

FRESHWATER REPORTER

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

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Sept. 25 - Nov. 19, 2024 FREE

Meet local freshwater advocate Madison Dix

By STEWART A. MCFERRAN

The fish and all the creatures of the Great Lakes have an ally in Madison Dix. When not at work, she spent her spare moments this summer snorkeling in Lake Michigan and Bear Lake, where she spotted fish and fossils and made rainbows on the beach with brightly colored rocks. I wish she could have met my favorite fishes, the Coregonus species. But it may be too late for that. The chubs are mostly gone, as are the blackfin, and the whitefish are in decline.

Making of an advocate

Madison left her science communication job at the New England Aquarium in Boston this spring to return to Michigan to advocate for underwater creatures and the lakes that support them. "This is my favorite place on earth, and it's really threatened right now," she explained. It was at the aquarium that she said she "got the bug as far as climate communication and advocacy for protecting freshwater."

Her advocacy took her to Cincinnati in March, where she joined a group of demonstrators organized by the nonprofit Oil and Water Don't Mix. The group was protesting the move of the Line 5 oil pipeline case from state jurisdiction to federal court. Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel testified at the hearing and spoke to the demonstrators. (The move was struck down, keeping the case in the Michigan court system.)

In August, Madison wrote a letter and sent copies to the editors of area publications about the importance of freshwater and the threat of a Line 5 oil pipeline spill. In her



Above: Madison Dix. Courtesy photo. Right: The Dix family's Bear Lake screened house.

letter, sent to this publication in August, she wrote: "Did you know that every drop of water you've touched has been part of the Great Lakes? The water in your morning coffee, your ice-cold beer, your evening glass of wine, the juiciness in a steak, and the nectar that bursts from the first bite of a ripe peach — every drop. We never get "new" water, it just keeps traveling and changing form." She went on to write that "the pipeline is most vulnerable in the Straits of Mackinac, where a spill would send oil gushing into some of the fastest-moving currents in the world ... Even in the best-case clean-up scenario, we can only hope to recover 30% of what we lose."

Going with the flow

Madison's love of freshwater runs in her family. Born in Cadillac 30 years ago, she said her parents were avid windsurfers in their day. They founded a club in Cadillac called The Society for Insane Board Sailors, and her dad once owned Crystal Lake Sailboards in Beulah. She said her family moved frequently around the Midwest but spent every summer in Bear Lake. "My

parents bought a greenhouse there in the 1980s, and that's where I currently live," she explained. "It's the most consistent home I've had throughout my life, and my favorite place I've ever lived."

She said she has always been "super obsessed" with underwater creatures. "Mostly what you see in Lake Michigan when you are snorkeling is gobies and alewives," she said, adding, "I love looking a fish in the eye. It's just fun!" She is still snorkeling as the leaves turn color. "We will see how much longer I can do it without getting hypothermia," she said with a laugh.

Rallying citizens for action

As the Lakes are cooling this fall, the planet is warming, and Madison is extremely concerned about the havoc she sees in our

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James Earl Jones: The roles our writers like best

By PAT STINSON

Editor's note: When we assigned our contributing writers the task of writing 150 words about their favorite James Earl Jones' story or movie role, we were advised by several of them that they had much more to say about the man, that we weren't doing him justice. In order to do that, we would need to publish a 12-page newspaper, our goal for next year. With reader donations and advertising support from local businesses, we can make this happen. What say you?

Growing up, I always heard about James Earl Jones, more often than the average household. My grandma Margaret Chandler grew up with him, and they were in the same class. Later, my dad went to school with his cousins.

I've always enjoyed his supporting role as Mr. Mertle in "The Sandlot" because his character was humble, just as he was in real life.

He was one of America's greatest voices that commanded attention and put Manistee County on the map. Graduating from Dickson Rural Agricultural School (now Kaleva Norman Dickson School), he showed us that, with enough determination, anyone can become whatever they want in life. I am proud to have graduated from the

same school and share that connection to him.

The little town of Brethren will never forget the voice of Darth Vader in "Star Wars" and Mufasa in "The Lion King". On Oct. 14, 2023, the Arts and Culture Alliance of Manistee County memorialized the actor with a life-sized statue and plaque in front of Brethren High School. May he be the inspiration for another Hollywood star with small-town roots.

— Valerie Chandler, Wellston

In my earlier days, I remember hearing the iconic, deep, rumbling voice of James Earl Jones. I don't remember most of the roles he played, but that voice always had a soul-

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Area Events

ONGOING EVENTS

Thursdays

Elberta Farmers Market

8am-12pm, Thru Oct 3. Dudley Penfold Memorial Marina Park, corner of M-22 & M-168.

Bear Lake Community Market

3-7pm, Thru Oct 31. Corner of US-31 & Lynn St. (across from Filer Credit Union)

Saturdays

Frankfort Farmers Market

9am-1pm, Thru Oct 19. Open Space Park, 832 Main St.

Manistee Farmers Market

9am-12pm, Thru Oct 7. Wagoner Community Center, 260 St. Mary S. Pkwy.

Scottville Farmers Market

9am-12pm, Thru Oct 26. Miller's Marketplace, 202 N. Main St.

Thru Sep 28

LACA Member Art Exhibition, Ludington

Free. 2D & 3D works by LACA members. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

Thru Oct 4

Hooked: The Art of Fishing Art Exhibition, Frankfort

Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Thru Oct 18

Creative Kaleidoscope: Annual Juried Art Exhibition, Frankfort

Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Artist talk Oct. 18, 4-6pm.

Thru Oct 19

Chani Devers & Ellie Harold Art Exhibition, Manistee

Free. 7 days/week, Noon-3pm. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St.

Manhattan Short Film Festival, Ludington

Sept 26, 7pm. Sept 27, 1pm. Sept 28, 11:30am. Oct 1, 1pm. Oct 2, 4:30pm. \$10. Ten films shown. Filmgoers will vote for their favorite film & actor. Results from across the country will be sent to NYC festival headquarters to determine winners. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Tickets: www.oliverartscenter.org or at LACA.

Thru Oct 26

Relatives You Didn't Know You Had Art Exhibition, Ludington

Free. Solo works by Jane Rosemont. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

Thru Oct 31

Birds Fly In: A Human Refuge, Manistee

Free. 7 days/week. Noon-3pm. An international collaborative art installation featuring art, music & poetry. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St.

Thru Jan 3

Fall Art Show, Arcadia

Free. Pleasant Valley Community Center, 3586 Glovers Lake Rd.

Sept 30-Oct 5

Frankfort Beer Week, Frankfort

Celebrate Michigan's craft brews all week at various locations in Frankfort & Elberta.

Oct 4-26

Ken Cooper's Scottville Unframed, Ludington

Free. Solo art exhibition. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Opening reception October 4, 5-8pm.

Oct 11-Nov 8

Transfiguration: The Art of Upcycling Art Exhibition, Frankfort

Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

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Dedication last year of a statue of James Earl Jones. Photo: Valerie Chandler

Area Events Calendar

TELL THEM YOU SAW IT IN FRESHWATER REPORTER!

To be included in our November 20 edition, submit your announcements by November 9. Be sure to include the address where the event takes place, for visiting readers. Email your events/press releases to: editor@freshwater-reporter.com. Email any time for our online calendar. Always check with the venue before attending as some event dates may change or be canceled. Despite our best efforts, errors may occur.

Disney's Beauty & the Beast: The Broadway Musical, Scottville

Oct. 24-26, Nov. 1-2, 8-9 7:30pm. **Oct. 26-27, Nov. 2-3, 9-10** 2pm. \$20-30. Center Stage Theater, West Shore Community College, 3000 N. Stiles Rd. Tickets: www.westshore.edu/performing-arts/

Oct 25-Nov 30

Resonance and Rhythm Art Exhibition, Frankfort

Free. Art works by Christy DeHoog, Jon DeHoog, Michelle Newman & Joan Richmond. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Opening reception Oct. 25, 5-7pm.

Nov 1-16

Regional High School Art Exhibit, Ludington At Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison. Artists reception Sat., 11/2, 11am-2pm.

Nov 1-Jan 31

Small is Beautiful Miniature Art Exhibition, Ludington

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

Nov 9-Dec 23

Winter Artisans Market, Frankfort

Unique handmade gifts from regional artisans. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

DAILY EVENTS

September 25

Food Bank Distribution, Manistee

11am. Free. No I. D. or proof of income required. First Baptist Church, 1201 Lakeshore Rd.

Blessing of the Animals, Free Soil

1pm. Free. Silent auction, games, blessing. Public invited with their pets of all kinds. Circle Rocking S Farm, 5487 N. Tuttle Rd. Info: circlerockingsfarm.org

September 26

Walk of Hope (sponsored by West Michigan Community Mental Health), Ludington

2:30-4:30pm. Free. Raise awareness of suicide prevention. Promote mental health & wellbeing. Wear purple/teal. Meet at West Mich. Community Mental Health, 920 Diana St., and walk 1 mile to Mason Co. Court House.

Celebration of Raindrops Artwork, Thompsonville

5 p.m. Dress in rainbow/rain-themed outfits. Light refreshments. Collaborative community project offers everyone a hands-on chance to explore climate change, water usage & enviro issues. Michigan Legacy Art Park, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr.

Solar 101: Intro to Solar Energy Workshop, Kaleva

5:30-6:30pm. Free. Presenter Allan O'Shea, CBS Solar. Learn about solar systems, how they work/advantages. Maple Grove Township Community Center, 9208 Kauko St. Must register: www.manisteeed2.org/events

September 27

LACA Art Supply Yard Sale, Ludington

12-3pm. New & used art & craft supplies, frames. All sales benefit LACA programming. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

The Venue Concerts: Taproot with special guest Hed Pe, Cadillac

7pm. \$30. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

Hyemin Kim, Pianist in Concert, Manistee

7:30pm. \$25. A faculty member of Interlochen Arts Academy, Dr. Kim will perform. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

September 28

5th Annual Rally for our Rights, Ludington

11am-3pm. Free. Rain or shine. Rally for threatened rights: women's, reproductive, LGBTQ, voting, reading, freedom from violence. Live music, speakers, signmaking, refreshments, kids' activities, resources, voter regis. Group march at 2pm from Rotary Park, 525 W. Ludington Ave., to Mason Co. Courthouse.

Octoberfest, Ludington

1-6pm. Annual fall festival with Michigan beer, live music & family-friendly activities. Legacy Plaza, 150 N. James St.

Craft Beer Festival, Cadillac

2-9pm. \$30-80. \$10 designated driver. Numerous breweries. Live music: Raylin Vance 3:30-5pm, Jesse Ray & the Carolina Catfish 5:30-7pm, The Insiders: A Tribute to Tom Petty 7:30-9pm.

A Full Tilt Comedy Show, Frankfort

3pm. \$15 adults, \$5 kids. Tilt Think Comedy Collective (TTCC). All-ages variety comedy show. Improv games, sketch comedy, musical improv, stand-up, song parody. Garden Theater, 301 Main St. Tickets: gardentheater.org

Art Talk with Oil Painter Sonia Vasquez, Ludington

6pm. \$5 suggested donation. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

October 1

Native Plug Planting at Arcadia Grassland, Arcadia

9:45am. Free. Volunteer to help Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy plant native plants. All materials supplied. Learn all you need to know. No prior experience. Family activity with some digging/kneeling. No restrooms or water avail. Dress for weather. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Bring a reusable water bottle, snacks, sunscreen & bug spray. Meet at the Grassland parking area on Keillor Rd. north of Glovers Lake Rd. Registration appreciated. Map & registration: gtrlc.org

Special Needs Halloween Costume, Hayride & Potluck, Free Soil

4pm. Limited to 21 participants. Bring treats & a dish to pass. Wheelchairs welcome. Circle Rocking S Farm, 5487 N. Tuttle Rd. **Must RSVP by Sept 27:** 231.462.3732 or circlerockingsfarm@att.net

October 2

Workday at Lower Woodcock Lake, Lake Ann

9:45am. Free. Help maintain the trail & remove invasive plants. Materials supplied. No prior experience. Hike up to 2 miles/use hand tools. No restrooms, no water avail. Dress for weather. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Bring work gloves, reusable water bottle, snacks, sunscreen, bug spray. Meet between Bowers & Hooker rds. at the Burnt Mill Rd parking area. Map/Registration: gtrlc.org

October 3

The Venue Concerts: Alex Williams with special guest Tyler Roy, Cadillac

7pm. \$10. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

October 4

The Venue Concerts: Petey Pablo, Cadillac

8pm. \$40. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

October 5

Rusty Fish Bicycle Races & Marathon, Manistee

8am-all day. Multiple races all start/finish at Manistee VFW Walsh Post 4499. Info/registration: rustyfish100.com

Walk to End Alzheimer's, Ludington

9am-12pm. Waterfront Park, 300 S William Street

Fall Festival, Beulah

10am-5pm. Downtown Beulah Village Park. Info: clcba.org

Onkama Fall Festival, Onkama

Free. Family-friendly event featuring scarecrows, hayrides, pumpkin decorating. Onkama Village Park

Cider & Sweaters, Onkama

Porch party at Patina, 4850 Main St., during the Onkama Fall Fest, and the debut of Alicia Barnaby's Skelly Collection.

Metropolitan Opera Live/Encore in HD presents Les Contes D'Hoffmann (Offenbach), Manistee

1pm, \$15-25. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

October 6

Zombie Disc Golf Tournament, Beulah

12-4pm. 2-person team scramble. Open to all. Costumes encouraged, not required. Prizes for closest to pin, longest drive, etc. Raffles. Regis. begins noon. 1pm Shotgun start. St. Ambrose Cellars, 841 S. Pioneer Rd.

Benzie Area Symphony Orchestra Concert, Benzonia

4pm. Special guest Patrick Owen, cello. Benzie Central High School Auditorium, 9222 Homestead Rd.

October 8

Native Plug Planting at Arcadia Marsh, Arcadia

9:45am. Free. Volunteer to help Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy plant native plants. All materials supplied. Learn all you need to know. No prior experience. Family activity with some digging/kneeling. No restrooms or water avail. Dress for weather. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes.

Bring a reusable water bottle, snacks, sunscreen & bug spray. Meet at the Grassland parking area on Keillor Rd. north of Glovers Lake Rd. Registration appreciated. Map & registration: gtrlc.org

October 10

Paths of Fate: Stories of Sacrifice, Benzonia

4pm. Part of the Benzonia Academy Lecture Series by the Benzie Historical Society. Local historian/author Steven Veatch. Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave.

October 10-12

Frankfort Fall Festival, Frankfort

Thurs & Fri, 5-10pm. Sat 10am-10pm. Carnival, art & craft fair, cornhole tournament, music, beer tent, food truck, rides, parade, pie eating contest, kid's games, Scottville Clown Band, giant pumpkin drop & more.

October 11

Michigan State University Bebop Spartans in Concert, Ludington

7:30pm. \$20-25. Jazz big band playing improvisations, bebop, swing, blues, & soul. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Tickets: www.westshore.edu/performing-arts/

The Venue Concerts: The Verve Pipe, Cadillac

8pm. \$30. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

Daughtry in concert, Manistee

9-10:30pm. \$100-145. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy. Tickets: lrcr.com

October 12

Stream Monitoring Program, Bear Lake

9am-2pm. Help collect macroinvertebrates from rivers/streams. Short instruction, gear/locations given to teams. Bring waders or some will be provided. Manistee Conservation District, 8840 Chippewa Hwy (US-31).

Guided Birdwatching Hike, Thompsonville

10-11:30am. Art Park admission: \$10 adults, \$5 kids over 5 or \$20 for families. Led by Angie Quinn. Meet at Mich. Legacy Art Park Trailhead, ¼ mile from parking area, rain or shine. Bring binoculars if available. Check Facebook 1 hour prior for severe weather cancellation. Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr.

Chief Day 2024, Kaleva

12-10pm. Parade, cider & donuts, food trucks, car show & more. Live music featuring Great Lakes Brass, Ted Bounty, The Handstanders & Seth Bernard. Northern Natural Cider House & Winery, 7220 Chief Rd.

Oktoberfest at St. Ambrose, Beulah

12-10pm. Special German beers on tap, farm-to-table locally sourced pig roast feast, official Steinhilfing competition, live music @ 5pm with Billy & the Kid. St. Ambrose Cellars, 841 S. Pioneer Rd.

Groundwork's Fall Fling, Frankfort

2-6pm. Fundraiser for Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities at Stormcloud Brewing Parkview Taproom, 366 Parkview Ln. Music, taco truck. 50% of beverage proceeds donated to Groundwork. RSVP: groundworkcenter.org/events

Brass Queens in Concert, Ludington

6:30pm Doors, 7pm concert. \$30 ADV, \$35 Door. Cash bar avail. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St. Tickets: ludingtonartscenter.org or 231.845.2787

Pumpkins in the Park, Ludington

7-8:30pm. Cartier Park walkway loop, 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr.

October 15

Native Plug Planting at Abby's Woods, Arcadia

9:45am. Free. Volunteer to help Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy plant native plants. All materials supplied. Learn all you need to know. No prior experience. Family activity with some digging/kneeling. No restrooms or water avail. Dress for weather. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Bring a reusable water bottle, snacks, sunscreen & bug spray. Meet at Grassland parking area on Keillor Rd. north of Glovers Lake Rd. Registration appreciated. Map & registration: gtrlc.org

Seed Collection at Arcadia Grassland, Arcadia

1pm. Free. Help GTRLC collect native seeds. All materials supplied. No prior experience. Family-friendly. Some uneven terrain. No restrooms or water avail. Dress for weather. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Bring reusable h2o bottle, snacks, sunscreen & bug spray. Meet at Grassland parking area, Keillor Rd. north of Glovers Lake Rd. Map & registration: gtrlc.org

October 16

NWS presents Shelby Van Pelt, author of "Remarkably Bright Creatures", Traverse City 7pm. Tickets: nationalwritersseries.org

October 19

Metropolitan Opera Live/Encore in HD presents Grounded (Tesori/Brant), Manistee

1pm, \$15-25. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

Ben Traverse & Nick Veine in concert, Manistee

7:30. \$25. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

Here Come the Mummies in concert, Manistee

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

October 19, 20

Ephemera Show: For the Art of Love and Paper, Benzonia

Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave.

October 23

Food Bank Distribution, Manistee

11am. Free. No I. D. or proof of income required. First Baptist Church, 1201 Lakeshore Rd.

October 25

Poetry with Daniel Behring, Onkama

Gather to hear some creative verse at Patina, 4850 Main St. Time TBD. Follow Patina on Facebook/Instagram.

October 26

Run for your Lives 5k/10k, Ludington

9am-12pm. Packet pickup & late registration is from 7:30-8:45am. Participants are encouraged to dress in costumes. Legacy Plaza, 150 N James St. Info/register: runludington.com

Downtown Halloween, Ludington

2-4pm. Trick or treating, games & activities for kids. Downtown Ludington, 100 Ludington Ave.

Pines of Arcadia Halloween Party, Arcadia

7pm. All are welcome. Show your holiday spirit and don a costume. Music by Jake Allen & TJ Rankin. Look for the POA sign at the west end of Bischoff Road, north of Arcadia Bluffs.

October 28

Reproductive Freedom Event, Ludington

11am-3pm. Fund raiser & information. Rotary Park (City Park), 500 W Ludington Ave.

November 1

The Venue Concerts: Thunderstruck, a tribute to AC/DC, Cadillac

8pm. \$20. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

November 2

Parmalee in concert, Manistee

8-10:30. \$50-80. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy. Tickets: lrcr.com

The Venue Concerts: Armageddon, Rock of Love & Rat Trap, Cadillac

8pm. \$20. Three bands in tribute to Def Leppard, Poison & Ratt. The Venue Event Center, 902 W 13th St. Tickets: thevenueeccadillac.com

November 8

Thornetta Davis in concert, Manistee

7:30pm. \$15-50. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

November 9

Guided Birdwatching Hike, Thompsonville

10-11:30am. Mich. Legacy Art Park: \$10 adults, \$5 kids over 5, \$20 families. Meet Angie Quinn at trailhead, ¼ mile from parking area, rain or shine. Bring binocs if avail. Check Facebook 1 hour prior for weather cancellation. 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr.

November 13

Food Bank Distribution, Manistee

11am. Free. No I. D. or proof of income required. First Baptist Church, 1201 Lakeshore Rd.

November 16

The Bewitching Bluejay, Onkama

A pop-up of vintage clothing collected by Morgan Kelsey. At Patina, 4850 Main St. Time TBD. Follow Patina on Facebook/Instagram.

Australia's Thunder From Down Under Untamed Tour, Manistee

8-10:30pm. \$25-45. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy. Tickets: lrcr.com

FRESHWATER REPORTER
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An Iowa Hawkeye on the Michigan Coast

By **DON HANSEN**

Moving to Ludington, Michigan has been a dream come true for my wife and me. Beautiful lakes, abundant wildlife, and lots of great people who have made us feel welcome and comfortable. To name a few, the employees at Larsen's Ace Hardware, the Book Mark, Brand's Auto, Watson Jeep, U Win Motorcycles, and Hoot and Honey in Manistee have all been gracious and understanding to a couple of former "fudgies" who now call Michigan home. This is a great place to live, with many wonderful people and businesses. This is home.



Don Hansen with Larsen Girls corn sold by The Roadside, Kistlercrest Farms. Photo: Jane Hansen.

What surprised me most is how fast and how much it has felt like home. Part of the reason happens to be one of my favorite pastimes, the acquisition of food! We love to eat, so the remainder of this article will describe some discoveries which impressed this Hawkeye transplant.

One of our first new experiences was the pizza at Mancino's and Chuck Wagon. Great pies with tasty crusts, sauce and toppings. The best? It's a toss up for me. When I get hungry for pizza these are my picks. Coffee is next and I choose the handiwork of the Book Mark's baristas, hands down. Great coffee, lattes, frappés, and smoothies as well as pastries that would make any bakery jealous. For breakfast or a break, the Book Mark is my place.

The Ludington area has so many great restaurants; it is difficult to name them all, but some do stand out. Brenda's, Jamesport Brewing, House of Flavors and the Ludington Meat Market are just a few of our favorites. If you haven't had fried fish or chicken at the Northside Market, you are in for a treat. Jeff's Fried Chicken (JFC) is a definite go-to.

Of course, area supermarkets stock abundant groceries, yet the local roadside markets really appeal to us. Fresh produce can't be beat, and we try to stop at every one we see. It seems like every Michigan burg has at least one, which puts Iowa to shame. They are few and far between in Iowa, while towns like Ludington have two or three in their proximity. Fresh produce is everywhere! Our recent shopping sprees have taken us to Kistlercrest Farms-The Roadside, 4049 S. Pere Marquette Highway and The Market at Stiles and US Highway 10. Good stuff at each.

Ironically, we recently bought 12 ears of corn at The Roadside with the intention of comparing it to Iowa corn. We were assured it would be good, yet would it pass a Hawkeye's tastebud test? We were skeptical, and being from the Tall Corn State we wanted to have bragging rights. But, lo and behold, we experienced one of our biggest cultural shocks yet. The corn from The Roadside was as good as

or better than my recollection of Iowa corn. Blasphemy! Or not. It was absolutely delicious. I think I made their day when I called them to give them my findings. Peaches from The Roadside — another hit. (Juicy and sweet.) They were batting a thousand, and with their eggplant I made my best Eggplant Parmesan ever. No fooling. Out of the park. We can't wait for the pies and other goodies we will make from their apples.

Closer to home are others growing fresh produce. Our neighbor has green peppers, cucumbers, corn, berries, squash and more. Couturiers Blueberry farm is nearby, with fresh, packaged berries, or you can pick your own. On Hansen Road (no relation that I know) past the nursery is a strawberry farm where you can do the same. We live in a Garden of Eden! (Clothing required, of course.)

Given these culinary resources, it's going to be tough to maintain a healthy A1C, but all things considered, I am really enjoying the perks of being a Michigander. A true test of my Michigan spirit will be this fall, when college football starts. Will I root for the Hawkeyes or any one of Michigan's great teams? To avoid being conflicted, I might just punt and root for Notre Dame. "Go Irish!"

Don Hansen lives in Ludington and is the author of four books: "Meg and the Manistee Christmas", "Meg and the Konkreet Krockadile", "There's a Booger in my Book!" and "Seven Who Served". They are available at Hoot and Honey bookstore in Manistee and the Book Mark in Ludington (and on Amazon).

New Children's Story by Local Author
Don Hansen

"Hansen's children's stories are delightful treasures... skillfully crafted to encourage a love of reading... weaving adventure and whimsy...a wonderful addition to any child's bookshelf!" ~Christian S.

Meg and the Manistee Christmas
 Don Hansen
 Illustrated by Leah Yoder

Available at the **Book Mark, Ludington** and **Hoot & Honey, Manistee**. Also on Amazon.

West Michigan **WCMH**

JOIN US FOR A WALK OF HOPE

Walk of Hope is an event to:
 Raise awareness about suicide prevention
 Promote mental health and wellbeing
 Share resources

Please join us for this **FREE** community event to raise awareness, promote hope and healing, and break the stigma around suicide! Open to the public!

WHEN: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

- 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM Registration, conversation, sign making
- 3:30 PM Welcome and send off
- 3:30 PM - 4:00PM 1 mile walk to Mason County Courthouse
- 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM Rally: Speakers including survivor story & moment of silence in remembrance

WHERE: Meet at WCMH, 920 Diana St., Ludington, MI

WHAT: 1 mile walk to Mason County Courthouse

*Event will move to Ludington Area Center for the Arts in case of rain.

WEAR PURPLE OR TEAL TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Transportation available with advance arrangements made with your WCMH care team or request assistance on your registration form.

QUESTIONS? Contact Lori Schummer at 1-800-992-2061

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QUESTIONS?? INFORMATION@ONEKAMA.INFO

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Food for thought: ‘Someday’

By JOSHUA ELIE

Isn't it strange how friends or family, even ones that you are close to, can just disappear? Maybe after graduation, a job/career change or a wedding. It's not that you never thought about them, wondered what they ended up doing in life or even told yourself, "Someday, I'm going to track them down and see what they have been up to." You just never seem to get around to it.



Joel Smalley, 1977-2024.

I can't really remember when I met Joel Daniel Smalley or when I saw him last, but I do remember we were inseparable for three years. We found ourselves trapped in a rather domineering, I would even say cultish, junior high/high school. I picked up guitar, he picked up bass, and when we weren't sneaking off to dances and other places we weren't supposed to be, we would skate (skateboard), often in places we were also not supposed to be. And we would sing songs like, "If I die before I wake, at least in heaven I can skate, 'cause right now on Earth I can't do jack, without the man upon my back..."

One time, a vanful of us drove to the Traverse City skate park. Back then it was just a big parking lot with a bunch of small ramps, small enough we could move around if we wanted to, and a big ramp that was actually two ramps back-to-back, one 6 feet tall and the other 10 feet tall. We were all rolling back and forth, side to side on the big ramps, seeing how high we could get as Joel taunted us, calling us all "posers" (fake skaters) because we wouldn't drop in from the top. He raced up the steps to the top of the 6-footer and stood there looking not quite so bold as he did on the ground, but now he had to do it. He had everyone's attention in the entire park, all of us heckling/cheering (same thing) him on. Here came the moment we had been dreaming about for months, and with nowhere to go but down, he set up, leaned forward ...

Now, skate ramps were a relatively new concept (especially up north) then. They were built using plywood, and plywood has a way of buckling and peeling when left out in the weather, and these ramps had been left out for years. With a shout, Joel roared

down, the skateboard shot out from under him, and his butt went for a skid on the gnarly wood. Instantly he was back on his feet, jumping up and down, doing some sort of "frog dance." Those of us closest to him noticed a giant splinter, at least a foot long, sticking out of his left butt cheek! Was there any concern that he might really be hurt, any guilt or remorse about not letting him back out of the situation ... or even a shred of compassion? I tell you there was not a dry eye in the park, but not because of any of those things. Even the onlooking parents were howling with laughter.

Of course, the jovial ribbing would continue in school, but Joel, always leading the insult and prank score, was never to be outdone. He decided to start a new butt-joke game called "pantsing" (pulling down someone's pants/underpants without their permission). This was hardly a new concept in the world, but it was in a private school so cultish that students were not allowed to participate in "worldly" things such as dances, most movies/TV shows, or music that was not approved by the school board. To us students, this was a novelty. I didn't want to have anything to do with it; I didn't want to have anything to do with anything there. I just wanted to do my "time" and get out, but much to the chagrin of the faculty and school board, this form of prank became surprisingly popular.

On the last day of school, my junior and Joel's sophomore year, we had a field trip to Manistee's 1st Street beach. A few of us left the rest of the group (as usual) and walked a little way down the coastline to a dune I had been to many times. I was there in early August this year, and you can still see where it used to be, only there is some

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fencing up and weeds growing where a tall dune with a cliff on top used to be. Anyway, I was showing everyone how to jump off the cliff and tumble down the sandy slope. Joel shouted to a couple of the girls walking along the coast below. They looked up and the next thing I knew my swim trunks were on the ground. One of the girls' dads was on the school board, so with one swift yank of the shorts, we were granted freedom. That is, I was expelled for being "exposed," Joel was expelled for "exposing" me, and three more guys were granted the same freedom just for being there.

After that, we all went our separate ways. I never did take the time to catch up with Joel. I knew where he was working, and it would have been easy for me to pop in for a beer. I got an email from a mutual friend of ours in August telling me that Joel had passed on.

Life is a busy thing, sometimes overwhelming us with stuff to do. With the holidays approaching, you have a perfectly good excuse to catch up with someone you haven't seen in a while. Isn't that what holidays are for, spending time with friends and family? Don't wait for a "someday" that may never come.


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

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MI BACKYARD

Autumn: The five things I love about you

By **EMILY COOK**

Michigan has many months of magic, and typically I can find aspects of each season to appreciate. January has bluebird skies and deep snow, when winter cooperates. The arrival of spring ephemerals in April and May (Read Cook's "Watch for Spring Ephemerals" online at Freshwater-Reporter.com, April 2023) mark the shift to a new season and light up the woods with color. The long hours of sunlight in summer allow for endless outdoor adventures, something even this cold-loving Scandinavian can support.

Autumn, however, is a season unmatched. The best offerings of summer seamlessly transition into September and October. One day, Lake Michigan is still warm enough for comfortable swimming; a few weeks later, the region's trees put on nature's greatest fireworks show as leaves change color. Gardens are still providing blooms and food, and wildlife is abundant as some begin (or complete) their migrations.

As northern Michigan residents and visitors, we have much to look forward to. The list of plants, animals, landscapes, and experiences is far too long for this space. That said, the following are five of my favorite things.



Goldenrod and aster are a fall garden highlight. Photo: Shelly Stusick

1

The combination of goldenrod and aster. No autumn landscape is complete without the yellows of goldenrod and purple-blues of aster. Blooming simultaneously and often in the same landscape, they provide a sight that is quintessentially, "Midwest Fall." There are multiple native varieties of both plants that give almost any yard

a boost, regardless of whether you have sun or shade. Also, don't blame goldenrod for your allergies. Its pollen is too heavy and sticky to be moved by the wind and must rely on our amazing pollinators for transport. Ragweed is the true culprit.

2

Migration season.

September and October provide amazing opportunities to see wildlife as they depart for their wintering grounds. Look to the skies to see large flocks of geese and ducks returning south to warmer climates. Alternatively, pay attention to returning species, primarily birds, that prefer northern Michigan's winters. It's always exciting to spot the first dark-eyed junco of the season as they favor Canada's cooler environment for nesting. The return of these cold-loving animals are a big indication of shifting seasons.



The bright yellow needles of a tamarack tree. Photo: Shelly Stusick

3

The tamarack tree.

Also known as the American Larch, the tamarack is unquestionably my favorite tree, partly because of its fall colors. Unlike other conifers, tamaracks are also deciduous, meaning they lose their needles in the fall. First, however, they transform from a subdued green to a vibrant yellow, illuminating forests that typically remain dark with evergreens. While it prefers wet soils, it can tolerate other areas as long as there is some consistent moisture, and I can attest they happily grow in my sandy Arcadia soils. I immediately planted two when I had my own home. Another perk

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of the tamarack? Their needles are delicate and soft, with stems featuring small purple pine cones in the spring.

4

Moody skies.

While sunlight hours may be dwindling in September and October, the opportunities for stunning landscape views are never better. As it gets colder (and sometimes rainier), more cloud cover arrives and with it stark contrasts between the vibrant and colorful world at ground level and the skies above. Photographers descend on the area for good reason. Again, maybe it's in my blood, but there is almost nothing better than an autumn day that threatens to rain.



Joe and Finn. Photo: Emily Cook

5

An excuse to slow down.

I once read of a woman who used the fall equinox as her "New Year" rather than January 1st. She realized, apart from humans, most animals were preparing to hunker down and ease into the months ahead. Of course, for them it is instinctual and without choice, but certainly we can all take note of this effort and work to incorporate it into our own lives. The days will get shorter and darker. What a great opportunity to reset and prepare for an entirely new season.



Moody skies above Lake Michigan in October. Photo: Emily Cook

Emily Cook is a resident of Arcadia, where she lives with her husband and two collies. She is a conservationist by training and a writer and artist when the time allows. She explores the nearby nature trails and Lake Michigan beach as much as possible.

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KALEVA NEWS

The Log Cabin
By **CYNTHIA ASIALA**

This is the 25th anniversary of a new life for the old Log Cabin at the corner of Panu and Walta streets.

In 1908, Karl and Johanna Asiala and four children came to Kaleva from Chicago. They were lured, as many Finns were, by the Siirtolainen, or Immigrant, a newspaper that was sent to Finland, the eastern and western U.S. and the Upper Peninsula. The Asialas rented the Paavola cabin, a 12x16 log cabin with a loft for sleeping, located along Cedar Creek south of Nine Mile Road. They lived there for two years while their house was being built a few miles down Wilson Road. The family moved to their house, and the cabin might have been forgotten, since the Siiltanen family moved it and enclosed it as a part of their home.

In the 1970s, the cabin was uncovered and purchased by the town mayor's wife. Richard and Leon Asiala heard from their uncle that their family had lived there once, and they decided to take possession of it in 1979. They moved it to their summer home, the Ponderosa. Again, the cabin sat for many years. During this time, it was not protected

from the elements and it greatly deteriorated.

In 1998, the Asiala boys decided to give the cabin to the Kaleva Norman Dickson Service Learning Class to restore. It was moved again, this time to a lot in Kaleva provided by the village council. The students tore the cabin apart, replaced rotten logs, chinked the cracks, cut the cedar shakes and rebuilt the cabin during a two-year period under the direction of Doyle Eckhardt.

The students heard that in Finland old buildings were often used as venues for concerts and plays. So, they constructed a deck, and a committee of local volunteers was tasked with making the music happen. Concerts were held on Friday evenings in August beginning in 1999 and have continued ever since.



Why Does My Dog Flee Twilight?
twilight: the time between light and dark


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

Our dog, Ella Rose was hoarded and neglected outside day and night in Copemish until taken by the sheriff to Manistee's shelter where we rescued her.

Come, my friends, walk with me and Ella Rose on our early evening stroll. As the sun surrenders, do you see how Ella Rose makes a sharp u-turn, then fast sprint back home in the waning light? She ignores how sunset's blush paints the horizon radiant rose-gold: a promise that endings can uplift before shadows yield fully to darkness. Knowing Ella Rose was hoarded, tied to a post outside all night, I wonder, does she escape to safety from her recollections of neglect and loneliness at days' end?

Or does she intuit twilight's deeper mission: Nature's reminder that life's colorful palette dims, as the years pass, leading us to our final moments. *Let's imagine Ella Rose runs home to flee her harsh experiences of nightfall and twilight's intimations of transience, our nudge toward eternity, the gathering dark.*

She runs home to her refuge, leaps on her steady companion, the couch. Buries her face in a vintage pillow, snuggles with the cozy blue blanket, to dream of her sanctuary, shelter, comfort, protection until morning. A dream we all love to share: we will wake up tomorrow to another dawn, green grass and dew, right in the teeth of this wild world.



Freshwater
continued from Page 1

future due to the amount of carbon going into the atmosphere. "When we work together towards taking down these bigger bosses (to use the video game analogy), the cumulative effect of lowering our carbon footprint as a country can be more impactful than trying to go it alone. I try to look for the ones (issues) that have a lot of momentum, or the ones that if (they) are successful would have the largest impact and try to get people rallied around them."

She said she encourages individual action and added that the Oil and Water Don't Mix organization has "a wonderful list of actions you can take." She has contacted her representatives and contacted the president regarding the pipeline that runs beneath the Straits of Mackinac.

"I am always looking for more things to do. I also volunteer with the Invasive Species Network."

Though you might expect she holds a degree in environmental studies, Madison earned hers in theater, playwriting, singing, acting and dancing. She is a member of a



One of Dix's friends, snorkeling. Courtesy photo.

Michigan playwrights' association. I asked her if she has written a play about global warming or the Line 5 oil pipeline under the Straits. "I have tried sooo many times," she replied. "I don't know how I would tackle that in a play, but I am always trying."

Line 5 Facts
The "Line 5" pipeline originates in the coastal town of Superior in northern Wisconsin. It is operated by the Enbridge Company and carries oil and natural gas liquids, traversing Native American lands in Wisconsin as well as many wetlands and streams in Wisconsin and in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Twin pipelines run under

the Straits of Mackinac for 4.5 miles, and a single pipeline continues south through the Lower Peninsula to Sarnia, Ontario, where the oil is refined.

The Line 5 pipeline was built in 1953 and has spilled oil 29 times. According to the Sierra Club, "parts of the pipeline have begun corroding and cracking." The part of the pipeline that lies in the water near the Mackinac Bridge was dented when a ship dropped its anchor on it in 2018. Another ship's anchor damaged the pipe's anchor supports in 2020, causing a shutdown. Members of the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations are concerned about future oil spills along the 645 miles that Line 5 covers.

Those interested in learning more about the Line 5 pipeline and the freshwater advocacy organization Oil and Water Don't Mix can visit: oilandwaterdontmix.org and the Sierra Club at sierraclub.org.

Stewart A. McFerran illuminates current environmental issues in a historic context. Listen to him discuss our stories with WNMC 90.7 FM station manager Eric Hines, usually the morning after an issue is published.

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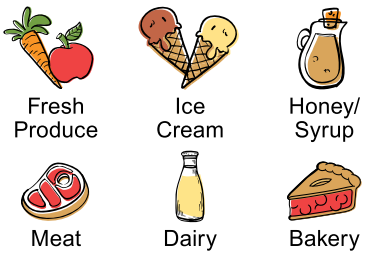


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Road trip: the new P.M. River access site

By KEVIN HOWELL

Ray Hackett and David Hayes were dropping lines in the river off the new access pier on the Pere Marquette River the morning I drove in for a look-see. I was early for a meeting with Kelly Smith, Pere Marquette Township supervisor, and wandered in their direction for a chat.

"How you guys doin'?" I asked. "What do you think of this place?"

Hackett, sitting under an umbrella on a stretch of the new riverwalk perfectly suited for fishing, was more than willing to offer his opinions.

"This is going to be a nice facility," he said. "It'll be good for steelhead."

The two men's now-favorite fishing spot, just recently opened, includes a boat launch ramp, accessible restrooms, information kiosk, walkways along the north branch of the river, a picnic pavilion and a roofed fish-cleaning station. Everything at the access is built for universal accessibility, and the parking lot lights are solar powered.

Prior to the establishment of the new river access, just south of Ludington, fishermen would hazard fishing from the side of the Pere Marquette Highway or from an access point on the south branch of the river.



Ray Hackett (L) and David Hayes fish at the new Pere Marquette River Access. Photo: K. Howell

The river splits into north and south branches near US Highway 31 and rejoins just below the new access. I had planned to launch a kayak and try a paddle after I



Kelly Smith, Pere Marquette Township supervisor, on the river's ramp dock. Photo by K. Howell

met Smith, but due to technical difficulties with my kayak-hauling truck, I decided to postpone that trip. More on that later.

According to Hackett, the new access is a better place to catch fish than earlier alternatives. "We really like (this access), I think we've caught about 100 fish here already," he said.

The Pere Marquette Township Conservation Park consists of 300-plus acres, and though technically not part of the park, the area unofficially includes separate but nearby entities such as Sutton's Landing and Buttersville Campground.

A newer area acquired from Dow Chemical is on Lakeshore Drive near the campground. The park also includes a landing behind the Pere Marquette statue across from Lake Michigan on Lakeshore Drive and Buttersville Beach.

Across the river from the new access boat ramp, the river branches rejoin to form Pere Marquette Lake. I had envisioned taking the kayak to that point and swinging around to go back upstream on the slower south branch. Smith would tell me later it was a favorite route he and his family had taken. "Go up the slow side, then come back down the fast side," he suggested.

When Smith met up with me, we sat down in the shade of the pavilion, where he filled me in on details and future plans.

Smith said the new Pere Marquette River Access was formerly owned by Dow Chemical. Renovations came from Great Lakes Fishery Trust, Land and Conservation Fund, Michigan Waterways program, Pennies from Heaven Foundation, Metalworks Corporation and Mason County Community Foundation grant funds.

"We have a plan for the upkeep and for the conservation park as a whole; we have an endowment fund that we started so we'll have money to skim off the top every year," Smith said. "The concept of the township trying to own this property (new access) pretty much started when I started with the township in 2013.

"There was some very initial talks, then by 2014 or '15 we started having some sort of official-capacity meetings with Dow (Chemical). Then it took until 2020-'21 until they closed on the property. I'd say by 2019 or '20 we had a general concept of what we wanted this park to be, and



Fisherman Pete Moulton (L) and Dave Roller of Pere Marquette Outfitters at the fish-cleaning station. Photo: P. Stinson.

I don't think this will be the end of it, honestly," Smith explained. "I think we'll develop more of it up here on the north side at some point." He said there was still a lot of available space, and members of the pickle ball club, for instance, would like more area courts. "It's pretty level ground,

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Lake Michigan Poem from Manistee

By Jennifer Teller

The Creator of this mighty lake formed and placed it without mistake and tossed upon its edge last night treasures to be found first light.

Early risers walk that shore reveling in waves and more. Sand sometimes squeaks under foot as bare feet slide, and wide eyes look.

Endless waves will wash away footprints that were left today, while swaying grasses upon the dunes still secure Mother Nature's room.

Sit or walk for a short while. Contemplate what makes you smile: plovers, beach glass, vultures, eagles, sand, driftwood, sunsets, "sea" gulls.

Young and old enjoy this lake, fond memories here to make. Walk the pier, swim or fish from it. How awesome is this northwest 'Mitt'!



A birdwatcher on the riverwalk spied red-winged blackbirds, kingfishers, egrets, a great blue heron, a green heron and a least bittern. Photo: P. Stinson.



Ray Hackett's line had a fish on. Number 101! Photo: Kevin Howell

Pere Marquette

continued from Page 7

and it's in an area where it wouldn't annoy residents hearing the clink, clink all day long," Smith observed with a laugh.

He suggested my navigator Jean and I take a ride to the other side, along Lakeshore Drive, to check out that part of the conservation park.

But first, after Smith left, we sat down for a quick lunch. That's when Hackett hollered at me from the fishing dock that he had a fish. I took a closer look and saw he had a nice-sized sucker on the line. Make that 101 fish caught.

Following Iris Road west, south of the river, we turned north onto Lakeshore. North of White Pine Village, we spotted the conservation park sign on the right side of the road and an entrance to a gravel drive. We took the right-hand turn off the drive and headed toward Pere Marquette Lake. It's a site with a lot of potential, where Dow Chemical employees once took their families to play. Just above the river are remnants of the old softball field. Beyond are a parking area with pavilions and a bathroom surrounded by woods.

From there, in lieu of my postponed kayaking trip, we went to Buttersville Beach to stick our toes in the frigid Lake Michigan water. (Winds had brought in deeper, cold water offshore.)



Time to stick my toes in sand, Buttersville Beach. Photo: Kevin Howell

Gotta say, Pere Marquette Township has some great places to visit on a road trip, but keep it between us, please.

To get there: From U.S. Highway 10 take Pere Marquette Highway south. Just before the Pere Marquette River, there'll be a sign for the Pere Marquette River Access on the right (west) side of the road. The new access is visible from there.

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

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Jones

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reaching influence on me.

Its most poignant effect hit me in the early 1980s. I, my wife, and our oldest son Zac, then around 4 years old, went to see "The Empire Strikes Back" of the "Star Wars" trilogy. We were all on the edge of our seats when Jones, aka the voice of Darth Vader, deeply proclaimed, "I am your father," to Luke Skywalker. As the room reverberated with those dire words, my young son jumped to his feet and cried aloud, "NO-O-O-O-O-O-O!" Chuckles arose from patrons around us as we consoled Zac. That was the effect of the deep, resonant, profound voice of James Earl Jones. It definitely got your attention.

– Kevin Howell, Branch

My favorite movie is "Dr. Strangelove", a farce about the end of the world. Peter Sellers starred in the saga about Dr. Strangelove's "doomsday machine." James Earl Jones played the navigator of a B-52 bomber armed with nuclear warheads, as the captain, played by Slim Pickens, guided the plane on "doomsday."

James Earl Jones had a fine voice that will be missed. He found that voice while a student at school in Brethren. The "Bobcats" should be proud to count him as an alumni in their ranks. I recall fondly the students at school in Brethren, where I taught for a time. There were many unique voices in those classes at Kaleva Norman Dickson school, where big and little Bobcats continue to roam the halls.

– Stewart McFerran, Lake Ann



Entrance to James Earl Jones Theatre, Manhattan. Photo: dbvirago - stock.adobe.com

Most impressive to me was that one of James Earl Jones's first acting experiences was in Manistee, and there wasn't a place for him to stay there. Eventually, the Ramsdell did find housing for him, according to his cousin. Despite the prejudice against Blacks at the time, he went on to become a star that everyone knows. When will that prejudice end?

– P.G. Misty Sheehan, Traverse City

My most endearing connection to James Earl Jones is from his classic role as Darth Vader and his powerful voice proclaiming, "I am your father" — a bid for Luke to come over to the Dark Side. And, though conflicted and tempted, Luke never did.

For all the pain that moment ignited in Luke, it was Luke who brought his father to the Light. That single act of forgiveness erased all the years of anguish. It opened the door to acceptance, redemption, love and freedom — not only of his father, but their relationship with each other.

No other voice on the planet could have conveyed that emotion. James Earl Jones gave us a gift. One that will be part of our collective consciousness for generations to come. For that, we are all forever grateful.

– Gordon Berg, Traverse City

Everyone talks about his voice, but James Earl Jones's face was more than a window, it seemed a portal to his soul. When not acting, his face almost had a cherubic quality, with shiny-apple cheeks, a light in his kind-looking eyes and a luminous smile. I never met the man, but photographs of him capture the essence of a person with a deep conscience and a zest for life. And if he had neither, then his much-celebrated acting chops were even more remarkable. I watched him in "Dr. Strangelove", "The Hunt for Red October" and the TV series "Roots", and heard his booming voice in "Star Wars" and "The Lion King". I read his short biography at the Ramsdell Theatre. And now I feel the emptiness of his passing and resolve to watch all his movies. I'll check in with you about them in, oh, say three years or so.

– Pat Stinson, Manistee

I'm remembering some iconic movies and TV shows James Earl Jones acted in, from Kubrick's "Dr. Strangelove" to "Roots", to a guest appearance on "The Big Bang Theory" and the "Star Wars" series, and many others. His depiction of the evil sorcerer Thulsa Doom, leader of a snake cult, in "Conan the Barbarian" has always stood out to me. Cast as the villain in the epic (and somewhat cheesy) sword-and-sorcery film, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jones's acting was the finest of the entire cast. I was amazed, when the film was released in 1982, that he had taken the role. He portrayed Doom with the same dignity and intensity he brought to Othello and King Lear. Even adorned in a goofy Prince-Valliant-meets-the-mullet hairstyle, he exuded "Badass." His acting single-handedly raised the quality of the entire film, especially in one truly chilling scene. I read that Jones gave Schwarzenegger some well-received acting tips, and in return received some health and exercise advice — which, since he lived to 93, must have stood him in good stead.

– Mark Videan

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President George H.W. Bush and Mrs. Barbara Bush present the National Medal of Arts to James Earl Jones. Photo Library of Congress.

More ❤️ for James Earl Jones

By PAT STINSON

As this paper goes to press, the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts and county partners in Manistee are organizing a memorial service for veteran actor and former Manistee County resident James Earl Jones, who died Sept. 9. The service will presumably take place inside the theater where Jones worked as a stagehand and performed as a young actor.

James Earl Jones spent most of his childhood in the Dublin area and attended school in Brethren. (Read about his family, particularly his cousin, in P.G. Misty Sheehan's story, "Family tree bears fruit", which you can find online at <https://freshwater-reporter.com/family-tree-bears-fruit>.) During his acting career, Jones won Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony awards, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Screen Actors Guild and a National Medal of Arts from former President George H.W. Bush, along with many other awards and recognition.

Beginning in high school, he also wrote poetry, including his "Ode to Grapefruit". The overwhelmingly positive experience of reciting that poem aloud to his classmates, at the prodding of his high school teacher and despite the young man's stutter, gave Jones the confidence to participate in debates and oratorical contests, according to The Academy of Achievement. (Visit achievement.org to discover more details about Jones' life and acting career, and read about a different kind of activism at <https://theconversation.com/what-james-earl-jones-can-teach-us-about-activism-and-art-in-times-of-crisis-238861>.)

Recently, his poem and life story were the inspiration for the new book "Ode to Grapefruit: How James Earl Jones Found His Voice" (Knopf, July 2024), written by Austin, Texas speech pathologist and author Kari Lavelle. The book is available at Hoot and Honey bookstore in Manistee.

PSSST: If we're fortunate, you may hear more about Lavelle and her latest work in the future.

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