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# REGIONAL NEWS

## Ostrander to speak

Retired Edwardsburg School Superintendent Sherman Ostrander will speak at the Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum at 7 pm, Thurs., Sept. 20. His topic will be "Leading the Schools for 23 years."

There is no admission charge.

Ostrander, who retired June 30 after 31 years in Edwardsburg, served as the assistant high school principal, middle school principal, high school principal, and assistant superintendent before his tenure as superintendent.

Under his leadership, the district became the first in the State of Michigan to have all of its buildings designated as Blue Ribbon Schools.

In addition to having served as North Central Association visitation chairman, he was chairman of the Michigan Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Select Committee. Ostrander was a recipient of the Regional Superintendent of the year Award by the Michigan Association of School Administrators and was selected as one of only 100 superintendents nationally for membership in the Superintendent's Institute of America.

His accomplishments in innovative, diverse and inspiring educational opportunities include the establishment of the Middle College and Early College Online programs at Edwardsburg; participation in the Berrien County Math and Science Center, and dual enrollment through both Southwestern Michigan College and Indiana University South Bend.

He also was instrumental in the use of technology innovations in the district, as well as bond referendums. Besides leading the construction of several building projects, including the Performing Arts Center, the Administrative Center and the Edwardsburg Intermediate School, he fostered the establishment of both the Edwardsburg Public Schools Foundation and the Hall of Fame.

Ostrander received the Bachelor of Arts degree, with honors, from Northern Michigan University, the Master of Arts Degree in Educational Leadership, with honors, from Western Michigan University, and the Specialist in Educational Degree, also with honors,

from Andrews University

The Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum's presentations will conclude Thurs., Oct. 18, when Edwardsburg Resident Edward Patzer discusses growing up in Edwardsburg, and the progress made on the development of the Not-For-Profit Edwardsburg Sports Complex. Patzer founded the sports complex in 2005 and serves as its president.

The event begins at 7 pm. There is no admission charge but donations are welcome.

The season's final exhibit will open on Nov. 7 with a new 10-foot high Christmas tree. The season will close on Dec. 15.

## Michigan Flywheelers celebrate 35 years of old equipment shows

**SOUTH HAVEN, MI** - Over three decades ago three long-time friends decided they wanted to hold an antique engine and tractor show.

They hauled their old hit-n-miss engines to a friend's house for the weekend. They ran an ad in the local shopper paper, put out road signs and about a dozen people showed up to look at the engines.

Probably not one of the guys had a clue that their event would evolve into one of the largest shows of its kind in the state let alone become a 70 acre plus museum whose mission would be to restore and preserve antique farm equipment.

This year, the Michigan Flywheelers Museums celebrates the 35th anniversary of its antique engine and tractor show. Slated to start Thursday, Sept. 6, the four-day event will feature hundreds of tractors and engines, working displays, parades, music and plenty of things to do for the entire family.

"Things really took off for us when we bought the property on 68th street in 1995," said Patrick Ingalls, museum president. "For many years, we held our show at the Van Buren County Youth Fairgrounds in Hartford, but it wasn't until we got our own property that we were really able to grow."

It also meant educational goals, other events and developing permanent exhibits could be part of its growth.



"Preserving our agricultural machinery history is very important to us," said Ingalls. "And part of preserving that is educating people about it."

Located in Geneva Township, the members of the museum have spent the last 35 years creating a unique experience for visitors as they take a step back into time and experience rural farm life during the 1920s.

To fund various projects and operating expenses, the museum hosts three events a year and is open for tours from Memorial Day through the end of August. By far, the largest fundraiser is its September show.

Collectors from across the nation gather at the museum for the popular event. From flywheel tractors to the huge steam traction engines, visitors will be able to talk with collectors about their equipment, eat corn on the cob steamed in a steam engine, shop the flea market, watch tractor pulls, attend an auction and look at the exhibits in Olde Town.

Saturday is considered Kids Day and is filled with kid-friendly activities like the John Dudley magic show, peddle pulls, sawdust pile treasure hunt, and lawn tractor games.

This year's entertainment line up in the Stephenson Barn includes Silver Songs on Thursday, Jared Knox on Friday and Brandt Carmichael Band on Saturday. Also in the entertainment line up are Ken and Judy Moore's Jam Sessions, Hymn Sing, Casco Community Band and folk singer Joe Foster.

Admission is \$7 per adult. Children 12 and under free with paid admission. Thursday is Seniors Day and admission is \$3 for 62 and older. Camping is available. Pets are allowed only with exhibi-

tors, campers and flea market vendors. Personal transportation vehicles (like golf carts) are allowed. Registration is \$15. For more information, visit [www.michiganflywheelers.org](http://www.michiganflywheelers.org), Facebook or 269-639-2010.

## Backpack program begins

While Cassopolis's Sam Adams elementary students are enjoying the last month of summer vacation, organizers of the Food Backpack program are gearing up to begin their third year of providing six meals plus snacks, free of charge, each weekend to needy children throughout the school year.

The program, begun in January of 2017, initially sponsored by four local churches, now includes two more sponsors. The United Presbyterians, United Methodists, Penn Friends, St. Ann's Catholic Church, Christ's Temple and Helping Hands are now working together to increase the number of students served each week from 20 in 2017 to 46 when the 2018 school year ended. Each sponsoring organization shops, packs and delivers six meals and snacks per student every weekend for their assigned month. Food packs are delivered on Friday mornings to the school where teachers disperse them to the children before they head home. There is no cost to the participating organizations, as food costs are covered by donations.

The need for food during school holidays, Christmas and spring break, was handled by providing food vouchers to each family unit, allowing them to get staples; bread, eggs cereal, milk and a roast or turkey at Harding's Supermarket, the cost of which was reimbursed by the Backpack Program.

The financial costs of the program are covered through donations from our own community as well as grants from corporations and local organizations. Midwest Energy & Communications and Helping Hands in Cassopolis, Bayer International, and Cass County Michigan 100+Women who Care have provided generous financial support.

There will be more children needing weekend food assistance in the 2018-2019 school year.

For more information on the Sam

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# REGIONAL NEWS

Adams Backpack Program, or to become a sponsor or volunteer, contact Barb Strlekar at 269-501-3402 or at bstrlekar@hotmail.com. Donations may be made to the Michigan Gateway Foundation, 111 Days Avenue, Buchanan, Mi. 49107, attention Backpack Program

**Giveaways planned**

The First Church of God, 21083 Spencer Rd. in Cassopolis will hold it's annual "Warming Hearts and Hands" giveaway on Nov. 9, from 10 m to noon in the Hardings, Cassopolis, parking lot. The church will also host the Compassion Cupboard food give away on Nov. 16, and Dec. 20, from 9 am to 11 am.

**Hearing and Vision screening**

Attention parents: Do you have a 3- or 4-year-old child? Have they had their hearing and their vision checked?

Your child's hearing and vision can impact their success in school in many ways. An undiagnosed hearing problem may impact your child's ability to pay attention or follow directions. An undiagnosed vision problem may affect your child's ability to read and learn.

You've watched your child develop, grow and learn, now it's time to prepare your child for success in school. Have your child's hearing and vision tested beginning at age 3, and again just before the start of kindergarten.

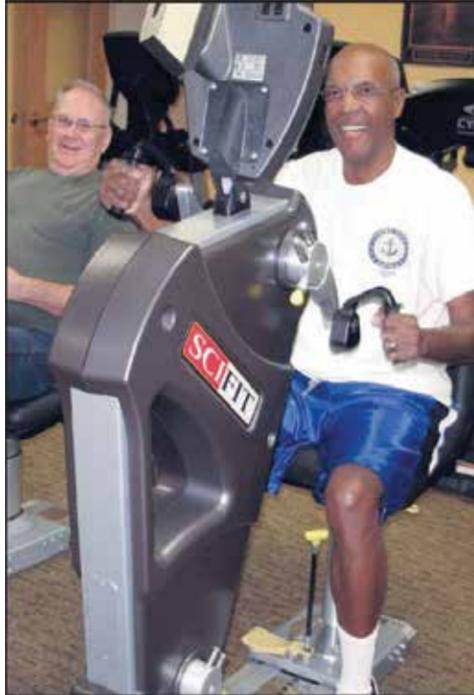
Your Van Buren-Cass District Health Department has FREE preschool and kindergarten screening. Call these numbers to make an appointment: Cass County, (269) 782-0064, ext 2012 Van Buren County, (269) 621-3143, ext 1333.

**Art classes in Michigan City**

MICHIGAN CITY, IN -- Lubeznik Center for the Arts' Fall Class & Workshop offerings for children, teens and adults are now open for registration. Learn a new skill in a workshop or expand your technique in a 6-week session. Offerings run from Sept. 24 through Nov. 1.

Six-week classes in painting, drawing and writing are available this fall. For those who have conquered that class, and want to face a new challenge, LCA offers Abstract Painting II. Drawing Bootcamp facilitates students' visionary skills and strategies when drawing from real life and photographs. Watercolor Plus provides a relaxing environment for students to enhance their skills in both classic and contemporary techniques. And In the First Person lets writers infuse their lived experiences into their prose.

To see a full listing of classes and to register for classes and camps visit lubeznikcenter.org.



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# REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

September 6-9 - Michigan Flywheelers' Antique Engine and Tractor Show, South Haven, [www.michiganflywheelers.org](http://www.michiganflywheelers.org), 639-2010

September 11 -- Story Time Begins, 10 am on Tuesdays, recommended age 3-5 yrs old, enjoy stories, songs, activity/craft, and more. Cass District Library-Howard Branch, 487-9214

September 12 -- Story Time Begins, 10 am on Wednesdays, recommended age 3-5 yrs old, enjoy stories, songs, activity/craft, and more. Cass District Library-Mason/Union Branch, 357-7821

September 12 -- Beaded Spider Craft, 1-3 pm, Call the Main Library to register for this fun craft class taught by Deb Wiggins. Cass District Library- Main Library, 357-7822

September 13 -- Story Time Begins, 10 am on Thursdays, recommended age 3-5 yrs old, enjoy stories,

songs, activity/craft, and more. Cass District Library-Main Library, 357-7822

September 14 -- Story Time Begins, 10 am on Fridays, recommended age 3-5 yrs old, enjoy stories, songs, activity/craft, and more. Cass District Library-Edwardsburg Branch, 487-9215

September 14 -- Infant Story Time Begins, 11 am on Fridays, recommended age birth-2 yrs old, Children are introduced to stories, rhymes, music, and more. Cass District Library- Edwardsburg Branch, 487-9215

September 20 - Sherman Ostrander will speak on Leading the Edwardsburg School for 23 years, 7 pm, Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum

September 24 -- A Trip Down the Old "Sauk" Trail - US 12, 6 pm, narrated slideshow by Dr. John Geisler. Cass District Library- Mason/Union Branch, 357-7821

September 25 - 5 pm - The National Association Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 monthly meeting, Super Buffet in Benton Harbor. Call Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or e mail [jeanrowe70@comcast.net](mailto:jeanrowe70@comcast.net)

October 4, 5 - 2018 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention, Crowne Plaza Hotel Grand Rapids (Airport), <http://www.canr.msu.edu/michiganlakes/convention>

October 13 - Andy Warhol exhibit, Lubeznik Center for the Arts, Michigan City, IN , 219-874-4900, [lubeznikcenter.org](http://lubeznikcenter.org)

October 14 - Antique & Vintage Flea Market, Centerville, 715-526-9769, [www.zurkopromotions](http://www.zurkopromotions)

October 18 - Edward Patzer on growing up in Edwardsburg and the Edwardsburg Sports Complex, 7 pm, Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum

October 18, 19 - Lubeznik Art Festival, Lubeznik Center

for the Arts, Michigan City, IN , \$5/day, 219-874-4900, [lubeznikcenter.org](http://lubeznikcenter.org)

October 23 - 5 pm the National Association Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 monthly meeting at the Super Buffet in Benton Harbor (next to Big Lots). All retired /current federal employees, spouses/families are welcome. For information, call Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or e mail [jeanrowe70@comcast.net](mailto:jeanrowe70@comcast.net)

November 7 - Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum final exhibit of 10-foot-high Christmas tree. Season closes Dec. 15

November 9, 10 - Annual "Warming Hearts and Hands" giveaway, Hardings parking lot, Cassopolis, 10 am to noon

November 16, December 20 Compassion Cupboard food give away, 9 - 11 am, First Church of God, 21083 Spencer Rd, Cassopolis



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- SMC is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, [www.higherlearningcommission.org](http://www.higherlearningcommission.org).



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# LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

## Summer's ending ... carpe diem!



by Jane Boudreau

**H**ey Neighbors! Have you looked around, sniffed the air and realized that things are not the same? I also believe our lakes and lake roads are a little more quiet and a little less crowded, and for those of you in town, you have the peacefulness you've missed. It's a bit too early to really feel like fall is upon us, and after the incredible heat of late we simply need to have some normal 80 degree temps to go outdoors and have some quality comfortable time. Never took that picnic in the park or hiked a forest preserve? Didn't get around to sprucing up a garden bed or the shed ~ no excuse now. Were you too busy and then too hot to sit outdoors and make a dent in that pile of book and magazines under the shade of a tree? Well now ~ go for it! Carpe Diem!

I have a good appreciation of being indoors as well as out. As September evolves into autumn, I realize how much I love to nest and I crave coziness and the simple things in life. I can party like the best of them in the summer, sometimes



I'm the one tamping down the bonfire on late summer nights. I still find a change in season and weather a reason to embrace different habits. Hot tea in the evening instead of iced, early morning coffee as the sun comes up later, and thinking about pulling out the sweaters and jeans.

My favorite room in my home to relax and unwind is my den. It's smallish and



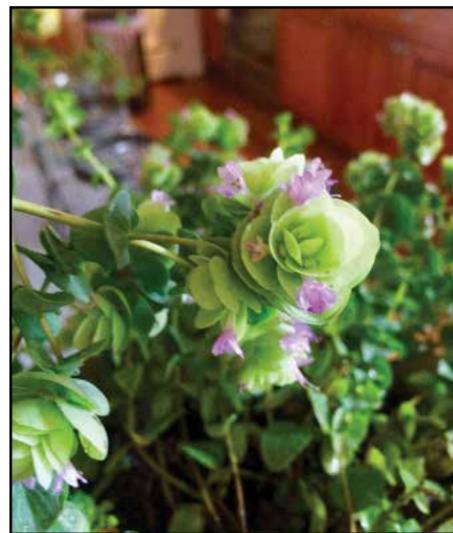
I like that I can reach out to grab a book or pillow straight from my favorite chair. Summer and winter, I find comfort in this room; lights down low, a warm departure from whatever has become too much. I hope you have a special spot, too.

The end of the seasons here in the Midwest bring about a change in local fruits, vegetables and flowers. I'm first in line at the farmer's markets to grab up the latest...soon it will be apples and pears and pumpkins. As far as flowers, Gladiolus do make a statement. They take time to trim and fiddle with and you need the right size vase but they definitely attract attention. I like that they are pretty inexpensive to buy if you don't grow them yourself (and I don't, as you have to dig up the bulbs and store them over the winter in our region. You might

know by now I'm inherently lazy). I like to buy several bunches in all colors to mix and match. Some I cut down short for display on end tables and such, others I leave tall and spectacular looking in large vases. It's a September ritual for me.

I cut and trim store bought flowers on newspaper next to my kitchen sink. It's best to cut the stems at an angle under running water. Strip off any leaves that will be in the vase water. When you have made your arrangement and tossed out the newspaper and mess, be sure to wipe your counter and sink with a disinfectant as there be may residual pesticides hanging around. Try to change the water every day (if you can remember), and trim the ends of the stems a tiny bit. They will last a lot longer with a little extra care. Another tip, when my flowers are spent and I've tossed them out, I rinse the vase and fill it with hot water and a tad of bleach to kill any fungus and bacteria. Let it soak a little bit and then just wash it with soap and water or run it through the dishwasher.

Lastly, dried flowers are so perfect displayed in a pottery vase or a simple



ball jar. If you were able to dry some hydrangea, great. I have a ton of Sedum that bursts into color in September and I cut gorgeous blooms that last until spring. Remember~do not put the stems in water, they are meant to dry out!

I mentioned last month that we'd talk about indoor plants. Before I try to lend a hand in any houseplant upkeep or advice, let me say I have never met a plant I couldn't kill. Fast. Really fast. As a result I don't have many, nor have much advice. Can I just share a few successes? I grew this geranium in a pot last summer and decided to bring it indoors once the frost came along. In a garden window facing southeast it seemed to thrive. It was so healthy in fact that I never brought it outside this summer. It's gorgeous, isn't it? I don't suppose it has that innate energy to thrive inside year after year but I'll take what I can get. The tall guy to the right...well he just keeps growing and growing so he must not know I'm his owner.

One important tip: When you have a plant that has had a summer vacation outdoors, get it cleaned up really well before you bring it in. I had a firsthand experience with an egg-laden hibiscus plant. We brought it in around mid September. In February, while watering it I happened to see some little gnat-like critters flying around it. I lifted one of the leaves and it was covered with little white eggs, as were all the rest of the leaves. Of course I screamed hysterically for the Man to come and get-it-out-of-the-

house. I have since heard from experienced gardeners that you should thoroughly prepare to bring a plant indoors. And also consider this when you are buying a plant from a nursery or anywhere, as diseases and bugs can transfer easily. Spray the plant down with your hose, shower spray perhaps. Use a spray bottle of water with a few drops of dishwashing liquid in it to squirt on the plant, especially under the leaves and on the stems where those little eggs are awaiting. Rinse it well, let dry, and bring it indoors. Keep an eye out for buggies. They can be transferred to your healthy plants, too. Something to think about.

I found an ornamental oregano plant at a floral shop (and I've seen them more and more everywhere). They have the most beautiful flowers that look like tiny roses with lilac colored buds. Tricky indeed but how beautiful. If you can find one, snatch it up.

Since I'm such a failure with houseplants I like to brag about the few I have. A few spider plants and ivy, a fern or two, and I can't pass up a scraggly plant marked down to \$1.99 at the grocery store even though it might have a worse fate with me. Why bow down to possible failure when there is always a chance to succeed? Indoors or out, getting plants to grow and thrive is a learning experience.



### Homemade Pizza

This month I'm getting you away from the smoke of the grill and inside the good 'ol kitchen where you can relax, play some music, have a glass of wine, and chop up all those extra vegetables you've been wondering what to do with. It's time for homemade pizza and a healthy one, too. Don't think I'm going to give you the easy way out and let you use a store bought crust, but if need be, go for it. You will love this crust though, it's very basic, easy to make, and the great thing is, you can freeze the dough to use later. I double the recipe to freeze half, then I'm good to go the next time we are craving pizza.

### BASIC BREAD DOUGH

#### Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour  
2 cups bread flour  
1 1/2 t sea salt  
1 t instant dried yeast  
1 T olive oil  
1 1/3 c warm water

#### Directions

Mix the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Add the olive oil and water and mix to a rough dough. Knead by hand for 10 minutes or as I do, use the dough hook if you have a Kitchen Aid or similar standing mixer. I let it work away for 15 minutes while I prepared a second batch to freeze and cleaned up.

Set oven to 200 degrees. Once it reaches that temp, let it go for 5 minutes.

Continued on next page. See:

**JANE**

## JANE

*Continued from previous page*

Turn the heat off and open the oven door keeping it ajar for 5 minutes to let most of the heat escape. Take your kneaded ball of dough and place it in a large oven-proof bowl in which you have drizzled a little oil. Roll the dough a bit in it to lightly coat. Cover the bowl with a clean kitchen towel and place in oven for approximately 2 hours. I let my dough rise with this method as it's foolproof. Most recipes instruct you to place the dough in a warm spot of your home. That's an impossibility in my drafty old house. Try it this way.

**2 hours later. The risen dough**



All you need to do now is gently poke the dough with your fingers, let it 'deflate', and then gently shape it into a log-type form. Cut it into three even sections to make crusts for three thin pizzas, approximately 12 inches in diameter. Simply roll out the pieces, stretching as

you go along, on a floured surface until they are 1/8 inches thick. Place on a lightly floured pizza pan and fold and crimp the edges any old way. Then create the pizza of your choice~~the possibilities are endless.

### Sauce Ingredients

1 T olive oil  
2 T chopped shallot  
2 large cloves of garlic finely chopped  
1 28 oz. can whole peeled tomatoes  
2 T fresh thyme  
3 T fresh parsley  
1 t sugar  
1 T honey

### Directions

On one of these pizza's I just brushed the crust with some olive oil and then added a variety of veggies (red onion, eggplant, red and green peppers and a generous sprinkle of mozzarella cheese), the sky is the limit. The other pizza has a sauce I've been perfecting over the years. You can try it, you can even freeze it. Or buy the stuff in the jar but then you can't claim that the pizza is entirely homemade. Then again we don't have eggplant trees in our backyards. ;-D

I know this sounds like a lot of work but it really isn't. While the dough is rising you can go scrub a toilet or do a few loads of laundry. Make the dough ahead of time, even the day before and refrigerate it. Then all you have to do is roll it out. And remember, you can double or triple this recipe and freeze it.

\*\*\*

### Pan Seared Scallops

It's always fun to have family over for a weeknight dinner without a lot of planning. I had picked up some shrimp and scallops on sale, and knew it all was too much for The Husband and I. I invited my daughter, her hubby, and baby Madelyn, and then started searching for

something delicious but easy on Pinterest.

I settled on a dish made with pasta and sea scallops in a white sauce. It was simple, easy, and really tasty. The salad I chose however, was to absolutely die for. It was a recipe for an entree, but I modified it for a starter salad.

I changed the recipe tremendously based on what I thought would yield much more flavor, and to eliminate some unnecessary steps. This is my version.

### Pan Seared Scallops with Bacon and Spinach

2 slices of bacon, cooked and crumbled.  
1 T reserved bacon drippings  
2 large shallots, diced small  
2 cloves garlic, diced small  
1/2 lb. fresh scallops, coarsely chopped  
1 12 oz. package of fresh baby spinach  
Juice of 1 lemon half  
1 T olive oil combined with 1/4 t balsamic vinegar

### Directions

In a large skillet heat the reserved bacon drippings. Saute the shallots for about 2 minutes over low heat. Do not cook until they are wilted, you want a little crunch. Add the garlic and cook an additional minute. Add the scallops and stir until cooked through, about 2 minutes. Remove mixture from pan and keep covered and warm. Add 1/2 of the spinach to the pan and add the lemon juice. Toss until barely wilted. Add the remaining spinach and the balsamic mixture. Toss gently until heated through but not wilted--again you want a slight crunch. Remove the spinach to 4 salad plates. Top with the warm bacon bits, shallots, and scallops. Garnish with a lemon wedge if desired.

Serves 4

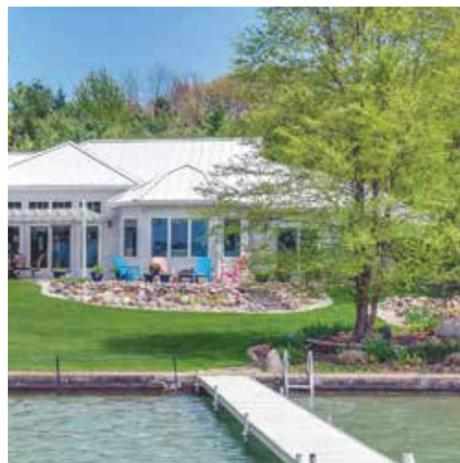
I think this makes for a nice spring salad, light for lunch, or doable for dinner. I had a loaf of good artisan bread,



and we used globs of butter instead of the traditional Italian olive oil and Parmesan mixture for dipping. A contrast to the two recipes. I love that it creates a little bridge in the meal department going from light summery foods to something with more depth (from the bacon, and some good, hearty bread. You can dine indoors or out (which we did), quite easily in September.

It's been a great summer hanging with you guys. I can't believe it's almost over but I think if you really try...close your eyes and click the heels of your flip flops together, we might possibly go into a nice Indian Summer. I'd love that. I am dying to do a fish boil. Its been put on the back burner....hmmmm, no. No pun. It just hasn't happened yet but I'm very determined and I will share it with you next month if it truly happens. Until then, do the rest of the summer the way YOU want to do it!

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# PASTA ITALIA CON CHEF DONATO

## Sicilian pesto

by Chef **Dennis Bamber**

When we hear the word pesto, we right away think of green basil pesto, but with tomatoes at their ripened peak, this pesto has an abundance of flavor and is quick and easy.

This is an uncooked sauce bursting with freshness and vibrancy. I made it recently for my family, and they liked the flavors and could not believe it was not a cooked sauce.

**Tips** - salt the tomatoes and put in a colander for an hour, shaking it several times to remove some of the water from the tomatoes to keep the sauce from being too runny.

I like to toast the pine nuts by putting them on a cookie sheet in the oven at 350, but be careful. Check them every minute as they will burn very quickly..

By the way, Dussel's Farm Market in Cassopolis has sundried tomatoes and pine nuts.

Serves 6 for main course or 8 sides

### INGREDIENTS

2 cups of fresh basil, de-stemmed (leaves only)  
6 ripe tomatoes, seeded, cored, chopped  
1 small jar sundried tomatoes packed in olive oil  
1 small tin of anchovies in olive oil  
4 TBSP pine nuts, toasted  
4 peeled garlic cloves  
1/2-1 TSP red pepper seeds  
1 cup or more (to taste) of grated Parmesan Cheese  
1 cup or more (to taste) extra virgin olive oil  
2-3 pats of softened butter  
2 lbs (or bags) of pasta (rigatoni, penne, fusilli, even spaghetti)



### DIRECTIONS

**STEP 1** - Put the garlic, pine nuts, sundried tomatoes and anchovies with their oil, pepper seeds in a food processor and process until it forms a paste.

**STEP 2** - Add the basil and the tomatoes and blend until chunky, then add the butter and cheese and blend until you have the texture you want, much like a tomato sauce. Taste with a spoon and decide if you want to add more cheese or not. If too stiff and dry, add a little more olive oil.

**STEP 3** - Bring a large pot of water to a boil, add 3-4 tablespoons of salt, add the pasta, stirring often, and cook until very

al dente- not quite done-drain immediately and put back into the pot.

**STEP 4** - Add 2-3 ladles of the pesto to the pasta in the pot at medium heat, stirring often, until it is al dente

**STEP 5** - Ladle the pasta in the bowls and add more sauce as desired and pass the cheese if needed.

When I cook, just like my mom, I never measure but rely on taste. So use your own taste to decide if the sauce needs more cheese, next time more basil, etc, want it hotter? More pepper seeds.

This sauce could go with most pastas, but for this time, I like the extra large Rigatoni's. You could make this sauce very simple as



well by leaving out the sundried tomatoes, and/or the anchovies, but I really like the extra flavor the sundrieds add.

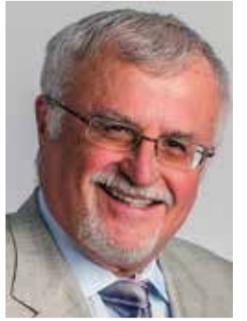
This sauce will stay in the fridge sealed for a week or more and freezes very well.

If storing or freezing, add a very thin layer of olive oil on top to retain the freshness.

Delicioso!

~*Boun Appetito*

Dennis Bamber is 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.



## TO YOUR HEALTH!

### Important benefits of regular dental check-ups

Many people visit the dentist routinely and do so every year. It's certainly a good habit, but why do dentists recommend cleanings and what is it they do? The simplest and most obvious answer is that it's a preventive treatment meant to keep you healthy. It is relatively easy to maintain a healthy mouth if you have good habits.

Many of us however have our weaknesses, including high sugar diets and poor oral hygiene. What we can do as health care professionals at a single visit is not enough by itself to keep a mouth healthy. An important part of routine check-ups are the at-home oral hygiene instructions. Dental professionals are here to guide you in the best ways to care for your teeth at home, but it's what you do every day with your brushing and eating routines that are so critical.

A primary purpose of cleanings is to diagnose and treat gum disease. This progressive issue, known as gingivitis, will inflame and break down the gum tissue surrounding teeth. If unchecked this can further develop into periodontal disease, which is a more aggressive form of gum disease that erodes the bone holding your teeth in place.



Once you develop this form of the disease you will always be more susceptible to further breakdown. Bone lost from periodontal disease does not regenerate and these patients need more frequent maintenance visits. But this disease is preventable with routine care and that is why cleanings are so critical.

X-rays taken at the time of the cleanings help show us what is happening under the gums. Cavities will appear on x-rays and can sometimes be detected even before they need a filling. X-rays will also show developing wisdom teeth, tumors, cysts, bone loss from periodontal disease, and other conditions that are otherwise

impossible to see.

X-rays are critical tools for assessing your periodontal health, showing specific defects and helping make the cleanings more effective. They also aid hygienists in detecting the precise location of calcified tartar, which is extremely difficult to get rid of without professional help.

Even for the individual who has great oral hygiene and always has a good report, it's important to still have these check-ups. Despite our best efforts some things are still out of our control. For example, teeth wear down and can crack or break from years of stress. A cracked tooth can often be detected at a routine cleaning and

fixed before the tooth completely breaks. This proactive treatment could save you a lot of time and money.

Many systemic diseases can also be detected early by identifying specific oral signs and symptoms. Dentists are not only treating the teeth and gums, a part of your periodic check-up is to assess all oral tissues for cancer and other pathologies. Dentists also check the neck, jaw, lymph nodes, and TMJ's (jaw joints) for abnormalities. We work closely with medical doctors to treat people and their whole body health, not just what you see in the mouth.

Being proactive with check-ups is like changing the oil in your car. It's a basic maintenance that is vital to keeping a healthy mouth and body for years to come. Preventive cleanings are less expensive than fillings later and a great way to prevent other problems that can lie undetected for years. Here's wishing you a great year of oral health!

**This article was provided by Dr. Roger Pecina of Afdent, 605 West Douglas Rd., Mishawaka, IN 46545, (574) 277-7770, [www.afdent.com](http://www.afdent.com).**

# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## Does everyone really need life insurance?

By Charlie Retherford  
Kemner-Iott Benz Agency  
of Cass County

Life insurance. Thinking about it reminds many of us of both of our mortality and the need to provide for our loved ones. Yet despite the relatively high level of public awareness regarding the benefits of having life insurance, research by LIMRA (Life Insurance and Marketing Association) shows that approximately 95 million Americans—especially those in their 20s and 30s—do not have such a policy and millions more who do have life insurance do not have enough.

Since September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, let's examine the question: Does everyone really need life insurance?

While the answer is not black and white, not everyone needs life insurance. If you don't have anyone financially dependent on your income, then you may not need it. However, it is worth reviewing the following life-stage guidelines from LIMRA to see if obtaining this type of insurance coverage is something you want to consider, given your life circumstances. If you already have life insurance, this information can be useful to help you determine if your existing coverage needs to be updated.

### If You Are a Small-Business Owner

Besides taking care of your family, life insurance can also protect your business. What would happen to your business if you, or a key employee died

tomorrow? Life insurance can help in several ways. If you have co-owners of your business, a life insurance policy can be structured to fund a buy-sell agreement. This would ensure that the remaining business owners have the funds to buy the company interests of a deceased owner at a previously agreed upon price. That way, the owners get the business and the family gets a monetary payment. To protect a business in case of the death of a key employee, key person insurance, payable to the company, provides the owners with the financial flexibility needed to either hire a replacement or to work out an alternative arrangement.

### If You Are Single

Most single people without dependents don't need life insurance, but there are some important exceptions. For instance, some single people provide financial support for aging parents or a sibling with special needs. Others may be carrying significant debt that they wouldn't want to pass on to family members who survive them or want to pay for final funeral and/or burial expenses. Insurability is another reason to consider life insurance when you're single. If you're young, healthy, and have a good family health history, your insurability is at its peak and you should be able to get very affordable rates on a life insurance policy.

### If You Are Married

Many people mistakenly believe that unless they have children, they don't need life insurance. But what if you or

your spouse died tomorrow? Even with your surviving spouse's income, would that be enough to pay off debts like credit card balances and car loans, let alone cover the monthly housing payments and utility bills? If not, having a life insurance policy can protect you financially if you are faced with a loss of a spouse.

### If You Are Married with Children

Most families depend on two incomes to make ends meet. If you died suddenly, could your family continue to meet their financial obligations? Could your family continue their standard of living on your spouse's income alone? Would their plans for the future—like attending college still be possible? Life insurance makes sure that your family's plans for the future don't die when you do.

### If You Are a Single Parent

Single parents play a critical role in their children's lives—and in providing for them financially. Yet, according to LIMRA, nearly four in 10 single parents have no life insurance, and many with coverage say they need more than they have. With so much responsibility in your hands, having enough life insurance to safeguard your children's financial future is especially important.

### If You Are a Stay-At-Home Parent

Stay-at-home parents may not earn a traditional salary, but that doesn't mean they don't contribute financially to their families. Childcare, transportation, cleaning, cooking, and other household activities are all important tasks, the replacement value of which is often severely underestimated. With life insur-

ance for a stay-at-home parent, the quality of life for the family that remains after their death can be preserved.

### If You Have Grown Children

Yay! Your kids are through college and the mortgage is paid off—but this doesn't necessarily mean that you no longer need life insurance. If you died today, your spouse will still be faced with daily living expenses. Would your financial plan, without life insurance, enable your spouse to maintain the lifestyle you've worked so hard to achieve now and into retirement? If not, it is worth maintaining—or obtaining—a life insurance policy.

### If You Are Retired

Depending on the size of your estate, your heirs could be hit with an estate-tax payment of up to 45 percent after you die. The proceeds of a life insurance policy are payable immediately, allowing heirs to take care of these taxes, funeral costs and other debts without having to hastily liquidate other assets. Life insurance proceeds are also generally income tax free and won't add to your estate tax liability, if properly structured.

As you can see, life insurance can provide important financial security at every stage of life. So, ask yourself, "Do I really need life insurance?" Chances are you do! If you already have life insurance but you are not sure if you have adequate coverage to protect your family, now is an ideal time to check with your representative. Please contact us with any questions you may have about your life insurance needs.



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# OUR CHILDREN

## Childhood Stress / The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

by **SANDY FLEMING**

**S**tress is a normal and natural part of life. In fact, in the right amounts and at the right times, it's actually beneficial to us. Stress increases our focus and attention, allows us to perform at peak efficiency, and puts us at the top of our game. Or at least that's what it's supposed to do.

Under stress, the body releases chemicals that change the way we use energy, the way we breathe and digest, and a whole lot more. These changes prepare us for "fight or flight," the automatic response to danger. The pumping adrenaline and other chemicals are responsible for the faster reflexes that allow us to jump out of traffic and even the increased strength that we hear of when mothers move cars off of children. And a little bit can go a long way.

In the right amount, stress sharpens our wits and makes us feel pumped up and excited. Think of rooting for your favorite team or playing your favorite sport. Think of the bit of anxiety you feel starting a new job or entering into a new situation. Even the anticipation of welcome guests or upcoming holidays can be just the teensiest bit stressful and so we clean and prepare so everything will be just right.

However, we all know that stress can become unmanageable, too. Stress from unexpected life changes, illness, death, and other tragic circumstances can disrupt the healthy balance and can damage our bodies. When our adult stress feels out of control, we turn to self-help techniques like relaxation, deep breathing, long walks, or warm baths. Sometimes we seek out professional help for dealing with out-of-control stress. And if things have gone awry, we may overeat, turn to substance abuse, or do other unhealthy things to cope with it.

### The Ugly Part

Science is becoming more and more certain that undue stress in childhood causes far more damage than we previously admitted to ourselves. Chronically toxic stress levels are more common in many households than we care to admit, and kids are suffering. Too much stress, particularly over long periods of time, interferes with learning, with emotional growth, and with physical well-being. There are actual physical changes in the brain caused by too much stress. The possible psychological, emotional, and physical damage makes it crucial to educate ourselves about how to protect our children.

### Stress and Children

Many people don't consider it, but children and yes, even babies, have stress in their lives too. True, they don't usually have to worry about the big stuff, like maintaining a home or keeping a job, but they experience stress nonetheless. And part of what determines how well adults handle stress is how they learned to manage stress when they were very young.

What can stress children out? Pretty much the same list that stresses adults. Children will be under stress if they are worried about their physical well-being. They will feel stress if they question their overall security or the ability of their parents to care for them. They will feel stress at life changes such as death, moving, or family break up. Even something as simple as a parent being late for pick up from practice can cause a great deal of stress for children.

What we sometimes fail to realize is that children also feel the same subtle stresses that adults do. They feel stressed when they believe they (or their caregivers) are not in control of the situation.

They feel stress when they witness violence even if it is not directed at them. They feel stressed when they do not understand what's happening around them. They feel stress when their routines are disrupted.

Children are also in a unique position in that they rely so completely on the adults in their world to care for them and to support them. So they will feel stress when they perceive that their adults are fallible or out of control in some fashion. They also feel stress because they are only beginning to understand their feelings. Strong feelings, like grief, anger, or sadness and even excitement or happiness, produce stress when kids don't know how to express or channel those feelings.

When you think about it, little people are typically under an enormous amount of stress even on a good day. And if things are stressful for the whole family, kids just might be heading towards a breaking point. It's important to be intentional about teaching kids to manage stress and stressful situations from a very early age. Stress management tools are critical, because constant stress and anxiety is not only harmful to mental development and learning, it can damage the young body as well.

### How Stressful is Your Child's Life?

Remembering that children may find everyday events more stressful than adults is an important key to understanding the level of stress your child might be experiencing. Not only should you consider the big, obviously stressful events or situations, like new caregivers, first day of school, family break-ups, or family financial instability, but you also need to think of things that raise the excitement level, such as holidays, vacations, small frustrations related to under-developed skills, witnessed violence in media, and so forth.

Educating yourself about childhood stress is very important. Try checking out the article at [https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Child\\_Trends-2010\\_10\\_05\\_RB\\_AssessingStress.pdf](https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Child_Trends-2010_10_05_RB_AssessingStress.pdf) for some helpful information and a checklist of things to consider.

Many children show signs and symptoms when their stress levels are out of control. Because most children are less articulate than we'd like to believe, they may not be able to tell you directly that they are struggling. Instead, they might act out in unusual ways, might have trouble sleeping, or might complain of stomach aches, headaches, or bathroom troubles. Young children may seem to revert back to behaviors you thought were long eliminated, like toileting issues or tantrums. If your child's behavior or actions seem to have changed suddenly, you should make it your business to get to the

bottom of the problem and find out why. **Strategies to Help Children Manage Stress**

There are some simple things you can do to relieve or minimize your child's stress. Start by making sure household routines, like mealtimes, bath times, and bedtimes are consistent and secure. Kids thrive on routines, and if you can keep these stable, kids will derive a great deal of comfort and security from them. The time to set up routines is BEFORE stresses hit your household. Start today if you don't already have these in place, to help the routines become habitual before they are needed.

And of course there's nothing like consistent verbal and physical reassurance to help children feel safe and loved. Hugs, affirmations, real valid praise, and similar positive experiences can be very important stress relievers, but not if you don't offer them routinely before stress builds up. Keep your behavior predictably positive, and your children will be better able to manage stress when they need to.

Kids have enough to cope with without adding adult issues and problems. Be sure that you protect the very young from your adult worries and conversations. You never know how much of that overheard bit of talk will take root in their minds and cause anxiety. Share just what you need to share, based on their age and level of understanding, about how your problems will impact their lives and how you will help them through the stressful period. Be especially cautious about adding stresses from media, as well. Violent images from movies, television shows, video games, or even the evening news

can really settle into a child's mind and cause a lot of anxiety. Remember that they are not as deeply asleep as you think they are!

Teach your kids some simple relaxation techniques when things are calm that you can help them to implement or prompt them to use when they feel upset or anxious. Here are some quick ideas. "Palming" is a soothing gesture that even the very young can master. Remove glasses if they are worn. Rub the palms together hard and fast, to generate a warm feeling from the friction. Close the eyes and place the warm palms on the eyelids. Teach deep breathing. Use imagery like "breathe in through your toes" to encourage the deep, even breathing that helps a person regain control of runaway emotions. Teach them to tense and relax muscle groups one at a time to intentionally let go of stress.

Some children respond well to instructions like "Make yourself stiff as a board. Now relax your feet and feel them float..." And so forth.

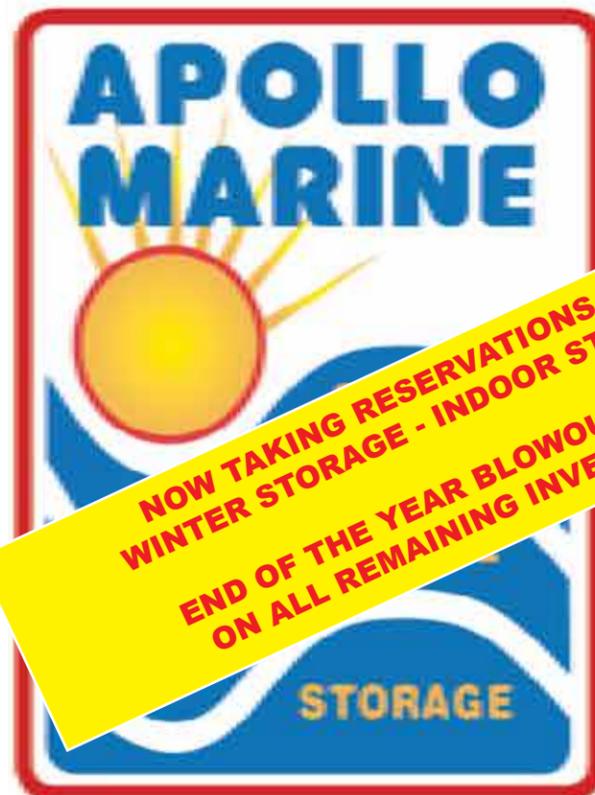
You can play a huge role in how well your child learns to manage stress. By protecting him or her from unduly stressful situations, teaching relaxation strategies, building routines, being positive, and giving him or her appropriate levels of control over life, you will be nurturing the tools everyone will need to keep stress at a manageable level.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sandy Fleming is a tutor and author living in Edwardsburg, Michigan. Visit her website at <https://sandyflemingonline.com> for lots of information for parents and teachers.



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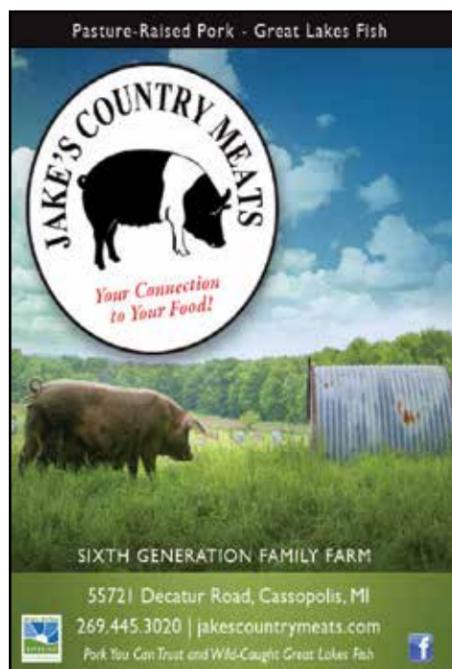
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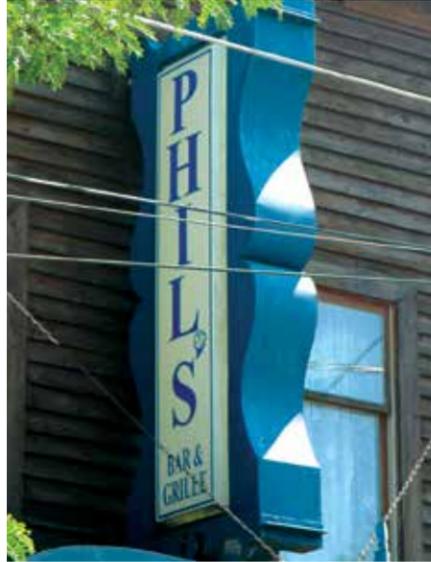
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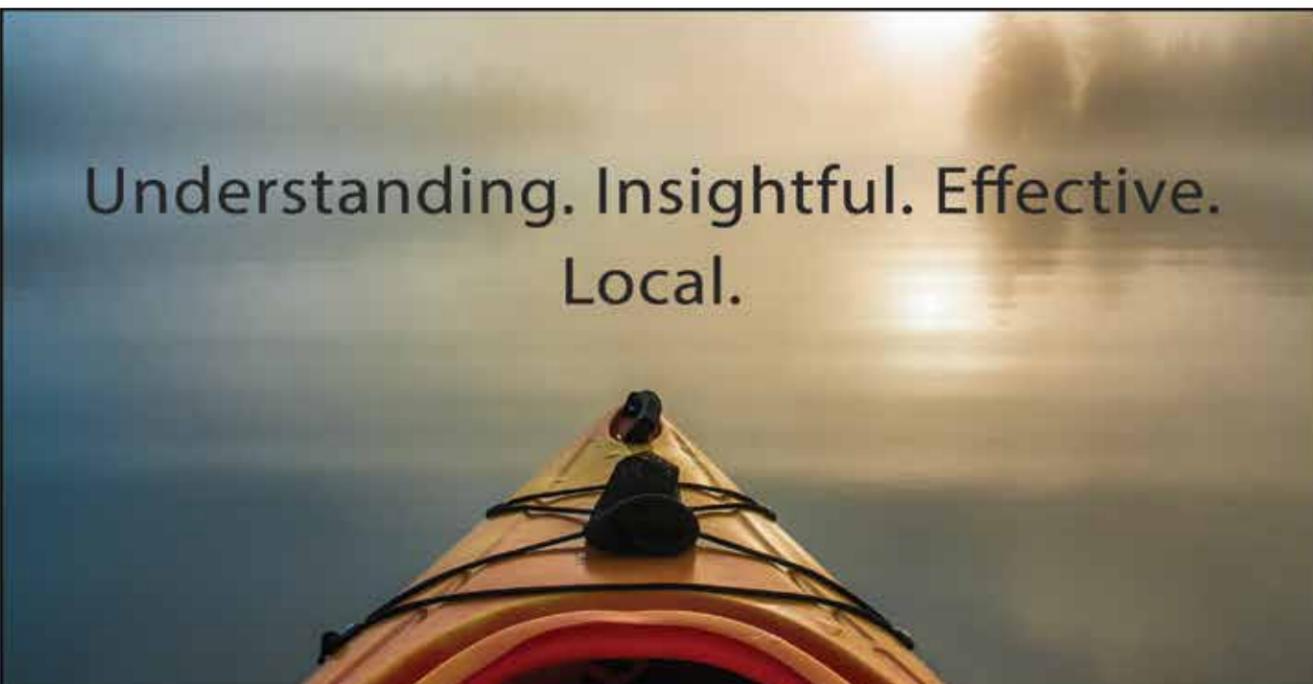
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# HISTORIC POSTCARDS

## 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.

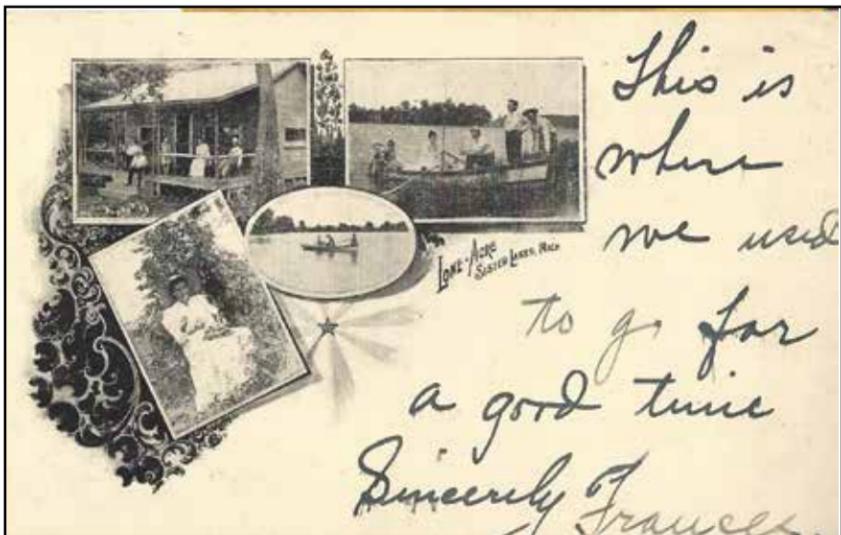
Floyd and his wife Donna started collecting post cards more than 20 years ago, and since Jerdon Real Estate specializes in marketing lake property, it was a natural fit that Floyd's interest be directed to the lake cards. The collection now numbers many thousands.

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](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

In this edition of Neighbors we have selected postcards showing images of Dowagiac, and the nearby area. 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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A View of Magician Lake, Dowagiac, Mich.



Bridge over Channel, Sister Lakes, Mich. 37866.



'Oaklands' Magician Lake, Dowagiac, Mich.



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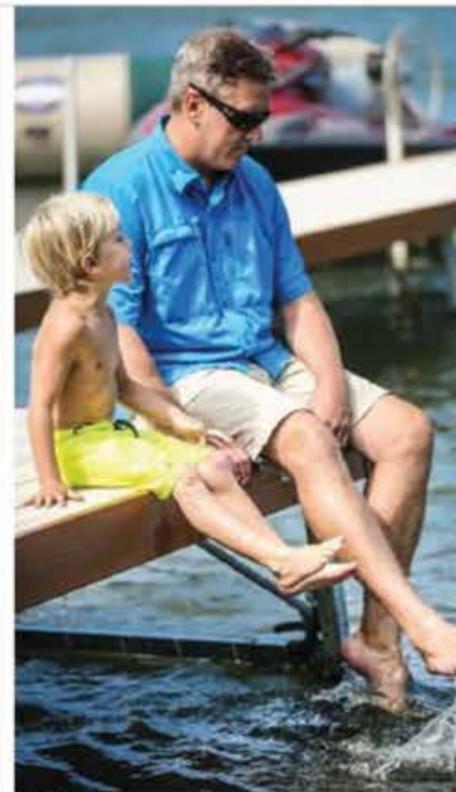
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# NATURE NOTES

## Piping plovers, phoebes, egrets & herons

Provided by Cass District Library  
Local History Branch

The piping plover was once common along the shoreline of the Great Lakes during the summer months, where it nested. As humans began to recreate along and develop the beaches, piping plover numbers plummeted. Many of the bird's nests, located on the beaches, were destroyed by vehicles and dogs.

Garbage left along beaches attracted raccoons which in turn would prey upon plover eggs.

By the 1980s only a few breeding pairs remained along the Great Lakes shoreline. Through protection the species has managed a modest comeback in the Great Lakes region, mainly along northern beaches where there is less human related threats to their nests. Despite the increase in numbers, piping plovers in the Great Lakes are not out of danger.

Piping plovers once nesting along Berrien County's Lake Michigan shoreline up to 1980 when the last nest was recorded in New Buffalo Township. There are no inland records of Piping Plover.

Migrant piping plovers are seen regularly, in small numbers, along our beaches. The individual in Schaller's photo can be seen with three leg bands, one being orange, placed there by University of Minnesota. I am still trying to find out what agencies placed the white and metal bands on the birds legs.

Piping plovers have only been found in Southwest Michigan on the Lake Michigan beaches, more so during fall migration than during spring. The majority of piping plovers seen locally occur during August, but have been seen as late as November.

Spring migrants are observed during April and May. June observations are to define as either spring migrants or very early fall migrants. Some local June observations may be of unmated adults.

Piping plovers from the Great Lakes generally spend the winter months along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts in southern US and Mexico.

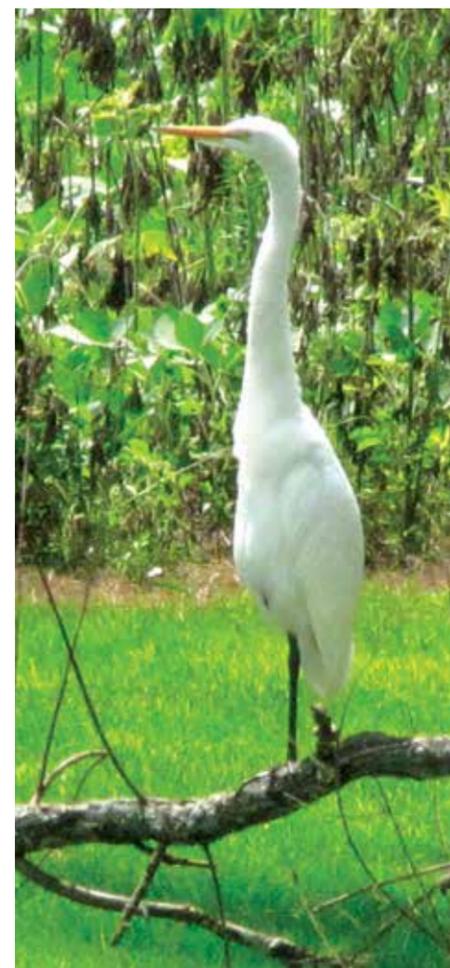
Brad Anderson sent in a photo of an eastern phoebe, one out of a small family group seen at Warren Dunes State Park



A migrant Piping plover on August 13, 2018 at Tiscornia Park, St. Joseph. Photo by Lisa Schaller of Bridgman.



Eastern phoebe at Warren Dunes State Park on August 13, 2018 by Brad Anderson of Bridgman.



Great egret, Baroda Twp. July 2018. Barry Young of Baroda.

on Monday, August 13.

The phoebe in Anderson's photo appears to be a young individual, as told by the yellowish wash on the birds lower belly.

Within the next month, young phoebes will venture out on their own as they migrate to the southern US for the winter.

Barry Young of Baroda Township photographed a great blue heron and a great egret while both were perched on branches over a pond on his property last week.

Both birds are herons, closely related and placed in the genus Ardea by ornithologists, being Latin for bittern. All Herons, egrets, bitterns and night-herons are in the family of birds called Ardeidae, numbering sixty-six species worldwide.

In Berrien County, ten species of Ardeidae have occurred at one time or another. They are great blue heron, little blue heron, great egret, snowy egret, cattle egret, American bittern, least bittern, black crowned night-heron, and yellow crowned night-heron. All but the little blue heron and yellow-crowned night-heron are reported annually in the county.

Southern Michigan lies at the northern range limit for all of the herons mentioned with exception of the great blue heron.

The sandhill crane and whooping crane are not in the same family as her-



Great blue heron, July 2018, Baroda Twp.. Barry Young of Baroda.

ons. They are often confused with the great blue heron. In flight a great blue heron has its neck pulled in toward the body, while cranes extend their necks straight out. Cranes do not generally stand in water, while herons wait patiently for prey while standing in water.

Great egrets are easily identified with the naked eye as their white plumage stands out against the green foliage, even at a distance. Great egrets are slightly shorter than the great blue heron, being about three feet in height, and have a yellow bill. Great blue herons stand at nearly four feet tall.

Herons and egrets start to wander

around the region after nesting season is over. This is called post breeding dispersal, resulting in a relatively greater influx of the birds into our area. In late summer I have seen upwards of 30 great egrets feeding at once at the Three Oaks reclamation ponds off Schwark Road. Great blue heron numbers also increase during middle to late summer.

As autumn progresses, herons and egrets start to migrate south. By the middle of November only great blue herons will remain locally, as long as water remains open, and the majority of the population will have migrated to southern US, Mexico and Central America for winter.

# LOCAL HISTORY

## The hardships of pioneer life in Cass County

Provided by Cass District Library  
Local History Branch

**Hardships and Incidents of a Pioneer Life in Howard Township, as told by John F. Coulter, who lived most of his life in the area. Provided by Cass District Library's Local History Branch.**

**The Coulter home and farm were located on both sides of the intersections of Coulter Street and M-60. During the early 1900s, John F. Coulter reminisced about the early pioneer days in Cass County during the 1830s-1860s, which the Cass District Library has transcribed here.**

"The first teacher in the log schoolhouse was Miss Fanny Baily, of Yankee Street, in the winter of '44 and '45. The writer hereof was four years old--not old enough to go to school--but a sister 3 and 1/2 years older than I was went, so I was sent along to get me out of the way. My folks knew I would learn the way to the schoolhouse anyway, if nothing more. Miss Baily was a good teacher for those days, and well liked. My earliest teachers were Miss Sears, Miss Van Antwerp, and

Miss Smith.

Preaching in the neighborhood was established before the building of a schoolhouse, meetings being held at the homes of Nathan McCoy and my father. After the building of the schoolhouse they were held there.

The class that was called Coulter's class was attached to the Edwardsburg circuit, and they held their meetings at what was called "a candle lighting," the tallow candles used for light being furnished gratuitously by the neighbors.

In their singing they didn't need any hymn books, as the minister was in the habit of "lining" the hymn, then all knew it, and the tunes were largely of the long metre style -- nothing very operatic about them.

The first members of the class were Nathan McCoy and wife, Dennis Parmerlee and wife, James Coulter and wife, Mrs. Eliza Smith and daughter, Saarah, Mrs. James Shaw, Lorinda Cooper and Sarah Doane, P.A. and Martha Lee, uncle and aunt to the Lee brothers of Dowagiac, Edward Clisbee, brother of the Hon. Charles W. Clisbee; a Mrs. Averall, Miss Tracy, A.C. Swift,

Robert Allen, Jonathan Olmstead, and Dwight Gage, all of whom, I think, have gone to their long home.

Coulter's Chapel was commenced in

1857 and finished in 1859, was dedicated July 20, 1859, by Dr. Bannister of Chicago.

To be continued...

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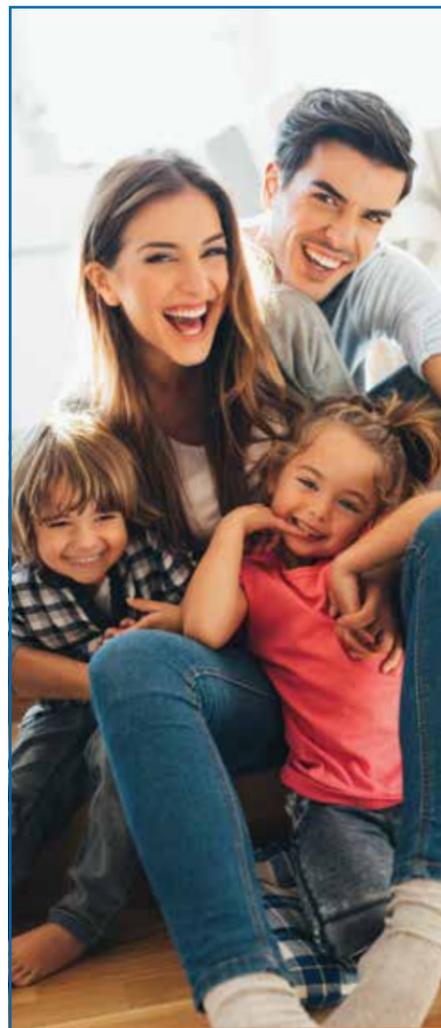


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# THE LAST WORD

## Where did the summer go?

**A**ugust isn't even over yet but the sun is already setting on summer off the end of my pier. Temps are still over 90 degrees with humidity thick enough to make Mike Nelson gasp for air, but my thoughts are increasingly turning cold as the days are increasingly turning towards fall.

I know that autumn doesn't officially start until the middle of September, but the leaves on the neighbors' soybeans are turning yellow, the kids are back in school and some of the people around the lake are already making noises about pulling their boats and piers out of the water.

Wince, and wince twice.

Where did the summer go?

Wasn't it just a couple of weeks ago that the ice finally melted and the spring rains started flooding the fields and ponds and washing out the roads?

Wasn't it just a couple of weeks ago that the neighbors showed up on a Friday night and slammed their trunks, laughing and shouting in joyful arrival?

Wasn't it just a couple of weeks ago that the first fireflies flitted and flamed across the deck?

Wasn't it just a couple of weeks ago that the first mosquito bite angrily erupted on my arm causing me to itch and moan until it faded?

Wasn't it just a couple of weeks ago that we spent a whole week digging out summer deck chairs, lake toys, and picnic tables, then another week buying and planting flowers, herbs and other fauna

in a dazzling array across the front of the house?

And then, BAM, the next thing I know, it's September.

Where did the summer go?

Maybe I fell asleep. Maybe I blinked. Maybe I missed the text.

Maybe the dog ate my calendar.

I mean, one day I'm riding around

the lake on the pontoon, dragging a busted up old fishing lure behind me and complaining that it's so stupid hot the fish won't even bite, and the next day a busted up old school bus is rattling down the lane filled with sleepy-eyed cootie-carrying crumb snatchers who are ready to try the "dog ate my homework" excuse for the first time on an unhappy, underpaid school teacher who is no more ready to start a new school year than their lethargic charges whose brains are still somewhere out on a sandlot between a dirty ballcap held in place with a rock that stands for second base, and a decaying tree-stump that is third base.

One day I'm bobbing in the motorboat wakes that are trying to capsize my sailboat, brazenly bemoaning the lack of wind, and the next I'm barking at my beloved spouse for harvesting the last of the peppers and tomatoes I planted and tended, and grinding them into an unrecognizable and unappetizing sludge to make her health smoothies.

One day I'm waist deep in the warm water of my front yard, searching for the wrench I dropped off the pier while I was trying to install the new fenders holders for the kayaks we drag out every spring so our grandkids can delight in crashing

into one another and screaming in those melodic, cherubic tones, "MOM, HE/SHE IS BEING A BUTT," and the next minute we find out the first school choir recital is tomorrow night and could we please bring ice cream for 35 kids when we come to hear everyone's grandkids raucously croon an ancient melody somewhere in the key of shrill ...

Where did the summer go?

I do have some favorable memories of the glorious summer of 2018 ...

... I think.

I distinctly remember Memorial Day passing as that weekend I missed while I was busy fixing a boat lift, rigging two sailboats for the season and rearranging heavy wooden chairs in a feng shui pattern that must have warned visitors to ignore them completely and telling them to sit, instead, on the comfortable, padded reclining deck chair I had bought for myself ...

And I distinctly remember the best of the summer treats when they finally showed up: the first under-ripe home-grown tomatoes that sat on the deck rail in the sun for two weeks in hopes of ripening, the first ears of sweet corn that were picked so early the kernels resisted soaking and cooking even though we'd soaked and boiled for hours, and even the first cookout with charred cheeseburgers, badly burned and charcoal-blackened Ball Park franks and salmonella-flavored potato salad.

I remember my dog finding the first snake of the summer and how proud she was when she brought it to me in her mouth ... and I remember when the

neighbor got stung by the first bee and his leg got all swollen and he had to go to the hospital and get an Epi-pen shot to keep his throat from swelling shut.

And how could I ever forget the dazzling fireworks erupting out over the lake and the sparks that drifted in a dizzying fog on the wind ... and how they were still burning when they finally burned through the weathered cloth bikini tops that otherwise would have protected my boats from the natural summer elements.

But then, BAM, the next thing I know the stores are strutting out shelf-loads of scruffy back-to-school displays, hanging horrific Halloween masks and costumes where the Independence Day flags used to sit, and plastering fake fall-colored leaves on the ends of the aisles to inure us to the impending seasonal change.

Where did the summer go?

Will fall, well, will it fall with such panache? Will autumn arrive with equal eclat and ease us from summer slumber, transporting us magically into the invigorating environment of falling foliage to the tune of a thousand leaf blowers a minute?

Where did summer go?

In the blink of an eye the summer of 2018 is becoming a memory.

It was a hot summer, we'll tell our children when we talk of it ... hot and humid ... lots of rain. Ran the air conditioner a lot. Fished some. Rode around in boats. Worked outside when we could.

And then it was over. Just like that.

Cue up cheesy Christmas music ... winter will be here before you know it.



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