



August primary sets stakes for big Michigan November election

Barr and Blomquist bid for Congressional battle against Bergman

By Jacob Wheeler
Sun editor

When Leelanau County voters cast their ballots in the primary election on Tuesday, Aug. 4, the outcome of their decisions may resonate far beyond these sunny summer days. Who wins the closely watched intraparty contests for Michigan Governor, U.S. Senator, and Congress could set the paths forward for the Democratic and Republican parties at a time of political upheaval in this country.

Polls show that Democrats are likely to nominate establishment candidate Jocelyn Benson—Michigan's current Secretary of State—as their next gubernatorial choice over Genesee County sheriff Chris Swanson, following eight years of Gretchen Whit-

mer at the helm. But will Republicans run with MAGA courtier John James over millionaire businessman Perry Johnson? James, who once criticized Trump, saying he “can’t be trusted,” now covets the president’s endorsement. James, who previously lost two U.S. Senate elections, occasionally visits Glen Arbor during the summer.

Eyes around the nation are closely watching Michigan’s Democratic Senate primary race to see if left-wing progressive Abdul El-Sayed can beat centrist establishment candidate Haley Stevens in a battle that could help Democrats regain control of the U.S. Senate in 2027. Buoyed by the election of New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani last year, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) movement is riding momentum in New

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Congressional candidate Callie Barr shares a laugh with John and Barb Lund at their dock on the Glen Lakes on July 26, nine days before the primary election.

Sleeping Bear Forever, National Lakeshore hold final Port Oneida Fair

From staff reports

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore invites visitors to celebrate the United States’ 250th anniversary at the 2026 Port Oneida Fair on August 7-8. Each fair site explores a thread connecting Port Oneida to the nation’s 250-year journey.

The Port Oneida Fair Committee invites visitors to take part in “The Next Thread,” a special activity that reflects on the fair’s legacy and looks toward the future. By sharing memories of past fairs, offering ideas for future programs, and identifying skills or stories they may wish to contribute, participants will help shape the next chapter of Port Oneida’s story. The activity will be hosted at the Dechow farm during the fair, and then later moved to the Philip A. Hart Visitor Center for continued community involvement.

To kick off the fair, on August 6 at 7 pm, Sleeping Bear Forever and the National Lakeshore will host author Susan Wasserman’s presentation on her book, *Stepping off the Boat: Stories from North Manitou Island*.

This year’s event also marks the culmination of the Port Oneida Fair in



Photo of reenactors at Port Oneida Fair by Leonard Overmyer

its current form. Sleeping Bear Forever, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Fair Committee members, and the surrounding community will collaboratively begin shaping a new vision for events that honor the area’s history. Together, these partners remain committed to preserving the cultural legacy of Port Oneida and exploring fresh ways to celebrate the stories, landscapes, and spirit that make this place so meaningful.

Sleeping Bear Forever holds Aug. 1 Port Oneida Run

Lace up your running shoes for one of Michigan’s most scenic race courses. The 16th annual Port Oneida Run will take place on Saturday, August 1, a fundraising event hosted by the nonprofit park partner Sleeping Bear Forever.

Three races are offered including the Homesteaders Hilly Half Marathon and the Tiller’s 10k which go up past Pyra-

mid Point trailhead, and the Farmers Flat and Fast 5K ventures out and back on the Heritage Trail and Basch Road in Port Oneida. The Kid’s Schoolhouse Dash is also being brought back this year with participant treats from Cherry Republic.

The only race of its kind, the courses wind through the beautiful scenery of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore’s Port Oneida Rural Historic District. The run starts and ends at the big red barn at the Olsen Farm/Port Oneida Farms Heritage Center, 3164 W. Harbor Hwy, (M-22) Maple City, MI, just 4 miles north of Glen Arbor. Strollers and leashed dogs are welcome on the 5K.

All races have a wave start with professional chip timing. Post-race celebrations include race awards and food. Afterwards, participants can take a swim on the beautiful Lake Michigan beaches down the road in Port Oneida.

“This race supports preservation of the park’s historic structures and landscapes that are so integral to our National Lakeshore. We encourage the community’s participation to help preserve these treasured resources,” says Sleeping Bear Forever’s executive director Susan Pocklington.

Missing the Manitous

By Abby Chatfield
Sun contributor

With the Manitou Islands all but closed to visitors this year (unless you have a private boat)—as the National Lakeshore rebuilds the docks, we are reflecting on the Manitous with an on-going series about experiences we’ve had on the islands.

A visit to the Manitou Islands requires focus and strategy to navigate abundant poison ivy, black flies, mosquitos, and ticks. Although many fall in love at first sight with this pair of remote islands in northern Lake Michigan, part of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (SLBE), some may wonder what the draw is, as they disembark

onto either of these windswept, buggy, and vegetation-dense islands. After many trials, I’ve discovered the best path to joy is weaving between the forested interiors and sandy perimeters, rotating which biting insect to tolerate.

On her first visit to the islands, Emmie Koonmen took the Manitou Island Transit ferry to South Manitou Island (SMI). She caught a serious case of poison ivy and learned the hard way about micro-bears, the island’s nickname for chipmunks. Emmie recalls, “I remember being surprised that they were all over our stuff.”

Eight years ago, Cory Wade took his infant to SMI on the ferry for an overnight. Mosquitoes and black flies made the day challenging and uncomfortable

See MANITOUS on page 10



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Lively Acres hosts Backyard Blues, Brews & BBQ

From staff reports

Lively Acres is excited to announce the first annual Backyard Blues, Brews & BBQ this August 7-8 at their Backyard event space. Located in the shadow of the Sleeping Bear Dunes, on M-72 a few miles east of Empire, Lively Acres is a beautiful setting for world-class blues music, down-home BBQ and satisfying brews.

Tickets are on sale now for the event, headlined by Detroit-based and nationally acclaimed Thornetta Davis, along with other Michigan talent. Lively Acres will serve a home-cooked barbeque meal from local meats and produce, served with northern Michigan beer and wine.

The venue has RV and tent camping onsite, a working farm, and a full-service farm market.

Jim Lively, owner and event host says, “I’ve been a blues fan forever, and always showed up for ‘Girl Thornetta’ at (former) JR’s Warehouse in Traverse

City. She rocked the place to the ground back then, and she’s still doing it today. I’m excited to share the best of Detroit and northern Michigan blues with our neighbors and visitors to the area, along with delicious BBQ and brews.”

The musical headliner, Detroit’s Queen of the Blues Thornetta Davis, tours nationally and internationally, and recently was honored at the 47th Annual Blues Music Awards in Memphis with the Soul Blues Female Artist award. Thornetta has opened for Bonnie Raitt, Etta James, Glayds Knight and many other blues legends, as well as recording with Bob Seger and Alberta Adams. More recently she paid tribute to Bessie Smith for Preservation of Jazz.

Opening for Thornetta are local legends The Fabulous Horndogs, with more than 30 years of boogie history in our region. Ahead of the Horndogs will be rising star and young guitar slinger Brendon Linsley from metro Detroit, who was semi-finalist at this year’s



Memphis International Blues Challenge. Mississippi-based blues historian and acoustic guitarist Captain Dirk Wissbaum will open the show at 3 pm.

Lively NeighborFood Market will host authentic BBQ featuring local pork raised by neighbors at Recker Swine Farm, and beef from local farmers Noonan and Sons. Traverse City’s acclaimed pitmaster Adam Eastman will ensure the meat is fall-off-the bone amazing, and

See BACKYARD BLUES on page 3

Upcoming Summer Events in Leelanau County

- Friday, July 31:** French Valley Vineyard hosts launch party for Sugar Loaf Red and Sugar Loaf White to support Leelanau Conservancy, Sugar Loaf’s new owner, 7-9 pm
- Saturday, August 1:** Port Oneida Run
- Glen Arbor Arts Center hosts Woodland Home: A History Of A Place, 11 am
- Tuesday, August 4:** Primary election
- Wednesday, August 5:** The Homestead Music on the Mountain features Jabo Bihlman, 7 pm
- Thursday, August 6:** Sleeping Bear Forever and National Lakeshore host author Susan Wasserman (*Stepping off the Boat: Stories from North Manitou Island*), 7 pm
- August 6-8:** Glen Arbor Arts Center holds Plein Air weekend
- Friday, August 7:** Old Art Building in Leland hosts New Yorker cover artist Gayle Kabaker opening reception, 6-8 pm
- August 7-8:** Final Port Oneida Fair held in Port Oneida Rural Historic District in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
- Lively Acres hosts Backyard Blues Brews & BBQ
- Tuesday, August 11:** 5 Loaves 2 Fish fundraiser, 6 pm at Dune Bird Winery
- Wednesday, August 12:** Leelanau

- County Historic Preservation Society hosts picnic concert at Poor Farm Barn featuring The Fabulous Horndogs, 6-8 pm
- Leelanau Historical Society hosts Michigan Notable Book Author Susan Wasserman (*Stepping Off the Boat: Stories from North Manitou Island*) in Leland Library, 6 pm
- Saturday, August 15:** Northport Arts Association hosts artist in resident workshop with Honey Nilson, 9 am-noon
- Friday, August 21:** National Writers Series features Leelanau author Martin Sorge, winner of the *Great American Baking Show*, 4 pm at TC Food & Wine Tent
- Beach Bards Bonfire at Leelanau School beach features by-heart storytelling, poetry and music. Children’s hour begins at 8 pm.
- Wednesday, August 26:** Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society hosts picnic concert at Poor Farm Barn featuring Go North! 6-8 pm

Live Music and Performance

Check venues for days and times.

- In Glen Arbor**
- Boonedocks
 - Cherry Public House
 - Glen Arbor Wines
 - M22 store
 - River Club Glen Arbor

- Elsewhere in Leelanau County**
- Bel Lago
 - Dune Bird Winery, near Leland
 - French Valley Vineyard
 - Northern Latitudes Distillery
- Bay Books in Suttons Bay hosts Books and Wine Book Club, first **Tuesday** of the month, 6 pm
 - Stories & More for Preschoolers, Glen Lake Library, **Fridays** at 11 am
 - Lake Street Studios Center Gallery art openings, **Fridays** 6-8 pm
- Summer Farmers Markets**
Visit GlenArborSun.com/calendar for a list of vendors at each market.

- Glen Arbor’s** market, located behind the Township Hall, runs Tuesdays until Sept. 15.
- Leland’s** market, located in the Blue Bird parking lot, Thursdays until Sept. 3.
- Northport’s** market, located across from the marina, runs Fridays until Sept. 18.
- Suttons Bay’s** market, located on St. Joseph St., at the north end of the village, runs Saturdays until Oct. 17.
- Empire’s** market, located next to the post office, runs Saturdays until Aug. 29.
- Recycling located at 9 locations throughout Leelanau County, including at the ball fields in Empire, at the Leelanau School and at Glen Lake School.

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Glen Lake Community Library pursues millage renewal

From staff reports

In the upcoming Aug. 4 election, voters in Empire, Glen Arbor and Kasson Townships will consider a funding proposal to support the ongoing operations of the Glen Lake Community Library. The Library is seeking a renewal of the current millage of 0.2861 mills, to be assessed for six years beginning in December of this year. Income from the millage comprises almost 90% of the library’s operating income, and a renewal would generate approximately \$380,000 in the first year. Property taxes, collected via a dedicated millage, are a common funding mechanism for public libraries. In Michigan alone, over 390 libraries benefit from such local funding, with a state-wide average assessment of 0.9287 mills.

The Glen Lake Library has been supported by a dedicated millage since 1996, when area voters first approved a proposal to fund significant facility improvements and expanded services. Since then, an operating millage has been reapproved twice, in 2016 and 2021. The 2021 proposal, which passed by a 4 to 1 margin, set the millage rate at 0.30 mills. However, the millage rate has been gradually reduced to the current rate of 0.2861 mills as local property values have increased. This rate reduction is mandated by the Headlee Amendment, passed by the Michigan



legislature in 1978. The Glen Lake Library Board of Trustees determined that a renewal of the current millage would be adequate to cover projected operating costs. Careful management of expenses has made this possible, even as usage of the library has increased.

The growth of the library has been dramatic since the opening of an entirely new building in September of 2020. The expansive facility, construction of which was funded entirely through grants and private donations, offers a diverse range of materials and services. While traditional collections of books and media are still a mainstay, electronic books and streaming movies are also now available. Children’s programs are offered throughout the year, along with a full schedule of lectures, classes, concerts, author visits and more. With dedicated study, work and meeting spaces, the library has become an increasingly

popular destination. Last year, more than 20,000 people visited the library, checking out over 40,000 items.

Beyond the numbers, however, the variety of activities that take place at the library illustrate its value. Kids and parents, and often grandparents, make themselves at home in the Young Learner’s area, enjoying books, puzzles, learning kits, and animal puppets. The Lakeshore Readers have a spirited discussion of a recent bestseller. A retiree relaxes in the Reading Lounge, perusing newspapers and magazines, and warming by the fireplace (seasonally, of course). The Empire Area Community Center holds a monthly meeting, fine-tuning their various service programs. A local author presents a fascinating new history of North Manitou Island. A Social Security recipient prints out a benefits statement on our public computers. A patient advocate faxes records to a health care provider. A young naturalist checks out a Birding Backpack, complete with binoculars and field guides. And, in June, poets gather to serenade Asparagus.

Next year, the library will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Established in 1977, the library has grown and evolved along with the Glen Lake area, benefiting from strong local support, while developing into a valuable and inviting community resource. The August 4 millage renewal proposal presents an opportunity to reaffirm this bond. The Citizens for Glen Lake Library Operating Millage, led by committee chair Kathy Drabik of Maple City, are leading the drive in support of

the proposal. This group of area residents has coordinated a low-key campaign, adopting the slogan “Libraries are for Everyone”. The Citizens are asking area voters to consider the value of the library when they go to the polls on August 4.

For more information about the library, including the millage renewal proposal, visit GlenLakeLibrary.net, call 231-326-5361, or email info@glenlakelibrary.net. Or, even better, visit the library to explore all it has to offer.



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BACKYARD BLUES

continues from page 2

Lively Acres own chef Tero Valtonen will delight with a plethora of delicious side dishes, including gluten-free and vegetarian fare - all made with local produce and ingredients from the all-local all-the-time NeighborFood Market.

Stormcloud Brewing from Frankfort will provide a variety of cold and delicious beers, and Mawby Sparkling and Big Little Wines will provide a variety of wine to wash down the BBQ.

Lively Acres Campground is pleased to offer rustic and electrical hookups for camping blues fans that want to not only enjoy the music but also want to explore the beauty of the adjacent Sleeping Bear Dunes. A two-night minimum is required for campers, and reduced-price tickets (\$30) are included in your stay.

On Friday night (Aug. 7) campers and locals can enjoy Sugar Mae’s Blues Camp, sponsored by Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine publisher Sugar Mae Owens. This campfire event will feature

an open mic blues campfire hosted by Captain Dirk Wissbaum. The Blues Camp is included for campers with a two-night minimum, although locals can purchase a ticket to enjoy the blues campfire for \$10. Food and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for sale.

Pyramid Point Custom Guitars is also a sponsor of this event and will have a few custom beauties on hand for viewing and purchase.

Local nonprofit Row by Row, whose mission is to improve the lives of the underserved by providing nutritious, fresh food, is the nonprofit partner and is hosting the beer and wine sales.

A host of other community partners helping to support this event as sponsors include: Empire Business Association, Sleeping Bear Surf, Grocers Daughter Chocolate, Baileys Kombucha, Nature Walk, Higher Grounds Coffee, Glen Arbor Bed & Breakfast, Sleeping Bear Storage, Devette & Ford Insurance, Stanz Dozer, Logic Electric, Cherryland Electric Cooperative, and Williams & Bay Septic Pumping.

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Jabo Bihlman next up at Homestead’s Music On The Mountain

By Ross Boissoneau
Sun contributor

For Jabo Bihlman, music is a calling. The Traverse City guitarist, singer and songwriter performs at clubs, wineries, and on Aug. 5 at Music On The Mountain at The Homestead.

But he also works with television networks and streaming services. He’s a producer and engineer at his home-based recording studio. And he tours nationally and internationally.

Not bad for a kid who hated guitar. “I had a couple lessons when I was 10 or 12 and hated it. I was a jock – in high school I played football and pole vaulted.”

Despite the early lack of interest in music, shortly after high school he picked up the guitar again. “My brother and I started jamming. He had a drum kit, and a friend of his had a (guitar) body and neck. I bolted it on – I had no knowledge of it, but I figured

out the strings and started playing.” In the years since he making the Frankenguitar, he has created a career while cultivating a love of the blues and blues-based rock. He studied guitar heroes like Eddie Van Halen (his favorite), Alex Lifeson of Rush, and Steve Ray Vaughan. “Those were the guys I was paying attention to,” Bihlman says. His first year at college his parents got him an Ibanez guitar, and after graduating with a degree in psychology, he immediately headed to Los Angeles to Musicians Institute. “I realized it’s what I wanted.” The program was still in its early years, and Bihlman says the one-year course of study was intense. “They crammed four years into one,” he says. He began working wherever he could in the Los Angeles area. “The strip was still happening.”

He and his brother Scot wrote, played, worked day jobs and did what they could to make it, spending four years in

Los Angeles before moving back to the Chicago area where they’d grown up.

He absorbed the blues music the city was famous for, and ended up joining the band of Son Seals and becoming his musical director. He also was working a day job at an ad agency – for a while. “I hated it,” he says with a laugh. “My wife was working as a bartender.”

By this time, his parents had moved to Frankfort, where they had long vacationed, turning the family cabin into the family home. That was attractive to him, especially after he lost his job. “I got fired from the ad agency. We said, ‘Let’s go to Frankfort and see what happens.’ I decided to start playing, doing solo acoustic, playing with Ron Getz. My brother was on the road and he ended up here too.”

Bihlman got hooked up with a then-new program called Synch, which places music on television shows. He was able to get some of his original music on programs like Burn Notice, Sons of Anarchy and others, which provided exposure, a new income stream, even awards. “I got hooked up with All My Children. They put a bunch of Bihlman Brothers music in it.”

He won Emmy Award for CBS News Documentaries “Surviving the Bradley,” and “Edmund Fitzgerald: 30 Years a Legend.” Currently the Amazon Prime series Cross uses his music.

He still rocks out with his trio, and his show last year at Music On The Mountain drew one of the biggest crowds of the season. He says the changes in the music industry mean live shows are more important than ever, and he still loves playing for a crowd.



“I just played the Houghton Lake Blues Festival. The crowd was great. People knew my music, so that was awesome. It rekindles your desire.

“I still love playing guitar,” he continues. “I’ve been doing this a long time. I’m still a work in progress. You have to have the desire and motivation. There’s no gold at the end of the rainbow.”

But there is music at the top of the hill. Jabo Bihlman performs at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 5, at the top of Bay Mountain at The Homestead. Tickets are \$22. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to tinyurl.com/Tickets-MOTM. In the event of inclement weather, the show will take place at Mountain Flowers Lodge at the base of the ski hill.



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Upcoming fundraiser helps 5Loaves2Fish continue feeding community

By Cameryn Cass
Sun contributor

It was unseasonably cold for the height of summer as I made my way through the ever-busy Fishtown to 5Loaves2FishNMI housed in the basement of the Leland Community United Methodist Church.

The wind was howling, but the many “Community Meal Tonight” signs around town remained upright, pointing toward the church, advertising the free weekly event.

When I arrived, Michelle and Bill White, the two co-founders of the group, were inside, working.

“Were the arrows pointing the right way?” Michelle asked of the signs.

I said yes with a laugh, and looked around the welcoming space.

Kate Saffell, who Michelle called “our everything,” was bustling about the kitchen, helping prepare the many pizzas, brats, beans and salads that were to be served in a few short hours.

“A lot of people come at four and stay ‘til six,” said Michelle of the community meal. “It’s just about community. Anyone can come.”

Throughout the week, 5Loaves-2Fish travels around the greater area, serving meals in Traverse City, Suttons Bay, Lake Leelanau, Northport and, of course, Leland.

“We meet people where they’re at,” said Michelle.

And it’s Josh Miller, the executive chef of the operation, who is tasked with cooking the meals.

“He’s for sure a chef,” said Bill. “Executive is a bit fancy.”

Sometimes, Bill went on, cooking at 5Loaves2Fish can be a “wild card.”

“Fifty people will show up to Veteran’s Park one day, and the next 70 will come,” he said.

“So, we set up for 80,” said Miller. “We bring the extra food back or send it somewhere else.”

Interestingly enough, it’s that very spirit of successfully serving the hungry—however many there may be—with limited resources where 5Loaves2Fish draws its name.

It’s a biblical one, from Matthew 14:13-21, where Jesus feeds five thousand men with just five loaves of bread and two fish.

“Those stories happen here all the time,” said Michelle.

Miller related his experience of preparing meals with this kind of uncertainty to the television show “Chopped.”

“You know the one, where they open their basket and it’s like, ‘Here, make a meal out of this,’” he said. “I love it.”



L-r: executive chef Josh Miller, Bill and Michelle Smith and Kate Saffell.

Except he’s often multiplying the recipes 16-fold.

Volunteers help make it happen, and so does Miller’s past experience. Having worked at Camps Leelanau & Kohahna, it wasn’t unusual to feed 400 kids a day.

In fact, before this role, Miller cooked in Glen Arbor for 36 years.

He was at the Good Harbor Grill for ten of them, then took a job cooking at the aforementioned camps. He learned the art of butchering at Anderson’s Market and worked at the Cherry Public House, too.

For the past year, he’s been at 5Loaves2Fish.

“And he’s only 32 years old,” said Bill.

Miller laughed, and said that a friend first encouraged him to volunteer, which he did in late February 2025.

As Michelle remembers it, she welcomed Miller in and gave him a brief tour. She showed him where the walk-in was, introduced him to some of the volunteers and then headed upstairs to join the rest of the crew for a meeting.

“He made mac and cheese, curry, soup – all while we were in this meeting,” she said. “So, I asked if he wanted a job.”

He eventually accepted, and on May 1 of last year, Miller started full time.

For someone who’s worked his career in the food industry’s famously long hours, Miller said having week-ends and nights off the past year has been “unbelievable.”

What’s more, he’s no longer serving patrons who could sometimes be, in a word, “entitled.”

“Now I’m serving people who are hungry, who have no entitlement,” he said. “They just appreciate being fed and they know it’s made with love.”

“And it’s good,” Bill added. “We’re

not going to serve guests something we wouldn’t eat.”

Since it started in 2019, 5Loaves-2Fish has served a little over 100,000 meals.

Food Rescue, a Goodwill program out of Traverse City, supplies the group with 75% of its food, and the other 25% or so is purchased, Michelle explained.

To help with such purchases and the greater work they do, 5Loaves2Fish is hosting its fifth annual fundraiser on August 11 at Dune Bird Winery in Northport.

“We’ll have fairly authentic Mexican food,” said Michelle. “There will be an upscale taco bar, side salads, desserts.”

Geno and the Big Change band will soundtrack the evening and five or six speakers from other like-programs will talk. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the event ends at 9 p.m.

“This fundraiser will support the 24,000 meals we’ll serve this year,” said Michelle.

Tickets are \$100 online and \$125 at the door. Since it was “crazy busy last year,” folks are encouraged to purchase tickets ahead of time.

“It’s all about community, inclusion, dignity,” said Michelle. “Food is the vehicle, love is the message.”

If you’re interested in volunteering, visit 5loaves2fishnmi.org or email 5loaves2fishnmi@gmail.com.

Update: the Big Change Fundraiser for 5Loaves2Fish is sold out. But another fundraiser coming up on Tuesday, Sept. 22, from 4:45-6:45 pm at Northern Latitudes Distillery in Lake Leelanau still has capacity.

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Business is good in Lake Leelanau

By Ross Boissoneau
Sun contributor

Summer is here, and for three Lake Leelanau beverage-centric businesses, it's been worth the wait. The owners of Northern Latitudes, Locals Lake Leelanau and Peninsula Provisions all say things are looking good.

Northern Latitudes opened the doors of its new facility last October. Mark Moseler, who owns the business with his wife Mandy, says the project took longer than anticipated, but that's invariably the case. "You think you're the only one having issues," he says wryly.

In their case, the Moselers had to not only deal with delays in building

the new facility, but in getting the liquor licensing. The imbroglio with the state led to having their Suttons Bay tasting room closed, as well as not being able to distill anything while the new location was under construction.

"It was two years from the property to permits to open. Including acquiring the property, it was three years," Moseler says.

More time meant more cost, at a time when there wasn't any money coming in. "When projects take longer, things don't usually go down in price," he laughs.

Moseler says they have already seen changes in the operation because of the larger building. They have much more room for the distilling operations, as

well as nearly 9,000 square feet for servicing customers. That doesn't include the outdoor space.

The result is a more spacious feeling, even with more customers. "The space is phenomenally bigger," he says, which leads to better numbers even when it doesn't necessarily feel as busy.

Among the most popular items are the new Finish Line spirits. The first in the line is a bourbon aged at least five years in American charred oak, then finished in Brazilian Amburana wood barrels. Next up is one finished in French oak barrels previously used for aging orange liqueur.

In the spirit of everything old being new again, Moseler says old fashioned are the most popular drink. "They are in fashion. They have really taken over. Espresso martinis are also huge." And number one on their spirits list? "The most popular since we opened is our horseradish vodka," he says.

Not only are there always new spirits coming on board, Northern Latitudes also boasts a much larger food menu than originally planned. Shareables, soups and salad, sandwiches and small plates give customers options to go along with their drinks.

"Food is a whole new ballgame," Moseler says. "When we first designed the building, we just had a little teeny tiny kitchen. We were just going to do small plates." Fortunately, they realized people wanted food to eat with their cocktails before finishing construction, and they were able to convert what had been planned as a storage area into a full-fledged kitchen.

Despite the delays, closure, and this summer's smoke, heat and humidity, Moseler says summer has been great. The result has been everything they hoped for. "We are extremely happy with our numbers," he says. "We have no regrets."

At the former Northern Latitudes location, Tony West opened Locals Lake Leelanau in May last year. The bar and restaurant was hampered by the lack of a liquor license, which ended up taking until the weekend before Memorial Day this year to obtain. "We knew it was going to be a while," says West.

Just not that long a while. Besides the usual regulations and red tape, the process was slowed by the governmental shutdown last year, and as West says, not a lot happens during the holiday season. Nonetheless, the show went on, and the business focused on food and fun, with a large menu, live music and a side order of history.

Locals Lake Leelanau welcomes locals and visitors alike, with a healthy



Tony West smokes meat at Locals.

dose of the region's story through the years. Not only are the menu items named for people and places tracing the roots of Leelanau County, a QR code takes you to the Leelanau Historical Society. "The beauty of this is we get to tell the story of locals," says West. "It's the history, the story of our region."

West's enthusiasm is palpable. It's clear he loves what he does and sharing it with others, be they from the area or those visiting. "We had a big group, about 20. They were from Ohio and got to experience it here," he says, noting that one of the moms told him their kids would always remember it.

"We had a family here from Japan. Their son is at Interlochen. They said, 'It's so beautiful here.' We can't take it for granted."

Now that the restaurant has been granted its liquor license, West talks up the brisket and beer. "I've had the Thunderbird smoker going every day," he says. Another popular choice from the smoker is the T-Bird Smoked Wings, with a special brine and custom rub. Both the smoker and the dish are named in honor of the building's origin as the Thunderbird Gift Shop, which sold souvenirs and moccasins.

Not wanting to miss a trick, West transformed a large part of the footprint into a retail outlet for Locals-branded merchandise, plus products from some 50 Michigan businesses, most of them from the region.

As if that isn't all enough, West says he's been busy hauling the smoker around the region doing catering. "Catering has been awesome. We've got

See LAKE LEELANAU on page 7

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A photograph of the outdoor seating area of Glen Arbor Wines. There are several people sitting at tables, and a musician is playing a guitar. The area is lit with warm string lights.

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Unaffordable housing: a view from Leelanau’s porch

By Cameron Krepps
Op-ed for the Sun

I grew up in Empire.
South of 204, if that still means anything to anyone.
Now I work as a carpenter mostly north of it, inside houses that explain this county better than most people ever will.
And after another Fourth of July weekend, I think it is worth saying something plainly.
It is easy to celebrate freedom from a porch most working families could never afford.
It is easy to fly a flag over a house that sits empty half the year.
It is easy to talk about independence while depending on people who can no longer afford to live near the work they do.
That is the part nobody wants to say out loud.
This is not just about outsiders.
It would be easier if it was.
Some of the people helping hollow this place out have been here for generations.
Some of them have the right last names, the right addresses, the right family stories, the right old photos, the right memories of “what Leelanau used to be.”
And somehow they still became part of the machine eating it.
That might be the worst part.
Because new money does what new money does. It shows up, buys the view, calls it paradise, and turns belonging into branding.
But old money knows better.
Old money remembers when this place was not just a lifestyle.

Old money remembers working families, farmers, teachers, tradesmen, servers, strange old houses, year-round people, winters, favors, and the quiet dignity of people who did not need to advertise how much they cared.
And still, too many of them looked at all of that and chose the market.
Leelanau County has a housing gap of 2,335 units through 2027.
At the same time, the county had 15,572 housing units, with 5,832 of them vacant.
That is 37.5% of the housing stock. So no, the houses did not disappear. The homes did.
In 2024, only 40% of Leelanau County homebuyers were local.
The median sale price went from \$285,000 in 2015 to \$609,500 in 2024.
That is not just change.
That is a choice.
A choice made by buyers.
A choice made by sellers.
A choice made by people who inherited land, homes, influence, and

community trust — then turned around and cashed out while telling everyone else to accept reality.
So let’s stop pretending this is only being done to Leelanau by people from somewhere else.
Some of it is being done by people from here.
People who know exactly what is being lost.
People who sit on boards, donate to the right causes, talk about stewardship, preserve the view, protect the brand, and still somehow cannot find the courage to protect the people who make this place alive.
That is not stewardship.
That is reputation management.
And on the Fourth of July, of all times, maybe we should remember that independence was never supposed to mean the freedom of the wealthy to quietly own everything while everyone else rents permission to survive.
You cannot sell out the working class of a place and then call yourself a caretaker of it.

Leelanau is not just lake access.
It is not just property value.
It is not just a rental calendar.
It is not just a family name.
It is not just a donation plaque.
It is not just a flag on a porch in July.
It is old trucks, dogs in the cab, muddy boots, borrowed tools, long winters, weird houses, back roads, quiet favors, dead grandparents, first jobs, farms, storms, bonfires, and people who still show up when nobody is getting paid.
That is the part money did not create.
That is the part money cannot buy.
And that is the part money is killing.
So yes, outside wealth is part of the problem.
But so is the local money that decided inheritance mattered more than responsibility.
So is the old money that wants credit for loving Leelanau while helping make it impossible for ordinary people to live here.
So is every person who knows better and chooses profit anyway.
Because the truth is simple:
You cannot love a place while helping remove the people who gave it a soul.
You can own property here.
You can have history here.
You can have your family name attached to half the county.
You can clap for fireworks over the bay and call yourself patriotic.
But if your version of freedom only works after the working people are gone, then you are not preserving anything.
You are just managing the decline from a better porch.

• A LEELANAU PLEDGE •

Whether Leelanau County is my home sweet home, OR my home right now away from home:

I WILL EXPLORE RESPONSIBLY.
I WILL PREPARE FOR EVERY EXPERIENCE.
I WILL LEAVE NO TRACE.

I WILL HONOR THE HISTORY AND BELONGING OF THOSE WHO WERE HERE BEFORE ME AND PRESERVE THE LAND FOR THOSE WHO COME AFTER ME.

I WILL BE KIND TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF EVERY KIND.
I WILL GET LOST IN MY THOUGHTS, BUT NOT IN THE WOODS.
I WILL CARVE THE SNOW, AND NOT THE TREES.
I WILL TREAD LIGHTLY ON THE BEACHES AND LEAVE ONLY MY FOOTPRINTS.
I WILL DRIVE VERY CAREFULLY AND CONSUME RESPONSIBLY.

I PLEDGE TO TAKE CARE OF THIS PLACE CALLED LEELANAU.

LAKE LEELANAU
continues from page 6

132 (catering jobs) on the books for this year, all over, from Charlevoix and Gaylord to Frankfort and Elberta, and all over the county. We had someone call us from Detroit.
“I get to take Lake Leelanau all over Michigan.”
Just down the road, Kate Vilter Stassen traded her role as proprietor of the Riverside Inn in Leland for what she says is a slower pace at Peninsula Provisions. She took her hospitality experience with her, along with her knowledge of food and wine.
The result is a specialty food shop that offers cheese boards, Mediterranean platters and charcuterie specialties including chicken liver mousse,

venison pâté, and spiced pork terrine. It stocks snacks, beverages, and grab-and-go items including salads and dips, even family dinners in the off-season.
Oh yes, catering. Peninsula Provisions does that too. It’s all overseen by Chef Brad Roth. He combines locally sourced, seasonal ingredients with experience gleaned locally and in San Francisco’s culinary scene.
Don’t forget the wine. Stassen certainly hasn’t, with a selection of wines from across the region and across the world. Asked what is the very best wine, she quickly demurs. “It all depends on what you’re serving for dinner,” she says with a laugh.
It all fits with her vision of hospitality, just a different side of it. “I do what I love, just with a smaller footprint,” Stassen says. “I’ve been in the industry

30 years. It’s a slower pace.”
She owned and operated the Riverside Inn for 24 years, selling it in 2021. The next year she purchased the building and opened Peninsula Provisions in July 2023.
She says there were some surprises along the way. “I didn’t know in the winter we’d get into doing dinners. But we have the time and requests.”
She agrees with Moseler and West that business has been good this summer. “I was worried, with the economy, would people be traveling? People are still traveling in the states. I’ve been pleasantly surprised.”
Given its location on busy M-204, connecting the west side (Glen Arbor and Leland) to the east side (Suttons Bay, Traverse City), Lake Leelanau

can be considered a drive-through, a place you go through on the way to somewhere else. Stassen says that plays to her business, as people can stop in to pick up a bottle of wine or a grab a snack or salad on their way.
West says while it’s true that Lake Leelanau can be seen as a place to simply pass through, the town is more than that. He champions the other businesses as well as the natural beauty of the town and lake it is named for. “Dick’s Pour House, Fiddleheads, Peninsula Provisions, the new steakhouse in town (Leelanau Steakhouse at the former Bella Fortuna/Nittolo’s). I’ve always considered Lake Leelanau to be the heartbeat of the county.”
“Even if you’re passing through, there are some amazing locations to check out.”

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Community unites to create NoMi’s first annual yoga festival

By Shelley Smith
Sun contributor

Hi, I’m a Leelanau-based yoga teacher and holistic wellness coach. When inspired (and when my adolescent son’s schedule allows mom the time), I’m also a yoga and wellness writer for the *Sun*. I love sharing with our community about the wonderful people, places and events in our own backyards who offer yoga and more to support our wellbeing.

I have exciting news to share: I’m organizing our community’s first annual yoga festival in Traverse City. It’s a one-day, all-day, collaborative event called Northern Resonance Yoga Festival, featuring over 30 of Leelanau and Grand Traverse County’s leading yoga teachers and holistic wellness facilitators. I hope you’ll join us.

Here’s how this festival came to be, and why it’s important for our community.

I’ve been a yoga teacher, retreat leader, and in various ways, a catalyst for connection within yoga communities in Michigan and globally for 20 years. The reason I’ve devoted my life to this path is clear: I have had, since day one, a deep and unwavering belief in the power of yoga to create positive change in individuals, communities, and our world.

If you practice yoga, you already know one of the reasons yoga creates positive change is that it cultivates connection. Yoga, at its root, means union. Practicing yoga brings us into union on all levels- body, mind, and soul/spirit

come into alignment. When we find ourselves out of balance for reasons big or small, and disconnected as we navigate our lives in this complicated world, yoga helps us find our way back to center. And when we return to that steady center, the stress and stories we were caught up in begin to drop away. We come home to ourselves. We remember who we really are. We return to our inner knowing of who we want to be, how we want to live, and why we are here. It’s simple and powerful. Yoga supports connection, and when we are truly connected to ourselves we walk through the world in a better way.

That connection flows out to our friends and family, as we navigate our relationships with kindness, patience and respect. It flows out to our community, as we feel inclined to make space for others, care about their needs, and support when and where we can. Those ever-strengthening webs of connection flow out into our world, making it a better place where people care about each other, willingly work together, and strive to create the best for all, instead of reaching for the best only for ourselves. When we are connected with ourselves, we realize that everything is connected. Harming one harms all. Supporting one supports all. Uplifting one uplifts all. We navigate our lives with more love, more grace, more consideration, and more respect for each part of our world.

Now back to the Northern Resonance Yoga Festival. This day of yoga, dance, meditation, breathwork, sound healing, speaker panels and more, is

here to cultivate deep and nourishing threads of connection within ourselves and our community in multiple ways.

First, this is about you. We have created an experience to support you in coming home to yourself. Pause. Breathe. Reconnect. Come back into alignment with who you really are, so you can step back into your life feeling rejuvenated, inspired, and more firmly rooted in that strong and steady place within.

We want you to find everything you need, and there’s so much to choose from. Practice dynamic yoga, or the most gentle and restorative yoga. Rest in sound baths and guided meditations throughout the day. Join a dance session to move energy and feel free. Expand your perspective with a panel discussion on how we live and work with integrity as yogis in the modern world. Many sessions are accessible to those new to yoga; you don’t need experience to join this day. Add simple music, beautiful nature, old and new friends to share it with. Spaces to be together, and spaces to be alone to quietly integrate the experiences when that’s needed. It’s all here for you.

Next, the festival will create and strengthen connections between yourself and your community. With so many highly experienced teachers and interested practitioners gathered together in one place, we know you will find new teachers who inspire you, new practices and services that support you. You’ll meet new friends to share the path with too.

Finally, there is the web of connection the event is creating for our team. This day is about like-minded people who do heart-centered work coming together to provide an incredible yoga and wellness experience for the good of our community. Collaboration and co-creation are the way we want to work in the world; we can do so much more together than any one of us can offer alone.

Here are the details:

Who? 30+ of Leelanau and Grand Traverse County’s leading yoga teachers, dance and movement facilitators, sound healers, meditation guides, and artists. Sandra Carden is one of our many yoga teachers. Courtney Wiggins shares a sound immersion. Kristen Ryder guides Forest bathing. And more.

What? A day of yoga, dance, music, meditation, sound and energy healing, inspiration, education, fun and connection.

Where? Twin Lakes Park near Tra-



verse City. It’s a wonderful location: an indoor, climate-controlled space, a yoga tent on the lovely lawn, and a covered pavilion. There are trails and a lake to take a break from classes and sessions and you may pack a picnic lunch.

When? 9 am to 9 pm Saturday, Aug. 15. Yes, it’s a 12-hour event. No, you do not have to stay for the entire day! Browse the schedule, find a session or two that inspire you. Plan your visit around that time, and see what else flows.

Why? To cultivate connection. To offer you a day away from everything else, a day to return home to you. To meet new friends and be inspired by new teachers and facilitators. To enjoy.

How? With the support of community. Through collaboration, co-creation, and mutual support. Over 30 presenters and a team of support staff are contributing their time and services. We’ve aligned with sponsoring businesses who share the same values, led by soulful people who truly care about our community and believe the way we work makes a difference. From yoga studios like Yoga for Health Education and New Moon Yoga, to conscious businesses like Grocer’s Daughter Chocolate and Higher Grounds Coffee, our team is made of people and places who are invested in doing meaningful work and building a web of community to make this region stronger and healthier for all.

I’m going to turn this conversation over to you. Who are your favorite NoMI yoga teachers and holistic wellness facilitators? I’d love to learn more! Email hello@northernresonanceyoga.com to share.

Northern Resonance Yoga Festival is Saturday, Aug. 15 at Twin Lakes Park outside of Traverse City, and offers over 30 presenters on three stages throughout the day. Programming runs 9 am to 9 pm. View the lineup, schedule, purchase tickets and register for volunteer opportunities at NorthernResonanceYogaFestival.com.

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Smokey Bear tried to tell us

By Tim Mulherin
Sun contributor

In 1944, the Smokey Bear public awareness campaign launched with the famous tagline, “Only YOU can prevent forest fires.” Poorly extinguished campfires, reckless use of fireworks, even smoldering cigarette butts carelessly discarded can ignite a woodland conflagration of immense and tragic proportions.

And then there’s the CO2 emissions tinderbox we’ve created.

According to the Canadian Climate Institute, “The last three fire seasons have been among the 10 worst on record.” Further, the Climate Atlas of Canada reports, “Accelerating climate change, largely from the burning of fossil fuels, makes wildfires bigger, hotter, and more destructive.”

Now it’s all come home—to my home and yours.

Like so many people in Leelanau County, we don’t have air conditioning. Yet. The past several summers have delivered some merciless blasts of heat that have changed my mind. The brief heatwave in mid-July got my sweaty attention. But the immediately following wildfire smoke from Ontario and along the Minnesota Boundary Waters sealed the deal.

Since the summer of 2023, wildfire smoke drifting down from Canada has become a common summertime occurrence in northern Michigan. But not like this.

On Wednesday, July 15, I met a friend for lunch in Manistee. When we entered the restaurant about 1 p.m., it was hazy outside though tolerable. When leaving 90 minutes later, we were greeted by dramatically worsening air quality. The wildfire smoke was palpable: in our suddenly hacking lungs, particle-irritated throats, and burning eyes. The toxic cloud blanketed the area.

I spent the night in Manistee. As I headed back toward Cedar, dense smoke hung over the landscape, a dismal, haunting gray. Everyone drove with their headlights on.

While traveling along M-22, I kept the AC running in my pickup truck. Every time I tried to turn it off, the acrid, smoky smell infiltrated the cabin.

Being human, I tend to illogically insist on my agenda not getting disrupted by any unforeseen factors. So I stubbornly kept to my original plan and visited the Arcadia Marsh Nature Preserve on the way home.

Parking my pickup truck was a breeze: It was the only vehicle there. As I stepped out of the truck, a thick haze obscured the entire 360-degree horizon, with about a mile of visibility.

Succumbing to my flawed sense of judgment, I decided to venture forth. Although I stayed at the preserve for

more than an hour, I didn’t cough or feel ill. I attribute this to growing up in a home where both parents smoked three packs of cigarettes daily, filling ashtrays in, of all places, our “living room.”

Arcadia Marsh never disappoints. Yet this time, migrant and resident wildlife allowed me extraordinary closeup views. The striking common yellowthroat warblers, quite uncommon to me, were out in numbers. A trumpeter swan family of five, with three downy gray cygnets, glided warily by me in the Great Lakes coastal marsh. A great blue heron stoically perched nearby on a limb jutting out over the water. A garter snake, its skin a purplish pewter with body-length yellow-gold stripes, made an appearance on the boardwalk.

Despite the smoke, these creatures’ lives went on. Yet I wondered what impact the poor air quality would have on them. And the lone human in their midst.

On Friday when I awoke, I peered out my east-facing bedroom window. Wildfire smoke permeated the surrounding woods. I had to keep our chalet’s doors and windows shut, even though the temps had dropped to what is normally associated with a comfortable northern Michigan summer.

In 1988, NASA scientist James Hansen rang the alarm bells about climate change and global warming when he testified before members of Congress. In 2009, Hansen’s book, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity*, was published. The sobering title no doubt scared off many potential readers.

Former Vice President Al Gore’s book and climate documentary of the same name, *An Inconvenient Truth*, rather inconveniently came out in 2006. Despite its urgent nonpartisan message, a certain political party downplayed its existential warning. Gore was the recipient of a backlash of insults decrying the science behind his assertions. Now, 20 years later...

Despite one’s politics, farmers and orchardists in northern Michigan are altering their agricultural practices out of necessity. Unpredictable springs with seesawing temperatures; violent, crop-damaging storms; and invasive insects such as the spotted winged drosophila, an Asian native that can quickly decimate unprotected cherry orchards (and other thin-skinned, ripening fruits), are all coming to bear on the region. Gore, in his modern-day impression of Paul Revere, was just trying to get our attention.

On Saturday, July 18, I had a meeting in downtown Traverse City. The tourists were out in force. After three days of smoky skies, and no doubt many vacationers being cooped up indoors, the unexpected summertime cabin fever broke. Time to shop.

High winds buffeted the dense crowd



A great blue heron at Arcadia Marsh.

while the smoke made an apocalyptic visual and harsh pulmonary statement, reminding me of Hansen’s dire warning.

What also occurred to me was whether northern Michigan tourism would take a hit this year, and in coming years, as Canadian wildfires in the world’s largest intact boreal forest, at 1.3 billion acres, are likely to continue to break out in similar daunting numbers. During the suffocating week of July 12, upwards of 800 reported wildfires raged north of us, with more than 200 burning out of control.

On Sunday, I went to Good Harbor Beach 651 for a morning walk. The AirNow app, the Environmental Protection Agency’s Air Quality Index tracker, showed that the air quality in Cedar had “improved” from “hazardous” to somewhere between the “unhealthy” to “very unhealthy” range. Hooray!

Even though I arrived at 10 a.m., typically too early for most vacationers, the trailhead area, where beachgoers tend to congregate, began to fill up. In the distance, Pyramid Point to the west and Whaleback Hill to the north were veiled in the smoky haze. North Manitou Island was nearly invisible. It was just weird out.

Ignoring countless warnings from climate experts for nearly four decades about what was coming down the pike should we refuse to change our ways has led to our current predicament. Although a painful admittance, let’s accept that it’s going to take decades—or more—to dig our way out. And let’s take to heart what Smokey Bear has been campaigning about for years, yet in a much larger, ecologically responsible context. Only this time, let’s truly do it as we the people.

Enough with the arguing—Cough! Cough!—already.

Tim Mulherin’s *This Magnetic North: Candid Conversations on a Changing Northern Michigan* is a 2026 Michigan Notable Book. His next book explores wildlife in Michigan and Indiana and the rediscovery of awe.

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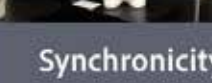


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MANITOUS
continues from page 1

for the family. Manitou Island Transit allowed them to change their reservation and take the afternoon ferry back to Leland that same day.

By introducing the islands in a negative light, I am definitely trying to persuade you not to visit, because it increases the possibility of keeping this treasured place less discovered. Although every return visitor I've talked with agrees that the island experience is more enjoyable when there are less people to share it with, this is not the point. As part of our national parklands that belong to all Americans, the Manitou Islands should be accessible to everyone. Despite poison ivy and chipmunk raids, Emmie's overall island experiences convinced her to move to Leelanau County (as the *Sun* reported in a June story).

Cory Wade enjoys the solitude of the islands. "Right now, there's nobody out there. It feels like you have the world to yourself," he said.

With visitor access to the Manitou Islands limited this year due to National Park Service (NPS) construction projects and the suspension of ferry operation, which has faced several challenges

since 2020, people are left wondering how to get there and what future island recreation opportunities may look like.

According to its website, SLBE hosts over 1.5 million annual visitors, with approximately 11,000 per year visiting the Manitou Islands in 2018. This year as the NPS relocates docks on both islands and replaces outdated infrastructure, all docks and facilities are closed to the public and will remain so until work is complete. The ferry cannot operate without a safe docking location for both islands, and the question remains what will happen once the new docks are in place.

"We took a private boat out during COVID," Emmie explained. "It was so much faster than the ferry but financially not realistic. We hired a charter boat to drop us off in the water by one of the islands. I wouldn't do this with my kids for safety and financial reasons."

Although Cory owns a boat and can get to the island without a ferry, he feels that "taking the ferry is a little more peace of mind. Anchoring your boat at the islands is a crapshoot. If the weather comes up, you're stuck out there."

For those who do make it, bathrooms and potable water are currently unavail-



Photo courtesy of Leelanau Historical Society

able. Private vessels are not permitted to land at island docks. The park's website advises against access via private boat yet also mentions that boaters can anchor offshore and use a smaller vessel to reach shore. There are no mooring buoys or protected anchoring areas according to the park's website, and private boats are not permitted to land on the islands.

On one trip to pick up friends on the island when weather conditions were testy, Cory couldn't get his boat any shallower than five feet.

So, what are the options this year to access the Manitou Islands? Either hitching a ride on a private boat or a reservation with Manitou Passage Boat Tours, the only charter boat with a Commercial Use Authorization to land on the islands. While this decreases the overall visitor numbers to the islands, it also means that potential visitors are looking at higher prices and less availability to get there.

As part of our national parklands, the islands should be available to everyone, regardless of their connections, pocket depth, or boat ownership status. For over a century now, a majority of visitors accessed the islands via ferry service operated by the Grosvenor family out of Leland's Fishtown. Tracy Grosvenor established Manitou Mail Service in 1917, a time when people actually lived on the islands, delivering mail between the mainland and the Manitous. This eventually turned into Manitou Island Transit, as the Grosvenor family provided transportation for islanders and eventually recreational visitors.

In Algonquian, the language of the indigenous Anishinabek people, Manitou means spirit, mystery, or a supernatural force. Their ancestors must have sensed the life force flowing through this pair of islands so appropriately named.

According to historical references, the Anishinabek used the Manitou Islands as seasonal fishing grounds. *Tending a 'Comfortable Wilderness'*, an NPS report about North Manitou Island

(NMI), mentions the perspective of an 1823 passerby, Albert G. Ellis, who remarked that the island appeared to have been a "great resort of the Indians." He observed a line of mounds topped by wooden frames stretching half a mile down the beach and assumed these were a form of recreation for the Indigenous people. Ellis claimed that "evidently for a game of athletes at jumping... their tracks were abundant proof of the game, at which it appeared they had been exercising, only a day or two before our visit." Although most likely not a resort of any type for the Indigenous people of the time, perhaps they did partake in some recreational activities as a break from their fishing duties.

White settlers inhabited the islands from the 1830s-1970s. Mostly isolated from the accoutrements of mainland life, island residents found many ways to entertain themselves despite the hard work it took just to survive out there. Historical records mention card games, parties, dances, recreational fishing, sailing, row boating, and baseball as favored pastimes.

In the early 1900s, island baseball teams competed against each other and mainland teams. The Leland Band also made visits to perform for islanders.

In 1903, the Bournique family of Chicago developed a private retreat at the southeastern tip of NMI. According to Rita Hadra Rusco's book, *North Manitou Island ~ Between Sunrise and Sunset*, Colonel Alvar Bournique was a professional dance instructor. He and his wife used the upstairs of their horse barn as a ballroom and hosted dances, spanning ballroom to square dances, for fellow islanders and visitors.

By 1894, an exclusive resort colony known as Cottage Row was underway with the first cottages constructed and a U.S. Life-saving Service Station converted into a dining hall and inn. According to *Tending a 'Comfortable Wilderness'*, a retired Chicago banker "in search of health" acquired substantial property on NMI with a goal to create a summer resort for wealthy Chicagoans to escape the city's summer heat and pollution. Plans included private cottages, a private park with boat houses, and other recreational buildings. Also included was a private parcel on Lake Manitou for boating on the inland lake. By the early 1900s, NMI was a well-established summer resort with reports sharing that

NWS

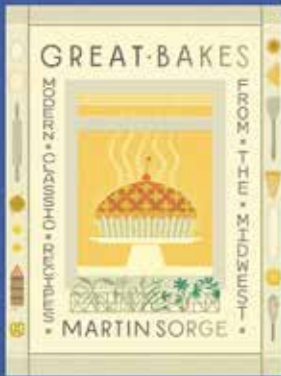
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MANITOU

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oftentimes there were 40-50 people in the dining hall who enjoyed picnics, plays, parties, and hayrides.

The resort colony flourished for over 50 years. By the 1920s, the Manitou Island Syndicate took over Cottage Row and a lot of other property on NMI. The Syndicate oversaw farming to accommodate resorters' needs with plans to continue expansion. By 1928, one of the Syndicate partners, William Angell, began buying up more land and, within just three years, owned the majority of NMI, transferring property from the Syndicate to his new corporation, Manitou Island Association. Angell planned to develop the island into a hunters' retreat with a hotel and golf course.

Rita Rusco's book tells that, prior to 1925, there was no record of deer inhabiting either of the Manitou Islands. Angell introduced nine deer to NMI that year, and by 1959 there were over 1,200 deer on the island. Other animals and birds were introduced for hunting, with the raccoon one of the few to survive, still a problem today for campers.

On SMI, tourism and planned recreation began in the 1940s. *Coming Through With Rye*, an NPS report about South Manitou, stated that longtime residents were leaving the island and selling their land to a developer named William Boals, triggering what became the tourist era on the island. Boals' Lee Island Associates (LIA) development group planned to turn SMI into a resort community for summer visitors. LIA created a lodge for visitors and converted many village buildings into vacation homes, building additional cottages at inland Lake Florence.

In the 1950s, LIA owned the lodge and 243 acres of land with plans to build a marina, lunchroom, driving and putting range. The developers advertised sand dune climbing for "hardy mountaineers," a "healthful" environment, a "fine bay of refuge for yachtsmen," and "deep sea and small lake fishing." Ferry service was to be provided by the Grosvenor family of Leland.

The Burdick family, one of the first families to settle on SMI, also attempted to profit from island recreation. In 1959, they began a small tourist operation offering cottage stays at Lake Florence. Their guests enjoyed jeep transportation and burro rides around SMI.

Since the 1970s, land use on the Manitou Islands has been dominated by recreation and the preservation of natural resources. SLBE was authorized by Congress on October 21, 1970. It encompasses a 35-mile stretch of Lake Michigan's eastern shoreline and North and South Manitou Islands. The



Photo courtesy of Leelanau Historical Society

Park was established to preserve the "outstanding natural features, including forests, beaches, dune formations, and ancient glacial phenomena...for the benefit, inspiration, education, recreation, and enjoyment of the public."

NPS eventually took over ownership of both islands with the exception of a few privately owned cottages. The park's intent was to return the islands to wilderness, with the exception of a designated zone to preserve cultural history. In 1974, the Riker Family, SMI's last residents, were forced to leave the island. *Tending a 'Comfortable Wilderness'* reported that the NPS purchased NMI in 1983 for \$11 million from the Angell Foundation. Angell held its final deer hunt during the 1977-78 season. The NPS still allows hunting in order to control the deer population, with its first sponsored hunt taking place in 1984.

Besides the deer hunt on North Manitou, present day recreation commonly includes hiking, backpacking, camping, swimming, relaxing on the beach, and visiting cultural sites. Leland Public School utilizes the islands for field trips and student retreats, such as cross country and soccer team training camps.

Cece Chatfield has visited the islands at least a dozen times as a camper and as house guest of an island property owner. She has utilized both private boat rides and the ferry. One of her favorite trips was in 2011 when Cece, her 90-year-old mother, and two young daughters took the ferry to join her friend for a two-week stay at the last private residence on NMI.

"Being out there gave me the feeling I had as a young child in the early '70s on the Leelanau Peninsula. They were carefree, easy days." Her crew picked wild apples from deserted orchards and rolled pie dough on the cottage's tin countertop. They enjoyed picnics and plays put on by her children and swam under the starry night sky. Her friend insisted they greet the ferry each day, a longtime island tradition. Her young girls ran free, playing, creating, and relishing in this simply magical place. Cece shared that, "Getting away and not having those everyday distractions that exist on the mainland forces you to be present out there, in the moment."

Her girls were initiated as honorary

volunteers by the nonprofit Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear (now known as Sleeping Bear Forever) and helped collect beach rocks for a foundation renovation at the Katy Shepard Hotel, a Cottage Row dwelling converted into a hotel in 1908.

This summer, Cece and her friend are returning to NMI, her first time back to the island cottage in 15 years. With the ferry out of service this season, they reserved roundtrip transportation with Manitou Passage Boat Tours.

"To be out there on an island and looking back at the mainland, there's something about being separated from the hustle and bustle, a new perspective on where I come from," Cece said.

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PRIMARY ELECTION

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York and other big cities, but can their economic populist message resonate with rural and Midwestern voters too?

El-Sayed, the former health director for Wayne County, favors Medicare for all, ridding politics of outside money, and ending unconditional military aid for Israel and other countries engaged in human rights violations—a message that resonates with young voters and the large Arab American community in southeast Michigan. If he wins in November, El-Sayed would become the first Muslim U.S. Senator.

El-Sayed’s campaign donations come primarily from individual grassroots contributors. Meanwhile, Congresswoman Stevens is heavily backed by outside spending and corporate-aligned political action committees, including the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Stevens has the endorsements of Whitmer and current Senator Gary Peters.

On the Republican side, Mike Rogers is running unopposed for U.S. Senate.

A high Barr to beat Bergman

Meanwhile, the primary race for Northern Michigan’s first congressional seat—a sprawling district which includes the Upper Peninsula and 15 counties in the Lower Peninsula—also features a choice between an upstart candidate who has excited activists and a well-known establishment candidate who has the support of political leaders.

Democrat Callie Barr, a veteran advocate, attorney, and educator who lives in Traverse City, is running once again to unseat Republican incumbent Jack Bergman, who bested Barr in 2024 by more than 20 percentage points. In that race, Barr beat Bergman in Leelanau and Marquette counties and lost everywhere else.

Bergman, a MAGA-aligned lawmaker who has flanked Trump during his campaign appearances in Traverse City, has represented Michigan’s first congressional district since 2017.

On her second run for office, Barr enjoys strong labor union support as well as endorsements from former Congressman Bart Stupak and fellow Traverse City resident Pete Buttigieg, who served as Transportation Secretary during the Biden administration.

“She’s made an extraordinary



Photo by Katie Dunn

Pete Buttigieg endorsed Callie Barr in Traverse City on July 10.

difference delivering for military families, and I know she’ll bring the same focus to the Capitol on behalf of Northern Michigan and the UP,” Buttigieg said of Barr on July 10.

If elected, Barr, who the *Glen Arbor Sun* profiled in October 2024, would be the first woman to win the first congressional district in Michigan’s 187-year-old statehood.

Bergman has easily won the last five elections; however, Barr points out that two years ago her campaign garnered 35,000 more votes than the Democrat who lost to Bergman in 2022—even as the 2024 election represented a right-wing shift in the United States and around the world.

“It means a lot when people in our area step forward and say, ‘This is a race we can win,’” Barr told the *Sun* while campaigning in Glen Arbor on July 26, referring to the public endorsement from Buttigieg. “At every step I have had to prove the viability of this race to win these endorsements. Pete told me to ‘Just keep going. Running can be tough.’”

Circular firing squad among Democrats?

Barr may be the Democratic establishment candidate, but progressive Yooper Kyle Blomquist has also excited progressive activists and picked up endorsements from Traverse Indivisible (TI) and the Northwest Michigan Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) chapter. Traverse City resident Wayne Stiles is also running in the primary.

Blomquist, 41, an architect from Iron Mountain, considers himself a

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Photo by Denise Sica
Kyle Blomquist spoke at an event inside a barn near Maple City.

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Democratic Socialist. The backing from Indivisible in June came as a surprise and upset the apple cart for some Democrats. (Leelanau Indivisible has not endorsed anyone.)

“Historically, we have not made endorsements in contested primaries. We respect the right of our members to evaluate candidates and make their own decisions,” wrote John DeSpelder, president of Traverse Indivisible. “This year, however, felt different. For me personally, this has involved a genuine struggle between my heart and my head. ...

“Across this district, people have watched wages stagnate, housing become unaffordable, young people leave, and communities struggle while too many politicians seemed disconnected from the realities of everyday life,” DeSpelder added. “Voters are increasingly looking for authenticity, independence, and accountability. They’re looking for candidates who show up, listen, and build trust face-to-face rather than through consultants and television ads.”

Some progressives cheered the Blomquist endorsement. Others criticized it.

“I’m quite disappointed in this decision. For one, I feel it is too early. Secondly, there is no mention of Calie Barr, who has worked tirelessly through almost two election cycles, to garner votes and build a campaign that represents this district,” wrote Stephen Hammontree. “She has been at events throughout northern Michigan and has been the face of opposition to Jack Bergman. Kyle Blomquist has not.”

Others pointed out Barr’s fundraising ability as necessary to beat Bergman.

“Hope you can raise \$3 million as [it] will take that to beat Bergman,” wrote Jamie Roseman Mills. “We need 40,000 Republicans to vote Democrat to beat Bergman who will have \$10 million. How do you intend to do that? Citizens United destroyed elections but the reality is the money is necessary to flip this seat Blue. ... What’s your plan to pull the 40,000 over to vote democratic?”

Still others called out the activist group for making an endorsement before the primary.

“TI should remain neutral,” wrote Rick Derthick. “Endorsing candidates before voters have even selected a nominee is divisive and unnecessary. If the organization’s preferred candidate goes on to lose the general election, it calls into question the value of that endorsement and diminishes TI’s credibility.”

Barr and Blomquist break down Bergman, healthcare, environment

“He’s an embarrassment to Yoopers and Northern Michiganders,” Blomquist said of Bergman. “The way he has been sycophantic toward Trump. The way he has voted alongside Trump for the Big, Beautiful Bill and attacks on SNAP benefits as rural healthcare systems shut down.”

Barr pulled no punches either when describing Bergman.

“He’s a coward. He won’t hold debates. We’ve had no interaction with him. He doesn’t live here (in the first congressional district). When you’re paid to do a job, you should show up and do your job. You should stand by it.

Barr also singled out the 2025 Veteran Choice Act, which Bergman supports, for opening the door to private companies filing veterans’ initial benefits claims—something currently illegal.

“I have spent my adult life fighting for military families and veterans, and I will make sure that they get the benefits that they have earned,” she told the *Leelanau Enterprise*.

Both Barr and Blomquist tout their ability to reach across the aisle and engage in bipartisan dialogue.

“This seat is not a seat for Democrats or Republicans; it’s a northern Michigan seat,” said Barr.

From Bergman and the federal government, both candidates see chaos, corruption and destabilization, along with rising costs of groceries, gasoline and healthcare.

Blomquist said that corporate consolidation of hospitals has hurt Yoopers, many of whom have lost services in their communities and now travel long distances for healthcare visits.

“I’ve seen my neighbors’ material conditions deteriorating,” said

Blomquist. “We shouldn’t have commodified healthcare. I support Medicare for all, from birth to death, which should be covered by your taxes. We’re the only developed nation in the world that doesn’t provide universal healthcare.”

Barr has called for repealing Medicaid cuts in the federal budget bill Bergman voted for, warning that rural hospitals in the district can’t absorb the loss.

“Already in the past year and a half, we have lost three labor-and-deliveries in this district,” she told the *Enterprise*, referring to maternity units.

Blomquist spoke to the *Sun* on July 20, a few days after the acrid smoke from wildfires in Canada and Minnesota sent Northern Michiganders indoors or searching for medical masks left over from the COVID pandemic.

“As a kid I never remember staying indoors in the summer because of wildfire smoke,” he reflected. “Man-made climate change is a thing, and it’s accelerating because we have neglected the science. We need to break our reliance on fossil fuels, and we can’t rely on utility companies to dictate the timeline.”

Blomquist advocated for a green new deal with investments in public utilities to keep rates down and a mass effort to decarbonize our economy.

Barr decried how the Trump administration, with the backing of Bergman and others in Congress, have rolled back clean energy initiatives.

“We need to think about workforce development. We need to be a leader in the new economy. This is our future,” she said.

She recalled how under Elon Musk and the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), the administration cut resources to keep invasive species out of the Great Lakes and cut

staffing for the National Park Service.

“If we want to protect our environment, we need appropriate staffing levels in federal services, and we need to make sure they’re run by competent people.

“Our natural environment is our way of life,” Barr added.

Housing, data centers, jobs

“Housing isn’t just a local issue, it’s a national one,” said Barr.

As potential solutions she named Michigan’s 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, a bipartisan legislative package that Gov. Whitmer signed into law this month that cuts regulatory red tape, modernizes Department of Housing and Urban Development programs, and restricts institutional investors from hoarding single-family housing inventory.

“We need to look at zoning and where we can build. We need access to capital so our developers can build. We need to work across levels of government. Tariffs driving up the cost of timber doesn’t help.”

As an architect, Blomquist sees private equity firms as contributing to the housing crisis. He favors a return to subsidized public housing.

As for data centers, which some see as targeting Michigan’s rural communities, Blomquist supports a full moratorium on new construction.

“Right now the flood gates are open. We need a federal licensure process to make sure they’re not draining aquifers or polluting water,” he said. “We need to use this opportunity to negotiate from a position of strength and make sure Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not stealing our data privacy, not engaging

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in mass surveillance, and not producing weapons.”

Barr emphasized local control and knowledge before reaching conclusions about data centers.

“It’s important to recognize that these new types of mega data centers are totally different,” she said. “We need regulations to protect fresh water. We need to make sure any increased energy costs are borne by companies and not by people. We already have folks who can’t bear the costs of utilities. We need transparency. We need to know the risks before we can really engage here. I’m a strong believer in local control.

“A mega data center today could look different years from now. What does the cleanup look like? Who’s responsible for it? How can we protect our local communities?”

Barr compared data center development to PFAS, the forever chemicals that linger in our groundwater.

To create jobs, both candidates touted the need to invest in infrastructure.

Blomquist namedropped the Works Progress Administration, the 1930s, New Deal-era program that used federal government funds to “employ Americans to build America. ...

“We need to spend less on military and wars. We need to invest in jobs, especially in rural areas. When you make investments, jobs come out of it.”

Barr pointed out that one quarter of the first congressional district doesn’t have Internet, calling it crucial to help small businesses.

“We need to make this a place where people can come and work. We have an economy with lots of tourists

and workers on H2A and H2B visas. Some of them are afraid to come even though they’re here legally,” she said.

Barr noted that Trump’s tariffs, immigration enforcement and threats against Canada led to a 25-percent drop in visitors through the border city of Sault Ste Marie between 2024 and 2025.

“We need jobs and innovation coming here. We want ideas, we want to innovate, we want small businesses. We want to bring in population. We want to make sure our hospitals are secure, because if hospitals suffer, so do coffee shops on Main Street.

“We need to make sure that kids who are born here can stay here.”

Israel, Iran and ICE

Israel’s use of American-made weapons to prosecute its war in the Palestinian territories of Gaza and the West Bank also motivated Blomquist to run for Congress, he told the *Sun*.

“I decided I wanted my neighbors to have an option on the ballot that didn’t result in genocide and violence abroad.”

Barr said her view on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—a topic important to many young, progressive voters—is rooted in her values as a mother.

“We need a two-state solution,” she told the *Sun*. “We need to work with the region to protect innocent civilian lives. When I think of the need for humanitarian aid, clean water, food and medical care for Palestinians, I think of my own children.

“I would be guided by my values if I took a vote on military funding for Israel.”

Barr clarified that she would not withhold funding for Iron Dome, Israel’s US-sourced air defense system

which intercepts rockets fired from Iran or other hostile neighbors.

The *Sun* asked Barr about whether, as a member of Congress, she would hold Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to account for alleged war crimes committed by the Israeli military against civilians in Gaza and Lebanon. In Gaza, the mostly destroyed enclave on the Mediterranean, more than 70,000 have perished since Israel’s siege, which followed Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, terrorist attacks and murder of 1,200 Israelis—the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust.

“We need to distinguish between Netanyahu and Israel,” Barr said, before pivoting back to Northern Michigan. “I’m 110-percent focused on what’s happening here at home. Some candidates are only focused on the Middle East. ...

“I talk to people here who have don’t have running water.”

Barr was also circumspect about Congress’ role with respect to the war in Iran, which Trump and Netanyahu started in February, and which has sent shockwaves through the global economy.

“We’ve got a war right now that’s not approved by Congress, and we cannot have that. We have gas prices continuing to increase. We’ve hurt our standing around the world,” she said.

“Coming from a military family, I know the impact and trauma of war. I know it within my own family,” Barr said. “Whenever we think about getting involved in a conflict, I think about the sacred duty we have. We have lost American lives in this tragedy. I think about those families that will be impacted forever.

“Congress needs to reassert its role as a coequal branch of government. Bergman the military general has hid his face. But we’re in it now. We need to be smart about how we protect U.S. national security, how we reopen the Strait of Hormuz. We have now lost U.S. bases in the Middle East.”

Barr added that Defense Secretary Pete “Hegseth wants billions more

without a plan. There is no way we blanket reallocate funding without a plan. No way.”

Barr and Blomquist offered different reactions on what the next Congress should do about Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the department which Trump has emboldened to invade American cities like Chicago and Minneapolis, terrorize domestic populations, and incarcerate and deport hundreds of thousands of immigrants—many of whom have lived in the United States for decades, albeit without legal status, and had no criminal record. ICE’s largest detention center in the Midwest is in Baldwin, Michigan, a mere 80 minutes from the tranquility of Leelanau County.

“We should abolish ICE,” said Blomquist unequivocally. “As Democrats, we should change the messaging to make immigration our strength. Democrats should stop caving to Republicans that immigrants are a drain on our economy or are violent criminals. The data shows the opposite.”

Blomquist referenced a study published in April by the libertarian CATO Institute which showed that, over the past 30 years, undocumented immigrants paid a net tax surplus into the U.S. economy.

“If they weren’t here, our national debt would be 50 percent higher,” he said.

“Abolish ICE, return to a sane immigration policy, run it through the Department of Justice and not Homeland Security. Reappropriate all those funds



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Crystal River IV
Crystal River Outfitters
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Funistrada Restaurant

Glen Arbor Bakery
Glen Arbor Construction
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7-17-25

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BERGMAN

continues from page 14

to something more constructive.”

Barr said ICE was created for valid reasons following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, but someone competent should run the Department of Homeland Security now, and the funding should mirror that of the FBI and the CIA.

“Masked men, without names, without adequate training are going into our cities. Folks are not held accountable. This is a perversion,” she said.

“There was a place for (ICE) after 9/11. We had a gap there. I wouldn’t say we don’t need immigration enforcement. We need some. But what we have today is not that.”

Left, right, center, and socialism

Barr disagreed with comparing this first congressional primary race to the U.S. Senate primary race, where leftist El-Sayed battles centrist Stevens. Barr emphasizes that she takes no corporate PAC money, though campaign finance disclosures show that she has received contributions from leadership political action committees. Most of Barr’s funding comes from individual contributions.

“I’m from here in the district. I’m the only candidate on this side of the ticket that’s endorsed by labor,” she said, referring to the United Auto Workers, the National Education Association, the Michigan Building Trades and Northern Michigan Building Trades International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 85.

Aware of a lingering stigma surrounding the word “socialism,” Blomquist described Democratic Socialism as a movement and not a separate party.

“The easiest way to describe Democratic Socialism is that it centers the American working class before billionaires,” he said. “We in the working class are the ones who produce everything, who build things and make them run.

“The DSA doesn’t work as a third party. They put forth candidates that are on the Democratic Party ticket who guarantee health care and housing, who don’t overmilitarize our foreign policy.

“It’s a campaign of being FDR Democrats rather than Bill Clinton Democrats.”

Is Bergman vulnerable this time?

Both Barr and Blomquist believe that Bergman is vulnerable this election. So, apparently, do Justin Michal, a 43-year-old U.S. Army veteran from Grayling, and Matthew DenOtter, Republicans who are challenging him in the primary. Michal doesn’t have Bergman’s deep campaign coffers, but as evidenced by yard signs at prominent locations in Leelanau County—such



as near the Shimek farm on M-72—he does have grassroots support from some Republicans.

Michal, who believes it’s time for a new generation to lead the first congressional district, supports Congressional term limits, healthcare reform that protects Medicare, and ending U.S. financial support for proxy wars abroad. In an interview with the *Enterprise*, Michal linked the Iran war directly to fuel costs, arguing that diesel prices are squeezing industries throughout the district.

Bergman told the *Enterprise* he declined to set a timeline for when Congress should vote on continued funding for the war on Iran, which was started by Trump and Israel early this year. He said he would not do anything to “hobble the administration’s ability to keep our citizens safe and secure.”

Since the war began in late February, 18 U.S. service members have been killed, with more than 600 injured. Meanwhile, Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz, which has crippled global trade and raising energy and gas prices worldwide.



During his most recent term in Congress, Bergman voted for Trump’s “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” which included cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, gutted the SNAP-Ed national nutrition education program, and cut Affordable Care Act tax credits. On top of that, Bergman has long faced claims that his primary residence isn’t in the UP but in Louisiana.

Bergman has also raised eyebrows among constituents for accepting lucrative donations from out-of-state actors. In March, Interlochen Public Radio reported that Bergman received a check in 2025 totaling \$289,100 from

a California couple—one of the largest individual donations given to a Michigan congressional candidate. That couple was entertainment and corporate lawyer Robin Rosensweig and her husband Elliott Broidy, who runs a private equity firm that invests in technology for law enforcement and defense agencies. Broidy has deep and long-standing ties to Israel through private equity investments and pro-Israel advocacy.

Broidy pleaded guilty in 2020 to an illegal foreign lobbying scheme and was later pardoned by President Donald Trump, a pardon Bergman supported.

“He has no reason to listen to anybody here,” Wayne Stiles told the *Enterprise*.

Bergman, 79, a retired Marine lieutenant general, who has served in Congress for nearly a decade, outright dismissed his primary challengers.

“I would suggest to you, in this case, there’s no integrity within the confines of my opponent’s body (DenOtter),” Bergman told the *Enterprise*. Bergman also told Leelanau County’s weekly paper of record that he encouraged Michal, “the best thing you can do is just drop out now and endorse me, and let’s see if we can make something good happen.”

Bergman has refused to participate in debates during the primary or general election season. He last debated an opponent in September 2018 during his reelection campaign against Democratic challenger Matt Morgan. Since then, he has publicly dismissed debates as “a waste of everybody’s time” for an incumbent who already has a public voting record for voters to evaluate.

This story was supported by reporting made possible by the Northern Michigan Journalism Collaborative, led by Bridge Michigan and Interlochen Public Radio, and funded by Press Forward Northern Michigan.



Don’t miss the final Port Oneida Fair, Aug. 7-8 in Port Oneida, east of Glen Arbor.

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