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August 2017

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NEIGHBORS

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A Regional newspaper freely distributed in Dowagiac, Cassopolis, Edwardsburg, Vandalia, Jones, Marcellus, Decatur, Union, Sister Lakes, Three Rivers, Elkhart and Mishawaka, with home delivery at Diamond, Eagle, Birch, Corey, Donnell, Indian, Magician, Shavehead, Baldwin, Long, Dewey, Cable, Juno, Christiana, Painter, Paradise, Stone, Buck, Lewis, Big & Little Twin and Bair Lakes



We are half way thru July, and the sunflowers and Joe Pye Weed are in full bloom, promising to entertain us into August. Both are from the sunflowers family, and both plants bring out the butterflies and bees this time of year. These photo's were taken in Cass county by Cassopolis native Angela Solloway.



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Neighbors is published monthly from
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To contact Neighbors

(269) 228-1080
(269) 476-1680
<http://www.cassneighbors.com>
sailorphil@philvitale.com
jack@beanstalk.net

REGIONAL NEWS

Compassion Cupboard
The Compassion Cupboard food pantry at the First Church of God Cassopolis, 21083 Spencer Rd., Cassopolis, will be open from 9 to 11 am on July 29 and August 26. In addition, the Feed the Hungry Food Truck will be at the church from 4-6 pm on August 23.

Cruzin for Meals on Wheels
On Saturday, August 19, The Cass County Council on Aging will host "Cruzin for Meals on Wheels," a 1950's-themed fundraiser in support of Cass County seniors who benefit from the Meals on Wheels program.

Guests will be treated to a delicious dinner in a 1950's diner-themed area, '50s live music, along with other '50s era-themed activities. There will also be an exciting auction and raffle prizes. This year's event is generously presented by the "Auto Museum" sponsor, the McLoughlin Family Foundation.

The event will take place from 5-9 pm at the COA Lowe Center in Cassopolis. There are still spots available, but they are going fast! Tickets are \$40 per person or \$320 for a table of eight, and sponsorship opportunities range from \$100 to \$10,000. For information about sponsoring or attending the event, contact Heather at 445-8110 ext. 268 or heatherc@casscoa.org to reserve your spot.

Through the Meals on Wheels program, the COA prepares and delivers more than 10,000 meals each year. The COA subsidize the cost to ensure that homebound seniors have access to a hot, nutritious meal daily. This program is critical for many seniors. For some, it is more than just a meal; it may be their only contact with another person all day. Equally important is the fact that the hot nourishing meal has proven to help to allow seniors to remain in their homes longer, instead of having to transfer their residency to a nursing facility.

Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show
Classic autos and motorcycles cruise into historic Dowagiac Saturday, August 19, for the Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show. Winning autos receive trophies, with dash plaques presented to the first 150 entries. Festival goers will enjoy 1950s music, auto games, the Tailgate Treasures' Flea Market, a Lions Club pancake breakfast and barbecue. Activities open in the central business district at 7:30 a.m.
For information e mail vphillipson@dowagiac.org, call 782-8212 or visit www.DowagiacChamber.com

Lots on tap for Antique Engine and Tractor Show

SOUTH HAVEN - A full slate of activities is on tap as the Michigan Flywheelers Museum hosts its 34th annual Antique Engine and Tractor Show Thursday, Sept. 7 to Sunday, Sept. 10.

Along with the hundreds of old tractors and engines that will be on display, the four day event features parades, entertainment, a large outdoor flea market, auction and plenty of things for the kids to see.

"A lot of our exhibitors have turned their displays into working demonstrations so that people especially kids can see how these old machines were once used," said museum president Patrick Ingalls. "

One of the largest shows of its kind in the state, collectors from across the country attend the event each year bringing a wide assortment of antique farm machinery for visitors to see.

If looking at old farm equipment is not your thing, there's plenty of other things to do. The show features a large outdoor flea market with over 200 vendors, antique and garden tractor pulls, Thing-A-Ma-Jig parade, valve cover races and more.

"We have a full schedule of activities" said Ingalls. "This is a family-friendly event and there are plenty of things for kids to do like look for wooden nickels in our Sawdust Pile hunt, or play on the wooden tractor in The Barnyard which is our version of a playground."

A favorite activity at the show is eating locally grown sweet corn cooked by a 1923 Nichols and Shepard steam traction engine that was made in Battle Creek.



"Don't let the long lines discourage you - it's worth the wait," admitted Ingalls. "It is pretty tasty."

The music line up includes high-energy, 50's & 60's Rock 'n' Roller Quentin Flagg on Friday and the southwest Michigan country band- the Bronk Bros. on Saturday. All evening shows start at 8:30 p.m.

Throughout the show, there will be performances by folk singer Joe Foster, Casco Band and jam sessions for anyone who would like to play.

Saturday is considered "Kid's Day" at the show. Activities start with Valve Cover Races at 9:30 a.m. followed by Kiddies Pedal Pull at noon, a sawdust pile treasure hunt at 3:30 p.m. and the John Dudley Magic Show at 7 p.m.

Tractor games will be held for those children who have access to riding lawn tractors, and returning for its seventh year will be the "Kids Night Time Lawn Tractor Cruise" at 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

One of the popular activities for young and old is the "South Haven Tractor Cruise." Scheduled for 4 p.m. Thursday, participants drive tractors of all makes and models into South Haven, cruise along the South Beach, and then stop downtown for an evening of dining and shopping.

Gates open at 8 a.m. rain or shine. Admission to the show is \$7. Children 12 and under are free with a paid adult admission. Thursday is Senior's Day and admission is \$3 for those 62 and over. This is a pet-free event for those paying admission.

Rustic camping sites are available on a first-come basis. Cost is \$10 per night plus daily admission per person. Pets are allowed with exhibitors, campers and vendors only. Personal transportation vehicles, such as golf carts and riding lawn mowers, will be charged a \$15 registration fee. ATVs, dirt bikes and firearms are not permitted.

For more information, contact 639-2010, michiganflywheelers@yahoo.com, or Facebook. A complete show schedule is available on Facebook or www.michiganflywheelers.org.

The Michigan Flywheelers Museum is located at 06285 68th Street, two miles east of South Haven.



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REGIONAL NEWS

Kee-Boon-Mein-Kaa Pow Wow

Located on tribal land of the Band of the Potawatomi Indians in neighboring Pokagon Township, more than 100 Native American dancers from throughout the Great Lakes will compete at Kee-Boon-Mein-Kaa Pow Wow on Saturday & Sunday, September 2 & 3. As they compete for cash prizes, the Potawatomi Indians celebrate the end of the huckleberry harvest.

Families will enjoy the music of drum groups, as they visit a marketplace that showcases black ash baskets, traditional beadwork, sweet grass braids, jewelry, crafts and native foods.

For more info call 782-8998 or visit www.PokagonPowWow.com.

Under the Harvest Moon

Celebrate the crisp autumn season of Michigan in downtown Dowagiac at Under the Harvest Moon, Saturday, October 14, from 10 am to 4 pm.

This fun and family-oriented festival showcases vendors of antiques, hand-made goods, fall produce and sweet delicacies. View our display of vintage farm tractors and vote for your favorite scarecrow. There's also street entertainment, a pumpkin pie eating contest and Caruso's caramel apple and cider bar.

To receive information on booth vendor space, call the Chamber at 782.8212.

Cass County tire collection

Cass County residents are offered free used passenger tire collection. Cass County has received a grant for the collection of used passenger/pick-up truck tires. Collection will be held on Saturday, August 5, from 9 am - noon at the Cass County Historic Courthouse, 120 N Broadway, Cassopolis. There will not be collection at Deerpath or the fairgrounds this year. No appointment is necessary. Proof of county residency is required.

Cass County Fair through Aug.6

The 166th annual Cass County Fair continues in Cassopolis through August 6. Grandstand entertainment features Caroline Kole, who has been on a two-year international tour with Reba McIntire, SJO Super Cross Championship Series, along with the demolition derby, super-stock and street-legal truck pulls, rodeo events and monster trucks. Free must-see events include horse pulls, fireworks, and hundreds of 4-H, Open Class and commercial exhibits. The fair is open Sunday through Saturday, 11 am to 11 pm. Free daily grounds entertainment shows feature Nick's Kids

Show with shows at 2, 4 and 6 PM, Pets Overboard with shows at 2:30, 5 and 7 PM, and the Wild World of Animals with shows at 3:30, 6 and 8 PM. There will be lots of fun and exciting exhibits at the fair, along with numerous vendors and fair food available daily from 11 AM to 10 PM. Come join in the fun!

For information phone 445-8265 or visit www.CassCountyMiFair.com

Summer Play Groups

Cass County's Great Start 0-5 Summer Play Groups - (Free to families with children 0-6) activities for the summer include:

August 16: St. Joe Splash Pad/ Beach Party-333 Broad St. St. Joseph, MI -Splash Pad is FREE. Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy St. Joe's beaches and many attractions after the splash pad.

August 23: Camp 0-5 Play Group-9:30-11 am, Squires Education Center 725 Center St. Cassopolis.

Camp out with us! Enjoy camping activities, crafts and SMORES!

Cass County Great Start Playgroups is also currently enrolling 4 year olds for preschool. Its open enrollment. For more information contact Vicki Foote at vfoote@lewiscassisd.org or 445-6283.

Outside Play Groups/Events will be canceled in the case of inclement weather. Please check the Cass County Great Start Facebook page for cancellation notices.

Running Wild at St. Patrick's County Park, So. Bend

A FUNd-raising run and family fun walk to benefit St. Joseph County Parks will be held at St. Patrick's County Park on August 19. Registration begins at 8am; Run and Walk start at 9 am. There will be a 5K chip-timed run on a trail course; and a 3K Wacky Nature Scavenger Hunt Walk for all ages! Dogs are allowed on 6-ft leash, for the walk only. The event is organized by the Friends of Bendix Woods and Spicer Lake and St. Joseph County Parks. Proceeds will go towards park facilities, programs and bus transportation to the parks for school programs.

There will be awards for the top 3 finishers in each age category, disposable chip timers, great door prizes, and technical t-shirts available for order with pre-registration. Food and beverages will be available after the race, including gourmet egg bakes from Victorian Pantry.

Registration fee is \$20 per individual pre-registration for the 5K; \$25 day

of event. 3K Walk registration is \$15 per individual pre-registration and \$20 day of event. Families registering for the Walk only can get the "Wild Herd" Discount for 3-4 participants, any age, \$35 pre-registration; \$40 day of event. T-shirts are available during pre-registration only for an additional \$9 each. Order by August 13 to be guaranteed a t-shirt.

Running Wild is taking steps each year to be a more earth-friendly event. To reduce waste, we are asking participants to bring their own labeled water bottle to put in coolers at the finish line, and a re-fill station will be provided. Visit our website for more information on the Green Initiatives.

For more information and to register please go to www.sjcparks.org. To volunteer to help with the event please call 574-674-9770.

St. Patrick's County Park is located on Laurel Road, just north of Auten Road in South Bend.

St. Joseph County (MI) program



On Tuesday morning tune in to "Behind the Lines" with Zinta Astairs on NPR/WMUK for a discussion of "The Hidden History of St. Joseph County Michigan" by Kelly Pucci, published by The History Press. The book is available at Lowry's Bookstore, Amazon and Barnes & Noble.



Dickert receives Star Award

Bridget Dickert, paramedic and dispatcher for LifeCare Ambulance Service (<http://lifecareems.org>), is a recipient

of this year's prestigious Stars of Life Award from the American Ambulance Association (AAA). The award honors exceptional emergency medical service providers nationwide. In June, Dickert, along with LifeCare Ambulance CEO, Ron Slagell, attended the National Stars of Life Conference (<https://stars.the-aaa.org/>) in Washington D.C., which celebrates the contributions of ambulance professionals nationwide.

The conference also provides the opportunity for members of Congress to hear directly from paramedics and EMTs about the difference they're making in patient care. "It gives recognition to EMS professionals who are on the front lines every day delivering exceptional care in patients' homes and at accident scenes," Slagell said.

Highlights for Dickert included meeting other EMS professionals from all over the U.S. as well as key legislators on Capitol Hill, sharing ways EMS professionals are working to improve care to patients.

Dickert was nominated for the Stars of Life award by her co-workers and supervisor because of the effort she puts forth in improving dispatch operations plus her work on employee recruitment and retention. Colleagues add that "Bridget's performance in dispatch is fantastic, as is her ability to problem solve, create plans and manage the system status independently. She also works to nurture the next generation of EMS professionals as an EMS instructor."

A graduate of Kellogg Community College, Dickert has been a paramedic and dispatcher at LifeCare Ambulance since 2001, having spent the last six years in dispatch. She also has her instructor/coordinator license and has taught the MFR/EMR course at Kalamazoo Valley Community College for the past three years.

LifeCare Ambulance Service serves as the 9-1-1 response provider for seven Southcentral Michigan counties covering 1,400 square miles, including Battle Creek, Coldwater, Sturgis, Mendon, Cassopolis and surrounding areas. Upholding the highest standards of advanced life support services found anywhere in the country, LifeCare is proud of the bond it has formed with the medical community and area residents. It is also accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS). Learn more at <http://lifecareems.org/>.

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REGIONAL NEWS

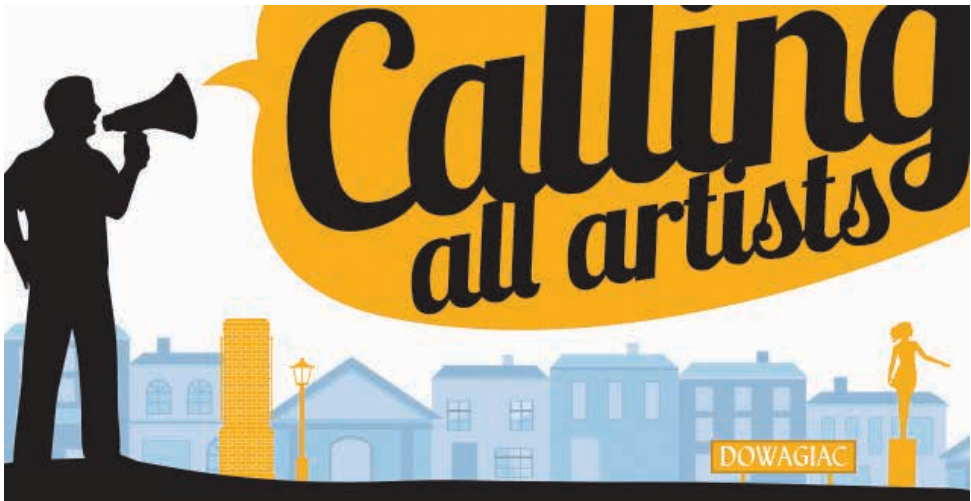
Dairy alumni show at the Fair

Have you ever wanted to show a dairy cow? Could be you have recently aged out of the program and still have a friendly rivalry going on; or, maybe you are a dairy showman from years ago, and would like to have the chance to show some of these whipper-snappers a thing or two? Well ... your time has come! There will be alumni dairy showmanship show at this year's Cass County Fair. The event will be Saturday, August 5 at 6 pm in the show arena; and you don't even have to bring your own cow! Youth exhibitors will be "loaning" their animals for this fundraising event, and money raised will go directly to the

dairy program at the fair for improvements to the barn.

You say that you don't know how to show a cow, but would certainly like to see a good friend of yours try to do it? That's no problem. According to Randy Bowman, dairy superintendent, "You can either nominate yourself or someone else for \$20. And if someone nominates YOU, and you don't want to show, you can 'buy out' for \$20." It will be a fun time spectators and showmen included!

Nomination/sign up forms will be available all fair week at the dairy barn or the auction office at the Cass County Fair. Come on out and be prepared for a great time.



Final Call to Artists

The City of Dowagiac is looking for an artist to tell a story through art. Art Call Dowagiac invites artists of every medium to get to know Dowagiac in-person or virtually and create a series of works that describe the spirit of the City and her people.


The city recently completed a corridor improvement program. That program included multiple locations for permanent works of art. The city intends to find the right artist to depict the spirit of the city on these larger than life exterior spaces. The artist will have the opportunity to over-see the large-scale creation of their design in back-lit metal.

The selected artist will join quite a prestigious family of artists who have permanent works across the City: Richard Hunt, Tuck Langland, John Mishler, Rosetta, Nina Akamu, Bob Guelich, Fritz Olsen, Richard Tylor, and Winifred Godfree.

The blinders are completely off in this invitation: any medium, any style, from any artist, from any corner of the globe is welcome.

Artists are urged to answer this call with the ingenuity and openness of the people of Dowagiac themselves; restraint and conventionality are strongly discouraged. The deadline is quickly approaching. Visit www.ArtCallDowagiac.com for more information and permanent installation locations.

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15932 Saddlebag Lake Road, \$295,000 Open concept feel throughout kitchen, dining, and living areas with lakeviews, a spiral staircase and a woodburner in the living room. A real must see!

Diamond Lake



61711 Channel Drive Cassopolis, \$449,000, Completely Remodeled, 75' frontage, 13' ceilings, oak hardwoods, granite counters, stainless steel appliances



Birch Lake - 63300 Birch Road, Vandalia, MI. Price: \$1,170,000 w/o guesthouse \$895,000. Every special amenity imaginable inside!

Klinger Lake



20760 Watson Road, White Pigeon, MI, \$1,499,500. Waterfront Luxury on 133 ft sandy beach frontage. High ceilings, oak curved staircase with grand foyer, fireplaces, bedroom suites, theatre room. State of the art!



21312 Sail Bay Road Cassopolis, MI \$749,000, Diamond Lake- Turn Key-68' lake-frontage- Over 6,000 square feet of living space!

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Harwood Lake Street, Three Rivers, \$329,900. WHAT A VIEW-From the open concept living room.



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REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

August 2 - Annual Book Sale, 9 am-5 pm, Don't miss this large annual book sale, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 3 - Annual Book Sale, 9 am-5 pm, Don't miss this large annual book sale, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 4 - Annual Book Sale, 9 am-5 pm, Friday is \$1 per bag day, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 4-6 - 57th St. Joe Valley Old Engine Association Antique Tractor and Engine Show 9 am daily, Boot Hill Ranch, Harder Rd., Jones, Mi, 651-4878 (evenings)

August 5 - Cass County tire collection, 9 am - noon, Historic Courthouse, Cassopolis, proof of residency required

August 5 - Dairy alumni show, 6 pm, Cass County Fairgrounds show arena, \$20

August 8 - Exotic Zoo, 10 am, Live animals will be shown at this free family-friendly program, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 8 - Exotic Zoo, 1 pm, Live animals will be shown at this free family-friendly program, Cass District Library- Mason/Union Branch, 357-7821

August 9 - Card Making Class, 1-3 pm, Space is limited to 12 people ages 7+, Call library to register, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 9 - Friends Group Open House, 6-7 pm, Join us for refreshments and learn about the group, Open to the public, Cass District Library- Mason/Union Branch, 357-7821

August 10 - Exotic Zoo, 10 am, Live animals will be shown at this free family-friendly program, Cass District Library- Edwardsburg Branch, 487-9215

August 10 - Exotic Zoo, 1 pm, Live animals will be shown at this free family-friendly program, Cass District Library- Howard Branch, 487-9214

August 11 - Family Fort Night, 6-8 pm, Bring your own sheets/blankets and pillows to build a fort, Pizza, games and books provided, Cass District Library-

Main Library, 357-7822

August 11 - Beckwith Park Summer Concert series, Dowagiac, 7:30 pm, Dennis Ferrier, 782-8212

August 11 -13 - US 12 Garage Sale

August 12 - Barron Lake Decorated Boat Parade, 2 pm (rain date Aug. 13, 1 pm); theme: Music

August 12 - Summer Library Club Ends, Turn your library passports in during regular library hours to receive your final reward, All Cass District Libraries, 1-866-808-READ

August 13 - Centerville Antique Show and Sale, 8 am - 3 pm, St. Joseph County (MI) Fairgrounds, \$4, 715-526-9769, zurkopromotions.com

August 14 - Math Scoops! Ice Cream Math Club Begins, All Cass District Libraries during regular open hours, 1-866-808-READ

August 14 - Lego Afternoon, Begins at 1 pm, Legos will be available to play with in the children's area, Cass District Library- Edwardsburg Branch, 487-9215

August 14-19 - Berrien County Youth Fair, Berrien Springs, <https://bcyf.us/>

August 15 - Movie: Boss Baby, 2 pm, Free popcorn and water provided, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 19 - Running Wild fund-raiser family run and fun walk, St. Patrick's County Park (So. Bend), \$fee, 574-674-9770, www.sjcparks.org

August 19 - Cruzin for Meals on Wheels, 5 - 9 pm, COA Lowe Center, Cassopolis, \$40, 445-8110, heather@casscoa.org

August 19 - Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show, downtown Dowagiac, 7:30 am, 782-8212, www.dowagiac-chamber.com

August 20 - 10:30 am- Southern Gospel Concert with Ron & Sharon Frazier followed by annual church picnic at the Cass Fellowship Bible Church, 64016 M-62, Cassopolis

August 21 - The Great American Solar Eclipse Program, 1:30 pm, Crafts, snacks, and free solar eclipse glasses provided to view the eclipse, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 22 – 5 pm – National Association of Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 monthly meeting at the Super Buffet, Benton Harbor. All retired/ current federal employees, spouses /families are welcome, Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or jeanrowe70@comcast.net

August 23 - Native Art Suspended, 2-6 pm, Drop in and create a hanging nature art piece, You are encouraged to bring some of your own natural found items, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

August 24 - Lego Day, 9 am-8 pm, Legos will be available to play with in the children's area, Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

September 2, 3 - Kee-Boon-Mein-Kaa Pow Wow, 782-8998, www.pokagonpowwow.com

September 7 - 10 - 34th annual Antique Engine and Tractor Show, two miles east of South Haven on 68th St., www.michiganflywheelers.org

September 17 - 10:30 am Missionary Appreciation Sunday & White Elephant Auction, proceeds go to increase Missionary Christmas Offering at the Cass Fellowship Bible Church, 64016 M-62, Cassopolis

September 26 – 5 pm, National Association Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 monthly meeting, Super Buffet, Benton Harbor. All retired/current federal employees, spouses/families are welcome, Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or jeanrowe70@comcast.net

October 3 - Centerville Antique Show and Sale, 8 am - 3 pm, St. Joseph County (MI) Fairgrounds, \$4, 715-526-9769, zurkopromotions.com

October 14 - Under the Harvest Moon, 10 am - 4 pm, downtown Dowagiac, 782-8212

October 24– 5 pm, National Association Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 monthly meeting, Super Buffet, Benton Harbor. All retired /current federal employees, spouses/families are welcome, Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or jeanrowe70@comcast.net.

December 5 – 1:30 pm, National Association of Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 annual holiday dinner at Coach's Bar & Grill, Stevensville. All retired/current federal employees, spouses/families are welcome, no RSVP needed. No business meeting, new officers will be sworn in. Next meeting March 28, 2018. For information call Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or jeanrowe70@comcast.net

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Sneak in your daily fitness

By **BRENDA HARRIS**
Cass COA

If you think that you're too busy to fit in a full workout, think again. Plenty of small bouts of exercise can add up and provide just as many heart-healthy benefits as longer workouts. The best part is you don't need a gym or even wear workout clothes. You can squeeze in little bits of activity here and there so that even when you're too busy for a full workout, you can stay active and burn calories.

The following examples are ways to transform the must do chores into mini-workouts.

CLEANING HOUSE

House cleaning is on our daily to-do list. Instead of seeing it as a chore, start thinking of cleaning as a double-duty workout. Simple cleaning, such as dusting, taking out the trash, changing the bed linens, can burn up to 170 calories for a 150-pound person. So heavier duty tasks such as sweeping the floor, washing windows and cleaning the garage can burn more than 250 calories an hour.

To increase that calorie burn even

more, get creative. When scrubbing the bathtub, scrub extra hard to give your muscles a challenge. Just remember don't use the same arm, switch arms. While sweeping, add some lunges instead of letting your arms do all the work. When you are either getting something or cleaning those lower cupboards don't bend over, squat down to get those hard to reach places. When doing laundry, use the bottle of detergent as a dumbbell and do bicep curls on your way to the laundry room. Try doing a few push-ups using the kitchen counter before you start doing dishes. Be creative with exercises, there are endless ways to get fit cleaning house.

AT WORK

Surely you have heard the advice to take the stairs instead of the elevator and park the car at the back of the parking lot. Instead of emailing or calling a coworker, walk over to his or her office for that report you need. Something different you could do is a walking meeting. This won't work for everyone but for the ones that it does it can encourage new thoughts and unique solutions to problems, making it great for brainstorm sessions.

If someone at work is looking to get fit, invite him or her to an active lunch break. Go for a brisk walk outside, climb a few flights of stairs or even hit the gym if you have one.

If you can't get away from your desk, try to stash a pair of dumbbells or a resistance band in your drawer or locker to use during breaks or while you talk on the phone.

DURING YOUR DRIVE TO WORK

How much time do you spend in your car on a regular day? What a waste of valuable exercise time. There are a few simple exercises that are safe behind the wheel. Turn your favorite music on, and squeeze those gluteus muscles in beat with the music. Just be sure to watch the road and save the hard move at the traffic light or stop sign. If the guy next to you looks at you funny, just smile and be on your way when the light changes.

YARD WORK

Yard work is a great way to get in your fitness. Mowing, trimming bushes and gardening are huge calorie burners. A 150 pound person can easily burn 200-

400 Calories an hour working in the yard. You will not burn as many calories using a power mower or a rider mower. You have to put that body to work to burn those calories. Don't be afraid to get creative. When working in the yard take the opportunities to squat or lunge when picking up tools or do a few reps with bags of mulch. When it's snowy outside, you can burn as many as 400-plus calories an hour shoveling the white stuff.

TV TIME

Many of us look forward to plopping on the couch or our easy chair when we get home after a long day. After a long day, the last thing your body needs is to sit down. Try doing push-ups, crunches, jumping jacks or some sort of exercise during each commercial break.

Squeezing in short bursts of exercise is great for beginners and experienced exercisers because it burns calories, tones muscles, strengthens your heart and helps you keep an active lifestyle. Start thinking of and doing more ways you can get active on the job, at home, and throughout the day.

Think fit not fast

By **BRENDA HARRIS**
Cass COA

Have you ever stared at your to do list with dread: unload the dishwasher, sweep the floors, do the laundry, plan dinner, drop the kids off, go to the gym, and the list goes on.

The good news is that one simple change has the ability to shorten your list, improve your health, bring your family closer together, and conserve resources all at the same time.

Instead of using modern technology to do things the fast way, try doing things the fit way. By avoiding modern conveniences in favor of the old-fashioned methods, you'll find endless calorie burning potential. While the fast way may seem more efficient, think of the fit way as a way to combine your goals. In a way, you'll be getting more things done at once, so you'll check off that to do list with ease. If you're so used to the

fast way that you've forgotten that there is another way, start with these alternatives:

Fast Way: drive through the car wash.

Fit Way: wash your car with a sponge and a bucket of suds. In just 30 minutes, you can make your car sparkle and burn 140 calories. If you want to get your kids involved, bring out some extra sponges and let them scrub and rinse with you. There is no guarantee anyone will stay dry, but the chances are that you'll have fun. If you don't have a place to wash your car, there are lots of "do it yourself coin" car washes that will do the trick.

Fast Way: drive to the supermarket, cleaners, video store.

Fit Way: walk, jog, or ride your bike to where you are going. If you only have a few things to pick up or drop off, take a backpack and use people power to get there. You'll burn calories. Get a workout while

running errands, and reduce fuel expenses and wear and tear on your car.

Fast Way: pick up dinner at the local carry out.

Fit Way: Cook dinner yourself. In just 15-45 minutes you can whip up an amazing dinner with lots of healthy veggies and whole grains, and you can burn at least 126 calories while you're at it. If you have kids, get them involved. They are great at measuring, mixing, and setting the table—plus learning how to cook wholesome foods will set them up for a lifetime of healthy eating habits.

Fast Way: load the dishwasher and push start.

Fit Way: Wash your dishes by hand. Before you run away screaming, listen to this: Just 30 minutes of dish washing burns 70 calories! Get your family involved for a great opportunity for conversation; if you're solo, turn on some music and make it fun. With you scrubbing the dishes, you'll

save money on your electric bill and extend the lifetime of your dishwasher too.

Fast Way: use a leaf blower (or hire someone to do the raking).

Fit Way: Rake your own leaf pile. Raking leaves burns 126 calories per half hour, why would you pay someone to work out for you?

Fast Way: dry your clothes in the dryer.

Fit Way: Hang your laundry out to dry. Hanging your clothes out to dry, you'll burn calories, save on energy consumption, and save money by skipping the dryer sheets.

These are just some ideas to get you started. "Thinking fit" will burn more calories, save you money, and may even improve your relationships. Chances are, you might even have fun with these fit alternatives, or at the very least, gain an appreciation for how easy you really have it.

Think fit, not fast!



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PASTA ITALIA CON CHEF DONATO

Caprese Portabella Burger and Salad

Mid to late summer is a great time for cooking and eating the abundance of fresh vegetables and fruits we have in our area, and, especially vine ripened tomatoes. These recipes feature the versatile tomato, which is actually listed as a fruit.

Caprese salad comes from the southern part of Italy, Naples, Capri area. Featured on many Italian restaurant menus, it is made up of sliced tomatoes, fresh mozzarella and fresh basil on top and olive oil

Here are two fun twists of a Caprese salad that are easy fun to make, and will sure delight your family and guests.

Caprese Portabella Burger

This is for 2 servings; add 2 mushrooms and burgers for every 2 servings and more tomato and cheese.

Ingredients

- 4 portabella mushrooms
- 4 2 oz hamburger sliders
- Package of fresh mozzarella
- 4 fresh ripe tomatoes

Marinade

2-3 tablespoons oregano, 1/3 cup olive oil, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, splash of white wine

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients of the marinade
2. Clean mushrooms and scrape out the gills with a spoon or knife
3. Core and dice the tomatoes and then put in a bowl and salt them and add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to marinate them



4. Brush the gill side of the mushrooms with the marinade and put on a hot grill with the gill side down for about 5 minutes
5. Brush the top side of the mushrooms and turn over
6. Cook the hamburgers about 2 minutes on each side
7. Assemble the dish by putting the hamburger inside the mushroom, cover with the tomatoes(drain them a bit before adding them) and then top with a fresh slice or pearls of mozzarella.

8. Cover the grill until the cheese melts, serve with any extra tomato on the side. Drizzle a bit of the marinade on top.
9. Serve two on a plate for each serving

Option - make a larger number and serve on a platter and let the guest serve themselves.

Caprese salad with goat cheese, anchovy and lemon

This is a simple refreshing twist on the old standard

- Ingredients** for 2
- 2-3 fresh tomatoes sliced
 - 2-3 oz of goat cheese
 - 1 can of anchovies drained
 - Lemon dressing- 1/3 cup of olive oil, 2 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice

Directions

1. Make the dressing-mix the oil and lemon together- taste- if you want a more lemon flavor add more lemon, too lemony, add more olive oil
2. Put the sliced tomatoes on 2 plates-sprinkle lightly with sea salt if using the anchovies
3. Lay the anchovies on top- be sure to drain the anchovies
4. Cover with crumbled goat cheese
5. Refrigerate until ready to serve, then spoon the lemon dressing over before serving.

Options - For a big group, put the sliced tomatoes on a platter and follow the steps. Don't like anchovies, then leave them out. Don't like goat cheese, then use mozzarella or Gorgonzola.

Enjoy
~Chef Donato

Chef Donato is Dennis Bamber an avid cook. He grew up in the restaurant business and has traveled extensively worldwide as well as being a partner in a business in Paris for 9 years. He is a second generation Italian-American. He is currently a realtor with Cressy & Everett, licensed in Michigan and Indiana, and specializes in lake property.



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LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

August ... and the heat is on!

by JANE BOUDREAU

Hey Neighbors ... it's just me. We are SO in the heat of the summer. And I don't mean just weather-wise ... the heat is on to get out, soak it up and eat it up, because we are now sliding downhill toward the end of the summer season. I know, I hate to be the bearer of bad news (or maybe good news for those of you who despise the heat), but its time to shake it up and start making plans-real plans, to squeeze all we can out of this Season 'O Plenty!

We live on a smallish bay or what some call a cove. We have an inlet which takes us out to the big bad lake. We like it here as we can have a sandy beach. We extend the sand out a good 20 feet so when we swim and goof around, it's a nice feeling for the tootsies. The water is quite calm as well, which is conducive for a smooth kayak or paddleboat cruise. We recently found some affordable paddle boards (if you want one or two, check out Walmart), and as we are just learning, a beach launching spot and smooth sailing is the key.

My husband has always done the heavy work of adding sand to the beach and water every year. It takes days and it's physically demanding. We were waved down by a company doing work in the area about three years ago. They noticed the truckload of sand in the driveway. Turns out they are The Beach Boys, although they can do a multitude of other work on your property as well. They gave us a price and I asked, "When can you start?" Knock me over with a feather, "Right now". In 45 minutes this crew of seven had it done and it was absolutely worth it. Jim's business is expanding all the time. He doesn't just oversee his employees, he jumps right in with them if needed. He follows up by coming to your home not only when the work is in progress, but every time he's working in the area. And that's often--he's in big demand! You can Google more info on The Beach Boys.



I love this little ladder and cute tea towel. I found a 'New to Me' shop called Sweet Comforts right on M 62 in Edwardsville. Pay a visit if you love painted furniture and handcrafted pieces of decor. Something for everyone. The owner is huggable!

When I spend week after week at



the lake in the summer, I like to wake up and hit the road to explore. I love to shop everywhere; the mall and big box stores in Mishawaka and Elkhart, and the local business in every town. I've been striking gold in Edwardsville lately. It's just 15 minutes away and I really love the small town pride vibe I get there. Main St. boasts a few antiques shops (and a quilt shop), and I fell in love with a shop called Chicago Road Antiques. This is not a shop where you have to riffle through dusty boxes to find a treasure, although there is nothing wrong with that. Although it's a small shop, everything is arranged and displayed with thought. I found pieces I had been lovingly collecting over the years, and others I fell in love with immediately. The owner is a lovely woman and she is so friendly and helpful.



While I love grabbing low prices on flowers and plants this time of year, my enthusiasm for being outdoors is waning by now. So this is how it goes around my Ponderosa in August:

I've gotten so tired of eating outdoor grilled foods that there are 2 inches of grit on this monster that is praying for mercy-or time off for good behavior (and the grease fire I started on the 4th of July).

I am totally through with shuffling food and drink from my kitchen to the patio or beach. If someone wants something, well hello-I trust you to go into my home without stealing the silver.

I'm disgusted with the sand on my floors. It may or not be my fault seeing that we have a beach as I extolled above. I had the brilliant idea to place a tub of water near the door where our people could step in and rinse off their feet. And then hubby pointed out I would then have water all over said floors. Hmmmmmm ... I curse the day men were allowed to have wise thoughts.

I love my garden when I am doing cartwheels in the spring to get going on digging, planting and watering. In August it's the survival of the fittest. I'm parched and the flowers are parched, but I'm all out for me so I pacify myself that rain will come eventually. I think live or die as I sip my second Bellini.

So now you have it. I'm a fair weathered gardener but I think we all feel a bit of the same sometimes. Mid summer is tiring, physically and mentally. If we truly want to view the fruits of our labor, its best to do it early in the morning. Late evening is also good. Wander around with that glass of Pinot Noir and you will find it's a wonderful remedy for mosquito bites. Like a hangover, you'll only notice in the morning.

Addressing the grill/running to the kitchen thing, I feel I have to give some honest advice. And I know I'm always pushing that on you. I keep a plastic bin with a lid, something durable from perhaps Lowes or Home Depot. Have it in a sheltered area with close access to your grill and outdoor dining area. Keep your clean BBQ utensils in it, as well as a few large melamine trays to transfer food to. Oven mitts, foil and a spray bottle with water is helpful. Just think of those essentials you are always running back and forth for when you really can't leave that grill unmanned or unwomaned. I thought of keeping paper plates and napkins but I really don't want to push this idea too far. I mean there is a cleanliness issue here. But I raise my hand to say I have a kitchen cabinet designated to all things simple and transportable for the outdoor patio. It's not so much about organization as it is an easy way to tell somebody where they can find the stuff. And take it from me, when someone offers to go fetch something and you reply, "Thanks! You can find it ...", I love the surprise on their face. Some people actually think you are going to say, "Naw, I'll run in and get it." Thus my grease fire. Get

these people up and moving.

I live at the lake almost all summer, especially this year because we were stuck in the city after the house was gutted and reborn 18 months later due to water damage. I am loving it. Days stretching into lovelier days. Just me, my dogs, and a superior security system. It's a great time to catch up with my longtime lake friends as well. I've always loved the hospitality of rural people. In my little part of the city, most folks ask if they can bring something to a get together, and the polite response is usually, "No, just yourself. Ha ha ha!". At the lake, people don't even ask, they show up at your door with an appetizer or something to accompany your spread.

That said, I've noticed these little acts of kindness are wonderful but the food is uninspiring. I see appetizers that were very popular going back to the 1990's. Not intending to insult anyone, honestly. Time is of the essence and a lot of times, get together and parties are impromptu. When I share recipes, it's always my goal to enlighten you readers to something new and fun and sincerely, not daunting. When I first started blogging, I was amazed that their were women who did not like to cook, never had and never will, and even had husbands who cooked! Foreign territory in my house, that's for sure. And I love that. Let those guys liberate themselves. I was never a huge foodie, but I'm always up for a challenge and that's when I started to read cookbooks and experiment. I was hooked. And of course, I love that I'm rewarded with compliments, even if its just my husband mumbling something incoherent with a mouthful. The nod says it all.

So, here are some appetizer recipes that still fit the bill during the coming weeks. Nothing needs to be heated or served hot. Most are quick to make and don't require a lot of ingredients. Don't worry if the picture or ingredient looks 'weird'. I have often found that these are the most sensational dishes you can try. The compliments will be sincere.



Fresh Mango Guacamole

I've found this wonderful dip in my grocery store but its super expensive. I really love the tanginess the mango makes without overpowering. It's a colorful dip as well, and it comes

together quick. This is a make ahead recipes, too. The key is to save the pit of one avocado and keep it in the container you store the guac in. Making it from scratch really saves money and the beauty is, store bought tortilla chips is like a little cheat.

Fresh Mango Guacamole

Ingredients

- 4 avocados, pitted
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 cup mango, diced small
- 1/2 c each chopped red pepper, green onion, and tomato
- 2 T chopped cilantro
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- S & P to taste

Directions

Smash the avocados in a large bowl with a fork until soft but with a bit of chunkiness. Slowly fold in the remaining ingredients very gently until well combined. Chill at least 1 hour before serving.



Ricotta Lemon Prosciutto Bruschetta

Don't let the idea of using Prosciutto daunt you. It is simply ham that has been cured and sliced thin (handle it carefully as it can tear and shred). I find it in the meat and cheese section of the grocery store. A package runs under \$5.00 in my store. And finally, ricotta cheese is an unsung hero, I'm guilty of using it only in lasagna. Try this recipe and I think you'll come up with new ideas for this exceptional cheese.

Ingredients

- 1 baguette of good bread, sliced in 1/4 inch pieces
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 c fresh ricotta cheese
- S & P to taste
- 1 lemon, zested**
- 2 T fresh basil, roughly chopped
- 2 T honey

Directions

Toast the slices of bread in a 450 oven until lightly browned (about 7 minutes) Flip over and drizzle the olive oil on each slice and return to oven until browned.

Meanwhile, zest your lemon*. This simply involves using a cheese grater or vegetable peeler to remove ONLY the yellow part of the lemon. The white section under is very bitter. Chop the pieces until very fine. Mix the zest with the ricotta cheese and add a little salt and pepper, the cheese can be a little bland. (Note: The cheese mix can be made ahead of time and stored in a tightly covered container for a day or two. The bread will get soggy otherwise).

Top the toasted bread slices with the ricotta mixture and prosciutto, sprinkle the basil on each one and then drizzle with the honey. Heavenly. Save some for your guests.

Watermelon 'Pizza' with Feta and balsamic glaze



This is a beautiful sight! I can't begin to tell you how refreshing and delicious the flavors are. The ingredients look a little odd, but hey, you have to step outside of the box and be open to new things. Food included. Everything compliments each other. And besides being visually pleasing, you will be hooked on how delicious this is.

Ingredients

- 1 large watermelon, cut in the middle to get the three biggest slices, 1 inch thick (the remaining will not be wasted if you have kiddies around!)
- 3 oz. feta cheese, crumbled
- 15 pitted kalamata olives, sliced

- 2 T mint leaves, chopped
- 1 to 2 T balsamic glaze*

Directions

Cut the rounds of watermelon into 'pizza slices' and arrange on a round pizza pan or dish as seen in the photo. Randomly sprinkle on all of the remains ingredients and then drizzle the balsamic glaze* over. I use a small plastic bottle found at a local craft store that has a cooking/baking aisle. You can use a teaspoon but it tends to look sloppy. Serve cold.

You can purchase balsamic glaze in your condiment or salad dressing aisle, but if you want to save a few pennies, make it this way:

- 1 1/2 c balsamic vinegar
- 1 1/2 to 2 T honey
- 1 clove garlic, chopped finely
- 1 t salt

Mix all of the ingredient in a small jar with a lid. Use what you need and save the rest for a nice salad. Keeps in the fridge about 3 days.

Tea Sandwiches



These sound fancy and a little too fussy to serve or bring to a casual get together, but believe me, you can do these easily ahead of time and store in the refrigerator wrapped very tightly in plastic. This is a picture of the table I created for my daughter in laws baby shower. I made the tea sandwiches and most of the other nibbles with the help of my daughter and sister in law. I'm not including this photo for accolades, I wanted to show you quickly some of the easy and inexpensive ways you can serve your appetizers if the gig is at your own home.

First of all, these are not family heirloom silver trays, they are from a dollar store. Seriously. The cute napkins are from a craft store. So are the little chalkboard signs which had the names of the foods. I jazzed up some of the trays with edible flowers found near the herbs in my grocery store (I have to admit no one ate them but they

sure looked pretty!). Finally I took some of the more common appetizers like cheese cubes to another level by poking rosemary sprigs into them. I'm a fussy person but you can't deny this isn't a festive table. Plan, buy cheap, get help.

The main highlight was several platters of tea sandwiches, the main attraction and 'filler' of the spread. Note how I placed them on their sides. You can see the filling this way. On the creamier fillings, sprinkle some finely chopped basil or chives on a plate and press the sides of the sandwich sections into it. A colorful touch and very flavorful.

Before I overwhelm you, let me say I'm made several fillings for these, but I know you can do your own. One was my own egg salad recipe, another chicken salad. Finally, to balance the creaminess I made traditional (some-what) cucumber sandwiches that the Brits know and love. Here's that recipe:

Ingredients

- 10 slices of firm sandwich bread, such as Pepperidge Farm
- 1 stick of salted butter, softened
- 1 large English cucumber, thinly sliced and drained on paper towels
- Dash of S & P

Directions

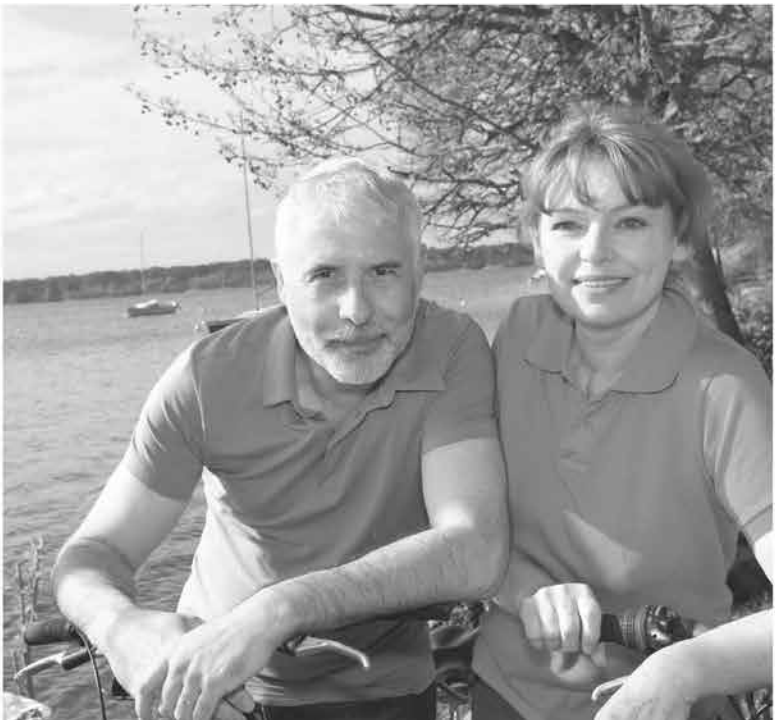
Spread the butter generously on 5 slices of the bread. Top with 4 rounds of cucumbers in a square. Lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper and add the remaining 5 slices over each sandwich. Using a sharp knife, slice the crusts off and cut the sandwiches in to four pieces. Serve turned on the diagonal. Makes 20

A note: make all of the sandwiches completely before cutting the crusts off for a nice clean edge.

Goodness, I'm exhausted writing this. I hope you have your scissors to cut out some of these recipes. Don't store them away in an obscure place as they scream summer. And like all good Michigan folk, we never show up empty handed!

See you next month with some cute fall crafts, house warming decor ideas, and cooler weather recipes.

Jane Boudreau is a blogger and writer who spends time at her lakehouse, city home and a little place in the North Carolina mountains. She contributes to Neighbors each month and writes a weekly column for a Chicago newspaper. Contact her at blndy9@yahoo.com



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Cass County real estate sales

In June, overall the number of houses sold in Cass County was 58; the same as in June 2016. Year-to-date, the number of houses sold slipped to 285 from 296 in 2016 for a 4 percent decline.

The number of waterfront homes sold in June increased 15 percent (23 vs. 20). Year-to-date, waterfront home sales were up 11 percent (82 vs. 74). Non-waterfront home sales dropped 8 percent from 38 in June 2016 to 35 in June 2017. Year-to-date, non-waterfront home sales were down 9 percent below sales in 2016 (203 vs. 222).

In June, the average selling price in Cass County for all homes sky rocketed 33 percent to \$221,799 from \$166,705 in June 2016. The median selling price for all homes in June jumped 10 percent to \$154,500 from \$140,250 in 2016.

The average selling price for waterfront homes nearly doubled. At \$368,692 in June 2017, there was a 98 percent increase over the \$185,790 set in June 2016. The median selling price for waterfront homes soared 61 percent to \$290,000 from \$180,000 in June 2016.

The average selling price for non-waterfront homes in June plummeted 20 percent (\$125,269 vs. \$156,661). The median selling price fell 29 percent to \$90,000 from \$127,000 in June 2016.

The median price is the price at which 50 percent of the homes sold were above that price and 50 percent were below.

In Cass County, the number of bank-owned or foreclosed homes as a part of all closed transactions in June was 7 percent. This was the lowest percentage reached in June since 2014. It was also the lowest percent for the year. The highest percentage in June previously was 16 percent in 2014.

For comparison, last month in May a new record low was set in the number of bank-owned or foreclosed homes as a percentage of all transactions. That was 6

percent. In June the record was lowered to 5 percent. The previous lowest percentage was 8 percent in October 2016. In June 2009, the percentage was 36 percent.

Throughout SWMI, the housing market rolled into the peak season with buyers experiencing a small reprieve in selling prices. The average selling price in June increased only ½ percent from May 2017 (\$225,091 vs. \$224,204). Comparing June 2017 to June 2016, the average selling price only increased \$1220 or again ½ percent (\$225,091 vs. \$223,871).

The SWMI housing market in June continued to shatter previous records in the year-over-year comparison that dates back to 2006 in all categories except one. The number of houses sold in June 2017 tied the record set in June 2006 at 388 houses sold.

The 388 houses sold in June resulted in an 11 percent increase over the 348 houses sold in June 2016. This becomes significant when you consider in June 2016, the inventory of houses for sale stood at 2386 and in June 2017 the inventory was 1982. So with a 17 percent drop in inventory, 40 more houses were sold.

From May to June 2017, the inventory of houses available for sale only grew by 26 houses (1982 vs 1956). This robust market was operating with an inventory at just 6.5-months supply of houses in May and June.

The total dollar volume for June increased 12 percent over June 2016 (\$87,335,485 vs. \$77,907,454). Year-to-date, the total dollar volume was up 15 percent (\$355,292,735 vs. \$310,108,424).

The median selling price of \$165,250 in June 2017 increased 6 percent over the \$156,000 set in June 2016. Year-to-date the median selling price rose 11 percent to \$150,000 from \$135,000 in 2016.

Overall in SWMI, the mortgage rate

dropped slightly to 4.03 from 4.129 percent in May. Last year in June, the rate was 3.65. Nationally, the Freddie Mac mortgage rate in June was 3.88 compared to 3.94 percent in May for a 30-year conventional mortgage.

This data reflects home sales across Berrien, Cass and the westerly 2/3 of Van Buren counties and should not be used to determine the market value of any individual property. If you want to know the market value of your property, please contact your local REALTOR®.

When Selling a Home...

You may think about selling your home yourself. But here is a fact that you should consider. Nearly nine out of 10 sellers, or 89 percent, wholeheartedly believe it's important to work with an agent when selling. They also reported a median gain on the sale of their home of \$40,000 more than they paid for it, according to NAR's 2015 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers. So by trying to sell the house yourself, you may be leaving

money on the table while going to all the expense and effort of doing all the work alone in a vacuum. Contact a REALTOR® to help you navigate through this hot but still competitive housing market.

When Buying a Home...

The house will mean more than just a place to live. The number one reason to own a home is that it will increase your net worth. Based on the Federal Reserve's 2016 data, Yun, chief economist of the National Association of Realtors®, predicts it will show that homeowners will show between \$225,000 to \$230,000 in median net worth while renters will only have around \$5,000. The second biggest impact home ownership does is to save you money when you pay your tax bill. Home owners can deduct state and local income and property taxes and mortgage interest and mortgage insurance payments. Ask your REALTOR® about other home ownership benefits.



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Back to school ... are you ready?

By Vicki Brossman
Kemner-Iott Benz Agency of Cass County

The dog days of summer will be over before we know it. By the end of the month, students will be back in school, practicing for school activities, or both. While preparing for the new school year, take a few minutes to talk about safety with your children.

The roads are busy with additional traffic including school buses, vehicles, bicycles, and children walking making this the most dangerous time of your student's school day. A few tips to review with your student are:

- **School Bus** – Stay a safe distant from the street. Don't play around while waiting for the bus. If you drop something near the bus, ask the bus driver for help. Wait to cross the street until the bus driver tells you it is OK. Sit down as soon as you are on the bus and stay seated. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before moving to get on or standing up to get off. Be courteous and respectful to the bus driver.
- **Vehicles** – All occupants should be properly buckled in. Do not distract the driver with loud music, yelling, or moving around in the vehicle. If you are the driver, keep your eyes on the road. If you are traveling 55 miles per hour, in the five seconds it takes to read a text, you will have traveled the length of a football field. Be vigilant in school zones – watch for moving vehicles, children getting in and out of vehicles, and chil-

The roads are busy with additional traffic including school buses, vehicles, bicycles, and children walking making this the most dangerous time of your student's school day.

dren walking.

- **Walking** – Cross streets at corners where there are traffic signals and crosswalks. In school zones, cross only where there are crossing guards. Always walk on the sidewalks. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic. Be aware of cars that are turning or backing up. Never run into the street or cross between parked cars. Look both ways before crossing. Do not walk, talk, and text. Do not walk with ear buds in your ears. Be aware of your surroundings.
 - **Bike** – Always wear a helmet. Follow the rules of the road including riding single file in the same direction as traffic and obeying traffic lights and stop signs.
- School sports offer social, emotional, and physical benefits for children. One of the worst things is for athletes to be on the sidelines with an injury. Some things that will help reduce injuries are:
- **Warm Up and Stretch** – Warming up and stretching before practice and games help prevent sports-re-

lated injuries.

- **Hydrate** – Conditioning and practice for fall activities begin during the hottest days of summer. Review the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke with your athlete. Stress the importance of staying hydrated. Be sure they take a water bottle with them and drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after participating.
 - **Concussions** – Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion. If you think the athlete may have a concussion, remove them from play until they have been evaluated and cleared by a medical professional.
- Are you leaving for college for the first time or returning for another year? Keep these tips in mind:
- **Be Aware** – Pay attention to your surroundings. To avoid being distracted from your surroundings, put your phone away, turn your music down, and keep your eyes open to what is going on around you.
 - **Know Your Campus** – Familiarize yourself with landmarks and streets. Research the emergency system on your campus. Locate emergency call buttons or phones that are on campus. Never walk alone at night.
 - **Parties** – Stick with your friends and watch out for each other. Don't accept drinks from someone you don't know or trust. Never leave your drink unattended. It is easy for someone to drug your drink without you knowing. If you think a friend has been drugged, call 911 – make sure emergency person-

nel have all the information so they can administer the correct tests. Some consequences of college drinking are death, assault, and sexual assault.

- **Be Prepared** – Consider carrying pepper spray, a whistle, or taking a self-defense course. Program emergency numbers into your phone allowing emergency personnel access to your contacts without the need to bypass your code.
- Take a few minutes to search the Internet for more safety information to share with your children. Being aware of their surroundings may be the most important tip you can share with them. Here's to a safe and memorable school year to all students!



Vicki Brossman
Kemner-Iott Benz



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FIELD TRIP

THE GREAT RACE

photos and story by
Fred Stein

Remember the movie “ Cannonball Run?” If you’re not as old as me, you probably don’t ... but it was about an auto race, with various nefarious and comical individuals racing at breakneck speed across the United States in 1981.

It was illegal because it was based on the fastest time from start to finish, without regard for speed limits.

Well in 2017 there is a modification of that race called the “ Great Race,” primarily sponsored by Hemmings Motor News. There are 120 entrants limited to pre-1972 vehicles, and \$150,000 will be awarded to the winners.

The Great Race is the premiere time/speed endurance rally for vintage cars. The race started in Jacksonville, Florida, and ended in Traverse City, Michigan in 2017, and had many stops along the way.

One of the stops was in Auburn, Indiana in front of the ACD (Auburn, Cord, Dusenberg) museum.

The photos here are representative of some of the participants, and the vehicles in the ACD museum.



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HISTORIC POSTCARDS

Historic postcards depict rich scenes of our area's past

In this issue of Neighbors, Jerdon Real Estate of Dowagiac, owned by Floyd Jerdon and his son Tom, has provided antique postcards of a few of the many lakes in our area.

Floyd and his wife Donna started collecting post cards more than 20 years ago, and since Jerdon Real Estate specializes in marketing lake property, it was a natural fit that Floyd's interest be directed to the lake cards. The collection now numbers many thousands.

Jerdon has recently used many of his postcards featuring the Sister Lakes area in a book written by RL Rasmussen. The book, which retails for \$19.99, is in its second printing by the publisher, Arcadia Publishing.

Among other places, the book may be purchased at the Jerdon Real Estate office on M-62 West, and at Whistlestop Gifts, which is operated by the Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce.

For more information or to get a copy of Jerdon's book, visit the website: www.arcadiapublishing.com

In this edition of Neighbors we have selected postcards showing images of Dowagiac and the nearby area and lakes.


In future issues, we will couple additional cards from one or more of the area's lakes with views of nearby communities and countryside.





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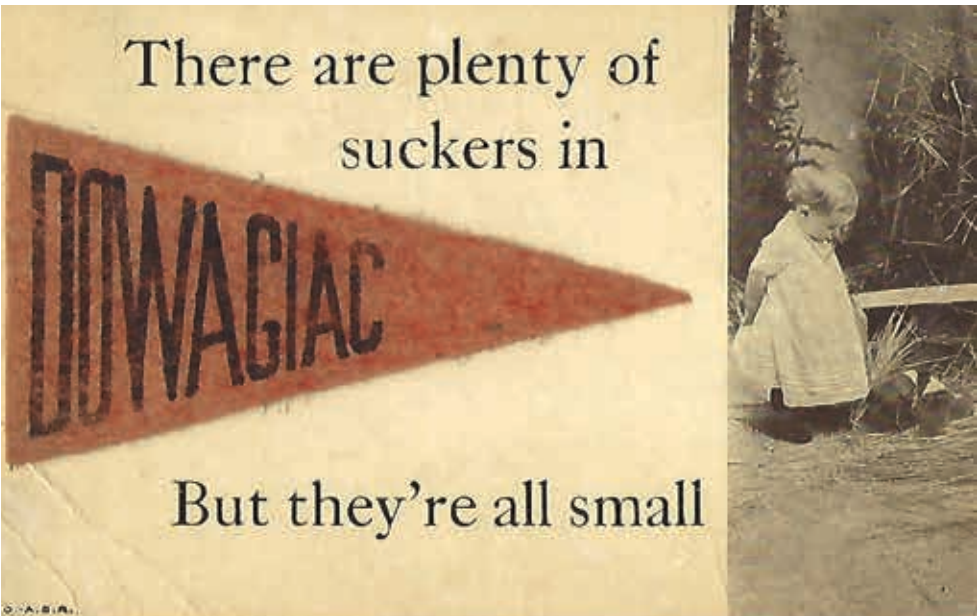


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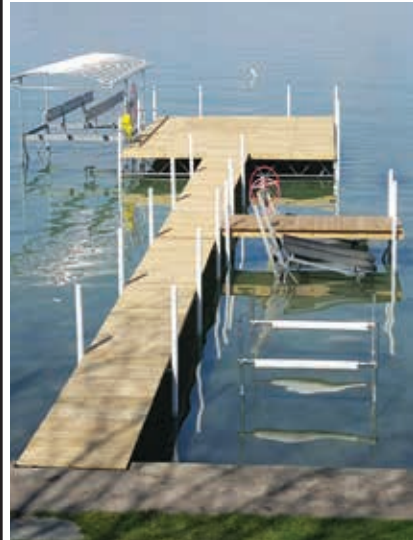
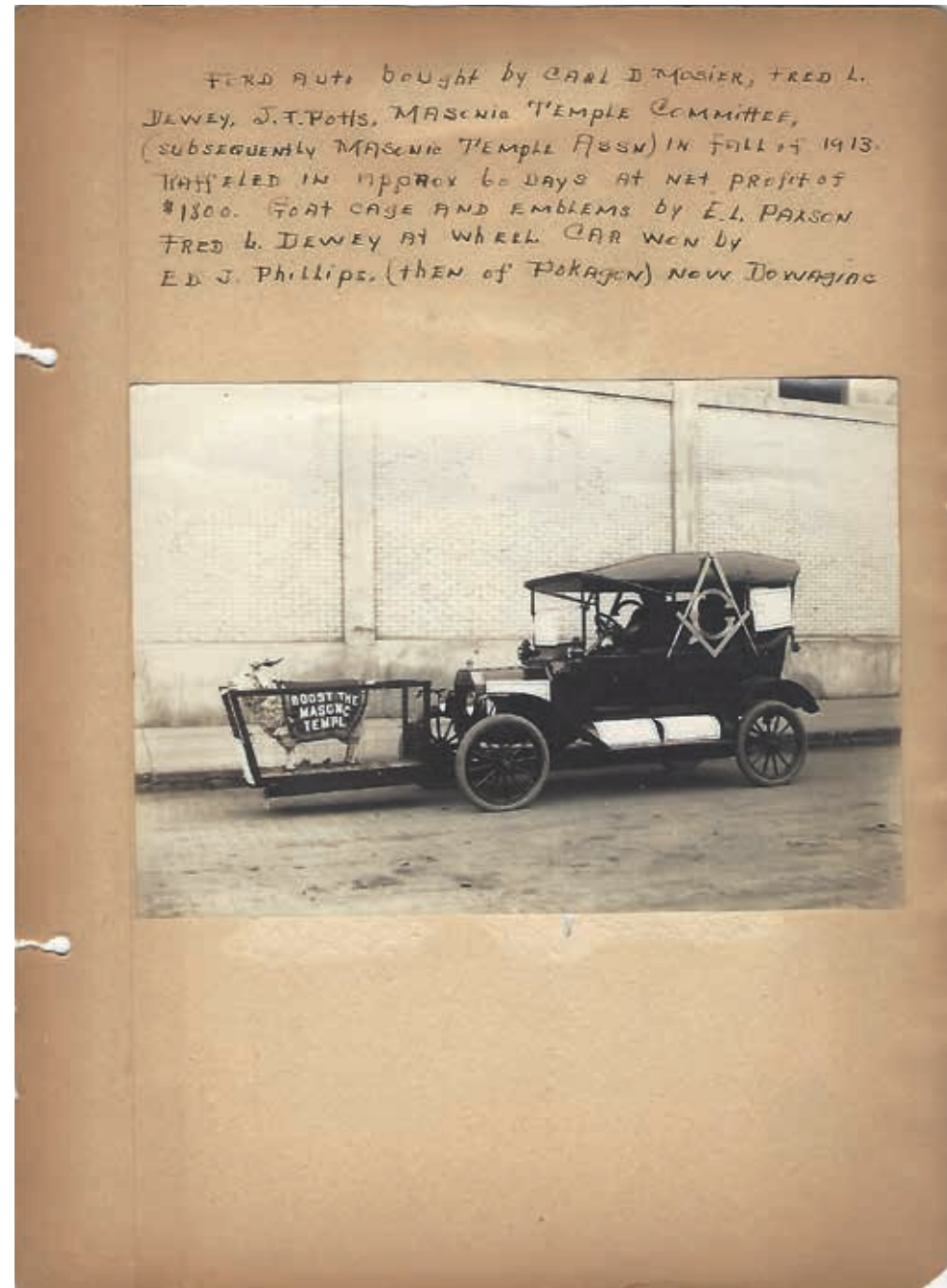
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OUR CHILDREN

Overcoming the summer slide

by **SANDY FLEMING**

It's August, and for most families with children, it's time to start gearing up for the school year. Your kids have been in summer mode for the past seven or eight weeks. Bedtimes have slipped later and later into the evening, and morning rise and shine time is likely to be hours off from the school year routine. The days are long and empty for many kids, filled with choices about what to do with their free time.

Hopefully you've managed to limit the screen time, but other than that, there have been few obligations outside of the occasional chores.

And now you begin thinking about the coming school year. There's a new grade and new academic demands. Will your child be ready? It's an important question. When kids haven't mastered (or have forgotten) the things they learned last year, they stumble at the gate, so to speak. They start out behind in the new school year, and some never do catch up. They just slip a little farther back in the pack each year until school is a huge chore and they announce frequently that they "hate" it.

Each year, teachers present new concepts that build on the old ones from previous years. They sort of expect the kids to remember what they learned last year, and after a quick wake-up-the-brain review for the first few weeks in fall, they move on.

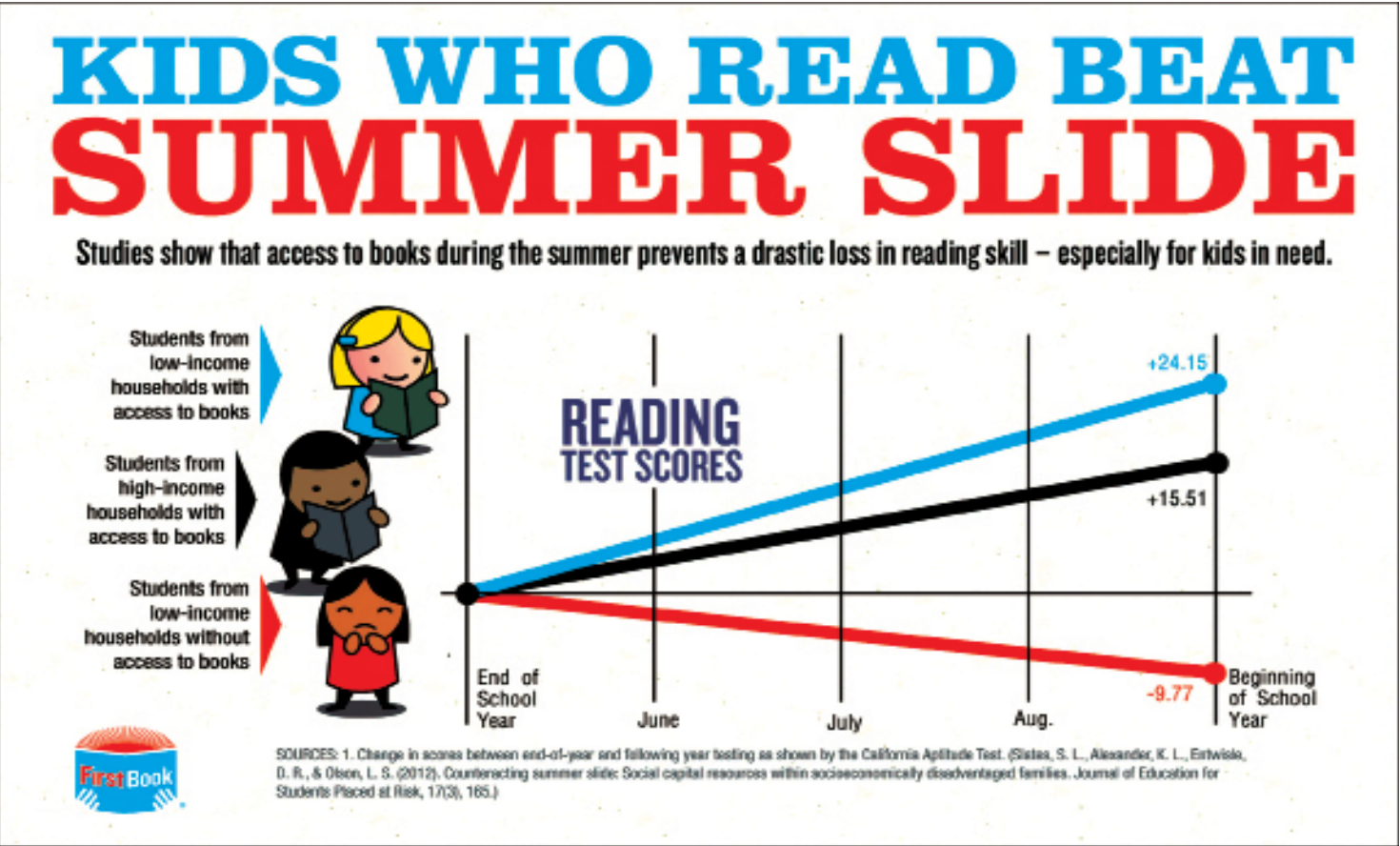
The only way to prevent your child from having trouble caused by Summer Slide is to monitor what your youngster knows and does not know a few times through the summer, and if you find holes, weak spots, or places where grade level material knowledge is slipping, take some action to remedy the problem. You are the only one who can do this, because "the school" doesn't have access to your kid for most of the summer. Even children who attend summer programming aren't there for the bulk of the weeks between June and September.

But you can fix this problem. You can "nip it in the bud" so to speak. I'm sure you've heard before that as a parent, you are your child's best teacher, and there's a lot of truth to that. Only you can completely monitor and know what your child knows at any given time. And August is an excellent time to take charge of your responsibility to make sure your child is as successful in school as can be. The short version is, find out what your child is expected to know, then find out if your child knows it. And if they don't, take action to fix the problem.

So how does a non-teacher-person find out what a child is supposed to know? With the Internet and public libraries at our fingertips, it's actually pretty easy.

One of my favorite "summary" sites is from PBS Parents. Visit their Grade-by-Grade Learning Guide at <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/going-to-school/grade-by-grade/>. This handy tool summarizes not only the academic goals of each grade, but also the social-emotional milestones related to learning. These are the skills your child needs like getting along with others, sharing group work, and so forth. The guide covers preschool through grade 5 and is thorough, yet simple to read and use.

Try looking through <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/signs-symptoms/academic-readiness/academic-skills-your-child-needs-for-middle-school> for info about what skills your



middle school student should be learning, and check out <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/signs-symptoms/academic-readiness/academic-skills-your-child-needs-for-high-school> for their high school version. To help your high schooler out even more, search for sites that list SAT vocabulary, classic books that high schoolers should read, and so forth.

If you need to dig deeper than these quick lists, the next step is to visit the State Department of Education website for your area. Every state (whether they subscribe to Common Core Standards or not) has a list of grade level standards in each subject area, and there will be a link to it on that website. These are a bit tougher to read, but they are very thorough.

Or, cut to the chase and visit <http://corestandards.org>. The complete list of standards for every grade level is here for reading, writing and math. Whether you love it, hate it, or have no idea what it is, Common Core does provide a standard by which you can check your child's progress each year. And even states that have "pulled out of Common Core" have a similar set of standards that vary only slightly in most cases in their wording or numbering system. So the Common Core website will give everyone a pretty good idea of what kids ought to know at each grade level.

How can you tell if your child can do the things that the school thinks he or she should be able to do? For the most part, seeing is believing. Have your child demonstrate the skills. Some things are pretty easy to find out on your own, like whether or not your child can tell time on a clock with a face and hands to the nearest minute. Just ask him or her! Or, find out if your kid can add and subtract thousands numbers with regrouping by trying a few problems.

And once again, we can turn to the trusty Internet. Specifically, the homeschooling community has this covered. Check out <http://howtohomeschoolforfree.com/free-assessment-tests-online-homeschool/> for resources to help you find comprehensive grade level tests for your child.

So you've gotten familiar with the learning goals at your child's grade level. You've even tried a few activities to see if

your child can do those skills. And you found some holes, weak spots, or even gaping gaps. THESE are the things you need to help your child with, preferably before his or her school class moves on without them.

Search the Internet for "free printable worksheets," "free lesson plans," and "free online games" with the specific skill and grade level added to the end of the search term.

Check Youtube for tutorial videos, and visit <http://khanacademy.org> for some free online help. Scour the bookstore and the teacher supply store for materials that will help, too.

Or find a tutor. Some communities offer free tutoring in different areas. Your library may know where to find a good one, or the folks in your school office can serve as resources. Tutors frequently leave their business cards at libraries or schools. There are also online tutoring services available, such as <http://wyzant.com>. These services can match you up with a tutor either in person or over the Internet.

But remember, YOU are actually your child's best teacher. You set the rules, and you set the examples. One strong example to set is to lose the "learning only happens from 9-3 between September and June" mindset. Learning is actually something that should be happening 24-7 and throughout the entire year. Some of it should be formal, and some of it should be informal. When you allow your children to "take a break" from learning in the summer, you are setting them up for the Summer Slide.

You're not really doing them any favors. Do the math: Even if you ask your child to complete academic tasks for an hour or two each day, they still have a wealth of free time not normally available during the school year. If you encourage them to pursue learning that interests them, you are not depriving them of fun. "Learning" is not really the same thing as "work." It's actually a vital part of a healthy lifestyle, and just like teaching the children to brush their teeth and eat right, it's part of every parent's responsibility to put a high value on learning and to make it part of each and every day.

That being said, here are some ideas for what to do if you choose to have kids

focus on learning for an hour or two a day for the rest of the summer:

- Make sure everyone has good command of their basic math facts for their ages. First and second graders should be able to solve all 100 addition and subtraction combinations within 5 minutes. Third and fourth graders should be working on the 100 multiplication and division facts. Fifth graders should be able to do 100 facts in all four operations in five minutes, and ideally, middle and high schoolers should be able to complete those tests in 3 minutes.
- Play games. Play word games, play board games, make up new games, and generally do lots and lots of games. Games are not only good for social and emotional development, most also hone various academic skills including aspects of reading and math. And have the kids research, learn and teach new games frequently.
- Read. Read aloud to the kids (yes, even the high schoolers), and have them read as they are able. Daily reading will build vocabulary, language, comprehension and more.
- Write. Every day. Write sentences in the earliest grades, paragraphs in middle elementary school, and multiple paragraph pieces up to multiple page pieces in middle and high school. Include lots of kinds of writing, too, from journaling and descriptive writing to persuasive essays to research reports and book reports to fiction and poetry.
- Do puzzles. Word searches, crosswords, cryptograms, Sudoku puzzles, and every other kind of puzzle you can find will all help with general thinking skills and many other aspects of learning.

It's easy to come up with two hours of daily practice with very little effort, and if you add in some online activities or free printable worksheets, you'll have it covered five days a week with little effort and planning. And your child will be far less likely to experience a Summer Slide that could have devastating effects on their next school year's progress.

Sandy Fleming is an educational consultant, tutor, and writer living in Edwardsburg. Visit her website at <http://sandyflemingonline.com> for more information and ideas about helping kids learn.

NATURE NOTES

Young birds take the spotlight

July is the height of the nesting season, and I have received several good photos this past week from Eliza Wein while on vacation in Michigan.

American robins are common throughout the entire state during the warm months, and will have at least two sets of young during the nesting season.

Robins begin nesting as early as March and are now on their second brood of young. American robins often have a third set of young, more commonly in the south.

Both adult robins care for their young. The first batch of the year is attended to by both parents until they fledge from the nest, when they become the responsibility of the male. The female will incubate and care for the second brood of eggs.

Young hatchling robins are fed insects, but graduate to larger prey, mainly earthworms, once they fledged from nest.

During the winter American robins are found throughout the southern half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Roughly from an imaginary line running west to east, roughly from Muskegon to Bay City, southward.

During the winter months, American robins flock together, sometimes numbering 100 or more individuals. You won't see them hopping on the ground after worms, but in sumac trees or other trees and shrubs that bear fruit.

Wein also sent a photo of a young sandhill crane, which was seen in northern Michigan. But there are young sandhill cranes such as the one in the photo, in Southwest Michigan.

Sandhill cranes only produce one clutch of young per year, and only one or two eggs hatch. The young take several months to grow to adult size, but are in fine shape by October and November when migration begins.

The young sandhill crane shown in the photo may stay with its parents for up to ten months, being well into the upcoming winter.

As of the middle of July, many photos of young birds are being provided for articles. Most noteworthy is a adult female summer tanager, which has been observed with a male, and believed to be nesting at Warren Dunes State Park.

For the past few years, at least one pair of summer tanagers has been observed at the park, noteworthy because Michigan is north of the species breeding range. The northern limit of the summer tanagers nesting range is roughly Indianapolis.

Warren Dunes State Park is interesting because it harbors nesting bird species that are considered slightly north of their established range, such as summer tanager and worm-eating warbler and nesting species considered slightly south of their summer range such as red-breasted nuthatch, Canada warbler and black-throated blue warblers.

The reason for this is that the dunes provide enough habitat along Lake Michigan, being a major migra-



Hatchling American robins, plus one working its way out of egg. Common across all of Southwest Michigan, and eastern North America. In this photo we see two hatchlings, just one and two days old, while a third digs its way out of an egg.

photo by *Eliza Wein*, vacationing in Michigan.



Young red-tailed hawk at YMCA, Royalton Twp.

Photo by *Dar Davis* of St. Joseph July 2017



At left, female summer tanager at Warren Dunes SP, likely only known nesting pair in Michigan this year. The northern edge of their breeding range is southern half of Indiana. Young sandhill crane, photo by Eliza Wein



Young house wren at St. Joseph, July 2017.

Photo by *Susan Melnyk*

tion corridor.

Dar Davis of St. Joseph sent photos of young red-tailed hawks, present at a fence in back of the YMCA in Royalton Township this week.

These red-tailed hawks have white spotted backs, being somewhat patterned in the shape of a V, which is diagnostic of an individual in its first year of life.

Susan Melnyk of St. Joseph reports young house wrens fledged from their nest this past week, one being photographed at her window.

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LOCAL HISTORY

The diary of Dr. Phineas Gregg

Provided by Cass District Library
Local History Branch

Continuation of the diary of George Franklin Gregg (1848-1932). In February 1870, Frank Gregg lived in Newberg Township, but had family in nearby Brownsville, Calvin Township. In the spring of 1870, Gregg moved to Brownsville when he became a school-teacher. Insights on daily life in rural Cass County during 1870 are documented in this diary.

Saturday, October 1, 1870 — Cool but pleasant, went to quarterly [school] conference at Cass [Cassopolis].

Sunday, October 2, 1870 — At Sunday school, singing in the PM. Went to meeting at night, no preaching.

Monday, October 3, 1870 — Worked for Charles Fellows [1845-1916] and working [illegible]. Made myself sick beating cow hair. Had a chill in the evening.

Tuesday, October 4, 1870 — Hard rain last night. Had a high fever most of the night not able to do anything today.

Wednesday, October 5, 1870 — [Worked] at everything and yet night finds me with nothing done. Wrote to Stephen.

Thursday, October 6, 1870 — Very pleasant. Dug potatoes part of the day for Jim.

Friday, October 7, 1870 — Nothing uncommon. Dry weather. Did not do much of anything.

Saturday, October 8, 1870 — Got wood and did chores. Went to church meeting with mother.

Sunday, October 9, 1870 — Went to Sunday school in the morning, and to Greens in the afternoon.
Monday, October 10, 1870 — Nothing uncommon.

[Cutting] wood and chores and nothing else.

Tuesday, October 11, 1870 — Nothing but chores and geography. Studied late.

Wednesday, October 12, 1870 — Went to Dowagiac with Peter Shaw. Got a basket for [illegible, Lydia?]. It rained all the way home.

Thursday, October 13, 1870 — Went to Newberg. Gathered grapes in the afternoon at Bald Hill, got a great many. Three pails full.

Friday, October 14, 1870 — Gathered grapes in the forenoon again. Went back to Brownsville. In the evening Mate came with us, it rained hard in the forenoon.

Saturday, October 15, 1870 — Set out the strawberry plants. Helped Jim in the store in the afternoon.

Sunday, October 16, 1870 — At Sunday school in the morning. Sing at River's in the eve. Meeting at night. Rain all afternoon and evening.

Monday, October 17, 1870 — Still cool and rainy did not do much in the forenoon. Went after pawpaws in the afternoon and got wet.

Tuesday, October 18, 1870 — Clear. Hauled wood in the afternoon with Dan. Got my corn from Hales.

Wednesday, October 19, 1870 — Went to Finleys to husk corn. It rained so that we only got in about half a load.

Thursday, October 20, 1870 — Some rain. Husked corn at Findley's in the afternoon.

Friday, October 21, 1870 — Cool but pleasant. Husked

corn at Findley's.

Saturday, October 22, 1870 — Pleasant but cool. Husked corn at Findley's.

Sunday, October 23, 1870 — Went to Sunday school. Went to Northropes in the evening. Dan was sick all night.

Monday, October 24, 1870 — Went to Findley's to husk corn. In the morning, Old Dan died age 20 years. It makes things look lonesome.

Tuesday, October 25, 1870 — Cold. Husked corn for Findley. Rained in the evening.

Wednesday, October 26, 1870 — Worked for Findley, he has not got home yet.

Thursday, October 27, 1870 — Rain in the morn. Went to husk in the afternoon.

Friday, October 28, 1870 — Husked for Findley. Done a very good days work.

Saturday, October 29, 1870 — Husked for Findley in the forenoon. Helped him butcher.

Sunday, October 30, 1870 — Rained all day no Sunday school concert in the evening. Rev. Webster stayed with us over night.

Monday, October 31, 1870 — Cool and windy. Off for the [teaching?] institute. Had to walk all the way [likely to Dowagiac], lecture by Medoah and by Hosford in the eve.

To be continued...



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THE LAST WORD

Some thoughts on the dog days of August

Saba is my dog (or I'm her person, we're still working on the exact relationship). Saba is a Lab and Shepherd mix. She's brindle brown with bright orange eyes and ears that stand expressively whenever I say words like walk, boat, treat or car.

As you might imagine from her parentage, Saba loves the outdoors. She loves the lake. She loves barking at seagulls when we're toodelling around the lake on the pontoon boat. She loves hanging her head out the passenger side window of the car, her tongue out and her eyes all squinty in the wind.

Saba isn't very good with other dogs. Despite her good nature around people, bring another dog into view and her sweet disposition goes out the window, my lovable, snuggle bunny that doesn't bat an eye when one of the grandkids climbs on top of her or takes her bone right out of her mouth ... that same little fluffy big puppy suddenly morphs into Kujo, lips drawn back, fangs dripping saliva and ready to feast, snarling, growling, barking, hackles raised, tail straight as an arrow.

And since Saba isn't overly fond of other dogs, I guess I shouldn't be surprised that she isn't really a big fan of the dog days of August.

I've tried to explain to her that the expression refers to the night sky, not to canines, but I don't think she believes me. I know for a fact she doesn't care when the temperature gets up around 90 and the humidity is to high you need scuba gear to go outdoors.

I'll give you an example of how I know that.

One day last week Saba and I had gone out for our regular mid-day business meeting that took us by the corn field at the top of the hill. It wasn't August yet, but you couldn't tell it from the weather. Hot, maybe 92 or so. So humid, the sweat was running in rivulets down my face, my sleeveless shirt was plastered to my chest like I was trying out for a wet T-shirt contest.

Anyway, we had walked far enough that both of us were thinking about maybe heading home for a cold drink (I was thinking beer, but I'm pretty sure she had her mind set on the cold water in that big porcelain water fountain we keep in the bathroom just for her), when this young doe burst out of the tall corn onto Harvey Street not 10 feet away, scaring the bejusus right out of us. I'm pretty sure both of us came off the ground by several inches.

Strange, Saba and I had just been discussing how the corn reminded us of that one Steven King novel, and how we half-expected to see a bunch of eerie, pale-white kids with stringy hair and deepset, dark, spooky-looking eyes come walking out. Saba mentioned the possibility of whispering voices demanding we build something in the corn field or of ethereal, wispy baseball players sticking their heads out at us, but we both knew that wasn't going to happen.

Anyway, we take a look at this doe, she takes a look at us, and wham-bam, there she goes, diving right back into the corn so slick we couldn't even see where she parted the stalks.

Saba gave me one of her "did-you-see-that" looks, and stands up on her hind legs to try to see if she was going to come back to play. No barking, no snarling, no growling (that's just for dogs, see). Just curious. After that, she dropped down onto all fours again and walked over to the corn row to sniff, and, of course, she to do that one thing that dogs do (doo) whenever some other animal has violated their personal space.

Then, all of sudden like, realizing that she's in the shade of the corn that's towering over both of us, she plops down into the cool dirt beside at the edge of the field and puts her head down.

She cocked her head and those big orange eyes turned up to me as if to say, "Enough. I'm done. It's too hot to be out here. Let's take a break."

And without warning, she turns her head so her neck is in contact with the dirt and she starts to wallow like she's some kind of African Wildebeest coating herself with dirt to keep the tsetse flies off. Then she rolls completely onto her back and begins this weird upside down shimmying like she's scratching her back on the ground.

Finally she stops and looks up at me, her tongue lolling out the side of her mouth and she gives me this look that says, "Come on, dad, roll with me. It's cool down here." (She always calls me dad ... I haven't had the nerve to tell her she was adopted).

As tempting as it looked, I resisted the impulse (I'm pretty sure my T-shirt would have turned into a mud-crusted mess that I could never have explained on laundry day).

So anyway, I told her to get up. She thought that was amusing. I ordered her to get up, using my most stern "DAD" voice.

Equally amusing.

I pulled at the leash and threatened to cut her down to only one Busy Bone a day if she didn't get up right that minute.

Did you know that if you look deep enough you can see the word "Really?" deep in the pupil of a big orange eye?

So I did what every responsible dog owner does in a situation like that ... in a situation where a dog is just completely ignoring it's owner's commands.

I sat down in the dirt in the shade of that corn and scratched her belly and rested for a while.

I'm pretty sure it made my point.

I'm even more sure it did us both a lot of good ... It's important to stay as cool as you can on hot days and rest in the shade when you can, you know.

Well, we sat a while and cooled off, and eventually we got up off the ground and plodded through the baking sun down the road toward our house. On the way, we passed a field where a neighbor's horse was standing in the sun. Saba pointed out that there was shade near the barn, but the stupid horse was standing in the blazing sun.

Huh, Saba opined.

And when we got back to the air-conditioned (but barely tolerable house) and I'd grabbed a beer and Saba had slurped a cold drink, I conceded her point. All that rolling in the dirt aside, during the dog days of August, maybe the expression "horse sense" is a bit misplaced.

Oughta be dog sense if you ask me.

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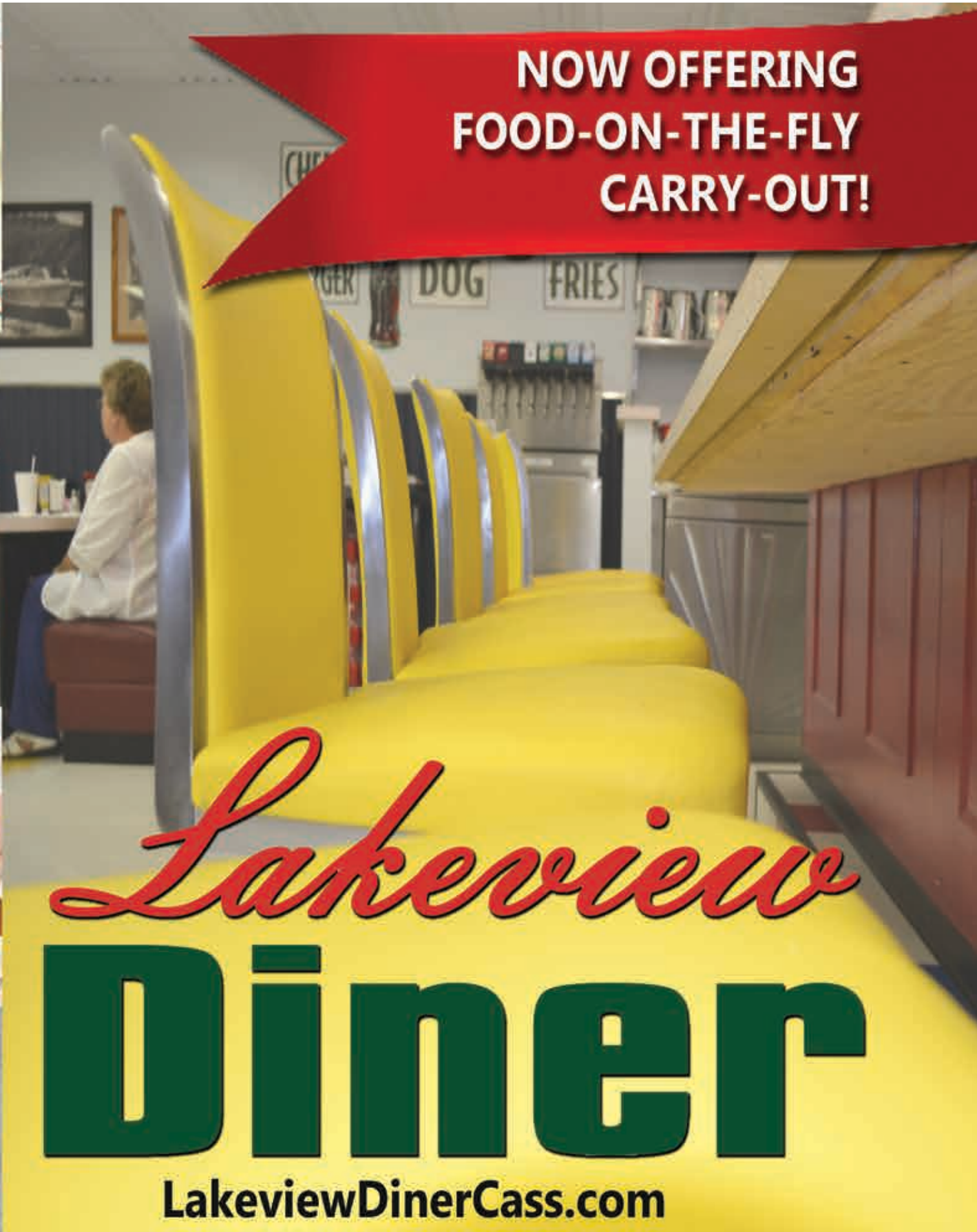


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