga.

On May 10, 1869, the first transcontinental railway was completed when the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railways met at Utah's Promontory Point.

On May 10, 1894, two 10-foot bronze lions were unveiled at the west entrance to the Chicago Art Museum.

On May 10, 1924, J. Edgar Hoover was named director of the FBI. He held the post until his death in 1972.

On May 10, 1930, the first planetarium in the United States opened in Chicago.

On May 11, 1647, Peter Stuyvesant arrived in the New World to become royal governor of New Amsterdam (now New York City).

On May 11, 1894, workers began a strike at the Pullman Palace Car Co. on the South Side of Chicago, prompting Eugene Debs' American Railway Union to boycott Pullman blocking freight traffic in and out of Chicago.

On May 11, 1928, in Schenectady, N.Y., Station WGY began the first regularly scheduled television programs.

On May 11, 1947, the B.F. Goodrich Co. of Akron announced development of a tubeless tire.

On May 11, 1949, Israel was voted into membership in the United Nations.

On May 12, 1536, England's Queen Anne Boleyn, accused of the crime of adultery, went on trial for treason.

On May 12, 1935, Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in Akron, Ohio, by "Bill W.," a stockbroker, and "Dr. Bob S.," a heart surgeon.

On May 12, 1937, following the abdication of his brother, King Edward VIII, George VI was crowned King of England.

On May 12, 1971, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art announced it paid \$5.5 million for a painting by Spanish artist Velasquez.

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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

Who is Maud Dixon? by Alexandra Andrews (hardcover, \$28 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 320 pages.)

“Be careful what you wish for, you might get it.”

In the case of Florence Darrow, I would add, *“Oh what a web we weave, when first we practice to deceive.”*

Florence should have heeded those words, in that order, but when ambition and a burning desire to shut her mother up about her shortcomings are involved, well, common sense leaps out the window.

Florence makes the move from Florida to New York City to pursue a career in the publishing world, followed by writing a kick-ass novel that will put her at the top of the charts...not to mention worldwide publicity and a bulging bank account. Big plans.

So far, Florence’s move lands her two roommates in a small apartment and a job as assistant editor at Forrester Books, where she doesn’t have the Ivy-League credits fellow editors have. In subtle ways, they use that information to make her feel diminished.

Back in Florida, Florence has a mother who is constantly on the phone, nagging about her go-nowhere job, and all the good fortune her friends’ daughters have accomplished.

Florence had written a series of short stories, all of which have been rejected by numerous publishers. Her luck has to change, right? Enter Simon Reed and the Christmas Party...

Simon is Forrester’s editorial director. That would make him the boss to Florence’s boss. He is married to an actress, Ingrid Thorne, long-limbed and beautiful. So why is he hitting on Florence at the office holiday party? Men. Do they all subscribe to the theory that “variety is the spice of life”? Apparently, as the two soon try out the sheets in a downtown hotel. Florence is surprised at what she has done, but files the encounter away. It might come in handy... although blackmail is such an ugly word.

However, blackmail can backfire, and it isn’t long before Florence leaves Forrester. She can’t and won’t go home, but Lady Luck steps in, and an agent calls who asks if she wants to apply for the job of assistant to mega-popular novelist Maud Dixon. The how and why of her being selected isn’t made clear until later.

I have to back up here a bit to explain the phenomenon of Miss Dixon. A few years back, she wrote a mega-hit titled Mississippi Foxtrot. It sold millions of copies and catapulted her to the top of

the literary scene. Full disclosure — Maud Dixon is a pseudonym for a woman named Helen Wilcox. No one knows her or has even seen her, except her agent. Maud gives no interviews, no photos and no book-signing events. Well, that just adds to her mystique and popularity.

Wonder of wonder, Florence gets the job that includes a non-disclosure agreement and moving to upstate New York, way back in the woods. What an opportunity! To learn from the best. And maybe work on her own writing, too. But still...how to have the job of a lifetime and not be able to tell anyone?

As the days go by, Florence observes and catalogs everything she can learn from Helen. She is surprised to find out Helen writes on a yellow legal pad, which Florence then has to type up for her. Since Helen’s agent has been pushing to get another novel out of her, she seems more distracted, and it shows in her writing, which becomes harder to read. Florence starts substituting her own words, and Helen doesn’t seem to notice. Hmm... something to tuck away for another day.

It’s not long before Helen tells Florence they are going to Morocco for research on this next novel. It all starts out beautifully, with sightseeing and exotic restaurants. One night, Helen picks a restaurant on a hillside that requires going up a narrow, dangerous road alongside the ocean. Good thing the food was worth it.

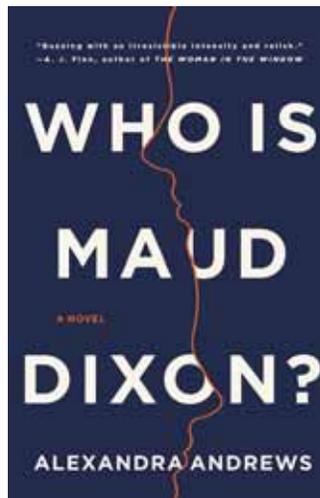
Wonderful dinner, wonderful wine, wine, more wine...wait a minute, something is wrong. Florence wakes up in a hospital bed with no memory of what happened the night before. The doctor and nurse keep calling her Mrs. Wilcox. She remembers Helen had her put her driver’s license and money in Florence’s purse. No one mentions another passenger in the car, which she learns fell into the ocean. So where is Helen? She must have drowned, right?

Here is Florence’s big break. Become Helen Wilcox, or Maud Dixon, to be exact — become the world-famous writer she knew she could be. Of course, keeping Helen’s agent away may prove a big obstacle. Naw, not a problem for our amoral Florence! Until the agent arrives in Morocco...

There are so many twists and turns, you may get motion sick. But that just adds to the question: who’s zooming who? You may think Florence has the upper hand until...she doesn’t. It only takes one small error to tip the scales in the wrong direction. But that just calls for a change in plans, right?

This is another stunning psychological read to keep you up nights...and it’s well worth it.

Till next time, happy reading!



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