



Volume 39, Number 41 Thursday, October 19, 2023



The Value in Diversity

by Edmund Lawler

Bridget Verdun's burgeoning greeting card business needed help...and fast.

Her business, Occasionally Speaking, which she operates from her former art gallery in downtown Three Oaks, Mich., finally got what she was wishing for this summer: a massive order from Barnes & Noble for 20,000 artisanal cards featuring famous quotes for a variety of occasions.

But fulfilling an order of that scale for the nation's largest bookstore chain in less than a month was going to seriously strain the family-run business. Verdun's mother, Pam Durkin, who lives in Sheridan Beach, handles fulfillment duties by hand-folding each card and placing it in an acetate envelope. She was accustomed, however, to processing orders of 1,000 cards or less from its network of 700 retailers.

"I knew that we were going to need some help," Verdun said. "We've used friends and family and folks in the community who have pitched in at times when we needed extra hands on deck. But I knew that if I was to scale this business, I needed a more sustainable model for fulfillment."

Verdun contacted organizations around the country that could handle her company's fulfillment.

"But I really wanted something local," she explained, "to keep our shipping costs

Tanya, an Opportunity Enterprises supervisor, directs Jon, a worker with disabilities, as he handles Occasionally Speaking's large-scale greeting card order for Barnes & Noble. Provided photo

down and reduce the potential for loss or damage."

Through her work as a consultant for the Chicago-based Noetic Executive Search for nonprofits, she learned of Opportunity Enterprises. The nonprofit organization in Valparaiso helps people with developmental disabilities reach their fullest potential and live enriching lives. Its OutSource Solutions unit provides assembly and packaging services for area businesses with whom it partners.

Verdun connected with Kathleen Parks, Opportunity Enterprises' senior director of Employment Services and Transition.

"Kathie invited me to tour their facility," she said, "and I brought along our cards. Our project was absolutely in their wheelhouse."

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The Value in Diversity

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Opportunity Enterprises did an initial test run and folded 300 cards.

“They did it beautifully,” Verdun said. “When we were ready to go, they were ready to take us.”

She said she is not the least bit surprised a team of people with disabilities mastered the task on a tight deadline.

“...we believe that embracing diversity in the workforce is critical,” Verdun said, calling the Opportunity Enterprises team assigned to the task “capable, talented and amazing people.”

She cited a *Harvard Business Review* article that stated, “Many people with neurological conditions such as autism spectrum disorder and dyslexia have extraordinary skills, including in pattern recognition, memory and mathematics. Yet they often struggle to fit the profiles sought by employers.”

Unfortunately, Parks said, too many people with disabilities aren’t given the opportunity to do meaningful work.

“Due to the fact that less than 20 percent of people with a disability are employed shows us that there is a huge pool of potential employees that are often overlooked,” she said. “A study found that companies who hired people with disabilities outperformed their peers and saw a wide variety of improvements.”

The study by Accenture Strategy and Consulting found that people with a disability in the workplace are 72 percent more productive than their non-disabled peers, and help their organizations produce a 30 percent higher profit margin.

“Hiring someone with a disability is not a philanthropic effort, but truly a way to find valuable employees,” Parks said. “Just like the rest of us, each person has different strengths. With some extra focus during onboarding (bringing new employees into an organization) – you can find an amazing workforce who may outperform many other employees.”

She added, “Hiring a diverse workforce can improve overall employee culture and improve your reputation, which can help attract a forward-thinking younger generation of workers.”

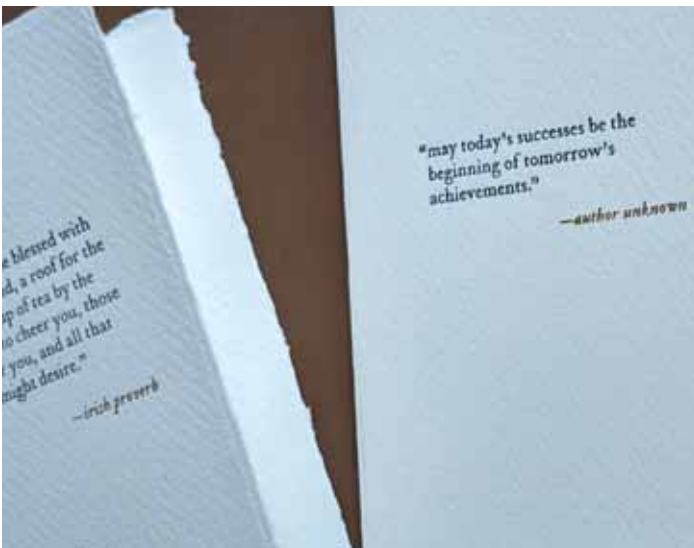
Opportunity Enterprises’ OutSource Solutions unit folded, packaged and labeled Occasionally Speaking’s cards and envelopes. It took OutSource Solutions’ team of 19 people, who have intellectual and physical disabilities, less than a week to complete the project.

The workers range in age from 18 to 70-plus, according to Parks. Work hours are from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., with individual assignments based on the worker’s particular skill-set.

“We have two direct-support business professionals who oversee the work groups, as well as quality control,” she said. “Nothing leaves here that hasn’t been thoroughly inspected.”



Bridget Verdun is photographed by *The Beacher's* Edmund Lawler in her office/warehouse.



The type of sentiments conveyed on Occasionally Speaking greeting cards.

OutSource Solutions works with a variety of manufacturers, medical supply companies, military contractors and other companies. Most are local, but some are as far away as California, according to Parks, who has been with Opportunity Enterprises for 25 years.

"We have companies that ship product to us, and we ship it back," she said. "If there is a company in need, especially amid the current labor shortage, we can provide assembly and kit-building work. We are here to support other businesses."



Kathleen Parks.

The work provides "a meaningful day and a paycheck for people with physical and intellectual disabilities from La-Porte, Porter and Lake counties," Parks said. "We've enjoyed working with Bridget and her company. We were delighted to know that a product we assembled was going to be in Barnes & Noble stores."

Verdun has worn several hats in her career, starting as a graphic designer before transitioning into a staffing organization placing creative, marketing and digital talent.

In 2004, she and her husband, Tad Verdun, bought the historic Decker Electric Building on Elm Street in Three Oaks, where she launched the Studio b gallery she operated until 2019. Verdun later added executive search to her personal portfolio.

Along the way, she explained, "I had this light bulb moment: What if I could take famous quotations and pair them with beautiful hand-made paper and create a line of cards that I could have in my desk drawer at work?"

Continued on Page 4



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Her creative vision, however, was met by some with skepticism.

“When I decided to do greeting cards years ago, people said to me, ‘Why greeting cards? Everyone sends emails now.’ But,” she continued, “I’m an artist and graphic designer at heart and have always had a love for the art of the handwritten letter.”

Regardless of her professional role, Verdun said she had a habit of sending personal notes on paper to clients, customers and colleagues.

“I found that a common thread in all my work in sales and in connecting with people was always writing a thank-you note. There is nothing that replaces that hand-written correspondence,” she said. “The surprise and delight of receiving a hand-written letter sparks joy.”

She sources all the quotes for the greeting cards. To be certain, none of the quotes violate copyright law. She hired an attorney for the creative arts to review quotes before going to press.

She and her family had been living in the Hyde Park neighborhood near the University of Chicago, where her husband is a manager in the Financial Aid division. But they moved to an apartment above their business in Three Oaks in 2021.



Pam Durkin, Sheridan Beach, Bridget Verdun’s mother, handles the lion’s share of Occasionally Speaking’s fulfillment. Provided photo.

Their son, Cole, is a freshman at Michigan State University, and their daughter, Eloise, is a sophomore at La Lumiere School in LaPorte. She was recently named Three Oak’s Young Poet Laureate.

Tad Verdun, who now works remotely from Three Oaks, assists Occasionally Speaking with his knowledge of regulation and compliance, which is critical when meeting the production and labeling standards of major national retailers. Bridget Verdun’s mother Pam will continue to play an important role.

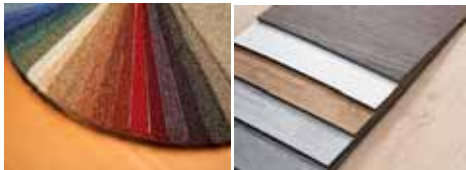
Verdun is grateful to have struck up a relationship with the nonprofit Opportunity Enterprises.

“They did a fantastic job,” she said. “I feel we have a real partner in Opportunity Enterprises.”

Verdun, who’s long been inspired by famous quotes, said her company’s positive experience with Opportunity Enterprises calls to mind a famous adage from poet Maya Angelou: “In diversity there is beauty, and there is strength.”



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LaPorte Community Concert Association Celebrates 100th Anniversary

LaPorte Community Concert Association celebrates 100 years of bringing acclaimed entertainment to the community, the new season commencing Oct. 22.

The idea behind Community Concerts began in 1923 when Ward French of New York created a plan to take live, professional talent to small towns in America, with assurance the sponsoring organization would not lose money. His idea was to raise money first, then select programs to fit the budget. LaPorte was the second city — Battle Creek, Mich., being the first — to try the idea.

The LaPorte Amateur Music Club sponsored the organization known as Civic Music. The first year, organizers signed up 1,200 members at \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for children. The concerts were held at the LaPorte theater, the old LaPorte High School and Civic Opera House. After 1930, most concerts were held at LaPorte Civic Auditorium. Today, they are at the LaPorte High School Performing Arts Center, 602 F St.

In 1948, the name changed to LaPorte Community Concert Association and Walter Burger was elected president, a position he held for many years. Over the years, performers who have appeared in LaPorte included Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Al Hurt, Marian Anderson, Mario Lanza, the Swedish Symphony, the Moscow Balalikas, the London Piano duo and Shanghai Acrobats from China.

The 2023 schedule is:

- **Jason Lyle Black at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 22.** The award-winning pianist celebrates numerous musical styles, playing nearly 100 songs and sharing comedic stories like “Songs Not to Play at People’s Weddings and Funerals.” He also has the ability to play as easily sitting backward as forward. Program highlights include selections from “Les Miserables,” “The Sound of Music,” “West Side Story,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Star Wars,” “Indiana Jones,” “William Tell Overture,” “Flight of the Bumblebee” and “Blue Danube Waltz.”
- **Chris Funk at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024.**



Chris Funk.



Jason Lyle Black

Funk present a magic show with live music, complete with a violin concerto and guitar loop recorded live on stage. The live-feed camera and interactive video bring the audience into the action.

- **Kathy Kaefer’s award-winning show “Kiss Me Once: Stories from the Homefront” at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 26, 2024.** Honoring “The Greatest Generation,” Kaefer draws a personal

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narrative from interviews with veterans about wartime experiences, and her own grandmothers, about their lives as young women on the homefront. She subsequently blends storytelling and songs such as “When I Grow Too Old to Dream,” “Moonlight Serenade,” “I’ll Be Seeing You,” “White Cliffs of Dover” and “Sentimental Journey.”

- **Carlson Quartet at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 28, 2024.** Carrie Ann Carlson and Denise Kuehner founded the quartet in 1977 during their first years of teaching instrumental music in Porter County. They continued to thrive over the years — some years booking more than 35 weddings and other events — and rekindled this past year, adding Lewis Stahl (violin) and Anna Anderson (cello). The broad range of music includes Haydn (“String Quartet Opus 77 No. 1”), Mozart (“*Eine Kleine Nachmusic*”) and Debussy (“*Clair de Lune*”).

LaPorte has a reciprocity agreement with associations in Portage (four concerts) and Munster (six concerts), allowing LaPorte members to attend any of those programs. A \$60 adult membership includes all 14 concerts a year. Tickets also are sold at the door for \$20. Contact Bill Burger at (219) 362-5292 or Beth LeRoy at (219) 362-8262 for memberships or more details.

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Canada Park Mural Dedication



The new Canada Park mural is by East Chicago native Felix "Flex" Maldonado Jr.

Michigan City Public Art Committee will host a dedication and ribbon cutting for a mural painted on the Canada Park wall at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, 300 Center St.

The mural represents local flora and fauna, the bright colors chosen by artist and East Chicago native Felix "Flex" Maldonado Jr. He is self-taught, with more than 35-years experience in painting, drawing and graffiti art. In 1995, he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts with a minor in graphic design from Chicago's American Academy of Art. His work has landed him at several Chicago ad agen-

cies, directing and producing commercials for companies such as Mulligan Water, Roto-Rooter, Head Tennis and ATA Airlines.

The Michigan City Common Council created MAC in 2011. Sculptfusion debuted in 2013 with an original exhibit of eight sculptures rotated each year throughout the Uptown Arts District and Washington Park. As the sculptures gained popularity, many leases were renewed and several sculptures purchased for Michigan City's public-art collection. Since then, various pieces have been added to the collection, but the mural painted in a city park is a first.

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BACKGROUND:

- Long Beach Park Board (2020 - current)
- Long Beach Advisory Plan Commission (2019 - 2022)
- Legal Administration (1972 - 2013)



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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:

- **Scratch Club (ages 7-17) at 4 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19.** Learn to code with Scratch — a platform to create stories, games and animations — by working through projects and sharing ideas. Call Dave at (219) 873-3045 for details.
- **Film Showing: "Top Gun: Maverick" at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20.** The movie is Rated PG-13.
- **Genealogy Help with Colleen Miltenberger from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.** Miltenberger offers tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical records. She also can interpret Ancestry/genealogical DNA results.
- **Kid Bingo! from 4-5:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 23.** No registration is required. Children have the chance to win small prizes.
- **Halloween Costume Parade (birth-age 5) at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25.** Children will hear stories before parading through the library collecting treats. Children can wear a favorite costume and take a bag to collect treats.
- **Tinkercad 3-D Modeling from 4-5 p.m.**

Wednesday, Oct. 25, in the Makerspace. Registration is required for the program that involves Tinkercad, a free online collection of software tools. This session, for children 9-17, 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. MCPL 3-D printing rules apply, and the printing fee is waived for this program.

- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in October.** 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, Oct. 17, 24 and 31.** Harris can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical records.
- **Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in October.** 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.
- **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens weekly.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Makerspace. Supplies are limited.
- **Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays.** Children birth to age 5 and adults will enjoy stories, songs and crafts. Check out previous story time videos through the library's YouTube channel, Facebook page and website.
- **Spooky Halloween Scavenger Hunt in October.** Visit Youth Services, find all the characters and win a prize. Children can return each week when the characters move around.



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



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Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Saw-whet Owl Banding Demonstration from 7-10 p.m. Thursdays in October 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
- **The Save the Tunes Council performs from 7:30-9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** The group preserves folk songs in the traditional way, using guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, banjo, harmonica, bagpipe, penny whistle, hurdy gurdy and other obscure instruments.
- **Pinhook Bog Open House from 9-11 a.m. Saturdays in October.** Meet at the bog parking lot for a ranger-led hike to experience carnivorous insect-eating plants and rare orchids. Passes are required. The bog parking lot is at 700 N. Wozniak Road in Michigan City.
- **Drop-In Volunteering from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 21, at the Park Connection Office at Chellberg Farm, Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20.** Join a ranger and fellow volunteers to care for the park. Equipment and protective gear will be provided. Wear

comfortable clothes.

- **Close up Nature Photography with Mark Chantell from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 21, at Paul H. Douglas Center.** First is a 30-minute presentation on lenses, accessories and other tips. Then, visitors head to a trail for hands-on experience. Take an interchangeable lens camera with a macro or similar lens, or a good point and shoot with macro capability. A tripod is recommended.
- **Paul H. Douglas Center Open House and Nature Play Date from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays in October.** Participate in a free nature-themed craft in the art room, watch the staff feed the animals or build a fort in the Nature Play Zone.
- **Furs to Farm Flashback from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays in October at Bailly Homestead/Chellberg Farmhouse, 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter.** At Bailly Homestead, the chapel and fur traders' cabin will be open. The main house will be closed due to ongoing restoration. At Chellberg Farm, tour the farmhouse and visit the animals. Rangers and volunteers will be on hand at each location to share area history.
- **Fall Colors Hike from noon-2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 22, at the National Park Headquarters, 1100 N. Mineral Springs Road, Chesterton.** Dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes.
- **Mount Baldy Summit Hike from 9-11 a.m. Sundays in October.** Meet at the parking lot off U.S. 12 for a ranger-led hike to the top of the dune. Passes are required. The parking lot and beach are open from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. The dune, however, is still closed.
- **Miller Woods Hike from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sundays in October at Paul H. Douglas Center.** The ranger-led stroll explores a rare black oak savanna, and offers views of Lake Michigan and Chicago.
- **Feeding at the Farm from 4:30-5 p.m. Sundays in October at Bailly Homestead/Chellberg Farm, 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter.** Join a volunteer or ranger to help feed cows and chickens at Chellberg Farm. The program, sponsored by Friends of Indiana Dunes, is part of the Farm & Garden Crew, where volunteers take care of the farm, including its buildings, animals and resources.

□

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

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of the 34th annual Northwest Indiana Storytelling Festival:

- **Stories and Sing-Alongs from 7-8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20.** Folk musician Luke Nover and Northwest Indiana Storytellers will perform at the campground shelter next to campsite 113. Friends of the Indiana Dunes will provide treats. Parking is available at the Nature Center or campground gate overflow parking lots.
- **Stories for Children from 10:30 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 21.** Stories told with puppets and props are planned at the Nature Center Auditorium fire ring.
- **Storyteller's Favorites from 1-2:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.** Listen to stories at the Nature Center fire ring.
- **Stories from Around the World and an Open Mic from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.** Stories will be shared before the open-mic portion of the program at the Nature Center fire ring.
- **Ghost Stories from 5:30-8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.** The free open-air program is at the Nature Center fire ring, so take a blanket and/or lawn chair. Two sessions are planned: children 7 and younger from 5:30-6:30 p.m., then youth 8 and older from 7-8 p.m. Friends of the Indiana Dunes will provide cider and cookies.
- **A Witch Hunt in the Dunes at 10 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 22.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center for a one-mile moderate stroll seeking witch hazel and other signs of fall.
- **Beach Mysteries Table from 2-3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 22.** Stop by the Nature Center to watch a naturalist explore items that wash up on beaches, and learn their natural and cultural stories.



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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NB Library Community Forum



The lighthouse today exists as Old Lighthouse Museum.

The New Buffalo Library Community Forum continues with a program on famed Michigan City lighthouse keeper Harriet Colfax at 6:30 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Oct. 24, at the library, 33 N. Thompson St.

Colfax operated the lighthouse for 43 years, from the Civil War era through the Gilded Age. To those used to seeing men in such positions, Colfax initially seemed an unconventional choice, but she never failed to keep the flames lit.

Presenter Sandra Young is a historian, actress and author who spent three decades in community theater, and has presented at nearly 50 events in the community.

The program is free.

New Buffalo Township Library

- **Youth Advisory Board Meeting.** The group meets at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19.
- **Halloween Craft with Stampin's a Hoot at 6 p.m. Monday, Oct. 23.** The program is appropriate for ages 7 and older. Call to register.
- **Teen Pumpkin Decorating Party and Contest from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 24.** The program is appropriate for ages 10 and older. Call to register

Weekly programs:

- Craft Time on 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 all day Fridays.
- Saturday Morning Cartoons from 10 a.m.-noon.
- 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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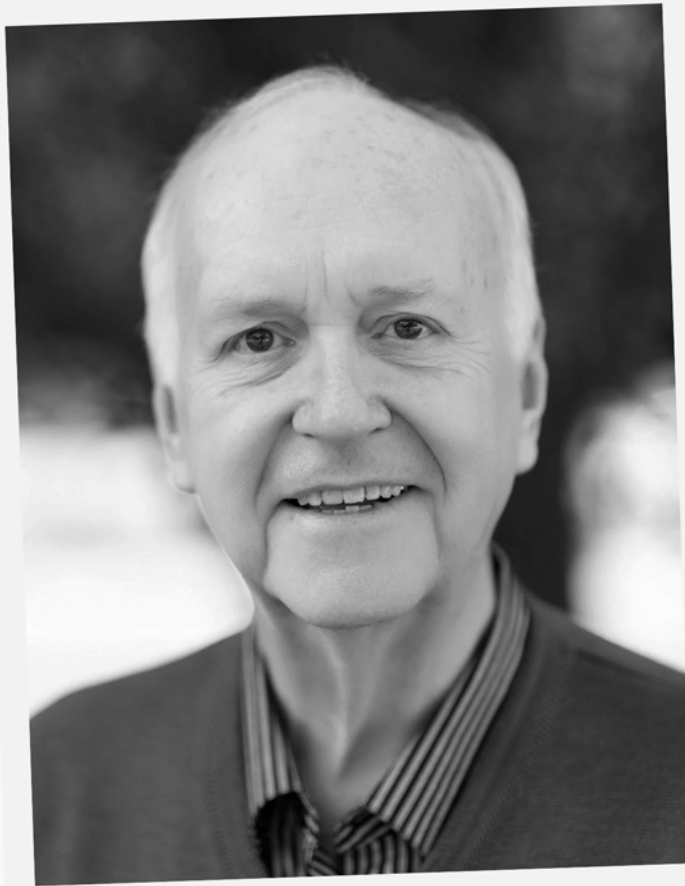


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- ▶ Work with all Town Boards and Committees to obtain and maintain in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office all minutes, records and/or transcripts of their actions at public meetings.
- ▶ Maintain relationships and open lines of communications with relevant State Agencies and Officials.
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NOVEMBER 8TH

Paid for by John Kocher

LaPorte County Public Library

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

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

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

▣

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

▣

The following program is planned:

- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 20, at the main library.** Children ages 3-5 with their caregivers experience stories, songs, crafts and activities.
- **Fall STEAM Camp: Lego Challenge from 1-4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, at the Coolspring Branch meeting room.** Registration through the website is required for the program where teams make building challenges.
- **Learn It! Leaves of 3-D from 1:30-3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, at the main library Meeting Room B.** Registration through the website is required for the program where youth identify and analyze the characteristics of leaves.
- **Self-Care Workshop from 4-5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25, in the main library Study Cafe.** Learn tips for practicing self-care and improving your mental health.

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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“Only Murders” Only Gets Better With Each Season

by Andrew Tallackson



Meryl Streep, seen here with Martin Short, is a pure delight in Season 3 of “Only Murders in the Building.”

“Only Murders in the Building” is streaming comfort food of the tallest order. The coziest of cozy mysteries, where we’re so happy to be back with these characters in Season 3, the issue of “whodunit” nearly becomes secondary.

Cozy mysteries are titled as such because they’re about amateur sleuths. In this Hulu series, our amateurs are an unlikely trio: washed-up actor Charles Haden-Savage (Steve Martin), misguided Broadway director Oliver Putnam (Martin Short) and floundering artist Mabel Mora (Selena Gomez). Life seems to have skipped over them, so a podcast is their only ticket to notoriety. Specifically, to only investigate deaths striking close to home: the Arconia, their sprawling NYC apartment complex.

So endearing are these characters and their misfit friends, everyone wants in on the game. And by everyone, I mean Hollywood’s best. Season 3 may be the crown jewel by adding three-time Oscar-winner Meryl Streep and Ant-Man himself, Paul Rudd. The result is a mystery of obvious outcome, but a character study so rich and generous in laughs and heart, you can’t get enough of it.

As Season 2 wrapped its investigation into the death of Bunny Folger, the Arconia’s cranky board president, the body count added another victim to

the list: insufferable actor Ben Glenroy (Rudd), who appears poisoned to death on stage during opening night of Oliver’s Broadway play, “Death Rattle.”

As Season 3 begins, Ben’s story unfolds largely through flashbacks, where Rudd creates a narcissistic pain who consumes everyone in his path. So, everyone is a suspect. But as we know from previous seasons, “Only Murders” will misdirect you as to the killer’s identity, only to debunk theories in favor of more fresh meat.

Much of Season 3 sticks to the Arconia, but Broadway is now its playground. By doing so, the series reinvents itself, embracing and satirizing all the myths, glamor, vanity and irony of theater.

Like having none other than Matthew Broderick play an intensely inert version of himself. An actor who does more research than necessary, annoying fly-by-the-seat-of-his pants Oliver. That yields one of the show’s biggest laughs: a cameo by a certain “Producers” creator.

Next, the series lured Broadway treasures to pen outrageous songs for Oliver’s musical rebirth of “Death Rattle,” now titled “Death Rattle Dazzle.” Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, the guys behind “Dear Evan Hansen,” “La La Land” and “The Greatest Showman,” did their homework, the opening num-

ber, “Creatures of the Night,” sounding like Andrew Lloyd Webber on a bender. “Look for the Light,” a lullaby Pasek and Paul crafted with Sara Bareilles (“Waitress”), is the gem, with Streep and co-star Ashley Park (“Joy Ride”) so in sync with each other, the song could actually exist within a Broadway production.

Streep, by the way, what a pleasure. She abandons all the acting tricks — the accents, the physical transformations — that win awards and operates strictly on instinct. Feeding off co-stars and seeing where the scene takes her. Her performance as Loretta, the play’s secret weapon, feels natural and effortless. It’s a treat to see her smile. Giggle. Play someone a little off, and by off I mean distracted. And her vocals on “Look for the Light” are so enchanting, you can see why during rehearsals, as she and Park reach a crescendo of emotions, stage manager-Broadway enthusiast Howard Morris (Michael Cyril Creighton) can’t hold back the tears.

Steve Martin and Martin Short both play men grasping at straws. Long having lost any career vitality. If Charles revels in his long-defunct TV show, then Oliver is a narcissist trying to cover up severe insecurity. I never really cared much for Short in the past. It always felt like he was trying too hard, forcing the physical comedy. But here, he seems more at ease. Bathing in ego. The humor of Oliver is that he’s his own best fan, so watching Gomez and Martin react with deadpan disinterest is the perfect comedic counterpoint.

But rather than reducing these men to comic caricatures, the heart of the show is that secretly, they can’t imagine life without each other, and especially with Mabel. They validate each other’s existence, thrive off each other’s energy, particularly Gomez, who feels more comfortable in this role than ever.

These three characters are family. Those moments where they rediscover that bond, where they realize they can’t stand being apart, are why we love “Only Murders in the Building.”

Rudd plays a vain actor much like James Marsden’s scene-stealing, Emmy nominated turn in “Jury Duty.” Rudd, however, does not come across as effortless as Marsden, but what’s surprising is how good he is late in the season. The more dramatic moments where we discover how damaged Ben Glenroy really was. In many ways, he’s not too removed from Oliver and Charles. Like Season 2, which elevated



Paul Rudd plays a narcissistic actor seen mostly in flashbacks throughout the season.

murder victim Bunny Folger into a sad portrait of loneliness, Rudd transcends the idea of Ben as a total jerk into something more complicated.

Who killed him? The answer is not so complicated. The show drops visual clues so by the penultimate episode, we have a good idea who did it. Ironically, we’re not disappointed, because, again, the bond between Oliver, Charles and Mabel is airtight. And the ensemble is comfortable enough around them to cut loose. They don’t seem intimidated by their star power, especially the hilarious Da’Vine Joy Randolph as Det. Donna Williams, who now knows the eccentricities of these three so well, she has no patience for them.

Hulu has renewed “Only Murders” for its fourth season. Clearly, it savors the hit on its hands. And the final scene of Season 3 sets up the latest death. Can the show top what it achieved here? That remains to be seen. All we know is, the quality, the consistency, in the laughs and camaraderie of the cast are untouched.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

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The Joy of Music

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra hosted the 35th annual Drayton Family Education Concerts on Oct. 11 at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Rick DeJonge was the conductor, incorporating his own compositions and arrangements into the program. More than 5,000 students and educators from Northwest Indiana and Southwest Michigan attend the concerts. All photos by Bob Wellinski



“Fair Play” Wages a Blistering Attack on Male Ego

by Andrew Tallackson



“Fair Play” uses corporate culture, especially closed-door meetings, to explore gender and male ego.

“Fair Play” opens with ridiculous hanky-panky in a restaurant bathroom, and believe it or not, there’s something nostalgic about it. It’s like those ’80s-’90s thrillers Adrian Lyne cranked out with salacious titles like “Fatal Attraction” and “Indecent Proposal.”

The opening scene, however, is the bliss before the storm. Writer-director Chloe Domont, in her feature film debut, wages an all-out attack on male ego that is so stinging, it’s like splashing rubbing alcohol on an open wound. I don’t know who will be more uncomfortable: men or women. Not on the same shockingly offensive level as last year’s NC-17 mess “Blonde.” No, it’s more what Domont has to say, that in our post #metoo culture, men haven’t learned a darn thing. We may not want to hear that. We’d like to believe we live in slightly more enlightened times. But maybe, we need more wakeup calls like this.

As “Fair Play” begins, Emily (“Bridgerton” star Phoebe Dynevor) and Luke (“Solo” star Alden Ehrenreich) are on the cusp of greatness. Just engaged, both doing well at a New York hedge fund firm. She overhears office chatter that he’s next in line for the coveted title of portfolio manager.

Turns out, she’s the one chosen by the boss, Campbell (Eddie Marsan), who asks that she meet him at a bar at 2 a.m. to break the news.

There are no sexual overtones during the meeting, but Luke fears the late-night call was Camp-

★ ★ ★^{1/2}

“Fair Play”

Running time: 113 minutes. Netflix. Rated R for pervasive language, sexual content, some nudity and violence.

bell’s way of making the moves on Emily: The first red flag he’s unwilling to accept she earned the promotion by merit alone. Nonetheless, Luke is genuinely happy, and supportive, of her.

At first.

I found Ehrenreich underwhelming as the galactic bad boy of “Solo,” the actor cast more out of resemblance to Harrison Ford than for exuding the same charisma. But here...*wow*. Luke’s steady collapse amid Emily’s rise, it’s a train wreck. The desperation reeking out of the actor is a study in toxic, wounded masculinity. Every action is a feeble attempt to reassert himself as the alpha male. And as each strategic move flounders, the failure oozing out of Ehrenreich, the way it trashes his relationship with Emily, paces the film like an intense corporate thriller. A nightmare horror movie, even.

For Emily, Dynevor finds a complicated balance. Emily’s sharp, way more than her male counterparts. She’s also been keeping her relationship with Luke secret per company policy banning such behavior. And the strain of Luke’s jealousy, and apparent

inefficiency at work, takes a toll. Watching Dynevor always having Emily on guard, outthinking not just Luke, but also the male-dominated culture at work, is exhilarating *and* devastating.

These two exceptional performances trigger the harsh realities of Domont's poison-pen script. That men cannot handle the women in their lives making more money *and* having earned it by being *better* than them. That the male-ego solution to nursing wounded pride is to dismiss female success as tokenism, or the fruits of "sleeping with the boss."

By the time "Fair Play" reaches its hold-no-punches finish, Emily and Luke face each other for the last time. All bets off. All truths dragged to the surface. It isn't pretty, but that's the bruising achievement of Domont's screenplay. She isn't about easy outs. She has the guts to see these two characters through to the end.

People tend to dismiss movies that make them uncomfortable because they've touched on a nerve, either within themselves or on a much larger scale. Indeed, the past 10 years or so have shown that,



Phoebe Dynevor and Alden Ehrenreich are superb, achieving some of their best work.

in terms of racism, hate crimes, gender inequality and violence directed at women, we are a one-step forward, two-steps back society. There is much more work to be done. "Fair Play" is bold enough to say, hey, let's pick at the scabs and get a dialogue started. And let's do it in the guise of an anxious thriller.

Domont pulls it off. Amazingly so.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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Shouldering Onward

I shredded my right shoulder, while swimming, on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022.

Then came the reverse total-shoulder replacement on Monday, April 3, 2023.

Finally, I successfully completed four months of physical therapy on Thursday, Aug. 3, 2023.

Do the math, and you'll see something like eight months at play here. Eight months from initial injury to graduation from PT at Ascension Borgess Hospital in Dowagiac, Mich. My ace physical therapist, Hilary Mancik, sent me on my way with six pages of clearly delineated and cleverly illustrated "marching orders." Marching orders for life. (And, at a vigorous 73, I have a lot of life left in me. Right, Natalie?!?)

Swimming?

Oh, yes.

Hilary prescribed a sensible amount of swimming. For "Charley's Swimming Protocol," she outlined a graduated course, beginning with 500 yards of mixed strokes, culminating in a maximum of 1,000 yards of front crawl, breaststroke and backstroke. And, "Maximum swim days per week: four."

That's right: four.

And, I am only to swim in the lake they call Michigan when it is calm. No body surfing until the summer of 2024.

Bummer?

Not really.

But it is quite a comedown for a chlorinated old swimmer who prided himself in swimming 72 lengths of a 25-yard pool for his 72nd birthday, in 2022. Hey, I would knock off at least a mile at most of my daily workouts in the pool. As for lake swimming, I knew no bounds because there are no boundaries out there.

What can I say?

Life With Charley

Charles McKelvy



A self-portrait of an older and wiser swimmer.

I was a swim junkie. I loved the endorphin rush and the wash of chlorinated water over my body.

But then, what was it I was doing when I felt and heard that popping sound in my right shoulder on Dec. 3, 2022?

Why swimming, of course.

But not just swimming. OVER-SWIMMING.

Natalie and Hilary, who was Natalie's PT at various times, warned me I was overdoing it. Going too far and putting too much stress on my pair of old-guy shoulders. I listened to the two of them, but I kept on swimming.

I did begin to notice other regulars at "the club" where I swim who bore shoulder scars. I even encountered proud members of the so-called "Club of Six." Those are folks who have had both shoulders, both knees and both hips replaced. An elite group, to be sure. Then, I met a member of an even more auspicious group, "the Club of Eight." This man not only had the aforementioned six joints replaced, but two ankles as well.

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When I told Natalie about these illustrious organizations, she said I should be sure and steer clear of even “the Club of One.”

But you know I didn’t listen to Natalie and/or Hilary. You know my sad little shoulder saga.

You should also know I firmly resolve to swim out the rest of my life as a proud member of “the Club of One.” Hey, one joint replacement is more than enough, right?

Right on!

So, back to living life on my new right shoulder’s terms.

Hilary Mancik spelled it all out for me. She taught me all the exercises: the ones with bands and pulleys and the ones with weights. She showed me how and when to up the weights and number of reps. She gave me pictures of people dutifully doing those exercises.

“You can do this,” she said.

“Yes, I can,” I replied.

And, as of this writing, I am.

No rocket science here. It’s all straightforward and clearly delineated. I like clearly delineated, and Hilary gave me a modest bunch of it.



Body surfing resumes in summer 2024.

So off into the wild blue yonder with fair winds and following seas, ever shouldering onward and upward.

Thanks for reading this. If you enjoyed what I had to say, buy yourself a water bottle and head to your nearest gym and/or pool with the clearly delineated plan to take it easy.

★ ELECT ★

Cheryl

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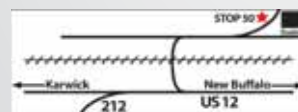
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Reins of Life Receives Lilly Grant

Reins of Life has received a \$650,000 Lilly Endowment Inc. grant to expand the South Bend facility.

The program is funded through Lilly Endowment’s initiative, Strengthening Youth Programs in Indiana. The aim is to help youth-serving organizations improve abilities to promote the academic, physical and social well-being of youth ages 5-18.

In 2022, many individuals wanting to participate in Reins of Life therapeutic programs could not since programs reached full capacity. After two years of COVID-19 and its imposed limitations, the result for Reins of Life was a growth of almost 40 percent, considerably stretching resources.

A two-year, three-phase expansion plan for the South Bend facilities has been developed. The project involves adding a classroom area, reception area with weather-protected entrance, office space, a meeting/data room, remodeling of the multipurpose activity room to include a sensory corner, practice/therapy rooms, designated volunteer space, a small arena, tack room, horse stalls and paved parking lot. Walkways will be added to areas around the property that were previously inaccessible.

Reins of Life is one of 187 organizations receiving grants through Strengthening Youth Programs in Indiana. Its Michigan City facility is located at 9375 W. County Road 300 North.

KAC Gnome Competition

Krasl Art Center will host “Go Big or Go Gnome,” a competition that’s part of its fall fundraiser.

The event supports not only KAC, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich., but also the Clay Artist Guild.

Individuals and groups are encouraged to share their artistic interpretation of a gnome — indoors or outdoors. The submission deadline is 5 p.m. EDT Wednesday, Nov. 1. The fee is \$25 for individuals and \$50 for groups/businesses. Prizes await the winners.

Voting is open at noon EDT Nov. 2-16. Winners will be announced at Krasl’s annual meeting at 6:20 p.m. EDT Friday, Nov. 17.

Participation guidelines include:

- Indoor gnome pieces should not exceed 2 feet tall and 2 feet wide.
- Outdoor gnome displays are a minimum of 2 feet tall and 2 feet wide, and must be waterproof for up to two weeks.
- Can be made of any medium. They also must be family friendly and in good taste.
- All entries must have a name and title. Provide a brief description (not to exceed 150 words). Name, email and phone number are required.
- Krasl is not responsible for any repairs or damages. In the unlikely event of damages or repairs, participants will be made aware by KAC staff. Visit tinyurl.com/2fynvhma for details.

Harbor Country Hikers



Berrien County Parks Chief Naturalist Derek Pelc (center) speaks to hikers at a 2022 visit to Madeline Bertrand Park.

Harbor Country Hikers will host the second stage of its three-park tour through Berrien County Parks at 1 p.m. EDT Saturday, Oct. 21, at Madeline Bertrand Park, 3038 Adams Road, Niles, Mich.

Led by parks naturalist Lamanda Hilty, the group will learn how Southwest Michigan's wildlife prepares for winter. The 2.5-mile hike, rated moderately physically difficult, is expected to last about two hours.

Madeline Bertrand offers trails in 153 acres of gently rolling hills, through pine and oak forests and along a bluff overlooking St. Joseph River.

Membership is preferred; however, the public is welcome. Dress for the weather, wear comfortable shoes or boots and take plenty of water. Visit www.harborcountryhikers.com or Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook for more details.

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Oct. 10, 2023

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2. Pin Ball Wizards	13	7
2. Pin Pushers	13	7
HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES	SCORE	
1. Carolyn Wiggins		170
2. Debbie Novak		169
3. Kathy Straninger		167
4. Dottie Brinckman		153
SPLITS		
Deb Novak		4-5
June Salmon		3-10
Robyn Rice		5-6
Susan Kieffer		3-9-10

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Upcycled Holiday Family Workshop

Registration is open, with only 20 participants allowed, for Recycling and Waste Reduction District of Porter County's Upcycled Holiday Family Workshop.

Held in partnership with Valparaiso's Art Barn School of Art, the workshop for ages 6 and older is from 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 18, at Art Barn, 695 N. County Road 400 East.

Art Barn instructor-Master Recycler Sharon Angelina will show how to create holiday ornaments, centerpieces or decorations using materials such as discarded holiday cards, ribbon, scrap paper and small boxes and containers.

Cookies and cocoa will be served, and district staff will discuss ways to reduce, reuse and recycle. All materials and supplies are provided, but if residents want to donate any "wish list" items, they can be dropped off at Art Barn from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday. All materials should be clean, dry and usable. That includes:

- Cardboard items/packaging (egg cartons, small boxes — less than 6" — inserts, textured pieces).
- Scrapbook paper/origami paper.
- Magazines/calendars.
- Used holiday cards (with address/info removed).
- Food cans or tubes such as Pringles/oatmeal.
- Plastic jars and bottles.
- Yarn and ribbon.

The cost is \$10. Register at tinyurl.com/4hm5u9be. Contact the Art Barn at (219) 462-9009 or info@artbarnschool.org, or the district at (219) 465-3694 or gabrielle@portercountyrecycling.org, 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. The Baugher Center is located at 100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton.

Chesterton Art Center

The quarterly free Family Art Day is from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.

With guidance from the CAC team, families will explore the Duneland Plein Air Painters exhibit “A Brush with Nature: Duneland Plein Air Adventures 2023,” which showcases work by local artists who create paintings outside and are inspired by nature.



Visitors then move into the classroom to create projects inspired by DPAA. That includes watercolor landscapes, mixed-media nature scenes and observational flower drawings. All supplies are provided, and dress to get messy.

All ages are welcome, with materials provided. Register at tinyurl.com/5n82979a or call (219) 926-4711.

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.

Legacy Center Gallery

Work by Michigan City Art League members is on display through Dec. 31 at The Legacy Center Gallery at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave.

A special “meet the artist” reception follows the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Nov. 5.

The Art League is in its 91st year of offering affordable art classes. Featured artists in the Legacy Center exhibit include: Bill Cavalier, Susan Hughes, Catherine Kissinger, Kadie O’Connor, Sandra Stroud, Peggy Michaels, Betty Thomas, Linda Pinkepank, Bunny Dimke, Pamela Hackett, Pamela Struebing and Sandi Terry.

Legacy Center hours are 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays and 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays. Visitors should enter through the Esther Street doors.

Email Art League president Kadie O’Connor at kd3627@hotmail.com for more details.

Land of Lakes Art Alliance

Land of Lakes Art Alliance will host an open house/art exhibit from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, at LaPorte County Public Library’s large meeting room, 904 Indiana Ave.

Members will show examples of their work and chat with the public. Refreshments will be served.

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Belle Gunness Program

“Belle Gunness: The History of the Mystery Event” is at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, at LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave.

The event starts with a showing of the documentary “The Gunness Mystery,” followed at noon by a downtown historic walk to view spots in LaPorte that Belle frequented. Participants receive a booklet with explanations of each location to visit. At 2 p.m., retired judge William Boklund will give the program “Stories from the Gunness Mystery.”

The cost is the regular admission fee: \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors 60+ and free for children 18 or younger. The event may not be suitable for younger children. Call (219) 324-6767 for more details.

“Spooky Sprint” 5K

Runners are encouraged to wear costumes for the “Spooky Sprint” 5K fun run Saturday, Oct. 28, in Washington Park.

Registration starts at 8 a.m. the day of the event, with the race at 9 a.m. It begins at North Point Pavilion, then heads along the beach to Beachwalk and back along Lake Shore Drive.

The entry fee for pre-registered adult runners is \$20, or \$25 the day of the run. Students are \$10.

The event is sponsored by the Michigan City High School Class of 2025, which will use proceeds to host prom, a senior picnic and other class activities.

Register at tinyurl.com/4zrf9tcp. Contact stice@mcas.k12.in.us for more information.

Unity Foundation Annual Luncheon

Unity Foundation of LaPorte County will host its annual luncheon from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 26, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

The cost is \$20. Make reservations at tinyurl.com/nhb6fhh7

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American Red Cross

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

- Queen of All Saints, 606 S. Woodland Ave., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21.
- City Hall, 100 E. Michigan Blvd., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 24.
- Hamon Gray, American Legion Post 83, 228 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 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.

PNW Alumni Hall of Fame

Purdue University Northwest seeks nominations of impactful alumni to honor and induct into the PNW Alumni Hall of Fame.

The recognition honors graduates from the 77-year history of the university's campuses. They must be high-achieving leaders in their fields, involved community members and have engaged with PNW beyond their time as students.

Nominations must be completed by Nov. 15. They are available at www.pnw.edu/hall-of-fame. The criteria is:

- Alumni who graduated at least 10 years ago.
- Nominations must be submitted by someone other than the recommended recipient.
- Posthumous nominations will be accepted.

Alumni nominated for the 2023 class remain in the candidate pool for five selection periods if deemed eligible for consideration.

A selection committee will review all nominations. The next class will be selected in December and recognized in April 2024.

The 2023 hall of fame class included: Robert Johnson III, CEO of Cimcor Inc.; Stewart "Stu" McMillan, founder of the Multi Agency Academic Cooperative Foundation; and Alfredo "Al" Sori, former division manager of Kiewit subsidiary Mass Electric Transportation.

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In the Area

Oct. 19 — Scratch Club (ages 7-17), 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info (219) 873-3045.

Oct. 20 — Fall STEAM Camp: Lego Challenge, 1-4 p.m., Coolspring Branch meeting room, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

Oct. 20 — Film Showing: “Top Gun: Maverick,” 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info (219) 873-3049.

Oct. 20 — Learn It! Leaves of 3-D, 1:30-3 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Oct. 21 — Genealogy Help with Colleen Miltenberger, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info (219) 873-3049.

Oct. 21 — Michigan City Public Art Committee dedication/ribbon cutting, 10 a.m., Canada Park, 300 Center St.

Oct. 21 — Land of Lakes Art Alliance open house/art exhibit, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library large meeting room, 904 Indiana Ave

Oct. 21 — Farm-to-fork fundraiser, Anam Cara Counseling/La Ventana Culinary School, 4-8 p.m., Anam Cara Counseling, 4298 E. County Road 1000 North, LaPorte. Cost: \$125. RSVP: tinyurl.com/ym6j3a8p

Oct. 21 — Dunes Summer Theatre, “A Taste of Old Hollywood,” 6-10 p.m., Pottawattomie Country Club, 1900 Springland Ave. Tickets: \$150. Info/reservations: www.dunesarts.org/2023-gala, (219)

879-7509.

Oct. 22 — LaPorte Community Concert Association, pianist Jason Lyle Black, 2 p.m., LaPorte High School Performing Arts Center, 602 F St. Tickets at door: \$20. Memberships/info: (219) 362-5292, (219) 362-8262.

Oct. 23 — Kid Bingo!, 4-5:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info (219) 873-3049.

Oct. 23 — Monday Musicale, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St.

Oct. 25 — Halloween Costume Parade (birth-age 5), 10 a.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Oct. 25 — Tinkercad 3-D Modeling, 4-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

Oct. 25 — Self-Care Workshop, 4-5 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Through Oct. 21 — “Vivian Maier: In Color,” “Under the Same Sun,” “to render the infinite,” Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: www.LubeznikCenter.org, (219) 874-4900.

Through Oct. 29 — “A Different Look at the Century of Progress,” “Volunteers: With A Little Help from Our Friends,” The Beverly Shores Depot Museum & Art Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Info: www.bsdepot.org

Through Nov. 5 — “Glass: An Exhibition,” The Ellen Firme Gallery, 92 W. U.S. 12, Beverly Shores. Regular gallery hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays/Saturdays.

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

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 October — Genealogy Help with Pat Harris, 1-4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library,

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100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Tuesdays in October — Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17), 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 October — 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.

Saturdays through Oct. 28 — Michigan City Farmers Market, 8 a.m.-noon, Eighth & Washington streets. Info: www.emichigancity.com

In the Region

Oct. 20 — Stories and Sing-Alongs, 7-8 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 20 — Billy Elton — Tribute to Billy Joel & Elton John, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$40 + \$6 convenience fee, \$65 + \$6 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

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

Oct. 21 — Close up Nature Photography with Mark Chantell, 10 a.m.-noon, Paul H. Douglas Center, 100 N. Lake St., Gary. Info: (219) 395-1882, visit www.nps.gov/indu

Oct. 21 — Free Family Art Day, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Registration: tinyurl.com/5n82979a, (219) 926-4711.

Oct. 21 — Stories for Children, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 21 — “Belle Gunness: The History of the Mystery Event,” 11 a.m., LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Museum admission fees: \$5/adults, \$4/seniors 60+, free/children 18 & younger. Info: (219) 324-6767.

Oct. 21 — Storyteller’s Favorites, 1-2:30 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 21 — Harbor Country Hikers, 1 p.m. EDT, Madeline Bertrand Park, 3038 Adams Road, Niles, Mich. Info: www.harborcountryhikers.com, Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook.

Oct. 21 — Stories from Around the World and an Open Mic, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 21 — Ghost Stories, 5:30-8 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 21 — Led Zeppelin 2, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich.

Tickets: \$35 + \$5.50 convenience fee, \$60 + \$5.50 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

Oct. 22 — A Witch Hunt in the Dunes, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 22 — Fall Colors Hike, noon-2 p.m., National Park Headquarters, 1100 N. Mineral Springs Road, Chesterton. Info: (219) 395-1882, visit www.nps.gov/indu

Oct. 22 — Beach Mysteries Table, 2-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Oct. 22 — Open Mic Night-Youth Night, 7 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Performer inquiries: openmic@acornlive.org. Info: www.acornlive.org

Oct. 23 — Halloween Craft with Stampin’s a Hoot, 6 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Registration: (269) 469-2933.

Oct. 24 — Teen Pumpkin Decorating Party and Contest, 6:30-7:30 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Registration: (269) 469-2933.

Oct. 24 — New Buffalo Library Community Forum, Michigan City lighthouse keeper Harriet Colfax, 6:30 p.m. EDT, library, 33 N. Thompson St.

Through Oct. 30 — Duneland Plein Air Painters exhibit, “A Brush with Nature: Duneland Plein Air Adventures 2023,” Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Artist reception: 4-7 p.m. Oct. 20. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

Through October — “Ever Yours: Postcards From the Golden Age,” Porter County Museum, 20 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso. Free admission. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Sun. Info: www.pocomuse.org

Through Nov. 3 — Diversified Art Visionaries (Dave), Art Barn School of Art, 695 N. County Road 400 East, Valparaiso. Info: www.artbarnschool.org/exhibitions

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

Continued on Page 40

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Continued From Page 39

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

Thursdays in October — Saw-whet Owl Banding Demonstration, 7-10 p.m., Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, visit www.nps.gov/indu

Saturdays in October — Pinhook Bog Open House, 9-11 a.m., 700 N. Wozniak Road in Michigan City. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Saturdays in October — Paul H. Douglas Center Open House and Nature Play Date, 1-3 p.m., 100 N. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Saturdays-Sundays in October — Furs to Farm Flashback, 1-3 p.m., Bailly Homestead/Chellberg Farmhouse, 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Sundays in October — Mount Baldy Summit Hike, 9-11 a.m., parking lot off U.S. 12. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

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

Sundays in October — Feeding at the Farm, 4:30-5 p.m., Bailly Homestead/Chellberg Farm, 618 N. Mineral Springs Road, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing*: “Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour.” Not Rated. Times: 6 p.m. Oct. 19-22. *Also*: “The Road Dance.” Not Rated. Times: 3 p.m. Oct. 21-22. *Also*: “Oh, The Horror!” Time: 7 p.m. Oct. 24. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickers-theatre.com, (269) 756-3522.



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Mystery at the Mansion

Tickets are on sale for The History Museum’s “Mystery at the Mansion,” with tours leaving every 15 minutes starting at 5:30 p.m. EDT Friday, Oct. 27 and 28.

This year’s mystery is set in the early morning hours on Jan. 10, 1935. South Bend’s Palace Café was reduced to rubble when three bombs exploded. There were plenty of suspects, but no conclusive evidence. Local authorities turned to a so-called “scientific palmist” named Nellie Simmons Meier for help. Who was guilty, what was the motive and how did they know about detonating bombs?

To discover the villain, participants must listen carefully to clues while walking from room to room in the three-story Oliver Mansion. Stair climbing is required.

The museum is located at 808 W. Washington St. Tickets are \$25, or \$20 for members. Because tours are limited, reservations are strongly recommended at www.historymuseumSB.org. Call (574) 235-9664 for more details.

Fabric Painting Workshop

“Paint and Print on Fabric,” a two-day beginners workshop led by Tisha Sandberg, is Thursday and Sunday, Oct. 19 and 22, at Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich.

Times are (all Eastern) 6-8:30 p.m. Oct. 19 and 1-3:30 p.m. Oct. 22.

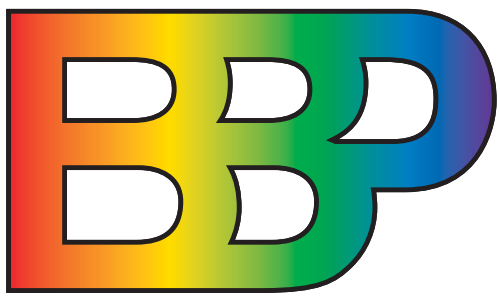
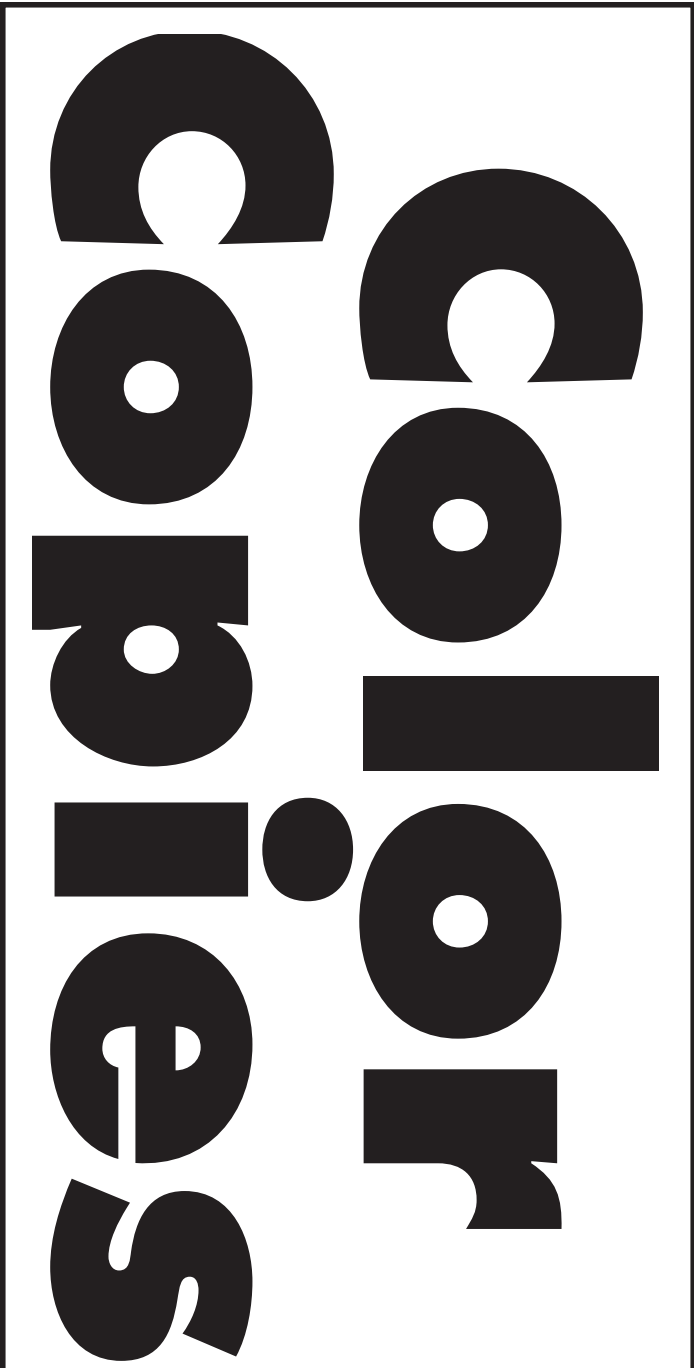
Participants use stencils, brushes and everyday objects to design fabric pieces. The class fee includes textile paints, markers and mediums, tools, two yards of fabric and practice squares.

A non-refundable class fee is \$110 for Berrien Artist Guild members and \$125 for non-members, along with a \$25 materials fee. Registration is at <https://boxfactoryforthearts.org/workshops>, which also includes a video demonstrating techniques used in the workshop.

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On October 19, 1630, the first general court in New England convened in Boston.

On October 19, 1744, the Earl of Sandwich, creator of the sandwich, said, "*Sandwiches should be eaten with a civilized swallow, not with a barbarous bolt.*"

On October 19, 1879, Thomas Edison conducted the first successful demonstration of his electric light.

On October 19, 1889, John Crerar willed \$2.5 million to build the Library of Science, Technology and Medicine at the University of Chicago, a library that now bears his name.

On October 19, 1944, Marlon Brando made his stage debut in Broadway's "I Remember Mama."

On October 20, 1873, P.T. Barnum opened the New York Hippodrome as the home for his "Greatest Show on Earth."

On October 20, 1910, a baseball with a cork center was used for the first time in a World Series game.

On October 20, 1944, during World War II, Gen. Douglas MacArthur stepped ashore in the Philippines, 2 1/2 years after his famous statement, "*I shall return.*"

On October 20, 1954, "Peter Pan," starring Mary Martin as Peter Pan, opened on Broadway.

On October 20, 1968, Jacqueline Kennedy married Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis.

On October 21, 1797, the frigate U.S. Constitution, better known as "Old Ironsides," launched at a Boston shipyard.

On October 21, 1906, Chicago's last cable car made its final run on Cottage Grove Avenue.

On October 21, 1945, women in France were given the right to vote.

On October 21, 1959, New York's Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, opened.

On October 21, 1966, more than 140 were killed in southern Wales (most of them children) when a coal waste landslide engulfed a school and several homes.

On October 22, 1721, Peter the Great took for himself the title of "Emperor of all Russia."

On October 22, 1746, New Jersey's Princeton University received its charter.

On October 22, 1797, at Monceau Park in Paris, Andre Jacques Garnerin executed the first successful parachute jump from a balloon.

On October 22, 1883, the original Metropolitan Opera House opened in New York City.

On October 22, 1962, following the discovery of

Soviet missile bases in Cuba, President John Kennedy announced he ordered U.S. air and naval forces to blockade the island nation.

On October 22, 1968, after 11 days in space, Apollo 7 astronauts Walter Schirra, Don Eisle and Ronnie Cunningham splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean.

On October 23, 1871, martial law in Chicago, which was declared after the Great Fire was extinguished, ended.

On October 23, 1910, in Fort Wayne, Blanche Scott became the first woman to make a solo flight in an airplane. She reached a height of 12 feet, a noteworthy achievement in 1910.

On October 23, 1915, 25,000 women marched in New York City demanding the right to vote.

On October 23, 1929, stock prices fell sharply on Wall Street, a prelude to the "Great Crash" that was to follow six days later.

On October 24, 1537, Britain's Queen Jane Seymour died after giving birth to Prince Edward.

On October 24, 1861, a message from California Chief Justice Stephen Field to President Abraham Lincoln was the first telegram transmitted across the United States.

On October 24, 1901, to raise money to pay off a debt, Anna E. Taylor agreed to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, becoming the first person to survive the plunge.

On October 24, 1939, in Wilmington, Del., the first nylon stockings went on sale.

On October 24, 1962, to avoid a confrontation with U.S. Navy forces blockading Cuba, a large Soviet flotilla turned back and headed home.

On October 24, 1992, the Toronto Blue Jays defeated the Atlanta Braves 4-3 in the seventh game of the World Series, bringing baseball's crown to Canada for the first time.

On October 25, 1825, Austrian composer Johann Strauss Jr., "Waltz King to the World," was born in Vienna.

On October 25, 1854, during the Crimean War, two-thirds of approximately 670 men of the English light cavalry brigade were killed when they charged a heavily fortified Russian position. This ill-designed attack was the inspiration for Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

On October 25, 1911, after operating for 12 years, Chicago's "Everleigh Club," an opulent brothel at 2131 S. Dearborn St., was ordered closed by Mayor Carter Harrison.

On October 25, 1929, Albert B. Fall, a former Secretary of the Interior, was convicted of accepting a \$100,000 bribe in connection with California's "Elk Hill Naval Oil Reserve."

On October 25, 1955, the Tappan Stove Co. introduced the first electronic range designed for home use. It was priced at \$1,200, and could cook bacon in 90 seconds.

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 More than 120 women have cleaned their closets and contributed every type of item from dressy dresses to causal comfy wear. We have winter coats, jackets, shoes and boots size 6-11, sweaters, shirts, dress pants, blue jeans, suits, hats, gloves, scarves, jewelry, purses, workout wear, PJs and even a few men's racks! We also have an entire room full of new, tags on, designer specialty boutique items at 70% off retail!!! This sale is not to be missed. Grab all your girlfriends and come shop with us for unbelievable values and a whole lot of fun! Check out our FB page at thegirlfriendsale for sneak peek photos and to join our mailing list. Stop off at the ATM before you come to take advantage of our speedy cash only checkout. We do accept credit cards.
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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.

The Devil's Playground by Craig Russell
(hardcover \$28 retail available in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and audiobook. 349 pages.)

I love it when a novel challenges me to think and not just let answers fall into my lap unbidden...and that's what we have here. A chance to play Watson to the book's Sherlock Holmes, a movie studio fixer named Mary Rourke who's one smart cookie!

You like a murder-mystery? Secrets of the Golden Age of Hollywood? Love? Revenge? Witchcraft? This story has it all. I even love the artwork on the cover. Greed, power and lust make up the cheerful themes of this perfect Halloween read.

An innocuous beginning takes us to 1967 in the Mojave Desert where a film historian, Paul Conway, is on his way to a former hotel now occupied by an old woman who may have the answer to his burning question: What happened to the last copy of the famous silent film "The Devil's Playground"? It was billed as the "greatest horror movie ever made" and based on a 100-year-old book.

"...the guy who wrote the original book...was a defrocked Jesuit priest. That he was some kind of devil worshipper or warlock...and he ended his life raving in an insane asylum...there's a legend he didn't really write the book at all but was some kind of amanuensis for a demon who dictated it."

Interested? Read on...

The story then fades to 1927 Hollywood, and things are moving at warp speed. The first "talkie" has been made, so fear and trepidation fly through every other studio as stars wonder if they can make the transition or not?

Meanwhile, Carbine International Studio is in the middle of production of the aforementioned "The Devil's Playground," a very expensive silent movie the owners know will either send them into fame and fortune, or financial ruin. Harry Carbine refuses to make the movie a talkie. His sets and special effects will stun and scare the bejesus out of a willing audience looking for chills and thrills. And soon, the cursed production rumors begin in earnest...

Leading lady Norma Carlton is found dead in her home. Harry Carbine sends Rourke to find out what happened. At first ruled a suicide, the next day, Doc Wilson calls Rourke to the morgue to show her signs that Norma was murdered. Well, that's inconvenient for the studio...

Shortly thereafter, a bizarre accident on set kills one of the crew — he's found spread out in the arms of the devil statue — the body count continues to rise and, well, there's more going on for Mary to realize she is being played by more than one person...

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



would that be human or demon? It's getting hard to tell.

This is the era that saw actors having to sign morality clauses, which sent everyone underground with their real names and backgrounds. They were forced to sneak around to hide illicit affairs and questionable backgrounds that could end their careers.

Imagine that happening today? Ha! Yes, it was a different time, but with all its secrets and faults, it was still the Golden Age of Hollywood filmmaking. This insider's look at the world of films makes for a fascinating addition to the story.

The story goes back and forth in time, first to 1897 Kansas and a young boy obsessed with the traveling show The Magic Lantern Phantasmagoria — "Here lies your darkest fears, your greatest terrors" — then to 1893 and 1907 Louisiana. There, we encounter a woman called the Swamp Witch and her daughter, also rumored to be a witch (many have seen the result of their curses), who become central to what happens in 1927, but where do these people enter the story? It's a wait and see, just keep reading, all will

be revealed...eventually.

Meanwhile, Hollywood 1927 has its own problems, with half the police force paid off by the studios, young women used and abused by studio execs and people like Rourke, the "fixers," following behind and cleaning up the messes. No one is who they claim to be. Rourke's investigation into what really happened to Norma takes her first to the home of stars Robert Huston and Veronica Stratton, because Norma and Robert were reportedly having an affair. Leaving their home, Mary's brakes inexplicably go out and she almost dies. Coincidence? Or the work of the devil? Believe what you will.

One day, Mary follows a clue to check out the vast tunnel system under the streets of Hollywood, where she finds evidence of a private party nest called "The Resurrection Club." Oh the rumors about that place!

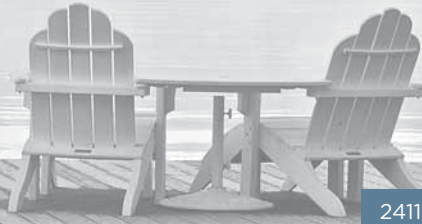
The final word: You slide into this story. Before you realize it, you're 50 pages in and totally hooked. Vividly imagined, the line gets blurred between the evils of Hollywood and the evils that go bump in the night. As the song says, "You ain't seen nothin' yet."

Till next time, happy reading!



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