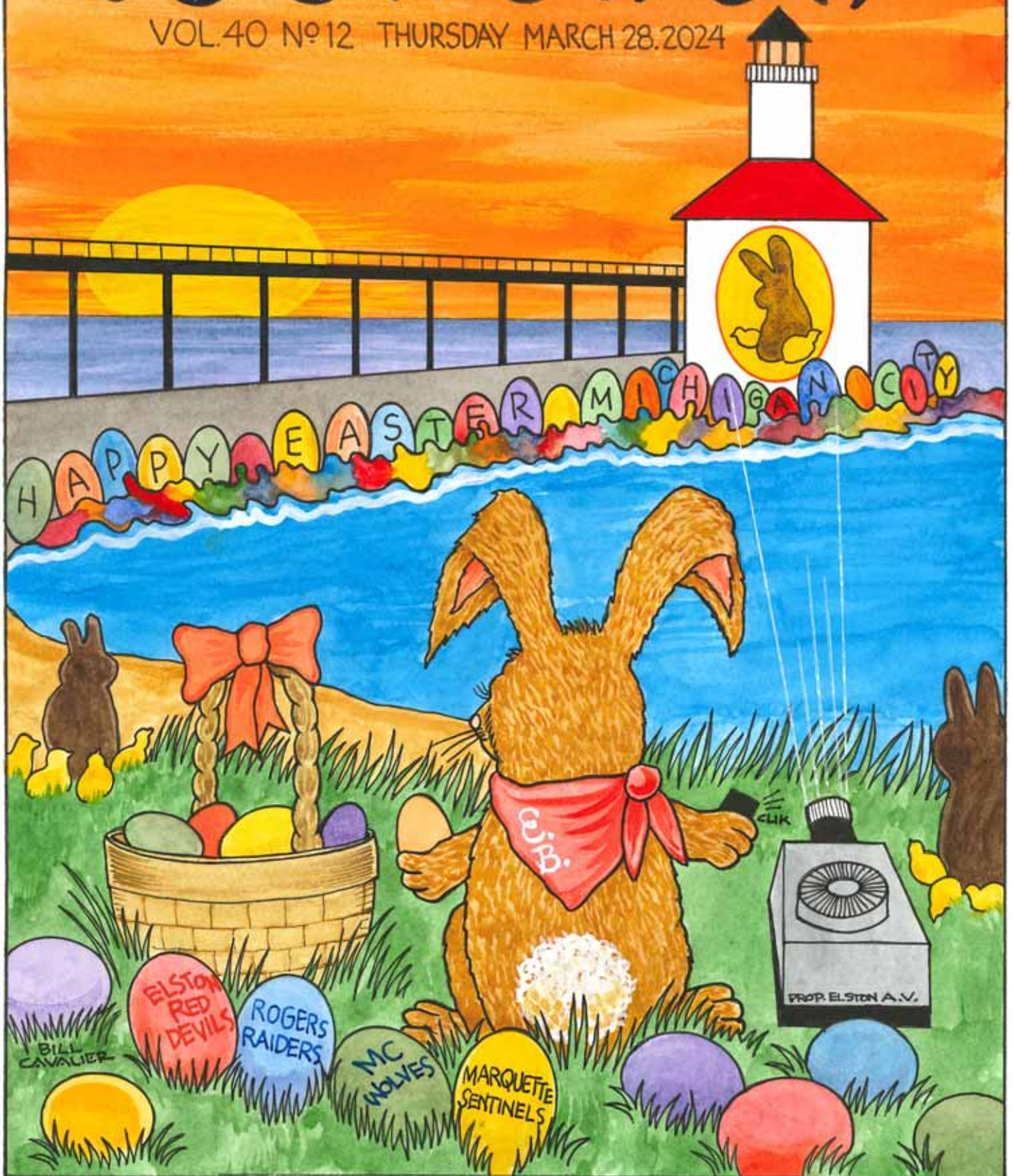


THE BEACHER

VOL. 40 No 12 THURSDAY MARCH 28, 2024



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Delivered weekly, free of charge to Birch Tree Farms, Duneland Beach, Grand Beach, Hidden Shores, Long Beach, Michiana Shores, Michiana MI and Shoreland Hills. The Beacher is also delivered to public places in Michigan City, New Buffalo, LaPorte and Sheridan Beach.

Ready to Roll

by Andrew Tallackson

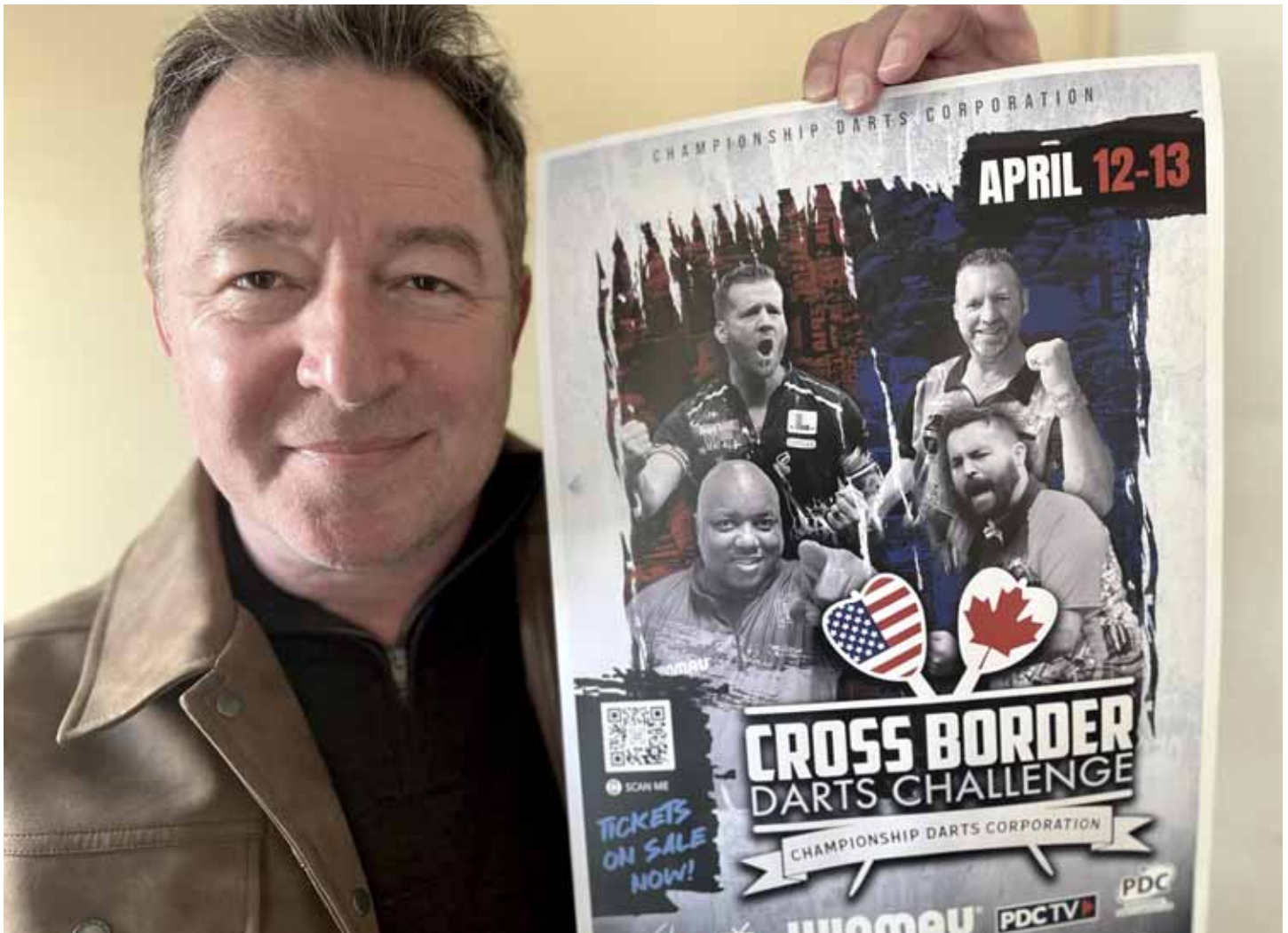


Everything was in place, the decades-long journey for Dan Meyer to direct his original screenplay “Bulls” — now set in his hometown of Michigan City — one week from commencing.

Then came the phone call from Line Producer Kelsey Bunner.

“She’s like, ‘Are you sitting down?,’ and I said, ‘No, I’m better standing, pacing,’” Meyer recalls with a laugh. “She said we didn’t get our SAG (Screen Actors Guild) waiver to shoot. That evening, I was kind of stunned, because they thought we would be good, but they also told us we wouldn’t know until right before we were ready to shoot. It was a bit heartbreaking.”

Indeed, it was a tumultuous period in Hollywood. Not



Dan Meyer, the writer-director of “Bulls,” holds the poster for Championship Darts Corporation’s Cross Border Darts Challenge, which will be part of the April movie shoot. Photo by Andrew Tallackson

only were writers on strike, but also actors, the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists locked in a labor dispute with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. Halting production on movies and TV shows, SAG officials granted waivers to productions if meeting specific conditions. Some independent projects, because of smaller budgets, received the waivers.

Meyer was hopeful.

Bunner's phone call, delivering the unfortunate news, felt like a kick in the gut. Life, however, has a way of framing disappointment through perspective. The next day, Meyer viewed the now-delayed shoot as a positive.

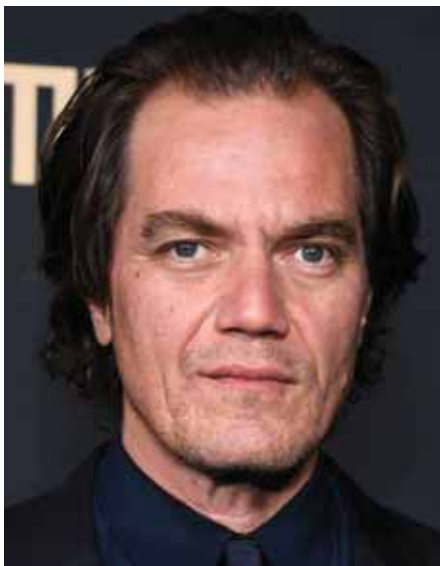
"It was like, OK, well, we've got some time now. We'll take a little break," Meyer said. "We'll wait for the strikes to get over. We put our whole team together, everyone is coming back, so all that work we put into it is done."

Not only did the delay afford Meyer time to revise his script for "Bulls," but it also yielded remarkable good fortune.

Meyer and his team persuaded Championship Darts Corporation to host its Cross Border Darts Challenge on Friday-Saturday, April 12-13, at Up-town Social, 907 Franklin St. The intention is for the darts challenge to become an annual event here. The icing on the cake? Meyer gets to capture footage from the tournament, then use the same setup for staging his film's tournament Sunday, April 14. That means the need for plenty of extras.

"So, yeah, I put more work into the script, and now, we're bringing this major North American darts tournament to Michigan City," Meyer said. "We wouldn't have had that. So, it worked out perfectly. And the movie is only that much better for it."

"Bulls" is scheduled to shoot in Michigan City starting April 5 and wrapping around April 27-28.



Oscar-nominee Michael Shannon, Meyer's longtime friend, will make a cameo in "Bulls" as a legendary dart player.

Meyer wrote the screenplay a little more than 20 years ago, initially as something he could do with actor pals like Michael Shannon and Paul Rudd. Those plans never came to fruition. Shannon and Rudd went on to pursue their respective acting careers. Meyer, however, realized the actor's life was not

Continued on Page 4

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Ready to Roll

Continued from Page 3

for him. He preferred work behind the screen.

In 2017, Meyer's script for the offbeat comedy "Pottersville" found a home at Netflix. Meyer afforded Shannon a lead role bolstered by an all-star cast that included Judy Greer, Ron Perlman, Christina Hendricks, Thomas Lennon, Ian McShane and Greta Lee.

"Bulls" channels Meyer's love of darts into an underdog sports-buddy comedy — one embracing the LGBTQ+ community — that celebrates community and, especially, his love for Michigan City.

Save for one role, everyone cast in the script's 30 speaking roles is back. Ditto the crew, which includes producer Ryan Lewis, Assistant Director Heather Mingo, Co-Producer Royce Williams, Co-Producer Travis Keyes, Bunner as line producer, and two-time Emmy winner Kevin Grace as production designer.

Shannon will make a cameo as darts legend Alastair Whitman, featured in the movie's prologue set in 1966. That opening, by the way, is what Meyer retooled from earlier versions of the script.

"I was never really happy with the beginning of the movie, so I completely rewrote it so it goes much faster," he said. "It's much better. So much better. Again, I wouldn't have been able to do that before. We would have shot it the other way, and I would have wanted it this way after the fact, then have to bang my head against the wall."

The fact that Championship Darts Corporation agreed to host its Cross Border Darts Challenge here, right as filming commences on "Bulls," is a major coup for Michigan City.

Founded in 2014, the CDC consists of long-format 501 tournaments, with a prize fund of more than \$120,000. According to the CDC website, the top U.S. and Canadian player on the tour Points List,

after 12 tournaments, earns a berth in the World Darts Championship in London at the Alexandra Palace.

(In 501 tournaments, players start with 501 points. Subsequent points scored inch players toward the goal of having zero points remaining.)

Serving as

the CDC's chief executive officer and tournament director is Peter Citera, of Skokie, Ill., who has spent more than 20 years promoting the sport. That ranges from serving as director of Windy City Darters from 2000-2018, including seven years as president from 2005-2012, to being tournament director of the Windy City Open (2004-2012).

Citera told *The Beacher* he's excited by the potential Michigan City holds for the Cross Border Darts Challenge.

"Michigan City is close to a bunch of areas where darts are popular, like Chicago, Detroit and Grand Rapids, and it's very easy to come from Indianapolis," he said. "It just seemed to make sense to be centrally located."

"And," he continued, "certainly to have the 'Bulls' movie filming at the same time, well, it was a no-brainer to do this."

The potential for "Bulls" to bring the sport to a greater audience is exciting, Citera says.

"Darts is in the background of a lot of places," he said. "Watch 'Big Bang Theory,' it's on the back of the door. It's never the focal point. It's something that's there because it looks good in the back. But this is really cool to bring our sport to the forefront."

Times for the Cross Border Darts Challenge are 7 p.m. April 12 and 6 p.m. April 13. Confirmed players at press time include:

- U.S. — Doug Boehm, Jason Brandon, Stowe Buntz, Larry Butler, Leonard Gates, Danny Lauby, Alex Spellman and Jules Van Dongen.
- Canada — Sylvain Bourdeau, David Cameron, Jim Long, Jake Macmillan, John Part, Jacob Taylor, Keith Way and Steve Warnock.



Jules Van Dongen is set to return to Michigan City for both the Cross Border Darts Challenge and the movie shoot.

Tickets are available either at the CDC website (<https://champdarts.com>) or Uptown Social website (www.uptownsocialmc.com/).

That Uptown Social is *the* key location not only for the darts challenge, but "Bulls" as well is exciting for Jeremy Rossi, Uptown's part owner and chief operating officer.

"We opened at the peak of the pandemic, when it was hard to showcase what we do," Rossi said. "A lot of people believe we are still a church. This movie is really going to give us the exposure we need and the notoriety to propel us forward. Having a movie

Continued on Page 6



Peter Citera, Championship Darts Corporation chief executive officer and tournament director, is excited by the exposure "Bulls" will bring to the sport.

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Ready to Roll

Continued from Page 4

here, and having people see the inside of the venue, the historic character of the building, is really what we need."

Rossi also likes the premise of "Bulls."

"I like the fact that the movie is about this group of friends who play darts with their fellow comrades at the local bar, and they want to take a leap of faith and try something different and be part of this competition," he said.

"What I love is that they have the community support behind them to essentially propel them forward. That's what we have in Michigan City. We have a community here that essentially does that here. We're tight-knit. We support our neighbors. The movie goes hand in hand with what we do in Michigan City."

Meyer says something like the Cross Border Darts Challenge draws a passionate fan base. Some even dress in costumes. For the April event in Michigan City, he already knows of people heading here from the East and West coasts.

Those who attend will see Van Dongen in action. One of the country's top darts players, and known by fans as "The Dutch Dragon," he reiterated that enthusiasts come from all over the country to witness these players in action. With that in mind, he continued, hosting the Cross Border Darts Challenge will be a plus for Michigan City.

"It's great to go somewhere darts isn't quite part of the community yet," he told *The Beacher*. "So maybe, people who don't watch darts will come, watch



Alex Spellman is among the U.S. players who will appear in Michigan City for the Cross Border Darts Challenge.



Jeremy Rossi, Uptown Social's part owner and chief operating officer, says he likes what the "Bulls" screenplay has to say about community.

and catch the bug.

"For Michigan City, you're going to have people come from all over and stay the weekend in Michigan City. It's a win-win."

Van Dongen, who is from The Netherlands and now lives with his family in Missouri, admits he'd never heard of Michigan City until attending a "Bulls" promotional bash last July at Zorn Brew Works. He was impressed by the community.

"We drove in from the airport from Chicago, we stayed at an arbnb, and we could see so much history

and character to the town," he said.

That is what Meyer wants audiences to take away from "Bulls." An appreciation of his hometown. And it is why, hopefully with any delays behind him, the time is now to shoot his movie.

"I have said from the very beginning, this movie is going to happen the way it's meant to happen," he said. "Every time something has gone down where we got delayed, we've taken every opportunity and turned it into something better that just makes the entire movie better."

(Visit the Facebook page "BULLS The Movie" for updates, including the need for extras for the shoot at Uptown Social.)

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The School of American Music hosted the free family concert, “Dueling Divas,” featuring sopranos Rebecca Derbas-Selvidge (left) and Carrie VanDenburgh and accompanist Maggie Martin, on March 17 at Episcopal Church of the Mediator, Harbert, Mich. The next free family concert, which features tenors Matthew Daniel, Joseph Fosselman and Cameo Humes from Lyric Opera of Chicago, is at 3 p.m. EDT Sunday, April 28, at the church.

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The Legacy Center Gallery

The Legacy Center Gallery will host artwork by Julie Kasniunas as its next installation April-June at Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave.



Kasniunas

Kasniunas' work, according to a press release, explores her delight in the dunes, beaches, gardens, woods and countryside. She lives in Beverly Shores, where she maintains a studio and teaches art classes. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education from Purdue University. She taught in Michigan City Area Schools

and Duneland School Corp. for 31 years. She enjoys working in all media, including watercolor, acrylics, color pencil, pastels and oils.

Mostly a self-taught artist, Kasniunas has studied at The Peninsula Art School in Door County, Wis., The Arrowmont School of Art in Gatlinburg, Tenn., The Boca Raton Museum of Art in Florida and The Aegean School for the Arts in Samos, Greece. She also has attended workshops in New Mexico, Florida, Indiana, Illinois and North Carolina. Memberships include Michigan City Art League, The Lithuanian Women's Art Association, Area Artists Association, Plein Air Artists of Chicago and Indiana Plein Air Association.

Legacy Center hours are 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays and 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays. Visitors should enter through the Esther Street doors. A meet-the-artist reception follows the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, May 5.

Email lucia@qas.org for more details.

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LCSO Conductor Renews Contract

LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra's board of directors announced the three-year contract renewal for Music Director Dr. Carolyn Watson through the 2026-2027 season.

Watson became music director in 2021 after a lengthy nationwide search. She soon will complete her third season as music director.

A native of Australia, she has been based in the



United States since 2013, and maintains an international career as a conductor, having led performances with the Austin Symphony, Barrier Reef Orchestra (Australia), Cape Symphony, Catskill Symphony, Columbus Indiana Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra, Interlochen Philharmonic, Kansas

City Ballet, St. Joseph Symphony, South Bend Symphony, Traverse Symphony Orchestra and World Youth Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to LCSO, she is the principal guest conductor of Kansas City Chamber Orchestra and director of orchestras at The University of Illinois.

"I am delighted to be able to continue my association with the LaPorte County Symphony Orchestra, which has been a great source of professional joy and inspiration to me these past three years," she said in a press release.

Watson will conduct the fourth and final concert of the 2023-2024 subscription season at 7 p.m. April 20 at LaPorte Civic Auditorium, a pops program titled "Beatlemania!"

Visit www.lcso.net for more details.



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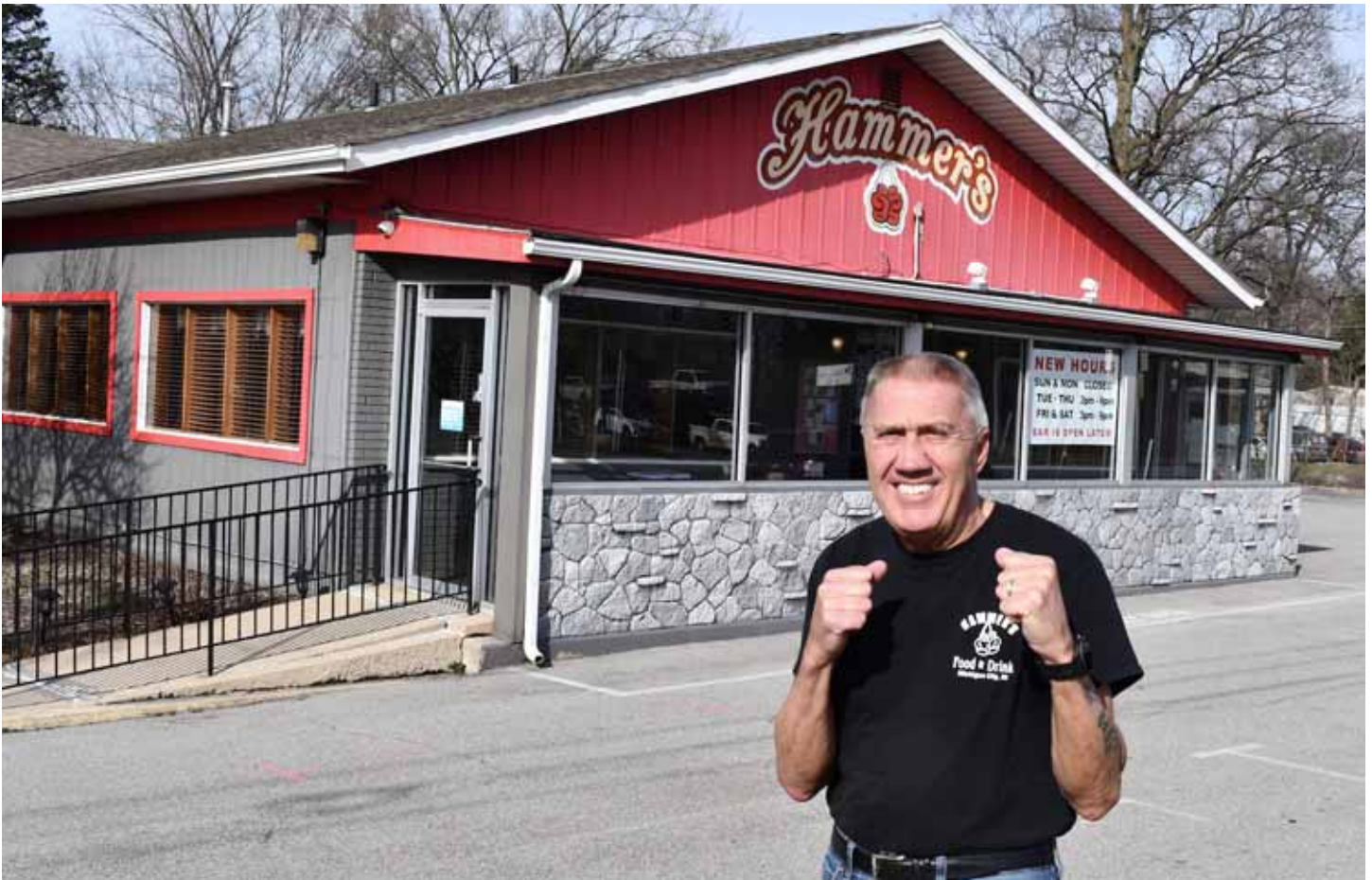
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It's the End of an Era for Hammer's Restaurant

by Kim Nowatzke



Kenny Larson is photographed by *The Beacher's* Kim Nowatzke outside of Hammer's Restaurant.

The bell has rung for the last round of the match.

After 22 1/2 years, Kenny Larson will close his popular Hammer's Restaurant on March 30.

Growing up, Kenny, who turns 65 on April 15, learned about the restaurant business through his father, Roger Larson. As a young sailor, Roger owned a successful chain of chow mein restaurants called "Roger's Chow Mein" in Minneapolis. Only 2 at the time, Kenny grew up in the business, learning about the life of a restaurateur for the next 19 years.

When the family moved to Beverly Shores, the older Larson owned and operated the beachfront Red Lantern Inn. With Kenny fulfilling all positions there, the seed was planted: the dream of one day owning his own restaurant.

Kenny was on the wrestling team at Purdue University while earning his bachelor's degree in hotel and restaurant management. But, it was boxing for which he earned the most recognition.

Searching for a different sport to try, he took up boxing at the late-in-the-game age of 21. Despite a deep learning curve, within two years, he was racking up wins. He won the Indiana Golden Gloves Tournament in 1981 in Indianapolis. A *Lafayette Journal & Courier* sportswriter dubbed him "Lafayette Hammer." The name, later shortened to "Hammer,"

stuck. After 10 years, he stepped out of retirement in 1988, and at age 39 won two six-round matches.

Returning to the area, Kenny stepped back into the restaurant business, operating Red Lantern Inn with his brother, Danny, until it closed in 1986. Next, Danny opened Pumps on 12 on U.S. 12 just outside of Michigan City. In 1995, Kenny started a carryout extension of it called Pumps Pasta and Pizza and, later, Hammer's Pasta and Pizza. It began at Coolspring Avenue and Franklin Street in the Park N Shop Plaza, then moved to Lighthouse Place three years later. Still dreaming of his own full-service restaurant, he purchased the former Sumarita's at U.S. 20 and Johnson Road, opening Hammer's Restaurant on Sept. 11, 2001, with his former wife, Jamie.

Jamie's niece, Tia Marsh, began filling in as a bartender, eventually becoming a server in the summer of 2006 at the persuasion of an aunt, Lori Hermann. When Lori passed away a year later, Tia stepped up to help Kenny with management duties, eventually becoming the event coordinator for The Banquet Room in the restaurant's lower level.

"Our two older sons, Nick and Spencer, both worked there from their early teens holding the positions of dishwasher, busser, host and line cook," she said.

“Both of them are still thriving in the food and beverage industry today. Our younger two, Audrey and Liam, grew up there, spending time helping me set up banquets and hanging out while I did office work.”

Marsh described the impact Hammer’s has had on her life.

“I worked a total of 16 years for Kenny,” she said. “It was a great run, and the memories are endless. It is bittersweet to see it come to an end. It is definitely the Cheers of Michigan City, where staff and patrons are truly more like family.”

Charlotte Young also is a longtime employee, clocking in about two decades. She started as a busser and worked the past eight years as hostess.

She recalls her unforgettable first night.

“I bussed a large table onto a tray and dropped it in the wait station,” Young said. “Another server at the time yelled, ‘When you get your first check and it says china, that doesn’t mean you’re going on vacation.’ I’ll never forget the laughing tears from that.”

She will miss her Hammer’s family.

“I’ve learned from Kenny to adapt,” she said. “You just have to go with the flow – roll with the punches, if you will. Kenny has been a strong role model in my life! He’s always encouraged me to do big things, but also he’d always be there for me if I needed him. I’ll never forget my 20 years at Hammers.”

Over the years, Hammer’s has been known for offerings such as handmade pasta and pizza, hand-cut steaks, lake perch, barbecue ribs and Potato-Crusted Walleye. As stated on his menu, which is divided into “Rounds,” his “Hammer’s World Famous Turnover – big enough for two” was a hot item with stuffed spinach, or in a large variety of fillings chosen by the customer. Kenny’s lasagna, made with a combination of ground beef and sausage, had been a long sought-after staple.

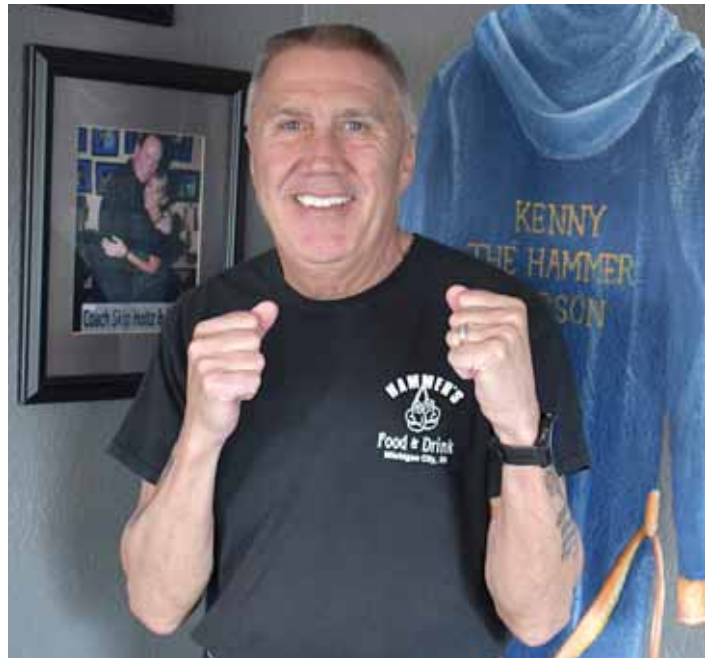
“Pretzel Crusted Chicken was something that everybody wanted, but it became a challenge to find the unsalted pretzels for it,” Kenny explained.

Some of Kenny’s dishes were named for special customers. There was “Tony’s Southpaw Spaghetti,” named for his left-handed boxer friend, Tony Drzewiecki.

“That was all he ever wanted to eat when he came in,” Kenny said.

Another menu item, “Barb & Stan’s Pizza,” was named after Stan Holdcraft and his late wife, Barb. The menu describes the selection, which doesn’t contain pizza sauce, as “made with garlic butter, fontinella, grilled chicken strips, diced tomatoes, artichoke hearts, portabella mushrooms, red pepper strips, spinach and feta. WOW!”

“Adolpho’s Steak Fettuccine” was named after Kenny’s good friend Adolpho Washington, a cruiser-weight and light heavyweight world champion professional boxer. The customer favorite was listed on the menu as “grilled shish-kabobs of marinated steak, red peppers, Bermuda onions and portabella



The walls at Hammer’s, as seen behind Kenny Larson, are filled with photos and images celebrating his career in boxing, and the many people who stopped by the restaurant. Photo by Kim Nowatzke

mushrooms over spinach fettuccine, tossed in a garlic butter and topped with Boursin cheese.”

Popular appetizers that came in generous portions included Calamari Fritti, Buffalo Wings, Spinach Artichoke Dip, Sausage and Peppers, Chicken Quesadilla, Baked Meatballs and Hammer’s Potato Skins. Favorite desserts included Famous Bread Pudding, Peach Cobbler, Sherri’s Molten Chocolate Cake (named after Kenny’s wife) and Brownie Ala Mode.

Kenny spoke candidly about the effect the COVID-19 pandemic had on Hammer’s.

“Since COVID, I’ve lost hundreds of thousands of dollars,” he said. “I can’t find products, and when I do, they are so much more costly, and it’s harder to

Continued on Page 18

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Continued from Page 17

find good employees...it just started a domino effect.

"You had to change your way of thinking," he continued. "You had to reinvent yourself. It's totally different."

His typical workday as of late included arriving early to clean and set up the kitchen. After a mid-day break to fit in exercise, he returned in the evening to help out. He and Chef Rudy Paniagua, well-known for decades in the Michigan City area, handled the cooking, with a few others to help.

Kenny passed on his strong work ethic to his two daughters: Natalie Weill and Jade Larson.

"I told them," he said, "You go and you make it. You do your own thing. Don't rely on anybody. Go, go, go. Get up and go. Don't stop'."

Kenny looks forward to less stress once Hammer's closes... and playing more pickleball.

"My new gig is pickleball," he said. "It's something new for exercise."

He's also taken up off-road triathlons — a series of swimming, mountain biking and trail running — completing two last year. About 15 years ago, Kenny began participating in Ironman Triathlons, defined as swimming 2.4 miles, biking 112 miles and running a full marathon of 26.22. Several posters of Ironman Triathlons decorate the walls of Hammer's. Kenny traveled to beautiful locations such as Austria, Cozumel and Lake Placid for competitions.

Those aren't the only sports memorabilia adorning the walls. Customers enjoyed photographs of the late Pernell Whitaker, a four-time world champion professional boxer from the 1980s-1990s, and Angel Manfredy, another popular professional boxer from the late 1990s.

There are framed prints of former Chicago Bears Head Coach Dave Wannstedt and former Purdue University Head Coach Joe Tiller, as well celebrities such as Larry King and Ed Orgeron, of "The Blind Side" fame. Kenny accompanies all of them in the photos.

"A lot of people have come and gone over the years," Kenny said.

These include an estimated 14 different college football teams playing at The University of Notre Dame that Kenny fed. Some, such as Boston College, The University of Southern California and Duke University, left memorabilia footballs behind, which line one wall.

"It's been mayhem since we announced the clos-

ing" he admitted, adding he appreciates all the community support during the last few weeks.

"There's been a lot of great times," Kenny said.

He also mentioned past luaus: huge parties outside with sand, two bands and an estimated 1,000 in attendance.

When Sherri asked Facebook users to share some of their favorite memories of the restaurant on the "Hammer's Food & Drink" page, there was a seemingly endless stream of heartfelt happy retirement wishes amid shared memories of birthdays, anniversaries and many more occasions.

Sherri began the feed with her own love story.

"I met Kenny on Match.com at the beginning of March 2009. On March 12th, I agreed to meet him at Hammer's for our first face to face meeting. I brought my sister and my teenage daughter with me for back-up! On October 11, 2009, Kenny and I ran the Chicago Marathon and he proposed. We were married at the same table spot one year from the date we met, on March 12th, 2010."

Former employee Betsy Howard commented on the page, "Where to begin...I was there to open the doors on 9/11/01. That day will forever be etched in my soul. That is the day we became the 'Cheers' of Michigan City. The kinship forged in that day alone is beyond compare. This is the day I became forever connected to the greatest family in the industry. My coworkers became my brothers and sisters and the patrons became my dearest of friends."

Theresa Lindsey Goeman also posted a photo of herself and her son celebrating her birthday at Hammer's. It would be the last of its kind, as he passed away six months later.

Lisa Schoch said in the Facebook feed, "I don't have a picture, but made sure to be there on opening day. Told my boyfriend in an announcement to the whole place that I loved him at Hammer's!"

Other comments include: "Thank you for holding a special place in my life," by Trisha Foltz; "Hammer's will always be the place where my family's biggest moments happened," from Shelbey Ward; and "We will miss the hometown atmosphere of Hammer's and the welcoming smiles by you (Sherri) and Kenny to all who entered," from Annette Wienke.

Kenny admits he doesn't have any "concrete plans" at this time, but shared with *The Beacher*, "I'm looking forward to a whole new life. I'm going to recreate myself to something else. I don't know what — a way to stay out of trouble."



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James Cameron's "The Abyss" Finally Gets the 4K Blu-Ray Treatment



The water tentacle in "The Abyss" remains a watershed moment in computerized visuals.

If you haven't guessed by now, I am a stone cold movie nerd. Often lavishing more thought on film analysis than the clothes on my back.

Streaming is like a gift from the movie gods, but the old school part of me champions physical media. That's post-pandemic speak for blu-rays and DVDs. You know, those discs in plastic cases we used to buy before streaming became the norm? Physical media, to me, is film preservation at its best.

For the longest time, the movie nerd in me lamented, "Where the heck is 'The Abyss'?" Why isn't James Cameron's 1989 underwater epic getting the restored 4K treatment? Why does it come and go from streaming services?

On March 12, after years of pleading from fans, Cameron released the long-awaited 4K blu-ray of his Oscar-winning film. It is so gorgeously remastered, it does not look like it was made nearly 35 years ago. And seeing it today, I remain convinced of its triumphs and perceived failures.

When it debuted in August 1989, "The Abyss" be-

past
present

Andrew Tallackson



came one of my favorite movies. It tapped into my love of water and underwater movies. It showcased Cameron's knack for killer action, ground-breaking effects, strong female characters and crowd-pleasing heroics. And by inventing technology specifically for the film, it was the first cinematic experience where, yes, you *did* feel like the characters were trapped at the bottom of the ocean.

Unfortunately, the movie arrived amid a highly competitive summer that included Tim Burton's "Batman," Steven Spielberg's "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," Richard Donner's "Lethal Weapon 2" and Ron Howard's "Parenthood." "Field of Dreams," released in April, was still packing theaters thanks to word of mouth.

(It didn't help that, in the months prior to its release, two underwater monster movies beat Cameron to the punch: "Deepstar Six," then "Leviathan.")

Nonetheless, Cameron, hot off his success with "Aliens" (1986), promised the summer's most original movie. The buzz was bad, though, largely due to a difficult shoot. Cameron, a stickler for authentic-

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ity, put his cast through hell to create the ultimate underwater movie. Audiences, however, gave it the cold shoulder. Reviews were mixed, with critics unanimous about one thing: They hated the ending. Called it dumb, derivative, unsatisfying. And because reports of the film's budget ranged anywhere from \$40-\$70 million, pundits couldn't figure out if the total domestic-global gross of nearly \$90 million meant it was a hit or a flop.

Cameron moved on to greater success. Today, he's responsible for three of the highest grossing movies globally of all time ("Titanic," the two "Avatar" movies).

But here's the thing. As the availability of "The Abyss" grew sketchy over time, absence did, indeed, make the heart grow fonder. A re-evaluation deemed it Cameron's most underrated effort.

Watching it now at home, through the latest 4K restoration, it remains one of my favorites.

The story is simple. The crew of a U.S. submarine chases what it thinks is a Russian target, only to be blindsided by an unknown presence. The sub crashes into the side of a precarious drop. In one terrifying image, a crew member turns around as a wall of water mercilessly charges toward him.

All are presumed dead on the sub, but the crew of an underwater civilian oil rig, because of its proximity, is recruited to check if survivors remain.

With the Marines in "Aliens," Cameron demonstrated an efficient way to quickly introduce salt-of-the-Earth characters. Afford them a likable moment or two. That is true of "The Abyss." The rig's crew contains working class folk, decked out in coveralls and grime. They work as a tight unit, no tension between them.

Outside the rig, Cameron achieved a level of realism lacking in underwater movies. Often, you could tell a movie was shot in a tank, the water too bright. Cameron, instead, filmed in an abandoned nuclear reactor. While shooting, he covered the reactor with a tarp blanketed with millions of tiny black beads to help simulate the endless night of the ocean depths.

Scenes like a storm-damaged crane sinking toward the rig, and especially what Cameron dubbed the "battle of the submersibles," showcase his knack for tightly edited action. The director also was one of the first to push the envelope with computer technology. Disney experimented with the process seven years earlier with "Tron," followed in 1988 by im-



Michael Biehn does some of his best work as a man slipping into madness as a result of being so far below the surface.

pressive camera trickery in Ron Howard's "Willow," but the water tentacle of "The Abyss," which holds up incredibly well, was the tipping point. The "wow" of a precursor to the T-1000 in Cameron's "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (1991) and Steven Spielberg's lifelike dinosaurs in "Jurassic Park" (1993).

Amid the technological wonders, we appreciate the grit Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio invest into playing Ed and Lindsey Brigman, the film's estranged husband and wife. As actors, they don't behave as if they're slumming by appearing in science-fiction. They give everything they've

Continued on Page 22

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The finale no one seems to like: Bud Brigman (Ed Harris) meets the underwater aliens on their own turf.

Continued from Page 21

got, especially Mastrantonio. She is a woman with defenses up because of rampant sexism. And the scene where Lindsey pleads with Bud to believe she saw an alien? A beautifully acted moment.

Cameron's screenplay, however, frequently has characters refer to Lindsey as a "bitch," and the moment when Bud tries to revive her after she willingly agrees to drown is vehemently attacked today as sexist. The first argument is that the scene, the shouting, goes on too long. The other is that Ed doesn't just bring Lindsey back to life. He symbolically beats her into submission, into being a more subservient wife.

I won't go there on that one. It is interesting to note, though, that the movie's 1993 special edition changes the tone somewhat of their relationship. The aliens are revealed to be disgusted by man's

ability to destroy itself. The creatures even threaten humanity by rolling out a mega tsunami to wipe out the planet. Cameron, however, cut the wave, and the political subtext, in a race to get the movie in theaters on time. By removing all that material, it affected that crucial scene.

Ironically, I prefer the theatrical version, *especially* that scene where Bud revives Lindsey because it contains some of Harris' best acting. His behavior is that of a man willing to do whatever it takes to bring his wife back.

Which gets us to the aliens themselves. Seeing the 4K restoration, these aquatic marvels more vibrant than ever, I understand now why audiences at the time rejected them. Cameron, up until then, was a dark, violent filmmaker. A storyteller where monsters are villains. But with the kinder creatures of "The Abyss," Cameron was stepping on Spielberg's toes. The clash of dark with light, to some I suppose, was awkward.

Me? I love it. I like the fragile beauty of the scenes when we first see the aliens. The way Alan Silvestri's percussive score backs off in favor of a more angelic effect. And I like the idea that aliens hiding in the depths are so moved by a husband's sacrifice for his wife and friends, they come to his aid by the end.

That people can still debate the merits of "The Abyss," thanks to Cameron's 4K restoration, warms this movie nerd's heart. Reassures me the movie won't become lost to future generations. They, too, can decide whether it works or not.

You know where I stand.

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The weather may have been a tad on the chilly side, but families turned out in full force March 16 for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade. All photos by Andrew and William Tallackson



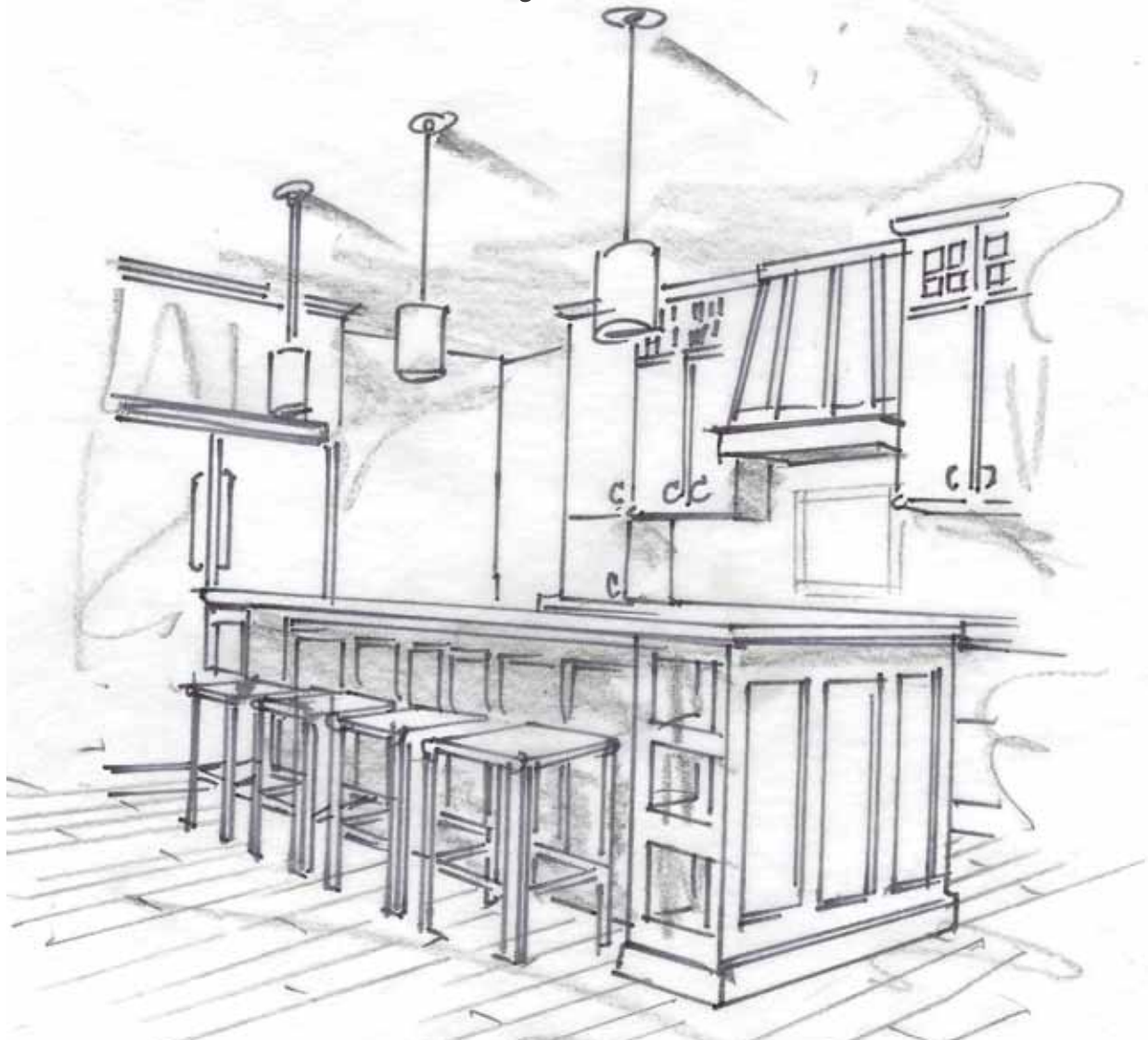


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“The Zone of Interest” Finally is Available to Rent. And the Verdict?

by Andrew Tallackson



“The Zone of Interest” conveys its characters going about their daily lives as if Auschwitz *isn't* next to them.

Editor's note — After an exceptionally limited release, the Oscar-winning “The Zone of Interest” finally became available to rent March 12 through View on Demand. Two days prior, writer-director Jonathan Glazer came under fire for controversial comments made during the Oscar telecast. This review is a case of trying to separate the art from the artist.

“The Zone of Interest” is not a movie. It's a sensory experience about a mystifying indifference to evil. Everyday noises persist, but so does the sound of death, like a steady beating drum.

I wasn't sure what to make of “The Zone of Interest” at first. It does not operate within the mechanics of regular moviemaking. Instead, it uses sound as a trigger, to force our reluctant mind to fill in the gaps, paint the rest of the picture.

Having won Oscars for Best International Film and, most deservedly, Best Sound, the film is inspired by Martin Amis' 2014 novel, itself taken from the life of Rudolf Höss, the long-serving Auschwitz commandant, and his wife Hedwig, who lived right next to the camp. Christian Friedel stars as Höss, and Sandra Hüller, the Best Actress Oscar nominee for “Anatomy of a Fall,” as Hedwig.

How writer-director Jonathan Glazer tells their

★ ★ ★^{1/2}

“The Zone of Interest”

Running time: 105 minutes. View on Demand. Rated PG-13 for thematic material, some suggestive material and smoking.

story does not adhere to conventional storytelling. There is no discernible beginning, middle or end. Instead, his camera is like a silent observer to their daily rituals. Dressing the children, weeding in the garden, bathing in the nearby river, enjoying meals together as a family.

On the surface, you'd have no clue there is anything fractured about this idyllic existence. Except for the background “noise.” The overlapping sounds from the death camp. You can see why Johnnie Burn and Tarn Willers won Oscars for their sound design. “The Zone of Interest” never once sets foot inside the death camp. Where we see the atrocities committed. Instead, we hear them. Sometimes, it is the indistinct cries of men, women and children. Other times, it is the trains bringing Jews to the camps. Often, it is random gunfire. On top of that, the hum of the buildings designed to decimate countless lives.

Sound, for a lack of a better description, is the

main character of the film. And the contrast Glazer achieves, of one family going about its daily life as unthinkable horrors commence, is the point of “The Zone of Interest.” How can human beings behave as if nothing is going on next door? Are these people symbols of evil, do they have any shred of humanity, or is there something more complicated to them?

Glazer does not provide an answer. He leaves that to the viewer to decide. You could say what Höss does is just “work” to him and Helga. However, a scene in which Rudolph, swimming in the river with his boys, realizes it may be “contaminated” by Jewish remains, subsequently having the boys scrubbed raw to “cleanse” them, is rooted in anti-Semitism. So, hate *is* a driving force among them.

After seeing “The Zone of Interest,” my thoughts, of course, drifted to “Schindler’s List,” Steven Spielberg’s monumental 1993 achievement. He dared to depict evil on film, but he also found a way out for audiences by giving us a complicated “hero” in Oskar Schindler. Amid the horrors on screen was one man who made a difference. We could leave “Schindler’s List” bruised raw, but moved by unlikely heroism.

Glazer offers some of that through a Polish girl who secretly aids Jews in the camp at night. But for the most part, his film is like, well, his camera slipped back in time to secretly film his subjects. The result? An undeniable technical achievement with a certain emotional detachment because we



Christian Friedel stars as Rudolf Höss.

are not sure what to think. All we know is that what we saw disturbed us, and we’re glad it’s over, no desire to experience it again.

I suppose, for Glazer, that’s mission accomplished.

Contact Andrew Tallackson at atallackson@gmail.com

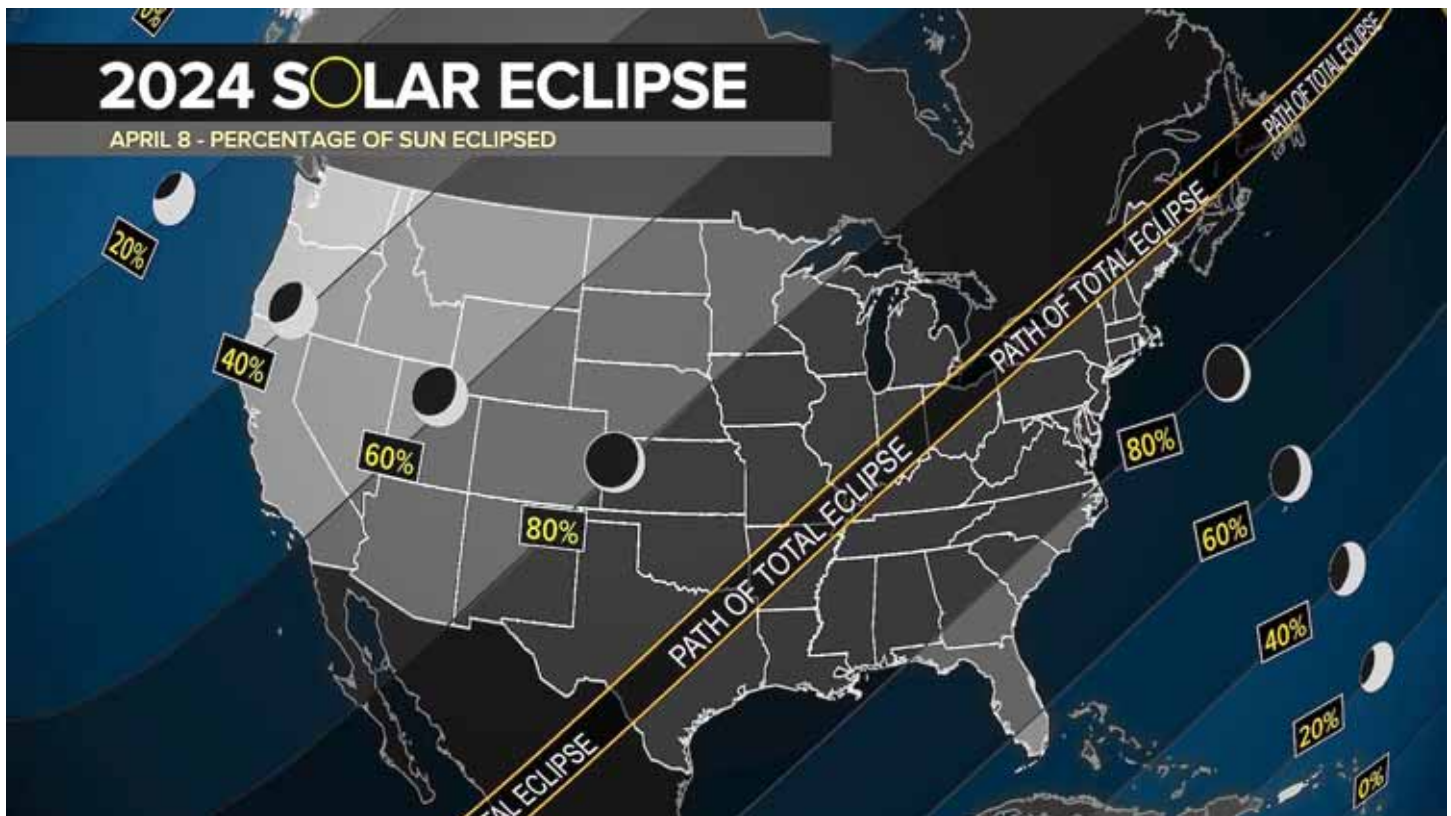
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What to Know About the April 8 Solar Eclipse

by William Halliar



On April 8, many people — we Hoosiers in particular — will experience a miraculous phenomenon in the form of a total solar eclipse.

For millennia, humankind has been periodically terrified, awed and inspired by this occasional special alignment of the sun, moon and Earth. The earliest known mathematical prediction of an eclipse may be May 28, 585 B.C., as recorded by the Greek historian and geographer Herodotus.

Today, remarkably, NASA can predict solar and lunar eclipses up to 1,000 years into the future.

A solar eclipse can be defined as a particular alignment of the sun, moon and Earth in their orbits. When the moon comes between the sun and Earth, it casts a shadow on the Earth's surface. This

shadow traces a curved line across the surface as the planet rotates on its axis. The technical term for this shadow is umbra, or Path of Totality.

Hoosiers will experience a total solar eclipse beginning at 2:01 p.m. CDT Monday, April 8, in Portland, Ind., in Jay County. The shadow will track through the state until the moon's shadow crosses the Illinois state line near Vincennes in Knox County at 2:12 p.m. CDT.

(Visit tinyurl.com/bde9c4tv for an overview of the path of the moon's shadow across the state.)

The next total eclipse that will cross Indiana is in August 2044, which makes April's event special.

Indianapolis probably will have the best view of the eclipse, as it lies almost directly in the Path of Totality. The city will experience nearly 3 minutes, 30 seconds, of umbra darkness.

Here, being well outside of the shadow path, we will experience the eclipse at least in part. At 2:08 p.m. CDT, we will witness 95.3 percent of the sun covered by the moon.

Great care must be taken when viewing the eclipse. While the sun is dimmer as the moon blocks its light, the solar rays are still bright enough to damage eyes. Eye protection should be worn at all times when viewing the eclipse. Visit NASA's website at tinyurl.com/yvjpc38 for more information.

Online retailers, including Amazon, have the special eyewear available for as low as \$8.99. Locally, options typically include optometry stores/opticians,

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Curiously, on average, 2.38 eclipses occur every year somewhere on the Earth's surface. Because of its rotation and the orbit of the moon around it, there must be at least two solar eclipses every year. The moon's shadow follows different paths across the Earth's surface each time depending on which side is facing the sun at the time of the moon's and sun's alignment.

It may be observed during the eclipse that birds begin to roost and become silent. Crickets quit chirping while the atmosphere becomes cooler. Victoria Freile writes in *The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* in New York that zoologists at Seneca Park Zoo have observed even stranger behavior. Gorillas "*marched all together to be let in for the evening, flamingos gathered together around the perimeter and clumped around the juveniles and babies, giraffes began running around nervously and Galapagos tortoises began to mate.*"

Local astronomy buff-amateur astronomer Larry Silvestri has spent years thinking about and studying the sun. He has a solar telescope designed with filters to study the sun. Several times, he has travelled to far-flung destinations just to observe this phenomenon.

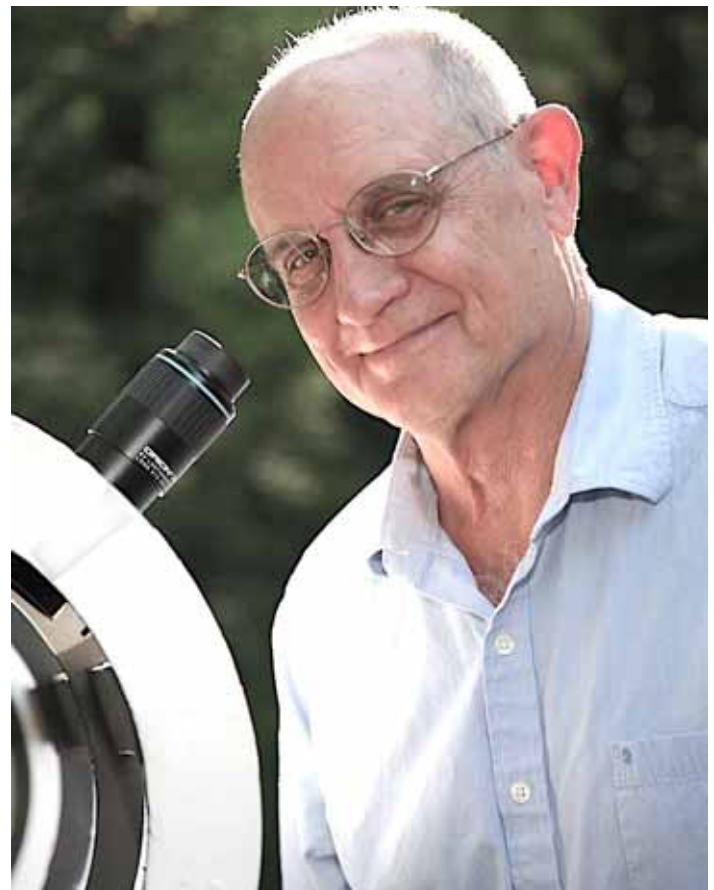
A member of Michiana Astronomical Society based in South Bend, he describes a total eclipse as a physiologically profound experience, hair-raising and a bit scary, saying he was "not prepared for the emotional vertigo that accompanies totality."

Silvestri advises anyone who wants to really experience the event to forget about capturing it with a camera and simply stand quietly. Then, listen for the birds, crickets and frogs go silent. Observe the half-light created by the sun's disappearance, and feel the sudden coolness of the air.

Whatever you do, use the recommended safety precautions, and take a moment to soak in the majesty of the ancient dance and movement of the heavenly bodies.

Revisit a Previous Beacher Article

More information about Larry Silvestri, and the last solar eclipse of the sun on Aug. 21, 2017, is featured in an article by *The Beacher Weekly Newspaper* available at tinyurl.com/bp5h73zd



Larry Silvestri, photographed by *The Beacher's* Bob Wellinski in 2017.

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Tower Hill Woods is a 32-acre protected area
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meander over and around ancient dunes. The trails
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ed area "the best nature has to offer," according to a
press release. He will start the hike with a brief talk
about how local fauna survives the winter and pre-
pares for spring. Hikers should dress for the weath-
er, wear a warm cap, sturdy shoes or boots, and take
water. The 2- or 2.5-mile hike is rated moderately
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www.laportehabitat.org



New Buffalo Township Library

Spring Break Programs, all from 3-4 p.m.:

- Paleontology Day on Monday, April 1.
- Galaxy Play-Doh Workshop on Tuesday, April 2.
Registration is required.
- Artist Day on Wednesday, April 3.
- Potawatomi Zoo on Thursday, April 4.

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 from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays
while supplies last.
- Chess Club from 6-8 p.m. Thursdays.
- Lego Club from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fridays and 9
a.m.-1:30 p.m. Saturdays.
- Yoga from 9-10 a.m. Saturdays.

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



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Indiana Dunes Birding Festival

Paul Labovitz, retired Indiana Dunes National Park superintendent, is the keynote speaker at the 10th annual Indiana Dunes Birding Festival.

The event, held May 16-19, is organized by Indiana Audubon in collaboration with IDNP, Indiana Dunes State Park and Indiana Dunes Tourism.

Labovitz will deliver the program "From City Kid to National Park Superintendent: An Accidental Birder Story" on May 18, sharing his journey through the park system to what some claim is the best national park for birding in the United States.

The festival includes nearly 180 trips, events and workshops. Registration is open starting at \$65 for adults, with single-day tickets ranging from \$10-\$35. Additional fees apply for field trips, socials, workshops and the keynote dinner. For those solely interested in Labovitz's presentation, a keynote-only option costs \$60.

Visit www.indunesbirdingfestival.com for more details.



Labovitz.

Michigan City Easter Egg Hunt

The Michigan City Easter Egg Hunt is at noon Saturday, March 30, at Fedder's Alley in Washington Park.

The event is a collaboration between Michigan City Senior Center, city police and fire departments, and local groups and companies.

Families can start arriving at Fedder's Alley at 11:30 a.m. The city will provide each child with a bag, with plastic eggs collected at the end of the event for recycling.

Easter Egg Hunt

Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12, will host a free Easter egg hunt at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 30.

Children through age 12 and their families can search for thousands of eggs hidden in the Symphony Meadow. The two egg-hunting areas are: one for ages 0-3 and another for ages 4-12. Afterward, families can take pictures with the Easter Bunny.

Take baskets for the hunt, which start at 10:15 a.m. Email info@friendshipbotanicgardens.org or call (219) 878-9885 for more details.



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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:

- **Genealogy Help with Colleen Miltenberger from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, March 30.** Miltenberger can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical record.
- **Genealogy Help with Pat Harris from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays in March.** Harris can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical record
- **Needle Arts Club to Warm Up America Joining Night from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursdays in March.** 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.
- **Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays in March.** Create with LEGO WeDo, Micro:bits, paper circuits, Ozobots and 3-D pens. Children 12 and younger must have a parent or guardian attend with them.
- **Story Time at 10 a.m. Wednesdays.** Children birth to age 5 and adults will enjoy stories, songs and crafts. Check out previous story time videos through the library's YouTube channel, Facebook page and website.
- **"Kung Fu Panda" Scavenger Hunt in March, then frogs in April.** Find the characters hidden in Youth Services for a prize. Locations change

each week.

- **Jewish Mini Film Festival: "Love & Hummus" and "Farewell, Mr. Haffmann" from 1-5 p.m. Saturday, April 6.** The program is sponsored by the library and Blossom and Irving Levin Jewish Cultural Fund of Sinai Temple.
- **Weekly Crafts for Kids & Teens.** Each week offers a different project. Take-home craft kits are available, or create some in the Makerspace.
- **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance aid needed.** Volunteers help at least one day a week during tax season. 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. The bus leaves Marquette Mall at 7 a.m. in front of the former Marquette Theatre. The next stop is Kabelein Ace Hardware, 512 Andrew Ave., LaPorte, at 7:30 a.m. It leaves the library for the return back at 4 p.m. The \$35 cost is due by March 25. Send reservation forms to LaPorte County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 365, LaPorte, IN 46352.

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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Boating Classes

Michigan City Sail and Power Squadron will host its Basic Boating Course from 6:30-8:40 p.m. Tuesdays, April 9-May 14.

Registration is at 6 p.m. the first night at B&E Marine, 31 Lake Shore Drive. The cost for the text and materials is \$40. Families are welcome, and the program meets state-specific and National Association of State Boating Law Administrators requirements for certification.

Also planned is the Electronic Navigation Course from 6:30-8:40 p.m. Wednesdays, April 10-May 15. Registration is at 6 p.m. the first night at B&E Marine. The cost for the text and materials is \$50.

Course descriptions and more details are available on the Michigan City Power Squadron Facebook page, or email Larry Fleck at ecklj@gmail.com

Making a Difference



In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, the Ancient Order of Hibernians-McGinnis by the Lake Chapter, in partnership with Ritz Klub, presented an \$800 check to the Sacred Heart Food Pantry at St. Mary's. Pictured are (from left) Dave Nelson, Sacred Heart Food Pantry director, and Jack Lydon, Ancient Order of Hibernians president. The AOH also presented a \$700 check to Friendship Botanical Gardens raised at its Irish garden fundraiser at Farina Cafe.

Reins of Life Training

Reins of Life Inc. will hold therapeutic carriage driving training, its fastest growing program, from 5:15-7:15 p.m. Thursday, April 4, at the Michigan City facility, 9375 W. County Road 300 North.

New volunteer training is a prerequisite. Register by calling (219) 874-7519. Visit www.reinsoflife.org for more details.

Also needed are feeding team volunteers. Individuals commit to one shift per week at either 7 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. Training is on an individual basis, and no horse experience is necessary. Each feeding crew consists of 3-4 volunteers who clean stalls, fill water buckets and troughs, tie horses to feed them grain, put proper amounts of hay in each paddock and sweep barn aisles.

Feeders must be at least 16 and wear closed-toe shoes. Each shift takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours to feed the herd of 11 horses, three ponies, one miniature donkey, a barn cat and two ducks.

Call (219) 874-7519 if interested.

Native Plant Presentation

Berrien County Conservation District will host a free native plant presentation at 1 p.m. EDT Thursday, April 4, at Love Creek Nature Center, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, Mich.

Vern Stephens from Designs by Nature Nursery will discuss topics such as native plant characteristics and care, and picking the right plant. Questions are welcome.

Park fees are waived. Seating is limited, and registration is required by calling (269) 471-9111, Ext. 3, or email nancy.carpenter@macd.org by April 2.



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LaPorte County Parks



All registrations/questions go through the Red Mill County Park Administrative Office, 0185 S. Holmesville Road, LaPorte. Call (219) 325-8315 or visit www.laportecountyparks.org for more details.

Easter Egg Hunt For Dogs

The program is from 9 a.m.-noon Friday, March 29, at Creek Ridge County Park, 7943 W. County Road 400 North.

Take dogs into the dog run to find Easter eggs filled with dog treats.

Eclipse Series

The series continues from 11 a.m.-noon Tuesday, April 2, at Creek Ridge County Park.

The program, held in conjunction with LaPorte County Public Library, involves a STEM lesson.

Nature's Tiny Tots

Designed for parents and grandparents, explore nature with toddlers and preschoolers. Enjoy music, dancing, storytelling and, weather permitting, hiking.

The free program is from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 3, at Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte.

Field Trips

Educators, Scout leaders and groups can schedule a free organized program for students or group at any county park.

The programs on various topics meet state standards and patch requirements.



Call (219) 324-5855, visit www.laportecountyparks.org or email natureniki@csinet.net for additional details.

Indiana Dunes National Park

- **Sneaky Snake(sssss) Show from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Thursday, March 28, at Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.** Learn about snakes that call the Indiana Dunes home, and meet reptiles that live in the Critter Room.
- **Paul H. Douglas Center Open House and Nature Play Date from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, March 30, at the center.** Participate in a nature-themed craft, visit the live animal room or build a fort in the Nature Play Zone. The program is sponsored by Friends of Indiana Dunes.
- **Chellberg Farm Open House from 1-3 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays in March.** Rangers and volunteers share the area's history as visitors tour the farmhouse/garden and visit the animals. Passes are required. The parking lot is off Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12 and 20 in Porter.
- **Miller Woods Hike from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 31, at Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education.** The ranger-led stroll explores a rare black oak savanna, and offers views of Lake Michigan and Chicago.
- **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 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:

- **Indiana's Solar Eclipse 101 at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 30.** With the pending solar eclipse April 8, learn about what an eclipse is, safe viewing and what to expect.
- **Turtle Shell-abration at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 30.** Stop by the Nature Center to meet native turtles and learn about their adaptations.
- **Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, March 31.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center to help fill bird feeders and play the game.
- **The Sun Did It! from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, March 31.** Meet at the Nature Center to learn about solar energy.

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.



Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

(Never known to fail.)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the 'Sea, help me and show me, herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth! I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in

this necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3x). Holy Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3x). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me and that in all instances in my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in Eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. The person must say this prayer 3 consecutive days. After 3 days, the request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted.



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JROTC Supports School, Area

Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, in what's turned out to be a busy month, worked the Indiana High School Athletic Association boys basketball regional and semi-state championship tournaments.

They also provided Color Guards for the Lions Convention and Michigan City St. Patrick's Day parade, and supported the Lake Hills Elementary School Career Day, Barker Middle School Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Forum and LaPorte County Spring Garden Show.



The Color Guard prepares to lead the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The cadets look to strongly finish the school year. Among the activities are boys and girls track meets, events at Friendship Botanic Gardens and the MCHS graduation. They also will prepare for a busy summer of Raider and Drill team conditioning, as well as marching in the Michigan City Kiddie and Patriotic parades.

MCHS plans to send cadets to national drill and leadership camps. Like all MCJROTC activities, they are funded by the Marine Corps.

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.



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Washington Park Zoo

Washington Park Zoo will open daily for the 2024 season April 1, with a “Wild Spring Preview” from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, March 30-31.

Regular admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for youth ages 2-11, \$9 for seniors 62 and older and free for children 2 and younger. Members are free on regular admission dates.

Visit www.washingtonparkzoo.com or the zoo's Facebook page for more details.

NB Library Community Forum

The New Buffalo Library Community Forum continues with a program on Elvis Presley's rise and fall at 6 p.m. EDT Tuesday, April 2, at the library, 33 N. Thompson St.

Tim Moore, a Lake Michigan College history teacher and frequent forum speaker, leads the free presentation. The series is sponsored by the Friends of the New Buffalo Library.

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American Red Cross

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

- Northwest Health Heart and Vascular Building, 901 Lincolnway, LaPorte, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, March 30.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, April 2.
- Sacred Heart Church, 201 Bach St., LaPorte, noon-5 p.m. Wednesday, April 3.

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

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March 19, 2024

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2. Pin Pals	24	8
3. Gutter Gals	20	12

HIGH INDIVIDUAL GAMES

	SCORE
1. Mary Lou McFadden	177
2. Tammy Vouri	161
3. Nancy Kubath	160
4. Deb Konicek	157
5. Diana Holt	152
6. Shelly Dunleavy	150
7. Deb Frederick (series)	418

THREE STRIKES IN A ROW

Diana Holt, Mary Lou McFadden

Good Friday Cantata

First United Methodist Church, 121 E. Seventh St., will present the Good Friday cantata "It Was On The Week" at 7 p.m. Friday, March 29.

The cantata uses a variety of musical styles. A free-will offering benefits the church's outreach ministries.

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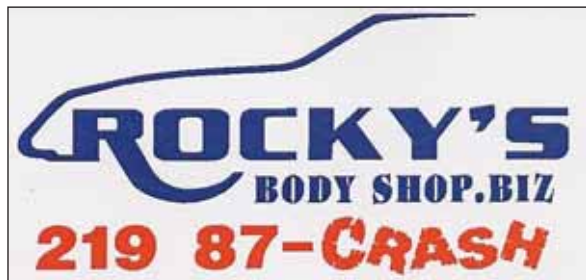
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In the Area

March 29 — GOOD FRIDAY.

March 29 — Easter Egg Hunt For Dogs, 9 a.m.-noon, Creek Ridge County Park, 7943 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org, (219) 325-8315.

March 30 — Genealogy Help with Colleen Milt-enberger, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

March 30 — Easter egg hunt, 10 a.m., Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Info: info@friendshipbotanicgardens.org, (219) 878-9885.

March 30 — Michigan City Easter Egg Hunt, noon, Fedder's Alley, Washington Park.

March 30-31 — "Wild Spring Preview," 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Washington Park Zoo. Official season opening: April 1. Info: www.washingtonparkzoo.com, zoo's Facebook page.

March 31 — EASTER.

April 2 — Eclipse Series, 11 a.m.-noon, Creek Ridge County Park, 7943 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org, (219) 325-8315.

April 2 — Virtual Author Talk with Smithsonian Curator Paula J. Johnson, 1-2 p.m., through LaPorte County Public Library. Registration: www.laportelibrary.org

April 3 — Nature's Tiny Tots, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, LaPorte. Info: www.laportecountyparks.org, (219) 325-8315.

April 3 — Creative Kids: National Library Week, 4-5 p.m., LaPorte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

Through March 30 — Women's History Month & Kingsford Heights exhibits, LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Info: (219) 324-6767.

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. Also: work by Julie Kasniunas, April-June. Reception: after 10:30 a.m. Mass on May 5. Info: lucia@qas.org

Through April 2 — Indiana Historical Society traveling exhibit, "Endangered Heritage," LaPorte

County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Info: (219) 324-6767.

First and Third Mondays — Singing Sands Toastmasters Club, 6:30-8 p.m., Senior Health/Wellness Center (old hospital ER, Barker/Bufalo).

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

Tuesdays in March — Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17), 3:30-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Thursdays in March — 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.

Fridays — Overeaters Anonymous, 9:30 a.m. Info: Jan at (219) 241-8757, Paula at (219) 588-3127, www.oa.org

Saturdays in LaPorte — Guided tours, 2-3 p.m., LaPorte County Historical Society Museum, 2405 Indiana Ave. Info: (219) 324-6767.

Second Tuesday of the Month — Stroke Support Group for Survivors and Caregivers, 2 p.m., Mother Maria Theresia Room, Franciscan Health Michigan City, 3500 Franciscan Way. Info: Kelly Wise at kelly.wise@franciscanalliance.org

In the Region

March 28 — Sneaky Snake Show, 1:30-2:30 p.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: www.nps.gov/, (219) 395-1882.

March 29 — Frontier Ruckus, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$30 + \$5 convenience fee, \$55 + \$5 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

March 30 — Indiana's Solar Eclipse 101, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

March 30 — Harbor Country Hikers, 1-3 p.m. EDT, Tower Hill Camp, 12173 Tower Hill Road, Sawyer, Mich. Info: www.harborcountryhikers.com

March 30 — Paul H. Douglas Center Open House and Nature Play Date, 1-3 p.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: www.nps.gov/, (219) 395-1882.

March 30 — Turtle Shell-abration, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

March 30 — Louisiana Calling with The Sonny Landreth Band and The Iguanas, 8 p.m. EDT, The Acorn, 107 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$60 + \$8 convenience fee, \$85 + \$8 convenience fee (reserved). Reservations: www.acornlive.org

March 31 — Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O, 9:30 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

March 31 — The Sun Did It!, 1-3 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

March 31 — Miller Woods Hike, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: www.nps.gov/, (219) 395-1882.

April 1 — Spring Break Program, Paleontology Day, 3-4 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

April 2 — Spring Break Program, Galaxy Play-Doh Workshop, 3-4 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Registration: (269) 469-2933.

April 2 — New Buffalo Library Community Forum (Elvis Presley program), 6 p.m. EDT, library, 33 N. Thompson St.

April 3 — Insights in History, 1:30 p.m. EDT, The History Museum, 808 W. Washington St., South Bend. Admission: \$3, \$1/members. Reservations by April 1: www.historymuseumSB.org, (574) 235-9664.

April 3 — Spring Break Program, Artist Day, 3-4 p.m. EDT, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Info: (269) 469-2933.

Through March 31 — "Being There" (oils by Julie Christian Bender), Episcopal Church of the Mediator, 14280 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, Mich. Hours: 9 a.m.-noon EDT weekdays. Info: www.mediatorharbert.com

Through April 28 — Kevin Firme, "Sculpture and Drawings," Midwest Museum of Art, 429 S. Main St., Elkhart.

Through May 2 — Peter Wise exhibit (oil paintings/mixed media/montages), Pines Village Retirement Communities, 3303 Pines Village Circle, Valparaiso.

Through May 5 — Community Student Art Exhibition, The Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. Hours: noon-4 p.m. EDT Thur.-Sun. Info: <https://boxfactoryforthearts.org>

Through May 5 — "Radiator Mascots: Art, Style & Story," The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11/adults, \$9.50/seniors 60+, \$7/youth ages 6-18. Info: (574) 235-9714, (888) 391-5600, www.studebakermuseum.org

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.

Through May 12 — Photo exhibit of 1926 Valparaiso fire, Porter County Museum (PoCo Muse), 20 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso. Free admission. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Sun. Info: www.pocomuse.org, @pocomuse on social media.

Through May 12 — "Facing the Giant: 3 Decades of Dissent," Krasl Art Center, 707 Lake Blvd., St. Joseph, Mich. *Also on display:* Aaron Martin's "Nébwakat Mshiké: Wise Turtle," through 2024. Info: www.krasl.org, (269) 983-0271.

Through May 31 — "Birds, Butterflies & the Beauty That Surrounds Them" (Pamela Kirkham's original acrylic paintings), Fernwood Botanical Garden Clark Gallery, 13988 Range Line Road, Niles, Mich. Info: www.pamkirkham.com

Through July 28 — "Family Haulers: The American Station Wagon," The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11/adults, \$9.50/seniors 60+, \$7/youth ages 6-18. Info: (574) 235-9714, (888) 391-5600, www.studebakermuseum.org

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

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

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing:* "Top Gun" (1954). Rated PG. Time: 7 p.m. March 28. *Also:* "Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire." Rated PG-13. Times: 3 p.m. March 29, 4 & 7 p.m. March 30. *Also:* "I'm Your Huckleberry...Fin." Time: 8 p.m. March 29. All times Eastern. Theater address: 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

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and apply that to how you relate to each camper

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the camp director.

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Three-Inch Teeth by C.J. Box (hardcover \$30 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 369 pages.)

C.J. Box is another one of my favorite authors because he brings so much to the table: action, suspense, falcons and the beauty of the Wyoming landscape. His books feature state game warden Joe Pickett, his wife, Marybeth, and three grown daughters. His best friend is Nate Romanowski, a master falconer who has a wife, Liv, and 2-year-old daughter, Kestrel.

This is book 24 in the series, and the skillfully written storylines never stop, never get stale.

The title tells the subject of this book: a giant predator with very large teeth. He's more than 6 feet tall, furry, can run 30 miles an hour and has a nasty attitude. A grizzly bear, of course. But there's a twist to Box's thinking. Yes, the grizzly is the apex predator in the wild, but what about man? Who comes out the winner in a game of hide and seek between man and beast? You might be surprised.

The story begins quietly with Clay Hutmacher Jr., 25, fly fishing in the river when a mule deer crashes out of the forest, into the river, almost running over Clay Jr. Following the deer is a large grizzly bear, obviously intent on supper. The grizzly, still in the river, and right in sight of Clay Jr., set his sights on the human at hand and attacks...

Finding your son mauled and torn limb from limb is a horror show in itself without two crazy women, part of an animal rights group, hounding the father and Pickett for hunting down the bear to kill it. They don't seem to realize when a grizzly tastes human meat, there's no other option than to destroy it.

For those with sensitive stomachs, you might have trouble reading about the attack and the aftermath of the body. Just a warning.

The story, though, has a lot more to offer. A state team heads out to find and destroy the grizzly when one of its members is attacked and killed by the bear. Now, the two women who don't want the bear killed are doing all they can to impede the investigation. Pickett finally has enough, taking sterner measures to get them out of the way.

In the meantime, Pickett's oldest daughter, Sheridan, works for Romanowski and his bird-abatement business. A master falconer, she is sent to Colorado on a possible job. People figured Clay Jr. was her

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



fiancé, something she didn't want, although she is devastated by his death. But this job is a chance to get away from all the condolences she feels she doesn't deserve.

Sheridan's job takes an interesting turn as the story shows how a group of starlings takes over a barn, but Sheridan's raptors soon send them looking for new digs. The old woman at the house somehow

looks familiar to Sheridan, who can't get information out of her: the older woman behaves angrily and suspiciously toward her. This provides an interesting twist later...

Meanwhile, Pickett gets word that Dallas Cates, a nasty killer and super-psychopath he helped put away in prison, has been released. He has vowed revenge on those responsible for putting him in jail, and his family in the ground. Cates avoids detection and joins Axel Soledad, another psycho, for some special torture-killing... but first there's a little preparation that requires a workshop...

Soon, Pickett receives word from around the state of more grizzly killings. Is it the same bear that killed Clay Jr.? He feels he is chasing his tail when none of this makes sense...except that the next killings include people who put Cates in prison.

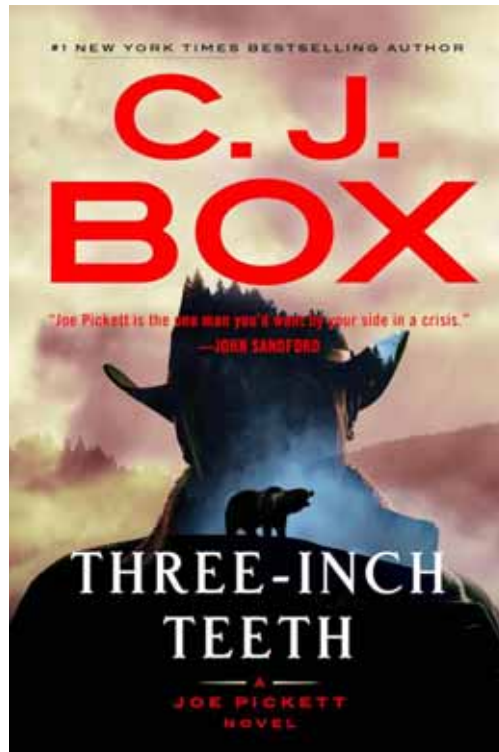
This is storytelling at its finest.

Characters are so well-defined, the action is non-stop, twists and turns abound, keeping you reading just one more chapter. This is a series that has evolved over the years into something solid and lasting. Box shows us how nature can work for us *and* challenge us. The essence of the story sounds ripe for a lot of swearing, but that is minimal here.

The final word: I didn't see the ending coming — a climax with more than one surprise as only Box can orchestrate — and was shocked, but they also leave a wide-open door for the next book...and I can't wait to read it.

Box has won numerous awards for his Joe Pickett novels. He also is an enthusiastic outdoorsman — fishing, hunting, hiking, skiing — to name a few activities. That, and his love for his state of Wyoming, is evident in all his books. Two enthusiastic thumbs up.

Till next time, happy reading!





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Jordan Gallas	219.861.3659	Sofia Mockaitis	219.670.0902	Susie Yemc	219.617.3731

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Jenna Francesconi

Jenna is a full-time residential and commercial real estate broker. She has the knowledge and experience to guide you through the buying/selling process and will do so with responsive, detailed, and transparent service. Her goal is to help her clients find their dream home while providing a stress-free experience from start to finish.

To work with Jenna call or text 219-363-9512



Carie Strieter

Carie grew up in Glenview, Illinois, moving to the area to attend Valparaiso University on a basketball scholarship. While there she met her husband, Owen, and moved to LaPorte, falling in love with the community.

Her favorite part about being a Realtor is building relationships with her clients and assisting them in achieving their dreams! Past clients describe Carie as intelligent, hardworking, and dedicated to making them feel comfortable every step of the way.

To work with Carie call or text 847-513-4397



Julie Wagner

Julie is a mother of four grown children raised in LaPorte. With many years of experience as a Realtor, she takes joy in assisting people in finding their perfect homes. She caters to LaPorte, St. Joe, and Porter County and actively participates in the LaPorte County Association of Realtors.

To work with Julie call or text 219-608-5614

