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Honoring the Brave

by Kim Nowatzke

Back in 2010, when 73-year-old Stan Adams began therapeutically writing down firsthand memories of his one-year Vietnam tour, he had no idea it would someday turn into a book, Mokane to Mole City: A Manchu Vietnam Memoir Bravo Co. Nov. 1968 – Nov. 1969.

“I must admit that next to serving and fighting in the War, reliving my tour and bearing my soul in the writing of this book has been the most difficult thing I have ever done,” he writes in the book’s foreword.

After several years of putting his thoughts, memories and, yes, fears down on paper, Adams knew he had a good start on what he had to do.

He had to complete his labor of love.

Even though, Adams said, “It’s been a long process,” and that it was “difficult to write because sometimes the memories were too much and I had to step away a bit.

“My purpose in writing this book is to share my story and those of my close Manchu friends, not only for my daughters and grandsons, but as a way of honoring the men I served with as well as our fallen soldiers and their families who grieve for their loved ones,” Adams wrote in the book.

The Manchus are members of the U.S. Army 25th Infantry “Tropic Lighting” Division, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment.



Darrel Cavin (from left), Stan Adams and Matt Switanowski spend time with *The Beacher* before attending Darrel and Barb Cavin’s 50th wedding anniversary celebration.

Photo by Kim Nowatzke



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The Beginning ...

The Mokane, Mo., native was drafted into service at 19 and left for an eight-week boot camp at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in June 1968.

It was there he met Darrel Cavin from LaPorte, who was drafted at 20 after working close to a year at New York Blower Co. The two were sent to Fort Ord, Calif., for Advanced Individual Training to prepare for combat. There, they received additional training on weapons, grenades, small rockets, hand-to-hand combat, live-fire courses and emergency field medical procedures, as well as physical conditioning.

"We knew we were headed to Vietnam and, at the tender age of 19, we did our best to prepare for what was to come, although we truly had no idea of what that meant," Adams wrote in Chapter 3, "We Had No Choice."



Stan Adams is photographed next to an eight-inch artillery gun.

Next, Adams and Cavin were sent to Advanced Weapons Training at Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, Calif. After a two-week leave of absence, when Adams admits he "was glad to be home with my family, but I had a lot of strange feelings during my visit, worrying that I would not return to them," the two arrived in Saigon on Nov. 26, 1968. Remarkably, assignments for the two friends who first met at Boot Camp mirrored each other during their tour as they ended up in the 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company. This was a rare occurrence.

"Once we met in basic training, we never left each other," Cavin said.

"He's a good friend to me. I'm sure he saved my life and I saved his," said Adams, referring to Cavin, who is now 75.

Adam's wife, Rita, shared a more lighthearted memory.

"Darrel would get a care package from home and Stan would have already gotten to it," she shared with a laugh.

"If it was good," Stan added, "it was gone."

(After mentioning his wife, daughters and grandsons in the dedication page of Mokane to Mole City, Adams includes the following: "And to my good friend, Darrel Cavin, thank you, I wouldn't have made it without you.")

Adams served as a bartender for Cavin when he married his wife, Barb Nowatzke, on July 1, 1972. Now Michigan City residents, the two celebrated their 50th anniversary at a special party July 9. Stan and Rita traveled from Millersburg, Mo., where they now live. A fellow comrade, 73-year-old Matt Switanowski, who lives in Warren, Mich., also attended.

Switanowski was drafted into the Army at 20 from his hometown of Roseville, Mich. He served from August 1968-August 1970, spending a year in Vietnam from Jan. 3, 1969, to Jan. 4, 1970. His assignment lines up exactly as Adams' and Cavin's, except Switanowski was in a different platoon – the 1st instead of the 3rd.

Mokane to Mole City describes how when the young and naive Adams first landed in Vietnam, he was greeted with the smell of decomposing bodies and cart loads of body bags carrying fallen U.S. soldiers.

"There's nothing quite like it, and it leaves you with a noticeable scar in your psyche," he writes. "Later, I'd equate that horrific smell with physical fear and fear of the unknown."

It wasn't long before Adams and Cavin learned the unnerving fact that they were sent in as replacements for Bravo Company soldiers killed in the Thanksgiving Day Battle of 1968. All in all, there were 29 killed in action and more than 50 wounded in that battle.

Adams' and Cavin's first assignment was building "Mole City," a combat patrol base camp near the Cambodian border. Its purpose was to bait the

North Vietnam Army and disrupt its supply lines through the region.

"After three days of non-stop digging bunkers and trenches, and filling and stacking 40,000+ sand-bags, the base camp was finally complete," Adams wrote. "We were worn out. Ultimately, the camp was tiny – only 100-150 yards across in any direction. But in the heat, dust and humidity, to us it felt like we had dug the Grand Canyon. LTC Leo L. Wilson nicknamed the camp 'Mole City.' The name was fitting because for the most part, it was entirely underground and once it was finished, it seemed that we lived like moles in our maze of tunnels and bunkers. Mole City was the first base camp to be built this way."



Darrel Cavin on the job as a radio telephone operator, a position he held for 11 months while serving in the Army.

Cavin shared his memories of building Mole City. "All we did at first for the first month was fill sand bags," he said. "I thought, 'Is this all we are here to do?' Then, I wished we had a few more (bags) when we got hit."

Adams explains in the book how the enemy was almost sure to attack because Mole City was positioned so close to them.

The Realities of War

And, attack they did during a Christmas truce, just before midnight on Dec. 22, 1968.

"The Manchus fought valiantly through the night as their ammo supplies dwindled, and, as a last resort, artillery was called in on Mole City," the back cover of Adams' book summarizes.

As helicopters brought in more ammunition, Adams and Cavin were carrying the weaponry to the bunkers while being shot at by the NVA, and while their own soldiers were shooting at an overtaken bunker. A mortar round hit 20-30 feet near them on Cavin's side. Later, it was determined he sustained

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a hernia injury from retrieving the heavy ammunition off of the helicopters. He went to Japan for the operation and was gone two to three weeks.

Adams wrote in the chapter, “Daybreak – God Was With Us”: “We later learned that our group of about 250 men had fought a hardened regiment of 1,500+ NVA soldiers that night... We had repulsed a human-wave attack by laying down a massive field of fire. So heavy was the volume of fire that four M60 machine guns barrels melted down completely ... It’s nothing short of a miracle that only twenty American soldiers lost their lives as a result of this battle.”

Adams was wounded only once throughout his military service, by enemy artillery during an attack in the thick jungle area of Tay Ninh. Shrapnel hit his right knee and left elbow, and he suffered burns on his stomach.



Matt Switanowski in basic training.

Adams, Cavin and Switanowski each received several medals for their Vietnam service. These included the Bronze star with a valor device, the Army commendation medal with a valor device and the Army Air Medal for flying more than 90 Eagle flights.

(Adams describes an Eagle flight as a “large air assault of helicopters to insert troops into hostile territory” in the “Index of Terms, Abbreviations & Acronyms” at the end of the book.)

Along with other Manchus, the three received numerous other medals, including Vietnam Campaign Medals, Vietnam Service Medals and Good Conduct medals.

Many years later, Adams learned Capt. Ron Cabral filed paperwork for him to receive a Purple Heart for the shrapnel injuries he received in battle. Sadly, he never did – even after filing two appeals and providing written substantiation by Cabral and seven other Manchus who were with him that day. Ironically, had he saved the bit of shrapnel that popped out of his knee years later while climbing an electrical pole, he could have used it as proof he was injured in the field in Vietnam.

During their tours of duty, Adams and Cavin both held the position of infantry rifleman. The two also were Radio Telephone Operators, with Cavin fulfilling this job for 11 months compared to Adams for three weeks. Ironically, Cavin serving as an RTO cost him a promotion from specialist 4 to sergeant since RTOs could not be sergeants. Adams, however, advanced to staff sergeant. Similarly, Switanowski held the positions of infantry rifleman and RTO, in addition to point man and squad leader. He also achieved the rank of sergeant.

The Healing Begins

The three veterans sat down to talk with *The Beacher* before the Cavins’ anniversary party to discuss Mokane to Mole City and their tours in Vietnam.

However, speaking easily or openly about their experiences hasn’t always been the case.

When Adams was formally discharged in June 1970, he returned home to find the reception shocking and unnerving. Because of the horrors he lived through, he could only sleep on his bedroom floor, where it now felt “normal” and “safer.” The slightest noise woke him from a sound sleep.

“I often felt guilty for coming home and leaving my friends over there,” Adams recalled in Chapter 45: “Trying to Move On.” “It really bothered me not knowing if they made it back safely. I put my Vietnam pictures, medals and service awards in a suitcase in the back of the closet, hoping to put that entire experience away and out of my mind. Even without those physical reminders, no matter how hard I tried to forget, there wasn’t a day that went by that I didn’t think about what I had been through.”

After his military discharge, Adams had a career in the electrical field, working at the Callaway Nuclear Plant near Fulton, Mo. He married Rita Russell on Nov. 28, 1974, and the two raised two daughters, Kimberly (Kim) Force and Nichole (Nikki) Tutt – who knew very little about what their father experienced in Vietnam. Stan and Rita now have two grandsons.

“It was just easier that way,” Adams wrote. “Darrel and I kept in touch off and on over the years, but otherwise, I put it all behind me; buried it deep inside. Over the years I tried various ways to block

out the memories of what I had experienced over there, but nothing really worked. Many years later, I would be officially diagnosed with PTSD."

Darrel, who also was officially discharged in June 1970, and Barb raised four children: Charlene McGuire, Sue Abrams, Dan Cavin and Cindy Cavin. They now are the proud grandparents of eight grandchildren. Retiring after 33 years as a semi-driver, Cavin is "proud of never having an accident" after more than three decades on the road.

But, he, too, had difficulties adjusting to civilian life.

"I had a real hard time with it – just getting back – after what I had went through," he said.

After arriving back in the States and walking through the airport in his khakis (a less formal field uniform) with his mother, a man approached Cavin. Trying to spit on the Vietnam veteran, the man accidentally hit Cavin's mother instead.

"That was the worst thing he could have ever done," he said.

When he first tried to become a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Cavin said he was told, "You didn't fight a war."

But, "a bunch of us came back from 'Nam at the same time, and kept at it until we got in."

Starting as a carpenter, Switanowski worked for various military contractors before he retired with 33 years. He has two daughters: Corey Hostetter and Sarah Cole, in addition to two grandchildren.

"For 29 years, I never talked to anyone and lost contact with them," he said about his own Vietnam memories.

But in 1999, that changed for Switanowski when he was searching online and found information about a Manchu reunion.

"I said, 'I have to go. I have to make contact.' I was glad I went," he said.

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Stan and Rita Adams with their family. Their two daughters are (from left) Kim Force and Nikki Tutt.



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The Adamses had attended two 25th Infantry reunions in hopes of locating Manhus. Then, Rita stumbled across the Manchu website, www.manchus.org. She focused on calling and emailing to try and get a large group of former Manchus to attend their first reunion in Orlando, Fla., in 2003.

Both Adams and Cavin made this first big step and attended their first Manchu Reunion – it was 35 years after they left for Vietnam.

At first, Adams admits he had mixed feelings about attending, but now “thoroughly enjoys them – they are great.”

Cavin confessed he was reluctant to make the trip as well and would have backed out of it, except their children purchased the airline tickets for him and Barb.

While the Adamses waited to check into their hotel room, Stan heard an unmistakable Boston accent in front of him – it was Cabral, his commander who led the Bravo company.

“An outstanding leader and good man, Capt. Cabral was like a father to all of us, and I truly believe that he was the reason so many of us made it home from that faraway place. He always looked out for his men and treated us with respect, even though he called us ‘kids’ at the time,” Adams wrote in his book. “We often referred to him as ‘The Old Man,’ but it turns out the old man was only five years older than we were.”

As the two old friends talked, Adams remembered Cabral’s comment, “We need to write this down.”

He would become one of Adams’ top supporters of his book project.

“Although I had the support from my comrades, Capt. Cabral’s encouragement motivated me to continue on my journey to finish the book,” Adams explained. “He was a big influence...Capt. Cabral and I wanted to document about our unit because after we died, no one would know about it.”

“Welcome Home...America’s Tribute to Vietnam Veterans” was another important milestone for the veterans held June 13-19, 2005, in Branson, Mo. The event included demonstrations, displays, golf and fishing tournaments, even a homecoming parade. There was a “Dignity Memorial Experience,”

a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

“Saturday’s Grand Finale Celebration featured fifteen Vietnam-era aircraft – even a Huey Helicopter!,” Adams wrote. “Darrel and I went up in it with our wives, but it was totally different than it was in Vietnam – we had to wear a seatbelt, couldn’t sit on the edge of the chopper, and weren’t getting shot at like we did over there.”

Cavin said, “My kids had never heard about what I did in Vietnam” until the Welcome Home event. “We never got a welcome home until we went to Branson, Mo.”

Changing The Future

Today, Cavin serves as commander of VFW Post 1130 in LaPorte. For the past six years, he has volunteered on the Veterans Treatment Court, where he helps local veterans with legal situations. He mentors and advocates for them, and accompanies them to court. He is actively trying to bring a VA Clinic to LaPorte. Now, veterans must drive to Crown Point, Mishawaka or Chicago, depending on which medical treatment they need.

Barb joined VFW Auxiliary in 1984. She served as president at the state level for 2004-2005, being in charge of more than 300,000 members. Her special project was the audiology department at Riley Hospital for Children. They donated more than \$23,000 for hearing aids for children. For the past 19 years, she has served as secretary and treasurer of the local auxiliary.

“The reason I joined is that our men and women went there to fight,” Barb said. “The least we can do if you’re eligible to join is support them by working on the many programs to help the veterans.”

She said the Cavin children, and even the grandchildren once they are 16, are members of the auxiliary.

“Our children grew up in the VFW so they are very respectful toward veterans and especially the flag,” Barb said.

Both Stan and Darrel are open about seeing counseling professionals in the past and present through the VA hospital to help process what they lived through so many years ago.

“They help – they listen. But getting it out isn’t easy,” Adams admits.

In addition to the years he spent writing down his



The Cavin family: Charlene McGuire, Cindy Cavin, Darrel Cavin, Barb Cavin, Dan Cavins and Sue Abrams.

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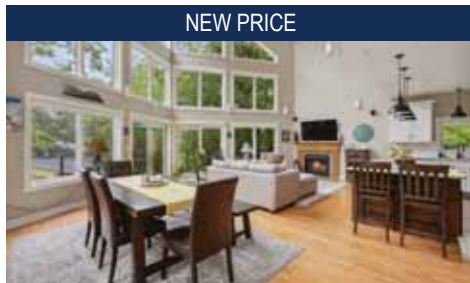
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thoughts, it took him three years to publish Mokane to Mole City. Honored to help bring her father's story to life, Kim, an attorney in Prairie Home, Mo., edited and published the book. To date, more than 1,100 copies have sold and many others gifted.

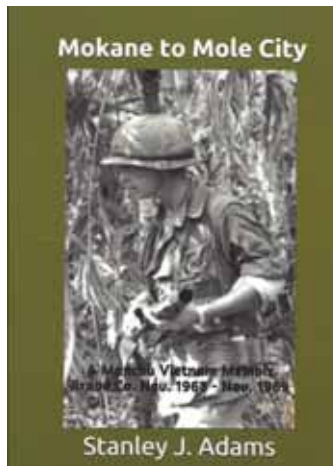
Copies of the book are available at www.luckysnipe.com, Kim's family's website where readers can obtain an autographed copy, as well as Amazon.

This past spring, Mokane to Mole City was made into an audio book for the blind or with vision or physical limitations after being approved and accepted by the Library of Congress Bureau of the Blind.

The Adamses have dedicated this version to Manchu Charlie Company John Strnad from Nauvoo, Ill., who was blinded during the Mole City Battle.

They've also dedicated their time and resources to meeting with Manchu Gold Star families – immediate family members of a military service member who died in the line of duty – all across the country. It's not easy, but Adams knows the importance of being there to answer questions, to talk about what their loved one was like, to even tell them details of their last moments and, hopefully, offer closure.

"I often wondered, if I had been killed, would I only be a vague memory to my family?," Adams wrote in the last chapter, "Reflections." But now, af-



Matt Switanowski and his family. In the back (left to right) are his daughters, Sarah Cole and Corey Hostetter.

ter meeting and talking with the families of soldiers who died over there, I know that families never forget. They think often of their loved ones and never really get over losing them."

So many things – the sound of a Huey helicopter flying overhead, the smell of fish since the locals ate so much of it, sharp noises, the sounds of weapons being fired – bring back intense feelings of Vietnam in a flash.

"I look back on my time there and it was horrible, but I lived through it," Adams wrote. "The Manchu soldiers were young men forced to deal with situations that were many times unbearable, all the while we were still kids. I met a lot of brave and honorable men there who would've given their lives for me, and I for them. It's a thing with soldiers that we will never forget. I hope the life I have lived since then honors the ones we lost...My journey from 'Mokane to Mole City' seems a lifetime ago, yet remains in my heart and mind as if it were just yesterday. I grew up in Mokane, but became a man at Mole City."

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LaPorte Community Concert Association

LaPorte Community Concert Association's campaign is under way to subscribe new and old members for the 2022-2023 season.

The package includes 19 performances. Four are at Kesling Intermediate School Auditorium, 306 E. 18th St., LaPorte, five in Valparaiso, four in Portage and six in Munster. The total price is \$60 for adults, \$10 for students through high school and \$140 for a family, including two adults and all students. A \$5 discount is available on adult subscriptions through Oct. 2.

The concert season runs September through May 2023. This season's artists are:

- **North American Brass Company on Oct. 2.** The classically trained brass quintet includes members from the Michiana area, including LaPorte's Chuck Steck. He is joined by: Jay Crouch, trumpet; Bill Brownie, horn; Gary Cooper, trombone; and Roger Lewis, tuba. They have performed for colleges and service events, including Andrews University, Valparaiso University and with LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra.
- **Empire Wild on Nov. 9.** The crossover trio of two cellos and guitar/piano/vocals was founded by Ken Kubota, Brando Ilaw and Mitch Lyon. The classically trained musicians met at The Juilliard School and formed Empire Wild, which emphasizes original music, covers and twists on the classical canon.
- **Illumine Trio on March 27, 2023.** The award-winning ensemble consists of trumpet (Chris O'Hara), harp (Katie Lynch Koglin) and soprano (Sarah Moyer). The friends met as performers in Boston, and each has experience across the musical spectrum, from internationally touring brass ensembles to musical theater.
- **"Brothers" on April 30, 2023.** Canadian singer/pianist/producer Jim Witter has performed for more than 30 years. His new show, "Brothers," features hits by "musical brothers" such as the Everly Brothers, Lennon and McCartney, the Righteous Brothers and the Beach Boys. He will be joined by Ian Tanner, with Witter on vocals, piano and guitar and Tanner on bass, guitar and vocals.



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Canterbury Summer Theatre Ends Season With Comic-Fantasy “Sylvia”

Canterbury Summer Theatre will present its final show of the 2022 season, the comic-fantasy “Sylvia,” on Thursday-Saturday, Aug. 4-6.

No Wednesday matinee is scheduled.

Written by A.R. Gurney (“Love Letters”), the play concerns Greg, a middle-aged married man feeling increasingly isolated from his wife. He finds a dog, Sylvia, in the park and decides to bring her home. The dog, played by an actress, can speak and understand him. As Greg spends more time with Sylvia, the friendship creates friction with his spouse, but ultimately has a positive effect on their marriage.

The play debuted off-Broadway in 1995 with Sarah Jessica Parker as Sylvia, then received its Broadway debut in 2015 starring Matthew Broderick and Annaleigh Ashford. The show here is produced in association with Bossier Parish Community College in Louisiana as part of its two-decade relationship with Canterbury. The production opens in Michigan City and continues in Shreveport later in the month.

Canterbury Artistic Director Ray Scott Crawford is the director. The cast includes Michael Schutza (Greg), Aubrey Brummett (Kate), Sarah Foster (Sylvia), Josue Escobar (Tom), Alisa Schutza (Phyllis) and Sarah Johnson (Leslie). Rona Leberr is costume designer. David White serves as technical director/designer, with Jim Boyter as props master



Michael Schutza (from left), Sarah Foster and Aubrey Brummett star in “Sylvia.”

and Johnathan Houghes as stage manager.

Seating is by general admission, and patrons will be safely social-distanced. Season ticketholders may reserve specific seating, if the box office is notified in advance. The monitoring of, and adherence to, CDC and state guidelines regarding COVID remains. Performances are at 2 p.m. Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Friday and 6:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets, as well as season discount cards, can be reserved by calling (219) 874-4269 or by email at info@canterburytheatre.org. Regular admission is \$20, or \$18 for seniors (62 and older) and \$10 for students and military. Visit <http://www.canterburytheatre.org> for more details.



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A Special Boost



Long Beach Fire Department has received an unexpected boost. Three girls, Colleen Chlystun and Brea and Lainie Newman, held a bake sale and lemonade stand to raise money for the department. The result was a \$100 check. The girls (center) are pictured here with members of the fire department.



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Harbor Country Hikers



Chikaming Open Lands Executive Director Ryan Postema (far left) leads a 2021 hike.

Harbor Country Hikers will walk the trails of Chikaming Open Lands' Burns Prairie Preserve at 10 a.m. EDT Saturday, July 30.

The 1.5-mile hike is led by COL Executive Director Ryan Postema, who will give a brief introduction before leading the group through the preserve.

Burns Prairie is a restored mesic, or moist, prairie seeded with native grasses and wildflowers. Un-restored mesic prairies, once home to bison, are now rare in Michigan. None, in fact, occur on sites open to the public, according to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

Burns Prairie is especially notable for its wildflowers, including black-eyed Susans, butterfly bush, cone flowers and Queen Anne's lace.

Rated moderately physically difficult, the hike lasts about two hours. Participants should wear long pants (preferably tucked in), a sun hat, sturdy shoes or boots, and take insect repellent and water.

HCH membership is encouraged, but the public is welcome. The group observes federal and state COVID guidelines, and face masks are optional. An all-terrain rollator — a wheeled walker with oversized tires for unpaved areas — is available on a first-come, first-served basis by emailing harbor-countryhikers@gmail.com.

Driving directions and other details are on the group's website, www.harborcountryhikers.com, and Facebook page, Harbor Country Hikers.

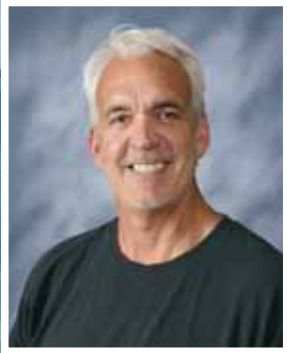
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The American Red Cross LaPorte County Chapter will sponsor the following bloodmobiles:

- Palko Services, 4991 W. U.S. 20, noon-5 p.m. Thursday, July 28.
- Conservation Club House, 1 Mill Pond Road, Union Mills, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday, July 31.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 2.
- Sacred Heart Church, 201 Bach St., LaPorte, noon-5 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 3.

Donors must be in good general health and feeling well, at least 17 (16 with parental consent) and weigh at least 110 pounds. Call (800) 733-2767 or visit www.redcrossblood.org for more details.

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“Disney’s Descendants: The Musical”

Centerstage Youth Theatre MC will present “Disney’s Descendants: The Musical,” with performers ranging in age from 7-14, on Friday-Sunday, July 29-31, at Michigan City High School’s Auditorium, 8466 W. Paks Road.

The new musical-comedy features characters and hit songs from the popular Disney Channel movies. The setting is present day in the kingdom of Auradon, where Disney’s heroes and royalty live safe from villains and troublesome sidekicks now banished to the magic-free Isle of the Lost. That is, until Ben, the benevolent teen son of Belle and King Adam (The Beast), offers a chance of redemption for the troublemaking offspring of the evilest villains: Mal, Evie, Jay and Carlos.

Directed by Becky Tiedeman, performances are at 7 p.m. July 29-30 and 2 p.m. July 31. Tickets, available at the door, cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and children 5 and younger.



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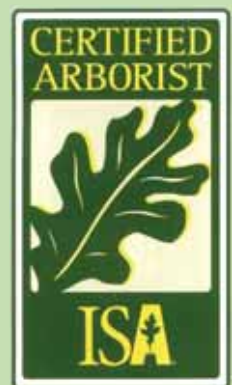
Five Tips for Taking Care of Your Trees

1. Don't prune ANY oaks from April 15th to September 30th. Oak wilt spreads readily during this time. Oak wilt will immediately kill any infected trees and will spread to your trees via root grafts if your neighbor prunes their oaks and they get infected. There is no treatment or cure for infected trees. Prevention is your Only choice.
2. Don't "spike" your trees. Spiking causes wounds that lead to infection and tree decline. Anyone who spikes trees is causing long-term damage to the trees.
3. Avoid damage to the roots. Large trucks cause soil compaction and digging up roots cause frayed wounds that can't heal and create access points for pathogens (fungi) that start root rot and weaken the trees structural stability. Lawn mowers can also cause damage to the root flares.
4. Keep a good amount of natural leaf litter and organic matter covering the roots under the canopy. Blowing leaves away from your trees can kill the fibrous roots by drying the exposed soil.
5. Consult an ISA Certified Arborist before doing anything to your tree.

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“The Burning Sea” Reinigorates the Disaster Movie

by Andrew Tallackson



Henrick Bjelland (from left), Kristine Kujath Thorp and Rolf Kristian Larsen play a team trapped on a collapsing oil rig in “The Burning Sea.”

Sorry, Roland Emmerich, but Norway is kicking your butt in the disaster movie department.

Back in February, Emmerich saw his costly “Moonfall” crash and burn...and Hollywood was left scratching its head. This is a guy who, with “Independence Day,” “Godzilla,” “The Day After Tomorrow,” “2012” and “Independence Day: Resurgence,” clearly has a fetish, albeit a successful one, for ravaging the planet. But “Moonfall” was trash. Terrible acting, flimsy plot and special effects that, for a \$140 million movie, weren’t that special.

“The Burning Sea,” Norway’s latest disaster epic from much of the team behind “The Wave” (2015), enjoyed a brief theatrical release and now is finding an audience through streaming and blu-ray. I’ve been singing the praises of “The Wave” since its debut. It was made for a fraction of the cost of an Emmerich picture...and it put most of them to shame. Once disaster strikes and a small Norwegian community has 10 minutes to reach safety, the movie is an anxiety-inducing adrenaline rush, told with a minimum of special effects and centered on a family whose scramble for survival brings them together.

“The Burning Sea” is Norway’s answer to 2016’s “Deepwater Horizon,” with a splash of James Cameron’s “The Abyss” (1989) tossed in for good measure. It is not as consistently enthralling as “The Wave,” but when it revs up, it offers emotional, superbly executed action.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“The Burning Sea”

Running time: 104 minutes. Streaming/blu-ray. Rated PG-13 for peril, some disturbing images, language and brief partial nudity

“The Wave” capitalized on actual concerns of potential flooding within Norwegian communities. “The Burning Sea” feeds off ecological fears spurned by more than 50 years of offshore drilling by the Norwegian government. Now, it’s taken a toll. Cracks emerge on the ocean floor, causing a rig to collapse in a little over two minutes. Called to search for survivors — and it is here the movie echoes “The Abyss” — are two researchers, Sofia (Kristine Kujath Thorp) and Arthur (Rolf Kristian Larsen). They’ve been experimenting with a drone submersible. What they discover is that the ocean floor has been reduced, as one character says, to the equivalent of Swiss cheese by years of drilling. The swollen fissures mean the remaining oil rigs, and they number more than 300, are next to collapse.

It was here I braced for “the idiot plot.” Not familiar with that term? It’s simple. It means the screenplay requires characters behave like idiots, ignoring the warnings so the movie’s special effects team can get to work, reducing all the sets to rubble. Remember “Dante’s Peak” (1997), where Pierce Brosnan tries to warn a sleepy town its volcano is about

to develop fatal acid reflux? No one heeds the warnings, and the area is buried beneath layers of volcanic ash. This is what we do in American disaster movies. If we don't have characters who behave like morons, then we can't make everything go boom.

But by having a brain, "The Burning Sea" forces itself to up the ante. With government officials hoping to avoid another Deepwater Horizon fiasco, they commence with a large-scale evacuation of the North Sea's rigs. That sequence, which aims for ultra-realism, is one of the most exciting things I've seen in years, staged with a minimum of effects and exploiting our fears of what is about to head their way. Then comes catastrophe, climaxed with a breathless last-minute escape and the image of a freighter literally getting swallowed up by the sea. The sequence is a triumph of acting, editing, music and carefully executed effects.

When Sofia realizes her boyfriend, Stian (Henrick Bjelland), is trapped on one of the collapsing rigs, she and Arthur hitch a ride with one of the rescue crews to see if they can save him. Up until this point, "The Burning Sea" has been touch and go in terms of pacing. It's building, yes, but with too many scenes of officials standing around looking worried. The downtime, however, has allowed Thorp, as Sofia, and Larsen, as Arthur, to create an extremely likable team, people who don't look like the athletic supermodels that populate Emmerich's pictures. They are smart, courageous, real people driven by a desire to save one of their own. And by this stage of the film, the tension, the action — it's all non-stop.

A prevailing criticism of "The Wave," its inferior sequel, "The Quake," and now "The Burning Sea" is that critics go gaga over them simply because



The film's most impressive special effect involves a ship being swallowed by the sea.

they're Norwegian. That they are the same tripe as their American inspirations. I would argue that when filmmakers, wherever they hail from, find a way to sidestep clichés, when they pump you up through smart storytelling, well, that is cause for celebration.



Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



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Music Under the Stars

The concert series “Music Under the Stars” is in full swing at Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12, with entertainment lined up that ranges from soloists and bands to Dunes Summer Theatre. The complete schedule is at <https://friendshipbotanicgardens.org>. Pictured are photos by *The Beacher’s* James Conlin taken of The Freddy Jones Band when it performed earlier this month.



Guest Day at Long Beach Country Club

Thanks to Patricia Bailey for providing us with photos from the popular tradition among ladies 9-Hole golfers. The event was held July 14, with cocktails on July 13. Ninety two golfers participated.





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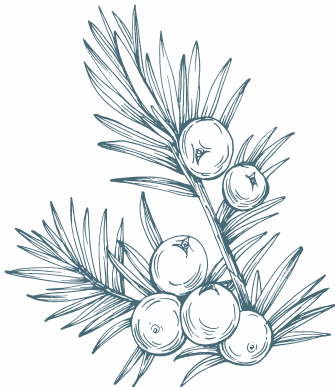
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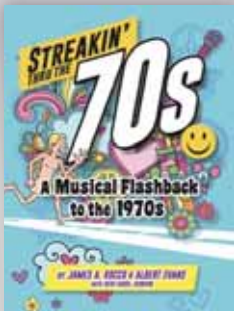
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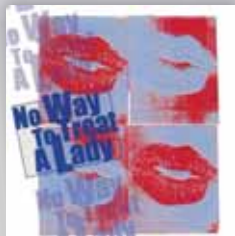
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Croonin' at the Courthouse



"Croonin' at the Courthouse" will feature Martha Cares (center) with Garth Taylor (left) and Daniel Rodriguez.

"Croonin' at the Courthouse: Martha Cares and Friends" is from 6:30-8 p.m. EDT Friday, July 29, at Berrien Springs (Mich.) Courthouse, 33 N. Cass St.

Sponsored by the Berrien County Historical Society, former Broadway performer Cares will present a concert with the theme "Love: Past, Present and Almost." She will be accompanied by Garth Taylor on guitar and Daniel Rodriguez on bass.

Concertgoers can take lawn chairs to the outdoor program. The cost is \$5, or \$2 for Berrien County Historical Society members.

Paws for Humanity Concert Series

Paws for Humanity will host "Build the Barn," live concerts to support its mission, from 5-8 p.m. EDT every other Sunday through Sept. 18 at 14671 Three Oaks Road, Three Oaks, Mich.

Concertgoers can take beer, chairs, blankets and picnic baskets with snacks. Artists include Mike Felten, Patti Shaffner and Chicken Dolphin Band. The suggested donation at the door is \$20, while children are free.

The series kicked off July 24. Ensuing dates are Aug. 7 and 21 and Sept. 4 and 18.

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Rotary Club Scholarship Awards



The Rotary Club of Michigan City recently presented its annual scholarship awards to Sophie Reyna, a 2022 Marquette Catholic High School graduate, and Cory Stevenson, a 2022 Michigan City High School graduate. Reyna and Stevenson both will attend Indiana University-Bloomington this fall. They were selected based on essay submissions regarding the Rotary Club motto "Service Before Self," and how it has been reflected in their community service activities. Pictured are (from left) Club President Terry Voltz, Reyna, Stevenson and Scholarship Committee Chair Nicole Manning.

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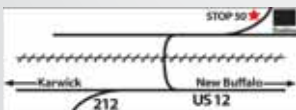
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*Offer available July 11, 2022 to August 19, 2022. Offer based on a retail price of \$10,000. Requires purchase of qualifying system. Financing available to well-qualified buyers on approved credit. No down payment required. Financing requires 120 equal monthly payments of \$132 a month of principal and interest after the first 6 months. Normal late charges apply. Financing can combine with any eligible rebate. Minimum and maximum amount financed of \$3,000 and \$100,000, respectively. You may prepay your account at any time without penalty. Financing is subject to credit requirements and satisfactory completion of finance documents. Any finance terms advertised are estimates only. See Truth in Lending disclosures available from lender for more information. **Rebate requires purchase of qualifying items between July 11, 2022 to August 19, 2022. Qualifying items must be installed by August 26, 2022. Rebate claims must be submitted (with proof of purchase) to www.lennoxconsumerrebates.com no later than September 9, 2022. Rebate is paid in the form of a Lennox Visa® Prepaid card. Prepaid Card is subject to terms and conditions found or referenced on card and expires 12 months after issuance. Conditions apply. See www.lennox.com/terms-and-conditions for complete terms and conditions. © 2022 Lennox Industries Inc. Lennox Dealers are independently owned and operated businesses.

JROTC Cadets Attend National Drill Camp

Marcus Mantel and Matthew Wilson, cadets with Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, attended the National Military Drill Camp on July 6-12 at Schreiner University, Kerrville.

The objective is to prepare cadets to command units in military drill competitions, and provide drill skills specific to JROTC ("armed and unarmed exhibition" drill). The camp, like all MCJROTC activities, was conducted at no expense to MCHS nor the cadets. The Marine Corps paid for the camp and transportation to and from Texas.

"Both of these cadets are superlative representatives of MCHS," Maj. Tom McGrath, senior Marine instructor, said in a press release. "In addition to their dedication to the drill team, they are outstanding students and do many hours of community service."

Master Sgt. Jeff Benak, the Marine instructor,



Cadets Matthew Wilson (far left) and Marcus Mantel (holding American flag) prepare to march in the Michigan City Patriotic Parade.

noted the maturity and potential of each cadet.

"They are only sophomores, but they have stepped up to assume leadership positions in our program," he said in a press release. "With their positive attitudes, they really set the tone for other cadets to follow their leadership by example."

Both cadets had nothing but praise for the camp.

"It was great to talk to other cadets from all over the country to get their perspective as to how their programs are run," Wilson said.

Mantel noted the "tricks of the trade," particularly dealing with exhibition drill.

"I am really looking forward to sharing this knowledge with the other cadets on the drill team," he said.

MCHS will try for a berth in the national championship meet in Washington, D.C., next April. The Wolves qualified for the nationals twice before the pandemic.

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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 library has begun changing overhead lighting to LED fixtures. They will feature automatic ambient lighting, centralized controls for turning on and off and conservation in unoccupied public areas. A section above the front entrance will have specialized color lighting for seasonal themes. The expected completion date is Sept. 16. The library will remain open during all phases of the project, but reserves the right to close if necessary. Areas under the work zone will be closed. The goal is to minimize closure time to its collections and services. The meeting rooms will be closed while work is done in them.

The following programs are scheduled:

- **Friday Afternoon at the Movies: "Cyrano" at 2 p.m. Friday, July 29.** The film is Rated PG-13. Due to ongoing work in the library, the date may change. Visit www.mclib.org or call Robin at (219) 873-3049 for updates.
- **Needle Arts Club from 5:30-7 p.m. Mondays in July.** Membership to the group, formerly

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

- **Makerspace: open lab hours from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in July.** Youth ages 6-17 can create with LEGO WeDo, Micro Bits, paper circuits and Ozobots. Children 12 and younger must have a parent or guardian attend with them.
- **Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays.** 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.



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.)

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Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

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

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

Cocktails at the Grand Cottage

Michiana Humane Society will host its "Cocktails at the Grand Cottage" fund-raiser from 5-9 p.m. EDT Saturday, July 30, at the beachside home The Grand Cottage in New Buffalo, Mich.

The event includes nine auction items, including a trip for eight to a private club, along with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. All proceeds benefit home pets in the shelter's care.

The cost is \$125 per individual. Visit tinyurl.com/2p8dh7wc for reservations or more details.

Michiana Humane Society is located at 722 Indiana 212, Michigan City. Call (219) 872-4499 for more information.

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Back Nine Winner – Juliet Birnbaum, Eileen Wilenborg, Eve Minogue, Lisabeth Hayes.

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Chamber Ambassador of the Quarter



Michele Gustin is the Michigan City Chamber of Commerce's Ambassador of the Quarter for the second quarter of 2022. The honor goes to someone who has shown dedication to the Chamber's mission by regularly attending Chamber events, connecting with members through emails, calls and in-person meetings, and referring non-members for membership. Outside of the Chamber, Gustin is Barker Mansion's operations and programming manager.

Music in the Gardens

"Music in the Gardens," presented by South Bend's The History Museum and 88.1 WVPE, is from 5-9 p.m. EDT Friday, July 29, in The History Museum's Oliver Gardens.

Taking center stage is Big Daddy Dupree's Broke & Hungry Blues Band, which showcases eight local musicians, most with 25-30 years experience, who perform everything from classic rock to the blues. Guests can take lawn chairs or blankets for lawn seating. No chairs are provided. No carry-ins are allowed because food and drinks will be sold. Tickets, which cost \$10, are available at www.historymuseumSB.org. Guests also can browse the museum's exhibits, including "Unveiled: Wedding Traditions" and "University of Notre Dame: The Fabric of a Global University."

The museum is located at 808 W. Washington St. Call (574) 235-9664 for more details.

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July 27-30 — Canterbury Summer Theatre, “No Way To Treat A Lady,” Canterbury Theatre, 807 Franklin St. Times: 2 p.m. Wed.-Thur., 7:30 p.m. Fri., 6:30 p.m. Sat. Tickets: (219) 874-4269, info@canterburytheatre.org. Info: www.canterburytheatre.org

July 28 — Michigan City Municipal Band, 7:30 p.m., Washington Park’s Guy F. Foreman Bicentennial Amphitheater.

July 28 — Arts in the Park, LaPorte’s Fox Park. Heartache Tonight (Eagles Tribute Band)/7 p.m.; preconcert: open mic night/6 p.m. *July 27*: LaPorte City Band/7 p.m. Info: contact@artsintheparklaporte.com

July 28, Aug. 2 — Maker Cart Pop Up, 4-5 p.m., Coolspring Library Branch, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

July 29 — Friday Afternoon at the Movies: “Cyrano,” 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

July 29-31 — Centerstage Youth Theatre MC, “Disney’s Descendants: The Musical,” Michigan City High School’s Auditorium, 8466 W. Pahs Road. Times: 7 p.m. July 29-30/2 p.m. July 31. Tickets at door: \$10/adults, \$5/students, children 5 & younger.

July 29-31 — “Matilda: The Musical,” LaPorte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St. Times: 7:30 p.m. July 29-30, 2 p.m. July 31. Tickets: \$17/adults, \$16/seniors, \$13/students. Info: www.laportelittletheatreclub.com

July 30 — Art in the Park, Long Beach Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail. Art fair/9 a.m.-2 p.m., children’s activities/10 a.m.-noon. Food: Fork in the Road Food Truck, Valpo Velvet Ice Cream Scoops. Info: longbeachparkboard@gmail.com

July 30 — Michiana Humane Society “Cocktails at the Grand Cottage” fundraiser, 5-9 p.m. EDT, The Grand Cottage, New Buffalo, Mich. Cost: \$125. Reservations: tinyurl.com/2p8dh7wc

Aug. 3 — Virtual Author Talk with Dr. Marcia Chatelain (adults 19+), 1-2 p.m., through LaPorte County Public Library. Registration: <https://libraryc.org/laportelibrary/18035>

Aug. 3 — Crafty Kids (ages 6-11), 4-5 p.m., Meeting Room B @ LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Through Sept. 30 — Michigan City Art League, Queen of All Saints Catholic Church’s Legacy Center, 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. Info: kd3627@hotmail.com

Through Oct. 21 — “moniquemeloché presents...,” Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: www.LubeznikCenter.org/Events

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

Mondays in July — Needle Arts Club, 5:30-7 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Tuesdays in July — Makerspace: open lab hours, 3:30-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Saturdays in Michigan City — Michigan City Farmers Market, 8 a.m.-noon, Eighth & Washington streets. Info: farmersmarketmichigancity@gmail.com

Saturdays in LaPorte — LaPorte Farmers Market, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Lincolnway parking lot next to Mucho Mas. Info: laportefarmermarket@gmail.com

In the Region

Through July 28 — “Transition,” Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

July 28-31 — Jeffrey Hatcher’s “Scotland Road,” Box Factory For the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Times (all Eastern): 7:30 p.m. July 28-30, 2 p.m. July 31. Tickets: \$12, \$15 (reserved cabaret seating. Reservations: <https://ticketstripe.com/scotlandroad>

July 29 — “Music in the Gardens,” 5-9 p.m. EDT, The History Museum’s Oliver Gardens, 808 W. Washington St., South Bend. Cost: \$10. Reservations: www.historymuseumSB.org

July 29 — “Croonin’ at the Courthouse: Martha Cares and Friends,” 6:30-8 p.m. EDT, Berrien Springs (Mich.) Courthouse, 33 N. Cass St. Cost: \$5, \$2/Berrien County Historical Society members.

July 29 — Scott & Lila with opener Emma Hamel, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: general/\$25, reserved/\$50. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

July 30 — Friends of Beverly Shores Pop-Up Sale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 2856 W. Dunes Highway. Info: wagnercasa44@gmail.com

July 30 — Harbor Country Hikers, 10 a.m. EDT, Chikaming Open Lands’ Burns Prairie Preserve. Directions, additional details: Facebook page (Harbor Country Hikers), www.harborcountryhikers.com

July 30 — The Common Concert Series, 7-9 p.m. EDT, Buchanan, Mich. Entertainment: Mowtown... Pride of the Motor City. Info: The Common-Buchanan, MI (Facebook).

July 30 — Acorn Anywhere! — The Music of Ella & Billie, 7 p.m. EDT, Fernwood Botanical Garden, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Tickets: gen-

eral/\$35, reserved/\$60. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

July 30-31 — Summer Gardens in Watercolor (Dave Knoebber exhibit), Art Loft Studio, 10232 Wilson Road, New Buffalo, Mich. Time: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. EDT both days.

July 31 — 31st annual Car Show, American Legion Post 204, 204 W. Linden St., Three Oaks, Mich. Registration/8 a.m.-noon EDT, awards/2 p.m. EDT. Info: (219) 363-5736.

July 31 — Simply Barbra, 7 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: general/\$35, reserved/\$60. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Aug. 1 — Critter Dinner, 10-11 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Aug. 2 — "Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O," 9:30-10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Aug. 3 — High Dunes Hike, 10-11 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Aug. 3 — Chicago Farmer & The Fieldnotes – Midwest Made, 7 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: general/\$15, reserved/\$40. Reservations: www.acornlive.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.

Thursdays in July — Chellberg Farm Open House, 1-3 p.m., Mineral Springs Road parking lot between U.S. 12/20, Porter. Info: www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

Fridays/Sundays in July — Mount Baldy Sunset Hike: 5-6:30 p.m. Fridays/9-11 a.m. Sundays, parking lot off U.S. 12. Info: www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

Saturdays in July — Pinhook Bog Open House, 9 a.m.-noon, parking lot @ 700 N. Wozniak Road, Michigan City. Info: www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

Saturdays in July — Beachcomber Hike with a Ranger, 8-9 a.m., Central Avenue Beach. Info: www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

Saturdays in Chesterton — European Market, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Broadway & Third Street. Info: (219) 926-5513.

Sundays in July — Bailly/Chellberg History Hike, 2-4 p.m., Bailly/Chellberg parking lot off Mineral Springs Road, U.S. 12/20, Porter. Info: www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing*: "My Donkey, My Lover & I." Not Rated. Times: 6 p.m. July 28, 3 p.m. July 29-30, 9:45 p.m. July 30, 3 p.m. July 31, 6 p.m. Aug. 1. *Also*: "Elvis." Rated PG-13. Times: 6 and 9:45 p.m. July 29, 6 p.m. July 30-31, 2:15 p.m.. Aug. 1. *Also*: Paintings by Annie Hickman through late August. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickers-theatre.com, (269) 756-3522.



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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Miller Pizza By the Beach, 1012 N. Karwick Road, is taking applications for employment. Apply within. No phone calls, please.

The Beacher is seeking someone to deliver the newspaper on Tuesdays. A few businesses are included among the stops, but it's mostly homes in beach communities. The person, who will be paid, must have his/her own vehicle. The individual currently in the position will train the new employee for a few weeks to familiarize him/her with the route. If interested, call (219) 879-0088 and ask for Drew Tallackson, email drew@thebeacher.com or stop by our office, 911 Franklin St.

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GARAGE SALES, ESTATE SALES, ETC.

The Good Things Sale is hosting a "Give Back Sale" on Sunday, July 31, 10 a.m.-noon, cash only. All remaining donated household consignment items: furniture, lamps, linens, dishes, etc., will be available for purchase at 1/2 off plus an additional 25% off on purchases of \$100 or more. Proceeds will benefit our local animal welfare organizations. Thank you for your support!

Long Beach Community Center.

2501 Oriole Trail, Long Beach

Parking at the Community Center is limited. Please obey all parking signs or you will be ticketed. You may pull in and park on the grassy triangle at the front of the building with all 4 tires off the pavement. Do not park on residents property or down any side streets. Looking forward to seeing you there!

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Friday-Saturday, July 29-30, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

8077 W. Dianne Court, Orchard Estates, MC

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Estate Sale July 29-31 • 48114 McKean Drive, Grand Beach, MI

9 a.m.-5 p.m. EDT Friday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon EDT Sunday

Terms: cash. Furniture, small freezer, glassware, china, sewing machines, fabric and vintage patterns, retro and many household items. 2012 GMC Terrain SLE 100,800 mileage. \$10,000. Pictures: estatesales.net

Moving Estate Sale: 2622 Oriole Trail, Long Beach

Saturday, July 30, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Premier furniture and accents for sale. Sofas, chairs, tables, desk, consoles, beds, lamps, Ottomans, porch furniture etc. Snow blower, bikes, tools, exercise equipment, SO MUCH MORE. No early birds. No deliveries.

WANT TO BUY

WANTED: I buy all types of antiques and collectibles, including toys, advertising, military items and more. **Call Matt at (219) 794-6500.**

Wanted: Fishing tackle. Buying all kinds of fishing tackle. Tackle boxes, lures, reels, collectibles, toys, misc. **Call/text (219) 873-6568.**

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Armored by Mark Greaney (*hardcover, \$28 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 495 pages.*)

There is no such thing as a boring Mark Greaney book. If it's about the military, private security bodyguards, international politics or the drug trade, Greaney is your author. He has traveled to more than 35 countries to train alongside military and law enforcement to lend credence to his stories.

The Gray Man has been his main character in most of these books. Now, he introduces Josh Duffey, an interesting, complicated man I hope appears in future books.

The story begins in Lebanon and ends up in Mexico, and the excitement starts at Page 1...

Josh is former Army, now working as a "high-threat security operator" for a number of companies that protect and defend politicians, the über rich and others. Call it what it is — trained and armed bodyguards. He's made a reputation for himself all over the world and is in constant demand.

On one occasion, Josh's outfit is in western Beirut to protect a politician about to make a speech in the middle of the city. It all goes south in a hurry when the motorcade is attacked and Josh finds himself alone with the politician's wife in a high-speed chase for their lives.

A high-powered rifle shatters Josh's left leg at the knee, and the lower leg has to be amputated.

Three years later, back home in Virginia, the only job Josh can find is mall security. His wife runs a small cleaning business. They have two children, and the money just isn't there anymore.

At the mall one day, Josh is surprised when Mike Gordon shows up. He worked with Josh on many assignments and can't believe where his friend is now. He says he works for Armored Saint, a company with a not-so-good rep ("*...those guys are psychos*"), but with fantastic pay. He says the next job in Mexico will be worth \$30k and last three weeks. Josh wants in. It's not just getting back in the game that Josh is thinking about. It's mostly the big bucks that could get him out of debt.

He meets with Armored Saint and gets a job as TL — team leader. Question: why are all names in military and government acronyms? Drives me crazy. Anyway, Josh and Gordon are in the air and on their way to base camp to meet their teams. They are a bunch of smart-ass men with not-so-clean records, but most are ex-military and know how

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



to take orders, as well as shoot an Mk 48 machine gun. They all have nicknames: Josh doesn't know their real names and doesn't care. There will be 22 men in three teams providing security. Will that be enough?

Their job is to escort a UN delegation to meet with

a cartel in the Sierra Madre mountains, brokering a deal to bring some stability to the region. They are meeting with Archuleta, head of the Black Knights cartel, one of the largest. They also want the Black Knights to surrender some 60 recently purchased shoulder-launched missiles.

The delegation hopes to bring about some semblance of peace between the cartels. Really? Are they insane? The delegation's about to find out that cartels don't play nice with each other.

One woman on board is Dr. Gabriella Flores, a regional analyst at the Mexican National Museum of Anthropology. She knows many local dialects and customs. For some reason, Adnan Rodriguez, rep for the Mexican government, doesn't want her along and constantly belittles everything she says. What

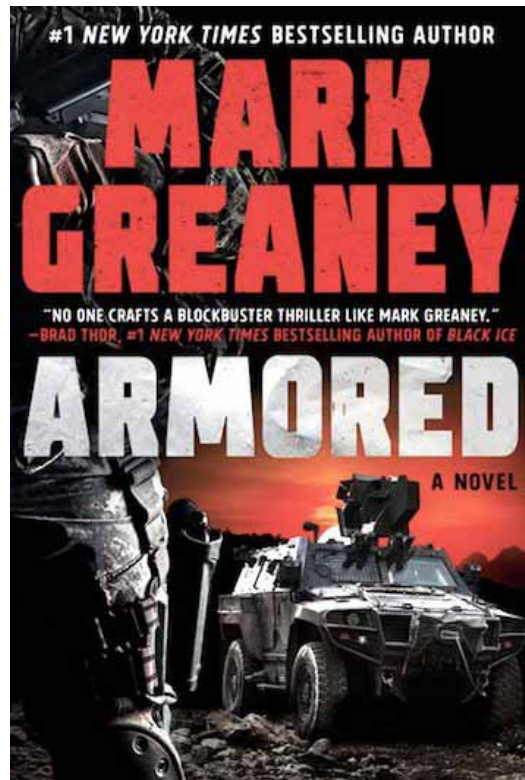
does he have against her? Josh soon discovers her worth to the project, but it may be too late.

There's no time to find out as bullets soon start flying, and it's a rocky, dangerous trip to the meeting place. Other cartels don't want the UN in their territory and tell them so — with bullets and grenade launchers. But maybe Josh should look into his own group. Something feels off...

This is compulsive reading to the nth degree, with a startling realism that makes you want to hide under the couch: from the gun battles, to a harrowing trip on an airplane running out of fuel, to a wild escape on foot. When the bullets start flying, make no mistake, there is no holding back on the language or bloodbaths. Things don't always turn out as you would like; people you thought were trustworthy turn out to be the worst of the lot.

If you crave adventure with current themes, this is the book for you. I was glued to the pages with a Do Not Disturb sign in front of me.

Till next time, happy reading



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