Soo Locks closes for the season, repair work begins

SAULT STE. MARIE — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, has announced the Soo Locks are officially closed to navigation until March 25. The Corps will use this time to perform critical maintenance on the lock structures.

“The Soo Locks are vital as a single point of passage for shipping from the upper to lower Great Lakes,” said Lt. Col. Greg Turner, district engineer. “Maintaining our existing infrastructure and building the new lock are keys to providing a resilient link in the Great Lakes navigation system now in the decades to come.”

With the annual closure vessel traffic ceases through the Soo Locks for the season. This year during the closure, the Poe Lock will be de-watered. Crews are busy with a variety of maintenance projects in preparation to reopen in March.

The MacArthur Lock has repairs partially completed to the gate operating machinery. Additional work taking place includes inspection of gate anchorages, electronics updates and operating shelter maintenance. Work on the Poe Lock includes gate structural repairs, gate anchorage link replacement, gate stressing checks, gate tieback installation, repairs to concrete gate sills, emptying valve and valve machinery repairs, electronics updates and debris removal from the drainage system. The Poe Lock will also undergo a formal periodic inspection.

The last vessel to traverse the Poe Lock for the 2019-2020 shipping season was the 1,000-foot freighter Burns Harbor. The ship was up-bound from Burns Harbor, Indiana headed for Superior, Wisconsin for winter lay-up. The ship completed locking through January 15 at 6:44 a.m. This last vessel through the locks marks the end of a busy season and the beginning of yearly maintenance.

More than 4,500 vessels, carrying up to 80 million tons of cargo, maneuver through the locks annually. Iron ore, coal, wheat and limestone are among the most frequently carried commodities. Opened in 1969, the Poe Lock is 1,200 feet long. The MacArthur Lock was opened in 1943 and is 800 feet long.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, maintains a navigation system of 95 harbors, including the Great Lakes Connecting Channels that join lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, St. Clair and Erie.

Gaming legislation will have positive local impact

BAY MILLS — On Dec. 20, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed bipartisan House Bills into law that legalize Internet gaming and sports betting through Michigan casinos. Bay Mills Resort & Casinos plans to hit the ground running and looks forward to expanding their market.

“These new opportunities will modernize our gaming business and enable BMRC to offer exciting new games to our customers,” said Bay Mills Resort and Casinos General Manager Richard LeBlanc. “As the founders of the first casino in the state of Michigan, this is exciting new business territory we are entering into.”

The legislation will benefit not only Bay Mills Indian Community, but it will also impact the surrounding community in terms of job growth.

“We would like to thank Gov. Whitmer, House Speaker Lee Chatfield, and Sen. Wayne Schmidt for their work on this legislation,” said Bay Mills Tribal Chairman Bryan Newland. “These laws were crafted in a way that will benefit not only tribes, but also communities across northern Michigan.”
Bay Mills Executive Council discusses business

BY SHANNON JONES
BAY MILLS NEWS

BAY MILLS – Bay Mills Executive Council met for a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, Jan. 13. This was the first meeting of 2020.

After approval of prior meeting minutes and a prayer, the council heard from a group of concerned citizens about pollution remediation in the Paradise area that could impact the fishery. Council will be providing the group with a resolution of support on the issue. Council then moved into reports.

In the chairman’s report, Chairman Bryan Newland updated on the following:

- Health and Wellness: Proposed changes to bylaws of health board have been shared, waiting on feedback from the group before moving forward.
- Health Center financing: Working with USDA on financing for new health center, looking to go to bid with general contractor this spring.
- Treaty fishing: In process of negotiations on consent decree, meeting planned at Grand Traverse this week. The group is working on draft language for some proposals.
- No work done yet on constitutional reform, but this item is still on the radar.
- In economic development: Michigan enacted sports betting legislation, added it to gaming compact for BMIC. BMRC management went to Las Vegas to learn how to implement and regulate sports betting at BMRC. The tribe is still looking at cannabis business operations on tribal lands and has finalized a letter of intent with potential partner for this business. A meeting is scheduled with the governor’s office for consideration of a tribal-state compact on marijuana.
- Emergency Response Plan: Power outage issue impacted many on the reservation, with some parts in the dark up to three days. BMRC had a generator/ Bay Mart was out of business for the time. This is also public health risk for elderly tribal members. A plan is being worked on for shelters, evacuation, and checking on elders. The plan will be authorized and approved by council by end of February.
- Kronos (time-keeping system) process has been finalized with cloud-based system to be in place. This will spread cost out and be quicker to implement.
- The tribe will be changing brokers for health benefits, but for 2020 keep status quo. Work on self-funded insurance plan is the overall goal, which has become the trend in Indian Country.
- Leasing: There have been challenges in recent years (forcing compliance, subleases). Council hopes to reform ordinances to fall under the Hearth Act to manage leases without BIA oversight.
- Transition has been made moving the food bank to the lower level of Bay Mills Community College.
- Enrollment and membership questions are still being considered with much work to be done.

Tribal Manager Duane Bedell reported he is working on BIA funding for the fire crew, the economic diversification plan, and that the tribe has received funding from the Department of Transportation for a new public transportation bus.

Chief Financial Officer Albert Bertram discussed IT issues related to the power outage, noted the Exchange server for e-mail will be changed out in March, and that he is looking into utility connections for the new health center.

Human Resources Director Ken Perron is continuing to move forward with the Kronos transition, reviewing employee satisfaction surveys, and looking at how to equalize wage increases due to minimum wage increases at the state level.

Bay Mills Resort & Casino General Manager Richard LeBlanc was unable to make the meeting, but submitted a written report to council.

In Old Business, the Health Board will be moved to new business in the next meeting after review of the by-laws is complete. The Cooperative Agreement with the BIA regarding the fire crew was tabled, as was a nondisclosure agreement due to lack of communication from the company.

In New Business, the following items were approved:
- Changes to the utility ordinance that add a board member from the council who is not utilizing tribal utilities;
- Resolution for Tribal Court Training Funds: Five year agreement with BIA Office of Tribal Justice Support training funding with $112k funded this year;
- IHS Environmental Sustainability Initiative Grant application: This will bolster existing funding larger garage for e-waste, collect and agreement with Goodwill will come pick it up once a month and be transferred to Grand Rapids, no match required;
- Brown & Brown Insurance Broker contract;
- Grant application in conjunction with the Inter-Tribal Council to provide access to traditional and healthy foods, increase physical activity;
- Two raffle licenses; and
- Reaffirmation of poll votes for medical donations, counsel contract, noxious weed grant, and Christmas donation.

The next meeting of the Bay Mills Executive Council will take place on Monday, Jan. 27 at 4:30 p.m. in the tribal administration building.

The next General Tribal Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 6 p.m. in the lower level of Bay Mills Community College.
Cloverland Electric issues summary after historic storm

DAFTER — Cloverland Electric Cooperative recovered from a historic week of extended multi-day outages after freezing rain and ice paralyzed the Eastern Upper Peninsula over the New Year’s holiday. Outage counts peaked to historic levels Monday, December 30, 2019 with more than half of the co-op’s 33,000 members in the dark.

All available crews from the co-op’s five divisions worked to restore outages that numbered over 480 locations. Although crews restored thousands of outages after the initial storm, additional outages occurred and made it challenging to make an impact on the total number that fluctuated all week.

Approximately 10,000 Cloverland members remained without power New Year’s eve and approximately half of those members were still without power for several more nights.

“As far as winter storms go, this one topped the list for doing the most damage to our electrical system,” said Cloverland Electric’s Director of Operations Paul Warner. “This is the worst widespread winter storm damage I have seen in my 28 years at the co-op.”

Storm damage was extensive across Cloverland’s service territory but concentrated in Chippewa County. Cloverland Electric line crews worked 16-hour days from Monday, Dec. 30, 2019 to Monday, Jan. 6, 2020. The co-op more than doubled its manpower with the addition of 21 mutual aid crews from across Michigan and nine tree-trimming crews.

“The snow and ice build-up from this storm made the restoration efforts much more difficult than most other storms,” said Cloverland Electric’s Director of Safety Jim Wilson. “The trees continued to hang over the lines in a draped condition that made it very hard to remove.”

The impact of social media made a major difference with keeping members updated with the storm restoration process. Knowing members were preserving battery life on mobile devices, the co-op provided a schedule for daily updates so members could plan accordingly. While there were understandably some complaints expressed on Cloverland Electric’s Facebook page, the general response was overwhelmingly positive with thousands of comments of praise for line crews.

“Mother Nature has not been very kind to us lately. From Thanksgiving to New Years, we were hit with two systems reeling heavy snow, winds and ice which is never good in any combination. This storm unfortunately broke a record for the most members affected and longest duration,” said President and CEO Mike Heise. He added that an entire team of employees worked tirelessly behind-the-scenes throughout the holiday week to support restoration efforts. Heise reported the total cost of this historic outage is still being calculated but estimated it to be well over $1 million.

Cloverland Electric reminds the public to stay safe in all storm situations by staying clear of downed power lines and reporting them to 1-800-562-4953 or local law enforcement agencies. Members with access to www.cloverland.com and Cloverland Electric’s Facebook page can stay informed on updates with major outages. However, the co-op reminds its members not to use Facebook or other social media platforms to report outages since they are not connected to its outage management system. The most efficient process for reporting outages is through its SmartHub app or calling Member Services (1-800-562-4953).

Cloverland Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned utility located in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. It serves over 43,000 homes and businesses in Chippewa, Delta, Mackinac, Luce and Schoolcraft counties.

How to prepare for a power outage

- Take an inventory of the items you need that rely on electricity.
- Talk to your medical provider about a power outage plan for medical devices powered by electricity and refrigerated medicines.
- Plan for batteries and other alternatives to meet your needs when the power goes out.
- Sign up for local alerts and warning systems. Monitor weather reports.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup in central locations on every level of your home.
- Determine whether your home phone will work in a power outage and how long battery backup will last.
- Review the supplies that are available in case of a power outage. Have flashlights with extra batteries for every household member. Have enough nonperishable food and water.
- Use a thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer so that you can know the temperature when the power is restored. Throw out food if the temperature is 40 degrees or higher.
- Keep mobile phones and other electric equipment charged and gas tanks full.

During a power outage:

- Keep freezers and refrigerators closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary. Monitor temperatures with a thermometer.
- Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators, camp stoves, or charcoal grills should always be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows. Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home.
- Check on your neighbors. Go to a community location for heat and water.
What will the anointed one do next?

By Sharon M. Kennedy

Like many Americans, I have no idea what to think about Trump’s decision to kill Iranian General Soleimani. As I watched the news, I was reminded of how little the average person knows of politics at the national and international level. We have no way of learning the truth about which actions are necessary and which are dictated by the enormous egos of those in positions of power. Perhaps what Trump authorized will have positive results. Perhaps not. Iran’s modest response in the days following the assassination should not lull us into believing all is forgiven and forgotten. Unlike us, Iranians have a long history and an even longer memory.

As crazy as it seems, what I’m going to say next is easily confirmed by a Google search. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo takes his cue from the Bible and is a faithful attendee of the Cabinet’s Bible study group. He’s convinced that Trump is anointed by God and landed the presidency as a means of saving Israel from the clutches of Iran. The current state of affairs seems to confirm Pompeo’s belief that Trump was chosen to save the Jewish people from the Iranian menace which might explain why, despite his many moral and verbal flaws, evangelical Christians continue to support and praise him.

An article in a November issue of the New York Times stated, “He [Pompeo] believes in the rapture and that God is working through Trump and himself.” In an October 29, 2019 Tweet Pompeo said, “Today in 539 BC the pagan king, Cyrus the Great, entered Babylon and freed the Jewish people from captivity. His respect for human rights and religious freedom inspired America’s founding fathers.” Pompeo’s hostility towards Iran apparently prompted him to encourage Trump to kill Soleimani. It’s likely he was also instrumental in moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move that would be necessary to receive the coming of the real Messiah in accordance with Jewish belief.

Being guided by the Bible in the hallowed halls of a government that has abolished the practice of praying everywhere except in churches and private homes may seem like a load of poppycock. However, there must be a reason for the loyalty Trump inspires. I suppose one explanation is as good as the next even if it sounds ridiculous. Trump anointed by God makes as much sense as Pompeo being anointed by the devil, but who knows. I suppose stranger things have happened.

Here’s another interesting twist. Mike Pence also believes the president was chosen by God but for a different purpose. His take is if Trump is impeached by the Senate, it would fulfill God’s ultimate plan to make Pence president. If your head isn’t already spinning, consider the book “God’s Chaos Candidate” written by evangelical leader, Lance Wallnau, who predicted the election of Trump which would pave the way for the true leader, Pence.

As we concentrate on impeachment proceedings, Iran, and try to digest the idea of God choosing a U.S. president, we ignore Executive Orders that continue to be signed into law and how they impact our daily life. Anointed or otherwise, Trump delights in giving us a good show especially when it’s a thriller. So what will be the final scenario of the current drama be? How will the play end? Will there be mass retaliation here at home or will the missiles be confined to U.S. military bases throughout the Middle East? Was the killing of Soleimani an act of a genius protected by God or the act of a moron running amuck? By the time you read this we’ll probably have a better idea, but before the final curtain falls, the last scene will undoubtedly be played out far into the future.

Kennedy is a freelance writer who resides in Brimley. She is also the author of Life in a Tin Can, available on Amazon. Kennedy can be contacted at sharonkennedy1947@gmail.com.
Ojibwe Charter School recently chose their December Students of the Month. Ojibwe Charter School uses the Seven Grandfather Teachings for their Student of the Month program along with TRIBE. TRIBE is a positive system of following school wide rules. TRIBE stands for; Treat others kindly, Ready to learn, I need to listen, Be safe, and Everyone tries their best. The Grandfather teaching for December was Humility or Dbaadendiziwin.

Humility is represented by the wolf. For the wolf, life is lived for his pack and the ultimate shame is to be outcast. Humility is to know that you are a sacred part of creation. Live life selflessly and not selfishly. Respect your place and carry your pride with your people and praise the accomplishments of all. Do not become arrogant and self-important. Find balance within yourself and all living things.

Caleb Parish/Kindergarten - Ms. Heikkinen

Our Grandfather teaching of the month was Humility. Caleb was chosen for Student of the Month. He is kind to his classmates and is always happy when they do a good job. Caleb is a joy to have in class and he has grown so much over the school year. Great job Caleb!

Brayden Atchison/1st & 2nd Grade - Mrs. Dell

Brayden shows humility regularly. He is just as happy about others accomplishments as he is for himself. He always stays humble and kind to others.

Calob Shimmons/3rd & 4th grade - Mrs. Bowen

The student of the month for third and fourth grade is Calob Shimmons. Calob is an incredibly polite and respectful young man. He comes to school each day with a smile on his face and is dedicated to being the best version of himself, putting a great amount of effort into everything he does. Calob always contributes to classroom discussions and serves as a role model for his peers. We are lucky that he is in our class and he absolutely deserves to be student of the month! Way to go Calob.

Sienna Kuzmik/5th & 6th grade - Mrs. Ennes

My student of the month is Sienna Kuzmik. I have been really impressed with how Sienna has grown and matured in the last month. She encourages her classmates success and does not concern herself with taking the credit or being the center of attention. Her desire to see others succeed and her modest demeanor in the classroom are two of the many ways which she embodies humility on a regular basis.
OCS announces Spotlight Readers for December

Kindergarten
Lola has been chosen for Spotlight reader because her continuous effort to increase her reading and comprehension skills. She is always excited to talk about books, learn new words and read books on her own. -Ms. Heikkinen

First Grade/Second Grade
Elijah has shown great improvements in his reading and is proud to show his growth. Very proud of the hard work and dedication. - Mrs. Dell

Third Grade
December's spotlight reader for 3rd grade is Rebecca Goloversic. Rebecca really seems to enjoy reading and sharing what she is reading with others. Rebecca is an excellent example for her peers in reading. Great work Rebecca. - Mrs. Bowen

Fourth Grade
The fourth grade spotlight reader for December is Ricky Robbins. Ricky works hard in reading to meet his goals. He is always trying to improve and become a better reader. Keep it up Ricky! -Mrs. Bowen

Fifth Grade & Sixth Grade
The 5th and 6th grade spotlight reader for December is Tayvin. Tayvin is often found reading in the quiet moments when he is finished with an assignment. He enjoys reading and models positive reading strategies in class. -Mrs. Ennes

Cloverland Electric offers Power of Excellence Scholarship

Cloverland Electric Cooperative will award a $1,500 Power of Excellence scholarships to a graduating high school senior in each District A, B and C. These scholarships are one-time, non-renewable scholarships.

Eligibility for the scholarship applicants include:
• Student/Applicant must be a graduating high school senior with a minimum 2.75 grade point average, based on a 4.0 scale.
• Student/Applicant’s parent or legal guardian must be a member of Cloverland Electric Cooperative and currently receiving electric service from the cooperative.
• Student/Applicant must be enrolled or planning to enroll as a full-time student at an accredited university, college or vocational/technical school for the 2020 fall term.

Completed applications must be submitted by March 6, 2020 by 4:30 p.m. to be considered. All supporting materials and documentation must be included with the application. Email to: coop@cloverland.com OR Mail to: Cloverland Electric Cooperative, Scholarship Committee, 725 E. Portage Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria: grade-point average (GPA), school involvement and achievements, community service and work experience, personal statement of educational and career goals, essay, and letters of recommendation. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Cloverland Electric Cooperative will only notify the three award recipients. Winners will be announced by June 1, 2020.

Applications and full instructions can be found online at www.cloverland.com or by clicking this link.

Indigenous College Planning Guidebook available for Native students

A new college-going guide created for Native students by Native students is now available.
The 36-page Indigenous College Planning Guidebook was published by the College Board this fall and features advice and insights from Native college students regarding the admission process.

The free resource includes information about college prep programs, scholarships, and on-campus resources aimed specifically at Native students. It also offers step-by-step instructions to help students select challenging high school classes, apply for financial aid, and complete college applications. You can access the guidebook online at https://professionals.collegeboard.org/pdf/indigenous-college-planning-guidebook.pdf
Bill would ban the practice of lunch shaming

By CAROL ABBEY-MENSAH
Capital News Service

LANSING — A Southeast Michigan lawmaker is renewing an effort to prohibit schools from stigmatizing students who owe lunch money or can’t afford to buy a school meal.

The practice, known as lunch shaming, sometimes involves kitchen staff throwing away students’ hot lunches and offering them cold sandwiches instead. While the purpose is to push parents to settle their children’s debts, it also embarrasses the students because they’re identified and sometimes picked on by their peers.

To curb lunch shaming in school districts, Senate Minority Leader Jim Ananich, D–Flint, has reintroduced what he called the “Hunger Free Students Bill of Rights.”

“Sometimes students will receive a substandard lunch, or they are forced to perform chores or wear a stigmatizing wristband,” Ananich said.

His bill aims to prevent such behavior by ensuring that school boards not publicly identify or stigmatize students who cannot pay for a school meal or owe a lunch debt.

“No child should be publicly embarrassed in front of their peers due to a low balance,” Ananich said. “Matters of lunch account balances should be taken up with students’ parents.”

All the Great Lakes states have introduced legislation or programs to tackle lunch shaming. Minnesota was the first to pass a lunch shaming law in 2014.

Apart from preventing stigmatization, the bill would require school boards to ensure the confidentiality of pupils who qualify for free and reduced-price meals.

A similar bill was unsuccessful in 2018.

He predicts that as more parents, students and teachers share stories of lunch shaming policies they see in their schools, more legislators will have an interest in working with him on the legislation.

Harmony Lloyd, who lives in Grand Blanc, inspired Ananich’s legislation. She became interested in lunch shaming in 2018 after she heard of a local child’s lunch thrown away due to lunch debt.

“I vaguely recollected hearing stories of kids having lunch debt,” Lloyd said. “But it wasn’t until my son came home and told me the story that I really began researching the issue.”

Lloyd called a school cafeteria worker to check out the story.

“She confirmed that this was the policy and that it happened often,” Lloyd said. “She also shared that the cafeteria workers hated to do it but were told they would be fired if they gave away any lunches.”

After she brought the issue up at a school board meeting and had a friend donate money to support the indebted students, other parents contacted her to share similar stories.

“This is when I reached out to the media and to Sen. Ananich,” Lloyd said.

Lori Adkins, a child nutrition consultant with Oakland Schools, said a bill like Ananich’s could help with the problem, but there must also be good communication and understanding among parents, school districts and food service workers.

“The food service workers must understand what the policies are so that they will be able to deal with issues like this appropriately,” Adkins said.

When it comes to communicating with parents, some school districts are already putting in effort.

“School districts send emails to parents telling them about [overdue] balances, but sometimes the parents can’t pay because they have fallen on hard times,” Adkins said.

The bill is pending in the Senate Committee on Education and Career Readiness.

Carol Abbey-Mensah writes for Great Lakes Echo.

52nd annual Soo I-500 takes place on Feb. 1

SAULT STE. MARIE — Join thousands of drivers, sled heads, and snowmobile enthusiasts for the professional racing excitement of the 52nd annual International 500 Snowmobile Race on Saturday, Feb. 1. Known as the granddaddy of snowmobile endurance racing, the I-500 is the world’s longest, fastest, toughest oval race event. Professional athletes from all over the U.S. and Canada ride the monster mile in hopes of winning this prestigious race, and adding their names to the history books of snowmobile racing.

Every year, the I-500’s main event is always held on the first Saturday of every February starting promptly at 10 a.m. However, all the excitement of the I-500 starts a week prior to the main event beginning on Sunday, Jan. 26. The I-500 Snowmobile Race hosts time trials, mid-week racing events, and fun activities for the whole family throughout Michigan’s oldest city, Sault Ste. Marie. A full schedule of events can be found online at I-500.com.

Spectator gates open at 8 a.m. on race day, with vintage snowmobiles on display. Spectators can enjoy the heated hospitality tent all day. Vendors will also be on site with food and beverages. Opening ceremonies start at 9 a.m., with rider introductions at 9:30 p.m. Then, after the Invocation and National Anthem(s) the Green flag drops promptly at 10 a.m. Weather and track conditions will ultimately determine the length of the race. The race banquet will take place at Kewadin Casino approximately 90 minutes after the race has ended.
LSSU announces annual list of banished words

SAULT STE. MARIE - The wordsmiths at Lake Superior State University have released LSSU's 45th annual List of Words Banished from the Queen's English for Mis-use, Over-use and General Uselessness.

The influencers in the English Department at Lake Superior State University have announced LSSU's 45th annual List of Words Banished from the Queen's English for Misuse, Overuse and General Uselessness.

"These days, 'living your best life' is 'literally' impossible with 'influencers' making us 'totes' 'jelly,'” an LSSU spokesperson ‘chirped.’ “I mean, the least they could do is watch their words.”

OK, boomer.

The Word Banishment tradition, created by the late W. T. Rabe, former public relations director at Lake Superior State University, is now in its fifth decade. For every new year since 1976, LSSU — also known for premier programs in nursing, engineering, robotics, and Great Lakes freshwater research — has issued this list.

Rabe and fellow LSSU faculty and staff came up with the first list of words and phrases that people love to hate at a New Year's Eve party in 1975, publishing it on Jan. 1, 1976. Though he and his friends created the first list from their own pet peeves about language, Rabe said he knew from the volume of mail he received in the following weeks that the group would have no shortage of words and phrases from which to choose for 1977.

Since then, the list has consisted entirely of nominations received from around the world throughout the year.

Through the years, LSSU has received tens of thousands of nominations for the list, which now includes more than a thousand entries. This year’s list is culled from nominations received mostly through the university’s website, lssu.edu/banished. Word-watchers target pet peeves from everyday speech, as well as from the news, fields of education, technology, advertising, politics and more. A committee makes a final cut in December.

Noticeable trends for the past decade show the influx of social media language into our daily lives, with ‘tweet,” “app,” “sexting,” and “friend” as a verb being banished. Since 2010, each year has seen additional social media terms appearing on lists: “Facebook” and “Google” as verbs, “selfie,” “Twittersphere,” “break the internet,” and “ghosting” to name a few. Since 2016, a noticeable trend of exhaustion with words rooted in politics and media coverage has emerged: “post-truth,” “echochamber,” “fake news,” and “collusion” appear on the 2017-2019 lists. This latter trend persists in the 2020 list with the most-nominated word: “quid pro quo.”

“Quid pro quo was offered during the creation of this meticulously curated list of words,” said Dr. Rodney Hanley, LSSU president, “I mean, literally, this holiday season I’m living my best life and looking forward to all the reactions to this years list.”

And now, the 2020 list:

The Most Nominated Word or Phrase for 2020

Quid pro quo: This phrase received the most nominations this year, with a noticeable spike in November (gee, we wonder why…). The popularity of this phrase has the committee wondering what it should offer in exchange for next year’s nominations.

Words that attempt to make something more than it is

Artisanal: One nominator described this word as an “obfuscation,” describing an “actual person doing something personal for another unknown person.” The committee agrees this word should be banned for well water… but not for sandwiches.

Curated: Like “artisanal,” this seems to be another attempt at making something more than it is, especially when used in reference to social media (or Banished Words Lists). As Barb from Ann Arbor says, “Save it for the museum.”

Influencer: According to Urban Dictionary, “A word Instagram users use to describe themselves to make them feel famous and more important when no one really know who they are or care.”

Words Banished for pretentiousness or imprecision

Literally: Surprisingly, this word hasn’t already been banished, but here it is, one of the few words in English that has begun to serve as its own antonym. Many of the nominators cite this word’s use for figurative expressions or emphasis, which is literally annoying.

Living my best life: The committee very much enjoys exercising its authority in banishing words annually—literally the capstone of our year—but as Eric says, apart from reincarnation, are there “options for multiple lives”?

Mouthfeel: A word used by foodies to describe the texture of food or drink in the mouth, which the committee feels should be banished entirely from food reality TV shows. As our nominator asks, “Where else, exactly, would you like to touch your food or beverage?” This one just doesn’t feel right in the mouth.

Chirp: This one is a new insult for the non-millennials on the committee. Before we get chirped for being out of touch, as our nominator suggests, why don’t we leave it to the birds?

Jelly: An abbreviation of “jealous,” the committee agrees with the nominator of this word who suggested that it’s better left for toast.

Totes: Another abbreviation, this time of “totally.” Totes overused.

Vibe / vibe check: A new use of the 60s term, “good vibes.” This one just doesn’t vibe with us anymore, unless the speaker is actually vibrating.

OK, Boomer: This phrase caught on late this year on the Internet as a response from millennials to the older generation. Boomers may remember, however, that generational tension is always present. In fact, it was the Boomers who gave us the declaration: “Don’t trust anyone over 30!”
Great Lakes water levels higher than last year at this time

DETROIT - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, has announced that water levels on each of the Great Lakes started 2020 higher than they started 2019, a year where many record high water levels were set across the lakes.

The Corps urges those impacted by the high water levels of 2019 to prepare for similar levels again in 2020. The most recent six-month forecast of Great Lakes water levels shows water levels continuing to be well above average over this period. Unlike last year, lakes Michigan and Huron are forecasted to reach record high levels this year.

“It is likely that water levels on lakes Michigan and Huron will set new monthly mean record high levels over the next couple of months,” said John Allis, chief of the Great Lakes Hydraulics and Hydrology Office, Detroit District. “This sets the stage for coastal impacts and damages in 2020 similar to, or worse than, what was experienced last year.”

The Detroit District monitors and forecasts Great Lakes’ water levels and provides the data and analysis on their Website www.lre.usace.army.mil.

Several natural factors contribute to the record lake levels. Persistent wet conditions across the Great Lakes basin continue to drive high water levels. Many cities across the basin set records in 2019 for the wettest period on record. The warmer than average temperatures in December led to greater runoff due to snow pack melting, especially on lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron, leading to more water supply. The warm air also caused less evaporation off the lakes’ surface, which leads to more water in the system.

The water levels of each lake peaked during this past summer or fall and since then have been in a seasonal decline, however, significant erosion continues in many locations as water levels remain extremely high. Strong storm systems and resulting large waves have led to substantial erosion along much of the Great Lakes coastline.

High water levels pose dangers to people and property

High water levels create safety hazards, such as submerged breakwaters, dangerous rip currents and electric shock risks.

Submerged structures: Use extreme vigilance while boating – many piers, docks and portions of breakwaters are currently under water and not visible above the water surface. Winds often affect local water levels, pushing them dramatically higher during storms and windy days. Structures that may be visible on a calm day may not be visible on a windy day.

Although breakwater structures were primarily built for navigation, they are also often used for recreation. Walking along breakwater structures can be hazardous – uneven slippery surfaces, especially when doubled with wave action, increase the risk of falling in to the water. Large armor stones may be hidden below the water surface and there is risk of getting wedged between armor stones or striking a stone with one’s body, should an individual fall or jump into the water.

“The Detroit District has a broad range of engineering and flood fight expertise it can bring to communities to help them respond to flooding they are experiencing,” said Pat Kuhne, chief of Emergency Management, Detroit District. “We have been supplementing State and local efforts, by providing advice to neighborhoods and homeowners on how to protect their properties. If you need this type of assistance, reach out to your County emergency management office who can make the official request.”

Rip currents: Water circulation can differ with changes in water levels. When water levels, wind and waves increase, so does the risk of dangerous currents. Rip currents and structural currents are a common cause of drowning. Rip currents are fast-moving, narrow currents of water that flow away from shore. Structural currents can occur at fixed structures such as breakwaters and piers, and flow away from shore parallel to the structure. To get out of a rip current, it is advised to “Flip, Float, Follow” until the current subsides to save your energy and reduce your risk of drowning.

Electric shock and drowning: Electric shock drowning is an increased risk due to high water levels. Water-overtopped docks at marinas or public areas may have electrical hook-ups, which have the potential to shock someone that has come in contact with the water. When immobile due to shock, the risk of drowning increases.

Other water dangers. Cold water, even in summer months, can be a significant safety threat. Water can quickly drop in temperature up to 30 degrees when upwelling takes place, which is caused when winds push warm surface water away from an area and cold water moves in. Being immersed in cold water (60°F degrees and colder) can cause cold water shock during the first minute of exposure. Cold water shock causes gasping and difficulty in breathing, followed by muscle failure, all of which can lead to drowning.
Walking on

Donna Faye Benoit
Donna Faye Benoit, 60, of Bruce Township, Michigan passed away Friday morning, Jan. 10, 2020, at the Pennington Home in Pickford, Michigan.
Donna was born on June 5, 1959, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to the late Harold and Marion (DePlonty) Reid. She graduated from Sault Area High School, with the class of 1977. Donna enjoyed camping, sewing, swimming, fishing, and spending time with her grandchildren.
Donna is survived by her husband: Edward “Ed” Benoit, whom she married on July 10, 1982, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; her daughter: Angie (Dan) Bonnee of Bruce Township, MI; two grandchildren: Eddie Bonnee and Kaelynn Bonnee; two sisters: Cheri (Dave) Wedge of St. Clair, MI and Lonna (Mike) Ferraro of Kincheloe, MI; and Courtney Moon, of Sault Ste. Marie, MI, who was like a daughter to her.
Donna was preceded in death by her parents.
A funeral service will be held at 4:00 PM on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020, at C.S. Mulder Funeral Home with Stella DePlonty officiating. Friends may call at the funeral home from 2:00 PM until the time of the service. Burial will be at Donaldson Cemetery in the spring.
In lieu of flowers, memorials may be left to Pennington House, or to help with funeral expenses.

Patrick Joseph (Crimins) Hascall
Pat was born on April 1, 1933, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. He served his country in the United States Army during the Korean War, working in the motor pool. In addition to various other awards, Pat also received two purple hearts for his service. He was a member of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the VFW post #9023, and the DAV.
On March 28, 1959, Pat married Nancy Taylor in Brimley, Michigan. For many years, Pat worked as a dredgeman for various companies and the Corp of Engineers. He was involved with many aspects of his community, including his role as Fire Chief and Ambulance crew member, as well as Township Supervisor for Bay Mills Township. He and his wife opened the Iroquois Grocery Store and ran it for many years afterwards. In his spare time, Pat enjoyed fishing and playing cribbage with his friends and family. He had a big heart and loved to help others. Pat also enjoyed hiding his Tootsie Rolls from Nancy.
Pat was preceded in death by a son: Shannon R.W. Hascall; his parents: Clinton and Viola Hascall; three sisters: Sharon, Clintia, and Marsha; and three brothers: Michael, Clinton, and Clayton.
Mass took place Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Church with Brother John Hascall as celebrant. Burial will be at Mission Hill Cemetery in the spring.
In lieu of flowers, memorials may be left to the Hospice of the EUP.

Mike and Kathy Williams
Kathy was born Sept. 29, 1973 in Ishpeming to Lawrence J. ‘Jim’ and Katherine B. ‘Honey’ (Laveau) Copley and graduated from Gwinn High School, Class of 1991. She earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Northern Michigan University and was employed as a second-grade teacher for Sault Ste. Marie Area Public Schools and most recently as a special education teacher at JKL Bahweting Anishnaabe School. She was a selfless volunteer for the schools and also the local community, having coached basketball, cheerleading and volunteered for the Relay of Life among other organizations.
Michael was born Nov. 14, 1970 in Pontiac to David R. Williams and Tina M. Chiapelli. He proudly served in the Michigan National Guard and was called into active duty serving in the United States Army in Kuwait and Iraq, being honorably discharged in 2006. Michael was employed as a machinist for Superior Fabrication Company in Kincheloe.
Kathy and Michael were avid bowlers, and during the summer, they enjoyed golfing at Tanglewood Marsh in the Sault. Most important to them was spending time with their family.
Surviving are their three children: Joseph, Christopher and Anastasia Williams. Kathy is also survived by her father, Jim; 10 brothers and sisters: Mary (Dave) Hermann, Shirley (Bill) Fountain, Barbara (Bruce) Copley-Gierke, Tina (Dan) Locke, Nancy (Gary) Nellist, Lawrence (Misi) Copley, Jr., Martha (Richard) Diercks, Rita (Robert) Savola, Theresa (Jeffrey) Andrews and David (Patti) Copley; and numerous nieces and nephews. Michael is also survived by his mother, Tina; step-mother, Denajo Williams; brother, David Williams; three sisters: Laura, Theresa and Michelle; and numerous nieces and nephews.
Kathy was preceded in death by her mother, and Michael was preceded in death by his father and a brother, Tony.

JKL Bahweting School and Sault Area Schools are working together to host an Open House Memorial for Kathy and Mike Williams. The memorial will be from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020, at the Big Bear Hospitality Room (upstairs). This is for all members of the Sault Ste. Marie community. In lieu of flowers, memorial
Robert "Rob" Berkland


Rob was born on April 24, 1960, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to the late Alfred and Evelyn (Aikens) Berkland. He was a member of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Rob enjoyed playing the guitar and singing. He also enjoyed nature walks, camping, and traveling.

Rob is survived by his daughter: Brandi Aube of Sault Ste. Marie; five grandchildren: Atticus, Frank, Thomas, Seth, and Leah; siblings: Leo Berkland and Karen Berkland both of Sault Ste. Marie, and Brenda (Bruce) Lipponen of Brimley, MI.

Rob was preceded in death by his parents, a son: Nathan Berkland; and a sister: Pamela Mahanna.

Services have taken place with the assistance of C.S. Mulder Funeral Home.

Donnell Conde "Bubba" Avery


Donnell was born on Oct. 18, 1970, in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to the late Howard and Eleanor (Riley) Avery, Jr. He attended Sault High School. On Aug. 23, 1991, Donnell married Roxanna (Payment) in St. Ignace, Michigan. He worked as an auto mechanic for many years and was currently employed at Northern Sand and Gravel. He was a hard worker and he enjoyed having a beer with his friends. He also enjoyed mud runs, truck pulls, and his dog Riley, who went everywhere with him. He was a member of the Moose Lodge #717.


Donnell was preceded in death by his parents and his former girlfriend Michelle Goetz Elliott.

Frances “Francie” Elaine Robbins

Frances “Francie” Elaine Robbins died surrounded by the love of her family on Dec. 17, 2019. Francie was born in Prescott, Michigan on Oct. 27, 1928 to Arlington and Anna Osborne. She was a life-long educator who began her education in a one-room school house, graduated high school as salutatorian, and continued her higher education at Central Michigan and Northern Michigan Universities completing both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in elementary education.

Francie was an educator for 47 years, and the Brimley elementary principal from 1970 to 1995. She led numerous initiatives and earned a wide-range of awards and recognitions for her tireless efforts to educate local youth. In recognition of her contributions to the Brimley Area Schools, and the community, the Brimley School Board dedicated the School Library in her name in 2013.

Francie was a devoted member of the First Congregational Church of Brimley guiding youth programs and serving as the choir director for 60 years.

She was an active member of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, holding multiple leadership positions to support women educators. She was the founding member of the Brimley Al-Anon chapter, and one of the founding members of the Women Today Inc. and the Superior Township Volunteer Ambulance core. Francie was a volunteer for the Bay Mills-Brimley Historical Society, as well as numerous other community organizations and functions.

Francie is preceded in death by her parents; husband, Robert (Bob) Robbins; her son Eric Robbins; her sister, Lois Freeburn; her brother, Lloyd Osborne; her sister-in-law, Della Osborne, and her granddaughter, Angel Charles.

She was a fiercely loyal friend and a devoted family matriarch who effortlessly transitioned from the demands of her professional career to caring for her family.

She enjoyed time in her garden, baking (especially her famous cinnamon rolls) and days at the family cabin on the shores of Lake Superior.

She was affectionately known as “Ma” to her children and grandchildren. She is survived in death by her children, G.J. Hallesy, Reg and Laurie Robbins, Carole Robbins-Johnston; grandchildren, Darrell and Becky Mead, Sara and Paris Billiot, Nathan Hallesy, Erica and Bryan Newland, Kurt Robbins, Steven and Tonya Robbins, Cody Robbins; great-grandchildren D.J. and Ellen Mead, John Mead, Graydon Newland, Meredith Newland, Deshawn Lowes, Brody Hallesy, Bobby Robbins and Mila Croad; great-great granddaughters Quinn and Alayna Mead; brother-in-law Claude Freeburn, and most special nieces Bonnie Gerrity and Judy (Gary) Cole.

Services were held at the First Congregational Church of Brimley on Saturday, Dec. 21, 2019.
The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed the first influenza-associated pediatric deaths of the 2019-2020 flu season in Michigan. Influenza claims the lives of children every year across the United States. MDHHS is urging residents to get vaccinated for protection this season.

The reported deaths involve children from Shiawassee and Wayne counties who were infected with Influenza B. Nationally, there have been 32 influenza-associated pediatric deaths reported during the 2019-2020 flu season. Additional possible cases will continue to be investigated by state and local public health agencies.

“These tragic deaths are a reminder of how serious influenza can be,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health for MDHHS. “I urge all Michiganders ages six months and older to get their flu shots if they have not already done so this season. It is not too late.”

Flu is a contagious respiratory disease caused by different strains of the influenza virus and can result in mild to severe illness. Michigan has experienced widespread flu activity over the past few weeks. A majority of the positive influenza specimens confirmed by MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories this flu season have been Influenza B virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, during last year’s flu season there were an estimated 34,200 deaths from influenza. In Michigan, four children died last year due to flu-related complications, while nationally there were 136 flu-related deaths among children.

MDHHS strongly recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a seasonal flu vaccine. Flu vaccine is the best way to prevent against getting the flu and can also reduce the severity of flu illness. During the 2018-2019 flu season, only 46.1 percent of Michigan residents were vaccinated against flu, below the national rate of 49.2 percent.

Vaccines are especially important for people at increased risk for complications from flu, including children, adults aged 65 years and older, persons of any age with underlying medical conditions and pregnant women. Children less than six months of age are too young to be vaccinated and need to be protected by vaccination of their close contacts, including parents, siblings, grandparents, childcare workers and healthcare personnel.

It takes up to two weeks after the vaccine is administered before the body builds up enough immunity to prevent the flu, so Michigan residents should get vaccinated now to protect themselves before flu activity increases in Michigan. The flu shot is made with inactivated or killed viruses and cannot give you influenza.

There is still plenty of flu vaccine available. To find flu vaccine near you, call your healthcare provider, local health department or check the Health Map Vaccine Finder at Flushot.healthmap.org. For more information about the flu, visit Michigan.gov/flu.

To learn more about the influenza vaccine and other vaccines, visit IVaccinate.org.

Hospitals announce flu restrictions

The first floor OB Department at War Memorial Hospital in Sault Ste. Marie is now under flu restriction. Precautions are being taken for the safety of the patients at this time. No visitors under the age of 18 will be admitted, and only significant others/labor support persons, and grandparents to the infant will be permitted on the floor.

If flu-like symptoms are present in permitted visitors, you may also be restricted from the floor. Please note, you are contagious 24 hours before symptoms appear.

In Petoskey, McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital is also limiting visitors to those age 12 and older, and only immediate family. All visitors are being asked to use hand hygiene when entering the premises and masks are available.

Both facilities will announce when restrictions are removed.
Select Upper Peninsula streams no longer have increased brook trout daily possession limit

An experimental regulation that allowed for 33 streams in the Upper Peninsula to have a 10-fish daily possession limit for brook trout is no longer in effect. During its regular meeting today in Lansing, the Michigan Natural Resources Commission voted to return the five-fish daily limit to those streams, effectively immediately.

The regulation expired Oct. 1, 2019, and the commission then voted in November to extend it. Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologists had recommended against re-instituting the 10-brook trout daily possession limit on the select streams because of concerns based on biological and social science.

The newly approved regulation means all Type 1 streams, which are designated trout streams, in the Upper Peninsula are back to having a five-fish daily possession limit for brook trout. The streams with previously higher daily possession limit represented about 8 percent of the total mileage for Type 1 streams in the U.P.

The 2020 season on Type 1 trout streams will open April 25. For more information on Michigan’s fishing regulations, check out the 2019 Michigan Fishing Guide at michigan.gov/DNRDigests.

Mackinac Bridge rolling out new format for MacPass

ST. IGNACE -- The MacPass toll card is being replaced with a windshield-mounted sticker for customer convenience, and for a limited time they are available for free.

The Mackinac Bridge Authority has been slowly replacing current MacPass cards with the new stickers for the past few months and is now encouraging others to make the switch as well. Customers are encouraged to visit the MacPass website at https://MacPass.MackinacBridge.org to sign up for an account and receive stickers in the mail.

"Unlike the old MacPass cards that required drivers to roll down their window and hold the card near the reader device, the new system will automatically scan the windshield sticker when drivers pull up to the toll booths," said MBA Executive Secretary Kim Nowack. "Drivers still need to stop and wait for the gate to rise before proceeding, but the new process will speed transactions for frequent customers."

The stickers are part of a new tolling software system installed last fall. Anyone can open a MacPass account, which allows for online deposits and transaction information. MacPass stickers are currently free but will be $1 each after July 1, 2020. MacPass customers can use toll lanes designated for MacPass by the overhead signs, or any open lane. Drivers should still watch for toll collectors and customers walking across lanes.

Though the MacPass is not exclusively for commuter customers, MacPass holders with passenger vehicles can still qualify for the commuter discount toll if they make both a northbound and southbound trip within 36 hours. The toll will be $4 for the first trip but customers will not be charged for the return trip if completed within 36 hours.

Current MacPass cards can still be used through the end of 2020. MacPass is the only tolling transponder currently in use at the Mackinac Bridge; I-Pass, E-ZPass, SunPass, etc., though similar, are not accepted.

Customers who already have a MacPass account can still use their cards through the end of 2020. Current MacPass account holders do not need to open a new account to get a sticker.

Passenger vehicle MacPass accounts require an initial deposit of $80 and a $7 one-time setup fee. Commercial accounts require a $200 deposit and $7 one-time set-up fee.

More information on the MacPass is available on the MBA website at www.MackinacBridge.org/MacPass.
Artists sought for residence program at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

Applications are being accepted for the Porcupine Mountains Artist-in-Residence Program for the 2020 spring, summer and fall and 2021 winter residencies.

The Artist-in-Residence Program is open to artists and artisans whose work can be influenced by the unique northern wilderness setting of Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.

Located in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, Michigan’s largest state park encompasses 25 miles of wave-washed shores, four inland lakes, entire river systems, countless waterfalls, enchanting wooded peaks, and an escarpment, which rises slowly from the edge of Lake Superior until it plummets abruptly into the Carp River valley.

Still, the park's most impressive feature – and the reason for its creation – is the virgin forest of eastern hemlock and northern hardwoods and the variety of flora and fauna that it supports. Because of these attributes, the park is an ideal location to inspire creativity.

The Artist-in-Residence Program offers writers, composers and all visual and performing artists an opportunity to experience the natural beauty of the park and to express it through their art form. Each year a number of artists will be selected for residencies lasting a minimum of two weeks.

Artists will be given the use of a rustic cabin located on the Little Union River and, if requested, a three-night backcountry permit so that they may live in and explore the park’s 60,000 acres of natural beauty, ranging from stunning vistas to 90 miles of rugged backcountry trails.

During their residency, artists will be asked to share their experiences with the public through demonstrations or talks. The artists are required to contribute an art piece representative of their stay.

Selection will be based on artistic integrity, ability to reside in a wilderness environment, a willingness to donate a finished piece of art inspired by their stay in the Porcupine Mountains, and the artist’s ability to relate and interpret the park through their art medium. The program is open to all art forms except those that may be inconsistent with the mission of the park.

Applications for the 2020 spring, summer and fall and 2021 winter residencies must be received by Feb. 14, 2020. Selections will be announced by early April.

Application materials for the Porcupine Mountains Artist-in-Residence Program can be found at the Friends of the Porkies Web page at porkies.org/Artist-in-Residence.

Michigan Indian Elders offer education incentive

A Student Incentive Program is being offered by the Michigan Indian Elders Association to recognize students who achieve all “A’s” for a marking period as well as students who achieve perfect attendance for a marking period.

In the event that the number of qualified entries exceeds the funds available, the winners will be determined by lottery.

TO QUALIFY:

• The student must be an enrolled member or be a direct descendant of an enrolled member of one of the MIEA constituent tribes/bands.
• The student must be in Grades 1-12 at a public or private school.
    - Home schooling is not eligible.
• A student must be in Grades 4-12 to qualify for the straight “A” award (A-, A, A+).
• Perfect attendance means exactly that. A student must be in school or at a school sponsored function each day of the marking period. Excused absences for anything other than a school sponsored/approved function do not constitute perfect attendance.
• The first two (2) marking periods ONLY of the 2018/2019 school year will be used to determine the winners for this lottery.
• A student can qualify for both the perfect attendance and straight “A’s” for both marking periods. For example, straight “A’s” and perfect attendance for both marking periods would mean four (4) chances to win.

New interactive map in web app highlights Great Lakes shipwrecks and their lore

The cold, fresh waters of the Great Lakes are literally littered with shipwrecks – pieces of history capturing chapters of a time when transport by water was as important as transport by land.

Some, like the Syracuse, recall the Great Lakes’ sailing heyday, when goods and people routinely plied the lakes along well-used routes. The Syracuse, a two-masted schooner carrying a cargo of coal, sank in Lake Huron on Nov. 10, 1863.

Other shipwrecks speak to more recent times when steel behemoths like the 600-foot Cedarville, shepherding a cargo of limestone, collided with a Norwegian ship in the fog on May 7, 1965. Ten crew members died, and the ship, broken nearly in two, sank in more than a hundred feet of water.

The Syracuse and the Cedarville are among 1,500 shipwrecks submerged in Michigan waters, making up one-quarter of the estimated 6,000 wrecks found throughout the Great Lakes.

Now, thanks to the recently launched Michigan Shipwrecks StoryMap, it’s easy to learn about the mystery and tragedy surrounding these ships.

The Michigan Shipwrecks Public Web App goes even further, offering users a closer look at shipwrecks as well as the locations of lighthouses and boating access sites. Users can search for shipwrecks by name or location or customize and print their own PDF maps.

This new tool gives divers, kayakers, snorkelers and armchair explorers a chance to learn more about these underwater archaeological sites and the circumstances that led to the shipwrecks,” said Sandra Clark, director of the Michigan History Center. “It’s a wonderfully interactive way to help people connect with this part of Michigan’s maritime history.”

The app map offers information about each ship, including:
- The difficulty level of diving to the wreck.
- Whether the wreck is accessible by kayak or canoe.
- The circumstances of the sinking.
- A description of the ship, with photos and drawings (if available).

The map also highlights Michigan’s underwater preserves and water trails.

Sonar image of the Syracuse wreck from October 2013. Some wrecks, such as the wooden bulk freighter Daisy Day, lie in as little as 10 feet of water and are suitable for beginning divers and visible to paddlers and snorkelers. Others, such as the Indiana, a propeller vessel that went down in Lake Superior in 1858, are in more than 100 feet of water and require advanced diving skills.

The map will be updated as more ships are discovered and more information becomes available.

Users may notice that some high-profile wrecks, such as the Carl D Bradley, which sank in Lake Michigan in November 1958, are not listed. Because crew members went down with these ships, they are considered underwater burial sites.

Clark reminds the public that Michigan law prohibits removal of any artifacts from shipwrecks. “The wrecks on the Great Lakes bottomlands belong to the people of Michigan,” she said. “If everyone follows the rule of `take only pictures and leave only bubbles,’ we can ensure that these underwater time capsules will be available for future generations to explore, research and enjoy.”

Visit and explore both the storymap and public web app at michigan.gov/ExploreShipwrecks.

Recreation Passport to increase $1 as of March 1

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has announced that the regular Recreation Passport vehicle entry fee for residents will increase from $11 to $12 – the first Recreation Passport price increase since January 2013. All other resident Passport fees stay the same, including those for motorcycles, mopeds and commercial vehicles.

The change is due to a statutory provision to adjust the Recreation Passport fee based upon the Consumer Price Index as determined by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. That statutory requirement was put into law when the Recreation Passport funding model was created in 2010 to ensure the funding source keeps pace with inflation.
Announcements

Report water issues online or via phone
Bay Mills water customers can now report if they are experiencing issues via phone or online. The number to report issues is 906-248-8179. You can also utilize the online reporting form available at www.baymills.org on the upper left side of the page.

Paradise winter hike on Jan. 25
Come out with the North Country Trail, Hiawatha Shore to Shore chapter and experience Paradise in the winter for a hike on Jan. 25. The schedule is as follows:
10 a.m. -- Hike off the Tahqua Trail Road along the Tahquamenon River. Meet at the 'Hunt Club' corner just west of Snug Harbor on Tahqua Trail Road. Plans will be finalized depending on conditions the day of the hike. Distance will be determined by your abilities and willingness to cover the trail.

Bring snow shoes or cross country skis, clothing appropriate for the weather and activity, a whistle, water, camera, and a friend or two.

After the hike the group will gather for refueling and refreshment at a local establishment.

Hike meeting location: Tahqua Trail Road is the dirt road that follows the Tahquamenon River at the river mouth it on the north side of the river. Access it from M-123 south of Paradise. GPS Coordinates Lat/Long: 46.563334, -85.08183

A map of the area is here: https://nct.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=23a2e0d674eb443ea9835af2e8c5f13a&extent=-85.1469,46.5421,-85.0096,46.5886

Ask questions via e-mail at hss@northcountrytrail.org. Please note, phone coverage will be spotty the day of the hike.

Downtown Winter Ice Festival planned
On Feb. 15 come watch the excitement as award-winning sculptors use chainsaws, chisels, and blowtorches to create more than 50 stacked ice sculptures in downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

Sculptures are available for viewing 24 hours a day in front of participating business and will remain standing after the event – weather permitting. Also, visit the Farmer’s Market at the corner of Ashmun St and Portage Ave to view the Ice Gallery of finished sculptures. Don’t miss the Ice Wars Saturday evening at 6 p.m. where everyone will gather at the corner of Ashmun St. and Portage Ave. to watch carvers will go head to head with chainsaws and chisels competing for the approval of the crowd.

Call to artists: All things fiber
In February 2020, the Alberta House Arts Center will host an all-fiber exhibit to warm up a cold month. Fiber artists are invited to submit work for this show.

There is no entry fee—only a 30 percent commission. This commission can be reduced if you have time to help staff. Staff one day and your commission will be reduced by 10 percent. Two days staffing reduces it to 20 percent and three days removes it entirely.

The Alberta House will be accepting work for three days at the end of January. Exhibition dates are Feb. 1 to 29. If you have questions e-mail: saac@saultarts.org, or call Jean Jones at 906-437-5463.