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**MARCH
2024**

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ThumbPrint News

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CHECK OUT THE NEW LAYOUT!

CAMP OKAWANA

REVISITED By Derek Smith, *ThumbPrint News* Contributor

PREFACE: Last year, I published a story on Camp Okawana first online with Blue Water Healthy Living and then in the March 2023 issue of ThumbPrint News. It was a disabled children's camp located within the confines of the Sherman Woods subdivision in Port Huron, Michigan. The story centered around Miss Edna O'Neil and Mr. Earl Casey, the camp's founders, as well as the disabled children they so lovingly cared for. If you have not visited that article, please do so by going to bit.ly/TPNmar2023. The article below follows up on some of the beautiful characters illustrated in that story and introduces new individuals. Knowledge of that previous story will make this reading more illuminating and interesting.



After releasing the Okawana story, I received a message from a woman named Celeste Repp. Celeste stated that she had read the article and thought it had been presented as factual and caring. She left her phone number and requested this writer to call her. I later learned that over several months previous, with little success, Celeste and her family had been looking for information on Camp Okawana. At some point, one of Celeste's children took it upon themselves to Google "Camp Okawana" and discovered my first article. As requested, I called Celeste, wondering what to expect. I was anticipating further news about the wonderful Okawana camping adventure launched many years ago, an undertaking that changed the lives of so many disadvantaged children.

As it turned out, Celeste Repp is Edna O'Neil's only natural daughter. Celeste and I had a great conversation about Edna's life, about Celeste herself, Edna's children, grandchildren, as well as the lives of those dear little souls from the cripple camp. Celeste promised to mail me detailed information about Camp Okawana that she had. For several weeks, I waited patiently, hoping she had not forgotten me or that she had suddenly decided that we should not follow further into that story. Finally, the "camp history" manila envelope arrived, and I felt the same excitement as a 10-year-old tearing into his first Christmas gift.

In addition to the manila information, Celeste told me that her daughter Nancy had been researching a different disabled children's camp for several years. I mentioned in the earlier Okawana story Miss O'Neil and Mr. Casey had been employed with the disabled children camp in Detroit, the Van Leuven Browne Hospital School. They had also spent three summers at the Van Leuven camp for disabled children at Lakeside Park in Port Huron. Celeste's daughter's research focused primarily on the Van Leuven Browne Hospital, which would become the "seed" for Camp Okawana, so we shall begin this narrative with Van Leuven Browne Hospital School.

At nineteen years old, Blanche Van Leuven Browne was small in stature at 4 feet 8 inches and weighed just 78 pounds soaking wet. However, what she lacked in size was well balanced by her drive, determination, foresight, intellect and faith. Born a healthy child, she developed infantile paralysis at

the age of three. Her right side became paralyzed along with her neck, so lifting her head was no longer possible. Doctors had advised her parents she "would have to be lifted and carried the rest of her life." Never a family "to give up hope", from the age of five through twenty, Blanche was treated with

See OKAWANA Page 9

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By Pamela Lynn Hayes, *ThumbPrint News* Columnist

We are getting closer by the day! Springtime will start peaking her head out soon and we will start to see the tulips, daffodils and, hopefully, cherry blossoms. The cool thing about Michigan is our diverse climate that allows for a rich tapestry of blooming flowers throughout the year. Spring is the best; we all start to stay outside a bit longer and notice daylight hangs around a little longer as well.

Not much longer and the official opening of my little cabin will be here. I am excited to see all the neighbors once again, even though I keep in touch with most of them all year long.

The mental list of things to do around the outside of the cottage begins to grow. The excitement starts to build as I think of the days ahead of relaxing lakeside, getting a summer tan and planning to attend a few local music festivals and events.

A friend of mine recently asked me if owning a seasonal cottage is a lot of work and, do I ever regret buying the place? I've had my place for 12 years, and the answer is a hard NO. Never has this place been too much to care for or is an incredibly high expense to maintain. In fact, it's just right. I'm sure a day will come when I get older and some things may get a little harder for me to do, but that's what my kids are for!

My family moved to the Thumb area in mid-November, it has been the best decision I have ever made. Moving and packing up a home with 20 years of "stuff" can be a bit daunting, but it felt great to do a purge of old items and

furniture that have just been collecting dust in the basement. Getting settled into a new home is a great way to see all the items and cherished memories that we keep but forget about once they have gone into a storage area.

I am glad we chose to move at the time that we did, I would have missed out on a whole cottage season if we had moved in the late spring or summer as originally discussed. But other than a few stressful days and situations, everything went along as planned. There is such a difference between the residents in the Thumb area from those down in the metro Detroit area. Huge difference. The pace and the attitudes downstate are no longer appealing. I should have made this move several years ago.

Now that we are 95% settled into our beautiful new home, it's time to shift my focus to the cottage. Spring cleaning inside first, water turn-on in April and then outdoor landscaping begins.

This will be a busy year for me with a new home and opening the cottage for the spring, but it is a welcomed busy. Not much needs to be done to the cottage this year structurally, except for maybe replacing two windows in the summer. I usually use the winter months to freshen up some rooms with a coat of paint, but not this year with the move and all. Next winter may be a different story. One season at a time. 🍀

Happy St. Patrick's Day TPN Readers!

Pamela can be reached at
pammypoo123@icloud.com.

NOTES FROM OUR READERS

Dear *ThumbPrint News*,
Big fan of your little paper here! I've enjoyed so many of your great lead stories – including the amazing "Stompin' at the Savoy" in the February 2024 issue.

Plus, you've introduced us to some great places to eat, etc. on our never frequent enough sojourns from Mt. Clemens to the Marine City area.

Thanks for your efforts, and for the distribution of the paper to our Macomb County area.

Best, Terry B.

Mt. Clemens, MI

Thanks so much for letting us know, Terry! We love to hear people are enjoying the paper and are visiting our advertisers!

Sincerely, TPN Staff

To *ThumbPrint* Staff,

Thank you for running our Woman's Life Chapter 855 Meeting in the Calendar of Events. We gained a new member last night!

She saw the listing in your paper.

Kathy O.

Columbus, MI

Kathy, we are happy to hear word is getting out and people are responding.

Best Regards, TPN Staff

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PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TAX SCAMS

The United States tax season is here, and so are the scammers. Con artists resurface every year with a tax scam that typically involves posing as someone from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) trying to trick people into either giving up their money or sharing personal information.

Tax scams are among the most stubborn cons out there, and the culprits can be very persistent. While individuals are becoming more aware of ways to identify IRS impersonators and protect personal information, these criminals aren't going away anytime soon, so it's important to remain vigilant.

Especially during this time of the year, taxpayers are encouraged to watch for various versions of tax scams, such as phishing emails with malicious links, fake IRS websites, calls asking for personal information, and fake IRS communications through non-traditional mediums such as text messages or direct messages on social media.

No matter how convincing a person may be, consumers should follow these tips from Better Business Bureau® Serving Eastern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula to avoid falling victim to the latest tax scams:

- **The best way to avoid tax identity theft is to file your taxes as early as possible.** File before a scammer has the chance to use your information to file a fake return.
- **In the U.S., jot down your Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN) from the IRS before you file your return.** This is a six-digit number, which, in addition to your Social Security number, confirms your identity. It is important to note that you cannot opt out once you get an IP PIN. So, once you apply, you must provide the IP PIN each year when you file your federal tax returns. The IRS will provide your IP PIN online and then send you a new IP PIN each December by postal mail. Visit irs.gov/individuals/get-an-identity-protection-pin for more information about the program.
- **The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text message or social media to request personal or financial information.** This includes requests for PIN numbers, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.
- **Only deal with trustworthy tax preparation services.** For many people, major life changes, business ownership or simply a lack of knowledge about the ever-changing tax laws make finding a trustworthy tax preparer a good idea.
- **Check out websites carefully and make sure you are accessing the real IRS website** when filing your taxes electronically or inquiring for additional information.
- **If you are the victim of tax identity theft in the U.S., contact the IRS at 1-800-908-4490.** You should also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at ftc.gov/complaint or by calling 1-877-FTC-HELP. The FTC also offers a personalized identity theft recovery plan at identitytheft.gov.
- **If your personal information has been compromised, place a fraud alert on your credit report** by contacting one of three credit bureaus (listed below). That credit agency must tell the other two.
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Editorial note: Melanie Duquesnel is the president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving Eastern Michigan & the Upper Peninsula, which is a non-profit organization that fights fraud and promotes ethical business practices in the local marketplace through its business accreditation, consumer education and dispute resolution programs. Contact your local BBB by calling (248) 223-9400 or by visiting bbb.org.



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Navigating End-of-Life with Comfort: The Role of Death Doulas

By Dr. Jen Vogtmann, Occupational Therapist/End of Life Doula

As the demographics of the United States shift, with one in six Americans aged 65 years or older, there's a growing need for **innovative approaches to end-of-life care**. In response to this, the ancient practice of death doulas has reemerged as a vital profession, offering indispensable support to individuals and families navigating the final stages of life's journey. In today's caregiving landscape, many individuals find themselves in the **sandwich generation** – juggling the responsibilities of caring for both children and aging parents. In such scenarios, the need for additional support becomes paramount, allowing caregivers to focus on providing love and companionship rather than feeling overwhelmed by the logistics of end-of-life care.

A notable trend is the increasing preference for **families to care for their loved ones at home, fostering a nurturing environment** where individuals can spend their final days surrounded by familiar faces and cherished memories. For nine out of ten hospice patients, the desire to remain at home during their final moments is profound – a wish that highlights the importance of creating a peaceful and supportive environment.

However, challenges arise within the confines of insurance limitations and the resources of the medical system. While palliative and hospice teams offer invaluable medical care, their time and



resources are limited. It is within this space that death doulas step in, providing continuous, **personalized assistance without insurance limitations** complementing and working with loved ones and other services as part of your caregiving team.

Death doulas transcend traditional caregiving roles; they serve as companions, space holders and advocates, bridging the gap between medical care and emotional support. They **alleviate the fear of dying**, guiding individuals and their families through conversations, decisions and the complexities of grief. With a foundation in compassion and dignity, death doulas offer unwavering support, prioritizing holistic care to meet the **physical, emotional and spiritual needs** of those they serve.

End of life doulas provide comprehensive support, initiating as guides in **holistic death planning**, which includes considerations of eco-friendly and traditional funeral and burial options, as well as decisions regarding your location, personal care and companionship during your final days. They facilitate conversations on advance care planning, aiming to clarify your wishes with loved ones to reduce suffering. People of any age can benefit from the reassurances and guidance offered by doulas, even if the threat of a terminal illness or other health events is not imminent.

Their assistance continues upon diagnosis of a life-limiting illness. They offer **preparation**, engage in honest discussions about what to expect, and provide education for you and your family on the process. If there are unfulfilled dreams, such as traveling to Italy, they can help recreate such experiences locally, like hosting an Italian dinner at the Port Sanilac Museum and Village with close friends. Death doulas also contribute to legacy projects, provide companionship and support both you and your loved ones during this phase.

During the final months, weeks and days, doulas may **advocate and serve as liaisons** between hospitals, hospices and funeral homes



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if desired, allowing loved ones to focus more on being present with you. They offer **vigil services, respite, life reviews, assistance with unfinished business** and may provide **calming techniques**, such as Reiki or meditation if desired. Additionally, they offer grief support and aid your loved ones during this phase.

Each death doula brings a **unique set of skills and experiences** to assist their clients during life's most challenging moments. They all offer compassionate guidance and expertise. They help create peaceful environments and advocate for your wishes. Additionally, they offer caregivers much-needed respite.



In times of profound transition, the presence of a death doula offers reassurance – a compassionate reminder that individuals and their families **do not walk this path alone**. With dignity, grace and understanding, death doulas ensure that every step of the end-of-life journey is met with **comfort and support**. To learn more about doulas or to locate one in your area contact the National End of Life Doula Alliance. 🌱

Editorial note: Find out more at inspiredbyjen.info or on Facebook @inspiredbyjen.



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A Nutritional Approach to Our Auditory Health for National Nutrition Month

When we examine any aspect of our health, we should take a whole-body approach being that the human body is an interconnected system of many complex parts. If we look at the auditory system specifically, we will find that is closely connected to our cardiovascular and nervous systems. The type of foods and beverages that we consume have a major effect on the health and well-being of our entire structure. There's so much truth to the proverbial saying, "you are what you eat". Consuming clean, quality water and raw organic fruits and vegetables that are packed full of essential vitamins and nutrients help to keep our arteries and veins clear and open to ensure blood flow to the heart, brain and other organs, thus keeping us in optimal health. A 2010 study in the *American Journal of Audiology* discovered that healthy blood flow was necessary for healthy hearing. Conversely, when we consume unhealthy foods that are highly processed and full of saturated and trans fats, refined sugars and toxic chemicals, degenerative health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure are inevitable and have been closely linked to increased hearing loss.

THE STATISTICS ARE STAGGERING:

- *Hearing loss is twice as common in individuals who have diabetes than in those without.*
- *Studies suggest those with hypertension have a greater incidence of hearing loss than those without.*
- *Those that suffer from untreated, severe hearing loss are said to be five times more likely to develop dementia.*
- *Mild to moderate untreated hearing loss leads to cognitive decline and may be an early indicator for Alzheimer's disease.*
- *Individuals with untreated hearing loss are twice as likely to be depressed than those who have normal hearing or those who wear hearing devices.*

Additionally, the foods we consume have a major effect on our nervous system and mood, which can contribute to emotional strain, depression and anxiety. Products, such as processed, refined sugars, tend to cause our blood sugar levels to move up and down like a rollercoaster, consequently causing our mood to do the same. A study conducted by the Seniors Research Group, an alliance between NCOA and Market Strategies, Inc., surveyed 2,300 hearing impaired adults age 50 and older and found that those with untreated hearing loss were more likely to report depression, anxiety and paranoia and were less likely to participate in organized social activities. Dealing with untreated hearing loss alone tends to have many negative psychological effects, thus having an even greater negative impact when coupled with the stress and mood swings caused by an unhealthy diet. This is why it's even more important to place a higher emphasis on nutrition if we suffer from hearing loss.

In the famous words of Greek physician Hippocrates, "Let food be thy medicine; thy medicine shall be food!"

The true key is prevention and the healthier we are, the less likely we are to experience debilitating ailments such heart disease, diabetes, dementia and high blood pressure which are all linked to hearing loss.



Editorial note: Beltone Skoric Hearing Aid Center has been serving the hearing-impaired community in Michigan for over 30 years. They have made it their mission to educate about the negative effects of untreated hearing loss. For more information, please visit their website www.beltoneskorichearing.com or call to schedule a free hearing exam at one of their 38 locations: (810) 356-0559.

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More Than Birds

By Rita MacDonald, ThumbPrint News Columnist

Growing up, I remember my dad taking every overtime opportunity he could get to make a little extra money. When he became sick, my mom took a job to carry the insurance. The two of them modeled a work ethic which is hardly seen today, but I'd like to believe it was inherited by my brother, sister and I. My parents made sure we never went without.

Years later when I became a single mom, Rory was two and I was pregnant with Ian, and I worried how in the world I was going to make it. I waitressed a couple of days a week until I could finish school, and then I worked from home doing medical transcription for many years before becoming an RN. I typed every extra report I could listen to. I'd get up at 4:00 a.m. and transcribe until the kids went to school. But when the reports ran out, I'd panic. There was a time when we were running out of work frequently, and I called my boss asking if I should change my hours around, her response was, "Rita, can't you go find a toilet to scrub or something?" and we laughed. I needed to quit worrying, but instead, when I wasn't taking advantage of the time to clean my own house, I found other homes to clean for a little extra cash. I was always worried about how we would make it.

A funny thing my kids and I would do when stopped at traffic lights was looking up at all the birds lined up on the telephone wires, I'd ask them, "Hey, what do you think those birds are talking about?" and we would make up funny stories. I had no idea how meaningful those moments would become in the future.

Fast forward a few years to a woman named Sharon in my Bible study sharing Matthew 6:26 with our class.

She went on to tell us that her husband had been laid off from his job but insisted that they continue to tithe while he was looking for work. A full year went by that he hadn't worked, and each month when she sat down to pay their

**THUMBPRINT NEWS
PET PHOTO
CHALLENGE**

This month, we are featuring
Chance, sent in by his
hooman, Leah D. of Holly, MI.

Our hound dog Chance loves nature hikes, berry picking, and playing with me and my daughter Lilly. When he's relaxing, Chance enjoys catching up on the latest happenings with *ThumbPrint News*!



Thank you, Leah, for sharing
Chance with us!

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bills, she was worried. There were more bills than there was income. She'd go over and over and over the math, trying to figure out how the bills were all paid – with money left over – when the income was less than the outgoing bills.

I remember Sharon laughing and saying, "Ladies, God uses a completely different calculator than we have on our phones. Don't try to figure Him out. Just be obedient and do what He tells you to do. He loves you more than the birds, and He cares for them, doesn't He?"

I never quite looked at those birds on the telephone wire the same way again, and Matthew 6:26 quickly became one of my favorite verses. I think about Sharon's story every time I stop at a red light because, let's face it – the birds are always up there just sitting, aren't they?

Looking back over the two decades of caring for my sons by myself, it's all pretty obvious, really. My calculator doesn't work like His. He loves me more than the birds, and they don't look the slightest bit worried, so why should I? He loves me more than He loves those birds up on the telephone wire! None of

us ever went without. Ever! Sometimes His provision was supportive parents and family, other times His provision was a busy mom who needed their home cleaned. Like Sharon, on paper, nothing made sense, on my iPhone's calculator, nothing added up.

But in light of Matthew 6:26, it makes perfect sense!

Trust Him to provide for you because you can. He loves you more than the birds of the air. And the next time you're stopped at a red light, look up and ask yourself, "Do those birds look worried about where their next meal will come from?" Neither should you worry. 🌱

Author's note: The pictures in this article are of sea glass art made and sold by my friend Amy – though these she made as a gift just for me as a reminder that God loves me and has always provided for me. I've currently got a couple of shelves I'm putting together to go on a wall in a special place in my home with one of the pictures, and I'm so excited to hang it! I'm also going to start giving these as gifts to single parents as a reminder of God's love for them.



LEPTOSPIROSIS INFECTION

How to Protect Your Dog

By Dr. Elizabeth Gray, *ThumbPrint News* Columnist

With winter beginning to thaw, spring is right around the corner. The standing water and wet soil, which we all know will be abundant in the coming months, can lead to disease transmission, specifically Leptospirosis. Here's what you need to know about the disease lepto and what you can do to protect your pet year-round.

Leptospirosis is a disease caused by a bacteria called *Leptospira*. There are many strains of *Leptospira* bacteria, and they can be found worldwide in soil and water. Many mammals can become infected, including dogs. Lepto is also a zoonotic disease, meaning humans can be infected as well.

While leptospirosis is more common in warm climates, it can occur anywhere, especially after heavy rainfall and flooding.

The following situations can put dogs at higher risk:

1. Exposure to slow-moving or stagnant water sources; like ponds, rivers, lakes or streams
2. Roaming on rural properties can expose your dog to potentially infected wildlife or farm animals
3. Exposure to wild animals, especially rodents, even if in the backyard
4. Contact with other dogs, such as at dog parks or boarding

The signs of leptospirosis can vary from no signs of illness to severe, life-threatening illness. For dogs that do become ill, the signs tend to be non-specific:

- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Lethargy
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Yellowing of the skin
- Dehydration
- Drinking or urinating more than usual
- Weight loss
- Stiffness or muscle pain

The disease can progress to kidney and/or liver failure. Some dogs may develop severe lung disease causing difficulty breathing. Rarely, leptospirosis can also cause bleeding disorders, which can lead to blood-tinged vomit, urine, stool or saliva.

Leptospirosis may be suspected based on the exposure history and signs shown by the dog, but many of these signs can also be seen with other diseases. Your veterinarian may recommend several tests such as blood tests, urine tests, x-rays and an ultrasound examination.

Leptospirosis is most often spread through the urine of an infected animal, especially wild rodents. Infected dogs can seem healthy but still pass *Leptospira* bacteria in their urine. The bacteria can survive for weeks to months in urine-soaked soil. Dogs typically become infected when their mouth, nose, eyes or skin wounds are exposed to urine or urine-contaminated water or soil. Infection can also be spread through urine-contaminated food or bedding, or the carcasses of infected animals.

Leptospirosis is generally treated with antibiotics and supportive care. Depending on how sick an affected dog is, they may require fluid therapy, certain medications and nutritional support. Dogs with severe disease may need intensive care measures. When leptospirosis is treated early, the chance of recovery is good. However, there is still a risk of permanent kidney or liver damage.

Fortunately, vaccines are available to protect dogs from this potentially life-threatening disease. An initial series of two vaccinations is typically recommended, followed by annual boosters. Your veterinarian can help you decide whether and when vaccination might be right for your dog, based on your and your dog's needs. 🌱



Editorial note: Dr. Gray serves the St. Clair County area with In The Pink Mobile Veterinary Services. She is based out of Goodells, Michigan. To reach out to Dr. Gray, please call (810) 985-3011 or visit her website at inthepinkpetcare.com.



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- Single-family existing-home sales prices climbed in 86% of measured metro areas – 189 of 221 – in the fourth quarter of 2023.
- The national median single-family existing-home price increased 3.5% from one year ago to \$391,700.
- The monthly mortgage payment on a typical existing single-family home with a 20% down payment was \$2,163 – up 10% year-over-year.

NAR Chief Economist Dr. Lawrence Yun noted: “Homeowners have benefited from housing wealth accumulation. However, many homebuyers have been shocked at high housing costs, with a typical monthly mortgage payment rising from \$1,000 three years ago to more than \$2,000 last year. This doubling in housing costs for recent homebuyers is not included in the official consumer price index inflation calculations and contributes to the sense of dissatisfaction about the economy.”

Yun continued, “Among the major U.S. regions, the South posted the largest share of single-family existing-home sales (45%) in the fourth quarter, with year-over-year price appreciation of 3.2%. Prices also climbed 7.3% in the Northeast, 4.7% in the Midwest and 4.2% in the West.”

NATIONAL HOUSING SURVEY

It was reported that the Fannie Mae Home Purchase Sentiment Index® (HPSI) increased 3.5 points in January to 70.7, its highest level since March 2022. The increase was reportedly due primarily to increased consumer confidence in job security and another significant jump in the share of consumers expecting mortgage rates to decrease. Consumer perceptions of homebuying conditions remained pessimistic, with only 17% of consumers indicating it’s a good time to buy a home. Overall, year-over-year, the full index was up 9.1 points.

Local Markets

Data from Realcomp II Ltd. Report® 2024 ShowingTime.

In local markets, we saw the following year-over-year changes:

Average Sales Price

Metro Detroit: **Residential** **Condo**
\$307,362 +0.1% \$260,866 +3.4%

Covers Livingston, Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties.

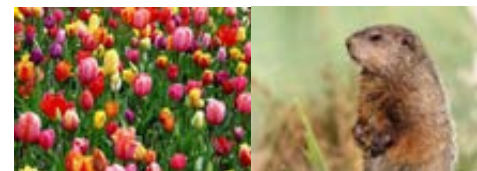
Average Sales Price

Area/County	Residential	Condo
Detroit Area ¹	\$107,085 -5.9%	\$322,728 +21.5%
Genesee	\$205,822 -0.7%	\$225,212 +5.8%
Grosse Ptes. ²	\$460,183 +4.1%	\$358,205 +9.9%
Huron	\$201,154 -0.5%	\$246,500 -3.3%
Livingston	\$425,548 +2.7%	\$301,258 +9.3%
Macomb	\$285,053 +3.2%	\$212,634 +6.0%
Oakland	\$429,388 +4.1%	\$296,604 +2.7%
St. Clair	\$275,213 +0.7%	\$197,500 +22.8%



¹ Covers Detroit, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park.

² Covers Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Shores Vlg, Grosse Pointe Woods and Lake Twp.



We’re hoping the groundhog was right and that we will have an early spring along with a robust residential real estate market. Whether you want to buy or sell, make a plan and follow your dreams! 🌱

Editor’s Note: Don and Barbara Alcorn are Realtors® serving St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland Counties, & the Grosse Pointes. Part of an international network of Realtors®, they are affiliated with Coldwell Banker Realty in Michigan, one of the nation’s largest and most successful real estate brokerages. You can reach them at 810.278.6655. donald.alcorn@cbrealty.com barbara.alcorn@cbrealty.com



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COOKIE JAR MEMORIES



By Theresa Nielsen, *ThumbPrint News* Columnist

When I was a kid growing up, any container with a lid served as a cookie jar. My mom always said it was because cookies never stayed in it for very long, so anything would work. There were lots of kids in my family, so, that made sense to me. Sometimes, when we got home from school, we would find out mom had baked cookies. Then she would always say, "do your homework first."



Gingerbread Cookie Jar from Kohl's, approx. 2010

But sometimes, I couldn't wait, I would quietly open the lid only turn to find out she was standing right behind me. "Darn," I would mutter to myself as I hurried to finish my math problems.

My siblings would also be sitting at the table doing their homework. Soon enough my cookie cravings disappeared, along with my desire to hurry and get done. Then it was time for dinner and my turn to help mom cook. No cookies that day, but there would always be another day and another cookie.



Sea Shell Cookie Jar from Kohl's, approx. 2010

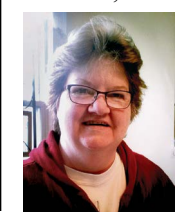
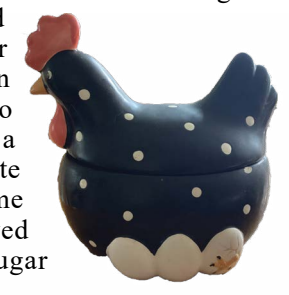
Recently, I asked around to several of my friends whether or not they have a cookie jar. I was surprised to learn that many of them don't. I was told since there are so many kinds of containers these days with tight fitting lids that there isn't really a need for a cookie jar to take up space on the counter. I agreed that makes sense, my small kitchen doesn't have much counter space either, but the designated cookie jars are just so fun.



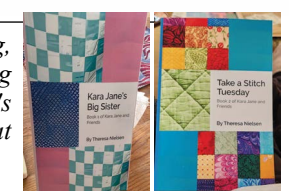
1940s Shawnee Owl Cookie Jar

Jars in all shapes and sizes are readily available at antique shops, estate sales and garage sales too. Over the years, I've picked up a few and they serve as décor on an extra shelf in my kitchen wall – instead of precious counter space. One of the cookie jars is always filled with cookies specifically for my dogs. They know the sound and always come sniffing when I lift the lid on their jar on those days when they just seem to need a treat. And I of course fill my pocket with some dog cookies when we go out for our walks. However, among the jars on the shelf, my favorite is the black chicken with white polka dots...it serves as the perfect hiding place for the cookies I don't want to share with my husband.

Cookie jars have been around for a long time, since the late 1700s in England. They were usually glass jars with lids. They didn't become popular in the United States until the time of the great depression in the '20s. In later research, I discovered there is adoration for ceramic cookie jars, that has never really disappeared. Collecting cookie jars can be a fun hobby, if you have space for them – but really, who doesn't have at least one empty wall that could use a cookie jar shelf? Character cookie jars seem to be quite popular these days. Perhaps I'll pick one up at some point...but I don't think anything can replace my beloved chicken, which is currently hiding my favorite sugar cookies...just don't tell my husband.



Editorial note: To read more of Theresa's writing, you can find her books about growing up sewing in a small town on Amazon and Barnes & Nobel's website. To reach Theresa, you can email her at catbirdinn@sbcglobal.net.



OKAWANA

Continued from Page 1

multiple orthoscopic surgeries and wore over fifty plastic casts and braces.

She had decided during her long years of hospital convalescence that if she would ever become well, she would open a hospital and a school for disabled children. Blanche never gave up, and eventually, she could walk, run and write rapidly with the hand that had been previously paralyzed. She had only a slight paralysis on her right side, brought about by severe lateral curvature of her spine.

Winston Churchill, the great English statesman and politician, once wrote, “The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” Blanche was forever the optimist. Still a young lady at the age of 24, she left her home in Milford, Michigan, and went to Detroit to make the cripple hospital school a reality.

She stated that she “had six dollars when I reached the city, but I had a good wardrobe of new clothes and knew I could go back if I had to, but I did not expect or intend to return.” Just two years later, she founded the Van Leuven Browne Hospital School in Detroit. The original facility consisted of five rooms with borrowed furniture and only one child. That six dollars had long since disappeared. The Van Leuven Browne Hospital School would care for nearly 200 children



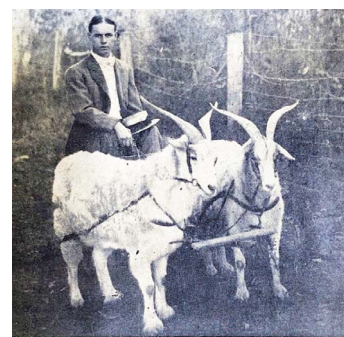
Miss Blanche Van Leuven Browne and her youngest adopted daughter

over nine years. Along the way, Blanche adopted eleven children, all wholly dependent on Blanche for their care and support. This Van Leuven Browne Hospital School and Blanche Van Leuven Browne herself are remarkable stories. I will compose detailed writings on these topics to hopefully be featured sometime in the future.

Edna O’Neil was a nurse at the Van Leuven Browne Hospital School, and Earl Casey was a patient and then a teacher. Their summer visits with their patients to the Van

Leuven cripple camp at Port Huron’s Lakeside Beach would provide the fuel for the founding of their own cripple camp.

A few years went by and finally the dream of O’Neil and Casey was able to become a reality. Once they had the spot and support, nearly everything was set – except Edna was still looking for a suitable name for the new camp on the shores of beautiful Lake Huron. Joe Sullivan, once a patient at the Van Leuven facility had a suggestion: “Okawana”. He was originally from



Joe Sullivan, November 1914



Joe Sullivan, circa 1930

Arkansas and the name originated in the Ozark Mountains, where he had heard it used by Indians native to that region. Though I have attempted to find a meaning for the word Okawana, I have been met with little success. It seems to me that the name fits this place and this time perfectly. Joe’s suggestion and Edna’s decision on the name Okawana were just the beginning of many good decisions Edna would make over her lifetime.

Sullivan, who at the age of four lost the use of his left arm and both legs due to paralysis, lived an exceptional life. He managed his movements in his wheelchair or traveled via his famous billy-goat team. He won fame as the author of a book called *The Unheard Cry*, which dealt with the welfare and education of disabled children. He would also go on to become the youngest mayor in the world at that time. He was elected Mayor of Imboden, Arkansas, on April 12, 1912. He became the editor of a local newspaper and worked as a newspaper correspondent.

My first Camp Okawana story featured a boy who had spent five to six years of his young life in hospitals, suffering from tuberculosis. The lad was of North American Indian ancestry. As a small boy, he traveled with his parents, whose Indian



Miss Edna O’Neil and Earl Casey at Lakeside Cripple Camp, circa 1917



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan officially declared the month of March as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness month. The proclamation called for people to provide understanding, encouragement and opportunities to help persons with disabilities to lead productive and fulfilling lives. This class of disabilities can refer to impairments in learning and behavior, such as autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and impairments in physical and/or intellectual functioning such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida and Down syndrome.

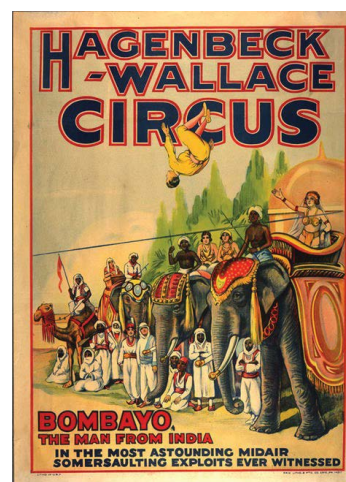
Each individual, regardless of their abilities, has the right to be respected, embraced and provided with opportunities to thrive. Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month serves as a profound reminder of these principles, emphasizing the value, rights and aspirations of those with developmental disabilities.

- **1990:** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signed into law, prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in public life
- **2004:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act reauthorized, ensuring that all children with disabilities have access to a “free appropriate public education”
- **2008:** ADA amended, making it easier for an individual seeking protection to establish that they have a disability
- **2014:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act signed into law, helping individuals with disabilities gain access to employment, training and support services

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

- **Support Organizations:** Contribute to, or volunteer with, organizations dedicated to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities
- **Promote Inclusivity:** Encourage schools, workplaces and community centers to adopt inclusive practices and programs
- **Listen & Learn:** Engage with individuals with developmental disabilities, listening to their experiences and perspectives and learn from them

Info in this article comes from stelar.edc.org.



troupe made a living appearing at circuses and as part of the old Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. When the family and their Indian troupe were to travel to Europe with the Hagenbeck Wallace Circus, their child, Steve Shomin, came down with tuberculosis. Steve was left behind where he would begin a new life in and out of hospitals.

Soon after, Steve’s parents separated and he was made a ward of the state and placed in an orphanage in Coldwater, Michigan. When the Coldwater orphanage closed, still suffering from tuberculosis, Steve was sent to Camp Okawana for some healthy Lake Huron air. A young nurse, Edna O’Neil, took over his care there. Steve made a deep impression on Edna with his quiet courage and steadfast determination. Edna eventually adopted

young Steve and instilled in him many positive life choices, such as the value of an education and the benefits of learning.

To me, Celeste wrote, “I was proud of my adopted brother, Steve Shomin. He was a quiet, humble person. My mother didn’t change his name because she did not want to give a North American Indian an Irish name.” Edna encouraged him to study his Indian ancestry, leading to Steve being active in several Indian organizations. He helped organize the Petoskey tribe and was elected chairman of Unit 10 of the Ottawa tribe. He would honor his Indian name, “Chief Sky Eagle”, by teaching Brighton area school children about Indian cultures, such as sign language, trapping, Native American games and the story of his life, depicted in Indian drawings.

He assisted in securing educational grants for Michigan Native Americans and helped win a \$10 million lawsuit by the Chippewa and Ottawa See *OKAWANA* Page 20



Steve, with his Native American headdress

More Than Just a Bike!



By David Gillis

ThumbPrint News Columnist

"Hey look out!"

"I can't stop!"

"Ouch!"

These are all words I found myself using as a young boy. The exclamations are all related to my experiences with my first two-wheel bicycle. Why I recall them at an advanced age, I am not certain. It must be the excitement coupled with the hazards of this important time in my life.

Before the joys and pain of this experience, there was a period at eight years of age when I felt sorry for myself. It seemed that everyone in the entire world had a bicycle except me. That, of course, was not the truth, but it was the world I lived in. Certainly, most of my friends in the neighborhood had one, but not me.

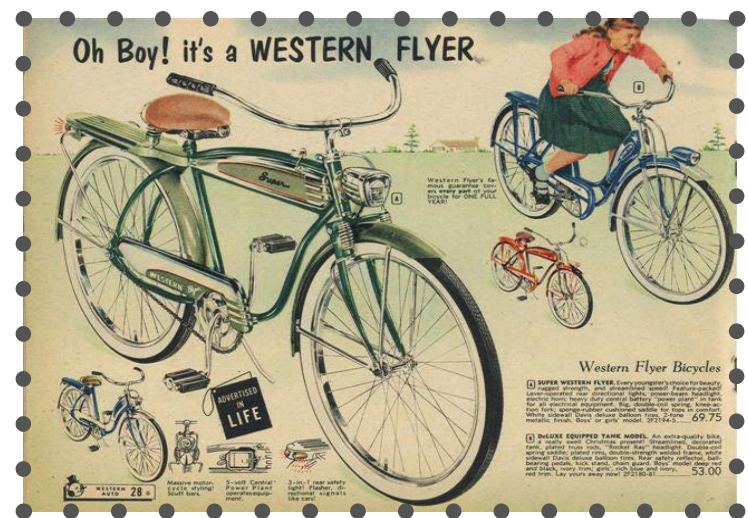
Then one day it happened. As I would learn later in life, at the urging of my mother, my father cautiously gave up his desire to protect me from injuries all children experience and came home with a bicycle in the trunk of his car. It was a used blue bicycle he had purchased, and I knew it was for me. My sisters were all younger

so who else could it possibly be for? The fact that it was not new and a girl's model didn't bother me too much. I learned later that my dad was still hanging on to some protectiveness and was concerned about me being able to throw my leg over the crossbar and thought this would be a good first bike. At this point in my excitement, I didn't much care about what it looked like. I now had a bicycle of my own. My world was complete, so I thought.

My new concern now was that I didn't know how to ride a bicycle but thought that it couldn't be that difficult. That's when the words I used to begin this tale were used often for several days.

In the early 1950s, I don't believe training wheels were in existence or, knowing my dad, I would have had them. How embarrassing would that have been?

The mentorship I received, provided by my father, was, at best, very limited. He demonstrated how to mount the bicycle, how to pedal it, and how to apply the brakes so I could stop. He did that but once, then stepped away to watch as I applied the skills he had just provided me with. That's when I began using the shouts



of warning and pain. I remember the anxiety in my father's face as he watched me, but he didn't interfere. Learning by doing was the rule of the day.

I can recall how my balance was not very good and that remembering how to apply the brakes was difficult. Often, in the beginning, I would simply slow down and run the bike into something so I could stop. It became less traumatic, less painful and less embarrassing as I gained experience.

There were rules I had to follow until I gained experience. They included not riding in the streets or on the sidewalks of the neighborhood. That substantially limited me to my yard for a time. Fortunately, we had a large yard and a long dirt and gravel driveway. So, each morning I was up practicing my newly gained skill of bicycling.

As time passed and my parents were convinced that I would not be in danger or, for that matter, not be a danger to someone else, I was permitted to venture out of the yard and into the quiet neighborhood streets. Their watchful eyes coupled with my advancing expertise were enough for them to decide it was time I could have a larger boys' bicycle. Dad's arrival on a Saturday morning with another bicycle in the trunk of his car

was a dream come true. As he pulled the beautiful red and chrome bike into view, I became excited. It was a Western Flyer model he had purchased from the local Western Auto Store. It was larger than my first bike, had white-wall tires, dual headlights, reflective pedals and streamers coming from the handlebar grips. I was in bikers' heaven and couldn't wait to show the entire neighborhood my new mode of transportation. I devoted the rest of that day and the weekend to doing just that.

So, what prompted my thoughts about my first bicycle and the importance it was in my life? Well, I have noticed that there are fewer young people on the streets with bicycles and, when I do see them, many are with newer battery-powered bikes. Rarely do I see the bike racks that were often found in commercial areas and certainly at schools. Most of the bicycle riding I see is by adults in proper riding gear and helmets, mostly on multi-speed bikes.

The world has changed, as have the younger people who are entering into life's experiences. I guess the dreams and anticipated adventures of a first bicycle are not that important any longer. I think that's sad, but that is just an old man's memories recalling the joys of past experiences. 🇺🇸

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Navajo proverb

Manuelito, Navajo War Leader
1818 - 1893

Asdzáa Tł'ógí, ("Weaver Woman")
Manuelito's wife

One of the most famous of the Navajo (Diné) people was Manuelito, the last of the Navajo Chiefs. He was known also as *Hastiin Ch'il Haajini* "Man of the Black Plants Place" and *Hashkeh Naabaah* "Angry Warrior". (1818-1893). He led his nation against the oppression of the United States and for several years he and his warriors resisted federal efforts to be forcibly removed to Bosque Redondo, New Mexico, via the ethnic cleansing of the Long Walk in 1864. One of his famous quotes is "My grandchildren, education is a ladder. Tell our people to take it."

CREATIVITY ON DISPLAY

Submitted By **Lou Belli**, Secretary of Metro Carvers of Michigan

Creativity and camaraderie go hand in hand with the members of Metro Carvers of Michigan (MCM). Laughter and the chip-chip sound of busy hands with fine tools permeate the room at carving sessions every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9:00 a.m. until noon at the Washington Township Senior Center.

Woodcarving is more than simply whittling. It is an art form. Among many styles, the most common are chip carving, relief carving and character carving, as well as wood burning. The mission of MCM, which has several groups throughout the Metro area, is to promote wood carving or shaping; and share knowledge in the artistic use of wood – through meetings, shows, competitions, discussions, workshops and other opportunities.

The Washington Township group began in the early 1980s and Pat Murphy was one of the first to join. A retired tool maker from Chrysler Corp., Murphy likes to work with his hands. Considered a master carver, mentor, teacher and friend, he is still a member after more than 40 years. Icicles carved from basswood are his latest favorite project, made with the chip carving technique. Each icicle is topped with an iconic figure – like a Tigers baseball, a wreath or nutcracker for the holidays, a church, lighthouse or penguin, all hand-carved.

A pleasant soft-spoken man, Murphy plans to demonstrate relief carving at the annual show in March. For relief carving a scene is cut into a flat piece of wood. Over the years Murphy has done many, including maritime and farm scenes. Murphy said, “I like all types of carving. I am not particular.” His wife, Arlene, is also a member of MCM. She loves woodburning and teaches it as well.

Another female carver, Jean Martin, is a former teacher at Bemis Junior High School in Utica. When contemplating retirement, she knew she would need a hobby. Before her last year of teaching, she came to the Washington Senior Center to learn to carve. “In the summer of 2014, I took a class and got hooked,” Martin said. “It is a marvelous group. They

are wonderful people.”

Her first project was an eagle cane head. “I did a little of everything until I found my niche – minis. They are a challenge. The smallest thing I ever carved was a picnic table and a wishing well in a bottle,” Martin proudly declared.

Member Don Shook carves houses out of bark. “I like cottonwood,” Shook said. “I like the color and it is a softer wood.” That and the fact that he can get lots of wood for free from his son who lives on a large property in Traverse City, fuels his hobby.

He takes inspiration from the wood itself. “Put the wood to your ear and it talks to you,” Shook explained. “I came to carving 12 or 13 years ago to do relief carving, and I have yet to do relief carving. I sat next to a guy who did bark carving and that is what I got into.” That is his niche.

“I had always wanted to carve. It was not until I retired that I got a chance to get into it,” he added. Shook taught drafting at Stevenson High School in Utica and auto body design at Macomb Community College. Now, Shook is serving as president of MCM in Washington Township.

Shook was at the helm during many changes in the club due to the pandemic. COVID-19 posed difficult challenges. The club’s storage facility was closed during that time, cutting access to supplies. In addition, the building where the annual show had been held for years was also closed and later sold. MCM scrambled to find a new venue. Last March, it held its annual show at the Packard Proving Grounds and everyone got excited about the new space. It invigorated the group. “We are doing a better job of promoting our club. We have a great group of friendly people doing lots of different types of carving, including chip carving and character carving. We have experts that can teach and help you out – whatever you want to learn.”

Don Faulkner is one of the newest members. Recently retired after 35 years with Fanuc Robotics, Faulkner likes to work with basswood. Over the holidays he started character carving. He completed three snowmen and is now carving an Irishman



with great painted detail. “This is a great group,” Faulkner said. “There is great talk. Sometimes I do not get a lot done.”

One important project keeps all the members busy, called “Lean on Me”. The carvers create wooden canes that are topped with eagle heads. Each is created for a Michigan veteran from any branch of the military, who has served our country during times of conflict. The cane is individualized with the veteran’s name, military branch and service location. It also details all the medals the vet earned. Thus far, more than 5,000 canes have been distributed in Michigan.

The carvers are currently working on fine pieces for the club’s upcoming show, 42nd Artistic Creations in Wood, to be held March 23-24 at the Packard Proving Grounds in Shelby Township. The annual show features carvings for sale, competitions and demonstrations, as well as raffles and door prizes.

For more information about Metro Carvers of Michigan, visit metrocarvers.com. For additional information about the upcoming show in March, contact Sharon Hill at sharon0229@att.net or (586) 557-3712.

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Vocabulary Voyage

Compiled By Laura Irwin, ThumbPrint News Staff

“The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live.” – Mortimer Adler
American philosopher, educator, encyclopedist and author. (1902–2001)

hoi polloi hoi pol·loi | ,hòi-pə-'lòi
A noun meaning: 1 : the many : MASSES : the general populace : ordinary people. 2 : people of distinction, wealth or elevated social status: ELITE. First known use: (sense 1): 1830s, (sense 2 - a direct contradiction of the original meaning and rarely used): 1950s; from Greek, the many. Ex: (sense 1) *In ancient China, only the Emperor could wear the symbol of a dragon with five toes; four- or three-toed varieties were acceptable for hoi polloi.* Sentence credit: yourdictionary.com/lovetoknowmedia

idem i·dem | 'ī-dem
An adverb or pronoun meaning: something previously mentioned : the same authority : used in citations to indicate an author or work in an immediately preceding reference. It is commonly abbreviated to id. in legal or academic writing. First known use: before the 12th century from Latin, meaning same. Ex: *The herbs are distilled using a process called “semper idem” (or always the same).* Sentence credit: [Wikipedia https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).

métier mé·tier | 'me-tyā
A noun meaning: 1 : vocation or trade. 2 : an area of activity in which one excels : FORTE. First known use: 1792 (sense 1) from Old French *mistier*, *mestier* “divine service, function, craft, profession.” Ex: *The majority of the world population would not claim public speaking as their métier.*

A good vocabulary is a powerful tool, making communication simpler. Readers can contribute to our learning journey by submitting underused, misused or uncommon words they’ve discovered to thumbprintnews@comcast.net. Your name will be credited as the contributor.

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BONUS SPECIFIC PESTERING PROBLEMS Stingers

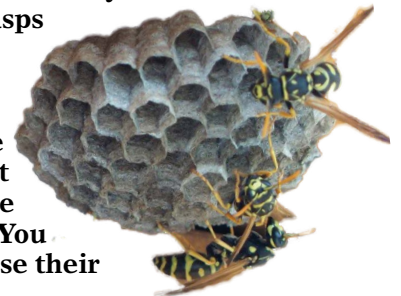


Informational Tips and Advice on Common Household Pests from Nicole Szymczak, President, ABC Home & Commercial Services

Stinging insects are always a problem this time of year! In Michigan there are several species of stinging insects, including wasps, yellow jackets, bald faced hornets, bumble bees, carpenter bees and more! Not only can these winged pests cause intense pain, they can also pose serious health issues to people that are allergic. Allergic

reactions can vary in severity, from slight swelling to life-threatening, where an epinephrine pen is needed if stung. This can make the warm summer months absolutely frightening and unbearable for some. Everyone should be able to go out and enjoy their own backyard without the worry of encountering these scary stingers.

One of the most common wasps you should be aware of this time of year is the European paper wasp. It will build nests that have a honeycomb pattern with individual chambers that are easy to spot from a distance. European paper wasps are quite large at 3/4 inch long and are black with yellow stripes with yellowish-orange antennae. They can be commonly mistaken for yellow jackets, which have black antennae. It is important to know that both of these insects can be very aggressive and a sting from them is extremely painful. You should also keep in mind that they do not lose their stinger and can sting repeatedly.



The European paper wasp is a cavity/void filler and they prefer to build their nests in areas sheltered from the wind, rain and other harsh weather elements. They will build their nests under eaves of homes, behind shutters and under deck railings. Typically, they will not reuse old nests, but prefer to start fresh in newly constructed nests each spring. When building these new homes, they may use materials from their old nests.

Wasps are attracted to untreated wood surfaces, such as decks, furniture and play structures. They will strip the wood from the surface and use it to make their nests. One way to discourage this behavior is to seal, paint or stain these surfaces; they are less likely to go after sealed wood. Wasps are also attracted to nectar from flowers and sugar from fruit trees. Since most people do not want to rip out all their flowers and remove their ornamental fruit trees, the attraction of wasps and other stinging insects is just an inconvenient side effect.

Though the wasp usually builds its nest on the exterior of your home, from time to time you may see them inside. They may wander inside in search of food, protection or by accident. Nests are usually only built inside for overwintering purposes. Once the weather turns cold, the fertile queens will seek out warmth and protection to survive the harsh winter ahead. They may build in an attic or a wall void, emerging the following spring to once again start a colony and continue to populate.

ABC Home & Commercial Services has more than 20 years experience in the pest control field. Our technicians can identify your stinging insect onsite and treat accordingly in a safe and professional manner. Like most insects, wasps are very persistent and will do whatever it takes to protect their homes, just as you or I would. Do not put yourself in danger; call the professionals at ABC Home & Commercial Services now to set up an appointment at (810) 794-5678. The sooner you begin treatment, the sooner you'll be outside enjoying the short Michigan summer without fear of being stung. 🐝

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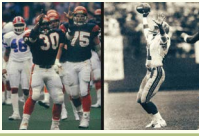
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*some restrictions apply



March

What Happened on This Day in History?

3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p>On this day in 1913, the Women's Suffrage Parade through Washington, DC, takes place with over 8,000 women marching for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to vote.</p>	<p>On this day in 1954, actress Catherine O'Hara is born in Toronto, Canada.</p> 	<p>On this day in 1853, Steinway & Son, one of the most well-known piano manufacturers, is founded in NYC.</p>  <p style="font-size: 10px; text-align: center;">STEINWAY & SONS</p>	<p>On this day in 1808, the first college orchestra in the U.S. is founded, the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra.</p>	<p>On this day in 1908, Cincinnati Mayor Mark Breith stands before city council and announces that, "women are not physically fit to operate automobiles."</p>	<p>On this day in 1945, the first International Women's Day is observed.</p> 	<p>On this day in 1497, Nicolaus Copernicus' first recorded astronomical observation happens.</p>
<p>10 On this day in 1913, American abolitionist and social activist Harriet Tubman dies at 91.</p> 	<p>11 On this day in 1959, Lorraine Hansberry's <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> opens at the Barrymore Theater in NYC. It is the first play by a Black woman to premiere on Broadway.</p>	<p>12 On this day in 1994, for the first time the Church of England ordains 32 women priests.</p> 	<p>13 On this day in 1930, Clyde Tombaugh announces his discovery of Pluto at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.</p>	<p>14 On this day in 2017, the world's oldest golf club, Muirfield in Scotland, votes to admit women as members for the first time in 273 years.</p>	<p>15 On this day in 2021, Deb Haaland is confirmed as U.S. Secretary of the Interior by the Senate. She is the first Indigenous person to lead a cabinet agency.</p>	<p>16 On this day in 1974, the first performance takes place at the Grand Ole Opry House at Opryland in Nashville.</p>
<p>17 On this day in 1968, the Bee Gees make their American TV debut on <i>The Ed Sullivan Show</i>.</p> 	<p>18 On this day in 1970, the American rapper, songwriter, singer, actress and producer Dana Elaine Owens, better known by her stage name Queen Latifah, is born in Newark, New Jersey.</p>	<p>19 On this day in 1279, a Mongolian victory at the naval Battle of Yamen ends the Song Dynasty in China.</p>	<p>20 On this day in 1800, Alessandro Volta reports his discovery of the electric battery in a letter to the president of the Royal Society of London.</p>	<p>21 On this day in 1984, NFL owners pass the infamous anti-celebrating rule.</p> 	<p>22 On this day in 1894, the first championship series for Lord Stanley's Cup is played in Montreal, Canada.</p>	<p>23 On this day in 1857, author of the famous cookbook <i>The Boston Cooking-School Cookbook</i>, Fannie Farmer, is born today in Boston.</p>
<p>24 On this day in 1932, the first radio broadcast from a moving train takes place.</p> <p>31 On this day in 1888, the National Council of Women of the U.S. is founded.</p>	<p>25 On this day in 1958, Sugar Ray Robinson is the first boxing champ to win a divisional world championship five times.</p>	<p>26 On this day in 2015, Richard III of England (1452–1485) is reburied at Leicester Cathedral in England, after being discovered under a carpark in Leicester in 2012.</p>	<p>27 On this day in 1977, 583 die in aviation's worst ever disaster when two Boeing 747s collide at Tenerife airport in Spain.</p>	<p>28 On this day in 1971, the last episode of <i>The Ed Sullivan Show</i> airs on CBS.</p> 	<p>29 On this day in 1989, Soviet hockey players are legally permitted to play for the NHL for the first time.</p>	<p>30 On this day in 1984, Robert Cunningham, a New York police detective, offers his waitress Phyllis Penzo, half the winnings of his \$1 lottery ticket as his tip. The following day they win and split \$6 million.</p>

GRAPHICS BY PINKSUPERSTAR VIA FREEMIX.COM

Editorial note: This calendar's purpose is to provide entertainment for our readers and to mention lesser-known historical events. We are aware that there also may be well-known events that have happened on these days, and not listing them does not indicate that we are unaware of their importance.



THIS MONTH'S RECIPE
ISLAND BLISS
TRUFFLES
IS A FAVORITE IN
NAURU

By **Laura Irwin**, *ThumbPrint News Staff*

This month we will travel 25 miles south of the equator to Nauru, a tiny island country northeast of Australia within the continental boundaries of Oceania.

It is the world's smallest island nation spanning only 8.1 square miles, and is the world's third smallest nation after Vatican City and Monaco. Its population of 12,500 (as of 2021) did not experience a single COVID-19 case during the pandemic.

Once called "Pleasant Island" before it was exploited by guano phosphate (calcified seabird poop) mining, it is now now referred to as the "Saddest Country Ever". In the 1960s, it became the wealthiest state in the world due to the transitory wealth of guano, but internal strife, corruption and bad decisions led to near bankruptcy and it is now mostly associated with a poorly funded refugee camp for people seeking asylum into Australia.

There are less than 200 tourists annually who are interested in seeing what the area has to offer, which on an island this small is not much. Stack together a year-round average humidity of 80%, poor infrastructure, 1-star hotels, piles of litter and debris and spotty WiFi, and you will conclude it's not a luxury tourist destination. It is, however, home to some interesting treasure troves.

Beautiful coral reefs surround the island which offers snorkelers a chance to view sea life species not found elsewhere. Recreational deep-sea fishing with a local charter might be an option or perhaps surfing, if you don't mind unpredictable currents. You can find a few scattered sites with WWII relics, as well as a small military museum. There are a few shallow beaches dotting the coast although most are unsuitable for swimming, some still littered with the rusty remnants of the decades gone mining industry.

Anibare Bay coral reef formations, unaltered photo by Living On A Blue Planet - Hadi Zaher, creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/



Remains of phosphate mining, unaltered Wikipedia photo Lorrie Graham, creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/



Coconut crabs are a species of giant hermit crab. Their flavor is described as a cross between lobster and snow crab with a creamier, less salty meat. These crabs can reach up to 3 feet and weigh up to eight pounds.

Being a tropical island nation it is only natural that seafood is a prominent dietary source, as well as foods made from coconuts or bananas. Only 10% of land is usable for farming due to the years of strip mining, so most food staples are imported.

Island favorites include coconut fish (tuna in coconut milk), coconut crab, coconut-crusting fish, shrimp and cauliflower, pandanus fruit and tea, taro, breadfruit, rice, breaded chicken, coconut bread, Chinese cuisine and copious amounts of fried foods.

We, however, are going to try one of their dessert specialties, Island Bliss Truffles which combine white chocolate and, you guessed it, coconut.

Author's note: Quick, easy and delicious. I used buttermilk powder in place of the coconut milk powder as I already had it on hand. This recipe makes a very small batch. I made a double batch which yielded 10 truffles. You could easily substitute with semi-sweet or dark chocolate.



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THUMBPRINT NEWS CONTEST

Each month, *ThumbPrint News* prints a photo of an object, person or a place for our readers to identify. If you think you know the answer, go to our website www.thumbprintnews.com and enter your answer. Of all persons submitting the correct answer by the 12th of the month, one person will be randomly selected to be entered into a drawing for a wonderful surprise gift at the end of the year! On December 13, 2024 one winner will be drawn out of all the monthly winners and that lucky person will be notified via email, and we'll share the winner's name in our January 2025 issue.

For our February 2024 contest, we asked our readers to identify what is pictured to the right. Almost everyone knew! Of the many correct entries, Matthew Jones of Port Huron, Michigan, was randomly chosen as the February winner. Matthew correctly identified this to be the inside of an acoustic guitar.



According to Britannica.com, plucked-stringed instruments probably originated in Spain early in the 16th century. The early guitar was narrower and deeper than our modern day guitars.

The person who is believed to have created the first American made, steel-stringed acoustic guitar was German immigrant, Christian Frederick Martin in 1833. Prior to steel strings, catgut strings created from sheep intestines were used.

The oldest guitar still in existence was crafted by Portuguese builder, Belchior Diaz more than 400 years ago (circa 1590). It is located at the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona.

photo credit: Musical Instrument Museum



For our March 2024 contest, reader **Dave Loersch** would like to challenge contestants to identify what the blurred structure to the right advertises and where in Michigan it can be found. If you think you know, visit our website, www.thumbprintnews.com, to answer. **GOOD LUCK!**

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup desiccated coconut
- 1 Tbsp coconut milk powder
- 1 oz of white chocolate
- ½ oz of coconut sugar
- 2 tsp boiling water



DIRECTIONS

1. Add the ingredients (keeping a little desiccated coconut aside for rolling the balls in at the end) into a food processor and mix and scrape until the mixture is uniform. NOTE: chocolate should not be melted.
2. Shape mixture into small balls, about 1", and roll in desiccated coconut. One batch makes five to six 1" truffles.
3. Let set for two hours in the fridge before consuming. Best to consume within one week.



PESTERING PROBLEMS Ant Rant

Informational Tips and Advice on Common Household Pests from Nicole Szymczak, President, ABC Home & Commercial Services



With warmer weather and spring rains almost upon us, ants of all shapes and sizes begin to surface. Like clockwork each year, they start to make their appearance inside our homes, looking for a nice and comfy place to set up shop. Ants are usually attracted to moist or decaying matter and often build nests inside wall voids or areas containing already damaged wood. Ants, big or small, will feed on just about anything inside and outside of the home. Some examples would be sweets, meats, pet food, grease, various plants, the honeydew produced by insects and even other insects. Once ants have made their way into a structure, it can be very difficult to eliminate them.

The big black carpenter ant is one of the most common and noticeable ants. Black carpenter ants range in size from 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch long, making them one of the biggest ants in the United States. Due to this range in size, these ants have the unique characteristic of being polymorphic, meaning they can be any size at any stage of life. You might spot a huge black ant and a small black ant together that are both adult carpenter ants.

Seeing an ant crawl across your kitchen counter or floor is usually an indication that you have an ant infestation. Another sign of invasion is small piles of wood inside your home. Carpenter ants can chew through wood, but unlike termites, they do not digest it. They will chew it up and spit it out, forming these small piles. Wood is not the only thing carpenter ants will bite; if feeling threatened, they may bite people and pets to protect their colony. Their bite can be powerful enough to break the skin and can be very painful. Ants are willing to travel 300 feet or more from their nest to forage for food.

Though it is very tempting to step on ants when you see them, this is not a wise decision. Well-established carpenter ant colonies can have more than 3,000 workers. A sign of a well-established colony is seeing winged ants, known as swarmers. These swarmers are produced and create new colonies of their own when the colony they are currently in is exceeding capacity. So, why shouldn't you squish those ants infiltrating your home? Because the queen of the colony knows exactly how many workers she has

sent out every day. If the queen notices that her ants are dying off in large numbers and not returning to the colony, she will begin to reproduce at a quicker rate, causing the colony to grow even larger.

With big or little ants, a slow kill is recommended. Not alerting the queen that anything out of the ordinary is happening is the key to success. ABC Bees, a division of ABC Home & Commercial Services, uses a product that the worker ants will take back to the nest. While this is a slow process, it is the most effective. The queen will not notice her workers dying off at an unusual rate away from the nest; they'll be returning to her for their next task with the bait stealthily returning with them. Eventually, the queen will ingest the poison and die. However, ants are extremely persistent, so it may take several treatments to gain control and eliminate the colony.

ABC Bees also offers an exterior, preventative ant treatment. This liquid treatment will create a barrier and reduce the number of ants coming into your home from the outside. Do not hesitate to seek professional help with interior or exterior ant problems. Self-treating and using over-the-counter products often cause the infestation to worsen. Call (810) 794-5678 now to let one of our friendly, certified, experienced technicians help you tackle your ant problems. 🐜



The ants are hungry after the long, cold winter and the soggy spring will have them scurrying into your home searching for food and dry ground.

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Is the Politics of Reason Out of Season?

From political pundits to amateur redundants these characters state their perceptions, positions, ideas and omissions early in the political season. Our elected officials grab the initial headlines, which become the said lines for making political hay.

So many perceptions, positions, ideas and omissions are stated that political reality is blurred into a marred, charred mass of carnal confusion of misplaced intent and motivation misspent.

In this most spring-like of seasons, the ideas to be debated are spawned.

The issues include how to combat terrorism, pro- or anti-war sentiments, education for all, immigration, First Amendment rights (protection), capital punishment, economic policy making, how to stop lobbyists who are out for the taking and into the peddling, legislators,

courts and executives meddling with individual rights – we, the people, are having so many sleepless nights.

In the political summer, the fires of debate conflagrate where some may take offense to the lack of common sense and where the average 'voting Joe' may be kept from the big show.

The politicians say, most assuredly, to the common man – without your input, we lack a reason for the overall master plan to succeed.

Our astute thought should be expressed lest we allow the flames of freedom to be repressed.

So, we speak, without being meek, set higher standards for this debate – to help prevent the taking of more individual freedoms that are now surely at stake.

Each idea is examined, and each new perception, position and omission is reviewed with all

accompanying conditions for public consumption (except the backroom politics whose deal-making eliminated all reasonable foes).

Summer reasoning turns to fall with its many-hued seasonings; the foliage casts rainbows of hope on the political landscape.

The votes are cast – the ideas, perceptions, positions and omissions become cast in stone or are turned away like an unfinished portrait set in clay.

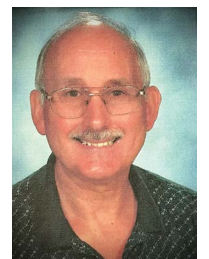
Have the people and their representatives spoken? Between the hard sell and soft soap lies a muddle of truth and a kernel of hope.

In the political winter season, the landscape turns to a barren, frozen wasteland of ice and snow where ideas, perceptions, positions and omissions lie dormant until

the next season emerges to begin the process anew.

If the democratic process is to flourish from political season to political season, one would do well to embrace ideals, perceptions and positions of our forefathers and standard bearers throughout the ages, and to eliminate the omissions of our present conditions which seem to imply – let the status quo, not on your conscience to rely.

Rise up – challenge the system, within reason; find a political cause for all your seasons, don't let the winter of discontent lead to a democracy less intent on preserving its cherished ideals, democratic perceptions and constitutionally ingrained positions. 🐜



By Bob Jones, ThumbPrint News Columnist

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General

SAVE THE DATE: ST. AUGUSTINE'S RUMMAGE SALE is April 4, 5 & 6 at their Parish Hall at 68035 Main Street in Richmond. The sale will be from 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and 8:00 a.m. - noon on Saturday. Sponsored by the St. Augustine Altar Sodality. For more info, contact Darlene at (586) 206-0822.

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If you have an event in April that you would like listed in the April issue of *ThumbPrint News*, email it to ThumbPrintNews@comcast.net by March 12, 2024. There is no charge for the listing. Before traveling beyond your hometown to attend any of these events, please call ahead for any changes in dates or times or for any cancellations.

GENESEE

BURTON

5 | Flint Genealogical Society Meeting Burton Senior Center, 3410 S. Grand Traverse, 7:00 p.m. Join us for "Becoming American, Research with Naturalization Records" presented by Kris Rzepczynski from the State Library in Lansing. There is no charge and all who are interested in genealogy are welcome! If you have any questions, we have knowledgeable people available to help you. For more info visit flintgenealogy.org.

LAPEER

IMLAY CITY

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 | Eagles #4082 Friday Fish Fry Eagles Hall, 170 S. Almont Ave., 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Join us each week for a dinner of cod, a baked potato, coleslaw, a roll and dessert. \$13/person, carry out available. For more info call (810) 724-1954.

6, 13, 20 & 27 | Eagles #4082 Cornhole Tournament & Ace of Spades Raffle Eagles Hall, 170 S. Almont Ave., sign-up from 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Bag Toss starts at 7:00 p.m., and raffle drawing at 8:00 p.m. Join us as we continue this 10-week tournament for just \$15/person. We'll also have a progressive jackpot each week – win by picking the Ace of Spades! Jackpot is split 60/40 with the club. Each ticket drawn is a winner! \$1 tickets are available at the club, License #C31427. For more info call (810) 724-1954.

29 | Eagles #4082's Blood Drive Eagles Hall, 170 S. Almont Ave., 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Come on out and give blood for those in need! We'll be serving homemade food to donors. Set up your appointment online at RedCrossBlood.org by searching our zip code: 48444 and selecting "Fraternal Order of Eagles 4082". For more info call Betty at (810) 834-7668 or Kelly at (810) 417-6498, line 2.

LAPEER

3, 10, 17 & 24 | Sunday Flea Market The Lapeer Center Building, 425 County Center St., 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. We'll be closed on Easter Sunday. All other Sundays of the

month we'll have 50 booths inside and outside selling a huge variety of items to the public. This long-running community event is sponsored by The Lapeer Center Building, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization for over 70 years. We do still have space available if you'd like to participate! For more info email lapeercenter@charter.net or call (810) 664-2109.

MACOMB

CHESTERFIELD

All Month Long | Advance Ticket Sales for the Crocker House Museum and Gardens' Yvonne Leslie Pottery Luncheon event on April 6 at Zuccaro's Banquets & Catering, 46601 N. Gratiot, 11:00 a.m. This year's banquet's theme is "My Favorite Things". We'll have raffles, prizes, a delicious meal and a cash bar. \$50/person, tickets limited for this FUN event. For more info and tickets call (586) 465-2488.

MEMPHIS

All Month Long | Woman's Life Chapter 855 Bottles and Cans Drive Helping those in need in our community. Make a difference today by donating. For larger donations, we have a pick-up service. Call (810) 543-1128 for pick-up or area drop off locations.

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 | Lent Fried Cod Dinner Memphis American Legion Post 566, 34330 Bordman Rd., 3:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., for eat in or call ahead (starting at noon) to set up a pick-up time. Chicken tenders available too. \$15/adult, \$7/child (ages 6-12), and children 5 and under eat free with paid adult, eat in only. Call early for the best selection of (limited) desserts! For more info call (810) 392-3237.

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 | Friday Night Euchre Memphis American Legion Post 566, 34330 Bordman Rd., doors open at 6:30 p.m., start time is 7:00 p.m. \$10/person. For more info call (810) 392-3237.

6, 13, 20 & 27 | Wednesday Night Bingo Memphis American Legion Post 566, 34330 Bordman Rd., 5:30 p.m. – 9:15 p.m., games start at 6:30 p.m. Concession stand available, light dinner served at 7:30 p.m. for a small charge. For more info call (810) 392-3237.

9 | Spring Craft Show Memphis American Legion Post 566, 34330 Bordman Rd., 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Come check out the many homemade crafts that will be available. We'll also have a raffle, bake sale and concessions by the Ladies Auxiliary 566. No admission charge and strollers are welcome. For more info call (810) 392-3237.

17 | St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef Dinner Memphis American Legion Post 566, 34330 Bordman Rd., 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., for eat in or call ahead carry out. We'll have a full corned beef dinner, including a wonderful dessert. \$18/adult (meat prices are astronomical). You can also pick up your tickets for our April 13th Elvis event! For more info call (810) 392-3237.

22 | Free Lenten Movie Night St. Andrew Evangelical Lutheran Church, 775 Kinney Rd. (M-19), 7:00 p.m. Join us for a showing of *Passion of the Christ*, the critically acclaimed movie by Mel Gibson, as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter. Everyone welcome. For more info call (586) 749-9804.

RICHMOND

All Month Long | Woman's Life Chapter 855 Bottles and Cans Drive Helping those in need in our community. Make a difference today by donating. For larger donations, we have a pick-up service. Call (810) 543-1128 for pick-up or area drop off locations.

5 | Woman's Life Chapter 855 Meeting Lois Wagner Library, 35200 Division Rd., 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. We are a friendly group of women who enjoy doing charitable acts for those in need in the community. We are looking for new members to help us in our cause. For questions, please call (586) 872-3867.

ROSEVILLE

5 | Songs of Dublin with Enda Reilly Roseville Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., 2:00 p.m. Join us in welcoming Detroit-based musician and songwriter Enda Reilly as he shares songs and stories of his hometown Dublin. No registration required. For more info and a full list of library events, visit rosevillelibrary.org/wordpress/programs-events or call (586) 445-5407.

14 | Green Thumb #1 – How to Garden in Small Spaces or When You Rent? Vertical Gardening Roseville Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., 6:00 p.m. Join us for the first installment of this new gardening series, this week presented by Jennifer Rizzo, a Master Gardener in Macomb County. She will discuss how you can garden even when you do not have lots of yard space. Registration open. For more info and a full list of

library events, visit rosevillelibrary.org/wordpress/programs-events or call (586) 445-5407.

26 | Animal Magic Roseville Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., 2:00 p.m. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime chance to meet amazing and rare animals from all over the world! Mark Rosenthal, voted Nickelodeon's Entertainer of the Year, will explore the animal world with you, sharing his animal ambassadors, as well as hilarious and mind-blowing stories and facts. No registration required. For more info and a full list of library events, visit rosevillelibrary.org/wordpress/programs-events or call (586) 445-5407.

STERLING HEIGHTS

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 | St. Malachy Men's Club Annual Fish Fry St. Malachy Catholic Church, 25226 E. 14 Mile, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Join us for cod, butterfly shrimp, potato pierogi and more! St. Malachy Women's Club will be selling drinks and desserts as well. \$10/person for all dinners, dine in and carry out available, credit/debit cards accepted. For more info call (586) 264-1220.

OAKLAND

OXFORD

2, 9, 16 & 23 | Friday Fish Fry American Legion Post 108, 130 E. Drahn Rd., noon – 8:00 p.m. Average cost is \$12/person. We have walleye, cod and shrimp, combo plates and carry out is available. Building is sanitized daily. For more info call (248) 628-9081.

ROYAL OAK

8 | How the Ice Age Shaped Royal Oak Royal Oak Historical Museum, 7:00 p.m. Join us for this presentation on glacial lakes and the topography of what became our township. \$15/person and limited to 50 people. For more info or to register visit royaloakhistoricalsociety.com.

ST. CLAIR

ALGONAC

5 | Woman's Life Chapter 883 Meeting Church of Christ, 1601 St. Clair River Dr., 6:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome, and we're always looking for new members. For more info contact Paula at paulaburgess@comcast.net, (810) 278-4466 or (810) 794-9641.

CASCO

2 | Sportsman's Swap Meet & Gun Show Perch Point Conservation Club, 7930 Meisner Rd., 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. We'll have guns, ammo, knives, arrows and hunting, fishing and outdoor sport related items. \$5/person, kids under 12 free. Breakfast, lunch and beverages available, \$20/

table (vendor plus one admission). For more info call (810) 278-5630 or (586) 738-5038.

2 & 16 | Euchre Tournament

St. James United Church of Christ Basement, 9008 Meisner Rd., play starts at 6:30 p.m. Join us for lots of fun where laughter is pretty much a guarantee! \$10/ person and euchres are 25¢ each. For more info call (586) 727-1623.

24 | St. James United Church of Christ's Annual Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

Perch Point Conservation Club, 7930 Meisner Rd., 4:00 p.m. Join us in honoring our own St. Pat (Pat Bandlow) for some great food! \$16/adult and asking for a good will offering for children under 12. We'll have a cash bar, raffles, 50/50 and a bake sale. Advanced ticket purchasing is strongly recommended. For more info call (586) 915-7662.

MARINE CITY

6, 13, 20 & 27 | Play Bridge

Washington Life Center, 403 N. Mary, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Join us to play this fun card game, alternates weekly duplicate and party bridge-style. You MUST pre-register! No experienced needed for party bridge-style, experienced players only for duplicate-style, experienced players only. No partner needed. \$2 to play. For more info, to register or for on-going free bridge lessons, contact Tom at tjbroyles@aol.com or (810) 326-0121.

9 | Adult Craft Corner: "Ribbon & Charm Bookmarks"

Marine City Library, 300 S. Parker, noon – 1:00 p.m. Celebrate National Reading Month with us by crafting your own unique bookmarks. Registration is required. For more info or a full list of library events, visit stclaircountylibrary.org/events and select your local library or call (810) 765-5233.

MARYSVILLE

2 | 3rd Annual Outdoor Knights

The Knight Club, 1195 Gratiot Ave., doors open at 5:00 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m. Join the Knights of Columbus Au Lac Council 10724 at Immaculate Conception Parish in Ira Township for dinner! Come on out to help us help others! We'll have dinner, raffles, auctions and an open bar! \$60/person, includes dinner and drinks, or \$420/table of 8! Limited tickets available. For more info call Joe at (810) 602-5382 or Brian at (810) 956-3648.

6, 13, 20 & 27 | Knights of Columbus #9526 Wednesday Bingo

The Knight Club, 1195 Gratiot Blvd., 6:20 p.m. start time. (Doors open 2 hours prior.) For more info call (810) 364-6800.

23 | Caring Crafters' present 2024 Easter Craft-a-Palooza

American Legion Post #449, 299 Huron Blvd., 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Join the Caring

Crafters of St. Clair County, MI LLP, for this event that will have 40+ local artisans displaying their unique items, photos with "Bella the Bunny" (for an extra fee), an Easter egg hunt, as well as Dog & Bear coloring and storytelling! \$2/person, kids 10 and under are free. Admissions go to the American Legion and Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. Concessions available for purchase. For more info email caringcraftersccmi@gmail.com or find us on Facebook @caringcrafters8422.

NORTH STREET

6 | St. Clair Kennel Club General Meeting

Dorsey House, 6008 Beard Rd., 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Calling all dog lovers to come see what we're all about! For more info visit our website stclairkc.org or email stclairkennelclub@gmail.com.

PORT HURON

All Month Long | Diaper Drive by the St. Clair County Health Department's Maternal and Infant Health Program (MIHP)

drop off at St. Clair County Health Department, 3415 28th St., during their regular business hours: Monday 10:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. or Tuesday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., or you can schedule a pick-up. Donation requests: new packages of baby diapers (all sizes), baby wipes, rash creams or baby hygiene items. 100% of donations will be given to eligible MIHP participants. Monetary donations can be made to St. Clair County Treasurer at paypal.com/paypalme/sccmitreasurer. For more info call (810) 987-4903.

1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 | Euchre

Charles A. Hammond American Legion Auxiliary Unit #8, 1026 6th St., 1:00 p.m. Join us for this fun card game! \$5 to play. Open to the public. For more info call (810) 982-9553.

4, 11, 18 & 25 | Play Bridge

Palmer Park Recreation Center, 2829 Armour St., 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Join us to play this fun card game, party bridge-style, no experienced needed. No partner needed. \$1 to play. For more info, to register or for on-going free bridge lessons, contact Tom at tjbroyles@aol.com or (810) 326-0121.

6, 13, 20 & 27 | Progressive Bingo

Charles A. Hammond American Legion Auxiliary Unit #8, 1026 6th St., play begins at 6:00 p.m. (doors will be open at 4:00 p.m.). Join us for Bingo! License #A22694. Proceeds to benefit the Auxiliary's charities. Open to the public. For more info call (810) 982-9553.

7, 14, 21 & 28 | Cornhole Tournament

Charles A. Hammond American Legion Auxiliary Unit #8, 1026 6th St., 7:00 p.m. Join us to play some cornhole! \$5 to play. Open to the public and all levels of experience

are welcome. For more info call (810) 982-9553.

9 | 2nd Annual STEMfest

St. Clair County Community College, 323 Erie St., 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. This event will take place in the SC4 Fieldhouse and Clara E. Mackenzie Building/ Experience Center, as well as the SC4 Fine Arts Theatre. There will be 100+ hands-on STEM experiences with many new exhibits this year, featuring the new SC4 Planetarium Experience. We will have exhibits by the Michigan Technological University's Mind Trekkers, Cranbrook Institute of Science and The Reptarium. Admission is free, but pre-registration is requested. For more info and to register, visit sc4.edu/stem-fest/.

17 | St. Patty's AYCE Breakfast

Port Huron Masonic Lodge #58, 927 St., Port Huron, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Join us for our All You Can Eat Breakfast, and if you wear GREEN to get \$1 off your meal! We'll have choice of eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon, potatoes, amazing coffee, as well as juice and water. \$10/adult. Discounts for veterans, service members and seniors. For more info call (810) 982-5044.

18 | Port Huron Elks Lodge #343's 60th Consecutive Blood Drive

Port Huron Elks Lodge #343, 3292 Beach Rd., noon – 6:00 p.m. We have been supporting the American Red Cross since 2013 and have collected over 250 gallons of blood. To make an appointment, please call (800) RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or go to RedCrossBlood.org and enter sponsor code: [porthuronelks343](http://porthuronelks343.com). For more info email elks343@comcast.net or call (810) 982-8531.

ST. CLAIR

1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, 26 & 29 | Play Bridge

St. Clair Community Center, 308 S. 5th St., noon – 3:00 p.m. Join us to play this fun card game. On Tuesdays we play party bridge-style, no experienced needed for \$1, and on Fridays we play duplicate-style, experienced players only for \$5. No partner needed. For more info, to register or for on-going free bridge lessons, contact Tom at tjbroyles@aol.com or (810) 326-0121.

2 | Euchre Tournament Hosted by Cornell Marysville Chapter #93 OES

St. Clair Masonic Temple, 1800 St. Clair Hwy., doors open at 12:30 p.m., play starts at 1:00 p.m. This event is open to the public and admission is \$10/person. We'll also have refreshments, door prizes and a 50/50 drawing. Don't miss out on this fun event! For more information call Diane at (586) 337-2729.

7, 14, 21 & 28 | Play Bridge

Voyageur Restaurant, 252 S. Riverside Ave., noon – 3:00 p.m. Join us for lunch and to play this just-for-

fun bridge card game, no experienced needed. No partner needed. No cost. For more info, to register or for on-going free bridge lessons, contact Tom at tjbroyles@aol.com or (810) 326-0121.

9 | Eclipse and Exoplanets

St. Clair Library, 310 S. Second St., 10:00 a.m. Join us as we welcome NASA Solar System Ambassador Jim Ottaviani who will teach us about space! Registration is required. For more info or a full list of library events, visit stclaircountylibrary.org/events and select your local library or call (810) 329-3951.

SMITHS CREEK

1 | Fish Fry

American Legion Post 525, 7150 Smiths Creek Rd., 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Join us for some delectable fish! \$11/adult and \$5/child (12 & under). For more info call (810) 367-6351.

10 | Smiths Creek Masonic Lodge Monthly Breakfast

Smiths Creek Masonic Lodge #498, 335 Henry St. (across the street from the Pink Elephant), 8:00 a.m. – noon. Join us for delicious eggs, bacon, potatoes, French toast, pancakes (plain & blueberry), along with coffee, orange juice, white and chocolate milk. AYCE for only \$10/adult and \$5/child under 12. For more info email clintonsharrard@comcast.net.

YALE

8 & 22 | K of C Council 8710 Fish Fries

Fr. Dunn Hall, Sacred Heart Church, 310 N. Main St., lunch: noon – 1:00 p.m. or dinner: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. (or until sold out). Come on out for fish, slaw, mac & cheese, fries, potatoes, rolls, drinks and dessert! We'll have dine-in or carryout. Thank you for your support! For more info email melln1@yahoo.com.

SANILAC

SANDUSKY

9 & 23 | Thumb Dance Club & Euchre

Maple Valley School, 138 Maple Valley St., 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Please join us for fun, fellowship and live music for only \$5. It's a great place to celebrate a birthday or anniversary because the hall and music are provided. We'll be enjoying a potluck dinner at 3:00 p.m., and would love if you bring a snack to share or a dish to pass. This is a smoke and alcohol-free environment. All ages are welcome! For more info call (810) 310-2715.

17 | Sanilac County Museum's St. Patty's Day Party

Elk Street Brewery & Tap Room, 3 S. Elk St., 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Come sham-rock it out with us to music from Ourselves! Be sure to wear your green attire unless you'd like a pinch! For more info call (810) 622-9946.

OKAWANA tribes against the federal government. Continued from Page 9 Steve retired as supervisor of the Brighton area school bus fleet. Shomin's knowledge of Indian culture and history and his experience as a leader of numerous Indian Councils even earned him an audience with President Kennedy. At that time, Kennedy was presented with a copy of the *Declaration of Indian Purposes* signed by the leaders of the Indian Groups.

With Edna O'Neil's help, Steve was able to find his birth mother, who lived in Gaylord, Michigan. Steve and his wife Loretta had two children and were blessed with two grandchildren. His was a life filled with learning and education and was lived with love for his family and ancestry. He had adopted and practiced the valuable advice Edna had given him back at Okawana many years prior, as well as throughout his life. Steve died in Brighton, Michigan, on April 25, 2003.

The Okawana camp's location was sold in 1924; as mentioned in my earlier article, several of the camp's children moved into Edna's house at 1831 11th Avenue in Port Huron. Marjorie Browne came to the 11th Avenue address as a baby from the Van Leuven Browne Hospital School. She was both disabled and blind. She arrived as a foster child and remained there for almost 20 years. With help from the family, Marjorie recovered physically and regained most of her sight. As mentioned in the previous article as well, Marjorie became a talented pianist and earned a living as a piano tuner. In 1942, she married Woodrow Darling, who was blind. Her camp friend Jean Osborn stood up for her at her wedding. Marjorie and Woodrow would later move to Detroit, where they operated a stand at the Liquor Commission.

After using her home as the camp's new location for a few years, Edna married Burt Peck in 1933, and three years later Celeste was born. To help make ends meet, Edna and Bert operated a grocery store from part of their house at the 11th Avenue address. Unfortunately, during this time, America suffered the economic woes of the Great Depression. Edna and Bert, being the generous people they were, ended up giving away more food than people had the money for! The grocery store would then transition into a shoe repair business as one of the camp boys, Earl Ladford, had learned this practice. Edna and Bert provided him with a storefront at 1831 11th Avenue from which he could conduct those repairs.

As time passed, more and more "camp children" found independence, married and moved away from the 1831 address. They would, however, always find a time and place to gather, along with their new families. The conversation of these reunions would eventually find its way to the daily adventures they had enjoyed at Camp Okawana. The bonds formed many years ago at Okawana would remain solid and enduring. In Celeste's words: "They were a family!"

Edna's husband, Bert, passed away in 1955. The last children



With President Kennedy at the White House in 1962, Steve is to the far right



Jean Osborn, Alex, Marjorie Browne and Harold Todd



Jean Osborn, Marjorie Browne, Reverend DuPlan, Woodrow Darling and Les Darling on Marjorie and Woodrow's wedding day, July 18, 1942



Get-together of Camp Okawana members and spouses, circa 1973. Front row: Loretta Shomin, Cecelia Chateau, Maybelle Spencer, Edna O'Neil Peck (standing), Marion Boynton. Back row: unknown, unknown, Anson Chateau, Jack Spencer, Steve Shomin, Hiram Brewer, Woodrow Darling, unknown and unknown

from Camp Okawana had now gone their separate ways. It is at this point Edna finally decided to do something for herself. She dreamed of someday returning to Huron's lakeshore, that magical place where so many of her young patients had found peace.

In 1960, Celeste married a man named Jim, and after a year, they acquired a property on Lake Huron, including a small trailer into which Edna would move. Celeste worked as a caseworker for the Bureau of Social Aid until their first child was born. Two of their daughters work at the University of Michigan Hospital, one as a nurse in the Oncology Department and the other as a caseworker in Children's Protective Services. Jim and Celeste enjoy eleven grandchildren, one of whom is a college senior majoring in psychology and planning to go into social work. The old saying "The apple does not fall far from the tree!" rings so true for this family.

Four years after Edna moved into that trailer on Celeste and Jim's property, a house nearby became available at Lake Huron Manor. Edna finally sold the house on 11th Avenue, that address that contained so many memories.

Edna moved into her little log cabin on Elmwood Drive. It is there that her final dreams were realized. True to her nature, with no more children to look after, Edna took it upon herself to feed the birds and carefully tend to her dog and cat. Her Christmas wish was simple: "Birdseed and cat food." Celeste wrote, "She was in good health, loved her house and enjoyed her final years being close to her six grandchildren. She had built a reputation of being the first one in the lake in the spring and the last one out in the fall."



The house at 1831 11th Avenue in Port Huron still stands today



Camp Okawana whispered the sounds of gentle waves as they lapped on Huron's sandy shoreline. It echoed the noise of a crackling bonfire, providing night shadows of children laughing and giggling as they enjoyed their first perfectly charred hotdog or that sticky brown marshmallow desperately clinging to a wooden roasting stick. It mimicked the call of a red-tailed hawk as it skillfully navigated the night sky. It gave feeling to the touch of a gentle south wind as it found its way through the pines that lined the shores of Okawana. For a short moment so many years ago, these wonderful little campers were absorbed in this magic of nature, briefly removed from all their ailments, and given a renewed faith for better days and a better life. 🌿

Author's note: My special thanks to the Edna O'Neil family for providing me with their loving insight into the life of Edna O'Neil Peck and for the narrative on the lives and adventures of Camp Okawana and its special children!

Editorial note: Derek Smith moved to Port Huron in 1987, from Sarnia, Ontario. You can read Derek's full bio and other articles he has written by visiting bluewaterhealthyliving.com/author/dereksmith/.





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