

Hours
M-Th 10-8
F-Sa 10-5
Su 1-5 (Oct-Apr)

215 N. Ottawa St.
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(517) 423-2238
www.tecumsehlibrary.org

**Fall
2024**

SHELF LIFE

BEYOND THE STACKS

News From Tecumseh District Library

It's been a wonderful summer at the library with the exciting Tecumseh Bicentennial, our new Teen Librarian Andy Jackson joining us, the gorgeous landscaping flowers maintained by volunteer Patty Murdock, lots of interesting programming and a really fun Summer Reading Program for readers of all ages. Now it's time to turn our thoughts to the fall and the new school year. TDL offers a digital library card for any student enrolled in the Tecumseh Public School system. We also offer many digital aids for students – Mango, MEL e-resources, Libby, and tutor.com, to name a few. You can learn more about these digital aids on the back page of this newsletter. We have an excellent collection of books for all reading levels, plus non-fiction DVDs and audiobooks. We have many handy tools to check out from our Library of Things, and hotspots to check out to connect you to wifi. We hope you'll stop in to take a look at the resources TDL offers for our patrons of all ages. We try to have something for everyone!

LEARN

EXPLORE

INTERACT

CREATE

ENJOY

Our Vision Statement:

The Tecumseh District Library strives to be a premier facility offering a welcoming, accessible community resource where all people can learn, explore, interact, create, and enjoy.

From the History Room: The Tecumseh Area before Settlement

“For centuries before the settlers came, a peaceful tribe of Indians, known as the Potawatomi, followed their trails through this good land, hunting, fishing, and camping along the River Raisin.” Erich A. vonFange, *The Indians of Lenawee*

That lasted until 1824 when a few Quakers arrived at what would be Tecumseh and began to settle.

The area that became Tecumseh was located where two major Indian trails crossed and led to Detroit, Chicago, Monroe and Maumee City. A few miles north of Tecumseh was the Great Sauk Indian Trail, once a well-used prehistoric trail and now US 12. Here, by the banks of the River Raisin was a high, circular earthwork, possibly built as early as 1000 AD by an earlier people than the Potawatomi. The Potawatomi did hold council meetings at the mound, called Indian Dancing Ground by the white settlers. Tecumseh, the great Shawnee chief, spoke here as well and encouraged the tribes to enter the War of 1812 on the British side.

White settlers liked the rich soil of the area, the natural clearings, the water provided by River Raisin and Evans Creek, and the wild game, including bear, deer and turkey. The land was covered with trees, interspersed with oak openings which were caused by Native American planned burnings. Area tree species included oak, walnut, hickory, elm, whitewood, butternut, ash, poplar, sugar maple and reed willow.

The Native Americans traveled widely through this region and there are many trails in the area where arrows, stone hatchets and fleshing knives have been found. These early residents of the area chose the shortest, safest, and most convenient pathways, so the early settlers used them as well.

La Plaisance Bay Trail began near Monroe at Lake Erie and went to the Lenawee County area. It was a prehistoric trail which was several feet wide, with a hard, beaten down surface 3-4” below ground level.



Rendering of a Giant Beaver (*Castoroides ohioensis*)
by Charles Robert Knight

Ridge Road is the oldest Indian trail in Lenawee County and is where the oldest artifacts have been found. The early peoples hunted fierce and gigantic Ice Age beasts with fluted points. For example, evidence of an 8-foot tall beaver has been found. Ridgeway Township was overgrown with grass and teeming with otter and beaver and the existence of all kinds of animal life.

The local river was bordered by many wild grapes which were preserved by drying, so the French named it River of Raisins; it has been called the most crooked river in the world.

Previous to settlement, many had thought the land in this area was practically worthless because it was so swampy. However, once ditches were dug (by hand) and it was drained, the land proved to be rich and fertile.

Native Americans of this area would travel to a unique flint mine in an area of hills about 10 miles long southeast of Newark, OH. Flint Ridge contained red, blue, orange, yellow, white, black and tan flint – some of the most beautiful flint in the world. To get there they took canoes down River Raisin to Lake Erie, then up the Vermilion River to Ashland. They then carried their canoes for a short portage until they reached south flowing streams, such as the Mohican and Muskingum, to reach the flint mines. They removed the flint using wedges and mauls to break the flint loose. The larger pieces were made into smaller blanks to carry home, where they were crafted into arrow and spear points, drills, knives, scrapers and other tools.

Even in the first years of settlement, the Native Americans that remained in the area were just a remnant of a once-proud people; no doubt there were many instances of friendly understanding between individuals of the two races, but not much has been recorded of it.

When choosing a name for the new community, Musgrove Evans suggested the name of the Shawnee Indian chief Tecumseh. Someone objected, saying Tecumseh had fought on the side of the British in the War of 1812. Evans said “No. Tecumseh fought for himself and his people. He was nature’s Indian.” The name was agreed upon.

The information for this article was obtained from the Clara Waldron History Room at the Tecumseh District Library.

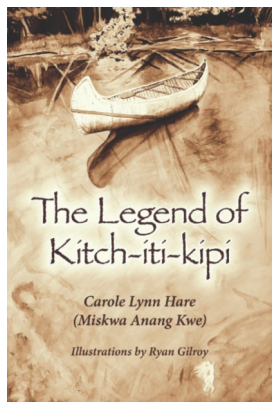


Bust of Chief Tecumseh
by Hamilton MacCarthy
at the Royal Ontario Museum

Native American Virtual Program Series

Watch on Zoom and Facebook

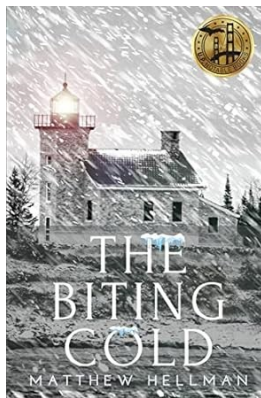
Native American Folklore & Legends With Native American Author Carole Lynn Hare



**Tuesday,
September 10
4-5 pm**

**Learn the
authentic
legend of The
Big Spring**

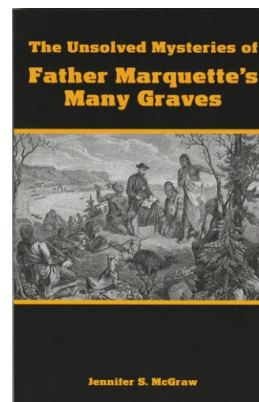
The Biting Cold: Story of Ojibwa Legend With Author Matt Hellman



**Friday,
October 18
10-11 am**

**Find out if an
Ojibwa legend
will come to
fruition**

Unsolved Mysteries Father Marquette's Many Graves With Author Jennifer McGraw



**Friday,
November 8
10-11 am**

**Find out what
his Native
American
parishioners
did with his
corpse**



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