

the Presque Isle Library for locals to judge and enjoy. The event was filmed by a professional videographer, which was entered into a contest with the Michigan Municipality League and was recognized as a unique initiative. In addition, building on the purple theme, purple lights, purple martin themed décor, and wish balloons could be found throughout the city. Citizens of Rogers City continued to gather each year to launch balloons in an effort to demonstrate support for this initiative and hope for their future.

THE PURPLE MARTIN INN

The idea for the Purple Martin was created shortly after Cindy discovered a piece of property on Lake Huron. On a whim, she purchased it within 24 hours, and then found herself trying to decide what to do with it. She ultimately received guidance to turn it into a tourist facility of some sort to allow others to enjoy the beauty of the area, utilizing her experience in tourism.

The Purple Martin Inn Nature Center and Lakeside Inn was the start of this endeavor and was named after a conglomeration of birdhouses built on the site to attract nesting purple martins. The building originally housed a commercial laundry facility serving the laundry needs of lake freighters that once plied the Great Lakes. This building had fallen into disrepair from lack of use and had been scheduled for demolition, but through the visionary efforts of founder Cindy.

As a child, Cindy spent of many her summers in Rogers City and wanted children to experience the same safety, cleanliness, and enjoyment of Pure Michigan that she had. The Purple Martin was a place where you could smell the flowers, gaze at the stars, and not be afraid. She understood that foster children fear the unknown more than anything, and safety was what they needed. One of the most simple pleasures she had always enjoyed was giving these children a word of encouragement or hope, and according to Cindy, they held onto that dearly.

CINDY VEZINAU AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH A PASSION

After graduating from high school, Cindy backpacked across Europe, returned to the United States and decided to start looking for a job. She worked in travel agencies and was approached by Eastern Airlines and was hired as a liaison between the airline computer reservation system and travel agencies and corporations housing airline software. She then transferred to Continental Airlines, and ultimately Northwest World Airlines World Vacations. Northwest Airlines merged with Delta Air Lines and she has worked the last 20 years with Delta Vacations.

In Cindy's current position, she works with the travel agency community and as an educator who delivers high-level training at Delta Vacations University and was a frequent contributor on radio stations throughout the state.

Her practical industry experience has always revolved around tourism. She has traveled the world over but still admits—Rogers City is the best place on the planet. Cindy was passionate about her vision and when speaking about the value of the Purple Martin experience, she always noted that, “All these children need is love” and promoting the theme “Nature Plus Nurture Equals Future.”

FULFILLING A MISSION

Although she had focused much of her initial attention on renovations and starting up a business, she still felt compelled to serve the community. A few months after purchasing the property she was listening to the radio while driving and overheard a radio broadcast that was discussing the peril of foster children and the need to help them. She called the station, tracked down the speaker, and set up a meeting immediately. Jeannie