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Humble Servant

by Edmund Lawler

Bill DeFuniak would rather I not write this story about his retirement as Long Beach's clerk-treasurer. A modest man with a wry humor, he sought no fanfare, no farewell party.

But because he's a gentleman, a public servant, DeFuniak agreed to sit down for an hour at Lakeshore Coffee & Specialties to talk about his life and his 10-year run as Long Beach's clerk-treasurer. It's an elected position some say is tantamount to being mayor of the lakefront community.

Most recently elected in the fall of 2019, DeFuniak's term was to run until the end of 2023. But he turned 85 in November and figured it was time to step away from the 40-houraweek job and do what other octogenarians do: sleep past 6:30 a.m., visit his five grandkids and play more bridge. A lot more bridge.

"I told myself that my brain was still working, and it was time to turn this job over to someone else," DeFuniak explained with his usual sense of self-deprecation.

In 2011, at 75 and seven years into retirement, his wife, Barbara, encouraged him to run for clerk-treasurer.

"Barbara said, 'You could do this,' and I was encouraged by some residents to do so," DeFuniak recalled.

Barbara died of complications from surgery at 75 not long into his first term. She was convinced he was more than up to the task of managing Long Beach's official records, its revenue and cash flow, the issuance



Bill DeFuniak is photographed in front of Long Beach Town Hall by The Beacher's Edmund Lawler.



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of permits, licenses and public notices, and the disbursement of municipal funds.

Among other things.

His math and computer skills came in handy. DeFuniak is a numbers guy. He majored in mathematics at the University of San Francisco, one of 27 U.S. Catholic colleges or universities operated by the Jesuit religious order. He didn't have far to go to college because he grew up in San Francisco. His father, William Q. DeFuniak, was a law professor at the university.

Prior to enrolling at USF, Bill DeFuniak attended St. Ignatius High School in San Francisco, not to be confused with the Jesuit high school of the same name in Chicago.

"I had some fun with that one," he said with a chuckle. "After St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago relaunched its football program, I told some of the staff in Long Beach that I once played football for St. Ignatius. They said that's impossible because the school hadn't played football in years. That's when I told them I went to the San Francisco version, and they got a good laugh."

DeFuniak was a ferocious 6-foot-2, 200-pound tackle who played on both sides of the line for the St. Ignatius Wildcats. At USF, he continued to play football, but at the club level because the university no longer fielded its once-storied intercollegiate football team. Just as well, because math was a demanding major.

After graduating, DeFuniak parlayed his math degree into a sales position on the West Coast with IBM. He spent 5 1/2 years selling computers before switching to the programming side for companies in northern California's burgeoning software industry.

On a blind date in San Francisco, he met Barbara, who was working as a secretary for the San Francisco office of BBDO, a major Madison Avenue ad agency. She grew up in Hinsdale, a western suburb of Chicago, before migrating to California. They married in 1961 at St. Anne's Catholic Church in San Francisco and began raising a family of two sons and a daughter.

In 1971, DeFuniak was transferred to Chicago, delighting Barbara, who would now be closer to her family in Hinsdale. Very close. That's because they rented a home there and later bought a four-bedroom 1869 farmhouse in the community.

DeFuniak had a faint familiarity with Chicago. Between the ages of 1 and 5, his parents lived on the city's far North Side, close to his father's office for a legal publishing company.

> "I was told that one of my playmates in our apartment building was the daughter of Stan Hack of the Chicago Cubs," he said. Hack, a fleetfooted five-time All Star with a quicksilver bat from the left side, played third base for the Cubs.

> The family moved back in the early 1940s to San Francisco, where his father began teaching law rather than writing about it. In the 1960s, his father published DeFuniak's American-British Dictionary. Targeting an audience of travelers, the dictionary explained some of the linguistic differences between American and British English.

DeFuniak is a Slavic name, its origins in the Caucasus Mountains. The family line apparently migrated west into France, where it acquired

Bill during his football days at St. Ignatius High School in San Francisco the "De." And it's a name its owner has fun with.

> "When I was campaigning for president of the sixth grade at Argonne Elementary School in San Francisco," he said, "my sister and I made posters that read: 'Don't be a maniac, vote for DeFuniak!""



The name must have been magic because DeFuniak won the election, which was his last campaign until 2011 in Long Beach.

His move back to the Midwest in 1971 wasn't quite the shock Californians experience when they relocate to a four-season climate with its extremes of blistering heat and brutal cold. He pointed out that he's from the chilly, fog-shrouded city of San Francisco, not sunny southern California. As Mark Twain once put it, "The coldest winter I ever spent was summer in San Francisco."

In 1981, DeFuniak and a friend from the software industry launched an executive recruiting firm called DeFuniak and Edwards, with a focus on executive placement in the technology and insurance industries. DeFuniak was now captain of his own ship, but the constant travel was a challenge.

He recalls a time in the mid-1990s when his son, Andy, a Chicago doctor, bought him and Barbara expensive, fifth-row seats to a performance of the hit play "Rent" in Chicago. DeFuniak promptly fell asleep, exhausted from a road trip of four cities in four days.

His breakneck pace slowed considerably when Barbara underwent a long series of surgeries. He was needed at home. That was about the time the family sold their house in Hinsdale in 1995 and bought a home in Long Beach.

DeFuniak retired in 2004 and continued to care for Barbara until her death in 2012.



Bill and Barbara on their wedding day in 1961.

"She was a very easygoing, caring person," he said. "In 51 years of marriage, we may have only exchanged a few harsh words."

In 2014, while still in his first term, he suffered another terrible blow. His daughter, Katherine, a mother of three, died of cancer.

Continued on Page 4



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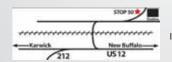
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Humble Servant Continued from Page 3

DeFuniak carried on amid the waves of grief. He says he was grateful he had the clerk-treasurer's position because of the outpouring of sympathy from the staff and community. And he had somewhere to go, something to distract him from the devastating personal losses.

Deanna Carlson, the town's deputy clerk-treasurer, chokes back tears when she talks about her boss of the past decade.

"I was very fond of Bill," she says. "He was like a father figure to me. He was very humble and very giving, and he totally trusted me."

Carlson noted his brilliance with numbers, and that he had not lost an ounce of his mental acuity well into his 80s.

"I am grateful to have known Bill for 10 years," she added.



This undated photo shows Bill riding a horse in Arizona.

Mark Swistek, Long Beach Police Department's chief marshal, echoed Carlson's sentiments.

"Bill's been a joy to work with," Swistek said. "He's always carried himself with great compassion."

He, too, marveled at DeFuniak's command of numbers, and his gentle human touch with the town hall staff.

The former Michigan City police chief, Swistek hoped he and his colleagues could celebrate DeFuniak's career with a send-off party or luncheon.

DeFuniak quietly resisted them. But it's not because he didn't appreciate them. He did, deeply so.

"They were a really good, dedicated staff. I loved working with them," DeFuniak said reflectively. "And I loved working for the people of the town by solving problems. Sometimes, it could be very mundane, like replacing a garbage can with a crack in it. Or it might be a call from a resident complaining that their cell phone zones out every time they pass Town Hall, and they would like me to do something about it.

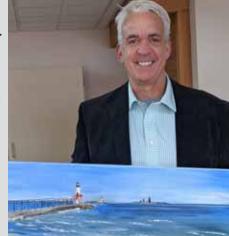
"For that one, the best I could do was to politely explain that it was beyond the scope of my mystical powers," he said with a deep laugh. "Those are the things that are fun."

The New Face in Town Hall

Bill DeFuniak left big shoes to fill at town hall. Size 13, to be exact. But Tim Perry, his replacement as clerk-treasurer, goes two better at size 15.

At 6-foot-10, Perry will be a towering presence in town government as he completes DeFuniak's term that runs through the end of 2023. Perry was appointed by the Republican Party of La-Porte County, which controls the seat because DeFuniak won as a Republican in 2019. He ran as an independent in his successful campaigns in 2011 and 2015.

Perry, 58, operates from both sides of his brain with a verve for hard numbers and fine art. A Long Beach homeowner since 1995, he is a Realtor, a mortgage broker and an accomplished artist whose vibrant paintings hang in restaurants and bars in and around Michigan City.



Tim Perry is photographed by *The Beacher's* Edmund Lawler with a painting he did of the lakefront

A former basketball player for Maine South High School in Park Ridge, the suburban Chicago community where he grew up, Perry has no illusions about the challenges that lie ahead.

"My real goal is to help mend fences here," he said. "There are a lot of things that are too contentious in Long Beach. I love Long Beach, and want it to be the nice, sweet beach town it used to be and should be."



A portrait of Bill DeFuniak by Tim Perry.

He developed an interest in town government while undertaking a nine-month renovation of his home at Stop 18 that his parents first purchased in 1978. Along the way, Perry became a frequent visitor to Long Beach's historic John Lloyd Wright-designed town hall. He got to know people and the inner workings at

town hall. He has yet to determine if he will run for the clerk-treasurer position in the fall of 2023

Engaging and personable, Perry and his wife, Jenny, have three sons: Dan, Brad and Mike.

"I'm thrilled about the challenge of being a part of local government," Perry said. "I hope to bring some unity to the community."





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"The Batman" is the Fresh Vision This Franchise Needs

by Andrew Tallackson



Batman (Robert Pattinson) and Catwoman (Zoë Kravitz) team up to stop crime lords in Gotham in "The Batman."

It's my steadfast belief that Christopher Nolan's "Dark Knight" trilogy is untouchable. Complete in story, character, theme and style. A seamless blend of fantasy and reality.

So when it was announced Matt Reeves ("Cloverfield," "Dawn of the Planet of the Apes," "War of the Planet of the Apes") planned to reboot the franchise, my reaction was, oh brother, here we go again. Do we have to revive *everything*? Are there *any* original ideas left in Hollywood?

Turns out, Reeves gets the last laugh. This is a Batman like no other. A nearly three-hour descent into a dark, noir nightmare.

Christian Bale, for my money, still ranks supreme in the role, but the interesting thing is, he, along with Michael Keaton, Val Kilmer, George Clooney and Ben Affleck, approached the character as having figured out the Caped Crusader's swagger. Robert Pattinson plays him as not yet settled in his comfort zone. When Batman maneuvers through crowds of police officers, he doesn't do so with confidence. The actor's hesitance, the way Reeves places his camera, we have a Batman who is unsure of himself. Deeply aware of all the eyes on him, looking down on him. Trying to figure him out.

Bruce Wayne is still wounded by the unsolved



"The Batman"

Running time: 175 minutes. Rated PG-13 for strong violent and disturbing content, drug content, strong language and some suggestive material

death of his parents, but Reeves doesn't feel the need to restage this for the umpteenth time. Instead, he plunges into a mystery that finds The Riddler sending cryptic messages in the guise of Dan Brown puzzles. The clues come bathed in violent deaths of city officials accused of lies and corruption.

This version of Gotham, more so than any before it, is a cesspool of crime and filth. Streets blanketed with trash. Boarded up storefronts. Seedy elements on every corner. And most of the criminal activity at night, with Gotham perpetually pelted by rain.

Batman enters a Mafia underworld that includes The Penguin, played by an unrecognizable Colin Farrell resembling Robert De Niro in "Raging Bull," and crime lord Carmine Falcone, played by John Turturro in a carefully subdued performance. You get the sense this vision of Gotham would mesh well





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with the '70s-style tone that Todd Phillips achieved in 2019's Oscar-winning "Joker."

Pattinson is fine. No trace of Edward Cullen here. He hits one note, though, and sticks to it, lacking the range Bale brought to the role. But Pattinson broods well, I'll give him that. Zoë Kravitz balances him out with an angry energy for Selena Kyle/Catwoman. Ditto Jeffrey Wright as Batman's Gotham police ally James Gordon. All the actors, in fact, are so compelling, the grimy world Reeves envisions so confidently spun, we find ourselves wrapped up in the mystery that unites them. We crave answers, not an action sequence every five minutes.

When action does arrive, Reeves knows how to adrenalize it. The first sight of the batmobile pumps you up, the ensuing chase worthy of anything Nolan staged. The big finish, which has the city's breakwalls destroyed, flooding Gotham, is particularly satisfying.

With a budget rumored between \$185 and \$200 million, Reeves clearly had the resources to achieve a fully realized world.

I was prepared to dismiss "The Batman," yet walked away invigorated by it. That is the best experience, when a movie surprises you, catches you off guard. Defies expectation. Delivers the goods. Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



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LCSO Performance Set at Holdcraft Performing Arts Center

LaPorte Symphony Orchestra continues its 49th season by celebrating Giuseppe Verdi and Peter Ilyich Tchaikvosky at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 13, at The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St.

Led by Music Director Dr. Carolyn Watson, LCSO will perform Verdi's "Overture to La Forza Del Destino" and Tchaikovsky's "Rococo Variations, Op. 33" and "Symphony No. 5." Masks are required upon entrance.

Watson returns after her first successful venture with "Holiday at the Pops" in December. In addition to her duties with LCSO and as director of orchestra activities with the University of Kansas, she has led the All-State Orchestras of Colorado and Washington, and served



Guest soloist Hannah Collins.

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chestra. Between her LCSO concerts in March and April, she will be the guest conductor at the Nevada All-State Orchestra and Pacific Lutheran University Honors Orchestra.

Joining the symphony is Hannah Collins as the soloist for Tchaikovsky's "Rococo Variations." Championing new works, she recently performed with the Grossman Ensemble, Bach Aria Soloists and Trinity Baroque Orchestra. She holds degrees in biomedical engineering and music from Yale University, the Royal Conservatory of The Hague and City University of New York. She is assistant professor of cello at the University of Kansas.

Tickets cost \$22 for adults and \$20 for seniors. Students are free with ID. Tickets are available at www.lcso.net, by

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Hoosier Star Auditions

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra will hold auditions for the 17th Annual Hoosier Star on Saturday-Sunday, March 19-20, at Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G St., LaPorte.

Amateur singers of all musical styles from Indiana and Berrien County, Mich., can compete individually or as a duet. Auditions times are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday.



Jarynn Sampson, the 2021 Hoosier Star Adult Division winner.

Contestants are divided into two age groups: Youth Division (17 and younger) and Adult Division (18 and older) at the time of auditions. Ten finalists — five in each age group — advance to the final event, performing with LCSO and Music Director Dr. Carolyn Watson on Saturday, Sept. 17, at La-Porte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Audience members and a panel of judges will choose the final two winners in each age division based on that evening's performances. First and second place in the Youth Division receive \$1,000 and \$500, respectively. First and second place in the Adult Division win \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

Audition forms can be found at tinyurl.com/mwkybau7. Contestants should pre-register for a guaranteed time slot. The fee is \$20 per person or duet. If auditioning as a soloist and a duet, the competitor must submit two separate forms, including separate fees. Applications must be received by March 15 to be eligible and receive a guaranteed time slot. Walk-in auditions will be available at the end of each day.

Applicants may provide an accompanist or supply a digital mp3-4 capable device. Acapella singing is not allowed. Email hoosierstar2018@gmail.com or call (219) 362-9020 for more details. Applicants will be notified of the assigned audition date and time within a week prior to the auditions.



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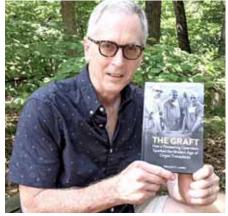
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NB Library Community Forum

New Buffalo Township Library opens its 2022 Community Forum series with Edmund Lawler, author of <u>The Graft: How a Pioneering Operation Sparked the Modern Age of Organ Transplants</u>, from 6:30-8 p.m. EDT Tuesday, March 15, in the Pokagon Room.

The book focuses on the first successful organ

transplant: a kidney from a recently deceased woman grafted into woman with a life-threatening kidney dis-Remarkably, the surgery took place not at big teaching hospital, but at Little Company of Mary, a small Catholic hospital in Evergreen



Edmund Lawler is photographed with a copy of his book.

Park, Ill. The transplant made news throughout the medical community, and spurred further development of organ transplant research. It also raised serious ethical and moral questions, some of which still follow transplant surgery.

Lawler teaches journalism at DePaul University in Chicago and is a correspondent with *The Beacher Weekly Newspaper*. He is the author or co-author of six books. Copies of <u>The Graft</u> will be available for sale after the presentation.

The library is located at 33 N. Thompson St. Forum programs are sponsored by the Friends of the New Buffalo Library, and admission is free. Face masks are requested.

Genealogical Society Bus Trip

April 9 is the reservation deadline for the bus trip to Allen County Public Library sponsored by LaPorte County Genealogical Society and Michigan City Public Library.

The trip is Wednesday, April 27. A Cardinal bus with Wi-Fi leaves Michigan City at 7 a.m. in front of the former Marquette Theatre near Marquette Mall, with a 7:30 a.m. pickup at Kabelin's Ace Hardware in LaPorte. It leaves Allen County Public Library at 4 p.m. Masks are recommended on the bus, but not at ACPL.

The \$25 reservation per person is payable to LaPorte County Genealogical Society c/o Patricia Harris, 164 Riviera Drive, Michigan City, IN 46360-6800. Call (219) 872-3273 for more details.

Part of the registration process involves signing a form that those attending will not hold the Genealogical Society, Michigan City Public Library nor the bus company liable for contracting COVID and/ or any of the resulting health issues.

"Wake Up the Gardens"

Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12, will hold its annual "Wake Up the Gardens" Volunteer Day from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, March 26.

Volunteers will help with spring cleanup, preparing the grounds for the May 1 season opening. That entails raking leaves, picking up fallen branches and sticks and cleaning up other debris.

Email volunteer@friendshipbotanicgardens.org by March 21 if interested. Students and Master Gardeners can earn service hours. They should take a rake and garden gloves, if possible. Water and light snacks will be provided. Dress for the weather.

Visit the Gardens' Facebook event page for more details.



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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:

- Duneland Stamp Club at 4 p.m. Thursday, March 10. The club meets the second Thursday of each month. New members are invited.
- Dunes Summer Theatre Preview at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 12. Dunes board members and Artistic Director Steve Scott will announce the 2022 season. Scott also will provide background and context to the season.
- Great Decisions at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March **14.** The foreign policy discussion group returns for its 24th season. The March 14 discussion is Russia and the U.S. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details. Reading material is available at the circulation desk.
- Needle Arts Club from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Mondays in March. 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.

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- March Madness Book Tournament for Kids & Teens through March 31. Stop by Youth Services to vote for a favorite book.
- 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.

Volunteers are needed for the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program at least one day a week during tax season through April. The IRS provides some training, and helpers must pass the VITA test through the intermediate level. Testing and training are online. Call (219) 873-3049 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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- ☐ "CODA"
- ☐ "Don't Look Up"
- ☐ "Drive My Car"
- ☐ "Dune"
- ☐ "King Richard"
- ☐ "Licorice Pizza"
- "Nightmare Alley"
- ☐ "The Power of the Dog"
- ☐ "West Side Story"

DIRECTOR

- □ Paul T. Anderson, "Licorice Pizza"
- ☐ Kenneth Branagh, "Belfast"
- ☐ Jane Campion,
 - "The Power of the Dog"
- ☐ Ryûsuke Hamaguchi, "Drive My Car"
- ☐ Steven Spielberg, "West Side Story"

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- ☐ Kristen Stewart, "Spencer"

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- \square Ariana DeBose, "West Side Story"
- □ Judi Dench, "Belfast"
- ☐ Kirsten Dunst, "The Power of the Dog"
- ☐ Aunjanue Ellis, "King Richard"

ACTOR

- ☐ Javier Bardem, "Being the Ricardos"
- ☐ Benedict Cumberbatch, "The Power of the Dog"
 - "The Power of the Dog"
- ☐ Andrew Garfield, "Tick, Tick ... Boom!"
- ☐ Will Smith, "King Richard"
- ☐ Denzel Washington,
- "The Tragedy of Macbeth"

SUPPORTING ACTOR

- ☐ Ciarán Hinds, "Belfast"
- ☐ Troy Kotsur, "CODA"
- ☐ Jesse Plemons,
 - "The Power of the Dog"
- □ J.K. Simmons, "Being the Ricardos"
- ☐ Kodi Smit-McPhee,
- "The Power of the Dog"

Rules for The Beacher's Beat the Editor Contest:

Check one box in each category. Only one entry per person. Entries from *Beacher* employees will not be accepted. Forms can be dropped off at *The Beacher* or submitted by mail to: The Beacher, Attn: Oscar Contest, 911 Franklin St., Michigan City, IN 46360. Only scanned copies will be allowed by email to drew@thebeacher.com. The deadline is noon Friday, March 18. Editor Andrew Tallackson's picks will appear in the March 24 edition, before the March 27 telecast. Those who beat his picks will be placed into a drawing. First place receives a \$25 Swingbelly's gift certificate and an AMC movie pass. Second place receives an AMC movie pass. If no one beats him, readers with the most correct picks will be placed into the drawing. The winner will be revealed in the April 7 edition.

- Name:
- City/Town:
 - Phone Number:

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"The Girl Before" Classes Up Lurid Novel Big Time for HBO Max

Midway through the first episode of "The Girl Before," I experienced a thrill that had little to do with the story itself.

There's been plenty of talk about the lack of good roles for actors of color. When they do surface, it's often period pictures or "message movies." True change, I would argue, comes when actors of color appear in projects once intended for white actors. When Hollywood abandons the dated belief that white audiences require white stars only.

"The Girl Before," a new four-part HBO Max series based on J.P. Delaney's lurid debut novel, is a British potboiler in the spirit of women-in-peril hits like "The Woman in the Window" and "The Girl on the Train." But by casting black talent in the leads, it introduces former "EastEnders" actress Jessica Plummer to American audiences, and affords Gugu Mbatha-Raw ("Loki," "The Morning Show") the best role of her career. Mbatha-Raw isn't just a pretty face: the window dressing movies and television reduce her to being. This is an actress who can hold her own with the best of them.

On the page, "The Girl Before" is a satisfying page-turner. The writing, itself, isn't memorable. There are times when Delaney — the pseudonym for author Anthony Capella — slips into sleaze as a cheap way to spice up his tale...but in the end, it does what it's designed to do: keep you guessing.

Delaney adapted his work, and he's not only done an effective job, but surprisingly managed to improve on it. Toning down the trashy elements, the story on the small screen is more of a character study, the female cast digging deep into the material. The story is an exploration of control and obsession. Women obsessed and consumed by tragedy, men insistent on controlling every element of the world around them, especially their women.

Like the book, the narrative alternates between two women. Jane Cavendish (Mbatha-Raw), devastated after her daughter is stillborn, moves into a minimalist home designed by a curious architect named Edward (David Oyelowo). His wife and son died at the house while it was under construction. We also meet "the girl before" — the woman who lived, and died, in the same home three years before Jane arrived. That would be Emma Matthews (Plummer), whose relationship with her boyfriend, Simon (Ben Hardy, "Bohemian Rhapsody"), is strained after a past sexual assault come to light.

The house, itself, is an extension of Edward's personality. It limits and confines every aspect of the tenant's life. Little to no personal effects. A virtual "housekeeper" that decides when the lights go on and off, or how long shower water keeps running.



Above: Edward (David Oyelowo) tries to exert his control over Jane Cavendish (Gugu Mbatha-Raw) in "The Girl Before." Below: The relationship between Emma



It strips the tenant of any identity so she is viewed solely as Edward wants her to be.

Jane is drawn into Edward's world, where she not only becomes romantically involved with him, but also curious about what happened to Emma.

The pages of "The Girl Before" contained laughably filthy discussion on sex, as well as sex in public places that read like Michael Douglas leftovers from "Basic Instinct." But by dispensing with that, the series affords Mbatha-Raw and Plummer the room to give it everything they've got.

Mbatha-Raw's Jane is sharper here. More at odds with Edward's behavior. The actress is fiercely intelligent and persistent. When the series deals with the loss of Jane's baby, anyone who has experienced such pain will identify with her performance: It is raw and emotionally honest.

Emma, on the other hand, is a mess, and Plummer makes her one, but on a far more tragic level than the book. Emma can't escape tragedy. It surrounds her. What we get from Plummer is a woman unraveling at every seam. Watch her. It's heartbreaking. Every action, every mistake thrust into Emma's face.

The irony is that Oyelowo is sorely miscast as Edward. We know the guy can act. All you have to do is watch "Selma" (2014) to appreciate that. He does create an air of mystery about Edward. Other than that, he has all the sizzle of a bored CPA. Someone like "Bridgerton star Regé-Jean Page might have exuded the star power that explains why these women are drawn to Edward.

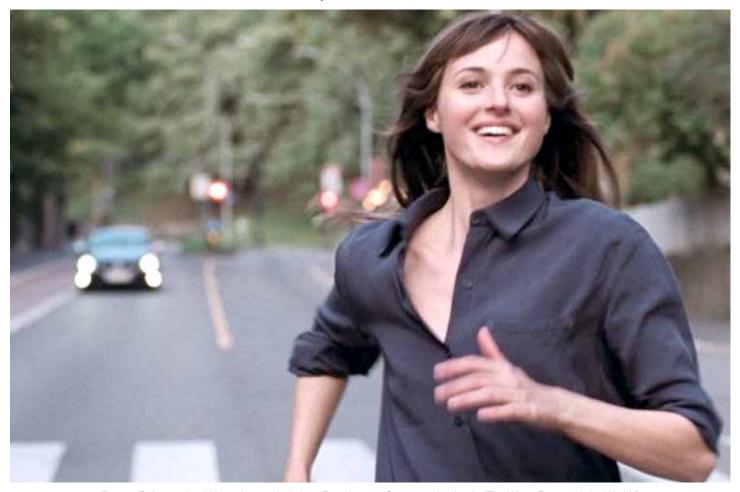
We appreciate that Delaney only required four episodes to tell his story. So many TV and streaming adaptations milk their source for anywhere from 8-10 episodes, overstaying their welcome. But the series remains faithful to the book in just the right amount of time. And by focusing less on cheap thrills, the finale is surprisingly moving. These characters have been put through the ringer, and they deserve the resolution that comes their way.

You might be surprised by how much you like "The Girl Before."

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com

A Restless Soul Finds Peace in Engaging "Worst Person in the World"

by Andrew Tallackson



Renate Reinsve should have been a lock for a Best Actress Oscar nomination in "The Worst Person in the World."

We all know people like Julie, the restless spirit at the heart of "The Worst Person in the World." Never happy. Content one minute, unfulfilled the next. "Flaky" is how they're described, that they need to get their you know what together.

Rarely, though, has a movie plundered the mind of an unsatisfied soul with such epic precision as this Norwegian Oscar contender for Best International Feature Film and Original Screenplay. It is the closing act of Joachim Trier's "Oslo Trilogy" that began with "Reprise" (2006) and "Oslo, 31 August" (2011). You could say it's a dark romantic-comedy, but it is more than that. And, the setting may be Oslo, but the journey could unfold anywhere.

Julie is played by Renate Reinsve in a performance that deserved a Best Actress nomination. Maybe voters overlooked it because you don't catch her acting. It is like Trier followed her around with a camera, and this is what he captured. Reinsve is an unstudied natural. Vibrant one minute, giddy with lust the next, then frustrating as heck, leaping to whomever or whatever might make her happy next.

In the movie's prologue, we learn Julie began her 20s as a medical student, then decided she is less structured, and more emotional, than the profes-



"The Worst Person in the World"

Running time: 128 minutes. Rated R for sexual content, graphic nudity, drug use and some language

sion warrants. She shifted to psychology. When that grew weary, photography captured her fancy. Now, she's working in a bookstore, biding time before the next burst of inspiration.

The men in her life follow the same pattern. After a while, the consistency, the routine, bore her, particularly any talk of starting a family. Children are not in her forecast. Instead, she craves the thrill of early romance.

Aksel (Anders Danielsen Lie), however, may be "the one." Fifteen years her senior and a graphic novelist, he is everything she prefers *and* abhors. Creative, cerebral. At the same time, he wants children. She has zero interest.

Another guy drops into the picture. Eivind (Herbert Nordrum). They meet at a wedding reception she crashes out of boredom. There is an attraction. They flirt with the idea of cheating on their significant others. And in the movie's most magical mo-

ment, time literally stands still so Julie can act on her feelings for Eivind.

Had "The Worst Person in the World" been told from a man's perspective, such behavior would be embraced as sowing one's wild oats. But because the hero is a woman, she is cast by others as suffering from arrested development. A constant letdown. The film makes the argument that men define key milestones women must achieve to be "successful." But through Julie, and Reinsve's wonderfully honest performance, the film makes a plea for allowing people to live life on their terms. Being

content means having triumphed and failed. Having explored different partners. There is a frankness to the sexuality of "The Worst Person in the World." Plenty of nudity and intimacy. But there is nothing lurid about it; rather, a matter-of-fact acceptance of people's bodies, of their desires.

So how does Julie discover her place in the world? That is tricky. I don't want to let slip any spoilers. Suffice it to say, someone from Julie's past, someone she cared for, takes a turn for the worse. As the two reconnect, something happens to Julie. She slows down, puts her life on hold. Discards the resentment, the barriers, that drove the two apart. Instead, Julie lets this person talk. Get everything out. Reinsve does beautiful work. We see it in her face. The change. The tragedy and inspiration behind her ailing friend. We are moved by the way these two reconcile, and learn, from each other.

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Julie's longest-lasting relationship is with graphic novelist Aksel (Anders Danielsen Lie).

An American romantic-comedy might have focused on which man Julie ends up with in the final scene. "The Worst Person in the World," however, arrives at a deeper, far more affecting close. By fumbling through life, experiencing its highs and lows, Julie may have just discovered her place in the world. And she deserves it.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at drew@thebeacher.com



Long Beach Police Department in the Spotlight

Editor's note — This week, we begin a monthly series on those who serve with Long Beach Police Department.

Deputy Marshal Tobin Babcock is in his 17th year with Long Beach Police Department. He began his law-enforcement career with LaPorte County Sheriff's Office in 1998. While there, he served in the jail, transportation and patrol divisions, and was a member of the Emergency Response Team (SWAT).

Babcock came to Long Beach Police Department in 2005 and handles patrol and investigation on the day shift. He also is the department training coordinator.

Babcock was the department representative on the Indiana Department of Homeland Security District 1 Law Enforcement Strike Team. He is certified through the Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board as a primary instructor, and holds special certifications from the ILETB as an instructor in handgun, shotgun, patrol rifle and emergency vehicle operations. He holds instructor certifications from several other agencies.

Babcock is certified through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, at The Center for Domestic Preparedness, New Mexico Technical College and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center as an instructor in Field Force Operations (riot control), Field Force Extrication (removal of protester devices), Identification of Vehicle Borne IEDs, Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings and Tactical Medicine.

Babcock continues to attend classes to help Long Beach deputies enhance their safety, and the level of service they provide, to residents.

During his career, Babcock has worked with Homeland Security, the U.S. Secret Service Close Protection Detail to the vice president, and was part of the security detail for the 38th G8 Summit and subsequent NATO Summit.

At home, Babcock is the father of two children: Matthew, who is a Michigan City Police Department officer, and his daughter, Abby, who is an audio and visual specialist with the FOX network. In his spare time, he enjoys riding his motorcycle, cooking and is an avid competitor in the shooting sports, competing in pistol, shotgun, rifle, long range and multigun shooting matches. Babcock represented Team USA competing in 2018 in the IPSC World Shotgun Championship in Châteauroux, France, and the





2019 IPSC World Rifle Championship in Karlskoga, Sweden.

Babcock regularly serves as a range safety officer at shooting matches and teaches firearms safety. He also ran the Blue Line 3 Gun event in Missouri, which is a charity event supporting families of fallen police officers.

(Deputy Jason Yagelski will be profiled in April.)





Chamber Awards Finalists

The Michigan City Chamber of Commerce will announce winners in several award categories at its Annual Member Dinner.

This year, in addition to recognizing milestone members and legacy businesses, the Chamber will announce winners in categories such as Community Impact Award, Small Business of the Year, Large Business of the Year, Young Professional of the Year and Ambassador of the Year.

Nominations have been qualified. They are:

2021 Community Impact Finalists

- 1. HealthLinc Michigan City.
- 2. Lubeznik Center for the Arts.
- 3. United Way of LaPorte County.

2021 Small Business of the Year Finalists

- 1. Harbor Country Adventures.
- 2. Infinite Painting & Design.
- 3. Social Que BBQ & Catering.

2021 Large Business of the Year Finalists

- 1. Blue Chip Casino, Hotel & Spa.
- 2. Franciscan Health Michigan City.
- 3. Horizon Bank.

2021 Young Professional of the Year Finalists

- 1. Cara Jones.
- 2. Holly Martinez.
- 3. Jessica O'Brien.

Any member who served on the chamber's Ambassador Committee in 2021 is eligible for Ambassador of the Year. Award finalists will be recognized, and winners announced, during the Annual Member Dinner program March 25 at Blue Chip Casino. Members, businesses and the community are invited. Event registration and sponsorship opportunities are open and available through March 11 by visiting www.MichiganCityChamber.com, emailing info@mcachamber.com or calling (219) 874-6221.

10-Digit Dialing Now Mandatory

Ten-digit dialing is official for Indiana, Illinois and Michigan residents.

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

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

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





Indiana Dunes National Park

The 45th annual Maple Sugar Time festival runs from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, March 12-13.

Learn how Native Americans first boiled maple sap into sugar, and how early settlers used large iron kettles to make syrup. While walking along the maple trail, pass by the sugar shack where sap is boiled down the way the Chellberg family did it in the 1930s. Children can learn how to tap a tree at the Maple Fun Zone and meet farm animals while sampling a maple syrup snow cone.

Stop by the front of the farmhouse where Indiana-produced maple syrup and related products are for sale. Visitors can learn how to make maple syrup at home, and how modern farmers use advanced technology to make syrup today.

Chellberg Farm is located at 618 Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 20 and 12 in Porter.

The National Park Service has approved an IDNP entrance fee that begins March 31.

The new revenue will help fund the Marquette Greenway Bike Trail, visitor services, parking and transportation improvements for a park that has seen attendance increase from 1.7 million visitors to more than 3 million since its 2019 name change.

The fee only affects the national park, not Indiana Dunes State Park. Costs vary depending on the

method used to enter:

- The per person/walk-in/bike-in/boat-in rate is \$15 (up to a maximum of \$25 per family).
- Motorcycle pass is \$20.
- One- to Seven-Day Vehicle Pass is \$25.
- Annual Pass is \$45.
- Commercial Fee for a Motor Coach (Bus): up to \$100.

Holders of the following federal land passes will not pay an entrance fee: Annual Pass, Senior Pass, Veterans, Military and Gold Star Family Pass, Fourth Grade Pass, Access Pass (for permanent disability) and Volunteer Pass.

The Entrance Pass (1-7 days) and Annual Pass will be available at: Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, seasonally at West Beach Entrance Station or online at www.recreation.gov. The Annual Pass will be available March 1 and the Entrance Pass on the first day fees are collected: March 31. There are plans to have local vendors such as gas stations, or other retailers near the park sell passes. More information will be available when vendors are confirmed. Call (219) 395-1882 or visit www/nps.gov/indu for more detail.

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 program will be offered:

• Runnin' with the Irish 5K Race from 8:30-11 a.m. Saturday, March 12.

St. Patrick Catholic School, Chesterton will host the 22nd annual pre-spring event. Participants can walk or run on park roads. Visit www.runsignup. com/irish5k to register. Park roads will be congested before and during the event.

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.





MCAS Kindergarten Roundup

Kindergarten enrollment through Michigan City Area Schools is open online for the 2022-2023 school year, with students required to turn 5 by Oct. 1.

Parents/guardians can visit www.EducateMC. net/kindergarten to begin the process. Once basic information is received, parents receive instructions on setting up a PowerSchool account to finalize enrollment. Parents/guardians will need a child's official birth certificate, a parent/guardian's driver's license or state photo ID, proof of residency, immunization records and proof of lead testing.



These documents may be uploaded during online enrollment or dropped off at the child's school. Parents who need additional assistance can come to their child's school by appointment through March. Kindergarten students should be enrolled at the school that serves the area in which they live. If unsure, information is available by contacting the transportation department at (219) 873-2127.

School-based Pre-K programs, offered at Pine and Springfield elementary schools in partnership with LaPorte County Family YMCA, are open for fall enrollment as well. Children must be 3 by Oct. 1. There are tuition fees; however, need-based scholarships are available and CCDF vouchers accepted. Visit http://educateMC.net/preK for details.

MCAS also is accepting applications for its K-6 magnet schools, which include Pine Elementary School (visual and performing arts) and Lake Hills Elementary School (Indiana-certified STEM school). Most magnet spots will be available at the kindergarten level. Slots in higher grades will be filled as space allows before the start of the school year. Information and applications are available at www. EducateMC.net/magnets. The deadline is April 29.



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JROTC Earns Awards at Portage Meet

Despite having the smallest team present, Michigan City High School cadets earned first-, secondand third-place trophies Feb. 26 at the Portage High School Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps military drill competition.

The Wolves Color Guard A finished first, Color Guard B finished second and the Armed Exhibition platoon earned third place. Cadet Maj. Declan Rice commanded Color Guard A and Armed Exhibition platoon, while Cadet Lance Cpl. Marcus Mantel commanded Color Guard B.

Rice, who also commanded the Unarmed and Armed platoons, was impressed with his school's performance, but is determined to improve.

"It was great to earn trophies in those three events, but I know that we can do better, particularly in the Unarmed and Armed regulation competitions," Rice, a senior, said in a press release.

Major Tom McGrath, the senior Marine instructor, agreed with Rice's assessments, but offered praise as well.

"Most schools have a different commander for each category in a drill meet," McGrath said in a press release. "Having the flexibility and mental endurance to command four units is a tribute to Major Rice's dedication to our program."

Master Sgt. Jeff Benak, the Marine instructor, noted Mantel's commanding Color Guard B, earning a second place trophy as a freshman.

"Younger cadets like Lance Cpl. Mantel, and fellow lance corporals (Matthew) Wilson, (Tanner) Klimczyk and (Keith) Hawley, have really stepped up as we try to recover from the effects of COVID."

Mantel was grateful for the opportunity to command, and encouraged other students to consider taking MCJROTC as an elective course.

These same cadets also helped honor their country and MCHS' boys basketball seniors on Senior Night. The program provides a Color Guard for all home football and boys basketball games, along with just about every patriotic event in LaPorte County.

MCHS competed in the March 5 MCJROTC Re-





The Armed Exhibition platoon reports out after conducting its routine at the Portage military drill competition.

gional Championship at Purdue University West Lafayette. The winner competes in the national championship in April in Daytona Beach, Fla. That trip, like all MCJROTC activities, is done at no cost to the student; instead, the Marine Corps funds it.



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LONG BEACH WOMEN'S BOWLING



March 1, 2022

waren 1, 2022		
WON	LOST	
N/A	N/A	
N/A	N/A	
N/A	N/A	
1	SCORE	
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	7-8	
4-	5, 3-10	
	5-7	
	5-7	
	N/A N/A N/A	

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

St. Patrick's Day Parade/Magic Show

Michigan City Mainstreet Association will host the St. Patrick's Day Parade from 1-2 p.m. Saturday, March 12.

The parade route heads north on Franklin Street from 11th to Fourth streets. Email president@michigancitymainstreetassociation.org for more details.

Afterward, "The Magic of Kalita!" is at about 2 p.m. at Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. The show



Matt Kalita entertains a youngster at one of his shows.

is subject to change due to CDC guidelines.



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Museum Photo Contest

This year's theme for LaPorte County Historical Society Museum's photo contest is "LaPorte County Streets and Signs."

Open to all ages, photos must be taken in 2021 or

2022 in LaPorte County. Entries can include photos of streets, intersections, advertisements painted on the sides of brick buildings or a road covered in fall leaves. The submission deadline is 4:30 p.m. Saturday, April 22, with judging results announced Saturday, April 29.

All entries will be displayed at the museum in May, and select photos will be used in the 2023 calendar. A full list



An example of the type of photo that can be entered in the contest.

of rules is available at https://laportecountyhistory.org, or stop by the museum, 2405 Indiana Ave., La-Porte.

Email Assistant Director Danielle Adams at assistant director @laportecounty history.org for more details.

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Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail.)

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

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

Chesterton Art Center

Chesterton Art Center will host its new free program Family Art Days from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, March 12.



A sample of the mixed-media accordion book activity.

The focus is Cathy Feeman, a local artist whose work highlights familial and cultural history, as well as the impact of storytelling. With guidance from the CAC team, guests can explore Feeman's exhibit, then move to the classroom to create a mixed-media accordion book inspired by her work. All supplies are provided.

To support ongoing COVID safety protocols, families must reserve a one-hour time slot and indicate the number of people in the group. The limit is eight guests per hour. Masks are required, and any changes in protocols will be communicated before the event.

Visit tinyurl.com/2p82xznm to register.

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



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LaPorte County Park Awards



Jeremy Sobecki (second from right) presents the Outstanding Park Service Award to (from left) Bob Walker, Boyd Lomow and Don Fuller.

LaPorte County Parks staff, the park board and foundation presented their annual community awards during the March 1 park board meeting at Red Mill County Park.

"Organization of the Year" went to LaPorte County Highway Department. Its staff assisted with the new playground at Bluhm County Park because it required considerable grade work to be at the needed elevation. The department helped reuse dirt on the edge of the newly expanded and paved parking lot. Other efforts included signage, equipment needs, asphalt patching and brush trimming. The results helped save "tens of thousands of dollars on several projects," according to a press release.

"Outstanding Park Service Award" went to the entire full-time maintenance crew of Don Fuller, Boyd Lomow and Bob Walker. On top of maintaining parks and equipment, they worked on major renovation and improvement items at Bluhm.

"Volunteer of the Year" went to David Love. As part of an Eagle Scout project, he designed, acquired



Duane Werner from LaPorte County Highway Department.



Love

materials for and constructed a lean-to at Luhr County Park to store items and equipment.





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First and Third Mondays — Singing Sands



In the Area

March 10 — Duneland Stamp Club, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

March 11-13 — "Clue," LaPorte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St. Times: 7:30 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$17/adults, \$16/seniors, \$13/students. Reservations: www.laportelittletheatreclub.com

March 12 — St. Patrick's Day Parade, 1-2 p.m., 11th-Fourth streets. Info: president@michigancitymainstreetassociation.org

March 12 — "The Magic of Kalita!," 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

March 12 — Dunes Summer Theatre Preview, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

March 13 — LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, 3 p.m., The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St. Cost: \$22/adults, \$20/seniors, free/students with ID. Tickets: www.lcso.net, (219) 362-9020, Roxy Music, LaPorte.

March 14 — Teen Anime Club, 4:30-6 p.m., Meeting Room B @ LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

March 14 — Teen D&D, 5-7 p.m., Meeting Room A @ LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

March 14 — Needle Arts Club, 5:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

March 15 – Joyful Movement Easy Exercises for All Ages, 8:30 a.m., Luhr Park Nature Center, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. Free. Info: (219) 325-8315, www.laportecountyparks.org

Through March 31 — Local artist Kristy Kutch, 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.

First/Third Tuesday — Bingo, 5-6 p.m., Long Beach Community Center, Room 13, 2501 Oriole Trail. Free.

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.

Toastmasters Club, 6:30-8 p.m., Senior Health/Wellness Center (old hospital ER, Barker/Buffalo).

In the Region

March 10 — Noon Time Talk Series, 12:20 p.m. EST, Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart. Admission: \$5, members/free. Info: (574) 293-6660.

March 10 — Time Out with The Accidentals, Beth Nielsen Chapman, Kim Richey & Maia Sharp, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. General/\$30, reserved/\$55. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

March 12 — Runnin' with the Irish 5K Race, 8:30-11 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: www.runsignup.com/irish5k

March 12 — Family Art Days, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Times/registration: tinyurl.com/2p82xznm

March 12 — Brass from the Past (rock/soul tribute band), 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. General/\$40, reserved/\$65. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

March 12-13 — Maple Sugar Time festival, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Chellberg Farm, 618 Mineral Springs Road, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

March 15 — New Buffalo Township Library Community Forum, Edmund Lawler (<u>The Graft:</u> <u>How a Pioneering Operation Sparked the Modern</u> <u>Age of Organ Transplants</u>), 6:30-8 p.m. EDT, library Pokagon Room, 33 N. Thompson St. Free.

March 16 — Berrien County Conservation District Native Plant Presentation, 2-4 p.m. EDT, Love Creek Nature Center, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, Mich. Free. Registration: (269) 471-9111, Ext. 3, nancy.carpenter@macd.org

Through March 25 — "Finding (Me)aning," Red Cup Café, 115 Broadway, Chesterton. Info: programs@chestertonart.org

Through March 25 — Opportunity Enterprises exhibit, Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Reception: 6-8 p.m. March 11. Info: (219) 462-9009, www.artbarnschool.org

Through March 26 — "Shadow, Mooring + Undercurrents," Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.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

Vickers Theatre — Starts March 11: "West Side Story." Rated PG-13. Starts March 18: "Licorice Pizza." Rated R. Check website for details. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.





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

- American Legion, 107 N. Flynn Road, Westville, noon-5 p.m. Thursday, March 10.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, La-Porte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, March 14.
- St. John Kanty, 7012 N. County Road 600 East, Rolling Prairie, 1-6 p.m. Tuesday, March 15.

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.

Duneland Weavers Guild

Duneland Weavers Guild will meet through Zoom on Saturday, March 12, with registered guild members receiving Zoom information by email.

Tammy Deck, a fiber artist, teacher and owner of TLD Designs, will discuss Thrumori Weaving, her term for a free-style technique that creates a textile from leftover yarns. A two-day virtual workshop follows the program.

Visit http://dunelandweaversguild.org or the group's Facebook page for more details.

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Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter

<u>The Cage</u> by Bonnie Kistler (hardcover, \$26.99 in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 346 pages.)

Is it murder? Is it suicide?

This thrilling, non-stop read leaves you guessing until the wow! ending. See what you think...

It's a Sunday night, no one else is around and two women enter an elevator on the 30th floor where they work. Something goes wrong, the power goes out and the elevator stops and is sunk into utter darkness. One woman makes a call to 9-1-1.

Reaching the main floor, the doors open, one woman is standing, the other is dead of a gunshot wound.

Is it murder? Is it suicide?

Warning: You will have those "wait a minute" moments when something contradicts what you read earlier. Maybe you're just being overly cautious. Or, maybe you should be wary?

The first woman is Shay Lambert, newly hired lawyer; the second, and very deceased, is HR director Lucy Carter-Jones. They both work for CDMI, a worldwide fashion manufacturer. The acronym stands for the founder of the company and past famous fashion model: Claudine de Martineau International.

Since Lucy is the dead one, only Shay can relate what happened in the elevator. She says Lucy was ner-

vous, seemed to hyperventilate when the elevator stopped and finally pulled a pistol out of her purse. Shay said there was a struggle, and the gun went off.

Sounds pretty straightforward, and the police have no reason to believe otherwise. Enter J. Ingram Barrett Jr., senior VP and general counsel of CDMI. All he can think about is Lucy's recent remark — "I could burn this place down"— and all his less than sympathetic mind can think of is "... maybe now, through her death, she'd done it." Hmm. Just what is CDMI up to? And if so, who's involved?

Of course, there's much more to this story than meets the eye. And Barrett is convinced Shay shot Lucy in cold blood. Maybe not convinced, maybe just wanting it to be true to tie up a few loose ends. And he's just the man to prove it.

The real question is, why does Lucy's death have to be murder and not suicide? Just what is Barrett hiding?

The story then goes back about eight years ago when Shay and David first got married. He was in finance and she in law. The 2008 financial fiasco found them both out of jobs and out of their expensive lifestyle in New York City. Bills piled up and their savings gradually disappeared.

While David was decimated and turned to drinks and drugs, Shay found employment wherever, finally landing the job with CDMI just a few months ago.

She's a smart gal, our Shay, and finds some paperwork in her new desk that probably wasn't supposed to be left there. If you're into law, you'll love the behind-the-door business practices going on with CDMI. Does their illustrious founder know

what's really going on? She's holed up in France in some out-of-the-way country mansion, so why should she care?

Alternating chapters in Shay's voice give us a sympathetic view of her and her life up to now. But other chapters give a different view. She keeps to a story of innocence, but nagging doubt fills your mind.

Evidence suddenly shows up making Shay look very guilty, indeed. Planted? Of course. Someone is trying very hard to get her charged and found guilty of murder — someone with very deep pockets.

The story goes at warp speed. You will think you're on the giant roller coaster ride at Six Flags. Shay is finally charged with killing Lucy and sent to jail awaiting trial. Her fear of hav-

ing to defend her virtue against hard-nose criminals turns into a hoot as the women prisoners line up for legal advice when they find out she's a lawyer!

After two months in jail, Shay is taken out of her cell and told she has been bailed out. By whom? That's the big question because Shay has no money. And her benefactor is an even bigger surprise.

Shay's life suddenly takes a new turn — it's a complete turnaround in a dream job that will set her up for life, but, of course, she has other ideas. It's said revenge is a dish best served cold, but two months in jail has made that dish steaming hot.

This is a psychological thriller that shows how youthful joy and expectation give way to the harsh reality of greed and corruption at the highest corporate level, as well as the use and abuse of people who are nothing more than disposable — just use 'em and lose 'em when they are no longer important.

Kistler is a Bryn Mawr graduate and former Philadelphia trial lawyer. A wholly original legal thriller, <u>The Cage</u> surely will put her on the list of must read books of 2022.

Till next time, happy reading!











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Zach was born and raised on the shores of Lake Michigan and has lived in the Michigan City area his entire life. After spending 20 years in the trades, including owning and operating a busy painting company for the last 12 years, Zach decided to bring his experience with both the area and beach homes to the real estate world.



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