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100 and Counting

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100 & COUNTING

JANUARY WAS A BIG MONTH FOR
TWO RITTENHOUSE RESIDENTS



Mary is photographed with her youngest daughter, Mary Kay Steele, next to her special birthday sign outside of Rittenhouse Village at Michigan City.

Meet Mary Ellen Scupham for the first time, and you'll be just as impressed by her infectious smile, positive outlook and refreshing sense of humor as you are that she turned 100 on Jan. 6.

Scupham celebrated that milestone Jan. 5 with her friends and neighbors at Rittenhouse Village at Michigan City, where she is a resident, followed the next day by another celebration at Patrick's Grille with about 70 close friends and family.

"Most people can't even imagine becoming a centenarian, and I am one of them," Rittenhouse Senior Lifestyle Counselor Stefanie Olson said. "Mary Scupham makes 100 look magical! She is truly a gift to the Rittenhouse family, and she is definitely one of my role models. I can always count on Mary to have a warm inviting smile and a giggle to follow. She is one sharp and beautiful soul. I often wonder if her secret to longevity is due to her being a nurse. I hope she continues to live a happy and healthy life with the Rittenhouse family!"

Born and raised in West Frankfort, Ill., Scupham was the second oldest of four children born to Harmon and Clio Kinison. Fond childhood memories bring a smile to her face.

"There was a lot of music in my house. My mother sang. She was the head of the choir at church and played the piano," she recalled. "My sister, Rachel, played the piano beautifully too."

Her youngest child, Mary Kay Steele, jogged her mom's memory of a chocolate doll.

"To go to St. Louis 90 miles away was really something. They had candy shops that we never had in

West Frankfort. They would have Kewpie dolls made of chocolate. I got one and I saved it in our fridge for over a year. We didn't eat it – it was sacred," Scupham shared, giggling.

Living through the Great Depression, she knows it affected her parents, but as a child, she didn't feel aware of it.

"My mother sewed beautifully. We had the greatest clothes," Scupham recalled, adding that sometimes, her mother would fashion her older sister's clothes into outfits for her.

Scupham has special memories of being crowned "May Queen" in eighth grade.

"Every school had a May Queen...in May!," she said with a laugh.

Then, as a senior, she was crowned 1940 Football Homecoming Queen for West Frankfort High School. The high school newspaper wrote: *"She was attractively dressed in a white taffeta formal, that together with her fair complexion, made a striking picture. Her royal accessories consisted of a lovely white satin train covered with lace and innerlined with pink satin. Nestling in her black curls was the sparkling crown of royalty."*

In 1941, Scupham attended Southern Illinois University to become a journalist. Her plans changed freshman year, however, after a serious car accident while coming home from college for the weekend. Others were involved, but she was the only one injured, ending up unconscious for five days with several injuries.

"It wasn't so much the physical," she explained. "It was in my brain that I worried about it."



Bill and Mary Scupham, seen together on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Her hospitalization, along with the United States entering World War II, impacted her future.

"The war came along," she said. "Everyone was saying, 'Go into nursing, go into nursing,' and I did."

She left her hometown for Wesley Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in Chicago. It was there she met the love of her life, William (Bill) Kent Scupham, who was amid his medical residency.

"I think I married the right man," she said, grinning when asked why she thinks she lived to be 100.

Bill and his bride married on June 10, 1945, then moved to Long Beach, Calif. Bill was serving in the U.S. Navy as a Lieutenant Junior Grade medical doctor and chaplain.

Like her childhood, music filled her home since Bill played the piano and saxophone.

"Music has played an important part in the Scupham family, in great part because of Bill's love and appreciation of it," his obituary stated. *"...And,*

Continued on Page 4

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100 & COUNTING

Continued from Page 3

while not a pianist in the strictest definition, Bill could definitely play the piano, playing his children to sleep on many evenings.”

Asked what stands out in her memory of the past century, Scupham replies, “Of course, the war (World War II). And, every time there’s a little war someplace, you wonder, ‘Why, why, why?’”



Mary’s graduation photo from nursing training in 1945.

What other memories stand out?

“Every time I had a baby,” she said with a smile.

Their first two children were Janet (now Knight and living in Kokomo) and Rick (Melanie) Scupham, of West Des Moines, Iowa. The couple moved to Homewood, Ill., in 1949, where they had two more children: Nancy (now Hutchings), who lives in Elkhart with her husband, John, and David, who lives in

Cincinnati with his wife, Jane. At that time, Bill went into medical practice with his father.

In 1953, the Scuphams moved to Flossmoor, Ill., where they had the last two of their six children: Andy (Heidi) Scupham, Union, Mich., and Mary Kay (now Steele), who lives in LaPorte with her husband, Peter. Mary Kay is a familiar face in the local arts scene, performing musically and in community theater.

The Scuphams made their final move to LaPorte in 1972, with the first four of their children grown and on their own. Bill began practicing at the LaPorte Clinic and LaPorte Hospital, continuing there until his retirement in 1986. They lived on Indiana Avenue, having lovingly restored one of LaPorte’s historic Italianate homes.

Mary’s daughter, Janet, has written about her parents, sharing that information with *The Beacher* for this article.

“Mary became...active in church (First United Methodist in LaPorte), Questers, a poetry group and Service League. Over the years, Mary directed nine Service League children’s plays, acting in some of those,” Knight wrote. “...Caring for the six children was a full-time job, but Mary made time to serve the church, the Junior Women’s Club and the PTA.”

The couple enjoyed walking along the shores of Lake Michigan or just in their own neighborhood.

“Daddy and her would walk at least a mile each day,” Steele said. “People would always tell me, ‘Your parents are so cute walking down Indiana Av-

enue holding hands’.”

“Keeping active” is another explanation Scupham offers for her reaching her 100th birthday. At Rittenhouse, where she has lived for the past two years, she still walks and does her exercises, Steele says.

In her writings, Knight quoting her mother as saying, “I think it’s because I’ve always taken care of my health and kept my mind active. I’ve been a lifelong learner. Bill used to say that I walked so fast and far ahead on our trips because I was so excited to know what was around the next corner. I’ve lived my life with a positive outlook, full of gratitude. Curiosity is my secret to happiness.”

The Scuphams also enjoyed ballroom dancing, often with about five other couples.

“Anytime there was good music,” Scupham said, “we were there dancing.”

And, there are wonderful memories of years spent traveling, especially after Bill retired in 1986. Immersing themselves in culture and history, their travels included England, Finland, Greece, Turkey, Australia, Caribbean islands and Machu Picchu.

There was plenty of laughter in their home as well.

“She’s always laughing,” Steele says, adding her mother understands the value and importance of a smiler or laugh for others – the effect it has on them.

“My husband was a funny guy,” Scupham shared.

Mary lovingly cared for Bill after his declining health necessitated a move to assisted living in 2012. He passed away Jan. 11, 2014, at age 92.

Scupham and Steele reminisced about Bill’s “four things for a good day,” words of wisdom he lived that were outlined in his obituary: “First, you get up. You help someone. You learn something. Then you have a little fun. And if you don’t have fun...don’t get up.”

Mother and daughter remember what Bill’s mother, Estelle Scupham, added to it: “Be good and you’ll be happy.”

The birthday girl, herself, added a fifth part: “Count your blessings.”

After Bill’s passing, Mary filled her days by spending time with friends, reading and spending time with her six children, 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Scupham said she loves fiction, especially historical fiction and poetry by Billy Collins. She proudly showed off a photo of her meeting the author. Her own poetry was published in several volumes.



Mary Scupham is photographed with her 92-year-old brother Robert Kinison.

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100 & COUNTING

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“I had a thing about England and English writers,” she continued. Steele explained her mother is a big Shakespeare fan. Scupham shared, “Bill and I went to Stratford, Ontario, for 28 years. They have a Shakespeare festival there every year.”

In the last decade, she’s faced health challenges ranging from two broken hips to the removal of a kidney.

“It was painful,” Steele said. “It showed a lot of tenacity and perseverance getting through it.”

She has some lapses, but her memory is remarkable for her age.

“She’s just getting down to my level in the memory category,” the 60-year-old Steele said with a laugh, noting her mother always has had a better memory.

Today, Scupham looks forward to a future that includes a family reunion this year. Most of all, she lives life with positivity, gratefulness, kindness and, always, that smile.



Mary Scupham celebrates her 100th birthday at Patrick’s Grille with about 70 family and friends.



Why does Mary Dillow think she has lived to see her 100th birthday?

“It was God’s will – that’s all I can tell you. The man upstairs – He knew what He was doing, I guess,” the Rittenhouse resident said.

Her oldest child, Sharon Boynak, echoed that sentiment.

“He surely did,” she said. “My mom has the sweetest smile of anyone I know. She always has a friendly attitude...It’s a joy – I love visiting her.”

Dillow celebrated her 100th birthday Jan. 6 at Rittenhouse with 38 family and friends.

Boynak said Dillow’s friends at Rittenhouse tell her how her mother is always smiling.

Rittenhouse’s Stefanie Olson considers having Dillow as part of the family for the past six years as “truly a gift.”

“She is definitely one of my role models!,” Olson said. “I admire how she consistently has a smile on her face. She is so sweet, and her outlook is always positive! She is one sharp, beautiful lady, and I often wonder if it’s all the reading she does that keeps her so with the times.”

(Evalena) Mary Dillow was born to Constine and Rose LeClere on Jan. 20 in southern Indiana near Tell City. She had an older sister, Irene, and younger brother, Ray. Her 1-year-old brother, Gabriel, died before she was born during the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918. In addition, she had two half-brothers, Charlie LeClere and Mark LeClere, and two half-sisters, Diane Sweat and Margaret Bruggeman.

Of her early childhood, she recalls her father “donated land for the school to be built, and we walked



Mary Dillow is photographed with her children celebrating her 100th birthday: Lisa Cunningham (from left), Sharon Boynak, Victoria Lintner and Patrick Cunningham.

across the field to the school up until the sixth grade.”

Later, she enjoyed staying active while attending Bristow High School. Being athletic, her favorite sport was basketball.

“I went to dances anytime that I could find one,” she said, her eyes lighting up at the memory.

On Aug. 3, 1943, she married Clarence Patrick Cunningham, who was a certified welder. They came to Northwest Indiana because he wasn’t interested in making a living as a farmer. They had four children: Sharon (David) Boynak, Victoria (Pat) Lintner, Lisa Cunningham (Lee Gloster) and Patrick (Evalina) Cunningham.

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“One thing that sticks out,” she said, “is my Dad would always take Mom out on their anniversary — so special.”

Tragically, after 16 years of marriage, Clarence died from brain cancer at age 35. Dillow knew she had to support her young family, with her children ranging in age from 3 to 13. She got a job at The Anderson Company of Indiana (ANCO) in Michigan City, where she worked for 26 years, eventually becoming quality control inspector.

“It wasn’t easy,” she recalled. “Sharon was 13, so she could babysit when I went to work. She was very responsible.”

Boynak said her mother raised four children with values that stick with all of them to this day.

“Mom always put her family first,” she said. “We never knew things were tight. When she had a payday every two weeks, she would buy us a pop or candy — such a treat. We grew up with a lot of love

and always went to church, and thanked God for what we had.”

As a new widow, Dillow had to learn to drive.

“They (husbands) felt woman were no good drivers,” she said. “Back then, guys didn’t like their wives driving.”

However, a kind neighbor helped her with the necessary practice to obtain a driver’s license.

“It was hard,” she said. “I just did it. I made up my mind that I had to drive.”

Thanks to a friend, Betty Young, who introduced the two, Mary met Jim Dillow, and they were married Nov. 1, 1968. They celebrated 35 years together before he passed away at age 83. He was a letter carrier. Dillow has fond memories of them dancing at Washington Park’s Oasis Ballroom or at Trianon and Aragon: two premier ballrooms in Chicago.

“Jim grew up in Chicago, so he knew the city,” she explained.

Jim learned how to ballroom dance from his sister, who was an instructor; Mary learned from a neighbor.

During their retirement, the Dillows enjoyed



Thirty-eight family and friends came to Rittenhouse Village at Michigan City on Jan. 6 to celebrate Mary Dillow’s 100th birthday.





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Jim and Mary Dillow, photographed together in the 1970s.

camping and traveling for about a decade; they even visited all 50 states.

“We traveled to Texas because it was warmer there,” she said. “We went someplace warmer every winter – Florida, too.”

Looking back, certain events stand out in her memory more than others.

One was Pearl Harbor.

“It was such a sneak attack on America that impacted me,” she said, explaining that Clarence was in the U.S. Navy then, stationed at Honolulu at the time of the attack. Her second husband also was a veteran. Before they met, Jim was a Navy Seabee.

She recalled days before television, personal computers and cell phones, when people “would sit in a circle and listen to the radio.”

Dillow vividly remembers her family getting their first automobile.

“In 1928, we got a brand new Chevy,” she said.

“That was the most exciting day of my life. We stood at the end of the driveway and waited for my dad to bring it home.”

A Rittenhouse resident for the past six years, Dillow still enjoys playing cards, whether it be pinochle, Skip-Bo and poker with her family.

“I can play euchre if I have to,” she added.

She has seven grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren and, just recently, a great-great grandchild.

Dillow never expected to live as long as she has, but she offered the following advice: “They should never start drinking heavy or smoke. I think that shortens your life.”



Mary Dillow (LeClure at the time), at age 19, as a bride marrying Clarence Cunningham.

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Krasl Art Center to Host Shepard Fairey Exhibit

Krasl Art Center will present “Facing the Giant: 3 Decades of Dissent” by artist Shepard Fairey on Feb. 10-May 12.

A free preview party is from 6-8 p.m. EST Friday, Feb. 9, complete with snacks and a cash bar.

In 1989, at 19, Fairey created a sticker campaign featuring Andre the Giant for his “clique of art school and skateboard friends” at Rhode Island School of Design. The image of the 7’4” World Wrestling Federation star caught the attention of more than just Fairey’s peers, becoming a street-art phenomenon. Fairey subsequently began a career in graphic design and guerilla marketing. The KAC exhibit presents 30 silk screen and mixed collage works that feature not only those early depictions of Andre the Giant, but also subsequent work from the last 30 years.

Visitors also can tour the exhibit during the free Coffee with the Curator from noon-1 p.m. EST Thursday, Feb. 15.

Also on display are Joe Matty’s “A World Apart” in the Lab through March 24, then Jacob Lehmann’s



Shepard Fairey

“Outside In-Works on Collection and Memory,” which runs March 30-May 12.

Matty, a Pittsburg-based artist, uses 19th-century processes like wet plate collodion to recontextualize the digital, non-physical worlds of video games as physical photographs. Born in Clemson, S.C., and trained as a painter, Lehmann’s installation expands his paintings into “sites” that include sculpture and found objects. Both artists are Master of Fine Arts candidates at The University Notre Dame University.

In The Lounge throughout the year, Detroit-based artist Aaron Martin features “Nébwakat Mshiké: Wise Turtle,” a large-scale, semi-permanent digital print. Martin is a citizen of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, his art influenced by Potawatomi traditional culture and pop culture, as well as fantasy and storytelling. He works across several media, including watercolor, pen and ink, animation and tattoo.

Krasl Art Center is located at 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. Visit www.krasl.org or call (269) 983-0271 for more details.

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LCSO “Side by Side” Concert

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra will present its next subscription concert of the 2023-2024 season, “Side by Side with a Twist: A Celebration of Music Education,” at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 10, at The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St.



Watson

For this year’s “Side by Side” program, Music Director-Conductor Dr. Carolyn Watson invited local music educators and enthusiasts to join the orchestra. Students are encouraged to attend and see their music teacher or private-lesson instructor on stage.

The program celebrates Black History month, with works by black composers William Grant Still, “Ragtime King” Scott Joplin, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Margaret Bonds and Valerie Coleman.

Tickets cost \$25 for adults and \$22 for seniors, while students with ID are free. Make reservations at <https://lcsos.net/event/side-by-side/>

Harbor Country Hikers

Harbor Country Hikers and Chikaming Open Lands will sponsor a hike to identify animals by scat and tracks at 9 a.m. EST Saturday, Feb. 10, at Merritt Family and Younger Family Preserves on Mydra Road in Union Pier, Mich.

Grace Fredenburg, HCH member and COL’s education and outreach coordinator, will lead the hike. The contiguous COL properties protect 60 acres of forest and wetland. Two different forest environments are in various stages of regrowth: a mesic, or moist, southern forest and a southern hardwood swamp. The hike, rated moderately physically difficult, will cover about 1.5 miles. Those who attend should dress in layers, wear a warm cap and sturdy shoes or boots, and take plenty of water.

Space is limited, and registration is required by contacting Fredenburgatgball@chikamingopenlands.org. Visit www.harborcountryhikers.com or Harbor Country Hikers on Facebook for more details.

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Chamber Festival Recital

Michigan City Chamber Music Festival will present "Sensations," a free recital by Jenet Ingle on oboe and Ellis Anderson on piano, at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 11, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 600 Franklin Square.

The program includes music by Ruth Gipps, Samuel Coleridge Taylor and a new piece by Jeffrey Agrell.

Ingle has been South Bend Symphony Orchestra's principal oboist since 2006. As the owner and operator of Jenet Ingle Reeds, she makes and sells more than 200 handmade reeds monthly. She also has helped people with their own reed making through her video channel, "The Five Minute Reedmaker," her weekly online Reed Club and annual live Oboe Reed Boot Camps. She is the author of *The Happiest Musician* (2022).



Ingle

Anderson is a pianist, accompanist, educator, composer, church musician and choral singer from South Bend. He is a piano instructor and collaborative pianist at Saint Mary's College, the accompanist for The University of Notre Dame choral department and the music coordinator at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, Edwardsburg, Mich.

Visit www.mccmf.org, the festival's Facebook page or YouTube, or call (219) 561-1939 for more details.

Duneland Weavers Guild

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

Meetings are open to the public. The focus this month is the "Weavers and Spinners Challenge."

Visit www.dunelandweaversguild.org or Duneland Weavers Guild of Northwest Indiana on Facebook for more details.

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La Lumiere School

La Lumiere School senior Ava Navarro has received the Heisman High School Scholarship Competition Award.

Thousands of senior scholar-athletes graduating with the class of 2024, from 4,129 different schools, applied for the scholarship earlier this fall.

"Ava has been a three-sport varsity athlete through all of her time at La Lumiere," Head of School Andy Webster said in a press release.

One hundred of the recipients will become state winners, with the opportunity to become part of the 12 national finalists and ultimately one of the two national winners. State winners receive a \$1,000 college scholarship, national finalists a \$2,000 scholarship and the national winners a \$10,000 college scholarship.



Jackie Eberspecher, Hinsdale, Ill., a member of the La Lumiere graduating class of 2024, has been designated an Illinois State Scholar.

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the state's college access and financial-aid agency, presents the recognition of academic achievement to Illinois high school students annually.

"Jackie has always taken the most ambitious and rigorous courses available to her," Webster said in a press release. "She is a true scholar with a constant work ethic and an insightful mind."



Sweetheart Contest Benefits Shelter

The public can vote for its favorite "Sweetheart Candidate" through Sunday, March 17, through Independent Cat Society's Sweetheart Contest.

The annual event is from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, March 16, at Valparaiso Moose Lodge 1357, 108 Indiana Ave.

ICS has hosted the contest for about 15 years, with several feline residents competing for "Sweetheart of the Year." The public can vote for its favorite by donating \$1 per vote. Volunteers create teams to come up with unique items to sell, raffle or auction to raise funds for their candidate, including partnering with businesses for donations or fundraisers. All proceeds benefit ICS cats and kittens.

One candidate is featured each week on Facebook (www.facebook.com/INCatSociety) and at the shelter on the weekend. Those interested can vote in person from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and noon-4 p.m. Sunday at the shelter, 4061 S. County Line Road, Westville.

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“The Last Repair Shop” is a Minor Miracle of a Movie

by Andrew Tallackson



“The Last Repair Shop” opens with this young girl staring directly into the camera and saying, “I love my violin.”

Coming from a foundation of music, where the piano is a source of joy and a refuge from stress, the opening scene of “The Last Repair Shop” got to me.

A girl delicately cradles her violin, like it’s a priceless artifact. “I love my violin,” she says, conviction in her voice. It is a safe haven when her family is besieged with health issues. When family subsequently has no time for her, the violin offers companionship. A reassuring voice.

With that, a lump firmly lodged in my throat and stayed put through the remaining 38 minutes of “The Last Repair Shop,” a leading Oscar contender for Best Documentary Short Film now streaming on Disney+ and Hulu.

Talk about a delicate work of beauty. “The Last Repair Shop” packs more emotion into 39 minutes than most two- to three-hour prestige pictures. It is a love letter to people who treat their work like the craft it is. A tender reminder that not everything “broken” should be discarded. And, it is a stirring musical metaphor for the American Dream.

The documentary hails from L.A. Times Studios, and it exists like investigative feature reporting. At the center is a downtown Los Angeles warehouse whose gift to the community is repairing more than 80,000 musical instruments for students in the Los Angeles school district...for free.

We meet several students, each conveying how important music, and their personal instruments,



“The Last Repair Shop”

Running time: 39 minutes. Disney+, Hulu.

Not Rated, but suitable for all audiences.

are to them. But it is the lives of four key workers, telling their own stories, where “The Last Repair Shop” consumes you.

We first meet Dana Atkinson, who works on string instruments. Directors Ben Proudfoot (a 2021 Best Documentary Short Subject winner for “The Queen of Basketball”) and Kris Browsers (the Oscar-nominated “A Concerto is a Conversation”), as with every employee they interview, allow their camera to quietly observe hands in motion, paying attention to the most minute details of repair and restoration. But when Atkinson speaks of realizing he was gay as a teen, that he felt “broken” and contemplating suicide, his restoration work is a powerful metaphor for his own resilience.

Then comes Paty Moreno, who repairs brass instruments. As a Mexican immigrant trying to provide a new life for her and her children, her story is such a potent tribute to fighting for what you want, it’s impossible to see this woman, to hear her words, and not be moved.

Duane Michaels, who works on woodwind instruments, is a hoot. He once played fiddle in a blue-



Directors Ben Proudfoot (left) and Kris Browsers clearly have great affection for the people they interview.

grass group — a fiddle that cost only \$20 — that opened for none other than Elvis Presley.

Lastly, we arrive at the store manager-piano tuner, Steve Bagmanyan. Armenian by birth, his father was killed in the late 1980s amid political demonstrations and ethnic clashes. The story of Bagmanyan’s father, who believed nothing terrible would happen to him in his own country, draws parallels to Jews who stayed put in World War II amid Nazi tyranny. Bagmanyan, at one point unable to speak, consumed by thoughts of his father, reveals how music saved him, physically and spiritually.

These four individuals, in so many ways, are part of a dying breed. Repair shops have become an anachronism. A relic of the past. Something breaks, buy a new one: That is our present mentality. But by gracefully casting light on those interviewed here, “The Last Repair Shop” reveals the beauty in saving life’s potential castaways.

Co-director Bowers, a composer whose latest score is for Ava DuVernay’s “Origins,” was one of the countless Los Angelinos who benefitted from the repair warehouse. Bagmanyan, in fact, tuned the pianos at the elementary and middle schools Bowers attended.

You can feel his affection for these people. As a tribute, he composed his own musical selection for the film. The final scene, as the end credits roll, shows that performance, which includes the students interviewed in the film, students from years past and the employees themselves.

Seeing them all together, well, try not to cry. I dare you.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

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Weathering Through WinterFest

LaPorte Park and Recreation Department hosted its annual WinterFest on Jan. 26-28 throughout the LaPorte area. Many offerings, from ice-sculpture demonstrations to horse-drawn cabin rides, went largely unaffected by warming temperatures. Others, like the Snowball Softball Coed Tourney at Lions Field, proved a tad interesting, as you can see by Bob Wellinski's photos here.



“Fool Me Once” is Old School Fun

by Andrew Tallackson



Maya Stern (Michelle Keegan, right) attends her husband's funeral, her wary mother-in-law (Joanna Lumley) by her side, in “Fool Me Once.”

“Fool Me Once” marks my introduction to Harlan Coben. Hadn’t read any of his books, nor seen any streaming adaptations. Nothing about the series when it popped up in Netflix’s “New Releases” column suggested it was anything out of the ordinary.

So when one of my bosses begins pestering me to review it, when the show becomes a Netflix juggernaut, boasting massive streaming numbers, well, maybe it *is* time to take a look.

I can’t speak to how faithful this British adaptation is of Coben’s 2016 work, nor if it embraces his style of storytelling. What exists certainly isn’t prestige TV. It has all the subtlety of road crews busting up pavement with jackhammers.

But as a twists-and-turns popcorn thriller, one paced like a bullet train, “Fool Me Once” is old school fun, with engaging characters marching toward one *whoah* of a climax.

The series hurls a lot at you in the first episode, enough to make your head spin. In just 55 dizzying minutes, we learn that:

- Maya Stern (Michelle Keegan), disgraced ex-military, wants answers. Both her husband (Richard Armitage) and sister (Natalie Anderson) are viciously murdered.
- Maya’s dead husband turns up on the nanny cam,

said nanny brandishing pepper spray at her, then going into hiding.

- Her late husband’s haughty mother (Joanna Lumley, gnawing through every inch of the scenery), who believes Maya is *the* suspect in her son’s death.
- The investigating officer, DS Sami Kierce (Adeel Akhtar, wonderful), is suffering from blackouts, his new partner, DC Marty McGreggor (Dino Fetscher, equally good) worried about him.
- Secrets from the past factor into the mystery.

As each episode unravels, more key players enter the fray:

- Maya’s niece and nephew, Abby (Dánya Griver) and Daniel (Daniel Burt), who launch their own probe into their mother’s death. Their father (Marcus Garvey), still grieving his wife’s death, has descended into alcoholism.
- Maya’s former military colleague, Shane Tessier (Emmett J. Scanlan), who may be keeping tabs on her.
- An Internet whistle blower (Laurie Kynaston) who was working with Maya’s sister to expose a pharmaceutical company conspiracy.

Scanning back through this breakdown of all the characters, it strikes me that it reads like trash. That

“Fool Me Once” is streaming junk food. Maybe it is. The laughable score by David Buckley and Luke Richards cranks up to soap opera extremes every five minutes, as if we need reminders to be shocked by the big reveals.

Thing is, the cast never descends into camp. Instead, it treats the material as a sprawling character study. That’s especially true of Akhtar’s detective, who creates the most sympathetic character of the lot. On the brink of getting married, his bride-to-be pregnant, the frequent blackouts have him worried he might not live to see the birth of his first child.

Akhtar is so good, you don’t want anything bad to happen to Sami. That Fetscher plays his partner as someone who hits the ground running, increasingly worried about his mentor’s health, adds to the likability of these characters.

Here’s something else. There is not one wasted character. Every single one has a purpose, a reason to exist, their connections satisfying and believable.

Keegan, as Maya, takes an interesting approach to the character. Embracing her military background, there is nothing sentimental or emotional about the performance. She storms through each layer of the mystery with the clipped, no-nonsense demeanor of someone accustomed to military efficiency. She’s also the perfect foil for Lumley’s snobbish matriarch, who carries herself with the entitled expectancy of upper-crust British society.

Even as the story veers into soap opera with the



The two most likable characters in “Fool Me Once”: DS Sami Kierce (Adeel Akhtar, left) and his new partner, DC Marty McGregor.

revelation of a secret love child — yep, that’s the most apt description — the way Maya’s brother-in-law, niece and nephew forge a relationship with her bound by grief, and a need for closure, it rescues the material from cheap theatrics.

By the penultimate episode, “Fool Me Once” drops its most shocking twist, one I didn’t see coming. You wonder how the series can resolve itself now that all bets are off. To its credit, the show plays fair with the characters so justice arrives as a compromise.

Will I remember “Fool Me Once” six months or so down the road? Probably not. But, like a theme park ride, while everything’s in motion, revved up and revved forward, you’re too caught up in the thrill of it to care.



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Long Beach Resident

Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Porter Beach Restoration from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Feb. 10.** Meet staff and volunteers at Porter Beach Parking Lot at Wabash Avenue and Johnson Beach Road. Wear comfortable clothes; work gloves and equipment will be provided. Temporary passes will be available.
- **Warm Up to Winter from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays in February at Chellberg Farm.** Try snowshoeing and wander through Chellberg Farm. Then, stop by the farmhouse to learn about the area's history. A limited number of snowshoes can be checked out at the Eastern National Bookstore located off the main parking lot. Snowshoeing is dependent on the amount of snow on the ground, with a minimum of 3 inches of snow required. Regardless of snow, the farmhouse will be open for hikers. The parking lot is on Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20 in Porter. Call (219) 395-1882 for snow conditions
- **National Park Themed Movie from 2-3:30 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays through February at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Movies will change each weekend and last between an hour to 90 minutes. The schedule is: Feb. 10-11, "Eastern National Parks & Historic Sites"; Feb. 17-18, "Ribbon of Sand: Cape Lookout National Seashore" and "Hopewell Furnace: A Place of Opportunity"; Feb. 24-25, "San Juan National Historic Site."
- **Nature Photography in Winter: The How and the Why from noon-2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 11, at Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.** Nature photographer Mark Chantell will cover practical considerations, including what camera gear to use, macro photography tips and proper outdoor dress and safety.
- **Drop-In Volunteer Program (Trash Trekkers) from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily at Indiana Dunes Visitor Center.** Trash Trekkers is a no-hassle volunteer option that helps keep trails and beaches clean. Temporary passes are available. Visit tinyurl.com/2p83798v for more details.

□

The National Park Service is requesting expressions of interest (RFEI) to help develop Bailly Homestead.

The NPS will hold site visits by appointment only between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Feb. 12, 16 and 23. Interested parties can review the property, facilities and park area, then submit concept(s) that consider the park's purpose and building's significance. The NPS may choose all or part of the content of one or more responses. That input may be included with public solicitation advertised to the public, inviting all qualified candidates then to submit proposals.

Submit questions in writing to Concessions Management Specialist Steven Rossi to steven_m_rossi@nps.gov no later than 2 p.m. March 1.

□

The National Park Service has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact for the "Marquette Greenway Trail — Calumet Trail Reroute Segment" environmental assessment.

The selected alternative, "Alternative B – Build the Trail," allows IDNP to coordinate with Porter County to build an approximately 6.3-mile segment of trail. This will reroute a portion of the current Calumet Trail, located in a flooded utility corridor, into the national park, providing a safe, more usable and scenic experience. This segment will become part of the broader Marquette Greenway Trail, a continuous 60-mile regional trail stretching from Chicago to New Buffalo, Mich.

Based on tribal consultation and a walk-through of the project area, a portion of the original trail route was altered to avoid sensitive Cultural Resources. Based on input from the public, Furnessville Road will not be closed to vehicle traffic; instead, it will be converted into a one-way road, allowing it to still serve as a scenic drive and provide ingress/egress for local residents.

The NPS and Porter County developed the assessment, which is online at tinyurl.com/mpwwe2zk

□

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

Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Subnivean Subjects at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 10.** The walk-and-talk program highlights the Dunes' smallest mammals, including their winter adaptations. If snow conditions allow, free snowshoes will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Scatology 101 at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 10.** Meet in the Nature Center Auditorium to play the game.
- **Superb-Owl Hike at 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 11.** Take the one-mile flat hike through owl habitats. If snow conditions allow, free snowshoes will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Snakes Alive at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 11.** Meet at the Nature Center to see snakes up close.
- **Full Moon Hike at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22.** Meet at the Nature Center for a short presentation about the moon, followed by a hike to Lake Michigan and back. The Friends of Indiana Dunes will provide "lunar" treats. The hike proceeds in cloudy conditions, but not inclement weather.

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.

And the Nominees Are...

PICTURE

- "American Fiction"
- "Anatomy of a Fall"
- "Barbie"
- "The Holdovers"
- "Killers of the Flower Moon"
- "Maestro"
- "Oppenheimer"
- "Past Lives"
- "Poor Things"
- "The Zone of Interest"

ACTRESS

- Annette Bening, "Nyad"
- Lily Gladstone,
"Killers of the Flower Moon"
- Sandra Hüller,
"Anatomy of a Fall"
- Carey Mulligan, "Maestro"
- Emma Stone, "Poor Things"

SUPPORTING ACTRESS

- Emily Blunt, "Oppenheimer"
- Danielle Brooks,
"The Color Purple"
- America Ferrera, "Barbie"
- Jodie Foster, "Nyad"
- Da'Vine Joy Randolph,
"The Holdovers"

DIRECTOR

- Jonathan Glazer,
"The Zone of Interest"
- Yorgos Lanthimos,
"Poor Things"
- Christopher Nolan,
"Oppenheimer"
- Martin Scorsese,
"Killers of the Flower Moon"
- Justine Triet, "Anatomy of a Fall"

ACTOR

- Bradley Cooper, "Maestro"
- Colman Domingo, "Rustin"
- Paul Giamatti, "The Holdovers"
- Cillian Murphy,
"Oppenheimer"
- Jeffrey Wright,
"American Fiction"

SUPPORTING ACTOR

- Sterling K. Brown,
"American Fiction"
- Robert De Niro,
"Killers of the Flower Moon"
- Robert Downey Jr.,
"Oppenheimer"
- Ryan Gosling, "Barbie"
- Mark Ruffalo, "Poor Things"

Contest sponsor: Swingbellys!

Rules for The Beacher's Beat the Editor Contest:

Check one box in each category. Only one entry per person. Entries from *Beacher* employees will not be accepted. Forms can be dropped off at *The Beacher* or submitted by mail to: The Beacher, Attn: Oscar Contest, 911 Franklin St., Michigan City, IN 46360. Only scanned copies will be allowed by email to atallackson@gmail.com. The deadline is noon Friday, March 1. Editor Andrew Tallackson's picks will appear in the March 7 edition, before the March 10 telecast. Those who beat his picks will be placed into a drawing. **First place receives a \$50 Swingbelly's gift certificate and an AMC movie pass. Second place receives an AMC movie pass.** If no one beats him, readers with the most correct picks will be placed into the drawing. The winner will be revealed in the March 21 edition.

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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, Feb. 8.** 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.
- **Duneland Stamp Club at 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8.** The club meets the second Thursday of each month. New members are invited.
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in February.** 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.
- **Any Book Book Club (adults only) from 5-6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 12.** Participants can discuss any books they are reading. Meetings are the second Monday of the month. Light refreshments will be served.
- **Great Decisions at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 12.** The foreign-policy discussion program returns for its 26th season. The focus is "Mideast Realignment." Reading material is available at the circulation desk. Call 873-3049 for more details.
- **Genealogy Help with Pat Harris from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays in February.** Harris can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical record.
- **We Heart Angels Among Us at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13.** Ange Benz leads the program.
- **Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13.** 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.

- **Board Game Night for Adults from 5-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13.** A variety of board and card games are available. Games begin at 5:15 p.m.
- **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.
- **Winter Reading Bingo for Adults through Feb. 29.** Stop by the reference desk to pick up a Winter Reading Bingo sheet. Complete five reading-related activities in a row, then turn in the sheet to the reference desk to receive a sticker and free entry into a drawing for a \$25 Amazon gift card. The winner will be notified March 1.
- **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Makerspace.
- **Wild Pokemon Scavenger Hunt in February.** Visit Youth Services, find all the characters and win a prize.
- **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance aid needed.** Volunteers help at least one day a week during tax season (February-April). The IRS provides some training, and passing the VITA test through the intermediate level is required. Testing and training are online. Call (219) 873-3049 for more details.
- **Learning Center volunteers needed for children and adults.** Areas include reading, math, high school equivalency and English as a Second Language. All supplies and training are provided. Volunteers are needed two hours a week. Contact Jessica Hoffmaster at (219) 873-3043 or stop by the Learning Center for more details.
- **The 2024 Genealogy Bus Trip to Allen County is Wednesday, April 17.** The trip is sponsored by the library and LaPorte County Genealogical Society. The center has an extensive collection of North American genealogy resources. More details will be available in March.

Michigan City Public Library is located at 100 E. Fourth St. Visit www.mclib.org or call (219) 873-3049 for more details.

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LaPorte County Public Library

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

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

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

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

The following programs are planned:

- **Virtual Author Talk with Tessa Bailey from 7-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8.** The *New York Times* bestselling author will discuss her new book, Fangirl Down. Register through the website.
- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 9, at the main library.** Children ages 3-5 with their caregivers experience stories, songs, crafts and activities.
- **A Deeper Dive into Excel from 5-6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 12, in the main library Study Cafe.** Take a laptop and/or Microsoft login.
- **Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13, in the main library Meeting Room B.** The focus is Charles Frazier's The Trackers.

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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LaPorte County CTE Launching Smart Manufacturing Program

LaPorte County students with an interest in robotics, technology and automation soon can train for a new career field: Smart Manufacturing.

In August, the LaPorte County Career and Technical Education program will offer a Smart Manufacturing program at its new facility, 1001 U.S. 20, which formerly housed Brown Mackie College. Michigan City Area Schools acquired the facility last year, and it offers a Pre-K program there for 4-year-olds, the Little Wolves Early Learning Center, and a training program for students interested in Early Childhood careers. The district is renovating the building to provide classrooms and lab spaces for welding, construction, automotive and other career-tech programs.

Smart Manufacturing uses emerging, advanced technologies to increase the efficiency of traditional manufacturing processes.

According to Dr. David Notary, LaPorte County CTE interim director, Smart Manufacturing was a high-priority area for local companies, and it will be an appealing career field for many students.

“Our program will include hands-on labs, virtual simulations, field trips and critical thinking assignments,” he said in a press release. “This is an exciting industry, and our program will focus on subjects like robotics and AI, which we know are very engag-

ing to today’s students.”

In addition, coursework will center on the “Internet of Things,” Cybersecurity, Big Data, CNC operation, CAD/CAM programming, Smart Sensors, Fluid Power and Analytics. Dual credit will be offered in partnership with Ivy Tech, and students completing the program earn industry certifications.

Students from seven area school districts are eligible to enroll in the program, which will serve Michigan City, LaPorte, New Prairie, Westville, South Central, LaCrosse and New Buffalo high schools. Interested sophomores and juniors should contact their school counselor.

Funding to establish the program is provided in part through a \$125,000 Perkins Reserve Grant from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

The program is seeking industry partners to assist with curricula, equipment donations, field trips and internships. Contact Notary at d.notary@mcas.k12.in.us or (219) 873-2120 for details.

Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins, superintendent of Michigan City Area Schools, which oversees LaPorte County CTE, thanked Economic Development Corporation Michigan City for helping identify industry needs. Clarence Hulse, its executive director, noted several area companies use smart manufacturing, and others are looking to locate here.



The initial stages of construction in the new facility at 1001 U.S. 20.

New Buffalo Township Library

- **Valentine’s Day Story Time.** The program is at 10 a.m. Monday, Feb. 12.
 - **Valentine’s Day Make or Take Craft.** The program is from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 14.
 - **“The Giving Tree.”** The library is accepting donations to Michiana Humane Society.
 - **Winter Readings.** The program runs through Feb. 29.
- Weekly programs:**
- Story Time at 10 a.m. Mondays.
 - Read to a Dog Sessions for all ages from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and 4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday.
 - Craft Time on Wednesdays while supplies last.
 - Lego Club on Fridays-Saturdays.
 - Yoga from 9-10 a.m. Saturdays.

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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Midwest Museum of American Art

Two new exhibits run through March 3 at Elkhart's Midwest Museum of American Art, 429 S. Main St.

The first is "Abstract Topographies: One if by Land, The Paintings of Richard Keen," a Maine artist with a local connection to Elkhart as a 1990 Memorial High School graduate. Since then, he has become known throughout New England for his abstractions of Maine's topographies. His work reveals his daily observations and work life on Casco Bay as a commercial diver looking upward at forms of boat hulls, rudders and keels.

His MMAA exhibit includes 35 works.



Richard Keen's "Cathedral Woods."

Also on display is "Intimate Worlds: The Collage Works of Bonnie Rock."

The Bonnie Rock Legacy Collection, now housed at MMAA, culls from the estate of the late Plymouth, Ind., artist (1941-2022). Director Brian Byrn and Estate Executor Ted Wagner came to an agreement with Rock's family to save 54 works dating from the mid-1980s through 2022, including the last two collages that appeared in the 44th Elkhart Juried Regional.

Rock began entering the Elkhart Juried Regional in 2014, in one case winning the Best Mixed Media Award. Her multi-layered collages use encrusted surfaces with costume jewelry, personal photos and other ephemera excavated from books, magazines and other paper sources.

Museum admission is \$10 for adults, \$6 for ages 8-12, and \$8 for ages 13-18 and college students with ID. Hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m.-4 p.m. EST Tuesday-Friday and 1-4 p.m. EST Saturday-Sunday. Call (574) 293-6660 for more details.

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Alinsky Award Nominations

The Rotary Club of Michigan City seeks nominations for the 2023 Paul J. Alinsky Award.

Alinsky was a past Rotary Club president, past Michigan City Chamber of Commerce board chairman and the Sentinel Alarm Co. founder. He passed away in 1997. The award goes to someone from the community who, according to a press release, exhibits dedication to community service, excellence, passion and innovation in their vocation or career.

A nomination form, available at www.mcrrotary.org, must be returned to Alinsky Award Committee Chair Marty Corley at mcorley@emichigancity.com or sent by mail to Michigan City Police Department, ATTN: Marty Corley, 1201 E. Michigan Blvd., Michigan City, IN 46360.

Past recipients include Les Radke, Bud Ruby, Duane Mertl, Ron Bensch, Jerry Karstens, Emerson Spartz, Glen Lubeznik, James Welborne, Kathleen Lang, Bernie Scott, Jan Radford, Tom Ringo, Jim Dworkin, Dr. Lisa Hendricks, Marty Corley, Don Babcock, Al Whitlow, Dion Campbell, Cyndi Davis, Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins, Angie Nelson Deutch, Clarence Hulse and Rotary Service volunteers. In 2016, in honor of the club's 100th anniversary, the award recognized every Rotary Club member over the past century. A memorial inscribed with the names of past recipients is on display at City Hall, 100 E. Michigan Blvd.

The deadline is 4 p.m. Friday, March 1. This year's recipient will be announced March 8 and the award presented when the club meets at noon Thursday, March 21, at The Salvation Army, 1201 Franklin St. This meeting is open to the public, and lunch costs \$15. The recipient receives a replica of the Alinsky memorial. In addition, the club makes a donation to a charity of the recipient's choice.

More information is available by visiting www.mcrrotary.org or by following the club on Facebook.

Rockstar Bingo

Lakefront Career Network will present the benefit "Rockstar Bingo" at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 15, at Uptown Social, 907 Franklin St.

The cost is \$10 per person, with 4-6 players required per team. Half the proceeds benefit Save the Dunes. Visit tinyurl.com/ytafjcsu for more details.

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JROTC Competes; Supports City

Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps competed in the Jan. 27 military drill sectional championship at Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis.

"Despite the weather challenges that restricted our practice time, our cadets really gave it their best effort," Maj. Tom McGrath, the senior Marine instructor, said in a press release.



The color guard posts and retrieves the colors for the inauguration of Michigan City Mayor Angie Nelson-Deutch.

Most of the competing schools were from the Indianapolis area and south, and did not receive the heavy snow and ice Michigan City experienced.

"We could really use at least two to three more dedicated cadets to lift some of the heavy work done by our present team," McGrath added.

Master Sgt. Jeff Benak, the Marine instructor, was optimistic that, with a good month of practice this month, cadets will improve for their last meet at Fort Wayne Concordia.

"I think, barring a repeat of January's weather, we will see positive results at Fort Wayne," he said in a press release.

Hoping to boost enrollment, cadets were set to conduct presentations at Barker and Krueger middle schools Feb. 7. The Marine Corps requires schools to maintain an enrollment of 100 cadets.

In January, MCHS cadets provide the Color Guard for the Michigan City Mayoral Inauguration and all home basketball games, and helped at gymnastics meets.

Franciscan Job Fair

Franciscan Health Michigan City and Franciscan Physician Network will host a recruitment fair from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 14, at Franciscan Health Michigan City, 3500 Franciscan Way.

Positions are available in clinical and non-clinical settings, including hospitals, Franciscan Physician Network and Specialty Physicians of Illinois practices, home health, hospice and the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.

No appointments are necessary, and participants should take resumes and other supporting documents. More information is available online at jobs.franciscanhealth.org

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American Red Cross

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

- Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1237 E. Coolspring Ave., 2-6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8.
- Queen of All Saints, 606 S. Woodland Ave., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 10.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 12.
- Blue Chip Casino, 777 Blue Chip Drive, noon-5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 15.
- Hamon Gray, American Legion Post 83, 228 E. Lincolnway, LaPorte, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 15.



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.

GAF Supports Boys & Girls Clubs

Roofing manufacturer GAF recently made a \$50,000 donation to The Boys & Girls Clubs of LaPorte County's Great Futures Capital Campaign.

The youth-development organization provides free after-school programming at eight locations in Michigan City, LaPorte, Westville and Kingsford Heights, in addition to a full-day summer camp.

The Great Futures Capital Campaign supports BGCLPC's multi-phased expansion plans.

GAF has been a member of the community for more than 20 years.

It has partnered with the club for several years, supporting initiatives ranging from after-school snacks to the Blue Bash gala.

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Dunebrook Now Will Lead Agency

Healthy Communities of LaPorte County is dissolving and Dunebrook Inc. becoming lead agency for the Covering Kids & Families program for LaPorte and Porter counties.

Covering Kids & Families provides free assistance with healthcare coverage and insurance. Indiana Department of Insurance-certified navigators work with community members in person or virtually.

Healthy Communities began in 1997 as a joint effort between LaPorte Hospital and LaPorte Hospital Foundation to identify major health needs in the community, and promote health and well-being through collaboration, education, advocacy and policy development. Franciscan Alliance (then St. Anthony's Hospital) joined the effort in 1998.

HCLC created a sliding-fee dental clinic in LaPorte within the Community Health Center operated by LaPorte Hospital. The clinic is still in place and operated by HealthLinc in LaPorte and Michigan City.

HCLC recently served as the local lead agency for Covering Kids & Families, and has worked to decrease tobacco use in LaPorte County through the Indiana Department of Health's Tobacco Prevention and Cessation grant.

Call Dunebrook at (219) 369-0351 or visit www.dunebrook.org for more information.

Dunes Announcement Party

Dunes Summer Theatre will host its 2024 Season Announcement Party from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 29, at Vita Del Lago, 521 Franklin St.

Artistic Director Steve Scott and the Dunes Arts Foundation board of director will highlight the 73rd season. A cash bar and appetizers are planned.

Email contact@dunesarts.org or call (219) 879-7509 to RSVP. Visit www.dunesarts.org for more details.

Ruby Red Reception

Leadership LaPorte County will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a "Ruby Red Reception" from 5-10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 17, at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St.

Tickets cost \$50. Appetizers and a cash bar are planned. Visit <https://leadershiplaportecounty.com> for reservations.

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1. Spare Me	4	0
1. Gutter Gals	4	0

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Mary Lou McFadden	181
2. Tammy Vouri	171
3. Ginny Hogan	165
3. June Salmon	165
4. Dottie Brinckman	157

SPLITS

Nancy Klausner	2-7
Tina Sonderby	3-10, 5-7
Kathy Staninger	3-10
Tammy Vouri	4-5
Ann Bogart	7-10
Diana Holt	8-9-10, 5-6
Debbie Novak	5-6
Holly Dres	3-10
June Salmon	7-8

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.

Annual Valentine Tea

The women of First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St., will host the annual Valentine Tea at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 10.

The free event is open to all women in the community. A short devotional is followed by light entertainment, tea and sweets.

Senior Named Commended Student



MCHS Principal Kyle Dean presents Jess Buetow with a Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corp.

Michigan City High School senior Jess Buetow has been named a Commended Student in the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program.

MCHS Principal Kyle Dean presented him with a Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corp.

Buetow has taken numerous AP and dual credit courses. He is a member of the Safe Harbor Robotics Team, Computer Science Honor Society and MCHS Advanced Wind Ensemble. He works in the Tech Zone at MCHS, troubleshooting and repairing student devices. He plans to attend Purdue University, majoring in computer science.

This school year, approximately 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized. They will not continue in the 2024 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards; however, they placed among the top 50,000 of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2024 competition by taking the 2022 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.



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In the Area

Feb. 8 — Scratch Club (ages 7-17), 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3045.

Feb. 8 — Duneland Stamp Club, 4 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Feb. 8 — Virtual Author Talk with Tessa Bailey, 7-8 p.m., through LaPorte County Public Library. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

Feb. 10 — Farmed & Forged Market, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., LaPorte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St. Free admission. Info: www.thecollectivein.com/fandf

Feb. 10 — Annual Valentine Tea, 1:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St.

Feb. 10 — LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, "Side by Side with a Twist: A Celebration of Music Education," 7 p.m., The Holdcraft Performing Arts Center, 1200 Spring St. Tickets: \$25/adults, \$22/seniors, students with ID/free. Reservations: <https://lcsso.net/event/side-by-side/>

Feb. 11 — Michigan City Chamber Music Festival free recital, "Sensations," 3 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 600 Franklin Square. Info: (219) 561-1939, www.mccmf.org

Feb. 12 — Any Book Book Club (adults only), 5-6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth

St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Feb. 12 — Great Decisions, 6:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Feb. 13 — Page Turners Book Club, Charles Frazier's *The Trackers*, noon-1 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Feb. 13 — We Heart Angels Among Us, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Feb. 13 — Creative Tech Activities, 3:30-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Feb. 13 — Board Game Night for Adults, 5-7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Through March 31 — Work by Cheryl Kaper, The Legacy Center Gallery at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Legacy Center hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: lucia@qas.org

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

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

In the Region

Feb. 9 — A Valentine's Open Mic Night featuring Kelly Hoppenjans, 7 p.m. EST, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Performer inquiries: openmic@acornlive.org

Feb. 10 — Porter Beach Restoration, 9 a.m.-noon, parking lot at Wabash Avenue/Johnson Beach Road. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Feb. 10 — Duneland Weavers Guild, 10 a.m.-noon, Three Moons Fiberworks, 402 Broadway, Chesterton. Info: www.dunelandweaversguild.org

Feb. 10 — Subnivean Subjects, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Feb. 10 — Scatology 101, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes

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State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chester-
ton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Feb. 10 — Harbor Country Hikers/Chikaming
Open Lands hike, 9 a.m. EST, Merritt Family and
Younger Family Preserves, Union Pier, Mich. Info:
gball@chikamingopenlands.org., www.harborcoun-
tryhikers.com

Feb. 10-May 12 — “Facing the Giant: 3 Decades
of Dissent,” Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Jo-
seph, Mich. *Preview party: 6-8 p.m. EST Feb. 9.* Also
on display: Joe Matty’s “A World Apart” (through
March 24), Aaron Martin’s “Nébwakat Mshiké:
Wise Turtle,” through 2024. Info: www.krasl.org,
(269) 983-0271.

Feb. 10 — The Chicago Experience, 8 p.m. EST,
The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks,
Mich. Tickets: \$40 + \$6 convenience fee, \$65 + \$6
convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.
acornlive.org

Feb. 11 — Superb-Owl Hike, 10 a.m., Indiana
Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East,
Chesteron. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Feb. 11 — Nature Photography in Winter: The
How and the Why, noon-2 p.m., Paul H. Douglas
Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake
St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219)
395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Feb. 11 — Snakes Alive, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes
State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chester-
ton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

Feb. 12 — Valentine’s Day Story Time, 10 a.m.,
EST, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thomp-
son St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

Feb. 14 — Valentine’s Day Make or Take Craft, 9
a.m.-4:30 p.m. EST, New Buffalo Township Library,
33 N. Thompson St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

Through Feb. 13 — Newly acquired paintings
from Philipp Brockington estate, Porter County
Museum (PoCo Muse), 20 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso.
Free admission. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Sun.
Info: www.pocomuse.org

Through Feb. 25 — Series 1 Exhibit, Box Fac-
tory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich.
Info: www.boxfactoryforthearts.org, facebook.com/
boxfactoryarts

Through Feb. 29 — “Changes” (solo exhibit
by Bryana Bibbs), Chesteron Art Center, 115 S.
Fourth St. *Gallery tour/talk with Bibbs: 1-2 p.m.
Feb. 10. Public weaving workshop: 10 a.m.-noon
Feb. 10.* Info/registration: www.chesteronart.org

Through March 3 — “Abstract Topographies:
One if by Land, The Paintings of Richard Keen,”
“Intimate Worlds: The Collage Works of Bonnie
Rock,” Elkhart’s Midwest Museum of American Art,
429 S. Main St. Admission: \$10/adults, \$6/8-12, \$8/
ages 13-18 & college students with ID. Hours (East-
ern): 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Fri., 1-4 p.m. Sat.-Sun.
Info: (574) 293-6660.

Through March 14 — Chesteron-based plein

air oil artist Christine Newton, The Village Gallery
at Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303
Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

Through May 12 — “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.

Saturday-Sunday in February — Warm Up to
Winter, 1-3 p.m., Chellberg Farm, Mineral Springs
Road between U.S. 12/20, Porter. Snow conditions:
(219) 395-1882.

Saturdays-Sundays in February — National
Park Themed Movie, 2-3:30 p.m., Indiana Dunes
Visitor Center, 1215 N. Indiana 49, Porter. Info:
www.nps.gov/indu, (219) 395-1882.

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:* “Freud’s
Last Session.” Rated PG-13. Times: 2 p.m. Feb.
10, 3:30 p.m. Feb. 11. *Also:* “Driving Madeleine.”
Not Rated. Times: 5 p.m. Feb. 10, 1 p.m. Feb. 11.
All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St.,
Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com,
(269) 756-3522.

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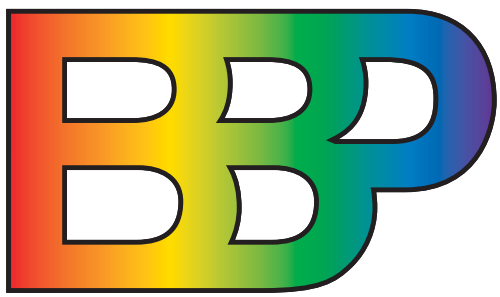
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“My beloved grandmother, a.k.a. my gran, worked her whole life as a maid. I have followed in her footsteps. It’s a figure of speech. I could not literally follow in her footsteps because she has none, not anymore. She died just over four years ago...”

Those are the words of Molly the maid, first introduced in the aptly named book The Maid.

Molly Gray is looked upon by many as having a low I.Q., but those who know her realize she is someone who is proper, kind and takes the spoken word literally. *“I’ve always struggled with understanding the true meaning behind people’s words, but I’ve gotten a lot better at reading people, even strangers...”* When her gran, who raised her, learned she would be held back a year in school, she withdrew her, teaching her through her own wisdom and books, and taking her along to the mansion she cleans every day, teaching the finer points of deep cleaning.

You see, Molly isn’t stupid, as some think, she’s just different.

Gran’s wisdom included teaching Molly many quotes, like, *“Only fools jump to conclusions,” “tell a lie once and your truth becomes questionable,” “treat others the way you wish to be treated”* and my favorite, *“we’re all the same in different ways.”*

You want to take Molly home, ply her with sweet tea and cookies, then give her a polishing cloth and duster, letting her clean your house to shining perfection. You see, that is Molly’s calling. She loves being the head maid at the Regency Grand Hotel, *“...a five star boutique hotel.”* Molly takes great pride in being a maid, never thinking of it as a lowly job or unworthy of respect. No, indeed. When Molly is through with cleaning a room, it is not merely clean. It sparkles, and as Molly says, *“deep cleaning gives life meaning.”*

Other characters at the Grand Regency are important to Molly and her story. Mr. Preston, the long-serving doorman, has always looked out for her like a father she never knew. The hotel manager, Mr. Snow, who gave Molly the head maid promotion after finally seeing her worth. Angela, the head barmaid who loves mystery stories. And, several other maids who make life interesting and challenging, sometimes at the same time.

There’s Lily, a new maid hire: young and very shy, but with a work ethic much like Molly’s. And then there’s Angela, a tongue as sharp as a bone cutter, always stealing the tips guests leave for good service by another maid, not her.

Things are moving along until Molly is notified

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



the newly remodeled tea room will host a reception for J.D Grimthorpe, a world-renowned author of bestselling mystery novels. Molly is surprised and apprehensive about the event, but carries on with her usual efficiency. Why does the appearance of this man put such a worrying look on her face? Hmm.

The reception starts out well, if a bit crazy, as a coterie of Grimthorpe’s biggest fans arrive — all women of a certain age bubbling over with enthusiasm and adoration for their favorite author. The mere thought of having tea with him and signing their books, well, reduces them to a flock of clucking chickens almost impossible to control.

Grimthorpe says he has an important announcement to make, takes a sip of his tea and falls over — quite dead. Shades of three years ago! That’s when another man had the audacity to die in the Regency Grand and the police, lead by Detective Stark, thought Molly was responsible. Of course, another was found to be the murderer — with Molly’s help — so she was exonerated.

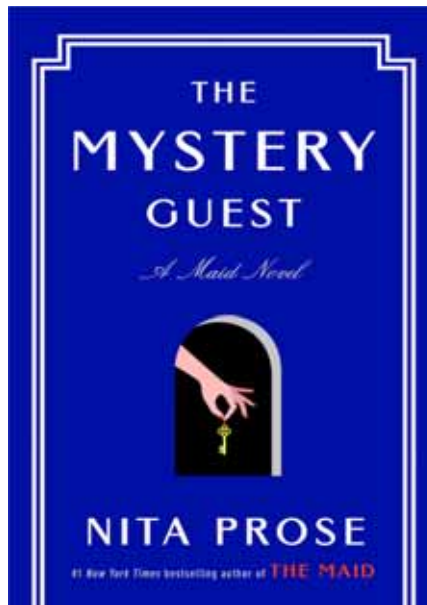
As with any good murder-mystery, there are a number of suspects besides Molly. There’s one of the Grimthorpe girls who claims to be his biographer; Lily, who served the tea; even Serena, Grimthorpe’s secretary, who is handling the murder very strangely, indeed.

Molly knows she might hold the key to discovering who killed Grimthorpe, but that requires some digging into her past — back to when she started working with gran at the Grimthorpe mansion. But she was just a child then. Can she piece together anything she observed that might reveal the murderer? Alternating chapters into the past provide a look at Grimthorpe’s real personality, or lack thereof, and working under the housekeeper who looks and acts like someone from a Dickens novel.

Molly is determined to find the murderer, and watching her follow clues will make you understand how people have underestimated her for years.

The final word: A fine continuation of Molly’s life that’s certainly shaping up to be a new series. Refreshing, fun, with a plot worthy of praise. I say brava! There also is scuttlebutt of a movie to come.

Till next time, happy reading!



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