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Innovation, Inventiveness & Industry

by Linda Weigel

It's always nice to be surprised. Wowed. Gobsnacked. It doesn't happen often for me, but when it does, I can't stop thinking about it.

That's what it felt like experiencing for the first time LaPorte County Public Library's new Exchange building at 807 Indiana Ave. What a transformation, and so unlike anything I expected from a library, much less something so forward-thinking and with a 21st century vibe. A place to experience new services and programs...and have fun, too.

The acquisition and transformation of the new stand-alone LPCPL Exchange into a maker-space, well, even a modern-day Leonardo da Vinci or Thomas Alva Edison could admire it.

The old telephone exchange building served for years as the hub for LaPortean phone connections before sitting empty and unused. In 2015, a local individual donated it to LPCPL, and plans began to convert it into something that would enrich and enhance our lives. It took a little more than five years from development until completion.

"The money for the redesign came from the library's savings,"

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LaPorte County Public Library's new Exchange building at 807 Indiana Ave.

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LPCPL Fonda Owens said. “The library knew that funds would be needed to renovate and transform the space. The library did not want to bond for the project. None of the funds came from the city or state. In Indiana, libraries are independent units of government and therefore have their own tax rate. The majority of taxes that fund the library are property taxes.”

Unity Foundation played a role, she added, by bringing to the table “discussions that revolved around employment and skilling up students and community members to meet the needs of local employers.”

Makerspace

If you're wondering how they were going to do that, well, you are not alone.

The answer was to create a special space to meet 21st century needs and make it available to all LaPorte County residents. Judging by what I've seen as I toured the new site, the LPCPL Exchange meets the bill.

“Makerspace” as a descriptive term may not be familiar to many. I'd only heard about such sites a couple of years ago, and since there wasn't one in our area did not pursue the issue. However, with the formal welcome and ribbon cutting of the new LP-CPL Exchange in October, my interest was piqued.

Researching the makerspace movement, I discovered it started, surprisingly, in 2006 and is considered an extension of the Do It Yourself culture, which today is as popular as ever. Think HGTV, Magnolia Network, DIY and more. Furthermore, I was surprised to learn there are only a handful of free county or city library-associated makerspaces in Indiana. LPCPL Exchange is the only three-story makerspace in the entire state.

What exactly, then, is a “makerspace”?

“Makerspaces fill many needs in a community,” Owens said. “As previously mentioned, they help people skill up for employment. They provide access to equipment that you may not otherwise have. They spark creativity and innovation. They are a great place for people to come to learn a new machine or new hobby. They increase happiness and quality of life in a community.”

The hope for this new space is that it will be a



The official ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Exchange building.

place of creativity and experimentation.

“It fits very well with the mission of the library in regard to being a place for lifelong learning and public involvement,” Owens said. “As a collaborative workspace, it can promote making, exploring, the sharing and exchange of ideas, and even foster entrepreneurs and future business startups. The possibilities are endless.”

Online, I discovered a website (tinyurl.com/4vdnrzd4) with a wonderful explanation of makerspace benefits, especially to students:

- Makerspaces foster innovation through hands-on experimentation – the opportunity to innovate.
- Creates real-world applications for classroom concepts. The hands-on aspect helps one go from an abstract idea to real-world understanding.
- Experimentation can lead to failure, but that is all part of the process, and learning how not to become discouraged or too frustrated is important — to take it all in stride is a great life lesson.
- It can expose students to new opportunities via new tools, resources, etc., to reach a solution.
- It builds critical thinking and problem-solving skills – definitely a lifelong asset.
- It can help develop a wide range of 21st century skills beyond critical thinking and problem solving, such as: flexibility, collaboration, adaptability, oral and written communication, information literacy, technology literacy, productivity, social skills, leadership and initiative.

Continued on Page 4



Glen Wade, LaPorte, uses the lathe.

Two advertisements stacked vertically. The top one is for 'hoity toity shop! sell!' featuring a green and blue color scheme with a sunburst graphic. It lists services like furniture consignment and home decor, along with contact information: 219.809.9249, 731 Franklin Street, Michigan City IN 46360, and email hoitytoityconsignments@hotmail.com. The bottom advertisement is for 'the Salon at 10th and Pine', showing five women sitting in a row on a bench. It lists services like Brazilian Blowouts, haircuts, and manicures, with contact info: 128 East 10th Street, Michigan City, IN 219.809.9632.

An advertisement for Brandt's Pet Emporium. It features a close-up of a brown dog's face wearing a light blue surgical mask. The text reads: 'Your Pet Misses Socializing. Bring Him to Brandt's!' Below the image, it says 'BRANDT'S -OLD FASHION- FEED, PET & WILDLIFE EMPORIUM, INC.' and includes a Facebook logo, the slogan 'We Have Perfected Knowledgeable Service', and the address '309 West US 12 • Michigan City, IN • 219.874.4188'.

Innovation... Continued from Page 3

In the case of adults, the LPCPL Exchange helps promote many of the same benefits. I especially am drawn to the concept of a budding inventor/entrepreneur using equipment to develop new products. There are so many possibilities available to anyone willing to get in there and try. The staff has been trained on all the equipment and, along with volunteers, are there to help. The Exchange affords individuals and families new learning experiences...and without having to pay for technology on their own.



LPCPL Exchange's second-floor equipment room bustles with people.

What kind of equipment is available? Answer: 3-D printers, CNC Mill, laser cutter, soldering stations, industrial sewing machines, jewelry and leather working, wood lathe and drill press. I was especially captivated by the industrial sewing machines and 3-D printer. What an asset to have such tools available without having to buy one.

What kinds of spaces are available? The first floor includes meeting rooms, study pods and audio and visual recording studios. I can just imagine a young filmmaker reserving time in the audio and visual studios, creating new videos and experimenting in filmmaking. The second floor includes the open floor room with machines and a large classroom with attached kitchen gallery (perfect for teaching or clubs needing a space to meet).

The Renovation/Conversion

The great architect Louis Sullivan (1856-1924) once said, "Form follows function," a mantra for many architects and industrial designers since the late 19th century. In other words, purpose or func-

tion are key to a building.

In the case of revamping the old telephone exchange, the architectural firm did a fantastic job realizing its full potential, and allowing the purpose to dictate the changes made to the building's interior.

Craig Campbell, MKM Architecture + Design construction administration manager, and others attended the October grand opening and ribbon cutting. Asked about when they began the initial design work for transforming the building, he said initial feasibility studies began in 2017. Construction lasted July 2020-August 2021.

Library staff already were familiar with MKM because of prior work that included updates to the main library, 904 Indiana Ave., and designs for new branches in Hanna, Rolling Prairie, Fish Lake and Coolspring Township.

"The library determined the use for the building," Owens said. "The decision to create the spaces was based on input gathered from community members, our local school corporations, employers, along with city and county officials. We also had already developed a maker program that was growing and needed more space."

As the building was designed to support heavy equipment, converting to a public space wasn't going to require any large structural changes.

That was good news.

"For the most part, when the project began, the building was mostly large open spaces (with the exception of a small office here or there)," Campbell said. "The largest change to the building was the installation of a new elevator and stair through the entire building to access each level and provide an

accessible entrance from the street.”

Of course, all electrical, plumbing and mechanical components, as well as windows and such, were updated. MKM made sure enough ventilation existed for any equipment: not only for the present, but for the future as well. Allowing for possible future needs was crucial to the conversion. I especially like the welcoming industrial vibe of the second floor, with exposed mechanicals and polished concrete floors imbuing the space with a feeling of innovation, inventiveness and industry.

I was curious, too, about the overall interior design aspects for the building, especially the first-floor entrance with its stunning art installation/construction that greets visitors as they ascend the staircase approaching the lobby.

“The hope was for the project to have a large focal point that mimicked the history of the space as the ‘telephone building’ – to provide an installation that honored that legacy,” Campbell said. “For the design team, the most interesting part of the project was the fact that, throughout its lifetime, the building has always functioned as a home for innovation and communication. From telephone switch operators to the new makerspace, this location has consistently been dedicated to the idea



The first-floor installation art piece.

of collaboration and connectivity – the hallmark of all good public libraries and the mission for the staff at LPCPL.”

When you visit, you also will note the use of yellow on walls and as other accents. I asked Campbell how the color choices were made.

“While some of the spaces in the existing building

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Innovation... Continued from Page 5

were constrained (particularly the ceiling heights in the lower level), the design team knew that most of the mechanical and electrical systems would need to be exposed," he said. "Therefore, early in the design process, we proposed the idea of painting the majority of the surfaces white (to enhance the natural light and unify the interior spaces). This allowed us to project warmer accents with the use of perforated plywood at the elevator and the lobby installation.

"While it's common to have signage in 'hazard yellow' in many workshops, we thought it would be an interesting way to use that color to brand the space throughout the building (from accent walls to task chairs)."

Reserving Your Spot

If you own a home or live in LaPorte County, then you are eligible to take advantage of the new makerspace, studios and meeting rooms. To start with, an LPCPL card is required. Fortunately, LPC-

PL has reciprocal agreements with all the libraries in the county. If you have yet to sign up for a LPCPL card, do so soon.

The next step is to check out what's needed for participating in the new makerspace by visiting the library website (www.laportelibrary.org), the necessary requirements needed to complete your equipment training and how to reserve a spot and time. Better yet, visit and see for yourself. However, if you already have a library card, you just can't come in and start using the equipment. You can check out the space beforehand. If you want to use any of the other spaces, such as the audio or visual studios, you'll also need a reservation to receive your code to enter the room.

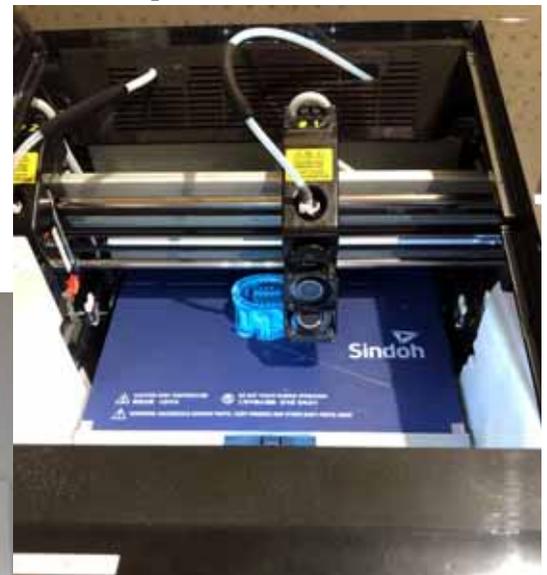
Now is the time to discover a new hobby. Learn how to use new equipment. Book a studio and try your hand at recording or filming. Or simply sit in a study pod in peace and quiet.

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“Last Night in Soho” is a Wild, Trippy Ride

by Andrew Tallackson

Edgar Wright is one of my favorite directors because he’s a Brit obsessed with American cinema. Not the highbrow stuff, mind you, but junk food. Genre movies revered by geeks who know them line for line, scene for scene. His “Shaun of the Dead” (2004) was a pitch-perfect satire of George Romero zombie movies, while the slacker comedy “Scott Pilgrim vs. the World” (2010), in my opinion, is the greatest cult film of the past 15 years.

“Last Night in Soho” shows him aiming for the art-house crowd: a loopy descent into madness and the supernatural. He crams a lot into his movie, and not always successfully, but the boldness invigorates you.

All of Wright’s past efforts featured guys as the protagonists. “Last Night in Soho” offers his first female hero embodied by “Jojo Rabbit” actress Thomasin McKenzie. She is dangerously fragile as Eloise, who lives in the countryside with her grandmother and is fixated on 1960s pop culture — the clothes, the music, the sensibilities. She’s a wisp of a girl. Every word uttered, every gesture feels like it took severe courage to do so. She also has a bit of a sixth sense, “seeing” her dead mother, a woman fraught with mental illness who took her own life.

Obsessed with fashion, Eloise is accepted into a London design school. The party atmosphere is everything she’s not, so she finds an apartment rented out by the lonely Ms. Collins, played by Emma Peel herself, Diana Rigg, in her final performance. Turns out, the available room somehow transports Eloise back to 1966 London, where she shadows a striking young woman about her age, Sandie. She is played by Anya Taylor-Joy in a raucous turn that continues the hot streak established by “The Queen’s Gambit.” This is the kind of performance people would describe as having the “it” factor. Star quality. In a bravura sequence, Sandie barrels into a nightclub decked out like Nancy Sinatra and “These Boots Were Made for Walking.” Boldly confident. Sexy as heck. Wright places Eloise in mirrored reflections of Sandie, then alternates between the two characters in the same scene. It is a stunning mix of editing, lighting, choreography and music.

These trips back in time are invigorating at first

for Eloise: an out-of-body experience for a young woman mired in the past. But there is a darkness to this world, one that chips away at Eloise’s sense of reality...and her own sanity.

The first half of “Last Night in Soho” bounces along with a jazzy feel to it, Wright having fun rec-



Anya Taylor-Joy (right), seen here with Matt Smith, is a force of nature in “Last Night in Soho.”

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“Last Night in Soho”

*Running time: 116 minutes. AMC, Vickers Theatre.
Rated R for bloody violence, sexual content, language,
brief drug material and brief graphic nudity*

reating a specific time and place, and with music central to how the story advances. The story, in a way, is an old-fashioned mystery disguised as trippy nostalgia.

Once Eloise starts to slip into madness, Wright frequently shifts gears, and the tone of his film becomes a bit bumpy. Is it a ghost story? A period-piece slasher tale? A mystery whose feminist bent nearly backfires on it?

Wright doesn’t make a decision until the very end. I’d pretty much figured out the twist — any mystery fan will pick up on all the red flags — and Wright, for all his ideas, is back to his home turf: B-movie horror.

But that’s OK. “Last Night in Soho” may be a mess, but it’s a delicious mess.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

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Michigan City Public Library

Michigan City Public Library's circulation/front lobby area is open to the public.

The front doors are open. Remodeling of the front lobby is almost complete. Public seating is available, and the computer lab is open. Hours are: 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday-Saturday and closed Sundays.

The following programs are scheduled:

- **Michigan City Historical Society's annual meeting featuring guest speaker Alex Neel at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 6.** Neel was selected in 2020 as Lake County's District 10 Conservation "Officer of the Year." In April, the four-year veteran of Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement was credited with helping save the life of a heart attack victim.
- **The Seventh Annual Michigan City Video Fest at 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6.** Among the videos is the premiere of the locally produced animated short "The Last Days of Digger," as well as Joanna Mendl Shaw's video "Imprinted." More details are available at <http://MCVideoFest.com>.
- **Writing Out Loud at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6.** Eric Zorn is a former American op-ed columnist and daily blogger for The Chicago Tribune who specialized in local news and politics. He co-wrote the 1990 book Murder of Innocence about Laurie

Dann that served as the basis for a 1993 made-for-TV movie. When Alden Global Capital took control of The Chicago Tribune this past spring, he was among the many columnists and other journalists who accepted a buyout offer. His final column appeared June 27.



Zorn

- **Book in a Jar Contest for Kids through Nov. 17.** Those who stop by Youth Services can view the jar to guess which book is inside. All guesses receive a bookmark. Correct answers are entered into a drawing.
- **Take-Home Craft for Kids & Teens.** Free take-home craft kits are available at the Youth Services desk while supplies last.
- **Virtual Story Time with Take-Home Craft.** A new storytime video is posted at 10 a.m. Wednesdays on the library website and YouTube channel at www.mclib.org/parents/story-time/. Visit Youth Services to get the craft! The program is aimed at children through age 5. Contact the Youth Services department at (219) 873-3045 for more details. *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.
- Fold3, a military-records database powered by Ancestry.com. 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.



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



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PNW Hosts College Goal Sunday on Nov. 7

Financial aid professionals will help college-bound students and their families apply for financial aid during the free College Goal Sunday from 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, at Purdue University Northwest.

The Westville campus will host the program in Room 219 of the Technology Building.

Completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is required for students to be eligible for state and federal grants, scholarships and student loans offered by most colleges, universities and vocational schools across the U.S. The submission deadline is April 15, 2022.

Students 23 or younger should attend with a parent or guardian. Parents and guardians should take completed 2020 IRS 1040 tax returns, W-2 forms and other 2020 income and benefits information. Students who work should take income information.

Students 24 and older may attend alone and take a completed 2020 IRS 1040 tax return, W-2 form or other 2020 income and benefits informa-



tion.

Students and parents are encouraged to apply for their U.S. Department of Education FSA IDs at www.studentaid.gov before attending the event.

Volunteers will walk through the online form line by line and answer questions as needed. All sites offer FAFSA online capabilities, and many have Spanish interpreters.

Students who attend College Goal Sunday and submit a completed evaluation form will be entered in a drawing to win one of five College Goal Sunday \$1,000 scholarships. Winners will be notified in the spring, and scholarships will be sent directly to the higher education institution selected by the winning students. Financial aid information can be obtained at PNW by visiting www.pnw.edu/finaid; e-mailing the Office of Financial Aid at finaid@pnw.edu or calling (219) 785-5460.

Visit www.collegegoalsunday.org/ for additional information.



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Fire Prevention Week



Long Beach Fire Department recently visited Notre Dame Preschool as part of Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 3-9). The youngsters learned what firefighters do, what they wear, how not to be afraid of them and to be smart during an emergency. Students promised to never play with matches, then got to ride in the department fire truck with the sirens on and horns honking.

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The Happiest Moment

The two of us sprawl out at a prime terrace table at our favorite lunch spot. We order iced teas and agree to split a harvest salad and the best chicken quesadillas on the planet. After catching up on recent happenings in our busy lives, my friend poses a startling question.

“What would you say was ‘the happiest moment’ of your life?”

Before answering, I savor the last bite of my crispy quesadilla wedge, one I infused with just the right smear of guacamole. This kind of penetrating query is one I field often from Robbie, and it’s one of the reasons I enjoy our frequent lunch dates.

I met Robbie four years ago on the tennis courts. Before COVID struck, Robbie lost her husband to a prolonged battle with cancer. She spent the better part of the COVID year sequestered and alone, coping with debilitating grief and loss. During her brief journey into widowhood, Robbie has shared how she misses her husband’s easy laugh, doting presence and it-can-wait-till-tomorrow attitude. Happily married for decades, she admits to craving the return of the life they led. Sometimes during our gabfests, she laments about how easily a widow is sidelined when couples formulate weekend plans.

I wipe my gooey fingers on the linen napkin in my lap and study Robbie. The way her dark eyebrows arch to meet the brim of her straw fedora, I know she means for me to carefully consider her startling question. I assume she has been reflecting upon the happiest moments in her own life, and I suspect I’m not the first or last friend she will poll with this thought-provoking query.

I drain my iced tea and ask for clarification, “The happiest moment. Just one moment? Not a time in my life?” I wish I could see the expression lurking behind her mirrored sunglasses.

Robbie’s auburn hair flutters around her face in the light afternoon breeze. At 72, she could easily pass for 60. She grins. “Yep. The ‘happiest moment.’ Pick one!”

She settles into the blue canvas seat cushions of

This Girl, That Life

Julie McGue



her rattan lounge, pleased with herself for steering our lunch conversation into a positive and interesting lane. My brain pulses. Happy moments burst forth like heated popcorn kernels. Each joyful moment from my 62-year existence vies for the lead.

“OK,” I say and scoot my chair closer to Robbie’s. “I could claim that the day that I got married was my ‘happiest moment.’ Or the days that my children were born. Or the day that my book was published. But I won’t. While those events were each momentous and important, I expected to be happy....”

Robbie nods so energetically, her straw hat slips off the back of her head. “Go on,” she says, retrieving it from under the table.

As I struggle to settle on a favorite “happiest moment,” I contort the linen napkin in my lap. “While those moments I just mentioned were happy, they were also stressful. So, I guess what I mean is that my happiness during those times included well... relief! Relief that everything turned out as I’d hoped.” I giggled. “Steve didn’t leave me at the altar, childbirth was not too terribly difficult and the kids came out with all their fingers and toes.”

Robbie takes off her sunglasses. Her impish grin crinkles her blue-green eyes. “Keep going,” she pleads. “I can tell by the way your eyes shone a moment ago, that there’s something else you want to offer as your final answer.”

Feeling a little like a “Jeopardy” guest, I giggle again. She’s right. There was another thought jiggling for position. I’d initially ignored it, mostly because the other “happiest moments” felt more appropriate, like they were what I thought I should say.

“Okay...” I draw out the syllables to buy time.

My brain pounces on the shy memory and pushes it forward. Under this intense focus, it sparkles and gleams like a diamond catching the light just right. This particular “happiest moment” had been a yearned-for success. One that was a lifetime in the making. Being granted this wish made me so deliriously happy, completed me in such a way, that when it came to fruition, I think my heart stopped for a second.

Just as I’m about to speak, the waitress appears with a pitcher of tea. As Robbie and I watch her fill our glasses, I rack my brain. I gather words, try

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stringing them together, discard a few and scramble for worthier ones. Not one word will suffice. In fact, most of what I come up with is grossly inadequate. I need to convey brilliance, magnificence, stunning magic, novelty, longing fulfilled and blissful satisfaction. Even now, immersed in the act of remembering something that happened a decade ago, my body tingles. Yes, of all the really joyous times in my life, this one moment changed me the most. It lifted my soul from lacking to content and complete.

What was about to spill from my lips was not fresh news to Robbie. She knows my story. She read my memoir, Twice a Daughter, which is the tale about the search for my birth relatives. Like other readers, Robbie knows the basic facts of my adoption experience. But because she is not an adoptee or a birth mother, she cannot fully appreciate how my adoption search and reunion stack up against the other chapters in my life.

I say, "When each one of my four children were born, I was ecstatic to see their little faces for the first time. I don't mean to minimize this, but"

"Go on. Share," Robbie demands and leans in.

I draw in my breath and when I exhale the words come. "The day that I spoke to my birth mom on the phone for the first time.... Hearing her voice after wondering for 50 years what it would sound like.... After all the searching, and then the phone rang, and I was talking to her. As she talked, in my head I kept repeating: 'I'm talking to her. I'm actually talking to my mother.' You see I had fantasized about her for my entire life. And not only was she on the phone speaking with me, but she also sounded nice. And friendly. And loving. The more she talked, I had to close my eyes and then open them right away to prove to myself that what was happening wasn't just a dream. Speaking to my birth mom was one of the 'happiest moments' of my life."

I finish my little speech and collapse into the back of my rattan chair. Robbie reaches over, and her warm fingers close around my hand.

I smile back at her shyly and whisper, "And now it's your turn. What was your 'happiest moment?'"

And as Robbie begins to recount her story, my mind drifts. I think about how good it feels to be sitting here with a friend, sharing both a fabulous lunch and a beautiful autumn day. I think about my friend's question and how wonderful it is to concentrate on only the happiest of times.

Robbie's question is an elixir; it has transformed just another Monday into a magical afternoon. I read somewhere that fear and gratitude occupy the same space in the brain, and if we want to banish our anxieties, we should think about something for which we are grateful. Today, I'm grateful for the bountiful supply of happy memories on which my life has been built.

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Footlight Players to Present New Holiday Comedy

Footlight Players will present its second show of the 72nd season, "Miracle on South Division Street," the first two weekends in November at Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St.

Set in Buffalo, N.Y., the play introduces the Nowak family. Clara (Debbie Bartholomew) and her three adult children, Beverly, Ruth and Jimmy (Bobbi Ann Lauritsen, Crystal Lundstrom-Sobus and Alexander Bonner, all of Michigan City) knew they were special since the miraculous Christmas Eve in 1942 when the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Grandpa...in his barber shop. Ruth unveils her decision to write and star in a one-woman show about the family miracle so "the whole world



Debbie Bartholomew (right) stars with Bobbi Ann Lauritsen, Crystal Lundstrom-Sobus and Alexander Bonner in "Miracle on South Division Street."

will know." The family, however, finds its faith shaken when a deathbed confession causes the legend to unravel.

Chesterton native Denise Barkow is the director and Joe Blanchard the assistant director. The crew includes Kevin Doler, Tony and Michael Thomas, Kristen Allison, Adam Wogoman, Laura Meyer, Thom Nelson and Nikki Anthony.

Performances are Nov. 5-7 and 11-14. Times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children 12 and younger, as well as for the Nov. 11 show.

Anyone who was a patron for the 71st or 72nd season can use complimentary passes.

The space seats 80 people comfortably. There no longer is assigned seating, so reservations are strongly suggested in person when the box office is open, by calling (219) 874-4035 or at www.FootlightPlayers.org, then click the "Reservations" button.

MCHS Veterans Ceremony

A ceremony honoring veterans is at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, in the newly renovated gymnasium at Michigan City High School, 8466 Pahs Road.

The program will include a modified military parade involving the school band and choir, along with the MCJROTC. U.S. Congressman Frank Mrvan is the guest speaker. All veterans, as well as the public, are invited.

Author Book Signing

Local author Mitch Taebel will hold a book signing for his new work, Looking Out For America, from 3-5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, at Lakeshore Coffee & Specialties, 444 Wabash St.

Taebel describes the book as an autobiography and political manifesto.




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Veteran's Day Concert to Feature Michigan City Municipal Band

Michigan City Municipal Band is the guest ensemble for the free annual Veteran's Day concert at 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, at Valparaiso University's Chapel of the Resurrection, 1600 Chapel Drive.

The program, which includes "Concerto for Euphonium and Band," features the Valparaiso University Chamber Concert Band, Windiana Concert Band and euphonium soloist Hiram Diaz. Jeffrey Scott Doebler is the conductor. The performance is sponsored by the Valparaiso University Department of Music and Windiana Concert Band.

The concert, performed without intermission, will last about 75 minutes. Gunnery Sgt. Diaz is

from the U.S. Marine Band, "The President's Own."

The "Concerto for Euphonium and Band" was commissioned by the Michigan City Municipal Band, with funding from a special music projects endowment within Unity Foundation of LaPorte County. Last summer, the band debuted an excerpt from the concerto with Diaz as soloist. The concerto will receive its complete Michigan City premiere in 2022. Diaz will be the guest soloist, with Doebler conducting.

Audience members are encouraged to stay current with VU's COVID-19 safety protocols at www.valpo.edu/covid-info/

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“The Forgotten Battle” is a Remarkable Tribute to Overlooked Chapter in History

by Andrew Tallackson



Former “Harry Potter” actor Tom Felton (right) is among the sprawling cast in “The Forgotten Battle.”

“The Forgotten Battle” is a potent reminder that in war, individual acts of defiance merit our respect whether they make the history books or not.

What a staggering achievement. Combining talent from The Netherlands, Great Britain and Canada, this Netflix film cost a fraction of major Hollywood studio efforts, but its scope and devastating impact outweigh what we are accustomed to seeing.

In only his third outing as director, Matthijs van Heijningen Jr. (2011’s “The Thing” prequel) has created a film that is epic in ambition and at the same time deeply personal, weaving together characters whose lives intersect during a key turning point in World War II that up until now has received scant attention.

All the story threads in “The Forgotten Battle” build to what became known during World War II as “The Battle of the Scheldt,” its goal being to clear the shipping route to Antwerp so Allies in Europe could receive crucial supplies.

The movie opens after D-Day in 1944, in German-occupied Zeeland in The Netherlands. Teuntje Visser (Susan Radder) and her father, Doctor Visser (Jan Bijvoet), reluctantly collaborate with Nazis occupying the area: she in the mayor’s office, he treating wounded from all sides of the battle. Her younger brother, Dirk (Ronald Kalter), is secretly working with the resistance. When it appears the town has



been liberated, the Germans marching rank and file past residents, Dirk commits what he believes is a final act of rebellion: hurling a stone at a German convoy that results in the death of three soldiers.

We also meet Marinus van Staveren (Gijs Blom), a Dutch volunteer serving with the Waffen-SS Division Das Reich who gets reassigned as an office worker for Oberst Berghof (Justus von Dohnányi), the Nazi commandant in Zeeland. Marinus gets a front seat to Nazi lies and hatred as the search tightens for Dirk, who has gone into hiding.

The third key player is a British pilot, Sgt. Will Sinclair (Jamie Flatters), whose approach to combat is sculpted by Hollywood bravado, but who gets a swift lesson in reality when his plane crashes during aerial combat, leaving him and a few others to trek through marshes to deliver intel to the allies.

Heijningen Jr. spent the U.S. equivalent of \$14 million on his film – chump change compared to the \$400 million lavished on “Avengers: Endgame” – but this filmmaker gets more bang for his buck based on ingenuity and sheer talent. There are images in

his movie that carry the sweep of David Lean epics. Women, on the ground, looking up at fighter planes above, the camera placed at the lowest angle possible. The view from inside these planes as blasts of enemy fire emerge is spectacular.

On the ground, though, “The Forgotten Battle” does not sentimentalize war. Scenes in the trenches, of Nazi torture and deception, are unflinching. With his camera right next to these soldiers, we watch these men rise and fall, the ground rattling beneath them, chunks of dirt and debris littering their bodies. The movie is as much a sensory experience as it is a peek into major World War II combat that never entered the mainstream of conversation for this period.

The movie holds no punches. There are no easy way outs, no simple heroics. War is shown for what it is: a literal Hell on Earth. Teuntje, Marinus and Will, in their own ways, stand up to obvious wrongs: acts of courage amid the chaos of combat.

“The Forgotten Battle” has caught Netflix by surprise. Ratings have been through the roof. On cer-



Teuntje Visser (Susan Radder, right) is drawn into the resistance during World War II in a scene from “The Forgotten Battle.”

tain days, it is the streaming service’s most watched film. That the movie is in Dutch, French, German and English suggested to Netflix its sole audience was the art-house crowd.

Hardly. “The Forgotten Battle” passionately tells a story that for years needed to be told...and now, it has an audience. It’s also one of the year’s best.

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Believe the Hype: “Squid Game” is Scary, Thrilling, Emotional

by Andrew Tallackson

Jumping on the “Squid Game” bandwagon held zero appeal when Netflix launched it Sept. 17. Possibly it was the title. It sounded gross. Or the description — a South Korean “Hunger Games” — which suggested unlimited bloodshed. Or that the last global sensation of this magnitude was “Tiger King,” which streaming through the Netflix app — alone — likely gave my 4K television an STD.

Leave it to South Korea, though, for proving me wrong yet again. As blistering social commentary, this makes the Oscar-winning “Parasite” look like child’s play — *literally*. As dystopian horror, creator Hwang Dong-hyuk has achieved something that, had it been made in America, would have been exploitation fare: violence for violence’s sake. In his hands, it has so much to say about human nature.

Told through nine episodes, “Squid Game” introduces us to Seong Gi-hun (Lee Jung-jae), an irresponsibly down-on-his luck chauffeur — divorced from his family — whose crippling vice is gambling. The addiction has left him with nothing, just free-loading off his ailing mother. One night, he is approached by a man in a subway who taunts him, promising money just for playing a game with him right then and there. Afterward, he leaves him a card with a number to call if hungry for more.

Of course, he is. Money, for him, is an elusive commodity. He arrives at the scheduled pickup time, enters a van and is gassed into a heavy slumber. When he awakens, he finds himself in a room with more than 450 strangers. A few individuals, he recognizes. Like a childhood friend, Cho Sang-woo (Park Hae-soo), a childhood classmate who bucked the odds to be an investment broker. Or Kang Sae-byek (Jung Ho-yeon), the pickpocket who robbed him of all his racetrack earnings.

The entire lot is tossed into an arena for a life-or-death match that must be seen to be believed. A game of “Red Light, Green Light” where anyone still moving after “Red Light” is shot and killed on sight. The device keeping the game moving? A large doll that swivels to and fro with the sweetest of voices. By the game’s end, more than half the contestants will be eliminated.

What’s going on here?

The show treats its audience like the characters: struggling to make sense of it all, desperate for information. Every single contestant has experienced some sort of financial difficulty, whether it be of their own doing or if life, itself, dealt them unfortunate blows. Is everyone being punished for their financial sins by some shadowy presence? What the survivors do learn is that they stand the chance to



Contestants in a most dangerous game find their lives under constant threat in “Squid Game.”

win \$45.6 billion.

The second episode is pivotal, both for the contestants and we, the audience. We meet more of the survivors. They have the option by vote to quit — and they do, by the narrow margin of a single vote. They are subsequently shipped out in the same manor in which they arrived. The real world, though, is so bleak, with little promise of a better life, that the surviving 200 or so opt to return for Round 2 of the games. The show’s political overtones suggest society has produced lives desperate from financial ruin. Fair shakes no longer exist. These are people so disillusioned, the idea of risking their lives back in the games has more appeal. At least then, there is hope of triumph.

What’s fascinating, once the contestants return for Round 2, is how the dynamic within them shifts. Whereas the first game was defined by disorientation and paralyzing fear, now, the group has some hint of what to expect. The mood is less dismal, more competitive. Cocky bravado emerges in the form of Alpha males and females, all surveying who among them are the weakest.

A stroke of storytelling genius is the introduction of a police detective, Hwang Jun-ho (Wi Ha-joon), searching for his missing brother, who sneaks in undetected amid the parade of vehicles ushering contestants back to the games. Through him, we have a glimpse into the behind-the-scenes mechanics. How it all works. The step-by-step method of ushering people to a remote island. The spirit of “The Hunger Games” may loom over the heart of “Squid Game,” but it also hearkens back to Richard Connell’s classic tale *The Most Dangerous Game*, which tends to get remade for each new generation.

(Hwang Dong-hyuk, while basing the Netflix show on an actual child’s game, was inspired by his own economic woes, along with disparity in South Korea between the haves and have-nots.)

The production design of “Squid Game” is as much a star as the cast is. Downright brilliant, actually: a perverse bastardization of childhood innocence. Surreal hallways and staircases that resemble Lego blocks. An arena designed to resemble a playground sandbox. Simple games such as tug-of-war, again, are reinvented through production de-

sign triumphs, the arena for that game suspending the players above a deadly precipice.

Evenings, when the day’s games have drawn to a close, are a terrifying glimpse of society in a fish-bowl. Under the microscope. In these scenes, “Squid Game” is less about violence, but how people behave amid the threat of violence. Do they rise to the occasion or fall with crushing defeat? What triggers the worst in people, and how quickly do some slip into a primal form of survival, where little else matters but self-preservation?

The irony is that Seong Gi-hun, up until now depicted as a hapless loser, is reborn as the voice of reason. The games give him a purpose, as a unifying force. Addiction may have eroded his moral fiber, but the games suggest a reluctant, but worthy leader exists. Seong Gi-hun becomes the best version of himself.

Midway through the games, however, as contestants who are little more than faces in a crowd perish, we are left with characters with whom we have become quite attached. That leads to the emotionally exhausting sixth episode. A simple game of marbles erodes into the dawning realization that half the contestants will die before it draws to a close. Anyone who has stuck with “Squid Game” and invested themselves into these characters will be devastated here. The frenzied mayhem of the games is reduced to a hushed silence that gives way to heartbreak. Jaded exteriors abandoned for genuine truths, sacrifices, honor, deception and cruelty.

“Squid Game,” though, still has a few tricks up its sleeves, the most terrifying being a game set across a bridge of glass. Some of the panes are tempered, others easily breakable. Which one is the right one to approach? That’s the dilemma, and the result is a queasy challenge that is the definition of a nail-biter in terms of who will make it and who won’t.

I anticipated the final episode of “Squid Game” to build to an epic confrontation between the last two contestants. Again, had this been filmed in the United States, that would have been the case. Instead, it delivers that match early, then explores the emotional fallout for the winner over the course of a year. It is realistic, moving and invigorating.

The final scene may suggest Season 2 is forthcoming, but not in how we expect it might. Instead, it suggests a trickier scenario where the mouse is now the cat.

Intrigued? You should be. “The Squid Game,” during its first month on Netflix, was seen by 142 million households, making it the streaming giant’s most watched series ever. I am more than pleased to be among the masses of fans hungry for more.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

The Writing Life: Part Two

So, we left off at the formative stage of my writing life. That would have been in 1969, when I became a published writer in my Chicago neighborhood's weekly newspaper, *The Beverly Review*.

But before I forge ahead with my writerly formation as an English-journalism student at Illinois State University (1968-1972), I need to back up to Morgan Park High School in Chicago for a shout-out to Veronica Gillolly, my sophomore typing teacher.

Mrs. Gillolly was a taskmaster: She demanded perfection as we banged away on those big, honking Royal typewriters. I struggled to get Cs every marking period and may have won a B once or twice, but never an A. Didn't matter, because I was passing in a vital writer's skill being passed on by a woman who really knew her keys, and then some. Oh, and I didn't mind being one of the only boys in the class. And it was while taking Mrs. Gillolly's typing class that I went to an office supply store on Western Avenue and bought a brand-new Smith-Corona portable. I literally typed that baby to death. I only traded it in in recent years for a mint-condition Remington Quiet-Riter Eleven manual typewriter.

You do have a manual typewriter handy, don't you?

No?

Then how are you going to keep your sanity during the next power outage?

All right, enough digression. On with my progression in the writing life at Illinois State University.



The author with his "sheepskin" from Illinois State University.

Life With Charley

Charles McKelvy



We called it ISU, and it was located in Normal, Ill., down there on old U.S. 66. And, yes, some wag with a can of black spray paint climbed up on the water tower one fine evening and added the prefix "AB" to NORMAL. We figured he or she had to be an English major, right?

ABNORMAL was quickly edited back to NORMAL, but my development as a writer at ISU was anything but normal.

Take, for example, winning first prize in a literary contest my junior year. I submitted what I thought was a short story about my encounter during the summer of 1970 with a World War II veteran. I had actually met such a man while working as a payphone coin collector for the late, great Illinois Bell Telephone Co. on Chicago's celebrated South Side. The job took me to more than a few taverns; it was while servicing the phone in such an establishment that I got to hear a colorfully inebriated patron's fantastic tale of his exploits in the Army Air Corps over Japan in 1944-1945.

His tale was so tall, I wrote my account as fiction and submitted it in the short-story division. But the judges deemed it worthy of top honors in the essay category, so I won. My colleagues at the campus newspaper were none too pleased; I overheard them saying they gave the award "to a real hack."

Every young writer needs to hear that he or she is a hack, right?

I didn't like it, but then I knew my colleagues at *The Vidette* didn't like the crappy way I cropped photographs and sized headlines. So it was all water off a duck's back for this ink-stained wretch.



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By my junior year at ISU — which some say stands for “I Screwed Up” — I was developing the hide of a rhino. I was realizing a real writer has to rise up under ridicule and rejection, and exact revenge by continuing to write.

And I continued to write my senior year at I Screwed Up: I volunteered to write some of the copy for “INDEX 1972,” the poetically named yearbook.

Some, my eye!

I pretty much ended up writing most of it, except for the sports pages. Sportswriters always seem to be thick on the ground, but getting somebody to go out and actually interview the chairs of all the various departments, then actually pound out copy about, well, the philosophy department, that was another matter.

To wit:

“An unexamined life is unworthy of a man.”
Socrates

In existence at ISU since 1967 when it received authorization, the philosophy department is chaired by Kenneth Kennard, an individual who measures his department’s stature not in the number of majors it attracts, but in helping students experience “intellectual adventure on a broad plain of subjects.”

Noting that no cuts had been made in his department, Kennard saw philosophy as a growing discipline at ISU. “In 1968 Dr. Kane and I were the only professors teaching philosophy. The following year we had three full-time and one part-time teacher. Presently we have seven full-time instructors, and we would like to increase to between 12 and 20.”

With regard to the philosophy faculty, Kennard explained, “We want only the most qualified people on our staff as we presently have. All of our faculty were trained in nationally ranked philosophy programs on the Ph.D. level.”



Proof of publication at Illinois State University. No byline, but I was happy to see my words in print.

Concerning the requirements in philosophy, Kennard had this to say, “Because we do not limit students with the burden of restrictive requirements, the Philosophy major requires only 27 hours. Students seeking a liberal background of knowledge are then free to explore a wider range of subject matter.”

Kennard said the philosophy department was in tune with the administration’s concepts of a diverse education.

“Within the realm of our present curriculum,” he

said, “we have Philosophy of Religion, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Logic and Social Philosophy. When the budget freeze ends we are going to search for qualified people to instruct Philosophy of Law and Oriental Philosophy.”

Kennard concluded by saying, “If we taught Philosophy without indicating its broader applications, it would seem too abstract and formal.”

“The University has been criticized because it does not impart moral and ethical values to its students as its traditional characteristics required it to do,” Kennard explained. “The state university has wisely opted to be amoral. Nonetheless, the University should urge students to develop their own morals and ideals. The Philosophy Department fulfills this vitally important role by teaching a person to discover his or her own basic values and convictions.”

Not the best writing I’ve done, but Kennard contacted me after the yearbook was published and effusively thanked me for presenting his department in such a positive light. I told him I would have been a philosophy major had I had to do it all over again.



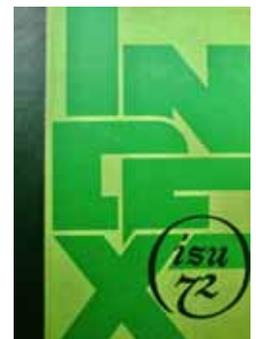
And INDEXT 72 staff photo at ISU’s Ewing Castle. That’s “Prince Charles” in the center of the back row.

While I received no byline nor remuneration for those and other words I wrote for INDEXT 1972, I did get to dress as a Prince Charles of yore and pose with the rest of the staff for a group portrait at ISU’s Ewing Castle. Another staffer insisted he was the king, but I was happy to be a prince-in-waiting. And I was absolutely thrilled to see so much of my writing in print.

So much so, I have long reserved a place of honor on my bookshelf for my copy of INDEXT 1972. My first book, right?

Well, we’ll get to my other books next time.

’til then, keep reading and writing.



I wrote the lion’s share of the copy for INDEXT 72.

Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Finalists



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Chezem



Ellis



Fleshman



Gorski



Jaracz



Klimczak



Kubik



Mrozinski



Shaia



Walker

Unity Foundation of LaPorte County announced 11 high school seniors are LaPorte County finalists for the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship.

Two finalists will be selected, receiving a full-tuition scholarship to pursue a baccalaureate degree at any accredited public or private Indiana college or university, and an annual \$900 book stipend. The program has provided approximately \$5 million in tuition and book stipends to 68 LaPorte County students since 1998.

The finalists are:

- Lillian Burke, LaPorte High School.
- Isaac Chezem, LaPorte High School.
- Jacob Ellis, LaPorte High School.
- Emma Fleshman, LaPorte High School.
- Kyle Gorski, LaCrosse High School.
- Lauren Jaracz, La Lumiere School.

- Jolie Klimczak, South Central High School.
- Anna Kubik, LaPorte High School.
- Macy Mrozinski, LaPorte High School.
- Alyssa Shaia, Michigan City High School.
- Abigail Walker, New Prairie High School.

Finalists were selected based on academic achievement, service to others, extracurricular activities and, to a lesser extent, financial need. A committee of local volunteers reviewed the applications, not knowing the names until after the finalists were selected. Next, each finalist will be interviewed, and nominee and alternate names submitted to the Independent Colleges of Indiana Inc. Final selection will be announced by the end of December.

Noon Time Talk Series

The Noon Time Talk Series continues, focusing on the 43rd Elkhart Juried Regional, at 12:20 p.m. EDT Thursday, Nov. 4, at Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart.

The speaker is Tom Zuber, Goshen, an art educator-painter who teaches at Goshen High School. He will discuss his work, including "Pandemic," which received the Steve & Traci Bollero Purchase Award.

Admission is \$5. Members are free. Call (574) 293-6660 for details.

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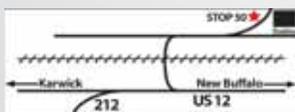
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It started a couple weeks ago when the Michigan sales stats for properties from the Indiana line to the Bridgman School District indicated there was a dramatic (50% lower) drop for September 2021 versus September 2020. I became more anxious after attending two Realtor® meetings where the discussion was almost totally about how the market will probably be going down.

When I sat down to look at the market in Indiana, I'd just received LaPorte County stats for August-September for 2020 and 2021.

In LaPorte County, there were 166 sales in September 2020 and 142 sales in September 2021. Same down trend as Michigan. But my interpretations began to change when I compared August 2021 to September 2021. There were 170 residential units sold in August 2021 and 142 units in September 2021. Not terribly unexpected when we consider the effect of school starting usually causes.

Three conclusions:

1. Beware of one month statistical vicissitudes. They may be meaningless or easily explained.
2. The second half of 2020 may be better than the second half of 2021, but the market is still strong. Median sales prices are up from \$159,238 to \$165,900 for the first nine months of 2021 compared to the first nine months of 2020. Your house is likely worth more this year than last year, even if there are fewer sales.
3. COVID and the changes in where people work and how they work are still impacting our real estate market. COVID is so strong because it causes fear. As Napoleon Hill said many decades ago, "Fear is a great motivator than hope of gain." COVID fears will likely continue to strongly impact our real estate market.

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Here's What's Happening in



Barker Middle School celebrated 2021 National Chemistry Week (Oct. 17-23) with career-awareness activities and experiments. STEM teacher Amy Hamman (dressed as an M&M and pictured with students Robert Pearce and Hayden Mangual) led students in a series of experiments involving candy corn and M&Ms. After submerging an M&M in warm water, they observed the phenomenon of "floating letters," finding the "M" is not water-soluble. Other experiments explored "confectioner's glaze," which makes candy corn shiny and keeps pieces from sticking together. They observed the glaze (made from ingredients such as shellac, wax, vegetable oil or starch) peeling off when submerged. Barker is an Indiana STEM-certified middle school.



Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps participated in Cyber Patriot, the national cyber security competition. Cadets act as managers for a company's information system, receiving a set of virtual operating systems. Then, they must find and fix vulnerabilities while maintaining critical services. The top teams earn an all-expense paid trip to Maryland for the finals, where they can earn national recognition and scholarship money.



Sgt. Daniel Edwards, local recruiter for the U.S. Army National Guard, visited the Automotive Technology class at A.K. Smith Career Center to discuss career options with students. He brought a Humvee (high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle) the students got to inspect. They received first-hand experience in how it feels to start and ride in the 1,000-pound vehicle while hearing about what it's like to operate and service a military vehicle while on duty.

Michigan City Area Schools

Hospital, MCAS Partnership

Students in health sciences at the A.K. Smith Career Center are getting exposure to medical career paths thanks to a new partnership between Franciscan Health and Michigan City Area Schools.

Through the partnership, Health Science II students will visit Franciscan three days a week for six weeks during each grading period, rotating among numerous departments for observation alongside Franciscan nurses, physicians and specialists. The exposure is to areas such as Outpatient Surgery, Radiology, Pharmacy, Cardiac Rehab, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Wound Care, Physical Therapy and Pulmonary Care. Upon completion, the students may be considered for part-time job opportunities at Franciscan. The first series of clinical rotations began Monday, Oct. 18.

The Health Careers program has expanded this school year, according to Delincia Smith, LaPorte County Career and Technical Education director.

“We added a third section of Health Science, which is evidence of this program’s growing popularity with students,” she said in a press release.

The Health Careers program, open to LaPorte



Sarah Jones, Franciscan Health vice president and chief nursing officer, briefs Health Science students prior to clinical rotations.

County juniors and seniors, provides students with an opportunity to become CPR and First Aid certified, and to earn Certified Nursing Assistant and Dementia Care certifications while still in high school. Students study medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, and gain simulated hands-on experience in a classroom lab at A.K. Smith. Second-year students are placed in clinical rotations at Franciscan and other area health-care facilities. Dual college credits are provided to students in the program through a partnership with Ivy Tech.

J.A.G. Ceremony

Breast cancer survivor Channelle Glover describes herself as someone who is “all about fun, all about life, all about community.”

That didn’t change when she was diagnosed with cancer at age 36.

Glover was a guest speaker at a recent Jobs for America’s Graduates program initiation and installment ceremony at Michigan City High School. She told the students she was encouraged by her diagnosis to learn all she could to overcome the setback.

The J.A.G. ceremony was held to recognize students and officers of the program, including MCHS senior Amya Higgins, who will serve as president this school year. Because breast cancer awareness is one of the students’ several community outreach initiatives this year, J.A.G. instructor Ray Davis invited Glover to speak to his students. Her message focused on challenging them to keep pushing through adversity, help each other and their community, and be the best versions of themselves.

The J.A.G. Program is offered to MCHS students through a partnership with WorkOne and the Center of Workforce Innovations. The program helps students focus on four goals: leadership development, career preparation, civic awareness and social awareness. Students also were initiated as J.A.G. Career Association members.



Guest speaker Channelle Glover, a breast cancer survivor, gives life advice to students as they are initiated into the Jobs for America’s Graduates program at Michigan City High School.



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Harbor Country Hikers



Galien River County Park's marsh boardwalk.

Harbor Country Hikers will explore Galien River County Park, New Buffalo, Mich., at 2 p.m. EST Saturday, Nov. 6.

The hike is the group's third visit to Berrien County parks this fall. In October, it explored Madeline Bertrand Park in Niles, Mich., and Love Creek Park in Berrien Center.

The Galien River County Park hike begins in the parking lot with a 10-minute introduction by a county park naturalist, who also will lead the hike. The park includes a mix of upland and wetland habitats. The wetland area is part of the large Great Lakes Marsh that formed along the Galien River upstream from its mouth at Lake Michigan. The marsh is home to many protected birds and a resting stop along a migration path for others.

The park is located at 17424 Red Arrow Highway. The hike is about one mile long. Trails include a boardwalk over the marsh and onto the overlook platform, and are paved with gravel elsewhere. It is rated easy to moderate, and portions are flat and easy to navigate for those with mild difficulty walking. HCH has an all-terrain rollator available on a first-come, first-served basis. Details are available at www.harborcountryhikers.com and on the group's Facebook page.

Hikers are advised to wear long pants, a sun hat, sturdy shoes or boots and insect repellent, and take plenty of water. HCH follows federal and state COVID guidelines; masks as of now are optional.

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Shared Bikeways Ribbon Cutting

LaPorte County Parks will host a Shared Bikeways System ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, at Red Mill County Park, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte.

The event includes a project overview, bike ride, door prizes and refreshments.

The Shared Bikeways System has been updated to use a Ride with GPS App. The bikeway system features natural terrain, communities and parks, varying in difficulty from easy to moderate.

Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte funded the project with help from The Bike Stop, park staff and volunteers.

After the ribbon cutting, an 8.5-mile bike ride on a portion Red Mill Loop is planned (weather permitting). Visit www.laportecountyparks.org/biking.html for more details.

Harbor Country Singers

Harbor Country Singers will present a Beatles sing-along at 6:30 p.m. EDT Thursday, Nov. 4, at New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St.

Sponsored by the Friends of the New Buffalo Library, the program will feature classics such as "Eleanor Rigby," "Ticket to Ride," "When I'm Sixty-Four" and "Yellow Submarine," all transposed to easy-to-sing keys. Chorus members will lead the songs, accompanied by Garth Taylor on guitar and Adrian Cole on keyboard. HCS will provide a song-book with words and music, while the Friends of the Library will offer snacks and drinks at intermission.

The program is free. Face masks are requested.





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Chesterton Art Center

The new Duneland Plein Air Painters exhibit "Together Again" runs Nov. 6-30, with an opening reception from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 6.

The group travels weekly May-October through-

out Northwest Indiana and Southwest Michigan to paint dunes, beaches, surrounding farmlands, town squares, private gardens and other familiar sites. Members use a variety of techniques and media, including oil, watercolor, pastel, charcoal, pencil and ink. Participants include: Sandy Appleby, Lee Bauman, Kei



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Constantinov, Kris Cook, Jane Cowley, Bunny Dimke, Sharon Goodall, Sandra Hass, Pat Herman, Kuhn Hong, Sue Hughes, Laura Krentz, Carolyn Lelek, Claire Merrill, Linda Monahan, Chris Newton, Diana Plenys, Kirsten Renehan, Carleen Rivera, Linda Swanson, Betty Thomas, Nicole Willbur and Gail Woolever.



The following classes will be offered:

• **Comics I for ages 6-11 with Katie Wiley from 10-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, 13 and 20.**

The three-week introductory class teaches basic story structure. Students create a three-part story with original characters, and learn to lay out their comic book and finish with coloring. Tuition is \$75 for non-members and \$65 for members. All supplies are provided.

• **Comics II for 12 and older with Wiley from 12:30-2 p.m. Saturdays, Nov. 6-Dec. 11.**

The five-week class builds on comics knowledge and improving storytelling. Students will learn to script their story, develop characters, organize thumbnails, ink their comic and use color effectively. On the last day, they will swap their 4-8 page comic books and share their stories with each other. Tuition is \$75 for non-members and \$65 for members. All supplies are provided.



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.



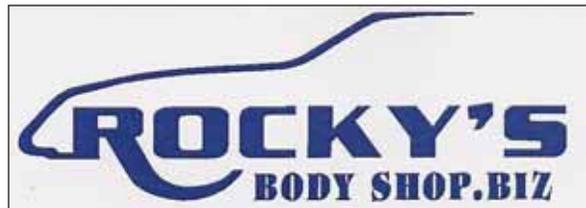
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LCSO in the Spotlight

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



Becky Osborn.

A lifelong music educator, Becky Osborn has been LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's pianist for 13 years, as well as choral director of "Illumination," which frequently performs with LCSO.

With degrees from Butler University and Valparaiso University, Osborn taught high school choral music for 16 years before opening a music studio, Music of Oz. She also taught music appreciation and methods at Purdue University Northwest for 22 years.

She and her husband, Greg, have two adult children and four grandchildren. They divide vacation time between St. Joseph, Mich., and Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.

Osborn also is a vital part of LCSO's Hoosier Star, providing vocal coaching for the finalists.

Intern Spotlight

Elijah Smith has interned for five months at LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave.

After graduating from Manchester University with a bachelor's degree in history, he started work with the LaPorte museum's W.A. Jones Collection of Ancient Weapons.



Smith

During his time here, he researched and updated tags for hundreds of firearms. He sought better ways to present the information to the public — people who know a lot about firearms, and those who don't. He also worked on a redesign of the household exhibit.

Smith's favorite artifact is the Vetterli Rifle. It was previously misidentified and through research, he correctly identified it.

Work on both of Smith's projects will continue after he leaves. His education will continue by working on a master's degree in history.

"Messiah" Performances

The 56th annual performance of "Michigan City Messiah" is at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18, and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19, at a new location: The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St.

There is no open dress rehearsal Saturday.

Maestro Philip Bauman will lead a nearly 100-member chorus, a full orchestra with Nic Orbovich as concertmaster and four professional soloists: soprano Kimberly Jones, alto Kristin Gornstein, tenor Matthew Daniel and Bill McMurray, bass.

All seats are free and general admission, with no ticket necessary. The Holdcraft PAC holds more than 700 people, so social distancing can be accommodated.

Visit www.MCMessiah.com for more details. Donations can be made to MC Messiah and mailed to P.O. Box 9219, Michigan City, IN 46361.

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LCA Receives Power for Good Grants

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., has received two Power for Good grants from Unity Foundation of LaPorte County to support its Student Learning Tours and Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Access initiatives.

Tours bring nearly 1,800 students annually to LCA for educational tours and onsite artmaking. Many participating students have never visited a museum or gallery, but 85.5 percent express interest in visiting another cultural institution after completing the program.



Dale Cooper (left), Lubeznik Center for the Arts board member, and LCA Executive Director Janet Bloch celebrate Unity Foundation of LaPorte County's Power for Good Grants.

In the 2021-2022 school year, tours are being offered virtually and in-person. When held virtually, a high-quality video tour with a lesson plan for a hands-on project is provided. The tours will focus on the current exhibit: "Nature Now," featuring works that explore the nature of life and reflect upon the impact humans have on the world. It runs through Feb. 25. Teachers, clubs and homeschool groups wishing to organize a virtual or in-person tour can email Education Director Nelsy Marcano at nmarcano@lubeznikcenter.org

Also, one of LCA's primary goals this year has been to start a community advisory group focused on Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Access.

"Over the past several months, our IDEA Advisory Group has met regularly and has generated many strategies and initiatives to make LCA more accessible, as well as build on our diversity, equity and inclusiveness," Executive Director Janet Bloch said in a press release.

Genealogical Society

LaPorte County Genealogical Society meets from 6-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9, at LaPorte County Public Library, 901 Indiana Ave.

Members will discuss foods and treats their families enjoy in the fall and holiday season. Reservations for a December dinner meeting will be accepted. Visit <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~incigs/> for more details.

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

- Midwest Warehousing Co., 3999 Hupp Road, Building R-5-2, Kingsbury, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 4.
- Purdue University Northwest-Westville Campus, 1401 S. U.S. 421, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 4.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 8.

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.

10-Digit Dialing Now Mandatory

Ten-digit dialing became official Oct. 24 for Indiana, Illinois and Michigan residents.

Those affected are: Indiana residents with (219) and (574) area codes; Illinois residents with (309) (618) and (708) area codes; and Michigan residents with (616), (810), (906) and (989) area codes.

A 10-digit call requires the three-digit area code and seven-digit telephone number, even when calling someone in the same area code. The change does not affect a current telephone number. In the case of the Illinois (708) number, the 10-digit number may have to use trunk code 1, which is known as 1+10-digit dialing, or national, format.

Why is this required? According to the Federal Communications Commission, "as more area codes begin to run out of new seven-digit numbers to assign, a second local area code may be added, requiring that area to transition to ten-digit dialing."

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Closed: Saturday & Sunday

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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 Pick-up 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:

- **Mad Candy Science from 4-5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 4, in the main library Meeting Room B.** To celebrate National Candy Day, staff will read *When Ruby Tried to Grow Candy* and conduct science experiments with popular candy.
- **Stories & More: Celebrating Isamu Noguchi from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 5, at the main library.** Aimed at youth ages 2-5, the program will celebrate the life of artist Isamu Noguchi, who lived in LaPorte.
- **Teen Anime Club from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 8, at the main library.** Meet other teen anime fans through the club. Register online.
- **Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9, in the main library Study Cafe.** Refreshments will not be served, but guests can take coffee or tea.
- **Pajama Time from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9, at the Coolspring Branch.** The program involves family storytime. Guests can wear pajamas.

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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LaPorte 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.

Healthy Lifestyles

The free social club meets from 9 to 10 a.m. Wednesdays at Luhr County Park Nature Center, 178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. 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:

- Nov. 3 — Understanding Medicare Parts A, B, C and D, and the upcoming annual enrollment period, Megan Rogers, State Health Insurance Assistance Program specialist.

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. 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:

- Nov. 3 — What's For Dinner?
- Nov. 10 — Turkey Talk.
- Dec. 1 — Catch the Sun.
- Dec. 15 — Behind the Mask.

Nature's Tiny Tots

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

The free program is from 10-11 a.m. Nov. 8 and 22 and Dec. 6 and 20 at Luhr County Park. Masks are required for 3 and older. Call (219) 325-8315 at least one week in advance to register.

Tails from the Trails

Park board member Rob Knickrehm will discuss his journey along the Appalachian Trail from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9, in the Luhr County Park Nature Center.

Call one week before the program to register.

Nature Center Craft Day

The free family program is from 1-4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, at Luhr County Park Nature Center.

Guests will do a craft while supplies last. No pre-registration is required. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Classified Ads Do the Trick! Call (219) 879-0088

Indiana Dunes State Park

The following program will be offered:

• South Shore Line: The Way to the Dunes on Thursday, Nov. 4.

The Midwest Rail Rangers, a partner with Indiana Dunes State Park, will present an on-board educational program that includes Indiana Dunes State Park.

The eastbound program is on South Shore Train 503. It departs Chicago-Millennium Station at 8:40 a.m., with a stop at Dune Park at 10:04 a.m. and arriving at South Bend-Airport Station at 12:10 p.m. EDT. The westbound South Shore program is on Train 506. It departs South Bend-Airport Station at 1:05 p.m. EDT, with a stop at Dune Park at 1:15 p.m. and arriving at Chicago-Millennium Station at 2:39 p.m.

Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Look for the car with yellow signs on the inside (normally towards the middle of the train). No reservations are needed. A regular train ticket is 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.

Waves of Laughter

Dig the Dunes will host its fifth installment of the "Waves of Laughter" comedy show at 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 5, at Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St.

The comedians include Patti Vasquez, Adam Burke, Hari Rao, Bridget McGuire and Colleen Brennan, who also will serve as emcee.

Doors open at 7 p.m., and a cash bar is planned. Tickets are \$30. Visit tinyurl.com/r5t42svw for reservations or more details.



Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail.)

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

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

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Activities to Explore

In the Area:

Nov. 4 — “The Way to the Dunes” (Midwest Rail Rangers). No reservations needed. Times: (219) 926-1390, www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2980.htm

Nov. 4 — Mad Candy Science, 4-5:30 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library Meeting Room B, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 4 — Harbor Country Singers Beatles sing-along, 6:30 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St.

Nov. 5 — Stories & More: Celebrating Isamu Noguchi, 10-10:30 a.m., LaPorte County Public Library Meeting Room B, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 5 — Dig the Dunes’ “Waves of Laughter,” 8 p.m., Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St. Doors open/7 p.m. Tickets: \$30. Reservations: tinyurl.com/r5t42svw

Nov. 5-7, 11-14 — “Miracle on South Division Street,” Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St. Times: 7:30 p.m. Thur.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$15/adults, \$10/children 12 & younger, Nov. 11 show. Reservations: www.FootlightPlayers.org, (219) 874-4035.

Nov. 6 — Turn Up Dance Fitness with Stacy G., 8:30-9:30 a.m., Long Beach Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail. Cost: \$5 paid @ class.

Nov. 6 — Michigan City Historical Society annual meeting (guest speaker Alex Neel), 10 a.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St.

Nov. 6 — Holiday Clay, 10-11 a.m., Long Beach Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail. Cost: \$10/materials. Space limited.

Nov. 6 — Seventh Annual Michigan City Video Fest, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St.

Nov. 6 — Writing Out Loud (Eric Zorn), 7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Nov. 7 — LaPorte County Parks Shared Bikeways System ribbon-cutting ceremony, 10 a.m., Red Mill County Park, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org/biking.html

Nov. 9 — Page Turners Book Club, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library Meeting Room B, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 9 — Tails from the Trails, 6-7 p.m., Luhr County Park Nature Center, 178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. Info: (219) 325-8315, www.laportecountyparks.org

Nov. 10 — Veterans Day ceremony, 1:30 p.m., Michigan City High School gymnasium, 8466 Pahs Road.

Nov. 10 — Book signing, Mitch Taebel (Looking Out For America), 3-5 p.m., Lakeshore Coffee & Specialties, 444 Wabash St.

Through Dec. 31 — Oil paintings by Don Grott, The Legacy Center Gallery @ Queen of All Saints

Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: kd3627@hotmail.com

Through Feb. 25 — “Nature Now,” Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Opening celebration: 3-7 p.m. Nov. 5. Center hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon., Wed., Thur., Fri.; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Closed Tuesday. Admission: free. Info: (219) 874-4900, www.lubeznikcenter.org

Tuesdays — Tai Chi for health & relaxation, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Long Beach Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail. Sliding fee paid at class.

First and Third Mondays — Singing Sands Toastmasters Club, 6:30-8 p.m., Zoom. Info: <https://7269291.toastmastersclubs.org>.

In the Region

Nov. 4 — Noon Time Talk Series, 12:20 p.m. EDT, Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart. Admission: \$5. Info: (574) 293-6660.

Nov. 6 — Opening reception, Duneland Plein Air Painters exhibit “Together Again,” 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Exhibit runs through Nov. 30. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

Nov. 6 — Harbor Country Hikers, 2 p.m. EST, Galien River County Park, 17424 Red Arrow Highway, New Buffalo, Mich. Info: www.harborcountryhikers.com

Nov. 6 — Free annual Veteran’s Day concert, 5 p.m., Valparaiso University’s Chapel of the Resurrection, 1600 Chapel Drive.

Through Dec. 9 — Valparaiso University exhibit, The Village Gallery @ Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso. Gallery hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Info: (219) 465-1591, www.pinesvillage.org

Through Dec. 19 — The Midwest Museum of American Art’s 43rd Elkhart Juried Regional, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart. Hours (all times Eastern): 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tue.-Fri., 1-4 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Admission: \$10/adult, \$6 (8-12), \$8 (13-18 & college students with ID). Info: www.midwestmuseum.org

Vickers Theatre — *Now showing:* “The Rescue.” Not Rated. Times: 3 p.m. Nov. 5-7, 6 p.m. Nov. 8. *Also:* “Last Night in Soho.” Rated R. Times: 6 p.m. Nov. 5-7, 3 p.m. Nov. 8. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

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Chamber Education Award

The Michigan City Chamber of Commerce has revised its annual award that honors Michigan City area educators.

Presented by Comcast Business, the annual community award recognizes educators or educational programs that made a significant impact in the community over the last year. Nominations can be for teachers, program directors, counselors, administrators or other individuals, as well as programming or partnerships.

An official Chamber nomination form should be used. Nominations may be submitted by colleagues, students, community members or anyone with knowledge of a deserving individual or program. Nominations will be accepted through Nov. 26. They will be kept confidential until a winner is selected.

Visit www.MichiganCityChamber.com or call (219) 874-6221.



Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

Tower of Babel by Michael Sears (hardcover, \$27.95 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and audiobook. 394 pages.)

Michael Sears is part of Soho Crime, a division of the Soho Press publishing company that features national and international crime fiction. He has been nominated for every major American crime writing award, and won the Shamus and Silver Falchion awards. Other popular Soho writers include Peter Lovesey, Cara Black, Jacqueline Winspear, David Downing, Stephen Fry and Quentin Bates, to name a few.

This story takes us to Queens in New York City, one of the most culturally diverse areas of the country. Let me introduce you to Ted Molloy, former hotshot lawyer and now...well, let me explain...

Ted was smart, ambitious and married to the boss' daughter, also a hotshot lawyer. Now? He's working on "surplus money" cases involved with foreclosures: residential, not business. Big business properties mean big players and big problems. How did he drop to this station in life? Well, that's another story. Suffice it to say, things have been going downhill these past several years, including his divorce from Jill, the aforementioned boss' daughter.

Actually, Ted has been getting by. He'll never be at the monetary level he once was, but he's OK with that. He's helped by Ritchie Rubiano, a small-time former crook who does legwork and paper research for him on a case-by-case basis. Ted describes him as a "*nasty weasel with a long list of annoying habits.*" But they get along.

One day, Ritchie brings Ted the offer of a lifetime: He found a foreclosure on properties with \$1.2 million in surplus monies. Find the owner, file the paperwork and split the money with the owner and each other! Not so fast. Ted isn't impressed. High amounts of money mean big-time developers and probably crooked lawyers and investors. His long time rule has been no deal more than \$500,000.

The next day, Ritchie Rubiano is dead. Killed by person or persons unknown. Why? He had no enemies Ted knew of. Only a wife, Cheryl, he didn't know of until she knocks on his door demanding Ted find his killer, finish the deal they were working on and split the money with her. Whoa! Where did this come from? Ted tries to explain there is no deal, and the cops are on the case to find the killer.

Cheryl drops an envelope with \$1,000 cash in Ted's hands, saying here's a down payment, now we're partners.

Ted heads for the courthouse to look up the filings on these properties, which belong to a Barbara Miller. She turns out to be a 90+ lady living in a nursing home. Coming out of the courthouse, Ted meets Lester McKinley. Not an auspicious meeting. Lester looks like life threw him a curveball, but he speaks like he knows what he's talking about, namely that he's a good researcher. Something about him makes Ted hire him on the spot. Later, he wonders if the meeting was coincidence or a setup. For now, he'll settle for coincidence.

He's still mulling over whether he should get involved when he discovers the Miller file has been torn apart and pages are missing. Now, he knows something dirty is going on. The properties in question are in a part of Queens where a multi-story building and complex are to be built called La Bella Casa Tower. Ted can't help but notice, "*The sheer arrogance of the project was impressive.*" Hmm.

Especially when he meets Kenzie Zielinski, a community organizer leading protesters in marches around the property.

She's also easy on the eye. She explains how badly this development will affect residents in Queens.

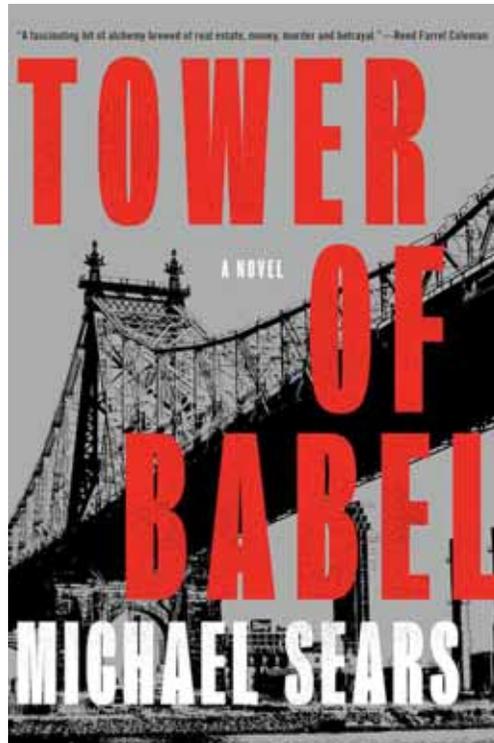
Someone killed Rubiano for what he knew. For Ted, "*He could walk away and feel no responsibility...But someone had taken a big chance just to hide information. He had a strong urge to kick the hornet's nest.*"

This is a crime novel inked in asphalt and written with a jackhammer. Ted begins to see things through Kenzie's eyes. He realizes that — "*New York rewards the strong and the lucky. Everyone else gets by or gets devoured. It has always been that way.*"

Sears gives us a daily view of life in Queens, from the boardroom with players tossing money around like a game, to the tenement building with junkies in the hallway, and the poor just trying to survive.

It's a gritty, stab-'em-in-the-back story to keep you reading, angry at how the system can reward the crooks and sometimes, just sometimes, give justice to the common man.

Till next time, happy reading!





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