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If you are one of the myriad people who have approached the team at Watermark Brewing

Company over the last three years in hopes of hosting a wedding reception, major party, or some other private event inside the wildly popular brewery building in downtown Stevensville, your prayers have been answered. The team at Watermark elected early on to establish a policy to turn aside requests for wedding receptions and other private affairs on premise because they didn't want to disappoint their regulars and turn away regular business. They wanted to be certain that Watermark could always be considered to be your go-to spot. Now...they are literally doubling down on Stevensville and answering private party requests with a huge "Yes!" in the form of the forthcoming new Watermark Solarium for The Best Party of Your Entire Life. Since opening in 2016, Watermark Brewing Company has had a steady stream of requests for private party opportunities and they're answering that clarion call by renovating an 11,000 square foot warehouse adjacent to the brewery and turning it into a private venue experience. They are already booking events for 2020 and plan to be officially open in the spring of 2020 at the "Watermark Solarium." The Solarium will be able to host up to 250 guests at a single event and house Watermark's nano-distilling operation. The venue will include a commissary kitchen to be used by food caterers, offer fully functional climate control capabilities, provide transportation for guests and serve Watermark's wide variety of adult beverage options including cocktails. The vibe of the Solarium will have an array of live plants, natural light, along with an array of wooden barrels aging both spirits and beer. Watermark has hired on Nicole Crawford who has a ton of experience curating stunning looking events during her time as an independent photographer. Nicole's role is to help facilitate the planning and details leading up to the day of a client's event as Event Coordinator. Ali Brodhacker has been promoted internally at Watermark as the Beverage Coordinator aka "The Queen of Quench," to help clients choose the libations that will best suit their event at the Solarium. Ali will help clients select what beer, wine, cider and cocktails they would like to enjoy at their event.

Continued on page 10



umins Executive Director, Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council

Michigan College. The beloved tradition that continues to capture the hearts of children and their families everywhere comes to the live stage for the first time ever! This all-new musical and premiere stage production includes an exclusive invitation to Santa's North Pole and engages audiences with a glimpse into the magical lives A Christmas Musical, of Scout Elves. Featuring an original story and

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score, dazzling sets and costumes, and wondrous moments that make even the most cynical believe, this momentous celebration of the season leaves spirits high and captivates all with the splendor of Christmas. Complete your experience with the exclusive pre-show photo opportunity with a Scout Elf! Photos will take place in

DAVID "SHEP" SHEPHERD

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Continued on page 2



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A Full Service Real Estate Office Fun & Interesting Things to Do in Michigan's *Great* Southwest! I hope this column December 18, at The Mendel Center at Lake finds you enjoying all of the festivals, perfor-

mances, concerts and events surrounding this Christmas! This festive time of year continues

with The Elf on the Shelf:

Page 2 December 14, 2019 **TOURISM** Continued from cover

front of a magical North Pole backdrop. Children can leave a personalized message for Santa or their Scout Elf using the Christmas Wish Activity Sheet. As a commemorative takeaway for the children in your party, the VIP access badge becomes a keepsake that can be hung on your own Christmas tree at home for years to come.

The next day, December 19, join the folks at the Silver Beach Carousel for *Live Reindeer!* What a magical way to start your holiday weekend! See their favorite North Pole guest and pet a live reindeer. You can eve n have a photo taken (see details). The fun continues when you catch your breath from all the busyness of the season by playing games, coloring pictures and watching electric trains whistle through the snowy holiday scenery in the Carousel House. Explore the Silver Beach Amusement Park memorabilia and interactive displays. Or relax in one of the comfortable rocking chairs and sing along to "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

You can go from one comfortable seat to the next during Twin City Players four staged readings of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, December 19-21. This lively, dramatic staged reading will delight children and adults alike when the Grinch and some special Whos come to visit. It will be followed by a special reading of The Night Before Christmas and a visit from Santa Claus. Children are welcome to attend in their PJ's. Parents may bring cameras and letters to Santa are also encouraged. Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. Some lucky youngsters will also receive Grinch surprises. Special family pricing, holiday decorations, and cookies will make this a memorable family event. There's another memorable family event at the Inn at Harbor Shores, December 21, during *Brunch with Santa & His Reindeer*. Come back to the Inn December 31, for the *Roaring 20's New Year's Eve Party*. Ring in the New Year, roaring 20's style with dinner, dancing, and fireworks! Put on your glad rags and come out and cut a rug on the dance floor to tunes by DJ Hunter. Enjoy dinner buffet stations with carved meats, seafood bar, tossed salad bar, pasta station, and more. Midnight brings fireworks over the harbor and a champagne toast!

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Be sure to join the folks at The Boulevard Inn for the last *Sunday with Santa*, of the season, December 22. It includes Santa's favorite brunch buffet and cookie decorating.

I'll end this column with one more idea for December 31, it's the *New Year's Eve Party* at Journeyman Distillery. Celebrate the New Year with family, friends, and neighbors!

They will get the party started at 9pm in the Still Room, with music and dancing before welcoming the New Year with a midnight champagne toast. Your ticket includes one complimentary cocktail and a glass of champagne. Dinner reservations for parties of eight or more can be made at Staymaker Restaurant. This event is only for 21 and over and is limited to the first 200.

For details on these and other fun and interesting things to do in Michigan's *Great* Southwest be sure to visit <u>www.swmichigan.org</u>.

From all of us at the Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council, we hope your holidays are filled with joy, love, laughter and peace. Merry Christmas!

Read more at www.MailMaxOnline.com

Nichigan's Great Southwest Michigan's Great Southwest Your Good News Paper 50,009 Weekly Readers!* *Circulation Verification Council Audit June 2018

MailMax for Michigan's Great Southwest

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Photo-of-the-Week



Midnight Moon Photo by John Brannen

Please email your favorite photo with a brief description to **Photos@MailMaxOnline.com** Photos must be horizontal orientation to be considered for Photo of the Week.

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MailMax Celebrates 20 Years of Spreading Good News



March of 2020 will mark the 20-year anniversary of publishing and delivering Michigan's *Great*

good news to Michigan's *Great* Southwest through *MailMax*.

Recently, we dusted off a copy of our very first issue of *MailMax* and noted several businesses that helped get us started. Pillars of business, such as Ace Hardware, Deals on Wheels, Henry's Hamburgers, LeValley, Mid County Lawn & Garden, Siemans in Bridgman, and Sparkle Car Wash & Quik Lube, graced our first pages and still advertise with us today. In business and in life, there are leaders and followers; and we want to thank these business leaders who saw the power of getting their marketing message into over 37,000 homes.

Speaking of "pillars," **Pat Moody** also began the **Moody on the Market** column in 2000, as a way to share good news pertaining to local businesses. Pat's column quickly became "must read" content for our area. Soon thereafter, **Glenda Head** and **Don Stuart** began writing weekly columns and developed their own followings. Without them, you'd be reading my drivel each week. Since then, we've added many regular columnists such as **Millicent Huminsky, Lucy Kubash**, Kaitlyn Marie, Jenna Podjan, Dave Ramsey, Pastor Glenn Rosenbaum and others who inform us on where to go, what to do, what to drink, where to eat, how to save, and how to be saved. To our contributing columnists, thanks for all you add to our readership.

I also need to thank **Doug** and **Jo Farrell**, who worked on *MailMax* at its inception and continue to work tirelessly to make it happen each week. We have a great team that includes **Kayla Harris, Shelly Head, Kaitlyn Marie, Jeff Painter** and **Brook Reddel**. I thank each of you for making the magic happen week in and week out. I love our work family!

While many newspapers are struggling to keep readers, *MailMax* continues to have strong readership. In fact, recent independent research showed that **8 out of 10 homes read** *MailMax* on a regular basis. That equates to over **50,000 weekly readers**. We are thrilled to see that you still love getting *MailMax* and reading it.

This research from the Circulation Verification Council also points out that our readers love to see the ads from local businesses. The study showed that **76.2% of you use the** *MailMax* advertisements to help in your buying decisions. This is good news for our advertisers who are proud to promote what they have to offer you as they compete with giant box stores and online outlets.

Along with providing you with a free subscription and helping local businesses grow, we also sponsor more than 50 non-profit organizations each year with advertising space in *MailMax* and online, helping to promote their causes.

We've tried to provide virtually every home with a weekly subscription at no cost because we know that for many, things are financially difficult. However, postage for mailing 37,209 copies each week is extremely high. We're hoping that you're one of those households that reads and appreciates MailMax and would be willing to help us help others. Our annual Contribution Envelope Program helps others in three ways. First, it helps to ensure that MailMax continues to reach homes that could not otherwise afford a newspaper subscription. Secondly, it helps us to assist local charities with their marketing. Lastly, you help local business owners, your friends and neighbors, by keeping our ad rates affordable.

Inside this edition of *MailMax*, you'll find your Contribution Envelope. We have several levels of donation, and those who give will be honored in an upcoming issue of *MailMax*. Contribution levels start at just \$9. At that level, you've earned the Honorary Reporter title. At \$15, you are an Honorary Editor. For only \$30, you can be an Honorary Publisher. You can also give any other amount you'd like. For instance, for just \$2 million, I will make you the Owner! ©

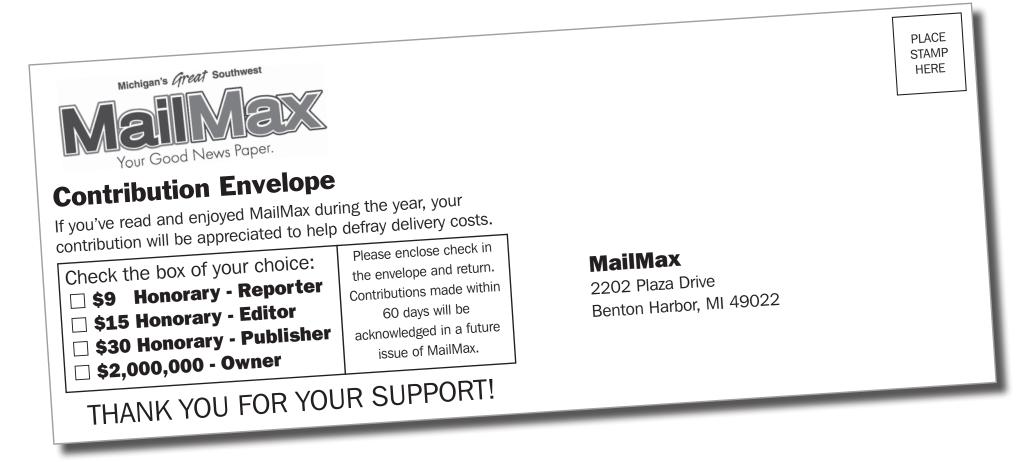
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Whether you participate in the Voluntary Pay program or not, we will continue to deliver your *MailMax* each week, free of charge, right to your home or business.

Thank you for twenty great years and Merry Christmas to you all.

Glen Head, Publisher Publisher@MailMaxOnline.com



Look inside this week's inserts for your Contribution Envelope. All contributors will be honored in an upcoming issue of MailMax. Page 4 December 14, 2019

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Christmas time is such a wonderful time of the year. We so enjoy family, the festive spirit and the

giving and receiving of gifts. This gift giving is a very integral part of the holidays. Black Friday and Cyber Monday beckon all of us to spend next year's money on this year's gifts!

As Christians we think about the "ultimate" Gift that God gave to the world...the Gift of His Son Jesus. Let's think about and examine this life changing Gift. II Corinthians 9:15 states, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift". In John 4:10, Jesus tells the woman at the well that He is "the gift of God". John 3:16, probably the most well-known Bible verse states, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Romans 6:23 states, "...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." In Romans chapter 5 it is called the "free gift" 3 times.

A gift costs the recipient nothing. The price of the gift is paid by the purchaser. A missionary in the South Pacific Islands was explaining to a group of children the custom and significance of giving gifts at Christmas. "Giving gifts" he said, "expresses love and reminds us of the perfect gift of love we received from God: Jesus." Later that week, a young native boy came to the missionary's side and said, "I love you and want you to have this." He pulled from a straw basket the most

beautiful shell the missionary had ever seen. As he admired its beauty, he recognized it as a special shell found only on the far side of the island, a half day's walk from the village. When confronted by this, the boy smiled and said, "Long walk part of gift!" The gift of eternal life is free to us, because the cost of the gift, eternal life, was paid by God Himself on the Cross.

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The purpose of this wonderful gift is to bless the receiver. John 1:12 states, "But as many as <u>received him</u>, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" If you receive His salvation, He will give you a new heart. If you receive His wisdom, He will give you a new mind. If you receive His power, He will give you new strength. If you receive His love and mercy, He will give you a new attitude. If you receive His will, He will give you a new purpose.

Christmas. The greatest Gift from the greatest Giver. Our prayer is that you would receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Millions have already received this Gift and been made eternally grateful for the blessing it has brought: eternal life, the forgiveness of sins, peace with God and much more. It truly will be the best gift you have ever received. Merry Christmas.

Fellowship Bible Church. 12243 Red Arrow Highway, Sawyer, MI. <u>www.fbcsawyer.com</u>. Please read about us on our website. Read more at www.MailMaxOnline.com





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and the snow has come and gone a few times already. Temperatures continue to drop, taking with them the ability to easily exercise outside. But I promise you-you can exercise outside in the Winter. It just requires a few extra precautions.

1) Choose the right activity.

Now is the opportune time to partake in coldweather activities, like cross-country skiing if the ground is covered in snow and ice skating when the water is frozen. Biking might be out of the question now, but running and walking are still good options.

2) Dress appropriately.

Cold weather requires a few extra layers, but it doesn't eliminate the need to sweat, so choose base lavers that wick away moisture. When deciding how many layers to wear, consider the temperature and dress as if it were 10-20 degrees warmer. You might be cold when you first step outside, but that will change when you start moving.

3) Take care of your feet.

Snow, slush and ice wreak havoc on feet that aren't prepared, so tackle winter weather from the ground up. Stock up on wool socks that keep your feet warm and dry. Purchase a pair of snow and ice cleats (and some waterproof spray) for your shoes-you might even consider purchasing a pair of shoes that are meant to be worn while exercising in cold-weather conditions. No matter what, be sure to keep track of your feet when you're out and about. If they're wet or too cold, it's a sure sign you need to come inside. (Plus, wet feet promote the formation of blisters, and they aren't fun.) 4) Pay attention to the wind.

Before you step outside, check the wind chill factor. If it exists, it will make the temperature outside feel much cooler. Then check to see which way the wind is blowing. Try to plan walking or running

How to Exercise Outside When It's Cold December is here routes so that the wind is always at your back. Wind in the face? Never a comfortable thing. Cover up! And wear chapstick.

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"Celebrating Our 50th Year!"

5) Be visible.

Colder months tend to be darker, so make sure you're dressed in gear that promotes visibility. If you exercise before dawn or after dusk, consider purchasing equipment that alerts oncoming traffic of your existence. 6) Stay hydrated.

It's not uncommon to guzzle down water on Summer days. We parch easily in hot temperatures, but that doesn't mean we can ignore water in the Winter. Despite the cold, hydration is-and always will be-the key to any successful exercise routine. Drink water, and take water with you if necessary.

7) Know when to come inside.

Bottom line, you have to be smart when you exercise in cold weather. Ice isn't safe, and hypothermia is a very real thing. Abnormally low body temperatures from overexposure to the cold can lead to a number of medical emergencies, none of which you want to experience. Be smart about the length of time you spend outside in the cold, listen to your body-and listen to the warnings from your local weather station.

Remember, despite the beauty of exercising outside in the Winter, exercising inside will still bring you closer to those fitness and health goals. Put your health and safety above the experience whenever necessary. Lucky for us, it's been a somewhat mild Winter, but we live in Michigan, so that's bound to change!

Questions? Reach out: tara@southshorehrc.com!

By: Tara Sabo (Fitness Director, ACE-CPT and Group Fit Instructor at South Shore Health & Racquet Club)

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MailMax for Michigan's Great Southwest





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Don



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the western edges of my "Where would I rather be?" thoughts when I'm doing something boring. ..*sigh*...

Where was I?

I was still dragging you along through my reminiscences of our cross-country road trip with No. 4 son, wasn't I? Eventually we'll get to Way WAY-Away University, I promise.

Anyway, back to paragraph one: Between those two parks, we passed under Montana's big sky (which truly IS bigger out there!) and as we neared a town called Miles City, I saw something prrrretty unexpected: A huge billboard-sized "cutout" of a crawling baby. . . . which appears to be delightedly chasing after life-size cutouts of a rhinoceros, a bison, and a velociraptor dinosaur.

The characters in this tableau are depicted in a photo-realistic style. There are no signs, markers or explanations whatsoever of what the heck you're looking at as you whiz by. But with a little internet sleuthing, I learned this artwork has a name -- "Creepy Crawler" – and, of course, a creator – John Cerney – who has painted scads of giant murals like this all over the U.S.

I visited John Cerney's website and wow!, this guy is creative and talented! And he now also resides on the western edges of my "Where would I rather be?" thoughts when I'm doing something boring. . .*sigh*. . .

Our destination on this day's drive was a town called Hardin, Montana. We headed there from Theodore Roosevelt NP, which we didn't leave until mid-afternoon, so the last part of the

drive was in full darkness. And just to make things more "atmospheric," a driving rainstorm. And along one of the most torn-up, rutted, potholed, construction-in-progress roads of all time – Montana Highway 47. It was one of those tracks where one quickly loses count of how many times one's wife mutters "Oh my G!" or says "You MUST be going the wrong way!!" or yells "Get us OFF THIS ROAD!"

(This road wasn't as traumatizing to one's wife as staying in the Best Western in Fergus Falls, Minnesota – "Oh MY G! – These sheets are so thin I can read through them!" – but it was a close second.)

The next day, we wound our way to Cody, Wyoming, where we visited a spiffy museum called the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. It's actually multiple museums – the Buffalo Bill Museum, The Draper Natural History Museum, the Whitney Western Art Museum, the Plains Indian Museum, the Cody Firearms Museum, and even more that I won't mention because this sentence has gone on long enough. The exhibits in all the various halls are very well done, although the Western Art museum lacks any giant crawling babies.

Speaking of which, near the entrance to the museum complex, there's a massive Creepy-Crawler-Baby-sized map of the U.S., with a gojillion pins stuck in it, representing where museum visitors hail from. And in Michigan there's a pin planted right above Stevensville, where I used to live! Unfortunately, it's smack in the center of the dot depicting St. Joseph. So the Bears have it over the Lancers. Or did, until I moved the pin to Stevensville's dot!

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Friday, December 20 at 7:00 pm - Doors open at 6:30 ~ Tickets \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door.

The Spaniels were the first artist signed to Vee-Jay Records, the ground-breaking independent African-American owned record label that eventually paved the way for Motown Records. The Spaniels recorded their initial release, "Baby It's You" on May 5, 1953 and it reached #10 on Billboard's R&B chart on September 5, 1953.

The Spaniels' roots go back to 1948 at Roosevelt High School in Gary, Indiana when classmates Billy Shelton and Pookie Hudson began singing together and formed the group, The Three B's. Upon graduation, after some local success and plenty of regional sock-hop performances, Hudson went on his own to formed the first official incarnation of The Spaniels.

The Spaniels line-up has survived personnel changes over the years, including the happy return of Billy Sheltonas The Spaniels bass singer, where he has remained ever since. Shelton later became the group leader following Hudson's 2007 death.

Shelton - now 85 - is the last of the original group of friends who began singing together in Roosevelt High School's hallways during the formative days of the early 1950s, and his voice remains untouched by time.

The group has been aptly re-christened as the "Spaniels Forever" as Shelton continues singing those classic Spaniels' hits and other songs with Patrick Pitre, Dan Porter, Phil Ratliff and Fred DeBose

The group debuted in late 1952 at Roosevelt High School in Gary, Indiana as Pookie Hudson & The Hudsonaires. They changed their name to The Spaniels that spring and, upon graduation, became one of the first two artists to sign with Vee-Jay Records, the first large, independent Afro-American owned record label. The group recorded their initial release, "Baby It's You" on May 5, 1953. Released in July, the song reached #10 on Billboard's R&B chart on September 5, 1953

In Spring 1954, "Goodnite, Sweetheart, Goodnite" hit number twenty-four on Variety's pop chart, and rose to number five on Billboard's R&B chart. The Spaniels played regularly at the Apollo, The Regal and other large theaters on the Chitlin circuit.

An entire new generation was exposed to the group's music when "Goodnight, Sweetheart, Goodnight" was featured prominently in the movies, American Graffiti and Three Men and a Baby.

The Box Factory for the Arts is located at 1101 Broad Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085. For more information, contact the Box Factory for the Arts at 269.983.3688 or visit www.boxfactoryforthearts.org





Congratulations to barbara HAGADORN, caregiver for the month of December. Barb joined our team in May, 2018, with a great skill level coupled with a caring heart. She willingly steps up to provide care outside of her schedule and makes sure her client's needs are met with the quality and compassion they so deserve. Barb creates a personal bond that reassures a comforting experience. Her warm smile and genuine kindness shines through at all times. Thank you Barb for the difference you make!

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MOODY Continued from the cover

Watermark Co-Founder Chris Mason says, Since we opened in 2016 we have constantly been approached by a number of patrons to close down on a Saturday so that someone could have a wedding reception or charity event in our taproom, so that is why we have decided to expand our operation with the addition of the Solarium" What was formerly a beer distribution warehouse will now house Watermark's nano-distilling operation and barrel aging program. In addition to facilitating weddings, the venue will offer space for large scale charity events, corporate events, private mug club parties and unique food pairing dinners. Mason tells us, "We have assembled a solid team and concept to help facilitate the best possible party of client's entire life, as we are beyond excited to offer such a unique venue unlike anything else in the region." He adds, "Southwest Michigan has become a destination

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family at Dino's to yours!

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:17:

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for wedding venues and breweries, so we had the idea to crossover the two. We have positioned the Solarium as a venue that includes all of the amenities that you may not necessarily think about prior to hosting an event or wedding. We identified that some of the outdoor venues or barns lack climate control, standard bathroom accommodations and are located relatively far away from lodging. When we designed the Solarium we made sure to create a space where all guests will feel as comfortable as possible and take all the stress off the event hosts." You can see the floorplan by going to this link: www.WatermarkSolariumFloorplan.com

Co-Founder of Watermark Justin Schaul has done an incredible job adapting to his role as the General Contractor on the project and building out the entire space with a small team on a very limited budget. Co-Founder David Cockell will continue to oversee all brewing operations along with developing the distilling program, Co-Founder Chris Mason will continue to handle all business operations and Justin Koehneke will remain taproom manager of the brewery's taproom. Mason says, "We would not be able to pursue this project without the constant dependability of our current employees who have been with us since we opened, along with the addition of Nicole and Ali joining us to help manage the Solarium. We would also like to thank Honor Credit Union for financing our expansion project, Cornerstone Alliance for helping us secure a property tax abatement and the Village of Stevensville for being so supportive of all the small business developments in our community.' Watermark Solarium anticipates becoming fully operational this upcoming spring and is already booking events for as early as May of 2020. To book your event and find more details at

:watermarksolarium.com. The new President of the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber should have little problem hitting the ground running inasmuch as he's very familiar with the lay of the land, brings a wealth of experience to the role, alongside of his passion and a clearly articulated vision for the organization. The real bonus for members - he's local. Those key elements are what propelled the familiar face of Bridgman-native Arthur Havlicek to the top job at the Chamber today. Havlicek was appointed President & CEO of the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber by the Chamber's Board of Directors, bringing to a conclusion their period of internal evaluation and an extensive review of multiple candidates. Board Chair Julie Thomsen says, "Our dynamic Chamber members deserve a dynamic leader who understands our community and who can help businesses thrive by strengthening Chamber programs, promoting our region, and working collaboratively with other key players." Mark Lemoine, who Chaired the Ad-Hoc Executive Search Committee says, "Competition for senior leadership positions is always strong, and we were pleased with the interest we received from numerous, high-caliber individuals from the area and out-of-state." Lemoine adds, "We are confident Arthur's local roots and state-level experience will make him an effective advocate for Chamber members and help us build upon our regional footprint." Havlicek graduated from Lake Michigan Catholic High School in 2010 and Grand Valley State University in 2014. He has close to a decade of experience holding key staff roles for various elected officials around the state, including as Legislative Director for thenstate representative Kim LaSata. Currently, Havlicek serves as an Advisor to West Michigan legislators in the Michigan House of Representatives where he recommends and implements strategies related to policy, communications, and constituent outreach. For his part, Havlicek says, "Working with government officials, business leaders, and community organizations to affect positive change in this state has been an invaluable experience," and adds, "I'm excited to bring that experience back home and



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build upon the recent success of this organization." Havlicek, citing estimates that predict millennials will make up 50-percent of the U.S. workforce by 2020, believes his perspective will provide an advantage in the new role, saying, "Ensuring sustained growth for our area over the next decade will depend entirely on our ability to attract, develop, and retain the businesses and workforce of the future." He adds, "As President, one of my main priorities will be to grow and promote the type of vibrant workplaces and communities where talented entrepreneurs and young professionals want to live, work, and raise a family." Havlicek takes the reins from Interim President Greg Parrett, who was filling in following the departure of Chris Heugel who returned to the hospitality industry this fall. The Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven organization encouraging the growth of business through networking, advocacy, visibility and benefits for all members. Established in 1954, they represent more than 700 members from throughout southwest Michigan and have local offices in downtown St. Joseph and Bridgman. You can find them online at www.smrchamber.com.

Rob Cleveland and Coleen King are undoubtedly soaring in the clouds after their **#VacayEveryDay** campaign encouraging people to make Michigan's Great Southwest their next home in order to consider themselves "on vacation every day," picked up a huge, unexpected boost. The popular global travel magazine Conde Nast Traveler has issued its 20 Best Places to Go in 2020, and Southwest Michigan is one of only two destinations in the entire nation to make that elite list. The highly respected publication says, "It's always an exciting time when we put together our list of destinations for the New Year. We start our list of the best places to go in 2020 by surveying our well-traveled staff, and then our hyper-connected network of writers based all over the world. We look for the big reasons to visit destinations: The Olympics in Japan and the World Expo in Dubai are two major ones in 2020, but there are also smaller, surprising ones, such as the 800th birthday of a stunning Gothic cathedral or a new museum dedicated to African American music." The colorful nature of Conde Nast makes it a popular draw and they open the segment on Southwest Michigan citing "oceanlike coastlines and a laid back vibe," also with our "grown-up take on agritourism" and "family farms," as being major attraction points for the entire area. Cornerstone Alliance President Rob Cleveland who introduced the #VacayEveryday attraction campaign earlier this year says, "It's always humbling for our community to receive this kind of recognition, especially when the list includes some of the most unique locations around the world." He quickly adds, "This recognition also reinforces that we can't let up. As a community, we have to support investment in projects and infrastructure that will maximize our natural resources and attract people to our community." He concludes, "As this list indicates, Southwest Michigan is a great place to live, work, play and vacay...and we are focusing on making it even better." Coleen King's King Media group designed the #VacayEveryDay campaign for the community and continues to shepherd media placements to enhance the efforts every day. Conde Nast worked for geographical diversity, but also points of interest for every type of traveler in compiling their list, recognizing the bucket list ranges from far-flung locales like



Southeastern Australia to Southwest Michigan. Nashville, Tennessee is the only other destination in the United States to make the list. To be in the company of some amazing destinations is heady stuff.

Here's who else made the list: Armenia... Bahia, Brazil...Bostswana's Salt Pans... Canadian Arctic...Canary Islands, Spain... Copenhagen...Dominica...Dubai...El Chalten, Argentina...Guyana...Metz, France... Mokpo, South Korea...Nashville, Tennessee...

Okinawa, Japan...Rwanda...Slovenia...

Sri Lanka's South Coast...Southeastern Australia...Southwest Michigan...and Tangier, Morocco. Conde Nast Traveler is a luxury and lifestyle travel magazine published by Conde Nast, and the recipient of **25 National Magazine Awards** over the years. You can see the complete story shared by Conde Nast Traveler at

www.cntraveler.com/gallery/best-places-to-go-in-2020. Now that the newest Dollar General store in Southwest Michigan is open for business, they have celebrated their Grand Opening last Saturday, December 7th. The major discount retailer's newest Dollar General store is located at 2502 Old US 31 in Niles, and is now open. In its new location, Dollar General will offer area residents a convenient new place to shop for everyday essentials at low prices. Dollar General celebrated the store's official grand opening with free prizes and special deals. Dan Nieser is Senior Vice President of Real Estate & Store Development for Dollar General. He says, "Dollar General is committed to delivering a pleasant shopping experience that includes a convenient location, a wide assortment of merchandise and great prices on quality products," and adds, "We hope our area customers will enjoy shopping at Dollar General's new location.' Dollar General officials say their stores offer convenience and value to customers by providing a focused selection of national name brands and private brands of food, housewares, seasonal items, cleaning supplies, basic apparel and health/ beauty products.

That's it for this week. Please shop local, and we'll see you Saturday right here in **MailMax**!

Pat Moody Morning Radio Personality WSJM Radio **moody@wsjm.com** (269) 925-1111 Read more at www.MailMaxOnline.com





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Ramsey



Why not budget and save? Dear Dave,

I've never heard you talk about store layaway programs. With Christmas coming, I wanted to ask your opinion of using layaway for buying gifts.

Meg

Dear Meg,

If you know me, you probably have a good idea what's coming next. I'm not a huge fan of layaway programs, because they're not the answer to a problem. I mean, Christmas comes at the same time every year. It's not like it snuck up on you. What's wrong with just saving up money for Christmas ahead of time?

Here's a good rule of thumb: if you don't have the money on hand, you can't afford it. Now, sometimes there are instances when certain popular items are on sale, and you can take advantage of them through layaway if you don't have enough cash at that very moment. I don't have a huge problem with this sort of thing, as long as it's not habitual behavior, and you're already saving money and living on a budget. Still, I would never, ever recommend using a layaway plan with fees attached.

It may be too late to budget for this Christmas, but I want you to make plans to

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Dave Says

start living on a written, monthly budget in January. Make it a resolution! Give every dollar a name, on paper, before the upcoming month begins. You can include Christmas spending in those monthly budgets, too. If you set aside a little bit each month from January until next December, you won't have to worry about layaways or Christmas debt.

Remember, Christmas is about God and it's about love. There are many, many ways to bless people and make them happy without overextending yourself financially! -Dave

* Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 16 million listeners each week on 600 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.

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Wrong Turn



No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. ~ Romans 3:20

pold Loyka is not a household name

Nevertheless, Leopold Loyka is the man who made one of the most consequential wrong turns in human history.

Leopold was a chauffeur and a prestigious one at that. His job was to serve as the official driver for a high-ranking official from Austria, a man by the name of Franz Ferdinand. In June of 1914, Ferdinand decided to visit Sarajevo, a city that harbored hostility toward Austrian rule. As Leopold drove the car through the city with Ferdinand as his passenger, he made a wrong turn. When he stopped to correct his mistake, it so happened that he passed directly in front of a man who very much wanted to see Franz wrong turns in my life-all of the times I Ferdinand dead. The man seized his chance have turned away from you. Turn me again and shot Ferdinand to death.

Austria was the spark that started World War Amen. I. World War I, in turn, set the stage for World War II. In all, 77 million people perished. And it all began with a wrong turn.

There is another wrong turn in human history that has even greater consequences. It is the false assumption that we can make

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The name of Leo- our own way into God's favor. It is the false assumption that we can chart our own course into a right relationship with God. Such thinking is not only wrong-headed and self-absorbed; such thinking also has consequences that are fatal, and eternal.

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Enter Jesus. Jesus did far more than chart a safe course. He created a path where none had existed. The path was himself. He alone was the way. As our substitute, he lived and died on our behalf. Through faith in him, God's favor is ours, forgiveness is ours, peace is ours, life is ours. And not just for a while, but forever.

Through faith in Jesus, we will one day arrive safe and sound in our heavenly home.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive all of the and again toward you until I see you face to The assassination of Franz Ferdinand of face in the heaven you are preparing for me.

> Submitted by:Pastor Glenn T. Rosenbaum Administrative Pastor Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Joseph Originated by: www.What AboutJesus.com Read more at www.MailMaxOnline.com

> > t college

Destination: DONE

LAKE MICHIGAN

star this fall!



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Who's Reading MailMax? **HIGHER INCOME EARNERS** 69% of MailMax readers have HH incomes \$50,000+, compared to only 48% for the Southwest Michigan market

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