

Neighbors

MAY 2024

NOW IN OUR 21ST YEAR

FREE—take one

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

[HTTP://WWW.CASSNEIGHBORS.COM](http://www.cassneighbors.com)

Inside this month

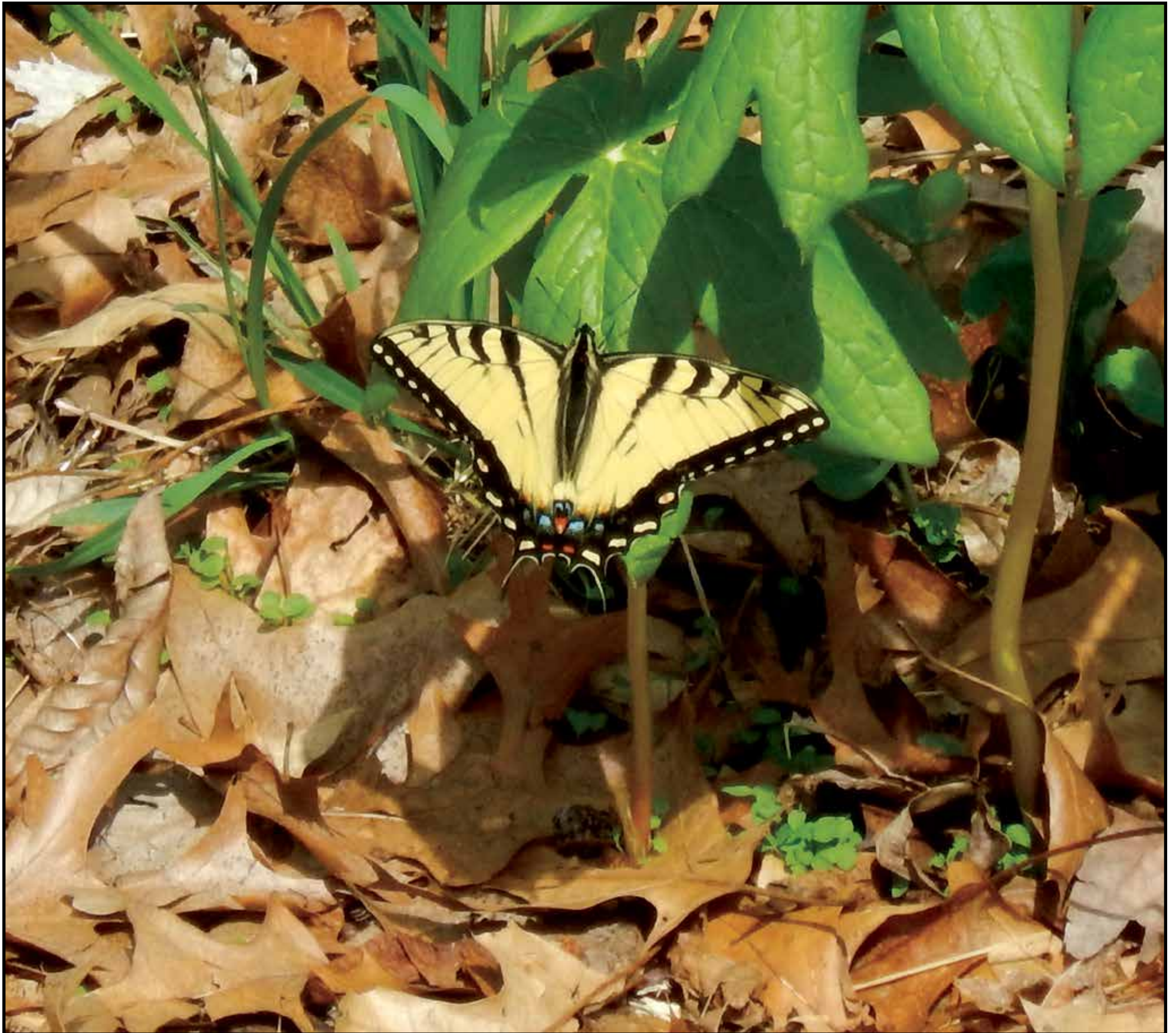
Regional News Page 2-4
Regional Events Page 5
Lake Life with Jane Page 8
Field Trip..... Pages 10-12
Floyd's Postcards..... Pages 13-15
The Last Word..... Page 19
Neighbors is published monthly from March through November.

To contact Neighbors

(269) 228-1080
(269) 476-1680

www.cassneighbors.com

sailorphil@philvitale.com
Brazilstein@gmail.com



Post Office: Please deliver as soon as possible!

**Cass Co. Neighbors
21308 Sail Bay Dr.
Cassopolis, MI 49031**

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Milford, IN
Permit No. 2

Field Trip:

Signs of SPRING!



Pages 9-11

Regional News

Cassopolis summer events

The village of Cassopolis has announced the following summer events:

Beach Bash - May 31 & June 1 (Stone Lake Beach)

Friday, May 31, Beer garden, Music, 4-7 pm One Man Band Entertainment (DJ), 7-10 pm PS Dump Your Boyfriend. Drone Show ~10 pm, Food trucks: Taqueria Don Chepe (Mexican), Dine and Dash Specialty Meats (BBQ/American), Blume (Baked Goods & Carolins BBQ), Diana Kitchen (Soul/American).

Saturday, June 1

Free Kids Area 12-3 pm; 40+ animal petting zoo, camel rides, face paint, snow cones, cotton candy, & more, Beer garden. Music: 2-7 pm One Man Band Entertainment (DJ), 7-10 pm Blammo. Fireworks ~10 pm. Food Trucks: Taqueria Don Chepe (Mexican), Drive Thru Q (BBQ), Diana Kitchen (Soul/American), Cottage Inn (Pizza), SWAT (Sweets & Treats).

Rock the Block - July 13 (Stone Lake Beach)

Beer garden. Music: 7-10 pm The 1985 Food Trucks: Taqueria Don Chepe (Mexican), Curly Q's BBQ SWAT (Sweets & Treats), Cottage Inn (Pizza).

Rock the Block - August 17 (Stone Lake Beach)

Beer garden, Music: 7-10 pm The Heavy Load. Food Trucks: Taqueria Don Chepe (Mexican), Dine and Dash Specialty Meats (BBQ), Roundbelly's Pizza (Woodfired Pizza), SWAT (Sweets & Treats).

Ghouls Night Out - October 5 (Cass County Fairgrounds)

Beer garden, Fall family fun (pumpkin carving, haunted barn, etc.). Music: 4-9 pm DJ Butters Pro. Food Trucks: Taqueria Don Chepe (Mexican), Drive Thru Q (BBQ), Cottage Inn (Pizza), SWAT (Sweets & Treats).

Cass County Fair July 28-Aug. 03

The 172nd annual Cass County 4H Fair will be held at the fairgrounds in Cassopolis from July 28. For more information call (269) 445-8265 or visit MyCassCountyFair.com

Diamond Lake sailing program

This summer, the Diamond Lake Yacht Club will host a series of classes and events from June 24 through August 1 to help introduce sailing to area residents of all ages. Small class sizes for children age 7 - 16 will be held Monday through Thursday, and evening classes and private lessons are available for adults. All classes will be held at the Diamond Lake Yacht Club, 21268 Shore Acres in Cassopolis.

Among the programs are:

KinderSail (Ages 5-6), July 1- 4 from 10 am to noon. Kindersail is a four-day session designed to give the youngest sailors (ages 5- 6) an easy, safe introduction to sailing. This two-hour per day course provides great exposure to sailing while starting to teach them fundamental sailing and safety skills. Program Cost: \$150 per student.

Morning Sail Camp* (Ages 7 -10), Monday - Thursday 9 am - noon. This class is in the morning to take advantage of the generally lower wind speeds for

younger sailors. In this class, youth sailors learn the basic skills to sail a small boat independently. Sailors are taught the parts of the sailboat, the points of sail, capsize recovery, and basic knot tying. Program Cost: \$160 members/\$200 non-members.

Afternoon Sail Camp* (Ages 11 to 16), Monday-Thursday 1-4 pm. In this class, youth sailors learn the skills to sail a sunfish single handed or a 420 with another sailor or improve their skills on an Opti. Program Cost: \$160 members/\$200 non-members.

Open Sail Camp* (Ages 7 to 16), Monday-Thursday 1-4 pm. All classes are focused on fun as opposed to racing. In this class, youth sailors learn the skills to sail an Opti, sunfish or a 420 with another sailor. On shore they will be taught how to correctly rig their sailboat, launch and then sail the craft.

Program Cost: \$160 members/\$200 non-members

Fun Sail (Open to all ages), Wednesday from 6-8 pm at the DLYC waterfront. Program Cost: Members \$32, non-members \$40. Signing up for multiple sessions is encouraged.

Wind and Wine cruises (18 and over, only those 21+ will be served an alcoholic beverage), Tuesday 6-8 pm. Class Size: 8. Program Cost: \$64 for members, \$80 for nonmembers. Weekly Wind and Wine cruises are held throughout the summer.

Private Lessons (open to all ages), Monday 6-8:0. Program Cost: Members \$64/person, Nonmembers \$80/person

For full details on all of the classes, and registration information, visit <https://www.diamondlakesailing-school.com/>

** The DLYC is offering a limited number of scholarships for youths who need financial assistance to attend. Please contact Louis Csokasy at lrcsokasy@comcast.net or Jackie Comeau Bankowski at jcmgm@aol.com for details.*

Dowagiac Farm & Artisan Market

The city of Dowagiac will host a Farm & Artisan Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays from June 1 - October 5, from 9 am - 2 pm on the grounds of the Dowagiac Area History Museum, 201 E. Division Street

Beginning in September, the market will be held only on Saturdays. The Dowagiac Farm & Artisan Market features the produce and fruit, grown in Cass and Berrien counties, along with artisan booths of handcrafted merchandise.

To register for commercial space at the market, contact Steve Arseneau via email at sarseneau@dowagiac.org or call 783.2560.

Ed's Open Header Cruise

Join fellow vintage auto enthusiasts, friends and family of the late Ed Kazlauskas, for the seventh annual Open Header Cruise on July 25, from 5:30 - 8:30 pm.

The Open Header Cruise coincides with Dowagiac's Music in the Park concert Series, held at the Dowagiac Library Event Pavilion at 206 Main Street. The concert gets underway at 7:30 pm..

FLOE DOCKS & LIFTS

PIER PERFECTION

CASSOPOLIS, MI
269.233.2222
pierperfection.com

EASY LEVEL™ SYSTEM ON LIFTS

EASY LEVEL™ SYSTEM ON DOCKS

Regional News

All proceeds benefit the Cass County Cancer Service. For more information or to receive a registration form contact event organizer Curt Rohdy at 269-782-2524.

Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show

The annual Dowagiac Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show, organized and hosted by the Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce since 1990, will take place on Front Street in the Central business District-downtown on August 17, from 7 am - 3 pm with classic cars and music. Show cars arrive between 7 and 10:30 am.

Under the Harvest Moon Festival

Dowagiac's fall festival celebrates Michigan's glorious autumn on October 12 from 10 am - 4 pm.

Hosted by the Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce, this event showcases vendors of handmade and artisan product, Michigan-grown produce, and antiques, and features activities for families.

Dowagiac Christmas Open House Weekend & Theta Mu Craft Show

The Dowagiac Christmas Open House Weekend will be November 14 - 16 from 10 am - 5 pm. Shopkeepers offer special activities and cheer as they present their finest in holiday merchandise during Christmas Open House Weekend, Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital and the Chamber are proud to host the Dowagiac Christmas Celebration. Enjoy the relaxed pace of holiday shopping, the way it used to be.

Additionally, Theta Mu hosts their annual craft show at Dowagiac Middle School Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm.

Candlelight Christmas Parade

The Dowagiac Candlelight Christmas Parade will be December 6, from 7-8 pm. In anticipation of the grand procession, South Front Street downtown will be closed to through traffic at 4 pm. The parade steps off at Front and Main streets, heading north on Front Street then circling the downtown.

Penn Twp, COA Pickleball FUN

Looking for a fun and welcoming community activity? Look no further than the Penn Township Pickleball Club's COA Series, sponsored by Paul and Judy Rutherford! Whether you're a seasoned player or a complete beginner, everyone is invited to join us for some pickleball fun!

What We Offer: Friendly Atmosphere: Our club prides itself on being inclusive and welcoming to players of all levels.

Learn and Socialize: Whether you're looking to improve your game or simply socialize with fellow pickleball enthusiasts, our club is the perfect place for you! **Free Pickleball Lessons:** We're excited to offer free pickleball lessons specifically tailored for the Council on Aging. It's never too late to learn a new sport!

Equipment Provided: Don't have your own equipment? No problem! We provide all the necessary gear for you to enjoy the game.

Coffee and Donuts: Thanks to the generous sponsorship by Paul and Judy Rutherford of Rutherford Rentals, enjoy complimentary coffee and donuts during our sessions!

Stay Connected: Facebook: Visit us on Facebook at Penn Township Pickleball for updates, photos, and more!

Court Reserve App: Find us on the Court Reserve app under Penn Township Pickleball for easy access to court reservations and schedules.

Future Events: Watch for more information on other lessons and events for the whole community!

Convenient Schedule: Classes are held every Tuesday in May from 9:30 to 11:30 am, giving you plenty of opportunities to join in the fun!

Location: Penn Township Hall Address: 60717 S. Main St., Vandalia, MI

Contact Information: Ready to join us or have any questions? Reach out to Lisa Fitzsimons, Email:l.fitzsimons1@gmail.com or call 506-5240.

Dowagiac Memorial Day Parade

The city of Dowagiac will host a Memorial Day Parade May 27 from 10:30 am-1 pm. Gather outside Dowagiac City Hall for the ceremony, which will feature a speaker and performances by the high school and Kalamazoo bagpipe bands. The Masons of Peninsular Lodge #10 hosts this long-standing tradition.

Dowagiac Music in the Park

This summer, gather downtown from 7:30-9 pm on Thursday evenings for Dowagiac's Music in the Park concert series. Concerts will be held at the Dowagiac District Library Event Pavilion on Main Street, and are an event of the City of Dowagiac's Downtown Development Authority.

For event information visit https://www.cityofdowagiac.com/arts_recreation/entertainment/summer_concert_series.php. There will be no July 4 concert.

Dowagiac Home & Garden Tour

On June 22 from 11 am-5 pm, the Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce Home Tour Committee home & garden tour showcases the architectural diversity and unique character of Dowagiac.

Pre-sale tickets are available through June 22 for \$15 per person. Pre-sale tickets are only available online. Tickets will be sold in person only the day of the event, until 3 p.m., at the Dowagiac History Museum and are \$20 per person.

The tour starts at the Dowagiac Area History Museum 201 E. Division. Participants can pick up their wristbands and maps at the museum. No one will be allowed to enter tour homes without a tour wristband. If you pre-purchased your ticket, you will need to present your purchased ticket on your cell phone OR a printed copy the day of the event in order to receive your wristband.

For tickets visit <https://www.dowagiacchamber.com/events/upcoming-events>

COA trip to Shippshewana

The Cass County COA will host a tour of Shippshewana Amish artisans and workshops on Wednesday, May 15, leaving at 8 am and returning around 5 pm. Cost is \$85, and includes transportation, admission, tour guide's fee and full-course threshers lunch. Space is limited and registration is required.

To register for any of the events call 445-8110.

Festival, BBQ, Steve's Run

Dowagiac's second annual barbecue competition featuring an amateur division sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbeque Society will be held during the

EXPERIENCE

for today's market

JAN LAZZARA
RE/MAX 100
& BY THE LAKE



574.532.8001

JANLAZARRA.COM

LICENSED IN
INDIANA & MICHIGAN



Regional News

annual Summer Festival July 19 & 20 from 1-7 pm.

This community celebration is a family-friendly event, with music, children's entertainment, games and rides, and food trucks. Families can browse summer sales and the booths of artisans.

In addition, Southwestern Michigan College's annual Steve's Run will start downtown Friday evening.

Cass County Historical Society Lecture and event series

Unless otherwise stated, there will be a short business meeting at 6:30 pm with lectures or tours beginning at 7 pm.

May 21, 6:30 pm - Visit the Bonine Carriage House across from the Underground Railroad Bonine House, 18970 M-60, Vandalia. See the collection of early pioneer tools as well as a false bottom carriage used to transport freedom seekers, followed by a presentation.

JUNE 18, 6:30 pm - Join us for a tour and lecture at Smith Chapel, 3009 Redfield Road, Niles. This was the first Methodist Church in Southwest Michigan. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Smith Chapel is a wood-frame late Victorian church built in 1840.

JULY 16, 6:30 pm - Edwardsburg and Cass County Historical Societies' Show 'N Tell of artifacts, family heirlooms and tools. Bring your treasures to the Edwardsburg History Museum, 26818 Main Street, and share their history or have one of our experts weigh in! A short lecture will follow on

George Redfield.

August 17, 1-3:30 pm - Red Brick Schoolhouse on the corner of M-62 & Brick Church Road will host BACK TO SCHOOL and BACK IN TIME: Celebrate the Red Brick School and One-Room School Houses in our area. Come see what schools were like in the 19th and early 20th century.

SEPT. 17, 6:30 pm - A celebration of trains at the Dowagiac Depot, 200 Depot Drive. Train models, photos, and historic memorabilia will be on display as well as a juried artist show. Refreshments and speakers from the Historical Society and the Blue Dart Art group.

OCT. 13, noon - 5 pm - Annual Fall Festival - Newton House. Come to the Fall Festival at historic Newton House, 20689 Marcellus Hwy., Decatur. This is a free, family-friendly event featuring kids' activities, artisan vendors, free snacks, docent-led house tours, wagon rides through Fred Russ Forest Park with Civil War Reenactments and lectures.

Cass Library Edwardsburg Branch

Cass District Library (CDL) has announced the construction award of the district's new Edwardsburg Branch library to Cornerstone Construction Management. The Library's Board of Trustees unanimously accepted the \$4.6 million bid. Cornerstone Construction Management will join a project that began in 2022 with the success of the Library's ballot initiative to restore its only millage to the original 0.75 mill amount. Thereafter, Abonmarche was hired as architect for the new building

and a new parcel of land was acquired on Main Street in the heart of the Village of Edwardsburg. In 2023, the Barton Group was engaged to serve as Owner's Representative.

Construction is expected to begin in the late spring and CDL is planning to open the new branch in the summer of 2025.

Using community feedback gathered during a facilities master plan process in 2021, CDL officials said they are proud to offer a new building that is appropriately sized to meet community needs. The new building will include an expanded Children's area, a dedicated area for teens, a large community room, and small private study rooms ideal for remote workers and home school families. A maker space rounds out the improved and enhanced amenities in this new facility which has been thoughtfully designed to highlight its scenic, wooded surroundings. The warm and inviting new library will serve as a true community hub for the ever-growing Edwardsburg community while maintaining its close walkability for school students.

The majority of construction costs will be covered through the Library's issuance of bonds and cash reserves. Special opportunities for donors will be unveiled at the ceremonial groundbreaking on May 8 at 10 am at the current Edwardsburg Branch. Special guest Randy Riley, State Librarian of Michigan, will speak during the ceremony.

During construction, all library services will remain available at the CDL's current Edwardsburg Branch at 26745 Church Street. For more information and current updates, please visit www.cass-districtlibrary.org/edwardsburg-build/.

[districtlibrary.org/edwardsburg-build/](http://www.cass-districtlibrary.org/edwardsburg-build/).

Outdoor Adventures

St. Joseph County (IN) Parks is taking registrations for "Outdoor Adventures" summer nature camps at St. Patrick's County Park in South Bend.

"We offer campers a variety of activities," says Amal Farrough, Interpretive Services Manager. "Depending upon the age group activities may include kayaking, nature games, creek/swamp stomping and other outdoor fun!"

Six camps are offered for children entering kindergarten through 8th grade. The camps are scheduled for:

- June 18: Survival Skills (ages 11-14)
- June 24-28: Nature's Superheroes! (ages 5-6)
- July 2: Escape Room: The Eradicator (ages 11-14)
- July 8-July 12: Wonders of Water (ages 10-11)
- July 15-July 19: Fun is Natural (ages 8-9)
- July 22-July 26: Treasure Hunters (ages 6-7)

For more information, or to request registration materials, please call 574/654-3155, or visit www.sjcparks.org.

Spring Plant Exchange

A plant exchange will be held at Saint Patrick's County Park (IN) on May 18 from 2-4 pm. This is an opportunity for the public to bring plants to exchange for new varieties. The public is asked to not bring invasive species, and make sure to label all plants, seeds, and bulbs. This program is open to both beginner and more experienced gardeners alike. The event is free, but a gate fee is in effect (\$4 for in-county, \$5 for out-of-county).

WWW.APOLLO MARINE.NET
SPRING SPECIAL

BOAT SHOW PRICING
STILL IN EFFECT!



MOOMBA



AVALON



STARCRAFT



APOLLO MARINE.net

We rent Pontoon Boats!

We service all area lakes!



South side of Gravel Lake
15355 96th Avenue
Lawton, MI 49065

269-423-6011
1-888-966-BOAT

SALES • SERVICE • STORAGE

Regional Calendar

AREA EVENTS

May 15 - COA tour of Shipshewana, \$85, 445-8110

May 18 - St. Patrick's County Park (IN) plant exchange, \$4 for residents, \$5 for out-of-county residents, 2-4 pm

MAY 21 - Cass County Historical Society Lecture and visit the Bonine Carriage House, 6:30 pm, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

MAY 27, Dowagiac Memorial Day Parade, 10:30 am-1 pm, www.dowagiacchamber.com/events/upcoming-events

MAY 31, JUNE 1 - Cassopolis Beach Bash

JUNE 1 - October 5, Wednesdays and Saturdays, Dowagiac Farm and Artisan Market, History Museum, 782-2560

JUNE 18 - Cass County Historical Society tour and lecture at Smith Chapel, 3009 Redfield Rd., Niles, 6:30 pm

JUNE 24 - August 1 - Diamond Lake Yacht Club Summer Sailing program, <https://www.diamondlakesailingschool.com/>

JUNE 28 - Fireworks, Dowagiac Municipal Airport, 9:30-11 pm

JULY 13 - Cassopolis Rock the Block summer concert series

JULY 16 - Edwardsburg & Cass County Historical Societies Show 'N Tell artifacts, Edwardsburg History Museum, 6:30 pm, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

JULY 18 - Tour of Smith Chapel, Niles 6:30 pm, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

July 19, 20 - Dowagiac Summer Festival; Dowagiac BBQ competition, 1-7 pm

JUNE 22 - Dowagiac Home Tour, www.dowagiacchamber.com/events/upcoming-events

JULY 25 - Ed's Open Header Cruise, 5:30 pm,

JULY 28-AUG. 3, Cass County Fair, Cassopolis, MyCassCountyFair.com

AUGUST 17 - Cass County Historical Society "Back to school, back in time," Red Brick Schoolhouse, Cassopolis, 6:30 pm, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

AUGUST 17 - Cassopolis Rock the Block summer concert series

AUGUST 17 - Dowagiac Rod & Roll Classic

Auto Show, 10 am - 4 pm, Front Street

AUGUST 31 - Fireworks, Lions Park, Sister Lakes

SEPTEMBER 17 - Cass County Historical Society celebration of trains, Dowagiac Depot, 6:30 pm, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

October 5 - Ghouls Night Out, Cass County Fairgrounds, 4-9 pm

OCTOBER 13 - Annual Fall Festival of the Cass County Historical Society, Newton House, Decatur, ccnihistoricalsgmail.com

NONMEMBER 14-16 - Dowagiac Christmas Open House Weekend & Theta Mu Craft Show; open house 10 am - 5 pm, craft show Saturday, 9 am - 3 pm

NOVEMBER 30 - Small Business Saturday, Dowagiac

DECEMBER 7 - Christmas in Cassopolis

CASS DISTRICT LIBRARY

<https://www.cassdistrictlibrary.org/events-programs/>

MAY 1 - STORYTIME, 10-11:00 am, Mason/Union Branch

MAY 2 - STORYTIME, 11 am - Noon, Main Branch

MAY 3 - INTRO TO GENEALOGY, Call 269-487-9214 to register for either Session 1 at 10 am-Noon, or Session 2 from 12:30-2:30 pm, Howard Branch

MAY 3 - STAR WARS DAY, 2:30-3:30 pm, Edwardsburg Branch

MAY 6 - T'AI CHI WITH ALYSE KNEPPLE, \$40, 11AM-NOON, Mason/Union Branch

MAY 8 - ADULT CRAFT CLUB: PRESSED FLOWER LANTERNS, 1-2 pm Main Branch. Registration is required, call Stephanie Knepple at 269-749-1384 to register.

MAY 9 - STORYTIME, 11 am-Noon, Main Branch. Registration is required, call 269-487-9215 to register.

MAY 9 - - STORYTIME 5:30-6:30 pm, Edwardsburg Branch, Registration is required, call 269-487-9215 to register.

MAY 13 - T'AI CHI WITH ALYSE KNEPPLE, \$40. 11 am-Noon, Mason/Union Branch

MAY 13 TEEN MAKER MONDAYS, 2nd and 4th Monday, 2:30-3:30 pm, Edwardsburg Branch

MAY 14 - INTRO TO CANVA, 5:30-6:30 pm, Howard Branch

MAY 16 - STORYTIME, 11 am-Noon, Main Branch.

MAY 16 - VILLAGE BOOK CLUB, every third Thursday at 5:30 pm, Edwardsburg Branch

MAY 18 - HISTORIC BONINE HOUSE TOUR, 10 AM - NOON, In partnership with the Mason/Union Branch Library. Registration is required, please call 269-357-7821 to register.

MAY 20 - T'AI CHI WITH ALYSE KNEPPLE, \$40, , 11 am-Noon, Mason/Union Branch

MAY 21 - SAVAGE READERS BOOK CLUB, 9am-10:pm, Savage Bean Coffee Co.

MAY 23 - STORYTIME, 11 am-Noon, Main Branch.

MAY 23 - LAVA BEAD BRACELETS, 5:30-6:30 ,Howard Branch, for ages 10 and up. Registration required, please contact 269-487-9214 to register.

MAY 27 - T'AI CHI WITH ALYSE KNEPPLE, \$40, , 11 am-Noon, Mason/Union Branch

MAY 27 - TEEN MAKER MONDAYS, For ages 12- 18, 2:30- 3:30 PM, Edwardsburg Branch

MAY 30 - STORYTIME, 11 am-Noon, Main Branch

Dowagiac District Library
<https://www.dowagiacdl.org/events>

May 3 - Make & Share Cookbook Club, 5:15 -6:30 pm - First Thursday of the month. To reserve space, email dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com

MAY 7 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 -11:30 am./Every Tuesday at 10:30 am. Preschool Story Time is geared toward children 3-5 years old..

MAY 7 - Teen Tuesday: BINGO, 3-4 pm

MAY 7 - Slow Jam at the Library, 5-6 pm. Bring your instrument to the library Slow Jam the first Tuesday of each month.

MAY 14 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 -11:30 am.

May 14 - Teen Tuesday: Arts & Crafts, 3-4 pm. Tissue Paper Stained Glass.

MAY 16 - Heated Tropes Book Club-The Duchess Deal, 6-6:45 pm.

MAY 21 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 -11:30 am

MAY 21 - Teen Tuesday: Game Day, 3-4 pm

MAY 27 - TBR Book Club for Teens, 3-4 pm. May Book: Pandora Seven Vol. 1 by Yuta Kayashima

MAY 28 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 -11:30 am

MAY 28 - Teen Tuesday: S.T.E.M. 3-4 pm. Teens will use their S.T.E.M. Knowledge to make DIY marble runs.

MAY 28 - Great Expectations by Charles Dickens, 5-6 pm. To sign up, email mweston@dowagiacdl.org

JUNE 4 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30 -11:30 am, geared toward children 3-5 years old

JUNE 4 - Teen Tuesday: BINGO, 3-4 pm

JUNE 5 - STEAM for Tweens-Summer Break escape room, 4-5 pm 7, Register by June 3 at(269) 782-3826 or email dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com

JUNE 11 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30-11:30 am

JUNE 11 - Teen Tuesday: Arts & Crafts, 3-4 pm, Bird Seed Ornaments

JUNE 18 - Preschool Story Time, 10:30-11:30 am

JUNE 18 - Teen Tuesday: Game Day, 3-4 pm

JUNE 19 - STEAM for Tweens-Fingerprint Fun4-5 pm, Register by June 17 at (269) 782-3826 or email dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com

JUNE 24 - TBR Book Club for Teens, 3-4 pm, June Book: My Blood Approves by Amanda Hocking

JUNE 25 - Preschool Story Time10:30-11:30 am

JUNE 25 - Teen Tuesday: Taste Test Challenge, 3-4 pm

JUNE 25 - The Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle (1st half), 5 -6 pm. To sign up, email [mweston\[at\]dowagiacdl.org](mailto:mweston[at]dowagiacdl.org)

BILLS ROOF REPAIR
"A man & his business committed to Christ"
Lifetime Warranty on ALL Labor Performed

Dawn Jones
O: 269-591-5700
TF: 866-217-7663
E-Mail: wrg1grant2@gmail.com

18599 Mason Street, Cassopolis Michigan 49031
www.BillsRoofRepair.com

Over 45 Years of Service

Neighbors

Fred Stein
228-1080
Brazilstein@gmail.com

HAMPSHIRE Country Club

Open to the Public Hampshire
Dogwood Hampshire
Two 18-hole courses
29592 Pokagon Hwy, Dowagiac, MI 49047
For info or a tee time call (269) 782-7476
<https://www.hampshire36.com>

SAUGATUCK DECORATOR OUTLET
AFFORDABLE ART FOR HOME OR BUSINESS
HUGE NEW SELECTION
NOW
50% OFF
EVERYTHING

317 Butler Street, Saugatuck (near the park)
Open 7 days a week
Off-Season hours vary

TURF Services
269-782-6990
email: turfservicesmi@gmail.com

10559 Rangeline Rd.
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Hunter Nelson Rainbird

Quality Lawn Sprinkler Systems
Design, Sales, Service Since 1967
Mike Villwock **TORO**

NEW LEAF
CUSTOM SHORELINE & LANDSCAPE SERVICE
269-462-0966
SERVING SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN
www.newleaflandscapesmichigan.com
NewLeafLandscapesSod&Sprinklers

Business & Finance

Understanding insurance technology

By **Kerry Davis**
Kemner, Iott, Benz Agency

Not many people go through life wanting to gain knowledge about insurance. In fact, it is more likely that you have no interest in reading policies or having to learn the insurance language.

Unfortunately, you may need or want to know more about your policies when you've had a loss- whether it's a car accident, house fire, slip and fall or you were injured at work. Understanding insurance language is crucial for you, the policyholder, to make informed decisions and have some level of comprehension of your insurance coverages, hopefully before it is claim time. That is the worst time to find out you don't have coverage, or the deductible is high. Below are some examples of insurance terminology that may help you learn the insurance terms you see or hear.

● **DEDUCTIBLE:** The amount of money you pay out of pocket before the insurance coverage kicks in. For example, you have a \$1,000 deductible and a claim for \$7,000. You would be responsible for paying the first \$1,000 and the insurance would then cover the remaining \$6,000. Having higher deductibles can be more cost effective for the premium; however, at the time of a claim, you would need to have that amount to put toward the cost of the loss.

● **PREMIUM:** This is the amount you pay the insurance company for coverage. There are often pay plans available but beware of the installment fees. You usually can get a break in pricing by paying

annually or at least quarterly with less installments.

● **EFFECTIVE/EXPIRATION DATES:** These are the dates that your policy is in force. Normally, it is an annual term, but occasionally could be different.

● **COVERAGE LIMITS:** These are the maximum amounts an insurance policy will pay for a covered loss. If you have a liability policy with a coverage limit of \$500,000 and someone slips and falls on your property and has medical expenses exceeding that amount, the most the policy will pay for that incident is \$500,000.

● **EXCLUSIONS:** These are specifically

listed conditions or situations that the insurance policy will NOT cover. The exclusions vary depending on the policy type. Your personal auto policy may have an exclusion if you are conducting business using your truck. In health insurance, pre-existing conditions may be excluded from coverage. The exclusions are listed in the policy, but you may have to look for them.

● **LIABILITY:** Legal responsibility or obligation for you or your business to compensate for harm or damage to someone or some property.

● **CO-PAY:** A fixed amount you pay out of pocket for certain services or treat-

ments. This is usually health insurance related.

By understanding some of the terms used in insurance, you can better comprehend how your policy works and make well-informed decisions regarding coverage. Your policies have a whole list of definitions in them also, usually indicated in quotations on the forms. When you have some free time, look through your policies and get a good understanding of what is there. In addition to learning more about your coverages, reading the policy has also been known to help cure insomnia.

Pasture-Raised Pork - Great Lakes Fish

JAKE'S COUNTRY MEATS
Your Connection to Your Food!

SIXTH GENERATION FAMILY FARM

55721 Decatur Road, Cassopolis, MI
269.445.3020 | jakescountrymeats.com

Pork You Can Trust and Wild-Caught Great Lakes Fish

Get Fit, Stay Fit

The Cass County COA has outstanding fitness centers at both locations. Each center offers a variety of cardiovascular fitness machines and weight training equipment as well as In-Person and Zoom Fitness Classes. Trained instructors provide assistance, advice and class instruction to help you meet your fitness goals.

- Balance, Stretch & Stability
- Cardio Challenge
- H.I.L.I.T.
- S.E.A.T.
- Tai Chi
- Yoga

Cass County COA
Enhancing Life

Low Center
60525 Decatur Rd.
Cassopolis, MI 49031

(269) 445-8110
www.CassCOA.org
facebook.com/CassCOA

Front Street Crossing
227 S. Front Street
Dowagiac, MI 49047

Cub Cadet

<p>STARTING AT: \$2,299*</p> <p>XT1 LT42B LAWN TRACTOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 540cc B&S Pro Engine • 42" Stamped Deck • Tuff Torq® Transmission 	<p>STARTING AT: \$3,299*</p> <p>XT2 LX46 LAWN TRACTOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 HP† Kohler 7000 HD • 46" Fabricated Deck • Tuff Torq® Transmission 	<p>STARTING AT: \$3,599*</p> <p>ZT1 50 ZERO-TURN RIDER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 HP†† Kawasaki FR691V • 50" Fabricated Deck • Hydro-Gear EZT 2200 	<p>STARTING AT: \$6,599*</p> <p>ZTX4 48 ZERO-TURN RIDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 HP† Kohler KT-Pro 7000 • 48" Fabricated Deck • Hydro-Gear ZT 3100
<p>STARTING AT: \$419*</p> <p>SCP 100 PUSH MOWER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 140cc Briggs & Stratton • 21" 3-N-1 Mowing Deck • 1.9 bu. dust blocking bag 	<p>STARTING AT: \$499*</p> <p>SC300B SELF-PROPELLED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 163cc Briggs & Stratton • 21" 3-N-1 Deck • Front Wheel Drive 	<p>STARTING AT: \$679*</p> <p>SC500K SELF-PROPELLED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 173cc Kohler Engine • 21" 3-N-1 mowing deck • High Rear-Wheel Drive 	<p>STARTING AT: \$1,199*</p> <p>MUSTANG GARDEN TILLER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 208cc Troy-Bil® Engine • 18" Tilling Width • Dual-Direction Tine

Cub Cadet

Cass Outdoor Power Equipment

62101 M-62 South, Cassopolis, MI 49031 . 269-445-2231

1 Restrictions apply. See store for details. *Product Price - Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes, freight, setup and handling charges may be additional and may vary. Models subject to limited availability. For full warranty details, visit cubcadet.com or see your local dealer. See your local dealer for limited warranty details and information. Certain restrictions apply. Specifications and programs are subject to change without notice. Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or unit specifications. † As rated by Kohler, all power levels are stated in gross horsepower at 3,600 RPM per SAE J1940 as rated by engine manufacturer. †† As rated by Kawasaki, horsepower tested in accordance with SAE J1995 and rated in accordance with SAE J2723 and certified by SAE International. Δ Commercial products are intended for Professional use.

EXCEPTIONAL FINANCING OFFERS AVAILABLE



Business & Finance

The Housing Market in Cass County & SWMI

Sales bounced back in March in Cass County while selling prices for non-waterfront houses soared but plummeted for waterfront houses.

When we refer to all or overall housing types, we combine results for waterfront and non-waterfront houses. So, in total, 41 houses were sold in March 2024 compared to 44 in March 2023. Sales of waterfront houses increased by one house in March 2024 (8 vs. 7). Non-waterfront houses drove the overall sales decrease, with sales slipping 11 percent (33 vs. 37).

The overall average selling price in March 2024 increased 21 percent to \$307,917 from \$254,992 in March 2023. The overall median selling price in March at \$250,000 was 35 percent higher than the \$185,000 median selling price in March 2023.

The average selling price for waterfront homes fell 26 percent to \$502,250 from \$676,000 in March 2023. The median selling price for waterfront homes dropped 34 percent (\$487,500 vs. \$740,000).

In March, the average selling price for non-waterfront houses surged 54 percent to \$260,806 from \$169,234 in March 2023. The median selling price increased 6 percent to \$195,000 from \$184,500 in March 2023.

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

In Cass County, one bank-owned or foreclosed house was part of all closed transactions in March 2024 (2 percent). The highest percentage in March previously was 26 percent in 2015.

For comparison, the number of bank-owned or foreclosed homes as a percentage of all transactions was 2 percent (3

The average selling price for waterfront homes fell 26 percent to \$502,250 from \$676,000 in March 2023. The median selling price for waterfront homes dropped 34 percent (\$487,500 vs. \$740,000).

houses) across SWMI. The previous low percentage was 3 percent in March 2023, and the highest percentage in March was 60 percent in 2009.

All of Southwest Michigan's housing market sales in March 2024 plunged 14 percent compared to sales in March 2023. Selling prices continue to rise to record levels for prices in March.

The number of houses sold in March dropped to 202 from 236 in March 2023. The level of sales in March 2024 was the lowest since March 2014. The highest number of sales in March was 286 in 2020.

At the end of the first quarter of 2024, house sales were down 6 percent compared to 2023 (510 vs. 545).

The inventory of houses for sale increased 5 percent, providing a 4.1-months supply at the end of March (641 vs. 612). This level still needs to be higher for buyers searching listings for sale across Allegan, Berrien, Cass, and the westerly two-thirds of Van Buren counties. For comparison, in March 2014, there were 2219 houses for sale.

In March 2024, the average selling price increased slightly to \$321,752 compared to \$321,345 in March 2023. Year-to-date, the average selling price increased 9 percent (\$325,471 vs. \$299,667).

The median selling price in March 2024 increased 7 percent to \$250,000



from \$233,500 in March 2023. Year-to-date, the median selling price rose 12 percent to \$245,000 from \$219,000 in March 2023.

The total dollar volume dropped 14 percent in March 2024 due to the decrease in sales (\$64,933,986 vs. \$75,837,608). The year-to-date total dollar volume rose 2 percent (\$165,990,642 vs. \$163,318,594).

The Freddie Mac mortgage rate in March was 6.79, down from 6.94 in February for a 30-year conventional mortgage. A year ago, the rate was 6.32.

When Selling Your House ...

The Internet makes selling your home seem "free and easy". But it is really the exact opposite. The whole selling process is time consuming and emotionally challenging.

Selling your own home puts you in the position of needing to quickly study your local home market, be willing to risk making less money, trust every stranger, and believe that marketing on the web will bring a flood of buyers to your doorstep.

Using a REALTOR® to sell your home will give you assurances that doing the selling process alone cannot give. A REALTOR® has up-to-date data on homes in your local market and familiarity with the advantages and disadvantages of competing homes. He or she can

help you price your home to sell with the potential to make a good return on your investment.

REALTORS® will show your home to qualified, local buyers who have a real interest in your house. The list of what a REALTOR® needs to do to sell your home is very long. Why take a risk with your biggest investment?

When Buying a Home ...

You have three great financial advantages that you don't have as a renter.

First is a steady payment for the life of the mortgage. When you rent, the landlord sets your monthly payment, and you can expect increases year after year.

The second advantage is that you will build equity as you pay down your mortgage and thus increase your financial worth. The third advantage is that every year, you can deduct the amount of mortgage interest and property taxes from your income taxes, helping you reduce the amount of taxes that you owe.

There are many more advantages, and the best way to learn about them is to call a REALTOR®. A REALTOR® will help you with the process of making the right financial investment in your dream home.

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

Capture Precious Memories

Unique and Beautiful photo etched Markers, Memorials, Garden Urns and Benches - all etched in Genuine Granite.

Bolt Laserworks
WE MAKE IT SPECIAL...

Cassopolis, MI - Ph: (800) 438-2658 - www.boltlaserworks.com



Photo etched garden memorial

Understanding
Insightful
Effective
Local



THK LAW, LLP

Estate planning
Elder law
Business counsel
Mediation
Litigation

Cassopolis | South Bend | Elkhart
269.445.1818 | thklaw.com

Lake Life with Jane

And here we have it ... May!

Hello Neighbors! And here we have it ... May! There's no denying that we are this close to warm sunny weather and that makes for a happy Jane. Spring is a sign of renewal and I think we are all ready for it. Lighter days, brighter days, days that stretch into warm nights with stars above. I'm looking out my window right now at the lush beds of daffodils (and soon, more tulips), I think how they come back every spring like clockwork, how they have for over thirty-nine years when I first planted them.

Lately continuity means so much more to me than before. When life seems to be spinning out of control, sometimes all we have to do is look around at the constants in our lives, the things that ground us and make us feel secure. The bits and pieces of life that we don't always see in the big picture, they're there if we stop to look and listen. They're there because very probable life is gonna hit you with some hard blows and it might make you think, "What I'd give for those little moments." Sitting on the end of the dock with your toes dangling in the water, picking up wet beach towels abandoned by the little ones after a ride on the boat, snipping a few flowers for a vase on the patio table in time for lunch ... not so much at the time but you'll look back on these little snippets of everyday life and realize you had the world in your pocket. So now, right this minute, I'm just waving out my window to my daffs bobbing back and forth in the breeze. And trying to get this article done!



Spring can be a challenge for decorating. If you like to change things up for the seasons, I'd focus now on lightening things up gradually (you do know the premise of my column is to advise you all things cooking, gardening, decorating, and all the things I taught Martha). I want to pull out some of my lighter throws and pillows but we still might need the warm and woolly. You can take baby steps by choosing areas in (and outside) your home to add touches of spring. For me, the first thing I do is add a floral wreath to my front door. I go for a natural look with dried flowers and buds. I also add pansies to a small urn on my porch that gets switched out to a large fern in the summer. Just these little spots of color make for a welcoming entry. Have we seen the end of faux potted plants in our homes? Amazing seeing them everywhere in the stores. They had a boatload of succulents on sale at Target

when I was there the other day, probably making room for the faux florals. I have nothing against artificial plants, I've had fake palm trees on my patio in the summer only after finding out how much space they take in my house in the winter. As far as vases and pottery, I like dried flowers and grasses. Buy bundles At HomeGoods, Michael's, or on Amazon and store them flat in cellophane. You'll always have the makings for something new if the mood strikes you.



Photo Credit: The Design Twins

One of the simplest tricks up my sleeve is to bring the outdoors in. If you don't grow spring bulbs, fear not. Your local grocery store or nursery is flooded with them and after Easter they are marked down to make room for their summer plants and flowers. Have some fun and get creative with a variety of vases and containers. And don't overlook the potted flowers in the stores as you can plant the bulbs once they die off.



My indoor potted plants keep me sane in the cold winter months, anything green and alive lifts my spirits. I don't have a lot of space for large plants but I've learned that I can tuck them into spaces as a backdrop as you see here in our family room. Once the weather gets warmer and you open your windows, just watching your guy moving with the breeze will make your heart sing!

Living on a bay gives me the gift of seeing some beautiful creatures in their natural habitat. Here I was able to get a snap from my patio not only of a blue heron, but also our menagerie of turtles sunning themselves on a neighbor's dock. One spring a few years ago I was sitting in front of a warm fire as the



light waned with the setting sun. I keep the blinds open in hopes I'll see something nocturnal (I know, I'm weird). As luck would have it, Crazy Dog Poppy started to bark relentlessly by the floor-to-ceiling windows. Sure enough, a baby opossum. It just sat blinking at us for about five minutes and then crept away to wherever it lived ... hopefully not under my shed. And just the other night I stood in front of my kitchen sink having a glass of water when I saw the large-ish shape of some sort of animal, and then another behind it. Raccoons! Just strolling by like nobody's business. Funny thing though, I was at my home in Chicago and they were passing by right on the sidewalk. The sidewalk!! If there had been a red light they probably would have stopped. And again, I hope they don't live under my shed.

So moving on to recipes for this month ...



Marinara Topped Polenta over Mixed Greens

If you haven't noticed, I try to share recipes that coincide with the seasons. Why give you a recipe for Beef Stew in mid summer? Or a cold pasta salad in the dead of winter? Anyway, May is not an easy one. Not yet warm and summery, nor the type of weather for comfort food. I looked through my imaginary recipe box and decided I'd like to share some easy but delicious salads that aren't your average go-to. Of course you can incorporate them into your summer menu and enjoy them al fresco, but I think they are very interesting and I feel good about creating my own take on new and old recipes. Most of all, they are simple to make.

Ingredients:

1 roll of prepared polenta (find this in the Italian section of your store)
1 T olive oil
1 15 oz jar of marinara sauce
4 c mixed greens (spinach, arugula, butter lettuce for me)
1 T olive oil + 1 t (divided)
1 T of Italian seasoning (I prefer my own blend of oregano, rosemary, and

thyme)

1/4 c grated Parmesan cheese
Salt & Pepper to taste

Directions:

Slice the log of polenta into 1/4 inch pieces. Saute in a pan with 1 T of olive oil until lightly browned and crispy on both sides. Remove to a plate and cover with foil to retain heat. Meanwhile, heat the marinara sauce. While doing this, add a splash of olive oil to the greens in a large bowl along with the seasonings, toss, and then divide amongst 4 plates. Place a few slices of the warm polenta on each plate and top with a large dollop of marinara. Add S&P to taste and add a good amount of Parmesan over the dish. Enjoy! Serves 4



Simple & Classic Wedge Salad

A wedge salad is just what it implies; a wedge of iceberg lettuce usually topped with a blue cheese dressing. Bacon is often included in the mix, but over time all sorts of varieties of this classic have been served. So here is mine. It's so simple to make it's almost horrifying.

Ingredients:

1 head of iceberg lettuce, loose thin leaves removed
2 celery stalks, cleaned and finely chopped
4 thinly sliced radishes
4 oz pancetta, diced fine*
4 oz goat or feta cheese crumbles
Ranch dressing, homemade or store bought
S&P to taste

Directions:

With a sharp chef's knife, quarter the head of lettuce keeping all the leaves intact. If the center leaves appear too yellow or unappetizing, cut them out carefully. Divide the quarters amongst four plates keeping the wedge shape intact, and scatter the celery and radishes over each one.

In a small skillet over low heat, saute the pancetta until its warmed through. Scatter this as well as the cheese crumbles over the lettuce, drizzle with the ranch dressing, and add a bit of salt and pepper. Serves 4

*Pancetta is similar to bacon but is cured and unsmoked as opposed to bacon that is cured and smoked. And of course, both need to be cooked before eaten. You can find pancetta usually near the cheese section of your grocery store.

Lemon Raspberry Prosecco Floats

This is an adult version of the classic root beer float we loved as kids. But

Our Children

Ready for the last days?

by **SANDY FLEMING**

Ready for the Last Days? Of school, that is? In the next few weeks, most local districts and programs will be winding down. Make the most of this time by helping your child or teen get ready for the exams, the break, and the transition to the next level.

Prep for Projects and Exams

Kids in middle school and high school are likely to have year or semester ending tests to show what they know. Younger children may have big projects to do to cap off the learning done in the last few weeks. It's important for parents to help their students (no matter what their ages) to manage these tasks.

First of all, be sure that you keep up the priority on school work. Just because the year is winding down does not make the learning any less important right now. Life usually gets busier for many families in the spring, and it's harder to keep the focus on homework and academics, but try to keep the priority in place. Don't allow sports practices and games to take the place of doing homework and turning in assignments.

Secondly, help your student with time management. On a daily basis, make sure they are finishing and turning in assignments. Over the next few weeks, help them create a timeline of what projects and large assignments are due and when as well as what tests need studying for, and then parse out the work so it doesn't get left to the last minute. People in general are notorious procrastinators. Kids WILL leave tasks go as long as possible before addressing them. It's up to us adults to teach them better skills. A written timeline or calendar that is visible and usable will help everyone.

And finally, remember that studying for those big tests should not be waiting until the last minute. "Studying" is intended to happen all through the course. Don't buy "My teacher hasn't given us a study guide yet so I can't start studying" as a valid excuse. Students of middle school and high school age should have class notes, printed or digital resource material, and old assignments they can look over. It can be very, very helpful to have your student write down a sentence or two each day about what was covered in each class. Keep it like a journal or a diary, and they will have a built-in study guide! It's not too late to start that – they will have that much more information to work with when they need to prepare for a test.

To create a DIY study guide, start by listing topics covered in class and in readings. Use these as main points in an outline, and add important things to remember about each one as subpoints. Put details like dates, important events, people, vocabulary words, and concepts under each subpoint.

Pay special attention to vocabulary. Chances are good that the teacher has selected important words throughout the class periods, so look back through assignments. List the words and their meanings on separate cards, mix them up and play memory and matching games.

Checking Progress

No matter what the age or stage of your student, the end of the school year is a great time to make sure he or she is on track with learning. There are goals for every grade to accomplish, and they



are cumulative. If your child has weak areas, you'll have all summer long to build the missing skills so the student does not fall behind. Small gaps quickly turn into big ones if unaddressed because next year, the expectations will be higher than they are for this year.

One good way to assess your child's current performance and skills is to look over the Common Core Standards for language arts and for math. You can find all the lists for all the grade levels at <https://corestandards.org/>. No matter what state you are in, these standards form the basis for curriculum at each grade level. Some states have re-ordered them or changed the wording a bit, but all are based on these skills. Look over the standards, and think about if you have seen your student do this successfully. If you don't know, try it out! There are also grade level assessments available free online from places like https://www.mathmammoth.com/complete/place-ment_tests and homeschooling resources like <https://www.homeschooltreasury.com/resources-assessment.html>.

Double check reading levels the next time you are at the library. Find a book that is written at your child's current grade placement level (the librarian can help you if need be). Open it to a page with lots of print and few pictures, and give it the "five-finger test." Have your child read aloud. Put up a finger for each word that is hard for the reader, has a stumble, is misread, or causes a lot of hesitation. If you get to five fingers before the child is done reading the page, the book is probably too difficult for independent reading, and your child may benefit from more in-depth reading assessment to make sure the skill is developing correctly.

Do some writing, too. Have your child write a paragraph if in grades 2-5. Try a 5 paragraph essay in grades 6 and up. The topic does not matter. What you are looking for is if the student uses good spelling, good grammar and mechanics, and sound paragraph structure with topic sentences and supporting details. Look for organization and sentence structure.

Finally, check those standardized testing scores that the school probably sent to you. If you have trouble navigating the summary page, reach out for some help – the teacher, the school office, or even shoot me an email and I'll help you decipher the information. Look to make sure your child's scores are at least in the average or meeting expectations ranges. If not, it's time to look further and dig deeper to find out where the

problems may be. Don't let small skill problems turn into big ones! Take action if there are any weak areas.

Make Summer Plans

Study after study shows that Summer Slide is real. Kids' skills usually regress over summer break, and that puts them at a disadvantage when school begins again in August or September. If your student is facing any challenges at all (i.e. they have any weak skills), make a plan to build those missing skills over summer time while the rest of the students are standing still. It's the perfect time to gain ground in many ways because the target you want to hit is not moving.

Probably the single most important thing you can do to help your student stay sharp over summer is get them to read. Try signing up for the local library's reading incentive program, or look for a similar program at your favorite bookstore or online. Set a goal for a number of books to read or an amount of time to spend reading each day or week and stick to it. It doesn't even matter much WHAT

kids read. Just time spent reading alone is a huge plus for keeping the brain active. Make it even better by setting up some way for the student to respond or interact about the book. This can be as simple as telling you about what's going on in the text, or you can try a book project of some sort, like writing a review or making a poster about it.

If there are weak skill areas, check out commercial "bridge" type books that review grade level academic skills from the grade your student just completed. Make sure to look at the number of pages and "assign" enough each day to get through the book by the end of summer vacation. If you have concerns that this won't be enough to keep the skills in practice or to build the weak areas, consider talking to a tutor to get some extra help.

And bring academics into everyday activities. Get your child reading directions, recipes, instructions, and so forth. Write letters and keep a journal. Have them make math calculations about how much money will be needed for an outing, or how much flour is needed to double the cookie recipe. Measure and sort and classify and apply all the skills that he or she has been learning about this past year in school. Let them see you applying reading, writing, and math skills in everyday life, too. The main goal is to put those skills they are learning into practice so they can see connections between school and everyday life.

Keeping brains active all summer long and positioning your student for success next fall can be that easy. With just a little planning, you can help them get a proverbial leg up for the coming school year and still have a fun and relaxing summer.

Sandy Fleming is a writer and educational consultant/tutor living in Edwardsburg. Visit her websites at <https://learningnook.com> and <https://sandyflemingonline.com> to get some great ideas and activities to bring learning home this summer.

JANE

Continued from previous page

it's prettier, more fancy, and has alcohol. Prosecco is actually a sparkling Italian wine which should not be confused with Champagne, which comes from the region of Champagne, France. I recommend LaMarca for its crisp, sparkling taste.

Ingredients:

1 container of lemon sorbet
1 container of raspberry sorbet
1 750mL Prosecco
1 lemon cut into round slices

Directions:

Place a lemon slice in each of four glasses. Add a scoop each of the lemon and raspberry sorbet and top with the Prosecco. Then listen to everyone ooh and ahh over your gorgeous little cocktail!

Next month summer will be in full swing. I'm going to share some appetizers for your company as well as some cocktails that I think you'll all love because they don't need a lot of ingredients and you can make them by the pitcher and who doesn't love that? We will also jump back into Jane's Imaginary Book Club starting off with some beach reads



and why not? So you all have yourselves a great month and Happy Memorial Day!

Jane Boudreau is a writer, columnist, and lifestyle blogger who spends her time on Diamond Lake, in Chicago, and a little mountain place in North Carolina. You can contact her at blndy9@yahoo.com

Field Trip



SIGNS OF SPRING

After teasing us for weeks with temperatures and weather patterns fluctuating from bone-chilling cold to balmy warm, it looks like spring has finally arrived, and with it a host of spring signs that include glorious flowers, roadside greenery and creepy-crawly critters creeping out of their winter hidey holes onto the roads around the county. Let's just hope decent weather is here to stay this time!



LIFT WITH YOUR FINGER, NOT YOUR BACK

Exclusive PowerFold® option lifts decks with the flip of a switch.

- Effortlessly raises FrontMount™ DuraMax® decks
- Access to underside of deck for easy maintenance
- Shortens length to simplify storage and trailering

Visit your dealer today for a demonstration!

Cass Outdoor Power Equipment
62101 M 62
Cassopolis, Mi. 49031
269-445-2231

EQUIPPED WITH
PowerFold
ELECTRIC DECK LIFT



Committed to the Cut.®

Field Trip



Your Summer Fun Center

THE ULTIMATE PACKAGE FOR LIFE ON THE SHORELINE

Enjoy life on the waterfront to the fullest with ShoreStation's complete line of remarkable dock, boat lifts, and canopy equipment. Transform the shoreline into your sanctuary of fun and relaxation with ShoreStation's Classic Dock, boasting seemingly limitless dock styles, layouts, and accessories. ShoreStation's reliably fast freestanding and permanent boat lifts make launching and lifting simple, while also protecting your investment. Three hundred sixty degrees of watercraft protection comes in the form of ShoreStation's REVOLUTION™ Series Canopy and ShoreScreen™ Power Curtain.

Elevate life on the water, experience the ShoreStation difference.

Visit Pier Perfection Inc. Today!
PierPerfection.com



ShoreStation PIER PERFECTION INC. • 1105 E. State St. • Cassopolis, MI • 269.233.2222 • PierPerfection.com

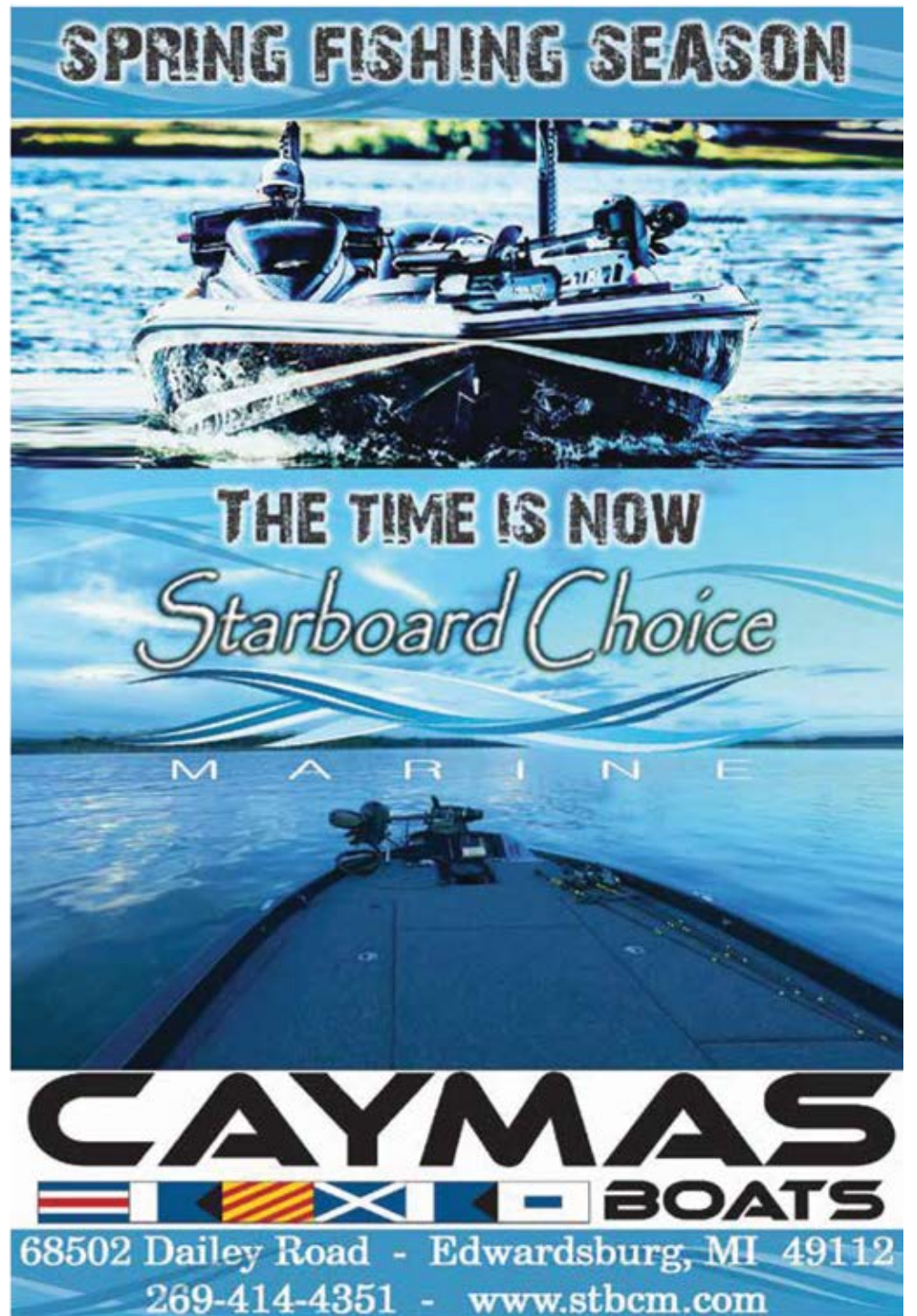
Field Trip




we insure your car.
because some people
never learned to park.
simple human sense.

Union Insurance Agency
Licensed in Michigan and Indiana
15479 US 12 Union, MI 49130
269-641-5995
ashley@unionins.net

Auto-Owners
INSURANCE
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS



SPRING FISHING SEASON

THE TIME IS NOW
Starboard Choice

M A R I N E

CAYMAS
BOATS

68502 Dailey Road - Edwardsburg, MI 49112
269-414-4351 - www.stbcm.com

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.



JERDON
REAL ESTATE, INC.

MYSTATEMLS

Floyd Jerdon & Tom Jerdon
(269) 782-4000 www.jerdon.net

ELK PARK LLC.
Feed Store

60559 Calvin Center Rd.
Vandalia, MI 49095

John Baker
Ph: (269) 476-1775
Cell (574) 333-6877

Now selling live bait
Hours of Operation
M-F 8AM to 6PM
Sat 8AM to 2 PM
Sun Closed

Harding's
Friendly Markets

Cassopolis, Michigan

Carter's Electric Motors
Service and Sales
Specializing in sprinkler pumps

Ph: 476-2220
Cell: 506-6108

63474 Union Rd.
Vandalia, MI

SUN & SHADE AWNING

Retractable Awnings for Decks & Patios
Sales • Service • Installation

269-244-5307
www.sunandshadeawning.com
12291 Bidelman Road • Three Rivers, MI

JL LANDSCAPING
For All Your Landscape Installation Needs

Jim Leach
59818 Decatur Road
Cassopolis, MI 49031
phone/fax: 269.445.2111
email: jl_landscaping@yahoo.com
jllandscaping.com

BOBCAT WORK
RETAINING WALLS
= STONE & BLOCK
BRICK & FLAGSTONE PATIOS
SOD & SEEDING
CONCRETE LANDSCAPE EDGING
FIREWOOD
INSURED

INFINITY
HOME SERVICES LLC
Jim Merkle

269-259-1127 Jim@infinitymichiana.com

Home Watch, Property Checks
Home Management

Maintenance, Repairs
Small Projects

Infinitymichiana.com

Neighbors

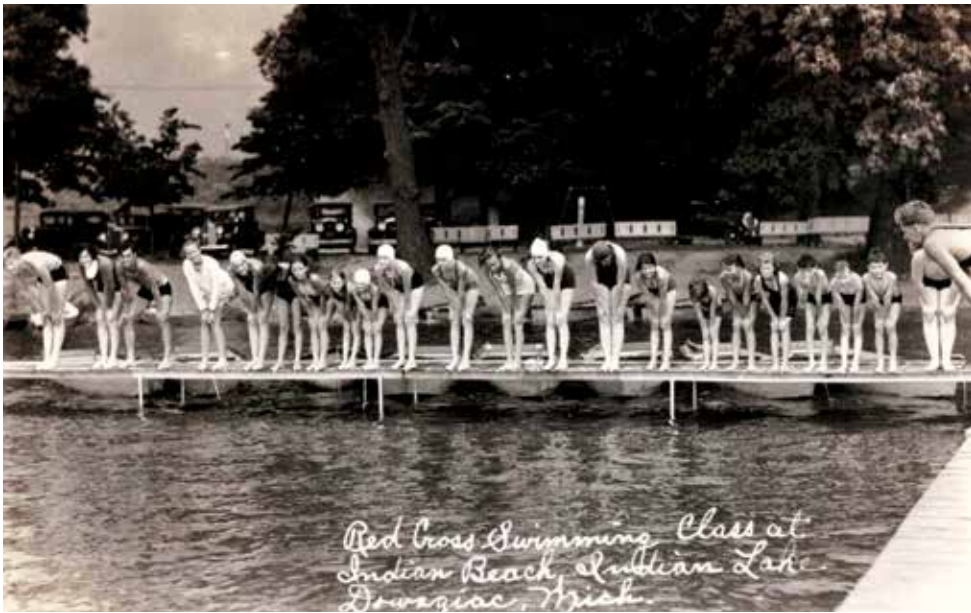
Fred Stein
228-1080
Brazilstein@gmail.com

Eagle Lake Marine
YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN

CHARMAYNE NASCO-DALY

68777 Avenue A
Edwardsburg, MI 49112
Phone: (269) 699-5103
Toll Free: 1-888-EAGLE-LA
(1-888-324-5352)
www.eaglelakemarine.com

Historic Postcards





NORTH STAR

Landscape Design & Installation

Guiding the Way to Beautiful Landscapes!








Call Now to Schedule a **Free** Consultation!

866-445-9100

www.northstarlandscape.net



We Know Insurance.
You Know Us.
Let's Talk.

Patti Badner
Account Executive

Knowing is...a Strong Foundation

Ask us about:

- Personal & Business Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Auto Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Bonds

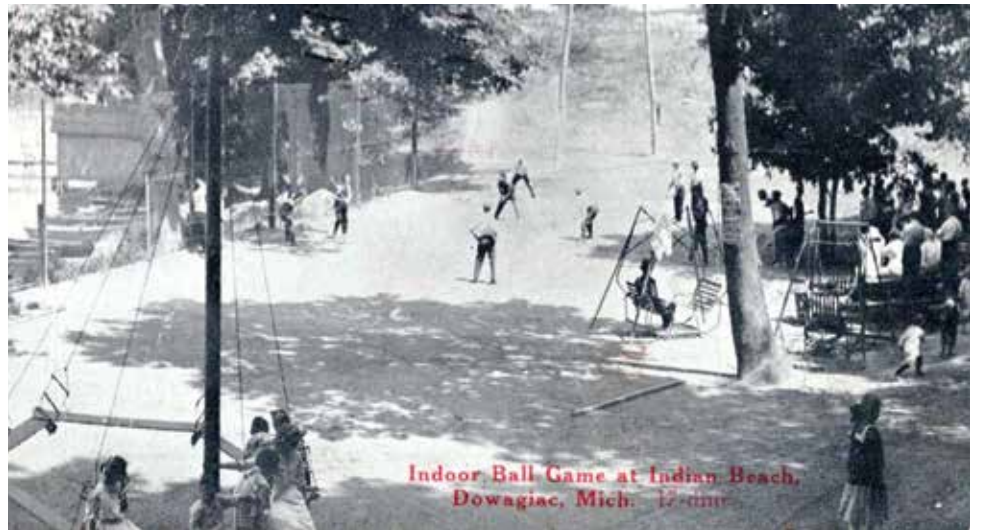
Auto-Owners
INSURANCE
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS



Kemner Iott Benz

269-445-2425 | 800-228-7855 | kemneriottbenz.com

Historic Postcards



CASS COUNTY
Outpatient Therapy Services
CONTINUING COMMUNITY CARE

*Patient-Centered
Care Within Your
Reach!*

269-445-3801

CASS COUNTY MedicalCareFacility 23770 Hospital St. Cassopolis, MI 49031
Casscountyoutpatienttherapy.org

O'Donnell's Docks LLC
Southwest Michigan's Premier Dock & Lift Headquarters

SPRING CLEARANCE SALE
We overbought and need to clear the lot.
25 percent off all in-stock anodized aluminum dock sections. Retail price was \$891/section; 25 percent off the sale price now \$668. We have over 50 used boat lifts in stock!
WE ALSO REPAIR MOST MAJOR LIFT BRANDS
New boat lifts in stock up to 8000 lbs. along with jet ski lifts

DIAMOND LAKE SAILING SCHOOL

Classes Available for All Ages
June 17th thru August 1st
Register at diamondlakesailingschool.com

Small class sizes for ages 7-16 during the day, Monday thru Thursday. Evening classes and private lessons for adults.

CLASSES ARE HELD AT THE DIAMOND LAKE YACHT CLUB
2126 Shore Acres Drive
Cassopolis, Michigan 49031
Come Sail With Us!

Serving you for over 30 years!

Sales and service of all major docks, boatlifts and water front accessories.

For an online quote, go to www.odonnellsdocks.com

12097 M-60 • Jones, MI
269-244-1446
info@odonnellsdocks.com
Authorized Dealer For:

SHOREMASTER lift tech Marine
4EVER ALUMINUM PRODUCTS, INC.
POLYDOCK PRODUCTS
HEWITT LSP
CRAFTLANDER

Nature Notes

Beaver, Wilson's snipe and an albino robin

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

I was surprised to open up my email and see images of a beaver present on the shore of Lake Michigan. But that is what Marc Thrum of Lincoln Township photographed on the evening of April 6 while out walking the shore of Silver Beach County Park.

Beavers typically avoid the Great Lakes in addition to rivers with fast moving currents, and instead prefer slow-flowing streams, rivers and inland lakes with little wave action. Beavers also require large stands of young trees of early successional forest growth, rather than large mature forest trees.

As to why the beaver in Thrum's photos was present at Silver Beach is open to speculation. Perhaps the animal is a young adult out searching for new territory, or possibly it traveled down the St. Joseph River and then down to Silver Beach?

The first Europeans were attracted to Southwest Michigan because of the abundance of the beaver, valued for its fur which was used in the manufacturing of hats in Europe. The French were first to arrive in the 1680s, followed by the British during the 1700s. By the 1810s, some 15-20 years before the first American pioneers arrived here, the beaver was nearly extirpated (locally extinct) in southern Michigan.

The species started to make a comeback in Michigan as a result of hunting and trapping regulations put in place by the Michigan Department of Conservation (now Michigan Department of Natural Resources).

In 1962 a beaver dam was photographed along Snow Road outside of Berrien Springs. In 1971-1972, two beaver lodges were present on July Lake in Buchanan Township. These were destroyed due to claims that beavers were flooding nearby farmland. The species was still rare in the region because just six years later, in 1978, the Michigan DNR stated that beavers were absent from Allegan, Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties.

By the early 1990s there were reports of beavers present at Dayton Lake in Bertrand Township and Mud Lake Bog in Buchanan Township.

During the mid-2000s beavers began to be observed along the St. Joseph River and several inland lakes. Local beaver populations have continued to recover over the last 20 years and the species is now found near most inland streams and lakes. Beavers are present at Sarett Nature Center along the Paw Paw River and have built a lodge at Circle Pond.

The re-establishment of the beaver in Southwest Michigan has been successful, so much that the species is now considered a pest in many locations.

On April 9, I photographed a Wilson's snipe that was standing in mud along a roadway in Royalton Township. Wilson's snipe are common migrants during spring and fall through Southwest Michigan. Snipe are short, stocky shorebirds with long beaks that prefer grassy wetlands.

Most snipe nest to our north in Canada and northern Michigan, however a few stay in Southwest Michigan



Left: Beaver on April 6 on Silver Beach, St. Joseph. Photo by Marc Thrum of Lincoln Township.
 Above: Wilson's snipe on April 9, Royalton Township by Jonathan Wuepper.



Right: Partial albino American robin, April 5, St. Joseph Township. Photo by Sheila Sweers.

to nest. Habitat destruction has severely limited local nesting populations. Southern Michigan is at the southern end of the snipe's breeding range.

The male Wilson's snipe emits a non-vocal song called winnowing, made during its flight display. Some naturalists have described the winnowing of the snipe sound similar to a comical vocalization made by Curly Howard of the Three Stooges.

Most snipe overwinter in the southern US, south into South America. The first migrants arrive around March 24, and migrant snipe numbers peak in mid-April. Most snipes depart Southwest Michigan by May 20. They appear again on average by Labor Day, occasionally southbound snipes are seen in mid to late August. Southbound Wilson's snipe numbers peak locally in late September or early October, and most have departed by November 11. Occasionally Wilson's snipe are seen in Berrien County in winter, around the edges of wastewater reclamation ponds, or out in large, open fields especially where there is shallow, unfrozen water.

On April 5, Sheila Sweers of Str. Joseph Township photographed an interesting looking American robin in her St. Joseph Township backyard. The American robin had an interesting black-and-white plumage pattern, as the individual is partially albino.

M/H

McGann Hay

FUNERALS | CREMATIONS | GATHERINGS
SINCE 1842

Granger Chapel

• Large Rooms • Children's Room
• Spacious Cafe/Lounge

574-232-1411

www.mcgannhay.com

"The perfect location between Michigan and Indiana"

Local History

Prospect Hill Cemetery & Albert P. Anderson

Provided by Jonathan Wuepper
Manager Local History Branch
Cass District Library

On Saturday, June 8, from 11 am-1:30 pm, Dr. Thomas Henthorn of the University of Michigan - Flint and students will lead a program and workshop on repairing and cleaning damaged headstones at Prospect Hill Cemetery, Cassopolis, Michigan. This program is co-sponsored by the Cass District Library Local History Branch and the Village of Cassopolis.

Volunteers are welcome to attend and participate for free, but must register beforehand. To register, please call 269-357-7823 or email Jonathan Wuepper, manager of the Local History Branch at jwuepper@cass.lib.mi.us. Around 20 additional people will be able to participate, that number is based on the available number of sets of cleaning supplies.

On April 15, Dr. Henthorn made a preliminary visit to Cassopolis to work out logistics, meeting with some staff of the Village of Cassopolis and myself. We identified a group of headstones for cleaning and repair which are located within the original plat (original portion) of Prospect Hill Cemetery that was laid out in the 1830s. It is this section of the cemetery in which time and the elements have taken their toll on the old marble headstones.

One of the gravesites we intend to clean and restore is that of Albert Phipps Anderson. Readers of Neighbors may recall I ran Anderson's Civil War diary in installments from September 2006 to April 2007, being very popular with readers.

Albert P. Anderson was born February 19, 1841 in Cassopolis and lived on the family farm just south of the village limits. On September 14, 1861 he answered the call for volunteers to help suppress the Rebellion and enlisted on Company L of the 2nd Michigan Cavalry, at Niles, for three years. His rank was Corporal.

Anderson engaged in several battles in the western theater of war in 1862, and was shot through the neck on July 1 or 2, 1862 (reports conflict as to the exact date) while out skirmishing with the enemy near Booneville, Mississippi. Albert Anderson succumbed to his wound on July 3, 1862 in the General Hospital at Rienzi, Mississippi.

Albert Anderson's remains were brought back to Cassopolis by his older and only brother, Thomas W. Anderson, where they were interred in the village cemetery (now Prospect Hill Cemetery).

Albert and Thomas were the sons of Samuel F (1803-1877) and Mahala Phipps Anderson (1807-1884). Mr. and Mrs. Anderson came to Cass County in 1836, where they

Upcoming Cemetery Program and Workshop, June 8, 2024. Will clean-repair several grave-stones in Prospect Hill Cemetery, including Civil War grave of Albert P. Anderson



Above: Marble gravestone of Albert P. Anderson, Prospect Hill Cemetery. The local chapter Grand Army of the Republic held services at the gravesite for at least 50 years. The GAR Chapter was named Albert Anderson Post No. 157.

Above right: Albert Phipps Anderson, 1841-1862, of LaGrange Township. Served in Company L, Second Michigan Cavalry. Died on July 3, 1862 in Mississippi from wounds received in battle two days before. Photo taken circa 1861-1862.

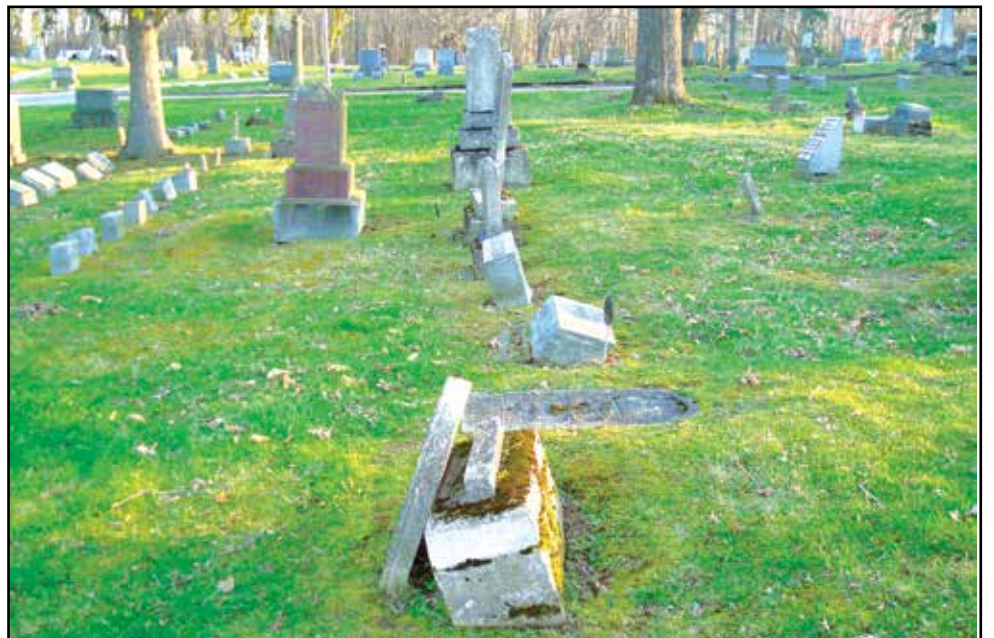
Right: (a) Row of gravestones, Prospect Hill Cemetery, Cassopolis scheduled to be cleaned and repaired on June 8, 2024 by University of Michigan students and local volunteers.

settled in the hamlet of Cassopolis until 1838, when they moved to the farm located just south of town. In addition to the boys, the family also included Mary and Caroline (Carrie).

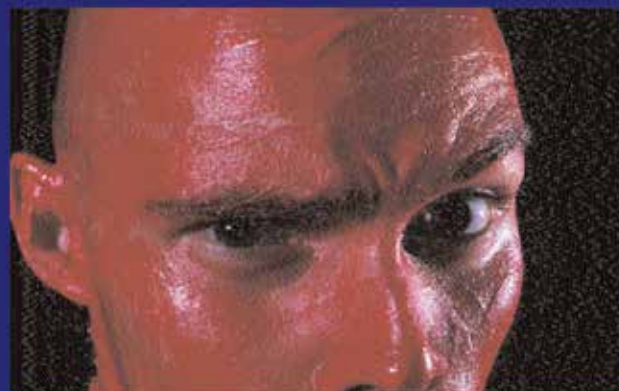
The family temporarily moved back to New York State, as they are shown on the New York State Census of 1855. But were back at the Cass County farm by 1860.

The Andersons became a highly respected family in Cass County. Thomas W. became a physician and practiced in Berrien Springs, Berrien County.

Note that on June 8, we will clean and repair several old grave-stones of several families in addition to some belonging to the Anderson family.



HEY I'M WORKIN' HERE!



For advertising that works ...
call Fred at 228-1080

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Boats, Marinas, Piers, Sports

Apollo Marine..... 4..... 423-6011
<http://www.apollomarine.net>
 Diamond Lake Sailing..... 15..... n/a
<http://www.diamondlakesailingschool.com>
 Eagle Lake Marine..... 13..... 699-5103
<http://www.eaglelakemarine.com>
 Hampshire Golf..... 17..... 782-7476
<http://www.hampshire36.com>
 O'Donnell's Docks..... 15..... 244-1446
<http://www.odonnellsdocks.com>
 Pier Perfection..... 2, 11..... 233-2222
<http://www.pierperfection.com>
 Pro Dock..... 18..... 447-4796
<http://www.prodock.com>
 Starboard Choice..... 12..... 414-4351
<http://www.STBCM.com>

Construction, Home Improvement & Repair

Bill's Roof Repair..... 5..... 591-57800
<http://www.billsroofrepair.com>
 BLT Mechanical..... 18..... 476-4114
 Bolt Laserworks..... 9..... 800-438-2658
<http://www.boltlaserworks.com>
 Carter Motors..... 13..... 476-2220
 Cass Outdoor..... 6, 10..... 445-2231

Hearth & Home..... 18..... 800-769-3031
<http://www.hearthandhome-sb.com>
 Imperial Furniture..... 18..... 800-884-5020
<http://www.imperialfurniture-dowagiac.com>
 Infinity Home Services..... 15..... 259-1127
<http://www.infinitymichiana.com>
 Saugatuck Gallery..... 17..... n/a
 Sun and Shade Awnings..... 13..... 244-5307
<http://www.sunandshadeawnings.com>

Food, Restaurants, Markets

Hardings..... 13..... 445-2607
 Jake's Country Meats..... 6..... 445-3020
<http://www.jakescountrymeats.com>

Lawn/Landscaping

JL Landscaping..... 13..... 445-2111
<http://www.jlandscaping.com>
 New Leaf Landscaping..... 5..... 462-0966
<http://www.newleaflandscapesmichigan.com>
 Northstar Landscaping..... 14..... 445-9100
<http://www.northstarlandscape.net>
 Turf Services..... 12..... 782-6990

Medical/Health

Cass COA..... 6..... 445-8110
<http://www.casscoa.org>

Cass Medical Care Facility..... 15..... 445-3801
<http://www.ccmcf.org>

Real Estate

Dennis Bamber..... Insert..... 574-532-3808
<https://dennisbamber.cressyeverett.com/>
 Jan Lazzara Team..... 3..... 574-532-8001
<http://www.janlazzara.com>
 Jerdon Real Estate..... 13..... 782-4000
<http://www.jerdon.net>
 Lake Life Realty Group..... 20..... 445-8877
<http://www.thelakelife.com>
 Michigan Lakes Team..... 19..... 663-7700
<http://www.michiganlakesteam.com>

Misc.

Elk Park Feed Store..... 13..... 476-1775
 Kemner Iott Benz Insurance..... 14..... 445-2425
<http://www.kemneriott.com>
 McGann Hay Funeral Home..... 14..... 574-232-1411
<http://www.mcgannhay.com>
 THK Law..... 15..... 445-1818
<http://www.thklaw.com>
 Union Insurance..... 12..... 641-5995
<http://www.unionsins.net>

Imperial Furniture
 D O W A G I A C
 Family Owned Since 1962
Furnishings for your Home and Cottage
 Living Room • Bedroom • Dining Room • Mattresses • Unique Accessories
 Gifts & Home Decor • Special Orders Always Welcomed
 57530 M 51 S Dowagiac, MI 49047 • HOURS: M-F 9-5, Sat 9-3
 (269) 782-5020 | www.imperialfurniture-dowagiac.com
 800-884-5020

HEARTH & HOME
 DESIGN CENTER, INC.
Drew Herendeen
 Hearth & Home Design Center, Inc.
 51129 IN-933
 South Bend, IN 46637
 drew@hearthandhome-sb.com
 hearthandhome-sb.com
 Office: 574-272-3030
 Where great ideas begin & great products are found!

Making the climate comfortable since 1987
BLT Mechanical
 James Baker - Owner
269-476-4114
HVAC A/C HEATING
 GEOTHERMAL



PRO DOCK
 DOCK, LIFT, AND BARGE SERVICES
INC.
 269.447.4796
 prodockinc.com

BULMANN DOCK & LIFT
 Lift your lakefront expectations.
 www.bulmanndock.com



I love it when my kitchen smells good



ast evening a little before I turned in for the night, I walked through the kitchen. The lights were low, the room was warm and quiet, my mind was wandering; far afield, to tomorrow's weather or how much work I had to do over the weekend or something else

that was unfocused and unimportant, when I noticed something that popped me out of my daydream and grounded me with a backside in the dirt kind of flop.

My kitchen smelled good.

Not just good, it smelled Italian good; the scent of basil and oregano and rosemary left wafting in air long after we'd eaten the last nibbles of whatever we'd cooked for dinner. Out of nowhere my mouth started to water and I had to repress the urge to pop open the fridge door and stand staring at the Saran wrapped leftovers illuminated by the magic light (does anyone know if the light really stays off all the time after you've shut the door?).

I resisted the scented bait that over the years has compounded pounds of pasta around my love handles and kept on walking toward wherever I was going when I was so vividly distracted, but my mind wandered on in an almost dreamlike journey to try to make sense of the scents of my past.

Growing up in an Italian family I was introduced to the rich aromas of Calabria at an early age. When I was a lad my mom, although not of Italian descent, was the world's best producer of everything Italian. Every kid in the neighborhood used to show up at our table on spaghetti night, lured into the room by the luxurious scent of simmering marinara that spread in the early evenings and infused the entire south side of the city. Next thing you knew, the Chianti was poured (dad was a big fan of dry, red Italian and Sicilian wines), the heel was torn off the Gonella bread by hand, cloth napkins were tucked into the tops of our grass-stained tee shirts and forks were twirled into the Parmesan capped mountain of steaming pasta.

We didn't talk much on spaghetti nights. Maybe a quick "how was your day," or a brief discussion of how the Cubs fared against the dreaded Cardinals in the afternoon game.

We weren't there to talk.

We were there to eat.

And to savor every bite; to slurp the sauce-sloppy spaghetti into our mouths like a vacuum sweeping blades of grass off the carpet by the back door mat.

To taste and feel and smell the food of the Gods, To gorge and sate our young lustful appetites and to totally immerse ourselves in the wondrous aromas of youthful surrender. And abetting the explosion of tang that roused our taste buds to action, the subtle aromas of fresh herbs sentenced our olfactory nerves to a lifetime of awe and wonder that have stayed with me across all of the miles and through all of the years of my life.

No matter where I am on any given day, whenever I am treated to the scent of fresh Italian herbs stewing and steaming and streaming to my nostrils, my mind wanders off to that dinner table of my youth.

The mental image conjured by those scents is formidable, an inescapable force that rouses my hunger and forces my hand toward a mental fork and spoon.

More parmesano, my brain cries out. More vino rosso, per favore.

Forget the day's cares.

Forget politics and ball scores and the ripped out knee of my new blue jeans.

Forget hanging with the guys out by the dilapidated garage where my brother's busted up old Studebaker was still needing an oil change.

Forget all that.

There's spaghetti to be eaten somewhere.

Of course my mom cooked a lot of other things; she made a lot of food for my brothers and I.

All of it was delicious (she made a really mean apple pie). Some of it was healthy (eat those butter beans, they're good for you). Some not so much (mom used a lot of ingredients that would spin the head of my cardiologist around like that little girl in the Exorcist). Some was just filling (three growing boys always seemed to need a lot of filling up back in those days).

But nothing compared to spaghetti night.

Unlike many of the Italian immigrants in the neighborhood, spaghetti night was not on a specific day. No taco Tuesdays, no Salisbury steak Saturdays, no Manicotti Mondays.

But there was no mistaking spaghetti night.

For days before it would build.

One day mom would start with the tomatoes. Some got peeled. Some got diced. Some got smashed.

All of them went into the big cast iron pot that lived on our stove top for my entire youth.

Add a bit of red wine, turn on the gas just enough to simmer and walk away for a while.

The next day was meatball making day. Ground beef (no one used turkey in those days), maybe a little ground pork. Bread crumbs. Eggs. Mix in a few fresh herbs (but save a bunch of those for later so they wouldn't cook out while the pot simmered).

Over the next couple days more goodies would go in. Sometimes some leftovers like chicken or pork steak. Sometimes some pepperoni or prosciutto or salami.

Sometimes some bell peppers or zucchini.

Then simmer. Simmer. Simmer.

And with the simmering came the scents.

Scents to arouse my senses.

Scents to beckon me away from being the star South Fellows Street sandlot shortstop.

Scents to call me home before the street lights came on and all the neighborhood would move indoors.

And then after days of enduring the siren song of the simmering pot of sauce, then, finally, spaghetti night would fall from the ceiling right onto the dining room table, and the feast would begin.

There are few memories of my youth that are as vivid, as welcome and as enjoyable as my memories of spaghetti night.

I admit, try as I will, I can't make spaghetti as well as my mother. Our oldest daughter comes as close as anyone in the family, but alas, my spaghetti efforts, good though I'm told it is, lacks something, some mysterious "mom" element, maybe.

But I'll keep trying.

Tomatoes, meatballs, red wine, zucchini, salami, and whatever else I might find in the fridge.

And don't forget the herbs.

Fresh basil and oregano and rosemary and a bit of Italian parsley.

And simmer. Simmer. Simmer.

Open the wine. Break the bread.

It's spaghetti night.

And for days my kitchen will smell Italian good.

Memories Made On The
Lake Will Last
A Lifetime

The Michigan Lakes™
REAL ESTATE TEAM



Broker/
Owner

Michelle
Scott

Call/Text: (574) 286-9050
Email: Mj.scott@comcast.net
Also Licensed in IN



Managing
Broker
(Sister Lakes)

Managing
Broker
(Grand Haven)

Call us at (269) 663-7700 for a **FREE Waterfront Property Market Analysis** and see how our **Chicago Marketing Plan** benefits **YOU**

(269) 462-0783
Kellymichiganlakes@gmail.com



Kelly
Smit

(773) 454-0528
PettersonProperties@gmail.com



Darren
Petterson

(708) 217-5087
ListedByLMP@gmail.com



Laura
Mitrick

(574) 904-1213
Ajurkovic44@gmail.com



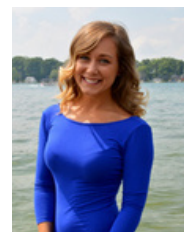
Angi
Jurkovic

(269) 207-1937
Rick @ Michiganlakesteam.com



Rich
Olson

(269) 462-5758
Haleymichiganlakes@gmail.com



Haley
Richter

(574) 292-2179
SallyL04 @ Comcast.net



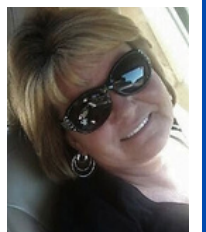
Sally
Leonard

(574) 315-4283
Dyjscott @ gmail.com



Dylan
Scott

(269) 462-2290
Sellingthedream711@gmail.com



Dawn
Russo

10 Agents that specialize
in waterfront properties
on 120+ lakes here in
Southwest, MI

Superior Digitalized Marketing
to Chicago for our Sellers and
Invaluable Information for our
Buyers

60+ years of
experience selling
Waterfront Properties
only

www.MichiganLakesTeam.com



Exclusively serving **SELLERS & BUYERS** of Michigan Lake property.

SELL WITH PAUL

The Southwest Michigan lake home market is experiencing buyer demand at levels never seen before. Now is the time to sell your home with Lakefront Broker Paul DeLano.

Paul DeLano is Southwest Michigan's **number one lake property Realtor** since 2012. He employs a proven digital marketing system that targets Chicago and local buyers to your home, and has expertise in evaluating the best offer for your home in today's unique market, while generating the highest return on your investment.



PAUL DELANO
Owner / Lakefront Broker

269.445.8877
Paul@TheLakeLife.com

BUY WITH PEGGY AND MATT

A buyer's-only agent of lake properties, Peggy Gonyon has unsurpassed expertise as a certified Resort and Second Home Property Specialist at The Lake Life.

Agents Peggy Gonyon and Matt DeLano focus on one area of realty: **they only serve lake home buyers.** Peggy and Matt possess extensive knowledge of Southwest Michigan's lakes and lake communities, and have the network and the know-how to position your offer above the competition.



PEGGY GONYON
Lakefront Buyer Specialist

269.445.8876
Peggy@TheLakeLife.com



MATT DELANO
Lakefront Buyer Specialist

269.445.8872
Matt@TheLakeLife.com

The
LAKE LIFE
REALTY GROUP

TheLakeLife.com

69150 Sunset Boulevard • Union, Michigan 49130

Information provided by the Southwest Michigan Association of Realtors, with respect to sales of inland lake properties in Cass, Berrien, St Joseph Counties, MI, from 1.1.12 to 1.31.23.
When an agent represents the buyer and seller, 200% credit is granted. Results are for individual Realtors and exclude Realtors that group results through a team.

