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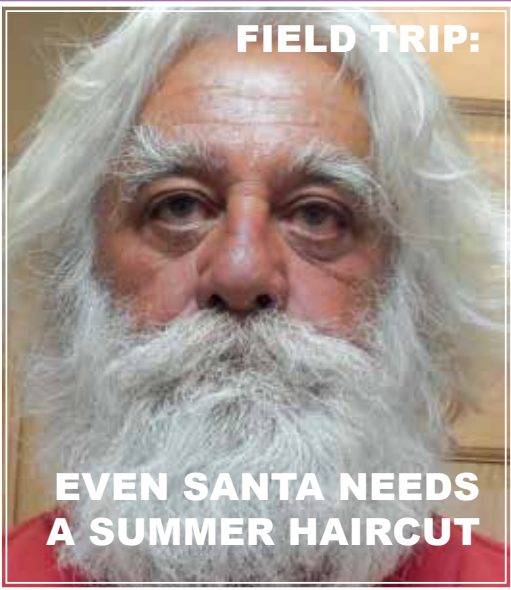
A regional newspaper freely distributed in Dowagiac, Cassopolis, Edwardsburg, Vandalia, Jones, Marcellus, Decatur, Union, Sister Lakes, Three Rivers, Elkhart and Mishawaka, with home delivery at Diamond, Eagle, Birch, Corey, Donnell, Indian, Magician, Shavehead, Baldwin, Long, Dewey, Cable, Juno, Christiana,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



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FIELD TRIP:

EVEN SANTA NEEDS  
A SUMMER HAIRCUT

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Neighbors is published monthly from March through December.

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# REGIONAL NEWS

## Electronics recycling program

Waste Management is introducing a weekly electronics recycling program at its Three Rivers-area location.

Collection will take place 7:30 am to 11:30 am on Saturdays at 60050 Roberts Rd. The service is provided by St. Joseph-based Green Earth Electronics Recycling and a partnership between Waste Management and St. Joseph County.

Accepted electronic items include computers and laptops, LCD monitors, CRT monitors, keyboards, mice and speakers, printers, wires and cords, audio/visual equipment, and LCD, plasma and tube televisions. In addition, the collection will accept stereo equipment, game consoles, wires and cords, car batteries, kitchen appliances and electronics, lamps and Christmas lights. It will not accept Freon units, light bulbs and PCB lighting, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, alkaline batteries, household hazardous waste and electronics that have been exposed to radiation.

## Edwardsburg art fair

The Edwardsburg community will host an art fair on Saturday, August 1, from 9 am until 3 pm at the Edwardsburg American Legion.

Organized by Edwardsburg residents Gail Campanaro, Sherry Sayles and Christine Groves, the Art Fair will feature a number of well-known



Michiana area artists including Neil Benham, Dennis Anderson, Diane Beecher, Jim Lothary and Judy Ladd.

Organizers are hoping the event will be produced annually.

The fair is the result of suggestions from Michigan State's School of Planning, Design, and Construction when three visioning sessions were held with community members on how to create a more viable, attractive, and welcoming community. One of the committees established after the sessions was the event committee. Headed by Gail Campanaro, the committee has worked hard to bring the art event to Edwardsburg this summer.

For more information on the First Annual Art Fair, there is a Facebook page: Edwardsburg First Annual Art Fair, and applications to participate are displayed on the Facebook page. Booths for area artists are still available and will continue to be welcomed until all spots are filled.

## Diamond Lake 2020 Youth Sailing

Did you know that Diamond Lake was nominated as one of the top five inland sailing lakes in the state? With over 80 years of sailing tradition the Diamond Lake Yacht Club has many members that grew up sailing on Diamond Lake and support the continuation of the tradition. The sailing program at the DLYC is intended to lay a foundation for a lifetime of interest in sailing. While many programs focus on racing, it is the intent of the DLYC program to focus on learning the science of sailing, teaching basic sailing technique and getting kids in the boats and on the water for hands-on experience and fun.

## Youth Sailing Regatta Friday July 17

Instructors: Lane Francis is our lead instructor, an accomplished youth sailor and instructor and a graduate of the DLYC sailing program. Timothy Hesse will join the Junior Sailing Program as an Instructor this year and Genevieve Hesse will be the program Administrator.

Contacts: Genevieve Hesse, youth-programs@dlycmi.org

## Junior Sailing Schedule Learn to Sail I & II (Beginner and advanced Beginner)

Ages 6+ and up to 120 pounds—Optimist Dinghy; over 120 pounds—Sunfish; Limit 10 kids per session; \$100/session members - \$140/session for on-members

### Dates/ Times Offered:

July 6-9 9 am-noon (Friday, July 10 –rain date)

July 20-23 9 am-noon (Friday, July 24—rain date)

July 27-30 9 am-noon (Friday, July 31 —rain date)

## Intermediate & Advanced Sailing Camp

Ages 10+; Intermediate—Sunfish & Butterfly; Advanced — 420; Limit 10 kids per session; \$100/session members -\$140/session non-members

### Dates/Times Offered:

July 6-9, 1 -4 pm (Friday, July 10 — rain date)

July 20-23, 1 -4 pm (Friday, July 24 — rain date)

July 27-30, 1 pm-4pm (Friday, July 31 -rain date)

We will try to make accommodations for family members of differing abilities

so they can be in the same class time.

To register, contact Genevieve Hesse at youthprograms@dlycmi.org

## Citizen Planner Program

This summer, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is offering two rounds of their six-week land use education series, Citizen Planner, delivered through video conference (i.e. live webinar). Citizen Planner is a course designed for locally appointed and elected planning officials, zoning administrators, and interested residents throughout Michigan that provides participants with the fundamentals on roles, responsibilities, and best practices for planning and zoning in Michigan. Over six weeks participants will learn about the legal context for planning and zoning in Michigan, the function and importance of a master plan, how zoning is administered, using innovating planning and zoning techniques, and tips successfully fulfill their role taught by experts all around the state.

Local officials have a responsibility to help their communities manage the impacts of economic change and be part of the solutions to challenges their communities face. Local communities that proactively plan to succeed in Michigan's new economy can improve their quality of life and overall sustainability. The Citizen Planner Program empowers local officials to shape the future of their communities by providing them with the tools and education they need to lead.

This limited time offer is available at a reduced price of \$225 per person (group rate of \$195 per person for 4 or more from the same municipality. Check for

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# REGIONAL NEWS

local reimbursement or scholarships—more info at our website). Registration for this and all other Citizen Planner events can be found on CitizenPlanner.msu.edu or contacting the Citizen Planner Program Coordinator, Kara Kelly, at [cplanner.msu.edu](mailto:cplanner.msu.edu) or (517) 353-6472 or your local MSU Extension Land Use Educator, Tyler Augst, at [augsttyl@msu.edu](mailto:augsttyl@msu.edu). Summer Session II will be offered on Wednesdays, 2 – 5 pm beginning on July 29 and finishing on September 2.

To contact your local MSU Extension office, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu/> or call 1-888-678-3464

## Lubeznik Center to reopen July 3

MICHIGAN CITY, IN - Lubeznik Center for the Arts (LCA) will officially reopen to the public on July 3 with the exhibition Well-Behaved Women: Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage after temporarily closing its doors on March 14 in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

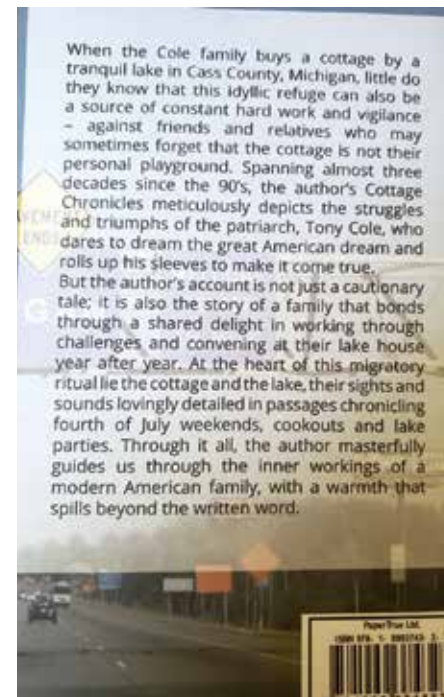
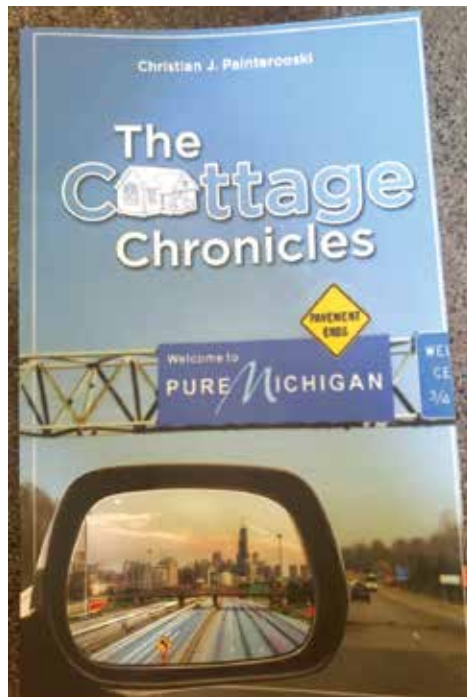
To help protect public safety and prevent crowds, LCA is launching the exhibition with an open house from 10 am to 8 pm on July 3 instead of an unrestricted First Friday evening event. Admission remains free but timed tickets are required for entry. Tickets are now available on a first-come, first-serve basis online at [wellbehavedwomen.eventbrite.com](https://wellbehavedwomen.eventbrite.com).

Well-Behaved Women includes artworks by 24 women artists and artists who identify as women, both living and historic, to mark the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which gave women and men equal voting rights.

## The Cottage Chronicles ...

Editor's note: Got this message last week from a reader and thought to pass it on:

I'm not sure if you would be interested, being an avid reader I was looking for a new book to read and this one caught my eye on Amazon. My family has a summer home on Diamond Lake and this book takes place somewhere around our area in Cass County, although I'm not exactly sure where but I thought it was pretty interesting (I read it in one day!). It is an interesting read about a young cottage owner and all the trials and tribulations of hard work, aggravation and problems that visiting family brings, yet the joy and beauty that comes with having a home on the lake. It seems to take place in the early 90's and continues into the present (well, 2019). I have attached a copy of the front and back cover. ~Melissa Martinez



The artists address areas where women lack access or rights; express the emotions felt as a result of inequity; and challenge the conventional "male gaze," where women are presented as objects rather than subjects. They elevate the subject matter of family and domesticity and reclaim mediums, such as embroidery, that have been slighted as "craft" and "women's work." Some draw strength from the spiritual power of their female ancestry.

From the engravings of Maria Sybilla Merian, the first woman to study insects scientifically, to four famous

women of the Abstract Expressionist movement who reached ground-breaking status in a genre steeped in brute masculinity, this exhibition celebrates a variety of women's voices that have led us to this moment in time.

LCA has implemented several new safety measures, including capacity restrictions, advance online ticket purchases, mask and social distancing regulations and increased sanitizing and cleaning protocols. LCA's staff, volunteers and all visitors will be required to wear face coverings during this initial reopening phase, with complimentary dispos-

able masks and gloves provided upon request.

Going forward, LCA will be open to the public Wednesdays through Mondays, 10 am to 5 pm weekdays and 11 am to 4 pm weekends, closed Tuesdays. LCA's Gallery Shop is also reopening during visitor hours.

Lubeznik Center for the Arts is located at 101 W. 2nd St. at the lakefront in Michigan City, Indiana. Admission is free year-round. For more information, please visit [www.lubeznikcenter.org](http://www.lubeznikcenter.org) or call 219-874-4900.



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# REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

**Editor's note:** Some of the events listed on this page may have already been canceled by the pandemic ... Please check with organizers prior to the events

July 3 - Fireworks, Birch Lake, dark

July 4 - Diamond Lake Association Fireworks, Firework's Island, rain/wind alternate date will be Sunday July 5

July 17, 18- Summer in the City Festival, 10 am - 5 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

**CANCELED**

July 17 - Diamond Lake Youth Sailing Regatta, youthprograms@dlycmi.org

July 18 - Diamond Lake Triathlon  
**CANCELED**

July 25 -Steve's Run, 9 am - 1 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

July 25 - Reid Francis Memorial MC Invitational, Diamond Lake Yacht Club, 10 am, rain delay date: Sunday July 26, 10 am dlycmi.org

August 1 - Edwardsburg Art Fair, 9 am - 3 pm, Edwardsburg First Annual Art Fair Facebook Page

August 2 - August 8 - Cass County 4H Fair, Fairgrounds, Cassopolis

August 15 - Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show, 7 am - 4 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

August 29 - Kee-Boon-Mein-Kaa Pow Wow, 9 am, Dowagiac, 782-8212

October 10 - Under the Harvest Moon

Festival, 10 am - 4 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

November 13, 14 - Christmas Open House Weekend, 10 am - 5 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

November 28 - Small Business Saturday, 10 am - 11 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

December 4 - Candle-light Christmas Parade, 7 - 9 pm, Dowagiac, 782-8212

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# LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

## Are we having fun yet?

by **Jane Boudreau**  
**H**ey Neighbors! It's July--are we having fun yet? I've been waiting and wanting for summer to come along and even now, it takes me by surprise! Personally, the Covid virus had me very hunkered down so it was a slow start in getting outside to get my yard and garden together considering I wasn't getting to stores and nurseries quite as easily as before. Actually, it may have worked out for the better.

Have you ever succumbed to the beckoning of garden nurseries and the big box stores to buy flowers and plants only to come home and realize you have a lot of clean-up and prep before you can begin planting? I wasn't keen on venturing out, even with a mask, and waiting in lines to shop, so even with the "risk" of having everything picked over, I put it off. So... my garden beds are spic and span and I'm adding new plants slowly, mostly perennials. A big shout out to Dussels in Cassopolis. Always a great selection of plants and a super grocery with fresh local produce. They have tons of gorgeous ferns this year and if you ask me, they are perfect for hanging or elevated on a stand, indoors or out. Totally timeless. So while I was a little late in my fussing in the garden, I'm appreciating the beauty now, not to mention the butterflies!



their hooks. I never let anything stop me so finally I decided to hang my plants and wrap the hanger of said plant with wire around the hook. They don't move. And yes, wind does dry out hanging plants much more than those planted in the ground but get yourself one of these long wands to attach to your hose and voila - problem solved. If you aren't one to fuss, then just read on. I'm always up for a



Living in our little bay lets us get an up close and personal view of nature. The swans never disappoint. This is a new family, albeit small, just one little offspring. A few weeks ago we watched Daddy Swan have a serious altercation with a Daddy Goose, well know for being long time rivals. It was quite odd as the swan chased the goose way into the yard of my neighbor, and that's not something swans do very often. And while you just have to be respectful of nature, I couldn't help but feel for the goose who has quite a few little ones to watch over. And the turtles this year! Huge. What is happening? They are morphing into dinosaurs. Next, the carp, swimming right around my little toes in the water while sitting on the shore. Tons. No social distancing for these critters.

I snagged some pretty hanging plants that I love to see just swaying in the breeze and looking so purdy. For the longest time I took the advice of longtime lake people that they dried out quickly and the wind would knock them right off

challenge and I'm loving my hangers. And aren't these beautiful? Petunias that have deep purple throats that almost looks black. Love at first sight.



We have a few bird baths and cleaning them reminds me of the days when I was a kid and had a goldfish. Every few weeks I had to clean the bowl and the gravel and it made me cringe to feel that slimy water on my hands. Sort of the same with the birdbaths, except bird slime rather than fish slime. So I did some looking into the fastest and most natural way to get them clean and shiny which will result in more visitors and well, that's the whole idea, right? Keeping your birdbath clean will also reduce the number of gnats and mosquitoes that can infect humans and animals. So let's get started:

Remove all stagnant water, debris, seeds and feces into a bucket to dispose of in a place away from your outdoor space. Hit the basin with your hose sprayer set on "Jet", or the most forceful spray you have. Get the outside as well as the pedestal. Make a solution of one part distilled white vinegar and nine parts water. Use this to scrub the basin, lip and any area of the birdbath that birds land on. You may have to let the solution sit awhile if you have a buildup of slime/scum...bleh! Finally, rinse with clean water until there is no foaming. Water the area around the birdbath to wash away any debris. And a few tips to keep your birdbath clean on a regular basis:

- 1). When filling, dump out the old water rather than just adding more to it.
- 2). Position the birdbath away from your feeders to avoid seed falling into the water.
- 3). Choose a shady spot so you can slow evaporation and algae growth.
- 4). Position the birdbath where it will not be clogged by grass clippings, falling leaves and other debris.

I hope this is helpful or even inspires you to get a birdbath to enjoy the myriad of feathered friends we have in Michigan!



Now isn't this a delightful picture? If it makes you cringe like it does me, read on because it gets worse, but then it gets better, but then it just stays pretty bad anyway.

I never saw a stinkbug until I moved to Michigan. That's not to say they don't exist anywhere else, but one recently learned fact about them sort of got the wheels in my head turning. Just like mice, if you see one you probably have 100 more. Stinkbugs know from the shorter days of sunlight that it's time to get to warmer quarters and they are very clever in finding ways into your home through cracks and crevices by the thousands. Researchers once found more than 4,000 in a breadbox! Once inside, they like to explore. You might see one in your shower or morning coffee. When they fly they are blundering little monsters, bumping and hitting surfaces loud enough for you to hear. The reason for this is in part due to their hibernation. They typically appear when they first begin to see sunlight on a sunny winter day, fooled that its spring. And then you start to see them here and there, sometimes a little too often. I know that in spring and early summer I capture a good 5-7 stinkbugs a day. The good

thing is that they don't eat, bite, or reproduce indoors.

Inside you might find that stinkbugs tend to congregate on upper floors and in tight spaces, like the folds of your curtains or along the tops of your walls. For me, I seem to spot more near my windows in the morning when the sun is really shining. Then again at night when the lamps are on. I always make sure to have a light on in my bedroom for awhile before bed so I can catch any wandering critter before dark. You might want to turn down the bed ahead of time also.

There are a number of ways to catch and remove stinkbugs. My way is one at a time using a Kleenex, gently gathering it up and then flushing it down the toilet. They of course, get their name from the foul stench they release when threatened or disturbed. My method protects me from that. I've actually never smelled one so I must be doing something right. Another way to catch them, particularly if they are up high, is to cover a dry sweeper mop-head with a sticky lint remover sheet and just tap it until it sticks. I knew a blogger down South that has so many she just sucks them up with her vacuum cleaner. They can climb out so you have to remove the bag or empty the canister once you're done.

I still have a lot of questions, like, if there can be thousands in your home, where are they hiding? And why do we have traps for mice, rats, ants, and flies but nothing yet for these prehistoric looking bugs? Lets get on it!



Summer days, wiling away the time on my patio with coffee in the morning or a cocktail (or two+) in the evening, it's just sublime now. Maybe the problems of the world have taught us to be more aware of the precious time we have on this earth, and how meaningful our connections with people are. Not just family and friends, but Everyman. I so appreciate my time in the country and on the lake to remind myself that it's okay to be alone in soaking in and soaking up every beautiful thing life has to offer. Well, at the risk of waxing poetic, have any of you learned or become more appreciative of the little things in life in this new reality?

### Melon, Prosciutto and Arugula Salad

Okay, I'm going to move on to recipes before you start shredding the paper to wash your windows with. I have a huge collection of salads that aren't your average salads, but since I'm only allowed so much space here so I just have one for now. I recommend you double or triple this beauty as it's not difficult to assemble and you can enjoy it alone, with family or friends, or in a small group. You decide!

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



# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## Home insurance claim? Here's what to do

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

The need to file a homeowners insurance claim can be a stressful time for the homeowner. The homeowner may have suffered damage to their home or property, or caused injury or property damage to others. Here are some tips to help with the claim process.

Notify the police if your home has been burglarized or vandalized. Your insurance company will require a police report to accompany your claim forms.

Notify your insurance agent of the loss immediately. When speaking to your insurance agent, get the name and contact information of the individual in the adjusting department who will be helping you settle your claim. Get names and contact information from everyone you speak to about your claim. Review your coverages with your agent or claims representative. Here are some questions to ask:

- Am I covered for the loss I am describing?
- What are my responsibilities and how long do I have?
- When will you send me claim forms

and when do they need to be completed and returned?

- What is my deductible?
- What additional coverages does my policy contain?
- When will the insurance adjuster be scheduled to see the damage?

Make temporary repairs to prevent further damage. Do not make permanent repairs until the adjuster has inspected the damage. The adjuster is authorized to make payments to you and others for all necessary repairs.

Document the damage to your property. Photos and videos are an excellent way to document the extent of the loss or damages. Write down what happened as soon as possible so you can give this information to the insurance adjuster. Keep receipts for any money you spend on temporary repairs or other expenses due to the loss such as restaurant meals and hotel room expenses. Make a list of lost, destroyed, or damaged belongings. Having prepared a home inventory before you have a claim will make this task much easier.

Get estimates from a reputable contractor. Don't be rushed into signing contracts. Instead, collect business cards, check references, and get written esti-

mates for the proposed job. You can use these estimates to determine the fairness and accuracy of the claims settlement you are offered. Sometimes adjusters will accept these estimates which in turn will speed up the claim process.

When the adjuster is inspecting your property, make sure you are present. This will enable you to point out damage the adjuster may have missed. Be courteous and provide them access to the damage they are to inspect and answer questions associated with the damage. Take notes regarding the adjuster's comments and actions.

Do not file a claim if the repair costs are within your deductible. If the repair estimate is \$420 and you have a \$500 deductible, the insurance company will not be paying for any of the repairs. Once you create a record of a claim against your insurance company, it stays in your file and may have an effect on your future insurance premiums. You can find your deductible on your policy. Contact your insurance agent if you are unsure of your deductible.

Do not discuss your claim with anyone other than the police, your insurance agent or representatives from your insurance company. This is especially import-

ant in a liability case where you could unknowing waive your legal rights or unintentionally accept responsibility.

If you don't agree with the settlement, you have a right to refuse the offer. You may have to do some research to prove a higher payment is valid, but it may be worth it.

Before you have a loss - some preparation ahead of time can save time and disappointment if you have a loss. Review your policy with your insurance agent. Homeowners policies are not all the same. Most policies have strict limits on certain valuable items and for certain potential perils. Know what your policy does and does not cover. Prepare a home inventory and store it in a safe place. A home inventory will prove invaluable at the time of a loss.

While no one wants to suffer a homeowners loss, these tips can help the claim process go as smoothly and uneventful as possible. If you have a claim, your insurance representative is there to assist you through the process. By following these tips and working closely with your insurance representative, you should be able to settle your claim in a fair and timely manner.

### JANE

*Continued from previous page*



**Ingredients:**

- 1 small cantaloupe melon
- 2 T lemon juice
- 1 t honey
- 1/4 t Dijon mustard
- 1 T olive oil
- 4 c arugula
- 4 oz fresh mozzarella pearls or pieces
- 3 oz prosciutto, roughly torn (I actually use about 6 oz as it is sooooo good!)

**Directions:**

Use a melon baller to portion out melon or simply slice and cut out 1 inch pieces. (Perfect for lazy and un-fancy people like me).

In a small bowl whisk together lemon juice, honey and mustard. Gently whisk in olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Gently mix with arugula. Add melon, cheese, and prosciutto, toss and serve. Serves 4-6

Just when you think you have had just about everything one can make on their outdoor grill, you come across new-to-you ideas. This is a perfectly grilled pizza that doesn't require an outdoor woodburning oven, but it definitely tastes much better than something you'd make

in the oven in your kitchen. That direct heat gives you such a nice crunch. I like my crust thin and crisp with a few charred edges. Something else that may be new for you is how fresh fruit caramelizes on the grill creating a flavor above and beyond your expectations. This recipe had me using fresh peaches. The salty prosciutto (making it's way into yet another recipe this month), is the perfect complement to the sweet peaches. The fresh mozzarella and basil give it the Italian touch. This is super easy to throw together and pop on the grill for lunch or dinner. We've even had it for a later night snack as we sat out under the stars!



**Grilled Peach & Prosciutto Pizza**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 pound stop bought pizza dough (Trader Joe's has a great dough)
- 2 T olive oil for drizzling
- 3 garlic cloves thinly sliced
- 1-2 c fresh mozzarella
- 1 peach cut into thin wedges
- 12 thin slices of prosciutto cut in half
- 1/3 c fresh basil, torn
- Splash of balsamic reduction or vinegar

**Directions:**

Preheat your grill to high. Shape the dough into two medium size pizzas. Brush each side of the pizzas with olive oil. Place on grill and cook dough on one side about two minutes, flip and cook the other side two minutes as well. You should have some golden grill marks. Remove the pizzas to a clean chopping board or surface and brush the tops with additional olive oil. Arrange the mozzarella, peaches, prosciutto and basil evenly over both, give them another little splash of olive oil and balsamic, then return to the grill on the upper rack. Cover and let cook approxi-

mately 3 minutes until all melty and juicy. Let sit 3-4 minutes before slicing. Enjoy!

It doesn't always take a lot of fussing to make a hamburger that stands out from the rest, nor any fancy ingredients. Next time you want to take an old standby up a notch, try this burger created by Sunny Anderson of The Food Network, and one of my favorite shows, The Kitchen. I've made several modifications to take you from kitchen to patio grill.



Photo courtesy of Food Network  
**Bacon, Onion, and Cheese Stuffed Burger**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 1/2 lb. ground beef
  - 2 cloves garlic, minced
  - 1 t hot sauce (like Frank's Red Hot)
  - S & P
  - 4 strips bacon, diced
  - 1/2 yellow onion, chopped small
  - 1 c grated sharp cheddar cheese
  - 4 burger buns
- Directions:

Preheat grill to medium. In a bowl combine beef, garlic, hot sauce, and salt and pepper. A good thing to remember about making burgers is to not overwork them. Get the flavors going but don't over-mix or you will have a very dense, tough hunk of beef. Refrigerate while you make the bacon by warming a skillet and frying the pieces til crispy, about 2-3 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Sauté the onion in the bacon fat until just tender, about 5 minutes or so. Place the bacon and onion in a bowl with the cheese, mix it up, and while it cools remove the beef mixture from the fridge and form 8 patties. Place a spoonful of the bacon/cheese/onion mixture in the center of four patties, then top with the remains. Pinch the edges to seal. Head outside to your grill, or if you are a smart cookie and made these ahead of time, you can cover and keep in the fridge until you plan to cook. Grill over medium

high heat about 4-5 minutes each side for medium doneness. Serve with all of your favorite condiments. Watch for the surprised faces when they bite into the secret centers of these delish burgers!



Finally something sweet. These are fun to make with the kiddo's for a sweet treat or even as part of a healthy lunch. The picture looks neat and perfect but it really is somewhat messy and summer is the right time to sit at the picnic table and slap these together. They are addicting for adults as well, believe me!

**Strawberry Cheesecake Crackers**

**Ingredients:**

- 12 graham cracker squares
- 3 oz. whipped cream cheese
- 4-6 strawberries, sliced
- Powdered sugar for dusting

**Directions:**

Lay out 12 graham cracker squares. Thinly spread cream cheese on the crackers. Top 6 with a few strawberry slices and a sprinkle of powdered sugar. Place remaining crackers, cream cheese side down, on the crackers with the toppings. Dust additional powdered sugar over your little "sandwiches". Makes 6

Okay ... this is it for July. I hope the pretty outdoor and food pics make up for the sick stinkbug photo. I wanted some of you to know it really was an insect and not your teenage son. See you next month!

Jane Boudreau is a blogger and newspaper columnist with homes in Chicago, Diamond Lake, and the mountains of North Carolina. Please send any questions or comments to her at [blndy9@yahoo.com](mailto:blndy9@yahoo.com)



# LOCAL REAL ESTATE

## The Housing Market in Cass County & SWMI

**T**he full effect of shelter-in-place restrictions hit the housing market hard in May. The overall number of house sales fell 30 percent compared to May 2019 in Cass County (42 vs. 60). Sales of waterfront houses took the biggest hit, plummeting 79 percent. (5 vs. 24). Non-waterfront home sales showed a small gain of 3 percent with one additional house sale (37 vs. 36).

Year-to-date, the overall number of houses sold was down 12 percent (187 vs. 213). Waterfront home sales decreased by 13 percent (40 vs. 46). Non-waterfront home sales also declined by 13 percent (147 vs. 168).

The overall average selling price in May 2020 fell 23 percent over May 2019 (\$208,200 vs. \$271,616). The overall median selling price in May at \$173,750 dropped 12 percent from the \$197,500 median price in May 2019.

The average selling price for waterfront homes increased 10 percent to \$407,940 from \$370,394 in May 2019. The median selling price for waterfront homes soared 44 percent (\$416,699 vs. \$290,000).

The average selling price for non-waterfront homes in May decreased 12 percent to \$181,209 from \$205,764 in May 2019. The median selling price jumped 45 percent to \$171,000 from \$118,000 in May 2019.

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

In Cass County, two houses were bank-owned or foreclosed as a part of all closed transactions in May or 5 percent of the total houses sold. The highest percentage in May previously was 16 percent in 2014.

For comparison, The number of bank-owned or foreclosed homes as a percentage of all transactions was 6 percent in May, the same as in April. Six percent is the lowest percentage reached in May and was obtained in May 2019 and 2017. The highest percentage in May was 34 percent in 2009.

The overall SWMI housing market in May suffered the worst from the economic lockdown from March through May. House sales fell to the lowest level since 2006. Selling prices also dropped. May is normally the month the peak selling season starts. Since our market has been robust for the last three years, we are expecting this to be a temporary disruption of home sales.

The number of houses sold in May dropped to 142. This is the lowest num-



ber of houses sold in the month of May in our year-over-year comparison back to 2006. Compared to May 2019, it was a 61 percent decline (142 vs. 361), and from April, it was a 27 percent decrease.

Year-to-date, the number of houses sold fell 27 percent to 952 from 1302 sold in May 2019. The last time sales were at this level was in May 2011 (825).

The average selling price in May was \$240,374 compared to \$264,171 in May 2019 for a 9 percent reduction. The average selling price was the highest for the year. Year-to-date, the average selling price was within \$742 (\$224,160 vs. \$224,902).

The median selling price in May decreased 5 percent to \$173,250 from \$182,000 in May 2019. Year-to-date, the median selling price rose 6 percent (\$175,126 vs. \$165,000). The year-to-date median selling price became the highest median selling price in the year-over-year comparison.

Comparing May to April, the number of houses sold fell 27 percent (142 vs. 194). The average selling price jumped 9 percent (\$240,374 vs. \$220,208). The median selling price dropped 7 percent (\$173,250 vs. \$186,000).

With fewer houses sold, the total dollar volume fell 64 percent in May (\$34,133,128 vs. \$95,366,067). The year-to-date total dollar volume was up down 27 percent (\$213,401,102 vs. \$292,823,002).

The inventory of houses for sale declined 15 percent from May 2019 (1420 vs. 1666). This level gave the market a 6.2-months supply of houses for buyers. In April 2020, the level was 4.5-months supply. For comparison, in May 2010, there were 3602 houses for sale.

your landscaping an update. A shabby doormat, dingy house numbers, and a rusty old mailbox are hardly deal-breakers, but they do leave a stale impression. If your outdoor accents have seen better days, replace them. Then make sure your landscaping looks lush for any passersby. Prune overgrown shrubs and trees. Weed flower beds and spread a layer of fresh mulch.

### When Buying a Home...

It seems that we can do everything online these days, but homebuyers should beware of online information. While convenient, it may not include all the details that may be needed.

For example, the first step in buying a home is determining how much you can afford. There are hundreds of online calculators where you can pop in your numbers and almost instantly get a number. In reality, this number is just a ballpark figure.

In general, experts recommend that your house payment (which will include your mortgage, maintenance, taxes) should not exceed 28% of your gross monthly income. So, if your monthly (before-tax) income is \$6,000, multiply that by 0.28, and you'll see that you shouldn't pay more than \$1,680 a month on your home mortgage.

For a more accurate assessment, head to a lender for mortgage pre-approval. This means the bank will assess your credit history, credit score, and other factors, then tell you whether you qualify for a loan and for how much. Mortgage pre-approval also puts home sellers at ease, since they know you have the cash for a loan to back up your offer.

A lender will also help you explore the array of types of mortgages available such as a loan through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). An FHA loan will have looser qualification requirements than a traditional mortgage, but there are still certain prerequisites borrowers must meet like getting private mortgage insurance and having a minimum credit score of 500.

To view properties that are for sale in your local area, go to [www.swmar.com](http://www.swmar.com) and click on "Property Search." The Southwestern Michigan Association of REALTORS®, Inc. is a professional trade association for real estate professionals who are members of the National Association of REALTORS®, and ancillary service providers for the real estate industry in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. The Association can be contacted at 269-983-6375 or at [www.swmar.com](http://www.swmar.com).

Locally, the mortgage rate was 3.244 up slightly from 3.213 in April. Last year in May, the rate was 4.255. Nationally, the Freddie Mac mortgage rate in May was 3.15 down slightly from 3.23 in April for a 30-year conventional mortgage.

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

### When Selling a Home...

Curb appeal is the make-or-break first impression of your home. It either beckons a second look or turns buyers off entirely. In the Coronavirus age, curb appeal is more vital than ever—since buyers are looking more online and doing more drivebys before touring homes with a REALTOR®.

So to improve curb appeal, here are some key areas to consider:

Keep the yard green and pristine. The lawn is one of the first things buyers notice, whether they are pulling up to the curb or looking at an online listing. When lush and green, it creates a favorable impression. Keeping your yard groomed is one of the cheapest things you can do to enhance curb appeal.

You might be inclined to overlook the driveway and front walk. However, both are the gateway to making your home appealing. They lead buyers to your home, so concrete cracks with weeds will be distracting.

Prospective buyers might be driving by after dark see what your house looks like at night. Turn on the charm with exterior lighting.

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# WACHA-MA-CALL-IT?


## What is it?

This item is perhaps recognized by farmers. It was patent in 1886 and was used by farmers. What is C?

### ANSWER ON PAGE 17 OF THIS MONTH'S NEIGHBORS

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# OUR CHILDREN

## Putting video games to work

by **SANDY FLEMING**

**P**arents all over the world are getting more and more concerned about their kids having too much screen time, particularly when they just had tons of extra time on devices doing distance learning for school. Yet, nearly every family I talk to has thrown up their hands. “How can I monitor them when I’m at work?” “They complain about being bored when they don’t have their video games!” and other comments that I’m sure every parent has heard since the beginning of video games.

Time to turn the tables on these young people! We know from experts ranging from psychologists to pediatricians that too much screen time can lead to a host of problems for kids from stunted social development to lagging academic progress. This summer, why not tame the video game monster at your house?

### First Things First

If you are concerned about your child’s use of technology, remember that YOU are in charge of that. You control the amount of time they can spend with their devices, and you can control the content on those devices. It does take work, but it is possible. Control content by using parental monitoring tools. Install apps or programs that allow you to see usage history and usage content. Use the “history” tab on your computer, the parental controls on YouTube, and the built-in monitor programming on your cell phone (or your child’s cell phone). Educate yourself about the choices open to you as a parent to see what your child is up to on his or her device, and then follow through by checking regularly- daily or even more often if you need to. You can get a start by heading over to <https://bestappsforkids.com/> and typing “parental controls for my device” in the search bar. This will get you to some good articles that will address the mechanics of safeguarding your family. Check out <https://www.bestappsforkids.com/2018/android-guide-the-best-parental-control-apps-on-android/> and <https://www.bestappsforkids.com/2020/how-to-childproof-apples-newest-iphone-11-and-iphone-11-pro/> for specifics about protecting your or your child’s phone.

When all else fails, remove access to the device. If things are so totally out of your control, you can do things like changing your household wi-fi password, changing the device’s password, or removing power cords from computers. It’s tough for even determined kids to break your rules about digital content if they can only use a device when you give the OK. I’ve even seen families purchase those little padlocks that can fit through the hole in a plug and snapping it shut when they weren’t around to prevent plugging in or charging without parental knowledge. You just have to be more devious than the kids are!

Once you are in control of your child’s digital diet, then you can start to turn around addictive behavior and use the games and videos as a tool to get where you want to be.



### Make Device Time an Earned Privilege

It’s remarkable, but it’s human nature to be willing to work for things we want. Kids want time with their devices, so it’s perfectly ok to make them work for it. You can set this up, and it’s a great tool to get all sorts of compliance on things that are important to you. Here’s how it works:

- Step 1: Get control. Once you are in charge of when and how devices are used, you can use them to your advantage and set up rewards for getting other things done, learned, or finished.

- Step 2: Set one or two goals for your child. Don’t make the mistake of trying to build Rome in a day. Your kid took years to get to this stage, and you’re not going to be able to snap your fingers and make huge changes quickly. Pick the one or two most important things you want your child to be doing. You can work on another one or two after these are working for everyone. The goals could be about time spent with screens, or they could be about doing household chores, getting outside time, or whatever is needed.

- Step 3: Make sure your goals are concrete and observable. Setting a goal of “be good” or “be respectful” won’t be successful because there’s too wide of a range of acceptable behavior. What constitutes “good” behavior might be different to me than it is to you. Plus there are times and places where you won’t be able to monitor compliance. Instead, make a goal that any adult in the child’s life will be able to observe if it happens or not and all will agree if it did or did not happen. Goals like “Use a device for a maximum of 60 minutes daily” is measurable and observable. Set a timer, and when the time is up, so is the device time. Other good, solid, observable goals might include “Complete the three daily chores listed on the refrigerator by 5 PM each weekday,” “Take out the household trash every Tuesday,” or “Vacuum the kitchen and the living room before lunch on Friday.” Everyone who’s watching can say “Yes, he did that” or “No, she did not do that.” There’s no room for opinions.

- Step 4: Set up an important reward for compliance. No, this is not bribery! This is exactly why most of

us go to work each week. We want that paycheck! The only difference is that you are in charge of the rewards for your behavior plan with your child. Find something that he or she WANTS to work towards. Use a sticker or check chart if you have to help yourself or your child keep track, but (and this is VERY IMPORTANT) make sure the reward happens once the desired behavior has happened. If we adults promise rewards (or consequences for that matter) and then don’t deliver, it completely undermines our efforts to change behavior. Remember that adult attention is usually the single most desirable reward, and it doesn’t have to cost a thing. Offer to have a meal together, to take a walk or a ride, to play a game. Spend time with just that kid, and put your focus on your child. If you have to, block out an “appointment” that you keep as religiously as you would a business or medical appointment. It’s that important!

- Step 5: Set up an undesirable outcome for noncompliance. And as with the reward, make sure it happens when promised and immediately. Be careful here- consequences that last for weeks and months on end, such as device removal or grounding, are usually not effective. You need something that is quick and is over with quickly. Otherwise, you run the risk of the child saying “Why should I bother doing XYZ? Whenever I mess up, there’s no way to dig out of the hole.” Some ideas for negative outcomes include short term removal of device access (an hour, the rest of the day), additional household chores, loss of a privilege coming up in the next day or two, such as an outing or a visit to a friend’s house, withdrawal of your positive attention for a short time, such as an hour or until the next meal, and so forth.

- Step 6: Get everyone on board. Every adult in your child’s life should be on the same page with your behavior plan. This includes child care providers, family members, both parents, adult siblings, and so forth. Everyone should be working toward the same one or two goals. Get your child on board, as well. Let them know the goal, the rewards and the consequences, as well as the time frame. Write it all down so people

can refer back to it. Ask your child to help you set up rewards, in particular...lots of times kids know exactly what they want and you can use this to help you change their behavior.

- Step 7: Be consistent. I can’t stress this one enough. No behavior plan will work if you don’t use consistency and follow through with both rewards and consequences that you have promised. Kids who are continually threatened with “If you don’t hurry up, I’m going to leave you here” and who are never left (of course you’re not going to leave your child!), quickly learn that your threats are empty. Instead, use consequences that you are willing and able to carry out, each and every time, on time, and without fail. Same for rewards- only offer things that you can produce, each and every time, without fail.

- Step 8: Once your child has met your behavior goal, start again by choosing a new goal and setting up a new plan.

This method is tried and true, and works like a charm if you apply it consistently. When it breaks down, take a close look at adult consistency of response, valuable rewards, and undesirable consequences. Adjust whatever needs adjusting and try it all again.

### Put the Video Games to Work

Once you are in control of time spent on devices and the content of the games being played, you can make these work for you and ultimately for your child. Try these suggestions:

- Have kids earn device time by writing real sentences on real paper. You can assign a minute value to words or sentences and let them earn their device time by strengthening writing skills.

- If math practice is needed, allow the kid to earn video game time by completing math assignments at the level needed. You can find tons of free worksheets and sites online or you can use commercial workbooks.

- Challenge them to write directions to play their favorite video game.

- Ask them to design their own video game using paper and pencil, storyboarding techniques, and more.

- Have them write a compare/contrast essay or paragraphs to show similarities and differences between two of their favorite games.

- Have kids graph their scores over time, average them, or keep track of their highs and lows.

- Send them on a scavenger hunt through video or game, searching for the answers to trivia questions as they play or watch.

Whatever strategy you choose to use to get good out of video games and screen time, remember that you and not your child are in charge. Video games and computer use and phone possession are all privileges that need to be earned and maintained, and you control them. Once you take control back, be sure you maintain it until your child is grown and gone.



# FIELD TRIP



## Field Trip: Even Santa needs a summer haircut

Between the "Stay Home Stay Safe" order and the resulting pandemic-related shutdown of most of the businesses near me, it had been months since I'd had a haircut. As one of the last living members of the 1960/70 era hippies, I wasn't really too worried about it. I'd had long hair before ... so this would be a piece of cake for me ... Until it wasn't.

Apparently I'd forgotten how hot long hair and a full beard can be when the temps top 90 and the humidity gets into the stupid-sultry range, but by the time I finally got the call from Just Hair to schedule an appointment, I was done with the long hair phase.

When your hair gets to a certain length, there's no keeping it out of your eyes and mouth, and even a 60s era bandanna headband wasn't cutting it for me (not the mention the top-notch scrunchy my kids and grandkids rigged for me in the pic at left).

And with the facial hair, eating had become an adventure ... the white in my mustache was almost continuously stained with marina-ra sauce or red wine, and soup and coffee ended up being strained through an inch of hair by the time I finally got shorn.

The fact of the matter is that I don't remember ever being more ready for a haircut.

Fortunately, I guess, the call came on the day I was searching for something ... anything ... that was open enough for me to do my monthly field trip for this paper ... and since almost nothing else was going to be open in time, it was a natural.

Might have been my wife who suggested I take pictures (she was pretty ready for me to get a trim as well), so I made the plans.

Chrissy Grant, my barber, and I shared a laugh about the idea, and she said it was ok with her, so I showed up with my face mask (impossible to wear when you're getting a full head trim) and she went to work.

About mid-cut, after telling her how many times I'd been called Hippy, Moses, and Santa Claus, she dropped the line that became the headline for this story. Thanks Chrissy for the headline, and thanks for the great haircut ... I feel sooooo much better for it!





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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 web-site: [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 additional cards from one or more of the area's lakes with views of nearby communities, lakes and countryside.



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# NATURE NOTES

## Bobcat sighted in Niles

Provided by Cass District Library  
Local History Branch

A bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) has been roaming the east side of the city of Niles, Michigan since April 2020, and seen as recently as Mid-June. Photos had surfaced recently on Facebook taken by Brent Van Tuyl, and Greg "Ozzy" Ostrander, both residents of Niles. You can see in Ostrand's photo the short bobbed tail with black tip, its conspicuous ears, and tawny fur coat.

The bobcat has been seen primarily around dusk and early morning hours west of M-51, aka 5th Street, east to the county line, and from Lake Street, south to East Main Street. Most sightings have been near the Niles Dairy Queen, on Oak Street.

Prior to European settlement in North America, the bobcat ranged over what would become southern Canada, all of the Lower 48 States, and most of Mexico. As settlement progressed, the bobcat receded into wilderness or sparsely settled areas that retained forested regions and swamps. The species was also persecuted by humans who thought it was a nuisance species. By the early to middle 20th Century the bobcat was eliminated from much of its range east of the Mississippi River and Great Plains where habitat was modified for farming purposes.

As the 20th Century grew to a close, areas that were once heavily farmed were being reclaimed by second growth forest. At the same time hunting pressure eased as did the demand for the bobcat's fur. As a result the species has reclaimed much of its former range.

In Michigan, bobcats survived pressure put on their existence from humans in the Upper Peninsula and northern portion of the Lower Peninsula. However they were wiped out across the southern half of the Lower Peninsula but have been slowly returning over the last 25-30 years.

I am aware of an additional three reports of bobcats in Berrien County since 2002, including a sight record from Lincoln Township in 2002. A single infrared photo of a bobcat taken on January 30, 2010 along Morrison Channel, St. Joseph represented the first modern record in Berrien County back by physical documentation. Most recently, in September 2019, a sight record was reported from Watervliet Township.

I'm not aware of any bobcat sightings within Warren Dunes State Park, but I have seen trees within the park that appear to have bobcat scratch marks on their bark, one way in which the animal marks its territory. The park certainly has enough habitat to harbor a bobcat.

Michigan DNR officials have told me that bobcats are occasionally seen in Cass and Van Buren counties, but are still uncommon over the southwestern part of the state.

Studies have shown that female bobcats in summer have a home range size of around 1/3 square miles, while adult males' summer home ranges are 1.9 square miles. Mating of bobcats occurs in February and March, with most young being born in May and June. Winter home ranges vary from 10 to 15 square miles. Movements of up to 50 square miles per day usually indicate transient animals.

I can't tell from the photos whether the bobcat is male or female, but based on reports posted on social media, I would say it is a female because the home range seems to be confined to a



Above: Four of nine American white pelicans are seen here, photographed on June 4, 2020. They rested on the St. Joseph River, between St. Joseph and Benton Harbor for another day before moving onward.



Left, Right: Bobcat, *Lynx rufus*, June 3, 2020 in a backyard in Niles. Photo by Ozzy Ostrander, bobcat in May 2020, Niles, Michigan by Brent Van Tuyl.



Bottom left: White-tailed deer fawn, just hours after birth, June 9, 2020 at picnic shelter, Warren Dunes State Park. Brad Anderson.



Female common snapping turtle laying eggs on May 28, 2020 in freshly seeded lawn of Arthur and Kristine Herman of Hagar Township. Photo by Art Herman.

Below: Recently hatched painted turtle, May 2020, rescued from the road, seen here in hand of Peter Plikaitis of Shoreham.



specific area in size to that typical of female bobcats.

Bobcats are shy and generally avoid areas of human inhabitation however in recent years bobcats have been turning up in and around suburbs of major metro areas closer to humans and in spite of this, human-bobcat incidents remain rare.

Just as the bobcat is seemingly adapting to humans, we must adjust to the bobcat.

Other sightings:  
Brad Anderson found a newborn fawn white-tailed deer on June 9, at the picnic shelter at Warren Dunes State Park. June is the month during which most fawns are born in southern Michigan. The newborns are able to walk within an hour after birth and is able to nurse once or twice a day while in a standing position.

Readers should remain extra vigilant when driving vehicles in June as many fawns and their mothers walk out onto roadways, usually in early morning hours.

Auto collisions are perhaps the most common cause of fawn mortality. Other common causes of fawn mortality include domestic dogs, and coyotes.

Fawns may fall prey to bobcats, but the bobcat population in southern Michigan is very low, this is not a major threat. It is much easier for a bobcat to prey on smaller animals such as cottontail rabbits, and various rodents including squirrels and mice.

On June 4 and 5, a flock of nine American white pelicans were seen by multiple observers in the St. Joseph River between St. Joseph and Benton Harbor. The pelicans were also seen in flight over St. Joseph that day by Claire Gillespie of St. Joe. Mike Mahler, on staff at Sarett Nature Center provided several nice pictures of the birds, as did Mark Parren of Sodus Township.

American white pelicans winter along the Gulf Coast and migrate through our region every spring. We typically see white pelicans between April and May so these are a bit on the late side. They likely moved onward to the

northern Great Plains where they nest among the low wet areas known as prairie potholes.

The freshly seeded lawn of Art and Kristine Herman was the location at which a large female common snapping turtle chose to dig a nest and deposit several eggs, providing good photo opportunity.

Young male orchard orioles in their first year of life appear strikingly different than adult males which have reached one year of age and have molted into adult plumage. Because the young male orchard oriole appears so drastically different than the adult male, it causes confusion to many bird watchers.

The juvenile male appears olive green on its back and a yellow-green on underside along with a distinct black bib. Males of the species molt into their adult plumage of dark chestnut body with black hood and wings by August of their

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



# LOCAL HISTORY

## Clem Cressy at Carnegie Library in 1909

Provided by Jon Wuepper,  
Local History Branch Manager  
Cass District Library

The 1909 Carnegie Library serves as the Local History Branch of the Cass District Library, and while under the current renovation-restoration project, workers discovered that a piece of stained trim was signed by Clem Cressy on March 30, 1909 when the original finishing work was being done.

Through Ancestry.com I was able to find out about the life of Clem Cressy, who put up the finishing trim around the library over 111 years ago.

Clement Gordon Cressy was born to Robert W. and Sarah Cressy on August 23, 1885 in England. The family moved to the United States in 1888 settling in South Bend, Indiana.

According to the US Census of 1900, Clement, or "Clem" was the oldest of six siblings enumerated in the Cressy household at 1233 St. Peter Street, South Bend on June 12, 1900.

Robert Cressy was a carpenter by trade, and Clem took up his father's profession sometime after 1900, for we know of the back of the woodwork signed by the latter Cressy on March 30, 1909. In the 1910 US Census, Clem was living in a boarding house with other carpen-



Backside of stained trim from Local History Branch of Cass District Library, which reads: "Clem Cressy Mar 30 1909 South Bend Ind." Photo provided by Cass District Library

ters in Gary, Indiana. That city was under a construction boom during the first two decades of the 1900s. On March 9, 1916 Clem married Katherine Leonard in Chicago, but they lived in South Bend. The couple had seven children, of which Clement, Jr died tragically at age 16, on June 11, 1937 while returning home from a swimming party held at Notre Dame when his bicycle

was struck by an automobile in front of St. Mary's College on US-31. Clem Sr died on September 3, 1970 in South Bend, age 85. This is an example of the genealogical information that can be found at the Cass District Library Local History Branch.

## WHACHA-MA-CALL-IT? ANSWER FROM PAGE 8

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## NATURE

Continued from previous page

second calendar year of life. The female orchard oriole sports a yellow-greenish plumage from its hatch year through adulthood. Orchard orioles are less common in Southwest Michigan than the Baltimore oriole, partly due to the fact that southern Michigan is the northern limit of the species breeding range. Orchard orioles preferred nesting habitat includes old fields converting back to forest, farmyards, roadsides, tree nurseries and of course orchards. The species generally avoids dense forests, both coniferous and deciduous. Brad Anderson found an eastern hog-nosed snake at Warren Dunes State Park on May 21. This relatively common snake is found in sandy, well drained soils in our region. Because the species has an upturned nose it is called "hog-nosed". When frightened, the snake will spread its neck, reminiscent of a cobra. But the hog-nosed snake is non-venomous. Scott Nolte of Royalton Township photographed a black rat snake along the wooded ravines of the St. Joseph River in Royalton Township. The black rat snake is the largest snake that inhabits Michigan. Adult black rat snakes may grow to six feet or more in length. The species is a constrictor, meaning it squeezes its prey to death, and is non-venomous. It is a good climber, and it will prey on young squirrels located in nests high above the ground. Peter Plikaitis of Shoreham rescued a baby painted turtle last month that was attempting to cross a parking lot in St. Joseph Township. As you can see from the photo the young turtle is only about the size of a quarter dollar. It likely hatched last year inside of an underground nest, and just emerged this spring. Painted turtles grow rapidly and this turtle will double its size by the end of this year. Please report your sightings to Jonathan Wuepper at wuepperj@gmail.com



Top: Juvenile male orchard oriole that hatched 2019. Taken May 19, 2020 in Hartford by Sally Germinder. This bird will molt into its adult plumage by August of this year.

Top middle: Adult male orchard oriole, May 16, 2020, Hagar Township, Arthur Herman.

Top right: Eastern hog-nosed snake at Warren Dunes State Park, May 21, 2020 by Brad Anderson. This non-venomous snake is relatively common in well drained sandy soils throughout the Lower Peninsula of Michigan.

Bottom right: Black rat snake on May 18, 2020, Royalton Township by Scott Nolte.





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# THE LAST WORD

## Give me a head with hair ... long beautiful hair!

**T**he young lad, a beaming towhead with an Opie of Mayberry smile, was checking me out pretty good when I, clad in a full-face, plastic Covid shield stumbled into Cranky Hanks to pick up some fried chicken. His grin quickly faded though when he caught sight of me, and his eyes widened and his jaw dropped.

"Hey," I offered. "You checking out my face mask?" I asked ...

"No ..." he stammered. "Your hair! He pointed and his face widened about a foot. "It's all white ... you could be Santa Claus ... you've got white hair everywhere!"

I smiled indulgently.

"I know, I grew it," I countered. "And look, I've even got white hair on my arms and my chest .. but that's as far as we're going with this, I'm not showing you white hair anything else!"

The lad laughed aloud.

His parents were mildly amused, but they fairly rushed him out the door as he gaped back at me standing in line to pay for my yardbird.

If you've already seen the pics in the "field trip" in this issue, you have a pretty good idea what this is about.

To paraphrase the Cowsills' 1969 hit, it's about my hair.

I'll admit that during the lockdown phase of the pandemic, my hair and beard, both bone white with age, had gotten pretty long.

Hair down to there ... shoulder length or longer.

And I'll also admit, that after a while, just like they sang in that song, my hair

was a fright.

For weeks I'd been hearing hair jibes I hadn't heard since the '70s. And since I'm near 70 years old, the irony was palpable.

"Get a haircut, hippy."

"Moses! Where's your stone tablets?"

"Excuse me Poseidon, can you direct me to Mount Olympus?"

A neighbor couldn't help herself the other day when I helped her with a simple home improvement project that involved getting a doorbell cover open to put in new batteries ... it involved removing a screw and popping the cover open ... except the screw was already gone. I pointed it out to her when I opened the cover, and in a exasperated and embarrassed burst, she blurted out, "Oh Jesus."

I smiled.

"Hardly," I chided her. "I just look like him."

She lowered her gaze, then pointed and burst out laughing when she saw I was wearing sandals.

Hey, it was a hot day.

I got together with a couple sailing buddies the other day, and one, a recently retired attorney from Elkhart who'd snuck down to his old stomping grounds to get a quick trim, pointed out that if someone were to hand us a couple guitars, at least a couple of us could pose for a '60s rock-n-roll album cover.

Having had long hair a long time ago (and having been proud back then to have long hair as a form of youthful defiance), I usually let the wisecracks and the jibes and the jokes roll off.

But then came summer.

I'd forgotten what a pain the posterior it is to have long hair on a hot summer

day (and night).

I'd forgotten how sticky the back of my neck used to get, how the sweat would gather at my brow and drip down across my forehead and how my wet hair would turn into stringy ropes blowing in the breeze, slashing at my eyes and getting into my mouth.

I'd forgotten how my long hair and beard (black back in those days) used to collect sweat (not to mention a bakery-full of bread crumbs, and maybe an insect, rodent or snake ... I think I remember once losing a set of car keys in there), and it would act as a super-insulator to hold in the heat and threaten my entire skull with a spontaneous combustion event of volcanic magnitude.

When the lockdown first started, I was ok with not getting a haircut. Just a few weeks before the cutoff, I'd decided to let my hair grow out just a bit ... maybe even long enough to wear it in a pony tail, something I hadn't done since my oldest daughter's wedding.

And then, when everything shut down, the idea didn't seem like such a great idea anymore ... I mean if everyone was wearing long hair, I would surely have to rebel and get mine cut short if I expected to have my 1968 radical protester license renewed, wouldn't I?

So, it was ok two months ago, when it was cool out, and when it was my idea.

But my hair just kept growing.

And the weather got hotter, and the sweat started dripping into my eyes and down my face and my shirt was soaked from the drips coming off my beard until I was ready to scream.

A neighbor asked my wife why she didn't just cut my hair.

"Because I'm not nuts," she replied.

"The marriage ceremony didn't say anything about haircuts."

So I called the hair salon I've been frequenting for the better part of the last 20 years and was surprised to get an answer considering hair salons hadn't been given the nod to reopen for another week or so.

Liz, the owner, was in the shop making plans for reopening, and she promised me they'd get me in as soon as possible (I'd have to wear a mask in, get my temp taken, answer the routine health questions and sign a form).

"I'll call you in a few days when I can see how the schedule's going to be," she told me.

It was almost a week later, a miserable, hot, sweaty, uncomfortable week later, a week filled with constant references to biblical and historic figures, carnival sideshow performers and even to Yeti, before she called.

"Are you ready?" she inquired innocently. I almost cried. I'd never been more ready for a haircut in my life.

On the morning that I finally got the cut (it reminded me of sheep being shorn on a hot summer day), I ran into half a dozen neighbors on the way home.

And everyone reacted the same way ... and what they said wasn't much different from what I'd been hearing for the past few months. Some offered a sarcastic "Nice haircut," a surprised gasp or an "Oh My God!" comment.

And in response I can only paraphrase another '60s throwback, ... I guess "you won't have Santa Claus to kick around anymore."



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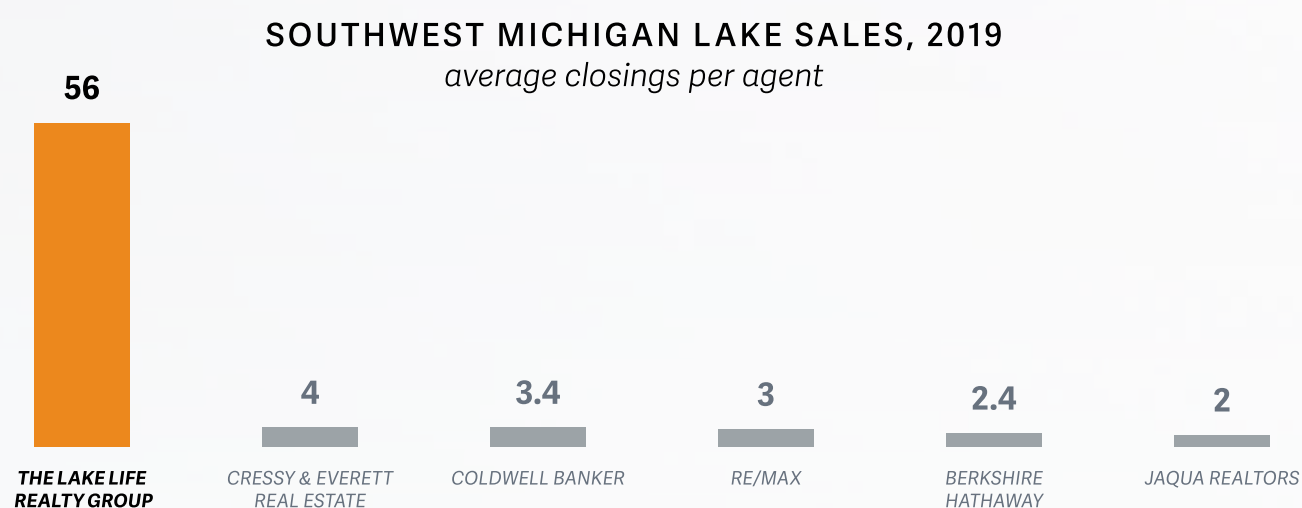
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Information provided by the Southwest Michigan Association of Realtors, with respect to sales of inland lake properties in Cass, Berrien, St Joseph and the Southern half of Van Buren and Kalamazoo Counties, Michigan, from 1.1.19 to 12.31.19. When an agent represents the buyer and seller, 200% credit is granted. Agents with zero lake property sales are not considered in this report, nor are companies with less than \$19 million in lake sales.