



Fred Sitkins readies Inland Seas for more sailing adventures

By Ross Boissoneau
Sun contributor

It's a special year for the Inland Seas Education Association. Make that *another* special year: the organization is on track to serve its 200,000th person this year in its 37th season. At the same time, the ISEA is launching the bidding phase for construction and expansion on its Suttons Bay campus. "We've served 192,123 participants since our founding in 1989," says Skyler Singleton, communications coordinator for the Suttons Bay organization. The numbers continue to grow each year. "We reached nearly 10,000 participants in 2025 alone, so we are

definitely on track to hit that 200,000 milestone this fall."

Executive director Fred Sitkins says expansion of the campus will enable it to continue to grow and serve even more. "It's going to be really strong. Every year is a little bit better," he says.

The success of the Campaign for the Future of Great Lakes Education provided funds for the organization to purchase property to the south of its existing Suttons Bay headquarters, as well as to acquire a new schooner, the *Alliance*, and take over the nearby Leo Creek Preserve.

Last year's public announcement of
See INLAND SEAS on page 11

Crystal River high water: an omen and a lesson in resilience

From staff reports

The good news is that the Crystal River is healthy. She winds like a lazy snake through wetlands protected by the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, so when excessive rain or snowmelt inundate her environment—as happened during record flooding in early April—the extra water has a place to go.

"When you look around the region and see how other watersheds fared, it's obvious that we on the Crystal River have a lot going for us," said Rob Karner, the Glen Lake Association's watershed biologist. "That's largely due to the wetlands that are not filled in but intact. Our well-functioning wetlands are what helped the Crystal River weather the storm."

Karner, who has owned a riverside home for 50 years, contrasted the Crystal with Traverse City's Boardman River, whose churned-up water looked tan brown and filled with sediment after the flooding triggered by severe rain and rapid snowmelt took out bridges and inundated basements. The city described the April deluge as a 500-year flooding event. By contrast, the Crystal looked clear within a couple days, Karner said.

"We don't need cisterns and big aqueducts to [move] water. We have a natural system, so we don't need huge infrastructure costs."

The other good news is that the removal of culverts in three locations under County Road 675 during the past five years has helped the river flow more



Photo of April flooding at The Mill on the Crystal River by Norm Wheeler

freely and relieves pressure during high water events. The Crystal River restoration project was the result of a federal grant-funded collaboration between the Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA), the Leelanau County Road Commission and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The goal of the project was to remove barriers the culverts posed to fish, wildlife, stream flow and human paddlers.

[The *Sun* published an online story on April 14 that unfairly and inaccurately cast the blame for flooding in the basement of The Mill last month on

See FLOODING on page 8

ICE detentions grow in Northern Michigan; local immigrant joins hunger strike inside Baldwin facility; faith leaders pray in solidarity

By Jacob Wheeler
Sun editor

Soon after Lynn's husband arrived on March 5 at the North Lake Processing Center—the mammoth ICE detention center in Baldwin, Michigan—the food began to make him sick. Beans and rice lacked texture and resembled slop; onion rings tasted like cardboard; pizza was served cold.

"I haven't seen an orange the whole time I've been here," he told Lynn, a U.S. citizen and Traverse City resident who shared their family's story with the *Sun*. She chose not to reveal the name of her husband, a native of Nicaragua who came to Michigan in 2022 following a wave of repression in his home country. The couple, who have a 2.5-year-old son, worship at Guadalupe Chapel in southeastern Leelanau County, where local clergy held a prayer service and press conference on April 27 to illuminate the plight of detainees in federal custody.

"He started to get sick and his stomach cramped up," Lynn said. "I could hear him moaning and in pain when we talked on the phone."

Lynn's husband, who is 47, stopped eating food supplied by the facility and relied instead on snacks like ramen noodles and Little Debbie cakes which she purchased through a commissary ac-

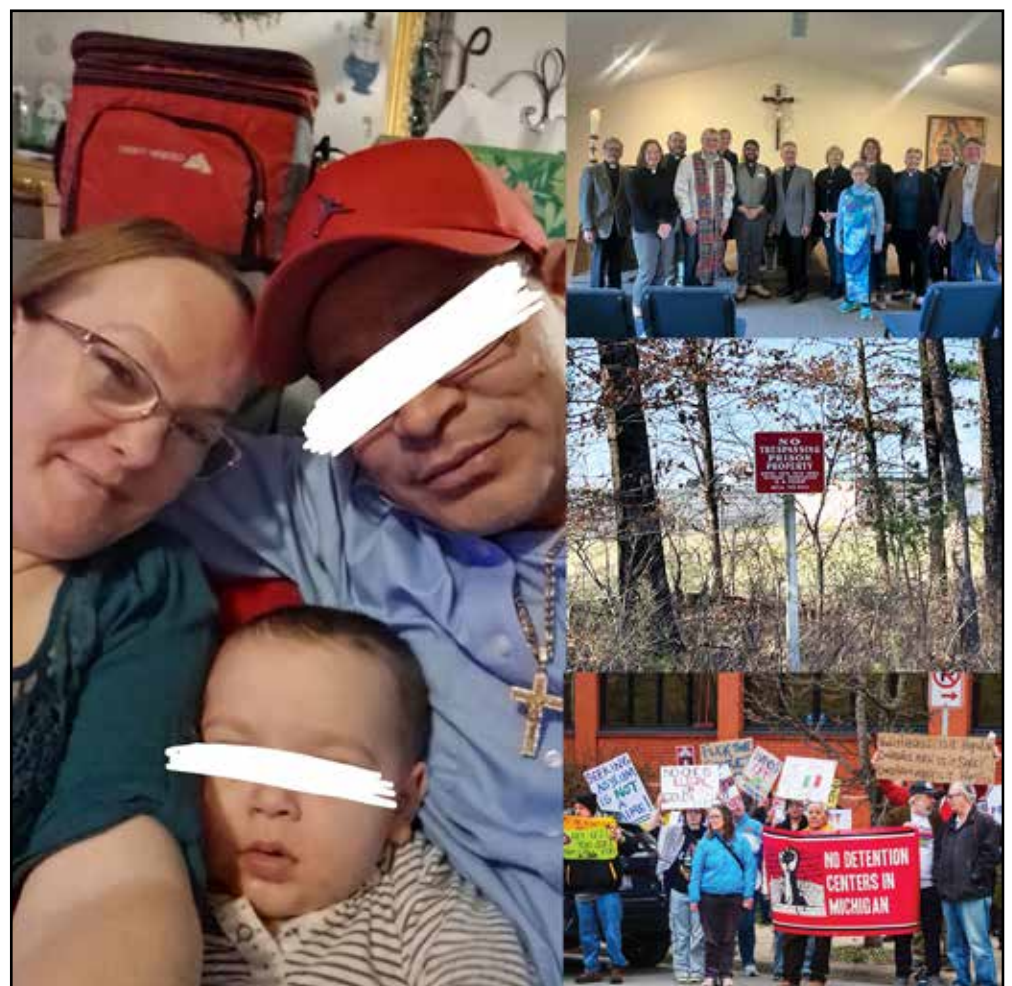
count. Then he stopped eating altogether.

In mid-April, some detainees at North Lake launched a hunger strike to protest what they described as inedible food that lacked nutrition; cold temperatures and occasional electricity outages that left them in darkness, prevented toilets from flushing and TVs from working; a lack of adequate medical care and language interpretation services, and denial of their legal rights. Some have languished there for more than six months.

The facility in Baldwin, 75 minutes south of Traverse City, is owned by Geo Group, a private prison corporation that made over \$250 million in profits last year. It was a major donor to Trump's presidential campaign in 2024 and has benefited from his administration's policies to round up and detain immigrants—including those who have spent years or decades living in the United States.

The North Lake Processing Center currently holds approximately 1,400 detainees and has a capacity of 1,800. Located in one of Michigan's poorest counties, Baldwin and nearby Idlewild are also home to a sizable African American minority who reacted with trepidation when the prison reopened to house immigrant detainees in June 2025.

See ICE DETENTION on page 10



Photos, clockwise: local clergy held a prayer service for detained immigrants on April 27; North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin; protest organized by No Detention Centers in Michigan last year in Grand Rapids; Lynn, her husband and son.

Glen Arbor to celebrate Tree City USA designation May 9

By Ross Boissoneau
Sun contributor

It's practically in the town's name, so celebrating trees seemed like a no-brainer to Chris Sack of Glen Arbor.

Sack, the co-owner of Great Lakes Tea and Spice with his wife Heather, will be on hand at the town's May 9 Arbor Day Celebration, the inaugural celebration of Glen Arbor being named a Tree City USA.

"We want to get this off the ground on the right foot," says Sack.



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The day will start at 10 a.m. with a tree planting ceremony at the corner of Lake Street and State Street, marking Glen Arbor's first Arbor Day as a recognized Tree City USA community. It will be followed at 10:30 with a community "tree talk" at the Cherry Public House. Featured speakers will include a representative of Schillinger's Tree Doctors of Northern Michigan, Nick Carlson of Carlson's Tree Service, and Ellie Johnson, CCF Outreach Forester with the Michigan Forest Association.

Sack, a member of Glen Arbor Beautification, says this is a way to continue to trumpet the ecological importance of trees. Glen Arbor earned the Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day Foundation in February, becoming the latest in a line of Michigan communities to achieve national recognition for its commitment to urban forestry. Northport, Frankfort and Traverse City are already designated Tree City USA communities, and to Sack it only made sense for Glen Arbor to gain that same designation.

"Glen Arbor is called Glen Arbor for a reason," he says.

Sack says one of the goals of both Glen Arbor Beautification and the Tree City USA designation is to help everyone realize the benefits of trees and to take care of them. That includes avoiding any unnecessary removal of trees.

"Development in town is a foregone conclusion, but it doesn't have to include taking down all the trees," he says.

Trees play several crucial roles, according to the National Arbor Foundation. They clean the air, filter water, slow storm surge and flooding, provide habitat for wildlife, connect communities, provide shade and cool, and support our health and well-being. Trees emit vola-



Giant white pine trees adorn Synchronicity Gallery.

tile substances called phytoncides that increase the number of the body's natural killer cells, according to the National Library of Medicine, which significantly boost human immune function and fight cancer and viruses.

The largest and oldest trees have a special role in the environment and a special place in Sack's heart. "They have a critical value to the next generation," he says, pointing to seedlings developed from the "mother trees."

"They provide homes for animals. They're the most natural carbon sink. They take carbon from the air - trees are 70 percent carbon. They're way more valuable than just for board feet or firewood."

Sack says he first became interested in trees while in college and working for a downstate landscaping business in the summer. He eventually became a tree-planting specialist. He moved to Glen Arbor 26 years ago, in part due to the area's lushness and biodiversity.

He's happy to talk at length about trees. He mentions the Black Willows cloned by Glen Lake students from a championship tree, courtesy Archangel Ancient Tree Archive. "The oldest and biggest Black Willow in the state of Michigan. They actually suck up harmful chemical toxins and hold or convert them so they don't leach out into water.

"My favorite? Hemlocks provide a wonderful natural screen at our house. The Beech were one of my favorites. They look like elephant feet and legs. They provide amazing homes for porcupines. Now they're gone," he says, referring to invasive insects and diseases, which kill them and other species. Weakened trees are then more susceptible to wind.

Sack says trees play such an important role in the environment that saving even one or two from construction sites is worth the effort. "For 26 years I didn't do enough," he says. He's trying to rectify that any way he can, from Glen Arbor Beautification to talking with elected officials in Washington, which he did early this month.

Hence the May 9 tree talk. Topics will include the ecological and aesthetic value of mature trees, best practices for tree health, how to assess tree health and when to prune and the environmental impact of clear-cutting. It is free of charge and open to residents, business owners and visitors. The first 75 guests will each receive a seedling tree. For more information, email info@gabeautification.org.

Leelanau Calendar: Upcoming May events

Saturday, May 9: Inaugural Glen Arbor Day ceremony, 10 am, corner of Lake Street and State Street

Wednesday, May 13: Glen Lake Community Library presents Access MI Solar presentation, 4:30-5:30 pm

Saturday, May 16: Old Art Building Leland hosts Jon Muq

May 22-24 and 29-31: Glen Arbor Players perform An Inspector Calls at Leelanau School auditorium

May 22-25: Memorial Day weekend: traditional start of tourism season

Saturday, May 23: Leland Air at Old Art Building

Ongoing

• Live Music at Dune Bird Winery,

Sundays, 3-6 pm

• Trivia Night at Cherry Public House, Sundays, 5-7 pm

• Bay Books in Suttons Bay hosts Books and Wine Book Club, first Tuesday of the month, 6 pm

• Euchre at Glen Arbor Wines Wednesdays, 6-8 pm, January through April

• Live Music at French Valley Vineyard, Thursdays, 3-6 pm

• Live Music at Dune Bird Winery, Thursdays, 3-6 pm

• Northern Latitude Distillery in Lake Leelanau hosts Books and Bourbon Book Club with Bay Books, last Thursday of the month at 5 pm

• Stories & More for Preschoolers, Glen Lake Library, Fridays at 11 am

• Glen Arbor Wines hosts live music, Fridays, 7:30-9:30 pm

• Live music at River Club Glen Arbor, Saturdays, 5-8 pm

• Live Music at Bel Lago, Saturdays, 5-7 pm

• Glen Arbor Wines hosts live music, Saturdays, 7:30-9:30 pm

• Glen Arbor Arts Center hosts Members Create exhibit, March 20-May 28

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Sun named local news media publication of the year, wins 18 awards from Michigan Press Association for 2025 coverage

From staff reports

The *Glen Arbor Sun* was named local news media publication of the year and won 18 awards in 11 different categories from the Michigan Press Association's 2025 Better Newspaper Contest for stories published between August 1, 2024, and July 31, 2025. The

awards were unveiled on Thursday, April 23, at MPA conference at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing.

In the **Spot News** category, the *Sun* won second place our Jacob Wheeler's June 19, 2025, story, "American flags, strawberry rhubarb crisp, but no Kings," third place for our July 1, 2025,

story, "Police raid Twin Flames Universe home: Michigan AG announces investigation" and honorable mention for Berry Kendall's August 24, 2024, story, "You may now sniff the bride."

In the **News Enterprise Reporting** category, the *Sun* won second place for Wheeler's October 9, 2024, story, "Trump mass deportation threat worries Leelanau's tight-knit Latino community" and third place our July 7, 2025, story "From Black Eden to Migrant Prison: ICE's second largest detention center nationwide opens in Baldwin."

In the **Government/Political News** category, the *Sun* won third place for our August 5, 2024, story, "Leelanau Energy task force boasts big goals: Commissioner Lautner pushes back."

In the **Education/School News** category, the *Sun* won first place for our February 10, 2025, story, "Stripped of safe haven status, local schools face immigration enforcement threat," and second place for our June 5, 2025 story, "National nutrition education program with local impact slated for elimination by Congress."

In the **Business News** category, the *Sun* won third place for Kendall's June 23, 2025 story, "Passing the whisk: Inn and Trail changes hands, but keeps its heart."

In the **Agriculture News** category, the *Sun* won second place for our July 21, 2025 story, "Saving cherries, saving farms."

In the **Feature Story** category, the *Sun* won first place for Abby Chat-

field's October 13, 2024, story, "Childless locals care for Leelanau's future."

In the **News Photo** category, the *Sun* won first place for our Sept. 4, 2024, story, "Goodbye culverts, hello timber bridge over Crystal River" and second place for Ross Boissoneau's July 5, 2025, story, "Inland seas expands, announces fundraising campaign."

In the **Feature Photo** category, the *Sun* won first place for Tim Mulherin's Dec. 16, 2024, story, "Bear crazy: DNR study seeks answers to human-bear conflict," second place for Boissoneau's June 20, 2025, story, "Fishing Day an annual treat," and third place for our May 11, 2025, story, "Oomen-Yamasaki collaboration features 'Innocents in Peril'."

In the **Best Video Presentation**, the *Sun* won first place for Wheeler and Justin Warnes' Nov. 16, 2024, project, "Democracy in Leelanau: what unites us in politically divided times."

In the **Environmental/Climate Change/Weather** news category, the *Sun* won first place for Katey Schultz's Oct. 25, 2024, story, "Report from the Climate Change front line: Mud, grief, perseverance in wake of Hurricane Helene."



Friends of Sleeping Bear expand accessibility program

From staff reports

The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes is expanding its renowned Bear Tracks accessibility program with the help of Elk Rapids-based Great Lakes RV Solar Solutions. New solar panels from Great Lakes are now attached to the Friends' track chair trailer, allowing access to additional trails through the use of solar power. By cutting the cord, the track chairs can now be used on the Park's popular Alligator Hill trail, expanding access for all to the beauty of the Lakeshore.

"Accessibility is an important part of the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes mission," said Laura Ann Johnson, executive director of the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes.

"Every year since the start of the program, we have seen how much of an impact the program has on visitors who otherwise may not be able to enjoy a hike with their friends and family. Working with Great Lakes, we are able to expand this crucial program and help even more people enjoy the Lakeshore."

For Great Lakes RV Solar Solutions, this was the first time the company worked on a project of this nature with track chairs.

"When we were approached by the

Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, we immediately jumped in to see how our solar panels could be utilized with the track chairs," said Ian Frick, owner of Great Lakes RV Solar Solutions.

"We had no idea what the track chairs could do, the impact on users and how many people were able to see the Lakeshore because of them. We knew we had to become involved in this project."

The Bear Tracks track chair program began in 2019 after several years of planning, development and fundraising by Friends' volunteers. The program, the first of its kind in the National Park Service, began with one track chair on one trail, and has now expanded to three chairs. With the new solar panels

providing charging capabilities, additional trails can now be accessed. This expansion follows the Friends' recent addition of a wheelchair bike for use on the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail in 2025.

The track chair program will run daily from May 22 through October 11




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Hallstedt Homestead: sharing Leelanau farm life

By Sandra Serra Bradshaw
Sun contributor

The Hallstedt Homestead (HH) is nestled near the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, at the southern edge of Northport. Back in 2006, Phil and Sarah Hallstedt bought 53 acres of property on Matheson Road, some 400 miles away from their home in Indianapolis.

The Hallstedts searched dozens of properties, but nothing felt quite right. “Then,” explained owner Sarah Hallstedt, “Phil climbed a snowy hill one cold February to see the rolling hills, woods and privacy of the place in the property we now call home.”

Most of the land consisted of very old, scrappy, barely-producing cherry trees. But with a lot of hard work and grit they are making a hard-earned life today and selling the fruits of their labor. They started the new orchard in 2010 and today includes eight varieties of eat-off-the-tree sweet cherries, Mount Morency tarts, thornless raspberries, and enchantingly beautiful fresh flower bouquets. With Lake Michigan buffering the temperature swings, it provides the perfect micro-environment to grow cherries, grapes and apples in abundance.

“A lot of work had to be done before the property would produce anything more than burnt s’mores,” said Sarah. Along with her husband Phil, and their children, Erika, Becca and Nick, the family worked hard to make it the captivating farm it is today. “We were also assisted by many of our local farmers and neighbors, and we can never thank them enough,” she emphasized.

Their vision has been being refined

since their beginning with neither one of them ever running an orchard before. Sarah did have a home garden back in Indiana, but a far cry from what they today manage.

From the beginning, and every year since, the Hallstedts invite friends and family up from their hometown in Indiana for weekends and vacations. This is to both assist the family in building the farm up and, at the same time, for them to enjoy the wonderful location.

“We believe we are simply stewards of the land,” said Sarah. Over the years they began expanding the circle of visitors to the public. “The land is at the core of the farm. But respecting the farm goes beyond sustainability and achieving a harvest.”

The Hallstedt Homestead now offers u-pick operations and holds other events which fit with the bucolic character of their homestead and active farming operation. “We love sharing the land so that each person feels valued and safe and be able to relax and enjoy their time here,” she emphasized.

“Phil has a degree in chemistry, and has graduate degrees from the University of Michigan, and Indiana University’s School of Business,” said Sarah, explaining their pre-farm life back in Indiana. “He worked at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. And I am a recovering CPA,” she added with a distinct laugh.

“Now we have become first generation farmers who are passionate about having the best u-pick experience for our customers. We will provide everything our pickers need – buckets, instructions, and our friendly ‘pit crew.’ They will



show you where and how to pick the fruits. We want our visitors to enjoy their time on the Leelanau Peninsula and hope they come back every summer.”

In addition to the fruit operation, Sarah holds sourdough bread-baking workshops, which have been well received with the wide-spread renewed interest in sourdough bread across the country. Though making sourdough bread has become a popular “newer” activity, sourdough bread has been around for thousands of years. It is the oldest type of leavened bread, and it’s enjoyed in many cultures around the world.

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Folksinger Bill Staines' music lives on at show

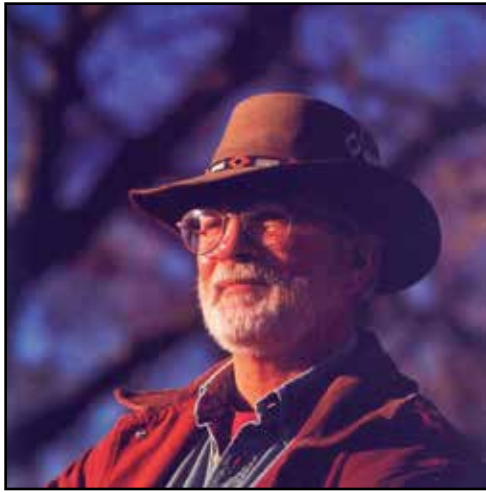
By Ross Boissoneau
Sun contributor

In 1994, a tradition began when the Cedar Tavern hosted folk singer Bill Staines. Over the following years, the troubadour became a regular presence in the area, first at the Cedar Tavern and later at Sleder's in Traverse City. He gained a loyal following, and his concerts became singalongs that heralded the arrival of spring.

Staines performed about 200 shows a year, including those local stops. He appeared on *A Prairie Home Companion*, *Mountain Stage* and *The Good Evening Show*. His extensive discography includes more than 20 albums. He died in 2021, but his music lives on. Now many of those loyal concertgoers are resurrecting the songs and the tradition, with "Bill Staines Remembered," a show featuring his music as a fundraiser for the Benzie Emergency Fund. The concert will take place May 10 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Mills Community House in Benzonia.

This show was the brainchild of longtime concert promoter Seamus Shinnars, who first booked Staines all those years ago. "His music and stories were an inspiration to all of us. He became friends to so many of us," Shinnars says.

"These shows created a sense of community and how much it is valued. What a fine legacy to share about our friend Bill, and how much his music restored and renewed our collective spirit and appreciation of friendships we may have over the years."



Among the many friends and fellow musicians who attended the shows were Chris Skellenger and Patrick Niemisto. Skellenger has been organizing the show, and Niemisto will be part of the band backing up the various musicians who will lead the songs.

Skellenger promises that just like a Bill Staines show, the concert will be a huge singalong. He put together a set list for the other musicians to pick and choose from, and the audience will be given lyric sheets. The set list includes such Staines favorites as "Crossing the Water," "Wild Wild Heart," "Ol' Pen," "River," "Roseville Fair" and many others.

"The songs are dear to me," says Niemisto. He will be playing bass for the majority of the show. "Bill was a good friend. His shows were a mark of spring. I did one in my living room."

He says many attendees were or became familiar faces and friends over the years. "All the pickers, folkies, hippies and in between. It was just a big

love fest. Everyone knew Bill. You'd jump right in and sing your heart out."

Among the many other musicians who will be part of the proceedings are Adair Corell and Norm Wheeler. "I didn't know Bill or his music as well as others but every year a substantial number of people who liked it came out," says Correll.

He did get to know Staines better when the two were both playing at the Hiawatha Traditional Music Festival in Marquette in 1998. They were among a group seated around the campfire, and eventually everyone else left. "Bill and I were alone for three or four hours in the afternoon," Correll says. "We had a long conversation about life on the road, his travails – he was a good guy, down to earth."

"I'm going to do a couple songs that I like pretty well, lead a couple singalongs. Bill's tunes became familiar to everyone over the years."

Correll says Staines would often introduce songs with the same stories. "We knew what he was going to sing from the introduction," he says with a laugh. "Everybody was singing. His concerts turned into a singalong."

Wheeler is known for his trumpet playing and spoken word presentations with various performers around the area, so his choice is appropriate. "I'm going to do 'The Black Fly Song.' It's spoken word with music," he says.

"What appeals to me is he was one of the greatest folk singer/songwriters ever," he continues. "I'm not the folksinger like the guys who studied Bill, but I saw him on the porch at Sleder's. He was a great guy, laid-back. The lyrics and melodies were memorable and singable."

The Staines shows were a yearly occurrence for more than two decades. Is there a chance this remembrance show could also become a yearly staple? Correll for one doesn't dismiss the idea. "I don't know," he says after hesitating. "We could get together and sing his music again."



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Stephanie Schlatter: Finding the Extraordinary in the Everyday

By Katie Dunn
Sun contributor

For centuries, the arts have recognized and illuminated the profundity of everyday life. The practice of depicting ordinary, shared social spaces as enduring images is what art historians refer to as *genre painting*: works that transform the familiar into the extraordinary, revealing the poetry, light, and rhythm embedded in lived experience.

Think: from the crowded, unvarnished portrayals of taverns and markets by Adriaen van Ostade (1610-1685), to the smoke-filled cabarets of Montmartre immortalized by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), to the closely observed cafés of Paris captured by Édouard Manet (1832-1883), and then to the bustling urban gathering places depicted by John Sloan (1871-1951).

It is within this tradition that Stephanie Schlatter's painting, *Gathered Together*, finds its place.

Renowned for her luminous landscapes—renderings of water, sky, and the shifting light of northern Michigan—Schlatter departs from that familiar creative practice in *Gathered Together*. She instead turns to a more intimate, human-centered scene: the vibrant summer atmosphere at Art's Tavern in Glen Arbor.

This emphasis on a buoyant, communal vision led to *Gathered Together*'s selection for the 2026 Manitou Music Poster. Sarah Bearup-Neal, GAAC gallery director and chairperson of the poster committee, explains:

"Stephanie captured a moment that has universal meaning. It's not just a painting of Art's. Even though Art's is, arguably, as iconic a Leelanau landmark as the Sleeping Bear Dunes, the painting isn't promotional: Stephanie's painting conveys the pleasures of being together with friends. I think that suggests an element of life in a smaller village that many people value—the joys of hanging out on the village square. Many people have used the adjective 'happy' to describe what they see in Stephanie's painting."

The artwork featured in the annual Manitou Music Poster is chosen through a collaborative process guided by the poster committee, with Bearup-Neal helping to shape the process



through her engagement with artists across the region.

"When it comes time to choose artwork for the poster, we meet as a committee and review images, debate and discuss, then vote on the work or works we feel are the best fit for the project," she explains. "The poster competition evolved into an invitational project several years ago. Although we accept submissions, we no longer put out an open call for work."

Historically, the Manitou Music Poster series has centered the region's most defining natural landscapes—the Sleeping Bear Dunes, Glen Lake, Crystal River, Port Oneida—a reflection of northern Michigan's identity shaped by water, sand, and sky.

Intermittently, the series has also featured heritage structures such as D.H. Day Barn, Glen Haven Cannery, and North Manitou Shoal Light Station—sites preserved within Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore that function as enduring markers of regional history.

Schlatter's subject occupies a different category altogether. Art's is not a preserved historic landmark in the conventional sense, but it is nonetheless iconic—a veritable cultural institution. In that sense, *Gathered Together* extends the Manitou Music Poster tradition beyond landscape and heritage into something more immediate: lived experience.

"We've published posters that have in them buildings that are known to all. But Stephanie's painting goes a step further... Stephanie's painting moves beyond memorializing a static building. She infused it with life," Bearup-Neal says.

Schlatter, who has long been drawn to strong contrasts of light and shadow, immediately recognized the scene's potential. "While I was waiting for a table at Art's Tavern, I saw this painting waiting

to happen—friends, families, couples, all creating memories," she says. "The color and shadows were irresistible."

Gathered Together reveals a sunlit moment on Art's patio: umbrellas scattered, tables filled, glasses glinting, and the familiar rhythm of summer unfolding. Rendered in Schlatter's signature brushwork, the scene bursts with color, vitality, and levity. The interplay of shadow and warmth shapes not just a place, but a mood: cheerful, inviting, and entirely emblematic of the season. Through her use of color and composition, Schlatter translates the quotidian into the iconic.

For Schlatter, the subject transcends the visual toward human connection. "As a painter, you are really always painting light, but as a human being, these scenes of gathering were calling to me," she says. "Community is the very heart of our humanity. Yes, the beauty here can't be beaten, but it's the people who make it oh so special."

Schlatter's painting is instantly recognizable and deeply resonant, reflected in how it is received by those familiar with the scene.

"I love the Art's Tavern picture that has been selected... I love seeing a painting of a place that I recognize and know exactly what it is and where it is... where the light hits and the road leads," says Jennifer Jones, part-time Glen Arbor resident and longtime admirer. Of Schlatter's work, she adds, "Her choice of vibrant colors and the ability to capture a moment in time—it's really special."

This year's Manitou Music Poster also carries a notable symmetry, a convergence of two timelines unfolding in parallel: Schlatter's first year as a full-time Glen Arbor resident and Barbara and Paul Olson's first year of stewardship at Art's. For Barbara, the piece speaks most directly to what Art's represents in the everyday life of Glen Arbor:

"*Gathered Together*—I love the title. It evokes a love of Art's, captures its spirit, and that spirit is why we bought it," she says.

"Inherently, we need to be together. Art's provides social well-being, community, connectivity. The painting is a perfect snapshot of togetherness, sunshine, and joy."

That sense of connection to place and community, so manifest in *Gathering Together*, is grounded in Schlatter's long relationship with Leelanau County.

For more than 30 years, Schlatter has returned to this magical corner of northern Michigan from her hometown of Grand Rapids, first drawn by the



natural beauty of Leelanau County and then by a deeper, almost instinctive sense of belonging.

"It was love at first sight," she recalls. "Each visit pulled me more and more to the area."

In 2017, Schlatter and her husband, Marc, purchased a cottage on the southern shore of Little Traverse Lake. Months spent painting outdoors from May through October, immersed in the natural landscape, gradually altered her sense of place, with Leelanau County becoming more of a center of gravity.

That long, quiet magnetism ultimately resolved into permanence. "Moving to Glen Arbor [this past February] has felt less like a decision I made and more like a journey that unfolded naturally," she says. "If you've ever felt an inexplicable pull toward something, where everything seems to align perfectly, you'll understand what I mean."

Schlatter's roots in the Glen Arbor arts community have strengthened through her new volunteer role with GAAC's communications and marketing committee. Georgia Gietzen, GAAC board member, emphasizes the importance of artists like Schlatter participating directly in the organization's leadership and visioning process:

"We are thrilled to have Stephanie join our communications and marketing committee. It's very important to the Glen Arbor Arts Center that we have artist voices on our board of directors and at the committee level. We speak to many different audiences and that needs to include the many artists that are members and users of GAAC. By having Stephanie on that important committee, she will be a voice for artists and a conduit for feedback from that community as we help shape strategic vision for GAAC marketing and communications."

Gietzen further underscores the broader significance of Schlatter's presence in the region's arts ecosystem:

"The Leelanau Peninsula, with all

See SCHLATTER on page 7

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SCHLATTER

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its natural beauty is a mecca of sorts for artists, and I think Stephanie's year around presence here will benefit not only the Glen Arbor Arts Center, but her creative practice and the greater Glen Arbor community. . . I believe in synergy so the more art we can bring to the community, the better for all of us that value creativity and appreciate the beauty that artists in our area bring into our homes."

Schlatter's engagement has continued to deepen, extending from participation at the GAAC into a more established role within the region's gallery landscape. As of 2024, she co-owns Arbor Gallery in Glen Arbor with Paul Czamanske and David Westerfield, the latter a two-time Manitou Music Poster artist, and the only artist to receive that distinction.

Westerfield notes Schlatter's arrival has brought renewed vitality to the space. "Having Stephanie join Paul Czamanske and I as a partner in Arbor Gallery has brought some great new energy to our business. Her colorful palette and dedication to her craft have been an exciting addition to our space," he says.

As part of a broader engagement in



the local community, Schlatter recently donated several works from her earlier studio practice to Samaritans' Closet, the resale shop component of Leelanau Christian Neighbors where proceeds support its food pantry and associated ministries. "This will feed the people of our community," she said.

Schlatter's *Gathered Together* selection as this year's Manitou Music Poster marks part of a larger unfolding. "This area has always resonated with me," she reflects. "I show up, I pour my love and creativity into the land, and opportunities arise. It reaffirms my deep-seated belief that this is my home, these are my people, and it was all meant to be."

To be chosen for the Manitou Music Poster carries a particular weight in her

artistic trajectory. "I am so honored and humbled to be among so many great artists whom I admire," Schlatter says. "It's hard to explain what a big deal these posters are here locally."

Over the years, the posters have become fixtures in homes throughout the region and beyond—collected, framed, and revisited.

"People get excited every year," she adds. "I used to look at them when I was a budding painter and think, 'Maybe someday.'"

That "someday" now places Schlatter within a lineage spanning more than three decades—a local pantheon reflecting both artistic excellence and an authentic reverence for place. From Suzanne Wilson, a founding force behind the Glen Arbor Art Association (now GAAC) and the first Manitou Music Poster artist, to esteemed contributors such as Westerfield, Margo Burian, Lou Heiser, Barbara Reich, Greg Sobran, Richard Kooyman, Stephen Duren, George Peebles, Jim Frixen, Sally Wille, and Randi Ford, the collection charts an evolving visual history of the region.

Among those who witnessed and participated in the nascency of the

Manitou Music Poster tradition is my 83-year-old mother, Kathleen Dunn, whose dune grass painting of Glen Haven Beach was among the first selected for the series.

Recently, sitting together at Art's, Dunn inquired about the story I have returned to each year in the pages of the Sun: the Manitou Music Poster series. What began as a recurring assignment for me has, over time, taken on a more personal resonance. It is less an obligation than an inheritance, and, in some quiet way, an homage to her.

When I showed her Schlatter's *Gathered Together*, Dunn recognized something immediately—not only the social landscape, but its spirit, the enduring pull of a place that never stops revealing itself. Absorbing the piece, she said, "It feels like coming home."

In that sense, Schlatter's *Gathered Together* does what the strongest works in the Manitou Music Poster tradition have always done: it transforms a familiar scene into an experience of belonging. And in doing so, it reflects what the series has come to hold over time—a record not only of place, but of return.

HALLSTEDT

continues from page 4

cording to some studies, sourdough bread acts as a prebiotic. The fiber in the bread helps feed the "good" bacteria in our intestines, so important for maintaining a stable, healthy digestive system. This type of bread is also lower in gluten than other forms of bread.

The workshop is held in Sarah's spacious homey kitchen on a large wooden island built by Phil. It is filled on top with all the necessary bread making tools.

"The first thing that we teach is how to make and feed the starter that goes in each loaf," Sarah explained. "You will have enough for a loaf, and some left over when you return home. You should feed your starter once a week."

Each participant in the workshop goes home with a starter mix, loaf of bread ready to bake (within 6-24 hours), robust starter in a jar (it only needs to be fed once a week,) the recipe and instructions, and the experience and knowledge of the pitfalls to avoid.

Then, after the instructional part of the workshop, Sarah invites her guests to a delicious tasting at the end of the session at her spacious dining table. She offers cherry wine, four flavors of sourdough bread, bottled water, homemade HH Cherries jam and her incredibly creamy pesto. It is an experience participants will not soon forget about with all the accompanying fun and camaraderie!

And the flowers? "What started as

our daughter's "Wedding Flower Garden" in 2017 is now an opportunity for people to come experience the amazing variety of an ever-changing array of flowers," Sarah noted. "We doubled our flower selection area in 2021, shortly after we took out several rows of trees to "right-size" the U-pick cherry area."

The family transitioned 100% from wholesale to U-pick cherries in 2019. They provide the snippers, a packet of flower food, and instructions as needed (including approximate size of bouquet).

"If you would've asked me, before we moved here, if I would be ready to go through life's highs and lows that we have visited, and the circumstances around them, I would have laughed!" Sarah stated. "Often, we are joking that we don't need to go to the local casino, we gamble every day here at home as farmers. Between the two of us but didn't know anything about growing a cherry tree! Turning our acreage into a beautiful u-pick cherry, raspberry and flower farm. . . what a ride! Let's keep pedaling! Oh, and that cherry vinegar. . ."

Yes, their unique cherry vinegar is available for purchase online, at the farm, and at the various farmers markets they attend.

Em Korte, with her degree in Outdoor Recreation & Sustainability, is the Homesteads' "right hand gal. "Phil offered me a part-time job bottling the vinegar," Em explained with a smile. I guess they wanted to keep me around.



He offered me a job as Orchard Manager and I gladly accepted. I love living and working here."

With approximately 6,300 cherry trees, they are continuing to develop their Leelanau homestead with great pride and determination. "We want to continue to build our home and develop effective infrastructure for our pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest," said Sarah. We are always open to new ideas and solutions to making our farm more welcoming and offering opportunistic

employment to fit your needs while creating a comfortable space for folks to work and gather. Join the team."

They are offering three intern positions this summer. No prior experience needed; they will teach in assisting the agriculture operations at the site. Tasks include but are not limited to mowing, picking, processing, assisting with distribution partners, weeding, pruning, farmer's market, u-pick operations, etc.

"Joy to us is as much a reminder to ourselves as well as recognition of sharing the fruits of our labors with others. Farming is difficult and an emotional experience of successes and failures, and Joy reminds us that we chose this lifestyle, and that Joy can be a fleeting experience for so many," said Sarah. "We make it a point to be joyful and share joy with all that visit and experience the orchard and flower farm with us." (HHcherries.net/work-with-us/)

Fruit and flower picking begins in May–September. The flowers bloom beginning in May, cherries ripen in July and stay up until mid-August.

For further information, call or text Sarah at 317-440-9273. The farm can be visited in-person at 8227 N. Mathe-son Rd, Northport, MI 49670.

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FLOODING

continues from page 1

the removed culverts. Several readers wrote to us and criticized our oversimplified and hasty reporting.]

“Overall, the river responded well to unprecedented precipitation,” said Grand Traverse Band restoration specialist Brett Fessell. “Removing the culverts removed constriction of the river.”

In fact, the removed culverts might have prevented a nightmare scenario if backed-up water had created a “cut across” over an old dam where the river makes a turn to the southwest toward Glen Arbor.

“Having removed the culverts diminishes the likelihood of backwatering or flowing over the old sill,” said Fessell. “If it were to cut a channel there, the river would abandon the whole loop that goes to Glen Arbor.”

Multiple businesses, including Crystal River Outfitters and the River

Club, rely on the proximity of the river flowing through town.

The last culverts

The bad news is that two more culverts remain downstream of The Mill. Those culverts restrict water flow beneath Overbrook Drive, an entrance road to a community of 172 condominiums in South Beach, near The Homestead resort and the Leelanau School.

“Opening up [those culverts] to the greatest extent possible will improve that flow of water,” said Fessell. “If any trees or large wood gets lodged there, it can obstruct the river flow even more.”

Corey Smith, general manager at The Mill, told the Sun that he spent last winter on his kayak clearing those culverts downriver from the popular restaurant and café in the historic gristmill.

“Anytime the river level would rise, I took it as an indication to clear blockages at the culvert with a metal rake and sledgehammer,” he said.



“Each time I did this, river flow would continue into Lake Michigan, lowering the high-water level at The Mill.”

Because Overbrook Drive is privately owned, applying federal grant money to close the road and remove the culverts—as was done on CR-675—would be more difficult.

Patrick Brown, the president of one of six different homeowners’ associations at South Beach who use that road to access their homes, told the Sun he feels bad about The Mill flooding, and he and his neighbors want to be good community partners. They are actively looking for partnerships to help fund the cost of removing or improving the Crystal River’s last remaining culverts.

“To replace that bridge would cost a lot of money, which we just couldn’t fund ourselves,” said Brown. “It’s a dilemma, no doubt about it.”

An upgrade of the Overbrook Drive crossing would benefit the river, Conservation Resource Alliance biologist DJ Shook told the Sun. Especially since last month’s flood.

“From a severity standpoint, [the Overbrook culverts] didn’t look like something that would raise to the priority level of the vast number of undersized culverts that are in watersheds that CRA works with.

“We’re all keenly aware of them now after this historic rain event.”

The Glen Lake Association (GLA) has the unenviable task of operating the Crystal River dam according to a binding court order that stipulates minimum flow requirements and establishes how water is shared between the lake and the river.

“We got an extraordinary amount of rainfall on the heels of an extraordinary amount of snow, which overloaded the

system with water,” said GLA executive director Kate Gille.

Last month the GLA recorded the highest lake level and the highest river flow since the organization began tracking data in 2010. Peak river flow in the spring typically measures 95-100 cubic feet per second. But the GLA measured the river flowing at 159 cubic feet per second during the water deluge.

“Unprecedented water like that changes how we educate our riparians,” said Gille. “People asked us why there was so much water. They wanted to know when the water will go down.”

Homeowners on the Glen Lakes reported and took photos of wind blowing ice mounds onto their windward shorelines, causing erosion.

“Nature will do what it does,” said Gille. “We recommend to riparians that they protect their shorelines using native plants to create a vegetative buffer.”

Climate change is new normal

Shook and Fessell both alluded to a “new normal”—and the tricky act of balancing the interests of the Glen Lakes, the river, wildlife and businesses along the shore—particularly during high water.

“The biggest challenge here is that everything happened at once,” said Fessell. “A different capacity to pass water through the system combined with an unprecedented flood event.

“We’re going to see a greater frequency or intensity of precipitation events. The bottom line is that infrastructure we’re currently using is outdated.”

That’s the other bad news. Scientists who study climate change in the Great Lakes region predict more frequent

FLOODING concludes on page 9

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FLOODING

concludes from page 8

and more intense extreme weather events, including rainstorms.

Environmental journalist, and Benzie resident, Keith Schneider wrote a scathing column for Circle of Blue—an online news organization covering global water, food and energy—which posited that the myth of Northern Michigan as a safe haven from the ravages of climate change drowned in last month’s floods.

Northern Michigan “rarely suffered the extreme climate disasters—wildfire, drought, wicked storms—that seriously damaged so many other parts of the United States,” wrote Schneider. “The perception of being a safe haven as large as Maryland where just 800,000 people lived had begun to attract migrants from climate-wrecked states in the South and West to settle in northern Michigan, especially in the counties [around]



Ice piling up on Big Glen lake last month. Photo by Ashley Siepker

Traverse City, the region’s largest city. “That perception ended on April 7. The light drizzle steadily built into a

drenching rain that fell on forest soils saturated by the melting of the heaviest snowfall in years, including a storm in mid-March that dropped two feet of wet snow. The first flood emergency was declared for Cheboygan County, along Lake Huron, on April 10. Over the next week declarations were issued for 39 more counties, from Mackinaw City at the northernmost tip of Michigan’s lower peninsula to Ann Arbor in the state’s southern reaches.

“All that snowmelt and rain surged off the land into rushing rivers that crested two feet above previous record levels and caused the worst floods in the region’s recorded history. An earthen dam collapsed in Alcona County. A citizen brigade piled sandbags to hold the Homestead Dam in place in Benzie County, along Lake Michigan. Lakes and streams overflowed their banks, inundating hundreds of homes. Culverts washed out and water clawed huge gaps

in important roadways, among them Beitner [Road] just south of Traverse City, and the iconic Tunnel of Trees on route M-119 along the Lake Michigan shoreline north of Harbor Springs.

“Northern Michigan is not safe from extreme climate disasters. No region of the country or the world is.”

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Arts Center hosts Hudson-Casanova, McWhorter

From staff reports

Chicago musician Michael Hudson-Casanova is the Glen Arbor Arts Center’s first artist-resident of 2026. During his two-week stay, beginning May 3, Hudson-Casanova will compose music for an ensemble consisting of four saxophones, four brass players, and a four-piece rhythm section (piano, guitar, bass, drums). His instrumentation for this composition is inspired by the American big band tradition. Hudson-Casanova will talk about his residency during a public presentation May 14, at 10 am at the GAAC.

“I am exploring a new direction within a genre that is familiar to me,” Hudson-Casanova said. “Composing for large ensembles takes a more thorough-composed approach than writing for small groups, meaning more time, care, and thoughtfulness. There is no greater teacher than trial and error, but trial and error takes time, which a GAAC residency would provide.”

The GAAC has been hosting visiting artmakers as part of its residency program since the 1990s. For more infor-



mation about the GAAC’s AIR Program visit GlenArborArt.org/ARTISTS.

Lobby Gallery: Poetic Visions Of Port Oneida

Images and poetry are the essence of the Glen Arbor Arts Center’s next Lobby Gallery exhibit. Poetic Visions Of Port Oneida: Painting And Poems That Reimagine is a series of oil paintings and corresponding poems created by Grand Traverse County artist Wendy McWhorter. This exhibition is in the GAAC’s Lobby Gallery from April 30-Aug. 27.

McWhorter’s focus is the iconic

farmsteads in the Port Oneida district of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Each painting is enriched by a poem McWhorter composed; and her imaginative reworking of the sites’ gardens. “My vision of the eight paintings included in this exhibit was guided by my passion for historic Port Oneida as well as other buildings in SBDNL,” McWhorter said. “This began with reimagining the spaces. With the lakeshore so close I

added slices of water in the distance. I thought of myself as the farmhouse gardener. I planted flowers or flowering trees in all paintings.”

Poetic Visions Of Port Oneida is on view in the Lobby Gallery during GAAC business hours; or may be viewed online at GlenArborArt.org/Exhibits.



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LEELANAU INVESTING FOR TEENS

ICE DETENTION

continues from page 1

No Detention Centers Michigan (NDCM), a statewide coalition opposed to North Lake and other ICE facilities that have been proposed in the mitten state, began publishing press releases on April 21 about hunger strikes in Baldwin.

“The food here is pitiful,” Ahmad Alnajdawi, an immigrant from Jordan stated in a NDCM release. “I want the people outside to know, they’re treating us like animals. Everyone here has a family, a wife, a parent, a dad, a mom. Everyone here has people outside who care for them. We’re all humans.”

According to NDCM’s Ale Rojas, a man at North Lake attempted suicide in April.

“These men have been going against their human instinct to eat and survive because they want us to know that they are being mistreated,” said Rojas in the media release. “Constant neglect and mistreatment have negative effects on mental health and overall feelings of belongingness which are essential to human survival.”

A Bulgarian national and longtime Chicago business owner named Nenko Gantchev died at North Lake on Dec. 15, 2025. He was among 33 people who died in ICE custody last year across the country, the highest total in two decades.

Many detainees were released earlier this year through habeas corpus petitions. But recent months have seen a steep decline in the judicial approval of bonds that would allow some to pursue their immigration cases outside of detention.

Feds deny hunger strike, limit food access

Mutual aid advocates helping detainees and their families told the Sun that the strike—called a *huelga de hambre* in Spanish—was probably organized through conversations in the kitchen, where detainees from different pods of the detention center can sometimes gather and communicate.

It’s unclear how many currently are, or were, participating in the hunger strike. Advocates in contact with those on the inside say that some detainees opposed the strike. Some weighed any benefits from the hunger strike against the threat of being transferred to other detention facilities which are considered to have far worse conditions.

ICE and the Department of Homeland Security have denied the existence of a hunger strike at North Lake.

Nevertheless, beginning on April 24, detainees no longer received food trays delivered to their cells. They were instead herded to the cafeteria in groups of approximately 20 where they were each given 5-7 minutes to eat.

“If you’re not done, they dump your food tray and make you get out,” said Lynn.

Guards also recently reinstated the “morning count,” when every detainee is locked in their cell around 9 am until a manual count of all prisoners is complete. According to one advocate, “it is a depressing act to the detainee.”

It’s unclear whether the morning count or limiting detainees’ mealtimes were punitive reactions to the hunger strike. Geo Group and ICE routinely refuse to respond to media inquiries,



Our February edition featured former ICE detainee Fernando Ramirez (middle) and his daughters, who have led innovative mutual aid work to help other detainees and their families.

tion which were not provided,” Stevens said. “That lack of transparency is unacceptable. No one should be subjected to prolonged detention without basic care and dignity, and the hunger strike underscores the urgency of these concerns.”

Lynn worries about her husband’s mental health in conditions he described to her as “cold and dirty.” On their video calls, she always sees him wearing a jacket to guard against the cold. When the electricity goes out, sometimes for days at a time, he has suffered panic attacks.

“My husband is a strong man,” she said. “But there’s more screaming, yelling, banging, and crying when the lights go out. There’s nothing to distract them.”

ICE arrests grow in Northern Michigan; clergy speak out

Detentions of immigrants in Northern Michigan, or those living in our region, have increased this spring. Lynn’s Nicaraguan husband was detained by ICE agents during his immigration interview near Detroit on March 5.

In mid-March, a Turkish national who had worked legally for a Leelanau County restaurant since 2022, but overstayed his visa, was detained by agents from different federal agencies and is currently at North Lake in Baldwin. According to the Turkish man, his detention was orderly and calm, and he holds no ill will about the way he was apprehended, or the way he is treated at North Lake. He has not taken part in the hunger strike.

On April 20, according to local clergy with knowledge of the situation, ICE agents detained four Mexican nationals near Kingsley. The men, who had all lived and worked in Northern Michigan for more than a decade, had no criminal records. At least two of them are detained at North Lake in Baldwin. The location of the other two is currently unknown.

The Nicaraguan and the Turkish man also had no criminal history. According to ICE’s own data, 86 percent of those detained at North Lake have no criminal record.

More than a dozen area religious leaders held a prayer vigil at Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel in Elmwood Township on April 27 to share Lynn’s husband’s story and illuminate the plight of detainees at North Lake.

“We join together in prayer for a community that typically remains voiceless,” said Father Wayne Dziekan of the Diocese of Gaylord’s Hispanic Ministry. “We pray for detainees at all detention facilities ... and we pray for those who staff them.”

ICE DETENTION concludes on page 11

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INLAND SEAS

concludes from page 1

the campaign coincided with the organization's purchase of the nearby Millside building, which will be renamed the Inland Seas Education Center. It will include educational spaces, storage, and a maintenance workshop for its vessels in the lower level. However, a question of whether Dame Street, located between ISEA headquarters and the Millside Building, was a public or private road delayed the project.

That was resolved in January, and the organization was given the go-ahead for the project. It is now launching the bidding process for the campus expansion. Sitkins says bids for construction and renovation are due May 28, and he hopes to get construction underway by the end of June or beginning of July. Due to the delay in the permitting process, Sitkins says it likely won't be finished until the fall of 2027.

In the meantime, he and the staff are preparing for what he anticipates will be another busy year on the water. "It's always different. Every group has different kids," he says.

The ISEA's schoolship program is available to students from kindergarten through high school and college. It provides the students hands-on activities on the water, focused on science,

technology, engineering, and math.

One change Sitkins has noticed over the years is that more students are serious and knowledgeable about the need to protect the waters of the Great Lakes.

"I see a higher percentage of kids who are aware of and tuned in to environmental issues," Sitkins describes. "They want to make the world a better place. They're more receptive."

While the focus of the programs is on the Great Lakes, Sitkins says the lessons the students learn are applicable elsewhere. "They want to make their communities a better place."

As if that wasn't enough excitement, Sitkins will be embarking on his own sailing adventure this summer and fall. He will be heading to Sweden this month to help ISEA supporter David Verdier sail his boat across the North Sea from Ellos, Sweden, where it is being built, to Southampton, England. He'll join him again in November to sail across the Atlantic Ocean from Cape Verde, off the coast of Africa, to St. Lucia, the Caribbean island country north of Venezuela.

Though it might seem that sailing across the Atlantic would be potentially more problematic, Sitkins says that likely will not be the case. He says the North Sea has a reputation for being challenging, due to several factors. "It's shallow, so it's rough, the waves are close together. It's the busiest ship-

ping area in the world. There are obstacles I've not dealt with—windmills, oil platforms," he says. Nonetheless, "I'm looking forward to it."

Once in the open ocean, Sitkins says they will be sailing with the tradewinds. "It's a pretty downwind run the whole way," he says. "There are squalls, yet it's more predictable."

Always looking to provide education for those interested, Sitkins will be posting digital updates during each of the legs for ISEA supporters. "I'm excited. I hope to see some wildlife," he says.



The schooner Alliance under sail.



Collecting a plankton sample in Detroit.

ICE DETENTION

concludes from page 11

"We pray that immigration reform would be comprehensive so that people will be able to realize their right to remain at home, the right to not have to leave their home.

Rev. Julie Delezenne, of Traverse City's Presbyterian Church, said this wasn't a political issue.

"No matter our political leanings, our feelings about the work of ICE, our understanding of our government's policies around immigration, no matter any of that, we are called to stand with the least of these. We are called to treat all people with dignity."

Faith leaders announced at the Guadalupe Chapel that 80 clergy members across Michigan had committed to join North Lake detainees in their fast.

"Where is papa?"

Lynn's husband fled Nicaragua in 2022 during a wave of arrests and suppression of free speech in the Central American nation run by the Ortega regime. According to Lynn, her husband's mother and brother both had serious illnesses, but because they opposed the Nicaraguan government, their access to clean water was taken from them.

Lynn and her husband met in August 2022 when he stayed at a hotel in Traverse City where she worked as a receptionist. They married the following March. For the last 18 months they have

attended mass at Guadalupe Chapel.

When the March 5 immigration hearing in Troy, Michigan, approached, Father Wayne Dziekan warned Lynn's husband of the dangers. ICE agents were lying wait at courtrooms in Detroit and around the country and preying on immigrants who showed up to hearings they thought were routine.

But the Nicaraguan wanted to follow the law and play by the rules.

"My husband is a well-mannered man," Lynn said. "He wants to do things right. A couple of his friends also told him, 'Don't go to the interview.' But he said, 'I need to do this the correct way.'"

Lynn said they prayed together before they entered the immigration interview. She remembered sharing the room with a man taking notes and a female interpreter. Seven minutes into the interview, the officials announced they needed to leave to "make a color copy of the passport"—a statement she found confusing.

Then she saw in a window the reflection of two men waiting in the hallway who didn't look like anyone else in the building. "Bounty hunter clothes," she said.

Lynn grabbed her husband's hand and said "Amor" (my love) as two ICE agents walked into the room and announced they planned to detain him. As they handcuffed him, she sobbed and protested that they were taking the steps for him to secure legal status to remain in the United States. Lynn managed to hug her husband as he was taken away.

To add insult to injury, an official approached her afterwards and said, "The good news is that your I-130 was approved." The I-130 form is the mandatory first step for U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents to help eligible foreign national relatives immigrate and obtain a Green Card.

"I told him, 'There's no good news,'" Lynn said. "You've just taken my husband."

The Nicaraguan was taken to North Lake in Baldwin, and while Lynn has spoken with her husband by telephone every day, she has only been able to visit him four times. During one visit, their child refused to sit still and chased things around the prison's visitation room. An officer approached and chastised her. "You need to get your

kid under wraps," he said.

"But he's just a toddler," I told him. "All they have in that room is plastic furniture for the children. It's hard to chase him around when we're visiting with papa—and my husband was supposed to stay seated."

The last time Lynn tried to visit North Lake, she was turned away because she was told she "wasn't wearing appropriate pants."

Their child, who turns three in November, wakes up most mornings asking for his papa, said Lynn. Sometimes he dreams about his father and looks under the couch for him.

"He'll have bad days when he looks out windows, screaming, 'Where is papa?'"

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5/1 - 5/10	Connected by Cause (NPS)	7/19 - 8/8	Gene Rantz Memorial Plain Air Exhibit
5/23	FREE Northport Photo Exhibit, Opening Reception 5-7pm	8/15	FREE Harbor of Creativity Invitational Opening Reception 5-7pm
5/24 - 6/13	Northport Photo Exhibit	8/16 - 9/12	Harbor of Creativity Exhibit
6/20	FREE Members Exhibit Opening Reception 5-7pm	Sept	FREE Say It Out Loud
6/21 - 7/11	Members Exhibit	10/3	Annual Meeting 4-5pm
6/27	FREE Say It Out Loud	10/3	10 Years in Place Shape, Form & Light
7/17 & 7/18	Gene Rantz Memorial Plain Air Paint Out		FREE Opening Reception 5-7pm
7/18	Kids Plain Air & Celebration!	10/4 - 10/31	10 Years in Place Exhibit
		11/28	FREE Holiday Arts & Crafts 10am - 5pm

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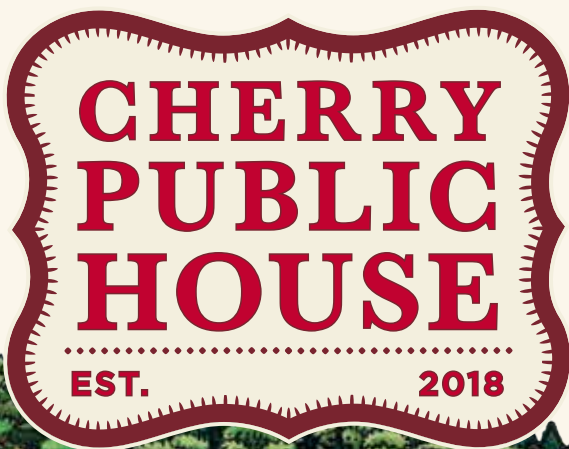


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