Rehabilitating Northern Michigan's Wildlife

Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund brings essential service to Benzie and beyond

By Emily Cook

Current Contributor

The arrival of March means many things. Winter's intensity lessens, the sun shares its light for more hours of the day—accompanied by the sounds of returning robins and red-winged blackbirds from their southern migration—and outdoor enthusiasts swap their cross-country skis for hiking boots and mountain bikes once again.

Without fail, March also brings "baby season" for Michigan wildlife. From a clutch full of chickadees to a family of opossums to a sleeping fawn, the young creatures of the region are plentiful in spring. Unfortunately, this can result in a higher likelihood of stumbling upon an orphaned or injured animal—how should someone living in Northwest Michigan handle this situation?

Samantha Wolfe (32)—originally from Benzie County, but now residing in Grand Traverse County—has an answer.

"Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund was start-



Samantha Wolfe (32, left) and Justin Grubb (31, right) are co-founders of Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund, a new nonprofit to help rehabilitate and restore the wildlife and wild spaces that exist in the northwest lower peninsula of Michigan that is slated to begin operating this spring. Photo courtesy of SBWF.

ed to help rehabilitate and restore the wildlife and the wild spaces that exist in the northwest lower [peninsula of] Michigan, and to help connect people to nature through wildlife," she says.

Slated to begin operation this spring—just in time for the aforementioned "baby season"— Wolfe and SBWF's cofounder, Justin Grubb (31), a wildlife photographer and biologist, will be providing a much-needed environmental service to the region. (Grubb's wife's family is from Northern Michigan.)

Apart from raptorspecific facilities—North Sky Raptor Sanctuary of Interlochen and Skegemog Raptor Center on the east side of Traverse City—other rehabilitation nonprofit organizations are currently two or more hours away, based in Grand Rapids, Eaton Rapids, and Houghton Lake.

"Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund is based in Benzie County and covers northwest lower Michigan—wildlife populations don't care about municipal boundaries and county lines," Wolfe says. "As long as we are able to arrange transport, I am happy to be a resource for the wildlife in [the greater] area."

SBWF will start out by helping to rehabilitate opossums, rabbits, and squirrels at the Benzie location, but the organization will also be able to take in myriad other animals temporarily, until they can be transferred to another rehab facility. Regardless if the animal stays with SBWF in Benzie County or is moved to another appropriate organization, the hope is to be able to release these animals back to the wild, once they are healthy and viable.

Please see Rehab on page 6

Radiant Love

The comforting warmth of wood heat

By Ron Schmidt

Current Contributors

Many have sung songs and told stories about their fondness for a particular car or truck they have owned, but I have not heard any about a favorite woodstove. A decent vehicle will get you from here to there—that is true—but a good woodstove filled with seasoned hardwood logs will keep you warm and cozy all the way through until spring.

If a storm takes down the powerlines, and there is no electricity for hours or days, a woodstove will reliably keep you feeling warm and as welcomed as a good friend.

How many of us wished we had one just before Christmas? A big storm in Michigan took down powerlines and knocked out electricity to thousands; plenty of folks in Northern Michigan had no heat for two or three days. I sure wished for one of my former woodstoves and a good woodpile to feed it.

Where It Began

My first kinship with a woodstove was in 1973, when I bought a wood-burning antique cookstove at a yard sale in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It was already 50 years old at that time but in great condition.



Lincoln family wood-fired stove in the kitchen of the Springfield Lincoln home, Illinois. Photo courtesy of Daniel Schwen/Creative Commons.

This cookstove was cast-iron, weighed about 500 pounds, and needed four adults to move it. The oven was between the firebox and a water reservoir. Above the burners were warming ovens to keep the plates warm or allow bread dough to rise.

I loved cooking with this stove, which also kept our house warm—I used it for 10 years, until I had to leave it behind when we moved to the Lower Peninsula.

I soon missed heating with wood so much, though, that I bought an Ashley woodstove. The Ashley held much more wood and was more efficient than the cookstove had been. When I finished my farm chores, I reveled in sitting in a high-backed rocking chair next to that stove and feeling the heat radiat-

ing from the Ashley's metal firebox. I fed the stove with seasoned firewood that I had cut myself, with the help of my brother and friends.

In 1983, my wife and I welcomed twin daughters into our lives. When one or both infants would awaken at night, I had the pleasure of rocking them back to sleep beside the warmth of the Ashley. Sometimes, I would fall asleep, too.

A few years later, another move found us in a smaller home—with no room for

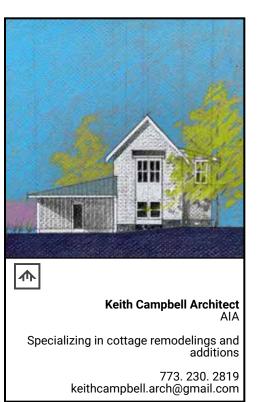
Upper Peninsula Heat

Six years passed before I again enjoyed the warmth of a wood-burning stove, once more while living in the Upper Peninsula.

I bought a remote cabin in the woods, where I lived every May through October. The cabin was outfitted with an old Ashley woodstove that had seen better days and had numerous problems. Still, it kept my cabin warm for nine seasons.

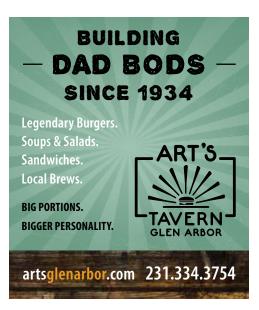
During that time, as the beech trees in my forest slowly died from beech bark disease, my brother Karl and I cut them and split them for firewood. It was fantastic to sit in my overstuffed easy chair four feet from the stove and feel comfortable

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"Dark & Stormy Night"

Second-place winner of annual Stormcloud essay contest

By Jamison Rae Roethler

Current Contributor

It was a dark and stormy night, and a young 10-year-old girl was crying on her bed. As the lightning flashed from the window, her eyes were red, and you could see she had been crying for quite some time. On the floor and all over the bed were "LOST DOG" flyers that she had made and put around town all day, just before the storm.

The dog in the picture was a brown mutt, with a black smudge over one eye. His ears were lopsided, and he was about five years old—at least that's what the dog shelter had told her and her family. The name below the picture was "Yooper." He had been missing all day.

He was her best friend. Amelia loved Yooper and—before he went missing—the pair could be spotted all through town together. They had been inseparable. He would go to the park with her, to the bakery for his favorite treats, a stop by the realty office for a drink of water from their sidewalk bowl, and he loved visiting the garden next to the brewery.

"Amelia! Where are you?" called her mother, who had also spent the day hanging flyers in the hopes that they would find Yooper.

"I'm in my room," cried Amelia. "Did you find him?" she asked through her tears.

Slowly, her mother walked to the doorway of her room.

"No, honey I didn't." she replied. Amelia's mother looked at her daughter, the flyers, and knew they couldn't give up! "Put on your jacket, boots, and grab a flashlight. We aren't done. There's a storm out there, and we can't let Yooper be alone in it!"

The two put on raincoats, boots, and grabbed flashlights and headed out to Main Street. It wasn't completely dark, and many businesses were still open or getting ready to close after a busy day. As they passed the shops, people poked their heads out one by one to inquire.

"What is going on?" asked Frannie, one of the shop owners.

"Yopper is missing! He can't be in this storm alone!" replied Amelia, as she raced down the sidewalk.

Frannie grabbed her coat and locked

her shop door to join in the search—and she wasn't the only one. As Amelia and her mother reached the end of Main Street, they came to realize almost all of the shop, restaurant, and business owners were with them, searching in the dark, stormy night for one loveable mutt. The crowd of people scattered around the beach searching for Yooper. Suddenly, there was a quiet, muffed yelp, and Rick, one of the business owners, approached a wet cardboard box where the noise had come from. He reached down, and in it was Yooper! Cold, wet, and a tail that couldn't stop wagging in excitement!

Amelia raced over to Rick. He handed Amelia her lost dog. Amelia began crying and kissing Yooper. The rain kept falling, and—surrounded by her family and her incredible town—she was reunited with her best friend.

Read the rest of the 2023 essay contest winners—along with an archive of previous years of winners—at BetsieCurrent.com online.

Dog-Gone Manifestation

Local girl writes essay about a lost dog just weeks before losing her dog

By Aubrey Ann Parker

Current Editor

Jamison Rae Roethler (9), a fourthgrader at Frankfort Elementary School, is a storyteller. And a dog-lover. And I should know—like recognizes like.

On the day that I interviewed Jamison and her mother, Beth Roether (42)—notably a second grade teacher at Frankfort and co-owner of The Cabbage Shed—she had just received a "Panther Pride" bracelet from her school.

"Because I write a lot," Jamison explained to me. "We do journal entries, and I do very good stories. Sometimes I type my stories, but not a lot."

However, until recently, Jamison had never taken part in a writing competition.

Knowing that her daughter enjoys writing, Beth Roethler asked if Jamison wanted to participate in the annual essay contest that has been put on by Stormcloud Brewing Company since 2014.

Stormcloud co-owner and brewmaster Brian Confer (55) came up with the idea for the essay contest nearly a decade ago and enlisted the help of a few literary locals to serve as judges. (Full Disclosure: *The Betsie Current*'s co-owner Jordan Bates has served as judge of the anonymous competition every year since its inception, including this year. Bates has also sporadically been employed by Stormcloud to clean kegs, though you would not have called it his "day job.")

"Many of Stormcloud beers have names with a story behind them. Sometimes I will share the story, while others are kept secret," Confer told The Betsie Current. "I thought it would be fun to have people submit essays with their own stories behind the beer names."

From 2014 to 2018, the first five years of the contest were about "Gerald's Talking



Jamison Rae Roether (9) and her family's two-year-old American Bulldog, Dottie. Photo courtesy of the Roethler family.

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Dog," a cherry-rye dubbel. The first line of every essay had to begin with "Gerald's Talking Dog loves cherries. That's all he talks about..." but the rest was left up to the creative genius of the writer—to spin the "tail" in 500 words or less.

In 2020, things changed a bit—the first line of every essay had to begin with "It was a long way to shore..." in honor of "The Farthest Shore," a Belgian strong dark ale. The contest took a hiatus in 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic..

The last two years, though, every essay had to begin with, "It was a dark and stormy night..." Submissions were due on Monday, February 27, and this year's panel of judges met on Monday, March 6, to compile their favorites. The winners would be announced during a public reading of the top four essays on Saturday, March 11.

"I got my idea from the movie 'Dog Gone' [on Netflix], which we had watched two days before we wrote this," Jamison told me. "After we had watched the movie, my mom mentioned there was a contest going on at Stormcloud for a writing competition. I thought we should write a story about a dog going missing. We were thinking maybe we should base it on our town—everyone searching and helping. We got out her computer on February 14, and I came up with some ideas. My mom helped me to type it up."

Jamison's mother, Beth, added:

"She cried for an hour and a half when we watched 'Dog Gone.' In that movie, a lot of people help them. It's got Rob Lowe in it, and it's really good. But you will cry."

The mother-daughter duo submitted their entry the next day, on Wednesday, February 15. In the story, a 10-year-old girl's dog has gone missing, so she and her mother recruit the townsfolk to help in the search during a "dark and stormy" night. Readers will recognize local places and people—notably "Rick," the brewery owner [like Frankfort's very own Rick Schmitt, co-owner of Stormcloud] and "Frannie," a shop owner [like Frankfort's very own Frances "Frannie" Olivares Elbaz, co-owner of Anet & Ollies and Frannie's Follies, two local shops]. Ultimately, the little girl is reunited with her pup after "Rick" finds the dog on the beach. (The full essay can be read above, with a few minor changes made by The Betsie Current's editor, Aubrey Ann Parker.)

As the Roethlers were waiting to hear how Jamison's story went over with the essay contest's judges, they had cause to wonder if she was beginning to show clairvoyant powers.

Two weeks after Jamison had dictated the fictional story to her mother, Dottie—the family's two-year-old American Bulldog—went missing on Tuesday, February 28. They believe that she might have chased a deer after playing in the backyard of their home near M-115, just outside of Frankfort.

"It started with us just searching around the house, just where she would normally wander off to," Jamison said. "Then it started to turn into a big thing. We had probably 30 people looking for her."

After recruiting friends to help in the search that first evening—to no avail—the Roethlers put Dottie's kennel on their back porch around 8:30 p.m. in hopes that she would come home while everyone was sleeping.

However, the next morning, Dottie still had not come home.

Beth Roethler had put up a Facebook post about their missing pooch, and it received more than 100 "likes," nearly 100 "shares," and more than 50 "comments." Just like in Jamison's story, friends were



Jamison Rae Roether (9, top) and her sister, Emerson (8), who is hugging the family's six-year-old American Bulldog, The Dude (brown), and two-year-old American Bulldog, Dottie (white), at around 10 a.m. on March 1 after she had been missing for 16 hours. Photo courtesy of the Roethler family.

offering to help look, and Beth says that more than 30 families helped to look for Dottie, who was missing for a total of 16 hours, including that first night spent all alone outside.

Ultimately, though—just as in Jamison's essay—Dottie was found and reunited with her family.

"One of our friends [J.D. Kittleson, 43] tracked her footprints into the woods across from our house," said Jamison, whose father, Tony (46), was able to find Dottie based on those footprints. "She must have been sitting there quietly, because [Kittleson] went right up to where she was but didn't see her. When we found her later, she was underneath a pine tree, and it looked like she had been there for a while."

(Notably: J.D. Kittleson is married to Melissa "Missy" Kittleson, who is the other 2nd grade teacher with Beth Roethler at Frankfort.)

Dottie was then taken to the veterinarian to get checked out; she was hobbling a little bit, because she had cut the inside of the pads of her paws and she had frostbite on them.

When I asked Jamison—who turns 10 years old in just a few weeks—how the ordeal had made her feel, considering it was so much like the story she had written about a 10-year-old girl and her lost dog just a few weeks before, she replied:

"The day that she went missing was actually her 'gotcha' day, and she did almost this same thing the day that we got her, but we found her before it turned night that time. I was thinking, 'Wow, this is kinda like the story I wrote.' And I wished I knew what she was thinking. I was kinda scared.

I felt very loved, though, because everyone around the community was looking for her and helping us out. Everyone went searching for her."

About a week after Dottie came home, Jamison got the news that she had received second place in the 2023 Stormcloud Essay Contest for her story about "Amelia" and her lost dog, "Yooper." Sadly, she was out of town—in Florida, with her father, Tony, visiting her grandmother—during the public reading on Saturday, March 11, at Stormcloud.

"Ms. Kaitlyn read her story," Beth Roethler explained. Kaitlyn Matesich (31) is in charge of youth services at Benzie Shores District Library and works in partnership with Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools; she is also notably a former Stormcloud employee.

This was Jamison's first time being in a writing competition, but it likely will not be her last.

"I felt happy and very excited, because I hadn't done it ever before and I got second place," she said.

Again, being a dog-person and a writer, I was eager to find out if Jamison thought she might keep going with her writing beyond school. For now, at nearly 10 years old, she is thinking she maybe wants to be a teacher when she grows up—like Mom.

Lastly, I asked Jamison to describe Dottie to me, in case she ever gets lost again.

"She's white with dots on her," Jamison described her canine best friend to me. "She's sweet and she's loving—sometimes she's naughty, though."

Hopefully Naughty Dottie stays at home from here on out.





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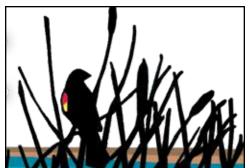
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CONSTANTLY FLOWING

Mondays

Gentle yoga class with Leah Davis, 200-YTT certified. Bring your own mat, water bottle, towel. Donations appreciated. Interlochen Public Library. 9am.

Stretching & Balance at The Gathering Place Senior Center at 10579 Main Street in the Honor Plaza. 231-525-0600. 10-11am.

Euchre at The Gathering Place. 1pm.

Zumba at The Gathering Place. 5:30pm.

Tuesdays

Get Hooked: Yarn Therapy. Bring your own project to work on. All levels welcome. Limited group size. For more info, call the Interlochen Public Library at 231-276-6767. 10:30am-12:30pm.

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

Chair Yoga class at The Gathering Place. 3:30-4:30pm.

Free vinyasa flow yoga class. Interlochen Public Library. Donations are suggested.

Open Drawing Night at Grow Benzie; 3rd Tuesdays, 5:30pm; All experience levels welcome, hosted by the Art Guild.

Zumba: Tons of energy and sweating--if you don't laugh at least once, something is wrong! All fitness levels welcome. Suggested donation of \$5. Interlochen Public Library. 6-7pm.

Wednesdays

Preschool Story Hour with Miss Ann: stories, songs, and a craft. Share the fun of reading with your children ages 3-5 years. Children and their grown-ups will explore stories and activities to encourage them to develop a lifelong love of reading and learning. These 30-minute programs are designed to promote language and listening skills, expand children's imaginations, and arouse their curiosity about the world around them. Interlochen Public Library. 10am and 1pm.

Art with Heart: Bring your supplies and explore your creativity with painting, drawing, coloring, jewelry-making, or anything else you can imagine. Interlochen Public Library. 10am-12pm.

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

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

Knitting Circle at Grow Benzie; Wednesdays, 1:00pm - 3:00pm. All experience levels welcome, drop-in.

If you are a runner, walker, or wanna-be runner, then "Run Benzie" is the group for you! We are a group of runners who meet at Five Shores Brewing in Beulah. Some of us run, some walk, and others do a combination of walk/run. We just like being outdoors and moving. Join us every Wednesday at 6pm. Join the "Run Benzie" group on Facebook to learn more.

Grow Benzie Fibershed is a volunteer-run, fiber and fiber-related community resource space offering creative re-purposing workshops. Open for shopping and inspiration! Materials and other treasures may be purchased for cash or fiber credits. Fiber credits are issued for fiber donations; however, space is very limited so contact us to see if we are accepting donations and interested in considering what you may have to donate. Absolutely no dropoffs! 2-4pm.

Movie Night at Five Shores Brewing. Movie is free! 6-8pm.

Trivia Night! at Lake Ann Brewing Co. Trivia with host Tom Kaspar in the heated tent on the patio! Details-No team size limit, but around 6 is perfect. Games typically take two hours to play and consist of three rounds of general knowledge questions. 7-9pm.

Brose Bowling Tournament. "It's time to roll at the Cellars! We've teamed up with our good friends at Lake and Leaf to bring you Wii Wednesday Brose Bowling League. Every Wednesday you can compete with people from around the area to see who is the best bowler in town. Prizes awarded to the top scorers. No bowling shoes required." 6-8pm.

Thursdays

Tot Time: Let your tot get their wiggles out with interactive play and imagination. For ages 18-36 months, these 20-to 30-minute programs are full of books, songs, and activities that are designed to help develop a child's language skills. Children are encouraged to engage with stories and activities, and their grownups should also participate in the program. Interlochen Public Library. 10am.

5-to-ONE Playgroups at Grow Benzie; 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 10:00am - 11:30pm; Parents and children ages 0-6 years old, older siblings welcome; Free

Computers with Carol at the Darcy Library at 7238 Commercial Street in Beulah. Ask Carol computer-related questions. Read to Denny, the therapy dog! 12-4pm.

Bunco at The Gathering Place. 1:30-2:30pm.

Bridge Group: Do you know the basics of Bridge? Join us for a friendly neighborhood card game. Interlochen Public Library. 2-5pm.

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

Submit events to our FREE CALENDAR by emailing editor@betsiecurrent.com

Announcing 2023 Collection Dates ALL EVENTS 9.00 AM - 1.00 PM

HHW/ELECTRONICS/SCRAP TIRE

Saturday June 3rd - Frankfort High School Saturday August 12th - Honor Road Commision

SCRAP TIRE *ONLY*

Saturday July 15th – THOMPSONVILLE

APPOINTMENTS ARE REQUIRED BenzieRecycler@benzieco.net

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.

Free Zumba class; donations suggested. Interlochen Public Library. 6:30-7:30pm.

Sporcle Trivia at Five Shores Brewing. 6:30pm.

Trivia with host Tom Kaspar in the heated tent on the patio of Lake Ann Brewing Company. No team size limit, but around six is perfect. Games typically take two hours to play and consist of three rounds of general knowledge questions. Prizes awarded to the top three teams. 7-9pm.

Open Mic Night With Jeff Louwsma at St. Ambrose Cellars. Come out and show them what you got! 5:30-8:30pm.

Fridays

Gentle yoga class with Leah Davis, 200-YTT certified. Bring your own mat, water bottle, towel. Donations appreciated. Interlochen Public Library. 9am.

BUNCO at The Gathering Place. 9:30am.

Baby Time is a great way to introduce your child to language skills in a positive environment. These weekly 20-minute storytimes are full of books, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays for children from birth to two years old. Children and their grown-ups are encouraged to engage with the books and songs and actively participate in this program. Interlochen Public Library. 10am.

Preschool Storytime with Miss Anne at Benzonia Public Library! Join us Fridays at 10:30am for stories, craft, activities and a chance to make new friends!

Bunco at The Gathering Place. 9:30am.

Baby Time: 20 minutes of storytime full of books, songs, rhymes, and fingerplays for children from birth to 2 years of age, followed by free play. Our baby time is a great way to introduce your child to language skills in a positive and fun environment. Children and their grown-ups are encouraged to engage with the books and songs, as well as to actively participate in the program. Interlochen Public Library. 10-11am.

Wii Bowling at The Gathering Place. 1pm.

Open Mic Night, hosted by Andy Littlefield: two to three sons or 15 minutse per person. Five Shores Brewing. Sign-ups start at 5pm. Music begins at 6pm.

Karaoke and Shooting Star Entertainment with DJ Shawny T. A prize for everyone that sings! Fallen Timbers, located at 13901 US-31 between Honor and Interlochen. 8pm-1am.

Saturdays

Grow Benzie Fibershed from 10am-12pm. (See bigger description under WEDNESDAYS.)

STEAM Saturday: Families can use traditional LEGOs and giant LEGO blocks to create; explore STEAM kits without having to check them out. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) Interlochen Public Library. 10am-12pm.

ON DECK

Friday, March 17

Square Foot Gardening Workshop with Cold Creek Farm. Learn the basic "how-to's" of creating a small, productive garden for beginner growers with just one square foot of growing space. Grow Benzie. 12-1pm.



By Andreas F. Borchert, CC BY-SA 4.0

Friday, March 17

Saint Patrick's Day, or the Feast of Saint Patrick, is a cultural and religious celebration held on 17 March, the traditional death date of Saint Patrick (c. 385 - c. 461), the foremost patron saint of Ireland.

Friday, March 17

Looking for green beer and music? Head to St. Ambrose to hear Barefoot play! 12pm.

Friday, March 17

Rigs & Jeels perform from 3-6pm; The Jameson Brothers perform from 6:30-9:30pm at Lake Ann Brewing Company.

Friday, March 17

Brett Mitchell at Iron Fish Distillery. 5-7pm.

Saturday, March 18

Join the Benzie Area Historical Society Museum and the Oliver Arts Center as they open ARTiFACTORY 2023, the place where poetry meets history. Through the power of poetry, we will explore history and find



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meaning as we uncover new personal truths. Register for a short class on the basics of how to write a poem at the Oliver Art Center (March 18, morning), then head over to the Benzie Area Historical Society Museum to explore the exhibits (March 18, afternoon). After a brief tour, choose an artifact that calls to you; that matters to you. You will start writing your poem, inspired by your selected artifact. After the museum session, you will then have a few days to finish your poem. Your original poem will be published in a chapbook, and you will be invited to read your poem at a reception (April 22) at the Oliver Art Center when the poetry exhibition is launched. ARTiFACTORY 2023 offers an inclusive platform for poets of all ages in our community to have an opportunity to have their poem published and to read their work at the opening reception. Cost for poetry class, handouts, National Poetry Month poster, museum tour, one keepsake booklet, and reception is \$25. (No cost for those under 18 years of age.)

Saturday, March 18

Release party for 31 Planes, a West Coastinspired Belgian-style double IPA. This is the latest release of a seasonal canned beer from Stormcloud Brewing Company. Party will take place at the Parkview Taproom. 3-7pm.

Saturday, March 18

Max Lockwood of The Insiders--Tom Petty Tribute, solo artist, and many other projects-teams up with Eric O'Daly of The Appleseed Collective, also a solo artist, for a great night of music on the Lake Ann Brewing Co. Heated tent stage. 6:30-9:30pm.

Saturday, March 20

Spring Equinox: See definition in Kids of the Wild Corner on Page 6.

Friday, March 24

Ramadan begins. Ramadan is a period of prayer, fasting, charity-giving, and self-accountability for Muslims. The first verses of the Qu'ran were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad during the last third of Ramadan, making this an especially holy period.

Friday, March 24

Nick Veine at Iron Fish Distillery. 5-7pm.

Friday, March 24

The Bourdains--musical stylings of Chris Skellenger and Andre Villoch-- at Lake Ann Brewing Company. 6:30-9pm.

Friday, March 24

"Here Comes the Sun" Party: A groooovy event to honor the most far-out decade yet-the '60s--and to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the release of the Beatles' first album, "Please Please Me." Dig it, man. Get decked out in your best 1960s threads and warm up those pipes! Prizes for the top two '60s-inspired outfits, and karaoke to twist and shout about. Keep the fab memories alive for years to come with souvenir Polaroids! So get jazzed to have a gas. Stormcloud Brewing Company (downtown pub). 7-10pm.

Friday, March 24-April 3

Spring Break for both Benzie County Central Schools and Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools.

Saturday, March 25

From the backroads of Northern Michigan,

Silver Creek Revival (SCR) is an alt-country/indie folk band founded on the idea that the songs come first--songs that are simple, profound, and accessible. SCR crafts their songs with a unique approach using banjo and saxophone, lush harmonie, and an intuitive rhythm section. The songs--and the band-tell a story. Lake Ann Brewing Company. 6:30-9:30pm.

Saturday, March 25

Mike Struwin at Iron Fish Distillery. 5-7pm.

Saturday, March 25

"GIVE A WOMAN THE RIGHT LIPSTICK, AND SHE CAN CONQUER THE WORLD." Blake Elliott's signature style is as universal as the types of music that she creates. Her writing spans a wide range of genres--covering the scope from jazz to folk to soul--and ensuring that even the most discriminating of listeners will enjoy watching her perform. With a vibrant personality that matches those bright red lips, Blake has made her mark on the Michigan music scene with a fervor that's unceasing. St. Ambrose Cellars. 5-8pm.

Sunday, March 26

ARTIST'S TALK with Nik Burkhart and Marti Liddle-Lameti: An afternoon art talk with the artists about their intriguing exhibition, "Reverberations", a fascinating blend between the subtle interplay of contrasting values and varied surfaces in Burkhart's drawings and mixed media pieces, and the sensuous textures and rich color of Liddle-Lameti's fiber creations. The artists will discuss the inspirations behind their work, some of their techniques and choices, and the separate journeys that brought them together for the exhibition at Oliver Art Center. Free to the public. Donations appreciated. 12:30pm.

Saturday, April 1

April Fool's Day.

Thursday, April 6

Full Pink Moon: The name omes from the herb pink moss (*Phlox Subulata*), a wildflower which blooms during the early springtime. These flowers usually grow in the North American region. Thus, the name Pink Moon associates with Springtime; first published in the Maine Farmer's Almanac quoting a list of all the Native American names of the moon phases every month.

Friday, April 7

Good Friday: the Friday before Easter Sunday on which the crucifixtion of Jesus Christ is commemorated in the Christian Church by a day of fasting and penance.

Saturday, April 8

Frankfort-Elberta Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Easter Egg Hunt is very fast paced, so please be on time and bring a basket or bag for the eggs. Mineral Springs Park in downtown Frankfort. 10am.

Sunday, April 9

Easter: the most important and oldest festival of the Christian Church which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the northern spring equinox.

The Betsie Current

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Rehab

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Pathfinding

The trajectory of Wolfe's life is varied, but ultimately, it is not surprising that her path led to this point.

"I grew up here, so I took these spaces for granted. But as soon as I started college, I knew that protecting the environment would be my calling," Wolfe says. "It's been more than a decade, and I've taken a winding career journey to realize this mission, but I am thrilled to be on the precipice of something great with Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund."

Growing up in Benzie County, she learned much from her grandfather, who she considered "the original naturalist." He was an early role model for her regarding land stewardship—teaching her about beech-maple forests, foraging, and gardening.

"After college, I spent several years in New Jersey in environmental education and outreach roles," says Wolfe, who graduated from Benzie Central High School in 2009 and from Kalamazoo College in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in environmental studies; she later received a Master of Arts degree in biology in 2022 from Miami University, where she met Justin Grubb. "I attended many of the classes that I scheduled [in New Jersey], so I learned a lot from experts in the field at that time, too. That was when I began volunteering at a wildlife rehabilitation center, and I also did amphibianmigration monitoring, bird-banding, and

horseshoe crab rescue on the Delaware Bay shore."

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Wolfe realized that she needed to return home to Northern Michigan. Soon after her arrival back, she discovered the environmental education and wildlife resources that she had come to know and appreciate through professional experiences were essentially nonexistent in her hometown.

"I had a lightbulb moment that this could very well be my calling—and now, three years later, it's a reality," Wolfe says.

The last three years have been busy with a multitude of steps being taken to prepare for becoming an operational wildlife rehabilitator. In order to prepare for wildlife patients, supplies are being collected, facilities developed, and Wolfe has been making significant efforts to develop her knowledge and further her education.

For now, the facility location will not be open to the public, to ensure that the animals being treated receive privacy and are kept safe. Wolfe and volunteers will soon work together to find public locations to pick up injured wildlife from people who have found them.

"I have a few seasons of hands-on rehabilitation experience with both birds and mammals, and I have a wonderful network across several states. I've been reaching out to other organizations' founders and directors to learn how they started and how they scaled, and I have learned so much already," Wolfe says.

She is a member of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC), National Wildlife Rehabilitators Asso-

ciation (NWRA), and the Ohio Wildlife Rehabilitators Association—the latter of which because Michigan does not currently have a state network. She has also been volunteering with North Sky Raptor Sanctuary and attending online conferences over the past three years. Additionally, she just returned from Delaware, where she attended her first in-person NWRA conference.

"I'm still working full-time in my conservation 'day-job," Wolfe explains. "Many people refer to wildlife rehabilitation as their unpaid profession—right alongside their paid one—and I'm sure I'll start introducing myself this way soon. In many cases, wildlife rehabilitation doesn't pay; this is why we started the nonprofit, and the long-term goal is to fundraise enough to have a public-facing space with additional revenue streams, like programming, grants, etc."

The Animals

It is clear that Wolfe is well-prepared for the possible influx of aid that may be needed this spring and beyond. At first, the Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund will focus on opossums, rabbits, and squirrels. However, they will welcome all calls about injured and orphaned wildlife. They will also be able to take in birds on a case-bycase basis, as Wolfe is a sub-permittee for migrating birds via North Sky Raptor Sanctuary.

The goal is simple for the organization: "Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund is here to provide a resource for wildlife in our region, whether we are the ones delivering the treatment or we are leveraging connections with other facilities to make

Color me! Robins are gray-brown birds with warm orange underparts and dark heads. In flight, a white patch on the lower belly and under the tail can be conspicuous (likely to

sure the animal is receiving the best care possible," Wolfe says. "In some cases, we might just be a safe place for a patient to await transfer to a more experienced facility, but the great part is that we will have the resources they need and will be a legal, permitted option right here in northwest lower Michigan."

Unfortunately—but also realistically—not every species of animal can be accepted or responded to.

In Michigan, you are not legally allowed to rehabilitate bats, bears, adult deer, or skunks, for instance. Raccoons and fawns are allowed but may come later for SBWF, so that the organization is able to scale and grow appropriately—both of those animals come with additional concerns, such as roundworm or rabies in racoons and chronic wasting disease in deer.

Wolfe adds:

"We also won't have the capacity to take many birds for the next year or so, because baby birds eat every hour from dawn until dusk, and we'll need more volunteers and hopefully staff before we are able to commit to that quantity of care. That said, one of our goals is to help connect people who find wildlife in need with appropriate resources—even if it's not us."

While the Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund will be a fantastic regional resource, it is also important to remember that not all "orphaned" animals require care.

In many cases, the baby animal is okay. Fawns, for example, are often left alone for quite some time in order to keep them safe, while the mother ventures off. Additionally, if a baby bird has fallen from a nest, in many cases, they can be safely



Happy Spring! Welcome to the Kid For The Wild Corner - a fun space filled with love for the WILD, inspired by the legacy of Walkin' Jim, singer/songwriter, cross-country hiker, and activist for the wild. Nature Explorers International has also included animal life cycle and nature knowledge. This is all for YOU: The Kids for the Wild!

The first day of Spring is March 20, 2023.

What is the Spring Equinox?

It's the time at which the sun crosses the plane of the equator toward the relevant hemisphere, making day and night equal length. The Equinox also marks the end of Winter, assuring fresh beginnings filled with sunkissed days, new growth, and a fruitful season.



Click here to listen to music! Visit WalkinJim.com for outdoor scholarship opportunities!

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SPRING WILD

ROBIN NATURE

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MIGRATE EQUINOX

Can you find 6 robins perched through out this issue of The Betie Current?

American Robin
Life Cycle & Nature Knowledge

Some robins migrate for the winter, while others stay in Michigan year-round and roost together by the thousands for warmth. In early spring, females build a cup-shaped nest out of twigs, mud, and grass for their 3-5 blue eggs. They hatch after a couple weeks, and leave the nest a few weeks later. Adult robins can have 2-3 broods per year, and their lifespan is 6-14 years.

- All birds can make a call that has a single sound, but only songbirds - like robins - can produce a song that is a series of repeated musical notes.
- When robins forage on lawns they can be poisoned by pesticides; this makes them "indicators" of a polluted area.

Animal Life Cycle & Nature Knowledge from "Michigan Wildlife: A Coloring Field Guide" by Amalia Celeste Fernand. Visit amaliaexplores.com online.

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returned—unlike what urban myth will tell you, most birds do not have a well-developed sense of smell (this excludes species like vultures), and nestlings can be tucked back in as a warm and safe space from predators. (In other words: No, the mother bird will not be able to "smell" you and thus will not "kick" her baby out of or abandon the nest because of your scent.)

If you do have to rescue a baby animal, always make sure that gloves are worn and hands are thoroughly washed to keep both you and the animal safe from diseases.

Wolfe makes another excellent point: "One of the most common reasons people call about wildlife is that their dog or cat has gotten into a nest or attacked a baby animal. Rehabilitators will ask that you please secure your pets and keep children away, and—if a baby animal is uninjured—let the animal's parents continue to raise them. They do a much better job than humans ever could! If they are injured, of course, we need to step in."

The Future

Sam Wolfe, Justin Grubb, and the nonprofit's board members have big goals for the future, with a lot of groundwork being laid for what the future of the Sleeping Bear Wildlife Fund may look like.

Following the exciting realization that they had met all of their 2021 and 2022 goals, additional long-term dreams include a facility with paid staff and interns, research, unique wildlife-based educational opportunities, and more.

Looking at 2023, however, they are ready to respond to your wildlife-rehabilitation needs for small animals, as well as being a resource for other questions.

Visit SleepingBearWildlife.org online or "Sleeping Bear Wildlife" on Facebook or @wildliferehab.nmi on Instagram to learn more about how to volunteer or just for general information. Contact SBWF directly via phone at 231-590-8639 or email hello@sleepingbearwildlife.org. Donations are also very welcome, as they serve as the foundation to keeping these resources available in Benzie County.

Emily Cook is a resident of Arcadia, where she lives with her husband and their two collies. She is a conservationist by training and a writer and artist when the time allows. She explores the nearby nature trails and Lake Michigan beach as much as possible.



Aubrey Ann Parker Photography

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Wood

Continued from page 1

on cold nights.

In the late fall of 2010, I decided not to cross the Big Mac bridge and to instead stay the entire winter at my cabin. However, I needed a new woodstove and a lot more firewood. So I researched stoves and decided on an Avalon Arbor cast-iron model with a big firebox and glass doors. We stressed and strained, but Karl and I successfully installed all 300 pounds of it

Next came the firewood. I figured with 30 face cords of wood and a new, efficient stove, I could make it through to May.

My brother and I cut and stacked the wood, and I planned to split the logs as I needed them. I calculated I would use about 100 pounds per day. Each morning, I would shovel the snowy paths to the woodpile and outhouse, eat breakfast, then split the next 24-hour supply of firewood with a sledgehammer and steel wedges.

It sounds like a lot of work, but the stove was a dream to use and enjoy while listening to music—CDs and the radio—and while reading or writing stories.

Two moves later, I am back in the Lower Peninsula and a "troll" once more. I had to leave my woodstove buddy behind and am without one again. I hope to remedy that soon, so that when the next power outage happens, I will not be shivering in a sleeping bag with my black Lab, Lila—and waiting to hear the furnace groan back to life.

Keep warm!

A children's author, Ron Schmidt lives in the north woods with his leader dog, Lila. He enjoys long walks, listening to birds and music, and reading next to a woodfired stove.

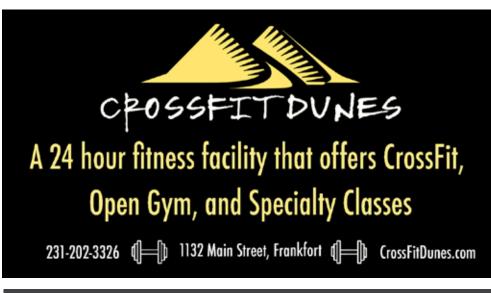
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Saturday at 5p.m. Sunday at 10a.m.

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Want to write for us? Email editor@betsiecurrent.com





If it's been a while - or never Easter is a great time
to connect or reconnect to
God and the greater life.
Please join us this

Palm Sunday: April 2

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services
will be live-streamed on Facebook
First Congregational Church of Frankfort, MI

Easter Sunday: April 9

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