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Neighbors is published monthly from March through December.

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

<http://www.cassneighbors.com>
sailorphil@philvitale.com
jack@beanstalk.net

REGIONAL NEWS

Cass Historical Society meeting
The Cass County Historical Society has canceled the Oct. 4 New House fall festival and the Oct. 13 regular meeting. For further information on the society, contact Alen F. Butchbaker, at 260-244-8479.

Cass Library plans Hartley event
The Cass District Library will host a retirement open house in honor of Shirley Hartley on Wednesday, October 28. Congratulate Shirley on her 21 years of service at Cass District Library. The open house will run from 10 – 4 pm at the Edwardsburg Branch, 26745 Church St., Edwardsburg, MI 49112.

St. Joseph County Park hikes
Enjoy the St. Joseph County Parks this fall on a free guided hike to explore our natural world at a different park each week.
Upcoming hikes include:
October 7: Bendix Woods County Park
October 14: Spicer Lake Nature Preserve
October 21: Ferrettie/Baugo Creek County Park
October 28: St. Patrick's County Park
Registration is not required. For

more information or to get directions, call 574-654-3155.

Cass to host Ghouls Night Out
Registration is open for the Cass County Fair's A Ghouls Night Out camping weekend, which will run from Friday, Oct. 9 to Sunday, Oct. 12, with check-in from 2 to 8 p.m. Friday and checkout at noon Sunday. Registration for the weekend is \$70. The weekend will be host to a Halloween costume contest and campsite decorating contest. For more information or to register, visit mycasscountyfair.com or call 445-8265.

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, or household hazardous waste and electronics that have been exposed to radiation.

Candle-light Christmas Parade
Kris Kringle returns to Dowagiac on Friday, December 4, for the Candlelight Christmas Parade, proudly presented by Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital and the Chamber of Commerce. Hear the tolling bell of our Town Crier, inspired by the Victorian-era, and attend live performances at Front and Beeson streets.
While you await the 7 pm grand procession, savor the sweet delights of street vendors. More than 100 parade entries, featuring lighted floats, costumed characters and marching bands, makes this an enchanting evening you'll long remember.
Pre-parade entertainment features Miss Michele & Co., Green Dance Academy, tree-lighting and introduction

of our Grand Marshal and the Lighthouse Choir.
For safety reasons, through-traffic and parking on Front Street closes in the afternoon.

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REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

October 7 - Bendix Wood County
Park hike, 574-654-3155

October 9-12 - Cass County Fair's
A Ghouls Night Out weekend
camp out, register Friday 2 - 8
pm, 445-8265

October 10 - Under the Harvest
Moon Festival, Dowagiac, **can-
celed** due to the pandemic

October 13 - The Cass County
Historical Society meeting **can-
celed** due to the pandemic

October 14 - Spicer Lake Nature
Preserve hike, 574-654-3155

October 21 - Ferrettie/Baugo
Creek County Park hike, 574-
654-3155

October 28 - St. Patrick's County

Park hike, 574-654-3155

October 28 - Shirley Hartley retire-
ment open house 10 am - 4 pm,
Edwardsburg Branch of Cass
District Library.

November 13, 14 - Christmas
Open House Weekend **can-
celed** due to the pandemic

November 28 - Small Business

Saturday, 10 am - 11pm ,
Dowagiac, 782-8212

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

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

Settling into Autumn

by **Jane Boudreau**

Hey Neighbors! It's just me. It feels like I was here just a few weeks ago. And that reminds me of a recent trip to the Rite Aid store in town. With pretty much just that and a grocery store to get provisions, I'm constantly in and out. After the same employee checked out my purchases three days in a row, I laughed and said, "I feel like I'm here every day." She replied with a little sigh, "Yeah, me, too." We then had a good laugh.



Lake life can be slow, especially during the week. I start to notice the predictability. The woman down the street who walks her dog over to the edge of the woods precisely at 4 every afternoon. The people that check their roadside mailboxes within three minutes of the postman's truck leaving. The same early morning joggers who always seem to go by when I'm standing in the garden in my PJ's looking ratty, urging my dogs to get it over with. I love a friendly town, but when I'm looking like what I really look like at 8 a.m., I don't even want a glance much less a wave.

Well, how did I get on that subject? Oh yeah, it's October and everything is getting very quiet. I love to sit outside with Poppy and Layla, knowing in a month or two they will be shivering and want to get out and back in. Not that I need the dogs as an excuse to get outside right now, but I can't walk into the room, without Poppy running to the front door to go out. Back when Milo was still alive, between him and Layla, the outdoor trips lasted forever. Milo lifted his leg on everything, It seemed important to him to save a little bit to get on every tree, bush, birdbath and lawn chair as he possibly could. It's almost like you can't tell when they have finished. This is a fact of life if you are a dog owner. And if you think this is a little too much info, my daughter takes her pup to a dog park in the city. He has developed an unhealthy habit of lifting his leg on people. Yes, people. It must be that vertical factor. Or maybe there aren't enough trees. Being dog lovers, these people haven't reacted badly, but I'm sure they avoid good 'ol Squall as much as they can.

Besides taking the pups out, I love raking leaves, really! Okay, I like using the blower more, but that usually gets my allergies going like crazy. In the city all we have to do is rake the leaves down to the curb, and a big old truck comes by every few days and sucks them up. I'm not a big fan of bagging them. Frankly, I just pray for a westward wind to blow them into the woods. It's a great aerobic exercise that involves the upper body and gets the heart and lungs working harder, thus healthier. October is also an excellent month to plant bulbs for next spring and summer. I add to my tulips and daffodils, and phlox to one of my large borders. You can never have enough of hearty cornflowers, and if you want more of a color selection. You might try ordering through a bulb and seed company. In our area of Michigan, now is the optimal



time too plant, bulbs need about six weeks in the ground before the first frost. You will be so grateful when warm weather arrives next year and you have some pretty little new faces bobbing in your garden!

Nesting inside is fun this time of year. I want to make things pretty and cozy, as I'm going to be stuck looking at it for a good six months. Fall is colorful, our decor is especially beautiful when it picks up some of the rich colors Mother Nature provides outside of our windows. A table set with dishes that don't match, but look festive together is my idea of creativeness and fun. By using mismatched dishes you can never really run out of ideas. Neutral placemats and napkins can be used over and over, they are the backdrop most times. Bringing in natural elements like apples and pumpkins really get that autumn vibe going. And candles, I can never have too many. I like to keep a few scented ones burning here and there, but on your table when you are having a meal, try to use unscented as they don't overwhelm the fragrant smell and taste of your food.



One of the great things we have going for us here in the 'Land of Four Seasons, is that we can change out our clothes much like we do with our home. A cozy throw on the sofa is the equivalent of a snugly sweater on a cold evening. Flannel shirts are comfy and a staple for both men and women. And boots. How I love boots! I've had this pair for about six or seven years. The height is perfect to tuck your jeans in and the heel is about all I can handle without tripping and falling on my face. In the snow and slush, I like my Hunter boots. A little on the expensive size, but they will outlive you. I have a pair of waterproof and super warm Northface boots that feel like slippers. These are basics and will get you through the rain, snow and cold just perfectly. This fall I'm seeing a lot of cardigan sweaters. I really like the versatility in dressing them up with a silky blouse or scarf, or down with a simple tee shirt and jeans. Most of all, you have the option to take it off if you are in a warm room, or put it on if the day or evening gets colder.



Veggie Stuffed Won Tons

These little appetizers are so simple and time saving it's ridiculous, I'm not even going to write up directions. I like to make up my own salsa, and if you'd like to email me, I'll give you my secret recipe! You can also use store bought pico de gallo. Try going Italian style and spice things up with fresh oregano or rosemary and top with shredded mozzarella. I've been lucky in transporting this appetizer to parties by placing them on a platter on which I have a bed of lettuce. This helps keep them from sliding around. Toss a few cherry tomatoes and black olives around to make the tray look festive.

Using a regular size muffin pan, press won ton wrappers in each to make a cup sort of shape. Spray with vegetable oil and bake at 350 degrees for about 7 minutes until lightly browned. Remove and let cool completely. Add your salsa and a slice of fresh mozzarella. I got fancy and sliced the cheese very thin. I then used a teeny little cookie cutter to make little flowers shapes (or clouds as I envision), and placed them on top. Voila, you have turned tomatoes into salsa; totally overdone, overused and hopefully not boring anymore.

This recipe will help you use up the peppers you've grown in your garden or at least can still find at stores pretty fresh and not shipped from far away. And a quick tip, especially if you are making them for company, you can do the filling ahead of time and refrigerate. Enjoy!

Spicy Stuffed Peppers

These were fun to make, and I just made it up as I went along. I had a bit of an uncooked piece of center cut pork roast. I used 1/2 of a piece of chorizo sausage that usually comes in two lengths

per 12 oz. package. You can control the spice when using the Cajun spices and jalapeño peppers. I've also been using farro as a go to for rice as it is slightly lower in carbs and all around healthy.



Ingredients:

- 2 bell peppers, sliced in half and seeds removed
- 1 small piece of pork, about 1 1/3 cup, chopped a little less than the size of a die.
- 3 oz. chorizo sausage, pulled apart into small pieces
- 1/2 cup farro
- 1/2 T canola oil
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 poblano pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 plum tomato, seeded and roughly chopped
- 1 c black beans
- 2-3 T Cajun seasonings
- 1 T oregano,
- 2 c Mexican cheese, divided
- S&P to taste

Directions:

Cook the farro in a good amount of water approximately 20 minutes until tender. Drain and set aside. Meanwhile, sauté the pork cubes in the canola oil over medium heat for about 3 minutes, stirring and tossing occasionally. Add the remaining ingredients including the farro, and 2/3 of the cheese. Cook 5 minutes until well mixed and the flavors start to meld.

Trim the bottom side of the bell pepper very thinly so that they will sit steady in the baking dish. Spoon the sautéed mixture into the four pepper halves, pressing it in firmly. Top with the last bit of cheese. Place the pepper halves in the dish and pour a scant bit of water around them so that they will steam. Cover tightly with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes.

Serves 2 as a main dish, 4 as a side.

Lastly, I wanted to share a stick-to-your-ribs pasta sauce which everyone should have in their repertoire. I use the traditional ingredients and methods, but of course I can't leave well enough alone. I have a secret ingredient I learned from a Canadian friend-cinnamon. Yep. Well obviously it's not a secret anymore. I have to say I was skeptical, but it added a whole new dimension to the sauce. It's a subtle flavor and has a depth that is hard to describe. Not one person who

Continued on next page. See:

JANE

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Medicare plans and the annual election period for 2021

By **Dean Johnson**
Kemner, Iott, Benz Agency

Medicare, Medicare Supplement Policies, Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans are sometime referred to as “Medicare Alphabet Soup.”

The first hurdle many people face with Medicare coverage is simply understanding the various parts and how they fit together to provide the best medical coverage for you.

Original Medicare has two parts; Part A which covers inpatient care and for most people does not have a premium. Part B covers outpatient care and for most people it has an \$144.60 monthly premium for 2020, this premium could be lower or higher depending upon your income. This monthly premium will be deducted from your social security benefits or if you are not receiving social security benefits, you will be billed quarterly by Medicare.

Medicare Prescription Drug coverage is provided by insurance companies. These Plans are known as Medicare Part D. From the list of the drug formulary approved by Medicare, the insurance companies must offer at least two drugs for each medical condition. Each insurance company will publish their own drug formulary. These formularies will vary and the co-payments you pay out of pocket will vary as well as the premiums will vary. The average premium for 2020 was about \$33.00 per month. In order to decide what drug plan offers the most savings for you and covers your drugs, your insurance agent is able to provide you with a report showing what plan

would save you the most money.

Medicare has deductibles and co-payments that can quickly add up. For example, Part A for your inpatient services pays 80 percent for the approved Medicare procedures and has a \$1,408 deductible for each admittance in 2020.

Part B for your outpatient services pays 80 percent for the approved Medicare procedures and has an annual deductible of \$198.00 in 2020.

Insurance companies offer a Medicare Supplement Plan or Medigap Plan to pay for some or all of the deductibles and co-payments not paid by Medicare. Medicare has approved plans referred to by the letters A through N. The premiums will vary from Plan to Plan based on the coverages, age and location. In our area Plans F and G seem to be the most popular plans. If you are 65 years or older and apply for one of these plans when you are first eligible for Medicare, the insurance company must accept you and can not charge an additional premium for pre-existing conditions.

Remember if you have Medicare because of a Disability and are under 65 years old, some areas of the country will not have a Medicare Supplement Policy to offer you, however you would be eligible for a Medicare Advantage Plan.

Medicare Advantage Plans are known as Medicare Part C. The difference is that rather than adding a Medicare Supplement Policy and a Medicare Part D Policy with Original Medicare, the Medicare Advantage Plans replaces the coverage of a Medicare Supplement Policy and Medicare Part D policy and pays instead of Medicare for your Part A and Part B services and usually your Part D services. You must be enrolled in

Part A and Part B of original Medicare to qualify for a Medicare Advantage Plan. These Medicare Advantage Plan must cover all Part A and Part B medical procedures approved by Medicare. These plans with Part D coverage will have their own Drug Formulary. Additionally, these plans can cover other services not covered by Original Medicare, including services for hearing, dental and vision as well as fitness club membership and allowances to purchase over-the-counter products.

Medicare Advantage Plans usually have medical services covered by health-care networks (similar to employee group health plans) such as a PPO's or HMO's. In our area the PPO networks are much larger and give you more choices for you to choose providers than the HMO networks in our area, which are much smaller and more limited. The networks in our area have been very stable, meaning that the providers are staying in the networks for long periods of time.

What can I do during the Annual Election Period (AEP) starting October 15 through December 7?

1. If you have original Medicare with a Medicare Supplement Policy and Part D, you can change your Part D to another Part D; or you could enroll in a Medicare Advantage with a Part D for an effective date of January 01.

2. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan with a Part D, you could enroll in a different Medicare Advantage Plan with a Part D.

3. If you never had a Part D plan, you could enroll in a Part D plan with an effective date of January 01. You may have to pay a penalty, usually about 40

cents per month for each month you were eligible to enroll and did not enroll.

4. If you only had original Medicare, you could enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan or you could enroll in a Medicare Supplement Policy, however the Medicare Supplement policy would be medically underwritten and you could be declined based on your health issues. However, the Medicare Advantage plan is a guarantee issue policy, meaning no medical underwritten.

In summary, remember Medicare Advantage Plans have smaller premiums than Medicare Supplement Policies, but require co-payments when receiving medical services, where as the Medicare Supplement policies will cover most if not all of your costs for your medical services. The average monthly premium for Medicare Supplement Policies in our area in 2019 was \$152 monthly. The average premium for the Medicare Advantage Plan in our area vary from \$0 to \$74 monthly. The \$0 plans are usually Medicare Advantage Plans without Part D coverage or special needs plans. Please do not rely exclusively on TV commercials for Medicare information, that is an area where a lot of people make wrong or bad decisions based on limited information. It is however, a time to do business with people you know and trust so you can receive good information to make a good decision. We are here in the community and look forward to working with you.

Dean R. Johnson
djohnson@kemneriottbenz.com
269-445-2425
Kemner Iott Benz Agency
Cassopolis, Michigan

JANE

Continued from previous page

has had my sauce has identified this ingredient. It's sort of like nutmeg in a white sauce, or cardamom in a dessert. It enhances, but it's hard to put your finger on. Enough said, here ya go:

2 cloves garlic finely chopped
2 28 oz. cans diced tomatoes
1 T dried fennel
2 T dried Italian seasoning
1 T cinnamon
Pinch of S&P
1 pound cooked spaghetti
1/2 cup reserved water from cooked spaghetti



Jane's Bolognese Sauce

Ingredients:

1 pound Italian sausage
2 T butter
1 medium yellow onion
2 carrots thinly sliced
1 stalk of celery thinly sliced

Directions:

Brown sausage in a large, deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat about 5 minutes, stirring often. Remove to a colander to drain. In the same pan add the butter and saute the veggies. When somewhat soft add the canned tomatoes and remaining seasonings. Simmer on medium heat with the pot lit



slightly tilted to let out a bit of steam, 1 hour, stirring every now and then and scraping the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. After 1 hour most of the liquid from the tomatoes should be evaporated. Add 1/2 cup of the water in which you cooked the spaghetti ... this will not add anything except starch to bind everything together. Arrange spaghetti on plates and top with sauce. I served this with crusty bread and butter. This makes a huge amount ... could easily serve 6. I love the leftovers! Remember that the sauce is going to take an hour not counting the prep -- you do not want to be surprised if you decide to make this a half hour before dinnertime! (I hate recipes like that). Enjoy!

And in closing ... are the pumpkins, pansies and mums not the best part of October? I love them. I love to have

them in abundance. My home in Chicago has your typical walk-up porch and I always go to town making it look fun; pots of flowers on every step in the summer, lanterns and potted evergreens in the winter ... but the very best is fall. Look at this color. And out on the lawn, tons of colorful leaves. And I mean tons ... most times I just wait for them to blow away.

See you in November!

Jane Boudreau is a writer, blogger and newspaper columnist on Diamond Lake and in Chicago. She has another place in the mountains of NC, and this often causes her confusion about which state and time zone she is in. You can reach her at blndy9@yahoo.com.

OUR CHILDREN

Supporting students at home

by **SANDY FLEMING**

Whether you chose in-person school, virtual classes, or homeschooling this year, your children need your support in lots of ways, maybe even more than usual. I wanted to spend a little time sharing some great tools that you can use to help bridge learning gaps between school curriculum and getting the work done at home. No matter what their ages are or what classes they need your help, you can come to the rescue. Don't throw up your hands in despair next time they want or need your help. Just check out some of these great resources.

Staying Organized

The first trick to managing online learning, no matter what the circumstances, is to stay very, very organized. This means that you have a master list of important email addresses, websites, user names, and passwords for each child. Don't rely on the device's memory...if you have a master list written down somewhere, your student will be able to log on from nearly any device at any time. There will be no excuse of "I can't find my password" or "I don't know the address for my class page."

Teach your children how to use your browser's address bar to properly type in a website, too. Many kids, for whatever reason, are convinced if they type the first few letters into a Google search page, the site they want will magically appear. While this method can work most of the time, it is not reliable.

Keep in touch with your student's teachers. Be sure you know class policies about missed or late work, absenteeism, and so forth. If you are using an online learning environment, what is the policy if there are tech problems that prevent logging on or turning in work on time? What happens if your Internet or the needed website goes down? How can you access your students' grades and communication portal for the school or program?

Non-Digital Resources

No Internet connection is no excuse not to help your kids. One of my favorite tools is absolutely off-line and old-school. A few publishers got really, really smart, and created "cheat sheets" for nearly all middle school and high school subjects, and even a few for elementary grades. There are grammar ones, math sets, and even science and social studies. My favorites are laminated and printed on card stock, and they fold up.

There are two brands that I really like: SparkCharts and QuickStudy. You can purchase these resources online through Amazon, the publishers' websites, or other retail outlets for only a couple of dollars each. You can also buy the physical versions at large book stores (like Barnes and Noble) and your favorite educational supply store (like United Art in Mishawaka for my local friends).

Each subject is crammed with the bare basics of important concepts, formulas, and labeled examples in some of the teensiest print that is still seeable by my bifocals. For example, the

Algebra I chart goes over absolute value, how to graph points, rules for exponents, linear equations, roots and radicals, polynomials, word problems, and all those properties summed up nice and neat. All those formulas like for area of polygons are in the geometry version. In other words, it's like having all the info for the final exam tucked onto the sheet and at your fingertips.

These are perfect for those of us who actually had these classes once upon a time, but the details have been lost in the mists. Usually, all it takes is a quick glance at the relevant section, and you'll be in a position to help your student. They're inexpensive, they don't take up much space, and they cram a year's worth of information into a handy guide that you'll use again and again.

Math Resources

We'll start here because math is probably the most intimidating topic in most households. When it comes to math, YouTube is your best friend. Get the name of the skill or concept that you need help with, from long division to solving simultaneous equations, and enter it into the search bar. You'll find a wealth of videos that explain everything, complete with illustrations. Many were made by teachers for just your situation. And if the first one or two don't meet your needs, just try another. There are loads of good ones out there. If you find a presenter that is easy for you to understand, who explains things in just the right way for your student, or whose style is good for everyone, be sure to bookmark the channel and write down the name (in case you need to access it on another device).

There are apps and websites that will show you step-by-step solutions to nearly any kind of math problem, as well. While I don't recommend giving these directly to your student, keep the information in your own back pocket so you can take a quick peek and better understand how to guide your child to the correct answer or check your child's work. There's one called PhotoMath and one called MathWay that have versions for both iOS and Android devices, and if you are using a computer, try Quickmath.com and Microsoft Math Solver.

Also, there are some fantastic sites dedicated to teaching higher math skills. If you or your child need a quick refresher on solving two-step equations or a calculus concept, check out <http://purplemath.com> and <http://hippocampus.org>. These sites are set up like textbooks, but you can also search based on your concept needed. There are videos explaining nearly anything that will be needed in middle school, high school, and early college math.

Got younger students who need some drill and practice? You can print out an endless supply of worksheets from the Internet. Check out <http://mathaids.com> and <http://math-drills.com>. Some of my other favorite resources are <http://homeschoolmath.net> and <http://dadsworksheets.com>. You will find free printables on various levels of computation, story problems, and a whole lot more. Want some



online math fact practice? Visit <http://xtramath.org>. After a quick pretest, kids will get guided practice to build fluency and accuracy on basic math facts.

And don't forget the fun! <http://coolmath.com> and <http://coolmath4kids.com> are two great sites loaded with math games of various sorts. The kids will hardly know they are practicing, since they will be having tons of fun, and best of all, the resources are free.

Reading Resources

When your child needs support with reading, the Internet is a huge library of resources. You can find libraries at your fingertips, including <http://epic.com> and <http://Internetarchive.org>. Your local library probably subscribes to a site called <https://www.overdrive.com/>, too, which is a fabulous digital library and all you need is a library card. If you're looking for older literature, check out <http://gutenberg.org>, where they've digitized classic literature from prior to about 1930 or so. One of my favorite free sites is <http://readtheory.org> where you can have your child complete a quick online assessment, then the system automatically assigns reading passages and questions at just the right level. There's a nearly endless supply of these, as well, so it will grow with your student and provide appropriate practice for years and years. And if you want still more grade level passages with questions, check out <http://read-works.org>.

Another really handy set of resources are the readability tools that are available online. "Readability" is the fancy teacher way of measuring the difficulty level of a text or a book. If you need to find out the reading grade level (or a host of other types of difficulty measures) of a particular book, check out <http://arbookfind.com> and <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/bookwizard/>. You can also actually check readability on your own using sites such as <https://readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php>. Just type sections of text (or copy and paste them) into the site and it will spit out various measures of how challenging the text is to read. You can check the reading level of text on many word processors, as well, to judge the level of text that you've written. On Word, check under the Review section, the option that allows you to do a grammar and spelling check. You might need to toggle a setting to get it to appear, but trust me, it's really there. If you use another word processor, it's likely to be somewhere near

the grammar check section. These tools use a method called Flesh-Kincaid because it is based on combination of word length and sentence length, which are easy for computers to calculate. Be warned that they may not be as accurate for grade levels below three, though.

More General Tips and Tricks to Support Your Student

Need grammar and writing help? My first stop is always the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html. This site is perfect whether you need to remember how to punctuate complex sentences, format a bibliography, or even need help showing your child how to organize writing effectively. Other universities also have online writing labs, as well, so if you don't find what you need here, be sure to check them out.

<http://quill.org> is a wonderful resource for writing instruction and exercises. It picks up at about grade 5ish, and moves through the skills needed up through high school. Best of all, it's free! There's a free grammar checker at <https://www.gingersoftware.com/grammarcheck> if your student needs some proofreading help.

Finally, here are a couple of my favorite tricks to help students when they are doing online research for school projects. First of all, don't assume that they understand how to use Google and its kin correctly. I have seen dozens of students who believe that if you type your search term into the bar, you can just copy and paste the summary for notes. They never even click the links to the webpages! So please watch the research process and nip that habit in the bud as soon as possible.

If your student is younger, or has some challenges with reading, get into the habit of adding the words "for kids" to the end of search terms. This will bring up sites that have lower reading levels, like <http://ducksters.com> and <http://kids.kiddle.com>, both of which have extensive libraries on science and social studies topics that will help your student do the basic research needed. When source reliability is a concern, you can help students limit their searches to sites that schools believe are appropriate (usually sites ending with .gov and .edu as well as some .org sites) by typing that way into the search bar in Google. All you need to do is type your search term, then add "site:.gov" or "site:.org" to the end of it. That will bring up only relevant sites that are in those domains. It's a huge help for students who are learning how to choose reliable sources for their research.

Put the power of today's learning resources to work for your student!

Of course these represent just a small sampling of the amazing resources I've uncovered over the years as I've been tutoring and providing educational consultation for families locally and globally. If you need a personalized or more individualized consultation or assistance program, please feel free to reach out to me at sfleming1235@gmail.com.

FIELD TRIP



Ok, so we figured that since the fish probably wouldn't be able to give us Covid so Mr. Bill, my wife and a couple friends decided to drive to Big Chetac Lake in northwest Wisconsin for a fishing trip. The weather was horrid but we stopped along the way to visit the Stone Guardians in Rockford IL, at historic Galena, IL, the Leinenkugel Lodge & Brewery in



Chippewa Falls, WI, several wineries, an Irish pub, and a couple of other places before fishing ... then we took the SS Badger Ferry across Lake Michigan to get home. Despite the rumors, we caught a lot of big fish, we had a few drinks and a great time, we wore our masks and washed our hands a lot, no one was seriously hurt and there were no charges filed ...







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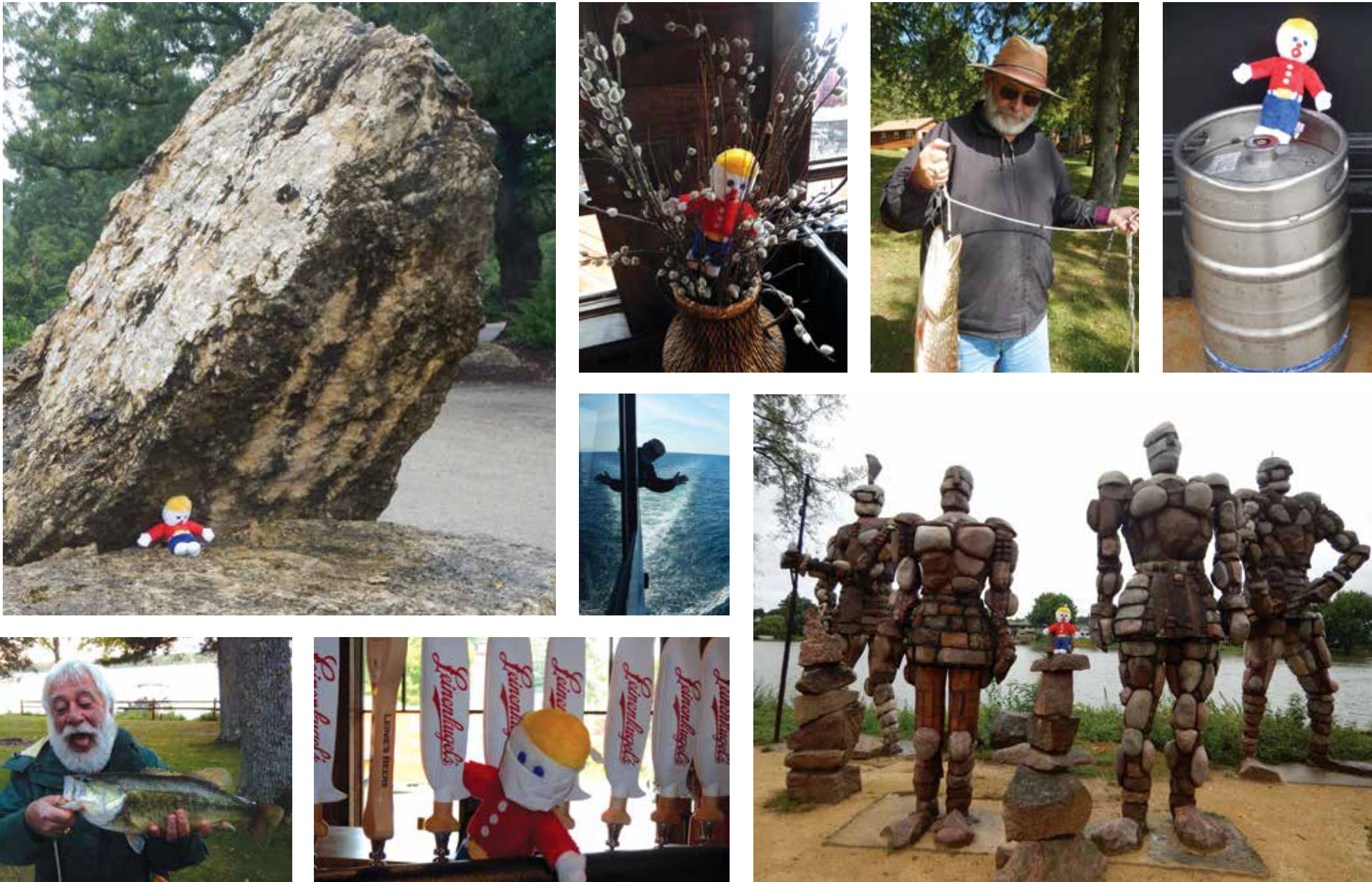
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HISTORIC POSTCARDS

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

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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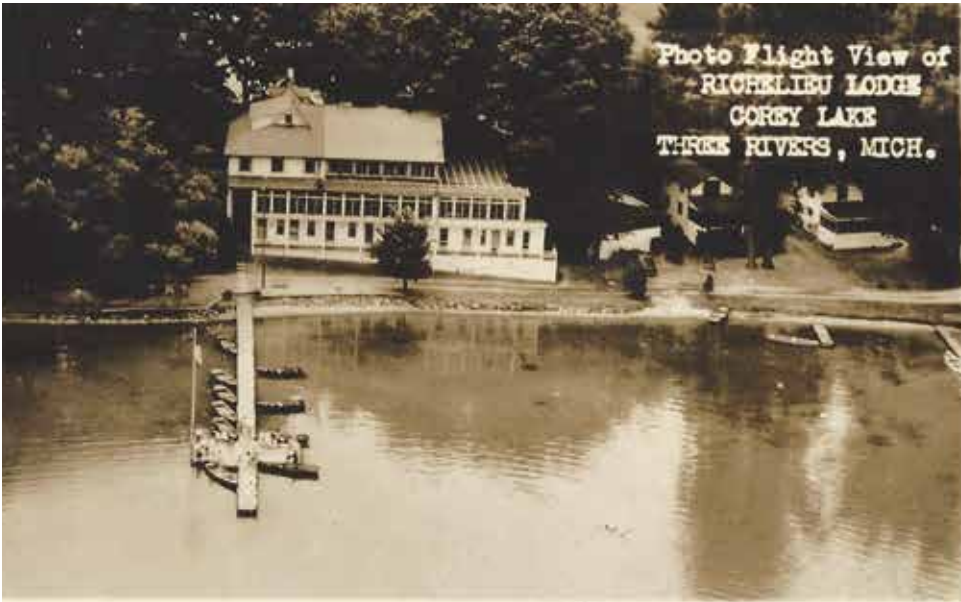
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HISTORIC POSTCARDS



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NATURE NOTES

Autumn migration underway

Provided by Cass District Library
Local History Branch

With a height of 18 inches and wingspan of over 2 feet, American avocets are among the most striking shorebirds that regularly visit Southwest Michigan.

They are also one of the first bird species to migrate southward from their breeding grounds in western North America, towards their wintering grounds of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, with the earliest southbound individuals detected in late June, but most often they are seen migrating along our beaches during the July 4th holiday.

Avocet migration peaks during August in our region and thus Michael Shelton of Stevensville was able to take photos of three avocets on August 11 as they foraged for food along the beach at Tiscornia Park.

Terry Moran of Watervliet Township photographed an imperial moth at his home back in late June. This species can be found over much of the eastern United States, but reaches the northern limits of its range in southern Michigan, although there are scattered records north to Grand Traverse County.

Imperial moths in Southwestern Michigan will eat the leaves of basswood, cedar, elm, hickory, maple, sassafras and walnut trees. In the southeastern US where the species is more numerous it also feeds on the leaves of the bald cypress tree.

Brad Anderson of Bridgman ran into a female pileated woodpecker back in June at Warren Dunes State Park, where the species has been known to nest. The female pileated is identified by the fact she has no red "mustache" which is present on the male. Another diagnostic feature is the lack of red on the forehead, also being present on the male but not the female.

When this female was photographed back in June, she likely had a clutch of eggs on a nest which the male was incubating. Both male and female woodpeckers incubate eggs and help care for the young. The young likely fledged the nest in July and as of this writing in late August, are still being cared for by their parents. Young pileated woodpeckers hatched this year will stay with their parents through the fall or early winter before going out on their own.

Peg Pinkowski of Baroda Township snapped a photo of our most common snake, the garter snake, on August 24 as it crossed the road in front of her property. Garter snakes are non-venomous but will bite if picked up. They eat a variety of small mammals, birds and even other snakes. Garter snakes are found among forests, old fields, meadows and prairies.

Bald eagles are on the move and passing through Southwest Michigan on their way to the southern US for the winter. On September 2, Brad Anderson of Bridgman witnessed two adult bald eagles flying southward at Warren Dunes State Park. I saw another adult, southbound bald eagle on September 6 in Royalton Township. These migrating bald eagles are likely individuals that spent the nesting season in northern Ontario, having started their fall migration a few weeks earlier than those that have nested in Michigan.

In Berrien County, bald eagle migration peaks in October, however the species is present in winter along open waterways such as the St. Joseph River and along the Lake Michigan shoreline where they prey on fish.



Top left and center: American avocets on August 11, 2020 at Tiscornia Park, St. Joseph by Michael Shelton.

Top right: Imperial moth in late June 2020 in Watervliet Township, Terry Moran.

Second row left: Female pileated woodpecker at Warren Dunes State Park on June 16, Brad Anderson.

Second row right: Garter Snake, August 24, 2020, Singer lake Road, Baroda Township, Peg Pinkowski.

Third row left: One of two adult bald eagles migrating together on September 2 over Warren Dunes State Park, by Brad Anderson.

Third row right: Broad-winged hawk in flight over Warren Dunes State Park on August 23.

Bottom left: Red knot on September 7, at Tiscornia Park in St. Joseph by Michael Shelton of Stevensville.

Bottom center: Olive-sided flycatcher on August 15 at Warren Dunes State Park by Brad Anderson. This long distant migrant nests in Ontario and northern Michigan and winters in South America.

Up until the mid-1990s the bald eagle was considered an uncommon spring and fall migrant in Berrien County. Over the last 25 years the bald eagle has continued to reoccupy much of its former nesting range in the US, including Southwest Michigan. It now nests in every county in the southwest part of the state, though still quite rare as a breeding species in Berrien County.

Anderson reported at least two broad-winged hawks at Warren Dunes State Park on August 23. The broad-winged hawk is in the family of hawks called buteos which also includes our common red-tailed hawk.

Broad-winged hawks prefer wood-

lands, as opposed to the red-tailed hawk that likes open spaces. Broad-winged hawks spend the summer months over most of the eastern US, including all of Michigan, however the species is found less frequently in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula where there is less acreage of wooded areas.

Broad-winged hawks spend the winter months in South America. Fall migrants from Ontario and northern Michigan begin to appear locally by late August, with peak migration in

Continued on next page. See:

NATURE

LOCAL HISTORY

Cass County man was a Shiloh battle casualty

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

Not much is known about the life of Isaac N. Tewksberry (last name also spelled Tewksbury), of Cass County, Michigan other than he served as a Private in Company F of the 12th Michigan Infantry, organized at Niles, Michigan.

Tewksbury Enlisted in Company F, 12th Michigan Infantry on November 23, 1861, in Jefferson Township, Cass County, Michigan for 3 years age 45. Mustered December 19, 1861. Died April 8, 1862 of wounds received in action on April 6, 1862. Buried at National Cemetery at Shiloh, Tennessee. Section G. Grave number 2082.

There are no obituaries for Isaac Tewksberry among extant local newspa-

pers, but he is listed among the Shiloh battle casualty list in the Cass County Republican (published at Dowagiac), May 1, 1862 edition.

In the 1860 US Census, "Isaac Tewksbury" is listed as living in Niles, Berrien County (age 46), occupation was "cooper" (barrel maker). In 1860 Isaac's household consisted of Eliza A. (wife, age 33); Rollin (son, age 12); Amada E. (daughter, age 10); Charles (son, age 6); and Albert E. (son, age 2). Because both Isaac and Eilza were born outside Michigan (Vermont and New York respectively) and all of the children were born in Michigan we can deduce that Isaac and Eliza came to Michigan during the late 1840s.

In "History of Cass County, Michigan" by Matthews (1882), it lists Lizzie E. Tewksberry as joining the Cass

County Pioneer Society in 1877, having emigrated to Ontwa Township, but her date of settlement in the county is not given.

Eliza ("Lizzie") died in 1905 and a short obit appeared in the Edwardsburg Argus of September 7, 1905:

"Mrs. L. E. Tewksbury, formerly of this place, died at her home in Niles last week, after an illness of several months, in the 78th year of her age. She was born in Niagara county, N.Y., Oct. 11th, 1827. Her husband was a member of the 12th Michigan Infantry during the civil war, and was killed on a southern battlefield. The deceased is survived by a son, Roland, of South Bend, and a daughter, Amy, of Niles. The funeral was held at 11 o'clock, last Friday, at the M.E. church, Rev. H.L. Potter, of Dowagiac officiating."



Isaac N. Tewksberry of Company F, 12th Michigan Infantry, mortally wounded on April 6, 1862 at Battle of Shiloh. Photo courtesy of Shiloh Discussion Group/Stan Hutson.

NATURE

Continued from previous page

September.

Shorebirds from the Arctic Circle are passing through our region. A red knot was discovered on Labor Day at Tiscornia Park in St. Joseph by Mike Mahler, naturalist at Sarett Nature Center. Michael Shelton of Stevensville was able to snap a photo for this column!

The red knots migrate through Southwest Michigan during August and September, en route to their wintering grounds of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.

During the non-breeding season the species plumage is a mottled gray, but in

the spring adults appear with a noticeable reddish chest, the coloration resembling a robin.

Southbound songbird migration peaks in September, particularly long distance neo-tropical species that must vacate the north before their food supply, being insects, are killed off by frosts.

One early songbird to arrive here in fall from points north is the olive-sided

flycatcher. It is one of the larger species in the flycatcher family and nests to our north in coniferous forests and bogs. It may arrive here in mid-August on its way to South America where it winters.

The olive-sided flycatcher is known for perching atop dead trees, often called dead snags by birders, where it may be photographed, as in this case.

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THE LAST WORD

Autumn and winter and snow and ice, yikes



I walked in the rain this morning. It was a cold rain that drizzled on me, my wife and our dog as we slowly slogged past the empty, rutted fields that were packed with brown, ripe soybeans just a week ago. It was the kind of rain that soaks into your bones. The kind of rain that makes your fingertips sting. The kind of rain that drips into your psyche and makes you forget that just a couple of weeks ago the sweat was dripping off your forehead.

The kind of rain that makes you realize summer's over.

The kind of rain that makes you think about autumn and winter.

Yikes.

Autumn.

And winter.

And snow and ice.

Yikes.

Just Saturday we started our fall chores in earnest. Blew the leaves off the deck for the first time (of what will probably be a jillion times before I'm done). Started letting the air out of the inflatable rafts the kids used all summer. Took our sailboats out of the water, tarped their decks, stowed the sails, packed some moth balls and dryer sheets in the hulls to keep the critters out in the winter, and generally made them ready for what's coming, that thing that everyone's trying to avoid talking about.

But when it's 55 and raining and the September calendar page is ready to fall onto the floor, you just can't NOT talk

about it.

Ok, I live in Michigan year round (no snow-bird winters in Florida for me), and I've endured more falls and winters than most people I know (I got that distinction by mysteriously getting older than most people I know), so you'd think I'd just get over it and accept the fact that it's here.

But every year when the reality dawns on me that autumn is here and winter is just around the cosmic corner, I get a little freaked out.

Autumn means a lot around here, (even if you're not getting planning to go out into the woods and shoot Bambi or decorate your yard with a thousand pumpkins and giant, scary, Halloweenie blow-up zombies).

At my house autumn means a flurry of activity to stow what gets stowed, to cover everything that stays out and to batten down anything that might blow away before the north wind blows in from the UP and blows everything away before freezing whatever is left into a giant, ugly-colored yard sicle.

At my house autumn means untold millions of brightly colored leaves, some the size of interstellar UFOs will fall out of my neighbors' trees and pile themselves into soggy messes in the yards and demand that I break out the rakes, leaf bags, blowers and make room for them to sit in the shed next to the snow brushes, shovels and blowers for the next big disappointment of a season.

But the worst of all is that at my house autumn means there won't be any more toodling the afternoons away on the pontoon boat, no more corn so sweet you can almost hear your teeth decaying, no more happy hour with the neighbors on

the deck, and the nastiest of all, no more of those delicious home-grown tomatoes, zucchini and banana peppers that magically showed up every weekend this summer at my house.

I suppose there's a logical explanation for their appearance. No sleuth am I, but I did notice that they seemed to show up on the mornings after my trunk-slammng neighbor (who has a large garden at his home in Indy) got to the lake at the end of every week.

But who knows for sure? I do know that I'll miss the neighbors, and it seems decidedly unfair that I have to trade those delightful veggies for ...

... Autumn.

And winter.

And snow and ice.

Yikes.

Nostalgia-ing back after my cold, damp walk, I remember that it was a hot but pretty uneventful summer, with nearly everything canceled by the pandemic except staying home and staying away from other people ... especially the cootie-carrying kind who might sneeze an icky Covid bomb at you.

I learned a lot of things during the summer incarceration period ... like how annoying Zoom meetings can be and how a lot of people prefer to not actually communicate face to face anyway.

And like how annoying television has become, with shouting on commercials, insipid programming, offensive political ads and inane, fan-less sporting events.

And like how hard it is to complete what were once normal, everyday activities, like getting a haircut, renewing a passport or drivers license or dropping by the grocery store to pick up a gallon of

milk and a package of toilet paper (I still am baffled by the whole toilet paper thing).

And like how I now need to have spare face masks in all my cars just in case I forgot to grab one on the way to Wally World or Maynards, and the face mask Nazis at the front door want to charge me for yet another new one before they'll let me share their stale air.

I guess I can take at least a bitter-sweet consolation in the fact that around here autumn, at least, is brief, quickly sliding from pumpkins and apple cider, brisk, crisp days, cool nights and brilliantly colors splashed across the woods right into the next season, bland and monochromatic as that is sure to be.

And I guess I can still silently hope that we are yet to see at least a few days of Native American summer (the new, politically correct term for warm days after a frost), even though today's rain doesn't promote a lot of optimism.

In fact, as my sodden hair dries while I type, the coming seasons look pretty bleak.

Pandemic resurgence. Football without fans. Forced family fun in full face mask. Christmas over-shopping and the dreaded elevator Christmas music, fake Santas and the reincarnation of Clarence getting his wings when a bell rings.

Leaf raking, snow shoveling, wet socks, layered clothing, frostbit ears and slush ponds filled with frigid, dark water.

Yikes.

Autumn.

And Winter.

And snow and ice.

Yikes.

Happy fall everyone.

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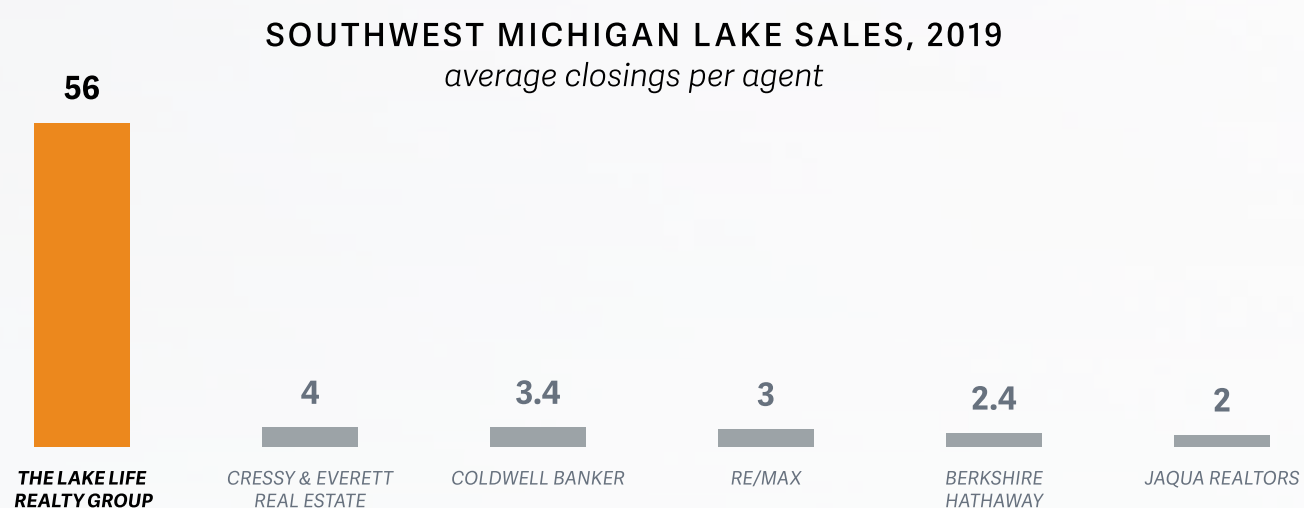
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PEGGY@THELAKELIFE.COM

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