Northwestern Michigan College president Tim Nelson recently announced that he would retire effective Dec. 31, 2019. As the longest-serving president of NMC at nearly 18 years, he will leave behind a legacy of growth, change, and adaptation.

Nelson's ties to NMC reach back to 1975, when he worked as the resident supervisor for West Hall and the apartments. Then, he didn't imagine that he'd one day be sitting inside the president's office of the Tanis building. Along the way, however, he had peers who encouraged him to follow that path. “There are just opportunities that come along and you take advantage of them, and try things, and sometimes they work and sometimes they don't work the way you want,” he said. “I think that's served me well.”

Both Nelson and NMC have been supported by the selfless contributions of his wife, Nancy Johnson, through the years. Together, Nelson and Johnson founded the Global Opportunity Scholarship program in 2012. “[Nancy] has always enjoyed going to the luncheons when the students talk about what they've done. Because quite often they say, ‘This has changed my whole perception of what I can be,’ which was the whole purpose [that] we did it,” Nelson said. The program helps students that otherwise may not have spent time abroad gain that unique experience and awaken what Nelson calls a “global curiosity.” This curiosity leads students toward more globally-related programs, causes, and activities such as the Global Endorsement and overseas internships. Offering this type of opportunity to students was very important to both Nelson and his wife.

Johnson's contributions to NMC go beyond the Global Opportunity Scholarship. She attends many meetings and events, and supports community groups. “We chose to do this as a partnership, and so the college almost got two-for-one,” Nelson said. “But it's not necessarily the norm.”

That tight partnership also made Nelson's decision to retire a joint one. “We talked about it, and it's just time,” Nelson explained. “There was no single event. The college is in good shape. We have great people working here, great leadership—the rest of leadership is not walking out the door. There's a strategic plan that the Board [of Trustees] has endorsed and will continue on, so there's some focus there, and some clarity.” The average tenure for Nelson's position is only three to five years at most community college, and he will be closing in on the 19-year mark by the time he leaves. “You reach a time where you just know it's time. I always asked myself, am I the person to take the organization to the next step? And at 67, when I leave, I decided no. I'm fortunate, we're healthy, and so... we'll be able to search out new opportunities.”

Continued on Pages 6 & 7

Ann Hosler
Editor in Chief

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Continued on Pages 6 & 7
On Feb. 26, 2001, Timothy Nelson began his first day as president of Northwestern Michigan College at age 48. Former state senator George McManus Jr. introduced Nelson around town as “our college president,” a sentiment that Nelson believes is echoed in the local community. “This community owns the college,” he said, explaining that the difference with NMC compared to other community colleges was cemented by it being built within Traverse City. Though Nelson doesn’t recall the moment pictured here, he reflected on the variety of thoughts and emotions of that time. “I’m sure I was very happy. They did a national search. I competed. I obviously weighed less then,” Nelson laughed. “I was excited! Before this, I had been here for about 10 months … I might have been a little bit scared. It was a long time ago. It was a lifetime ago.”

A Message from NMC's President

NMC students, faculty, and staff:

I thank all of you who exercised your right to vote [on Nov. 6] in our country’s mid-term election. In Michigan, voters approved the recreational use and possession of marijuana covered under Proposal 18-1 and it will become law ten days after the Secretary of State certifies the election and changes the state law regarding marijuana possession in Michigan.

Please be aware of the following:

Proposal 18-1 does not change NMC policies or federal laws. The use, distribution or possession of marijuana by students, employees or any person on college property or at college events is prohibited.

Using, distributing and possessing marijuana remains illegal under federal law. NMC must comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. As a recipient of federal funds, NMC takes measures to combat the use of drugs and alcohol.

Violating NMC policies may be grounds for discipline up to and including dismissal. Thank you for continuing to adhere to college policy and federal law.

Sincerely,
Timothy J. Nelson, President

Non-Discrimination Policy Notice
Northwestern Michigan College is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, genetic information, height, weight, marital status or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. nmc.edu/nondiscrimination
Newly graduated at age 18, Dr. Victoria Derks had the same desire as many peers her age had: to get the heck out of her hometown. A Traverse City native, Derks wasn’t interested in sticking around the area or attending her little town’s community college. Her mother worked at NMC, though, and the affordable tuition ultimately convinced her to give the school a try.

“At the time I knew of NMC, but I really wanted to go to a four-year [university]. But I ended up going [to NMC] and it was great,” Derks said. “It wasn’t an easy school. I felt like I was challenged. I had a really good foundation from NMC when I went to other colleges after that.”

While Derks works for a general studies degree, she took advantage of the school’s many student activities, playing sports, participating in a theater production, and serving as a student worker in the extended education department. She loved the beautiful campus and was thrilled to find out that many of her high school classmates had chosen to attend NMC as well. That helped her adjust to sticking close to home for a few years. “I was pleasantly surprised at how many people stayed. It was a really good thing for me. The relationships were a big piece of my time there.” She credits her years at NMC as a time in her life when she learned more about herself as a young adult, figuring out how to manage her time and balance academic studies with social relationships.

Derks later left Traverse City to spend time as an exchange student in Ecuador. During her time away from home, she also earned her bachelor’s degree from Liberty University in North Carolina and did missionary work teaching at a bilingual school in Honduras. Eventually the call of Traverse City drew her back home.

The connections and relationships Derks cultivated during her time as a student at NMC proved to be vital to both her professional and personal growth. She taught a Spanish course at the college, brought to her attention through those connections. People she once knew only as teachers became colleagues, and in some cases mentors, giving her advice as she navigated a new phase in her life.

Derks went on to receive a Master’s degree, a specialist degree, and a doctorate in the educational field through NMC’s University Center. She taught for many years in the TCAPS system, and at one point was the director of professional development with the TCAPS administration where she helped start the Elementary World Language Program. She became the principal at Cherry Knoll Elementary School in 2017, and finds the position both rewarding and exciting, as every day is new and different.

Derks loves learning, her life an ode to the beauty of education—both her own and for those around her. “I want to convey my love of learning to these kids. I want to be a support to teachers, so that they can turn around and support the kids,” Derks said. “What can we do to help them? What is it that we can do so that everyone has equal access to education? I think everyone can learn. We just have to find what it is that spurs that enjoyment of learning.”

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Our liberal studies bachelor’s degree not only fits your busy life, it helps you achieve your unique career goals. The flexible program lets you focus on topics most relevant to you, while giving you the critical knowledge and decision-making skills you need to succeed in any field. Contact us to learn more.

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Math Matters

“The Force is what gives a Jedi his power... It surrounds us, penetrates us, and binds the galaxy together.” This is Obi-Wan Kenobi’s description of the force from “Star Wars: Episode IV.” For the last couple years, NMC has had its very own Obi-Wan Kenobi. Math/Science instructor Mike Gillett. For years, he has been creating Star Wars themed videos that supplement his developmental math classes. Just like the Force, math is always in and around us, and it’s the way we understand our universe.

Dressed in the long, brown and white robes of Master Obi-Wan, Gillett teaches the ways of this real life force in our universe. The videos have been well received among students.

The videos are coming to an end as Disney clamps down on its property. But, just as with the force, ends bring beginnings, and a new character may be coming to teach the ways of math.

Gillett began hearing from his students that they understood their lessons during the first 20-minute video over four years ago. “I gotta figure out how to do this faster” Gillett began thinking. He decided to try NMC’s Light board and editing technology with the help of Dennis Schultz. This allowed Gillett to start producing videos much more easily. In the two years since he began using the Lightboard, he has created over 40 videos and uploaded them to Moodle for his students to access. The series is called the Math Matters Academy, and it was well received by students.

Before beginning this endeavor, Gillett sought permission to use the Star Wars theme from George Lucas himself, through Lucasfilm, who owned it at the time. They liked the idea, and granted permission. In 2012, Disney bought Lucasfilm in a $4 billion deal.

“I had been hearing things about Disney going after people that were using their products.” Gillett stated. So, he thought it would be prudent to give Disney a call, and be sure he retained permission. This did not go well. He dealt with Lucasfilms over the phone, meaning there wasn’t physical proof of the permission he received. Unable to get proof, Disney said no. “I understand why, that’s the way they make money, too,” Gillett said.

“But, a good side of this too, ’cause I always look for the positive, is, I’ve done it once, I’ve been looking at the videos I’ve already done, and looking at how I can make it better.” Gillett stated optimistically. Rather than just stopping, he plans to make the next generation more concise and refined.

Star Wars offered a literal universe of popular fiction to base his videos on, so now, he needs a new theme. Gillett is in the process of creating an original character for the next Math Matters series.

Mike Gillett found a way to use the ever expanding content, and vast popularity of Star Wars to help NMC students grasp math concepts. Math really does matter. Despite the setback from Disney, he continues to spend his time and creative energy to keep Math Matters Academy alive.

NMC Pride

Tamara Wiget

If you walk into Osterlin 201 on a late Tuesday morning, you’ll find a small group of students most likely discussing politics, particularly issues pertaining to trans or gay rights. Discussions are often quiet, although sometimes punctuated by jokes or YouTube videos. This hour spent together allows these members of the NMC Pride group to share their concerns, fears, and sometimes positive changes they see reported in the media.

The group that also meets on Tuesday evenings is more casual, and members prefer to discuss personal experiences rather than policy. Students are welcome to attend either or both meetings, and are not required to discuss their sexuality unless they so desire. Privacy is an important part of the group, especially in consideration of members who may not be out. The aim of the group is to provide a safe and secure place for LBGT+ students to connect with others.

The group is still in its developmental stage, but the hope is to eventually engage with the community. There has been talk of hosting a campus movie night, volunteering at the State Theater, having a bake sale to raise funds for activities, and getting involved with local LBGT+ organization Polestar.

With time and a little organization, the group could become a major resource for queer students on campus.
Annie Hindle  Living in a small, remote town in northern Michigan can feel like a dreamland at times. Many who live in Traverse City and the surrounding area feel safe enough to refrain from locking their homes and automobiles. What could go wrong in a town where you know just about everyone and their mother? Where everyone greets you with a smile and a friendly nod?

It appears that behind the smiles and familiarity of our beautiful small town, danger and uncertainty lurks. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Michigan is currently ranked sixth in the nation for human trafficking cases. This year alone there have been 305 reports and 142 calls from victims or survivors. In our region, 24 men were arrested on Aug. 23 for human trafficking, sex trafficking, and prostitution in seven different areas, including Petoskey, Traverse City, and Houghton Lake. Human trafficking exists in our community. It is something we need to make everyone aware of, especially women and young girls.

Human trafficking is the act of illegally transporting a person from one country or area to another. Most often, this is done with the intent to force labor or sexually exploit the victim. Another layer is sex trafficking, which includes sexual slavery.

Social media is a common platform used by predators for trafficking purposes. This setting is right under our noses on Facebook, Craigslist, and dating apps. “They’ll put on ads of the trafficking victims for solicitation purposes, and potential Johns will find the ads and respond to them. It’s masked as escort service or dating service or something along those lines,” Todd Wilton, a special agent for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, said in a May 14 interview with 9&10 News.

In January 2016, the Record-Eagle wrote about an arrest involving two men in an East Bay township hotel. “A lot of current or former drug dealers are turning to trafficking humans because you can sell a person more than one time,” Hannah Burdek, director of development for Citizens Against Sex Trafficking TC, told the Record-Eagle. “You can only sell a drug once.”

Human trafficking can happen to the people around us—a classmate, neighbor, or friend. Knowing the warning signs related to trafficking is essential for a community to fight against it.

NMC student Emma Ziebarth had multiple experiences related to human traffickers targeting women in the Traverse City area. After receiving three separate letters in the mail over a 3-month period, she posted on her social media to see if anyone had answers to the odd correspondence. The letter contained a job offer for a “summer break opportunity” paying $17.50 per hour, with flexible hours and no prior experience required. The letter was vague and lacked a reliable source and website. These letters are suspected to be a lure used by human traffickers.

Ziebarth was cautioned by an employee of the Traverse City Walmart to carry something to defend herself after the employee was attacked by a group of men in the parking lot following her night shift. The employee reported it to the police. “Women shouldn’t have to worry about carrying a weapon to defend ourselves, but we do,” Ziebarth said. “This is a whole new generation. Our parents’ generation didn’t have to worry about this. People in small towns don’t always want to accept or open their minds to see that something like this is happening in their tiny town. This is a real thing happening right now in front of us.”

This is simply a warning and a plea to rally together as a community to become aware and resist these horrors. Sitting in ignorance or being too afraid to face the facts of human trafficking will only hinder the safety of future generations.

The Grand Traverse area has a safe haven for women: the Women’s Resource Center. The center is completely focused on helping women who are victims of domestic abuse or sexual violence. Its mission statement reads: “The mission of the Women’s Resource Center is to protect, shelter, and empower people impacted by domestic and sexual violence. We’re here 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide individual and group support and emergency shelter.”

Peace Ranch, founded by owner Jackie Kashel, is another refuge for people who are healing after addiction, sexual, mental or physical abuse, etc. Peace Ranch has helped women of all ages who have been victims of sexual abuse, human trafficking, and trauma. “The environment here at Peace Ranch is calming, soothing, and relaxing,” Kashel said. “Horses are non-judgmental and help people who have gone through trauma reconnect and come out of that isolation.”

There is hope and avenues for getting rescued and removed from these dangerous situations. No one should fear these atrocities.

If you are a victim seeking counseling or help, or know someone who does, call the Diane Peppler Resource Center (dprcenter.org) at 906-635-0566 or any of these other resources:

- **Confidential 24-hour Crisis Line**: 800-554-4972
- **National Human Trafficking Hotline**: 888-373-7888 (humantraffickinghotline.org)
- **Peace Ranch**: 231-499-4736
- **Women’s Resource Center**: 231-941-1210

**Common Living Conditions**

- Not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- Has few or no personal possessions
- Not in control of his/her own money
- No financial records or bank account
- Not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

**Common Work Conditions**

- Is in the commercial sex industry
- Has a pimp / manager
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Not allowed breaks
- Suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- High security measures exist in work or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

**Poor Mental and Physical Health**

- Fearful, anxious, depressed, or submissive
- Tense or nervous / paranoid
- Unusually fearful or anxious about law enforcement
- Avoids eye contact
- Lacks medical care or denied medical by employer
- Appears malnourished or shows signs of repeated exposure to harmful chemicals
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

**Other Signs**

- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or of what city he/she is in
- Loss of sense of time
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

**SOURCE:** HUMANTRAFFICKINGHOTLINE.ORG

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**FEATURE**

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING: WARNING SIGNS**

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**SOURCE:** HUMANTRAFFICKINGHOTLINE.ORG
I think he has been an incredible leader, a great visionary,” said former Board of Trustees member Elaine Wood. “He has really taken NMC well into the 21st century in ways that other community colleges haven’t gone.” Wood believes that Nelson has accomplished both local and global expansions of NMC’s reach—one of many reasons she says that the college has been fortunate to have him for the past 18 years. “I think that all the things he has led the development of, and all the things he has initiated, will really go a long way to benefit NMC and the community long after he has retired.”

There are five major categories of accomplishments that Nelson finds most gratifying. First, nearly every building across NMC’s campuses, excluding the apartments, has either been renovated or is new under his watch. Second, the college has built many programs—such as marine technology, unmanned aerial systems, and international programming—and several are unique, either nationally or globally. Third, NMC invests into the professional development of its employees, keeping them up-to-date in a rapidly changing environment.

The fourth category is the college’s focus on establishing a global connection. “We’ve essentially said that our community is the world, and I’ve told people for a long time that I don’t believe the college can effectively serve this region [without] thinking about how to serve the world and connect to it,” Nelson explained. Finally, the category that Nelson thinks will have the longest impact on NMC is the creation and expansion of “a culture that supports innovation, experimentation, and entrepreneurial activities … I think that’s going to be critical for people to try new things and not be wed to the past.”

Innovation is something we’ve heard a lot about, especially since the announcement that the college would be constructing the West Hall Innovation Center. But what does it mean to innovate? “Part of it is creating in order to meet a need. Part of it is taking a risk, having faith. Part of it is being able to learn from failure,” Nelson said. “I think one of the things that’s curious to me about how organizations actually work.”

An unanswered challenge Nelson believes that colleges need to address is creating a relevance for education in a region that’s seen demographic change. “If you look at us at the height of the recession, we had about 5,500 students. Now we’re down around 4,000. Almost all of that loss is in the working adult,” he said. Taking the opportunity to listen and talk with this adult working population can help in determining how to best serve their needs. “I think change is hard for anyone. We’re in an environment … that is more than just change. It requires transformation of how organizations actually work.”

Nelson thinks that NMC can continue to fulfill the needs of its students by creating partnerships with other institutions of learning as well as the private sector. “The nature of the world we’re living in is much more partnership oriented,” he explained. Investing in programs that leverage existing resources and assets is how the college can serve the community as it moves forward.

Those resources apply not just to academics, but also to student support. Nelson acknowledges that many concerns affect NMC’s students, from affordable housing, to child care, to food education is it’s a system that by and large is structured to prevent failure when we know that we tend to learn more from something that didn’t work than when it worked all the time. How do you innovate a system that creates a safe place to fail, but more importantly than that, creates processes to help people understand how to deal with failure?”

To further the learning experience, the college is working on adding more experiential learning into the curriculum. Nelson explained that learning is more effective when people are engaging through synthesizing and applying, all while collaborating with others. “The skills that people need to be successful in this century, at least the first part of this century, go well beyond the acquisition of knowledge.”

NMC Foundation Board chair Bill Marsh Jr. agrees that an entrepreneurial focus benefits the college. “He’s positioned NMC to be on the leading edge of community college education,” Marsh said. “He always challenges those around him.” Marsh described the forward-thinking challenges that Nelson presents to the Foundation Board, and how he encourages them to think beyond the confines of a community college. “He would always talk, not of the next two or three years, but really positioning NMC for the next 5, 10, 15 years, plus. And I think that’s why he leaves the college in such good shape.”

Northwestern Michigan College president Tim Nelson was one of the “celebrities” that read to children in Osterlin Library during the 2010 NMC BBQ. The fourth category is the college’s focus on establishing a global connection. “We’ve essentially said that our community is the world, and I’ve told people for a long time that I don’t believe the college can effectively serve this region [without] thinking about how to serve the world and connect to it,” Nelson explained. Finally, the category that Nelson thinks will have the longest impact on NMC is the creation and expansion of “a culture that supports innovation, experimentation, and entrepreneurial activities … I think that’s going to be critical for people to try new things and not be wed to the past.”

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Innovation is something we've heard a lot about, especially since the announcement that the college would be constructing the West Hall Innovation Center. But what does it mean to innovate? To further the learning experience, the college is working on adding more experiential learning opportunities to the curriculum. Nelson feels that this type of position requires a thoughtful risk taker. But if we have to wait until we're 110 percent sure something's going to work, we probably have missed the window. Nelson talked about a piece of "design thinking" called prototyping, where you get part of something done, try it out, learn from it, and move forward. He encourages his successor to "continue to try to evolve the culture of the institution and the college. To make collisions happen.

Nelson isn't sure yet what he'll do beyond his retirement. "We like to travel, we want to see national parks. But in terms of intellectual activity I'm sure something will come along." One thing Nelson is certain about is that whatever he does, it will involve people. "When I was young, I wanted a homestead. Wanted to go live on 10 acres someplace and disconnect, even before there was a grid, and just be self-sufficient," he said. "Nancy and I figured out that's not who I was. We leased a little 10-acre plot for a year... and no, I gotta be around people."

"I've had a number of people who want me to write a book, or a couple of books, on this whole insecurity. Some of these needs can be addressed on campus, while others require connecting with the Traverse City community. "There are organizations who have taken up this mantle, and it's incumbent upon the whole community to talk about these things," he said. "There's a conversation at the national level with community colleges about how much we can and should do in those types of areas... I think we have to be careful how much we try to do."

Every resource that receives funding from the college has to compete with other resources that require funding as well. "My preference would be that we partner with people who who's their mission," Nelson said. "We collaboratively agree we have this challenge as a community, it has an impact on our organization, and [on] our ability to meet our mission." Collaborating with community organizations would include determining how to best accomplish these goals in a way that benefits the recipients and makes sense to meeting their needs.

A long list of milestones decorate Nelson's tenure as college president, but this type of position always leaves more that one would like to accomplish. "I'd like to crack the code on this value proposition for the working adult. And can I get that done in the next 14 months? We can get it started," he said, after several contemplative moments. "I don't think it's ever done, because the nature of the working adult, and the nature of what work is today, is going to constantly change."

Nelson explained that he reads a lot of material outside the topic of higher education about the future of work, society, and social structures—a topic discussed at state level among the 28 community colleges in the Michigan Community College Association. "If part of the reason we're here is to give people skills, experiences, and values so that they can create wealth, we better be paying attention to what's going on with the nature of work."

If he was to enroll as a new student at NMC today, Nelson thinks he would choose a combination of liberal studies and a program in technology. He talked about the reason he graduated with a degree in math from Grand Valley State University: because at the time, it was the quickest path to graduation. "I took a whole bunch of math my senior year, so that I could graduate. It wasn't by design early on," he said. "In fact, originally I was going to go to Michigan Tech to get an engineering degree in forestry, and I decided I didn't want go, predominantly because I didn't want to take all that math. So," he laughs, "the universe has a strange way of getting back at you."

In a little over a year, Northwestern Michigan College will have a new president. Nelson said that he isn't someone who typically gives advice, but "one of the most important things is [that] the world we're in will require innovation, experimentation, and entrepreneurial activity." Reflecting on his 2014 visit to China, Nelson described telling colleagues there that "perfection is the enemy of good enough," which to him means that you should just try something. "Think about it. Be a thoughtful risk taker. But if we have to wait until we're 110 percent sure something's going to work, we probably have missed the window." Nelson talked about a piece of "design thinking" called prototyping, where you get part of something done, try it out, learn from it, and move forward. He encourages his successor to "continue to try to evolve the culture of the institution and the community towards that end, because I think that single set of characteristics is what can lead to success in a very uncertain future."

"Another thing I would encourage, not just my successor, but other people here is: look outside of your own sector, because there's a lot to learn," Nelson added. "I always tell people that I believe innovation occurs when two or more dissimilar people or objects collide. And so, figure out how to make collisions happen."

Nelson isn't sure yet what he'll do beyond his retirement. "We like to travel, we want to see national parks. But in terms of intellectual activity I'm sure something will come along." One thing Nelson is certain about is that whatever he does, it will involve people. "When I was young, I wanted a homestead. Wanted to go live on 10 acres someplace and disconnect, even before there was a grid, and just be self-sufficient," he said. "Nancy and I figured out that's not who I was. We leased a little 10-acre plot for a year... and no, I gotta be around people."

"I've had a number of people who want me to write a book, or a couple of books, on this whole 20-year experiment here, so I may very well do that," Nelson added, laughing, "I want to clean my garage!"
Northwestern Michigan College Honors Veterans

Steve Tucker  Staff Writer

On Monday Nov. 12, NMC held its annual Veterans Day commemoration. This year, the event was attended by Michigan’s District 1 congressman and Marine veteran Jack Bergman. Following a breakfast at the Dennos Museum, veterans participated in the Walk of Honor down the flag-laden sidewalk alongside Scholars Hall and Osterlin, to the flagpole in front of Tanis.

For the flag ceremony, the Traverse City Central High School Marching Band performed the Star Spangled Banner, followed by the VFW performing taps, and then a three-volley salute. Bergman offered some brief remarks to the crowd before veterans and attendees met inside the Tanis atrium for coffee and cake.

“The college’s military friendly environment is ... where veterans probably have a space they can call their own,” Bergman told the White Pine Press following the flag ceremony. “Where they can hang out when they want to hang out as a group and talk about ... their shared experience.”

Bergman also talked about the importance of family and community for veterans. He explained that many military experiences simply cannot be understood by those who have not been in there. It is important that veterans pursue goals when they return to civilian life. “It’s the environment, and I believe president [Tim] Nelson, through his leadership here has created a student environment that allows that to occur,” Bergman said. “It’s all back to treating people with dignity and respect, and respecting the differences that we have.”

This is NMC’s eighth year holding a Veterans Day commemoration event. According to a press release, the NMC Foundation received $10,000 to “offer unrestricted assistance to student veterans.” The funds were donated by Veterans in Crisis, a northern Michigan organization founded by NMC alumnus and veteran David Mikowski.

Make Noise at Home with TC Library Sight & Sound

Nick Moug  Staff Writer

Ever thought of playing the Theremin along to The Beach Boys’ “Good Vibrations,” but never had the money to purchase one? The Traverse City Library’s Sight & Sound department has been lending instruments both familiar and exotic to patrons for over a year, and are ready to officially promote the program at an open house on Dec. 8th, from 1pm-4pm.

Instruments range from ukuleles and banjos to analog ribbon synthesizers and the aforementioned Theremin. Aaron Olson, department head of Sight & Sound, says there is also plenty of room for instrument requests to check-out if they don’t have what you’re looking for, with the exception of brass instruments – no spit sharing, please!

Beginning as a pilot project and gradually building in popularity, Olson believes the era of electronic-based media – compact discs or DVDs, for example – is being met with a rebound desire for authenticity. Adjusting to this new cultural climate, Sight & Sound is acknowledging the culture’s electronic saturation by offering a return to the analog and the tactile, instead of simply being another location to rent digital media.

Rentals are free and last seven days, with the option of renewing unless there are names on the waitlist. Currently, 16 instruments are ready to be checked out, with more coming in the future.

The open house will feature local children’s author and illustrator Brianne Farley, who will be signing books, as well as a musical performance from Michigan-based indie folk group Breathe Owl Breathe. Farley also painted the murals covering the walls of Sight & Sound’s instrument alcove.

The instrument loan service at Sight & Sound is an exciting opportunity for many without resources to get their hands on instruments or devices both familiar and not. With such a variety of acoustic string instruments and analog synthesizers ready to be loaned to anyone with the ambition to learn, there is endless potential for new sounds coming out of Traverse City.

Photos by Nick Moug
Believe Women

Liam Strong

The sheer cascade of Facebook comments alone on statements showcased by local establishments is fascinating to watch unfold. There's a certain ethical and philosophical twinge in the side when scrolling through these that comes as painful, or even inspiring to negotiate against. This irrational aversion to support—or rather, curl verbal fists toward—is particularly estranged with just the State Theatre and Bijou by the Bay's Facebook page in the comment section of a post from Sept. 28, with a picture depicting their sign of “Believe Women” on their marquee. It should come as no surprise that conservative America pounced on the stigma of portraying their disgust and negligence toward rational argumentation, but their counter-arguments grounded on the evasion of actual social issues does nothing but spin circles.

The disenfranchisement of the State Theatre is certainly ungratifying, but what should be examined are the facets through which those affronting the argument are subscribing to. It’s fair to procure the argument that “Women lie, too!” it’s not invalid, but this doesn’t disregard how the statement still purports women’s words and values as considerably less than men’s. Believing women isn’t about disbelieving men necessarily; it’s about giving women the weight of words they deserve. The marquee, in essence, isn’t inherently political, but becomes as such in the eyes of those perceiving it negatively. Rather, the reference is to the long-standing cultural issue of systemic sexism and misogyny diminishing women’s courage bring allegations of sexual assault to recognition.

Whether or not we find ourselves affected negatively by a positive statement is up to the beholder. Likewise, the political “agenda” of the theatre is much less mute than what’s let on; they aren’t plea bargaining us with propaganda or outward discussions, but rather solidifying their support for others. Support for people, and victims especially, of any gender, race, or sexual orientation, ultimately comes down to legitimate ethical and moral rationale, which many of the commenters (ie. locals) on this post undoubtedly do not have. The prevalence of allegations rising is a good thing, albeit one of rigorous logical vigilance, and it starkly shows the vehement face of white, male America. Misogyny and sexism is beyond skin deep—in fact it’s so ingrained in history and modern life that it is undeniably surface level. People care too much about topics and issues that don’t necessarily affect them, but the situation with the State Theatre does nothing but further the segregation of people ascribing to stances they have no rational comprehension of.

The biggest sadness of the situation inevitably comes from those who have commented saying they will never spend money of the theatre again. Though perhaps it’s only sad on the level of logical confusion— the State Theatre might be losing that business, but they aren’t going anywhere. However, apparently the conservative community here isn’t either.

OPINION

Believe Women

Tamara Wiget

I was milling about Garland Street with my friend Katie, my long purple cardigan wrapped around me as I wondered how long until I could leave the after-party without seeming rude.

"I love being gay!" our friend Naomi gushed, looking exquisitely queer in blue, pink, and purple—the colors of the bisexual flag—with stripes of grey, black, and purple across her face to represent asexuality. Standing next to her was her best bisexual flag—with stripes of grey, black, and purple across her face to represent asexuality. Standing next to her was her best friend, who was holding hands with her girlfriend of two years. I smiled agreeably, although I didn't share her sentiment. We had just Marched through the streets of downtown Traverse City in the annual pride parade, thousands of people wearing rainbows, waving flags in the colors of their personal sexual identities. We shouted “LOVE WINS!” over and over as crowds lining the sidewalks clapped and cheered. I felt like I should have been elated, overjoyed to be queer, but in reality it was cold and drizzly and I just wanted to go home.

I'm not a good queer. I came out at 26, and at 30 being part of the LGBT+ in many ways still feels new to me. There are terms I've learned—demi boy/girl, genderqueer, pansexual—and can explain, but don't truly understand because they're not words with which I identify. Allosexual is another word that I understand, but still find mystifying. Allosexuality is, well, what the majority of the population experiences: sexual attraction. Apparently these people can see a person and BOOM! They're struck by homo/horny or something.

I don't actually know. I can't relate. I've known this for most of my life; a memory that often comes to mind when I think of my sexual identity is being in public with my sisters, and my older sister commenting that a man passing by was “hot.” My younger sister nodded as I wondered to myself, How can you tell? How do you know if someone is hot? When I expressed this thought, both looked at me like I had developed an acute disease. I didn't ask that question of anyone again, but I always wondered.

It wasn't until a chance online meeting with the word demisexual that I began to understand why I couldn't answer these questions. Demisexual is the ability to feel sexual attraction for someone only after a deep emotional connection has developed. I didn't know this at the time, but my tendency to google things that I don't know led me to the AVEN (Asexuality Visibility & Education Network) website, where I learned several things: demisexual is part of the asexual spectrum; asexual (in the social sense, not the scientific) means that one generally does not experience sexual attraction; that 1 percent of the population is asexual. 1 percent doesn't seem like a lot, but when you consider that there are over seven billion people in the world, that number equates to millions. Even so, the asexual community is mostly invisible. Some argue that it doesn't even exist, that asexuals just can't get laid, just haven't had good sex, or are broken in some way.

Yeah, it sucks when people tell you that your identity is broken. You would think that this would unite the ace community, but prepare to be disappointed. The majority of asexuals are sex neutral—they don't desire sex, but aren't opposed to participating in sexual activity—or sex repulsed. Sex repulsed aces are horrified or disgusted by the thought of engaging in sex. They want some part of it, although some may engage in it to please a partner.

A small minority in the ace community are sex favorable, meaning that they enjoy and may even actively seek out sexual relationships. In my experience, being sex favorable is considered asexual treason. Adding that I'm grey-acesexual—someone who rarely but sometimes does experience sexual attraction—and also bisexual only adds to the betrayal.

"Oh, so you're not a real asexual," is a common response from asexual elitists, who are somehow more purely asexual because they never ever experience sexual attraction. Being marginalized in an already marginalized community is like being a high school kid who's too weird to hang out with the weird kids.

Responses from asexuals are mixed; some are unphased, while others are confused or defensive, as if my sexuality is an attack on their own. Stereotypes abound, as demonstrated by one romantic partner who tried to engage me in an argument on what it means to be asexual.

It wasn't until I began writing this article that I voiced my feelings of being inadequately queer to another person. Sitting in Katie's car on a Saturday afternoon, I, with some anxiety, finally said out loud all these things that I'd been thinking for a long time. Katie, who is also on the asexual spectrum, simply nodded thoughtfully and gave my thoughts validation with just four words: "Yeah, I get that."
Dennos Exhibits Modern Inuit Art

Dylan Jewell

Inuit art encompasses a wide range of skill and perspective, from the esoteric and traditional to the familiar and modern. Currently, at the Dennos is a collection of Inuit works from Cape Dorset, a town in Nunavut widely considered the epicenter of art. The collection boasts pieces that span in time from the late 50s to the present, and one can easily observe how time has changed both the technique employed and the perspective represented. As indigenous culture rapidly embraces modernity, the subject matter and inspiration of indigenous media embraces outside influence and unconventional voices as well.

A great deal of Inuit art focuses on naturalistic subject matter; that is to say, depictions of indigenous life, nature, ritual, and mythology, for the purpose of capturing the practices one and one's own engage in. However, a fair number of pieces on display capture motifs and characteristics which are often overlooked in western perceptions of indigenous art: concepts such as irony and angst.

One piece in particular by Kananginak Pootoogook entitled “The First Tourist” (1992) depicts a European man, camera handy, taking snapshots of Inuit natives. It aptly and rather humorously represents the fascination westerners have with what they perceive as “exotic” cultures, and calls into question the possibility of exploitation as a result of this interest. Another piece, Pudlo Pudlai’s “Reluctant Wife” (1961) abstractly depicts the practice of arranged marriage. While most naturalistic themes in indigenous art involve images of hunting activity and native animals, pieces such as this offer new perspective on less-often represented aspects of traditional Inuit society.

More current pieces such as Annie Pootoogook’s “Brief Case” (2005) and Anirnik Raga’e’s “Field of Verse” (2004) unambiguously reference influential western artists such as Andy Warhol and Yayoi Kusama, injecting indigenous art with highly modern aspects of artistic movements like pop art, minimalism, and surrealism. Works such as these deviate from slice-of-life, expressionist sceneries, and delve more deeply into the psychology and social lives of indigenous peoples.

A particularly impressive medium commonly seen primarily in Dorset art is that of stonecutting. In lithography, which is traditionally done using wood or rubber, artists will carve out a design into a block which is then rolled in ink and translated onto another medium; however, as one could surmise from the name, stonecutting involves the use of a hammer and chisel rather than a knife, and requires considerable patience and craftsmanship. The results, however, are beautiful, evoking much greater detail and saturation (see Mayoreak Ashoona’s “Great Big Loon” (2009), for example). Cape Dorset prints are available for viewing and purchase at the Dennos Museum through Nov. 25.

Music that is Sometimes Good but also Sometimes Not Good

Liam Strong

The piano man convulsed into a homogenous gruel of himself as the same song played over and over for an hour. No one seemed to notice, the cancerous spillage devouring the same song played over and over for an hour. No one seemed to notice, the cancerous spillage devouring the stage. Across town, distortions wails, bodies fight for an outstretched microphone in a small legion hall. The band confronts human humidity and a high tide full of rancor and release. In there, you actually felt something. In the arena, the piano man continues to bloat, and the crowd screams in adoration.

I think I almost got through Arctic Monkey's newest outing, Tranquility Base Hotel and Casino, before I already delegated my feelings about it, which, invariably, are scant. After four years without new music, maybe expectations were too high. But listening to a painful attempt at the same Yelp review in song-form for eleven tracks just makes me angry. Lyrically, that’s what it is—fluffy, egotistic draws, like a waiter putting too much cheese on a salad. When the production of a record becomes too good, it loses the fervor of natural, raw sound. Tranquility Base Hotel and Casino is devoid of even the casual anthemic tone the band was previously known for; here, it feels like the band has lost all prominence and influence. Nothing stands out.

When a group makes the transition into becoming a solo-project of the vocalist hinging on a backing band, then I cease to care about the intents and purposes of the record as a whole. The vocalist is not the most important part of the band, and the direction of sound should likewise not be dictated as such. I hope David Bowie returns to us as a deadite to kill Alex Turner and his contemporaries for tainting a retrofied sound. If you want to feel actual emotion, listen to a skramz, post-metal, or jazz record. Listen to something trying to make each song unique, rather than this.
**EVENTS CALENDAR**

**November 16 – December 5**

**Rachel Lynn Moore**
Staff Writer

**Friday, Nov. 16**
3-7pm: The three-day Annual Holiday Market at the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort, MI begins today. See oliverartcenterfrankfort.org/events for more information.

5-9pm: TART Trails 20th Birthday party is the Lake Ave Block Party. TART is shutting down Lake Ave for a free entry block party including live music, a sour beer competition, and more. See traversetrails.org/event/tarts-20th for more information.

**Saturday, Nov. 17**
9am-3pm: Traverse City Christmas Winterfest Craft and Vendor Show will be held in the Williamsburg Dinner Theater at 4230 M 72 E in Williamsburg.

10am-4pm: The Annual Holiday Market at the Oliver Art Center continues.

10am-4pm: Traverse City West Senior High hosts its 8th annual craft show.

7:30-11pm: The NMC Children’s Choir Holiday Concert will be held at the Lars Hockstead Auditorium. Tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for seniors and children. There is a second performance on Sunday. See mynorthtickets.com/events to purchase or see more information.

**Sunday, Nov. 18**
Noon: Cranksgiving, an active food drive in partnership with Norte, Food Rescue of Northwest Michigan, and Kolo TC, is an event where cycling participants are given a list of food items and tasked with purchasing them from grocery stores in town as well as committing one random act of kindness. There is no entry fee but riders should expect to spend $25 on the food items. See elgrunporote.org/cranksgiving for more details.

Noon-4pm: The last day of the Annual Holiday Market at the Oliver Art Center.

3pm: The Traverse Symphony Orchestra will perform a Fireworks Festival lineup of songs at the Interlochen Center for the Arts Corson Auditorium. Tickets are $25.50 to $61.50. See traversymphony.org/concert/fireworks to purchase and see more information.

3-6pm: The second performance of the NMC Children’s Choir Holiday Concert.

**Monday, Nov. 19**
7pm: Here:Say Presents: Beat the Clock, where scheduled performers will tell stories about the race against time. A $7 door donation is suggested.

**Wednesday, Nov. 21 (at 5pm) – Sunday, Nov. 25**
NO CLASSES – Thanksgiving Holiday at NMC

**Thursday, Nov. 22**
9am: The 11th Annual Up North Media TC Turkey Trot features 5k and 5 mile races to benefit local charities. Entry ranges from $20-$40. See tcTurkeyTrot.com for more information.

**Friday, Nov. 23**
6:30-9am: A PJ Party! Shopping in Glen Arbor, is the town’s alternative to Black Friday madness. Shoppers are encouraged to come comfortably in their cozy pajamas and enjoy the specials offered by participating Glen Arbor retailers. See visitglenarbor.com for more information.

9am: Following the PJ Party shopping event, enjoy the Bed Parade. Local businesses and residents decorate beds to wheel through town in celebration of sleep.

**Saturday, Nov. 24**
10am-4pm: The Winter Fantasy Art Show will be held at the Historic Elk Rapids Town Hall and will feature art and specialty goods handcrafted by local artisans.

11am-11:30pm: Short’s Brewing Co. invites you to celebrate stouts and ski season at the Brewski Bash. Shanty Creek will give a free lift ticket voucher to the first 100 people to attend. The Charlie Millard Band performs at 8:30pm. See shortsbrewing.com/event for more.

**Tuesday, Nov. 27**
3pm: North Peak Brewing Co. hosts a special happy hour for Giving Tuesday for TART Trails. $1 of every pint sold will benefit the TART Trails and North Peak will match up to $2,500 of donations. See traversetrails.org/event/giving-tuesday for more information.

7pm: Norte hosts an All Ages Dance Party at The Little Fleet in downtown Traverse City to benefit Amigos, an empowerment program for children with special needs. The entry cost is any donation, small or large. See elgrunporote.org for more information.

**Wednesday, Nov. 28**
7:30pm: The Accidentals, Beth Nielsen Chapman, and May Erlewine perform together at the City Opera House in Time Out: A Night of Songs & Stories. Tickets range from $20-$50. See cityoperahouse.org for tickets and more information.

**Saturday, Dec. 1**
10am: The Farmland 5k and Free for All Bike Race will be held at the Rasho Farm in Traverse City. Racers can use many different types of bikes in the race, can run, or enter to both run and bike. Entry ranges from $35 to $50. See tctrackclub.com for more information.

**Wednesday, Dec. 5**
5-7pm: Join The Ticker at the Park Place Hotel for the Recess of Giving, a networking event with drinks, hor d’oeuvres, and prizes to benefit the Cherryland Humane Society. Entry is $10. See traverseticker.com for more information.

5:30–7:30pm: The Climate Meet & Greet is a free event to discuss climate change solutions hosted by Grand Traverse Area Citizen’s Climate Lobby at Right Brain Brewery.

**Dennos Museum—Current Exhibitions**

*Admission: NMC Student/Faculty (with ID): Free; Children (5-12): $5; Adults: $10*

- Visions of American Life: Paintings from the Manoogian Collection, 1850–1940
- Homage: A Collection of Neck-Pieces Inspired by Outstanding Canadian Women
- Pangnirtung Weavings from the Dennos Museum Center Collection
Imagine this situation. You are going to college and living with your significant other. The relationship falls apart, and you are kicked out of the house. Nowhere to go, and little to no money for a place. You have a car, so you decide to sleep in it. Perhaps you have some friends that will let you crash on their couch for a bit. Or maybe, you have no options and no idea where to go or who can even help. There are so many organizations that offer help, but they can be difficult to get hold of and you have no idea where to start. What can you do?

This is a common problem with youth and young adults in the Grand Traverse area. And there is help serving just those people: The Homeless Youth Initiative (HYI), a subcommittee for resources. Professional volunteers who have come together and make sure needs are being addressed and met. Their mission statement is “To offer homeless youth comprehensive housing, counseling, and education services that support successful transition to healthy, independent living.” The mission statement is broad, because the mission itself is. The initiative works as a kind of entry point where the young adult that is in crisis can express their needs, and the initiative works as a kind of triage, deciding how they address homelessness. “We are the group that keeps the momentum moving forward, making sure this community has clear pathways for those who are homeless to get help,” said Thomas, explaining the mission and work of HYI. When she started with HYI eight years ago, she felt the frustration of people who were in need but had no idea where to go. She recognized the need for a funnel of this information, personalized and counseled to the person in need to make things not only less stressful, but more efficient.

Thomas emphasized how important it is for students, or any of the young adults who may be homeless, to reach out for help. “We are a good place to start. If we can not meet the immediate need, we will find the resources in town for the need to be met.” The subcommittee in Student Life offers services such as gas cards, bus passes, and other emergency funds. They are even working to expand the food pantry to include perishable items such as fresh produce and are currently discussing possible deals with local farmers. The subcommittee is also working on another initiative, a possible clothing drive for winter clothes and other much needed items.

The most important part of getting help is taking the step to reach out. To access these services, even if the student is not homeless but just in need of help with anything due to tight finances, contact the Student Life office and they can direct anyone to what they need. Not homeless or in need? HYI and Student Life are always in need of volunteers. To get in contact about either volunteering or an emergent need, call Student Life at 995-1118 or stop by in person, located in the Osterlin Building room O152.

The end of the fall semester is just around the corner, which means snow, holidays, and exams are on the horizon. During these times of joy, slippery roads, and test anxiety, it’s important to de-stress as much as possible. While some students may turn to a bender on Netflix to decompress (a very tempting remedy, I’ll admit), it may be more beneficial to hit the gym.

Physical activity can be a good way to ease stress. According to NMC psychology professor Shilo Smith, physical exercise “can serve as a release. It can serve as an opportunity for you to, kind of, get away from everything. Not only does it do that, but it also actually activates the reward center, so, there’s a release of endorphins and dopamine when you’re physically active, which makes you feel better.” Along with improving your body’s health, exercise can be fun, which is rewarding in itself!

While physically challenging exercises are abundant, it may help your scholastic career to find one that also tests you mentally. This is where engaging in martial arts can be beneficial.

“I like taking complex problems, and systemizing them into a process that I can repeat,” said Matthew Elliot, owner and trainer at Warrior Combat Academy in Traverse City. “Jiu Jitsu is what started the systemization [for me], 100 percent.” Elliot says that the most beneficial part about participating in martial arts is confidence. “Whether it’s the confidence to be able to defend yourself, be able to speak in front of people, be able to make decisions, problem solve, that’s the biggest thing.”

Elliott attributes his success as a business owner to being heavily involved in martial arts, which is easy to link to succeeding in college and beyond. Making decisions and speaking in front of people are often incorporated in class, too, and confidence in your ability to problem solve can be the difference maker in having a successful semester.

The typical “end of semester blues” is compounded in northern Michigan by our seasonal climate. “Weather definitely plays a role,” Smith said, explaining why students are stressed at this time of the year, adding that the number of cloudy days we experience is a contributing factor. “Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a real concern,” she adds.

According to the Mayo Clinic, symptoms of SAD may include: “having low energy, feeling sluggish or agitation” and “having difficulty concentrating.” None of these symptoms are helpful when you’re studying for an exam. While there are many ways to ease the symptoms of SAD, one in particular is physical exercise. Smith says martial arts can “absolutely” help combat SAD.

If you’re feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or are affected by SAD, you could try to fight it by learning martial arts. There are several martial arts gyms in the Traverse City area, like Seung-ni Academy and the aforementioned Warrior Combat Academy. If you don’t feel like leaving the campus to unwind, you can sign up for Tai Chi through NMC.