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Moody on The Market

Pat **Moody** 

#### Water & Wheat: Cultivating New Ground

Chef Josh Musinski's goal is to effect greater change using fewer resources. Unfortunately, for fans of Water & Wheat products, meeting that goal means he is permanently closing his restaurant in Hagar Shores and will no longer commercially produce and sell his line of vegan meats.

Musinski is the founder and owner of Water & Wheat and its parent company, Fernberry Farm. The Water & Wheat brand is arguably how most people were introduced to Josh and his food creations which are totally vegan and taste unequivocally decadent.

Whether it was Musinski's creative takes on cheeseburgers, Beef Wellington, baconwrapped filet, Bake-and-Take Fried Chick'un, or Italian sausage sandwiches, many agree his meals were delicious, filling, and astoundingly made entirely without animal products. **Piloting something new** 

Musinski opened the brick-and-mortar Water & Wheat Cafe about six years ago. The idea started as a pilot project inside the Arclight Brewing Company in Watervliet. Musinski had an idea to open a coffee shop/ bakery/sandwich counter and eventually move into a nearby undeveloped building space. Though the Arclight pilot was never picked up, Musinski felt strongly there was enough momentum and support that it would be a shame not to continue to let it grow.

That's when Musinski decided to open Water & Wheat at 6218 M-63 North in Coloma. While it took six months to wade through the bureaucracy, he said once it opened business steadily grew. Musinski saw the typical growing pains with finding the right menu and staff but while working through it, the business began to flourish.

"Somehow, I felt like I was able to pull it off because of my experience and the resources we had. I probably dove in too deep at the beginning, had too big of a menu, too deep of a staff. We were open for a year and a half, and we had 12 employees, which isn't that many for a restaurant our size. The first thing I did when we opened was get rid of half of the tables and chairs. So, we had a lot of square footage, but it wasn't that big of a restaurant."

*Continued on page 16* 

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Arthur **Havlicek** 

**President,** SMR Chamber

#### Announcing the Berrien Talent Collaborative

As of February 16th, 2024, a new partnership dedicated to helping cultivate and retain workforce talent in Southwest Michigan has been unveiled. You are among the first to hear about this new and innovative partnership, second only to our 600 employers and community leaders in attendance at this morning's Business Recognition Breakfast. The Berrien Talent Collaborative is a partnership between Berrien RESA, Lake Michigan College, the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce. The group represents an employer-led initiative for high school students that merges the area's education and job development resources to create a sustained pool of

Continued on page 2

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#### Page 2 February 17, 2024 MailMax

#### Havlicek Continued from cover

skilled workers through a registered apprenticeship program. It's the first county-wide effort on apprenticeships in Michigan.

Labor shortage concerns resonate strongly with us at the Chamber as the number one issue we hear from members regarding finding skilled labor they need to operate much less grow. Our counter to this problem is to create a county-wide talent supply chain that aligns education with business, up-skills available talent, and then connects that talent to meaningful, highwage careers right here at home.

This model helps students to recognize high-paying job opportunities exist in our community and comprehensive training is available locally. It also widens the initial scope of what is viewed as traditional apprenticeship programs in manufacturing and the trades to include areas such as education, human resources, banking, and media.

"The Berrien Talent Collaborative will work to reduce vacancies in the local workforce by providing sustainable talent, which will help our communities grow and flourish," Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ryan Boeskool added.

Why is this so important? Let's look at the numbers:

According to the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, the labor force in Berrien County remains more than 2,600 workers short of pre-pandemic levels.

In 2023, education, business, and chamber leaders met to discuss the Berrien County talent shortage. Data revealed that just 40 percent of the 2022 high school graduating class in Berrien County went on to college or a trade school. It's estimated that only 30 percent of those students will complete two or more years in their chosen program, leaving a massive gap of untapped talent.

"It's about creating a pathway to opportunity, matching employers and students, and build-

ing out a system leading to highly skilled talent," Berrien RESA Superintendent Dr. Eric Hoppstock said. "The Berrien Talent Collaborative will work directly with employers to help them navigate the paperwork and standards of having a registered apprentice. We have had several productive meetings with state officials about eliminating red tape and making it easier for employers and community groups."

One of the first moves of the partnership was the donation by Lake Michigan College of its Niles Campus to the Berrien RESA. That building, now named the Berrien Innovation Center, houses Career & Technical Education courses and select college courses. Lake Michigan College's Main Campus in Benton Harbor and the Hanson Technology Center are also available to K-12 districts.

"This is about aligning resources in our community to help our communities and businesses thrive and grow," Lake Michigan College President Dr. Trevor Kubatzke said. "Students and parents are concerned about debt and finding the right opportunity. It is why Lake Michigan College is offering free tuition to our graduating classes, and we realize it's not just about college degrees, but about short-term certificates, specialized training, and getting business and education working together and talking the same language."

Additional meetings are being planned for all parts of Berrien County throughout the year. The Berrien Talent Collaborative will also

work with other community groups, workforce developers like Kinexus Group, non-profits, trade associations, and unions to ensure all employment sectors have access to the model.

For more information on the Berrien Talent Collaborative, visit www.BerrienTalent.org.



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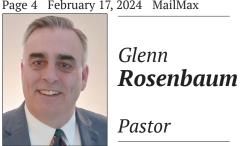
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February 17, 2024 MailMax Page 3



Page 4 February 17, 2024 MailMax



Official

For we know that our old self was crucified with [Christ]. Romans 6:6

For a young woman by the name of Anne Greene, the year 1650 was a year she would never forget. Falsely accused and wrongly convicted of murder, Anne Greene faced the gallows. The hangman carried out her execution. Immediately afterward, the coffin bearing her body went to a team of doctors for medical research. Upon lifting the lid, however, the doctors detected faint breathing. They rushed to do everything possible to revive her, and in so doing, they saved her life.

The consensus among all involved was that her official execution had taken place; there was no need to pursue the matter further. As a result, Anne Greene enjoyed a full and free pardon. Displaying an extraordinary sense of wonder about her indescribable experience, she took her coffin as a souvenir, settled in another town, got married, and raised a family.

In Romans chapter 6, the apostle Paul tells us that our official execution has taken place as well. When Jesus went to the cross

outside the city walls of Jerusalem, God took all the sins of my old self and placed them on his Son. This means that, as far as God is concerned, my old identity as a lost sinner is no more. It's no more because a first-century crucifixion detail carried out my execution just outside the city walls of Jerusalem. And now, through faith in Jesus, I enjoy a full and free pardon. Jesus' death has washed my old identity away. I stand forgiven. A fresh, bright future now awaits me. And beyond that is eternal life in heaven.

One more thing. On the day of her execution, Anne Greene labored under massive debt. Afterward, however, Anne received more than enough contributions from others to wipe her debt away. In our crucified and risen Lord, the debt of our sin is gone, too. It's official.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, in God's eyes my old identity as a guilty sinner is no more. The old debt of my transgression is gone. My life is now fresh and clean and new. Move me to live it for you. Amen.

> Submitted by Pastor Glenn T. Rosenbaum Administrative Pastor Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Joseph

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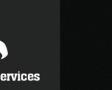
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February 17, 2024 MailMax Page 11



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Bedliner, Running Boards, Remote Start, Navigation, SVNC3, Power Heated Front Seats, lower Adjust Pedals, Power Slide Rear Window, Front Collision Mittigation, Reverse Sensin System, Back-Up Camera, MAX Trailer Tow Package, Ford Certified! Iconic Silver, U23157



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Page 12 February 17, 2024 MailMax

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February 17, 2024 MailMax Page 13



Page 14 February 17, 2024 MailMax



#### Names Out of the Games

After "pausing" for Year of the Dragon and Super Bowl columns, I bet you thought I was done with 2023's college football player names. So wrong! But I promise this is the last one. Until the next one.

Long ago, I read a columnist kvetch about sports announcers referring to players as being "out of" some college or university or town. To use a real-life example, they might say that the University of Kentucky's Kavosiey Smoke "is a promising running back, out of Wetumpka, Alabama." Then, if he makes it to the NFL, announcers will say Smoke is "out of Kentucky."

The kvetching pundit took issue with this because "out of" is a term used by horse breeders; a horse is "by" a sire and "out of" a dam. For some reason, I've never forgotten this. No. 5 son, while he was home over the holidays, gave me another reason to never forget it; when I told him I was opening this column with this "out of" anecdote, he said, "You're out of your mind."

Anyway, I'm almost out of interesting college football player names, but here's one last go at 'em:

Boston College has a wide receiver who I would nickname "Call Me" – Ismael Zamor. (Don't get it? Read the first sentence of "Moby Dick.")

While scanning all the players on Howard University's team, it struck me that the time has come to create my first-ever All-Apostrophe Team - or as I prefer to call it, the All-A'Roster'Phe Team! It includes defensive back A'drian

Ramsey; offensive lineman Da'metrius Weatherspoon; wide receiver Ja'Colby Thomas, Jr.; wide receiver Se'Quan Osborne; wide receiver Nah'shawn Hezekiah; and quarterback Ja'Shawn Scroggins.

Hey Mac, are ya ready for a Mack attack? The name "Mack" jumped out at me a lot this year: University of Utah quarterback Mack Howard: Old Dominion defensive back Jeremy Mack: University of Washington OB Austin Mack: University of Houston defensive lineman Brandon Mack; Wisconsin defensive back Michael Mack; LSU tight end Mac Markway.

But you know what? No matter how proud they are of their skills, they all know they must defer to Penn State defensive back King Mack

Tell me what you think of this? - does Florida A&M's roster sound like one of the tenderest and least violent of all college football teams?: There's defensive back Winsome Frazier; defensive back Chase Lilly; defensive back Lovie Jenkins: defensive lineman Gentle Hunt: tight end Jackson Gay; wide receiver T.J. Huggins; and (channel your inner Rod Tidwell from the movie "Jerry Maguire") wide receiver Quan Lee.

This guy just HAS to be drafted by Buffalo's NFL team: University of Utah tight end Keaton Bills. And his teammate just HAS to be drafted by Atlanta's NFL team: offensive lineman Falcon Kaumatule.

Opponents going up against Troy University's offensive linemen Eli Phillippe, Eli Prather and Eli Russ surely must get a little jittery when they hear them growling in unison the Three Dog Night hit "Eli's Coming."

Minnesota established a new NCAA record this year for Most Ouarterbacks With VERY Long And Unpronounceable Names; they were Athan Kaliakmanis and Max Shikenjanski.

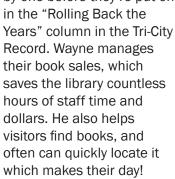
University of Wisconsin has an offensive lineman named Tanor Bortolini and a running back named Grover Bortolotti. I just got a little kick out of that. (I hope that's an appropriate usage of "out of"!)

TakeFiveT5@yahoo.com



# Wayne & Sandi

The Coloma Public Library wouldn't be the same without Wayne Binnington and Sandi Munchow. Sandi covers and processes books one by one before they're put on the shelf. She also writes about library history



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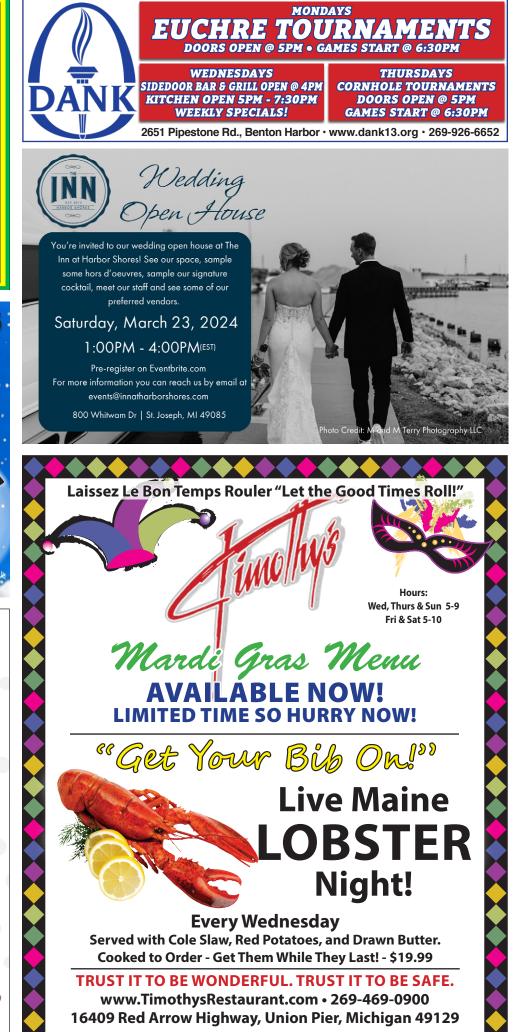


#### Moody Continued from cover

#### Shifting with the pandemic

A year and a half into running the restaurant, COVID hit. Like so many eating establishments, the dine-in portion of Water & Wheat closed.

Even after the front of the house closed, Musinski continued using the kitchen to make and sell his vegan meat products. At the height, he says close to 20 restaurants and stores in the region carried his products. From farmers markets to festivals and different food pop-up opportunities, Water & Wheat continued its community presence through the mobile food trailer and restaurant and retail distribution network. Musinski even expanded to teach food courses at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and developed a line of spices under the Fernberry Farm brand.



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Things came to a head, however, in the fall of 2023 when Musinski made the decision to close the remaining Water & Wheat meat production operations.

"We couldn't really grow without taking on debt and we didn't want to take on the kind of debt that was needed to grow."

Musinski says he'll still be making food, just in a different and gentler capacity.

"We're choosing to just move a little lighter, a little leaner with a mobile food unit, the spice line, a cookbook, and cooking classes."

> Planting new roots... in the mushroom business

Alongside those business plans, Musinski is also cultivating another business angle from the ground up - mushrooms.

They're profitable for people to grow. They're gentler on our environment and our ecosystem. Buying them keeps your money local. There are so many reasons to do it, let alone health and taste."

Musinski feels he can help inspire people's food futures easier and faster by just going straight to the mushrooms. To make that happen, he's partnering with Sprout It mushroom producer Dan Delaney whose operations are in Plainwell, Michigan.

"People could have one little taste and see the real potential for cooking a mushroom the proper way. Because I think it's still a little scary for some people or still a little weird. It's still kind of new ground to break to enjoy mushrooms beyond a garnish on a meat or a side dish or whatever."

Musinski says if you give him 45 minutes, he'll show you how to prepare a mushroom to taste like something completely familiar.

"I'm going to find ways to sell those mushrooms, to excite people, and really open their horizons to using them. Basically, every time I get a chance, I'm going to talk about how they can turn it into seafood, turn it into chicken, turn it into pork. And I'm going to show them three different ways. If I can get 45 minutes of their time, I can show them. Well, mavbe an hour."

**Plans Moving Forward** 

Musinski will continue operating his mobile Water & Wheat food trailer and plans to be active through markets, festivals, fundraisers, and private events. He's also focusing on selling fresh mushrooms and his Fernberry Farm brand of spices. Until the end of March, you can find him every other week at Dagger Mountain in Valparaiso partnering with the House of Rufus bakery.

Musinski says since he posted on social media about closing the restaurant and stepping down production, people have been reaching out to him to ask if everything is alright.

"I kind of didn't realize how big of a factor we are in people's lives until we started to take it away. I do apologize for maybe not preparing people enough to be able to cut them off from our products. But that's why we're going to have the cookbook and the classes to really help people still access the recipes to make batches at home."

The cookbook Musinski is referring to is something he hopes to self-publish by this summer. It's his way of saying sorry to his loyal customers, and a way to keep the vegan food movement moving forward.

Although Musinski can look back on what he might have done differently, he also takes pride in Water & Wheat becoming something more than a restaurant.



"It was a great time to be able to do it and be able to show people in the community what vegan food can be and to show people around the region where vegan food could flourish. [We] acted as a bit of a progressive beacon for certain people. We became known as a kind of safe place and welcoming place for people who are different or are marginalized for one reason or another. We have really cherished that the most - being able to be there."

Even though the restaurant and commercially available products are gone, you can still find Water & Wheat at festivals, fundraisers, and other venues. You can find current information about upcoming events, the Fernberry Farm spices, and class schedules at their website, www.waterandwheat.com

> Pat Moody Publisher, MoodyOnTheMarket.com moody@wsjm.com (269) 925-1111

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#### LEGALS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF BRIDGMAN, BERRIEN COUNTY PROPOSED ACTION: Request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) located on Parcel(s): #11-56-0020-0150-19-0 & #11-56-0020-0150-16-0

DATE OF HEARING: Monday, March 4, 2024 TIME OF HEARING: 6:30 PM

PLACE OF HEARING: Bridgman City Hall, 9765 Maple St., Bridgman, MI 49106

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that representatives of The Lannert Group have submitted plans for a planned unit development on properties located at parcel #11-56-0020-0150-19-0 & #11-56-0020-0150-16-0. The Bridgman Zoning Ordinance requires a public hearing before the City Council,

pursuant to Article 2.16(K)(4)(a).

The subject site encompasses 29.75 +/- acres and is currently zoned Open Space (OS) and Residential Central (RC). The proposed development will comprise a mix of single-family and multi-family residential lots totaling 68 parcels. On January 18, 2024, the City of Bridgman Planning Commission, during its regular meeting, reviewed and approved the PUD application and a motion was made to forward the PUD application to the Bridgman City Council for further consideration. Pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Act 110 of 2006, the Bridgman City Council will conduct a public hearing during its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, March 4, 2024, at 6:30

PM, to hear public comments on the proposed Planned Unit Development. Written comments will be received by postal mail

or email to inspector@bridgman.org until 5 PM on March 4, 2024. Site plans may be viewed in person at Bridgman City Hall during regular business hours.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that persons interested may attend the public hearing and speak during public comment and/or send correspondence to City of Bridgman, attention: Zoning Administrator, 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, MI 49106 or via email to inspector@bridgman.org. The City of Bridgman is committed to providing necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities at the public hearing. Please contact the city seven days in advance by writing or calling City Hall, 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, MI 49106; (269) 465-5144 to make accommodations.



LEGALS 2024 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW MEETING SCHEDULE

**City of Bridgman, Berrien County** The City of Bridgman Board of Review for March 2024 will be held in person at the City of Bridgman City Hall, 9765 Maple Street, Bridgman, MI 49106.

The City of Bridgman March Board of Review will meet on the following dates: • Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 2:30 p.m. =

Organizational Meeting

Monday, March 18, 2024, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00
p.m. and 1:00p.m. to 4:00 p.m. = Appeal Hearing
Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00
p.m. and 6:00p.m. to 9:00 p.m. = Appeal Hearing The Board of Review will meet as many more days as deemed necessary to hear questions, protests, and to equalize the 2024 assessments.
By board resolution, taxpayers are able to protest by letter sent to the City of Bridgman Assessor, 9765 Maple St, Bridgman, MI 49106, provided protest is received prior to March 15, 2024.
The tentative ratios and the estimated multipliers for each class of real property and personal prop-

Review meetings upon three days notice. Contact: Sheila Reitz, City Clerk, 269-465-5144 x102

Board of Review Members: Kay Roehl; James Kole; Karin Chappell; Kyra Reese.

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Page 20 February 17, 2024 MailMax









#### The Pet Corner

The warm, spring-like weather we enjoyed just a few weeks ago was a welcome respite from January's cold temperatures, but unfortunately, it brought out the critters no one wants to see-ticks and mosquitoes. A veterinarian, who speaks often on TV, had a recent photo of a tick and mosquito on his hand at the same time. Knowing the diseases these predators can carry, we don't want them passing any illness on to our pets or us. Heartworm tests are done routinely with dogs and preventative measures are available from your veterinarian to keep that deadly disease from taking hold. While cats' bodies are not a natural host for heartworms, they can also get them from a mosquito bite. Even indoor-only cats can be infected, so it's advisable to ask your vet about preventative, especially since the treatment used for dogs is considered toxic for cats.

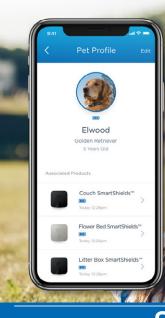
Ticks carry their own nasty variety of pathogens, Lyme disease being one that is prevalent in our area. Ticks live just about everywhere but thrive in wooded, grassy, wet, and marshy areas, of which we have plenty. First identified nearly fifty years ago, Lyme disease is carried by the tiny black-legged deer tick. It is the most common tick-borne illness and is spreading around the country; it is found in most states. Thankfully, a Lyme test can be done annually along with your dog's heartworm test and a vaccine is available. Having seen my share of the tiny ticks that are almost impossible to find on a dog, I choose to have my dog vaccinated every year against Lyme disease. Again, cats are not as susceptible; their bodies are highly resistant to the bacteria that causes the disease. But that doesn't mean you want them exposed to any illness a tick may carry.

If you do find a tick on your pet, the best way to remove it is to use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, pulling out with a steady motion. Once the tick is removed, clean the skin with soap and water and wash your hands. Place the tick in a jar of alcohol. Never crush them. Any method of using a hot match or petroleum jelly to kill them before removing may cause the tick to burrow further and release its toxin. Prevention is still the best way to go to keep ticks and fleas from infesting our pets. When frequenting areas where ticks may be present, take measures to prevent exposure and check yourself and your dog when you leave. Cold weather, not even a freeze, will kill ticks. Temperatures must be a sustained number of days below ten degrees to actually kill them. Opossums, however, are our friends when it comes to ticks. They eat them. For more information on Lyme disease in pets and tick bite prevention visit the American Veterinary Medical Association: www.avma.org/resources-tools/ pet-owners/petcare/lyme-disease-pet-ownersguide.

On Sundays from 1 -3pm, Kittens at the Café takes place at Mason Jar Café, 210 Water Street, Benton Harbor. Adoptable cats and kittens from Animal Aid visit for your enjoyment and in hopes of finding new homes. If you're looking for a cute kitty to brighten your days, check them out. If you do adopt, please be responsible and make sure to spay/neuter your new pet. Animal shelters, fosters, and rescues are overwhelmed, especially with cats and kittens, and kitten season has not yet begun. Please don't add to the problem of pet overpopulation by allowing yours to reproduce.

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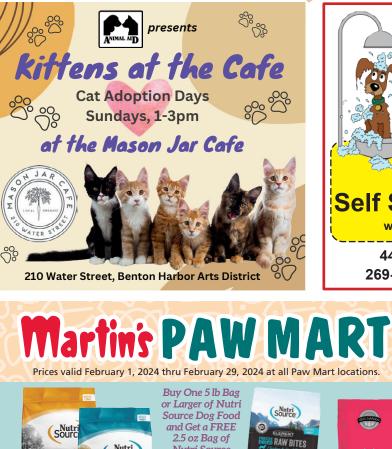


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# National Love Your Pets Day Guide









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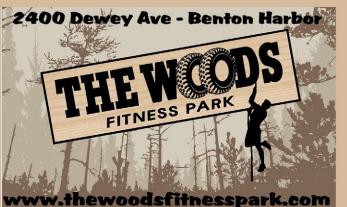


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The Woods Fitness Park is a huge outdoor playground, filled with over 60 obstacles and fun zones. Come walk, run, crawl, jump, climb and swing your way through the course anytime from sunrise to sunset daily. Or if you prefer, just skip the obstacles and have a beautiful walk and enjoy the quiet nature of our hidden gem. The park is fun for all ages, all abilities and yes even dogs!

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