

West Michigan **Plus**

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Kathy Daly

A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to the June-July issue of PLUS. Please join me in celebrating the 1st anniversary of PLUS. With this issue we are starting our second year. Thank you to all of our readers and advertisers for their continued support.

In my past columns I talk about how great it is to live in a Lakeshore Community and how the people of those communities make it a great place. I talk about being involved not only with



financial support but physically volunteering one's personal time. Volunteering for a number of events, committees, and boards is something that I have been doing for a number of years. Looking back I realized that I have been involved with projects in Muskegon and Ottawa counties but never in the community that I call home. I decided that I should follow my own suggestion.

The township in which I live does a great job informing the community of important events and issues that affect the residents.

In the November e-newsletter I read that there was an interim position available on the Parks & Recreation Commission. I contacted the township Supervisor and it was suggested that I write a letter of interest along with my qualifications. Whether it was the drawing of straws or a coin toss, the Board of Trustees voted me in. Let's hope that they don't regret their decision. I attended my first official meeting in January.

Being a part of the P&R Commission is filling my personal needs to be a part of my community, to have input in making my community a great place to live, and to gain a better understanding of the decisions that our local elected officials make on our behalf to maintain and improve our quality of life. Only a few months into my new position I'm learning much more than I expected. I realize that filling a temporary position is only scratching the surface. The current position will be over at the end of November. I have made the decision to put myself on the November ballot. If my community wants me to represent them I'm all in. Let the adventure of public service begin.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Williamson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Williamson
Publisher

inside

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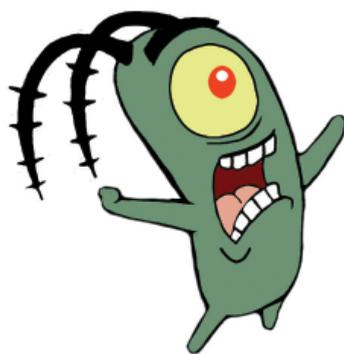
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Tim's Cartooniverse

Going Up?

By Tim Wheeler



I'm a big fan of eschewing the elevator for the stairs. Because I'm a fitness junkie? No. Because I'm a junk food purist. It's called a *Walking Taco*, not a *Standing in the Elevator listening to Chuck Mangione on the Tinny Speaker in the Ceiling Taco*. Ingesting a bag of Fritos covered in Coney sauce and Cheez Whiz while floating up to the 5th floor dilutes the spirit of



the *Walking Taco*. It also stinks up the elevator, and at least one person is always giving you the "It's not the *Walking Taco* that I smell" look. Yep, me and *Walking Taco*. Our boots were made for walking.

Avoiding the elevator also protects me from the elevator pitch. As you likely know – because no matter who you are,

you undoubtedly know more than I do – the elevator pitch is your 30-second commercial. When you mingle with people you don't really like – but whose money you think is pretty cute and probably a lot of fun on a date – you bandy about your elevator pitch. You inflate your accomplishments, avoid your poor choices on Snapchat, and look for opportunities to wedge the word infrastructure into the conversation. "The infrastructure of this cranberry chutney is heavenly." Like that, but in a way that actually makes sense.

While pretty much everything I do to pay for my mortgage and my Pop-Tarts addiction is based on writing (I know. I can't believe people hire me either.), it's always been difficult for me to say, "I'm a writer." People (and talkative amphibians) often reply with, "Oh, have I read any of your novels?" Since I've never written any novels I suppose the correct answer is no, but I don't want to be the bag of downers who points that out. After all, I'm trying to get up the nerve to ask your money out on a date, remember?

But the world is changing. My cartooniverse is changing. First, I switched from regular Fritos to Chili Cheese Fritos for my *Walking Taco*. Why did I not know about this sooner?! Second, I have a new elevator pitch: "I make cartoons, and yes, that is the *Walking Taco* you smell."



Now that *Rocketoons* are officially in production and customers are actually buying them, a lifelong dream that has been meandering in the mists of Avalon is coming into view. A life spent loving cartoons may or may not prepare one for a host of opportunities, but apparently it prepares one for profound happiness. And I, for one (or for two), am profoundly happy to now add *Cartoon Maker* to my elevator pitch. It feels like that missing piece, the one that so many of us search for and long for, just plopped down next to me on the sofa, offered me a Dr. Pepper and said, "Hi. Peppa Pig is on Channel 309. Wanna watch?"

The floodgates are now open.

The ideas and cartoons and characters are all storming the castle, demanding their moment in the sun, and I am happy to decree: "Good news, cartooniverses. You are next

in line!" I really need someone blowing the Gjallarhorn when I say that. Can't really decree from a castle without the Gjallarhorn, but mine is on backorder so I'll just stick with this slide whistle for now.

Of course, as a writer who makes cartoons, I also realize I have replaced one ineptitude with another: "No, I don't write novels," has been traded in for a newer model: "Yes, I make cartoons. No, I can't even draw a stick figure without an intricate system of pulleys and levers." That's okay, though, because I am so ridiculously happy. And because I now have this to offer: "You really need to switch to the Chili Cheese Fritos. Top floor, please."

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Tim Wheeler is the creator of *Rocketoons* (Rocketoons.com), an original animated series for teachers, counselors, parents, and anyone interested in helping kids by having a *Cartoonversation*. Tim's e-book (not a novel!) is available through Barnes & Noble and Amazon. He holds degrees from Western Michigan University, Villanova University and Northwestern University.



Sticky Insurance Questions Need Action

By Jonathan J. David

In other words, the terms of the trust do not control who is to receive the death benefits under a life insurance policy when the named beneficiary named under the policy is someone other than the trust.

Dear Jonathan: My wife and I have a living trust and recently after consulting with our attorney, we transferred our home, as well as our family cottage to our trust for probate avoidance. Last week as I was writing out a check for our homeowners insurance premium, it occurred to me that my wife and I are the insureds on the policy, but our trust isn't. Is that the way it should be, or now that the trust owns the home and cottage, should the trust now be the insured on the policy? I just want to make sure that we are properly covered.

Jonathan Says: It was a good thought to have and a good question to ask. Anytime real estate is transferred to a trust, it is critically important that the homeowners insurance agent is contacted to make sure that the proper coverages are maintained under the homeowners insurance policy.

With that said, you and your wife want to continue to be insureds on the policy and depending upon what your policy requires, you may need to name your trust as an additional insured on the policy. My recommendation is that you contact your homeowners insurance agent and advise him/her of the transfer of your home and cottage to your trust and ask the agent what needs to be done to make sure that the appropriate coverage is maintained and that the policy insures both of you, as well as your trust. I would also recommend that you have your agent provide you with a written response verifying what coverages you have and who the insureds are under the policy.

Dear Jonathan: After my uncle died, I found out that I was named as a beneficiary in his trust of the proceeds from a certain life insurance policy, which he identified in his trust by name and policy number. When I contacted the attorney handling his estate about when I can expect to receive those proceeds, he advised me that even though the trust named me as a beneficiary of those proceeds, the beneficiary of the life insurance policy was someone else and not the trust, so consequently I was not entitled to anything. Is that true? Do I have any recourse?

Jonathan Says: Generally speaking, the beneficiary of a life insurance policy is entitled to receive the proceeds regardless of what the insured's trust says. In other words, the terms of the trust do not control who is to receive the death benefits under a life insurance policy when the named beneficiary named under the policy is someone other than the trust. In the case of your uncle's trust, in order for you to enforce your rights as a beneficiary of that trust, the trust would have had to be named as the beneficiary of that life insurance policy.

Having said the above, if the death benefits from the life insurance policy are significant, you may want to consult with an attorney to see if there are any legal theories that might be available to you to pursue a cause of action. For instance, is there any evidence to support that someone may have unduly influenced your uncle to change the beneficiary on the insurance policy, if in fact the trust was ever named as a beneficiary under that policy? If any such evidence does exist, then you should ask the attorney as to the likelihood of your being successful if you decide to pursue this legally and what it would cost in attorney fees to do so.

Jonathan J. David is a shareholder in the law firm of Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC, 1700 East Beltline, N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525. He is a runner, sports enthusiast, and University of Michigan alum, with a passion for reading and writing. He has been practicing estate planning, business, and real estate law for over 30 years and has been writing his column "Legal Ease," for over 20 years. His favorite quote is his own: "It doesn't take a village to write — just a reliable dictaphone and transcriber."



Ever Wonder What a Realtor Actually Does?

By, Dale P. Zahn, CEO
West Michigan Lakeshore Association of REALTORS

A knee jerk response might be they have an easy job of listing homes – slapping a sign in the yard and waiting for a buyer, getting buku bucks. Or, they take out buyers and open doors cutting people loose and waiting for them to make an offer so they can soon get more buku dollars. These knew jerk reactions are, in reality, quite false.

There are not too many professions whereby each day the practitioner wakes up unemployed. But, that's what the REALTOR does, they don't know from one day to the next if and when there will be a payday to reward the countless hours they put into it. For many it's like being on call 24/7. It's not to say that's a 'good thing' but it is reality. REALTORS are encouraged to have a life and time to themselves and for their families but it can be a daunting task when dealing with other families that rely on their REALTOR to help guide them.

There are many words to describe what a REALTOR does, so let's identify a few: negotiator, counselor, scheduler, director, knowledgeable, trained, friend – the list can go on and on. So, what do they actually do in the course of a day? First and foremost, the REALTOR helps sellers realize the best price in the shortest period of time on the market and help buyers find just the right home. It's a proven fact that REALTORS can and do sell property for more dollars in less time than if a seller flew solo. Sure there can be exceptions, but they are just that, exceptions.

It's frequently the REALTOR that helps For Sale By Owners that have 'gone wrong'. It's the REALTOR that is trained to properly prepare the purchase agreements, not to mention the initial listing agreements, and to help the seller stage their property to show in the most beneficial way. REALTORS are the folks that help sort out the myriad of details and nuances that come into play when one transaction is reliant on another and another called the Domino effect. They effectively will handle the dreaded 'multiple offer scenarios' where only one party can 'win', schedule showings, help in the decision making process, ensure safety and security for showings and the screening of customers and clients. The REALTOR is akin to a Director in the theater whereby they direct and oversee the entire transaction from start to finish. They work in concert with mortgage lenders, appraisers, inspectors, governmental bodies, title companies.

The REALTOR has the task of keeping a transaction 'on track' and being available to calm nerves and deal with emotions that can run high in the buying or selling of real estate. These are but a few of the laundry list of things your REALTOR does.

Your REALTOR is not only your business partner when buying or selling, they become your friend, your ally. When all is said and done and the closing takes place, it's with great satisfaction that all of the parties can leave the closing feeling good about the process. Real Estate Transactions can have glitches - in life they can happen.....it can be a challenging task for the REALTOR to handle the glitches professionally but it's their job.

In a nutshell, your REALTOR adds value to the buying and selling process. In a recent visit to a large West Michigan real estate office, I was pleased to hear the REALTORS making a list of all the great things they do to add value that frequently are taken for granted – being a REALTOR isn't for everybody.

Entering the business with illusions of grandeur is a bad idea and often results in failure. Entering the business with open eyes and the thought of helping people at strange times and on holidays and weekends is a recipe for success. Adding value, your REALTOR member of the West Michigan Lakeshore Association of REALTORS knows West Michigan is a Great Place to Call Home and REALTORS will always be bringing people home and also 'Remembering The Troops!'

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



American Regional Cuisine of the South

By Chef Bruce Konowalow, CCE, Dean of Culinary Arts, The Culinary Institute of Michigan

In the United States of America, southern cuisine evokes many images and interpretations of what "true southern cuisine" encompasses. The truth is that like all cuisines, there are differences of recipes and cooking methods that may vary from one state to the other that are in the same so-called geographic region. Certainly the cuisine of Florida must be considered as being southern. The traditional foods of northern and central Florida differ from the tropical and coast bound southern region of Florida. The Gullah people of South Carolina have their own unique version of Southern cuisine that relies heavily on seafood. Their famous Frogmore stew is a sort of jambalaya that uses potatoes instead of rice. Examples of this nature are common and found throughout the south.

There are some common elements that have influenced much of Southern Cuisine. The French, Spanish, English, Native Americans, the African cultures informed the preparation of the ingredients found throughout the various southern states. Common ingredients such as rice, seafood and pork are used throughout the south. The Creole cuisine of New Orleans represents this multi-cultural approach to the more sophisticated tastes of the city life, while Cajun cuisine is more representative of a type of country or rural cuisine with the influence of the French Acadians.

The feudal system of slavery that forcefully brought large numbers of African people of various cultures was perhaps the greatest influence on what most people throughout the world refer to as American southern food. This "soul food" that was cooked by the Afro-Americans refers to the natural instinct and passion in which the slaves used their talent

and ingenuity to fashion delicious food when given meager ingredients of inferior quality. Pre-slavery the African diet would have included fruits, grains, leafy vegetables, okra, yams, seafood and beans and rice, game and seafood.

During the entire history of slavery in the United States it was the Afro-American cooks that wielded the greatest influence in American Southern cooking. They learned to cook fine cuisine with wonderful ingredients for their masters and create a unique cuisine with poor quality ingredients supplied by the slave owners coupled with the ingredients that they were allowed to grow and raise on their own. They were the ones that worked the plantation kitchens and eventually as restaurant cooks and chefs with great skill and talent.

After the Civil War ended there was a huge diaspora of African Americans that headed toward the northern states. They brought with them their culture and their cuisine. The southern fried chicken, braised greens, beans and rice, cornbread, biscuits are just a few of the dishes that started in the south and are now popular all over the United States and other parts of the world. You can get great soul food in Detroit, New York City, or Bridgeport, Connecticut. Its universal appeal has been translated by humble cooks and exalted by world famous chefs such as John Besh, John Folse and the much celebrated and revered Paul Prudhomme. The foods are not hard to prepare but they must be made with respect for the ingredients and the love and care that these recipes demand. Try my interpretation of some southern soul food classics, share with friends and family and enjoy one of America's greatest "comforts foods".

Southern Fried Chicken

1 -3 pound Chicken cut into 8 pieces
 2 cups buttermilk with 2 tsp. of salt and 1/2 tsp tobacco sauce
 2 1/2 cups all -purpose flour with 2 tsp salt, 2 tsp. paprika, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1tsp onion powder, 2 tsp old bay seasoning, 1 tsp ground black pepper

Soak chicken pieces in buttermilk for 30 minutes or more. Drain Chicken from buttermilk and coat in the seasoned flour, place back in buttermilk and back into the seasoned flour. Place chicken pieces on sheet pan for 10 minutes before frying.

Either in a deep fryer or in a heavy bottomed pan, heat vegetable oil to 350 degrees F Carefully place each piece of chicken in the hot oil away from you to avoid splashing oil Cook chicken until 165 degrees F internal temperature. This will take 12 -15 minutes .It is best to check with a thermometer. Chicken can be held in a 140 degree F oven for 15 minutes. Serve with sides or sauce of your choice.

Braised Baby Collard Greens

1 smoked ham hock or two smoked turkey necks
 2 qts. Water
 2 lbs baby collard greens
 1/4 cup sugar
 3 Tbs Kosher salt
 2 tsp. red pepper flakes
 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper corns
 1 Tbs. red wine vinegar

Place ham hock in simmering water with 1 tsp of salt and simmer covered for 1 hour or until meat is tender. Remove the ham hock and pull the meat off the bone and reserve for later use. Carefully wash the greens several. Cut off heavy stems and rough chop the greens. Place greens in the pot with all other seasonings. Cook for 30 -40 minutes uncovered in the simmering seasoned water. When greens are tender, add the remaining pulled ham hock. Check the seasoning and add 1 Tbs. of red wine vinegar, Serve hot.

Red Beans and Rice

1 cup dried red beans that have been soaked overnight
 40 oz. water
 1 smoked ham hock
 2 Tbs. salt
 1 Tbs. Tabasco sauce
 2 Sprigs fresh thyme
 2 bay leaves
 2 cups converted rice

Combine the beans, ham hock, salt, thyme, bay leaves, and Tabasco sauce and add to a saucepot with water and bring to a boil. Cover the pot and reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook for 1 hour. Add rice. Add more water if necessary. Cook until rice absorbs liquid. Remove ham hock. Remove meat from the bone and mix in with the rice and beans. Serve hot.

Cheddar Cheese Biscuits

2 cups of sifted all- purpose or bread flour
 1 Tbs. baking powder
 1/2 tsp. fine granulated salt
 2 oz. butter cut into small cubes
 1 Tbs. granulated white sugar
 4 oz grated cheddar cheese
 3/4 cup milk
 2 oz. melted butter

Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees F. Place sifted flour in a bowl with salt, sugar, and baking powder and mix well. Add the butter cubes and cut the butter into the flour until the mixture is mealy. Add cheddar cheese. Add milk until a soft dough forms. Place extra flour on a cutting board and knead the dough for a minute. Roll dough in a square that is a half inch thick. Cut the dough square into even dough squares. Place biscuits on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Brush each biscuit with melted butter. Place in 450 degree F oven for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Check the bottom of the biscuits for doneness as well. Serve hot



AN EYE ON EDUCATION

The Fourth Quarter

By Steve Edwards

On Friday nights in the fall, on high school football fields all over the country, you can count on seeing young athletes raising four fingers to the sky in unison. That fourth quarter message is clear: Finish strong!

Like a football game, a school year follows similar patterns. It's relatively easy to be motivated to start the game (or year). The first quarter is spent learning what is working and what isn't; what adjustments are necessary and what aren't; who wants it and who doesn't. The second quarter is all about adjustments. It's all about using what has been learned to adjust and create the best possible outcome (learning in school). The third quarter is where teams (students, teachers, and parents in schools) make their move. It's grinding and growing - learning the key content and concepts fully and deeply. And the fourth quarter is all about finishing strong.

For schools, spring is our fourth quarter.

Whether it is your family, your class, your school, or your community, it's the fourth quarter. What adjustments have we made? What have we learned as a family, classroom, school, and community about what works and what doesn't? Are we reading enough? Do we have a place in the house and a time period set aside for daily study? Is education the priority it needs to be? Do we value the struggle that is necessary for growth? Do we think, learn, adjust, and react?

One of my favorite motivational speakers says, "You can't make me want what I don't want!" Do you know what you want? Do you know what you want for your students, your family, and your community? Do you want school to be meaningful? Then make it meaningful! Do you want school to be enjoyable? Then make it enjoyable. Do you want to have options for your children and all of our children when they turn 18? Let's work so hard that every option available is waiting upon graduation.

As we move into the 4th quarter, I urge you to celebrate everything that has gone well and also to celebrate, just as joyously, the learning that you've had relative to things that didn't work out so well. It is that combination of thinking that will lead us to our greatest improvement. One of the reasons so many people are unhappy in life is that they sacrifice what they want most for what they want at the moment.

What do you want most?

The whistle has blown to start the 4th quarter. Are you ready?

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.



The Jungle Book

(2016, Rated PG-13)



In the jungle, no one can hear you sing... At least that would be the case if Director Jon Favreau (*Iron Man*, *Elf*) had shot Disney's latest live-action animation adaption in an actual jungle. That's right, none of it's real! With the exception of Mowgli, everything was shot on a green screen and that's one of the wildest things about this film. Disney went beyond the bare necessities to feature the most realistic computer generated imagery to date, singing animals included. If immersing your senses in groundbreaking special effects doesn't sound like enough to wet your jowls, then listen to this: the writing is strong and the performances are purrfect. From Ben Kingsley as Bagheera to Bill Murray as Baloo, Idris Elba as the scary Shere Khan, and even Christopher Walken as King Louie, each character is a delight to spend time with and all for different reasons. If you have not yet done so, see this movie. Trussst in me, you won't regret it!

Criminal

(2016, Rated R)



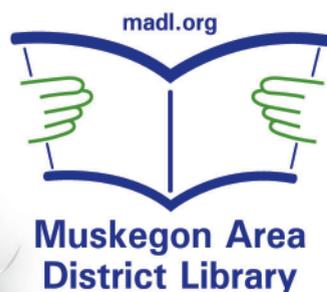
To its credit, *Criminal* has a terrific ensemble: Kevin Costner, Gary Oldman, Tommy Lee Jones, and Ryan Reynolds. Nine films out of ten would warrant the price of admission based on these names alone. The unfortunate news here is that *Criminal* is that elusive tenth film. Every performance is phoned in, meaning: it's obvious these actors are only interested in the paycheck. The exception here is Kevin Costner and that's the good news ("good" being used in its loosest possible sense) seeing is he is the focus of the film. He gives himself to the role of a whacky, homicidal sociopath who is implanted with the memories of a deceased government agent in order to salvage vital national security information. The intent is a gritty psychological thriller with a hint of sci-fi flavor but the result is a sloppier, bloodier, unintentionally funnier version of *Taken*. With all that out of my system, I'd like to recommend this film to any Costner fans (I know you're out there) because despite the technical chaos of this film, he turns in a good performance. Just go in with your standards set below sub-par.

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.



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Just Two More States

By Laura Holmes

So, why New Mexico? It's one of the last three to complete my quest to visit all 50 states in the union. What's missing: Washington State (because a Seattle-airport hop to Alaska does not count), then there's Hawaii. Just two more to go to complete one of my travel bucket-lists!

You've heard about southern hospitality, but what about New Mexican hospitality?

On an April trip to Albuquerque and Santa Fe, we discovered a new breed of friendliness. At the Airbnb casita, at bakeries, restaurants, breweries and bike shops, everyone was supremely pleased we chose the desert to visit. Of note, most Albuquerqueans are not native but transplants from Santa Fe, Taos, Austin or as far away Buffalo, New York. Local or transplant they were all about pleasantly chatting, offering up suggestions on food and places to visit.

Ken, our host for the week pampered us in our quaint home-away casita, complete with local artwork and surprises like French press coffee. At the Boiler Monkey and Golden Bakery just down the street, all the patrons sensed we were new in town and inquired about our visit. Plus, we got a free Biscochito (the official state cookie) when we placed an order. The Bikesmith Cycle shop, ironically owned by Michigan natives, attended to my ailing rental bike, fixing my shifter and sending us out to the trails with a full compliment of gears. (I had whacked my brake lever squarely on a rock on the north trails on day two).

It's dry in Albuquerque, really dry. Bring lots of lotion for your body and saline for your sinus. The terrain is considered a high desert. Albuquerque metro is at about 5500 feet and the Sandia Mountains just to the east top out at 10,300 feet at the top of the tram and ski resort. The dry air and desert landscape will bloody the nose, but the views and the hospitality ultimately outweigh any dry skin or minor sinus complaints. When the sun sets and glows pinkish and purple against the granite in the Sandia's it's easy to see why it's the land of enchantment. The combination of mountains and desert make for a memorable landscape and one ideally suited for hiking and mountain biking. Both activities were prime reasons to visit the southwest instead of Florida (where half the state of Michigan goes in winter). Albuquerque's trails proved an old adage true, there's a hiker in every biker!

We hike-a-biked on many occasions where elevation, stone steps, cactus and plenty of loose rocks made the passage on two wheels treacherous. Josh and I became bike-tourist-pin-cushions with scrapes, bruises and bloodied-knees from the north trails, the Dale Boss in Santa Fe and the East Mountain trail system. All the trails were above my bike-pay-grade, thankfully my Santa Cruz Bronson rental took most of the beating with its fancy full-suspension. We took our lumps, pulled out cactus spikes from my hand, bought Band-Aids and Neosporin then nursed wounds with local cuisine and an excellent compliment of craft breweries.

Marble Brewery was close to Old Town where we downed Irish stouts, an Imperial Red and



food-truck sandwiches. Red Door Brewing provided much needed hydration and nourishment after biking on day two. And, near NMU campus at Kaktus Brewing, we sipped brown ales, then their Red Card alongside a plate of bison nachos. Right across the street was Bosque Brewing, a more contemporary bar version. The best New Mexican culinary specialty: Green chile stew. This hearty bowl of spicy goodness left a spicy burn on my tongue and fond memories in my heart. A pattern emerged. Go biking. Get tired. Find local brewery, eat and drink. Or, go hiking. Get tired. Find local brewery, eat and drink. Rinse and repeat.

We gave our scrapes a break and went hiking instead on a few occasions. On the way to Santa Fe, a green mileage sign listed Las Vegas at 103 miles. An animated discussion immediately ensued.

"Did you know Vegas was this close?"

"I had no idea, that can't be right."

"Are we that close to Colorado and Nevada?"

"If we are only 100 miles from Vegas, we're going babe!"

At that comment, I set about searching our Thrifty Rental Car map for an indication that this tidbit of news was indeed true. Then, I found it. There is little borough northeast of Santa Fe, also called Las Vegas, but in New Mexico.

The Vegas disappointment faded quickly as we pulled in Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument near Cochito. This geological marvel shows the power of volcanoes, Mother Nature and erosion as we walked through narrow slot canyons then ascended up a rocky trail to a panoramic lookout. The rock formations seemed otherworldly with hundreds of ringed layers of rock, tent caps on each spire. The tent-top looked like a rudimentary martian helmet strapped on each peak. We completed a loop in about two-hours, getting more suggestions from friendly local hikers on where to dine and shop. I'd give the hiking a high-rating. We didn't fall off our bikes when we did not ride them!

The desert landscape and mountains made for a unique spring break playground, the cactus spikes often glinting in the sun warning us about getting too close. After a week of exploration, I can affirm the land of enchantment is more than a marketing slogan. The high-desert will draw you in.

On returning home, I checked New Mexico off my list as my 48th state.

Laura Holmes is a FineLine Creative career girl and writer who always has a trip up her sleeve.

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MEDIA WATCH: WHAT I SEE

This may be politically correct, but...

By Jay A. Newmarch

Having been on this earth for over 5 decades, I recall a time when no one knew the term “political correctness”. A time when anyone could basically say or do anything without too much fear of retribution.

For instance, I remember, sadly, when it was perfectly OK to mock those with disabilities, usually in the form of an exaggerated pantomime or verbal parity. And, this loutish behavior wasn't reserved singularly to adults, kids were just as, or even more cruel. People often speak about the innocence of a child. I think back with astonishment, “where did these well behaved, politically correct children reside anyway?”

Kids, at least when I was growing up, were completely without filter. In my experience, the rudest, crudest, most politically incorrect retorts were not uttered by adults, but instead by these “innocent” children. If a child tripped, whether literally or rhetorically, one was more than likely to hear the chant, “RETARD!” bellowed by the witnesses. No thought of retribution toward those taunting, that's for sure, just loud jubilation.

Fortunately, those times are gone, at least in most circles. Now if someone imprudently yelled out such a heartless comment, he or she would find themselves the focus of revulsion and censure.

But, and this might be where I am thought to be politically incorrect, all good things, even political correctness, tend to go too far. I have begun to feel like our political correctness meter is swinging way too far in the opposite direction. While I believe we need to hold individuals responsible for rude, hateful speech and action, I think we also must balance our outrage with our supposed desire for free speech, lest we turn our bullies into victims.

Less and less, it seems, are we willing to debate the worthiness of a belief or phrase that we ourselves do not hold. If we, the majority, feels it is “out of bounds,” we collectively pounce. We ostracize and demand amends from the “guilty”. Remember a time when the majority was fine with segregation? With slavery? With preventing a woman from voting or owning property? Whenever we act as a group against another, we run the danger of going too far – of being wrong – even in the defense of something seemingly “good”.

I suggest that we all remember the fine art of debate and disagreement. Let's stop condemning and start talking. We should not play judge and jury, but instead, respond with reason AND respect. If another's intolerance and ridicule is matched only by ours, no one is the winner.

One current example is the appeal of Donald Trump's unfiltered and oft shared opinions. I believe this fascination is simply a backlash to our culture's suppression of politically incorrect speech. Our stifling of contrary opinion. Donald Trump's allure IS his unabashed RIGHT to say whatever he wants and, seemingly, get away with it. Maybe, in reality, the best way to fight such political incorrectness is not to loudly condemn, but instead, to let them keep digging their hole until it's so deep they can no longer be heard.

Jay A. Newmarch is a lifelong native of west Michigan, currently living in Kalamazoo. A marketing, design and communications professional, Jay is a self-admitted newshound with an avid interest in current events, politics and governmental accountability.



Good Reads



The Nest

by Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney

Clever without showing off, *The Nest* by debut novelist Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney submerges you in the relationships and tensions of the Plumb siblings Leo, Beatrice, Jack, and Melody and their associated children, spouses, friends, and acquaintances. The Plumbs have gone through life secure in the knowledge that they will have serious money coming to them; their father established a trust, the titular Nest, that will be dispersed in equal shares to each sibling when the youngest, Melody, turns forty. It's almost time for that to occur when Leo, the oldest, commits a crime and their mother drains the Nest to pay for his defense. Bereft of the income they've been counting on, the siblings have to face up to the choices they've made and the people they've become while waiting for their money to arrive. Marital, filial, emotional, and financial strife piles up as everyone deals with the loss of the Nest, although it slowly becomes clear that losing the Nest may have been the best thing that ever happened to the Plumbs. Each character is finely drawn and feels refreshingly realistic, with frankly written storylines that occasionally seem like they're becoming too pat, only to surprise and delight in the resolution. Perfect for readers who enjoy snappily written, diverse family sagas that feature complicated sibling relationships and don't mind a few curse words.



Lab Girl

by Hope Jahren

Educational, emotionally complex, and full of fascinating details, Hope Jahren's biography, *Lab Girl*, provides access to an extraordinary mind's account of an unusual life. Jahren is a geobotanist, and the clarity with which she describes her work is a testament to her skills at communicating complicated ideas in a straightforward manner. She does not shy away from the difficult parts of her profession or her personal life, vividly relating what it's like to worry about funding, teach disinterested students, deal with overt sexism, work grueling hours, and manage mental illness while also being a wife and parent. Her perspectives on the natural world are eye-opening, causing the reader to look at seeds, trees, and soil in a new and unexpected way. Another standout portion of the book deals with her irascible, deeply odd lab partner Bill. He is a bizarre but accomplished figure who is a constant in her life and work; his presence in the lab and the field gives Jahren intellectual companionship and friendship at a level that's hard to understand but is clearly essential to success. This love letter to science and knowledge would be great for readers who like Michael Pollan, Mary Roach, or Oliver Sacks.

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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The Power of the Metaphor

By Michelle Martin, M.A.

As a therapist, I find metaphors are a powerful means of expression. Because they are symbolic, they have layers of meaning that deepen the impact beyond a straight-forward turn of phrase. They also seem to be easier to remember than straight-forward directions about change. Most of my clients find them helpful in conceptualizing their worlds, problems and solutions. Below I share some of my most frequently used therapeutic metaphors in hopes that you, the reader will find them helpful.

When I am trying to help someone understand why old habits are hard to break I use the metaphor of cement. When we are very young we are wet cement. You can write your name, make an impression of your hand and come back decades later and still see it. That is how we learn when we are children. We learn easily and it stays with us a very long time, by forming neural pathways that do not disappear when we learn something new. When we are adults, the cement has set and is hard. Then we learn by the hammer and chisel method. It requires a lot more effort and often does not have as profound an impact on our belief system. That is why it takes a lot more effort to change old habits into new and more productive ones.

When I discuss the multi-dimensional nature of the individual self with clients I use a number of metaphors to elucidate aspects of the self. Most people experience feeling younger than their chronological age in certain circumstances. When older adults fall in love, they will often say they feel like a kid again. For people with trauma

in their backgrounds, feeling younger may evoke the perceptions of helplessness and fear. I have used both the rings on a tree and Russian nesting dolls to describe my belief that every age we have been stays inside of us.

Building on the theme of the multi-aged self, one of my favorite metaphors is the bus. Imagine that you are driving a bus. On this bus are many seats filled with younger versions of you. Because the unifying, most knowledgeable and mature part of the self is driving, everyone can be relaxed. When a person has experienced trauma, younger parts of the self can become very agitated when triggered by particular events. It is as if these younger parts dash to the front of the bus, wrenching the driver from the seat and take the wheel. This can cause a lot of problems if they cannot reach the pedals or see over the dash. This is often how clients will describe the problems they face, when they have reacted to situations in an emotional and sometimes destructive way. They are solving problems in the same manner a five year old or thirteen year old would. The necessary task becomes to get the younger parts to trust the older, mature self to take the wheel and bring everyone to safety.

While our emotional reactions make life meaningful and interesting, they can sometimes wreak havoc with unintentional consequences. While most of us would not want to live a life without any feeling, making huge life decisions based solely on how we feel is not a good plan for success. Oddly, most Americans are emotional

decision makers. I use the metaphor of food and spices to explain this to clients. Emotions are the spices and herbs. They have very little nutritional value. Facts, on the other hand, are the protein, vegetables and starch. Facts can sustain us. Personally, I do not care for bland food. If I were to be stranded on an island and had to choose between food and spices, I would choose food. I might be bored, but I would survive. When I make a big decision, I try to think beyond my feelings and focus on facts. The goal is not to ignore emotions. The goal is to integrate them at an appropriate ratio with facts to come to a productive decision.

My hope is that whether it concerns driving, food or cement, these metaphors will be useful to you in conceptualizing problems and solutions. At the very least, it may give you some interesting imagery.

Michelle Martin, M. A. is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Limited Licensed Psychologist, (supervised by a Licensed Psychologist,) and Certified Sex Therapist at Harbor Psychological Associates. She has twenty years experience working both in agency and private practice settings. She has also worked as an educator teaching subjects related to mental health. She can be reached at michelle@harborpsychological.com.





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Professional fisherman and promoter Mark Martin has fished and won tournaments across North America, but he often finds himself in his childhood fishing hole on Lloyd's Bayou — the place where he first learned to tie his own lines, set the hook and outsmart the fish.

Sitting at his kitchen table in his log home off River Road, when asked if he still makes time to fish for pleasure, Martin walks to the refrigerator, opens the door and pulls out a bowl of fresh fillets.

"I caught my limit of bluegill yesterday 100 yards from where I grew up on Lloyd's Bayou," he says.

Martin, inducted into the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame in 2015, spends more time talking about his early life than his rise to one of the top-ranked freshwater sports fisherman in the nation.

It was those formidable years — learning to fish at 3 years old, taking weekend trips with his dad and grandfather, saving his lawn mowing money to buy his own boat at age 12, out-fishing the older guys on the banks of the Muskegon River, and watching others have run-ins with the law for illegally selling fish — that motivated him to learn all he could about fishing and find a way to make it a career.

"Every day after school, I fished, even if I went by myself," he says. "That was standard, getting out in that boat wherever I could go with a pair of oars on Lloyd's Bayou or going with my dad, my friends or my grandpa."

From a young age, Martin had a dream of fishing for a living — something his dad recorded on a reel-to-reel tape.

"When I was 5, I said I wanted to be a fisherman and he looked at me and said 'You can't make any money. I'll come back to you,'" he recalls. His dad, Robert, played the tape during a special dinner after he was named 1990 Professional Walleye Trail World Champion and said "maybe I was wrong."

Born in Muskegon and raised in Spring Lake, Martin's professional career spans more than 30 years and includes over \$400,000 in tournament winnings. It all started near home when he fished his first tournament and won the 1983 Muskegon Shoreline Spectacular.

By winning tournaments and gaining sponsorships — he's backed by Lund, Mercury, Rapala and other big names — Martin's career evolved into fishing promoter, speaker and teacher. He travels extensively throughout the United States and Canada doing tournaments, TV shows, outdoor media events, and spreading his walleye wisdom at seminars and clinics.

He hosts his own ice fishing and open-water fishing

MARK MARTIN

One Awesome Angler

By Marla Miller

vacation schools, and his ice fishing clinic, held every winter on various lakes in Michigan, is the only school of its kind in North America, he says. As a writer and author, Martin contributes to various fishing publications and self-published two books, one titled "Over 250 Walleye Tips" that has turned into a bestseller among walleye enthusiasts, along with "Year Round Walleye/Fishing the Four Seasons." His latest book is "Pro Walleye Tactics" and he has one night video that has been a bestseller.

Martin's early claim to fame was his ability to catch walleye at night in the Muskegon area. He has been called "Mr. Walleye at Night," averaging more than 600 walleye per season in the 6 to 12 pound range.

He knows local lakes well thanks to a history of walleye fishing developed over three generations of Martins. His father and grandfather, Smitty, liked to fish for all kinds of fish and explore the various waterways in Michigan.

"My dad and grandpa took me all over," he says. "We would go on little adventures every weekend. There is hardly a lake, reservoir or river I haven't fished in Michigan."

His grandpa passed away when he was 12, but Martin continued fishing with his dad and learning all he could about the sport. He picked up tips from old-timers and locals who fished along the Muskegon River and were willing to share their secrets with a kid.

"I knew who the best fishermen were, The Old Man and the Sea types, and I wanted to hear their stories," he says. "Back when I started fishing, it wasn't for entertainment, it was for necessity. It was like going to the grocery store.

You would go out and catch dinner. My grandpa didn't like frozen fish so we came home and ate the fish we caught. We ate a lot of fish."

He read newspapers and magazines like *Field & Stream* and *Outdoor Life*, and watched Virgil Ward and Wally Taber on television.

"It was different when I was a kid" he says. "There wasn't much out there. You couldn't go on YouTube and the Internet. Virgil Ward was your Internet. I soaked it all up. I got every magazine and read all the time."

Then, he tried out the techniques or new lures and equipment, gleaning other tips from people on the riverbanks, piers and lakes and earning their admiration. Once, during an outing where no one was catching anything, Martin recalls using a can of corn as bait — and it worked.

"You don't know it's going to be your career," he says. "But I knew I wanted to be the best at fishing."

In high school, Martin spent his lunch breaks or study hall at Spring Lake High School fishing down by the Grand River. His interest and enthusiasm spurred other classmates to pick up a pole and try it out and even led to a credited class at the school, he says.

As a teenager, he also worked at Bill's Sport Shop in Spring Lake where he first started selling fishing tackle.

"They would come in to talk to Mark the kid," he says. "I was their little Wally Taber. They wanted to get into salmon fishing but didn't have a clue."

Despite his skill and love for the sport, it took Martin a while to take the leap into professional fishing. He worked factory jobs and fished after work, but people started offering to pay him for his expertise and he realized he needed to get a charter captain's license.

"I didn't want to be on the DNR's hit list and I saw guys getting arrested for selling fish when I was young," he says. "It's something that formed who I am and people started looking up to me."

He studied on his own for the test and quickly became a sought after captain and guide in the area.

"I had the ability to take people night walleye fishing and catch monsters," he says.

He would take clients to register fish over 8 pounds so they could get a master angler patch and certificate. They caught so many 8 pounders the state soon increased the size to 9 pounds and then to 10 and 11 pounds, he says.

Martin's success spread regionally and nationally in the 1990s as he made a name for himself by winning tournaments, securing sponsors and making TV appearances and writing for sport magazines.

Friend and mentor Gary Roach, who lives in Minnesota, helped start Martin and several others in the promoting side of the business. Promoters visit sporting goods stores, make dealer calls and attend seminars to talk about the equipment and tackle they use and how and why it works. "The more they did this, the more they got known," he says.

"All my guys went into the Hall of Fame."

Hall of Fame anglers are voted on by peers and it's based on career achievements, impact on the sport, introducing fishing to the public and other factors.

"It's based on how you have helped the fishing people in the world," Roach says. "You try to treat everybody good and guide once in a while and take them out and show them how to fish. That's how the whole thing spins around."

Martin continues to perfect established techniques and develop new ways to catch walleye as well as fish tournaments. Through his fishing schools he finds new and interesting spots to bring the media walleye fishing to help educate and inform the country's walleye fishing public.

"It's like going to school," Roach says. "The more writers talk about him, that's what makes him valuable."

Besides his knack for selling and promoting product, Martin is a hard worker with an attention to detail, an interest in teaching others and dedication to the sport, Roach says.

"You have to be able to catch fish," he says. "It's a lot of work. Every lake is different. You get to know what the fish want. They all feed differently, they all bite differently. You have to know."

Martin doesn't do much local guiding these days, but he still enjoys teaching others at his ice and open-water fishing schools and sharing his knowledge at seminars. He recalls the pride of seeing the old-timers he used to talk to on the bank listening to him speak.

"They never forgot who Mark Martin was," he says. "They've all passed away, but they came to see me."

Martin, also an avid hunter, says West Michigan has some of the best fishing, hunting and scenery for nature lovers and says "I wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

He feels grateful to be able to share his love of the sport

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- 30 years in tournament fishing and more than 200 tournaments; over \$400,000 in tournament winnings.
- 2015 Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame.
- 1st tournament fished 1983 Muskegon Shoreline Spectacular — placed 1st \$2,500.
- Qualified for 18 Professional Walleye Trail World Championships. He is the only person to qualify for every PWT championship and fish every PWT tournament, achieving over 43 "Top 10" finishes in his pro-walleye career.
- 1990 Professional Walleye Trail World Champion. Martin won the first Tournament of Champions held at International Falls, Minnesota, netting him \$30,000 — the highest cash prize in history for a walleye tournament at that time.
- Earned his way into the championships of the Masters Walleye Circuit; Ranger, Crestliner and Lund (RCL) tournament trail and the National Walleye Trail (NWT).
- Martin has had 47 top-ten finishes and is a Professional Walleye Trail Champion.
- Awarded the Normark/Rapala prestigious "Angler of The Year" and was the winner of the Chamberlain, and Mobridge S.D. P.W.T. events; he holds the position of eight-place, all-time money winner on the Walleye Trail.
- Today Martin is one of the owners of the AIM Tournament Series and sits on the board of directors planning out the AIM Tournaments for the future of professional walleye fishing.
- Noted author and information resource for walleye fishing with best education video.
- Helped bring angling education into schools, radio programs and guest hosting outdoor TV programs such as Midwest-Outdoors TV, Michigan Out Of Doors, Discovery Outdoors and Wilderness Journal.

INSIDER TIPS:

- Largest Walleye: 14 pounds 1 ounce
- Favorite Jig Types: Northland Fireball or Whistler Jig and Blue Fox Standup and Slider Jigs.
- Favorite Crank Bait: Rapala Original Floating Rapala or Shadrap
- Favorite Lake: "There are so many across the United States and Canada... I can't decide, because each one has its own special traits."
- Favorite method for tournament fishing: "Any method that catches walleye. I really don't have any hang-ups with any one type of method. I like them all. Whatever it takes to catch fish that day. But I am partial to long line trolling Rapala's at night along rip-rap dropoffs or breaklines using 20lb Fireline with a 7'10" Berkley Trolling Rods with Abu Garcia Line Counter Reels."

Information: markmartins.net or fishingvacationschool.com



with others and make a pretty good living for himself in the process.

"I consider it a blessing," he says. "I've been able to touch that many people. It's a humbling career. I walk in the same shoes you do. I've had to make myself well-known to make a good living. I let my actions and abilities speak for themselves. If you want to earn a living, that's how you do it."

He says it's rewarding when someone comes up to him, or sends an email or letter, to say they are catching more fish than they ever have. His fishing schools are very hands-on and participants have the opportunity to learn from a group of pro staff, ask questions, properly rig their boat, and get tips on how to use electronics and other equipment.

"That's how you touch people," he says. "Tell the truth and share your secrets and it will come back to you. People wouldn't buy my books if it didn't work. If they become better, they're going to tell their friends."

.....
 Marla R. Miller is a professional writer and Total Control instructor who lives in Norton Shores and enjoys writing about the people, places and events that make West Michigan a great place to live. Learn more about her at marlarmiller.com.



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Shining a Light on Ludington

By Peter Manting

Like many of the ports along Lake Michigan the Ludington Harbor has seen a variety of lighthouse structures.

In 1870 Congress first appropriated funds of \$6,000 to build the first lighthouse to light the entryway to Ludington. The first government light was built on the south pier of the Ludington Harbor channel in 1871 and included a keeper's quarter. Shortly after, in 1874 the Flint & Marquette Railroad started cross lake ferry service from Ludington to Sheboygan, Wisconsin. A fog signal building with a ten inch steam whistle was added to the end of the pier. In 1877 the pier light was rebuilt and placed atop the fog signal building. In 1890 range lights were then placed on the north pier and connected to shore by a wooden catwalk.



In 1914, along with the "Million Dollar" harbor improvement the lighthouse was moved to the north breakwater and placed on a new crib or base.

The present north breakwater lighthouse was built in 1924. It is a formable structure. The main tower fabricated of steel plates over an internal skeleton. The lighthouse took the form of a square, white, gently tapering pyramidal tower that stands 57 feet tall. With plans calling for the installation of an air diaphragm fog signal operated by electrically powered compressor there was no need for a large fog signal building and thus the signal building took the form of a relatively small structure integrated into the base of the landward side of the main tower. In order to help protect the structure from the force of waves crashing across the breakwater, the concrete foundation at the base of the structure

was formed with an angled surface designed to deflect the force of the wave action up and away from the building. The tower has four round portholes on each of the three decks. The white painted tower was capped with a square gallery and an octagonal iron lantern installed at its center. A new fourth-order Fresnel lens,

manufactured by the MacBeth Evans Company of Pittsburg PA. was installed in the tower making the lighthouse one of the first lighthouses in the USA to install a Fresnel lens not made in France. The lens was lit by a two lamp apparatus that was bolted into the center of the lens and flashed at 4 second intervals to produce a 19 mile visibility. The lighthouse was automated in 1972.

In 1993 the lighthouse received a refurbishing that included replacing the porthole glass with Lexan, new wiring, a backup battery system, new sheetrock ceilings

and a thorough painting and a cleaning to make the fourth-order lens sparkle.

In 1994 renovations and reconfiguration of the concrete breakwall by the Army Corps of Engineers took place. The 1924 tower suddenly settled and the tower shifted to an approximate four degree list to the northeast. The Army Corps of Engineers made the decision not to straighten the light tower because they deemed it stable and it would be too expensive to straighten.

The United States Coast Guard dismantled the Fresnel lens in 1995 and removed it from the lighthouse. It is on loan to the Mason County historical society and will be displayed in the new Ludington Maritime museum scheduled to open early 2017.

Today the lighthouse's optic is a Tideland Signal 300 a plastic lens with a solar powered LED light that flashes a green light four seconds on and one second off. The green color is the



lighthouses night mark. It can be seen for 15 miles out.

Although the SS Badger still carries on the proud tradition of carrying passengers and automobiles across the lake between Ludington and Manitowoc, the preeminence of Ludington as a harbor has waned considerably over the years.

Visitors are welcome to visit the lighthouse which opens daily from 10 am to 5 pm on May 27th. For a slight fee guest can climb to the top to view the spectacular Ludington Harbor from one of Michigan's Castles along the Lakeshore.

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.





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Wine tasting, appetizers and desserts will be paired with a variety of live jazz performances and artist receptions.

4TH OF JULY PARADE

Monday July 4
Beginning at 10 am
From Whitehall City Hall to Montague City Hall. Over 100 entries are involved in this family fun, annual parade.

4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

Monday, July 4, 2016
North end of White Lake This annual event begins at dusk.

CELEBRATE WHITE LAKE

July 9
A family event with an antique boat show and historical displays. Held at Goodrich Park in Whitehall beginning at 10 am.

CRUZ'IN CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Friday, July 29
Downtown Montague Cars cruise at 7 p.m. from Whitehall to Montague where they will be on display in the downtown area. DJ, food and fun for all.

WHITE LAKE CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

August 5-14
A mix of visiting professional groups & local talent offer wide variety of performances throughout the White Lake Area.

FISH BOIL

Saturday, August 20
4-8pm
The annual Bob Gillan Memorial Fish Boil will be held at the Montague Band Shell. The event is sponsored by the White Lake Area Sportfishing Association. All proceeds support fishing improvements in the White Lake area

LABOR DAY COMMUNITY WALK

Monday, Sept. 5, 10 am
Hart-Montague Bike Trail, at the trailhead behind Montague Foods

SUMMER AIN'T OVER YET

Tuesday, Sept. 6, 13 and 20
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
An outdoor concert at the Goodrich Park Gazebo in Whitehall. All Proceeds benefit the White Lake Food Pantry.

PUMPKINFEST

Saturday, October 8
9:30 am registration
The famous Pumpkin Roll down the Dowling Hill begins at 11 a.m. plus many pumpkin events... largest pumpkin, pumpkin painting, seed spitting, pumpkin carving & pumpkin toss.

DEPOT TO DEPOT

Saturday, Oct. 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2016, 10am - 4pm
12th Annual Muskegon County Fall Color Tour Travel between White Lake Area Chamber Depot and Muskegon Convention & Visitors Depot.

WHITE LAKE AREA HOLIDAY WALK

Friday, Nov. 18, 2-8pm
Saturday, Nov. 19, 10am-4pm
Montague and Whitehall downtown shopping. Enjoy Carriage Rides Friday & Saturday, use the Muskegon Trolley to travel from store to store all day Saturday in both towns. Visit with Santa, listen to caroling and enjoy the luminaries Friday evening. Maps available at participating merchants

64TH ANNUAL WHITE LAKE AREA CHRISTMAS PARADE

Saturday, Dec. 3, 2 pm
Whitehall to Montague and concluding with Santa in his sleigh! Nearly 75 entries lineup for this festive event.

The Best Farmer's Market in the State

Courtesy of Dave LeMieux

It began as idle talk over the back fence with my neighbor Ken.

Nothing special. The weather. Lawn care. Sports. That kind of thing.

And then there it was, the bombshell. "Muskegon," Ken said, "has the best farmer's market in the state."

Booyah!

Had the statement come from any of the many local booster and civic organizations, I'd have been likely to let it slide and move on to the next topic. But, what you need to know about Ken is he's not from around here. Ken bought the house next to our's as a vacation home, a place to escape the rigors of life and a very successful career on the state's crowded east side.

Ken's perspective on west Michigan in general and the Muskegon area in particular is a powerful antidote to the legions of cranky local naysayers who grumble anytime anyone suggests anything be changed around here.

The long fight to move and improve the Muskegon farmer's market is just one example.

I confess that I never saw any compelling reason to build a new downtown farmer's market a mere 3,700 feet from the old one. The old market had a certain worn out charm and grittiness that perfectly embodied a town left in the backwaters of a bygone era fueled by heavy industry. I never saw the need for an expensive new market.

Until I had to go the bathroom.

While my first trip to the luxe restrooms in the new market didn't completely sell me on the new setup, I've got to say it sure went a

long way toward my conversion. (George Costanza of Seinfeld fame himself just might endorse the new market's facilities).

Anyway, back to Ken. He didn't gush about the market, he simply said he'd been to the markets in Ann Arbor and many other upscale eastside burgs and that they didn't measure up even halfway to Muskegon's.

It set me to thinking. Now, I've travel some and visited my share of markets

around the U.S. and as I thought back on them it slowly began to dawn on me that the Muskegon market could hold its own against the best of 'em. Sure, Muskegon doesn't the abundance of 100% organic foo-froo that the market in Burlington, Vt. does or the strange specialty items the one in Boulder, Colo. has, or the bewildering variety of fresh fish as one in San Diego, Calif., but it has the same thing that makes all of them special. It is a local market with a large offering of local produce from local people. A place where you're sure to bump into someone you know and a place where, over time, you'll get to know and trust the vendors who come back again and again to sell their bounty.

Thanks, Ken, for opening my eyes to what's been right under my nose all along.

The Muskegon Farmer's Market is open from 6:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday during the summer and fall.

For more information on the market and a full list of in-season produce, visit the market's website at: <http://www.muskegonfarmersmarket.com/>

Dave LeMieux is west Michigan-based freelance writer, sometime triathlete, world traveler and inveterate reader of books great and small.



The Sunshine Vitamin

By Laurie Semlow

Vitamin D has long been called the "sunshine" vitamin since it's produced in your skin following exposure to sunlight. Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin in a family of compounds that includes vitamins D1, D2 and D3. It can affect as many as 2,000 genes in the body.

Vitamin D serves several important functions. Perhaps the most vital is regulating the absorption of calcium and phosphorus, and facilitating normal immune system function. Getting sufficient vitamin D is important for the normal growth and development of bones and teeth as well as improved resistance against certain diseases. Vitamin D is not just for growing children though. If you're body doesn't get enough vitamin D as an adult you risk developing bone abnormalities such as osteomalacia (soft bones) or osteoporosis (fragile bones).

As mentioned above, vitamin D may also play a role in:

- reducing your risk of multiple sclerosis¹
- decreasing your chance of developing heart disease²
- helping reduce the likelihood of developing the flu³

There are several ways your body can obtain vitamin D. You naturally produce it with direct exposure to sunlight. As little as 10 minutes a day during the mid-day sun without sunscreen is enough for a fair-skinned adult. There are also

certain foods and supplements that you can draw vitamin D from. The National Institute of Health (NIH) recommends obtaining vitamin D from all three sources in order to ensure adequate levels of the vitamin in your blood.

Food sources of vitamin D include: salmon, sardines, egg yolk, shrimp, fortified milk, fortified cereal, fortified yogurt and fortified orange juice. It can be difficult to get enough through sun exposure and food alone; taking a supplement can help.

The NIH emphasizes that people over 50 generally need higher amounts of vitamin D, suggesting as much as 2000 IU per day. Vitamin D is extremely important to your health and you should talk to your doctor about how many IUs per day are appropriate for you based upon your lifestyle and diet.

1 2006 Journal of the American Medical Association 2 2008 Circulation 3 2010 American Journal of Clinical Nutrition

Laurie Semlow is a Certified Creating Wellness Coach and Office Manager at Semlow Chiropractic, 5353 Grand Haven Road, Norton Shores. She can be reached at 231.798.9355.



MORE
^

Treasure Hunting in West Michigan

By John Morgan

It's cold and raining and I am standing beneath the bare and dripping trees on an early April day in the old Lake Forest Cemetery in Grand Haven. Laid out in a series of unremembered, almost organic, rationales over the last 150 years on a rolling hillside above the great lake, the headstones and memorials stand, or sit, or lean in patient acceptance of their role; necessary markers, dignified, if a bit forlorn in their damp, moss scented quiet, memorials for those who once were like us: alive, aware, loved, but now passed on.

Who were the departed, back when their eyes were bright and they too could feel the cold rain on their cheeks and think of a warm kitchen and the sound of people important to them laughing together over a forgotten moment? Some might say it really doesn't matter anymore once the years have passed, when the family visits taper away, or as the memory or accomplishments of the interred no long touch or inspire the rest of us. The world is full enough in the present, without wandering between rows of headstones and dwelling on the past.

But I think that might be wrong.

In front of me is a small red granite headstone, part of a family grouping. Andrew A. born Aug. 5th 1886, died April 15th 1893...That this child is only one of countless lost during the 1800's is obvious. That his immediate family and those that knew him have long since passed away is also a certainty. But does any distant relative visit this spot these days? There are no flowers. Could there be, in a box somewhere, faded photographs of a serious little face framed in curls that his mother and father so adored? Perhaps some dry lines in sepia colored ink, hand written in the dusty, back records of the local municipality or the family church to give a hint of dimension to this child's life? Or is there just nothing at all? No depth, no meaning?

That he was 6 1/2 years old means he likely had the energy, alertness, articulacy, silliness, and sensitivity of most children that age. All blended together in a unique little kid who maybe loved rope swings and root beer and his dog Tag, and who left a choking hole in his family when he died in their arms of diphtheria or dysentery or infection. Though we'll never know the particulars, we assume he was much like other little fellows we know, or were, or have of our own. With that, we can empathize with that long ago family in their loss and grief, and look to our own little boys, our own little girls, and cherish them all the more for knowing that life was not always so easy or certain.

Today we take for granted the vaccines, antibiotics, surgeries and procedures, and medical access that are a phone call or short drive away. At the end of the 1800's, however, the only thing that was certain was that life could be supremely short and unfair. Even in the "developed" world of western Europe and the United States, something like 170 out of every 1000 children died by the age of 7. Nearly one in every twenty mothers died in child birth and the average life expectancy was just 47 years old. Now, we seem to assume that we and our children will live to ripe old ages—and we often act like it will be forever. We assume that our kids will have whatever they need and be whatever they set their minds to be. That's what we're told, right? That teachers and doctors and policemen and X-Box One will take care of most everything our children need and that we can turn the bulk of our attention to work or shopping or Bud Lite or The Real Housewives of New Jersey, instead of setting aside the time with our kid to toss a football or read a book or explain why everybody should help

with chores. If Andrew's parents could reach out to us, if they could share one message now, one thought on what's important and what is not, could we guess what it might be?

As I stroll through the cemetery, I'm struck by the beauty of the stone; white, grey, black, yellow, brown, variegated, a hundred shades of slate. Smooth or stippled or hewn. The handsome, sturdy lines of headstone, bower, plinth and stele, tablet, cross, and obelisk. Sculpted hands clasped in friendship, a reclining lamb, a fraternal seal, a lost rose. Detailed artistic touches of their age, with scroll, or leaf, or deco-esque trim and borders. Forms straight or canted, arched or trapezoid, and everywhere the elegant rectangle. Marble, granite, and bronze carved or cast with the distillation of all these lives in forgotten fonts and wistful hints here in the tranquility of the park.

The marker I look at now is simple, grey, and manly, set nearly flush against the grass—and two seasons from being subsumed into the earth forever, should the groundskeeper not return. Capt. John F. P. 1881-1918. Maybe I'm wrong, but at 37 old, it's likely this was an American officer lost in World War I, the "Great War". The "War to End All Wars", except of course it didn't and many more of our men and boys have gone away with a smile, or smirk, or a clench of the jaw, departing with a spring or shuffle in their step, off to fight the good fight or the bad one, to take care of business or avoid it, many to return with new purpose or value, others only to return quiet, or hard, or not at all. Did this man have a last heartfelt embrace with his wife, one final kiss on his daughter's forehead, a solemn nod from his dad as they parted at the train station? It's hard to see the understated memorial and not project these images onto his life and onto our own should fate have so arranged our trajectory. In valuing his existence, even theoretically coloring it this way with our imagination, we have stimulated a response that carries us in a nearly hundred year circuit to our own present and to a better understanding of who we are and would be if it was us, or our husband, our father, our son.

And thinking about how this man might have parted from his family on that last day, leads us then to reflect on his return and what the consequences were. For his family, as the casket sits, flag draped, and the honor guard presents their arms to fire. For his community, who remember the serious young man, with the good grades and the fine pitching arm and the appointment to the military academy at West Point. For his nation, that joined in a global war against tyranny that diminishes today's conflicts to skirmish status, his death one of 116 thousand American deaths and over 320 thousand casualties. (This does not include any of the other Allied nations that suffered much greater losses fighting the German led war machine.) All part of a sacrifice we've for the most part forgotten or dismissed. Now, if we think at all of threats to our country, we think of Islamic terrorists or perhaps Adolf Hitler, yet the price the men and women of our military have paid for our freedoms over the years requires a more regular reckoning we dismiss to our peril, if we are to truly understand the aggressive and chaotic nature of the world beyond the comfortable Shire-like borders of our living room or neighborhood and our daily routines of self-interest. To stand in front of this soldier's grave causes me to reflect on his sacrifice, or at least on the sacrifice of people of his age and occupation. His death helped provide for me and for my kids, the pleasure, and freedom, and opportunity, and safety that I have enjoyed all my life. It is a privilege to be able to honor him, and, I think perhaps, a duty on occasion. And I would not have had this moment of dedication, or benefited from consideration of him in so personal a sense, had I not strolled through this beautiful old cemetery with an open mind.

The rain seems such a little thing.

John Morgan



GOOD SPORTS

Let's go out to the 'ol ballpark!

By Mike Mattson

At last, summer is in full swing and so is my favorite sport, baseball.

Summer wouldn't be the same without this great pastime. Can you imagine a summer without the Detroit Tigers?

My love for baseball started when I was 10 years old. My Dad signed me up for a youth league, where I spent my first year catching up with the other "experienced" players.

I struggled learning the fundamentals that inaugural season. But the smell of leather gloves, sound of baseballs coming off a wooden bat and the positive feeling from wearing a uniform left an impact.

I've been sold on baseball ever since. And the memories from playing, coaching, spectating and writing about the sport throughout the years still are treasured. My playing career didn't attract any scouts.

I made a few all-star teams, pitched some solid games, and enjoyed being a "tough out" as a decent contact hitter who refused to strike out. There, however, was little power in my game at the plate.

I also played with some great teammates in Escanaba, including former Major League pitcher Kevin Tapani.



boys make progress in the challenging game and enjoy success throughout the season.

My coaching career came to an end after an amazing journey that culminated with the 2002 Roosevelt Park Little League Majors Team finishing as the state runner-up. We lost the first game of the district tournament, then meshed together en route to the state championship game.

As a spectator, nothing compares to watching the 2001 Roosevelt Park Little League Majors team from the bleachers. My twin sons were part of this squad that captured the state title and lost to Brownsburg, Ind., 4-1, in the regional championship game televised on ESPN-2 from Indianapolis.

This summer marks the 15th anniversary of that historic Little League team.

That team had it all – especially outstanding coaching from Steve Schuitema, Craig Bundt and Dale Carlson. There were plenty of solid pitchers and no weaknesses on defense. This group was fundamentally sound in all areas of the game.

We traveled to Norway in the U.P. for the state tournament and did a quick turnaround to Indianapolis.

Every year I watch the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa., I think about all the hard work and success earned by those two Roosevelt Park teams.

As a sportswriter, I've covered big games at the high school, college and professional level. Interviewing Hall of Fame Manager Sparky Anderson was a real treat, along with other Tigers on their talented teams in the 1980s.

Today, baseball is not as exciting to the younger generations. Many of these folks grew up with soccer, video games, cell phones and social media. To them, baseball is too slow and not cool.



Perhaps, that's why I still like baseball so much. Our society is constantly in a hectic, stress-filled mode. But in baseball, there's no clock and the game ends when the final out is made.

So I welcome another summer in West Michigan.

I will find some time to watch baseball – the West Michigan Whitecaps, Tigers, a Little League game, or college league action at Muskegon's Marsh Field.

And I owe it all to Dad for signing me up for that youth league, where a lifelong passion for baseball began and is still going strong.

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.



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YOUR MONEY MATTERS

Securing Retirement Income: Looking beyond 'the number'

By Tom Kendra

Today's challenging economic environment has forced many Americans to review their retirement planning goals with a more critical eye.

While most core principles about retirement planning still hold true no matter the environment, a few may require some slight modifications. Who couldn't use a roadmap to help plan and execute a successful retirement strategy?

When it comes to retirement planning, we all want to know what "the number" is: That magic dollar figures that, when reached, means you're set in retirement. Sure, knowing your number—and reaching it—is good, but it's only part of the equation. Mastering the accumulation phase without factoring in the distribution phase could render all your hard work saving toward your number moot.

Instead, you should think about retirement in terms of income needs. The accumulation of, say, \$300,000 is not meaningful for living in retirement unless you can translate that figure into a yearly or monthly income stream. You need to be able to pay your monthly food, rent and utility bills, as well as health-care expenses—and have enough left over to live the way you want to live in retirement.

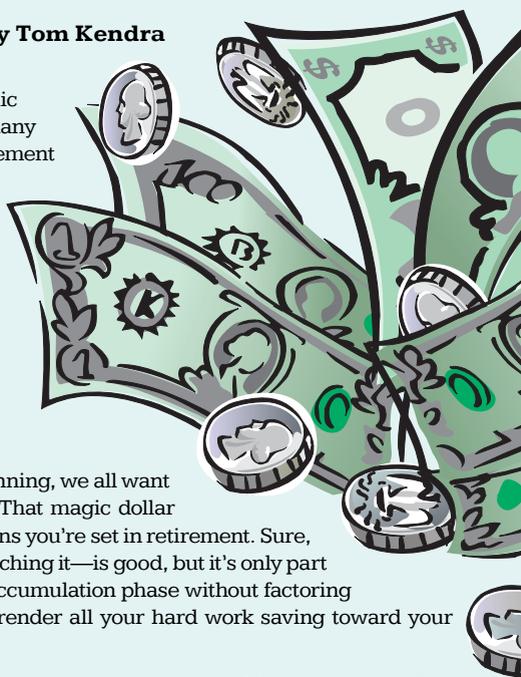
When you consider your retirement income needs, make sure you also factor in that some of your assets have a built-in tax liability. In other words, view your retirement assets with a "tax lens" on so you can see their true economic value. You can't pay your rent or utility bills with before-tax dollars, so it's important to understand what you'll be left with after taxes before concluding you're saving enough.

Longevity risk and investment risk are other items the number approach does not consider. So to use the same example, you've reached your \$300,000 number, but how do you know that a sufficient amount will be there 20 years later? If the assets decline to \$200,000 in the next year, what does that mean for your future? Are there ways to manage these longevity and investment risks? By translating the number into an income stream, you can better see what a decline in asset value will mean to the longevity of your assets.

The message here is that retirement planning should be done considering income needs. If you base it purely on accumulation, or reaching "your number," you won't adequately define your retirement planning goals or manage retirement planning risks.

By choosing strategies that mitigate the risks of poor investment return or of outliving your assets, you will substantially reduce your plan's risk of failure.

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



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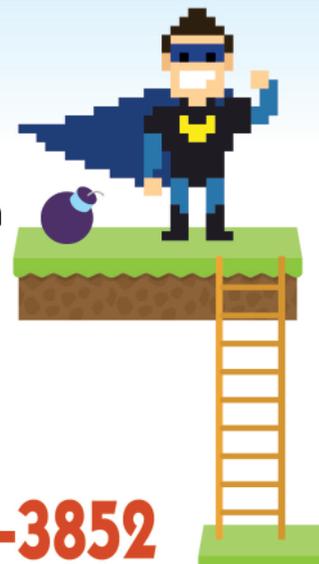
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For Better Health and More Happiness... Volunteer!

By Kathy Daly

Research supports what many of us already know: Making a difference through volunteering may be one of the most natural ways to promote good health and happiness.

Whether it's helping your neighbor in a time of need, working at a community event, or committing time each week to support an organization, volunteering may offer surprising health benefits for individuals who incorporate it into their lives.

Benefit #1) Volunteering can support your physical health.

- Reduces high blood pressure in older adults¹: A study published in 2013 from Carnegie Mellon University shows that "older adults who volunteer for at least 200 hours per year decrease their risk of hypertension, or high blood pressure, by 40 percent." This study suggests that volunteering might combat high blood pressure without the use of medication.
- Increases longevity in altruistic volunteers²: A 2012 study found that participants who volunteered on a regular basis lived longer—but only if they were motivated by wanting to help others rather than by wanting to make themselves feel better.
- Helps maintain a healthy body through physical exercise: Volunteer opportunities that involve physical activities are especially helpful. For example, being a docent gets a person walking, talking, and guiding others. Volunteering to help maintain an outdoor space—such as a beachfront or park—has the added benefit of being active in fresh air and sunshine!

Benefit #2) Volunteering can be good for your mental health.

- Wards off depression³: If you are isolated from people, depression can set in. Keeping in contact with others develops relationships and a support system that will help keep depression at bay during difficult times. In 2007, the study *The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research* supported this finding.
- Provides a sense of purpose⁴: If you have recently retired or lost a spouse, you can find new meaning and purpose by helping others. Volunteering can help take your mind off your worries, keep your mind active, and help you live longer. "Possessing a greater purpose in life is associated with lower mortality rates among older adults," said Patricia A. Boyle, PhD and other researchers at Rush University Medical Center, who conducted two ongoing research studies of community-dwelling elderly participants. In 2009 Boyle stated, "We are excited about these findings because they suggest that positive factors, such as having a sense of purpose in life, are important contributors to health."
- Increases self-confidence: When you do good for others you may gain a sense of accomplishment. Volunteering in ways that provide a new challenge can also build your self-esteem.

Benefit #3) Volunteering may improve your social health.

Unpaid volunteers are often the glue that holds the community together. There are so many opportunities in our local community for volunteers: community festivals, local neighborhood associations, food pantries, homeless shelters, nonprofit organizations, animal shelters, after-school programs, church groups, museums, libraries, service organizations, senior centers, and yes, hospitals.

- Meet new friends and make new contacts⁵: Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. It can also strengthen your ties to the community and broaden your support network, bringing you together with people who share common interests, neighborhood resources and fulfilling activities.
- Increase your social and relationship skills: If you tend to be shy, try volunteering with others who share a common interest. That way you can practice and develop your social skills. Once you have gained more confidence, you will likely make more friends and contacts.

Benefit #4) Volunteering could bring you more fun, fulfillment, and happiness.

- Kindles happiness: "When researchers at the London School of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large group of American adults, they found the more people volunteered, the happier they were. Compared with people who never volunteered, the odds of being 'very happy' rose 7% among those who volunteer monthly and 12% for people who volunteer every

two to four weeks. Among weekly volunteers, 16% felt very happy...."

- Follow your passion: Doing volunteer work that you find meaningful and interesting can be relaxing, energizing and provide a healthy escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family obligations. Many people volunteer so they can make time for hobbies outside of work.
- Consider your goals, interests and motivation: Why do you want to volunteer? Is it to explore a different career path? What do you enjoy doing? Are you ready to try something new in your life? Experiences that fulfill your goals and interests are going to give you the most satisfaction and fun.

By incorporating volunteering into your routine, you could experience health benefits that help your mind, body, and spirit. With the arrival of warmer weather and longer days, why not get out there and try something new?

1Published by the American Psychological Association's journal *Psychology and Aging*
2Published by the American Psychological Association in the journal *Health Psychology*
3Published by the Corporation for National and Community Service
4Rush <https://www.rush.edu/news/press-releases/having-higher-purpose-life-reduces-risk-death-among-older-adults>
5Source: www.helpguide.org, "Volunteering and Its Surprising Benefits"
6Source: www.helpguide.org, "Volunteering and Its Surprising Benefits," a study published in *Social Science & Medicine*

Kathy Daly is the Manager of Volunteer Services for Mercy Health Muskegon.

Volunteer Profile: Let Lois Be Your Guide!



Have you ever walked through the entrance to a hospital and wondered where to go? Finding your way can be confusing, especially if you are going to a hospital as a patient for the first time.

That's where special volunteers like Lois Sullivan come in. If you need to find your way around Mercy Health Hackley, she's the person to ask for as your escort. After 35 years of teaching in a grammar school, Lois retired and was living alone as a widow. Her daughter, who was a nurse, encouraged Lois to volunteer at Hackley Hospital as a way to improve her mother's social life. Now 85, Lois has been a volunteer for 20 years!

The social aspect of her work is delightful, but volunteering helps her spirit, too. "Everyone is so nice. You just feel good helping others. I like taking care of people. When I am here I feel useful."

Escorting patients to their departments after they have completed the admissions process is just one of the ways Lois contributes to the mission of the hospital during her weekly eight hours of service.

Sometimes a hospital "guest" will say, "Hello, Mrs. Sullivan." That is when she knows she is leading one of her former students or their family member through the hospital. "I have worked with all kinds of people in many different situations," says Lois. When she isn't guiding patients, Lois also makes deliveries to different departments and helps with clerical tasks.

Lois no longer drives, but between her family, friends, and other volunteers, she manages to make it to the Hackley campus each week. This passionate lady recognizes the health benefits of volunteering. "It gives me a reason to get up and moving in the morning," she says.

For Lois, volunteering is the best medicine of all.

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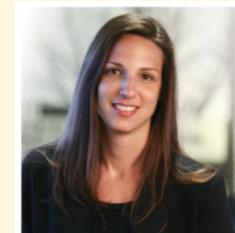


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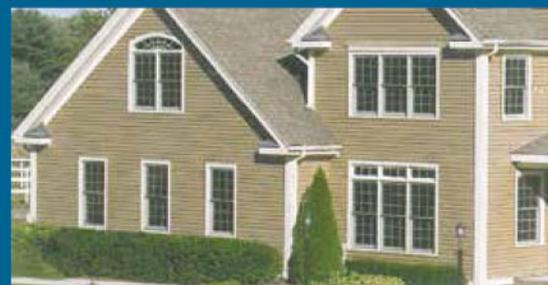
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