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A Master Craftsman

by Linda Weigel

“Good pots require the ardor of vocation and the devotion of a lifetime.” Bernard Leach

As a kid, did you play in the dirt, make mud pies and enjoy the feel, the squishiness of mud or clay between your fingers?

Perhaps, in your imagination, you tried to form it to make a bowl or cup, yet struggled to get it to hold together. Meanwhile, the smell of fresh earth was imprinted on your young brain. It was a visceral experience, one repeated by millions before you.

Ceramics is the oldest of all technologies, evolving alongside early humanity. “After cooking meat, baking clay was the first thing that humans did to chemically alter our environment on purpose,” says Tallie Maughan, the Turning Earth Ceramics founder and creative director.

Why, then, would someone work in such a medium, especially in this day and age? It requires not only dedication and physical strength, but also a passion for the work and a skills set not readily



Paul Jeselskis is photographed working in his studio.

attained. Imagine, then, working in this most ancient of art forms, becoming a master craftsman.

Paul Jeselskis is such an individual.

Born in Chicago, his journey began in grade school when stacks of manila paper at the back of the room beckoned young students to grab, doodle and imagine. He enjoyed drawing “tanks, and bombs and explosions.”

By the time he arrived at the all-boys Mount Carmel High School on Chicago’s South Side, he found there were no art program, only sports and academics. I imagine he might have been disappointed. He was a legacy student following in his father’s footsteps. His dad grad-

uated in 1961; he graduated in 1981. He even had some of the same teachers, and because his father was, as he describes it, a “troublemaker,” they kept a close watch on him.

After high school, he attended Bradley University in Peoria, Ill., intending to major in psychology, afterward adding geological engineering.

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A Master Craftsman

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“When I took my first ceramic class, I dropped the geology. I finished with a minor in psychology and a BA in fine arts,” he said.

He likes to kid around, telling people he has an “honorary degree in psycho-ceramics.” If asked what that means, he would reply it is the study of “cracked pots”

Indeed, Jeselskis has a good sense of humor about himself and his work.

Before starting graduate school at Edinboro University in Pennsylvania, he worked on the docks, loading semis for 60 hours a week.

Edinboro, at the time Jeselskis attended, was known as Edinboro Teachers College. It was noted for its ceramics program, with “top notch teachers that did workshops around the world.”

Asked how he discovered the school, he replied, “When I was an undergraduate, *Ceramics Monthly* magazine had an article about graduate programs,

an entire issue just talking about different graduate ceramic programs around the country.

“I sent out seven applications for graduate school and ended up choosing that particular one because it was the halfway point between Chicago and New York. Right down the road was Cambridge Springs, which used to have a fancy hotel, and which was the halfway point in the old days between the two cities.”

Getting Established

“It comes to this, that one must be true to oneself uncompromisingly. That sounds most arrogant but it is nothing but the deepest humility.” Ruth Duckworth

After graduate school, Jeselskis “jumped right into doing art fairs.”

His first professional studio evolved out of his work in building a garage for his parents...until he “realized that was the dumbest thing in the world, moving home just to save a buck.” He only stayed there for a year and a half before buying his current home/studio location in LaPorte County.

Graduate school may have found him doing large-



The process of air drying pieces before the carving begins.

scale sculpture, but that changed after he was on his own.

“Even in terms of functional work, I think my first 10 years as a potter was pretty much dedicated to strictly mugs, dinnerware, bowls, plates, that type of thing,” he said.

Now, he no longer makes mugs or pitchers. For the past 35 years, he says, he’s just enjoyed making whatever he wants.

As with all professional artists, his work has evolved. For me, the forms he now creates are more elevated in that they are larger, still functional, yet geared toward an art aesthetic, rather than just a utilitarian aesthetic.

Around 2002, he began carving into his air-dried clay forms, creating unique repetition, directionality and surface tension while maintaining an elegance and balance of form/shape. A lot of his work is intuitive, and by watching some of his YouTube videos, one grasps the concept, skill and intention.



An example of a piece ready for glazing.

He’s been mixing his own clay for decades; however, he will take the time to explore a different clay body, a manufactured clay body just to see how it works. Experimenting to discover new approaches and possibilities is essential for any serious artist. It also is a means of discovery, especially if problems arise when something does not fire as he’d like, or does not fire correctly.

“I was having problems with a glaze, so I figured, let’s try a different clay body and see if that’s where the problems are stemming from, the clay instead of the glaze,” he explained.

He’s also had recent problems with the quality of feldspar he orders. It takes a lot of patience, trial and error and communication among and between other ceramicists to solve problems. Most people, I would imagine, would never understand the complexity of ceramics: the technical, chemical and properties of the clay mix, itself.

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Asked what goes into mixing his own clay, he replied, “Dry material and water! In the clay mixes, I can handle 300 pounds of wet material. The clay I work with is porcelain (not earthenware). The term ceramics just covers anything made of clay. So, my porcelain clay recipe is basically 25 percent feldspar, 25 percent kaolin, 25 percent flint and 25 percent ball clay (which adds plasticity).”

His proportional equation makes me think of baking where, after careful measurement of dry ingredients, you finish by incorporating the liquids. How does he know how much water to add? Is it by feel? I was surprised to learn that Jeselskis actually weighs the water.

“After years of experience, I know the workability of my clay,” he said. “If I’m going to throw a 22” platter, I’m going to work with softer clay so I don’t have to fight gravity. If I’m going to throw something taller, I’m going to mix the clay a little bit stiffer, i.e. less water so I can make a taller piece.”

That means each mixed batch is mixed for a specific use.

The Process

“The world always seems brighter when you’ve just made something that wasn’t there before.” Neil Gaiman

There are several steps to completing a finished ceramic work once the clay is mixed.

First, you begin with a lump of clay and form the shape. Jeselskis says if you spend more than 10 minutes on a single work, you’re spending too much time. That surprised me. He likes to average about five minutes per item.

Secondly, each piece is carefully set aside to be-



A vase and platters Jeselskis has created.

gin drying until it reaches what he describes as a “leather hard/stiff leather” stage. However, even during the air-drying stage, there are seasonal variables at play. It is, after all, an evaporation process. Thus, in the winter, he lights his wood stove to high to dry things quickly. In the summer, with high temperatures and high night humidity, it takes longer. This evaporation process, especially in the summer, requires a two-week turn around before proceeding.

Third, once leather hardens, the form is ready for manipulation and trimming. The clay is no longer sticky, yet firm, yet not fully dried out. For Jeselskis, once this stage is reached, he can begin carving into the surface.

“Carving, depending on how big the piece is, can take some pieces a half hour, depending on which type of carving you do, whether it’s line carving or the little divots,” he said. “I call it chip carving, the little divots, about the size of my pinky nail, and that just takes forever. It’s just tedious.”

Additionally, he describes the line carving as playing a little



An example of finished line and divot-carved works.



A piece referred to as blue nesters.

softer and the chip carving a little stiffer. There is a difference between the two.

Fourth, after the piece is air dried and carved, he takes a damp sponge to smooth down the rough edges. Now, the work is ready to be set on the shelf once again to fully dry (before bisque firing). How long that takes depends on the humidity, which is never consistent.

Next, the dried piece is coated in a glaze to dry again, after which it returns to the kiln for the final firing.

“Clay is a process,” Jeselskis says. “It’s making. It’s drying. It’s trimming. It’s completely drying. You’ve got one firing next, which is called a bisque firing, which is a low-temperature fire. Then, you dip the glaze and afterwards, you have the high fire.”

The entire process takes days, if not weeks, to achieve enough works for one fully loaded kiln. Even then, with all the careful preparation and attention to detail, pieces may not come out as expected. Jeselskis holds a high standard to his work, and that is reflected in his 35 years of experience and expertise.

Designing and Self-Criticism

I’ve long been an admirer of Jeselskis’ work, observing how his design considerations evolved and changed. I asked him how he comes up with the forms and shapes he uses, and if he draws out his ideas first.

“After 35 years,” he replied, “you just kind of have shapes in your head. You know, the ones you make on the wheel are pretty finite.

“Probably every shape that has ever been made, ever going to be made on the potter’s wheel has been made,” he continued. “Shapes that I’m drawn to are vessels with lids. I like vessels that belly out, get fat and then come back in and make a narrow point. Sometimes, you see shapes in nature. Sometimes, stuff (ideas) don’t translate. Sometimes, you make a small shape, and it just doesn’t look as good as it would as a big shape and vice versa.”

Clay’s plasticity affords Jeselskis the chance to readily experiment and discern the best options.

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Aside from his own work, I asked who he admires. Jeselskis says he admires his contemporaries on the show circuit. After so many years, he now gets into the best craft shows in the country, and is exposed to other top-level professional ceramicists. He states that by virtue of his long experience, he has developed a good eye for what is excellent and what is mediocre, comparable to any long-working, successful individual in any profession.

Jeselskis also travels, visiting locations noted for craftsmen studios and reputations for excellence. A few months ago, in fact, he traveled to Japan.

“When we were students, everyone talked about this Japanese potter,” he said. “As a student, everything looks much better than what you can do.”

Jeselskis, however, was disappointed by what he saw as works in some studios “cranked out” for quantity, sacrificing quality. That’s not to say there aren’t still living treasures in Japan, craftsmen like Akihiro Maeta, whose ceramic works are of the highest repute and standards.

Jeselskis’ experience surprised me.

“Part of that is my eye becoming more mature in what I see, and how I process in terms of what constitutes a good piece of pottery and what constitutes a mediocre piece of pottery,” he said.

That led me to ask how he self-critiques. Jeselskis admits that even now, he can look at his work and point out flaws.

“Maybe this curve should have been a little bit more pronounced here, or this belly bowed out a little more,” he said. “Or, perhaps the tops could have been a little bit more refined.”

That push to always improve is a key factor in success.

“I should say, the people who are the most critical of their own work make some of the best works,” he stated. “They don’t rest on their laurels. They’re always trying to improve.”

Evolving, growing, intellectually challenging oneself is a key component to Jeselskis’ ongoing suc-



Jeselskis is photographed with an award he received.

cess. There is a price to pay, though, in the physical toll it takes. He has his physical limits dealing with years of manipulation in throwing clay, forming, carving and everything else it takes to make a superb product, resulting in repeated stress to the body, including wrists, arms, back and legs.

Making anything from scratch is satisfying and life-affirming. Creative minds realize this regardless of the challenges.

Isamu Noguchi stated, “The attractions of ceramics lie partly in its contradictions. It is both difficult and easy, with an element beyond our control. It is both extremely fragile and durable. Like ‘Sumi’ ink painting, it does not lend itself to erasure and indecision.”

Jeselskis is not a person of indecision, for sure, but rather an expert in execution, a discerning eye, a spokesperson and an example of excellence in quality.

A true master craftsman.

(On YouTube, Jeselskis has several instructive and fascinating videos demonstrating his wheel technique.)

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The “Equalizer” Series Draws to a Satisfying Close

by Andrew Tallackson



Denzel Washington reteams with his “Man on Fire” co-star, Dakota Fanning, in “The Equalizer 3.”

“The Equalizer 3” opens with carnage that’s extreme even for this series...and I wasn’t having it.

At first.

You see, I like these movies. They’re thinking man’s vigilante flicks. I especially like the way Denzel Washington’s avenging angel, a retired U.S. Marine, is drawn from his isolated existence to protect regular people who cannot fend for themselves.

But with the visceral bloodbath that kicks off “The Equalizer 3,” Washington and returning director Antoine Fuqua seem to be chowing down on Liam Neeson’s reheated leftovers.

Consider the story: Washington’s Robert McCall, for reasons that aren’t clear at first, lays waste to every thug at a crime compound near Naples, Italy, but an unexpected bullet to the back sidelines him with a kindly doctor, Enzo (Remo Girone), who nurses him back to health.

Turns out, the picturesque seaside village is ruled by the vicious Camorra crime organization, which makes grotesque public displays to reiterate it means business.

The actors, as the mobsters, huff and puff like well-trained wolves, but if the “Equalizer” movies have taught us anything, it is that any and all thugs are lambs positioned for McCall’s slaughter.

We expect all this. However, right when it seems like the movie is content to go through the motions, an interesting thing happens.

McCall takes a liking to his new community. These salt-of-the-earth people embrace him as one of their own. He enjoys the routine of his day, the people who offer a smile, some lively conversation, at the local cafe. This place, to him, is worth saving.

So when McCall finally opens his specialized can



“The Equalizer 3”

Running time: 109 minutes. In theaters. Rated R for strong bloody violence and some language.

of whup-ass, you smile, invigorated by what’s about to unfold. Take, for instance, the scene where thugs storm a restaurant, yet are no match for McCall. Washington, as always, is remarkably and hilariously poised while lecturing attackers on life, death and pain pressure points. We laugh because Washington acts less like a raging psycho and more like an introverted intellect annoyed his meal has been disrupted.

We also are surprised by how effective Washington’s “Man on Fire” co-star, the now 29-year-old Dakota Fanning, is as CIA agent Emma Collins. Maybe it’s because Washington and Fanning have remained in touch for two decades, but Fanning never seems intimidated by Washington. She holds her own, the dialogue by screenwriter Richard Wenk centered around these two taunting each other with cryptic details.

By the end, as Robert defends the community, and the community in turn defends him, “The Equalizer 3” has given us a reason to care about the outcome. Fuqua carried out the second film’s big finish with more kick, but there is something comforting in knowing McCall can create “home” wherever he finds it. It may not be the spectacular finish we desire, but it is satisfying.

And that’s good enough for me.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

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Dragon Boat Races Return to Stone Lake



The team for Applegate & Co. CPA's celebrates its 2019 win.

After a three-year absence due to COVID-19, Dunebrook's Dragon Boat Family Festival returns to LaPorte's Stone Lake at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 9.

This marks the eight annual event, which will be a festival atmosphere, according to Ted Perzanowski, director emeritus and event cochair, in a press release. That includes the GIS Family Fun Area, Food Truck Bazaar, the Captain's online auction, face painting by The Kraft Box and music. Co-Chair Tim Gartland returns to deliver play-by-play color commentary from the lifeguard stand.

Swimming is not allowed during the races.

Dr. Tammy Button, Dunebrook's executive director, encourages spectators to take sun canopies, beach chairs and blankets.

Reigning champions Applegate & Co. CPA's are returning along with Spirit Team winners Franciscan Health Michigan City. Both teams will compete with returning teams American Licorice, CLH, CPA's & Consultants, Northwest Health and newcomer Smooth Sailing Boat Detailing, and a team powered by Larry Zimmer and Perzanowski.

Festival proceeds support Dunebrook's programs, namely Healthy Families, Body Safety, the Child Advocacy Center and Parent & Family Education.

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The initial meet and greet is followed by a double feature from 7-9 p.m. at Indiana University Northwest's School of Arts and Sciences Main Stage Theatre, 3415 Broadway. The first film is "Shifting Sands: On the Path to Sustainability." The second is "Liminal: Indiana in the Anthropocene."

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Hoosier Star



Ten finalists in the youth and adult divisions will vie for the title of Hoosier Star 2023 during the annual LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra benefit at 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 9, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

Finalists sing pieces of their choice and accompanied by LCSO, which is conducted by Dr. Carolyn Watson. Celebrity judges are Matt Fuller, Jason Moon and Melanie Dorn Kraut. Audience members can cast votes for their favorite finalist:

Youth Division

- Molly Cooper, LaPorte.
- Sophia Grubbs, Elkhart.
- Landon Mitchell, Buchanan, Mich.
- Makayla Mitchell, Buchanan.
- Eleanor Nohos, Hobart.

Adult Division

- Kelly (Bourget) Staton, Griffith.
- Jessica Johnson, Michigan City.
- Raul Palma, South Bend.
- Mary Pasyk, Griffith.
- Shania Povlock/Evan Wooding (duet), LaPorte.

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Door Village Harvest Festival



LaPorte County Historian Bruce Johnson (center, left) and Tammy Heinen lead the Horse and Wagon Tours of History.

The 29th Door Village Harvest Festival is from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 9-10, at Scipio Township Park, 3501 W. Joliet Road in Door Village.

The event is free; however, parking is \$3 per vehicle, with donations accepted. All proceeds benefit Scipio Township Park.

Saturday morning features a patriotic opening ceremony at 8:30 a.m., with the annual Pancake & French Toast Breakfast from 7:30-10 a.m., which is free to veterans thanks to LaPorte Mayor Tom Dermody. Sunday includes the pork chop dinner from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Local vendors will have food at the food court, along with homemade baked goods from the Country Bake Shop. Old-fashioned ham and beans, and chicken and noodles, are served from 11 a.m. Saturday until gone.

The event also includes craft vendors, Grandma's Parlor (demonstrations of spinning/quilting),

Grandpa's Woodshed (wood carving/wood working), Grandpa's Barnyard (farm animals), a children's area (old-fashioned games with prizes) and, for a small donation, the miniature Door Village Air Line Railroad.

The Four A's Car Club Auto Show is from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday-Sunday and includes the Black Sheep Car Club, Rusted Knuckles Car Club and Sunday Farmer Tractors. Entertainment on the festival stage includes magician Matt Kalita and musicians For Pete's Sake, Johnny V. and the Quatronics Barbershop Quartet.

The Horse and Wagon Tours of History (driven by Tammy Heinen and narrated by LaPorte County Historian Bruce Johnson) run Saturday-Sunday for a small donation. The tour includes facts about Door Village, including early settlers, the 1832 Fort of the Blackhawk War, Parkinson's LaPorte-Valparaiso Stage Coach, the New York/Chicago Electric Air Line Railroad and local families, homes and businesses.

The Living Cemetery Tour, where actors portray people buried in the 1834 Door Village Cemetery, is at 1 and 3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday.

The Pioneer Village encampment of 1832 and Civil War Camp feature re-enactors dressed in period clothes as they share stories and demonstrate artifacts used during those times.

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When a Tree Grows

As the spectacular season of autumn descends, I offer a few thoughts about the magical nature of trees, and a few stories about a few stunning oaks around which my family has crafted significant memories. Perhaps you have a favorite tree or two that define your family history, too?

Nearly a decade ago when my family decided to live full time in Northwest Indiana, it became evident our beach cottage would not fit our changing needs. There were many things I knew I'd miss about the place – the cozy family room, huge wrap-around deck, deep sandy foredune – but the massive old oak anchoring the long, meandering path to the beach topped the list.

For me, the majestic oak was not just a guidepost for the seasons, it was a benchmark for the many years of beachfront memories our family banked. Moving away made me feel like I was leaving behind a member of our family. But as luck would have it, the property to which we relocated contains an equally impressive mature oak to which I have transferred my emotions and attention.

My father-in-law, Louie, also had a love affair with trees. He studied horticulture in college, ran a greenhouse for a bit, then bought a small farm in Michigan, which he named Weatherwood Farm. Louie's dream was to purchase enough acreage to plant trees. Not just any kind of tree, though. Walnut trees. Walnut trees are unique. They take a lifetime to reach maturity, so their valued products, nuts and hardwood, only benefit future generations.

My father-in-law's vision never came to fruition. He died from a cardiac event in his early 60s, one year after his first grandchild was born.

Fast forward 30 years.

After my husband and I became full-time Indiana residents, Steve purchased acreage in LaPorte County and set about realizing his father's unfulfilled dream. Steve teamed up with our son, Louie's only grandson, and they hired an arborist who advised them to add a few deciduous and coniferous varieties to the mix. There were no arguments when it came to naming the property. It became Weatherwood Walnut Farm.

Three years ago, before my husband succumbed to cancer, the fields were sown with acres and acres of tiny saplings. After they were planted, Steve made a special request to each of our four children: "I want each of my grandchildren to pick a tree and claim it as their own. Each time they visit, snap a photo of them with their tree. It'll be fun to compare their progress."

This past August, my daughter and two preschool-aged grandsons boarded an overnight Amtrak from New Jersey to visit me in Michigan City. One of our planned adventures was a trip to Weatherwood Walnut Farm, where the boys would fulfill

That Girl, This Life

Julie McGue



Jack is photographed by his chosen tree.

Steve's wish.

On the day of the outing, 4-year-old Jack jumped from my car, and I raced after him up the incline to the farm's unofficial entrance.

Jack scanned the field and then, wide-eyed, turned to me. "Where's my tree, Lulu?"

I pointed at the scores of rows loaded with saplings. The walnuts and pines were still shorter than Jack, but other species like sycamore towered over my head.

"You need to pick one, Jack," I said smiling.

The summer growth of wildflowers made slogging through the field slow and difficult. Undeterred, Jack took off and made a beeline to a tree with little brush surrounding it. At roughly 4 feet tall, Jack's

selection had crowded out the competition. It stood straight and proud, solitary like a sentinel. When I reached Jack's side and took in the tree's distinctive pointed leaves, my face beamed.

"I found my tree, Lulu. This is it. Take my picture."

"It's a beauty, Jack. You picked one of my favorites, an oak tree."

After the photos, I snagged Jack's hand and drew him in close to his tree. I wanted us to study his choice, to chat about why he chose this tree, and to share with him about my love affair with oaks. But before I could speak, I spotted something that took my breath away.



"Oh, wow, Jack! Your tree has its first bird's nest. Look here."

As the entire family ventured over to ogle the stunning surprise in Jack's oak, we zeroed in on the nest. A handful of featherless, newly hatched baby birds were chirping for their next meal. Mindful of the mother bird who was probably circling overhead, we all took a quick peek and stepped away.

As we climbed into the car to head back to my house, my grandson marveled at his decision.

"I can't believe my tree had a nest and baby birds. It's my favorite tree forever," Jack crowed.

With tears in my eyes, I said, "You know the big tree in front of my lake house is an oak tree. I'll show you when we get home. It's exactly what your tree will look like when it grows up."

As I drove along absorbing Jack's excitement, I was awed by the full circle moment. A little boy made an exciting discovery on a tree farm his great-grandfather envisioned, one his grandfather planted to ensure the dream was realized. The idea of Weatherwood Walnut Farm may have begun with Louie, but his progeny is experiencing the magic of a dream coming true. As for me, Jack's selection was a bonding moment for us. Without any forethought, my fondness for oaks has been passed on to the next generation, an outcome I find deeply satisfying.

Whether it is an oak, an elm or pine tree you prefer, trees are breathtaking creations. They provide pleasure, privacy and nurture the world around them. Their steady presence influences where and how we live and play, as well as the memories we make and hold dear. When a tree grows, something magical happens. The world is made instantly better, and astounding things become possible.



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Mirren is Fine, but “Golda” Has Major Problems

by Andrew Tallackson



Helen Mirren stars
as the Israeli prime
minister in “Golda.”

in
Theatres

There’s been talk that Helen Mirren never should have appeared in “Golda,” that the honor of starring as the Israeli prime minister should have gone to a Jewish actress.

Thing is, Mirren, an Oscar winner for playing British royalty in 2006’s “The Queen,” is fine in the role. It’s the movie that is a mess.

The fault rests with Israeli director Guy Nattiv, whose 2018 short film “Skin” took home an Oscar, and screenwriter Nicholas Martin. So many wrong choices here.

The approach, though, is on point. “Golda” does not chart Meir’s life from start to finish. Biopics that do so are setting themselves up for failure. How do you encapsulate a life into a two-hour run time? Instead, it embraces the spirit of 2014’s Oscar-winning “Selma,” which focused on a specific moment in the life of civil-rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., capturing who he was by his actions.

“Golda” introduces Meir near the end of her career, during the Yom Kippur War, the 1973 conflict between Israel and Arab states led by Egypt and Syria. The result, early in the conflict, led to severe Israeli losses, prompting an official inquiry. I would have preferred a film that explored her work at the end of World War II and the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948, but I get it. The goal is to depict how the safety of the Israeli people was her utmost priority, even when things didn’t go her way.

★ ★ 1/2

“Golda”

Running time: 100 minutes. In theaters. Rated PG-13
for thematic material and pervasive smoking.

So, “Golda” plays out like a war room docudrama, charting the key players and major incidents of the Yom Kippur War. And, it’s been over-directed by Nattiv, who wants to give the drama the same crackling energy as Steven Spielberg’s “Munich” (2005). He prefers style for style’s sake. We get it, for example, that Meir and her political colleagues were heavy smokers. But the movie seems fixated on capturing cigarette smoke on screen. What else? Well, we get bizarre close-ups, particularly of Mirren’s eyeballs, that distract from the key focal point of scenes. There is rampant, unnecessary symbolism involving birds that, to be honest, was lost on me. The worst offense: the laughable score by Dascha Dauenhauer that sounds like a parody of string-heavy music used in Holocaust films.

Nattiv, basically, is being a showoff, and the overbearing approach muddles the film’s impact.

That’s a shame, because Mirren does what you expect: disappear into the role so the transformation is complete. You believe her as Meir, and she’s heartbreaking in fragile moments where updates



Liev Schrieber is good in "Golda" as Henry Kissinger.

arrive on Israeli losses, and she looks to the meeting stenographer for her reaction, the woman's son out on the frontlines.

Liev Schrieber is good as a no-nonsense Henry Kissinger, approaching scenes with zero sentimentality. Ditto the wonderful French actress Camille Cottin ("Stillwater") as Meir's assistant: the calm amid the frequent storms.

Mirren, Schrieber and Cottin — they're wonderful. But do we really get inside Meir's head? Feel like we truly know her by the end? Nope.

□

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A Decade-Long Journey With The Beacher

by Andrew Tallackson

I'm just going to throw this out there, corny as it may be.

OK, here we go.

The Beacher restored my love for newspapers.

There, I've said it. It's out there.

Why declare this now?

Because by the time you hold this edition in your hands, it will officially be 10 years since I stepped in as editor of *The Beacher Weekly Newspaper*.

A decade.

Where did that go?

Back then in 2013, my son was nearly 7. Now, he's a high-school junior with his driver's permit, which scares the living *you know what* out of me.

Before becoming editor, I'd written a few *Beacher* articles as a correspondent...and before then, one of the darkest chapters in my life.

Those of us with Crohn's disease will tell you, it's no walk in the park. Between February and December 2012, I was in and out of the hospital eight to 10 times, two of those stays requiring major surgery. Subsequently unable to work, unable to secure disability as a financial cushion.

Even before then, things were not good...and I should have seen it coming.

Back in the summer of 1992, while interviewing for my first newspaper job out of college, the managing editor asked one of those speculative questions designed to test the foresight of candidates. Specifically, that burnout in journalism is high, its dogged soldiers weary after a handful of years. How did I intend to cope?

My response eludes me. But looking back, not even the editors at *The Peru (Ind.) Tribune*, where I was hired in 1992 as a general-assignment reporter, could have predicted the impact the Internet would have on print journalism. Quick access to news that swiftly reduced newspapers to outdated relics. Over the next 10-20 years, many newspapers didn't make it. Those that remained hacked workforces down to skeleton crews trapped in toxic survival mode.

Somehow, *The Beacher* has dodged that bullet. Not that it's always been smooth sailing. Like any enterprise, there are peaks and valleys.

Now, after a decade with *The Beacher*, its restorative effect on me is crystal clear.

First and foremost, *The Beacher* is a niche product generously supported by the communities it serves. These communities, these dear readers and advertisers, take a certain degree of ownership in it. I've heard people say, "*The Beacher* is our paper," and I love that. We're not *The New York Times*. We're never going to win a Pulitzer for investigative journalism.



The backbone of *The Beacher Weekly Newspaper*: its writers and photographers, the photo taken at the December 2022 Christmas gathering at Lakeshore Coffee & Specialties. Pictured are (front row, from left): James Conlin, William Halliar, Kim Nowatzke, Edmund Lawler and Charley McKelvy. The back row is (from left) Linda Weigel, Andrew Tallackson, Connie Kuzdym and Bob Wellinski. Unable to attend were Sally Carpenter and Julie McGue.

But by being a "good news" product, by letting readers know about the people, and the arts, entertainment, leisure and quality of life in their own backyard, readers get what they call "news you can use."

When people step through the doors of *The Beacher*, many feel like it's family. I mean, where else can you go where you're greeted by a 120-pound Great Dane? Laszlo Montgomery has his own fans, with many people stopping by just to see him...not us.

Customers, too, like that they'll see the same faces when they stop by. Turnover here is rare. So when customers drop by wanting copies made, for instance, they'll know they will be greeted by the sweet, smiling face of Janet Baines at the front desk.

That means something to people. That comfort from consistency, quality and friendliness.

The respect goes both ways. Even when mistakes are made, readers and customers understand that we are human. And my philosophy is, it's not that mistakes are made that matters, but how you fix the mistake that defines you. As is almost always the case here, when mistakes arise, everyone works toward the best possible solution.

As for *The Beacher* itself, when I look at the

family of writers and photographers we have, you couldn't ask for better:

The writers: Sally Carpenter, William Halliar, Connie Kuzdym, Edmund Lawler, Julie McGue, Charley McKelvy, Kim Nowatzke and Linda Weigel.

The photographers: James Conlin and Bob Wellinski.

These individuals are the heart and soul of *The Beacher*. They don't treat an assignment as if it's beneath them because we're not a huge paper. They pour their hearts and souls into their work. Writing, rewriting, fact-checking. They give their all to what they submit, and it shows in the finished product.

Indeed, amazing people have come into my life through this job. Advertisers I enjoy chatting with weekly by phone or email. People I've interviewed who are now a steady presence in my life.

Those elements — the advertisers, readers and community news sources — impressed me the most three years ago. Why three? Well, as you probably guessed, that was when we were introduced to the COVID-19 pandemic. I remember that day, March 13, when the imposed "shutdown" commenced. My wife, an elementary school teacher, called saying

she and her teacher's aide were hurriedly shoving everything into cabinets, putting as much away as they could before being sent home.

I sat at my desk at *The Beacher*, plagued by uncertainty, thinking, "What are we going to do?" We are a what-to-do publication, and everything is shutting down. What's left to write about?

That weekend involved plenty of retrospection, introspection...whatever term fits the bill. What came to me was simple: don't reinvent the wheel. Keep doing what we're doing. There are plenty of interesting people to interview, people with fascinating stories to tell. The world quickly caught on to the software program Zoom: a means to keep programming alive. Streaming became our go-to source for entertainment, although looking back on it, we must have been desperate to view "Tiger King" as our immediate salvation, wouldn't you say?

But I digress.

As it turned out, we survived. It wasn't easy. I had many a sleepless night mulling potential content for the paper, whether certain businesses and longtime *Beacher* advertisers could survive the pandemic. A few, sadly, did not.

Collectively, as a society, we have begun the rebuilding process, inching closer toward a world that existed before COVID. We may never reach that state. The point is, we adapt. And, we survive.

What do the next 10 years hold? Can't say. Don't have the magic crystal ball that will provide the answer. Life, as the past three years showed us, is a curious example of the unexpected. Nonetheless, life is good. No, scratch that. It's better than good.

It's great.

And in so many ways, I have *The Beacher* to thank for that.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Within “Bat Mitzvah”

by Andrew Tallackson



Sunny Sandler stars as a girl preparing for the biggest day of her life in “You Are So Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah.”

On one hand, you gotta hand it to “You Are So Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah.” For once, Jewish characters aren’t victimized nor embarrassed by their religion. They love who they are.

On the other hand, the movie is 1 hour 43 minutes of middle-school girls behaving like heinous brats.

If you can reconcile the two, then the experience is worth it.

Many comedies have a way of laughing *at* their Jewish characters, but “Bat Mitzvah” smiles *with* them. The new Netflix movie, based on Fiona Rosenbloom’s 2005 Young Adult novel, hails from Adam Sandler’s Happy Madison company. Sandler has never shied away from his Jewish identity, arguing Jewish kids need to recognize a bit of themselves on screen. This time, he’s invited his wife and daughters along for the ride, his daughters Sunny and Sadie boasting a real on-screen presence.

In the film, Stacy (Sunny Sandler) is on the verge of celebrating her Bat Mitzvah at the same time as her best friend, Lydia Rodriguez Katz (Samantha Lorraine). They’ve got everything planned: Lydia’s helping write Stacy’s speech, Stacy’s prepping Lydia’s “entrance video.”

That’s part of the movie’s humor: the insane



“You Are So Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah”

Running time: 103 minutes. Netflix. Rated PG-13 for some crude/suggestive material, strong language and brief teen drinking.

amount of time and money that now goes into representing Jewish coming-of-age rituals. The heart of the movie dissects the way Stacy and Lydia get caught up in the material, surface aspects of the event, not the religious, symbolic meaning of it. We also have a wonderful performance from “Saturday Night Live” regular Sarah Sherman as the rabbi: a woman balancing tradition with trying to be hip in front of her cell-phone savvy youth in Hebrew classes.

We also appreciate the easy vibe between Adam Sandler, more a supporting presence here, and his “Uncut Gems” costar Idina Menzel as Stacy’s parents. These two feel like a real couple, with that unspoken language that exists between a husband and wife married for some time.

But remember, “Bat Mitzvah” at its core is a teen

comedy, so what tears Stacy and Lydia apart is a boy. And not just any boy, but the teen dream, Andy Goldfarb (Dylan Hoffman). Andy is proof that morons exist in all cultures. A self-absorbed dud. Even the movie acknowledges he's a loser, but it takes Stacy and Lydia most of the movie to realize it. That is unfortunate, because once Stacy goes on the rampage against Lydia, the movie loses its buoyant tone and becomes downright unpleasant. It essentially becomes a Jewish "Mean Girls."

So what saves it, redeems it by the end? The big finish, which is sweet in finding a way for Stacy to redeem herself. Sunny Sandler is quite good at forcing Stacy to re-evaluate the kind of person she's become so we believe the transition back to a kindhearted soul. A welcome twist, too, is how Sadie Sandler, as older sister Ronnie, supports her younger sister, having already navigated the treacherous preteen waters with her parents.

By the movie's end, the story's generous heart has



Adam Sandler and Idina Menzel star as Stacy's parents.

revealed itself. It is the right step forward, in terms of representation, in allowing Jewish characters to be themselves, not weary old caricatures.

Just no more Andy Goldfarb, please.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com



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United for the United Way



Michigan City Area Schools and Michigan City police and fire departments joined forces Aug. 25 to hold their traditional car wash fundraiser, “United for the United Way.” The event, which returned after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was held at the MCAS Plant Planning parking lot across from Ames Field.

All photos by Bob Wellinski



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:

- **Writing Out Loud: Lee Bey at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 9.** The African-American writer and architectural critic was born in Chicago, attending Lindbloom Technical High School. His father passed away when he was 15: a turning point in his life. He eventually transferred to Chicago Vocational School, where he prepared for a career as a printing press operator. Motivated by a teacher's compliment about his writing, he decided to become a journalist. Today, he is the architecture critic for *The Sun-Times* and a member of its editorial board, writing on city governance, neighborhood development, politics and urban planning. Purdue Professor Emeritus Matt Kubik is the interviewer.
- **Tinkercad 3-D Modeling (ages 9-17) at 4 p.m. Monday, Sept. 11, in the Makerspace.** This session of Tinkercad, a free online collection of



software tools, serves as an introduction to 3-D design, art and printing. No experience is necessary. Participants receive a 3-D print of his/her creations. Call (219) 873-3045 and ask for Dave for more details. MCPL 3-D printing rules apply, and the printing fee is waived for this program.

- **Any Book Book Club (adults only) from 5-6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 11.** Participants can discuss any books they are reading. Meetings are the second Monday of the month. Light refreshments will be served.
- **Angels Among Us at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12.** Ange Benz, who leads the discussion, can be contacted at (219) 874-3754.
- **Teen Trivia Night: Disney! (ages 10-17) from 5-6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 13.** Prizes are included. Light refreshments will be served.
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in September.** 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.
- **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.
- **Paw Patrol Scavenger Hunt in September.** Visit Youth Services, find all hidden Paw Patrol 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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Leadership and Innovation Summit

The Leadership Institute and Society of Innovators at Purdue University Northwest will host the 2023 Northwest Indiana Women’s Leadership and Innovation Summit.

The event is Thursday, Sept. 14, at the James B. Dworkin Student Services and Activities Complex, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. for networking, with programming at 9 a.m. Brunch service is at 10:30 a.m., with the event concluding at approximately 3 p.m.

The annual event unites 260 women leaders for presentations and panel-style conversations. Featured speakers include:

- Emcee: Chelsea Whittington, founder and CEO, C WHITT PR LLC.
- Mary Ann Ahern, political reporter at NBC 5 Chicago.
- Carnessa Carnes – CarnessaThePoetess.
- Rachel Clapp-Smith, Ph.D. – Teddy Jacobi dean of the College of Business, academic director for The Leadership Institute at PNW, and professor of leadership at PNW.
- Amanda Zelechowski, J.D., Ph.D., ABPP – professor of psychology, and founding director of clinical training at PNW.

Individual tickets are \$95, while tables of 10 can be purchased for \$750. A small business bundle of three tickets can be purchased for \$255. Sponsorships are available. Visit pnw.edu/womens-summit or email leadershipinstitute@pnw.edu to register.

Car Seat Safety Clinics

Franciscan Health and Geminus Regional Health Systems are partnering to host two free LaPorte County car-seat safety clinics.

The first is from 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 13, at the Strengthening Indiana Families LaPorte County Family Resource Center, 1232 W. Indiana 2, LaPorte. The second is from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Franciscan Health Michigan City Legacy Campus, 301 W. Homer St.

Car seats will be available free to qualifying Indiana residents thanks to a Geminus Regional Health Systems grant. The seats will be installed by a certified technician while supplies last. Caregivers must take children to the event so technicians can create a safe, proper fit.

Call (219) 488-1380 to schedule an appointment and determine eligibility.

New Book Club

A new book club meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 402 E. Coolspring Ave.



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Long Beach Park Board

CLAY 101

Long Beach Park Board is hosting art class **Clay 101** with instructor Erin Ledyard. The class will be 6 sessions of 1.5 hours of instruction each session. Handbuilding techniques, clay tool use, and a pottery wheel experience will be taught during **Clay 101**.

Dates/Times:

Week 1	Week 2
Tues. 9/19 @ 5:00-6:30PM	Tues. 9/26 @ 5:00-6:30PM
Thurs. 9/21 @ 5:00-6:30PM	Thurs. 9/28 @ 5:00-6:30PM
Sat. 9/23 @ 10:00-11:30AM	Sat. 9/30 @ 10:00-11:30AM

- Location:** Long Beach Community Center
Cost: \$25.00 per class - includes all instruction and supplies
 Advanced Registration and payment **REQUIRED**.
Experience: All experience levels welcome
Contact: longbeachactivities@gmail.com / 219-873-3773

New Harbor Country Singers Director

Maggie Martin is the new director of Harbor Country Singers, which starts rehearsals in late September for the Dec. 2 annual Christmas concert.

Martin has been the HCS piano accompanist since it started in 2016, and has assisted with directing throughout that time. She is a classically trained pianist with 25 years experience in choral accompaniment. She is from Three Oaks, Mich., and a small business owner in Harbert.



Martin

A HCS meet and greet for new and current members is at 6:30 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Sept. 26, at Episcopal Church of the Mediator, 14280 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert.

Nine rehearsals for the Christmas concert, held at the church, are planned at 6:30 p.m. EDT Tuesdays in October and November.

Text Martin at (734) 730-1126 or email maggiemartinpiano@gmail.com for more details.

South Shore Line Special

Doctors, nurses, EMTs, paramedics, firefighters, other medical personnel and law enforcement can ride the South Shore Line free Sept. 9-13 on all westbound and eastbound weekday and weekend trains.

To ride free, medical and law-enforcement personnel must present a valid work ID that shows they are employed at a hospital, doctor's office, medical facility, fire department, police station, prison or aforementioned related agency. Law enforcement encompasses police officers, correctional officers, TSA agents and other security personnel.

In the near future, SSL will offer free transportation for military personnel, including active-duty, reserves and veterans, in honor of Veterans Day.

SSL also offers reduced fares for seniors, active-duty military personnel, commuting students, infants and passengers with disabilities year-round. Also, up to three children 13 and younger ride free on all daily off-peak, weekend and holiday trains.

SSL continue to bus passengers to stations between Michigan City and Gary, including Carroll Avenue, Dune Park, Portage/Ogden Dunes, Miller and Gary Metro Center. Buses operate according to the scheduled train times. Visit tinyurl.com/mr448ur9 for details.

Potawatomi Audubon Society

Potawatomi Audubon Society will host a nature walk at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 13, at Marquette Park, located in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood.

Take U.S. 12 or 20 west to County Line Road. Turn north (right) and head to Oak Avenue. Turn left. Parking will be along Oak Avenue in the park.

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American Red Cross

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

- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 11

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

Monarch Music Fest

Monarch Music Fest, proceeds from which benefit Save the Dunes, is from 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 10, at The Brewery Lodge & Supper Club, 5727 N. County Road 600 West.

The event celebrates the Monarch butterfly's journey and migration through the region. Protecting pollinators like the Monarch butterfly is part of Save the Dunes' mission to protect and advocate for the Indiana dunes, Lake Michigan and surrounding natural areas.

Tickets start at \$50 online and \$60 at the door, with children only \$15. Available until the event reaches capacity (300-people limit), tickets can be reserved at www.savedunes.org under the events tab. Each ticket includes entrance, food and one craft draft ticket. Beer, wine and cocktails will be available for an additional cost.

Music is by MilkBillies, Chicago Drum Battery and Massasauga.

Event supporters include The Brewery Lodge & Supper Club, Zorn Brewery, Dig the Dunes and sponsor Castle Subaru.

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Whipped Feta	Tapenade Salmon
Crab Cake	Bone-In Pork Chop
Steamed Mussels	*Filet & Caesar
Lodge House Salad	*Filet
Beet Salad	*Ribeye
Oysters On the Half-Shell	56 oz Tomahawk Steak

Dinner specials are available every night
 Please call for details at (866) 625-6343

Upcoming Events

SEPT 10 2023 **MONARCH MUSIC FEST** 
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Michigan City Municipal Golf Course



North Course, "Early Birdies,"
Aug. 28, 2023
Event: Low Gross + 50/50

A Flight

Low Gross: Pat Czizek.
Low Net: Pat Czizek.
Low Putts: N/A.
Event: Mary Beres.

B Flight

Low Gross: Mary Lou Marshall.
Low Net: Mary Lou Marshall.
Low Putts: Jane Spang.
Event: Mary Lou Marshall.

C Flight

Low Gross: Ann Batagianis.
Low Net: Ann Batagianis.
Low Putts: Kathy Nelson.
Event: Ann Batagianis.

D Flight

Low Gross: Beverly Nichols.
Low Net: Beverly Nichols, Pam Betcher.
Low Putts: Beverly Nichols.
Event: Beverly Nichols, Nancy Wilhelm.

Chip-Ins: Kathy Grott, Hole #6.

Birdies: Kathy Grott, Hole #6.

50/50: Ann Batagianis, Pat Czizek.

South Course, "Par-Tee Women's Golf League," Aug. 23, 2023

Flight A

Low Gross: Linda Hirsch.
Low Net: Linda Hirsch.
Low Putts: Jane Shuger.

Flight B

Low Gross: Daphne Craft.
Low Net: Daphne Craft.
Low Putts: Linda Wabshall.

Flight C

Low Gross: Jill Mellen.
Low Net: Jill Mellen.
Low Putts: Alice Wozniak.

Flight D

Low Gross: Linda Komp.
Low Net: Linda Komp.
Low Putts: Bev Szybala.

Chip-Ins: Alice Wozniak.

Pars: Jane Shuger, Linda Hirsch, Phyllis Roach, Lu Ann Uremovich, Sharon Weber, Daphne Craft.

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LBCC Women's Golf Leagues 9-Hole League

Aug. 24, 2023

Event: Regular Golf

A Flight Low Net

First — Kathy Kenefick, Sue Luegers, Sue Smith.

Second — Mary O'Neil, June Salmon.

Third — Vicky Krop.

Low Putts — Kathy Kenefick.

B Flight Low Net

First — Catherine Kelly, Diane Rubey.

Second — Sarah Blank.

Third — Joanne Dodd.

Low Putts — Erin McMahon.

Sunken Approach — Catherine Kelly (#13).

C Flight Low Net

First — Ann Daley.

Second — Ann Heeren.

Third — Ginny Hogan, Alison Kolb, Katherine Shannon.

Low Putts — Beth Linnen.

D Flight Low Net

First — Teresa Curi.

Second — Regina Bradley.

Third — Joanie Doyle, Marge White.

Low Putts — Joan Rowan.

18-Hole League

Aug. 29, 2023

Event: Regular Golf

A Flight

First — Sue Luegers.

Second — Vicki Hill.

Third — Linda Behringer, Kellie Burke, Peg King, Roxanne Warble.

B Flight

First — Amanda Ferlmann.

Second — Pat Bailey.

Third — Donna Hennard.

C Flight

First — Nancy Reinert.

Second — Joanne Dodd.

Third — Susan Keeley.

Sunken Approaches

Sue Luegers, #12.

Eunie Nundorf, #13.

Kathie Mole, #7.



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The Pig Did It by Joseph Caldwell (paperback \$13.99 from Amazon or Barnes & Noble; also available as an eBook and audiobook. 224 pages.)

And all this time, I thought the butler did it. So, what goes on here? A lot of Irish blarney, I'm thinking. But first, we must set the stage...

"And so, two years after his wife's elopement to Akron, Ohio, with a baritone from the choir of Saint Joseph's Church, Aaron decided to let his favor fall on Phila Rambeaux. How grateful the woman would be. She would be given the attention of a man not without assets, a man noted for his easy charm, his easy wit, his easy allure. He was a published novelist and the recipient of several awards obscure enough to be considered prestigious...Phila would be a pushover."

Oh brother! Spare me the egotism of man! Really — they can be so thickheaded sometimes...

Needless to say, Phila isn't swept away by her professor (and him, 12 years older), leaving him empty-handed and bereft. What's a literary man to do? Go to Ireland and brood by the ocean, of course.

Aaron McCloud gets to Ireland and takes the bus to his aunt, Kitty McCloud, and fond childhood memories of happy summers, when the bus is waylaid by a bunch of pigs (or is that a herd?). Anyway, the passengers get off the bus and proceed to round up said pigs. Aaron makes the mistake of chasing one up the hill. A mistake because by the time he makes it to the crest of said hill, he is worn out with no pig in sight, making his way back down to the road, but the bus is gone.

He tries hitchhiking, to no avail, wondering where the friendly Irish spirit went, when he turns around and finds the pig following him! No wonder no one wants to pick him up. Finally, a man in a truck picks up Aaron and the pig, depositing them on his aunt's doorstep. The woman who owns the pig, Lolly McKeever, is known (and hated), and she will be told to come get it and that will be that. Now, Aaron can get back to his brooding in earnest.

Aaron wakes early in the morning, looks out the window and onto his aunt's garden to see the remains of a beautiful patch of vegetables upturned and eaten by guess who? The pig, of course. It obviously got out of the shed and made a night of it — it even managed to take down four tall sunflowers.

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



The whole place looks like a battlefield.

What's a man to do? Run, is Aaron's first thought, but then he somehow gets the pig back in the shed before Kitty wakes up. He sees a plot of ground that seems more torn up than any other. Closer inspection shows a man's skeleton in the hole, still fully dressed and buried barely 3 feet below ground and now exposed to the world due to the pig.

Aaron shows the body to Kitty, who says it's Declan Tovey, apparently a roaming fix-it man who had eyes on Kitty and Lolly. Kitty says Lolly must have killed him in a jealous rage, burying the body on her land to make her look guilty. Aaron doesn't know what to think — except that he is attracted to Lolly. Where do we go from here? Grab another pint of Guinness, the story is about to heat up...

Aaron barely has time to absorb all this when Lolly shows up to claim her pig, which she denies owning. Aaron lets it slip about Declan, tells the women to let the police figure it out, both women tell him no police will be involved, then the accusing begins in earnest. Wow.

Kitty thinks Lolly killed Declan, Lolly blames it on Kitty's handyman, Kieran Sweeney,

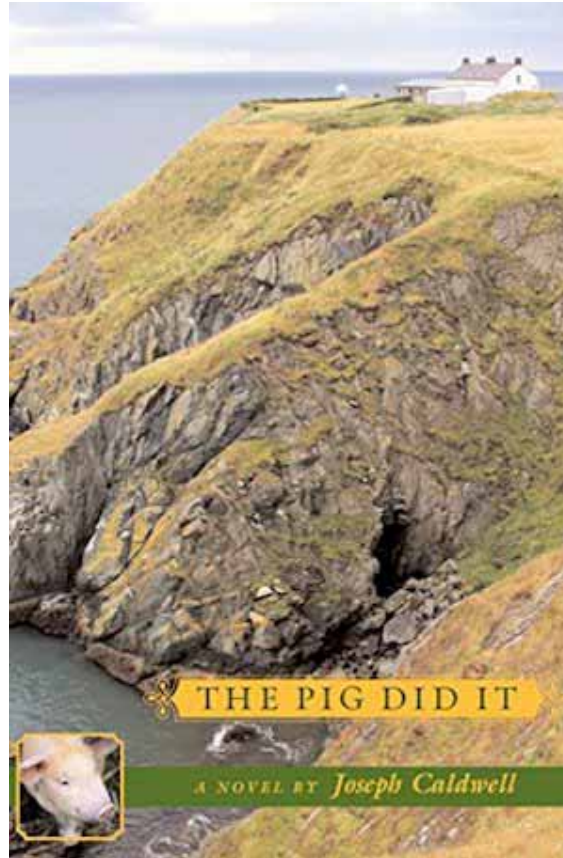
and Kieran, who shows up in the middle of all this, thinks Kitty did him in, and Aaron is totally lost. All he wants is a place to brood! Suffice it to say, this is a veritable smorgasbord of blame and denial that will have you thinking they're all to blame in one way or another.

Of course, the story goes like the Irish countryside: rocky, with lots of ups and downs. Did you expect anything else? But in a most entertaining and Irish way.

The final word: The Pig Did It was a *Washington Post* Book World Best Book of 2008. If you want to continue the adventures of Aaron, check out The Pig Comes to Dinner (2009) and The Pig Goes to Hog Heaven (2010).

Ah, those Irish storytellers, they never disappoint.

Till next time, happy reading!



Chesterton Art Center

Chesterton Art Center will host “Glass: An Exhibition,” a stained glass and fused glass show featuring adult student artists, on Sept. 8-Nov. 5 at The Ellen Firme Gallery, 92 W. U.S. 12, Beverly Shores.

An opening reception is from 4-7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 8. The gallery’s regular hours are from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays and Saturdays.



Mindy Milan’s fused glass piece “Dunes Sunset.”

Participating artists include: Susan Anderson, Mabelle Bissonnette, Amanda Burton, Bunny Callahan, Susie Cook, Patricia Crowle, Jill Fuller, Judy Gregurich, Randy Grieger, Marlene Hrabota, Jane Kilander, Sue Kozak, Carol Lawrenz, Rachel Lawrenz, Mindy Milan, Mark Montgomery, Lynn Novak, Melanie Pergiel, Jacqueline Polka, Veronica Simms, Cheryl Stanley, Nancy Sutton, Linda Vivirito, David Wodrich and Marilyn Zweig.

Glass fusing — the process of melting glass together at high temperatures — is explored under the guidance of teaching artist-instructor Mindy Milan. The technique, done in a kiln, enables artists to craft new glass colors and experiment with textures and shapes.

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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In the Area

Sept. 7 — Music Under the Stars, Johnny V, 7 p.m., Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Tickets: \$15/members, \$20/non-members, 2 & younger/free. Info: <https://friendshipbotanicgardens.org>

Sept. 9 — Dunebrook's Dragon Boat Family Festival, 9 a.m., LaPorte's Stone Lake. Info: tinyurl.com/296pzy8b

Sept. 9 — LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, 7 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Tickets: \$25/adults, \$10/children. Live stream option: \$15. Reservations: tinyurl.com/4vtxbcej

Sept. 9 — Writing Out Loud: Lee Bey, 7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Sept. 9-10 — 29th Door Village Harvest Festival, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Scipio Township Park, 3501 W. Joliet Road, Door Village. Free. Parking: \$3.

Sept. 10 — Monarch Music Fest, 1-5 p.m., The Brewery Lodge & Supper Club, 5727 N. County Road 600 West. Tickets: \$50/online, \$60/door, \$15/children. Reservations: www.savedunes.org

Sept. 11 — Tinkercad 3-D Modeling (ages 9-17), 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

Sept. 11 — Any Book Book Club (adults only), 5-6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Sept. 12 — Angels Among Us, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Sept. 12 — Book club, 7 p.m., The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 402 E. Coolspring Ave.

Sept. 13 — Teen Trivia Night: Disney! (ages 10-17), 5-6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Through Sept. 14 — Indiana Historical Society's traveling exhibit, "Be Heard: Latino Experiences in Indiana," LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Info: (219) 324-6767.

Through Sept. 30 — Artwork by Kristina Knowski, The Legacy Center Gallery at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Center hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: (219) 872-9196.

Through Sept. 30 — "Early Builders of Beverly Shores," "Dancing for Our Tribe: Potawatomi

Traditions in the New Millennium — Photographs by Sharon Hoogstraten," The Beverly Shores Depot Museum & Art Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Reception: 5-7 p.m. Sept. 8. Info: www.bsdepot.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.

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.

Thursdays in September — Yoga in the Gardens with April Fallon, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Info: <https://friendshipbotanicgardens.org>

Thursdays in September — 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

Sundays through Sept. 24 — Farmed & Forged Market (LaPorte Farmers Market), 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Monroe & Lincolnway.

In the Region

Sept. 7 — Northwest Indiana Green Drinks. Meet & greet: 4-6 p.m., Brown Skin Coffee, 1921 W. 25th Ave., Gary. Double-feature films: 7-9 p.m., Indiana University Northwest's School of Arts and Sciences Main Stage Theatre, 3415 Broadway. Info: NancyforVision@gmail.com

Sept. 8 — Tuba Skinny: A CLUB ACORN Show, 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

Sept. 8-Nov. 5 — "Glass: An Exhibition," The Ellen Firme Gallery, 92 W. U.S. 12, Beverly Shores. Opening reception: 4-7 p.m. Sept. 8. Regular gallery hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays/Saturdays.

Sept. 9 — The J.D. Marshall Shipwreck Story, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Sept. 9 — Pioneering of the Dunes, 2-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25

East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Sept. 9 — Marrakesh Express: A Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young Experience, 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

Sept. 9-10 — Beaver Trading Hike, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Sept. 9-10 — History Comes Alive Weekend, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Sept. 10 — Battle of the Dunes, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Sept. 12 — Ride Your Horse on the Beach, West Beach, 376 N. County Line Road, Portage. Times: 12:30-2:30 p.m., 3-5 p.m., 5:30-7:30 p.m. Cost: \$25. Reservations: (219) 395-1882.

Sept. 13 — Potawatomi Audubon Society nature walk, 9 a.m., Marquette Park, located in Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood

Daily through Sept. 17 — Outdoor Adventure Festival, Northwest Indiana parks & preserves. Info: www.dunesoutdoorfestival.com

Through Sept. 17 — Theda Sandiford's "Triggered, Truth & Transformation," Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Info: tinyurl.com/yckh57jx

Through Sept. 28 — Plein air artist David Baker, The Village Gallery @ Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

Through Sept. 30 — Suzy Vance's "Collaborating with the Natural World," Teen Arts Group ("As I See It"), Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. Reception: noon-2 p.m. Sept. 9. 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 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

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing:* "The Hill." Rated G. Times: 3:30 p.m. Sept. 8, 7 p.m. Sept. 9, 3:30 p.m. Sept. 10. *Also:* "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3." Times: 7 p.m. Sept. 8, 4 p.m. Sept. 9, 1 & 7 p.m. Sept. 10. *Also:* "The Goonies." Rated PG. Time: 7 p.m. Sept. 7. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickers-theatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

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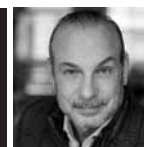
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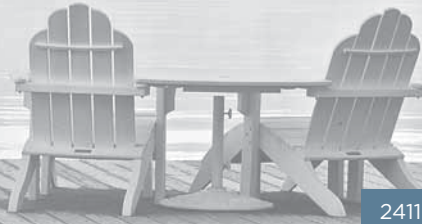
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