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WHITE PINE PRESS

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News-in-Brief

NMC Math Bootcamp

Didn't do too great in your last math class? Looking to strengthen your foundational math skills? The Student Success Center is hosting a math bootcamp over winter break. It runs Jan. 2–5 from 9am–12pm and costs \$25 per person. Call 231-995-2134 or email studentsuccesscenter@nmc.edu to register.

Nominate Your Instructor Today!

Has an NMC instructor made a difference in your life? Consider nominating them for the Faculty Excellence award. This is the highest teaching honor awarded at NMC and nominations can only come from students. Faculty are truly honored to be nominated. Nominations are due by Dec. 15 and can be submitted here: surveymonkey.com/r/JPLQW6G

Textbooks: Sell, Rent, Reserve

Fall semester book buyback runs from Dec. 11–15. Rented textbooks are due by Friday, Dec. 15. You can also reserve your books for the spring semester through Dec. 31 and pick them up by Jan. 5. The bookstore is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30am–5:30pm, and Friday 8:30am–5:00pm.

PSY 225 Human Sexuality

Still need that psychology credit in the upcoming spring semester? All majors, undecideds, and dual-enrolled students are welcome in professor Susan Odgers's Human Sexuality class! Develop a critical awareness of the dominating issues in the field of human sexuality and explore your sense of sexual responsibility and integrity in a supportive and interactive classroom environment. PSY 225 has no textbook and meets every Friday from 11:15am–2:15pm in Scholars Hall 113.

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Alumni Spotlight: The Honorable Kevin Elsenheimer



Deanna Luton
Staff Writer

As a high school student, Kevin Elsenheimer coasted through school. However, once he enrolled at Northwestern Michigan College, he quickly learned that coasting was not an option in higher education. His time at NMC was when he really learned how to be a decent student. He discovered academic areas that piqued his interest—in

particular psychology and philosophy. “I still remember the first time I ever was motivated to read a chapter with interest was in an Introduction to Psychology class,” Elsenheimer recalls. “I thought to myself, ‘Oh, so this is how you study!’ I earned my first 4.0 in that class and never looked back.” Many new college students breeze through primary and secondary education, and are unprepared for the level critical thinking that accompanies higher education. NMC provides a stepping stone for learning study habits and adapting to the stark transition into higher education.

Elsenheimer started his career in higher education as a freshman pre-law major at NMC in the fall of 1984, receiving an Associate degree shortly thereafter. He continued earning credits toward his Bachelor’s degree at Michigan State University. “When I walked onto the MSU campus after two years at NMC, I was fully prepared. There was no gap between what I had learned and where those who started as freshman at MSU were in their academic careers.” People often assume that because NMC is so much cheaper, it is somehow a lesser educational institution. This is incredibly far from the truth.

“I’ve had a career that I never would have expected as a student at NMC,” says Elsenheimer. And he’s had quite a career. “I knew I wanted to be a lawyer, and began work as an assistant prosecutor in Antrim County. From there I started a law firm that represented municipalities throughout Michigan. I had to deal with Lansing quite a bit in that job, and decided that I could probably do at least as well as a legislator as some of the people I was dealing with.” As a result, he decided to run for office. “I was elected state representative for the tip-of-the-mitt area for six years. In my last two years,

I was named by my colleagues to be the Minority Leader in the Michigan House of Representatives, negotiating directly with the governor (Granholtz) and the other three legislative leaders. From there I served in the Snyder administration, first as Director of Michigan’s Workers’ Compensation Agency, then as Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), and then as Director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). Governor Snyder appointed me to the 13th Circuit Court for Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Leelanau counties in January.”

When asked what he liked most about NMC, Elsenheimer said, “What I appreciated most about NMC was the quality of the instructors. The people who had an influence on my life as teachers—Roy Terdal, Walt Beardslee, Joe Dionne and others—were as thoughtful and engaged as any of my university professors. I was very well-prepared for higher education by NMC, and am grateful for it.” The reduced student-to-teacher ratio at NMC allows professors to devote more time to individuals and provide one-on-one assistance. After graduating from MSU, Elsenheimer returned to NMC to keep his mind ‘in tune’ prior to law school at Wayne State University. “NMC ignited the spark of curiosity that led to what continues to be a rewarding career in public service. I’m fortunate and grateful that the arc of my career began there.”

When asked what advice he would give to current and prospective NMC students, Elsenheimer said, “Time is the great equalizer and a diminishing resource, so use it effectively. Figure out what is important to you and pursue it—you can always change your mind. And crack open a book once in awhile!”

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Taxing Civilization

How the proposed tax plan could harm higher education

William Walton-Case
Contributing Writer

If you walk down the streets of Washington, D.C., you'll come across a building with the phrase "Taxes are what we pay for a civilized society." This is the home of the Internal Revenue

Service. The federal income tax pays for services we depend on—schools, Medicare, and a justice system among others—but for many people, taxes are a burden. People who are economically challenged often rely on tax refunds just to remain solvent. College students in particular rely on the many tax breaks given to students under the current tax code in order to afford their education. These tax breaks—the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC), Lifetime Learning Credit (LLC), Tuition and Fees Deduction, and Student Loan Interest Deduction—are essential in making college affordable. However, a new tax plan is currently being drafted by the GOP, in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, that could bring major changes in the benefits students see when filing.

One particularly challenging change for those pursuing higher education is the proposed elimination of the Student Loan Interest Deduction. Student loans are often the only way that many people are able to afford higher education. These loans can be a burden after graduation, but the tax code is typically written in a way that lessens the load. Under the current tax code, students who already graduated are allowed to claim up to \$2,500 of their student loan interest paid in a year as a deduction on their taxes. The proposed plan would remove this deduction, meaning that students could be responsible for an additional \$2,500 a year in taxes after graduation.

The proposed plan could also increase the tax burden of currently enrolled students who are entering Master's or Doctoral programs. The current tax code offers two tax credits for education—the AOTC and the LLC. Of these two, the AOTC is the most beneficial, but its benefits only extend to students enrolled in an undergraduate program. Students looking to expand their education beyond a Bachelor's degree are allowed to claim the LLC, which grants them up to \$2,000 a year in tax breaks. The most important detail of the LLC is that it can be claimed for an unlimited number of years so long as the taxpayer (or a dependent) is enrolled. This makes the LLC a valuable tool for students in Master's or Doctoral programs. The proposed plan would eliminate the LLC, leaving these students without any tax credits for their education. This could be a major burden for students already in graduate programs, and

may discourage undergraduate students from pursuing higher degrees. According to Anthony Temple, an H&R Block Franchisee and tax expert, "you could see students not going into Master's programs." He worries that without the LLC, students might not be able to afford the education that they want.

Temple also mentioned that the proposed plan would throw out the Tuition and Fees Deduction. In past years, even if a student does not qualify for any education credits, they could typically deduct up to \$4,000 of tuition paid from their taxable income. This deduction is important because most education credits require full or part-time enrollment. This means that many college students who are taking only one or two courses due to financial strain must rely on the deduction instead. Under the new plan, that \$4,000 dollars is now entirely taxable income. For students experiencing financial struggles, removing this deduction could be a death sentence for their education.

All of this raises the question: if taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society, why should we accept a tax policy that damages education, one of the cornerstones of civilization? The answer is that we shouldn't and we don't have to. This is a democracy, and next year is an election year. Temple believes the plan can be halted if enough voters voice their opinion. If the plan doesn't gain popularity, he says that "Congress wouldn't pass it before an election year." But what about the year after? The only way to encourage fair tax policy is to elect representatives who support it and boot representatives who don't. So when you're getting ready to vote in the midterm election, pay attention to the tax policies of whomever you vote for—the future of college in America might depend on it.

[Editor's Note: Since this article was written, the U.S. Senate passed its version of the tax bill, H.R. 1, on Dec. 2. Unlike the House version, the Senate version of the bill does not tax graduate student waivers, and also does not eliminate the \$2,500 deduction for student loan interest. The next step is for the Senate and Congress to agree on a single, consolidated piece of legislation and have it approved in both chambers before it would be signed into law. At this time, it is unknown whether the House or Senate version of student taxation will go into the final bill.]

Pay Up: The Battle Over Net Neutrality

Dylan Jewell
Staff Writer

A vote is set to take place by the Federal Communications

Commission (FCC) on Dec. 14 that will decide the fate of "Restoring Internet Freedom Order" (a misnomer). This ordinance would effectively end the principle of net neutrality. In short, net neutrality is a guarantee from internet service providers (ISPs) to customers that they will not classify, differentiate, or block information coming from certain websites, circumvent the transference of data, or charge users more money for high-speed services. Information is sent from its origin to its destination without ISPs altering its content or hampering its delivery for any reason. The FCC itself was the entity that proposed and enforced this guarantee. Under new leadership, it's also the entity that plans to repeal it.

This action is being spearheaded by Ajit Pai, the newly appointed head of the FCC's board of commissioners, a former corporate lawyer for Verizon Fios. Staunchly opposed to government regulations of any sort, Pai displays a blithe ignorance to both the principles of net neutrality and the implications of his plans. He has insisted that net neutrality has hindered the financial growth of ISPs, yet even Verizon's CFO has

publicly said that it's had no effect on their revenue or investments. Pai and supporters of this action maintain that it would help put an end to the "micromanaging" of the internet. This is technically true—but in an insidious way.

Ending net neutrality would mean that not only do ISPs have the power to extort money from their customers in exchange for functioning high-speed internet, but that they also have the power to withhold information they deem to be not in their best interest. Corporate and political bribery is a potential outcome as ISPs may expect money from online entities in exchange for consumers having easy access to their content. Individuals would be able pay ISPs for their web content to run faster than other web content, causing a surge in competition and keeping fledgling websites without large amounts of expendable revenue from building a userbase. Logically, those voices with the most money are afforded the opportunity to be heard.

The purpose of net neutrality regulations was to solidify access to digital media and information as a right afforded to all people—a reasonable progression in a society where news, and the sharing of knowledge, is primarily a digital medium. If passed, the internet could cease to be a place where

people have access to a myriad of media, information, and opinion freely, regardless of where it comes from. It could become a pay-to-play service where those with the most money get the best exposure and ease of access. Pai's plan would have the internet behave less like a community for the sharing of information, and more like a free market—it would essentially become a mechanism for sponsorships and paid advertisements, free from any regulation.

What's more, Pai suggests that it is enough to simply have ISPs "voluntarily agree" to not obstruct or hinder the displaying of information to customers. This proposal is harder to believe because ISPs have been accused of hindering under net neutrality laws, choking the speed and availability of services from companies, such as Google and Facebook, that were in competition with their own services. On top of this, ISPs have steadily contested net neutrality restrictions since their advent, as far back as in 2010 under Obama-era FCC regulation. Verizon famously won a lawsuit claiming that the FCC did not have the authority to enforce these rules, which was what caused them to have to place net neutrality laws under even stricter regulation.

By all accounts, the vote is expected to be

in favor of the ordinance. The FCC's current commissioner board has a majority Republican representation, and all members are in favor of it. While seemingly inevitable, this movement can be avoided should Congress attempt to snuff it. It will face extensive scrutiny in court before it can be put into effect.



Ajit Pai, Chairman of FCC

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: An Invisible Epidemic

Anna George

Contributing Writer Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is hiding everywhere. We think of it as a soldier's condition, ignited by the most abnormal and far removed things from privileged first-world life: bomb explosions, gunshots, and terrifying village-wide attacks. But that couldn't be further from the truth. The condition is most prevalent in the people you see every day, and born from the places that we hold to be safe.

According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, PTSD is a wound present in the hearts and minds of roughly 8 percent of Americans. It is defined as a mental condition resulting from either bearing witness to a terrifying event or being involved in one. In America, the condition is commonly attributed to soldier-hood. Military statistics from the Secretary of Defense show that over 20 percent of the soldiers deployed in the past six years will develop PTSD, and between 10 and 30 percent of combat veterans will suffer symptoms of PTSD for the rest of their lives. While it is true that soldiers often experience PTSD, most sufferers inherit it from someone they thought they could trust. It is estimated that among the 8 million adults that suffer from PTSD annually, roughly 600,000 of those cases are veterans, revealing that the majority of cases—over 90 percent—occur in the civilian population and are caused by cases of domestic abuse, sexual violence, extreme neglect, and natural disasters.

Traumatic events can awaken our primal responses, manifesting in ways that do more harm than good. Because of the likelihood of being exposed to a traumatic event at some point in life, many develop PTSD as a natural response to these events. In many cases, the victims go undiagnosed, may

physically heal before any diagnosis can be made, or often the people they love are the ones inflicting the damage, and the arena in which they are traumatized is where they are told to recuperate: home. No one thinks to investigate the negative psychological effects their family may have on them, and victims do not want to blame someone they love and trust.

Statistically, females are almost twice as likely as males to develop PTSD. Sexual assault and domestic abuse is more likely to cause PTSD than many other traumatic events and can add another layer of complexity: Stockholm syndrome. Stockholm syndrome is when a victim develops trust or affection for their captor or abuser, and is usually present in domestic situations, as well as hostage and kidnap cases. The victims of domestic abuse often have no idea that damage is being done to them because of the affection, trustworthiness, and security they associate with those who are the abusers, often remaining within arm's reach of the people who continue to hurt them. Many cases go undiagnosed, or are misdiagnosed, which leads to improper treatment.

Because the symptoms of depression and anxiety are very similar to those of PTSD, many are often given the incorrect diagnosis. PTSD is an extremely complex condition that requires a unique plan for every individual going through treatment. Misdiagnosing these cases causes treatment to be ineffective, and the patient's mental well-being may decline.

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs also shows that as many as 3–15 percent of young girls and 1–6 percent of boys will develop PTSD, and of these kids aged 12 to 17, 10 percent will turn to smoking, and 17 percent to alcohol. Out of children ages 12 to 18, 18 percent are overweight. PTSD also affects cognition and development, leading

to further destructive behavior which affects their health and development. Victims self-medicate without knowing they have a condition that could be diagnosed and treated. Furthermore, when their home life is causing the damage, it is more difficult to diagnose.

In domestic cases, a child's primary defense is their school. Teachers can become the stable adults in a child's life, influenced only by parents and guardians. By the time a child starts kindergarten, most kids from violent or traumatic homes already show the beginning signs of PTSD. If a teacher's first impression of a child's behavior is that they are academically behind, moody, or disruptive, PTSD is harder to diagnose.

The parents are usually the first people to be contacted if there is a behavioral issue with a child, but if the parents are the problem—whether they know it or not—telling them there's something not quite right with their child may potentially make things worse. And after all measures of protecting the child have been taken, unless they are removed from their home, they are returning to the same place that did them harm, with the same people that did them harm, tearing down any progress made toward mental health.

The treatment and way we approach PTSD could be improved. There are people all around who need help, who are suffering, and some don't even know it. PTSD is unique in every single person, and can go undetected for decades longer. The first step to uncovering the vastness of this heavy and sorrowful condition is to look inside homes and neighborhoods.



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The Reason for the Season

A brief look at TC's charitable organizations.

James Robinson Staff Writer

Beyond the bustle of Black Friday and the commotion of Cyber Monday, people all across the United States took time out of their busy lives on Nov. 27 to demonstrate the holiday spirit by giving back to their communities. This day—the first Tuesday following Thanksgiving—is known as Giving Tuesday, an annual event was created in 2012 to encourage people from all walks of life to “[gather] together around the values of service and [philanthropy]... to celebrate and encourage giving.” Although Giving Tuesday has come and gone this year, there are still many ways to give back this holiday season. For those who are looking for more ways to give back to their community, here are a few descriptions of volunteer opportunities for nonprofit organizations in the Traverse City area.

The Salvation Army – For many, a bell ringer bundled up in winter clothes, standing next to a red donation kettle, is the iconic volunteer activity of the holiday season. On a good day, a friendly bell ringer “raises about \$30 per hour,” according to the website for the northern division of The Salvation Army. This is enough to provide a family with two bags of groceries, or shelter an individual for a night. If you aren’t keen on standing out in the cold ringing a bell, you can also assist with other volunteer projects like distributing winter coats, sorting and/or distributing items from the food pantry, and helping serve holiday meals. If you’re interested in joining “The Fight for Good”, visit satraversecity.org or call the Traverse City chapter of The Salvation Army at 231-946-4644.

Michigan Blood – Winter is a notoriously high demand, low supply time for blood products, so this is a great opportunity to give back. Michigan Blood helps “make a lifesaving difference”



by providing blood products and services to nearly 60 hospitals throughout Michigan. If you are willing to donate blood, you can visit the local donation site in Traverse City (2575 Aero Park Drive). The site is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12pm–7pm, and all other days from 7am–2pm. If you’re too squeamish to donate blood or are looking for more ways to volunteer, you can also help by hosting a blood drive. To make a blood donation appointment or to learn more about other volunteer opportunities, visit miblood.org or call 231-935-3030.

The Father Fred Foundation – Locally founded. Locally funded. Locally focused. This is the tagline of the Father Fred Foundation, which works “to nurture hope when all seems hopeless” by helping individuals and families meet their essential needs (food, clothing, personal care items, household goods, financial services, etc). Since this is such a varied organization, there are several different ways volunteers can help. For example, the Frostbite Food Drive, held annually in January and February, requires volunteers to hand out fliers and collect food/monetary donations at stores, then drop off and sort the items afterwards. If you are interested in volunteering or donating to Father Fred, you can sign up for volunteer notifications at fatherfred.org or call 231-947-2055.

Cherryland Humane Society – Our four-legged friends need just as much help as we do during the cold, winter months. The Cherryland Humane Society strives to find “responsible, loving, and permanent homes [for the animals in their care], while educating the public about humane values.” The shelter is dependent upon donations, which pay for food, medical attention, and vaccinations. You can make a donation by visiting cherrylandhumane.org/donate. Donations can be monetary, but they can also include pet food and supplies. Volunteers play a vital role in accomplishing this organization’s mission. Volunteers are needed for many different services, including dog walking, socialization, and animal housing maintenance. You can sign up to volunteer by visiting cherrylandhumane.org/volunteer, or by calling 231-946-5116.

Habitat for Humanity – Everyone deserves a place to call home. This is the mission of Habitat for Humanity, which “brings people together to build sustainable homes, communities, and hope.” You don’t have to have years of building experience to volunteer, you just need to have a willingness to help out your community. Monetary donations and in-kind donations of services and materials are greatly appreciated. You can also donate gently used appliances, furniture, building supplies, and other items to the Habitat for Humanity Restore (1129 Woodmere Ave, Suite K). The sale of these items funds the organization and allows volunteers to build more homes for more families in the Grand Traverse region. The Restore is open Monday through Friday from 10am–6pm and Saturday from 10am–5pm. For more information about donations and volunteer opportunities, visit habitatgr.org or call 231-941-4663.

This is only a very brief sampling of the many varying nonprofit organizations in the Traverse City area. Most are year-round organizations, so there are always opportunities to do some good in your community.



Photos by Emily Clements

Contact Info

Salvation Army:

231-946-4644

satraversecity.org

Michigan Blood:

231-935-3030

miblood.org

Father Fred:

231-547-2055

fatherfred.org

Cherryland Humane Society :

231-946-5116

cherrylandhumane.org

Habitat For Humanity (The Restore):

231-941-4663

Campus Quotes

Kelsey Pease
Staff Writer

**How do you give back during the holiday season?
Are there any causes or nonprofit organizations that you support?**



"I usually donate to Toys for Tots around here. When I was in high school, we would do something similar, putting together shoe boxes filled with little gifts, trinkets, and small toys to be given to kids in need. I've also done Paper Angels, where you're given a child's Christmas list and like a \$100 spending limit."

DANA KJELDGAARD, BUSINESS



"When I come across dog or cat food that's on sale I usually buy a whole bunch and bring it to a local animal shelter."

HANNAH HOLMES, DENTAL ASSISTANT

"As an office, we donate towards the NMC Giving Tree to support our students through the Community Foundation. Additionally, my family participates in Save the Children, through which we 'adopt' a child in poverty from Michigan and give them support through the holidays."

KRISTY JACKSON, PRESIDENT'S OFFICE



"Every year since I started college, my friends and I have donated to the Toys for Tots box at Fox Motors. When I was still living at home, my family would donate to the Community Cupboard in Elk Rapids."

GARRETT KOSS, BUSINESS

"Lately I've been regularly contributing to a couple local food pantries, and in the past I've donated to Toys for Tots. I've always felt that it's important for us to give if we're able—it brings us together and a shared sense of unity is never a bad thing."

JARED JENSEN, LAW ENFORCEMENT



"It costs zero dollars to be a nice person; I get so heated when I meet jerk people. It doesn't take much to just share a smile or hold the door open, so I try to make a difference by just doing the little things, whether it's the holiday season or not."

SHELBY MITCHELL, PRE-MED



"I usually give a few dollars to the bell ringers outside of Walmart. It's kinda like, why not? Even if it's just a dollar, it could mean something bigger to someone else; you never know what they're going through."

SABRINA PINA, VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

American Horror Story: Letter and Response

Hello Maya,

I read your article in the *White Pines Press*. It was very good and well done, but one question. Why do you think there is so much assault and harassment against women? What is your opinion of the real reasons that takes place? Yes, there is a cultural expectation. Is there? And what about the male ego and drive? What do you think?

I have decided to look into this more as a retired professional and want to learn more, may write an article about it. I write for the UU [Unitarian Universalist] newsletter every month. So, if you can and have time, please share some of your ideas. I appreciate that.

Emmy Lou

Emmy Lou,

I'm going to assume you mean 'why there is so much assault and harassment against women right now,' because, unfortunately, ever since the existence of women, there has been sexual assault.

I would argue that a patriarchal society means a society with unhealthy expectations of men and women. While there is a "feminine ideal"—that the majority of women, including those in the black, LatinX, and rainbow community will simply never fit into—there are unhealthy expectations for both genders. The way to break up a patriarchal society is to reform society in and of itself, and there are ways we can all pitch in to do this, such as conversations about consent in the community.

According to PolitiFact and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, white men made up 60% of the perpetrators of all violent crime in 2012. Most terrorism in our country has been domestic terrorism from the hands of white men like Alex Fields, Dylan Roof, Timothy McVeigh, and most recently Stephen Paddock, who gunned down a sea of people in a country music concert in Vegas. Men in our country are more likely to commit violent acts, but why? Could it be a culture of media depicting men aggressively harassing and beating women in shows like "Shameless," "South Park," and "Family Guy"? Or could it be the military ideal of the "Hulk" or the "Justice League," a sentiment that the only way to show your strength is through violence?

Whatever the cause, it is a controversial issue with many perspectives—one of which is my own. Women have been harassed throughout time, and now people feel more emboldened to step up and talk about it. From one perspective, this can be seen in the #metoo or #churchtoo campaigns, where women relay instances where they were sexually assaulted and the many ways in which their church or community failed them. However, from another perspective, sexual assault is not a crime, or not as serious a crime. Donald Trump himself was caught bragging about grabbing women's genitalia on a bus and "grab em' by the pussy" became a popular slogan for his campaign adorned on shirts, posters, signs, and Facebook posts. No matter your perspective, sexual assault and harassment is not going anywhere and there will be more allegations as time goes on.

Last year I was raped by the friend of a friend. I'm not going to go too deep into details because I am still trying to heal—but I did lose many of the people I loved because they thought I was lying and trying to ruin my assaulter's reputation. Most days I stayed at home crying, missing many of my classes the rest of the semester, but I still went to work only to receive demands from my managers to "smile more" and "lose the attitude". I could not go into the local coffee shop Brew, where my friends used to spend time with me, because there were employees and customers who would tell me to my face that I am a liar and what a good person my rapist was. "DIE YOU FUCKING SKANK" was something screamed at me one sunny day after yoga when I was starting to feel better. I reached out to the police, but since I reported the incident too late to get a rape kit there was virtually nothing I could do besides file for a restraining order and by the time I could, my assaulter had left town. Before my assault I had never cried so much that it caused me to vomit.

My rapist got away with what he did, and for all I know could be doing the same things to other women wherever he is today. Brock Turner, Louis C.K., Donald Trump, Bill O'Reilly, Bill Cosby, Al Franken, and all of the other famous assaulters out there have faced barely any justice for their actions, and no matter how much any of their survivors speak up and demand justice, our nation has demonstrated to us that sexual assault is barely a crime. People are speaking up now more than ever. It's less about the 'why' now, and more about the 'when'. But when will this horror end? Right now, Emmy Lou, it feels like never.

— Maya James

Vladimir Putin: The Guise of a Grizzly Bear

Mike Sims

Contributing Writer

My personal belief regarding Vladimir Putin stems from

his portrayal of himself as a stereotypical tough guy—a man dressed in the guise of a grizzly bear—so perhaps it's fear coupled with acrimony that someone other than a western leader is seizing the world by storm. I believe Putin is very much like a tsar, but I dare not say he's a Joseph Stalin. He is a complex man wrapped in privacy, wishing to steer his home country to greatness while also being somewhat poisoned by his past.

Is Putin trying to be the tough guy of the world, or is he already the tough guy the western world fears? Looking into his background might help answer this question. For 15 years, Putin worked as an agent for the KGB. He officially joined the agency in 1975 after graduating from Saint Petersburg State University. While stationed in East Germany, he saw an ailing Soviet Union and knew that its destruction was inevitable. I suspect that in Putin's mind, he thought no piece of the Soviet Union would be salvageable and that Russia needed to change to remain a major power in the global arena. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Putin realized the nation he'd grown up in was gone.

We as human beings have a touch of fear for our own insecurities. The same could be said about our world's most powerful nations. If this is true, then we have to see things from a different perspective—the calculative

motive of Vladimir Putin. In other words, Putin's plans are the result of his desire to make Russia great again.

Putin is truly Russia's strongman, not because of how tough he is, but because of how intimidating he can be. He preaches grand things in store for Russia, promising

strength and power greater than that of the former Soviet Union. Vladimir Putin is the orchestral conductor, commanding every word he so chooses. He does this to show the people of Russia how great potency can be in achieving wonders. In truth, we may not know what's inside Putin's head. However, we

can say the Russian president is just like any other man on Earth, only more daring and cunning with his words and strategies. To me, Putin is a man putting on the stereotypical tough guy persona because he isn't fearful of how the world will see him.



Illustration by Kayleigh Johnson

Sugar: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Macy Schwert
Staff Writer

Sugar, in all forms, is a simple carbohydrate that the body converts into glucose and uses for energy. But the effect on your body and overall health depends entirely on the type, and how much, of sugar you're eating.

The best source of sugar is fresh fruit. Fresh fruits are whole foods that contain pure, naturally occurring sugar. Fruits are rich in water, diluting the sugar, and high in fiber, slowing the release of fructose in the bloodstream. Fresh fruit is also loaded with nutrients that are essential to be able to properly process sugar.

The most preferable type of sugar additive to consume is organic cane sugar. It is unrefined sugar that does not contain the cancer-causing and environmentally damaging pesticides present in refined sugar, which is processed from conventionally grown sugarcane or sugar beets (a genetically modified crop). Compared to regular white table sugar, organic cane sugar has the full-bodied taste of sugar cane and retains more naturally occurring nutrients that help our bodies properly process it. Unrefined cane sugar contains 17 amino acids, 11 minerals, and six vitamins.

Refined sugar, commonly referred to as white or table sugar, is made by stripping the nutrients and color of the sugarcane plant through a several-step refining process. The refinement process is what differentiates cane sugar from refined sugar. Both cane and refined sugars begin as juice extracted from sugarcane, which is then filtered, evaporated and spun in a centrifuge, which results in the creation of sugar crystals. For cane sugar, this is where the process ends, but refined sugar is further processed. Refined sugar offers no substantial

health benefits because the refining process strips the sugar of all of its naturally occurring vitamins and minerals. Table sugar is basically sucrose and calories, plus trace amounts of pesticides and the chemicals utilized in the refining process such as lime, sulphur dioxide, and phosphoric acid. The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of refined sugar a day.

The main difference between natural and processed sugars is how each one delivers glucose and fructose. For example, fruits contain a pile of nutrients, vitamins, antioxidants and fiber—your typical table sugar does not. The nutrients present in fruit and organic cane sugar allow your body to slow down the absorption of fructose. When your body gets overloaded with sugar it can't properly break it down, the liver can't use it as energy, and it gets stored as fat. Over time, this can have serious implications for your health.

Table sugar increases type 2 diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease risks. High intake of refined white sugar can lead to an array of health problems including: tooth decay, gout, immunosuppression, inflammation, pancreatic damage, multiple sclerosis, vision problems, osteoporosis, hyperactivity, hypertension, Hypercholesterolemia, nutritional deficiencies, cancer, kidney problems, depression, and schizophrenia.

We eat more refined sugar today than our parents and grandparents did three decades ago. This is one of the main causes of increased obesity rates among adults and children. Obesity has been associated with certain cancers, including breast, prostate, uterine, colorectal, and pancreatic. On the flipside, fruits high in antioxidants—blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries and apples—may reduce your cancer risk.



A Rainbow Connection: The Lovers, the Dreamers and You

Maya James
Staff Writer

The national Human Rights Campaign has called out for better, more inclusive sex education for the rainbow community, stating "Far too many LGBTQ youth are sitting in classrooms where their teachers and textbooks fail to appropriately address their identities, behaviors, and experiences." How is Michigan's Department of Education addressing intersectional needs within our own community? In short: they aren't.

According to the Department of Education's "HIV/STD and Sex Education in Michigan Public Schools: A Summary of Legal Obligations and Best Practices," a guideline all public schools must follow, the sex education laws in Michigan create a web of strict regulations for teachers, as the threat of decreased funding looms.

The focus of sex education in Michigan public schools must only be on "reproductive health," which excludes non-heterosexual students who may or may not be engaging in reproductive practices at all. "Dispensing or distributing family planning or drug or device, dispensing prescriptions for family planning drug, or making referrals for abortion" is banned statewide and may cost a teacher their job,

making sexual education in Michigan a limited class about reproductive, heterosexual, cis-gender, male-female sex. Sex education in Michigan does not include the teaching of a gender spectrum and excludes sex in the rainbow community.

Students can opt out of the sex education class with a note from a parent or guardian, but where does this leave them when it comes to learning about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), healthy sexual interactions, and consent? These guidelines already limit the scope of information in the classroom, especially education that could prove useful to the LGBTQ community.

For example, a teacher can teach about the existence of HIV and AIDS, but not that, according to the Centers for Disease Control, "consistent and correct use of latex condoms is highly effective in preventing sexual transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS." The only thing a teacher would legally be able to say is that abstinence is the only way to avoid STDs. The Human Rights Campaign notes on their website that "among Millennials surveyed in 2015, only 12 percent said their sex education classes covered same-sex relationships," and HIV.gov points out that "gay and bisexual men accounted for 82% (26,375) of HIV diagnoses among males and 67%

of all diagnoses" of HIV. This means that barely 12 percent of the Millennial generation is being taught about a dire health crisis that affects 82% of the gay male community.

Is sex ed in Michigan really doing that much for young women, either? According to the sex education laws in Michigan, the use of the term "family planning" is prohibited unless it only refers to abstinence. In the CDC's "Effectiveness of Family Planning" graphic, the least effective type of family planning, with over 18 pregnancies per 100 women in a year is abstinence, and the most effective type of family planning, with less than one pregnancy per 100 women a year, are devices like the intrauterine device or sterilization. Michigan's Department of Education is advocating for the worst way to prevent pregnancy. At what cost? According to the *Record-Eagle*, during 2011 in Traverse City, there were 98 pregnancies of girls between the ages of 15–19.

Teen pregnancy has decreased nationally by a staggering amount, but there is still work to be done within our own community. The "abstinence only" method is no longer an adequate tool for sex education, for either heterosexual or LGBTQ youth.

Book ^{Shady}_{Lady} Reviews
Mythology

Ann Hosler When studying a work from a mythographer’s standpoint, you have to take a step back, carefully analyzing and interpreting the story. These pieces of literature
Staff Writer come from so many cultures, with varying belief systems, pantheons, symbolic representations, themes, archetypes, and more. What we consider quality writing has evolved over time, and will surely evolve more in the future. One might say that it’s unfair to read a story in, say, a Mythology textbook—that, perhaps, this writer had to indulge in for a World Mythology class this semester—and judge it as you would a modern piece of literature. That “one” is not me.

“Before All Before’s”

Ancient Sumerian Mythology

Translated by: Samuel Noah Kramer

This creation story gives a powerful role to the female gender. The universe comes from the main character, Nammu, because everyone knows that men are junk at birthing babies. There is enough incest in this myth to rival one of George R.R. Martin’s “A Song of Ice and Fire” novels. Nammu’s first child(ren)—An and Ki, aka Anki—make sweet love until their firstborn, Enlil, gets impatient and rips them apart.

Just when you think the lovefest is at its end, mama Nammu swoops in and gets a piece of that incest. Don’t worry, there’s a happily ever after as both An and Ki receive important jobs in their newly divorced lives: An gets to protect the “Above” (aka the Heavens), and Ki gets to protect the “Middleworld” (aka the Earth).

Unicorns: 🦄🦄🦄🦄

“Raven and the Sources of Light”

Native American Mythology

Translated by: Donna Rosenberg

Need an interesting plot twist to infiltrate your enemy’s lair? Transform yourself into a seed and impregnate his daughter, wait nine months to pop out, grow into a toddler, THEN finally accomplish your goal. In “Raven and the Sources of Light”, the main character, Raven (who is a raven), does just that. When a great chief steals the moon and sinks the nights into eternal darkness, Raven plays the long game, becomes his grandson, and cons the old man into giving him pieces of moon. Mission accomplished.

Unicorns: 🦄🦄🦄🦄🦄

“The Story of Re”

Ancient Egyptian Mythology

Translated by: Jonathan Dee

From the nothing there was something called Nun, but that’s not important to this story. What is important is that Nun was so powerful it randomly hatched a powerful-egg-

thing, and that’s where we got our homeboy Re (aka Ra, aka Khepera, aka Tern). Despite his identity crisis, Re got some shit done in this story. He would namedrop and BOOM, that thing was created. Eventually he made Earth and everything including mankind, then decided being a god wasn’t enough—it was time to be Pharaoh, too.

Re has a grand old time playing Pharaoh until he realizes that his subjects are mocking him as he aged. He was greatly offended and the other gods suggested he should unleash his Eye in the form of Sekhmet. Caving to peer pressure, Re does this, and the story takes a dark turn. Humanity is slaughtered by the uncontrollable Sekhmet, and Re could only watch on in horror. He eventually tricks Sekhmet with 7,000 jars of beer, and thus saves the remnants of humanity.

Unicorns: 🦄🦄🦄🦄🦄

“Beowulf”

Anglo-Saxon Mythology

Translated by: Donna Rosenberg

Holy sea-swells, Batman. I’m about to upset some hardcore mythology fans with this statement: I didn’t like “Beowulf”. Sure, it’s an important text, but that doesn’t mean it was good.

Our hero of the hour, Beowulf, has superhuman strength which he puts on display while fighting and defeating the monster Grendel. In later fights, his characterization becomes inconsistent as he begins to rely on swords. Not just any swords—ones that break if you look at them funny. Huge emphasis is put on these amazing ancient swords over and over, yet nearly every one breaks in a fight. No wonder Beowulf had superhuman strength.

Apart from the inanity of the combat system in this story, the reader is also treated to “word-hoards” (which are just long monologues), “sea swells of XYZ” (basically a fancy way to say rising tide of XYZ emotion), and treasure...lots and lots of treasure.

If King Hrothgar had bestowed a treasure upon me, maybe I would’ve rated this higher on my arbitrary unicorn scale.

Unicorns: 🦄🦄

“The Iliad”

Greek Mythology

Translated by: Donna Rosenberg

What would Achilles do for a Klondike bar? Absolutely nothing, because they didn’t exist in Ancient Greece, but I was eating ice cream while pondering what to write here, so I digress.

This story is jam-packed with gods, heroes, battles, bro-fighting, intrigue, ridiculous dialogue, useless women, and death. King Agamemnon decides to take Achilles’s battle-trophy woman, Briseis, so Achilles peaces out to his ships and asks mommy—who happens to be a goddess—to fling some bad luck at Agamemnon until he realizes how useful Achilles’s presence is. Zeus agrees as well, and soon enough Achilles is sending his BFF to assist the other Greeks in battle. His BFF dies to Hektor, Achilles gets pissed, Hektor dies to Achilles, Achilles plays with his corpse... well, you can see where this story is going.

Unicorns: 🦄🦄🦄🦄🦄

“Sir Gawain and the Green Knight”

Arthurian Mythology

Translated by: Marie Boroff

Knights, honor, chivalry. A challenger in King Arthur’s court. How can you go wrong?

This story pits one of Arthur’s knights, Sir Gawain, against the challenge posed by the Green Knight. Surviving his beheading at Arthur’s court, the Green Knight tells Sir Gawain to meet him one year hence at his chapel. Fast-forward to a year later, and we’re off to see the wizard...er, Green Knight.

Along the way, upholding the knight’s code of conduct will be difficult. Sir Gawain accepts the hospitality of Lord and Lady Bertilak at a totally-not-suspicious castle in an enchanted forest. After choosing survival over s haring an item he acquires there with its lord, he moves on to meet the Green Knight. Turns out all along the Green Knight had been Lord Bertilak and was just testing Sir Gawain—who must now reconcile with the fact that knights, too, are human.

Unicorns: 🦄🦄🦄🦄🦄🦄

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Homemade Granola

Lindsay Schmandt
Staff Writer

If you've ever been down the granola aisle at the grocery store, you know the versatility of the crunchy, oat-based cereals. If you're looking for something cheap, different, and easy to learn how to make, granola is your recipe. Beginning with the simple base of granola, the possibilities are endless for mix-and-match options—flavors like apple pie or gingerbread spice might be the perfect addition to a holiday morning breakfast. In addition to being easy to make it, granola lasts for a long time in pantry, so making a big batch and dividing it into decorated, air-tight jars are the perfect gift to give away for the holiday season!

Base Granola Recipe:

3 cups plain rolled oats
½ cup light or dark brown sugar
½ cup maple syrup
3 tbsp. oil
Pinch of salt

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 325° Fahrenheit. Mix the oats with the brown sugar and salt until the sugar is evenly distributed. Add in the maple syrup and mix until the oats are evenly coated, then mix the oil in. Spread the oat mixture onto a metal sheet pan, or any pan big enough so that the granola can be in an even layer no taller than ½ an inch—this will ensure the granola browns evenly and gets nice and crunchy. Bake the granola, stirring every 20 minutes, until the oats are nice and dark brown, about one hour. The granola might still feel soft but will harden as it cools.

Add-on Ideas

Coconut Pecan Granola:

Follow the directions for Base Granola – adding in 1 tsp. cinnamon and 1 tsp. vanilla extract before baking. During the last 20 minutes of baking, add in 1.5 cups raw pecans and 1 cup coconut—shredded or shaved is fine.

Gingerbread Granola:

Follow the directions for Base Granola. Before baking, add 1 tsp. vanilla extract, 1 tsp. ground ginger, 2 tsp. cinnamon and a pinch of ground clove. Optionally add nuts 20 minutes before baking is finished.

Protein Granola:

Follow the Base Granola recipe, adding in any flavors and spices, like cinnamon and vanilla, before baking. Immediately after you remove the granola from the oven, stir in 1 cup pecans, ½ cup almonds, 1 cup dried fruit (cranberries, blueberries, cherries, or a mix works well!) and 1 cup seeds (sunflower go well with dried fruit).

Kelsey Pease
Staff Writer

EVENTS CALENDAR

December 8 - January 1

Friday, Dec. 8

5:30 to 6:30pm: Voices student group meeting in Health and Science 100.
6 to 10pm: Christmas in the Village at Grand Traverse Commons, featuring snacks, beverages, music, stocking stuffers, and tree lighting.
6 to 10pm: Volleyball sponsored by Ratio Christi at the Physical Education 100 Gym.

Saturday, Dec. 9

Noon to 7pm: Christmas in the Village at Grand Traverse Commons, featuring indoor farmers market, carriage rides, Santa, music, and stocking stuffers.

7:30 to 9:30pm: TSO's Home for the Holidays, featuring the NMC Children's Choir for the Symphony's celebration at the Lars Hockstad Auditorium, Central Grade School.

Sunday, Dec 10

11am to 4pm: Christmas in the Village at Grand Traverse Commons, featuring music, Santa, and stocking stuffers.

Tuesday, Dec. 12

4 to 9pm: Ugly Sweater Party featuring prizes for the best outfits at the Jolly Pumpkin Restaurant, Brewery, & Distillery, 13512 Peninsula Dr., Traverse City.

Wednesday, Dec. 13

3:30 to 4:30pm: SUGR group meeting in Health & Science 100.
6:30 to 7:30pm: Beer Yoga, all levels welcome, no experience necessary at the Jolly Pumpkin Restaurant, Brewery, & Distillery.
9pm to Midnight: NMC iDance club meeting in Physical Education 120.

Thursday, Dec. 14

5pm: Men's Night Holiday Shopping in downtown Traverse City, featuring food, refreshments, and specials on Front Street.

Friday, Dec. 15

7:30 to 9am: NMC Leadership Group in Oleson Center Rooms A & B
5:30 to 6:30pm: Voices student group meeting in Health and Science 100.
6 to 10pm: Volleyball sponsored by Ratio Christi at the Physical Education 100 Gym.

Saturday, Dec. 16

10am to 12pm: Breakfast with Santa, featuring a family-friendly buffet, face painting, balloon artists, music, and a doughnut station at Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, 100 Grand Traverse Village Blvd, Acme.
Semester Ends - Have a great winter break!

Sunday, Dec. 17

5pm: Jingle Bell 5k, featuring food, refreshments, a Festive Attire Contest, and donations for ACTS Food Pantry at the Warehouse District, 221 Garland St., Traverse City.

Wednesday, Dec. 19

7:30pm: NMC Concert Band at the Dennon Museum Center Milliken Auditorium.

Friday, Dec. 22

7 to 8 pm: Storytime with Santa featuring cookie decorating at Lakeview Spa - Shanty Creek Resorts, 5780 Shanty Creek Rd., Bellaire.

6pm: Tannenbaum Blitz, featuring a pasta buffet, torchlight parade, Christmas carols, cookie decorating, and a visit from Santa at Ivan's Cafe, Schuss Village - Shanty Creek.

College closed for Christmas Holiday, Dec. 22–25. – Merry Christmas!

Monday, Dec. 25

9am to 4:30pm: Ski Free with Santa on the slopes of Schuss Mountain at Shanty Creek Resorts. Pay it forward with food, clothing, or household item donations.

11am to 5pm: Christmas Day Buffet at Aerie Restaurant - Grand Traverse Resort & Spa.

Wednesday, Dec. 27

6:30 to 7:30pm: Beer Yoga, all levels welcome, no experience necessary at the Jolly Pumpkin Restaurant, Brewery, & Distillery.

College closed for New Year's Holiday, Dec. 29–Jan. 1.

Sunday, Dec. 31

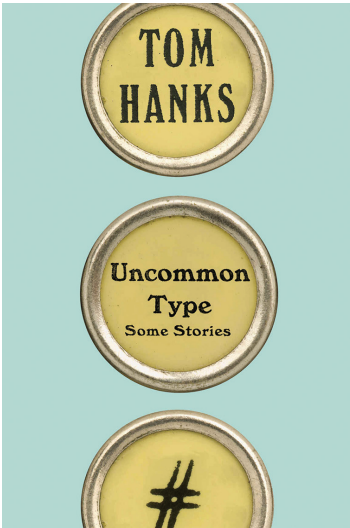
9pm: Traverse City New Year's Eve CherryT Ball Drop, featuring live music and entertainment on Front St.

Monday, Jan. 1

New Year's Day - Happy New Year!

Take a Break: NMC Librarian Book Reviews

The break between the fall and spring semesters is a great time to not only catch up on everything you’ve been neglecting for three months, but also to enjoy some quality relaxation. Hopefully that time will include a bit of leisure reading. Before heading out for winter break, swing by the Osterlin Library to check out one (or more!) of these great books.

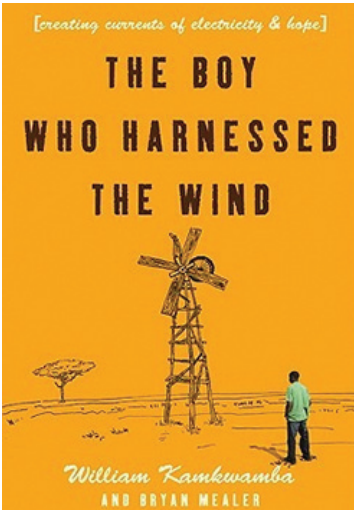
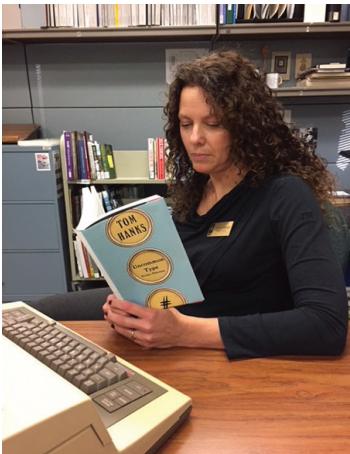


Reviewer: Michele Howard, Librarian
“Uncommon Type” by Tom Hanks

“My mama always said life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re gonna get.” These words, spoken by actor Tom Hanks in the iconic movie “Forrest Gump”, perfectly describe Hanks’s new book “Uncommon Type”. Featuring 17 short stories, you will be taken down many wonderful storylines where you won’t ever know exactly what you’re gonna get until the story unfolds. The only thing you do know is that each story will somehow contain a typewriter, and waiting for that typewriter to appear is like the anticipation of opening a present on Christmas morning.

His first foray into fiction, Hanks’ writing won’t shift any paradigms, but his short stories are a nice way to unwind after a busy semester without committing to read a whole book.

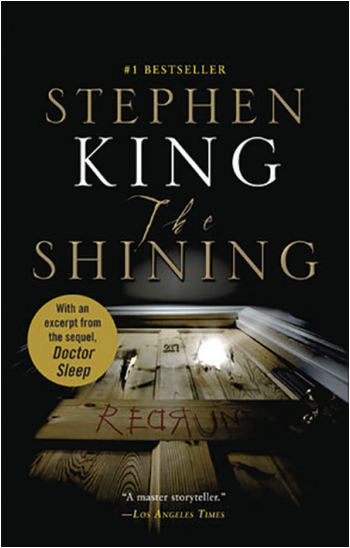
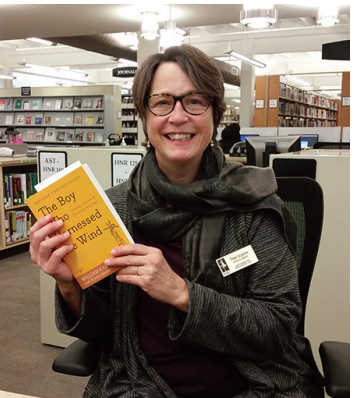
Available at the Osterlin Library, call number: PS3608 .A71522 A6 2017



Reviewer: Tina Ulrich, Director of Library Services
“The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” by William Kamkwamba

“The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope” is about childhood and science and famine and farming and inventing. But most importantly, it is about the power of libraries to affect people’s lives in even the most difficult circumstances. William is a poor farmer’s son in Malawi whose parents cannot afford to keep him in school. In his elementary school was a tiny library: three shelves of old textbooks donated by the American government for a teacher training program. While his peers went to school, William used one of the old science textbooks to build a windmill to generate electricity. Reading William’s story reminded me that education is not the exclusive domain of schools. Just free books and curiosity can turn people into agents of change for their communities.

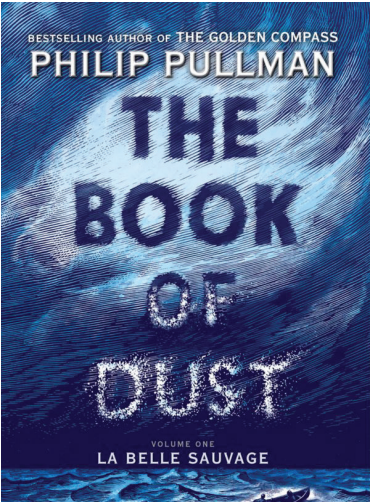
Available at the Osterlin Library, call number: TJ140.K36 A3 2012



Reviewer: Ann Geht, Librarian
“The Shining” by Stephen King

Jack Torrance is a devoted family man. Really. It’s just that sometimes he loses his temper. Anyway, acting as the winter caretaker for the remote Overlook Hotel—with its testy basement boiler and its homicidal history—would make *any* man a bit edgy. If only his wife would stop pick-pick-picking at him about his writing. If only his five year-old son Danny would stop sticking his nose where it doesn’t belong, like room 217. And if only the ghosts of the Overlook Hotel were a little less hellbent on ensuring the Torrance family never lives to see the spring. “The Shining” is Stephen King’s third published novel, and the horror descends slowly and steadily, like thickly falling snow. If you need an antidote to smugly smiling families in Hallmark holiday movies, you should pick up “The Shining”. I promise you won’t be able to put it down.

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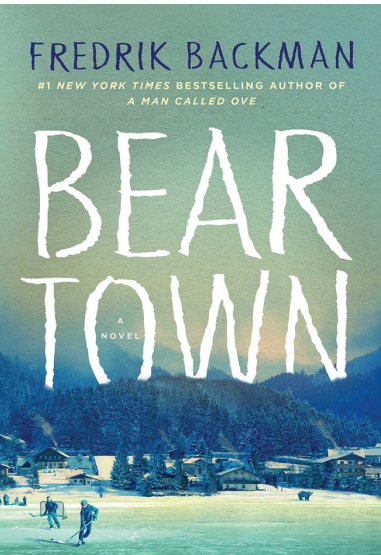


Reviewer: Joelle Hannert, Library Technical Services Coordinator
“La Belle Sauvage” by Philip Pullman

I grew up reading Philip Pullman’s epic “His Dark Materials” series (“The Golden Compass”, et al.), so when I heard that he was writing a new trilogy to add to the story, I was super excited. Lyra Belacqua, the hero of “The Golden Compass”, is a baby in “The Book of Dust, Volume One: La Belle Sauvage”. Prophesied about by witches and wanted by the Catholic authoritarian regime, baby Lyra’s unlikely protector is Malcolm, an 11-year-old innkeeper’s son. Malcolm embarks with Lyra on a dreamlike journey down the flooded River Thames, evading threats from an unhinged scholar and the increasingly fascist government.

Though not quite as moving and magical as the novels in “His Dark Materials”, “La Belle Sauvage” is a fun re-immersion into Lyra’s world. If you’re new to the series, start with “The Golden Compass”, but if you’ve read “His Dark Materials”, this new story will be a welcome treat.

Available at the Osterlin Library, call number: APZ7 .P968 BO 2017



Reviewer: Rochelle Hammontree, Librarian
“Beartown” by Fredrik Backman

Want to escape into a small wooded town that seems quaint and idyllic, yet has all the intrigue of suspense, mystery, and emotion? “Beartown: A Novel”, written by Fredrik Backman, will send you there. I was drawn to this book because of the author’s 2012 novel, “A Man Called Ove”. I thought it would be of the same easy gentle read, but soon discovered this is a little darker and doesn’t have the humor portrayed in “A Man Called Ove”. All the same, it is a quick read for a good getaway suspense novel. You get a sense of who the characters are and their surroundings. It’s a coming-of-age story for the characters involved. Backman describes the area as a beautiful wooded town troubled by the economic times and hoping to get the junior ice hockey team to win the national championship so they can get back on the map as a winning town to get the economy going again. You see the friendships grow together and part ways, you get a feel of the characters. Your emotions will definitely get the better of you with this novel, but that is why I enjoyed this read.

Available at the Osterlin Library, call number: PT9877.1

