

FRESHWATER REPORTER

A fresh approach to storytelling in Manistee and Mason counties...and a bit beyond.

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FREE

Time to kill? Get reading!

We had an inkling this winter could be another long one, so we asked each of our contributing writers to recommend a book our readers might enjoy.

We heard several complaints along the lines of, "How can I pick just one?" The task left some of them frozen – even before the first snowflakes flew. So, we share here some reading suggestions from the brave souls (warm bodies?) who answered the call. They will be rewarded with the possibility of suggesting another in the coming months. Stay tuned!

Playing for Pizza

Author: John Grisham
Publisher: Bantam Dell, Division of Random House

Reviewed by KEVIN HOWELL

Being an ardent John Grisham fan, I've read most, if not all, of the 20-plus legal thrillers this author has written.



Kevin Howell, blissfully lost in a Grisham novel. Photo by Jean Howell.

From his first novel, "A Time to Kill" (Windwood Press, 1989), to "Camino Winds" (Doubleday, 2020), Grisham has a way of empathizing with his characters. He also has a talent for adding twists and turns in his creations that keep the reader

reading and never wanting the story to end. His latest, "A Time for Mercy" (Knopf Doubleday, 2020) was just released.

Along the way, I found one book by Grisham that steps aside from the usual tone

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Exploring our traditions

Holiday Magic (We need it)

By JUDY COOLS

There's no denying that the holidays will be different this year. The coronavirus touches daily life for all of us – the way we work, the way we shop, the things we do online, instead of in person. Traditionally, winter holidays bring comfort, a touchstone to our backgrounds, a reconnect with family.

This year, life has handed us a huge dose of isolation and we need new ways to connect – without travel, without danger to ourselves or others. This is the perfect time for creative ways to reach out to those near

home ... socially distanced, of course.

Northwest Michigan is a predominantly Christian culture, and there are many Christian denominations and schools of thought here. Most readers are well-familiar

with Christmas traditions. However, even within our modest population of residents in Manistee and Mason counties, we have a wonderful diversity of additional faiths and traditions.

I wanted to explore a few of the late fall and winter season holidays that our neighbors of non-Christian faiths celebrate.

When I began this adventure, the first volunteers to contact me were wonderful Jewish women who shared a thumbnail of their faith's winter traditions. Many non-Jews think of Hanukkah when asked about Jewish holidays. It falls near Christmas and it involves presents and family gatherings. Hanukkah however, really isn't "Jewish Christmas" as my own elders and many others have attempted to explain to their children. Whereas Christmas is one of the major holidays celebrated in Christianity, Hanukkah is a lesser holiday within Judaism and really doesn't have the same sort of basis as Christmas.

The story of Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian army about 2,200 years ago and marks the Jews' rededication of the Temple that was violated by the army. The lamp oil was in

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SEE THE EVENTS
CALENDAR INSIDE

Second Thought

A Gift to Remember

Editor's note: A version of the following originally appeared in The Antrim Review.



By DAVE LEIN

A long time ago my father, our church's pastor, offered a Christmas Eve sermon in which he said the greatest gift of Christmas – along with the

birth of Jesus – is the gift of ourselves.

For a squirming youngster of 8 or 10, this thought caught my interest. I was at that pivotal age – between drawing pictures on church bulletins and napping in my mom's lap to actually paying attention to what the familiar preacher was saying.

The gift of ourselves. That was an interesting thought. In my mind, if I showed up at someone's door offering the gift of myself, most would probably pat me on the head and send me back home.

But Dad went on to talk about God working through us and using each of us to bless the lives of others. I wondered if he meant shoveling someone's walk or mowing their lawn as an act of goodwill.



Well, sort of. That, he said, was a start. The harder part, which made the gift even more valuable, was setting ourselves aside – and what we thought should be done.

Some needs aren't as obvious as others, and we shouldn't assume to know exactly what to say or do when giving of ourselves.

Dad told the congregation that sometimes the best gift is simply being present – absent of any goals, agendas, game plans or catalog of answers. But it can also be the hardest gift to give.

For the most part, a desire to help others is human nature. Barring a sense of deep apathy or anger, our conscience tells us that we should do something to make things better. But too often that translates into a belief that we need to "fix" the situation, and that our fix will

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Fun & Fabulous Community Events - Manistee & Mason Counties

Due to weather, schedules and COVID-19, some events may change or be canceled. **Always call ahead.**

Email your January calendar events or press releases by Dec. 28 to editor@freshwater-reporter.com

or mail to Freshwater Reporter, P.O. Box 188, Manistee, MI 49660.

November

1- Artist Appreciation Invitational Dec Exhibition

4 Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts, 132 Coastguard Rd., Frankfort. Featuring artists who have given their time and art to support O.A.C. fundraisers

26- Thanksgiving Reconnect Weekend 29 at Crystal Mountain Resort

12500 Crystal Mountain Dr., Thompsonville. Featuring a Virtual Turkey Vulture Trot 5k, Thanksgiving Day Dinner To-Go, Holiday Trail Celebration and First Light Tree Lighting Celebration. For details, go to crystalmountain.com

28 Small Business Saturday and Mini Pop-up Art Market

Patina and Anchored Designs, downtown Onekama. Patina: Open 11-3. Free gift from our Thank You Tree for your support this year. Anchored Designs: Open 10-3. Giveaways and sales. More info on their Facebook and Instagram pages.

28 First Light Celebration at Crystal Mountain

5-6pm, free, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr., Thompsonville. Christmas tree lighting and holiday music. Meet between the Lodge and Crystal Center. Tree will be lit at 5:30pm. Dress warmly, wear masks and observe social distancing.

28- 16th Annual Sparkle in the Park

Dec Hopkins Park, 7727 Hopkins Dr., Bear Lake
31 5-10pm, Free, with donations accepted. Drive or walk through 1000s of lights in holiday displays

29- Deck the Halls: A Mason County Dec Holiday Decorating Contest

27 To register or for details, go to www.ludington.org

December

4- Festival of Wreaths benefitting 12 L.A.C.A.

Artist-created wreaths for sale by silent auction, displayed in the Performance Hall Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Reception and final bidding Dec. 12, 12-2pm

4- The Lamplighter: Interactive 28 Sculpture and Painting by Tyler & Ashley Voorhees

On display in Hardy Hall, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee and downtown Manistee next to the city Christmas Tree

5 Make & Take Wreaths

Two sessions: 9:30-11am or 11-12:30pm. Call 231-864-3517 to pay in advance and reserve a spot. Pleasanton Valley Greenhouses, 14758 Pleasanton Hwy., Bear Lake. Free holiday cookies and hot chocolate provided

5 Mini Pop-up Art Market

Patina and Anchored Designs, downtown Onekama. More info on Facebook and Instagram

5 West Shore Community College Livingroom Livestream Performances

with Chloe Kimes (singer/songwriter, Bluegrass/Americana, alumnus of W.S.C.C.). 7:30pm. Go to <https://www.westshore.edu/community/performing-arts/> to view

6 Pet Photos with Santa

1-3pm, Patina, on M-22 in downtown Onekama. Donations accepted for Homeward Bound Animal Shelter

11- Annual Winter Members Jan Exhibition

8 Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts, 132 Coastguard Rd., Frankfort

11 Sixth Annual Home for the Holidays (virtual) Concert

6pm., free. A variety of performers livestreamed from Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Access on [youtube.com/ludingtonartscenter](https://www.youtube.com/ludingtonartscenter) and 97.7 & 98.7 FM

11 Jeff Daniels Online & Unplugged

7:30pm., \$15/ link, presented by Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. A concert of original songs and stories, with a Q & A afterward. For ticketing go to <https://ramsdelltheatre.org/>

12 Mini Pop-up Art Market

Patina and Anchored Designs, on M-22, downtown Onekama. More info: Facebook/Instagram.

12 West Shore Community College Livingroom Livestream Performances

with Fred Knapp & the Fred Knapp Quartet (Jazz), 7:30pm. View at <https://www.westshore.edu/community/performing-arts/>

13 Pet Photos with Santa

1-3pm, Patina, on M-22 in downtown Onekama. Donations accepted for Homeward Bound Animal Shelter

19 DIY Holiday Centerpiece

10am., Call 231-864-3517 to pay in advance and reserve a spot. Pleasanton Valley Greenhouses, 14758 Pleasanton Hwy., Bear Lake. Includes fresh flowers or candles. Free coffee and holiday appetizers

19 Mini Pop-up Art Market

Patina and Anchored Designs, downtown Onekama. More info on Facebook and Instagram

The Moon's Secret

By BROOKE EDWARDS

Late last month, a discovery was announced that changed our perception of our moon. After NASA built anticipation on social media around a big announcement, the space agency finally revealed the news on October 26. It turns out there is water, H₂O, on the sunlit surface of the moon.

The water is not a lake or ocean but, according to NASA, "is equivalent to a 12-ounce bottle of water trapped in a cubic meter of soil, spread across the lunar surface." The agency added that the Sahara has 100 times the amount of H₂O detected (so far) on the moon.

The discovery was made while observing Clavius, one of the largest lunar craters, using NASA's SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy). It was previously known that water ice existed on the cold, unlit surfaces of the moon, yet there was uncertainty whether H₂O existed elsewhere, or if it was just OH, (hydroxyl).

SOFIA is truly an engineering marvel, a Boeing 747 fitted with a powerful telescope. A joint project between NASA and the German Aerospace Center Program, SOFIA flies out of Palmdale, Calif., to observe distant objects in space from an altitude of more than 40,000 feet. The telescope detects deep space objects using infrared light. With renewed scientific focus on the moon, it was decided to take a break from the normal observing and test the telescope on our celestial partner. Our moon is so close, it filled the telescope's entire field of view.

How the water is stored, or even how it got there, is still a mystery. Future observations are planned by the SOFIA team. NASA has even been planning a lunar water resource



We have yet to uncover all the Moon's mysteries. Photo of the moon by Duncan Miller, Pixabay.

mission called VIPER (Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover).

The discovery of more water on the moon holds great promise for future lunar exploration and eventual settlements. Water is a vital necessity that we can't live without. It's also heavy. If we can use water resources found on the moon, we can bring less water and more cargo or equipment on future lunar missions.

Humanity will take all the assistance the Universe has to offer!

Brooke Edwards is a NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador. She lives in Manistee. Follow her on Facebook @ManisteeStarParty.



Liftoff! SpaceX Crew-1 rockets into orbit

Story and photos by MATT RUMPFELDT, Freshwater Reporter Special Correspondent

CORAL SPRINGS, FLA. – About a week out from the launch, I received an email from NASA's Kennedy Space Center, offering a VIP launch viewing in conjunction with Gray Line Tours. They had four pickup locations, three in the Orlando area and one at Merritt Island.

It seemed well thought out, to be as safe as possible. They required masks the entire time, except when eating, took our temperature before we boarded the bus, only filled the buses to half capacity and staggered the seating. No single riders had anyone next to them.

We boarded the buses at the pickup location on Nov. 15 and (were taken) to Kennedy Space Center. We entered through security, our temps were taken again, then we were back on the buses to the Saturn V site, about 3.9 miles from the launch pad.

I was surprised at the folks from out of town. One family was from New Jersey; there was another man from New Jersey, and a man from California. All came in for the launch. There was also a person from Gainesville, Fla., that was attending his 11th launch – not all crewed, however.

They handed out plenty of hand sanitizer. (There was) plenty of room to spread out on the bleachers. I had the whole row to myself.

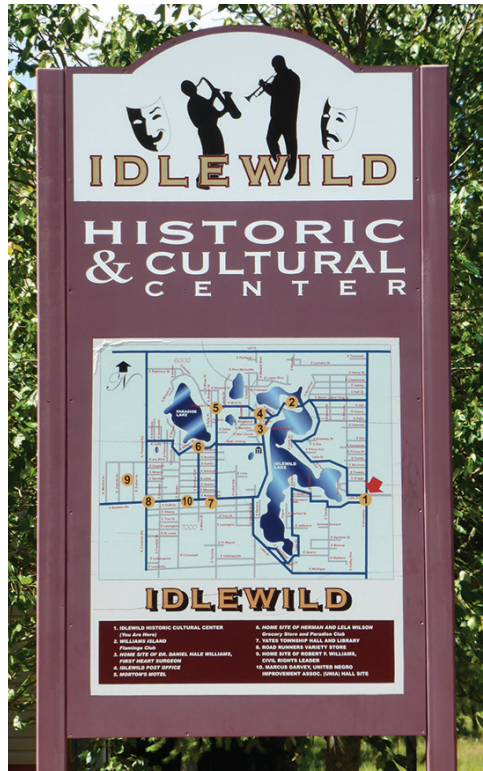
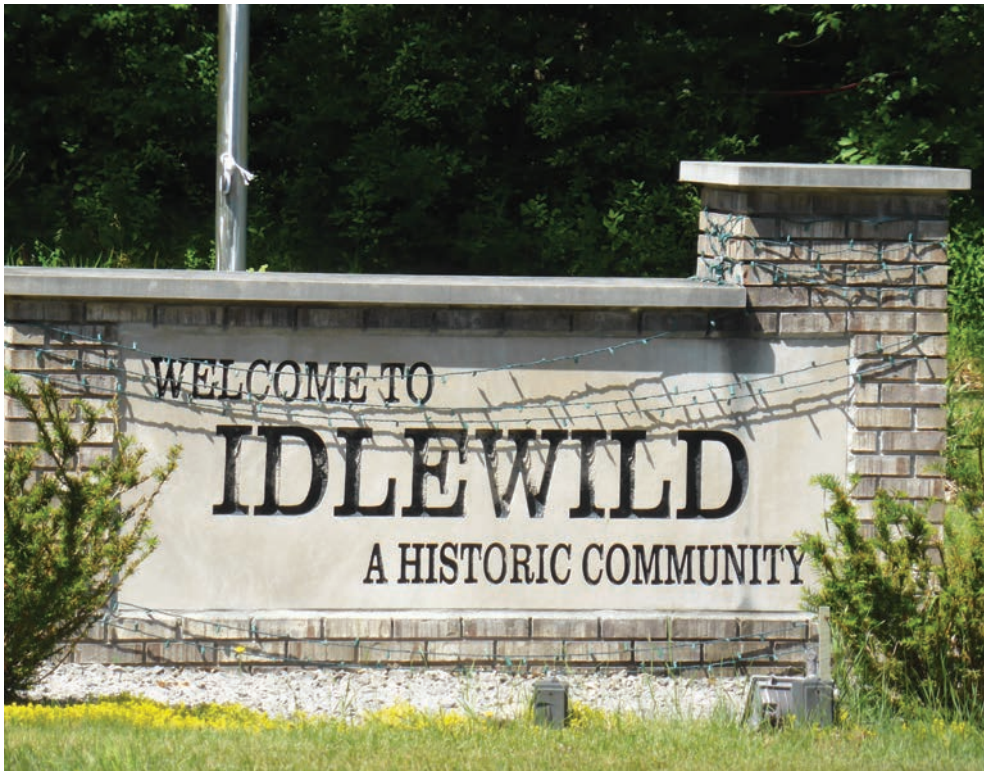
About 20 minutes before launch, we saw the International Space Station fly overhead.

At 10 seconds, everyone started counting down. Very cool feeling ... not to mention the oohs and ahhs! Getting chills just writing about it.

It was by far the best location I've ever watched from and, being my first night launch, it was just incredible the way the area lit up. We were even able to see the "jellyfish" effect surrounding the rocket, as well as seeing the fire blasts when the first stage was landing. Being so close really provided an added sense of awe. Kind of gives you a certain sense of pride, to be sure!

I'd love to view another launch from there. That being said, as impressive as it was, I think the shuttle launch was more impressive, mainly due to the pounds of thrust generated. It's just the difference between 2 million pounds of thrust versus about 7 million. Don't get me wrong, though. This was fantastic!

Matt Rumpfaldt is a space enthusiast and photographer. He lives in Florida and has attended 5 crewed launches, the final 3 shuttles: Discovery, Endeavor, and Atlantis, and the first two SpaceX launches: Crew Demo-2 & Crew 1.



Above left. The entrance to the community of Idlewild. Photo by Mark Videan. Above right. A map at the Idlewild Historic & Cultural Center points visitors to sights of interest in the community. Photo by Mark Videan.

Top. The Flamingo Club in Idlewild is now abandoned but once brought well-known performers to the community in Lake County. Photo by Mark Videan. Above. Now an open field, the Paradise Club on Paradise Lake was one of several night clubs in Idlewild during the '40s and '50s. Photo courtesy of Lake County Historical Society.

On the musical road to Idlewild

By KEVIN HOWELL

Last summer, my favorite navigator Jean and I took to the Mason County Cultural Trails, a series of six trails developed by the county's Cultural Economic Development Task Force.

Each trail led us through the heritage and history of the area's maritime and lumber industries, agriculture, barn quilts and sculptures.

"Are we going on the music trail soon?" my navigator asked in early November. "Isn't it about time to do that?"

"Yep, let's go tomorrow," I replied. Fortunately, it was a sunny day with, gasp, no snow yet.

Stops along the trail include a Ludington radio station and Scottville Clown exhibit in White Pine Village, outside of Ludington. On this day, we headed in another direction on the trail, taking U.S. Highway 10 east and winding our way through the woods of the Manistee National Forest to neighboring Lake County. At the intersection of M-37,

we headed south to the town of Baldwin. From Baldwin, we picked up U.S. 10 again (at the traffic light) and headed east a few miles to the community of Idlewild. Here, nights once rang with the sounds of top-quality musicians and performers who found a haven in the area's African American community. This rich and vibrant music culture existed from the 1930s to 1950s, finally withering in the mid to late '60s.

First stop was the Idlewild Cultural Center, unfortunately closed due to the everlasting pandemic.

Though we couldn't get a close-up look at the displays inside, we could catch a glimpse of what we were missing through the windows. There were outdoor displays

too. One set of photos showed the familiar figure, though long gone now, of Louis Armstrong.

Jean found an outdoor display with a map of the community and took a photo. My faithful navigator used it to guide us through the winding, often confusing streets and sand tracks leading to two of the most famous nightclubs: the Flamingo Club and the Paradise Club.

We wound our way to the island on Idlewild Lake, where we found the boarded-up building that housed the former Flamingo Club.

While I snapped a few photos of the nightclub's exterior, Jean wandered across the road to see some construction in progress.

"They're building a retaining wall at the beach," she told me.

The beach at Idlewild Lake was, and still is, a popular spot for the community during the summer.

Please allow me to hit the pause button on our trail adventure and take a step forward a few days, to a conversation I had with Bruce Micinski, president of the Lake County Historical Society in Baldwin. I wanted to learn more of Idlewild's music heritage from him.

"In its peak time," Micinski told me, "there would be 20,000 people there."

It was popular for a couple of reasons. "(Phil) Giles promoted the area for whites and blacks," he said. "The community was for African Americans, but whites came for the entertainment."

Sharing a photo of the Flamingo Club in 1959, he pointed out, "A lot of people were coming here; the whites were at separate tables, but it was integrated."

Micinski knows what he's talking

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Typical celebrations during Hanukkah. Photo courtesy of Meryl Werner Smith.



Above. Typical celebrations during Hanukkah. Photo courtesy by Africa Studio. Right. Hanukkah candles on the last night. Photo courtesy of Meryl Werner Smith.

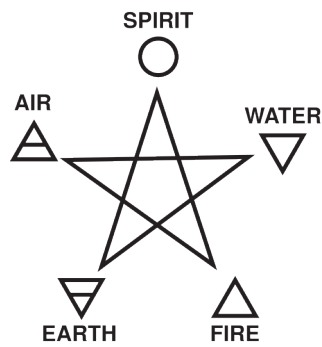
Traditions

continued from page 1

short supply and they expected it would only last one night. Inexplicably, the oil lasted eight nights. The eight candles in a special candle holder called a menorah celebrate the eight nights the lamp remained lit. For more information on Hanukkah, there's a brief article on the History Channel website: <https://www.history.com/news/8-things-you-should-know-about-hanukkah>)

The Baha'i faith has members sprinkled throughout west Michigan as well. Baha'i is an independent, worldwide faith based on one God and one humanity. It is the second most widespread world religion, behind Christianity.

The Baha'i faithful have a celebratory period called Intercalary Days in late February, when gifts are given and hospitality offered. Like Hanukkah, Intercalary Days is more a family and social holiday rather than a remembrance of a major religious anniversary. It precedes the Baha'i New Year in March, one of the major holidays of the Baha'i faith. Many Baha'is have families of different faiths, and often celebrate those holidays along with their families. (www.bahai.us)



Pentagram, a symbol common in Paganism. The top point stands for spirit, while the other four represent earth elements. Note that use of the inverted pentagram (two points at the top) is a symbol for chaos, inversion and, perhaps, evil.

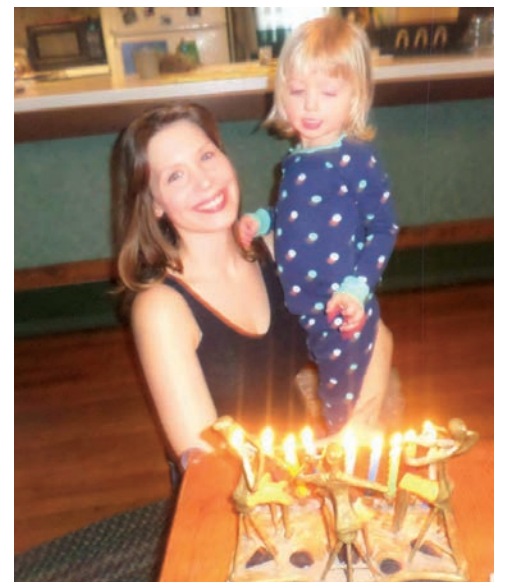
Pagan festivals occur on the solstices and equinoxes during the year. Yule is the period beginning with the winter solstice and running for about ten days. My friend described her Yule as follows:

"Yule is the only pagan holiday [our family] celebrates. It's not about presents or a tree. It's about family and taking time to just be together. To laugh, love and create memories. We do welcome the winter solstice as a thank you to Mother Nature for the season's change but there is no grand celebration. I personally use the time of winter solstice to reflect on the year and find ways to be and do better in the year to come."

While this represents all the local folks who responded to my request for help with this piece, several more religious cultures "outside the mainstream" are also happily functioning here in our communities. We have a few adherents of Eastern religions – Buddhism and Hinduism. Islam is another world religion with followers in nearly every community. Unitarian Universalists are found in most communities as well, and their congregations offer some of the most inclusive and accepting folks around.

Native American traditions are integrated with natural phenomena, such as solstices, and are celebrated then. A "Ghost Supper" in the fall is a community meal honoring ancestors, and especially those loved ones who have passed during the previous year. Native peoples may choose to observe their cultural traditions as well as those of another organized religion.

Our area communities have held events for Kwanzaa – a celebration of African Culture which also occurs in late December. Kwanzaa was created in 1966 as a healthy focal point in response to the racial unrest



Author Natalie Ruth Joynton enjoys the last day of Hanukkah with her child. Courtesy photo.

in California (and across the country) during the 1960s. It is based on "Seven Principles" which include such things as unity, faith and purpose. A single principle is the main focus of each night's celebration during the seven days of Kwanzaa. (<http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/>)

There is plenty of room in this world for those whose beliefs differ from our own. Even Christian believers vary in their holiday celebrations. Seventh Day Adventists don't observe the Christmas holiday, nor do Mennonites. The Greek Orthodox Church is Christian, but they celebrate Christmas on January 7, due to differences in the early calendars.

Calendars are another expression of diversity. Differences between solar calendars and lunar calendars explain why some holidays seem to roam around the main calendar we reference in our daily West Michigan lives. The Chinese, Jews, Muslims, and Baha'is have different calendars where New Year's Day is other than January 1. That means multiple New Years for some – a result of blending cultures.

One thing in common is that all of the local folks who stepped up to talk with me mentioned how difficult it is to observe their traditions, raise their children and live their chosen life without a local community. Natalie Ruth Joynton, a faculty member

Food is a focal point of many cultural traditions, including those of Native Americans. Photo by quadxeon.



at West Shore Community College and a practicing Jew, has authored a memoir highlighting the difficulties of living outside one's chosen culture: "Welcome to Replica Dodge" (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/44424913-welcome-to-replica-dodge>) takes a look at Joynton's world.

Here in rural northern Michigan, diversity abounds – although to some it means a kind of isolation. So, welcome the diversity in your neighborhood. Send a card, drop off some baked goods, share a campfire with another family. Reach out in friendship and I can just bet you that friendship will reach back. Build bridges, wish one another well, experience different foods and new customs.

Happy holidays, my friends, whatever you celebrate.

Judy Cools has been a columnist, web designer, feature and business writer, and an editor for nearly 30 years. She and her husband make their home in the woods near Ludington. Read more at: www.judycoolsmoonandance.blog.



Top. Baha'is and friends perform at an event at West Shore Community College. Courtesy photo. Above. Ringstone, a symbol of the Baha'i Faith.

Also, right here at home, we have followers of Paganism in its various forms. Different types of Paganism may center on one deity, on many different deities or on the "spirit of the divine" being in all things. Pagan culture teaches that nature itself is sacred. Profound spiritual meaning is placed on the natural cycles of birth, growth, and death. Humans are part of nature, as are animals, trees, stones, plants and all things of the earth. Of the several sub-groups, perhaps the most commonly known is Wicca. Others refer to their beliefs as "Earth Religions." There are differences between these groups, just as there are differences in the various forms of Christianity or Judaism.

Lending a hand: Restaurant owners help each other during crisis

Story and photos by STEWART A. MCFERRAN

I asked Tammy Grant, owner of the Bear Claw Café in Copemish, if I could take her picture. “Mask on? Or mask off?,” she replied.

Knowing that mask mandates do not work in the State of Michigan, I indicated that it was up to her.

She coyly suggested, “Half on? Half off?” but then added, “I like masks.”

Despite large bears all around you, and a big set of bear claws hanging above the counter, you can feel safe in the Bear Claw Café. The place is clean, and Tammy wears her mask.

I’ve ordered both breakfast and lunch here. The coffee is good and the mashed potatoes are the real thing. The turkey with gravy is delicious.

Grant says her homemade ice cream is “made with love.” Customers can buy an ice cream cone or a pint to take home. She uses fresh strawberries, blueberries and raspberries in her fruit-flavored ice cream. She also sells Salty Pistachio and Bear Claw. Of the latter, she says, “I do an actual Bear Claw. It’s a chocolate ice cream (with) pecans and walnuts in it, Salty Caramel and

some fudge in it.”

Geno’s Sports Bar and Grill in Thompsonville is “just down the road” from the Bear Claw Café. Geno Allen, of Geno’s, and Grant have had trouble getting help at their restaurants.

“So, over the summer, I helped out,” Grant said. “I volunteered at Geno’s, mostly doing dishes, busing tables, doing their to-go orders, answering the phone – wherever they were shorthanded.”

Over the summer, they were shorthanded almost every day.

“Geno actually came over here and worked (at) my restaurant,” Grant said. “I had no cook. I had to close my dining room. Geno took care of the front, took care of the orders and I cooked.”

With the state’s three-week closing order for indoor dining, which began on Nov. 18, area restaurants are responding in ways that best meet their needs and those of their customers. For the latest ordering



Above. Bear Claw Café owner Tammy Grant, wearing a mask among bears. Right. The Bear Claw Café in Copemish.



information, contact Geno’s at 231-378-2554 and Bear Claw Café at 231-970-1237. Follow Bear Claw Café on Facebook.

Stewart McFerran has visited the Ben and Jerry’s facility in Vermont, among other ice cream facilities. He looks forward to trying homemade Copemish Bear Claw ice cream.

Toys for Tots

Making sure every child has a gift

From staff reports

The annual Toys for Tots/Gifts for Teens giving program is underway in Manistee and Mason counties. The program, coordinated by FiveCAP, an anti-poverty community action agency, helps to provide a free gift to children ages 0-18 in income-eligible families. The program is administered in partnership with Synergy Broadcasting group, which owns area radio stations.

Decorated barrels for new, unwrapped toys and teen gifts, as well as canisters for cash donations, are found at participating local businesses and nonprofits. Members of the public may drop their donations in the barrels or canisters. Santa’s elves will sort the unwrapped presents and make certain there are enough for every age group. Monetary donations will be used to purchase gifts closer to the time of distribution.

Parents must apply in advance and phone applications are currently being taken. In Mason County, call (231) 757-3785. In Manistee, call (231) 723-8327. Alternatively, parents living in Manistee County may call Sharon at (231) 525-2285. Those living in Mason County may call Angela at (231) 251-2192.

A statement on the FiveCAP website states: “Parents will receive their date and time for picking out toys/gifts for their child(ren), a family game and stocking stuffers, with the assistance of a personal shopper. COVID protocols, social distancing and masks required.”

Distribution dates this year are Wednesday, Dec. 16, and Thursday, Dec. 17. In Manistee County, gifts may be picked up at the VFW Hall. In Mason County, gifts will be distributed at the Holiday Inn Express – Graystone Event Center.

Donors may look for barrels at the following locations. (Some schools, government centers and businesses may be closed, due to COVID-19.)

Bear Lake: Blarney Castle

Copemish: Copemish Family Market, Honor State Bank

Ludington: AJ’s Party Port, Applebee’s, Coldwell Banker, Family Video, Fifth Third Bank, Great Lakes Ford, Jamesport Brewing Co., Lakewinds Dental, Ludington Pumped Storage Power Plant, Ludington Woods Living Center, Mancino’s, Metalworks, Nordlund & Associates, Reimer Eye Center, Walmart, Western Land Services, West Shore Educational Service District, West Shore Eye Care Center, Whitehall Industries and Wildwood Meadows.

Manistee: Casman Academy, Filer Credit Union, The Fillmore, Goodies Juice and Java, Happy Owl Bookshop, Highway Inn, Huntington Bank, Jefferson Elementary, Lighthouse Realty, Manistee Catholic Central, Manistee City Hall, Manistee Courthouse, Manistee County Library (main branch), Painted Lady, Ramsdell Theatre, VFW Hall, Walgreens, West Michigan Credit Union and WSCM Cardiac and Pulmonary Unit.

Onkama: Onkama School, Five Star Realty.

Scottville: Dollar General, Dr. Squires Chiropractic, Mason County Central Middle School, Mason County Eastern Schools, Mason-Lake Soil Conservation District, Steve’s Tire.

For more information, go to: www.fivecap.org/toys-for-tots

Best advice for holiday eating

By MILTON F. WHITMORE

In this season of festive occasions, and the required eating that is involved, it might be a good time to ponder dietary restrictions and edicts. Arthur C. Gilroy was a 19th century English chemist/biologist who dabbled in nutritional studies. His main work, conducted at Oxford University from 1892-1902, concerned the intricacies of digestion and metabolism.

It was during an intense period of investigation and experimentation that he developed what has become known as Gilroy’s Law of Caloric and Lipid Dispersion. Even in this late Victorian Period there was intense interest in weight loss and gain.

Gilroy’s Law (he was called “Gilly,” for short) states: While consuming desserts and other foodstuffs which contain the threat of prodigious amounts of lipid-producing elements, it is best to choose for intake only those food items which, by the nature of their preparation or construction, offer the greatest amount of surface area. Puddings, cakes, pies, cookies, etc. with smooth surfaces must be avoided. The nutrition-conscious connoisseur will keep a keen eye open for those delicacies offering undulating surfaces created by swirls, dips, twists, turns, coconut, nuts, etc. Heavily furrowed and wavy frostings are especially prized.

Specifically, Gilroy’s Law postulates that “The greater the surface area of tasty treats, the more opportunity fats and

calories will have of dispersing into the atmosphere.” This process renders most desserts and other tidy tidbits harmless, as far as weight gain is concerned.

As in many culinary adventures, the above must be taken with a certain amount of “tongue in cheek.”

I do hope this is of help.

Milton writes from the Arcadia area, where he lives with his wife Mary and their 2.5-year-old Australian Shepherd, Molly.



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Books

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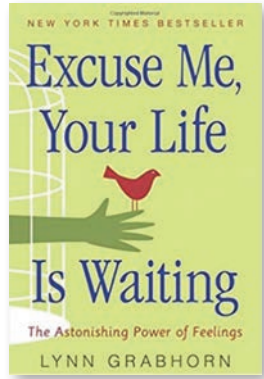
of the former attorney's style. "Playing for Pizza" adds a touch of humor to Grisham's writing that makes it an enjoyable read with an easy pace. It is the story of a washed-out, third-string quarterback for the Cleveland Browns who manages to throw a 17-point lead in the big game. After the loss and cut from Cleveland, Rick Dockery is left with few to no options, but his agent manages to find one more team who will take him. Dockery ends up becoming the starting quarterback for Italy's Parma Panthers and earning a small salary ... plus bonuses paid in pizza.

Finding this gem among Grisham's works was a real surprise for me and a delightful change of pace from his more intense thriller novels.

For anyone who loves American football and pizza, (who doesn't?), and wants a relaxing break from 2020, follow Rick to Italy – where he finds glory on the field (sort of), friendship, a new love interest and the flavors of Italian food.

Excuse Me, Your Life is Waiting

Author: Lynn Grabhorn | Publisher: Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc.



Reviewed by JUDY COOLS

This book did for me what no other book in the genre has done, throughout my (getting long) lifetime. Some readers may relate to the phrase "power of positive thinking" or "mindfulness" or, perhaps, "visualizing." The concept is one of attraction – vibrational attraction. If you're happy, you attract more happy because it's in the same wavelength. If you're grumpy, sour and negative, well then, that's what you'll attract.

I've been exposed to this concept throughout my life. All the Dr. Norman Vincent Peales and Wayne Dyers of the world sounded a little wacky to me. Unrealistic. Pollyanna. Unbelievable. So, I shook my head and went about my life the same as before. It wasn't until a major life crisis crossed my path

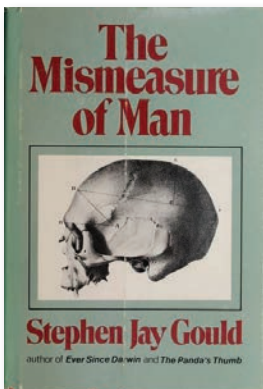
at the same time as "Excuse Me, Your Life is Waiting" that I began to see what the "Power of Attraction" people had been saying all along. I get it now – IT WORKS! And when you put it to work for yourself, your mind will be spinning.

My one sticking point with Grabhorn is that she denies the existence of God as a component in a person's life journey. Fortunately, the book is still a good read and full of brilliant concepts and examples, if the reader just works around the God issue with their own beliefs in mind.

A valuable, life-changing book. I keep it in my e-reader and go back to it often, reading a page or two, sometimes several chapters. It never gets old.

The Mismeasure of Man

Author: Dr. Stephen Jay Gould | Publisher: W.W. Norton



Reviewed by STEWART A. MCFERRAN

I met Stephen Jay Gould in Yellow Springs, Ohio, after he had given the commencement address at Antioch College. An Antioch graduate and professor of paleontology at Harvard, he wrote a column in Natural History Magazine for many years. Among the numerous books he wrote is the "The Mismeasure of Man."

It is a fascinating discussion of the use and misuse of science to understand ourselves. Gould delves into the history of the measurements taken and conclusions made about men and women. Craniology, for example, was the practice of taking the skulls of deceased individuals and filling them with BBs. A comparison was made of the volume of brains after the BBs were counted.

On average, men have larger bodies and heads than women. That is a fact. Gould points out the wrong-headed conclusion that followed: because men have larger brains filling their larger heads, they are smarter. This was a faulty 19th century "scientific" conclusion, just one of the mismeasures of man in Gould's tome. He goes on to discuss

"Mismeasure" continued

how the theory of intelligence quotient, or "IQ," was developed and used to hold many groups of people back.

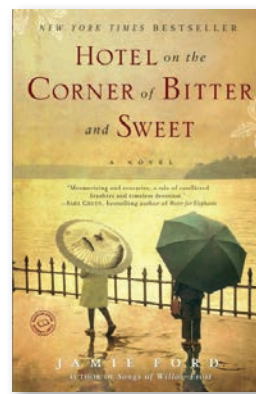
Wrong-headed conclusions still abound regarding the theory of biological evolution. Used to bolster theories on everything from criminal behavior to sexism and racism, biological evolution is widely misunderstood. Gould shows what the theory can be used for and what it cannot.

Good science is vital to fight viruses and develop vaccinations. We rely on vigorous scientific process for so many things in our lives, from the eyeglasses on our faces to satellites that power our TVs. But faulty conclusions about science made by those seeking to confirm prejudice have caused lots of problems.

Originally published in 1981, and revised and expanded by the author in 1996, "The Mismeasure of Man" will enlighten the reader's understanding of issues still relevant today.

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet

Author: Jamie Ford | Publisher: Random House



Reviewed by RAMONA DEGEORGIO VENEGAS

While walking our pooch, I passed the "little library" again. As she stopped to sniff a message, I opened the small door to other worlds and selected a book. I liked the name, "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet." I wondered ... did the author, Jamie Ford, know my crossroads?

Grabbing my attention and my hand, the historical novel took me to Seattle in the 1940s, sharing a time and cultures quite unfamiliar to me.

Henry was the 12-year-old only son of Chinese immigrants. His father was traditional and loyal to the country of his birth. A good son, Henry went along with the arrangement to attend the all-white "better" school on "scholarship." The other

Chinese neighborhood kids distanced themselves from Henry, as he walked to school in the opposite direction. The white boys bullied him.

He earned his scholarship by helping to serve school lunches and cleaning. His life at school was unpleasant until she came, another scholarship student. Their friendship lasted their whole lives, even though she was Japanese. Henry and Keiko enjoyed listening to jazz and sitting in the park under the cherry trees. She brought her sketch pad along. Their relationship grew into young love. Though he tried to keep her a secret from his father, who despised the Japanese after years of bad blood and wars, his parents suspected something.

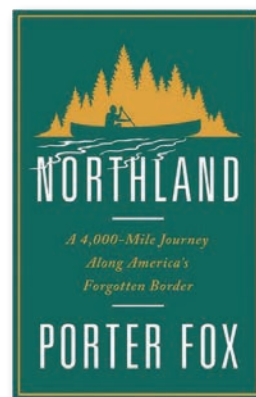
Keiko, her family, and all Japanese were sent to camps until after the war. From the high desert internment of Idaho, they tried to stay in touch. Henry even traveled to visit her once, with his friend the sax player.

Forty years later they were able to reunite. His son had helped Henry find Keiko in New York City.

The mystery of the belongings many Japanese families had left in the basement of an old theater is just one of the fun twists of the story. Based on historical events, the book was entertaining and educational. I could feel the despair and damp fog of the war times and appreciate the bond of hope that gave their friendship wings.

Northland

Author: Porter Fox | Publisher: W.W. Norton



Reviewed by MISTY SHEEHAN

I always like to read books about the wilderness. "Northland," by Porter Fox, is one of those excellent books. Fox traverses the border between the United States and Canada – canoeing, hiking, riding freighters and driving by car from Maine to Seattle.

What is special about the book, in addition to the magnificent scenery Fox describes, is his discussion of the history of this land – told in a manner that isn't boring, like the history I read in school. Instead, he weaves his historical knowledge with his skills as a professional writer, using language, metaphor and analogy.

He begins in Lubec, Maine, tracing an invisible border on

continued on page 7

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Look for Loon Rangers – Part Two
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the green-blue water of the St. Croix River. He struggles through three-foot swells and is knocked about by wind and water in every direction. He tells of the French occupation and the history of the Passamaquoddy tribe from Donald Soctomah, a tribal member who spent his life trying to convince federal and state officials of the tribe's 12,000-year-old history.

Fox's next adventure was on a freighter which took him from Montreal, Quebec, to Thunder Bay, Ontario, on the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes. The reader learns Ontario history from stories of voyageurs and coureurs des bois (fur traders) as they traveled up the Ottawa River through Lake Nipissing on the old canoe route to Lake Huron.

The Boundary Waters were next, with the area's thick forests and rocky lake edges. He tells of the trains that chugged through them, taking lumber.

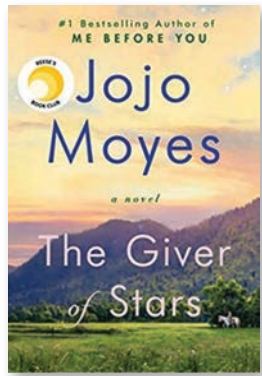
From there, he travels across North Dakota and brings contemporary history to life in the Sioux Indians' fight with the federal government over the oil pipeline through the Standing Rock reservation. He addresses the geology of North Dakota from ancient times to the present.

The last chapter takes us through Montana, Idaho and Washington State as it details the problems of establishing the border.

This is a great adventure tale with a marvelous history.

The Giver of Stars

Author: JoJo Moyes | Publisher: Penguin Random House



Reviewed by RONSCHMIDT

This year I have been more engaged than ever in my two favorite activities, reading and walking. I've been doing more of each as I stay close to home – safe, healthy and content. It has made me more grateful than ever to my mom for passing on her love of reading. She read stories to me when I was too little to do it myself, sharing all the joy and excitement of a well-written book.

Of all the good books I have read and reread this year, my favorite, perhaps, is "The Giver of Stars." This work of historical fiction is based on the true exploits of a group of brave women who became packhorse librarians, carrying books and magazines to their neighbors in the mountains of Kentucky. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, these women rode alone on horses and

mules through all kinds of weather and hardships – and for just a few dollars a week – to deliver books to families. Sometimes, they even became teachers, helping the households learn to read. I really liked the genuine feelings of friendship and dedication among the characters. They inspired me, and I bet they will inspire you also. Oh, yes ...it has the happy ending I want all the books I read this year to have.

Jane Eyre

Author: Charlotte Brontë | Publisher: Harper Perennial Deluxe Editions

Reviewed by CHELSEA WHITE

I've always been a voracious reader. When I was a kid, I hungrily consumed any literature put into my hands, from mythology to historical fiction to fantasy and science fiction. It didn't matter what it was; I was just as happy reading one of my grandmother's crime mysteries as I was reading about vampires or dragons. Because of this, the "why" behind my most treasured piece of literature is convoluted.



When I was 9, we were visited by family. My cousins were all avid readers, like me. One day, I had run out of books to read and my cousin handed me an old book of my grandmother's.

"Here, try this," she said. "It's too boring for me."

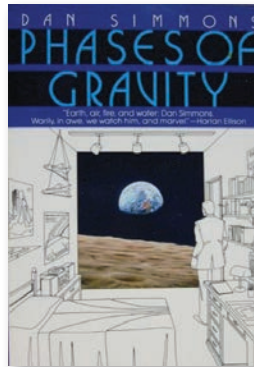
It was "Jane Eyre."

I don't know what exactly it was about it that gripped me. Certainly, I related to the young, solitary Jane hiding behind curtains and losing herself in books to escape her grim existence. To be fair, her situation was much more dire than mine, but I related to her struggle to relate to the people around her. I related to her oddness and loved her for her stoicism. One would think a 9-year-old would lose interest in the tale once it turned to love, but I was completely swept up in the tragedy and intrigue that was Jane and Mr. Rochester. I read that book five times in the next two days and, as our most loved characters do, Jane Eyre became one of my dearest friends.

I still read Jane's story once a year. My time with the book has become a ritual of sorts, the kind that never fails to bring comfort. A few years ago, I was given the exact book of my grandmother's in which I met Jane for the very first time, and now that ritual is even more precious to me. I will always be grateful to have discovered the small, determined young woman Charlotte Brontë created so many years ago.

Phases of Gravity

Author: Dan Simmons | Publisher/Imprint: Subterranean Press



Reviewed by PAT STINSON

In my late teens, early 20s, I began reading more and more science fiction, mostly newer stories and collections. I was usually holed up in a bedroom as I read, Bowie's "Low" playing nonstop in the background. One day, into my hands fell this unassuming little book of fiction, incorrectly shelved with the science fiction because the author wrote many others works in the genre, (like the excellent "Hyperion Cantos" series with its hair-raising character, the Shrike).

This more mainstream book, called "Phases of Gravity," could have been written by Margaret Atwood, another author I discovered in my 20s and for whom I'd skipped a day's work and traveled alone to the Detroit Institute of Arts to hear. "Phases" is a story of finding oneself adrift and looking inside for answers. It didn't matter to 20-something me that the over-the-hill male protagonist, a former astronaut, was going through the motions of a mid-life crisis. How would you find meaning in your life after walking on the moon and sacrificing your family relationships to do so? This is Richard Baedeker's attempt to fit together the pieces of his broken life, after seemingly reaching his "peak" too early.

The story is both gut-wrenching and humorous, dramatic almost to the absurd. But love can be absurd, sometimes. We follow Baedeker through the phases of his life, with flashbacks to the moon, restless wanderings, an exciting rescue, illuminating conversations and fiery arguments. His is a far from perfect life, but his story will leave you with a warm glow.

This book is perfect fodder for a movie. Someone, please, write the screenplay.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

From staff reports

Dolly Parton is reportedly a generous soul, and a number of children living in Manistee and Mason counties are recipients of her giving spirit.



received free books.

Children ages 0-5 must be registered with the program. No additional criteria are required to begin receiving a free book in the mail each month.

Recently in the news for donating \$1 million toward a COVID-19 vaccine, the country singer and songwriter has flown a bit under the radar with another project.

It began as an early childhood literacy program in 1995, in the township where she was raised. Today, the Dolly Parton Imagination Library mails free, high-quality children's books each month to little ones from the time they're born until age 5, so long as they live in the U.S., Canada, Australia, The Republic of Ireland and the U.K.

Parton's vision, according to a statement on imaginationlibrary.com, is to spark a lifelong love of reading and inspire children to dream.

Through a partnership with FiveCap, a community action agency with offices in Baldwin, Scottville and Manistee, Parton's program has touched the lives so far of 65 children, ages 0-5, living in Manistee County and 90 preschoolers in Mason County – all of whom received free books. In Michigan, 63,547 children so far have

Citizens, businesses, school districts and other organizations in the above-mentioned counties who wish to start a book-giving program in their communities need only to partner with a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

According to statements on its website, the program has mailed more than 147 million children's books from 1995 through October 2020. One book is donated every 1.8 seconds.

Research into the reading program's impact suggests "positive increases in key early childhood literacy metrics," according to a press release from the Dolly Parton Foundation.

During the nationwide lockdown earlier this year, Parton released a video series, "Good Night with Dolly" featuring the singer-songwriter snuggled in bed for weekly readings of books from the program.

Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. For more information, please visit imaginationlibrary.com.

Gift to Remember

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solve the problem.

If the problem seems too big, we tend to gravitate in the opposite direction, assuming that any fix we attempt would not make a difference.

Today, more than ever, we see the need to make a difference. But that need, without question, is overbearing. Often our reaction follows a standard approach: tossing spare

change into a red kettle, making donations to charity groups or sacrificing a few hours for volunteer work. All admirable but limited to our respective means.

“Wish I could do more” is the thought that resonates but doesn’t seem to count for much in our own minds. The fix will always seem temporary, and impersonal.

I believe that’s the difference my dad

was talking about. Real giving was without obligation, guilt or need for self-satisfaction. Essentially, it’s not really about us, he said. We’re simply the instruments, waiting in the wings for a greater purpose. And whether that involves listening, action, or just being present with someone during a time of need remains open.

Ultimately, it all hinges on our unrestricted willingness to sacrifice our own interests to serve others: the ability to make a difference without reservation or provocation. That’s

what allows it to be personal and complete.

This, my dad said, is the greatest gift of Christmas – born in a manager under a starry sky in late December.

I remember because I drew a picture of it on a Christmas Eve bulletin.

Dave Lein, a former newspaper editor and public relations manager, grew up in Kaleva and currently lives in Elk Rapids with his wife, Pam. The couple has two grown children.

Idlewild

continued from page 3

about. When I met with him in Baldwin, he showed me a framed news story of a Smithsonian Channel documentary, “The Green Book: Guide to Freedom” in which he participated. The Green Book was a publication listing places to stay and eat that were safe for black Americans in the '50s and '60s. Idlewild was one of the entries in the book.

The history of Idlewild can be found, in part at least, on the Music Cultural Trail guide, but talking with Micinski was more enlightening. He really enjoys uncovering history.

“Around 1912 or '15, developers, the Branch Brothers, saw a market – no one’s selling land to the black population – and that’s how Idlewild got started,” Micinski told me.

“White Realtors started the Idlewild Development Company and went to the cities where the black population was: Chicago, Indianapolis, Cleveland, especially Chicago.”

They sold 25-foot by 100-foot lots, he explained. The small plots of land weren’t large enough to build a house, so people had to buy two or three.

“Bus tours transported people up here who had never owned anything in their life, and that’s how that started,” he said.

Tourism, automobiles and trains brought artists and intellectuals, at first, Micinski said, and later factory workers and others. Hotels were built to house entertainers and visitors, and the fresh air and outdoors kept them coming.

From clubhouses on the lakes to clubs for dancing and dining, the area grew in the days before the civil rights movement brought about the Civil Rights Act, and property and travel became more available for the black populations.

Micinski also referenced another stop on the Music Trail. He mentioned that Louis Armstrong owned a cabin in Idlewild, but Micinski’s research never found anywhere in that community where he performed. Rather, he might have performed in, say, Ludington – at the Rainbow Garden Pavilion, where the skate park is now located – then returned to Idlewild to stay.

Back on the trail, my navigator and I headed over toward Paradise Lake in search of the Paradise Club. We traveled back and



Bruce Micinski, president and researcher for the Lake County Historical Society in Baldwin, offered insight into the music heritage of Idlewild and the surrounding area. Photo by Kevin Howell.

forth on Paradise Path but no Paradise Club, abandoned or otherwise.

A well-tended, stone craftsman-style home was on one corner, where we found a brochure. Evidently the home was owned by the Wilson family, who also owned the Paradise Club across the street. No longer there, the club once occupied the vacant property on the lake which can be rented for special events. Oh, well.

With that discovery, it was time to wend our way back through Idlewild to Baldwin. We looked for one more site on the trail: the Pleasant Plains Auditorium, in downtown Baldwin. The building is still sort of there, but the facade has changed, and a bank has taken the place of the auditorium.

According to the trail guide, and echoed by Micinski, it “hosted numerous musical events from its construction in 1929 through the late 1950s. In 1937 the Prairie Farmer WLS Home Talent Show from Chicago showcased local talent, including the young Leonard Keller. Keller went on to form Brown and Keller, a well-known regional orchestra.”

As a reward for our travel – following

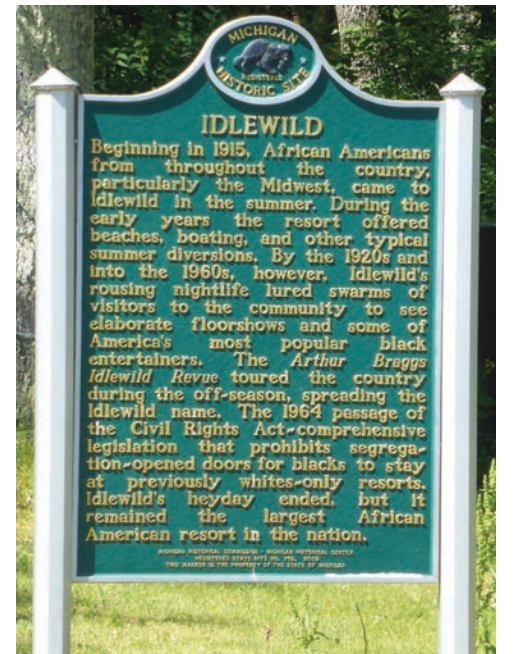
trails is hard work – we found lunch at The Thai Mango, in James Street Plaza, Ludington, just up the street from the former Rainbow Garden.

And that was the last stop on our Music Trail travels, and the last stop on our travels along the Mason County Cultural Trails.

You can follow your own version of the cultural trails by checking out: <http://masoncountyculture.com/trails/>.

Information on Idlewild and the area’s rich music heritage can be found through Bruce Micinski and the Lake County Historical Society Museum. Visits to the museum are currently by appointment only. Call (231) 898-6500, or email lakecountyhistory@hotmail.com. Follow them on Facebook.

Kevin Howell is a transplanted freelance writer from Indiana residing in Mason County. He loves the Michigan woods, lakes and especially Michigan craft beers – not necessarily in that order! Kevin can be contacted at kevin@ytc.com.



A “Michigan Historic Site” marker at the entrance to the Idlewild community tells some of the history of the area. Photo by Mark Videan.

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