

The Betsie Current

Volume VI, Issue 8

Summer's Last Sigh

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Keeping History Visible

Benzie Area Historical Museum boasts 14,000 objects

By Beau Vallance

Current Contributor

Museum professionals call everything “objects”—a painting, a teaspoon, a stove, or a flag, all are “objects.” The Benzie Area Historical Museum has about 14,000 objects, all pertaining to Benzie’s history.

But visitors will not see 14,000 things; they will see only the best. It is typical for any museum to exhibit a surprisingly small fraction of its collection at a time: 10 to 12 percent is common, while the rest is kept in storage.

That is because no museum has the space or desire to exhibit its entire collection. Museums select (“curate”) the highest-quality objects to exhibit, avoiding duplication—one 1940s toaster is enough—grouping related objects into thematic exhibits. The stories they



The current temporary exhibit at the Benzie Area Historical Museum is “Gone to the Colors,” marking the centennial anniversary of U.S. involvement in World War I. Photo by Beau Vallance.

reflect are clarified by short object labels and longer wall text.

It takes a lot of work to manage 14,000 objects. Many museums have staffs to do this—curators who specialize in, say, farm implements, home décor, or Native American artifacts and who write the labels; educators who give workshops and tours; a maintenance crew. In big museums, professional registrars keep track of where each object came from (its “provenance”), its condition (“shallow diagonal two-inch scratch in upper right corner,” “silverplate wearing off on bottom of spoon bowl,” “major tatters along 80 percent of the bottom edge”), its current location (“on view in Gallery X,” “in storage on shelf Y,” “on loan to Museum Z”).

But of the 35,000 museums in the coun-

Please see History on page 6

Michigan’s Forests: From Clear-cutting to Sustainability

Area landowners to learn about managing their trees

By Emily Cook

Current Contributor

As Michigan’s forests have developed since the last ice age, they have experienced many changes. Over thousands of years, varying climates created diverse landscapes we would not recognize as the forests that we know so well today.

Leading up to the 19th century, however, forests began to resemble the scenery that we all are now so familiar with. Mixed hardwood trees and pines covered nearly the entire state with relatively little impact from humans. While some settlement had occurred, it was quite minimal and forest clearing was small—development occurred where Native Americans resided and then where Europeans who were moving westward settled. But that all changed when settlers started to see the value in lumber.



Kama Ross is helping to host Forestry Field Day, an upcoming workshop for landowners at Interlochen Center for the Arts. Photo courtesy of the Leelanau Conservation District.

During the 1800s, Michigan’s lumber operations resulted in more wealth than all of the gold that was mined in California during the gold rush. Michigan experienced a financial boom, and forests began to be cleared not only for cities but simply for their worth. Landscapes throughout the entire state were clear-cut, starting with groves of large white pines, which were considered the best for various reasons. White pines grow straight and tall, thus they were in high demand. Additionally, they were a softer wood and weighed less, meaning that it was easier to float them down rivers to ports where they would then be shipped.

By the end of the century, Michigan’s forests were nearly barren. Settlers attempted to farm by clearing downed brush and stumps and burning them, causing massive forest fires that often destroyed any remaining stands of

Please see Trees on page 7

LivelyLands

A new music festival launches in Empire

By Jacob Wheeler

Current Contributor

It was a late night in Dallas in 2016, and Burdickville-native Emily Lively and her friend, Shannon Holt, were reminiscing about how idyllic Northern Michigan is in the late summer. They began planning a trip to Leelanau County for their Texas friends. Next thing they knew, they were organizing a music festival for their friends, local musicians, Austin virtuosos, and just about anyone else with an interest in live music and good cheer.

Now, a year later, the first annual LivelyLands is about to kick off on Friday, August 25 and run through Sunday, August 27. The music festival will take place at four locations: the five-acre Lively Farm off Bow Road, just



Headlining acts include Northern Michigan songster Seth Bernard, pictured left. Other musicians include Rebecca Loebe, The DEER, and Amy Rosalyn from Austin, Texas; Heather Styke from Chicago; Nicholas James Thomasma from Grand Rapids; and the familiar Leelanau presence of Patrick Niemisto. Photo courtesy of Earthwork Music Collective.

one mile south of Big Glen Lake; the Empire beach; the Empire Town Hall; and the Empire Eagles’ campground on M-72.

The festival kicks off Friday with a 6 p.m. preview concert and dinner for those with VIP tickets, followed by a free “Sunset Serenade” at the Empire beach, nightcapped by a bonfire at the campground. Saturday’s events at the Lively Farm run from noon until 11 p.m. The festival closes Austin-style on Sunday with Bluegrass & Breakfast tacos at the Empire Town Hall from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Headlining acts include Austin favorite The DEER and Northern Michigan songster Seth Bernard. Other musicians include Rebecca Loebe and Amy Rosalyn from Austin, Heather Styka from Chicago, Nicholas James

Please see Lively on page 2

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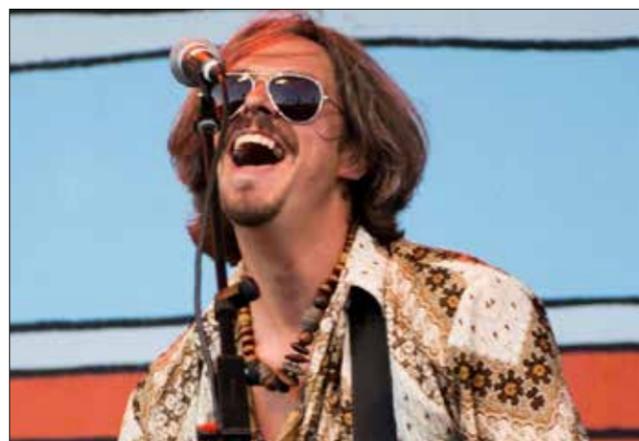
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Lively
Continued from page 1

Thomasma from Grand Rapids, and the familiar Leelanau presence of Patrick Niemisto. “I’ve been working for festivals since leaving Michigan for Texas in 2005,” says Lively, who now resides in the hot music town of Austin and who has worked at the famous music and film festival South by Southwest (SXSW). “I always dreamed of using my experience to create my own festival. Finally, I approached my dad, Jim Lively, with the concept. While leery of throwing a festival on his property at first, the innate planner came out in him, and he’s been instrumental in helping us make this happen from so far away.”

Her dad, Jim, is program director at the Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, and her mom, Kelly, works for Cherry



Nicholas James Thomasma of Grand Rapids is one of the musicians to perform at the upcoming LivelyLands music festival. Photo courtesy of NicholasJamesThomasma.com

Capital Foods. The pair has spent years cultivating the land to accommodate large groups of family and friends, says the younger Lively, Emily. “With rolling hills and expansive skies and a group of Lively girls, I couldn’t think of a better location for our first, intimate, pilot event,” she says.

Lively confirms that LivelyLands was inspired by mobile model festivals like SXSW and smaller festivals like Viva Terlingua, in West Texas.

“We wanted to incorporate the local community as much as possible,” she says. “So we decided to bring some of the music to them and show our out-of-town attendees some of our favorite places in Leelanau County. The historic Empire Town Hall couldn’t be a better location for our Bluegrass & Brunch concert on Sunday, and what better way to open a festival than with a concert as the sun dips into Lake Michigan?”

While Lively may call Austin her home, she will always have one foot in her native Northern Michigan, and she loves how collaborative our local music community is.

“The Northern Michigan music scene is intimate, giving, fun, and there is so much organic talent. They offer so much to the area and to each other—it’s not about the money or the fame, it’s about creating music together” she says. “From an early age as a budding songwriter, I was never short of advice from

my lifetime music teacher and mentor, Pat Niemisto, who brought me to Lambs Retreat for songwriters for the first time, lent me my first guitar, and let me plan all the Glen Lake North by Northwest concerts and trips [during] my senior year of high school.”

Do Northern Michigan and Austin have anything artistically in common?

“The Austin music community is so similar to the Northern Michigan scene, but it moves a little faster,” Lively says. “Upon moving to Austin in 2008, I was blown away by the sheer number of live shows you could see in a night. From folk/Americana to jazz to hip-hop, Austin has it all. And the beautiful thing about the Austin community is the drive to support each other. Whether it’s recording back-up vocals on your friend’s new album, going to shows, housing a friend’s band on tour, or backing a Kickstarter with the last five dollars in your pocket, Austin musicians thrive on collaboration.”

If LivelyLands sounds a little like the late Dunegrass Festival—a staple annual August music festival in downtown Empire through the 1990s and early 2000s—that is no accident.

“Dunegrass was my first music festival,” Lively says. “I loved every moment I spent at Dunegrass, from grade school to graduation. While we don’t intend to grow to the size of Dunegrass, I definitely channeled the early festivals when creating LivelyLands.”

A full schedule of events and tickets are available at TheLivelyLands.com. Friday’s Sunset Preview Concert and Dinner is \$50 and will take place at the Glen Arbor home of Ken and Shirley Hurlin, featuring a locally sourced dinner and a review of Saturday’s musical line-up. A Saturday Pass is \$50 and includes an all-day-access wristband for music on the hill at the Lively Farm. Bluegrass Brunch on Sunday is \$15 and will be a casual bluegrass jam, hosted by Hawks & Owls String Band, with a locally grown breakfast taco buffet. Weekend Camping is \$30 for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, while Saturday camping is only \$10. Tickets for Saturday and Sunday, including Saturday camping, are \$75 and include access to all events. A Weekender Pass is \$100 and includes an all-access wristband for Friday’s acoustic bonfire, all Saturday shows, and Sunday’s Bluegrass Breakfast. A VIP Weekender Pass is \$175 and includes a t-shirt; a poster; and an all-access wristband for Friday’s VIP dinner, sundown preview concert, and acoustic bonfire; all Saturday shows; and Sunday’s Bluegrass Brunch. Children ages 12 and under are free to all events.

*A version of this article first published in our sister publication, the **Glen Arbor Sun**, owned and edited by Jacob Wheeler. Wheeler is communications manager for Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities.*

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Laurenn Rudd

A millennial boomerangs home to Glen Arbor fashion

By Stephanie Purifoy
Current Contributor

Laurenn Rudd began working at Cottonseed Apparel in Glen Arbor when she was 16, and the Lake Ann native never thought the job would introduce her to what would become her passion—business and fashion.

Rudd, now 28, only knew that she enjoyed the work. Like much of the Cottonseed's staff, she returned every summer through high school and college. After finishing her business management degree at Hope College, Rudd knew her heart lay in the fashion industry.

"I don't really care about designers; I just think clothing is a way to express yourself," Rudd says. "It's not just about fashion. It's also about helping people express themselves and feel good about themselves."

Rudd followed her passion and embraced the travel bug that had bit her during a semester abroad in England—she decided to take a leap and move to the suburbs of New York City.

"I just wanted to get away and try things out," Rudd says. "I wanted to experience something else."

After struggling for the first year and working briefly at a shoe store, she found her footing at Anthropologie, a retailer giant that sells everything from clothing to home décor. While working there, she made friends and began to feel more comfortable in the once-foreign, urban setting.

But after two years, Rudd recognized that it was time to return to her true "home" of Northern Michigan.

"It was hard to leave once I got settled," she admits. "But I'm glad I did the two years out there, and I'm glad I came home. I wanted to be back with my family."

Rudd's original plan was to transfer to Anthropologie in Grand Rapids, but since the store had no openings, she ended up moving back to Benzie County. Rudd soon learned that she could return to work at the Cottonseed, one of her first jobs as a teenager. At the end of her first autumn back in Glen Arbor in 2015, the Oberschultes offered her a full-time position, which was too good to pass.

"Even though it's a small store, it's really a big business," Rudd says. "It's a huge space and a huge amount of inventory. The season is so short, you're honestly opening a brand-new store every year... My experience out east and working in a corporate company really increased all my skills."

Back in Northern Michigan, Rudd had to adapt to more than different work environ-

ments. The seasonally sleepy towns of Glen Arbor, where she works, and Lake Ann, where she lives, lack the constant pulse of the New York area where Rudd spent two years.

"Everyone's moving quickly, and everybody wants to climb the ladder; it's hard to connect," she says, comparing New York to Michigan. "Here, I think it's different. I think people are happier, because they love being here, and they do more of what they love."

Another major difference between New York and Northern Michigan, she says, is the demographics. Whereas the median age in White Plains, New York, is 38, and 61.4 percent of the population is under the age of 45, the average age in Glen Arbor is 63, making that township the oldest populous

in Leelanau County. Rudd admits that being part of Northern Michigan's millennial generation can be a struggle.

"You really just have to go to Traverse City," she says. "There are tons of people, you just need to put yourself out there."

Rudd recognizes the gap that separates older generations from the area's millennials and young professionals, but clarifies that everyone in town—regardless of age—shares one thing in common.

"It's this whole idea about moving away and appreciating where you come from," she says. "Just because we're young doesn't mean we don't appreciate this area. I loved it here."

Despite being in the generational minority, Rudd has found community at her workplace.

"All the women who work at the Cottonseed I feel really close with," she says. "So, I feel like they're all my friends, too."

Rudd now works full-time at the Cottonseed in the spring, summer, and fall. During the winter, she travels to spend time with friends and visits her boyfriend, Seth Ankerson, who is currently in the Marines and stationed in Hawaii.

"Cottonseed is such a unique place. I think a lot of [co-owner] Diana [Oberschulte]," says Rudd, whom she cites as being a major inspiration and role model. "She has created an awesome work environment. She's incredibly smart, business-wise, but she's also a good person and so nice and nurturing toward everyone. That transcends to the customers and the staff, and it's just a happy place to be. It's a beautiful place to work. You're a block away from Lake Michigan, you have a bunch of beautiful things around you, and there's always something to do."

*A version of this article first published in our sister publication, the **Glen Arbor Sun**.*



Laurenn Rudd returns to Northern Michigan from New York City. Photo courtesy of the **Glen Arbor Sun**.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CONSTANTLY FLOWING

Mondays

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

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

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

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

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

Tuesdays

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

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

Gentle yoga in the barn at the First Congregational Church of Benzonia. All levels welcome. Donation. 10am.

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

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

Knitting Group at Benzonia Public Library. A "knit-along" project for those who want to work on the same project, or bring your own project if you prefer; we'd love your company! Need help? If you are having troubles with a current project, bring it along and we'll help

you get it straightened out. Call Michele at 231-383-5716 with any questions. 1-3pm.

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

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

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

Steve Fernand plays Ballads a la Bossa at the Cold Creek Inn. 6-9pm.

Wednesdays

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center. annamallien@gmail.com 9-10am.

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

Fitness Fusion (Yoga + Fitness + Pilates) with Beth at Discover YOU Yoga & Fitness. 770-235-9306. 10-11:15 am. *

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

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.

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

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

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

Thursdays

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

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

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

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

Bunco at The Gathering Place. 1-2pm.

Computers with Carol at the Darcy Library at 7238 Commercial Street in Beulah. Ask Carol computer-related questions. Read to Rosie,

the cute little dog! 1-5pm.

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

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

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

Fridays

Pilates with Anna at the Oliver Art Center. annamallien@gmail.com 9-10am.

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

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

Saturdays

Body Sculpting on the ball with Deanne at Oliver Art Center. annamallien@gmail.com 9-10 am.

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

Michigan Legacy Art Park's ATV-riding tours. 10am-12pm.

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.

Steve Fernand plays Ballads a la Bossa at the Cold Creek Inn. 6-9pm.

*Yoga classes at Discover YOU Yoga and Fitness in Frankfort every day of the week, except Saturday. For a complete schedule and more information on classes and rates, visit discoveryyogami.com.

ON DECK

Thursday August 24

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

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Thursday & Friday August 24 & 25

Benzie's Magical History Tour. Benzie Bus and the Benzie Area Historical Museum offer two distinct loops (Frankfort and Thompsonville) around the county, with historic stops along the way. \$15 for one loop or \$20 for both loops. Ask about our discount for groups of 5 or more. Loops begin at the Historical Museum. Reservations required 231-325-3000.

Friday-Sunday, August 25-27

This annual festival in Honor, celebrates 50 years this year, beginning in 1967, celebrating the 'salmon run' up the Benzie County rivers. Honor is considered the 'birthplace' of salmon in the state of Michigan, as the first salmon were planted in the Platte River. Parade, Family Fun, Car Show Fundraiser on Saturday, Live Music, Softball Tournament, & lots more. Nationalcohosalmonfestival.org

Friday-Sunday, August 25-27

Benzie Fishing Frenzy. The Benzie Fishing Frenzy Tournament, is the 2nd largest salmon fishing event on the Tournament Trail. Mineral Springs Park, downtown Frankfort - One of the only places in Northern Michigan where you will see potentially over 1,200 salmon and trout being weighed as these competitors try to win the Biggest and Heaviest Fish! Weigh-ins begin just after noon each day under the pavilion. Frankfort.

Friday, August 25

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Celebrates 101st Birthday of the National Park Service with a Fee Free Day! Empire.

Friday, August 25

Maples 7th Annual Community Carnival. This is the 7th annual community carnival but this time it is in front of the NEW facility! Games: Duck Pond, Ring Toss, Basket Toss, Fishing, Corn Hole, Gun Shott, Fishing, Ball-Toss, Spin-the-Wheel. Entertainment: Clowns, Face Painting, Prizes, & Photo Booth. Food: Popcorn, Cotton Candy, Pretzels, Apples w/caramel, fried pickles, Cheese curds, Lemonade, & Iced tea. 210 Maple St, Frankfort. 1-4pm.

Saturday, August 26

3-on-3 middle school (3rd-8th grade) basketball tournament in memory of Isaac Julian Ryan McKinnon is taking place at the Coho Salmon Festival. Honor. 231-218-0655. 9am-12pm.



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Saturday, August 26

BACN/Bacon Cookoff. Over a dozen chefs from favorite area restaurants prepare a signature dish containing bacon. Guests may enjoy as many as they like and vote for their favorite 2017 Bacon Creation! Trinity Lutheran Church, Frankfort. 11am-1:30pm.

Saturday, August 26

Benzonia Public Library used Book Sale! Proceeds benefit the Benzonia Public Library. 10am-4pm.

Saturday, August 26

Annual Benzie County Air Show at the Thompsonville Airport. Annual Benzie Area Radio Control Club Airshow brings avid pilots from all over Michigan, and their remote-controlled planes, to perform at the event. 10am-3pm.

Thursday, August 31

Volunteer Trail Building Day - Arcadia Dunes. 10am-12pm

Thurs & Fri, Aug 31 & Sept 1

Benzie's Magical History Tour. Benzie Bus and the Benzie Area Historical Museum offer two distinct loops (Frankfort and Thompsonville) around the county, with historic stops along the way. \$15 for one loop or \$20 for both loops. Ask about our discount for groups of 5 or more. Loops begin at the Historical Museum. Reservations required 231-325-3000.

Thursday & Friday September 7 & 8

Benzie's Magical History Tour. Benzie Bus and the Benzie Area Historical Museum offer two distinct loops (Frankfort and Thompsonville) around the county, with historic stops along the way. \$15 for one loop or \$20 for both loops. Ask about our discount for groups of 5 or more. Loops begin at the Historical Museum. Reservations required 231-325-3000.

Thursday, September 7

Volunteer Trail Building Day - Arcadia Dunes. 10am-12pm

Saturday, September 9

11th Annual Taste of Benzie and Beyond. Annual Food, Wine, and Beer tasting event held in Downtown Frankfort. Come sample the area's restaurants and what they have to offer and as well as local beer and wine. Sidewalk Chalk Art contest - Kid's games and activities. Mineral Springs Park, Frankfort. 11:30am-3:30pm.

Saturday, September 9

Forestry Field Day at Interlochen Center for the Arts. Join area landowners for a Forestry Field Day. The workshop will include an indoor presentation in the morning, and a field tour of some of Interlochen's nearly 1,000 acres. The Forestry Field Day is presented by the Forestry Assistance Program, Benzie, Leelanau and Grand Traverse Conservation Districts, Michigan Tree Farm System and the Interlochen Center for the Arts. 4000 Highway M-137, Interlochen. www.interlochen.org. 9am-3pm

Way out: Plan now for the Frankfort Film Festival! October 19-22. frankfortgardentheater.com/film-festival/

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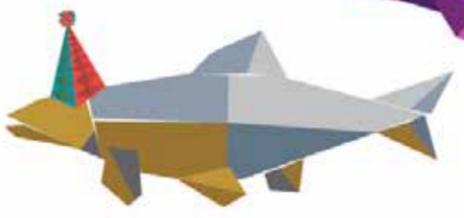
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History

Continued from page 1

try—more than all of the McDonald's and Starbucks combined, and in nearly every county—over half are “small,” where all of this work is done by three or fewer staff members, plus many dedicated volunteers.

The Benzie Area Historical Museum is one of these small museums. It has one staff member. Some 50 volunteers make up the difference—about 20 docents (“tour guides”), in addition to gardeners, archives specialists, and marketing and finance experts. It attracts people from well beyond Benzie—about 4,500 people visit the museum annually, and about half are locals, while the other half are tourists.

I have visited dozens of small museums in my career as a museum educator, and I can attest that this one is unusually professional and engaging, with lively public programming and regularly changing exhibitions.

Local History

The Benzie Area Historical Museum opened in 1969 in the Benzonia Congregational Church, a building that was constructed in 1887 with large central spaces and a few nooks and crannies. It was not built to be a museum, so it does not have the tidy sequence of “galleries” to which museum patrons may be accustomed. But the stories are made visible in an inviting arrangement of spaces, identified by large signage and defined floor and wall spaces.

The museum is a legacy of the forward-thinking Congregational ministers who, in 1859, founded Benzonia to establish a college that was welcoming of all people, including women and people of color, as students. The museum's exhibits illustrate life before (i.e. the Native American exhibits) and since that time.

There are exhibits on Native American settlements and crafts; the original Benzonia “colony;” historian Bruce Catton; local artist Gwen Frostic; logging; fishing; summer resorts and cottage life; rural schools; sewing and weaving; agriculture (check the panels describing each of 13 “Centennial Farms” in Benzie, with great photos and fascinating details); the car ferries; railroads; early medicine; a 19th-century parlor; and kitchens in 1908 and the 1940s.

The current temporary exhibition, “Gone to the Colors,” on World War I (do not miss both spaces that are dedicated to this topic), has been quite popular. (Go online to read the article on this topic that published earlier this summer in *The Betsie Current*.)

On my visit to the museum, I met Sharon Osborne, a museum volunteer and World War I Red Cross nurse, who was dressed in her uniform, offering donuts, just as she would have in the trenches.

The United States entered World War I three years after the war began, in 1917, after much debate. The exhibit honors that centennial, with a local spin. The museum website explains: “The exhibit focuses on how Benzie County was affected; on a number of the ‘local boys’ who enlisted; and on ‘propaganda’ in a variety of forms—popular music, posters letters, etc.”

Staff, Volunteers, and Exhibits

Following Dr. Lou Yock, who served as museum director for a decade and retired in 2016, Dr. Misty Sheehan has been museum director for about a year. She came to museum work from a career in college teaching in Illinois and at Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) in Traverse City, retiring twice and then deciding to settle in Benzie. Her PhD is in philosophy, and years of teaching the humanities and history have prepared her for working with the artifacts that history has left behind.

Sheehan has traveled the world, and she says this museum is “one of the best” of the small museums that she has seen. The collection is broad, important objects are in great condition, signage and labeling are clear and

simple, the exhibits are updated periodically, and changing exhibitions draw repeat visitors.

Sheehan works with a board of community people, including a dentist, an attorney, a doctor, educators from Interlochen, a camp director, and representatives from Benzie County towns and villages. The Program Committee—largely teachers and librarians—helps to create the revolving exhibitions and update the permanent installations.

Where do the objects come from?

“All are donated,” Sheehan says, and a committee reviews each one; objects accepted into the collection must have a Benzie or a Benzie-person connection. Many are accepted, but some are declined—a beautiful quilt from someone's grandmother in Flint, for example, did not qualify.

Occasionally, a visitor offers a correction to an object's label information.

“We're always glad when people question an object's information, so we can correct it,” Sheehan says.

What are the favorites?

“People come here to see the Bruce Catton exhibit,” Sheehan says, noting that most visitors are also interested in the car ferry exhibit. “People's parents worked for the ferry, and they want to learn more about it.”

A lot of women like the “sewing room,” which includes carder, loom, and a spinning wheel.

Sheehan's personal favorite is the 19th-century dentist's chair, with its hand-cranked drill, which is attached to a large gear and looks pretty horrifying. Sheehan recalls seeing chairs like this when she was in China during the 1980s, when roadside dentists set up in rural areas with signs depicting a tooth to alert passersby to their services.

Sheehan singles out the Native American exhibit as a favorite, also, for “the contrast it shows between their and our ways of living.” Many of those objects are fragile, unusually susceptible to damage by touching, and are protected under glass.

A new success is the Magical History Tour program. The Benzie Bus tour began during the summer of 2016, but the program really got a boost from a partnership with the museum, beginning earlier this summer. (Read the article on the tour that published last summer in *The Betsie Current* here: bit.ly/28Yk7Mm)

“[Sheehan] really helped with honing our scripts and recruiting volunteer tour guides,” says Bill Kennis, executive director of Benzie Bus.

The Magical History Tour offers two two-hour guided tours, one that heads eastward through Thompsonville and the Centennial Lily Farm and the other heading westward to Elberta's old iron works and the harbor. Offered at noon and 2:30 p.m. every Thursday and Friday through the summer (Saturdays and westward only, starting in September), the tours have been “very successful, we've had a great response,” Sheehan says.

I did the Thompsonville loop a few weeks ago, and though I am a lifelong Summer Person, I saw things that I had never known before—like: we have wild cactus here (and elsewhere in western Michigan), and giant, metal-sculpted ants at the lily farm. It is a bargain, at only \$15.

The funding that keeps local history visible at the museum is almost 100 percent donations. Area townships contribute small amounts in cash or by in-kind contributions, such as mowing the grounds, but there are no major grants supporting the museum—maybe in the future.

For now, the museum is supported by visitors, exploring the best of those 14,000 objects and learning the background to what Benzie is today.

Visit the museum Tuesdays-Sundays, 1-5 p.m. (closed Mondays, also Tuesdays beginning in the fall). You will be amazed at (but do not touch!) the objects, some familiar and some surprising, and at the histories they reflect. Plus, chances are that your family had some part—even if only as tourists passing through—in at least one of these stories.

Trees

Continued from page 1

forest. After all of this, farming was found to be difficult in Northern Michigan's sandy soils.

Only after most of the damage was done did active concern begin regarding forests and the need to re-establish them.

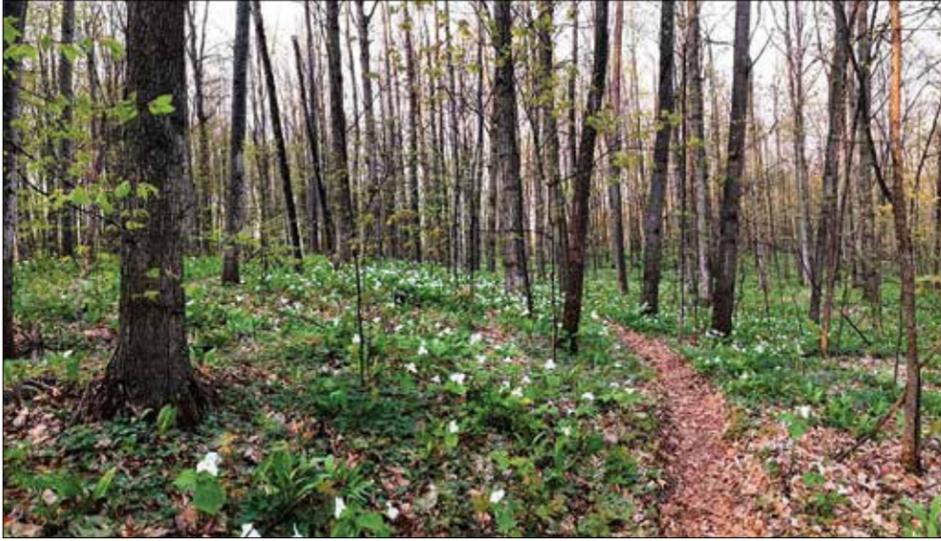
The early 20th century marked the beginning of Michigan's conservation era—an era that created the foundation for the trees that we see around us today.

Lumber continued—and continues—to be an important industry but now with a sustainable approach. People learned that

that is not too crowded is receiving the water, sunlight, and nutrients it needs to grow and has a better chance at surviving."

The Forestry Field Day is a partnership between the Benzie, Leelanau, and Grand Traverse Conservation Districts, the Forestry Assistance Program, the Michigan Tree Farm System, and Interlochen Center for the Arts. The program will provide landowners with education on a wide range of forestry subjects. Speakers include:

- Consulting forester Daniel Schillinger will present on creating a management plan and how to incorporate thinning projects, while also enhancing wildlife habitat.
- Jenna Johnson, from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), will discuss oak wilt and provide a tour of



Early spring in Pete's Woods in Benzie County. Photo by Emily Cook.

it was possible to harvest trees, while also still maintaining a healthy forest.

Kama Ross, district forester for Benzie, Leelanau, and Grand Traverse counties, makes a point to educate today's landowners on what this means.

"A healthy forest is rich in diversity and has varying age classes and vertical structure, according to the types of trees growing there," Ross says. "It provides sustainable benefits for us and all wildlife that depend on that habitat now and in the future."

To avoid the errors of our early settlers, programs are now in place to assist landowners with their forest-management decisions. To dive even deeper into this subject, Ross is helping to host Forestry Field Day, an upcoming workshop for landowners at Interlochen Center for the Arts.

While only half of the state is now covered in trees, much of it is privately owned, meaning the future of our forests is in many hands.

"A managed forest is a healthy forest," Ross says. "A healthy forest is better able to withstand the stress of insect and disease [both native and non-native] and maintain more vigorously in times of drought. A tree

sites that are currently undergoing treatment for this disease.

Additionally, there will be a sawmill demonstration; the sharing of an artistic study, being completed by Interlochen students, that shows the conversion of a pine plantation into native forest; and a breakdown of the Forestry Assistance Program, available to landowners—a free state-wide program.

Ross emphasizes that learning how to maintain our forests and allowing them to expand is key to not only ecological health but our own well-being.

"The forest is so resilient," Ross says. "And that strength and beauty is good for our minds, especially when our lives are so busy and uncertain."

The Forestry Field Day is being held on Saturday, September 9, from 9am-3pm at Interlochen Center for the Arts at 4000 Highway M-137. Please register by September 1 by contacting Kama Ross at 231-256-9783 or kama.ross@macd.org. Cost for the workshop is \$5 per person and includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

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