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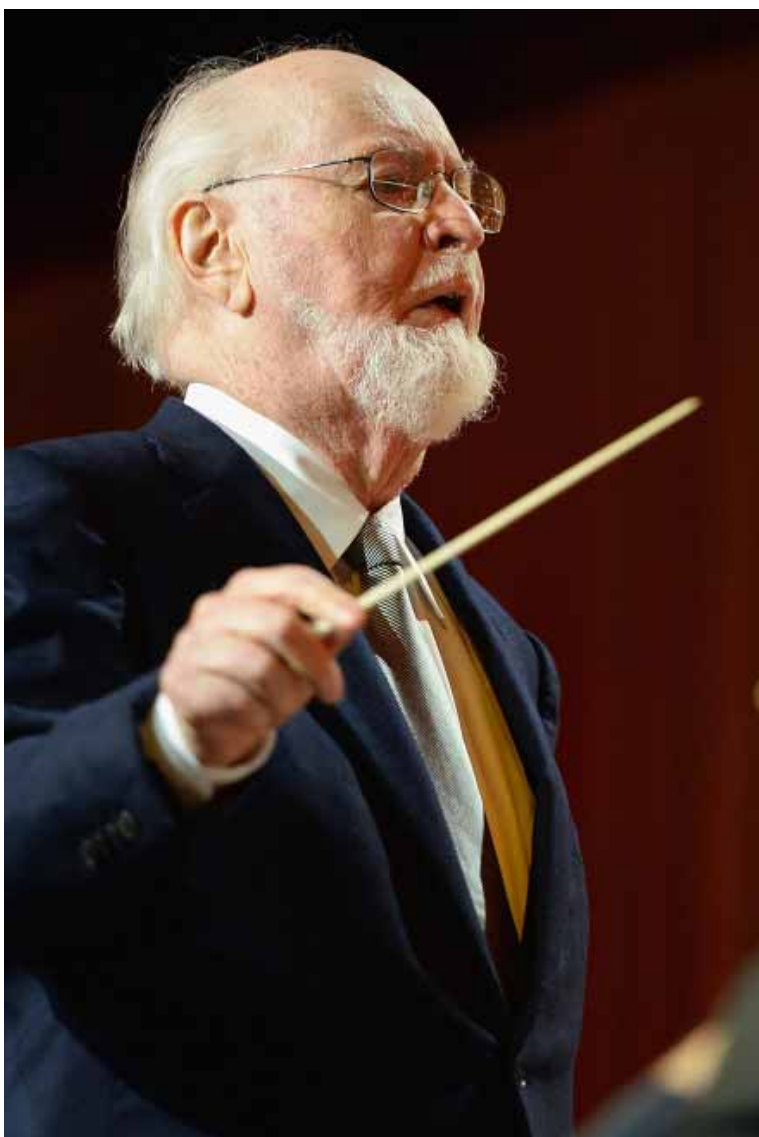
A Little Movie Magic

by Andrew Tallackson

John Williams wrote the soundtrack to my youth.

He did so for millions of starry eyed children back in May of 1977 who, likely after standing in block-long lines, experienced for the first time a little movie called "Star Wars." The words "*A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away*" flashed across the screen, then the movie's title, boosted by Williams' triumphant score.

There was no Internet. VCRs were not commonplace. So until the next trip to the theater for repeat viewings, you made due with Williams' two-record soundtrack. I would lie on my bedroom floor, thumbing through comic-book adaptations of the movie while the record played on the turntable. The composer's sweeping score was so cinematic, so closely tied to lending the images their power, you could almost see the movie in your mind. Obi-Wan Kenobi's grand appearance. Luke Skywalker, gazing at a horizon dominated by twin suns. The rebel heroes, marching victoriously to receive their medals.



Oscar-winning composer John Williams is the focus of LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's final concert of the 49th season.

The same held true for Williams' subsequent scores. Hearing the main theme for "Raiders of the Lost Ark" conjured images of Harrison Ford. The soaring orchestral high point of "E.T. The Extra Terrestrial," taking you with Elliot as his bike soared past the moon. The majestic themes in "Jurassic Park" that recall those towering dinosaurs. The haunting chimes in "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" that introduce Professor Dumbledore on a mist-shrouded street.

Back in 2018, as an early birthday present, my parents took me and my family to see Williams conduct Chicago Symphony Orchestra, performing selections from "Lincoln," "Jaws," "Hook" and "Superman." Late in the program, when he kicked off the grand march from "Star Wars," the symphony's brass section achieving melodious glory, I was briefly

transported to my youth. Seven years old again, on my bedroom floor, comic books in hand, soundtrack playing on the turntable.

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Dr. Carolyn Watson gets that. It's part of the reason the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra music director chose to pay tribute to the composer during "Film Fest!," the conclusion to its 49th season. The performance is at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

"I grew up watching 'Star Wars' and 'Indiana Jones,' and those are great movies," she said in an interview with *The Beacher*. "A large part of their success is John Williams. Everything that needs to be there, it is. The way he writes, it really brings any film to life, whether that's from beautiful melodies like in the 'Star Wars Suite' (we'll play), 'Princess Leia's Theme,' when you see it on the big screen, it adds an extra dimension. It brings the drama of the film to life."

"He's really something special when it comes to film music," she continued. "He really has a gift for the drama of the cinema."

After Walt Disney, Williams is the most nominated person for an Academy Award. Fifty two nominations, to be precise. He's won five Oscars ("Fiddler on the Roof," "Jaws," "Star Wars," "E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial" and "Schindler's List"), 25 Grammys, four Golden Globes and seven British Academy Film Awards. The American Film Institute in 2005 chose his 1977 score for "Star Wars" as the greatest of all time. That score also is included with the National Recording Registry. His work spans television, the Olympics and classical pieces. Having turned 90 in February, he shows no signs of slowing down. His long-standing partnership with Steven Spielberg continues with a score for the Oscar-winning director's next project, "The Fabelmans." He'll score the fifth Indiana Jones film, along with the theme for the Disney+ limited series "Obi-Wan Kenobi."

For LCSO's concert, the audience will experience Williams at his best. Selections from "Star Wars," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone." Delving into other Hollywood legends, the symphony will perform Elmer Bernstein's classic, Oscar-nominated theme from "The Magnificent Seven" (1960), music from "Spider-Man" and a lesser-known work, British composer Debbie Wiseman's music for "Wilde," an acclaimed 1997 biopic about Oscar Wilde.

To bring the 49th season to a close, the night is as family-friendly as you can get. Not just the music, of course, but in the many "extras" — pun intended — scheduled for the night. Concertgoers, for instance, are encouraged to wear movie costumes. A children's instrument petting zoo



Dr. Carolyn Watson, seen here with clarinetist Petar Smilev at her debut concert with LCSO in November.
Beacher file photo by Bob Wellinski

is from 6-6:45 p.m. in the auditorium. Providing the instruments is Quinlan & Fabish, which also works with LaPorte Community School Corp. to ensure students have instruments for the school year. Symphony staff will provide a sneak peak of LCSO's 50th anniversary during the 2022-2023 season.

Also planned is an annual tradition: the "Magic Baton" competition, back for the first time since 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. This year, Michigan City Mayor Duane Parry and LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody will face off to win the privilege of conducting LCSO at one point during the program. The mayors will seek support and votes (\$1 per vote). Votes can be purchased at www.lcso.net, by sending a check to the LCSO office at P.O. Box 563, LaPorte, IN 46352, or by voting that night. At the concert, voting ceases after intermission, with the winner revealed soon after. Proceeds from the votes support LCSO's "New Generations" initiative, which includes education concerts, in-school visits, instrument donations and the Student Apprentice program. The winner also receives a conducting lesson from Watson on stage.



Michigan City Mayor Duane Parry (left) and LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody are gearing up for a little playful competition to see who wins the "Magic Baton" competition. Photo provided

Sound like fun? Tim King thinks so.

"I'm telling people, the theme of this one is fun. Three letters: F.U.N.," LCSO's executive director said.

And while the program's movie flavor will make for a playful evening, that does not mean the musicians will have an easy night of it.

"This is really going to be a hardcore brass concert," King said. "It's really going to test the brass folks in our orchestra. That's the way John Williams writes. But what a great way to end our season!"

Hard to believe, indeed, that Watson's first season with the orchestra is drawing to a close. The pandemic delayed the search for a new director, after

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Movie Magic Continued from Page 3

Philip Bauman's departure, beyond what LCSO staff anticipated. But now, Watson is about to have one full season under her belt.

"It's been a wonderful experience," she told *The Beacher*, "and I feel like myself and the orchestra, we are getting to know each other better, and that's going to continue. As far as I'm concerned, it's been a great season."

"One of the things I would like to do throughout my tenure," she continued, "is expand the scope and reach of the symphony, and bring in people (to concerts) who have not had the opportunity to experience live classical music."

King has only praise for Watson's LCSO debut.

"What else can I say?," he told *The Beacher*. "We have more people attending our concerts. I can always tell if a concert is successful by how many people stick around after the concert. That's always the barometer for me. Are they running for the door or staying and talking to people?"

"With every concert, I've had to shoo them out the door. Carolyn is good at coming into the lobby, talking to people. She knows, too, how to program. That's the thing I really appreciate. That is challenging for the orchestra and exciting for the audience. It's a gift. Not all conductors have that."



Tim King, LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's executive director, seen here at last November's concert, says attendance is up since Carolyn Watson's debut. *Beacher* file photo by Bob Wellinski.

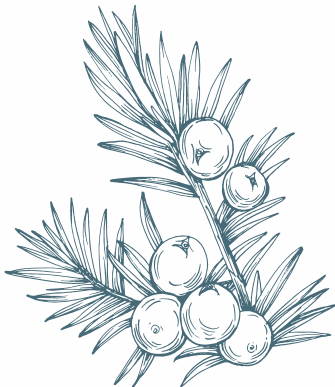
"If You Go"

"Film Fest!," LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's final program of the 49th season, is at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Balcony tickets are available: \$22 for adults, \$20 for seniors 60 and older and free for students with valid ID. They are available at www.lcso.net, by calling (219) 362-9020, at Roxy Music, 1012 Lincolnway, LaPorte, and LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

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SAM to Present Program of Classical Violin and Jazz Standards

The School of American Music will host "From Classical to Jazz," a pairing of solo violin and the Great American Jazz Songbook, at 3 p.m. EDT Sunday, April 24, at Converge Community Church, 601 W. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, Mich.

The Free Family Concert will feature Nic Orbovich on violin, Ron Spears on electric guitar and Dino Jackson on French horn. Spears and Jackson perform as the new venture Duo Jazz.

Spears plays guitar for Down by the Docks, a Northwest Indiana big band, and teaches at SAM. Jackson often performs with one of the bands in Ed Bagatini Musical Groups, a St. Joseph-based collection of ensembles that performs around the area.

For the SAM concert, Duo Jazz will perform selections by Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin and Sonny Rollins. Orbovich will perform his own arrangement of "Recitativo alla Fantasia," "Chaconne" by J.S. Bach, "Caprice



Jackson



Spears



Orbovich

in G Major" by Henri Vieuxtemps and "Sonata for Violin" by Antonio Vivaldi.

Orbovich helped found Michigan City Chamber Music Festival with his wife, Sunny. He also is a classical violinist with South Bend Symphony and Hot Springs Festival Orchestra. He appears in more than 20 concerts annually.

Tickets are free but must be reserved at www.schoolofamericanmusic.com/tickets/ or by calling the school at (269) 409-1191. Donations are welcome. SAM's Family Concert Series is supported by a Pokagon Fund grant and donations.

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“The Secrets of Dumbledore” Rediscovered Some of the Old Magic

by Andrew Tallackson

Finally, a “Fantastic Beasts” movie worth a damn. When Warner Bros. introduced the first “Harry Potter” prequel in 2016, five years after “The Deathly Hallows: Part 2,” the signs were there that the studio was trying to milk a dead (cash) cow. “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” felt like an imposter. It looked like a “Harry Potter” movie, felt like a “Harry Potter” movie. But something was missing. A reason to care. A plot so sleepy, it was like creator J.K. Rowling forgot how to tell these stories. Then came “The Crimes of Grindelwald” (2018), a film so unmemorable, I had to read its Wikipedia page to prep for “The Secrets of Dumbledore.”

The good news is, the film is better for all the right reasons. Gorgeous, with director David Yates finally infusing some life into the action scenes.

In advancing the fight against dark wizard Gellert Grindelwald, who now seeks a position of authority in the wizarding world before unleashing hell on muggles (non-wizarding folk), the franchise made significant changes. The most obvious is that Johnny Depp, as Grindelwald, was replaced by Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen after Depp’s personal life imploded. *Best. Move. Ever.* Depp showed no signs he enjoyed the role, the look of the character creepy for all the *wrong* reasons. Mikkelsen, however, is imposing, storming into a room like he owns it, with no regard for collateral damage.

The other change is that longtime “Harry Potter” screenwriter Steve Kloves tinkered with Rowling’s screenplay...and you can tell. This is the first “Fantastic Beasts” movie to efficiently make the beastly obsessions of Newt Scamander (Eddie Redmayne) central to the plot. In the process, the series rediscovers its heart. The damaged romance between bakery owner Jacob Kowalski (Dan Fogler) and the witch Queenie Goldstein (Alison Sudol) takes on more immediacy. Jessica Williams is lively as Charms teacher Eulalie Hicks, sparking every scene with high energy. Jude Law seems to have settled into the role of Dumbledore with relaxed wisdom. And in detailing Grindelwald’s ascent up the political ladder, the production design effective-

ly achieves parallels to the rise of Nazi power in Germany.

Indeed, “The Secrets of Dumbledore” has everything a \$200 million budget can buy. Exquisitely detailed recreations of 1930s New York that rival Peter Jackson’s “King Kong.” The first sight of Hogwarts has all the majesty of the early movies. The final confrontation between the forces of good and



Mads Mikkelsen superbly takes over the role originated by Johnny Depp.



“The Secrets of Dumbledore”

Running time: 142 minutes. Rated PG-13

for some fantasy action/violence.

evil is breathtaking. James Newton Howard’s lush score is the greatest John Williams soundtrack not created by the man himself.

The overall pace is still a bit pokey, yet nowhere near as sluggish as before. And Katherine Waterston’s Porpentina Goldstein is curiously reduced to a brief cameo. Why limit the prequel’s great invention this time around?

There was talk when the “Fantastic Beasts” series began that Rowling intended to release five new tales. Waning interest suggests her core fan base has moved on. If this is it, if no other movies get made, then at the very least, “The Secrets of Dumbledore” is proof a little of the old magic still existed.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

Youth Summer Innovation Experience

The Society of Innovators and Leadership Institute at Purdue Northwest will host the Young Leaders Academy 2022 Summer Innovation Experience on June 22-24 at the Westville campus.

Students practice 30 key skillsets that help them become more confident, collaborative leaders.

Participation is free and open to high school freshmen and sophomores. The program runs from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day. A light breakfast, snacks and lunch will be provided.

More information and registration are at www.pnw.edu/summer-innovation

NIPSCO to Support Events

Northern Indiana Public Service Co. is partnering with Michigan City Special Events as a Gold Level Sponsor of two major summer events.

The inaugural Singing Sands Sand Sculpting Festival is June 3-5 in Washington Park, while Oktoberfest returns Labor Day weekend.

The sculpting festival includes a professional sand-sculpting exhibit and competition. Visit tinyurl.com/yckrpa4r for details. Oktoberfest will include live music, food vendors and art, craft and merchandise vendors. Potential vendors can visit www.emichigan-city.com/1251/Okttoberfest to register.

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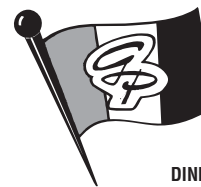
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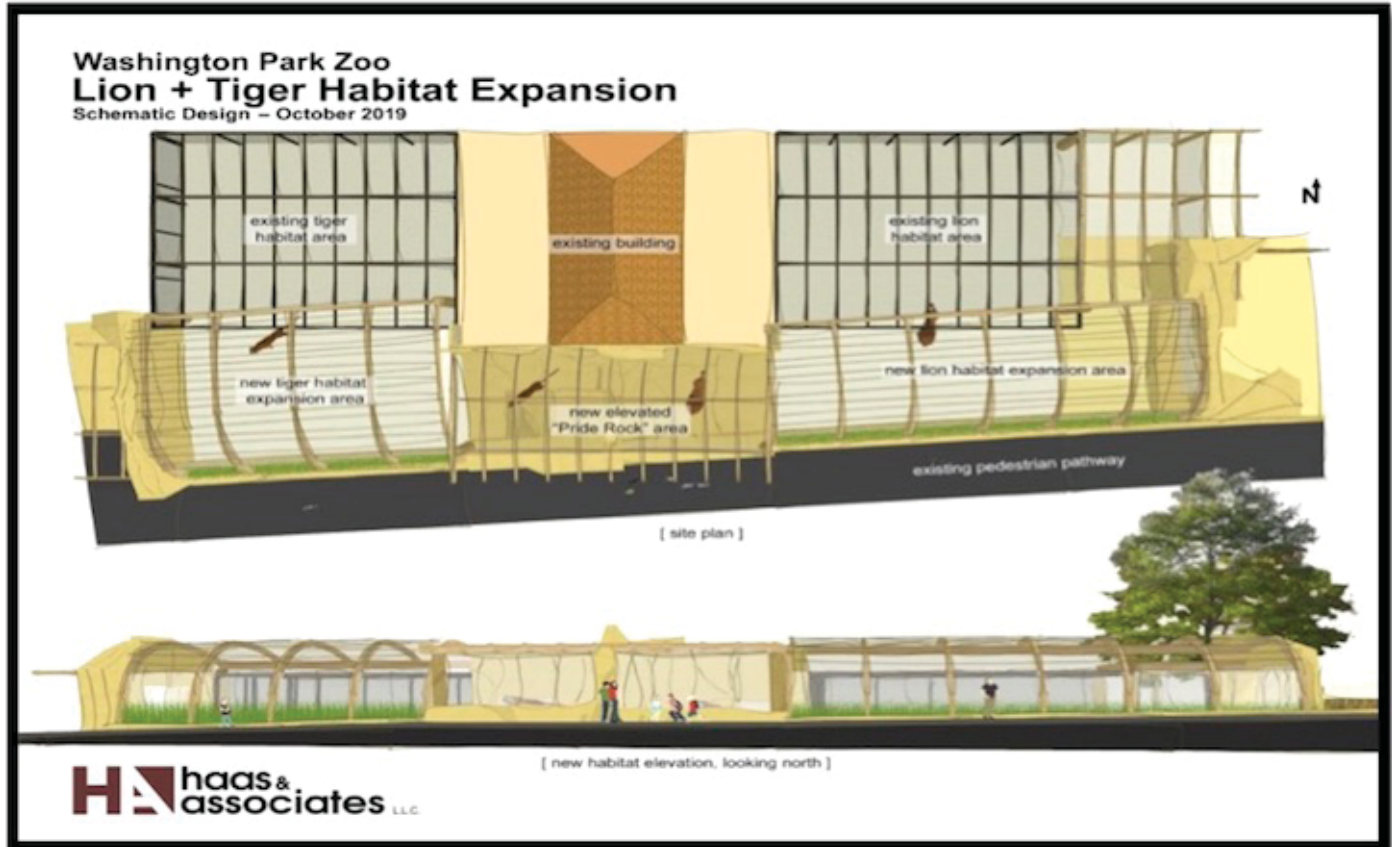
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Washington Park Zoo Big Cat Exhibits to Receive \$1.6 Million Makeover



A rendering of the new big cat enclosure, showing an expanded habitat and new viewing glass walls.

Michigan City will spend more than \$1.6 million on renovations to Washington Park Zoo's African Lion and Bengal Tiger exhibits.

The project will bring new habitats to the outdated 1975 ones. The new exhibit will include enhanced visitor experiences and provide more room for the animals. The plan calls for removing the current welded wire-mesh fences on the south side of the exhibits. The project will add an additional 3,000 square feet to the outdoor habitats. The cats will still have access to their indoor holding areas for evening rest and meals.

The new habitats feature additional climbing areas and enrichment elements. Both habitats include a natural substrate, gunite rockwork ledges, a den space and a mixture of grasses and shrubs. The carnivore keepers will continue to provide daily enrichment opportunities, including special food items,

scents, boomer balls, frozen meat or fish icicles and beef knuckle bones.

Interpretative education aspects will teach visitors about the natural habitats, and why it is important to conserve regions of the world where they live. While the current big cat areas meet national standards, they do not reflect the modern zoological design the zoo has been trying to achieve.

The Michigan City Park Board approved the Washington Park Zoo 5-Year Strategic Plan, which includes guidelines for redevelopment. The plan outlines renovation of the monkey island, construction of an all-season, free-flight aviary for the "Wings of Wonder" parakeet exhibit and construction of a new classroom and gift shop to replace the outgrown existing ones.

Funding came from a variety of sources, including the Michigan City Common Council, Michigan City Redevelopment Commission, Michigan City Enrichment Corp., Michigan City Park Board and Michigan City Zoological Society. Private donors include WHM Motorsports team owner Billy Mauff, the Otto and Margaret Zack Charitable Trust and other local donors. Haas & Associates, Michigan City, completed the design and engineering. The construction contract went to Holladay Construction Co., Portage. Work is scheduled to begin July 5, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2023.



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Welcome to 3617 Powhatan in Michiana Shores

A newly remodeled vintage Michiana cabin sits on two large, wooded parcels, just a short walk to Lake Michigan. This 2BR/2BA getaway features a field stone fireplace, knotty pine paneling and vaulted ceilings with exposed beams. Behind the house you will find a newly remodeled coach house, perfect for extra guests or entertaining! The large 2.5 car garage can park your cars and have tons of room for all your beach toys.



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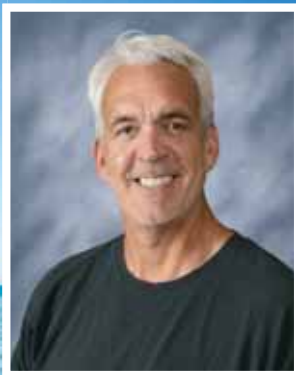
Helping Make a Difference



Queen of All Saints Catholic Church hosted a fundraiser to support Ukrainian refugees in cooperation with its Peace and Social Justice Ministry. The efforts were organized by Kasia Kelly, a woman from Poland who lives here and has relatives in Poland housing refugees, and helping at the front lines to collect supplies for babies and mothers crossing into the country. The fundraiser involved making and selling Polish foods, and making traditional Ukrainian and Polish crafts.

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Music Director



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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. 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:

- **Local Author Bill Nelson: Firm Grip at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 21.** The local attorney/author Bill Nelson will share his story of surviving a rare, incurable cancer.
- **MCPL Podcast Episode Release at 9 a.m. Friday, April 22.** "Discussions with Miss Dana" includes discussion on upcoming books and an interview with a librarian. Listen on Buzzsprout or through www.mclib.org/podcast.
- **Great Decisions at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 25.** The foreign policy discussion group returns for its 24th season. The April 25 discussion is drug policy in Latin America. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details. Reading material is available at the circulation desk.
- **Needle Arts Club at 5:30 p.m. Mondays in**



Nelson

April. Membership to the group, formerly known as the Knit Club, is open to anyone interested in needle arts such as crochet, needlepoint, cross-stitch, crewel, tatting and other hand stitching. All skill levels and ages are welcome.

- **Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays in April.** Children birth to age 5 and adults will enjoy stories, songs and crafts. Check out previous story time videos through the library's YouTube channel, Facebook page and website.
- **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.



The Collector's Corner Breakfast returns after a two-year COVID hiatus, the event set for 9 a.m. Saturday, April 23, in the St. John's United Church of Christ Fellowship Hall, 101 W. St. John Road.

Tickets, which cost \$25, may be purchased at the library circulation desk; no tickets are sold at the door. The breakfast is catered by Portofino Grill, and Martin Papke from Kathy's Antiques, Chesterton, returns to appraise items. Each ticketholder may take one item for appraisal.



Two new services are available:

- ComicsPlus offers unlimited access to thousands of digital comics, graphic novels and manga. Popular titles include Avatar: The Last Airbender & The Legend of Korra, Big Nate, Bone, Disney Princesses, Geronimo Stilton, Stranger Things, Locke & Key and American Gods. Patrons need a current library card and PIN.
- The app Library NewsStand includes 7,000 titles of digital magazines and newspapers in more than 60 language, including: *Newsweek*, *Fast Company*, *Forbes*, *The New Yorker*, *Reader's Digest*, *Elle* and *Esquire*. A library card is required.

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

Volunteer Expo

Leadership LaPorte County will host a "Volunteer Expo" from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, April 28, at the LaPorte County Fairgrounds Community Building, 2581 W. Indiana 2.

The goal is to raise awareness of organizations providing services, and connect youth and adults to those organizations in need of assistance.

Admission is free. Call (219) 325-8223, email info@leadershiplaportecounty.com or visit www.leadershiplaportecounty.com for more details.



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Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Community Park-wide Cleanup for Earth Day from 9 a.m.-noon Friday, April 22, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Sponsored by Friends of Indiana Dunes, Indiana Dunes Tourism, Mermaid Straw and the park's volunteer office, guests work with staff to pick up trash. Dress for the weather. Equipment and protective gear are provided. Temporary passes are available.
- **The Friends' 26th Annual Native Plant Sale from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 23, in the Friends of Indiana Dunes office, 1000 W. Oak Hill Road, Porter.** More than 90 native plant species will be available. Varieties come in pots and are native to Northwest Indiana, Northeast Illinois and Southwest Michigan. Gardening consultants can answer questions about native plants and specific habitats. Take photos with proposed native garden sites. Free leaflets on planting, and the many benefits of going native, will be available. All profits support the Friends of Indiana Dunes. The office is near Chellberg Farm, with parking immediately to the north at the National Park's headquarters complex. Admission is free.
- **Woodland Wildflower Hike from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays through April 30 at Heron Rookery, 1336 County Road 600 East, Michigan City.** Join a ranger to view woodland flowers. The Heron Rookery trail runs along the Little Calumet River, with the hike starting at the east parking lot. Passes are required.
- **Mount Baldy Summit Hike from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, April 24.** The Mount Baldy parking lot and beach are open from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. daily. The dune, however, is still closed for general use, so the ranger-led hike offers a chance to experience the dune as much as is possible. No reservations are required. The parking lot is off U.S. 12.
- **Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers) from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.** Trash Trekkers is a no-hassle volunteer option that helps keep trails and beaches clean. Temporary passes are available. Visit tinyurl.com/2p83798v for more details. Another drop-in opportunity is from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, April 16, at the Park Connection Office, which is located next to the

Bailly/Chellberg parking lot. Projects can include working on invasive species, land and building restoration, or preparing for special events.

- **Miller Woods Hike from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sundays in April at Paul H. Douglas Center.** The ranger-led stroll explores a rare black oak savanna, and offers views of Lake Michigan and Chicago.



IDNP has jobs for four teens this summer.

The Youth Conservation Corps program is a work-learn-earn program for 15- to 18-year-olds. April 30 is the application deadline. Participants are paid \$7.25 an hour for the 40-hour work week. The program runs June 5-Aug. 13, and applicants work the entire length of the program. Crews perform work such as staining, painting and caulking the exterior of park buildings and work as grounds maintenance (mowing grass, picking up trash, cleaning restrooms) and trails rehabilitation.

No experience is necessary. Participants are selected by random draw from the pool of applications. They must be U.S. citizens and 15 before June 5, but not turn 19 before Aug. 13, the end date of the program. The forms also are available at www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/jobs.htm

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.

Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Help Save a Dune: Marram Grass Planting from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, April 23.** Take a short hike up the dunes to transplant marram grass, helping prevent future erosion. Meet on the west side of the main beach pavilion in front of the restrooms. Long pants, water and gloves are recommended. The Friends of Indiana Dunes provides snacks and water.
- **Are They Here Yet Hike? from 2-3 p.m. Saturday, April 23.** Stop by the Nature Center, where a naturalist will introduce spring ephemerals.
- **Walk with the Timberdoodles at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 23.** Join a naturalist on the west side of the beach pavilion to search for shorebirds often called woodcocks, bogsuckers or timberdoodles. The hike is moderate and just more than one-mile long.
- **To the Blowout and Back at 10 a.m. Sunday, April 24.** Meet a naturalist at the Nature Center for a moderate two-mile hike on Trail 9.

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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U.S. Navy Band in Concert



The U.S. Navy Band from Washington, D.C., will present a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 28, at Valparaiso University's Chapel of the Resurrection. Tickets are required, and all seats are general admission. Tickets are available at tinyurl.com/eaj339k4

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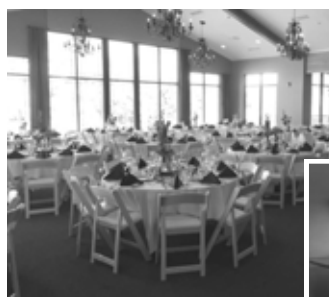
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HBO Max Delivers the Goods With Comedy, Mystery, Sci-Fi

by Andrew Tallackson

Comedy at its core, even amid squeamish cancel culture, is about pushing buttons. About seeing how far you can go for a laugh. Insult humor, shock value — whatever it takes.

“Our Flag Means Death” is the absolute opposite. It’s sweet, good-natured silliness. People behaving like buffoons. Even when profanity slips into the dialogue, you aren’t offended. There is an innocence to the laughs, a heart, sorely missing from many comedies. How else then, do you explain pirates who complain their leader is a wimp...yet relish his bedtime stories, everyone camped out around him like a slumber party.

That’s the tone of the show, conceived by relative newcomer David Jenkins, who grew up in Chicago and somehow, thanks to the involvement of Oscar-winner Taika Waititi (“Jojo Rabbit”), has attracted a comic dream cast from across the globe that consistently delivers the goods.

I did not realize the HBO Max series is inspired by an actual person. Stede Bonnet was known in the early 18th century as “The Gentleman Pirate” because he was born into a rich English family, owned land and had a family.

In an effortlessly hilarious performance, Rhys Darby plays Stede as if he stumbled out of an episode of “Downton Abby.” Decked out in over-the-top aristocratic attire, he’s filtered his cultured sensibilities into his own pirate ship. That includes room for a squash court and, in laugh-out-loud gags, a fully-stocked library. Mind you, Stede never takes into account that turbulent seas will send his collection flying off the shelves.

His crew sizes him up as a confused oddity. That they’re better than him. But the beauty of the show is that the crew is a ragtag band of misfits. Alone, their eccentricities would make them outcasts. Together, they’re like children in search of a guiding parent. And that’s how they come to view Stede. Over the course of the show, over many misadventures, they emerge as a reluctant family.

The actors as the crew are not household names, but you recognize their faces. They’ve done comedies all around the globe, and they create an endearing lot who make you laugh because they play it straight, their body language and facial expressions spinning the laughs into unexpected territory.

When the notorious Blackbeard arrives on the ship in the second episode, his presence sets the course for the remainder of the series.

Blackbeard is played by Waititi, and it is another performance where he delights in shattering expectations. In movies like “Jojo Rabbit,” “What We Do in the Shadows” and “Free Guy,” he toys with al-



The misfit pirates in “Our Flag Means Death” are populated by a comic dream team, led by Rhys Darby (center, saluting) as Stede Bonnet, who was known in the early 18th century as “The Gentleman Pirate.”

pha male masculinity. Chips away at what society demands of men. Here, Blackbeard finds himself drawn to Stede’s world. A bromance emerges between the two, creating the maritime equivalent of a domestic “courtship.” They’re playing “home,” the crew rambunctious children who must constantly be entertained.

In a performance of deadpan genius, Con O’Neill plays Izzy Hands, Blackbeard’s disgusted first mate. Izzy is so appalled by Blackbeard’s less manly behavior, he frequently stands in a locked pose, horrified, as if he’s witnessing a freak show.

When on land, “Our Flag Means Death” features dynamite talent in cameos and key supporting roles: Will Arnett, Leslie Jones, Kristen Johnston, Nick Kroll, Kristen Schaal and Fred Armisen. You can’t ask for better.

If there’s a flaw in the show, it’s that there is not enough material to warrant 10 episodes. As the series winds down, the laughs are not as consistent, where each episode contains about one or two moments that make you chuckle. Trimming the series to six or seven episodes might have done the trick.

The last episode, however, is a doozy. As a guilt-ridden Stede returns home, Claudia O’Doherty is hysterically funny as Mary, Stede’s wife, a woman

so content with her new life, Stede is a constant distraction. A weary irritation.

The fate of Mary and Stede’s relationship, though, is another example of how “Our Flag Means Death” never reduces the characters to cheap jokes. It works out the complicated union between the two in a way that is explosively funny and quietly moving.

No word yet from HBO Max if the show has been renewed. It ends with a cliffhanger, setting the stage for more comic chaos. The ratings, alone, would suggest another season is a given.

Let’s hope so. After a pandemic-driven two years, we can always use a good laugh.

□

“The Tourist” takes one of the oldest jigsaw-puzzle mysteries — the charming amnesia victim — and flips it on its head Australian-style.

Storytellers Down Under have a way of finding even the most dire situations oddly amusing. They’re more interested in character, in the way peculiar folk react amid stressful situations.

“The Tourist” is by no means a comedy, but it has a disarming way of never getting too worked up about itself. Had this story been told in America, it would have been a two-hour rush of tension. But here, with characters scrambling about a desolate



Taika Waititi is a riot as the notorious pirate Blackbeard, while Con O’Neill (background) is deadpan perfection as Izzy Hands, Blackbeard’s disgusted first mate.

community in the Australian outback, the amnesia victim often takes a back seat to a female probationary constable whose nerdy fiancé is ticked she missed ballroom dance classes.

That’s the tone of the HBO Max piece: a “thriller” by definition only. It’s six episodes of quirky types chased by sketchy criminals with personal issues. The humor is as dry as the scorched landscape, but it engages you more and more with each passing episode, with a whopper of a fourth-episode twist that deliciously ups the ante.

The series finds a man from northern Ireland (Jamie Dornan, “Belfast”) jolting awake in a hospital, suffering from textbook amnesia. No idea who he is nor how he got there. Before then, we see the car crash that sent his memory packing: a chase staged like Spielberg’s “Duel,” complete with a semi in relentless pursuit. Other than that, why he’s in Australia and how his past speaks to his character — all gone. That means he has to rely on any clues tossed his way.

Two women enter his life. One, Luci (Shalom Brune-Franklin), may be connected to him. The other, Probationary Constable Helen Chambers, is a delight. She’s played by Australian actress Danielle Macdonald. If you saw the Netflix comedy “Dumplin’,” about an overweight teen pressured by



Jamie Dornan (right) is the bigger name, but Danielle Macdonald steals “The Tourist” as its probationary constable.

Continued from Page 21

her mother to appear in a beauty pageant, then you know how instantly likable she is. In “The Tourist,” Helen is bored by her life. The routine of her work. A fiancé (Greg Larsen) who can be annoyingly controlling, even downright cruel. This new mystery man may be her ticket out of personal and professional stasis. Macdonald plays Helen like the outcast desperate to sit with the cool kids at lunch. That giddy enthusiasm makes her the heart of the show.

“The Tourist” does an expert job of keeping us in the dark. The scripts by Harry Williams and Jack Williams parcel out the clues only as they are revealed. We know what Dornan’s mystery man knows. That’s it. We do learn his name is Elliot, and that’s the only clue I’ll let slip. The sleepy out-back town in which he finds himself has a way of not getting too excited about things, even after, for instance, the local diner is obliterated when a bomb goes off. And the first main threat to present itself is a doozy: Ólafur Darri Ólafsson’s plump, shaggy killer, Billy Nixon. He shows no hesitation at bumping off anyone in his path. In that classic loopy Australian style, he nearly offs Helen’s fiancé, not just because the guy now knows his face, but because he can’t stop talking about himself. There’s also a Greek drug lord, Kosta (Alex Dimitriades), who wants Elliot found and possibly killed.

So, you can see how “The Tourist” works. All the elements are in place, but the show arrives at them through the back door, taking its time to reveal them. The beauty of Dornan’s performance — the

actor does some of his best work here — is that Elliot seems like a decent guy. In Helen’s eyes, the equivalent of a lost puppy who’s also kinda hot. But with each new clue, Dornan creates a man riddled with nagging doubt. A crushing sense that, before the crash, he might not have been a man worth saving. The performance, as such, takes on an urgency with each new episode.

The end of the fourth episode offers one killer twist. All the pieces now add up, and we realize just how unstable the forces at work are. The fifth episode, in which Elliot’s memory begins the process of returning, takes an utterly original approach by having Elliot accidentally drink something that launches a psychedelic journey. That’s something we have not seen before. The approach rattles your cages. You’re not sure what is unfolding at first, then it becomes crystal clear.

Daniel Nettheim, who shares directing duties with Chris Sweeney, stages all the answers we crave without drowning them in bloodbath violence. Instead, Nettheim’s big reveal about the nature of Elliot’s past is carefully handled so it registers with the desired impact. And the final scene offers hope when all seems lost.

Viewers who crave a more violent resolution will be disappointed by “The Tourist.” Those who want their thrillers to actually mean something will be surprisingly affected by it.

□

“DMZ” starts as one thing, leads you to believe it will stay the course, then becomes something alto-

gether different...and infinitely more satisfying.

Apocalyptic visions of America are common these days. In some cases, tedious bores. If the countryside isn't crawling with zombies, then it's nuclear winter or some other disaster.

"DMZ" is based on a DC graphic novel by Brian Wood and Riccardo Burchielli. On one level, it exists as a modern paraphrase of John Carpenter's "Escape From New York" (1981). Remember that one? Manhattan is a walled prison, with Kurt Russell's anti-hero sent in to rescue the president after his plane crashes. I saw it again recently, and it doesn't quite hold up. The opening and close are strong bookends to a dreary midsection that revels in tired urban stereotypes Hollywood had no trouble exploiting back in the day.

"DMZ" appears designed to rectify that with a more thoughtful exploration of how America treats the marginalized. The directors are Ava DuVernay and Ernest Dickerson. DuVernay ("Selma," Netflix's blistering "When They See Us") is one of the few storytellers willing to take unflinching looks at race. Dickerson, a frequent collaborator with Spike Lee, helmed some of the best early episodes of "The Walking Dead." Together, with "DMZ," they achieve futuristic storytelling with a brain.

The series envisions a Manhattan Island that becomes a demilitarized zone, or DMZ, during what's called the Second American Civil War. Eight years later, Alma Ortega (Rosario Dawson), a New York medic, sneaks into the DMZ with a clear-cut mission. During the evacuation from Manhattan, she was separated from her son, Christian. Now, she wants to find him and bring him back.

(The evacuation flashback contains the series' most staggering image: the top of the Empire State Building, severed and upended.)

The show's vision of Manhattan is a world abandoned by time like 2007's "I Am Legend," where the Earth has reclaimed the landscape, weeds and vines everywhere. Those who remain in the DMZ are society's disenfranchised. Largely black and Hispanic, but with a fair share of white residents. Medical personnel are frazzled. Living conditions are scant. Life in the DMZ is an obvious metaphor for those groups within society who feel deprived of the American dream.

There is no police force. Safety — protection from crime — is relegated to two rival gangs, the leaders for which are about to square off in the first election for governor. One is Parco Delgado, head honcho of the Spanish Harlem Kings that rules part of Upper Manhattan. He's played by Benjamin Bratt in the best performance of his career. He is charismatic, dangerously unstable, ferociously ruthless. The other warring party is led by Wilson Lin (Hoon Lee), who presides over Chinatown.

Both are men from Alma's past. How and why, I won't spoil. But the tension between these two



Rosario Dawson and Benjamin Bratt do the best work of their careers in "DMZ."

heats up as the election nears, sparking flashes of violence and terror within Manhattan.

Dawson is an actress we movie geeks love because she plays cool girls. The kick-ass hero in Robert Rodriguez, Quentin Tarantino and Kevin Smith pictures. She's never had a lead role like Alma, and this is proof of why she's a star. She is the thinking woman's hero. Dawson is tough, compassionate, devastating in scenes that reveal the loss of innocence within her son once she finds him.

And it is Alma — a new symbol of hope within the election — who reinvents "DMZ" to reveal its true message. Yes, race is at the forefront of the show, but the two men calling the shots in Manhattan's first election are rabid alpha males engaged in a violent pissing match. Doesn't matter the color of their skin. Men, the show argues, revert to the same behavior regardless of their environment. Women, however, they are the *true* catalysts for change.

That message takes us on a ride we didn't anticipate, and "DMZ" is better for it. The show wraps up amid enlightenment, of how the world can become a better place. And we can't help but agree with it.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

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“City Connect” Links Graduating MCHS Seniors to Opportunities

Michigan City Area Schools has partnered with Diversity Squared, aimed at connecting graduating high school seniors with employment and other regional post-secondary opportunities.

The “City Connect” program will supplement existing school-counseling efforts, serving approximately 50 Michigan City High School seniors who have not established firm post-graduation plans. Diversity Squared, a consulting firm with workforce preparation and placement experience, will assist students through one-on-one and small-group sessions, helping them determine next steps.

City Connect activities include:

- Workshops focused on soft skills, work ethic and related skills to ensure students' readiness for the workplace, military or commu-



Diversity Squared President Angie Nelson-Deutch works with students.

nity college.

- Small-group sessions to promote awareness of job-placement opportunities and high-demand fields in Michigan City and surrounding areas.
- Guest speakers and field trips to area businesses for first-hand observations and connections with potential employers.
- Tours of Ivy Tech, along with information about industry certifications and training programs such as Next Level Jobs and Crossing the Finish Line.
- Assistance with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and information about financial aid options for post-secondary education.

Companies and organizations interested in participating in the program or providing opportunities for graduating seniors should contact Diversity Squared at (219) 321-0005 or

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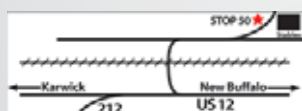
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Lubeznik Center Summer Offerings

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., will host classes, workshops and camps for all ages this summer.

The schedule includes:

- “Abstract Painting I & II” (16+): Mondays, June 13-July 25, 4-7 p.m.
- “Sandcastle Writers” (21+): Mondays, June 13-July 25, 5-7:30 p.m., or Wednesdays, June 15-July 20, 5-7:30 p.m.
- “Fundamentals of Drawing” (15+): Tuesdays, June 14-July 19, 6-8 p.m.
- “Drawing for Young Artists” (7-12): Tuesdays, June 14-July 19, 4-5:30 p.m.
- “Watercolor Plus” (15+): Wednesday, June 15-July 20, 6-8 p.m.
- “Understanding Contemporary Art” (18+): Thursdays, June 30-Aug. 4, 6-7 p.m.
- “Scraps to Sculptures” (9-14): Thursdays, June 16-July 21, 4-5:30 p.m.

Two one-day summer workshops are planned:

- “Sun Printing Workshop” (13+): Saturday, June 18, noon-3 p.m.
- “Fused Glass I & II Workshop” (15+): Saturday, July 30, noon-3 p.m.

Three five-day summer camps are available for children ages 7-14:

- “Dino Action Camp,” Monday-Friday, July 11-15, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- “Passion for Fashion Camp,” Monday-Friday, July 18-22, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- “Wildlife Around the World Camp,” Monday-Friday, Aug. 1-5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Visit www.LubeznikCenter.org/Learning or call (219) 874-4900 to register or for more details.

Scholarships for all ages are available through support from the Unity Foundation of LaPorte County and LCA's Dolly Fund.



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The Ballet Lady



Paused because of the pandemic, Judith Joseph and her team have brought "The Ballet Lady" back to Head Start classes, with plans to continue through May 11. For more than 30 years, "The Ballet Lady" has brought ballet to young audiences, complete with performances and instruction in dance. Joining her this year are Doug Moon and Helen Williams from Metamorphis Traveling Theatre.



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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.

Earth Day Celebration

The event, which features Ranger Laura and other environmental booths, is from noon-3 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at Michigan Public City Library, 100 E. Fourth St.

Daddy Daughter Dance

The event that features dancing and refreshments is Friday-Saturday, May 20-21, at the Luhr County Park Morgan Shelter, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte.

A maximum of 72 people are allowed each night. Times are 6-8 p.m. May 20 and 2-4 p.m. May 21. The cost is \$25 per couple and \$5 for each additional daughter. Pre-registration and payment are required on or before May 12 or until full, whichever comes first.

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 3-8, with an adult required to participate. Times are 6-7:15 p.m. at Luhr County Park's Morgan Shelter. 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:

- June 1: The 3 B's Butterflies, Bees, Birds.
- June 15: Web of Life.
- June 29: Animal Encounters.
- July 20: Play Pod Exploration.

Field Trips

Formal educators, Scout leaders and groups can schedule a free organized program for students or group at any county park. The programs on various topics meet state standards and patch requirements.

Visit www.laportecountyparks.org for sample programs. Email natureniki@csinet.net or call (219) 324-5855 for details.

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A Generous Boost



Members of the Michigan City Fire Department, including firefighter Christopher Blake, help unload school supplies donated to Edgewood Elementary School through the Enchanted Backpack program.

Edgewood Elementary School on April 12 received a nearly \$50,000 donation in school supplies from Enchanted Backpack.

Edgewood students, teachers and staff greeted the delivery in a celebration just outside the school doors. Included in the donation were classroom supplies, winter coats, hygiene products, books and playground equipment.

Principal Kristin Smith thanked Enchanted Backpack, saying in a press release "this generous gift provides all students with the supplies needed for a successful school year."

The supplies will be distributed to students in need for the remainder of this school year and next year.

The donation was made possible through a rigorous application and interview process completed by Smith and Edgewood Elementary School's Success Coach Nicole Norris.

LaPorte 4th of July Parade

The Kiwanis Club of LaPorte announced the 76th Annual 4th of July Parade starts at 10 a.m. Monday, July 4.

Preceded by the Annual Run for Riley and Kiwanis Kids Korner, the parade follows the traditional route, headed westward down Lincolnway from Tipton Street to Andrew Avenue in uptown LaPorte. Community members and organizations can submit an application to enter a unit. A dedicated website, <http://Kiwanis4thofJulyParade.org>, launches in mid-April and contains new and improved entry forms, 2022 sponsorship opportunities and general parade information.

The theme is "America Proud. LaPorte Proud." The \$50 application fee is due for community entries and \$250 for corporate entries.

Call Drummond Osborn at (219) 716-0013 or email drumm.osborn@gmail.com for more details.



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3. Pin Ball Wizards	22	22

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Mary Lou McFadden	187
2. Susan Kieffer	175
3. Shelley Dunleavy	166

SPLITS

June Salmon		2-7
Mary Clohessy	2-4-8-10,	5-10
Susan Kieffer		9-10
Mary Lou McFadden	5-6-10,	3-10

STRIKES

Mary Lou McFadden	5
Shelley Dunleavy	3



More bowlers are invited when teams meet at 12:30 p.m. Tuesdays at City Lanes.

SMSO "Symphonic Stories"

Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra will feature musical director finalist Timothy Verville as the conductor during "Symphonic Stories" at 4 p.m. EDT Sunday, April 24.

Patrons are invited to a pre-concert conversation with Verville at 3 p.m. EDT. The program and concert are at Howard Performing Arts Center, 4160 E. Campus Circle Drive, Berrien Springs, Mich.

The program is:

- "Overture to Hansel and Gretel" by Humperdinck and featuring members of the Lake Michigan Youth Orchestra.
- "Five Selected Songs" by Mahler and featuring contralto Evgenia Pirshina.
- "Scheherazade Opus 35" by Rimsky-Korsakov.

Tickets are \$20/\$35, while student tickets are \$5. Masks are optional. Tickets are available at www.smso.org, by calling the SMSO office at (269) 982-4030 or in person at 513 Ship St., St. Joseph.

Spring Art Sale

A "Springtime Hometown Hand-Crafted Art and More Sale" is from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at Visit Michigan City LaPorte tourism bureau, 4073 Franklin St.

Items range from fine art and clothing to jewelry and stained-glass products. Many items will focus on spring and Mother's Day. Participating artists are from the Michigan City and LaPorte areas, including those from Michigan City Art League and Land of Lakes Art Association.

Call (219) 872-5055 for more details.



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LaPorte County Public Library

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

New users can download the meeScan app through options such as Apple and Google Play. Then, place holds on items using a customer account. Once at the library, check in using the app and clicking 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 program is planned:

- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, April 22.** The socially distanced storytime includes rhymes, music and activities.
- **Readers Corner — Book Club from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, April 26, at the Coolspring Branch Meeting Room.** Refreshments will not be served, but participants may take coffee or tea.

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, including programming through the Exchange building.

Walk to Prevent Child Abuse

The 10th Annual Walk to Prevent Child Abuse, presented by LaPorte First United Methodist Church, is at 5:30 p.m. Thursday April 28.

The walk begins at the church parking lot, 1225 Michigan Ave. Participants then walk as a group down Indiana Avenue to the courthouse, where community leaders address the importance of child protection. LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody, Dunebrook Executive Director Dr. Tammy Button, Family Advocates Chief Executive Officer Jackie Dermody and Family Recovery Court Magistrate Pamela Munsey will speak.

Everyone is encouraged to wear blue as a symbol of Child Abuse Prevention. Those unable to walk can join the group on the courthouse's southwest lawn. Participants then return to the church for a light meal and fellowship. In the event of bad weather, the program will take place at the church. Call the church at (219) 362-2443 for more details.

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In the Area

April 21 — Local Author Bill Nelson: Firm Grip, 6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

April 22 — MCPL Podcast Episode Release, 9 a.m., through Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: www.mclib.org/podcast

April 23 — Wake Up the Gardens Volunteer Cleanup Day, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Reservations: volunteer@friendshipbotanicgardens.org

April 23 — Collector's Corner Breakfast, 9 a.m., St. John's United Church of Christ Fellowship Hall, 101 W. St. John Road. Tickets: \$25, purchased at Michigan City Public Library circulation desk.

April 23 — "Springtime Hometown Hand-Crafted Art and More Sale," 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Visit Michigan City LaPorte tourism bureau, 4073 Franklin St. Info: (219) 872-5055.

April 23 — Earth Day Celebration, noon-3 p.m., Michigan Public City Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 325-8315, www.laportecountyparks.org

April 23 — Free Family Day, 1-3 p.m., Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: (219) 874-4900, www.LubeznikCenter.org

April 23 — LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, "Film Fest!," 7 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Balcony: \$22/adults, \$20/seniors 60+, free/students with valid ID. Tickets: www.lcso.net, (219) 362-9020, Roxy Music, 1012 Lincolnway, LaPorte, LaPorte Civic.

April 25 — Great Decisions, 6:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: www.mclib.org/podcast

April 26 — Readers Corner — Book Club, 6-7 p.m., Coolspring Library Meeting Room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Through June 30 — Local artist Elda Rundzaitis, The Legacy Center Gallery @ Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Legacy Center hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun.

Mondays in April — Needle Arts Club, 5:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Saturdays — Turn Up Dance Fitness with Stacy G., 8:30-9:30 a.m., Long Beach Community Center,

2501 Oriole Trail. Cost: \$5 paid at class.

First and Third Mondays — Singing Sands Toastmasters Club, 6:30-8 p.m., Senior Health/Wellness Center (old hospital ER, Barker/Bufalo).

In the Region

April 21 — Open Mic Night with Jack Cunningham, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Free admission; donations welcome. Performer inquiries: openmic@acornlive.org

April 22 — Community Park-wide Cleanup for Earth Day, 9 a.m.-noon, Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

April 23 — The Friends' 26th Annual Native Plant Sale, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Friends of Indiana Dunes office, 1000 W. Oak Hill Road, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

April 23 — Help Save a Dune: Marram Grass Planting, 10 a.m.-noon, Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

April 23 — Woodland Wildflower Hike, 1-3 p.m., Heron Rookery, 1336 County Road 600 East, Michigan City. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

April 23 — Are They Here Yet Hike?, 2-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

April 23 — Walk with the Timberdoodles, 7 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

April 23 — Chicago Comedy Tour, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: general/\$20, VIP/\$45. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

April 24 — To the Blowout and Back, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

April 24 — Mount Baldy Summit Hike, 1-3 p.m., parking lot off U.S. 12, Michigan City. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

April 24 — The School of American Music, "From Classical to Jazz," 3 p.m. EDT, Converge Community Church, 601 W. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, Mich. Free. Reservations/info: (269) 409-1191, www.schoolofamericanmusic.com/tickets/

April 24 — Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra, "Symphonic Stories," 4 p.m. EDT, Howard Performing Arts Center, 4160 E. Campus Circle Drive, Berrien Springs, Mich. Tickets: \$20/\$35, student tickets/\$5. Reservations: www.smso.org, (269) 982-4030, 513 Ship St., St. Joseph.

April 25 — Harbor Country Film Group, 6:30 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Free.

Through May 15 — Guillermo Sotelo's "Broken Alphabet: A Love Letter to Graffiti," Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: (269) 983-0271, www.krasl.org

Through May 28 — "University of Notre Dame:

The Fabric of a Global University,” The History Museum, 808 W. Washington St., South Bend. Tickets: \$11/adults, \$9.50/seniors (60+), \$7/youth (6-17), free/members. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat./noon-5 p.m. Sun. Info: (574) 235-9664, www.historymuseumSB.org

Through Oct. 2 — “WIRED: The Rise (and Fall) of Electric Cars,” The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$10/adults, \$8.50/seniors 60+, \$6/youth ages 6-18. Info: www.studebakermuseum.org, (574) 235-9714.

Through Oct. 30 — “The Avanti: America’s Most Advanced Automobile,” The Studebaker National Museum, The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$10/adults, \$8.50/seniors 60+, \$6/youth ages 6-18. Info: www.studebakermuseum.org, (574) 235-9714.

Sundays in April — Miller Woods Hike, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Paul H. Douglas Center, 100 N. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu for details.

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing*: “Mothering Sunday.” Not rated. Times: 3 p.m. April 22, 6 p.m. April 23, 3 p.m. April 24, 6 p.m. April 25. *Also showing*: “Aline.” Rated PG-13. Times: 6 p.m. April 22, 3 p.m. April 23, 6 p.m. April 24, 3 p.m. April 25. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

Wake Up the Gardens

Help prepare Friendship Botanic Gardens for the 2022 season during “Wake Up the Gardens Volunteer Cleanup Day” from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 23.

The event was scheduled for March 26, but postponed due to inclement weather. Volunteers can rake and haul, and pick up garbage and sticks. If possible, take gloves and rakes.

RSVP to volunteer@friendshipbotanicgardens.org. Dress for the weather — the event will occur rain or shine — and light refreshments will be provided. Students can get community service hours, and it’s a chance for Master Gardeners to get hours as well.

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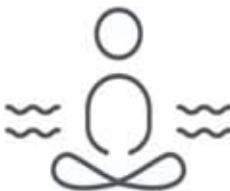
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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On April 21, 753 B.C., Rome, according to legend, was founded by Romulus and Remus.

On April 21, 1789, John Adams was sworn in as the first vice president of the United States.

On April 21, 1843, Chicago passed an ordinance prohibiting pigs from running free on the streets.

On April 21, 1855, a mob of 21,000 irate Chicago citizens battled police during the trial of people accused of violating Sunday closing laws.

On April 21, 1857, New York's Alexander Douglas patented an adjustable bustle.

On April 21, 1861, during the Civil War, the first Chicago volunteers left for Cairo, Ill., to join the Union Army.

On April 22, 1348, at a royal ball in England, the Countess of Salisbury was dancing with King Edward III when one of her garters slipped off. The king retrieved it and put it on his leg. This was the beginning of the Order of the Garter, the highest order of English knighthood.

On April 22, 1864, Congress first authorized the director of the U.S. Mint to use the motto "In God We Trust" on all coins.

On April 22, 1889, the Oklahoma Land Rush began as thousands rushed to stake claims on land the federal government had not assigned to Native Americans. Those claimants who "jumped the gun" (entering the "territory" a little sooner than the rules allowed) were referred to as "Sooners."

On April 22, 1937, thousands of college students in New York City staged a fourth annual "peace strike," vowing to "refuse to support the government in any war."

On April 23, 1564, William Shakespeare, considered the greatest dramatist the world has known, was born in Stratford-on-Avon, an English market town about 80 miles northwest of London.

On April 23, 1789, in New York (then the nation's capital) President George Washington moved into the Franklin House, the new nation's first executive mansion.

On April 23, 1838, the first transatlantic steamship service began as two ships arrived in New York from England.

On April 23, 1848, the Illinois & Michigan Canal, linking Chicago with the Mississippi River, officially opened.

On April 24, 1704, *The Boston News Letter* commenced publication. It was the first American newspaper printed on a regular basis over an extended

period of time.

On April 24, 1800, with a startup fund of \$5,000 "for the purchase of such books as may be necessary," and with books from Thomas Jefferson's entire library, the Library of Congress was officially established.

On April 24, 1897, William Price, upon reporting for work at *The Washington Star*, became the first journalist to have the title "White House Reporter."

On April 24, 1942, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley was born.

On April 25, 1719, Robinson Crusoe, a novel by Daniel Defoe, was first published.

On April 25, 1859, Chicago's first horse-drawn street railway begin operation on State Street between Lake and 12th streets (Roosevelt Road).

On April 25, 1901, New York became the first state requiring automobile owners to have license plates for their vehicles; the fee was \$1. The plates, for all 954 registered cars, carried their owners' initials.

On April 25, 1983, the Pioneer 10 spacecraft crossed Pluto's orbit, speeding on its endless voyage through the Milky Way.

On April 26, 1865, John Wilkes Booth, assassin of President Abraham Lincoln, was found dead in a Virginia barn.

On April 26, 1961, Roger Maris of the New York Yankees hit the first of a record 61 home runs in a single season.

On April 26, 1962, the first true international satellite, a United States-British venture, was launched from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

On April 26, 1984, President Ronald Reagan arrived in China for a five-day visit.

On April 26, 1989, actress-comedian Lucille Ball died, in Los Angeles, at age 77.

On April 26, 2000, Vermont's governor, Howard Dean, signed into law the nation's first measure allowing same-sex couples to form civil unions.

On April 27, 1875, New York's Roman Catholic Archbishop John McCloskey was installed as the first American cardinal.

On April 27, 1906, U.S. Steel broke ground for their new steel mills, and a city named Gary was born on the Indiana shores of Lake Michigan.

On April 27, 1937, the nation's first Social Security checks were distributed.

On April 27, 1967, Expo '67 opened in Montreal, coming very close to bankrupting the city.

On April 27, 1972, after an exploratory mission to the moon, Apollo astronauts John Young, Thomas Mattingly and Charles Duke made a safe splash-down in the Pacific.

On April 27, 1986, almost 50,000 people were evacuated from the area surrounding Russia's crippled Chernobyl nuclear reactor.

On April 27, 2002, South African entrepreneur Mark Shuttleworth arrived at the International Space Station for an eight-day, seven-night cruise that cost him \$20 million.



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

- Conservation Club House, 1 Mill Pond Road, Union Mills, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Sunday April 24.
- A.K. Smith Career Center, 817 Lafayette St., 7:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. Tuesday, April 26.

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.

Home Watch Earns Accreditation

Home Watch of Southwest Michigan, St. Joseph, Mich., has earned accreditation from the National Home Watch Association for the fifth year.

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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

The Cartographers by Peng Shepherd (hardcover, \$27.99 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook or an audiobook. 387 pages.)

“What’s the purpose of a map?”

Seems like an easy question, but it’s amazing how quickly I got caught up in this story. First impression might be “maps? Eh! How dull.” But in this cleverly written book, a map is a lot more than just showing how to get from here to there...perhaps it’s more about bringing people together, or even something more undefinable.

But as one thing piles upon another you realize there is a mystery here worth pursuing — maybe even a murder, or two...or three. See what you think...

Nell Young has a doctorate in cartography. She’s passionate about the subject, but now works for a company called Classic that takes copies of old maps and embellishes them with mermaids, pirates and fake water stains, then makes the paper look old and worn, all for people to frame and hang over their fireplaces. Quite a letdown from the job she lost seven years ago at the New York Public Library map division.

So what happened? Fired by her prestigious father, Dr. Daniel Young, head of the library’s map division, that’s what happened.

She and boy friend, Felix, lose their dream jobs there because Nell finds a box of uncataloged maps in the basement. Her father is the department’s senior curator and immediately lets both of them go when Nell discovers a 1930s highway map of upstate New York in the box. It is one gas stations used to give to motorists. What is so special about it? He won’t say, because she won’t give up with the questions her father doesn’t want to answer. Nell and Felix end up going their separate ways, with Dr. Young giving no explanation for their firing.

Now, after years of no communication between them, Nell gets a call to go to the library immediately. Police greet her at the door. Her father is dead. Probably murdered. The map division is ransacked, but nothing is missing, although several of the maps on display are worth thousands, maybe millions, of dollars.

Nell knows her father had a secret compartment in his desk. She opens it, and there is that 1930s highway map. Why did he keep it locked away?

Searching her databases, Nell finds out hundreds of this same map were “missing, destroyed, or sto-

len” and now are a sought-after item by collectors.

There also is a 1903 map of the library building in an envelope. Again, what is its importance?

Nell keeps this information to herself and begins an investigation into who would want her father dead. And is the highway map the reason?

After a memorial to her father at the library, another person is killed. Security shows the killer disappearing into a room with no outside access. Where did he go?

The story now flows between the present and 20-some years ago, when...

They called themselves the Cartographers. A group of seven University of Wisconsin students who become more than just friends... more like a family unit. Nell’s parents are part of the group along with five other friends and Nell, who is just a toddler at the time.

After receiving their doctorates, the one nicknamed Bear suggests the summer at his family’s vacation home in upstate New York to work on their “Dreamer’s Atlas”— “a creation to bring wonder back to cartography.”

It’s on the trip to Rockland that a map is acquired at a gas station along the way. Just past Rockland on the map is a town called Agloe. A trip to explore the town finds only empty buildings and deserted streets. What happened to the people? And why don’t the locals know of its existence?

In the now, Nell makes contact with Eve, one of the Cartographers, who admits to Nell, “*There’s so much we could tell you about that town. And we will — but that isn’t the point. The point is what it did to all of us.*”

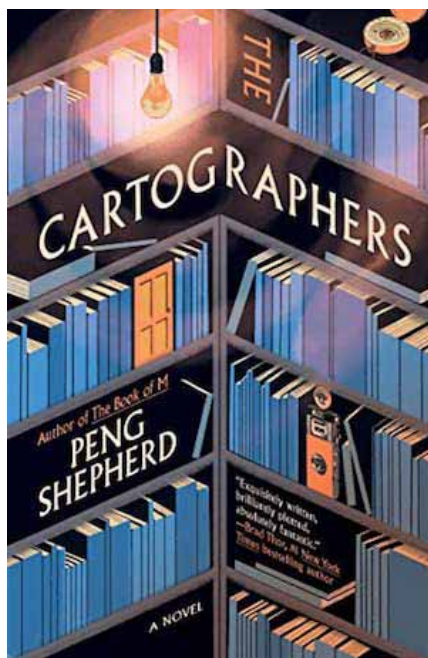
Nell has to know what happened that summer in upstate New York. Shepherd’s carefully crafted storyline brings together a “before and after” that finally fuses together to create a “now.”

Besides giving us a fresh look at what it means to make a map, it’s a story of intellectuals who start out as friends brought together by a love of maps, working toward a common goal, but finally taken down.

The Cartographers is a creative novel, and Shepherd’s seamless writing carries you deep into questions that may not have answers. And that’s what is at the heart of this story...thought-provoking imagination.

As the British would say, “Brilliant!”

Till next time, happy reading!



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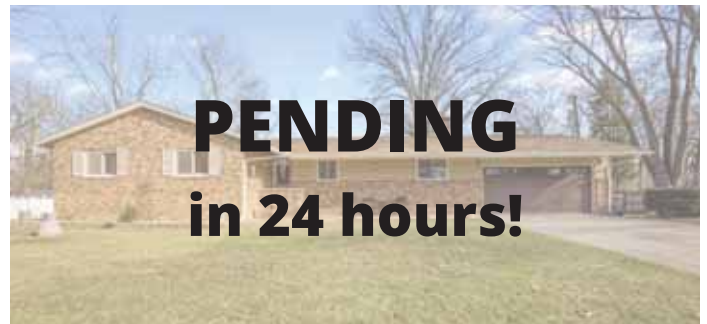
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