



Volume 37, Number 18 Thursday, May 13, 2021

A League of Her Own

by William Halliar

Betsy Jochum always loved outdoor sports.

Born in Cincinnati on Feb. 8, 1921, and growing up with a brother, she learned early how to swing a stick or bat to strike rocks or worn-out leather ball, to run bases on a sandlot with the best and toughest boys.

On May 17, 1943, Jochum was among 280 women who showed up at Chicago's Wrigley Field for consideration in the new All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. She was one of the 60 original players chosen that spring day. From there, she headed to South Bend for a career that defined the rest of her life.

Now 100, Jochum has played a role in a new permanent exhibit honoring the AAGPBL at South Bend's The History Museum, 808 W. Washington. St. And this month, a historical marker will be placed near the site of the former Playland Park — land now owned by Indiana University-South Bend — to mark where the South Bend Blue Sox played from 1946-1954. Museum staff learned of the decision from the Indiana Historical Bureau, Division of the Indiana State Library. The ceremony will commemorate the month the Blue Sox first went to



Betsy Jochum, photographed in the 1947 season with the South Bend Blue Sox.

bat at Playland Park following three seasons at Bendix Field. Due to COVID-19, however, attendance at the ceremony is limited to ensure proper pandemic safety measures.

America's love affair with baseball, especially the game's origin, is shrouded in some mystery, as befits any good romance. Games with balls struck by sticks were played for centuries in Great Britain, Ireland and across Europe. The rules varied, but many such games included running between or around bases. And, they were imported to our shores with the waves of immigrants in the early 19th century.

New York in the early 1800s was a crowded, bustling, dirty, but without a doubt energetic city. According to newspaper publisher Thurlow Weed, "*Though an industrious and busy place, its citizens found leisure for rational and healthy recreation.*" To feed that leisure time, baseball clubs formed among groups of young men. Challenges were published between neighborhoods and various athletic associations.

Some attribute the invention of the game to Abner

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A League...

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Doubleday, the Civil War general who fired the first shot in defense of Fort Sumpter, in 1839 at Cooperstown, N.Y. Wherever the idea originated, it soon took hold in the hearts of young men all throughout New York. By 1845, the "Knickerbocker Rules" were codified and official baseball clubs formed. The game spread across the city and countryside.

During the Civil War, nearly 460,000 men volunteered or were conscripted into service from New York alone. It has been said service during the war was "long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror." To ease the terrible burden of boredom, some men gambled with cards or dice, but officers thinking this would lead to moral decline discouraged it. A better solution was sports, especially this new game of baseball introduced into the camps by recruits from the Knickerbocker state.

Baseball clubs began to be formed and challenges issued across camps. When the war ended, baseball was carried to every corner of the United States. Amateur ball clubs were formed and games scheduled regularly. In December 1865, there were ball clubs in Fort Leavenworth, St. Louis, Louisville and Chattanooga, Tenn., and numerous clubs in the north-east United States.

Of course, wagers were place on the games played by these amateur teams, so enterprising organizers began to pay wages under the table to gain the services of certain players with outstanding talent. Michigan City had its share of such amateur teams in baseball's early years, teams like the Michigan City Cubs and the White Caps, which were considered semi-profes-

sional teams.

The National Association of Professional Base Ball Players formed in 1871. It eventually was reorganized as the National League in 1876, becoming the world's oldest professional sports league.

Thus was born professional baseball and the beginning of an American love affair with the sport.

American Professional Baseball grew in popularity. By 1943, there were teams playing in two professional leagues, the American League being founded in 1901.

On Sept. 1, 1939, the world changed when Germany invaded Poland and Europe was once again faced with war. Americans watched as the struggle raged across far away Europe. Russia, Italy and eventually Japan joined the fray. Prescient souls in America understood the United States could not stand neutral for long.

The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 established the first peacetime draft in the United States. All American industry was affected by this draining of manpower, and the nation looked to its women to fill the gap in production. No less affected was the game of baseball. As the United States was drawn ever closer to war, able-bodied men either were drafted into the service or enlisted to serve their country. During World War II, more than 500 major league players served in the military. Many who would become famous laid down their bats and gloves and



Betsy Jochum made South Bend her home after her career in baseball.

took up arms, including Hall of Famers Ted Williams, Stan Musial and Joe DiMaggio.

Baseball by this time had woven itself into the character of the American people. Those who led the nation realized it was important the game continue to keep up moral during the dark days of the war.

What could be done to support the continuance of



Betsy Jochum (right), photographed with another South Bend Blue Sox player.

America's game?

Enter entrepreneur Philip Knight Wrigley, chewing gun magnate and owner of the Chicago Cubs. The year was 1943 and Wrigley, who loved baseball, wanted to ensure the game would stay alive and that stadiums, at least in the Midwest, would be filled with fans needing the distraction of an afternoon in the bleachers, cheering on their favorite team. Of course, the box office and concession intake did not hurt either.



Philip Knight Wrigley.

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Women were working in the nation's factories and in farmers' fields. Why shouldn't they play professional baseball as well?

Wrigley sent scouts all over the country, and to Canada and Cuba, to find suitable players. Five hundred were invited to try out. On May 17, 1943, 280 women showed up at Wrigley Field to test their skills. Sixty women were chosen to play on the first four teams of what would become the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, which would exist until 1954 and eventually boast 15 teams fielding more than 600 women.

Betsy Jochum was one of the 60 original players chosen that spring day in 1943.

Betsy "Sockum" Jochum, as she later was called, was 22 in 1943, 5 feet, 7 inches tall and built to compete at 140 pounds. In her youth, she played sandlot

to play professional baseball in Wrigley's league for \$50 a week. Jochum packed her bags, said goodbye to her family and headed to South Bend.

The AAGPBL began in 1943 with four teams. Jochum signed on to the South Bend Blue Sox, which was one of two teams, along with the Rockford Peaches, to play in every AAGPBL season from 1943 to 1954. The importance of the AAGPBL cannot be overestimated, because it was the forerunner of all women's professional league sports in the United States today.

"Sockum" Jochum began her career as an outfielder since she was able to throw a ball great distances for her height and weight. During a competition in Connecticut in 1938, she threw a ball a record 276 feet. She later became the team's pitcher as the rules evolved from underhand to side-arm pitching. She pitched and threw right-handed.

During Jochum's rookie season in 1943, she had a .273 batting average. She also led the league with 439 times at bat, which included 120 hits, 100 sin-



Betsy Jochum's glove (from left), a signed Silver Hawks hat, spikes and uniform.

ball with her brother and his friends, playing organized softball at age 12. She attended Hughes Center High School in Cincinnati, where she excelled at basketball, volleyball and track.

Graduation from high school created a more serious mindset, and Jochum decided that to make a living in the Depression-era workplace, she needed to attend business school. She attended the Cincinnati Business School, learning the equivalent of today's high tech computer, the "Comptometer," a gadget for mathematical calculation and predecessor of modern day computers.

Being the Great Depression, office jobs were difficult to come by, so Jochum was forced to take a job in a meat-packing plant. Here, fate took a hand because she joined its semi-professional softball league, participating in several national tournaments, including one in Chicago. It is not a stretch of the imagination to think that this is where P.K. Wrigley's scouts spotted her.

Trying to improve her financial situation, she left the job at the meat-packing plant for one at a dairy doing Comptometer work for \$16 a week. It can only be imagined that in 1943, she jumped at the offer

gles and 12 doubles. She was a runner and stole 66 bases, scoring 70 runs. In the second half of the season, she led all hitters in the league with a .295 batting average.

"Sockum" Jochum was selected for the All-Star Game that year played at Wrigley Field on July 1, 1943. This, by the way, was the first night game ever played at Wrigley, which had temporary lights set up for the occasion.

A highlight of Jochum's career must have been the 1947 training camp that moved to Havana, Cuba. Two hundred of the league's players were flown to the camp, which was a first for most of them. Jochum later recalled to Jim Sargent, author of the book *The South Bend Blue Sox*, "I took my first airplane flight, we stayed at the Seville-Biltmore Hotel, and we played our games at the Gran Stadium."



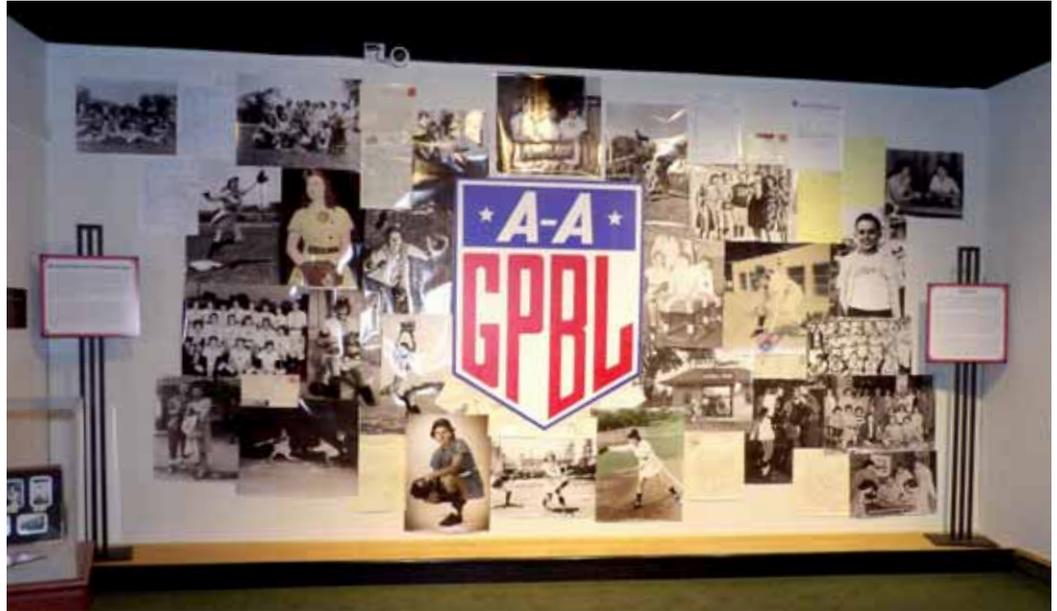
During this season, sidearm pitching was developed, and many players had trouble hitting this new style because they had played for years developing their skills at hitting underhand pitching. Jochum's averages slipped this year to an average of .211 with 42 RBI, 36 runs and 44 stolen bases.

In 1948, Jochum switched to pitching with the new side-arm style, providing 14 out of the 57 team victories that year. She struck out 103 batters and walked just 58 batters in 215 innings.

Jochum retired from her professional baseball career after the 1948 season. "Soc-kum" Jochum spent her entire baseball career with the South Bend Blue Sox. She made many friends in the city and decided to stay in South Bend, making it her home after baseball. She worked her Comptometer job at Bendix Home Appliances in South Bend and attended Illinois State University, where she earned her master's degree in physical education. She

returned to South Bend, where she made many friends while playing professional ball, and taught physical education for South Bend Community Schools at the junior- and high-school levels. She retired after 26 years of teaching, but continued being led by her love of sport as she participated in golf, bowling and the Run Jane Exhibition Games in support of the local YWCA.

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A mural featured in the exhibit "Polished in Public, Fierce on the Field; The All-American Girls."

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A League... Continued From Page 5

In 1988, Jochum joined all of the former members of the AAGPBL for induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, with a display dedicated. In 1999, she was inducted into the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame.

Her South Bend Blue Sox uniform has traveled across the United States in an itinerant display promoted by the Smithsonian Intuition titled, "Sports; Breaking Records, Breaking Barriers."



Archivist Kristen Modden stands by the display of Betsy Jochum's uniform.

Jochum turned 100 on Feb. 8. She continues to be an influence in her adopted hometown, and recently assisted in gathering and sorting AAGPBL memorabilia for The History Museum exhibit "Polished in Public, Fierce on the Field; The All-American Girls." It features the stories and memorabilia of Jochum and the league, numerous uniforms gifted over the years, programs, equipment and stories of the league's formation and history. It is considered the foremost collection of such items in the world.

The effort also includes photos and souvenirs from the 1992 movie, "A League of Their Own," which included some scenes shot in Evansville, Ind.

Jochum has been a longtime friend of The History Museum. Executive Director Brian Harding said of the new display, "Betsy Jochum has been an outstanding representative of the AAGPBL, both to the South Bend community and across the country.

"As the national repository of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, The History Museum is proud to tell their story, and through 2,000-plus items in our collection, we gladly preserve their history."

(Visit www.historymuseumsb.org for more details.)



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Midwest Museum of American Art to Unveil “The Poetry of Landscape”

Midwest Museum of American Art will celebrate poetry through “A Walk in the Woods: The Poetry of Landscape,” paintings by artists in the permanent collection, through June 6.

The exhibit, which also helps commemorate the museum’s 42nd anniversary, offers several examples of woodland scenes stretching more than 100 years, along with selected poems about trees. Together, they will reinforce the artistic and interpretive impulse by artists to commune with nature. It also illustrates how modern life has altered perceptions of the landscape.

The display presents 38 works featuring the subject of landscape as witnessed, described or idealized by 20 artists of regional or national renown — living and from the past. Some artists present the landscape from a specific place and time, as does Dorothy Morlan (1882-1967) in her 1930s painting “Sentinels,” a view from the Ohio River area. Others look at the land up close, as seen in the untitled landscape study of Cumberland Falls by Frederick Weygold (1870-1941). Others describe it by traveling no further than their backyard to portray a wooded scene, river view or pastoral field, like artist Tim Grieb.

Also on display through June 6 is the spotlight exhibit “Ralph Bower: Goshen Woodcarver.” It includes 10 hand-carved wood sculptures by the late Goshen artist. The sculptures center on caricature



An untitled landscape study of Cumberland Falls by Frederick Weygold.

figures, whimsical otherworldly beings and historical impressions.

Museum hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 1-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for college students and students 13-18, and \$6 for students 8-12.

The museum is located at 429 S. Main St., Elkhart. Visit www.midwestmuseum.us or call (574) 293-6660.

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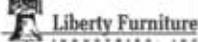
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SAM Student Showcase

The School of American Music kicks off its spring concert series with a free, outdoor student showcase at 2 p.m. EDT Sunday, May 16, at Three Oaks Arts and Education Center, 14 Elm St.

The two-part recital is slated for the Spring Creek Stage behind the center. Families can take lawn chairs and other provisions. All COVID-19 protocols for outdoor large gatherings will be observed, including distancing and masking where appropriate.

“Traveling Music” is the recital’s theme. A blend of voice and piano compositions featuring students of Donna Mitchell, Denise Vanden Bussche and Elin Boklund, the performance will include tunes ranging from “Guitars of Seville” to “Nights in White Satin” to “For Good” from “Wicked.”

Performing in the first half are voice students Clay Burk, Kirill Petrov and Charis Todd, along with piano students Arthur Anderson, Harper Baldwin, Maddox Baldwin, Acacia Baney, Zion Baney, Aiden Bettig, Ben Bolinder, Hana Bolinder, Charlie Gibson, Karina Hamann, Alex Heiser, David Lewis, Krill Petrov, Abby Shaw, Charlotte Sullivan, Claire Sullivan, Tabitha Sullivan, Chris Todd, Eli Todd and Mark Todd.

The second recital, beginning at 4 p.m. EDT, will feature students of Madison Kutch, Beth Oeseburg and Ron Spears, in addition to Boklund, Mitchell and Vanden Bussche. It will showcase voice students Lauren Eggleston, Alex Heiser and Abby Shaw, violin students Kendra Klint, Sadie Liggett, Deb Rancatore and Ella Siri, piano students Morgan Siri and Owen Siri, along with Emma Reitz on piano, Callyn Reitz on baritone ukulele, Kyle Kaeding on guitar, Erius Bower on saxophone and Alivia Reitz on flute.

Music in the second recital will include “Mary Had a Little Lamb and J.S. Bach’s “Minuet and Bouree.”

Accompanists for the afternoon are Adrian Cole on piano and Garth Taylor on guitar. A surprise SAM faculty musical offering opens each recital.

The program is free, but donations are welcome at www.schoolofamericanmusic.com. In case of rain, the event moves indoors to 2 p.m. EDT Sunday, May 23. Details will be announced as needed.

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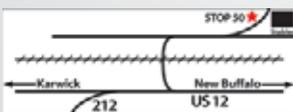
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An image of PNW's Westville campus included in the virtual tour.

Purdue University Northwest has launched a virtual tour to give potential students and their families a new opportunity to see the university.

The tour is available on the PNW Undergraduate Admissions website at www.pnw.edu/visit. Visitors can explore campus facilities, classrooms and service centers through 360-degree panoramic photos, videos and pictures. Narration describes key features and benefits Purdue Northwest offers. Visitors also can request additional information, start the application process or request an in-person visit.

Visit www.pnw.edu/admissions for more details.

Art Barn School of Art

• **Papermaking: In the Field with Andrea Peterson** is May 21-23.

Participants 18 and older will create paper from plants, understanding the process of turning plant cellulose into fine sheets of paper. Students also will participate in a community field hike around Art Barn from 2 to 4 p.m. Friday, identifying and harvesting plant species, following up with processing plant material Saturday and making sheets of paper Sunday.

The cost is \$265 per person. The times are 2 to 4 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Register at www.artbarnschool.org

Art Barn is located at 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Call (219) 462-9009 for additional information.

Alzheimer's Association Programs

The Alzheimer's Association Greater Indiana Chapter will host two virtual programs this month, starting with "Dementia Conversations" at 11 a.m. Friday, May 14.

Attendees will learn about three of the most difficult conversations families face after a dementia diagnosis: doctor visits, driving, and legal and financial planning. The program will feature tips from experts, as well as stories from Hoosier families.

A program for residents of independent living communities and their loved ones is at 5 p.m. Tuesday, May 25. Attendees will learn about dementia risk factors, stages of the disease, the latest research and treatments that can help alleviate symptoms of Alzheimer's and dementia.

Visit alz.org/Indiana/helping_you and click on "join a virtual education program," or call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at (800) 272-3900 for details.

LCA Family Day

Family Day, which includes family activities and tours of the "Lost and Looking" exhibit, is from 1-4 p.m. Saturday, May 15, at Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St.

Artists in "Lost and Looking" use memory to confront pasts and imagination to address futures. Works include paintings, drawings, large-scale sculptures and a video installation.

Families can view the galleries with LCA docents, and create art projects on the outside patio, including accordion books and a postcard project inspired by "Wish You Were Here," an ongoing installation by Kelly Kristin Jones.

Snacks are planned. No registration is required. In case of inclement weather, art projects will be available as take-home kits.

Visit www.lubeznikcenter.org or call (219) 874-4900 for 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, "Final: Advanced Concepts and Projects," from 2-4 p.m. Thursday, May 13, 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.
- Two sessions of "Sew a Yoga Mat Bag" are Saturday, May 15, at the main branch. Participants will sew a carrier bag for a yoga mat with a zipper pocket. The zipper, accessories and fabric are provided, or take these items (1/2 yard exterior fabric and 1/2 yard lining fabric). The target age is adults and teens 13 and older. The first session is from 10 a.m.-noon and the second from 2-4 p.m. Register through the website.
- Two sessions of the LaPorte Street Walk, "That Was Then, This Is Now," are Tuesday, May 18. The times are 4-5 p.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m. Meet at the historic sign on Indiana Avenue in front of the library. Register through the website.
- Teen Advisory Board from 6 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 18, through Zoom. The board allows teens in seventh grade and older to share ideas and get involved. Register through the website.
- Virtual Memorial Day from 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, May 19, in the Coolspring Branch Meeting Room. Participants use Google Expedition headsets to tour battlefields and memorials of fallen servicemen, such as the National Mall and Gettysburg.

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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“The Mitchells vs the Machines” is a Truly Great Family Film

by Andrew Tallackson



A dysfunctional family braces itself against a robot uprising in “The Mitchells vs the Machines.”

All hail the first great family film of 2021.

Actually, make that the year’s first great movie... period.

“The Mitchells vs the Machines,” a Sony Pictures Animation comedy that just dropped on Netflix, is a triumph of wit, imagination and heart. I could scan a thesaurus for hours rounding up adjectives to do it justice; suffice it to say, the movie is more satisfying than the last few Disney and Pixar efforts.

Why so? Because amid the clever laughs and lively animation, the movie speaks to us on a basic level about family. It marks the feature directorial debut of Mike Rianda who, working with co-writer/co-director Jeff Rowe, achieves an off-kilter world where a dysfunctional family must save the world from a robot revolt. What’s weaving through the action, though, elevates it beyond the ordinary.

The Mitchells, you see, are a distracted mess. Dad Rick (voiced by Danny McBride) is a technophobe with a beer gut, one increasingly distanced from his college-bound daughter, Katie (voiced by Abbi Jacobson). She’s an aspiring filmmaker who relies on the family dog — a dim-bulb pug with two lazy eyes — to create a series of super-hero tales. Mom Linda (voiced by Maya Rudolph) wears tacky clothes that fail to hide bulging hips. Younger brother Aaron (voiced by director Rianda) relates only to dinosaurs; however, in a refreshing twist, he’s no brat. Katie and Aaron are each other’s biggest fans. Supportive at every turn. And it just so happens that when Rick cancels Katie’s plane fare to college, opting instead for one last family road trip, a robot



“The Mitchells vs the Machines”

Running time: 113 minutes. Netflix.

Rated PG for action and some language

Editor’s Note

“The Mitchells vs the Machines” not only includes computer animation by Michigan City High School graduate James Ward, but also a sight gag appreciated by those who like to, as the billboard says, “take a bite out of a legend.”

uprising springs into action.

It’s no spoiler that somehow, the Mitchells will get their act together, becoming a unified fighting force. That is a given. But it is the journey that delivers the pleasures. The message is that picture-perfect families exist only in picture frames, a theme conveyed in a laugh-out-loud sight gag. Families, in reality, are a gaggle of imperfections. However, it is those very imperfections that endear parents to their children and vice versa.

The surprises for Katie comes not just from savoring her family’s quirks, but also from embracing them as strengths. And for Rick, the lesson of compromise, of meeting his children halfway, may just lead him to being a better parent.

These moments for Rick arrive in flashbacks to the salad days of Katie’s youth, when the bond between father and daughter was unfettered by adult



The family pet, a pug with lazy eyes, provides some of the film's biggest laughs.

responsibilities. These images contain gentle, almost fragile, lump-in-the-throat truths, where children look to their parents as their one true saviors. Any parent who says they did not choke up during these scenes is a bald-faced liar.

Keeping the sentiment in check is a hilariously devious villain, PAL: a virtual assistant cast away by her creator and bent on revenge. It is voiced by the great Olivia Colman with "hell hath no fury" gusto. PAL is done with the human race, prepared to jettison everyone on the planet into space. Colman's voice, as PAL, retain the aristocratic air of her work on "The Crown," but with a snarkier edge. PAL's reaction, in fact, to one of Rick's most tender flashbacks yields one of the movie's biggest laughs. That PAL speaks through a cell phone adds to running commentary that we've become too enabled by technology.

Don't be surprised if "The Mitchells vs the Machines" becomes an instant classic.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



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Jordan is Great, the Action Fierce, but “Without Remorse” is Blah

by Andrew Tallackson



Michael B. Jordan is in strong form in “Tom Clancy’s Without Remorse.”

Michael B. Jordan, without question, is a movie star. He has the matinee-idol looks, but the drive of an old-school method actor. Oscar nods should have been a given for “Creed” (2015) and “Just Mercy” (2019), no Best Supporting Actor win for “Black Panther” (2018) a darn shame.

Thing is, he likes popcorn movies, but acts them like prestige pictures. That may be why his awards mantle isn’t packed with trophies. His peers don’t take him seriously.

In “Tom Clancy’s Without Remorse,” which just dropped on Amazon Prime, the actor is in strong form. And yes, the fact that he’s the first black star of a Tom Clancy picture is cause for celebration, matched no less by a strong black actress, Jodie Turner-Smith, who proves his equal.

The movie, though, suffers from an acute case of the blahs. The late Tom Clancy’s name may be attached — it’s based on a 1993 novel — but it’s fill-in-the-blanks Tom Clancy. When you consider, too, that Amazon’s Clancy-spinoff series “Jack Ryan” re-assembles all the clichés into something fresher, the fact that “Without Remorse” does *not* do so makes it even more generic.

However, you could do far worse than spend just shy of two hours with Jordan and company. It entertains despite itself, thanks to the sincerity of the cast and some exciting action sequences.

The premise is a glossier version of the revenge

★ ★ 1/2

“Tom Clancy’s Without Remorse”

Running time: 109 minutes. Amazon Prime.

Rated R for violence

trash Charles Bronson and Chuck Norris cranked out in the ’80s. John Kelly (Jordan), a senior chief with the U.S. Navy SEALs, leads a team to rescue a CIA operative they believe is captured by ISIS members. Turns out, it’s Russian military. In retaliation, John’s team is bumped off, one by one. And in an attack on John’s home, his pregnant wife is shot and killed.

That isn’t a spoiler. The death, which arrives during the first 15 minutes, is the catalyst for what happens next...and you don’t need a film degree to plug in the key ingredients. John, blind with fury, doesn’t play by the rules to track down the assailants. In the process, he opens up a Pandora’s box of conspiracy theories, bad guys who might be good, good guys who may be bad, and hopelessly dated Cold War speeches about American patriotism.

The lack of surprises is, well, surprising. Especially when you consider Taylor Sheridan, the grit behind “Sicario,” “Hell or High Water” and “Wind River,” helped write the screenplay. But “Without Remorse” easily could have been made in the ’90s, when Paramount Studios, which released the film



Jodie Turner-Smith is Michael B. Jordan's equal, scene after scene.

through Prime, was churning out Clancy hits like "The Hunt for Red October," "Patriot Games" and "Clear and Present Danger."

There are pleasures, though, to be found. Like a harrowing plane crash into the ocean in which John has to swim through the sinking wreckage. That's a spectacular sequence, complete with the downed plane capsizing in the water. Later, when John and his team arrive at the apartment of the man who killed his wife, in Murmansk, Russia, what ensues is a showdown of massive scale, the action high above and down below. Italian director Stefano Solima knows how to stage a gun battle with high energy and tension.

Through it all, Jordan is ferocious. Watch him in the scene when he's wounded and trying to reach his pregnant wife, knowing he's too late. The grief pouring out of him, on top of the physical struggle itself, is raw. Genuine. His relationship with Turner-Smith, as Lt. Com. Karen Greer, is thankfully unsentimental. She isn't reduced to the love interest. In fact, at one point, as John playfully antagonizes her, they behave more like siblings than colleagues.

A mid-credits scene suggests a sequel is on the way. Whether we get one, I suspect, depends on how well viewed "Without Remorse" is. To its credit, it is never dull. But it is not memorable either. If there is a sequel, they're going to have to do better.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



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“The Friends Experience”

by Andrew Tallackson



Alice, Will and I jumped at the chance to recreate an iconic scene from “Friends.”

For some dumb reason, “Friends” wasn’t hot on my radar when it debuted in 1994.

Likely, it was a mopey, Generation X thing. I was living in central Indiana, making near-poverty wages as a small-town reporter. The lives of these sexy New York singles, while not dripping in wealth, were so much more exciting than mine. Hipper. Boo, friggin’ hoo, right?

Now, as an adult binging the show through HBO Max with my wife and teen son, the pleasures of the iconic sitcom are not lost on me. It was a show propelled by star power, wit and silly scenarios. Something remains comforting about it, these six friends, despite their quirks, standing by each other’s side through thick and thin.

“The Friends Experience: The One in Chicago” capitalizes on nostalgia for the show, taking visitors on a 45-minute tour of set recreations, props and costumes. And time is running out. The self-guided

experience at The Shops at North Bridge, 540 N. Michigan Ave., ends Monday, May 31.

For a traveling tour, “The Friends Experience” is pretty extensive. Anything related to the show, you’ll likely find it here. Set recreations like Joey and Chandler’s apartment, Monica and Rachel’s kitchen and Central Perk. There’s even a Lego set recreation of Central Perk, the number of pieces used, well, I’ll leave that to you to be sufficiently wowed. There’s a display devoted to the evolution of “The Rachel,” or Jennifer Aniston’s much-copied haircut, and a chance to poke “Ugly Naked Guy” from the apartment patio window.

Oh, and don’t let pandemic-related health and safety issues keep you from ordering tickets. Everything, as the tour proudly states, is “Monica Clean.”

Visit www.friendstheexperience.com/chicago for reservations or more information.



If You Can Withstand All the Blood, “Spontaneous” is Wickedly Funny

by Andrew Tallackson



Mara (Katherine Langford) and Dylan (Charlie Plummer) finds themselves falling in love in “Spontaneous.”

“Spontaneous” is one of the sweetest teen rom-coms...and one of the yuckiest.

Studios once had no qualms about churning out dark teen comedies, “Heathers” (1989) and “Ghost World” (2001) being the supreme entries. Unfortunately, we’ve become squeamish. Fearful of crossing that line between good taste and severe distaste.

“Spontaneous” behaves as if the line never existed. Based on Aaron Starmer’s 2016 book, it’s not perfect. My biggest problem with the film, streaming on Amazon Prime, is that it cannot sustain the same warped pitch. The first hour is savagely funny, then it turns deadly serious, losing its footing.

What it does have is a wickedly original heroine, played by Australian actress Katherine Langford. She’s done good work in Netflix’s “13 Reasons Why” and films like “Knives Out” and “Love, Simon,” but this is like watching a star being born. Her Mara Carlyle is a high school senior who reacts to life with a detached sense of humor. She’s not connected to the world around her; more, she’s so pop-culture savvy, she prefers to dish out running commentary. Langford gives her the right bite, the sting, to create someone who’s dripping with comic bile. Smarter than everyone around her.

That approach to life may be what saves her from going mental when, for reasons unknown, her fel-



“Spontaneous”

Running time: 101 minutes. Amazon Prime. Rated R for teen drug and alcohol use, language and bloody images throughout

low seniors start exploding. Yep. Spontaneously combusting. In class. Writer-director Brian Duffield keeps the gore and entrails to a minimum, but the spray goes everywhere. Meaning, Langford and her cast members spend half the movie covered in viscera. But somehow, Mara reacts to the unexplainable chaos as she does with everything: bouncing back with what-the-hell sarcasm, relying on caustic gal-pal Tess (Hayley Law) to keep her sane.

Somehow, amid exploding bodies and all the classic high-school archetypes (jocks, brains), Mara clicks with cute-guy Dylan (Charlie Plummer). The two are cut from the same cloth. They’ve been raised on movies and television. Every scenario in life is equated to some movie scene or dialogue they can quote. Take, for instance, the most outrageous moment when scientists and the FBI arrive to investigate the strange phenomena. They set up white, sterile tents, connecting all the students to IVs while conducting tests. We are reminded of “E.T. The Extra Terrestrial.” Apparently, it reminds Mara

and Dylan as well, because they both reach out to each other, screaming “E.T.,” “Eliot.”

Duffield, as writer-director, takes some inventive approaches to his story, like the flashback to how Dylan and Mara first noticed each other, one that seamlessly transitions into Dylan addressing the camera, narrating the experience.

The film’s outrageous premise makes the relationship between Mara and Dylan exceedingly fragile because one of them could die without warning. Essentially, the movie is John Hughes-meets-David Cronenberg (think “Scanners”), where all the teens want to do is live out their final high school days...but without exploding.

The film’s third act lands on a serious note, and the premise loses its comic buoyancy. It finds Mara spiraling downward emotionally, for good reason, and we wonder if the film will introduce any subtext, like “Heathers” did, ridiculing society for making martyrs out of teen suicide. Nope. There isn’t any in “Spontaneous.” But right when the film tee-



Amid frightening health screenings, Mara and Charlie still find time to poke fun at their predicament with a nod to “E.T. The Extra Terrestrial.”

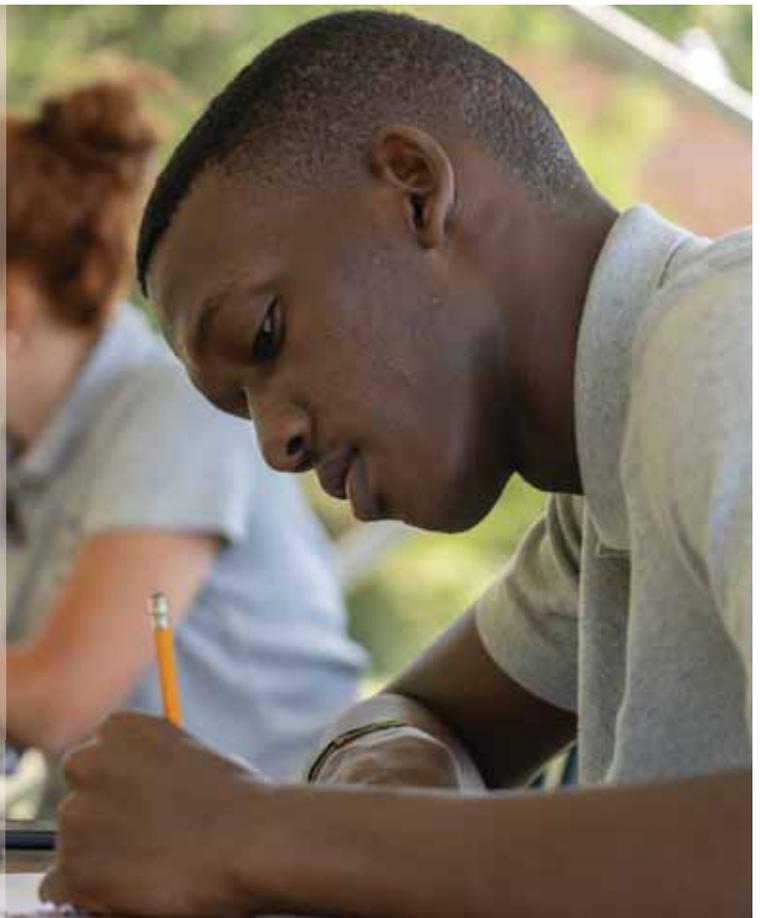
ters toward us not caring anymore, it reveals its point, that life is about living in the moment.

“I’m gonna live the life I want right now,” Katherine says. “I’m not gonna waste time waiting for a day that may never come for me.” Such a valid message today, when teens are pressured to think about the later, rather than the now. “Spontaneous” may take a wild approach, but for those with the fortitude, and stomach, to do so, it works.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

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Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Youth & Family Birding Day from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, May 15.**

Part of the Indiana Dunes Birding Festival, the event offers beginning bird hikes starting every hour on the hour at the Nature Center. Also planned are bird games, bluebird house building and photo ID quiz giveaways. All activities are free. Visit <https://indunesbirdingfestival.com/> for details.

- **Bird Buffet at 10 a.m. Sunday, May 16.**

Help a naturalist fill bird feeders at the nature center, and learn how to attract birds to a backyard.

- **Photo Scavenger Hunt from noon-4 p.m. Sunday, May 16.**

Use a camera to spot signs of spring along a mapped route. Stop by the Nature Center for directions. Friends of Indiana Dunes helped provide the prizes. □

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

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

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.

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Indiana Dunes National Park

The National Park service on May 8 resumed offering a limited number of ranger-led programs at Indiana Dunes National Park.

All programs are limited to 10 people and require advance reservations. Wearing a mask is required because it is not possible to maintain 6 feet of social distancing at all times during the hikes.

A hike through Miller Woods is from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. every Sunday except May 16 at the Paul Douglas Center for Environmental Education. Explore a rare black oak savanna and see lupine blooming in May. Call the Douglas Center at (219) 395-1824 to reserve a spot and confirm the program's time.

Upcoming programs include:

- May 22 — Pinhook Bog Hike.
- May 23 — Miller Woods Hike.
- May 28 — Mount Baldy Summit Hike.
- May 29 — Bailly/Chellberg History Hike.
- May 29 — Pinhook Bog Hike.
- May 30 — Miller Woods Hike.
- May 30 — Mount Baldy Summit Hike.
- June 5 — Bailly/Chellberg History Hike.
- June 5 — Pinhook Bog Hike.
- June 6 — Miller Woods Hike.
- June 6 — Mount Baldy Summit Hike.
- June 12 — Bailly/Chellberg History Hike.
- June 12 — Pinhook Bog Hike.
- June 13 — Miller Woods Hike.
- June 13 — Mount Baldy Summit Hike.

- **The National Park Service has implemented a mask requirement for employees, visitors, partners and contractors.**

The move supports President Biden's Executive Order on Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing, aiming to protect those who live, work and visit national parks.

At Indiana Dunes National Park, face masks are required in all park buildings and facilities, including the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center, Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education and Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk pavilion. Masks also are required on NPS-managed lands when physical distancing cannot be maintained, including on narrow or busy trails, overlooks and in historic homes.

As conditions are subject to change, visitors should check the park's website and social media channels for updates before a visit. Visit [tinyurl.com/2r86ch6e](https://www.tinyurl.com/2r86ch6e) for details.

Park rangers are on duty to provide information, protect visitors and park resources and uphold the requirement. □

The Visitor Center is at 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. The Paul H. Douglas Center is at 100 N. Lake St. in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Call (219) 395-1882 or visit www.nps.gov/indu for details.

Beach Garden Club

Smiles are everywhere from seeing daffodils and red bud in full bloom. Those smiles brought Beach Garden Club members together for the first meeting of the 2021 garden season.

Due to cold weather, members used the conference room at Long Beach Country Club. Mary Beth Rebedeau-Warden introduced speaker Laura Ekastaya, who was associated with Chicago's Lurie Garden, first as horticulturist, then as director and head of horticulture. She fostered ecologically responsible design, shifting the mindset from one of maintenance to constant improvement. She now works with Piet Oudolf Collection. Her presentation focused on the usefulness of bees and wasps in the garden.



Speaker Laura Ekastaya (left) is photographed with Beach Garden Club Vice President Mary Beth Rebedeau-Warden.

An extensive agenda followed the presentation. The club has worked closely with the Long Beach Park Board in revitalizing and adding to garden areas around town. In addition to the Long Beach park, gardeners have maintained the entrance to the community center and the Long Beach entrance at Moore Road.

Member Susan Keenen presented a project to enhance the entrance to the Civic organization. With its approval, Laura Bolton of Beachside Gardens designed, extended and planted the area around the planter. The club now maintains it.

With the 100th anniversary of Long Beach this year, Rebedeau-Warden introduced a new project titled "Learn and Grow." Club members enthusiastically approved it. Goals will be determined, but might include docent-led tours of town gardens to educate the public about their history and current plantings. Master Gardeners would answer questions.

Dee Caulfield shared a photo of the park gardens as they appeared when Long Beach was founded. Jan Brown discovered a path in front of the shade garden lined with soft bricks. Unearthing the path — apparently laid in the early days of the Long Beach park — is a project to improve the path for resident use and enjoyment.

This year's goals are to work with the park board, the Civic and Dennis Kelley to improve the entire park areas, as well as all other gardens around Long Beach.



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Notice to Long Beach Property Owners Planning to Rent Their Residence:

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

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

Michigan City Public Library

The library is open, but with restrictions in place.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday. There is no public seating. The library also follows LaPorte County Health Department's Public Health Order Face Covering Mandate by requiring masks inside the building. Every individual must wear a face covering over his/her nose and mouth at indoor areas open to the public. The circulation and reference desks will have masks available for \$1.

The following services are temporarily suspended: public programs and meetings; literacy tutoring; MakerSpace/3-D printing; study rooms; homebound service; interlibrary loan; puppets; puzzles; blocks and children's AWE computers in Youth Services; Ellison die cut machine; public faxing; microfilm use; magazine/book sale; and accepting donations.

Access is limited to the computer lab: One session (up to one hour) per person per day is allowed. Due to social-distancing guidelines, only one person at a station at a time. Children are not allowed in the computer lab with parents/guardians.

One computer is reserved for genealogy research, with time limited to one hour per person per day. Four charging tables allow a limit of 30 minutes per use (no seating is available at these stations). WiFi is available throughout the building and exterior/parking lot.

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

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

The following virtual programming is scheduled:

- Great Decisions returns through Zoom. Limited discussion booklets are available at the circulation desk. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details.
- Virtual Story Time. A new video will be posted to the website, Facebook page and YouTube channel at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. Each video will be available for two weeks at www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/. Stop by Youth Services to receive the craft project for the week.

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

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Volunteer Appreciation Event

The Salvation Army of Michigan City will mark National Salvation Army Week by celebrating the many volunteers who support the non-profit throughout the year.

The public can attend a Volunteer Appreciation Ice Cream Social, set as an open house-style event because of COVID-19, between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Thursday, May 13, at The Salvation Army, 1201 Franklin St.

Recognized as Volunteers of the Year are Chuck Krause (individual) and Williams Systems (group) for going above and beyond during COVID-19.

Other recipients include: "Rescue Christmas" honorees, Al's Supermarket, McDonald's Restaurants of LaPorte County, the Applegate family and Josh Thayer; "Spirit of Generosity" honorees, Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte, Unity Foundation of LaPorte County, United Way of LaPorte County, Horizon Bank, Harbour Trust and Investment Management Co., General Insurance Services, Michigan City Community Enrichment Corp., Franciscan Health and Duneland Health Council; "Doing the Most Good" honorees, Steve and Darlene Baker, Marty Corley, Carol Flores, Andy Hynek, Diane Swain, Swanson Center/PATH team, Michigan City Fire Department, Michigan City Police Department, Michigan City Area Schools, Rotary Club of Michigan City, Michigan City Exchange Club, Emergency Management, Central States Manufacturing and Michigan City High School JROTC; and special recognition for National Able employee Kenneth Russell.

Visit www.samichigancity.org or call (219) 874-6885 for more details.

Baroque Concert

Tickets are available starting Monday, May 17, for a Michigan City Messiah Inc. Baroque concert, which is at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 27, at The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St.

The chorus will present Vivaldi's "Gloria" with soprano Kimberly Jones and mezzo-soprano Kristin Gornstein. Pat Lee is the accompanist and Nic Orbovich the violin soloist. More information will appear in an upcoming edition of *The Beacher*.

Tickets will be available at www.mcmessiah.com, or as paper tickets at First Presbyterian Church, 121 W. Ninth St.

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RHC Bike-n-Brunch

The eighth annual Radio Harbor Country Bike-n-Brunch fundraiser, a gourmet brunch and bike ride through Harbor Country, is Sunday, June 6.

Rides for the all-outdoor event will be marked for every level: 15-, 30- and 45-mile loops. The usual buffet will be replaced with individual servings. The ride begins at 9 a.m. EDT and departs from a local Wilson Road farmhouse, about two miles east of Four Winds Casino. The brunch is at the farm.

The event is limited to the first 150 applicants. Adults cost \$50, children 12 and younger \$30 and a brunch-only option costs \$50 per person.

Visit www.radioharborcountry.org/events and click on the Events section to register and make payment. Also, checks can be mailed to the station at the address on the registration form. Payment confirmation will be emailed to applicants. Send questions to bikenbrunch.wrhc@gmail.com

The Beverly Shores Depot 5x5 ONLINE Event is Coming Soon!

May 14th Opens ONLINE at 5:00PM Each piece: \$55

Sign up early at www.bsdepot.com and at 5:00 PM be ready to snag the piece of art you want!

Thank you for supporting The Depot's major fundraising event of the year!



When Seconds Count Initiative

Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte is accepting applications through June 11 for Automated External Defibrillators through its When Seconds Count AED Initiative.

Since 2017, HFL has awarded 78 AEDs, along with cabinets and signage, totaling more than \$160,000.

Nonprofit organizations, schools and government entities in LaPorte County may apply for a grant for an AED and AED cabinet and signage. They must agree to have an AED maintenance plan and at least one staff member certified in CPR and AED use. Organizations can apply for one AED, cabinet and appropriate signage. HFL will consider requests for more than one from organizations where circumstances may warrant multiple AEDs, such as organizations with multiple locations.

Contact HFL at contact@hflaporte.org or (219) 326-2471 before applying. Visit www.hflaporte.org for more details.



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

- Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G St., LaPorte, 1-6 p.m. Tuesday, May 18.
- St. John Kanty, 7012 N. County Road 600 East, Rolling Prairie, 1-6 p.m. Tuesday, May 18.
- Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, May 20.

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 www.redcrossblood.org for more details.



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La Porte County Parks



All registrations/questions go through the Red Mill County Park Administrative Office, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Call (219) 325-8315 or visit www.laportecountyparks.org for more details.

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.

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 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.

Easy Exercises for All Ages

The free program is from 9-10 a.m. Wednesday, May 26, at Luhr County Park.

Physical therapist Diane Rich leads a head-to-toe walk-through of easy exercises to help keep muscles and joints limber.

Masks are required. Call at least one week before the class to register.

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Edgewood Teacher Honored

Edgewood Elementary School teacher Patrice Huley is a 2021-2022 Armstrong Teacher Educator for the Indiana University School of Education.



Patrice Huley is photographed with her Edgewood students.

The program recognizes teachers from across the state, providing interactions with education faculty and students at the Bloomington campus. IU students also visit Armstrong teacher classrooms to observe and learn.

Huley is the first Michigan City educator selected for the program. She was honored April

15 during a virtual Celebration of Teaching. She also will receive an honorarium and participate in two panel discussions at the School of Education during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Selection is based on recommendations from administrators and peers, an application and a video submission explaining the candidate's teaching methods and philosophy.

In her video, Huley highlighted the equity focus in her classroom, emphasizing that students are expected to be leaders of their own learning.

Huley began her career with Michigan City Area Schools seven years ago as an instructional assistant at Edgewood. She has been teaching fourth grade there for the past five years, and is a fourth-grade teacher leader for the district.

FUMC Scholarship Applications

Thursday, June 3, is the deadline to submit applications for annual scholarships through First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St.

The scholarships go to students entering an accredited college or trade school, and those continuing or resuming their education, regardless of age. Some awards require church membership; however, five are open to the community:

- The Richard Presser Scholarship. Named for the late local educator, it goes to a graduating senior from Michigan City High School or Marquette Catholic High School.
- The Timberlake Scholarship in memory of Joan Thomas Timberlake and Diane Fike Timberlake. Open to a non-traditional student, the applicant must be a mother, at least 18 and an active member of any recognized church, synagogue or mosque. Residents of LaPorte, Porter and Berrien counties are eligible.
- The Jean Kruse Scholarship, which goes to a student pursuing an elementary education degree. Kruse was a longtime primary grade teacher in Michigan City.
- The Mabel Rhoades Scholarship, in memory of the registered nurse and nursing instructor who established the first post-op recovery room in Indiana. Nursing students may apply.
- The Swinehart/Bartholomew Scholarship, which goes to an arts major living in LaPorte County. Applicants must have completed at least one year, studying vocal music, instrumental music, theater or visual arts. The Swinehart and Bartholomew families have been involved in local music and community theater for three generations.

Contact Higher Education Committee chair Sue Cassler at susan.cassler@comcast.net or (219) 362-1421 for information or to obtain an application.

Leeds Project Heart

Leeds Public House, 401 Franklin St., continues its Leeds Project Heart program by supporting Healthy Communities of LaPorte County and Coving Kids and Families Program in May.

Fifty percent of the proceeds from May's drinks support Healthy Communities. Visit www.leedspublichouse.com for more details.

A Notice to Our Readers

The Beacher will continue the following office hours for now

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

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LCSO in the Spotlight



Jared Collier.

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

Jared Collier grew up in Jasper, Ind., learning percussion from his father, John Collier. After high school, he continued his studies at Valparaiso University, where he performed works such as Paul Creston's "Concertino for Marimba and Chamber Concert Band," Steve Reich's "Nagoya Marimbas" with his father and Mark Ford's "Stubernic Fantasy" with his father and the composer.

Collier also plays percussion/drum set for musicals across Northwest Indiana, with LaPorte City Band, Michigan City Municipal Band and Andrews University Symphony Orchestra. The music department paraprofessional for Edison Jr./Sr. High School in Lake Station, he is going back to school to major in music education.

Collier also is an endorsing artist for Artifact Percussion and Soultone Cymbals.

Westchester Public Library

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

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

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

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

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

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For more than 35 years, The Beacher has existed as a **free** newspaper, and it will **continue** to do so.

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Hey U.G.L.Y. Annual Contest

Designed to turn negatives into positives, Hey U.G.L.Y. is asking students to create positive acronyms for the words Dork, Fag, Geek, Hate, Loser, Racism, Moron or Stupid in its 18th annual contest.

Hey U.G.L.Y. stands for Unique Gifted Lovable You.

An independent panel of journalists, photographers and filmmakers will judge the entries for each category's most impactful work. First prize for each contest is a certificate, T-shirt, \$100 check and a press release sent out about the winners.

The deadline is May 31. All rules and regulations are available at www.AntiBullyingContests.org.

Hey U.G.L.Y. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that empowers youth to be part of the solution to bullying, racism, substance abuse and suicide through self-esteem and empathy-building programs, curriculum, radio show and school assemblies.

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Native Plant Sale

Berrien Conservation District is taking orders for native wildflowers and grasses, the deadline being Thursday, May 20.

Orders must be picked up Thursday, May 27, at Love Creek County Park and Nature Center, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, Mich. Some species will be available to purchase the day of the event, with pickup from noon to 4 p.m. EDT. Orders can be made at www.berriencd.org, or a form can be mailed upon request.

Native plants are adapted to the region's soils and climate, and require little maintenance once established. They have strong, extensive root systems that help rainwater infiltrate deep into the soil and protect it from erosion.

Love Creek admission will be waived during pickup. Call Berrien Conservation District at (269) 471-9111, Ext. 3, to request an order form or for more information.

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Yoga in the Gardens

Instructor April Fallon will host the all-ages "Yoga in the Gardens" at 9:30 a.m. Thursdays, May 20-Aug. 26, at Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12.

The one-hour classes cost \$15 each and are cash only, paid directly to Fallon. Take a mat and water, and arrive early to take the five-minute walk to the front of the Celebration Pavilion. More than enough space exists to ensure social distancing. Classes are held under the pavilion in case of rain.

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“Outstanding Women in History”

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Rebecca Dewey Chapter, named Charlotte “Lottie” Wilson and Aunt Melissa Gibson Brown as two “Outstanding Women in History.”

Born in Niles, Mich., Wilson was the first person of color to attend The Art Institute of Chicago, and the first African American to graduate from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. A nationally known artist and suffragist, she created busts of famous African Americans such as Frederick Douglass and Phillis Wheatley. In 1892, she gifted a painting of Charles Sumner to Provident Hospital in Chicago, and in 1894 a painting of Booker T. Washington to the Tuskegee Institute.

Brown likely was the first of her family born a free person. Her family escaped slavery, traveling from South Carolina to “Ramptown” in Cass County, where she was born. Her parents were Hugh Gibson and Matilda Porter. Her family assisted runaway slaves who found safety in Ramptown or briefly stopped there before heading north to freedom. It was not long before she helped these people in the same manner as her parents. She later became an ordained preacher with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Benton Harbor, Mich., where her revivals drew large crowds of people. She is buried in Bethel Cemetery.

Visit www.dar.org or email rebecca.deweyto@gmail.com for more details.

Fernwood Botanical Garden

• **Outdoor Yoga from noon to 1:15 p.m. EDT Friday and Saturday, May 14-15.**

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 15.**

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

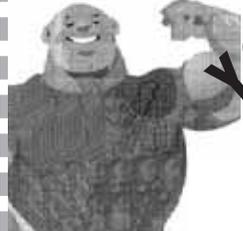


Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve is located at 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Call (269) 695-6491 or visit www.fernwoodbotanical.org for more information and to confirm the status of classes.

Sunset Social

LaPorte Young Professionals will host its first in-person event of the year, Sunset Social, from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, May 20, at Stone Lake Beach, LaPorte.

The free event includes food, games and networking. Visit tinyurl.com/m47xj5tx to register.



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Activities to Explore

In the Area:

May 14 — 5x5 event, 5 p.m., The Beverly Shores Depot Museum & Art Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Registration: www.bsdepot.com

May 15 — Youth & Family Birding Day, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Free. Info: <https://indunesbirdingfestival.com/>

May 15 — “Sew a Yoga Mat Bag,” LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Two sessions: 10 a.m.-noon, 2-4 p.m. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

May 15 — Family Day, 1-4 p.m., Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Free. Info: (219) 874-4900, www.lubeznikcenter.org

May 16 — Bird Buffet, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

May 16 — Photo Scavenger Hunt, noon-4 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

May 18 — LaPorte Street Walk, “That Was Then, This Is Now,” LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Two sessions: 4-5 p.m., 5:30-6:30 p.m. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

May 19 — Virtual Memorial Day, 2-3 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library Coolspring Branch Meeting Room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. 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/ Laurelee Sikorski, 1 hour before sunset (specific time TBD), Long Beach Realty Stop 31 location. Limited parking. Updates: Long Beach Realty Facebook page.

Sundays (except May 16) — Miller Woods Hike, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Paul Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Reservations: (219) 395-1824.

In the Region

May 14-15 — 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 16 — The School of American Music free outdoor student showcase, 2 p.m. EDT, Three Oaks Arts and Education Center, 14 Elm St. Info: www.schoolofamericanmusic.com

Through June 6 — New exhibits, “A Walk in the Woods: The Poetry of Landscape” & “Ralph Bower: Goshen Woodcarver,” Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tue.-Fri./1-4 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Admission: \$10/adults, \$8/college students & students 13-18, \$6/students 8-12. Info: www.midwestmuseum.us, (574) 293-6660.

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

Vickers Theatre — *Now showing:* “The Courier.” Rated PG-13. Times: 2:45 p.m. May 14 & 16, 6 p.m. May 15. *Also:* “The Truffle Hunters.” Not Rated. Times: 6 p.m. May 14 & 16, 2:45 p.m. May 15 & 17. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: (269) 756-3522. www.vick-ertheatre.com

LaPorte Little Theatre 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.

Want your event listed in Activities?
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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On May 13, 1867, Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War, was released from a Union prison after posting \$100,000 bail. He then was promptly brought to trial on charges of treason.

On May 13, 1918, the first U.S. airmail stamps, featuring a picture of an airplane, were introduced. On some of the stamps, the airplane was printed upside-down, making them collector's items.

On May 13, 1940, Winston Churchill, in his first speech before the House of Commons as British Prime Minister, said: *"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."*

On May 13, 2003, the federal government unveiled a more colorful version of the \$20 bill.

On May 14, 1607, the first permanent English settlement in America began at Jamestown, Va.

On May 14, 1853, Brooklyn's Gale Borden — founder of the Borden Milk Co. — applied for a patent for condensed milk.

On May 14, 1942, Congress established the "Women's Auxiliary Army Corps."

On May 14, 1973, Skylab, the first U.S. space station, was launched from Florida.

On May 14, 1998, the hit sitcom "Seinfeld" aired its final episode after nine years on NBC,

On May 15, 1797, President John Adams called Congress into its first special session to take up the French-American crises.

On May 15, 1856, Lyman Frank Baum, author of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, was born in Chittenango, N.Y.

On May 15, 1902, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley was born in Chicago.

On May 15, 1930, Ellen Church, the first airline stewardess, was assigned to a United Airlines flight between San Francisco and Cheyenne, Wyo.

On May 15, 1940, in New York City, nylon stockings first went on sale. Women bought up 4 million pair in the first few hours, and the Japanese silk industry went into a permanent tailspin.

On May 16, 1770, Marie Antoinette, she of "let them eat cake" fame, married France's King Louis XVI.

On May 16, 1866, Congress authorized the Treasury Department to manufacture and circulate the first 5-cent piece. Referred to as the "nickel," it contained 25 percent nickel and 75 percent copper.

On May 16, 1868, the Senate failed by one vote to convict President Andrew Johnson as it took its first vote, on one of 11 articles of impeachment.

On May 16, 1920, Joan of Arc was canonized in Rome.

On May 16, 1929, the Academy Awards were given for the first time. "Wings" won the award for best movie, Emil Jennings for best actor and Janet Gaynor for best actress.

On May 16, 1946, the musical "Annie Get Your Gun" opened on Broadway.

On May 17, 1792, the New York Stock Exchange was founded by brokers meeting under a tree located on what is now Wall Street.

On May 17, 1875, in the first running of the Kentucky Derby, Astrides won by two lengths.

On May 17, 1946, President Harry Truman seized control of the nation's railroads, delaying a threatened strike by engineers and trainmen.

On May 17, 1985, United Airlines pilots began a strike which would last for 29-days.

On May 17, 1998, Yankees pitcher David Wells became the 13th player in modern MLB history to throw a perfect game as he retired all 27 batters he faced in a 4-0 victory over the Minnesota Twins.

On May 18, 1852, Massachusetts became the first state to make school attendance mandatory for children between the ages of 8 and 14.

On May 18, 1910, Halley's comet disappeared from Earthly view as it moved across the face of the sun.

On May 18, 1953, American Jacqueline Cochran became the first woman to travel faster than the speed of sound as she piloted a North American F-86 Canadair over Rogers Dry Lake, Calif.

On May 18, 1980, the biggest eruption in 123 years took place on Washington's Mount St. Helens. The blast took 1,300 feet off the top of the mountain, leaving at least 57 dead or missing. Ash from the explosion traveled completely around the world.

On May 19, 1780, in the early afternoon, much of New England, as well as parts of Canada, were enveloped in a sudden inexplicable darkness. What triggered this event has never been determined.

On May 19, 1876, Philadelphia was host city for an exposition marking 100 years of American independence.

On May 19, 1930, playwright Lorraine Hansberry ("A Raisin in the Sun") was born in Chicago.

On May 19, 1962, during a Democratic fundraiser in New York actress Marilyn Monroe performed a sultry rendition of "Happy Birthday" for President John F. Kennedy.

On May 19, 1992, Vice President Dan Quayle criticized the sitcom "Murphy Brown" for having its title character decide to bear a child out of wedlock.

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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

Rhapsody by Mitchell James Kaplan (*hardcover, \$27 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook. 342 pages.*)

If ever a book could sing, this one would be a symphony. There's plenty in it about music to keep you reading, but it's the story of one special lady who handles the baton. Let me introduce you to a musical discourse covered with history and wrapped in the songs of America the whole world was beginning to sit up and pay attention to.

Classical artist meets Broadway. Bach meets Duke Ellington. This week's book is a musical soundbite of America in the first half of the 20th century. Classical kept the highbrows entertained at their soirees, while jazz at the speakeasy helped the lower classes forget their troubles for a few hours. And George Gershwin met Katherine Swift (whom he only calls Kay), and the musical world turned upside down.

Kay Swift will forever be known as the first woman to compose an entire score of a musical play: 1930's "Fine and Dandy." For the rest of us, she will be remembered as the woman who loved, and was loved by, George Gershwin.

What makes this special is that the author throws in all these amazing things from 1917-1937. It was a time of turmoil in politics, great wealth and great poverty, changing morals. The country saw the coming popularity of the automobile, the radio bringing news and entertainment into our homes, the struggle of a nation falling into a deep depression while producing the world's tallest buildings. Everything from the sublime to the ridiculous.

For the most part, however, this is the story of Kay Swift, pianist/composer, wife of millionaire Jimmy Warburg, mother of three daughters, and lover of America's great composer, George Gershwin.

Yes, this is a love triangle swirling around music — it permeates the air, fills the senses, creates historical fiction like no other. Music and biographical lovers will sing and whistle tunes after reading this absorbing tale of a place, a time and three people whose lives are entwined for all eternity.

As the scarecrow said in "The Wizard of Oz," it's always best to start at the beginning, so here we go...

Kay is a musical prodigy, no doubt. She attends the Institute of Musical Art — you and I know it today as the Juilliard School of Music. She becomes a star at the institute, longing to play on the international stage. Even the great Gustav Mahler pays her a compliment.

In 1917, playing with the Edith Rubel Trio on the

salon circuit, she meets Jimmy Warburg. He comes from a wealthy family whose father helped set up the Federal Reserve banking system. Jimmy would become a financial advisor to FDR, but his real passion was poetry, which comes as a surprise to Kay.

After the courtship, Jimmy and Kay marry on June 1, 1918, in her parents' apartment. The Warburgs wanted Kay, a Christian, to convert to Judaism, but since neither she nor Jimmy are religious, they object and are married by a city magistrate.

Six years and three daughters later, in the winter of 1924, Jimmy takes Kay to the theater to hear a new piano concerto written by George Gershwin, "Rhapsody in Blue." That's all it takes. Kay is mesmerized by this new sound in music.

It doesn't take long before Kay meets Gershwin and he introduces her to jazz and the jazz masters at The Cotton Club. Soon, the pair is collaborating on music with George's brother, Ira, providing much of the lyrics. On her own composing, Kay finds Jimmy to be a good source of lyrics, and they publish some music under her maiden name, Kay Swift, and his as Paul James. Successfully composing music with two men? Now that's an accomplishment!

Well, well, Kay, here she is in love with two men. Where do you go from here? Problem is, Kay discovers her marriage is not what she thought it was. "*Jimmy traveled often, spending months abroad. He delighted in sexual escapades. This he had confessed four years ago, after Katherine happened upon evidence.*"

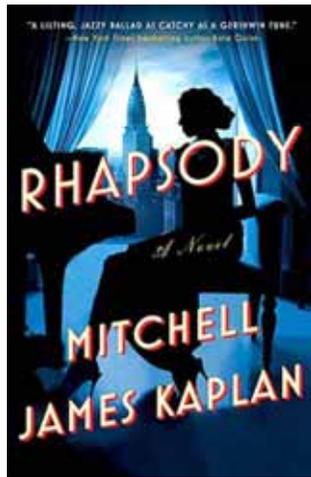
Somehow, Kay and Jimmy manage to live together for the sake of social propriety and the children. She could have gone ahead and divorced him, but would George marry her? He always says he isn't the marrying kind. Kay continues her love for George and her musical collaboration with him until 1934, when Jimmy finally asks for a divorce...

End of story? Not quite. There is so much packed into this book, it almost defies possibility.

For example, Kaplan goes into the making of "Porgy and Bess" — how George invests his own money to get it produced because Broadway bigwigs are shocked he doesn't want to cast white singers using "blackface," but black performers instead. Not an acceptable thing to do in 1930s America, and the box office take shows it.

Kay's story is one of great musical accomplishments, and her love of George. And while she loved her children, she wasn't the stay-at-home mother type. One thing's for sure, you won't be bored reading this book.

Till next time, happy reading!





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