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Telling Tales of the Ordinary and Extraordinary

by William Halliar

Benjamin Franklin said, *“Either write something worth reading or do something worth reading.”*

Some people manage both.

Local author Matt Werner is one of them.

What Ben Franklin neglected to mention, though, is whenever you write or create anything original, then share it with the public, you make yourself vulnerable. You give a part of your soul to the world and hope it is received with graciousness and returned intact, if not uplifted.

Often, the person gifted with such creativity feels no option but to share that talent.

Ask Werner why he writes. His reply: “Everybody has a story to tell.” He is just a guy who feels a “need to tell it.” This is his passion.

“A writer must reflect the story that he discovers, not push the story that he wants people to find,” he adds. Werner believes passionately it is his task in life to record true stories, perhaps most especially the stories of fellow Hoosiers.



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As a reader of Werner's stories about Hoosiers, folks he has known personally or experienced through others' writing, you get a feeling for what sympathetic vibrations stir his memories, interests and soul.

Werner has a passion for telling the extraordinary and ordinary stories of everyday ordinary people. His stores are filled with personal insight, and while he insists a story must almost tell itself, his inner musings are reflected in each tale. This adds to the richness and color of his writing.

Werner grew up on a farm south of Michigan City in the little berg of Union Mills. A young man with a very active and curious mind, he grew up amid the fields of farmers, listening to the stories of old-timers and one day feeling the need to write these down and share them.

Werner is, by nature, a storyteller. A raconteur. He honed his craft as a teacher. "Writing is very hard," he says, but admits teaching is even more difficult. During his career, he has taught English, social studies, history and business management, both in high school and on the college level.

Werner's storytelling tends to stress personal stories and recording local history. It is obvious by reading some of his tales that he enjoys spending time with people, perhaps relaxing over a campfire or beer and just listening to their stories.

He is generally very reserved, but when he begins to speak of his writing and the stories he has uncovered, his features come to life. His eyes sparkle. He speaks with emphasis on the important aspects of his craft as a writer and storyteller.

Werner has written five books: Season of Upsets, How Sweet It Is, A White Sox Life, plus most recently Dispatches from a Northern Hoosier and

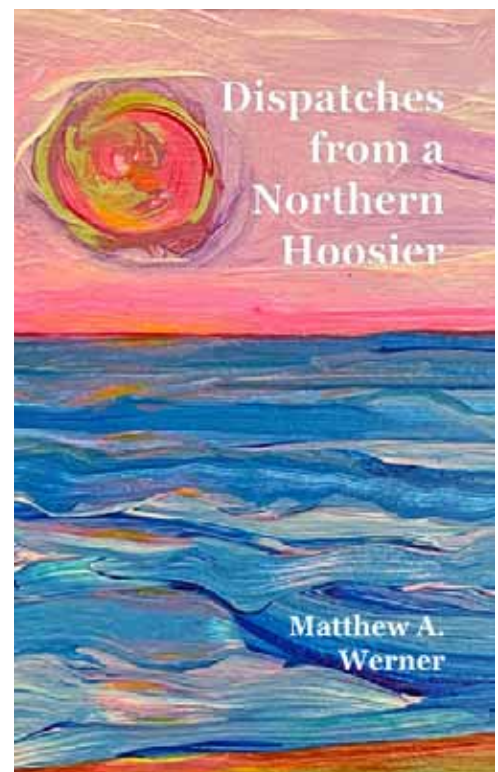
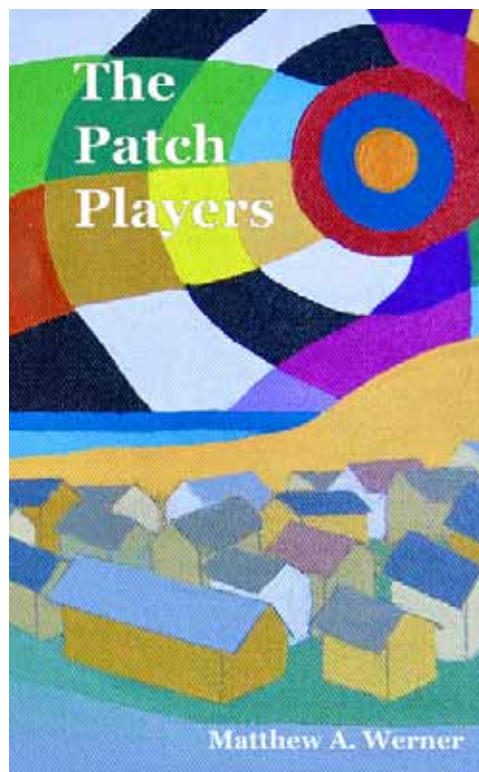
The Patch Players, a true story about the first black basketball players in Michigan City.

How Sweet It Is was culled from interviews, and vast research, completed in 2016 for *The Beacher* to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Elston High School 1966 boys basketball state championship season.

The Patch Players, which also has origins in Werner's writings for *The Beacher*, is a real story that "revealed itself during research," he says. During that process, he interviewed players who lived through an age of segregation. It is the story of Dave Greer and his cousin, Bill Wright, and the boys who played basketball at Elston High School in the 1960s. The teen players couldn't eat in local restaurants, couldn't try on clothes in stores or were not welcome there.

(The Patch essentially was the only housing available to black families. It was five acres located on Fourth Street and surrounded by Michigan Boulevard and Trail Creek.)

"Playing basketball was an escape from the daily injustices they faced," he said. "Their accomplishments changed the history of their city."





This *Beacher* file photo shows Elston playing Valparaiso on Dec. 1, 1950.

Sports, Werner says, “is about people. Sport reflects life.”

Because of the dedication and inspiration from their coaches, these young people went on to become local celebrities in their school and town, thus changing the way they were treated, and changing life for those who came after them.

Madeleine L'Engle, the author of *A Wrinkle in Time*, famously said, “*You have to write the book that wants to be written. And if the book is too difficult for grown-ups, then you write it for children.*”

Werner’s book about basketball players growing up in The Patch has been edited and printed in a special version for enjoyment by children, in hopes they may be inspired by those who came before them.

Werner considers himself a journalist, a writer of history and nonfiction, more than a mere storyteller. He feels it is important to record local history, tell its stories, record its lessons.

Dispatches from a Northern Hoosier is a collection of stories by him with “an insatiable curiosity and a bit of an obsessive personality,” Werner says. These stories reflect 13 years of research and rubbing shoulders with neighbors in northern Indiana, collecting interesting tidbits and facts to share.

“You hear about things and then dig to find compelling stories,” he said.

A perusal of the table of contents offers such interesting titles as “Chance and Happenstance,” “She Lived Out Loud From Start to Finish” and “Running Around Like a Clown and an Idiot.”

Some stories, like “Beer Run – a Research Project,” an adventure with Curt and necessary designated driver Moon, are humorous and personal. They share intimate stories of Werner’s personal take on life. These stories will surely resonate with anyone who has grown up in Northwest Indiana.

Continued on Page 4

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Telling Tales... Continued from Page 3

Reading these short histories and stories might cause the reader to smile, to fondly recall moments in their own lives. “Chance and Happenstance” reflects on the word “if” — how small decisions can change big plans. “She Lived Out Loud From Start to Finish” relates the story of a woman who was always the “life of the party,” who inspired and comforted all she knew.

“Running Around Like a Clown and an Idiot” shares the author’s experiences with the famous Michigan City photographer-photojournalist Bill Swedenberg, his scrapes and adventures experienced trying to get the best shots for the newspaper.

When he writes, Werner says, he thinks about who will read his stories, then writes something they would enjoy reading. Following the threads of his stories is like joining him on a voyage of life discovery.



Former *News-Dispatch* photographer Bill Swedenberg (center, with the camera) is the focus of one of Matt Werner’s stories in *Dispatches from a Northern Hoosier*.

A word must be said about the unusual, stunning cover art that emblazons each of Werner’s new books. One responsibility borne by a self-published author is choosing a suitable cover for the printed work. Again, Werner’s love of people and their stories is reflected in his choice of cover artists. He selected people who are personal friends to illustrate his covers. Chesterton artist Holly Jackson designed the cover for *Dispatches from a Northern Hoosier*. Jackson portrays the familiar view of Lake Michigan under a smiling sun in a most unusual and colorful manner, using acrylic paint on wood as her medium. Even as printed in two dimensions, the textures of thick layers of paint applied to the

Mark Your Calendar

Matt Werner has the following events scheduled:

- A presentation on local basketball history from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14, at The Hangar Grill Pub, 5 N. Washington St., LaCrosse. Werner also will share information on “Indiana’s Game,” the upcoming WNIT-PBS documentary he wrote about the history of basketball in Indiana.
- Readers Corner from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 21, at the Coolspring Library Branch meeting room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North.
- Cover to Cover book club at noon Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, at the Union Mills Library, 3727 W. County Road 800 South.

waves and rays of sun give the illusion of fingertips gently rubbing over the surface of the cover, sensing the movement of the crashing waves through textures seen rather than felt.

As a writer, Werner has many more stories to tell, and not only in publications. In fact, he is working on a PBS program about Indiana basketball.

As a self-published author, Werner stresses how much work it is to not just write the stories, but also create the book yourself. Curious folks might ask, “How do you become a writer?” Werner says you must first become a reader. Novelist Stephen King concurs, writing, “*If you don’t have time to read, you don’t have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that.*” That is the advice Werner leaves for anyone who wants to be a storyteller.

His philosophy on life, and perhaps his attitude toward storytelling and his craft, may be summed up in a personal story about his mother that is found in *Dispatches from a Northern Hoosier*.

“Make the most of life. Be generous. Stand up to bullies. Lend a hand to those who are knocked down. Laugh out loud. Enjoy a bad movie.”

In other words, live life to the fullest and share the joy!

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Some Interesting Options

The statistics I can get from the MLS are still bogus, so I cannot report on the Indiana lakefront listings and sales year over year.

So, let me offer some thoughts for buying in a time when financing has jumped 5% in just over a year to right below 8% for a home loan.

New home builders are offering to "buy down" the interest rate. New houses are more expensive, but they require less maintenance in the first years of ownership. The cost of building has dropped, making new houses more affordable.

"Adjustable rate" mortgages (means you start at 5% for 30 years, but it jumps to 8 or 10% starting the 4th or 6th year) are offering lower rates. These seem to be a good bet because they go 3 to 5 years before the rate jumps, and they have no "prepayment penalty." You may be able to use an adjustable mortgage until the rates of "fixed rate" loans come down. Then, you can find a "fixed rate" mortgage at a lower rate.

Not seeing any seller financing yet. But, it may happen. Getting 6% return on money is not bad for the seller. Ask the seller to finance the sale.

The cost of construction has come down. So, instead of buying a new house, it might make sense to expand your existing house. Plumbing, heating and cooling will be the major expenses. Floor space with regular windows should not cost more than \$150 per square foot. Once you add plumbing and a new furnace, you get up to \$250 per square foot. But you may be able to reduce your living costs by using new, more efficient HVAC and plumbing fixtures.

Believe that rates will never go below 5% again. Think about that as the new normal.

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It's the Great Pumpkin, Father Fleck

by Kim Nowatzke

It may be named "Independence Pumpkin," but Father Ken Fleck's giant veggie, roughly 800 pounds, is taking the prize this fall.

Fleck, a 73-year-old retired Catholic priest and Sheridan Beach resident, said his great pumpkin earned its name because it was pollinated around July 4. After he measured it at 110 inches around the waist and 109 inches from the stem to around the bottom, he turned to Google to estimate its weight at anywhere between 740 to 825 pounds.

"It took two of us three attempts just to stand it up-right," Fleck says.

After 44 years of serving through the Archdiocese of Chicago, Fleck knows a few things about gardening, especially about growing pumpkins.

"Along with my duties as a pastor of different parishes, I brought to all the school children my passion for gardening and passed along that knowledge by helping the children grow a garden at all my parishes where I served," Fleck explained. "Together, we supported local food pantries with fresh vegetables. Children learned to eat and like vegetables, which they grew. I also taught cooking classes for what we grew."

Spurred by the kids' requests, Fleck turned to pumpkin growing.

"It was totally by accident that we grew a giant pumpkin," he said.

The head of the parish council, who is Italian, asked to remove the garden's pumpkin blossoms to make an Italian specialty dish, Fleck said. He unintentionally took all the female blossoms off so all the

vines fed to the one pumpkin left on the vine. This is one of the secrets to growing a giant pumpkin.

There are other tips Fleck readily shares. Get a start from another giant pumpkin, for instance. His came from a parishioner's relative who had a 1,200-pound pumpkin. Use weep hoses or drip lines, make sure there's plenty of sun and don't water the leaves directly to avoid a powdery mildew. He also used a 7 pound bag of time-release fertilizer.

At St. George Catholic Church in Tinley Park, Ill., Fleck worked in tandem with parishioner Jay Surufka, who tended the church's gardens until age 98.

(He passed away one month after celebrating his 100th birthday last February.)

The two tried to beat their record of a 243-pound pumpkin in 2007 they dubbed "Baby Huey." Two years ago, they succeeded with "St. Paul" weighing in at 305 pounds, then "St. Peter" at 315 pounds.

The "Independence Pumpkin," however, blows the others out of the garden.

Fleck said his own garden favorites are tomatoes and peppers. Cucumbers are a staple, too.

"Every year, I try to grow a new vegetable," he said. "My mantra is to try something new."

This year's garden had acorn squash, lettuce and his newbies: corn and turnips.

Fleck shares his story in hopes that families will take time to grow gardens with their children.

"For adults, taking time to plan, prepare, plant and care for a garden reduces stress," he explained. "Choosing vegetables and seeds they would like to try, children learn to eat vegetables and have a healthy diet."

Fleck was inspired by his fourth-grade teacher, in addition to his mother. When she offered the tip that carrots grow well in sandy soil, he bought a 5-cent packet of Burpee seed and planted them in the sandbox he'd outgrown. His harvest consisted of 27 pounds of trimmed and cleaned carrots.

"I wish to all successful gardening and a healthy lifestyle," he said.



Ted Perzanowski, M.Div., B.A.

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SAM Completes Teacher Training for Neurodivergent Learners

Teachers for School of American Music have completed a training session on methods for teaching “neurodivergent” learners, a term specialists use to describe people with autism spectrum disorder, Asperger’s, ADHD and other neurological conditions.

The training was conducted by Katy Foster, a specialist from Berrien Regional Education Service Agency, a Michigan-certified special education teacher and Andrews University adjunct professor.

“Neurodiversity” is a neutral term to describe the idea that people experience the world in a variety of ways. Different ways of thinking and learning are viewed as exactly that: differences, not deficits.

The training covered characteristics of students with autism and other challenges, language to use with students who may be neurodivergent and educational strategies proven effective for neurodivergent students.

For younger students, applying neurodiversity



Katy Foster conducts a neurodiversity training for SAM teachers.

training to music education involves skills such as managing the learning session, structured learning, maintaining focus and accepting diversions from the lesson plan. For older students, teachers often are challenged to create alternative, often visually-oriented ways of presenting musical concepts.

Tim Hinds, an adult student at SAM who lives near Saugany Lake, Ind., heard about the training and wrote, “I’m a 60-year-old neurodivergent male who has always had difficulty in school. In the past, I would get frustrated with how I was being taught and would lose confidence and quit. The staff at the SAM understood me. For five years, they have modified teaching plans to make it fun and interesting. Today, I’m still taking classes, playing music and grateful.”

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Veterans Day Celebration

Purdue University Northwest will honor veterans with a celebration breakfast, open to the public, from 8:15-10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at the Westville campus Dworkin Center.

Registration is at 8:15 a.m., followed by a buffet breakfast at 8:30 a.m., then the program at 9 a.m.

The keynote speaker is retired State Sen. Jim



Arnold

Arnold, who was born in Michigan City and graduated from Elston High School. He is a Valparaiso University graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in political science and history. He served four years in the U.S. Air Force as an air-traffic controller, including two years in Okinawa during the Vietnam War. He later enlisted and served three years in the U.S. Army Reserves. His career includes 32 years with LaPorte County Sheriff's Office, where he served his last eight as sheriff. He served 10 years as state senator and is in his seventh year as a member and current board president of LaPorte Community School Corp. board. He received the Sagamore of the Wabash in 2004. In 2012, he was named Indiana Legislator of the Year by the Indiana Disabled Veterans Association. He is in his 61st year of public service.

He and his wife, Lauren, live in LaPorte.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/42s73ptc> for reservations and more details.

Veterans Day Breakfast, Ceremony

Frank & Edward Skwiat American Legion Post 451, 121 Skiwat Legion Ave., will host a Veterans Day breakfast and flag-retirement ceremony Saturday, Nov. 11.

The breakfast, held in the hall from 7 a.m.-noon, is free to any veteran or active-duty military. Non-veterans pay \$10. The flag-retirement ceremony is at noon in the north parking lot.

WEFM Radio will host "Fun in Michiana" in the hall from 9 a.m.-noon.

Interwoven Expressions Celebration

Interwoven Expressions will present its 38th annual celebration from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Sand Creek Country Club, Chesterton.

Pieces on display include elements of weave, dye, knit, felt, quilt, tat, stitch and design. The 23 artists are from Three Rivers, Lake Leelanau, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, South Haven, Chicago, Park Forest, West Lafayette, South Bend and Northwest Indiana.

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Wall of Fame Open House

Michigan City Area Schools will host a “Wall of Fame Open House” from 6-7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, at Heritage Hall in Michigan City High School, 8466 W. Paks Road.

Former MCAS employees inducted into the “Wall of Fame” – along with family and friends – are invited. Visitors should park in back and enter through Door I by the tennis courts. Guests can view the renovated Wall of Fame display boards, which replace hundreds of smaller plaques. The new configuration provides more space so the district can continue to honor inductees. Small plaques from the previous wall will be available for any past recipients or family members who would like to take them.

The MCAS “And then Some” Wall of Fame honors employees who made contributions to district children. First presented in 1976, the award recognizes employees from every area: administrators, custodians, food-service personnel, instructional assistants, maintenance personnel, paraprofessionals, teachers, transportation staff and secretarial staff. Inductees are honored each spring at the annual Employee Retirement and Wall of Fame dinner.

Visit <http://educateMC.net/WOF> for more details.

LaPour Brew & Wine Fest

The eighth annual LaPour Brew & Wine Fest, complete with eight wineries, is from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

Participating wineries include Lemon Creek, St. Julian, Running Vines, Ash & Elm, Chill Hill, Round Barn, Aftermath and Tabor Hill. New breweries include Foreign Local, Fuzzyline Brewing, Duneland Distillery, Round Barn (beer and wine) and South Bend Brew Werks. Returning vendors include Michigan City’s Burn’ Em Brewing.

VIP admission is at noon, with general admission at 1 p.m. Entertainment is by Smalltown & More Unplugged.

Tickets range from \$15-\$65. Make reservations at <https://tinyurl.com/3marjak2>

Barker Mansion Reopening

Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St., will reopen for the holiday season starting from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 10.

Guests can expect visits from Santa Claus, holiday-themed crafts and a hot cocoa bar. Self-guided tours include the first and second floors, and the permanent exhibit “Haskell & Barker Car Company and The Legacy of Freight.”

Tickets cost \$16.50 for adults and \$10 for youth (2-17) and seniors. Visit <https://barkermansion.org/events/> for tickets.

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Not Gonna Happen

After seeing "The Bucket List" (2008) with Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman, I reckoned it was time to get me one of them "do and then die" lists.

Lots and lots of big, fancy things to finally do before kicking the bucket, like jumping out of airplanes, running with the bulls and such.

(By the way, when was the last time you saw someone actually kick a bucket when he/she died?)

First on my list would be a so-called "Neptune Party," just for me. That's the festival they used to have for you in the U.S. Navy after crossing the equator for the first time. I was in the Navy from 1973-1979, but I never crossed "the line;" thus, I never had me a proper Neptune Party, complete with some old salt dressed up as Neptune himself.

Oh well. There was, after all, a fair amount of mockery involved, so, again, oh well.

But I do wish a neighbor well as he circumnavigates the globe on an actual sailing ship. By all accounts, he did have himself something of a Neptune Party as he sailed across the equator. But his son recently reported that his dad is: 1. hot, 2. tired, 3. overworked, and 4. underslept. Other than that, he is having the time of his life as he ticks off a really big item on HIS bucket list.

Do I wish I were with him?

Nah.

Life With Charley

Charles McKelvy



Not gonna happen.

Not on my bucket list.

So, I will live happily ever after without having some silly Neptune Party.

But what about another item on my bucket list: visiting Australia and New Zealand?

I was obsessed with the "lands down under" as a high school student. In fact, I knew so much about Australian politics, history and geography my junior year, I earned a posting to the "Host Corps" at the Boy Scout World Jamboree in 1967. Although I was assigned to host a German troop because of my passing command of their language, I chatted up every Aussie and Kiwi I met at the jamboree, out there in Idaho. And, I promised them I would one day visit their fabled lands.

Alas, that never happened. And, as I cruise through my 70s, I don't see it happening. Not in this lifetime, anyway.

Oh well.

Another item that will never be checked off my bucket list. No worries, and certainly no regrets. I occasionally listen to a disgruntled Australian on the Internet, and that's really all I need. I'll live if I never pet a koala. But, I can always look them up in my desktop dictionary and discover that the koala is a "furry, tree-dwelling Australian marsupial." International zoology right at my fingertips, without shelling out a single shekel.

Now that I think about it, attending that world jamboree in 1967 pretty much took care of my bucket list...for life.

Well, there was the not-so-small matter of finding a wife for life. That was on my bucket list from kindergarten until Aug. 13, 1977, when I wed the fair and lovely Natalie DeViney.

Natalie and I met on a blind date in late November 1976. Neither of us were getting anywhere on the find-a-mate front. Natalie had asked a co-worker to fix her up with one of his pals from his previous place of employment, the late, great *City News Bureau of Chicago*.

"Surely, Vince, you must have some single friends. Fix me up," Natalie told our mutual friend.

Vince had some prospects, but none were interested or available. Finally, he went with the C team and called me. I only agreed to meet this "kind-of-a-women's-libber" because I was after a job at the

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consortium of trade magazines where Vince and Natalie worked. I figured I'd get a free lunch and a possible job lead out of it...and that would be all she wrote.

So who knew I was about to scratch off the biggest item on my bucket list: finding a wife for life? I had no clue. I was clueless in Chicago until I stepped off the elevator and got gobsmacked by what can only be described as a ravingly beautiful creature.

"Where have you been?!?" she screamed at me.

I was about to do an about-face and summon the next downward elevator when good-old Vince appeared and said to the screamer, "He's not from City Bonded (a messenger service). He's here to meet Natalie."

"Oh." That was it. Just, "Oh." Oh well.

I exhaled and followed Vince to meet the beauty of my bucket list: the one, the only, Natalie DeViney. Yes, the love of my life who would become my wife on Aug. 13, 1977.

Natalie and I soon created our own bucket list. We began ticking off items such as: bicycle touring here, there and everywhere in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan; moving to Michigan and living where the whole world goes on vacation; and taking a grand railroad tour. As for the latter, we originally wanted to ride The Trans-Siberian Express from Moscow to Vladivostok, then go to Mongolia and sleep in a yurt. Never happened and, most likely, not gonna happen. We just don't have the scratch. Or the time. Or the energy. Not to mention the dire world situation.

So, we are more than content with the memories of our trip-of-a-lifetime on VIA's Canadian from Toronto to Vancouver. That was in December 1984 when Natalie was invited to address a conference in Vancouver about her recent book: Pension Fund Investments in Real Estate: A Guide for Plan Sponsors and Real Estate Professionals.

We planned to fly until I came up with the following brilliant idea: "Let's take Amtrak from Chicago to Toronto, and then VIA from Toronto to Vancouver. It would be the trip of a lifetime; I could write about the trip for a trains magazine. You'd give your conference, we'd tour Vancouver which is supposed to be amazing, and then we'd fly home. What do you say?"

"Yes."

And so we went by rail — all the way from Chicago to Toronto to Vancouver. And, yes, I did see



We took the train across Canada in December 1984. That was a big check off our bucket list.

my article about the trip appear in the March 1985 edition of *Passenger Train Journal*. They even put my photo of our train, The Canadian — stopped in Field, British Columbia — on the cover. I framed that photo. We have it hanging in our living room as a reminder that we don't need no more stinkin' bucket lists.

We've been there, and done all that we really want to do.

Now, our only goal is to eat a healthy diet, get plenty of exercise and sleep, and live to ripe old ages — in one another's loving company.

Blunt Transforms “Pain Hustlers” Into an Emotional Journey

by Andrew Tallackson



Liza (Emily Blunt) and Pete (Chris Evans) are celebrated at work by their boss (Andy Garcia) for making their company successful in “Pain Hustlers.”

“Pain Hustlers” isn’t the first movie to explore the American dream crippled by greed. Heck, there’s a formula to it, even for those lifted from fact. The aimless desperation, the exhilarating ascension to the top, followed by the catastrophic downfall.

“Pain Hustlers,” however, is one of the few of its breed where the price of greed arrives with a lack of phony cynicism...and we have Emily Blunt to thank for that.

Blunt (“The Devil Wears Prada,” the “Quiet Place” series) is an actress who, when attached to a project, I take interest. It will be a given she’ll project strength. Intelligence. A range that spans comedy and drama. Other actresses like that, for me at least, include Jamie Lee Curtis, Angela Bassett, Kathy Bates and Jane Lynch.

In “Pain Hustlers,” Blunt is outstanding as a woman who flirts with sleaze but, here’s the thing, owns up to it in the end.

The new Netflix film is lifted from a 2018 *New York Times Magazine* article by Evan Hughes, which he expanded into the 2022 book *The Hard Sell*. At the center is the opioid epidemic, in this case pharmaceutical firms that strike it rich by bribing doctors to prescribe fentanyl regardless of the risks.

Blunt plays Liza Drake, a high school dropout who drifted through jobs, married, had a daughter, divorced and, as the movie begins, is working in a

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“Pain Hustlers”

Running time: 122 minutes. Netflix. Rated R for language throughout, some sexual content, brief nudity and drug use.

strip club. It is there she meets Pete Brenner (Chris Evans), and she quickly sizes him up as a pharmaceutical rep. She doesn’t know the half of it. His employer is a failing start-up in a cruddy strip mall in central Florida. He is impressed by her smarts, later fudging her resume and getting her hired as his colleague.

Anyone who has experienced a doctor’s waiting room, observing a pharmaceutical rep zeroing in for the kill with gift baskets or takeout food, will appreciate how “Pain Hustlers” depicts Liza’s early struggles. But she is a quick study. She not only knows how to make key connections, but also how to make those connections work to her benefit. Pretty soon, Liza has revitalized the company into an astounding success, and with Pete by her side.

The key drug referenced in the movie, Lonafen, is not real, but based on Subsys (fentanyl), which is used to treat breakthrough cancer pain. What ultimately destroys Liza and Pete’s company is when greed clouds their judgment, forcing doctors to prescribe the drug beyond its intended purpose. That

is when we see the devastating effects of fentanyl.

Blunt is an interesting choice to play Liza. On average, she brings an innate goodness to characters she plays. So, watching Liza tread the line, succumbing to the life she's desired, becomes the emotional core of the film. It's not so much that Liza wants to be rich. She wants to be respected, and if letting ethics slide is the collateral damage, well...

Blunt achieves that struggle with ease, while Evans, as Pete, conveys everything wrong with what the two are doing. Blunt may toy with sleaze, but Evans devours it whole. It's refreshing, to see the actor like this. Playing Captain America for eight years required him to find one note to play and stick with it. Here, Pete makes no apologies for doing whatever it takes. The performance is kinetic. It's all about the "sell."

"Pain Hustlers" was directed by David Yates, who directed installments five through seven in the "Harry Potter" franchise. I found him an odd choice, more at home with quieter character moments, less inventive with the fantastical elements. But here, he's in his zone because the story is all about character. He achieves the right tone for the first half, charting Liza's rise with an intoxicated pace. And, he's populated his film with wonderful character actors, including Andy Garcia as the head of the pharmaceutical firm and Catherine O'Hara as Liza's rough-around-the-edges mother.

It is the movie's second half, though, that really hits home. All the likable qualities Blunt can invest into a character come into play. Liza has to take a hard look at herself when Lonafen deals its deadly hand. I was genuinely moved by Blunt, by how Liza doesn't just turn whistleblower. How she accepts the consequence of her actions is a study in human-



The end of the movie, when success turns to disgrace, features some of Blunt's best work.

ity at its best and worst.

There is no happy ending to "Pain Hustlers," but thanks to Blunt, we don't entirely despise Liza. She's given us a reason to care.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

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All photos taken by Andrew Tallackson on Tuesday, Oct. 31.

"Nowhere" Trumps Silly Premise with Taut Tale of Survival

by Andrew Tallackson



I am a sucker for a survival story. They fascinate me. Truth is, in these scenarios, I'd last all of five minutes. But in films like "Cast Away" and "The Martian," the characters achieve the impossible by relying on their wits to defeat death.

"Nowhere," a Spanish import generating huge traffic on Netflix, makes a solid case for why these tales never grow old. Added proof, too, that judging a book by its cover is a no-no. When the movie first dropped on Netflix, it looked, well, dumb. Wildly improbable. And it is. But thanks to the persuasive performance by its star, Anna Castillo, and a screenplay by four people, no less, that contains a few ingenious surprises, the result is never dull.

The movie opens with vague details involving a totalitarian government in Spain and an extreme shortage of just about everything for its people, whose immediate response is to flee. Director Albert Pintó treats the early scenes like a refugee tale. The plan for Mia (Castillo) and Nico (Tamar Novas) is to sneak into Ireland by way of cargo ship. They're joined by a handful of others, but apprehended by police and placed in large containers. Mia and Nico are separated, but cell phones keep them connected. Later, a storm violently rocks the ship, tossing the containers into the turbulent sea.

How Mia ends up being the only one in her container, with only a few items at her disposal, is rather complicated. Maybe *too* complicated. Needless to say, the other containers, weighted down with people and large machinery, sink.

Oh yeah, there's one other complication. Mia's pregnant. Like, *really* pregnant.



"Nowhere"

Running time: 109 minutes. Netflix.

Rated TV-MA for brief nudity and violence.

So, you have a lot here. A lot that strains credibility, including damaged phones that miraculously still receive cell service.

Having said that, you get caught up in Mia's determination to stay alive, to outthink every crisis that could send her to the bottom of the ocean. Pintó asks a lot of his star. At one point, she appears completely nude, not for smutty cheap thrills, but when Mia gives birth within the flooded container. And Castillo rises to the challenge at every turn, bolstered by a screenplay that gives Mia the tools to survive at all costs. It is a tough, uncompromising performance. And, there are moments when you gasp in admiration at how Mia makes the best use of the ship's items. How she filters water out of the container. Catches fish while at the same time rocking her child back to sleep. Whatever silliness exists within the film, you cast it aside because of the fierce drive by Castillo, as Mia, to keep going.

The final scene of "Nowhere" is more wishful thinking than based in reality. But again, Castillo's ferocious intensity pulls you back in. The movie could be about many things, but in the end, it's purely about what a mother will do to save her child.

And we are riveted by it.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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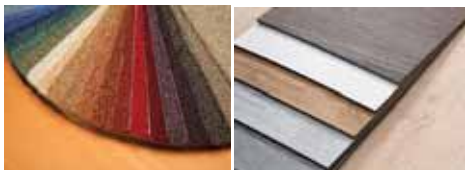
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Power for Good Community Grants



Representatives from the grant recipients pose for a group picture.

Unity Foundation of LaPorte County announced \$190,000 in Power for Good Community Grants during its annual luncheon and grant celebration.

The recipients and their programs are:

- Advancing Christ's Kingdom Ministries-Michigan City: ThanksGIVING Turkeys.
- Anthony Adams House: Save Our Youth.
- Arts in the Park: Arts in the Park Summer Concert Series.
- Boys & Girls Clubs of LaPorte County: Westville Club Expansion.
- Catholic Charities: Safe Haven Homeless Prevention.
- Citizens Concerned for the Homeless: Sand Castle Shelter for Homeless Families Renovation, Phase II.
- City of LaPorte Police Department: Community Needs Fund.
- Community Food Pantry of Galena, Hudson, Kankakee and Wills townships.
- Dunebrook: Child Advocacy Center.
- Dunes Arts Foundation: Creative Theatre Arts Program for Safe Harbor Summer Camp Students.
- Family Advocates: Inside Out Dads Pilot Program with LaPorte County Jail.
- Fly High Youth Services: SOARING Through the Holidays.
- Hope Center: Helping Our People Excel-Rebuilding the Westside.
- Interfaith Community PADS: Emergency Shelter for Men, Women and Children.
- Intrepid Phoenix: Fitness for recovery from substance abuse disorder in LaPorte County.
- Junior Achievement of Northern Indiana: Elementary Programming-Michigan City Area Schools.
- LaPorte County Drug Free Partnership: LaPorte Crisis Intervention Team-Improving Responsiveness to Mental Health and Substance Use Crises.
- LaPorte County Public Library: Dolly Parton's

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Imagination Library in LaPorte County.

- LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra: Side by Side Concert with Local Music Educators.
- LaPorte High School: SlicerTech Robotics.
- LaPorte County Habitat for Humanity: LaPorte Build on McCollum and Woodward streets.
- LaPorte Lake Association: Pine and Stone lakes weed treatments, lake equality and walleye stocking to lakes.
- Leadership LaPorte County: 2023-2024 High School Leadership Program & Youth Advisory Council.
- LETSGO City: LETSGO Get It.
- Michiana Humane Society: Kitten & Puppy Foster Support.
- Michigan City Area Schools: "Future Wolves" Elementary Sports Program.
- Michigan City Art League: Bringing the love of art to everyone in the community.
- Michigan City Holiday Meals: Free Holiday Meals.
- Michigan City House of Hope.
- Michigan City Police Department: Community Needs Fund.
- North Central Community Action Agencies: Health and Hygiene for Youth.
- Open Door Adolescent Health Center.
- Open Door Community Alliance: Medication Assistance Program.
- Paladin: Reducing Social Isolation through Transportation Services.
- The Play for Jake Foundation: Meet Ready Eddy.
- READ LaPorte County: Tutor Recruiter.
- Sacred Heart Food Pantry at St. Mary: Healthy Families.
- The Salvation Army of LaPorte Indiana: Client choice food pantry.
- Service League of Michigan City: Equipment Inventory Additions.
- Social and Learning Institute: Science & Nature Exploration.
- South Central Jr. Sr. High School: Engineering and Robotics Equipment Supplement.
- Stepping Stone Shelter for Women: Shelter Meals and Food Security Program.
- Trinity Episcopal Church: Trinity Community Food Pantry.
- Worthy Women Recovery Home: Worthy Home.
- Youth Service Bureau of LaPorte County: School Buddies.

The following funds provided additional support for this year's grants: LaPorte County Mental Health Fund, Glick Foundation Fund for the City of LaPorte, George H. and Madeline A. Smrt West Side Neighborhood Fund, Kay Franklin Commemorative Fund, Charles Westcott Youth Fund, Polad Animal Care Endowment Fund, Barry Dulyea Arts Fund for Children and the LaPorte County Educational Advancement Fund.

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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 following programs are scheduled:

- **Duneland Stamp Club at 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9.** The club meets the second Thursday of each month. New members are invited.
- **"Attitude of Gratitude: A Thanksgiving Philosophy With Ange Benz" at 2 p.m. Monday, Nov. 13.** Call Benz at (219) 874-3754 for additional information.
- **Any Book Book Club (adults only) from 5-6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 13.** Participants can discuss any books they are reading. Meetings are the second Monday of the month. Light refreshments will be served.
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in November.** 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.

- **Genealogy Help with Pat Harris from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays in November.** Harris can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical record
 - **Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in November.** Create with LEGO WeDo, Micro:bits, paper circuits, Ozo-bots and 3-D pens. Children 12 and younger must have a parent or guardian attend with them.
 - **Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays.** Children birth to age 5 and adults will enjoy stories, songs and crafts. Check out previous story time videos through the library's YouTube channel, Facebook page and website.
 - **Tinkercad 3-D Modeling (ages 9-17) from 4-5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 15, in the Makerspace.** Registration is required for the program that involves Tinkercad, a free online collection of software tools. This session serves as an introduction to 3-D design, art and printing. No experience is necessary. All registered participants receive a 3-D print of his/her creations. Register at the Youth Services desk or call (219) 873-3045 for more info. Space is limited.
 - **Trivia Night for Adults from 5:30-7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 13.** Participate with a team of family and friends. Prizes go to the first- and second-place teams. Registration is required, because limited spots are available, at tinyurl.com/3kjpakm4. Light refreshments will be served. Call Sydney at (219) 873-3044 or Molly at (219) 873-3042 for more details.
 - **Mythical Creature Scavenger Hunt in November.** Visit Youth Services, find all the mythical creatures and win a prize.
 - **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Makerspace.
- Michigan City Public Library is located at 100 E. Fourth St. Visit www.mclib.org for more details.*



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NB Library Community Forum



William Hazelgrove, a prolific speaker and author on historical American figures, will discuss the last two years of President Teddy Roosevelt's life at 6:30 p.m. EST Monday, Nov. 13, at New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St.

The free program, part of the library's community forum, is sponsored by the Friends of the New Buffalo Library.

Failing health and personal disappointment characterized the Rough Rider's final days (1917-1919). Racked by rheumatism, a ticking embolism, pathogens in his blood, a bad leg from an old injury and a bullet in his chest from an assassination attempt, Roosevelt's request for his own cavalry regiment in World War I was turned down. The death of his son, Quentin, in the skies over France proved devastating.

Hazelgrove is a frequent speaker in the library series. He has led programs on: Woodrow Wilson's wife, Edith, who took over her husband's duties following a stroke; Henry Knox, a Boston bookseller who saved Washington's army by delivering cannon despite impossible odds; and Sally Rand, arguably America's first sex symbol.

River Valley Garden Club

Jack Pizzo will discuss "Restoring Michigan's Ecosystems" during the River Valley Garden Club meeting at 1 p.m. EST Tuesday, Nov. 14, at Harbert Community Church, 6444 Harbert Road, Sawyer, Mich.

Pizzo has a Bachelor of Science in ornamental horticulture and a Master of Science in restoration ecology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a professional landscape architect, certified prescribed burn manager and certified nursery professional. He has been restoring ecosystems and growing native plants for more than 35 years. His Three Oaks office has restored Michigan and Indiana ecosystems since 2001.

The public is invited. Contact Elizabeth Palulis at (269) 362-4564 or email her at evpalulis@yahoo.com, or visit www.rivervalleygardenclub.org for more details.



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La Porte County Habitat for Humanity is growing and we are seeking dedicated, mission focused people to join us on our board and committees, in our office and on the construction site to crew lead and volunteer.

Email Sophia exdir@laportehabitat.org, or pass this along to great people you know. Thank you!



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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 Pickup 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:

- **Virtual Author Talk with Tiffany Aliche from 1-2 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9.** Aliche is a bestselling author whose new book is Get Good with Money. Visit the website to register.
- **Preserve Your Family's Stories from 3-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, at the Coolspring branch meeting room.** Get tips and tricks for storing documents, photographs and personal items.
- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 10, at the main library.** Children ages 3-5 with their caregivers experience stories, songs, crafts and activities.
- **Veteran's Day: Conversations and Coffee all day Saturday, Nov. 11, at the main and Coolspring branches.** Listen to stories from local veterans and learn about the LPCPL Digital Local History collection.
- **Guess the Author from 11-11:45 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14, in the main library Meeting Room B.** Test literary knowledge by guessing an author from a single quote.
- **Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14, in the main library Meeting Room B.** The focus is Colson Whitehead's The Nickel Boys.
- **Getting Started with the Online Job Applications from 3:30-5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 15, at the main library Study Cafe.** Discussion includes resources to start a resume, applying for jobs and finding the right one.


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 for more details, including programming through the Exchange building.



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American Red Cross

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

- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 13.
- Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14.

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

New Buffalo Township Library

- **The public can create and donate a wreath for a silent auction to support library needs.** The library encourages wreaths for all themes, seasons and occasions. They should be appropriate and suitable to display and auction. Those that are noticeably old, worn or damaged cannot be accepted. Wreaths may be submitted during library business hours. The wreaths will be displayed Nov. 17-18 in the Pokagon Room. Open bidding is planned at this time, ending at 3 p.m. Nov. 18.

Weekly programs:

- Craft Time from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays while supplies last.
- Chess Club from 6-8 p.m. Thursdays.
- Read to a Dog Sessions for all ages from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and 4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday.
- Lego Club from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fridays and 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Saturdays.
- Story time at 10 a.m. Mondays.

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

Shirley Henize Volunteer of the Year

Shirley Henize Land Trust named Claudia Wood "Volunteer of the Year" for her "unwavering and exemplary support," according to a press release.

Wood conducts water-quality monitoring, maintains trails as an Adopt-A-Trail steward at Ambler Flatwoods Nature Preserve, Michigan City, and supports other volunteer projects. She also was a 2023 Bringing Nature Home award recipient.

Shirley Heinze also recognized Hans Lagoni, Dale Nichols and Evie Kirkwood for significant volunteer contributions throughout the year.

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MCHS Inducts 44 into National Honor Society

Parents, friends, teachers and other supporters filled the Michigan City High School auditorium on Oct. 25 as 44 juniors and seniors were inducted into the National Honor Society.

NHS President Erin Piazzisi led the ceremony, which also involved 19 MCHS seniors who were inducted as members last year. The event featured remarks from MCHS Principal Kyle Dean, Michigan City Area Schools Superintendent Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins and NHS sponsor Kristen Freitag.

The 2023 MCHS National Honor Society inductees included: Abbas Al-Saedi, Katelyn Ast, Gavin Baldwin, Emily Blank, Zoe Brooks, Siniyah Burdine, Bailey Chavis, Ella Frever, Jada Gee, Logan Grantham, Nathan Groszek, Jaden Hart, Brianna Harvey, Kyra Haywood, Brooke Lakin, Katelyn Lane, Ayana Malone, Caitlin Mason, Chase McMillon, Jen-



nifer Mezo, Kaitlyn Milligan, Emilio Munoz, Hazel Murphy, Kayden Nowatzke, Nolan Painter, Hannah Parker, Khushi Patel, Stephanie Ramirez, Jhoselyn Ramos, Kaylee Richardson, Jhonatan Ruiz, Kailla Sanchez, Levi Scoville, David Serrano, Christian Shanks, Madelyn Shinn, Dakota Smith, Sarah Sutor, Ava Taylor, Natalie White, Naomi Williams, Aav-

erie Wingard, Alyssa Workman and John Zaknoun.

They joined the following seniors inducted in 2022: Jeremiah Allen, Sophia Barczak, Esther Barnes, Davida Barney, Abigail Bartlett, Keona Briggs, Sophie Devens, Angelina Duenas, Sofia Garcia, Madison Gresham, Gerzey Hibner, Tatiana Miller, Meaghan Painter, Lorenzo Panozzo, Erin Piazzisi, Krystani Quinn, Ashley Sparks, Andrew Vicari and Juliana Williams.

Art Barn School of Art

Valparaiso's Art Barn School of Art seeks an instructor to work with adults with developmental disabilities to provide weekly instruction for an ongoing outreach program.

Successful candidates will have an arts background, some teaching experience (whether in a classroom or community arts context), experience volunteering or working with people with disabilities and an ability to adapt to different learning styles/means of artistic expression.

Also sought is an arts instructor to work with older adults. Successful candidates will have a background in the arts/be a working or teaching artist, have an interest in lifelong learning and an ability to adapt to different learning styles/means of artistic expression.

Visit www.artbarnschool.org or call (219) 462-9009 for more details. Art Barn is located at 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso.

Duneland Weavers Guild

Duneland Weavers Guild meets from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, Nov. 11, at Three Moons Fiberworks, 402 Broadway, Chesterton.

Gail Pilgrim, of Ohio, will present the program "Throw in the Towel." She will provide tips on how to make towels to give, use, sell, display and exchange.

Meetings are open to the public.



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Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Saw-whet Owl Banding Demonstration from 7-10 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, Nov. 9-12, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** The Indiana Audubon will shed light on Indiana's smallest owl. See them banded following hourly net checks. The program is weather dependent and cancelled during rain or high winds. Space is limited. A donation is required. Registration is required at www.indianaaudubon.org/events
- **Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers) from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily in November at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Trash Trekkers is a no-hassle volunteer option that helps keep trails and beaches clean. Temporary passes are available. Visit tinyurl.com/2p83798v for more details.
- **Veterans Day Film from 2-3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** "Hero's on Deck" follows World War II fighter pilots training over Lake Michigan.
- **Fall Colors Hike from 2-3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, at Kemil Beach Parking Lot.** Meet at the parking lot one mile north of U.S. 12 on East State Park Road, Beverly Shores. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes.
- **Chellberg Farm Open House from 1-3 p.m. Sundays in November.** Rangers and volunteers will share the area's history as visitors tour the farmhouse and garden and visit the animals. Passes are required. The parking lot is off Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20 in Porter.

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

Westchester Public Library

Westchester Public Library has curbside pickup at its Thomas and Hageman branches.

Use a library card or go online to place holds on up to 10 items, including DVDs and CDs. Once notified the items are available, park in specially-numbered spaces at each branch during pickup hours.

While parked, call the library phone number posted on the numbered space sign, tell staff your library card number and he/she will check out the items and take them to a table at the parking space and walk away. Patrons then can step out of their vehicle to retrieve them. Curbside hours are Monday-Friday (1 to 6 p.m. at Thomas and Hageman) and Saturday (11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Thomas and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at Hageman).

Hageman Library (219-926-9080) is located at 100 Francis St., Porter. Thomas Library (219-926-7696) is located at 200 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton. Westchester Township History Museum (219-983-9715) is located at 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton.

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Quality of Life Fair

The Michigan City African American Coalition will host a free Quality of Life Fair from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at the HOPE Center, 222 McClelland Ave.

The newly formed coalition aims to unite the African-American community to address shared concerns and issues. It is coordinated by Indiana Black Expo Michigan City Chapter, LaPorte County NAACP and the Black Business Association of Northwest Indiana. Other represented groups include the ministerial alliance, Drifters, Franciscan Alliance, Anthony Adams House, City Council, HOPE, State Farm Insurance-Bradley Group, City of Michigan City and community representatives.

The fair is aligned with the Vibrant Michigan City study conducted by The Brookings.

Sessions will be held throughout the day. Each will include workshops on health, education, housing, justice, family dynamics and financial literacy. Group panels will lead discussions.

Contact Pat Harris (219-879-6902), Denise Shipp (219-877-8242) or Wes Scully (219-878-2034) for more information or to reserve a seat.

Senior Center Closes Through Nov. 10

Michigan City Senior Center in Washington Park is closed through Friday, Nov. 10, due to the continuing remodel.

The following activities will be held at their usual times in the EEOC Room (lower level of City Hall):

- Monday: Stretch It Out, Exercise, T'ai Chi, knitting and crocheting.
- Tuesday: Mahjong, Tai Chi.
- Wednesday: SHIP, Stretch It Out, Exercise, Spanish I & II, Mexican Train/Dominoes and Rummi-kub.
- Thursday: Woodcarving, Samba and Bridge Group.
- Friday: Chess and Italian.

All other programming is canceled. City Hall has elevator access for those needing it.

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2. Pin Ball Wizards	21	11
2. Pin Pushers	21	11
3. Lady Strikers	17	15

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Ann Bogart	169
2. Diana Holt	163
3. Mary Lou McFadden	157
4. Mary McDonald	156

SPLITS

Nancy Kubath	3-7
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National Lung Screening Day

Franciscan Health will offer \$49 self-pay lung scans Saturday, Nov. 11, in honor of National Lung Screening Day.

According to the American Cancer Society, more patients die from lung cancer annually than breast cancer, colon cancer and prostate cancer combined. However, when diagnosed in the earliest stages, the five-year survival rate for lung cancer is 92 percent.

Lung scans are simple, non-invasive computer tomography screenings that use a minimal amount of radiation. To qualify, patients must be 50 and older, have smoked an average of at least one pack of cigarettes per day for 20 years and have no signs or symptoms of lung cancer.

Anyone interested in scheduling a scan should call (866) 600-1919 to see if they qualify and to schedule an appointment.

South Shore Line Special

All active-duty military personnel and veterans can ride the South Shore Line for free Nov. 10-13 on all weekday and weekend trains.

Passengers should let train personnel know about being active military or a veteran. No identification is required. Up to three children 13 and younger ride free with each military personnel/veteran on off-peak weekday and all weekend trains. Off-peak weekday trains arrive at Millennium Station after 9:30 a.m. and depart Millennium Station before 3:30 p.m. and after 6:30 p.m.

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In the Area

Nov. 9 — Virtual Author Talk with Tiffany Ali-che, 1-2 p.m., through LaPorte County Public Library. Reservations: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 9 — Preserve Your Family's Stories, 3-4 p.m., Coolspring Library meeting room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 9 — Duneland Stamp Club, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Nov. 9 — Michigan City Area Schools "Wall of Fame Open House," 6-7 p.m., Heritage Hall in Michigan City High School, 8466 W. Pahs Road. Info: <http://educateMC.net/WOF>

Nov. 10 — Reopening, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St. Tickets: \$16.50/adults, \$10/youth (2-17) & seniors. Reservations: <https://barkermansion.org/events/>

Nov. 11 — Veterans Day.

Nov. 11 — Veteran's Day: Conversations and Coffee, all day, LaPorte County Public Library (904 Indiana Ave.)/Coolspring Library (6925 W. County Road 400 North). Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 11 — Veterans Day breakfast/flag retirement ceremony, Frank & Edward Skwiat American Legion Post 451, 121 Skwiat Legion Ave. Breakfast: 7 a.m.-noon. Cost: free/veterans & active-duty mili-

tary, \$10/public. Flag ceremony: noon.

Nov. 11 — LaPour Brew & Wine Fest, noon-4 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Tickets: \$15-\$65. Reservations: <https://tinyurl.com/3marjak2>

Nov. 13 — "Attitude of Gratitude: A Thanksgiving Philosophy With Ange Benz," 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 874-3754.

Nov. 13 — Any Book Book Club (adults only), 5-6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Nov. 13 — Trivia Night for Adults, 5:30-7 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Registration: tinyurl.com/3kjpakm4. Info: (219) 873-3044, (219) 873-3042.

Nov. 13 — William Hazelgrove program (the last two years of President Teddy Roosevelt's life), 6:30 p.m. EST, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Free.

Nov. 14 — Guess the Author, 11-11:45 a.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 14 — Page Turners Book Club, Colson Whitehead's The Nickel Boys, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 15 — Tinkercad 3-D Modeling (ages 9-17), 4-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

Through Nov. 22 — "Pets of LaPorte County" exhibit, LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave., Suite 1. Info: (219) 324-6767.

Through Nov. 26 — "Dancing on the Shoulders of Giants: Fresco Painting by Diane Grams," Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St.

Through Dec. 31 — Work by Michigan City Art League, The Legacy Center Gallery at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Reception: after 10:30 a.m. Nov. 5 Mass. Legacy Center hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: kd3627@hotmail.com

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 lessons, 2-3 p.m. Improver 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 November — Genealogy Help with Pat Harris, 1-4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.



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.

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

Tuesdays though mid-November — Dave Littell improv classes, 5-6:30 p.m., Long Beach Community Center gym, 2501 Oriole Trail. Recommendation donation to center. Info: (203) 219-5700.

Thursdays in November — Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night, 5:30-7 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

In the Region

Nov. 9-12 — Saw-whet Owl Banding Demonstration, 7-10 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Registration: www.indianaaudubon.org/events

Nov. 10 — Berrien Artist Guild annual member show opening reception, 5:30-8 p.m. EST, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Show runs through Jan. 14, 2024. Info: www.boxfactoryforthearts.org

Nov. 10 — The Claudettes with Maggie Kubley, 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$25 + \$4.50 convenience fee, \$50 + \$4.50 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 10-12, 16-19 — “The Curious Savage,” 4th Street Theater, 125 N. Fourth St., Chesterton. Times: 8 p.m. Thur.-Sat./3 p.m. Sun. Tickets: \$20. Reservations: <https://4thstreetncca.com>

Nov. 11 — Interwoven Expressions 38th annual celebration, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sand Creek Country Club, Chesterton. Info: www.InterwovenExpressions.com

Nov. 11 — Duneland Weavers Guild, 10 a.m.-noon, Three Moons Fiberworks, 402 Broadway, Chesterton.

Nov. 11 — Veterans Day Film, 2-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Nov. 11 — Corky Siegel, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$40 + \$6 convenience fee, \$65 + \$6 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 12 — Fall Colors Hike, 2-3 p.m., Kemil Beach Parking Lot, one mile north of U.S. 12 on East State Park Road, Beverly Shores. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Nov. 14 — River Valley Garden Club (“Restoring Michigan’s Ecosystems”), 1 p.m. EST, Harbert Community Church, 6444 Harbert Road, Sawyer, Mich. Info: (269) 362-4564, evpalulis@yahoo.com, www.rivervalleygardenclub.org

Nov. 12 — Open Mic Night Featuring Abbie Thomas, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Email openmic@acornlive.org. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Through Nov. 28 — Duneland Photography Club Group exhibit, “Visions of Reality,” Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Info: (219) 926-4711,

www.chestertonart.org

Through Nov. 30 — Artist David Gray, The Village Gallery at Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

Through May 12, 2024 — “Indiana Lore,” South Bend’s The History Museum, 808 W. Washington St. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11/adults, \$9.50/seniors, \$7/youth 6-17, free/members. Info: www.historymuseumSB.org, (574) 235-9664.

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

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

Daily in November — Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers), 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: tinyurl.com/2p83798v

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing*: “Anatomy of a Fall.” Times: 2:30 & 6 p.m. Nov. 11. *Also*: “North by Northwest.” Not Rated. Time: 7 p.m. Nov. 9. *Also*: “Stop Making Sense.” Rated PG. Show times: 7 p.m. Nov. 10 & 12. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickers-theatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

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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.

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The Exchange by John Grisham (*hardcover, \$29.95 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 334 pages.*)

Grisham Groupie Sally here with another winner from my favorite legalese expert-top author. The Exchange is hailed as a sequel to his mega-bestselling The Firm, but I don't think that's exactly right.

Fifteen years have passed for Mitch and Abby McDeere, and the book only contains a few sentences about those years. A story bridging those years would have filled the gap to being a sequel. Grisham likely just wanted to use Mitch and Abby because they are interesting characters and certainly fit the bill for this story. It's a mistake to think you have to read The Firm before The Exchange. You don't. So let's not call it a sequel. Moving on...

Grisham gives us a different kind of legal thriller with an emphasis on international law and mega law firms. A different area for him, one that shows how politics play a big part. It is a tense thriller with little time spent in the courtroom. Grisham goes for political implications: Can international law really work with terrorists and dictators?

Mitch is now is a partner at Scully and Pershing, billed as the world's biggest law firm with "2,000 lawyers scattered around the world."

It's now 2005, and Mitch is told one of their most respected lawyers in Europe, Luca Sandroni, has requested his help in a case for one of Scully's most lucrative clients, Lannak, a Turkish construction company, one of the biggest in the world.

Lannak makes the big mistake of getting involved with Moammar Gadhafi, the dictator of Libya. He got the bright idea one day to build a large bridge in the desert — that's actually true — over a man-made river that would require water being redirected from another source. The road on both sides of the bridge would go absolutely nowhere, but hey, it's only costing \$1 billion U.S. dollars, and won't it look amazing? An advance payment of \$400 million is squeezed out of Gadhafi, but now, he has decided the bridge isn't his best decision. He refuses to pay the remaining balance, blaming it all on the Turks, of course.

Luca's daughter, Giovanna, also is a lawyer working for Scully, out of the London office, and wants to help Mitch handle the case with the United Arbitration Board in Geneva, Switzerland. They meet in the Sandroni home in Italy, then fly to Libya for advance discovery work.

A trip to visit the bridge is arranged, but the night before, Mitch gets a case of food poisoning. Funny, no one else did. He's in the hospital, and Giovanna

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



says she will go ahead and make the trip. After all, she'll have a security team with her.

It turns out to be an ambush, the Libyan soldiers killed, the others kidnapped.

A video showing the violent killings of three Libyan soldiers soon makes the press, but it will be several weeks before Mitch is sent a photo of Giovanna, seemingly alive and well.

More time will pass before the expected ransom demand comes around. They are to give \$100 million for Giovanna's safe return. But just who are these kidnappers? They offer no name, although Adhere Barakat is suspected. He has an army of his own hidden in the desert and hates Gadhafi. So who will pay the ransom? Scully's insurance won't pay because they don't deal with terrorists. The Brits, Italians and Americans...mostly say the same. Mitch can't believe his own firm won't lift a finger for one of its own. More photos of brutally killed captives show up, one with Giovanna standing next to them as a chilling reminder of the consequences of not paying the ransom. The body count goes up as Mitch cajoles and begs, facing a deadline the kidnappers have made,

adamant that if not met, Giovanna will be killed.

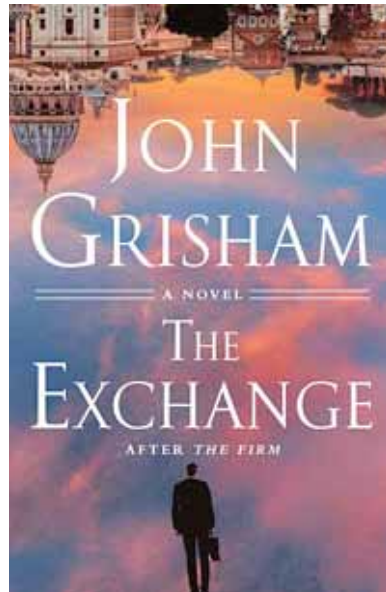
Mitch can't believe Scully's managing partners are so indifferent to using company money to save one of their own lawyers. I was out of breath following Mitch from Libya to the U.S. to Italy to England in pursuit of ransom monies.

This certainly is a different approach to law for Grisham. I like his ability to think outside the box while not veering too far from the story's legal aspects.

My only criticism is that the story ends rather abruptly. It could have played out a little longer and a little shadier perhaps, but that still didn't keep me from enjoying every page. Mitch and Abby come across as real and likable, as does Giovanna's father, the sickly Luca Sandroni, for whom I have much sympathy.

The final word: I found the following excerpt from a *Time* interview with Grisham: "I don't spend a lot of time delivering messages. People take the stories in different ways. It's often fun to watch people read themes into the stories, about loyalty and forgiveness and greed or whatever. I just want to tell a story. I want to tell a story in such a way that the reader is caught up in it, and the pages turn."

Till next time, happy reading!



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