



BETWEEN THE COVERS

Community Center Grant Awarded

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity awarded \$64 million in Community Center grant funds to 100 Michigan municipalities and organizations for programming and capital projects. The Fennville Collaborative Community Project, comprised of the City of Fennville, Fennville District Library and Fennville Public Schools, will receive one million dollars to fund capital projects in the community.

“The City is thrilled to work with our friends at the Library and the Schools on these capital projects which will not only provide new types of recreation, but also improve access to recreation throughout the greater Fennville area,” said Fennville City Administrator Kathryn Beemer.

Design work on the capital projects will commence shortly, and construction is expected in spring 2025.

The City of Fennville will utilize the grant funds to supply varied recreational opportunities in a new community park in the downtown area. “Design is ongoing and will incorporate elements that were listed as most desired in the community’s most recent parks and recreation plan,” said Beemer. “The city will be able to provide programming around the recreational opportunities, incorporating their use into reoccurring and pop-up events that are scheduled in downtown Fennville”.

Fennville District Library will apply the

funds to expand and reconfigure their parking lot. Reconfiguration includes space for a community garden and community shed. The capital project will allow the library to continue to expand its services, programming, and events to the community it serves.

“The grant will allow the library to enhance our community programming and events and provide more safe parking spaces for our patrons,” said Fennville District Library Director Teresa Kline.

Fennville Public Schools will apply the funds to enhance plans in place to improve the old tennis and basketball courts that are open to the public as a part of the Fennville Area Community Recreation. Superintendent, Dr. Doug Greer, summarized the work by saying: “We are so excited about this partnership and the opportunity to start renovating the outdoor recreational space. Based on a recent community survey, we plan to install four pickle ball courts, a versatile tennis court, a futsal (soccer) court, and flexible basketball court. The community supported the preliminary plans with a recreational millage in August and this grant will allow us to begin construction sooner than what the rec millage would have afforded.”

The highly competitive grant received nearly 1,000 applications requesting over \$1 billion in funding. Organizations in 43 Michigan counties received funding that will stretch across nearly the entire state.

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Current Hours:
Monday - Thursday 10 am - 8 pm
Friday 10 am - 5 pm
Saturday 10 am - 2 pm
Sunday 2 - 4pm

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NEWSLETTER *contact*
fdlnewsletter1@gmail.com

NATIONAL MONTH OF HOPE

convoyofhope.org



VANESSA'S VIEW

Have you ever wondered what love smells like, what love sounds like? *My Love for You is Always*, written by Gillian Sze

and illustrated by Michelle Lee, may answer some of those questions. In this endearing book, we see the heartwarming conversation between mother and son regarding the question, "What is love?" Michelle Lee's soft, dynamic illustrations capture the essence of love and compliment the author's descriptions perfectly. Lee illustrates beautifully dynamic scenes that lead you through the book. From the illustrations of yummy aromas filling the space on the page to the carp trailing across the pages as they make their journey to the end of the book, Lee's work pulls the reader in allowing us to engage our own senses and experience the mother's descriptions. The stunning depictions of Chinese culture further add a layer of depth to the exploration of love. We are shown detailed, yet simple, illustrations of Chinese spices and foods, along with the mesmerizing image of a red dragon. The inclusion of these cultural traditions help the boy and reader to not only understand the meaning of what love can be, but how one's culture and everyday ways of living are filled with love. With the illustrators' imaginative illustrations and the author's exquisite descriptions, readers are able to experience just how magical love truly is.

Many of us, looking back over the past several years impacted by a global pandemic and other crises, would admit we have faced some challenging times. The National Month of Hope, observed every April, is dedicated to celebrating resilience and finding strength during tough times.

Peanuts creator Charles M. Schulz said, "A whole stack of memories never equal one little hope." If there were ever a fictional character who exemplified undying hope, it was Schulz's Charlie Brown.

Hope can be an essential beacon of light to guide us through difficult times, ignite our spirits with the belief that better days are within reach, and empower us to persevere, dream, and create a brighter future.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL MONTH OF HOPE?

The National Month of Hope encourages us to offer support to those facing challenging circumstances.

It's a time to rally together, drawing

inspiration from the stories of individuals like Rosalind Tompkins, who founded Mothers in Crisis, a nonprofit organization, in 1991. In 2018, she led the initiative to create National Month of Hope. Tompkins has dedicated her life to providing assistance, guidance, and hope to mothers facing challenging circumstances.

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NEW! YOUTH READS >>>

The concept of the NATIONAL MONTH OF HOPE

has gained traction, and its observance continues to grow. As communities, activists, and advocates unite their efforts, hope is sure to continue growing.

This collective endeavor allows the celebration of hope to transcend boundaries and touch the lives of people from various backgrounds and walks of life.

HOW CAN WE CELEBRATE?

Organize Games & Activities

Create a joyful atmosphere in your neighborhood or church by organizing games, sports activities, and interactive sessions. Encourage their participation, foster teamwork, and promote the values of friendship, fairness, and inclusivity.

Support Families in Need

Consider volunteering at local shelters or with organizations that provide assistance to mothers and families in need. You can

offer your time and skills, donate essential items, or simply lend a compassionate ear to those who may be going through tough times.

Share Stories of Hope

Use social media platforms, personal blogs, or community forums that amplify the power of storytelling to inspire others and spread hope. Share stories of people you know who have overcome adversity or highlight organizations that work to uplift communities. *~ continued on page 4*



jazz
HANDS!

PICTURE BOOK
Jazz Baby
by Lisa Wheeler

MIDDLE GRADE
A Child's Introduction to Jazz
by Jabari Asim

YOUNG ADULT
Struttin' with Some Barbecue
by Patricia Hruby Powell

NEW! TWEEN READS>>>

Even in tough times, hope can be a guiding light that leads us toward a better tomorrow.

Cultivate Positivity

Cultivating a positive mindset becomes crucial during challenging times. Surround yourself with uplifting quotes, affirmations, and motivational content. Engage in activities that bring you joy and make a conscious effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones. Your positive outlook can inspire not only yourself, but also those around you.

Engage in Acts of Kindness

Spread hope through acts of kindness to others. Volunteer at a local charity, help a neighbor, or express gratitude to those who have made a positive impact in your life. These acts create a ripple effect, igniting hope and compassion in others.

Connect With the Community

Reach out to your community and organize events that foster connection and support. Host virtual gatherings, workshops, or discussion forums where people can share their stories, experiences, and messages of hope. By coming together, we can create a network of support and inspiration that transcends geographical boundaries.

As we celebrate the National Month of Hope in April, let's determine to take all of these highlighted actions and express them in our lives throughout the year.

#nationalprincesweek

GRAPHICS CORNER

NEW! TEEN READS>>>

A POLITICAL HORROR STORY

On November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln became the fluky victor in a tight race for president. The country was bitterly at odds; Southern extremists were moving ever closer to destroying the Union, with one state after another seceding and Lincoln powerless to stop them. Slavery fueled the conflict, but somehow the

passions of North and South came to focus on a lonely federal fortress in Charleston: Fort Sumter.

Master storyteller Erik Larson offers a gripping account of the chaotic months between Lincoln’s election and the Confederacy’s shelling of Sumter—a period marked by tragic errors and miscommunications, enflamed egos and craven ambitions, personal tragedies and betrayals. Lincoln himself wrote that the trials of these five months were “so great that, could I have anticipated them, I would not have believed it possible to survive them.”

Drawing on diaries, secret communiques, slave ledgers, and plantation records, Larson gives us a political horror story that captures the forces that led America to the brink—a dark reminder that we often don’t see a cataclysm coming until it’s too late.

Movie Preview...

Titles subject to change.



KENDRA'S CURRENT ISSUE

The March/April edition of Michigan History magazine is sure to delight local readers. Take a trip down memory lane with entertainer, storyteller, puppeteer, and local-art supporter Burr Tillstrom. Discover the talent behind *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*, which included radio personality, Fran Allison whose talents fostered viewers' connections with the characters.



MICHELE'S MEDIA

I would have to say that my taste in music can be a little 'ahem' behind the times. I mean, I only figured out who Harry Styles is last year, and I wouldn't be able to pick a top 10 hit out of a lineup these days... Although I do have an opinion about *Texas Hold'Em* (it is NOT country). When my friend told me about her love for Stephen Sanchez's sophomore album *Angel Face*, I had to check it out. Immediately I found myself entranced by this 21-year-old Nashville native's soulful Roy-Orbison-type voice and Elvis-rock-'n-roll demeanor. Sanchez delivers his linguistic ballads and upbeat tracks with a 50's, 60's era vibe that is smooth, fun, and croon-worthy. If this is what "new" music is, I have been caught... hook, line and Sanchez.



Once Upon a River

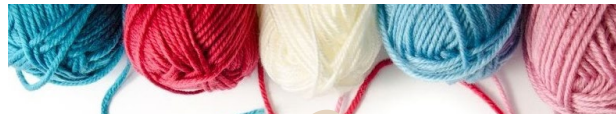
by Bonnie Jo Campbell

**DISCUSSION
WEDNESDAY
5.1 @ 1:30 PM**

Bonnie Jo Campbell has created an unforgettable heroine in sixteen-year-old Margo Crane, a beauty whose unflinching gaze and uncanny ability with a rifle have not made her life any easier.

After the violent death of her father, in which she is complicit, Margo takes to the Stark River in her boat, with only a few supplies and a biography of Annie Oakley, in search of her vanished mother. But the river, Margo's childhood paradise, is a dangerous place for a young woman traveling alone, and she must be strong to survive, using her knowledge of the natural world and her ability to look unsparingly into the hearts of those around her. Her river odyssey through rural Michigan becomes a defining journey, one that leads her beyond self-preservation and to the decision of what price she is willing to pay for her choices.

Email questions to: fdlbookclub@gmail.com



KNIT & Crochet GROUP

1:30 PM, MONDAY • APRIL 1 & 15

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Beginners to experienced. Ages 18+*



CORNER TO THE PAST...

Mack's Landing Presentaiton

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 @ 4:30 PM

click for more info.



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\$10,000 Grant Will Help the Library Work with Residents with Disabilities to Access Books

Fennville District Library has been selected as one of 310 libraries to participate in round two of Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities.

The competitive award comes with a \$10,000 grant that will help the library better serve patrons with vision impairments.

“We are so excited to be chosen for this amazing opportunity,” said Assistant Library Director Abi Avery. “This grant will allow the library to learn more about what our patrons with disabilities need from the library and allow us to begin making the necessary changes now, so that everyone in the community is able to fully utilize our services.”

As part of the grant, Fennville District Library staff will take an online course

in how to lead conversations, a skill vital to library work today. Staff will then host a conversation with residents about making the library collection more accessible and use the grant funds to expand the collection to include a wider variety of titles in accessible formats.

“Due to lack of space and funds, the audiobook and large print collections have become some of the less well-maintained collections in the library,” said Avery. “Our initial plan is that this grant will help us revitalize them, though we’re keeping an open mind. We may need to pivot based on what we hear from our community conversation participants. The goal of this grant isn’t just to provide a more accessible library, but also to create that accessibility in ways that people say they need.”

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the conversation, please contact Abi Avery at 269-561-5050 or aavery@fennvillelibrary.org, or visit www.fennvilleidl.michlibrary.org for more information.



“To provide access to varied materials and services for lifelong enrichment”

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The board meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 4pm, at the Library. The public is welcome to attend.