



## A Polar Bear Returned to Russia

Little-known local history from WWI

By Andy Bolander

Current Contributor

As 4th of July celebrations for our country's Independence Day approach, it seems timely to recall that 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of U.S. involvement in World War I. Notably, there was a unit with very strong ties to this area that was fighting the Bolsheviks in Russia until May of 1919, six months after the armistice, and theirs is an interesting—and little-known—history.

One of the men in the 339th Infantry—which referred to themselves as the “Polar Bears,” because the Russian winters were so cold—was named Walter Dundon, born in Elk Rapids and raised in Elberta. His mother ran a bakery and restaurant across the street from the Elberta waterfront. (The building was located in the park across the street from The Cabbage Shed, next to the pump house building. It was replaced by the Veterans Hall that was built in 1946, which is also now



AFTER AN ALL NIGHT MARCH IN THE SWAMP

Born in Elk Rapids and raised in Elberta, 1st Sergeant Walter Dundon (back right) of “M” Company, 339th Infantry, stands next to a campfire, made to dry socks after a 17-hour trek in the woods of Obozerskaya, Russia, on September 29, 1918. The 339th Infantry referred to themselves as “Polar Bears,” because the Russian winters were so cold. Photo courtesy of the Bentley Historical Library.

gone.) The backroom of Dundon's Bakery was a place where river drivers would sleep after driving logs down the Betsie River.

Dundon first joined the U.S. Army in 1911 and was stationed in Alaska. After his discharge, he worked for the Ann Arbor Railroad as a brakeman in 1914. Then he was drafted in 1918, while living in Detroit, and married his wife, Cecile Hager, before he went to Camp Custer in Battle Creek. In September 1918, he landed with the 339th Infantry forces in North Russia.

The experiences of the American North Russian Expeditionary Force during World War I are often overlooked.

The Americans were involved in the North Russia theater of operations, which was a convoluted diplomatic mess of Allied relations, Russian social reform, and unpaid debts. Their military purpose was to maintain an Allied presence on the eastern front of the European conflict. After the Bolshevik Revolution on November 7, 1917, the Allies

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## Safer, Warmer, Drier

Volunteers help “neighbors”

Aubrey Ann Parker

Current Editor

It is 9:30 a.m., and there are already flecks of cream paint on Pastor Anne Hébert's orange-sherbet-colored sweatshirt. While some people are just getting their morning caffeine buzz going, Hébert and around 80 volunteers have been at work for a couple of hours—some cooking, some painting, some sawing, some hammering.

They will continue to work well into the late afternoon, a long day by anyone's standards, and especially give that the average age of the group is late 60s, and most of the volunteers have retired from their “day jobs.”

This work occurs Monday through Friday

for an entire week in June. The group meets each morning at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church—at the top of the hill between Beulah and Honor, with a view of Upper Platte Lake and Lake Michigan out the back and a vineyard out the front—at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast, a run-down of the day's jobs, and a prayer, before rushing off to housing projects in Copemish, Elberta, Frankfort, and Thompsonville.

They install new windows and doors, paint siding and shutters, build new porches and railings, as well as wheel-chair ramps.

The volunteers are part of St. Andrews Mission Project, or STAMP for short, which works on the homes of Benzie County families in need during the third full week of June each year. Workers do not have to be members

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## Celebrate The Fourth

### FRANKFORT EVENTS

Carnival Opens at 10am (open July 1-4) - Open Space Park  
Parade begins at 10am - Main Street & Forest Avenue  
Art in the Park begins at 10am - Mineral Springs Park  
Sand Castle Sculpture Contest at 12pm - Frankfort Beach  
FIREWORKS at dusk (about 10:30pm) - Frankfort Beach

### BEULAH EVENTS

Pancake Breakfast Buffet from 8-11am - Hungry Tummy Restaurant  
Firecracker 5k Run at 8am - Beulah Pavillion  
1-Mile Family Walk/Run (free!) at 9am - Beulah Pavillion  
Kids Games & Face-Painting from 10:30am-12pm - Beulah Park  
Food Concessions, sponsored by the Boy Scouts at 12pm - Beulah Park  
Parade begins at 1:30pm - S. Benzie Boulevard  
Kids Greased Pole Climb at 2:30pm - Beulah Park  
Coin Hunt at 3:30pm - Beulah Park  
Rubber Duck Race (duck rental available) at 4:30pm - Beulah Park  
Fireworks at dusk (about 10:30pm) - Beulah Beach  
(Alternate rain date: July 5th)

## Awe and Wonder at COGNiTION

New science & discovery center in Beulah

By Nicole L. Bates

Current Contributor

Squeals of joy greet you the moment that you walk in the door. In one corner of the room, little learners can be found building with gears, while others are using small tools at a workbench. From the bow of a toy sailboat, kids and parents are pretending to fish. Later in the day, the group will get the chance to feed Severus Snake, as well as to touch Quillow, the spiky hedgehog, and the smooth shell of Mellow Yellow, one of two red-eared yellow-bellied slider turtles in the facility. Contained within a new, custom-made formicarium, the industrious nature of an ant colony that never stops working can be seen.

COGNiTION Science & Discovery Center is a multi-generational educational center that adds a unique attraction of community and cultural significance to Benzie County. The

facility features interactive exhibits that are designed to inspire, educate, and stimulate exploration of natural wonders, scientific principles, fine art, and more. Visitors to the center will enjoy its interactive exhibits, seasonal camps, special programs, changing themes, demonstrations, and guest speakers.

There are day passes available at the door, only \$4 per child, and it covers the entire day. Seasonal and annual memberships are also available. The space



Two visitors to the Science & Discovery Center make nature projects that they can take home with them. Photo courtesy of COGNiTION.

can also be rented for private parties. There are a multitude of ways to enjoy this space, which is designed after a museum yet is very flexible in meeting individual needs.

To facilitate learning through time spent in awe and wonder, and to inspire others to investigate the many facets of the world around them—that is the mission of COGNiTION. Kimmee Wenkel, president and co-founder of this non-profit organization, embodies this mission statement and carries it out every day with passion and enthusiasm that shines through her from the moment that you walk through the door. She stresses that she wants this to

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# The Once and Future Otter Creek

An ode to brook trout and the river ecologists who study them

By Stephanie Mills

Current Contributor

When your heart wells and you shed tears of joy, the occasion merits serious attention. In my long years of professing bio-regionalism, many such moments of pure connection with some true marvel have happened: out back on my patchwork of land; elsewhere amid prairie forbs and grasses; at the raging Pacific Ocean's shore; and in doing creative work. Finding myself misty-eyed at last year's Research Rendezvous lectures—given by scientists who work in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore—surprised me, though.

Brett Fessell, a river ecologist with Russell Clark Associates—an environmental planning and design group that belongs to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians—was the speaker for the Research Rendezvous lecture back in September 2016, and his talk brought me to tears of joy.

Fessell's affection for Otter Creek and its population of brook trout is plain. He has been doing a long-term study of brook trout in Otter Creek, which meanders leisurely through marshes of cedar, poplar, and alder shade, then out into Lake Michigan.

Although Fessell's presentation was easy going, it offered a rich synthesis of his considerable knowledge of the Otter Creek watershed's geohistory, hydrology, and ecology. As he spoke about the glacial processes that shaped the roughly five-square-mile watershed—the ancient forces that deposited the marls that conduced to the springs that cooled the pools where brook trout could spawn and mature—those dynamic earth changes became vivid and comprehensible. It was time travel, courtesy of the facts and imagination.

Fessell's existentially serious attention to this minute but vital portion—a clean, short, little capillary—of Lake Michigan's watershed is something wonderful but not unique. Scores of naturalists in our bio-region are fixing their minds and hearts on wild lives and landscapes.

The field scientists among them who brave the elements, discomforts, and all-season rigors of the place to study its biota and who then contribute sturdy data to public questions about how we might better coexist with those multitudes of other beings—they perform a very real service.

Moreover, jurisdictional, political, and regulatory complexity are inescapable working conditions for resource professionals, but it is surely affection that sustains them through the number-crunching, desk work, and hazards in the field. Fessell, who has worked with the tribe for 20 years, is seasoned

in collaborating with a complex welter of public agencies, a tribal government, and feisty anglers. This perseverance and diplomacy also attest a consecrated life.

Fessell might not see it that way, but he seems mighty grateful to be doing what he is doing. It suits him, right down to his waders.

## A Plan for the Brookies

The “brookie”—a nimble, charismatic native fish—is a prized catch. It is a versatile creature, thriving in both streams and along the coast of the Great Lakes. Coasters, the adfluvial brook trout that swim out of their native streams and into the great lake, can bulk up during the next few months or years, spent in the lake's wide open spaces. For instance, typical weight varies from half a pound to 6.5 pounds, but a coaster that was caught in Thunder Bay a century ago weighed in at more than 14 pounds, and there have been reports of Otter Creek coasters, too, for the



**Brett Fessell, a river ecologist with Russell Clark Associates, an environmental planning and design group that belongs to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, has been doing a long-term study of brook trout in Otter Creek. Photo courtesy of NatureChange.org.**

way to the coast is clear.

The natural continuance of brookies, *Salvelinus fontinalis*, is the keynote of the Otter Creek survey and any future restoration work.



**Otter Creek meanders leisurely through the marshes of cedar, poplar, and alder shade, then out to Lake Michigan. Photo courtesy of NatureChange.org.**

A restoration plan, based on intensive study of the watershed's hydrogeology and geologic history, led to what Fessell calls some “very fine grain design.” It is, at present, in abeyance, however, owing to shifts in the tribe's Natural Resources Department and to the challenge of organizing support and funding.

One thing is known for certain, though—respecting nature's own genius for balancing ecosystems and determining carrying capacity, there will be no captive breeding or stocking of fish in Otter Creek, according to Fessell.

“We don't always know whether we're pushing the limits of the habitat,” he explains.

The wild brook trout, inseparable from its

Otter Creek habitat, is one among a community of 25 species of fishes, only four of them non-native, and countless other critters. To thrive in a stream, the brookies need, among other things, the shelter of large woody debris—also known as fallen trees—and the thermal refuge of clean, cold, upwelling groundwater. Pool depth and cover, diversity of bed forms, and undercut banks where they can abide are also of importance.

## Then and Now

Otter Creek's picturesque, low-gradient watershed—entirely contained within the national park—was hard used in the past. Historic accounts of the area tell of many streams that were so densely shaded by old-growth forest and riparian brush that their courses could only be inferred from their flowing waters' sound.

Lovely as the area presently is, the thought of its being cloaked in vegetation so thick and abundant is fairly stunning to imagine. Those cedars would have needed centuries to mature, then could die of old age and topple into the rivers, carrying on their life's work as large woody debris. But 19th-century logging claimed the trees, log drives scoured the stream beds, wiping out bogs and fens along the way, and the vast conflagrations of slash that followed the cut left the landscape pretty raw.

Natural history is a fine passion: there can be something clear and true of mind and heart in scientific attention, paid out of doors. In this story, it contributes to a long-term hope of seeing the flourishing of a creek and its ecology, attested by a healthy run of brook trout. It even, in its example, offers hope for our kind.

For the Tribal Council, the rehabilitation of a watershed like Otter Creek and sustaining its population of native fish would support their goals of maintaining treaty rights in the fishery, which was once and may again be important as sustenance, as well as the cultural value of participation in the mortal dance of give and take with the lands and waters of home.

The Otter Creek story's swirl and flow of creatures, currents, patience, possibility, and commitment stirred my heart with a power of good. Listening to Fessell, whose good humor and learning were as lively and fluent as some of Otter Creek's marly springs, I wondered if this meticulous research project—so carefully considered, if relatively modest in geographic, but not cultural and metaphysical, scope—might not also be a long-term ceremony.

It is a way of studying and honoring the land and waters as they were and are. While pledging recollection of their true nature, the purpose is not to make an aquarium or museum diorama, but through long-term, careful work to repair relationships throughout.

This goal—of healthier relations among streams, fish, and fishers—may sound “a little Pollyanna,” Fessell admits. “But I'm here to tell you that we're making progress. That's important. That's what we really need to do.”

So cue those tears of joy.

*A version of this story first published on NatureChange.org.*

# Stamps

Continued from page 1

of St. Andrews Church to get involved, and, in fact, many are not—about one-quarter of the 80 volunteers belong to other churches or no church at all. (They've even got one atheist.)

"It's a way for us to get to know our neighbors and to get involved in our community," says Hébert, who is the pastor at The St. Andrews Church. "And our faith calls us to be servants."

### How It Works

The first STAMP projects began in 2009 in Thompsonville, and since that time, the group has completed jobs at 134 homes in and around Benzie County—that is an average of about 17 homes per year.

There is a mix of construction and non-construction projects at each site, so anyone of any age or ability can volunteer. The budget for the 14 homes that STAMP worked on during the week of June 19 through June 23, 2017, was just over \$16,000, which included 10 windows and casings at \$300 each; 10 doors at \$800 each; and six wheel-chair ramps at \$1,000 each.

Additionally, there are volunteers who work out of the church—preparing breakfast and lunch snacks, running errands, making deliveries.

"STAMP lets us connect on a human level," Hébert says. "Many of us are only one paycheck away from being in a similar situation... There is no barrier to reaching out and realizing that we have more in common than we think."

The pre-planning work begins in April each year, when a handful of STAMP coordinators—namely Jim Jackway, and Tom Torbett, and Tim Quist, along with Judy Harnish, chair of the St. Andrews Presbyterian Mission Ministry Team—connect with Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN) and Benzie Senior Resources to get a list of people who have requested help with housing projects, mostly of a "make it warmer, make it safer, make it drier" nature. The only hard-and-fast rule is that you must own your home to be a part of the program.

"[St. Andrews] sets up the structure of the program, and we recruit the homeowners," says Gerri VanAntwerp, BACN's executive director. "Weatherization, disability, ramps, decking, windows, things like that"

The STAMP coordinators then visit each house and survey the potential projects to see what jobs are within the scope of what STAMP volunteers can do, versus what jobs need more professional assistance. By the beginning of June, they order the materials that are needed to complete the projects. There is about six weeks of fundraising, followed by one week of work.

Jim Jackway, a master electrician, was in charge of assigning work crews and getting materials for STAMP this year. Jackway grew up in Lowell, studied electrical engineering, and spent 20 years working for General Motors, followed by 20 years teaching skilled trades.

He joined St. Andrews Church when he moved to the area in the winter of 2014, shortly after building a house in Empire. He has a lot of experience, given that his Empire home is the seventh that he has built for himself. His father was a builder, and Jackway estimates that he must have helped his father to build another 20 homes.

Given his background, it is no surprise that Jackway became one of the lead coordinators for STAMP.

"I've been known to be a little bossy," Jackway laughs. "But someone needs to give direction, right?"

### History of STAMP

STAMP began in 2009, when Pam and Jim Pendexter retired to Benzie County. Pam had been a pastor at the First Congregational Church of Dundee, Illinois, which had run a similar program with Cumberland Mountain Outreach in Kentucky.

"It was such a rewarding experience, for the homeowners and the workers, too," she says.

When she and her husband moved here, they became members of St. Andrews Church, and immediately felt a connection to the close-knit community.

"This is as close to First Congregation of

Dundee as we're gonna get," Pendexter laughs. "It's a smaller congregation, but it's vital, with very friendly people, who want to help."

So the Pendexters enlisted the help of 16 people from their Illinois church to come and help that first year, and many have continued to come to Benzie County each year to help.

### Filling A Need

Barb Ball, 55, moved to Frankfort from the Cadillac area six years ago, and she has been renovating her trailer ever since. Two years ago, she received help from STAMP, which installed 18 new windows, two new doors, and a back deck. This year, they came back and installed a new storm door, a new railing and steps on one deck, and a completely new second deck. Ball heard about the STAMP program while she was interning at BACN and then at St. Andrews; internships were a requirement of her Bachelor's degree in Human Services through Baker College.

"I love these windows," Ball says. "My trailer is so much warmer now. My gas bill has gone down; I used to have to keep it well above 80 degrees, and now, I never need to put it above 70."

Ball is currently a stay-at-home grandmother to 3-year-old Sophia, whiler her daughter, Danielle Cascaddan, 26, works at Harbor Lights. All three



A new wheelchair ramp is installed in Elberta. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

are now members of the St. Andrews Church, and all three were baptized at the same time.

"If we can reduce utility costs, that's a win," VanAntwerp says. "There is a lot of talk about housing right now—and yes, big picture, it's good to ;build homes to combat that problem. But this is a pretty simple way of keeping people in their homes, by making it more liveable and re-establishing pride in their homes."

*Want to get involved in the STAMP project next year? Fundraising for the 2018 year begins now, so you can mail a check to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 8190 Lincoln Road, Beulah, MI, 49617, with "STAMP" in the memo line. Get your name on a workbee list for next year by calling 231-882-4241 or emailing revanne@benziestandrews.com. Learn more at BenzieSTAndrews.com.*

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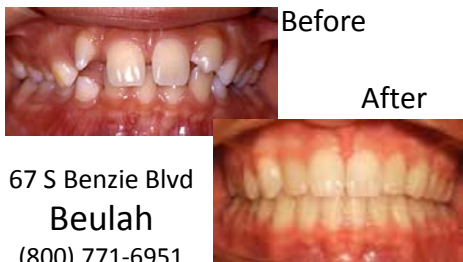
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## CONSTANTLY FLOWING

### Mondays

Circle Time for infants and toddlers at the Benzie Shores District Library at 630 Main Street in Frankfort. Infants and toddlers (+ their parents/caregivers) will have fun rhyming and moving with Miss Char, as well as a focus on repetition. Each week, children build their repertoire of rhymes, both old and new. There is an informal playgroup following Circle Time. 10-11am.

Yoga class for seniors led at no charge by Michelle Leines at The Gathering Place Senior Center. 10579 Main Street in the Honor Plaza. 231-525-0600. 10-11am.

A volunteer will be at the Benzie Shores District Library to repair clothing while you wait. No formal wear or upholstery; no drop-offs. 10:30am-12pm.

Cards at The Gathering Place. We have a dedicated group of card sharks who play Pinochle weekly during lunch, but we aren't limited to Pinochle: grab your friends and join us for euchre, cribbage, and rummy, too! 12-1pm.

Grow Benzie Farmers' Market: Every Monday at 4pm and 5:30pm, there will be free cooking and nutrition-education classes. All are welcome! Fresh vegetables and fruits, baked goods, bread, jam, honey, maple syrup, artisan crafts, and more will be featured at each market! You can also tour our new edible trails and try out mini-golf! The Grill Benzie Food Truck will be there so bring the family for dinner! 5885 Frankfort Highway (M-115) between Benzonia and Frankfort. 3-7pm.

### Tuesdays

Sunrise Rotary Club's weekly meetings are over breakfast at the Cold Creek Inn of Beulah. Come join us! 7:30-9am.

Stretch and tone with Jean at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email [annamallien@gmail.com](mailto:annamallien@gmail.com) if interested. 9-10am.

Technology Tuesday: Benzie Shores District Library in Frankfort offers assistance with technology. Learn how to download ebooks, audiobooks, and magazines to your personal devices. 10am-12pm.

Music by the Melody Makers at The Gathering Place. 10:30am-1:30pm.

Knitting Group at Benzonia Public Library. A "knit-along" project for those who want to work on the same project, or bring your own project if you prefer; we'd love your company! Need help? If you are having troubles with a current project, bring it along and we'll help you get it straightened out. Call Michele at 231-383-5716 with any questions. 1-3pm.

Chair Yoga class for \$5 at The Gathering Place. 3:30-4:30pm.

Yoga with Kari at Pleasant Valley Community Center in Arcadia. Open to all levels; \$13 per session. 231-383-1883. 5:30-7pm.

Yard Yoga with Jenn Ryan at St. Ambrose Cellars. Register via text 231-218-0655. 6-7:30pm.

### Wednesdays

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center. [annamallien@gmail.com](mailto:annamallien@gmail.com) 9-10am.

Stay Fit with Doris at The Gathering Place. 10-11am.

Open studio at the Oliver Art Center. Participants are strongly encouraged to become members and to contribute a donation of \$2 per visit. 10am-4pm.

Bingo at The Gathering Place. Cost is \$1 per card or bring a prize. 12:30-1:30pm.

Yoga with Kari at the Oliver Art Center. Open to all levels; \$13 per session. 231-383-1883. 5:30-7pm.

The Storm Riders Cycling Club is rolling through beautiful Benzie County this summer. Join the rides every Wednesday, or just those that you can make! Explore rotating sections of rides around Frankfort and Elberta. Rides will begin and end at Stormcloud Brewing Company, and riders get a discount on their first beer after the ride. No registration; just show up!

Michigan Legacy Art Park (Crystal Mountain) is offering ATV Riding tours to guests who may be unable to hike the rustic, hilly trails. Tours take place at 10:00am on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, from June 21 through August 12. Because seating is limited to five passengers, advanced registration is required for these tours. Tour is free with \$5 admission. 10am-12pm.

### Thursdays

Elberta Farmers' Market at the Elberta Pavilion Park. 8am-12:30pm.

Stretch and tone with Jean at Oliver Art Center. [annamallien@gmail.com](mailto:annamallien@gmail.com) 9-10am.

Adult coloring at Benzie Shores District Library. All materials provided. 10-11am.

Bible Study at The Gathering Place. 10-11am.

Bunco at The Gathering Place. 1-2pm.

Computers with Carol at the Darcy Library at 7238 Commercial Street in Beulah. Ask Carol computer-related questions. Read to Rosie, the cute little dog! 1-5pm.

Everyone is welcome to attend Open Clay Studio at the Oliver Art Center, including families! Per 4-visit block (12 hours total, used how you like), \$60 fees cover one adult or one adult and child pair. It can be as fun or focused as a student prefers, and all skill levels should consider taking part. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times in the studio. Price includes: 25 pounds of clay, glaze, and firings. 3:30-6:30pm.

Yoga with Kari at the Ware Farm of Bear Lake. Open to all levels; \$13 per session. 231-383-1883. 4-5:30pm.

Open Mic Night at The Cabbage Shed in Elberta. 8pm.

### Fridays

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center. [annamallien@gmail.com](mailto:annamallien@gmail.com) 9-10am.

Bunco at The Gathering Place. 9:30-10:30am.

Wii Bowling at The Gathering Place. 1-2pm.

### Saturdays

Frankfort Farmers' Market at Open Space Park on Main Street, between 7th & 9th streets, along the beautiful waterfront. 9am-1pm.

Farmers' Market and Flea Market at the Interlochen Eagles #3503 at 20724 Honor Highway/US-131, three miles west of Interlochen. Consisting of Michigan-grown fruits and veggies, flea marketers, cottage food vendors, artisans, arts & craft vendors, and independent reps. 12-4pm.

Body Sculpting on the ball with Deanne at Oliver Art Center. [annamallien@gmail.com](mailto:annamallien@gmail.com) 9-10 am.

\*Yoga classes at Discover YOU Yoga and Fitness in Frankfort every day of the week, except Saturday. For a complete schedule and

more information on classes and rates, visit [discoveryogami.com](http://discoveryogami.com).

## ON DECK

### Thursday, June 29

Volunteer Trail Building Day at Arcadia Dunes. Come help to connect the Dry Hill Trail to the Village of Arcadia! We are looking for plenty of helpers on this project, which will last into October. Meet at the intersection of St. Pierre Road and the seasonal Taylor Road. Tools will be provided, but bring comfortable shoes, gloves, and plenty to drink. To RSVP, please visit our website at [GTRLC.org](http://GTRLC.org) or call Steve Lagerquist or Jon Troop at 231-929-7911. 10am-12pm.

### Thursday, June 29th

Andre Villoch will play at Lake Ann Brewing Company. 6:30-9:30pm.

### Thursday, June 29

Beulah Music in the Park features Keith Scott & Friends. 7-9pm.

### Friday, June 30

Music On The Deck of The Cabbage Shed features Midlife from 5-9pm and Fifth Gear from 9:30pm-12:30am. No cover.

### Friday, June 30

Cousin Curtiss plays at Lake Ann Brewing Company. 6:30-9:30pm.

### Friday-Saturday, June 30-July 1

Tent Revival at Hilltop Tabernacle Church. Worldwide recording artists will be performing. Public welcome. 7383 Hoadley Road, Benzonia. [HTabernacle.com](http://HTabernacle.com) for more details. 6:30pm.

### Friday-Sunday, June 30-July 2

Battle at the Betsie Fishing Tournament: Friday is Ladies' Battle, where you can weigh your best five fish. On Saturday and Sunday, weigh your best five fish over two days. Entry fee: \$300. First place prize: \$2,500 and Grizzly 150 cooler. Captains meeting and weigh-ins will take place at Mineral Springs Park in Frankfort. [FishTinyBubbles@att.net](mailto:FishTinyBubbles@att.net) or 231-352-7076.

### Saturday-Tuesday, July 1-4

Carnival comes to the Frankfort Open Space. No clowns, as far as we know.

### Saturday, July 1

23rd Annual Lake Ann Homecoming: opening ceremony, bands, tractor & vintage car parade, luncheon, children's events, food & drinks in the park, bake sale, silent auction, rifle & quilt raffle tickets, vintage car rides, L.A. jail, and more! 9am-3pm.

### Saturday, July 1

Melissa Lee, an up-and-coming Nashville country music artist, performs at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

### Saturday, July 1

Full Cord plays at Lake Ann Brewing. 6:30-9:30pm.

### Monday, July 3

Detroit-based Escaping Pavement performs at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

### Tuesday, July 4

Independence Day! Happy 4th of July!

### Frankfort Events

- Parade begins at 10am: begins on Main Street, turns at 7th Street, then down Forest Avenue to Michigan Avenue, then back up Main Street to the Benzie Shores District Library.
- Art in the Park begins at 10am at Mineral Springs Park.
- Carnival opens at 10am (open July 1-4).
- Sand Castle Sculpture Contest at 12pm at the Frankfort Beach.
- FIREWORKS at dusk (about 10:30pm) on

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**Beulah Events**

- Pancake Breakfast Buffet from 8-11am at the Hungry Tummy Restaurant.
- Firecracker 5k Run begins at 8am at the Beulah Pavillion.
- 1-mile Family Walk/Run (free!) begins at 9am at the Beulah Pavillion.
- Kids games & face-painting from 10:30am-12pm at the Beulah Park.
- Food concession, sponsored by the Boy Scouts, at 12pm in the Beulah Park.
- Parade begins at 1:30pm and runs down South Benzie Boulevard.
- Kids greased pole climb at 2:30pm at Beulah Park.
- Coin hunt at 3:30pm on the Beulah Beach.
- Rubber duck race at 4:30 pm at Beulah Beach. (Duck rental available.)
- Fireworks at dusk (around 10:30pm) at Beulah Beach. (Alternate rain date: July 5th.)

**Wednesday, July 5**

Sisters Chloe and Olivia Kimes at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Wednesday, July 5**

Port Oneida Driving Tour. Learn the history of this 1800s agricultural community by exploring five of the 18 farmsteads with our tour guide. Car pool or drive individually to each farm. Meet at the Charles Olsen Farm. 10am-12pm.

**Thursday, July 6**

Baby's Breath Work Bee: Join the Invasive Species Network (ISN) and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy as we work to remove invasive baby's breath from Elberta Beach in Benzie County! Help ISN to pull invasive baby's breath from the Elberta Beach. Shovels and other tools will be provided, but please bring your own work gloves to protect your hands while using shovels. Long pants are recommended, as there is some poison ivy on the beach. We will meet at Elberta Beach parking lot. Water and other refreshments will be provided. As an extra thank you to volunteers, each participant will receive coupons to both Stormcloud Brewing and the Crescent Bakery. There will also be a drawing at the end of each workbee for additional prizes including discounts to The Cabbage Shed and Frank Z, packets of wildflower seeds, ISN T-shirts, and more! No need to register beforehand, but any questions can be directed to Emily Cook at 231-929-7911. 9am-12pm.

**Thursday, July 6**

Volunteer Trail Building Day at Arcadia Dunes. Come help to connect the Dry Hill Trail to the Village of Arcadia! We are looking for plenty of helpers on this project, which will last into October. Meet at the intersection of St. Pierre Road and the seasonal Taylor Road. Tools will be provided, but bring comfortable shoes, gloves, and plenty to drink. To RSVP, please visit our website at GTRLC.org or call Steve Lagerquist or Jon Troop at 231-929-7911. 10am-12pm.

**Thursday, July 6**

Beulah Music in the Park features He Said, She Said. 7-9pm.

**Thursday, July 6**

The Rough & Tumble perform at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Friday, July 7**

Bayou in the Barn, a Grow Benzie Fundraiser: This one-day festival celebrates the cultural connections that Louisiana and Michigan share through music, food, and community leisure. National and local musicians perform blues, roots, and zydeco music, while Louisiana cuisine is made with Michigan ingredients. All funds raised will benefit Grow Benzie's community center, as well as youth and educational programs. 2017 performers include: Grammy Award Winner Chubby Carrier & the Bayou Swamp Band; Grammy Award Winner Peter "Madcat" Ruth & the Midnight Blues Journey; Grammy-nominated K Jones & the Benzie Playboys. 231-882-9510 or info@GrowBenzie.org. 4-11:30pm.

**Friday, July 7**

Summer Sounds Concert series features Vox Vidorra at Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville. Led by vocal-phenom Molly Bouwsma Schultz, this Kalamazoo indie-soul band is becoming one of the most popular acts in the state. 7-9pm.

**Friday, July 7**

Toledo's Kyle White performs at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Saturday, July 8**

Beulah Art Fair. 10am-5pm.

**Sunday, July 9**

The talented trio of Awesome Distraction performs at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Monday, July 10**

Genna & Jesse bring retro soul pop to Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Tuesday, July 11**

Travis Mulhauser, author of *Sweetwater Girl*, will speak at the Darcy Library of Beulah. Mulhauser is a 2017 Michigan Notable Book Award winner and has received national attention with his debut novel that tells the story of 16-year-old Percy, who rescues a neglected infant during a Northern Michigan blizzard. Mulhauser is originally from Petoskey and now lives in Durham, North Carolina. 7-8:30pm.

**Tuesday, July 11**

Emmy Award-winning composer/songwriter Jeff Bihlman performs at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Thursday, July 13**

Based in New York City, Mulebone is the musical partnership of multi-instrumentalist John Ragusa and roots-music-specialist Hugh Pool. They perform at Stormcloud Brewing Company. 8-10pm.

**Thursday, July 13**

Beulah Music in the Park features Rachel B. 7-9pm.

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# Teenager Lights Up Crystal

Lakeside luminaries mark new 4th of July tradition

By Susan Koenig

Current Contributor

There is something upon which we in Benzie County—locals, lakies, snowbirds, tourists, Democrats, Republicans, oldies, youngies—can all agree upon: notably our love, in varying degrees, for the beautiful Crystal Lake.

But some of us put our money—or, in this case, energy and ingenuity—where our mouths are. That is, into action to defend and protect our lake, its beauty and safety, from pollution and degradation.

One such person is the inimitable 16-year-old A.J. Duggan, a "jock with a social conscience," who has spent every summer at his family's cottage on the east shore of Crystal Lake. That in itself may not sound remarkable, but because of the career demands of his parents, the family has moved five times in less than two decades, thus A.J.'s summers on the lake have provided a constant for him, which has increased his devotion to and appreciation for this beautiful natural resource.

A.J. is a charming and unassuming teenager who aspires to play Division 1 soccer through college and eventually become an engineer. Modest though he is, A.J. confessed, under pressure, to never having received "a B," but he maintains that he "really isn't very good at English." (Check out his letter to the "Crystal Lake Lovers" below, and you may disagree.) A.J. loves boating, wake-boarding, and especially soccer. He is the middle child of a middle child—his older sister is now attending summer camp at Interlochen Center for the Arts for trombone and piano, and his younger brother is another avid soccer player.

A.J.'s generation is constantly being labeled as lazy and individualistic, but A.J. is a refreshing reminder that generalizations like this are unfair—there are many young people who are doing great things and want to get involved, but they sometimes need a spark to get them started.

### All In The Family

A.J. hails from a family of community activists—for instance, his uncle, Mike Duggan, is the progressive mayor of Detroit. His grandmother, Joan Duggan, is no stranger to community action and is active in the Benzie Boosters and other causes.

Last winter, A.J. and his grandmother were lunching together and began to chat about what could be done to help guarantee the preservation of the lake that they both hold so dear. A.J.'s grandmother is an active member of the Crystal Lake Watershed Association (CLWA), which is always in need of creative fundraising ideas, so the pair came up with a plan to help.

According to the CLWA website, the association is a non-profit organization of concerned citizens who are committed to protecting the beauty and water quality of Crystal Lake and its surrounding environment. It engages in monitoring, education, and advocacy on behalf of the broad community for whom Crystal Lake is a vital economic, recreational, and aesthetic resource. Committees include fundraising, education, water quality, zoning and land use, as well as a partnership with other groups that are concerned with the "swimmer's itch" cycle in Crystal Lake. (For more on this eradication effort, read our article from last summer online.)

### The Plan

While attending boarding school in Georgia, A.J. participated in and was very impressed by a cancer benefit, which included a moving ceremony using candles, placed around a pond. He has expanded upon this experience, creating Crystal Lights, his luminary concept that is planned for the upcoming 4th of July celebration in Beulah.

He wrote a letter, addressed to "Dear Crystal Lake Lovers," explaining his idea in the first paragraph:

"As residents and visitors of Crystal Lake, we are asking you to join in an exciting new lake-lighting tradition, called Crystal Lights, to benefit the Crystal Lake Watershed Association. The event will take place on July 4th on the waterfront of Beulah, in conjunction with the fireworks display. 100% of the funds raised will be donated to the Crystal Lake Watershed Association. This will enable the association to continue their research and efforts to keep Crystal Lake pristine. All expenses are already paid for by anonymous donors."

In A.J.'s words, "the concept is simple, but could result in a dramatic visual effect around



A.J. Duggan and his grandmother, Joan Duggan, came up with a plan to honor Crystal Lake, while also fundraising for its preservation. Photo by Susan Koenig.

the village of Beulah's shoreline." His proposal is to place luminary bags, with two LED lights inside each, on the Beulah Public Beach and the entire Beulah waterfront from dusk until the finale of the July 4th fireworks.

The LED packets—20 luminary bags and 40 LED candles—will be provided for a donation of \$20. Bags can be decorated by kids or other family members, and T-shirts will be available for sale at \$15 each or \$10 with a luminary package order.

"It is wonderful—and uncommon—to see a young person take this kind of initiative out of the goodness of his heart, rather than as a community obligation," says Joel Buzzell, president pro-tem of the CLWA. "We at the CLWA are thrilled that A.J. has chosen us to be the beneficiary of his efforts."

A.J. is looking forward to this first year of Crystal Lights, but he is already expanding his goals—his hope is to grow the Crystal Lights project to include the entire lake, so that, for future Independence Days, the whole lake will be entirely illuminated.

Here is one example of a great kid who cares about our environment, who saw a need in his summer community, and who is willing to spearhead a project that will have positive results—plus, it will look enchanting—for many years to come!

*If you wish to pre-order the special T-shirt or LED packets, you may send your size and number to: [dugganjoan@aol.com](mailto:dugganjoan@aol.com) or call 734-623-3275. Your order will be delivered to your home. If high school students would like to participate, they are invited to send their name and phone number to A.J. at the number or email listed above, or to call the Beulah Boosters at 231-882-0262 and ask for A.J. Duggan, chairman of Crystal Lights.*

# Polar Bears

*Continued from page 1*

were weakened by the loss of Tsarist Russia. The Bolsheviks signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany in March of 1918, and the line of battle on Germany's eastern border disappeared. So the American North Russian Expeditionary Force appeared in Archangel, Russia, in September 1918 to keep the Bolsheviks in the south and the Germans out of Murmansk—this adventure later became commonly known as the Polar Bear Expedition.

The units arrived in Archangel, Russia, on September 5, 1918, and 175 out of more than 5,000 troops in the 339th Infantry were unable to disembark their troop transports, as they were being quarantined with the Spanish flu. Although the Americans were specified not to be an offensive force, a day after arrival, on September 6, the British command ordered a push southward along the railroad to Vologda.

It was hailed as a victory, but it had created a front of 450 miles in length that the Allied Forces struggled to defend for the next nine months. (By contrast, the front between France and Germany was roughly the same length, about 500 miles long, and had millions of soldiers entrenched in on either side, whereas the Americans, who comprised the majority of the boots on the ground who were covering the area outside of the Russian city of Archangel, numbered only 5,500 men.)

The notorious Russian winter battled the American troops. President Woodrow Wilson determined that the American soldiers in Russia would not be equipped with standard Army kits—no American flags were to be officially brought to Archangel, and the soldiers did not wear the uniform of the U.S. Army. Cold weather gear, provided by the British Army, was criminally inadequate. Soldiers bartered for improvements from the markets or looted the dead for fur-lined hats, gloves, boots, and coats, which were suitable for the environment that they had been commanded into.

### Local Connection

Walter Dundon of Elberta was a Sergeant in Company "M" of the 339th Infantry, and despite this small sample of the trials that he and his companions experienced, he would willingly return to the same frozen countryside a decade later.

During the early period of WWI, Dundon was awarded the Cross of St. George—a Russian award—for his heroism, and he was promoted to 1st Sergeant. He exhibited excellent leadership during this time, and he continued to be in a leadership role after the war ended, as part of the Polar Bear Association, which was a veterans organization for those soldiers who had served in Russia

during the First World War.

In 1922, Governor Green of Michigan appointed a commission to locate and retrieve fallen American soldiers that remained in Russian soil when the U.S. troops were withdrawn. Gordon T. Shilson, a native of Traverse City, was appointed as the commission's chairman. Dundon, who was then serving as president of the Polar Bear Association, was included in the commission, as well.

By July 1929, enough research and fundraising had been accomplished to send a team over to Russia and retrieve the fallen American soldiers. In partnership with the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the U.S. Government's Graves Registration Service, Dundon had an adventuresome time when he returned to Russia, and the group retrieved 84 American bodies. All of these service members were identified, except two, who were only identified as American by their uniforms.

The Polar Bear Association dedicated the Polar Bear Monument at White Chapel Cemetery in Troy, Michigan, on Memorial Day of 1930, and a total of 55 of the total 84 bodies from the Russian soil were interred in American soil at that location. (When the bodies were retrieved, the bereaved families had an option to be buried with the Polar Bears or a standard burial near the family's home, so some of the retrieved bodies were buried elsewhere.)

Dundon worked as a civil servant in Detroit and Lansing, later moving to Frankfort by 1964, where he lived until his death on January 3, 1970. He is buried at the Crystal Lake North Cemetery, which is north of Frankfort on M-22, just past Crystal Gardens and before the Congregational Summer Assembly (CSA).

As a veteran, I am impressed with the accomplishments of the Polar Bear Commission, and, moreover, of the foresight and the awareness to take detailed notes where each death or burial took place in Russia in 1918. They did this because they knew that they would one day return to retrieve their fallen comrades, and they followed up on that commitment a decade later. I would like to think that the same would have been done for me, if I had fallen during my service (in the Navy, on the Indian Ocean after 9/11). The efforts of the Polar Bears make me proud to be an American veteran, and theirs is a great history that should be better known.

*Andy Bolander is a volunteer with the Benzie Area Historical Museum, which will conduct a cemetery tour on Tuesday, July 11, from 7-8 p.m. A remembrance ceremony will be held at Walter Dundon's grave that evening. Starting Memorial Day weekend, the museum has been maintaining a display on the Polar Bears as part of the World War I exhibit that will be open for the duration of this summer. Check it out during museum hours: Tuesday through Sunday from 1-5 p.m. Or call 231-882-5539 if you have questions. Visit the museum online at BenzieMuseum.org.*

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## Cogs

Continued from page 1

be a place for inter-generational connection.

"I love seeing it work, seeing curiosity inspired across different ages," Wenkel says of the learning center.

### Getting Started

The seed that would later grow into COGNiTION was planted in 2015, when Wenkel spent the day with her four children at the Imagination Station in Toledo, Ohio. They had so much fun that they spent the entire day there, right up until closing, and it was then that Wenkel decided that she wanted Benzie County families to have this experience a bit closer to home.

So she and her mother, Laura Stanwick, the other co-founder of COGNiTION, got to work on the idea: they started the research and business plan in October 2015 and were incorporated by December of that year. They obtained non-profit status in September 2016, developed the board, and began raising the funds for an actual space. This process took about a year and a half.

Since incorporating in December of 2015, COGNiTION has been raising funds to create a space that provides hands-on experiences, explorations, and experiments. On January 20, 2017, the non-profit launched the first phase of that plan with a soft-opening of the Science & Discovery Center in downtown Beulah; the grand opening was held in May 2017.

Currently, the center is working to incorporate more technology, in the form of virtual reality exhibits, with the help of software designer and new board member, Aaron Harris. (You can follow the COGNiTION Facebook page to find out the days and times for these special virtual reality events.)

Many local groups have been eager to get involved with COGNiTION.

"Recently, McLain Cycle & Fitness of Traverse City donated 27 gently used bikes and large sales counters," Wenkel says. "So far, three of the bikes are being used in an exhibit, three have gone to good homes via door prizes, two have found a home with a family that has a COGNiTION membership and volunteers gladly, and we are working on a plan to disperse the rest to the community in the near future."

Additionally, the Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club granted \$2,030 towards the Gears, Circuits, and Power (oh my!) Exhibit that the bikes are a part of, and that also includes the center's large educational K'NEX collection.

"We have also been blessed by Nugent Ace Hardware [of Benzonia], with a sweet busy board in our boat exhibit," Wenkel continues. "Honor Building Supply donated the lumber for our first homemade exhibit—the big circuit wall. And we've enjoyed hosting a playgroup with Grow Benzie and 5toOne; it meets the last Tuesday of the month at Grow Benzie from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m."

To complement the fantastic exhibits that you can experience in the center, there is also a gift shop, featuring toys and gifts that will expand your child's mind, while keeping you engaged, as well.

### Long-term Plan

Though they are settling into their new space, the non-profit's board is by no means settling. They have a long-term vision that includes moving into a larger space, but remaining in downtown Beulah. In a variety of ways, COGNiTION hopes to feature and support local businesses, as well as being a send-off point to the best that our area has to offer—the hope is that COGNiTION will draw guests to the beautiful little town of Beulah and help to sustain the community and other businesses in the area.

Plans for the future of COGNiTION are grand and inspiring—COGNiTION is seeking to raise \$1.5 million from grants and other fundraising efforts, which could also include low-interest loans, if necessary.

Imagine walking into a children's playscape, full of fun and educational toys that little hands are encouraged to touch. From there, enter into a "fairy garden," where you become the fairy, scampering beneath giant ferns and mushrooms. Next, you will encounter animals of all kinds that, unlike those at the zoo, you can pet and hold and feed. If you ever tire of interacting with the animals, you could become a weather reporter or climb through a giant tree into a Swiss Family Robinson-style treehouse, while learning about the parts and processes of these forest giants. After learning in the treehouse, you enter into an active orchard, where apples and cherries are ripe for picking and ready to be transported to nearby mini-cafes and storefronts in an active replica of our Northern Michigan hamlet.

If they get the location that they are hoping for—currently the Old Kenney Garage, a beautiful brick building with an arched roof at 163 S. Benzie Boulevard in downtown Beulah—the second story of the future building might feature an art studio or maker space, as well as a gallery. There could be a small theater, featuring inspiring and innovative films such as the *Planet Earth* series or 20th Century Fox's *Robots*, movies that kids and parents, even grandparents, would enjoy and that would inspire ideas and conversation.

### How To Get Involved

Perhaps the easiest way to get involved in this exciting endeavor is to show up and check out the space for yourself. Walk around, play, bring the kids.

If you want to be a part of making the board's long-term vision become a reality, you can become a COGtributor, a COGzibit sponsor, or a COGmission founder today. (Details can be found at [DiscoverCognition.org](http://DiscoverCognition.org). You can also donate online at [HometownGiving.org](http://HometownGiving.org).)

"Our members have become part of our family," Wenkel says of those who have already donated to COGNiTION's efforts, adding that more members are needed for the non-profit to grow into a bigger space. COGNiTION currently has 61 member families, with multiple individuals included in each family.

Are you a scientist or a kids' entertainer with a focus on education? Or maybe you just want to volunteer? Giving of your time or talents is also a fantastic way to support the continued growth of this year-round local community center.

And in a unique spin on advertising, with a focus on connecting with the community, those who are passionate about furthering COGNiTION's mission, or those who are just looking for a fun birthday party theme, can host a house party. Invite your friends—and their kids—and COGNiTION will bring a unique, hands-on learning experience into your home!

As far as the multi-generational connection that Wenkel loves to see at the educational center, she sees it happening in her own family, as well. Her mother, Laura Stanwick, continues to help to run the center and has encouraged her from the start. Stanwick lives in Frankfort and is retired from occupational therapy at Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital.

"She is talented in many ways including art, creativity, attention to detail, and loving care," Wenkel beams about her mother.

However, Wenkel's husband and four children also provide feedback on new exhibits and help to find new material for the center.

It is truly a family-centered business.

*Located at 244 S. Benzie Boulevard in Beulah, COGNiTION is a hands-on learning center for kids of all ages. Open Tuesday through Thursday from 1-5:30 p.m., Fridays from 1-7 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Also this summer, COGNiTION is offering day camps from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Tuesdays through Fridays, featuring themes ranging from Machine Madness to Wild Animals. A full schedule of dates and themes is available on their website at [DiscoverCognition.org](http://DiscoverCognition.org) or call 231-383-4095. You can also follow them at [Facebook.com/DiscoverCOGNITION](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverCOGNITION) or on Instagram at @discover\_cognition.*



# Preventing Drowning Deaths

National Park increases water-safety awareness

By Jacob Wheeler

Current Contributor

Last June 22, before Scott Tucker had finished his first week as the new superintendent at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, a vacationer drowned while snorkeling in Loon Lake, near the Platte River. Two weeks later, an 81-year-old man from southeast Michigan perished in Big Glen Lake when his boat drifted away while he was swimming. And on September 5, a 21-year-old died when his kayak capsized near Platte Bay in Lake Michigan waters.

Three drowning deaths in or near our National Lakeshore within less than three months last summer season. (Just recently, on June 11 of this year, another drowning death took place, this time in West Grand Traverse Bay—a flipped canoe sent two teenagers into the water, without life jackets.)

National Park policy stipulates that visitors are responsible for their own safety. But when something goes wrong, Sleeping Bear Dunes staff, first responders, and local law enforcement respond.

“Are we giving people as much water-safety training as we should?” Tucker asked himself.

## Doing Something About It

Drowning is the number one cause of death within our National Parks. Nationwide, 10 people each day die from drowning, and two of those 10 are children under the age of 14, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Between 2010 and 2016, 537 people drowned in the Great Lakes. Data collected by the Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project (GLSRP) counted 46 drowning deaths in Lake Michigan during 2016 alone.

GLSRP executive director Dave Benjamin attributes the increase in water tragedies to hotter summers and longer seasons, which brings more people into Lake Michigan waters. If the weather forecast for this summer holds, Benjamin adds, this could be another hot one, with more people going to the beach.

But he resists the temptation to characterize drowning deaths as a new problem.

“Drownings in the Great Lakes have always been a huge problem,” he says. “We just didn’t have a way to collect the data before. Now, because of the internet, because of Google news alerts, the drownings are more noticed.”

This challenge prompted our National Lakeshore staff to facilitate a first-ever “Splash Into Summer: Water Adventure Expo” earlier this month at Platte Point at the end of Lake Michigan Road, on the afternoon of Saturday, June 17. The educational event included water-play safety demonstrations, skills practice, and exhibits. The expo was designed to appeal to anyone who likes to swim or paddle in rivers, inland lakes, or Lake Michigan. Kayak and stand-up paddleboard (SUP) demonstrations, mock capsizing/self-rescue exercises, and life-jacket-fittings were also offered. Stations were set up for weather and rip-current recognition, gear checklists, and drowning survival strategies. Still, the expo managed to be lighthearted, too, featuring face-painting and scavenger hunts for kids, with food trucks on site.

“As the water warms up and becomes more inviting in early summer, this event [was] a great opportunity to develop skills and remind everyone about water safety and the importance of wearing a life jacket,” Tucker says. “It is essential to know how to respond if you find yourself in an unplanned, out-of-boat experience or a rip current.”

In addition to the expo, which had about

300 people in attendance, the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is also hiring a preventative search and rescue intern this year. This individual will visit popular sites and talk to visitors about safe practices on the water.

Merrith Baughman, chief of interpretation and visitor services for Sleeping Bear Dunes, hopes that there will be another event next year. She says that most of the partners—including the National Park, GLRSP, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Benzie County Emergency Medical Services, the Coast Guard, Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital, and others—attended a post-meeting, and all had great things to say about the event. For the event to happen again, Baughman says, it will depend on resources and staff time that are made available next year.

## Bridging The Disconnect

In 2016, the World Health Organization noted that drownings continue to be a neglected public health issue worldwide. But the resources allocated by governments have not fit the scope of the problem, according to GLRSP’s Dave Benjamin.

For instance, the U.S. government spent millions to combat the Zika virus—and media told countless horror stories of the mosquito-borne disease creeping northward—but drowning deaths have not prompted a national call to action. Meanwhile, 10 Americans each day drown.

“There’s a huge disconnect,” Benjamin says.



Drowning deaths are increasing in national parks nationwide, and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore wants to educate people about safe swimming practices, as shown in this water-safety training. Photo courtesy of SBDNL.

GLSRP also warns that knowing how to swim should not be interpreted as a cure to prevent drowning.

“Knowing how to swim gives a false sense of security,” Benjamin adds. “When we look at the statistics, two-thirds of all drowning victims are good swimmers, who often overestimate their abilities.”

Furthermore, when children know how to swim, it tends to reduce parental supervision.

“What we say is, ‘Everyone knows how to run, but not everyone can run a marathon,’” Benjamin says. “If you’re in water over your head, and you exhaust your energy, you could drown.”

According to GLSRP, a whopping 54 percent of Americans do not have basic swimming abilities to save their own lives in a water emergency. When people were tested on five basic skills—being able to resurface, treading water, turning around 360 degrees in the water, swimming at least 25 yards, and climbing out of water without assistance—more than half could not do it.

“People just assume that going to the beach is like going to the pool,” Benjamin says. “So if we put 1,000 people on the beach, 540 of them don’t have the ability to save themselves... Then you add winds, water currents, and cold water fluctuations.”

*Jacob Wheeler is a former editor of The Betsie Current. A version of this story first published in our sister publication, the Glen Arbor Sun, where Wheeler still serves as editor.*



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# Story Updates

## Jay White, Land Consulting Services

In Volume V Issue 7, published August 18, 2017, we featured a Q&A with Jay White, of Land Consulting Services, an exclusive buyer's

spending time at the beach with her daughter and their two dogs. She is looking forward to working as a buyers real-estate buyers agent



Kristin Tebo (L), Jay White (C), and Kari Lawler (R). Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

agency that was founded in 2014 and based upon the growing national trend for buyers to be exclusively represented in a real-estate transaction. In large part due to White's keen business sense and great personality—and in small part thanks to our article getting the word out about his business—Land Consulting Services assisted 29 clients to find the right home and closed on nearly \$9 million in sales during 2016. This means that White's business has been able to expand, bringing on two new sales associates this spring.

The first is White's daughter, Kari Lawler, born and raised in Frankfort. Lawler graduated from Grand Valley State University, and she also studied European history and art at the University of Salzburg in Austria. After college, she moved to Sun Valley, Idaho, for five years, where she started working for Scott Sports, a global ski and bike company. She has continued to work for Scott for 10 years doing national sales, marketing, and product development/management. This experience taught Lawler how much she enjoys working with and building relationships with people, so she is very glad to have returned home to the beauty of Northern Michigan, where she is raising her family. She enjoys spending time outdoors, whether skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking with fellow Stormcloud Riders, or

because she has a true joy in helping families to find a home in this area that is so close to her own heart.

The second new employee is sales associate Kristin Tebo, who grew up in Dayton, Ohio, and graduated in 1987 from Ohio State University with a degree in business and marketing. While her roots are in Ohio—and yes, she is a former Buckeye—Tebo followed her parents to Illinois 30 years ago, where she spent the next 17 years in Chicago, where she met her husband, Steve Tebo (notably, who is currently the chef at Chimney Corners Resort on the north shore of Crystal Lake). In 2006, the Tebos moved to Benzie County to run one of Frankfort's favorite restaurants, the Coho Cafe, located on Main Street for five years. (The Coho is now owned and managed by Becky DeVries.) For the past 12 years, Kristin Tebo has served as Regional Sales Director for a retail organization. A Midwest girl at heart, she is thrilled to be a Michigan-resident and beginning to work alongside Jay White in support of her real-estate clients.

Learn more at [LandConsultingServices.com](http://LandConsultingServices.com), or email [Jay@LandConsultingServices.com](mailto:Jay@LandConsultingServices.com), [Kari@LandConsultingServices.com](mailto:Kari@LandConsultingServices.com), or [Kristin@LandConsultingServices.com](mailto:Kristin@LandConsultingServices.com), or call 231-631-0574.

## Renovations to Michigan Shores

In Volume V Issue 3, our Susan Koenig wrote about "youthful vigor on the hill" at Michigan Shores, a self-governing housing cooperative of senior citizens, located on the Frankfort bluffs. Constructed in 1991, the facility celebrated its 25th anniversary last year, and you can read Koenig's original story here: [bit.ly/29wXv1M](http://bit.ly/29wXv1M)

Since Koenig's story ran last June, Michigan Shores Cooperative has announced the completion of their first floor renovation. The project's general contractor was Harris Custom Carpentry, one of Benzie County's trusted building contractors, and the remodel was managed by owner Fred Harris. The renovation included updating the carpeting in the hallways, dining room, and lobby, as well as fresh paint throughout and wood trim around all of the doors.

Since opening in 1991, Michigan Shores has not had renovations of this scale. The remodel will transform the space to a more

modern concept.

"We are excited to get our 2nd and 3rd floors done early next year" says Shirley Robert, corporate manager of Michigan Shores.



Michigan Shores is a housing cooperative in Frankfort. Photo courtesy of Michigan Shores.

"The renovation will transform the entire building."

Renovations to the 1st floor began in April 2017 and were completed mid-June. The 2nd and 3rd floors are on schedule for the January 2018.

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# A Lot Can Happen in a Year

Nicole L. Bates, Speech Therapist & Novelist

In Volume V Issue 3, published June 23, 2016, we featured a Q&A with Nicole L. Bates of Encouraging Expression, her own speech therapy practice, which ranges from one-on-one, in-home appointments locally to virtual, online sessions—you can read that article here: [bit.ly/2bUWUKN](http://bit.ly/2bUWUKN).

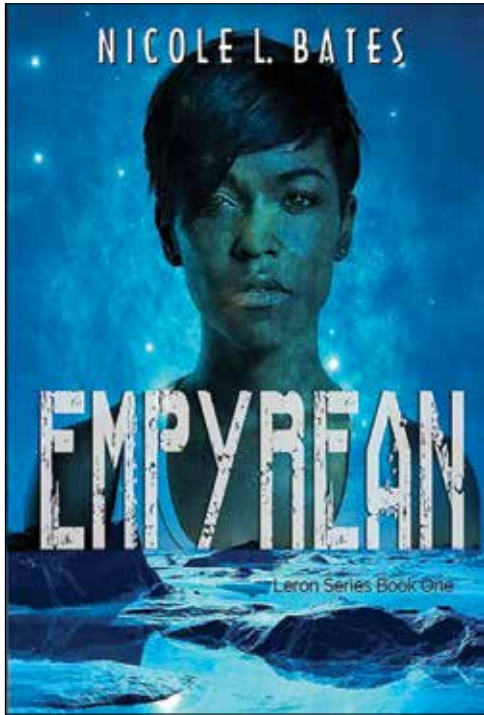
But not only is Bates a speech therapist, she is also a writer. (See one of her many stories for us featured in this issue of The Betsie Current, on pages 1 and 8.)

Bates's first novel, *Empyrean*, was released in January 2017. *Empyrean*—a science-fiction adventure and the first book in The Leron Series—is currently available in e-book and paperback through Amazon. A copy can also be checked out at the Benzie Shores District Library in downtown Frankfort.

Bates says that the response from friends and family has been overwhelming.

"I'm thrilled with the support and enthusiasm from friends who've read the story and shared the news with others," Bates says. "It's really been more than I expected."

The second book in the series, *Empyrean's Fall*, is scheduled for release in January 2018. To get the latest updates, you can follow her at [Facebook.com/WriterNicoleLBates](https://www.facebook.com/WriterNicoleLBates) or on Twitter at @NicoleLBates.



*Empyrean* is available on Amazon. Image courtesy of Nicole L. Bates.

## Benzie Bus, Magical History Tour

In Volume V Issue 2, published June 9, 2016, Mitch Kennis wrote about the launch of Benzie Bus's Magical History Tours, two 30-minute loops—intersecting in Beulah—that featured many of Benzie County's most famous historical landmarks. The Magical History Tours ran every Monday during the summer of 2016, and you can read Kennis's original story here: [bit.ly/28Yk7Mm](http://bit.ly/28Yk7Mm)

Well, the Magical History Tour is back for a second summer, and they have expanded the routes and included new stories, including the tale of the 1919 grasshopper plague that struck Benzie County. The Magical History Tours will enlighten your day with secret mysteries, wild history, and some classic tales. This year, they are again offering two separate tours with the same amount of fun and fascinating information.

The Thompsonville route begins by exploring the many important foundations of Beulah and Benzonia. The tour then heads to the Benzonia Cemetery, followed by the Betsie River Centennial Lily Farm, where passengers will disembark for a personal tour with the owner. From there, riders will head to the Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort, then to Thompsonville, where the tour explores the history of the pioneers with their lumbering quests. Finally, passengers will head to St. Ambrose Cellars, home of the largest beekeepers in Michigan.

The Frankfort route, meanwhile, leads passengers on a journey adjacent the old Ann Arbor Railroad. The tour follows the trail down scenic River Road, with special attractions like Beedazzled, the Crystal Lake Alpaca Farm, and Gwen Frostic's. Passengers then take a trip into what used to be South Frankfort—today known as Elberta—to explore the history of the old Iron Works

and to discuss the hard labors of lumbering in Benzie County. Next, into downtown Frankfort, where passengers will exit for a short walk down Main Street and consider the history of the old buildings, the story of the piers, the death of the beloved Father Jacques Marquette, and the tale of Chicago mobster Al Capone, burrowing through the underground tunnels of Frankfort.



Magical History Tour. Shoddy Photoshop job by Jordan B. Bates.

Both tours include the Benzie Area Historical Museum and The Village of Beulah. The museum highlights the biggest events in Benzie County history such as: car ferries, Bruce Catton, the Grand Army of the Republic, and the brand new exhibit on how World War I affected the area. The Village of Beulah has an overwhelming amount of history, as well, with stories including: Archibald Jones and his comical blunder, the overabundance of smelt leading to the sport of "smelt dipping," and The Cherry Hut's wonderful business adventures, just to name a few.

Benzie Bus and the Benzie Area Historical Museum have partnered up with the help of generous local sponsors to provide this special program. If you would like to be a part of these unique experiences, tours began June 1, 2017, and will continue every Thursday and Friday through October at 12 p.m. And 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per tour. For reservations, call Benzie Bus at 231-325-3000.

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**Felting Fun:** All ages, July 14 or July 21, 10am - 12:30pm.

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**Exploring Drawing:** July 25 1:30pm - 3:30pm. All ages.

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