

FRESHWATER REPORTER

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

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FREE

Finding peace among the pieces

By PAT STINSON

The sound of breaking dishes in her great-grandmother's kitchen one evening was Tricia Boucha's introduction to the fine art of mosaics. Sent at age 7 to live for the summer with Eva Strauss, Tricia felt her presence in the household had upset her great-grandmother's life and angered her.

Instead, Strauss told her, "You've gotta learn art; we're gonna heal your soul."

At the time, Boucha was relearning how to walk and talk after severe trauma.

Boucha said her great-grandmother taught her mosaics on a TV tray, using broken dishes and glue. Boucha also learned from Strauss that she is Native American, and that her great-grandmother was also known as Silver Cloud, whose birthname was Boucha.

"My parents never talked about it," Boucha said, adding that she later learned her father, who had experienced discrimination, was "a half breed," and his race was listed as "mulatto" on a 1940 Census form.

Boucha said she was under the impression from her father that she was a little, Catholic, white girl.

Her family tree, however, includes fur trapper William Boucher, who traded with the Ojibwa and lived for a time near present-day Naubinway in the Upper Peninsula. Boucher, a half-breed known as Métis, married an indentured servant, also a half-breed, and the two had many children. One of their sons was Eva's grandfather. When Eva married, her last name changed from Boucha (a variation of the Boucher name) to Strauss. She and her husband moved to Traverse City, where Tricia's grandfather was born.



Mosaic artist Tricia Boucha, pictured in her Kaleva studio, is close to completing the second glass mural depicting a scene from the Finnish Kalevala. In this one, Väinämöinen uses his magic harp to sing everyone to sleep, including thief Loki who stole his Sampo. This panel, and five more, will be lit at night and displayed in Kaleva's Sculpture Park. Photo by Mark Videan.

In her first year exploring her Native American heritage, Boucha learned embroidery and beadwork from Strauss. Over the course of the second year she learned the language and foods. Her third year, she said, "was a primer of the whole thing."

"She instilled in me a love for that part of my life, the Earth and the Spirit."

As an adult, Tricia honored her great-grandmother by changing her last name to Boucha.

The owner, artist and self-proclaimed "general nuisance"

By Boucha's own account, she had an "unusual and dramatic" past, one that compels her to work on a memoir. Her business page on Facebook, Mended Pieces Mosaics, includes her artist's statement:

"Fine Art outside the box ... Mosaic is a healing art, therapeutic and serene. An ancient art for a modern time. Where objects fit together in a sparkling dance of mended pieces."

Boucha said she has spent 50 years creating artworks, and her intricate mosaics, tilework, beadwork and embroidered pieces honor history, art history and culture.

Honoring her heritage, she said she gives her creations away to fellow Native Americans, as well as to many others.

Once an Ann Arbor gallery owner, the artist and art teacher – she taught classes at the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts last year – has found a niche in her new home of Kaleva. (Boucha moved to the village last year.) She has been embraced

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SEE THE EVENTS
CALENDAR INSIDE

Local shelves fill once more

By KEVIN HOWELL

Two local businesses, one shuttered, one lost in a fire, will spring back to life in Mason and Manistee counties, much to the anticipation of area shoppers.

The owners of Nash Bros. Market, of Custer, hope to have the grocery store stocked and ready to open by the time this paper goes to press. Similarly, Dublin General Store, in Wellston, is slated to open soon and resume thrilling customers with its famous jerky.



Charlie Nash, co-owner of the new Nash Bros. Market in Custer, was stocking shelves about a week before the proposed opening date of Aug. 30. Photo by Kevin Howell.

Nash Bros. Market, Mason County

Local residents, campers and anglers staying in the area around Scottville,

Custer and Walhalla will have a place to pick up groceries and last-minute camping supplies once again.



Charlie Nash and his brother Greg are reviving the former grocery store in Custer. Nash Bros. Market kept the store's iconic cow head. Photo by Kevin Howell.

When Bonser's grocery store in Custer closed in 2016, it left a huge gap for residents, who faced long drives to pick up needed supplies.

But shelves are filling again at the newly renamed Nash Bros. Market on the corner of U.S. Highway 10 in the middle of the small village.

New owners Charlie and Greg Nash were hoping to have the store open by the end of August, but that may have been delayed a few days due to issues with new scanning equipment and required inspections.

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Follow the food!

Story and photos by KEVIN HOWELL



Sweet, local peaches at Orchard Market, Free Soil.

Two issues ago, I began following Mason County's Cultural Heritage Trails, beginning with the Maritime Trail, followed by the Barn Quilt Trail.

Thus far, my trusty navigator Jean and I have found curious and interesting sites and discovered a few surprises on each of our sojourns through the county – with nary a wrong turn.

Not so this time. My navigator was absent, waylaid by a twisted back that precluded the couple hours' driving needed to hunt for sites along the Agricultural Trail, the third of six heritage trails.

Always double check the names of the roads before heading out. I didn't.

I decided to travel a back way from our home near Walhalla. I missed a turn while looking for the wrong road and finally backtracked to the (wrong) road. A half hour later, I ended up asking my phone where the heck I was and where I really needed to be.

My first stop was an elk ranch a little south and east of Ludington, on what I ultimately discovered was Conrad Road, not Hawley Road. Anyway, the extended

drive to Amber Elk Ranch was not without its pleasures – wandering as I did through woodlands, rolling farmlands and orchards. The sight of a wind farm near the Pere Marquette River and Lake Michigan took the sting out of my waywardness. And the Elk Farm was pretty cool. I didn't see the elk – they were in the back pastures – and I was already running too late to take the tour, (\$12 for adults, \$8 for children and \$10 for seniors). However, I learned from Emily, the young woman behind the gift shop counter, the elk business had been going for some 20 years on the 100-year-old farm. (Read "October means bugling elk at Amber Elk Ranch," Freshwater Reporter, Oct. 2019.)

She explained to me that there were elk steaks and burger for sale, and there was a weekly cookout.

"Every Saturday, the owner grills out and it's open to the public," Emily told me.

The evening meal includes elk burgers, chips, soda pop and corn on the cob in the outdoor pavilion.

I snapped a few photos, picked out a

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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.**

September

- 2 Music by Nick Veine**
3-6pm, Taco 'Bout It Mexican Fusion, 344 River St., Manistee
- 2 Chairlift Rides and Top of the Mountain Entertainment with Jim Hawley**
6-8pm, weather permitting, \$9, 8 and under free with paying adult, houseguests free. Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 3 Live in the Plaza - acoustic music with Christian Larumbe**
5-8pm, free, N. James St. Plaza Stage, downtown Ludington
- 4-24 L.A.C.A. Members Only Art Exhibit**
11am-4pm, Tuesdays-Fridays, free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington, Artist reception Sept. 4, 5-8pm
- 4 Joseph Works - Exhibit of Paintings by Phil and Susan Joseph**
Noon-3pm, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Reservations required
- 4 Onekama Farmers Market**
1-4pm, next to 4850 Main St., Onekama
- 4 Ludington Farmer's Market**
3-7pm, N. James St. Plaza, downtown Ludington
- 4 FNL Unplugged - acoustic music with Joe Stickney**
6-9pm, free, N. James St. Plaza Stage, downtown Ludington
- 4 Live Music at Lahey's Pub with Big Daddy Fox (blues)**
8:30-midnight, Portage Point Resort, 8567 Portage Point Dr., Onekama
- 5 Manistee Farmer's Market**
8:30am-12pm, Memorial Dr. and Washington St., Manistee
- 5 Pop-up Art Market**
10am-2pm, Yellow Dog Café, Patina and Anchor Designs Boutique, 4850 Main St., Onekama
- 5 Chairlift Rides and Top of the Mountain Entertainment with Izzy Wallace**
6-8pm, weather permitting, \$9, 8 and under free with paying adult, houseguests free. Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 5 Live Music at Lahey's Pub with Big Daddy Fox (blues)**
8:30-midnight, Portage Point Resort, 8567 Portage Point Dr., Onekama
- 8 Live, Outdoor, Socially-distanced Courtyard Concerts w/ Fremont John**
7 and 8pm, \$5, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Two individually ticketed (in advance), 40 minute concerts limited to 20 guests each. Tickets available at L.A.C.A. gift shop, or call 231-845-2787, or go to <https://ludingtonartscenter.square.site/>
- 10 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Cavalleria (Mascagni)/Pagliacci (Leoncavallo)**
1-4pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 10 Live Music at the Level Four Rooftop Bar with Mike Youker**
7-9pm, bar is open 6-11pm, Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 11 Joseph Works - Exhibit of Paintings by Phil and Susan Joseph**
Noon-3pm, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Reservations required
- 11 Ludington Farmer's Market**
(tentative) 3-7pm, N. James St. Plaza, downtown Ludington
- 11 Live Music at the Level Four Rooftop Bar with Luke Woltanski**
7-9pm, bar is open 6-11pm, Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 12 Manistee Farmer's Market**
8:30am-12pm, Memorial Dr. and Washington St., Manistee
- 12 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Cavalleria (Mascagni)/Pagliacci (Leoncavallo)**
1-4pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 12 Live Music at the Level Four Rooftop Bar with Meg Gunia**
7-9pm, bar is open 6-11pm, Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 13 Cyrano de Bergerac with James McAvoy, presented by National Theatre Live**
1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Filmed live at the West End theatre in London
- 13 Live Music at the Level Four Rooftop Bar with Chris Smith**
7-9pm, bar is open 6-11pm, Crystal Mountain, 12500 Crystal Mountain Road, Thompsonville
- 15 Cyrano de Bergerac with James McAvoy, presented by National Theatre Live**
1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Filmed live at the West End theatre in London
- 15 Live, Outdoor, Socially-distanced Courtyard Concerts w/ Mike Luusua**
7 and 8pm, \$5, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Two individually ticketed (in advance), 40 minute concerts limited to 20 guests each. Tickets available at L.A.C.A. gift shop, or call 231-845-2787, or go to <https://ludingtonartscenter.square.site/>
- 17 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Don Pasquale (Donizetti)**
1-3:30pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 18 Joseph Works - Exhibit of Paintings by Phil and Susan Joseph**
Noon-3pm, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Reservations required
- 18 Ludington Farmer's Market**
(tentative) 3-7pm, N. James St. Plaza, downtown Ludington
- 19 Manistee Farmer's Market**
8:30am-12pm, Memorial Dr. and Washington St., Manistee
- 19 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Don Pasquale (Donizetti)**
1-3:30pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 19 Live from the Lot with Sadie Bass presented by the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts**
5-8pm, \$50/car, old K-mart parking lot, corner of Merkey Rd. and US-31, Manistee. Advance tickets only, available thru Sept. 17 by calling 231-398-9770 or going to Ramsdelltheatre.org/drive-in. Social distancing and other event guidelines online
- 20 A Midsummer Night's Dream presented by National Theatre Live**
1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Filmed live at the Bridge Theatre in London
- 20 25th Anniversary Blessing of the Animals**
1:30-6:30, free, Circle Rocking S Children's Farm, 5487 Tuttle Rd., Free Soil. Also pet show, contests, costumes, and more. For info www.circlerockingsfarm.org
- 22 A Midsummer Night's Dream presented by National Theatre Live**
1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Filmed live at the Bridge Theatre in London
- 24 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Le Nozze Di Figaro (Mozart)**
1-4:15pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 24 Manhattan Short Film Festival presented by L.A.C.A.**
7-9pm, \$10, limited seating, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Ten best films from 1600 world-wide entries will be shown. Audience members vote for their favorite. Global winner will be announced November 2
- 25 Joseph Works - Exhibit of Paintings by Phil and Susan Joseph**
Noon-3pm, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Reservations required
- 25 Ludington Farmer's Market**
(tentative) 3-7pm, N. James St. Plaza, downtown Ludington
- 26 Manistee Farmer's Market**
8:30am-12pm, Memorial Dr. and Washington St., Manistee
- 26 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Le Nozze Di Figaro (Mozart)**
1-4:15pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 30 Manhattan Short Film Festival presented by L.A.C.A.**
1-3pm, \$10, limited seating, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Ten best films from 1600 world-wide entries will be shown. Audience members vote for their favorite. Global winner will be announced November 2

October

- 1 2nd Annual ARF Prize art show featuring artists' pets**
11am-4pm, free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington
- 1 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Madama Butterfly (Puccini)**
1-3:45pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee
- 2 2nd Annual ARF Prize art show featuring artists' pets**
11am-4pm, free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Artist reception 4-7pm
- 2 Ludington Farmer's Market**
(tentative) 3-7pm, N. James St. Plaza, downtown Ludington
- 2 Manhattan Short Film Festival presented by L.A.C.A.**
7-9pm, \$10, limited seating, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. Ten best films from 1600 world-wide entries will be shown. Audience members vote for their favorite. Global winner will be announced November 2
- 3 Manistee Farmer's Market**
8:30am-12pm, Memorial Dr. and Washington St., Manistee
- 3 2nd Annual ARF Prize art show featuring artists' pets**
12-3pm, free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington
- 3 The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD: Madama Butterfly (Puccini)**
1-3:45pm, \$20 adult/senior, \$10 under 18, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee

Bright planets light the night sky

By BROOKE EDWARDS

With fall fast approaching, the days are beginning to get shorter. As we get less sunlight, we have more time to view the beauty of the night sky. Chances are there will be some clear nights in September and October to enjoy the stars, before the dreaded lake-effect cloud cover and cold air move in.

Many planets have already been gracing our sky for the past month and will continue to do so through September. They appear as bright "stars" in the sky that do not twinkle.

The show begins on clear nights, just after sunset. Saturn and Jupiter appear together in the southern sky. Saturn is on the left;

Jupiter appears to its right and is much brighter. Although invisible to the unaided eye, the exoplanet Pluto appears between the two. It is amazing to think these planets are aligned perfectly in their orbits and appear together so beautifully from Earth. With a good pair of binoculars, you can even view 3-4 of Jupiter's moons. Start

looking for Saturn and Jupiter just after sunset, and as they move west overnight. They set before the early-morning hours.

If you are a night owl or early riser, you are in for even more of a show. Mars, a planet of great interest right now, rises in the eastern sky just before midnight and will continue to rise in the sky overnight. It appears as a red star. Again, since it is a planet, Mars does not twinkle. It is worth looking after midnight to catch sight of this beauty. With the Mars Perseverance Rover on its way to the Red Planet, who knows what it might discover about our planetary neighbor in the years ahead.

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Saturn and Jupiter lie in the southern sky, along the Milky Way galaxy, after sunset. Photo by Brooke Edwards.



A.H. Lyman Building houses the Manistee Historical Museum on River Street. Photo by P. Stinson.



Moviegoers appreciate the Art Deco style of the Vogue Theatre on River Street in Manistee. Photo by P. Stinson.



The Manistee Golf and Country Club, on Cherry Road, offers several views of Lake Michigan. Photo by P. Stinson.



Ramsdell Theatre. Photo by Crescent Rose Photography.

Free passport to Manistee’s past

By P.G. MISTY SHEEHAN

It’s a beautiful day. Fluffy cumulus clouds are floating by in a bright-blue sky. The weather is perfect. I breathe in its freshness and want to go somewhere outside. I google and find self-guided historic tours posted on visitmanistecounty.com. One-quarter of the 100 historic sites found in eight self-guided tours can be viewed online, something to remember during our relentlessly gray November days.

The virtual tours are narrated by Manistee native Toni Trucks, a former entertainer at the Ramsdell Theatre and present-day actor starring in Seal Team and Twilight Breaking Dawn. I watch several of them and decide to visit some of the sites. It all seems promising, but there is one problem: the video tours are missing the addresses of the places they describe so brilliantly. This forces me to spend more time indoors looking at Google maps instead of under the blue sky. Site addresses can be found, however, in the eight historic walking tours listed beneath the videos on the website.

I live north of Manistee, in Benzie County, but I know that River Street runs along the south side of the Manistee River and, as you head south, up the hill, the street names are First Street, Second Street, etc. So, I begin at 425 River Street, at the Manistee Historical Museum. On a busy August day, finding a parking space here is easier than closer to U.S. Highway 31. The museum is housed in an older structure known as the A. H. Lyman building, named for a drug company that by 1890 was the largest north of Grand Rapids. A section of the building was used to produce schoolbooks until 1957, and in 1960 the building was given to the museum.

Unfortunately, the museum is not open today, but through the window I see artifacts filling the shelves, lining the walls and occupying the floor. I’ve found Executive Director Mark Fedder enormously helpful to anyone with questions about historical Manistee.

From here, I walk back toward U.S. 31 to the Vogue Theatre, 383 River Street, which is open in August and early September for previously released, limited movie engagements ... but not today. (As this paper went to press, Tuesday Evening Port City Documentaries, Wednesday Morning Classics and Saturday Matinees were on hold.) The Vogue also offers virtual showings of independent movies online.

The theatre, built with an Art Deco motif, opened its doors in 1938 and was owned by the Butterfield Theatre group. In 1985, the theatre was remodeled to include two screens, presenting separate and sometimes simultaneous screenings. Then, in 2013, it reopened as the nonprofit Historic Vogue Theatre of Manistee. I miss going to first-run movies and hope to be able to return to the Vogue soon.

I decide to leave the downtown area, so I drive west on River Street toward Lake Michigan and turn south on Cherry Road. I can smell the lake from here. I’m at the



The Civilian Conservation Corps built the limestone pavilion in 1940 at Orchard Beach State Park on Lakeshore Drive. Photo by M. Videan.

Manistee Golf and Country Club, 500 Cherry Road, built on 80 acres in 1901. The clubhouse has indoor-outdoor dining and convenient locker rooms. A nine-hole course was built in 1910 and was expanded in 1931 to an 18-hole course. There’s a nice breeze blowing and a bench on the fairway beckons, but I’m not a golfer and I’m watching the clock.

I drive back along First Street to the Ramsdell Theatre, 101 Maple Street. Attorney Thomas Jefferson Ramsdell conceived of a theatre that would be every bit as refined as any opera or vaudeville theatre of the time. It opened in 1902 and is still a magnificent edifice today, with a ballroom, gallery and rows of balcony seating in the theater. Ramsdell’s son, Fred Winthrop Ramsdell, painted the entrance with scenes of Venus riding a chariot through the heavens. In 1953, a young man began work at the Ramsdell as a carpenter but soon became an actor in Shakespeare’s Othello. He was none other than James Earl Jones, the famous Hollywood actor. (Read “Family Tree Bears Fruit,” Freshwater Reporter, July 22, 2020.)

My next stop is 410 Second Street, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. It is the oldest building regularly used by a Manistee congregation today. In 1888 the cornerstone was laid for an English-Norman country church built of hand-cut stone. It was plagued by fires in 1909 and 1929 but was rebuilt each time. The bright-red front door is a beacon in summer when mature trees shade the building’s entrance.

Heading south, I reach the Simeon Babcock House at 420 Third Street. Babcock was one of many lumbermen who made their fortune in Manistee in the 1880s. His home, built in 1881, includes

a first-floor hall, parlor, living room and dining room. Babcock was a carpenter and built the impressive 10-foot doors himself.

Leaving the city, I drive north on U.S. 31 to Lakeshore Road and follow this route to Orchard Beach State Park, 2064 Lakeshore Road. It was built originally as a model farm with 60 cattle and an orchard, but in 1921 it became a state park and the city streetcar line was extended there. Now it has 166 camping sites, an historic pavilion slated to be relocated from an eroding bluff, and a beautiful view of Lake Michigan’s blue waters.

Next, I return to U.S. 31 and head northeast to Nine Mile Road and east to Kaleva. I follow the village signs and turn



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, on Second Street, was built of hand-hewn stone. Photo by P. Stinson

down Kauko Street to the Bottle House Museum. Kaleva was built by Finnish people and had a well-known Finnish Publishing House. The village also had a bottling plant, and multi-colored bottles from the plant were used to build the Bottle House. The original owner died before the house was completed, so the now-famous landmark was given to the Kaleva Historical Society.

On another day – when the leaves are



The Bottle House Museum, in Kaleva, was built using multi-colored bottles from a former bottling factory in the village. Photo by P.G. Misty Sheehan.

at their height of color – I will return to see more sights on another of Manistee’s fascinating historical tours.

P. G. Misty Sheehan is a retired professor of humanities and former executive director of the Benzie Area Historical Society and Museum.



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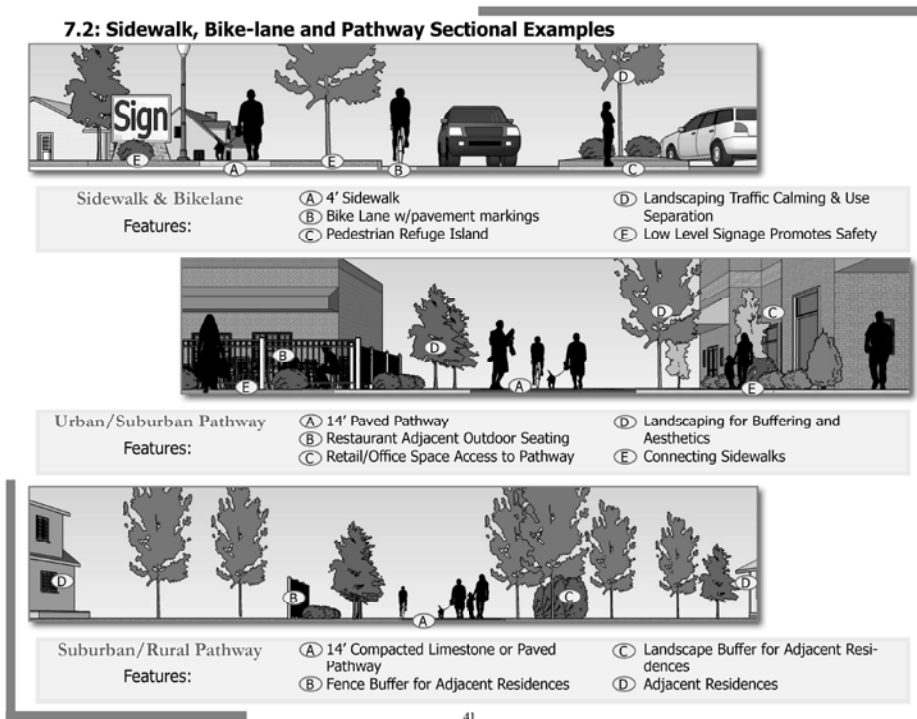
Proposed multi-use trail plan connects communities

By STEWART A. MCFERRAN

Last August, Freshwater Reporter spoke to two Manistee County Planning Department employees inside their booth at the Copemish Heritage Festival. The pair’s enthusiasm for a SMARTrails project, which would create new trails inside the county and connect them with existing trails, was apparent. At the time, surveys were taken for public reaction and input. We also spoke to Robert “Rob” Carson, Manistee County Planning Director, about the types of trail uses identified in the plan.



Accessible Trail at the Betsie River in Thompsonville. Photo by S.A. McFerran.



Trail and pathway examples in a draft of the Manistee Lake Area Non-Motorized Trail Plan

We touched base with Carson last month for an update. Progress has slowed, due to COVID-19, but enthusiasm for the project has not. We spoke about the Recreation Commission that was established in June 2019, and its plan to develop trails in Manistee County, known as SMARTrails. The new trails would link Manistee to the adjacent counties of Benzie, Mason and Wexford and connect to established trails between communities.

The old railroad grades that crisscross Manistee County are mostly owned by the state and will serve as a backbone for these trails. (These are the “rails” in the SMARTrails name.) As a result, the plan has attracted the attention of state officials.

“We can connect three State Parks and several State Forest Campgrounds on one series of trails,” Carson explained.

This would be a huge boon to bicyclists and hikers planning overnight camping trips.



Accessible Trail at the Betsie River in Thompsonville. Photo by S.A. McFerran.

The commission and its mission

The Manistee Recreation Commission has ten members, one from the Planning Board, another from the Road Commission, the Drain Commissioner and a county commissioner. The other six “at large” seats have been filled.

“We had a formal board recognized,” Carson said. “With that, one of the primary focuses is the development of trails. The primary routes we looked at were on already existing railroad corridors that were abandoned in the 19th century. They would be hiking and biking trails in the warm months and in winter they would be snowmobile trails.

“The DNR made strong recommendations to have multi-use trails,” he added. “It broadens the spectrum of the type of grants we are able to write.”

Meanwhile, Carson identified three grants received for trail plan development from:

- Northern Michigan Health Coalition,

used to compensate staff time for the development of the plan;

- Manistee LiveWell Group, which assists with plan development and printing costs; and
- Manistee County Community Foundation, which assists with the formation of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit “Friends of SMARTrails,” planning document route engineering, plan production and printing, and publication/ outreach.

Multi partners, multi uses

Carson said the commission is considering hard-surface pathways 12-14 feet wide.

“Those trails would intersect the North Country Trail and some other trails that are already existing,” he explained.

The Big M trail and the Marzinski horse trails are certainly candidates to be linked.

“What would work,” Carson began, “is a regional trail connection from the City of Manistee towards Wellston and then continuing on towards Caberfae (ski area) and the Cadillac area.”

Carson said Mark Coe, of the Benzie-Manistee Snowbirds, has been a great partner in the effort to link trails. The Snowbirds’ clubhouse is in Kaleva and is open to riders of snow machines every Saturday in January and February. The clubhouse acts as a warming hut – offering free hot chocolate, coffee, tea and cookies to trail riders.

“They have a ton of experience obtaining easements from private landowners and working with the various departments of the State of Michigan,” Carson said, of the Snowbirds.

The club has 162 miles of groomed trails that link to Wellston Winter Trails and others. Coe has helped to direct the placement of some of the routes in this new Manistee trail planning effort.

“We envision a route that is wide enough and safe enough that you could put your children with training wheels on a bike and feel safe,” Carson explained. “We are going to be submitting grants here over the next few years to develop the priority routes extending the Betsie Valley Trail into



Betsie Valley Trail heads into downtown Thompsonville. Photo by S.A. McFerran.

Manistee County, both toward Mesick and toward the City of Manistee.”

Carson continued: “The railroad corridor that goes from the City of Manistee up through Thompsonville heads to Interlochen. The thought was ... you get the Betsie Valley Trail extended down through Manistee from Thompsonville into Kaleva and towards the City of Manistee. You connect Healy Lake State Forest campground. And the other spur of the trail, that goes through Copemish to Mesick and Yuma, connects Cadillac to the White Pine Trail.”

This would connect to Mitchell State Park.

One series of trails would connect Orchard Beach State Park with a spur route. You could hop on a bike and ride 30 miles between communities. There is a campground on Nine Mile Road in Kaleva, and within the Pere Marquette State Forest you are allowed to camp anywhere, as long as it is not within 300 feet of water.

Orchard Beach State Park has a trail system for hiking and cross-country skiing. Mitchell State Park on Lake Cadillac has a Heritage Nature Trail. Interlochen State Park has a small nature trail but more than 400 campsites. The envisioned routes would connect these campgrounds.

“That’s getting more use of our parks and the parks would be interconnected,” Carson said.

The Recreation Commission will be dealing with 20 units of government as the trail crisscrosses Manistee County. Add other counties and the State of Michigan



Accessible Trail at the Betsie River in Thompsonville. Photo by S.A. McFerran.



Healy Lake is a future stop on the planned Manistee County trail system. Photo by S.A. McFerran.

and the path to trail completion becomes steep. The cost per mile of trail would be \$80,000-\$125,000.

Yet, models for this type of regional trail promise economic development. It is expected that the cost of building trails that connect recreation sites in Manistee County would pay for themselves in short order. Communities such as Thompsonville and Kaleva might welcome the economic boost that travelers along a trail could bring. While bicyclists carry little, most carry a smartphone and a credit card, or at least stuff a twenty in their spandex shorts.

The commission hopes to gain support for this effort from all quarters, including the shoreline communities of Onekama and Arcadia.

“The goal would be to bring a trail up the coastline, but there is so much private property between Onekama and Frankfort that we have to be very tactful in our approach in discussions with landowners,” Carson explained. “We don’t want to turn anyone off.”



Kyle Storey, of Manistee County Planning Department, shares information about the proposed SMARTrails system during the 2019 Copemish Heritage Festival. Photo by Mark Videan.

“Once the Covid restrictions are lifted and we are in the clear, we will be working with local communities on establishing priority routes through their communities to determine where they would like to see the trail go.”

Carson said a draft of the Manistee Lake Area Non-Motorized Trail Plan document “will be moving through the public review and adoption phases over the next couple of months.”

Stewart A. McFerran illuminates current environmental issues in an historic context. As with his investigations into earthen dams, sand dunes and fisheries, he hopes readers will gain an understanding of and insight into ways people interact with their environment.



This red caboose, at the Thompsonville trailhead of the Betsie Valley Trail, is across the street from Geno's Sports Bar and Grill.

The Thompsonville Trail Connection

By STEWART A. MCFERRAN

Just north of the Manistee County line is the village of Thompsonville. Years ago, the village was a hub of activity. Several railroad lines met there, and the Betsie River was dammed to generate power for the residents. Logs and freight passed through from destinations near and far.

While all but a short set of tracks have been pulled up, and the dam has been removed, Thompsonville still has power and is at the center of a wide network of railroad grades that remain. That being the case, this little town is poised to be a main hub in a busy trail system still in the planning stages.

As the sun sets to the west, Crystal Mountain casts a long shadow onto the village. Condo owners have flocked to the resort. Many dwell part time on the woody shoulders of Crystal. According to John Rothhaar, a board member of the Betsie Valley Trail organization, owners and staff at Crystal Mountain are all for the establishment of a trail system that would link activities offered at the mountain.

Crystal has an extensive network of Nordic ski trails that go up and down and 'round the mountain. The opportunities to link to a regional trail occur at different

points. These trails are used in the warmer months for bikes with fat tires.

To find the Betsie Valley Trail's Thompsonville trailhead, look for the red railroad caboose that has "Thompsonville Junction" written on the side in big letters. Right across the street is Geno's Sports Bar and Grill which has a full menu and some really good cooks. You can ride a bicycle 12 miles west to Beulah from there on a trail that, while unpaved, runs straight and level on an old railroad grade through 6.5 miles of Pere Marquette State Forest.

Planners from different units of government are eyeing points to the south for links to the "Greater Thompsonville Area."

Perhaps a connector will take trail users to Iron Fish Distillery, south of M-115 and Crystal Mountain, to refresh or camp. The owners have developed their own hub of activity there.

More about proposed trails connections and links are found in the story on Page Four.

Stewart A. McFerran writes about environmental topics from an historical perspective.

Michigan Trails Week, Sept. 20-27

From staff reports



Mountain biking at DTE Trail, Waterloo, Mich. Courtesy photo.

According to the MDNR, Michigan has 13,000 miles of state-managed trails, thousands of miles of local, county and federally managed trails, and more rail-trail miles than any other U.S. state.

The 2020 Michigan Trails Challenge offers everyone a chance to walk, run, ride, hike, bike or paddle during Michigan Trails Week, Sept. 20-27, to help the state attain its goal of 100,000 miles – all to benefit trails.

As participants log their miles, they earn multiple badges to qualify them for entries in a drawing for outdoor gear and Michigan-branded prizes. The first badge is earned after a combination of registration and a mile-long activity. Thereafter, badges are earned for any of the following: horseback ride for 5 miles; walk, run or hike for 5 miles; bike for 10 miles or paddle for 2 miles.

Those participating may also donate online to their favorite trail.

To sign up for the challenge or to donate, visit: <https://runsignup.com/Race/MI/Lansing/MichiganTrailsWeekChallenge>

Local shelves

continued from page 1



The new Dublin General Store in Wellston is nearing completion after fire destroyed the building last year. Courtesy photo.

"I can't give you an exact date," Charlie Nash said, about a week before the hoped-for August 30 opening.

"I have five inspections to go through, and once the Department of Agriculture comes through and says I can go, then I have to take that down to Lansing to get my beer license."

"We're going to have the biggest beer cave in Mason County," he said, adding that any delay in getting the beer license won't slow the market's opening. As soon as the other issues are resolved, the store will open.

Although the brothers are currently residents of Florida, they have a past based in Michigan and Mason County.

"We're originally out of metro Detroit, but then we moved to Pentwater in the late sixties," Nash said.

From there the family moved to Riverton, and Charlie ended up graduating from Mason Central Schools and Greg from Ludington High School.

Last year Charlie came back to the area from Florida for a friend's celebration and headed to Bonser's for some ring bologna, only to find the store closed.

He and his brother inquired about the store's asking price.

"We decided to buy it," Nash said, and the brothers closed on the deal last winter. "I lived here in this area for about six years, so I know how far people have to drive to get food. I know the terrain, so we decided to open up the store."

The store's contents and layout, from what Nash described, will make the wait well worth it.

"What I call this section," Nash said, pointing to the area just inside the front entrance, "is the Grab and Go."

The entry area will be stocked with outdoor needs – fishing, camping and automotive – along with munchies, pop and beer.

"People can come in and out and hit the road," Nash said.

"There will also be a \$5 lunch, Monday through Friday."

Beyond the Grab and Go, the main section will have everything a grocery store would carry plus a full deli and prepared breakfast, lunch and dinner items, as well as locally grown beef.

Nash also hopes to have a small seating area in the back of the store for patrons to grab a bite, sit down and eat. But that may have to wait until the pandemic eases.

Nash also said the store's iconic cow's head out front will stay.

Interestingly, the Nash brothers found a maker's tag on the head stating it was made in Sparta, Wisconsin, where Greg once lived.

"It turns out my brother knows the guy who made it," Nash said.

Oh, and for all those caffeine lovers, the store will also have free coffee on hand.

Anxious patrons can stay tuned for the store's opening by following them on Facebook @NashBrosMarket.

Dublin General Store, Manistee County

Area residents have watched with excitement as an enormous concrete block and steel structure has taken shape the past three seasons along Hoxeyville Road in Wellston. Dublin General Store's Facebook posts served to heighten the suspense of opening day, pushed from late summer to presumably sometime in September, though owners Greg and Bonnie Fischer have not identified a date. In an Aug. 19 Facebook post, the Fischers announced they are taking applications for help. On Aug. 26, a post by Dublin Jerky Company in Grandville indicated the rebuilt Wellston store had smoked its first jerky.

Founded in 1935, the Dublin General Store became a one-stop shopping destination for residents looking for groceries, hardware and other supplies. The store also catered to hunters, campers and visitors and began offering house-made meat jerky, eventually boasting the largest selection of jerky in the area. The new store's barn-like country façade is a replica of the store's exterior in 1935, according to a Facebook post by the Grandville location, and it has a gigantic entry overhang.

With the recent closing of Super Bad's Pizza next door, the Dublin store's rise from the ashes after a tragic fire last year is even more eagerly awaited. (See "Memories of Dublin General Store," Freshwater Reporter, March, 2020.)

Follow the store's progress on Facebook @Dublin-Store Jerky-Place.

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

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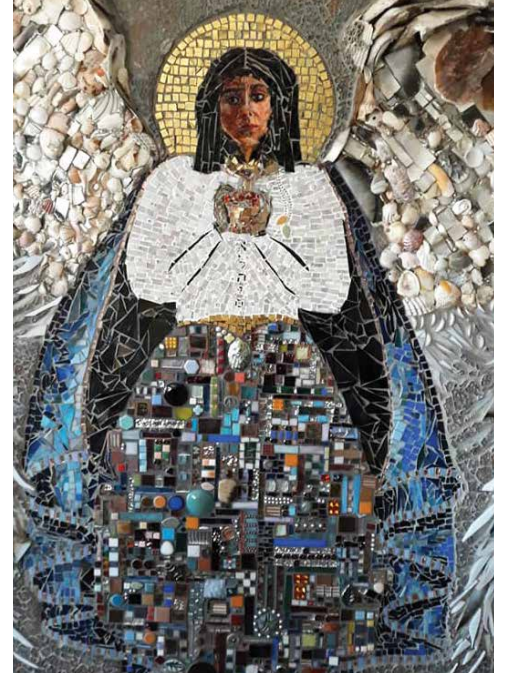
continued from page 1



To make her glass and tile creations, Tricia Boucha uses glass nippers, brushes, a glass cutter and sanders. She also uses files that her dad once used in his automotive job. She also makes her own glazes for her tiles. Photo by Mark Videan.



As she waits for materials to arrive for the Kaleva murals, Tricia snips tiles and uses found glass to decorate a “gazing” ball for her own garden. Photo by Mark Videan.



“Lost Angel of the Apocalypse” is a 5-foot-tall mosaic featuring gold, pearls, opals, ceramics and hidden surprises. Artist Tricia Boucha said the angel will be “steampunked” with fleur de lis epaulets adorned with Swarovski crystal skulls. (Boucha incorporates personal surprises in each mosaic piece she creates.) This piece is for sale at the Kaleva Art Gallery. Courtesy photo.

by the artists’ cooperative known as the Kaleva Art Gallery and is currently working for cost of materials only – some donated by her suppliers, Laticrete International and Swarovski, others provided by Kaleva Historical Society and grants – on a glass mosaic mural depicting a scene from the Kalevala. The five-foot, 150-pound mosaic panel, mounted on half-inch-thick tempered glass, is the second of three murals planned for installation in the Sculpture Park outside the Centennial Walkway, at the corner of Nine Mile Road and North Walta Street. The panels will be displayed in one triad mounting, fabricated

by metal artist Andy Priest, and will be lit from behind.

Boucha’s work also honors the contemporary – in her mosaic garden gazing balls, found objects, such as a mosaic wheelcover, and commissioned work. The latter included a public work of art, a 15-foot-tall sculptural piece of glass mosaic marigolds installed in a rain garden of the Pittsfield Township Hall, outside Ann Arbor. Other commissions include mosaic tables, reliquaries, shower walls and kitchen backsplashes, as well as beadwork.

Every Friday, she posts photos of her works-in-progress or finished artwork on her Mended Pieces Mosaics Facebook page, as well as the Kaleva Kaleidoscope group page on Facebook.

On her Facebook page, she wrote: “This is a window with a view. A display of



Tricia Boucha’s 55-inch “Koi Pond” glass mosaic mural, her 20th mural and most popular piece, is for sale and is currently on display in the Kaleva Art Gallery, 14449 Wuoksi Avenue. Courtesy photo.



creations to cause the viewer to pause for a closer look ... perhaps to distract you from reality.”

They are welcome distractions.



The first of six glass mosaic murals depicting stories from the Kalevala was donated by artist Tricia Boucha to the village of Kaleva. In this one, Väinämöinen is on his steed going after his stolen magic Sampo. This mural is currently in the Bottle House Museum, where the paintings Boucha replicates are also kept. Courtesy photo.



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“Wiidigemaagan - Spouse.” Perfect for a bride, this piece incorporates a hand-knapped, rock-crystal arrowhead, Herkimer diamonds, vintage beads, Swarovski crystals, sterling silver, pearls and leather. Photo by Pat Stinson.

Bronze Glitter Necklace, by Tricia Boucha. The handmade glaze turned into “a glittering surprise” after firing in the kiln. The chevron woven chain with abalone button pendant is a one-of-a-kind piece. Photo by Pat Stinson.



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Night sky

continued from page 2

Early risers have been treated to the sight of Earth’s other neighbor, Venus, for the past month and will continue to be in September. If you are awake at 4-5 a.m., look toward the east to see it. Four proposed missions to study Venus are currently being considered by NASA. The agency will select one and announce its decision by next summer. Venus is full of mystery, from its atmospheric clouds to its high- pressure surface. Only time will tell what secrets our neighbor hides.

Pick a clear night, go outside and look up in wonder. The planets in our night sky through September are other worlds with many secrets. Before we know it, winter’s clouds will ruin any chance of seeing them. So, take this opportunity to get outdoors and view these bright points of otherworldly light in our Solar System.

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

Fishing Mason County's Largest Lake

By MILTON F. WHITMORE

Hamlin Lake, north of Ludington, offers a 5,000-acre angler's banquet of warmwater fish species, such as large and smallmouth bass, bluegill, perch, walleye and northern pike. With depths of under 10 feet to more than 70 feet, Hamlin offers a range of fishing experiences.

DNR surveys have shown the wisdom of an aggressive stocking program for walleye and the lake produces these tasty fish with regularity. Zebra mussels, a well-stocked larder of baitfish, and other food sometimes makes for tough fishing conditions, especially for ice anglers. The Narrows, which separates the two basins of this lake, as well as breaklines to the west of North, Middle, and South bayous, are prime areas for these "golden eyes." Nighttime trolling – with bottom-bouncing Lindy Rigs, using crawlers, leeches, or minnows – works well in the many shelf areas under 10 feet. Drifting weedlines with leeches is also effective in summer.



Bluegills. Photo by M. Whitmore.

Panfish – including yellow perch, specks, and bluegills – are a year 'round mainstay on this lake. While not noted as a lunger perch and crappie lake, Hamlin does offer respectable catches of both species. Again, find the weedbeds and you'll find these fish. Minnows and tube jigs are reliable choices during all seasons. My preference on the ice has been some sort of chartreuse teardrop with a red eye. Maybe it's my abiding faith in this color combo that makes me use it more and work it effectively. Given the choice of one ice lure, mine would be this one tipped with a wax worm, wiggler or minnow.

The cooling water that October brings turns fish into feeding machines as they take on foodstuffs in preparation for the icy cold of winter. Competition from boating

traffic, as well as other anglers, is non-existent. Bluegills, and I speak of some real slab-sided 'gills, are there for the taking. While mid-May through June offers the best fishing for large fish as they move into the shallows, they are there for the taking in all seasons, with winter hard water anglers accounting for as many as their warm-weather brethren. The three small bayous on the east side of Lower Hamlin, as well as Indian Pete Bayou off Upper Hamlin, draw boats during the open water months and ice fisherman seek these areas in winter. Water clarity, due to zebra mussel importation, may cause the wise fisherman to go light in line, lure, and bait offering. It may be a good idea to keep a handy supply of two-

pound test monofilament in your tackle box, especially in the winter.

Both large and smallmouth bass swim these waters. And while the lake is not noted for throwing large fish, there are plenty of 14-inch and larger fish around to keep any fishing guru happy for hours. Key on the weedlines and the areas of break points along the drops. The broad shelf off Ludington State Park will draw nighttime bass and should be probed. Nightcrawlers, boosted with an injection of air to keep them above the weeds and slowly worked in the nooks and crannies of underwater vegetation, are worth mentioning. Lower Hamlin is more noted for smallmouths than the upper lake, but the latter is better

suited for largemouths. Spinner baits as well as crankbaits (for smallmouths) should produce. When all else fails, I find that a gold/black Rapala-type lure can fill a stringer if worked in the right areas.

The four bayous also offer a little-used fishery – nighttime surface plug plunking for bucket mouth bass who steal their way into the shallows after the sun sets, and the noise of daylight boaters recedes into the still and cooling air. The noisy gurgle and plop of a well-worked plug will draw the attention and ravenous strike of a bass bent on gulping an easy meal. Ply the waters between boat docks and right up to shore, especially after midnight, and the persevering angler can be rewarded with topnotch surface action for bass.

A well-kept secret: the existence of some Master Angler qualifying channel catfish in Hamlin. A large sucker minnow fished on the bottom off the Sable River outlet near the state park has proven effective for this whiskered, secretive fish. Deep-fried channel cat fillets are a delight. Night fishing is suggested, as these fish move from the deeper holes up to shelf water to gobble baitfish and crayfish. Be sure to give the inlet of the Sable River, at the eastern end of the upper lake, a try also.

Milton Whitmore's father took him fishing and hunting in the Grand Rapids area, where he was born and raised. He and his wife moved their young family north to Manistee County and the Onekama/Arcadia area, where he taught middle school math and science for Onekama Consolidated Schools until he retired in 1997. Stream trout fishing was his first love, followed by deer hunting ... after his wife and family. While he no longer fishes and hunts, he relives it all through 70 years of memories.

Lights! Camera! BLT!

Story and photo by MARK VIDEAN

Maybe you are a green-thumbed garden wizard with decades of veggie growing experience. Or perhaps COVID-19 gave you the incentive to try planting for the first time this year. Whatever your gardening background, now is the time to enjoy the fruits of your labors. Some of the most wonderful of these are tomatoes. Guy Clark's song – made famous by John Denver – summed it up nicely, "Only two things money can't buy. That's true love and homegrown tomatoes..."

Ripe and bursting with sweet, tangy juice, a tomato fresh from the garden is a thing of beauty, needing little embellishment. Perhaps a dash of salt, a grind or two of pepper? To truly display the wonders of these garden stars, we humbly recommend a cast of bread, bacon and lettuce in a production of "The BLT."

The bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich became popular after World War II, when the ingredients became readily available year-round. The initials, B.L.T., were shorthand when calling out orders in delis and gained popular use among consumers in the '70s. Over the years, many variations

of the classic BLT have been invented. All recipes start with (some sort of) bread, lettuce, and tomato. Many add mayonnaise. Some toast the bread, delete the lettuce or even the tomato (sacrilege!), or add other supporting actors to the play. We reached out on our Facebook page to see how other directors stage their versions of "The BLT!"

"White or wheat toast with Miracle Whip." – Tom

"Scallion cream cheese...on sourdough." – Greg

"With peanut butter (on top of the bacon) mayo on the bottom slice. Sourdough is critical." – Sarah

"Avocado, always. Also if you grill the bread, use mayonnaise instead of butter to get a nice crispy brown on your bread." – Aubrey

"Italian bread, lots of Miracle Whip, and no lettuce." – Susan

"Add peanut butter, remove the lettuce and tomato...mmmmmm." – Jacob

"Salt and vinegar potato chips and provolone cheese, minus the tomato." – A.J.

"Avocado and arugula." – Barb
"I like some onion, arugula and thousand

island dressing. Sometimes a fried egg on top." – Christine

"How about a TALL: tomato, avocado, bacon-flavored liverwurst and lettuce with mayo and a touch of mustard on toasted and buttered sourdough." – Ramona

Maybe these suggestions will inspire you to try something new in your BLT. Maybe not. Whatever you do, enjoy those fresh, ripe tomatoes while you can.



Mark Videan adds peanut butter and Miracle Whip to his BLT.

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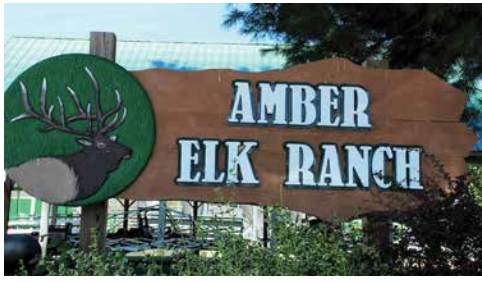
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Agricultural trail

continued from page 1



Top. The writer finally found the Amber Elk Ranch on Conrad Road, east of Ludington. Above. Emily, of Amber Elk Ranch, greets gift shop visitors who find a freezer full of elk steaks and burgers.

package of elk burgers and continued to the next stop – now that I knew where I was going.

One thing that brought my absent navigator and me to Michigan is the plethora of farm markets, meat and fish vendors, and specialty food shops.

The Agricultural Trail lists 18 sites and includes those specialty shops, along with other sites related to agriculture.

On other excursions we had been to several of the sites. Orchard Market along U.S. 31 near Free Soil is a favorite. We usually run there for fresh fruits and veggies in season, and they have a great little bakery and assorted special sauces we really like.

Now in its 54th year and third generation of family owners, the Orchard Market starts out each year as a nursery and garden center and then shifts into home-grown products as the season progresses.



Top. A favorite stop along the Agricultural Trail is Orchard Market on U.S. Highway 31 and Free-Soil Road. Above. Piles of fresh, locally grown, sweet corn await Orchard Market customers.

Another trip had taken me to Michigan Farm Cheese Dairy and the Jam Farm, each selling delicious, locally made products. Both are on the Agricultural Trail.

After leaving the Elk Ranch – having regained my sense of direction, now that I was back in familiar territory – I headed east on Conrad for a hundred yards or so and turned north on Stiles Road, where I noted a stand of chestnut trees on the corner. A sign informed they were planted in 2002 and they looked plenty healthy, considering the species was nearly lost in the early 20th century.

Between Conrad and U.S. Highway 10, I drove past Starving Artist Brewing. (Read “Starving Artist Brewing: Masterpiece in a



Sanders Meats, in Custer, is a popular destination for its own Butterball Ham, snack sausage sticks, smoked cheese and local pork and beef.

Pint,” Jan. 2020). Jean and I have sampled several craft brews here from time to time. Today, I stayed the course and turned east as I reached U.S. 10.

My next stop was Sanders Meats, a small, locally owned meat processor south of U.S. Highway 10 on Custer Road (Main Street) in the village of Custer.

According to its trail listing, Sanders has been around since 1925.

The listing states: “(Joseph Sanders) was an entrepreneur who started a micro business from scratch peddling his meat with horses and a sleigh during the winter months. He later delivered his homemade products with a Model T Ford.”

One specialty of this busy, fourth-generation business is its Butterball Ham, made from locally raised pigs.

On this day, I had to stop in for a couple packages of Sanders meaty snack sticks. Deciding among jalapeño cheese, teriyaki, barbecue and other flavors, I carried out one each of teriyaki and pepper jack cheese. Yum!



Freshwater Reporter Delivery Diva Pam Dohner channels Groucho Marx as she samples a snack stick from Sanders Meats in Custer. Photo by P. Stinson

Loaded up with snack sticks and elk burgers for later, I headed back to the homestead with the thought that you should always, always, always double check names of the roads you want to follow.

Or maybe not. Sometimes it’s just nice to wander through the countryside.

Stay tuned – there are three more trails to follow.

For information or to follow the trails, go to: <http://masoncountyculture.com/trails/> On the left side of your screen, click Online Trails App to find the trail sites.

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

SUPPORT YOUR MANISTEE COUNTY BUSINESSES

By MARK VIDEAN

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- BUNGALOW INN
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- GRILLE FORTYFOUR
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