

Lean on OPC

By Renee Cortright

*"Lean on me, when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend / I'll help you carry on."*

These familiar lyrics are from the award-winning song by Bill Withers. It's about knowing when you need help and having the wherewithal to ask for it whether from a family member, friend or an organization like the OPC.

As a community focal point, the OPC has been a friend to many over the years with our supportive services for older adults to stay safe, healthy and independent. The wide variety of services offered include: Meals on Wheels, Adult Day Service, Information and Referral, medical equipment loans, counseling and support groups, Transportation services and more.

*"For it won't be long
Till I'm gonna need somebody to lean on."*

Meals on Wheels is designed for senior citizens (60 years of age or older) unable to prepare meals for themselves due to physical or mental impairments related to age, a medical condition or while recuperating or rehabilitating from a hospital stay. Through the program, a volunteer delivers a meal, prepared



in OPC's kitchen, directly to the senior citizen's door five days a week. Meals include frozen options for the weekend, providing nutritional meals to cover a full week for residents living in Rochester, Oakland Township, Rochester Hills and NE Oakland County communities.

This is what Meals on Wheels recipients have to say about the service. "My nutrition has improved without a doubt since

receiving the meals." And, "Thank you for the delicious meals. I appreciate them very much."

Lunch with Friends are provided in the dining room at OPC Monday through Friday. Last year OPC prepared, served and delivered 102,239 meals. For information on the nutrition programs call 248-608-0264.



*"I just might have a problem that you'll
understand We all need somebody to lean on"*

Adult Day Services Provide Peace of Mind for Participants and Caregivers: As a cost-effective alternative to home health care, nursing home and assisted living facilities, OPC's Adult Day Service program provides a variety of activities for seniors who can function somewhat independently, but who are socially isolated and need structure, activities, mental stimulation and/or supervision in a home environment. Activities include discussions about current events, exercise, art and crafts projects, games, singing, and storytelling.

"Not only does this program address the needs of family members who at times desperately need a break, but also the clients themselves. I see the clients brighten up as they walk into the room in anticipation of the day's activities," says Michelle, OPC Adult Day Services Aide.

The Dennis White Adult Day Center is open Monday through Thursday from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm. Participants benefit from daily activities, socialization, mental stimulation, hot meals, snacks and more. Call 248-608-0261 to arrange a visit.

*"You just call on me brother / When you need a
hand / We all need somebody to lean on"*

Information & Referral / Senior Services are available to seniors, caregivers and their families. These services include: Resource advocates who assess each individual's needs and make referrals to appropriate resources in the community, medical equipment loans of walkers, wheelchairs, and bath benches for short term use, MMAP counselors advise on Medicare, RX plans and Medicaid and Long-Term Issues. Other programs include commodity food programs, snow removal for low-income seniors and community service volunteer projects like leaf raking and holiday baskets to support the Aging in Place of the seniors in Rochester, Rochester Hills and Oakland Township.

"This was like having angels sent to my home during the holidays." Quote from a happy RH Senior who received a holiday basket.

Support Groups provide a safe place for people to share similar experiences, concerns and provide emotional help, advice and encouragement for one another. The following support groups meet regularly at OPC: Visually Impaired, Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers, Grief, Parkinson's Support and Parkinson Care Partner groups.



JOANIE, OPC NONAGENARIAN

By Ruth Ciocan

World traveler...conversationalist...
nonagenarian.

These are just a few adjectives that can describe Joanie (Griffith) Hergert. A true Detroit, she grew up on the east side of the city attending Immaculata high school and Marygrove. After her first year at college, she decided she wanted to see the world, and she surely did.

Joanie has had a plethora of jobs in her lifetime. At 15 she worked at S.S. Kresge and then moved onto American Airlines flight attendant school in 1948. She passed the test with flying colors, but alas was told she was too tall and was put onto the reservations desk. Now that was not a bad thing because she could converse with people.

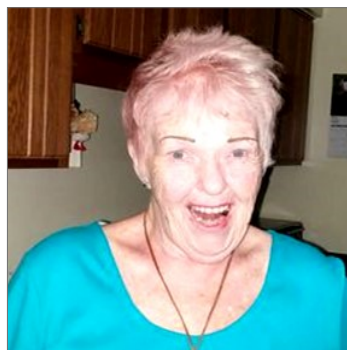
A few years later she moved onto Detroit Edison. One of a dozen women, her job was to "always know the answer" to any questions customers called to get clarification. No computers back then, so she would have to research the answers. Joan will be the first to admit that "talking to people has always been my obsession". No doubt she had to tell more than one customer what Detroit Edison store to go to replace their lightbulbs.

Joanie's life before OPC is a story board of adventures. Being a sociable young woman, Joanie was involved in many activities. She had been involved in various singles groups including the USO at Selfridge Air Force Base. The CYO met at church and drove her and her friends every other Friday night to the Selfridge USO. In those three years, the group danced, played games, and talked, but followed the "no hanky panky" rule.

It was there in October of 1955 that she caught the eye of Jack Hergert, her future husband, while she jitterbugged on a tabletop. Come June of 1956 they were married and had 58 years, nine months, and three weeks

together. Because Jack worked at Edison, married couples were not allowed to work in the same company, so Joanie went to GM. There were 17 young women on the top floor working on the old switchboards. While on the job, a bad electric storm

shook so bad Joanie and three other ladies fell off their tall stools.



Joanie Hergert



Jack and Joanie had three children: Paul, John, and Nancie. She was a stay-at-home mom during this time but did not stay home for long. She passed the real estate test and worked four years with Century 21. Her last sale really did not go so well. She convinced her husband to drive her because the man worked the afternoon shift. All was well that night until the police came to her front door the next morning. The sale was not completed because the customer who had signed the papers at midnight murdered his wife.

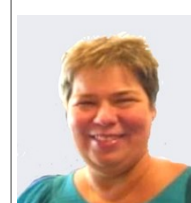
Probably one of Joanie's most interesting jobs was working for a travel agent. The owner believed that the sales personnel better know what they were recommending. So, Joanie traveled a lot and had wonderful adventures. She was able to visit the pyramids, go on an elephant safari, go to the Berlin Wall where she and Jack spent one anniversary in East Germany. She has memories of Venice, Finland, Kiev Russia, Hawaii, and Alaska. She has more memories – she sang "My Wild Irish Rose" in County Cork Ireland complete with instruments and applause. This feisty nonagenarian (now 93 years young)! has climbed the Mayan Ruins in Mexico, swam with manatees, rode a camel as well as an elephant and ostrich in the Serengeti in Africa. She has shopped in the Moroccan and Turkish bazaars.

This amazing woman is also a person with a big heart; she has loyally volunteered at Troy Beaumont for 24 years! Joanie and Jack joined the OPC the year it opened. Since she loves the water, she heard it had a pool. They could not find it because they were looking at the wrong building! When you are at OPC and want to meet her, look for the woman with the vivid frosted hair color. One day it might be neon orange, and the next week it could be lavender; it depends on her mood or holiday. Today you can find her having lunch and then playing games with OPC friends.

Joanie says, "I have been and am fortunate to have met some very special ladies and groups" at OPC to join in for a good time.

Her only regret...she cannot skydive because "it would jar the arthritis!" Joanie really shows no signs of slowing down feet on the ground and still enjoying life keeping her a young-at-heart nonagenarian!

Joanie Hergert is one of those people you could talk to for hour If I were still teaching, she would be a person who my students would be mesmerized listening to her experiences in her 90+ years on this earth. Find her, buy her a cup of coffee, start talking about life, and you will realize you have just found a new and exciting friend...grateful your paths have crossed. ▼



Ruth Ciocan

I joined OPC to learn Hand and Foot Canasta and work on this publication. I'm back after a 38-year hiatus from writing while I taught high school and college English and history! I now enjoy writing about everyday thoughts and memories of days gone by for the new *Vibrant Voice*.

VIBRANT VOICE CONTACT CORNER

We are looking for writers 50+ to share their written words—Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Poetry are welcome.

Summit your articles or poems to our editors, or simply contact us for more information.

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OVER THE RIVER AND INTO STRATFORD

By Toni Sanchez-Murphy

Driving over the beautiful St. Clair River on the Blue Water Bridge and then through lush Canadian farmland, one enters Stratford—the city of the Shakespeare Festival and the Ontario Pork Congress. Being in Stratford Center, one realizes how important the Theatre and Performing Arts are to our enlightenment and enriched understanding of life.



Over the many years, my husband Brian and daughter Lauren have seen fantastic productions of Shakespeare plays. Our favorites are “A Midsummers’ Night Dream” where four sets of lovers work through their relationships amid beautiful fairy settings. Another was “The Tempest” where another set of lovers work through their powerful fathers’ conflicted brother relationship and bring harmony to both the Venetian and fairy worlds. Of course, the musicals “Jesus Christ Superstar,” “West Side Story” and “Man of La Mancha” were also superb productions exploring the tension between love and hate amid a challenging world. These performances show the expert acting, choreography and performing that Stratford has been famous for since 1953.



2023 Season. The four Stratford theatres presented thirteen productions in 2023. Included among these was the uproariously funny “Spamalot” written by Eric Idle of Monty Python and the energetic dance musical “Rent” about the 20th century HIV/AIDS crisis which is a take-off from the Puccini opera “La Boheme.” The Shakespeare plays dealt with the arrogance and anger of kings who are deposed while ignorant of their weaknesses and reality as in “King Lear” and “Richard II.” Shakespeare’s “Much Ado About Nothing” dealt with the diminished power of women in 17th century society and general male inconsistency. Les Belles-Soeurs (The Sisters In-Law), a Canadian play about working class Canadian women of the 1940 and 50s, dealt with their raucous rebellion against perceived social injustice and religious dogma.

2024 Season Opens in April. Among the season’s twelve Stratford Festival plays and musicals will be “Twelfth Night,” “Romeo and Juliet,” and “Cymbeline” by Shakespeare and “Hedda Gabler” by Ibsen as well as “Salesman in China,” “La Cage Aux Folles,” and “Wendy and Peter Pan.”

Crossing into Canada is very easy. It is only a three-hour drive to Stratford and all you need now is an enhanced driver’s license or a current passport.

You will wonderfully enjoy fantastic theatre productions by Shakespeare and by others that truly rival New York productions. Then the finale the next morning is you will enjoy extremely tasty Canadian pork sausages for breakfast at any restaurant of your choice. ▼

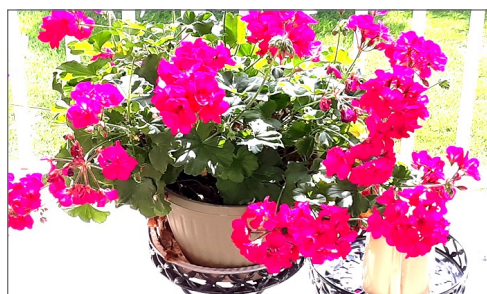
Toni and her husband have attended plays at Stratford for many years and are “expertly” knowledgeable of the theatre and area. They love pre-play discussions and post discussions. They have also been members and supporters of the Detroit Opera for 47 years. Toni is a career psychologist and currently the Life Wellness Coach at OPC.

“Harriett” the Geranium

By Nancy Knitter

Spring is finally here. Warmer, sunnier days are on the way.

A visit to the local garden center, filled with a spectrum of color, stirs the senses. Pansies come first since they tolerate Michigan’s colder spring nights. In mid to late May, gardeners are in full force, planting their flower beds and planters with petunias, million bells, marigolds, and begonias.



“Harriett”

Mother’s Day flower baskets of geraniums are my favorite. You just can’t beat the floral majesty of this flowering plant. Planters and hanging baskets in shades of red, pink, coral, and white decorate decks, patios, porches, and balconies with glorious color. Many communities display the geraniums in hanging baskets attached to light posts in their downtown business districts. Barrels of flowers dominated with geraniums are often placed at entrances to stores and large buildings. Vines of various types are added to the planting to set off the beautiful colors of the geraniums.

Three years ago, I received a dark fuchsia geranium hanging basket from a dear friend. I like to name my geraniums after the person who brought it to me. “Harriett” was put out on my balcony and bloomed all summer and into early fall. I didn’t have the heart to throw out a lovely plant still so green and full of color-bursting blooms but the temperatures were now dipping below freezing at night.

I remembered how my mother would take her geraniums in for the winter. They were cut down and left to rest in the basement and watered lightly once a month. I thought...*Why not give it a try with “Harriett”?*

Since my apartment does not have a basement, I placed her in my bedroom window, with the same exposure she had on the balcony. I trimmed her down to a few branches and leaves and let her take the vacation she deserved after blooming her heart out that summer.

In late February I started to pamper “Harriett.” I guess you could call it a Spa treatment for plants. She received regular watering with a light dose of fertilizer. I talked to her every day and encouraged her to send out some new shoots. I also played classical music on the radio to awaken her.

After a few weeks, the first new green shoots appeared. She continued to fill out with broad green leaves. Finally, the daytime temperatures were warm enough to move her to the balcony. Occasionally, the night temps dipped close to freezing and she was moved to a protected spot. By the middle of May, the first buds started to appear. The buds became large mounds of color. The plant became larger and full of more blooms than the previous year.

That was two years ago. “Harriett” has enjoyed her third winter hiatus in my bedroom window. In the next few months, she will receive the entire spa treatment plus some fresh soil to bring her to full bloom by Mother’s Day.

I think I will add some geranium friends this year to keep “Harriett” company all year long. ▼

Arranged Marriage

By SuSasnta Sarkar

As an Asian Indian, I am often asked by my non-Indian friend's whose curiosities get the better of them, if my marriage was arranged. Here is the long answer...

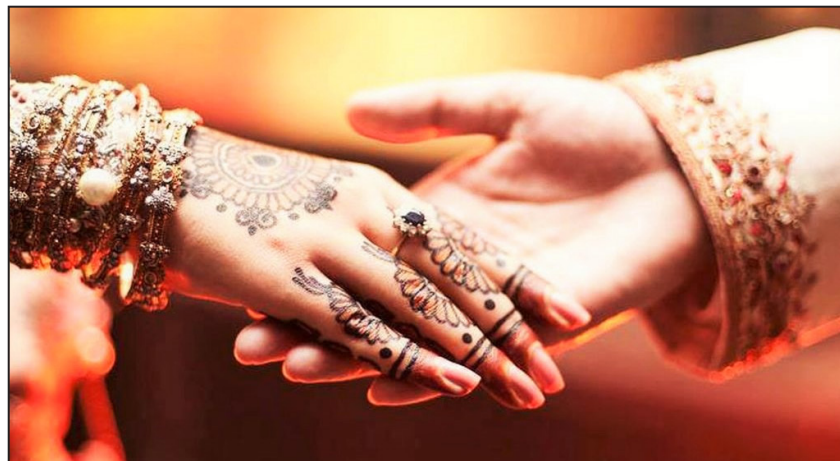
Most Americans agree with the lyrics from the song "First comes love, then comes marriage....", but this has not always been the case throughout history. The idea that marriage is based entirely on love is a fairly new concept around the world. An arranged marriage is a union brought about by someone other than the bride and groom. The reason for an arranged marriage varies based on culture, but they are generally performed for religious, political, or economic gains.

What is an arranged marriage? If we ask the latest Artificial Intelligence (AI) App, Chat GPT, the answer is



long, put together from a search of the entire web without considering which source is correct. The answer is something I can have fun with.

Arranged marriage is a cultural practice in which families or matchmakers choose spouses for individuals based on a variety of factors such as social status, education, and family background. While arranged marriage may not align with certain Western cultural norms, it is a common practice in many parts of the world and has been for centuries. In terms of natural selection and evolution, arranged marriage may not necessarily go against these processes. Natural selection is the process by which certain traits become more or less common in a population over time based on their ability to aid in survival and reproduction. Arranged marriage does not necessarily prevent individuals with advantageous traits from reproducing and passing on those traits to their offspring. That being said, arranged marriage can potentially limit the genetic diversity within a population, which could have negative consequences in the long term. Additionally, arranged marriages can lead to individuals being paired with partners who they may not be compatible with, which could have negative effects on their mental health and overall well-being.



Just like life, nothing is simple, and there are parts of the definition that I agree with. However, the answer needs improvement from a human's characterization of an arranged marriage.

From my perspective, marriages are not one size fits all. In the small towns of India, marriages are still being arranged, with the couple meeting for the first time at the ceremony. Per Indian custom, professional matchmakers collect generational information from their region, tracking cultural and family backgrounds. They use a birth chart as a unique record locator to prevent poor outcomes regarding mental and physical health. Can you think of a monarchy that could have used better tracking when arranging their marriages?

Yes, traditional arranged marriages are still the norm in India, but there's a growing trend for some women to choose their own partners - or to not marry at all. Introductions from friends, and even technology may be replacing traditional methods of matchmaking. Instead of relying on family connections, many young Indians are turning to friends and even online dating sites.

Finally, to answer my non-Indian friends question... Yes, my marriage was arranged to the most beautiful Indian girl, and we are still happily married! ▼



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Oh my, what's that smell outside?

By Jim Avery

The arrival of spring comes with mating season in the animal kingdom. Living on a few acres backed by a woods, we see it all at this time of the year.



The young bucks become dreamy-eyed while surveying the available selection of does. Chubby red squirrels, that would rather fill their cheeks with seeds from the bird feeder, are now seen flicking their tails with excitement over playful female rodents. The colorful red cardinal is the ultimate romantic as he plucks seeds from the feeder for his demure female friend. All are entertaining and busy doing their thing to sustain the breed each spring.



There are other courtships taking place under the cover of night, namely the nocturnal animals that venture out after darkness. On a regular basis, possum, porcupine, raccoon, and skunk wander our property seeking food and friendship.

A troublesome bunch, both the possum and porcupine are cranky, raccoons forever mischievous, and skunks are downright stinkers. With claws, jaws, and quills, the possum and porcupine are tenacious fighters by nature, while the raccoons are manipulative and crafty for their own purposes. Like humans, all were created with their own unique gifts and talents for self-preservation.



However, it is the skunk (of the Mephitis family) that causes me to scratch my head and wonder why this critter was created. Unless challenged by a predator, or one of our pups, they would rather retreat into the darkness. Yet, skunks are legendary for their powerful predator-deterrent, hard-to-remove, horrible-smelling spray. That spray is an oily liquid produced by glands under the skunk's

large tail. To employ this scent bomb, a skunk turns around and blasts its foe with a foul mist that can travel as far as ten feet.

The early colonist quickly learned about the small black animal with the large white strip from nose to tail. They soon adopted the Algonquian Indian name "Seganku," meaning "one who squirts," which eventually became the English word "skunk."

Skunk spray causes no real damage to its victims, but it sure makes them uncomfortable. It can linger for days and defy attempts to remove it. Because skunks have a limited supply of ammunition, they don't waste their defensive spray. A striped skunk can fire five to eight times before it has to reload, which takes about a week.

One commonly held belief is that a pet that has been sprayed should be bathed in tomato juice in order to neutralize the smell. This, however, can require large amounts of tomato juice and is only marginally effective. The Humane Society of the United States recommends using a mixture of hydrogen peroxide, baking soda, and dishwashing liquid.

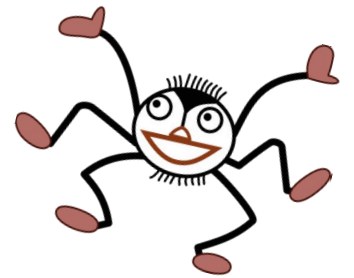
As distasteful as their spray is, this animal has an effective tool for dealing with potential threats. Unlike humans, who sometimes struggle with problems when they arrive, Seganku merely has to "spray them away and create space" for itself.

That is downright convenient! ▼

Fred, the Friendly Spider

By Sam Seabright

I first saw him walking across the ceiling. Later, he was on my shirt as I ate lunch. He smelled food. Well, he probably eats crumbs to supplement his regular diet of various small bugs that infiltrate the house.



Once I caught him inside my water glass, sipping on a drop of water. Well, they need hydration too. Sometimes I find Fred's cousin in the shower, also drinking. It is said that no matter where you are, there is a spider within three feet!

Spiders are great mosquito catchers and compete with birds for protein tidbits. I sat on the porch one sunny day and was surprised to see a house finch hovering like a hummingbird. Upon closer inspection, I saw it was after a mosquito caught in a very large spider web. It's not often that food is stolen from a spider!

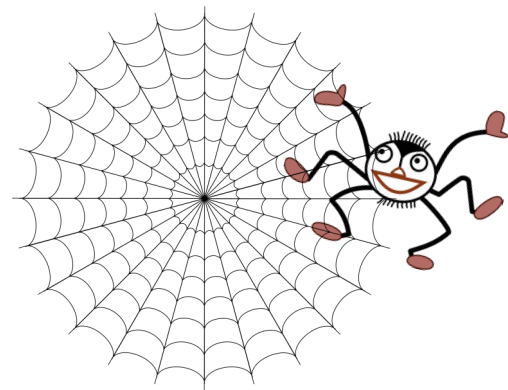
From the porch I see a variety of spiders. Most spin small webs, glistening in the morning dew. One spider looks especially vicious and does not usually spin webs: a Jumping Spider. They look like space creatures with their stocky bodies, eight eyes, and thick fur. They can jump surprising distances to pounce on prey.

Spiders spin webs almost anywhere. The corners and eaves outside our house have many spider webs. They especially like the garage, where they like to spin cocoons and lay eggs for next summer. Under furniture is a favorite place, near the floor. One even spun a web inside a lampshade, probably figuring the light will attract insects. Smart!

It is fascinating to watch a spider catch prey. First, the bug gets stuck on the web. (Why doesn't the spider get stuck?) Then it methodically begins to ensnare the bug to immobilize it, still alive. Then dinner can be served. This technique works on bugs even much larger than the spider. I have seen tiny spiders catch very large insects: a wasp, a moth, a large mosquito.

Our little friend Fred catches his share of bugs, evidenced by the beetle carcasses on the floor by the baseboard. One year we had an invasion of weevils and Fred and his cousins dispatched them handily.

I would never knowingly kill a spider, realizing the valuable service they provide. ▼



Homes of Detroit Sports Teams – Detroit Red Wings

By Michael Flannery

The past two stories of Detroit Sports teams stadiums in the *Vintage Views* summer and winter editions covered history of the stadiums of the Detroit Tigers and the Detroit Lions. This spring edition tells the story of the homes (stadiums), the history, and some stories of our beloved Detroit Red Wings, followed by the story of Detroit Pistons.



The Detroit Red Wings were one of the “Original Six” National Hockey League teams along with the Montreal Canadiens, Toronto Maple Leafs, Boston Bruins, Chicago Black Hawks, and the New York Rangers that made up the National Hockey League for 25 seasons from 1942 until league expansion in 1967. Today there are 32 National Hockey League teams split into 4 divisions. In 2017 the NHL expanded for the first time in 17 years by adding the Las Vegas Golden Knights and in 2021 the Seattle Kraken were added.

Two of my grandsons live and work in Seattle and were pleased to have a professional hockey team in their town although it is very hard to obtain tickets to any games as season tickets were sold out. In the early years the teams would travel by train rather than plane—the “Original Six Teams” were not that many miles apart. The train trips provided for a lot of camaraderie and card playing, and as Mickey Redmond, the Detroit Red Wing Hall of Famer and color TV commentator for Detroit Red Wing hockey, would say “and also include the drinking of a few ginger ales.”

The Detroit Red Wings have had four different stadiums in their 95-year history.

Border Cities Arena—It was built in 1925 and was the home of the Detroit Cougars and who were later renamed the Detroit Red Wings for the 1926-1927 NHL season. The Arena was later named Windsor Arena. It was an enclosed arena with a capacity of 4,400 in the city of Windsor Ontario Canada. The Border Cities Arena had the nickname of the “Barn” and the “Madhouse on McDougall.”

Detroit Olympia—This was the Detroit Red Wings’ home from 1928–1979 and the Detroit Pistons from 1958–1961. It was nicknamed “The Old Red Barn” and had a seating capacity of 13,000 plus a rafter’s area of 3,000 for standing room only ticket holders. Olympia was located in Detroit on West Grand River Avenue between McGraw Avenue and Lawton Street. The Stadium was the home of the famous “Production Line” that included Gordie Howe, Sid Abel, and Ted Lindsay. There were many outstanding hockey players who skated at Olympia including goalies Terry Sawchuk and Roger Crozier, center Alex Delvecchio, and defensemen Red Kelly and Marcel Pronovost. During the 1950s while here the Red Wings won four Stanley Cups and finished first seven times in a row.



As a young hockey fan at that time, I was thrilled to listen to games on the radio and watch the Red Wings on the Channel 9 Canadian TV broadcast when the Red Wings would play either the Toronto Maple Leafs or the Montreal Canadiens. The CBC Television Network produced

“Hockey Night in Canada” with a pre-game segment “The Hot Stove League” featuring expert hockey analysis. The hockey games at Olympia had many of the greatest hockey teams and players of all

time. In addition to Detroit Red Wings hockey, Olympia hosted many concerts including artists Elvis Presley (1957), Led Zeppelin (1975), The Rolling Stones (1969), The Beatles (1964 and 1966), the Beach Boys, Eric Clapton, Pink Floyd, Bob Dylan (1978), Kiss, Gordon Lightfoot, and John Denver. Olympia Stadium hosted other events such as boxing, Harlem Globetrotters basketball, The Ice Capades, and the Ice Follies.

Joe Louis Arena—The Wings played hockey from 1980–2017 at Joe Louis Arena (affectionally called “The Joe”). The stadium was named after the legendary boxer Joe Louis located on what is now known as Steve Yzerman Drive in downtown Detroit. It was on the riverfront right next to Cobo Hall which is now Huntington Place. Joe Louis Arena had a capacity of 20,000 for hockey games and 21,000 for concerts. In



1980, the Joe Louis Arena hosted the NHL All Star game and in 1987 was the site of the first NHL Entry Draft held in the United States. In 1980 the Arena hosted the Republican Convention that nominated Ronald Reagan as the Republican candidate for the President of the United States. In 2006, the West entrance of the Arena was named the “Gordie Howe Entrance” and a bronze statue of Gordie Howe was placed inside the entrance. Although the Arena has been demolished, the “Gordie Howe Bridge” from the United States to Canada is under construction honoring the legendary Detroit Red Wing.

Six Stanley Cup Playoff games and four (1987, 1988, 2002, and 2008) Detroit Red Wings Stanley Cup victories occurred at Joe Louis Arena. The Detroit Pistons played 15 games of the 1984-1985 basketball season at The Joe when the Pontiac Silverdome roof collapsed. I had the opportunity to attend and enjoy several Red Wings hockey games at Joe Louis Arena.



The “Post Bar” located just west of the Joe provided a great gathering place for hockey fans before and after the games. Patrons would write their names on the walls and ceilings of the establishment and every so often a bell would be rung, and free pizza was provided to the guests. The Detroit Red Wings had a tradition of playing a hockey game on New Years Eve. On a few New Years Eves, my wife and I obtained tickets that included dinner and game tickets in box seats at the top of the stadium. That was very special to us.

Notable Red Wings hockey players that played at Joe Louis Arena include Steve Yzerman, Nicklas Lindstrom, Bob Probert and Joey Kocur (The Blues Brothers), Darren McCarty, Brendon Shanahan, Chris Chelios, Domink Hasek, Henrik Zetterberg, and “The Russian Five” (Sergei Fedorov, Igor Larionov, Vladimir Konstantinov, Slava Kozlov, and Igor Larionov).

Held also at The Joe in addition to Red Wings hockey were 377 concerts of so many well-known artists and groups: WWE Wrestling, Pro Boxing, 1994 U.S. Figure Skating Championships and college hockey tournaments. The Detroit Drive played in six Arena Football League Bowls from 1988-1993 and Horizon League men’s basketball played in tournaments in 2016 and 2017.

Joe Louis Arena was truly an important entertainment center that we Detroiters were so fortunate to enjoy. The Detroit Red Wings are one of the most popular and successful franchises in the National Hockey League and the Detroit area is referred to as “Hockeytown,” a registered trademark owned by the franchise since 1996.

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Detroit Red Wings

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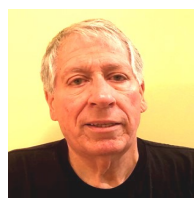
Little Caesars Arena—This Arena was opened on September 5, 2017, with a capacity of 19,515 for ice hockey and 20,332 for basketball.

It is a multipurpose facility on Woodward Avenue in the city of Detroit's midtown. Little Caesars is the home of the Detroit Red Wings and the Detroit Pistons. The Arena

is eight stories high and built in a bowl with a floor that is 40 feet below street level. The bowl features a gondola seating level suspended above the stands. It has a 37,300 square foot practice ice rink inside the facility. It is truly a spectacular building with a revolutionary design.

I remember taking my 11-year-old grandson to his first professional hockey game when the Detroit Red Wings played the Montreal Canadiens at Little Caesars Arena on April 5, 2018. We had the opportunity to meet the hall of fame Detroit Red Wing defenseman Chris Chelios at the game, take a photo with him, and obtain an autographed commemorative hockey puck.

In addition to Detroit Red Wings hockey and Detroit Pistons basketball, Little Caesars has been the site of the 2019 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, profession wrestling events, the 2022 NCAA Division 1 Wrestling Championships, and the Midwest Regional Division 1 mens' basketball tournament which is returning in 2024. Since its opening in September of 2017, many major recording artists and groups (too many to mention) have held concerts at Little Caesars Arena. From hockey games to basketball games, to concerts, and so many other events, Little Caesars Arena is a remarkable venue that we Detroiters can be proud of. ▼



I am an avid collector of sports memorabilia, a dog lover, and enjoy golf, fishing, music, and attending grandkids activities. A 20-year poetry writer, I joined *Vintage Views* in 2018 writing poems and stories ever since. I hope readers enjoy these as much as I enjoy writing them. It's a great opportunity and venue.

Do you have a story, article, anecdote, or poem to share?

The Vibrant Voice, formerly Vintage Views, is quarterly and distributed throughout the OPC facility and the many places seniors frequent. The publication is filled with personal stories, musings, and essays (fiction and nonfiction). The publication is written by, for, and about seniors and then assembled by the Committee members. It's supported by loyal advertisers so we can provide printed copy free to readers. It's also an online version for readers near and far.

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Are you a veteran with an exceptional experience?

What is your heritage or family history?

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If your story is chosen, we will contact you to discuss it. We work with you, and before printing you review and approve the article or poem. We do not have room for a book, so a 500-800 word article would be perfect. Send us your name, phone number, and email with a digital copy of the story to: v@opccenter.org. ▼

HISTORY CORNER

Continued from Page One current police and newspaper and nations around the world. Detroit, the Detroit Council for treatment of the crime prob- "Here, as elsewhere, crime

The book History of Oakland County, Michigan written in 1877, in the section on Oakland Township is the following story.

The story is under a paragraph titled Infested. The first story told spoke of an alarming number of mosquitoes plaguing the citizens of this township. Followed by a story which recounted about a "vile class of people" who came to infest the peaceful Oakland Township citizenry with the intent to do evil dealings

In an abandoned cabinet-shop, a man "calling himself Murwin," came through the community and found it a pleasant enough place to settle. Proclaiming himself a physician he purchased a small stock of drugs and set up shop.

It was not long before the local townsfolk realized he was interacting with rough characters who were passing through the community. Having raised their curiosities, the locals discovered Murwin was using his building as "a resort for house-thieves and counterfeiters."

Not wanting this a type of dealings in their community, and without a real law enforcement entity they took it upon themselves to rid this man and his unlawful enterprise from their mist.

One dark evening approximately twenty locals young and old gathered and "bombarded the building with stones, clubs, and such other missiles as they could lay their hands on, until it was battered to pieces." The offenders hid "...in the cellar, where they defended themselves with firearms."

When the conflict ended Murwin fled the county and Oakland Township was troubled no more by horse-thieves and counterfeiters. Word must have spread because Oakland Township was desperado free for some time. ▼

 Oakland Township Historical Society

group collected the seriously United States. There are reported France as a result of the recent adverse and detrimental effects of rising crime rates among ju- French atomic tests in the on the entire community of seniors and adults from cities Sahara

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Homes of Detroit Sports Teams – Detroit Pistons

By Michael Flannery



This is the final story about our Detroit sports teams stadiums and it concludes with some history and stories of our hometown Pistons.

In prior stories, stadium dimensions and seating stats have been documented as the Detroit Pistons played at some of those same Detroit sports stadiums except for two venues in Indiana.

North Side High School Gym, Fort Wayne, Indiana—

From 1941-1951 the Pistons played at this indoor fieldhouse gymnasium with a capacity of 4,800. At that time the Detroit Pistons were the Fort Wayne Pistons. The gymnasium hosted the games of the North Side High School and the Pistons. The Pistons won 4 NBL Division titles in 1943, 1944, 1945, and 1946.

War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana—From 1953-1957 the Pistons (NBA) played basketball at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. The stadium was an enclosed arena with a capacity of 10,480. The stadium's nickname was "The Jungle." The Pistons won two Division titles in 1955 and 1956.

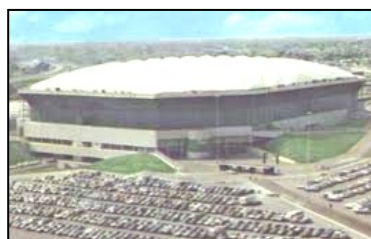
Detroit Olympia—The Detroit Pistons called Detroit Olympia (Olympia Stadium) their home from 1958-1961. Detroit Olympia hosted the NBA All-Star game in 1959. Bailey Howell (nicknamed The Garbage man), Don Ohl (5x All Star), Gene Shue (5x All Star & 2x All NBA), Hall of Fame George Yardley and Detroit's own Dave DeBusschere (Austin Catholic High School and University of Detroit Mercy) are all Pistons greats that played at that time. (Refer to the Red Wings article on page 6 for more details.)

Cobo Arena—The Detroit Pistons played basketball at Cobo Arena (Cobo Hall) for 16 years from 1961-1978. Cobo Arena had a capacity of 12,000. The arena was built on the site where Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac (French colonist), landed on the Detroit River in July 1701 claiming the area for France in the name of King Louis XIV. Notable Pistons that played during that time-frame include Hall of Famers; Dave Bing, Bob Lanier, and Walt Bellamy.



Photo Credit: John Clore

Pontiac Silverdome—From 1978-1988 the Detroit Pistons played basketball at the Pontiac Silverdome, joining the Detroit Lions football team here. Because the Silverdome was so large (80,000 capacity),



a curtain was hung over one of the end zones. To fill up the stands the Pistons organization offered very inexpensive seating with some free seating giveaways. Seating was loose as you could move around to seats that you didn't necessarily have a ticket for.

Attending Pistons games at the Silverdome was an exciting experience. I remember a game I went to with my son where fans in front of us brought in a substantial amount of their own Mickey's malt liquor from outside the stadium for their enjoyment. On February 4, 1979, the NBA All Star game was held at the Silverdome. 31,745 attended the game which showcased many great basketball legends including Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Julius Erving (Dr J), Moses Malone (Pistol) Pete Maravich, David Thompson (MVP of the game), Bob Lanier from the Detroit Pistons, and George (Iceman) Gervin (product of Detroit Martin Luther King Jr High School and Eastern Michigan University). When he came to town, the fans would throw ice in the stands.

The Palace of Auburn Hills—From 1988-2017, the Detroit Pistons played basketball at the Palace of Auburn Hills. Other teams that played there include the Detroit Vipers (IHL) 1994-2001, the Detroit Safari (CISL) 1994-1997, the Detroit Whalers (OHL) 1995-1996, the Detroit Rockers (NPSL) 1997-2000, the Detroit Shock WNBA) 1998-2009, and the Detroit Fury (AFL) 2001-2004.

The Palace became a model for sports arenas and was one of the most notable NBA basketball arenas of all time. In addition to the above



sports teams, the Palace hosted thousands of concerts, circuses, ice shows, soccer matches, sporting exhibitions, motocross rallies, and bridal shows. On August 13, 1988, Sting played the first concert at the Palace to a crowd of 16,587 for a bargain cost of \$20.00 for a first floor seat.

The Detroit Pistons won three National Basketball Association (NBA) championships at the Palace of Auburn Hills including 2 back-to-back championships in 1989 and 1990 and a third championship in 2004. These were the years of the hated "Bad Boys" including Bill Laimbeer (man of war), Dennis Rodman, Rick Mahorn, Isiah Thomas, John (Spider) Salley, Joe Dumars, Vinnie (Microwave) Johnson, Adrian Dantley, Mark Aguirre, James Edwards, and William Bedford. I had the opportunity to attend a number of the Pistons games when the "Bad Boys" played and have some great memorabilia including pennants, tee-shirts, and even a "Bad Boys" cassette. I attended a show where the "Bad Boy" Pistons head coach was signing his book "The Daily Life". The late Chuck Daly was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame and I treasure his book that he signed for me. The Detroit Pistons players gave Chuck Daly the nickname "Daddy Rich" for the fancy suits he wore during the games.

After work, on occasion we would head over to the Guest Quarters (Doubletree) Hotel (just across the parking lot where I worked) to have some refreshments. Many sports teams stayed at the hotel when in town for a game. That evening, the Boston Celtics were in town to play the Detroit Pistons. I can remember seeing the great Larry Bird sitting at the bar with other Celtic teammates. As I was leaving, I ran into the Hall of Fame Boston Celtic player and coach KC Jones and struck up a conversation with him. I don't recall exactly what we discussed (mostly basketball) but I will always remember that encounter. Lastly, on Friday, November 19, 2004, the episode called "The Malice at the Palace" occurred. It started when Pistons Ben Wallace was fouled hard by Indiana Pacers Ron Artest. Things escalated when Artest was hit by a fan with a full cup. Upon being fouled, Wallace pushed Artest in the face. Benches were emptied and fans rushed onto the basketball court. Nine players were suspended for a total of 146 games.

Little Caesars Arena—In 2017 the Pistons moved to Little Caesars Arena which is their current home as well as the Detroit Red Wings. The Pistons have had three coaches since their move to Little Caesars Arena in 2017. They include Stan Van Gundy, Dwayne Casey, and Monte Williams who is their new current coach. The Pistons have not had a great winning record since relocating to Little Caesars Arena although they have had some fairly high draft choices. Let's hope that their current roster of young players continues to improve and the team's future will be on the rise. It is possible that Little Caesars arena could be selected for the 2025 or 2026 NBA All Star game. In April 2024, the NFL Draft will be held outdoors at Campus Martius in downtown Detroit. The NCAA Men's Basketball Regional Games will be held less than a month later at Little Caesars Arena. ▼

STUFF

By Alyson Denyer

As pen meets paper to begin the draft of this article, it is already 2024. Oh, my. Time to rethink, regroup, reinvigorate...and purge. Such a ghastly word. Perhaps remove is better.

Yes, it is time to take down holiday décor and decide what to keep and what to remove. I seem to have *a lot of stuff*. Parting with *stuff* is difficult; the pleasure given when I unpack is not there when faced with re-packing.

My mother loved Christmas and all its trimmings. She especially loved vintage items that were once highlights of the season: postcards, often addressed to simply a name and a town; miniature cardboard houses, churches and bottle brush trees used in “Putz” displays; a little tin horn from a popular Santa tune; celluloid reindeer; and always the fragile glass ornaments we had on our holiday tree when I was a child. She could not resist collecting them long after I had left home and I share her enthusiasm.



One year she began buying Italian paper mache angels, many of which I still have. When it was time to move my parents to a retirement home, I found my old sled and my Christmas stocking along with all of my father’s Lionel trains. His first train set was a gift in 1935 when he was only 12, surely



a financial stretch during the Depression. I also unearthed my mother’s ice skates, a special gift from her older brother. The youngest of seven, she seldom had anything new.

I have given away, sold or donated some of this holiday collection, but seem to have inherited the “love of vintage” gene. What is a nostalgic, purge-resistant person to do? It is difficult to part with what is left, not to mention what I have gathered on my own. I have kept only favorite items; it is like meeting old friends that resonate with memories when we are together again. I am back to square one.

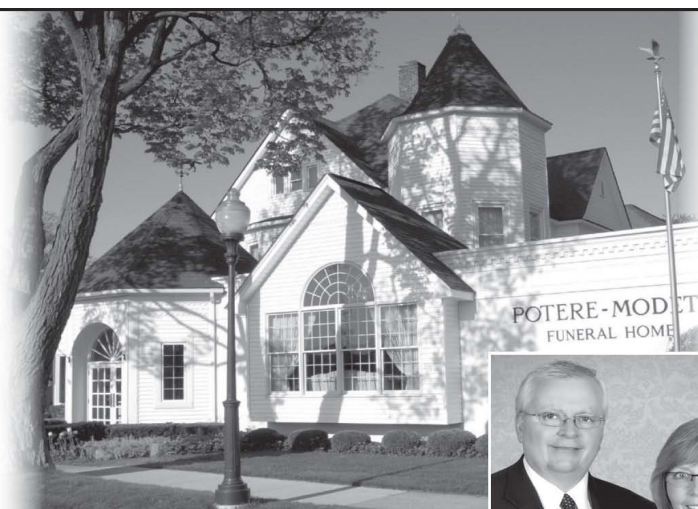
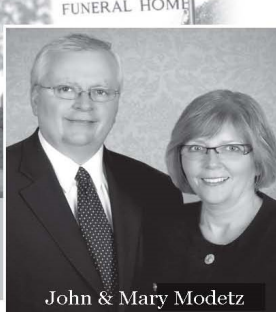
I must get tough! Or not. After all, I hope to see these treasured “friends” next year. It is 2024, however, and my children and grandchildren won’t want most of this accumulation. I need to accept that. I promise, therefore, I *vow*, to purge some of this *stuff*, if not for me, for them.

But wait! Spring is right around the corner and I will have flowers, bunnies, and Easter eggs to unpack followed by summer seashells. Autumn will usher in colorful sunflowers, pumpkins, and gourds.

Oh, dear me. ▼



Ten years ago, I became an OPC member and joined the *Vintage Views* Committee right away. I wanted to “rub elbows” with people who enjoy reading and writing. It was the right decision! I welcome the challenge of choosing and researching a topic that I hope our readers will find curious and informative.

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AMERICA: HOMELAND FOUND

By Adam Thiny

October 23, 1951—Bremer Haven, Germany: Seven years have gone by since being banished from our Balkan homeland and confined in incarceration centers. Four and a half years have vanished since our escape and trek to Austria. Now we are about to board this gray vessel that would transport us across the Atlantic.

November 3, 1951—New York City Harbor: My mother, my sister Käthe, and I strode down the gangplank of the M.S. *General M.B. Stewart* amidst hundreds of refugees. After seven years without a country, we have found our new homeland. Or have we?

While being processed by Immigration we were told that that our sponsor, a California farmer, had rescinded his offer of providing work for our widowed mother. What were we to do now? Will they send us back? No, in America we would remain!

Dusk blanketed Manhattan's sky-scraping structures as a bus shuttled us to a hotel on Madison Avenue. Immigration had loaned us some money, which my mother used to purchase an electric hot plate and some kitchen utensils. She then bought groceries in a nearby supermarket and within the privacy of our room cooked chicken soup and other meals during our brief hotel stay.

Through our mother's unceasing efforts some distant relatives living in Michigan were contacted who cordially consented to sponsor us. Late afternoon in mid-November we checked out of the hotel and by train arrived the next morning in Detroit.

Finding work became our top priority. But what type of work? Having been a farmer's wife back home, cooking and housework would be best suited for our mother. But then there was a language barrier. Käthe had two years of English while attending school in Austria. My mother and I did not know any English. But with the help of our host, we advertised in the local newspaper. Those ads paid off.

Käthe (age 16), her blond hair still braided in pigtails, went to work for a young couple with two children: a five-year-old girl and a boy just under two. In addition to taking care of the children, Käthe did light housework. The parents were considerate and treated her kindly. To continue her education, four times a week they drove her to night school. Yet for my sister, these were still sad times. She missed her family.

An accountant retained our mother as a live-in cook and housekeeper. He and his wife lived on the south-east side of Detroit, near Jefferson Avenue. At the time he had just bought a bigger house that was being renovated. Since his present home had only two bedrooms, and my mother's room accommodated only a single bed, he recommended that I remain with our host until we all could move into the new dwelling.

Schooling became my next obstacle. Initially I had intended to wait until I reunited with my mother at her place of work and attend an elementary school there. Due to my three years of missed schooling in Europe this would have been embarrassing. At age thirteen I would have joined ten-year-old students in the fifth grade. Luckily this never came about.

Within our host's household lived their widowed daughter and her son. The son informed me about this school that offered three special classes geared to immigrants. So, the week after Thanksgiving I enrolled at Steven Elementary. The student body consisted primarily of European nationalities: German, Italian, Greek, Polish, Estonian, Swedish, and one Chinese. All subjects were taught in English.

Early January of 1952, even though the accountant's new dwelling was not yet ready, I joined my mother. A few months later we all moved into the refurbished dwelling. My mother and I occupied the spacious second floor.

The accountant ran his practice out of his house. He was a generous person, outfitting me with new clothes and a wristwatch. In return I washed his Chrysler and performed other household chores, including stoking a coal furnace in the basement. At times he gave me money to attend a movie. However that period of my life ended shortly.

Our mother wanted us to become a united family again. Except for some brief moments, the three of us had not lived together since we were ousted from our Balkan homeland in 1944. So, late in 1952 my mother quit her job, as did Käthe. The three of us moved into a rented house east of Gratiot Avenue, between 7 and 8 Mile Road.

It would be fondly remembered as the house on Liberal Street. This one-story building, without a basement, was the tiniest on the block, the size of a two-car garage. It had two bedrooms, living room, dining area, kitchen, bathroom, and a tiny pantry. An oil stoked furnace sat exposed adjacent the dining room table. As long as we paid the rent, this place belonged to us. Here we were finally rooted as a family—a partial family that is. We still did not know the fate of our father.

To pay the rent, utilities, and other living expenses, my mother did general housework, mostly in the Grosse Pointe area. Käthe worked as a seamstress in a drapery shop. I also, at age fourteen, joined the employment ranks, stocking shelves at a grocery store.



A family again

At 14993 Liberal Street, I would spend the most carefree times of my teen years. I continued my education at Steven Elementary, later transferring to Barbour Intermediate. At age fifteen, I entered the tenth grade at Denby High School. I frequented public libraries, checking out books, some by Zane Grey who was and is my favorite writer of western sagas. Sundays I patronized the Flamingo or Ramona theatre, munching on an Almond Joy while being tantalized by a Gary Cooper or Alan Ladd western.

My mother and sister followed their daily routines, trekking the quarter mile to Gratiot Avenue and catching an early morning streetcar or bus to work. After school I went to work at Food Fair Market, by bus or on my three-speed bicycle. Occasionally, even late at night, I hitch-hiked a ride home. It was a different era, simpler times. I felt secure!

Many decades have eroded since 1944, the year of the beginning of my seven-part chronicle. All my elders that came before me have long since departed, as have many others. It has been 36 years since I strode across my native soil, viewing the remnants of what once was but is no more. Today, I am thankful for having been given the privilege of living in this great country—my new homeland—the United States of America. ▼

Epilogue

Worldwide, scattered they are,
Residing in places both near and far,
The ones that survived, and those long dead,
Some with, many without, a gravestone above their head.

Me and them are not the smartest

By Hans Koseck

My best buddy was really surprised when I told him that he would inherit 10,000 dollars when I die. He could not believe it. "You don't have any money now and you can't give that to me when you're dead," he said.

No, no, no, I would not give him the money. I had met this guy, Diavolo, and he had insured that the money would be delivered to my best buddy. He had introduced himself to me a while ago as an insurer. He felt sorry for people whose friend had died penniless and they were stuck with paying the cost of the funeral. His calling was to help those unfortunate souls. He was a benefactor, a Maecenas, a Croesus, a giver, a little plutocratic and an optimist by nature, and philanthropist all of that.

He had approached me in the bar and generously had paid for my tab. I trusted him immediately. He was a likable fellow he introduced himself as Diavolo Nobiscum. He had immigrated legally. He said, "just call me Volo." We became second-best friends right there and then.

He got me interested in this windfall theory which would enable me to help my best friend pay off his trailer. My friend was struggling financially and I wouldn't need the money when I'm dead.

Here is how Volo explained it to me:

"You're thirty-five years old. You don't look good. You should see a doctor. I don't give you much time. With just a couple of small payments you can give your best friend ten thousand dollars when you die, God forbid. It's called life insurance. But that's not what it is. It doesn't guarantee anybody's life. But it sounds encouraging."

To himself he thought:

This guy is 35 years old. He looks healthy. He's going to make it to seventy, God willing, according to statistics. He pays me \$285 a year for 35 years, the whole 10,000. I make a couple of thousands in interest. If I'm lucky, God willing, he misses one premium payment toward the end, I made a good deal.

Now, understanding what Volo offered, I became interested. My best friend would also be able to pay my final expenses, besides the trailer. I figured, if my best friend weren't my best friend and he needed the money soon, he could take the 7,000, after taxes, pay the *guy* two, and run with the rest. But he wouldn't do it. I trust people.

We consummated the contract in Volo's "office." He lives in a trailer, also. He seems to be very frugal and very rich.

Here is how he makes all the money that he eventually gives away. He gets it from where all the money is, from the bank. Volo knows that I'm in good shape and will probably live to almost one hundred. So he can wait, invest my premiums and live off the interest. But, just in case, you never know. With his trailer as a collateral he borrows \$5,000 from the bank, to be paid back within ten years at a low rate of interest. That system works for him beautifully, he says. This is actually his side job.

My obituary:

I passed at age 69 with Alzheimer's Disease. My best buddy presented the Life Insurance contract to Volo. Volo was very sorry. He pointed out the part in the contract reading

***If we do not receive your payment by due date
your policy will terminate and lapse.***

Maybe, Volo *is* smart. Everybody's caution: Look at your own policies! ▼



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Lean on OPC

(continued from page 1)

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And I’ll be your friend / OPC will help you carry on.” ▼*

Pretty Boy

By Susan Woodard

My grandmother lavished attention on her little blue parakeet, Pretty Boy, patiently training him to dance, talk, and come from any corner of the house when called. Oh, and he was potty trained. When nature called, he dutifully retreated to his cage, dropped his offering on the newspaper-lined bottom, then emerged to soar through the air announcing, “I left a caca! I left a caca!”

He had free rein of the house. As soon as the cover was lifted from his cage he began swooping and gliding from curtain rods to door jambs, to shoulders. If offered a morsel off your dinner plate, he wouldn’t turn down a nibble.

When I was born, the first grandchild, he summarily made guarding me his life’s calling. Woe to the person who came through my grandmother’s door. They were immediately dive bombed as Pretty Boy, on high alert, swooshed and fluttered furiously around their head before alighting on my wooden playpen, where he’d furiously march around the perimeter squawking, “Don’t touch that baby! Don’t touch that baby!” As I sat happily gurgling and flailing, he’d sit motionless, glowering silently at the interloper, never budging from his sentry post until they left.

By the time her tenth grandchild came along he was in his retirement years and no longer on active duty. He was now content to simply watch family life from his perch on grandma’s shoulder.

When he could work up the energy, he’d alight on top of our heads for a brief ride and we’d giggle as he nestled into our hair, but he preferred to spend the better part of his day in his cage, head tucked under his wing, snoozing.

He died at age 25, a revered member of our family. My grandmother buried his fragile body in her lily-of-the-valley garden one spring day as tears slipped down her cheeks.

I’ve spent my adult life trying to fill the void left by Pretty Boy. I’ve never had dogs or cats. I’ve had parakeets. Lots of parakeets. Alas, I have never been able to train any of them. Sadly, they each met their various demise, escaping through windows mistakenly left open, eaten by stray cats who somehow found their way into my home, inadvertently stepped on as they took a stroll on the living room carpet, drowning in the toilet or nibbling on a houseplant that turned out to be poisonous.

I finally gave up. Like so many cherished experiences, Pretty Boy is just a halcyon childhood memory I’ll never be able to relive. I hope he’s in bird heaven. ▼



The Mackinac Bridge and Mackinaw Bridge Museum

By Jean Waid

The Mackinac Bridge was completed in 1957 by many brave and talented workers despite considerable controversy preceding its construction. It is often referred to as “Mighty Mac” and “Big Mac.”

Historians have praised the beautiful design and its engineering. The bridge took over four years to be constructed by over 3,500 skilled workers. Sadly, five workers died during the construction of the bridge. Before having the Mighty Mac, travelers between Michigan’s upper and lower peninsulas had to cross the Straits via an hour-long ferry ride. It ranks among the longest suspension bridges in the United States.



By Main Span, the Mighty Mac ranks third (3800 feet) behind the: Verrazano-Narrows (4260 feet, lower New York Bay, completed 1964) Golden Gate (4200 feet, San Francisco Bay, completed 1937) George Washington (3500 feet, Hudson River at New York City, completed 1931).

Have you seen the Mackinac Bridge in person? Have you driven or ridden across that five-mile-long span? Did you walk across that bridge with thousands of others on a Labor Day, the only day it is open for walking?



My husband, Roger, son Steve, and his friend Jason, walked it one Labor Day. They had driven to Mackinac Island to pick up our son, Greg, who worked there one summer between high school and college. Do you know anyone who has walked it? I know one OPC member, Ernie, who has walked that bridge three times.

Mike Fornes, a retired reporter, wrote a fascinating book Mackinac Bridge - a Fifty Year Chronicle 1957 – 2007 published by the Cheboygan Tribune in 2007. It contains over 206 pages with many interesting pictures. He lives within sight of the bridge and plays a Gibson guitar in a band. Perhaps you remember his name from his outstanding October 2023 presentation on the Edmund Fitzgerald at an OPC Terrific Tuesday. He



ended his talk by astounding those attending by singing and playing “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald” on his Gibson guitar. This song was written and made famous by the late Canadian Gordon Lightfoot.

Mike has presented his video “101 Things that Happened on the Mackinac Bridge” at the Lorenzo Center at Macomb Community College and The Rochester Hills Public Library, among other venues. You can catch that amazing video on the internet or online under RHPL under “Programs, Recorded Programs” at approximately number 82. Watch the OPC newsletter for Mike’s possible return to OPC with his presentation of “The Grand Hotel.”

Three babies have been born on the Mackinac Bridge. Too many people have run out of gas on that crossing. Some people with acrophobia (fear of heights) have hired a driver to cross the bridge. Severe weather can make traveling difficult and dangerous but rarely causes the bridge to close. Traveling the Mighty Mac is a wonderfully spectacular experience in any up north beautiful season or simply pausing at nearby look-out places for amazing views of the bridge.

Our summer vacations when we spent a day on Mackinac Island were often a highlight of the years raising our three sons. The boys, my husband, and I loved the ferry boat ride over to the island! While there we always looked forward to biking the eight miles of sensational woods and water scenery around that island and the view of the Mackinaw Bridge. Ice cream cones and fudge were joyfully mandatory after our pleasant bike ride.

On one trip through Mackinaw City, we discovered Mama Mia's Pizza where *everything* tasted so good! Plus the owner, J. C. Stilwell, who had been an ironworker on the bridge, displayed his collection of Mackinaw Bridge artifacts on the second floor with free admission.

The Mackinaw Bridge Museum opened in 1979 and is located at 231 East Central Avenue. Mama Mia Pizza and the Mackinaw Bridge Museum were rebuilt after a fire destroyed them in 2005. Other ironworkers donated a diving suit, boots, photos, tools, and other artifacts. Mr. Stilwell has since died in 2013 at age 84 but the museum remains open spring through autumn. It is my honor to have my two 45 RPM records of the dedication of the bridge in the museum.



Many great pictures of the bridge and museum artifacts are online. ▼

Sources:

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Interesting information: <https://www.mackinacbridge.org/>



After reading the *Vintage Views* stories by others, I was inspired, beginning in 2004 to share some of my travels, humorous events, and poetry. I proudly write about my husband Roger, our three adult sons, five precious grandchildren, and 40 years in Rochester Hills. It’s a joy to contribute to this publication with other writers and poets.



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My Father's Man

Robert A. Lytle

*I don't know how long it's supposed to take
before a person gets over the death of a parent.
It's been over thirty-five years for me, and
it's still hard.*



Haven't writ' too much about my dad before today,
I s'pose it's 'cuz he meant too much t' me for
words t' say.

Wasn't much he couldn't do—sing or tell a tale.
Most of all, he loved all us—and us, he'd never fail.

When I was small, he took me with him visitin' the farms,
Teachin' men t' grow their crops—he taught me country charm.

He showed me all his fishin' tricks—t' catch a bass or trout.
He showed me how t' pitch a ball t' strike a batter out.

Gave me boxin' lessons—to defend myself, y'see,
The lesson that he taught me best was bein' friends with 'me'.

He showed me what a man should be—and husband, daddy, too,
For folks he loved, like Mom an' us, he gave his whole life through.

I'll tell you when I miss him most—I'll need an answer straight,
I think t' ask him for advice, then 'member it's too late.

But then I think just how he taught me when he was around.
I solve the problem by myself and know the answer's sound.

He taught me all there is to know. I do the best I can
T' follow his example—how to be my father's man.

Joy

Brenda Seabright

Getting away from the city—
its miles of pavement,
streets, fences, alleys, and brick.

And my first experience of joy—
climbing the mountains
of Rapid City, South Dakota.
I'd never seen anything
so beautiful.

Space as far as the eye can see,
no limits—seeing in three dimensions,
fresh air and sun, everywhere
bushes and wildflowers.

Somehow the sight spoke to me,
unlocked a part of my nature.
Instinctively I knew the joy
of being human,
knowing what it was like
to be free.

I'd never been so happy
as I was there, in my youth, in

*The great wide open so free;
the great wide open so free. **

(*From lyrics by William Prince.)



My Growin' Time

Robert A. Lytle

Happiness begins at home.

If every kid had sisters
An' a Mom an' Dad like mine—
A home with happy feelings
Like I had at growin' time,

If babies born around the world
Could growed up jus' like me—
What a happy, peaceful place they'd find
It turned out, now, t' be.



The Base on Balls

Robert A. Lytle

*This happened after my son's
Little League baseball team lost
in the championship game.*

I know there's times in baseball,
As in the game of life,
It's safer just to take a walk—
You 'void a lot of strife.

It's easier to stand there and
Watch a pitch go by,
And hope the ump calls out, "Ball four,"
Than it is to really try.

'Cuz you can let that third strike go,
Just stand there sorta numb,
Like, "Ump, c'mon, you must be blind,
Or awful, dad-burn' dumb."

For all the things that happen
When you DO swing out are these:
Ground ball, pop-up, fly out, foul,
Or, (worse than death) strike three.

But 'spose you flat out sock one
Through the box or down the line,
Or poke it o'er the left field wall—
Well, then you're really flyin'.

So, as for me, give me my cuts,
No "Hall of Fames" got there
By wishin' balls was high or wide—
But just if they lands fair.



That First Kiss

Michael Flannery

I was listening to the singer/songwriter Ed Sheeran's song "Castle on the Hill" which includes the lyrics "My First Kiss on a Friday night, I don't reckon that I did it right, but I was younger then, take me back to when..." That song and lyrics prompted me to write this poem.



I remember my first kiss
It was completely bliss

I had walked her up the steps to her front door
She turned giving that kiss that almost put me on the floor

The kiss was unexpected, sweet and innocent
It made our relationship so relevant

I remember driving home filled with exuberance
Thinking of that first kiss that was beyond joyfulness

She was a year younger than me
Our future relationship was not meant to be

As I went off to college she remained
We had different aspirations that did not blend

We eventually went our separate ways
"That First Kiss" so long ago on that cherished day

I still respectfully remember

London Calling

Michael Flannery

London is calling across the sea
Oh, to taste those scones and English tea
There's Buckingham Palace where the Monarchy stays
With visits by royalty on many days

There is the town of Liverpool on the west coast
Home of the Beatles the townsfolk boast
Springsteen played in Hyde Park
All those in attendance were happy as a lark

The Tower of London is a site to see close to the harbor
Remembering those Knights of Shining Armor
Hampton Court Palace is where Henry VIII called home
Wondrous spot where he and his subjects could roam

Trafalgar Square is busy with the throngs
Who have come to dive in the pond and sing songs
Nine million people live in the city
Where the financial moguls fill up their kitty

The streets are filled with those that came to see
The Queen Mother, William, Kate, and the Royal family
The Ferris wheel called the "Eye" is a wondrous site
So slow it operates to eliminate any fright

The taxis are everywhere on the streets
Shuffling the masses of businessmen and tourists each
The restaurants and pubs are alive and well
Special places where stories and songs there to tell

London was calling across the sea
Now we are home with treasured memories
Next adventures we will plan
Traveling hand in hand



Ode to our Favorite Mail Person

Jean Waid

Whose name we never know.
"Has the mail arrived yet?"
"Did you bring in the mail?"
Nary a day without mail.

No one writes about mail.
It's time to write about mail.
What could I possibly write?
Surely not enough for a poem.

Some days exceed others.
Yesterday there was a bill.
"Are you thinking of moving?"
"Call and let us sell your home"

"In need of some new windows?"
"Is it time for a new roof?"
"Insulation will save money"
Pages of grocery store ads.

Who pays for these, anyway?
Money saving food coupons.
"Vote for me, I am the best choice!"
"Sign up for a special cruise!!"

Or the unwelcome favorite,
Sign up for a new credit card!
This pile is for recycle bin,
En route into my residence.

Today is a check to cash,
A concert we will enjoy.
This one is for my neighbor.
My husband's name is on this.

The weather changes by the day.
Sunny, rainy, snowy, blowy.
A walk to the mailbox provides
Good fresh air and exercise.

Check the yard for curb appeal.
Pick up stray trash for recycle.
I labeled their Christmas card tip
"To Our Favorite Mail Person"

Does anyone know their name?
Someones do deserve credit.
How often do they hear "Thank You"?
How often are they even seen?

Sometimes a front porch wave.
Sometimes a glass of ice water.
Once just arrived pizza slices,
A symbol of our appreciation

Cheers for our mail carriers



The Collectible Petoskey Stone and other Fossils

By Jean Waid

To me, Northern Michigan encourages one to go hunting along the beaches for Petoskey stones. For our hunting, we found a lovely park with picnic tables and beach to the east of Traverse City.

Petoskey stones are actually fossilized coral thought to be at least 350 million years old from during the Devonian time when coral was in warm, shallow seas in Michigan. Petoskey stones are calcite, with some clay, and fossils. The hexagon shape of each cell and thin lines radiating out from the dark “eye” in the center are distinguishing features unique to this fossil.



If you are looking for places to go “rock hunting,” the Petoskey area website suggests the Petoskey State Park Beach on M-119 on the way to Harbor Springs. and the break wall in Magnus City Park Beach. *A little tip for new hunters...* spring (after the snow and ice melt) and following windy thunderstorms are prime times to find Petoskey stones



as the waves have moved them along the bottom of the lake to the shoreline. Note that Michigan law limits the amount of stones that can be collected to 25 pounds per person, per year.

For a bit of geological history, millions of years ago glaciers moved rocks, fossilized ancient coral, bedrock and soil throughout what is now Michigan, carving out the Great Lakes and depositing a wealth of natural treasures beneath them. Over time, the waves churned these waters and in turn polished pieces into rocks of all shapes, sizes and configurations—including Petoskey stones.

Special note for you our readers... there is a difference between a Charlevoix and Petoskey stone. The Charlevoix stone has a smaller exoskeleton compared to its cousin the Petoskey stone. It's not uncommon to find both of these unique fossils while exploring area beaches.



Michigan Governor George Romney passed a bill on June 28, 1965, naming the Petoskey stone as the state stone. But it wasn't until 1969 that geologist Dr. Edwin C. Stumm, Professor of Geology and Curator of Paleozoic Invertebrates at the University of Michigan, made the formal determination that what was thought to be a Petoskey “stone” was actually fossilized colonial coral of the genus and species *Hexagonaria percarinata*. At least seven species exist and can also be found in Ohio, New York, Canada, Germany, England, and even Asia.

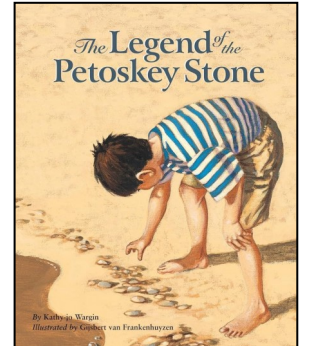
Apparently there are an abundance of fossil stones in Morocco. Beautiful black polished stones bearing fossils from Morocco frequently are found in Michigan displays and shops for sale. Our own black polished stones came from Orthocera, Morocco.



Shops in northern Michigan sell Petoskey stones and items as jewelry in rings, pendants, and pins. Additionally key chains, paper weights, and wine stoppers are among items made from Petoskey stones. Popular items are turtle pins and stones cut in the Michigan mitten shape on pendants and brooches.

Polishing Petoskey stones can be done by hand. It is imperative that goggles and masks be worn to protect the eyes and breathing if cutting Petoskey stones. There is an abundance of resources available on the internet.

The Legend of the Petoskey Stone, Myths, Legends, Fairy and Folklore is a wonderful children's picture book written in 2004 by Kathy-jo Wargin and illustrated by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen.



One time we joined a group of fossil hunters on a field trip to Rock Glen Conservation area in Ontario, Canada. This is a frequently visited area about halfway between Detroit and Toronto, north of London Ontario. Our instructions were “No digging allowed, surface collecting only.” We arrived home with a bucket full of unnamed, as in unidentified, fossils. In recent years, my husband, Roger, and I returned to that site to hunt for more fossils that were still everywhere we stepped.

During a visit from English friends, we took them hunting for Petoskey stones. They quickly caught on to the spirit of the hunt and kept asking “Is this one any good?” When wet, the designs are much more pronounced. We put Petoskey stones in clear glass-corked bottles in some bleach water to keep the mold from forming. This intensifies the design.

Wouldn't it be great if rocks could talk? For example, through legend and facts, a Petoskey stone could tell you much about Michigan's history and geology. Legend and history are often intertwined. Such is the case with the Petoskey stone. Legend is the son of Chief Neatooshing was born as the sun rose while the traveling family camped on the banks of the Kalamazoo River. Noting the glorious sunshine on his son's face, the Chief proclaimed, “His name shall be Petosegay (or Bedosegay, there are several versions). He shall become an important person.”

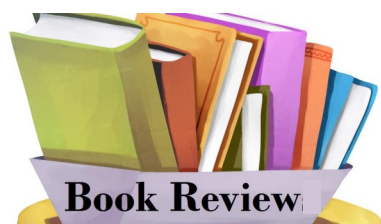
The translation of the name is “rising sun,” “rays of dawn,” or “sunbeams of promise.” In the summer of 1873, just a few years before the death of Petosegay, a city came into being on his land along the bay at Bear Creek. The site was a field overgrown with June grass. Only a few nondescript buildings existed. The population was no more than 50 or 60.

The city was named Petoskey, an English adaptation of Petosegay. They honored someone who gave his land, name, and the heritage of “sunbeams.” ▼



Sources:

<https://petoskeyarea.com/> and <https://www.michigan.gov/som>



Tom Lake **Author Ann Patchett**

Reviewed by Lyn Sieffert

Ann Patchett is one of my favorite “trendy” authors — more because of her intimate writing style than her narration.

I recommend this recent book, Tom Lake, because of its description of the beautiful northern Michigan’s cherry orchards with which outsiders may not be so familiar.

The story unfolds as a series of personal narratives told by mother, Lara/Emily, in order to entertain her grown daughters while they are stranded at the family orchard home during the Coronavirus quarantine.

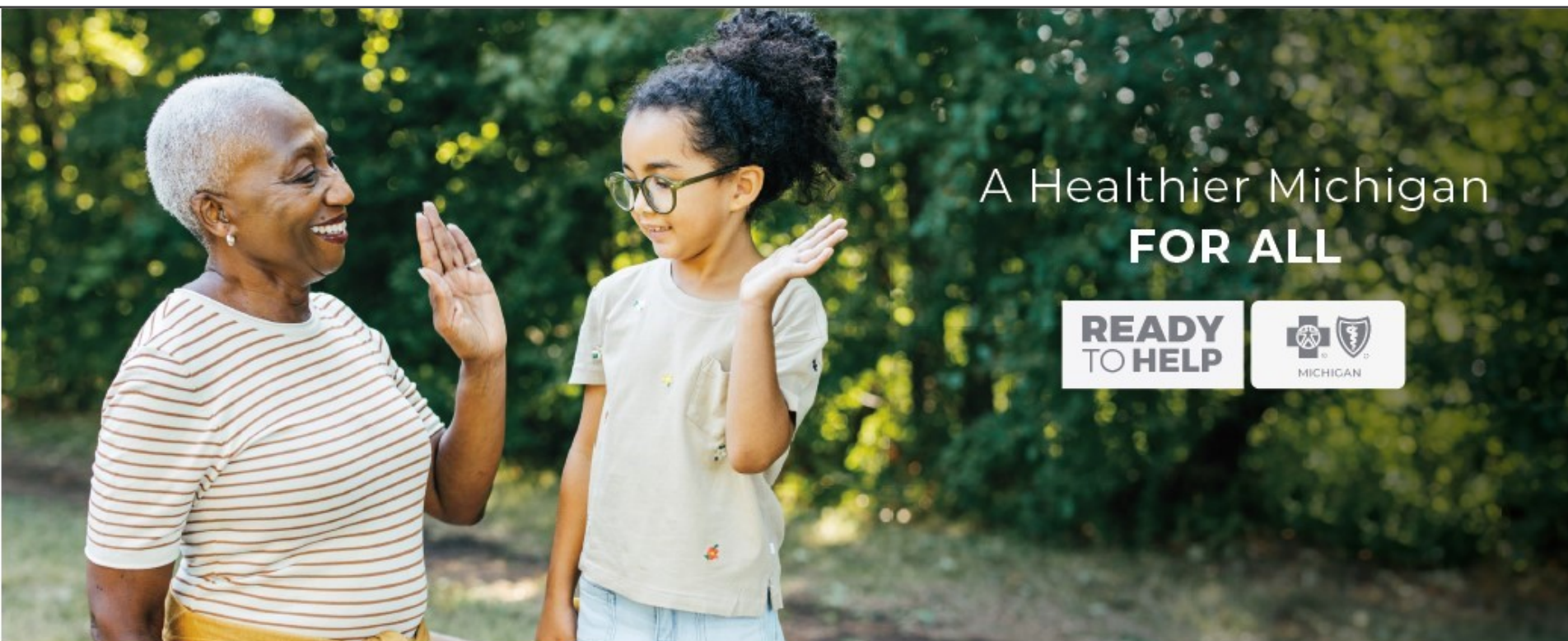
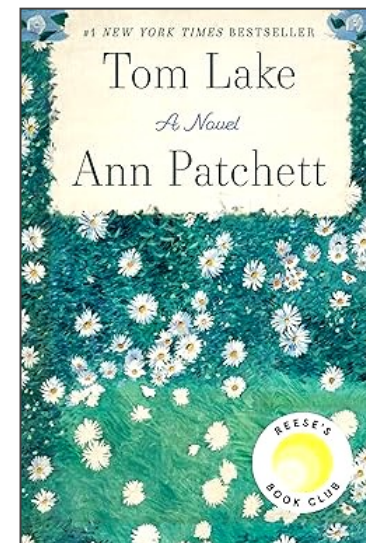
Most offspring are curious about their parent’s intimate secrets. But these three daughters have the most interest in mother’s dating life with a popular Academy Award winning actor. At one point in her life, first daughter Emily, was obsessed with the conviction he was even her real biological father.

It will help, while reading this novel, if you are familiar with Thornton Wilder’s classic play, *Our Town*. Because of his ubiquitous all-American themes, Wilder’s writing has been described as our country’s Shakespeare. And, as the parallels between the *Our Town*

play and the narrative in *Tom Lake* unfold, we may recognize our own memories from this universality.

As a fifty-six-year-old parent, Lara struggles to justify decisions that lead to her current satisfying life style as opposed, to what appeared to her daughters, as a glamorous Hollywood option. Of-course there is much more detail they try to wring out of her than she can admit without disillusioning their youthful exuberance.

This is the fun of being a reader as an outside observer. The last three chapters reveal what we, as a mature audience, might even consider life’s happy consequential realities. ▼



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AGENARIAN WORDSMITHING

By Maryann Blodgett Wilshere

If you had to guess... what would these words mean?
 Quinqu? Sex? Septu? Octo? Non? Cent?

If you know your Latin and you preface “agenarian” or modified suffixes (those dependent on vowels and spellings), these are names for decades of age. Defined as –arius “containing” or geni “each”.

Quinqu — From *quinqūāgēnārius*, meaning “containing fifty,” from *quinqūāgēnī*, “fifty each.” Five. Into five parts. Ages 50-59.

Sex — From *sexāgēnārius*, from *sexāgēnī*, meaning “sixty each,” from *sexāgintā*, “Containing sixty. Ages 60-69

Septu — From *septuāgēnārius*, from *septuāgēnī*, meaning “seventy each,” from *septuāgintā*, “seventy.” Ages 70-79

Octo — From *octōgēnāri(us)*, meaning “containing eighty”, from *octōgēn(ī)*, meaning “eighty each.” Ages 80-89.

Non — From *nōnāgēnāri(us)*, meaning “containing ninety,” from *nōnāgintā*, “ninety.” Ages 90-99.

Cent — From *centenāri(us)*, from *centēn(ī)*, meaning “a hundred each,” from *cent(um)*, “one hundred.” Ages 100-109.

HMMM? What age decade do you suppose describes a person 110 or older?



At OPC currently there are:

15.9% in the fifth decade, 25.9% the 6th,
 35.3% the 7th,
 10.5% first half of the 8th,
 and 12.6% over age 85.

Ohhh the answer is a Supercent ... A supercentenarian.

As we get to know the OPC Center’s members in class, in passing, at an event or class... imagine, just imagine the history, the life, the experiences, and so much that would unfold in conversation!! That would be a conversation ... human history. History beyond textbooks.

No matter what decade of “agenarian” you are, you have stories to share with the decades younger than you all the way to the denarians, vicenarians, tricenarians, quadragenarians. ...Decades filled with daily life, clothing, food, homes, community, music, entertainment, ways to earn a living, medical care, traditions, inventions, life lessons from eras that later became history to those not yet born. ▼



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Speaking of Age, What about Copyrights?

By Karen M. Lemon

Food. Warranties. People too. All have an expiration date. Most are stamped on the container or in the fine print. Well...not with people.

But, what of music, literature, and the arts? What is their lifecycle before they enter the public domain? Well, the laws of the United States do spell out how long a copyright stays in effect. Like all laws, they have been written, then revised, then brought to court, and then the laws are again rewritten.

Looking up copyright on the internet brought me to a blog from 2020 by Nicole Lamberson entitled *The Lifecycle of Copyright: 1924*

Works Enter the Public Domain. In her post, she writes, “Last year, for the first time in twenty years, published creative works entered into the public domain in the United States. Works from 1923 saw their copyright terms end, meaning they were no longer subject to copyright protection. With the new year, works published in 1924 joined them.

The U.S. Constitution instructs Congress to pass copyright law protecting creative works, granting creators exclusive rights; of course, the Constitution also establishes exceptions and limitations. As the Constitution asserts, there are exclusive rights, but they should only exist for “limited times.”

In the classic romance category: Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice, Little Women, Secret Garden, Wuthering Heights. In who done its: the Great Sherlock Holmes, and Agatha Christie’s The Secret Chimneys.



Are any of these your favorite works of literature? These classics no longer have copyright protections. In the fright genre: there is Dracula, Frankenstein, The Picture of Dorian Grey, ▼

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FEBRUARY FUN WORD CHALLENGE

Find the listed words. They may run in any direction but they always run in a straight line.

T	Q	N	K	L	C	E	C	N	A	M	O	R	T
R	E	N	O	E	T	A	T	S	E	L	A	E	R
A	T	F	I	G	F	W	N	O	X	O	X	X	D
E	K	S	E	S	O	R	T	D	E	D	A	T	E
H	A	H	U	G	S	E	R	V	Y	E	E	U	S
T	H	E	A	R	T	S	U	C	O	A	T	E	S
E	P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	B	E	N
E	C	U	P	I	D	E	L	D	S	A	S	H	H
W	T	A	H	R	G	E	O	E	L	S	R	S	S
S	R	E	W	O	L	F	V	R	I	P	I	N	K
B	O	U	Q	U	E	T	E	K	E	U	E	H	A
A	V	A	L	E	N	T	I	N	E	S	D	A	Y
A	A	L	I	N	D	A	R	E	A	T	E	A	M
S	E	A	N	N	C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E

VALENTINES DAY
LINDA REA TEAM
KISSES
XOXO
FLOWERS
CANDY
CHOCOLATE
HEARTS
TRUE LOVE
FRIENDSHIP
DATE
RED

HUGS
CUPID
ROSES
BOUQUET
ROMANCE
PINK
GIFT
SWEETHEART
REAL ESTATE ONE

Mail completed puzzle to The Linda Rea Team • Real Estate One
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Music right here in ...*Rochester Hills*

Michigan has many well-known people who hail from our Winter Wonderland State. There are *authors* Elmore Leonard and Mitch Albom, to name but two. While the *actors* are almost too many to mention, let's go ahead with a few. Tim Allen, Kristen Bell and her husband, Dax Shepard, Jeff Daniels, Ken Jeong, Keegan-Michael Key, David Spade, and Dave Coulier, to name a few.

What of famous musicians crossing the many genres? To start: there's the Motown crowd of Smokey Robinson, Diana Ross and fellow Supremes, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, and Stevie Wonder. We're not lacking in rockers like Grand Funk Railroad, MC5, The White Stripes, Glenn Frey of the Eagles, Alice Cooper, and Iggy Pop.

Musicians from all walks of life have called the Rochester area home—here are a few remarkable stories!

Do you know where King's Cove is now? It is off of Tienken at the Paint Creek Trail. A handsome home facing Paint Creek is where Chuck Mitchell, a local folk singer, married his Canadian girlfriend.



Joni Mitchell

Chuck Mitchell started singing in Detroit folk clubs and saloons. On his first out-of-town gig in Toronto, he met Canadian songwriter Joni Anderson from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. They married at the family home in Kings Cove and as a duo, Chuck and Joni Mitchell played the coffeehouse circuit until they divorced in 1968.

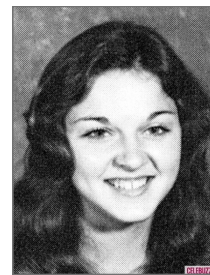


Bob Seger

South of Tienken between Livernois and Brewster Roads on the 120-acre cattle farm not far from the Mitchell home, Bob Seger's tour manager and roadies rented a 120-acre former cattle farm with house, lake, and barn for \$300 a month from the fall of 1970 to the summer of 1974. Intended to be a rehearsal site, it soon turned into a communal-style hangout. Band members playing at nearby gigs were invited to after-parties at the farm. Guests at the farm could wake up to see Johnny and Edgar Winters or Rod Stewart at breakfast.

If you grew up in the area and attended Rochester Adams High in the mid-seventies, you may have known Madonna Louise Ciccone, personally. Madonna would achieve many successes, which was not always easy. Madonna lost her mother when she was five, and her father married the housekeeper/nanny when she was eight, which put her and her father on bad terms. She left home a couple of years after graduating from Adams, moved to New York with only 35 dollars to her name. Originally working as a dancer, she would learn to play guitar and the drums in two rock groups, Breakfast Club and Emmy.

According to *Billboard*, Madonna is the most successful solo artist in the Hot 100 chart history (second overall behind The Beatles) and the most successful dance club artist of all time. ▼



Madonna
in High School

Do you Love History? Visit the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm!

Fridays and Saturdays

12:00 — 3:00 p.m., guided tour at 1:00 p.m.

Free for Museum Members

Not a member? Sign up at rochesterhills.org/musdonate

\$5/Adult \$3/Seniors 62+/students (3rd grade+)

No registration required

Drop-In Hours: The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 12:00 — 3:00 p.m.

Guided Tour of the Van Hoosen Farmhouse at 1:00 p.m.

Included with your admission is a self-paced, interactive look at our community's local history.

Meet the Taylor-Van Hoosen families, check out Mastodon bones, local history exhibits and local videos.

The guided tour of the Van Hoosen Farmhouse departs from the Diary Barn at 1:00 p.m., and you may take a self-guided tour of the Bull Barn, Milk House, Equipment Barn, and Children's Garden, as well as the nearby Stoney Creek Cemetery and our 16 acres or grounds. Come and share your afternoon with us at our site, proudly listed on the National Register of Historic Places!

FRIDAYS IN MARCH 2024 HISTORIC PRESENTATIONS

March 1 **The Abolition Movement in Oakland County**
7 p.m. **Presented by the Birmingham Museum**

The Abolition movement in Oakland County laid the foundation for the Underground Railroad through Oakland County. Come and learn how the Rochester Community was involved in the abolition movement.

March 8 **History of the Hudson's Department Store**
7 p.m. **Presented by Bruce Kopytek**

Do you remember a time when shopping was an adventure? Join architect and historian Bruce Kopytek as he leads you on an intoxicating journey of exploration through this lost Detroit landmark. Along the way, you'll discover the rags-to-riches story of Joseph L. Hudson.

March 15 **"Troy in the Roaring Twenties"**
7 p.m. **Presented by Stephanie Arwady of the Troy Museum —**

In 1927, Troy opened the doors to a brand-new Township Hall, but what did the rest of the area look like? Discover life in the quiet little community of Troy during the Roaring Twenties and the connections of Troy to Rochester.

March 22 **Art of Illustration - Books for Children**
7 p.m. **Presented by Wendy Evans**

Artists created images to illustrate stories on ancient scrolls, in medieval manuscripts, and in printed books and magazines. Some of our most loved illustrations are in books for children. Examples from late 19th and early 20th century illustrators, such as Randolph Caldecott and Beatrix Potter, to current award winners like Maurice Sendak, Mo Willems, and Leo Lionni.

March 29 **"Albert Kahn: The Residences"**
7 p.m. **Presented by Dale Carlson**

A rundown of metro area residences designed by Albert Kahn, who was the preeminent architect from Detroit and mostly focused on building factories for the Ford Motor Company. But his residential homes were scattered throughout the Midwest and even in Rochester on Main Street!