

# Learning

WEDNESDAY 1C  
FEBRUARY 6, 2019

## Grandparents Teach, too

# Indoor sandbox fun for kids in winter

While the sandbox is buried under layers of snow and frozen solid you can still provide sand fun indoors and keep a tidy house. It's hard to believe but this recipe feels better than damp beach sand. It is soft and velvety, yet holds its shape when building castles and roads. It also adds moisture to dry winter hands.



SABIN, DAVIS, HETRICK, ANDEREGG, MACALADY, WALKER, DARLING and KATERS

### Homemade Sand

You will need homemade sand (recipe below), spoons, plastic measuring cups for pails, plastic people and animals, small cars and trucks, Legos, and other plastic pieces like trees to make scenes.

Mix 8 cups white baking flour and 2 cups baby oil. Add a little

more oil (¼ cup) slowly and mix if it feels too dry. The mixture should clump together when you hold it in your fist. Continue to mix well. The sand can be stored in a sealed container or freezer lock bag. Do not mix with water.

Put it in a cookie sheet or several large cake pans so each child has a private sandbox. For easy clean up, place a large beach tow-

el on a non-carpeted floor or table. Spilled sand will make the floor slippery. After sweeping, wash with dish detergent. If play cars get covered with sand or sand gets into toy crevasses, just brush or knock off the sand from cars with a paint brush and wipe them off. You can keep a special bag

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# From geomatics to forestry

## Northern Michigan University senior wins Baldini scholarship

By CHRISTIE BLECK  
Journal Staff Writer

MARQUETTE — It might be easier to learn about a topic in a temperate-controlled classroom than in a muggy forest that requires constant checks for ticks.

However, it might not be as satisfying.

Ian Pope, a geomatics major at Northern Michigan University, is the 2018 recipient of the Superior Watershed Partnership's Victoria Baldini Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship, new as of 2018, is named in honor of the late Baldini, longtime SWP accountant and grants administrator. According to the SWP, she played a large role in the growth of the organization, including assisting with the Michigan Energy Assistance Program, the Earth Keepers church network and the Great Lakes Conservation Corps.

The \$1,000 Victoria Baldini Memorial Scholarship is available to one GLCC crew member per year and can be used for any continuing higher education or personal improvement opportunities and related expenses.

Pope, an NMU senior from Appleton, Wisconsin, often has to explain the meaning of geomatics, likening it to modern cartography. Geomatics, though, it is much more computer-based, he said, with the student being part computer scientist, part statistician and part data-management specialist.

"It's pretty much the way all spatial information is being rendered nowadays," Pope said.

He wants to take those fundamentals and transfer them to forestry, which he plans to study at Michigan Tech University where he's already been accepted.

However, Pope acknowledged a lot of forestry now is transitioning away from the traditional "person in the woods" to computer-based drones, which have a lot of potential to be powerful.

"The data you're going to be able to collect, you'll be able to understand things at a new complexity level, which will be very interesting, very exciting to be part of," he said.

Pope was a member of the GLCC in the summer of 2018, serving as a crew leader for part of his stint.

There were so many times I was caught up in how beautiful the backwoods of the U.P. are, especially the Sturgeon River area."

— IAN POPE

Recipient of the Superior Watershed Partnership's Victoria Baldini Memorial Scholarship



Ian Pope, a senior at Northern Michigan University, is the winner of the Victoria Baldini Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is given to a member of the Superior Watershed Partnership's Great Lakes Conservation Corps. (Photo courtesy of the SWP)

GLCC crews get hands-on experience while working in all 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula to implement high priority hands-on conservation and restoration projects within the Great Lakes watersheds of lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron.

GLCC crews are trained and supervised by experienced crew leaders and are equipped with a truck, tools, safety equipment and camping gear for overnight stays at remote sites if needed. All crews wear uniforms and receive first aid training along with other project-specific training before each field season.

Pope was involved in a variety of GLCC activities, one of which involved planting 2,000 trees near Ontonagon to serve as a windbreak. Another was helping the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in electrofishing for trout in the Keweenaw Peninsula and south of Skanee. The purpose of that project was for the USFWS to assess data from trout near culverts and pass on that information to county

road commissions.

One of his most satisfying efforts, though, was helping out following the devastating flooding that hit Houghton County in June.

That's when Pope got the chance to apply his Geographic Information System knowledge.

"I helped create a system with the GLCC to do the canvassing to make sure we were trying to reach as many people that we thought were affected as possible," Pope said. "That kind of explains the major a little better."

Essentially what he did was take data from the U.S. Geological Survey and correlate the amount of potential rainfall with its watershed.

Through the manipulation of data, Pope determined "hot zones" where possible damage could be anticipated through correlating the slope with water.

He then created a map series to make sure volunteers visited the correct homes to offer aid.

"That was fun because it finally made my college experience feel real," Pope said.

One upside to the flooding, he stressed, was that many culverts that were to be assessed for removal were taken out — by "Ma Nature."

Not only did Pope get scientific experience, he got caught up in the social aspect of it all.

"What I love so much about that is just, like, I think it kind of built on what I always loved about the U.P.," Pope said.

What he cherishes is the "community feeling."

"I just love how much people care about each other up here, especially in the winter cross country skiing," Pope said. "I don't

think I've ever passed anyone up here that hasn't said hi. It's the funniest thing, and I love it.

"It was really awesome to see how much the Houghton community came together to help each other out," Pope said.

Cross country skiers greeting each other on the trail is one thing. Facing a natural disaster such as the Houghton flooding was another matter altogether.

"If there was something that needed to be done, there is at least 10 people from 10 different backgrounds there doing it, which was great, but the level of destruction was incredible," he said. "I just couldn't get past that."

Being part of the GLCC, though, allowed him to take part in many proactive conservation activities.

His favorite part just was being in "incredible" places.

"There were so many times I was caught up in how beautiful the backwoods of the U.P. are, especially the Sturgeon River area," Pope said. "Right through there was just gorgeous, especially even on a rainy, foggy, kind of muggy day."

Then there were the sights that usually only people who travel deep into the woods see.

One of them was a witch's broom, which is composed of shoots and typically found on a tree, growing from a single point.

"It was just the creepiest, coolest thing," Pope said.

He didn't come across any bear or moose, although he did see plenty of ticks, hence the routine tick checks.

GLCC members also saw a grouse, which Pope called "a really angry chicken."

That might be understandable since the crew was building a trail near its nest, he said.

"It was beating its wings, trying to freak us out," Pope said.

He hopes to return to the GLCC this summer, but that depends on his Michigan Tech graduate studies.

"If the stars align, I'm very excited to hop back in the truck and get going again," Pope said.

For more information on the SWP, visit superiorwatersheds.org.

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