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# NEIGHBORS

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

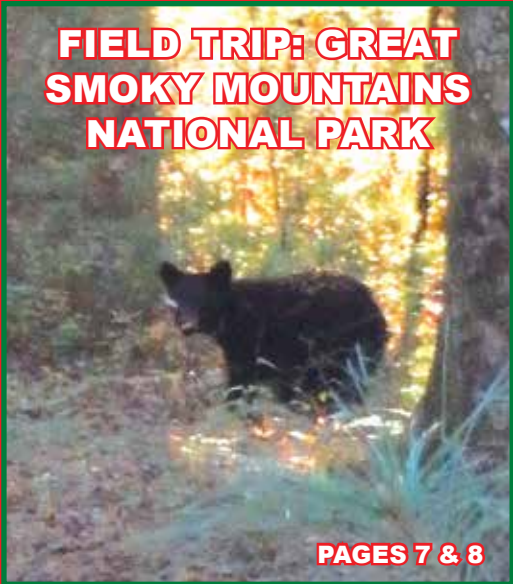


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**To contact Neighbors**  
(269) 228-1080  
(269) 476-1680

<http://www.cassneighbors.com>  
[sailorphil@philvitale.com](mailto:sailorphil@philvitale.com)  
[jack@beanstalk.net](mailto:jack@beanstalk.net)



# REGIONAL NEWS

### MEC closes lobbies

Given the new mandates issued by Gov. Whitmer on Sunday, Nov. 15, and out of an abundance of caution for the safety of its customers and employees, MEC is closing its lobbies to walk-in traffic through Monday, Jan. 4.

The drive-through window at the Cassopolis office will remain open, and payments left in the drop boxes at each of the district service centers by 5 pm Monday-Friday will be posted that day.

MEC is part of the critical infrastructure that will continue to work to meet the needs of customers. Here are some points to this latest mitigation strategy:

While lobbies are closed, MEC will continue to take calls through its Solutions Center. If your business requires you to meet with a team member, please call us 800.492.5989 and schedule an appointment. Call volume continues to be very high so please consider alternative ways to reach MEC, including email and Live Chat.

MEC offers a variety of easy and convenient ways to pay your bill.

Electric, propane, and fiber operation teams will continue their regular work with strict precautions in place. This includes new propane tank sets and fiber in-home installations. MEC will use all appropriate personal protective equipment with in-home work and ask all customers to wear a mask and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet.

Many people are once again learning new ways to do things. Please review MEC's COVID-19 Resource Page for tips on working, learning, and playing from home; it also includes information to help you manage your energy use.

### Christmas Parade Canceled

Dowagiac's 30th annual Candlelight Christmas Parade, which was planned to be hosted as a reverse parade on Friday, Dec. 4 at Southwestern Michigan College, has been canceled.

While the event was going to be staged as a reverse parade, with spectators driving past the lighted units within the safety of their own vehicles, new mandates issued Sunday by the state of Michigan do not enable the Greater Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce to meet requirements for social distancing, chamber members announced.

Committee members reassessed the parade's needs for staging the event, as well as the number of people, including volunteers, security, traffic control and parade unit participants, that would be on site that night. As a result, it was determined there is not enough space within the college's Cherry Grove parking lot to adhere to the mandate.

**Cass Library - December Programs**  
*Now – December 4*  
**Fleece Pillowcase Take and Make** – Available for pickup at any branch. Winter Virtual Story Time Activity Packs are available for pickup at any branch. Activity packs include children's crafts and activities that coincide with weekly story time videos posted to our website and Facebook page.

*December 7 – 11*  
Holiday Porch Gnome Take and Make – Available for pickup at the Main Branch only. Create a Holiday Porch Gnome out of a tomato cage, fresh greens, mittens, sweater and nose. Cost

is \$10 per person. Call Stephanie at 749-1389 ext. 106 to reserve a kit.

December 8  
**Winter Virtual Story Time Begins**

December 14 – 18  
**Knit Hat Craft Take and Make** – Available for pickup at any branch.

Please call the Library before attending an event to make sure that the event has not been canceled.

**Cass Underground Railroad Program Recognized**  
The National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom accepted the Underground Railroad Driving Tour of Cass County, produced by the Underground Railroad Society of Cass County, as one of over 650 sites, programs, and facilities within the Network. It joins 12 new listings from the 40th round of Network to Freedom applications, representing sites and programs in eight states across the United States. New listings were accepted in the final days of September, which represented International Underground Railroad Month in 11 states.

Twice per calendar year, the Network to Freedom reviews and accepts applications from sites, facilities, and programs with verified connections to the Underground Railroad. Diane Miller, the National Program Manager, says, "We have a unique opportunity to work with incredible people bringing little known stories to light."

The tour itself, first produced in 2011, highlights the role that local African Americans, Quakers, and other

abolitionists played in the Underground Railroad. One notable tour stop is the Stephen Bogue House and Marker. A Network to Freedom site, the home marks where Hannah and Stephen Bogue worked together to hide freedom seekers. In 1847, a group of slave catchers broke into several properties, including a cabin on the Bogue's farm, capturing freedom seekers to return them to their enslavers. The 1847 Kentucky Slave Raid ensued, during which abolitionists from the community, including Stephen Bogue, came together to free nine freedom seekers.

"I think people often don't realize how many Underground Railroad stories are in their backyards," says Miller. "I am eager to see how communities representing the new listings work together to continue to share these stories with the public."

The tour stops are not all owned by the Underground Railroad Society of Cass County, and not all of them are open to the public. Visit [www.urscc.org](http://www.urscc.org) in order to properly plan your trip.

**Innertubing Parties**  
St. Joseph County Parks is accepting reservations for Private Innertubing Parties for January, February and March at Ferrettie/Baugo Creek County Park and St. Patrick's County Park.

Parties may reserve either park for \$175 for up to 50 people for two hours.

All innertubing parties include inner-tubes, a warming room, fire, tables/chairs, and staff supervision on the hills. Not recommended for children three years of age or younger.

Call; 574/654-3155 for reservations.



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# REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

December 4 - Candlelight Christmas Parade - **Canceled**

December 7 - 11 - Holiday Porch Gnome Take and Make - for pickup at the Main Branch only, \$10 per person. 749-1389 ext. 106

December 8- Winter Virtual Story Time Begins at Cass District Library

December 14 - 18 - Knit Hat Craft Take and Make - for pickup at any branch (call the Library before attending)

December 17 - The Econ Club of Southwestern Michigan: Mental Health "Pandemic" - The Crisis Within the Crisis, 7 PM - 10 PM, TheMendelCenter.com

## 2021

January 29 - Puzzle tournament for adults, Dowagiac

District Library, 6 to 8 pm.

January 31 - Coloring contest entries for Fandom Fest due

February 1, 5, 8 - Storytime, Dowagiac District Library, for ages toddler to 5 years old, 10:30 am

February 6 - Dowagiac Ice Time Festival, **Canceled** due to the pandemic

February 7 - Dowagiac District Library Puzzles and pizza, 4 pm

February 14 - Dowagiac District Library Teen Trivia, 4 pm

March 27 - Dowagiac Easter Extravaganza 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

May 21 - Dowagiac Memorial Day Parade, 10:30 am -

Noon

April 6 - Fandom Fest, Dowagiac District Library library sponsored comic-con, 11 am - 7 pm the Mendel Center at Lake Michigan College

April 21 - Henry Winkler at The Mendel Center, Lake Michigan College, Benton Harbor, 7:30 pm, [https://www.themendelcenter.com/events/detail.html?calendarid=11Admission:\\$50-\\$80+applicablefees,269-927-8700](https://www.themendelcenter.com/events/detail.html?calendarid=11Admission:$50-$80+applicablefees,269-927-8700)

June 2 - Dowagiac Farm & Artisan Market, 9am - 2 pm

July 16 - Dowagiac Summer in the City Festival, 10 am - 5 pm

August 1 - 7 - Cass County Fair

August 21 - Dowagiac Rod &

Roll Classic Auto Show, 7 am - 4 pm

October 9 - Dowagiac Under the Harvest Moon Festival, 10 am - 4 pm

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Due to the pandemic all events are subject to change or cancellation. Please check with event organizers prior to attending any events.



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# LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

## Ho, Ho, Ho Neighbors!

by **Jane Boudreau**



**H**o Ho Ho, Neighbors! Here we are, the last month of the year. Some may be breathing a sigh of relief after such a horrendous year. It's not that everything will change once some magical door swings open on January 1, but the surprise, disbelief and devastation that began in March of this year is something that we have learned to work with, to push ourselves in a way to save each other from the deadly virus. Simply said, I hope this column finds you well and keeping safe.

With Christmas shopping we only have limited access to most public places at this time and it could change at a moments notice. Websites are vying for business and it's difficult. There is SO much out there to look at! For me, I hem and haw over the quality of the item, the reviews, the shipping charge. Then you have to understand the return policy. This year online shopping is to such an extent that deliveries are slower and may be late. If it's possible to order gifts through a store online and then do curbside pick up, you can be a little safer and not worry about delays.

All of us have a little bit of craftiness in us, and the creative sort, not witchcraft! I love coming up with festive decorations that I can make on a dime. Using elements from nature bring in the fresh scent of pine, and edible fruits and candy echo the bright colors of the holidays. I like to fill simple vases with fresh cranberries. I poke a few pine stems down and voila! Instant happiness! A little can wrapped in burlap and tied with a ribbon can take on a darling look filled with candy canes, and an empty jar with a little velvet ribbon wrapped around is perfect for small glass ornaments, or some deliciously fragrant potpourri. Are you getting excited yet? 'Tis the season! Make a little basket of your creations to pass out to the hardworking postal delivery people or the girl who babysits. I have a friend who made little paper cones, slapped some Christmas stickers on, and added some pretty tissue with a Starbucks gift card stashed inside. I'm sure you have friends or coworkers who would appreciate something like this.

These are my prized Winterberry dishes that only come out at Christmas. I know, it sounds crazy but there is something about taking them out of the old cabinet, washing them by hand, and then



stacking them up for the brunch buffet we have on Christmas morning with the kids and grand kids. We have six grands now in just the past five years! We nibble on Cinnamon rolls while we open gifts, there is a ton of loud talking and joking, laughter and gasps of surprise. I try a new 'make ahead' egg casserole every year, and no matter what, it never comes out right. This year I'm just scrambling up some eggs, frying bacon and sausage, and putting out a bowl of fruit and some yogurt. My daughter Emily has mastered a great French toast casserole, with sugar and maple syrup



baked right in. She got it on the first try! So she will bring that to top it off. Oh, we can't forget the mimosa's. Such a classy way to get tipsy at 11:00 a.m. So--these pretty Winterberry dishes get one little debut a year, but they get the best one! We may have to do this in the garage or backyard to avoid infecting anyone, but if we can't do that we will do FaceTime or Zoom later in the day.

Just to show you that you can find little spaces to make festive, this is on the hearth. Just a rustic basket I found for a song at a craft store (think Michael's or Hobby Lobby) a long time ago, a tall snowman, and super inexpensive bow and berry wreath made for gift wrapping. We lost a birch tree several years ago at the lake to some sort of disease. We saved pieces that were not affected and we just have the logs displayed here and there like this and on the fireplace grate in the summer. We really miss that tree, but we've been able to keep memories of



it alive this way.

### **Creamy Bacon & Cheese Spread**

So on to some festive recipes. I put this trio together so you can make a really nice meal using all three recipes, or you may want to have the chowder on a cold December afternoon, the turkey tetrazzini after Christmas day, and the spread on New Year's Eve. Best of all, I think you will enjoy these recipes over and over all winter long.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Creamy Bacon & Cheese Spread**

#### **Ingredients:**

7 slices of bacon, coarsely chopped

- 1 T reserved bacon drippings
- 2 cloves of garlic, chopped finely
- 1 T dried thyme
- 2 t garlic powder
- 2 t onion powder
- 2 t salt
- 1 t black pepper
- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 c half and half
- 4 oz. blue cheese, crumbled
- 2 T fresh chives, chopped
- 2 T chopped walnuts

#### **Directions:**

Chop the bacon slices in small pieces and fry until lightly crisp, about 3 minutes. Remove bacon to a paper towel and set aside. Pour out all but 1 tablespoon of drippings. Add the chopped garlic and sauté on low, about 1 minute. Pour into a small bowl and set aside.

Beat the cream cheese and half and half together until smooth. Add the blue cheese, dry spices and chives, and mix another minute until well blended. Add the garlic mixture and the bacon, stir well. Pour all into a 1 quart baking dish or pie pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Top with chopped walnuts. Serve with crackers, or sliced apples and pears.



### **Jane's Clam Chowder**

I have made so many versions of this classic, and finally got it right by combining the best of everything in all of the recipes I had fiddled with. I know you will enjoy it.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Jane's Clam Chowder**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 8-10 slices of bacon
- 2 T butter
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 leek, white and light green bottom only, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3-4 small potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 c. chicken broth
- 1 8 oz. bottle clam juice
- 1 t each salt and pepper
- 1 t dried thyme
- 1/3 c. flour
- 2 c half and half, divided
- 3 cans (6 1/2 oz. each) whole clams, drained, chopped small
- 1 bay leaf
- Chives or green onion, chopped, for garnish

#### **Directions:**

Cook the bacon in a dutch oven over medium heat. Remove to a paper towel to drain. Chop and set aside. Add the butter to the drippings and sauté the celery, leek and onion until just tender. Add garlic and cook 1 additional minute. Stir in the potatoes, broth, clam juice, salt, pepper and thyme. Bring to a boil.

*Continued on next page. See:*

**JANE**



# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## Sliding safely into winter

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

Another Michigan winter is upon us and one place you don't want to slide is while driving on slippery roads. Winter storms in the form of blizzards, heavy snow, ice storms, or freezing rain can be especially hazardous to motorists. Every winter we hear reports of dozens of cars piling into each other creating a chain-reaction accident leaving drivers and passengers stranded along major freeways.

You can avoid many dangerous winter travel problems by planning ahead. Preparation and caution can go a long way towards driving safely in the snow.

### Prepare Your Car for Winter

Keep your car in good working order by following the manufacturer's maintenance recommendations. In addition, be sure to check the following every fall:

- Antifreeze
- Tires (air pressure and wear)
- Windshield wiper fluid
- Fuel (wintertime mixture)
- Oil
- Heater
- Brakes
- Brake Fluid
- Ignition
- Defroster
- Emergency flashers
- Battery
- Exhaust
- Radiator

During the winter, keep your gas tank near full to help avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.

### Don't Forget the Basics

Keep posted on weather conditions in the surrounding area through the news media. The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it. If you have to travel you can drive safely on icy roads by:

1. Decrease your speed and allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
2. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
3. Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
4. Keep your lights and windshield clean.
5. Don't use cruise control or over-drive on icy roads.
6. Travel by daylight and use major highways that have been maintained and treated with salt. Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads.
7. Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
8. Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads. Be sure you know how to react should your vehicle begin sliding on the snow or ice.
9. Understand and respect the dangers of ice. Black ice, which is frozen water with air bubbles trapped inside making it highly transparent, is a serious threat during winters due to fluctuation in temperatures. The intermittent rain combines with oil from vehicles to create



a film which is difficult to see.

### Winter weather supplies for your car

Have emergency "winter storm supplies" in your car. Some of the items you should keep in your car are:  
Cell phone; portable charger and extra batteries  
Canned compressed air with sealant (emergency tire repair)  
Shovel  
Road salt, sand, kitty litter  
Windshield scraper  
Booster cables  
Battery-powered radio (and extra batteries)  
Emergency flares  
Bright colored flag; help signs  
Flashlight (and extra batteries)  
First aid kit  
Water  
Tool kit  
Snack food  
Road maps  
Extra hats, coats, mittens  
Compass  
Blankets  
Waterproof matches and a can (to melt snow for water)  
Chains or rope

Paper towels

### If You Have an Accident

Sometimes no matter how careful we are, even the safest driver can have an accident. If you are involved in an accident:

1. Stop, no matter how slight the accident may appear and remain calm.
2. Use your emergency flashers to warn oncoming traffic of an accident.
3. Immediately call the police to report any accident resulting in personal injury or vehicle damage.
4. Tell the police if an ambulance is needed.
5. Make no admission of guilt or take any blame for the accident. Record only the facts – not opinions.
6. Obtain the names, address, and phone numbers of any possible witnesses.
7. Notify your insurance agent of the accident as soon as possible.

Don't forget to review the coverage on your automobile insurance policy with your insurance agent. You don't want to find out after an accident that you didn't have the coverage you thought you did.

Hopefully, these safe winter driving tips will go a long way in allowing you to experience a safe and pleasurable winter driving season.

## JANE

*Continued from previous page*

Reduce heat to simmer and cook uncovered for 15-20 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

In a small bowl, combine the flour and 1 cup half and half until smooth. Gradually stir this into the pot of soup, gently whisking. Bring to a boil, cook 1-2 minutes until thickened.

Stir in drained clams and remaining half and half. Reduce heat to a simmer and add bay leaf and 2/3 of the chopped bacon, and continue to cook on low about 3 minutes.

Divide soup among bowls, and garnish with remaining bacon and chopped chives or green onion. Serves 4-6

### Creamy Turkey Tetrazzini

When looking for recipes in which I could use leftover turkey, I would inevitably come across turkey tetrazzini. I tried a few recipes and it always came out something like turkey baked in Elmer's glue. I gave that up, and spent the past few holidays making soup and pot pies with my leftover turkey. Then I experimented, I love a challenge. I was going to come up with an edible tetrazzini that would make my family crave it. You can substitute chicken if you don't happen to have a cooked turkey around. Or make this with leftover turkey from your Christmas dinner if that's what you make. Feel free to add and subtract the herbs and spices until it is as flavorful as you want it.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 c. cooked, shredded turkey, light and dark meat
- 8 oz. package egg noodles
- 4 T butter\*\*
- 3 T flour



- 1 1/2 c chicken broth
- 1 t dried thyme
- 1 1/2 t. garlic powder
- 1 1/2 t onion powder
- 1/2 c frozen peas and carrots
- 1/2 c half & half
- 1/4 c fine breadcrumbs

- 1/4 c Parmesan cheese
- S & P to taste\*

#### Directions:

Boil the noodles according to package directions.

Drain and pour into a 1 3/4 quart casserole. Top with shredded turkey, spreading evenly.

In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour and keep whisking for approximately 1-2 minutes until the mixture is light brown. Slowly add in the broth, whisking as you go. Once blended, turn up heat until the mixture reaches a boil. Add the peas and carrots and keep stirring until thickened. Add your dry spices and half and half. Taste and adjust seasonings, this recipe needs enough salt to keep your taste buds happy, so feel free to adjust\*.

Pour mixture over the turkey and noodles in the casserole dish. Top with the bread crumbs\*\*. I like to add a few pats of butter over the crumbs for more flavor. Finally, the Parmesan cheese. Cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes until bubbly. You can turn on your broiler, watching closely, to brown the top if you'd like. Any leftovers can be frozen. Enjoy!

I wish all of you a blessed Christmas. Celebrate everything and everyone you have in your life every single day. Find the joy in the little things. Kiss or save those kisses for your children and grandchildren. Snuggle with your pets. Don't take a minute for granted!

#### See you all in March!

*Jane Boudreau is a writer and blogger. She has a home on Diamond Lake, as well as one in Chicago, and a little retreat in the mountains of North Carolina. You can reach her at [blndy9@yahoo.com](mailto:blndy9@yahoo.com)*



# OUR CHILDREN

## Off to a Fresh Start!

by **SANDY FLEMING**

**T**he holiday season is upon us, and if you are like most people, you are looking forward to a brand new year full of possibilities and hope. Hard to believe it will be 2021 soon! One of the best things about the new year is that it offers a blank slate and a fresh start. Many like to make resolutions or set goals to improve their lives in the coming year, so here are some ideas to help your kids make the most of the opportunities they will be given.

But first a word about “resolutions” and “goals.” Over the years, I have given up on making New Year’s Resolutions for one very simple reason. These grand ideas I have around January 1 for lifestyle changes, new habits, and the general “out with the old and in with the new” excitement are almost always tarnished by February. I haven’t made the big changes and I get discouraged and give up on my brave new ideas.

Instead, I take time each December to set goals for myself. The difference is in my expectations of how I will accomplish these things. “Resolutions” speak to me of sudden and instant change, while “goals” make me think of plans and work and keeping track of my progress. I find the goals a whole lot more effective as a foundation for moving forward in my life.

That being said, here are some ideas that you may want to consider for the coming year as you guide your children toward adulthood. Think of them as goals, and take a close look at the stepping stone ideas that I’m going to share – they will be the most effective way to reach the goals and to effect real change in everyone’s lives.

It’s also important to make your goals about behavior and actions that you control. Ultimately, even parents have little direct control over what their kids do. All we really control is how we set the situation up and how we respond. So be sure to write your goals to state the changes YOU want to make in YOUR actions or responses. That way you’ll be setting the stage for your child’s success.

### Managing Those Pesky Behaviors

Everyone’s kids do things that parents would rather they didn’t do. Sometimes it’s low level annoyances like bickering, whining, or refusing to keep their clothes picked up. These add stress to our lives and keep the family emotions on a low simmering boil that erupts at the smallest provocation. Other times, it’s challenging behaviors like defiance, violent outbursts, lying or stealing.

For all of them, the experts agree that parents’ first line of defense should be positive management strategies, like praise, rewarding right behavior, and giving parental attention. If you feel like you’re stuck in negative habits with the kids and



***If your New Year’s Resolutions include major changes for the way you work with your kids, consider setting goals instead. They are much more likely to prompt the real change that you’re trying to achieve***

seem to be always stressed out by their behavior or yelling, maybe it’s time to set a goal to try positive strategies for a while to see if you can make some headway.

This goal starts with some planning. Pick the one or two behaviors that bug you the most, and clearly define them. They should be observable actions that the kid does rather than vague, emotional things like “being bad” or “causing trouble.” The behavior you identify should be so clear that any adult in the room could agree that it was happening. Now, start by making a count for a few days. Exactly how many times each day does this happen? Write it down so your memory will be clear.

While you are counting, make a plan to change your reaction to the situation. Set up a reasonable consequence (not a punishment- there’s a difference) that you can implement whenever the behavior happens. For example, you cannot actually leave your child behind at the store when they won’t come along with you, so don’t threaten to do that. Instead, you can limit a privilege like access to a favorite toy in the car or once you get home, so that can become the consequence. It only works if you follow through, though!

A good plan tells what behavior you would like to decrease or increase, what the consequence will be for noncompliance AND what you will do to reward the child when he or she behaves properly. Set a goal to decrease or increase the target behavior, not to eliminate it or make

it perfect all the time. So if your child nearly always refuses to come with you when you need to leave, set a goal that the child will leave obediently one time per day. Reward that one time and give the chosen consequence the other times. Then increase the goal once you get the one time per day accomplished.

As you can see, instead of a resolution to “get my child to behave better,” I highly recommend a GOAL of changing your own behaviors and strategies to those that will be more effective. It takes a lot of work, but you are more likely to be successful in the long run.

### Improving Academic Performance

If you are considering resolutions such as “get more involved with my child’s education” or “help my kid get better grades,” then let’s look at goals parents can use to accomplish those ends. Like behavior management, the key lies in adults setting goals to help children learn to be more successful and independent. You lay foundations, and this puts your child in a better position to be successful.

Once again, the roots of change are in planning. If need be, set a goal for yourself to create a good work environment for your child. Make sure there is a well-lit spot to do homework, with few distractions (like away from television and unrelated conversation). Gather commonly needed supplies, like paper, pencil, markers, charge cord for computer,

references, and so forth to keep nearby. You might even want to grab a kitchen timer to help your child set goals for getting specific numbers of items completed within a given time frame.

Set a schedule and keep to it. Predictable and consistent routines related to homework and academic practice time will help everyone get the job done. Pick a time of day that you all can stick to, and use that as a starting point. National experts suggest planning 10 minutes per grade level of time at home working on school skills, so if your child is in grade 6, think in terms of 60 minutes. Not enough school work to take up the extra time? That’s an easy problem to solve. Every kid can use practice with reading, writing, and basic math skills appropriate for their age group. You can even, if grades are good and the child is doing what’s needed, add in some academic games online or using apps on phone or tablet.

Once you have all the groundwork in place, set that goal for yourself- how many times each week are you going to enforce academic/homework time with your kids? If you want, make yourself a little chart and think of a fun reward for when you meet your goal at the end of each week. And you don’t have to be perfect right out of the gate! If this is new territory, maybe set a goal of working in this way for a shorter daily time, or two or three days each week at first. Work your way up to what is needed to get the grades up.

And don’t forget to set up a reward system for your students, too. Most kids are not mature enough to want to do school work for the sheer sake of learning. Even good grades are not a natural motivator for many. Instead of trying to get them to work to avoid punishment, see if you can turn things around and reward a little more effort each week until the kids are putting in the time and energy needed to impact their grades.

### Putting It All Together

So, to summarize, if your New Year’s Resolutions include major changes for the way you work with your kids, consider setting goals instead. They are much more likely to prompt the real change that you’re trying to achieve. Make them measurable and observable, write them down and make a plan about how to achieve them, then keep track of how well you do each week until you’ve built the habits that you want to develop. And be sure to celebrate your success! This New Year can be the one where you make the changes in your habits that will help your child get on the road to success.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sandy Fleming is a writer and private tutor living in Edwardsburg. You can get academic help for your kids, learn fun activities to help them gain skills, or find out about educational topics on her website: <http://sandyflemingonline.com>.**



# LOCAL HISTORY

## Winners of Presidential race in Cass County, Michigan, 1836-2020.

Provided by **Jon Wuepper**,  
Branch Manager of  
the Cass District Library  
145 North Broadway  
Cassopolis, MI 49031  
jwuepper@cass.lib.mi.us

The attached table shows the winner of each Presidential race in Cass County, Michigan in each of the 47 Presidential Elections from 1836-2020.

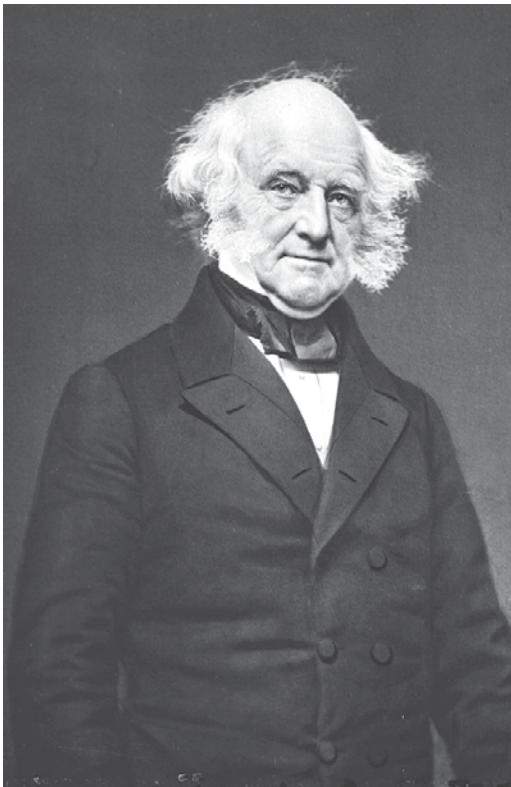
Thirteen times, the winner of the election in Cass County did not match the overall national winner of the Presidency.

Note that Cass County, Michigan was set off and organized in 1829, but did not participate in the Presidential election of 1832 because Michigan was not admitted into the Union until January 26, 1837. The state was ready for admission by 1835-1836, but a boundary dispute with Ohio was one cause for the delay.

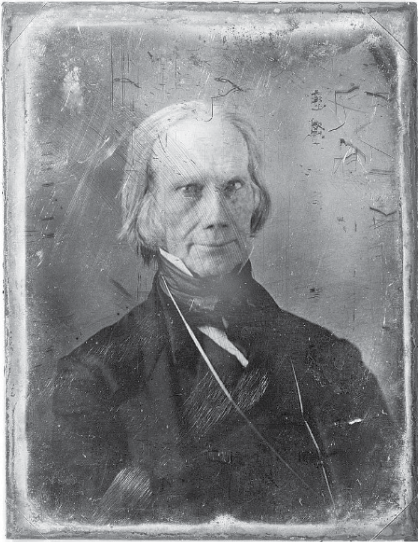
In regards to Michigan voting in the 1836 Presidential race, Congress worked out a compromise, deciding that it would tally the electoral votes two ways, one with Michigan and one without. Michigan only got three electoral votes back then and as it turned out Martin Van Buren was the winner no matter how Michigan's vote went, so it didn't become a big issue. (Michigan went for Van Buren).

Thirteen times, the winner of the election in Cass County did not match the overall national winner of the Presidency. Four of those election cycles were consecutive 1844, 1848, 1852, and 1856.

Lewis Cass, after whom Cass County is named ran for President as a Democrat in 1848 against General Zachary Taylor, a Whig



Former President Martin Van Buren, c1841, courtesy Library of Congress. Van Buren won the popular vote in Cass County, Michigan



Henry Clay (1777-1852), US Senator from Kentucky. Courtesy Library of Congress. Known as the Great Compromiser, averted the US drifting into Civil War and probable disunion with his Missouri Compromise of 1820, and the Compromise of 1850. Henry Clay ran for President three times: in 1824, 1832, and 1844. Clay ran as a Whig in 1844 winning the popular vote in Cass County. Michigan ultimately went for Democrat James K. Polk, who also won the Presidency. Interestingly, Polk won in Cass's neighboring Michigan counties: Berrien, St. Joseph and Van Buren.

Republicans have won the Presidential race in Cass County 31 times out of the 47 contests, or 66 percent of the time. Democrats have won Cass County ten times, or 21 percent of the Presidential elections. Whigs won three times, and the National Union Party, which was really an arm of the Republican Party, once in 1864.

Sources for this article included various local newspapers, the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, Michigan Election Returns, 1835-1870 (Ann Arbor, MI: The Consortium, n.d.), and the History of Cass County, Michigan by Matthews (1882).

I would like to thank Bob Myers of the Historical Society of Michigan for his help with this article.

1836 – Martin Van Buren (D).	5 – Franklin D. Roosevelt (D).
1840 – William Henry Harrison (W).	9 – Wendell Willkie* (R).
1844 – Henry Clay* (W).	1 – Thomas E. Dewey* (R).
1848 – Lewis Cass* (D).	3 – Thomas E. Dewey* (R).
1852 – Winfield Scott* (W).	1 – Dwight D. Eisenhower (R).
1856 – John C. Fremont* (R).	5 – Dwight D. Eisenhower (R).
1860 – Abraham Lincoln (R).	9 – Richard M. Nixon* (R).
1864 – Abraham Lincoln (U).	1 – Lyndon B. Johnson (D).
1868 – Ulysses S. Grant (R).	3 – Richard M. Nixon (R).
1872 – Ulysses S. Grant (R).	1 – Richard M. Nixon (R).
1876 – Rutherford B. Hayes (R).	5 – Gerald Ford* (R).
1880 – James A. Garfield (R).	9 – Ronald Reagan (R).
1884 – James G. Blaine* (R).	1 – Ronald Reagan (R).
1888 – Benjamin Harrison (R).	3 – George H.W. Bush (R).
1892 – Benjamin Harrison* (R).	1 – William J. Clinton (D).
1896 – William McKinley (R).	5 – William J. Clinton (D).
1900 – William McKinley (R).	2 – George W. Bush (R).
1904 – Theodore Roosevelt (R).	1 – George W. Bush (R).
1908 – William H. Taft (R).	2 – Barack Obama (D).
1912 – Woodrow Wilson (D).	2 – Mitt Romney* (R).
1916 – Woodrow Wilson (D).	5 – Donald Trump (R).
1920 – Warren G. Harding (R).	2 – Joseph Biden (D).
1924 – Calvin Coolidge (R).	
1928 – Herbert Hoover – (R).	
1932 – Franklin D. Roosevelt (D).	

**Winners of Presidential race in Cass County, Michigan, 1836-2020.** Names marked with an asterisk (\*) indicates that candidate won the popular vote in Cass County, but did not win the Presidency. Abbreviations: D=Democrat; R=Republican; National Union (U); W=Whig.

### WHACHA MA-CALL-IT?

#### ANSWER FROM PAGE 11

Milk warmer used to warm baby's milk at night. The basin was for oil or alcohol for burning. Donated by Annette Van Noss



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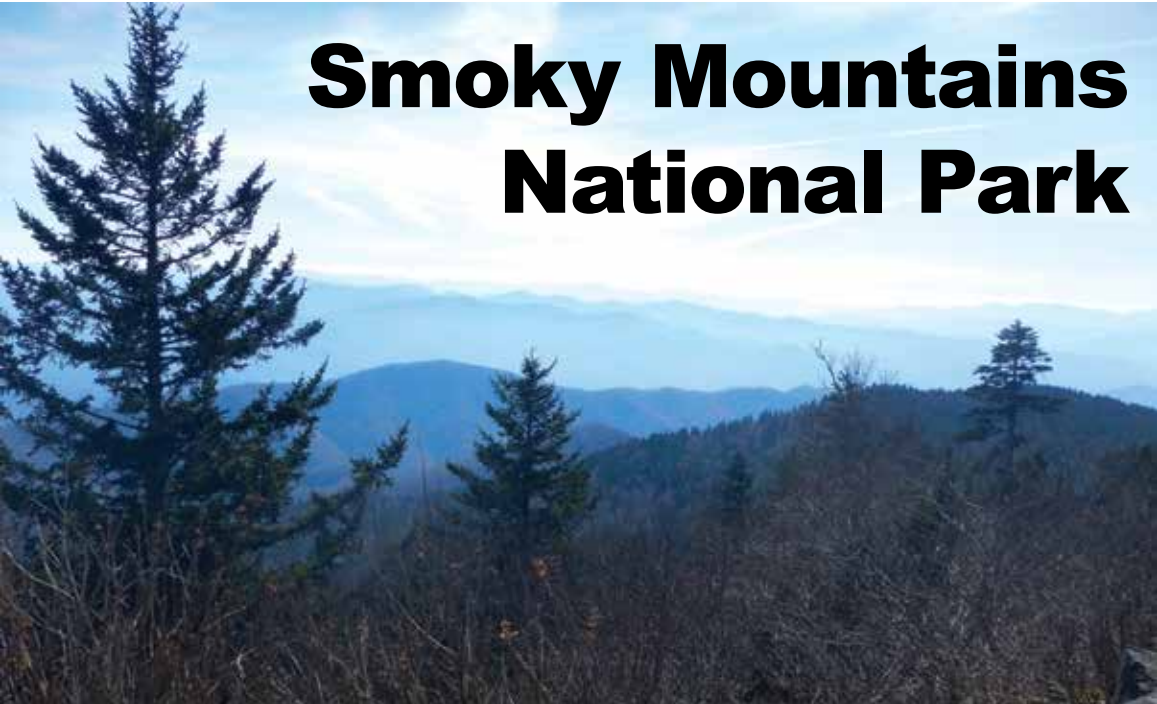


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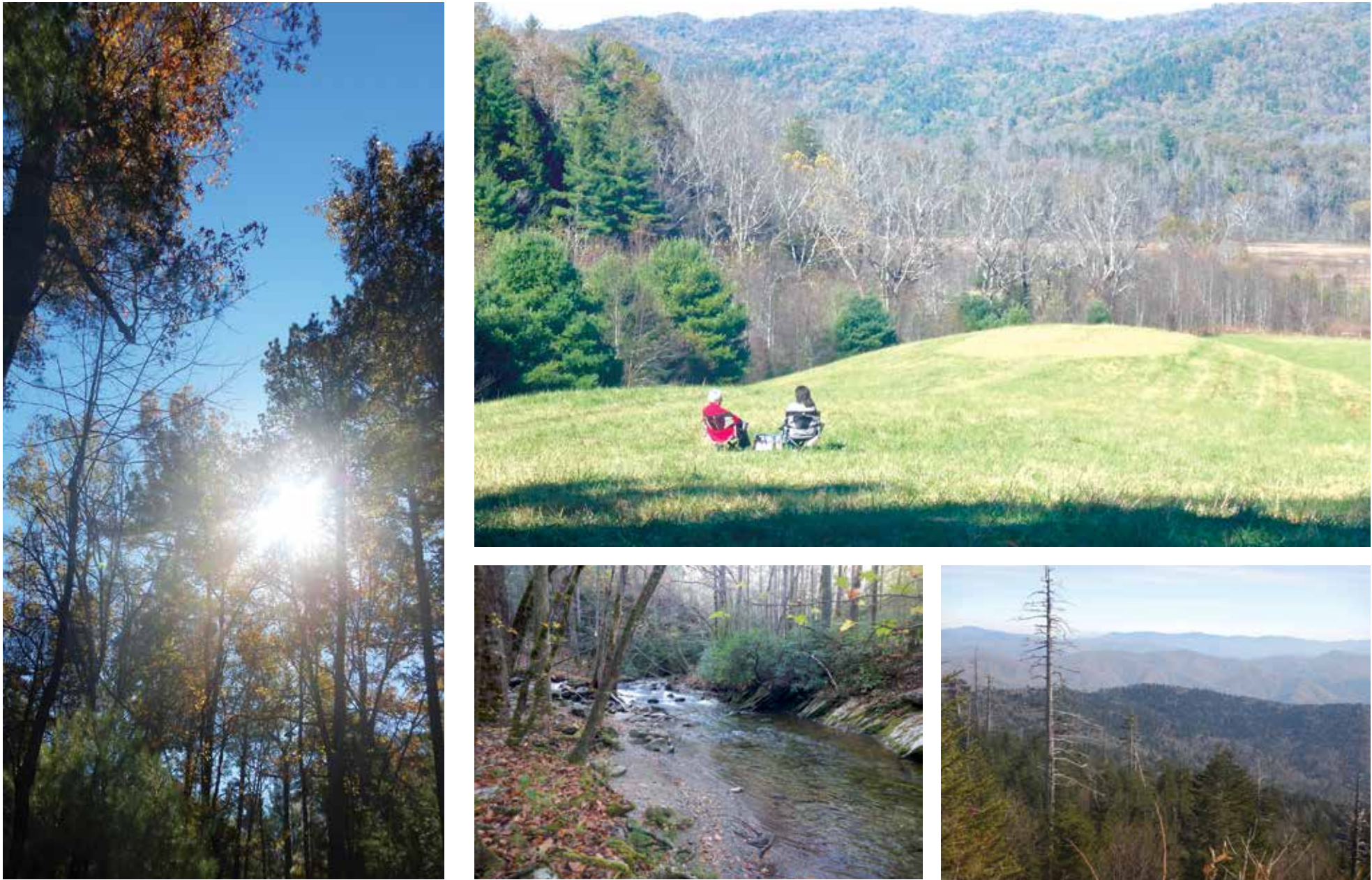
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# HISTORIC POSTCARDS

## Historic postcards depict rich scenes of 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

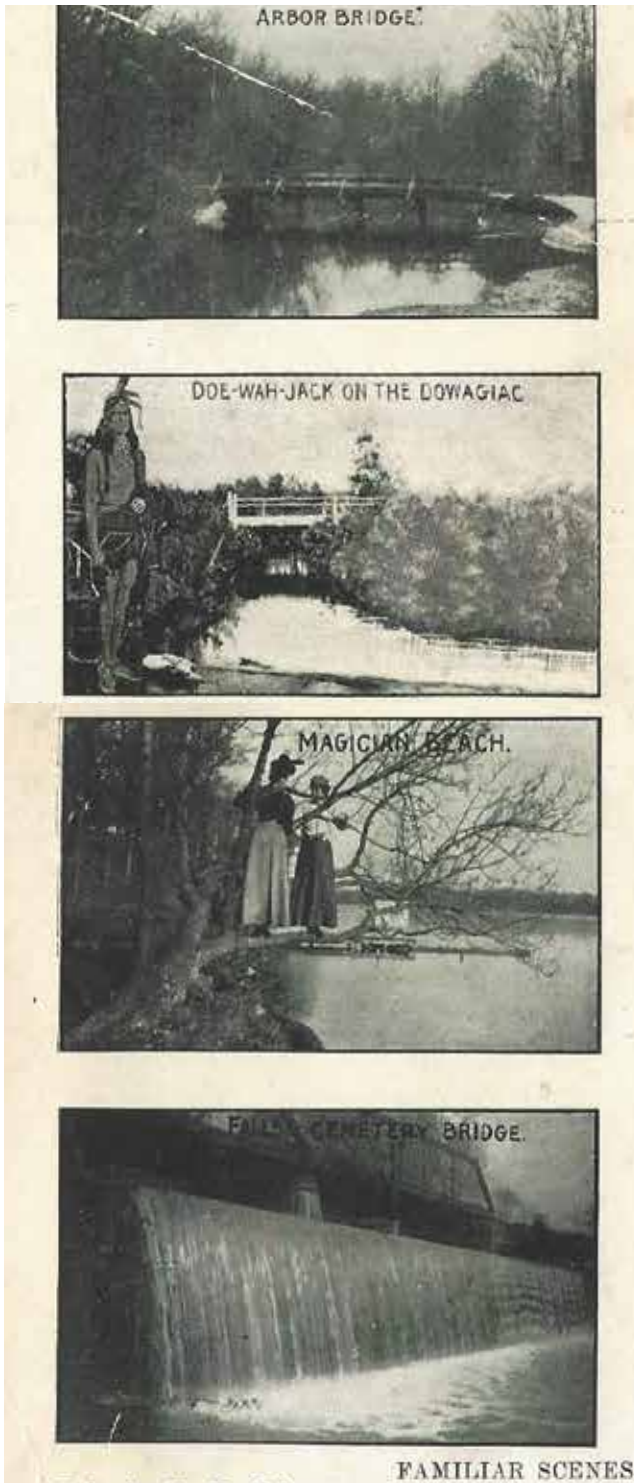
RL Rasmussen. The book, which retails for \$19.99, is in its second printing by the publisher, Arcadia Publishing.

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 various places around Cass County. In future issues, we will couple addi-

tional cards from one or more of the area's lakes with views of nearby communities, lakes and countryside.



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# HISTORIC POSTCARDS



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# NATURE NOTES

## Fall sightings reported

*Provided by Cass District Library  
Local History Branch*

A barred owl was seen and photographed in the daylight hours of Tuesday, November 2, 2020 in the yard of Theodore Post in St. Joseph Township, not far from Hickory Creek. Post said the owl was present in his wooded yard for approximately two hours hunting for food. It is not known if the owl captured any prey.

The barred owl lives in heavily forested areas, especially swamps, rarely venturing into open areas where they may fall prey to the larger great horned owl. Barred owls prey on a variety of small birds and mammals such as mice, voles, squirrels, and rabbits. They also eat reptiles and amphibians such as frogs, salamanders, and snakes. The species ranges over much of the eastern US and is non-migratory.

The barred owl was the most abundant owl in Southwest Michigan prior to the late 19th Century, as it found home among the region's vast forested areas, but as pioneers settled the region, they drastically altered the landscape by cutting down most of the original forests. The great horned owl, which thrives on small to medium sized woodlots interspersed among open areas, increased and became the most common owl in the region through the 20th Century.

Since the 1960s, second growth forests have reclaimed many areas that were void of trees during the 20th Century such as the St Joseph River, Paw Paw River, and Dowagiac River corridors. Trees have also grown back large enough along Hickory Creek to where it can support birds such as the barred owl, red-shouldered hawk, and pileated woodpecker.

David Lawrence photographed one snow bunting on the beach at New Buffalo last month, featured in today's column.

Snow buntings have been seen along our Lake Michigan shoreline since late September, having arrived here from the treeless Arctic tundra of Canada. In summer the species ranges around the Arctic Circle but migrates southward into Eurasia and the Northern and Central US for winter.

Look for them along beaches and other open areas such as the large open fields along Linco Road between Hollywood Road and Niles Road (M-139). In winter, snow buntings are often found in our region in mixed flocks along with horned larks and lapland longspurs.

Snow buntings and Lapland longspurs will recede back northward come late February and early March.

Brad Anderson photographed a rooster ring-necked pheasant in October, along Basswood Road near Three Oaks. The bird in the photo is an escape from the nearby hunting club.

It is very probable that a wild, self-sustaining population of ring-necked pheasants is or will be soon gone from Southwest Michigan. All of the pheasant sightings that I am aware from this area in 2020 pertain to birds that were released by private individuals or by hunting clubs. It's been years since I have personally seen or heard of a wild hen pheasant or pheasant chicks in this area.

Lastly, I would like to encourage readers to report any current hummingbird sightings, as now is the time that stray hummingbirds from western North America turn up in the area. The last



*Left: Barred owl on November 2, 2020 in yard of Theodore Post, St. Joseph Township.*

*Top: Ring-necked pheasant rooster, October 17, along Basswood Road, near Three Oaks. Photo by Brad Anderson.*

*Above: Snow bunting, October 2020, New Buffalo Beach. David Lawrence of Berrien Springs.*

*Below: Ruby-throated hummingbird on October 25, which stayed until November 1 at the feeder of Brad and Hannah Anderson of Bridgman.*



ruby-throated hummingbird in Berrien County this fall was seen November 1 in Bridgman by Brad and Hannah Anderson. A sighting in Cass County occurred as late as October 17 in Jefferson Township at a private residence.

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

The fall of 2020 is turning out to be a

great year for observing evening grosbeaks in southern Michigan! This black, white and yellow finch inhabits the northern coniferous forests of Canada and northern Michigan during the summer months. During the fall and winter, the species irrupts southward depending on food supply in the north.

Evening grosbeaks frequently travels in flocks on average of 12-15 individuals, but flocks over 100 may occur and will

devour sunflower seeds at feeders in just a few minutes. While they will eat black oil sunflower seeds, their favorite is the striped sunflower seed.

Birders along Berrien County's Lake Michigan shoreline report multiple flocks of evening grosbeaks recently, including a

Continued on next page. See:  
**NATURE**



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## NATURE

*Continued from previous page*

flock of 13 at the feeder owned by Lisa Schaller of Bridgman on October 26. While the grosbeaks were present at Schaller's feeder for just a few minutes, she was able to take photos, appearing in today's column.

Brad and Hannah Anderson have reported evening grosbeaks at their Bridgman feeders since October 31. The largest flock numbering between 25 to 30 individuals occurred on November 3. The grosbeaks have been seen at other locations in the region such as Dowagiac on October 30 at the feeders of Jim Brosnan.

Evening grosbeaks invade our region less frequently today than in previous decades. Local records show that evening grosbeaks appeared locally almost annually up to the middle-1980s, usually arriving in Berrien County during the last week of October or early November and were seen through early May after which they return north for the breeding season. Currently several years may pass before the species is seen this far south in good numbers.

Another noteworthy sighting was a female summer tanager, present on October 26-30 at a suet feeder owned by Mia Lischer Kompare of St. Joseph Township.

Summer tanagers are neotropical migrants which range over much of the Southeastern US in summer, north to central Indiana and Ohio. The species occurs very sparingly in Southwestern Michigan in summer. At least one pair of summer tanagers has nesting at Warren Dunes State Park over the last few years, as previously reported in this column.

What makes Kompare's sighting interesting is the fact it was seen in late October, long after the species should have departed for its wintering range of

Mexico, south to the Amazon River basin.

Brad and Hannah Anderson of Bridgman played host to a late ruby-throated hummingbird, seen at their feeders until November 1. Over the years, Andersons have hosted many lingering ruby-throated hummingbirds, due to the fact they keep their hummingbird feeder out well into November, and their proximity to Lake Michigan, which is a natural migration corridor.

While 95 percent of the ruby-throated hummingbirds have departed Berrien County for the winter by Late September, lingering birds are seen well into November. The Andersons hosted a ruby-throated hummingbird as late as November 21, 2002. The latest fall record of the species in Berrien County was one remaining until November 29, 2015, in Three Oaks Township, at the feeders of Dan Collison and Elizabeth Meister.

Any hummingbirds present in the area after October 20 should be checked carefully to see if they are a species other than a ruby-throated. The rufous hummingbird of western North America has turned up eight times in Berrien County alone from 1988-2013. One of this species was present in Livingston County, Michigan earlier this fall. An Anna's hummingbird, which normally ranges along the west coast of North America, is currently present at a private residence in northwest Indiana.

**Top: Evening grosbeak (male) at feeders of Brad and Hannah Anderson, on October 31, Bridgman, Michigan. Near right: More grosbeaks at the feeding station of Lisa Schaller, on October 26, Bridgman. These interesting looking finches occasionally move south during fall and winter, from Canada into the northern tier of states. Look for them at feeders! Far right: This female summer tanager was present at the feeders of Mia Lischer Kompare.**





# THE LAST WORD

## Dog ponders thumbs and her people's weird activity



i, Saba the dog, dad and mom's best friend here writing the column this month for my Alpha peep ... but I have to admit that I'm not very good at this typing thing, what with claws instead of fingers and no opposable thumbs and all.

Anyway, I decided to chime in after some pretty weird behavior on the part of my peeps ... you know, the humans I let live in my house and take me for walks and feed me and stuff.

Most of the time our routine is pretty predictable and acceptable. We get up when I'm ready to go out in the morning. Dad (I call him dad because that's what all the peeps call him) gives me a breakfast Busy Bone, fills my dish with that crunchy, yummy Purina stuff and makes sure the font of water in that toilet thing in the bathroom has been flushed in case I need a drink after breakfast.

My peeps then sit and play with their electronic toys, checking emails and reading the morning news and whatever else people do in the morning (God am I glad I don't have to do all that nonsense, no opposable thumbs and all that).

When they've had enough of all that, they put on their shoes and coats, grab the leash, and we go for a walk.

A nice, long walk.

Some days it's a bit much for an old dog, especially considering they don't seem inclined to taste or even smell the delicious dead things along the road (I don't think people "get" the whole smell thing, but hey, their loss).

After the walk, we usually rest for a while (well, usually I rest the rest of the day while they go about their people business and leave me alone).

The day drifts into dinnertime, after-dinner treat time and more napping while they zone into the flashy box thingie hanging on the living room wall. Dad sits on the floor and scratches my neck and usually jokingly asks me to get him a beer, then it's last call for a before-bed squirt, and off to sleep.

Well, that's the routine. But then the routine got busted to smithereens (whatever and wherever that is).

It all started when they got this wild hair going and traded in my car ... the car they bought to carry me around in since they won't let me in the other car that doesn't even have a dog hair in it.

Hey, that was my car!

Well, they bought this bright red van thingie with automatic doors and lots of space, which was ok, since my car dog-bed fits nicely and I've got plenty of room to stretch when we're on the road.

But then it got weird. Weirder!

Dad built this raised platform that looks like a cross between a people bed (a no-no for dogs) and a dining room table (where I'm not allowed to eat anything ... unless one of the grandkids innocently slips me the odd hunk of people food).

Then they filled this van up with all sorts of gear and blankets and pillows, a mini stove, a big cooler, cooking supplies, some food, plates, cups ... everything but the kitchen sink it seemed.

And they didn't offer a word of explanation to the poor dog, not even when they started packing their clothes into

big bags like they do before they drop me at the Bed and Biscuit Doggie Motel for a week or more and disappear, and then come home smelling like they've been in the Caribbean or somewhere.

I'm pretty sure they knew I wasn't at all happy with the whole thing, but I don't get a vote when it comes to that vacation thing ... and with no opposable thumbs and all, I probably couldn't mark my vote down anyway.

So just as I was sensing that the time was nearing for the vacation (they get all hyper just before they go and you can't miss the signals), the world wobbled, and after we got into the car on what I was sure was the trip to the kennel, they took off driving with me inside.

Hey, it only takes a half hour or so to get to the B&B, I tried to tell them, but they just kept going and going and going, hour after hour. We stopped a couple of times during the day so I could water the weeds and stretch my legs, then it was back into the van and more driving.

Just before dark (hey, I'm ready for my dinner!) we stopped near a lake. They tied my leash to a picnic table and scurried around starting a fire in a big pit, setting up their little stove and cooking food for themselves (thank God they remembered to feed me).

We hung out by the fire, then they rearranged everything in the van, moved my bed onto a seat and had me climb in (which was ok, I was tired from all that car sleeping and it was getting cold sitting on the dried leaves by the table).

Then they climbed into the back of the van on the mattress they piles on the bed/table contraption, wrapped up in

blankets and just went to sleep.

Damnedest thing I ever saw.

When the sun came up the next morning we went out to take care of business, then they started up that stove thing again, cooked breakfast (and fed me, thank you very much). Then it was back into the van for more driving. All day again, no explanation, just driving.

Toward dark we stopped again, this time in a big wooded area that smelled like "bears." There were a bunch of other cars and trucks with fires burning near them, and my peeps went through the whole stove, fire and food thing again.

We ended up staying there for three nights, all of us sleeping together and hanging out outdoors and all, then it was back into the van, more driving, different places to park so we could eat then sleep in the van together ... and on and on.

After about a week we found our way home where we proceeded to take all the stuff out of the van and pack it onto shelves in the garage, and suddenly I found myself back in my inside bed, warm and well fed and happy.

They haven't mentioned it since, at least not to me, and I still don't have any idea what that was all about, but it was kind of cool. We saw bears and deer and turkeys and mountains and a lot of highways where the trucks and cars roared past at about a hundred miles an hour.

And now we're home. Drove for hours and hours, my peeps up front listening to music, me in back, stretched out on my bed.

At least they didn't make me hitch a ride home ... that's pretty hard to do without thumbs and all.



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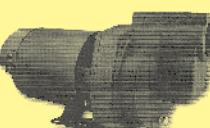
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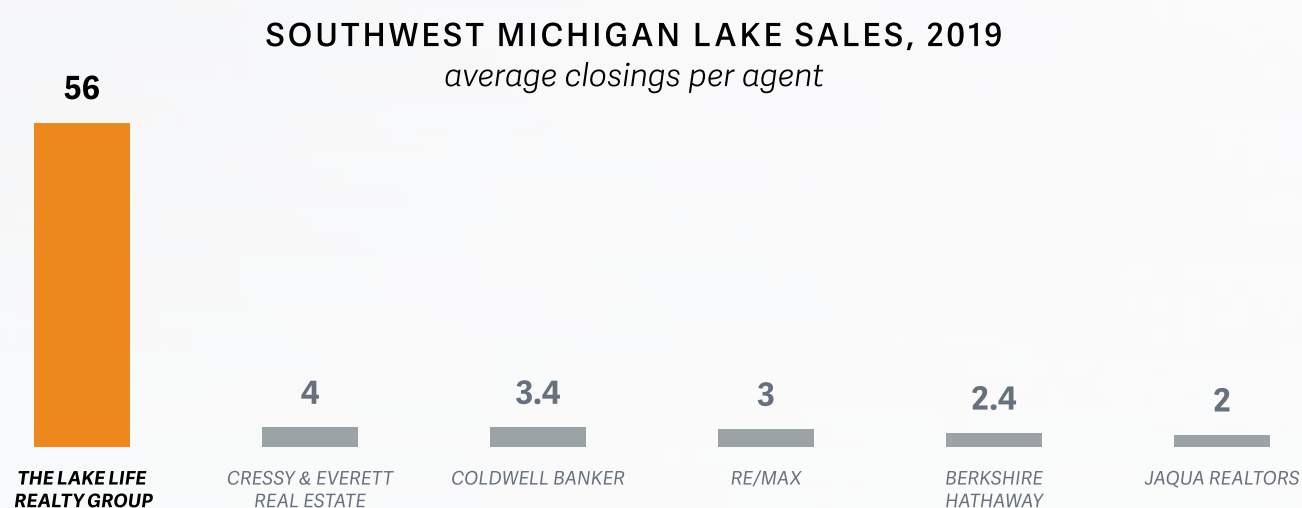
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