

THE
*Beacher*TM

Weekly Newspaper

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Happy

Easter



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About the Cover

This week's Easter-theme cover is a collaboration between Photographer James Conlin and Editor Andrew Tallackson.

Volume 39, Number 13



Simply the Best

by Kim Nowatzke

Kyra Krachinski doesn't just make beautiful music.

She makes history.

The Michigan City senior was selected as a member of the Indiana Bandmasters Association All-State Honor Band – the first musician in Michigan City High School's history to receive the honor, and the first from Michigan City since 1986.

Ultimately, she's the third best high school flute player in Indiana.

In her junior year, Krachinski was named an alternate with the state band. After this past January's audition at Valparaiso High School — school affiliations aren't made known to judges — she actually shed tears, convinced she played the piece better in the past.

"But when I saw my name as the third one to pop up on the list, I was very speechless," she said. "Not only would I now experience another great thing on my musical journey, but I also knew that I would be breaking history, which I wasn't expecting."

She learned the news, in fact, while in a Zoom call with Frank Gast, MCHS director of bands, who has taught her for the past four years.

"He told me that he was very proud of me," she said, "and that made me even more emotional."

It was a moment Gast won't forget as well.

"I was personally elated when I heard the news," he said. "I wasn't surprised because Kyra had



Kyra Krachinski began teaching herself how to play the flute in sixth grade because she was drawn to how delicate and beautiful its sound was. Photo by Isaiah Barczak.

worked so hard on her craft. It still was great to see it happen. It's always an honor to be able to watch one of your students truly soar. It's also an honor to see someone rewarded for the hard work they put in to make it happen."

Gast had other students selected to honor bands while previously teaching in Arizona.

"Indiana, however, as a state is known to have some of the finest band programs in the nation," he said. "Within those programs, you have many many students who are absolutely stellar musicians. The rigor of the audition process and level of music they have to perform to be selected is definitely challenging. To have a student selected so highly coming from our program is a game changer and hopefully will lead to

continued future success at MCHS."

Gast touched on the influence Krachinski has on other students.

"Kyra has had the ability of raising the expectation and bar of her peers," he said. "They perform better as a total program because of her abilities. She's just a great student who makes everyone better around her. She's inspired others to push themselves."

Trey Bradshaw, a professional flute player and Krachinski's private weekly teacher since October, is immensely proud of her.



Trey Bradshaw

“I was thrilled when Kyra immediately texted me that she made All-State Honor Band,” he said. “I knew how hard she worked and, as a musician, I understand how much of ourselves we put into the work we do. It can be incredibly validating to receive this affirmation that you’re on the right track. I couldn’t be happier that Kyra has gotten this recognition of excellence!”

And, of course, her parents, Tim and Julie Krachinski, were beaming.

“We were ecstatic that she earned a spot in the top 10 for the All-State Honor Band,” Julie said. “Breaking a school record is a remarkable achievement.”

Students chosen for the band attended the All-State Band Festival at Purdue University in West Lafayette on March 10-12.

Just in from the event the night before *The Beacher* interview, Krachinski said, “There was so much great music made. It was such an ethereal experience. Hours after I got home, I was still in a good state of shock. I was able to meet a lot of great people who have similar interests as mine and make connections that I hope to cross paths with again in the future.”

Gast was impressed with the event.

“It was truly remarkable to watch,” he said. “The power of music was showcased, and I was thrilled for all the participants. The directors and students really showed why I believe Indiana music is so powerful and highly regarded.”

Krachinski describes herself as a child who “really loved music.”

Her paternal grandfather, Daniel Krachinski, played the organ, harmonica and flute. Her maternal great-grandfather, Adolph Fietz, also played the harmonica. She has two cousins who play various instruments.

Krachinski recalls annual school field trips to La-Porte County Symphony Orchestra.

“I always felt drawn to it – the music and everything about it,” she said.

Continued on Page 4

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Simply the Best

Continued from Page 3

Her dream came true when she became a student apprentice with LCSO in November 2022.

“I really wanted to get in because I wanted to experience what it was like to play with an orchestra,” she said, “because that was all I dreamed about as a child.”

Krachinski cherishes the opportunity to play alongside talented and highly skilled flautists.

“I get a lot of feedback and knowledge from the other flautists,” she said, “such as capturing music styles I’ve never touched on before and playing tips.”

She plays in MCHS’s Advanced Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band, previously participating in pep band. In addition, she has been a substitute musician with Michigan City Municipal Band since the summer before her junior year of high school.

“It was my first experience playing with a different musical group outside of Michigan City High School,” she said. “It was such a great experience because it pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I eventually got very comfortable with it.”

Krachinski began playing the flute in sixth grade, teaching herself through online instruction. She participated in band at Barker Middle School. When she first tried out different instruments at school, she actually was told she wasn’t a good fit for the flute. However, in love with “the delicate sound of it and how absolutely beautiful it was,” she persisted, never giving up on it.



The Krachinskis (from left) — Tim, Kyra, Julie and Kinsey — on senior night for Michigan City High School’s marching band.

She is grateful to music’s many life lessons.

“I think that it’s really helped me push through adversity and feel emotions that I haven’t felt before,” she explained. “It has helped me express emotions that were hard to express at the time, especially growing up. It has also taught me responsibility and how to work with people.”

Her parents are grateful for the education – in more ways than one – that music has provided.

“Music has taught Kyra that nothing is impossible with hard work, determination and dedication,” her mother said. “When Kyra plays, she captivates the audience. She makes you hear the music like she feels the music. We are so proud of the exceptional musician that she has become.”

In addition to the flute, Krachinski plays the piccolo and baritone saxophone.

“Kyra plays with a powerful, rich sound, and wholeheartedly throws herself into whatever music she is performing,” Bradshaw said. “It is quite clear to any listener that she truly loves playing. The biggest secret to Kyra’s success is that she is never daunted by any roadblocks or difficulties she faces. If she stumbles or falls, she simply picks herself back up and tries again.”



Frank Gast.

Gast considers her one of the finest musicians he has taught.

“Kyra is a tremendously hard worker and extremely meticulous,” he said. “Her work ethic is astounding to watch...her attention to detail is astounding to me. She looks at home when she’s performing.”

Bradshaw touched on the growth he has seen in Krachinski’s musical abilities.

“Kyra already had a great technical foundation when I began working with her, so I have focused on helping her become more mindful of interpreting the music she performs,” he said. “She has learned that there is always an expressive reason that the composer has decided to put each note, dynamic and articulation on the page. She now takes more ownership of interpreting what those reasons are, and aims to perform the music in a way that expresses the composer’s intentions to the listener as clearly as possible. This has given her playing much more depth and emotional impact.”

Music, however, isn’t Krachinski’s only passion.

“I’ve always had a very strong passion for science. I used to want to go into vet science,” she said. “But I have evolved from my childhood mindset of wanting to take care of sick pets. When I was discovering career paths and majors, I realized that I’ve always been intrigued by different molecular and biological structures. I was trying to find a degree specific to that, (such as dealing) with different viruses or bacterial diseases.”

So, she has chosen microbiology as her major and genetics as her minor at Ball State University.

“I’ve been stressed out since I was a freshman on what college to attend,” she said. “I eventually decided to narrow my choices down through website information and college visits. It’s not too big or too small. It doesn’t seem like the opportunities there are limited. I felt walking around the campus that something just clicked.”

Krachinski was one of 50 Indiana students selected to participate in the Molecular Medicine in Action event at Indiana University on March 5-6. It’s a free annual program developed by representatives of the Riley Children’s Foundation, the Herman B. Wells Center for Pediatric Research, IU School of Medicine, Indiana Association of Biology Teachers and Hoosier Association of Science Teachers.

“Their hope was to inspire high school students interested in pursuing careers in science by providing a real-world look and hands-on experience with cutting-edge medical research that will revolutionize healthcare in the 21st Century,” according to the website www.mmia.medicine.iu.edu.

Students learned about the latest techniques in molecular biology, cytogenetics and cancer therapy, including analysis of gene expression, imaging technology and modulation of cancer cell growth.

Krachinski said she applied in August 2022, after her teacher, Ashley Zahrt, thought it would be a good experience for her Principles of Biomedical Sciences student.

As she found herself immersed in the event experience, she said, “I think that was the moment that I knew I wouldn’t be myself if I didn’t pursue a career in science.”

In addition to passions for music and science, Krachinski enjoys reading and painting. Toward the end of her sophomore year, she started volunteering at Friendship Botanic Gardens. In addition to helping with garden duties, she also works special events and other volunteer projects there.

Whatever the future holds for Krachinski, no doubt she will pursue her goals with the same recipe for success she’s applied to her musical endeavors.

“Kyra is a hard-working, talented young person with the resilience and grit to keep going, no matter what,” Bradshaw said. “She always approaches challenges with a can-do attitude and a willingness to put in the time to accomplish her goals. The biggest secret to Kyra’s success is that she is never daunted by any roadblocks or difficulties she faces. If she stumbles or falls, she simply picks herself back up and tries again.

“Beyond these traits that will certainly propel Kyra forward in all of her musical and professional endeavors, she is also a kind, thoughtful person who goes out of her way to support others.”

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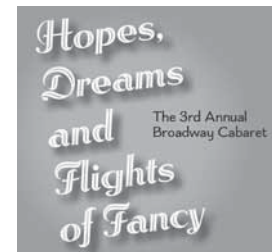
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“Dungeons & Dragons” Goes for Laughs and Comes Out a Winner

by Andrew Tallackson

“Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves” is typical sword-and-sorcery nonsense, but it has something few big-budget gambles boast.

Snark.

Rather than milk a tabletop role-playing game for a quick buck, the movie goes for laughs. It knows it’s silly, the cast practically winking at you through the screen. Jonathan Goldstein and John Francis Daley, the duo behind the film, made something anyone can enjoy, while all those gobbledygook incantations and creature names should satisfy long-time players of the game.

All you need to know about the story is that thieves played by Chris Pine, Michelle Rodriguez, Justice Smith and Hugh Grant fractured. Grant’s scheming Forge Fitzwilliam took over the country, Pine’s and Rodriguez’s Edgin and Holga, respectively, landing in prison. The two escape, reunite with Smith’s iffy sorcerer and recruit shape-shifting Doric (“It” scene-stealer Sophia Lillis) to take him down...and rescue Edgin’s daughter, Kira (Chloe Coleman), in the process.

Forge Fitzwilliam is designed to launch Hugh Grant into full Hugh Grant mode. Meaning, you’re not supposed to take him seriously. How can you? Forge floats an Oz-like balloon across the city with his face on it, and when trying to appear threatening whines about his tea being too hot.

Pine is the smarmy court jester to Rodriguez’s stone-faced warrior, the actress liberally applying her trademark scowl to scenes with deadpan zip. Enter “Bridgerton” star Regé-Jean Page, and you have the saintliest of allies whose noble demeanor takes a constant ribbing.

A sample of the dialogue:

Regé-Jean Page: *I will not be complicit in the il-*



Chris Pine (center) leads the all-star cast in “Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves.”



“Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves”

Running time: 134 minutes. Rated PG-13 for fantasy action/violence and some language.

licit use of ill-gotten booty.

Chris Pine: *Can someone else ride next to this guy?*

The special effects exist more for a laugh...until the film’s rumored \$150 million price tag comes into play amid the dynamite finish, where Pine and company enter a maze that’s like a medieval “Hunger Games.” The visuals, the stunts, the cast, the gags — all of it comes together for a rousing finish that is as exhilarating as it is unexpectedly moving.

The movie sets out to be nothing more than a silly good time. It accomplishes that goal.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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Chamber Music Festival, Paladin Unite for Inclusive Concerts

by Andrew Tallackson

Melissa Bohacek was relatively new to Paladin Inc., hired a few months prior as the development and marketing officer, when she had an epiphany in one of the art classes.

Paladin, 4315 E. Michigan Blvd., is widely hailed as an advocate for children, people with disabilities, seniors and their family. It also actively pursues ways to build community support.

“So I’m in the art class and looking at what’s happening, and I notice we have folks who might not be verbal, who may not have the vocabulary to express what’s happening in their lives. Young children and adults with disabilities, and I’m trying to think of all these ways in which art helps with that,” Bohacek recalled. “Art is an amazing form of communication.”

How could Bohacek find another means to bring culture directly to Paladin’s clients? Well, it helps to have talented friends. Bohacek turned to Nic and Sunny Orbovich. The two founded the acclaimed Michigan City Chamber Music Festival. Sunny is the driving force behind its children’s programs.

On Monday, April 10, MCCMF musicians will present two concerts at Paladin and Imagination Station. They are not open to the public, but down the road, such concerts will be, particularly this summer when the chamber music festival kicks into high gear.

“So here we are,” Bohacek said, “starting this amazing program and partnership where we’ll connect people to music that they may have not heard before. We’ll connect them to stories about composers they may have never heard before. We’ll connect them to sounds they may have never heard before.”

Nic and Sunny are thrilled. Concerts for children are a key part of their annual festival, with musicians presenting programs that acclimate youngsters to classical music. Now, through Paladin, such concerts will be more inclusive than ever.

“This is so important to me,” Sunny said. “This is why we started the festival, to bring music to all of our citizens...and I’m so grateful to Paladin and

Melissa for making this outreach. It’s very challenging, making people feel comfortable. We have a lot of different worlds here in Michigan City, and stepping into someone else’s world isn’t easy. This is an opportunity to really overlap in some places we haven’t before.”

In Michigan City, Paladin serves about 150-160 clients through its early childhood programs, Bohacek said, and about another 150-160 in programs for adults with disabilities.

Having these concerts at Paladin sites, Bohacek explained, is nice. For the clients, she continued, “they’re comfortable there. They’re used to being there, (parents are) used to having their kids there, so those anxieties are taken off the table. Now, they can fully absorb what’s happening in that location.”

Nic said he’ll be among the performers at the April 10 concerts, joined by Jessie Bennett on violin, Rachel Goff on viola and Brook Bennett on cello.

The timing of these Paladin concerts, Nic said, is perfect in terms of the chamber music festival.

“Last year, our theme was ‘Music and Healing.’ We were coming out of COVID and so much social turmoil,” he said. “This year, our theme is ‘Many Musics, Many Peoples.’ What we’re doing is emphasizing those composers, creators of great music, that have traditionally been from underserved communities. And with Paladin serving those with disabilities, we have a night where we are focusing on some great composers that have been disabled and shown you can still succeed.”

The most famous, of course, is Beethoven, who lost his hearing in full by the time he was in his mid-40s. Other composers the festival will highlight include women and LGBTQ individuals, and those of African descent.

Indeed, timing is everything. The April 10 concerts coincide with the fact that April 1-7 is the national Week of the Young Child.

“Sometimes,” Bohacek said, “when great things are happening, things fall into place and a magical thing happens.”

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



Above: Nic and Sunny Orbovich.
Below: Melissa Bohacek.





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New Beverly Shores Depot Exhibits

The Beverly Shores Depot Museum & Art Gallery kicks off its spring/summer season by opening a month earlier than normal and with two exhibits.

"Works by Lydia Lemmons" is a first for the depot in that the featured artist is a student: Marquette High School senior Lydia Lemmons.

"The variety of emotions expressed, as well as the images she creates to surround them, are very creative, particularly for a young artist," the depot's new curator, Meg Bero, said in a press release.

Held simultaneously is "Celebrating Our Depot," an exhibit encompassing photos of the depot's history, construction and renovation. It also features photos of architect Arthur Gerber's other train depots that dotted Chicago's North Shore and the South Shore line in Northwest Indiana.

The Beverly Shores station was built in 1929 in the Spanish Mission style preferred by Frederick H. Bartlett, who developed Beverly Shores. By 1988, it was headed for demolition, like its sister station at Central Street in Beverly Shores. Over 10 years, a group of Beverly Shores residents, along with the then Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore superintendent, NIPSCO and Save the Dunes helped preserve the building. They obtained designation on the National Register for Historical places and collected \$500,000 for its restoration. The station, located at 525 S. Broadway, reopened in July 1998.

Hours are 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays. Openings are from 5-7 p.m. the second Friday of each month. Visit www.bsdepot.com for details.



One of the pieces on display
by Lydia Lemmons.

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Slow Market

Let's start with some data for October-March for the last two years from our "Indiana Lakefront," which is the area from Beverly Shores to the Michigan state line on the lakeside of U.S. 12.

Year	Units	Med Price	Aver Price	Total \$Vol	Aver DOM
21-22	74	\$528k	\$674k	\$49.9M	40
22-23	48	\$544k	\$744k	\$35.7M	47

Year	Coop Sales	Sold Sq Ft Price	Active	Aver DOM
21-22	66%	\$256	NA	NA
22-23	71%	\$259	27	30

The first table tells me a drop from 74 sales to 48 sales is a serious drop of 35%. My guess is that it was caused by the lack of houses to sell. The median price rise from \$528K to \$544k supports the lack of inventory hypothesis, as does the increase in cooperative sale (sales made with the help of another brokerage). In a tough market, cooperation pays off. Remember that if your listing agent wants to start with a 4-month "in-house only" listing before putting your house into the MLS.

The average price increase and its relationship to the median price tells me the high-end listings are selling better than the low end. I am not sure I make much of the longer time to sell this year versus last year. But both are longer than the 4-week average DOM in Michigan. Again, inventory is my bet.

The statistics about DOM of current active listings is suspect in my mind because of the way the MLS saves this data. But if it is good data, then the 27 listings put on the market from the end of September through the end of March were only on the market for an average of 30 days. Remember, we are talking about average time. Some of them have been on the market for 6 months.

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First Friday Poetry Slam

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., will host its annual First Friday Poetry Slam from 5-8 p.m. Friday, April 7.

Readings begin at 5:30 p.m., with audience members acting as judges. Admission is free, and guests also can explore LCA art exhibits. A cash bar and free light refreshments are planned.

The event is conducted "tournament style," meaning performers will be eliminated each round, with the last one standing crowned as this year's champion. Tim Stafford, a poet, storyteller and former Chicago Grand Slam Champion from Lyons, Ill., returns as emcee.

Poets interested in participating should prepare three original pieces, each under three minutes, and register by contacting Samantha Bean at (219) 874-4900, Ext. 202, or sbean@lubeznikcenter.org. Spots are limited.



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Northwest Indiana Green Drinks

Northwest Indiana Green Drinks will present “Save Our Butterflies: How to Plant Butterfly Gardens and Establish Pollinator Sanctuaries” at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 6, through Facebook Live or Zoom.

The speaker is Victoria Wittig, former Save the Dunes senior program specialist. She will demonstrate how the Save the Dunes downloadable “A Homeowners Guide to Pollinator Garden Landscaping in Indiana’s Coastal Communities,” which she and her collaborative community partners created, can help chose native flowers to plant and design a pollinator sanctuary.

Programs are co-sponsored by Save the Dunes, Michigan City Sustainability Commission and 219 GreenConnect. Email NancyforVision@gmail.com for more details.

Volunteer Day Rescheduled

The cleanup event “Wake Up the Gardens Volunteer Day” has been rescheduled to Saturday, April 15.

Volunteers can rake and haul leaves, pick up garbage and sticks and help with other efforts to prep the local attraction for the season. Dress for the weather, and refreshments will be provided.

Anyone who can help should email volunteer@friendshipbotanicgardens.org

Greek Bake Sale

A Greek bake sale is from noon-6 p.m. EDT Friday-Saturday, April 7-8, at Annunciation-Agia Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church, 18000 Behner Road, New Buffalo, Mich.

A variety of Greek pastries will be available, while museum tours will be provided. Call (269) 231-9052 for more details.



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Wind Chimes

These days, my Florida house ripples with activity. My daughter and her family are staying with me until I downsize into a condo later this spring. When there is a battle of wills between my 2- and 4-year-old grandsons, I scoop up their aging dachshund, Stella, and wander out to the front yard, where she sniffs and scratches in the cedar mulch of the meditation garden. I plop down on the concrete bench, content to linger in the shade alone with the dog.

Coastal breezes whisper in my hair. And I luxuriate in the familiar panpipe melody of nearby wind chimes. The Irish-themed set was gifted to me by friends when my husband, Steve, passed away last year. And then, perhaps, because of the circumstances – thoughts of Steve, the chimes, the dog and my impending move – I recall a similar moment, one that arrives crisp and clear, even though it is decades old.

It was the spring of 2001, and my family, which consisted of three busy teens, a sassy 5-year-old, two adult collies and a large iguana, was embroiled in packing and moving out of one historic Victorian and into another. Spring morphed into summer before our belongings settled into their rightful places.

One summer evening, I joined my husband by the backyard grill at our new “old” house. As Steve flipped burgers, I peeked through the slats of our

That Girl, This Life

Julie McGue



fence and admired the mature landscaping of our neighbors’ yard. Much like the present moment in the meditation garden with Stella, songbirds fluttered in the tree canopy. As they fed from an array of feeders scattered about the property, a set of wind chimes jangled in a towering oak.

As soon as I heard the music, my hand flew to my mouth. “Oh, no!” I moaned. “I forgot to pack the wind chimes you and the kids gave me for Mother’s Day!”

While I hoped the chimes were right where I’d left them in the magnolia tree, I feared the new owners may have tossed them out. As Steve and I bantered about how to remedy the situation, our soon-to-be sixth-grade son, Dan, stormed down the patio steps.

“When’s dinner?” he asked.

“Burgers are just about ready, son. Your mother’s upset. She left the wind chimes at our old house.”

Dan looked at my stricken face. “Don’t worry, Mom. I’ll get them. After dinner.”

I watched my son’s quick smile widen. I knew this kid. I doubted he’d ring the doorbell and ask the owner’s permission to reclaim the wind chimes. His voice may have deepened into that of an adult male, but he still fostered the rich fantasy life of a boy. One that involved good guys, bad guys, and secret and dangerous missions.

“Danny, you can’t just show up...,” I started to say, but my husband’s palm went up, silencing my objections.

“That’s great, Dan! Your mom will be happy to have the chimes back.”

Dan ran up the steps two at a time. “I’m calling Matt to see if he can help.”

After my son wolfed down a double cheeseburger and fed most of his broccoli to the male collie, he hopped on his bicycle. He planned to meet Matt at the corner by our old house, only three blocks away. Steve and I took what was left of a bottle of red wine to the front porch, where we dropped into a pair of wicker rockers to wait. The two collies followed us out and surveyed the yard, their noses lifting at the pungent scent of the yard’s newly laid cedar mulch.

I sipped my wine and studied my husband. “I think you should have driven Danny over there. Made sure he went about this the right way.”

Steve chuckled, pointing his finger at me. “He’s a good kid. Let him prove it to you. Besides, what real

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trouble could he get into?"

I raised my eyebrows. Because the Village of Hinsdale lacked serious crime to fight, the local police tended to zero in on the town's youth. They nabbed kids for suspicious activities, hauled them into the station and phoned their parents. As much as I wanted my precious Mother's Day gift returned, I didn't need it at the expense of my son's reputation.

The collies let us know Matt and Dan were close before we caught sight of them. The boys sped past us into the driveway. We met them at the gate to the backyard, where they slipped off their bikes, all high-fives and grins and guffaws. Dan reached into his backpack and handed me a wad of metal and tangled twine.

"Mission accomplished," he said as Steve slapped him on the back.

"Thanks, honey! Did you...," I never got the full question out.

"Yeah, Mom, don't worry. We rang the front doorbell. No one answered. So, we walked around to the back door. I knocked and knocked until my hand hurt. While I was doing all that, Matt climbed onto the bench and pulled the chimes from the tree. We never saw anybody. Nobody saw us either."

Steve took the chimes from me, shook the kinks out and asked, "Where would you like these?"

Stella whines to be picked up, stirring me out of my reverie. As the coastal winds hush, the melody from the Irish chimes fades away, too. The dog and I settle into silent harmony, much like I used to do in the old days with the collies in the yard. I consider the Irish chimes and get up. The old dog is on my heels as I pluck them from the tree. This time, I won't let the confusion of moving prevent me from packing them. It's not just the wind chimes' beguiling sound or the sentiment behind the gift that stirred me into action.

It's what they represent: significant memories and beloved family. I have come to realize that in times of transition, we rely on our cache of experiences and memories, as well as the support of those we hold dear, to usher us through uncertainty and fill us with the promise of tomorrow.



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The Right Touch

by Kim Nowatzke

Students helping students.

It's the simple, yet successful spirit behind new tactile tables created by three Michigan City High School students for a multi-curriculum classroom.

Sophomore Matthew Wilson and freshmen Ethan Sonnenberg and Brock Jones take "Introduction to Construction" taught by MCHS Technical Education Teacher Jeff Rochowiak. And, it was special education teacher Carla Quinn who planted the seed that grew and blossomed with Rochowiak and the boys.

"His class was just the obvious choice to design and construct the tables over simply just ordering a kit online, as there are so many talented young people within the construction program at Michigan City High School," Quinn said. "Mr. Rochowiak has always been a big supporter of the multi-curriculum program, so I knew he would make sure the tables would be top notch and suitable for the unique needs of the students."

She explained that each 32"x48"-inch tactile table is more than just something to use for play.

"They actually have multiple purposes and for students with unique physical, emotional and academic needs, a tactile table can help improve fine motor skills, such as grasping and pinching that are essential for writing, help to develop critical thinking, increase language development, heighten social skills and assist in calming down anxious/hyperactive episodes," Quinn said.

Rochowiak is pleased by what his students learned through the project.

"Seeing them make projects to be used for someone else is better than them making something for just themselves. It gives them real-life experience," he said. "Since we made the first one, all they wanted to do was make the second one, too."

The effort was an extra-curricular project, Rochowiak added, and the three often would come during Wolf Pack time to work on it. As explained by school counselor Linda Meyer, Wolf Pack is an "advisory" period where students can obtain a pass to visit teachers and receive extra help, or make up quizzes and tests.

"They worked really hard on getting them done," Rochowiak said.

He estimated it took about six to seven hours to complete each table. But, he doesn't place a concrete time frame on such assignments because he doesn't want the students to rush and end up accidentally injuring themselves.



Freshman Ethan Sonnenberg (from left), sophomore Matthew Wilson, Michigan City High School Technical Education Teacher Jeff Rochowiak and freshman Brock Jones are photographed next to one of the tactile tables in progress. Photo by Kim Nowatzke

He cited several skills that Wilson, Sonnenberg and Jones honed during their creation of the tables. This included measuring, using a variety of tools, including a miter saw, power drill, impact screw driver, level and sander, as well as applying stain.

Wilson said he definitely learned the importance of communication, teamwork and problem solving.

"It's a lot more difficult than you think," he explained. "You have to get it all level, accounting for the blade thickness that you're cutting with. It's surprisingly difficult to get each leg square with the top. It's nice to see something come together, and see what goes into building a table that you take for granted."

Jones, who said he "likes to build and take things

apart," appreciates now "that something like this takes time and patience, and the importance of measuring properly."

Sonnenberg learned how to use a power sander. There also were less concrete, but still valuable skills acquired, such as teamwork and the satisfaction of "being able to build something and give it away. It was easier than I thought it would be because it was my first time building something like this."

The construction-class students have lent their skills and talents to other multi-cultural classroom projects, including a table mobile, sensory table accessible from the floor, and a wall to separate the kitchen area from the rest of the classroom.



Carla Quinn (left) and Sara Krachinski stand by one of the completed tables. Photo provided by Betsy Kohn.

Other projects by the class' students have benefitted the school, too. They constructed benches for the tennis teams, and look forward to building shelves in the Den Closet, which supplies student clothing needs.

"I am very thankful for our 'Introduction to Construction' class here at the high school and all the hard work they put into this project," special education teacher Sara Krachinski said. "...The sensory bins will give my students the opportunity to explore and learn through hands-on tactile play that engages their senses...I think it will benefit multiple students this year and for many years to come."

The first table was delivered Dec. 16, and the second one will be soon.

"I didn't know one was even finished, so when I saw it, I was just blown away," Quinn said. "I actually cried because I was so excited. The design and construction exceeded all expectations. The boys did a FANTASTIC job! In looking at the design, it is apparent that a lot of thought and effort was put into creating a table that would best serve the unique needs of their peers."

“Boston Strangler” Celebrates Women Journalists Who Covered the Case

by Andrew Tallackson



Jean Cole (Carrie Coon, left) and Loretta McLaughlin (Keira Knightley) look through reader-provided tips in “Boston Strangler.”

Yes, “Boston Strangler” is a serial killer movie. And not just any killer, mind you, but the notorious, largely unsolved deaths of 13 women back in the 1960s. Writer-director Matt Ruskin has all the key ingredients here so the film works as a mystery and as a period piece.

For me, the movie, now streaming on Hulu, is a celebration of two remarkable women in a male-dominated profession.

In a perfect world, journalism, with its quest for truth and transparency, would be immune to sexism. Truth is, newsroom behavior can be just as piggy as any other workplace. What “Boston Strangler” gets right is its depiction of two women at the dawn of the 1960s — both mothers and journalists — forging respected careers in their field.

So many things, Ruskin, as writer and director, nails perfectly.

As the 20th century rolled into its second act, women like *Boston Record American* reporter Loretta McLaughlin (Keira Knightley) often were relegated to Lifestyles writing: subjects “suitable” for women. In Loretta’s case, at one point she is reduced to reviewing a name-brand toaster.

McLaughlin, however, is the only one who notices the connection between three older women raped

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“Boston Strangler”

Running time: 112 minutes. Hulu. Rated R for some violent content and language.

and murdered in Boston. She pushes to investigate, her editor, Jack MacLaine (Oscar-winner Chris Cooper) resisting, but giving in to her requests. She is teamed up with an investigative reporter, Jean Cole (Carrie Coon), and these women are a fascinating study in contrasts. Loretta is raw at reporting, but a natural. Knightley, flawlessly achieving an American accent, has never been this intense. She rarely wavers. You can see it in Loretta’s presence. She is all backbone and savvy. Coon’s Jean, by comparison, has more experience in the field. Wise in avoiding sexist roadblocks. Coon, who gave the most aching performance in HBO’s “The Leftovers,” is a steely portrait of calm under pressure.

What “Boston Strangler” shows, like “She Said,” “Spotlight” and “All the President’s Men,” is that Loretta and Jean succeed where colleagues fail because they’re willing to do the grunt work. Combining through books, old newspaper clippings. Pounding the pavement to find sources. The movie also

suggests that, as women, they introduce elements to their reporting largely ignored by male colleagues. The human element. Psychologists illuminating the mind, and pattern, of a serial killer. They also talk to the surviving relatives. In particular, parents of the younger women targeted in the killings. This movie gives a proper voice to the families.

Ruskin, as the director, does not sensationalize the killings. In fact, we don't see them. And as Loretta and Jean's investigation stretches into years, "Boston Strangler" knowingly conveys the growth, the journey of Loretta into a respected journalist. Any barriers that once existed because of being a woman...gone. Boston police, for instance, share details off the record in blunt fashion. A New York police officer calls Loretta with a tip instead of Boston police. A state police detective in Ann Arbor, Mich., where a similar killing occurs, calls, saying she's the "expert" in the case. What we witness in "Boston Strangler" is a reporter's evolution from "cub" to "ace." By the film's second half, Knightley strides into a room with the bold confidence of a woman who knows her turf.

Another fascinating layer to the film: Loretta's husband, James (Morgan Spector, HBO's "The Gilded Age"). He is supportive at first. Then, when her work infringes on "his" time, when he is required to parent more, it's like a light switches off. He becomes cold, distant. A product of his time. And for Loretta, the sexism has shifted from work to home.

Ruskin did an insane amount of research for his



Chris Cooper, seen here with Keira Knightley, stars as the editor of the *Boston Record American*.

film, including interviewing the daughters of Loretta and Jean. Many details of the killings, as well as newspaper headlines, are lifted directly from fact. I wish there was more insight into why Boston police came across as ineffective, and the look of the film by cinematographer Ben Kutchins is so dark, at times it's tough to make out what is happening.

Historians debate whether there was only one individual involved in the deaths or multiple people. "Boston Strangler" makes an effective argument for the latter. Whatever the case, the movie works as a historical thriller and as a tribute to journalism at its best. The very best.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

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Here's One You Might Have Missed: "Watcher"

by Andrew Tallackson



The most chilling moment in "Watcher" — Julia (Maika Monroe) waves to the stranger across the street, waiting to see if she gets a response.

"Watcher" is a case where, as the saying goes, someone made 'em like they used to, a thriller that actually thrills without cheap scare tactics.

There is a tendency, with old-school movies like "Watcher," to simply praise them as "Hitchcockian" and leave it at that. As if such a blanket statement explains everything you need to know. What we're really trying to say is, the movie grabs you, hooks you in and doesn't let go.

Beyond its obvious style, and nods to "Rear Window," "Watcher" succeeds because director Chloe Okuno, making her feature-film debut, takes a feminist approach. There is no on-screen violence until the end, and even then, it's moderate. Women are not exploited. Instead, we get a terrific young actress, Maika Monroe (2014's "It Follows"), in a story dripping with dread.

Streaming on Hulu and AMC+, the movie is all atmosphere. The paranoid tone is as much a star as the actors and actresses. And, the tension amps up by plunking a lonely woman into an increasingly cold and hostile setting.

Monroe stars as Julia, who moves with her husband, Francis (Karl Glusman), to Bucharest because of his work. She's a former actress, unsure of her next career move. That means she has time, *lots of it*, where her loneliness offers no reprieve.

Bucharest in this movie is far from inviting. Okuno strips it of exotic appeal. With most people at work, its streets are frequently barren. The weather alternates between rain and snow, the city scape al-

★ ★ ★ 1/2

"Watcher"

Running time: 96 minutes. Hulu, AMC+. Rated R for some bloody violence, language and some sexual material/nudity

most stripped of color. Julia doesn't know the language, nor does she have any friends there. Worse, news reports indicate a serial killer is on the loose.

Rarely has a movie established such an isolated feel for its main character. "Watcher," through Monroe's sharp performance, introduces a woman who feels raw and vulnerable. It's at night, for instance, that she notices someone watching her from the apartment across the street, only his outline visible behind the drapes. Of course, we think of "Rear Window," but whereas Jimmy Stewart's injured photographer enjoyed spying on neighbors to kill time, Julia wants nothing to do with voyeuristic behavior. And, in the movie's signature image, Julia tests her fears that she's going crazy, standing at her apartment window, waving at the individual across the way. The reaction, well, is creepy as heck.

That's really what "Watcher" is about: a mounting sense of dread, of being watched and followed. Like in supermarkets and during casual walks through Bucharest.

Okuno refuses to reduce Julia to a hysterical mess. The movie becomes an exploration of one woman facing her own anxieties. Monroe creates a woman who doesn't like feeling weak. So, for in

stance, there are no secrets. Julia tells Francis everything. And by secretly following the man she believes is the guy across the street, "Watcher" treats Julia as a woman confronting the potential for violence in someone she hasn't even met.

Okuno's screenplay builds to a confrontation between Julia and the man she believes is stalking her. But before then, in an unusual twist, the guy sits across from



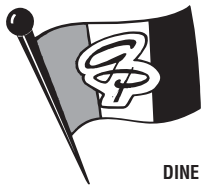
Maika Monroe, seen here with Karl Glusman, is dynamite in the film.

her in an abandoned subway car... and they talk. He gets personal, tells of his beleaguered existence. How rare is that, where two people — one a potential threat to the other — face off not through violence, but words? Do we still believe this guy is the killer? We are not sure...until the big finish. It's another example of how the movie efficiently toys with us.

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Schuyler Colfax Exhibit Now Part of Museum's Permanent Display

It was March 23, 1823, that Schuyler Colfax, the most notable political figure in St. Joseph River Valley history, was born.

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth, The History Museum has introduced the permanent exhibit "Colfax: Speaker for Freedom" in the Voyages Gallery.

An ardent abolitionist, Colfax is best known for his roles as speaker of the house under President Abraham Lincoln and vice president under President Ulysses S. Grant. He was instrumental in many political achievements, including passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States. He also was in demand across the country as a lecturer.

Showcased in "Colfax: Speaker for Freedom" is the chair used by him when he was speaker of the house. When Colfax left office, members of Congress made a gift of the chair to him. He brought it back to his South Bend home, and it was given to The History Museum in 1949.

The gown worn by Ellen Wade Colfax on March 4, 1869, at her husband's inauguration as vice president, is on display. Given to the museum by the Colfax family in the 1920s, it was on permanent display for years, due to its popularity. Around 1978, it was removed due to structural damage: a common and non-preventable issue with silks from the Victorian Era. Harold Mailand of Textile Conservation

Services, Indianapolis, restored the gown in 1996.

In addition to the exhibit, the museum is launching online access to the collection. In October 2021, museum staff initiated a project to digitize the vast number of photos, documents and artifacts related to Colfax. Photos and documents were scanned,



The chair used by Schuyler Colfax and the gown worn by his wife are part of the permanent display.

and documents, including letters written by Colfax, transcribed for the museum's archives. Now completed, the collection is one of the largest in the country. The project was underwritten by two anonymous donors.

The Colfax digitization is part of a larger initiative, one that also will focus on the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League and local African-American history.

Museum hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Tours of the Oliver Mansion are available daily. Admission is \$11 for adults, \$9.50 for seniors, \$7 for youth 6-17 and free for members. Visitors can tour the adjacent Studebaker National Museum for an additional charge. The museum is located at 808 W. Washington St., South Bend.

Visit www.historymuseumSB.org or call (574) 235-9664 for more details.



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Tom Mulcahy - 219-229-1592



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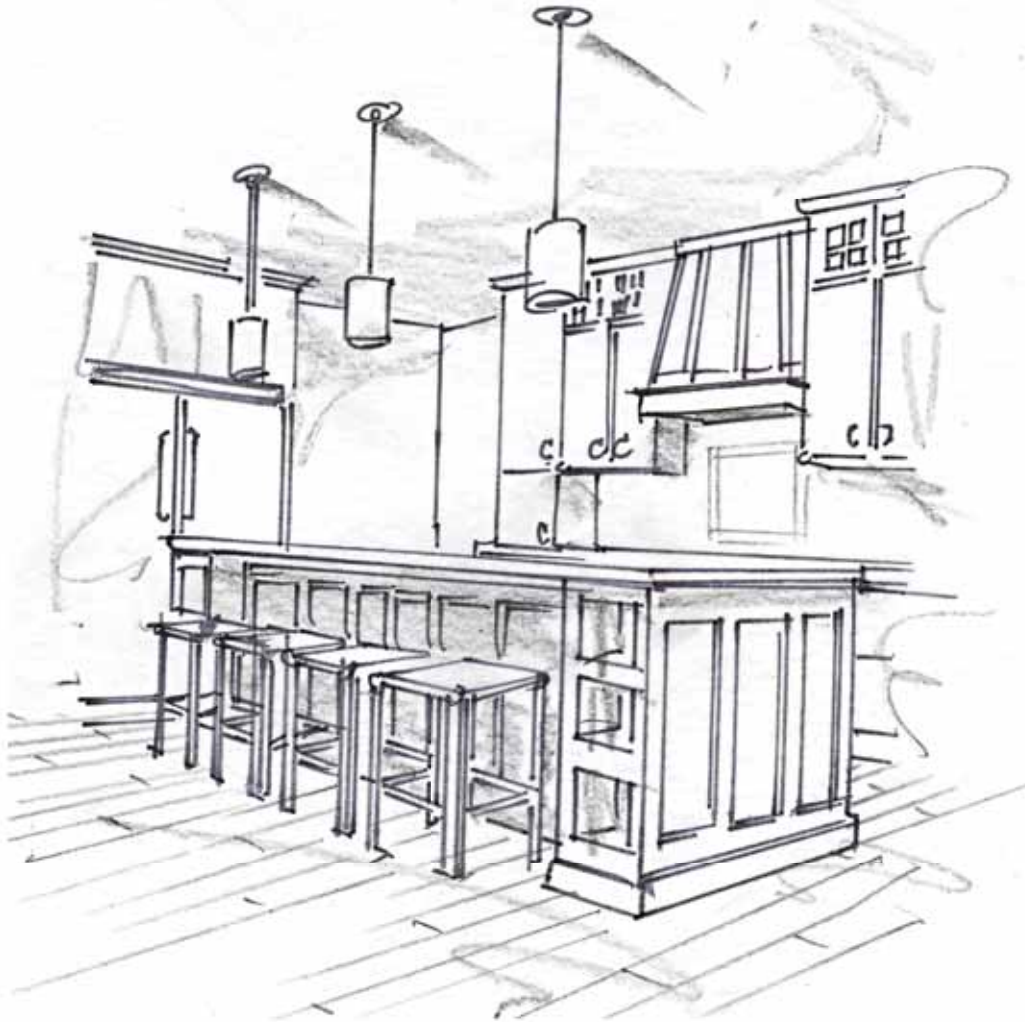
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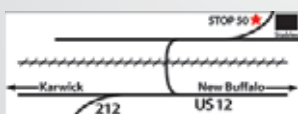
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Railroad Museum Opens for Season

The New Buffalo Railroad Museum has reopened for the season with hours from noon-5 p.m. EDT Saturdays-Sundays through Oct. 29.

The museum received special funding from The Pokagon Fund for museum infrastructure needs and upgrades, along with previous funding from the Berrien Community Foundation, Frederick S. Upton Foundation, TCU Foundation and TCU for upgrades to existing displays and the new veterans display. Many of the exhibits — photo captions and signage — dated back to the original installation in 1989-1991. A key element of the project involved removing nonrailroad specific artifacts from the depot building displays. These items, which relate to the history and development of the greater New Buffalo area, were relocated to dedicated exhibits in the C&O boxcar opposite the veterans exhibit. As such, the museum could refresh railroad-associated artifacts by replacing captions and frames and re-arranging existing displays for better viewing.

Two new exhibits are in the C&O/Chessie Boxcar. “New Buffalo: Founded by Chance — Built on a Dream” showcases how the community has changed over the past 189 years. Additionally, a reconditioned luggage cart donated by the Tulacz family, and a couch used at the railway depots in the 1920s, were incorporated into the exhibit.

“New Buffalo High School, established in 1875” is dedicated to student life at the school. It highlights athletics, academics, music, drama and alumni. An existing display case was upgraded to accommodate high school memorabilia dating back to the mid-20th century. Mannequins display a band uniform, cheerleader uniform and a varsity Letterman sweater, while jerseys representing all varsity sports are displayed. Trophies, plaques, newspaper pages and photos round out the exhibit.

Volunteer and New Buffalo alumnus Jim Smitchger was key to the work on the veterans display and New Buffalo exhibits.

The museum is located at 530 S. Whittaker St., Suite B. Email ask@thenewbuffalorailroadmuseum.org for more details. Visit www.facebook.com/Newbuffalorailroadmuseum for updates.



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Meet James Conlin

Area of Residence: LaPorte.

Title: photographer.

Years with *The Beacher*: I've been making images for *The Beacher* for around 3-4 years.

What I love about my job: Getting into the community during various events and meeting people.

Favorite story/assignment and why: An assignment I did a couple years back for the Coast Guard Auxiliary in Michigan City. It was fun boarding the different vessels and meeting the men and women dedicating their time to keep our shoreline safe.



Favorite movies: Pretty much anything Christopher Nolan has made, documentaries.

Favorite books/authors: I don't get to read much these days, but I've enjoyed revisiting the "The War of Art" by Stephen Pressfield.

Favorite music: Too much to list, but I have a soft spot for Vietnam-era rock n' roll.

Favorite TV shows: Mostly watching cooking shows, i.e. "The Chef Show," "Chef's Table," etc.

What I'm watching now: Just finished "House of the Dragon."

Favorite food: I could eat breakfast for every meal.

Favorite sports team: Go Cubs!

Reason I love living in this

Photo by Bob
Wellinski



area: This region has such a great environment for raising a family, and just about all of the attractions you'd find in much bigger cities. Great restaurants, entertainment and more. Couple that with the beautiful parks and recreational opportunities, and you'd be hard-pressed to find a better place to live!

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Paper

Michigan City Public Library

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

The following programs are scheduled:

- **Make Your Own Comic Book! (ages 10-15) at 10 a.m. Friday, April 7.** A limited amount of supplies is provided. Registration is required by calling Youth Services at (219) 873-3045.
- **Great Decisions from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Monday, April 10.** The foreign-policy discussion program continues its 25th season. The topic is "Politics in Latin America." Reading material is available at the circulation desk. Call 873-3049 for more details.
- **Poetry Writing Now! from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 11.** Write and share poetry. Work by participants will be displayed in the library this month.
- **Virtual Dungeons & Dragons from 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, April 12.** Youth ages 12-18 can play through Zoom. Miss Dana can teach people how to play. Advance registration is required. Contact Dana in Youth Services at dwolf@mclib.org or (219) 873-3045 for more details.
- **Toy Story Scavenger Hunt through April.** Find Woody, Buzz, Jessie and Mr. Potato Head in

Youth Services. Clues are listed below each picture. Receive a prize for finding them all.

- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night at 5:30 p.m. Thursdays in April.** Membership 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. Also, the group has organized a local chapter of the Warm Up America Foundation. Volunteers are knitting and crocheting handmade squares (7x9 inch) that will be joined together to make full-size afghans.
- **Makerspace: open lab hours from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in April.** 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.
- **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens weekly.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Makerspace. Supplies are limited.
- **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.

The library seeks volunteers to help at least one day a week during tax season (through April) through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. The IRS provides some training, and volunteers must pass the VITA test through the intermediate level. Testing and training are online. Call (219) 873-3049 for details.

Volunteer genealogists can answer questions from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays (Pat Harris) and 11 a.m.-2 p.m. the last Saturday of the month (Colleen Miltenberger).

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

Buchanan Chili Walk

The 15th Annual Buchanan Chili Walk is from 5-7 p.m. EDT Thursday, April 13, in downtown Buchanan, Mich.

Spoon sales begin at 4:30 p.m. EDT, with the awards presentation at 7:30 p.m. EDT. Lehman's Farmhouse is the starting and ending points.

The sampling cost is \$5 for each participant/spoon. A portion of the money benefits the local non-profit Buchanan Tree Friends. The three award categories are: Judges' Choice; People's Choice; and Spirit Award.

Kombi Keg SW Michigan will sell lemonade, while Red Bud Roots will sponsor the Chill Zone, with music provided by DPM Events. Vans for these businesses will be located at Main and Front streets.

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Chesterton Art Center

Two exhibits are on display through April 28 at Chesterton Art Center: Duneland Weavers' Guild's "Fiber Art '23" in the upper gallery, and the CAC Youth Art Exhibition in the lower gallery.

Guild members are displaying original handwoven and knitted shawls, scarves, linens and wall hangings. Items can be purchased on site. The guild meets September-May through Zoom or in person at Three Moons Fiberworks, Chesterton. Visit www.dunelandweaversguild.org for details.



An example of work displayed by Duneland Weavers' Guild members.

An opening reception for the CAC Youth Art Exhibition is from noon-2 p.m. Saturday, April 15.

CAC's afterschool art classes explore a new modern art movement each month September-May, beginning with American Realism and moving through the western art-history timeline to Pop Art. The exhibit is a culmination of efforts by instructor Jen Aitchison and her students.

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.

Potawatomi Audubon Nature Walks

Potawatomi Audubon Society will conduct two nature walks this month.

The first is at 10 a.m. EDT Wednesday, April 12, at Galien County Park, 17424 Red Arrow Highway, New Buffalo, Mich. The second is at 10 a.m. EDT Wednesday, April 26, at Keith Richard Walner Nature Preserve on West Taylor Street, Chesterton.

Both hikes meet in the parking lots, and each lasts two to three hours. Dress for the weather, and take binoculars.

Cantata Performance

First United Methodist Church's music ministry will present the cantata "Journey Into Risk" at 7 p.m. Friday, April 7, in the church sanctuary, 121 E. Seventh St.

The collection of Lenten anthems and readings is based on the writings of Amy-Jill Levine. A free-will offering will be received. Call the church at (219) 872-7200 for more details.

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FUMC Scholarship Applications

Thursday, May 4, is the deadline to submit applications for scholarships through First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St.

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

- **The Richard Presser Scholarship**, named for the late local educator, traditionally goes to a graduating senior from Michigan City High School or Marquette Catholic High School.
- **The Timberlake Scholarship**, given in memory of Joan Thomas Timberlake and Diane Fike Timberlake, is open to a non-traditional student. The applicant must be a mother, at least 18 and an active member of any recognized church, synagogue or mosque. Residents of LaPorte, Porter and Berrien counties are eligible.
- **The Doctors M.D. and Russell Gardner Scholarship** is available to students majoring in medicine or related allied sciences. Proceeds from the sale of the doctors' former medical offices at 801 Washington St. were used to establish the Endowment Fund at FUMC.
- **The Jean Kruse Scholarship** goes to a student pursuing an elementary education degree. Kruse was a longtime primary grade teacher here.
- Nursing students may apply for the **Mabel Rhoades Scholarship** in memory of the registered nurse and nursing instructor who established the first post-op recovery room in the state.
- **The Swinehart/Bartholomew Scholarship** is for an arts major living in LaPorte County. Applicants must have completed at least one year, studying vocal or instrumental music, theater or visual arts. The Swinehart and Bartholomew families have been involved in local music and community theater for three generations.

Contact Higher Education Committee chair Sue Cassler at susan.cassler@comcast.net or visit www.ulfc.net/scholarships/ for an application.

Lip Sync Battle

United Way of LaPorte County, to raise funds for critical social services, will present "Lip Sync Battle 2023" from 6-9 p.m. Friday, April 14, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

Contestants perform through single acts, duos or groups that can dress the part, dance and lip sync for several awards. Funds are raised through mobile votes, sponsorships and the night of the event. Costume contest prizes are: first place, \$250; second place, \$100; and third place, gift basket.

Visit www.unitedwaylpc.org/lip-syn for tickets. Email Dave Sisk at dave@unitedwaylpc.org for more details.



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3. Pin Ball Wizards	24.5	19.5

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Debbie Novak	169
2. Mary Lou McFadden	165
3. Nancy Kubath	156
4. Diana Holt	155
5. Linda Sperling	153

SPLITS

Dev Frederick	5-6-10
Mary Clohessy	4-5
Dottie Brinckman	2-7
Mary Lou McFadden	5-7

THREE STRIKES IN A ROW

Debbie Novak



American Red Cross

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

- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, La-Porte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, April 10.
- South Central Junior-Senior High School, 9808 S. County Road 600 West, Union Mills, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday, April 12.

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.

Basic Boating Course

The Michigan City Sail and Power Squadron will present its Basic Boating Course from 6:30-8:40 p.m. Tuesdays, April 11-May 16, at B&E Marine, 31 Lake Shore Drive.

Registration is at 6 p.m. April 11. The cost of the text and materials is \$35. Families are welcome. The program meets state-specific and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators requirements for certification. A Marine electronics course will be presented later.

Course descriptions and information are available on the Michigan City Power Squadron Facebook page. Contact Larry Fleck at ecklj@gmail.com for more details.

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Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Gardening at Chellberg Farm from 9 a.m.-noon Saturdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29.** Wear comfortable clothes. Work gloves and equipment will be provided. Insect repellent and sunscreen are recommended. The Chellberg Farm parking lot is located at 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter.
- **Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers) from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily in April at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and Paul H. Douglas Center.** Trash Trekkers is a no-hassle volunteer option that helps keep trails and beaches clean. Temporary passes are available. Visit tinyurl.com/2p83798v for more details.
- **Bailly/Chellberg History Hike from 1-2:30 p.m. Saturdays in April.** Explore the grounds of both historic homes, and learn about early settlers and farmers who came to the region in the 1800s. Park at the Bailly/Chellberg parking lot off Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20 in Porter. Passes are required.
- **Miller Woods Hike from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sundays in April at Paul H. Douglas Center.** The ranger-led stroll explores a black oak savanna, and offers views of Lake Michigan and Chicago.

Indiana Dunes National Park has jobs for five teens this summer through Youth Conservation Corps, a work-learn-earn program for 15- to 18-year-olds.

The deadline to apply is April 30. Participants are paid \$7.25 an hour for the 40-hour work week. The program runs June 4-Aug. 12, and applicants should be prepared to work the entire duration. Youth jobs include working as part of a crew on manual-labor tasks, normally outdoors. Labor-type activities may include mowing grass, picking up trash, cleaning restrooms, groundskeeping, weeding a historic farm garden and light trail maintenance. No experience is necessary. Participants will be selected by random draw. Participants must be U.S. citizens and 15 years old before June 4, but not turn 19 before Aug. 12. The application is available through high school guidance offices, the IDNP office at (219) 395-1772 or at <http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/jobs.htm>

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

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Easter Egg Hunt

The Michigan City Easter Egg Hunt returns Saturday, April 8, in Fedder's Alley at Washington Park.

The Fedder's Alley gates open at 11 a.m., with activities from 11 a.m.-noon. and the hunt at noon.

The event is a collaborative effort between community businesses, police, fire, Park & Recreations, Emergency Management, Special Events and numerous volunteers. During the hunt, children will be divided into various age groups. A dedicated Americans With Disabilities Act area is near the event entrance. The age groups are:

- Ages 0-3 (one parent per child will be allowed to accompany a child during hunt).
- Ages 4-6.
- Ages 7-10.
- Ages 11-12.

The city will provide each child with a bag to collect plastic eggs filled with candy and prize tickets. Collection boxes for the plastic eggs to be recycled will be placed at the end of the event. No vehicles will be allowed past the Senior Center parking lot. Parking is in the main Washington Park parking lot (Lot 1) and Senior Center parking lot.

Michigan City Special Events is accepting candy donations and Golden Ticket prizes. Donations can be dropped off at City Hall in the Special Events office. Local businesses wishing to participate in the event can contact Special Events Assistant Eric Williams at ewilliams@emichigancity.com

Elston/Rogers Class Reunion

The Elston/Rogers 50th class reunion is from 5-10 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 26, at Blue Chip Casino's Freemont Ballroom.

The committee is seeking help locating graduates. Visit www.facebook.com/ElstonRogers73 or <http://elstonrogers73.wixsite.com/michigan-city>, or email elstonrogers73@gmail.com for details.

Two for Tuesday Admission

"Two for Tuesday," a buy one admission, get one free special, runs Tuesdays in April at LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave.

The promotion includes the public and Historical Society members. Call (219) 324-6767 for more details.

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In the Area

April 5 — PASSOVER BEGINS.

April 6 — Vernal pools presentation, 6 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Public Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

April 7 — Make Your Own Comic Book! (ages 10-15), 10 a.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Registration: (219) 873-3045.

April 7 — Cantata, "Journey Into Risk," 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St. Free-will offering. Info: (219) 872-7200.

April 7 — First Friday Poetry Slam, 5-8 p.m., Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Free admission. Performer registration: (219) 874-4900, Ext. 202, sbean@lubeznikcenter.org

April 7-8 — Greek bake sale, noon-6 p.m. EDT, Annunciation-Agia Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church, 18000 Behner Road, New Buffalo, Mich. Info: (269) 231-9052.

April 8 — First Saturday Art Class, 10 a.m., Long Beach Community Center, Room 13, 2501 Oriole Trail. Cost: \$10. Registration: longbeachactivities@gmail.com

April 8 — Michigan City Easter Egg Hunt, 11 a.m., Fedder's Alley at Washington Park.

April 9 — EASTER SUNDAY.

April 10 — Meet Libby, Hoopla and Kanopy, 5:30-7 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

April 10 — Family Pajama Storytime, 6-6:30 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

April 10 — Great Decisions, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

April 11 — Page Turners Book Club, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

April 11 — Poetry Writing Now!, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

April 12 — Can You Yoga Like A Frog?, 4-5 p.m., Coolspring Branch Library, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

April 12 — Virtual Dungeons & Dragons, 4-6 p.m., through Michigan City Public Library. Registration/info: dwolf@mclib.org, (219) 873-3045.

Through April — Exhibits: "Works by Lydia Lemmons" & "Celebrating Our Depot," The Beverly Shores Depot Museum & Art Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays/11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays. Info: www.bsdepot.com

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

Mondays in Michigan City — Bingo, Moose Family Lodge 980, 2107 Welnetz Road. Doors open/8:30 a.m., early birds/9:30 a.m., regular Bingo/10 a.m.

Tuesdays — Bingo, St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church, 109 Ann St. Doors open: 3:30 p.m. Bingo: 6 p.m. Starting Feb. 7: \$45 entrance fee (includes all cards). Info: (219) 336-3099.

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

Thursdays — Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night, 5:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

In the Region

April 7 — "Both Sides of Joni: Celebrating Joni Mitchell," 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$25 + \$4.50 convenience fee, \$50 + \$4.50 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

April 7-8, 14-16 — "A Year with Frog and Toad," Elkhart Civic Theatre @ Bristol (Ind.) Opera House, 210 E. Vistula St. Times (all Eastern): 7:30 p.m. April 7-8, 14-15, 3 p.m. April 16. Tickets: adults/\$25, students/\$19, seniors (62+)/\$23. Reservations: www.elkhartcivictheatre.org/hoppy, (574) 848-4116.

April 8 — The Ron Burgundys, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$30 + \$5 convenience fee, \$55 + \$5 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

April 12 — Potawatomi Audubon Society nature walk, 10 a.m. EDT, Galien County Park, 17424 Red Arrow Highway, New Buffalo, Mich.

Through April 12 — Anneke Dekker solo show, Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

Through April 16 — Exhibit, artist-poet-artificial intelligence researcher Sasha Stiles, Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: www.krasl.org

Through April 28 — Two exhibits, "Fiber Art '23" & CAC Youth Art Exhibition, Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

Through April 30 — 2023 Community Student Art Exhibitions, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Reception: middle-, high-school/ 6-8 p.m. EDT April 20. Info: (269) 983-0271, www.krasl.org

Through May 29 — "Built to Last: Studebaker Buildings Past & Present," The Studebaker Na-

tional Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11 - adults, \$9.50 - seniors 60+, \$7 - youth ages 6-18. Info: (574) 235-9714, www.studebakermuseum.org

Mondays — Pickleball, 5:30 p.m. EST, New Troy (Mich.) Community Center, 13372 California Road. Free, donations welcome. Info: (269) 426-3909, friendsofnewtroy@yahoo.com

Saturdays in April — Gardening at Chellberg Farm, 9 a.m.-noon, Chellberg Farm parking lot, 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Saturdays in April — Bailly/Chellberg History Hike, 1-2:30 p.m., Bailly/Chellberg parking lot off Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12/20, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

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

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing: "Creed III."* Rated PG-13. Times: 4 p.m. April 7, 7 p.m. April 8, 4 p.m. April 9. *Also: "Paint."* Rated PG-13. Times: 7 p.m. April 7, 4 p.m. April 8, 7 p.m. April 9. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

Gabis Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Valparaiso's Gabis Arboretum at Purdue Northwest is taking orders for its first native plant sale, the proceeds supporting its work and mission.

Arboretum staff selected their favorite native plants growing at the arboretum: Blue-Stemmed Goldenrod, Blue Wild Indigo, Butterfly Weed, Celandine Poppy, Cardinal Flower, Cup Plant, Compass Plant, Obedient Plant, Heath Aster, Purple Prairie Clover, Prairie Dropseed, Rough Blazing Star, Royal Catchfly, Micro Prairie Seed Mix and Switch Grass.

Plants are sold as plugs (\$5 each), pints (\$9 each) or seed mix (\$3 per packet). Limited quantities are available. Pickup is May 20-21 at the arboretum, 450 W. County Road 100 North. However, arrangements can be made to pick up items at a later date. Visit tinyurl.com/3h4utueb for more details.

Salvation Army Summer Camp

Registration is open through April 28 for The Salvation Army's annual free summer camps.

Children ages 7-17 who live in Michigan City are eligible, with options including four different camps at Hidden Falls Camp, Bedford, Ind. The experience involves a four- or five-day overnight visit. Teen Camp is June 12-16 for ages 13-17; Kids Camp for ages 7-12 is June 19-22; and Sports Camp is July 3-6 for ages 10-14, with a rotation of six different sports. STEM Camp for children ages 8-14, is June 26-30. Campers select one of the following STEM topics: Chemistry; Edible Science; Computers/Coding; Intro to Coding; Engineering/Building; and Lego Challenges.

A parent or guardian must contact The Salvation Army at (219) 874-6885, Ext. 1006, between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Thursday to register. Space is limited to the first 100 children. There is no cost to attend. The program in Michigan City is supported by a Duneland Health Council grant.

New Buffalo Township Library

• **A vernal pools presentation at 6 p.m. EDT Thursday, April 6.** Subsequent hikes are at 10:30 a.m. EDT Saturdays, April 8 and 22 and May 13 and 27. Meet in the New Buffalo Elementary School parking lot, 12291 Lubke Road.

Weekly programs:

- Craft Time all day Wednesday while supplies last.
- Read to a Dog Sessions for all ages from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and 4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday.
- Story Time at 4 p.m. Thursday.
- Lego Club all day Saturday.

All times are Eastern. New Buffalo Township Library is located at 33 N. Thompson St. Call (269) 469-2933 for more details.



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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On April 6, 1830, Joseph Smith (in the New York village of Fayette) founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known today as the Mormon Church.

On April 6, 1896, the first modern Olympic Games formally opened in Athens.

On April 6, 1906, a copyright was granted for the first animated cartoon. The film, by James Blackton, consisted of drawings of a man rolling his eyes.

On April 6, 1909, Robert Peary, accompanied by Matthew Henson, became the first people known to have reached the North Pole.

On April 6, 1965, the United States launched the “Early Bird” communications satellite.

On April 7, 1775, Samuel Johnson made this famous observation: *“Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.”*

On April 7, 1927, the first successful long-distance television program was broadcast. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, in Washington, was heard and seen clearly by viewers in New York.

On April 7, 1947, a nationwide telephone strike that was to last for 23 days began in the United States.

On April 7, 1949, “South Pacific,” a musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein, opened on Broadway.

On April 7, 1957, the last of New York’s electric street cars completed its final run from Queens to Manhattan.

On April 7, 1972, 46 people were injured when two Chicago Transit Authority cars fell from the elevated tracks at 40th Street and Wabash Avenue.

On April 8, 1513, Juan Ponce de Leon, in his search for the fountain of youth, landed on the coast of Florida, near the present site of St. Augustine. Since this occurred at the time of the Easter feast of Pascua Florida, he named the land *La Florida*, and claimed it for Spain.

On April 8, 1730, in New York City, the first Jewish congregation in the United States consecrated its synagogue.

On April 8, 1952, to avert a nationwide steel strike, President Harry S. Truman seized the steel industry.

On April 8, 1974, Atlanta Braves outfielder Hank Aaron, in a home game against the Los Angeles Dodgers, hit his 715th career home run. The homer came off pitcher Al Downing, and broke the home run record set by legendary Babe Ruth.

On April 9, 1833, the first tax-supported library

in the United States was founded in Peterborough, N.H.

On April 9, 1928, Mae West made her New York debut in a play called "Diamond Lil." Critics described the play as "shocking," "suggestive" and in "questionable taste." Such reviews, naturally, made the play a huge success.

On April 9, 1939, after being denied the use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution, more than 75,000 people gathered in Washington's Lincoln Memorial Park to hear black singer Marian Anderson perform.

On April 9, 1959, NASA announced the selection of America's first seven astronauts: Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, John Glenn, Gus Grissom, Wally Schirra, Alan Shepard and Donald Slayton.

On April 10, 1849, New York's Walter Hunt received a patent for the safety pin.

On April 10, 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was incorporated.

On April 10, 1912, Titanic, on its ill-fated maiden voyage to New York, set sail from the English port of Southampton with 2,224 people aboard.

On April 10, 1925, F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby was published.

On April 10, 1947, Brooklyn Dodgers President Branch Rickey announced he had purchased the minor league contract of Jackie Robinson, who would become the first black player in Major League Baseball.

On April 10, 1953, the first feature-length color 3-D movie "House of Wax" premiered in New York.

On April 11, 1898, following the sinking of the U.S.S. Battleship Oregon, President William McKinley asked Congress to declare war against Spain.

On April 11, 1931, Dorothy Parker retired as drama critic for *The New Yorker*, thus ending her self-described "Reign of Terror."

On April 11, 1945, U.S. troops liberated the Nazis' Buchenwald concentration camp.

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1968, a week after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On April 12, 1877, the catcher's mask was first used in a baseball game.

On April 12, 1927, Baseball's opening day at Yankee Stadium featured a historic 15 future Hall of Fame players.

On April 12, 1934, Tender is the Night by F. Scott Fitzgerald, was published.

On April 12, 1955, the Food and Drug Administration declared the Salk polio vaccine safe and effective.

On April 12, 1961, Russia's Yuri Gagarin, in the space vehicle Vostok I, became the first man to venture into space.

On April 12, 1983, Harold Washington was elected Chicago's first black mayor, defeating Republican Bernard Epton.

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Young Artists Sought for Expo

Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St., and the Lindsey O'Brien Kesling Wishing Tree Foundation seek artists ages 7-18 to exhibit in the ninth annual Young Artists Expo.

Quality artwork of any style and media is welcome. The works don't have to be framed or mounted — LCA will provide that service. All artists must schedule a portfolio review before submitting any work with LCA Education Director Nelsy Marcano. The informal review can be in person or online. All reviews must be scheduled by Friday, May 5, by contacting Marcano at nmarcano@lubeznikcenter.org or (219) 874-4900

The YAE will be on display in Lubeznik Center's NIPSCO Education Studios from May 22-July 28. An opening celebration is from 5-8 p.m. Friday, June 2.

The project is supported by an ongoing collaboration between the LOK Wishing Tree Foundation and LCA. The foundation has a dual mission: carbon monoxide education and supporting young people in achieving their highest potential.

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

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Harpie by Ron Richie (paperback, \$9.95, and Kindle, \$4.95, from Amazon.com. 202 pages)

If you're interested in sci-fi and fantasy, this one by local author Ron Richie is for you. Peppered with pen and ink drawings, the story revolves around Zylar, a creature from another planet? Maybe another dimension? Or another universe?

Wherever he's from, Zylar drops into Earth by chance and decides to stay awhile. He's immortal, after all, so time doesn't really mean anything to him. He's obviously quite advanced from Earth humans, and looks a lot like a creature from our mythology called a "harpie."

After an encounter with a homeless man in an alley, he takes his clothes to blend in. Of course, the homeless man is laughed at by police when he says he was jumped by a creature with wings who stole his clothes and left him almost naked in the alley.



Richie

It doesn't take long to learn language and customs. Zylar finds a small restaurant and picks up on conversations and food choices. He even stops a robbery there, although the man gets away. Charlene, the restaurant owner, is so impressed, she introduces him to her brother, Paul, who is a New York City police detective.

What follows is an entertaining story of Zylar trying to fit in by getting a job and a place to live, with the help of Charlene and Paul. From a book cover, he gives himself the name Silas Marnar.

He must eventually tell Paul his real story, as several murders occur, making him the prime suspect. Helping Paul solve them will prove he is not there to cause any problems, especially those of the heart when Charlene starts to show more than friendly interest in him, interest he cannot return.

Ritchie calls it a sci-fi murder-mystery romance novel. All those elements are here in a readable format that explores identity and acceptance in a world that doesn't always accept so easily those who are different.

As Zylar/Silas will soon find out, *"This world of humans was a really complicated and mysterious place."*

Ritchie is the author of two books of poems — Pomes for Gnomes and Everyone and Gnomes, Pomes, and Christmas Candy — and two books of essays — When the Roses Bloom Again: Dreams

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



and When the Roses Bloom Again: The Book of Ron Ritchie. All are available through Amazon.com

The Rembrandt Affair by Daniel Silva (originally published in 2010 and available in hardcover and paperback online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 544 pages.)

Art, history and mystery. Now that's what I call a winning combination — a trifecta for the serious reader.

The story starts out as simply a theft of Rembrandt's portrait of his mistress. Art restorer Christopher Liddell of Glastonbury, England, is working to restore the painting when he is killed and the painting stolen. It has been a record year for art thefts around the world, so why would one more be any different from the others? Maybe because this painting is hiding a secret...

Meet Gabriel Allon, master art restorer, but perhaps better known as an assassin and spy for the Israeli secret service. He is their best, but after a close call in Africa, he turned down an offer to run the operations office in Israel. He and wife Chaira retreated instead to the white cliffs of Dover to piece their lives back together.

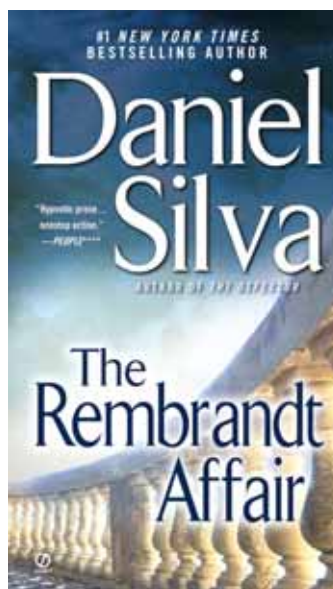
Enter Julian Isherwood, eccentric art dealer from London who calls Gabriel about the stolen Rembrandt. He gave the painting to Liddell to restore before selling it and now feels guilty about his murder.

And so the hunt is on...Gabriel's search takes him from England to South America and back to the continent, and will reveal more than just a stolen painting. His search will take him to the dark days of World War II

and the systematic plundering of the Nazis against the Jews. Fortunately, the Nazis kept very good records, and soon Gabriel realizes he's looking at far more than just the theft of a Rembrandt. He's looking at taking down one of the world's largest corporations whose leader is a well-respected philanthropist, but whose family ties mean his world is a sham built on blood money.

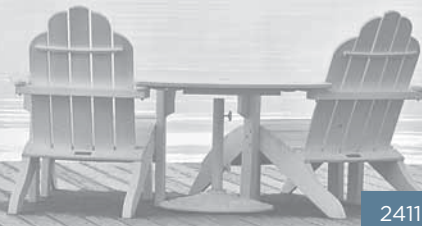
Will Gabriel have to return to the Israeli secret service to solve this puzzle?

Til next time, happy reading!



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A top-down view of various Easter-themed cookies on a bright yellow background. The cookies include a green egg with white patterns, an orange carrot with green leaves, a white bunny with blue ears and nose, a light blue butterfly, and several pink and blue speckled eggs. Small colorful sprinkles are scattered throughout.

Happy Easter Day

Hippity, hoppity,
Easter's on its way!

*From Your MTM Realty
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