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REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

November 4 - Fall Family Fun Night - Cass District Library Main Branch, 6 pm, registration at 574-314-6454 ext. 113	Howard Branch, 6 pm, for adults only, \$10 per person due at registration. To register call 574-314-6454 ext. 113. No refunds for cancellations or no shows.	Portage Rd., Niles	mation call Jean Rowe, 782 2769 or e mail jean-rowe70@comcast.net
November 6 - Edwardsburg Area Museum Christmas program, 7 pm	November 13 - Ceramic Owl Painting - Cass District Library Main Branch 1 pm reserve at 574-314-6454 ext. 113	November 28 - Thanksgiving Dinner, Cassopolis United Methodist Church, 1-3:30 pm, 445-3107 for delivery	December 6 - Candlelight Christmas Parade, 7 - 9 pm, Dowagiac, 782.8212
November 6 - Michigan's Most Dangerous Women - Cass District Library Main Branch, 6 pm, True crime author Tobin T. Buhk will discuss "Michigan's Most Dangerous Women."	November 14 - SCORE workshop on aspiring entrepreneurs: fundamentals of small business, Edwardsburg Chamber of Commerce, 6:30 pm registration, 7 pm workshop, 574-215-6527 to register	November 30 - Small Business Saturday, 10 am - 11 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212	December 7 - Christmas open house at the Log Cabin Museum in Cassopolis
November 9 - Barn Swallow Theatre Pie Auction and Variety Show, 7:30 pm, 22334 US-12, Edwardsburg, 28-6672, http://www.barnswallowtheatre.com	November 15, 16 - Christmas Open House Weekend, 10 am - 5 pm, Dowagiac, 782.8212.	November 30 - Holiday Market - Cass District Library Main Branch, 9 am - 1 pm. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, contact McKinzie at 574-314-6454 ext. 113.	December 7 - Cookie walk & holiday decor sale, First United Methodist Church, Dowagiac, 9 am - 3 pm
November 11 - DIY Leather Earrings - Cass District Library Main Branch 6 pm, reserve at 574-314-6454 ext. 113.	November 18 - Angry Birds 2 Movie Night - Cass District Library Main Branch, 6 pm	December 3 - 1:30 pm The National Association of Retired Federal Employees SW Michigan Chapter 572 will hold their annual holiday dinner at Coach's Bar & Grill, Stevensville. All retired/current federal employees, spouses/families welcome, no RSVP needed. No business meeting, new officers will be sworn in. Next meeting is March 24, 2020. For infor-	December 7, 8, 14, 15 - Christmas at the Bonine house, 1-6 pm, Penn Rd. at M-60, Vandalia
November 12 - Fall Paint Party - Cass District Library	November 23 - Girl2Girl Sale by Girl Scout Service Unit 202, 1-3 pm, Portage Rd. Baptist Church, 1765		December 12 - 15, Barn Swallow Theatre Christmas Play Ho Ho Ho The Santa Claus Chronicles, 7:30 pm (2 pm on Dec. 15), 22334 US-12, Edwardsburg, 28-6672, http://www.barnswallowtheatre.com

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PASTA ITALIA CON CHEF DONATO

Garlic braised short ribs in red wine with polenta

by Chef Dennis Bamber

With the weather getting colder, this is such a satisfying dish to warm the body and the soul. There a number of ways to make this dish, but here is one I just made and it turned out really good.

This dish is often served with mashed potatoes, but here I used polenta, which I feel is a little lighter and goes great with the dish. Polenta is cornmeal and in Italy it was a dish for the peasants and poorer people. Now you find it on gourmet menus in more expensive Italian restaurants.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8-10 short ribs
- 2 sticks of celery
- 3 sticks of peeled carrots
- 1 red onion
- 1 garlic bulb
- 3-4 tablespoons of tomato paste
- salt & pepper
- 3-4 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 cups of red wine
- 2-3 cups of beef broth
- 3-4 sprigs of thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Polenta- Note there are 2 kinds of polenta you can buy. Those in the tube are already cooked and just need to be warmed up and browned, or instant polenta . If using instant polenta, follow the directions, and when done add 2 pats of butter and a cup of grated Parmesan cheese for more flavor.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the oil in a large dutch oven or heavy pot that can go into the oven. Salt and pepper the short ribs all over and brown on all sides in the oil and then remove to a dish, leaving the oil in the pot
2. Chop the celery, carrot and onion



very fine. I put mine in a food processor and processed it very fine. Put the minced vegetable in the pot and cook until soft, about 10-15 minutes,

3. Add the tomato paste, stirring often until it starts to brown slightly.3-4 minutes.
4. Add the red wine and bring to boil until the smell of alcohol goes away. Then add the beef broth.
5. Add the thyme, bay leaves, and the garlic cloves separated, unpeeled, but with the paper outer part removed.
6. Add the short ribs and make sure they are completely covered. If not, add more beef broth.
7. Put in a 300-325 oven covered for 3-4 hours. Checking occasionally to make sure the ribs are covered.
8. Remove the ribs using a slotted spoon so they don't fall apart because

- they are so tender into a bowl. Cover with foil to keep warm
9. Strain the sauce with a fine sieve into a saucepan and boil until it is reduced by 1/2, then add 2 pats of butter to bind the sauce.
 10. Prepare the polenta according to the directions while the sauce is being reduced down.
 11. Spoon the polenta onto deep dishes or bowls, add the short ribs on the polenta,then spoon the sauce over the top.

Not as complicated as it sounds and certainly worth the effort.
Enjoy.

~Buon 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.



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LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

Enjoy the moment and the variety!

by **Jane Boudreau**



I know I've said many times to you, my friends, that I love spring, that I love July, that I adore September. Well, how can you not embrace all of the seasons and the changes they bring? Waxing poetic, our lives are much like the seasons and we need to be in each and every moment to enjoy the variety in our days and weeks. I hope I've inspired or at least encouraged you to do that by finding new challenges or old loves.

We have this gorgeous arbor that is sort of an entryway to our dock. Hard to see here but there are little benches inside that you can sit on. At least you could for awhile. My husband doesn't have a very green thumb but he planted this fall a loving clematis after he built the arbor and it goes nuts at this time of year. Very pretty and lush, I had to share it. Are you cleaning up your gardens about now? Big job. I often wonder, "What made me plant so many pots last April?!!" I have now replaced those summer flowers with pansies and mums and they will last until a deep frost, which may actually happen sooner than we think.



After a long summer we start to nest and focus on making our homes inviting and cozy. I love the natural and organic feel of live plants, real fruits and flowers to bring indoors and we have an abundance of all of this in the fall. It's not so hard on the pocketbook either I might say. I love to visit orchards or the farmer's markets to get what I can to make pies and tarts and cakes. I love apple cake ... I have a wonderful recipe I will share with you if you'd like. And today I made homemade granola (recipe follows). I made quite a bit so I filled jars with it and jazzed them up with some muslin, ribbon. They make great gifts. Maybe not so exciting but I love that it was easy and full of fresh nuts, seeds and dried berries. I keep my fruit on display; apples, pears, pomegranates. I like mini pumpkins to place here and there for a little surprise. I try to keep things simple with a few spicy candles and layers of soft pillows and throws to curl up with in front of the fire (or TV). Texture is the key word. And comfort of course. Okay, coziness is a runner up!

Simple Granola with Fruit and Nuts (Blondie's Version)
Ingredients:



- 3 cups oats
- 3/4 c slivered almonds
- 3/4 c raw pumpkin seeds
- 1/2 t cinnamon
- 1/2 t salt
- 1/4 c canola oil
- 1/2 c maple syrup
- 2 t vanilla extract
- 1 c dried cranberries
- 1 c dried apricots (chopped ... you may substitute any dried fruit you like chopped uniformly)
- 2 T honey

Directions:
Preheat oven to 325 degrees
In a large bowl mix the first 5 dry ingredients. In a small bowl stir together the oil, syrup and vanilla. Drizzle the syrup mixture over the dry and mix thoroughly. Spread on a parchment lined baking sheet and bake for 50 minutes, stirring every once in a while to brown evenly. Remove and toss with dried fruit. Drizzle with honey and let cool. Store in an airtight container.



I'll keep my outdoor decorations at a minimum at the lake until the day we can be there longer in the colder months. Here in the city, I get more creative but I would do much the same in any place and you can, too. I really enjoyed what I came up with last year. Lots of color and very inexpensive. It helps to get your pumpkins and gourds later in the game ... like a week before Halloween. Prices are marked down by then. Haystacks are very reasonable and it leaves you wide open for creating a little orchard scene. A basket filled with Indian corn, gourds, leaves -- whatever you like is so festive! And pop a few pansies in empty pots, they can make it through a few frosts. I mentioned in a previous article that I spray Pledge furniture polish on my pumpkins, the squirrels do not like it one bit. They seem to have wizened up in the last two years or so. Once they get brave enough (or the furniture polish has worn off, one little nibble leads to full on destruction. I read some where that they absolutely do not like anything spicy, so this year I mixed together vegetable oil, some red hot sauce (I use Frank's), and a good tablespoon of red pepper flakes. It smelled like hot chicken wings! I painted this concoction on my pumpkins with a pastry brush, and not only have the squirrels stayed away, the pumpkins look quite pretty all shiny like that.

I get really excited over



Thanksgiving. It is the biggest family gathering we have in my home over the entire year with my children and extended family (I'm always amazed at how many people we squeeze in!). My mother in law always said that she loved a standing-room-only party, it made people socialize. I agree.



This is a picture of one of my place settings last year. I simply mix and match everything. I collect old mismatched silver from antique shops (very cheap). I keep a lot of white or neutral colored dinner plates in supply, and then grab salad/dessert plates when I see them on sale. Layering makes a table so interesting but you really don't need a lot of layers to create a table like this. An option would be to eliminate the salad plate (and those are mini acorns on it which serve no purpose whatsoever). You can place the napkin on the plate or even fold it and layer the silver on top of that. Use what you have and make it fun! And never, never feel like you have to use cloth napkins. A little tip: When I buy cloth napkins I always wash them first and use fabric softener. I then fold them right away. Starched and ironed napkins are very 'old school' and your guests will feel more relaxed and comfortable with soft, 'feel good' napkins.

I don't have any other recipes for you this month. I am sure that every magazine and newspaper has ideas for making your Thanksgiving menu delicious and

your table gorgeous, sometimes it all becomes overwhelming. I serve the traditional turkey, stuffing, potatoes, corn and apple pie. My older kids have added their own recipes for mac and cheese and a few different green salads. I miss the relish tray my mom made with olives, pickles, carrots and fat green onions, but that is so foreign to my kids. Remember that? :) Since I have been making holiday dinners for so long now, which I think I can do in my sleep, I like to use the part of my brain that is somewhat creative to make a great do ahead dessert or appetizer. If you have a group of crabby people whining over when the turkey will be done, I recommend that you have a lot of snacks on hand, even if it's only chips and peanuts. Last year I made a platter of different cheeses and crackers

and fruit (think grapes and sliced pears) and everyone had a great time sampling. I served it on the kitchen island so I would have some company while I slaved over the stove! Yay!

Our house on the lake looks so beautiful now. We have many different varieties of trees so the carpet of fallen leaves looks like a kaleidoscope of color. I remember the kids raking and making huge piles to jump in. Hard to believe that in another month or so this may be covered in frigid snow. But that's just another part of the cycle. Being a part of it with warm fires and hot soups, wrapped in wool throws and slippers ... well that's a subject we can spend time on next month!

Happy Thanksgiving from my family to yours!!

~Jane
Jane Boudreau is a longtime blogger, and newspaper columnist. She divides her time between Chicago, Michigan and a little place in the mountains of North Carolina. You can contact her at Blindy9@yahoo.com. All photos are taken by and property of Jane Boudreau. Please ask for permission before using. Thank you.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

A brief history of insurance

By **Charlie Retherford**
Kemner, Iott, Benz Agency

Hello All! I was just talking to Clyde, my trusty, 4-footed, best friend about how interesting insurance can be. OK, go ahead and call me a Nerd but I find it fascinating! Clyde enjoys hearing about insurance too, although for some reason, it puts him to sleep. So, I thought I would see if I am able to pique your interest with a few basic insurance facts. Just don't read this at nap time. And so ... A Brief, and in no way, comprehensive, History of Insurance.

13th Century: Marine Insurance, the oldest branch of modern insurance, originated in Italy with the Lombard (pawn-brokers) merchants. It eventually spread to "the continent" and then England. The British dominated this insurance market throughout the 1800s and into the 1900s.

1688: Lloyd's of London started in a coffee shop; Edward Lloyd's Coffee House on Tower St in London. The original focus was by investors hoping to protect their interest in ships and cargo. Several investors would each agree to "insure" a percentage of the total risk by writing their name and the percentage they agreed to cover under the description of the ship and cargo. This coined the term, "underwriters".

1693: The first known "mortality table" was compiled by Sir Edmund Halley (Halley's Comet). He used figures from a small town in Germany (now Poland) and although it was unlikely to be an accurate representation due to the low numbers, it was nonetheless a first step in estimating the length of human life.

1706: The first noted life insurance was started in England by William Talbot and Sir Thomas Allen. The company was

named The Amicable Society for a Perpetual Assurance and the office was in London.

1752: Benjamin Franklin started the oldest, property insurance company in America and it is still in existence today. A mutual insurance company, The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses formed to insure homes against loss by fire. Interestingly, this fire protection was offered in a city of 15,000 people where many homes were built of brick and stone and where there were 8 volunteer fire crews. The company would not insure homes or structures that did not meet strict building standards and they even hired chimney sweeps to help maintain the homes of some of their insureds. Some insurance companies of the period provided their insureds with placards or "Fire Brands" to attach to their building so the fire departments would respond faster knowing they would be paid sooner than if the owner was responsible for payment.

1760: The first life insurance in the American colonies became available when the Presbyterian Synods in Philadelphia and New York City created The Corporation for Relief of Poor and Distressed Widows and Children of Presbyterian Ministries about 1759. This was followed 10 years later by a similar coverage made available by the Episcopalian priests.

1850: The Franklin Health Assurance Company of Massachusetts first offered accident and health insurance.

1866: The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company opens in Hartford, Connecticut.

1878: The first Fidelity and Surety Bonds were made available.

1881: The first Workers' Compensation laws were established by Otto von Bismarck, Germany's "Iron Chancellor" between 1881 and 1884. Workers' Comp laws were not successful in surviving legal challenges in America until 1911 when Wisconsin passed the first successful Work Comp program in the country. Prior to that, workers injured on the job had to sue the employer in court by proving negligence. Most workers could not afford the cost of the judicial process so employers only rarely paid medical expenses.

1885: The first employer liability policies became available.

1898: Travelers Insurance became the first insurer to write an auto insurance

policy in America.

1912: The first aviation insurance policy was written.

1938: The Federal Crop Insurance Program began.


1968: The Federal Flood Insurance Program was started.

This is just a snapshot of insurance history that I hope made you say, "Wow!" So, the next time you and your friends are looking for some fun facts, you can dazzle them with insurance history!

We invite you to call or stop by Kemner Iott Benz to speak with an insurance professional who can help you find the best protection for all your assets. After all, it's Historic!

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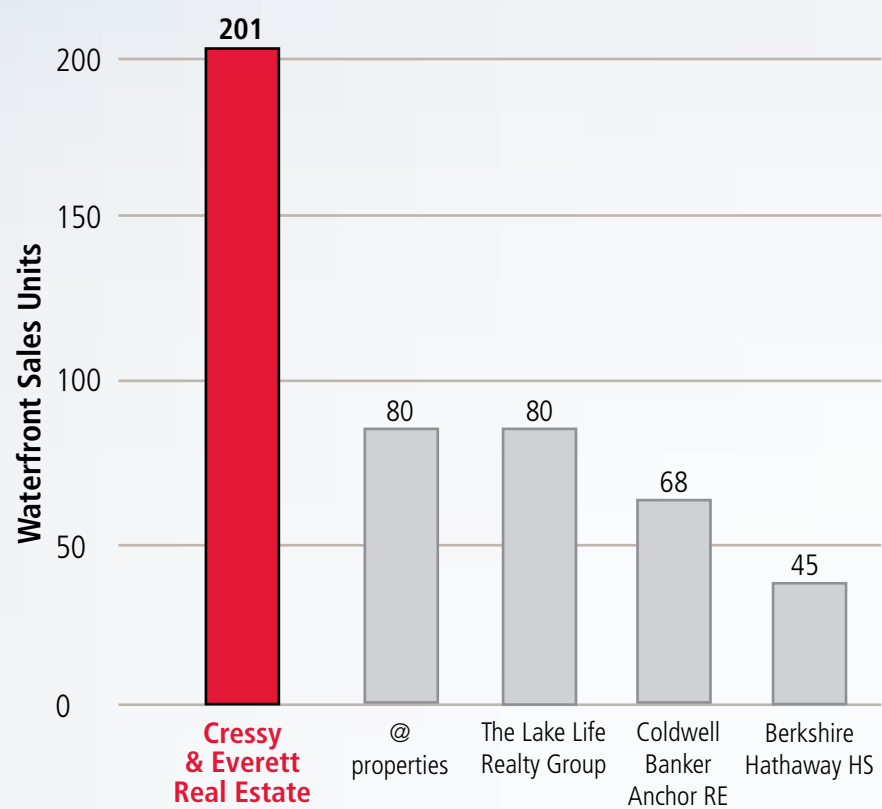
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OUR CHILDREN

Six tips for reading aloud to older kids

by **SANDY FLEMING**

The weather is about to turn cooler, and many fall sports are winding down. Families have a bit more free time, and it's a great time to build habits for reading out loud. In many families, parents are careful to read aloud at bedtime for the first four or five years of the child's life, but then the habit slowly dies out as everyone gets busier. It's easy to think, "My child can read alone now, so it's not a big deal to cut this out of the schedule." However, nothing can be farther from the truth. Your children will benefit from hearing you read aloud to them well into their teens if you can get them to sit still long enough. Here are some tips to keep the habit alive well past kindergarten.

Choose Harder Books

As your youngster grows up, so should the choices for reading aloud. Somewhere around age 3, kids usually have the cognitive and memory skills to keep track of a story over multiple sessions. That means it's time to start reading chapter books to him or her. Reading chapter books builds a lot of new skills that are crucial to school success, so it's important that you take full advantage of this activity as long as you are able to do so.

First of all, reading chapter books that must be digested in multiple sessions will help your child build memory skills. He or she will need to keep track of the story between reading times. If you wish, try having a "recap" session just before you begin reading new material. See what your child remembers from the previous chapters, and fill in any major blanks that he or she has. You should go over the main points of the plot, the characters, and so forth before each reading.

You can use this opportunity to build summarizing skills as well. Put your child in charge of reviewing the events so far in the story. The ability to pick out the important events and information to share in a summary is very important in school success. Summaries should be complete but short, so you can also work

on sorting out important from trivial information.

Try making some predictions before you begin the new section. Have your child take a guess about what a character will do or how a situation will turn out. Making predictions is an important school skill. As they practice, your children will refine this skill and their predictions will fall into alignment with reality. They will gain experience at making their predictions reasonable based on the clues they have already heard in previous readings.

Reading tougher books together like this will also give you a chance to tease your children with the delights awaiting them as they build reading skills. Choose books that are just above their independent reading level, and you will open doors that will have them salivating to learn more about reading skills and be able to read these new books on their own.

Choose Classics

Classics are classics for good reason. The stories have a timeless quality that allows them to speak to kids across the years. Many classics are very difficult to read in their original format. Even if your child is young, try to find original versions of their favorite paraphrased stories or those they've seen on video. Pick out stories like Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz, Mary Poppins, or Pinocchio. The kids (and maybe even you!) will be amazed at the rich detail that was omitted from the more common paraphrases or movies.

Reading from original versions of classics is a great way to build vocabulary. The words that the author used are more challenging than those in the easy-to-read versions. Your children may not be able to read them on their own, but they will pick up and start to use richer and more descriptive vocabulary if you share these books with them.

The classics can give kids a glimpse into the past and into other cultures. Try reading older versions of Tales of the Arabian Nights or folk tales from other countries. It's a great way to learn about

others from around the world.

Another difference between newer stories and older ones is the language and sentence structure. It takes a lot more understanding of how language words to follow the longer sentences and the more complex thoughts that are included in older literature.

Read with Expression

Stories from more challenging books are great opportunities to exercise your flair for the dramatic. There are more characters and more dynamic changes in the emotional tone of the story. Take advantage of these and use your best expressive reading to help keep the kids' interest. Make the story come alive!

What if you're not good at this? That's easy. Practice! Read a bit of the story in private and try out different paces, different tones, and different voices for the characters. You'll learn and then your children will benefit.

Reading with expression supports comprehension. If you add a wide range of expression to your reading, your children are more likely to keep up with the changes in the story. They also will find it more memorable. Reading with expression can liven up the experience for everyone.

Share the Load

Once kids can read proficiently, there's no reason that they can't share in the work of reading aloud. They can develop important skills in this way, as well. Reading aloud requires an awareness of your audience and an understanding of how you are being perceived. It builds confidence and self-assuredness.

You can share the reading by taking turns at each page, section or chapter. Let everyone who wants to give it a try chime in. If your child is interested and willing, but lacks the necessary reading skills, try reading in unison for a bit. Simply put the book on the table in front of both of you and read together. They will learn and grow as you share this activity.

Do Book Teasers

How do you get older kids to pick up books? You read aloud from them and get

to an exciting spot, then stop. Leave the book lying around somewhere in your house and chances are that it will disappear! Kids will want to know what happens next.

Book teasers are a perfect means to introduce new series or even entire new genres to your children. And if one doesn't work, try another in a few days. If you need suggestions for your child's age and stage, talk to your local librarian or someone at the local bookstore. Those folks know a LOT about what children are interested in reading.

Do Something With the Book

Reading books is only the beginning. Make sure that children are interacting with the book in some way. They can participate in a discussion, tell an absent family member what is going on in the story, or turn the story into a homemade skit or play. They can write their own "test" over the content and give it to a parent to solve. They can make puzzles related to the book, such as a crossword, word search or similar activity.

They can even use the book as a jumping off point for writing. Try writing a different ending to the story, writing a scene from a different perspective, or creating a whole new story in the same universe with the same characters. If you want a very, very creative exercise, try writing a story where the characters from two totally different books meet up and interact!

So what are you waiting for? Reading aloud is not only good for the little ones. It can be a huge skill builder and family uniting force for older kids, too. Find a good time when folks are available, and pick a good book. Read aloud instead of some of that screen time. It's better for everyone and a whole lot more productive than most other activities.


Sandy Fleming is an educational consultant and tutor living in Edwardsburg. Find more fun ideas to help kids learn at her website: <http://learningnook.com>.



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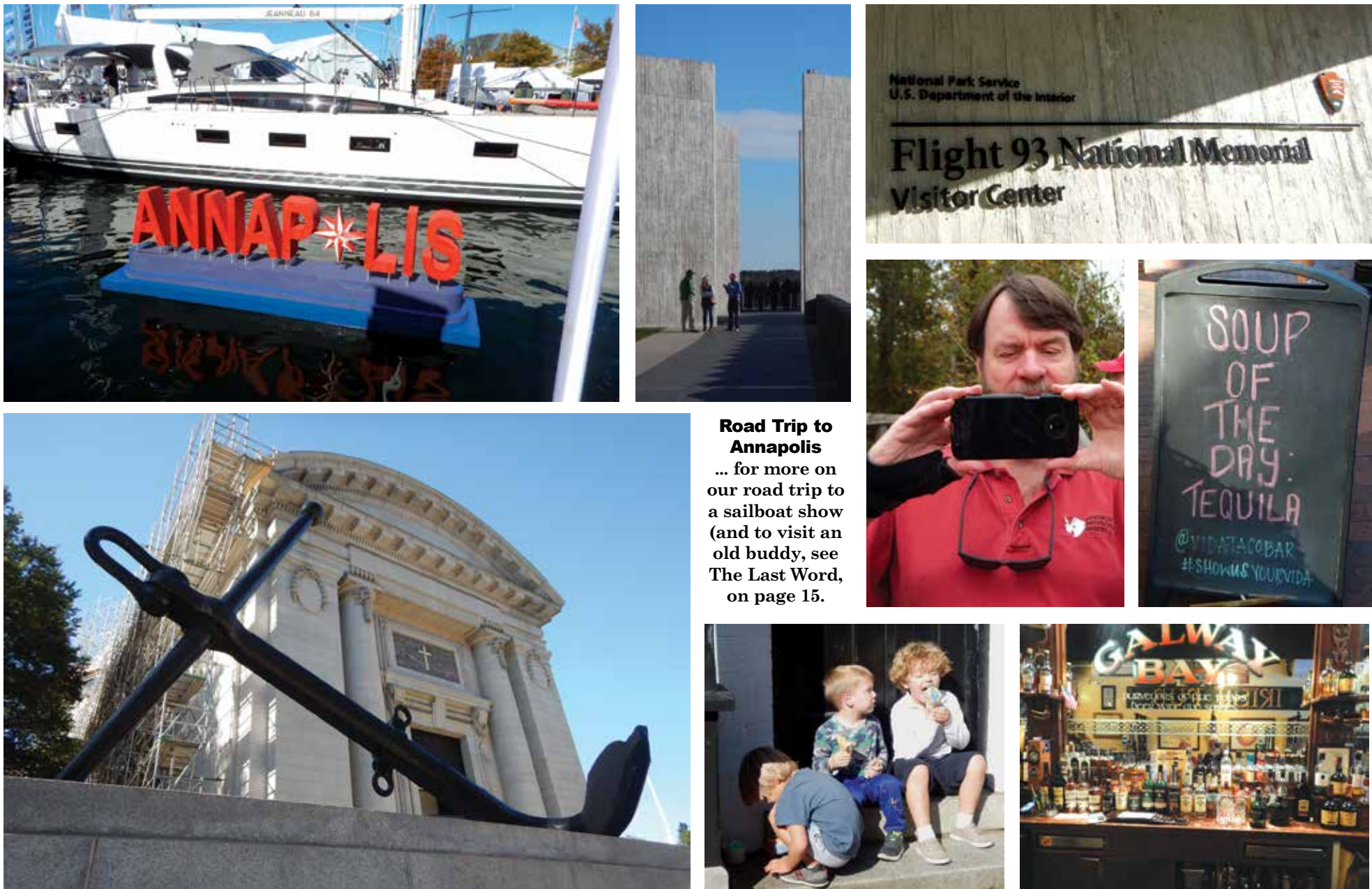
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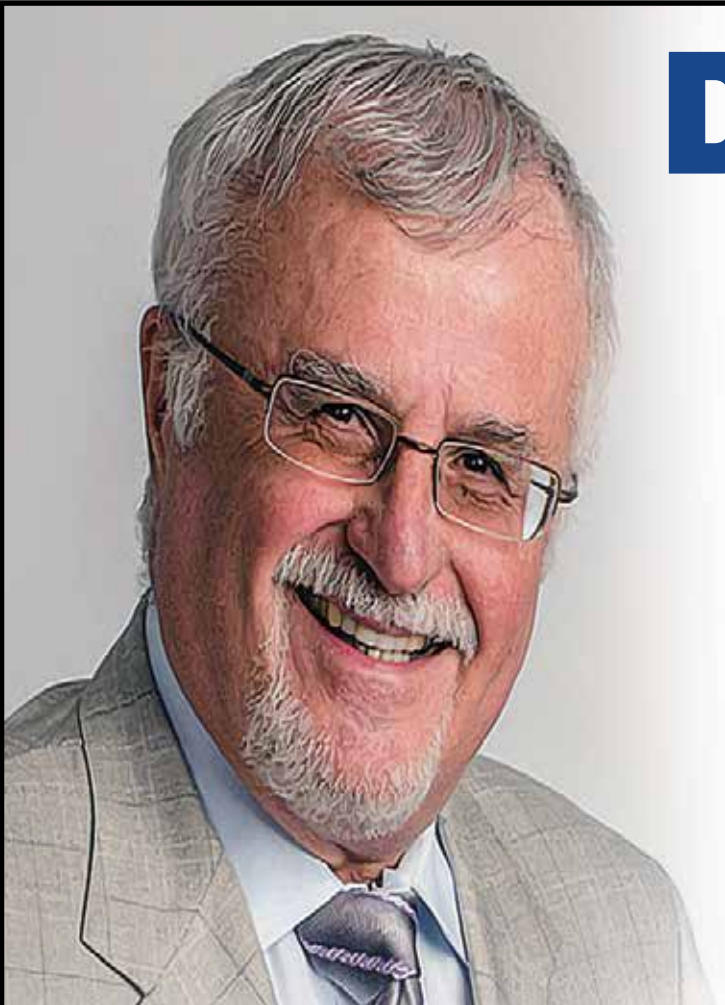
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FIELD TRIP



Road Trip to Annapolis
... for more on our road trip to a sailboat show (and to visit an old buddy, see The Last Word, on page 15.



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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.

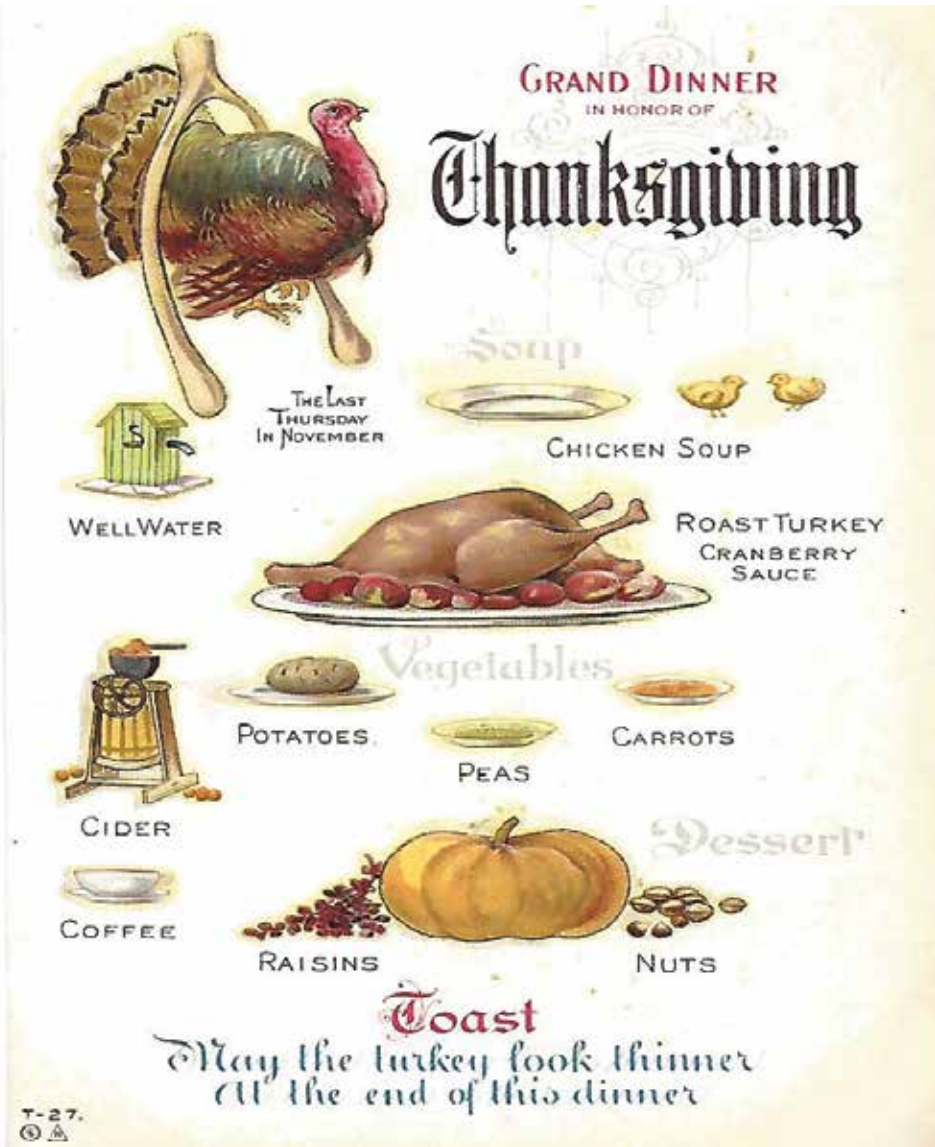
Jerdon has recently used many of his postcards featuring the Sister Lakes area in a book written by RL Rasmussen. The book, which retails for \$19.99, is in its second printing by the publisher,

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



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LOCAL HISTORY



Cass County: Now and Then by Jonathan Wuepper, Cass District Library Local History Branch

This month I am featuring "then and now" from Edwardsburg, Cass County. The black and white photo at top left was taken circa 1915, one of many of the George Andrus collection. The Edwardsburg Argus newspaper was

owned by the Andrus family for many years. Pinning an exact year on the black and white photo is not possible, but it is probable that it dates from about 1915 when George and Henry Andrus were photographing many landmarks in and around Edwardsburg. According to the Edwardsburg Area Museum, the Ford Garage and Auto Sales building was formerly the

Burlingame Furnace Factory. These buildings were reportedly south of Claire's Barber Shop, also on Cass Street. A quick glance of the Edwardsburg Argus newspapers of that period among the library's collections, I found an advertisement in the May 20, 1915 edition of that paper for a Tonsorial Parlor, Eugene Claire proprietor. It reads "Everything has been put in first-class shape, and every effort will be made to merit the

patronage of the public. Special attention will be made to the dressing of ladies' hair. We also keep the best cigars in town." I have included a photo taken on October 17, 2019 from the same viewpoint facing northeast and another looking southwest. Many thanks to the Edwardsburg Area Museum for their help in researching this article.



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NATURE NOTES

Provided by Cass District Library
Local History Branch

Anearly all-white ruby-throated hummingbird caught the eye of Betty Timmreck of Berrien Township on September 18, when Timmreck noticed it at her hummingbird feeder. Several photos were taken of the hummingbird, being present until September 19.

Albino birds and animals usually signify lack of genetic diversity, which in turn often results in an animals' below average life span. I wondered about Timmrecks albino hummingbird, if it was an adult or juvenile. So, I asked Allen Chartier, director of the Great Lakes Hummernet project which studies hummingbirds in the region and elsewhere about albino hummingbirds. Chartier said: "A hummingbird bander from Oklahoma banded quite a few albinos, and tracked those banded by others, for over 20 years. I think that maybe 200 or 300 were banded. All of them were hatch-year birds, not a single adult. And not a single banded albino hummingbird returned the next spring. So, as you might expect, a white hummingbird has a very low chance of surviving to adulthood." The reason albino animals have shorter lifespans is genetic weakness often caused by inbreeding.

The ruby-throated hummingbirds we see in our region from late September onward are usually migrants that have nested north of Southwest Michigan and are now headed to the southern US, south to Central America and northern South America where they winter. Our resident ruby-throated hummingbirds having nested locally have already departed south.

Adult male ruby-throated hummingbirds are the first to depart southward beginning in July and August. Adult females leave in August and September followed by young which hatched in 2019.

The great majority of ruby-throated hummingbirds will have vacated Michigan by October 20, but a few may linger until November.

James and Karen Shymkus reported that a belted kingfisher recently flew into their sliding glass door, which overlooks Paw Paw Lake in Watervliet Township. James was able to snap a photo of this stunned bird, which stayed on the ground about 20 minutes before it regained its senses and flew away.

Belted kingfishers are more abundant in Southwest Michigan from March through November after which they become scarce. Most migrate to our south, but no farther than the southern US in the east. A few over winter in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, especially around open water.

On September 15, a Nashville warbler while en route from Canada or northern Michigan to its wintering grounds of Mexico and Central America hit the window of Troy and Lori Thompson of Royalton Township. Fortunately the bird was only stunned and as it recuperated on the Thompson's deck, Lori took some photos of the bird and submitted them to the HP.

Nashville warblers are fairly common in our woods during spring and fall. They are most common during the last ten days of September through early October. They reappear in southern Michigan during late April.

White feathers of the Great egret stand out against green and blue backgrounds, and one such egret was found Tuesday, October 1 in Royalton Township by Bob Conrad of St. Joseph who took some great photos.

The great egret is about the size of the more common great blue heron, being over three and a half feet tall with a four and a half foot wing span. The great egret sports a yellow bill, and black legs and feet. It is the only egret which has



Top row, l to r: Albino ruby-throated hummingbird at feeder of Betty Timmreck, Berrien Township. Ruby-throated hummingbird on at fuchsia plant of Scott Glenn, Lincoln Township. Belted kingfisher, stunned after striking window of James and Karen Shymkus, Watervliet Township, James Shymkus. Bottom row: Nashville warbler after striking window of Troy and Lori Thompson of Royalton Township. Great egret images captured in Royalton

Township by Bob Conrad. Female common yellowthroat along Yellow Birch Trail at warren Dunes State Park, Brad Anderson. Great horned owl in first year of life, atop post in HP columnist Dave Mull's Yard. Almena Township, Van Buren. Adult bald eagle over Warren Dunes State Park. Blue-headed vireo at Warren Dunes State Park by Brad Anderson. Cattle egret at New Buffalo on by David Ferris of Buchanan.

that color combination.

Michigan is at the northern limit of the great egrets range, being more numerous all months of the year in the southeastern US.

Nesting of the great egret takes place in Michigan during May through July. Pairs of adult egrets may nest alone or in colonies with others of the same species or in rookeries along with great blue herons.

During July and August egrets disperse from the nesting areas, and wander quite a great distance. This is call post breeding dispersal, accounting for the increase of egret sightings during August and September.

The species gradually departs Michigan during September and early October. Although great egrets are not often reported after the middle of October, some have been reported locally into November.

On September 30, Brad Anderson photographed a female common yellowthroat along the Yellow Birch Trail of Warren Dunes State Park. The common yellowthroat is a member of the warbler family, and is quite numerous in our region from May through October.

The male of the species looks quite different from the female, having a black mask over most of the face. Yellowthroats are common in cattail marshes and overgrown fields where they nest.

Like other species in the warbler family, yellowthroats are currently migrating to more southern latitudes for the winter months. Most common yellowthroats winter in the southeastern US. Most yellowthroats will be gone from Michigan by the middle of October.

Several readers have asked whether or not hummingbirds will remain here too long if feeders are left out. Hummingbirds will not delay migration because they have access to sugar water in hummingbird feeders.

Migration is triggered mainly by the amount of daylight and by weather. Fall hummingbird migration in southern Michigan peaks in September and tapers off in early October. I suggest taking hummingbird feeders down on October 10, or ten days after the last hummingbird was seen.

This week two raptors are featured, one nocturnal, being the great horned owl and one diurnal, being the bald eagle.

Dave Mull sent me photos of a great horned owl, probably a young bird that

hatched in early 2019, found entangled in netting placed over Dave and Kathy Mull's chicken coop, October 3 in Almena Township in Van Buren County.

Dave Mull said: "The owl was tangled in the netting that covers our chicken coop. I cut him free with game shears and he eventually ended up perched atop this pipe on our barn. I couldn't get him to agree to only eat our roosters and leave our chickens alone however."

This great horned owl very likely was still being fed by its parents, and perhaps was only learning to catch its own food. Young great horned owls stay near their parents from the time they hatch in early spring until November, when they go off in search of territory they call their own.

Great horned owls range from the tree line in Canada, south through the US, Mexico, Central America and all the way to the southernmost tip of South America. It is one of the most widely distributed native birds in the Western Hemisphere.

The Great horned owl is a year-round resident over its range and does not migrate. They eat small rodents, birds, reptiles and mammals as large as skunks.

Brad Anderson of Bridgman found at least two bald eagles in Warren Dunes State Park in recent days, one of which was photographed and is featured today.

The bald eagle can be found sparingly all year long in Southwest Michigan, although it is probable that no individual eagle stay here all year. The individual eagles that can be found nesting along the St. Joseph River in summer likely migrate southward, possibly to the Ohio River for winter.

In contrasts, bald eagles found here in winter are most likely individuals that have nested in Canada and northern Michigan and have migrated to our region for the winter.

During October and November many bald eagles pass through Southwest Michigan on their way south. The migration period runs from late September through about Thanksgiving. While most bald eagles only pass through during spring and fall, a few stay the entire winter.

During the coldest part of the winter season, bald eagles can be found where there is open water. Eagles will patrol the skies over the St. Joseph River looking for patches of open water during the

dead of winter.

A handful of bald eagle nests have been confirmed along the St. Joseph and Paw Paw Rivers since 2018, marking the return to of our national bird as a breeding species to Berrien County for the first time since 1870.

White-crowned sparrows, white-throated sparrows, and dark-eyed juncos are turning up at area bird feeders. Dark-eyed juncos are members of the sparrow family and become one of the most numerous songbirds at feeders in Southwest Michigan from October to April. During the summer months they nest to out north.

Most white-crowned sparrows and white-throated sparrows will migrate to points south but a few will remain here throughout the winter. The blue-headed vireo can be found traveling through our woods this month, on its way to the Southeastern US for the winter. Brad Anderson captured an image of the species on October 14 at Warren Dunes Sate Park.

The blue-headed vireo is quite small, being about 5 and a half inches in length. Its has a greenish back, yellowish sides, and a blue-gray head along with white throat. The diagnostic feature which stands out immediately is the white spectacles around the eyes.

This species passes through Southwest Michigan every spring and fall, but does not generally stay the summer. Their nesting range is the forests of Canada south to the northern half of Michigan Lower Peninsula. The average fall arrival date of the blue-headed vireo in Berrien County is September 9 and the average departure date is October 14, although on occasion the species has been observed into late October.

A cattle egret was photographed on October 13 at New Buffalo by David Ferris of Buchanan. Cattle egrets are uncommon, annual visitors to Southwest Michigan usually seen during April and May in the spring and September and October in the fall.

Cattle egrets stand about one and a half feet tall as opposed to the great egrets length of three and a half feet. Cattle egrets like to eat insects that are attracted to larger mammals. In Africa follow African buffalo. In North America cattle egrets follow domestic cattle, also domestic and wild bison.

The cattle egret is a relatively recent addition to the avifauna of North America, the species originating in Africa and it showed up in South America on during the last third of the 1800s. It's range progressed northward in the 20th Century, reaching North America by 1941. Michigan's first cattle egret occurred in 1961, and Berrien County's first sighting occurred in 1965.

Nesting occurs very infrequently in Michigan and most individuals observed in the state during fall are likely post-breeding individuals from southern states.

Scott Glenn of Lincoln Township photographed a ruby-throated hummingbird on October 10, while it fed on nectar of his fuchsia plant.

Ruby-throated hummingbirds occur in small numbers in Berrien County well into October. Since Glenn's sighting on the 10th, Brad Anderson has reported up to two ruby-throated hummingbirds at his feeder in Bridgman on October 12, with one remaining until at least October 14.

I encourage all local hummingbird observations after October 10 to be reported. The chances of a species other than a ruby-throated hummingbird turning up locally increase as the autumn progresses.

Please report your sightings to Jonathan Wuepper at wuepperj@gmail.com.

THE LAST WORD

Negotiating for boats over balloons



ur latest road trip started out as a compromise that I proposed in the interest of marital accord (which every long-married male in the world will understand to be a compromise I hoped would keep me from being beaten into a bloody Halloween decoration).

Sometime around the middle of last September my wife saw an Internet article about an annual hot-air balloon festival somewhere near Albuquerque, New Mexico, and immediately decided that we (as in the "Royal" we) should go.

My wife, you see, is one of those rare mutants who doesn't suffer my own most personal, dreaded fear (which is known as splat-o-phobia, a condition often mistaken as acrophobia (different in that I don't fear heights, I fear hitting the ground after falling from a great height). My wife loves roller coasters, rooftop restaurants and mountain top aerie-like vantage points where she will stand at the very edge, her toes hanging over a drop of hundreds of feet, lean forward and point to something three counties away and try to get me to stop squeezing the bumper of the car in the parking lot two blocks away from the ledge while I try not to embarrass myself by peeing my pants in fear ...

My wife entertains this bucket-list fantasy of actually riding in the gondola of one of those hot air balloons, no doubt so she can oooh and aaaah at the experience while I, no doubt, would be sitting at some dive bar, nursing an iced Milk of Amnesia and trying not to look at her way up there, and trying not to pee my pants from just knowing she's up there.

So as you might imagine I was something less than thrilled with her choice of venue for a fall vacation. At first, I did what most husbands do when a wife presents an unpleasant idea (I think we should repaint the inside of the washer and dryer this weekend, don't you?) ... I pretended that I didn't hear a thing. Unfortunately, after being married to me for nearly 50 years, she has learned a few spousal tricks of her own, and she just scowled and started repeating it again and again, louder and louder, until I was forced to respond.

My move. Think fast!

Believing in the ancient Taoist axiom that delay is the deadliest form of denial, I decided to defer action, and I might have told her we could talk about it later.

Somehow mistaking my sarcasm as meaning that I was actually willing to discuss the idea at all, she brought it up again. And again, and again, and again.

Once it became clear to me that the Taoists were fatally optimistic when it comes to manipulating my wife's whims, I initiated Plan B, smoke and mirrors.

"Wouldn't you rather go sailing or visit Paris again?" I asked, my mind reeling with the thought of fouling my pants in front of the entire Southwestern United States. "How about a trip to Norway to see the northern lights ... or a photo safari in Africa maybe?"

The look on her face said it all.

"Stupid man," her eyebrows scowled aloud. "You know I've always wanted to ride in a hot air balloon."

Time for Plan C, excuses.

"If we're going to drive to New Mexico, we'll have to make it two weeks, which means boarding our poor, ancient,

lonely dog who'll cry every day and miss us so badly she won't eat and will just mope around on a cold concrete floor and she'll probably die of distemper or something," I parried, my rapier wit flashing like the dim reflection of a dying candle off Zorro's sword.

The stony glare I got told me I'd have better luck talking to the Blarney Stone.

Feigning nonchalance, I turned the page of the sailing magazine I was trying to hide behind ... and the seeds of my salvation fell into my lap, needing only a bit of well-placed fertilizer to bud.

So I laid it on thick.

Sailboat show (where they'll have jewelry), fall foliage in the mountains of Pennsylvania, romantic getaway dinners and hotels, soft shell crabs, mussels, lobster, maybe even go look up our old friends John and Debbie in Maryland and ... and ... and.

I talked to near hypoxia as I gasped out my sales pitch for the sailboat show. And then a miracle happened.

She said ok. I began breathing again.

Fearing the dread "I've changed my mind" quarterback reverse, I ran to the computer, hastily bought tickets for the show, booked a hotel room in Annapolis and surfed to "things to do in the area." And to my pants' relief, a couple of weeks later we found ourselves sailing down the highway in our Subaru schooler-wannabe towards the east coast.

Well, we're back now, and as we sit and look over the photos, we (especially my part of we) are very happy we went.

We did get to catch up with our friends (and meet their son, finally) and spent a day and a night with them. We did get to see some spectacular fall col-

ors in the mountains of Pennsylvania. We got to have some great romantic dinners of shellfish and seafood, and we got to stay at some great hotels. And, oh yeah we got to visit the sailboat show for two days (and, yes, she got some jewelry).

We also found a boatload of really cool things we didn't expect ... like the US Air Force Academy, where we visited the coolest museum of aviation I've ever seen and the crypt of John Paul Jones. We visited the National Civil War Museum of Medicine (which my retired-nurse wife found fascinating). We visited Rock Creek National Park on the Potomac River and the Flight 93 National Monument. And we visited a half dozen (or so) great Irish pubs where I forced myself to take a break from the show and indulge in a pint (or so) of Guinness (and where, to my wife's annoyance and minor amusement, I talked sailing and Ireland and beer and shellfish and Maryland and even the Cubs ... or whatever else any one of my new best sailing/pub friends wanted to talk about).

And best of all ... better than the boat show; better than the mountains and the amazing autumnal array; better than the crabs and mussels and lobster and even better than the romantic dinner and hotels and our great one-on-one renewing drive across three states ...

Better than all of those things during the entire vacation our dog didn't die and I never once peed my pants!

I am a little concerned, however, that my wife has already looked up the dates for next year's hot air balloon festival and marked them on the calendar.

Do balloons even have bathrooms?



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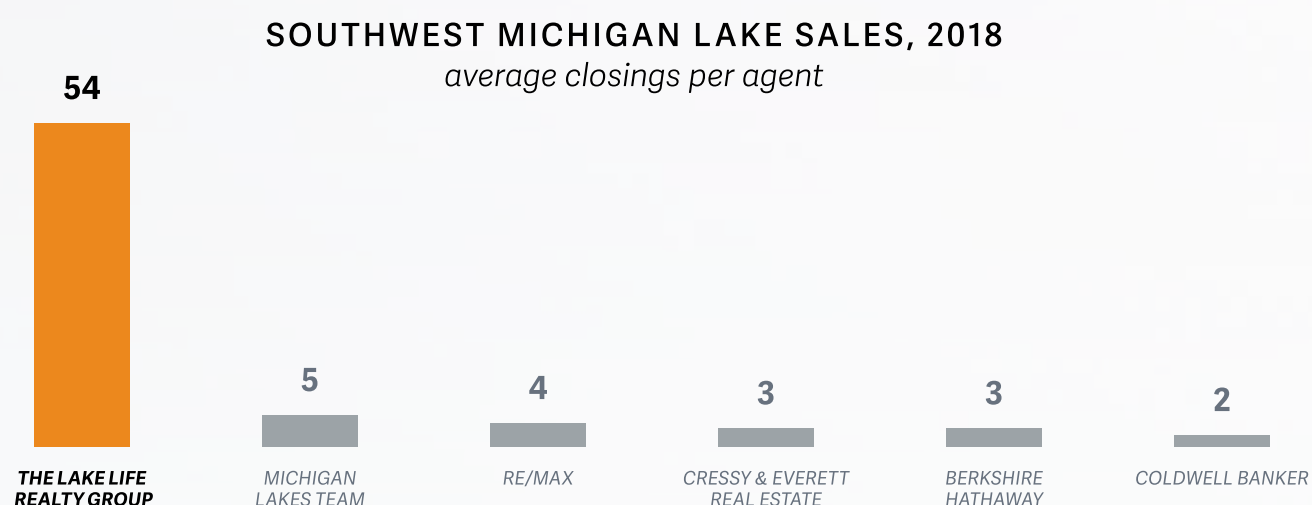
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