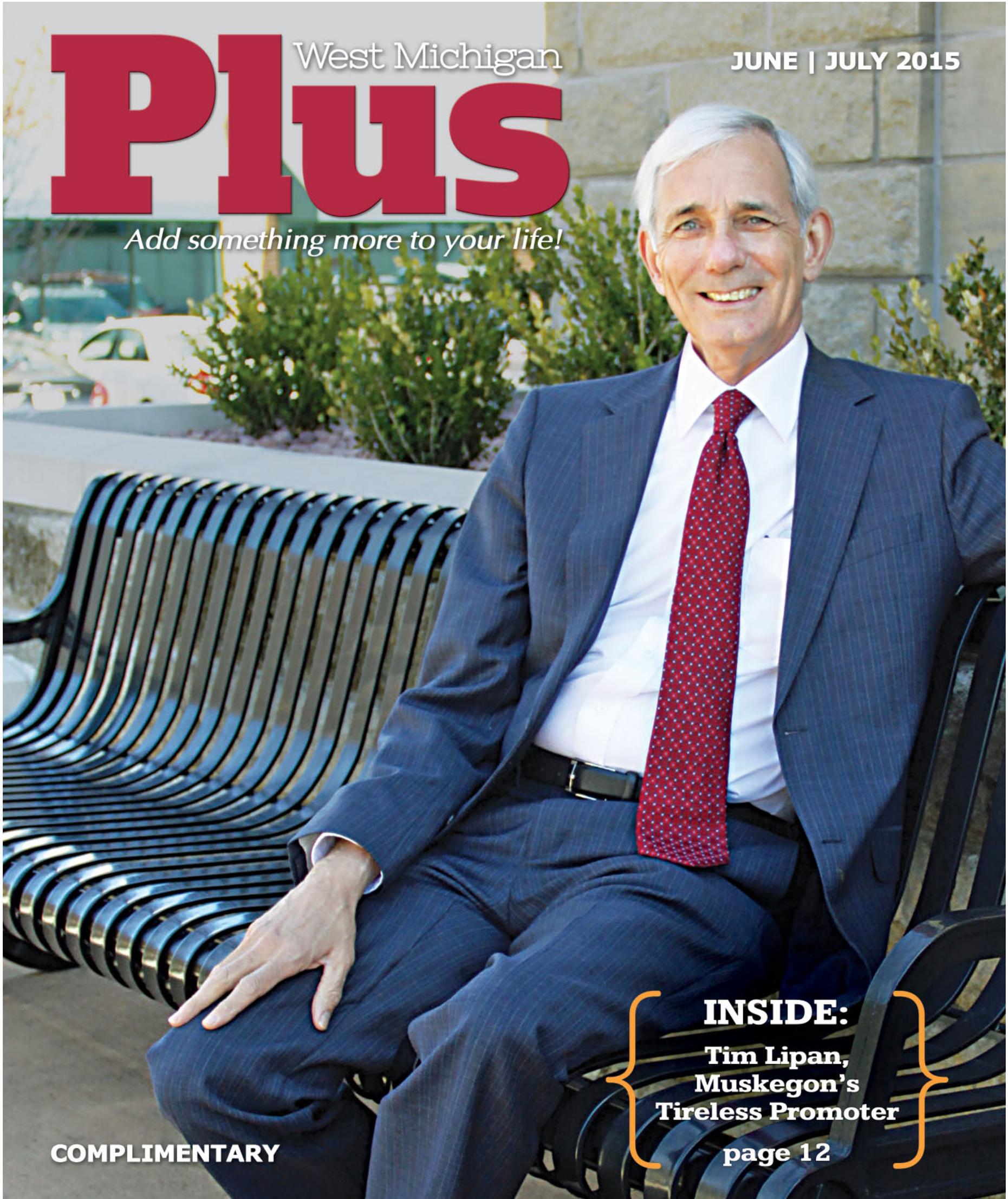


Plus

West Michigan

JUNE | JULY 2015

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

I would like to dedicate the first issue of PLUS to my second family and friends of the Muskegon Chronicle who encouraged me to jump off the high board....or was it "walk the plank", into a new adventure!

Orshal Road Productions was created back in the late fall of 2011. ORP was developed to produce, print, and distribute niche publications including "Homes of West Michigan", newsletters for Mona Shores, Muskegon, North Muskegon, Reeths Puffer schools, and Hackley Library. As I traveled up and down the Lakeshore meeting new people I kept hearing about the things they missed in their everyday reading of news and information. As I listened I began making notes and thinking of ideas that would bring back the things readers missed.

A little over a year ago the idea of West Michigan PLUS began to take shape. The concept of PLUS is that it is a Lakeshore community publication written by leaders and experienced professionals that live in our communities, writing stories that have an impact on our lives. Although the stories and columns may vary from issue to issue we will cover topics I hope will be of interest to you the reader. Within the pages of PLUS you will find book & movie reviews, a feature story about an individual or company that has had a positive impact on their community, we'll cover Real Estate, finance, education, assisting aging loved ones, marketing, sports, health & fitness, travel, and much more.

PLUS will cover and be available all along the Lakeshore from Pentwater to Holland and Zeeland and east to Hesperia, Fremont, and Holton down the M-120 corridor to over 400 locations. If you can't find a copy you can always go on-line to <http://orshaldproductions.com/> and view it or download the issue to your favorite device. Subscribe to PLUS and we'll email you when the latest issue is available on-line and at your favorite retailer.

I want to thank all of the talented contributing writers for sharing their thoughts, ideas, and experiences. Thank you to all of our Advertisers that have helped make PLUS possible.

As you flip through the pages you may scratch your head, you may smile, you could laugh right out loud, and I promise we'll do our very best not to make you cry. I hope you'll discover something that adds to your life making the time spent a PLUS!



Mark Williamson
Publisher



inside

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Orshal Road Productions, LLC was established in 2011 as a Marketing/Publishing company specializing in niche publications.

To advertise in future issues of West Michigan PLUS contact Mark Williamson. Contact information is listed above.

West Michigan PLUS is on-line and downloadable to your favorite device at: <http://orshalrdproductions.com/>.

SUBSCRIBE to West Michigan PLUS and you will receive an email when the latest issue is available for download or pick up at your favorite local retailer. West Michigan PLUS is published bi-monthly.

The views expressed by individual writers in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the publication. Opinions or information contained in any of the stories in this publication should not take the place of seeking professional advice.



Charitable Donations

By Bruce M. Duff

Every year one topic I seem to get several clients asking me about is charitable donations. In particular donating clothing and household items to Goodwill and other similar non-profit organizations. How much can be deducted? Do only certain items qualify? How are the items valued? What kind of receipts or documents are needed?

The first thing to consider when determining if the a donation is tax deductible is whether or not the organization you are donating to is a qualified non-profit in the eyes of the IRS. You can't give your old sofa in the basement to your nephew moving away to college and call it a charitable donation. While it is a charitable and nice gesture, the IRS will not see it as a deductible item if you include it on your tax return. Goodwill and Salvation Army are obvious non-profits that most people are familiar with, but if you need to check on whether the organization you are donating to qualifies, you can look them at <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check> to be sure.

The fair market value of the goods being donated is the amount used to determine your donation. Fair market value is what the item is worth at the time of the donation, not the purchase price of the item. Be realistic in valuing what you are donating. Goodwill's website is has good reference tool for determining the value of clothing and other items. The rule of thumb here is the more you are donating, the better record keeping you will need to have. Amounts to keep in mind are \$250, \$500 and \$5,000. For donations totaling under \$250 in fair market value, you need to have a receipt with the organization's name, the date of the donation, and a brief description of the goods donated. Donations between \$250 and \$500 require the same information, as well as, a statement of whether or not any goods or services were given to you in exchange. If they were, there needs to be an estimate of their value. For goods totaling over \$500 you need information on the items you donate, the dates of your donation and so on. Keeping a detailed list and taking pictures of your items (especially higher valued items like computers, jewelry or electronics) are good ways to document donations of any size, but especially when the

amount exceeds \$500. I am not suggesting you need to have to list out each individual item of clothing, but you should document something along the lines of so many men's shirts, so many pairs of women's pants or whatever the case may be. This where a spreadsheet along with the Goodwill thrift values can come in handy. Once a donation totals over \$5,000, you are required to have a certified appraisal along with the signature of the donee. Most people will probably not have this situation, but it is worth mentioning.

Items that are in good condition qualify as a donation. Don't make Goodwill bring your items to the landfill for you. Damaged, dirty, or worn-out items may be refused by Goodwill and will not qualify as a tax deduction. If you are not sure, you can check Goodwill's donor guidelines for more detailed information about what they will accept. Most other organizations have similar rules.

Just keep in mind that large donations can be looked at with a close eye by the IRS because of the potential for abuse. Don't overestimate the value of your goods and always keep good documents to avoid any problems down the road.

And YES, the Clintons did write off \$2 per pair underwear back when Bill was Governor of Arkansas.

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-12-12/opinion/ct-perspec-1112-things-20101212_1_underwear-undergarment-bra

Bruce Duff is a graduate of Michigan State University. He has over twenty years' experience in the accounting field. Bruce recognized the specialized attention individuals and small businesses were not receiving from larger accounting firms led him to start his own practice, BMD Financial Solutions.



Bruce serves as Treasurer for the Michigan Irish Music Festival and the Muskegon Irish America Society. He serves on the MSU Alumni Club of Muskegon County Board Of Directors.

Treasure Hunting in West Michigan

By John Morgan

While digging in the back courtyard of a building in historic downtown Grand Haven for old bottles, clay ink wells, and ceramic buttons, I discovered the remains of an amazing repast (that's repast, not past). Actually, it was more like many, many repasts, however, for what I found at about four feet down and mixed in with broken china, rusty spoons, and a pair of twisted eye-glass frames were oyster shells; lots and lots of oyster shells.

Now my calculations, based on the height of the seams on the necks of the bottles, the patterns on china fragments, and the date on a large penny (1854 and in lovely condition), led me to believe that the strata I was digging through contained debris from about 1850 to about 1890 or so. And that meant what had been under the concrete slab, that needed



removal so I could expand the building I was in with my jewelry store at the time, had at one point been mostly a vacant lot between buildings and had—like many vacant lots between buildings down through history—become the final resting place of a lot of neighbors' garbage.

Ok, not so surprising, except for the oyster shells. Rusty horseshoes I can understand, but oyster shells? They had obviously been dumped in quantity by one or more of the restaurants, including most likely those in some of the grander brick hotels whose architectural edifices with their corbels and tall elegant windows still grace the downtown, after dinner a hundred plus years ago. But how did they end up in the mid-west? In the 1800's, the west coast of Lake Michigan was a long way from the sea. Sure, the Eerie Canal had opened up the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean in 1825 and the Detroit, Grand Haven, Milwaukee Railway was in full swing in 1870, but this is seafood we're talking about. Great the day you catch it, but without modern refrigeration it starts to smell worse than my frat house bathroom in 48 hours. And how many days by boat or train would it take back then to bring the catch to Lake Michigan?

I grant you it would be worth it. There were cities and towns and settlements all along the lake shore, from the Straits of Mackinaw to Traverse City to Holland, Gary, Chicago, Racine, and Green Bay. And lots of things shuttling back and forth, like timber, ore, livestock, mail, and passengers. Grand Haven, in particular, was blessed with a large sheltering sand dune that protected it at the mouth of the Grand River and was a major commercial port and outlet for Grand Rapids. But Petoskey and Charlevoix, Ludington, Pentwater, Muskegon, Saugatuck,

and South Haven, just to keep it local, also had ports and people there who would've been willing and happy to purchase the occasional tasty oyster dinner if it could be supplied. But how could it? Cut chunks of ice from a pond in Boston or New York City, throw them in a ship's hold or a railway car with a few crates of oysters from the bay and "express" them off to Michigan? How long would that take under the best of circumstances? And if packing ice was needed, that meant winter time. (Could they even harvest oysters in the winter?) I don't know how the railroads ran during the snowy season, but I do know a lot of the towns along our lake didn't have rail service at any time, and shipping pretty much came to a stop from the end of October until sometime in April. This left most communities relying for a long stretch on what they had harvested and set aside themselves or could trade for locally. Luxuries would have to wait until the fickle spring weather improved. All this would have left the inhabitants wondering when the new pianos and silk undies were going to get there—and me still wondering how the oysters got there at all.

So, the addition on my store is finished and the trench of a window to a time long ago, along with a mystery, is closed over in my back courtyard with a new layer of concrete, lumber, and steel. I've got a cool green bottle with an eagle on it and a two piece iridescent glass pestle I've glued back together as souvenirs, but it's time to get back to making and selling jewelry and so the question of the shells is set aside...until one day an elderly gentleman comes into my place with a request to make a piece of jewelry. Of course I tell him I'd be delighted, so he hands me a small, slightly oblong, but rather pretty white pearl for me to set in a pendent. Knowing quite a bit about pearls, I recognize it as a semi-baroque one and ask if he got it in travels overseas, while in the military in the Far East perhaps. Kindly and a bit wistfully, he proceeds to fill me in. "This pearl came from my grandfather," he says "and I'd kinda like my granddaughter to have it. My granddad used to hunt for these himself and you can't get them anymore." "Really?" I ask, thinking he must be mistaken, as I see lots of very similar ones at the booths of Chinese pearl dealers every year at the trade shows. "Yeah, he told me that when he was a kid, there used to be whole beds of them—some with gem quality pearls like this one—but even though the water's better again now, pollution killed them all." Intrigued, I ask "And where was your grandfather raised?" But then somehow I know the answer before I hear it. "Why, right here on the Grand River," the old gentleman declares proudly.

As realization washes over me that I really should have known better, I look at the delicate little white gem in my hand. From a time when the woods and rivers were full of life, now remembered by only a few. Not an oyster—I'd made an uninformed assumption about what kind of shells they were in the diggings— but some kind of pearl bearing freshwater clam or mussel I'd never considered or known to exist in our area. A simple little local fellow that could teach someone a lesson about treasure...and taste mighty fine too.

John Morgan
J. Morgan Ltd.
Fine Jewelers



MEDIA WATCH:

The Baltimore Riots

By Chad Lerch

The news media is supposed to play an important role in keeping elected officials honest — but unfortunately when it comes to the powerhouse news sources, personal agendas, corporate agendas, and sensationalism overshadow the watchdog duty. Case in point: CNN's coverage of the Baltimore Riots.

Following the death of a civilian who died in police custody, the streets of Baltimore literally blew up as protesters turned violent — thugs broke into liquor stores, stole anything and everything they could, and burned businesses to the ground.

While hundreds of police officers in riot gear stood inactive less than 100 yards away from the looting and straight out vandalism, CNN debated whether the Baltimore mayor should have issued a strict curfew to stop the violence from escalating.

CNN Legal Analyst Sunny Hostin defended the mayor's inaction, telling the audience that setting a citywide curfew takes time and the mayor couldn't have possibly spread the news in time to clear the streets by 10 pm — even though protesters threw bottles and rocks at police 7 hours earlier; things were clearly getting out of hand.

As it turns out, the mayor also ordered the police officers to stand down; she didn't put a curfew in place until the following day; and she failed to make a statement while the rioting escalated into the night. Yet Sunny Hostin, a lawyer-turned-journalist, failed to question authority. That's a journalism no-no.

Then Hostin, who sat in the host's chair, dropped a bombshell: She has a "relationship" with the mayor. Hostin couldn't say "friends" because that would imply closeness, another layer in her obvious conflict of interest. So much for watchdog journalism.

If you're looking for a column about race relations, police brutality, or casting blame on who is responsible for the death of a man who was arrested for alleged drug dealing, this isn't it. I believe the media plays a crucial role in delivering the news and keeping elected officials honest. Without strong journalists, government loses transparency and accountability, and in the end, the government doesn't work for the people.

It was a much different story in Muskegon five years ago; a police officer was nearly beaten to death by a suspect who fled a traffic stop. As the officer struggled to survive, he pulled the trigger and the suspect died. In the hours that followed, neighbors hurled insults at police during their investigation, and residents framed the incident as a white cop shot an innocent black kid.

Outstanding reporting by John Hausman and Heather Lynn Peters of the Muskegon Chronicle detailed how the cop did everything correctly. Kudos also go to the police department for releasing information to the press and de-escalating a potentially volatile situation in the community.

Weeks later, we still don't know what caused the death of a man in Baltimore. Why is it that at the time this column was published, we still didn't have answers?

I believe reporters like Sunny Hostin are to blame. Reporters need to demand answers and question authority. Without an active and relentless press, society suffers.



Chad Lerch owns the internet marketing firm Digi Marketing Pros in Grand Haven. He is a former reporter for The Muskegon Chronicle.

The Risky Business of Parenting Techy Teens

By Melanie Sportell

Parenting a teenager—difficult, for sure. Parenting teenagers with technology—downright scary. As a parent who has five children living at home with all the latest technology including phones, iPods, iPads, gaming systems and Wi-Fi, the fear of the trouble that could arise is intense. According to my children, I am the parent who comes up with "really stupid" ideas. One of which is a centralized charging station loaded with all the technology by 8:15 p.m. My children think I am the master of "stupid" ideas, so much so, I probably should have incorporated it into my bio. However, the reasoning behind this "stupidity" is that our children possess, at their fingertips, the ability to wreck their entire future with a few words and/or a picture, along with a quick tap on the send button. As their parent, it is my job to protect them, set boundaries, and inform them of the dangers of technology.

Our children are creating their digital footprint at very young ages, with underdeveloped brains that lack the ability to process long term consequences. When they hit send, they aren't thinking about how it will affect their college admission or future job opportunities. Many children have no idea that what they do online will impact their digital footprint, permanently. Most children don't realize that if they participate in sexting (sending or receiving a sexually explicit text or picture), they could face a felony charge of possession or distribution of child pornography. This is true even if someone else sent it to them, and all they did was receive it.

Technology is not going away. We need to learn to live with it—but with boundaries. We need to be clear about the dangers that are present. By no means am I an expert, but I have some experience with my own children and my students who are detained in a juvenile detention center. To help balance the pros and cons of technology, my children each created their own contract that requires them to maintain their grades, follow through with different responsibilities around the house, and maintain positive behavior in order to access their technology for an hour a day

during the school week. Included in their contract is the "stupid" rule that all technology needs to be placed on the charging station by 8:15 p.m. If their contract is broken, they lose their technology for three days.

At our house, we have frequent conversations about apps and technology. As far as the millions of apps that are available, I keep a close eye on which ones they are using. The current list of apps that are not allowed (and the list is constantly growing) are: Snapchat, Kik, any free texting apps (they each have phones, no need for any other means to text), Yik Yak, Tinder, Ask.fm, Voxel, Poke (Facebook's version of Snapchat), Vine, Whisper, Tumblr, FML, etc.

It is vitally important to keep the lines of communication open with your children. Find out which apps they and their friends are using, how they work, and whether they have ever been bullied online or had a stranger try to contact them via technology. Make sure they realize the consequences of even having a sexually explicit picture on their device, and that they understand that what might seem harmless to them, may end up leading to serious charges. There are many resources available to help. Check out the apps that assist parents in monitoring their children online and keep in mind, communication is key.

Melanie Sportell is the mother of the modern day blended Brady Bunch—four boys and two girls ages twelve to twenty. She holds her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction and teaches science for adjudicated youth. In her "free time", she teaches group fitness, does personal training, and coaches a girls' basketball and boys' soccer team.



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PLUS MOVIE REVIEWS

El Machina

(2015, Rated R)



Once or twice a decade, a science fiction film comes along that transcends the casual action-thriller conventions that have long plagued the genre and offers profound, provocative perception of the human condition in the way only good sci-fi can. *Blade Runner* did it in the 80's, *Gattaca* in the 90's, and *Moon* in the 2000's. After last year's release of the mesmerizing art flick *Under the Skin*, starring Scarlett Johansson, the science fiction genre spoils us again with a remarkable film by first time director, long time writer Alex Garland. In the most basic sense, *Ex Machina* is about a computer geek who is chosen to assess the human characteristics of an advanced artificial intelligence named Ava. It is a small-scale effort brimming with large ideas and outstanding performances. In particular: Oscar Isaac, who has recently come on as one of the most enthralling actors around, and Alicia Vikander, an up-and-coming Swedish talent who gives a breakthrough performance as Ava. Attempting to categorize *Ex Machina* as a certain type of film would be an injustice simply because it works on so many levels. It is a one of a kind experience that will challenge you, endear you, and, at times, break your humanoid heart.

It Follows

(2015, Rated R)



Don't let the reviews fool you, David Robert Mitchell's *It Follows* is not the scariest film in years nor does it break any new ground for the horror genre. It does however make the familiar feel grossly unnerving in a way that will linger with you long after the lights flicker on. From the opening shot, *It Follows* establishes a menacing sense of nostalgia: Midwestern suburbia, fall. The film owes a huge debt of its bone-chilling success to the classic suburban horror flicks of the 70's and 80's, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* among the most obvious. Here a band of bored Michigan teenagers is relentlessly pursued by what appears to be some sort of paranormal venereal disease. They are a much more grounded bunch of kids than you will find in your typical scary movie. The terrific young actress Maika Monroe

plays Jay, who is the center of attention both among her friends and the film. Monroe's subtle yet sincere performance echoes the long-standing brilliance of Jamie Lee Curtis in *Halloween*. From the slow moving camera pans, its crucial synth-laced score, to its lead-footed antagonist, *It Follows* is deliberately crafted in the vein of an old school slow burn. Rather than rely on booming jump scares, the film draws its tension from Jay's vulnerability. She is not safe anywhere. Even if Jay climbs into her car and drives far away, it is always walking straight for her. This realization slowly kills Jay's soul, which in turn kills yours. It is all part of the film's uneasiness, which sets in during the prologue and relentlessly builds towards a hauntingly eerie conclusion.

Kingsman: The Secret Service

(2015, Rated R)



Having given up the director's chair of the X-Men franchise after *First Class*, Matthew Vaughn is no stranger to the crafting fun, popcorn flicks and brings a

lot of that experience to his new comic book adaptation *Kingsman: The Secret Service*. This action-packed homage to the classic Bond films of old dishes out a high-octane energy that charges every frame, from the well-choreographed action sequences down to the witty, often uproarious dialogue. A stellar, mostly British star-studded cast ties it all together so properly, you might think it was made special for Queen Elizabeth herself. Oscar Winner Colin Firth is great as an experienced agent of the secret Kingsman organization, "The Rock of Hollywood" Michael Caine gives another solid performance as the head of Kingsman, and even the wildly unknown Welsh actor Taron Egerton as the newbie recruit boasts the acting chops to carry this February blockbuster (two words you rarely see together) and any potential sequels it may spawn. However, it is Samuel L. Jackson who steals the show as a loony villain with a speech impediment. Jackson charismatically delivers every men-a-thing line the way only Sam Jackson could, while simultaneously justifying our falling in love with him in the first place. If a film truly is only as good as its villain, then *Kingsman: The Secret Service* is a hoot... And it is.

Jordan Peterson is a film student at Grand Valley State University and works as a projectionist at Celebration! Cinema Carousel in Muskegon. He is an aspiring writer-director as well as an amateur screenwriter and reviewer. Some of his favorite movies include (500) Days of Summer, The Muppets, and Evil Dead 2.



Get Busy Slowing Down!

By Laura Holmes

It's always fun to run into a friend you haven't seen in a while. Greetings are exchanged, pleasantries on family, kids and careers. Most conversations go something like this:

"Hey there, how are you? How's your job going at AGM?"

"Great, really busy, but working a lot of hours to keep up."

"We should get together to catch up...grab a bite to eat."

"That sounds great; let me check my schedule and get back to you."

Two months go by and the pending reconnection has been buried under a pile of reports, 50-hour workweeks and an overloaded brain that forgot the conversation ten minutes after the initial chat.

We have the disease of busyness and don't leave much time for play, for a heartfelt conversation, or a getaway. Statistics show how overworked we are. We are vacation-deprived with no white space in our calendars. Apparently, we are so busy that many of us don't use the PTO or vacation days we've earned. The boss is paying us not to work, and we don't utilize this incredible benefit?



Expedia published a report in 2011: Americans leave two days of unused vacation, annually.* Does this sound like you? Most of us skip personal time and vacations for the following reasons:

- Cost
- Kids
- Time/Schedules

The Atlantic found similar statistics. Over 50% of working Americans had up to two weeks of unused vacation time at the close of 2011, and work longer hours than most other advanced countries.* The long-hour work culture that permeates our economy...has this become the American dream? We need to work toward a new solution, where life-work-play balance is a reality.

It's time for a vacation. Studies show it is good for your overall health and wellness. The anticipation leading up to a trip is almost as beneficial as the actual holiday; my travel buddies call this phenomenon, "peaking."

This boost in happiness occurs for up to eight weeks during the planning stages.

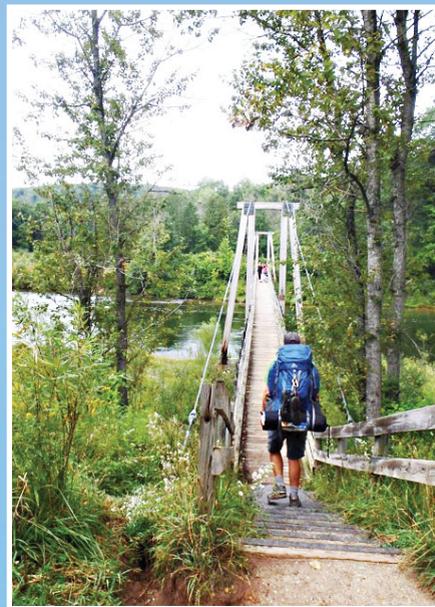
Don't become a victim of vacation deprivation; start planning, get off the couch and go. Jet across an ocean or stay close by. It's not important to fly overseas if cash is an issue. Plan something an hour away from home and that too can provide a vacation high. Many of us need some urging and inspiration to take time off. We need a break from our work schedules. We'd love to experience a holiday with a friend we've lost touch with. And, we have a chance to open our minds, beyond the familiar and the routine of our overloaded daily lives.

Let travel change you. A new experience or unfamiliar place holds all sorts of catalysts and social nuances, leading you to a new open-minded view of others and more defined sense of self. Want proof? There's science to back it up. The brain's neurons are influenced by environment, habits and are sensitive to change. New and different sights, sounds, smells and sensations all have been proven to revitalize your over-digitized brain.



Travel has undeniably changed my perspective and daily awareness, keeping my attitude meter shifted toward the happy side. With many local, Michigan-based destinations, you and your mind will get the needed workout, not your wallet. Here's a list of getaways within easy striking distance:

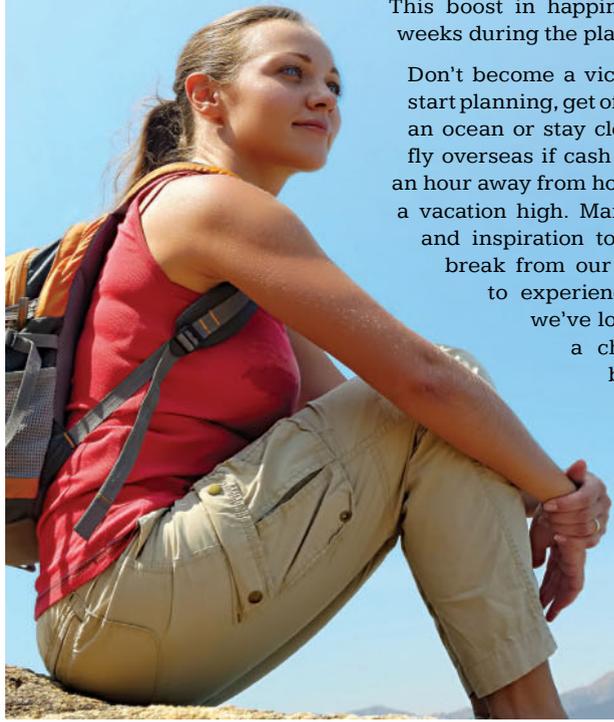
- Run down the dune at Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore, west of Traverse City. (Named the most beautiful natural wonder in the 50 states, 2011 Good Morning America poll).
 - Camp on a Lake Michigan beach at Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness area, just north of Ludington.
 - Hike or mountain bike the NCT (North Country Trail), the nation's longest scenic trail. Yes, longer than the famous Appalachian Trail.
 - Backpack the Manistee River Trail and NCT connector, the site of the largest wooden suspension bridge in Lower Michigan.
 - Visit the Lake Superior shoreline and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.
- No matter how much vacation you took last year, aspire to a new goal: Be more present and passionate now vs. whimpering and complaining, filling every time slot in our iCalendar. Get out of your box and go stay in a tent or treehouse somewhere else!



.....
Laura Holmes is a FineLine Creative career girl and writer who always has a trip up her sleeve. Gotta pack, write, travel, play! Reach her at www.4fineline.com or www.contentqueens.net



*Reference sources: Expedia 2011, The Atlantic.





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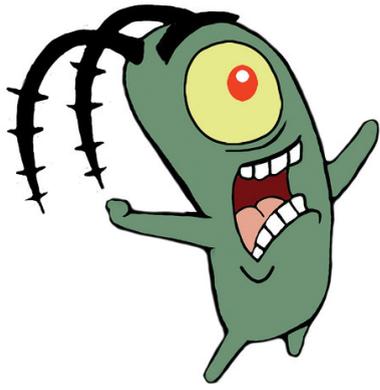


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Tim's Cartooniverse

The animated ramblings of an animation fan

By Tim Wheeler

I was at a cocktail party recently. Well, I was at another cocktail party or two as well, and I suppose you could consider those recent, but I'm referring to one in particular – as opposed to referring to one in general or two in particular.

I'm sorry. What were we discussing? Oh yes. I was at a recent cocktail party (you know the one), and the following request was served while we loitered around the cheese display: Name a famous person you would like to have here at the cocktail party. Without hesitation I said, "Sheldon J. Plankton." And then with just a hint of hesitation I said, "Is this the Jarlsberg or the Gruyere?"

Everyone looked at me like I had three eyes, which would be cool if the third eye could see through walls or into the future or had a laser; otherwise, it would just make it really difficult to find good sunglasses. "I'm sorry," I stammered, "I'm not really a cheese expert." I thought about putting the cheese back down, but I had already touched it. And who wants to eat a piece of cheese that was touched by a guy with a third laser eye that sees into the future? I ate it. Pretty sure it was the Jarlsberg.

Turns out the cheese question wasn't the snag. The problem was that my famous person du jour is a cartoon. So now the conversation shifted to whether or not my answer counted as a legitimate answer. I didn't know we had official rules and scoring, but I suppose that adds a wrinkle to the game. Didn't really matter to me, though. I was stuck on another question: What does the J. stand for in Sheldon's name?

If it stands for Jarlsberg I would have looked like a genius. Well, maybe not a genius, but sort of a cheese savant, which is as close to a genius

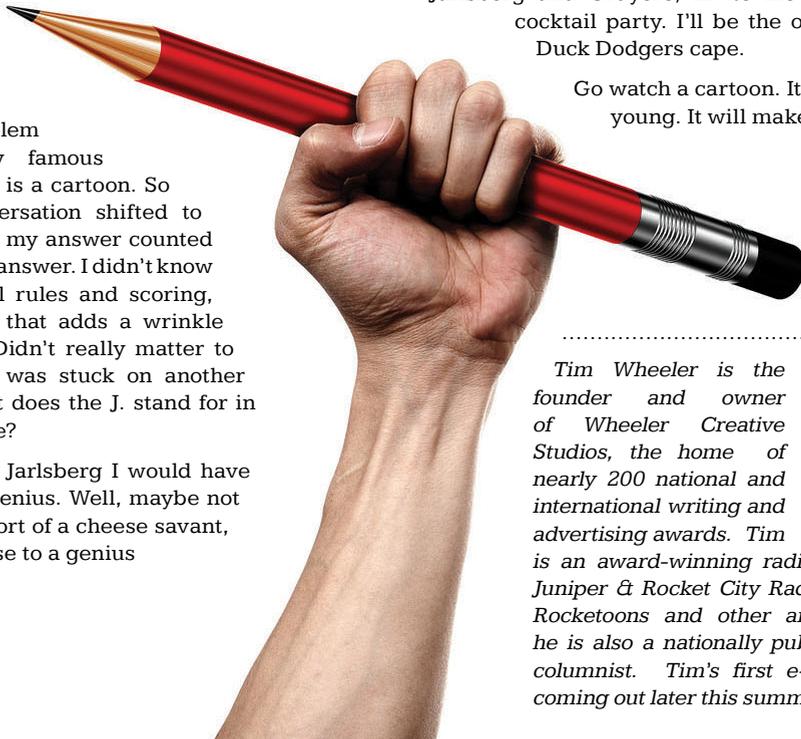
as I will come unless someone invites Stephen Hawking to our next cocktail party. And yes, Stephen Hawking is a big cartoon fan, so that's an added bonus.

I still don't know what the J. stands for, but I do know this: I think in cartoon. My wife even said that to me once. She says lots of nice things to me (I know. Your guess is as good as mine.), but this was definitely one of the nicest. I DO think in cartoon. I really DID write in Daffy Duck during a presidential election. I really DO think Great Grape Ape used PEDs to rig the Laff-A-Lympics (yes, that's how you spell it).

Why do I think these things? Why not?! It's fun. Okay, maybe that isn't enough of an answer for some, but I'm running out of space on this page so here is what I will do. If you want to know more about cartoons, come back here in the next issue. If you want to learn more about the cartooniverse, the power of animation, the joy and beauty of cartoons, the billions and billions of dollars at play in the world of animation, then come back here.

And if you can always tell the difference between Jarlsberg and Gruyere, invite me to your next cocktail party. I'll be the one wearing a Duck Dodgers cape.

Go watch a cartoon. It will keep you young. It will make you smile.



Tim Wheeler is the founder and owner of Wheeler Creative Studios, the home of nearly 200 national and international writing and advertising awards. Tim is an award-winning radio host (Radio Juniper & Rocket City Radio), creator of Rocketoons and other animation, and he is also a nationally published humor columnist. Tim's first e-book will be coming out later this summer.



Good Reads

The Girl on the Train

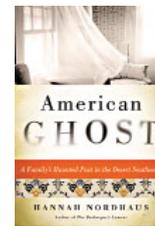
by Paula Hawkins



Avid readers spend a lot of time hunting for the perfect read-alike, a book that will satisfy their craving for more of what they've just enjoyed. If you've been looking for a *Gone Girl* read-alike, *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins will fulfill your expectations. Unreliable narrator Rachel is falling apart. She's drinking constantly, going through the motions but making no attempt to repair her damaged life. Disgusted with herself, the only fixed point in her day is the commuter train journey she makes where she watches "Jess" and "Jason", a seemingly happy couple, as the train passes their house. Everything changes when "Jess" goes missing, and Rachel is drawn into the police investigation of the disappearance – it turns out that Rachel's been seen around in the neighborhood, may have been stalking "Jess" and "Jason", and might have committed a horrible crime. Full of twists and turns that lead to a chilling climax, *The Girl on the Train* will take you for a thrilling ride.

American Ghost: A Family's Haunted Past in the Desert Southwest

by Hannah Nordhaus



Whether or not you believe in ghosts, reading Hannah Nordhaus's investigation into the appearance of the ghost of her great-great-grandmother, Julia Staab, will take you on a unique journey. In the 1970s, Julia began appearing at La Posada in Santa Fe, formerly her glamorous home, now a hotel. With the ghost came stories that hinted at a dark past – a cruel husband, a dead infant, a suspicious death. Nordhaus decided to investigate, using both standard sources like archives, genealogy, and history as well as tarot card readers, psychics, and ghost hunters. Her family's personal stories illuminate the sweep of history from the nineteenth century to the present with a humanity and warmth that is compelling and fascinating, touching on the struggles of German Jews, the rough-and-tumble life of pioneers of the American Southwest, the work and the luck of genealogical research, the various routes to the paranormal, and the hidden textures of women's history in an examination of the intersections between history and myth. In the finale, Nordhaus spends the night in the haunted room and recounts her experiences. I won't spoil the ending, but it makes a great finale to an exceptional story.

Laura J. Kraly is the Head of Adult Services at the Loutit District Library in Grand Haven, MI where she answers questions, selects books for the collection, provides tech support for the library's electronic resources and gives reading, watching and listening suggestions. While reading is a lifelong passion, she also enjoys watching hockey, doing Zumba and yoga, cooking Italian food, and traveling.



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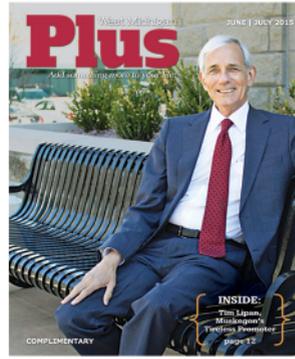
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The White Lake Area

By Amy Van Loon

In the heart of West Michigan, nestled among the shoreline of Lake Michigan, you will find the two small, historic, waterfront towns of Montague and Whitehall.

It's no mistake this beautiful area is nicely located just one hour south of Ludington, one hour north of Holland and one hour west of Grand Rapids. The perfect spot for family vacation activities! The area had long been a favorite of boaters and vacationers. Nearly a hundred years ago, steamships had offered regular service to Chicago and some local historians will tell you that the White Lake Area contributed to more than 85% of the lumber used to rebuild Chicago after the fire of 1871.

White Lake is situated between the two towns with a length of seven miles and a deep channel to Lake Michigan. Boasting with outdoor recreation, this geographic layout makes it ideal for boating and fishing opportunities. The pristine White River, where you can tube, canoe raft, kayak and fish, quietly flows into White Lake. Various charter boats are well prepared for taking pros and newcomers on an adventure on all three bodies of water that link together. There are several boat launches and nearly a dozen marinas that will welcome your own boat, as well. Golfers also enjoying the great outdoors and can try out the greens at a variety of seven golf courses in the area

Miles of Lake Michigan beaches covered in soft, sugar beach sand stretch along the shoreline. The historic White River Light Station, a museum in an old lighthouse, sits on the channel between White Lake and Lake Michigan. From the top you can see for miles over land and sea. Another museum in Montague houses lumbering artifacts and even the dress worn by Montague's very own Miss America in the late 1960's. The Michigan Heritage Park is new to the area highlighting fur traders, lumberjacks, a Native American village and a civil War Camp.

Accommodations run the full spectrum from a number of charming bed and breakfasts, to lake front cottages and resorts, to a variety of motels, hotels and campgrounds. Additional fun and recreation are only minutes away. The Double JJ Ranch offers a variety of outdoor activities for the entire family to enjoy year round recreation. Children of all ages are thrilled with one of the state's largest amusement parks, Michigan's Adventure. Agriculture is no stranger to the area

with Lewis Farms and Country Dairy offering a selection of crops and produce and other various local farms offering a bounty of fruits and vegetables.

These sister cities offer small town atmosphere with sophisticated and unique shopping in the downtown shopping areas. A shopping experience is sure to be found in the quaint and charming gift shops and antique stores where there are many treasures for one and all. Restaurants and eateries offer everything from hearty breakfasts to lunch in an outdoor garden to dining options overlooking the lake along with the area's very own Meadery and Brewery.

The World's Largest Weathervane sits on the north shore of White Lake. It stands 48 feet tall and is a tribute to the spirit of cooperation and friendliness of the people of the White Lake Area.

Bicyclers and hikers can enjoy a 32 mile rail trail. This paved recreation trail is a favorite to locals and visitors and is totally handicapped accessible. A multitude of events are scheduled each year including arts and crafts festivals, fishing contests, and major festivals with music, food and entertainment.

It is in this corner of paradise where recreational enthusiasts will find a wide range of outdoor activities to enjoy year round in the White Lake Area.

The White Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and Travel Information Center are located on the causeway between the two towns of Montague and Whitehall, housed in a renovated C & O train depot. The Chamber operates full time and year round. Friendly staff is happy to assist visitors and provide free information on their special spot in West Michigan, where you too can escape the hustle and bustle.

.....
Amy L. VanLoon is the Executive Director of the White Lake Area Chamber of Commerce located at 124 W. Hanson Street in Whitehall, Michigan.



This “East Coaster” Smitten by



By Marla R. Miller

Having grown up near Saginaw, Tim Lipan quickly realized the untapped potential of Muskegon when he moved to the area in 1982.

Since then, Lipan has lived the mission of service – both on and off the clock – as a tireless volunteer and promoter of all Muskegon has to offer.

“I fell in love with the place and the tremendous potential of the area,” he said. “It’s beautiful, a great place to raise a family. I always thought it was a secret jewel.”

On Red Cross: “I’ve tried to make a difference in the quality of life here. I’m certainly proud of my Red Cross work. We helped thousands and thousands of people and families.”

His day job as executive director of the Muskegon-Oceana-Newaygo chapter of the American Red Cross took him across the country responding to national disasters, mobilizing volunteers and supporting people in times of crisis. Lipan spent 40 years with the Red Cross, retiring last fall during a restructuring of the national organization.

Locally, he’s credited with serving on countless boards and putting Muskegon on the entertainment and festival map. Lipan’s knack for planning, marketing, recruiting volunteers and mobilizing people is a skill set that fits well with organizing large events.

His community involvement includes Muskegon Summer Celebration, Muskegon Bike Time, Michigan Irish Music Festival, Tall Ships Challenge, Party in the Park, the International Pyrotechnics Convention in 1996, Student Showcase and last summer’s Here’s To The Heroes.

“He definitely has tremendous knowledge of what it takes to plan an event and also who else needs to be involved; he’s got a great Rolodex,” said Chris Zahrt, who volunteered alongside him for 10 years at Summer Celebration and also planning the Tall Ships Challenge and Michigan Irish Music Festival.

Zahrt said many people underestimate the planning that goes into putting on a multi-day festival. Lipan’s experience and leadership ability are great assets to the community. He’s always been willing to serve on a board or step up and volunteer a shift, she said.

“He’s a great troubleshooter,” Zahrt said. “He’s very calm if there’s an emergency situation. He’s really good at making sure

we have all the information, getting in touch with the right people. He definitely sees the big picture and is able to make sure all the bases are covered.”

Many people know him as the emcee of Muskegon Summer Celebration – his trademark “Hello Muskegon” welcomed guests nightly – but he’s also a long-time youth basketball, soccer and baseball coach and announcer for Mona Shores’ sports.

A member of the original Summer Celebration board, Lipan feels fortunate to have been able to go to rock camp every summer. He introduced the main acts and volunteered backstage during the summer music festival’s 19-year run.

So how did a non-Muskegonite become such a proponent of the area?

Lipán grew up in Caro, a small farming community east of Saginaw in Michigan’s thumb area. He earned a degree in business and marketing from Saginaw Valley State University in 1974.

He landed his first job out of college with Red Cross, serving as director of the Saginaw Valley blood program. Lipan continued to climb the ranks and worked in various roles, including blood drives, family case work and damage assessment, program evaluation, disaster training and response, and chapter support and leadership development.

On Michigan Irish Music Festival:
“Irish Fest is one of the best festivals around. It’s unique and people love it. You can’t help but have a good time. It’s become a wildly successful event and a model for other Irish festivals.”

“I did almost everything there is to do in the Red Cross,” he said. “When I became executive director in Muskegon, and then

the region, I had had great training. I had walked in their shoes. I traveled around the country and worked in a variety of jobs at those disasters.”

He served as executive director of the Muskegon-Oceana Chapter of the American Red Cross and then the larger West Michigan region for more than 30 years. In 2000, Newaygo County joined the chapter. In 2011, the West Shore Chapter of the American Red Cross, serving Mason, Manistee and Lake counties, consolidated into the chapter.

“I used to travel the country and provide training to executive directors across the country,” he said. “When I didn’t go to disasters anymore, I sent other people and told them ‘this will be the toughest job you ever love, but you’ll be making the difference in someone’s life.’”

Under Lipan’s leadership, the Muskegon chapter amassed a roster of more than 2,000 volunteers and created some unique programs to address local community needs. In 1986, the chapter started providing transportation to elderly residents who needed to get to doctors’ appointments, especially dialysis treatments. That program continues, now with 10 cars, 70 volunteers and serving more than 500 people.

The Western Side of the Mitten



The chapter also developed an AIDS awareness and education program in the 1980s and installed more than 10,000 green address signs in rural areas so an ambulance could easily identify it from the road.

"It was a place that had tremendous potential to do good work," he said. "Over the years, we made Muskegon the best Red Cross chapter in the state and a model for Red Cross chapters across the country."

Lipan also did a great job of tying his Red Cross work with his festival involvement, providing volunteers for parking and other events as fundraisers for the local chapter, said Gary Nelund, board chairman of Muskegon Red Cross.

"As far as the Red Cross, Tim and the amount of growth he put into that organization was incredible," he said. "He is kind

of Mr. Muskegon. He is part of the fabric of the community. He's coached sports; he's still the voice of the Sailors and the Muskegon Clippers baseball team at Marsh Field. That's proof of the passion and how much he loves the community. He's a tireless promoter for what's great about Muskegon."

Lipan's also been active in the Greater Muskegon Jaycees, United Way, Rotary and events such as AIDS Quilt to Muskegon, Save a Life Tour and Hands Across America – Muskegon Mile, which involved recruiting volunteers from Muskegon to show up and hold hands across a mile stretch in Bremen, Ind., to raise awareness for childhood hunger.

Early on, Lipan organized and promoted concerts and national acts at LC Walker arena to raise money for Red Cross. That experience proved invaluable as community leaders were looking to revamp the Great Lumbertown Music Festival as Muskegon Summer Celebration.

Lipan helped book acts, produce shows, including sound, lighting and staging, and handle site setup and logistics at Heritage Landing – all as a volunteer – for 19 years. The commitment on the part of volunteers to pull off the annual festival remains a testament to the community.

"As a guy coming from out of town, I saw the potential for creating a community event fun for families, but that also could make Muskegon proud of itself," he said. "Sometimes, the people who live here don't fully appreciate how beautiful and nice it is. It put Muskegon on the map outside of Muskegon and gave Muskegon residents a sense of pride."

His son, Michael, now 22, grew up backstage at Summer Celebration. Despite his work and community commitments, Lipan still made time to coach him in sports and spent 10 years driving back and forth from Muskegon to Saginaw for meetings as president of the Saginaw Valley State University Alumni Association.

"You make time for what's important," he said, reflecting on how he had time for it all. "I was busy day and night. I would run from practice to a committee meeting. I took my vacation and worked festivals. Being on a board means you need to work." Even in retirement, Lipan has no plans of slowing down. He recently started a consulting business to provide support for nonprofits and returned to coaching baseball, as a volunteer, for Western Michigan Christian Middle School. He also emceed Student Showcase this spring and enjoys announcing games for the Muskegon Clippers.

"I was a Little League coach for many years and used to coach pretty much year round," he

said. "It takes a lot of time and effort, but the kids are worth it. I enjoy working with young people and hopefully make a difference in their life."

He's still active on the board of directors for Muskegon Bike Time and Michigan Irish Music Festival and believes moving Bike Time to the former horse track property by the I-96 and I-31 interchange is necessary to help it grow.

On Summer Celebration: "I'm very proud of what Summer Celebration did for the community and the impact it had."

He remains committed to the area and doing his part to make it a place people want to live or vacation.

"We all have seen the ups and downs, but I have always wanted to enhance the local image of Muskegon among

itself and enhance the image to outside people," he said. "I never had the attitude 'I need to be paid for my effort,' I just wanted to give back. I still love the place and do whatever I can to make it a great place to live and come to visit. There are a lot of people in this town who have the same attitude and feelings I do about our community."



On Muskegon Bike Time: "We created it from scratch. It has a \$30 million impact on the community and really puts Muskegon on the map. It brings so many people from outside the state here."

Marla R. Miller is an award-winning journalist who started her career working at community newspapers in Indiana. She relocated to West Michigan in 2005 to cover arts and entertainment and features for the Muskegon Chronicle. Now a professional, freelance writer, she worked as a beat reporter for more than a decade, covering education, health, arts and entertainment, religion, township government, general assignments and social and human services. She has a special interest in features and enjoys meeting interesting people and telling their stories. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Ball State University and a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University. She also teaches Total Control for Mercy Health's Bladder Clinic and enjoys walking her dog, hiking, yoga, boating and going to the beach.



There's a reason to

WATCH MUSKEGON

WATCH MUSKEGON is the message that is being conveyed through a multi-faceted, community image improvement campaign taking place along the Muskegon Lakeshore. The message behind the marketing component of this 14 point campaign was created to produce awareness about the community's numerous assets, recent developments and overall appeal.

The time has come for the Muskegon Lakeshore to promote the area's image," says Bob Lukens, Community Development Director for Muskegon County. "Muskegon has undergone many changes in recent years and it is time people hear about and understand them." Lukens is referring to Muskegon's low unemployment, millions of dollars in capital investment and many exciting new businesses downtown such as the Farmer's Market, breweries and others.

This **WATCH MUSKEGON** message will be seen throughout Muskegon County and the rest of West Michigan encouraging citizens and neighbors to get engaged in their community and understand what is here and that this is just the beginning. The message will be seen over the next several years through grassroots marketing efforts, online marketing, billboards, radio and television ads, industry publications, on Muskegon County buses and other unique forms of advertising.

The concept for this campaign began as a replacement for the welcome sign as you enter the downtown area from Seaway Drive. "Initially, we wanted to let visitors and residents know that things are happening in Muskegon and that there is momentum here," says City of Muskegon Manager Frank Peterson. "We know there's still work to be done and that this is a work in progress... in fact, we're just getting started."

To carry the momentum forward, an oversight committee was formed and the concept is evolving into a larger, local, regional, and maybe one day national campaign. "It has really evolved from a single city sign, to a campaign that better shows Muskegon's progress and the people that are making it happen," says Cindy Larsen, President of the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce.

Community residents, businesses and others are all encouraged to utilize the message in any internal and external publications understanding that the message will attract employees, investments, residents, students, businesses and others to the area. "We are glad to see a campaign that can be adaptable for a wide variety of uses throughout our diverse community," says Norton Shores Mayor Gary Nelund.

This community-wide marketing campaign is just one of the strategies currently underway to change people's perception of the Muskegon Lakeshore community. In a 14 point image improvement plan authored by the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce it reads, when people appreciate, promote and invest in a community, the local economy grows. *The community attracts residents, visitors, businesses and workforce talent.*

It is for this reason that numerous community stakeholders are allocating resources and staff time to projects which promote Muskegon's image as a premier waterfront community.

There are things happening in Muskegon. We're just getting started and we hope people will notice the progress that's being made.



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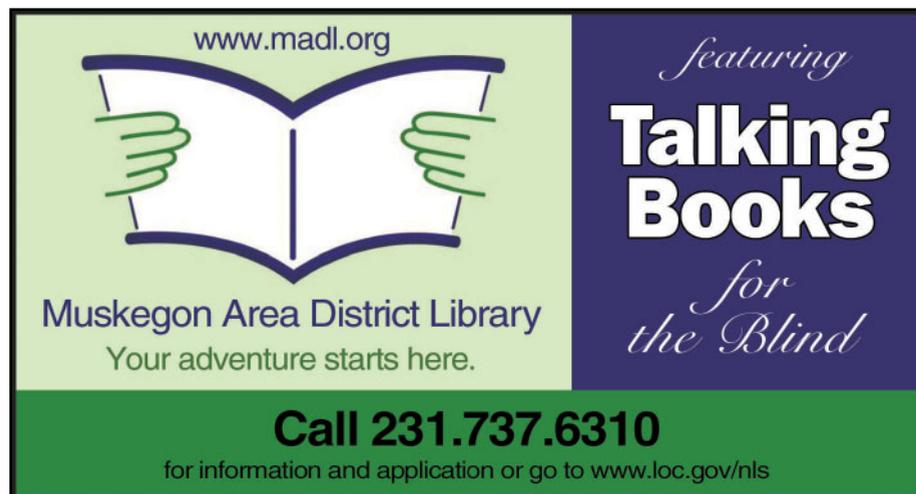
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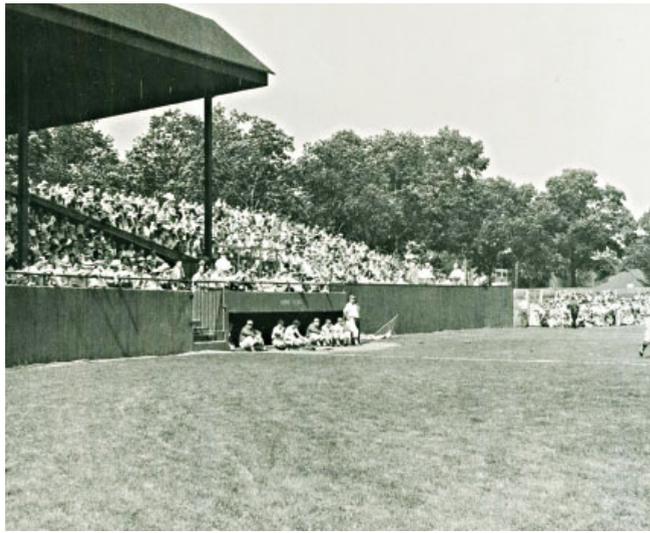


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GOOD SPORTS

Marsh Field

By Mike Mattson

Marsh Field brings out the baseball memories in Walt Gawkowski.

He's frequently visited the historic ballpark as a boy, player and coach. And as a self-admitted baseball purist, Gawkowski understands what Marsh Field has meant to the sport in Muskegon.

"You also think about some of the great players who actually played here," said Gawkowski, a local school administrator and veteran high school coach. "You think about the Detroit Tigers coming here to play an exhibition game and envision what that grandstand must have looked like. To see those old pictures and see thousands of people sitting in those stands, it's pretty special."

Marsh Field, located at the corner of Muskegon's Laketon Avenue and Peck Street, has undergone a renaissance and serves as the epicenter for baseball in the community.

The neighborhood ballpark has come alive again on summer nights with the sound of baseball and smell of hot dogs.

New chapters are now being written in the historic Marsh Field story.

Baseball has been played on the site created by Charles Marsh for nearly 100 years, with the Muskegon Reds hosting the first game on May 4, 1916.

Marsh Field has served as home base over the years for other notable men's teams like the Clippers (New York Yankees affiliate) and Zephyrs and the Lassies of the women's professional league. It also has been the home field for Muskegon High School, Men's City League teams and summer travel squads.

In the heyday of Marsh Field, the Detroit Tigers and Chicago White Sox made appearances that brought future Hall of Famers and huge crowds to town.

Muskegon author and baseball expert Marc Okkonen has chronicled 21 Hall of Famers who've appeared at Marsh Field, including Satchel Paige, Charley Gehringer, Mickey Cochrane, Johnny Mize and Harry Heilmann.

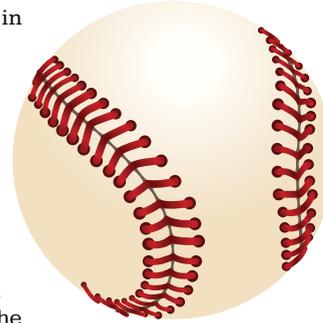
In recent years, Marsh Field has undergone key renovations, thanks to the Lakeshore Baseball Club. A new scoreboard, sound system, chair-back seating and rebuilt infield are some of the notable improvements.

New lighting and dugouts are among the next targeted improvements.

About 200 games are scheduled this season for Marsh Field.

The established Men's City League has about eight teams set to play weekly games at Marsh this summer.

Marsh Field also will host the popular high school All-Star Game on June 18 as one of its main fundraisers. Other big scheduled events are a Team Michigan Showcase Tryout June 16-17 and AAU State



Championship events on June 19-21 and July 10-12.

Currently, the main tenant of Marsh Field is the Muskegon Clippers, an entry in the six-team Michigan Summer Collegiate Baseball League. The league features some of the top college baseball players in the state.

"We've provided a high quality product with a local base of kids," said Gawkowski, the head coach of the Clippers. "(The Clippers) have been an important part in the resurgence of Marsh Field and baseball in the Muskegon area."

The Clippers enjoyed a successful inaugural season in 2014, which included a second-place finish and leading the league in attendance.

"The response was remarkable and 99.9 percent positive," said Clippers' owner and local businessman Pete Gawkowski. "There was a buzz around town and people were talking about it. I think the people who came had fun at the game, which is what our goal was. Overall, it was beyond our expectations."

The Clippers operate on a small budget, but Gawkowski said the team is doing more marketing this season to get businesses involved with sponsorships and other plans.

"I think we can get our attendance up and that is the goal," he said. "We'd love to do more and there is the potential to do more."

The VIP party deck will be available for rent again this summer, along with more opportunities for company picnics and special promotional events for each home game. The concession stand offerings have been enhanced, including the purchase of beer and wine.

Tickets for Clippers' games cost \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and senior citizens, with free admission for children under 12.

"I think we have a jewel there," Walt Gawkowski added about Marsh Field. "It's one of Muskegon's best-kept secrets."

For more information on Marsh Field and the Clippers, visit <http://www.playmarshfield.com>.

Mike Mattson is an award-winning sports journalist, with 23 years of experience at The Muskegon Chronicle. He enjoys sports, reading and leadership development. Mattson is a graduate of Central Michigan University.



Who or What is “WMLAR?”

By Dale P. Zahn

WMLAR stands for the West Michigan Lakeshore Association of REALTORS and represents over 1,000 REALTORS and Affiliates in Muskegon, Ottawa and a large portion of Allegan Counties. Also known as “The Voice For Real Estate” along the lakeshore, WMLAR was formed 15 years ago, the result of the merging of 3 former local associations. The goal was to have a more powerful voice politically and to offer members more programs and services of a higher quality and do it for less money. Looking back, the goal has been exceeded as members receive significantly more for their membership dollars which are well below what they paid to their professional trade association 15 years ago.

Often, people refer to the Association as ‘The Board’ of REALTORS, but what exactly does that mean? First, it means WMLAR is a member driven trade Association that is a member of the State and National Associations of REALTORS. Each REALTOR member has a license to ply their trade as a salesperson, broker, appraiser, counselor or educator. Simply put, not everybody that has a State issued license is a REALTOR, but all REALTORS have a license...

As one of the State’s largest real estate trade Associations, WMLAR has become widely recognized and awarded at the State and National levels for a host of reasons. In the political affairs arena and RPAC (REALTORS Political Action Committee), WMLAR was #1 in dollars collected and member participation in 2014 and has consistently been at the table interviewing candidates for public office, monitoring ordinances and legislation at all levels that affect private property rights and being that “Voice For Real Estate” previously referenced. When it comes to Professional Standards and enforcing the 17 Articles of the REALTORS Code of Ethics, WMLAR stands head and shoulders above the rest, takes its role seriously, holds members accountable and has been asked time and again to instruct Code of Ethics enforcement to other Associations around the State. Education is another reason for the existence of the Association. Countless offerings are presented throughout the year to raise the bar of knowledge, provide required Continuing Education Credits and specialty courses designed to help make the REALTOR better at what they do. How about Public Relations? The Association works tirelessly to provide good “PR” by taking part in parades, outings and special events that benefit lakeshore residents. The unique REALTORS Who Care program is one of WMLAR’s shining stars as it assists people and agencies in need from the north end of Muskegon County all the way thru Allegan County. Over the years, its provided both dollars and volunteer manpower as WMLAR’s charitable arm.

We cannot forget technology! The MLS or Multiple Listing Service has long been the method by which members offer cooperation to other participating firms to better expose listings and to compensate other brokers. Add syndication programs and free virtual tours to the MLS and it’s a win-win situation for members and the public alike. The Association believes in having a big heart and recognizes the important contributions of members to enhance the organization throughout the year. WMLAR even has a one of a kind REALTOR Memorial at its headquarters location in Grand Haven where members who passed away while active in the industry are permanently remembered. Families and co-workers of the deceased love this and stop by to visit from time to time.....

Finally, the Association recognizes the value of family and understands that life cannot be all work and no play. Each year special events are planned that are strictly social



and designed for just plain fun. The family picnic at the Ottawa County Fair is but one example and in 2014 over 500 guests were treated at no charge, thanks to membership in WMLAR!

So how does the Association have an impact on the public, or does it? Sure it does! We act as an ombudsman and are called upon frequently to discuss situations or disputes that may simply be misunderstandings between REALTORS and the Public. If the matters are legal in nature, we so direct. If they point to a possible Code of Ethics violation we assist in the filing.

Now perhaps readers will have a better understanding of just what ‘The Board’ or the ‘REALTOR Association’ is and what it does. We are happy to be part of the West Michigan Community and included in this publication. As a long established WMLAR slogan says, “West Michigan is a Great Place to Call Home!”

Dale P. Zahn
Chief Executive Officer
West Michigan Lakeshore
Association of REALTORS



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Food for **THOUGHT**

Answers on Page 23

SUDUKO PUZZLE #1

1				7	5		3	4
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SUDUKO PUZZLE #2

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60						61					62			
63						64					65			
66						67					68			

WHAT'CHA GOT? By Wes Benninghoff, edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

- Whisper lead-in
- Asian maidservant
- Dish of mixed greens
- Follow-the-leader player
- Doozy
- Santa ____ (California racetrack)
- Very pluckable
- Basic unit for the elements
- Cellist's purchase
- What an anxious person has?
- Faith of some founding fathers
- "My lips ____ Sealed"
- Suffix with "rich" or "poor"
- Writer's list lopper
- Andy Capp's haunt
- Naïve, unworldly girl
- Many Marine trees
- Foreign
- What a beachgoer has?
- Incorrect
- Song accompanied by an alpenhorn, perhaps
- Royal reflexive pronoun
- Baby's word
- Babysiter's nightmare
- Ambulance letters
- ____ Claire, Wis.

DOWN

- Thanksgiving Day event
- Small piano
- Rural residential "tank"
- Bit of salon waste
- 2000 presidential candidate Keyes
- Pup with no papers
- Word on Hawaii's license plate
- Shoulder-to-elbow bones
- "____ Smile" (Hall & Oates hit)
- Unknown author (addr.)
- Eavesdrop on
- Being contentiously discussed
- George the 41st's veep

- Encroach
- Reliever's spot, for short
- Number that rhymes with down
- "Cycle" or "lateral" prefix
- Vereen of "roots"
- Niether solid nor liquid
- A month in Tel Aviv
- Full-groan jokes
- Where slop is served
- Abandoned
- To what slop is served
- Tokyo, before it was Tojyo
- Sob story subject
- Search through sale items
- ____ Day (May 1 in Hawaii)
- Game also called "sevens"
- Slanted type
- Her hair is a fright
- Aspiring doc's course
- Ancient city NW of Carthage
- Melting periods
- Auto-body repair task
- Putts away the dished?
- ____ to the throne
- Oceanic whirlpool
- Slip preventer



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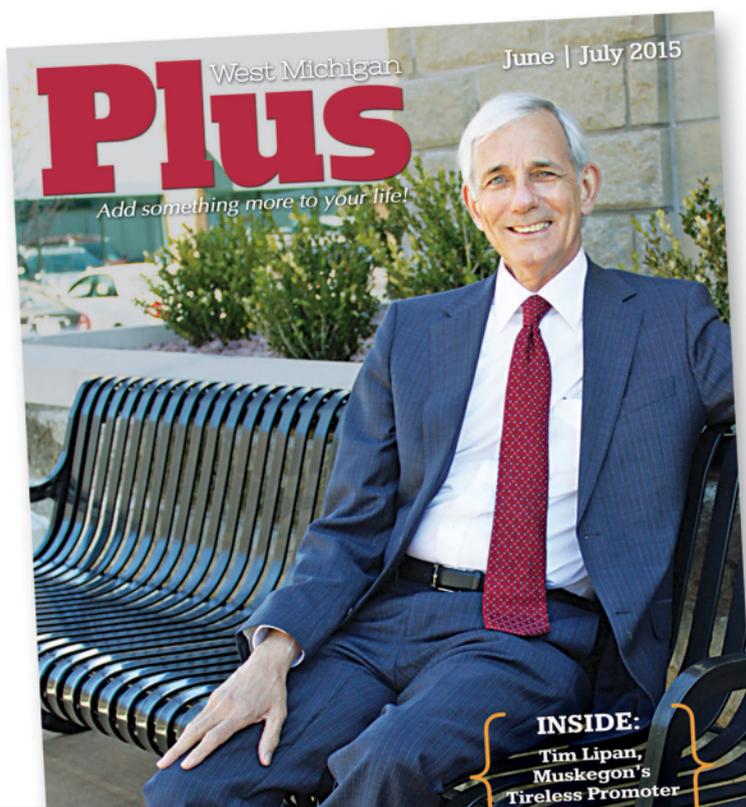
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RECIPES: MIXING MEMORIES WITH GREAT TASTE

Grandma Jan's Cherry Surprise

By Stanley Marcus

For those of you who don't know me I'm pretty much a confirmed bachelor. As with most bachelors our options for sustenance is limitless and most of us will eat almost anything. Local grocery stores and leading food manufactures have turned our simple needs into a multi-billion dollar business. Stop by any Plumb's or Meijer location, travel down the frozen food aisle and your taste buds will burst, microwave dinners and an endless variety of Sara Lee desserts abide. Take a dinner home, nuke it for 5 minutes and soon your feet are on the coffee table and the opening pitch is moments away.

Not so easy for me. Having the luck and influence of two Grandmothers and an incredible mother I was subjected (not always to my pleasure) to creating meals that were healthy and affordable, frozen anything was out of the question. I was really never thrilled as a young boy to help my mom in the kitchen and Sunday dinner dishes were not my favorite thing which brings me to....

Every summer all of my cousins, my brother, and I spent a few weeks with Grandma Smith at the cottage on West Lake. Now Grandma Smith was this little over five foot tall giant. She was "Old School" and everybody had their chores. Being the oldest I had my pick of the jobs and being Grandma's Kitchen Boy was what I chose. Don't get me wrong, it wasn't all peaches and cream, she could do things with a spatula besides flip pancakes and so my education began.

Looking back Grandma Smith's persistence and my mother's quiet influence I have become a bachelor who passes the frozen food section, most of the time, for better choices. I would like to share, with my mother's blessing which I hope to have after this publishes, with all those bachelors a dessert that takes less than 40 minutes and will make them a hit at the next party or family get-together. I say a "hit" because most bachelors show up to the party empty handed or with just beer.

Before I go any further this is a dessert and fat grams are somewhat involved. First the ingredients followed by detailed instructions so those challenged bachelors should be able to create this on the first try. I bring you... Grandma Jan's Cherry Surprise! Here's what you'll need:



1 average size tin or glass cake pan,
I prefer the glass pan as it is easier to see if you have the base crust evenly packed.

2 large mixing bowls.
Guys, buckets will work just be sure the car soap is all washed out.

1 1 gal. zip lock storage bag
1 box of graham crackers
1/2 cup of brown sugar
2 sticks of melted butter
1 8oz package of cream cheese
1 cup of powdered sugar
1 12oz tub of Cool Whip
1 can of Cherry Topping – Grandma Jan prefers the "Thank You" brand.

Step 1: Open the cream cheese and place it in one of the bowls or buckets. This allows the cream cheese to soften making it easier to mix.

Step 2: Open the graham crackers and place 1 package in the zip lock bag. Use a rolling pin to finely crush the crackers.
Guys, don't have a rolling pin? Use a piece of PVC pipe or a can of soup (DON'T open the can). Repeat this with all of the graham crackers and place in the other empty bowl or bucket.

Step 3: Add the brown sugar stirring it in the crushed crackers with a fork. Once mixed add the melted butter, stir again until completely mixed.

Step 4: Pour the graham cracker mixture into the glass pan smoothing it out evenly. Next, using a fork, start on the edges applying pressure to compact the mixture. Once completely compacted set to the side. Guys, you might think using the arbor press in the garage to compact the graham crackers might be a good idea, I wouldn't recommend it.

Step 5: Take the bowl or bucket with the cream cheese and add the powdered sugar and Cool Whip, blend with an electric mixer until completely mixed.
Guys, don't have an electric mixer? A paint mixer and drill cordless or electric will work, it'll just take longer.

Step 6: Pour the cream cheese, powdered sugar, Cool Whip mixture over the graham cracker crust spreading evenly. Open the Cherry filling and spread evenly (for more cherries add an extra can). Place in the refrigerator, covered, over-night and you're on your way to becoming a "hit".

Have a favorite "dish" or "dessert" and want to share it with PLUS readers? For consideration submit your recipe, recipe story in WORD format, and photo of the finished product to: mark@orshalrdproductions.com. Not all submissions are guaranteed to be published. Orshal Road Productions, LLC reserves the right not to publish questionable and non-family friendly submissions.

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The Family Caregiver

By Carolyn Ridders

At some point in our lives, all of us have been, or will be, in the position to be the primary caregiver for a family member or loved one. It can be a very rewarding experience to give back to someone that may have given much to us. As fulfilling as this may be, few of us are prepared for the responsibilities that come with the job or the impact they can have on our lives. I am very fortunate that my parents are still very healthy and active. I marvel at their energy and sometimes forget that they are in their eighties. Still, I am sure the day will come when they need someone to help and my siblings and I will be there for them.

When I was a child, my maternal grandparents owned and managed an apartment building. Grandma cooked and cleaned while Grandpa tinkered in his workshop and tended to repairs for the tenants. One day, Grandma fell on her way to the laundry room in the basement and broke her hip. While she was in the hospital recuperating from surgery, we discovered that my grandfather wasn't as independent as we had thought. He started a fire while trying to use the stove and struggled with other tasks as well. When my grandmother was released from the hospital, my mother made the decision to have them move into our home where she could keep an eye on my grandfather and help my grandmother as she recovered. It seemed like the perfect solution.

Three generations living under one roof was new for all of us so naturally it took some time to adjust. Everything appeared to be going smoothly once everyone settled into the new routine. My mother was managing work, kids, and caring for my grandparents with few issues. The household was running smoothly and everyone seemed contented.

Then one afternoon, my sister was startled by the sound of our grandfather cursing loudly below her bedroom window. She

ran outside to find him lying on the ground next to our brother's 10-speed bike. Apparently he was trying to go home. My mother had to leave work to come tend to the situation. My grandfather was extremely agitated. It was clear that his mental state was declining. Soon my grandmother's health began to deteriorate, requiring more hands-on care than my mother could manage along with her full-time job and raising us kids. She tried to keep up with the increased demand on her time and energy but it soon became evident that it was more than one person could handle. Feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, my mother made the difficult decision to move my grandparents to a nursing home.

Back in the early 70s when this all took place, there were few resources available for the family caregiver to find help caring for an aging loved one. There were no adult daycare centers, no Family Medical Leave Act, and hiring professional in-home care was something only wealthy people could afford. As the average life expectancy has increased, we've seen major growth in social programs for the elderly aimed at keeping them in their homes as they age and support for their family members who take on the role as primary caregiver. When the day comes that my own dear parents need help, I know that I have a wealth of resources at my fingertips to help me care for them as well as myself.

Visit www.seniorresourceswmi.org to access information and local resources for healthy aging and caregiver support.

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Carolyn Ridders is a professional in business and non-profit marketing and a lifelong resident of the lakeshore.



The Benefits of Chiropractic Care

By Laurie Semlow

Chiropractic treatment is available for senior citizens and offers a variety of different health care strategies, depending on the severity of the condition, as well as the general health of the patient. For those seniors who are in good physical health and lead an active lifestyle, chiropractic can offer significant help in many cases. These patients are treated with pain relief and stabilization in mind so that they can return to the active lifestyle that they enjoy. Chiropractors also successfully treat seniors with significant additional health problems. These patients typically respond a little slower to treatment depending on the amount of degeneration and their physical activity levels, but they do see results.

A three-year study of senior citizens over 75 years of age^[1] revealed that seniors who receive chiropractic care spend 21% less time in hospitals and 15% less time in nursing homes than elderly, non-chiropractic patients. Senior citizens under chiropractic care typically report better overall health, have fewer chronic conditions, and are less likely to use prescription drugs than non-chiropractic patients. 87% of senior citizens under chiropractic care described their health status as good or excellent, compared to only 65% of non-chiropractic patients.

Chiropractors are finding that quality of life is really the big issue for senior citizens. Our patients who come in with advanced arthritis are not going to be cured, but they can see improved mobility, keep their joints moving and decrease some of the pain. If it is hard for you to get dressed in the morning, that is a big deal. We see many chiropractic miracles in our office, and the one that will stick with me forever is an 88-year-old patient with severe osteoporosis and osteoarthritis. She had lost much of the ability to lift her head and look forward. After just two weeks of adjustments with the Pro-Adjuster, the patient commented, "I feel

like I am standing straighter and I noticed I can see myself in the mirror now." We should never forget our body's ability to heal itself. Chiropractic frees the nervous system, but it is each person's body that does the healing!

In our office we have equipment called the Pro-Adjuster (shown on WZZM 13), which gives a computerized adjustment vs. a hands-on adjustment. So many people are afraid of that hands-on adjustment. This equipment delivers a low force adjustment without the "pop & crack". The Pro-Adjuster has been effectively used on children as young as 2 months to our senior patients.

As our population grows, more people are consulting doctors of chiropractic, especially in their later years. As we live longer, there are growing concerns about over-medication and the side effects of combining various prescription drugs. Safe, natural chiropractic care is growing in popularity. Restoring proper nerve and spinal function can help improve mobility, vitality, and endurance, and therefore the quality of life.

[1]Chiropractic Patients in a Comprehensive Home-Based Geriatric Assessment, Follow-up and Health Promotion Program. Topics In Clinical Chiropractic 1996 (Jun): 3(2): 46-55

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Sound moves for a fiscal future

By Tom Kendra

There's no time like the present to reassess your financial goals. It's the financial decisions you make today that can really make a difference come retirement time. Here are six worth implementing:

GET ORGANIZED. Knowing where your receipts, investment statements and tax returns are is an essential component of your financial plan. Setting up a system now will keep you organized throughout the year. Create separate folders for all of your tax-deductible expenses, your banking and investment statements, insurance claims and pay stubs/W2s. This one simple step will get your financial goals off to a good start.

MAKE COPIES OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS. In an emergency, you may need to quickly locate critical records such as insurance policies, bank account and credit card numbers. Compile a comprehensive list with account information and contact numbers for all-important accounts. Also make copies of deeds to property, stock and investment statements and other valuable holdings. Put everything in a safe place in your home and keep a copy in a location away from home, such as in a safety deposit box.

START A PLAN FOR GETTING OUT OF DEBT. It could be a daunting way to start the year, but there is no better time than now for a financial reality check. Write down your credit card balances, the interest rates being charged and the minimum monthly payments. Figure out which cards (those with the highest rates) to pay off first. There are many good books on the subject, and depending on how much debt you have, you may want to meet with a financial advisor to develop a specific pay down plan.

REVIEW YOUR 401(k) PLAN. Or sign up, if you haven't already done so and your company offers a retirement plan. Many employers offer matching funds – sometimes as much as 50% of your contributions and up to 6% of your salary. That's free money! If you are already in a plan, now is a good time to review your allocations for the past year to see if you need to make adjustments.

CHECK YOUR INSURANCE COVERAGE. Did you make home improvements this year? Have a baby? Change jobs? You may want to make changes to your insurance policies to make sure you are adequately covered. If you or your spouse have neglected to purchase life, long-term care or disability insurance, now is the time to meet with a qualified professional to discuss the benefits of these important financial safeguards.

REVIEW YOUR ESTATE PLAN. While not something most people look forward to doing, documenting your wishes in the event of your death is essential. If you have not done so already, make plans to draw up a durable power of attorney for health care and finances and a living will. These simple steps can help protect your assets and loved ones should the unthinkable happen.

Getting your financial house in order takes more than just writing down a list of resolutions. It takes discipline and planning. But having clearly identified goals and taking consistent steps towards them will help you make great strides toward meeting your financial goals.

Tom Kendra is a Financial Advisor with Prudential, with an office in Muskegon. He can be reached by phone at (231) 563-6638, fax at (231) 375-5229 or e-mail at tom.kendra@prudential.com



The primary job of schools has changed

By Steve Edwards

As the resident of a public school district, you should know what the expressed purpose of your school district is. The only reason for schools to exist is to maximize the potential of all kids. That is and should be the foundation of all that we do and are as public schools.

While the very first schools, designed by Thomas Jefferson, were meant to sort students into various occupations, our job today is very different. We are preparing students for a world Jefferson never could have imagined. Schools don't exist to employ people. Schools should ONLY exist to prepare students for a meaningful future. The end goal is and should be that 100% of our graduates are college and career aware and ready. Graduating from high school is and should be a necessary next step in the future of our kids. It is not and cannot be the end. In order for students to be college and career aware and ready, they must be exposed to rigorous and meaningful content and connections that maximize their potential and open possibilities.

At the center of this model is the belief that we have to be a community that demonstrates a culture of learning. One of my favorite quotes is "In times of change, learners inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists." (Eric Hoffer) We have never experienced the rate of change in and with which our world currently operates. We have to be learners. We have to be open to the fact that as the world and information change, we have new ideas and methods to consider.

While operating to maximize the potential of all kids to guarantee that 100% of our graduates are college and career aware and ready by establishing a culture of learning, we must have excellent and transparent communication, targeted and intentional fiscal decisions, a physically and emotionally safe environment, and increased student achievement. The future of public schools is bright, and we all need to do our part to ensure that the potential of EVERY student is maximized.

Steve is the Superintendent of Reeths Puffer Schools, located in Rocket City, Michigan. He graduated from both Eastern Michigan University and Grand Valley State University and holds his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. He has two school-aged children, Sydney and Kaden and is the lucky husband of Karyn. Steve enjoys teaching, coaching, leading, and reading.



Little Sable Lighthouse

By Peter Manting

The tower of the Little Sable Point Light Station appears out of place, almost surreal. Save for the top, the conical brick tower resembles a brick smokestack from a long abandoned factory. It soon becomes obvious that there is more to the spire. The catwalk, windows, and roof reveal a beacon for mariners. Dwellings and other buildings have long since disappeared, robbing it of the grandeur of other lights.

Nonetheless, a sweet heritage remains at the graceful 107 foot tall structure.

Originally named Petite Au Sable, it is located halfway between the Michigan-Indiana border and the Straits of Mackinac, just ten miles south of Pentwater on one of Lake Michigan's marvelous eastern beaches. Built due to the increasing commercial boat traffic Lake Michigan was experiencing in the mid 1800's, built after the schooner Pride ran aground in 1866 and local merchants lobbied congress for a light in this area. Congress approved funds of \$35,000.00 in 1871 and 39 acres of land were selected to build the new Light station. The construction was destined to be a difficult task, since there were no supplies nearby and no roads to the site. Work began in April 1873 with the construction of a dock and temporary housing for the crew.

The light was designed by Col. Orlando M. Poe of the Engineers of the Eleventh Lighthouse District. It was a classic Poe tower: 109 one foot diameter pilings were driven into the sand nine feet below the surface to form a solid base to build the tower. Twelve feet of cut stone were laid carefully atop the pilings to provide a solid base for the towers brickwork. The brick walls had a thickness of five feet at the base, tapering to a thickness of two feet at its uppermost.

The following spring, work crews returned and installed 139 cast iron steps within the tower and the prefabricated cast iron lantern room and gallery. Finally, the Third Order Fresnel lens from France was carefully lifted to the lantern room and installed on its



clockwork cabinet and raceway. The lens has eight fixed panels in its lower section and the upper has ten rotating panels. The lens was rotated through the use of a clockwork mechanism powered by a fifty-pound weight, suspended in a vertical slot in the tower wall. The light is visible from 19 miles away.

A one and a half story brick dwelling connected to the tower by means of an enclosed walkway, a brick lean-to for wood storage attached to the rear of the keeper dwelling and a brick privy completed the station structures. Total construction cost came in at \$28,886.00, considerably under the funds allocated by Congress. The light was first lit in 1874 and its first Keeper was James Davenport.

Amid constant complaints that mariners couldn't see the tower during the day due to its natural color the tower was painted white in 1900. It stayed that way with the Keepers having to repaint the tower every two years.

1902 saw an access road built to the station so supplies could come via ground and did not have to be shipped in.

In 1915 the original 3 wick lard burning lamp was replaced with a kerosene oil vapor lamp.

1954 brought electricity and a 1000 watt electric lamp. The rotating mechanism was also removed giving the light a new fixed characteristic.

Since the station no longer had to be manned, the buildings were auctioned off and dismantled or demolished for the beautiful hardwood floors and bricks.

In 1977 the Coast Guard sandblasted the tower to reveal the bricks true color and alleviate the continual maintenance costs.

In December 2005, the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association signed a 25 year lease with the State of Michigan to open and operate Little Sable. In 2006 the Lighthouse was opened to the public.



Peter Manting is the Executive Director of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association. SPLKA's mission is to preserve, promote and educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all. SPLKA manages 4 iconic Lake Michigan lighthouses: the White River Light Station in Whitehall, Little Sable Point Lighthouse in Silver Lake, the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse and the Big Sable Point Lighthouse in the Ludington State Park. Peter grew up and lives in the Grand Haven/ Spring Lake area. He has had a love of local Maritime history fostered by his grandfather who would tell him stories of the many ships that frequented the Grand Haven harbor in the early 20th century. Peter has been active in the community as a former board member for the Tri-Cities Historical Museum which houses many of his grandfather's historic ship models.

What's Your Health

Everyone's health story is different; some have gone through huge transformations, many have built lifelong friendships with exercise partners, and others simply take it one day at a time, perhaps making a good nutrition choice when they're having lunch with friends. Part of what's great about my job at the Muskegon Family YMCA is that I get a front row seat to the stories about how members get and stay healthy.



By Melissa Wikman

The stories are endless, but here are a few...

One of our members, Irene, will turn 91 this summer. Her Spinning class had a party for her 90th birthday last summer...that's right, Spinning class! In addition to other exercise she does at the Y, she's takes a 75 minute Spinning Circuit class twice a week. Surely that helps keep her young and healthy.

Another member, Ron, decided about 18 months ago that he was tired of being heavy. He had lived his entire life overweight and wanted to make a change. Ron started with very simple goals such as "not drinking calories". Then he decided to make more subtle changes with his eating. He decided not to eat French fries and before long he wasn't eating fried foods at all. He also started bicycling for exercise and is now spotted on the treadmill, in a TRX class or Spinning. It has been 18 months since the start of his journey and he has successfully lost over 120 pounds—while quitting smoking! Ron says, "I feel great!" and he's careful to point out that he made small changes one at a time - lifestyle changes that he can maintain for the long haul.

We see wonderful transformations in cooking classes with our dietitian Jessi, too. During one class, a local farmer said "This is really great. I run a farm and didn't know how to cook. Now I look in my kitchen and see possibilities instead of mysteries." Another student, Christina, went from never cooking to making meals at home every

day by the end of the 6-week course. She and her family now have a homemade menu calendar on their wall so they can plan healthy homemade meals.

One of our volunteers, Roger, provides a wonderful example of how friends and strong social ties keep us happy and healthy. Roger is at the Y Welcome Desk every weekday, greeting members by name and giving treats to the youngest Y members. When holidays roll around, the friends he has made at the Y spoil him rotten. During Thanksgiving weekend, five different families from the Y made sure he had a holiday dinner. Oh, the leftovers! I'm positive these friends keep him smiling every day and healthy

enough to show up to volunteer rain or shine...or snow.

"Health" means something different to everyone but we know from research that physical activity, eating nutritious food, and having strong social connections are keys to having a healthy active life, especially as we get older. The ways we incorporate all of this into our daily routines is as different as we are: it has to work in our often crazy schedules, feel right for us, and be true to who we are.

What do you want your health story to be?

Melissa Wikman is the Director of Fitness and Membership Development at the Muskegon Family YMCA. She is a native of Muskegon and graduate of Hope College and the State University of New York.

ANSWERS FOR THE GAMES ON THE FOOD FOR THOUGHT PAGE ON 17

1	8	9	2	7	5	6	3	4
7	4	6	3	1	8	9	5	2
2	5	3	6	9	4	1	7	8
3	6	4	9	2	7	8	1	5
5	7	8	1	4	3	2	6	9
9	1	2	8	5	6	3	4	7
6	9	7	4	3	2	5	8	1
8	2	5	7	6	1	4	9	3
4	3	1	5	8	9	7	2	6

2	5	8	3	6	9	4	7	1
4	7	1	5	2	8	6	3	9
3	6	9	7	1	4	2	5	8
5	8	6	4	3	2	1	9	7
7	9	2	6	5	1	3	8	4
1	4	3	8	9	7	5	2	6
6	1	5	9	8	3	7	4	2
8	2	7	1	4	5	9	6	3
9	3	4	2	7	6	8	1	5

1	P	S	S	T	A	M	A	H	S	A	L	A	D		
14	A	P	E	R	L	U	L	U	A	N	I	T	A		
17	R	I	P	E	A	T	O	M	R	O	S	I	N		
20	A	N	T	S	I	N	T	H	E	P	A	N	T	S	
23	D	E	I	S	M	A	R	E	E	S	T				
27	E	T	C	P	U	B	I	N	G	E	N	U	E		
					P	I	N	E	S	A	L	I	E	N	
					F	U	N	I	N	T	H	E	S	U	N
40	W	R	O	N	G	Y	O	D	E	L					
43	O	U	R	S	E	L	F	G	O	D	I	M	P		
50	E	M	S	E	A	U	U	T	T	E	R				
	M	A	D	E	I	N	T	H	E	S	H	A	D	E	
60	M	A	K	E	A	T	I	E	D	A	L	U	M		
63	A	G	E	N	T	A	C	I	D	W	I	S	E		
66	T	E	N	T	S	N	A	R	V	S	C	A	D		

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Classes start August 24

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