



# Cloaked Treasure — Press Kit

Overview: [www.cloakedtreasure.com](http://www.cloakedtreasure.com)

Cloaked Treasure is a small Michigan-based company founded by four Michiganders with the express purpose of creating and hosting real-world treasure hunts within the Lower Peninsula of our incredible state. Its founders are fans of such movies as *Indiana Jones* and *National Treasure* and want to bring similar adventures to the participants of our hunts. Those participants, called Seekers, solve riddles, decipher codes, locate artifacts, and win cash prizes—all while journeying across the state to locations of natural beauty, historical significance, and civic pride. Founded in 2025, Cloaked Treasure is hosting the first of a long series of planned hunts that cater to outdoors enthusiasts, puzzle solvers, treasure hunters, and amateur historians. One affordable registration covers all stages, and prizes escalate throughout the event, culminating in a grand prize currently worth \$20,600+ and growing with each additional signup.

## Fast Facts

- **Founded by:** Four Michiganders (self-funded prize pool: **\$30,000**) and a DC-area relative.
- **Geography:** Lower Peninsula of Michigan; designed for public, safe, law-abiding participation.
- **Format:** Ten sequential stages; regular hints to keep the hunt moving; each stage's solution is posted after it's solved so everyone stays in the game.
- **Prizes:**
  - Stages 1–9: **over \$1,000** each for a total of **\$10,611**.
  - **Grand Prize: \$20,638+** and increases with each registration.
- **Registration: \$40** per participant (covers all ten stages).
- **Community:** 130+ active "Seekers" sharing progress, photos, and support on social media & Discord
- **Charity Partner: West Michigan Trails** receives a portion of each registration
- **Current status (as of December 2, 2025):** 9 of 10 stages solved; multiple unique winners; **\$10,611** awarded to date; **\$20,638+** still to win.

## What's Happening Now

- **The Final Stage began on December 1, 2025.**
- Company is trying to **drive public awareness** to increase registrations to **expand the prize pool for the final stage.**

## How It Works

1. **Register** (single fee covers the entire hunt).
2. **Receive Clues;** collaborate remotely and then explore Michigan to solve stages.
3. **Find & Claim** the prize for that stage; organizers verify and pay out quickly.
4. **Keep Playing:** After a stage is solved, the posted solution allows all seekers to continue to the next stage and stay in the hunt.

**PARTICIPATION IN EARLIER STAGES IS NOT REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN LATER STAGES**

## Why It Matters (Story Angles)

- **Pure Michigan Adventure:** Celebrates state history, culture, cities, small towns, and natural beauty, bringing together Seekers from families and friend groups.
- **Community-Powered:** Interactive community of treasure Seekers regularly post fun moments on social media and celebrate each other's successes while sharing their adventures.
- **Give-Back Model:** Founders aim to **raise funds for Charity Partner West Michigan Trails** (receives a portion of registration fee) and **break even** on Hunt #1 to bring a bigger, better statewide experience next year.

## Pull Quote

- "I went, I asked, I was wrong. That's okay, because I went to a cool new place that I likely never would have visited. I gained an appreciation for something that I've always disliked and met some cool people today as well. This hunt is truly an adventure, and I am loving every second of it. I sincerely hope everyone in this hunt gets some dirt on their boots. I have felt like Indiana Jones, Parzival, and Ben Gates these past few weeks."

-- **Jerry Browne of Perry, Michigan, Stage 2 Winner**

Describing some of his failures before winning the stage

## Key Links & Social

- **Website/Registration:** [www.cloakedtreasure.com](http://www.cloakedtreasure.com)
- **Facebook:** Active updates and stage teasers. [Facebook](#)
- **Instagram/YouTube:** Teasers, hints, and launches.  
<https://www.youtube.com/@CloakedTreasure>

## Media Contact

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## Inspiration

Stories of lost treasure have been part of our culture for hundreds of 50 years. But very few of us get a chance to be Indiana Jones, Lara Croft, or the cast of Outer Banks. Yet these movies and shows, along with books such as Treasure Island and The DaVinci Code, continue to inspire our imagination.

When Forrest Fenn created his Thrill of the Chase hunt in 2010, he spawned a lineage of hunts we are proud to be part of. Rather than watch a story, hunts like ours let you participate! Below is a non-exhaustive list of some of the treasure hunts that fill this space and inspire our minds and our feet.

- [The Thrill of the Chase](#) – Forrest Fenn's famous hunt that spawned a genre
  - [Gold and Greed](#) – the Ben Wallace Netflix documentary on the Fenn Hunt
  - [Beyond the Map's Edge](#) – Justin Posey's reboot of the Fenn quest
  - [Mlive Article](#) written on the person who solved this hunt
- [Gallows Harbor](#) – H. Charles Beil's million dollar hunt
- [There's Treasure Inside](#) - a million dollar hunt created by Author Jon Collins-Black
- [Project Skydrop](#) – a short duration hunt in the Northeast put on by tech designer Jason Rohrer
- [Utah Treasure Hunt](#) – created during the Covid 19 pandemic as a way to get people outside
- [Johnny's Treasure Quest](#) – Michigan born quests built by retire jeweler Johnny Perri
  - Mlive articles written about Johnny's endeavor [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#)
- [Trails.club](#) - small prizes hidden in West Michigan to encourage people to get out and about.
  - [Mlive article](#) covering the coin rollout

## User Experiences

We smile when people are having fun and exploring...especially when they involve their friends and family! Our hunt has taken people to the following locations across Michigan:

- Manistee River Trail Bridge – Mesick, MI
- Detroit Public Library – Detroit, MI
- Shakespeare’s Pub – Kalamazoo, MI
- Highland State Recreation Area – White Lake, MI
- Iargo Springs – Oscoda, MI
- Pinkney State Recreation Area – Pinkney, MI
- University of Michigan Law Library – Ann Arbor, MI
- Grand Valley State University – Allendale, MI
- Ella Sharp Museum – Jackson, MI
- Historic Bridge Park – Battle Creek, MI

But the real fun, as Forrest said, is in the Thrill of the Chase! Here is some of the discord chatter from our Seekers:

“I took my father-in-law today, and he said he felt like Indiana Jones when we were sitting alone in the giant room looking at the book with the flashlight and watching for others!”

- Jerry Browne, Stage 2, 3, 4 Winner, describing his experience in the Detroit Public Library

“I can relate. I've ‘been there, done that’ more times than I can count. Happy hunting!!”

“This is me with a side of confirmation bias.” [\(Image of fox jumping head first into the snow\)](#)

- Robert Nalett

“After many tavern stops yesterday, I was safely off the roads by 5pm, dreaming about playing golf in Northern Ireland. Had a great time speaking with bar staff. None of whom were off-put by our line of questioning. If anything, I've learned service professionals are very interested in quests like these! I'm having tons of fun thumbing through articles on the interwebs learning things as I go. Looking forward to the next clue.”

- Jon Kuipers, Stage 5 Winner (joined during Stage 4)

“My confirmation bias sent me to the wrong place for all the right reasons for Stage 4. Great family business. Great food and excellent ciders and wines. Their homemade on-site bakery...mmm... If you get anywhere near Fennville, MI, definitely stop into Crane’s Pie Pantry Restaurant and Winery.”

- Robert Nalett

“Oh my God I can't believe my partner and I were so close....we had plans to leave at 3 o'clock on Monday to head out to Shakespeare's Pub in Kalamazoo, we were going to ask for the 1985 based on Goonies. The alcohol we weren't so sure on we were gonna guess a Port Wine. Wow we were so close and only a couple hours too late. Man, at least I feel good that we are on the right track.”

- Erika Gutscher, Stage 6 & 9 Co-Winner

“Anyone else think they have a start on Stage 5? Meaning an idea of what or where yet? Even if not confident.”

"I think I picked up on the big hint mentioned on the YouTube video."

"I also think I know the hint and have a potential idea but nowhere near cracking the numbers"

"I'm thrilled to have solved this today. I had both of my children, aged 11 and 13, by my side. As well as our 1-year old corgi. We had a blast. Sweat our asses off. But it was worth the trouble."

- *Jerry Browne, Stage 2, 3, 4 Winner*

"Guys... I think I saw something behind the third Chester Copperpot gravestone... or maybe it was just Data's punching teeth again. Hard to tell with all the yelling. Anyway, if anyone finds a wet map that smells like peanut butter, don't touch it — I licked it already. Goonies never say die, but I'm close."

- *Stefan Preuss, Stage 7 & 8 Winner*

"Code is not cracked by me! Maybe if all the chemistry we had to do was put a lemon and a hairdryer to the Declaration of Independence I would be fine - but this I have not figured out yet."

- *Annie Rossio*

"Congrats! It's awesome that your kids were there! It's fun to find them, but watching my son's face when we got the bottle was priceless."

- *Jerry Browne, Stage 2, 3, 4 Winner to Jon Kuiper, Stage 5 Winner*

"Boots on the ground yesterday, and I thought I was on it a couple times, but instead, just a nice day out with the family. For what it's worth, my 6-year old is very invested and told me yesterday that he now believes pirates must be real, because if treasure is real, then pirates are real."

- *Josh Smith*

"I do think we need to spread the word on this fun hunt. I would love for the sponsors to be able to pull off another one next summer."

- *Jon Kuipers, Stage 5 Winner*

"Hey Gang! Just found out about this and am in the hunt. This game is AWESOME! Hope you all are having a blast and if all goes well, my kids and I will be boots on the ground ASAP!"

- *Michigan Man*

"I love the grass roots / word of mouth approach, but I would love to see it catch on quicker so that we can enjoy this next year!"

- *Josh Smith*

## Assorted Photographs

(More can be found in press releases at [www.cloakedtreasure.com/media](http://www.cloakedtreasure.com/media) or from Cloaked Treasure LLC)



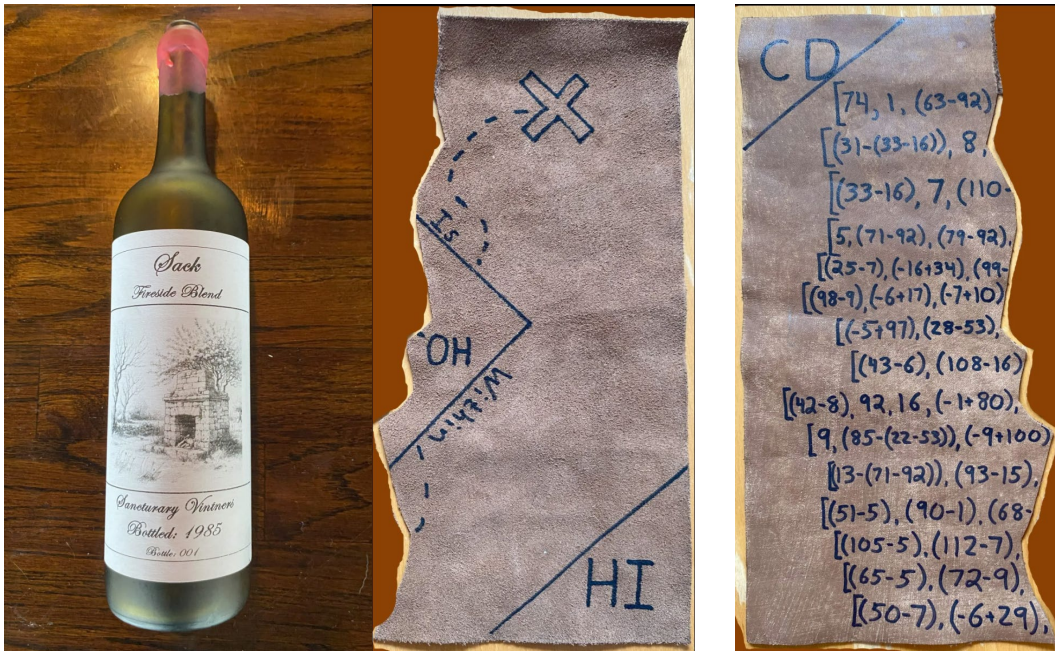
Winning Coin found during Stage 2 under the Manistee River Trail ('Little Mac') Bridge with Clues for Stage 3



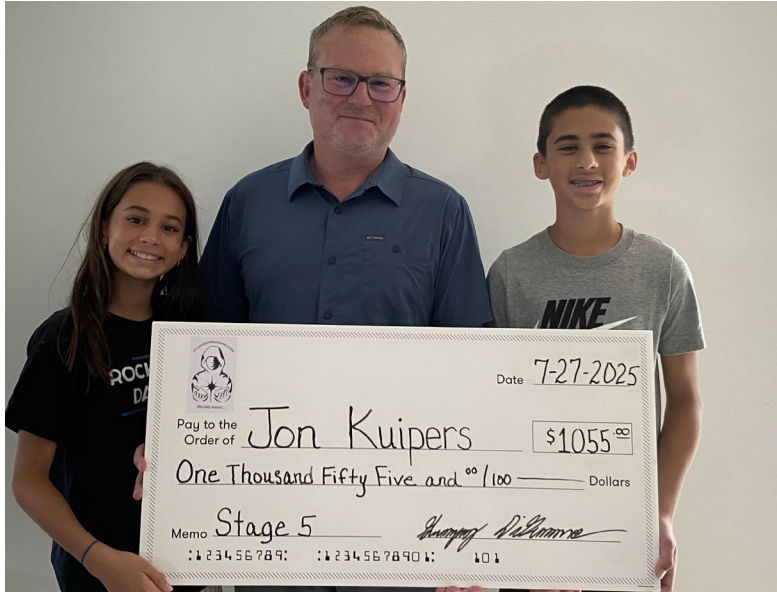
Email Address found during Stage 3 written in Invisible Ink in *Treasure Island* at Detroit Public Library



Winners of Stage 4, Jerry Browne of Perry, MI & Son, Logan, with the Winning Bottle At Shakespeare's Pub, Kalamazoo



The Clues to Solve Stage 5: Bottle of Wine from Stage 4, Two Sides of the Leather Map found Within



**Winner of Stage 5, Jon Kuipers of Rockford, MI and his children Harry and Mila Holding the Prize Check for winning Stage 5**



**The Wooden Staircase at Iargo Springs for Stage 6 Oscoda, Michigan**



**Coin found under the Staircase With its Navigation Puzzle**



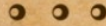
**Winners of Stage 6, Stefan Preuss and Erika Gutscher, of Berkley, MI  
With the Winning SD Card Found in the University of Michigan Law Library**



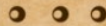
**The Object that Needed to Be Found to Win Stage 7  
Marker with QR Code Hanging Near the Shore of the Grand River**



*In Jackson's heart her name is known,  
A farmstead gift, through time it's grown.  
Her art and fields still welcome the day,  
And even the heavens aren't far away.*



*Four hidden clues waiting to be seen,  
Each gets you closer - if you are keen.  
No threshold to cross, no gates to pass through,  
All of the signs lie before you.*



*Once all four clues have come to light,  
Put your findings in your browser tonight.  
The path ahead may seem insecure,  
But the prize awaits for those who endure.*



**Poem to Start Stage 8 of the Cloaked Treasure Hunt  
Took Place Entirely at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson, MI**



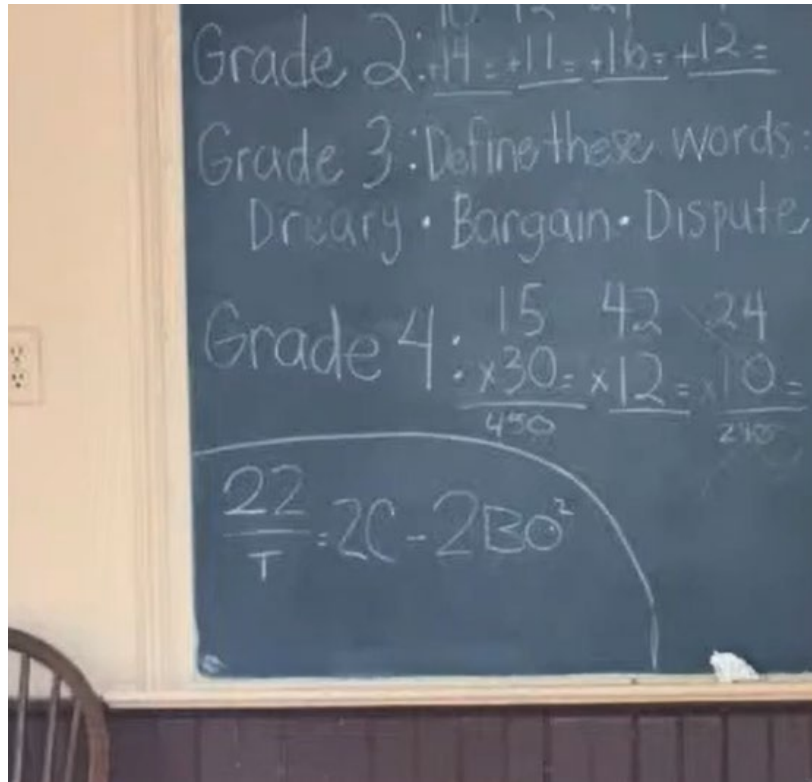
**Clue to Help Solve Stage 8 of the Treasure Hunt  
Located in the 'General Store' at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson, MI**



**Clue to Help Solve Stage 8 of the Treasure Hunt  
Located in 'Al's Clock Shop' at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson, MI**



**Clue to Help Solve Stage 8 of the Treasure Hunt**  
**Located in the 'Print Shop' at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson, MI**



**Clue to Help Solve Stage 8 of the Treasure Hunt**  
**Located in the 'Dibbel School House' at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson, MI**



The Stage 9 Visual Puzzle



**The Cloaked Treasure Object Found to Win Stage 9  
Located at the Historic Bridge Park in Battle Creek**