

Benzie ABCs: Art, Bagels, and Community

A Loveless night for L'Chayim

By Karen Roberts

Current Contributor

Two years ago, Ann Loveless won first place in the Grand Rapids ArtPrize competition for her beautifully quilted rendition of a sunset at the Sleeping Bear Dunes. This year, she and husband Steve, a photographer, decided to send a joint submission that would include quilting and photography—what an interesting amalgamation of talents! Excited by the prospect, I asked if we could throw a “sneak peak” preview party at our 3 Chairs Art gallery in downtown Beulah, directly across from Steve’s own gallery, State of the Art.

I wasn’t the only one who was excited by this idea; lots of people wanted to see their work before it was sent to Grand Rapids, and an end-of-summer party seemed totally fitting. So the Facebook invitations went out, the email listservs were blasted, Interlochen Public Radio announced the event, and friends were accosted in the street and told to come to the party. The date was set for Friday, September 4, and it would be a celebration on both sides of Benzie Boulevard, in our gallery and in the Loveless gallery.

But then, just one week before the big event, the unthinkable happened just down the street—a slow, smoldering fire burned and smoke damaged L’Chayim Delicatessen in the early morning hours of Saturday, August 29.

Employee Denise—who comes in at

3:30 a.m. on baking days—discovered the fire before it spread. No one was hurt, no other structure was damaged, and blessings were counted. But what a setback.

Even though L’Chayim has insurance, there are deductibles to cover and recent major investments to pay off. Not to mention that neither the Beulah location nor the Frankfort location—which depends on the Beulah location for the entirety of its bagel supply—would likely be operational for months.

Despite the peace of mind portrayed in television ads, insurance claims are a negotiation. It was clear to many of us who frequent L’Chayim that something needed to be done.

Quickly, the Loveless send-off party was re-purposed to also be a fundraiser for L’Chayim. The Facebook posts and emails



A platter of bagel sandwiches from L’Chayim Delicatessen at an end-of-summer party. Photo by Christina Steele.

were revised, and Friday, September 4, became the “Bring Bagels Back to Benzie/Ann & Steve Loveless ArtPrize Send-Off” party.

More than 500 of you came out on Friday night—500! So many people came that there was a line to get in, a line out the door in Beulah!

The night reminded so many of us why we love this community. Restaurants and caterers leapt into action. (Many thanks to Coho Cafe, Creation Farm, East Shore Market, Elberto’s, Marsha Foresman, Roadhouse, Stormcloud, and especially to Suz

McLaughlin—if there were a ‘Best in Benzie’ category for “Who you want to have in the foxhole with you,” she would win, hands down—for donating wonderful food and for, in Suz’s case, staying through the evening, keeping the food and wine flow on track, and doing most of the clean-up.) Additionally, Crystal Mountain donated two season

ski passes that were raffled off, concerned drinkers donated wine, Tony Viviano played free jazz piano, and the Beulah Boosters pitched in, too.

How Vicki Carpenter wasn’t hoarse after greeting each person, explaining the raffle, pointing folks to “Northwood Awakening,” the Loveless piece, and directing them to the food and wine is a mystery. Truly good sports, Carrie Fowler and Aimé Merizon thought that they were just coming to a party, but they ended up working the food and wine tables. Suz’s friend and protégé, Satomi, also worked tirelessly.

It was a good time for more than 500 guests; the Loveless piece—who can miss its 5-foot-by-25-foot mesmerizing magnificence—was celebrated and deeply admired, while other local art already featured in the gallery reminded us of the rich talent among us. Moreover, L’Chayim got great support.

This event, like so many others we’ve witnessed, was Benzie County doing what it does so well—looking out for its own.

Ann & Steve Loveless’s piece, “Northern Awakening,” will be on display at 3 Chairs Art gallery at 254 S. Benzie Boulevard until September 16. Hours are noon-5 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and catch-as-catch-can at other times. Donations to L’Chayim can be made through www.HomeTownGiving.com by clicking on “Help a Charity” and scrolling to “L’Chayim Delicatessen Fire Recovery” or by using this link <http://bit.ly/1IUkSeP>. Another option is to write a check directly to L’Chayim.

Remembering Michigan Legacy Art Park

The tireless founder, David Barr

From Staff Reports

The man who brought his expansive artistic vision to Northern Michigan and founded Michigan Legacy Art Park (MLAP) at Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville passed away on August 28 at the age of 75. Described as dedicated, generous, and giving of his own knowledge, David Barr was an associate professor of sculpture at Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan, for 40 years. He received a Master’s of Fine Arts degree from Wayne State University. There are eight Barr sculptures within the 30-acre art park.

“We are all so very sad to have lost David,” says Renee Hintz, MLAP’s executive director. “He was such a compassionate friend and a great mind; a person who, when he talked, you just hung on every word and let it sink in and become a part of you. He created a body of work—sculptures, reliefs, books, and the Art Park—from which great lessons about humanity can be learned. And I know just how proud he was of how the park has grown and the plans we have for the future.”

MLAP founding board member Jim Ristine describes Barr’s work as, “very precise, very elegant, very well-crafted. It has broader meaning than just a visual image.”

Internationally acclaimed, Barr was awarded the Governor’s Michigan Artist

Award in 1988, telling of his dream to create a place that told Michigan’s history through art. Barr worked tirelessly to create MLAP, aspiring to give artists the opportunity to express

Michigan’s story through “fundamental materials of nature.” Barr’s dream became a reality with the opening of Michigan Legacy Art Park on September 10, 1995. (The Art Park celebrates 20 years this month.)

Barr had long desired to create a “Michigan Art Park,” where contemporary artists would bring Michigan’s history to fresh and vivid life. Today, MLAP has 45 sculptures and 30 poetry stones along its nearly 2-mile hiking trail, with more acquisitions planned. The newest permanent sculpture in the park is “Communications Vine,” by Eric Troffkin, which was completed in late July after a three-step installation process.

MLAP’s annual fundraiser last month

raised more than \$46,000, half of which will be applied toward the park’s ‘Art Access for All Capital,’ which is nearing its \$500,000 goal. The campaign has allowed for several

additions and improvements to the park, including a new accessible trail, a rebuilt amphitheater, and six new benches for rest and contemplation. A portion of the money raised at the Legacy Gala will also go toward funding a new position for the park, the David Barr Endowed Chair for Artistic Direction.

Barr believed in using common “laborer” materials to make art democratic, or understood in a common language. Many of his sculptures are geometric in nature and made of wood, stone, or steel.

A prolific artist, one of Barr’s most visible works is downtown Detroit’s gleaming arch, *Transcending*, a tribute to the laborers who built Michigan and the country. Knowing no boundaries for his vision and aspirations, Barr

worked on the *Four Corners Project*—perhaps the largest sculpture in the world. It aimed to connect people, cross boundaries, and show the smallness of the world by connecting points of the earth’s tetrahedron.

“David Barr’s curiosity, intellect, creativity, and passion for the art are distinguishable from all others,” says MLAP founding board member and close friend, Marilyn Wheaton. “Creative experience was David’s mantra. In his 2008 *Crossing Lines* manuscript, he wrote, ‘For nearly 50 years, I have been a creative worker,’ and he referred to his famous *Four Corners Project*—1976 to 1985—as ‘an act of constructive creation.’ He often referred to the unifying principles of art while installing his series of global art projects. David understood with absolute clarity the power of art, and he articulated that knowledge with passion and conviction.”

“He put his whole life into creating his work, and it shows,” Ristine adds.

Michigan Legacy Art Park is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is located on a 30-acre preserve, leased from Crystal Mountain for \$1 per year. Michigan Legacy Art Park features more than 45 outdoor sculptures that celebrate Michigan’s culture and history along almost 2 miles of wooded hiking trails. A tribute video about David Barr and his wife and artistic collaborator, Beth Dwaihy-Barr, is viewable at YouTube.com/watch?v=gpKYregnbfo.



Michigan Legacy Art Park founder David Barr dreamed of creating a place that told Michigan’s history through art. Photo courtesy of MLAP.

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Dennis Pace, More than Meets the Eye

Questions & Answers with community faces

Though Dennis Pace grew up in the arid desert city of Phoenix, he married a Michigan girl who convinced him to move to Benzie County in 1988. Still here nearly three decades later, Pace says that he was instantly hooked by our lakes, rivers, and sense of community.

Graduating from the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University 17 years ago, Pace now lives in Beulah and works at the Scarbrough Family Eyecare offices in both Beulah and Traverse City.

That may be his day job, but there's more to Pace than meets the eye.

For instance, when it was unclear whether the Benzonia Ice Rink—a staple in our community for nearly 30 years—was going to be able to continue, Pace stepped up as the chief fundraiser and helped to save this free winter park. But his biggest task definitely comes in the fall season, when you can find Pace spearheading the local youth soccer program every Saturday from the beginning of school to the end of October.

This fall marks the 20th year of the program's affiliation with the Benzie County 4-H program—though Benzie Area Youth Soccer began two years before that—and Pace has been the program's director for the past 17 years. There are teams in Lake Ann at Almira Township Park, next to Mistwood Golf Course, and in Benzonia at Memorial Park, behind the Watson Benzie car dealership. The program runs completely on volunteers and benefits more than 200 area kids each year.

Continuing with our interview series on impactful Benzie County characters, The Betsie Current caught up with Dennis Pace as he was preparing for the start of the fall soccer season.

THE BETSIE CURRENT: About how many patients do you see per week? What are you treating? Are you taking new patients?

PACE: There is definitely a seasonal rhythm in our office. Summer is busy with student and child eye exams, as well as summer visitors who have "emergencies" ranging from glasses lost in the water—the lake or the river—to scratched, injured, or pink eyes. We're not quite as busy in the winter, but we still see a steady stream of patients, usually for glasses and contact lenses. We also see a significant number of people to treat or monitor conditions like dry eyes, glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetes. We are always happy to see new patients.

CURRENT: How have you seen your work grow and change since you started?

PACE: The office gets busier every year. The Affordable Care Act [Obamacare] has definitely had an impact on our office—we see many more adults who now have health and/or vision insurance. In the past, those patients just didn't come in, or they waited until problems were much more advanced and more difficult to treat.

CURRENT: How have things changed over your tenure in Benzie? What are the biggest challenges and rewards of working and living here? What's the best or most rewarding part

of your job? What's the toughest part?

PACE: My profession is very rewarding, I never dread going in to the office, although—just like everyone else—I am tempted by those perfect Benzie County days where the sun or the fresh snow beg you to call in sick so that you can go outside and play. The most rewarding patients are people who are in pain from a scratched eye or something stuck in their eye. Most of the time, I can help them to feel better immediately by removing the foreign object or putting on a bandage contact lens. Equally rewarding is helping children who have been struggling with school to see and read better. The toughest thing for anyone in health care is giving people bad news: fortunately, that is pretty rare for me, because modern eye care has amazing treatments for



Dr. Dennis Pace. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

so many problems that used to leave people blind. There's not much that is bad about living in Benzie County; winter is cold and dark, but I like to ice skate and ski, and I don't mind driving slow for a few months out of the year. Maybe the biggest disappointment is the lack of opportunities for young people; so many move away, including my own kids. But my daughter has moved back to Traverse City (close enough) after living in Chicago for seven years. My son now lives in Grand Rapids.

CURRENT: What are your favorite local events and activities? Any favorite dining, recreation, or hiking spots? What's your perfect fall day look like in Benzie County?

PACE: My favorite local event is playing music and singing with my friends on Thursday nights, usually in my basement, dubbed "The Pacement." I take part in the seasonal outdoor activities, like biking and hiking. I have a small sailboat that I like to take on Crystal Lake. I seem to enjoy fall more every year—the colors and the more relaxed pace of life after the usual hectic summer. My favorite hike is probably Old Baldy.

CURRENT: What are some ways that you give back to the community?

PACE: I have a few different community activities that I've involved with: I'm on the board of directors for the Darcy Library of Beulah, currently as the board president. I'm

also the main fundraiser for the Benzonia Ice Rink. My biggest project is being director of Benzie Area Youth Soccer, also known as 4-H Soccer, since we are a 4-H Health and Fitness Club, meaning that all coaches are 4-H volunteers and are screened by the local and state 4-H.

CURRENT: How many kids participate in fall soccer?

PACE: There are usually about 200 kids who participate in the fall soccer program, which is available for kids in Benzonia and Lake Ann who are in kindergarten through 8th grade. Benzie Central Middle School has a team for 7th and 8th graders, so they usually play on the school team, but we often get a few middle school kids from Frankfort-Elberta or who are home-schooled.

CURRENT: How many volunteer coaches, refs, and other adults participate in the fall soccer program?

PACE: On average, there are 16 coaches each year. Usually the refs are varsity players from the Benzie Central High School boys' and girls' soccer teams who ref on Saturday mornings.

CURRENT: How did the program get started? How have you seen the program grow and change, and how has your involvement in the program grown and changed? Who else is influential in making it happen year after year?

PACE: It was started by Ingemar Johansson, Ruth Forrest, Jack Gyr, and others. I was not involved in the early years, but I've been the director since 1998, at which time my own kids were playing. Participation has doubled since I started, and that growth could not have happened without bringing in the Benzie Central High School varsity boys and girls as refs and assistant coaches. Scott Kubit [varsity coach for the girls] has been invaluable over the years in countless ways, from coaching to lining up all the refs to putting on coaching clinics, not to mention help from his own kids Megan [in college now] and Cameron [a current sophomore at BCHS on the boys' varsity team]. Coach Scott Barker [varsity coach for the boys] has not been around the area as long, but he has contributed greatly, as well.

CURRENT: We hear you're about to be a grandfather: congratulations! What are the chances of your grandkids playing soccer?

PACE: 100%.

The Scarborough Family Eyecare office of Beulah is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Call 231-882-5542 to schedule an appointment with Dr. Dennis Pace. Benzie Area Youth Soccer begins September 12 and ends October 31. The \$35 fee includes accident insurance and a T-shirt, but you'll have to bring your own shin guards. To sign your child up for youth soccer or to sign yourself up to volunteer, call Dennis Pace at 231-882-0369 or send an email to dennis@4HBenzieSoccer.org. Or call MSU Extension at 231-882-0025 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Check out the website at www.4HBenzieSoccer.org.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Mondays

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center. 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. 10-11am.

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

Tuesdays

Sunrise Flow Yoga with Lara at Oliver Art Center. 7:45-8:45am.

Stretch and tone with Jean at Oliver Art Center. 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.

Minecraft Club at Darcy Library. 5-7pm.

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

Wednesdays

Open art 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. 11am-12pm.

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

Thursdays

Fitness Fusion with Beth at the Oliver Art Center. 10:15am.

Elberta Farmers' Market at the Elberta Pavil-

ion Park. 8am-12:30pm.

Guided hiking tours at Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville are a great way to learn about Michigan history. 9-10am.

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

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

Writers Club for kids and teens at Darcy Library. 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. All skill levels should consider taking part. 3-6pm.

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

Teen yoga and meditation with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center. 4-5pm.

Power Vinyasa with Jenn at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort. 5:30-6:30pm.

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

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

Fridays

Sunrise Flow Yoga with Lara at Oliver Art Center. 7:45-8:45am.

Pilates sculpt with Anna at Oliver Art Center. 9-10am.

Crystal Mountain Farmers' Market. 3-6pm.

Saturdays

Birding with Keith Wesphal: Hike the Michigan Legacy Art Park 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. 9-10am.

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.

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. No cover. 6-9pm.

Sundays

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

Interlochen Farmers' Market in the big parking lot behind Ric's. 9am-2pm.

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.

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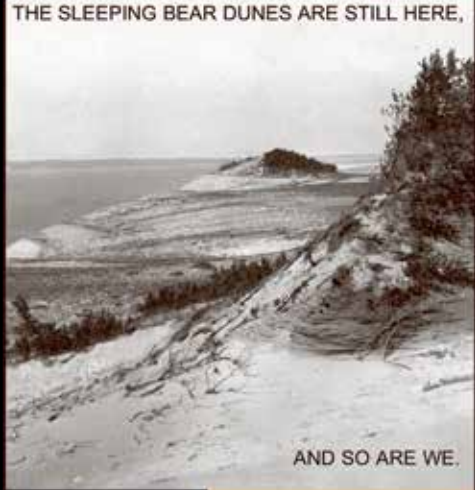


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The Betsie Current

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The Betsie Current is a free tabloid, published 12 times this year and distributed throughout Benzie County. Advertising inquiries, comments, suggestions, critiques, articles, photos, poems, and letters are welcome. © 2015, The Betsie Current, all rights reserved. www.BetsieCurrent.com

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