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JULY 2025



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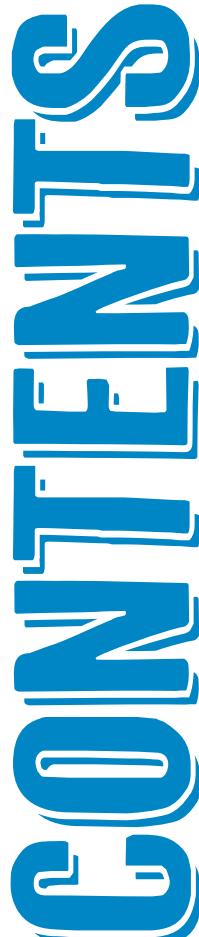
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ON GRADUATION, GRADUATES SHARE THEIR GOALS, DREAMS

BY DAVID L. BARBER
PTW COLUMNIST

If you're looking for a reason why the world became a kinder, brighter place in recent weeks, I have 17 reasons to share with you.

These reasons have names, and these names have dreams.

On May 22, in the Pentwater High School gymnasium, 17 graduating seniors shared their goals - their dreams - with us;

goals and dreams we all can appreciate and identify with.

Incoming senior Lauren Davis, who of course was a junior one month ago when the Class of '25 Falcons soared into the stratosphere and beyond in search of fulfilling their dreams, told us about those 17 dreams during the "Calling of the Class Roll."

Kaleb Brown's goal - his dream - grabbed my attention right off the bat. It caught everyone's attention, and for

that, we all chuckled. A few applauded.

"Kaleb is the son of Steve Brown and Kirsten Dykema-Alderink," Lauren said. "Kaleb plans to go to Grand Valley State University and get a Bachelor of Business Administration for Accounting. After that, he would like to get a government job to be able to have his loans forgiven."

Belle Powers dreams of becoming a modern-day Picasso, but what makes her dream ex-





tra special is that the canvas she'll brighten with her paints will be the human body, itself.

"Belle is the daughter of Judy and Tobin Powers," Lauren said. "Belle plans to get a part-time job, while she pursues an apprenticeship with a senior tattoo artist. Belle will build upon her artistic ability and eventually gain a tattoo license."

How cool is that?

Samantha Reese has a pretty neat goal, too - a wonderful dream.

"Samantha is the daughter of Patricia and Timothy Reese," Lauren said. "Samantha wants to be a singer, standing on stage motivating others to stand up and make a change, to make others smile and have self confidence by music."

And at the risk of repeating myself, how cool is that?

One has to salute the goal - the dream - of Kaiden Carter.



"Kaiden is the son of Josh Carter, Ashley Carter and Kristy Sausen," Lauren said. "Kaiden plans on joining the military and being a mechanic. He then plans to have a career in automotive technology after the military."

And so it went.

"Jonny Arnouts ... the son of Tony Arnouts and Katie Saunders. Jonny plans on attending Northwestern Michigan College," Lauren said.

"Michael Carlson ... is the son of Jeff Carlson and Kathy Richards. Michael plans to go to Northwood University to play basketball and study business management."

"Elijah Cook ... is the son of Nathan Cook and Elizabeth Panza. Eli has been accepted to Northern Michigan University and he will be majoring in history. After his bachelor's degree he will be attempting to get his masters in war history and its repercussions at the University of Potsdam in Germany."

"Tyler Douglas ... is the son of Dave Douglas and Heather Douglas. Tyler plans to attend Grand Valley State University and get a degree in business management. He hopes to take over his dads Amsoil accounts. He

plans on becoming an independent retailer and eventually start his own business," Lauren continued.

"Logan Gehrke ... is the son of Kristina Steinke and Jason Gehrke. Logan plans to get a job and start working as soon as possible."

"Cody Haight ... is the son of Rusty and Tiffany Haight. Cody plans on going to West Shore Community College for his associates, then he plans on going to Ferris State University for his Bachelor of Applied Science in digital Animation and Game Design program."

"Trey Johnson ... is the son of Sarah Acuna and Richard Johnson. Trey plans to attend Western Michigan University to study exercise science to pursue a job as a physical therapist."

"Nathan Macher ... is the son of Dave and Lucy Macher. Nathan plans to study Business Administration at Aquinas College while also playing on their Golf team. He also plans on getting his insurance license to sell insurance."

"Matilde Pacifico ... is the daughter of Patrizia Petretto and Bruno Pacifico. Her host parents are Vaughn and Hillary Thurston Cox. Matilde plans to go back to Italy, finish high school and graduate. She wants to study law to become a detective. She also hopes to come back to America."

"Rolando J Salgado ... is the

son of Rolando Salgado and Tamara Alltop. Rolando plans to go to Ferris State University to become a dental hygienist. He plans to get this degree so he can help people," Lauren said.

"Mandi Sayles ... Mandi is the daughter of Melanie and the late John Sayles. Mandi plans on working in agriculture and travel."

"Nick Murphy ... is the son of Maureen Murphy. Nick plans on attending Grand Valley State University. He plans on getting a bachelor's degree in accounting."

"William Werkema-Grondsma ... is the son of Melissa Grondsma and MariMichelle Werkema. Will plans to attend Tiffin University in Ohio. He plans on playing Basketball while studying sports management and marketing. One day he wants to be able to help other athletes become better and reach their goals."

Reach their goals?

Realize their dreams?

Oh yeah, the world became a kinder, brighter place last month, alright, and we have the aforementioned 17 goal-setters - dreamers - to thank for that.

Editor's note: David L. Barber is a retired journalist living in Manistee. He will provide occasional feature stories and columns for various Shoreline Media publications, including the Ludington Daily News, Oceana Herald-Journal, LakeStyle Magazine and PTW Magazine. He can be reached at dlbarber1006@gmail.com

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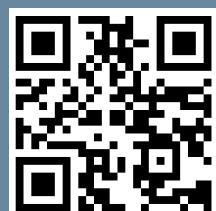
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A Journey into Pentwater's



BY SHANNA AVERY

SHORELINE MEDIA STAFF WRITER

Steeped with rich history, Pentwater officially formed as a village by 1867, but settlement in the area began well over a decade before that time.

In 1853, founders E. R. Cobb and Andrew Rector built a boarding house and a lumber mill, both on the south end of

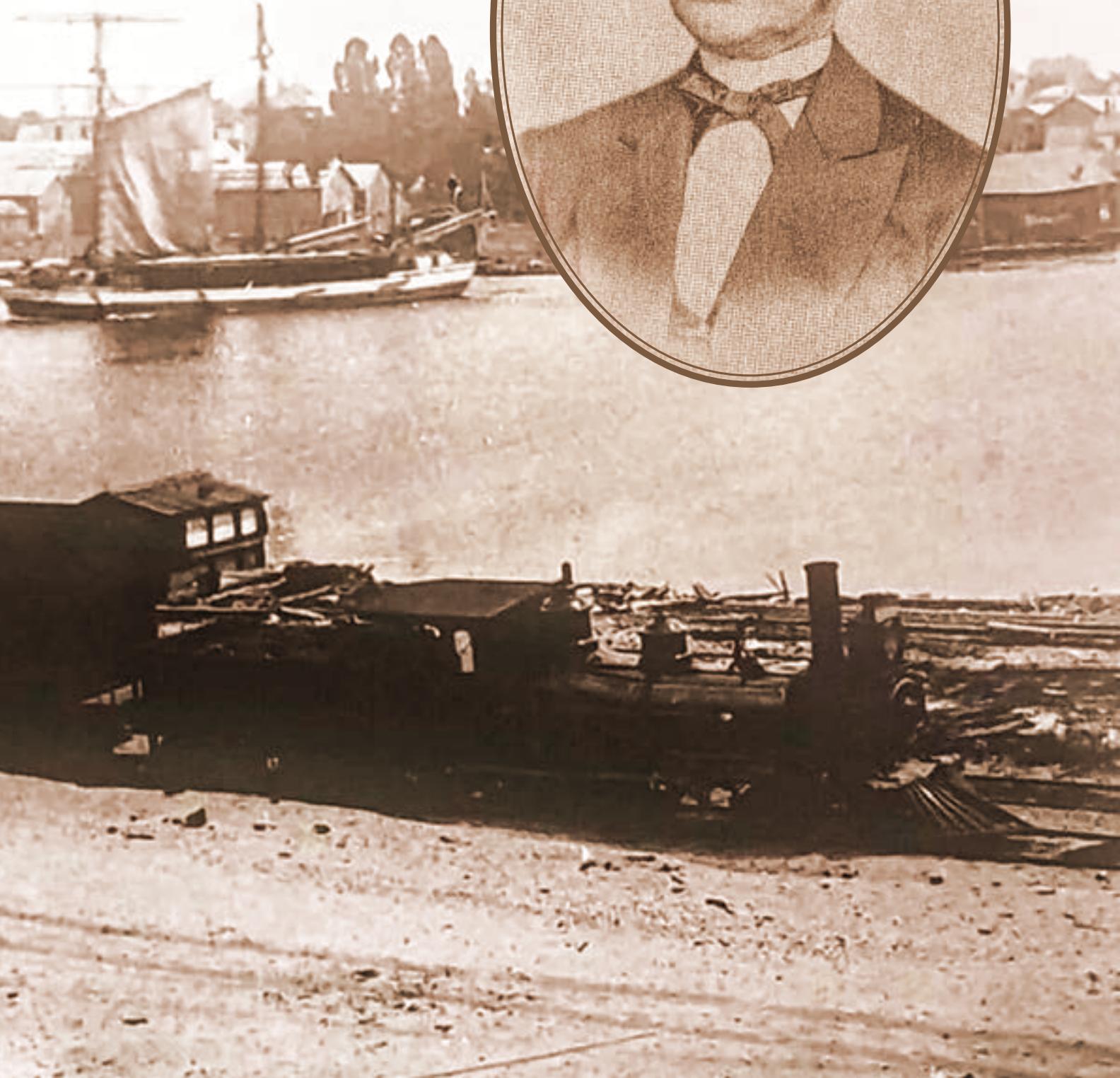
Hancock Street.

More activity stirred up when lumber baron Charles Mears built the channel to Lake Michigan and placed his sawmill on the north bank in 1855. Mears called the site Middlesex, which included the land east to Hancock Street. Although it was still called Middlesex for quite a while after, it was absorbed into Pentwater once the village was formed in 1867. Mears

established a ferry service across the channel in 1858, as well as a 660 ft. pier into Lake Michigan from the north bank so boats could haul lumber to his yards in Chicago. In 1920, his daughter deeded 600 ft of the beach north of the channel, establishing Charles Mears State Park.

The Pentwater News gives a glimpse of what life was like in the charming, quaint town back in the late 1880s.

Past





In the June 3, 1886 edition, we learn "The school boy is beginning to count the days between the present and a long vacation."

Also in the June 3, 1886 edition, with the summer season rolling, strawberries, radishes, lettuce, fresh onions and more, were reported as plentiful in Pentwater's market.

Along with a good start for early summer produce, construction was in full swing.

"New dwelling houses are going up in the country immediately adjacent to Pentwater, indicating a degree of prosperity, which is interesting to all," the article stated.

With all the summer activity, town residents were getting ready for a great Independence Day celebration.

"Let everybody get ready for a grand old boom on the Fourth. Remember that according to the present arrangement it's only once in three years we can celebrate properly, therefore we should put forth every effort to stir things up. It will make us feel better to give full vent to our pent-up enthusiasm and patriotism. We can have a big crowd here if we make

attractive arrangements," the article stated.

Faith played a big role in the community.

"The annual address of Bishop Gillespie before the recent Diocesan Convention, was read at St. James Chapel last Sunday morning," according to the article pertaining to the Episcopal Church, and, "Bishop Richter confirmed at the Roman Catholic Church in this village last week."

Life on the lake and docks was booming those days, according to the following items from the June 3, 1886 article.

"Business appears to be pretty good with the steamer W. F. Browne, and we are glad to see it," the article read.

"A large quantity of hemlock bark is being hauled to our docs and shipped."

"The old relic known as White's Mill has disappeared, becoming a thing of the past. A dock is being made where the plant formerly existed"

"Cris Jensen is still laboring up on his promising schooner, which he expects to launch soon."

Charles Mears was still very much a presence.

"Charles Mears of Chicago is expect-

ed to visit his interests on this side of the lake, in the near future," and "The Charles Mears Store is almost ready for business. Shelving has been put up, counters made, and goods are now being unpacked."

Fishermen were having a successful summer.

"Our fishermen are reported to be having good luck. We learn of their having some pretty good sized bank checks, which is generally considered a good criterion of business condition," the article said.

In June, 1887, the fishing was still great, according to the June 30, 1887 Pentwater News.

"No less than ten boatloads trolling for bass were counted by us at one time on the little lake Saturday. Some fine bass and pickerel were brought in," the article stated.

As people visit Pentwater and walk its streets in the summer, they can imagine what it was like about 140 years ago, with the mill whistles blowing and the steamers majestically pulling into dock, and community life as busy as ever - well-rounded and active.

THE PENTWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

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The Museum volunteers have worked hard this past year acquiring grant money to have a professional assist us in compiling an outstanding historical display of those who have come to our village over the years called, "Journeys to Pentwater," a compilation of historical stories ... retold combining, written word, voice and photography and then viewed using the latest addition to our museum ... Touch Screen Technology.

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Pentwater's Petal Project *adds color and charm*

BY CRISTINA JUSKA
SHORELINE MEDIA STAFF WRITER

Daffodils are beautiful perennial flowers, celebrated for their bright yellow and white trumpet-like blooms. Daffodils belong to the Amaryllidaceae family and the genus *Narcissus*. They bloom in early spring – and this past April, they brightened up the side of the road all along the south entrance to Pentwater.



CHRISTOPHER PULTZ PHOTO

"We planted 20,000 bulbs last fall," said Ryan Williams, owner of Portview Wine & Beer and co-chair of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) of Pentwater. He said that it's going to be a three-phase project over three years. "We plan to plant more so that they extend throughout the village next spring," Ryan said.

"Our goal is to create a beautiful path from the south to the north side of town."

Known as the Petal Project, the daffodils were actually his wife's idea, Lissa Williams. The reason was "to add color to town and to attract people to the village. It's a fun visual as you enter town," Ryan said. The flowers brighten up the roadway and add a welcoming touch. They hope to "extend Pentwater's tourist season by kick-starting it with a vibrant at-

traction" leading more people into town to eat, drink, and shop.

He took the proposal to the DDA, and it was approved by the group. Ryan said that they chose daffodils because they are "hardy flowers, maintenance is low and deer don't like to eat them." Because they are perennial, once planted the bulbs will flower every year in April to May. Residents with daffodils in front of their property do not need to do any additional work to maintain the flowers; they are just asked not to mow over them until the leaves completely die. This gives the bulbs enough energy to bloom next spring.

Daffodils often symbolize rebirth, renewal, hope, and new beginnings, as they announce that spring has arrived! They may be associated with optimism and positive change.

Daffodils are sometimes gifted to express friendship and affection. In Chinese culture, they are seen as symbols of prosperity and are often displayed during the Lunar New Year as a sign of good luck. The daffodil is also closely associated with the Greek myth of Narcissus.

In Pentwater, the flowers may have meant different things to different people passing by, but all agreed that the daffodils added a lovely touch. "We received so many great comments this year; everyone was really happy," Ryan said.

While the Petal Project is partially funded by the DDA, it depends heavily on donations and community involvement to even be possible. Ryan said, "This community project is possible due to donations from the public. Help us keep it going!"





PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER PULTZ



You can make a donation through the Oceana Community Foundation, which is considered a charitable contribution and tax write off.”

If you would like to donate, you can write a check to the Village and include Petal Project on the memo; or if you prefer to donate online, use the QR code provided, or visit <https://oceanafoundation.org/give/our-funds/> and select the Pentwater Beautification Fund from the list of funds available.





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PHOTO ESSAY BY JEANNE BARBER



"NO WORRIES"

Lookout world, here comes the Pentwater High School Class of '25

The childhood anthem of three best friends – a meerkat, a warthog and a lion cub – echoed over the Pentwater High School graduation on May 22. Timon, Pumbaa and Simba – the latter destined to become a lion king – strolled shoulder-to-shoulder through the forest merrily singing "Hakuna Matata." "It means 'no worries' for the rest of your days," the three forest creatures sang. That song – so full of spirit and promise – served as the Class Motto of the Pentwater High School Class of 2025, a close-knit class of smiling, dancing, mortar board tossing teenagers who celebrated their individual and collective achievement of graduating from high school. And so now, just a few weeks later, they've moved on, but in looking back to that evening, after moving their tassels from one side of their mortar boards to the other, and then tossing those mortar boards into the air in hard-earned celebration, the Class of '25 strolled down center aisle "Hakuna Matata" style: "No worries." Lookout world, here they come!



Schools out for summer; Superintendent's work continues

BY DAVID L. BARBER

No sooner had the Class of '25 walked into the crowd of smiling, cheering family and friends to celebrate their graduation, and Pentwater Public Schools Superintendent Craig Barter stood at the peripherals of the crowd to greet the Class of '26.

And '27.

And '28.

And all the others who will follow.

All the time Barter had tucked away in the back of his mind what programs and projects his school has planned to do dur-

ing its summer break.

Or not.

"As far as programs are concerned, we are looking at a few, but have not decided yet if we will advance with any," said the principal - yes, Barter serves the duo role of being both superintendent and principal.

"As we look towards the future, we have a core group of individuals that continue to work through the summer," he said. "There is a lot of behind the scenes work as we look toward next year, schedule building, data information reporting, updates to policies and procedures. A lot of the state reporting and schedule inputting is with Toni Glover, our administrative assistant/HR.

"Summer cleaning, touch-ups, painting, refinishing the gym floor, moving a batting cage from one gym to another, updating curtains in the large gym and changing out drinking fountains with bottle fill stations. We have some students who work with Anthony Davis, our facilities director. We also have two fantastic custodians Lucy and Laurie that work all summer."

Barter recalled how in November, the community voted in favor of a bond proposal, "... that we are incredibly thankful for."

"This summer there will be a complete replacement of our boiler system that generates heat for our building," he said. "Construction on that will start at the end of June, with a hopeful completion date by early September.

"Steve Rossiter, our tech director is looking at a new phone system for the district and updating our student Chromebook devices. Jenna Oleneack, our assistant principal and myself, will be looking at providing some summer professional development, attending training on curriculum, and attendance initiatives that are a priority through the West Shore ESD.

"We will also be collecting and analyzing data, our school handbooks, and filling any vacancies,

Barter said.

Greeting families one and two and three at a time as the Class of '25 prepared to exit the gymnasium, it was obvious





Barter enjoys, and appreciates, what he is doing, and where he is doing it.

"The community of Pentwater has had a deep impact on my family over the course of many decades and I am honored to serve our school community as the Principal/Superintendent," he shared, in part, on the district's website. "Our staff of highly qualified educators, para-professionals and support staff create an environment of safety and academic excellence for each and every one of our students.

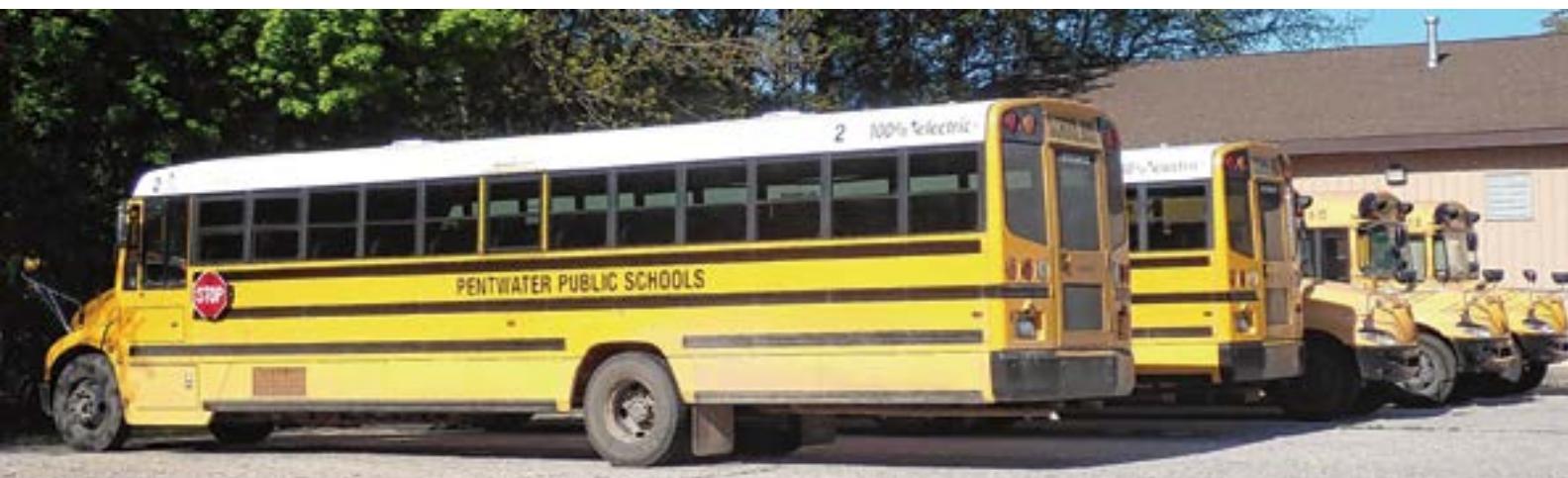
"Our motto, 'Where Everybody Is Somebody,' is supported by the commitment of each member in our school community as well as our families and stakeholders. Our community partners include our local businesses within the Pentwater area and Chamber of Commerce as well as the West Shore Educational Service District (WSESD)."

Barter wrote that at Pentwater Public Schools, "... our mission

is to provide an environment that encourages each child to succeed both academically and socially as a member of their community. Our vision is to educate and inspire each child to reach their highest potential and to become a contributing member of society. Our goals are to improve student achievement and develop/maintain safe and efficient school operations."

"We encourage parents and community members to get involved in our school community here at Pentwater Public Schools, whether it be volunteering, becoming a member of our PTCO (Parent-Teacher-Community Organization) and/or Athletic Boosters, attending one of our extracurricular events or stopping in for a visit. We cherish the impact of those that have already given their time to make a difference in our school district."

Barter can be reached at 231-869-4100, extension 213, or email him at cbarter@pentwater.k12.mi.us



Family fun



STORY & PHOTOS BY
LARRY LAUNSTEIN JR.



on the Fairways and mini course

LARRY LAUNSTEIN JR.

SHORELINE MEDIA STAFF WRITER

PENTWATER – There are some family-friendly options in the area for golf, including playing a local golf course, an opportunity for kids to learn to play golf, and play miniature golf.

A local golf course in the area, the Golden Sands Golf Course and Bucket Bar, is an 18-hole course but what makes it different from other golf courses is that there's no par-5 holes.

It's located between Pentwater and Mears, on North Wilson Road.

One of the owners, Alicia Kolenda, said, "Ours is a family course and is a par-4 course, so it's laid back and fun; it's not overwhelming.

"We focus on keeping them straight and a beautifully maintained course," Kolenda said. "It's not a hard course as long as you can hit the ball straight."

The course length, Kolenda said, "...makes it much more approachable for families and people on vacation or if you just don't want to spend six hours on the course. You can just pop out on vacation and play a quick nine for an hour and one-half to two hours and have fun," Kolenda added.

And it's open during the winter for those who want to have fun during the winter months.

Joel May hits a pitch shot at the Golden Sands Golf Course in the Pentwater area. The course is located between Pentwater and Mears.



Alicia Kolenda, one of the owners of the Golden Sands Golf Course and the Bucket Bar, located between Pentwater and Mears, works the cash register. The Bucket Bar has become renowned for their pizzas.

The course is also the home course for the Pentwater High School golf team, for which Kolenda is a coach.

Kolenda said, "If you have any beginners, we have the Dunes Junior Golf Program, which is huge for Pentwater, so it's not just for Pentwater kiddos, but for people from around the whole country and the world."

Kolenda said that the program has even had people from Russia.

"The Dunes Junior Camp starts the week after the Fourth of July and runs through the first week of August," Kolenda said.

In addition, she said there are three instructor areas, one for chipping, one for putting, and a driving range.

According to Kolenda, the program gives kids a chance to learn the game, and it's a four-level program, which makes it so once a kid

A photograph of the exterior of a real estate office. The building is dark blue with white trim. A sign on the side of the building reads "COLDWELL BANKER ANCHOR REAL ESTATE, INC.". In front of the building, there is a sidewalk and a small sign on the ground that says "REALTOR ON DUTY" with an arrow pointing right. The building has large windows and a glass door.

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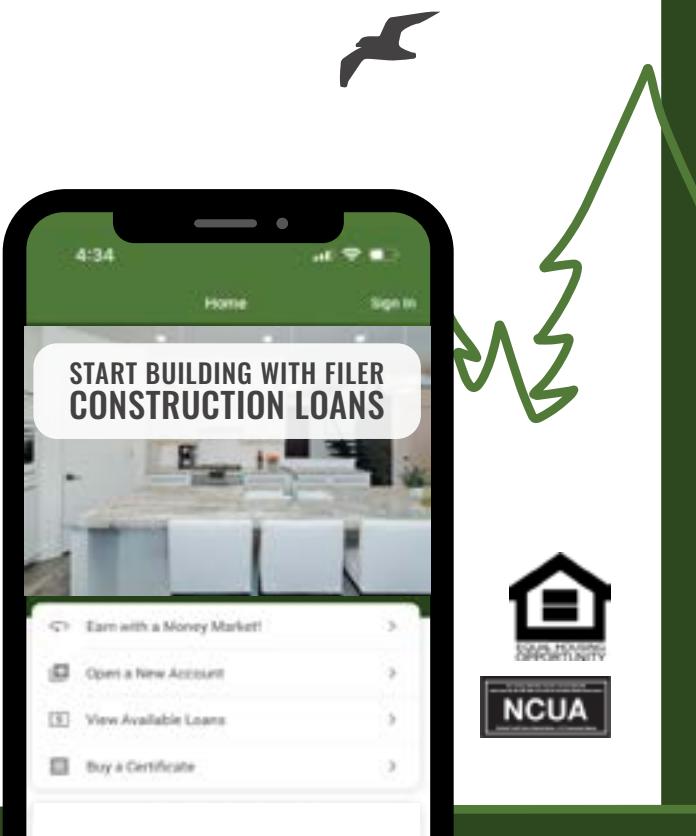
The water feature at AJ's Family Fun Center in Pentwater.

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A miniature golfer puts the ball down a hill at AJ's Family Fun Center in Pentwater.

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is at the highest golf level, they can walk the course and keep score. The program's age range is from age four to high school and about 150 kids participate each year.

Alicia and William Kolenda have run their family-friendly course as a family since July 1999.

Alicia was playing on Grand Haven's golf team, and even though she believed she wasn't a good enough player, she finished ranked 18th in the state and got several scholarship offers, but she turned them all down.

She wound up at Western Michigan University, and at first was involved with color guard and was on the ski team.

"After a year, I looked around and said, 'Why don't they have a golf team?', so I then started the golf club for Western Michigan University, which by my senior year my majors were recreation management, gerontology and coaching and Title IX was pretty big then," she shared.

Kolenda was then looking forward to playing on the newly formed Broncos golf team.

Her father intervened, telling her that they should start looking for a golf course to own and wound up buying the Golden Sands.

Her, William and their four kids have been working at the facility ever since.

"We all put it together and we work every day to make it fun to live here," Kolenda said.

When it came time to expand the course from nine holes to 18, the Kolendas sought out estimates to add the second nine.

Alicia recalled that Jerry Matthews, a renowned golf course architect along with his brother Bruce, drove around the back of the property and said

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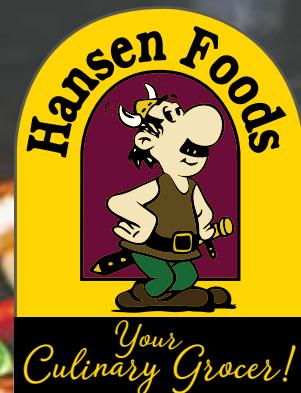
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the area was amazing and told the Kolendas how much it would cost, but they told Matthews that the course's real money lay with the restaurant. They said they couldn't afford to add the second nine because they charge family rates and that more people eat than play golf.

The family wanted to keep the family rates to help hold the cost of playing on their course down, but they got the back nine put in anyway.

Alicia said the restaurant, which became known as the Bucket Bar, began as a hamburger place, but when a pizza place was added, that is what Golden Sands became known for. have since become known for.

"The pizza smelled so good and tasted so great that people said, 'I don't want the burgers, I want the pizza,'" she said.

Because of the pizza demand, Alicia said that they had to change gears a little bit, but now her menu offers lots of great things, including dairy-free and gluten-free products.

"You could eat here every day and probably have something different, every day of the week," Alicia said.

Golden Sands has live entertainment and offers opportunities for two-person scramble events.

Joel May, who is from Grand Rapids and has a cottage in the Pentwater area, playing in the cool weather said he had been playing at the golf course since he



was about 8 or 9 years old..

"My grandma took me out and this is the first course I golfed on so whenever we're here, I'll come out and play," May said.

The colder weather greeting him this time was, he said, "Not ideal, but I didn't have anything to do this morning, so I wanted to go out and play."

May had good things to say about Golden Sands. "For one, it's the first one I ever played on and I'm getting to know Alicia a little bit," May said. "They've done a really great job of updating the

clubhouse and keeping the course nice.

"It's just a fun little place to go," he said.

Another family-friendly golf attraction in the Pentwater area is the miniature golf course at the AJ's Family Fun Center. Unlike most miniature golf courses, which are usually on flat land, this course goes through hills and has a water feature in the middle of the course.

Megan Becke and her husband, Randall Anderson, manage the family business, much like the Kolendas, helped by their four sons. Their parents, Don and Dee own the course and the adjacent Hill and Hollow Campground, both located off of Business 31.

Megan said, "We had the campground first, and then a family friend thought it would be nice if we added an amenity nearby." Her father put the miniature golf course in, and then Megan and Anderson took over from there, adding something other than the beach for families to enjoy.

Megan explained what lies ahead for those tackling the adventure course.

"There are a lot of steps, a lot of hills up-and-down, and waterfalls."

The course was professionally designed by a company who also created the Pirates Cove miniature golf courses in Traverse City and Petoskey. And the business, according to Megan, is doing great.

"We have people who come back who

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April Talaga, her husband David, their daughter Carolyn and son Ryan, all from Lyon Township in Oakland County, enjoy an afternoon of miniature golf. They started their day, except for Carolyn, playing at a Ludington course.



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have been coming for decades with their extended family," Megan said. "We're part of their tradition. "They come up to their cottage and they come to AJ's and they go to the beach."

The course is open to the public.

April Talaga, her husband David, their daughter Carolyn and son Ryan, all from Lyon Township in Oakland County, came to play miniature golf after playing a regular round of golf.

"My daughter-in-law's (Carolyn's) grandparents own a cottage in Branch Township, so we came up here to golf

and find anything fun to do along the way," April said.

She said that she and her family came to visit Pentwater and then decided to stop by because they thought it was cute to play putt-putt.

"I think it's really nice ... the waterfall and the spinning where you have to- if you spin it, it's like hitting the ball with your hand or different things," she said. "It's kind of a cute little thing to add to the regular putt-putt," April said.

For more information about the Golden Sands Golf Course and the

Dunes Junior Golf Camp, contact Alicia Kolenda at 231-425-0844 or visit their website at www.goldensandsgolfcourse.com. For more information about the AJ Family Fun Center, contact them at 231-869-5641.





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