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Moody on The Market

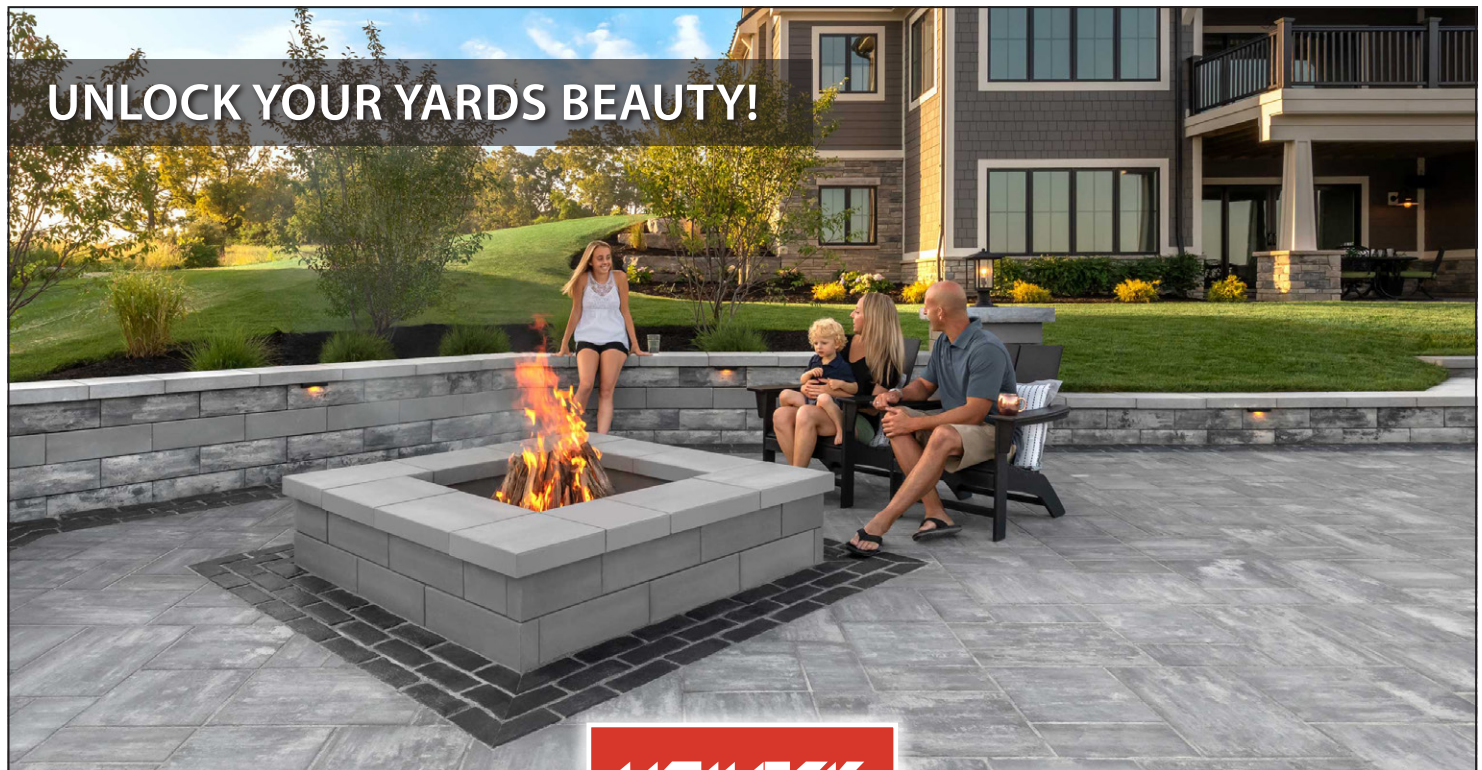


Moody Pat

You'll have to excuse **Amy Bleich Heugel** if her recent exuberance spills into your life. As owner and operator of the iconic **LakeHouse Restaurant & Bar** at the corner of **Lakeshore Drive and Hilltop Road in St. Joseph** it has been "an insane year," but...not only have they survived, they're gearing up for their **7th Year Anniversary** celebration next week on May 20th.

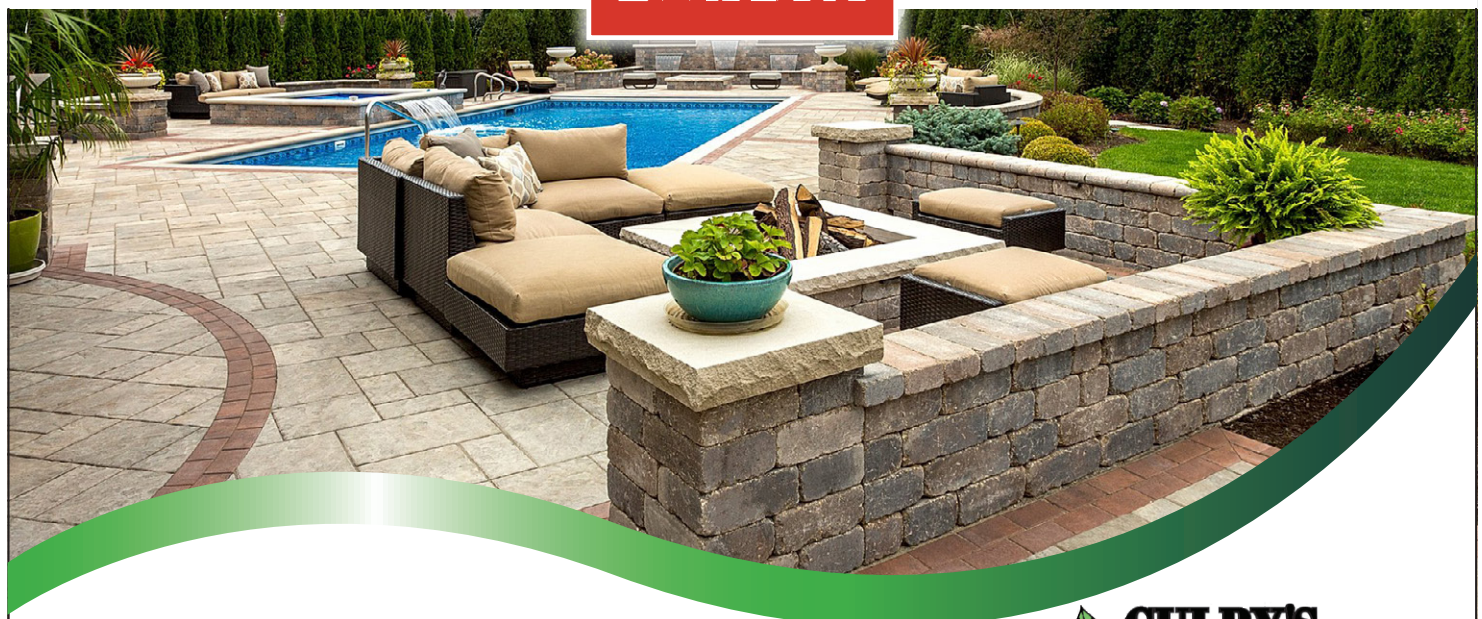
Amy calls her upcoming celebration, "**Seven Years of Sunsets.**" Here's what she has to say about it all: "Southwest Michigan residents are almost certainly familiar with The LakeHouse Restaurant & Bar at the corner of Lakeshore Drive & Hilltop Road in St. Joseph. However, not everyone is aware of the storied history of the stately building adjacent to the **Holiday Inn Express & Suites.**" She explains, "A lot of people don't know this, but our building was built in 1892 as a family residence. It first belonged to the **Smith** family, and later was known as the **Colby Mansion.**" Amy's father, **Attorney Donald Bleich**, purchased the home in 1993 then leased it to two restaurant ventures: **The Mansion Grille** from 1993 to 2007, and **El Cozumel** from 2008 to 2014. In the late 1990s, Mr. Bleich was approached about building a hotel on the land adjacent to the home and in 2000, the **Holiday Inn Express** opened. That land had gone through several incarnations in the 1900s, including a produce stand and a used car lot called **Colby Motors.** Soon, the Bleich family saw the opportunity to create a more cohesive experience. As Amy puts it, "After hearing so much feedback from hotel guests about the kind of restaurant they'd love to see at that location, I had the idea to transform the restaurant into what it is today." The result is the popular **LakeHouse Restaurant & Bar**, known affectionately to locals as simply "**The LakeHouse.**" They opened in 2014, and have been going strong ever since. While the casual family dining restaurant was originally designed to cater to hotel guests, it's earned tremendous loyalty from locals, who appreciate the amazing sunset views just across the street, the laid-back, friendly vibe, consistent and convenient hours, bright and tasteful beach-cottage decor, live music, and, naturally, the dining experience. Amy says, "We pride ourselves on serving high-quality food with as much local sourcing as possible, plus a diverse beer and wine menu that includes plenty of **Michigan-made** options." Needless to say,

Continued on page 8



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**Arthur
Havlicek,**
President,
SMR Chamber

Michigan's "Vacc to Normal" Plan

Governor Gretchen Whitmer recently announced her administration's new "MI Vacc to Normal" plan to further relax pandemic restrictions in our state. This week, I'd like to outline her plan and share some of the related advocacy efforts we've been involved in since it was announced.

The "MI Vacc to Normal" plan will use four vaccination-based milestones -- using data for Michiganans 16 years or older who've received

their first dose -- to guide future steps required to get back to normal. These four milestones are as follows:

55% of Michiganders (4,453,304 residents) would mean the return of in-person work for all sectors of business.

60% of Michiganders (4,858,150 residents) would increase indoor capacity at sports stadiums

Continued on page 2

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to 25%; increase indoor capacity at conference centers/banquet halls/funeral homes to 25%; increase capacity at exercise facilities and gyms to 50%; and lift the curfew on restaurants and bars.

65% of Michiganders (5,262,996 residents) would lift all indoor % capacity limits (requiring only social distancing between parties) and further relax limits on residential social gatherings.

70% of Michiganders (5,667,842 residents) would completely lift the *Gatherings and Face Masks Order* (and corresponding mandatory mask requirement) and MDHHS will no longer employ broad mitigation measures unless unanticipated circumstances arise, such as the spread of vaccine-resistant variants.

When the plan was announced, 48.8% of Michigan residents ages 16 and older had received at least one dose and 35.9% had been fully vaccinated. This past week, Michigan cleared 4.45 million doses of administered vaccines meaning we've already triggered the 55% benchmark.

This achievement came weeks earlier than projected thanks in large part to the advocacy efforts of elected officials and organizations from border communities (ours included) who were quick to identify and flag an early issue with our state's vaccination tracking method. Initially, only Michigan healthcare providers had the ability to add information to the vaccine registry meaning those vaccinated in other states wouldn't be recorded unless they told their Michigan-based doctors. This meant hundreds of thousands of Michigan citizens who had been vaccinated outside the state or at federal facilities since the vaccines first became available were not being accounted for. When these individuals were finally included, it resulted in a 2.5% jump (nearly 227,000 residents) in our numbers and pushed us over the 55% threshold.

Reaching 55% is certainly welcome news – especially for those businesses who have been desperate to return to in-person work. That said, several state departments will need to modify or rescind rules that currently contradict the new

re-opening plan before that restriction can be fully lifted.

For example, the Michigan Occupational Health and Safety Administration (MIOSHA) has temporary rules in place prohibiting, among other things, any in-person work that could be done remotely. Not only that, MIOSHA is actively considering making those rules permanent – a move our Chamber and others have vocally opposed through a statewide coalition called *Reopen Michigan Safely* (www.reopenmichigansafely.com). Now that we've passed the first hurdle of the "Vacc to Normal" plan, both the temporary and proposed permanent rules directly contradict the new guidance and MIOSHA will have to rectify this before May 24 when in-person work is scheduled to resume.

Rest assured, we will be keeping a close eye to ensure the administration is fixing issues and inconsistencies like those pointed out above. Additionally, we will be advocating for the re-opening metrics to be based on more than vaccination rates alone. For example, the current plan does not take into consideration the many citizens with natural antibodies help towards our goal of herd immunity, nor does it account for the decline of case rates, hospitalizations, deaths, or other metrics used over the past year to tell us how prevalent the virus is in our communities.

Much like the out-of-state vaccinations, what would our numbers be if all those with antibodies were added to our total? What happens if the virus and its variants all but disappear before we reach the 65% or 70% mark? How will this plan keep pace with the rapidly evolving CDC guidance? We'll continue to call for a more comprehensive approach that takes these questions and variables into consideration.

In the meantime, we should all be optimistic that Summer is around the corner and the end of this pandemic is in sight!

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Photo of the Week



Silver Beach is Ready for Company
Photo by Cathy Taber

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Diane Genovese, Owner

While caring for your elderly moms and dads or other family members, it is easy to put aside caring for yourself. Many boomers have assumed the role of caregiver while often juggling work and raising children. Caring for a family member is a loving commitment and definitely a rewarding role in life.

As devoted sons and daughters, we readily step up to care for family members. During this journey you may often forget to take care of yourself. Caregivers often acquire poor eating habits, are sleep deprived, do not find time to exercise and at times do not keep up with their own medical appointments. Many caregivers experience occasional bouts of anger or frustration and then feel guilty for having these feelings. Try to find positive ways of coping with these difficult feelings, by talking with others who are caring for family members and facing the same challenges. Be kind and patient with yourself. In the long run, it is a benefit not only to you but to the person on the receiving end if you make the time to rejuvenate by enjoying your favorite hobbies, exercising and going on outings that truly make you happy.

When it comes to siblings sharing the care, it is important to understand that we are all in different places with our emotional growth and

have different life pressures. Accepting your siblings for who they are is key. Not everyone thinks, feels or acts the same way, especially when a situation is emotionally charged. Try to keep your own expectations in check, and strive to accept and work with your siblings' personalities and abilities. Communicate and support one another as much as possible to ensure this role of caring for parents is a fulfilling one which can ultimately bring siblings closer together.

Our gift as children and grandchildren is to accept our parents and grandparents individual method of traveling the course of aging and to take as much time out of our lives as we can to just be with them; to sit and listen to their stories, to share a meal and to give some extra hugs along the way. The growing sense of isolation and aloneness can be a frightening path. We can walk with them on this path with encouragement and love.



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SPORTS

STUDENT ATHLETE
of the week

Name: Lynea Slayback
School: Lakeshore High School

Lynea Slayback of Lakeshore High School Track is the WSJM Sports Berrien County Student Athlete of the Week for the week of April 25, 2021.

In a meet against St. Joe and Portage Northern, Lynea won the Long Jump with a new Lakeshore school record mark of 18'1". She won the 100 Meter Hurdles as well with a new school record time of :15.26. Lynea also won the 300 Meter Hurdles and ran a leg for the 1600 Meter Relay team.

Lynea is also a member of the Lakeshore Diversity Club. In the classroom, she carries a 3.94 grade point average.

Lynea is the daughter of David and Renee Slayback of Stevensville.

Other finalists for the week were Andrew Chisek of Watervliet Baseball, Karly Klaer of St. Joe Track, Sophia Lozmack of Buchanan Softball, Macey Springer of River Valley Softball, and Jamier Palmer of Brandywine Baseball.

Lynea Slayback

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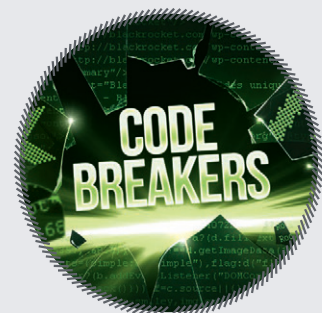
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MOODY *Continued from Cover*

running a restaurant in a 120+ year old home has its challenges, but Amy will tell you, "It's been a labor of love to keep using this old home to operate a restaurant - that's not what it was built for, so it hasn't been easy." She adds, "We've had to do a lot of repairs over the years, but we've worked hard to keep the character and authenticity intact." Now, Amy and her team are planning their celebratory event, "Seven Years Of Sunsets," to commemorate the history of The LakeHouse, and to look towards the future. The event kicks off on the LakeHouse patio next Thursday, May 20th at 5:00pm with live music from Jack Adams, then The 80s/90s band from 7:30 to 10:30. Lawn games and a special cocktail menu will round out the celebration. While COVID-19 restrictions have put a damper on some of The LakeHouse's larger events, like the regular community give-backs, local organizations, and

weddings they once regularly hosted, Amy is optimistic about the future, saying, "In the past year we've really streamlined our menu, which has made it much more manageable when trying to operate a restaurant out of an old home," and concludes, "The vibe, the food, and the view are just as magical as ever, so people keep returning." Congratulations on seven magical years for Amy Bleich Heugel and her team at The LakeHouse Restaurant & Bar, located at 3029 Lakeshore Drive in St. Joseph.

From the folks who brought us the fair trade connections at **Bound for Freedom in downtown St. Joseph** comes a new business venture slated for opening this weekend — **A Little Collective**. **Kelsey Bock**, who — with her husband — established Bound for Freedom in the 400 block of **State Street** in the city's central business district, will throw open the doors at 11am today, Saturday, May 15th to her sister store, A Little Collective located at

400b State Street. The new shop is focused on home and art, according to Kelsey. Kelsey calls A Little Collective, "A curation of beautifully hand-crafted works from the creative minds of many inspiring artisans and craftsmen from all over the globe, bringing thoughtful, functional design to our local and surrounding community." She adds, "At A Little Collective, we care about intentionality in design, while normalizing the standard of ethically sourced materials and labor lines that make up the items in our store." The store will be open Sunday through Thursday from 11am until 6pm and Fridays and Saturdays from 11am until 7pm. For a true feel for what's headed your way at the new shop, your best preview comes from the store's **Instagram** account at: www.instagram.com/alittlecollective/ You will eventually be able to shop for things from the store online as well at: www.alittlecollective.shop/ For those interested in the original fair trade and social justice-focused sister shop, Bound For Freedom just down the block on State Street, you can go to: www.boundforfreedom.org

Few would argue that it has been an extremely emotional year with many personal ups and downs, highs and lows, often related to the restrictions and conditions of the global pandemic. Nevertheless, there are many among us who share a feeling of gratitude for simply making it this far. **The Avenue Family Network, Inc.** hopes those with gratitude in their hearts will join them in a new virtual fundraiser, *Attitude of Gratitude: A Week of Giving*, beginning tomorrow, Sunday, May 16th and running through Saturday, May 22nd. The online giving event will serve as not only a fundraiser for The Avenue, but participants will also have the opportunity to share public gratitude for anyone who has positively impacted their life - a parent, a co-worker, a neighbor, a group of teammates, etc. Those comments will be shared via the website and social media to help support a positive virtual atmosphere. **Joe Goeprich**, Executive Director of The Avenue,



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says, "The last 12 months have introduced many new stress factors that have truly impacted the lives of others on multiple levels," and adds, "Through an initiative of giving gratefully, we hope to be able to spread some positivity, share some love, and hopefully inspire others to do the same, all while fundraising to help nourish our organization and those we serve." Donations can be made through The Avenue website at www.TheAvenue.ngo, through links provided via social media pages, or by sending an email for a donation request to info@theavenue.ngo. To learn more about how *Attitude of Gratitude: A Week of Giving* will work, visit the link in the paragraph above, where you can read more about The Avenue, and the five Divisions that specialize in adult day services, adult homecare assistance, guardianship services, and a range of programs and aid for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The Avenue Family Network, Inc. is a 501c3 organization, working to empower strong families and safe homes since 1891.

The River Valley Garden Club's plant sale will be held one week from today on Saturday, May 22nd, at Harbert Community Park from 10 am to 1 pm at 13300 Red Arrow Highway in Harbert, just north of the Chikaming Township Center. The sale is always a great kick off to spring, and rain or shine, the sale will welcome shoppers with face masks and hand sanitizer. The sale is all outdoors. Members dig a wide variety of perennials, ground covers, bushes and small trees from their own gardens for the sale. Anyone with an interest in gardening is always welcome at the River Valley Garden Club, which has field trips, guest speakers, a member's plant auction, and hands-on workshops in addition to the annual plant sale. The club is also involved in service projects throughout the year. Members come from Indiana and throughout southwest Michigan. For more information you can contact Elizabeth Palulis

at 269-426-3513 or email her at evalulis@yahoo.com. You are also invited to visit the club's website: www.rivervalleygardenclub.org

Artificial intelligence has come a long way in recent years, to the point that Honor Credit Union has welcomed aboard a new Virtual Team Member they call Macy. She is, essentially, a chatbot designed to enhance the member experience by assisting with questions 24 hours a day, 7-days a week. Using advanced artificial intelligence, Macy is an added channel of communication which aligns with Honor's mission to serve members when, where, and how they want to be served. Members can begin chatting with Macy online by clicking on the chat icon near the bottom right-hand corner of HonorCU.com and within the Honor mobile app. As part of Honor's ongoing commitment to the improvement of technology and innovation, Macy offers a new avenue for members to receive virtual and digital assistance. Honor team members created Macy's responses to help her provide real-life answers that members expect. While she does live inside a computer, her answers will sound just like an Honor team member, complete with Honor's fun, upbeat, and helpful personality. Macy is ready to answer commonly asked questions about products, services, and digital solutions. She can also connect a member to chat with an Account Specialist when questions are out of her depth. Macy makes the connection between a member and a virtual assistant personal and remembers a member's name each time they come back to chat. Like any new team member, Macy is still learning the answers to questions and will continue learning as members interact with her. At this time, Macy does not have access to member account information. Intentionally named, Macy is inspired by two long-time Honor team members, Marv and Tracy, which combined creat-

ed the name "Macy." Together, Mary and Tracy comprise 70-years of knowledge and experience at Honor Credit Union. Their expertise illustrates the wealth of knowledge a member can expect when seeking answers – a go-to person with a solution to every question. Angie Trowbridge, Honor's Assistant VP of the Virtual Member Center, says, "At Honor, we are committed to continuously working to make our member's experience even better than before, and that starts with listening to the needs of our members and finding ways to fill them." She adds, "It's our priority to answer our member's questions as quickly as possible, and Macy does just that. She provides a much-needed digital option for members to chat with a virtual assistant and receive quick answers and solutions around the clock." Honor Credit Union serves more than 91,000 members across the state of Michigan, driven by the desire to provide solutions for financial success and by giving back to the communities it serves. For more information, you can call 800.442.2800, or visit online at www.honorcu.com

If you are searching for a new primary care physician in and around St. Joseph, Spectrum Health Lakeland would like for you to know they have welcomed aboard a new internal medicine and geriatrics physician to the team. The hospital system has added Dr. Esther Servillas, MD, MPH, to the medical staff. Dr. Servillas is seeing patients alongside a team of five physicians and one advance

practitioner at Lakeland Primary Care, Royalton, located at 3950 Hollywood Road Suite 270 in St. Joseph. Dr. Servillas earned her medical degree and a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Illinois. She completed an internal medicine residency at Saint Peters University Hospital and a geriatrics fellowship at Rush University Medical Center. Prior to coming to Lakeland, Dr. Servillas worked as an internal medicine and geriatrics physician at Northwestern Medical Group in Chicago. She is fluent in Spanish and has previously worked as a medical interpreter. Dr. Servillas is a member of the American College of Physicians, American Geriatrics Society, and the American Medical Directors Association. For her part, Dr. Servillas says, "Patients are a key part of the Lakeland family," and adds, "I am excited to begin caring for and developing relationships with my patients and look forward to putting roots down in the area." For more information, or to schedule an appointment, you can visit online at www.lakelandprimarymed.com or call 269.983.0500.

That's it for this week, folks. Have a great week, and we'll see you Saturday in MailMax!

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Don

Stuart

Last week's column contained a comment about something being a "burr under my saddle." I chose that expression because it relates to one of my many nicknames.

That nickname would be "Cowboy." I'm also occasionally called "Chief," "Boss," and "My Man," which isn't really a nickname – more like a summons to one's butler.

I should explain that only one person calls me any of these nicknames. And I just met him yesterday. He's a podiatrist I went to about a problem in my, umh, podal area, and within 10 minutes, he'd quadruple-nicknamed me.

I had a nickname in college. It was like a living, breathing thing; it evolved and transmogrified, like a bird molting feathers. It started with Skinny. I can't deny it – all my life I've lacked much in the way of musculature, to the point where I had to borrow a friend's shadow, unable to cast my own.

The Skinny on Nicknames

Skippy evolved into Skin-man. Which morphed into Mr. Skin. My little sister, who went to the same college I did, carried the mantle after I graduated, becoming widely known as Skin-woman. She really loved that legacy, hahaha!

Actually, all this nickname talk also relates to last week's column – do you remember I mentioned the timeless nicknames of writer Studs Terkel, and baseball players Rube Walker and Yogi Berra?

Ah, do they still make 'em like that anymore? To find out, I googled around and found a long list of "sportspeople" nicknames. Many are fun and memorable, but not something you'd

actually routinely call the person. Nobody says to Charles Barkley, "Hey, Round Mound of Rebound, pass the pepper please?"

I sought nicknames that replaced the real names, the Magic Johnson-type names. Such as:

Cornbread (Cedric) Maxwell, former college basketball and NBA star. Guess what? – he did not like the nickname, bestowed on him by a college teammate after they saw a movie called "Cornbread, Earl and Me." Unfortunately, Cedric was too talented – he won the MVP award at a post-season tournament in college. Afterward, reporters heard his teammates refer to him as Cornbread, and it stuck fast to him ever after.

Muppet (Chrissie) Wellington, 4-time Ironman Triathlon World Champion. The Muppet nickname explained, in Chrissie's own words: "A muppet in the U.K. is a silly person. They say, 'Oh, you're such a muppet.' I just trip up all the time or bash my head or walk into a lamppost. I'm very clumsy. I drop food all over the place. I mix up numbers." But clearly, she knows her way to the finish line!

Skippy (Hal) Brown, former baseball player. I'm not sure how to feel about this one – that's my nickname!! Although his origin story is very different: "I was called Skippy because I wasn't. I was real fat as a baby, and being one of eight children, you know, everybody had to have a nickname." (I get that. Same thing happened to me. Though I was called Skippy, at one time my siblings – this is actually true – anointed me the family's "fat one.")

Okay readers, your turn! Let me know the memorable nicknames you cherish and treasure! The best ones will appear in a future column! (Note to my podiatrist: sorry Dude, you're ineligible – you bestow too darn many nicknames!)

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SIEMANS DISCOUNT.....	- 1,275
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BONUS CASH.....	- 1,000
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Graphite Crystal, 6.4 V8 Engine, Chrome Tubular Step Bars, Trailer Brake Controller, Power Trailer Tow Mirrors, Electronic Shift on the Fly Transfer Case, Snow Chief Group, Rear Sliding Window, Touch Screen Radio, and Much More! C20321



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Flame Red, Snow Plow Prep Package, 6.4 V8 Engine, Trailer Brake Controller, Chrome Appearance Group, READING Classic Service Body, and Much More! C20295



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SIEMANS DEMO DISCOUNT.....- 5,427
RAM HD ENGINE BONUS CASH.....- 500
ON THE JOB COMMERCIAL UPFIT*.....- 1,000

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5.7 V8 HEMI EFI Engine, 8 Speed Automatic, Aluminum Wheels, 84K Miles, Remote Start, Navigation, Security Cover, Bed Liner, Running Boards, Power Driver's Seat, Bucket Seats, Back-Up Camera, Remote Keyless Entry System, Brilliant Black, C20198A



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1.5 EcoBoost EFI Engine, 6 Speed Automatic, Alum. Wheels, 15K Miles, Power Driver's Seat, Heated Front Seats, CD, Back-Up Camera, Remote Keyless Entry System, Ford Certified! Lightning Blue Metallic, F20541A



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4.0 V6 EFI Engine, 5 Speed Automatic, Aluminum Wheels, 89K Miles, Security Cover, Bed Liner, CD-Player, Back-Up Camera, Remote Keyless Entry System, Gray, F21039A



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2.5 EFI Engine, 6 Speed Automatic, Aluminum Wheels, 43K Miles, Navigation, Memory Power Leather Heated/AC Front Seats, Heated Steering Wheel, 2nd Row Heated Seats, Power Moon Roof, Auto Climate Control, Blind Spot Monitor, Cross Traffic Alert, Lane Keeping Assist, Lane Departure Alert, Back-Up Camera, Power Lift Gate, Remote Keyless Entry System, Mazda Certified! Machine Gray Metallic, M21056A



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NOW \$42,500

2.7 V6 Ecoboost EFI Engine, 10 Speed Automatic, Aluminum Wheels, 48K Miles, Security Cover, Bed Liner, Running Boards, Remote Start, Navigation, SYNC 3, Power Heated Front Seats, Power Adjust Pedals, Back-Up Camera, Remote Keyless Entry System, Ford Certified! Oxford White, U21086



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2.0 EFI Engine, 8 Speed Automatic, Aluminum Wheels, 28K Miles, Black 3-Piece Hard Top, Blind Spot and Cross Path Detection, Back-Up Camera, Remote Keyless Entry System, Jeep Certified! Sting-Gray, U21041



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2010 KIA SOUL + HATCHBACK
NOW \$8,191

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Dave Says

More than any amount of money

Dear Dave,
 My husband and I are both 29, and we have good jobs that allow us to bring home \$100,000 a year combined. Recently, we began talking about starting a family. We live on a budget, but we still have about \$15,000 in credit card debt and student loans we're working hard to pay off. Do you think couples should wait until they are debt-free to have children?

Missy
 Dear Missy,

You and your husband are chipping away at your debt, and that's a good thing. It sounds like you two are determined to get it paid off and take control of your finances. You're also making pretty good money, so keep up the good work!

Ok, so the truth is kids can be expensive. From medical costs and diapers, to childcare and beyond, it costs money to raise a family. But here's the thing: If you let money alone, or the perfect financial situation, determine whether you have kids or not, you may never have them. Now, would it be *easier* from a financial standpoint *only* to wait on having kids until you're debt-free and there's a huge pile of cash in the bank? Sure, it would. But children are worth more than any amount of money. If you love each other and want to be parents, and you're mature adults in every other area, don't let this debt stop you.

A child isn't going to derail your journey to financial peace. Having kids might cause you to press pause for a while on some financial matters, or slow your pace a little bit, but as long as you both stay focused and determined to manage your money wisely, chances are things will work out fine.

Just don't make the mistake lots of parents do—especially first-time parents. Many of them think they have to run out and buy a new, "safer" car, spend a fortune on a fancy crib, or buy all things baby from some overpriced boutique. Do you get what I'm saying, Missy? Why buy a brand-new, \$400 stroller, when a friend or relative has a perfectly good, barely used one they're willing to *give* you?

It's easy to get carried away spending for a baby. But children will be just fine as long as they have food, clothing, shelter—and most importantly—loving, caring parents. God bless you two!

-Dave

* **Dave Ramsey** is a seven-time #1 national best-selling author, personal finance expert, and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 18 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions.

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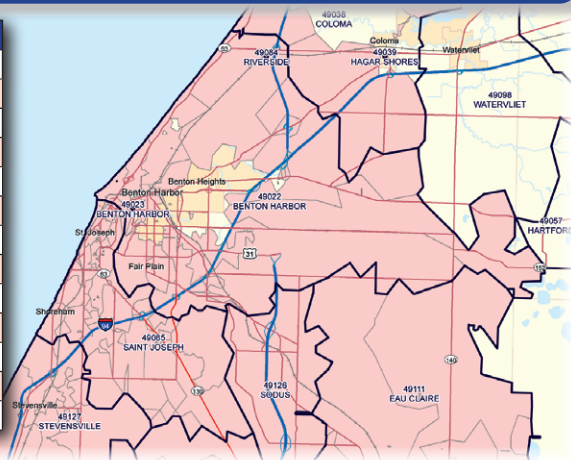


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Lucy Kubash



May is National Pet Month and reminds us to celebrate all the good things pets bring into our lives, like companionship and unconditional love. Of course, it is sometimes hard to remember this when our

furry friend forgets and causes a mess in the house or gets anxious when we're gone and chews up something other than a pet toy. With kids going back to school and many people returning to working outside the home, pets that have become used to everyone being home might begin to experience some separation anxiety and exhibit less than stellar behavior. It's to be expected, especially if the pet was adopted during the quarantines and lockdowns of the past year, but some tips that might help get over the hurdle can be found at aspc.org. A few are: Don't make a big deal out of arrivals and departures. Ignore the pet until they've calmed down, then pet them quietly. Leave an article of your clothing with them that smells like you. Establish a word or action that you use every time you leave them. It will send the signal that you will come back. Signs your pet may be suffering from separation anxiety include: panting, whining, excessive barking, howling, chewing, ripping things apart and other destructive behavior. Some other great ideas for dealing with this problem can also be found at dogtopia.com. Most of all, don't give up on your pet. They are learning something new, how to get along while you're not with them, and it will just take some time and patience. Having dealt with a dog that had severe separation anxiety, I can say that it does get better.

The Pet Corner

To help celebrate National Pet Month, the Junk Patrol of Berrien County will donate all proceeds this month to the Berrien County Animal Control Shelter. Check the shelter's Facebook page for items that they will pick up or call Junk Patrol at 269-369-1678. Help keep junk out of the landfill and support pets waiting for their forever homes by participating in their recycling fundraiser.

We are full steam ahead into Kitten Season and there are kittens of every shape, color, and size available at the rescues. Animal Aid has sweet pictures on their Facebook page that will make everyone want to adopt a kitten. Cats really are less apt to suffer separation anxiety, especially if there are two, but they are just as lovable and offer as much companionship to their humans. Many older cats are also looking for new homes, so don't overlook them if you are thinking of adding a new kitty to your home. Middle age and senior cats make ideal companions for those who are not as active themselves.

To adopt from Animal Aid, they ask that you view the albums of pets available on their website, fill out an application (found on their Facebook page) and email it to them, then respond when the foster parent reaches out to you.

Warmer days are ahead and as any veterinarian will tell you, the ticks are already out in full force. Can fleas be far behind? Please be aware that both can carry disease and you really want to see neither on your pet. Make sure pets and you are protected by consulting your vet for the best prevention plan.

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Romans 5:3,4

For many, it is the stuff of nightmares, a physical condition too horrific to contemplate, the worst of worst-case scenarios. But for a young boy by the name of Nick Vujicic [pronounced, "VOY-yitch-itch"], this nightmare was real.

Nick was born with no arms and no legs. Let that sink in for a moment. He was born with no arms and no legs. What you and I could not imagine facing for one month or even one day, Nick was facing for his entire life. By the age of 8, the darkness of his circumstances was about to swallow him. "I have no life," he thought. "I'll never get married. I'll never be able to do anything. I'll never be able to be anything. I have no life."

Fast forward 25 years. Today, Nick travels around the world, giving motivational speeches to children, adults, business leaders, prisoners, and everyone in-between. He's a college graduate, drives a car, goes fishing, records music, plays soccer, and swims. He's married and the father of a young son.

What happened? What made such a difference? Nick's physical circumstances did

not change. He still has no arms and no legs. What made the difference was the gospel. What made the difference was Jesus Christ.

Through the message of sins forgiven and new life in Jesus, Nick came to see his life very differently. As a redeemed child of God through faith in his Savior, Nick recognized that he had a unique opportunity to encourage others with the good news of Christ. Now his heart overflows in thankfulness. As Nick likes to say, "I've never met a thankful person who was bitter. And I've never met a bitter person who was thankful."

Don't misunderstand. Nick's life is still difficult. It's still full of struggle. But seeing his life as Jesus sees his life has made all the difference. That is what makes all the difference for you and me too.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, as I struggle through this world, open my eyes to see my life as you see my life. Empower me to live a life that proclaims you. Amen.

Submitted by: Pastor Glenn T. Rosenbaum
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