

# WHITE PINE PRESS

*We hew to the line; let the chips fall where they may.*

## NMC Celebrates 75 Years

NMC'S COMPUTER EVOLUTION (PG. 8)

BLOCK PARTY INTRODUCES NEW SWOOP (PG. 12)



50<sub>s</sub>



60<sub>s</sub>



70<sub>s</sub>



80<sub>s</sub>



90<sub>s</sub>



2000<sub>s</sub>

# Upcoming Events

NMC's **Spring Jazz Concert** will take place on **April 18** at 7:30 pm at the Milliken Auditorium inside the Dennos Museum. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. It will feature the NMC Jazz Lab Band, NMC Jazz Big Band, and a High School All Star Big Band. The NMC Jazz Big Band will be joined by guest soloist Robbie M. Smith, the Director of Jazz at Central Michigan University. Earlier that same day, NMC will host a High School Band Invitational at 1 pm in the Milliken Auditorium featuring bands from Traverse City West, Traverse City Central, Elk Rapids, and St. Francis. The High School Band Invitational is free for all members of the public.

Remaining dates for NMC's **Mobile Food Pantry** are **April 20 and May 4** from 3 pm to 5 pm at the Maple Lot on NMC's Front Street Campus.

The NMC Library holds its **Long Night Against Procrastination** on **April 20** from 5 to 11 pm. There will be pizza, snacks, coffee, and resources available to help you through finals.

The Dennos Museum will host an **Earth Day Clothing Swap** on **April 22** from 11 am to 4 pm. Donations of gently used clothing for the event will be accepted at the Museum from April 17 until 12 pm on April 22. They will also have a gear swap in collaboration with the Grand Traverse Conservation District. NMC's Green Team will be there as well hosting a plant sale. Please visit the Dennos Museum's website for more information on the event and what donations will be accepted.

On **April 22**, Student Life will host a **Make Your Mark For Denim Day** event in the Innovation Center from 11 am to 1 pm. This event is to honor survivors of sexual assault during Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

NMC's Graduation Celebration **Powwow** will take place on **April 25** from 1 pm to 4 pm at NMC's Front Street Campus on the south side of the Osterlin Building. This annual event hosted by Northwestern Michigan College's Native American Student Organization celebrates our local Native American tribes and Native American students.

NMC's student and community **Block Party** will be held on **April 25** from 3 pm to 7 pm at the Cedar Lot on NMC's Front Street Campus. Celebrating 75 years of NMC, the event will feature carnival rides, live music, food, and more.



National Writers Series

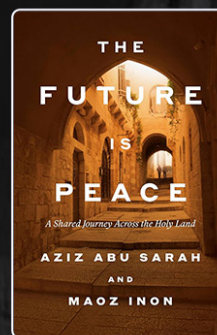
The Robert Giles "Truth Matters" Author Series Presents



## A Conversation with a Palestinian and an Israeli Both Lost Family Members to War Both Believe Peace is the Only Answer



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Show at 7:00 P.M.

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With guest host and IPR News Director **Ed Ronco**.

Commencement for graduating NMC students will be held on **May 2**. You can get your cap and gown from the NMC Bookstore.

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Are you a writer, editor, page designer, ad salesperson, or photographer? Looking for a job?

The *White Pine Press* would like to offer you the opportunity to join our staff. The *White Pine Press* is a bi-weekly newspaper published during the NMC school year that offers real-world experience while you do what you love. And we pay!

If you would like to learn more, contact faculty adviser Jacob Wheeler at [jwheeler@nmc.edu](mailto:jwheeler@nmc.edu) or editor-in-chief Minnie Bardenhagen at [barden34@mail.nmc.edu](mailto:barden34@mail.nmc.edu)

Looking for more *White Pine Press* stories? Find the latest issues of the *White Pine Press* and archives of our entire history online at [whitepinepresstc.com](http://whitepinepresstc.com). You can also connect with us on social media:

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## WHITE PINE PRESS

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# Accessible Journalism Opportunities for Students

## Build Northern Michigan News Coverage

### Parting Letter From The Editor

**Minnie Bardenhagen**  
Editor-In-Chief

This Spring, the *White Pine Press* attended two conferences, per usual. In San Francisco, our student-run news organization won fifth place for Best of Show in the 2-year college newspaper category at the Associated Collegiate Press conference. In Mt. Pleasant, we took home 18 awards, including third-place for general excellence at the Michigan Community College Press Association Conference.

These honors are more than just pieces of paper. They symbolize a year of hard work and dedication to covering our community. Our reporters, editors, designers, and photographers—many of whom had little to no journalism experience when they entered the newsroom—gave their time to learn and grow as they explored issues that matter to NMC students, faculty, and the general public.

I am not here to brag, but to ask a favor. First, let me give you a history lesson.

Student-run news has been there throughout NMC's 75 years of existence. In November 1952, just one year after the college was founded, the *Northwestern Reporter* published its first edition. The name went through an evolution—the *Reporter*, the *Tomahawk Reporter*, the *Norwester*—and the *White Pine Press* was ultimately born in 1983.

In case the lead paragraph of this letter was not convincing, let me tell you how the *White Pine Press* gives young reporters a space to thrive.

NMC is by no means a journalism school, but the institution has attracted talent who have gone on to work for local and state news organizations such as the *Traverse City Record-Eagle* and *MLive*.

That is what I admire most about the newsroom I have been a part of for the past two years. NMC provides an affordable place for students in the region to get an education, making the *White Pine Press* an accessible liftoff point for anyone interested in journalism, photojournalism, and design. Prestigious journalism schools and legacy outlets can be amazing, but you don't need to graduate from Columbia University or end up writing for *The New York Times* to make an impact as a journalist.

The *White Pine Press* and other small student publications have the opportunity to do something particularly special. These outlets can fill gaps in community reporting and provide a young adult perspective on issues. We are intimately connected to the experience of a student because we are living it. This provides an opportunity for a unique reporting voice in a community that has been increasing in age—the median age is 43.1 in Traverse City and 55.2 in Leelanau County, compared to a state average of 40.1, according to reporting by *The Ticker* in 2024.

I never would have thought a newsroom of fewer than 5 reporters could make a large impact, but I have seen it firsthand.

A news desert is an area with a community, or communities, that has little or no access to

quality, comprehensive news. In Northern Michigan, most counties have only one local news outlet, according to an October 2025 report from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. While one is better than none, it stands in stark contrast to southern Michigan, which has multiple outlets in most counties.

Calling the entirety of Northern Michigan a news desert would be an inaccurate statement. There is robust journalism by multiple outlets happening in many communities, especially in communities on the coast like Grand Traverse and Leelanau. Inland communities in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Peninsula tend to see the largest gaps in coverage.

My own observations have found Northern Michigan's journalism community to be encouraging of one another. It's a community that is constantly dedicated to finding solutions

to gaps in coverage. A recent initiative that I admire is the Northern Michigan Journalism Collaborative, a reporting project funded by Press Forward Northern Michigan. Led by *Bridge Michigan* and Interlochen Public Radio, outlets across Northern Michigan have worked together to tell the stories impacting underreported rural communities.

However, progress made in covering Northern Michigan is only temporary unless we continue to emphasize the importance of supporting journalism programs and outlets for students. If we don't provide young reporters with education and outlets to cover our communities, they will look elsewhere. If we don't provide an affordable environment for young reporters, such as the one that NMC provides, they will look elsewhere.

Right now, I believe the prospect of reporting

downstate, where young people can afford to live and have more job opportunities, seems much more appealing than toughing it out in Northern Michigan. It takes a love for the Northern Michigan community to want to stay here, and local journalism opportunities for students can build that love.

So, here is my request.

Keep nurturing the next generation of reporters. Encourage high school and college students to use their voices and be civically engaged. Don't let negative rhetoric around the press scare them. Incentivize young reporters—and the general emerging workforce—to stay in the area by working to provide affordable housing. Let the young people of Northern Michigan know there are opportunities for them here, in their own backyard.

To keep Northern Michigan informed, we need to continue to give the next generation of reporters a reason to stay.



Left to Right: Jace Dunlap, Minnie Bardenhagen, Isabelle Plamondon, Adeline DePauw

# First District Candidates Answer TC's Questions

Traverse Indivisible Held A Candidate Forum—Frontrunning Bergman And Barr Were No-Shows

**Minnie Bardenhagen**  
Editor-in-Chief

Housing, healthcare, and the Iran War were a few of the topics candidates vying to represent Michigan's First Congressional District were asked about at a crowded Milliken Auditorium on April 1. Those four candidates were invited to participate in a "Meet the Candidates Forum" hosted by Traverse City Indivisible Education and Solidarity (TIES).

Michigan's First Congressional District covers the entire Upper Peninsula and a large portion of Northern Michigan, including Grand Traverse County. In terms of land area, it is the largest congressional district in Michigan, taking up nearly half of the state.

The candidates present were Iron Mountain Democrat Kyle Blomquist, Traverse City Democrat Wayne Stiles, Grayling Republican Justin Michal, and Traverse City Independent Zebulon Featherly.

Healthcare was a recurring topic at the event, with candidates answering questions about access, cost, and mental health.

Blomquist stated early on that he believes healthcare access is one of the biggest issues facing Michigan's First District. He said that rural areas, like the one he grew up in, have gaps in service that need to be addressed.

"Ironwood had its labor and delivery department close," he said, "Not because people in the Western Upper Peninsula didn't need babies delivered, but because it was no longer profitable to the company that owned that healthcare system."

When asked about policies they would support to lower costs, each candidate took a unique approach. While most candidates addressed specific policies—Stiles supported removing tariffs, Blomquist supported Medicare for all, and Featherly supported incentivizing high earners to contribute more to the economy—Michal said the cost of living is too complex for one or a few overarching policies.

"There are a lot of things that make up the economy," Michal said, "I would bring people together that are economists, that have different forms of strategies, in order to attack each individual issue separately."

Featherly, an electrician who is currently enrolled in one class at NMC, mentioned data centers throughout the forum. Data centers have become a contentious subject throughout Michigan, with locals in areas with planned centers worried about energy consumption and cost, land usage, and water usage.

"I want to make sure that we have a policy in place that is going to put checks and balances on those projects," he said.

The candidates were asked about hot topics regarding the Trump administration. The candidates—except for Michal—opposed the SAVE Act and the war in Iran. All four candidates, however, agreed that Congress should approve military actions abroad.

Stiles was vocal in his opposition to the Trump administration, citing specific administration agenda items, such as tariffs and ICE presence in cities, as issues.

"Folks, this is not a drill. The foundation of our democracy is under attack," he said, "...One path leads to authoritarian rule, where one man feels he's above the law, unencumbered by applying Congress..."

The event, which was part of a series of events in various areas of Northern Michigan, gave the candidates 90 seconds to answer each question. The crowd was asked not to make audible reactions—such as applause, booing, and whooping—while the candidates

were speaking. For the most part, the crowd in Traverse City adhered to this rule, but there were moments when they could not hold in their reactions, such as after Michal's statement on affordable housing, which prompted some boos.

Michal asked the crowd to raise their hands if they would be willing to list their houses for \$100,000 and allow a first-time homebuyer to purchase the house. After no hands were raised, Michal said, "Each and every one of you has the opportunity to have affordable housing in this district, but you choose not to. Why is that?" He later stated, "It's a human condition, we call it greed."

Housing is a key issue in the Grand Traverse area. The average price for a home in Grand Traverse County was \$519,434 in 2025, and the median price for a home was \$405,223 in 2025, according to data from Northern Great Lakes Realtors MLS. Candidates brought up potential solutions such as putting limits on Airbnbs, revitalizing older homes, and funding public housing.

Notably, the Meet the Candidates Forum was missing the projected frontrunners from both major parties, Incumbent Republican Jack Bergman and Democrat Callie Barr.

Seeing as it was April Fool's Day, Michal made light of Congressman Bergman's absence.

"Guys, before I address the elephant in the room, I just received a text message from the congressional office. Congressman Bergman is actually on his way here, so we may need to get another chair."

Murmurs filled the auditorium before Michal said, "April Fools." Michal took the opportunity to stress the importance of politicians connecting with constituents, something he later said was the most important issue facing the district.

"It's about community, it's about being together, it's about having conversations that matter, opening channels of dialogue that are honest and transparent," Michal said, "And what that does is establish this trust. And that's something that's been lacking a lot in government."

Bergman, who has held Michigan's First District congressional seat since 2017, has been criticized for not holding in-person events to communicate with constituents. In March 2025, Traverse and Leelanau Indivisible attempted to hold a town hall for Bergman, which Bergman did not attend.

Reporting from *The Ticker* that Bergman's communications director said "the Congressman will not now, or ever, attend a George Soros-funded so-called town hall," went viral. The comment was in reference to grants given to indivisible groups by the Open Society Foundation. Traverse and Leelanau Indivisible released a statement afterwards refuting that claim.

Matthew Denotter, another Republican candidate, did not respond to correspondence from event organizers at the time of the event.

The primary election for the 2026 midterms is on Aug. 4, and the general election is on Nov. 3.

*Photos by Minnie Bardenhagen*



# “It’s Definitely Weird Not Seeing Him Around.”

## Head Sports Coach—Beloved By Students—Departs From Program

Photo by Minnie Bardenhagen

**Sydney Boettcher**  
Staff Writer

Andre Dean, head coach of the NMC Varsity Esports program, departed after nearly five years with the program.

Dean started working for NMC Esports in June 2021 as a coach for the Rocket League team and a stream commentator. As the program grew, he was appointed the first head coach. As of February 2026, he is no longer an employee of NMC.

“I miss it. It was a huge part of my life.” Dean told the *White Pine Press*. He described leaving like “having to let go of a baby I’ve been taking care of for almost five years.”

Dean’s doing alright for himself. He has a new job lined up as an Audio Visual Engineer at Leelanau Sands Casino & Lodge. He also spoke highly of NMC, “It’s a great working environment.”

Dean’s presence is missed by students. Everyone I spoke to was sad to see him go. Keiara Pettengill, a current player on the “League of Legends” team and former “Overwatch” player, spoke fondly of him. “He has a lot of love for the esports program & community he created.”

She recounted a story where some of the “Overwatch” players and Andre were going to Screams In The Dark, a local haunted house. Andre sent out a general invite to the entire program. At the end of it, most of the other “Overwatch” players and some of the “Apex Legends” players went all together. Pettengill said it was “a great way to get to know people.”

The coach for the “Smash Bros Ultimate” team, Jamey Henderson, known to the team by his username Zombryra (or Bry), had worked with Dean since 2023, when he helped organize the North’s Strongest tournament, among others. He described Dean as helpful and spoke fondly of his experience working with him. “I enjoyed Andre’s presence with the program. It’s definitely weird not seeing him around.”

Jay Pohl, a second-year student and player for the “Smash Bros Ultimate” team, shared an anecdote of Dean driving him and some other members of the team to a local tournament two hours away. He joked that since Dean never uploaded any of the team’s game replays for them to review, “[The] full semester’s replays are essentially lost media.”

Pohl expressed hope for the program’s future. “I’m sad that [Andre] is gone, but Trey has been great so far, and it really seems that he’s already dedicated to improving our esports program as a whole for next semester. I still wish Andre could be here with him, though.”

Trey Smith is the interim coach for Esports while NMC searches for someone to fill Andre’s position.

Dean remains an Audio Technology student here at NMC and will graduate with the class of 2027.



**White Pine Press**

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# Thirty-Seven Years of Service

## Mary Patterson and the People Behind the Badge

**Isabelle Plamondon**  
Staff Writer

Late into her 37th year in law enforcement, Mary Patterson still measures her career the same way she did when she started: by the

people she's helped.

"I just like interacting with people. I like helping people... just having an impact and knowing my community—that's pretty rewarding," Patterson said.

A road patrol deputy with the Leelanau County Sheriff's Office, Patterson has spent nearly four decades responding to everything from routine calls to life-threatening emergencies. But for her, the job has never been about recognition or pay. "You have to love what you do and know that you're helping people," she said. "You're not going to get rich doing this job."

In a small Northern Michigan community, that kind of work becomes personal. Unlike larger cities, where officers may never encounter the same person twice, Patterson has built lasting relationships with the people she serves.

"When you're in a small community, it's nice to know your community. I know a lot of people, and people know me," she said.

Those relationships don't end when her shift does. "You can take the uniform off, but you don't ever really take the uniform off. People still know who you are," Patterson said. Whether she's on duty or not, the role follows her—something she's grown used to over time. "You still have to conduct yourself professionally... people recognize you," she added.

That visibility also reflects the trust she's built. "People will ask, 'Is Mary working? We'd like to see Mary.' You really build bonds with your community," she said.

Over the years, Patterson has seen the full spectrum of human experience. Some calls are routine, others unforgettable. "Fatal accidents, child deaths—any deaths. Those are very difficult," she said. "You're trying to help, and sometimes you're not successful."

But not all moments are defined by tragedy. One call that has stayed with her involved a young boy walking alone early in the morning. After

making sure he was safe and reunited with his family, the situation ended on an unexpectedly light note. "He gave me a tour of his house," Patterson recalled.

Experiences like that—quiet, human, and often unseen—are what have sustained her throughout her career.

Behind the scenes, Patterson describes law enforcement as more than a job. "You become one big family because you work together so much—you spend more time with them than your own family sometimes," she said. That sense of connection becomes especially important as departments face ongoing staffing shortages. "If someone's down, you pick up the slack. That's what being a team is," she added.

She has also watched with interest as the profession has changed over time. "When I started, you'd have two or three positions and 25 people applying. That's changed," Patterson said. Fewer people are entering the field, she explained, in part because of the realities of the job. "You're going to have to make sacrifices—you're going to miss holidays, family events, and weekends," she said. "You have to know what you're getting into."

After nearly four decades on the job, Patterson doesn't point to a single moment as her defining achievement. "Probably what I'm most proud of is being in the career and being able to handle it for so long," she said.

For her, the meaning of the work comes back to something simple: connection.

"Law enforcement is a very rewarding career," Patterson said. "You don't get rich doing it, but it's so rewarding."



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# Passion for helping students succeed drives GVSU's Fousset

**Michele Coffill**  
Grand Valley State University

Grand Valley State University students in Traverse City are

in a new location that offers a more vibrant campus experience, close access to resources and connections.

GVSU is among five universities that offer classes in partnership with Northwestern Michigan College. All five had operated from NMC's University Center, near Boardman Lake in Traverse City. The partners celebrated their new location in the Beckett Building on NMC's Front Street Campus on September 23.

One of those connections is Jessie Fousset, who serves as GVSU's assistant director of students - Northern Michigan Region. Fousset said the move to the Front Street Campus has helped strengthen the relationship between Grand Valley and NMC, adding that students benefit by being closer to shared institutional resources.

"Being here on campus is a huge win for students at NMC who want to enroll in GVSU degree programs," Fousset said. "The Beckett Building has been updated to feature classrooms with state-of-the-art technology, labs and collaborative spaces."



Jessie Fousset

Since 1995, more than 3,000 Northern Michigan students have earned Grand Valley degrees in Traverse City.

Whether transfer students, adult learners or new-to-college students, Fousset said Grand Valley can offer students what they are

seeking: a cost-effective, timely academic path that can lead to a career in Northern Michigan.

"We have degrees designed for students with an associate's degree who want to complete a bachelor's degree, as well as certificates in business fundamentals, leadership and other valuable credentials," she said.

Fousset's own path started at the University of Tampa, where she served in the student life office. From there, she worked in fundraising and helped plan large-scale events for a Kansas

City pediatric charity that provides medical grants to help children's families who may struggle to afford medical equipment, care or travel-related costs.

After earning a master's degree in social justice and education at the University College of London's Institute of Education, she moved to Traverse City with a goal of returning to work in higher education.

"I'm enthusiastic about supporting students and am open to meeting with anyone interested in completing a bachelor's degree in Northern Michigan," Fousset said.

Fousset is available to meet with students virtually or in-person at the Beckett Building on NMC's Front Street Campus. Connect with her at [foussetj@gvsu.edu](mailto:foussetj@gvsu.edu).

### The pathway to your future in Northern Michigan

Whether you are an adult student returning to school, a transfer student seeking a bachelor's degree, or a graduate student, Grand Valley has the programming and support you need to get you to where you want to be. Learn more at [gvsu.edu/traverse](http://gvsu.edu/traverse).

# The Next Space Race, Towards or Away From Innovation?

**Jace Dunlap** Staff Writer The lights dimmed over the audience in the Dennos Museum Center's Milliken Auditorium on March 19 as community members and NMC students alike awaited the International Affairs Forum's introduction to the "New Space Race" to begin.

The program hosted by the IAF's student leadership team aimed to invite the audience to examine the complexities of space travel with the introduction of new technologies.

Starting off the program, the guest speaker, Aimee Hubble, talked about propulsion. Similarly to a handgun generating kick back after it has been fired, rockets propel themselves using hot gas which is quickly expelled towards the ground, generating thrust to propel it into space. Continuing to invent new ways to generate thrust, and get rockets and satellites into and out of space is a very hot topic for the field right now scientists want to do more testing on chemicals and toxins in space, there is more pressure for the transportation to be reliable.

Hubble believes that, while there is a large amount of old technology that is still crucial for propulsion, the integration of new companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin is the way forward in order to continue making progress.

Another field which Hubble has been working very closely with is In-space Servicing, Assembly, and Manufacturing (ISAM). "Imagine that you bought a car, and you drove it until it ran out of gas and then you just left it on the side of the road. That's pretty much how we operate satellites these days," said Hubble.

The goal of ISAM is to have a way to get into space and do minor repairs on satellites, or refuel them so that they do

not go to waste, and reduce the amount that are abandoned. If a company were able to effectively integrate ISAM, it would also lend itself to other fields like pharmaceuticals which could benefit from research and development done with less gravity.

ISAM would also allow companies to more responsibly follow new regulations set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Recently, the FCC changed their policy from requiring satellites to deorbit 25 years after their mission was complete to only five years.

Hubble is hopeful that ISAM is the way forward with this new policy. She suggested that having a spacecraft in Low Earth orbit with ISAM capabilities would allow a much smoother way for companies to alter their satellites so that they are safely taken down.

The IAF student leadership team also showed an interview they conducted with Donald Moore, a lecturer at the International Transactions Clinic at the University of Michigan Law School, and founder and CEO of Space Finance Company and GeoJump, Inc.

If the US wants to launch a rocket, it is more complicated than just rocket physics. In order to use airspace, the group in charge of the mission must acquire a licence from the FCC, said Moore. In addition to the FCC licensing, treaties with other countries must be considered because of the use of shared airspace, and the planning of the return site, which is typically in an ocean. The only way that any of these space missions works is through collaboration.

There is a lot of grey area within these treaties that limits the amount of collaboration that can happen. The Outer

Space Treaty states that no nation can declare sovereignty over a celestial body. However, if a nation is to take part of that celestial body back to Earth (like moon rocks), it is their property, and they own that part of the celestial body.

As of now, Moore does not see any more treaties to garner collaboration in the near future. "There is really no chance of any new treaties. The world is not in a mood right now for the US, Russia, and China to agree to [a] new treaty about space debris or space traffic management... Frankly, it's kind of a new Cold War that has developed in space," said Moore.

Regardless of collaboration, companies ultimately form to seek profit, says Lina M. Cashin, a Senior Project Engineer of Defense Systems Operations at the Aerospace Corporation. She highlights the importance of remembering that while a company can both seek a profit and want improvements for a community or industry, this can lead to companies overlooking ethics in order to increase profit.

Cashin gives the example of the maritime industry. There have been many instances where cruise or freight ships may seek government approval in a specific nation because they have more lax rules and regulations, which will likely cause more complications further down the line.

Regardless of the cautionary tales told by Cashin and Moore, Hubble maintained enthusiastic vibrancy throughout the forum. "Life can take you interesting places if you're open to it," said Hubble. To her, that means teamwork.

*Photo Courtesy of Tracy Grant*



# How NMC Joined the Computer Revolution at 3,600 Revolutions Per Minute

**Jonathan Mikowski**  
Guest Writer

Over the past few decades, schools like NMC have been computerizing various aspects of their administration, admissions, and facilities. Computers are a staple in libraries, offices, and classrooms throughout NMC.

According to various staff members, as Northern Michigan's first community college, NMC has had a historic advantage over other community colleges in terms of keeping up with modern trends and technology, especially computers. I was greatly intrigued by this little anecdote and decided to investigate further.

I sent an email to the NMC archives and spoke with them in person, asking for everything that they might know about NMC's first computer. They could not find much information, however, they did provide me with an image of George Kuhn with NMC's first computer, which was a Royal Precision LGP-30, and said there was some anecdotal evidence that it was used for about 10 years.

In the image, you can see the LGP-30's cube-shaped paper tape reader and puncher, Kuhn standing before a modified typewriter, and the main body of the computer itself that looks like a chest freezer.

After scouring NMC's online archives for old issues of the *Nor'wester* newspaper, NMC barbecue records, emails back and forth with NMC's archivists, and a few other connections, I managed to piece together a near-complete history of NMC's first computer.

In late 1963, Kuhn, then professor of mathematics and physics at NMC, persuaded the Wigwam club to use the funds from the then-upcoming 1964 NMC barbecue to purchase a digital computer.

The Wigwam Club was the name for the student body that organized the NMC Barbecue fundraisers and designated the use of the money from them.

The plan was for them to raise \$5,000 to add to a \$10,000 National Science Foundation grant. This would then match up with another \$15,000 grant being provided by the State of Michigan for a total of \$30,000 to buy the computer. That's about \$316,245 in today's dollars for just one computer.

This digital computer would be used by the computer technician and computer operation/programming courses starting on Oct. 14, 1964, with the LGP-30 as the only computer for the class to share.

The Royal Precision LGP-30 is quite an odd computer by modern standards, and thus required specialized courses to learn how to use it. It was a first-generation computer designed in 1956, when computer companies were more or less just throwing computer designs at a metaphorical wall to see what aspects worked well.

For instance, it doesn't exactly have

a keyboard; instead, it has a Friden Flexowriter on a shelf mounted to the left side of the computer. The Friden Flexowriter is a heavily modified typewriter that acted as both the keyboard and printer for the computer. It also contained a paper tape puncher and reader, which could read or print out data on paper tape with holes punched into it to represent binary.

The large cube to the left of Kuhn in the image is a separate, higher-speed paper tape reader/puncher connected to the computer, which was a purchasable accessory to it. Inside the computer, though, the data is all stored on a magnetic drum spinning at around 3,600 revolutions per minute. On this drum, there is room for 4,096 "words," with 64 rows of words across, and each row having 64 words around the drum. Each word was composed of 32 binary digits, (zeroes or ones expressed by direction of magnetization of the drum's surface), and could be either an instruction or data word, with the last bit always being a zero for spacing on the drum.

Meanwhile, a modified oscilloscope displayed the data inside the computer and showed the binary digits inside the instruction and accumulator registers, as well as the track and sector numbers on the drum memory.

Thankfully, the online Bitsavers archive contains plenty of information about the LGP-30, so quite a lot of information about our school's first computer and its history is still available today.

While this computer was already a bit old by 1964, it

nevertheless proved itself useful in teaching NMC students computer programming and operation when most schools, except for four-year colleges, didn't even have one.

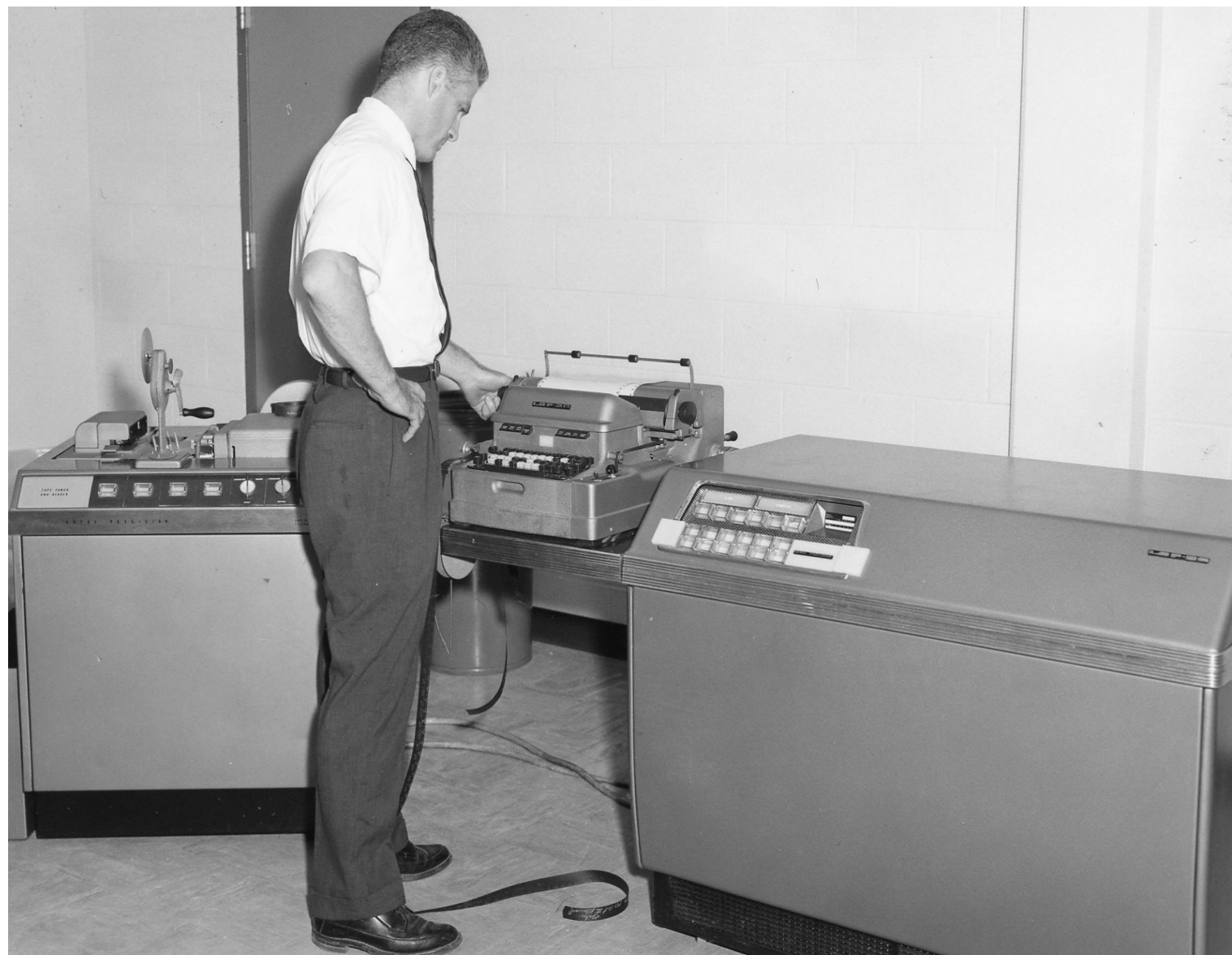
Preston N. Tanis, the first director of NMC, even praised the computer in a *Nor'wester* interview back in 1964, declaring, "I see it with two very valuable potentials. The first is in teaching. It was acquired with that purpose in mind. The second is in extra benefits derived."

In the meantime, Kuhn switched from being the physics and mathematics teacher to the computer programming teacher at NMC, aided by his previous work at the Battelle Institute in Columbus, Ohio, where he was first introduced to computers. From 1964 onwards, NMC offered many courses and educational opportunities in the field of digital computing.

NMC originally started as a small local college with a mission to prepare students in Northwestern Michigan to enter the workforce. Having a computer course all the way back in 1965 is a sign of NMC's dedication to evolving with the technological and computing innovations of the times.

NMC has and continues to keep up with progressions in computing and digital technology, but it is good to remember where it all started and reflect on it for NMC's 75th anniversary.

George Kuhn with NMC's first computer in 1964  
*Photo Courtesy of NMC Archives*



# NMC Culinary and Ag Tech Students Learn How to Feed America

**Cheryl Pavic Henner**  
Guest Writer

In the Great Lakes Culinary Institute (GLCI), six white towers gleaming under halos of

LED lights stand sentry along the corridor. Evenly-spaced pods of green lettuce, basil, parsley, and flowering plants circle the towers, and a faint swoosh of fortified water inside bathing their roots beckons all five senses.

Culinary Institute Director Chef Les Eckert, meets with the NMC Agriculture Technology students tending the towers.

“We need the basil harvested today because Chef Morse is making pesto,” she said as they inspect the leaves. Lettuce had been picked last week, yielding just over a pound from two towers. This amount supplemented the lettuce already purchased for the restaurant’s salads that day.

Chef Eckert purchased these towers three years ago with the help of a donor to help demonstrate local food concepts to students, a movement that has changed the way chefs and consumers think about food in America.

But sourcing food locally at the peak of freshness is not the only aspect of this movement. Environmental stewardship, food security, and economic sustainability are tenets of local food ideology as well.

This is why the culinary students learn and practice optimization at each level. Ingredients are thoughtfully procured to minimize mileage: packaging is recycled; bones and vegetable scraps are simmered into stock; used coffee grounds are steeped to flavor freshly made ice cream. What cannot be used, reused, or recycled is composted. Almost nothing goes in the trash.

## Big Ag, Rabbits, and Plant Poachers

Are sustainable practices in culinary achievable on the scale needed to feed Northwestern Michiganders, let alone 340 million Americans? GLCI’s grow towers cost \$800 each, and Chef Eckert estimates Lobdell’s would need 24 of them

to provide the required amount of lettuce, fresh herbs, and edible flowers for their menu.

High upfront cost is just one reason why everyone is thinking about local food, but relatively few are engaged in it. The belief that large-scale, high-yield agriculture, known as “Big Ag,” is the most effective way to feed a large population has been embedded in American culture since U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz aggressively promoted it in the 1970s.

Government policies also favor large agribusinesses over small farms that produce food for local distribution. In 2025, the Trump administration terminated the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program, which helped K-12 schools and childcare centers purchase fresh food from nearby farms.

Local Food Purchase Assistance met the same fate. This program addressed food insecurity by supporting food banks in sourcing fresh food from local producers.

While the current administration saved about \$1 billion by cutting these programs, it has authorized over \$30 billion in ad hoc subsidies for producers of large-scale commodity crops such as soy, corn, and sorghum, according to the USDA.

Big Ag also includes meat production. Americans’ appetite for animal-based protein spurred Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, commonly known as factory farming. In the US, about 75 % of beef, 98 percent of pork, and 99% of poultry are raised in confined, high-density settings to maximize production, according to 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture data.

Dean Sparks, pit master and owner of Traverse City restaurants Sparks BBQ and The Pretty Penny Steakhouse, would be happy to buy all his ingredients locally, but said it is hard to execute in Northern Michigan because smaller area farms cannot produce enough meat for his restaurants. He visits farmers’ markets to source local produce in the fall when it is most abundant.

Challenges to the local food movement exist right outside our doors as well. Chef Eckert explained why the culinary institute does not grow produce outside the building, which would cost less than purchasing grow towers, “We tried growing other things, but the rabbits ate the parsley, and people picked the peppers. They even dug up the plants.”

## Why Try?

Chef Eckert acknowledged that while impressive, the grow towers are not the solution in the quest to supply Americans with healthy food. “Sustainability is a puzzle with 10 million pieces. At GLCI, we teach the students what local food and environmental stewardship look like at this moment in time and hope they don’t forget about it, are interested, and ask questions when they go on their own.”

GLCI alum Chef Emily Fitzpatrick is doing that very thing. She started her culinary training at the same time Chef Eckert introduced the grow towers. Chef Fitzpatrick had never seen anything like them before and became a fan. She especially enjoyed pointing them out to Lobdell’s customers.

“See that basil garnish on your plate? That grew right over there,” she recalls saying when talking about the stately soldiers stationed visible through the dining room.

*Photo by Cheryl Pavic Henner*



The culinary institute sparked her interest in growing food and showed her where America stands in the local food movement. During a two-week study abroad in Switzerland, she realized that America is catching up to how the rest of the world eats.

The local food movement isn’t a thing overseas because it is what they have always done, she explained.

## It All Comes Down to Relationships

Chef Fitzpatrick caters at The Hagerty Center, an event venue in Traverse City, where she puts into practice what she learned at GLCI. The Center cooks with local produce when in season and collects all its prep scraps—up to 25 gallons daily—for composting by a local farmer.

When asked what challenges area restaurants may have with implementing farm-to-table or environmental stewardship, she said that it all comes down to relationships: chefs must know what farmers are growing, raising, or composting, then work with them to coordinate timing, price, delivery, or pickup.

This year, GLCI and the MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology at NMC established a relationship around the grow towers. Culinary students appreciate what the grow towers produce, but do not have the capacity to manage them, whereas the Ag Tech students do. The grow towers are also fostering communication between student chefs and farmers by prompting discussions about varieties, harvest times, and yields.

A Taste of Success, GLCI’s signature fundraising event, takes place on April 24. Chef Eckert just relayed the restaurant’s produce needs for the event to the Ag Tech students, who are now harvesting lettuce from another grow tower to ensure the next crop matures in time. This tower yielded one and a half pounds—their biggest harvest to date. The IAT Program Coordinator, Cristin Hosmer, also ordered six more grow towers.



# Two Bays, Two Networks, Two Worlds

**Jace Dunlap**  
Staff Writer

On the second floor of two different broadcasting studios, two men look out their windows onto a bay. A video producer and evening news anchor may be separated by thousands of miles, but are united by their morning view of crisp, crashing waves along a shoreline.

The Pew Research Center reports 32% of Americans often use TV as their main source for news consumption. In a country where one in three people relies on their television for their daily news, Americans are widely connected through their need for media consumption. A third of Americans tune into stations broadcast from studios with the smell of stale coffee hanging in the air, whispers of interns scuttling with their busy work, and the buzzing of phones in cramped newsrooms.

Dan Ashley and Morgan Burke-Beyers have both always lived with the water only a glance away, the only difference being that the water is on opposite sides of the country.

Growing up in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Ashley developed a love for all things newsworthy. He had a subscription to *Newsweek* in junior high and joined the debate team. As a young adult, he went to the University of North Carolina (UNC), majoring in English and Speech Communications. Ashley didn't have a childhood dream of becoming a news anchor, but was inspired by watching journalists during the presidential elections.

After graduating from UNC, Ashley moved to Charleston, South Carolina, for an internship at a TV station owned by ABC. After spending months with the company, Ashley worked his way up the corporate ladder to become the main anchor and investigative reporter, a position he comfortably held for a few years.

Ashley's time in South Carolina soon came to an end in 1989 when Hurricane Hugo hit the states. As storms ravaged the southeastern US, wind whipping around buildings and taking their roofs off, Ashley was inside the studio.

"I was the last broadcaster on the air before we lost power for a couple hours, and the first one back when we got power," recounted Ashley, buzzing with nostalgic energy, "[It was a] scary night, I thought we were going to get killed where we were, but it was a great personal and journalistic growth experience."

San Francisco sent Red Cross relief to help Charleston, so when the Loma Prieta earthquake hit San Francisco in 1989, Charleston reciprocated, and Ashley followed the story to the West Coast. In San Francisco, Ashley covered the effects of the earthquake over many stories. After his time in California, he knew it was the right move to work for the same station that he covered the earthquake out of when he got the job offer from ABC7 in San Francisco soon after.

After 31 years at ABC7, Ashley now has his own office in the corner of the building encased in windows that capture the twinkle of lights from the Ferry Building off of the San Francisco Bay at dusk. On the windowsill behind his desk, photos from his earlier days as a journalist sit in the moonlight. Ashley, standing with various people in the photos, may look like two strangers smiling at the camera, but to him, they are each a timeless memory of his career encased in glistening frames.

Burke-Beyers also found his interest in broadcasting through politics. Growing up in Traverse City, he recalls thinking as a young boy, "I want people to be as interested in politics as they are in reality television." This passion for TV led Burke-Beyers to attend Central Michigan University for broadcasting, with his original intent to work in radio.

While Burke-Beyers figured out the ins and outs of his career, he made his way into TV news with various broadcasting companies in Northern Michigan. Eventually, he found his way to 9&10, where he currently works as a Senior Video Producer.

Burke-Beyer's role with the company is working on the editing side of productions. He works with clients, manages shoots, edits video, develops content for TV and web, and creates internal promotional material. The career is a culmination of experiences working in photojournalism and editing/broadcasting knowledge.

Burke-Beyer's career has been based in a much smaller market compared to ABC7's in San Francisco. Most of the work that Burke-Beyers produces is what will generate the most money for the company. Because Traverse City is a smaller market, it is more important for them to follow whichever leads will generate the most revenue, which can be hard when many clients are small businesses.

Small markets also have to directly respond to what viewers are seeking, Burke-Beyers says. In Northern Michigan, it is the weather. "Weather is frequently a top priority for people within our community. We also have weather that's all over the place... people are also connected

with how they are going to get around [during a storm]."

At times, the work that Burke-Beyers does can feel like it has a direct connection to those who want to see it. In a town with a population of around 15,000 people, almost everyone has some connection to what is being reported on. Because of this connection, there is a feeling of tug-of-war with the viewers. He needs to produce what will bring in the most income because of the smaller viewership size, but what people want to see may not always be what the journalists deem newsworthy.

For small market broadcasters to continue to produce news, they sometimes need to make sacrifices in what they are covering. "You have to make money off of something... the product you're producing has to attract as many people as possible, not do the best job of being a journalist."

Burke-Beyers uses the example of a house fire. He believes there is not a lot of journalistic work in broadcasting a house burning down, but that is the type of content that will generate viewership.

Market big or small, all news media share the responsibility of informing the public and capturing their attention to keep them informed. Ashley said, "At the end of the day, you can't Google what [we] do every day. We go out with a camera, and we record the news, and you know, somebody's got to go do that."

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# Traverse City's Second-Hand Scene

## What Was Once Stigmatized is Now a Hub for Community Connection

**Minnie Bardenhagen**  
Editor-In-Chief

Following her typical route, Peyton LaRue made her way to

Goodwill's wall lined with shoes

and various trinkets. Almost immediately, a pair of maroon shoes with white laces caught her attention. She held them to examine.

"I need those," she said, pointing out that they were only \$15, "This is why I love thrifting."

LaRue, a second-year NMC student studying Liberal Arts, spent the evening of March 10 exploring Traverse City's Goodwill on South Airport with two friends: Niusha Rahjoo, a first-year NMC student studying chemistry, and Faith Gantner, a third-year NMC student.

The three, all Gen Z, had all known each other before from their classes at NMC. However, their trip to Goodwill was the first time they bonded as a group.

They giggled and talked highly of each other's fashion choices over the screeching sound of hangers being pushed around on racks and the background music playing from Goodwill's speakers. When the store wasn't playing hits like Olivia Dean's "So Easy (To Fall in Love)," they made announcements, addressing shoppers as "treasure hunters."

The three students were captured by curiosity. They pointed out the softness of slippers and crocheted scarves. At one point, they spent five minutes smelling various soaps. The word that dominated their vocabulary was "cute!"

When they saw something they thought another one of them would like, they would hold it up and call out their friend's name. Each of them expressed that the experience had allowed them to know each other better through their styles.

"I know that you're into skateboarding," LaRue said, pointing at Rahjoo. Then, pointing at Gantner, she said, "I know you might play Chinese checkers."

Rahjoo moved to the United States from Iran about two years ago.

"In my country, this donating culture, and also thrifting culture... It's not really regular for someone to do that."

While Rahjoo had thrifted with her family before, this was her first time doing so with friends.

LaRue has spent much of her life thrifting, citing its convenience.

"Especially because I'm a college student on a budget, it's just a lot better for me," LaRue said, "If you're buying clothes that are \$20 or \$30 pieces, it adds up super fast."

The appeal extends to the uniqueness of donated items.

"You can find unique items that don't feel like they came out of a cookie cutter," said Gantner, "I also like old things."

Buying second-hand has been a widespread practice in the US since the Industrial Revolution, which led to increased urban populations. However, according to a *TIME Magazine* article titled "History of Thrift Stores" by Olivia Waxman, the practice of buying second-hand was stigmatized, mainly because it was thought of as a sign of low income.

Waxman described a slow emergence of public acceptance, starting with thrift shops earning legitimacy through affiliations with Christianity. In the early 1900s, events such as the Great Depression and World War II spurred sales at thrift stores.

Now, thrifting has taken on a significant role in the lives of US consumers. A Capital One Shopping Research report on March 6 shows that in 2025, the US second-hand market was worth \$56 billion, and that 16 to 18% of Americans shop at thrift stores in their typical year. According to the report, clothes are the most purchased second-hand item, and in 2025, they accounted for 15.3% of the US apparel market. This is projected to increase to 18.8% in 2029.

As more people with stable incomes begin regularly thrifting, some critics have argued that increased demand can shut out those with lower incomes.

Carol Rose, the thrift shop manager for the Women's Resource Center (WRC), says she does not see that being the case due to special offers for those with low incomes and the community support the shop receives.

"I remember having to do PSAs and stuff when things got low in the newspaper, saying, 'We really need stuff... And we would get slammed with stuff, because community support is awesome. If I ask for something, we get buried in it,'" said Rose, "This store has gotten into a position where we don't have to really do that, because we have a really strong donation base that keeps it so full."

She explained a difference she observes between the purchasing habits of tourists and those in need.

"Summer people... they buy differently. They're on vacation," Rose said, "They might want to try to find that very expensive blouse that they can get for a third of the cost, it's a little more high-end." She said the low-income community members tend to look for items with everyday uses, such as school clothes for their children and office attire for work.

Rose has been working at the WRC for approximately 40 years. She began as a volunteer and was captured by the

power behind WRC's work to help those suffering from domestic violence.

"Women were dying. Kids were being abused," Rose said, "I knew what the agency was doing. It was fledgling, and it was trying."

The WRC had a humble beginning. They had one small building that housed both their thrift store and offices.

"[It was] a building where, when it rained, you had to put pots and pans out to catch the water," said Rose. With a laugh, she said, "It was bad, and it was so much fun."

At the beginning of WRC's approximately 50-year existence in Traverse City, Rose said it was hard to connect with the community.

"A lot of people had a really bad idea of what we actually did... Rumor was in town that we were doing abortions in our shelter. That all the women that worked at the agency were gay, bra-burning, men-haters, all that kind of thing."

As WRC grew into two thrift store locations, Rose watched the initial stigma surrounding the operation die out. Small moments, such as the release of "Thrift Shop" in 2012 by Macklemore, have gradually shifted the narrative. Rose remembered watching the music video, and seeing items that she would see in the WRC thrift store.

"The young kids never used to come in. In fact, if their mom got caught there, they would be embarrassed," Rose said, "[Now] we notice the younger kids coming in buying something that's fun and funky... I enjoy watching them out there laughing, you know, and then buying at the same time, they're just having fun."

She said one way you can tell the narrative has changed is from the parking lot.

"I learned how to jump a car... it [was] probably five times a week where [a] car wouldn't start. All these little beaters would come in there, and they'd buy their little bags of clothes and stuff. Now you look out into a parking lot at any thrift shop, and you have a Hummer parked next to the beater car that's barely going to drive, and they're both shopping at the same store, and it's amazing."

Photos By Minnie Bardenhagen



# 75th Anniversary Block Party Will Open to Entire TC Community

**Dominic Montoya-Arlt**  
Staff Writer

The NMC 75th Anniversary Block Party, to be held on April 25 from 3 to 7 pm, will host a variety of entertainment for everyone in Traverse City to take part in.

The block party will feature a dunk tank, rides, a slide, bounce houses, food trucks, two alumni bands, as well as a bucking mechanical unicorn, among many other attractions.

This year's NMC Block Party is open to everyone in Traverse City, though attendees are encouraged to register beforehand with the various QR codes posted on flyers around campus and around town, or through the form on NMC's website.

If the party is rained out on April 25, it will be held instead on the following day, April 26, within the same time range.

Every event except for the food trucks is free to participate in, though students residing on-campus in the East or North Halls will get a \$10 food voucher. In addition, the first 300 non-residential students who attend the event will also get a \$10 food voucher for the food trucks.

NMC's Mobile Food Pantry will also be providing refreshments to this event, and "there may be other vendors who decide to donate to the block party," according to Marcus Bennett, the NMC Associate Dean of Campus Life and an organizer of this event.

The block party will take place around the Timothy J. Nelson Innovation Center on NMC's Front Street Campus. The Cedar Parking Lot area will host the activities and rides, and the food trucks will be in the Chestnut parking lot on the opposite side of the Innovation Center. The eating space and the bands will be located in the courtyards in front of Founders' Hall. Also within the Cedar parking lot will be a caricature artist from Detroit who will draw caricatures for free throughout the event.

According to Bennett, the full list of amusement rides tally up to 18, ranging from a new amusement ride called the Spin Thing to a 40-ft obstacle course in the vein of American Ninja Warrior called the Patriot Run. To celebrate this 75th anniversary, the block party will specifically have a bucking mechanical unicorn instead of a mechanical bull.

As part of including the community, there are also several attractions specifically for younger children, such as the inflatable corn maze and the Toytown Toddlers' Playland. More age-neutral attractions are the digital photo booth or the caricature artist. Bounce houses are also expected to be part of the block party.

*Poster Courtesy of Marcus Bennett*

The dunk tank will allow anyone to dunk various NMC officials, such as the president of the college, Nick Nissley, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, Troy Kierczynski, and the Campus Safety Coordinator, Garrett Croon. These officials volunteered for this activity. This event will be kept safe with STT Security Services throughout.

The amusements involved in the block party are sourced from Michigan amusement provider ACP Entertainment.

Bennett stated that he was also working to provide "a space designated for neurodivergent [people]. We're trying to have an area where if they need to calm down, they can go."

NMC Foundation Director of Special Events, Rachel Urkowitz, added that this event is long enough that if people needed to take a step back from the crowds, they could still come back later in the event. The wristbands used to grant access to amusements stay valid throughout the day, so if one has to leave, they can come back without losing access to those events.

NMC plans to unveil its mascot, Swoop, at this event, but that's not the only big change. While in previous years, block party attendees were limited to students, their families, and staff, this year's block party is open to anyone who wants to come. Last year's block party was opened up to the families of staff as well.

Swoop, NMC's northern hawk owl mascot, will be debuting at this event, welcomed by other local area mascots in what Urkowitz called "a kind of homecoming." Davenport University's mascot, Pounce the Panther, and Ferris State University's mascot, Brutus the Bulldog, are expected to be there to greet Swoop.

The block party is one of three signature events celebrating the 75th anniversary of NMC, with the next two signature events, the History Event and the Anniversary Celebration, happening on July 25 and Sep. 19, respectively. More information on those events can be found on NMC's website.

As usual, the Dennon Museum will be open from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday, so one can fill up their day on NMC's campus. Also, as usual, the NMC Library will be closed on that Saturday.



Join NMC students for a community-wide block party to celebrate 75 incredible years! We're wrapping up the spring semester and want students, alumni, staff, faculty, neighbors and friends to join the festivities. Everyone's welcome for an afternoon of carnival thrills, tasty bites from local food trucks, and live music.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 3 - 7 PM**  
CEDAR PARKING LOT

Carnival attractions, live music, food, and more—the opportunities for fun are endless!

REGISTER

Brought to you by Campus Life, Residence Life, and the NMC 75th Anniversary Committee.

Questions? contact Marcus Bennett at [mbennett@nmc.edu](mailto:mbennett@nmc.edu) or Rachel Urkowitz ([rurkowitz@nmc.edu](mailto:rurkowitz@nmc.edu))



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