

THE
BeacherTM

Weekly Newspaper

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Michigan City, IN 46360

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Happy Thanksgiving



*Over the sand dune and
through the beach grass to
grandmother's house we go...*

THE
Beacher

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For this year's Thanksgiving edition, we tasked Bill Cavalier with putting a Michigan City spin on the old holiday chestnut "Over the River and Through the Woods."

What he came up with left us delighted!



Healing Through Art and Inspiration

by Edmund Lawler

Kendall Kopta's art pieces serve as a form of art therapy for bullied children. Photo by Edmund Lawler.

The most powerful art can arise from a most painful place.

"My art doesn't entirely revolve around pain, but that's where the inspiration comes from," says Kendall Kopta, a 27-year-old artist whose handiwork graces the website of local anti-bullying nonprofit Hey U.G.L.Y.

Kopta, who recently earned a psychology degree from Purdue University Northwest, and who plans to enroll in a graduate program there, did a series of poignant art pieces in clay prior to, and while serving as, an intern for Hey U.G.L.Y., which stands for

Unique, Gifted, Lovable, You.

Kopta says her art is drawn from her experiences as a child of divorce and as a victim of bullying while in middle and high school.

"Growing up and being very quiet, I was the classic outcast," Kopta says reflectively over a cup of coffee in downtown Michigan City.

As she wrote in a narrative accompanying photos of her art pieces on the Hey U.G.L.Y. website: "There were times it got so bad that I just wanted to

lie down and give up because the bullying became too much.”

Betty Hoeffner, Hey U.G.L.Y.’s co-founder, is grateful Kopta carried on in the face of cruelty.

“Kendall is a brilliant, sensitive, important artist,” Hoeffner says. “She could help a lot of kids with art therapy by getting them in touch with their pain.”

Hoeffner continued.

“We both came from painful childhoods, and we shared that together,” she recalled. “She showed me a piece of her art, and I said, ‘Oh my God, let’s showcase this.’ Her art could possibly help suffering kids out there.”

ART THERAPY FOR THE BULLIED

KENDALL KOPTA, artist and empowerer of those being bullied



Kendall Kopta is an artist who has dedicated her works to inspire and empower anyone struggling with low self-esteem and bullying. Kendall has fended off bullies who have used verbal and physical abuse since elementary school. Kendall is a survivor of bullying. There was a time in middle school

This screenshot reveals how the Hey U.G.L.Y. website introduces Kopta’s story and art.

the growing distance within the marriage. I added a white daisy as a symbol of innocence of the weeping child who is frightened over the loss of stability and uncertainty of what is to come.”

The caption goes on to say: “No, you did not do anything wrong. A child does not go out of their way to break up their parents. Do not listen to anyone who claims you were the reason your parents got divorced. As a young child of divorce, I can confidently tell you whatever pain you are experiencing will get better.”

Hoeffner says, “Kendall is a product of divorce, and she knows what it feels like to be on the kid’s side of that. We developed a whole page on the website because art therapy is so important to help kids get the pain outside of their body. We wanted to share her insights and encourage anyone who is suffering to look to art to abate the pain.”

Hoeffner asked Kopta to write a series of narratives to accompany photos of three of her pieces displayed on the organization’s website. For an art piece titled “Was It Me?” that featured figurines of a mother, father and weeping child, Kopta wrote: “This art piece is dedicated to anyone who felt their parents’ divorce was their fault. The child, visually weeping as the parental figures are facing away from each other, displays

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Healing Through Art and Inspiration

Continued from page 3

The page is aptly titled “Art Therapy for the Bullied.”

Kopta spent her early years in a trailer park with her family in LaPorte. She acknowledges there’s a stigma to living in a trailer park, but it was pleasant: good friends, kind neighbors.

Her family later moved to the Michigan City area, then to Florida and back to Michigan City. Along the way, her parents frequently bickered before divorcing. She recalls feeling jealous of friends or classmates whose parents were not divorced.

And, there was the middle-school bullying at the hands of mean-spirited female classmates who often operated as a team of three: a lead tormentor and two cheering girls. In response to taunts her ears were too large, Kopta had her ears pierced five times.

“I figured I might as well decorate my ears with earrings and studs,” she said. “They still bullied me, but I figured I’ll give them something else to look at. I did get a few compliments from my friends.”

As a child, Kopta enjoyed working with Play-Doh, the colorful, clay-like modeling compound. It made her realize all the creative things she could do with clay.

“I took a standard art class at Michigan City High School where you do a little bit of everything,” she says. “I absolutely loved doing clay projects, especially when our work was placed in a kiln.”

Her next art class was ceramics, which she enjoyed even more. It was the kind of creative outlet that truly engaged her, allowing her to express some of her pain. She stayed with it, continuously refining her work. But her art went largely unheralded until Hoeffner exposed her audience to Kopta’s unique handiwork.

“When Betty posted my work on the Hey U.G.L.Y. website, she sent it to me,” she said. “I cried when I saw my work displayed. It was very emotional.”

Kopta’s favorite art piece on the site is titled “Internal Struggles.” According to the caption she wrote: “*It represents people who try to hide their mental illnesses. The outside shows a perfectly healthy brain, while the inside reveals a storm of emotions brewing from within.*”

“...For a lot of people, mental illness ends up be-

coming an unseen struggle that worsens through the years without proper treatment. If you are reading this, please know you are not alone. The world might seem bleak right now from where you’re reading, but I promise you it does get better. I say this with confidence because I was also that person who thought I could never overcome my struggles, but here I am writing to you saying it’s going to be OK.”

Kopta drew inspiration for that piece from TV commercials by pharmaceutical companies promoting anti-depressants. The spots initially depict a person in turmoil. But after taking the medication, the person appears more content.

“For the longest time, I refused to go to therapy because I told myself there is nothing wrong with me,” Kopta says. “Eventually, I did go, and it was tremendously helpful. Just talking about it helped a lot. I’m fine now.”

Another piece on the website is called “A Temporary Fix.” Two Band-Aids crisscross a heart. In the

caption, Kopta wrote: “*It’s hard to describe that deep pain in your chest. That feeling of loss and emptiness weighing down your heart like throwing a rock into the ocean. It becomes a fight about keeping your head above water and trying not to drown because these emotions act like a weight pulling you down to the bottom.*”

“*It can feel easier slapping on a bandage and saying, ‘I’m Fine’, but that pain isn’t gone. It gets bottled away and turns into hostility and anger. It’s important to allow your heart to be vulnerable and heal from past trauma because that bandage works as a barrier. It prevents new pain from entering but that old festering pain can’t leave and continues to grow.*”

In addition to pain, Kopta’s pieces are inspired by compelling stories: a movie, a song, a video game.

“A strong story can stir up a lot of emotions,” she says.

One of the most unforgettable stories she encountered was while on her internship. Victor Vargas, who was mercilessly bullied from second grade on because of his Mexican heritage, spoke at an anti-bullying assembly sponsored by Hey U.G.L.Y. at Tri-Township Schools in Wanatah.

“I was sitting in the bleachers with Betty when she nudged me and said, ‘Do you see those kids over there, the big jock types – many of them were crying as they listened to Victor describe what he had been through.’”



Examples of clay art pieces created by Kopta.



Betty Hoeffner, Hey U.G.L.Y.'s co-founder, is pictured with her friend, Anthony Pratscher.

Confirming the story, Hoeffner said it's not unusual for students – the bullied and the bullies – at Hey U.G.L.Y. assemblies to experience a catharsis.

“Crying is common at all of our assemblies,” she says. “We help to open up students’ emotions, and when you open the bottled-up emotions, tears flow. Crying is one of the best ways to release pain. I want students to discover the power of tears because both they and adults hold it all in. Crying is just another way to get the pain outside of your body.”

Vargas, who has deeply touched student audiences across Northwest Indiana and Southwest Michigan with his affecting stories of survival and accomplishment, recently was named president of Hey U.G.L.Y.

Kopta, of course, has her own stories of survival, which she believes will be invaluable when she achieves her goal of becoming a K-12 school counselor. She plans to return to PNW in the spring to pursue a master’s degree in school counseling while continuing to practice her art.

“I was encouraged by my school counselors to find a path because I had no idea what I was doing,” she said. “I’m grateful for that. In turn, I believe I can help kids with their career goals.”

And should a counseling session turn to the subject of the pain of being bullied, Kopta expects to have heartfelt advice at the ready: “High school is probably not the best days of your life. And if it is, you are not doing something right. A teacher once told me that.”

As Kopta has learned, trouble doesn’t last forever. Things get better.

It’s going to be OK.

(Visit <https://heyugly.org> for more information on Kendall’s art and about Hey U.G.L.Y.)

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“Hunger Games” Prequel is Better Than the Book

by Andrew Tallackson

This is a rare case where the people who adapted a popular book streamlined it so what’s on screen, believe it or not, is better.

Not that “The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes” was a bad book, although it earned a bad rap in May 2020 as lazy fan service. True, at 517 pages, Suzanne Collins’ “Hunger Games” prequel felt bloated, with the last act playing out like an altogether different book. But as an origin tale, it honored the spirit of the series while exploring the notion that people are capable of evil, some more than others when the people calling the shots push all the wrong buttons.

And because there is so much material to cover, the film can’t quite maintain a propulsive momentum from start to finish. However, returning director Francis Lawrence and writers Michael Arndt and Michael Lesslie scale back passages in the book that dragged. Lawrence also achieves a more consistent tone so when the last act arrives, it clicks better.

The story is set during the 10th annual Hunger Games. We meet President Snow when he’s an 18-year-old played by Tom Blyth. His parents are dead as casualties of the rebellion, he and his cousin living a threadbare existence. He’s essentially good, but broken, craving a better life.

With the Hunger Games boring TV audiences, the totalitarian government shakes things up. Privileged teens within the capitol are assigned as mentors to youth “reaped” into fighting in the bloodbath.

And it is here Lawrence’s eye for casting his films well paid off. Rachel Zegler as tribute Lucy Gray Baird, the title songbird, delivers on the promise of “West Side Story.” She is the real deal. The movie belongs to her. She gives a bold, commanding performance. You can’t take your eyes off of her. Especially when she is required to belt out songs that endear her to her viewing audiences.

Because of Zegler’s powerful presence, we understand why Snow is drawn to Lucy. Blyth’s scenes with the actress bring out the best in him, because we see the potential to inspire change.

The book contained stretches within the actual games where nothing happened. Where the characters hid. Lawrence keeps that to a minimum, staging wow after wow of an action sequence. That’s especially true when, in a desperate act to end the games, the government unleashes thousands of genetically tinkered snakes into the arena.

The snakes, by the way, are the product of the head gamemaker, Dr. Volumnia Gaul. She’s played by Oscar-winner Viola Davis in a performance that threatens to lose control of itself. With the crazy hair, wonky blue eye and severe wardrobe, the character nearly becomes a cartoon, but it says something about Davis that she reins it in. Lavishes menace to



Rachel Zegler proves her star power, and then some, in “The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes.”

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes”

Running time: 157 minutes. In theaters. Rated PG-13 for strong violent content and disturbing material.

a single word here and there to draw blood.

After the games, the focus is Snow’s descent into District 12 as part of the government police force. In the book, Collins drew parallels to how the Nazis polluted the minds of German youth. That element exists in the film, but Lawrence and his writers ditch much of the training scenes and military downtime that stalled the pull of the book. Although, a few more trims would have been nice. You can feel the weight of the movie’s 2 hour, 37 minute length tug at you.

But here, Blyth makes the impressive transformation from flirting with evil to consuming it whole. At the end, as Blyth makes his way to the camera, we no longer see a child, but the adult he will become once a certain Katniss Everdeen enters the picture.

Collins has yet to reveal if she plans to tell more stories in this universe. If this is it, then she can rest comfortably knowing Hollywood did her right. “The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes” holds its own, and in some instances surpasses, what came before it.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

Read Sally Carpenter’s take on the novel in “Off the Book Shelf.”

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The program is from 4-5:30 p.m. at the James B.



Ross

Dworkin Student Services and Activities Complex, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville. The moderator is Dan Plesac, a Northwest Indiana native, 18-year MLB veteran and MLB Network analyst.

Ross is an integral part of Cubs baseball lore. His career as a catcher spanned 15 seasons in the Major Leagues. His journey culminated with the Cubs, where he played from 2015-2016 and helped lead the team to its historic World Series victory in 2016. After retiring as a player, he transitioned into coaching and until recently served as manager of the Cubs.

Single tickets are available for \$100 by visiting pnw.edu/sinai-forum. College and high school students may attend for free by presenting a valid student ID.

Urschel Laboratories Inc. is sponsoring the program and HealthLinc the reception.

Sacred Architecture Tour

The first free Michigan City Sacred Architecture Tour, which highlights seven churches, is from 2-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 26.

Participating churches are: St. John United Church of Christ; Queen of All Saints; Trinity Episcopal; First Presbyterian; St. Paul Lutheran; St. Mary; and St. Stanislaus Kostka. A docent will be present at each site to share highlights, and offer a brief history of each building.

A bus, provided for the tour, begins at St. John United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, and concludes with a reception at Trinity Episcopal Church at Barker Hall. The bus will return participants to their cars after the tour.

Email Lucia Bim-Merle at lucia@qas.org or call (219) 872-9196, Ext. 107, for more details.

LaPorte Santa Parade

The City of LaPorte will present the LaPorte Santa Parade at 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 25.

The parade kicks off at State and Tipton streets. The route heads west down State to Michigan Avenue, south on Michigan to Lincolnway, then east on Lincolnway to Plaza 618 for the second tree-lighting ceremony.

The event will include photos with Santa at his chalet, food trucks, hot chocolate and Christmas music. Contact Brett Binversie at (219) 362-2325 or bbinversie@cityoflaportein.gov for more details.

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Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Black Friday Opt-Outside Hike from 1-4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 24, at West Beach.** The free family hike, co-sponsored by Save the Dunes, is led by regional experts in fields such as birding, botany, insects, geology and ecology. The hike is moderate in difficulty, with 270 stairs and some sections of loose sand trail surface. Meet at the West Beach parking lot, 376 N. County Line Road in Portage, about 1/2 mile north of U.S. 12.
- **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.
- **Turkey Trot Hike from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 25, along Calumet Dunes Trail.** Hike along Lake Michigan's Calumet shoreline and through forested dunes and small blowouts. Meet at the Calumet Dunes Trail parking lot on County Road 300 East (Kemil Road), just off U.S. 12 near Beverly Shores.
- **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.

Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Opt Outside Hike from 10 a.m.-noon Friday, Nov. 24.** Join a naturalist for a two-mile, moderately rugged hike to Beach House Blowout and back. Wear hiking shoes, and meet at the Nature Center. Park entry is free.
- **Beach Glass Wire-Wrapping Workshop from 10:30 a.m.-noon Saturday, Nov. 25.** Learn the art of wire wrapping to make beach-glass jewelry. The cost is \$7, and pre-registration is required.
- **"Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O" at 10 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 26.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center to help fill bird feeders and play the game.
- **How Indiana Dunes State Park Came to Be at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 26.** A naturalist will shed light on the park's origins.

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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TROTOM Holiday Program

The Region of Three Oaks Museum, 5 Featherbone Ave., will participate in the Nov. 28 “Snowflake Stroll.”

For the fourth straight year, the museum will display the Three Oaks village scale model used in John Hancock’s 1989 Christmas classic “Prancer.” Hancock will attend to answer questions and sign “Prancer” memorabilia, while the model’s creator, Don Bowman, will be on hand at Three Oaks Heritage Hall, 8 E. Linden St.

If weather permits, people can take holiday photos in an antique sleigh. The 19th-century sleigh, part of the collection of the Chamberlain Museum (1916-1952), recently returned to TROTOM from Michigan State University. The sleigh will be in the Mannia Dental parking lot near Linden and Elm streets, placed in front of a snowy pine tree background. Anyone with a camera or cell phone can pose with family for photos.

Donations are always welcome.

Woodcarving Demonstrations

Center of the World Woodshop, 4102 Hanover Road, New Troy, Mich., will celebrate Small Business Saturday by offering wood-carving demonstrations, a sale and refreshments on Saturday, Nov. 25.

Demonstrations are at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. EST. The sale in the attached showroom is from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. EST. Free refreshments will be served.

Center of the World Co-owner Terry Hanover will lead the demonstrations with a chisel and mallet. Many of his furniture pieces contain handcarved embellishments.

No reservations are required. Contact Lorraine Hanover at info@centeroftheworld.net or (269) 469-5687 for more details.



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Monday Musicale

Monday Musicale continues the year's theme, "Music Unites the World," with an emphasis on French composers at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 27, at First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St.

Felicia Thomas is the program chair. Vocalists include Deb Campanella, Frank Casorio, Steven Mast, Laura Meyer and guest performer Dennis Brittain (also on piano). Other performers include pianists Bev Griffith and Barbara Brandon, flutist Betsy Kohn and guest percussionist Pam Jenks.

Selections include "April in Paris," Debussy's "Clair de Lune," "Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano" by Claude Bolling, "Aux Champs-Élysées" by Joe Dassin, "La Chanson Des Vieux Amants" ("The Song of Old Lovers") by Jacques Brel and "Avant de quitter ces lieux" ("Before Leaving This Place") from the Gounod opera "Faust."

Joe Stewart's hosting committee will serve light refreshments during social hour. There is no admission charge; however, donations to the scholarship fund are appreciated. Contact Sue Cassler at (219) 362-1421 for more details.



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Community Theater Suffers a Major Loss

by Andrew Tallackson



Bobby Komendera portrays Fagin in the 2014 Footlight Players production of "Oliver." *Beacher* file photo by Andrew Tallackson.

Robert "Bobby" Komendera, who left an indelible mark on local theater — Footlight Players in particular — passed away last week after valiant battles over the years with kidney issues and diabetes.

Komendera had a lifelong love of theater, influencing many here to pursue that same passion.


He told *The Beacher* in 2013, "No one in my family could understand why I loved theater, why I loved performing. I guess it was the sound of applause. I was short. I was fat. I had thick glasses. But when I was on stage, everyone, I guess, thought I looked great."

And it was on the Footlight stage where he found great happiness.

"I think Footlight, and the same applies to La-Porte (Little Theatre Club), is different than any other theater group," he told *The Beacher* in 2013. "We're not stuck on the fact that we have to be the best. We take chances with people and shows, and people learn from these experiences."

Komendera passed away at Franciscan Health, Michigan City. His husband, Bill Wild, posted on Facebook, "My thanks to everybody for your kind comments and outpouring of love. After talking with friends I have decided that the upcoming holidays are for joy and happiness, not sadness and mourning. Therefore I've decided that there will be no formal funeral, but will be planning for a celebration of Bobby's awesome life in the upcoming spring. I hope everyone understands."

The Beacher will publish more details when they become available.





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“Priscilla” Blows Chance to Do Its Subject Justice

by Andrew Tallackson

in
Theatres



Cailee Spaeny and Jacob Elordi star in “Priscilla.”

While we must acknowledge that Sofia Coppola has made great movies, we must also acknowledge that “Priscilla” is not one of them.

Talk about a missed opportunity. While Baz Luhrmann struck gold last year with the rock ‘n’ roll fairy tale version of Elvis Presley, Coppola (“Lost in Translation,” “Marie Antoinette”) aims for a grounded, intimate approach. She tells the entertainer’s story through the eyes of his wife, who often gets reduced on film to the equivalent of a wounded puppy dog.

Coppola’s source material is Priscilla Presley’s 1985 memoir *Elvis and Me*, so the insight is there for a complex story. Instead, the movie is all surface: never revelatory, at times painfully dull. It’s like watching a sour Lifetime Channel movie.

To Coppola’s credit, she handles with tact the early courtship between Elvis (Jacob Elordi) and Priscilla (Cailee Spaeny). There is an icky nature to it when you consider he’s 24 and she’s 14, the two living on the same Army base. Just a child, and that’s the striking nature of Spaeny’s performance. The actress — 25 in real life — is convincingly authentic as a star-struck kid before following the trajectory of Priscilla’s life into adulthood. And Coppola depicts Elvis as respectful of her youth, allowing her



“Priscilla”

Running time: 113 minutes. In theaters. Rated R for drug use and some language.

to finish high school and never consummating the relationship until she is of age.

Having said that, “Priscilla” quickly settles into a morose, repetitive format. Elvis is kind and adoring one minute, controlling, mean and selfish the next. His temper gets the better of him, she realizes there is a darkness to him...but she stays by his side.

Why? Why does Priscilla stay despite the red flags *before* they marry? Spaeny depicts Priscilla as being frustrated, but beyond the initial celebrity crush, what keeps Priscilla attached to him? There is not one scene, nor a single line of dialogue, where Priscilla opens up. Where we understand what she’s thinking. Spaeny had a brief, but memorable turn in HBO’s “Mare of Easttown” as a young woman whose death rocks her community. Here, though, she is deprived of the tools to make Priscilla, as a character, three-dimensional. Yes, the movie depicts Elvis’ transference of his own drug issues onto his wife, but Spaeny, in scenes where we should be wit-

nessing a grown woman coming into her own, is reduced to giving a reactionary performance. Elvis is kind, Elvis is a jerk. Priscilla somehow tolerates it.

There also is no moviemaking excitement here. True, Coppola is not working with a big budget, but the visuals are needlessly dark and bland. And, it has been edited with all the urgency of a sloth on its way to a meal.

Elordi certainly makes the transformation into the entertainer. He looks and sounds the part. But once Coppola settles into the movie's redundant groove, he comes across as a whiny, indecisive lout. And maybe Elvis was. Maybe this is a more accurate representation. At the same time, he has none of the charisma Austin Butler brought to the role in Baz Luhrmann's flick. Instead of feeling sorry for him, he is just an annoyance, so much so that you sit there, craving the moment when Priscilla finally packs up and leaves.

For a movie that wants you to feel everything for Priscilla, the cardinal sin committed by Coppola is



The movie explores in great detail the 10-year age gap between Priscilla and Elvis.

that, by the midpoint, you stop caring. What's on screen is a tedious bore.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com




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“The Killer” is Another Twisted Treat From David Fincher

by Andrew Tallackson



David Fincher treats the opening of “The Killer” as a partial tribute to Alfred Hitchcock’s “Rear Window.”

When David Fincher returns to his dark roots, there is no one better.

If you recall, Fincher is the guy who saw fit to place Gwyneth Paltrow’s severed head in a cardboard box in “Seven” (1995). Since then, he’s achieved everything from cult classics (“Fight Club”), to Oscar bait (“The Curious Case of Benjamin Button”), to zeitgeist greatness (“The Social Network”). When the itch returns to go dark, whether it be drawn from fact (2007’s superb “Zodiac”) or literary sources (first-rate adaptations of “The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo,” “Gone Girl”), the visuals are exhaustively crafted, the stories challenging.

“The Killer,” his latest, is drawn from a French graphic novel series by Alexis Nolent and Luc Jacamon. It reunites him with his “Seven” scribe, Andrew Kevin Walker. They achieve something unique: a hitman thriller with zero concern if you like the hitman. Instead, they treat him like a lab specimen. Place him under a microscope, dissect him to uncover what makes him tick.

The approach works. Whether we care for Michael Fassbender’s contract killer or find him a robotic bore is irrelevant. What’s going on inside his head is mesmerizing.

The opening 30 minutes of “The Killer,” which just debuted on Netflix, are like a tutorial in hitman methodology. Fassbender (“Inglourious Basterds,” “Shame”), listed in the credits simply as “the killer,”

★ ★ ★ 1/2

“The Killer”

Running time: 118 minutes. Netflix. Rated R for strong violence, language and brief sexuality.

takes us into his thought process when on assignment. The weapons, the location, the tedious waiting process: it’s like he’s teaching an introductory workshop for assassins. And his mantra? No emotion, no distraction, no humanity. Just do the job.

Situated in Paris, Fincher’s nasty wit is on full display. The killer’s go-to headphone music, for instance: It’s anything by The Smiths. And his knowledge of how many McDonalds restaurants are in the vicinity. The night of his intended kill, Fincher cribs from Hitchcock’s “Rear Window,” his camera a study in voyeurism as we peer into the many rooms near his target.

By this point, Fassbender’s voice-over narration has so succinctly outlined every single detail of his job, we prep for flawless efficiency.

Here’s the twist: the killer misses his target.

Knowing he’ll take the fall for botching the assignment, that his days are numbered, the killer must plow through a succession of key players before arriving at the puppetmaster.

Interestingly enough, Fincher and Walker don’t reduce their film to “John Wick” excess. There are

no extravagant chases, or blood-letting of epic extremes. Instead, the movie is as methodical as its main character. Fassbender, again, is like a college professor patiently explaining to his students how to trick death from extracting its payment.

The movie’s droll sense of humor is everywhere. The killer’s fake identities are lifted from 1970s television. In the most shockingly brazen moment, the killer uses Prime to get supplies swiftly delivered from Amazon. And the killer’s targets are too smart for their own good. When, for example, he confronts a fellow assassin in a restaurant, there is no violent attack. Instead, the assassin is played by Oscar-winner Tilda Swinton (“Michael Clayton”), who’s like a visiting guest lecturer, narrating second by second how her final minutes will play out.

I love when a Fincher movie gets like this. Like he’s not worried about what woos critics (“Mank” is a perfect example. He just enjoys having the freedom to do his own thing.

“The Killer” is one of his best. He and his long-



Oscar-winner Tilda Swinton has one scene in “The Killer,” but makes the most of it.

time editor, two-time Oscar-winner Kirk Baxter, create a movie just shy of two hours that flies. It knows precisely where it’s headed. There is not a single uninteresting shot, nor a piece of the puzzle that shouldn’t be there. Fincher is in his zone, and there’s no stopping him.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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Standing Up for Fall



We joyfully joined in the fall grape harvest by picking some delicious Jupiters.

Do you have trouble admitting that fall is your favorite season?

I do.

Come on, we're supposed to jump up and down for summer, and celebrate spring, and complain bitterly all winter long about lake-effect snow.

But fall?

Isn't that when summer's over and it's back to school and work, and drudgery, and the ending of the year, and yada, yada, yada.

Well, guilty little secret here, fall has been, and will always be, my No. 1 season. Fall is my favorite by far, even when I was a kid in Chicago trudging my way to and from Alice L. Barnard Elementary School at 104th and Charles streets.

That's right: the elementary school I attended for eight years of my young life was on my street: Charles Street. How could fall *not* be fun with attendance at a stately pile of red bricks set majestically along Charles Street between 104th and 103rd streets?

Best of all was the fall book fair.

We saved all summer for it from jobs of mowing lawns and babysitting younger kids.

Ah, the fall book fair at Barnard. I can still smell those brand new collections of fabulous fiction by the likes of Edgar Allen Poe, H.G. Wells, Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper. I would happily buy a volume or two and spend a good deal of those chilly fall nights plowing through Poe's creepy short

Life With Charley

Charles McKelvy



stories and Wells' "War of the Worlds." What better authors for the spooky season, right?

So there was that to celebrate in fall and, of course, the fall itself. The falling of the mainly oak leaves that festooned our Beverly neighborhood and, of course, the fragrant burning of said leaves in the gutter. We smoked the whole neighborhood with our leaf fires and we gloried in it. We rode our bikes through the smoke, pretending to be World War II fighter pilots on daring missions. Little wonder I have no trouble admitting that fall is my favorite season.

(Natalie is with me all the way, by the way.)

And we fell in love with fall all over again after moving to Harbert, Mich., from Chicago on June 27, 1987. We absolutely adored our first summer here on the "West Coast of Michigan." Fun in the sun and surf all summer long. What was not to like?

But then came the fall of 1987.

Not only were the fall colors fabulous, but there was the beguiling fragrance of ripening grapes on

the vine. And there was heavenly smoke from the burning of fallen leaves. We had forgotten all about the latter because such a practice was absolutely forbidden in Chicago. No more burning leaves in the gutter and riding through the smoke on bikes.

We loved the turning and burning leaves, and we found that fall was absolutely the most fabulous time to head out on our bikes. We reveled in the blazing palates of fall color on lightly traveled roads like Flynn, Harbert, Mill and Glendora. It was all too beautiful.

And it's only gotten better over the 35+ years we've been on the beautiful side of the lake.

Take the fall of 2022 as a prime example.

We began supporting local farmers from the moment we moved here, and so we stop at farm stands and, in season, buy most of our produce there.

It all starts in early spring with asparagus, then strawberries and on to cut flowers, peppers and all manner of garden vegetables. We really celebrate summer when the tomatoes and sweet corn appear at the stands, and we mourn their passage.

Summer is over.

But, guess what?

The first apples and pumpkins remind us the best is yet to come.

In fall 2022, we found a delicious new apple at Forraht Fruit Farms way east on Lemon Creek Road in Berrien Springs, Mich.: the humble, but totally tasty Shizuka. Our Forraht friends encouraged us to try a sample. We were reluctant because it didn't look like Honey Crisp or Jonagold. No blush of red, just a plain, old yellow apple. Not our favorite.

But it was love at first bite, for both of us.

Our Forraht friends said we should buy at least a half-peck because they had only six trees with Shizuka apples.

We did, and we ate them all up, with delight, before our next weekly farm stand "trapline" tour. The Shizuka was so good, I even made an emergency trip to Forraht Farms to get us through the weekend.

(We shop on Mondays.)

So there was the amazingly sweet, crisp and utterly delicious Shizuka, for a limited time, in fall 2022. But there was also a first for us: picking grapes.

We'd notice every Monday at Forraht Farms that groups were heading out into the vineyards with baskets and scissors. And they were returning with baskets full of fresh grapes. Grapes of many colors.

Hmmm.

So one week, when fall was at its finest, we decided to take our pick of the pickins out there at Forraht Farms. We reckoned we'd bag, oh, maybe two or three pounds. And that would be it. But, we were told, there was quite a variety out there, with each row being marked with the various varieties.

So, of course, we had to have a little of each, and we found that our new favorite was a seedless grape called the Jupiter. The sweet, with a smoky-finish Jupiter. The best thing about picking grapes is that you get to sample the wares, on the vine. What could be finer than that?

So we kind of went nuts out there at Forraht Farms on a fabulous fall afternoon.

We loaded our basket and returned to the barn for the weigh-in, thinking, oh, maybe we had netted five pounds.

Nope.

Thirteen pounds.

Thirteen pounds of a variety of fresh grapes we picked ourselves.

So that was a highlight of fall 2022.

And we know fall 2023 holds even more wonders in store for us.

By the way, I apologize to winter, spring and summer for slighting y'all. You three seasons are full of wonders of your own, but when it comes to standing in for a favorite season, we always fall for fall.



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How to Cook a Turkey

Stories from Notre Dame Elementary School third-graders on how to cook a turkey are a Thanksgiving tradition at The Beacher. They never fail to make us smile: a perfect start to the holiday season. Thanks to teacher Christina Schultz for sharing the stories with us. Enjoy!

First things first, me and my aunt get a turkey from a turkey farm. It weighs 2,000 pounds. When I get home I take the fat off the turkey. Then I put potatoes, gravy and bread inside the turkey. Me and my cousin preheat the oven to 999 degrees Fahrenheit. Next, we put it in the oven and cook it for 1 hour. When it is done, it is time to eat. We eat stuffing, potatoes, corn and cornbread. I will go to Florida with 15 family members for Thanksgiving!

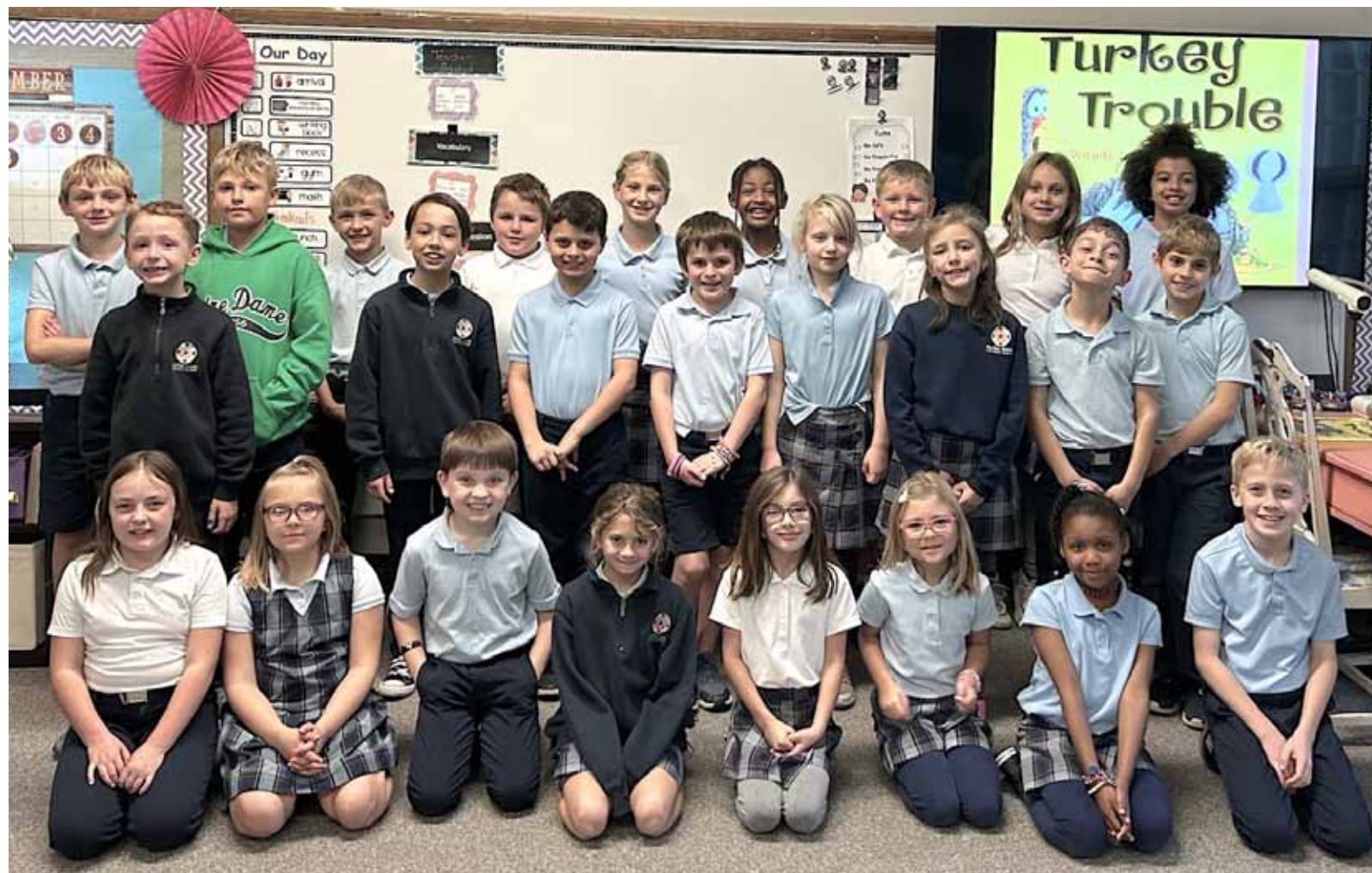
Della Bowen

First, We get a turkey from ALS. Once we get home we weigh the turkey. It weighs 650 pounds. Next we cook it in the oven. But before we put it in the oven, we put stuffing, rosemary and thyme in the turkey. Then we preheat the oven to 384 degrees and cook it for 9 hours. Once it is done cooking we take the turkey over to my grandparents house. Already at there house there will be cranberry sauce, vegetables, pie, noodles, candy and chips. All of my family would already be there. There are twenty-four of us, maybe more! Eventually, my family and I will go into the kitchen to eat. That is how I would cook a turkey.

Noreen Collins

First I get a turkey from the gas station. Then I put rainbow gummy worms in the turkey. Then you preheat the oven to a million degrees. Second, you put the turkey in the scorching hot oven. It stays in for 15 hours. I hope everything goes right! Finally you take your turkey out of the 1 million degree oven. Then you eat the TURKEY! We usually have Thanksgiving at my house. Most of my family from around here and Indianapolis come over to celebrate

Cambria Fleming



Thanksgiving with us. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!!!

Brady Edinger

Have you ever made a turkey? If you haven't you'll learn today. First you need to go to Eastside to get a turkey. Second you need to weigh it. If it doesn't weigh 5,000 pounds you need to have chicken for Thanksgiving. Third you need to put gushers in the turkey and sprite. Fourth you need to cook the turkey, but before you cook the turkey you need to season the turkey with gummy worms and onion powder. Finally you can cook the turkey!

I got my turkey from the store. Before I cook the turkey I season it. I add a dash of a parmesan, 4 cloves of garlic and add some 2 cubes of basil put the TBSP of salt. I preheat the oven to about medium heat for about an hour. I stuff the turkey with the garlic powder. it will not taste the same. I add some fresh garlic powder and let it sit for a few minutes. Then I Put it inside a small container of fresh garlic and salt for about a half hour and then add the remaining spices to make a delicious garlic sauce for later in your cooking process with garlic salt to help with this effect. As you cook it and

then you can use the rest of the spices for your cooking as you go. To make the sauce and you don't have any more garlic powder you are good to go with it for a while but if you're not careful then you can always put some more garlic powder in it and add it to the sauce and it should taste better and you can use the sauce for your cooking more evenly. If you're using the same spices as the sauce or not but it doesn't really matter what you're doing with your cooking it is time for you turkey and you need more time and time and it is not the time for the garlic and it will taste good for the sauce is

right after you cook it will look and taste better than the garlic and the sauce is just as much better with your sauce and the sauce will help you cook the turkey and the garlic in it and you can use the sauce as much of it is in your sauce then you are going for a better done cooking and the garlic.

Ava German-Cox

Have you ever made a turkey? If not, I'll tell you my recipe. Come on! Let's go! First I got the turkey from somewhere during a storm. It just fell out of the sky. The turkey weighs 50 pounds. I have to thaw the turkey out. I put pizza and bread in my turkey! I cook my turkey at Panera Bread. I eat the turkey with a salad and tacos. I will either have Thanksgiving dinner at my mom or my dad's. There will be 50 people at Thanksgiving.

Charlie Hall

Have you ever had a turkey on Thanksgiving? Well, this is my recipe on how to make a turkey but, this is one I made up. First, you go to Walmart and buy a frozen turkey. Then you have to unwrap it. You have to weigh it when you get home. It weighed 20 pounds! Also you put stuffing in the turkey. Then once you're ready, put it in the oven. Next you heat the oven to 400 degrees.

You also put it in the oven for 50 minutes. Then you get out the other foods. I will celebrate Thanksgiving at my grandparents house. But, you might celebrate it somewhere else. About 18 more or less people are coming to Thanksgiving. Last, you cut it up and eat it.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Luke Hartleib

I got my Turkey from the Farmer's market and it weighed 100 Pounds. I preheat the oven. I put 100 gummy bears in my turkey 25 gummy worms in my turkey. I put a big turkey on the big big big big tray! Put the heat on for 1'000 Greensky Hope attendant well? I put it on for a thousand hours. I eat it with Mashed potatoes and pie. Celebrate at my grandma's house. I celebrate with about 10 people. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

Ruby Kohler

Have you ever made a turkey before? I haven't made one yet, but this is how I would do it.

First, I would go to Al's supermarket and buy an 80 pound turkey and take it to my grandparents house.

Next, I'd let it thaw and wrap it in plastic wrap and put it in the oven at 350 degrees for 2 hours. While the turkey is cooking I'll get the ham and sides like, stuffing, mashed potatoes with butter, cranberries, corn bread, and apple and pumpkin pie. Then, I'll set the table and wait for the guests to arrive. After that, everyone shows up and we eat and celebrate thanksgiving together as a family. The end.

Moira Lane

Turn the page
for more
instructions from
third-graders on
"How to Cook
a Turkey!"

Hi! If you don't know how to cook a turkey well I am going to teach you how to cook an amazing turkey. So first, we have to go to the woods and kill a turkey and then I go home and check if it is at least 230 pounds by weighing it on a scale. It's perfect. Next, we need to freeze it because I got it a few months before. So, we have to thaw it out. Then, get the table set up and ready and relax while I wait for it to be cooked. I put some candy and fruit in it and some rosemary and salt sprinkled on it. I put the oven at 1,000 degrees and for 3 hours. Then, I put the mashed potatoes, peas, and garlic bread on the side to go with the turkey. We go to my house. I have Thanksgiving with my cousins, aunt and uncle, my grandparents, my brother, and my parents.

Jacob Marler

Do you want to learn how to cook a turkey? Good, I'll teach you how to cook the PERFECT turkey. So you go to Walmart and get a turkey. It should be 4,999 pounds and then buy the 1,000 dollar turkey. When you get home, cook the turkey at 6,001 degrees. Set the timer for two days. After you get the turkey out of the oven you should wait 16 hours for it to cool. Then put lettuce around it. And apples around it to offer more healthy things. You can serve it with a yummy pumpkin pie. There you have it, the perfect Thanksgiving turkey dinner!

Nathan Marler

I would go to Meijer to get a turkey. Once you get home you put it on a pan rapped in tinfoil. Then you put it in the oven at 1,000,000,000,000°F for 5,000,000 hours. When I take it out I put it lemon juice in the inside of the turkey to let it cool. Then I make the mashed potatoes. And then I invite 10 to 8 people at least. When they get to my house I bring the turkey and mashed potatoes out on the table to eat. Last we pray before we eat.

Eila McIntosh

Do you like turkey? I don't but I still need one for thanksgiving. Ok! Now it's time to learn how to cook a turkey. First, you need to buy a turkey, so you'll go to get a turkey from Lighthouse Mall and buy a turkey that weighs about 30 pounds. I put it in a pan and add butter.

Then, I add cinnamon and pumpkin spice for a filling. I put the turkey in a bowl and put that big disgusting turkey in the oven. Then cook it at 30 degrees and for 40 minutes. Then go get started with the rest of the food like, mashed potatoes, corn bread, cranberries things, etc.

I'm probably going to my Grandmas house or maybe my house for the first time.

Now you know how to make a turkey for Thanksgiving! Happy Thanksgiving and a happy new year

Fiona McKee

Do you know how to cook a turkey? Cause I am going to show you how. First you hunt or buy one. Then you bring it to the places you will cook it at. First you are going to get a cage and put it in there, then preheat the oven to 30 degrees fahrenheit. Next, put it in the oven for 20 min. Then, you make the other food well it is cooking and also set the table then when it comes out you what for it to cool off last eat.

Nora Meyer

Have you ever made a turkey for Thanksgiving? I have and I want to tell you how to make a good turkey. First, I go to ALS to get the turkey. It is probably 150 pounds, then take off the plastic, if you want a headless turkey, you have to cut off the head. It might sound a little weird just trust me if you don't you might end up eating the eyes. Then put it in the oven. In my opinion I don't put anything inside the turkey. I put it inside of the oven for 30 minutes and 350 degrees. My sides are stuffing, mashed potatoes and green beans. I go to my cousin's house

for dinner and my whole family goes. I had an amazing time. Yummy!!! Remember to put gummy eyes where the head would be. It makes it so much better, do it!!

Joey Salmon

I will get my turkey from the store and it weighs 5 pounds. I will preheat the oven to 500 degrees. you put the turkey in the oven for 30 minutes. I will also have mashed potatoes with my turkey and that is all. I will celebrate thanksgiving at my grandparent's house. There will be about 20 people there. I am excited for thanksgiving?

Mary Cate Sammann

Do you like Thanksgiving? I do so you should too! First things first, get a turkey from the Wild West. Next, how much does it weigh you ask? It weighs 5,000 pounds. After all that stuff, you have to take of the plastic. After that, grab a gallon of hot sauce and put it all over the turkey. Then, preheat the oven for 2,000,000 for the degrees. After that, throw it in the oven for 30 minutes. Then, make some other stuff like mashed potatoes, corn bread, and cake. Then we think about who's going to come to my house or my aunts house to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Henry Sarver

Let me tell you how I cook a delicious turkey for Thanksgiving. First, I went to the store with my dad. When we got inside we went to the turkeys there were a lot of them! Then we went back home. I cooked the turkey and it was a masterpiece! First I started a fire because we are cooking it over a campfire. Then we unwrap the turkey and put it on a spinning tool so it rotates around the fire. Next, when it is done we take it inside and put spices on and inside the turkey. Finally, we eat. we have soup and slushiest. We usually have Thanksgiving at my Grandma's house. My whole family will be there to celebrate.

Zane Schoonaert

Do you know how to cook a turkey? Let me tell you how I think you should cook a turkey. Well I got my turkey from the forest and it weighed 79 pounds. Then I Pull off all the feathers. The next step is I stuff it with gummy bears and sugar. Then I put salt and pepper seasoning on the turkey. Then you preheat the oven to 70,000 degrees. Next I put it in the oven. I hope everything goes right. then set the timer to 1,0000 hours. Next you get the stuffing and cheesy potatoes ready. Then you invite 100 Family and friends to your house. That is the best Thanksgiving ever!

Quinn Seddon

Do you know how to make a turkey? This is how to make a perfecto turkey. First, you go to a random person's turkey farm and steal one. Then release it into the wild. 3 days later you go shoot it. It weighs 150 pounds. Before you cook it you put sugar on it. Then you put it in the oven at 563 degrees for 1 hour. After you cook it you stuff it with chicken. We also eat mashed potatoes candy corn/sweet corn and ham. where we have it IDK man. We will have cousins and family over. The turkey will be delicious! I forgot to say go to the store and get...gravy! Nah.Ghost pepper sauce!

Harry Smith

Do you know how to cook a turkey? Well, this is my way to do it. We get it at a turkey farm, usually. It weighs 66 pounds. To get

it ready, we stuff it with carrots and potatoes. We also eat it with mashed potatoes with gravy. We celebrate Thanksgiving at my grandma's house. There will be 6 people.

Happy Thanksgiving.

William Thayer

Do you like turkey? Do you want to make a really good turkey? Let me tell you how we get and cook our turkey. We hunt for our turkey. The one we get is like 50 pounds. He's really massive. We preheat the oven and get ready to put him in. We put potatoes in the crockpot. We cook it until it is nice and brown at about 500 to 400 degrees. We cook it for about 1,000 hours. We also have Mac And Cheese and stuffing. We will celebrate Thanksgiving at my house and all of our family will come.

James Trout

Have you ever made a turkey? If you have, you should know how long it takes. Well if I was to cook a turkey here's how I would do it. First, you go to Als and buy a 5,000 pound turkey, not a 100 pound turkey. Next while you're there get pumpkin pie, cheese and crackers, carrots, ham, and wheat thins. Once you get home, preheat the oven to 500 degrees. While you're waiting to unload your groceries. Once you're done, check your oven to see if it's hot enough. Finally put your turkey in the oven. When it is done then have a yummy Thanksgiving dinner!

Jeremiah Wadle

My turkey weighs 3 pounds. I got my Turkey from Candy Boiling Isles. I stuff my turkey with gummy bears. I cook it in the candy grill at 2000 degrees for 50 hours. You put candy and sugar on top of the Turkey. I also eat candy pie, rainbow mashed potatoes, and rainbow cake with my turkey. I will celebrate my Thanksgiving at my house. A lot of my family members will be there to celebrate Thanksgiving with me and my family. THE END.

Moriya Woodard

Hey, have you ever cooked a turkey? Well I sure haven't. But I'm going to tell you how. So first, you go get a turkey from East side. After that you get a 90 pound turkey, take the rapping off and then season it with chicken broth and hot sauce. After that put mashed potatoes, grave, stuffing, and gummy bears inside the turkey. Then cook it in a campfire at exactly 700 degrees for 2 hours. I'll also have mashed potatoes, carrots, corn, and bread for sides. I will eat Thanksgiving dinner at my Grandma's house. I hope one million people will eat with me. I think it will be great.

Charlie Yoder



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Spooky Sprint



The Michigan City High School Class of 2025 held a “Spooky Sprint” 5K fun run on Oct. 28 in Washington Park to raise money for prom, a senior picnic and other class activities. All photos by James Conlin.

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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:

- **Thanksgiving hours.** The library is closed Thursday, Nov. 23.
- **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, Ozobots 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.
- **Write Now! (ages 10-17) from 4-5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29.** Children can learn how to create characters, build a setting and set up a plot, as well as work with each another to craft tales. No registration is needed.
- **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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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:

- **Thanksgiving holiday hours.** Branches close early Wednesday, Nov. 22, and are closed all day Thursday, Nov. 23.
- **Giant Scrabble from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 29, at the main library Meeting Room B.** Celebrate International Games Month with giant Scrabble or Bananagrams. Use the ground as a game board and play against friends, family or someone new. Attendees also have a chance to win a regular sized game.

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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New Buffalo Township Library

- **Thanksgiving holiday hours.** The library is closed Thursday-Friday, Nov. 23-24, then reopens Nov. 25.
- **New Buffalo Township Library Book Club.** The meeting is at 10 a.m. EST Tuesday, Nov. 28.
- **The Hogwarts Reading Challenge.** The program ends Thursday, Nov. 30.

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.

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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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Chesterton Art Center



The community attends last year's member exhibit.

The Annual Members' Exhibit runs Dec. 2-Jan. 4, 2024, with a free artists' reception from noon-2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9.

Every media and style typically is represented, including painting, photography, sculpture, drawing, glass, wood, ceramics and mixed media.

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

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JROTC Honors Veterans

Michigan City High School honored veterans, complete with a ceremony that included a modified military parade, the high school band, choir and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

State Rep. Pat Boy was the guest speaker, sharing how many members of her family served in the military, including Marines who survived the sinking of the USS Wasp. She encouraged the student body to consider serving the nation in that same tradition.

A ceremony highlight was a demonstration of armed exhibition drill, modeled after the U.S. Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon.

Master Sgt. Jeff Benak, the Marine instructor, noted the amount of practice it takes to synchronize the throwing and spinning of rifles.

“Armed Exhibition is the toughest event in a military drill competition,” he said in a press release. “It takes much dexterity and attention to detail to master those movements. It was really great for our cadets to be able to incorporate part of their routine into the ceremony.”

Cadets also provided Color Guards for the Purdue University Northwest and Michigan City chapter of the Marine Corps League ceremonies. This was in addition to the cadets’ own ceremony honoring the U.S. Marine Corps’ 248th birthday.

Prior to Thanksgiving break, the Raider team was to compete at Indianapolis Ben Davis High School. The goal was to qualify for the MCJROTC National Raider Championship in Boswell, Pa., the last weekend in April. The drill team heads to the Portage Drill Meet on Dec. 2. Immediately after that, the cadets will march in the Michigan City Holiday Parade that night. The drill team’s goal is to qualify for the Marine JROTC National Championship in May in Washington, D.C.

The cadets also will participate in community-service activities prior to the holidays, to include assisting The Salvation Army in its food and donation drive, the Deserving Children Shopping Tours and Michigan City Area Schools’ “One City One Sound” holiday concert.



The Color Guard performs “Eyes, Right” as part of the MCHS ceremony honoring veterans.

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The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes by Suzanne Collins (hardcover \$27.99 and paperback \$16.99 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 517 pages.)

It's finally here! The stunning prequel to *The Hunger Games*, first published in 2020, arrived Nov. 17 on the big screen. I, for one, can't wait!

Will the movie be as good as the book? That is always the \$64 question, and I will withhold judgement in favor of my esteemed colleague and editor, Drew Tallackson. Here's my take.

The former North America, now called Panem, is divided into 13 districts and the Capitol District. Some 10 years ago, rebels staged a civil war, which they lost — big time. In fact, District 13 no longer exists. It was blown to smithereens. So how do you punish the losers?

Show them every year who's boss, that's how. Each year, two young people, one boy and one girl, are chosen from each district to fight to the death. *"Instead of battles, we have the Hunger Games."* Tributes are dumped into the Capitol Arena, along with some weapons. There can only be one winner. The tributes are starved and often beaten.

The games have become boring to the general public, so incentives must be added. Like betting on who will win, or sending food and water to a favorite tribute. Also, mentors from the capitol's academy school are assigned to tributes to give the killings something more imaginative to view, since the games are televised. They give live interviews with the tributes, trying to gain support and favors.

Coriolanus Snow is assigned a girl from District 12: Lucy Gray, a singer/songwriter. Snow is not happy with his tribute as District 12 is the poorest of them all, and how long can a girl last before she gets killed...and she will get killed. He's sure of it. But maybe he is underestimating her as we see Lucy in another light in the arena, cunning and with much patience. He actually seems to fall for her like an average 18-year-old — is love in the air? And all that? Well, just when you think Snow has a heart, and looking with doe eyes at Lucy — he even considers running away with her — he turns around and uses her for his own glory. After all, *"What was there to aspire to once wealth, fame and power had been eliminated? Was the goal of survival further survival and nothing more?"* What happens after the 10th game is finished and the winner announced is an unforeseen event that will surprise you and lead Snow in a different direction.

This book has a different feel to it. While the 10th Hunger Games are described in all their gore and senseless killing, there isn't the more personal in-

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



teractions between tributes that we saw in the trilogy. Also, the games are held in the old bombed-out arena in the capitol, which gives off a different vibe — it is rather low-key. The poor lighting makes it even difficult to film and see what is going on, which makes for less viewership and lower ratings.

Snow is a complicated character. He can show signs of being honorable, but then he snaps to attention and does the opposite. Is he evil? Is he good? Or is he just misunderstood? (Sorry, it wasn't my intention to rhyme there.)

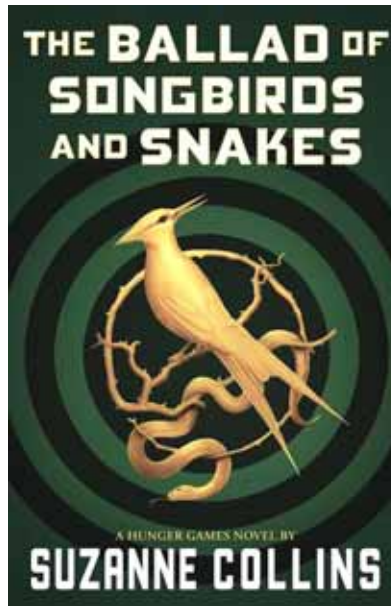
Collins could have written this story in 350-400 pages and it would have been effective. There are several sequences that drag and don't add much to the story. And yes, there are ballads, sung by Lucy. Whole lyrics are given, just add your own music. And there are songbirds and snakes. And a diabolical Dr. Gaul from the academy is über creepy with her strange experiments on animals and even humans.

However, this prequel does a good job of showing how Snow, the 18-year-old student, could evolve into the hideous president of Panem some 65 years later. *"What he desired had little to do with nobility and everything to do with being in control."*

There's no doubt Coriolanus Snow is the main character. His father was in the rebel uprising and lost his fortune and his life. His mother is dead. Now, he lives with his grandmother and cousin, Tigris. He's allowed to go to the Academy School because of his father's record. He has high hopes of getting into university, with a scholarship of course, and who knows after that? His ego, good looks and intelligence carry him because that's about all he has. Their penthouse apartment has hardly any furniture or food to eat. Intelligence and attitude are everything, right? And knowing how to take care of your detractors...one at a time.

The final word: Maybe another book with the intervening years between the 10th and 75th Hunger Games would be an interesting study of the rise of this power-hungry megalomaniac. Remember: *"Snow lands on top."* That's a recurring reminder that Coriolanus Snow has heard all his life...a message he obviously takes seriously.

Till next time, happy reading and Happy Thanksgiving!



LONG BEACH WOMEN'S BOWLING



Nov. 14, 2023

TEAM STANDING

	WON	LOST
1. Striking Beauties	30	10
2. Pin Ball Wizards	26	14
3. Pin Pushers	26	16

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Tammy Vouri	189
2. Dottie Brinckman	168
3. Mary Lou McFadden	167
4. Sarah Blank	154
5. Carolyn Wiggins	139

SPLITS

Kathy Osborne	2-7
June Salmon	5-8
Tina Sonderby	2-3-6-10

STRIKES

Dottie Brinckman, Mary Lou McFadden, 3.
Sarah Blank, 4.

Friendship Gardens Turkey Walk

An annual tradition in Michigan City, Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12, will host its free Gobble Gobble Turkey Walk from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 23.

Children can count paper turkeys hidden throughout the trails for a chance to win a Thanksgiving prize. Call (219) 878-9885 or email info@friendship-botanicgardens.org for more details.

Sullair DCH Christmas Party

Sullair Disconnected Compressor Honorees will host its Christmas party at 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7, at Galveston Steakhouse. The event includes appetizers, a cash bar and 50/50 drawing.

The cost is a \$15 cover charge payable at the door. Spouses and guests are welcome.

RSVP by Dec. 1 to sdch.reunion@gmail.com



American Red Cross

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

- Queen of All Saints, 606 S. Woodland Ave., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 25.

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.

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In the Area

Nov. 23 — Thanksgiving Day.

Nov. 23 — Turkey Walk, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Info: (219) 878-9885, info@friendshipbotanicgardens.org

Nov. 24 — Native American Heritage Day.

Nov. 25 — LaPorte Santa Parade, 3:30 p.m., downtown LaPorte. Info: (219) 362-2325.

Nov. 25 — Clown Tower Comedy Presents Bobcat Goldthwait, 8-10:30 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Tickets: \$20-\$35, with table seating available. Reservations: tinyurl.com/4c7zrrhy

Nov. 26 — Michigan City Sacred Architecture Tour, 2-5 p.m. Free. Info: lucia@qas.org, (219) 872-9196, Ext. 107.

Nov. 27 — Monday Musicale, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St. Info: (219) 362-1421.

Nov. 29 — Giant Scrabble, 3:30-4:30 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Nov. 29 — Write Now! (ages 10-17), 4-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

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. 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.

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

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. 24 — Opt Outside Hike, 10 a.m.-noon, Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Nov. 24 — Black Friday Opt-Outside Hike, 1-4 p.m., West Beach, 376 N. County Line Road, Portage. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/ind

Nov. 24 — Club Acorn Presents Dancing Queen: An ABBA Salute, 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$30 + \$5 convenience fee, \$55 + \$5 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 25 — Beach Glass Wire-Wrapping Workshop, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Cost: \$7. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Nov. 25 — Wood-carving demonstrations/sale/refreshments, Center of the World Woodshop, 4102 Hanover Road, New Troy, Mich. Demonstrations: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. EST/sale: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. EST. Info: (269) 469-5687, info@centeroftheworld.net

Nov. 25 — Makers Market, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. EST, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: boxfactoryforthearts.org, facebook.com/boxfactoryarts.

Nov. 25 — The Acorn Tree House Presents Sean Masterson’s Timeless Magic, noon EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$15 (general/adult) + \$3.50 convenience fee & \$10 (general/child) + \$3 convenience fee; \$40 (reserved/adult) + \$3.50 convenience fee & \$35 (reserved/child) + \$3 convenience fee. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 25 — Turkey Trot Hike, 1-3 p.m., Calumet Dunes Trail, parking lot on County Road 300 East (Kemil Road). Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/ind

Nov. 25 — PureSoul Presents: A Merry Motown Christmas, 8 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$35 + \$5.50 convenience fee, \$60 + \$5.50 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 26 — “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.

Nov. 26 — How Indiana Dunes State Park Came to Be, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Nov. 28 — New Buffalo Township Library Book Club, 10 a.m. EST, library, 33 N. Thompson St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

Nov. 28 — JazzReach: Metta Quintet at The Acorn – Big Drum/Small World, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$20 (general/adult) + \$4 convenience fee & \$8 (general/child) + \$2 convenience fee; \$45 (reserved/adult) + \$4 convenience fee & \$33 (reserved/child) + \$2 convenience fee. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Nov. 29 — JazzReach: Metta Quintet at The Acorn – Stolen Moments: The First 100 Years of Jazz, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$20 (general/adult) + \$4 convenience fee & \$8 (general/child) + \$2 convenience fee; \$45 (reserved/adult) + \$4 convenience fee & \$33 (reserved/child) + \$2 convenience fee. Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Dec. 2-Jan. 4, 2024 — Annual Members' Exhibit, Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Free artists' reception: noon-2 p.m. Dec. 9. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.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.

Through Jan. 14, 2024 — Berrien Artist Guild annual member show, Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: www.boxfactoryforthearts.org

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

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:* "Priscilla." Rated R. Times: 7 p.m. Nov. 24, 4 & 7 p.m. Nov. 25-26. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On November 23, 1876, three eastern colleges, Columbia, Princeton and Harvard, joined to form the first intercollegiate football association.

On November 23, 1889, the jukebox made its debut in San Francisco, at the Palais Royale saloon.

On November 23, 1911, Earl Ovington was sworn in as the first airmail pilot of the U.S. Post Office. His first assignment was to deliver mail, handed to him by the postmaster at Garden City, Long Island, to the postmaster of Mineola, six miles away. He flew a Bleriot monoplane, the Dragon Fly, in the first authorized airmail service.

On November 23, 1936, the first issue of *Life*, the picture magazine created by Henry Luce, was published in Chicago.

On November 23, 2000, in a setback for presidential candidate Al Gore, the Florida Supreme Court refused to order Miami-Dade County to resume counting ballots by hand.

On November 24, 1859, British naturalist Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, explaining his theory of evolution through natural selection.

On November 24, 1869, women from 21 states gathered in Cleveland to draw up plans for organizing the “American Women Suffrage Association.”

On November 24, 1871, the National Rifle Association was incorporated, naming Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside as its first president.

On November 24, 1963, in Dallas, Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John Kennedy, was shot to death by Jack Ruby.

On November 24, 1971, a hijacker, who went by the name of “Dan Cooper,” parachuted from a Boeing 727 over Washington state with \$200,000 in ransom money. Cooper, who is popularly — albeit incorrectly — referred to as “D.B. Cooper,” has not been heard from since.

On November 25, 1783, during the Revolutionary War, the British evacuated New York, their last military position in the United States.

On November 25, 1920, radio station WTAW, of College Station, Texas, broadcast the first play-by-play description of a college football game between Texas A & M and The University of Texas.

On November 25, 1922, in Egypt, King Tutankhamen’s tomb was opened for the first time.

On November 26, 1789, President George Washington proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving Day in the United States. He asked the nation to

observe the day as one of thanksgiving for the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

On November 26, 1825, students at Union College (in Schenectady, N.Y.) organized Kappa Alpha, America’s first collegiate social fraternity.

On November 26, 1832, with the fare set at 12 1/2 cents, public streetcar service began in New York City. The streetcar was the horse drawn John Mason, publicly unveiled 12 days earlier.

On November 26, 1833, Chicago’s first newspaper, *The Chicago Democrat*, was published by John Calhoun, a printer from New York.

On November 26, 1942, the film “Casablanca,” starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, had its world premiere in New York.

On November 27, 1889, Curtis Bradley received the first permit to drive an automobile through Central Park. The permit was issued on the condition that Bradley pledge to “*exert the greatest care to avoid frightening horses.*”

On November 27, 1910, New York’s Pennsylvania Railroad Station officially opened. It was, at the time, the world’s largest railway terminal.

On November 27, 1926, Chicago hosted its first Army-Navy football game, played at Soldiers Field, and which ended in a 21-21 tie.

On November 27, 1939, the play “Key Largo” by Maxwell Anderson opened in New York.

On November 28, 1839, Thanksgiving was observed for the first time in Chicago.

On November 28, 1919, American-born Lady Nancy Astor became the first woman elected to serve as a member of the British Parliament.

On November 28, 1922, over New York’s Times Square, Royal Air Force Capt. Cyril Turner gave the first skywriting presentation. His message: “*Hello USA. Call Vanderbilt 7200.*” New York’s telephone switchboards were jammed as in excess of 47,000 people did just that.

On November 28, 1925, the Grand Ole Opry, Nashville’s famed home of country music, made its radio debut.

On November 29, 1825, Rossini’s “Barber of Seville,” the first Italian opera to be performed in the United States, opened in New York City.

On November 29, 1886, Chicago’s first fireboat, the \$39,000 “Geyser,” was commissioned on the Chicago River.

On November 29, 1898, C.S. Lewis, who created the “Chronicles of Narnia” children’s books, was born in Belfast, Ireland.

On November 29, 1929, Navy Lt. Commander Richard E. Byrd flew over the South Pole in his trimotored Fokker plane, becoming the only person to have flown over both the North and South poles.

On November 29, 1961, a chimpanzee, Enos, was launched from Cape Canaveral aboard the Mercury Atlas 5 spacecraft, which orbited Earth twice before returning.

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