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# ART & HOPE

by Linda Weigel

Gerhard Richter once stated, “*Art is the highest form of hope,*” a hope that can lead to comfort, solace, introspection and joy.

Taking an interest in art can be transformative, whether by visiting an art center or gallery, or simply walking through an area filled with public art.

Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St., is adding additional space to further integrate the arts into this vibrant, growing artistic community. It is an example of how Executive Director Hannah Hammond-Hagman has taken the lead on many levels to bring more art to the Chesterton area.

She is from the area, having earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Indiana University Bloomington and a Master of Fine Arts from School of the Art Institute Chicago. Her path to art education began when she worked for a non-profit in California. Four years later, she was in Boston working on arts-education programs. Next, she moved to Lowell, Mass., working in an administrative position with a nonprofit cultural organization embedded in the city’s department of planning and development.

“This was a city that had invested purely in arts and culture as an economic-development driver, and I learned a lot in that role, but still got to work with artists, with creative communities, make festivals happen and meaningful professional development opportunities for arts and work with other arts organizations,” she said. “I think through education and that role, I understood the impact of collaboration.”

This collaborative experience would benefit her future role at the CAC.



Hannah Hammond-Hagman, Chesterton Art Center executive director, is photographed with CAC ceramics student Ben Michalak, his address plaque celebrating the new 116 Building space. Provided.

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# ART & HOPE

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## CAC EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Four years later, Hammond-Hagman was back in Northwest Indiana with her family: teaching, then six years as Lubeznik Center for the Arts' education director.

It was, she says, "a phenomenal experience, and I got to again work with all kinds of artists and all kinds of communities, because that's where I think that amazing things happen."

In 2021, she moved to her new role as CAC's program director under then-Executive Director Wendy Marciniak. Working with the local Boys & Girls Club, "Youth Arts Outreach" was born and involved new curriculum. Teachers trained to work at the club, offering after-school visual arts instruction that incorporates literacy, science, art history and contemporary artists.

"It was beyond make-and-take projects. It was really getting kids to like making work using their voices and learning some things that were aligned with academic standards," she said. "We did a whole

STEAM unit where kids were making scribble robots and electric circuits. It was really amazing. That was Year 1 of that program."

After Marciniak retired, Hammond-Hagman took on the role of executive director in May 2021, continuing CAC's commitment to expand art into the community. In Year 2 of "Youth Arts Outreach," CAC partnered with Duneland Family YMCA and the five elementary school sites it served, working at each site consecutively — not all at the same time — as funding wasn't available yet to do all of them at once.

However, by Year 3, the CAC integrated into all six sites, serving 200 students a week outside the center's physical walls, and fully funded at no cost to the partner organizations.

Also starting in 2021 was the Teen Art Group (TAG). Meeting the second Wednesday of each month, the free program is for teen artists from the region, offering professional experiences and portfolio development, as well as opportunities to meet other artists, visit studios and exhibit work.

The Arts Connect program offers free and low-cost classes to students 60 and older. The Emerging Artist Society (EAS), which began two years ago, is a free program for artists interested in feedback, and sharing skills, with others. Led by Education



Chesterton Art Center is located at 115 S. Fourth St. Photo by Linda Weigel.

Director Cara Schmitt, the group meets monthly and coordinates exhibit opportunities.

And, as always, CAC will bring back Chesterton Art Fair, which marks its 67th year. The CAC staff also look to expand outreach further as it partners with Indiana Arts Commission to facilitate Works in Progress (WIP) exchange labs across the region.

### CAC and Building Expansion

By now, community outreach programs needed more space, which is always a challenge to secure.

However, Tony Evans, who owned the bicycle shop across the street from the CAC, notified Hammond-Hagman of his intention to retire and sell the building. The news resulted in great excitement among CAC staff.

A benefactor then came forward and bought the property for the CAC with an interest-free loan arrangement, making the expansion possible.

The 116 Expansion project will feature large classroom studios, including a dedicated ceramic studio that can serve double the students. It also will include an

adaptive pottery wheel for anyone using a mobility device or wheelchair.

“There will be a new 2-D studio. We have a print-making press that’s going to move over there, and we’re going to build painting racks,” she said.

That means more space for models, figurative work, painting, printmaking and books. Tables in the 2-D space will be on wheels and movable, opening space for additional events: possibly lectures, poetry readings or music. Entrances and the new restroom facility will be completely accessible for people with disabilities.

Continued on Page 4



Hannah Hammond-Hagman displays plans for expanding Chesterton Art Center to the 116 Building. Photo by Linda Weigel.

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# ART & HOPE

Continued from Page 3

The capital campaign has officially ended. Not surprisingly, CAC surpassed the fundraising goal. By the end of May, Hammond-Hagman expects final touches to be complete for bathroom fixtures, cabinets and furniture.

## IN THE GALLERIES

Having visited the CAC galleries over the years, I was surprised to learn that for a long time, exhibits were scheduled about a couple of months ahead. The calendar was not set for at least a year in advance. Hammond-Hagman said she wanted to formalize the process a little more, “and also really expand the mission and diversify the types of artists we were showing and the types of work that we were showing.”

Previously, exhibits changed monthly, which is a lot.

“So, when we’re focusing on education program growth, we kind of needed to make that a line. I believe that the galleries are an extension of our education mission and therefore should be programmed whether that’s with artist demos or artist talks, and we can’t do that on short notice,” she said.

“Right now, we’re working on a two-year-plus calendar so our galleries are calendared out at least that far in advance, and while we do have wonderful annual partnerships with the Duneland School Corporation, with the Chesterton Women’s Club, we will always have those annual exhibitions (which are a month long). We also have a slate of two-month-long exhibitions, and those are varied and are bringing artists from outside the region and from inside the region.”



These provided photos reveal the work being done at the 116 Building.

Artists requesting a show need to fill out an application. Hammond-Hagman also is interested in expanding the artist pool, and “meeting artists that are underrepresented in the region, and bringing in folks from the Chicago area, Detroit, South Bend and Elkhart.”

She sees this as an opportunity to bring in newer voices to CAC and the region through exhibits. Visitors can experience new approaches, and younger people can discuss what they see.

“We provide programs that allow them to do that, whether it’s school visits, it’s family art days, which are free, or quarterly programs where kids and their favorite grownups can come into the gallery, get a little tour or a scavenger hunt with our team, and then come into the classrooms and make art based on the conversations that are happening in the gallery,” she said.

## IN THE COMMUNITY AND A CULTURAL DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Along with her commitment to CAC, Hammond-Hagman is deeply involved into the Chesterton community.

She sits on the board of the non-profit Chesterton Branding and Leadership Corp. (CBLC), a 501(c)(3) designed to bolster the downtown area. Other board members “include representatives from Indi-



ana Dunes Tourism, other artists in the area, small business owners and representatives from other organizations and from the Chamber of Commerce,” she said. The nonprofit has a volunteer board, with no staff.

“In the past,” she said, “there have been initiatives around having conversations with the Town of Chesterton about things that we think would benefit downtown Chesterton, like expanded parking, or how to integrate the European Market with small businesses.”

Four CBLC members, including Hammond-Hagman, Rebecca Riley-Vargas, Kevin Nevers and Jayde McAloon, applied to participate in Creative Convergence, a joint venture by Indiana Arts Commission in partnership with Indiana Communities Institute of Ball State.

“What it does is that communities or municipalities can apply to take part in this initiative,” she explained. “You are invited downstate for a two-day workshop on creative economic development on how towns and municipalities can leverage arts and culture to drive economic development.”

The group’s proposal was accepted for the workshop. They received valuable information and returned with a \$10,000 grant request to secure a cultural district designation for Chesterton. They obtained the grant and immediately went to work on a five-month engagement process seeking community input. They held meetings at multiple locations for all interested parties, and launched an online extensive survey. The result was plenty of data over five months.

They also worked with a consultant from Valparaiso University to help sort through the information, distill it to significant results. They began mapping a boundary district, one that would be walk-

able. One decision involved marking the boundary with public sculptures or special markers. Branding will include a new logo. The Chesterton Town Council unanimously passed a resolution last September designating the new arts district as the Chesterton Trackside Arts and Cultural District.

Future CBLB projects include seeking funding for more art, murals and for an oral history project making sure rail history is acknowledged as part of the community’s identity.

Indeed, Hammond-Hagman has been a force for artistic change in her community. She encompasses everything about Richter’s quote, “Art is the highest form of hope.” She’s helping inspire vibrant changes in the community, but credits CAC board members and volunteers for making things happen.

Together, they continue a tradition of art and community outreach.



Chesterton Art Center celebrates work by artists from throughout the region. Pictured here is “Kissers and Dancers, Triptych,” fresco on terra cotta by Michigan City’s Diane Grams. Photo by Linda Weigel

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## Barker Mansion Reopens for the Season on May 1

May 1 marks the official reopening of the season for Barker Mansion, 631 Washington St., with tours, programs and events planned.

Built in 1905 by railroad industrialist John H. Barker, the mansion has approximately 90 percent of its original furnishings and collections intact. Visitors can take self-guided and guided tours.

The first three planned events are:

- **History Hour: Lasen's Resort & the Golden Age of Cedar Lake from noon-12:45 p.m. Sunday, May 3.** During the resort era of 1880-1930, the Monon Railroad brought thousands of vacationers to Cedar Lake. Guest speaker Julie Zasada, Cedar Lake Historical Association executive director, will discuss the community's impact on the Calumet Region, and the amenities that resort offered visitors. The cost is \$20 for the program and a self-guided tour and \$30 for the program and a guided tour.



- **Mother's Day Tea from 1-4 p.m. Saturday, May 9.** The tea service includes special treats, followed by a guided tour of the mansion. The tea, itself, is in the third-floor ballroom. Tickets cost \$60.
- **Mothers & Music: A Celebration of Mothers and Daughters Concert from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, May 10.**

The event starts with a live classical concert in the grand ballroom by pianist Marissa Kerbel, who will explore music from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Afterward is a self-guided tour of the mansion. Select personal items belonging to Katherine Barker will be on display.

*The mansion will be open regularly through December, with expanded programming and special events scheduled. Visit [www.barkermansion.org](http://www.barkermansion.org) to register for any program or more information.*

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Ken Ludwig’s “Moon Over Buffalo,” a comedy in the tradition of his popular “Lend Me a Tenor,” runs May 1-3 and 8-10 at La Porte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St.

In the play, washed-up actors George and Charlotte Hay are appearing in “Private Lives” and “Cyrano De Bergerac” in Buffalo, N.Y. On the brink of a split caused by his affair with a young ingénue, the couple receives word that Frank Capra is coming to see their matinee. If he likes the performance, they might get cast in his remake of “The Scarlet Pimpernel.”

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. May 1-2 and 8-9 and 2 p.m. May 3 and 10. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$19 for seniors 55 and older and \$16 for students with ID and younger. Visit [www.laportelittletheatreclub.com](http://www.laportelittletheatreclub.com) for tickets.



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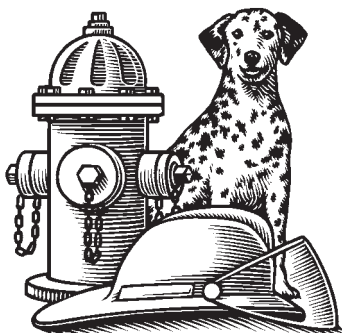
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Patrons are no longer charged daily overdue fines. Customers only will be charged for items they damage, lose or never return.

*The following programs are planned:*

- **Virtual Author Talk with Jason Reynolds from 6-7 p.m. Thursday, April 30.** Reynolds will discuss Coach, the fifth and last entry in the "Track" series. Register online.
- **An Evening with Marie Benedict from 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 30, at The Great Hall Events & Conference Center at Purdue University Northwest, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville.** Benedict will discuss her latest novel, Daughter of Egypt. A Q&A, book signing and cash-only bar are planned. Register online by noon April 30.
- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, May 1, at the main library.** The storytime includes rhymes, music and activities.
- **Choose Your Own Storytime from 4-4:30 p.m. Monday, May 4, at the main library Multipurpose Room.** Structured around the Every Child Ready to Read curriculum, children help choose books to read during storytime.
- **America @ 250 Alexander Hamilton: Financing a New Nation from 4-5 p.m. Tuesday, May 5, at the main branch Meeting Room B.** The program is appropriate for students in sixth grade and older.
- **Tween Book Club (ages 10-13) from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 5, in the main library Multipurpose Room.** The focus is Tahereh Mafi's Furthermore. Copies are available at the youth desk.
- **Creative Kids-Star Wars from 4-5 p.m. Wednesday, May 6, in the main library Multipurpose Room.** Celebrate May 4 (a little late) with stories, a character craft and LEGO droid builds.
- **All Things True Crime Book Club from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 6, at the main library Meeting Room A.** The focus is Axton Betz-Hamilton's The Less People Know About Us: A Mystery of Betrayal, Family Secrets and Stolen Identity.

*La Porte 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](http://www.laportelibrary.org) for more details, including program through the Exchange building.*

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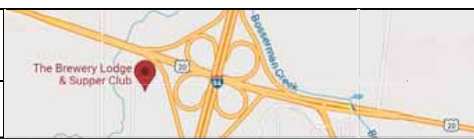
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**Nature's Tiny Tots**

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. Tuesdays, April 28, May 12 and 26, at Luhr County Park, 3178 S. County Road 150 West, La Porte.

**Spring Flower Tea Time**

The short hike on paved trails is from 10-11:30 a.m. Thursday, April 30, at Bluhm County Park, 3855 S. County Road 1100 West, Westville.

Hikers can view native spring woodland flowers, then meet for scones, elderberry jam and tea.

**Easter Egg-spedition**

Take a self-guided look at the park's Easter egg stash through April 30 at Luhr County Park.

Start by the nature center door and follow the clues to find an Easter egg prize.

**A Brush with Madness**

The all-ages program is from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, May 13, at Luhr County Park.

Participants follow easy painting directions, with all supplies provided. No experience is necessary. The cost is \$8 per person.

**Wandering Watercolors**

The program is from 10 a.m.-noon Tuesday, May 19, at Bluhm County Park.

Take a short walk around the park, then paint a nature journal-style watercolor art. All supplies are provided. Call (219) 325-8315 to register.

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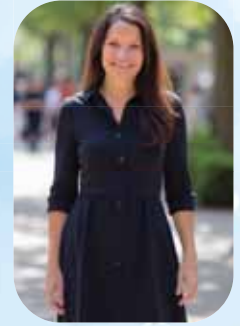
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**Faith-Based Diabetes Initiative**

Franciscan Health is offering the latest installment of “Fan Out Diabetes,” its free, faith-based diabetes initiative in partnership with local churches and community organizations.

The next sessions are at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, May 31, at The Salvation Army, 1201 Franklin St. Participants are asked to attend both sessions that bring free, two-day diabetes education, prevention and detection mini-workshops to the church after Sunday services.

The initiative pairs minority congregations here with Franciscan’s Community Health Improvement program and community organizations. Sponsors include Franciscan Health, the Michigan City chapter of Indiana Black Expo, CareSource, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Covering Kids & Families of Indiana and Dunebrook.

Pre-registration is not required, and participants don’t have to be members of the congregation to attend. Contact Nila Williams, Franciscan Health Michigan City community health improvement coordinator, at Nila.Williams@franciscanalliance.org for more details.

**MCHS Drama Club**

Michigan City High School’s Drama Club will present its spring show, “The Lightning Thief: A Percy Jackson Musical,” on Friday-Sunday, May 1-3, at the school auditorium, 8466 Pahs Road.

Performances are at 7 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Enter through Door P. The creative team includes:

- Productions Director: Angie Gresham.
- Artistic Director: Becky Tiedeman.
- Music Director: Kaity Mosher.
- Stage Manager: Kristi Steinhiser.
- Student Director: Midnight Bright.
- Student Stage Manager: Sabriel Croy.

Tickets, which are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and young children, are available at the door.

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## “The Plague” is a Chilling Look at Bullies and Hazing

by Andrew Tallackson



Everett Blunck stars as Ben, a middle-schooler attending a water polo camp, in “The Plague.”

“The Plague” picks at the scabs of adolescence so ruthlessly, it should be required viewing for teens as a rallying cry against cruelty.

Charlie Polinger, the writer and director, explores a pivotal turning point in childhood when bullies clearly establish themselves, zeroing in on fellow students they view as “different.” I suspect Polinger, as a storyteller, is drawing on past experiences, because his film, which just debuted on AMC+, feels so real, it’s like watching a chilling documentary; chilling because, sadly, this *is* what middle-school years are like.

The setting is a water polo summer camp for 12- to 13-year-olds in 2003. Ben (Everett Blunck) is new to the area and eager to fit in, the other campers having all grown up together. Ben is a good kid with a kind heart, which is why he watches from the sidelines, with natural curiosity, at the social warfare at play. A large cluster of boys follows Jake (Kayo Martin), the alpha male of the lot, as they make life hell for Eli (Kenny Rasmussen). He’s likely on the autism spectrum, his quirks treated by the other boys as an open invitation to torment him.

Eli has a rash covering much of his body that Jake and his crew dub “The Plague.” An illness they say is akin to leprosy. Anyone who touches him, or gets too close, might contract the same disease. Eli,

★ ★ ★ ★

### “The Plague”

*Running time: 98 minutes. AMC+. Rated R for language, sexual material, self-harm/bloody images, and some drug and alcohol use, all involving children.*

of course, has no contagious condition. It is likely a reaction to the pool’s chlorine levels, but the notion of “the plague” is the movie’s metaphor for any individual treated like an outcast for not adhering to the norms of school cliques. And Ben, who is perceptive enough to establish a tenuous bond with Jake, knows what’s happening is wrong.

Blunck, who also stars in AMC’s dark Silicon Valley satire “The Audacity,” may be the best new young American actor today. He looks like a real kid, but more to the point, there is a natural quality to him. No false note in his performance: You never catch him acting. Part of the reason what Ben experiences is agonizing to watch is that we’re seeing a child forced to react to ugly behavior when adults aren’t around. With Blunck, we relate to that sense of aloneness despite being crowded by others.

Martin, as Jake, is startlingly effective. Everyone knew a Jake growing up. The kid who is popular solely because everyone fears him. Because he

is calculating and, yes, hateful. With Martin, you can see the wheels turning inside Jake's mind. He knows there is a line between right and wrong...and blissfully disregards it.

(Martin is so unsettling as Jake, I was reminded of what a Circuit Court judge once told me, back in my days as a cub reporter. He said, "A perceptive kindergarten teacher can tell me who I'll see in my courtroom in 10 years." A harsh observation, sure, but one that speaks of a sad truth: Some children arrive into this world with the odds stacked so violently against them, they succumb to the very ugliness that surrounds them.)

The swim coach, Daddy Wags, tries to pound messages of kindness and empathy into Jake. He's played by Joel Edgerton ("Train Dreams") in a wonderful performance as a man who quickly recognizes when something is off. At one point, he even lines his team up, admonishing them for treating Eli badly. When Jake mouths off to Daddy Wags, clearly showing off by using profanity, Daddy Wags fears the youngster may be a lost cause.

That is why we are moved by the late-in-the film conversation between Daddy Wags and Ben. You can feel it in Edgerton, that his seen-it-all coach is putting his hope into Ben, reminding him that the petty garbage he experiences now will be a thing of the past once he goes off to college.

That really is what "The Plague" is about: life



Joel Edgerton is wonderful as Daddy Wags, the swim coach.

under the microscope. Middle school, high school, they're examples of living in a bubble, where it's darn near impossible to see a way out, even though one clearly exists. The movie, like Daddy Wags, puts all its hope into Ben, and through Blunck, we witness a kid who stares reality in the face and clings to every bit of goodness left in him.

You won't easily shake "The Plague." It burrows deep.

Contact me at [atallackson@gmail.com](mailto:atallackson@gmail.com)

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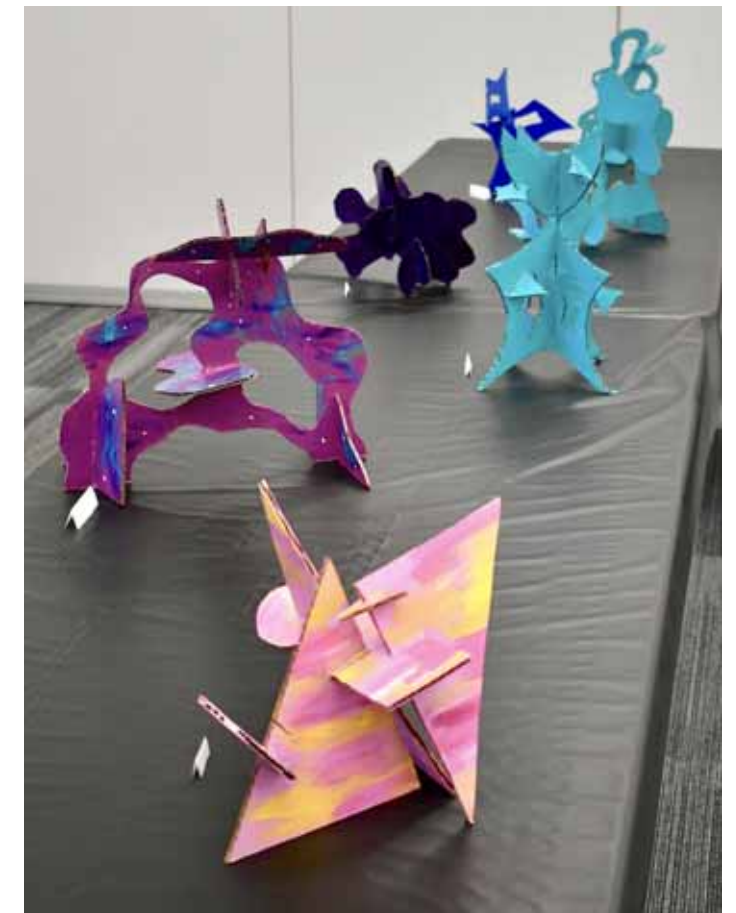


The staff at Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St., certainly had cause for celebration on April 18.

As part of Northwest Indiana's World Creativity & Innovation Week (April 15-21), the library's Youth Services Department received the CREO! (Creativity, Regional, Excellence, Originality) award from The Center for Creative Solutions Inc. Pictured to the right are (from left) Cindy Hedge, The Center's CEO, Dale Cooper, Visit Michigan City La Porte community relations director, and from the library Dave Fink, Lori Richardson and Don Glossinger.

And in conjunction with the special week, the library held a reception showcasing 2-D and 3-D works by Marquette Catholic High School students, the pieces managed by their art teacher, Matt Raney.

All photos by Kim Nowatzke



## The Whole Rubank

I literally ran out of breath at a recent open mic in Stevensville, Mich., as I played a tune or two on my licorice stick.

Well, clarinet, but you know what I'm talking about. I've talked myself blue in the face about my return to the clarinet in 2008 when I bought a used instrument at a friend's funky resale shop in Niles, Mich.

You read about my lessons with virtuoso Jason Gresl, and my valiant effort to earn a fourth chair in the celebrated South Shore Concert Band, in 2018 or so.

And I should note, I bought one fine clarinet from Bill King of Clarinet Connection and Michigan City Chamber Music Festival, right here in our living room, in 2013. Bill was in town to toodle a tune or two on behalf of MC-CMF at a local elementary school. He brought four Buffet Crampon clarinets to our house after his performance. He asked me to try all four, saying he would be happy to show me more at his "home office" in Ann Arbor, Mich.

I tried the first two, then hit an endless seam of gold on No. 3, a Buffet Crampon RC B-flat Clarinet of the finest African hardwood and silver keys. A bit pricey, I must say, but we had the scratch back then, so, SOLD!!!

(I did give the fourth clarinet a ride around the block, but I was home-free with No. 3.)

Back to my breathless night at the open mic.

I was pretty much talked into it, and agreed, thinking I could get back in tune in a few weeks. I hadn't been playing for weeks. It wasn't that I didn't enjoy toodling; well, I had just sidetracked my artistic impulses to the waterfront or watercolor painting. Every time I wanted to crack open the case, assemble my clarinet and play a tune or two, I would just shrug and pick up a paintbrush instead.

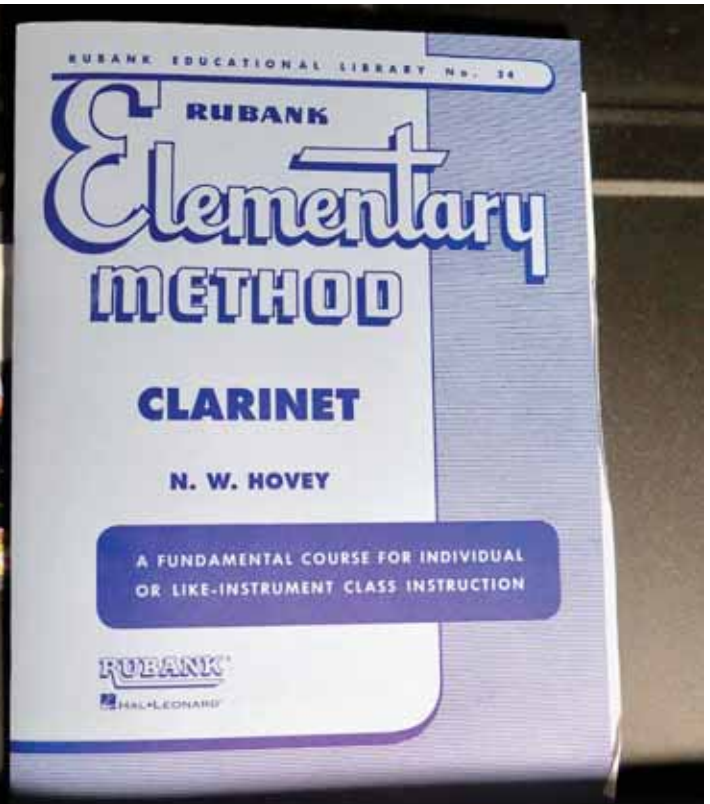
But then a friend, an accomplished singer, talked me into doing a duet at the forthcoming open mic event. We picked one of my favorites, "Auld Lang Syne," and adapted the familiar Scottish melody for voice and clarinet. We had fun rehearsing for a few weeks, and my songstress friend assured me I would have even more fun at the open mic.

Guess what?

I didn't have fun. I was so nervous, I couldn't regulate my breathing. And that's not a good place to

### Life With Charley

Charles McKelvy



Yep, "the Rubank" is back on the music stand, and I'm diggin' it.

be when you're playing a wind instrument in front of a live audience.

We played through "Auld Lang Syne," and the audience loved what we did, but I felt as though I had taken up smoking again. My heart was racing. I was just plain out of breath. A case of rapid, shallow breathing if ever there was one. And you psychology majors will know at once what caused that:

ANXIETY.

Oh, yeah. I had a bad case, and I was ready to bid farewell to my clarinet, forever.

I was so discouraged, I considered calling Bill King to see if he might have a buyer for my meticulously maintained, world-class instrument. I was that far down in the dumps.

I talked it over with my wife, Natalie, who is my best friend, mentor and crisis manager.

"You love to play the clarinet," she said. "Why don't you ditch the open mic nights, and band concerts, and all the rest of it, and just play for our enjoyment?"

In other words: no worries. No stress. No more rapid, shallow breathing.

So I went to my favorite music store and bought a fresh edition of what every beginning clarinet student recognizes as: Rubank Elementary Method — Clarinet by N.W. Hovey. My friends at the music store wondered if I was buying the fundamental course for a friend who wanted to take up the clarinet, but I confessed it was for me to kick-start my aging embouchure into making a perfect seal around the mouthpiece. And to calm my pulse and breathing, and slowly, methodically, returning to the instrument I have adored since first hearing Benny Goodman play his licorice stick, when my father spun his favorite vinyl in our living room.



Some assembly required, but I didn't need the directions to put "Clarice" back together again.

Then, I went to my long-neglected music corner, dusted off my music stand and cracked open my waterproof and insulated clarinet bag and case. I still knew how to assemble my clarinet. But first, I apologized to her, to "Clarice," for neglecting her.

When I first began taking my clarinet in for an annual tune-up, the ace technician asked if I named my clarinet. I replied, without hesitation, "Why Clarice, of course." Where Clarice came from, I'll never know, but I do know the name sure fits her. And I do know I had Clarice assembled in no time flat, ready to play all 48 pages of that blue music book known simply as "the Rubank."

We reviewed "the Rubank Boehm System Clarinet Chart" on the fold-out in front, then set to work on "Lesson 1: Whole Notes — Whole Rests." Play a note for four beats, then rest for four beats. Start with easy old E and work the left fingers all the way to C which, of course, stands for Charley's Clarinet, Clarice.

The fingers on my left hand knew just which keys and tone holes to hit, and the old embouchure wasn't half bad.

I didn't huff, puff nor gasp for breath.

No failure of nerves, no anxiety attack.

All because there was no audience out there in the dark watching and listening for that first mistake. For, if you'll excuse me, that first "clarinet fart."

I was amazed before I was halfway through, knowing without a doubt that day, that one day Clarice and I would play our way through to Page 48 for a polished go at Weber's "Gob Sticks."

It's grand and wonderful to be back at the music stand with Clarice in hand. To celebrate, we're having us a listen to Dave Bennett's awe-inspiring album, "Clarinet is King."

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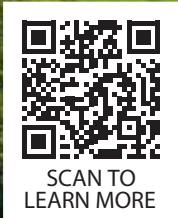
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- La Porte High School, 602 F St., 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursday, April 30.
- St. John's United Church of Christ, 101 St. John Road, noon-6 p.m. Tuesday, May 5.
- Northwest Health La Porte Hospital, 1331 State St., La Porte, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, May 5.

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](http://www.redcrossblood.org) for more details.



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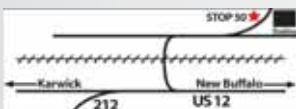
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## Michigan City Public Library

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:*

- **3-D Pen Workshop (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Thursday, April 30.** Meet in the maker-space, with no experience necessary. Children 12 and younger are required to attend with a parent or guardian.
- **Needle Arts Club from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursdays.** 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.
- **Eastland Disaster Presentation from 1-2 p.m. Saturday, May 2.** The Eastland Disaster Historical Society will lead a 45-minute presentation on the July 1915 shipwreck.
- **May the Fourth Party from 4-5 p.m. Monday, May 4.** Celebrate "Star Wars" through crafts, buttons and goodie bags.
- **Genealogy Help with Pat Harris from 1-4 p.m. Tuesdays.** Harris can offer tips and advice on how to research a family tree or find genealogical records.
- **Creative Tech Activities (ages 6-17) from 3:30-5 p.m. Tuesdays.** 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.
- **Author Susan Draper at 5 p.m. Tuesday, May 5.** Draper will discuss her writing journey, answer questions and sign her latest book, Lakeshore Secrets, a crime thriller set in Ogden Dunes.
- **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.

- **Piano concert by Joyceann Maynard at 1 p.m. Wednesday, May 6.** A classically trained pianist, Maynard will present a concert in the lobby. Her style mixes modern music with a classical feel.
- **Dungeons & Dragons (ages 13-17) from 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, May 6.** Supplies and characters are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Email Miss Dana at [dwolf@mclib.org](mailto:dwolf@mclib.org) for more details.
- **April and May scavenger hunts.** In April, find Super Mario Galaxy characters in Youth Services and win a prize. In May, find the hidden Sith, Rebels and droids for a prize.
- **Blackout Poetry: Create Your Own Pep Talk in April.** Pick up a discarded book page from the Reference Desk and black out most of the words, leaving visible only the words for a poem. Participants are invited to craft a self-pep talk, saying positive words needing to be heard. Turn in the completed "blackout" poem at the Reference Desk to be featured on the display wall.
- **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.
- **Hoopla.** The digital library app for eMaterials is available to cardholders. Along with eBooks and eAudiobooks, it offers comics, streaming films, TV shows and binge passes for popular collections, apps and channels.



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



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## New Buffalo Township Library

- **Star Wars Day.** The all-day program is Monday, May 4.
- **Read and Ride.** The program is from 9 a.m.-1:45 p.m. Thursday, May 7, at Silver Beach Center, St. Joseph, Mich.

### Weekly programs

- Teen Maker Space from 4-6 p.m. Thursdays.
- Chess Club from 4-6 p.m. Thursdays.
- Adult Literacy Class from 5:30-6:45 p.m. Thursdays.
- Essentrics Exercise for Seniors (gentle) at 10 a.m. Fridays. The intermediate program is at 11 a.m.
- Lego Club from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fridays and 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Saturdays.
- Story Time at 10 a.m. Mondays.
- Memory Café on the first Tuesday of the month.
- Read to a Dog Sessions for all ages from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday and 4-4:45 p.m. Wednesday.
- Teacher in the Library. The program is from 4-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays.
- Craft Time from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays while supplies last.

*All times are Eastern. New Buffalo Township Library is located at 33 N. Thompson St. Visit [www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org](http://www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org) or call (269) 469-2933 for more details.*

## Harbor Country Hikers

Berrien County Chief Naturalist Derek Pelc again will lead Harbor Country Hikers on his favorite wildflower trails at 1 p.m. EDT Saturday, May 2, at Love Creek County Park, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, Mich.

The trails highlight many of Michigan's "ephemeral" wildflowers, from trillium and hepatica to Dutchman's breeches and toothwort. The park also includes around 200 acres of meadows, forests, marshes and creeks.

HCH has an All-Terrain Rollator to use during hikes. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis by filling out the brief form at <https://harborcountryhikers.org/rollator>. Membership is preferred; however, the public is welcome. Wear a hat and sturdy shoes or boots, and take preferred pest controls and water.

Visit [www.harborcountryhikers.org](http://www.harborcountryhikers.org) or the group's Facebook page for more details.

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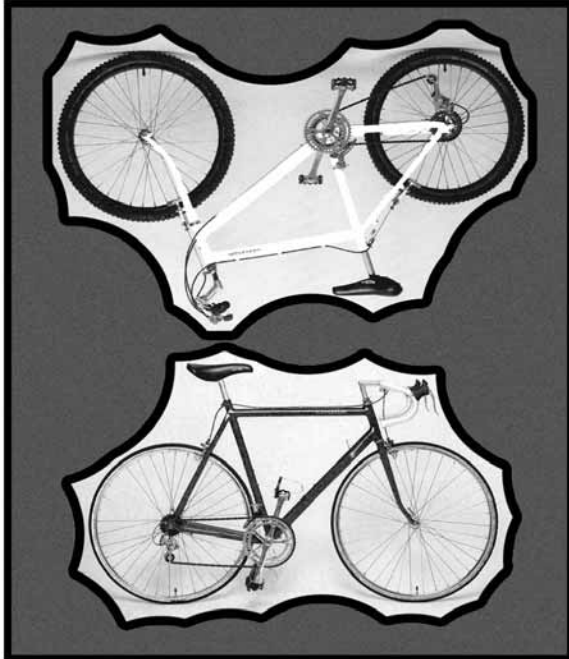
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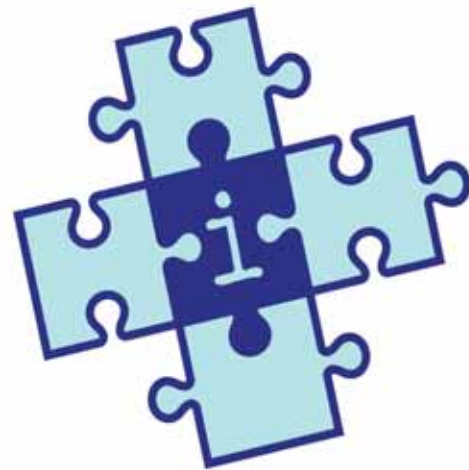
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### In the Area

**April 29** — Arts in the Park Spring Party Fundraiser, 5-7 p.m., The Boardwalk Beach Bar & Grill, 1110 Lakeside St., La Porte. Tickets: \$50. Info/reservations: [www.artsintheparklaporte.com](http://www.artsintheparklaporte.com), [tedbluesky@outlook.com](mailto:tedbluesky@outlook.com).

**April 30** — Spring Flower Tea Time, 10-11:30 a.m., Bluhm County Park, 3855 S. County Road 1100 West, Westville. Info: (219) 325-8315, [www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org)

**April 30** — 3-D Pen Workshop (ages 6-17), 3:30-5 p.m. Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**April 30** — Virtual Author Talk with Jason Reynolds, 6-7 p.m., through La Porte County Public Library. Registration: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**April 30** — An Evening with Marie Benedict, 6-8:30 p.m., The Great Hall Events & Conference Center, Purdue University Northwest, 1401 S. U.S. 421, Westville. Registration: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 1** — Open Studio Night, 6-8 p.m., St. Mary's Artist Studios, 326 W. 10th St.

**May 1-3** — Michigan City High School Drama Club, "The Lightning Thief: A Percy Jackson Musical," MCHS auditorium, 8466 Pahs Road. Times: 7 p.m. May 1-2/2 p.m. May 3. Tickets at door: \$15/adults, \$10/students & young children.

**May 1-3, 8-10** — "Moon Over Buffalo," La Porte Little Theatre Club, 218 A St. Times: 7:30 p.m. May 1-2 & 8-9, 2 p.m. May 3 & 10. Tickets: \$20/adults, \$19/seniors 55 & older, \$16/students with ID & younger. Reservations: [www.laportelittletheatreclub.com](http://www.laportelittletheatreclub.com)

**May 2** — The Biggest Little Baseball Museum First Saturday Speaker Series, noon EDT, Three Oaks Township Library, 3 N. Elm St. Free.

**May 2** — Eastland Disaster Presentation, 1-2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 2** — Harbor Country Hikers, 1 p.m. EDT, Love Creek County Park, 9292 Huckleberry Road, Berrien Center, Mich. Info: [www.harborcountryhikers.org](http://www.harborcountryhikers.org)

**May 2** — Spring Creek Horses Help Foundation "Hearts & Hooves" fundraiser, 5-9 p.m. EDT, Journeyman Distillery, 109 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich. Tickets: \$100. Reservations: (269) 756-3894.

**May 3** — History Hour: Lassen's Resort & the Golden Age of Cedar Lake, noon-12:45 p.m., Barker

Mansion, 631 Washington St. Cost: \$20/program & self-guided tour, \$30/program & guided tour. Info/registration: [www.barkermansion.org](http://www.barkermansion.org)

**May 4** — Star Wars Day, all day, New Buffalo Township Library, 33 N. Thompson St. Info: [www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org](http://www.newbuffalotownshiplibrary.org), (269) 469-2933.

**May 4** — May the Fourth Party, 4-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 4** — Choose Your Own Storytime, 4-4:30 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

### **May 5 — CINCO DE MAYO.**

**May 5** — America @ 250 Alexander Hamilton: Financing a New Nation, 4-5 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 5** — Tween Book Club (ages 10-13), 4:30-5:30 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 5** — Author Susan Draper, 5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 6** — Piano concert, Joyceann Maynard, 1 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

**May 6** — Creative Kids — Star Wars, 4-5 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**May 6** — Dungeons & Dragons (ages 13-17), 4-6 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: [dwolf@mclib.org](mailto:dwolf@mclib.org)

**May 6** — All Things True Crime Book Club, 5:30-6:30 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: [www.laportelibrary.org](http://www.laportelibrary.org)

**Through May 25** — "Reel Rides: Cars of TV & Film," Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$11/adults, \$9.50/seniors 60 & older, \$7/youth ages 6-18. Info: (888) 391-5600, [www.studebakermuseum.org](http://www.studebakermuseum.org)

**Through May 31** — "Rockne: Life & Legacy," South Bend's The History Museum, 808 W. Washington St. Info: [www.historymuseumSB.org](http://www.historymuseumSB.org), (574) 235-9664.

**Through June 14** — "Cosmic Connections," Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. *Family Day*: 1-3 p.m. May 30. Info: (219) 874-4900, [jsexton@LubeznikCenter.org](mailto:jsexton@LubeznikCenter.org)

**Through June** — Artist Betty Thomas, Queen of All Saints Catholic Church, 1719 E. Barker Ave. Hours: 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Thur., 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Info: [kd3627@hotmail.com](mailto:kd3627@hotmail.com)

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

**Mondays in Michigan City** — Bingo, Moose Family Lodge 980, 2107 Welnetz Road. Doors open/8:30 a.m., early birds/9:30 a.m., regular

Bingo/10 a.m.

**Mondays in Michigan City** — Adult Children of Alcoholic and Family Dysfunction (ACA), 6 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 600 Franklin St. Info: (219) 801-1296.

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

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

**Tuesdays** — Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS), 4:30 p.m., Simeon Square, 1207 S. Woodland Ave. Info: marsha2529@comcast.net

**Tuesdays** — Bingo, St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church, 1506 Washington St. Doors open: 4 p.m. Bingo: 6 p.m. \$40 entrance fee (includes specials except Winner Takes All & Jackpot). Jackpot consolation \$300 guaranteed. Info: (219) 336-3099.

**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

**Wednesdays** — Al-Anon meeting for Friends/Family of Alcoholics, 6 p.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 600 Franklin Square. Enter at Sixth Street Barker Hall side. Info: Candy at (708) 927-5287.

**Wednesday-Sunday** — Artist-in-Residence Art Display, 9:30 a.m., The Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary's Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

**Thursdays** — Needle Arts Club, 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

**Sundays** — Free sewing classes, 5-7 p.m. EDT, Friends of New Troy (Mich.) Community Center, 13372 California Road.

**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:* "Shane." Not Rated. Time: 7 p.m. April 30. *Also:* "Michael." Rated PG-13. Times: 4 & 7 p.m. May 1-2, 1 & 4 p.m. May 3, 7 p.m. May 5. *Also:* "Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope." Rated PG. Time: 7 p.m. May 4. All times Eastern. The theater is located at 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.



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## JROTC Supports Community

Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps continues to support the community, having aided nearly 50 different projects.

Cadets on April 17 helped distribute food to needy families at Sacred Heart Food Pantry. The following day, JROTC split its forces. Some cadets helped with spring cleanup at Friendship Botanic Gardens, while others assisted with the YMCA Game Day for underprivileged children.

The Salvation Army recognized cadets April 24 for supporting the organization. Cadets also will provide Color Guards on May 1 for the La Porte County Law Day at the Michigan City Courthouse, then during the Ivy Tech graduation at Valparaiso University on May 7.

Cadet 1st Lt. Payton Downs, after doing the Color Guard, will don a cap and gown to receive a certificate for earning college credits as part of the MCHS Dual Credit program.



Cadets who provided help for the Sacred Heart Food Pantry include (foreground) Cpl. Quinton Boorman and (from left) Lance Cpl. Shyanne Gasaway, Gunnery Sgt. Robert Pearce and 1st Lt. Payton Downs.

## Open Studio Night

Open Studio Night is from 6-8 p.m. Friday, May 1, at St. Mary's Artist Studios, 326 W. 10th St.

The featured artists are: Jane Cowley, Sunny Gardner-Orbovich, Diane Grams, Tim Lace, Nic Orbovich, Edwin Shelton, Margaret Sullivan and Suzy Vance.

## "Hearts & Hooves" Fundraiser

Spring Creek Horses Help Foundation will host a "Hearts & Hooves" fundraiser from 5-9 p.m. EDT Saturday, May 2, at Journeyman Distillery, 109 Generations Drive, Three Oaks, Mich.

The event is a key fundraiser to support the foundation's programs that bring horses to children and families, particularly those in underserved communities. Participants learn horse care, grooming and riding while developing confidence, empathy and life skills.

The evening includes a buffet dinner, cocktails, a silent auction and an 18-hole putting green experience. Tickets are \$100 per person.

Contact Alison Grosse at (269) 756-3894 for tickets and more details.

## Arts in the Park Fundraiser

Arts in the Park will host its Spring Party Fundraiser from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, April 29, at The Boardwalk Beach Bar & Grill, 1110 Lakeside St., La Porte.

The 21-and-older event includes music, light bites and beverages. The attire is relaxed, casual spring style. Tickets cost \$50 per person.

Contact Ted Taylor at tedbluesky@outlook.com or visit [www.artsintheparklaporte.com](http://www.artsintheparklaporte.com) for tickets or more details. All proceeds directly support Arts in the Park's free summer-concert series.

## Baseball Museum Program

The Biggest Little Baseball Museum kicks off its First Saturday Speaker Series at noon EDT Saturday, May 2, at Three Oaks Township Library, 3 N. Elm St.

Presented by museum staff, the program, "The Browns, Eddie Gaedel and a Glove," features an overview of the museum and introduces baseball's forgotten team, the St. Louis Browns.

Admission is free and includes a free box of Cracker Jacks.

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**Shirley Heinze Spring Benefit**

Shirley Heinze Land Trust will host its annual spring benefit May 30 at William E. Urschel Pavilion, 63 Lafayette St., Valparaiso.

This year's theme is "Adding Value to Community." The organization will highlight the connection between preserved natural spaces and the well-being of Northwest Indiana residents.

The cornerstone of SHLT's annual outreach and fundraising ventures, the benefit includes dinner, music, drinks and an auction.

Visit <https://shorturl.at/Gl2xn> or contact Deputy Director Bridget Harrison at (219) 242-8558 or [bharrison@heinzetrust.org](mailto:bharrison@heinzetrust.org) for reservations or more details.

**Westchester Public Library**

Westchester Public Library has curbside pickup at its Thomas and Hageman branches.

Use a library card or go online to place holds on up to 10 items, including DVDs and CDs. Once notified the items are available, park in specially-numbered spaces at each branch during pickup hours. While parked, call the library phone number posted on the numbered space sign.

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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**Upward Bound** by Woody Brown (hardcover \$28 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 184 pages.)

*“Walk a mile in my shoes.”*

That old adage immediately came to mind after reading this book. I’m speaking here of autistic children who are more misunderstood, especially non-verbal ones.

This amazing novel starts out at a former senior center turned into adult day care. Even more amazing is that the story was written by a nonspeaking autistic man who not only got his high school diploma, but also went on to UCLA, won the English Department’s top writing honors and became the first nonspeaking autistic graduate. If that isn’t enough, he went on to Columbia University to earn a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing. That happened just two years ago.

OK, I was not knowledgeable about the term “nonspeaking autistic,” so the verbiage sent me running to the computer for clarification. According to *Autism Parenting Magazine*: “It’s not about what someone can’t do; it’s about how they communicate.”

Do I have your attention now? Our narrator is Walter, a nonspeaking autistic who tells of his days at an adult day care in Los Angeles named Upward Bound, along with the people who run it and the clients.

Men and woman like Walter want very much to be part of society, to contribute, to lead a somewhat normal life. However, Walter sadly explains that “special ed” classes often make math no more than learning how to make change. English means looking at children’s picture books. How far will that get you in life?

Walter’s story begins as a small boy when his parents refuse to give up on him. They are inspired by a “60 Minutes” program in which an Indian woman taught her nonspeaking autistic son how to type. Walter’s parents get in touch with the woman, learning much from her about teaching Walter. It works...to an extent.

Walter makes it all the way through high school and receives his diploma. He is ready for college, but there is no way he can take the SAT by himself, so community college becomes his only choice. He sails through the next two years and receives an Associate of Arts degree, and to the wild cheering of his parents.

Right after graduation, Walter’s father dies unexpectedly and his mother goes back to work. Staying home alone, for Walter, is not an option. It’s off to Upward Bound...

## Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



What really makes the story is the up close and personal look at the people at the center. Some stories are told in first person, some by Walter. His best friend is Jorge, a “gentle giant” with a fixation on the Mr. Potato Head toy.

The staff includes Carlos, the supervisor, who works there with his sister, Mariana. Their mother is an alcoholic who landed in jail. Mariana got them their jobs at Upward Bound. Carlos has developed a friendship with Jorge, and an ability to communicate with him.

Ann needed a job for the summer before college resumes. She wanted something on her resume besides waitressing. She learns a lot from Tom, the client in a wheelchair due to cerebral palsy. He can’t believe she actually looks at him and talks to him like a real person. He’s looking for quality of life, not longevity.

There are more stories here, each client having a different experience. Many, but not all, of the counselors are just looking for a job, but even they have a story to tell.

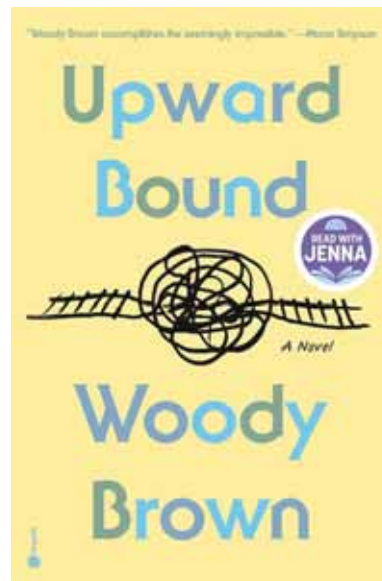
Making this book a novel was a stroke of genius. Brown’s writing is clear, concise, authentic and tugs at the heart of the matter. His characters will inspire you. Putting down the book is hard to do. There is drama and despair, even humor.

I can’t give enough credit to Brown’s parents for the hope and teaching they provided their son, never giving up on his ability to grow and learn.

*The final word:* Why is it so easy to look with disdain and fear at people who are different? People with mental and physical conditions we can’t even pronounce. Brown has taken a brave stand by saying “enough.” It’s time to open our eyes and see what these people are capable of. See the person inside. Don’t dismiss them to adult day-care centers that are understaffed and not trained in dealing with the autistic. I’m not criticizing the staff at these facilities — most of them are willing to give the best they can, and usually for lower wages — but they aren’t trained enough, as Walter points out.

Brown gives us much to think about — just remember who wrote this book, a nonspeaking autistic — then tell me he isn’t able to contribute to society.

He’s now working on his next book.  
Till next time, happy reading!



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