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ThumbPrint News

An imprint of places and people at work and play in the Thumb of Michigan

APRIL 2011



Inside This Issue

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Must-Have Perennials for Your 2011 Garden

By Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

I don't know about you, but if you are an avid gardener, such as myself, each April I begin literally salivating over the hundreds of new varieties of flowers, both perennials and annuals, that have been introduced over the winter season and are advertised to be available in your local garden centers come spring. I want one of every variety! Of course, I realize that is not possible, or even practical.

A gardener should take into account the spacing a mature plant will consume,

its growth habits, its requirements for sun or shade, how much water the plant is going to ultimately need to stay healthy, etc. In spite of this, there is also something in me that tells me to look for the new, the unusual – something that will make my garden the most unique in the neighborhood.

Looking over 2011's "new" offerings on the internet and in the copious amount of catalogs I have been receiving since the beginning of the year, there are



Established perennials add interest and color to otherwise ordinary areas in your yard.

See *PERENNIALS*, Page 16

Spotlight on a Small Town: Riley Township

By Ralph McKinch

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Riley Township is located in the rural west central part of St. Clair County and covers an area of just under 40 square miles. The population today is close to 4,000. Prior to the 1830s, this region was inhabited only by Indians, mainly from the Ojibwe (Chippewa) tribe. At that time, most were living in traditional wigwams.

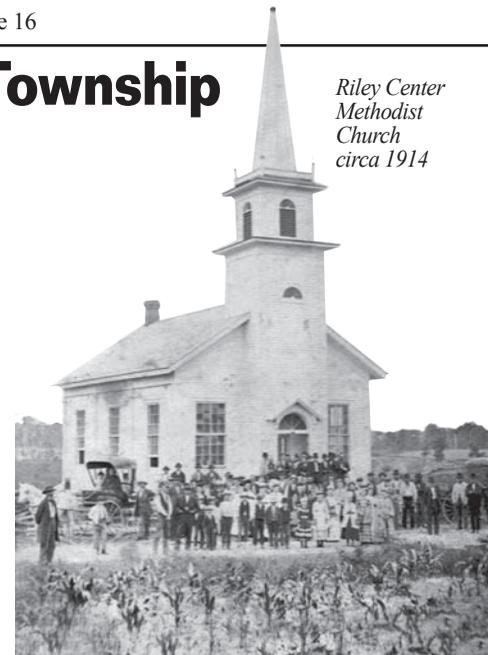
Land was first purchased in the Riley Township area around 1836, just prior to Michigan achieving statehood in 1837. Riley Township was organized in 1841. The first Supervisor was Oel Rix in 1842. The opening of

the Erie Canal and the development of the Canadian Railway was a boon to attracting immigrants to this area of Michigan. Jobs opened up in the lumbering camps and on railroad gangs, resulting in newly cleared fertile land being ripe for agricultural opportunities. The population of Riley Township by 1845 was 234. By 1854, it had increased to 593 and by June of 1880 to 2,002. Let's take a look at a few of the early settlers who influenced Riley Township during the 1800s.

John Riley, from whom the township takes its name, was part Native American. His father was James Van

See *Riley Township*, Page 30

Riley Center Methodist Church circa 1914



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

We all grow up with the weight of history on us. Our ancestors dwell in the attics of our brains as they do in the spiraling chains of knowledge hidden in every cell of our bodies.
~Shirley Abbott

One of my most rewarding moments as editor of *ThumbPrint News* is when a reader shares with us by phone, mail or email, information about the history of their family in relation to growing up or living in the Thumb area of Michigan. Most often, the person sharing the information does so with a passion that is hard to miss. As our staff takes that initial glimpse of life in the past that was shared with us and delves further to obtain background history of the towns being mentioned, we begin to almost feel intimately acquainted with people whom formerly were unknown to us. Sometimes, these reminiscences become articles we include in *ThumbPrint News* because they reflect a small part of what makes up the entire fabric of the Thumb. Our April edition is brimming with these types of articles.

In this issue our readers are introduced to some of the early pioneers of Riley Township in "Spotlight on Riley Township." The recollections of Edric Howe, who is 95 years old and the great grandson of one of those settlers, provided a snapshot of life in the mid-1920s near what today is called Riley Center.

David Gillis, one of our regular monthly columnists from the newspaper's beginning, often reminisces about growing up in Algonac and the surrounding areas. In his April article, as he writes about his first car back in the 1950s, that era not only comes alive for the readers but we also come to understand all that that car symbolized to David. Many of our readers may recall very similar emotions surrounding the obtainment of their first vehicle.

With the second part of a four part story, "The Journey," Fred Marengo continues painting a picture of what life was like for Roy Hahn, one of Lexington's current residents, as he enlisted in the United States

Marines as an eighteen year old in 1943, just shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

A new writer to this paper, Stacy Elliot, shares some of the history of the Dove/Sparling Family, who still has descendants in the area. Kathryn Seestedt, in "Notes from a Book Lover," gives the readers a glimpse into some of the religious history of Algonac in the late 1800s and early 1900s with her book review of *Faith the Root*.

Perhaps it is my own passion for history and genealogy that draws me to this type of information when we receive it from our readers and columnists.

Recently, I am nearing the end of one of my own journeys that started over three years ago. By June, if everything goes as planned, I will be able to say that I have played a major part in helping to get a book

published that covers the lives of three young men who fought together in the Civil War so many years ago. These three men left a legacy that almost was lost to future generations – fifty-eight letters that they wrote home to family

and friends from the camps and battlefields during their enlistment period with the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The letters barely survived a house fire in the early 1900s. More poignant than their descriptions of their initial patriotic enthusiasm is their later disillusionment with the realities of what war brings and the fact that two of the young men lose their lives as a result of the War.

These three young men are relatives of mine, from the Cadwell, Haviland and Glaza families. My part in the book has been to help provide the family history information that will be included. Throughout the three year journey of researching birth, marriage and death records, land ownership documents, plat maps, family memories

Family faces are magic mirrors. Looking at people who belong to us, we see the past, present, and future.

~Gail Lumet Buckley

and passed down photos and stories, I have become acquainted with the three soldiers and their lives in a way I could never have imagined.

My cousin, Linda, who is the person who has put the most work into the project, has diligently transcribed each of these fragile letters, provided the historical perspectives so that the readers of the book will be able to put the names and subjects the three men write about into context, and has also added her own reflections on their lives. Linda is a writer extraordinaire. While I was helping to proofread the text before it goes to the publisher, I became so engrossed in the letters and the added information that I cried, I laughed, I became a part of that period in history and in the lives of Austin, Deloss and LA, the three young soldiers. What I forgot to do was proofread! I had to go back and resume the task at hand.

The greatest thing I discovered on this wonderful journey was that I truly believe that what I am today is a reflection of who my ancestors were. Where they lived, what type of work they did, who their families were, how the events happening during their lifetimes affected them, their personalities, and their personal joys and tragedies all are engrained in my very being. By discovering more about my ancestors, I discovered more about myself.

I beseech our readers to continue to submit articles, ideas and photos of the people and places that created and still continue to influence the fabulous part of Michigan in which we reside. I can guarantee that I will be the first to look at what is submitted. It is absolutely one of the best parts of my job.

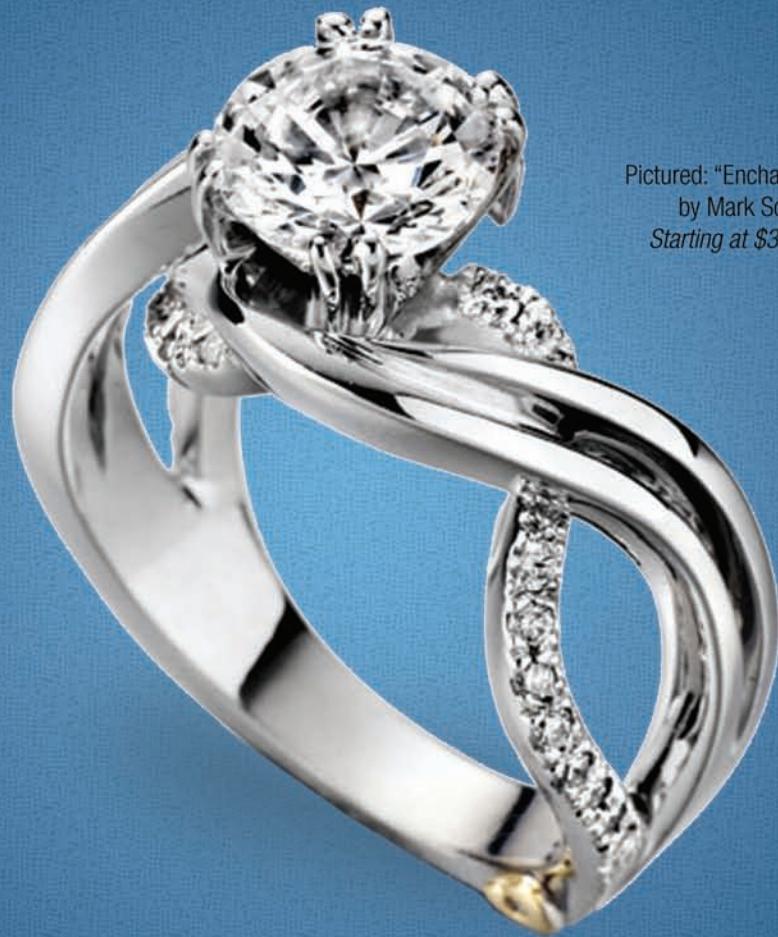
DIANE KODET
Editor, *ThumbPrint News*

Editor's Note: The above book of which I have had the privilege to be involved is tentatively titled Dear Brother and Sister, and is scheduled to be published prior to June, so that it will be available for a reunion of over 250 of the descendents of these three Civil War letter writers this summer in Hamburg, Michigan. Once the book is published, it will be reviewed in ThumbPrint News and information about where copies of the book can be obtained will be made public.

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The Journey To Peleliu and Back

The Story of Roy Hahn (Part 2)

By **Fredrick G. Marengo**

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Editor's note: This story is being presented in four parts. Part one appeared in the March edition. In part one, the reader was introduced to Roy Hahn, now a resident of Lexington, Michigan, as he enlisted in the United States Marines as an eighteen year old in 1943, just shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Roy was on his way to Australia, his first stop in the South Pacific as a member of the 1st Marine Division.

Australia stood defiantly in Japan's path of military domination of the entire South Pacific as their war machine churned over island after island, taking land and resources, providing forward bases that would threaten the west coast of the United States.

The country was quickly becoming a fortress stronghold bolstered by the youth of America, who were now members of the United States Armed Forces. The island continent would become the launching pad for the "sleeping giant" that Yamamoto had feared awakening by the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

This island continent offered a safe haven and staging area for General Douglas MacArthur, after fleeing the

Japanese invasion of the Philippine Islands. Marine Corps blood would pave the way on the long road back, before General MacArthur could make good on his promise of, "I shall return," to the people of the Philippines. "It would take the help of God and the Marines before MacArthur would return to the Philippines," Roy said.

Roy disembarked the liberty ship and joined the men of the 1st Marine Division at Melbourne. He was assigned to the 17th Engineering Regiment. Roy chuckled, as he thought about his first liberty. "We went to Melbourne on liberty and flirted with the girls, but didn't end up with anybody. We didn't know what was ahead of us, other than we would be island hopping. We had

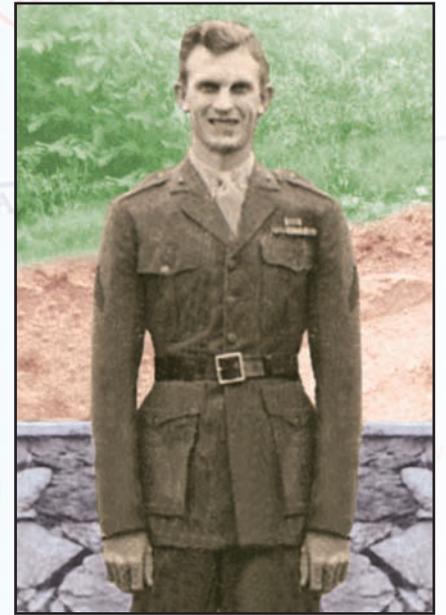
been brought up to date on the Battle of Guadalcanal and we knew it would be a rough road ahead." The battle had cost 1,769 marines their lives and another 3,000 wounded. An estimated 30,000 Japanese soldiers were killed. It indeed would be a rough road ahead.

There would be few opportunities for Roy to see much of Australia. Within a few short weeks he would be back aboard a liberty ship headed to Goodenough Island, Territory of Papua, in preparation for the invasion of Cape Gloucester, New Britain.

The Battle of Goodenough Island ended the previous year with an Allied victory on October 24, 1942 after a short but fierce battle with a small Japanese force lasting for three days. Australian soldiers, supported by three U.S. destroyers and one cruiser, secured the island which became a staging area and supply base for operations in New Guinea and New Britain. The circular shaped island was approximately twenty four miles long and sixteen miles wide.

"The island was sandy with palm trees. It was a real nice palm beach type island. It made a real good rest and recovery area. It was a nice selection to set up as a base camp to leave from and come back to after certain combat missions," Roy said.

"Wikipedia" described the island with rushing streams and waterfalls that drain water from the central mountain. Rain forest cloaks the higher elevations



Roy Hahn in 1945.

with secondary forest, grassland, and native gardens on the lower slopes and coastal plains. The islands of Cape Gloucester and Peleliu would be drastically different.

Goodenough Island was teeming with activity with the different elements of the 1st Marine Division as they made ready for the amphibious assault on Cape Gloucester. It would only be a short few weeks before the Marines would fight another life and death struggle against "a green jungle hell" and a fanatical enemy, both ready to repel their invasion.

On Christmas Eve 1943, all troops were aboard their ships heading out to sea. Roy was aboard an LST (Landing Ship Tank), one of many ships that would take part in the Battle of Cape Gloucester. Most of the men thought of family and wondered if they would ever return home again. On the eve of the birth of the Prince of Peace, the war ships rocked and swayed through the waves toward an island that would be

See *THE JOURNEY*, Page 22



A World War II Liberty ship, similar to the ship pictured here, carried Roy from his base in California to Australia where he joined up with the 1st Marine Division.

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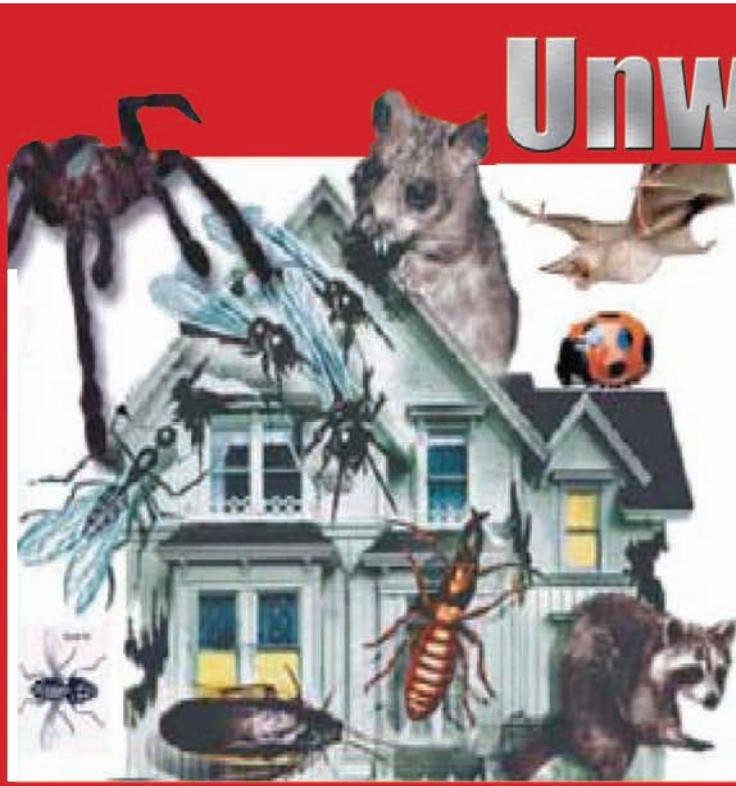
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Julius Sterling Morton, the Father of Arbor Day

By Diane L. Kodet

ThumbPrint News Editor

Julius Sterling Morton (better known as J. Sterling) was born on April 22, 1892 in Adams, New York. He moved with his family as a young man to Monroe, Michigan, where he lived from 1834 to 1854. After graduating from the University of Michigan, he married Caroline Joy French.

Both Caroline and J. Sterling were nature lovers, each having a true passion for trees, plants and flowers. On their wedding day in 1854, they moved west to the unsettled prairies of Nebraska, where they soon joined other brave pioneers and built a four-room house.

J. Sterling soon took a job as the



J. Sterling and Caroline Morton left for Nebraska on their wedding day in 1854.

editor of a local newspaper, *The Nebraska City News*. He often wrote agricultural articles, giving advice about the best varieties of trees and plants to grow in the Nebraska climate.

Caroline and J. Sterling both missed their homes back in Michigan, especially the trees and other plants that landscaped their neighborhoods and countryside. They started

planting numerous shade trees, shrubs and flowers around their home and eventually added a 300 tree apple orchard. In subsequent years, another orchard of 1000 trees was added. All the while that Caroline and J. Sterling were improving their own landscaping, J. Sterling was promoting the value of tree planting to others in Nebraska. He also advocated tree planting by civic organizations and other groups.

J. Sterling eventually became a prominent figure in his state, serving as secretary of the Nebraska Territory, acting Governor, and the third U.S.

Secretary of Agriculture. However, J. Sterling Morton is probably best remembered as being the founder of Arbor Day.

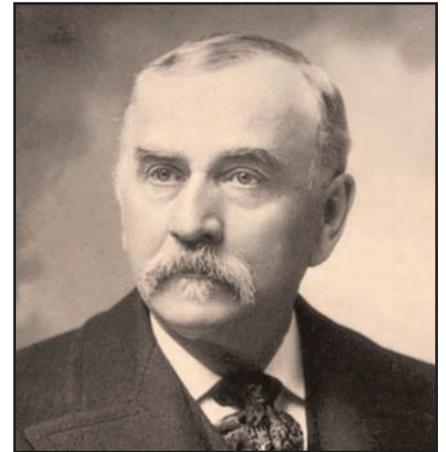
At a meeting of the State Board of Agriculture on January 4, 1872, J. Sterling explained his idea for a tree-planting holiday. Prizes were offered to counties and to individuals for planting the largest number of trees on April 10, 1872, providing that the trees were planted properly. Many of the pioneers who had moved from

“Other holidays repose upon the past; Arbor Day proposes for the future.”

J. Sterling Morton



Nebraska City, Nebraska celebrates the first Arbor Day, circa 1872



J. Sterling Morton, the founder of Arbor Day

the east to the west shared Caroline and J. Sterling's longing for a greener landscape than the prairies had to offer. They also needed the trees for windbreaks, fuel, building materials and shade from the hot sun. The idea was well-received and on that first Arbor Day it was estimated that more than one million trees were planted.

It was not until March 12, 1874, however, that the State of Nebraska officially recognized Arbor Day. Governor Robert W. Furnas set the observance to be April 10, 1874. In 1885, Arbor Day became a legal holiday

See *ARBOR DAY*, Page 28

Deducting Non-Cash Donations Is Not So Easy!

By Cindy Redmann

Tax Consultant

If you want to claim itemized deductions for non-cash charitable donations on your tax return, you better make sure you have receipts and the other necessary documents. Thanks to unscrupulous taxpayers who once made a habit of claiming bogus and inflated charitable write-offs, the IRS has tightened the rules.

For a donation of non-cash items worth less than \$250 you need a receipt from the charity with a written description of items donated – like the familiar slips you get for donations to Goodwill or the Salvation Army. You don't have to file the receipt with your tax return, but keep it with your tax records in case you are ever audited.

For non-cash donations worth \$250 to \$5000, you need a written acknowledgment from the charity (more detailed than a receipt). The letter should include: date of contribution, name and address of charity, and description of property donated.

For non-cash items worth \$501 to \$5,000 you also need written evidence that supports the acquisition date, the fair market value, the cost, etc. Keep the written evidence (which may simply be notes that you've prepared yourself) with your tax records.

Special restrictions apply to donations of vehicles, planes and boats. The important thing to know is that your charitable write-off will usually be limited to what the charity sells your car, boat, or plane for; not necessarily the blue-book value. The charity also has to give you form 1098-C if gross proceeds are above \$500. This form has to be attached to your tax return.

If your total non-cash donations for the year exceed \$500, you must fill out form 8283 (Non-Cash Contributions) and file it with your tax return.

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By Keith Kodet
ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This month, ThumbPrint News is introducing a new section called "Ask the Greasy Thumb." In this section we encourage readers to write in or to email their automotive questions for our resident automobile expert to answer. Keith Kodet is a self-proclaimed car nut, who has worked for many years as a mechanic. Keith also is an avid collector of vintage and specialty automobiles and has owned over 200 different cars to date. Please email your questions to thumbprintnews@comcast.net and put "Ask the Greasy Thumb" in the subject line or mail your questions to: ThumbPrint News, 8061 Marsh Rd., Clay Twp., MI 48001.

Because this is tax return season, many of you may be considering larger purchases. One great way to save money is by purchasing a used vehicle over a new one. Here are some great questions about used cars:

- Q. Are online vehicle history reports worth purchasing?
Phil from Marine City
- A. There currently is no law that requires shops and repair facilities to report services performed on a vehicle. These online reports were created as a sales tool for dealerships. In my experience, online reports usually do not cover everything that has happened to the car, especially body work and collision repair. So, for the time being, save your money spent on the reports and instead have a reputable mechanic at a shop not associated with your dealer check out the condition for you.
- Q. Is it better to buy a used car from a used car lot, individual seller, or from a new car dealer with a used car lot?
Sara from Port Huron
- A. Individual sales can vary greatly in experience, so it's always best to have your mechanic check those deals out.

New car dealers that sell used cars are often held at a greater responsibility by their franchise and liability insurance. Therefore you will often find the quality to be

better but the price also higher.

- Q. When purchasing a used car, is it better to purchase an import or domestic?
Chet from New Baltimore
- A. Although foreign built cars can often offer superior fuel mileage, the cost of maintaining one can often be significantly higher than a domestic vehicle, especially when repairing higher mileage models. Domestic parts are more readily available and many imported vehicles require model-specific specialists for larger repairs that can be difficult to locate and often charge more than your local mechanic.
- Q. My family is in need of a four-door SUV with four wheel drive, but we only have about \$3,000 to spend. What used model would you recommend that would work for us?
Mary from Almont
- A. Each of the big three auto manufacturers has made something that should work for you, so you have the advantage of picking your favorite brand. I would either recommend an older Ford Explorer/Mercury Mountaineer with either the 4.0 V6 or 5.0 V8, the Chevy Blazer/ GMC Jimmy with the 4.3 V6 or a Jeep Cherokee with the 4.0 engine. I have seen all three of these vehicles reach over 300,000 miles with regular maintenance.

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Ask the Audiologist

By Lisa Bont

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with two young individuals inquiring about the field of Audiology. It can be a very rewarding profession and career choice. Examining where the profession started will help to get a good feel for the field's strengths.

Shortly after World War II, as our young service people were returning from war, we began to investigate the need for hearing healthcare. Raymond Carhart is commonly referred to as the Father of Audiology. As a military man, he became instrumental in advancing the field during that time. The majority of our servicepersons were returning with hearing loss related to noise from various military weaponry and machinery whether they were on the ground, in the field, in the air or on the seas. Significant noise-induced hearing losses were treated immediately and yet, as our service people aged, we found a greater degree of hearing loss than could be attributed to the natural age related progression of loss of hearing. This led to much growth in the field of Audiology and helped to define it.

It was also at this time, and with the advent of

our tremendous technological growth, that the use of transistors and such led to the development of tools for assessing the levels of sound individuals were exposed to, degrees of hearing loss, and in the development of smaller hearing aids. Hearing tests today still use the procedures that were developed in the 1920s. Little has been done to assess the

hearing subjectively other than to have the person respond to a series of beeps or warbles. However, we now have more objective means to test hearing and ear health. These types of tests are prescribed by an Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist, if necessary. These tests incorporate some very advanced means of assessment, including measuring waveforms generated from an area of our brain called the brainstem and from auditory stimuli. The collection of these waveforms, measurement of eye movements, etc., has given us some definitive means to address hearing loss and other ear related issues. My, how the science of our ears and hearing exploded in a relatively short 70 years or so!

If you or a loved one has questions about their hearing, call Advanced Audiology Services at (810)388-9400, visit our website at www.advancedaudiologyservices.com, or on Facebook.



This photo, taken during a military parade circa 1917, shows a listening apparatus for aeroplanes using sound ranging which uses sound as a way to locate artillery pieces. Sound ranging started during World War I and continued into World War II, even with the advent of the radar.

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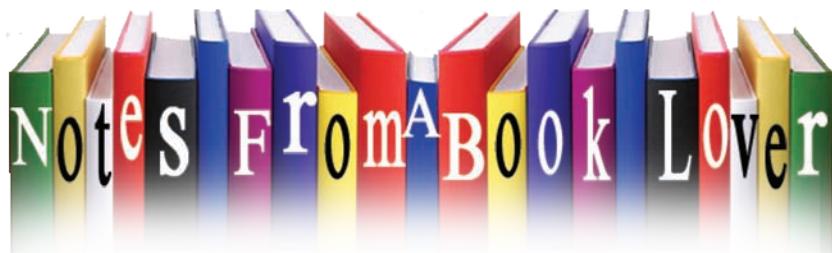
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By Kathryn Seestedt

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

My name is “Father Jerry” and I have come alive in a beautiful novel, *Faith the Root*, by Barbara Frances Fleury. I served as pastor of St. Catherine’s Parish in Algonac, Michigan, from 1895 until 1924. I also established the mission of St. Mark’s on Harsens Island, where the first services were held in July of 1897. To serve the mission, I took the morning boat (White Star Line boat, serving the Port Huron to Detroit area) to San Souci. I returned to Algonac on the afternoon boat unless a parishioner offered me a ride in their small pleasure boat.



Parishioners were ferried across the South Channel to attend services at St. Mark’s on Harsens Island.

The author, Barbara Frances Fleury, was born on November 20, 1907, in Detroit, Michigan. She became a singer and a school librarian. As a teenager, she attended Holy Cross High School in Marine City, Michigan, where she became acquainted with Father Peter Ternes, to whom this book is dedicated. Local residents of “a certain age” recall hearing their parents or grandparents talking about the friendship of the two pastors and their love and dedication to the needs of their neighboring parishes. When *Faith the Root* was published in 1942, these same grandparents immediately recognized the main character as Father Benoit Gery, who had been born in France, and whose body was returned to his homeland for burial in Lyon, France.

Recent conversations with contemporary Catholic “faithfuls” confirm the importance of *Faith in Root* in sharing with the reading public the basic teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. For her efforts, Miss Fleury’s book was awarded the honor of Book of the Month by the Catholic Book Club.

For the purpose of telling Father Gery’s story, Miss Fleury chose to re-name Algonac, “Algonquin” and to designate Father Gery as “Father Germain.” Her description

of “Algonquin” on pages 125 to 126 will warm the hearts of the present population:

“Algonquin was a quiet little place. Little indeed was there to stir these people who lived and had their being beside the swiftly flowing river. Town politics were in a seedy state . . . The same people ran for office term after term. Occasionally some outsiders from the county seat came down and stirred them from the lethargy by suggesting that they should repair the road running through the town. That sometimes drew a few people from their firesides to the Monday night council meeting. It also delayed the town council’s weekly cribbage game . . .

“The Algonquin people were not without their concerns . . . vessel passages were vital statistics. To the people of the little village of Algonquin . . . scarcely a house was without at least one (sailor) . . . If the wife knew what time her husband’s boat had passed upbound from Detroit, she could estimate when it would pass Algonquin . . . She would have time to gather the children and carry the baby to the dock. Her husband’s boat would slow to half-speed, and she would hold the baby up for its admiring father to see through his binoculars.”

Old timers will know that these dock-side reunions were accompanied by suitable whistle salutes. Perhaps my readers will join me in mourning for the time when whistles were commonly heard on our beautiful blue waterways. 🌿

Editor’s note: Faith the Root was first published in 1942 by E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., New York, N.Y. The author is Barbara Francis Fleury. It is 251 pages long. A search of Amazon.com and several used book sites did suggest that used copies can still be purchased. Check with your local library or used book store for assistance in locating this book.

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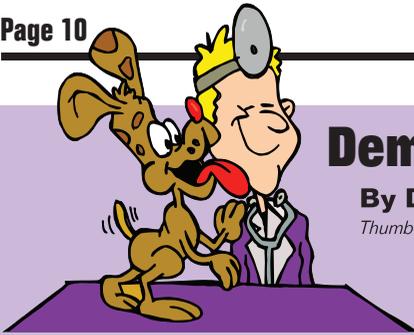
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Demodicosis in Pets

By Dr. DiBenedetto
ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Demodicosis is an inflammatory skin disease in dogs and cats, caused by skin mites in the Demodex family. The most common mite to affect dogs is Demodex canis, while in cats there appears to be two mites, Demodex cati and Demodex gatoi. Demodicosis is rare in cats and is not contagious to humans. Demodex is a unique disease in that nearly all puppies acquire the mites from their mother in the first few days of life. These mites will live in the hair follicles of the puppies for the rest of their lives, never causing any problems. The only time the mites are able to "take over" and cause disease appears to be when there is a weakened immune system. This is mainly seen in very young animals or older dogs that have concurrent diseases weakening their immune system.

Demodectic mange may either be localized and affect a few specific areas of the body, or generalized, where it affects the entire body. The areas are typically red with hair loss and scales present. If localized, symptoms are usually mild, with lesions occurring in patches, especially on the face, ears and legs, but not more than four lesions total. Localized mange usually heals spontaneously in six to eight weeks, but may wax and wane for several months. About 10% of the cases with localized Demodex will progress to the generalized form. The generalized form requires more intensive treatment for a longer period of time. These dogs are generally very itchy, febrile and lethargic with lesions over the entire body, face and extremities.

When a young dog with patchy hair loss and itching and scaly lesions comes into our clinic our standard protocol is

to do a skin scraping. Once we have scraped the skin, the scale and broken hair shafts are examined under the microscope with mineral oil. The mites are cigar shaped with multiple tiny legs and a long tail. They can be very difficult to diagnose even under the microscope. Often times multiple scrapings are needed to identify the mites. Fortunately, 90% of demodectic mange cases are localized. Goodwinol ointment has been a successful topical therapy and more recently, a 5% benzoyl peroxide gel applied daily, has had good effects. Bathing periodically with a benzoyl peroxide shampoo and feeding a high



quality diet with a fatty acid supplement will also help the skin. For dogs with the generalized form, daily oral Ivermectin is the treatment of choice. This anti-parasitic drug is

widely used in veterinary medicine, although its use for demodicosis has not been approved by the FDA. Bathing in a benzoyl peroxide shampoo and applying a miticide (Mitiban) to the skin and allowing it to dry is the only FDA approved treatment. The draw

back to this is that there are multiple side effects and young puppies do not always tolerate the treatment. The dip needs to be applied in a well-ventilated area and gloves need to be worn to avoid human skin contact. Antibiotics are given when there are secondary skin infections. Steroid treatment for itching is contraindicated because they further suppress the immune system, which allows the mites to flourish. Interceptor heartworm prevention is effective against demodex. The problem is with daily administration it can be very costly. All treatments need to be continued sixty days past a skin scraping that is negative for mites. No dogs that have had demodex should be bred. The females will pass the mites to the puppies and the propensity for the weakened immune system can be inherited from both the mother and the father. 🐾

Editor's note: Dr. DiBenedetto is a veterinarian at Maple Veterinary Hospital located at 2981 Iowa in Troy, Michigan. The hospital website is: www.MapleVeterinaryHospital.com. Dr. DiBenedetto can be reached at (248) 586-2622 for other pet related questions.

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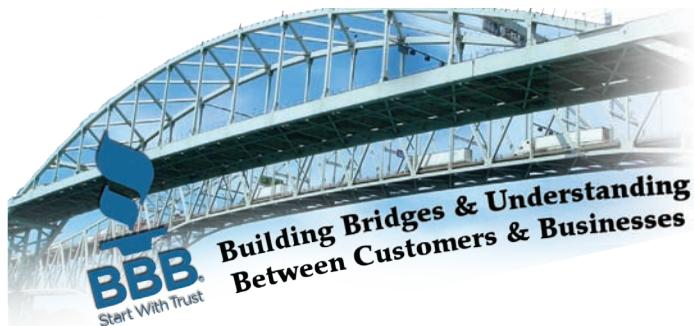
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Melanie Duquesnel

BBB Warns Consumers of the Cost of Watching “Free” Online Movies

Everyone loves a good movie and with today’s movie theater tickets costing more than ten bucks a pop (and that’s not even including the “pop”), many movie goers are opting to watch their favorite movies at home for free instead. “Free,” however, comes with a cost, a cost that many consumers don’t realize. The Better Business Bureau warns consumers against downloading “free” online movies.

According to researchers from cloud security provider Zscaler, movie sites like www.letmewatchthis.com, www.letbobwatchthis.com, and www.movie-source.org, all look harmless when in fact, they are luring consumers into

a copyright infringement trap. Sites like these house hundreds of pirated movies and by downloading them onto your computer you are committing a copyright infringement.

“Consumers need to know the consequences of using such sites,” said Patrick Bennett, BBB Director of Community Relations “It is ultimately their responsibility to ensure that the files they are downloading and sharing are legal copies.”

According to the United States Copyright Office, an individual who uploads or downloads online movies that are protected by copyright law without the authority of the copyright

owner can be subjected to copyright infringement violations. Such cases can be considered liable for statutory damages up to \$30,000 for each work infringed. If infringement is found to be willful that amount can be increased up to \$150,000 for each work infringed. In addition, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, the government can also criminally prosecute you for copyright infringement. Fines up to \$250,000 and/or a five year prison sentence can result.

To avoid such risks, the Better Business Bureau recommends the following:

- Purchase all copyrighted works online using one of the many services that are authorized to sell copyrighted pieces. By doing so, you can avoid copyright infringement violations.
- When evaluating services to decide if they provide legal music and movie files, look for statements that say they have obtained the copyright permission of the artists or company representing the artists.
- Seek legal alternatives. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) can provide a list of some

of the more popular legal online media sources, including iTunes and YouTube.

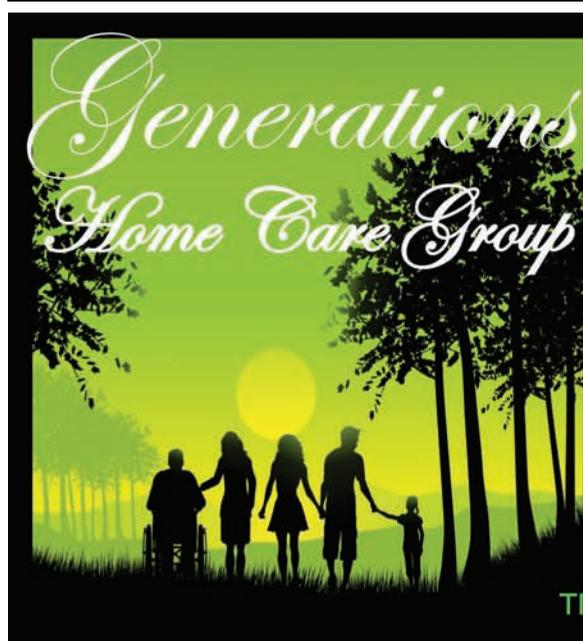
• Be careful when downloading illegal digital files. Illegal downloading places your computer at high risk of receiving viruses.

To learn more about how to protect yourself from copyright infringement, visit www.bbb.org and www.cybercrime.gov sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice.

About Better Business Bureau

As the leader in advancing marketplace trust, Better Business Bureau is an unbiased non-profit organization that sets and upholds high standards for fair and honest business behavior. Every year, more than 65 million consumers rely on BBB Reliability Reports® and BBB Wise Giving Reports® to help them find trustworthy businesses and charities across North America. Visit www.bbb.org/us for more information. 🌱

Editor’s Note: Melanie Duquesnel is the President and CEO of the Better Business Bureau Serving Eastern Michigan, which is a non-profit organization that fights fraud and promotes ethical business practices in the local marketplace through its business accreditation, consumer education and dispute resolution programs. Contact your local BBB by calling (248) 223-9400 or by visiting www.bbb.org.



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My First Car

By David Gillis
 ThumbPrint News Columnist



Like so many other Americans, I had a love affair with the automobile long before I was able to drive one. And, like most, if you asked me if I could remember my first car, my response would quickly be, "Of course I do."

I anticipated my first car not as a transaction, but as an event surrounded by excitement and expectations where the entire world would change because of it. No longer would I walk to school, I would now impress girls and arouse the envy of others who had not yet "arrived." I was really going to be cool.

My dream of the perfect car began long before I obtained my driver's license in the spring of 1959. I watched as the upper-classmen cruised into the school parking lot with their motorized chariots customized with bubble wheel covers, moon hub caps and chrome bar grills. Their cars were always full of more friends than I had and many were of the other gender. Oh, I found it so difficult to wait for my turn.

At 16-years of age the mere thought of my first car meant my entry into adulthood. I would fantasize about having total independence and assurance that my dating life would be greatly enhanced. The anticipation was often greater than I could handle.

That summer I got my first real job as a dishwasher at Sid's north of Algonac. That may not sound like a great job, but it was. Each payday brought me closer to realizing my dream of a first car.

As summer moved closer to fall and my return to school I came to a startling realization. The money I saved was not enough to allow me to satisfy the burning desire that had become the focus of my life. I would be walking to school again and not yet able to experience the true feeling of being cool.

Then one day in mid-September as I was leaving school I was met by my mother. She hadn't met me at school since I was very young and, even then,

only on special occasions. When I asked for an explanation, she simply pointed to a car passing on the street and said, "That's your dad driving your car."

As I discovered later, my parents had decided to sell a vacant lot they owned in town and to use the proceeds to purchase my first car. They sold the land for less than it was worth, but for a reason they felt important at the time.

My first car was a drab green colored 1950 Chevrolet 2-door sedan. The roof and exterior sun visor had a yellowish crème hue. It was powered by a sluggish six cylinder engine and had a stick-shift transmission.

Although I truly appreciated the wonderful gift, I fully realized that my decade-old car was obsolete and that reality would not match my expectations. Mechanically, it was not the fastest car on the road. In fact, it was probably the slowest, but with gasoline at 23 cents per gallon, I came to recognize the benefits.

Within time, I removed the silly sun visor, painted the car black and installed a chrome bar grill. On the interior I added a suicide spinner knob on the steering wheel, brightened the seats with red plastic covers and hung foam dice from the rear-view mirror. Yet, it seemed that nobody else was impressed by my car or jealous of my proud ownership of it. It was just a car.

It seemed, too, that the only girls I was able to attract consistently now that I had a car were my sisters, who I chauffeured to school or my mother, who I was required to take shopping weekly. Now, how cool was that?

Most of us retain some fond memories of the joys and difficulties of our first car. Mine relate more to what I learned in the process.

I learned how parental love and desire to provide for a child surpasses any financial barriers that may exist. I discovered that the realities in life may not always meet expectations, but they're still good. And, I am now aware that the girls attracted by a cool car are not the ones you really want to have a lasting relationship with.

Do I remember my first car? Of course I do. 🍀





Memoirs from The Restless Retiree

Retirement - Time For a Change!

By Gabriel Jones
ThumbPrint News Columnist

When a man works for a living, he wears appropriate clothing for the job. When he finally retires, it's time for a change.

For me: it's denim, denim, denim – seven days a week.

That can be a problem, however!

Once retired, you find that you don't have that many denims to wear. You look in your closet . . . and see . . . all lined up are suits, sport jackets, ties, dress shoes, etc.

"Where are my denim shirts and pants?" shouts Gabriel to his wife.

"Gabriel, there is a pair of denim pants and a shirt in the wash, and your other denim shirt and pants are in the garage, grass-stained."

"Oh, all right."

Gabriel goes to the garage to get his comfortable denim "grass-stained" pants and shirt and puts them both on.

"Gabriel! Get off of that sofa with those grass stained pants!"

"What! I can't sit down and be comfortable in my own home?"

"You know how much that sofa costs? It took us a long time to get a sofa like that. Go sit in the garage if you want to wear those pants."

"Retirement! You're supposed to wear anything you want."

"Well, if you want to buy a new sofa, go ahead and sit down but I would say to you, go to the store and buy some new denims. You've had those two pair for a long time."

I then took my wife's advice and went to the store to buy some new denims.

When I got there, I quickly picked out the denims I wanted! It didn't take me any time at all. I grabbed six pairs of pants and six shirts and rushed to the cashier. I couldn't wait to get home to put on my new clothes.

The cashier then started to total out my purchase.

I heard her say:

"Six pairs of denim pants at \$55 dollars a pair, six denim shirts at \$27.50 per shirt, plus \$29.70 for the tax. The grand total will be \$524.70. Will that be charge, check, or cash, sir?"

I had to grab the counter to keep my composure as I gasped and tried to speak!

"Sir, are you alright?" asked the clerk.

I finally uttered, *"Will you repeat that?"*

Her lips were moving, but I really couldn't hear her.

I was just too stunned to hear.

Slowly, I pulled out my charge card and handed it to her.

Then, taking the packages, I walked away thinking, "What will my wife say?"

Another lesson learned by the Restless Retiree. 🍀

It's Not Gone!

Think of all the things that go down your drain to your septic tank: grease from your kitchen sink, hair and oil from your shower and washer, body waste from your toilets. We tend to think – or not think – about what happens to all that waste. It doesn't just disappear.

Fats, oils and greases (FOG's) are put into your septic system everyday. Once they reach your septic tank, good anaerobic bacteria start to consume the waste. The FOGs not consumed by the good bacteria become solid waste. They build up at the top and bottom of your tank in the form of scum, often several inches thick. Pieces of these solids break off, and along with the liquid from your tank, go into your field. Much like plaque can clog our arteries and cause a heart attack, solids from your tank can clog your septic field and cause expensive repairs if you don't remove them.

Regular maintenance for your septic system is a must. The old saying "If it's not broke, don't fix it" is not true. Eventually your septic system or field will fail. Fields are expensive to replace.

Proper maintenance and care to your tank and filtering systems should be done on a regular basis based on your lifestyle, the number of people in the home, and usage.

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Limericks - Poems that Make You Laugh

A limerick is a little poem containing five lines with a distinctive pattern. The last words of the first, second and fifth lines all rhyme with each other. The last words of the third and fourth lines rhyme with each other. A limerick is meant to be funny.

In our March edition we talked about limericks in "Kid's Korner" and invited kids to try their hands at writing their own limericks. The kids at Great Oak's Elementary in the School-Age Child Care Program in New Baltimore, Michigan, under the guidance of Ms. Schafer, had fun creating some of their own. The staff enjoyed reading the poems that Ms. Schafer mailed to us. Here are a few of the limericks submitted for our readers to enjoy:

*There once was a cat named Pat.
He went to the Laundromat.
A rat ate his clothes,
And now they were foes,
And now Pat was mad at the rat.*

By Haley



*A silly girl named Clair,
Went out to find a silly bear.
The bear said, "Hey Clair bear," then he ran off.
The bear had a bad cough.
And the Clair bear went to a fair.*

By Clair

*There was a dinosaur, he had a funny name.
He also ate everything, and played a weird game.
The U.S. Army dropped a nuke, Ka-boom!
He lived in Area 51, and had a black room.
The bunker saved his life, and he's in the Hall of Fame.*

By Jeremy

*Little Susi Kaboozie
Made a little woopzie!
She forgot to tie her shoe,
So she fell and landed in glue.
That poor little Susie!*

By Caroline

*Donuts are yummy.
They go in my tummy.
I enjoy the sprinkles,
That look like twinkles.
I met a donut that was very crummy.*

By Emily and Alyssa

*There was a cat who wore a hat.
He remarked, "I am an acrobat."
"I am no dope.
For now I will jump rope."
"Now that is unusual for a cat."*

By Alexis

*There was a frog named Splat.
He liked to wear a hat.
When he turned seven,
His hat went to heaven.
And on his log Splat sat.*

By Ryan



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Dove/Sparling Family History According To Ron Dove

By Stacy N. Elliott

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Ron Dove was born on January 26, 1976, the bicentennial year of our country, and was delivered at Port Huron Hospital in Port Huron, Michigan to Ronald and Janice E. Dove (Sparling).

Ron remembers his mother's influence on others. Janice was compassionate and taught her children how to solve problems and help others. She worked as a nurse, but did not complain about her job. Her positive touch encouraged others and exhibited a loving and caring spirit.

While learning of his deep Irish roots from the Sparling family, Ron's maternal grandmother, Joyce

I. Sparling (Sweet) had taught generations the value of hospitality. It did not matter how much or how little one had. When a guest visited the family, one would offer a drink or a bite to eat and make guests feel welcomed in their home. Joyce had married George W. Sparling on January 20, 1951.

Velma Dove (Webb) is Ron's paternal grandmother who currently resides in Sparlingville, which was founded by George Sparling in 1923. She continues to regale stories of a time when they lived in Goodells and did not have running water in their home. Walking to her parent's home across the street to haul buckets of water for laundry, bathing, and cooking

proved to be especially challenging during the winter months.

A childhood memory that Ron recalls was that of his paternal great-grandmother, Louisa Dove, who had resided in Lambs. She was a soft-spoken woman who always had cookies and games ready for the children who visited her home. She was pleased when they entertained themselves by playing on a badly tuned piano in her home.

Louisa gave birth to Laurence Dove, who married Velma. He attended Bible School in 1954 and eventually became the pastor of a church in Memphis. Louisa had given Laurence a Bible the day he left for school. Today this heirloom, with its highlighted passages that

influenced his life, resides with Ron.

Louisa had a passion for family history which the family discovered after her passing in 2003. Among the compilation was a fact that Dove Road, which runs into Port Huron, was named after one of Ron's distant relatives.

One piece of history Ron has obtained was of his great-grandfather, James L. G. Webb. Mr. Webb was said to have lived in a house that Thomas Edison resided in, and he invented a more efficient oil lamp around the time electricity became popular.

The Dove and Sparling families continue to thrive in the Thumb Area with a rich history, a large family tree and a great heart for compassion. 🌱

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PERENNIALS

Continued from Page 1

twenty perennials I am just going to have to locate. (I say "new" in quotes because sometimes they are "new" to the nursery, greenhouse, or plant catalog which lists them as part of their current offerings, but in actuality, the plants have been around for several years.) Here are my picks for 2011, all of which are hardy in all counties in Michigan that the *ThumbPrint News* services:

Cenolophium denudatum

Cenolophium denudatum is a clump-forming, herbaceous perennial with finely divided, dark green leaves, and umbrella shaped white flowers from late July until mid-September. Growing to about three feet in height at maturity, it is a striking contrast to more colorful flowers in the perennial border. The flowers are excellent for dried flower arrangements.



Cenolophium denudatum

Coreopsis "Cosmic Eye"

Many new introductions of *Coreopsis* have taken place in the past few years. This new cultivar is shorter and more compact than most *Coreopsis*, standing just 12-15" tall. The well-branched plants remain attractive all season long. Loads of 1½-2" blooms cover the plant from early summer through early fall. The mature plant has a compact spread of 12-15" and prefers a sunny location.



Coreopsis "Cosmic Eye"

Coreopsis verticillata "Route 66"

This threadleaf *Coreopsis* has unique yellow blooms with a splash of burgundy-red in the center that bleeds into the yellow petals, making an impressive display in the perennial garden. Blooming all summer long, the plant reaches a height of 24-27" and likes full sun. The plant has the added value of attracting butterflies to the garden when in bloom.



Coreopsis verticillata "Route 66"

Dianthus barbatus Bararini "Picotee Purple"

Not truly a perennial, but a biennial, this wonderful new *Dianthus* in the Bararini series offers a phenomenal color display in the perennial border. Growing to only 8-10" in height and flowering most of the summer, it is an attractive, compact edging plant perfect for sunny locations. Other colors in the Bararini series are equally as striking.



Dianthus barbatus Bararini "Picotee Purple"

Echinacea purpurea "Green Envy"

Green flowers are relatively rare in the perennial flower world and 'Green Envy' is one of the few to exhibit that color range. The flowers make an excellent showy cut flower and attract butterflies to the garden. This is a new-comer to the perennial world from the state of New York. Established clumps can be three feet tall and just as wide. 'Green Envy' likes full sun, but will tolerate partial shade, and is very drought tolerant.



Echinacea purpurea "Green Envy"

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Echinacea purpurea "Milkshake"



Eryngium planum "Jade Frost"



Euphorbia "Helena's Blush"



Geranium pretense "Laura"



Hemerocallis "Ruby Spider"

Echinacea purpurea "Milkshake"

Massive numbers of double creamy white petals make each flower look like a scoop of ice cream. Flowers appear from early July and continue until late September. "Milkshake" likes a sunny spot and moist, well-drained soil. The mature size of the plant is 30-36" tall and 24-30" wide.

Eryngium planum "Jade Frost"

Eryngium planum, better known as Sea Holly, adds dramatic interest to any perennial garden. This variety is striking in that in spring each blue-green leaf in the rosette is edged with cream and, when the temperature drops, the margins of the new leaves turn pink. The thistle-like flowers that appear in summer are vibrant blue and make a great cut flower. Sea Holly is not particular about soil and will survive even in gravelly soil, as long as it is in a sunny location and well-drained. The plant grows 24-30" tall at maturity.

Euphorbia "Helena's Blush"

This easy to grow perennial will thrive in sun to partial sun. It grows 16-20" in height and will spread from 18- 24" at maturity. This is a new variety of *Euphorbia* from Germany and is ideal for growing in containers as well. In spring, the plant is topped with clusters of chartreuse flowers, but the foliage is colorful even when the plant is not in bloom. This is an ideal landscaping plant.

Geranium pretense "Laura"

Our native Meadow Cranesbill has been greatly improved upon with this lovely new double white form. The plant is very prolific and the white flowers are blessed with the addition of hints of green at the center. Actually discovered over 20 years ago, it is a relatively new introduction to the list of perennials readily available. The plant is mounding and upright to about 28" and attracts butterflies. Folks in the Thumb area will appreciate the fact that it is fairly deer-resistant.

Hemerocallis "Ruby Spider"

Hemerocallis are commonly known as Day Lilies. 'Ruby Spider' offers so much more than common day lilies which can be seen growing in ditches everywhere in the Thumb area. Tolerating a wide range of soils and amounts of sun received throughout the day, *Hemerocallis* are widely adaptable to a variety of landscaping needs. 'Ruby Spider' is a multiple award winner, bearing gigantic 9" flowers. The ultimate height of the plant is 34" and will spread from 18-24". Blooming time is from mid-summer until early fall.

Heucherella "Sonic Smash"

"Sonic Smash" is an excellent low maintenance perennial that looks fabulous in all seasons. The leaves are unusually decorative, with prominent deep red to wine colored veins, a light silver overlay and a scalloped green margin. They are also substantial in size, reaching 5-6" across and forming an attractive, robust clump. The ultimate height of the plant is 12", with a spread of 28" and the plant has a high tolerance for heat and humidity. Partial shade will intensify the coloring in the leaves.

Hosta "American Hero"

Hostas have always been staples of shade gardens. This new variety, "American Hero", was introduced in support of military families across the United States and a portion of the proceeds of the sale of each plant will be donated to Project EverGreen, a national non-profit organization and creator of the GreenCare for Troops program. The height of this hosta is 12", with a spread of 22". Lavender flowers top the clumps in midsummer. As the plant matures, the twisting of the leaves becomes more pronounced and provides added interest to the plant.

Hydrangea paniculata "Vanilla Strawberry"

Demand for this new *Hydrangea* has been overwhelming and may make it difficult to find. However, the reward for locating the plant is well worth the effort. Starting in midsummer, large flower heads start off creamy-white, turn pink two weeks later and then finally become strawberry red or even burgundy. They retain that final color for about three to four weeks. New flower heads will continue to open into late summer, so the plants will display flowers in all three color stages at any one time. This *Hydrangea* likes full sun to partial shade and will grow in any average garden soil. Ultimately, it can grow to 6-7 feet in height, so give it plenty of space to display its beauty.

Iris "Brown Lasso"

Bearded irises have always been one of the most attention-getting perennials of the early summer garden and are so easy to grow in any sunny, well-drained location. This gorgeous version, "Brown Lasso" has actually been around since 1975 but has only recently become easy to find. The plants only reach two feet in height. Bearded irises and day lilies are great companion plants as, when the bearded irises stop blooming in mid-summer, the daylilies begin their showy display.

See *PERENNIALS*, Page 19



Heucherella "Sonic Smash"



Hosta "American Hero"



Hydrangea paniculata "Vanilla Strawberry"



Iris "Brown Lasso"



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PERENNIALS

Continued from Page 17

**Pennisetum alopecuroides
"Burgundy Bunny"**

This perennial miniature grass should be treated as an annual in areas where the temperature dips below -10°F in the winter. Some red coloring develops in the summer but by the beginning of fall and continuing until frost the entire plant is blazing red. It is a great container plant as well as a front of the border perennial, growing only about 12-18" in height and spreading to 16" at maturity. Although reported hardy to zone 5, some winter protection is suggested.



Pennisetum alopecuroides "Burgundy Bunny"

Phlox paniculata "Shockwave"

Phlox paniculata have always been known as one of the staples of the fall perennial garden. "Shockwave" will be no disappointment in that arena, but provides the additional season long attraction of its vibrant variegated gold and yellow leaves. The foliage is reason enough to grow this attractive variety. Blooming in late summer throughout fall, it grows to 12-18" in height and spreads to about 12". This variety likes at least six hours of full sun.



Phlox paniculata "Shockwave"

Physotegia "Pink Manners"

Physotegia, commonly known as Obedient Plant for its unusual characteristic of having hinged flowers that will stay in any position that they are placed, are another staple of the fall perennial garden. However, most Physotegia can become rampant in the tidy perennial border. "Pink Manners" has become known for its well-behaved, clump forming habit. It grows to a height of 36" without needing staking. This plant will grow equally well in the sunny to partially-shaded garden.



Physotegia "Pink Manners"



Sedum "Black Beauty"

Sedum "Black Beauty"

This is the perfect perennial to add color to your fall garden, long after many perennials have quit blooming. The deep purple to black foliage of "Black Beauty" is unusual and the well-branched stems produce masses of reddish-pink flower heads in late summer, lasting well into the fall. The plant is very drought tolerant and will grow in almost any soil. The mature plant reaches a height of 18-20", and will spread as wide as 12-18".



Sedum "Marchant's Best Red"

Sedum "Marchant's Best Red"

Here is another sedum to add color to the fall garden – a time of year when bright hues often seem to be absent. This variety has been the recipient of the Award of Garden Merit for the best dark-leaved sedum for all-season foliage color. It is a short variety, growing to a maximum of 12" in height. It appreciates a sunny, dry location and will reward the gardener by attracting birds and butterflies to the garden. This flower makes both a wonderful cut and dried flower. Sedums are low maintenance flowers that are very heat tolerant.



Veronica "Hocus Pocus"

Veronica "Hocus Pocus"

This plant really has everything a gardener could ask for in a Veronica: incredibly showy flowers, a uniform habit, clean foliage, and branched stems of flowers which result in a longer bloom time. Growing 16-20" in height, it even makes the perfect container plant. "Hocus Pocus" spreads only about 12" and will grow in a sunny to partially sunny location. It does need a consistent water supply to perform to its peak. An added bonus is that "Hocus Pocus" attracts butterflies to the garden. 🌱



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Hobby Corner

Button Collecting



By Sheri DeCew

Member of the Blue Water Buttoneers Club

Do you have a hobby? Ours is button collecting. If you exclaimed: "Buttons!" you'll be surprised to learn that button collecting is the third biggest hobby in the United States right behind stamp and coin collecting.

Or maybe, up until now, you have only thought about the button as a way to fasten clothes. However, buttons have long been miniature works of art and can also be used as records of history. In the 18th century, metal buttons in Europe were crafted with miniature scenes from fables, fairy tales, operas, and the theater on them. In other cases, the material of the button, such as celluloid or Bakelite, identifies a time period in history when it was commonly manufactured. Buttons also mark many historical events. George Washington wore special buttons the day he was inaugurated as the first President of the United States. Today, those buttons are worth a great deal of money to collectors.

Beginning collectors typically look for buttons based on topics or materials they are interested in. Maybe they love dogs and soon they are hunting for buttons depicting scenes with dogs on them. One can find almost any possible topic on a button, whether it is something as common as animals or as unique as 19th century bicycles. Or maybe it is the button material itself that fascinates them. The list of materials from which buttons are made is virtually endless.

How do people

find buttons for their collections? Most people will begin with their grandmother's button jar. Maybe you have one of those. Next, they might start looking at garage sales and antique markets. Computer users will discover that eBay is another source for finding buttons of interest. Lastly, there are button dealers who sell their wares at state shows. New collectors will need to learn how to properly clean, store and display their buttons so these tiny treasures can be enjoyed for many generations. Button clubs and organizations are a great place to learn such things.



People have been officially collecting buttons since the 1930s. Women who had little money to spend banded together and shared the buttons that they had cut off old clothes. The National Button Society was born. Today information on button collecting can be found online at their website www.nationalbuttonociety.org.

Michigan, along most other states, also has its own button society. Their website is www.michiganbuttonociety.org.

This website can put you in touch with a local club. Our club is The Blue Water Buttoneers who meet at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library. Experienced button collectors are always glad to share their knowledge with newcomers to their hobby. Next time you look at a box of buttons, take some time to closely observe and enjoy each button for its beauty, material and place in history. 🍀



A Star Is Born

Baby Aardvark Roxanne Shines in Detroit Zoo Web Feature

Submitted By Patricia Janeway

The Detroit Zoological Society

Aardvark Roxanne is the Detroit Zoo's newest star. The adorable baby – whose name means "bright star" – was born Jan. 8, 2011. She is the second offspring of Rachael, 6, and Mchimbaji, 7; her sister, Amani, was born in December 2008.

A web feature with video and photos of Roxanne can be found on the Detroit Zoo's website at www.detroitzoo.org/roxanne. The baby aardvark will be seen with her parents and sister along with the Zoo's other aardvark, 1-year-old male Erdferkel, in their African Grasslands habitat this spring.

"Aardvarks are believed to be relatively plentiful in the wild, but not in zoos. Babies like Roxanne are special because they're both uncommonly cute and just plain uncommon," said Detroit Zoological Society Chief Life Sciences Officer Scott Carter. "We're excited to have our third baby aardvark in two years and to help this small population in zoos grow."

Aardvarks are small, hairless and fragile at birth, and aardvark mothers are sometimes clumsy and can accidentally injure their little ones. Roxanne weighed less than 4 pounds at birth and has since more than quadrupled in size. Mature aardvarks can weigh from 90 to 145 pounds and grow 5 to 6 feet in length.

Baby Roxanne and Mother Rachael are being carefully monitored by veterinarians and zookeepers at the Detroit Zoo.

The aardvark (*Orycteropus afer*) is an African mammal whose name derives from the Afrikaans word "earth pig." The animal's unusual appearance plays a role in its success as a forager. Its large ears point forward to enable it to



Baby aardvark Roxanne was born January 8, 2011 at the Detroit Zoo.

listen for the sound of insects during its nocturnal feeding forays. The snout is long and filled with hair that acts as a filter, letting scents in and keeping dirt out. Strong limbs and spoon-shaped claws can tear through the sturdiest of termite mounds and the most hard-packed earth, allowing the aardvark to trap insects with its long, sticky tongue which can be up to 12 inches long.

"Aardvarks are the real estate developers of their African grassland communities," said Carter. "They dig tunnels and burrows with ease, which are used by other animals when the aardvarks move on."

The Detroit Zoological Society is a non-profit organization that operates the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Zoo. Situated on 125 acres of naturalistic exhibits, the Detroit Zoo is located at the intersection of 10 Mile Road and Woodward Avenue, just off I-696, in Royal Oak. The Detroit Zoo is open daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. November through March (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day), 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. April through Labor Day and

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. the day after Labor Day through October. Admission is \$12 for adults 15 to 61, \$10 for senior citizens 62 and older, and \$8 for children ages 2 to 14 (children under 2 are free). The Belle Isle Nature Zoo is open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. year-round (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day); admission is free. For more information, call (248) 541-5717 or visit www.detroitzoo.org. 🍀



Detroit Zoological Society veterinarians and zookeepers are monitoring Rachael and Roxanne closely.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

February 4, 2011

Dear Editor,

My father shared a great article on birding (front page) with my son and I. We are all into caring for birds year round! My son is eight and he enjoyed the pictures, too!

Thank you for a terrific article!

What was even more interesting though was the article below that! I happened to glance at the obituary and upon further investigating I realized that it was my husband's great-great grandfather. My husband's father passed away a little over a year ago and several family members (including his mother) would love a copy. As it turns out (as told by my husband's father) Francis Palms' son lost everything, along with their inherited mansion, when it burnt down when my father-in-law was very young. He did have maids, servants, and even a chauffeur for a short time. We have never seen his obituary, so this was a real treat! 🐰



Thanks,
Anne Marie Williams

Editor's note: Anne Marie is referring to the articles, "Winter Backyard Birding in Michigan" and "Spotlight on a Small Town: Casco", both which appeared as cover stories for the January 2011 edition of ThumbPrint News. Francis Palms' obituary appeared as part of that article as Francis was one of the biggest landowners at one time in Casco.

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THE JOURNEY

Continued from Page 4

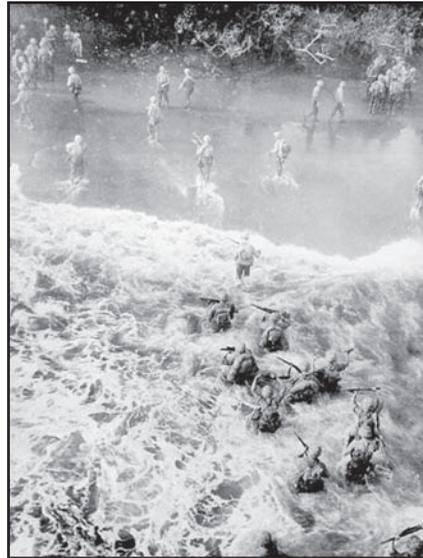
“hell on earth.” The “silent night” was soon to erupt.

On December 26th, Roy watched the awesome naval guns spit fire and shells across the water at the Japanese defenses on Cape Gloucester. “I watched the planes coming and going dropping bombs on the island, along with the bombardment from the ships. I could see the explosions and smoke rising up.”

In late December, the northwest monsoons come to New Britain and for three months subject the island to one of the heaviest concentrations of rain that falls anywhere on earth.

The bombings to weaken the Japanese defenses were over. The destroyers ended their bombardment with shells that provided a smoke screen on the shoreline. The infantry of the 1st Marine Division disappeared into the haze between the ships and the shore.

The Marines slogged through mangrove swamps, dense jungle and a



Marines wade ashore in three feet of rough water as they leave their LST to reach the beach at Cape Gloucester, New Britain on December 26, 1943. Inland, beyond a curtain of undergrowth, lie the swamp forest and the Japanese.

quagmire of muck. They were met by ambush from the treetops, mortars and machine guns. They fought off fierce Japanese “banzai attacks.” The Marines wouldn’t be stopped by “mother nature” or the Japanese.

Roy and his unit went ashore on the morning of December 27th to set up their water purification unit. “We had set up a unit on a creek. It was fresh

water until we saw a couple of dead Japanese soldiers float down. The creek came out of the mountains and the soldiers were in the water. We couldn’t use that water, so we had to switch over and go to the beach and bring in salt water. We had to convert the salt water to drinking water versus getting it from the fresh water stream.”

Roy tearfully remembers the infantry returning from the island interior. “You can’t imagine what they went through fighting a camouflaged enemy in the jungle for two weeks. When they returned they were haggard looking, their fatigues were ripped, and they had a hollow stare behind mud-caked, bearded faces. Combat in the jungle took a heavy toll on mind and body.”

The Battle for Hill 660 overlooking Borgen Bay on Cape Gloucester ended with the Marines achieving victory just before dawn on January 16, 1943 after two companies of Japanese soldiers counterattacked the Marines with bayonets. They gave their lives for their Emperor. There would be no surrender.

The Marines continued crisscrossing the island routing the enemy from treetops to mountain tops, from jungle to plantation, with organized resistance ending on March 9, after a skirmish on Mount Schlechter. The remaining Japanese soldiers had fled into the jungle, where earlier they had lain in wait to ambush the Marines. Now the trees, vines, and swamps that had protected them would digest them into a “green hell” from which there would be no return.

In total, 248 marines were killed in action and 772 were wounded. Approximately 3,100 Japanese soldiers were killed. U.S. Marines raised the “stars and stripes” at the captured airfield and Hill 660 that overlooked Borgen Bay.

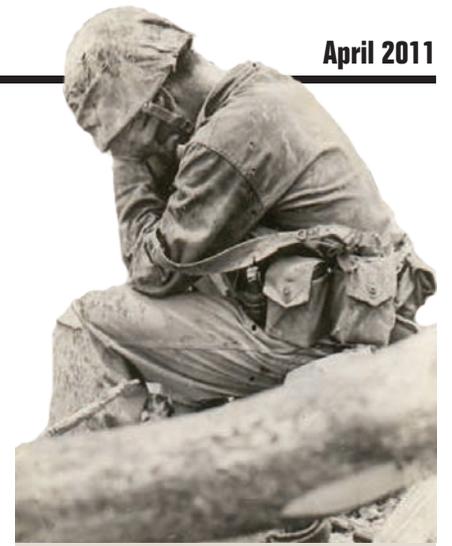
A surprise visitor arrived on Cape Gloucester on April 17th. General Douglas MacArthur arrived on the naval cruiser *Nashville*. The handshaking and pictures took less than two minutes.

Roy was back aboard ship heading for the Russell Islands, landing at Pavuvu, the largest island in the Solomon chain of islands. The rumors about returning to Melbourne were just rumors.

Next stop: Peleliu! 🍀

Continued in our next issue, we’ll read about two events that changed Roy’s life forever.

Editor’s note: Roy and Alice Hahn now live in Lexington, Michigan. They met during World War II and have been married 65 years. This installment is part 2 of a four-part story.



An unknown naturalist wrote the following after a visit to New Britain in the 1920s:

“When the day begins in the rainforest of New Britain, translucent morning mists hang without motion in the treetops . . . and the heat vibrates, and there is the sniff of the heavy damp odor of the forest. Within the forest, the light is dim, frequently suggesting twilight. The wind, as well as the light, is broken and the rain loses its force. Conditions are extremely constant, as if the inner parts of the forest were a natural conservatory.

The forest has a structure: the lower limits are the ground, the upper the forest roof supported by the forest skeleton, the trunks of giant trees. Not only is the forest real thick, but also, even in still stronger measure, the forest margin is closed by the overwhelming mass of lianas which frequently extend to the ground, and which can form so thick an overgrowth that the forest has been accurately called impenetrable.

There is no peace. The primeval forest is a mighty organism in which the struggle for existence among species is a life and death struggle. If the balance becomes disturbed, for example, through the crash of an old forest giant which in its fall has torn open a great place in the forest and has broken the forest roof, then we shall see immediately how the flora reacts to the infliction of the wound. There immediately arises in such a place a dense mass of tall herbs, shrubs, and young trees. At the same time the loose, flexible branches of lianas descend from the forest roof slowly to join with the lower flora and thus close anew the forest roof.

“In this struggle a few plants slowly triumph, in the long run, not more than one or two trees, and thereby the wound is healed. Meanwhile, fungi and bacteria have done their work, completely destroying the fallen trunk.”



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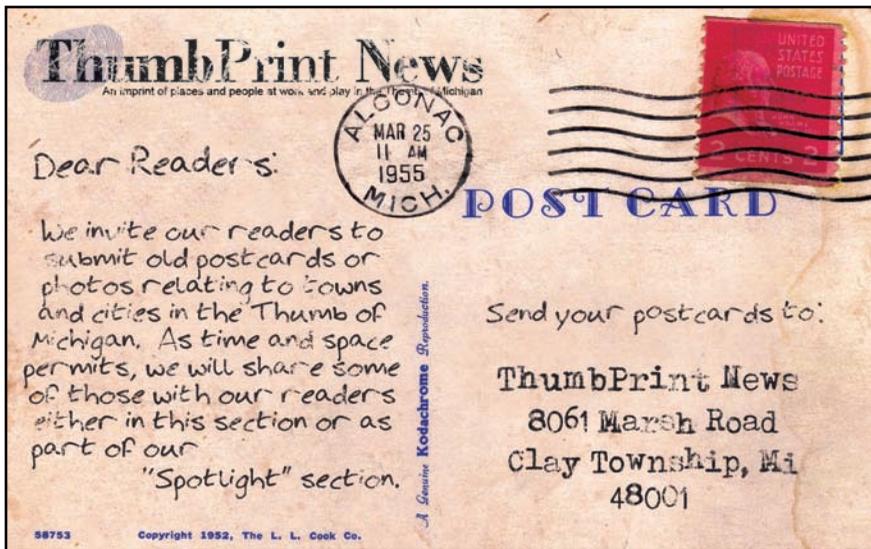
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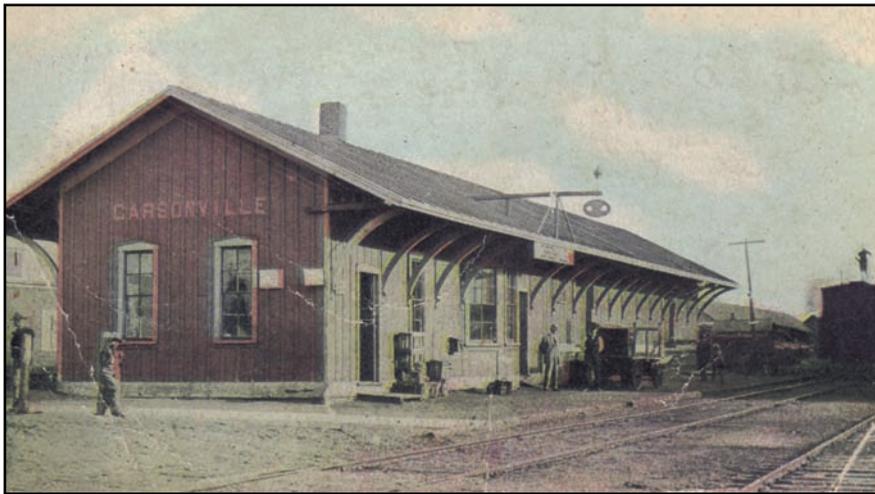
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Looking Back



- There are three ways that you can share these postcards and photos with us:
- If you have the capability to do a high resolution scan, you can email the scan to us at thumbprintnews@comcast.net. Please include all of the information that you can about where the photo is from and the year, if known. Also, please include your name and city so that we may give you credit for submitting it.
 - You may mail the postcard or photo to us at *ThumbPrint News*, 8061 Marsh Rd., Clay Township, MI, 48001. Again, please include the information listed above. If you want the postcard or photo returned to you, please be sure to let us know.
 - You may bring the postcard or photo to the *ThumbPrint News* office and we will scan it on our equipment.



The postmark on this postcard reads Dec. 22, 1910, Carsonville, Mich. A one cent stamp was all that was needed for this postcard in 1910.



The description on this card states that "The Algonac Inn is St. Clair River District's only Early American Dining Room. Excellent Food." The text of the post card indicates that the Algonac Inn will be open for the season on Saturday, April 9, 1955. It cost 2¢ to mail this postcard in 1955.

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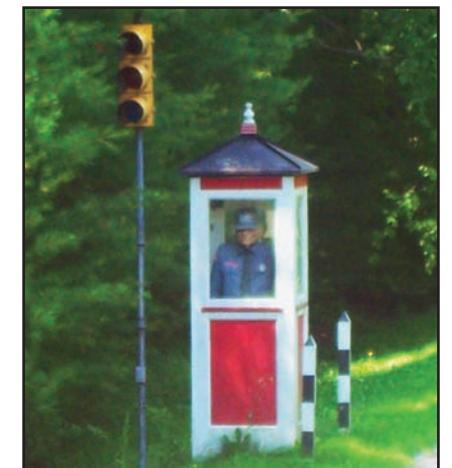
Each month, *ThumbPrint News* prints a photo of an object or a place for our readers to identify. If you think you know the answer, email us at thumbprintnews@comcast.net and put "Contest" in the subject line. All correct answers received by the 15th of the month will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate to Foxfire Farm Country Store at 8061 Marsh Road in Clay Township. (You can apply it toward the delivery of a floral arrangement also.) The winner of this month's contest will be announced in the May edition as well as information about the object or place. In March's edition, we

This month we are asking the question, "Where is it?" Identify where you can find the unique guard shack pictured below (please include the name of the street/highway and the city/town). We will give you a hint. It can be found in the Thumb area! Send an email to thumbprintnews@comcast.net if you think you know the answer. Include your name, address and phone number in case you are the winner of the random drawing for a gift certificate to Foxfire Farm Country Store. Good luck!



asked our readers to identify the object on the left. The winner of the drawing was Tracie Kriesch of

Columbus who correctly identified the object as an antique can opener. Tracie will receive a \$25 gift certificate from Foxfire Farm in Clay Township.



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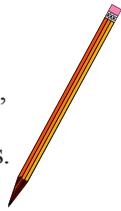
WHAT HAPPENED ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY?

By Diane L. Kodet
ThumbPrint News Editor

APRIL

1. On this day in 1748, the ruins of Pompeii were found.

2. On this day in 1827, Joseph Dixon began manufacturing lead pencils.



3. On this day in 1912, after only eight hours of sea trials, the *R.M.S. Titanic* left Belfast, Ireland bound for Southampton, England and her maiden voyage scheduled for April 10, 1912.



4. On this day in 1932, vitamin C was first isolated by C. C. King, at the University of Pittsburgh.

5. On this day in 1768, the first U.S. Chamber of Commerce formed (in New York City).

6. On this day in 1722, Peter the Great ended the tax on men with beards.

7. On this day in 1827, the English chemist John Walker invented wooden matches.

8. On this day in 1766, the first fire escape was patented – a wicker basket on a pulley and chain.



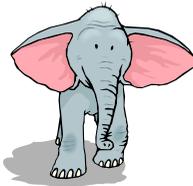
9. On this day in 1682, Robert La Salle claimed the lower Mississippi (Louisiana) for France.

10. On this day in 1872, Arbor Day was first celebrated in Nebraska, later changed to April 22.

11. On this day in 1890, Ellis Island was designated as an immigration station.

12. On this day in 1844, Texas became a U.S. territory.

13. On this day in 1796, the first elephant arrived in the U.S. from India.



14. On this day in 1828, the first edition of Noah Webster's dictionary was published.

15. On this day in 1996, the Detroit Red Wings won the NHL record of 62 games.



16. On this day in 1900, the U.S. Post Office issued the first books of postage stamps.

17. On this day in 1629, the first commercial fishery was established.

18. On this day in 1775, Paul Revere rode from Charleston to Lexington.



19. On this day in 1770, Captain James Cook first saw Australia.

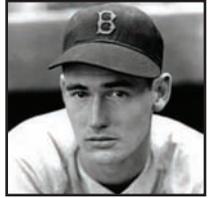
20. On this day in 1853, Harriet Tubman started the Underground Railroad.



21. On this day in 1789, John Adams was sworn in as the first U.S. Vice President (nine days before George Washington was sworn in as the first U.S. President).

22. On this day in 1526, the first slave revolt occurred in South Carolina.

23. On this day in 1939, Boston Red Sox's Ted Williams hit his first home run.



24. On this day in 1833, a patent was granted for the first soda fountain.

25. On this day in 1684, a patent was granted for the thimble.



26. On this day in 1721, the smallpox vaccination was first administered.

27. On this day in 1805, the U.S. Marines attacked the shores of Tripoli.

28. On this day in 1914, W. H. Carrier patented the air conditioner.

29. On this day in 1905, two inches of rain fell in ten minutes in Taylor, Texas.

30. On this day in 1942, the first submarine built on the Great Lakes was launched.



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Thumb Area Activities & Events for April 2011

If you have an event in May that you would like listed in the May issue of *ThumbPrint News*, please email it to ThumbPrintNews@comcast.net by April 12, 2011. There is no charge for the listing.

Editor's note: Before traveling beyond your home town to attend any of these events, please call ahead for any changes in dates or times or for any cancellations.

Genesee County

Flint – April 14

Ask the Lawyer Free Community Seminar, Flint Public Library, 1026 E. Kearsley St., 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. The topic is "The American with Disabilities Act – Employment and Housing/The Family and Medical Leave Act." Space is limited. RSVP by calling (810) 232-6000 or online at www.gcbalaw.org.

Huron County

Harbor Beach – April 16

Easter Egg Hunt, downtown area, Murphy Museum lawn. Kids hunt for Easter Eggs and candy all day long. Contact Jennifer Kerry at (989) 479-6959.

Port Austin – April 23

Easter Egg Hunt, Gallup Park, M-25 and Sand Rd., noon. Be sure to be prompt as the event will start on time. Egg hunt is for children ages 2-10. Contact Joyce Stanek at (989) 738-7600.

Lapeer County

Almont – April 9

Euchre Night, Almont Lions Hall, 222 Water St., doors open at 6:00 p.m., play starts at 7:00 p.m. Two sets of five games each with a break in between. Refreshments and lunch served during break. Generous prizes are awarded to top three points holders. \$15 donation at the door. Bring a first time player with you and you and the new player play for \$10. Call Don at (810) 798-9609.

Macomb County

Harrison Township – April 2

A.B.Y.A. Charity Fundraiser Texas Hold-em Tournament, Huron Pointe Yacht Club, 32800 S. River Rd., 1:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Tournament will be limited to the first 100 entrants, 50% of income will go to prizes. Cash bar and hotdogs will be available. Registration begins at noon. Advance registration with a non-refundable payment of \$40. Call Rick Watros at (248) 892-9032.

Clinton Township – April 4

Dancing at Main, Main Branch of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, 40900 Romeo Plank Rd., 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. This is an opportunity for little ones

and their parents to dance their wiggles out. Registration is required. Please call (586) 226-5030 to register.

Macomb Township – April 5

Life-Sized Game of Candy Land, North Branch of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, 16800 24 Mile Rd., 2:00 p.m., 2:20 p.m. and 2:40 p.m. Children will draw their own playing cards and become the game pieces as they move through a life-sized version of the game. Registration is required. Call (586) 226-5083.

Shelby Township – April 8

6th Annual Raise the Roof Benefit, Enchantment Banquet Hall, 46915 Hayes, 6:30 p.m. The event costs \$50 and features a strolling dinner, beer and wine, entertainment and silent auctions. Proceeds benefit the Macomb County Habitat for Humanity. Tickets can be purchased by calling (586) 263-1540 or at www.macombhabitat.org.

Clinton Township – April 20

The History of Vernor's Ginger Ale, Main Branch of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, 40900 Romeo Plank Rd., 6:30 p.m. Dr. Keith Wunderlich, a Vernor's memorabilia collector, will share his collection as well as the fascinating story of the Vernor's brand. Registration begins April 6. Call (586) 226-5040 or visit www.cmpl.org.

Mt. Clemens – April 25

Habitat Movie Night, Emerald Theatre, 31 North Walnut, 6:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Cost is a free will donation that will support Macomb County Habitat for Humanity's efforts to build affordable housing throughout Macomb County. Popcorn will be provided free of charge thanks to the Detroit Popcorn Company, and food will be available for purchase. This will be a triple feature, "Despicable Me," "The Wedding Planner," and one movie to be determined.

Richmond – April 28, 29 & 30

Rummage Sale, St. Augustine Parish Hall, 68035 Main St., 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Friday, 9:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m.-noon on Sunday. On Saturday only there will be a \$1 Bag Sale. contact Kathy at (586) 727-3666 or Rosemary at (810) 543-0402.

Oakland County

Rochester – April 16

Bunnies and Awesome Egg Dyeing, Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve, 333 North Hill Circle, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Meet a real bunny close-up while we learn all about these wonderful animals. Then we will try our hand at dyeing eggs using unique and creative techniques. We have pots of many different colors to try and you'll see how the dyes were made. We will then decorate our own bunny-themed cupcakes for a special treat. Call (248) 656-0999.

Rochester – April 22

Earth Day Family Night Campfire, Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve, 333

North Hill Circle, 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Join us around the campfire as we celebrate Earth Day and make some cool "re-used" windchimes. Fun for all ages, snacks provided. (248) 656-0999.

St. Clair County

Emmett – April 2

Texas Hold'em Tournament, Emmett Lions Hall, 10830 Mary St., doors open at 6:00 p.m., play begins at 7:00 p.m.-midnight. Call for reservations. Limited to the first 64 players 18 years or older. \$50 buy-in, 60% payout guarantee (after initial places are paid). Payout is based on the number of players. Proceeds go to the Emmett Lions Club Community Projects. Hot dogs, sloppy joes and coffee will be served. Call (810) 392-3069 or (810) 706-0203.

Marine City – April 19

61st Annual Spring Luncheon – Card Party, Knights of Columbus Hall, King Rd., 12:30-4:00 p.m. A donation of \$10 can be paid in advance or at the door on day of event. call Marilyn Dunn @ (810) 765-5556.

St. Clair – April 6

Vision Support Group Meeting, St. John River District Hospital, 4100 River Rd., 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., contact Paul Dailer at (810) 329-5172.

Port Huron – April 8

Darrin Hagel as Elvis, Port Huron Senior Center, 600 Grand River, 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15. (810) 984-5061.

Port Huron – April 9

English Tea with Music, First Congregational Church, 723 Court St., 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Area music students and their teachers will be providing classical music. Silent auction. Funds raised are for Summer Music Camp for award winning students. Visit The Port Huron Musicale at our website www.theporthuronmusicale.com and view pictures of our 2010 English Tea. Tickets are a \$15 donation. Call (810) 637-8273 for tickets.

Port Huron – April 16

BPW Club of Port Huron Luncheon Celebration, Black River Country Club, 3300 Country Club Drive, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. We are celebrating 70 years of contributions to the Blue Water area. Former members are invited and encouraged to come. Please contact Joanne at (810) 329-4953 to reserve your spot for this milestone occasion. The club is also looking for memories to include in its story, so if you have one to share, contact Joanne. The cost of the luncheon is \$20.

Port Huron – April 17

2011 Railroad Show and Swap Shop Model Train Show, McMorrان Place, 701 McMorrان Blvd., 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Admission is \$5, children 5 and under are free. The event is open to all exhibitors with an interest in model railroading of all scales and gauges. Also, railroad memorabilia, antiques, timetables, dining car silverware and

china or any railroad items may be displayed. Reserve your table space early as space is strictly limited. Call Fred at (810) 385-8815.

Port Huron – April 27

St. Clair County Family History Group, Port Huron Museum, 115 Sixth St., 7:30 p.m. Guests and new members are welcome to attend. Anyone interested in local history or researching their family tree is encouraged to become a member of our group or just attend one of our meetings. www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~miscfchg/ or (810) 989-0399.

Port Huron – April 30

Mom 2 Mom Sale, Port Huron Senior Center, 600 Grand River, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Six foot tables rent for \$10 and eight foot tables rent for \$15. Contact Karen at (810) 984-5061 for information or table rental.

Port Huron – April 30

Mom 2 Mom Sale, Salvation Army, 2000 Court St., 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Rent an 8 foot table to sell your items for \$10 per table. Only 20 spots are available. Secure a spot by paying by April 27. Hot dogs, chips and lemonade will be available. Admission is \$1. Proceeds will help with missionary work. Call Lynn Bezenah at (810) 982-3234 or Kourtney Thomas at (810) 300-7160 to sign up for a table.

Sanilac County

Lexington – April 9

Thumbfest Benefit Concert, Trinity Episcopal Church, 5646 Main St. (M-25), 7:00 p.m. Admission is a free will donation. Event is presented by the Blue Water Folk Society which promotes traditional and acoustic music in the Thumb. Featured musicians will be Floyd King and the Bushwackers and L. L. Blues (Larry Stevens and Larry Everhart). Contact (586) 727-5197 or go to www.bluewaterfolk.org or www.thumbfest.org.

Sandusky – April 9

Thumb Dance Club, Sandusky Middle School, 395 South Sandusky Rd., 7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Featuring the music of Jim and Howard. Everyone is welcome. Bring finger foods and friends. Admission is \$4 for members and \$4.50 for non-members. Annual membership is \$10. Call Leola at (810) 657-9349 or Dorothy at (810) 404-4250.

Tuscola County

Caro – April 23

Easter Egg Drop, Colwood Church, 1840 N. Colwood Road, 11:00 a.m. FREE helicopter drop! This year at our FREE community event, we are planning to drop 100,000 plastic eggs full of candies and toys. Kid's bouncers, Caro Fire Department trucks and plenty of other surprises on hand to create the perfect Easter memory for your family. Contact Sherri Hoy at (989) 673-3274 or by email at hello@colwood.org.

ARBOR DAY

Continued from Page 6

in Nebraska and the date selected for that year and future years became April 22, J. Sterling's birthdate.

Throughout the 1870s, other states passed legislation to celebrate Arbor Day and by 1882, the popularity of Arbor Day as a tradition to be celebrated in schools was well established nationwide.



A Nebraska school celebrates Arbor Day circa 1887.

Today, most states, including Michigan, celebrate Arbor Day on the last Friday in April. Several U.S. presidents have proclaimed that day to be a national Arbor Day. However, a number of individual states set their own dates for Arbor Day that best coincide with optimum tree planting weather in their states.

The tradition of planting trees on Arbor Day continues. The value of planting trees includes cleaning the air, beautifying neighborhoods, providing homes for wildlife, conserving energy and topsoil and helping to keep the atmosphere in balance. In the words of J. Sterling Morton, "Other holidays repose upon the past; Arbor Day proposes for the future." Indeed, it is the future generations who will call this earth home that benefit most when a tree is planted.

The original home of J. Sterling and Caroline Morton eventually grew to a stately mansion of 52 rooms which they called Arbor Lodge. In it, they raised four sons. In 1923, members of the Morton family donated the mansion to the state of Nebraska. Today it is maintained as a State Historical Park, in honor of J. Sterling Morton. 🌱



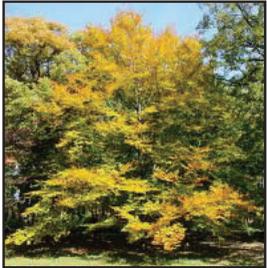
Arbor Lodge, the former mansion of J. Sterling Morton, is now a Nebraska State Historical Park.

Ten Native Michigan Trees

By **Ralph McKinch**

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

<p>White Pine – <i>Pinus strobes</i></p> 	<p>Also known as Eastern white pine, this tree is the largest of all the eastern conifers. Its needles are in groups of five and are 2½ to 5 inches long. The buds are dark brown to reddish brown and are sticky and aromatic. The cones are 4 to 8 inches long are also covered with resin. The bark of older trees has a rectangular block-like pattern. It is the state tree of Michigan and several other states.</p>  <p><i>White Pine needles</i></p>
<p>Quaking Aspen – <i>Populus tremuloides</i></p> 	<p>The quaking aspen grows from 50 to 70 feet tall. The leaves are alternate. The buds on the tree are conical and sharply pointed. The bark is whitish green to gray. A whitish cotton-like material produced in late spring contains the ¼ inch long seed of the tree. The tree is the most widely distributed tree in North America and is very fast growing.</p>  <p><i>Quaking Aspen during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Quaking Aspen leaves</i></p>
<p>Box Elder – <i>Acer negundo</i></p> 	<p>The box elder is a small to medium sized tree with a bushy, spreading crown. Its leaves are compound. Stout, greenish buds are often covered with a bluish bloom. The light brown bark has narrow interlacing ridges that are separated by shallow furrows. Flowers are produced in racemes in the fall. The female tree is often attacked by the box-elder bug and is often short lived. The tree can be tapped to produce a type of maple syrup.</p>  <p><i>Box Elder during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Box Elder leaves</i></p>
<p>Silver Maple – <i>Acer saccharinum</i></p> 	<p>The silver maple is a medium sized tree. Its leaves have five lobes with a silvery underside. Reddish brown rounded clusters of flower buds appear in the spring. The bark is silvery gray on young trees. Older trees develop long thin scaly plates. This tree is fast growing with brittle branches. It is a bottomland species and doesn't like dry soil.</p>  <p><i>Silver Maple during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Silver Maple leaves</i></p>
<p>PawPaw – <i>Asimina triloba</i></p> 	<p>The pawpaw is an understory tree, growing up to 30 feet in height. Its leaves are 7 to 10 inches long and elliptical. The stout twigs and naked buds are covered with reddish hairs. The bark is smooth and brown. The tree produces edible fruit from three to five inches long, tasting similar to banana custard.</p>  <p><i>PawPaw during fall</i></p>  <p><i>PawPaw leaves and fruit</i></p>
<p>Yellow Birch – <i>Betula alleghaniensis</i></p> 	<p>The yellow birch is a medium sized tree, growing from 60 to 70 feet in height. Its leaves are oblong to ovate. The slender, yellowish-brown to dark brown twigs and buds have a wintergreen odor and taste. The bark is gold-gray to bronze colored. On mature trees the bark peels into papery strips. It is the most important of the native birches and is moderately tolerant of various types of soils.</p>  <p><i>Yellow Birch during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Yellow Birch leaves</i></p>

<p>Eastern Cottonwood – <i>Populus deltoides</i></p> 	 <p>The Eastern cottonwood is a hardy very large tree, growing from 80 to 100 feet in height and 40 to 60 feet in width and it has a fast growth rate. The bark is coarse. The toothed leaves are two to five inches long and turn yellow in the fall. The tree prefers full sun and wet soil. It is salt and drought tolerant and pH adaptable.</p> <p><i>Eastern Cottonwood leaves</i></p>  <p><i>Eastern Cottonwood during fall</i></p>
<p>Red Oak – <i>Quercus rubra</i></p> 	 <p>The red oak is a large tree, growing from 60 to 80 feet in height. Its leaves are oblong and alternate. The buds are moderately stout, green-brown to reddish brown and are pointed. The dark bark has lighter vertical trails. The acorns are one to two inches long, with a fringed cap.</p> <p><i>Red Oak during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Red Oak leaves</i></p>
<p>Sassafras – <i>Sassafras albidum</i></p> 	 <p>Sassafras is normally a small to medium sized tree with deeply furrowed, dark brown bark. Its inner bark is reddish-orange and aromatic (smelling like root beer). The twigs are green with an aromatic, spicy odor. There are three forms of leaves on the same tree – elliptical, two-lobed and three-lobed. Sassafras tea was made in the past by heating the root bark in water.</p> <p><i>Sassafras during fall</i></p>  <p><i>Sassafras leaves</i></p>
<p>American Beech – <i>Fagus grandifolia</i></p> 	 <p>The American beech is a medium to large sized tree, growing from 70 to 80 feet tall. The leaves are alternate and elliptical. The tree has slender twigs and long pointed terminal buds. Nuts are produced in four-parted involucre. The bark is light gray and smooth. The tree has a wide growing range and is even found as far south as Mexico.</p> <p><i>American Beech during fall</i></p>  <p><i>American Beech leaves</i></p>

Ideas for Celebrating Arbor Day

From The Arbor Day Foundation website: www.arborday.org

Below you will find suggestions for group celebrations of Arbor Day, many of which would be appropriate for schools, clubs, and civic organizations:



- **Raise the flag,** strike up the band, make Arbor Day fun. Make it memorable.
- **Organize a beautification project in a public area.**
- **Get people into action.** Ask a civic or service group to promote a paper drive to gather paper to be recycled and save a tree. Use the proceeds to buy a special tree to plant in a park or other special public place.
- **Hold a poster contest, or a poetry contest.**
- **Sponsor a children’s pageant or play.**
- **Fill the air with music.** Have an Arbor Day concert of songs about trees, or with tree names in their titles.
- **Sponsor a tree trivia contest.** Give away trees to winners.
- **Conduct a tree search.** Ask people to find large, unusual or historic trees in your community. Once the results are in, publish a map that highlights the winners, or hold a walk showcasing them.
- **Tell people to take a hike** – a tree identification hike – and have Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts act as guides.
- **Dedicate a forest,** or a tree, or a flower bed in a park, and make it an occasion to talk about stewardship. Get a local nursery or garden center to hold an open house or field day. Organize an Arbor Day Fair.
- **Encourage neighborhood organizations** to hold block parties and get their members to adopt and care for street trees in front of their homes. Pass out buttons. Give away trees. 🌱



The Value of Trees to a Community

Gathered by **Diane L. Kodet**

ThumbPrint News Editor

“The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.”

U.S. Department of Agriculture

“Healthy, mature trees add an average of 10 percent to a property’s value.”

USDA Forest Service

“Trees can be a stimulus to economic development, attracting new business and tourism. Commercial retail areas are more attractive to shoppers, apartments rent more quickly, tenants stay longer, and space in a wooded setting is more valuable to sell or rent.”

The National Arbor Day Foundation



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SPOTLIGHT: Riley Township

Continued from Page 1

Slyck Ryley (Riley) of German descent and his mother was Me-naw-cam-e-goqua from the Ojibwe (Chippewa) tribe. John's father had bought land in this area in the early 1800s and gave John a life lease on it for a rental of six cents a year. John was the chief of the 200-member Blackwater band of Indians (often called the Riley Band of Indians), who lived on the Black River Reservation (also referred to as the Riley Reservation).

The Blackwater River band had a 1,287-acre reservation from 1807 to 1836 in the frontier settlement that would become Port Huron. John's brothers, Peter and James, were also members of the band. John lived near the mouth of the Black River in a two-room block house (presently the corner of Water Street and Military Trail, Port Huron). Often as many as a dozen or more Indians of this

band would sleep on blankets in one of the two rooms. The other room was used by John Riley and his wife. Cooking of the meals was all done outside.

The Riley Band of Indians was friendly to the Americans during the War of 1812, giving them much aid. It is even believed that John Riley acted as a guide for General Cass in repelling one of the Indian attacks on Detroit in 1812. John also acted as an official interpreter for the Americans at Detroit in 1815. The Americans rewarded John and his two brothers for their loyalty in 1819 as part of the treaty of Saginaw in which each brother received 640 acres of land. Riley Township in St. Clair County was named after the family.

John Riley opened a store near the Belle River in what is now Riley Township. He was well-regarded as a store owner, being well-educated and appearing more white than Indian (a trait that was important to the residents

of the area, reflecting the prejudices of the era). He spoke both his native tongue, as well as English and French.

John had many Indians as his customers and often granted them large amounts of credit. Unfortunately, his generous spirit and his fondness for alcohol were his downfall. Failing to collect debts that were owed to him caused him to have to close his store. Fits of temper during drinking binges almost cost him his wife. He sold his business in 1836 (the same year that the Black River Reservation surrendered its land) and moved to Muncie Town on the Thames River in Canada, where he died in 1842.

Patrick and Bridget Keough Dunigan and their friend, Michael Harrington,

are believed to be the first white settlers in the area that would later become Emmett and Riley Townships. Patrick and Bridget's son, Michael, was the first child of European descent to be born in this region on February 12, 1840.

John Grinnell, who was born August 2, 1809 in Connecticut, was another one of the earliest settlers of this area. When John was nine years old, he moved with his family to New York, where he lived until 1837 when he came to Michigan and settled in the town of Riley. For seven or eight years after arriving in this area, he worked in the lumbering business. Following that, he bought land and cleared 200 acres for farming. The first saw and grist mill in

During the mid-1920s, there was a large fire in town that burned down or damaged several of the existing buildings. Checking out the information with the Riley Township Hall, I was referred to Edric Howe, whom I was told is a wealth of information about Riley Center in days gone by.

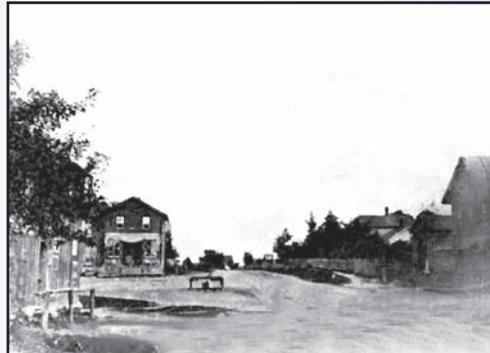
Edric is 95 years old and is the great grandson of John Howe, one of the early settlers and farmers mentioned earlier in the article. Edric currently lives in Florida, but was kind enough to share his reminiscences with me by phone:

"I remember the fire. At that time there were 19 people on a party-line for the telephones in town. One long ring on the phone was the fire alarm. When that alarm went off, all of us jumped into a Model T Ford to race into town to see what was burning. The car was a new 1926, so I know the fire occurred around that time. My grandfather lived across from the grocery store. It burned down during the fire. So did a gristmill, a blacksmith shop and a church."

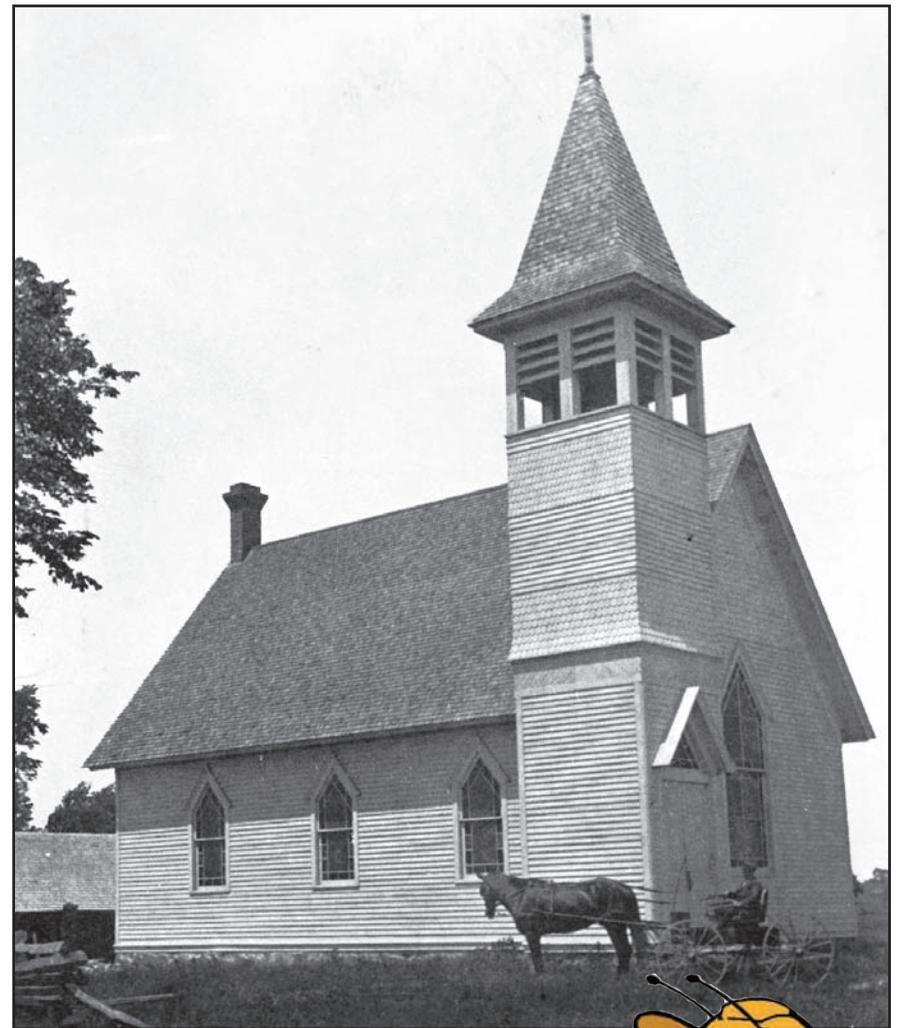
Edric also mentioned that at one time Riley Center had a new car business that sold Star and Durant cars.

"My grandfather, Lucius, though drove a Model T. Every fall he would drive it to Florida to meet up with friends. He said that when you mentioned Riley Center down in Florida at that time, someone always knew where it was."

There was also an old well in the center of the crossroads. "Most people had water at their homes, but it was used when they needed extra water for some reason," states Edric.



Riley Center circa 1900, showing the old well in the center of town



Early church of Riley Center

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the area were built by John. In 1871 he further expanded his business ventures by joining several other entrepreneurs in building a woolen factory.

John Grinnell's impressive list of jobs held included Representative to the State Legislature, Justice of the Peace, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Highway Commissioner and Superintendent of the Poor.

Martin Ellwood was the first postmaster of the Village of Riley beginning on June 7, 1867. The post office operated at this location until September 30, 1933.

John Howe was another of the early pioneers of Riley Township. He was born in London, England, on April 10, 1818. As a young man, he owned a dry goods store there. Soon after marrying and the birth of his first daughter, he immigrated to the United States, first settling in Genesee County, Michigan, where he began farming.

Farming at that time presented huge obstacles and opportunities as rich land was developed out of raw prairie and timber lands. John Howe was a master of this. Not satisfied with the lands of Genesee County, he eventually settled in Riley Township where he became one of the leading farmers of the area for many years. He was also actively involved in the political scene of his day and held various township offices. He and his wife eventually had six children together and several of his descendants still live in the area.

Another Native American, Ain-ose, who was a sister of Chief Francois Maconse, resided in the town of Riley in the mid-1800s and became a successful business owner. She had her own house and a sleigh, which she would use to drive into Port Huron in the winter. There W.H.B. Dowling, one of Port Huron's early merchants, would help load up her sleigh with goods that she could sell to the Indians upon her



The Masters Road bridge in Riley Township was built during the Great Depression.

return to Riley. She paid Mr. Dowling for the goods with a sleigh full of cranberries.

The Saginaw Chippewa tribe, who operate Michigan's largest casino in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, contains descendants from the original Riley Blackwater Tribe. They have been active in the past few years in their lobbying efforts to establish an Indian-owned casino in the Port Huron area. Riley Township, St. Clair County, Michigan, has a rich history, starting with the early Native Americans and continuing with the early pioneers who farmed and lumbered in the Thumb area of Michigan. Their influence is still felt today.

In more recent history, during the Depression, St. Clair County's residents were hit especially hard. The county's road commission applied for federal relief funds for road and bridge work to put the unemployed of St. Clair County back to work. At this time, the county's road system was in dire need of repair, so this was an opportune time for obtaining the needed funds. At least two bridges in Riley Township were built during these years, the Masters Road/ Belle River bridge and the Riley Center Road bridge.

Today, Riley Center is the home to The Life of Riley Party Store, a township hall, a church, a township park and several businesses. Few people remain, however, who remember the "good old days" as well as Edric. 🌱

KIDS' KORNERS



Poetry to Celebrate Arbor Day

Collected by Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Let's Plant A Tree

By Aileen Fisher

It's time to plant a tree, a tree.
What shall it be? What shall it be?

Let's plant a pine - we can't go wrong;
a pine is green the whole year long.

Let's plant a maple - more than one,
to shade us from the summer sun.

Let's plant a cherry - you know why:
there's nothing like a cherry pie!

Let's plant an elm, the tree of grace,
where robins find a nesting place.

Let's plant an apple - not too small,
with flowers in spring and fruit in fall.

Let's plant a fir - so it can be
a lighted outdoor Christmas tree.

Let's plant a birch, an oak, a beech,
there's something extra-nice in each...

In winter, summer, spring or fall.

Let's plant a . . .

why not plant them ALL?

Any Me I Want to Be

By Karla Kuskin

If you stood with your feet in the earth
Up to your ankles in grass
And your arms had leaves running over them
And every once in awhile one of your leafy fingers
Was nudged by a bird flying past,
If the skin that covers you from top to tip
Wasn't skin at all, but bark
And you never moved your feet from their place
In the earth
But stood rooted in one spot come

- Rain
- Wind
- Snow
- Sleet
- Thaw
- Spring
- Summer
- Winter
- Fall
- Blight
- Bug
- Day
- Dark

Then you would be me:
A tree.



Life of Riley Party Store today at the Riley Center crossroads.

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It's Asparagus Time in Michigan!

By Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Around the end of April in Michigan is the time to start looking for wild stalks of asparagus poking up along roadways, along the edges of ditches and on abandoned farmlands. However, since the stalks are best cut way before their ferny fronds start showing, it can be elusive, hidden among weeds, grasses and other roadside plants. The easiest way to locate a patch of wild asparagus is to look for the golden fern like tops in late fall. That way, next spring you will know where to look for the hidden spears!

However, asparagus is easy to grow in any well drained fertile soil in a sunny location and is well worth the initial effort. Soil that is a little on the sandy side is ideal. Clay soil is not recommended as the asparagus will tend to rot. Well-prepared beds of asparagus can easily produce spears for 50 years or more and continue increasing annually. The only real disadvantage of planting your own asparagus is that you will need to allow

three seasons for it to establish itself before you can begin harvesting it, otherwise you will greatly affect future yields of the vegetable.

The asparagus plant is a member of the lily family, which also includes onions, leeks and garlic. It is a perennial plant, which means it comes back year after year. It was first cultivated in Greece about 2,500 years ago and the word "asparagus" itself is a Greek word meaning stalk or shoot.



In the fall, a patch of wild asparagus is easier to locate.

Here are the directions for planting your own bed of asparagus:

Equipment Needed:

- Asparagus roots, preferably an all-male variety which are more prolific, from a respected local nursery or mail-order catalog. You will need about ten asparagus roots for every ten square feet of garden space.
- Tiller or shovel
- Compost or 0-20-20 fertilizer

Directions:

- Pick a well-drained area for your asparagus plot that receives at least six hours of sunlight daily.
- Till the area chosen once nighttime temperatures reach about 50°F.
- Add a little well-aged manure, if desired.
- Dig a furrow about eight inches deep, using a shovel or a spade. Add the compost or fertilizer to the bottom of the furrow.
- Set the roots in the furrow, about 1½ feet apart. Spread the roots out and have

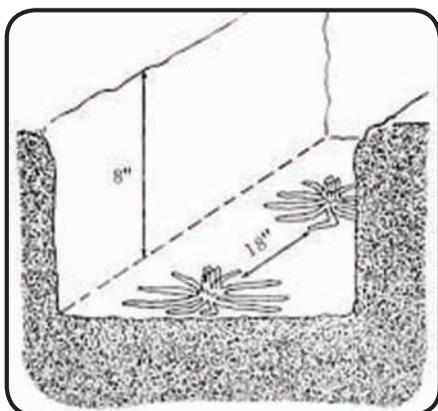


Asparagus roots are ready to plant.

the crown facing upwards.

- Fill in the furrows with soil, up to the level of the rest of the ground. Do not compact the soil.
- Water lightly. Spears should begin emerging within about a week.
- Allow these spears to grow uncut for three seasons. In the fall of the year, after the plants have produced their fern-like tops and the leaves have all turned golden, they may be cut down to the ground. Dispose of the trimmings as they often will harbor eggs of the asparagus beetle, which can wreck havoc with your plants in subsequent years.

Now, let's pretend that it is three seasons past and you are ready to harvest that wonderful crop of asparagus in your garden. In Michigan, the first spears start to push up out of the ground around the end of April or the beginning of May. Once they do, they grow extremely quickly in the warming temperatures,



Prosciutto Wrapped Asparagus

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound prosciutto, sliced
- 1/2 (8 ounce) package Neufchatel cheese, softened
- 12 spears fresh asparagus, trimmed

Directions

- Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C).
- Spread prosciutto slices with Neufchatel cheese. Wrap slices around 2 or 3 asparagus spears. Arrange wrapped spears in a single layer on a medium baking sheet.
- Bake 15 minutes in the preheated oven, until asparagus is tender.
- Yield is approximately 4 servings.

Asparagus Florentine

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 pounds fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can condensed cream of celery soup, undiluted
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon ground mustard
- Dash pepper
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, cubed
- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

Directions

- Place asparagus in a saucepan with a small amount of water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 3-5 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and set aside. In a large saucepan, saute onion and garlic in butter until tender.
- In a bowl, whisk together the soup, water, egg yolks, Worcestershire sauce, mustard and pepper. Whisk in lemon juice. Add to onion mixture. Add cream cheese. Cook and stir over low heat until cheese is melted. Stir in spinach and asparagus; heat through.
- Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 325 degrees F for 30-35 minutes or until a thermometer reads 160 degrees F. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Asparagus Cheese Strata

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds fresh asparagus, cut into 2 inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1 (1 pound) loaf sliced bread, crusts removed
- 3/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
- 2 cups cubed cooked ham
- 6 eggs
- 3 cups milk
- 2 teaspoons dried minced onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard

Directions

- In a saucepan, cover asparagus with water; cover and cook until just tender but still firm. Drain and set aside.
- Lightly brush butter over one side of bread slices. Place half of the bread, buttered side up, in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup cheese. Layer with asparagus and ham.
- Cover with remaining bread, buttered side up.
- In a bowl, lightly beat eggs; add milk, onion, salt and mustard; pour over bread.
- Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- Bake, uncovered, at 325 degrees F for 50 minutes.
- Sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Return to the oven for 10 minutes or until cheese is melted and a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.
- This strata is delicious for brunch or for a main dish at lunch or dinner.

sometimes as much as 12 inches in one day! You can start cutting down all of the spears that are bigger than a pencil when they are about 8 inches tall. Use a sharp knife to cut the spears at ground level. If it is a sunny warm day, there will be more to cut each day for a period of about six to seven weeks. After that, the spears start to become woody and the remaining spears should be allowed to grow so they will spread and there will be even a greater abundance to harvest the following year.

If you have an over abundance of asparagus, share some with your

neighbors and friends. Also, asparagus freezes beautifully. Blanch it for no more than ½ minute in boiling water and then immediately submerge in cold water. Drain well. Line up the asparagus on waxed paper on a cookie sheet, keeping a small space between each spear. Once frozen, you can put the spears in Baggies to take out and use over the winter months in all of your favorite recipes.

Although most people cook asparagus, it is equally tasty raw. Use in salads or sprinkle a light oil and vinegar or your favorite salad dressing over a plateful of these delicious springtime treats. 🌱

Time For Food Plots!

By Bryon McClain

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Hello again everyone! I know I've been absent for a few months, but hopefully you'll accept me back into your lives again as a regular writer for this great Michigan publication. It's been a very busy winter with the holidays, illnesses, and the regular day to day here at Buck Wild Nation. The snow is hanging on the best it can, but we know its days are numbered here in eastern Michigan. Time to wash off the snow blower, and change the oil in the lawn mower! It's also time to start heading back out to the beautiful backwoods in search of sheds, and peace and quiet. Michigan is full of passionate outdoors people, and it is extremely evident this time of year. I don't just mean the hunters and fishermen either. By the time this is printed it will be the first of April, flowers will be popping up, and everywhere you look you will see people outside raking their yards, burning brush, and getting ready for a beautiful summer! (GO TIGERS!)

Another spring ritual in this great state is planting food plots. Most plots are planted to attract whitetail deer, others are put in with the express intent on being great habitat and food for game

birds and small game. Whatever the intended goal, here are some helpful tips and time saving practices.

First off, let's address the first time food plot planter. If you've never planted a plot before, don't be afraid to do so. It can be quite simple and rewarding to do with very little equipment. Some seeds are what they call "throw and grow." This means that it is a no-till type seed. All you need is a clear area of ground, some decent sunlight and some spring rain. These plots are gaining in popularity around the country for their simplicity, and convenience. Of course they do have some drawbacks. First off, (I know I'm going to make some people mad with this statement) no-till planting tends to not yield quite as well as a conventional tillage plot. I'm not referring to cash cropping here by any means; there is quite a difference in land and practices when it comes to that.

What I'm referring to is the quality of the soil, and the availability of nutrients. First time plot locations should really be evaluated as to the soil type, and state of the nutrients. However, satisfactory results can and have been achieved without any preparation of the plot.

The more popular and standard method of putting in a food plot involves

a full scope of preparation and evaluation. One of the most important things to do is to get a soil test done. This will insure that your plot lives up to its full potential as fast as it can. If you try to plant a grain plot in an area with little available core nutrients, chances are good that the plot will not perform as you would like it to. Getting a soil test done and receiving the proper fertilizer recommendations is a great place to start your endeavor and get headed in the right direction. You will also receive a very valuable piece of knowledge from your soil test as well: the pH of the soil in your plot. If you plant a plot in soil with a very acidic or very base pH, you will also be getting short changed. If the pH is off by too much, it doesn't matter how much fertilizer you put down, the soil will not allow it to be available to the plant. Testing will give you your soil pH, and liming and fertilizer recommendations, which translates to a great start to a great plot! After you have this information, you can go ahead and apply the lime and fertilizer specific to the crop you plan on planting. A food plot specialist or your local agronomist can help you determine the specific needs of your plot.

That leads us to the next big consideration, what should you plant?



If you have looked at plot seed in the last couple of years, you may have been overwhelmed by the sheer number of options out there. This is very understandable as there are dozens of brands, and hundreds of seed blends to choose from. I'm going to attempt to simplify this for you the best I can. If you live in the lower half of the Lower Peninsula, (which I believe most of you do) you are surrounded by field crops. Corn, wheat, oats, soybeans, sugar beets and alfalfa will dot your landscape. It doesn't matter how big or perfect your plots may be, the local deer have always, and will always travel out into these readily available food sources. It has been ingrained in them for generations. Your best bet is to plant a variety not found in your area, but extremely attractive to deer. Several blends of clovers, chicory, turnips, peas, and

See Food Plots, Page 37

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*Foxfire Farm Country Store is an official recycle station for Ink & More. Save BIG on your ink cartridge purchases by buying recycled ink cartridges here! We also accept used cartridges for recycling. 8061 Marsh Road, Clay Township.

Word Scramble

Arbor Day

By Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Did you know that the towering white pine of Michigan's lush forests of the pioneering days and of our famed lumbering industry was adopted as the official State Tree of Michigan on March 4, 1955? Below you will find a special word scramble just for Arbor

Day. The letters in each word have been scrambled and all are trees that are native to Michigan. We will help you with the first one – it is "white pine". Notice that if the tree is made up of two words, we have not left a space when the letters are scrambled. For the correct answers to the other scrambles, please turn to page 35.

- htieewipn white pine
- augkqaipnnse _____
- bleedrox _____
- rplaselivem _____
- wawapp _____
- cblowrileyh _____
- taooodwesternctn _____
- dakeor _____
- fssssaar _____
- ribechanceame _____

How Long a Strong Buyer's Market?

By Scott Anderson

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

The real estate market in southeast Michigan and the Thumb has been a strong buyer's market for a while, with one unusual characteristic. How long will this strong buyer's market last? The brokers I've spoken with think it is already changing.

The unusual characteristic mentioned above is that almost all the time, almost everywhere, if mortgage rates are low then prices are relatively high, and if mortgage rates are high that forces prices down. For a while now, though, we have seen a combination of low prices and low mortgage rates.

For people looking to buy property, either a home for themselves or income property, it hasn't been this good in recent memory. Credit has been tighter than in the mid 2000s, but that was a period of unusually loose credit; credit standards now are similar to what they have been most of the time over the years.

For the first time in a while, though, there are signs that home prices are creeping upward in the Thumb area and that inventories are down.

Consider this, for instance: according to the MIRealSource real estate service, the median home price for single family

homes sold in St. Clair County in 2009 was \$73,500, but for December 2010 (the most recent month available as of this writing) it was \$78,900, a 7.3% increase.

To see why this might be happening, we look at what brought prices down to begin with. Here in eastern Michigan it was a combination of the nationwide economic crisis, which brought down many banks and securities firms, the contraction of the auto industry, and the fact that prices had been artificially inflated by the too-easy credit of the early part of the last decade.

The automotive crisis created a wave of unemployment which caused many people to lose their homes to foreclosure; these homes typically sell for less than occupied homes because homeowners haven't been able or willing to take care of them just before losing the homes. In February 2010, Michigan was ranked 3rd in the rate of foreclosures (number of homes in foreclosure compared to the total number of homes).

By February 2011, though, Michigan had dropped out of the top five, so relative to the country as a whole, the rate of foreclosure activity in Michigan has slowed a bit.

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How can that be? Well, for one thing, our employment picture has improved. Michigan's unemployment rate during the recent crisis, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, peaked at 14.6% in July 2009. By December 2010 it had gone down to 10.6%, which is a very significant decrease.

That points to home prices continuing to creep upward, though probably not rapidly. Another indicator pointing in the same direction is that inventory levels are down. According to RealComp, a Farmington Hills real estate information provider, total inventory in southeast Michigan at the end of 2009 was 37,608 units; by the end of 2010 that had dropped to 32,610 units, a decrease of over 13%.

With unemployment down, more people are able to come in to the housing market, and with inventories down, those people will have fewer choices. Both of those trends combine to push prices upward. Nobody can predict what will happen

to mortgage rates (though many will pretend they can), but there isn't too much room for them to go down any farther.

We aren't anticipating any quick and sudden turnaround to a seller's market with high prices and very low inventory, but the current data seems to indicate that sellers are beginning to have a little more leverage in setting prices and conditions, and buyers will not be quite as likely to find the bargains of the recent past. 🍀

As always, Scott Anderson is happy to answer your real estate questions and will print answers of general interest in this space from time to time. Contact Scott at scott.anderson@kw.com with your questions.

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Real Estate Consultant
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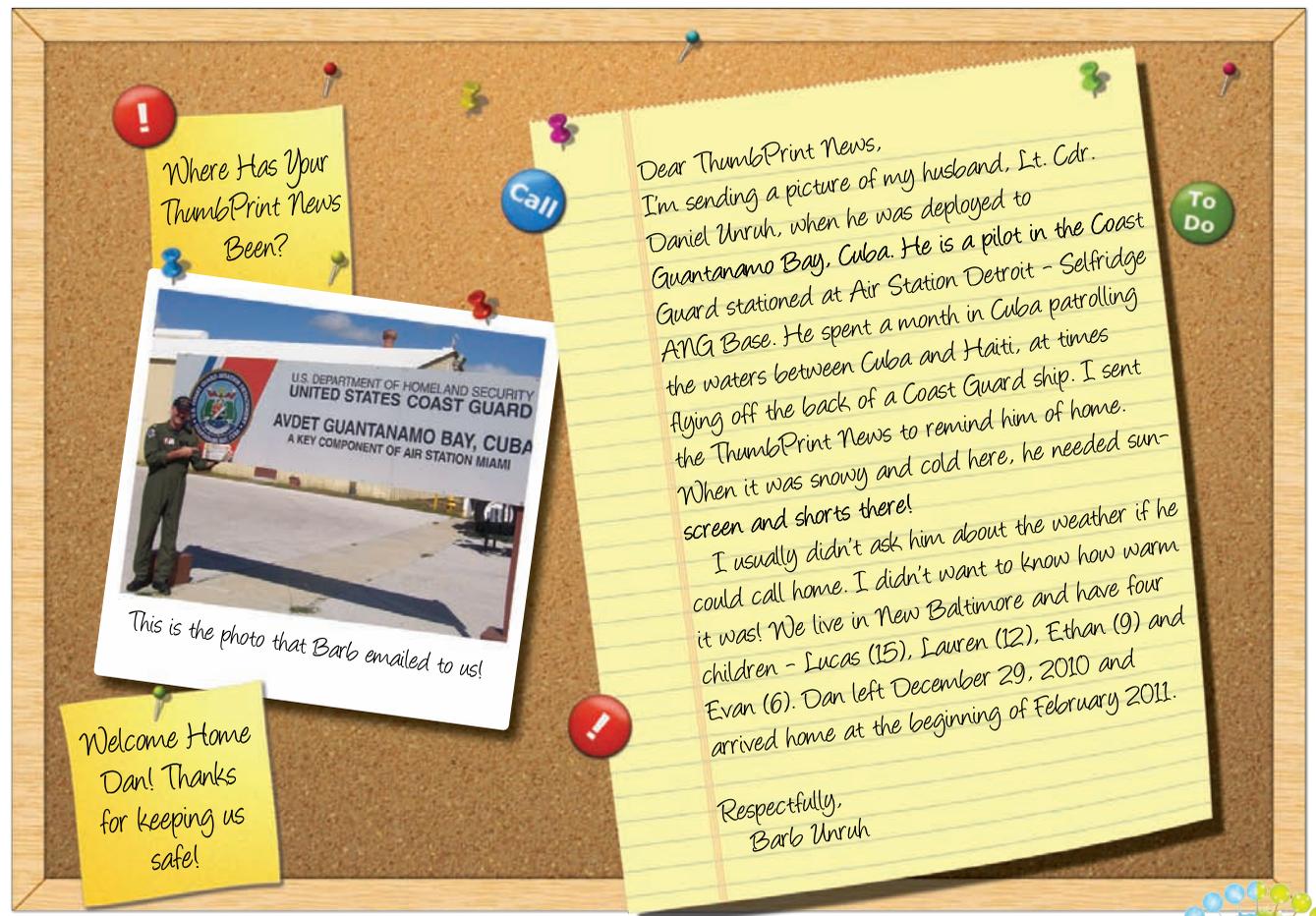
(586) 949-0200 • (810) 643-6316 cell
email: scott.anderson@kw.com

Where Has Your ThumbPrint News Been?

ThumbPrint News has been traveling the world! Not only has it been seen in many areas of the Thumb (over 580 businesses in eight Thumb counties are now drop locations for the newspaper), but ThumbPrint News has been seen on television, in Bonaire, in Mexico, in Utah, in Nevada, in Georgia, in California, in Illinois, in Pennsylvania, in Alaska, in Nova Scotia, in several parts of Florida, in Missouri, in Costa Rica and in Iraq!

When we began inviting our readers to submit photos of where they have taken ThumbPrint News, we never expected such an overwhelming response! This month, ThumbPrint News traveled to Cuba! We received the letter to the right from Barb Unruh of New Baltimore.

If you are a reader of ThumbPrint News and have taken it with you on a vacation or to an unusual place – or have done something unique with it, you may submit an email and photo to us at thumbprintnews@comcast.net. (The photo should be in jpeg format.) Please tell us a little about the photo and include your name, address and phone number in case we have further questions. Please be patient as you wait for your photo to appear in ThumbPrint News, as we are receiving a wonderful amount of photos each month! 🌱



2011 Calendar of Events for Foxfire Farm Country Store & Floral Shop

8061 Marsh Rd., Clay Township, Michigan 48001 • Toll-free: (866) 794-5108 • www.herbsandflowers.net

Below you will find the currently scheduled events that will be taking place at Foxfire Farm. Please mark your calendars now for any events you are interested in attending! As each event nears, there will be further information available in the store, in ThumbPrint News and by email. If you are not currently receiving Foxfire Farm's regular emails and would like to, please send a message to that effect to: thumbprintnews@comcast.net. This is the best way to receive all information about the events, including any last minute date changes or cancellations. Foxfire Farm reserves the right to adjust the dates for these events at any time, to add new events, or to cancel any event if necessary. You may also find further information on our website above or by calling (866) 794-5108.

APRIL 30 & MAY 1

SPRING EXTRAVAGANZA

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Get your spring planting off to a fantastic start with huge sales on flats of flowers, hanging baskets, porch pots and loads of perennials. All items will be sale priced **AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEASON**, instead of at the end, when the selection is limited. We have everything to make your yard the envy of the neighborhood! There will also be sales on **ALL GARDEN RELATED ITEMS** – pots and planters, tools, garden décor, etc. Since Mother's Day is only a week away, this is the chance to find something that mom will really appreciate! We will also be offering refreshments in the store as well as a variety of **FREE** gardening handouts and several activities for the kids to enjoy!

JULY 30

GARDEN PARTY

5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Enjoy a relaxing evening strolling through Foxfire Farm's Botanical Gardens located at 8945 Marsh Rd. in Algonac. Over 3,000 varieties of labeled herbs, flowers, trees and shrubs are divided into 17 different theme gardens. Pathways meander around the gardens and restored farm buildings. There are plenty of areas to sit and relax and enjoy the company of family and friends. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments along with a tour of the 9,500 square foot log home are included as well. The cost for the entire evening is \$25 per person, with advance registration and payment due by July 13. No tickets will be sold on the day of the Garden Party. Event will be held rain or shine – bring umbrellas in case of inclement weather! Tickets are non-refundable but are transferable.

OCTOBER 21, 22 & 23

FALL FESTIVAL & NIGHT FILLED WITH PUMPKIN LIGHT

Noon-9:30 p.m.

More than 400 decorated and painted pumpkins will be lit inside a warm greenhouse for the viewing pleasure of everyone in the family! Cost is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children ages 2-12. Children under two are free. All pumpkins and Halloween decorations will be clearance priced for last minute shoppers! We are also combining our Fall Fest with the Pumpkin Lighting. There will be additional activities for the kids to enjoy, such as a bouncy house, the kiddiepillar ride, games, a straw maze and more! Fall Fest activities are each priced separately. Food and refreshments will also be available for purchase.

DECEMBER 16-23

8th Annual History of the Christmas Tree Walk

6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Nightly

More than 50 Christmas trees, decorated with ornaments from the 1850s until the present, will be displayed inside a 9,500 sq. foot log home! Discounts given for advance ticket purchase! Discount tickets go on sale July 1, 2011 at Foxfire Farm Country Store & Floral Shop. Tickets purchased in advance are \$10 per adult and \$5 per child and are good for any night the Walk is open. Tickets are non-refundable but are transferable. Tickets can also be purchased by calling (810) 794-5108. Starting Dec. 1, ticket prices increase to \$12 per adult and \$6 per child. Santa Claus will be at the home on December 16, 17 and 23.

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Up To 8 Ton
10 Yard Can

\$275

Up To 8 Ton
20 Yard Can

\$350

Up To 8 Ton
30 Yard Can

\$400

Up To 8 Ton
40 Yard Can

\$525

FOOD PLOTS

Continued from Page 33

brassicas will fill that want and need quite nicely.

No matter where you live in Michigan, a simple clover may be the quickest and easiest way to go. Clover is very sweet, and high in nutrients and is very attractive to deer. The only drawback is that clover grows the best, and is richest in nutrients for the animal when it is regularly mowed down at or slightly before flowering. Not allowing the plant to flower keeps the energy in the system toward pure green tonnage, and eliminates the energy the plant will use in producing seed. This will add a slight maintenance requirement to your plot. Chicory, peas, turnips, and brassicas are great plot seeds that will require little or no maintenance over the course of the year. If you have sprayed and/or burned off the site of your plot before planting and fertilization, you should have the right conditions for this type of plant to become dominant, and hopefully choke out most native grasses and weeds in the plot. This allows the desired plants to grow and flourish unimpeded.

Whether you are a first time planter or a seasoned pro, you don't have to be intimidated by planting a food plot. It is just another way we enjoy the outdoors. It is also another way to help improve our native habitat for the wildlife around us, and another way to connect with nature in its most basic of forms. There will be no one to judge or critique you, so just go ahead and give it a shot. It's easier than you might think! Be sure to join us and several of our friends at the Plaid Shirt Weekend at Memoran Place in Port Huron, Michigan on April 31st and May 1st to further your knowledge of food plots and land management. There will be several seminars, several times each day. Check out the event website at www.bwqdma.com for more information. Until then, good luck, and we'll see you in the woods! 🍄

Editor's note: Bryon McClain is the owner of Buck Wild Nation, L.L.C. at 7419 Lakeshore Road in Lexington. Buck Wild Nation is a retail store that houses products in departments such as fishing, hunting, clothing, cooking, guns, ammunition and gifts. They also have online hunting gear, fishing gear, hunting supplies, camping gear and much more at discount prices. Their website is www.buckwildnation.com or call (810) 359-8550 for more information.

Word Scramble **Answers**

htieewipn white pine

augkqipnse quaking aspen

bleedrox box elder

rplaselivem silver maple

wawapp pawpaw

cblowrileyh yellow birch

taooodwesterntcn eastern cottonwood

dakeor red oak

fssssaar sassafras

ribchanceame American beech

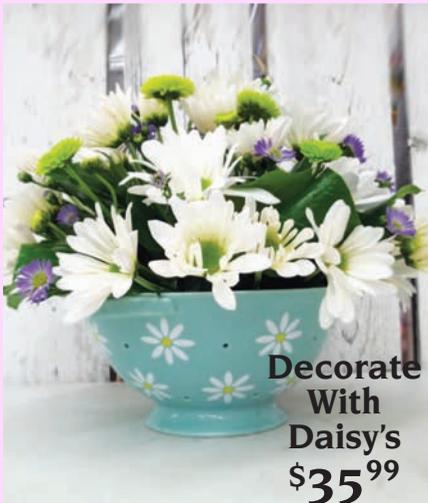
Custom Easter Center Pieces Starting at \$39⁹⁹



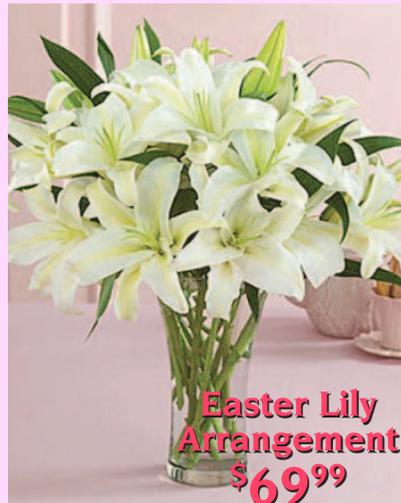
Easter Lily Plant Starting at \$9⁹⁹



Custom Arrangements Starting at \$59⁹⁹



Decorate With Daisy's \$35⁹⁹



Easter Lily Arrangement \$69⁹⁹



Fluffy Puppy \$49⁹⁹



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Buy direct from a real florist and save on wire service fees. • No Hidden Charges!
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2011 Honda Ruckus
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Save \$300⁰⁰



2009 Seadoo RXP-X 255
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2011 Honda Shadow Phantom
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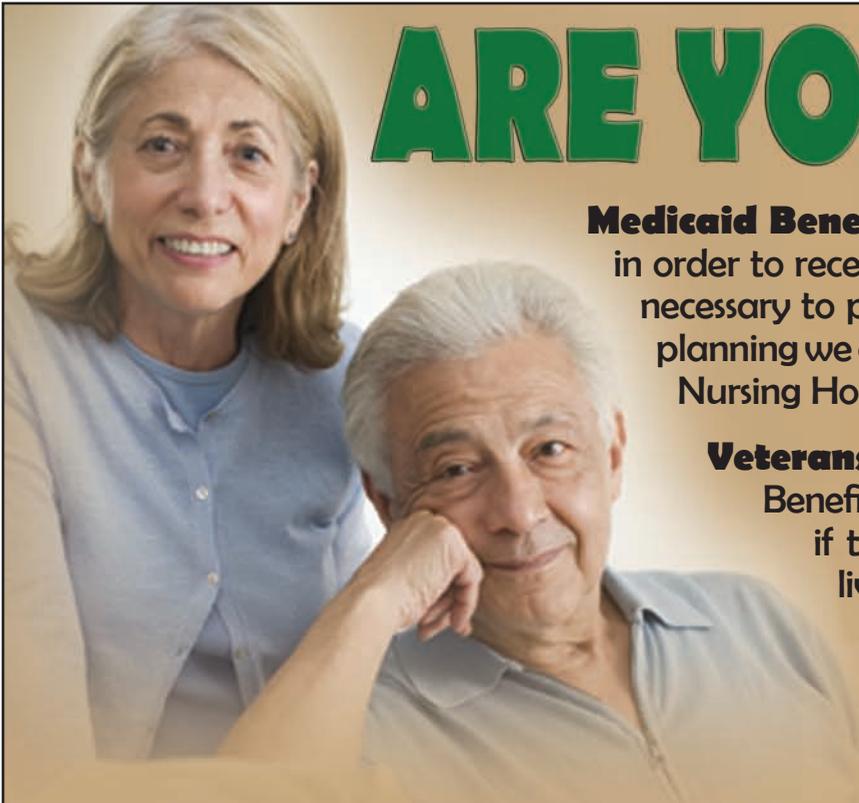


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