

Neighbors

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JUNE 2026

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A regional newspaper serving Cass County, Michigan and the surrounding area, with distribution at homes and businesses in Dowagiac, Cassopolis, Edwardsburg, Vandalia, Jones, Marcellus, Decatur, Union, Sister Lakes, and Three Rivers, and mail delivery at homes on Diamond, Eagle, Birch, Corey, Donnell, Indian, Magician, Shavehead, Baldwin, Long, Dewey, Cable, Juno, Christiana, Painter, Paradise, Stone, Buck, Lewis, Big & Little Twin and Bair lakes

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Field Trip

Wellfield Botanic Gardens
 Elkhart, IN, Pages 6-8

Regional News

Cassopolis summer events

The Village of Cassopolis has announced its summer community event lineup, including Beach Bash, Rock the Block, Lakeside Live and Beach Blanket & Blockbusters. For events, dates, times and full details visit the website: <https://cassopolismainstreet.com/>

CVCC Annual Golf Outing

The Cass Vandalia Chamber of Commerce will host its annual golf outing on June 19, from 8 am – 2 pm at Four Lakes Country Club, 22786 US-12, Edwardsburg. For details or registration visit <https://www.cassvanchamber.com>.

Beckwith Theatre performances

The Beckwith Theatre Co. will present these performances this season:

1776 June 26-28, and July 3-5, 7:30 pm Fridays and Saturdays, 2 pm on Sundays.

The Sunshine Boys by Neil Simon August 21-23 and August 28-30

Wait Until Dark by Frederick Knott, October 9-11 and October 16-18

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, December 3-5 and 11-13 .

Tickets to events can be purchased at online at www.beckwiththeatre.com/box-office or by contacting the theater at BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, Phone (269) 782-7653. For more information contact the BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, 782-7653

CASS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY LECTURES & EVENTS

The Cass County Historical Society has announced the following 2026 lectures and events:

Genealogy Guest Speaker Jim Jackson, local genealogist, on "Putting it all Together" at the Dowagiac District Library,



The Cassopolis Kickstart to Careers program has announced that Hydro Aluminum in Cassopolis has become a supporter with reoccurring donations. Cass Kickstart was organized to create, promote, support, and fund child savings accounts for students of Cassopolis Public Schools. Creating a community with a vibrant and diverse economy, a skilled workforce, and a shared prosperity doesn't happen overnight. To learn more about Cass Kickstart to Careers, visit casskickstart.com

June 16, 6 pm

Edwardsburg History Museum – Antiques Roadshow, July 21, 6 pm, 26818 Main Street, Edwardsburg.

Ed Lowe Foundation Tour of Penn Church – Cassopolis, Aug. 17, 6 pm, 58220 Decatur Road, Cassopolis

Jake's Country Meats Farm Tour, Sept 15, 6 pm, 55721 Decatur Road, Cassopolis

Annual Fall Festival – Newton House, Oct. 19, 4 pm, 20689 Marcellus Hwy., Decatur

November Lecture – TBA

Christmas at Newton House, Dec. 5, 1 – 4 pm, 20689 Marcellus Hwy., Decatur,

Unless otherwise stated, a short business meeting will start at 5:30 pm with lectures or tours beginning at 6 pm.

For information visit www.ccmihistoricalsociety.org.

Myers to speak at Edwardsburg

The Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum and the Uptown Improvement Association will co-sponsor a series of lectures by Bob Myers at 7 pm at the Edwardsburg Branch of the Cass District Library. There is no admission charge.

Events include:

■ Thurs., June 18: "Lost on Lake Michigan: The Wreck of the Chicora." .

■ Thurs., July 9: "Myths Busted: History Myths or Facts."

■ Thurs., Aug. 20: "Disaster at Fort St. Joseph: Pontiac's Rebellion."

■ Thurs., Oct. 15: "'The Worst Colonel I Ever Saw': Francis Quinn and the Battle of Shiloh."

Edwardsburg Museum fundraiser

The Edwardsburg Area Historical Museum will participate in the Hacienda Gives Back Fiesta again this year at the

Grape Road restaurant at Indian Ridge Plaza on Wed., June 24. Tokens for the event are available at the museum at 26818 W. Main St., from 1 to 5 pm, Tuesdays through Fridays, and 11 am to 2 pm on Saturdays. They also are available at the Edwardsburg Village Hall.

The museum will earn 20 percent of the total guest checks purchased by supporters who present tokens on that day. Purchase of Hacienda gift cards of Fiesta-to-go orders also count toward the fundraiser, although gift cards are not accepted on the day of the event.

2026 Elkhart Jazz Festival

The 2026 Elkhart Jazz Festival will be June 18-21 with music across multiple stages around town including The Crystal Ballroom, the Library Atrium, and multiple outdoor festival stages.

Tickets and passes are on-sale now, for informations contact The Lerner Box Office at 574-293-4469 or email info@thelerner.com.

Neighbors is for sale

After nearly 25 years publishing Neighbors, Fred Stein and Phil Vitale, the founders and operators, have started thinking about retiring. If you think this might be for you, qualified buyers should contact Fred for more information at:

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Regional Calendar

MISC. AREA EVENTS

Various dates - Village of Cassopolis summer event schedule, <https://cassopolismainstreet.com/>

June 19 - Cass Vandalia Chamber of Commerce annual golf outing, 8 am - 2 pm Four Lakes Country Club, Edwardsburg, <https://www.cassvanchamber.com>

June 18 - 21 - Elkhart Jazz Festival, various locations **574-293-4469** or email info@thelerner.com

June 26-28, July 3-5 - 1776, Beckwith Theater, Dowagiac, 7:30 pm Fridays and Saturdays, 2 pm on Sundays, BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, **782-7653**

August 21-23, 28-30 - The Sunshine Boys by Neil Simon, Beckwith Theater, Dowagiac, 7:30 pm Fridays and Saturdays, 2 pm on Sundays, BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, **782-7653**

October 9-11, 16-18, Wait Until Dark by Frederick Knott, Beckwith Theater, Dowagiac, 7:30 pm Fridays and Saturdays, 2 pm on Sundays, BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, **782-7653**

December 3-5, 11-13, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, Beckwith

Theater, Dowagiac, 7:30 pm Fridays and Saturdays, 2 pm on Sundays, BeckwithTheatreMI@gmail.com, **782-7653**

EDWARDSBURG MUSEUM (EAHM) JUNE 2026

7 - Spring gardening workshop with Mark Dussel, 6:30-8 pm, Cass District Library, Edwardsburg Branch; co-sponsored by the EAHM and Dussel's Farm Market and Greenhouses.

14 - EAHM opens for the season.

14-July 25 - Display "Riding and Writing for Liberty." Celebrating the 1776 signing of the Declaration of Independence and Paul Revere's Ride, EAHM

15-30 - Annual Perennial Plant Sale fundraiser, EAHM.

25 - Memorial Day Kids' Carnival-after parade, EAHM

18 - Speaker: Bob Myers, Historical Society of Michigan: "The Wreck of the SS Chicora," 7 pm, Edwardsburg Branch of Cass District Library

24 - EAHM, Hacienda Fundraiser, Mishawaka.

JULY 2026

5 - "America's 250th Birthday Bash," A picnic with music by the Phat Tuesday Dixieland Band,

1-4 pm, EAHM.

9 - Speaker: Bob Myers, Historical Society of Michigan: "History Myths or Facts," 7 pm, Edwardsburg Branch of Cass District Library

21 - Cass County Historical Society meeting with an "Antiques Roadshow" assessment of family heirlooms, 6 pm, EAHM.

28-Nov. 7 - Display: "Thimbles, Thread and Tea." Remembering Betsy Ross and the Boston Tea Party during America's 250th anniversary, EAHM.

AUGUST 2026

6-9 - U.S. 12 Historic Heritage Trail Garage Sale, EAHM.

16 - Open house after All-School Reunion, 3 pm, EAHM

20 - Speaker: Bob Myers, Historical Society: "Pontiac's Rebellion," 7 pm, Edwardsburg Branch of Cass District Library.

SEPTEMBER 2026

17 - History Hounds film presentation from the Historical Society of Michigan, "Exploring Michigan's Podunk Towns," 7 pm, EAHM.

26 - Sauk Trail Festival: Echoes of Our Past, 1775-1875; 10 a.m.-4 pm, EAHM.

OCTOBER 2026

15 - Speaker: Bob Myers, Historical Society

of Michigan, "The Worst Colonel," 7 pm, Edwardsburg Branch of Cass District Library.

31 - Witches on the Porch, 6-7 pm, EAHM

NOVEMBER 2026

10-Dec. 12 - Display: "Stars, Stripes, and Christmas Lights: A red, white, and blue Patriotic theme for Christmas, EAHM.

24-28 - The EAHM closes for Thanksgiving break

DECEMBER 2026

3 - Christmas Tree Lighting, 6:30 pm, followed by open house, EAHM.

12 - EAHM closes and re-opens in mid-April 2027.

DOWAGIAC EVENTS

www.dowagiacchamber.com/

LIBRARY EVENTS

For **Cass District Library** events visit <https://www.cassdistrictlibrary.org/events/>

For **Dowagiac District Library** events visit <https://www.dowagiacdli.org/events>.

For **Marcellus Township Memorial Library** events visit <https://www.marcellus.michlibrary.org/>



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Lake Life with Jane

June, the best month of summer here!

by **Jane Boudreau**

Hello Neighbors! And here we have it, June! Probably the best month of the summer here on the lake. The warm weather is an outdoor magnet; people come out of hibernation, and once there's life on the lake, laughter wafts over the water from backyards and docks. Or you might just be the kind of person ensconced in a lounge chair on the deck or patio with a good read and a glass of chilled Pinot Grigio, enjoying a quiet early evening. Whatever the case, June means the summer is ahead of us, and that's a great feeling!



Jane's Cutting Garden

I've been back in my gardening game since early April, but I get that many of you don't have the time or, maybe, the bravery to admit you have a brown thumb. Fear not. A cutting garden is virtually carefree, comes back reliably every year, and you get free flowers to fill your vases. I started my garden with perennial flowers (the type that come back each year). Coneflowers, Shasta daisies, yarrow, and phlox. I then filled in and around these plants with annuals, such as zinnias, cosmos, snapdragon, and asters. These are tried and true flowers that will give you blooms from spring to fall. Planted relatively close to one another and lightly mulched with shredded bark, weeds will not be an issue. So find yourself a little corner or an entire bed, and get planting!



Jane's Imaginary Book Club

The Last Page by Katie Holt

We're diving back into some good 'ol summer reads, and this is one that was after my own heart. Books, bookstores, rich handsome dude, a sweet but stubborn heroine, big city backdrop ... this

novel has it all.

Ella works at The Last Page, a charming, local bookstore in New York City, that holds lifelong memories, think: her first kiss in the women's health section, and so on. She is being trained to take over running the store when the owner, with whom she is very close, unexpectedly passes away, leaving his grandson everything in the will. Henry, the grandson, arrives from Tennessee with the intent to get things smoothed out until he and Ella lock horns. Having very different personalities and ideas for how to continue running the bookstore, they suddenly find the store in disastrous financial trouble. All of this makes for a funny, fast, and sentimental read if you're looking for something light to kick off the summer with. I really liked the whole premise, and the characters were relatable as the story moved along. I give this book four stars. The author's previous novel, *Not In My Book*, is also very good, again, on the lighter side.



Jane's Signature Drink

Cucumber Cocktail

This month, we are upping the ante with something light and refreshing, something so versatile it can be served with brunch, as well as cocktail hour. The Cucumber Cocktail has many of the highlights as the Cucumber Martini, but with some citrus and the effervescence from Prosecco. I love the convenience of serving it in a pitcher; however, please remember the protocol of the Signature drink at your party or event: one cocktail per guest. Serve these tasty concoctions all garnished up as your people arrive, and nonchalantly guard your decanter. If anyone goes in for a refill, a quick slap on the hand should suffice.

Cucumber Cocktail Ingredients:

3-4 cucumbers, peeled and chopped
1 c mint leaves
1/2 c cilantro
1/2 simple syrup
4 limes, juiced
a few dashes of salt
1 c vodka
2 c chilled Prosecco
Sliced lime, cucumber & sprigs of mint for garnish

Cucumber Cocktail directions:

Fill a blender with all ingredients except Prosecco. Blend well. Strain into a large pitcher, discard the pulp. Chill until ready to serve. Just prior to serving, add slices of lime and cucumber, as well as ice to the pitcher, along with the Prosecco. Serve in glasses garnished with cucumber, limes, and a sprig of mint.

June recipes

This month, I'm focusing on appetiz-

ers, because who doesn't like them? These are all fairly simple to make, serve, or bring to a gathering, and hopefully, a little different than the run-of-



the-mill cheese and crackers or potato chips and French onion dip. Enjoy!

Creamy Olive Dip

Creamy Olive Dip Ingredients:

8 oz. green olives (Manzanilla and Castelvetrano recommended)
6 oz. Feta cheese block, in brine
4 oz. cream cheese
2 T olive oil
1 clove garlic
Zest from 1 lemon
Juice from 1/2 lemon
8 oz jarred roasted red pepper, drained
1 t dried oregano
1/2 red pepper flakes
Fresh ground pepper

Creamy Olive Dip Directions:

In a food processor, combine the green olives, feta cheese, cream cheese, olive oil, minced garlic, lemon zest, and lemon juice. Blend until smooth, yet slightly textured, about 30 seconds. Add the roasted red peppers, oregano, red pepper flakes, and pepper, and pulse 2-3 times just to mix, keeping some chunks for texture.



Pesto Caprese Bites

Pesto Caprese Bites Ingredients:

1 sheet puff pastry (Pepperidge Farm is fine)
1/2 - 3/4 c pesto (store bought or homemade)
2-3 Roma tomatoes
Fresh mozzarella
3-4 basil sprigs
2 T balsamic glaze
1 egg (for egg wash)
Salt

Parmesan cheese

Pesto Caprese Bites Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Whisk the egg with a splash of water and set aside.

Slice the Roma tomatoes into 1/8-inch-thick slices. Do the same with the fresh mozzarella. Choose 9 slices of tomatoes and mozzarella of approximately the same shape and size, and set aside.

Roll the puff pastry sheet out on a floured surface, and cut it into 9 even squares. Dollop a spoonful of pesto on each one, and top with a slice of tomato and then mozzarella. Take two opposite corners of the puff pastry and wrap them over the filling, then pinch the center to seal. When you have finished with all of them, pop the tray in the fridge for 20 minutes to set.

Remove the pastries from the fridge and brush each one with the egg wash. Sprinkle a bit of salt and grated Parmesan cheese over them, then bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown. Allow to cool slightly. Drizzle with balsamic glaze.



Baked Fontina Dip

Baked Fontina Dip Ingredients:

24 oz. Fontina cheese, 1-inch diced
1/4 c olive oil
6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 T minced, fresh thyme leaves
1 t minced fresh rosemary leaves
1 t kosher salt
1 t freshly ground pepper

Baked Fontina Dip Directions:

Preheat the broiler and position the oven rack 5 inches from the heat. Distribute the cubes of Fontina evenly in a 12-inch cast-iron pan (a shallow oven-proof dish will also work). Drizzle on the olive oil. Combine the garlic, thyme, and rosemary, and sprinkle it over the cheese and olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and place the pan under the broiler for 6 minutes, until the cheese is melted and starting to brown. Serve the baked Fontina right out of the cast-iron skillet with crusty chunks of good Italian bread.

That's a wrap for June! I hope by the time you have this in your tanning-oil-greasy little hands, that you're out and enjoying summer on the lake!

Jane Boudreau is a writer, blogger, and newspaper columnist who lives on Diamond Lake, in Chicago, and in Asheville, NC. You can reach her at blndy9@yahoo.com, <http://blndiesjournalists.blogspot.com>

Our Children

School's out; summer is IN

by **SANDY FLEMING**

Kids around the country are looking forward to a weeks-long stretch of relaxed routines and calm summer days.

Parents are wondering how they'll keep the kids occupied and out of trouble. Yep, school's almost done for the year, and children are likely celebrating, for at least a few days. After that, most parents will tell you that they get bored. So what's the solution?

The trick is to keep brains engaged and learning mode activated. This doesn't have to look like school work. In fact, it will be more effective if it seems very different from what the kids normally do each day in school. Keeping minds moving throughout the summer will help them feel refreshed and ready to learn when school begins and will also keep the basics fresh and ready for action.

Here are ideas for you to try out with your family. While not all of them will work for your particular kids, most kids will respond to some of these ideas. And they all serve the same purpose: Keeping brains active and staving off boredom and learning loss. Try some of these ideas.

Preschooler Boredom Busters

This is likely the easiest age group to keep occupied with constructive learning. Their minds are questing and growing already, and your main job is just to get them focused on learning that will benefit them. Be extra careful to limit screen time in all its forms – more and more research is showing that hours of screen time per day (tablets, phones, televisions, computers, video games) is seriously damaging children's creativity, attention, and even self-control and behavior. So why not fill that extra time with activities that will lead to more learning?

Preschool Reading and Language

Hopefully by now you've gotten the message: Reading to kids is critical. It builds a knowledge and vocabulary base, develops language skills, and hones skills like sitting still, paying attention, and more. Share as many stories as you can, several times each day. Read the favorites again and again because that is a cornerstone for learning. Do the silly voices because that helps develop auditory skills. Ask questions and discuss the content of the books you share because that builds conversation, comprehension, and language skills.

Now, take it a step farther! Play "I Spy" with the pictures in books. Try going on a scavenger hunt in an open book, looking for words that begin or end with specific letters, sentences that have a certain number of words, words the kids recognize (like "is" and "me"), and rhyming words.

Build a reading caterpillar. Take some brightly-colored paper (or have your child color some!) and cut it into circles. Make a bigger circle for the caterpillar's head. Hang the head on the wall or display it on the floor. Add a circle to the beast each time you share a story with your child. Put the title of the book on the circle, and if you wish, have your kid draw a picture about the book. Keep adding circles over the summer, and see if you can get the caterpillar to stretch clear around the room!

And don't forget writing. When you play Tic-Tac-Toe, there is no "law" that you have to use Xs and Os. If your child is learning to write other letters, try substituting them into the game so players

use Ys and Ms or Bs and Cs. You can also take dictation when your child tells a story out loud. Write it down for him or her, in a nice clear printed hand. Let them "read" it back to you (they will remember most of what they said), and maybe make it into a book to keep awhile. This process helps your young learner make the connection between thoughts, spoken words, printed words, and stories that can be read and reread.

Preschool Numbers and Math

Play all the games that you remember loving when you were little. Nearly all of them support math and numbers learning. Think about UNO, for example. Players must match numbers and colors, and if you keep score, they learn about more and less. Card games, board games, and just about any other type of games are great. And don't forget dominoes, dice games, and traditional games with playing cards.

And don't feel limited by the game's traditional rules and purposes. Make a new game of putting number cards in order, or use them to create larger, multi-digit numbers. Make up your own games! Draw a game board on a large paper or the inside of a folder and let your child help decorate it. Play that game together a few times and let them refine the rules, dictate them, and have you write them down. Who knows what the two of you will come up with?

Early Elementary Boredom Busters

Once the kiddoes start school, you'll probably need to work a bit harder to "disguise" the learning. That's not too hard to do! First of all, keep reading to them, reading with them, and having them read as much as you can. Keep limiting screen time, too. There are plenty of things to do out in the real world!

Early Elementary Reading and Writing

Check out the reading program at your local library. They usually have some kind of fun theme and special events designed to intrigue your kids. They also offer incentives to get books read! You can also check bookstores, Pizza Hut, and sometimes local businesses for reading incentive programs. The more reading, the better!

Write and tell stories together. Young elementary kids are all set to put their creative minds to work. If you need a twist to the activity, try taking turns adding a sentence or two to the story, telling what happened after the end of a

favorite book, or describing what adventures happen when characters from two different book or media series meet for the first time. Stop reading in the middle, at some exciting spot, and have your child try to guess what will happen next.

Play word games, like hangman, Scrabble Junior or Boggle Junior. Try word search puzzles, secret codes, and even simple crossword puzzles. See who can make the longest lists of items in a specific category (like farm animals or furniture, or words that have "bossy Rs"). Send the kids on a treasure hunt through text they can mark on to find sight words they've been learning in school or words that match a phonic pattern you want to focus on and mark it with highlighter or crayon. Put on plays and puppet shows!

Early Elementary Math

Keep playing those games, and add in some that go beyond the luck of the draw and mere chance. Try some with some strategy involved, and score keeping that heads up to higher numbers. And try a few that are designed to help kids get fluent with computation (adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, depending on their exact age group). Shoot the Moon where you roll dice or draw number cards from a deck, and add or multiply them with your existing score. First person to 1000 or whatever goal you choose is the winner. Play it in reverse by subtracting or dividing your score by a dice roll and see who can get to zero the fastest. Grab a beach ball and a permanent marker. Divide the ball into lots and lots of little sections (100 is great!). Now write a math fact in each section and play catch – the section your left thumb is touching is the math fact you need to answer as fast as you can.

Go on a measurement scavenger hunt. Give the kids a list of sizes to find (in inches or in centimeters) and have them look around the house, the yard, or even the neighborhood to find items to match each one. Be sure to count money (coins and bills), and pay for things and get change. Have the kids tell you how much longer they have to wait for an anticipated event (like going swimming at 3:00), or how many hours and minutes ago something fun happened.

Boredom Busters for Older Kids

Once the kids have basic reading, writing, and math skills, the field for learning is wide open. They now should have the tools to learn about nearly anything they want. Be sure to use the library and the internet to get facts and to learn new skills. Encourage longer

projects, like planning and implementing an event, doing a fundraiser, hosting a show, and so forth. Try some experiments, too. You know, the kind where kids need to come up with a question, then figure out a way to test it, record their results, analyze them, then communicate their conclusion.

This is a great time in life to develop a hobby or other leisure activity. What could your child learn to do that they could keep doing even as an adult? Take some lessons if you can, or become a self-taught master. Consider learning musical instruments, getting good at a favorite sport, trying out sleight of hand magic, or becoming an expert on an interesting topic, like history or space.

Keep them reading, of course, but also add in crossword puzzles, cryptograms, word searches, Sudoku, and other types of puzzles. Get them cooking with real recipes. For example, you might want to spend the summer exploring desert recipes from other countries. I bet your family will find some new favorites, and your kids will gain cooking skills.

Visit museums and parks, pro and semi-pro sporting events, local theater, and game businesses. Consider organized groups like church youth organizations, Girl Scouting or Scouts of America, 4-H, or the Y to get some social contact. Check out game groups like chess clubs or Frisbee golf leagues. There are tons of ways to get out and about, and it's going to be great boredom-busting ammunition.


And One More Boredom Buster for Everyone

No matter what their age (even adults!), keep working on vocabulary. Knowing lots of words is the key to success in many educational and job settings. Take time as a family to learn new words, to uncover jargon for the current pastime, and to stock up on words that would stump a professor. Vocabulary is essential for good scores on college entrance tests like the SAT, and it is necessary to access higher-level literature and non-fiction works. The sooner you start, the better! Before you know it, the whole family will be light years ahead of where you are now.

Sandy Fleming is an educator, tutor, and writer in Edwardsburg. Visit her websites at <https://www.learningnook.com> and <https://sandyflemingonline.com> for more great ideas to help children learn and get everyone on the path to success!


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Field Trip



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<https://www.wellfieldgardens.org/>



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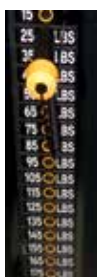


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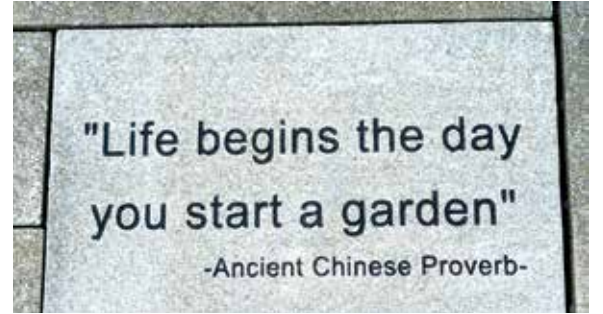
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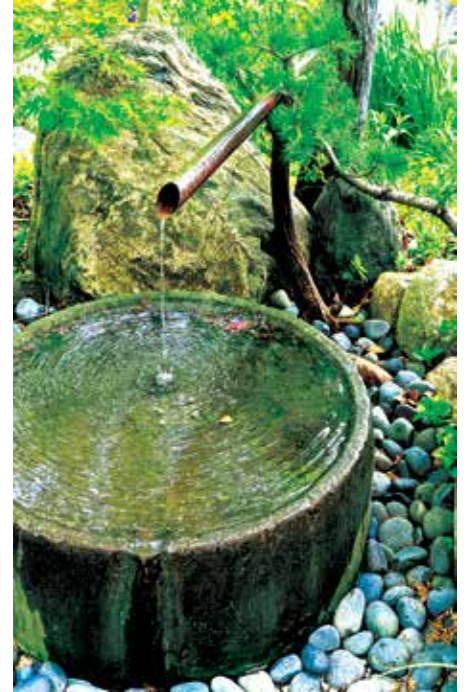
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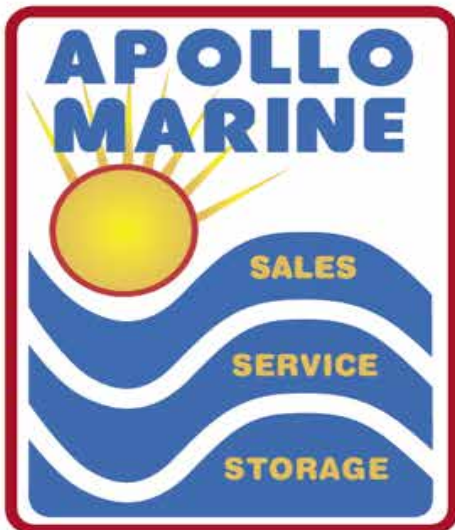
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Historic Postcards

Historic postcards depict rich scenes of the past

In this issue of Neighbors, Jerdon Real Estate of Dowagiac, owned by Floyd Jerdon and his son Tom, has again provided antique postcards of a few of the many lakes and towns 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 used many of his postcards featuring the Sister Lakes area in a book written by RL Rasmussen. The

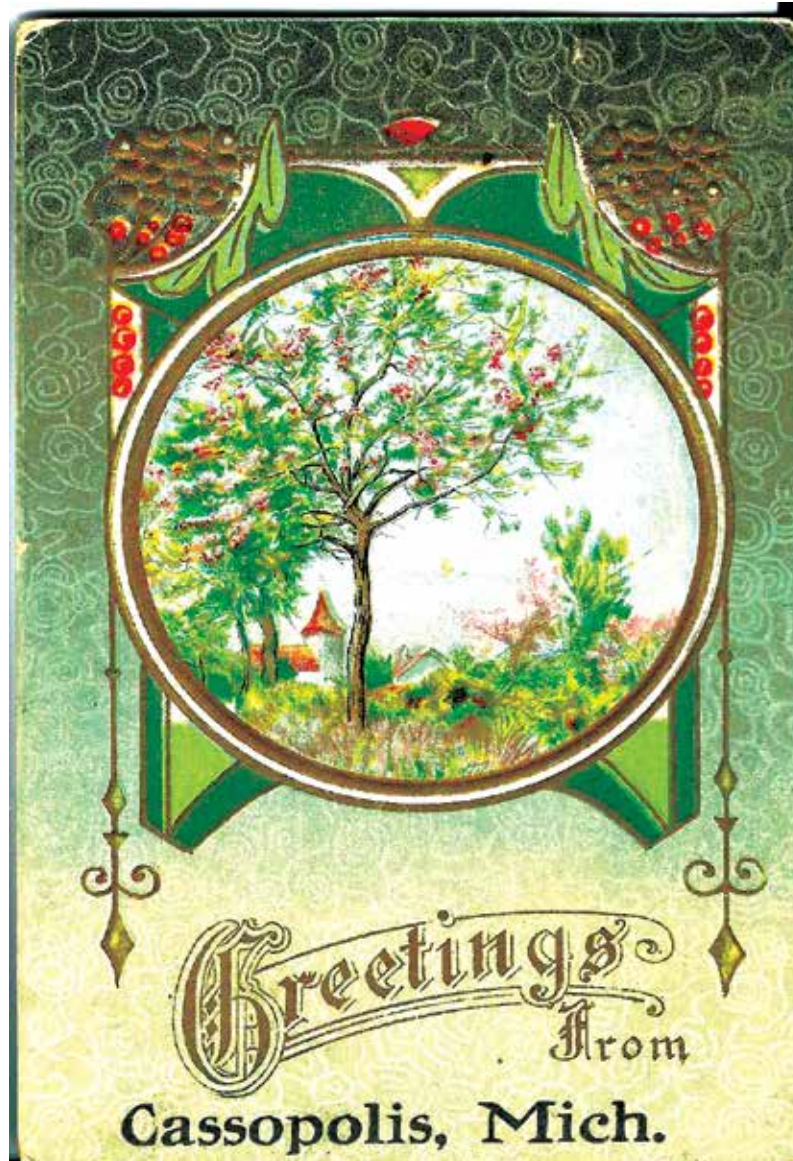
book, which retails for \$ \$39.95, is in its second printing by the publisher, Arcadia Publishing.

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.arcadia-publishing.com

In this edition of Neighbors we have selected postcards showing images of various plac-

es around Cass County. In future issues, we will couple additional cards from one or more of the area's lakes with views of nearby communities, lakes and countryside.



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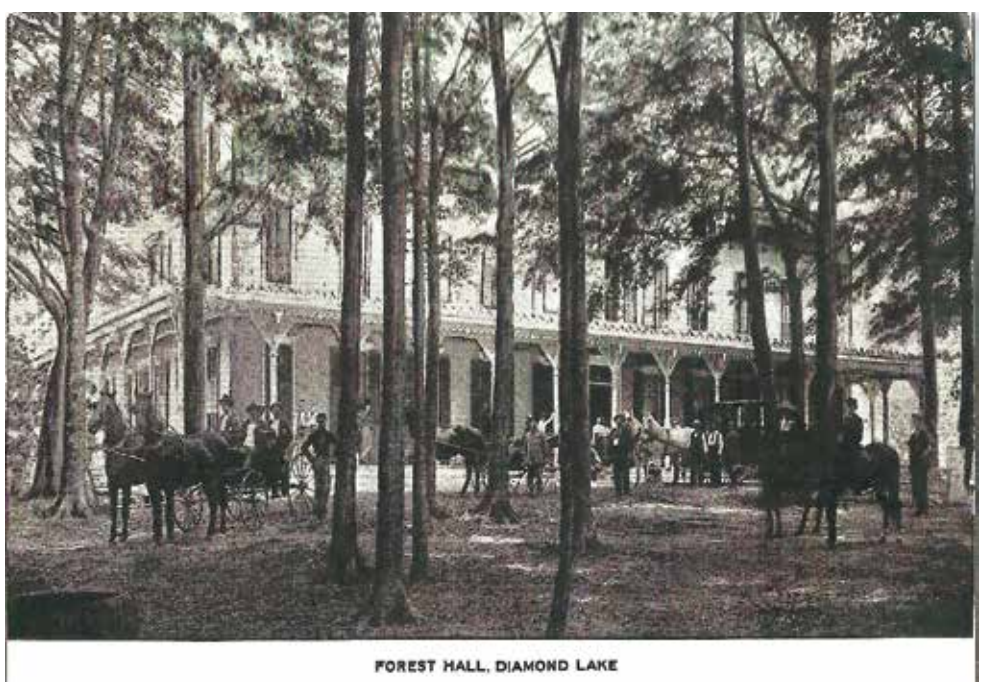
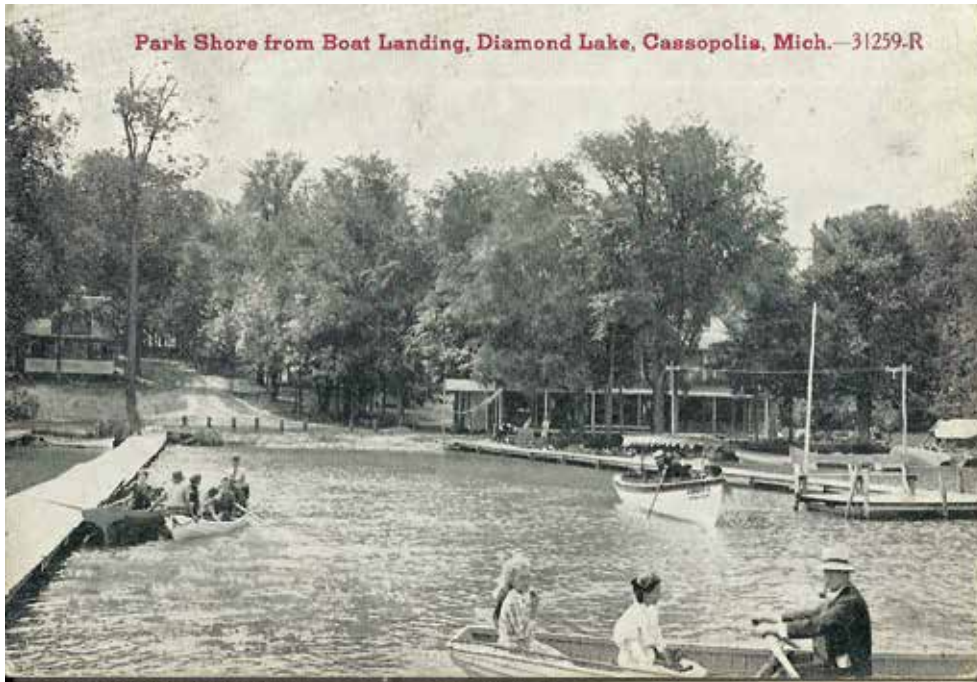


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Nature Notes

Glossy ibis, tanager, blue grosbeak

by Jonathan Wuepper
 Manager
 Local History Branch
 Cass District Library
 145 North Broadway St.
 Cassopolis, MI 49031
 jwuepper@cass.lib.mi.us

Berrien County's second glossy ibis was discovered on April 26 along Date Road in Lake Township by Cassie Americarelli and Ashley Higdon, both of Galien Twp. The bird flew off to the south and was relocated within an hour along Browntown Road by Josh Duis of Niles.

The glossy ibis is a long-legged wading bird about two feet high. It sports a long, decurved bill designed to pick up insects, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates on which it feeds. Its plumage is brown with iridescent green wings. In flight, ibises extend their necks straight out and perform quick wingbeats.

In eastern North America, the glossy ibis' normal range is the southeastern Atlantic and Gulf coastal states. During spring the species moves inland to nest. Usually during mid to late spring a few glossy ibis will overshoot their summer range and wind up hundreds of miles north of their usual area. This is what happened to the individual found in Berrien County on April 26. Ibises that end up overshooting their summer ranges find their way back south.

The glossy ibis found by Americarelli and Higdon was only the second record of the species for Berrien County. The first occurred on May 10, 1993 when a single glossy ibis was discovered in a large



Glossy ibis (left), and four drake mallards April 26, in a flooded field along Browntown Road, Lake Twp. The ibis was initially found by Ashley Higdon and Cassie Americarelli along Date Rd, relocated by Josh Duis of Niles.

flooded field at the northeast corner of North Scottdale and Linco Roads in Royalton Township.

Cass County has a glossy ibis record of one individual photographed on May 4, 1969 in Lake LaGrange, LaGrange Township. This was the second ever state record of the species, coming 30 years after the first which occurred on June 4, 1939 in Bay County. To date, Michigan has about 50 records of the glossy ibis.

A male blue grosbeak has been seen and heard again along Basswood Road, between Forest Lawn and Martin Roads

Top right: Male summer tanager molting into breeding plumage, April 26 at the feeders of Hanah and Brad Anderson, Bridgman. Photo by Brad Anderson.

Bottom right: A male blue grosbeak has returned to Basswood Road

in Three Oaks Township. The male this year was discovered on April 30 by Adam Byrne of Dewitt, Michigan. A pair of adult blue grosbeaks were present at this same location last year with suspected nesting.

The blue grosbeak is a songbird common in summer across the southeastern US and is apparently extending its summer range northward. The male blue grosbeak has dark dull blue feathers with chestnut wing bars, with a distinct conical bill, similar in size to our northern cardinal. The adult female appears brown



near the Forest Lawn Landfill in Three Oaks Township. A pair likely nested at this location last year. The male was discovered April 30 and has been multiple days since, indicating it is on nesting territory. Photo taken May 3 by Josh Duis of Niles,

with a conical bill. The male's song suggests a purple or house finch but slower.

On April 26, a male summer tanager visited the feeders of Brad and Hannah Anderson of Bridgman. The bird was in the process of molting from its winter yellow-green plumage, into its more attractive rosy-red summer plumage. This southern bird is apparently becoming more numerous north of its usual breeding range. At least one pair of summer tanagers have nested in Warren Dunes State Park over the last decade.

Local History

Gem Theater, formerly County Courthouse

by Jonathan Wuepper
 Manager, Local History Branch
 Cass District Library
 145 North Broadway St.
 Cassopolis, MI 49031
 jwuepper@cass.lib.mi.us

Last year the Local History Branch Library acquired 23 color Kodachrome slides, taken between 1961-1964, showing mostly scenes in Cass County (and at least one in Niles). Unfortunately, we do not know who took the color photos, but they ended up at the Local History Room of the Webster Memorial Library in Decatur, a branch of the Van Buren District Library. Webster Local History Librarian Amy Druskovich thought the slides would be better appreciated by the Local History Library branch of the Cass District Library, and thus she donated the slides to us last year. I had the slides digitized last fall at Gene's Camera Store in South Bend.

One stand out image (in color, shown at right) shows the Gem Theater on West State Street in Cassopolis, which formerly served as the Cass County Courthouse. It was moved in 1898 from its original location on the northeast corner of East State and Broadway Streets to make room for the new Cass County Courthouse, from its original location on the northeast corner of East State and Broadway Streets.

By 1964 the old courthouse was nearing the end of its existence, and four years later, in the spring of 1968 it would be



torn down. I have heard anecdotal stories that because the Gem Theater was in close proximity to a Community Mills (then also off State Street), rats would appear in front of the movie screen and walk under the theater chairs. Rats were attracted to Community Mills because of the grains and then moved over to the theater to feast on popcorn dropped on the floor by movie goers.

In August 1839 the Cass County

Board of Supervisors hired Joseph Harper, Darius Shaw, Asa Kingsbury, Jacob Silver and Alexander Redfield to build a new frame courthouse in the village square for a cost of \$6000 (equivalent to \$213,000 in 2026, a great bargain). The Greek-Revival style building was completed in 1841 and served as Cass County's courthouse for the next 57 years.

In Berrien Springs, the 1839 Berrien County Courthouse, of Greek-Revival style



Left: View of Gem Theater (1841 Cass County Courthouse) on West State & Disbrow Streets, early 1964. Credit: Cass District Library.

Above: 1841 Cass County Courthouse (aka Gem Theater), being torn down, spring 1968. Credit: Cass District Library.

architecture, survives along with the 1870 Sheriff's residence and the 1860 Berrien County Records building (addition built in 1873). The 1839 Courthouse is open to the public Wednesday-Saturday from 10 am - 4:30 pm.

The Local History Branch of the Cass District Library is open Monday-Thursday, 9 am - 4 pm. We focus on genealogy, local and regional history. We are located at 145 North Broadway Street, Cassopolis, MI 49031.

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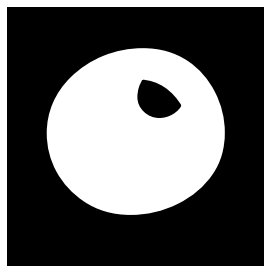
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If you ever have to wake me up, remember this ...



ne of my earliest memories of being awakened by an outside force at a specific hour of the morning on a regular basis began when I was just a tad, probably six or seven years old. Living in the city, we didn't have roosters to wake us, and at that age I didn't

have an alarm clock of my own (and even if I had, I probably wouldn't have wanted to make it work), so my memories involve my dear mother sneaking into my room, bending over the bed and nuzzling me gently, her cheek against my face, her lips near my ear murmuring softly and sweetly, "Phil, honey, it's time to wake up."

At that age I was more than fine with that ... hell, at any age I'd be good being awakened by a woman nuzzling me in my bed and whispering to me to wake up.

That didn't last though, and when I got a little older, I was probably a pre-teenager when mom stopped nuzzling, would instead shake my shoulder and speak the first "Phil, wake up" notice of the morning.

Which was usually followed very soon after by the second, more forceful notice, "Phil, WAKE UP NOW."

Then, by a third round, mom would deliver a decreasingly motherly and increasingly stentorian declaration delivered with undeniably increased volume and a dramatically motivating exuberance.

"PHIL, DAMN IT, GET UP, THIS MINUTE! DON'T MAKE ME COME IN HERE AGAIN OR YOU'LL REGRET IT THE WHOLE DAY, I PROMISE!"

Mom had evolved into such a sweet talker.

It was probably about that time that my parents bought me my first real alarm clock. As I remember, it was big, plastic, round and bright white, with a mechanical windup wingnut kind of key that I had to crank every night before bed. It had a 1/4-inch-long plunger sticking out of the back that I had to pull out at night to set the alarm, then push in the next morning to shut it off (although the plunger most often got pushed in when the whole clock got smashed against the wall).

That clock lasted a few months despite the abuse, until my exuberance at silencing the alarm left it in a couple dozen pieces of gears, springs, clock hands and

broken plastic pieces all over the bedroom floor. Dear mom almost immediately replaced it with a much more sturdy, more kid-proof model made of what looked like aluminum or brushed stainless steel. That clock was accompanied by a stern admonishment from mom to be more gentle and a reminder that clocks don't grow on trees (mom was a veritable trove of overworked, trite but true, depression-era sayings like that).

I remember buying my own alarm clock for the first time. I had begun working in a neighborhood grocery store. I was still too young to get a legitimate work permit that would have enabled me to go to work at one of the better paying larger stores, so the owner paid me in cash (probably to keep an underage employee off the books), and he would occasionally "spiff" me with a re-gifted item that someone had given him or one of his kids, that they either had no use for or wouldn't use.

So one year just after Christmas I got the 1960-version of a gift card, a hand-written \$5 certificate to a local department store downtown. I'd been in the store a few times with my mom, but it wasn't my kind of place. A lot of womens' clothing, a few mens' and boys' dress pants and ties and such. No baseball gloves, BB guns or slingshots, and no 45 rpm vinyl records by the Beatles or the Stones or Herman's Hermits. Boring ...

I must have walked around that store for an hour before I stumbled on a cool looking but highly impractical Lorus quartz desk clock with a moving dial that showed time zones in Japan, Italy, India, Australia, Africa and half a dozen other place. And it had a built in alarm. It was bronze and silver and I had to have it.

Problem was the alarm was pretty lame ... the gentle chime it produced wouldn't wake a white tail or startle a rabbit, let alone wake a sleep-in teenager. So back to the Big Ben alarm clock followed by mom's ungentle urging ... until I moved out, got married and had babies, when sleep just stopped being an option for a while.

Flash ahead to our daughters' first alarm clock. It was probably aunt Rita who bought it, Rita being the devilish holiday gifter who took sadistic delight in buying my brothers and I assorted drums, trumpets, marbles encased in hard-plastic mazes and any other ridiculously noisy toys that were designed more to drive parents to insanity than to amuse young kids. Anyway,

somewhere Rita came up with this electric, overly cute-sy alarm clock that had large molded images of Raggedy Ann and Andy on the top, and she gave it to our kids.

Our daughters loved it.

My beloved spouse and I hated it.

When the alarm would go off, in a too-loud, almost diabolical, maniacally sing-song chant, an unforgettable rhyming wakeup verse would fill the house.

"Andy, Andy, please wake up, it's time to call our friends," Annie would start. "Ok, Ann, I'm awake, lets sing it once again," Andy would respond. Then, together, "We were sent to wake you, so here we are to say ... Please get up, brush your teeth, and start your happy day." Possibly the most annoying, cloying and mind-numbingly ear worm of all time.

Due to my daughters' attachment to that dastardly device, it lasted much longer than anyone could have predicted, but, alas, it eventually found its demise in a pile of gears, springs, plastic shards and assorted miscellaneous clock part on the bedroom floor due to an unplanned but not unexpected ... ahem ... accident.

The kids were old enough by then to be fine with the clock radios that replaced good ole Ann and Andy, although their choice in morning music was as questionable to me as the music of my youth was to my parents. At that time the alarm clocks my wife and I relied on matured as we did. One had the outdoor temperature, one shone the time on the ceiling, all were loud and annoying and they work me up just fine ... until, and I don't really remember when it was, an internal circadian took over and began waking me before any clock would go off. Time after time I'd set the alarm, konk off, then the next morning I'd wake 10 minutes before it was set to chime. Today, on the rare occasion that I need to be awake at a specific time, I still set the alarm on both, my cell phone (when I can figure out how to use the damn thing) and on the Alexa speaker on the nightstand, but I'm always awake to cancel it in advance.

I don't understand it, but I'm super cool with it. After all, I always hated alarm clocks (truth is I usually hated having to get up in the morning).

And besides, even today if I really have to be awakened, I'd still very much prefer a woman cooing softly into my ear and gently nuzzling my face.



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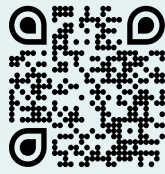


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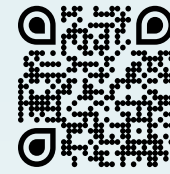


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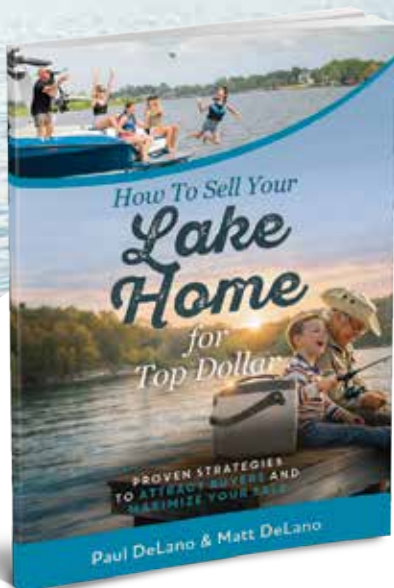
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