

FRESHWATER REPORTER

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Guitar Man: a conversation with wood

By VALERIE CHANDLER

Most everyone enjoys listening to music, but how many have thought about where the melodies begin, with the crafting of the individual instruments? I'd like to introduce you to a northern Michigan man, an extremely talented luthier named Tim Jagmin, who has become like family to my husband and me. He truly has led a life worthy of a movie script.

For those of you unfamiliar with the term, a luthier is a craftsman who makes guitars.

Tim, now 80, has rubbed elbows with some of the top names in the guitar world, both musicians and manufacturers. Through it all, he has remained humble. In fact, when my husband and I first met Tim, we had no idea how interesting and diverse his life had been.

Imagine being friends and making guitars for band members from Rush, Grand Funk Railroad, Bob Seger, The Allman Brothers, Kid Rock, Insane Clown Posse, and many others that he's not revealed. Money alone won't buy you a guitar from Tim. He is good friends with most of the guitarists he has built instruments for and told me, "If we don't click or gel somehow it won't, and at times didn't, happen."

Tim still makes, repairs, refinishes and tunes guitars but has also taken on a few apprentices. He has mentored and apprenticed a couple of young men from the Traverse City-based band The Smash, and two years ago he began mentoring my husband, Matthew.

Tim developed his woodworking skills as a child by building model airplanes and boats, preferring wood models over plastic because the wood needed to be shaped and fitted together. To those skills he added learning about and fixing electronics on ships during the 10



years he served in the U.S. Navy, including overseas in Vietnam.

After his military discharge, Tim settled in Detroit to be near his wife's family. His marriage was short-lived, and after the divorce his youngest brother came to live with him.

Tim was a maintenance supervisor on the midnight shift at the largest snack-producing plant in Detroit. One morning he came home to find a strange guy sleeping on his couch, which in the 1970s was no big deal. The guy told him his name was Harry, his brother's friend. After making a pot of coffee, the two started talking and discovered they had an overwhelming number of similarities, including the same birthday — December 28, 1943. From that moment, a new friendship blossomed.

Tim's new friend Harry owned a small guitar repair shop, Savannah Guitar, in



Top: Luthier Tim Jagmin in his workshop, surrounded by the tools of his trade. Photo: Matthew Chandler. Above: A work in progress. Photo: Matthew Chandler.

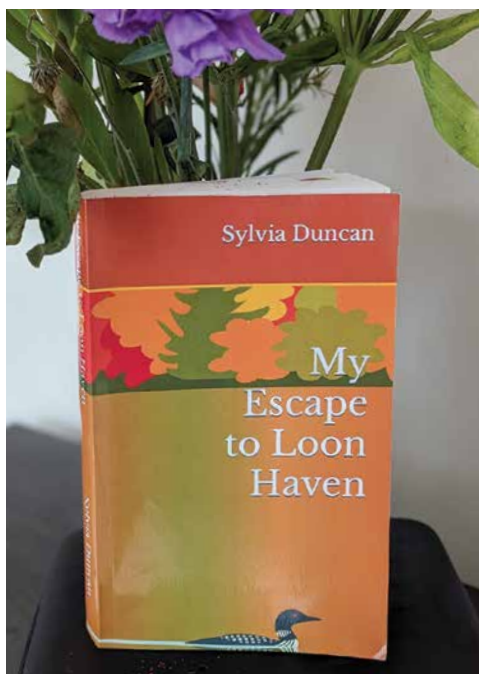
Redford, Michigan. Their excitement about being astrological twins led Harry to ask Tim if he'd like to try guitar repair. Tim's brother Tom was a guitar and bass player, but Tim knew nothing about guitars himself. Since his job at that time was going nowhere, he decided to give the guitar gig a try.

When Tim first started working at the repair shop, his friend told him the weakest

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Readers ask local author to pen sequel

'My Escape to Loon Haven' begins Jenna's story By PAT STINSON.



"My Escape to Loon Haven" is Sylvia Duncan's second book. Photo: P. Stinson

In her 2022 book, "My Escape to Loon Haven", Bear Lake author Sylvia Duncan fulfills the longing of young people to escape to the outdoors, flee from an unbearable situation in their lives, or both.

The author knows something about teenagers. She taught at the Leelanau School, a college-preparatory boarding school in Glen Arbor, Michigan. For 14 years, she also taught 15- to 19-year-olds in a public school in Craig, Colorado, a mining and ranching town.

Those experiences and Duncan's love of the natural world come together in her self-published paperback book. Her story is of a teenager who escapes a miserable life in the city and returns to a place she remembers fondly from her childhood. That place is her uncle's cabin, now abandoned, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Readers hear the voice of Jenna, the story's main character, and see through her 14-year-old eyes as she fights hunger and bullying, reacts to real and perceived

threats, and learns the basic skills she needs to survive alone in the backwoods. Sometimes her voice is small and weary or fearful; other times it is loud and full of bravado. As her confidence grows, wisdom borne of experience slowly calms her.

In the cabin, Jenna finds books to read by Walden and Thoreau and befriends a bird she names "Sisu", the Finnish word for personal courage and fortitude.

"She's me, really, in a lot of ways," Duncan said of Jenna, adding that she, the author, is "sort of a bird person" who read Thoreau at age 14.

In addition to bullying and food insecurity, the book touches on social issues affecting Jenna's life, such as racism, prescription drug addiction, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I guess I was trying to figure out what damage she would have when she came to the woods. I was thinking she fled to the last place she felt loved. Where would today's kids flee to? Their grandparents? I

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AREA EVENTS
CALENDAR
ON PAGE 7

NORTHWOODS
SAUCE
BOSS



Keep it Simple

Story and photo by JOSHUA ELIE

We all know that it is good to be good to each other. The holidays are great reminders of this. To be giving, even generous, when you can. To be a little less selfish and a little more selfless. Life has taught me that it is always better to give than to receive, but that doesn't mean you have to put yourself in the poor house or load on so much stress around the holidays that you spend the whole time looking forward to it all being over.

You really don't "have" to do anything so special.

After 911, my uncle Stuart wanted to have the whole family at his place for Christmas. I've never known anyone so plagued with "Murphy's Law," but somehow Stuart always stayed positive even though he was a real-life Charlie Brown. For instance, when he planned this big family holiday, we all bought our tickets to fly there, and then the towers came tumbling down.

We met up with my mother's aunt Irene at O'Hare (Chicago's airport), and we were supposed to fly to Phoenix together, but somehow my great-aunt got booked on a different flight. She, as usual, packed as if she were moving there and had this big extra suitcase that she couldn't take on the plane. So, I offered to carry it for her. Then we got her on her plane.

Let's paint a quick picture here.

We are at O'Hare during the busiest travel time of the year. There are Marines at checkpoints everywhere, pulling people out of the crowd for random checks, and we have about a half-mile walk to our concourse. I'm clean-shaven, hair tucked into my Santa Claus hat, wearing a black leather jacket with chains on the shoulders, and in one hand I'm carrying an electric guitar (in an assault rifle-shaped case) with an effects unit (kind of like a flat computer with a digital read-out) duct taped to it, and in another I'm carrying a big suitcase full of old-lady clothes and make-up. I got stopped and inspected at the first three checkpoints, and then, thankfully, they radioed ahead so I wouldn't get picked for inspection again. At least I gave them all a good holiday laugh.

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The Persistence of Pottery

By STEWART A. MCFERRAN

During a family trip in the station wagon, we made a stop at Bybee Pottery in Kentucky. As a teenager, I was impressed with the production of clay vessels on the potters' wheels. We watched as lumps of clay turned into pitchers and bowls in the potters' muddy hands as they went about throwing clay on the wheel. We bought some large bags of Kentucky clay, and I pursued pottery upon our return to Michigan. I built my own potter's wheel, and even though my wheel was a bit wobbly, I was able to throw pots with red clay from Kentucky in our Michigan basement.

North Muskegon High School had a limited ceramics program, so my parents signed me up for a class at Muskegon Community College. Our instructor, Kent Foster, had one rule: no ash trays. Mr. Foster stressed that chemistry was the key to ceramics, and now, years later, I am delving into what makes up the earthly clay. There are many kinds of clay, but the best ones have plasticity, which is a property that allows the clay to be molded into almost any shape.

Clay from the banks of the Kentucky River needed little processing before being thrown onto the spinning potter's wheel. There are countless other locations around the world where potters have dug clay to make vessels of all shapes and sizes. While



Illustration of how the clay vessels created by Summer Art Camp attendees will be displayed at the center. Photo by S.A. McFerran



Clay vessels made by young people attending Summer Art Camp at Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Photo by S.A. McFerran.

Bybee pottery was the oldest business (1809) in Kentucky, there are many vessels preserved from much older pottery operations. Forms created millennia ago by ancient civilizations persist to this day because the ceramic body undergoes chemical changes in the kiln, preserving its shape. Much of what is known about the art of ancient people has been gleaned from these kiln-fired vessels, found in museums worldwide.

Recently, I had the opportunity to teach ceramics at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. The young students collaborated to make a series of boxes. They made designs in slabs of clay that were then assembled into large boxes that were fired in the kiln. The firing process preserved these moments of creation, wherein children let their imaginations guide their hands. The glazes applied with the deftness of six-year-olds will withstand time and persist for millennia. Just what happens to these clay pieces will depend on how the collaboration proceeds.

My former ceramics instructor had explained to our class that by using minerals from the earth, a glaze can be produced on the clay's surface. A wide variety of colors can be obtained. The sky is the limit when the potter is able to produce any texture and shape. Once again, my teacher was correct; chemistry is key in the ceramic arts.

Once vessels are loaded into the kiln, they are heated to a high temperature. As the ceramics become hot, the minerals on the surface melt and become fused with the ceramic body. The glazes used can create a wide range of effects. This firing process is exciting, and as the kiln cools, the pottery can be unloaded. Changes to the ceramic material after firing are fascinating to see. Unfortunately, this part of the process was not shared with the young students, who were only at the art center for a short time.

It was such a pleasure to collaborate with the young people attending the Summer Art Camp. The kids made small sculptures using air-drying clay and Sculpy that were baked in an oven for 20 minutes. They made beads and strung them on pieces of yarn to form necklaces they could take home with them that day.

Hopefully, some of the art campers will return to Frankfort and see that the marks they made in clay have been preserved and put on display. Maybe they will even get a chance to see pottery created on a potter's wheel, as I did years ago.

Stewart McFerran illuminates current environmental issues in a historic context. He hopes readers will gain an understanding and insight into ways people interact with their environment.

Onekama author receives awards

From staff reports

Author John Wemlinger has received two prestigious writing awards from the Military Writers Society of America (MWSA). "Before the Snow Flies" garnered a MWSA Gold Award and "The Cut" received a Silver Award.

"I am both thrilled and humbled at this recognition," Wemlinger, a retired U.S. Army colonel who now resides in Onekama, Michigan, said. When asked what inspires him, he responded: "Our nation's veterans! I write about what I know. I write about what it means to serve. All of my books feature vets and the trials and tribulations that they and their family and friends endure. So, I am especially honored by this recognition from the Military Writers Society of America."

"Before the Snow Flies" traces the redemption of a veteran who returns to his hometown in Onekama, Michigan, with the intention of committing suicide rather than live as a double amputee confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. "The Cut", a work of historical fiction, tells the David-and-Goliath story of a small band of frustrated homesteaders, among them Civil War veterans, who take on big lumber to reclaim their land from a powerful lumber baron.

"John Wemlinger is one of our most popular authors and is no stranger to recognition like this," Doug Weaver, of Mission Point Press, said.

According to Weaver, "Winter's Bloom" was a regional bestseller, "Before the Snow Flies" had two previous writing awards, "The Widow and the Warrior" received a gold award from The Colorado Independent Publishers Association, and the Library of Michigan named "The Cut" a 2022 Michigan Notable Book.

Wemlinger's newest novel, "The Road to Empire", was published in August by Mission Point Press.

The author speaks frequently to service organizations, book clubs and other groups. He can be contacted through his website: <http://www.johnwemlinger.com>.

Sauce Boss

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We landed in Phoenix. First stop: something to drink. I was a big Busch (beer) drinker in those days, but down south, guess what? They don't have Busch, so I grabbed a couple other kinds of beers to try, then we stopped at a Taco Truck—those are fantastic in Phoenix, by the way—and got these humongous tacos. Then, off to the hotel. We were just dying to get out of our northern clothes and get some A/C going, but not my dad. He was hot, grumpy and not going to chill until the car was unloaded. I took my time in the bathroom, changing into shorts, while Dad was out there huffing and puffing in the Phoenix heat. I popped the top on a can of this stuff called Agave Hard Seltzer. They said it was a kind of Mexican beer, and, I tell you, it was the most gawd-awful liquid I ever tasted, but I played it cool because my dad was still barking away as he brought in the last of the luggage. His face was beet red, with sweat pouring down ... I couldn't help it.

"Hey, Dad, you gotta try this; it's really

good," I said as I handed him the can. He immediately downed at least half of it and dove for a taco to get the taste out of his mouth. Ground beef gives him terrible heartburn, so he had all these little Agave-flavored burps the rest of the night, but, hey, at least he stopped barking.

The next day, we all got together at Stuart and his wife Patty's house, and things were really pleasant. I got to see my cousins on that side again, and we all went to the movies, as Stuart is a big movie buff. We also went to a bunch of galleries, and I had to laugh because some folks were selling the same stuff out back for a tenth of the price.

I found a new lager beer I liked called Tecate. It's fantastic served Mexican style on ice in a frozen mug with a salted rim and a wedge of lime. There are a lot of cool things in that part of the country to try and see, like the desert, which has this mystical beauty about it that I really can't explain.

What was so nice about that vacation was that everything was relaxed; we didn't "have" to do anything; we just had fun and enjoyed each other's company. There was no big gift exchange, no big decoration

Elie's Easy Pie Crust

In a large bowl, place 1¼ cup flour and add one stick cubed (about ½") refrigerator-cold butter. Mix with your hands until coated with flour. Add ¼ cup ice water and mush together with hands until combined, then form into a ball. Cut in half and roll out each, making two pie crusts. If only one crust is needed, place the second half in a plastic sandwich bag and flatten. Store in the fridge for a week or two, or freeze for months.

Fill your pie crust with your preferred pie filling. Egg wash the crust and bake for about 45 minutes at 375 degrees. This crust is very forgiving as far as oven temperature and length of baking time. The egg wash will give you a nice golden brown when it is done.

For a lattice top, put one cube of cold butter in between each crossing and use egg wash. For a graham cracker crust, please refer to "Dancing in the Kitchen", Freshwater Reporter, Dec. 4, 2022. This crust works great for pumpkin pie, too. Happy Holidays!



displays, no competition of any kind, and nowhere we "had" to be at any given time.

I came away from that experience with a new perspective on holidays. Make it about the food, have everyone bring a dish to pass, and call it good. It is better to give than receive, but maybe relax and let

somebody else be the "bigger giver" this year and bake a pie.

Joshua Elie is a musician and retired building contractor. He now enjoys life as a homesteader.

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Dec. 17, 12pm-4pm HANDMADE HOLIDAY PASTA
Learn the basics & explore delicious variations. You'll "knead" to be hands on. Bring lidded plastic containers to take pasta home.

Register at: oliverartcenterfrankfort.org

What's aglow in December's night sky?

By **BROOKE EDWARDS**

Winter is on the way and with it comes a light show of the celestial kind. As night falls faster and darkness lasts longer, the coming months become some of the best for stargazing. If we can catch a break in lake-effect clouds, we'll be able to enjoy many cosmic sights.

Here is what you can expect to see during these earlier evenings.

Jupiter

After sunset, Jupiter will be shining brightly in the east. A good pair of binoculars will reveal a few of its many moons appearing as tiny "dots" around the planet. If you want to go further and see the bands on the active gas planet, you will need a small telescope. Throughout the night, Jupiter will continue to rise into the sky before setting in the west during the early morning hours.

Saturn

Look to the south any time after sunset to see Saturn shining as an unwinking star of the show. If you want to see detail, such as the rings, you will need a small telescope. If you have one, it is worth setting it up to look at this stunning planet.

The Orion Constellation (The Hunter)

This unmistakable constellation rises in the east after 9 p.m. and graces the sky all night. Characterized by its three-star "belt," this seasonal constellation is difficult to miss. Its right shoulder, the star Betelgeuse, flickers with a red hue. Betelgeuse is expected to go supernova, exploding in a dazzling display of light, but astronomers cannot predict when. It's likely this event will not happen in our lifetimes. When it does, what a fantastic show that will be.

The Orion Nebula

In the middle of the lower half of Orion is what appears to be a star. Look closer with a telescope to reveal the Orion Nebula. This stellar nursery lies 1,500 light-years from Earth. Though it will appear white in color to your eyes, when viewed with powerful magnification it is quite a colorful sight.

Sirius

Just below and to the left of Orion is his canine companion, the Canis Major constellation. Glowing on Canis Major's "chest" like a bright I.D. tag is the star Sirius. Sirius, also called the dog star, is



Photo of Orion, at bottom, and Pleiades, top, by Adrian Mag, Unsplash.

hard to miss as it appears to rapidly flicker in multiple colors.

Pleiades

Follow up, up and to the right of Orion. A bright and fuzzy feature will catch your eye. In the Taurus constellation lies the Pleiades star cluster, also known as the Seven Sisters. Binoculars will bring into view seven stars, yet there are many in the cluster – more than 1,000. Astronomers also identify this cluster as Messier 45.

Geminid Meteor Shower

Peaking around Dec. 13-14 this year, The Geminids provide us with a spectacular shower of meteors in December. Great views depend on clear skies and less

moonlight. The moon will be absent at peak viewing times this year, so grab your warmest gear and get yourselves outside on the thirteenth or fourteenth to see upwards of 120 meteors per hour. Look up any time there's a dark, cloudless sky between Nov. 19 and Dec. 24, and with a little patience, you'll see some meteors.

Stay warm, and happy stargazing!

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



Ode to Squash

By **Louisa Loveridge Gallas**
Freshwater Reporter Poet in Residence

I admit, often when served squash
I'm happy for a tiny portion
over quickly like the word.
Ploosh, moosh, bloosh, squish.
Squash. Where is the poetry?
Who imposed such a name?
Someone who was bullied
and sat upon at recess when
a youngster, who then grew up
crushed, demolished?
Is it slang?
A reduction
of some ancient word
that had music and spirit?
On their own, most squash need
abundant butter and spices,
to be worthy. Or baked into tasty
breads, even pie. Of course,
a scrumptious squash soup
does make even our turbulent
world seem safe, secure,
for a moment. One can admire
the hard exterior of Hubbard
or Buttercup to store
for months in harsh seasons.
Well, perhaps not all vegetables
rise to lyricism. Still squash deserves
a poem or song. For sure, the seeds
within are moist as we pull the soft
flesh away to prepare, then roast
in oil, sauteed garlic and a spray
of paprika to snack on while we
sit by the woodstove, in a mood
of melancholy and surrender
as autumn yields to winter,
happily licking our fingers
in the aftermath of gifts
from the deep
generous center
of squash.

Guitar Man

continued from Page 1

part of guitars, sound wise, are the pickups, transducers that convert mechanical vibration of the strings into electrical energy. Tim was curious and became determined to find a way to improve pickups. After examining all the models available at the time, he concluded the only difference between a stock model and the “Holy Grail,” also known as the Gibson PAF (Patent Applied For) humbucker, was a few more winds of wire on the bobbin, the casing that held it. Tim rewound, overwound and changed everything he could on stock parts before deciding that more wire and magnets were needed. He found an old coil-winding machine at a garage sale that “saved his life.” Forty years later, he still uses it.

After a year working at Savannah Guitar, Tim built his first guitar for Alex Lifeson, co-founder and guitarist for the rock band Rush. Next, fellow Rush member, Geddy Lee, wanted a lighter encore instrument. Geddy gave him his “P” (precision) bass and asked Tim to make it smaller, lighter and stereo. So, Tim added a jazz bass pickup after shaping the body like a teardrop. He painted it pearl white with a blue burst. Tim is pretty sure this was the first “P” jazz bass ever made, and he remained the repairman for all of Rush’s instruments for many years.

Tim only built neck-through electric and bass guitars because of Gibson’s Firebird guitar and Thunderbird bass, the company’s only neck-through guitar models. A “neck-through guitar” means the neck extends the full length of the guitar in one piece of wood. Since Savannah Guitar was a warranty repair center for Gibson, Tim and Harry made regular trips to the company’s factory, headquartered in Kalamazoo. Tim said that Gibson admitted that the neck-through design worked better than glue or bolt-on types of construction, but the former wasted a lot more wood. Tim decided that if Gibson was willing to admit the design worked best, then neck-through guitars, with no glue or bolt-on, would be how he built his.

Savannah Guitar got the reputation as the go-to place for anything needed for a guitar or bass. They had their own pickups and Tim built guitars, which was unheard of at the time. Most stores didn’t even have a repairman or technician on hand; they usually only sold the instruments, but Savannah had a crew of seven. They also had a delivery service twice a week to most of the stores in the Detroit metro area. They were one of the only places to offer instrument refinishing, and at any given time they had approximately a dozen waiting for refinishing or customizing.

Every time Tim made a trip to the Gibson factory, he wanted to see how a particular process was done, like refinishing. He said Gibson heated 55-gallon drums of lacquer to thin it, so that all of



Tim Jagmin (left) and apprentice Matthew Chandler holding their favorite guitars. Photo by V. Chandler.

would wear out. Tim used other materials, such as silicon bronze, and they worked very well, but due to the expense, he only used them on special instruments.

When it comes to making a custom guitar, Tim’s philosophy is: “Throw out what doesn’t work, and only use components that work better.” At first, he exclusively used Schaller tuners, but for the past 20 years or so he has used Gotoh tuners which he believes are superior to all others. For the fingerboards he only uses ebony wood (his favorite), and the pickups are his own because he thinks they sound better than any others. Bridges are mostly hardtail straight toppers. (This is a style of bridge with a straight top, versus curved or other design, that allows the strings to run across the top of the guitar rather than through the guitar body and out the top.) A piece of silicon bronze is fastened under the bridge to aid and enhance sustain.

Tim has never duplicated any guitar or bass he has built. He builds them uniquely for the customer and ends up personalizing them with inlays, so there are no duplicates.

While in Detroit, Tim managed to work with an acoustic guitar he believed was the best-made, best-sounding instrument at the time; it was a Harptone guitar. He took a jumbo 12-string Harptone and ported (a luthier’s term for smoothing and polishing) the interior. Every guitarist who needed a 12-string sound would visit his shop because they wanted to play that guitar, and they would play it for hours. As luck would have it, Sam Koontz of Harptone Guitar in Hoboken, New Jersey, offered to sell the company to Tim and Harry in 1975. Little did Tim know that Harry, his friend and partner, was wanted by the FBI. His real name was Warren, and he had carefully avoided any dealings requiring background checks. Eventually, however, he was caught. The Harptone sale didn’t happen, and to settle his legal troubles, Warren sold Savannah Guitar to Tim. The small shop was

only satisfaction is that they got it a little wrong.)

In the late 1970s, his second wife decided they should move north to Traverse City, his birthplace. He went along with the idea, sold Pyramid Guitar and moved north, but their marriage didn’t last. It was a shock for him to go from a customer list of 4,000-plus guitarists in Detroit to literally nobody in Traverse City.



Head stock of one of Tim’s guitars showing his “Jagmin” signature at the top and his custom pyramid inlay on the neck. Photo by V. Chandler.

To make ends meet, Tim worked at a factory in town, then at an exotic-wood store. He also spent time as a certified marine mechanic. Through it all, Tim continued to build and repair guitars, mostly for Detroit guitarists, and make his pickups to sell in Detroit-area stores.

One of Tim’s apprentices was working at a Detroit music store when a representative from a large Midwest guitar manufacturer walked through the doors. The representative was shown Tim’s pickups and was enormously impressed. Nine months later, Tim had a multi-million-dollar, five-year contract with the company to distribute his triple-coil pickups in 23 countries. However, his apprentice tried to acquire the contract by taking over Tim’s newly formed corporation, Jagmin International, Inc., and the deal fell apart.

The odd thing about Tim is that he doesn’t play the guitar. He decided he would build guitars and leave guitar-playing to his brother Tom, who, when he lived in Manistee, performed with Red Apple Road, Big Rig and Wooden Nickel. Tom also played in other bands in Canada. When one of his bandmates was diagnosed with leukemia, he asked Tom to play the Allman Brothers’ “Melissa” on Tim’s 12-string Harptone at his funeral. Tim said that to this day he gets goosebumps when he thinks of how that 12-string rang out in the funeral home without a sour note or missed chord.

Through the years, Tom helped Tim refine his electrical pickup. Another person who was helpful in assessing Tim’s pickups and guitars was Steve Stefanski, singer and guitarist for the Detroit band Standing Room Only. Everything Tim has built or designed, Steve has tried out for him.

Tim’s pickups have been accused of being secretly battery powered, but he uses passive pickups, which means no batteries or electronics are used. He has also used his acoustic pickups in acoustic pianos, harps, upright basses, cellos and every type of acoustic guitar. When Tim’s passive pickups are used, people tell him they have never heard their instrument sound so good. He explained that the main reason amplifiers are needed in most acoustic pickups is because the latter don’t have enough output, and the frequency response is all over the place when an amp is used. His acoustic pickups are flat response; therefore, there’s no change in sound when transitioning from acoustic to amplified acoustic.

After repairing all kinds of issues with acoustics — from cracks in tops and sides and broken and loose braces, to resets on bridges and necks — Tim began experimenting on his own. While working at a music store in Traverse City, he would buy the cheaper acoustic models they purchased, so he could try out his ideas.

He told me when he makes guitars, he talks to the wood. As he sands the wood, he might tell it, “Now the world’s going to see what you really look like.” I also asked Tim if he had a favorite guitar that he’s made. After a little thought he said, “Yeah, one for a best friend that played in Detroit. It was made of padauk, an orange wood, and I made it hollow. It was really light; I don’t know what it weighed, but it was much lighter than a regular guitar, and this is the one that had the bronze frets.”

Tim began my husband Matthew’s apprenticeship the way his started, by teaching him to cut and shape the guitar from a piece of wood. That was followed by a lot of hours of sanding, all by hand, because Tim’s idea is “if a tool breaks, you’ll still know how to work and finish the guitar without the fancy tools.”

“I think that’s the most important thing I’ve learned from Tim,” Matthew said. “When I’m sanding, I’ve learned how to hear when to stop ... because you can listen, and each grit will have a sound.”

He considers Tim to be his best friend, a respected Elder and a comrade. He looks forward to seeing him each week and learning more, but sometimes they take a break to just talk. As military veterans with similar interests, they have a lot to talk about and often lose track of time. They bounce new ideas off each other, always looking for ways to improve their product, so the session becomes part of their research and development.

Thanks to the guitars, Matthew has developed a love for woodworking. He designed and built a carrying box for a pedal board for one of the guitarists of The Smash.

He explained that when he is in Tim’s basement, he’ll be asking questions, leaning and watching over Tim’s shoulder, because someday he wants to be able to say, “Yes, I didn’t make this pickup, but I learned from the guy that made this perfect.”

Tim shared his own observation. “A lot of these people think that making guitars is a numbers game; the more you make, the better ... but I look at it this way; if you get it right the first or second time, do you really have to make thousands of them to prove your point?”

Tim’s brother Tom passed away last year. He has a brother, Terry, and a son, daughter, grandchildren and a great-grandchild. Many friends check in with him and visit over cards or a cup of coffee. Though Tim is currently undergoing experimental treatment for a second cancer diagnosis, he has no plans of slowing down.

Valerie Chandler lives in Wellston with her husband Matthew and their border collie/Australian shepherd. A citizen and employee of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, she is also a cancer survivor who loves to spend time with her family and has many interests.



Tim (middle) with Rush band members Alex Lifeson (left) and Geddy Lee (right). Photo courtesy of T. Jagmin.

the clear coat could be sprayed at one time. Since large drums like that are way too big for smaller-scale projects, he just sands and sprays as many coats of lacquer as needed for each job.

Around 1974, Tim decided to start using stainless steel frets in his guitars. A friend had a 1932 Martin C-100 arch top acoustic with steel frets that Tim observed were still usable, unlike nickel or silver frets which would have worn out during 40-plus years of play. Since the frets were harder, it made it easier to bend strings and they lasted longer. Most of the players getting their instruments refinished were playing 5-7 nights a week, and after a year or less of rock-guitar playing, their frets

then renamed Pyramid Guitar.

During his Detroit years, Tim acquired a couple of nicknames. One was “The Tone Pimp” from Mikhal Caldwell, named one of the top 100 guitarists in the world, because Tim’s pickups hone lots of tone. The other was the “Kahler Cure” because when a Kahler bridge was installed on a guitar, tone and sustain were lost; however, if Tim’s pickups were installed, the tone and sustain came back.

Tim has had many ups and downs in life. An original design for a pickup he invented was copied by a major manufacturer after its representatives bought two from Tim’s shop. (He said his

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MI BACKYARD

Cattails: purrfectly practical

By **JENNIFER DEVINE**

Nicknamed the “Plant of 1,000 Uses” and “Supermarket of the Swamp,” cattail (Typha) lines many stretches of road, fills many marshes, and borders many lakes and ponds here in northwest Michigan and beyond. Cattails are a regenerative crop, forming dense monoculture colonies in quiet water with help from their rhizomatic, creeping rootstalks.

Identifying Michigan’s cattail types

There are two varieties of Typha in Michigan: non-native, narrow-leaved cattail (*T. angustifolia*) and native, broad-leaved cattail (*T. latifolia*), according to michiganflora.net. Their names suggest the two are distinguishable by the width of their leaves.

The narrow-leaved cattail has flat, one-quarter- to one-half-inch-wide leaves that are 2-5 feet long. The common broad-leaved cattail’s leaves are flat and three-eighths to one-and-a-half inches wide, reaching lengths of 7 feet.

If distinguishing them by their leaf width is problematic, look at the flowering parts at the top of the stalk. Cattails contain both male and female parts. The female flower spike is under the male flower spike. The male spike on top produces pollen-rich flowers before shrinking away to allow the female spike to produce her fruit: a fluffy, seed-rich, cigar-shaped body that almost anyone can identify. In common broad-leaved cattails, the flower structures have no separation between them. The narrow-leaved cattail, however, has about a one-inch gap of bare stem between the male and female parts.

The soft, dense-packed fruit bursts open much like milkweed in the fall and lets the wind, water and wildlife do most of the work to spread seeds.

Plant of 1,000 Uses

Cattails almost became the alternative to Kopak to fill life jackets, instead of milkweed, during WWII. (See “Got Milkweed? Yes, in Michigan”, (Freshwater Reporter, Nov. 7, 2021). Cattails.wordpress.com states: “A wartime water-resistance test demonstrated that—even after 100 hours of submersion—this ‘swamp down’



Photo by Elijah Mears, Unsplash.



Photo by Maddie Weiss, Unsplash.

was capable of maintaining buoyancy,” and “a Chicago company began to substitute cattail cotton in furniture cushions and baseballs.”

The fluff is an alternative to boot, coat and mitten insulation and can be used to stuff things such as dolls, pillows, chairs or mattresses. Grab the cottony fluff and put it on a wound to stop bleeding. (If you are allergic, do not consider it for the above-mentioned uses.) Cattail fluff can be added to your tinder bundle for fires.

Use the stalks and leaves to weave baskets, quivers, mats, shelters, chair seats and more. Add Typha to your char tin (usually rectangular and thin), set it in coals until it stops smoking, and voilà! You’ve got char for your flint and steel. Boil leaves to use as a skin wash, or burn the leaves to ash

and apply to wounds as an antiseptic.

Supermarket of the Swamp

Before you begin foraging, pay attention to your surroundings. This is extremely important. Do not gather cattails, or any wild edibles, in areas where the water or the plant may be polluted by things like car exhaust or in areas treated with aquatic weedkillers. Get to know your foraging locations before you begin. Once you’ve done your research, you can try the following in your kitchen.

Pollen from cattail flowers in spring can be dried and added to your baking flour. Harvest the green female flowerhead, boil for about 15-20 minutes, cover in butter, season and eat it like corn on the cob.

In his book, “The New Wildcrafted

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Cuisine”, Pascal Bauder shares this nugget: “The true delicacy is the young and tender white shoots coming out of the roots in spring. Forage them carefully, as they break easily. You can cook or pickle them.” The author even shares a recipe for pickled cattail shoots.

Cattail roots are best harvested in the late fall. They produce more edible starch than potatoes. Use them like a root vegetable, or dry them and grind the roots to make flour. *Note: They may cause discomfort in those with gluten intolerance and should be avoided if you have celiac disease. Search “cattail recipes” online for inspiration.

Winter is a great time to start exploring with cattail!

Jennifer Devine has a passion for writing and plants. Homesteading off-grid and living in the city has offered her family a myriad of experiences, memories and adventures as they utilize natural resources in their crafts, cooking and more.

Through a Native American Lens: A Film & Speaker Series
All Film & Speaker Events are Free

Bring Her Home
Monday, November 27th at 7pm
 Vogue Theatre,
 383 River St, Manistee MI

Follows three Indigenous women - an artist, an activist and a politician — as they work to vindicate and honor their relatives who are victims in the growing epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Panel Discussion After the Film Featuring:
 Native American activists organizing around this important issue and members of families seeking justice for their loved ones.



BRING HER HOME
 A TWIN CITIES PBS ORIGINAL

Presenting compelling voices of Native American filmmakers and speakers, MARJDI (www.marjdi.org), a fiscally sponsored program of the Manistee County Community Foundation, invites you to attend during national Native American Heritage Month.

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A Dark and Stormy Night

By Louisa Loveridge Gallas
 Freshwater Reporter Poet in Residence

It was a dark and stormy night, gale force winds, the kind where ghosts of shipwrecked sailors are gathering on the shore to share elegies of their own lives cut short by the fierce waters of Lake Michigan. From Frankfort to Arcadia, scattered bones of the Ida and Minnehaha shift and twist in the Lake's deep graveyard.

The ghosts could see soft lights within the villagers' homes. Safe. Warm. Blessed. Waves pound so furiously the sailors call out to hear each other. Their phantom voices reach the villagers with an eerie echo. Up in his kitchen, a sailor, one Buster Driftwood, rushes to his kitchen window. His wife, Bessie, is busy at the stove making her best dumplings for his favorite pot pie. Yet she'd paused to sit down with him for a chat.

"Bessie!" says Buster, "I swear I hear the wailing of the shipwrecked."

"O, Sweetheart, the storm does sound haunting!"

He rushes to give her a great hug.

"Why, Buster Driftwood, what a lovely gesture, and me with flour all over myself."

"I hear them, Bess, I do. Below on the shore!"

"O, Lord, Buster, their fear in great storms, the terror of drowning. It's just your imagination makes you suffer."

Buster feels deep in his soul a mysterious force. Puts on his heavy storm gear, immense high boots. Grasps his brightest lantern.

"Bessie, I've got to go down there." His face flushed. The familiar angle of his cheek flexing, urgent.

"My God, Buster, those winds are too powerful!"

Yet mad as it seems, she knows, Buster must go. She rises to open the door, glances back at the stove, turns to say good-bye.

He's vanished.

For solace, Bessie returns to the delicate task of a tasty crust.

Moving through the driving rain, Buster thinks of Bess, worrying herself to a frenzy as seamen's wives do, yet easing his special dinner into the oven, complete with dumplings! As if all will be well.

Should he return to her? Yet the rain seems graciously to open a pathway forward just for him to reach those voices on the shore.

Welcome, Brother!" they cry. "Come sit, tell us your story. What wreck took you?"

"Ay, Mates," Buster joins in, "A lowly vessel she was! The Destiny. Doomed we were. Swamped. O, how I struggled against the devilish dark waters, but those dreadful waves dragged me down!"

The storm rages yet does not break their ghostly circle.

Bessie stirs the peas, tender chicken, adds the dumplings, finishing touches on the crust; nearby, that photograph of Buster and her, back then, so fresh, he, in his gear going to sea. That final time he left, O, hadn't he given her a young man's hug, strong, full of passion. Their new life bursting with promise before them.

His body was never found.

Her so lonely tonight, surely, wasn't it a kindness he'd stopped by. Such a good chat!

She'll keep his dinner warm. Buster Driftwood, he knows how to handle darkness, and the storm.

Author

continued from Page 1

wish that all children had that place." She said author Gene Stratton-Porter, who wrote "Girl of the Limberlost", was an inspiration to her. Stratton-Porter, she explained, was a naturopath before it was a "thing".

"She inspired me to think of nature as a healing force. Someone else gave this summation: 'Communing with nature holds the key to moral goodness.'"

"I think I modeled Jenna after her," Duncan said of Stratton-Porter. "Self-reliance and the natural world can heal people. Science backs that up now. We've known that for a long time. (Being in nature) chemically changes us."

She said another influence was Jean Craighead George's "My Side of the Mountain". In it, a young boy escapes his large farm family and lives inside a tree trunk. He learns to become completely self-sufficient.

Readers ages 16-95 have read the book. Many told Duncan they couldn't put it down. "I've had a lot of different kinds of readers," Duncan said. "People who have had more life experiences can appreciate the book more. Some teens can't fathom (Jenna) doing this."

By "this," she means living on \$60 for an extended period of time and going without a cell phone. "Other kids who've had some life troubles, they get it," she added.

Duncan said she's had a lot of requests for a sequel and plans to begin writing it this month. People tell her they like Jenna's



Photo of Sylvia Duncan by Thomas Duncan.

character, and "they're all wishing the best for her." In the next book, Jenna will be 26.

"I created a person that people like," the author said. "That's important to me."

Duncan sent an email message to Freshwater Reporter after this interview to add: "My dream is for everyone to have just one place in their life where they can return in body and/or mind and find peace and comforting memories surrounding, grounding, and protecting them," she wrote. "Even if that moment is fleeting."

Find "My Escape to Loon Haven" at the Happy Owl Bookshop, 358 River St., in Manistee. To order copies for groups or request a presentation, email the author at: sylduncan@hotmail.com.

Pat Stinson is the co-editor of Freshwater Reporter. She fell in love with the movie "My Side of the Mountain" as a youngster and wanted to live in a treehouse, too.

Christmas CryptoQuote

A cryptoquote is a quotation that has been encrypted by substituting one letter for another.

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With its origins in Manistee and Detroit, it is the tale of a young boy who faces terror ... and finds the power of love.



A dramatic and absorbing tale of a historic storm.

– Kirkus Reviews

Berg has combined oral history, historical documents, and personal family story to bring into the light an overlooked but important historical moment – seen through the eyes of an alert and sensitive boy, Berg's own father. Read it with your kids!

– Anne-Marie Oomen, Next Generation Indie Award for Memoir and co-author of illustrated tale in poems, "The Lake Michigan Mermaid"

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Gifts from a Rescue Dog

Story and photo by **GORDON BERG**

Sydney had no right to be so sweet. We were told that when rescuers and officers raided the puppy-mill farm down south, they found her living in horribly squalid conditions. Her front teeth were worn down to nubs from years of trying to gnaw her way to freedom from the three-foot chain that held her captive. She was emaciated from having given every last bit of nourishment she had to her four pups. The owner of the mill was arrested and charged with animal cruelty.

But something even more miraculous happened during that early dawn raid. It was at that moment that Sydney first learned the kindness of adults. Selfless spirits whose hearts burned so strongly with passion that they would endanger their own lives to save Sydney and her offspring.

There were literally dozens of people who showered her with similar compassion. They bathed her and saw to her medical needs. They shaved her matted fur and helped rid her of fleas, parasites, and later, heartworm. They put the word out to a network of truckers who freely offered space in their cabs to transport her north to the Australian Shepherd Rescue in Michigan organization, (arim.org). A member of that group stepped up to foster all four dogs until a permanent home could be found. (One of Sydney's pups died shortly after being rescued.)

Every step along the way, she was given love. There is no more powerful salve than

pure love. And she returned that love in her own way. When any of those helping her leaned in close, she would spontaneously bump her nose to theirs. People called them nose bonks. Sydney gave them freely, and every one of 'em made people giggle.

When Sydney was put into our care, we were warned with a wink that she might bonk our noses. She did not disappoint. She did this to us the first time we met, to perfect strangers, and to children throughout the next nearly 10 years she lived with us.

Until she died. About four months ago.

We are still heartbroken.

But it's getting better. Slowly. Her loss is, of course, being replaced with memories. Those reflections make us smile. Sort of a series of brain bonks.

As time passes, I'm increasingly aware that these memories are her steadfast gifts to us. And they fill us up.

And there is more. At this time of year, as we pause to be thankful and express our gratitude with gift-giving, I am increasingly aware of the many life lessons she so generously gave us. But of them all,

Selfless spirits whose hearts burned so strongly with passion that they would endanger their own lives to save Sydney and her offspring.

the two we hold closest in our hearts are forgiveness and gratitude.

Forgiveness makes it possible for healing, hope and freedom to arise. Sydney lived in the here and now. The past was over. It was like she knew that hanging onto all that



Syd and Moosey.

pain, fear, and anxiety only served to cloud an otherwise bright future.

And that bright future glowed with gratitude. Sydney smiled. No, really. With her whole being, she smiled. From her eyes and ears all the way to her wiggetty, stubby tail.

In August, Sydney's health declined rapidly. As she lay on the floor, unable to move, she simply wanted us by her side. Neighbors dropped in to say goodbye. In

the evening, a vet came to our home to euthanize her. In her final moments, we surrounded Syd with everything she had come to love. Her toys. My wife. Me.

We knelt on the floor with our faces close to hers. We told her how much she

was loved and how grateful we were that she came to our home. A miracle. Even as life flowed out of her, her eyes expressed deep gratitude. Pure. Love.

One more thing. All the time Sydney lived with us, I thought it was my wife and I who were caring for her ... when really it was Sydney who was caring for us.

Bumper stickers for those who have a rescue dog ask a poignant question: "Who Rescued Who?"

The answer is simple. And our hearts are overflowing with the gifts she left behind.

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. harryandthehurricane.com

Area Events Calendar

TELL THEM YOU SAW IT IN FRESHWATER REPORTER!

To be included in our January/February edition, submit your announcements by January 14. Be sure to include the address where the event takes place. Email your events/press releases to: editor@freshwater-reporter.com. Always check with the venue before attending as some event dates may change or be canceled. Despite our best efforts, errors may occur. See our online calendar for updates: freshwater-reporter.com/calendar-2.

ONGOING EVENTS

Thru Dec 1

Nancy Debbink, Dennis Gordon, and Tim Wade Group Art Exhibition, Frankfort
Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Thru Dec 16

Small is Beautiful Miniature Art Exhibition, Ludington

Free. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

Thru Dec 30

Winter Market, Frankfort

Expansion of the Gift Shop at Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Road. Invited artists/juried works from 30+ local & regional artists/craftspeople: ornaments, wearable art, cards, jewelry, home decor, photos, prints, paintings and other holiday gifts. Hours: Tues-Sat, 10-4. Sun, 12-4. Closed Nov. 23-24 & Dec. 24-26.

Thru Jan 3

"Artful Winter Trees" Art Exhibition, Frankfort

Free. Upcycled/Recycled decorative trees (not live or synthetic—just "made from scratch" creations). Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Nov 24-Dec 11

Festival of Wreaths, Ludington

Silent auction fundraiser. Bid on artist-made wreaths on display at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Bidding is online at ludingtonartscenter.org.

Nov 26-Dec 31

Sparkle in the Park, Bear Lake

5-10pm, Free/donations gladly accepted. Drive through 50 or so Christmas displays with over 80,000 lights. Hopkins Park Campground, 7727 Hopkins Dr. (just off US-31).

Nov 29-Dec 16

120th Anniversary Project Exhibit, Manistee

Free. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Reception Sleighbell Weekend.

Dec 8-Jan 12

Winter Members Show, Frankfort

Free. Art Exhibit featuring OAC members. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

DAILY EVENTS

Nov 23

Community Thanksgiving Dinner, Frankfort

11am-1pm, Free. A holiday meal with all the fixings: dine in or takeout. Perks of Frankfort, 429 Main St. Info: Victoria Mekas 231.882.5144

Nov 24

Aglow on the Avenue Holiday Parade & Tree Lighting, Ludington

6pm, Free. Parade is followed by caroling, tree lighting, and Santa's visit in Legacy Plaza, 112 N. James St.

Full Cord Bluegrass in Concert, Ludington

7:30pm, \$20 ADV, \$25 @ door. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Tickets: ludingtonartscenter.org or at LACA.

Nov 25

Small Business Saturday. Shop small, shop locally.

29th Annual Holly Berry Arts & Crafts Fair, Frankfort

9am-3pm. Frankfort High School, 534 11th St.

Winter Craft Activity for Kids & Adults, Frankfort

10am-2pm. Drop by the Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd., for holiday music, hot chocolate and a fun winter craft activity held during the art center's Winter Market.

Nov 25,26

Live Music with Working On Famous & Twice Shy, Manistee

9pm-1am, Free. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy.

Nov 27

"Bring Her Home," Manistee

7pm. Free film at the Vogue Theatre, 383 River St. Part of the "Through A Native American Lens: A Film & Speaker Series" in observance of Native American Heritage Month. Follows three Indigenous women – an artist, an activist and a politician – as they work to vindicate and honor their relatives who are victims in the growing epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Panel discussion after the film with Native American activists and members of families seeking justice for their loved ones. Hosted by MARJDI (marjdi.org) with funds from the Manistee County Community Foundation.

Nov 28

Art Talk, Ludington

6pm, \$5 suggested donation. "Herstory: We've Always Been Here, Haven't We?" Presented by Rebecca Mott, MFA. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

Nov 30

Benzie District Readers Book Club Event, Zoom

12pm. Club pick: "Saving Arcadia" by local author Heather Shumaker. Discussion of this heartwarming, inspirational, conservation tale set in Northern Michigan. Register with the Benzie Conservation District at: benziecd.org, or email jessica@benziecd.org. Read the April 26, 2023, Freshwater Reporter story by Gordon Berg, "The Hearts That Saved the Arcadia Dunes."

Visit Santa for a Cause, Manistee

1-4:30pm. Bring a canned good or nonperishable item for Matthew 25:35 Food Pantry and get a visit with Santa. West Shore Bank, 306 Cypress St.

The Manistee Choral Society's 62nd annual Victorian Christmas Concert, Manistee

7pm. First Congregational Church, 412 Fourth St.

Dec 1-3

Victorian Sleighbell Weekend, Manistee

Info online at: manisteesleighbellparade.com/event-schedule or look for printed schedules around town.

Dec 1-3, 8-10

The Nutcracker Ballet, Manistee

Fri & Sat, 7:30pm. Sun 2pm. \$10-30. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Info/tickets: ramsdeltheatre.org

Dec 2

Jingle Bell Jog 5k, Manistee

5K Run/Walk to benefit the Manistee Area Public Schools Cross-Country program. The race begins and ends at The Tabernacle Manistee Campus, 77 Hancock St. Registration/info: runsignup.com.

Christmas at the Bottle House Museum, Kaleva

12-4pm, Free. At dusk, light the trees on Wuoksi Ave. & at the Bottle House, 14551 Wuoksi Ave. Hot chocolate served & a free gift for kids.

"The Haunting of Old Ebenezer", Manistee

2pm, \$15. An acoustic retelling of the classic Dickens tale. Part concert, part musical theatre, and all holiday cheer. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Info/tickets: ramsdeltheatre.org

Community Tree Lighting, Frankfort

6pm, Free. Rotary Park, 517 Main St.

Dec 2,3

WSSC Holiday Music Spectacular III, Scottville

Dec 2, 2pm & 8pm. Dec 3, 2pm. \$20-30. Center Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd. Tickets: www.westshore.edu/performing-arts

Dec 4

Holiday Parade & Activities, Scottville

Parade at 6:30pm beginning on W. Beryl St. ending on Main St. Activities on Main St. will follow including kids' crafts, pictures with Santa, cocoa, popcorn & cookies.

Dec 6

Rotary Club Annual Holiday Auction, Ludington

6-9pm, \$50. Includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, desserts, & cash bar at the Stearns Hotel Ballroom, 212 E. Ludington Ave. Auction proceeds will fund the STRIVE mentorship program for high school students. Tickets: one.bidpal.net/ludingtonrotary

Dec 7

Coffee with the Councilors, Ludington

5:30pm. Up to 3 Councilors from the City of Ludington will hold a coffee hour to allow residents to ask questions & air their concerns about city issues. Book Mark Café, 201 S. Rath Ave.

WSSC Jazz Ensemble I & II, Scottville

7:30pm, Free. Center Stage Theater, at West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd.

Dec 9

Christmas at the Bottle House Museum, Kaleva

12-4pm, Free. "KOKKO" bonfire & hot chocolate, sauna tours. 14551 Wuoksi Ave.

Metropolitan Opera Live/Encore in HD presents Florencia En El Amazonas (Daniel Catan), Manistee

1pm, \$25 adults, \$15 under 18. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Info/tickets: ramsdeltheatre.org

Lantern-lit Snowshoe, X-country skiing and/or hiking, Ludington

6-8pm, Free. Begins at the state park's Warming Shelter, next to the parking lot at the end of M-116. 40 pairs snowshoes avail. to borrow. Hot chocolate & marshmallow roasting at a campfire near the amphitheater. Mich. Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry.

Dec 10

Cartier Mansion Holiday Tour, Ludington

1-4pm, \$15 tickets avail. the day of the event at the mansion, 409 E. Ludington Ave. Carson the Butler to greet visitors & send them home with his fav homemade doggie treats. Tours of Cartier Mansion & The Ludington House Bed and Breakfast included. Proceeds benefit Mason County Mutts.

Dec 11

WSSC Wind Symphony & Drumline, Manistee

7:30pm, Free. Manistee High School auditorium, 525 12th St.

Dec 12

Art Talk, Ludington

6pm, \$5 suggested donation. "The Period Between the Wars" presented by Dr. Dan Connolly, Ph.D. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

Dec 14

Benzoncia Academy Lecture Series, Benzoncia

4pm, \$5 donation. "The Ukraine" presented by Brian McCall. First Congregational Church of Benzoncia, 901 Barber St. Info/Zoom link: benziemuseum.org or 231.882.5539

Dec 14-17

Manistee Civic Players present "Nuncrackers", Manistee

7:30pm 14-16, 2pm 16-17, \$10-30. A hilarious musical comedy. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Info/tickets: ramsdeltheatre.org

Dec 15

"The Haunting of Old Ebenezer," Frankfort

6:30 p.m. \$25 non members; \$20 OAC members. VIP: \$80/2 seats, members only. Part concert, part music theater. Tickets at: tickettailor.com or oliverartcenterfrankfort.org

Dec 16

Christmas at the Bottle House Museum, Kaleva

12-4pm, Free. Taste of Finland including Nissua (bread with cardamom), pannukukka (oven pancakes) & other Finnish treats. 14551 Wuoksi Ave.

Kids' Christmas Party, Irons

1-3pm. Kids can visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus, receive a gift, enjoy cookies & punch. Skinner Park Hall, 5074 W. 10 1/2 Mile Rd.

Terry Fator: A Very Terry Christmas, Manistee

8-10:30pm, \$60-75. Talented ventriloquist. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy. Tickets: lrcr.com.

Dec 17

Friends of Ludington State Park Guided Hike, Ludington

2pm, Free. Led by 2 volunteers & starting from the Warming Shelter. Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry.

Dec 19

WSSC Concert Choir, Scottville

7:30pm, Free. Center Stage Theater, at West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd.

Dec 21

Winter Solstice Candle Lighting, Kaleva

4pm, Free. Meet across from the Maple Grove Cemetery (corner of 9 Mile Rd. & Kaleva St.) for a short memorial service at dusk & lighting of 1,000 candles. Soup served afterward at Bethany Lutheran Church, 14575 Wuoksi Ave.

Dec 23

Christmas at the Bottle House Museum, Kaleva

12-4pm, Free. Santa Claus will have treats for kids. 14551 Wuoksi Ave.

Dec 31

New Year's Eve Ball Drop, Manistee

8pm-12am. Chopo's Northside Bar, 132 Monroe St.

New Year's Eve Ball Drop, Ludington

9pm. Live music, beer tent, lighted ball drop at midnight with fireworks to follow. Legacy Plaza, 110 N. James St.



FRESHWATER REPORTER

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

P.O. Box 188, Manistee, MI 49660 231-835-0867 editor@freshwater-reporter.com

Contributors: Gordon Berg, Valerie Chandler, Jennifer Devine, Brooke Edwards, Joshua Elie, Louisa Loveridge Gallas, Stewart McFerran.

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Graphic design/layout: Amy Hansen

Co-conspirator: Mark Videan

Advertising Sales: Pat Stinson