

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS INSIDE

Moving with the flow: serendipity leads to Arcadia Tai Chi festival

By SUE OSELAND

The history of Tai Chi in Arcadia, Michigan, goes back further than you might think. The 42nd annual Arcadia Tai Chi Workshop Festival took place last month at the Arcadia Community Center (ACC) on Glovers Lake Road. Five teachers led a group of approximately 45 individuals in Tai Chi and Qigong over the course of both Saturday and Sunday mornings in this small waterfront community.

For those unfamiliar, Tai Chi and Qigong originated in ancient China. Tai Chi is the practice of using gentle body movements that are slow, deliberate and controlled to achieve a relaxed, meditative state. This wasn't always so. Tai Chi was once considered a martial art and was used for self-defense and in combat. Qigong is a practice that uses qi, a life force the Chinese believe is found in breath and bodily fluids. Practitioners of Qigong believe spiritual and physical health can be achieved by using various rhythmic movements and breathing as well as "moving meditation" to change the flow of qi in the body.

You might ask how the annual workshop of these Far Eastern practices came to be hosted in Arcadia, where community events like the Lions Club pancake breakfasts, Arcadia Daze and the newer Minnehaha Brewhaha music festival take place. Well, it really is the result of a lifetime of chance and not-so-chance encounters by Tai Chi Instructor Jim Bush. In 1978, while living in Saginaw, Bush met Tai Chi Master Hubert H. Lui (aka Mr. Lui) in Mt. Pleasant. At the time, Mr. Lui was visiting Central Michigan University to offer a Tai Chi workshop, one



Festival founder and instructor Jim Bush in Arcadia. Photo: Deborah Besanson

of his annual week-long workshops held at the university and sponsored by CMU's psychology department. Bush's own Tai Chi practice stemmed from this pivotal workshop offered by Mr. Lui.

Sometime in the early 1980s, Bush met Jean and Roger Muldavin of Arcadia at one of the eight annual Tai Chi workshops held in Mt. Pleasant. The couple asked Bush about hosting a weekend workshop for Tai Chi practitioners in their hometown of Arcadia.

Though it was a trek from Saginaw, Bush, whose grandfather Lloyd Earl Cady had been born in 1880 in Arcadia, was on board with the idea. In 1984 the first Arcadia Tai Chi workshop weekend was held, with some of the attendees staying at the Muldavins' hotel, called The Manor. (MT Plate Diner now occupies the corner where the hotel once stood.). Other participants set up camp on the Muldavins' empty lot

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Friendship and support come in all sizes. Photo: Volodymyr, AdobeStock.

On Kindness and Rabbit Holes

By VONNI SAGE

September is Practice Kindness Month, at least according to Holiday Smart, an online resource for special observances. The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation indicates that World Kindness Day falls on November 13 this year, Random Acts of Kindness Week is February 14-20, 2027, and Random Acts of Kindness Day is February 17, 2027.

I'm pretty sure we don't need official months, weeks or days to practice kindness, something that is good for the body and the mind. Giving and receiving kindness increases happiness chemicals like dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin and endorphins, and helps us feel more socially connected.

How do people view kindness? I decided to explore this question by asking local folks. Many people cited specific events. Sylvia Duncan described neighbors reaching out when she and her husband moved to the area. "Their kindness toward us allowed us to feel safe and valued in a new place. We have tried to pay this forward."

When a huge tree limb came down in her yard during a storm, Judy Twigg's neighbor came over with a chainsaw to remove it. Judy also likes to bake and share her creations with neighbors.

Ralph Mortensen shared a story about Mrs. Fox, an elderly woman who rode the bus to her secretarial job each day. Bus drivers and riders looked out for her, offering her an umbrella when it rained, an arm when it was snowy, a seat by the window. She seemed to inspire kindness.

Some folks waxed philosophical. Trace Howard pointed out that kindness starts with being kind to yourself, being self-reflective. For example, we might ask ourselves, when we feel like being unkind, what is this person or situation bringing up for me? Whether we choose to offer an olive branch or turn away, we act with thought, with our hearts.

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Living Among Wild Things

Story and photos by STEWART A. MCFERRAN

Before I built my cabin on the Upper Platte River, I always thought that I would someday build a mansion on the hill above the river. Forty years later, I am fixin' to move into that 800-square-foot mansion on the hill. There will be no more trudging down the path to my old digs where the wild things are or struggling back up the hill in winter.

These are just some of my encounters with wild things over the past four decades.

One summer day I had left the sliding-glass door open, with the screen door closed, to get a breeze. I came home to find a family of raccoons had broken through the screen door and were engaged in a free-for-all, until I shooed them out with my broom.

Another time, flying squirrels took up residence in my roof, and one came inside to jump about in the loft. I will not go into details, but it did not end well for that squirrel. I suppose we all defend our space in one way or another.

Red squirrels have defiantly stood on my deck and scolded me. Chipmunks found their way inside and had a party behind the stove, and mice had their way in the crawl



Woodcock. Photo taken next to the writer's sauna near the Upper Platte River.

space. I am pretty sure those chipmunks were related to "Petey," the chipmunk that visited my Bronson Lake neighbors.

Then there was the opossum that my friend Louise named "Jeff." You can find Jeff's adventures with cats on YouTube. Jeff still, to this day, visits my compost pile.

I encountered a porcupine on the path as I trudged up the hill early one morning in the dark. I have seen mink in the woodpile, otters frolicking in the river and bobcats hunting in the cedars. Recently, a red-shouldered hawk landed on the gate to

my garden, ready to pounce on Jeff, who normally waits until after dark to trundle over for an inspection of the compost.

Spring water roils the sandy bottom of the eddy near the log that serves as my canoe launch. The parasite that causes swimmer's itch has never been present in the flowing water of the Upper Platte River, but minnows have nibbled on my feet as I dip in the river. One time at dusk, a beaver slapped the water just a few feet from me as I stood in the river after a sauna.

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Area Events Calendar

TELL THEM YOU SAW IT IN THE FRESHWATER REPORTER!

To be included in our October print edition, submit your announcements by September 17. 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.

FARMERS MARKETS

Mondays
Scottville Farmers Market
10am-3pm, Thru mid-September. Every other Monday in West Shore Bank parking lot, 107 W State St. & along Main Street.

Honey Bee Market, Beulah
12-7pm. Thru September 7. A selection of arts, crafts, handmade goods, & homemade health & wellness products & more. On the lawn at St. Ambrose Cellars, 841 S Pioneer Rd.

Wednesdays
Baldwin's Pure Markette
3-6pm. Thru September 2. Parking lot behind Jones' Ice Cream, 858 Michigan Ave.

Thursdays
Elberta Farmers Market
8am-12pm. 9am-12pm after Labor Day. Thru October 1. Penfold Park, 1098 Lakeside Blvd.

Fridays
Ludington Artisan/Farmers Market
2-7pm. Thru September 18. Legacy Plaza Pavilion, 112 N James St.

Saturdays
Cadillac Farmers Market
9am-1pm. Thru September. 11978 W Watergate Rd.

Frankfort Farmers Market
9am-1pm. Thru October 31. Open Space Park, 800 Main St.

Manistee Farmers Market
9am-12pm. Thru October 4. Wagoner Community Center, 260 Saint Mary's Pkwy.

MUSIC SERIES

Tuesdays
Shoreline Showcase, Manistee
7-9:15pm, Free/donations. Rotary Gazebo, First St. Beach, Douglas Park, 100 S Lakeshore Dr. Rain Site: Orchard Beach State Park Shelter House, 2064 Lakeshore Rd. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

Sept 1 Manitou Trucking Company

Wednesdays
LACA Summer Concert Series, Ludington
7-9pm, Free/donations. Waterfront Park, 1122 S William St. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

Sept 2 Roger That

Fridays
Live in the Plaza Music Series, Ludington
6-8pm, Free/donations. Legacy Plaza, 112 N James St. Bring lawn chair.

Sept 4 Rocket Fuel Haulers
Sept 11 Whisky River Rats
Sept 18 Tom Zatarga
Sept 25 Downtowners

Saturdays
Sounds from the Forest Music Series, Baldwin
7-9:15pm. Free/donations. Wenger Pavilion, 876 Michigan Ave. (behind Jones' Ice Cream). Rain or shine. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

Sept 5 Manitou Trucking Company

ONGOING EVENTS

Thru Sep 11
"Out of Line" Art Exhibition, Manistee
Free. Artworks by James Stanton & Jim Scheussler. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St.

Summer Art Show, Arcadia
Free. Arcadia Community Center, 3586 Glovers Lake Rd.

My Michigan Art Exhibition, Frankfort
Free. Watercolor & oil paintings by Rick Koehler & Stan Myers. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Thru Sep 18
Jenni Bateman Art Exhibition, Frankfort
Free. Watercolors, acrylics, oils, textiles, collage & painting on silks. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Thru Oct 2
Field of Vision Art Exhibition, Frankfort
Free. Artworks by Sandra Ackerman, Logan Hudson, Mark Mehaffey & Les Scruggs. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

Sept 4-26
Member Exhibit, Ludington
Free. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St.

Sep 18-Jan 8
Fall Art Show, Arcadia
Free. Arcadia Community Center, 3586 Glovers Lake Rd. Opening reception September 18, 5:30-7pm.

Sep 25-Oct 30
A Thread Runs Through It Art Exhibition, Manistee
Free. Artworks featuring fibers & textiles. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Opening reception Sep 25, 5-7pm.

Sep 26-Oct 30
Steve Loveless: Atmospheres Art Exhibition, Frankfort
Free. Photographs of northern Michigan. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Opening reception September 26, 4-6pm.

DAILY EVENTS

Sept 3
Food Pantry, Bear Lake
9-11am. Eligibility: Must need emergency food, participate in income-based programs (like SNAP, WIC, or CSFP), or fall below the federal poverty level. Bear Lake United Methodist Church, 7861 Main St. info: 231.864.3680

Sept 4,5
9th Annual Minnehaha Brewhaha Music Festival, Arcadia
Free admission Friday. Gates open 6:30pm. Music starts at 7pm. \$10 admission Saturday. Gates open 1pm, music starts at 2pm & rocks on until midnight. Camping available @ \$100 (includes 2 show tickets). 8 local bands, craft brews, food trucks, games. Arcadia Marina on US-31 next to Arcadia Ice House Ice Cream Shoppe. Bring lawn chairs. Info/tickets: www.music-moves-me.org

Sept 4-6
Brethren Days, Brethren
Events usually include bands; High Bridge Hustle 5k run/walk; arts & crafts; vendors; cornhole, horseshoe and softball tournaments; pig roast; parade and fireworks. All events take place in Dickson Township Park, 14279 Coates Hwy. unless otherwise stated. Info: Brethren Days on Facebook.

Discraft Michigan Amateur State Disc Golf Championships, Ludington
Various times & locations. \$100. Info/register: discgolfscene.com

Sept 5
Cadillac YMCA Festival of Races, Cadillac
7am. \$0-75 depending on race run. Full marathon, 5k run, 7 mile relay run, 1 mile kids' fun run. 100 S. Lake St. Info/register: <https://tinyurl.com/yru8cpm2>

Mason County Garden Club Fall Plant Sale, Ludington
9am-1pm. Plant sale & community education. Rotary Park (City Park), 500 W Ludington

In concert: Six Mile Strings, Frankfort
6:30pm. \$10. String quartet blending classical repertoire with new sounds & genres. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Tickets: oliverart.org

In concert: Brett Young wsg Family Tradition, Manistee
7-10:30pm. \$75. Little River Casino Resort, 2700 Orchard Hwy. Tickets: lrcr.com

Sept 5, 6
LMBV 2nd Annual Labor Day Beach Volleyball Tournament, Ludington
8am-6pm. Stearns Park Beach, 421 N Lakeshore Dr.

Sept 5, 6, 7
Labor Day Flea Market & Barn Sale, Luther
9am-2pm. Luther Lions Club, 1003 State St.

Sept 6
Gears & Beers 30 Or 45 Mile Fun Ride, Ludington
\$75. Proceeds benefit Lakeshore Food Club. Stops at Starving Artist Brewing & Campbell Crossing Farms. Race ends at Ludington Bay Brewing, 515 S James St. for beer & live music (included in registration). Register: runsignup.com

Ludington Auto Club Cars & Coffee Car Meet, Ludington
10am-1pm. Free and open to the public. The 10 Spot, 5750 US-10. Coffee for purchase at the Meraki Coffee Truck.

Idlewild Float the Lake Sundays, Idlewild
1pm. Free. Join the local community to float the lake in canoes, kayaks, row boats weather permitting. Idlewild Lake.



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Sept 7
Marsh Walk, Arcadia
1pm. Meet at the Arcadia Marsh Preserve parking lot, just south of the village along the east side of M-22. Hosted by the Arcadia Lions Club.

Sept 8
Weed the Park, Ludington
10am-12pm. Free. Volunteer to help AFFEW remove invasive plants. Wear closed-toe shoes, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Bring garden gloves, water. Meet at the gazebo at the end of Rath Ave. by Lincoln Lake. Cartier Park, 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr.

Plant Diagnostic Clinic, Benzonia
11am-2pm. Bring your insects, weeds & plant diseases for identification & recommendations. Benzonia Public Library, 891 Michigan Ave. (US-31).

Walk of Hope, Ludington
5-7pm. West Michigan Community Mental Health hosts a walk to promote suicide prevention & awareness. Waterfront Park, 300 S William St.

Sept 9
Mysteries at the Museum, Baldwin
6pm. Free. Stories behind 5 mysterious artifacts from the museum. Lake County Historical Museum, 915 N Michigan Ave.

Sept 11
District 10 Health Fair, Idlewild
10am-3pm. Free, all ages. The TEEM Center, 1850 E US-10.

Near & Farr Friends, Onekama
11am-1pm. Free. Valerie Gerhart will discuss her involvement with the Dolly Parton Reading program that provides free books to children. Onekama Township Hall, 5435 Main St.

Movie Night, Idlewild
6pm. Popcorn is \$1. The TEEM Center, 1850 E US-10.

1964 The Tribute (Beatles Tribute), Manistee
7:30pm. \$30-50. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: ramsdelltheatre.org

Sept 11-13
West Michigan Fun-Fly, Baldwin
10am-5pm. Free for spectators. Fun family event. Many aspects of remote-control modelling are on display. See everything from RC jets to RC cars. Free parking. Baldwin Airport, 7668 M-37. Bring lawn chairs, sunglasses, cooler.

Sept 11-14
Benzie County Players present "Come From Away", Frankfort
7:30pm except Sunday, 3:30pm. \$20. Broadway musical based on events in the Newfoundland town of Gander during the week following the 9/11 attacks, when 38 planes, carrying about 7,000 passengers, were ordered to land unexpectedly at their airport. The Garden Theater, 301 Main St. Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/yc7lksver>

Sept 12
Apple Smash, Kaleva
A day of live music, food & beverages, disc golf tournament & more. Northern Natural Cider House & Winery, 7220 Chief Rd.

Third Annual Cadillac Book Fest, Cadillac
10am-4pm. Free. Speak with over 50 talented, enthusiastic, Michigan, small press authors about their work; purchase some great reads & get them signed. Cadillac Commons Market, 117 West Cass St.

Antique Tractor Pulling, Scottville
10am-2pm. Free for spectators. The Western Michigan Old Engine Club sanctions dead weight tractor pulling for antique farm stock tractors. All tractors must have been built prior to 1956. Riverside Park, 700 S Scottville Rd.

Sept 12
Fall Celebration, Scottville
12-10pm. Kids' activities, craft vendors, 5k race, Miss Mason County & Princess Pageant, cornhole tournament, & more. Live music with Barely Devils & Scottville Clown Band. Downtown Scottville.

Sept 13
SDA Health and Wellness Expo, Idlewild
3-6pm. Free for all ages. The TEEM Center, 1850 E US-10.

Sept 15
Join the Botany team of the US Forest Service to help remove invasive plants, Free Soil
9am. Free. Meet at the Nurnberg Trailhead parking lot (west end of Nurnberg Rd.) for a tailgate safety session. Bring lunch, gloves, & plenty of water (at least 2 bottles). Hike for approximately 1 mile to the project area. Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes & clothes that can get dirty. Botany program will supply digger tools, trash bags, great views of Lake Michigan & brownies.

Sept 16
HOAs and Native Plants Can Coexist!, Benzonia
7pm. Plant It Wild hosts a panel discussion covering lawn regulations. Can rules be modified to encourage native plants to thrive? Bring questions, ideas, success stories. Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave. (US-31).

Sept 17
Food Pantry, Bear Lake
4-6pm. This evening session coincides with a free Community Table meal. Eligibility: Must need emergency food, participate in income-based programs (like SNAP, WIC, or CSFP), or fall below the federal poverty level. Bear Lake United Methodist Church, 7861 Main St. info: 231.864.3680

Hemlock Woody Adelgid Management Workshop, Benzonia
5:30-6:30. Free. The Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave. Register: HabitatMatters.org/Events

In concert: The Mad Angler Trio, Frankfort
7pm. \$20 The Garden Theater, 301 Main St. Tickets: gardentheater.org

Sept 17-19
2026 World Championship Fish Decoy Carving & Collecting Show, Cadillac
Free. Thursday afternoon room to room trading. Friday 10am carving contests & show, Saturday 9am-3pm collectors show. Days Inn, 6001 E M-115. For more info, see ad page 3 and article page 8.

Sept 18, 19
2nd Annual Pick'n in the Pines Bluegrass Festival, Baldwin
Family-friendly camping, music, food trucks & vendors. High in the Pines Campground, 61 W US-10. Info/tickets: www.camphighinthepines.com

Sept 18
Near & Farr Friends, Onekama
11am-1pm. Free. Tim Mulherin, author of *This Magnetic North*, will speak about his interviews with many residents in northwest Michigan about the impact the pandemic, climate change and tourism made in their towns. Onekama Township Hall, 5435 Main St.

Sept 19
Scrap Tire Recycling Event, Kaleva
8am-12pm. \$2/tire without rims, \$3/tire with. Limit 10. Cash Only. Manistee County residents only (ID required). Tires must be clean. Passenger & light truck tires only. No commercial businesses/farms. Household & residential tires only. Bay Area Recycling for Charities, 14407 Industrial Dr.

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Sept. 18, Friday, 10 am Carving Contests & Show
Sept. 19, Saturday, 9 am to 3 pm Collectors Show

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Horseshoe Bend, Manistee County.
Photo: Shannon Courier

Spirit of the Woods

By Shannon Courier

Your name draws me near,
it brings me closer to your wildness
and antiquity.
The stories of old surround me
as I step into your wilderness.

The murmuring wind blowing
through your pines
puts me at ease.
Their needles carpet my footsteps
on the well-worn trail.

My hand grabs at rough bark for support
as I step over roots s p r e a d i n g
across the pathway.
My feet keep moving me deeper
into your depths.

I hear your meandering waters flowing
before I can see them.
Stepping out of the cool forest,
the sun gently warms my face.

There, below me, is a sight to behold.
Nestled amongst the endless trees
and rolling hills,
the river snakes its way
to Lake Michigan,
coursing around the bend.

A light breeze grazes my skin
sending a shiver through me.
A pair of Monarchs dance on the wind
chasing each other in tumbling motions.

The birds sing around me telling me
their plentiful stories.
High above a Bald Eagle soars
gracefully
through the air.

I look down at your river again
and see
a doe and her twins step to the edge
and take
sips of her cold water,
their white tails flipping at unseen insects.

I sigh with contentment,
The Ojibwe named you perfectly.
The “Spirit of the Woods” surrounds me.
Manistee County does NOT disappoint.

NORTH SHORE DISPATCH

Community Gardens: planting, growing and gathering together

By MARK BANASZAK

Community gardens are often placed in areas that have been abandoned. So often, in fact, you might not remember what was there before ... a vacant lot strewn with trash and weeds or a patch of unused lawn. Once community gardens are established, they're usually filled with raised beds, maybe some fencing, a water source and neighbors who talk as they water and weed. These pockets of fragrant greenery do more than grow colorful food and flowers. They also grow connection, wellness and self-reliance.

There are many kinds of community gardens: raised beds in open areas of cities and towns, school gardens, gardens run by gardening clubs, food pantry gardens, culinary gardens, senior center gardens, even gardens at places of worship. But they share a common trait: they're a place where people connect.

According to Lillian Katz, a researcher of learning approaches, people don't just relate to each other naturally; they have to relate over something. Gardening is exactly that something — no hidden agendas, just the shared task of growing vegetables or flowers well.

History of community gardens

Community gardens in the U.S. trace back to 1890s Detroit, where Mayor Hazen Pingree sponsored gardens in vacant lots to help residents through a brutal recession. The idea spread quickly, and schools picked it up to teach children responsibility and connect them with nature. During both world wars, Americans planted victory gardens to free up food for export abroad. By 1944, home gardens were producing an estimated 40% of the nation's vegetables. Decades later, in the rust-belt renewal of the '70s and '80s, cities



Some of the almost 50 raised garden beds at Manistee's Sophia Street Community Garden.
Photo: P. Stinson

like Detroit and St. Louis leased cleared, abandoned lots to community groups for beautification — a model still very much alive today.

These efforts rested on two common benefits: improved food access and a stronger sense of connection. Access to land allows anyone, rich or poor, to grow fresh produce with their own labor and tends to promote healthier eating in areas with few grocery stores. That's what happened in Detroit and St. Louis in the '70s and '80s, where organizations like the Urban League worked with municipal land reutilization authorities and urban greening groups to lease abandoned lots to gardeners. For the cost of a water tap and some raised beds, neighbors turned nuisance lots into vegetable gardens. Building a garden brought together neighbors of many backgrounds, strengthening and beautifying communities. Gardens gave isolated groups, such as the elderly and newcomers, social contact. Gardeners could trade tips, recipes and traditions, drawing people and their neighborhoods closer.

A model community garden

One great example of a community garden that fits this pattern is the Sophia Street Community Garden in Manistee. Founded by Manistee Community Kitchen, with its own goal of ending hunger and improving nutrition in Manistee County, the garden rents plots to people from the area. For \$35 a season, gardeners raise vegetables and flowers alongside all sorts of other folks, from kids to older adults. There is a “best practices toolkit” plus some physical infrastructure to increase residents' odds of success such as a shared toolshed, water hoses and materials for building a deer deterrent around your bed. Growing food and flowers attracts wildlife: deer, raccoons, rabbits, birds, worms, caterpillars and insects, good and “bad.”

But like every community garden, Sophia Street is only half garden. The other half is community. Tend to your bed and you'll find yourself trading advice, borrowing tools, and meeting people you might never have

crossed paths with otherwise. It's one of the most welcoming ways to start gardening if you never have before. For more information, look for Sophia Street Community Garden on Facebook.



Most beds are fenced for protection. Photo: P. Stinson

Use agreements matter

Community gardens do face challenges, and planning for them from the outset is what keeps a garden alive. A use agreement matters most. It's hard to pour your labor and love into a plot of land without confidence you'll have access next year. Water on the site matters almost as much. Without it, gardeners won't get the rewards that keep them coming back year after year. And unlike a home garden, a community garden asks something more of everyone. Beds don't get built or maintained unless each gardener puts in a bit of work for the group. That's the trade-off ... and also the point. A community garden doesn't just benefit the person tending it; it benefits the community that surrounds it.

Mark Banaszak has spent more than 30 years as a public-school educator, urban community gardener and outdoor enthusiast. He has transplanted his city life to rural Manistee County.



Garden Work Party in St. Louis, Missouri, the writer's former place of residence.
Photo: Mark Banaszak.

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Kindness

continued from Page 1

Jen T. shared that people often underestimate the power of verbal affirmations, of listening and being present. Kindness, she said, inspires appreciation and graciousness.

Am I being kind or nice?

Being a studious nerd, I dove down some rabbit holes. (I wonder how it is that rabbits' knowledge troves were discovered.) Is being kind the same thing as being nice? Well, let me tell you ... they are not at all the same.

The etymology of kindness hasn't changed. To be kind has always meant "deliberately doing good to others." Being nice, however, originally meant "foolish, ignorant, frivolous, senseless." Its Latin root, nescius, means "ignorant," "unaware," literally "not-knowing." Over time, the meaning of "nice" morphed from "foolish" to "timid" to "fussy" to "dainty" to "precise" to "agreeable" and is currently often considered a synonym for "kind." The rabbits would have us know that being nice is truly not the same as being kind. When I looked up the word "nice" in several dictionaries, I found that more than one dictionary contained notes indicating we need to use the word with caution and not ignore its roots. I leave you with a question, then, dear reader. Do you wish to be kind or nice (in any or all of its variations)?

Practicing Kindness

The Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Foundation offers calendars with daily ideas for practicing kindness. Their suggestion for September 1: "Leave a small note or treat for your mail carrier, delivery driver, or garbage collector."

"Send a smile across miles by mailing a postcard or drawing to a faraway friend or relative," is the suggestion for September 11. Hand write or draw a snail mail missive? What an idea! (Read our Sept. 2023 story, "The Happiness of Handwritten Letters," by Grace Grogan, found here: freshwater-reporter.com/happiness-of-handwritten-letters.)

Later in the month (September 27) they recommend: "Give the gift of listening by setting down your phone and being fully present." Hmm. I see a pattern of get-away-from-your-tech-and-share-kindness going on here. Look out! This might become a habit.

Speaking of habits, when I walked into Saddle Up Gas and Grocery last week, I was met with a compliment from Aliza Harvey. As I checked out, I asked Aliza about her perspective on kindness. She told me that she likes to give people compliments because "you never know what people might be going through." At that moment, all I was going through was the store, but she sure made me feel better about doing it. She made my day brighter.

One way to practice kindness is to pay it forward. I've been gifted two writing retreats, and I'm still glowing from those opportunities. One of the givers asked me to pay it forward. Instead of seeing this as a debt I owe, I view it as an opportunity to gift that glow to someone else.

When we pay it forward, our intent is to benefit another person. Several years ago, a Starbucks in Florida made the news when 378 customers paid for the coffee of the next person in line. On the surface, this seems like a kindness. The rabbits might call it nice, in an old-fashioned way. Let's break it down. People in line at Starbucks are expecting to pay for their coffee. Is it really a huge benefit for someone else to pay for a cup of coffee I was going to buy anyway? The baristas rail at the confusion this causes them. Suddenly, what someone thought of as a kindness seems a bit foolish ... (cough) um, nice.

Why Kindness Matters

If we return to the definition of kindness, we're presented with "benevolent, considerate." Those are qualities that have helped humanity survive. Groups of people who care for one another — who make sure folks are fed, clothed, nurtured and safe — are likely to survive. Even better, they thrive.

Kindness isn't something that just happens. Every moment we make choices that impact us and those around us. We are each responsible for designing the world we live in. What kind of world will we create?

For more information about kindness month and the health benefits of adopting a kinder attitude, visit the following websites: randomactsofkindness.org, etymonline.com, holidaysmart.com, and speaking of health: https://tinyurl.com/4dx5ksyc

Vonni Sage is a creative writer, avid reader, educator and nature lover. When she's not playing in the mud, she might be found wandering the streets or beaches with a far-off gaze as she adventures in the new worlds she's creating in her head.

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Compiled by the editors

- A **Water Weekend Camp** will take place Sept. 4-7 in Petoskey during the Labor Day Weekend and includes a Water is Life festival, a Pipe Out Paddle Up, a potluck, an open mic session as well as workshops and conversations about "what's under the Bridge" plus Mackinac Bridge Walk Outreach. Learn more at givebutter.com/Water Weekend
- Drivers can visit **HavelBeenFlocked.com** to find out if the license plate number on their vehicle was "queried" by either law enforcement or a private party. A company called Flock Safety uses more than 120,000 cameras in 49 states to track vehicles. A privacy researcher from Footnote-4a, a watchdog group, used the Freedom of Information Act to request public audit logs and the site contains more than 2 million plate numbers and millions of queries.
- Nonprofit organizations in Manistee County can apply for a **Manistee County Community Foundation grant** during its fall grant application cycle. The deadline is Sept. 15. Learn more at: www.manisteefoundation.org/grant-opportunities.
- The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy is **celebrating 35 years of protecting and stewarding area land and waters**, including in our readership area of Benzie and Manistee counties.

The nonprofit wants to hear from those who visit their preserves by Friday, Sept. 11. A survey is available at: https://surveymonkey.com/r/WTSVXPN.

- A Leelanau County group **art exhibition called "For the Birds"** is currently showing through Friday, Sept. 18, at the Leelanau Township Library, 119 E. Nagonaba St. in Northport. The art show includes works by Carrie Betlyn-Eder, Iris Eichenberg, Peter Finnemore, Mary Fortuna, Jamie John, Ty Maxon, Mark Nielsen, Angela Saxon and Robin Ward. A wide range of artwork is displayed, including prints, pen-and-ink, fiber, found objects, mixed media and moving images.
- **International Observe the Moon Night** is Saturday, Sept. 19. Everyone on Earth is invited to learn about lunar science and exploration, take part in celestial observations, and honor cultural and personal connections to the Moon.
- Registration is underway for the **Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference** which will take place Oct. 4-6 in Bellaire at the Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology. The conference will feature a keynote speaker, tours of two farms and workshops such as perennial farming, soil health, plant seeds and breeds, and more.

Turkeys and foxes and bats, oh my

From MDNR reports



Help the MDNR track the health of wild turkeys. Report any turkeys you see through August 31. Photo courtesy of MDNR.

Michigan's turkey survey is almost over for this year, but you have until Aug. 31 to report any sightings of wild hen turkeys with baby turkeys to the state's Department of Natural Resources.

The MDNR's wild turkey brood survey is one of the department's three community science efforts aimed at assessing the health of wildlife populations this summer. A press release from MDNR states that wild turkeys, once locally extinct, have rebounded and are found in every Michigan county. "They are one of Michigan's greatest

wildlife conservation success stories." To complete the turkey survey, go to: tinyurl.com/47yw6jbt.

Bats roost when raising their young and the MDNR needs citizen help to locate them this summer. Bats can be found roosting beneath bridges, in barns and in tree cavities and trunks. According to the agency's press release, these flying mammals typically roost from August through early September. Reports of roosting bats can be submitted at any time, even sightings that happened earlier in the year. Complete the survey online at: tinyurl.com/5ezpa9cw.

Sightings of red foxes are common, but gray foxes are smaller and more elusive,

reports the MDNR. After partnering with tribal and other entities in a red and gray fox survey, the agency found that the gray fox population is either much smaller or the animals are better at hiding. To help the agency get a sense of their numbers, citizens are asked to report any sightings, from years ago to the present.

"We've learned that gray foxes often live closer to people than many realize," said Tyler Petroelje, DNR Upper Peninsula research specialist. "They use structures such as garages, sheds and outbuildings near wooded areas."

To report any sightings, visit: tinyurl.com/yc599zs9

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Honoring Constitution Day, Citizenship Day and Constitution Week

By GRACE GROGAN

Read the U.S. Constitution by visiting the National Archives online at: archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript

Initiatives to educate citizens about the importance of the U.S. Constitution began more than 100 years ago, in 1919. According to the Constitution Center, these initiatives were “intended to provide for ‘the complete instruction of citizens in their responsibilities and opportunities as citizens of the United States and of the State and locality in which they reside.’” To that end, annual observances such as Constitution Day, Constitution Week and Citizenship Day were established. Today, all federal agencies and educational institutions receiving federal funds must host educational programs focusing on the U.S. Constitution every September 17.

Two events are held every year on that date in Michigan’s capital city of Lansing. A *Constitution Day Celebration* is hosted at the Michigan State Capitol, 100 N. Capitol Ave., from 9 a.m. to 12:30 pm. The event offers educational activities, student showcases and civic engagement. The building is open to the public year-round, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month. Admission is free. A *Constitution Day Tour* and events are offered at the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center, 925 W. Ottawa Street. Join scavenger hunts, question-and-answer sessions and a reader’s theater about the Constitutional Convention. Sixty-minute tours are held weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Contact them at (517) 373-7171 or feinauera@courts.mi.gov.

The importance of September 17

How did September 17 come to be selected, and why are both Constitution Day and Citizenship Day held on the same date? Let’s review the history.

“I Am An American Day” was the brainstorm of William Randolph Hearst. As reported on its website, the Constitution Center stated that Hearst spearheaded an initiative in the late 1930s to celebrate

naturalized citizens. On May 3, 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed House Joint Resolution 437, “*Authorizing the President of the United States of America to proclaim I Am An American Citizenship Day, for the recognition, observance, and commemoration of American citizenship.*” Roosevelt’s proclamation stated that every year two million men and women in the U.S. turn 21. A fact sheet on Congress.gov reports that the goal of this “Citizenship Day” was to prepare young citizens to exercise their rights and responsibilities under our self-governing republic. Observed on the third Sunday in May, the largest Citizenship Day gathering, according to the Constitution Center’s blog, happened on May 21, 1944, when 1.5 million gathered in New York’s Central Park, including 110,000 new citizens, to hear Judge Learned Hand speak about the meaning of freedom and liberty.

Citizenship Day

House Joint Resolution 314; Public Law 82-261 (1952), established the following: “*That the 17th day of September of each year is hereby designated as ‘Citizenship Day’ in commemoration of the formation and signing, on September 17, 1787, of the Constitution of the United States and in recognition of all who, by coming of age or by naturalization have attained the status of citizenship ...*” The law moved “I am an American Day” from May to September 17, changed its name, and encouraged civil and educational authorities to plan for proper observance, according to the J. Robert Van Pelt and John and Ruanne Opie Library at Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Mich.

President Harry Truman signed the bill in 1952, changing the name and date to the same day that states celebrated Constitution Day. Truman linked the two events because he felt every citizen, whether foreign-born or native-born, needed to give special consideration and thought on September 17

to their rights and responsibilities under the Constitution. President Dwight Eisenhower expanded this in 1956, designating Constitution Week, to be held September 17-23.

Constitution Day

This observance honors the creation and signing of the U.S. Constitution by 39 men on Sept. 17, 1787. It recognizes all who are born in the U.S. or have become citizens through naturalization. The holiday has a longstanding history, with celebrations originally observed by fraternal organizations.

In 1919, a spokesman for the National Security League told the Allentown Morning Call, the Allentown, Penn., newspaper, that the league’s purpose was to strengthen the faith of the American people in the U.S. Constitution. The intent was to share the doctrines and encourage 40-plus states to hold “suitable exercises in every classroom under their jurisdiction” annually on September 17.

A grassroots campaign to designate Constitution Day as a national holiday was started in 1997 by Louise Leigh, of California, who had learned during her speaking engagements how little people knew about the U.S. Constitution. The holiday was established in 2004.

Constitution Week

This was enacted under Federal Public Law 915, Chapter 875 (1956), and authorized the U.S. president to designate Sept. 17-23 as Constitution Week. During Constitution Week, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services encourages Americans to learn more about the Constitution, what it means to be a U.S. citizen, and the responsibilities and rights of citizenship. People seeking citizenship must pass a naturalization interview and a test. The test consists of 20 oral questions selected from a pool of 128; the individual must

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



CONSTITUTION DAY
& CITIZENSHIP DAY

— 17 SEPTEMBER —

answer 12 correctly. The questions cover citizenship rights, responsibilities, and the Constitution. Many people born and raised in the U.S. are unable to answer correctly.

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

These were combined in 2004 after Senator Byrd promoted changing Citizenship Day to “Constitution Day and Citizenship Day.” In creating the new name, two requirements were added. 36 U.S. Code § 106 requires that on September 17 of every year, the head of every federal agency must provide each employee with educational materials and training about the U.S. Constitution, and every educational facility receiving federal funds must provide a program for students about the U.S. Constitution.

The Declaration of Independence

According to the FAQ on the Constitution Center’s website, the declaration was a list of grievances against the King of England, written in 1776, to justify our separation from British rule. The U.S. Constitution was written and signed 11 years later at the Philadelphia Convention. Article VII of the Constitution required ratification by nine states. The Confederation Congress established March 4, 1789, as the date a new government under the Constitution would begin operating.

The U.S. Constitution

Another Constitution Center FAQ: Ours is the oldest and shortest national constitution and the world’s most powerful vision of freedom. No other country in the world has allowed its citizens to design their own form of government and put governance into the hands of the people.

Grace Grogan is the board secretary of Detroit Working Writers and a member of the Henderson Writing Group in Las Vegas, Nev. Born and raised in Michigan, she began living and traveling full time in a motorhome in 2019 and settled in Arizona in 2024. She returns to the beautiful Great Lakes state every summer.

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Black Cap Farm offers ‘one gigantic garden’ of native plants

By SUE OSELAND

One of my more favorite things to do each year is to visit Matt LaMore, owner of Black Cap Farm Native Plant Nursery, just south of Onekama on M-22. The business was named for the black-capped chickadee, which the nursery’s website describes as a “spunky and inquisitive forest bird.”

I find real pleasure in my conversations with Matt, me asking questions about many of the incredible native plants, shrubs, and trees he carries at the nursery, and him, a font of information, answering them. It has been a work of love creating native plant gardens on my own property, and Matt/Black Cap has supplied the bulk of the plants.

On this visit, though, I wanted to find out more about my neighborhood native-plant expert and why Matt chose this business path. He told me that throughout his life he was influenced by his grandparents to observe nature and learn the names of birds and plants. He was also highly influenced by his mother, “a tremendous home gardener.” He aspired to create a beautiful residential landscape of his own, and with his love of birds, it led to an appreciation and an understanding of the varied habitats that birds need. He also was aware of the crisis of habitat loss, invasive species, human encroachment and general bird population declines.

He had read Doug Tallamy’s “Bringing Nature Home,” a book that solidifies the connection between loving birds, understanding their needs, and fulfilling those needs through better land use. With that in mind, he set out to create bird habitat in his backyard by planting native species. He shared his experience of trying to find native plants, a search that made it clear to him that their availability and variety were issues for the home gardener. At that time, Michigan lagged behind some of the other Great Lakes states in native plant production



A sign marks the entrance. It’s a pleasant drive past woods and meadow to the hilltop nursery. Photo: Mark Videan.



August-blooming Joe pye weed, purple coneflower and ironweed join summer-blooming vervain and wild senna (in background). Photo: Sue Oseland

and retail options. The business he wished he could have shopped at during this time is what led him to create the business he now has: a native plant nursery that focuses on and provides a retail shopping space for home gardeners throughout the entire gardening year.

Matt founded Black Cap in 2020, not an ideal year to begin a business by most standards. However, many people were looking for options to spend more time in the outdoors. A business devoted to raising plants for outdoor gardens, whose retail operation was located outside, seemed to fill that need, and it turned out to be a decent time to jump into the trade.

I asked Matt how the varying ecosystems in and around the area affect which plants he decides to carry. He said his selections have become shaped by the dune plant communities, the overwhelmingly dry, sandy soil conditions found here, and the non-stop battle against a fast-growing deer population. Regarding deer, homeowners are tired of trying and failing to grow plants that inevitably are eaten or otherwise destroyed by these seemingly gentle herbivores. Matt commented that this is a huge problem in the area, and both ornamental landscapes and native plant habitats are suffering as a result of deer overpopulation.

His strategy for those bringing home a new plant is to go on the offensive. He told me that a new plant in the yard will attract deer. He suggested that right from the start, on the very first night after planting, a spray repellent should be used. Waiting longer only encourages deer to nibble on the luscious new greens. (You know they view your yard as a salad, right?)

When asked to name one of his favorite aspects of the business, he replied, “The nursery has become one gigantic garden, and I cannot imagine a better workspace! It

is a pleasure to welcome people for a few minutes out of their busy lives and the busy world. Many customers comment on the peaceful, natural setting of the nursery.”

I couldn’t agree more.

Though there are more than two dozen native plant nurseries in Michigan, Black Cap Farm is the only nursery built to serve retail shoppers that is also open regular hours for the full season and has no minimum-purchase requirements. Additionally, visitors have the opportunity to browse and select plants just as they might choose their produce at a grocery store or farmers market.

Each June, Black Cap hosts a “Native Plant Social” at the nursery and invites community members to meet local experts on gardening, ecology, invasive species management and more. Free resources are available and raffles for free native plants and trees are held. The event is a great way to be introduced to native plants and have your questions answered.

Black Cap Farm Native Plant Nursery is located at 5265 Crescent Beach Road, aka M-22, in Onekama. The nursery is open six days a week (closed Wednesdays and major holidays), May 20 to October 31. Hours are updated on their website: www.blackcapplants.com. Follow the nursery on Facebook and Instagram to view Matt’s photos of the nursery’s native plants and hear of books he’s read about birds, bird habitat and ecology.

Sue Oseland has spent much of her years teaching adult ed and also teaching beadwork while owning Osiris Bead Shop in Traverse City. Sue lives on 7 acres, not far from daily walks and swims in Lake Michigan. She loves music, the outdoors, books and farmers markets.

Broken

By Louisa Loveridge Gallas
Freshwater Reporter Poet in Residence

Every train carrying your dreams seems off the rails. All the buried baggage you’ve stuffed away has finally spilled the beans.

The family elders and kin have lost their minds for years or died suddenly, sometimes no farewell.

The insult a dearly beloved held onto for years, well, they let it fly, didn’t they, then ghosted you?

Dawn comes with feverish air, already scalded by fire.

No bouquet, however fresh, brings relief.

Beauty only recalls loss.

You’re on your knees, trees towering above are bittersweet in their majesty, you’re down so low.

You crawl into your car, drive wildly somewhere as if you can somehow get away.

Road’s so hot, your tires might melt. What’s that dark image ahead on the road?

Closer, you see it’s a slow-moving big old snapping turtle, scraping across the hot bleak asphalt, alone, estranged from its home.

You swerve.

Your heart pounds life back into you. You slow down. Look back.

Even at risk on its harsh journey, the turtle steadily moves onward.

You realize maybe it’s time to put the brakes on your desolation.

You return to the turtle, bend down, the shell too hot to touch, to carry, so you walk alongside in slow motion, you two, close, joined in a vision of, somehow, a release from your burdens when together you and that old relative help each other to reach the other side.

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Music and brew festival to feature eight musical acts

From community reports

The Minnehaha Brewhaha Music Festival will return to the village of Arcadia in northwest Manistee County during Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4–5, 2026, for two days of live music, craft brews, food trucks, family activities and camping.

Hosted by the nonprofit Music Moves Me organization, the festival’s proceeds once again will go directly toward supporting the region’s music education, awareness and appreciation.

The festival schedule is as follows.

Friday, Sept. 4
Minnehaha Music Festival Kickoff. Free admission and parking. Enjoy full access to the beer tent and evening snacks all night long.

6:30 p.m. Festival Gates Open

7 p.m. Live Music featuring Jim Cummings Band

Saturday, Sept. 5
Minnehaha Music Festival. All Day: Purchase craft-beer tastings, visit food trucks and hang out inside the beer tent. Free kids’ crafts and games.

8 a.m. 5k & 15k Races. To register, go to: runsignup.com/Race/MI/Arcadia/MinihahaBrewhaha5k15k)

1 p.m. Festival Gates Open. \$10 Adult entry. Children 12 and under, no charge. Free parking.

2-11 p.m. Nonstop Live Music Across Two Stages

Performances:
2-3:30 p.m. Delilah DeWylde
3:30-4:30 p.m. Jesse Jefferson
4:30-6 p.m. Atomic BombCatz
6-7 p.m. Mason Gratton
7-8:30 p.m. Djangophonique
8:30-9:30 p.m. Kevin and Darin
9:30-11 p.m. Jennifer Westwood and the Handsome Devils

Go online to MusicMovesMe.org for ticket purchases, schedule updates, camping details and festival information. Tickets will also be available at the entry gate on Saturday.

This year, Music Moves Me awarded \$12,000 in student scholarships, teacher grants, and community projects. Three music students from the village of Arcadia and Benzie and Manistee counties received scholarships to enable them to attend Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and Interlochen Arts Academy for musical experiences. Three



Photo courtesy of Music Moves Me.

classroom grants were awarded to the Frankfort High School music department, the Frankfort Elementary music program and the Manistee Elementary School music program. Music Moves Me also collaborated with Interlochen Public Radio to bring the IPR Sound Garden Project to Arcadia for a week-long residency program.

Student Scholarship and Teacher Grant information and applications are available on the Music Moves Me website: musicmoves-me.org.

The Music Moves Me organization can be reached via U.S. mail at P.O. Box 57, Arcadia, MI, 49613, or email them at musicmovesmearcadia@gmail.com.

Tai Chi

continued from Page 1

on Lake Street. (Jean Muldavin, by the way, was a guest of honor on Saturday at this year’s workshop.)

To jump back in time a bit, in 1968 Bush met Larry Besanson while both were students at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. They began a lifetime of friendship, and Besanson started attending the Arcadia Tai Chi workshops in the mid-1980s. He loved the place so much that, at some point, he and wife Debbie Besanson bought a permanent home in the village.

In 1988, the group established Lui Cloud Hands Tai Chi Friends of Michigan to promote Tai Chi for its health benefits. They continue to meet for workshops within the state four times a year. (For information on these workshops, check the Cloud Hands



At left: Richard Gallas, Tai Chi instructor. Photo: D. Besanson.

Michigan group’s Facebook page.)

In 1992, while attending a Tai Chi workshop in Champaign, Illinois, Bush met Richard Gallas and encouraged him and his wife, Louisa, to travel from their Milwaukee residence to attend the next Tai Chi weekend in Arcadia. The rest is history ... Arcadia history, that is. Richard and Louisa bought their home overlooking the park next to Arcadia Lake, and to this day, Richard Gallas teaches Tai Chi at ACC at various times throughout the year. Bush



2026 workshop attendees. Photo: Deborah Besanson

and Gallas both teach Tai Chi at Grebe Park in Arcadia during the summer months, and Bush teaches year-round, twice a week, in Saginaw.

I asked Bush why he practices Tai Chi. “Because it makes me feel good!” he replied. “It opens your energy bodies; it is a holistic practice for body, mind, and spirit; Mr. Lui said the world belongs to the energetic.”

The following quote from Mr. Lui may resonate with area residents who find their pace of life overwhelming. He wrote,

“Tai Chi is not only a health-building exercise and healing art but a philosophy and way of life that teaches us how to apply the art of relaxation to daily living.”

All are welcome to attend the 43rd annual Arcadia Tai Chi Workshop Festival to be held Aug. 7-8, 2027, at ACC.

For information on Tai Chi classes offered in Arcadia during the year, contact the Arcadia Community Center at 231-889-7079.

Sue Oseland has spent much of her years teaching adult ed and also teaching beadwork while owning Osiris Bead Shop in Traverse City. Sue lives on seven acres, not far from daily walks and swims in lake Michigan. She loves music, the outdoors, books and farmers markets.

Area Events Calendar

continued from Page 2

Sept 19
Beach Sweep: International Coastal Cleanup, Ludington
10am-12pm, Free. Volunteer to help clean the beach. Meet at south concession stand at Stearns Park, 420 N. Lakeshore Dr. Gloves/bags provided. We'll be inventorying everything collected and turning the data into the Alliance for the Great Lakes.

Free Senior Expo, Baldwin
10am-4pm. Info, drawings, concessions available. Hollister Senior Center, 1505 Michigan Ave.

3rd Annual Bigfoot Hunt, Baldwin
12pm. Join the scavenger hunt. Ride the trails & find Bigfoot to get prizes & giveaways. Customer appreciation grill out. Open to ATVS's, UTVS's, and dirt bikes. Fox Powersports Peacock, 276 S M37

Barn Dance 2026, Beulah
2-9pm. \$10. Featuring The Mighty TundraTones, The Fabulous Horndogs and The Go Rounds. As there will be lots of dancing, no dogs are welcome. A portion of proceeds will benefit Cognition, a children's center in Beulah that offers hands-on experiences for kids. St. Ambrose Cellars, 841 S Pioneer Rd.

Sept 20
5th Annual Ironman 70.3 Michigan, Frankfort
5am-9pm. Info/Register: www.ironman.com/races/im703-michigan

Ludington Auto Club Cars & Coffee Car Meet, Ludington
10am-1pm. Free and open to the public. Starving Artist, 634 Stiles Rd. Coffee for purchase at the Meraki Coffee Truck.

Sept 20
31st Annual Blessing of the Animals, Free Soil
1-4pm. The public as well as special needs folks are invited. Bring your pets of all sizes to this free church service. Join in the benefit silent auction, games for people & pets & a car & tractor show. Circle Rocking S Children's Farm, 5487 Tuttle Rd.

Sept 22
Weed the Park, Ludington
6-8pm. Free. Volunteer to help AFFEW remove invasive plants. Wear closed-toe shoes, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Bring garden gloves, water. Meet at the gazebo at the end of Rath Ave. by Lincoln Lake. Cartier Park, 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr.

Sept 24
Manhattan Short Film Festival, Ludington
6pm. \$10. 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.ludingtonartscenter.org or at LACA.

Sept 25
Fun with Fungi, Scottville
9am-12pm. Explore the identification and ecology of native wild fungi in Michigan. Fin and Feather Club, 3276 N Darr Rd. Register: <https://tinyurl.com/bdvatyf3>

Near & Farr Friends, Onekama
11am-1pm. Free. Includes lunch & speaker Terri Winegarden about elder law. Topics include Medicaid, estate, probate & special needs planning and more. Bring your questions and concerns. First Congregational Church, 4920 Spring St.

Sept 26
Aging Aces Disc Golf Tournament, Lake Ann
\$20. Singles tournament. 1 round of play. Almira Township Park, 7276 Ole White Dr. Info/register: discgolfsce.com

St. Andrews Fall Bazaar, Beulah
10am-3pm. Items for sale include kitchen & home decor, lawn & garden, arts & crafts, Christmas decorations, baked goods, children's toys, jewelry & accessories and handmade gift items. Proceeds are used to support worthy charities. St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 8190 Lincoln Rd.

Garden Tractor Pulling, Scottville
11am-3pm. Free for spectators. The Western Michigan Old Engine Club sanctions garden tractor pulling for both dead weight sled and transfer sled. Riverside Park, 700 S Scottville Rd.

Craft Beer Festival, Cadillac
3-9pm. \$15-50. Beer, mead, cider & spirits. Live music, food trucks, yard games. At the Cadillac Commons overlooking Lake Cadillac. Info/tickets: cadillaccraftbeerfest.com

Stop Motion Animation Festival, Ludington
6pm. \$5 ADV, \$10 DOOR. Audience members will get to vote for the Viewers' Choice Awards. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St. Tickets: ludingtonartscenter.org/smaf

Mason County Historical Society Gala 2026, Ludington
6-10pm. \$75. Dinner, historical presentations, live and silent auctions, door prizes, and dancing to benefit the Society. Stearns Ballroom 212 East Ludington Ave. Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/47ek5t3j>

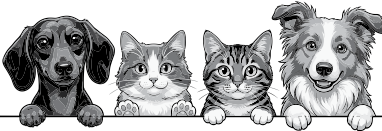
Auction & Dinner Night, Luther
6pm all you can eat food bar, 7pm auction. \$10. Luther Lions Club, 1003 State St.

A Night at the Museum, Benzonía
7pm. Fundraising event. Silent auction & more. Benzie Area Historical Society & Museum, 6941 Traverse Ave. Register: benziemuseum.org

Sept 27
Free Soil Gun & Knife Show
9am-4pm. \$5. \$4 for seniors & vets. Includes a 50/50 raffle (need not be present to win), & food & beverages for purchase. Free Soil Community Center, 8480 Democrat St.

In concert: Benzie Area Symphony Orchestra, Interlochen
4pm. Suggested donation \$15 adults, \$10 seniors, free for kids under 18. "Musical Fun for Children of All Ages" featuring "The Composer is Dead" by Nathaniel Stookey with text by Lemony Snicket & music from the films "Ratatouille" and "How to Train Your Dragon." Benzie Central High School auditorium, 9222 Homestead Rd.

Sept 30
Manhattan Short Film Festival, Ludington
3pm. \$10. 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.ludingtonartscenter.org or at LACA.



This isn't "Jeff," but he looks like this North American Opossum photographed in its winter coat by Empire, Michigan, native Cody Pope, CC-BY-SA 2.5 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5>>, via Wikimedia Commons.

Wild Things

continued from Page 1

I've seen or heard many bird friends. A hairy woodpecker made a habit of tapping on the metal garbage can outside my window at naptime. I encountered an American woodcock in the cedars near the river and was able to get very close. I am afraid I may have disturbed the woodcock's nest. A very large flock of cedar waxwings came and stayed one summer. Winter wrens nest in the sandy bank and I have enjoyed their warbling musical calls for many years. Great horned owls howled on cold fall nights as the moon shone through my bedroom window, and unknown creatures rustled about as winter approached.

I have been outnumbered for years and will be moving 150 feet away, (50 feet vertically).

I never wanted a lawn, but the mansion on the hill has one on the down slope. All the critters will have to run the grassy gauntlet if they care to join me on the hill. Up there, I am far above the riverine environment and have a defensible position, as they say in the



My woodpecker friend pauses his drumming for a portrait.

military, an observation post that will allow me to look down upon the creatures that inhabit my realm and tell myself they are only here by my leave.

I have enjoyed my time in a place where wild things rule. At times, I may have been counted as one of them.

Using the Case 450 bulldozer, S.A. McFerran cleared the space for his new home on the hill above the river. He installed a septic field and planted grass. With the help of Northline Construction the home is nearing completion.

Fish decoy carving competition and sale coming to Cadillac

By **PAT STINSON**

CADILLAC, Mich. – The 2026 World Championship Fish Decoy Carving and Collecting Show and Sale will take place Thursday, Sept. 17 through Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Days Inn, 6001 E. M-115. The annual event is free and is sponsored by the Great Lakes Fish Decoy Collectors and Carvers Association of Cadillac (GLFDCCA), a nonprofit organization whose stated goal is to promote the joy of carving and collecting fish-spearing decoys.

The show and sale schedule is as follows.

On Thursday evening, Sept. 17, “Room-to-Room Trading” begins and runs through Saturday. This sporting collectibles show opens the day before the World Championships and includes regional dealers with a wide variety of fishing lures, fish decoys, duck decoys and related items.

Friday, Sept. 18, marks the start of the “Carving Contests and Show,” beginning at 10 a.m. Contest categories include working fish decoys, decorative fish decoys, folk art fish decoys, jiggling sticks, decorative fish carvings, specialty carvings, a collaborative team challenge, juniors, lure and spears. Each category includes at least one class (sub-category, such as a fish species) to be judged. Contest rules can be found at GLFDA.com and registration forms are available online and at the event.

Saturday, Sept. 19, features a 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. “Collectors Show.” This will be followed by a silent auction beginning at 3 p.m. According to GLFDCCA, collecting fish decoys is enjoyed worldwide as an investment hobby. Collectors consider it an art form, and the carvings have universal appeal, including in warmer climates and other places where there's no ice fishing.

“Collectors attach a certain mysticism to the fish decoy as an object of folk art,” reads a statement on the organization's website.

GLFDCCA was founded in 1989 with a goal of collecting, preserving and passing on the tradition of carving fish-spearing decoys. Its members have worked to nurture the art form by hosting “friendly competitions” during which carvers and enthusiasts swap stories, share their techniques and add new fish decoys to their collections. Members hope to keep the art of carving fish decoys alive by teaching the beloved pastime to future generations. Membership is open to all.

The organization states that spearfishing through the ice with a decoy is a traditional and exacting form of fishing, adding, “We practice the time-honored spearfishing tradition of ‘Look and Release,’ taking only what we need without causing injury to fish as is common in ‘Catch and Release.’”

Some of the group's initiatives have included contributing to a display of spear ice-fishing artifacts at Western Lake Erie Museum in Rockwood, Mich. and helping to financially support the Michigan 4-H fish decoy carving seminars in Lansing and the George W. Brown Jr. Ojibwe Museum and Cultural Center in Lac Du Flambeau, Wisc., as well as supporting other charitable causes, including Hurricane Katrina relief.

For additional information about the show, including rules for entering and a downloadable entry form, visit the GLFDA.com website or contact Al Reeg, the show's chairperson, at (517) 617-0797 or alreeg@yahoo.com.

Pat Stinson is a co-editor of the Freshwater Reporter.

FRESHWATER REPORTER

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