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FURRY MIRACLE WORKERS

by Betsy Kohn



New Buffalo Area Schools preschoolers spend time with Colleen Melendy and Teddy during “Read to a Dog” at New Buffalo Township Library.
Photo by Betsy Kohn.

Colleen Melendy and her therapy dogs – Teddy, Ollie and Bernie – sure get around.

You might spot them at the library, listening patiently as children read, or spreading some love among staff and patrons. You might see them heading into a nursing home or hospital to bring joy and a calming presence to patients. You might even catch them at a college lecture or competing along-

side 4-H’ers at the fair.

And at any of these places, you might just witness something extraordinary.

Twice, Melendy’s dogs have been credited with saving a life – just by being present, resting a head on a lap in need. She can’t fully explain it.

“I know my dogs make a difference in people’s lives,” she says. “That’s what keeps me doing this.”

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FURRY MIRACLE WORKERS

Continued from Page 1

A NATURAL BEST FRIEND

Melendy has always been a dog person.

Growing up in Sanford, Mich., her brother was allergic to dogs, but the family kept beagles for hunting.

“When I left home,” she says, “as soon as I was on my own, I always had a dog.”

She and her husband, Chuck, moved to New Buffalo in 1976. The couple, which celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last year, own Exit 4 Storage, a family business their son, Bill, and his wife, Tabitha, help manage. Their daughter, Sarah, lives in Hudson Lake and volunteers with Project Hope Animal Rescue. Melendy also served as New Buffalo Township clerk from 1996-2004.

Over the years, the family had several dogs. But everything changed in 2009 with Newdle, a Newfoundland/standard poodle mix.

Melendy still remembers choosing Newdle at a rescue in Toledo.

“I temper-tested all the puppies in the litter,” she says. “They all passed with flying colors. So I just reached out and picked one up, and that was my dog.”

The rescue had three conditions: Newdle had to be spayed, returned (not rehomed) if she didn’t

work out and enrolled in obedience training.

It was at the obedience class that Newdle was “discovered.”

“The lady who ran the school asked me if I had ever considered using my dog for therapy,” Melendy recalls. “I didn’t really know anything about it, but she told me Newdle was the epitome of what a therapy dog should be.”

The trainer pointed her toward the Best Friends 4-H Club in St. Joseph. The inclusive club teaches youth with disabilities about dog ownership and training, and gives them an opportunity to compete in canine events at the Berrien County Youth Fair. It also certifies dogs for therapy, and connects owners with service opportunities.

When Melendy saw the club in action at the fair, she was all in.

“Here were all of these kids, competing with the dogs in obedience and agility. Everybody’s having so much fun,” she says. “I walked up to the table where the adults were sitting and I said next year, I want to be out there.”

Best Friends 4-H Club Coordinator Linda Shannon-Chaillet says Melendy is a “true 4-H treasure.”

That first year, she paired Melendy and Newdle with a shy 4-H’er named Veronica to practice Figure 8, Good Sportsmanship, Obedience and Agility.

There was just one challenge.

“Newdle decided that laying on the cool floor on those hot summer days was much more to her liking,” Shannon-Chaillet laughs.



Bernie greets Marina Santos, a Michigan City Public Library staff member.
Photo by Katie Mitschelen.

Still, they persisted. At the fair, Newdle did what she liked best, stretching out in the cool grass of the event ring. But Veronica used the commands she learned to get Newdle to sit up and heel.

“To everyone’s surprise, Veronica and Newdle took Grand Champion in Non-Traditional Obedience,” Shannon-Chaillet says. “It was a job well done and well earned.”

NEWDLA THE LIFESAVER

Following the fair, Melendy and Newdle expanded their therapy work. Initially, she was most excited about visiting schools and libraries to work with kids. Then, a vet tech suggested hospice.

“This was my serendipity moment,” Melendy says. “My mom was struggling with dementia. She was very independent, yet she needed help. I thought maybe if I do hospice, I’ll learn something about how to deal with people with dementia.”

She learned far more than she expected.

Just two months later, Lakeland Hospice recognized Newdle as 2011 Volunteer of the Year. Melendy was stunned when the award was announced at a state conference.

“Newdle was the only dog in the state of Michigan to be named a volunteer of the year,”

she says. “Everyone else was human!”

The recognition stemmed from an encounter with a patient in a memory care unit that Melendy still calls miraculous. The patient — frail, withdrawn and combative — had not spoken in more than nine months. When Newdle gently rested her head in the woman’s lap, everything changed.

Continued on Page 4



Colleen provided this photo of Newdle, the Newfoundland/standard poodle mix she adopted in 2009.

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Continued from Page 3

“She hugged and hugged that dog, and then she whispered something to a staff member,” Melendy recalls. “She wanted to play with the dog. Then, she kept talking and talking to Newdle.”

In the weeks that followed, the patient’s demeanor became pleasant and cheerful. The turnaround was so dramatic, she was able to go home to her family.

“Staff members were crying,” Melendy says. “The doctors looked it up; they could find nothing in any of the medical journals like this.”

Today, she shares stories like this with future nursing students at Andrews University, where she speaks about the impact of canine therapy.

THREE DOGS ON DUTY

Newdle passed away in 2020. But Melendy’s work continues.

Now, Teddy, Ollie and Bernie carry on with the mission. Teddy – a goldendoodle/miniature poodle mix – accompanies Melendy on most therapy visits, although Ollie (a goldendoodle/standard poodle) and Bernie (golden-doodle/bernedoodle) occasionally step in. Sometimes, Melendy will bring two dogs simply because patients enjoy watching them play.

All three are 4-H-certified therapy dogs trained using a clicker method that reinforces positive behavior. They respond to verbal commands and hand signals for heel, sit, stay and more. Teddy even knows left from right.

Some commands, however, are intentionally off-limits.

“Because we do hospice, we don’t learn ‘speak’ or ‘shake,’” she says. “We keep four paws on the floor.”

For the past decade, Melendy has been visiting New Buffalo

Township Library for its “Read to a Dog” program, where children read aloud to the dogs.

Kristy Good, coordinator of youth services, says the program helps children become better readers – and is beloved by staff.

“Dogs are so non-judgmental,” she says. “Teddy has the exuberance of a kid, but he’s also calming, gentle and very patient. Therapy Dog Day is also really great for me, because I can be having a stressful day, and it’s just amazing to give him a hug.”

At Michigan City Public Library, a similar program welcomes readers of all ages.

“Sharing a book in a calm and supportive environment increases confidence and reduces reading anxiety,” says Katie Mitschelen, director of public relations and programming. “Some of our youngest readers share the illustrations with Teddy while creating their own story. The program is very fluid and fits what each reader needs.”

Beyond libraries, Melendy and her canine crew also keep busy with weekly visits to three nursing homes in Bridgman, Mich., and the behavioral health unit at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospitals in St. Joseph.



Kristy Good, the New Buffalo Township Library youth services coordinator, is photographed with Teddy by Betsy Kohn.

“In the structured environment of a psychiatric unit, routines, treatment plans and clinical conversation are part of daily life,” says Denise Heindlmeyer, a recreational therapist at Corewell. “Teddy works his magic...transforming the atmosphere from clinical to comforting in a matter of minutes.

“The simple act of stroking a dog’s fur can slow breathing, lower heart rate and promote relaxation,” she adds. “Teddy doesn’t ask questions — he simply offers companionship. For many patients, that unconditional acceptance is a powerful part of the healing journey.”

Beyond emotional comfort, Melendy’s dogs also encourage social interaction. Patients often gather around during visits, sharing stories about their own pets or working together to give the dogs commands. Laughter and conversa-

tion tend to come more easily when a friendly dog is involved.

"To be in Teddy's presence and watch him work is truly an amazing gift!" Heindlmeyer says.

THE PEACOCK COLLAR

Melendy still keeps the bright green-and-blue collar Newdle once wore, patterned with peacock feathers. For years after the dog's death, it hung untouched, along with its matching leash.

Now, Teddy wears it.

"I always said that if Teddy did something really, really outstanding, he would earn the right to wear it," Melendy says.

Last year, during a visit to the psychiatric unit, Teddy stepped in when a patient in severe distress — injured and overwhelmed — began to escalate.

"I took Teddy over, and he stood alongside that patient, and instantly, the person calmed down," Melendy says. "They started saying, 'Teddy, you saved my life.'"

"Well, of course, he didn't save that patient's life," she adds. "But I guess in a way, he did. He earned the collar."

Stories like this continue to inspire Melendy, 75, who has no plans to slow down. The work matters to her, to the people she visits and to the dogs, who seem to genuinely love what they do.

Watching Teddy roll over for belly rubs at the library, she smiles.

"This is my dog, hard at work," she says. "We should all be so lucky."

(The Beacher's weekly listings for Michigan City Public Library and New Buffalo Township Library include listings for "Read to a Dog" visits.)

About Best Friends 4-H

Founded in 1988, the Best Friends 4-H Club teaches youth with and without disabilities about dog ownership and training, while offering opportunities to compete in canine events at the Berrien County Youth Fair.

As a recognized American Kennel Club organization, the club also certifies therapy dogs and connects owners with service opportunities.

Meetings and training are held March through December at Mutterly Love in St. Joseph, Mich.

Dogs of any breed are welcome, whether they already have strong social skills or are still developing them with their owners.

(Owners must become 4-H leaders and participate in the Summer Dog Program.)

Visit www.bf4hclub.com or contact Linda Shannon-Chaillet at shannollet@sbcglobal.net for more details.



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“Deathtrap” Kicks Off 75th Dunes Season With Style, Sting

by Andrew Tallackson



Sidney Bruhl (Kevin Lee Giese, left) discusses with Clifford Anderson (Michael Bond) his unpublished play in “Deathtrap.” Photos by Tony V. Martin.

Dunes Arts Summer Theatre’s “Deathtrap” has the most bite of any I’ve seen, and believe me, when local theater is a reviewer’s primary playground, certain shows make the regular rotation.

Even if you’ve seen Ira Levin’s snarky wink of a comic-thriller, the twists no longer such, there is joy to be had in watching dynamite actors dive into the material with zero fear.

Levin, the devilish mind behind “Rosemary’s Baby,” “The Stepford Wives” and “Sliver,” designed “Deathtrap” as an elaborate insider’s joke. A meta nod to “Sleuth” that comments not only on itself, but also the conventions of the genre that inspired it.

Playwright Sidney Bruhl (Dunes great Kevin Lee Giese) no longer is a Broadway juggernaut: bereft of hits, financial nest egg dwindling. His wife of 11 years, Myra (Jann Iaco), is supportive, but red flags wave when her husband invites aspiring writer Clifford Anderson (Michael Bond) over to discuss his not-yet-produced thriller, “Deathtrap.” Is Sidney about to stage a real-life murder?

The director and set designer here is Michael Lasswell, a talent so skilled at creating an entire world on stage, he’s almost his own worst enemy. His work is so vast and rich in detail, your gaze has a way of drifting across the set to take it all in. But

Janet Davies as
Helga ten Dorp.



here, his cast directs your eye back to front and center.

We expect that Giese will be strong — no one plays men itching for mischief better than him — but it is the ensemble that delivers the biggest surprises. Bond, as Clifford, is all nervous energy and admiration in the early scenes before the performance takes on an accelerating menace. And the horror on Iaco’s face, as Myra’s worst fears become reality, is genuine and heartbreaking.

Then, you have Janet Davies, back after last year’s

“Misery,” as Helga ten Dorp, the loopy psychic who likes to sniff around — literally — Sidney’s home. Past actresses I’ve seen in the role are too self-aware. They know the character is comic relief, and the performance slips into clumsy camp. Davies, however, disappears into Helga so entirely, she lets the character’s quirks speak for themselves. It is fair to say, Davies owns her every scene.

There is style to spare during the big finish, complete with an ominous storm courtesy of lighting designer Arturo Pozos and sound designer Jake Tillmann. It is a thrilling finish to a show that delivers the goods right from the start and never looks back.

(See *Upcoming Events*” on Pages 36-37 for show times, dates and ticket prices.)



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Annual Donut Eating Contest

The Salvation Army will host the 11th annual Donut Eating Contest on Friday, June 5, at Blue Chip Casino's Stardust Event Center.

Doors open at 9 a.m., with the contest beginning promptly at 10 a.m. Admission is free.

Reigning champion Ben Bachmann, representing Phi Delta Kappa and Michigan City Area Schools, returns this year. Michigan City High School's athletic director, he is back for his third year after winning the past two contests and setting a record of eating 20 donuts in 10 minutes. In 2025, he tied with Victor Hernandez, of CLH CPAs & Consultants, at 20 donuts, forcing a tie-breaker round that Bachmann won. Hernandez also returns this year.

Joining the two are: Jenni Alexander (La Porte County Family YMCA); Jon Arlow (Sullivan-Palatek); Derrick Arnett (Arnett Construction); Det. Cpl. Dylan Barden (La Porte Police Department); Jocelyn Colburn (Michigan City Police Department); Brad Ellett (Ruoff Mortgage); Dakota Euler (La Porte County Weights and Measures); Alexis Garcia (NorthShore Health Centers); Kristy Hahn (Family Advocates); Deputy Dylan Hisick (La Porte County Sheriff's Office); Marissa Hughart (Absolute Wages); Linda Moore (ServPro); Toni Kester Bulger (La Porte County Public Library); Liz Pina (Michigan City Chamber of Commerce); and Andrew Prentice (The Salvation Army).

Contestants try to eat the most donuts in 10 minutes, with this year's donuts provided by Al's Supermarket. Returning as emcees and judges are Katie Eaton of NIPSCO and Mike Hackett of Harbour Trust & Investment Management Services.

Contest proceeds benefit Salvation Army services in La Porte County, including the food pantry, diaper bank, weekend backpack feeding program, free summer camp for local children, free clothing room, case management and spiritual care.



Reigning champion Ben Bachmann.

Community members can vote for their favorite contestant. Each \$10 donation counts as one vote. After the contest, one voter who supported the winning contestant is randomly selected to receive a \$50 gift card from the chamber. Cast votes at www.salarmy.us/MCdonuts26 or at the event.

This year's sponsors include Blue Chip Casino, GAF and the chamber. Visit www.samichiganity.org or www.salaporte.org for more details.

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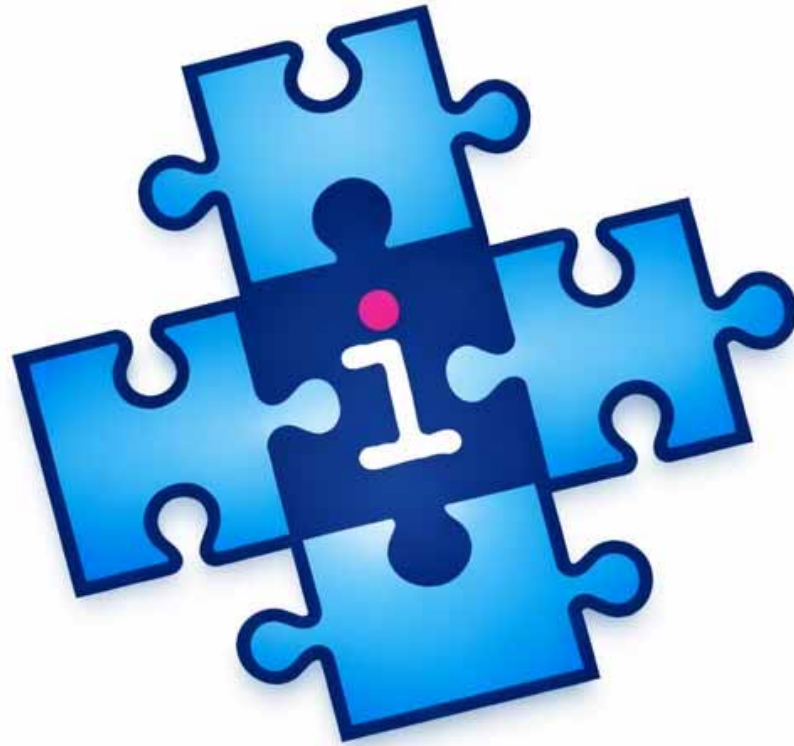
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Harbor Country Hikers

Harbor Country Hikers will explore Grand Mere State Park, with emphasis on the “Grand Marais Embayment,” at 10 a.m. EDT Saturday, June 6.

The embayment is a 16-mile-long, ancient marine bay running parallel to the Lake Michigan shoreline in western Berrien County. Extending between Lakeside in the south and Stevensville in the north, it contains some of the largest freshwater dunes in the world and two state parks. In 1968, it was designated a National Natural Landmark.

Leading the hike is HCH President Pat Fisher. A recreation passport is required. An All-Terrain Rollator may be reserved 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. The park is located at 7337 Thornton Drive, Stevensville, Mich. Dress for the weather, wear a hat and sturdy shoes or boots, and take preferred pest controls and water. Visit www.harborcountryhikers.org or the group’s Facebook page for more details.

Harbor Country Rotary Fundraiser

After last year’s sold-out debut, Harbor Country Rotary Foundation will bring back its “Mystery Dinner,” expanding from six private dining locations to 10, at 6 p.m. EDT Thursday, June 11.

The intimate, four-course gourmet meal in a private Harbor Country home offers the following twist: participants won’t know where they’re dining until 48 hours beforehand. Each location will host approximately 10 guests, creating a series of simultaneous dinner parties.

Tickets, which cost \$75, include dinner and wine. All proceeds support Harbor Country Rotary initiatives, including programs that promote literacy, address food insecurity, protect the environment, develop young leaders and fund international service projects.

Tickets are available at <https://givebutter.com/mystery-dinner-2026>. Early reservations are encouraged.

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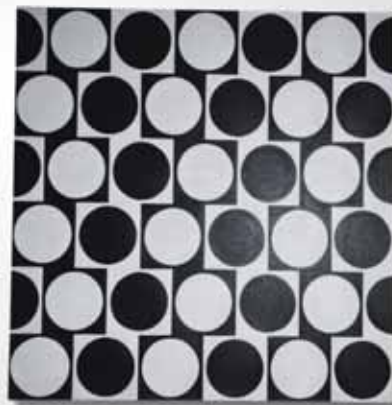
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— Dig the Dunes Upcoming Events —

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Saturday, June 27: Vinyasa in the Vineyard, Valparaiso

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PLUS..Mac & Cheese Fest, Sunday, Oct. 4. VIP tickets are limited.
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Banner Art Initiative

This summer, art in Michigan City will not be confined to gallery walls.

Instead, it will hang above Franklin Street, visible to residents, visitors, shoppers and anyone walking through the Uptown Arts District.

As part of Michigan City's 190th anniversary celebration, Michigan City Public Art Committee has launched a banner art initiative that will transform uptown light poles into a public art exhibit celebrating the city's history, identity and future.

Submissions are due by 4 p.m. Monday, June 15.

Nineteen artist-designed banners will line portions of Franklin Street. The project is centered on the theme "Heritage and Legacy: 190 Years, 190 Stories," inviting artists to visually interpret what Michigan City means to them, from its industrial roots and lakefront heritage to neighborhoods, architecture, faith traditions and cultural life.

Professional artists, students, nonprofits, educators, community groups and emerging creatives are encouraged to participate. Existing artwork may be submitted alongside new pieces. Final banners will measure approximately 24 by 62 inches and be professionally produced for outdoor display. Selected artists receive a \$100 commission while retaining ownership and copyright of the original art.

Submitted art may be pictorial, abstract or graphic. Quotations or titles may be used. Submissions may not include advertising or political statements. Artists may submit multiple proposals. Final artwork must be formatted for vertical banners. The recommended size is about 24" x 62" (2:5 ratio). A high-resolution digital file is required (minimum 300 DPI). MAC reserves the right to adjust/crop artwork for production. Each submission must include:

- Artist name/organization name.
- Contact information (email and phone).
- Title of artwork.
- Brief artist statement (100–200 words).
- How the work reflects the themes related to Michigan City's 190th anniversary
- A short artist bio is optional.

Email the submission to art.mac.mc@gmail.com

Barker Mansion

- **History Hour: Plowing Through the Competition: The Olivers and the Chilled Plow from noon-12:45 p.m. Sunday, June 14.** Kristie Erickson, The History Museum deputy executive director, and Curator of Copshaholm Amber Gabel will present the history of South Bend's Oliver Chilled Plow Works. Tickets are \$20 for the program and a self-guided tour and \$30 for the program and a guided tour.

Barker Mansion is located at 631 Washington St. Visit www.barkermansion.org to register for programs or for more information.

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P.E.O. STAR Scholarship

Adelaide Steele, a senior at North Reading High School in Massachusetts, has received a \$2,500 STAR Scholarship from the Philanthropic Educational Organization Sisterhood.

Steele is the granddaughter of Irene and William Rosevear, rural Michigan City. P.E.O. Chapter BR of Michigan City recommended her for the honor.

The scholarship, established in 2009, aids high-school senior women to attend an accredited post-secondary educational institution in the U.S. or Canada in the next academic year. It is for women who exhibit excellence in leadership, academics, extracurricular activities, community service and potential for future success.

Steele is an officer of Interact Club, Red Cross Club and Student Mentoring and Leadership. She plays lacrosse and recently served as the student manager on the girls' soccer team at North Reading High School.

She will attend Providence College in the fall to pursue a Bachelor of Science in nursing degree.

Woman's Club Art Show

Seven *Beacher*-area artists were among the winners in the 74th Annual Chesterton Woman's Club Art Show, which closed May 30 at Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St.

Award recipients were:

- First Place — Leah Romano McMeen, La Porte, for "The Snowy Owl, Winter Visitor to the Dunes" in soft pastel.
- Second Place — Chris Stiller, La Porte, for "Red Vase" done in mosaic/mixed media.

Merit awards went to:

- Jane Cowley, Michigan City, "Study of Suzy," an oil painting.
- Kevin Firme, Beverly Shores, "Fast Stream" sculpture in steel and glass.
- Kuhn Hong, Michigan City, "Homeless Artist" oil painting.
- Kris Cook, La Porte, "Fishing Cabin" acrylic painting.

Honorable Mention went to:

- Larry (Lars) Jensen, Beverly Shores, "Burned Bowl" basswood.

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The Coin Jar

My twin sister Jenny and I were clearing the dining room table after a family gathering when she started giggling. “Do you remember the year we played Santa?” she asked, shaking her head.

I grinned. “You mean the time we robbed Dad’s coin jar for what we thought was a good cause?”

We both laughed, the kind of laugh sisters share — the one that carries an entire lifetime inside it. A few of our grandkids bustled in the next room, playing with some small gifts we’d purchased to keep them busy while the adults finished dinner. Watching them reminded us of that one unforgettable Christmas when we decided we could create wonder and joy.

We were 12 — too old to believe in Santa, but too young to stop wanting magic. One evening, as we sat on our twin beds, I looked at Jenny and said, “Don’t you think it’s unfair that Mom and Dad never get gifts from Santa?”

Our parents were raising five of us, with another baby on the way, and every Christmas morning they were instrumental in creating joy, but there was never anything for them under the tree.

Jenny shrugged, half amused: “Yeah, but what can we do about it?”

That’s when my “brilliant” idea burst out: “We could buy them presents. Wrap them up. Leave



them under the tree from Santa.”

She stared at me. “With what money, genius?”

“Dad’s coin bin,” I whispered. “The one in his office in the basement. He never touches it. We’ll just borrow some until we can pay it back with allowance or babysitting money.”

And just like that, a scheme was launched.

On a few days after school, we rode our bikes into town to Kresge’s or walked over to the Ben Franklin Five & Dime, our mittens stuffed with change. We picked gifts that felt grown-up: Jean Naté perfume and hair clips for Mom. Handkerchiefs, socks and a coffee mug that said World’s Best Dad for our father, and a few other trinkets to fill a large gift box.

On Christmas Eve, after the house went quiet, we sneaked downstairs. The lights from the tree cast colorful puddles across the living room carpet. Carefully, we slid the big box under the lowest branches of the white-flocked spruce. The tag read: “To Mom and Dad — From Santa.” We grinned at one another. Everything felt perfect.

The next morning was pandemonium as always. Five kids tearing through wrapping paper, laughter bouncing off the walls, our father filming everything on the old movie camera with its platter-sized flash bulbs. Then, Mom spotted the mysterious gift box.

“Jack,” she said to Dad, her brown eyes wide, “there’s one for us.”

As we watched them unwrap each of the small gifts, we tried to hide our smiles. “Jean Naté! I used to wear this,” Mom laughed. Dad twirled a new comb between his fingers. “Santa knows I needed one of these,” he said. For a moment, my chest swelled with pride. We’d done it.

Or so I thought.

Later, when our siblings went off to play with their new toys, Mom called Jen and me aside. Her voice was kind, but serious. “When did you buy these gifts? And how did you pay for them?”

Jenny and I exchanged a look that meant, Uh-oh, I think we’re busted.

I swallowed. “We used some of the coins from Dad’s office,” I said, trying to make it sound harmless.

Mom’s face softened, but her words stung. “I know you meant well. But you can’t take things that aren’t yours — not even for a good reason. Some of your father’s coins were special, saved over years.

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You need to tell him what you did.”

Jenny and I looked at each other. We had good intentions, but it looked like they backfired. We trudged into the kitchen, our heads down, wondering how Dad would react.

Dad listened quietly and was silent for a moment. Uh-oh! We’re in trouble.

After a moment, his face eased into a smile. In that calm gentle way of his, he said, “You’ve got good hearts. But you should’ve asked for permission.” He hugged each of us, patting the crowns of our silky brown hair. “We’ll work out something with your allowance for payback.”

We learned a valuable lesson that day, one we’ve carried through life.

And now, as an adult with her own jar of loose change, I think of that lesson every time I drop in a coin. Over the years, my kids have borrowed from the coin jar for needy causes, but I taught them to always ask first.

The afternoon light spills through the kitchen windows as Jenny and I stack dessert plates and refill coffee mugs. Outside, the flowers are in bloom, sweetening the breeze that drifts through the screens. Our grandkids and their parents are in the yard, hiding small trinkets in the flowerbeds for an improvised “spring treasure hunt.”

Jenny nudges me with her elbow. “Looks like they’ve taken over the Secret Santa duties.”

I smile, watching one of the grandkids dash across the lawn with a ribbon trailing behind him. “Good,” I say. “It’s their turn.”

For a moment, we stand side by side, listening to the laughter outside, the clinking dishes, the hum of another season turning. The memory of that long-ago Christmas flickers between us — not heavy with guilt anymore, just warm with recognition. We were only trying to give what we’d been given: wonder, in whatever form we could find it.



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Chesterton Art Center



"West Beach," Edward Powell's 2006 oil on canvas.

Chesterton Art Center will host its new exhibit, "Site/Sight: Works from the Artist-in-Residence Program of the Indiana Dunes National Park," on June 4-Aug. 1.

An artist panel is from 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, June 18, and a Third Friday Artists' Reception from 4-7 p.m. Friday, July 17.

The program has been sharing the park's landscape for more than 25 years, and served more than 100 artists. The current exhibit is a survey of works in the National Park collection, including some from 2023-2025 that have not yet been exhibited.

Chesterton Art Center is located at 115 S. Fourth St. Hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday and closed Sunday. Call the center at (219) 926-4711 or visit www.chestertonart.org for more details.

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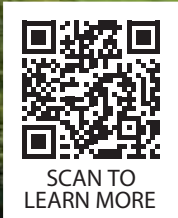
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The Force is Kinda Weak With “The Mandalorian and Grogu”

by Andrew Tallackson



in
Theatres

The action is plentiful throughout “The Mandalorian and Grogu.”

It’s probably a sign of the times, with streaming now the norm, that “The Mandalorian and Grogu” does not resemble a movie, more like a couple episodes of the Disney+ show strung together.

And it is another reminder that Disney, wringing every last buck out of a single franchise, has again dipped into a well darn near close to dry.

It is time to give that galaxy far, far away an overdue break.

Now, I admire the first two seasons of “The Mandalorian.” Not because the writing was strong, or a performance deserved an Emmy nod. It was more that director Jon Favreau, who did a wonderful job with the first two “Iron Man” films, assembled a talented group to recreate the sensation of experiencing the “Star Wars” universe all over again.

Then, the fatigue settled in, that initial joy crumbling...until Tony Gilroy proved with “Andor” that this world could be about more than lightsabers and droids: a stinging political parallel to present times.

Now, with “The Mandalorian and Grogu,” Favreau has created a film that, save for individual moments that rock with old-school thrills, suffers from the blahs of franchise overload. It’s junky, aloof storytelling.

★ ★ 1/2

“The Mandalorian and Grogu”

Running time: 132 minutes. In theaters.

Rated PG-13 for sci-fi action and violence.

The film presents itself as a direct sequel to “Return of the Jedi.” The Empire is no more, so the New Republic is hunting down remaining Imperial warlords. It is akin to the post-World War II years when Nazi officials fled Germany, many to South America, their pursuers hellbent on bringing them to justice.

As the movie opens, bounty hunter Din Djarin (voiced by Pedro Pascal), known simply as the Mandalorian, or Mando, tracks down one sleazebag that leads to a wow of a showdown involving the Imperial walkers from “The Empire Strikes Back.” By placing the walkers amid a precarious mountain glacier, the stunts, special effects and especially the sound effects — the wheezing moan of those walkers — still generates awe.

We also squirm with delight at sci-fi royalty Sigourney Weaver (“Alien”) as Ward, a New Republic leader. Early, she has a beautifully choreographed bit of comedy when Grogu, or Baby Yoda,

uses the Force to slide her meal toward him, Weaver placing her hand on the dish, her eyes still on the Mandalorian.

The movie feels amped for fun. But then, cracks in the proverbial armor appear.

Let's start with the soundtrack. On streaming, the score by three-time Oscar winner Ludwig Göransson ("Sinners") establishes the series on its own funky terms. But in a movie theater, we've been prepped for the majesty of John Williams. This is the first time a score by Göransson does not quite work. It's too experimental, with weird electronica that makes the action feel small and insignificant, like it belongs in a TV series.

Then, the plot takes over. Weaver's Ward needs the Mandalorian and Grogu to visit the Hutt twins — relatives of the now-deceased Jabba the Hutt — who have information on the whereabouts of a mysterious Imperial figure named Coin. If they can rescue their nephew, Jabba's son Rotta, from enslavement, they will share what they know about Coin.

Rotta is voiced by Jeremy Allen White, the fantastic actor from FX's "The Bear." In that show, the actor pulses with raw intensity. Here, the sound effects crew toys with his voice so it sounds like a member of the Hutt clan. They could have hired *any* actor for this. By turning White's distinct voice into an effect, it strips him of investing Rotta with any personality.

Rotta is designed as the film's soft spot. The son of a gangster denied a life of his own. But Favreau and crew appear more interested in chases, either on foot or by machine. These sequences are mildly fun, but because they lack the genuine heroics of the original "Star Wars" trilogy, they exist as effects for effects' sake.

After it appears Rotta's story is resolved, the story skids to a halt, as if one TV episode concluded and Favreau edited the next one directly into it. True, every action picture deserves a brief respite. But when the Mandalorian is injured, poison seeping through his body, Grogu must nurse him back to health. And from there, nothing. Literally...nothing. It is the cinematic equivalent of heading to the doctor's office with a loved one and waiting in the reception area while treatment occurs elsewhere. It is so deadly dull, I inadvertently drifted off to sleep. How long? Maybe a minute or two, tops. But when I jerked back into an awakened state, Grogu was taking a leisurely walk while the Mandalorian rested.



Sigourney Weaver is the film's most exciting new presence.

You can feel the movie testing your patience, which may be why the big finale works better than it should. Favreau brings a little of that old "Star Wars" magic as the Rebellion comes to the Mandalorian and Grogu's rescue, X-wing fighters soaring through the sky, Weaver's steely colonel leading the charge. Is it enough, though, to save the movie? No.

By cranking out spinoff after spinoff, Disney is diluting the "Star Wars" franchise to where it is losing its kick. Don't believe me? Ask the kid seated in front of me in the theater where I reviewed the film. At one point, he was on his father's cellphone, engrossed in a handwriting app where he'd spelled out the words "I love you mom."

If a child has lost interest, well, the party's over.

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All photos taken Memorial Day, May 25, by Bob Wellinski.



High School Seniors Receive Franciscan Scholarships



Members of the Franciscan Health Michigan City Medical Staff Scholarship Committee recently gathered to congratulate the 2026 scholarship winners. Pictured are (from left) Dr. Sandra Wischmeyer, Dr. David Fumo, scholarship winners Jennifer Serrano and Alyssa Tracy, Dr. Hosn Maatouk and Dr. Samuel West. Photo provided.

Two La Porte County high-school seniors interested in health-care careers have received Franciscan Health Michigan City Medical Staff Memorial Scholarships.

Jennifer Serrano and Alyssa Tracy, 18-year-old Michigan City High School seniors, are the recipients.

Tracy will attend Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Ind., this fall to pursue a career as a pediatrician.

"Growing up watching my mom, who was a nurse, and having health issues myself, I just knew how important it was, and I really wanted to help kids," Tracy said in a press release. "This will help me do that. It means a lot to me, and I'm really grateful for it."

Serrano will attend Valparaiso University in the fall, majoring in health sciences to become a physician's assistant. She said the scholarship award came at just the right time.

"A storm destroyed my car, a tree fell on it, so this will give me the ability to pursue my education

without worrying so much about the added cost," Serrano said in a press release.


Franciscan Health Michigan City medical staff voted unanimously in 2021 to establish and fund a scholarship honoring the memories and continuing legacies of medical staff members. The annual scholarships are funded by physicians on the Franciscan medical staff in partnership with Franciscan Health Foundation, and may be split among recipients as the committee deems appropriate.


"The Memorial Fund is really about the physicians who gave so much to this community and have passed on," Dr. David Fumo, who serves as scholarship committee vice chair, said in a press release. "The best way to memorialize them is to help inspire these kids."

Fumo said the scholarship committee chose Serrano and Tracy from a large pool of worthy applicants. The scholarships are needs-based, and emphasize students who are the first in their families to attend college.

Donations to the scholarship fund may be made at <https://www.franciscanhealthfoundation.org/franciscan-giving/>, then selecting "Northern Indiana" and "Michigan City Medical Staff Memorial Scholarship Fund" from the drop-down menus.

Those who donate \$500 or more may name a late medical staff physician to be honored with a name plate on the memorial plaque in the hospital's main hallway.





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The annual St. Stanislaus/Trail Creek 5K Run & Walk returns at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 6, at Moose Family Center 980, 2107 Welnetz Road, Trail Creek.

Advance registration ends at 11:59 p.m. June 4. Visit <https://shorturl.at/jLON4> to complete the form. The cost is \$25 for adults (a T-shirt is included) and \$20 for 13 and younger.

Race-day registration is from 6:30-7:30 a.m. at the Moose Lodge. The cost that day is \$30 for adults and \$25 for 13 and younger.

Overall awards go to the top three female and male runners and overall walkers. Age-group awards go to:

- Top 2 Female & Male Runners: 14 and younger, 15-19 and 70 and older.
- Top 3 Female & Male Runners: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-69.

Indiana Black Expo Luncheon

The Michigan City Chapter of Indiana Black Expo Inc. will host its sixth annual corporate luncheon Friday, June 5, at Blue Chip Casino, Hotel & Spa.

Doors open at 11 a.m., followed by the program at 11:30 a.m.

Continuing the theme of “Celebrating African American Leaders,” the corporate luncheon, presented by La Porte County Convention & Visitors Bureau, honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the community, and those who continue to do so. Dr. Carey Ransone, who will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award, is the keynote speaker. The chapter also selects an individual to receive the Community Spirit award, with the recipient not revealed until the event.

Tickets are \$50 and available at www.eventbrite.com. Call (219) 879-6902 for details.



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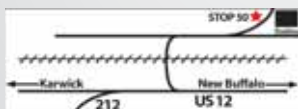
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“Echo of a Journey,” an exhibit celebrating work by Michigan City artists Diane Grams and Timothy Lace, runs June 5-July 31 at Visit Michigan City La Porte tourism bureau, 4073 Franklin St.

A public reception is from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, June 13.

Rooted in travel, memory and landscapes, the exhibit features:

- Paintings by Grams exploring worlds above and below the waterline.
- Black-and-white gelatin silver landscape prints by Lace.
- Color photography by Lace documenting Mardi Gras Native Americans.

The exhibit is free and open to the public during regular visitor center hours. Call (219) 872-5055 for details.

Market on Main



The Westville Cruise In Car Club is part of the eighth annual Market on Main.

The Westville Area Chamber of Commerce will host its eighth annual Market on Main from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, June 7, along Westville’s Main Street.

The free, all-ages event offers more than 20 artisan and vintage vendors, along with local food. Westville Cruise In Car Club will attend, while Burn ‘Em Brewing will sponsor a beer tent. Ric Federighi from WIMS Radio will host a live remote from noon-2 p.m. For Pete Sake will perform acoustic Americana music.

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Gwen Jones Art Show

The Arts of Mediator will showcase work by local artist Gwen Jones through July 7 at Episcopal Church of the Mediator, 14280 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, Mich.

An artist and filmmaker, Jones retired as a medical librarian and now works full time in her Bridgman studio. Her colorful art quilts reflect a love of nature and organic patterns.

Exhibit hours are (all times Eastern) 9 a.m.-noon Mondays-Thursdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, June 6, and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, June 20.

Contact the church office at (269) 469-1441 or office@mediatorharbert.com for details. Purchase any work on display directly through the artist.

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Exhibit Celebrates Porter County Fair

“Our Heart of Hearts: The Porter County Fair,” a collection of photos, artifacts and memories, runs through Oct. 25 at Porter County Museum (PoCo Muse), 20 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso.

“This exhibit reveals a remarkable story spanning 175 years,” Jacob Just, museum director of exhibits and publications, said in a press release. “While touching on major events in the fair’s history, it also brings into light the small and overlooked details that make this fair uniquely our own.

“The story is told largely through the snapshots and oral histories of some of the fair’s most dedicated caretakers.”

The museum is open from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday, with free admission. Visit www.pocomuse.org or find @pocomuse on social media for more details.

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Michigan City Municipal Golf Course



South Course, Par-Tee Women's
League, May 20, 2026
Event: Most 1 Putts

Flight A

Low Gross: Barb Rumbuc.
Low Net: Lu Ann Uremovich.
Low Putts: Linda Hirsch, Patty Jercich.
Event: Patty Jercich.

Flight B

Low Gross: Cheryl Mandel.
Low Net: Cheryl Mandel.
Low Putts: Pat Collado.
Event: Pat Collado, Daphne Craft,
Paula Hutchinson, Pam O'Donnell.

Flight C

Low Gross: Sheila Brackin.
Low Net: Sheila Brackin.
Low Putts: Sheila Brackin, Carol Tylisz.
Event: Carol Tylisz.

Flight D

Low Gross: Peg Burns.
Low Net: Shelley Dunleavy.
Low Putts: Shelley Dunleavy.
Event: Shelley Dunleavy.

□
Pars: Pat Collado, Shannon Filipiak,
Cheryl Mandel.

Chip-Ins: Pat Collado.



LBCC Women's Golf Leagues 18-Hole League

May 26, 2026
Event: Beat the Pro

A Flight

First — Ellen Nagrini.
Second — Cindy Levy, Jill Craig.

B Flight

First — Ann Heeren.
Second — Mary Kral.
Third — Barb Hall.

C Flight

First — Beanie Altier.
Second — Lisabeth Hayes.
Third — Diane Rubey, Teresa Curi.

□
Birdies: Lis Slattery, #12.

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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:

- **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.
- **Gene Stratton Porter Program from 4-5 p.m. Friday, June 5.** Glory-June Greiff will portray the naturalist, novelist and photographer (1863-1924), shedding light on her upbringing, writing and photography. Greiff is a public historian, preservation activist and published author.
- **Picture Book Bingo (18 and younger) at noon Saturday, June 6.** Play for a chance to win books.
- **Read to a Dog at 11 a.m. Monday, June 8.** Therapy dog trainer Colleen Melendy will bring her therapy dog, Teddy. Families can take a favorite story, or select one from the library, to read.
- **Chalk the Walk at 2 p.m. Monday, June 8.** Help decorate the sidewalk. Dress to get messy and for the weather.
- **Ask-a-Lawyer from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, June 9.** Speak to an attorney for free regarding family and criminal law, guardianships, wills, trusts and contracts. No preregistration is required. Visit www.volunteerlawyernetwork.net for more details.
- **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.
- **Board Game Night for Adults from 5-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 9.** A variety of board and card games will be available.
- **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.
- **Angels Among Us from 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, June 10.** Ange Benz, who leads the discussion, can be contacted at (219) 874-3754.
- **Adult Dungeons & Dragons from 5-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 10.** The in-person D&D campaign is for adults 18 and older and all experience levels.
- **June scavenger hunts.** Find the hidden "Toy Story" characters.
- **Through June 30: "Rebus Puzzles for Adults."** Stop by the reference desk to pick up a sheet of rebus (or word picture) puzzles. Those who solve them can pick a prize from the treasure chest.
- **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.
- **Art Exhibition Wall.** On display is photography by Jesse Bragg, a Michigan City-based music producer and creative artist with formal study in photography and graphic design at Ivy Tech Community College.

Michigan City Public Library is located at 100 E. Fourth St. Visit www.mclib.org or call (219) 873-3049 for 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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Ages: 3-11
Fee: Resident Full Camp: \$160.00
 Non-Resident Full Camp: \$220.00
 Resident Weekly: \$60.00
 Non-Resident Weekly: \$80.00

Weekly Themes:
 Week 1: Dinosaur Discovery
 Week 2: Buggin' Out
 Week 3: All-Stars
 (No Camp July 3)
 Week 4: Heroes vs. Villains
 Week 5: Camp Carnival
 Week 6: Galactic Adventure
 Week 7: Wild Wild West

Registration forms are available at the Long Beach Town Hall, Long Beach Community Center, and online at longbeachin.org.

Any questions email longbeachsummercamp@gmail.com.

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

- Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St., noon-4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 4.
- Trinity Lutheran Church, 907 Michigan Ave., La Porte, 1-6 p.m. Thursday, June 4.
- First Church of God, 2020 E. Lincolnway, La Porte, noon-6 p.m. Monday, June 8.
- Northwest Health La Porte Hospital, 1331 State St., 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, June 9.
- Indiana Department of Transportation, 315 E. Boyd Blvd., La Porte, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday, June 10.

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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New Buffalo Township Library

- **Stuffie Library Sleepaway Camp.** Drop-off is Thursday, June 11, and pick-up Tuesday, June 16.

Weekly programs

- Teen Maker Space from 4-6 p.m. Thursdays.
- Chess Club from 4-6 p.m. Thursdays.
- Adult Literacy Class, 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; ends June 15.
- 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 or call (269) 469-2933 for more details.

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“Five Driven Women”



“Five Driven Women,” which introduces the earliest female automobile owners and drivers, runs through July 19 at The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend.

These women ranged from explorers and socialites to philanthropists and actresses, using wealth to work around gender discrimination of the time. They include: athlete Eleanora Sears and her 1912 Simplex Torpedo; socialite Maribel Schumacher and her 1928 Hudson Series O Town Car; explorer Louise Arner Boyd and her 1934 Packard Twelve; aviator Amelia Earhart and her 1937 Cord 812; and automobile enthusiast Margaret Dunning and her 1930 Packard 740.

The exhibit received support from The JBS Collection, Singleton Collection, Classic Car Club of America Museum and LaVine Restorations.

Museum hours are (all times Eastern) 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$13 for adults, \$11 for seniors 60 and older and \$9 for youth ages 6-18. Call the museum at (888) 391-5600 or visit www.studebakermuseum.org for more details.



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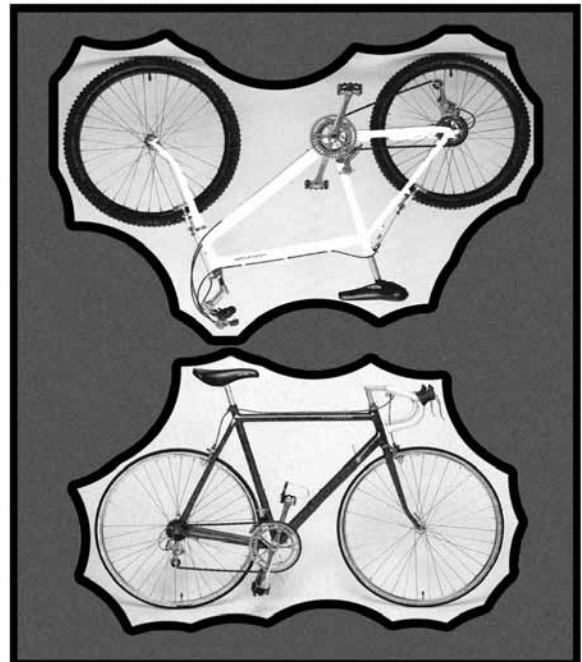
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June 3-4 — Arts in the Park, La Porte's Fox Park. Wednesdays: La Porte City Band, 7 p.m. *June 4*: Shock Roxy (oldies, rock, blues). Preconcert (Blue Sky Music): 6-6:45 p.m., main band: 7-8:30 p.m. National Anthem: Paul Hannon

June 4 — Crafternoon: Father's Day Cards, noon-6 p.m., Coolspring Branch Library, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 4 — Around the World in Recipes, 3:30-4:30 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 4 — Michigan City Municipal Band, 7:30 p.m., Washington Park's Guy F. Foreman Bicentennial Amphitheater. *Special guest*: baritone saxophone J.D. Flynn.

June 4-7, 11-14 — "The Miss Magnolia Senior Citizen Beauty Pageant," Footlight Theatre, 1705 Franklin St. Show times: 7 p.m. Thur.-Fri., 2 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Tickets: \$17/adults, \$12/children 12 & younger & Thursday shows. Reservations/info: www.footlightplayers.org, (219) 874-4035.

June 4-Aug. 1 — "Site/Sight: Works from the Artist-in-Residence Program of the Indiana Dunes National Park," Chesterton Art Center, 115 S. Fourth St. *Artist panel*: 6:30-8 p.m. June 18. *Third Friday Artists' Reception*: 4-7 p.m. July 17. Info: (219) 926-4711, www.chestertonart.org

June 5 — Michigan City Chapter, Indiana Black Expo Inc. corporate luncheon, Blue Chip Casino, Hotel & Spa. Doors open/11 a.m., program/11:30 a.m. Tickets: \$50 at www.eventbrite.com. Info: (219) 879-6902.

June 5 — Gene Stratton Porter Program, 4-5 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

June 5-July 31 — "Echo of a Journey" (Diane Grams/Timothy Lace), Visit Michigan City La Porte tourism bureau, 4073 Franklin St. *Reception*: 1-3 p.m. June 13. Info: (219) 872-5055.

June 5-Aug. 2 — Arthur Garcia solo exhibit, "Art's Work: Show & Tell," Box Factory for the Arts, 1101 Broad St., St. Joseph, Mich. *Meet & Greet*: 1-3 p.m. EDT June 27. Info: www.artgarciafineart.com

June 6 — St. Stanislaus/Trail Creek 5K Run & Walk, 8 a.m., The Moose Family Center 980, 2107 Welnetz Road, Trail Creek. Registration/info: <https://shorturl.at/jLON4>

June 6 — Morning Beach Stroll, 9:30 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

June 6 — Harbor Country Hikers, 10 a.m. EDT, Grand Mere State Park, 7337 Thornton Drive, Stevensville, Mich. Info: www.harborcountryhikers.org

June 6 — Dobot T-Rex Arms, 11 a.m.-noon, La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 6 — Picture Book Bingo (18 & younger), noon, Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

June 6 — High Noon First Saturday Series ("The Bird: Mark Fidrych and the Summer of 1976"), noon EDT, Three Oaks Township Library, 3 N. Elm St. Free.

June 6 — Turtle Pool Party, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

June 7 — Westville Area Chamber of Commerce Market on Main, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Westville's Main Street. Free.

June 7 — Dunes Lion Safari, 10 a.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

June 7 — Amazing Amphibians, 2 p.m., Indiana Dunes State Park, 1600 N. County Road 25 East, Chesterton. Info: (219) 926-1390.

June 7 — Music on the Porch, 5-6 p.m., Chellberg Farm, Mineral Springs Road between U.S. 12/20, Porter. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

June 8 — Read to a Dog, 11 a.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

June 8 — Family Storytime, 11-11:30 a.m., Coolspring Branch Library, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 8 — Chalk the Walk, 2 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

June 8 — Maker Monday: Royal Icing, 4-6 p.m., Coolspring Branch Library, 6925 W. County Road 400 North. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 9 — Page Turners Book Club, noon-1 p.m., La Porte County Public Library, 904 Indiana Ave. Info: www.laportelibrary.org

June 9 — Board Game Night for Adults, 5-7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

June 10 — Angels Among Us, 2-3 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 874-3754.

June 10 — Adult Dungeons & Dragons, 5-7:30 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 874-3754.

Through June 7 — "5x5 Show and Sale," The Beverly Shores Depot Museum and Art Gallery, 525 S. Broadway. Info: <https://bsdepot.org/>

Through June 14 — "Cosmic Connections," Lubeznik Center for the Arts, 101 W. Second St. Info: (219) 874-4900, jsexton@LubeznikCenter.org

Through June 14 — "Deathtrap," Dunes Arts

Summer Theatre, 288 Shady Oak Drive, Michiana Shores. Tickets: \$35/adults, \$30/seniors. Times: 7 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun. Info: www.dunesarts.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

Through July 7 — Local artist Gwen Jones, Episcopal Church of the Mediator, 14280 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, Mich. Exhibit hours (Eastern): 9 a.m.-noon Mon.-Thur., 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sun., 9 a.m.-3 p.m. June 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. June 20. Info: (269) 469-1441, office@mediatorharbert.com

Through July 19 — “Five Driven Women,” The Studebaker National Museum, 201 Chapin St., South Bend. Museum hours (Eastern): 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Admission: \$13/adults, \$11/seniors 60 & older, \$9/ages 6-18. Info: (888) 391-5600, www.studebakermuseum.org

Through October — Friendship Botanic Gardens, 2055 E. U.S. 12. Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tue.-Sun. Info: www.FriendshipBotanicGardens.org, (219) 878-9885.

Through October — The Region of Three Oaks Museum, 5 Featherbone Ave. Hours: noon-5 p.m. EDT Fri.-Sun.

Through October — New Buffalo Railroad Museum, 530 S. Whittaker St. Hours (Eastern): noon-5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. Info: (269) 820-1504, (202) 669-4423, ask@new-buffalo-railroad-museum.org

Through Dec. 31 — “America A-Z” exhibit, La Porte 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/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.

First Monday of the Month (February, April, June, August, October, December) — Cancer Support Group, 5-6 p.m., Franciscan Health Woodland Cancer Center Community Room, 8955 W. County Road 400 North, Michigan City. Info/registration: (219) 861-5820.

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 through June 28 — Super Kids! Douglas Center Scavenger Hunt, 9 a.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

First Wednesday of Each Month — Alzheimer’s & Dementia Caregiver Support Group, 2-3 p.m., Bella Largo Senior Living, 1800 West Hi-Point Drive, La Porte. Reservations: (219) 878-1141.

Thursdays — Needle Arts Club, 5:30-7 p.m., Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. Fourth St. Info: (219) 873-3049.

Thursdays through June 25 — Fireside Chats, 8 p.m., Portage Lakefront Parking Lot, 100 Riverwalk Road. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

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

Saturdays through June 27 — Critter Feeding Time, 10 a.m., Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education, 100 N. Lake St., Gary’s Miller Beach neighborhood. Info: (219) 395-1882, www.nps.gov/indu

Saturdays through October — Farmed & Forged Market, 8 a.m.-noon, Eighth & Washington streets, Michigan City.

Saturdays in Chesterton through October — Chesterton European Market, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., 220 Broadway, Chesterton. Info: <https://shorturl.at/tDC44>

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

Vickers Theatre — *Now Showing*: “Cinema Paradiso.” Rated PG. Times: 7 p.m. June 4. *Also*: “Pressure.” Rated PG-13. Times: 4 & 7 p.m. June 5-6, 1 & 4 p.m. June 7, 7 p.m. June 9. All times Eastern. The theater is located at 6 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, Mich. Info: www.vickerstheatre.com, (269) 756-3522.

JROTC Wraps Up School Year

Cadets in Michigan City High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps have continued to support Michigan City Area Schools and the community as the school year winds down.

Among the community service events supporting were: Michigan City Salvation Army; Sacred Heart Food Pantry; MCAS Wolfie's Night Out; and Color Guards for the La Porte County Law Day and Ivy Tech Community College graduation. At that ceremony, Cadet 1st Lt. Payton Downs participated in the Color Guard to open the graduation, then put on her cap and gown and received a technical certificate for earning 38 college credits while being a MCHS student.

"Cadet 1st Lt. Downs is emblematic of the type of student we want to see walk across the stage on Graduation Day," Senior Marine Instructor Maj. Tom McGrath said in a press release. "She is a dedicated student, and her academic acumen is duplicated in her unselfish use of her time and talents in her many community service hours."

Among the patriotic events cadets were scheduled to support were: Rolling Thunder Memorial Service on May 19 at Washington Park; Michigan City Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony at Greenwood Cemetery; and Michigan City Patriotic Parade on June 27. JROTC will do parking duty for the MCHS graduation June 7.

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La Porte County Public Library

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:

- **Crafternoon: Father's Day Cards from noon-6 p.m. Thursday, June 4, at Coolspring Branch Library.** Drop by anytime for all-ages arts and crafts.
- **Around the World in Recipes from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 4, at the main library Multipurpose Room.** The focus is sweet potato cookies from Zimbabwe, also known as *mbatata* cookies). Anyone with allergies should ask about potential allergens, such as tree nuts or soy.
- **Stories & More from 10-10:30 a.m. Friday, June 5, at the main library.** The storytime includes rhymes, music and activities.
- **Dobot T-Rex Arms from 11 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 6, at the main library Multipurpose Room.** Learn about the robotic arm to program for various tasks.
- **Family Storytime from 11-11:30 a.m. Monday, June 8, at Coolspring Branch Library.** The focus is stories, songs and other activities.
- **Maker Monday: Royal Icing from 4-6 p.m. Monday, June 8, at Coolspring Branch Library.** Use tools and small machines, build and repurpose objects to gain job skills or explore a new hobby.
- **Page Turners Book Club from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, June 9, in the main library Meeting Room B.** The focus is Donna Tartt's *The Secret History*.
- **Staying Safe Online from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, June 10, at the main library Meeting Room A.** The educational session equips participants with tips to stay secure and informed.

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 for more details, including programming through the Exchange building.

High Noon First Saturday Series

"The Bird: Mark Fidrych and the Summer of 1976" marks the next program in the High Noon First Saturday Series at noon EDT Saturday, June 6, at Three Oaks Township Library, 3 N. Elm St.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of when Fidrych took Detroit, and America, by storm "with his incredible pitching and eccentric behavior," according to a press release.

Guest presenter Brian Johnston, who lives with his family in St. Joseph, Mich., self-published three books and is a *Herald Palladium* columnist. His recent biography of baseball's Vada Pinson will be available this summer.

Indiana Dunes State Park

The following programs will be offered:

- **Morning Beach Stroll at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, June 6.** Meet at the east side of the beach pavilion for a morning walk.
- **Turtle Pool Party at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 6.** Stop by the Nature Center to meet Dunes turtles and learn about their adaptations.
- **Dunes Lion Safari at 10 a.m. Sunday, June 7.** Join a naturalist at the Nature Center for a hike to the park's tallest dune.
- **Amazing Amphibians at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 7.** Meet at the Nature Center auditorium to learn the identification and habitats of local frogs and salamanders.

Indiana Dunes State Park is at 1600 N. County Road 25 East (the north end of Indiana 49), Chesterton. Call (219) 926-1390 to register for programs.

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Skin and Bones by Paul Doiron (hardcover \$31 retail in bookstores and online; also available as an eBook and an audiobook. 355 pages.)

This collection of eight short stories encompasses humans and animals as they weave a story unique to Maine, while also showing how some people use both to their nefarious goals. The stories use Game Warden Mike Bowditch and his best friend and mentor, Charley Stevens, who is now retired from the warden service. Doiron has written 14 novels featuring these two characters, whose good and bad points are clearly seen. It's a stone-cold fact that being a game warden is more than just checking fishing and hunting licenses.

Doiron can take us into the Maine wilderness and show, with much clarity, the beauty and harshness of Mother Nature. When he talks about the flora of the great Maine forests, he puts the reader in the moment, whether it's pouring rain or a sweltering hot day, or a day so beautiful, it's impossible to forget. His words sing the praises of the life he knows so well, because when he's not writing, Doiron is a registered guide in Maine with a specialty in fly-fishing.

Here's a short line or two of what you can expect in this exceptional collection.

"Backtrack" raises several moral questions, such as should we have the right to determine our own mortality? Should individuals be able to choose their own day of death? Sometimes, a person's youth is a deterrent to having empathy for the elderly.

In **"The Bear Trap,"** we have a man who loves telling tales, not necessarily the truth. Will anyone believe him this time when he is telling the truth?

"Rabid," as the title suggests, follows a man bitten by a bat in his attic, but who doesn't seek medical assistance. Perhaps the difference between the pain from an animal bite and the pain sitting unbidden in our brain is too similar to make an informed decision.

"The Imposter" — Stealing someone's identity is bad enough, but when that ID belongs to a Maine ranger, how much damage can be done to one man's reputation? It's a study in having to prove you aren't the guy doing all the crazy things they say you are doing.

"The Caretaker" — A rich couple from Massachusetts builds a modern "cottage" on a Maine lake, then discovers they are being stalked. Mike is called

Off the Book Shelf

by Sally Carpenter



on to track down the mystery man, but soon finds there is much more to this story than just stalking.

"Snakebit" — Someone is letting rattlesnakes out into the woods, even though they were eradicated a long time ago. Maybe it's a milk snake, not a rattler? But a boy is soon bitten and taken to the hospital. Mike realizes he will have a hard time finding out someone's end game.

"Sheep's Clothing." It looks like a murder-sui-cide, but when is any of Mike's cases straightforward? Mr. and Mrs. Witham are the victims, leaving their son and his fiancée looking like the sad bereaving family. Mike is told to stay away from the case, but when did that stop him? Especially when things just don't add up.

"Skin and Bones" starts out with a dead bald eagle, shot between the eyes, which leads Mike to an old missing person's case and two brothers — one meek and mild, the other mean as a junkyard dog. As Mike gathers clues and damning information, Charley cautions Mike, *"You might not like how it ends."*

The last word: In Doiron's own words: *"My fondest wish is that someone who has never read a word of mine will pick up this volume and enjoy these eight tales on their own terms: as windows — some cracked, others tinted — into the wildness*

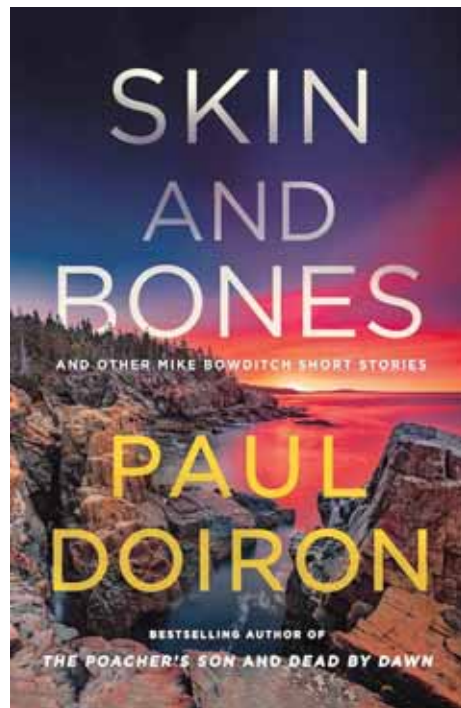
that is Maine."

Several other popular authors have put out volumes of short stories lately that you might want to consider. Short stories make great summer reading, and offer a quick look at an author you might not know. They include Python's Kiss by Louise Erdrich, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa in North Dakota. Among her many books, The Round House won the National Book Award, and The Night Watchman won a Pulitzer Prize.

Another popular author, Colm Tobin, recently published The News From Dublin, a collection of nine short stories about, you guessed it, Ireland.

You can't go wrong with any of these three authors for stories that keep you reading and characters who practically reach off the pages and shake your hand. OK, that might stretch it a bit, but you can't go wrong with their stories that have a universal appeal and understanding of human nature.

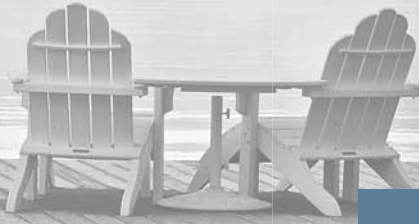
Till next time, happy reading!



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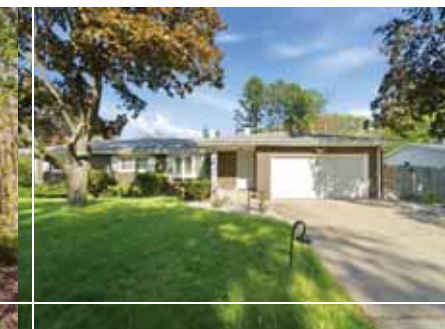
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FEATURED PROPERTIES



610 Pine Lake Ave, LaPorte, IN 46350

LAKE ACCESS to Pine Lake just a couple blocks away!

Full of charm and potential, this home features hardwood floors, cedar closets, real wood walls and ceilings, and unique character throughout.

The main level offers two bedrooms, a full bath, living room, and a flexible bonus space, while the upper level provides additional room for a bedroom, office, or playroom. A full basement and spacious two-car garage offer plenty of storage and functionality, with a potential deck area above the garage that even provides partial Pine Lake views in the fall. This home needs some TLC and is being sold as-is, but with nearby lake access and endless potential, it is ready for its next chapter.

Listed by: Ashlan Siford 219-301-1151

9 S Beach Ave, Michigan City, IN 46360

Tucked into the rolling dune topography of the enchanting "The Pride of the North Shore" community, this rare offering presents two adjoining parcels being sold together to create an incredible, expansive building site. Perched on a dramatic dune crest, your future dream home will boast stunning, elevated views of the pristine surrounding landscape, tree canopies, and the distinct, natural beauty that defines Beverly Shores. Location is everything, and this property delivers the ultimate luxury coastal lifestyle. You are mere steps from the sandy shores of Lake Michigan and completely enveloped by the serene, protected acreage of the Indiana Dunes National Park. Imagine waking up to the sound of the waves, spending your days exploring miles of tranquil park trails right out your back door, and ending the evening watching the sunset over the lake from the beaches of Lake Michigan.



Listed By: Meghan Maddox 219-877-5795

1808 Michigan Ave, LaPorte, IN 46350



Welcome home to this charming 2 bedroom, 1 bath ranch located on desirable Michigan Ave! Step inside to a welcoming living room that flows into a nicely sized dining room, creating a comfortable space for everyday living and entertaining. An open pass-through between the dining room and kitchen helps the layout feel bright and connected. Just off the dining room you'll find a spacious sunroom — the perfect spot to relax, enjoy morning coffee, or take in views of the yard, which is an unusual extra lot with this home. Down the hall off the dining room are two bedrooms and a full bath. The home sits on an extra lot, offering additional yard space and flexibility. Outside you'll also find an oversized one-car garage for parking and storage. The unfinished basement provides plenty of room for storage and potential for future use.

Listed by: Mike Liberatore 219-363-2944 & Hailee Hills 219-363-7840

for more information about these properties and more, visit mtmrealtgroup.com

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