



Volume 39, Number 17 Thursday, May 4, 2023



# Bridging the “GAAP”

by Kim Nowatzke

Visiting The Bean (Cloud Gate) in Chicago’s Millennium Park was a highlight for GAPP students.

Thanks to the German American Partnership Program, the distance between two countries and two cultures has been bridged for Michigan City High School and Chesterton High School students.

After a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GAPP is back on track, and the 39 participating students are cherishing their once-in-a-lifetime experience.

“All of the schools were really trying their best to make it happen as soon as we were allowed,” MCHS German teacher Nate Quinlan, known as Herr (the German name for “Mister”) Quinlan, to students. “I think everyone involved is really excited and optimistic that we’ve been able to get the ball rolling again this year and are hopeful to keep the long-standing tradition of this program alive and well...”

The exchange-student program between MCHS and CHS involves a German partner school, Schyren Gymnasium.

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A. Daniel Ruth (Herr Ruth), founder of the local GAPP program and a former MCHS German teacher for 45 years, admitted that continuing the program amid COVID-required distance learning wasn't possible.

“Kids in the GAPP program are supposed to experience normal life, and practice the language in the country they are visiting,” he said. “Both the United States and Germany are beautiful countries which need to be experienced firsthand.”

Through the exchange, 18 students from the district of Pfaffenhofen in Bavaria, Germany, stayed with host families whose students are taking third- or fourth-year German classes at either MCHS or CHS. The German students arrived March 30 and left for home April 19. Accompanying them were two German teachers: Herr Patrick Roider and Frau (German for “Mrs.”) Madeleine Engelhard.

Next, American students will travel to Germany on June 7-28, hosted by their new friends and their families in Pfaffenhofen after a few days in Oberammergau. In some cases, CHS and MCHS students only host a German student or, in other cases, only travel to Germany and don't host a student themselves.

There are 20 students from CHS involved in the program and one from MCHS.

“There is normally a more even split, but we are in the stages of building the German program at MCHS back up,” Herr Quinlan explained, “and I expect to see more students participate in the coming years.”

Herr Ruth said the GAPP program originated in Germantown, Pa. (now part of Philadelphia) in 1983, commemorating 300 years of German immigration to the United States.

“After World War II, Germany was not the most popular country, but numerous presidents believed



Students participating in GAPP enjoyed a ranger-led trip to Mount Baldy.



that the only way we could avoid another war with Germany and other European countries was to help them rebuild after the war,” Herr Ruth said. “The Marshall Plan was this instrument with which America helped Germany. Germany was very thankful for this help and friendship. Both countries endorsed the GAPP program supporting and promoting this friendship.”

In 2012, Herr Ruth, along with teacher Herr Reinhard Schuler-Wrede, his partner in Germany, were recognized in Berlin as having the longest, continuously running GAPP program. More than 600 students and their families participated in the 40 years they conducted the program.



Michigan City High School German Teacher Nate Quinlan stands next to the Bavarian flag. Photo by Kim Nowatzke.

Herr Quinlan was one of those MCHS students, traveling to Germany with Herr Ruth in 2010. He accepted the position as MCHS German teacher for the 2020-2021 school year.

“It’s hard to put into such short words how the exchange impacted me, but it was most definitely the reason I decided to become a German teacher,” he said. “I think it’s more than just loving German language and culture. I think meeting and building connections with people from across the world can show you just how fantastic humans are. Although being involved as a teacher is definitely more work and responsibility, it’s amazing seeing how quickly the students can grow and open up to each other in such a short amount of time. There are friendships that are built from this program that last lifetimes. When I was living in Germany in 2017, I spent Christmas with my same host family from when I went on the exchange in 2010.”

In addition to Herr Cary Knauff, Herr Justin Martinson is another German teacher at Chester-ton High School. A GAPP alumnus, he traveled to Germany with Herr Ruth, both as a student and later as a coordinator for the first time in 2019.

“GAPP allows students to experience all aspects of everyday life in another culture — something that most tourists don’t ever get the chance to ex-

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perience,” Martinson said. “Also, the special bonds that students make with their partners and host families can last a lifetime. I participated in GAPP in 2006, and my exchange partner, Felix, and I are still as close as ever. It’s great to see generations of families positively impacted by the program and foster the friendship between our two countries. When we saw the German students off to the airport, I realized just how close this group was and how much they care about one another. I think this brings students together in a way that social media can never achieve.”

Understandably so, language is a big part of the GAPP experience. Herr Martinson said German and American students improve the language they study by immersing themselves in it daily. Herr Quinlan said once the American students reach Germany, he, Herr Martinson and Herr Knauff make the switch to only speaking German.



Pictured are German exchange student Toni Bauer, Bobbi Malapanes, Drew Malapanes, Chesterton High School GAPP participant Marcus Malapanes and Eric Malapanes

Eric Malapanes and his wife, Bobbi, have been hosting German student Toni Bauer with their CHS senior, Marcus.

“Toni is optimistic and has a great sense of humor, so it has been great having her stir up the house and put a smile on our faces,” Eric said. “She also says exactly what she thinks, and that is very refreshing and entertaining.”

Jason and Jennifer Dennington, together with their daughter, Abigail, a CHS junior, are hosting Max Sulzburger.

“One surprise for us was that our daughter actually speaks German,” Jennifer said. “We had never heard her speak. The kids were hanging out and joking and were going back and forth between English and German. It was surprising and sweet at once. Another surprise was how well Max – and really all of the German students — spoke English. They didn’t make it very difficult to people like me

who don’t know more than a few words.”

Max admits to being surprised at losing in a German card game to American students, adding, “I laughed so hard.”

One favorite memory for Beth Rutherford also revolved around a game. About eight of the American and German students were hanging out at her family’s home playing the board game “Telestrations,” in which players sketch a word listed on a card, then guess what the other players have drawn.

“The American students started playing their part in German and the German kids were playing in English. The laughter was contagious,” she recalled. “They carried on and played for hours. It was the most wonderful sound.”



A group of American and German students enjoy a game of “Telestrations” at the Beverly Shores home of Chesterton High School senior Owen Rutherford, who is hosting Martin Dietrich.

Beth and her husband, Rafi, are the parents of a CHS senior, Owen. They hosted Martin Dietrich.

“The kids’ command of English is so good — they understand words that really surprised me and my husband,” Beth said. “In the car, Owen used an English slang word (teenager-speak), and when we looked confused because we didn’t understand, Martin explained it to us.”

Dianna Atrosh-Ciszweski noted how German exchange student Seline Ostermeier, who is staying with her daughter, CHS senior Abby Atrosh, has an excellent command of the English language.

“We’ve enjoyed the whole experience,” Dianna emphasized. “Honestly, it’s the unplanned conversations and day-to-day life exchanges that have been such a wonderful experience. We love hearing Seline’s take on our everyday existence, and hearing how our lives are similar and the differences. She has such a great sense of humor and fits in perfectly with our family. GAPP has been beneficial to our family and friends because I feel like we have had the opportunity to get to know more about life in Germany and meet one of the sweetest students ever!”



Owen appreciates that “there have been groups of students getting together in different settings almost every night, and it has contributed to the friendships.”

The Rutherfords won’t easily forget one gathering during the exchange.

“One Thursday night, all the kids went to the beach at 5 p.m. or so,” Beth said. “They didn’t really say what they were planning for dinner, so we told Owen just to keep us posted when everyone left the beach so we could feed Owen and Martin. Rafi’s phone rang and Owen was on the line saying, ‘Dad, how many Germans can you feed?’ We made four boxes of spaghetti, thawed out some marinara sauce and threw together some salad. Thirteen kids sat in the dining room and had dinner together.”

They also had the “amazing” experience of hosting a bonfire.

“Many of the kids had not seen a big fire, and with a few fireworks it was a true experience of a Fourth of July weekend from our family to them,” Beth said.



Michigan City High School junior Malakai Siuda (front, center) and his GAPP partner, Nikolaus Weiland (directly behind him), enjoy bowling with other students at Inman’s Bowling & Recreation Center in Valparaiso.

Anthony Siuda and his wife, Amber, were surprised to learn “there are a lot of similarities between our cultures.” Their MCHS junior, Malakai, hosted Nikolaus Weiland.

“On Easter, Malakai and Nikolaus hid some eggs and we couldn’t find one of them,” Anthony said. “Nikolaus told us the same thing has happened to him when hiding eggs at home.

“We felt it would be great for Malakai to have a firsthand experience into someone else’s lifestyle and culture — while allowing him to share his... We have enjoyed getting to know Nikolaus and believe GAPP is a unique way to build friendships and connections.”

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Jennifer noted how the German and American students “made friends so easily.”

“We think that our child has learned more about the German culture and the ability to speak German more freely,” she said. “It has taught us that kids will be kids across the world. They all enjoy homecooked food, and sitting around a table together sharing stories and laughing together.”

GAPP, she continued, has highlighted the many positives about teens today.

“I think in a time of media attention on teenagers having it all wrong — ills of social media, drugs and alcohol, ‘no motivation’ — this was a rewarding experience showcasing the maturity and open-minded nature of teens,” she said. “They weren’t judgmental about each other’s looks, clothes, backgrounds or intelligence. They came together as friends and schoolmates and remembered that we are all more alike than we are different.”

These are the interactions teachers – German and American alike – want.

“One of the major focus points of the GAPP exchange is to give the students an authentic experience of what daily life is like in the United States, so we try not to pack their schedule with a ton of ‘official’ events,” Herr Quinlan said. “We really want them to build connections with each other, their host families and experience the day-to-day of going to school.”

That said, there are still several key events and other activities that keep the exchange partners busy during their days in America.



American and German students in GAPP carried on the tradition of visiting the Chicago Cultural Center.

“We always make at least one trip to Chicago,” Herr Quinlan said. “We took the South Shore line, and our trip included a visit to the Chicago Cultural Center and The Bean (Cloud Gate). Students had time to split into groups and explore the city on their own and go shopping. We had a late lunch for Chicago-style pizza at Gino’s East, and we ended the day with a visit to the former John Hancock Center for an amazing view of Chicago.”

The latter is an experience Nikolaus won’t forget. “They tilt it so you are almost looking straight

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A trip to Chesterton Fire Department was on the agenda for American and German students in the German American Partnership Program. Herr Justin Martinson is the teacher being held up in the middle, and Herr Patrick Roider is the German teacher kneeling near him.





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down,” he emphasized.

Seeing skyscrapers for the first time left an impression on Max, while Seline fell in love with the beach.

Through a connection with a ranger, the GAPP partners enjoyed a ranger-led trip to Indiana Dunes National Park’s Mount Baldy. They visited the Chesterton Fire Department and went on a bowling trip to Inman’s Bowling & Recreation Center in Valparaiso.



GAPP students Colin Kostbade, Julius Dollefeld, Brock Redman and Mortiz Bluhme at Inman’s Bowling & Recreation Center in Valparaiso.

“It is fun to see the exchange students experience something different for the first time,” Eric Malapanes said. “There is an excitement to foreign travel, especially your first time, that is really wonderful. Any time you can experience or help someone else experience something new, it really is special and positive.

“As a host family, we thought we had a lot to offer. We have been to Germany and have worked with German interns through our work, so we could understand a small amount about where our exchange student was coming from and what they might think about their visit to the U.S.,” he said. “And, we would be able to introduce them to the things our previous guests have enjoyed most. We also hosted a Japanese exchange student for our older child in 2019, and it was just so much fun. We were excited to be able to host again.”

Marcus enjoyed the opportunity to show Toni around.

“My favorite part of GAPP is getting to show my partner stuff that I enjoy on a daily or weekly basis,” he said. “This could be certain food or restaurants, stores and landmarks. These are all things that are important to me in the place I live and represent our culture, which is different from my partner’s. Get-

ting to share this with them is awesome...I really enjoyed going to Chicago with the whole group. We got to see some of the coolest architecture around, and got to enjoy some great views and food.”

Herr Quinlan agreed, adding, “It’s fun to play tourist because you do things that you don’t normally do.”



Malakai Siuda, a Michigan City High School junior, is photographed with his GAPP partner, Nikolaus Weiland, next to a poster of the castle Neuschwanstein, which they will visit in Germany. Photo by Kim

When Malakai visits Germany, he is most interested in going to Neuschwanstein Castle in southwest Bavaria. It is considered the inspiration for Disney’s “Cinderella” castle, and is similar to Sleeping Beauty’s castle in Disneyland. In addition, the group will see Linderhof Palace.

But, Malakai admitted, he “really wants to go to Denmark and buy Legos,” since he will be geographically closer.

“We can go to Lego Land Germany,” Nikolaus his exchange partner, bantered back, laughing.

“There’s a Lego Land in Germany?!” Malakai replied.

On a more serious note, he plans to “go with the flow” once in Germany, and is “excited for taekwondo and piano lessons because that is what he (Nikolaus) does.”

Besides the Chicago visit, a lock-in from 6 p.m.-midnight at MCHS is a long-standing tradition while the German students are in America. There’s a potluck, in addition to access to the school swimming pool and areas to play basketball and other games. Herr Ruth stopped by, too.

“I could tell he was right back in his element... the GAPP program between these schools would not exist without the tireless, much-appreciated work that Herr Ruth put in throughout his time as a teacher at MCHS,” Herr Quinlan said. “Although there is some funding and support through GAPP, this entire program is only possible due to the schools, teachers, students and families involved, and it takes a lot of commitment and passion to



keep something like this going.”

Herr Ruth also attended the popular Bavarian Evening hosted by the German students.

“This is a night where all of the exchange students and their families are invited, and the German students make traditional Bavarian food and teach everyone about German culture and traditions,” Herr Quinlan said.

When the MCHS and CHS students visit Germany, they will create American dishes, give presentations on the United States and teach square dancing and line dancing to their host families.

Malakai said his favorite foods from the Bavarian Evening were chicken schnitzel, apple strudel and *Kaiserschmarrn* (a thick, fluffy, shredded pancake service with powdered sugar and applesauce).

For his contribution to the Bavarian Evening, Nikolaus made *Kasespatzle*, which are doughy drop noodles covered in shredded cheese. He brought along a special tool from home to create them.

He observed that “there’s not as much junk food and fast food in Germany.” He had never tried pizza with barbecue sauce instead of a traditional tomato-based sauce. He liked fried pickles, noting the differences in pretzels in America.

“Pretzels are way different in Germany,” he said. “They are less buttery and less sweet: dryer and more like bread.”

Eric told a funny story revolving around food with their exchange student.

“We had quite a bit of banter about the shape of U.S. butter,” he said. “She had never seen a stick of butter before, and the idea that almost all of our butter comes in the shape of a stick was hard for Toni to come to terms with. She did not approve. I guess butter is sold in a package and shape much like cream cheese is here.”

Dianna lightheartedly said her student, Seline, “missed her mom’s cooking the most,” but Dianna wasn’t offended.

“As a family, we love food – and hearing what Seline likes and doesn’t care for has been fun,” she said.

During their exchange experience, Jennifer said, “Food was always such a highlight. Max never said no to pancakes and would likely have eaten them every day if I offered to make them.”

He admitted, “I never knew I loved pancakes so much,” and that “food portions are much bigger” in America.

Marcus is most excited about the food on his upcoming trip to Germany.

“Anywhere my family travels, local food ends up being the staple thing to search for and try,” he said. “I have loved a lot of the German food I have had, and I am looking forward to trying it authentic and fresh.”

Above all, it’s the forged friendships that last, making the GAPP truly special.



Pictured are Anthony Siuda, Malakai Siuda, Nikolaus Weiland (the GAPP student) and Amber Siuda along the lakefront.

“The young adults/teens who have traveled are really one of a kind,” Beth stressed. “They are kind, smart, fun and adventurous. The German teachers at Michigan City and Chesterton did a really good job pairing the students up. Within moments, it was apparent that lasting friendships were being built.”

Nikolaus already made plans to visit America again someday.

“I know I will come back – they (the Siudas) don’t get rid of me,” he said with a big smile.

Dianna hopes the bond Abby and Seline have will continue to grow throughout their lifetimes.

“I think we have both learned to appreciate what we have,” she said, “and the experience has confirmed our thoughts that it is important to respect others’ differences and appreciate other cultures.”

Eric feels his son has learned a great deal from his GAPP experience.

“I think it has given our son a different perspective — learning not just the language, but about a different place, with different ways of doing things, a different outlook and different ideas and priorities. It is so much easier to understand where other people are coming from if you get the chance to live in their shoes a little, if only for three weeks. It’s more than most people get the chance to do.”

Herr Martinson feels the same way.

“Students have an opportunity to learn about and discuss our cultural differences with peers and families they trust, and ultimately learn about how similar we all are as human beings,” he said. “The program helps students to understand and engage with people with different points of view on a global scale.”

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## Record Store Day Draws Huge Turnout at Local Business

by Andrea Roberts

Record Store Day showed how impactful records can be.

“Something tangible to hold onto means something,” Michigan City resident Lauren Peters said.

Peters, 29, was among the 89 people who signed up to be in line at Static Age, 621 Franklin St., for Record Store Day on April 22. Many of them showed up when the store opened bright and early at 7 a.m. Static Age Owner KC Mars estimated around 130-150 people were in the store.

“It’s our biggest day of the year,” said Mars, 52.

Record Store Day is when customers support local businesses and purchase vinyls or CDs specially released for the event. Held annually around the world, the first event was in 2008; Static Age first participated in 2019. Because of COVID-19, the schedule was split into three dates in 2020.

This year’s event was what Mars called the store’s “second full Record Store Day.”

“(It’s) the biggest one we’ve ever done,” he said.

Donnie Flynn, a Chicago resident in line with his daughter, has enjoyed records since he was a kid. His favorite is “Anthem” by Flogging Molly.

“Growing up at my buddy’s house, his dad had a very big record collection,” said Flynn, 40. “So, it kind of brings me back to my childhood.”

Katherine, who came from Chesterton, was in line with her son. He wanted a Kenny Rogers live album, but ended up leaving the store with Pearl Jam’s “Give Way.”

Mars has been into records since he was a kid. He has always owned a record player. He started Static Age with his own collection, but still owns thousands of records.

On April 22, Static Age had a promotion in which any non-Record Store Day title was 10 percent off



Wayne Woodward (front), Lucas Nowesnick and Alexis Harvey browse for records during Record Store Day at Static Age.

### More About the Writer

Andrea Roberts is an eighth-grader at Krueger Middle School and a student-journalist for Truth from the Youth, a website run by students and Krueger Middle School personnel to inspire the community through journalism. Visit [www.truthfromtheyouth.com](http://www.truthfromtheyouth.com) for more stories by her and other students.

the original price. It was another reason for people to enjoy the day

“I think it’s exciting,” Peters said. “I think it’s a really good way to support local small businesses.”

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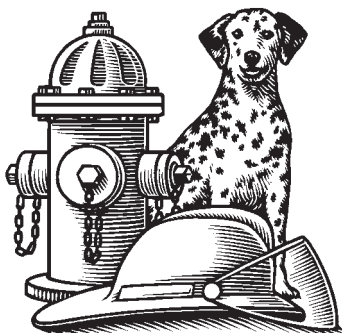
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## Mystery-Spoof “Murdered to Death” at Footlight Theatre

Footlight Players continues its season with the mystery-spoof “Murdered to Death” on May 5-7 and 11-14 at Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St.

Peter Gordon’s comedy introduces the inept and bungling Inspector Pratt, who battles the odds and his own incompetence to solve the murder of the house’s owner. However, it becomes clear the murderer isn’t finished.

The cast includes Nikki Anthony (Dorothy), Bob Cooley (Charles), Greta Friedman (Mildred), Josh Green (Bunting), Rick Henderson (Pierre), Dean Johanson (Pratt), Amy Johnson-Sobek (Margaret), Cindi Reyes (Joan), Michael J. Thomas (Thomkins) and Kaelie Winebrenner (Elizabeth).

Dee Piotrowski is the director and Jill Thomas the assistant director. The show is produced by Christopher West, with Tony Thomas designing lights, Veronica Thomas designing sound, Lara West designing costumes and Nikki Anthony procuring props and dressing the set.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday (doors open at 6:45 p.m.) and 2 p.m. Sunday (doors open at 1:15 p.m.). Tickets cost \$17 for adults and \$12 for children 12 and younger.

Make reservations at [www.footlightplayers.org](http://www.footlightplayers.org)

Nikki Anthony (left) and Greta Friedman appear in “Murdered to Death.”



### Upcoming Season

Footlight Players has unveiled its slate of shows for the 74th season (2023-2024).

The lineup is: “The Dastardly Doctor Devereaux” (melodrama musical) in August; “Four Old Broads on the High Seas” in October (a comedic sequel to last year’s “Four Old Broads”); “Murder on the Re-run” (comedy) in December; “The Unsinkable Mol-

ly Brown” (musical) in March 2024 and “The Lost Boy” (drama) in May 2024.

Footlight will have auditions for “The Dastardly Doctor Devereaux” at 6 p.m. Sunday-Monday, May 7-8, at the theater. Director Laura Meyer seeks a cast of 16 people. Visit [www.footlightplayers.org](http://www.footlightplayers.org) for details.



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 Michael Heinlein on:

**“HEROIC VIRTUE: THE EXTRAORDINARY AND LESSER KNOWN CHALLENGES OVERCOME BY FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE.”**

Augustine of Hippo defined “heroic virtue” as “The performance of extraordinary virtuous actions with readiness and over a period of time . . . exercised with ease, [with] faith, hope, and charity are practiced to an eminent degree.”

After years of research and travel, dozens of interviews, and new access to the personal papers of Francis Cardinal George’s papers, in Chicago and elsewhere, Author Michael Heinlein has produced the first comprehensive biography of the late Cardinal. And, according to Heinlein, Cardinal George possessed just such heroic virtue, to an extent previously unknown.

Many knew of the personal hurdles Cardinal George overcame in his early life, including being rejected by the Archdiocese of Chicago as not physically enough fit for the priesthood, due to the after effects of childhood polio. Heinlein’s research, however, has brought to light new evidence of the heroic virtues of the Cardinal, personal, spiritual and political, as he navigated the treacherous shoals of the modern American Church and of a diocese badly in need of reform and renewal.

At a time when such “heroic virtue” seems in very short supply among the American Catholic hierarchy, come hear Michael Heinlein remind us all of what it really consists of, as exemplified by our own Francis Cardinal George, Friday, May 12, 2023 at the Carlisle Banquet Hall Lombard, IL.

*Copies of Mr. Heinlein’s book, “Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I.,” will be available for purchase.*

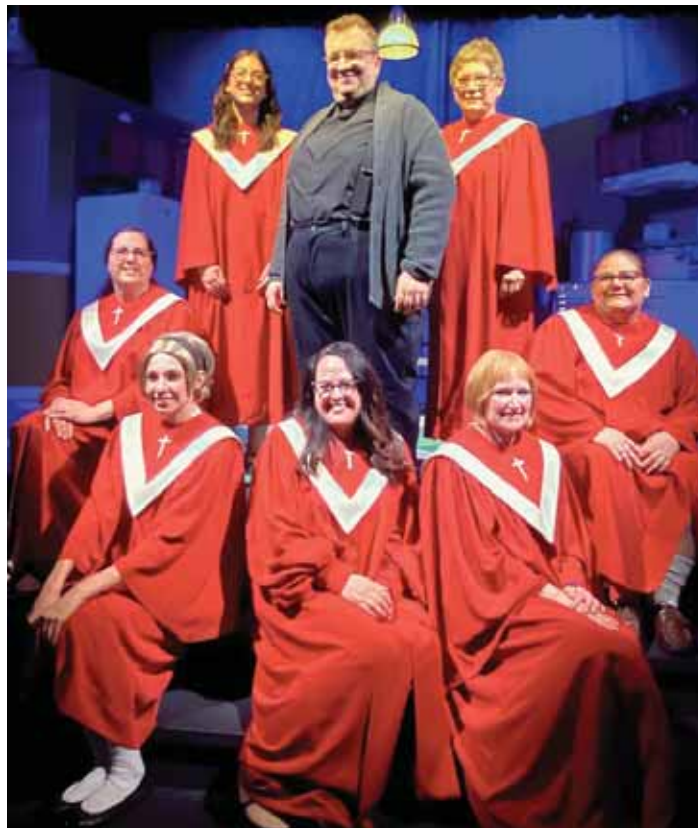
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The cast of “Church Basement Ladies.”

The musical-comedy “Church Basement Ladies” runs for two weekends, May 5-7 and 12-14, at LaPorte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St.

The show by Jim Stowell and Jessica Zuehlke features music and lyrics by Drew Jansen. In the play, we meet the pastor, three main kitchen cooks and one daughter who run the kitchen and cares for the congregation by preparing and serving food. Events pop up, like a lutefisk dinner, wedding, funeral and Easter fundraiser.

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## Spring Cleaning

My return to Michiana this spring was breathtaking. An April warm-up caused the neighbor's forsythia hedge to bloom and become a golden wall overnight. It reached a crescendo in symphony with a nearby magnolia's show of purple-pink blossoms the size of small saucers. I couldn't wait to pull on my gardening gloves.

If only the balmy breezes held.

Within 24 hours, the temperatures plunged, and a dusting of snow sidelined me indoors where less exciting spring-cleaning projects beckoned. Instead of clearing out the perennial beds, I attacked a closet that had become too tight for even one more hanger. It thrilled me to discover a forgotten jacket and locate my favorite puddle boots. This success reminded me of a similar project that yielded a win more important than locating boots and a jacket, a find that still ushers in strong emotion.

I mentioned in a previous column that I'm downsizing from a home in Florida to a condo. Anyone who has recently moved knows all too well the arduous nature of that task. The weeks that precede listing a property are mired in hours of decluttering, staging, cleaning and fluffing. And when those exhausting duties are complete, a similar cycle repeats for each house showing until a purchase contract comes in.

So, forced to evaluate my Florida house with the eye of a buyer, late this winter I went from room to room simplifying, storing and purging. In the living areas, old magazines got recycled, bookshelves straightened, cabinets tidied and personal items boxed up. Invigorated by those purposeful efforts, I went on to the closets. Items were rehung, refolded or eliminated, and a pile of pesky wire hangers dropped off at the dry cleaners. All of this felt liberating.

One of the last rooms I tackled was the exercise room. In hindsight, I wish I had started there. After restacking the weights and organizing the yoga gear, I surveyed the area with a stager's mind. Then I puzzled over the gray wooden end table occupying a far corner. Why had I placed it over there when it would look so much better under the TV?

I strolled over to the table, lifted it and gasped. "What the ...?"

Hidden under the hollow base of the end table were items I had spent the better part of nine months

### That Girl, This Life

Julie McGue



scouring for in every closet, cabinet and drawer. And on each occasion when I failed to locate these articles, I plunged into fresh despair. The missing items were not only valuable, but also irreplaceable.

When I'd complain to family members, they tried to buoy me with optimism: "Don't give up. That stuff will show up eventually." But while I tried to remain hopeful, I was convinced my belongings had been stolen.

So, with tears of relief, I knelt on the soft carpet, reached for the green jeweler's box and soft-sided jewelry pouch, and clutched them to my chest. My favorite things: lost, now found. A collection of jewelry my late husband gifted me over the course of our 37-year marriage on anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, Valentine's Day and Mother's Day.

Who had put these belongings under the oddly placed end table? If it had been me, why had I forgotten? I'm still at a loss. The only reasonable explanation is this: widow's brain fog. A term that describes the fogginess and disconnect that sets in after the death of a spouse; something that dissipates over time.

Because of recovering these lost possessions, my upcoming move is less a dreaded event and more of a blessing. Of course, I'm not looking forward to the loading or unloading of the moving truck, but I have benefitted greatly from the purging and discoveries. Putting my belongings away in a new place is something I find exciting. I'm eager for that step of moving forward. Another thing I'm clear on – and have stated to my dear ones – is where my jewelry and family keepsakes will be stored. I want to avoid any future heartache at all costs.


I hope that in your own spring cleaning, you unearth a significant surprise, or feel gratified by repurposing items that no longer serve your needs. Spring is about transition, change and hope. We all need a fresh look at our surroundings regardless of where we spend the winter.

Now that the weather is more predictable, my house is in order, and moving plans set, I'm eager to get back outdoors. The garden needs tending. There are wind chimes to rehang, perennial beds to rejuvenate and container pots to fill with vibrant color and texture. And one never knows what treasures may be unearthed when enough soil is turned over.

Happy Spring!

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## World Creativity and Innovation Week

Keeping with tradition, The Center for Creative Solutions ushered in World Creativity and Innovation Week by honoring students at Michigan City's A.K. Smith Career Center.

Fifteen students were recognized for projects and products, academic performance and positive attitudes.

"When we joined this international celebration 15 years ago, we wanted to highlight the places in our community where creativity was alive and well," board member William Halliar said in a press release. He is chairperson for Northwest Indiana's celebration of World Creativity & Innovation Week, which started April 15.

Tej Ram Gupta scholarships went to A.K. Smith students Alysa De Felice, Dylan Rogers and Kar-mar Scully. The scholarships are funded by the B.R. Foundation, through Dr. Rakish and Bina Gupta of Michigan City, in conjunction with The Center for Creative Solutions. The scholarships are named after Bina Gupta's father, Tej Ram Gupta, who was dedicated to education.

Supervising teacher Melissa Santana nominated De Felice, a student intern at South Central Junior/Senior High School.

"Alysa demonstrates creative ways of reaching students who at times struggle with concepts in history," she said in a press release. "She tries to bring real world situations in to make the concept more relatable to junior high students...she will make a terrific history teacher one day."

From New Prairie High School, Rogers was nominated by Elizabeth Tylisz, his welding instructor.

"He continues to work hard, help others and exceeds my expectations," she noted in a press release.

Scully, the third scholarship winner, hails from Michigan City High School. Teacher Alicia Young wrote of her nominee, "Kamar is an exceptional early graduate. He has been directly accepted into the Valparaiso University nursing program." In addition, he is active in the school's drama club and appeared in "You Can't Take It With You."

Presenting the scholarship winners was Keri Marris Barrón, Center for Creative Solutions creativity consultant and board member.

Pat Lain, Center for Creative Solutions board president, presented Student Innovation Awards



Kamar Scully, the Tej Ram Gupta scholarship winner, is photographed with Keri Marris Barrón, a Center for Creative Solutions board member.

funded through the Morgan Family Foundation.

The first recipient was Robert Lanchsweardt, a senior nominated by his automotive teacher, Steve Barnes. To finance a class race-car project, Barnes recalled, "We needed money, so Rob designed a logo that we put on hoodies to sell to students and staff." They were surprised at the amount of money raised. "Rob's eyes light up at the chance to do anything 'outside the box.'"

Lain congratulated Alex Easley, Emily Richardson, Lillian Lindsey, Arianna Gilroy, Anastasia Timm, Dion Smith, Emmanuel Johnson, Chase McMillon, Joanna Ringstad, Georgia Pumroy and Savannah Fowler for their collaborative work. According to culinary teacher Mary Koselke, the construction students built "trees" for culinary students to display their creations for the annual "Cupcake Wars." In honor of the student teams, Lain presented a donation to Koselke for future culinary and construction projects.

Visit [www.CenterforCreativeSolutions.com](http://www.CenterforCreativeSolutions.com), email [creativity52@comcast.net](mailto:creativity52@comcast.net) or call (219) 326-7259 for more details.

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## Slow, But Positive for Sellers

Inventory is still low. Activity is not heavy, but houses are selling for good prices in the marketplace north of U.S. 12 from Beverly Shores to the Michigan line for the first four months of 2023.

Some statistics puzzle me.

1. The median and average sizes of houses being sold are modest. Median is 2,000 square feet and average is 2,400 square feet.
2. There are very few large houses being sold.
3. The median "price per square foot sold," including the cost of land, is \$254 per square foot: the current cost to build new without paying for the land. Seems more intelligent to buy an existing home than build a new one.

A few houses sell after 100 days on the market for close to their latest (lower) listing price. But it is still right to say your house is overpriced if it has not sold after three weeks on the market.

The inventory is stuck at about 20 houses on the market at a time. Before COVID, we had about 100 houses most of the time. It dips down to 10 or 12 houses for sale occasionally.

If you own a second home and want to sell and not repurchase here, it is a very good time to put your house on the market.

If you need to buy another house near the beach after you sell, you will have few places to choose from, and you will pay as much per square foot for your replacement home as you sold your current house for.

Building new is not as bad as during the COVID years of 2021-2022, but it is still between \$250 and \$350 a square foot for modest finishes inside and out after you own the land. \$400 per square foot is not unusual.

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## The Complex Perspectives of “Citizen”

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead*

The title of Lubeznik Center for the Arts’ new exhibit, “Citizen,” caught my attention. A postcard stated the focus is “excluded histories of marginalized communities and the current state of those communities as they face the realities of climate change and political setbacks.”

How, I wondered, would the concept reveal itself artistically? Where would the two intersect: citizen and artmaking?

Turns out, I didn’t need to be concerned.

The show debuted March 3 at the LCA, 101 W. Second St. It answers that inquiry in a way some might find confrontational, others validating and reaffirming. I asked LCA Director Janet Bloch about the title and guest curator, Chicago artist Sam Kirk.

“I personally asked Sam to jury because I knew her from a previous exhibition that I had curated, ‘Well Behaved Women’ (2020),” Bloch said. “She is smart, talented, articulate and her work is super hot right now. She wanted to curate an exhibit with us. She picked the theme with regard to our audience and to our core values of relevance and inclusion.”

Bloch continued.

“Sam has connections with everyone, and she is extremely talented and well-respected. She wanted to give artists unknown to the mainstream an opportunity, and I loved that idea. I had great trust in Sam because of my past dealings with her.”

Relevance and inclusion: two words that strike at the heart of this exhibit and the broader art world.

Such concerns cannot be ignored. As I’ve often said, artists are a product of the time and place in which they exist. As a viewer, you will be confronted with the emotional reality, the relevance, of other people’s views, which can be challenging, yet rewarding, informative and admirable.

For “Citizen,” the exhibiting artists include: Sarah Atlas, Nicci Briann, William Estrada, Anne Heisler, Sergio Maciel, Brittany Maldonado, Joseph Josué Mora, Hilesh Patel, CRZ PRZ, André Rodríguez, Christian Roldán, noemi rose, Denise Ruiz, Jessica Sabogal, Diana Solís, Angie Vasquez, Vanessa Viruet and Mer Young.

### The Inquisitive Artist

Linda Weigel



Entering the Hyndman Gallery, you are struck by a large black-and-white banner suspended center stage. “Sanctuary For Our People You Are Safe Here You Belong” sets the stage for the visual artworks and poetry in this two-floor exhibit.

Turning to your right, you note noemi rose’s long black-and-white poem created for the exhibit, “Alien Dreams of a citizen Nation.” It begins as follows:

*put the U.S. flag in a blender  
red and blue make purple  
adding white unravels it to a soft pastel  
this country could be a lilac nation  
fragrant in the spring of beginnings  
every dream lifted by promises kept...*

Now, begin your visit. Be aware that with many of the artworks, the intent and symbolism behind the piece might not be readily apparent. You need to read the accompanying artist statement to fully appreciate what the artist is gifting you, the viewer, for your consideration.



“White Hoops Flag”/“Race Flags”/“Black Hoops Flag,” examples of fiber art by Vanessa Viruet.

For example, in the case of Vanessa Viruet’s “White Hoops Flag,” “Race Flags: Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Disqualified” and “Black Hoops Flag,” the initial presentation is appealing, interesting *and* puzzling. But look beyond the familiar bandanas and you’ll

discover a much deeper, complex message, one that is sure to be upsetting for some and liberating for others, especially those who feeling marginalized by current sociopolitical dynamics.

□

*“Art is the highest form of hope” – Gerhard Richter*

As a former art educator, I was particularly struck by works forming The Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project. It *“is a visual arts and education project that connects teaching artists and scholars to incarcerated students at Stateville Maximum Security Prison through classes, workshops, a policy think tank and guest lectures.”*

This particular grouping caught me unaware and after careful viewing deeply moved. What is expressed and how it is expressed is striking. Just thinking about the lives of these individuals, their incarceration, then their ability to articulate ideas through visual expression or poetic verse is hopeful. They are citizens despite current circumstances.



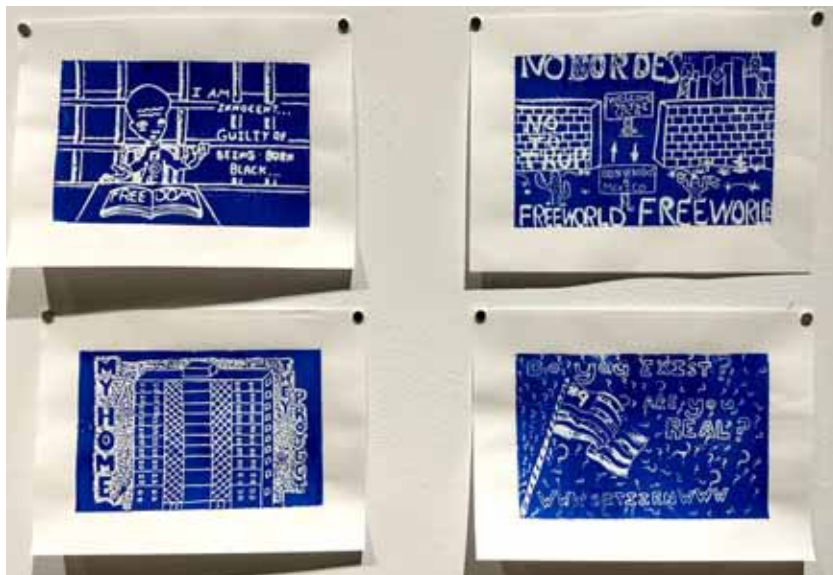
Henri Cartier-Bresson once said, “It is an illusion that photos are made with the camera...they are made with the eye, heart and head.”

In the case of the exhibit’s four photographers — André Rodríguez, Diana Solís, Nicci Briann, Angie Vasquez — that statement could not be truer. Each artist presents a direct link to their individual hearts and concerns.

With Vasquez, I found her eye, heart and head particularly interesting. Labeled as “photography on tapestry,” the two photographs give us forthright/full-sized figures. In the case of “Indigenous Peoples,” we see two individuals in a relaxed posture forward facing with feet firmly planted. Set against a background of teepee and distant trees, the figures project a reassured presence. Meanwhile, the folds of the draped piece form a directional triangle, re-



“Indigenous Peoples,” a photo on tapestry by Angie Vasquez.



Hand-pulled foam prints included with the PNAP presentation.

inforcing the eye to the central figures. The choice, too, to produce and print this particular photo on cloth as a form of tapestry is interesting, considering how historically, handwoven tapestries served more than one purpose and were highly transportable once rolled up. Considering, too, how many early indigenous/native peoples were nomadic, the concept of portability combined with contemporary photography is ingenious, reminding one of the resilience, dignity and pride of a people who, despite the odds when forced to pick up and move, survived as a culture, as a people and as citizens in the original sense.



“Art is a wound turned into light.” –

Continued on Page 22

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**Complex Perspectives** Continued from Page 21

Georges Braque

Painting as a medium has been around for thousands of years. In the hands of Anne Heisler, Sam Kirk, Sergio Maciel and CRZ PRZ, we find in the Hyndman Gallery examples of light, exposure, pain and perhaps disappointment.

Life isn't all roses. Bringing multiple voices and attention to the failings of society is a tradition in art, such as "Guernica" by Pablo Picasso, "The Scream" by Edvard Munch and in contemporary times Kara Walker's silhouettes and Kehinde Wiley's portraits.

Maciel presents two works, "Fresh Air" and "Masked #2." "Fresh Air" sees "two children back-to-back, but they face two very different Chicagos.



"Fresh Air," an oil on canvas by Sergio Maciel.

One child blows bubbles under blue skies. The other wears a gas mask against a backdrop of scrap metal and billowing smokestacks."

Beautifully painted, the message is quite clear. Those who exist in an upper class neighborhood live in a safer, cleaner environment than those in a lower class area, the results of which are an economic/structural form of racism. In addition to his two paintings, Maciel exhibits two sculptures with oil on wood block.

Before leaving the Hyndman Gallery, don't forget Young's and Maldonado's works. Young has three stunning digital collages, and Maldonado presents three mixed-media works. Both are multidisciplinary artists with an eye towards reinforcing the determination, strength and resilience of individuals. In Maldonado's case, she is "literally piecing women back together" through her collaged and painted works. Young's "In the beginning it was us" is a penetrating, beautifully executed collage. You won't want to miss these works.

*"If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him."* – John Fitzgerald Kennedy

The exhibit continues upstairs in the Brinka/Cross and Susan Block galleries. Within the artists and poets here, the freedom of vision and poetic verse are there to nourish not only our culture and society, but also our minds and hearts.

In Brinka/Cross, we find Mora's installation/participation presentation. Titled "Undocumented Projects: Ready? Set? Go! Typewriter Intervention," we encounter a black cloth-covered table with a typewriter and postcards, with typed postcards clipped onto hanging ribbons. Visitors are encouraged to participate by typing their own postcards.

Additionally, Sam Kirk and CRZ PRZ contribute a painting each to this gallery space.

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"I came all this way, it's gonna be worth it" offers Kirk's mixed media on canvas. It features a woman in profile wearing a dimensional head scarf (hand sewn onto the canvas) against a background of stylized buildings. Created in her signature style, it is a wonderful piece: beautifully executed, and a great example of why there is growing international interest in her work. It also is a personal reflection on her culture and role in society as an artist, with a voice and heart producing thoughtful, cutting edge art.

CRZ PRZ offers "State Bird": a house paint, spray paint and acrylic on canvas work. The provided statement explains the artist works with various sources and the "language of symbolism." Birds are an inspiration and "favorite subject matter." This particular painting is a fine example of his fascination with birds as symbols and their significance throughout various societies and cultures. Firstly, I marveled at his ability to combine so many types of paint medium into a cohesive, intriguing painting. His skill at doing so is admirable. The layering of colors and line is exquisite. I could get lost in the work the longer I spent with it.

The opportunity to experience fine poetry — spoken and written — is stimulating, thoughtful and humbling. Mounted on the wall opposite Mora's piece, we find the Chicago ACT collective, including Patel, Estrada and Atlas, with two interesting examples of their poetic work. The first features six poems by Patel, along with accompanying hand screen printed words on red sulphite paper.

Patel's six poems are insightful. One untitled work begins as follows:

*& what if I told you every day I drop off my son at school*

*his farewell is I'll see you in the stars & it used to be I'll*

*see you when the sun explodes but the other parents would stare &*

*I made a face & he saw that face & then we were in the stars...*

The second grouping features hand screen printed words on blue and black sulfite papers, with a suspended vinyl flag inches away from the wall-mounted works. The plastic vinyl and threaded transparent hanging is by Viruet. Take your time to read and ponder the words gifted to you. Afterwards, move on to the Susan Block Gallery and Denise Ruiz's "The Honeycomb Healing Room" installation.

Once you enter this gallery, you'll find a cheerful, yellow painted room, suspended plants used in aromatherapy such as lavender and eucalyptus. The back wall utilizes black outlines representing the mockup of an apothecary, with small packets of actual herbs available to a visitor. There are sounds of birds and water, a corner with a meditation pillow and headphones, and another opposite corner holding a chair to sit in, relax and take it all in. Note as well Roldán's acrylic on canvas painting, "Migration."



"The Honeycomb Healing Room," a corner chair by Denise Ruiz.

The voices in "Citizen" offer a revealing and rewarding journey for those keeping an open mind. With questionable response to contemporary art and art education in the news, the exhibit stands as a means of understanding, of interaction and serious consideration.

### More about "Citizen"

Addition information about Sam Kirk is available at [www.iamsamkirk.com](http://www.iamsamkirk.com), Facebook or Instagram. There are a number of fine YouTube videos documenting the artist's works.

The LCA show closes June 16. Family Day is from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, June 10.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COMPLETE REMODELING</li> <li>• ROOM ADDITIONS</li> <li>• SIDING</li> <li>• DECKS</li> <li>• GARAGES</li> </ul>	 <p><b>219-861-6341</b> <a href="http://www.hullingsconstruction.com">www.hullingsconstruction.com</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW CONSTRUCTION</li> <li>• 4 SEASON ROOMS</li> <li>• CONCRETE</li> <li>• MASONRY</li> <li>• FLOORING</li> </ul>
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# A Night to Remember



LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra brought the final subscription concert of its 50th anniversary season to a memorable close April 22 at LaPorte Civic Auditorium. In addition to performances by The Texas Tenors and Purdue Varsity Glee Club, LCSO honored two of its own. One was Chuck Steck for more than 20 years as associate conductor. The other was JoFran Bendix, celebrated for 50 years with LCSO. The announcement also was made of the "JoFran Bendix Principal Horn Chair" upon her retirement. All photos by Bob Wellinski.





## “Beef” Takes a Brave Look at American Rage

by Andrew Tallackson



Ali Wong and Steven Yeun star as motorists whose road rage escalates into all-out war in “Beef.”

“Beef” is touted as a dark comedy...which is putting it mildly.

It’s a horror show. A train wreck where you frequently sit in stunned shock. Right when it seems the 10-episode Netflix series cannot get bleaker, that these characters have crossed every line possible, they kick things up a notch.

So why watch? Why engage yourself in this Netflix smash? Because, for all the shock value — and believe me, there is loads of it — “Beef” holds up a mirror to society and asks, why have we become so angry? Lit fuses seconds away from erupting?

What the show has to say is compelling.

Netflix sold “Beef” to audiences as a “road rage” dramedy. Road rage is the least of the troubles for these folk.

Amy Lau (Ali Wong) is prepping to sell her plant-selling business for a cool \$10 million. Danny Cho (Steven Yeun) is a struggling contractor living with his younger brother. When these two nearly collide while driving, their antagonistic behavior creates a ruckus...and gets uploaded to social media.

From there, “Beef” becomes an intense character study. Amy and Danny cannot see beyond themselves, nor the miseries they inflict on those around them. The back-and-forth antics between them starts like playground bullying. Danny, coaxing his

way into Amy’s home when she’s gone and creating a mess, she flirting with Danny’s listless brother (Young Mazino). Then, the squabbles escalate to all-out war. These two are out for blood, with careers and loved ones the casualties.

Why are these two so hateful? From where is all this aggression coming? Amy and Danny cannot be dismissed simply as entitled millennials. Truth is, these two are terrified of failure, of being defined as such in the eyes of society, family and worse, themselves. They see things in each other that scare them, namely that they are more alike than they think.

Wong, a stand-up comic whose “Always Be My Maybe” was the surprise delight of 2019, is a revelation. We see a woman imploding day by day, horrified by the notion that she’s not only a bad person, but that she has *always* been one. Through Wong, we see the collapses within, and the effect on her mostly devoted husband, George (Joseph Lee), and young daughter, June (Remy Holt),

We know Yeun can act, not just from six seasons on “The Walking Dead,” but also from his Oscar-nominated work in 2020’s “Minari.” But here, his performance runs the whole gamut of emotions: arrested development, redemption, regression. There are times when it seems Amy is the worst of the



two, but right when Danny appears on higher ground, it's back to lies and childish antics. Aligning with the wrong influences, including his cousin Isaac (David Choe), a trash-talking misfit who flits in and out of prison.

I braced for the worst when Danny begins attending church. Hollywood delights in mocking religion and what it sees as its merry band of hypocrites. But "Beef" offers a rare glimpse into the Korean evangelical movement in America that is honest, even beautiful in its directness. In an early episode, Danny's first visit to church involves the praise team performing Elevation Worship's "O Come to the Altar." The opening passages couldn't be more telling of Danny's anguish — *Are you hurting and broken within? Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin?* — and he breaks down, sobbing. It is a beautifully self-aware moment on Yeun's behalf.

But what "Beef" shows is the damage within Amy and Danny blinding out all outside influences. And because of that, much of the show makes you cringe. The rough language, the outlandish behavior, the flippant attitude toward sex and relationships: it's overwhelming. Because of that, the show feels like it's two to three episodes too long, nearly overstaying its welcome.

Right when you ask yourself how much more you can take, the final episode arrives. You brace for a



"Beef" offers a rare glimpse into the Korean-American evangelical movement.

bloodbath. Indeed, the series appears headed that way. But instead, writer-director Lee Sung Jin pulls back. The confrontation between Amy and Danny is one of words. A dialogue is established. What happens from there, I won't say, but it is proof that "Beef" has the guts to see these characters through to the end.

In a strange way, I was moved by the final episode. Can't say I grew to like Amy and Danny, but I understood them. Whether this is it or more seasons follow, one thing's for sure. "Beef" lingers in your thoughts way longer than you anticipated.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at [atallackson@gmail.com](mailto:atallackson@gmail.com)



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## Celebrating “Episode IV” on “Star Wars Day”



Harrison Ford (from left), Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill became part of cinema history with the release of “Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope.”

Chicago’s Nortown Theatre was the embodiment of the grand old movie palace. Situated in the West Ridge neighborhood, at North Western and West Rosemont, its reputation for opulence was, in part, derived from its decorative use of terra-cotta and the ceiling’s zodiac motifs.

On Memorial Day weekend in 1977, a nearly 7-year-old boy hurriedly tugged at his parents to find the best seats in the theater’s vast auditorium. He was dying to see the movie there, the one every other kid at school had already seen.

“Star Wars.”

Lights within the auditorium dimmed, a trailer played, then the 20th Century Fox logo flashed across the screen. It was time. As the studio logo’s fanfare theme continued, a tease of a preface appeared. “*A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away.*” George Lucas’ space-age answer to the fairy tale introduction “once upon a time.” A moment of silence, then, *bam*, John Williams’ triumphant score as the words “Star Wars” burst onto the screen. The opening crawl got us up to speed on events already in motion. The galaxy was in turmoil, a terrifying new threat called the Death Star was nearly operation-

past  
present

Andrew Tallackson



al, the brave Princess Leia having stolen its plans. The camera panned down to a planet shimmering in blue, right as a spaceship that seemed to stretch for miles inched closer to Leia’s cruiser.

My nearly 7-year-old self was transfixed, my gaze alternating between the stars on screen and the twinkling lights high above on the ceiling. It was the closest thing a child might have to an out-of-body experience, where it felt as if the movie had extracted my imagination and placed it onto the screen. Where a movie, and the experience of it, engulfed me whole.

There are certain movie moments I wish could be experienced for the first time again. That thrill of discovery. Like the thud of the T-Rex as it ap-



proached the vehicles in “Jurassic Park.” The last 20 minutes of “The Shawshank Redemption.”

My introduction to a galaxy far, far away ranks at the top.

“Star Wars” and “Jaws” are dubiously credited with destroying the old Hollywood system, where studios now thought in terms of the next summer blockbuster. The event movie.

Nonetheless, what does it say about a film, its legacy and longevity, that it has its own special day? That’s right. This edition of *The*

*Beacher* arrives on May 4, also known as “Star Wars Day.” The day “Episode IV” arrived in theaters.

It is a tribute to Lucas that his vision stands the test of time. Sure, as adults, we can now pick at the scabs. But as unadulterated escapist entertainment, it remains the stuff of myth and legend.

Lucas was drawing on the space sagas of his youth, particularly the “Flash Gordon” serials. For me, as a youngster, it tapped into all the right elements. Space. Spaceships. Robots. Heroes. Villains. Ray guns. Strange creatures. And a kick-ass princess (Carrie Fisher was my first crush...before Elisabeth Shue arrived seven years later in “The Karate Kid”).

It strikes me as ironic, now, that the movie was considered a low-budget risk. Only \$9.5 million. Compare that to something today like “Avatar: The Way of Water,” which cost \$400 million *before* marketing. But to the child in me, it felt like the most extravagant adventure ever. You appreciate, more than ever, how Lucas assembled a crew that relied on every trick in the book to make you believe that, yes, this crazy, far-out world did exist.

Memories linked to the movie are immeasurable. Playing with the Kenner action figures. Laying on the floor, listening to Williams’ two-record soundtrack, the music so cinematic in its own right, you could play the story out in your head.

And of the eight times I saw the movie in theaters, four were at Dunes Plaza Cinema in Michigan City. That was when a movie only played on one screen. Where, at times, the line waiting to get into Dunes Plaza stretched way past Kmart.

Now, 46 years after its release, we continue to celebrate “Star Wars Day.” When I first showed “Episode IV” to my son, back in 2015 before “The Force Awakens” hit theater, my enthusiasm had not dimmed, although the experience was now peppered with perspective. For instance, after that tense shootout aboard Leia’s space cruiser, the pace of the movie felt a tad sluggish. Some of the dia-



John Williams’ score during the climactic ceremony is among some of his best work.

logue was lazy. Fisher’s stab at a “British” accent is clumsy at best.

That adult cynicism, thankfully, got kicked to the curb. The primal beauty of the movie, the thrill of it all, was still present:

- The haunting image, gorgeously accented by Williams’ score, of Alec Guinness, as Obi-Wan Kenobi, removing his hood for the first time.
- The Cantina sequence, complete with its bonkers Benny Goodman tribute.
- The bad-ass cool of Harrison Ford’s Han Solo.
- A take-charge Princess Leia, grabbing a blaster and firing a hole into the wall as a means of escape.
- The dizzying climax as tie fighters zip through the Death Star.
- Williams’ stirring march as our heroes receive their medals.

The “Star Wars” universe has expanded over the decades to include sequels, prequels, spinoffs and animated and live-action TV series. “Episode IV” isn’t even the best of the lot. To me, that honor goes to “The Empire Strikes Back” and “Rogue One.” But this was the one that started it all. The one that introduced us to this world. It remains firmly etched in my memory, in my love for cinema and my adoration for what Lucas achieved.

It is a classic.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at [atallackscon@gmail.com](mailto:atallackscon@gmail.com)

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## Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Logs to Lustrons Talk 2023 from 6:30-9 p.m. Friday, May 5, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** The illustrated talk highlights the park's history and preservation, including Calumet Region heritage. Also planned is a brief preview of areas on the May 6 tour, including rehabilitation work at the Good Fellow Club Youth Camp Lodge. The program kicks off with a reception and light refreshments.
- **Indiana Landmarks and the National Park Service will present the Logs to Lustrons Tour on Saturday, May 6.** The focus is a century of architecture, including restored residences not normally open to the public and vacant landmarks. That includes everything from rustic landmarks to Mid-Century Modern. Tour shuttles depart every 30 minutes from Indiana Dunes Visitor Center starting at 9 a.m., with the last departing at 3 p.m. The tour lasts approximately three hours. Reservations are required. General admission is \$30 + \$3.25 fee, or \$25 + \$3.13 fee for Indiana Landmarks members. Visit [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) and search Logs to Lustrons for reservations, or call (317) 639-4534.

□

May 24 is the deadline to apply for the National Park Service Teacher Ranger Teacher program.

K-12 teachers work in the park and learn about resources, participate in a lesson-planning webinar, develop at least one lesson to be used at school, assist the park with an educational project and increase understanding of place-based learning. Required is 240 hours participation June 12-July 30.

The University of Denver, a partner in the project, will pay a cash stipend to participants who pass all requirements. All questions can be submitted to IDNP Education Specialist Christine Gerlach at [Christine\\_gerlach@nps.gov](mailto:Christine_gerlach@nps.gov) or (219) 395-1885. An application is at [tinyurl.com/4rfrxbb6](http://tinyurl.com/4rfrxbb6). An application request also can be sent directly to Gerlach.

*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

*The following programs will be offered:*

- **Wildflower Wander at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 6.** Meet at the Nature Center for the easy discovery walk to see which woodland spring wildflowers are blooming.
- **Hunting for Herptiles at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 6.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center for the one-mile moderate hike.
- **"Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O" at 10 a.m. Sunday, May 7.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center to help fill bird feeders and play the game.
- **Turtle Time at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 7.** Meet at the nature center to learn more about turtles.

*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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**“Read Between the Crimes”**

“Read Between the Crimes: An Evening with Two Mystery Writers” is from 5-8 p.m. Friday, May 5, at Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St.

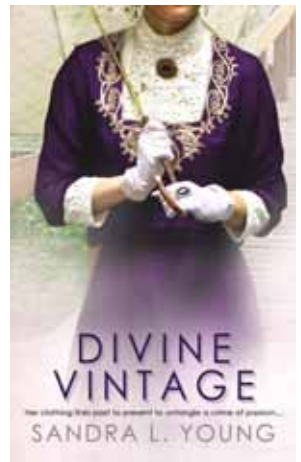
Local writers Nancy Nau Sullivan and Sandra Young will read excerpts from their latest books and participate in a question-and-answer session. Readings begin at 5:45 p.m.

Sullivan and Young also will sign books, available for sale, after the Q&A session.

Sullivan invented the life and times of Blanche Murningham in her four-part mystery series, which debuted with Saving Tuna Street in 2020. Sullivan’s other titles in the series include Trouble Down Mexico Way, Mission Improbable: Vietnam and A Deadly Irish Secret, which will be released July 11 from Light Messages/Torchflame. A former newspaper journalist, Sullivan taught English in Argentina, in the Peace Corps in Mexico and at a boys prison in Florida. She lives in Northwest Indiana.

Young is a first-time author sharing her passion for vintage clothing with her mystery novel, Divine Vintage. The story follows vintage boutique owner Tess Burton who, when modeling an Edwardian trousseau gown, opens her mind to witness a century-old murder, especially as her version disputes local lore. Young also lives in Northwest Indiana.

The program, part of First Friday events, is free. Contact LCA Marketing Manager Samantha Bean at (219) 874-4900 or sbean@lubeznikcenter.org for more details.



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## Beverly Shores Depot

May signals the arrival of two exhibits at The Beverly Shores Depot Museum and Gallery: “Celebrating Beverly Shores Veterans” and the “5x5” art show.

A reception for the exhibits, which run through May 28, is from 5-7 p.m. Friday, May 12.

The veterans display will feature memorabilia, as well as dozens of historic photographs. Eighteen are by the father of Beverly Shores resident Carol Westbrook. The late Chester F. Gartski, who grew up in Chicago during the Great Depression, was drafted in 1944, becoming the photographer in Gen. Mark Clark’s occupation army. One of his most famous photos is on display: a portrait of Gen. George Patton riding a white stallion as the U.S. Army liberated them from the Germans.



An example of a 5x5 work.

A ceremony to honor veterans is at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 20, on the Depot grounds. The event will feature local veterans, a 21-gun salute, the Krueger Middle School chorus and refreshments.

The “5x5” show is back for its sixth year. Local and aspiring artists work on 5x5 canvases, creating paintings, photos, 3-D works, weavings and other works. On May 12, those who purchase \$55 tickets online ([tinyurl.com/ypvs32vu](http://tinyurl.com/ypvs32vu)), or at the Depot at 3 p.m. that day, line up sometimes an hour before doors open to get a first crack at tagging 5x5 works they can buy with tickets. At 8 p.m., any works not tagged go online ([www.bsdepot.com](http://www.bsdepot.com)) for sale. All proceeds support the non-profit Depot, which is located at 525 S. Broadway.

## Michigan City Video Fest

The Michigan City Video Fest will present a variety of short videos, including a documentary honoring local suffragist Naomi Anderson, at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 6, at Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St.

Most of the videos are by local talent, or about local subject matter, although some entries are from Los Angeles, Europe and New Zealand. One entry is a trailer from an upcoming animated musical about Belle Gunness.

Visit [www.MCVideoFest.com](http://www.MCVideoFest.com) or Facebook/MCVideoFest, or email [info@MCVideoFest.com](mailto:info@MCVideoFest.com) for more information.



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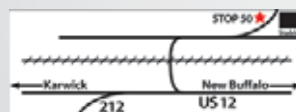
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## Michigan City Public Library

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:*

- **"Star Wars Day" at 4 p.m. Thursday, May 4.** Celebrate "Star Wars Day" with games, crafts and goodie bags. No registration is required.
- **MC Video Fest at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 6.** Most of the videos are by local talent, or about local subject matter. Visit [www.MCVideoFest.com](http://www.MCVideoFest.com) for more details.
- **Mother's Day Craft at 3 p.m. Monday, May 8.** Children and teens can make a craft.
- **Great Decisions at 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 8.** The foreign-policy discussion program continues its 25th season. The discussion is "Iran at a

Crossroads." Reading material is available at the circulation desk. Call 873-3049 for more details.

- **Creative Tech Activities from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in May.** Children ages 6-17 can create with LEGO WeDo, Micro:bits, paper circuits, Ozobots and 3-D. Children 12 and younger must have a parent or guardian attend.
- **Fairy Tale Scavenger Hunt in May.** Visit Youth Services, find all the hidden fairy tale characters and win a prize.
- **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens weekly.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Maker-space. 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.
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30 p.m. Thursdays in May.** 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.

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

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### Harbor Country Hikers



Coffee Creek Preserve.

Harbor Country Hikers will walk the trails of Chesterton's Coffee Creek Preserve, 2401 Village Point, at 1 p.m. EDT Saturday, May 6.

Coffee Creek features environments such as a pond, wetlands, woodlands and prairie. Hikers have a choice between a paved, ADS-compliant trail of 0.4 to 0.75 miles or a longer three-mile trail through the preserve's 157 acres.

More than 400 native plant species have been identified on the property. Coffee Creek (named for its color, the result of tannin from leaves) is one of the healthiest streams in the southern Lake Michigan watershed. It is home to salmon, trout and other fish. The preserve's trails are shared by hikers, birders, cyclists, fishermen and other nature lovers.

HCH President Pat Fisher will lead the hike, which is rated easy to moderately difficult. Those attending should dress for the weather and take plenty of water. Membership is preferred; however, the community is welcome. Visit [www.harborcountryhikers.com](http://www.harborcountryhikers.com) or Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook for more details.

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## Boys & Girls Clubs to Offer Summer Camps at Two Sites

For the first time, Boys & Girls Clubs of LaPorte County will offer its free summer camp at two locations: the Charles R. Westcott Club, 321 Detroit St., Michigan City, and Kesling Campus, 306 E. 18th St., LaPorte.

Summer camps include field trips, gym time, outdoor activities, STEM enrichment and arts and crafts. Held from 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays, they are open to children in kindergarten through eighth grade during the 2022-2023 school year.

The addition of the LaPorte site follows BGCLPC's launch of clubs at Lincoln Elementary School, Brighton Street Green Space and the Kesling Campus earlier this year. The organization also will increase its summertime capacity at its Michigan City location, which served 149 children last year. The partnership with Michigan City Area Schools and LaPorte Community School Corp. should result in more than 300 children served by the camps,



according to Michelle Shirk, BGCLPC chief executive officer.

Interested families can pre-register at [www.bgclpc.org/registration/](http://www.bgclpc.org/registration/). Early pre-registration is recommended, as summer programming typically fills quickly. The schedule is:

- Thursday, June 8 – LaPorte summer camp begins.
- Monday, June 12 – Michigan City summer camp begins.
- Wednesday, July 19 – LaPorte summer camp ends.
- Friday, July 21 – Michigan City summer camp ends.

Financial support for the 2023 summer camp program comes from Michigan City Community Enrichment Corp. and other supporters. The organization's Phase II expansion, including the addition of three new clubs in La-

Porte, is supported by the Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte.

Call (219) 873-2298 or email Shirk at [mshirk@bgclubmc.org](mailto:mshirk@bgclubmc.org) for more details.

## Native Plant Sale

May 20 is the deadline to submit orders for the Friends' 27th Annual Native Plant Sale, which is from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, June 3, at the Friends' office, 1000 W. Oak Hill Road, Porter.

Pre-sale ordering is recommended because only a limited quantity of each species is ordered from the supplier, Possibility Place Nursery. Every year, several varieties sell out to pre-sale customers. Volunteers fill orders in the sequence received. Individuals will be notified if a species is unavailable.

Order forms are available at [www.dunefriends.org](http://www.dunefriends.org). A link is on the Facebook page. Paper copies are available at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center and Indiana Dunes Tourism. Call (219) 707-3617 or email [nativeplants@dunefriends.org](mailto:nativeplants@dunefriends.org) for more details.

The day of the sale, parking is available either in the lot adjacent to Chellberg Farm or immediately to the north at the National Park's headquarters.

Admission is free, with open shopping available. Available are more than 90 native species, including: woodland flowering plants and ferns; dry, medium and wet prairie flowering plants; grasses, shrubs and trees; native grasses, woodlands and ferns. Plant varieties come in pots and are native to Northwest Indiana, Northeast Illinois and Southwest Michigan. Gardening consultants can answer questions. Take photos of proposed native garden sites. All profits support the Friends of Indiana Dunes.

  
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### LCSO New Education Manager

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra has named Jared Coller its new education manager effective June 5.

Coller is the band director of Rensselaer Middle and High Schools, as well as an LCSO percussion section member. He is a graduate of Valparaiso University and an endorsing artist with Artifact Percussion and Soul-tone Cymbals.

Donors to LCSO's "Music Forever" campaign made the position possible, LCSO Executive Director Tim King said in a press release.

Coller's full-time duties will include organizing the Drayton Family Education Concerts, coordinating the Student Apprentice Program, serving as the LCSO's liaison with Drew's Gift of Music, organizing the small ensemble offerings, serving as coordinator for the newly created Steck Family Music Education Fund, and staying in contact with regional music educators about LCSO opportunities and events.



Coller

### Northwest Indiana Green Drinks

"What Could You Do to Protect Native Wildlife?" is the topic of the next Northwest Indiana Green Drinks meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 4, through Facebook Live and Zoom.

Nicole Harmon, Humane Indiana Wildlife director, will emphasize the care needed for abandoned and injured animals.

The program is co-sponsored by Save the Dunes and Michigan City Sustainability Commission, with support from 219 Green-Connect.



Nicole Harmon

The Zoom link is [tinyurl.com/5xu6ab2j](https://tinyurl.com/5xu6ab2j). The meeting ID is 880 7219 5382, and the passcode is 429324. Email [NancyforVision@gmail.com](mailto:NancyforVision@gmail.com) for more details.

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# American Red Cross

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

- Edgewood Elementary School, 502 Boyd Circle, noon-5 p.m. Friday, May 5.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, May 8.
- Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St., 12:30-4:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 9.
- Marquette High School, 306 W. 10th St., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, May 11.

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.

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## Haiku Workshop Registration

Registration is open for a haiku workshop set for 3-4:30 p.m. EDT Saturday, June 10, at New Troy (Mich.) Community Center, 13372 California Road.

Award-winning poet Michael Kozubek, as part of “Gather & Author! Author!,” will lead the program. He has written and published more than 200 haiku, senryu, tanka and haibun. He also received second prize in the International Section of the 2017 Mainichi (Japan) Haiku Contest.

At 5 p.m. EDT, local author Vaughn Roycroft will give a presentation and reading. He is the author of The Severing Son (2022) and Bold Ascension (2023). A Q&A period will follow.

Free refreshments will be available. The suggested donation is \$5. Proceeds support new book purchases for the center’s lending library.

Call (269) 426-3909, or email [FriendsOfNewTroy@yahoo.com](mailto:FriendsOfNewTroy@yahoo.com) for more details.

## Shirley Heinze Spring Benefit

“Growing a Community of Stewards” is the theme of Shirley Heinze Land Trust’s annual spring benefit, which is at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, May 20, at Valparaiso’s William E. Urschel Pavilion, 63 Lafayette St.

Dale and Nancy Nichols, Leslie Shad and Joseph Brennan, and Anne and Tim Walsh, as well as corporate sponsors Cleveland-Cliffs and NIPSCO, committed to match pre-event donations up to \$100,000.

The event will feature champagne, jazz music, a live auction and dinner. Tickets start at \$150, with proceeds helping preserve and restore natural lands and waters in Northwest Indiana, and engaging people in nature and conservation. Tickets can be purchased at [www.heinzetrust.org/springbenefit2023/](http://www.heinzetrust.org/springbenefit2023/). Call (219) 242-8558 or visit Facebook at [www.facebook.com/heinzetrust](http://www.facebook.com/heinzetrust) for more details

**Prayer to the Blessed Virgin**  
(Never known to fail.)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the ‘Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.



### Chesterton Art Center

Two new exhibits, Matthew Berg's "Lake Mill Club" and Abbie Parmele's "An Invitation—Energy is Everything," run through May 30.

A free artist talk with Berg is from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 10. A reception with both artists is from noon-2 p.m. Saturday, May 20.

Berg's narrative paintings tell stories of an idyllic childhood at the lake surrounded by loved ones, companionship and nature. Parmele's oil paintings are a blending of ethereal abstracts and landscapes.



Matthew Berg's "Hunters," an acrylic on raw canvas.

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

### NB Library Community Forum

Jacques Derrida and deconstruction is the topic of the next New Buffalo Library Community Forum at 6:30 p.m. EDT Tuesday, May 9, at the library, 33 N. Thompson St.

The speaker is Albert Fernandez, North Central College professor emeritus of cultural history and humanities. Deconstruction is a mode of critique, originated by Derrida, that exposes concealed contradictions and weak spots in literary and philosophical texts. Time permitting, the talk will conclude with an example of deconstructive criticism.

The free program is supported by the Friends of the New Buffalo Library.

### Monday Musicale

Monday Musicale, in celebrating National Music Week, will present a free concert at 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 10, at Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St.

National Music Week is sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs, Monday Musicale's parent organization. It has been observed annually during the first full week in May (the first Sunday through the second Sunday) since 1924. This year's theme is "Music...is a Worldwide Adventure."

Donations to the Monday Musicale Scholarship Fund will be accepted. Call Ange Benz at (219) 874-3754 for more details.

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## LaPorte County Public Library

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

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

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



Patrons are no longer charged daily overdue fines. Customers only will be charged for items they damage, lose or never return.



*The following programs are planned:*

- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, May 5, at the main library.** Children ages 3-5 with their caregivers experience stories, songs, crafts and activities.
- **Family Pajama Storytime from 6-6:30 p.m. Monday, May 8, in the main library multi-purpose room.** The program focuses on stories and songs. Guests can wear pajamas and take a favorite stuffed animal.
- **Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, May 9, in the main library Meeting Room B.** Refreshments will not be served, but guests can take coffee or tea.
- **Getting to Know Your Apple Device (adults 19+) from 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday, May 10, in the main library Study Cafe.** The focus is iPhones and iPads. Take personal devices.
- **Virtual Author Talk with Jena Friedman (adults 19+) from 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, May 10.** Friedman is an Academy Award nominee. Register at <https://libraryc.org/laportelibrary/26167>

*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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## Intaglio Printmaking Workshops

A four-week series of Intaglio printmaking workshops runs from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. EDT Saturdays, May 6-27, at Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich.

Printmaker Hank Mattson will provide the basics of Intaglio printmaking through two projects: one drypoint on copper and one line etching with aquatint. Materials are provided.

Mattson is an interdisciplinary artist living in Kalamazoo, where he relocated to from Utah for a residency at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Northern Arizona University and studied Italian art and culture in Siena, Italy. He is the artist-in-residence for the printmaking department of the Kirk Newman Art School within the KIA.

The class fee is \$150 for Berrien Artist Guild members and \$165 for non-members. Visit [tinyurl.com/yc4dzjz5](http://tinyurl.com/yc4dzjz5) to register.

## Friends of Beverly Shores Sale

Friends of Beverly Shores will host a Dunes vintage non-profit resale store estate sale at 4980 W. Dunes Highway on Saturday-Sunday, May 6-7.

Times are 10 a.m.-3 p.m. May 6 and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. May 7.

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## “Big George Foreman” is Entertaining...But All Surface

by Andrew Tallackson



“Big George Foreman” recreates “The Rumble in the Jungle” between Foreman (Khris Davis, left) and Muhammad Ali (Sullivan Jones).

“Big George Foreman” actually is two movies, each duking it out for control until the last act, when everything clicks.

On one hand, it’s a square, straightforward sports flick. On the other, faith-based uplift. Even when the tone radically shifts from one to the other, the movie is always watchable.

It’s just not especially moving. The movie, like so many biopics, is all surface. George Foreman’s life is anything but predictable, and we might have made a greater connection if the film had dug deep.

Ably directed and co-written by George Tillman Jr. (“The Hate U Give”), the movie depicts George (Khris Davis as an adult) as a casualty of extreme poverty, always fighting to stay afloat. That temperament translates to boxing when he enters the Job Corps and earns a mentor in Doc Broadus (Oscar-winner Forest Whitaker), once a fighter, now a Job Corps staffer with an eye for boxers.

Davis, as George, narrates the picture, but the voice-overs never really enter this guy’s mind. They exist to string along one key event to the next. A line late in the film describes George as always angry because he felt the world hated him. Why not give Davis scenes where he opens up, vents? But as played by Davis, he comes across as a country bumpkin with zero rage control. Sonja Sohn, however, as his mother, is far more convincing. The actress is pure exhaustion: weary persistence amid daily struggles.

★ ★ 1/2

### “Big George Foreman”

*Running time: 129 minutes.*

*Rated PG-13 for some sports violence.*

(Tillman also might have better cast actors who at least look and sound like Muhammad Ali and Howard Cosell.)

The movie does not shy away from George’s infidelities that led to his first marriage’s collapse. It also depicts him under fire for not being more active in the civil rights movement.

At the midpoint, “Big George Foreman” recreates the fighter’s near-death experience that triggered his long dormant faith. The scene is awkwardly written — overly written, in fact — to where it feels artificial and calculated. And it is here the movie centers on him becoming a Baptist preacher, remarriage and returning to the ring to restore his title. Davis isn’t a skilled-enough actor to sell it...until the 45-year-old Foreman takes on boxer Michael Moorner. Here, everything about Davis’ performance is beautifully achieved. A fighter back in the ring, but with an inner peace that redefines his approach to the sport.

I liked “Big George Foreman.” It’s worth a look. I just wanted more from it.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at [atallackson@gmail.com](mailto:atallackson@gmail.com)



### In the Area

**May 4** — “Star Wars Day”, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 4** — Northwest Indiana Green Drinks, 6:30 p.m., Facebook Live & Zoom. Zoom link: [tinyurl.com/5xu6ab2j](https://tinyurl.com/5xu6ab2j). Meeting IDL: 880 7219 5382. Passcode: 429324. Info: [NancyforVision@gmail.com](mailto:NancyforVision@gmail.com)

**May 5** — First Friday Open Studios, 5-8 p.m., St. Mary’s Arts, 326 W. 10th St.

**May 5** — “Read Between the Crimes: An Evening with Two Mystery Writers,” 5-8 p.m., Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: (219) 874-4900, [sbean@lubeznikcenter.org](mailto:sbean@lubeznikcenter.org)

**May 5-7, 11-14** — “Murdered to Death,” Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St. Times: 7:30 p.m. Thur.-Sat./2 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$17/adults, \$12/children 12 & younger. Reservations: [www.footlightplayers.org](http://www.footlightplayers.org)

**May 5-7, 12-14** — “Church Basement Ladies,” LaPorte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St. Times: 7:30 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$17/adults, \$16/seniors 55+, \$13/students with ID. Reservations: [www.laportelittletheatreclub.com](http://www.laportelittletheatreclub.com)

**May 6** — The Potawatomi District Pinewood Derby Race, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte. Info: [carpenter46350@yahoo.com](mailto:carpenter46350@yahoo.com)

**May 6** — MC Video Fest, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 6-7** — Friends of Beverly Shores resale store estate sale, 4980 W. Dunes Highway. Times: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. May 6/10 a.m.-2 p.m. May 7.

**May 8** — Mother’s Day Craft, 3 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 8** — Family Pajama Storytime, 6-6:30 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 8** — Great Decisions, 6:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 9** — Page Turners Book Club, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 10** — Monday Musicale free concert, 6 p.m.,

Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 874-3754.

**May 10** — Virtual Author Talk with Jena Friedman (adults 19+), 7-8 p.m., through LaPorte County Public Library. Registration: <https://libraryc.org/laportelibrary/26167>

**Through May 28** — “Celebrating Beverly Shores Veterans” & “5x5” art show, The Beverly Shores Depot Museum and Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Opening reception: 5-7 p.m. May 12. Info: [www.bsdepot.com](http://www.bsdepot.com)

**Through June 30** — Artwork by the Rev. David Kime, the Rev. Roque Meraz, Dr. John Wilhelm, The Legacy Center Gallery at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Center hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: (219) 872-9196.

**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.

**Mondays in LaPorte** — Weekly line dance lessons, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1130, 181 W. McClung Road. Cost: \$5. Beginner dance lessons, 2-3 p.m. Improver dance lessons, 3-4 p.m. Info: (219) 363-8301.

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

**Tuesdays in May** — Creative Tech Activities, 3:30-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**Saturdays through Oct. 28** — Michigan City Farmers Market, 8 a.m.-noon, Eighth & Washington streets. Info: [www.emichigancity.com](http://www.emichigancity.com)

### In the Region

**May 5** — Logs to Lustrons Talk 2023, 6:30-9 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)

**May 6** — Logs to Lustrons Tour, Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Tours leave every 30 minutes starting at 9 a.m. Cost: general admission — \$30 + \$3.25 fee, Indiana Landmarks members — \$25 + \$3.13 fee. Info/reservations: [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com), (317) 639-4534.

**May 6** — Friends of New Troy “Gather, Garden & Grow!,” 10 a.m.-noon EDT, Friends of New Troy (Mich.) Community Center, 13372 California Road. Info: [www.friendsofnewtroy.org](http://www.friendsofnewtroy.org)

**May 6** — Wildflower Wander, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**May 6** — Harbor Country Hikers, 1 p.m. EDT, Coffee Creek Preserve, 2401 Village Point, Chesterton. Info: [www.harborcountryhikers.com](http://www.harborcountryhikers.com), Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook



**May 6** — Hunting for Herptiles, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**May 6** — The Fortunate Sons: A Tribute To Creedence Clearwater Revival, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$30 + \$5 convenience fee/\$55 + \$5 convenience fee. Reservations: [www.acornlive.org](http://www.acornlive.org)

**May 7** — “Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O,” 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**May 7** — Turtle Time, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

**May 9** — New Buffalo Library Community Forum, 6:30 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St.

**Through May 14** — “Efflorescence: New Works by Ann Latinovich,” The Center for Visual and Performing Arts, 1040 Ridge Road, Munster. Info: [Brandon@SouthShoreArtsOnline.org](mailto:Brandon@SouthShoreArtsOnline.org)

**Through May 18** — Stephanie Samaitis Carnell exhibit, The Village Gallery @ Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

**Through May 19** — 29th Annual Juried Arts Exhibition, Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Info: [www.artbarn-school.org](http://www.artbarn-school.org), (219) 462-9009.

**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)

**Through May 30** — Exhibits, Matthew Berg’s “Lake Mill Club”/Abbie Parmele’s “An Invitation—Energy is Everything,” Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Free artist talk: 6-7:30 p.m. May 10. Reception: noon-2 p.m. May 20. Info: (219) 926-4711, [www.chestertonart.org](http://www.chestertonart.org)

**Through June 2** — “So Far: Nancy Hejna Artworks in Exhibit,” Marshall J. Gardner Center for the Arts, 540 S. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Opening reception: 6-8 p.m. May 5. Artist talk/reading/book signing: 2-4 p.m. May 21. Info: (219) 885-9114.

**Through June 4** — Andy Sweet’s “South Beach,” Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: [www.krasl.org/andy-sweets-south-beach](http://www.krasl.org/andy-sweets-south-beach)

**Through July 31** — “Budgie’s Garden” Art Show, Front Street Crossing, 227 S. Front St., Dowagiac, Mich. Featured artist: Lisa Quinlan-Heibutzki (past collaborator with *Beacher* columnist Charley McKelvy).

**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 in Chesterton** — European Market, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Broadway & Third Street (next to Thomas Centennial Park). Info: <https://tinyurl.com/yc8z2utd>

**Vickers Theatre** — *Now Showing*: “Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope.” Time: 7 p.m. May 4. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: [www.vickerstheatre.com](http://www.vickerstheatre.com), (269) 756-3522.

## Porter County Museum Tours

A free, 30-minute guided tour is offered at noon Saturdays, with no reservations required, at Porter County Museum, 20 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso.

On display in the Eunice Slagle Gallery is “Connections,” which centers on Porter County and its people through seemingly unrelated artifacts from the permanent collection. The objects are organized into 12 stations, each a small exhibit exploring its own theme, covering a wide range of topics and a time line from the 18th to the 21st century.

The tours include stops at the Robert Cain Gallery, which displays a rotating selection of works from Porter County artists.

The museum is open from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. Visit [www.pocomuse.org](http://www.pocomuse.org) or @*pocomuse* on social media for details.

## New Buffalo Township Library

- “Star Wars Day” all day Thursday, May 4.
- Vernal pools hikes at 10:30 a.m. Saturdays, May 13 and 27. Meet in the New Buffalo Elementary School parking lot, 12291 Lubke Road.

### Weekly programs:

- Craft Time all day Wednesday (no program May 10) 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 5:30 p.m. Thursday (except May 11).
- 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.*

## District Pinewood Derby

The Potawatomi District Pinewood Derby Race is from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 6, at First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte.

Registration is at 9:30 a.m. The ensuing race schedule is:

- Lion — 10 a.m.
- Tiger — 11 a.m.
- Wolf — Noon.
- Bear — 1 p.m.
- Webelo — 2 p.m.

Contact organizer Terry Malstaff at: [carpenter46350@yahoo.com](mailto:carpenter46350@yahoo.com) for more details.

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Payments must be made with cash only and paid at the facility within 72 hours. All goods are sold as is and must be removed at the time of payment. Sale is subjected to adjournment.

**The spring Girlfriend Sale, your ultimate women's resale clothing event, is this weekend, Saturday, May 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., for the best selection, and Sunday, May 7, noon-4 p.m. 1/2 price sale day.**

**Long Beach Community Center, 2501 Oriole Trail, Long Beach**

This is the biggest sale to date, with 125 participants contributing gently worn clothing and accessories priced at \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20 and up, 5 specialty boutique filling and entire room with new, tags on designer clothing at 70% off retail, and 3 estate wardrobes. Size 2 to oversized. Hundreds of shoes from size 5 to 12, cutting edge dressy to comfy casual: we have it all!!! Plus, handbags, jewelry, scarves, gift items and so much more.

Be sure to check out our designer orange dot super sale racks too. Stop off at the ATM to take advantage of our speedy cash checkout line. We do accept credit cards. Parking is limited at the center. You may pull into the grassy area in front of the building, making sure all 4 tires are off the pavement. Please obey all no-parking signs, leave room for others, and do not park on residents' properties down any side streets. Looking forward to seeing you all there! Check out our FB page thegirlfriendsale for more details.

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**The Mystery of Mrs. Christie** by Marie Benedict (hardcover \$26.99 or paperback \$16.99 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook.

Agatha Christie is the most successful novelist ever — more than two billion books sold worldwide — with only the Bible and Shakespeare selling more. Brits crowned her “Queen of Crime.” Born in England in 1890, she died there in 1976.

Christie established herself as the best mystery writer ever, and that information is significant to this story. The Mystery of Mrs. Christie is historical fiction, imagining the 11 days the author disappeared very mysteriously and returned just as mysteriously, with little explanation. Was she seeking publicity? Hardly, since her first three books were published by that time to great success. Or was something wrong with her marriage to Archie Christie? That piece of information provides Benedict with a big *maybe* — and an even bigger *maybe not*.

So what happened those December days in 1926? Through extensive research and masterfully filling in the details, we have a believable story that could rival any Christie tale. She wasn't kidnapped, she didn't try to commit suicide, but she didn't want to talk about it afterward either. Something, or someone, set her off on this strange journey...

Starting in 1912, and told in her own voice, a young Agatha Miller meets Archie Christie at a ball given by family friends. He insists she destroy her dance card in favor of dancing only with him, and evidently makes quite an impression since they marry two years later.

Archie becomes a pilot in World War I while Agatha works in a hospital tending to wounded soldiers. Throughout these turbulent times, she never gives up hope of becoming a published author, even though she is belittled by a sister with stories published in various magazines. A little jealousy there?

Archie, however, comes back from the war a changed man. The story shows a previously funny, loving man who now is dark and moody, suffering from horrible headaches. He also has to take a desk job as the Royal Air Force deems him unfit for further piloting because of his eyes.

Resuming their life after the war, Agatha becomes chained to the house and Archie, her mother saying she must live for her husband and do everything for him. When Agatha becomes pregnant with their only child, Rosalind, Archie is unhappy, thinking the child will take up all of Agatha's time, with none for his non-stop neediness. He talks her into

## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



giving over the raising of the child to one nanny after another.

While this behavior seems extreme to us modern women and our own marriages, Benedict shows how it was a different time with different rules in the early 20th century. And, yes, the husband rules the roost.

We now see a changing Agatha, falling into depression and despair, not pleasing her husband and missing time she could have spent with her daughter. It's a downward spiral that only lets up when she is in front of her typewriter.

On Dec. 4, 1926, when Archie learns Agatha is missing, he is shocked, but a letter left by her is mysterious enough that after reading it, he throws it in the fireplace. Perhaps Agatha made a well thought-out plan before disappearing?

The police take her disappearance seriously. Archie is soon suspected of killing his wife, but they can find no proof — and no body. Archie tries hard to keep reporters

at bay, but when the police send out photos and the story to papers all over England, the headlines pile up, along with the reporters and cameras in his front yard. You can see a few of those headlines on the inside front and back covers.

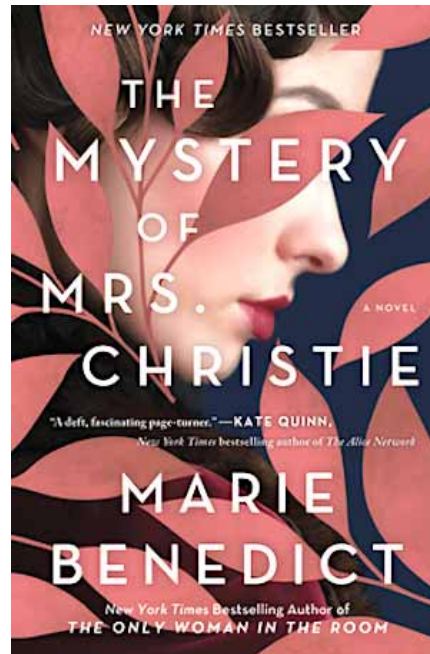
Benedict keeps you guessing, piling up clues and information on both sides. Her description of life in upper middle-class England in the early 20th century provides a look at a different way of life.

So, who is the innocent party and who is the perpetrator? Benedict first gives us Agatha's voice, then uses the third person for Archie's point of view, these alternating chapters leading to her inevitable disappearance. Something simply had to give in that marriage. A mystery writer living a mystery? Maybe the mouse just had to roar.

*The final word:* Benedict is an excellent historical fiction writer, focusing on overlooked women from the past. Christie is the only one she's written about so far whose reputation lived on in the books she produced and the mystery surrounding her own life.

Benedict's other books include The Other Einstein, Carnegie's Maid, The Only Woman in the Room, The Personal Librarian and Lady Clementine. All are worth your time.

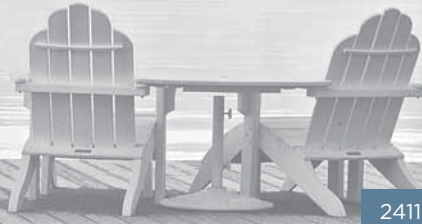
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# Tryon Retreat

Sleeps 4

Near Lake Michigan

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- Mark

