

If You Build It, They Will Come

Skatepark breaks ground next month in Frankfort

By Jacob Wheeler

Current Editor

Jeff Hessler began lobbying way back in 1976 for a skatepark in Frankfort. The now 53-year-old co-owner of Betsie Bay Furniture has skated these streets since he was 14 years old.

"I've been skating since the polyurethane wheel came out," he says.

Nearly 40 years later, he and his 14-year-old daughter Annie may soon get their wish.

A fund drive to raise money for a skatepark at Market Square Park—across M-22 from Frankfort Elementary School—has attracted \$11,000 from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Additionally, an anonymous donor has promised to cover the remaining cost of the estimated \$125,000

needed. After a couple years of planning and fundraising, the park is scheduled to break ground in July, confirmed by Frankfort superintendent Josh Mills.

"This is kind of a dream come true," says Hessler, who claims that, in his day, he won skateboard competitions in Frankfort, Onekama, and Traverse City.

But Hessler's recent push for a skatepark is more inspired by his daughter and her friends, who love to skate around town on longboards—three- to five-foot boards with larger wheels that are capable of greater speeds than a traditional skateboard. Longboards are especially popular with the millennial generation.



With no official place currently, kids skateboard around town, including down by the Frankfort beach turnaround. Photo courtesy of Jeff Hessler.

Annie Hessler and her friends, Helen Erginkara and Reagan Fombro, all 14, say they skate in the streets, on sidewalks, in alleys, or at the beach turnaround late in the evening, when fewer cars are present. However, they would prefer to have a skatepark that could also be used by any non-motorized wheels, such as trick bikes and rollerblades.

"It would be nice to have a place to go," Fombro says. "The cars don't always stop for us, and sometimes they get really mad at us. This would be a nice area for kids to play."

Scoping Out Skateparks

Jeff Hessler took the girls to visit existing skateparks in Michigan so they could determine what kind of park would be

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Point Betsie Lighthouse Illuminates Still

Museum and exhibit celebrate first full year

By Jacob Wheeler

Current Editor

On stormy days when the rain pierces like daggers and an angry wind whips the coastline, one can look out into the darkness and imagine a ship running aground just off the shore of Point Betsie. Her crew lashes themselves to the bobbing wreckage and prays their cries for help will reach human ears.

The Point Betsie Lighthouse was the southernmost in a network of beacons that were built to guide ships through the Manitou Passage during storms. During the heyday of Great Lakes shipping, her lifesaving teams rescued most of the crews of two shipwrecks: the *J. Hazard Hartzell* in 1880 to the south of Frankfort and the *St. Lawrence* in 1898. (Read about the *Hartzell's* controversial rescue at bit.ly/1FmWdyW in our online archives.)

Her lighthouse still beams 15 miles into Lake Michigan, but the lifesaving crews have



Point Betsie Lighthouse. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

long since left Point Betsie. A modern era of 1,000-foot ships on the Great Lakes and a

technologically advanced industry has, for the most part, turned Michigan's 270 lighthouses—more than any other state—into relics of history.

The Point Betsie Lighthouse no longer saves lives but still shines in its new role: to illuminate Great Lakes maritime history and enlighten visitors about the importance of lighthouses to trade and commerce throughout early American history. In fact, the ninth law passed by the U.S. Congress federalized existing lighthouses on the Atlantic Coast and was signed into law by our first president, George Washington.

Lighthouses then gradually spread to the Great Lakes as pioneers moved westward.

This particular lighthouse was built in 1858 and added a foghorn in 1891. Electricity reached Point Betsie in 1922, relieving the lightkeeper of the need to burn kerosene. In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt consolidated all lighthouses under the U.S. Coast Guard. The Point Betsie light—the last manned light on Lake Michigan's eastern shore—was automated in 1983.

Benzie County eventually acquired Point Betsie from the federal government in 2004. The Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse, a volunteer group, formed at the time of the transfer to provide interpretation and offer historic tours to the public. And to this day, the light—beamed through a modern acrylic lens from New Zealand—remains an official aid to navigation under U.S. Coast Guard

Please see Illumination on page 7

From Oz to Oliver Art Center

Mercedes Michalowski named new director

By Jacob Wheeler

Current Editor

Mercedes Michalowski's yellow brick road has led her to Frankfort's Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts, where she has been named the new executive director, following two years as associate director. Michalowski replaces outgoing director Steven Brown, who is moving to England with his German husband, Stephan. Brown, a published author in Germany, plans to write fulltime.

Unlike the German automobile, Michalowski's first name is pronounced with an emphasis on the first syllable, and not the second—"MERR-said-eeze." She

is half-Spanish and half-German and was named after her great-grandmother.

Michalowski's background is in museums. Before coming to Frankfort, she was director of the Oz Museum in Kansas for three years. Among the museum's notable specimens was one of the original flying monkeys that was used in the 1939 film *The Wizard of*



Mercedes Michalowski will take over the position of Oliver Art Center director for Steven Brown this month. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

Oz.

"They actually used three- to four-inch rubber models of the monkeys in the movie," Michalowski says. "The flying monkey named Nikko was my favorite character."

Prior to Kansas, Michalowski was assistant curator of the now closed Schmidt Museum of Coca-Cola Memorabilia in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. It boasted one of the world's largest collections of Coke artifacts, including a drivable van with fiberglass sculptures of people crawling out that was stamped with Coca-Cola logos.

Before that, as a 17-year-old, Michalowski was a tour guide on a submarine in Muskegon,

Please see Flying Monkeys on page 7



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The Betsie Current

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, Aubrey Ann Parker, Susan Koenig

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Foreign Exchange Students: What Do They Think About Benzie?

Questions & Answers with Community Faces

By Aubrey Ann Parker
Current Contributor

Each of the last three years, Benzie Central High School has hosted more than a dozen students from all over the world – Germany, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Australia, Ecuador, Brazil, South Korea, Thailand, China, and next year the school hopes to host students from a new country, Japan.

Students arrive in late August, just before school begins, and they stay until just after school ends in June. Most students average between 16 and 18 years of age. Every effort is made to ensure that students and host families are matched up based on interests, and many families have enjoyed the program so much that they have hosted all three years in a row.

Not only does each student bring his or her own unique culture to share with their native Benzie counterparts, they also bring valuable resources from the state. Per pupil funding allots \$7,200 per student in Michigan, and that includes foreign exchange students—that means these students have brought more than \$300,000 to Benzie Central since 2012.

This spring, the Benzie Central Girls Soccer team had five foreign exchange students: Amanda, 16, from Brazil; Emma, 17, from Norway; Julie, 17, from Denmark; Katrina, 18, from Finland; Sara, 18, from Mexico.

Continuing with our interview series on impactful Benzie County characters, *The Betsie Current* caught up with the girls at their graduation ceremony and asked them to reflect upon their year before they return home on June 6.

CURRENT: Is your hometown bigger or smaller than Benzie?

AMANDA: My city has 2 million people.

EMMA: I live outside the city; it's similar in size.

JULIE: I live in a big city.

KATRINA: My city has a population of about 55,000 people, but it's very spread out. The actual [downtown] city is a little bit smaller than Traverse City.

SARA: Bigger, around 400,000 people.

CURRENT: Besides your host families, what are you going to miss most about Benzie County?

AMANDA: My friends.

EMMA: All of the amazing people that made my year complete. School sports. This American way of life... I'm not ready to leave here!

JULIE: Benzie Central and a stronger feeling

of living in a community.

KATRINA: My friends (American and my exchange-student friends). The shopping possibilities and cheap prices. How much diversity there is in one country, meaning that if you go from Michigan to California to New York, or pretty much any other state, you can see some big differences!

SARA: My friends. The beautiful places I visited.

CURRENT: What are you going to miss least about Benzie County?

AMANDA: The fact that we don't have a



Amanda, 16, from Brazil; Emma, 17, from Norway; Julie, 17, from Denmark; Katrina, 18, from Finland; Sara, 18, from Mexico. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

mall here.

EMMA: Cafeteria food. Fast food.

JULIE: The long distance between things and my friends!

KATRINA: I'm really not used to this small place and not having public transportation. In my home country, it was really easy to just take a bus or a train whenever I wanted without having to ask my parents to give me a ride all the time. (We exchange students don't have the possibility of driving here in Benzie.)

SARA: The snow.

CURRENT: Besides your real families, what are you looking forward to most about going home?

AMANDA: My friends.

EMMA: My friends. Eating good, as I used to before I came here. My cat.

JULIE: Looking forward to having more independence, which includes being able to take the public transport and my bike everywhere.

KATRINA: My friends—believe it or not, but I really miss my high school! The learning culture is just very different, and I feel that it suits me better. And I miss some of the traditional foods like rye bread, black liquorish, etc.

SARA: I look forward to summer in Mexico. Hanging out with my friends. Vacations with my family. Starting school.

CURRENT: What's your favorite memory from your time here?

AMANDA: My time with the soccer team.

EMMA: All memories from sports are the best, and all memories with my host family.

JULIE: Going to Benzie Central and trying to feel what it's like to be part of an American high school.

KATRINA: The first weeks/month when everything was just so amazing and new, and there was just so much culture to experience and so many new things to see.

SARA: Spending Christmas with my host family in Florida. And a bike ride that my friends and I did from Beulah to Frankfort.

CURRENT: What was the biggest surprise about America?

AMANDA: The size of the city.

EMMA: How cheap shopping is. How much school spirit there is and how important it is.

JULIE: I felt very dependent upon people, which I didn't expect.

KATRINA: I know it sounds funny, but I was really surprised at first how every place has a drive-in option! We don't really have those, except for McDonald's.

SARA: The low temperatures and the huge loads of snow.

CURRENT: How did Benzie fit or not fit the stereotype about America?

AMANDA: The only way that Benzie is different than the rest of America is that the people here really enjoy nature.

EMMA: I didn't think America was so beautiful until I saw Michigan. People are very kind and welcoming, as I heard before I came here.

JULIE: The stereotype of Michigan about how it really doesn't have any public transportation and I guess the fact of how proud Americans are of living in America—proud in a good way—were both true.

KATRINA: It sounds extremely stereotypical, but I was honestly imagining that there would be all kinds of different cliques—cheerleaders and football players—so in that way, I guess Benzie didn't really fit to my expectations. But the expectation Benzie did meet was school spirit! Everyone is so supportive of their own school on sports, and I think it's awesome. Plus how talkative people are. In our school [back home], students would never really strike up a conversation with the teacher during class nor outside of class, and here I felt like teachers and students were actually pretty good "friends" with each other.

SARA: It didn't fit the stereotype because our school didn't have cheerleaders. Overall, it was better than what I had imagined.

CURRENT: What is going to be hardest for you to explain to your friends back home about your time here?

AMANDA: That Americans burp all the time in front of everyone!

EMMA: How great of an experience this was; I will never be able to explain all the feelings I've had through this journey. Homesickness, sad feelings, and insecurity—they don't mean much when someone opens up their heart to a complete stranger and takes care of them like they're their own family. I will never be able to explain how much I've changed and grown as a person. I've learned to appreciate little things and enjoy every moment.

JULIE: It is hard to explain how different of a life you can have here and for people to imagine what it feels like to be a teenager in America unless you have tried it.

KATRINA: What it actually feels like to live in another country and not just go there for a three-week holiday. Because there's a big difference.

SARA: How beautiful Michigan is; they can look at pictures, but you have to see it with your own eyes. It's not easy to describe.

If you're interested in hosting a student for the 2015-16 school year at Benzie Central or Frankfort, contact Ann Burket at big-missy37@yahoo.com or call 231-690-0513. To learn more about the program, Council for Educational Travel USA (CETUSA), visit cetusa.org online.

Skatepark

Continued from page 1

suitable for Frankfort. They were particularly impressed by a skatepark in Belding, near Grand Rapids, and how friendly it was for longboarding. The Belding skatepark was designed by the Evergreen Skateparks company, based in Portland, Oregon. Evergreen will reportedly break ground on the Frankfort skatepark in July.

“Skating is an excellent activity for kids of any age,” Hessler says. “Kids in skateparks are in great shape. With health issues looming for today’s youth in this country, skating offers amazing health impacts.”

Plus, Hessler says, parents can sleep more easily at night knowing that their kids aren’t skateboarding in the streets.

“This isn’t a sport that requires a lot of money to participate,” Hessler points out. “Skateparks are free. You just buy the board, and we always recommend a helmet and pads. It’s not like with skiing or golf—you don’t need to come from big-income families.”

Beachnut Surf Shop—located on the east side of Frankfort’s Main Street—has also been involved in coordinating plans, doing groundwork, and fundraising for the new skatepark.

“We’ve sent staff with Jeff to skateparks around the state to gather ideas,” says Nancy Bordine, co-owner of Beachnut Surf Shop. “We’ve had two different fundraisers, put on by kids who are excited about the skatepark. We had one event where we did a skate clinic, conducted by Annie Hessler and others, that raised a few hundred dollars.”

Additionally, Bordine says, Beachnut Surf Shop has increased its line of equipment, including pads for knees and elbows, high-end socks that are built specifically for skateboarding, as well as a new line of downhill boards.

“Frankfort kids come into the store every day and beeline for the skateboard section,” she says. “They pick up the boards and ‘ooh’ and ‘ahh’ over them. They’re excited.”

She adds that it’s not just kids, though—there are a lot of people with a surprisingly wide range of ages who enjoy skateboarding, especially when Frankfort’s population surges in the summer.

And although it is notable that there is currently a skatepark in Beulah, constructed more than a decade ago, Bordine has heard from customers that it’s “just not enough.”

“The park we’re working to bring to Frankfort would be somewhere between what Beulah has and what Traverse City has,” Bordine says of the future park’s size and style.

Adding Value

The dimensions of the skatepark coming to Market Square Park will be determined on June 6 during a meeting with Evergreen. Hessler envisions a 2,500- to 3,000-square-foot concrete park with a pedestrian path around its perimeter. The park will feature smooth, fast ramps with coping steel at the top that allows boards to slide on it. The vertical ramps will be less steep than some parks, says Hessler, so it won’t be dangerous. He wants to add lights so that kids can skate at night and to



Longboards are popular with the millennial generation. Photo courtesy of Jeff Hessler.

prevent random passersby from accidentally stumbling onto the ramp.

“Skateboarding is a fun thing to do, and the park would help keep kids out of the street,” Bordine says. “It’s a sport where kids encourage each other doing tricks and such. It’s a healthy, socializing opportunity.”

Market Square Park is already a destination for kids of all ages who are on break from school in the summer—it features a picnic area, playground equipment, tennis courts,

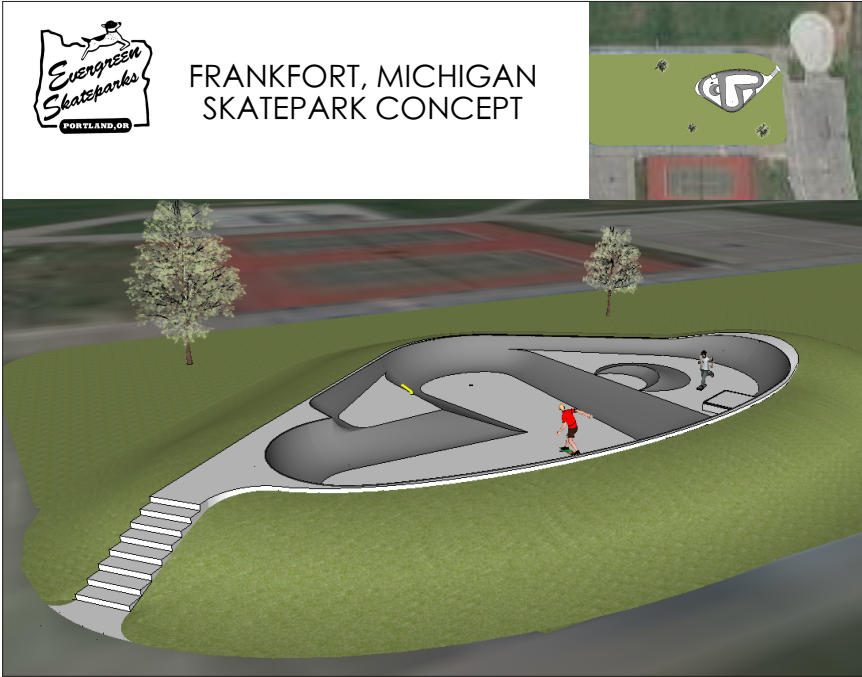
community provides many wonderful amenities, and the addition of a skatepark should prove to be beneficial in many aspects to the overall health of the community.”

Moreover, the skatepark should not compete with events that go on in Market Square Park like the Port City Art & Crafts Fair on July 18 or the 39th annual Frankfort Art Fair on August 14 and 15, because art booths are set up around the perimeter of the park.

An added benefit, Annie Hessler and her friends point out, is that the skatepark could make Frankfort a hotspot destination for area teenagers. Towns up and down the west coast of Michigan cater to beachgoing or boating tourists, shoppers, diners, wine- and beer-drinkers, but too seldom offer activities for action-starved 14-year-olds. Annie Hessler estimates that dozens of Frankfort High School students skateboard and that the skatepark would also draw kids from Beulah, Empire, Manistee, and beyond.

“This is a \$2.5 billion industry in this country, and it’s only going up and up,” Jeff Hessler offers. “I think we’re ready for a skatepark in Frankfort.”

To watch a video of skate action at an Evergreen skatepark, visit EvergreenSkateparks.com online. Also check out BetsieCurrent.com to see more rendered drawings of the proposed skatepark, as well as videos of Annie Hessler and friends on their longboards. Stay tuned to FrankfortMich.com for a posting of when a public meeting on the skatepark will be scheduled.



Skatepark concept by Evergreen Skateparks. Groundbreaking is planned for July. Image courtesy of Jeff Hessler.

and a basketball court that is also lit at night. Drive by on any cool summer evening and you’re sure to see a half dozen people using it, but Hessler hopes the addition of a skatepark will add a new dimension. City superintendent Mills agrees.

“The primary benefit that we hope a skatepark may bring to the community is to provide our youth a safe place to congregate that will promote and benefit mental and physical well-being,” he says. “The Frankfort

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Mondays

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.

Grow Benzie Farmers' Market, 5885 Frankfort Highway (M-115), Benzonía. 3-7pm.

Tuesdays

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.

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

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. Benzonía Public Library, 891 Michigan Ave. in Benzonía. 2:30-4:30pm.

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

Dance Benzie: Improvisational partner dancing at the Mills Community House at 891 Michigan Ave. in Benzonía. Don't know what that is? They'll teach you! Cost is \$7 for regulars; \$5 for students. 7:30-10pm.

Wednesdays

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

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

Thursdays

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

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 Benzonía 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.

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.

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

Fridays

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

Jessica's Restorative Yoga class is a great way to unwind after a busy week. 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! Oliver Art Center 483 Parkview Lane in Frankfort. Adult drop-in fee is \$15, student/senior drop-in fee is \$10. 7-8:30pm.

Saturdays

Birding with Keith Wesphal: Hike the Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville 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.

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, 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 Benzonía 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!

Sundays

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.

Ongoing Through June 15

Bag-a-Brown: Open to all anglers by land or boat in Benzie County and Arcadia only. Register at Big Bob's Up North Outfitters in Frankfort prior to fishing. \$20 entry fee lets you weigh up to three fish (but you are only eligible for one place). Money and prizes available!

ON THE DOCK

Thursday, June 4

The Comedy of Crystal Lake presentation and book signing with Dr. Stacy L. Daniels. Learn about Archibald Jones and the lowering of Crystal Lake at the Darcy Library of Beulah. 6:30-7:30pm

Thursday, June 4

Sip & Dab at St. Ambrose Cellars. A local artist guides you through your own paint-on-canvas masterpiece while you sip on mead by the glass. All experience levels welcome. First come, first serve. We have approximately 15-20 spaces available, so get your gang together and register. The cost of registration covers supplies and instruction. You will be responsible to the venue for food and drinks consumed throughout the three-hour session. It is recommended to arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the start time for check-in, seat selection, and ordering the first beverage of your choice. Register at bit.ly/1Jluljr online. \$35 per person. 6-9pm.

Thursday, June 4

Your Sculpture Park presentation by Rene Hintz and Patricia Innis at the Betsie Valley District Library, 14744 Thompson Avenue in Thompsonville. This visual presentation will explore the history of, as well as the artwork, education programs, and volunteer opportunities at the Michigan Legacy Art Park. Attendees will be given free park admission passes. Learn more at bit.ly/1Ql3qor or send an email to bvdlibrary@acegroup.cc or call 231-378-2716 or 231-378-4963. 7pm.

Friday, June 5

Register for Summer Reading at Benzie Shores District Library, which has an ongoing free Summer Reading Program for children and teens. Log your hours as you read and have fun collecting prizes from local businesses as you go. Registration begins June 5, so start your family's summer vacation off right and stop in to the library to sign up!

Saturday, June 6

Bike Benzie: A Ride to Remember Tim Krause. Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club's 7th Annual Bike Benzie, beginning and ending at Crystal Mountain Resort & Spa in Thompsonville, with rides of 30, 62 and 100 miles. Learn

PUBLISHING DATES 2015

May 21, June 4, June 18, July 2
July 16, July 30,
August 13, August 27
September 10
October 1, November 12
January 14 (2016)

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20 FRANKFORT CRAFT FAIR Outdoor Art Fair • Downtown Frankfort, Main Street • 10 am-4 pm	14-15 FRANKFORT ART FAIR Market Square Park, Frankfort Friday 4 pm - 8 pm • Saturday 10 am - 5 pm	10 FALL FESTIVAL IN FRANKFORT GIANT PUMPKINS & PARADE featuring the SCOTTVILLE CLOWN BAND with Performances after Parade, Mutt March During Parade, Kids Games, Pumpkin Decorating, Free Movies at Garden Theater, Pumpkin Drop and Catapult! Downtown Frankfort • 11 am - 4 pm
26-27 TAKE A KID FISHING & NITECRAWLER HUNT FREE FISHING DAY: Free Tackle, Lunch & Fishing Rods • Downtown Frankfort • Friday 10 pm - Saturday 8 am	15 FRANKFORT COLLECTOR CAR SHOW Mineral Springs Park • Frankfort • 8 am	24 HARLEM AMBASSADORS AT FRANKFORT HIGH SCHOOL 4-7pm
JULY	SEPTEMBER	NOVEMBER
1-4 4TH OF JULY MEDALLION HUNT Clues posted 9 am	12 TRI UP NORTH Paddle Bike Run • Frankfort	31 FRANKFORT TRUNK OR TREAT 5-6pm • 231-352-7251
2-5 CARNIVAL Old Fashioned Carnival Rides, Games and Food Open Space Park • Hours vary	12 TASTE OF BENZIE & BEYOND Sample Food, Beer & Wine from Local Restaurants & Caterers Mineral Springs Park • Downtown Frankfort • 11:30 am - 3:30 pm	28 HOLLY BERRY ART & CRAFTS FAIR Indoor Art Fair • 10 am - 4 pm
18 PORT CITY ART & CRAFTS FAIR Outdoor Art Fair with 75+ Artists • Market Square Park 10 am - 4 pm	25 FRANKFORT STREET SALE Special Sales with Downtown Retailers • 9 am	

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more at bit.ly/1AJQMNK online. 6am-5pm

Saturday, June 6

Beginning Birding with the Benzie Audubon. Carl Freeman will lead this trip along the Trail to help birders develop their identification skills. There should be enough warblers around to challenge everyone, beginner or not. Call Carl for more info at 231-352-4739. We will meet at the Betsie Valley Trail’s Adams Road parking lot, just off of River Road. 8am

Saturday, June 6

Northern Michigan Alliance for Lupus Walk in memory of Josephine Vanham: A walk along the Betsie Valley Trail from Frankfort to Elberta, then back. The goal of each Walk is to help the Alliance for Lupus Research (ALR) to further its mission to prevent, treat, and cure lupus by raising funds for lupus research. All participants are encouraged to raise a minimum of \$25, and 100% of the money you raise will support cutting edge lupus research programs. Contact Amy Gillard at ajgillard@charter.net or 231-347-4775 for more information. Registration begins at 9am at Mineral Springs Park in Frankfort. Walk is from 10am-12pm.

Saturday, June 6

Farms of Benzie: Asparagus from Harris Farms. Farms of Benzie is a new tour series -- brought to you by the Benzie Conservation District and Grow Benzie -- for all who are interested to know more about your food and your farmer. Each event features one farm and a taste of that farm. All ages welcome. Suggested donation of \$5-\$10 per person. For more info, call Aimé at 231-882-4391. Come out to Harris Farm (7356 Indian Hill Road, Honor) from 1-3pm.

Saturday, June 6

Live music with Ben Pervier at Stormcloud Brewing Company in Frankfort. A singer/songwriter based in Kalkaska, Michigan, Ben plays a mix of folk, rock, and country cover tunes, plus original songs. Ben has been writing and performing music for the past 15 years and has published his songs for TV, radio, and film. 8-10pm.

Monday, June 8

Back The Track Olympic Challenge: We have a great opportunity for kids from around the state to meet and race Olympic medalist Nick Willis. Nick will race a sub-4-minute road mile in downtown Beulah. High school or middle school 4x400 teams (boys, girls, co-ed, mixed schools etc.) will line up and attempt to race side by side with Nick in an attempt to beat an Olympian. After the event, all competitors and spectators will have the opportunity to meet Nick, get autographs, and take pictures along the shores of Crystal Lake. This event is a fundraiser for the Benzie Central track and field renovation project, Back the Track. Encourage your athletes to sign up early (<http://bit.ly/1GTuDxG>), as we really must limit this to the first 50 teams due to space constraints. Meet at the Beulah Beach Pavilion for 7pm race time.

Tuesday, June 9

Acrylic painting class with local artist/teacher Connie McLaren at the Benzonia Public Library. No experience needed. All materials are provided for this free class. Adults only, and registration is required, so call 231-882-4111 to sign up. 1-3pm.

Friday, June 12

Dune Wildflowers with the Benzie Audubon and Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. Paula Dreeszen will lead a field trip to see yellow Hairy Puccoon, Coreopsis, orange Wood Lily, blue Harebells, and endangered Pitcher’s Thistle. Be prepared for a 1.5-mile hike through the woods on an undulating trail. Wear sun protection. We will meet at the Baldy Trailhead parking lot on M-22, 0.8 miles south of Joyfield Road, for this hike to Baldy in the Arcadia Dunes Preserve. Call Paula at 231-275-7199 for more info. 10am-12pm.

Saturday, June 13

4th Annual Betsie River Clean Sweep with the Benzie Conservation District. We want you and your friends and family to join us in a morning of fun and meaningful work toward making our Betsie River more beautiful and clean! We start off the morning with a pancake

breakfast at the Benzonia Congregational Church at 8:30am. Then we divide into teams and all clean a stretch of the Betsie River. If you have a kayak or canoe, great! If you don’t, please contact us, and we will find a boat for you to use. Lunch is also provided. Contact us at mike@benziecd.org or 231-882-4391. 8:30am-2:00pm

Saturday, June 13

Sandy Kay 5K Run/Walk, hosted by the Benzie Central Interact Club to support Multiple Sclerosis research, in memory of Benzie County’s late Sandra Kay Nye. All ages are welcome. First 100 registrants will receive a T-shirt. Timing will be kept, and awards will be given for each age group. Pre-registration is \$20; day-of registration is \$25. The event will be held on the Benzie Central High School cross country course starting at 9am. Email bcinteractclub@gmail.com for more information and register at bcinteract.weebly.com online.

Sunday, June 14

Benzie Sunrise Rotary’s 5th Annual Golf Outing with a popular modified Ryder Cup format. Crystal Lake Golf Club at 8493 Fairway Drive in Beulah. 1:30-7:30pm.

Four Ampers&s

Across

- 1. Strawberry’s field?
- 5. Attacks, as a dog
- 9. Accelerator at CERN used to discover the God particle
- 12. “___ and Frayed” (Rolling Stones tune)
- 13. Jesus in the Quran (var.)
- 14. Unit of corn
- 15. *Gone With the Wind*, for example
- 16. The Snow Queen of *Frozen*
- 17. Virus that kills an avg. of 36,000 Americans each year
- 18. Someone from the Wolverine State
- 20. Animator Avery, creator of Bugs Bunny
- 21. Miner’s find
- 22. A lake across the Pond
- 24. Longtime quarterback in Green Bay
- 27. Feature common to Florida and Oklahoma
- 30. The #2 name for a baby girl in 1980
- 31. Like sushi
- 32. The world’s largest organization for the advancement of technology (abbr.)
- 33. Snoopy’s brethren
- 35. Common yoga pose, informally
- 36. Model of electric car from Nissan
- 37. Unit of electrical resistance
- 38. Letter used by some fraternities
- 40. Loving nickname of third baseman Pablo Sandoval
- 45. Frasier Crane’s friend and producer
- 46. Frankenstein’s assistant
- 47. Informant
- 48. Be indebted to
- 49. State bird of Hawaii
- 50. Wounded ___ (South Dakota creek)
- 51. Director Anderson
- 52. They follow effs
- 53. Seals the deal (with “up”)

Down

- 1. Where a rose has its thorns
- 2. Southwest Native American tribe
- 3. Rocker Clapton
- 4. Most populous city in Alaska
- 5. Invasion
- 6. Sailor’s mirage, maybe
- 7. Set of decisions that can be cited as precedent
- 8. Mrs. Marsh in *South Park*
- 9. Like 10% of humanity
- 10. Golfer Irwin, the oldest US Open champion
- 11. The hardest part
- 19. Anger
- 23. Singing rodents

- 24. Like the Beatles
- 25. “Soul” to Parisians
- 26. Defaces
- 27. Mas’ partners
- 28. Someone born between July 23 and August 23
- 29. Instrument that measures brain waves (briefly)
- 31. Someone displaced by war
- 34. Hockey player in SoCal
- 35. “Weird” Al Yankovic movie
- 37. Hulking monsters
- 38. Cawing corvid
- 39. Mr. Hockey
- 41. Less than few
- 42. Sheet of glass
- 43. The first Apostle
- 44. Eagles on par-threes

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A Benzie-Gulfport Connection

The town in Florida that feels like home

By Susan Koenig
Current Contributor

GULFPORT, Florida—Some of *The Betsie Current's* writers (well, at least this one) sneak away during the winter cold, taking refuge in a warmer climate. But we (I) always miss home, or at least its inhabitants, our friends and neighbors.

So imagine this: yours truly is at a beach bar, ordering a libation, and I meet a man who asks, as does everyone in Florida, “Where are you from?” Whereupon I reply, “Oh, a very small town in Northern Michigan; no one has ever heard of it.” He says, “Try me.”

That fellow turned out to be Phillip Bailey, son of John and Maren and nephew—one of many—of Chuck Bailey. The Baileys are members of a well-known tribal group, the Great Wolf Clan, who happen to have a very strong Benzie County connection.

Phillip was born in Traverse City. After the family moved to Flint, they continued to summer in Honor (about five miles from my house) on Phillip’s great-grandfather Robert’s original 80 acres, where John and Maren now reside. (Several Bailey relatives have recently passed on, at great loss to the family, including Vernon [Claudia Hermann], Charles [Sandy Pyle] and Patty [Bill] Hanrath Bailey.)

The family came to Benzie County in 1898 from Oceana County. The Baileys—originally from the French “Bailley,” pronounced “Ba-ye” —were “unallotted Anishinaabec,” meaning “first people,” who left Oceana for Benzie to take advantage of the labor opportunities in the Traverse area. This was a period of time when many area Native Americans did not “officially exist,” similar to today’s undocumented workers, except of course that they were the original Americans. Nevertheless Robert, the Benzie Bailey patriarch and Phillip’s great-grandfather, was able to accumulate land through deals with local lumbermen.

Hailing from the Grand River Band, Robert was only 12 when he began working on an Anishinaabec lumber crew. His son Clarence and grandson John—Phillip’s grandfather and father, respectively—are the Baileys most familiar to Benzie, Leelanau, and Traverse residents, the former having served as Grand Marshal in festival parades, among other activities, and the latter an expert on Native American culture and history who lectures frequently in our tri-county area.

After World War II, when prosperity began to dwindle and lumber companies

began their exodus from the region, Phillip’s grandfather Clarence went to work for the car ferries out of Ludington, where he remained for decades. He worked 28 days on, and when off, headed home to the Honor farm to run his dogsled, hunt, and spend time with family.

John and Maren, meanwhile, moved to Flint, where John worked for Buick until he was hired by a company called United South and Eastern Tribes, which managed 23 tribes. The family moved first to Sarasota, then to Tennessee, and finally back to Lansing, where he took a position for the Michigan Economic

Development Corporation evaluating and developing small businesses, from which he is now retired.

Phillip, during this time, attended a tribal community college in Bay Mills Indian Community, west of Sault Ste. Marie, and eventually came back to the Leelanau/Benzie area, lured by the excitement of the new casino industry.



Susan Koenig, second from left, meets up with Philip Bailey, far right, and friends at a beach bar in Florida. Photo courtesy of Susan Koenig.

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Phillip, during this time, attended a tribal community college in Bay Mills Indian Community, west of Sault Ste. Marie, and eventually came back to the Leelanau/Benzie area, lured by the excitement of the new casino industry.

For the next 20 years he worked as a pit boss in Peshawbestown and, subsequently, in Florida, too. He was working in John’s Pass, Madeira Beach, when he found his way to “his town” while visiting the village of Gulfport for a First Friday street fair. He tried one more stint Up North, but moved permanently to Florida in 2000 and now lives, with his partner Brian Liggins, a short walk from this *Current* writer in the cozy ambiance of an old Florida town. He works for Goodwill Industries as a

opposed to shoveling snow!”

Happy spring/summer transition to all from Pinellas County, Florida, to Benzie County, Michigan!

For more information on the Bailey family and Native American history, try some of the following suggested readings: *Wolves Against the Moon* by Julia Cooley Altrocchim, *History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan* by Chief Mack-E-TE-BE Nessy (a.k.a A.J. Backbird), and *The Indian Drum* (fiction) by William MacHarg and Edwin Balmer.

Fairies and Forts

What better way to usher in the celebration of long summer days than to sing, dance, and use your imagination in a natural setting? “Fairies and Forts” is on Saturday, June 20, from 2-5pm at Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville and will include crafting, hiking, and a kids’ concert, featuring Miriam Pico, a popular singer and songwriter from Traverse City who sings from the heart.

Pico’s angelic tones are playful, engaging and joyful, always with something meaningful to say. After the concert, Pico will lead participants on a march to the Fort for the annual raising of the flag. .

Children of all ages are invited to create their own fort or fairy house, flower tiaras, fairies, flags, and drums. Fairytale story time is sponsored by the Betsie Valley District Library. Children can enjoy face-painting and refreshments while getting creative with crafts.

The event requires general Art Park admission, which costs \$5 per adult, and is free for children.

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Illumination

Continued from page 1

control.

Something New

Today, education is the key purpose of the Point Betsie Lighthouse.

A new exhibit room and a gift shop in the Boat House, which opened last July and celebrates its first full year in 2015, recounts in stunning detail the *St. Lawrence* wreck on November 25, 1898. The onshore lifesaving team used a Lyle gun and allegedly fired a line toward the sound of the ship’s whistle in a blinding gale. With pinpoint accuracy—or luck—the line became entangled in the ship’s whistle cord. When the lifersavers pulled the line from shore, it blew the ship’s whistle. And that was how the *Lawrence* crew, nearly blinded by the storm, knew that help was on the way. The heroic actions of the Point Betsie team saved the lives of 14 of 15 crewmembers.

Like the *Hartzell* 18 years earlier, the *Lawrence* was an incredible rescue, full of bravery, skill, and luck. But the *Hartzell* shipwreck has received much more media attention over the years.

“We wanted an action story,” says Jonathan Hawley, past president of Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse and author of the authoritative book *Point Betsie: Lightkeeping and Lightsaving on Northeastern Lake Michigan* (University of Michigan Press, 2008). “We decided, since we only had the opportunity to feature one shipwreck in the exhibit, we’d do the one that wasn’t so heavily publicized. Yet the event was absolutely vital and very unique.”

Hawley’s book, *Point Betsie*, is billed as “the compelling story of a key Great Lakes lighthouse whose beam has pierced night skies for 150 years. This rich history recounts the efforts of the U.S. Lighthouse Service, the U.S. Life-Saving Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard on Lake Michigan’s wreck-strewn northeastern coast, near the treacherous Manitou Passage.”

Point Betsie also recounts the dedicated lightkeepers and their families who served there beginning in 1858. Among them is the illustrious Alonzo Slyfield, who served as keeper from 1861 until 1882. Remarkably, Slyfield was also the doctor for this part of Michigan, according to Hawley. He traveled on foot or by horse throughout this part of the state, taking care of people for all conceivable afflictions. Slyfield the country doctor was succeeded by his son, Edwin, who manned Point Betsie for seven years.

The exhibit room in the Boat House depicts the dramatic, but also the tranquil, everyday scenes from the lighthouse community that once lived here.

One wall mural tells the story of the Lawrence rescue. The opposite wall shows a bucolic scene of lifesavers in the water on a leisurely row, with Point Betsie in the background and an American flag flapping in a blue sky.

“We wanted to show that there was a little community here in this isolated spot,” Hawley says. “There was nothing around here besides this group of people who lived at Point Betsie.”

Anchoring the exhibit room is a wooden lifesaving boat, similar to what was used here in the 1890s. This particular one was built by the Coast Guard near Baltimore, traveled to Isle Royal to deliver supplies to lighthouses on Lake Superior, was bought by a family who used it for 30 years on Lake Huron, and then was donated to the Great Lakes Boat Building School. Through a fortuitous conversation, Hawley learned about the boat, and it was ultimately given to the Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse and rebuilt for the exhibit.

“Very few of these boats survived,” Hawley says. “Most were chopped up for firewood as they were being replaced by fiberglass boats.”

Somewhere To Stay

The Point Betsie Lighthouse does serve one other purpose.

Its second story apartment—where lightkeepers such as Alonzo Slyfield, the country doctor, once lived—is available for weekly rentals from spring until fall. The apartment, which was first rented out three years ago, can accommodate six people and costs approxi-

mately \$2,000 per week during the summer tourism season. All proceeds help fund the Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse.

“We’ve had Coast Guard descendants stay here,” Hawley says. “Some kids who were born here have come back and toured the lighthouse. They’re universally thrilled to see that the Point Betsie Lighthouse continues to inspire and educate.”

While the era of saving shipping crews in distress is long over, this lighthouse still has an important role to play.

“Tourists who come here should understand the roots of this area, its history and development,” Hawley says. “They should know about the tremendous importance of Lake Michigan and the development of its communities and settlements.”

The lighthouse is located about five miles north of Frankfort. Follow M-22 out of town and watch for signs for the Point Betsie Lighthouse on your left. For more information, visit PointBetsie.org.

Flying Monkeys

Continued from page 1

where she grew up.

This modern-day Dorothy—along with her 8-year-old daughter, Julia—are no longer in Kansas, and that’s just fine with Michalowski.

“I felt dehydrated when I lived in Kansas,” she says. “I’m a big lake girl. I love Frankfort.”

Focusing on Kids

During his time as executive director, Brown helped to focus the Art Center’s education on area youth.

“Seeing the Art Center’s impact on kids was the first time I realized what it’s like to change lives,” Brown says. “Seeing kids come out of an art class totally aglow, because of a great teacher like Sarah Abend, is to see kids’ minds open up. Some people are seeing quality abstract art for the first time, and it changes their mind. Every community deserves world-class art.”

Michalowski intends to continue honing the vision that she shared with outgoing director Brown. A big part of that is marketing the Oliver Art Center to kids in Northern Michigan, many of whom have watched their art curriculum gutted from their public schools.

“Something close to my heart is our youth outreach,” Michalowski says. “That means getting into the community to serve more local residents. We need to be a bigger presence in the schools. I’d love to hear kids’ voices echoing through these hallways. We’ve also been developing our online social media presence, and we’re trying to reach a younger market. Every age should feel comfortable here and want to visit the Art Center.”

This year, the Oliver Art Center will offer mini summer camps for area youth ages six to 11. Mediums range from drawing to ceramics and needle felting to sculpture.

Brown had words of praise for Michalowski.

“Mercedes is the best teammate anybody could wish for,” says Brown, who was executive director for three years and who has worked with Michalowski for the last two. “Everything she has done, she has hit out of the park.”

Reflecting on his time at the Art Center, Brown expressed gratitude for the tremendous connections he made in the local community and how generous and supportive people have been. He called his position at the Oliver Art Center the “project of a lifetime.”

“When they hired me, I told them that my background was in public art and that I wanted this to be one big public art project,” Brown says. “I’m not a nonprofit wonk who lives to sit behind a desk and look at a spreadsheet—it turns out that I got the same creative fulfillment here as I would from any of my art projects.”

Members of the community are invited to welcome Michalowski as new director during the Art Center’s annual open house on Friday, June 26, from 5-7 p.m. An expanded Family Art Day follows on Saturday, June 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. To see a line-up of classes for the summer, visit OliverArtCenter.org online.



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6-Mile Out-and-Back with Kids

Trail Runner Series: The Betsie Valley Trail from Elberta Trailhead

By Nicole Bates
Current Contributor

When I moved to Frankfort with my family last summer, one of the highlights of the area was the wealth of outdoor activities available. In particular, the number of beautiful trails waiting to be explored. With a highly active six-year-old and a newborn baby, we did a lot of walking—walking on trails, walking through the woods, and walking on the beach. We enjoyed our time together in our new community, but my true passion is running.

The challenge this summer is how to fit running into my schedule and where to take my still-active and typically daydreaming seven-year-old and my now 10-month-old who I'll have to push in the stroller when I can't run on my own.

With this series, I hope to highlight some of my favorite area trails and also give a heads up to other active families out there as to which ones are best for kids and pets.

One of my favorite routes with the kids is the three-mile stretch of the Betsie Valley Trail from the Elberta Trailhead to the River Road (or Adams Road) Trailhead. This paved section is flat and smooth, which means the seven-year-old can keep up without getting too tired and the baby can fall asleep—and hopefully stay asleep—without being jostled around. There are also very few intersections, so I don't have to worry about the oldest getting a little ahead. (This area can be busy in the summer with other bikers and runners enjoying the trail, so a reminder to my son to keep to the right and to warn people when he's approaching is always a good idea.)

Parking at the trailhead on M-22 is limited. A small dirt lot is the main access point, however, there is more parking available across the road at the Elberta Farmers' Market, too. The paved trail continues uninterrupted by main-road crossings for



Visitors riding the Betsie Valley Trail. Photo by Aubrey Ann Parker.

three miles before finally intersecting with River Road. At this point, I typically turn around and head back. This makes it the perfect choice for a fast six miler with kids in tow. If six miles (making it all the way to River Road and then returning to the Elberta Trailhead) is too long for you, team up with a running buddy and do a car drop, just don't forget to transfer the car seats!

The most scenic part of the trail greets us as we turn the corner from the small dirt parking lot. A sweeping view of Betsie Bay on the left and the surrounding marshland on the right carry us through the first quarter mile. We always see a variety of waterfowl, and one time my son had to stop to watch a local muskrat, which he then talked about for the next five miles. There is also a lookout point here for birders and curious kids to either side of the main trail.

The trail crosses the entrance to Betsie River Campground after about a mile and a half. This is the only place I have to be wary of traffic when I have the little biker along.

Miles two and three on the way out are flat and fast; not as scenic as some stretches but still close to town, fully paved, and pet friendly (as long as your dog is leashed). Bring your own water, and your own doggie bags, as these are not provided on this section of the trail. Additionally, there are

no outhouses at the Elberta Trailhead or along this section of trail, so keep that in mind before heading out. If you do make it to River Road, there is an outhouse at this trail access point, visible from the intersection. (Note that you do have to cross River Road to get there, which can be busy at times.)

Formerly part of the Ann Arbor Railroad, the Betsie Valley Trail stretches for 22 miles from Thompsonville all the way to Cannon Park in Frankfort. I can't wait to explore the rest of it!

Stay tuned for the next of this series, which will continue along the Betsie Valley Trail. You can learn more about the Betsie Valley Trail online at BetsieValleyTrail.org. Do you have a favorite Benzie County trail? Go to [The Betsie Current on Facebook](#) and share a picture of your favorite route.



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The Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts in Frankfort, MI, has an immediate need for a highly motivated and creative arts administrator to help lead its continued growth. The position of Associate Director offers a unique opportunity to have a tangible impact on the creative and educational culture of Northwestern Michigan, and to experiment with new programs, exhibitions and events. Frankfort is a charming and open-minded community with a highly motivated base of Art Center members and supporters, as well as an above-average number of working artists and artisans.

Deadline: June 15.
Candidates should review the posted job description and submit a cover letter, current resume, and three samples of graphic design.

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