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# NATURE PRESERVED

by  
*Edmund  
Lawler*



Pat Fischer leads Harbor Country Hikers through Grand Beach Nature Preserve. Photo by Edmund Lawler.

**I**n bone-chilling cold, a dozen hikers recently trekked through a gently rolling landscape resembling a snow globe as fierce winds whipped flakes in every direction.

But it could have been worse. Harbor Country Hikers could have been trespassing its way through a tract of new homes in this rare ecosystem on the

outer edges of Grand Beach, Mich.

If it were not for the multi-year effort of an ecologically minded landowner, a village council president hellbent on preserving the parcel's innate beauty, and a determined resident who led a successful grassroots fundraising campaign, the property might be just another high-end subdivision.

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Instead, it's now Grand Beach Nature Preserve, a 46-acre treasure trove of trees, plants and grasses characteristic of a coastal plain marsh on the East or Gulf coasts.

Take a bow, Ellen Frankle, Debbie Lindley and Sheila McGinnis. The land now belongs to the public, which will enjoy it for generations to come.

Frankle is a partner with Grand Beach Land Development, a private partnership that owned the land and sold it to the village; Lindley is the former Grand Beach village council president who championed the acquisition; and McGinnis is a retired Chicago judge who spearheaded Grand Beach's quest to meet an ambitious fundraising goal.

But back to the snowy hike led by HCH President Pat Fischer. Describing himself as a citizen naturalist, he paused frequently along the trails that zig-zag the nature preserve to point his hiking stick at some of the unusual natural features.

Bundled up against the chill, the group traced its way along the edge of a small pond created years ago when sand was mined from the site and trucked to the nearby lakefront to shore up an eroding beach. The project that carved out what's now called the Frog Pond had the state of Michigan's blessing.

Fischer explained that in Southwest Michigan and Northwest Indiana, coastal-plain marshes can be found on sand deposits left by glaciers.

"We're standing on an ancient shore," Fischer told the hikers.

The newly designated preserve has features such as sand prairies and oak barrens, a type of savanna with typically low tree cover.

Fischer then guided the group into the immediately adjacent Grand Beach Marsh Preserve, which features habitats such as a coastal plain marsh, oak forest, wet prairie and sand prairie. At the center is an open pond-like depression that holds water during seasonal precipitation. It was dry this day.

The wetland property was acquired from Grand Beach Land Development by The Nature Conservancy in 1984 and designated as Grand Beach Marsh Preserve.

In 2009, The Nature Conservancy transferred the property to Chikaming Open Lands, which manag-



Debbie Lindley (far left) and members of the Grand Beach Land Development partnership celebrate the closing of the land sale to the village on Nov. 11, 2021, at Meridian Title in New Buffalo, Mich. To her right are Ellen Frankle, Sid Mathias and Rita Mathias.

Photo courtesy of Debbie Lindley.

es the 11-acre preserve to protect the unique ecology for educational and recreational uses. It includes such rare flora as the bladderwort, an aquatic carnivorous plant.

To support the adjoining Grand Beach Nature Preserve, COL, a local nonprofit conservancy, is donating \$20,000 worth of in-kind consulting services for the next 20 years.

The preserve, with its 46 acres on mostly higher ground, combined with 11 acres now comprise a 57-acre swath of graceful landscape in the land of the dunes.

Getting to the Nov. 17, 2021, closing for the newly acquired 46-acre preserve took some work. A lot of work.

It was Frankle, a longtime Grand Beach resident and part owner of the land, who got things rolling by laying out a possible road map for the village to acquire it. The property was familiar to nearly everyone in the community. They had walked dogs, hit golf balls on the driving range adjacent to the golf course and onto the nature preserve, driven golf carts or snowmobiles through the terrain or simply strolled through the picturesque landscape. The private land was leased by Grand Beach Land Development to the village for decades at \$1 per year. Most in the community assumed the village already owned the property.

It wasn't, and the sweet deal for the village would not last forever.

In April 2017, Frankle addressed a letter to her fellow residents: “You may be aware that Grand Beach Land Development has offered the village of Grand Beach the first opportunity to purchase the 40 plus acres of vacant land it owns between the golf course and the Grand Beach Marsh Preserve at the appraised value. This includes the majority of the land used as a driving range, as well as the pond and large woodland and prairie areas.

“For decades the company has leased the land to the village for \$1 a year. Now that we are contemplating winding down the company, we need to pass control to new owners.

“... I would like to see the village obtain the property and keep it available as open space and recreational land,” she wrote. “With the lake rising and our beaches shrinking, preserving natural space and allowing room for leisure activities feels especially important for our quality of life.”



Sheila McGinnis is photographed at the frog pond in the newly designated Grand Beach Nature Preserve. Photo by Edmund Lawler

In her letter, Frankle said COL was willing to work with the village to help procure and manage the land. In addition, she pointed out that the village might be eligible for a Natural Resources Trust Fund grant.

In an interview, Frankle explained: “I had talked to people at Chikaming Open Lands even before all of this started to get their input

on the land. They mentioned the Natural Resources Trust Fund grant, but that land conservancies like Chikaming were not allowed to apply.”

Villages like Grand Beach, however, could.

“I brought that forward to the village to say, ‘Here is a way to be able to do this,’” she explained.

McGinnis, who led the grassroots fundraising drive, feared the possibility of acquiring and designating the property as a nature preserve might never actually happen.

“At one point,” she said, “I understood that the village was not looking to buy the property because they wanted more houses built there to generate more tax property money.”

Her understanding was correct. Some in the community and on the village council preferred to see homes built on the property.

Continued on Page 4

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Continued from Page 3

Whatever its use, land is expensive in lakefront communities. The 46-acre parcel's price tag would be several million dollars. And the taxpayers of Grand Beach would not be footing the bill through a special assessment or by draining its budget reserves. That option was a non-starter.

The village's acquisition of the land seemed like a long shot. That was, until Grand Beach landed a large grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, as per Frankle's suggestion.

The department's Natural Resources Trust Fund helps communities provide for natural resource protection and outdoor recreation. Impressed with Grand Beach's well-crafted grant application, which emphasized the unique nature of the land's flora and fauna, the state awarded the village \$2.4 million. But, there was a big string attached to the sizable grant. The Trust Fund requires that local communities have some skin in the game. The village needed to defray 25 percent of the final appraised price of the land, which was about \$3.2 million. One-quarter of \$3.2 million is \$800,000 — a daunting sum for a small community.

McGinnis, who has loved that land and all its wonderful plants and creatures since spending summers in Grand Beach as a child, was not going to let the state's \$2.4 million offer simply sit on the table. She was convinced Grand Beachers could meet their end of the bargain.

The clock was ticking.

"When I heard Grand Beach was actually in the running for the grant is when I got involved," McGinnis said. "At first, we tried to get a group of homeowners together and establish a nonprofit organization to buy the land and hold onto it for a year or two. Then we'd donate it to the village. But we couldn't get enough interest in that idea."

Plan B was more modest. McGinnis helped form a group of 10 homeowners known as the Friends of the Grand Beach Nature Preserve. The goal was to support the village's plan to acquire the land with the assistance of the state grant.

"We pledged about \$150,000," she said. The pledges were generous, but well short of \$800,000.

She needed to get more people involved.

"I just kept working, and we decided to do a fundraiser, something I've never done before," she explained. "We went around to every winery and brewery and restaurant in the area to ask them to donate gift cards to be auctioned to raise money for the grant match."

Many pitched in. The gift cards would be among the items auctioned at a fundraiser in the summer of 2018.

The group also secured overnight packages from the famous Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island and Crystal Mountain Resort near Traverse City. They procured free rounds of golf for foursomes at Long Beach Country Club, Beverly Country Club in Chicago and the Dunes Club in New Buffalo. Benches bearing the names of donors that would be set up in the nature preserve were auctioned, as were tickets to Chicago Bears games, even paintings of the acreage by local artists.

"I was like the crazy lady around here," McGinnis said with a laugh. "People would see me and run in another direction. I was determined to try my best. My father (the late Tom Kilroe) loved that land."

The auction's haul was impressive. But it was about \$120,000 short of the amount needed to meet the local match, even with a \$58,000 grant from the Pokagon Fund. Fortunately, at the 11th hour, an anonymous donor offered to match any additional donations up to \$60,000.

The Friends of Grand Beach put in a frenetic final round of requests for donations, emphasizing that the village was now only a few feet from the finish line. Some residents who already donated made a second pledge, according to McGinnis.

The Grand Beach Land Development partnership helped the cause.

"We agreed to accept cash compensation of \$2,808,000," Frankle explained in an email. "The difference is considered a donation of land value — a donation to the village. Grand Beach Land Development's contribution was independent of local fundraising. Our donation of land value counted to-



Some of the plant life at Grand Beach Nature Preserve. Photo provided by Ellen Frankle

ward the 25 percent required match for the grant application.”

The \$2.4 million state grant was approved in December 2018. The local fundraising campaign would take nearly three more years, culminating with the November 2021 closing.

Frankle is delighted the way things turned out and believes her late husband, Larry, would feel the same way. Larry Frankle, who died in 2009 at age 57, was a local attorney, a trustee of New Buffalo Township and a founding member of The Pokagon Fund board of directors.

Lindley, the village council president who recently resigned to prepare for a move to Indianapolis, said the village is thankful for the role Frankle played.

“She is very ecologically minded and was very thorough in learning about the state grant and what it would take,” she said. “She was willing to go through this process for the two to three years it took. Not many landowners would be willing to work with you for that long.”

Lindley also applauded Mary Robertson, the village’s well-regarded clerk-treasurer, who shepherded the project from start to finish. The village celebrated its acquisition with a spirited ribbon-cutting ceremony at the newly christened Grand Beach Na-



Jack Stewart is photographed at the driving-range portion of Grand Beach Nature Preserve. Photo by Edmund Lawler

ture Preserve on July 22, 2022.

Jack Stewart, a longtime member of the Grand Beach community, fondly recalls hiking, camping, cross-country skiing, skating on the pond and playing ball on the section of the preserve known as Rohde Field when he was a member of the Irish Sluggers youth baseball team in the late 1960s. Stewart is relieved the land will retain its pristine character.

“It’s a slice of nature in your backyard and something you have to appreciate and take in,” Stewart said. “I love to skate there in the winter when the pond freezes. It becomes a perfectly flat sheet of ice that even a Zamboni couldn’t do.”

Lindley says some residents have complained that the village spent too much money acquiring the 46-acre nature preserve.

“But I replied that we have not spent any taxpayer money on this,” she said. “It was bought through grants and more than \$300,000 in contributions from homeowners.

“It would have been criminal to let that property get built out,” said Lindley, who served 25 years on the village council. “But now we know that the property will be maintained for eternity by the village of Grand Beach as the land’s trustee. It can’t be sold. It will be there for generations to enjoy.”



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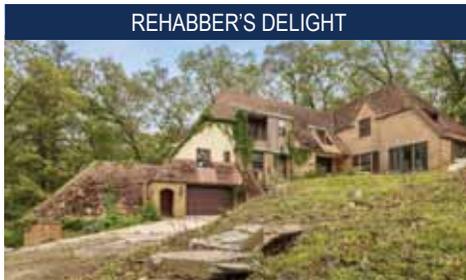
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## Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers) from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Trash Trekkers is a no-hassle volunteer option that helps keep trails and beaches clean. Temporary passes are available.
- **The Save the Tunes Council performs from 7:30-9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** The group preserves folk songs in the traditional way, using guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, banjo, harmonica, bagpipe, penny whistle, hurdy gurdy and other obscure instruments.
- **The Gem of Chicago Wilderness: Ecology & Restoration from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Dr. Spencer Cortwright's presentation will describe how the area came to be, emphasizing important restoration needs as well.
- **National Park Themed Movie from 10-11:30 a.m. Saturdays-Sundays in January at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** The schedule is: Jan. 21-22: "Everglades of the North"; Jan. 28-29: "Heroes on Deck."
- **Snowshoe Open House at Chellberg Farm (snow permitting) from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays in January at the Park Connection Office at Chellberg Farm.** At least 3 inches of snow is required, and a limited number of snowshoes are available for loan. Regardless of snow, the farmhouse may still be open for hikers to stop by. Call the visitor center at (219) 395-1882 for details. Park at the lot off Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20 in Porter. The program is sponsored by the Friends of Indiana Dunes.



IDNP is accepting applications for businesses offering approved services, such as guided hikes, overnight backpacking and camping trips, photography

lessons, instructional classes, guided kayaking, canoeing, paddle boat tours and mobile food trucks.

The park will review all proposals. Depending on the type of service, there may be some requirements, such as having insurance and following federal, state and local food-handling ordinances.

Applications can be sent to: Indiana Dunes National Park, Attn: Steve Rossi, Concessions Management Specialist, 1100 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter, IN 46304. There is a \$100 nonrefundable fee to process the application. The permit is valid through Dec. 31, 2023, and all approved service providers will be listed on the national park's website as an authorized vendor. Visit [/tinyurl.com/2n5ya2vb](http://tinyurl.com/2n5ya2vb) for an application or more details.

*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](http://www.nps.gov/indu) for details.*

## Indiana Dunes State Park

- **Beach Discovery Walk at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 21.** Meet a naturalist at the east side of the beach pavilion for a 45-minute exploratory walk along the state park beach. If conditions allow, snowshoes will be offered for free on a first come, first-served basis.
- **Cold Blooded Buffet at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21.** Meet at the Nature Center Auditorium to see reptiles and amphibians eat live meals.
- **Winter Tree ID Spree at 10 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 22.** Meet a naturalist at the Nature Center for a short hike. If conditions allow, free snowshoes will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

*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.*

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### Special Events Schedule Revealed

Eight major events shape the Michigan City Special Events schedule, beginning with the annual Michigan City St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 11.

The parade will follow the traditional Franklin Street route, heading north from Ninth to Fourth streets. Next is the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8, in Washington Park.

The Singing Sands Sand Sculpting Festival returns June 9-11 in Washington Park, bringing back sand sculptors to create works of art and showcase Michigan City's lakefront.

"In addition to the master and semi-professional competition, we will be announcing a new amateur competition which will allow local groups, organizations and companies to compete for a chance to win money for their favorite local charity," Special Events Director Terry Greetham said in a recent press release.

The annual patriotic celebration begins with the Kiddie Parade on Saturday, June 24, the Patriotic Parade on Saturday, July 1, and capped off by the Fireworks Spectacular in Washington Park on Tuesday, July 4.

Labor Day weekend, Sept. 1-4, sees the return of Oktoberfest to Washington Park.

"We want to expand the vendor area, bring in a few more food options and hopefully have some more options for the kids," Greetham said.

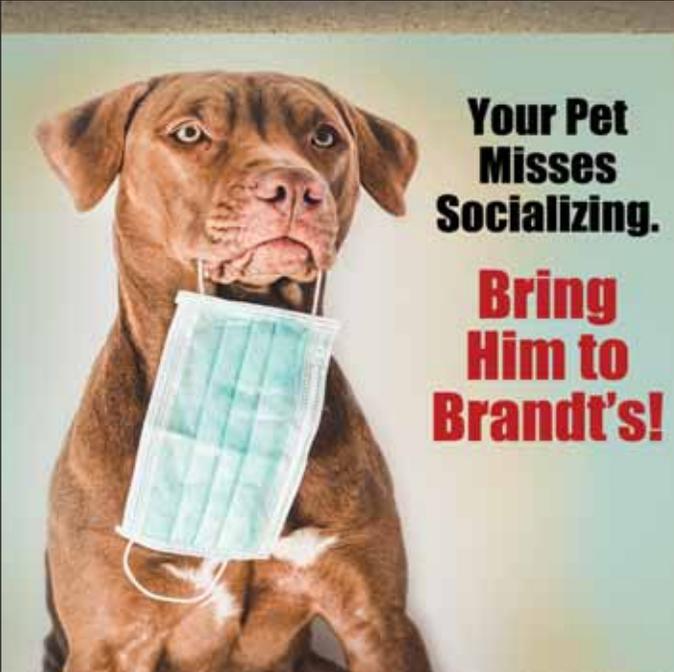
The final event is the Festival of Lights Celebration on Dec. 2. The parade will welcome Santa Claus, followed by the lighting of the Christmas tree. The celebration will continue with the annual Chili Challenge and other offerings.

The Michigan City Main Street Association will present the Shelf Ice Brewfest on Feb. 25, while The LaPorte County Convention & Visitors Bureau will present the Michigan City AquaX Grand Prix on July 8-9 and Great Lakes Grand Prix on Aug. 2-6, both in Washington Park.

Additional information and event registration is at [www.emichigancity.com/175/Special-Events](http://www.emichigancity.com/175/Special-Events)

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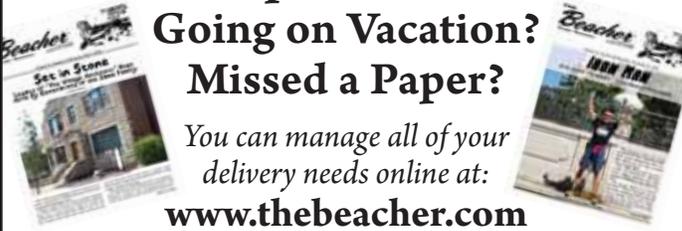
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### Harbor Country Hikers Heading to Memorial Preserve

Grace Ball, Chikaming Open Lands education and community outreach coordinator, will reveal how to spot animal signs during the next Harbor Country Hikers program.

The hike is from 2-4 p.m. EST Saturday, Jan. 21, at Chris Thompson Memorial Preserve, 7592 Warren Woods Road, Three Oaks, Mich. Ball will show how to find and identify common clues wildlife species leave behind in forests and fields.

The physical difficulty for the 1.1-mile hike is rated “moderate” for the venue’s rolling hills. Hikers

should dress for the weather and take plenty of water. Depending on conditions, there could be muddy or icy patches.

Membership is preferred; however, the public is welcome. An all-terrain rollator — a wheeled walker with oversized tires for unpaved surfaces — is available on a first-come, first-served basis by emailing harborcountryhikers@gmail.com. Visit www.harborcountryhikers.com or the Facebook page, Harbor Country Hikers, for driving directions, parking instructions and membership information.

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### LCSO Directors Speaking at Events

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's music director, Dr. Carolyn Watson, spoke Jan. 12 at the International Conductors Guild 2023 International Conductor Conference in Valencia, Spain.



Watson

Addressing an audience of conductors from around the world, the title of her presentation was "Cracks in the Glass Ceiling: Women Conductors, New Trends, Old Challenges." She was joined by Dr. Danielle Lisboa, music director of the Concordia University of Edmonton Orchestra.



King

Also, LCSO Executive Director Tim King will speak at the League of American Orchestra's winter conference Jan. 29-30 in New York City. He will present to colleagues in Orchestras Level 7 and 8 — those with budgets up to \$700,000 — the LCSO's "Music Forever" campaign, which began at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Visit [www.lcso.net](http://www.lcso.net) for additional information about the symphony and upcoming concert schedule.

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## “The Son” is a Grim Prequel to Superior “The Father”

by Andrew Tallackson



Zen McGrath (from left), Laura Dern and Hugh Jackman star in “The Son.”

Relentlessly grim, “The Son” lends weight to the theory on why Oscar heavyweights are tanking at the box office. After living through a global pandemic, who wants to leave the comforts of home streaming for a depressing experience in theaters?

Emotionally difficult films are worth the effort if they illuminate the human condition. “Schindler’s List,” for instance, is exceedingly painful, but enduring because it introduces one man taking a stand amid the unthinkable. “Lorenzo’s Oil” features agonizing scenes of a child in pain, but also parents who stop at nothing to help him.

I had high hopes for “The Son,” which opens nationwide in theaters Friday. It hails from the 2018 stage play by Florian Zeller, which also doubled as a prequel to his earlier work, “The Father.” Zeller’s 2020 film adaptation of the latter was astonishing, a rare movie to succinctly recreate the experience of suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. In the process, it won Anthony Hopkins his second Oscar and Zeller a Best Adapted Screenplay statue.

Zeller brought back the same crew from “The Father” for “The Son,” but the story, itself, is nowhere near as effective. It is, simply, a downward spiral into despair.

Hugh Jackman scored a Best Actor Golden Globe nomination, and he’ll likely do the same once the 2022 Academy Awards are announced. It is a tough



### “The Son”

*Running time: 123 minutes. Rated PG-13 for mature thematic content involving suicide, and strong language.*

performance, and not in the way we expect from the “X-Men” star. It is a steely portrait of a man who drowns himself in false assurances that everything is OK. When it’s not, the polished exterior begins to crack. Not in big, dramatic outbursts, but controlled releases of anguish. It is impressive.

Jackman plays Peter Miller, a successful businessman who left his wife, Kate (Oscar-winner Laura Dern), a few years back for another woman, Beth (Vanessa Kirby, “The Crown”). The two now have a newborn son.

The casualty of Peter’s divorce is his 17-year-old son, Nicholas (impressive Australian actor Zen McGrath). He’s angry. Disillusioned. Not just sad, mind you, but the type of crippling depression that sees him skipping school and lashing out at his mother. Looking for change, he moves in with Peter and Beth. All seems fine...at first. But Nicholas’ pattern of withdrawing from the world only deepens.

The trick of McGrath’s performance is that he dares to make Nicholas unlikable. Manipulative, in a way, although, one might argue, he has a right to

be this mad...and his parents aren't dealing with it responsibly. Kirby, whose absence from "The Crown" is still felt three seasons later, plays the only character smart enough to realize the help Nicholas so desperately needs.

A little past the film's midpoint, Peter has lunch with his father. He's played by Anthony Hopkins, and it is here we realize the drama of "The Son" is unfolding before the events of "The Father," during the earliest onset of Alzheimer's disease for the character. It is here, too, that we realize the Hopkins character is a horrible person. A monster of a father. The resulting impact is twofold. It deadens any sympathy we had toward the character in "The Father." And, it hammers home the film's message: Fathers and sons are trapped in a vicious cycle, doomed to repeat each other's mistakes.

And it is here when we realize...we know where "The Son" is headed. We sincerely hope it isn't, but

we can feel the wheels grinding away toward the inevitable conclusion.

By the final scene of "The Father," my heart ached, but somehow, through Hopkins and the movie's innovative approach, I was left with the sensation of having had a remarkable experience.

By the close of "The Son," I was numb and rabidly grateful it was over.

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## There is Style to Spare in Slow, But Satisfying “Pale Blue Eye”

by Andrew Tallackson



Christian Bale stars as a retired detective investigating grisly murders in “The Pale Blue Eye.”

I happen to like Scott Cooper’s movies. He’s no Scorsese or Spielberg, but with films like the Oscar-winning “Crazy Heart” (2009), the seriously creepy “Antlers” (2021) and my favorite, the exceedingly moving “Hostiles” (2017), he tells stories about people. Regular people in remarkable situations.

My respect for Cooper puts me in the minority. Most people find his work boring. True, he likes to take it slow, and he revels in “style.” By that, I mean long, unbroken shots of empty landscapes. Carefully composed images where you can tell he thought long and hard about them.

“The Pale Blue Eye,” his latest, just debuted on Netflix. It looks great, the story is compelling and Bale, his frequent collaborator, turns in a subdued performance. And...the pace is *so* sluggish, I suspect many a moviegoer will clock out long before the end.

Thing is, the deliberate pace does not bother me. This is a storyteller who wants to firmly establish the world we enter, carefully draw sympathetic performances from the cast before building to a satisfying close.

The film is based on Louis Bayard’s 2003 historical mystery, which I suppose you could call a “pot-boiler.” Set in the 19th century, it involves murders, flirts with the supernatural and sneaks real people into the mix. In this case, it’s macabre author Edgar

★ ★ ★ 1/2

### “The Pale Blue Eye”

Running time: 128 minutes. Netflix. Rated R for some violent content and bloody images.

Allen Poe, depicted here as a student at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. We meet him before he became a writer of worldwide renown.

Poe, however, is a supporting player. The driving force is Bale’s Augustus Landor, a respected retired detective asked to investigate the apparent hanging death of a cadet. School officials, hoping to protect the institution’s public image, ask Landor to go about his investigation swiftly and quietly.

The look of “The Pale Blue Eye” is gorgeous. Working with cinematographer Masanobu Takayanagi (“Silver Linings Playbook”), Cooper creates a West Point setting that is brutally inhospitable. As if the dense fog will never lift. Where the sun never breaks through the gloom. And Bale, who typically goes full-throttle “method” on a role, transforming himself in ways few actors do, does not lapse into many acting “tricks.” Instead, he creates a man who is methodical in his investigation, and whose personal demons wage war with his ability to perform his duties.



Augustus Landor (Christian Bale, left) finds an unexpected sidekick in a young Edgar Allen Poe (Harry Melling).

His unexpected sidekick is young Poe, and he's played by Harry Melling, better known for playing the piggish Dudley Dursley in five "Harry Potter" movies. As an adult, he's succinctly erased the memory of his claim to fame with one risk after another, including "The Queen's Gambit" and the Coen brothers' "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs." Here, in addition to bearing more than a passing semblance to the acclaimed author, he creates a rare original. An outcast who carries himself like a polished pro to conceal his loneliness and desire for approval. Melling is quite a force. Poe inserts himself into Landor's investigation without hesitation, proving adept at picking up the same clues as Landor.

The mystery of "The Pale Blue Eye," as per the requirement of any hearty mystery, is a world where anyone is a suspect. At West Point, everyone seems to be looking over their shoulders. There are knowing glances between cadets, hushed conversations. As the movie inches closer to the big reveal, I had my suspicions. Cooper throws out a nice curveball... before arriving exactly where I expected it might. However, the movie is less about monsters and more about loss and grief, and whether it is possible to reconcile behavior committed amid the two.

Anyone expecting the pace of a slam-bang Marvel flick will doze off during "The Pale Blue Eye." Those who prefer a little more thought to their violence may be unexpectedly moved by it.

I was.

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# Remembering Dorothy Tristan: Actress, Writer, Artist, Friend

by Andrew Tallackson

*"I wish I had cancer. At least they get a pink ribbon to wear."*

That line hails from the 2014 movie, "Still Alice," which won Julianne Moore an Oscar. However glib it may seem, it struck me as profound in terms of staring your own mortality in the face. Moore's Columbia University professor is struggling with early onset Alzheimer's disease while only in her 50s, and her remark conveys the callous nature of the illness. It's bad enough to be sick, but to have no memory, to no longer recognize loved ones in the present, feels like a cruel punishment.

My friend, Dorothy Tristan, passed away Saturday, Jan. 7, after a 10-year battle with Alzheimer's disease. She died as we'd all like to do. At home. In her sleep. Her husband and a caregiver close by. I have known her and her husband, director John Hancock, for 25 years now. They are good friends. No matter how diligently we prepare for death, for the loss of a loved one, the loss, itself, is deeply felt. Witnessing a friend's steady decline from Alzheimer's over the course of a decade is devastating.

What surprised and impressed me about Dorothy and John upon first meeting them was their lack of pretention about themselves. She'd forged a career first as a model, then as an actress ("Klute," "Scarecrow," "End of the Road," TV's "The Incredible Hulk"), then a screenwriter, author and artist. He'd scored an Academy Award nomination early in his career, then amassed an impressive resume of film and TV credits. "Bang the Drum Slowly" (1973), in fact, is regarded as one of the all-time great sports pictures. "Prancer" (1989) is a Christmas tradition for many a family.

After widespread fires caused catastrophic damage to their Malibu home, John and Dorothy called it quits to life in California, making Galena Township here their permanent home. It was where John's parents had created a life for themselves, one that included an orchard on the property just off Fail Road. By the time I met them in the late '90s, when they were prepping the back-to-back independent movies "A Piece of Eden" and "Suspended Animation," I covered the journey of making those two pictures for a local newspaper. To me, John and Dorothy came across as salt-of-the-earth folk. Regular people who just happened to be in the business of making movies. They preferred the realm of independent film because they could tell stories on their terms. It was a risk, never knowing if studios would show interest, and the reality was, sometimes, the bets didn't pay off.

My friendship with John and Dorothy deepened



Downtime during filming of "The Looking Glass" in 2013. My then 6-year-old son, William, chats with Dorothy Tristan before filming a scene at LaPorte Hospital.

in 2012-2013 during work on "The Looking Glass." Based on Tristan's own screenplay, the story involved a former actress, living in LaPorte, struggling with early onset Alzheimer's disease right as her granddaughter arrives to stay with her.

I was one of four producers on the film, along with serving as one of three vocal coaches for its young costar, Grace Tarnow. The crushing irony is that Tristan, like her character, was exhibiting signs of early onset Alzheimer's. The sting of it still gnaws at me. Here, she'd written this beautiful screenplay...and she could not remember the very words she'd written. How did she still pull off that beautiful performance? Through the loving patience of her husband, the cast and crew, by improvising scenes and having cue cards with dialogue placed at eye level behind the actors with whom she interacted.

And it was amid downtime between shooting that Dorothy was still as vibrant as ever. Tender, perceptive, witty and, yes, on occasion, profane. I loved watching her with my then 6-year-old son, William. When I glance at photos taken during that time, he is enraptured by her. Hanging on every word. Savoring her company.

I saw Dorothy just before Christmas, two weeks before her passing. She may not have known my name, but there were flickers of recognition in her eyes...and for me, that was enough. She still had that girlish smile. There was a moment when all was quiet, though, and she looked at me and whispered, "I'm ready to go."

I understood the meaning behind that remark.

I'm not going to dwell too much on my last time with Dorothy. Instead, I will think of "The Looking



Dorothy and me, during a break from filming "The Looking Glass" in Galena Township.



Dorothy's favorite portrait from recent years.

Glass." Those photos of Will with her. When, despite the presence of Alzheimer's disease, she was still Dorothy.

My friend.

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## The Energy in “Matilda” is High...But DeVito’s Classic Reigns Supreme

by Andrew Tallackson



Alisha Weir is winning in the title role.

Danny DeVito’s “Matilda” (1996) is perfection. True, it deviates a bit from Roald Dahl’s 1988 classic, but the changes better the tale. DeVito’s manic direction. The zinger-laced screenplay. David Newman’s fanciful score. The contrast between Pam Ferris’ evil Trunchbull, which *The New Yorker* in its review likened to a “human T-Rex,” and the fragile kindness of Embeth Davidtz’s Miss Honey.

There isn’t a thing I would change. Any of it.

So...maybe I’m the wrong person to review any musical adaptation. Why tinker with success? For nerds like me, you sit there, comparing the new with the old, and almost always siding with the old.

What cannot be disputed is the high energy of this Netflix adaptation of the 2011 stage production. The musical hews closer to Dahl’s tale, less focused on magical elements and more the battle of wills between child and adult.

Young Matilda (the winning Alisha Weir) loves reading and learning, her parents (Stephen Graham and Andrea Riseborough) not so much. In fact, they detest it. To rid themselves of Matilda, they cart her off to Crunchem Hall, which is run by the vile Miss Trunchbull (Oscar-winner Emma Thompson), who loathes children with every fiber of her being — a key trait of most adults in any Roald Dahl

★ ★ 1/2

### “Roald Dahl’s Matilda the Musical”

Running time: 117 minutes. Netflix. Rated PG for thematic elements, exaggerated bullying and some language.

tal. In his world, adults have long forgotten the simple pleasures of childhood.

Dahl’s other favorite themes are on display. A discovery through learning. The childhood bonds of friendship. Garish, wicked adults who’ve lost touch with reality.

The story has bite. So if you’re going to introduce songs, they better have the same sting. The music here may be bright and peppy...but it’s also instantly forgettable. True, the choreography by Peter Darling and Ellen Kane infuses the numbers with a “wow” factor. These kids can dance. But that’s the problem. You marvel at all the movement, while the songs themselves evaporate on impact.

Thompson relishes diving into a character like Trunchbull. The unflattering makeup, the outrageous costumes. She doesn’t so much chew the scenery, but wolf down every trace of it. And, she’s got the pipes to belt out a few big numbers. Thing is, the character had more savage dialogue in the 1996



Emma Thompson relishes getting to play the despicable Miss Trunchbull. film: outrageous lines you quoted to friends after leaving the theater.

Lashana Lynch (“The Woman King”), however, is wonderful as Miss Honey. Like Davidtz, she’s the antidote to the story’s cynicism. Sweet, gentle, wearing her heart on her sleeve. She also has the musical’s two best songs: “My House,” and the dynamite closing number, “Still Holding My Hand.”

Maybe I am being too critical. Much of the stage production’s team is back for the movie, and they find a balance between honoring the stage origins with opening it up on film. The cast aims to please, especially that final musical number. But will I revisit the film from time to time, as is the case with DeVito’s picture?

Probably not.

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## Automotive Students Earn Record Number of Certifications

Twenty-one students in A.K. Smith Career Center's Automotive Technology program wrapped up the first semester of this school year with 64 certifications through the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence.

Automotive Technology instructor Steve Barnes said this sets a new record. Typically, about half of the students enrolled in the program receive ASE certificates. With 38 students this year, Barnes was pleased with the number that passed the tests, some earning as many as eight certifications already this year.

There are 10 entry-level certifications available with area-specific tests – one for each major automotive system, as well as a Maintenance and Light Repair test that covers all eight areas, plus topics such as shop safety and pollution control. Students also can test in Automotive Service Technology, a more intense certification that covers all eight areas, plus work ethics and professionalism.

"I let students choose where they feel strongest," Barnes said in a press release. "We test for three days, so if they fail, they can try again. If they pass, they can try for additional certificates."

Barnes also uses the ASE certification process as a final exam in his class. If students receive certification in an area, they receive an "A" on the final. He also offers a written final exam for students who do not pass certification.

Certifications received by students will last for two years, as opposed to four-year certifications held

by technicians already working in the field. The students are: Michael Clark, 2 certificates (LaPorte); Adam Magill, 4 (LaPorte); Robert Lanchsweardt, 8 (New Prairie); Allen Troxler, 3 (LaPorte); Elliott



Steve Barnes (right), Automotive Technology instructor with the LaPorte County Career and Technical Education Program, looks under the hood of a car along with student Colton Sellers, who attends Westville High School.

Stanford, 2 (Michigan City); Jonathan Serrano, 8 (Michigan City); Zane Foster, 1 (LaPorte); Francisco Garcia 2 (LaPorte); Austin Bryan, 1 (LaPorte); Brandon Bubalo, 3 (LaPorte); William Marshall, 7 (Westville); Nicholas Smith, 2 (Westville); Ayden Griffin, 2 (LaCrosse); Alejandro Mota-Lopez, 7 (Michigan City); Jackson Kutkiewicz, 1 (LaCrosse); Payton Lijewski, 3 (New Buffalo); Jonathan Luna, 3 (LaPorte); Holden Sikora, 1 (Westville); Andrew Nelson, 1 (LaPorte); Christopher Lichkay, 2 (New Prairie); and Harry Bernstein, 2 (Westville).

More information on the Automotive Technology program is available at [www.EducateMC.net](http://www.EducateMC.net) / CTE



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**Area of Residence:** Michigan City.

**Title:** Counter sales.

**Years with The Beacher:** About 30 or so.

**What I love about my work:** There is a good feeling when I can be there for a customer, especially if they have an event that requires something in a hurry. I hope to at least ease the strain of getting that one thing done and off their list. Meeting so many people who have become friends over the years has been a bonus.

**Favorite story and why:** I returned from lunch to see that the window by the front door was shattered and covered in blood. It looked like a crime scene. It seems while I was gone, a deer headed right for the window, crashed into it, turned around and ran away. It was so bizarre.

□

**Favorite movies:** "The Dish," "Amazing Grace," "Sense & Sensibility" (the Emma Thompson version), "Captain America: The First Avenger," "Thor: Ragnarok," "Black Widow," "While You Were Sleeping," "Megamind," "The Emperor's New Groove," "Miracle on 34th Street," "White Christmas," "Rise of the Guardians," "Knives Out."

**Favorite books/authors:** Jane Austen, Alan Bradley (Flavia De Luce mysteries), Agatha Christie ("Cat Among the Pigeons" is my favorite, "The Chronicles of Narnia.")

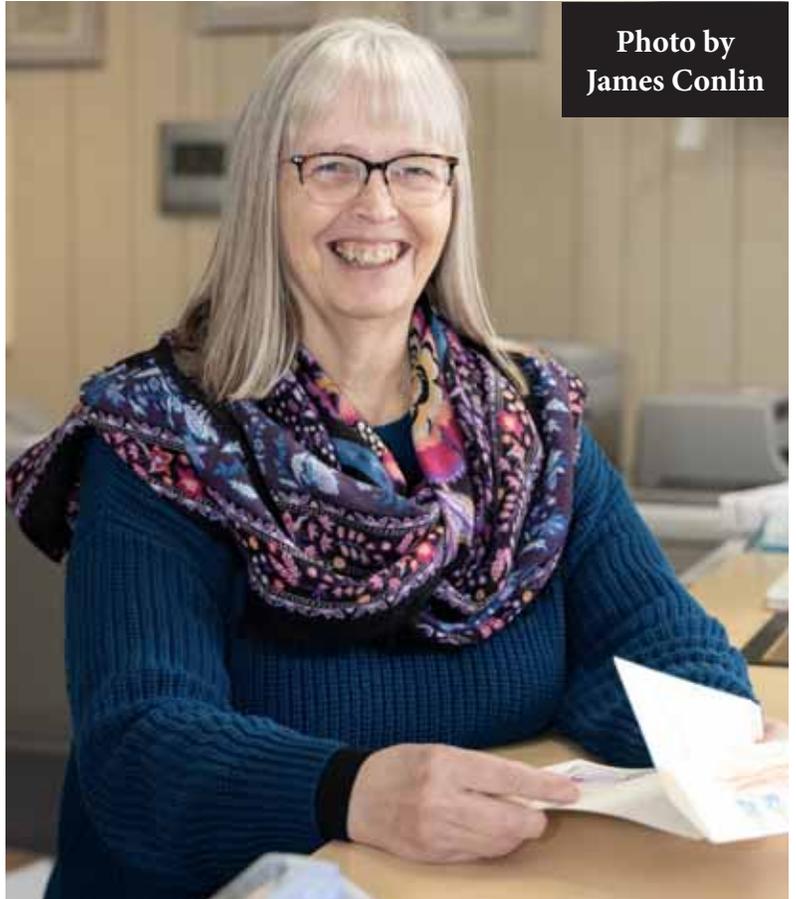


Photo by  
James Conlin

**Favorite TV shows:** "Vera," "Shetland," "Hawkeye," "Brokenwood," "Pride & Prejudice" (the Colin Firth version), "NCIS" (especially the early episodes).

**TV shows I'm watching now:** "The Chosen," "See No Evil," "Fixer to Fabulous," "Home Town," "Crisis 911," "Wham Bam Teslacam" (a YouTube thing).

**Favorite food:** my sister Joyce's pot roast.

**Reason I love living in this area:** My family is here, which is the biggest reason, the lake, Barker Woods, the Great Marsh, Indiana Dunes National Park, Indiana Dunes State Park, Red Mill County Park, Dune Ridge Trail... It's just a beautiful area.

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## Center Receives Learning Grant



A Dunes Learning Center naturalist provides an inside look at life as an early 1800s French fur trader during a "Walk Through Time" program.

Dunes Learning Center, Indiana Dunes National Park's education partner, has received a National Park Foundation Open Outdoors for Kids grant.

The grant will extend the reach of the "Walk Through Time" experience, which takes students on a living history tour from first settlement to the present.

Since 1998, IDNP and Dunes Learning Center, 700 Howe Road, Porter, have partnered to deliver "Walk Through Time" as part of the "Frog in the Bog" overnight camp experience for teachers and students in grades 4-6. Also featuring a succession hike through Cowles Bog, "Frog in the Bog" was developed by a consortium of teachers and community members, including the learning center's co-founders: environmental activist Lee Botts, former IDNP Superintendent Dale Engquist and Indiana University geology professor Mark Reshkin.

A new pre-visit lesson, "Historic Pathways: Early Settlers in the Indiana Dunes," will focus on the journeys of the region's earliest settlers: a French fur trader and Swedish farmer. Then, during the "Walk Through Time" tour at Bailly Homestead and Chellberg Farm, students will meet these characters, plus an indigenous person of the Potawatomi Bear Clan and a National Park ranger. They will explain how Lake Michigan's southern shore became a mix of national park, state park, steel mills, schools, businesses, churches and homes.

Back in the classroom, a new post-visit lesson, "My Family Heritage: What's Your Story?," will let students trace their family's journey to the Indiana Dunes region using guided prompts.

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## LaPorte County Public Library

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

New users can download the meeScan app through options such as Apple and Google Play. Then, place holds on items using a customer account. Once at the library, check in using the app and clicking Pick-up from the bottom of the screen (or calling the library location). An appointment no longer is needed. Add the parking space on the app if picking up from the main location. Enter information in the instructions box if picking up holds placed on more than one account, or if needing additional assistance. A staff member brings held items to the vehicle. Customers using the app receive updates as their requests are processed. Returns can be placed in book drops and be checked in within 24 to 72 hours. At this time, there is no limit to the number of items customers can reserve and pick up during curbside.

- Coolspring Branch: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Main Library: Tuesday/Thursday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Saturday (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).



LaPorte County Public Library patrons are no longer charged daily overdue fines when an item is returned late. Customers only will be charged for items they damage, lose or never return.



*The following programs are planned:*

- **Simple Nutrition from 5-6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 19, in the Coolspring Branch Meeting Room.** Learn the basics of nutritious cooking.
- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 20, at the main library.** Children ages 3-5 with their caregivers experience stories, songs, crafts and activities.
- **Intro to the Internet: Adults (19+) from 10-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, in the main library Meeting Room B.** Learn the basics of Internet use.
- **Family Pajama Storytime from 6-6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 23, at the main library.** The program focuses on stories and songs. Guests can wear pajamas and take a favorite stuffed animal.
- **Intro to iPads and iPhones (Adults 19+) from 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25, in the main library Meeting Room B.** Learn the basics of using such devices.



*LaPorte County Public Library is located at 904 Indiana Ave. The Coolspring Branch is located at 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Visit [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org) for more details, including programming through the Exchange building.*

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## 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:*

- **Film Showing: "Where the Crawdads Sing" at 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20.** The film, which is Rated PG-13, runs 2 hours, 5 minutes.
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in January.** 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.

- **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 (February-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.

□

*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](http://www.mclib.org) for more details.*)

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

- Conservation Club House, 1 Mill Pond Road, Union Mills, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 22.
- LaPorte High School, 602 F St., 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24.
- Purdue University Northwest, Library Student Faculty Building Room 144, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24.

*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](http://www.redcrossblood.org) for more details.*

### Public Art Committee

The Michigan City Public Art Committee meets at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 19, in the City Hall Mayor's Conference Room, 100 E. Michigan Blvd.

## LaPorte County Parks



All registrations/questions go through the Red Mill County Park Administrative Office, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Call (219) 325-8315 or visit [www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org) for more details.

### Parent & Child Discovery Days

The program includes arts and crafts, games and snacks. All activities are related to the topic. Programs are appropriate for children 3-8, with an adult required to participate. Times are 6-7:15 p.m. at Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. The cost is \$5 per child/per program. Pre-registration and payment are required at least one week in advance or until full, whichever comes first. The schedule is:

- Feb. 1 — “Oh Deer!”
- Feb. 8 — “See You Later.”

### Nature’s Tiny Tots

Designed for parents and grandparents, explore nature with toddlers and preschoolers at Luhr County Park. That includes music, dancing, storytelling and, weather permitting, hiking. Call at least one week in advance to register.

The schedule is: Jan. 31, Feb. 14 and 28, and

March 14.

### WinterFest

Visit Luhr Park Nature Center to make snow art (weather dependent), do a craft and have a snack from 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29.

All ages are welcome, and no pre-registration is required. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Visit <https://laporteparkandrec.com/> for additional details.

### Hat and Scarf Time With Your Stuffed Friend

The program, which involves storytime, snacks and activities, is from 4-5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at Luhr County Park.

Aimed at children ages 2-11 and accompanied by an adult, participants should wear a favorite hat and scarf, and take a favorite stuffed animal. Space is limited, so call (219) 325-8315 at least one week in advance to reserve a free spot.

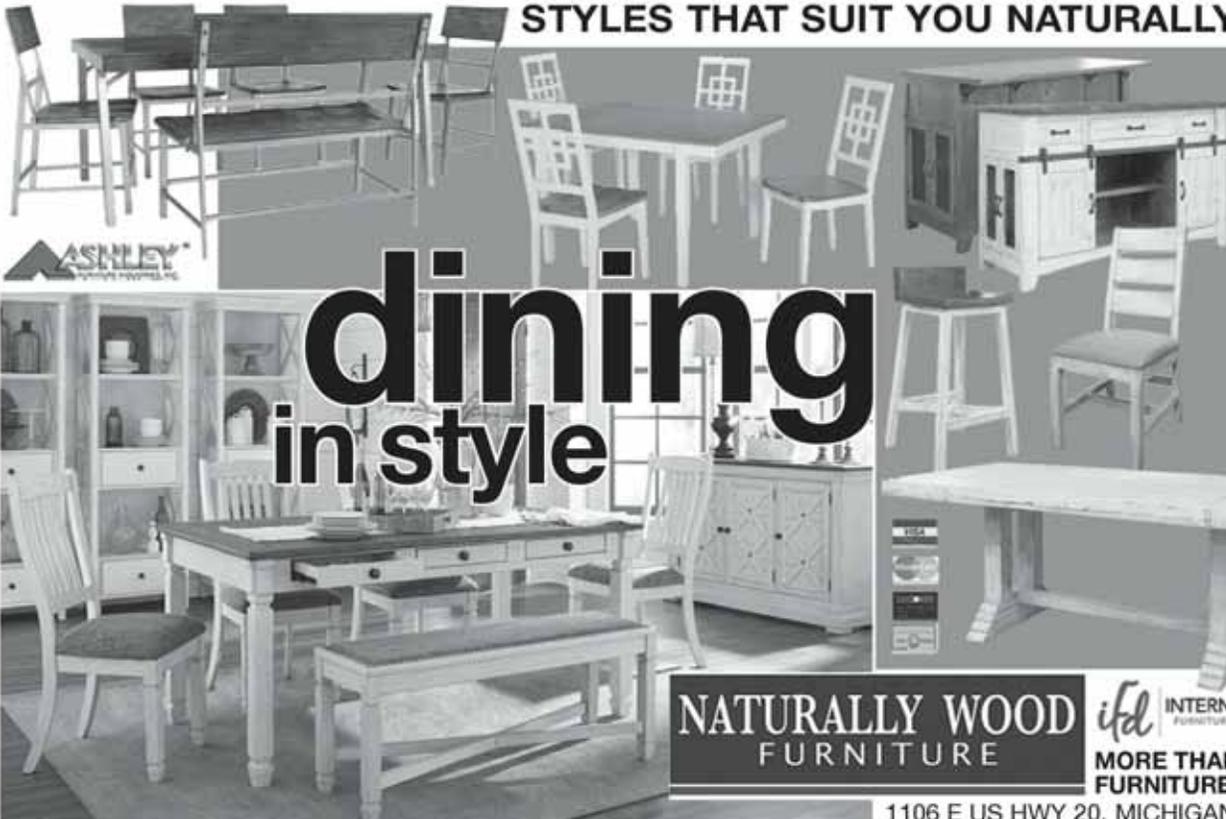
### Field Trips

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

Call (219) 324-5855, visit [www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org) or email [natureniki@csinet.net](mailto:natureniki@csinet.net) for details.



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## Chesterton Business Donates to FBG



Pictured are (from left) Chesterton Feed & Garden Center Owner Chuck Roth, Jackie Carroll, Janice Casper, Rima Binder, Pat Potempa, Dave Potempa, Jude Rakowski and Chesterton Feed Director Hannah Hill.

Chesterton Feed & Garden Center last month donated \$7,291 in perennials, shrubs and trees to Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12.

Chesterton Feed has supported FBG for the past 25 years, donating plants for the attraction's 105 acres. Staff also provided carts and helped load the plants. In spring 2023, FBG volunteers will place them in garden areas needing replanting or revitalization, including the heritage gardens, Cleveland-Cliffs Children's Garden, Persian Rose Garden and Cancer Survivors' Garden of Love and Hope.

FBG is closed for the season, reopening in May 2023. Call (219) 878-9885, visit [www.friendshipbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendshipbotanicgardens.org) or email [support@friendshipbotanicgardens.org](mailto:support@friendshipbotanicgardens.org) for more details.

## JROTC Triumphs in CyberPatriot



The CyberPatriot team is (from left) cadets lance corporals Dante Rojas and Jamie Mark, Sgt. Alexandra Reed and Lance Cpl. Jonathon Ruiz, along with faculty advisor Ralph Gee. Not pictured is Sgt. David Willis.

Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps finished above all Indiana JROTC schools in the third round of CyberPatriot, the national cyber competition for high school students.

In the All Service Division, which includes JROTC schools of all services, MCHS finished third behind two Civil Air Patrol schools, and above all JROTC schools. Civil Air Patrol focuses on an aerospace curriculum, whereas JROTC is primarily a leadership program.

In CyberPatriot, competitors act as cyber security managers, who must defend against, and counterattack, a cyber attack.

MCHS' faculty advisor is Ralph Gee, the school's engineering and technology instructor.

This year's team featured one senior, one sophomore and three freshmen. The group is open to students of all grades, but they must be enrolled in the MCJROTC.

## The Lee Meyer Music Emporium

The local music and community theater scene suffered a major loss last June with the unexpected passing of Lee Meyer.

To continue his legacy, his widow, Laura Meyer, along with members of Monday Musicale and First United Methodist Church's Green Team, invite the community to browse and take music from his massive library for free as part of The Lee Meyer Music Emporium.

Those interested can stop by from 1-6 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 18 and 25, at First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St. Enter at the side door with the ramp, where visitors will be directed upstairs using the elevator. The music includes piano, organ, vocal, opera, jazz, sacred (traditional and contemporary), folk, country, some wind instrumental music, keyboard magazines (*Sheet Music*, *Clavier*, *Piano Today*), hymnals and textbooks.

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### Bonnie Doon Special



The Studebaker National Museum recently acquired the Bonnie Doon Special, a Studebaker-powered Midget race car.

The car was built in 1948 by W.C. "Barney" Barnum, Mishawaka, and sponsored by the Bonnie Doon Ice Cream Co. It campaigned extensively in the AAA Midget racing series in the late 1940s-early 1950s, locally and nationally. Its best finish was in 1953 when it carried driver Rex Easton to third place in the season-end rankings.

The museum is located at 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$11 for adults, \$9.50 for seniors 60+ and \$7 for ages 6-18. Call (888) 391-5600 or visit [www.studebakermuseum.org](http://www.studebakermuseum.org) for more details.

### Krasl Art Center

Grants and donations are ensuring Krasl Art Center's ability to serve the community.

The Frederick Upton Foundation challenged the non-profit to a \$15,000 matching grant. The community responded with gifts totaling \$17,965. Combined, the \$32,965 supports the purchase of art supplies, teaching faculty pay and program resources for outreach initiatives, family days and nights, and studio-based activities.

In addition, \$10,000 is coming to studio classrooms through an anonymous donor. KAC will purchase iPads and new technology that will revamp programs. Classes such as photo editing and digital illustration will become available for classes at partner organizations like the Boys & Girls Club and in KAC's studios.

Krasl Art Center is located at 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Visit [www.krasl.org](http://www.krasl.org) or call (269) 983-0271 for more details.

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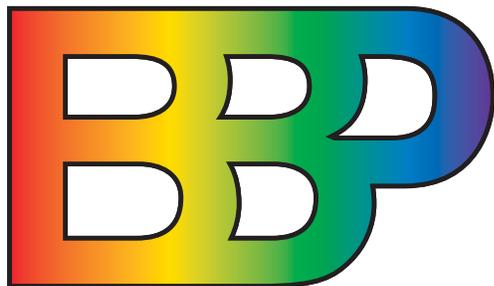
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## In the Area

**Jan. 19** — Simple Nutrition, 5-6 p.m., Coolspring Library Meeting Room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**Jan. 20** — Film Showing: “Where the Crawdads Sing,” 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**Jan. 23** — Family Pajama Storytime, 6-6:30 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**Jan. 23** — Monday Musicales, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St. Info: (219) 874-3754, (219) 362-1421.

**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.

**Thursdays in January** — Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night, 5:30-7 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

**Through January** — Ernie Pyle exhibit, LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Info: (219) 324-6767.

## In the Region

**Jan. 20** — The Save the Tunes Council, 7:30-9 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)

**Jan. 20** — “The Steel Wheels,” 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$30 + \$5 convenience fee, \$55 + \$5 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: [www.acornlive.org](http://www.acornlive.org)

**Jan. 20-Feb. 26** — “Stories from the Soil” (Jon Hook-Andrea Peterson exhibit), Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Opening reception: 5:30-7 p.m. EST Jan. 20. Info: <https://boxfactoryforthearts.org>

**Jan. 21** — Beach Discovery Walk, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Jan. 21** — The Gem of Chicago Wilderness: Ecology & Restoration, 1-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-

1882, [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)

**Jan. 21** — Cold Blooded Buffet, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Jan. 21** — Harbor Country Hikers, 2-4 p.m. EST, Chris Thompson Memorial Preserve, 7592 Warren Woods Road, Three Oaks, Mich. Info: [harborcountryhikers@gmail.com](mailto:harborcountryhikers@gmail.com), [www.harborcountryhikers.com](http://www.harborcountryhikers.com)

**Jan. 21** — Lee DeWyze, 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$25 + \$4.50 convenience fee, \$50 + \$4.50 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: [www.acornlive.org](http://www.acornlive.org)

**Jan. 22** — Winter Tree ID Spree, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**Jan. 22** — The Acorn's Dance Showcase: Sawyer Dance Academy, 3 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets (reserved stadium seating: \$25-\$35 + \$3 convenience fee. Reservations: [www.acornlive.org](http://www.acornlive.org)

**Through March 1** — "Sense of Place: Works from the Artists in Residence of Indiana Dunes National Park," Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Reception: noon-2 p.m. Jan. 21. Info: (219) 926-4711, [www.chestertonart.org](http://www.chestertonart.org)

**Through May 29** — "Built to Last: Studebaker Buildings Past & Present," The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11 - adults, \$9.50 - seniors 60+, \$7 - youth ages 6-18. Info: (574) 235-9714, [www.studebakermuseum.org](http://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](mailto:friendsofnewtroy@yahoo.com)

**Saturdays-Sundays in January** — National Park Themed Movie, 10-11:30 a.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)

**Saturdays-Sundays in January** — Snowshoe Open House at Chellberg Farm (snow permitting), 1-3 p.m., Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12/20, Porter. Weather updates/info: (219) 395-1882.

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**Foundation Taking Grant Proposals**

Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte has opened its 2023 Cycle 1 grants portal through March 3.

HFL seeks proposals that impact its strategic priorities of Healthy Children, Healthy Living and Healthy Minds. The goal must be measurable results that contribute to positive change in one or more community-wide indicators HFL uses to monitor and track progress for each strategic priority.

HFL also welcomes grant proposals to meet community health and wellness needs outside of strategic priorities.

Organizations interested in grants of more than \$25,000 are required to submit a Letter of Inquiry as a first step no later than 11:59 p.m. CST Jan. 27. All grant applications and LOIs must be submitted online through HFL's grant portal to be considered.

Visit [www.hflaporte.org/grantmaking-overview](http://www.hflaporte.org/grantmaking-overview) for more details.

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**Town of Long Beach**

**WATER DEPARTMENT OFFICE MANAGER**

**POSITION SUMMARY:** The Water Department Office Manager will provide administrative, accounting, bookkeeping and clerical support for the Town of Long Beach Water Department. Full-time position with full benefits.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** include, but are not limited to: Office reception, customer service, billing, account management, accounts receivable, accounts payable, bank deposits, record keeping and file management. Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:** High school diploma or GED. Computer skills and, knowledge of relevant software. Knowledge of accounting and office administrative procedures and systems such as bookkeeping, billing, filing and customer service.

Qualified candidates should email their resume to: [HRcommittee@lbpdin.com](mailto:HRcommittee@lbpdin.com) or, mail to: Long Beach Human Resources Committee

Long Beach Town Hall  
2400 Oriole Trail  
Long Beach, IN 46360

**Queenie of Norwich** by L.K. Wilde (paperback \$14.99; also available as an eBook and hardcover, available in bookstores and online. 363 pages.)

Ellen Hardy, Nellie Westrop, Queenie Read. She was known at one time or another by each of those names. Leaving and starting over again is nothing new, but starting over again as someone else, well, that's a different thing altogether. Let me explain...

This is historical fiction about a woman who not only survived a horrible childhood, but flourished in later years, living to a ripe old age.

The story begins in 1906. Ellen is 6. She has eight brothers and sisters. She's the youngest and most useless. Useless because she's too young to work, and since no one's around to check on her, she seldom goes to school. Even Mum works at the mill.

The description of Norwich and the hard-knock life there is told in vivid detail. The working class at the time has nothing to look forward to except to live another day. Girls can only look forward to finding husbands who will take care of them and their babies.

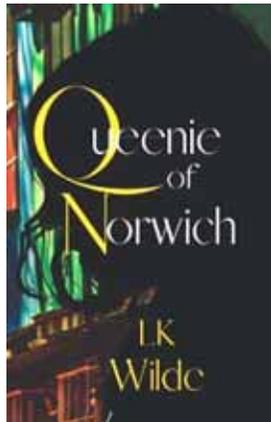
Told in Ellen's own voice, we see how much she observes at age 6, even while not completely understanding — *"Sarah will probably leave soon. I caught her kissing a chap from Reeves Yard and Mum says if she's not careful she'll get herself knocked up, or have a pea in the pond. I'm not sure what that means..."*

Sarah is Ellen's oldest sister, but Ellen is closest to another sister, Lottie. The hardest either of them has to endure is the day Ellen is taken away from her family and given — actually sold — to a couple passing through town.

Julia and Henry are a childless couple who own a shooting gallery attached to a traveling fair. Julia says she now is part of their family and renames her Nellie Westrop. A horse-pulled wagon has everything the Westrops own. Nellie is good with numbers and quite clever for her age. She soon blends in with the fair people, Lottie being the only family member she misses terribly.

Stopping at the small villages on market day, the fair sets up and here, again, Wilde shows us what this life is like, and how and why market day is so important to the people. Of course, you expect the other shoe to fall and Nellie to be mistreated or have something horrible happen, but that's not the case. The three of them have a good life as a family until years later, when life is upended and the traveling fair comes to an unpleasant halt.

Nellie and Julia end up living with Julia's sister and working in a local mill. Hours are long and working conditions not healthy. Nellie knows she



## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



can't live there forever and goes back to Norwich, where she embarks on a new career — this one not so legal...

It all begins when Nellie meets Olive, whose family seems to be doing very well, although her father's business ventures are a bit sketchy. At a party, she meets Barney, who tells Nellie, *"From where I'm standing, I see a woman good at hustling, making a deal, and not averse to unconventional methods when she wants to get her own way."*

No, it's not what you think! But it turns out to be very interesting...

The book is told in Ellen/Nellie's voice and provides a more personal look at her life through all the trials and tribulations of the early 1900s. Nellie shows us the fortitude the lower class needed to survive. Other, weaker ones succumbed to drink and drugs, dying young.

If anything, I would have liked the book to be a bit longer, carry on further with Queenie's exceptional life.

*The final word:* A lot of us know little of our ancestry, or none at all. L.K. Wilde was lucky enough to remember her great-grandmother, known to her as Queenie Nanny, and the stories she told of growing up in Norwich, England.

Queenie survived almost the whole of the 20th century, having been born in 1900 and passing away in 1999, just four months before her 100th birthday. She's a legend in Wilde's family. No wonder she wanted to write about her fascinating life. Wilde published the book independently as a tribute to Queenie and her family. There is a photo at the end of the book showing Queenie holding Wilde as an infant. For fans of early 20th century history England, of families both born into and made, and a woman who experienced both.

Till next time, happy reading!



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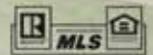
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