

# FRESHWATER REPORTER

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

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## OVER THE (SKI) HILL

By NIKKI SCHNEIDER

*Eighteen years ago, my husband, who loves to downhill ski, convinced me to try it for the first time in my 40s at a ski hill in Wisconsin. My group lesson among 8-year-olds did not go well. I ended up going backwards into a storage shed off the bunny hill.*

“Well, Colorado skiing is better, easier, so try that,” insisted my brother-in-law, who lives there.

Things only got worse! I spent several yearly trips with my skis pointed uphill and praying the day would end.

“I quit! I don’t need to ski!” I thought.

Flash forward 15 years and we are now retired and living in Northern Michigan, where winters tend to be long and, at times, beautiful. I love LOOKING at the snow through the window while perched in front of my fireplace with a book and a glass of wine — and occasionally strapping on snowshoes or cross-country skis, (on a flat trail).

But downhill looks so fun ... Ugh, why can’t I do it?

I shared my story with an older friend, who had just rediscovered her love of skiing a couple years ago. She suggested a program called Retired Not Tired at our local ski hill, Crystal Mountain, in Thompsonville. The instructors all have grey hair and are trained to teach older students who have



Nikki Schneider (right) and family members enjoy their time on the slopes. Courtesy photo.

never skied, haven’t skied in a long while, are working with physical restrictions or have PTSD (Post Traumatic Ski Disorder), like myself.

I set out one day, and my stomachache grew as I neared the mountain. I found my group in the cafeteria and felt slightly better that they all looked older than I do.

“If they can do it, so can I,” became my mantra.

We started with basic skills on the bunny hill then moved up to the dreaded chairlift and managed some green (easy) runs. There was lots of fear, and my PTSD muscle memory had me in a snowplow (toes-together ski position for slowing down) also known as pizza, (as I learned from the 8-year-olds). But I survived and felt exhilarated at the end of the lesson. The

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## Pine Knob Is Back!

By GORDON BERG

Wow. February already. Let’s check in with how 2022 is going so far. Covid is still around. (Ugh.) Our nation is still deeply divided. (Sigh.) The cost of a good burger is more than it oughta be. (Where’s the beef?!)

But when I read that one of my favorite concert venues on the planet is going back to its roots ... all was right with the world!



Pine Knob Music Theatre’s new logo. Courtesy image.

When it opened in the summer of 1972 with teen idol David Cassidy, the Pine Knob Music Theatre became an instant gem. Chicago played there 70 times. Bob Seger rocked the house with 33 sold-out shows!

For those who may be unfamiliar with Pine Knob, it is a 15,000+ seat, open-air concert venue nestled next to a skiing resort in the woods just north of Detroit. Each show felt like a beautiful event under a summer night’s sky. Pretty much every great performer did a gig there at some point in their career. Just the limited list of the people I saw in the ‘70s through the 2000s gives you an idea of the range of talent who performed there: The Stray Cats, The Beach Boys, Linda Ronstadt, The Eagles, John Denver, Dan Fogelberg, Boz Skaggs, Aerosmith, Blink 182, Jimmy Buffett, Isaac Hayes, Raffi, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seger and even Bob Hope.

But on January 25, 2001, the Pine Knob Music Theatre itself was sold out. DTE Energy purchased the naming rights from Palace Sports and Entertainment for a cool million dollars per year.

Ooof. It felt as though the energy conglomerate had just sucked all the warmth out of one of the coolest venues in Michigan.

But on January 14, 2022, in the middle of Covid, divisiveness and beef shortages, the planets lined up again. Gone was DTE Energy Music Theatre.

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From left: Louis Mosher and Laina Laarman greet customers at the coffee bar inside The Outpost in Manistee. Louis is the son of owner Carrie Mosher. Photo by P. Stinson.

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## Find your winter warm-up

By CARMELITTA TIFFANY

You don’t need to snowshoe a mile at our state parks, carve powder at Crystal Mountain or Caberfae, or cut a figure eight on a skating rink to appreciate the soothing effect of a steaming mug of coffee or tea. Ordering a special brew from your favorite barista this time of year is an extra-special treat.

In fact, people are treating themselves more than ever.

Coffee consumption at cafés and restaurants has increased by 20% in the past year, according to the latest (September 2021) National Coffee Data Trends report by the National Coffee Association. The report states more Americans (60%) drank coffee in the past day than drank any other beverage (including tap water), continuing coffee’s decades-long reign as America’s

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# Grooming new Nordic skiers

Story and photos by **STEWART A. MCFERRAN**

It's time for winter sports, and as the Olympics kick off near the Great Wall of China, students in area public schools will be practicing Nordic (aka cross-country) skiing on the playground and the snow-covered football field.

**K**en Blakey-Shell has been grooming trails on Manistee school grounds and assisting with the "Winter White Out" program. An avid skier himself, Blakey-Shell trains at the Manistee Non-motorized Trail Park. The trail is about three miles east of U.S. Highway 31 on the north side of M-55 and groomed for classic and skate skiing as well as snowshoeing. There are four miles of trail free to use.

"It's very flat; it's very beginner friendly," Blakey-Shell said. "It's a great place to go skate ski. It's pretty twisty. It's real fun to be able to rip around out there."

He explained they used to bus students to Big M (ski trail) for "Winter White Out." Due to COVID, he said they now bring equipment to the Manistee Middle/High School and groom trails for students to use.

The Nordic Rocks program for fifth-grade students provides ski equipment and ski instructors during the four-week winter program. Blakey-Shell said students ski on the football field beside Kennedy Elementary School in Manistee. A grant from the Manistee County Community Foundation provided the funds for cross-country skis.

"The kids get stoked on it," he said. "It's a great way to build enthusiasm for skiing locally."



Nordic skiers hit the trail at Crystal Mountain.

## Crystal Community Ski Club

The Crystal Community Ski Club operates out of a tent at Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville. Students from Benzie Central, Frankfort and Manistee high schools meet there with the coaches before practice. The CCSC is supported by local donors as well as a three-year grant from the Share Winter Foundation. They offer cross-country ski programs at seven elementary schools in Manistee and Benzie counties.

Beth Major, Assistant Program Director for the Crystal Community Ski Club, is a PSIA (Professional Ski Instructors of



Instructor Ian teaches students how to get the most out of their skate skis.

America) level 1 instructor.

"We are a non-profit community outreach program launched in 2018 to remove barriers to kids being involved in snow sports," Major explained.

She said their season began Jan. 9 for the middle school and high school teams, and she is one of five coaches. The program attracted 55 young skiers this year, a new record for participation.

"It's very exciting but also challenging to get all these skiers fitted with equipment, as you can imagine," Major said, adding that Nordic Rocks Skis are strapped to the kids' boots.

Referring to the seven elementary schools, she stated: "We send an instructor, and the kids are able to get their first experience skiing on their playground. That's really built our program."

S.A. McFerran skied at Ward Hills with his family. He got his first pair of cross country skis at 21 and learned telemark skiing on a NOLS course in the mountains of Wyoming. He has taught Nordic-style skiing at several programs including Traverse Area Public Schools. He still enjoys waxing his Nordic skis and trekking cross country to Woodcock Lake.

## Trail Wranglers

By **STEWART MCFERRAN**

### Caberfae Ski Club

Norma Roelfsema, a volunteer with the Caberfae Ski Club, skis the MacKenzie Cross-Country and Mountain Bike Trail, a 10-mile system of loops located northwest of Caberfae Peaks, east of Cadillac.

"On a good weekend, there could be 50 or more people skiing at the MacKenzie trail," Roelfsema said.

Caberfae Peaks offers cross-country ski rentals, and the Nordic trail within the Manistee National Forest is accessed from Caberfae's Alpine skiing and hotel area. The public may park at the trailhead on 38 Road. There are no Nordic ski instructors at Caberfae, but some markers along the trail include courtesy instructions. Snowshoes are permitted on the MacKenzie trail, but not on the tracks set in the snow by a grooming machine. Those tracks are groomed exclusively for skiers, and snowshoes could damage them. Ungroomed trail loops are meant for natural skiing.

Volunteers mainly maintain the trail. Between the Forest Service, Caberfae Peaks and local volunteers, the trails are kept clear of debris.

### Big M

Travis Owens, Recreation Management Specialist-U.S. Forest Service Huron-Manistee National Forest, said 18 miles of the 37-mile Big M Trail loop, located

between Cadillac and Wellston off M-55, are groomed. The trail's hills and dales are managed by the U.S. Forest Service, and volunteers help keep the trail clear for skiers. The trail is groomed under an agreement with the Manistee Cross-Country Ski Council.

"The Big M has specific fat bike trails, they have walking trails, and then they have cross-country ski trails," Owens explained. "So, they groom them differently and maintain them differently for each use. I don't think there is any Forest Service police that limits the use of those trails, but just as a courtesy, they're able to maintain three different types of trails to prevent user conflict."

Find trail conditions at [skibigm.org](http://skibigm.org).

### Friends of the state parks

"Friends" organizations are nonprofit groups of volunteers who help to maintain, improve and beautify area state parks through fundraising and other efforts. In winter, members of the Friends of Ludington State Park help with the snowshoe/ski hikes. The group purchased grooming equipment for the park's cross-country ski trails. Volunteers with Friends of Orchard Beach State Park in Manistee coordinate



Skiers and coaches in front of tent headquarters at Crystal Mountain.

winter snowshoe hikes on park trails. Both Friends' groups provide warming fires and beverages during lantern-lit snowshoe events. Follow them on Facebook for notices and updates.

### Spirit of the Woods Chapter, North Country Trail

Spirit of the Woods chapter of the NCT leads winter hikes and hosts events on the first Saturday of the month. The chapter encompasses 80 miles of the NCT trail from the Newaygo/Lake county line in the south to the Wexford/Manistee county line near Marilla. Work bees are coordinated with the U.S. Forest Service as the trail passes through the Manistee National Forest. The first Saturday in February is usually reserved for the Chili Feed at the Big M Cross-Country Ski Trails in Manistee. Follow the group on Facebook for event notices and updates.

## Ski and Sip

By **STEWART MCFERRAN**

A friend of mine who used to live in Chief shared on social media a dream he had about Obama visiting him. I posted my reply, "The Commander in Chief!" Well, if the commander really did visit Chief, he would find a sawmill on one side of the main street (a.k.a. Chief Road) and Northern Natural Cider House and Winery on the other.

Beyond the winery's tasting room is a cross-country skiing and hiking trail. The one-mile jaunt is open and wooded, flat and sloping, and just long enough to make a skier thirsty for one or more of the 11 hard cider flavors on tap and wines by the bottle. New this winter: smells from organic pizzas wafting from the food wagon parked in the plant. Eat them in the tasting room, carry them outside to the propane firepits, or order them to go.

Northern Natural Cider House and Winery is located at 7220 Chief Road, Kaleva. Hours are Thursday-Sunday, 12-7 p.m. Call them at (231) 889-0064 and follow them on Facebook @ NorthernNaturalWinery.



The firepits at Northern Natural. Courtesy photo.



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**MI BACKYARD**

# Seeing Red: Showstopping Native Plants

By JENNIFER DEVINE

*Every winter I find myself falling into a state of dormancy. The cold, darker days to me are a time of rest. A time to recharge, to help us bounce into the next year with vigor.*

Dormancy for animals means their normal bodily functions are slowed or suspended for a time, as if in a coma. American bullfrog and wood frog, garter snake, Indiana bat, groundhog, 13-lined ground squirrel, skunk, and American black bear are the only Michigan animals which hibernate.

Dormancy for plants means they are alive but not actively growing. Deciduous trees and shrubs, some house plants and outside perennials go dormant. Conifers go through a seasonal change with their needles but are not completely inactive.

As human beings, we might worry we're doing too little, brushing people off because we would rather lie around the house on a winter's night. We're lying dormant, resting and waiting for the weather to warm up and the days to get longer. (If you are experiencing seasonal depression, however, please see your medical provider).

So, what am I doing as I wait for spring? I'm reading about native Michigan flora to put in the ground. Seeking vibrant colors.



Cardinal flower. Photo by Mark Videan

In this current world of white and gray and black, a splash of color is a welcome thought. Let me share some great ideas for adding red to your garden.

**Cardinal flower**

The cardinal flower *Lobelia cardinalis* in the bellflower family *Campanulaceae* is an almost 4-foot-tall bright bloomer. The long, wide-middled, lance-shaped leaf (lanceolate) can grow to 8 inches long and 2 inches wide.

The flower grows in several Midwest states and graces many home gardens in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. In the wild, it has been found growing in a nature park in Schoolcraft County in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In western Michigan, the flower has been observed growing along the banks of the Manistee and Platte rivers and in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Mason County bird researcher and consulting ecologist David Dister reported its presence in Ludington State Park during a 2009-2014 field study published in "The Great Lakes Botanist". (2017).

This brilliantly-hued Michigan native flower thrives in damp and waterlogged soils and would be the perfect addition near a downspout, pond or other continuously wet-to-moist area. The five-petaled (or lobed) cardinal flower blooms scarlet red but can be found in white and pink, July-September. If you're looking for a showstopper, this is a must.

The Great *Lobelia* (*Lobelia siphilitica*), a different species in the family, blooms bright blue and is primarily pollinated by bees, whereas cardinal flower is mainly pollinated by ruby-throated hummingbirds and some butterflies. Amazingly, this plant has been used medicinally for hundreds of years but can be potentially toxic. The roots and flowers have also been used by the Pawnee in a love charm!

You can purchase cardinal flowers



through the Mason-Lake Conservation District's partnership with AFFEW, A Few Friends for the Environment of the World, during the annual native plant sale held June 11 in Ludington. In Manistee, you may purchase the perennials from Black Cap Nursery in Onekama, a partner of the Manistee Conservation District.



Red-osier dogwood growing along the Pine River in Lake County. Photo by P. Stinson.

**Red-osier dogwood**

Speaking of red, you've probably seen shrubs growing in wet areas and moist roadside ditches which are long, twiggy and reddish, giving stark contrast to the dull grays, browns and white of the winter landscape. The multi-stemmed red-osier dogwood (*Cornus Sericea*) is a deciduous shrub that reaches 4 to 8 feet tall. The shrub spreads rapidly underground by stolons just under the surface. Strawberries have stolons above the surface; we just call them runners. These stolons form dense thickets and would be great as a wall in the garden, if correctly contained. The colorful

plants are currently used to restore banks and reduce erosion in our waterways.

Their leaves are oblong to ovate, being rounded from stem to tip, up to 4 inches long and 2 inches wide. They are a lush dark green on top and pale bluish-gray to bluish-green underneath, turning red to purple in fall before dropping in winter. Leaf texture is silky, which is part of their scientific name: *Sericea*.

The 4- to 5-petaled flowers in spring are small, flat, creamy-white and formed in clusters. White berries pop up in late summer.

Found in almost every county in Michigan's upper and lower peninsulas, the plant is beloved by many animals in all seasons. Bees and butterflies love her nectar, and ducks, birds and mice enjoy the berries, with their high-fat content. This shrub is also essential to other wildlife such as elk, deer and rabbits which consume the leaves and munch on the stems. Beavers enjoy putting these stems in their dams. Indigenous peoples have used the bitter berries for many medicinal uses still in practice. The inner pith is rubbery, and when scraped, can be used as a tobacco substitute. The showy red stems are used in basket weaving, just like willow.

Always use caution and seek guidance when harvesting and using our backyard goodies.

Jennifer Devine is a homesteader living on 20 acres. She and her husband are licensed to sell black cherry, white oak and white pine trees. They and their children live off grid and have chickens, ducks and rabbits, a large garden and a lot of woods.



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# Snoopy to fly to the Moon

By **BROOKE EDWARDS**

Have you seen the moon in the night sky lately? Soon you'll be able to look up and realize there are humans on its surface. This will be the result of NASA's ambitious Artemis program, which will once again send humans to the moon, including the first woman and a person of color.

Artemis I will be the first test run of the SLS (Space Launch System) and the Orion Crew Capsule, though the only crew member on this first mission will be astronaut Snoopy, who "flew" most recently as a balloon in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. No launch date has been set as of this writing, but NASA plans to launch Artemis I in either March or April.

To coincide with this first moon mission, a new season of "Snoopy in Space" will launch this spring on AppleTV+ and Peanuts and GoNoodle will partner to produce short videos and curriculum for students.

The SLS is currently the most powerful human launch system and the only one capable of getting astronauts to the moon. Artemis I is a test flight to prove SLS is safe and reliable enough to transport humans.

Artemis I will go around the moon and return to Earth. To get there, the Orion Crew Capsule will launch on top of a powerful rocket. Once in space, Orion will separate from the rocket and deploy solar arrays to give it a boost. On board Orion is an Interim Cryogenic Propulsion System (ICPS), which, in simple terms, is a system that will give Orion the boost to escape Earth orbit and head toward the moon. The European Space Agency (ESA) has provided a service module for Orion which not only stores water and oxygen, but also gives propulsion. Both components will help Orion get to its destination and return to Earth, where it will splash down in the Pacific Ocean.

Once Artemis I is successfully completed, Artemis II planning will commence. This will be a crewed flight around the moon in 2024. Artemis III will be the long-awaited event that returns humans to the lunar surface. The first of its kind since 1972, the mission will use a human lander to send astronauts down to the surface, as Orion orbits the moon. This mission will take place no earlier than 2025.

Missions to follow will support the ambitious plan of a long-term human presence on the moon and in lunar orbit. The first step of Artemis IV will be



Snoopy as a zero gravity indicator. Photo credit: 2021 Peanuts Worldwide LLC

constructing the Gateway, a small space station orbiting the moon. Crews visiting the lunar surface will first fly to the Gateway in the Orion Crew Capsule. Once docked, astronauts heading to the lunar surface will board a SpaceX Starship, which will ferry them down and back again. With huge plans, little time, and a tight budget, NASA has partnered with private space companies like SpaceX to help keep the goals of Artemis moving forward.

The goal of returning to the moon, and eventually sending humans to Mars, is also an international cooperation between NASA, Canada's Space Agency, ESA, and JAXA (Japan's Space Agency). While a Canadian is expected to fly on Artemis II, (no crew members have been selected yet), astronauts from the four agencies will fly on Artemis missions.

As humanity expands into space, our efforts are going to require worldwide cooperation. As we visit Mars, and eventually beyond, countries will have to set aside their differences to work together on common goals. Until that time comes, Artemis will help here on Earth by creating economic growth and jobs, advancing science and technology, and even finding answers to common physical problems.

By the end of this year, we will be seeing a glimpse of our lunar future. Perhaps someone close to us will be making that journey someday. The universe is huge, and we have only begun to explore.

Brooke Edwards is a NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador. She lives in Manistee and has given area presentations and hosted night-sky viewings at Fifth Avenue beach. Follow her group on Facebook: @Brooke-Edwards-Solar-System-Ambassador

## Ski Hill

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season was almost over, so I managed a few more of the lessons and left the hill feeling O.K. with things. I had "gotten back on the horse" or, in this case, skis.

I returned to the program last year with a little less trepidation. I love asking my classmates, "Why are you here?" Most share my goal ... to join other family members, to get fresh air and exercise. At the end of last season, I bought a 2022 ski pass and my own equipment. These made the beginning of this season MUCH easier. In the meantime, my husband became a Mountain Host, my brother's family purchased season passes, and my 7- and 10-year-old niece and nephew began snowboarding. They are my motivation! We all enjoy après ski

at Vista Lounge, located at the bottom of the mountain. Crispy homemade waffles and hot cocoa for the kiddos and a beer or two for me.

You know the quote, "Do one thing every day that scares you." Well, that applies every time I strap on my skis. But I leave the mountain at the end of the day with a smile and a sense of accomplishment.

Crystal Mountain offers lessons for all levels, special events, a beautiful spa and more. It is a wonderful family-friendly resort right in our backyard. For more information, go to [crystalmountain.com](http://crystalmountain.com).

Nikki Schneider lives in Bear Lake with her husband, Mark, and her best furry friend, Max. She combines her love of junkin' and repurposing for Patina, the resale home-and-garden shop in Onekama she co-owns.

## Pine Knob

continued from page 1

This beloved venue returned to its roots. The newly renamed Pine Knob Music Theatre was back!

Every concert at Pine Knob I attended has a treasured memory tied to it. But of all the performances I experienced, there is no richer memory than the time my wife and I took my mom and dad to see The Carpenters at Pine Knob one magical summer night in July 1975. Wow! I just detected significant communal eyeroll from our readers. And had I not been there, I might have joined you. But, read on...

### Blue eyes

Let me set the stage for you. My dad was a huge Carpenters fan. More specifically, he loved Karen Carpenter. He had been anticipating this concert ever since my wife and I gave Mom and Dad tickets for Father's Day. It's all he talked about.

It was a perfect summer night. Our seats were about 15 rows from the stage. Four seats off the aisle. Amazing! Dad let us take our seats first. His was the seat next to the aisle.

Around 8 p.m., the house lights went down, the stage lights came up and there were The Carpenters! Song after song. Hit after hit. Story after story. They had the audience as they say, in the palm of their hands.

One of their gold-record singles was "Sing", a song written by Joe Raposa for the children's show Sesame Street. To everyone's surprise, the house lights came up again. Karen stepped down from the stage to perform this song in the audience.

As she made her way up the aisle, she held the mic for people to sing the first line of the chorus, "Sing, sing a song."

She was about to make her way back to the stage when she caught my dad's bright blue eyes. He was beaming at her. Making her way to him, she sang, "Sing, sing a song." Dad, without missing a beat, sang back to her as she held the mic for him. And then, something unexpected happened that forever became part of family legend. Karen Carpenter bent down and kissed my dad's forehead!

### Encore, encore

The rest of the concert was a blur. We were each replaying that moment over and over again in our minds. Most of all ... Dad.

One act of kindness lasting, maybe, only 15 seconds. And yet, a lifetime. And it all happened at Pine Knob. It was magic.

Thank you, Pine Knob. Thanks for restoring a memory so endearing. Dad is gone. So is Karen Carpenter. So, it's really something to have you back again. Have a great summer, my old friend.

Editor's Note: Do you have a Pine Knob story? Please share it with us! Send an email about your experience to [editor@freshwater-reporter.com](mailto:editor@freshwater-reporter.com). We will publish the best stories in future issues. Look for this story online to post a comment about it or about Pine Knob, in general.

Gordon Berg is a descendant of Manistee's Bergs, Swansons and Martinsons. His debut book, "Harry and the Hurricane", is about his father's life as a young boy and how he survived the Miami Hurricane of 1926. More at: [www.harryandthehurricane.com](http://www.harryandthehurricane.com)



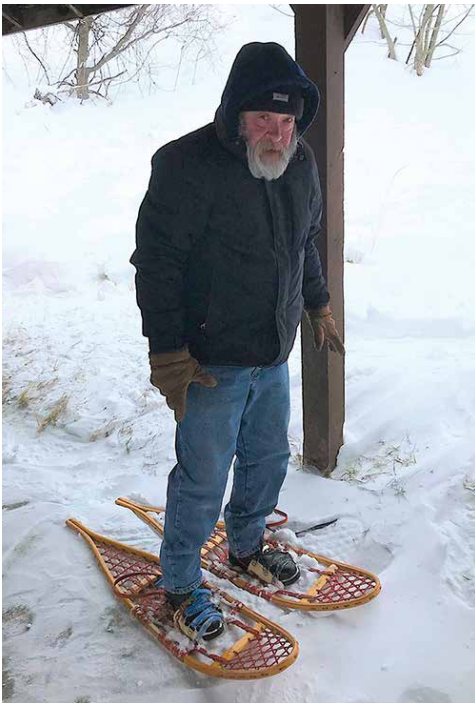


Guided hike led on a sunny afternoon at Ludington State Park. Courtesy photo.

# Snowshoeing 101: Old-Guy Style

By KEVIN HOWELL

*Hiking the woods on a snowy winter day has long been a pleasant experience for me. The wind soughing through the pines, quiet stirrings of critters among the trees, and occasional glimpses of standing-still deer near a creek always make the chilly trek worth the endeavor.*



Miserably cold, but ready to go ... I think ... Photo by Jean Howell.

I've never tried snowshoe hiking, though. So, after hearing about hikes at Ludington State Park, with free use of snowshoes, I thought I'd try it. But it was a guided group hike, and I don't do group things.

On this January Saturday, the park had fresh snow — more than a foot. On the drive along the lakeshore, the wind was whipping around 30 mph, blowing snow off the dunes and trying to fill in the recently plowed highway and doing a fair job of it.

I was doubting my choice of days.

I also wondered if my seven-decades-old wearing-down body was up to the task. My feet, and other sensitive body parts, tend to get colder easier these days.

More people were at the park, considering the blustery cold wind, than I expected. About 20 of us gathered at the meeting place, a "warming" shelter that wasn't warm but more of an out-of-the-wind shelter.

At about 1 p.m., the park interpreter and tour guide Alan Wernette appeared and began his pre-hike presentation. Wernette commended the Friends of Ludington State

Park for supplying 60 pairs of snowshoes, then demonstrated several styles. I didn't know there was more than one. There's a short shoe, the Bear Paw, for running trap lines in brushy terrain. There's a longer Michigan snowshoe with a pointy front that keeps a truer track, and there's the Ojibwe with pointy toe and heel ends.

Around the 20-minute mark of the scheduled 1.5-hour hike, we finally headed out to the shoe shed, in the wind, to grab a pair of snowshoes and attempt to put our feet into them. Taking hands out of sort-of-warm gloves, I worked at putting my snow boot into position and pulling cold stiff laces tight, which I managed to do before my fingers snapped off in the wind.

Okay, I'm ready. Snowshoes feel comfortable enough, but now it's a waiting game for the others to follow suit. It was another reminder that I am not well-suited to group happenings and the waiting-for-everyone-else thing. It's finally time to try hiking ... wait, our guide broke a lace binding and must go back for another shoe.

Onward. Walking in the shoes worked, once I readjusted my stride to accommodate the over-sized shoe — kind of like the stride of an Old West cowboy who has been in the saddle too long, but easy enough to get accustomed to, and it did make getting through the new snow much easier.

We made it about 30 yards and stopped. After a talk about the first campground, a small cabin to rent, and other bits about the campgrounds in general, we moved another 30 yards and ... stopped again.

"We'll just walk a little and stop and talk a little," our guide said.

After barely getting started, my feet were getting cold from standing still too much.

We moved a bit off trail and headed into the trees. I enjoyed gliding along, but there was just too much stopping and standing for my body to generate heat to reach my toes, despite wearing flannel-lined jeans, snow boots, three layers on top — including an insulated long sleeve undershirt, a flannel shirt and fleece hoodie — and a water-resistant hooded outer jacket.

I just wanted to try the shoes and traipse a little through the woods while listening

continued on page 8

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# Winter warm-up

continued from page 1

favorite beverage.

According to the website Statista, 23% of Americans drink tea daily. The Tea Association of the USA reported artisanal tea consumption continued to rise rapidly in 2020, with growing interest among Millennials and Gen Zs about tea's origins, terroir, flavors, harvesting methods and sustainability.

If you're looking for a local place serving coffee and tea, you'll find an abundance. However, the following dedicate significant time and space to the art and craft of brewing either or both.



HumanTea, Ludington. Courtesy photo.

## Ludington

Ludington coffee and tea drinkers have several choices, including two cozy, inviting downtown businesses on the same street.

As the name implies, **HumanTea**, at 127 S. James Street, (enter on East Loomis Street), specializes in teas and has a philanthropic mission.

"We are a primarily tea service (iced & hot teas and tea lattes), though we do serve an excellent AeroPress or pour over fresh-ground coffee," HumanTea co-owner Carmen Biggs explained. "We are a tea shop with a mission. We began because we wanted to provide a space in our community that raises awareness and funds for anti-human-trafficking efforts. Our net profits are invested into human-trafficking prevention and victim support efforts. All of our teas are responsibly sourced and we also sell artisan gifts that are made by survivors or are from organizations that contribute to trafficking prevention."

When asked why they decided to specialize in tea, HumanTea co-owner Chris Turnbull commented, "What we love about tea is that the variety is nearly endless. We currently carry approximately 40 different teas that we can offer as delicious hot tea, iced tea, or tea latte. The flavor combinations are plentiful and each one is distinctly unique."

Other menu items include kombucha



Mocha art. Photo by P. Stinson.

(fermented tea with mild effervescence) on tap, milk steamers and specialty sodas. Most-often requested is the White Coconut Cream Latte, blending white coconut cream tea, milk and a dash of white chocolate. Tea brands available for purchase are Art of Tea, an organic tea collaborative in Los Angeles, as well as Arbor Teas, an Ann Arbor-based company offering fairly traded, organic varieties. Omage Coffee, a local roaster who provides sustainable and fairly traded coffee, supplies their beans. HumaniTea's Drink of the Month features a unique limited-time beverage. Find locally made, mouth-watering pastries here, too.

The owners of **Red Rooster Coffee & Community**, at 207 South James Street, wanted to offer a place where people could gather. Ethan and Melissa Ambrose opened their "coffee shop with intention" in 2017. They partner with Traverse City roaster Higher Grounds Trading Co., which offers fair-trade organic coffee beans. They make



Nikki, of Book Mark, Ludington. Photo by P. Stinson.

their syrups in house and a local organic bakery supplies their pastries. Their most-requested drink? Lattes crafted with house-made syrup.

"A close contender would be Cold Brew & Nitro in the summer months, and a fan favorite for kids are our fruit smoothies," they added.

Speaking of summer, the Ambroses said they plan to open a seasonal coffee shop at Epworth, a 128-year-old summer

community north of Ludington. Follow them on Facebook @TheRoostLudington.

If you're looking for the perfect place to find a good read and a delightful drink, seek out the **Book Mark**. The bookstore with a coffee bar and lounge is located at 207 South Rath Avenue, near the Harbor View Marina and park. Inside the bookstore are newspapers, gift items, reading glasses and more. The coffee bar sources its beans from Lansing-based Paramount Coffee and serves brewed and cold brew coffee, lattes, cappuccino, mochas, Americano, and espresso. All booksellers here double as baristas. The menu includes specialty milks, extra shots of espresso and 23 flavors of Torani syrup plus 10 sugar-free options. They also serve tea, chai, hot chocolate, lemonade, Italian and French sodas, bottled water and chocolate milk. Follow them on Facebook @BookMarkLudington.

In a rush? Find a reliable cup of java with drive-through options along U.S. Highway 10, between Walmart and Lowe's. Both the new **Starbucks** and established **Biggby Coffee** serve specialty coffees and flavored hot and cold beverages, and offer food to go.

## Manistee

The city of Manistee has its share of places to get a caffeine fix, including a popular drive-through option at **Port City Brew**, 309 West Parkdale Avenue. The baristas serve mochas, lattes, chai teas, hot teas, frappes, iced drinks, smoothies, steamers, Italian sodas and the occasional packaged baked goodies. For hours of operation and details about drinks of the day, follow them on Facebook @PortCityBrew. Also find their coffee at **Downtown Delights**, 457 River Street.

A comfortable sit-down option is **Goody's Juice and Java**, at 343 River Street, in Manistee's beautiful historic downtown. The business has an established reputation, and the current owner carries on the same tradition of offering specialty beverages plus pastries, breakfast foods and luncheon sandwiches for dining in or to go. Paramount Coffee beans provide the rich coffee flavor. Most requested is the Dark Chocolate Mocha. Their White Chocolate Raspberry Mocha is a winner, too. Check out the raised seating area with floor-to-ceiling views of the goings-on in downtown Manistee. Follow them on



Kylie, of Port City Brew, Manistee. Photo by P. Stinson.

Facebook @goodysjuiceandjava.

When you're in the mood to shop and sip, you'll find **The Outpost**, at 359 River Street, offers both. The clothing store has been a part of downtown for 20-plus years, with "fashionably comfortable" attire for men and women. Owner Carrie Mosher opened the coffee bar at the front of the store about 10 years ago. The Outpost uses Traverse City-based Roaster Jack Coffee Company beans and Light of Day organic teas from Leelanau County. The baristas serve a range of specialty coffee and tea drinks (using vegan syrups) with popular choices such as Dirty Chai Latte, Mocha and London Fog. Follow them on Facebook @ManisteeOutpost.

Local residents and area visitors eagerly await the spring reopening of **Yellow Dog Café**, at 4850 Main Street (M-22) in Onekama. The seasonal coffee shop and bakery closes each year from December to April. Owner Bonnie McPhedran sources her roasted beans from Higher Grounds Trading Co. in Traverse City. She also bakes a wide array of pastries and creates the salads and sandwiches served fresh each day. Follow the café on Facebook @YellowDogOnekama.

Why wait until Mother Nature decides to warm us up? As my grandma used to say, "There's nothing better than a hot cup of coffee (or tea) to warm your heart and soul."

Carmelitta resides in Mason County, where she spent the last 30-some years enjoying the blessings of rural life. She is a semi-retired journalist who serves those needing "wordy" advice through her business, West MI Editorial Services.



# Community Calendar

To be included in our March 8 printed edition, please submit your announcements by Feb 26. Email your calendar events or press releases to: editor@freshwater-reporter.com. Always check with the venue about upcoming events. Some events listed in our calendar may change or be canceled due to weather, schedules or COVID-19. Despite our best efforts, errors may occur. This calendar is continuously updated online at [freshwater-reporter.com/calendar-2](https://freshwater-reporter.com/calendar-2)

## ONGOING EVENTS

Feb **Classes at Ludington Area Center for the Arts**

Mar There are too many art classes to list! Please go to [www.ludingtonartscenter.org](http://www.ludingtonartscenter.org) and click on Workshops/Classes for a complete schedule.

Thru **Furniture, Fiber, Photography, and Sculpture Art Exhibition**

Feb 25 Mon-Sat: 10am-4pm. Sun.: 12-4pm. Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd., Frankfort.

Thru **Local Artist Exhibit, Ludington Area Center for the Arts**

Feb 26 LACA main hall gallery and performance hall gallery. 107 S. Harrison.

Thru **"All in the Family," Art Exhibition in Manistee**

Mar 5 Free gallery exhibit highlights several families in the Manistee region who fostered generations of artists. Sculpture, painting, drawing, textiles, jewelry, woodcarving and paper-cutting. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, Hardy Hall. Open Tues.-Fri., 1-5 pm, and Sat. 12-3pm. 101 S. Maple St., Manistee. Go to [ramsdeltheatre.org](http://ramsdeltheatre.org) or call 231-398-9770.

Mar **Rabbit's Universe: Finding Joy Through Covid Conflict & Quarantine**

Feb 26 A Two-Year Retrospective Art Series. Artist receptions every Friday in March from 5-8pm, Main Gallery, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison.

Mar **Ruth Dimmitt's Weed Haven Whimsy: Poems, Paintings & Sculptures**

Feb 26 Artist reception March 4, 4-7pm. Performance Hall Lobby Gallery, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison.

## FEBRUARY

9 **Classic Film Series at The Vogue Theatre: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967) (not yet confirmed)**  
10am & 7pm. \$2. Drama/Comedy starring Sidney Poitier, Katharine Houghton, Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. 383 River St., Manistee

9 **Cookie Decorating with Dani Jo at St. Ambrose Cellars**

6-9pm, \$45, all materials included. To buy tickets, go to [stambrose-mead-wine.com](http://stambrose-mead-wine.com) 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

10 **"Sailing A Dangerous Lake Michigan"**

4pm. Local historian Tim Foster shares details of design issues of the 1892 to mid-1920s Great Lakes car ferry fleet. Zoom live at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83640036601>. Find a recording later at: [www.benzieuseum.org](http://www.benzieuseum.org). Benzonnia Academy Lecture Series, Benzie Area Historical Society.

11 **Live Music at the Brewery with Keith Scott Blues**

6-9pm, Free, Ludington Bay Brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

11 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Kyle Brown**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

11 **Fred Knapp Quintet**

7:30pm. An evening of swinging instrumental jazz music at Ramsdell Theatre, 101 Maple St., Manistee. Group includes: piano, double bass, drums, guitar & trombone Tickets at [ci.ovationtix.com/35295/production/1072880](http://ci.ovationtix.com/35295/production/1072880)

12 **Winterfest 2022 in Beulah**

All day, Free, Village Park, 7122 Prospect Ave., Beulah. Fun activities for all ages, including an outhouse race, frozen turkey bowling, chili contest, horse drawn wagon rides, parade, fireworks and more.

12 **OPEN HOUSE at new Maple Grove Township Community Center**

1-4pm. Enjoy some snacks and share your ideas. In the old Kaleva Elementary School, 9208 Kauko, Kaleva.

12 **Guided Snowshoe Hikes at Ludington State Park**

1pm & 6pm. Free. NO LANTERN-LIT HIKE THIS NIGHT. Bring a headlamp at 6pm, if necessary. Hike through dunes and forests, snow or no. 60 pairs snowshoes, first come, first served, for ages 8 and up. Event cancelled in event of severe or icy weather. Updates at Ludington State Park Facebook page. Meet at the Warming Shelter at Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116, Ludington.

12 **Valentine's Gala at the Duane E. Dewey Amvets Hall**

6pm, 1959 W. 24th St., Baldwin

12 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Bekah Brudi**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

12-13 **Osborn's Sport Shop Big Ice Fishing Contest**

Details to be announced. Contest ends at 3pm, so there's plenty of time to watch the Super Bowl. The sport shop is located in Bear Lake but the contest is for area lakes.

13 **Cheese & Love Pairing at St Ambrose Cellars**

12-4pm, \$15, Four meads paired with cheeses from Tina the Cheese Lady. No advance tickets/reservations needed unless you want to reserve an igloo at [stambrose-mead-wine.com](http://stambrose-mead-wine.com). 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

13 **Airsoft Biathlon at Crystal Mountain Resort**

Start times are every 5 minutes between 1-3pm in groups of up to 4 people, \$25/person includes cross-country ski equipment rental and airsoft (pellet gun) supplies. Minimum age of 8 to participate. The ski trail will be a one-mile loop with 3 target stations. Medals awarded for best overall, best ski time, and most targets hit for both men and women. Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr., Thompsonville. For more info, call 888.968.7686 ext. 4000

14 **Shifting Landscapes-Lecture Series at LACA and on Zoom**

7-8:30pm, Free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Available via Zoom at [mcdl.pub/sl-zoom](https://mcdl.pub/sl-zoom). Sponsored by the Mason County District Library and the Abondia Center. "Exploring Displays of Confederate Monuments and Symbols" with Mike Nagle. Registration is encouraged at [mcdl.pub/sl-register](https://mcdl.pub/sl-register). For more info, contact [ttrahey@mcdclibrary.org](mailto:ttrahey@mcdclibrary.org) or [baportmann312@gmail.com](mailto:baportmann312@gmail.com)

15 **Ludington Bay Brewing Company Beer Dinner**

6-9pm (doors open at 5:30), \$60/person, seating limited to 42 people. Five courses, each paired with a beer. To reserve seating, email [chelsea@ludingtonbaybrewing.com](mailto:chelsea@ludingtonbaybrewing.com), call the taproom at 231.239.6690, or visit the brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

15 **Great Lakes: Past, Present, Future**

7-8pm. Free Zoom presentation by Ludington State Park Interpreter Alan Wernette delves into the timeless Great Lakes. Hosted by Friends of Ludington State Park. To receive a Zoom link, register at: <https://friendsofludingtonstatepark.org/Upcomingevents/>

16 **Classic Film Series at The Vogue Theatre: The World's Fastest Indian (2005)**

10am & 7pm. Free. Sports/Drama starring Anthony Hopkins. Part of WSCC's "Humankind" free film series. 383 River St., Manistee

18 **Live Music at the Brewery with Taylor Makowiki**

6-9pm, Free, Ludington Bay Brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

18 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Chelsea Marsh**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

19 **Getting' Jiggy Ice Fishing Tournament, Ludington**

\$10 entry fee. There is a 100% payout for the longest fish in each category: Bluegill, Crappie, and Perch. You must be in line for measuring by 6pm. Free hot dogs will be served at Sutton's Landing at the end of the tournament. For more info contact Pere Marquette Expeditions at 231.845.7285.

19-20 **Michigan Free Fishing Weekend**

Enjoy free fishing on both inland and Great Lakes waters. All usual rules and restrictions apply.

19 **Guided Snowshoe Hike at Ludington State Park**

1pm Free, Hike through dunes and forests, snow or no. 60 pairs of snowshoes available to use, first come, first served (sizes fit ages 8 and up). Event canceled in event of severe or icy weather. Updates at Ludington State Park Facebook page. Meet at the Warming Shelter at Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116, Ludington

19 **National Theatre Live Rebroadcast presents A View From the Bridge by Arthur Miller**

1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Filmed live onstage from London's West End, starring Mark Strong and Nicola Walker. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee

19 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Meg Gunia**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

19 **Lantern-Lit Ski and Snowshoe Hike at Ludington State Park**

6-8pm, Free. Self-guided snowshoe hike or cross-country ski along a 1 mile loop of trail lit by kerosene lanterns. Bonfires will be at the Warming Shelter (where participants should start the hike) and the Amphitheater. Free warm beverages available at the Amphitheater bonfire. 60 pairs snowshoes first come, first served for ages 8 and up. Event canceled in case of severe or icy weather. Updates at Ludington State Park Facebook page. Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116, Ludington

19 **Drop the Mitts Against Cancer at West Shore Community College**

6:30-8pm, \$7. An elite hockey showcase with all proceeds benefitting the Ludington Optimist Club Childhood Cancer Campaign. Chances to win cash prizes with purchase of Chuck-a-Pucks and 50/50 raffle tickets. WSCC Ice Arena, 3000 N. Stiles Rd., Scottville

21 **Shifting Landscapes-Lecture Series at LACA and on Zoom**

7-8:30pm, Free, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Available via Zoom at [mcdl.pub/sl-zoom](https://mcdl.pub/sl-zoom). Sponsored by the Mason County District Library and the Abondia Center. "White Women in the White Power Movement" with Elizabeth Gillespie McRae. Registration is encouraged at [mcdl.pub/sl-register](https://mcdl.pub/sl-register). For more info, contact [ttrahey@mcdclibrary.org](mailto:ttrahey@mcdclibrary.org) or [baportmann312@gmail.com](mailto:baportmann312@gmail.com)

22 **Port City Documentary at The Vogue Theatre-Koyaanisqatsi(1982)**

7pm, Free, Part of WSCC's "Humankind" free film series. 383 River St. Manistee.

20-26 **Traverse City Restaurant Week**

21 participating restaurants serve 3-course meals for \$25 or \$35 per person. Reservations recommended. Take out available. Go to <https://www.downtowntc.com/traverse-city-restaurant-week/>

23 **Classic Film Series at The Vogue Theatre: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967) (not yet confirmed)**

10am & 7pm. \$2. Crime/Drama starring Sidney Poitier and Rod Steiger. 383 River St., Manistee

25 **Live Music at the Brewery with Meg Gunia**

6-9pm, Free, Ludington Bay Brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

25 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Chris Michels**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

26 **Live Music at St. Ambrose Cellars with Blake Elliott**

6-9pm, Free, 841 S. Pioneer Rd., Beulah

## MARCH

2 **WSCC's "Humankind" Film Series at The Vogue Theatre-The Red Shoes (1948)**

7pm, Free, Dance/Romance starring Moira Shearer, Anton Walbrook, and Marius Goring. 383 River St. Manistee.

3 **WSCC presents the play "Almost, Maine" a real romantic comedy**

7:30pm, \$15-25, Carter Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd., Scottville

4 **Live Music at the Brewery with Tim Krause**

6-9pm, Free, Ludington Bay Brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

4 **WSCC presents the play "Almost, Maine" a real romantic comedy**

7:30pm, \$15-25, Carter Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd., Scottville

5 **National Theatre Live Rebroadcast presents Skylight by David Hare**

1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 under 18, Filmed live onstage from London's West End, starring Bill Nighy and Carey Mulligan. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee

5 **WSCC presents the play "Almost, Maine" a real romantic comedy**

7:30pm, \$15-25, Carter Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd., Scottville

5 **Locash in Concert at Little River Casino Resort**

8pm, \$40-55, 2700 Orchard Hwy., Manistee. Tickets available at [lrcr.com](http://lrcr.com)

6 **WSCC presents the play "Almost, Maine" a real romantic comedy**

2pm, \$15-25, Carter Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd., Scottville

8 **WSCC's "Humankind" Film Series at The Vogue Theatre-Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)**

7pm, Free, Action/Fantasy starring Charlize Theron and Tom Hardy. 383 River St. Manistee

11 **Live Music at the Brewery with Benjamin Paetz (Ukelele Guy)**

6-9pm, Free, Ludington Bay Brewery, 515 S. James St., Ludington

12 **Metropolitan Opera Live/Encore in HD**

presents Ariadne Auf Naxos (R. Strauss) 1pm, \$20 adults/seniors, \$10 students, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St., Manistee

12 **Finny Slam Fishing Tournament, Ludington**

\$10 entry fee. There is a 100% payout for the longest fish in each category: Pike, Steelhead, and Perch. You must be in line for measuring by 6pm. Free sloppy joes will be served at Sutton's Landing at the end of the tournament. For more info contact Pere Marquette Expeditions at 231.845.7285.







Lined up waiting for snowshoes at Ludington State Park. Photo by Jean Howell

# Snowshoeing

continued from page 5

to the quiet, but that wasn't happening with so many people along. Despite a well-knowledgeable guide like Wernette leading the way, it was not what I had in mind. So, I broke off my trial run early, turned in my shoes and headed to a warm truck, where my navigator Jean sat reading a book awaiting my expected return.

Although this type of adventure didn't suit me, I could see the enjoyment of the others and the state park is a great place to visit, no matter the mode of transportation.

So, I'm not giving up on snowshoeing. I'm looking for a pair to rent or buy so I can try it again on my own, at my own pace, because really, I do enjoy a good hike through silent woods in winter.

For more information on snowshoe hikes at Ludington State Park go to Friends of Ludington State Park's Facebook page or friendsfludingtonstatepark.org.

Guided snowshoe hikes take place at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m., Feb. 12, and at 1 p.m., Feb. 19. A final lantern-lit hike will be held 6-8 p.m., Feb. 19, followed by bonfires at the Amphitheater (with warm beverages) and Warming Shelter. Snowshoes are available to borrow.



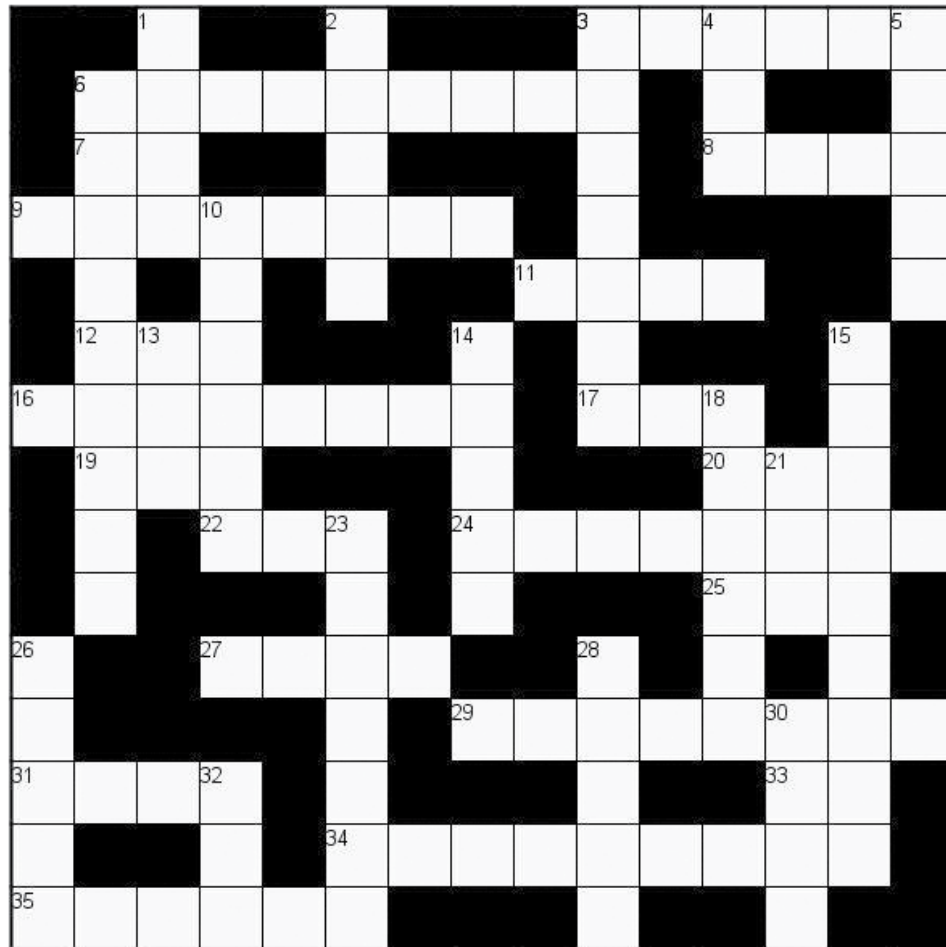
Stopped to talk, again. Photo by Kevin Howell

Orchard Beach State Park in Manistee also offers lantern-lit hikes on Feb. 26 and March 26, and hikers must provide their own equipment. For more information, check out the Friends of Orchard Beach State Park Facebook page.

Kevin Howell is a Mason County freelance writer. He loves the Michigan woods, lakes, people and, especially, Michigan craft beers - not necessarily in that order!



The roaring fire inside Orchard Beach State Park's Shelter House warms snowshoers before and after their lantern-lit hikes. One of this group was previously married here. Photo by Mark Videan.



## BRRR!

By MARK VIDEAN

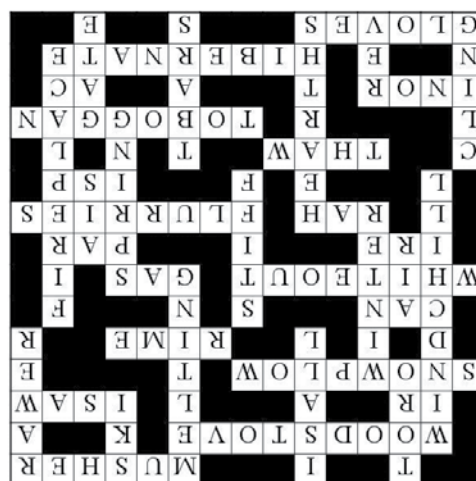
### ACROSS

- 3 Dog sled driver
- 6 Similar to #15 Down, but more efficient
- 7 Some space heaters produce this type of energy, Abbr.
- 8 "\_\_\_\_\_ Mommy kissing Santa Claus"
- 9 Post-blizzard vehicle
- 11 Winter coat?
- 12 Method of preserving food
- 16 Disorienting blizzard condition
- 17 Home heating option
- 19 Wrath
- 20 Score between birdie and bogey
- 22 Fan noise
- 24 Lightly snowing
- 25 Web access co.
- 27 #3 Down happens during one
- 29 Long, flat sled with a curled front end
- 31 "\_\_\_\_\_ out?" Question to a dog

- 33 Alternating current, Abbr.
- 34 To hole up during the coldest months
- 35 Hand warmers

### DOWN

- 1 Snow blower brand
- 2 "Love \_\_\_\_\_ you need"
- 3 Frosty's greatest fear
- 4 Hit the slopes
- 5 Colder and wetter, as weather
- 6 Factor that increases discomfort
- 10 Theme of this puzzle
- 13 Hang time, to a snowboarder
- 14 Rigid
- 15 Poker site
- 18 It follows #10 Down
- 21 Intelligent machines, Abbr.
- 23 Cozy spots near #15 Down
- 26 Static \_\_\_\_\_
- 28 Some ski lifts
- 30 Slalom obstacle
- 32 Gun, as a snowmobile engine



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# FRESHWATER REPORTER

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

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