

# Neighbors

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OCTOBER 2022

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A regional newspaper serving Cass County, Michigan and the surrounding area, and distributed at homes and businesses in Dowagiac, Cassopolis, Edwardsburg, Vandalia, Jones, Marcellus, Decatur, Union, Sister Lakes, and Three Rivers, with mail delivery at homes on 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: (Old) Guy's Fishing Trip up North, Wisconsin Pages 7, 8**



# REGIONAL NEWS

## Annual Holiday Bazaar

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church in Edwardsburg will host an annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, November 5, from 8 am – 2 pm at the Church Social Hall, 24832 US-12 East, Edwardsburg, MI 49112.

The event plans to feature over 80 talented crafters, homemade baked goods, unique gifts & seasonal decorations.

The first 250 visitors have chances for door prizes. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks will be available for purchase.

For more information contact: Amy Traxler (574) 329-3097 or Laurel Ward (574) 855-8829.

## Sandhill Crane races October 15

Scott Wyman, Director of Cass County Parks, announced that Dr. Lawless Park will host the 14th running of the Sandhill Crane All Trail races on Saturday, October 15. Races scheduled are a ½ marathon, a 10k run & walk, a 5k run & walk, and a kids' fun run. There will be no parking fee that day for participants.

Ron Gunn is directing the event, which includes really cool laser carved wood awards for the top two finishers and medals for third in each age group. Racers will also receive dynamite custom long sleeve performance t-shirts for all finishers registering by October 8 (to guarantee a shirt on race day). After October 8, sign up will only be online or in person between 8-8:45 am on race day. The event kicks off with the ½ marathon race at 9 am and is followed by the 10k run & walk at 9:30 am, the 5k run & walk at 10 am and the kids' fun run at

11 am.

There will be water and sport drinks on the course and a re-hydration station at the finish featuring fruit, sport drinks, Popsicles, potato chips, homemade cookies and water. There will also be a music DJ at the start and finish, along with two music stations on the course.

The race benefits the Dowagiac Rotary Club and the Cass County Parks. All finishers from Cass County, Niles and the Granger area will have their names listed in local papers.

Interested people can register on-line at: RunSignUp.com (scroll or search for "Sandhill Crane"); or manually on entry forms located throughout the area or found at CairnStoneAdventureTours.com. Race day sign up in person from 8 – 8:45 am. Cost for the event is \$25 for early entry before October 8. After October 8 the cost is \$30.

## Cass County Historical Society

On Tuesday, October 18 the Cass County Historical monthly program event will be at The Dowagiac Area History Museum. The speaker will be museum director Steve Arseneau. His program will be The Orphan Train. The program is free and open to the public. There will be a business meeting at 6:30 pm with the program beginning at 7.

## Edwardsburg Museum news

Steve Arseneau, director of the Dowagiac Area History Museum, will speak at 7 pm, Thurs., Oct. 20, at the Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum. He will discuss the first orphan train and the legacy of that movement. Homeless, orphaned children were sent

to Dowagiac in 1853 on what became known as the Orphan Train. Dowagiac's local museum has made this project a focal point in its work and displays. Over 75 years, more than 250,000 children eventually were sent from New York to the Western United States for adoption by families.

## Beckwith Theatre Company

The Beckwith Theatre Company will present Lady Windermere's Fan by Oscar Wilde on October 7 & 8 at 7:30 pm, October 9 at 2 pm, October 14 & 15 at 7:30 pm and October 16 at 2 pm.

Additional performances to be determined at a later date are scheduled on December 2 & 3 at 7:30 pm, December 4 at 2 pm, December 9 & 10 at 7:30 pm, and December 11 at 2 pm.

For more information see <https://www.beckwiththeatre.com/>.

## Rock the Block

The Rock the Block Summer Concert Series at Stone Lake Beach, hosted by Cassopolis Main Street and sponsored by Sunset Coast Provisions will feature the following events:

On October 8 bands will be 4-7 pm, Zach Schick; 8-11 pm • Memphis Underground (featuring Cassopolis Jazz Band). Food Trucks will be Wood, Stock, & Grill (@ Sinclair Station), Curly Q's BBQ (@ Beach) and Taqueria Don Chepe (@ Beach). Beer Garden, sponsored by AEP Foundation from 4 pm-midnight @ the Sinclair Station (200 S Broadway). 21+ only, valid ID required. Beer, specialty mixed drinks, frozen cocktails. Cash & card accepted, \$5/drink. Tap takeover Project Graduation. All beer garden tips

will be donated to their program.

## Deer management at park

St. Joseph County Parks will implement a deer management program at Bendix Woods County Park in New Carlisle on November 19 and 20. Bendix Woods County Park will be closed to the public on these dates.

Three hunters, plus one alternate will be selected by a lottery. Hunters must possess an Indiana Bonus Antlerless License. The deadline for applications is October 7. A mandatory meeting with park staff is required. Meeting will be held October 26 at 6 pm at the Bendix Woods Nature Center.

More information and Application Forms are available at [www.sjcparks.org](http://www.sjcparks.org)

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# REGIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

October 1-29: **Collectibles, Knick Knacks, Doo Dads. Oh, My!** (display). Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum

October 15 - **Sandhill Crane Half Marathon**, Dr. T.K. Lawless Park

October 20: **Steve Arseneau, presentation on Orphan Train**, 7 p.m. Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum

October 22 - **Harvest Fest/Trunk or Treat**, Dr. T.K. Lawless Park

October 31: **Witches on the Porch, Halloween**, Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum.

### Cass District Library

**Infant and Preschool Storytime**, September 12 - November 17. This program provides opportunities to have social interaction and to develop a love of reading. Each week will feature new stories, crafts and activities centered around a theme. Mondays - 10 am, Mason/Union Branch, Infant Storytime (Birth - 2 years); Tuesdays - 11 am, Howard Branch & Edwardsburg Branch, Preschool Storytime (3 - 5 years); Wednesdays - 11 am, Mason/Union Branch, Preschool Storytime (3 - 5 years); Thursdays - 11 am, Main Branch, Preschool Storytime (3 - 5 years)

Week of October 3 - **Teentober Magnetic Bookmarks**, Howard Branch. Create a personalized magnetic bookmark! A variety of vinyl art stickers, markers, colorful cardstock, and magnets will be provided. Available while supplies last!

October 12 - 6:30 pm - **My Life at Fort St. Joseph Presentation\***, Local History Branch. Dr. Nassaney will discuss his long journey in the discovery, investigation, and interpretation of one of the most important European settlements in the western Great Lakes region. Space is limited and registration is required. Call 269-357-7823 to register.

October 19 - 21 - **Teentober Metal Jewelry Stamping**, Howard Branch. Create a unique and personalized jewelry piece using a metal washer and cord! Participants will learn how to make a custom

stamped jewelry piece with metal blanks. Available while supplies last!

Week of October 24 - **Fall Character Magnets**, Howard Branch. Pick up a fun craft kit to create a fall character magnet! Take home kits are available while supplies last.

October 25 - 6 pm - **Lost on Lake Michigan**: The Wreck of the SS Chicora, Main Branch. Join us to learn of a fateful decision that doomed a ship and its crew presented by Robert Myers, Director of History Programming for the Historical Society of Michigan.

October 28 - 6 pm - **Library Spooktacular**, Main Branch. Calling all ghouls! Join us for Library Spooktacular at the Main Branch. There will be trick-or-treating and an outdoor movie on the back lawn of the library. Wear your favorite costume, collect treats and stay for the show! Outdoor activities are weather permitting and will be moved indoors if conditions are not favorable. Local agencies and organizations that are interested in having a table and passing out candy at this event are encouraged to call 574-314-6454 for details.

### Dowagiac District Library

October 5, - **Make & Share Cookbook Club**, 5-5:45 pm. The October cookbook of the month is TBD.

October 6, - **Game Day**, 3-5:30 pm, Students in 6th-12th grade are invited to play on the PS5 in the Teen Area on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month.

October 6 - **Story Squad**, 5:3 -6:30 pm, Children 6-9 are invited to join Story Squad, a new book club. We will begin reading The Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo. Due to capacity limits only children 6-9 may attend the program.

October 8 - **Fall Fun!** 10:30 am- 1:30 pm. During Dowagiac's Under the Harvest Moon festival, stop by the DDL for an easy seasonal children's craft, a cup of cider and a donut in the Community Room on the main level.

October 8 - **Sensory Story Time** with Miss Susanne, 11 am-noon, The Dowagiac District Library is offering Sensory Story Time on the second Saturday of each month for families with children ages 2-5

who are on the autism spectrum or who have multi-sensory needs.

October 11 - **Teen Tuesday**: Teen Cooking 101\*, 3-4 pm. Scrambled Teens will learn how to make scrambled eggs using a few simple ingredients, a mug, and a microwave. \*Registration is required for this event. Sign up in the youth department by Friday, October 7. Teen Tuesdays are for teens 6th through 12th grade and meet each Tuesday at 3 pm in the Pokagon Room on the second level of the library.

October 11 - **Board Meeting**, 6:30-8:30 pm

October 13 - **Story Squad**, 5:30-6:30 pm

October 18 - **Preschool Story Time**, 10:30-11:30 am

October 18 - **Teen Tuesday: Arts & Crafts**, 3-4 pm

October 20 - **Game Day**, 3- 5:30 pm

October 20 - **Story Squad**, 5:30-6:30 pm.

October 22 - **Southwest Michigan Writers' Conference**, 9 am-4 pm. The Southwest Michigan Writers' Conference will be at the Niles District Library in Niles.

October 24 - **OMG Book Club for Tweens**, 4-5 pm, October Book: The Forgotten Girl by India Hill Brown.

October 25 - **Preschool Story Time**, 10:30-11:30 am

October 25 - **Teen Tuesday**: Halloween Charades, 3-4 pm

October 25 - **Classics Book Group**, 5-5:45 pm. To sign up, email Matt Weston at mwesston@dowagiacdl.org

October 27 - **Story Squad**, 5:30-6:30 pm

November 1 - **Preschool Story Time**, 10:30-1:30 am

November 7 - **The Legacy & Memory of Emmett Till**, 6- 7:30 pm

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# LAKE LIFE WITH JANE

## Is this feeling like fall y'all?

by **Jane Boudreau**

**H**i Neighbors! Is this feeling like fall to y'all? The way our temps were going up and down, the rain and then lack of rain, the excessive wind, when can we just settle in and bask in the crisp, cool feel of fall? And how about a prelude to our nasty Midwestern winters? Please, let's be normal for once, Mother Nature.

Last weekend was great for me, I got so much done outdoors. I busied myself emptying out pots of miserably dead flowers and stored them (clay pots will crack in cold temps so try to get them into your garage or shed). This was a good thing because sometimes I wait until the eleventh hour and then my dainty little fingers aren't so thrilled to be doing this sort of outdoor work. I raked fallen leaves into my flower beds (is that considered the easy way out?) to serve as cheap mulch and we had a much needed outdoor fire in our chiminea. It was a little too windy though, and we had to keep moving our chairs around. But we had a fleeting idea of a little bit more of fall pleasure to come, hopefully. And I didn't have the stuff to make S'mores so we definitely have to have another go at it.



I am a decorating sort of gal, you have to know that by now. Give me a holiday, season, occasion or rainy day, and I'm rearranging everything in the house and making room for this and that. I have a few bins stored away with bits and pieces I like to bring out for fall and other fun times to celebrate, and for autumn I have some pretty large containers. Pumpkins made out of everything conceivable ... plastic, glass, pottery and even velvet. Cute little ceramic squirrels and mini acorn salt and pepper shakers. I sort through things- I have learned that even if you have the energy to go to town decorating your house like a pumpkin patch, you have to take all that stuff down as well, so have some restraint! And of course, Christmas comes along...

This year I went simple. So simple that I barely looked through those bins. Instead I hit the farmer's markets (which have now closed) for pumpkins, gourds and squash. Outdoors I used them to jazz up my porch and window ledges along with mums and pots of pansies. You can use haystacks and corn stalks -- I love all that but the crazy squirrels just go to town. And I remind you all every fall, if you have pumpkins on display in the fall, even if you are growing them, giving them a good swipe of veggie oil on a paper towel will scare those critters away. I guess they don't like that slippery feeling. I've used Pledge furniture polish in the past, its actually a little more convenient to spray, but whatever you have is fine. Remember to reapply

after a rain.



I love doing up my mantel for fall. I'm not decorating so much for Halloween anymore since my kids are grown. But for the little trick or treaters, I use a stencil to cut out little black bats to stick on the front door, and hang some webs and fake spiders on the porch lights (sometimes the webs are real). Anyway, my mantel is just a few things from the good 'ol bins, my houseplants add a little organic feel, and some faux fall flower arrangements are just enough.



If you want to have a cute, inexpensive and easy centerpiece for your dining table, take a look at mine. I had the pewter tray from a thrift shop, the ceramic pumpkins go way back, and I spent about two bucks on the pears. I can get about two weeks from the fruit before they have to be tossed; apples, pears, pomegranate ... then I scatter them in the backyard for the squirrels. If you buy your fruit slightly under ripe, it's fine to eat anytime until it goes super soft.



One of the most enjoyable things for me to do is make some sweets to have on hand, whether it be for the kids or my guy to dig into, its just fun to bake for a celebration; Halloween, fall, November ... think about the last time you really baked. And of course, if you've been reading my column over the years, you know I take the laziest way out and totally try to vamp up the presentation to

make up for any lack of flavor. I'm laughing at this because it's so true. I'm so mush better at cooking than baking (in my opinion), but I try.

Anyway, today I had the pleasure of baking with my little GrandDarling, Madelyn, and if I may use my grandma rights, she is smart as a whip and I only need to do a few steps with her and then she's a pro. So today we made some fudge, she loved putting it in the papers and sprinkling the powdered sugar. We made chocolate chip cookies and her part was smashing the dough on the baking sheet. Finally, a big bang for your time and buck, candy. I arrange waffle pretzels on a microwave safe platter. Top with 2 or three white chocolate chips and microwave for a minute. The pieces will appear whole but they are actually soft inside, add some sprinkles, and then the crown, a piece of candy corn. Have you ever wondered what those are made of? Those and Milk Duds always stump me. Anyway, I up the WOW factor by putting everything in little paper baking cups. They are easier to box this way if you are generous enough to want to give away some of your sweets. I can't tell you how fun this was to do with Mad. It brought back a lot of memories of her mama, Emily and I covered in flour and chocolate, making treats for the holiday or just on a rainy or snowy day.

I have a mixed bag of recipes for you this month, but all cool -weather appropriate. Who doesn't like a one pot meal and one that combines ingredients in a way you never would have considered? Trust me, you will love this chicken dish. The heat continues in my stuffed pepper recipe. Here's the thing about stuffed peppers. They are never on my routine menu rotation. Something sparks the idea and then I think, "Why don't I make these more often?" So delicious and budget friendly. And for me, I love how I can experiment with the ingredients and flavors. Lastly, I just had to share this brie recipe. Fall is upon us and this recipe fits the bill for something simple and delicious to serve in front of a roaring fire. I hope you enjoy!



### Baked Chicken & Chorizo Sausage

**Ingredients:**  
2 T olive oil, divided  
1 lb. boneless chicken thighs  
12 oz. soft Chorizo sausage, crumbled  
2 cups medium diced yellow baby potatoes  
One red onion, sliced in rings  
2 t. dried oregano  
2 t. salt and pepper each,  
Zest of one large orange.

#### Directions:

In a medium size ovenproof skillet or Dutch oven heat 1 T. of the olive oil over medium heat. Lightly brown chicken thighs about 3 minutes each side. Turn heat off. Add crumbled chorizo sausage, then top with diced potatoes. Layer red onion over, then oregano and S&P. Grate orange zest over the top and then drizzle the remaining T of olive oil. It will look like the above photo.

Remove from stove top to your oven pre-heated to 425 degrees. Bake 45 minutes covered, then 30 minutes uncovered. Serves 4-6.



I loooooove stuffed peppers but I wanted something different than the tried and true ground beef, rice, and tomato sauce. You can cut the heat in this filling by the type of peppers you use.

### Jane's 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 dice.  
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 starting 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.

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



# BUSINESS & FINANCE

## Medicare plans and the annual election period for 2023

By **DEAN JOHNSON**  
*Kemner, Iott, Benz Agency*

**M**edicare, Medicare Supplement Policies, Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans are sometimes 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 \$170.10 monthly premium for 2022, 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 2022 was about \$35 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% for the approved Medicare procedures and has a \$1,556 deductible for each admittance in 2022. Part B for your outpatient services pays 80% for the approved Medicare procedures and has an annual deductible of \$233 in 2022. Insurance companies offer a Medicare Supplement Plan or Medigap Plan to pay for some or all 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 coverage, age, and location. In our area, Plan G seems to be the most popular plan.

If you 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 cannot 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 Plan 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. The 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 memberships and allowances to purchase over-the-counter products.

Medicare Advantage Plans usually have medical services covered by healthcare networks (like 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 07, 2022?

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, 2023.

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 underwriting.

### What can I do during the Open Enrollment Period starting January 01 to March 31, 2023.

1. If you already have a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan or to Original Medicare.

In summary, Medicare Advantage Plans have smaller premiums than Medicare Supplement Policies, but require co-payments when receiving medical services, whereas 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 2022 was about \$160 monthly. The average premium for the Medicare Advantage Plan in our area vary from \$0 to \$74 monthly. The \$0 Medicare Advantage Plans for 2023 are now typical Medicare Advantage Plans available with or without Part D coverage and special needs plans. These \$0 premium plans for 2023 cover all Part A and Part B approved Medicare services and most for 2023 include coverage for prescription drugs, routine dental and vision as well as hearing aid benefits. These \$0 premium plans for 2023 have improved substantially for the coming year.

Some of the Medicare Advantage Plans in 2023 are offering \$0 copay for testing and treatment of COVID-19, Insulin Savings Programs, Travel Coverage across the United States, Wellness programs that reward members for doing healthy activities, improved Care Coordination, additional benefits for in home healthcare structured to keep you in your home and not in a Nursing Home as well many improvements in benefits for 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 they receive. 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**  
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## LAKE LIFE WITH JANE



Finally a great recipe that can be presented as an appetizer or dessert. It super quick yet looks so sophis-

ticated that your friends will think you slaved over it! Don't be put off by selecting a round (or wheel) of Brie. Some brands can be quite expensive but there are others that are half the price. And puff pastry looks very hard to work with, but not in this recipe. It can be found in your refrigerated section by the pie crusts.

### Brie and Apple Pastries

#### Ingredients:

- 1 small round of Brie cheese
- 2 sheets of puff pastry, thawed (it comes four to a pack)
- 1 Granny Smith apple, cored and cut in thin slices
- 2 T butter, divided and melted
- 1 t sugar

#### Directions:

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the 2 sheets of puff pastry together to make an approximate 14 x 14 square. Brush the pastry with 1 T of butter which has been melted in your microwave. Arrange the apple slices in the center of the dough as you desire and sprinkle with the sugar. Fold the pastry toward the center and the apples and twist to make a pouch of sorts. Don't

worry about how it looks ... just go for it. Brush the last tablespoon of butter over the pastry. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper (to prevent burning the bottom) and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Serve with crackers, breads, and fruit.

\*\*\*\*\*

Have I mentioned how much I love country life in the fall? The smell of woodsmoke as we rake leaves, long walks in the brisk air, turning on the heat for the first time and starting a fire in the fireplace. Every day is beautiful and rewarding. Every trip down my favorite country roads makes me feel happy and carefree! Enjoy these last few weeks of fresh air before we bring out the blankets and flannel sheets, pile up the firewood by the back door, and gas up the snowblower.

*Jane Boudreau is a writer and blogger who lives in Chicago, on Diamond Lake, and N.C. You can reach her at [blndy9@yahoo.com](mailto:blndy9@yahoo.com).*

*All photos are take by Jane Boudreau and can only be used with permission.*



# FIELD TRIP



## (Old) Guys fishing trip, Up north, Wisconsin

Big Chetek Resort on Big Chetek Lake in north-western Wisconsin played host to me and a few of my fishing buddies last month, the first 2 that I have been able to take in what seems like ages. This time, neither Covid, bad weather or crooked politicians stopped us and we were able to enjoy a full week of fishing and sheer relaxation (when the fish didn't get in the way). We even managed to find a couple watering holes that weren't fish related ... but that's another story.





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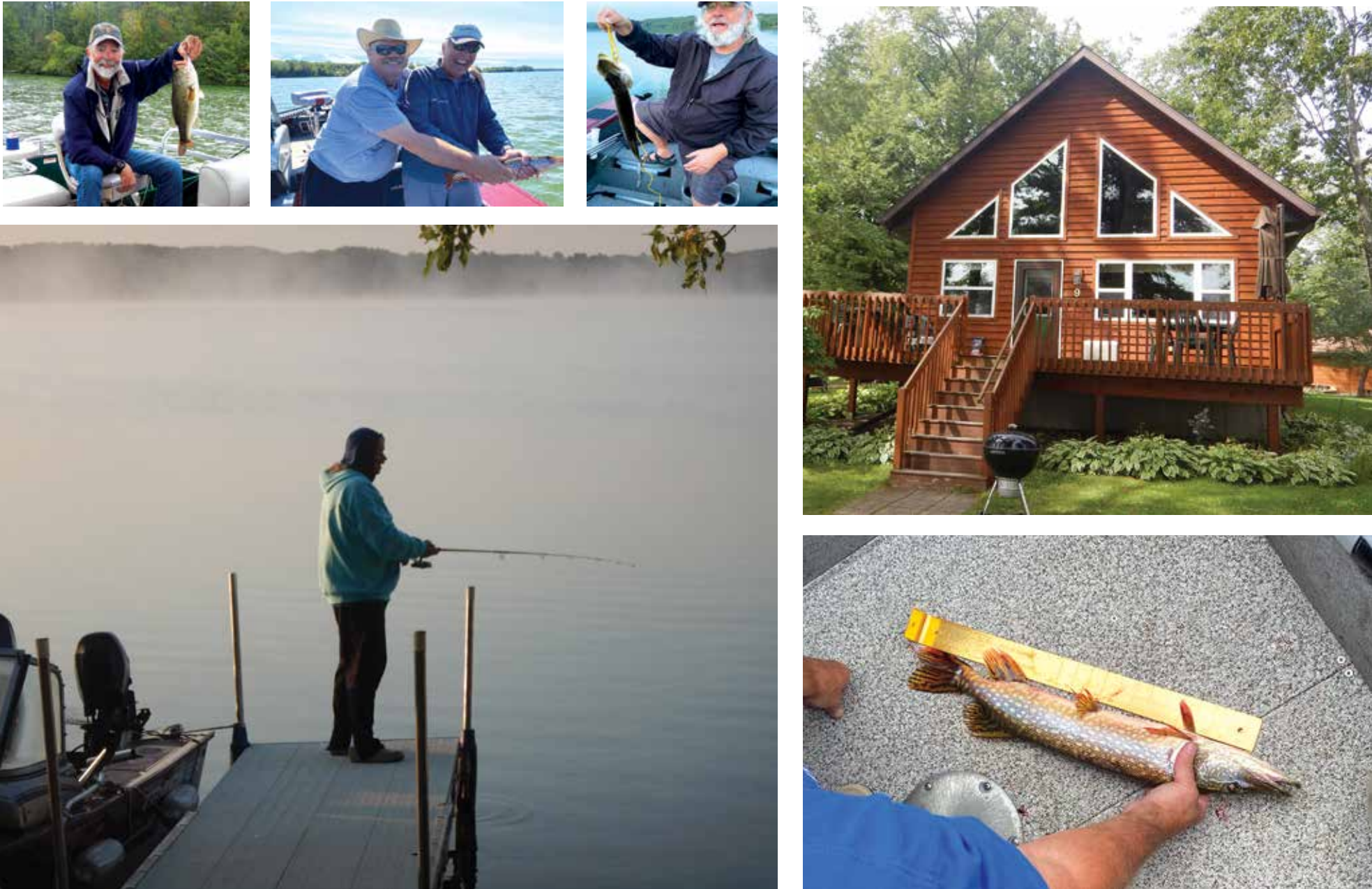


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# OUR CHILDREN

## Sneaking in learning with puzzles and secrets

by **SANDY FLEMING**

It's very hard to resist a mystery! Just watch how people try to figure out secrets that others are keeping or how children search high and low to get hints about surprise presents. Secrets and puzzles are naturally appealing, and many people think they are very entertaining. You can harness this power to motivate your reluctant student to practice important school skills and improve their overall brain power and thinking skills, too.

### Exploring the Benefits of Puzzles and Mysteries

The experts agree that puzzles tempt even reluctant learners into activities that will strengthen important skills and help them have fun with thinking at the same time. Here are just a few of the benefits of working on various kinds of puzzles:

- **Puzzles help people make mental connections.** These connections are both physical, between brain cells, and mental, allowing people to group and predict and use many other mental skills. Much like paths through a forest, paths that are used a lot become easier and easier to follow. Paths that are neglected grow weeds and other obstructions, and eventually disappear altogether. Unused machinery grows rusty and so does a brain. The more you use mental skills, the stronger they will grow.

- **Puzzles strengthen short-term memory.** Nearly all mental puzzles and games rely at least in part on short-term memory skills. Players have to hold visual or auditory information in their minds long enough to use it and manipulate it. Short-term memory has been shown to improve with use, and is an important step to getting information into long-term memory. Guess what skills are also important for academic learning? Short- and long-term memory!

- **Puzzles improve reasoning and logic skills.** Reasoning and logic skills are at the core of becoming a functional, successful adult. Employees need to learn to anticipate needs of their job or employer. They use reasoning and logic to do this. Adults use these skills in everyday life to predict outcomes and make decisions. People cannot be successful without the ability to think logically and to use reason.

- **Puzzles are relaxing.** True, this means you must do a bit of experimentation to find the right kinds of puzzles at the right levels of difficulty, but once a person knows this aspect of themselves, puzzles stimulate production of dopamine and other chemicals important for mental well-being. Successfully completing a puzzle is a satisfying feeling that can boost self-esteem and confidence, too.

- **Puzzles improve spatial and visual skills.** Many kinds of puzzles, such as jigsaws and tangrams, build the same skills that people need for things like packing the car for a long trip, judging speed and distance when driving safely, and deciding which pieces of furniture can be placed in specific spots of the room.

- **Puzzles make it easier to relax.** People who include some sort of puzzles as a hobby find that they have a ready-made activity to shut out the stress of relationships or projects. Puzzles are also much preferable to activities that involve screen time, as research is becoming ever clearer about the detrimental effects of hours of looking at a phone, tablet or other device. The kinds of light emitted by electronic gadgets can actually disrupt



sleep cycles and cause even more problems.

### Finding the Right Puzzles for Your Children (and Yourself!)

While the right kinds of puzzles at the right levels of difficulty can be hugely advantageous, the wrong ones can be downright harmful. It's important to make sure puzzles match with the preferences and ability levels of the people who are completing them.

The best way to find the magical combination of fun, challenging, and appropriate is to experiment. People can learn to love various types of puzzles if they've never seen them! Try doing new types of puzzles as a family. If you worry that puzzles will be too difficult, try beginner or children's versions first and work your way up to more difficult versions.

Try a mix of types of puzzles, too. There are word puzzles, number puzzles, and jigsaw puzzles. There are secret codes, anagrams, rhyming puzzles, and logic puzzles. And these just begin to scratch the surface in the world of puzzles. Try puzzles that rely on different types of skills and knowledge, like jigsaw puzzles and Sudoku puzzles. You never know when or where you will find a new favorite or one that really appeals to your child.

If you have a reluctant learner in the house, you can also choose puzzles that intentionally strengthen weak skills. For example, if the student needs to work on spelling, try word games and cryptograms. If math skills are weak, try crossnumber puzzles that challenge computation skills. The possibilities are endless!

### Learning about Puzzles (and How They Build Mental Muscle)

Here's a short list of common types of puzzles and some ways they can build critical skills for everyone in the house!

- **Jigsaw Puzzles:** Typically a large picture is cut into small, interlocking pieces. The goal is to re-assemble the pieces back into the original picture. The smaller the number of pieces, the easier the puzzle is! Children as young as 2 can do simple jigsaws, and the puzzles can become a life-long hobby. Jigsaw puzzles build memory skills, visual/spatial skills,

visual closure (the ability to look at part of a picture and imagine the rest), as well as fine motor coordination and patience.

- **Crossword Puzzles:** Players are challenged to use clues to enter interlocking words into boxes in a grid. Completed words provide clues to missing words. Crosswords build spelling skills, vocabulary skills, and logic/reasoning skills. They are available in beginner or children's levels all the way through extremely challenging for adults. And when you are ready for a bigger challenge, try creating your own crossword for someone else to try!

- **Word Search Puzzles:** Word search puzzles are literally everywhere! They present a large grid of apparently random letters and players circle or highlight words from a given list. Easy puzzles for beginners have words only going horizontally and vertically. Tougher ones add diagonals and even reversed order words. These puzzles are good for attention to detail, for spelling, and for categorizing words as a study tool.

- **Cryptograms/Secret Codes:** Codes and cryptograms (and oral languages like Pig-Latin and Op Talk) help children learn to represent one item with another. Simple codes substitute numbers or other letters for the letters in the word. They have a key that children can use to decode the secret message. Tougher codes require players to decipher the message without benefit of the code. This can be done by counting letter frequency (common letters are likely to be E, S, T, D, R...) and by using logic (single letter words have to be an I or an A. 2 letter words might be IN, IT, AT, OF, AS, etc.). Players improve spelling, learn common word patterns, develop organizational skills, and more.

- **Sudoku:** Sudoku puzzles are based on 9 x 9 grids divided into 9 3 x 3 squares. Each small square gets a number from 1 to 9 so that the 9 3 x 3 squares have one incidence of each digit. Each row and each column also can only have one incidence of each digit. The easiest puzzles for beginners use 4 x 4 grids on an 8 x 8 grid with numbers 1 to 4. Other versions make the puzzles easier by putting hint numbers into some squares. The more hint numbers, the easier the puzzle will be. Sudoku builds

attention to detail, looking at many attributes, and memory for directions.

- **Escape Rooms:** Escape rooms can be real physical rooms, a series of real world tasks, or even virtual puzzles. They have some sort of large goal, and require players to solve multiple puzzles to unlock codes, find the next steps, and complete specific tasks. There are commercial Escape Rooms that physically lock players into a room to solve a mystery by cracking codes and solving logic puzzles, as well as homemade escape rooms that challenge players to solve riddles and puzzles to do things like find the code to unlock a combination lock. They are loads of fun, and teachers have adopted them to encourage students to practice various kinds of school skills. Escape rooms encourage team work, logic and reasoning, observation, and much more.

- **Hidden Pictures:** These puzzles are very visual – typically a line drawing that has pictures of common objects embedded in the details. They are great puzzles for all ages, since they do not require reading. Many have smaller pictures of the hidden items in the margins, so all that is required is a sharp eye and some matching skills. Hidden pictures nurture attention to detail, observation, and a skill called visual closure. Visual closure allows us to see part of an item and recognize it just from that portion. When we read efficiently, visual closure allows us to attend to smaller portions of words to read them more quickly and easily.

- **Spot the Difference Pictures:** Like hidden pictures, spot-the-difference pictures build attention to details and observation skills. Players look at two very similar pictures and pinpoint minute differences between them. Want to take the learning a step farther? Have players explain the differences they find in words.

- **Logic Puzzles:** These are the puzzles that give clues about a situation that lead to a final answer. They are often solved using a grid where players can check off the information provided by each clue. They not only build logical thinking skills, but also reading comprehension, language comprehension, and attention to detail.

- **Mazes:** Mazes are delightful puzzles where players are challenged to find the correct path from the starting point to the goal. They build fine motor skills, planning skills, and prediction skills.

- **Riddles/Brain Teasers:** Riddles and brain teasers are word puzzles. Players have to think carefully about the clues, and need to be able to understand words and phrases that have multiple meanings. Many riddles and brain teasers also rely on similarities between words that sound nearly the same or that have similar spellings. They nurture language skills, problem-solving skills, and creative thinking.

It's important to give brains healthy opportunities for growth and learning each and every day! Puzzles and secrets activities will help children build important academic and life skills. They will also exercise and stimulate adult brains, which doctors say is important for continued mental health. Make it a family adventure to find and solve them as often as you can!

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Sandy Fleming is a private tutor and writer living in Edwardsburg. Visit her websites <http://learningnook.com> and <http://sandyflemingonline.com> for more great ideas to keep kids learning!**



# HISTORIC POSTCARDS

## Historic postcards depict rich scenes of area's past

In this issue of Neighbors, Jerdon Real Estate of Dowagiac, owned by Floyd Jerdon and his son Tom, has provided antique postcards of a few of the many lakes in our area.

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

thousands.

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

Among other places, the book may be purchased at the Jerdon Real Estate office on M-62 West, and at Whistlestop Gifts, which is operated by the Dowagiac Chamber

of Commerce.

For more information or to get a copy of Jerdon's book, visit the website: [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

In this edition of Neighbors we have selected postcards showing images of various places around Cass County. In future issues, we will couple additional cards from one or more of the area's lakes with views of nearby communities, lakes and countryside.



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# LOCAL HISTORY

## 19th Century Italianate home in Edwardsburg

Provided by  
**Jonathan Wuepper**  
Branch Manager of the Cass District Library  
jwuepper@cass.lib.mi.us

This month we have a photo of an Italianate-style house that was built between 1855-1863 and is still standing along Church Street in Edwardsburg. The current owners are Scott and Barb Mackling, who remodeled the home in the early 2000s, in keeping the mid-19th Century integrity of the structure.

The exact year that the home was constructed remains a mystery, but based on the Italianate architectural style of the home, I'd say it would have to have been built by Moses H. Lee who owned lot 137 from 1855 until 1863, or by Dr. Levi Aldrich who purchased the lot from Lee in 1863.

Dr. Levi Aldrich & family lived there until the turn of the century. Levi Aldrich passed away in 1892, and Mrs. Aldrich a year later. By that time the home was owned by Margaret Tuesley, who in 1901 sold it to Alonzo and Lewis Parson. Alonzo died in 1944 and the property was sold to Albert and Anne Ham.

Their daughter-in-law, Mary Lou Ham was the music teacher in Edwardsburg Schools, and her husband sold the house to Scott and Barn Mackling.

It is believed that the Hams gave a copy of the photo of the house to the Edwardsburg Area Museum, but that they did not take the photo. The photo of the house is not among the collection of



*Italianate-style house built circa 1855-1863, on lot number 137, Silver and Sherwood's Addition, Edwardsburg, Michigan. Photo courtesy Edwardsburg Area Museum.*

those donated by the Andrus family to the Edwardsburg Area Museum and Cass District Library.

The house in the photo bears resemblance to the sketch of the Aldrich home published on page 268b of the History of Cass County, Michigan by Alfred Matthews, published in 1882. Note that both porticoes are still intact on the house in the photo. The house appears to

have its original shutters and the fence in front of the house looks almost exactly like the fence sketched in the Matthews book.

What we don't see in the photo is just as telling as the visible clues: There are no wires leading to the house and no phone or electric poles visible in the foreground nor background. There are no automobiles, nor any clues showing that

autos are stored, or serviced.

The photograph of the Aldrich home that was donated to the Edwardsburg Area Museum was a copy, and not the original print. The original print would have held additional clues as to when the photograph was taken. Based on the clues I have stated, I believe the photo was taken around 1900, give or take five or ten years.



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# NATURE NOTES

## Osprey and Blackburnian Warbler

*Provided by Cass District Library  
Local History branch*

**O**n August 1, Bob Conrad of Lincoln Township paid a visit to the Madron Lake area of Buchanan Township in search of the nesting pair of osprey that takes up residence there in summer. He was rewarded with views of a healthy adult osprey which landed atop an electrical pole long enough to be photographed.

A pair of osprey have nested in the Madron Lake area for at least the last 10-12 years, and I suspect a pair is nesting in or near the Boyle Lake State Game Area near the Buchanan-Weesaw Township line.

The osprey is also known as the fish eagle and has made a remarkable comeback since the 1940s-1960s when populations were low due to habitat loss and nesting failure due to the pesticide DDT.

Ospreys spend the winter from Florida and along the Gulf Coast, south to Central and South America. They arrive back in Southwest Michigan by the middle of April and begin nesting immediately. Young usually fledge the nest by July or August, and resident birds will migrate south by late August or September. Osprey from farther north pass through our region heading south between August 20 and September 20, although some stragglers linger well into October, rarely into November.

While out with the Berrien Birding Club at Warren Dunes State Park on August 27, Brad Anderson photographed a male blackburnian warbler, told by its orange head and throat feathers, and the rest of the body black-and white. The blackburnian warbler nests among the coniferous forests of Canada and the northern tier of states in the east, including the Upper and northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan.

However, there are two reliable sites in Southwest Michigan where the blackburnian warbler nests. One is Warren Dunes State Park, where it is recorded nearly every summer, and the other is the Ross Coastal Plain Preserve in Covert Township, Van Buren County. Both of these parks-preserves have enough habitat requirements, such as stands of mature eastern hemlock and white pine that are favorable to the blackburnian warbler. Since Grand Mere State Park also has mature stands of white pine and hemlock, I would not be surprised if the blackburnian warbler was found to be nesting there too.

The blackburnian warbler's diet consists almost entirely of insects, although it will eat berries when insects are scarce. The blackburnian warbler winters in the tropics, from Costa Rica south to Peru and Bolivia. In Michigan, fall migration begins in mid-August and peaks in mid-September. The average date on which the last blackburnian warbler is reported each fall in Berrien County is September 18. The latest the species has ever been reported in Berrien County in the fall was one on October 10, 2011 at Warren Dunes State Park. Incidentally, the record late date for a blackburnian warbler for fall anywhere in Michigan was a male that lingered until November 4, 2019 in, oddly enough, Delta County in the Upper Peninsula.





*Top: A male blackburnian warbler on August 27 in the treetops of Warren Dunes State Park, captured through the lens of Brad Anderson.*



*Above and right: Osprey on August 1, 2022, near Madron Lake, Buchanan Township by Bob Conrad of Lincoln Township. By mid-September, osprey migration is at its peak in Southwest Michigan.*

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# THE LAST WORD

by Phil Vitale  
aka sailorphil

## Maybe it's time to plan another vacation



Maybe life's cruel fate twists of late had left me so thoroughly underwhelmed with my lot that I'd forgotten how revitalizing a vacation can be. Or maybe the fact that the last seven (count 'em, seven) times I'd made plans for a vacation, that fabled fickle finger had jabbed me in the ... ahem ... nose and grounded my plans before any wheels had gotten off the ground, but when my good friend Steve came up with a plan for a guy's fishing trip up north (see pages 7 and 8), I was ready but admittedly skeptical.

The term gun shy kept running through my mind. As the days passed and our planning grew, I tempered my anticipation with a less-than-optimistic dose of Debbie Downer ... "I'll believe it when I catch a fish," I repeatedly told friends and family.

It didn't help when less than 10 days before we were to leave, the dread pink line on the Covid test strip popped up on recently swabbed kits of both my live-in 94-year-old mother-in-law and my (decidedly younger and healthier looking) wife.

Since I'd spent most of the summer looking for any excuse to quarantine myself from the reruns of the mother-daughter show that had been playing daily on my living room TV, I silently hoped this might be an excuse to get some quiet, alone time where I could read and relax, plan, pack and look forward to my trip.

Be careful what you wish for, as they say.

Two days later the dreaded pink "test" line popped up on my own kit. Positive result, it screamed as my crest fell like fall leaves, my temp spiked, I started coughing, my nose started gushing like a broken fire hydrant, my body was aching, and I found myself unable to stay awake for most of the next two days.

Now what? What happens to my fishing trip? Is this really happening? Again? AARGH!

But somehow the world wobbled. I started feeling a little better day by day, and somehow, just two days before the trip, the pink "test" line disappeared on the kit and my concerns poofed away like an icky bug wand-

zapped by a Harry Potter heroine. Then when it failed to return the next day, I danced the jig, sang a quick verse of Hallelujah and tossed my bag (and a loaded tackle box, rods and reels, and other assorted implements of fish-catching necessity) into the van.

My buddies showed up on Friday morning, and we drove for what seemed like a month, stopping only long enough to take care of necessary travel business and bodily necessities at the roadside rest stops (and, of course to grab a quick burger and a beer at the roadside watering holes), then we'd be off again ...

Finally, a couple days later (or was it a couple of weeks, the trip is a blur now), I found myself on a boat in northwestern Wisconsin, soaking artificial fishing lures in cold, dull green water and chanting "here fishie, fishie, fishie" as my puffs of breath condensed in the cold air of a late-September, up-north, fall morning.

Like my mood, the weather improved daily, and my buds and I set about the task of fishing. And eating. And drinking a few beers. And fishing some more. And eating some more. And drinking a few more beers. Then we'd fish some more ... well, you get the idea.

We did what guys do on a fishing trip.

And for a brief while the cares of the world disappeared like the once-pink ink on the Covid test. We didn't think about work (all of use are retired anyway, but not a soul mentioned yard work or cleaning out the garage or jumping onto that honey-do list we all admitted to have been ignoring for weeks). And for that brief while we did our best to put the prolonged nightmare of Covid away in a dark corner at the back of our minds, although during the early part of the week we did all share our personal experiences with the dread plague (only one of our group, Dan, had never tested positive, and two of us had it more than once).

Until about mid-week, when Dan (the guy who'd been spared Covid but who'd also had the worst luck at fishing all week) started coughing.

No other symptoms, he claimed..

Bad luck twice, we all agreed. Got to be Covid.

There goes our fishing vacation.

I took Dan to the nearest gas station a few miles

from the lake and he got some cough drops. Helped a little, he cheerfully told us ... but the next morning his nose was running and he had a headache.

Covid, we all said again, our crests falling like those fall leaves. Back to the gas station for some cold pills, which Dan swallowed before promptly going back to bed, voluntarily missing part of a day of fishing.

He'd never do that if he weren't sick, we said.

But the next morning, Dan was up bright and early. Claimed to be feeling great (or he would be if he'd caught just one big fish, he said). Off we went, our party split into two boats. Cool but pleasant morning, no wind, perfect for fishing, we agreed.

Nothing special happened until mid morning when Steve got a bite. "OOH," he gloated (repeatedly) as he dramatically reeled in the first lunker walleye any of us had caught. To his chagrin, before he could get his line back into the water and before he could finish his really good gloat, I boated one that was two inches longer and a half a pound heavier. Steve called me dirty name.

Dour Dan said, "I still got a rock."

Then, just before we were going to call it a day, Dan's rod nearly jerked out of his hands. He squealed like a baby and reeled in a monster bass, the biggest, he said, that he'd ever caught in his life.

**Epiphany:** a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something. (2): an intuitive grasp of reality through something (such as an event) usually simple and striking.

After three years of being denied, I'd finally gotten to go on a vacation. I'd gone with good friends. We'd caught a lot of big fish. We'd shared great times. The storm was finally over. Roll the end credits, I thought.

Until I got home ... and began coughing.

And my nose began running like a fire hydrant ...

Oh no, Covid I was sure. Again.

I'd gotten the rock Dan avoided.

But the test kit ink was missing its pink, and after a couple days I started feeling better.

Just Dan's cold, I realized.

Maybe I'll live to fish another day.

Maybe it's time to plan my next vacation.



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