

Neighbors

AUGUST 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)

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

www.cassneighbors.com
sailorphil@philvitale.com
Brazilstein@gmail.com



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Field Trip:

**Indiana
Dinosaur
Museum**

SOUTH BEND, IN

Pages 10-12



Regional News

Cassopolis summer events

The village of Cassopolis has announced the following summer events:

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).

Dutch oven cooking expert to speak at Edwardsburg Museum

Starla DeMoss, a recent transplant to Edwardsburg, will talk about the many aspects of Dutch oven cooking and its place in American history, particularly pioneers, when she speaks on Aug. 22 at the Edwardsburg Museum.

A native of Casper, Wyoming, DeMoss grew up in Cheyenne, and left there after high school in 1973. She met her first husband in high school, and they had four children. He was in the United States Air Force and they lived in Arizona. After the marriage ended, she returned to Cheyenne where she married Ed DeMoss, who was also in the U.S. Air Force. After he left the military, they moved to Pender, Nebraska, where Ed was a refrigeration supervisor. They remodeled a house and Starla became a seasoned gardener and mastered food preservation practices. She later returned

to school to become a licensed practical nurse (LPN) and worked in the medical field for several years. After her husband died in 2017, she traveled extensively to visit her children.

She moved to Edwardsburg in 2022 to continue to be near her daughter and family, who relocated from San Diego, California, to Elkhart.

In the 1990s, DeMoss attended Being an Outdoors Woman (BOW) camps, where she studied various subjects, including canoeing, archery, native plants, and Dutch oven cooking. She cooks with several stackable cast iron pots over fires of hot coals and has several recipes that she will share during her presentation (but no, she will not cook over hot coals in the museum).

Fall Festival at Newton House

The Cass County Historical Society is excited to announce its annual Fall Festival on Sunday, October 13 from Noon to 5 pm on the historical grounds at the Newton House, 20689 Marcellus Highway, Decatur.

Join them for complimentary cider, popcorn, apples, and cookies while enjoying a variety of activities including hayrides, a petting zoo, and yard games. They will be holding their second annual kids costume contest, and new this year, their first kids pie-eating contest. There will also be guided tours of the Newton House, live music and a silent auction. Local artisans will be showcasing their talents, and Civil War reenactors will be on site with a cannon firing demonstration.

The group also welcomes Dowagiac native and author Ron Kirkwood, who will be in town for readings and auto-

graphs of his new book on Gettysburg's George Spangler Farm.

For more information, visit the Facebook pages for either the Newton House or the Cass County Historical Society.

Dowagiac Farm & Artisan Market

The city of Dowagiac will host a Farm & Artisan Marker on Wednesdays and Saturdays until October 5, from 9 am - 2 pm on the grounds of the Dowagiac Area History Museum, 201 E. Division St. In September, the market will be held only on Saturdays. The market features produce and fruit grown in Cass and Berrien counties, along with booths of handcrafted merchandise.

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 Aug. 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.

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.

Bubble gum, toys highlight season

Life in America's small towns conjures up baseball games and other team sports, board games, jacks and marbles, apple pie, bubble gum, bobbys, hot dogs, denim, t-shirts, and bicycles. There is no







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Regional News

shortage of those items in the Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum's first exhibit of 2024, Small Town Americana, which debuted in May.

Edwardsburg 1900-1920, closes on Halloween (Oct.31), and Christmas in Toyland, from Nov. 5 through Dec. 14.

The last two are still in the planning stages, but display chairs Laura Jamrog and Judy Montgomery will pull items from the museum inventory for Edwardsburg 1900-1920. That exhibit will showcase the collection of Edwardsburg photos taken by George Andrus of The Edwardsburg Argus in the first two decades of the 20th Century. George and Charles Andrus, along with their grandfather, Henry Andrus owned the Argus. The collection of about 350 photographs, was donated in four large binders by Charles Andrus' son, Dean, soon after the museum was founded. They are images of people, buildings, streets, animals, and businesses, mostly in the Village of Edwardsburg. They will be complemented by various documents and items such as sheet music, and utensils, as well as mannequins outfitted in popular clothing styles from those decades.

The last exhibit, Christmas in Toyland, will be a colorful exhibit that will be, as Jamrog said, "all about being a kid again." All Christmas trees will be decorated, with toys everywhere throughout the museum rooms.

The museum will close on Dec. 14, and re-open in mid-May, 2025.

Back to School, Back in Time
"Back to School, Back in Time" is scheduled for August 17, from 1 to 3:30 pm at the Red Brick School House on the



curve on M-62 South and Brick Church Road in Cassopolis, Michigan.

This event is an opportunity for members of the community of all ages to tour the school, learn about the history of one room schools in Michigan, sing some old school songs and play some games that were popular when one room schools were in use.

Additionally, there will be an art project and a chance for students to experience a school lesson using the school learning tools from the past. Adults can enjoy sharing and listening to the personal stories of former students of Red Brick School and other Cass County School Houses.

"Back to School, Back in Time" is being hosted by the Cass County Historical Commission (CCHS) with the help of local business and corporate dona-

tions as well as many volunteers. The event and parking are free to the public. For further information, see the CCHS Facebook page, email: cchistoricalscociety@gmail.com or phone 269-228-1328.

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.

AUG. 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.

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Regional Calendar

AREA EVENTS

AUG. 12-17 - Berrien County Youth Fair, Berrien Springs

AUG. 15-17 - Bluegill Frolic, Marcellus

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

AUG. 17 - Cassopolis Rock the Block summer concert series

AUG. 17 - Dowagiac Rod & Roll Classic Auto Show, 10 am - 4 pm, Front Street

AUG. 31 - Fireworks, Lions Park, Sister Lakes

SEPT. 15 -21 - St. Joseph County Fair, Three Rivers

SEPT. 17 - Cass County Historical Society celebration of trains, Dowagiac Depot, 6:30 pm, ccmihistoricalsociety@gmail.com

SEPT 15-21 - St. Joseph County Grange Fair, Centreville

SEPT 26-29 - Four Flags Area Apple Festival, Niles

SEPT 21 - Apple Fest & Craft Show, Coldwater

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

OCT. 12 - Under the Harvest Moon Festival, Dowagiac

OCT. 12 -Harvest and Wine Festival, New Buffalo

OCT. 13 - Annual Fall Festival of the Cass County Historical Society, Newton House, Decatur, ccmihistoricalsociety@gmail.com

NOV. 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

T'AI CHI WITH ALYSE KNEPPLE, MASON/ UNION BRANCH. MONDAYS: 11 am. Join Alyse Knepple at the Mason/Union Branch for T'ai Chi. T'ai Chi is a series of gentle physical exercises and stretches. Alyse will offer a free introductory class, followed by four weekly classes which will cost \$40.

STORYTIME, HOWARD BRANCH, TUESDAYS: 10:30 am. Head to the Howard Branch for a fun and exciting storytime each Tuesday! Foster a love for reading in your little one by creating lasting memories at storytime! Please contact Rhonda Belcher for more details at 269-487-9214.

STORYTIME, MAIN BRANCH, THURSDAYS: 11 am. Join Youth Services Librarian, Stephanie Knepple in a new story, song and craft each week at the Main Branch. Foster a love for reading in your little one by creating lasting memories at storytime! All ages are welcome. Please contact Stephanie Knepple for more details at 269-487-9215.

ART CONTEST, MASON/UNION BRANCH, ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS: STARTS AUGUST 1. Create an original work of art that reflects a family-friendly theme using any medium (crayons, pencils, markers, paint, mixed medium, etc.) Please print your first and last name, age category and phone number on the back of your entry. Entries can be any size up to a standard poster (22"x 28"). Prizes will be awarded for each age category. Entries must be turned in at any branch by Saturday, September 7 at 1:00pm or Tuesday, September 10 by 5:00pm at Mason/Union. Art Contest Reception will be held at the Mason/

Union Branch on September 14 at 1:00pm. Age Categories: Preschool - Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6, Grades 7-8, Grades 9-12 and Adult.

ANNUAL BOOK SALE, MAIN BRANCH, JULY 31 - AUGUST 2: 9 am - 5 pm. The Main Branch is having its annual book sale! Be sure to stop by to find new and gently used books, there is something for everyone! All books are \$0.25 and all media is \$.50. August 2 is \$1.00 bag sale day, bags will be provided.

MATH SCOOPS, ALL BRANCH LOCATIONS, AUGUST 5- 31. Get rewarded for learning! During the month of August join Math Scoops, an ice cream math club. Sign up at any branch location during the month of August and bring your completed packet back for an ice cream treat. This program is intended for those in preschool through grade 6 to help practice math skills before the new school year begins.

TAKE AND MAKE: GET CRAFTY! EDWARDSBURG BRANCH, BEGINS MONDAY, AUGUST 5: BRANCH HOURS. Stop on in to the Edwardsburg Branch for a craft closet cleanout and pick from a treasure trove of craft supplies and kits! These kits vary in availability and are on a first-come, first serve basis while supplies last.

MUG PAINTING WITH BEE CRAFTY* HOWARD BRANCH, MONDAY, AUGUST 19: 6 - 8 pm. CDL and BeeCrafty of Niles have teamed up to help you unleash your creativity and paint a custom mug! Mugs will be fired at BeeCrafty and brought back to the Howard Branch for pick up at a later date. This program is intended for ages 8-17 and requires a payment of \$5 to participate. Please call Rhonda Belcher at 269-487-9214 to register and for payment details.

STAR LAB PLANETARIUM* MAIN BRANCH, THURSDAY, AUGUST 15: SESSION 1: 2 pm, SESSION 2: 2:30 pm, SESSION 3: 3 pm, SESSION 4: 3:30 pm. Explore the wonders of the night sky from the comfort of the Cass District Library!

Enjoy an interactive and educational program featuring stories and facts about the constellations. Registration is required, please select a session time and call Stephanie Knepple at 269-749-1384 to register.

VILLAGE BOOK CLUB, EDWARDSBURG BRANCH, THURSDAY, AUGUST 15: 5:30 pm. Village Book Club meets every third Thursday of the month at 5:30 pm. Join us for a lively book discussion of The Stranger in the Woods: the Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit by Michael Finkel. Contact Molly Harwood at 574-314-6454 for more details.

AUTHOR VISIT: DENISE HALGREN, EDWARDSBURG BRANCH, MONDAY, AUGUST 19: 10 am - noon. Author Denise Halgren, an Edwardsburg native, will be at the Edwardsburg Branch for a special storytime and meet and greet event for her new book The Crazy Cat Lady. Books will be available for purchase and personalization, accompanied by fun activities for all.

SAVAGE READERS BOOK CLUB, SAVAGE BEAN COFFEE CO., TUESDAY, AUGUST 20: 9 am. Enjoy a fresh cup of coffee and book discussion every third Tuesday of the month! Join Savage Readers Book Club hosted by Cass District Library and Savage Bean Co. Contact Stephanie Knepple at 269-749-1384 for more details and the current month title.

INTRO TO CANVA, EDWARDSBURG BRANCH, TUESDAY, AUGUST 20: 5:30 pm. If you volunteer for your school, church, favorite organization, or have a home-based business, you need Canva! Learn about this simple to use free online graphic design service to create Insta and FB ready posts, business cards, brochures, newsletters and more.

For a complete list and description of events visit the library's website at <https://www.cassdistrictlibrary.org/events-programs/>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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Regional Calendar

Dowagiac District Library

Messy Time Fridays! Exploding Planets, August 9, 11 am - noon. Kids of all ages are invited to join us for Messy Time Fridays throughout the summer. Projects and activities might involve paint, chalk, water and other "messy" materials, so please wear older or play clothes. We're often in direct sunlight, so please remember to put sunscreen on before leaving the house.

Teen Matinee Monday, August 12, 3 - 5 pm. Teen Matinee Mondays are for teens 13 through 18 and meet each Monday at 3 pm in the Teen area on the second level of the library.

Preschool Story Time, August 13, 10:30 am. The Dowagiac District Library Preschool Story Time for children 3-5 years old will focus on developing early literacy skills and fine motor skills through listening to one or two stories and participating in fun-filled age appropriate crafts and/or learning activities.

Teen Tuesday: Game Day! August 13, 3 - 4 pm. On Game Days teens will be able to participate in a randomly selected (but age appropriate) board or card game while enjoying a light snack. Winners may receive prizes. Teen Tuesdays are for teens 6th through 12th grade.

Heated Tropes Book Club-The Rule Book, August 15, 6 - 6:45 pm. In August, we will be discussing The Rule Book by Sarah Adams.

Messy Time Fridays! Egg Drop, August 16, 11 am - noon. We're often in direct sunlight, so please remember to put sunscreen on before leaving the house.

Teen Matinee Monday, August 19, 3 - 5 pm.

Preschool Story Time, August 20, 10:30 - 11:30 am.

Teen Tuesday: Arts & Crafts, August 20, 3 - 4 pm. Worry Stones: Teens will have the opportunity to make a worry stone by painting patterns onto smooth stones. The perfect fidget to bring to school.

STEAM for Tweens-Blowing Up Peeps, August 21, 4 - 5 pm. Have you ever fermented a Peeps candy and made it blow up a balloon? Learn how these sugary candies make for an exciting biology and chemistry experiment. Space is limited, so please register by August 19 by calling (269) 782-3826 or email (att: Pam) at dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com

Teen Matinee Monday August 26, 3 - 5 pm.

Preschool Story Time August 27, 2024 10:30 - 11:30 am.

Teen Tuesday: Minute to Win It, August 27, 3 - 4 pm

The Leatherstocking Tales, by James Fenimore Cooper, August 27, 5 - 6 pm. More info email Matt Weston at mweston [at] dowagiacdl.org

TBR Book Club for Teens, August 28, 3 - 4 pm. August Book: Where the Dark Stands Still by A.B. Poranek

Adventures in Bookland Book Club for Kids, August 28, 4 - 5 pm. August Book: Dinosaurs Before Dark by Mary Pope Osborne

The Inkwell Explorers Book Club for Tweens, August 29, 3 - 4 pm. August Book:

Iveliz Explains It All by Andrea Beatriz Arango

Preschool Story Time, September 3, 10:30 - 11:30 am.

Teen Tuesday: BINGO, September 3, 3 - 4 pm. BINGO! "B-4" you say BINGO is boring, give it a try! Winners receive snacks and/or candy prizes!

STEAM for Tweens-Back To School Escape Room, September 4, 4 - 5 pm. Back To School Escape Room: Welcome back to school! After a long summer of relaxing, I am sure your brain is eager to get back into gear and solve some puzzles. During the excitement of the morning, the teacher down the hall has forgotten where she put all of her brand new school supplies. Thankfully, your amazing teacher has set up a series of clues that will reveal the location of the lost school supplies and allow your class to save the day. Can you use teamwork, clues

from the syllabus, secrets hidden around the room, and your brains to figure it out before the bell rings? Space is limited, so please register by August 30 by calling (269) 782-3826 or email (att: Pam) at dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com or fill out the form below

Make & Share Cookbook Club September 5, 5:15- 6:30 pm. In September, we are making recipes from the cookbook Heirloom Kitchen: Heritage Recipes and Family Stories from the Tables of Immigrant Women by Anna Francese Gass. To reserve your spot, call the library or email (Att: Erin) at dowagiaclibrarystaff@gmail.com

For a complete list and description of events visit the library's website at <https://www.dowagiac-dl.org/events>



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Business & Finance

Insurance for your gig

By **Kristen Goodwin**
Kemner, Iott, Benz Agency, an Acrisure Partner

GIG WORK definition: Short-term, freelance tasks instead of permanent jobs; self-employed and manage their own schedule; handle own finances and typically lack traditional employment benefits.

In today's world, many of us have a side hustle, gigs and part time work to go along with our full-time jobs. Some strictly do freelance-type work 100 percent of the time. There are many different types of gig work that people are doing, and as our technology and needs grow, these lines will expand even further. Most of the time with these gigs, we don't think about having insurance unless someone tells us we need it or if we needed it and didn't have it.

Freelancers can benefit from different types of insurance policies to protect themselves and their businesses. Here are some policies that are particularly relevant for freelancers:

● **Liability insurance:** This type of insurance provides coverage for legal costs and damages in case a freelancer is sued for negligence, property damage, or personal injury. It helps protect them from potential financial losses resulting from third-party claims.

● **Health insurance:** Gig workers often do not have access to employer-sponsored health insurance plans. Having individual health insurance coverage is essential for freelancers to ensure they have access to necessary medical care and to protect against high healthcare costs.

● **Disability insurance:** Disability insurance provides income replacement in the event that a freelancer becomes disabled and is unable to work. It helps protect against the loss of income and provides financial security during periods of disability.

● **Professional liability insurance:** Also known as errors and omissions (E&O) insurance, this policy provides coverage for freelancers who provide professional advice or services. It protects against claims of professional negligence, errors, or omissions that may result in financial loss for the client.

● **Business property insurance:** This type of insurance covers the physical assets of a freelancer's business, such as equipment, supplies, and inventory. It provides coverage for damage or loss due to events like fire, theft, or natural disasters.

● **Cyber liability insurance:** With the increasing reliance on digital systems, freelancers may be at risk of cyber attacks, data breaches, or other cyber incidents. Cyber liability insurance helps cover the costs associated with data breaches, including legal fees, notifications to affected parties, and credit monitoring services.

So, if you are a photographer, graphic designer, ride-share or food delivery driver, housekeeper, or do any other

type of gig work, it's important to assess your specific needs and risks and choose insurance policies that provide adequate coverage. Consulting with an insurance

agent or broker can help freelancers navigate the insurance market and find the right policies for their unique circumstances.



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.

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Business & Finance

The housing market in Cass County & SWMI

Cass County's housing market almost mirrored sales in June 2023. Cass County's average selling prices for all types of houses (waterfront and non-waterfront) sky-rocketed 29 percent based on the increase in selling prices for waterfront houses.

When we refer to all or overall housing types, we combine results for waterfront and non-waterfront houses. In June, 50 houses were sold, the same as in June 2023. Sales of waterfront houses increased by one house in June 2024 (11 vs. 10). Non-waterfront houses slipped by one house from sales a year ago (39 vs. 40).

The overall average selling price in June 2024 increased 29 percent to \$366,420 from \$284,176 in June 2023. The overall median selling price in June at \$275,000 was 33 percent higher than the \$207,450 median selling price in June 2023.

The average selling price for waterfront homes soared 65 percent to \$762,121 from \$461,200 in June 2023. The median selling price for waterfront homes increased 44 percent (\$640,000 vs. \$445,000).

In June, the average selling price for non-waterfront houses increased 6 percent to \$254,812 from \$239,920 in June 2023. The median selling price rose 35 percent to \$250,000 from \$185,150 in June 2023.

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

In Cass County, no bank-owned or foreclosed houses were part of all closed transactions in June 2024. The highest percentage in June previously was 9 percent in 2015.

For comparison, the number of bank-owned or foreclosed homes as a percentage of all transactions across all of SWMI stayed at 1 percent as it was in May. The previous lowest percentage was 1 percent in June 2022 and 2021, and the highest percentage in June was 36 percent in 2009.

Halfway through 2024, sales-to-date were down 4 percent from June 2023. June housing sales increased 7 percent above that in May 2024 (241 vs. 226), helping to build the peak selling season. The good news for buyers is that inventory grew 17 percent from June 2023, and average selling prices dropped from prices in May 2024. In the year-over-year comparison, the average and median selling prices in June 2024 dropped below the record-setting prices for June in the year-over-year comparison dating back to 2006.

The number of houses sold in June plunged 15 percent from June 2023 (241 vs. 283); the market hasn't experienced this level of sales in June since 2010. Year-to-date, 1224 houses were sold in June 2024, compared to 1278 houses in June 2023, for a 4 percent decline in sales.

The inventory of houses for sale grew 17 percent above the level available a year ago (889 vs. 760). Due to the lower

sales volume, the months' supply level increased slightly for homebuyers to 5.7 from 4.3-months' supply a year ago. For comparison, in June 2010, there were 3679 houses for sale for a 16.9-months' supply of houses for homebuyers.

The average selling price in June 2024 fell 15 percent to \$349,616 compared to \$411,289 in June 2023. Year-to-date, in 2024, the average selling price in June rose 3 percent to \$358,462 from \$348,227.

The median selling price in June

2024, \$275,000, shrank 3 percent from \$284,500 in June 2023. Year-to-date, the median selling price increased by \$15,000 (\$265,000 vs. \$250,000).

The total dollar volume in June 2024 tumbled 18 percent compared to June 2023 (\$84,257,669 vs. \$102,660,128). The year-to-date total dollar volume slipped 1 percent (\$438,758,422 vs. \$444,977,444).

The Freddie Mac mortgage rate in June was 6.86, down from 7.03 in May for a 30-year conventional mortgage. A year ago, the rate was 6.71.

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Recipes

Best summer recipes from our archives

Here are some of the very best summer recipes from the Neighbor's archives ... hope you have a great summer.

Fresh Mango Guacamole



I've found this wonderful dip in my grocery store but it's not only overpriced, it's a cinch to make yourself. I really love the tanginess the mango makes without being overpowering. It's a colorful dip as well, and it comes together quick. This is a make ahead recipe, too. The key is to save the pit of one avocado and keep it in the container you store the guac in.

Fresh Mango Guacamole

Ingredients:

- 4 avocados, pitted
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 cup mango, diced small
- 1/2 c each chopped red pepper, green onion, and tomato
- 2 T chopped cilantro
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- S & P to taste

Directions:

Smash the avocados in a large bowl with a fork until soft but with a bit of chunkiness. Slowly fold in the remaining ingredients very gently until well combined. Chill at least 1 hour before serving.

Ricotta Lemon Prosciutto Bruschetta



Don't let the idea of using Prosciutto daunt you. It is simply ham that has been cured and sliced thin (handle it carefully as it can tear and shred). I find it in the meat and cheese section of the grocery store. A package can run under \$5.00, but the more you pay, the better quality meat you get. And finally, ricotta cheese is an unsung hero, I'm guilty of using it only in lasagna. Try this recipe and I think you'll come up with new ideas for this exceptional cheese.

Ingredients:

- 1 baguette of good bread, sliced in 1/4 inch pieces
- 1 T olive oil

- 1 c fresh ricotta cheese
- S & P to taste
- 1 lemon, zested*
- 2 T fresh basil, roughly chopped
- 2 T honey

Directions:

Toast the slices of bread in a 450 oven until lightly browned (about 7 minutes) Flip over and drizzle the olive oil on each slice and return to oven until browned.

Meanwhile, zest your lemon*. This simply involves using a cheese grater or vegetable peeler to remove ONLY the yellow part of the lemon. The white section under, or the pith, is very bitter. Chop the pieces until very fine. Mix the zest with the ricotta cheese and add a little salt and pepper, the cheese can be a little bland. (Note: The cheese mix can be made ahead of time and stored in a tightly covered container for a day or two. The bread will get soggy otherwise).

Top the toasted bread slices with the ricotta mixture and prosciutto, sprinkle the basil on each one and then drizzle with the honey. Heavenly. Save some for your guests.

Strawberry Rhubarb Pie



Ingredients:

- Double Pie Crust, homemade or store bought
- 3 cups Strawberries, cut in half or quartered if large
- 3 cups Rhubarb, 1-inch diced
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- Zest of one orange

Directions:

Stir the fruit, sugar, and cornstarch together until combined. Add orange juice and zest of orange. Let the mixture sit while you prepare the crust and preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Put your crust into a 9-inch pie plate. Pour the filling into the crust. Top with the second crust. Trim the crust if necessary. Tuck and crimp the edges to seal the crust. Cut two or three slits in the top of the pie for steam release. Brush the top crust with milk or egg wash and sprinkle with sugar if desired.

Bake for 45 minutes or until the filling is bubbling and the crust is nicely browned.

Chocolate Toffee Cake

Ingredients:

- 1 box chocolate cake mix
- 1 jar salted caramel ice cream topping
- 6 toffee candy bars (I prefer Heath Bars), chopped into bite size pieces
- 2 8-ounce containers of whipped topping

Instructions:

Prepare the cake mix according to the package instructions for a 9 X 12 inch pan. One tip for making your chocolate cake more decadent is to replace the water with leftover brewed coffee.

Allow the cake to cool slightly. Then with the handle of a small wooden spoon or a large plastic straw, poke holes into the cake in 1-inch intervals.



Heat the caramel in the microwave for 30 seconds so that it is pourable. Pour the heated caramel into the holes and over the top of the cake.

Next, spread whipped topping over the entire cake. Finally sprinkle with chopped candy bar bits.

Keep leftovers refrigerated.

Millionaire Pie



Ingredients:

- 1 graham cracker crust
- 1 8-ounce block of cream cheese
- 1 7 ounce jar of marshmallow creme
- 1 8-ounce container whipped topping
- 1 can of pineapple tidbits
- 1 cup of maraschino cherries, quartered (reserve 2 or 3 for garnish)
- 1/2 cup of toasted and chopped walnuts (optional)
- 1/2 cup of sweetened coconut, toasted

Instructions:

To toast the coconut, spread coconut on a parchment or foil lined baking sheet. Toast @ 350 degrees for about 5-8 minutes or until it begins to turn golden brown. Toss the coconut after a few minutes to ensure even browning. Watch the coconut carefully, it can burn easily.

For the pie filling, beat the cream cheese with an electric mixer, add the marshmallow creme until combined. Stir in the fruit, nuts, and cooled coconut. Finally, fold in the whipped topping. Pour into your prepared crust and chill for 5 hours or until firm. You can also freeze and serve as a frozen pie. Decorate the top with additional whipped topping, coconut, and cherries if desired.



Grilled Pork Burgers

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 lbs. ground pork
- 2 t ground coriander
- 2 t curry powder
- 2 t Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 t cayenne pepper
- 3 scallions, chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves, finely chopped
- S & P
- 2 T olive oil
- 3 peaches, sliced
- 6 hamburger buns
- 2-3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 c ketchup
- 1-2 t Sriracha
- 1 head iceberg lettuce, torn into large leaves
- Condiments of your choice

Directions:

In a large bowl mix all of the burger ingredients right up to the peaches. Cover and place in fridge until ready to grill. The ketchup with Sriracha sauce is another unexpected twist to all the flavors. You can control the heat-make it to taste. And it's optional.

Fire up the grill and arrange the sliced peaches over the direct heat. Sear on both sides, about 3 minutes each, then move to the indirect heat side or the upper rack to cook until tender. Shape the pork mixture into 1/4 in. rounds to make 6 burgers. Sear on both sides and move them to the indirect heat side of the grill. Cook until the internal temperature is 170 degrees. Serves 6

Fruity Red Sangria



Ingredients:

- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 2 c chopped fruit- strawberries, pineapple, nectarines
- 1 orange, juiced
- 1/2 c brandy
- 2 T maple syrup or honey
- 1 bottle Spanish wine or Pinot Noir
- 3 c ginger ale
- Ice

Directions:

Add sliced oranges and lemon to a large pitcher, then fruit. Pour in the juice of the orange, then the brandy and maple syrup. Follow up with the ginger ale and stir well. Place in the fridge for a minimum of four hours. Serve over ice and top with a splash of ginger ale. Garnish with a few rinds from the oranges and lemons. I used a large 2 gallon container as you see in this photo. I doubled the recipe.

Editor's note: These recipes, which were previously published in Neighbors, were contributed by Jane Boudreau and Julie Frank.

Our Children

Finding your balance this year

by **SANDY FLEMING**

Nearly every parent will say that education has the highest priority in the lives of their children. We all know that learning opens doors for people throughout their lives, from allowing choices to pursue careers of choice to getting into colleges or post-secondary training to making midlife career changes manageable. And the learning kids do now, while attending public school classes, forms the foundation for adult life. We all want them to have the firmest foundation that they can possibly have! So of course education is a priority! Isn't it?

If your child is breezing through school, you can stop reading right now. Everything is going right, and your kid likely has a great balance of school, extra-curricular activities, family time, and personal time. They've learned important lessons about time management and will finish out their school career just fine.

However, if you notice slipping grades, high stress over homework and assignments, low test scores, or behavior problems at school or at home, it's time for some investigation. Our children's lives too often become crowded with things that don't further the final end goal of becoming a successful adult. It's time to take a look at the over schedule and use of time to determine how to help. It's time to investigate time management for the kids and for the family as a whole.

Start by figuring out where the time goes each day. Keep records for a few weeks. How does your child spend his or her time? How much sleep is he or she getting? How much exercise or active play? Take a hard look at screen time (yes, even "educational" screen time counts!). Look at how much time is spent doing household chores, and how much time is spent together as a family at dinners or on outings.

Some families do well with filling out a form a few times daily to reconstruct how much time was spent on what. You can make a chart with all the hours of the day for a week, or set up a journal-like system. The key is to write down times when activities start and stop. If you use the journal/words system to record time spent, have a plan to transfer the information to a grid or chart so you can color code the important activities and get a clear visual picture of where the time is going.

Spend a week or two just observing (or having your kids observe). This can be a great family project, since nearly all of us could use a boost in time management, and setting examples for the kids is one of the most effective ways to change behavior.

Once you have the data you need, put it into a daily time chart. Color code the essentials, like sleep, meals, personal

care, and relaxation (no, screen time does NOT count, in spite of your child's insistence the contrary- it may FEEL relaxing, but too much of anything is a bad idea).

Guidelines from various professional organizations, like American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Center, vary widely by age level. Educate yourself about how much sleep is recommended for children at which ages, and also how much screen time is considered acceptable. Chances are good that these two big areas of life may well be out of balance with expert guidance. Out of balance living leads to a host of problems, including educational challenges and behavioral challenges, and even long-term health and mental health problems. Look at sample suggested schedules for kids in the same age bracket from some reliable sources and see how closely your children's days line up with what is considered healthy.

Summer Scheduling

Summer is supposed to be more relaxed and less structured. This does not mean to toss the schedule and expectations completely out the window! Look for that theme of balance. Make sure the whole family is making wise choices about healthy living, like bedtimes and wake up times. Remember that getting schedules totally out of kilter (sleeping until mid-afternoon, and then staying up until the wee hours of the morning) is awfully difficult to fix, especially quickly when it's time to resume the school routine. Instead, make sure the kids stay on a schedule that is perhaps one or two hours offset from their schoolyear hours.

Though children will protest, study after study shows that they thrive with a structure, routine, and expectations. Give them age-appropriate responsibilities around the house; it helps them prepare for the time when they will be living on their own! Give them grade-appropriate responsibilities to keep their minds active, too. They can read, write, and practice math daily for just a little while, and it will give many a needed boost when the school year rolls back around. Daily practice will help them avoid the dreaded "summer slide" where their skills actually go backwards over summer (for some children, they can lose 1/3 to 1/2 year of progress!).

Once you have sleep schedules, chores, and brain exercise worked out, it's time to tackle the bugaboo of screen time vs. everything else. Remember that balance is the key, so set some strict guidelines on screen time, video games, watching television or streaming services, and the like. These can be a real "time suck", and usually if kids tell you there's not enough time to sleep, get mandatory chores done, or spend time reading, it's because they are parked in front of a television or other device for hours on end. That eats into time for active and imaginative play, social time

with friends and family, and much more. If your analysis of time usage shows hours and hours of screen time, it is likely time to rethink the limits in your household. Screen time should NOT be the second most time consuming activity in your children's schedules after sleeping.

There are monitoring programs you can use to limit connected time by setting total amounts per day or by shutting off access to their devices after a certain time. You may also have tools for this in your router or household wifi system. And if all else fails, you can physically confiscate the devices (or the power cords) to enforce your rules.

Finding School Year Balance

Things get even more complicated for managing the family schedule during the school year. There's a big chunk of time taken up by school itself (and transportation to and from school) – it might be as much as seven or more hours each weekday! This makes family and personal time management all the more important. Now we have at least two large chunks of time committed (sleeping and school attendance). Together, they may take fifteen or more hours per day! That leaves nine or less to squeeze in all the other things that must be done.

Here is where priorities and balance come in. Think about your commitment to helping your children become educated. How does that stack up with your commitment to giving them opportunities to participate in sports or clubs or other outside activities? It may come down to which is more important? And your children are noticing how you handle these time crunches.

When setting up the family schedule, do you plan for homework time each day? The recommendation is to think in terms of ten minutes for each grade level. This is typically negligible in the early years of elementary school, but by the time students reach high school, are you and they realistically allowing for 90-120 minutes daily (and sometimes more)? That is a significant chunk of time. Don't forget to plan out how much time kids will be spending at sports practices, games, meetings, and the like. Is there still time to get the homework done?

The calculus changes when kids are struggling with schoolwork, too. Assignments that the teacher intends to take an hour may turn into a two- or three-hour struggle. Is that needed time available in the family schedule? This is an important element to consider when deciding with your child what activities to pursue outside of the school day.

One way to manage a changing homework load

is to set aside a specific amount of time that will be the minimum educational time each afternoon or evening. If there are school assignments, this will allow for completing them. If there are no assignments (or your child is having trouble getting the assignments home – which is a different problem!), then have them fill this time with activities that will help them improve their academic skills anyway. This can be things like studying, reading, writing, practicing math, or even doing work from an appropriate stash of worksheet activities or a general purpose review workbook for their grade level. The point would be to engage in some kind of academic pursuits for the required amount of time each day. It builds the habit of having time to get assignments done and also allows for review and studying which builds skills for later test taking, organization, and planning.

As in other areas of life, children (even teens) sometimes have a problem with their "eyes being bigger than their stomachs." They may tell you that they can manage two sports at the same time, or basketball AND Art Club AND Scouts AND church youth group, but can they really? Look at the schedule and make sure the family is budgeting a reasonable amount of time for homework, as well as quiet times, relaxing times, and so forth. Help them to avoid overcommitment.

Keep the focus on the family priorities, such as health, relationships, and education, and examine the family schedule to make sure it's in line with your family values. It's true that they literally cannot do everything all at once, and we do them no favors by allowing them to try. A wise husband of mine once told our kids that they should be thankful that they have so many great options to choose from, but that they had to choose rather than try to participate in everything. Behavior and academic performance are bound to improve with the structure of a schedule that meets everyone's needs.

Sandy Fleming is an author, tutor, and educator living in Edwardsburg. Visit the websites at <https://learningnook.com> and <https://sandyflemingonline.com> for suggestions and tips to keep everyone moving toward educational goals.



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The museum is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm; last entry 4 pm. Entry prices vary (visit the website <https://www.indianadinosaurmuseum.org/> for full details) .. parking is free.



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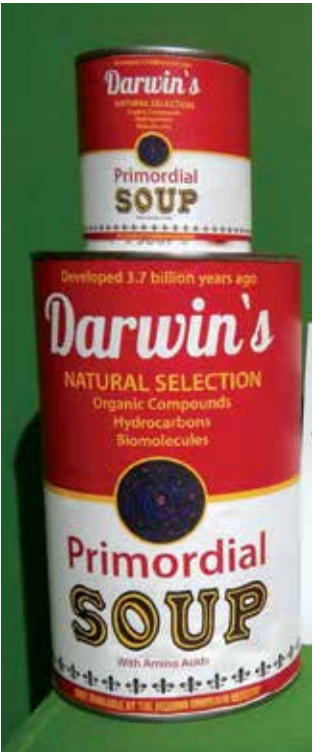
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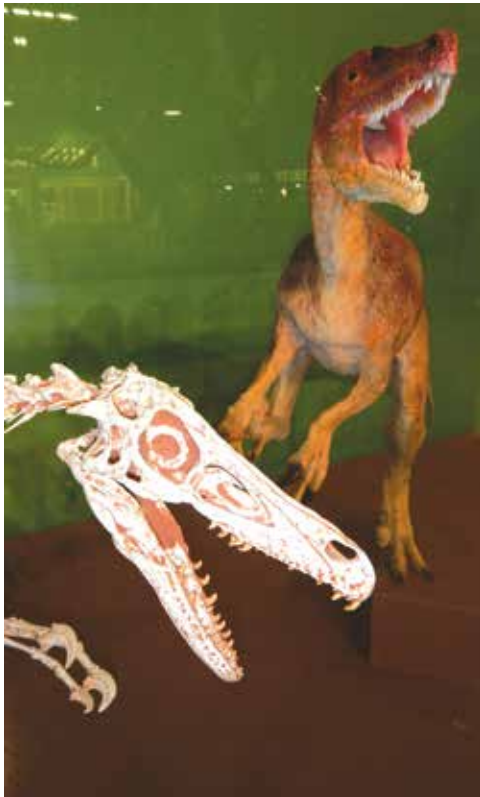
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Historic Postcards

Historic postcards depict rich scenes of area's past

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

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

Jerdon has recently used many of his postcards featuring the Sister Lakes area in a book written by RL Rasmussen. The book, which retails for \$30, is in its second printing by the publisher, Arcadia Publishing.

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

For more information or to get a copy of Jerdon's book, visit the website: www.arcadiapublishing.com

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





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Don't Leave Your Pet in the Car!

A car can overheat **even** when the window has been left cracked an inch or two.

Young, overweight or elderly animals, or those with short muzzles or thick or dark-colored coats are **most** at risk for overheating.

Shady spots offer **little** protection on hot days, and move with the sun.

90°

Even if the temperature outside is only 70°, the inside of your car may be as much as 20 degrees hotter!

102°

On an 85° day, it only takes ten minutes for the inside of your car to reach 102°.

120°

Within just 30 minutes, the car's interior can climb from 85° to a scorching 120°.

Many states and local governments have laws that prohibit leaving an animal unattended in a motor vehicle under dangerous conditions, which includes hot days. Your car could be damaged or you could be charged with a crime.

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Nature Notes

Rare, escaped toucan spotted

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

I normally don't report on exotic, escaped pet birds, but I couldn't pass up a collard aracari, a species of toucan that got away from its owner on July 6 along Nickerson Avenue in Benton Township. It showed up that morning in the yard of Darla and Ed Nickel, who also live in Benton Township. Darla Nickel says the bird was happily reunited with its owner later that evening.

There are over 40 species of toucans, all ranging in tropical areas in the Western Hemisphere. Specifically from southern Mexico south to northern Argentina. All but one toucan species live in forested areas.

Toucans eat not only fruit but also small birds, insects and small lizards. All toucan species are cavity nesters, often occupying woodpecker roost holes.

Toucans are generally declining in numbers, at least in the wild. Habitat loss caused by deforestation of tropical rain forests, the illegal pet trade, and illegal hunting are the main reasons for their decline.

The collard aracari ranges from south-central Mexico, south through the Yucatan, Central America into northern South America (northwestern Ecuador, Columbia and Venezuela).

Cory Germinder of Hartford, Van Buren County came upon an eastern hognose snake on June 30 in his yard. One of the diagnostic traits of the eastern hognose snake is that when it feels threatened it flattens its head like a cobra. Germinder was able to capture an image of the snake as it was exercising this trait. The eastern hognose also has a distinct looking nose that points upward, appearing like a hog-nose, for which it is named.

The eastern hognose snake is adapted well to preying upon American toads. The American toad makes up a large portion of the hognose snake's diet during its lifetime. The American toad is equipped with poison sacs, often erroneously referred to as warts on its skin. The poison in the American toad deters most other animals from preying upon it, but the eastern hognose snake has its own "anti-venom" in the form of high concentrations of adrenaline.

On July 6, Jim Brooks captured an



Above left: Collared aracari, which is a species of toucan, on July 6, 2024, Benton Township. This bird escaped from captivity and was free-flying most of the day, entering the yard of Dara and Ed Nickel before it was recaptured by its owner.



Above right: Adult bald eagle, July 6, 2024 along Old Lakeshore Drive, St. Joseph. Photo by Jim Brooks of St. Joseph.



image of an adult bald eagle as it perched in a tree along Old Lakeshore Road. Only after their four years of life do bald eagles assume their familiar white head and tail. Bald eagles have recently returned to Berrien County as a nesting species after a 150 year absence. They have nested in Cass and Van Buren Counties since the late 1990s-early 2000s

Left: Eastern hognose snake on June 30, in the yard of Cory Germinder of Hartford, Van Buren County. This is the only Michigan snake that can flatten its head.

A scenic view of a pond with a waterfall and two swans. The waterfall is cascading over rocks into a pond where two swans are swimming. The background shows lush greenery and a house.

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Local History

The naming of Barron Lake

Provided by Jonathan Wuepper
Manager Local History Branch
Cass District Library

Barron Lake located in Howard Township, Cass County, Michigan has been a popular resort, recreation area, source of water and ice for the nearby city of Niles for nearly 200 years. The lakeshore of this small inland lake has become highly developed, particularly during the 20th Century. Residents living on or nearby Barron Lake often ask historical questions pertaining to the lake and I thought I might answer a couple common ones in this article.

Questions about the naming of the lake are often asked. I have never read anything as to what either the Miami or Potawatomi Native Americans called the lake. However, the early pioneers of Howard Township initially named it Lake Alone, circa 1834, due to the remoteness of the lake from any other body of water, and its absence of surface outlets.

Early pioneer George Fosdick platted a town on the north side of Lake Alone in 1835, and named it Howardville, after Howard Township. The village never took off, and Howardville was added to the list of "paper towns" of Michigan.

Lake Alone was soon renamed Barren Lake, with an "e" between the second r and the n in Barren, as early as 1839. The first published reference to "Barren Lake" comes from the Niles Intelligencer newspaper dated January 30, 1839. I have cut and pasted the short note that appeared in that paper:

A CELEBRATION.—We are requested to state that the colored people of the St. Joseph valley country will have a celebration on the Seminary ground, about three quarters of a mile west of Barron Lake, and about three miles from this village, on Tuesday, the first of August. Mr. Bibb, from Detroit, said to be a colored man of great talent, will be the principal speaker. A general invitation to attend is extended to all, without regard to color.

The name "Barren Lake " comes from the fact that a certain type of wild grass, called "barren grass" grew throughout most of the township beneath the forest.

"Barren grass" was likely several species of native grasses, among them being Little Bluestem Grass and Big Bluestem Grass. The first government



land surveys of Howard Township (1820s) indicate oak savannah around Barren Lake. Oak savannah is essentially tallgrass prairie interspersed with oaks. Burr, Black, Northern Red and Pin Oak species were present. In History of Cass County, Michigan by Matthews 1882 (p.334), it states that annual fires set by the Native Americans each fall kept the underbrush from growing beneath the oaks.

The two spellings of "Barren Lake" and "Barron Lake" are found concurrently beginning in 1848 through at least 1872.

In Walter Roming's "Michigan Place Names" (1972) he states: "...the lake was renamed Barron Lake when the Michigan Central Railroad [MCRR] came through here and named its station Barron Lake."

The MCRR station near Barren Lake first appears on the Atlas of Cass County, Michigan by C.O. Titus of 1872. On it, both the lake itself and the station are spelled "Barren Lake".

The spelling of "Barron" with an "o" rather than an "e" occurs as early as 1848, although there was no MCRR station there at the time, the tracks passed nearby. I found this spelling in the Niles Republican newspaper dated

NOTICE. Application will be made to the Legislature of this state at its present session, for the passage of an act prohibiting the taking of fish in Barren Lake; Howard township, for two years. 6w50



Top left: Screenshot of Barren Lake area from the Map of the Counties of Cass, Van Buren and Berrien, Michigan by Geil, Harley & Siverd, Philadelphia, 1860.

Bottom left: Screenshot of Barren Lake area from the Standard Atlas of Cass County, Michigan, compiled and published by George A. Ogle & Co., Chicago, 1914

Right: Photo of Barren/Barron Lake, looking south towards Kennedy's Point, circa 1917-1918. Cass District Library.

July 19, 1848:
Thus, the spelling of "Barren" vs "Barron" were used interchangeably until sometime in the late 19th Century (1880s-90s?) when the spelling of "Barron" seemed to win out.

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Walking across Glasgow



nce upon a time, a long, long time ago, in a place that was far, far away from my home, I found myself walking down a street that seemed to stretch endlessly before me. It was a gray, nondescript kind of day, and the sun was only occasionally poking its head out from

behind what looked like rain clouds that were threatening to unleash torrents that would surely soak me to the bone. On that particular day, I was walking on a brisk late-October or early-September morning. I was about half way between two train stations in Glasgow, Scotland, hoping to catch up to a train that would take me to the coast where I hoped to then board a ferry across the Irish Channel and end up in some yet-to-be-determined hotel in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The memory of that day popped into my head the other day when I was walking down a rural street near my home thinking about last May's Memorial Day holiday in unfocused reverie. For some reason memories like that are getting more and more common as I age, and I find myself transported back into a part of my life that I rarely think about and have rarely shared. Anyway, on that day in Scotland, I had no idea of exactly where I was; no idea if I was on the right route, or how far the next train station was (it was a long time before cell phones and Google maps), but I kept walking, past houses and occasional businesses that all seemed to be closed. At some point in my walk I became aware of some beat-heavy music from up ahead, music with drums and horns creating a marching tune.

I tightened the shoulder straps on my daypack and trudged on into the wind, head down, just walking and staying warm. As I walked the music got louder and louder until, rounding a corner of a street, I discovered a full parade marching across my path. But it wasn't an ordinary parade, it was a full military parade, with dozens of men and women in full military uniforms, some playing instruments, others carrying an assortment of arms and weapons that ranged from what looked like 100-year-old muskets and sabers to modern-day machine guns and carbines. People of all ages were lining the street, waving flags (Scottish flags) and cheering.

Recognizing that my intended path intersected with the marchers, I decided to join the bystanders and wait until it passed.

"Quite a scene, isn't it?" a stranger next to me asked above the din. "Not sure what they're marching for, it's not even a holiday."

I recall talking briefly with the guy (that was back before I needed the hearing aids to hear anything), and once he accepted the fact that I was a stranger in a strange land, he said he thought we were watching what I interpreted to be the Scottish equivalent of a Memorial Day parade honoring military vets.

It wasn't a long parade, not long in terms of big-city USA parades, but nonetheless, it was quite a scene as troop after troop marched by, some saluting as they stepped, some with their spines stiff, and slinging weapons slung on white straps across their shoulders.

Five minutes later I was back on my walk, marching across Glasgow, the music and the sound of the troops' boot-steps fading in the distance, and I listened as my own footsteps echoed off the buildings of the now-empty street.

What an unusual experience, I thought. I hadn't expected to see that on this trip. But I knew that would be a memory I was going to carry for the rest of my life.

I thought about it as I continued my walk across Glasgow, the sights and sounds fading into some cranial recess when I found my train station (and the delightful pub inside), then made my way toward the ferry dock at Stranraer, and an eventual crossing to Ireland.

I remember having been apprehensive about the whole trip, since the "troubles" were still raging in Northern Ireland, but since a recent "truce" had been declared, I was determined to continue on my way.

My fears weren't eased when I got to the ferry station. After paying my fare, I was instructed to put my backpack with the luggage from all the other prospective passengers, into a circle formed by a ring that had been painted onto the floor. I was then instructed to sit on the floor outside the ring while heavily armed police (or soldiers) walked through the luggage and the crowd with large German Shepherds on stout leashes.

As I sat I noticed that all around the room were hand-made signs showing images of hand guns, automatic weapons and crude dynamite bundles, all shown

with large red, criss-crossed circles painted on them.

No guns. No weapons. No bombs.

I got it.

To make this long marching story march, after being detained for a time I was allowed to retrieve my pack, board the boat and ferry to Belfast, arriving after dark onto the dock near where the Titanic had originally been built and launched before its ill-fated trip.

Over the next couple days nothing bad happened. I explored the city, stayed in a great hotel, visited a bunch of friendly pubs and met a bunch of friendly people. I never heard a gun shot or an explosion of any kind (although the bartender at the Hotel Europa told me I was staying in the most frequently bombed building in the world, then "stood" me a pint when I quipped that I was ok with that since I was pretty frequently bombed myself, but that's another memory for another story).

Back to the long-story-short thing, I eventually made my way by train to Dublin, walked to the ferry dock at Dún Laoghaire (where there was almost no security), crossed to Wales, then hopped trains and a "coach" (the British word for bus) to England, and finally a plane ride back to the states. It was one of the most incredible trips I'd ever been on; the trip of a lifetime in what has since become a lifetime of trips.

I hadn't thought about that walk across Glasgow in a long time, but when it popped into my head the other day, all these memories rushed back to me (one of the few good things about getting old is remembering some of the few good things that happened when I wasn't old).

For two days I tasted the damp nip in that air that day and the creamy sip(s) of the Guinness at that train station pub. I remembered the tinny sound of the bugles and the trumpets, the oomph of the tubas and the echoes of the boots marching as the parade passed.

And when I got home after that walk, I remembered how much my legs and feet had ached when I was sitting on the deck of that ferry in the cold night air, and how my anxiety had peaked as the boat got closer and closer to the lights of Belfast where just days before people had been shooting at one another on the street.

And I decided to share those memories; good, long-ago memories that came back to me from the day I walked across Glasgow.

Hang onto your memories, Phil. But keep walking.



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