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WINTER
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White Lake Beacon
P.O. Box 98 • Whitehall, MI 49461
(231) 894-5356 • (231) 894-2174 fax

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CONTENTS

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THE CLAUSES CALL PENTWATER HOME 06

'WHO WE ARE' - PENTWATER TEEN CREATES AWARD-WINNING FILM 08

PENTWATER CALENDAR..... 11

PENTWATER - A YEAR IN REVIEW PHOTO ESSAY BY JEANNE BARBER 12

WAITING FOR THE BITE - ICE FISHING IN PENTWATER..... 14

CHRISTMAS IN PENTWATER 150 YEARS AGO 18

PENTWATER AT 160: A TIMELINE OF THE VILLAGE'S HISTORY 20

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'Twas the week before Christmas, and Pentwater glowed,
with tinsel and candles, and ribbons and bows;
from Storybook Village, to the bright Village Green,
to chimneys on rooftops, and all in between.
Where a Jolly Ole' Elf, and his Jolly Ole' Wife,
brought all of their magic, that brings Christmas to life;
and for those who believe, in children and song,
know that they've been here, been here all along.
When not with their elves, their reindeer or gnomes,
when not at the North Pole, Pentwater's their home;
it's here they seek pleasure, both nighttime and day,
it's here they seek peace, it's here that they play.
And it's here that he wears, a red furry suit,
clean of all ashes, clean of all soot;
polished and perfect, are his buckle and belt,
boots that are so warm, they make the snow melt.
But gone is the pipe, once held t'ween his teeth,
he gave up his smoking, when he set fire to a wreath;
as for the sweet treats, the children leave out,
they're cookies that fuel, his flying about.



By David L. Barber

Photos by Jeanne Barber

The Clauses call Pentwater home; It's where they dance the night away

(With apologies to Clement C. Moore)

So keep your eyes open, all through the year,
you'll just never know, when they'll appear;
the beach is their favorite, come daybreak or dark,
the campground, the downtown, the library and park.
Pentwater is where, they dance day 'n night,
where Santa tries Limbo – a hilarious sight;
they Polka, they Twist, they Cha Cha and Swing,
they Disco and Tango, they laugh, dance and sing.
They Line Dance, they Square Dance, Jitterbug and Jive,
'cause dancing is what helps, keep 'em young and alive;
they Two Step, they Salsa, then when the night's done,
they Slow Dance to slow down, from all of the fun.
They danced with each other, like when they were young,
they danced with the children, who find dancing so fun;
they danced with the grandmas, the grandpas and more,
they danced and they danced, 'til morning is born.
And with children in line, Santa danced in the fields,
for they knew the truth, that he surely is real;
they danced and they skipped, up hills and down,
they giggled and whistled, they danced round and round.
Wherever they go, and they go everywhere,
wherever fun music, fills the crisp air;
they dance and they dance, 'til the last song is played,
glad that they came, and glad that they stayed.

And wherever good people, speak the language of dance,
where faith, hope and love, leave nothing to chance;
where childhood reigns, and Christmas is true,
the Clauses believe, in me and in you.
Then come Christmas Eve, and all through the night,
he'll deliver his toys – such a wonderful sight,
with Rudolph out front, he'll take to his sleigh,
and shout out these words: "up, up and away!"
And when the day dawns, he'll be giddy with glee,
with thoughts of the toys, he left under the trees;
and the sleigh that he flew, and the hearts that he touched,
then he'll fly home to his wife, who loves him so much.
Some say he's a fantasy, some say he's folklore,
some say he's not real, but what do they know?
but for those who believe, and trust in their dreams,
they trust in a magic, that glitters and gleams.
They're ageless, they're timeless, they're jolly and kind,
they're friendly, they're family, they boggle the mind;
they'll pluck at your heartstrings, they'll capture your soul,
whether here in Pentwater, or at the North Pole.
But wherever they travel, wherever they go,
o'er mountains, o'er shorelines, all covered in snow;
they'll wave and they'll shout, as they soar out of sight,
"Happy Christmas Pentwater, and to you a good night!"









'WHO WE ARE'



PENTWATER TEEN CREATES AWARD-WINNING TRIBUTE TO HIS GRANDMOTHER, WHO PASSED AWAY IN 2022

BY DAVID L. BARBER
SHORELINE MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

There's truth in Bodey Lawler's eyes.

There's purpose, and passion, in his voice.

Most of all, and perhaps best of all, the teenager has an old soul, an heirloom given to him by his grandmother, Becki Lawler Lockwood, who passed away four years ago.

As 2025 flipped pages to become 2026, the Pentwater High School senior found himself being overwhelmed with memories of "Mom" – that is what he called her – soulful memories that took such a strong hold of him that he'd wake in the middle of the night to record them.

And it was through those midnight memories – and others that he jotted down throughout the day, just about every day – that he produced a six-minute video titled "Who We Are;" a grandson's heart-breaking, life-affirming video tribute to his "Mom" that in March won First Place in the 45th Annual West Michigan Student Showcase competition, held in Muskegon.

"It happened, a lot," Bodey said of waking up in the night to record those memories. "It took me at least three months to do it, so I had a lot of time to think. I would put stuff in and later I'd be lying in bed and I'd be thinking about it 'cause it takes me forever to get to sleep, so I had plenty of time to think.

"I'd have to get up and I'd have a little notes app on my phone, so I'd get up and

Becki Lawler Lockwood

I would write whatever idea I'd have and then go back to bed – another night, another idea."

Becki Lawler Lockwood – "Mom" – passed away in November, 2022.

"My grandma was much more than a grandparent to me," Bodey said. "She, alongside my mom (Lori), helped raise me and my siblings. Never once in the time that I had with her did I call her 'Grandma,' because she was practically my second mother. So, in turn, my grandma was always referred to as 'Mom,' and my mother was 'Mommy.'

"My grandma was an incredibly special human being. She was so incredibly strong and brave and she will forever remain as someone I will look up to for the remainder of my life. I spent countless hours with her, but one of my greatest memories of her involved taking walks with her and a few of my siblings every time she visited. We would walk around my neighborhood and she would tell us stories of her childhood and of raising my mom."

But there was that one time, Bodey said, when he and his grandmother shared something that he'll remember, forever.

"The memory of her that I hold dearest to my heart is of when she took me to the movies, just me and her, for my 11th birthday," he said. "We watched a horror movie, 'Halloween.' I 'd been seeing trailers for it and had begged her (and my Mother) to let me see it. She hated horror movies, but she did it for me. That day was one of the best days of my life."

Bodey said he "... started (his video) in early November of last year and I didn't finalize it until January, which was when we had to submit it, so I was really trying to hunker down and finish it off."

From start to finish, Bodey's "Who We Are" digital video tribute will leave the viewer with elbows on knees in order to get closer to the screen to see what's coming next. It is an artful blend of storytelling that is much more than that – it is an artful bonding of the souls, Bodey's soul to his grandmother, and her soul to everyone she ever crossed shadows with.

Not only did Bodey write, direct and produce what became an award-winning digital video, he also provided the voiceover, which begins with a telephone ringing, but no one answers, rather Bodey's call to his grandmother goes straight to voicemail:

"Hi, I hope this message reaches you," Bodey says. "I just wanted to talk to you … there are just so many things I wish I could tell you … like, I love you, but I'm sure you already know we all do ...life is so strange without you, like an essential piece is now missing … it's been hard, for all of us."



Bodey Lawler

As a series of video flashbacks take the viewer through rainstorms and snowstorms, through family Christmas and Halloween celebrations, through birthday parties and more, Bodey's voice stays soft, but certain.

The 18-year-old offers reassurance to his grandmother in his phone call: "I think you'd be really proud of all of us … I think you'd be really proud of 'Who We Are' … you light up the darkness that surrounds us."

And then, in a very personal message, Bodey reassures her that they will meet again, and when they do "... I will tell you everything I never got to … this will never be, goodbye."

To appreciate Bodey's story, one also should appreciate his grandmother's story.

Becki Lawler Lockwood, "beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt, teacher and dear friend," was born in Saginaw Jan. 7, 1947, and passed away on Sept. 23, 2022, six weeks after suffering a serious fall.

She married Carlton Lockwood in 1967, a year after meeting him at a dance in Prudenville. Together they would raise three children – Lori, Marci and John.

"The countless students that she has encouraged over the years have been incredible," her obituary read, in part. "There isn't a former student of Becki's that was not changed and impacted not only by her teaching but by her love for each student. Her classroom was always filled with activities like Governor's



quilts, knitting and life skills.

"One of Becki's life's work was to care for her family. Her fierce love and devotion for her children and grandchildren was seen in caring for her granddaughter, Charity, during her battle with cancer. Becki never left Charity's side during Charity's long-six month inpatient stay at Helen Devos Children's Hospital to battle her very aggressive cancer. For this, her family considers her a hero … if you were lucky enough to come in contact with Becki you always left feeling better as Becki was sincerely invested in everyone's 'story' and how she could make a difference to lift others."

Charity, who is Bodey's sister, graduated from Pentwater High School in 2024. She is now a student at West Shore Community College, where Bodey is "... planning to continue my education ... in the hopes of eventually entering their nursing program."

"After that, I'd like to develop my career in the medical field with further education," he said.

Bodey said his interest in creating digital art and media was sparked when he attended a school field trip to the Museum of Contemporary art Chicago in March, 2025.

"At the time, several works of digital media artist and cinematographer Arthur Jafa were on exhibition," he said. "It sparked an intense fascination and interest within me and inspired me to begin experimenting with digital media.

"The film I created was a school project for my independent art class and I began working on it in October, 2025. I completed the main video roughly around December of that same year, but it went through many stages of drastic changes until I officially completed it in January of 2026. I had never created anything like it beforehand and it was an incredibly daunting feat, but I loved almost every step of the process."

Bodey's hobbies include reading, writing, art, and "... dedicating my time to volunteer projects through my school," all the while being a member of the National Honor Society for two years.

"It's been an incredible opportunity that has allowed me to help my community and build countless skills," he said.

His favorite subjects in school have been science – specifically biology – and English.

"I love learning about the science of life, and I cherish reading and writing," he said.

West Michigan Student Showcase competition featured more than 120 students from Oceana, Newaygo, Mason, Ottawa and Muskegon counties. Competition categories were divided into Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Literary Arts and Digital Media Arts, the latter in which Bodey was awarded first place for "Who We Are."

Bodey's "Mother," Lori, is a single mother with eight children. When she spoke of Charity's battle with cancer and ultimate graduation from high school two years ago, she spoke of how her family is "unstoppable."

"I'm very, very, very proud of our team that we call 'The Fine Nine' – my eight children and myself," Lori said. "We are unstoppable because we will always show up for each other. (There is) no bigger gift than love and we are surrounded by love in Pentwater and in Ludington."

For more information on the awards go to westmishowcase.org ◀



Community Calendar

November 2026 through April 2027

Editor's note: *Because of our advance publication schedule, some dates and activities listed here have not been confirmed. Tentative listings are based on previous schedules and annual traditions. Dates, times and activities are subject to change. Before making plans, contact organizers or check their websites for current information.*

November 13

Pentwater Women's Club program on the Pentwater Artisan Center, featuring artist Jennifer Lydey, 1:30 p.m. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

November 25–27

Pentwater Public Schools Thanksgiving break; no school. Information: 231-869-4100 or pentwaterschools.net.

November 28

Small Business Saturday, participating Pentwater businesses; hours vary. Information: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150 or pentwater.org.

Santa on the Green, 5 p.m., Village Green, Pentwater. Santa arrives by firetruck, followed by visits and photos. Information: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150 or pentwater.org.

Thanksgiving through New Year's Day

Christmas in the Village, weekends in downtown Pentwater. Detailed 2026 schedule to be announced. Previous activities included merchant open houses, Sip 'n Shop, wagon rides, caroling, hot cocoa and Santa visits. Returning activities need confirmation. Information: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150.

December dates to be announced

Christmas by Candlelight, Centenary United Methodist Church, 82 S. Hancock St., Pentwater. Possible returning holiday program featuring Christmas carols, music, seasonal readings and desserts. The 2026 event and schedule await confirmation. Information: 231-869-5900 or pentwaterumc.org.

Annual Christmas Concert, First Baptist Church of Pentwater, 101 S. Rush St., Pentwater. Previously featured a holiday concert followed by a dessert reception. The 2026 event and schedule await confirmation. Information: 231-869-5149 or fbcpentwater.com.



PHOTO BY JEANNE BARBER

December 5

Pentwater Band Holiday Craft Fair, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Pentwater Public Schools, 600 E. Park St., Pentwater. Crafts, local vendors and live music supporting the school band. Information: 231-869-4100 or pentwaterschools.net.

December 11

Pentwater Women's Club holiday heritage celebration, noon. Food and stories highlighting holiday traditions. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

December 21 through January 3

Pentwater Public Schools Christmas break. Classes resume Jan. 4. Information: 231-869-4100 or pentwaterschools.net.

January 8

"Cooking for 1 or 2," Pentwater Women's Club program featuring Elaine Konhya, 1:30 p.m. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

February date to be announced

Ryan Williams Perch Derby, Pentwater Lake, weather and ice conditions permitting. Possible returning event based on the 2026 schedule. Date, hours, registration and weigh-in details await confirmation. Schedule inquiries: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150 or pentwater.org.

February 12

"Pentwater Cemetery — A Historical Perspective," Pentwater Women's Club program featuring Shannon Larson, 1:30 p.m. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

February 13

Snowman Scram, one-mile fun run at 11 a.m. and 5K run/walk at 11:15 a.m., Pentwater Public Schools, 600 E. Park St., Pentwater. Benefits the school's cross country and track teams. The registration page lists this date for 2027 but retains older information in its description; final confirmation is needed. Information: school office, 231-869-4100, or pentwaterschools.net.

Pentwater Winterfest, downtown Pentwater. Tentative date, based on the traditional second Saturday in February. Possible returning activities include a library puzzle contest, ice skating and sledding on the Village Green, and shopping and dining specials. The 2027 schedule awaits confirmation. Information: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150 or pentwater.org. Puzzle contest inquiries: Pentwater Township Library, 231-869-8581 or pentwaterlibrary.org.

Cocoa, Corks & Canvas, participating downtown Pentwater businesses. Tentative date, associated with Winterfest. Previous programs featured wine and cocoa tastings, snacks and artists demonstrating or presenting their work. Proceeds support art education. The 2027 date, hours and admission details await confirmation. Information: pentwaterartscouncil.org.

March 12

"Creating a Personalized Photo Storybook with Your Grandchildren," Pentwater Women's Club program featuring Storybook Village owner Barbara Sims, 1:30 p.m. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

March 26 through April 2

Pentwater Public Schools spring break. Classes resume April 6. Information: 231-869-4100 or pentwaterschools.net.

March 27 tentative

Colleen Plummer's Easter on the Green, noon, Village Green, Pentwater. Projected date and time based on the traditional Saturday-before-Easter schedule; organizer confirmation needed. Information: Pentwater Chamber of Commerce, 231-869-4150 or pentwater.org.

April 9

Pentwater Women's Club program on Dune, the Pentwater Police Department's school therapy dog, featuring Officer Darwin Mitchell, 1:30 p.m. Location and guest attendance arrangements to be confirmed. Information: pentwaterwomensclub.org.

Throughout the winter

Pentwater Artisan Learning Center: Member workspace and mentoring in woodworking, metalworking, painting, pottery, glass crafts, weaving, basket making and sewing, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 780 E. Park St., Pentwater. Membership required; annual dues are $150, with prorated rates for new members. Check for holiday closures. Information: 231-869-5323 or pentwaterartisan.org.

Pentwater Pathways: Self-directed cross-country skiing and snowshoeing south of Pentwater Lake, as conditions permit. Snowshoers should stay alongside groomed ski tracks. Information: pentwater.org.

Charles Mears State Park: Self-guided winter walks, including the park's quarter-mile interpretive trail, conditions permitting. Information: michigan.gov/recsearch/parks/mears.

Pentwater Sculpture Walk: Self-guided outdoor art walk featuring five sculptures around the village, available year-round. Information: pentwaterartscouncil.org.

















PENTWATER – A YEAR IN REVIEW

Once again, Pentwater sparkled like the jewel that it is – peaceful, beautiful, colorful, friendly and inviting. At the Cosmic Candy Company, Assistant Manager Marianna Lopez was all smiles as she showed off a five-pound jawbreaker. Longtime resident Mike Curtis was all smiles, too, when he delivered, by bicycle, an antique canoe he refurbished that was then awarded as a winning prize for a Pentwater Historical Museum fundraising event. Pentwater, too, is where rainbows arch high into the clouds; where kids play at the Charles Mears State Park; where flowers all around the town break out in kaleidoscopic bloom; where the sun melts into the waters of Lake Michigan; where boaters venture out onto the big lake from Pentwater Lake, and so much more.

PHOTO ESSAY BY

JEANNE BARBER









WAITING FOR THE BITE

Pentwater Lake offers cold-weather fishing and a perch derby tradition

Ice fishing begins with a decision that might require some explaining to people who prefer to spend winter indoors: You're going to drill a hole in a frozen lake, sit beside it and wait.

With any luck, something down there will be interested in what you've brought for lunch.

There are boots to pull on, gloves to keep dry and enough equipment to make a sled a sensible investment. A bucket serves as both a tackle carrier and a seat. A shanty offers shelter from the wind. Below the ice, a perch may be studying a minnow with considerably less urgency than the angler holding the rod would like.

Then the rod tip moves, and attention shifts from cold toes to whatever is on the other end of the line.

On Pentwater Lake, perch help keep anglers fishing as fall gives way to winter. Before freeze-up, that can mean jigging from a boat. When ice conditions allow, the fishing moves onto the lake itself, where bluegill and crappie also offer possibilities.

Before the freeze

Retired Ludington Daily News outdoors writer Brian Mulherin has described the late-season fishing opportunities on western Michigan's drowned river mouth lakes, including Pentwater Lake. For anglers willing to contend with the cold, trolling for steelhead and jigging for perch can continue until freeze-up.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources fishing reports have documented those catches through the seasons. Past



November reports describe perch fishing in 20 to 35 feet of water, with anglers using minnow-tipped dropper rigs or small jigs baited with wigglers and wax worms. Anglers have also caught perch near the Pentwater Yacht Club.

The DNR has reported anglers trolling for steelhead and vertically jigging for perch around the channel mouth, with additional perch catches near the municipal marina.

Those reports describe past fishing conditions, so locations and catches will vary from one outing to the next.

Through the ice

Perch remain a target after freeze-up. DNR reports have also documented bluegill and crappie catches on Pentwater Lake during the ice fishing season.

Some winter reports describe good perch catches, while others note that anglers were sorting through smaller fish. Finding keepers can take persistence.

After catching a 10.5-inch fish that earned the biggest-perch award at a past Ryan Williams Perch Derby, Jason Reinbold told the Daily News that fishing began slowly before the fish became more active as the wind picked up.

"We drilled a lot of holes and moved around a lot to find them," he said.

A Winterfest tradition

The Ryan Williams Perch Derby has drawn adults and children onto Pentwater Lake for more than a decade, with participants gathering afterward to compare catches and collect prizes.

Pentwater Lake Association newsletters and local newspaper coverage document the derby's place in Winterfest. Businesses have contributed gift certificates and door prizes, while local establishments have handled registration and hosted awards gatherings.

Past tournaments have included adult cash prizes, a biggest-perch award and a children's trophy division. In one competition documented by the association, Trent Kamstra won $300 with five perch measuring a combined 54.2 inches.

One Daily News account recorded 77 adults and 20 children participating, with anglers gathering behind Port View Wine & Beer Market to have their catches measured.

"I know people came across the state for this," Williams told Daily News reporter Hannah Hubbard after that tournament. "I couldn't be happier."

For the Willis family of Ludington, the outing provided fresh air and time together.

Mark Willis began fishing that morning, with the children joining at noon. He won



the adult division, while Brooke Willis took first in the children's category.

"We came to break up the monotony ... to get fresh air," Jeanne Willis told the Daily News.

Brooke said she would do it again.

"It gets people outdoors and brings them into town," Williams said of the derby. "It's something fun to do in the winter."

The derby is typically held in February in conjunction with Pentwater's Winterfest activities, sometimes coinciding with Michigan's Winter Free Fishing Weekend. Details for the coming tournament were not available at press time.

Conditions come first

Weather and ice conditions determine when anglers can head onto the lake.

The DNR warns that no single ice thickness guarantees safety. Ice quality, currents and temperature changes can create substantial differences across the same lake.

The agency advises anglers to check ice thickness and quality as they travel, fish with a partner and tell someone on shore where they are going and when they expect to return. Ice picks, a life jacket and a cellphone are among its recommended emergency equipment.

Anglers should avoid moving water and areas near dock de-icers or protruding debris. A cold stretch or another angler's tracks should never substitute for checking conditions. ◀

Includes reporting by Hannah Hubbard and Brian Mulherin and information from Oceana's Herald-Journal, the Pentwater Lake Association and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

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READY FOR THE ICE

Basic gear for a winter fishing outing

Getting started in ice fishing takes warm clothing, a few fishing tools and safety equipment. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources offers these basics:

Dress for the weather. Wear moisture-wicking layers, insulation and a wind-resistant outer layer. Add waterproof boots, warm socks, a hat and gloves. Pack spare gloves.

Bring traction and safety gear. Ice cleats help with footing. Carry accessible ice picks, a life jacket and a cellphone protected from water.

Pack a spud and auger. A spud is a long tool with a chisel-like end used to check ice and chip holes. An auger drills fishing holes.

Include a slush scoop. Use it to clear ice chips and keep the hole open.

Choose a rod and tackle. A short, flexible ice fishing rod, reel, small jigs and suitable line provide a basic setup. Bait options include minnows, wax worms, spikes and wigglers.

Plan for comfort. A bucket can carry equipment and serve as a seat. Bring food and a warm drink. A sled helps transport gear; a portable shelter offers protection from wind.

Before leaving, check current fishing license requirements, seasons and catch limits.

Fish with a partner and tell someone on shore where you are going and when you expect to return. Check ice thickness and quality as you travel. The DNR warns that no single thickness guarantees safety. Avoid moving water, dock de-icers and areas around protruding debris.

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources.









Christmas in Pentwater

BY SHANNA AVERY
SHORELINE MEDIA STAFF WRITER

As a touch of warmth on a cold winter day, the celebrations of the Christmas season in Pentwater in years gone by warm the heart, as the traditions of long ago seem to linger in the beauty and joy of the season one still finds in Pentwater during the holidays.

An article in the Pentwater news from 1876, shares how the community came together to celebrate in a fitting way.

The community celebrated with Christmas Tree festivities at the M. E. (Methodist Episcopal) Church, which was highly attended.

"The church was completely filled at an early hour, so well filled that many were obliged to go away for lack of seats. Fully as many went away as found seats," the article read.

The program opened by a song sung by the school, followed by prayer from Rev. W. I. Cogshall. The school sang another song, "followed by what was probably as interesting as any part of the proceedings of the evening. A number of recitations and songs by the young Masters and Misses."

"At the close of these exercises the M.E. Centennial Working Club, prese nted the superintendent with a beautiful motto, entitled "Rock of Ages." The presentation was made by fourteen members of the club, who recited verses in rotation, the first letters of which composed the name of the superintendent, William Tuller, followed by singing "Rock of Ages cleft for me," the article read.

The writer of the column, penned David, said, "It struck me that Mr. Tuller should have made a few remarks upon receiving





150 years ago

the motto, but he did not. We may perhaps excuse him from the fact that he was so completely taken by surprise," he wrote.

The article described that there were three trees well laden presents and two tables filled, as were the two windows back of the rostrum.

"Of course the trees, being so completely filled with costly presents, were very beautiful; but I think they would have been much more beautiful had the room admitted of their being left at their full height. But as it was, it was necessary to cut them off a trifle at the tops in order to use the lower and stronger branches.

"The room had also been trimmed with festooning, made of green cedar, which reached around the room. There were a goodly number of costly presents given out; but it is beyond my power to remember them, they were so numerous. I noticed however, that Mrs. Chas. Moody was one of the favored ones; as were also the members of Mr. C. Jensen's family. There were any number of mottos given and received. Master Willie Kuhn received a motto as a premium for- learning and reciting the most verses of any one in his class."

The writer of the column, David, also noted, "There were also any number of dolls. One would think from the scarcity of dress of some, that the calculation was to have a doll can-can. There were dolls with dresses, and dolls without dresses; dolls with heads, and heads without dolls. All seemed to enjoy themselves, (not the dolls….but the people present) and left with a sense of relief that Christmas had passed." This old newspaper account provides a little bit of humor but a lot of joy reminiscing holiday celebrations in Pentwater long ago. ◀

Pentwater at 160:

A timeline of the village's history

COMPILED BY LOIS TOMASZEWSKI
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Pentwater will mark the 160th anniversary of its incorporation on March 16, 2027.

Before incorporation, Pentwater and neighboring Middlesex developed around separate lumbering operations. Charles Mears established Middlesex near his sawmill on the north bank of the channel in 1855. Middlesex became part of the incorporated village of Pentwater in 1867, although its name remained in local use afterward.

By then, the community had sawmills, ferry service across the channel and a newspaper. Its history since incorporation includes downtown fires, harbor improvements, the Armistice Day shipwrecks and a visit from a former presidential yacht.

The following timeline highlights events in Pentwater's history, beginning with the lumbering settlement that preceded incorporation.

1853 — Early settlement
E.R. Cobb and Andrew Rector build a boardinghouse and lumber mill near the south end of Hancock Street.

1855 — Middlesex established
Charles Mears establishes a sawmill on the north bank of the channel and develops the passage connecting Pentwater Lake to Lake Michigan. He calls his settlement Middlesex.

1858 — Ferry service begins
Mears establishes ferry service across the channel, connecting residents and businesses on opposite shores.

1861 — First newspaper
Pentwater's first newspaper appears April 20.

1867 — Pentwater incorporates
On March 16, Pentwater becomes an incorporated village, bringing Middlesex within its boundaries.

1868 — Harbor improvements begin
The federal government begins a lengthy project to widen and deepen the channel, improving access for shipping.

1872 — Fire department organized
Pentwater's volunteer fire department forms March 1.

1883 — Brick company established
The Middlesex Brick and Tile Co. incorporates. Its bricks are used in homes, businesses, churches and the Village Hall.

1887 — Lifesaving station built
A lifesaving station is built on the north pier. Its crews assist vessels and sailors in distress.

1889 — Downtown fire
A destructive fire sweeps through wooden storefronts on the west side of Hancock Street.

1920 — Land donated for state park
Carrie Mears deeds beachfront property north of the channel to Michigan, helping establish what becomes Charles Mears State Park.

1926 — Bridge replaces ferry
A former railroad bridge from Elk Rapids is installed across the channel. The swing bridge allows boats to pass between Pentwater Lake and Lake Michigan.

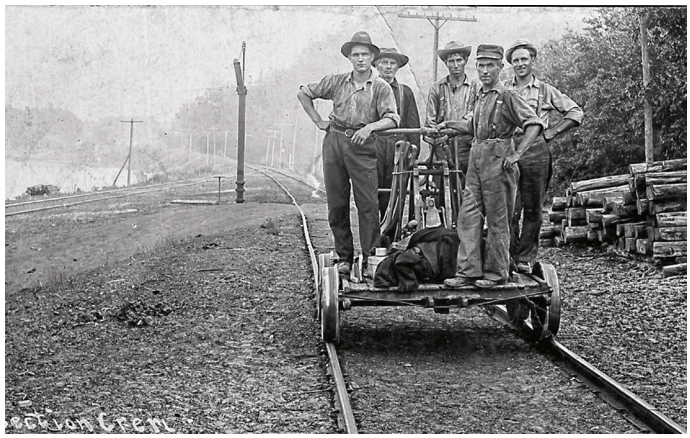


1927 — White Elephant demolished
The unfinished hotel known as the White Elephant is demolished. Its former location becomes the Village Green.

1940 — Armistice Day storm
The Nov. 11 storm sinks the freighters Anna C. Minch and William B. Davock with all hands and wrecks the Novadoc near Pentwater. Local fishermen rescue 17 surviving Novadoc crew members. Fifty-nine sailors die aboard the three freighters.

1982 — Historical society established
The Pentwater Historical Society is established to preserve and share the community's history.

1984 — Former presidential yacht visits
The Sequoia visits Pentwater during a Great Lakes goodwill tour, drawing spectators to the channel and welcoming residents aboard.

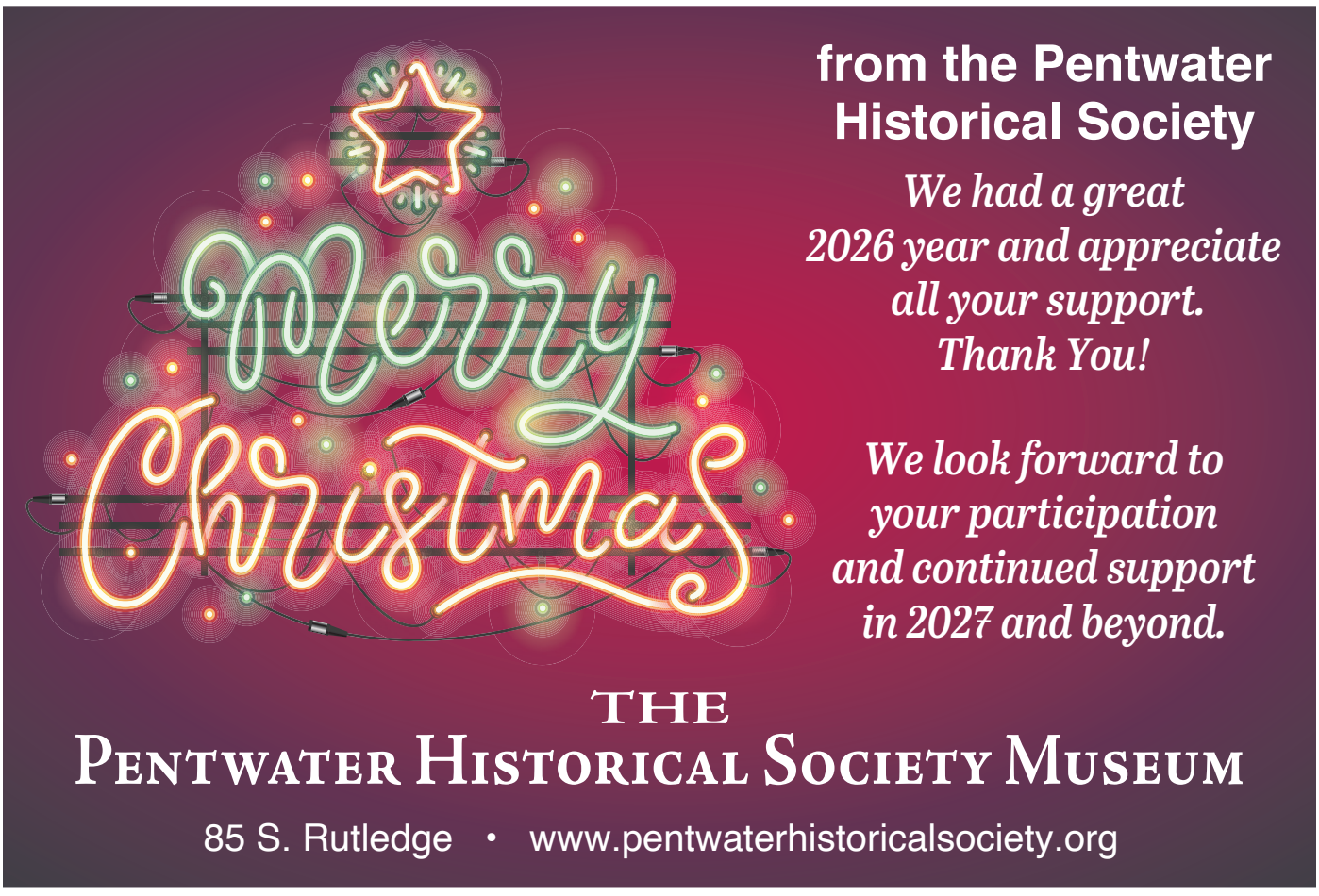




2024 — Sequoia model unveiled
The historical society unveils a completed scale model of the former presidential yacht for its museum exhibit.

2027 — Pentwater marks 160 years
March 16 marks 160 years since Pentwater's incorporation as a village.

Historical information compiled from the Pentwater Historical Society.



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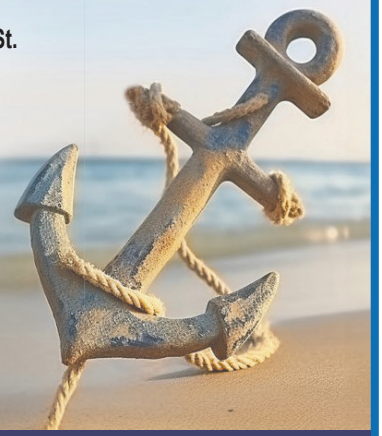
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