

# The Betsie Current

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## An evening of Gilbert and Sullivan

Cherry pies, beach bonfires, and CSA summer musicals

By Ginanne Brownell Mitic

Current Contributor

Almost every summer for the past five decades, the Congregational Summer Assembly (CSA) has held musicals—dubbed “adult operettas”—in a hat tip to W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, well known for their 19th-century musical follies.

In the early days, these shows were mostly all Gilbert and Sullivan including *HMS Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *The Mikado*. But over the years, the CSA performers—ranging in age from teenagers to retirees—have put on everything from *South Pacific* and *Guys and Dolls* to *Kiss Me Kate* and *The Sound of Music*. These operettas, which switched biannually between July and August, have become as much a tradition within



“All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players.” Photo courtesy of the Congregational Summer Assembly.

the CSA (and for neighboring locals) as cherry pies and Lake Michigan beach fires.

Last year, however, the cast of *Fiddler on the Roof* sang a particularly poignant rendition of “Tradition,” because it was announced during the Saturday performance that the CSA operetta tradition would take a hia-

tus during the 2015 summer season.

It’s almost like that final scene we all know and love from the movie *Dirty Dancing* when the resort owner says that times are changing. The CSA operettas—though fun for the cast and crew—took up a chunk of their vacation, pulling people away from their summer cottages and acting as a drain on their schedules. Though audiences dearly loved the operettas, over the years it had become more difficult to get young and mid-career actors involved in the shows; hurdles included competing vacation activities such as summer jobs and finding childcare during rehearsal time.

But not to fear. This year, the CSA has taken a different track—instead of a full-blown operetta, actors will perform scenes and songs

Please see Operetta on page 8

## Lake Ann’s Own Woodward Cruise

A Motown tradition migrates north

By Samantha Graves

Current Contributor

Woodward Avenue is the main street of Michigan’s Motor City. The north-south trunkline highway was something of a catwalk for unveiling the sleek styling and under-the-hood muscle of mid-20th-century, American-made automobiles. For teens of the era, the drive-in was the meeting place to commune with friends and their cars and—in some cases—to place a \$5 (a hefty sum) wager on a drag race, taking place on some desolate road located outside the city limits.

Between factories located in Detroit and Flint, the American car industry boomed with new Buicks, Chevrolets, Fords, Oldsmobiles, and Pontiacs rolling off assembly lines. By the end of the 1950s, some 58 million American-made cars had been sold and nearly one-sixth of the U.S. population was employed by some

facet the automotive industry. Cars were not only affordable to the average household, they fueled our economy and supported a way of life that included security, mobility, and—for youth—a newly garnered sense of freedom and adventure in the form of some fast, fast cars.

Today, the spirit of Woodward Avenue is commemorated with the Woodward Dream Cruise, a car show that represents the largest single-day automotive event in the world. More than 1 million people from all across the globe descend on the 20-mile span of road between Detroit and Pontiac to showcase more than 40,000 classic cars annually.

A little of that Woodward spirit has landed up here in Lake Ann. Don Ellis and Bobby Beck, of Detroit and the Tri-City area respectively, retired Up North and brought their love of classic cars with them. Last summer, Ellis started the Lake Ann Car Show, a gathering of people and their classic, muscle, and well-

loved automobiles in downtown Lake Ann, and Beck soon joined Ellis as co-organizer of the weekly summer event.

They say it’s the quaintness of Lake Ann that attracted them to the area.

“It’s a very good place for a car show,” Ellis says, pointing to the main thoroughfare through town. “This road right here is right across from the store [Lake Ann General Store], Stone Oven, the brewery [Lake Ann Brewery], the coffee shop [Red Door], the town hall, the park—I mean, everything is conducive to having a really nice get-together.”

He adds that the event is growing by word of mouth, with newcomers stopping by to see the cars, meeting neighbors, and then patronizing the local businesses.

Please see Cruising on page 3



A 1978 Silver Anniversary Corvette sits outside the Almira Township Hall in Lake Ann. Photo courtesy of Don Ellis.

## Beulah’s Thursday Evening Scene

Music, galleries, shopping, and nightlife

By Susan Koenig

Current Contributor

The village of Beulah (population 342 souls), attractively situated on the east shore of Crystal Lake in Benzie County, just west of US-31, hums during the day but is not known for much liveliness after 5 p.m. However, there is a “scene” downtown, particularly on Thursday nights in the summer. Mark your calendars—in Beulah, you’ll find music, art, boutiques, wine, and cheese.

Music in the Park happens every Thursday evening through August 6. Enjoy—seated or dancing—these lively, free concerts by favorite area musicians. The music begins at 7 p.m. and lasts about an hour or so. The audience, young and old, is encouraged to bring chairs,

blankets, snacks, and favorite beverages to the Beulah Village Park and listen to music as the sun sets.

If your evening wants to continue after the concert, then walk back to Benzie Boulevard to sample Beulah’s nightlife. (Yes, it’s small, but there is one.) For dining and music, head to the newly upgraded Cold Creek Inn where Steve



The Accidentals, a Northern Michigan favorite in the music scene, draw a big crowd to Beulah for Thursday night Music in the Park. Photo by Susan Koenig.

Fernand will be playing guitar and harmonica. Across the boulevard, you can also visit the Hungry Tummy or the Corner Pub, which are next door to each other, for some food and drinks.

Several of Beulah’s shops and boutiques will remain open later than usual on Thursdays, including Crystal Crate and Cargo (“distinctive accessories for home and person”), Mary Perzigian’s Luna Boutique (“small town, big style” women’s clothing), and Creation Farm Market (“organic and natural foods and skincare options”).

Please see Beulah on page 3



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# Walking the Lake Michigan Beach

A public right or trespassing?

By Linda Alice Dewey  
Current Contributor

It’s common knowledge that the public can walk along the Lake Michigan shoreline. You can walk it anywhere on public property—that means public road ends or the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The question is: how far from the water’s edge can a person legally walk along private property? This is an important issue, since about 70 percent of Michigan’s “third coast” is privately owned. The answer is unclear, because neither courts in Michigan nor in other Great Lakes states have offered a clear and consistent answer.

Here’s one simple solution. “The public has always had the right to walk along the Great Lakes shoreline,” says Robyn Wright of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). “As long as they were walking with their feet in the water.”

Your right to walk in the water comes from something called the Public Trust Doctrine, which originated with Roman law. It states, “Now the things which are, by natural law, common to all are these: the air, running water, the sea, and therefore the seashores.” That later carried over to English common law, which was paraphrased in a 2005 Michigan Supreme Court decision: “The sovereign [in this case, the state] must preserve and protect navigable waters for its people.” It goes on to explain that, “the state serves, in effect, as the trustee of public rights in the Great Lakes for fishing, hunting, and boating for commerce or pleasure.”

What about walking? That would be “navigation,” the court decided. Things become complex if the water is too cold or rough to walk in, thus necessitating that you walk on dry land. Muddying the case even further—with the water as high as it is now—where can a person walk without trespassing? That question has been tossed around and re-interpreted by Michigan courts for nearly 100 years.

In Ohio, you definitely have to keep your feet in the water—but that’s not the case anymore in Michigan. In 1955, the Michigan legislature passed the Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act (GLSLA).

“That GLSLA was really the key,” says attorney Dave Powers with Save Our Shoreline (SOS), an organization that represents the interests of Great Lakes riparians [beach landowners]. “Because what it did was to give the state—the Department of Conservation—the power to regulate land that was in the Public Trust. Up to that point, it was always clear that the beach was owned by the riparian landowner to the water’s edge and that therefore the beach was not in the Public Trust.”

Still others may take a different point of view on this.

At any rate, the GLSLA created a fixed “Ordinary High-Water Mark” (OHWM) point at 580.5 feet in elevation. From that point to the water, the land was deemed in the Public Trust. What wasn’t clear was where people could walk: did the public have to stay in the water?

Then, in 1998, a lawsuit was filed by Joan Glass, who owned property behind a couple on Lake Huron by the name of Goeckel. Glass alleged that the Goeckels harassed her when she walked in front of their home on the beach, something she had been doing for decades. When it came to decisions, there was no consensus on this one between the courts.



High water levels in Lake Michigan have decimated beaches, leaving little room to walk the shoreline and potentially pitting the public against private landowners. Photo of Empire Beach by Mimi Wheeler.

The lower court found in Glass’s favor, the Court of Appeals overturned that decision in favor of the Goeckels, and finally, in 2005, the Michigan Supreme Court found in Glass’s favor. But once again, the judges disagreed over the ruling.

Glass v. Goeckel (G v. G) was a game-changer, setting a precedent for the public’s right to walk the shoreline. At the same time, the court acknowledged the private rights of property owners to the water’s edge, but held that those private rights overlapped with the Public Trust and could not interfere with the public’s right to walk Great Lakes beaches. It defined a “Natural Ordinary High-Water Mark” (NOHWM), which is different from the OHWM that was defined in the 1955 act.

“The natural ordinary high-water mark is not the same as the jurisdictional ordinary high-water mark elevation [of 580.5],” says the DEQ’s Wright. This NOHWM would ideally be “the point on the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the water is so continuous as to leave a distinct mark either by erosion, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other easily recognized characteristic.”

The G v. G decision has since faced severe criticism.

“I think the Glass v. Goeckel decision is the most poorly written decision I have read

in my 28 years as an attorney,” says Powers of Save our Shoreline. “It basically ignores the Peterman Decision from 1994. It largely ignores the holding of Hilt v. Weber. It ignores several decisions of the Michigan Supreme Court after Hilt v. Weber. There is a decision in Ohio that was basically the same kind of case, and that case has made it to the Ohio Supreme Court, and they held in favor of the beach owners in a class action lawsuit. That trial judge, Judge Lucci, said that the Glass v. Goeckel decision was poorly [reasoned].”

In addition, G v. G was confined to the issue of walking the beach.

“I am not aware of any subsequent court cases that have expanded or clarified the rights described under the Supreme Court decision to include any other activities than walking,” Wright says. Moreover, it doesn’t say whether the public can ride off-road vehicles or pitch a tent or an umbrella, or even stop to rest in front of private land.

In its decision, the court stated “the private title of littoral landowners remains subject to the Public Trust beneath the ordinary high-water mark.” So what about landowners’ rights for their strip of Public Trust land along the shoreline?

“All riparian owners have and enjoy the riparian right to their property,” says attorney Jim Olson, president of Traverse City-based FLOW (For Love of Water) and a Benzie County resident. “That is, the Public Trust is paramount, but they [public vs. private rights] are not mutually exclusive—they sit side by side. Riparians have access to the water’s edge to enjoy their docks or riparian uses. Their use is broader and different than the public use of walking.”

So, the public gets to walk up to the observable high-water mark. But now there’s a new wrinkle—with the invasive grasses that have taken root practically down to the water’s edge, and with the rising lake levels, Olson says, “The question for beach walkers is: where is it?”

The court, in its 2005 decision, anticipated this problem but only in part, when it stated, “And where the bank or shore at any particular place is of such a character that is impossible or difficult to ascertain where the point of ordinary high-water mark is, recourse may be had to other places on the bank or shore of the same stream or lake to determine whether a given stage of water is above or below ordinary high-water mark.”

But what happens when the whole beach is difficult to ascertain?

“Mother Nature, in her swings of climate

Please see Trespass on page 7



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Beulah

Continued from page 1

**The Gallery Scene**

Live (rhymes with “give”) for Art is a beautiful gallery on Beulah’s main street and a one-minute walk from the park. Owner and operator Mary Lane hosts an artist opening reception with wine, cheese, and conviviality every Thursday through August 6 from 5-7 p.m.

Lane moved to Benzie County in 2010 looking for a space to rent and house an art gallery, but instead she bought the building at 273 S. Benzie Boulevard that is now home to her and husband Ben Wolfe, as well as to a large and eclectic art collection that changes regularly. They have one employee, Kristi Kuhn.

Lane grew up in Columbus, attended Hope College, and married Wolfe, who is a fishing guide by trade but also her partner in the business. She began her artistic career in television and video, making artist videos, watching the creative process and how the artists “make their magic.” She decided to “live her dream and her passion” by encouraging and exhibiting artwork in her very own gallery. Live for Art is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and random Sundays (events or special holidays), along with later hours on Thursday, as mentioned above.

Next door to Live for Art is State of the Art Framing and Gallery, owned by Steve and Ann Loveless. For many years, Steve owned a frame store in Traverse City, and subsequently, in 2003, opened a second location in Beulah. He does custom framing in the gallery, but he is also a talented professional photographer.

Steve majored in cinematography at Northwestern Michigan University, but says, “As I progressed through college, I got closer and closer to still photography, finding it more accessible.” He has had artwork other than his own displayed in the gallery, and eventually Steve encouraged Ann, his partner in business and in life, to branch out from her concentration on alterations and doll clothes. She took his advice, and later she won First Prize in 2013 at Art Prize in Grand Rapids. The couple has been married for 13 years. Both will submit entries for this year’s Art Prize. Ann’s work is also on display at the gallery alongside Steve’s.

The gallery is open 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. It is not open later on Thursdays, because Steve runs the Music in the Park series—he books the musicians, introduces them, and helps set up the sound system.

Across the street from the galleries is L’Chayim Delicatessen, a popular eatery, gathering place, take-out and catering restaurant. However, on certain Thursdays in the summer, the deli is also an art gallery, conceived and directed by Julie Orr, wife of L’chayim owner Jonathan Clark.

Orr graduated from Benzie Central High School and now teaches at Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District’s Career Tech Center in Traverse City. As an artist and a teacher, Orr was often asked by student artists, “How do I exhibit my work?” She decided that she might be able to help her students—and other adult artists—through the process of organizing, advertising, and selling their oeuvre in a non-threatening setting. They have to hang, label, price, and take down their exhibit. She asks for a bio, a few samples, and a press release before the openings.

After forcing Clark to repaint the interior of the deli, Orr launched her Hit the Wall series, which showcases a new artist (currently it’s the aforementioned Steve Loveless) every few weeks into the fall. Each show usually opens on a Thursday evening to coincide with Music in the Park and Live for Art artist receptions, but the open houses continue into the fall even after Beulah’s Thursday night scene ends in August. Hit the Wall’s first show on July 23 will be the husband and wife team of Harriet and Perry Jones. This will be Harriet’s first exhibit of her paintings, but Perry is “seasoned” and will also have a solo show in August.

Each show opens with a wine and cheese party after the deli closes, from 5:30-7 p.m. There is plenty of time to get from here to Live for Art (or vice versa) and still make it to the park for the concerts.

JUST OPENED: “Here today, gone tomorrow,” a new gallery. Commission-free, bring your art, or buy someone else’s, or just browse. Located on the first floor of the former Central State Bank building—now for sale!—at 254 S. Benzie Boulevard, across from Live for Art. Email karen@mandrininfoservices.com or call 231-218-0296.

Cruising

Continued from page 1

**Every Car Has a Story**

When asked what inspired Ellis’s love of classic and muscle cars, he smiles.

“My dad liked cars, so I used to sit in the garage, and we would wax his car about every three months,” Ellis explains.

Having worked as a hospital administrator in the Detroit area, Ellis was ready to turn his attention to his first passion upon retirement. Ellis describes the Lake Ann event as a community gathering.

“There’s no entry fee, no judging, no trophy. We come up, we bring our cars, and we stand next to them and tell the car story. Every car has a story,” he says.

Part of Ellis’s car story involves a 1978 Silver Anniversary Corvette that he purchased when he was 29.

“Corvettes have this thing—it’s the styling, the mystique,” he explains. “I take it to this car show and that, but I’ve never entered it to be judged. I just like to go, look at the other cars, talk about my car, talk to car people—car people can talk about cars forever. They never stop. We never get enough of it.”

**(Wind) Tunnel Vision**

Ellis’s love of classic and muscle cars comes from a difference in perspective.

“Cars today have been styled in a wind tunnel, so they get better mileage—they all look to me like a jellybean,” he says. “They’ve got rounded corners; they look like a wedge, so they can move through the air better. The styling in the ’50s and ’60s cars will never be back.”

Ellis goes on to explain that at the peak of the U.S. auto industry’s rein, the unveiling of a new model wasn’t just a dealership sales opportunity, it was a community event.

“The dealerships used to put paper on their windows so you couldn’t see the new cars, and there was a drop-dead day when they were going to pull that paper down,” he says. “They’d be packed with people. That doesn’t happen any more because the cars don’t change from year to year, where in the ’60s and ’50s, they changed a lot every year.”

Beck agrees that newer cars are great for fuel efficiency and even speed. While he has a passion for the older styling of the classic cars, he now drives a 2002 Convertible Roadster, a very different car from his first Corvette, a 1964 with a 365 under the hood. That car, he describes fondly, “was fast as hell and never got beat.”

Ellis nods and says, “The classic cars have rumbling, thumping horse-power. When you’re standing next to the car, the ground is shaking. The new cars are very smooth and really quiet—you wouldn’t even know they have a lot of horsepower compared to the classic cars because they’re so quiet.”

Beck agrees that the cars were designed to command respect, but in purchasing his first Corvette as an adolescent, he discovered something more: “Camaraderie,” he explains. “You’re 19, and you get to do the Corvette wave, the ‘V,’ and—you and me—we’re connecting.”

**A Way of Meeting People**

Both Ellis and Beck fondly recall the days when they cruised Woodward Avenue in Detroit. While Ellis was one of the pioneers of the modern Woodward Cruise, he was also an active participant along the stretch in his youth.

“I used to go out there with my brother,” he says. “I spent almost every night for five years—from the time I was 14—on Woodward, because that’s what kids did back in that time. Everybody that had a car went out and cruised Woodward. The cars were the way a lot of young people met each other. Woodward: you meet girls on Woodward. There are Woodward marriages because of cars of that era. People would meet future spouses on Woodward. The girls would go out there to meet the guys.”

Today, Ellis and Beck hope to help others connect with the nostalgia of the era.

*The Lake Ann Car Show is held every Tuesday (weather permitting) at 6 p.m. Cars usually begin lining up around 5:30 p.m. All cars are welcome, as well as boats or other vehicle creations, because “every car has a story.”*

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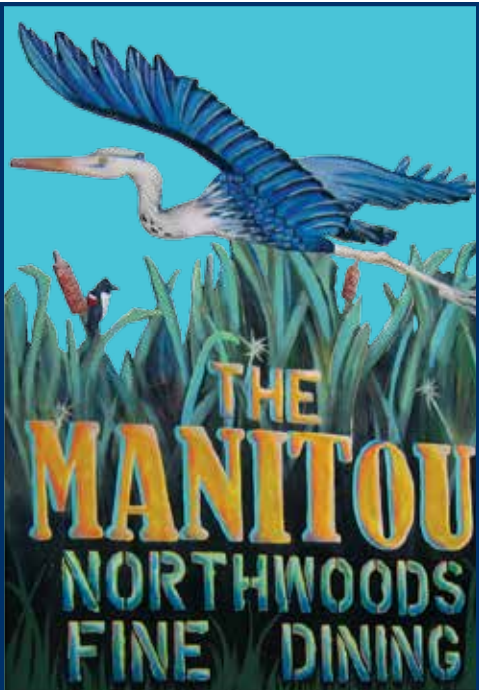
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P.O. Box 90 • Frankfort, MI 49635  
Phone: (612) 804-5975  
editor@BetsieCurrent.com  
ads@BetsieCurrent.com

Editors: Jacob Wheeler, Jordan Bates  
Contributors: Nicole Bates, Nancy Bissonnette Bordine Susan Koenig, Kelly Ottinger, Aubrey Ann Parker, Randi Lyn Stoltz

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Mondays

Power Vinyasa with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 7:45-8:45am.

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 9-10am.

Circle Time for infants and toddlers at the Benzie Shores District Library at 630 Main Street in Frankfort. Infants and toddlers (+ 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. 10-11am.

Fitness Fusion with Beth at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 10:15-11:15am.

Grow Benzie Farmers’ Market at 5885 Frankfort Highway (M-115) in Benzonia. 3-7pm.

Tuesdays

Sunrise Flow Yoga with Lara at Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 7:45-8:45am.

Stretch and tone with Jean at Oliver Art Center. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 9-10am.

Honor Farmers’ Market in Maley Park. 9am-3pm.

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

Tangle Time: Tangling is a simple way of creating designs from repetitive patterns. It is easy to learn, portable, fun, relaxing, and can be enjoyed by all ages 12 and up. Bring your own materials—cardstock, paper, fabric, jewelry, clay, wood, rocks—or use those provided. Benzonia Public Library at 891 Michigan Avenue in Benzonia. 2:30-4:30pm.

Earth’s Mightiest Heroes summer reading program. Darcy Library at 7238 Commercial Street in Beulah. 4:30-5pm.

Minecraft Club at Darcy Library in Beulah. 5-7pm.

Zumba classes at The Gathering Place in Honor are open to the general public and taught by Suzanne Waring. 6-7pm.

Pick-up soccer at Memorial Park across from Shop & Save and behind Watson Benzie car

dealership in Benzonia. Open to ages 12 and up. All skill levels encouraged. 6-8pm.

Wednesdays

Power Vinyasa with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 7:45-8:45am.

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.

Tai Chi for beginners. Space is limited, so please contact Aimé Merizon at 231-645-3711 or artis4anyone@gmail.com to register. Suggested donation is \$10 per session. Darcy Library at 7238 Commercial Street in Beulah. 11am-12pm.

Knit 2gether at Darcy Library in Beulah. Crocheters also welcome. 1-3pm.

Thursdays

Fitness Fusion with Beth at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 7:45-8:45am.

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

Stretch and tone with Jean at Oliver Art Center. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 9-10am.

Guided hiking tours at Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville are a great way to learn about Michigan history. The environment and the sculptures are a fun activity for adults and families. 9-10am.

Every Hero Has A Story is a national program that encourages early literacy and fosters a lifelong love of reading while having fun. Children of all ages are welcome at Story Time with Miss Charlotte at Benzie Shores District Library. 10-11am.

Computers with Carol at the Darcy Library in Beulah. Ask Carol computer-related questions. 1-5pm.

Quilting at Darcy Library in Beulah. 2:30-5:30pm.

Storytime for preschoolers at the Benzonia Public Library in the Children’s Room. Miss Amanda will lead us through an informal time to socialize, make new friends, and hear great stories. 3-4pm.

Writers Club for kids and teens at Darcy Library in Beulah. Share what you’re working on—novel, comic book, or anything else—and if you’d like, get feedback from your peers. 3-5pm.

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. 3-6pm.

Storytime with Kris at Darcy Library in Beulah. 4:30pm.

Teen yoga and meditation with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 4-5pm.

Power Vinyasa with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 5:15-6:15pm.

Steven Fernand sings the best songs from the last century at the Cold Creek Inn in Beulah. No cover. 6-9pm.

Beulah Music in the Park: A different musical artist every Thursday. Free family fun. Bring a chair or blanket. Brought to you by the Crystal Lake Community Business Association along with many gracious sponsors. 7-8pm.

Open Mic Night at The Cabbage Shed in Elberta. 231-352-9843. 8pm.

Fridays

Sunrise Flow Yoga with Lara at Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 7:45-8:45am.

Pilates sculpt with Anna at Oliver Art Center. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 9-10am.

Crystal Mountain Farmers’ Market in Thompsonville. 3-6pm.

Saturdays

Birding with Keith Wesphal: Hike the Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort with Keith, an active birder for 48 years, to identify birds by their song. Bring your binoculars to spot birds that make the 30-acre preserve their home each spring. Meet at the Art Park trailhead. Suggested \$5 donation. 8:30-10am.

Stretch and tone with Jean at Oliver Art Center. Email annamallien@gmail.com if interested. 9-10am.

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

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Lego Saturdays at Benzonia Public Library. For boys and girls ages 6 to 106. Dates will vary, so call 231-882-4111 to see if there will be Legos on Saturday!

Steven Fernand sings the best songs from the last century at the Cold Creek Inn in Beulah. No cover. 6-9pm.

Sundays

Guided hiking tours at Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville are a great way to learn about Michigan history. The environment and the sculptures are a fun activity for adults and families. 9-10am.

Integrative Yoga at the Oliver Art Center. Young or old, novice or seasoned practitioner, yoga is for everyone! Explore yoga on your own terms and discover all that it can do for you. Adult drop-in fee is \$15, student/senior drop-in fee is \$10. 10:30am-12pm.

ON DECK

Tuesday- Friday, July 14 - July 24

Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre: *Cymbeline* performances on July 16, 18, 21, and 23 with a preview performance on July 14. *The Taming of the Shrew* performances on July 17, 19, 22, and 24 with a preview performance on July 15. No show Monday, July 20. Rain or shine. Audience is invited, but remember to wear weather-appropriate clothing and bring blankets or (low) beach/lawn chairs for seating and a picnic dinner. Enjoy Shakespeare under the stars! Motorized assistance is available at Tank Hill park entrance in Frankfort. Parking along the Park Avenue and across M-22 at St. Ann's Catholic Church. 7-9:30pm.

Thursday, July 16

Very Cherry Smorgasbord Dinner at the United Methodist Church in Frankfort. Menu will include several entrees, salads, desserts, and beverages. Tickets will be available at the door. 5-7pm.

Thursday, July 16

Farms of Benzie tour of NorthStar Organic Cherry Farm from 2-3pm; then hop over to Grow Benzie on M-115 and learn how to create delicious jams and jellies from 3-5pm. Please contact Grow Benzie to register for the cooking class: 231-882-9510. North Star Organics, 1139 Forrester Road, Frankfort

Friday, July 17

May Erlewine with Seth Bernard: The sounds and influences you'll hear in her musical stylings range from good old fashioned folk and country swing to soul singers, rock, and music from all over the wide world. It's all bundled together with stories and melodies to take you on a journey of the heart. General admission is a \$10 suggested donation. Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain. 7pm.

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Friday, July 17

The lively & wildy talented Olivia Mainville will play in the gorgeous tasting room at St. Ambrose Cellars. Olivia plays experimental gypsy-swing folk. St. Ambrose Cellars is located at 841 S. Pioneer Road. 6-9pm.

Saturday, July 18

UpNorth StandUp Paddleboard Classic: Come paddle on one of the most pristine lakes in Michigan—there is a reason it is called Crystal Lake! All races are held under WPA rules and will have an Open Water Start and Finish. 8am-7pm.

Saturday, July 18

Crystal Lake Watershed Association annual meeting. All are welcome to come and hear what the CLWA is doing to preserve Crystal Lake for the future, including new initiatives to control swimmer's itch. Congregational Summer Assembly (CSA), 2128 Pilgrim Highway (M-22), two miles north of Frankfort. 9:30am.

Saturday, July 18

Waters of Benzie: Pearl Lake tour with the Benzie Conservation District. Learn about glacial geology, spring-fed lakes, and invasive plants while paddling among the bulrushes on peaceful Pearl Lake. We will be following the shoreline of a state-owned nature preserve, and there will be great bird-watching opportunities. Meeting place: Pearl Lake DNR Public Access Site atWagner Road. 231-882-4391. 9am-12pm.

Saturday, July 18

Port City Run: Frankfort. The "old" course goes up Hefron Hill. "It's just a hill. Get over it." (231) 352-7698. 8:10am is the 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk. 8:30am is the 5K Run and 5K Walk.

Saturday, July 18

Port City Arts & Crafts Fair in Market Square Park of Frankfort. 10am-4pm.

Wednesday, July 22

Congregational Summer Assembly (CSA) Art & Craft Fair with more than 100 artists participating from across Michigan and beyond. Decorative art, wooden works, children's delights, handcrafted herbal soaps, wearable art, and jewelry of all kinds. Food tents. The Cot-

tage Treasures Sale will also take place from inside the CSA assembly building. 9am-2pm.

Thursday, July 23

Marlene Wood's "Worms are Superheroes" and composting program at the Betsie Valley District Library in Thompsonville at 11am.

Thursday, July 23

Hit the Wall Wine & Cheese party at L'Chayim in Beulah featuring Harriet and Perry Jones. 231-871-0601. 5:30-7:30pm.

Thursday, July 23

Chamber Music North concert featuring Nicole Philibosian, soprano, and Sylvia Norris, harp. Be dazzled with the beauty and eclectic sounds of these two remarkable performers! Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. 7:30pm.

Thursday, July 23

"An Evening with Aaron Stander" at the Betsie Valley District Library. Local mystery writer Aaron Stander will be presenting a book talk about his latest Ray Elkins murder mystery, *Murder in the Merlot*. 231-378-2716. 7-9pm.

Friday, July 24

Star Party with the Grand Traverse Astronomical Society. Learn about the summer skies and view the moon, Venus, and Saturn at the Betsie Valley District Library from 9-11pm.

Friday, July 24

K. Jones and the Benzie Playboys play some great "old school" zydeco and cajun music with traditional button accordions, fiddles, and washboard for an authentic Louisiana dance experience. \$10 suggested donation. Michigan Legacy Art Park, Crystal Mountain. 7pm.

Friday, July 24

Dunesville Music Festival: Family-friendly atmosphere with lots of great music, arts and crafts, food, and fun. The Harm Farm, 4846 Hulbert Road, Lake Ann. 4:20pm.

Saturday July 25th

Dances Led By the Peaceful Sisters. The dances use sacred phrases, chants, music, and movement from many world traditions. No experience is necessary. \$5-\$10 donations. Dances of Universal Peace at Llama Meadows Eco Farm on River Road in Benzonia. 231-882-4933.

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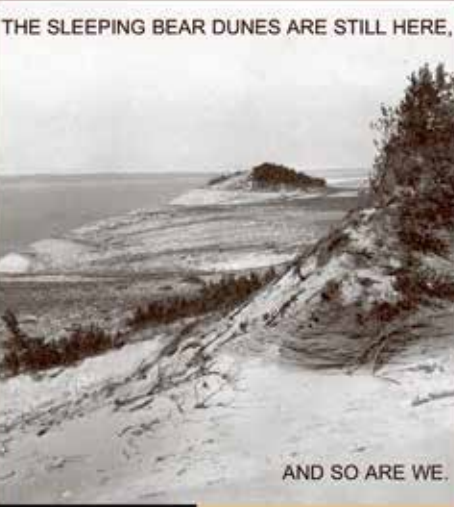


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# Seven Decades of a Cottage

## You can't build cottages like this anymore

By Beau Vallance  
Current Contributor

In 1941, it was a freestanding single room, a guesthouse to the house next door. The current grownups' grandfather was a friend of the owner, a druggist from his town in Ohio. The décor in that original room, now an inner living room, includes two crosscut saws that hang high on the walls and are said to be the tools with which their grandfather had cleared the land. (That may be only legend, however: he was after all a professor—and not a young one—when he bought the place. But the family has kept the artifacts, just in case it's true.)

That original room—which has long since been surrounded by handmade rooms, turning it into a functional cottage—was much improved by the addition of a long-overdue skylight. During World War II, their dad had sent some of his Army paycheck home to pay for a glorious stone fireplace, still the heart of the house. A silly cottage name, made up from combining their dad's and his sisters' names, is scratched into the hearth: one cousin actually refers to the place as "Cha-Vir-Ted," but most just call it "the cottage."

Their dad's published fable, *The Time We Lost Our Summer Cottage*, tells the family love story about the place. It sits on a high shelf along with scrapbooks filled with family history, glimpses into how this little house changed over the decades to handle the oncoming generations and yet always remaining true to its cottage-like character. The place is still unheated, and you can see daylight through chinks in some walls; you can't build cottages like this anymore.

Two outside windows of that original room were filled in as bookshelves, but two were left, panes and all, to look into a lakeview room that was added on. Bedrooms were added on two sides, one of them a bunkroom that was also the entry from the back door—a small wooden model from that time shows the original plan. The miniscule shower in the added bathroom gathered dust for decades, while they bathed in the lake every day with Ivory soap before ecology was discovered: oops! "Traces of old ingenuity" abound, as one sister's poem, framed on the wall, attests—for example, a clever single door with

a folding end panel is able to serve two rooms, making a suite in one configuration. The tiny first kitchen recently became a laundry room, after the miraculous portable washer was replaced with a real one; food functions (and the mismatched dishes) had long been moved to the original front room.

Lights everywhere work with pull chains—often threaded through various points to reach the door of each room—that are weighted with bolts. Handmade curtain rods are sticks of bamboo, inserted into mounted wood blocks with grooves to hold them. Ingenious swiveling wooden hooks hanging from rafters hold open top-hinged windows by catching their bottom edges. A few sliding windows, recycled from somewhere, lock

whom they had never met. Huge progress was made when they installed their own landline, a wall phone that changed over the years only by having ever longer scuzzy twisting cords connecting the handset to the base. They skipped the cordless era, going straight to cell phones, and finally, with sadness (everyone called one last time to hear it ring), surrendered the landline and the number that had served for 40 years. Now they bring Wi-Fi hotspots with them. Still no T.V.

There is one remodeled room, where the original main bedroom once stood, that was designed by an actual architect (Caleb Luibrand). The room, built by the family in springtime 20 years ago, is actually insulated and is complete with real light switches instead of pull chains! Somewhere are old cassette recordings of hilarious conversations about possible re-modelings, but aside from that new room, changes have been the usual maintenance to a place that is "perpetually sinking in the soft peat-like earth...[and] gracefully tilts just a bit to the North" (from the sister's poem). In the winter, "small four-legged creatures find courage to cope," and spring cleaning always involves sweeping up mouse turds.

Of course the cottage has hosted milestones big and small: their grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary in 1954, with grandmother posing in her wedding gown before going to dinner at Chimney Corners; a surprise family reunion for their mom's 70th birthday; a family meal after

her ashes went into the lake six years later; a tiny wedding reception; the welcoming of uncounted visitors from distant places; a recent honeymoon—friends chose this over Hawaii!

Both parents are now gone; their mother's spirit remains in the Lady of the Lake decoration that twirls in the front window, the father's in his published fable on the shelf. They leave behind a cottage they'd taught their children to love, and the three siblings—now grandparents themselves—find ways to share it. But whole books have been written on that subject.

*This story represents the tales of many cottages that have grown but managed to stay the same. If you have a story about your ever-changing cottage that you'd like to see published in The Betsie Current, please write to us at [editor@betsiecurrent.com](mailto:editor@betsiecurrent.com).*



A small wooden model shows the original plan for the family cottage. Photo courtesy of Beau Vallance.

during winter with nails inserted into holes that were drilled into the sills. One famous window, created during a 1986 addition of yet another front room, opened inward, thanks to another ingenious hinged device, a top part that folds back as it passes under an original beam.

All these features still function as they did decades ago. Some of the windows have muslin curtains, probably from the 1940s, that are thin and fragile but still washable. A newly bought curtain across the front room now gives the illusion of privacy for the sleeper sofa sitting there.

Telephone service has evolved. At first, there was no phone—seclusion was just fine. In the 1950s, they sometimes broke down and used a neighbor's phone or made collect calls from a payphone in Beulah. Eventually, when the first of them went off to the University of Michigan in the 1960s, they admitted that they needed telephone access and joined a party line, shared by at least two other families

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Trespass

Continued from page 2

change and water levels, at times erases the obvious markers under G v. G case,” Olson says, “making it difficult for riparian landowners to determine where that line is.”

The public has trouble knowing where it is, as well.

“The natural high-water line,” Olson continues, “is the more permanent physical evidence over a period of time, not the daily high-water mark. You look for evidence on the beach of where the longtime dunes or lines are. But when the water comes way up, there’s a question mark that the court didn’t resolve. If you take out photos and look where the water was in the ’60s and the ’80s and try to figure out where was the natural high mark, it is not observable; you have to reconstruct.”

The Glass decision is the law. Are we done now? Maybe not, explains Powers.

“What I say is that Glass v. Goeckel is going to stand until it comes across as bad fact,” Powers says. “At some point in time, there will be a case between a riparian owner and the public, and it’s going to come out on facts that favor the owner. It could be a riparian owner getting bitten by a dog, I don’t know. But it doesn’t make sense for the public to be walking on private land—I have no problem with the public walking in front of my place, but I should be able to pick and choose if someone does, if there’s going to be a problem.”

Such a case could open a whole new can of worms. All of this might have serious ramifications for the proposed Bay-to-Bay Trail in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, which has stalled at the moment due to intense pushback from shoreline landowners.

So what if you simply want to take a nice walk on the beach this summer?

“Play it safe,” Olson advises. “Be respectful, and play it safe.”

“If your feet are wet,” says Leelanau County Drain Commissioner Steve Christensen, “the question of where is the natural ordinary high-water mark, is not a discussion.”

Lake Michigan Rises Once Again

Those of us who have lived in Benzie County for years have noticed a trend as the lakeshore moves farther out, followed by the creep of dune grass and the forward moving tree line.

In April 2014, Brian Price, former director of the Leelanau Conservancy, took a group of 40 on a Conservancy geological tour that surveyed the effect of glaciers in forming the land. As we stood back in the woods at the base of Alligator Hill, observing the rolling “dune and swale” of the land as the lake had moved out and back, slowly away from the headland, he explained that the trend was for the lake to continue moving outward. If you owned a piece of land along that waterfront, he said, you would just be gaining “more real estate.”

But then came the heavy winter snows of the 2013-14 winter, followed by a long, cool, and wet spring, summer, and fall. Things reversed. The big lake began to crawl inward,

cutting into the newly formed bluffs, making it appear as though the lake was artificially high. But it wasn’t, and though that inward trend continues, it still isn’t.

Residents who have been around for awhile might remember that, in 1979, Lake Michigan beaches looked similar to the way that they do now, with rising waters cutting into the dunegrass, causing a cliff along some shorelines. In addition, rivers that were normally underground rose above ground and stayed there for years. That trend began again last year, and—although they are not to the point where they were in 1979—they’re getting there. That water stood for 10 years, killing all trees and vegetation. The dead trees can still be seen along wide swaths of forest parallel to the base of Alligator Hill.

The highest level recorded for Lake Michigan occurred, not surprisingly, during that same period, in 1986. Then the water began to recede, the rivers began to dry up, and by 1990, all was “normal.”

Then came the drought. In a June 1, 2000, article entitled, “Low Water Levels,” our sister publication, the *Glen Arbor Sun*, observed, “Summer lovers returning to lakefront cottages in Northern Michigan may drop jaws in disappointment before dropping their feet into water ... That’s because Lake Michigan water levels are the lowest they’ve been since the mid-60s, when measurements taken by the United States Army Corps of Engineers bottomed out at 576.05 feet in March of 1964... [W]ater levels reached an all-time low in March of 1964, [but] began rebounding by the late ’60s and climbed to record heights by the mid-70s. After falling nearly to the lake’s century-mean depth, the water level set a new record in the summer of 1986 at 581.99 feet.”

Water Level High Points

August 1960: 579.95  
July 1974: 581.76  
October 1986: 582.35  
July 1997: 581.33  
June 18, 2015: 579.76

Water Level Low Points

March 1965: 576.05  
January 2008: 576.44  
January 2013: 576.02

OVERALL AVERAGE – 578.80

Steve Yancho, at the time a “resource management specialist” at the National Lakeshore, commented, “Over hundreds of years of studying the lake, this isn’t a big deal... As frustrating as this might seem for people, it’s just a natural cycle ... The soil, the dunes, everything we’ve come to expect was influenced by lake fluctuations—you just have to make adjustments.”

He was right. Later that same year, 15 inches of rain fell in one month. Yet it was only a momentary high point. The average lake levels continued to plummet as the area continued to suffer hot, droughty summers until, in 2013, Lake Michigan reached its lowest level in 100 years.

Over the past 18 months, Lake Michigan’s water-level fluctuation has wreaked havoc with our beaches. 2014 was wet and cool. Last summer, the shoreline began to cut back toward the hills and into the bluffs, washing away dune grass that had advanced toward what had been an ever-receding shoreline (since 1987).

The lake is reclaiming some of what it lost. In the long run, though lake levels may be approaching their all-time 1986 high, they still have a ways to go. General statistics available from the Army Corps of Engineers (Detroit District) say they’re about 2 1/2 feet below that high. If you’re an old duffer like me, just check out a few beach landmarks you remember from the ’50s and ’60s. You’ll find that they’re still pretty far back from the water’s edge today.



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July 17 - May Erlewine  
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# Operetta

Continued from page 1

from Gilbert and Sullivan, going back to the traditions from decades past.

On Friday, July 17, and Saturday, July 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the CSA Meeting House (where M-22 meets Crystal Lake), the woods will hum to songs like “I am the Captain of the Pinafore,” “We Sail the Ocean Blue,” and “Three Little Maids from School.” The two evenings will focus on solos, duets, and chorus songs, and the scenes are short (but funny!), so the commitment has required less rehearsal time for the thespians who are involved in this year’s musical showcase.

The performances are free—though a good will offering will be collected during intermission—and the reverie is likely to be as lively as operettas of the past. One of the reasons the operettas have been so fun over the years for everyone is that they often feel, up until opening night, that they have been

put together on a wing and a prayer. Auditions are held on Monday afternoons, 11 days before the shows, and casting is announced that evening. Then, every weekday thereafter, the cast comes to the CSA Meeting House for a few hours of rehearsing. (For soloists and duets, there are often also separate rehearsals.) By the second week, costumes have been assigned, props sorted out, and the sets are being created; that was also the case for the Gilbert and Sullivan shows this year.

While most of the cast members are summer residents—from as far and wide as Chicago, Princeton, and London—local Benzie County folks also take part. Elizabeth Gottlieb, a professional opera singer based in Chicago (and a longtime CSA summer resident), will co-direct with other CSA members.

“We wanted to try something different this summer, and we have not done Gilbert and Sullivan for several years,” she says. “Expect a lot of laughs, some fantastic singing, and we pretty much guarantee you will leave humming.”

# Art Park Brings Famous Musicians

From Staff Reports

Local musician Joshua Davis, known nationwide for his fame on the reality television show *The Voice*, sold out Michigan Legacy Art Park’s cozy wooded amphitheater on July 1. A crowd of nearly 300 showed up to see the dashing, versatile folk musician open this year’s “Summer Sounds” series at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville.

The series—celebrating its 20th year—typically allows concert-goers to show up and pay a \$10 suggested donation. But the Davis concert was ticketed and sold out in less than an hour.

“I love playing at intimate venues like this,” Davis says. “This is like coming back home. It’s really important to support the arts, and it’s a really cool way to support the arts in such a natural setting.”

An unparalleled musical experience, the park’s outdoor amphitheater hosts five more concerts this summer in the intimate, wooded setting. All concerts take place on Fridays at 7 p.m. with rides from the parking lot to the amphitheater beginning at 6:15 p.m. The line-up for the rest of the Summer Sounds 2015 season is:

July 17—May Erlewine with Seth Bernard: The sounds and influences in her music range from

good old fashioned folk and country swing to soul singers, rock, and music the world over. Bundled together with stories and melodies, the experience is a journey of the heart.

July 24—K. Jones and the Benzie Playboys play some great “old school” zydeco and Cajun music with traditional button accordions, fiddles, and washboard for an authentic Louisiana dance experience.

July 31—Interlochen Faculty Revue: From singer-songwriter Courtney Kaiser-Sandler to cellist Crispin Campbell, this performance will have something for everyone.

August 7—Ruth and Max Bloomquist: With influences of folk, bluegrass, and country, Ruth and Max have created a heart touching, audience-pleasing, acoustic Americana that is all their own.

August 14—The Accidentals are back by popular demand. Traverse City singer-songwriters and multi-instrumentalists Katie Larson, Savannah Buist, and Michael Dause have created a sound all their own that is winning praise from music lovers across the country.

For more detailed information, visit [www.MichLegacyArtPark.org](http://www.MichLegacyArtPark.org).



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