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ThumbPrint News

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

DECEMBER 2010

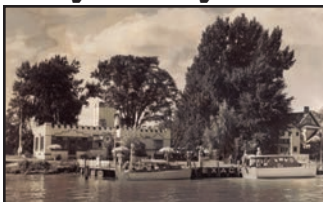


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The History of the Christmas Tree in America

By Ralph McKinch
 ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Almost every American child in the past half of a century has stood awe-struck in front of an elaborately decorated Christmas tree in their own home, in a business or in a public place. Whether tied to their family's Christian beliefs or whether simply a symbol of popular tradition, no one can argue that the lowly evergreen, once decorated in all of its glory, stands as one of the most anticipated precursors to the upcoming holiday season, and for youngsters, brings promises of what will lay beneath its branches on Christmas morning. Imagine that feeling magnified fifty fold. That is what a visit to the annual "History of the Christmas Tree" Walking Tour promises.



For the seventh year in a row, Allen and Diane Kodet have opened their log home to the public at Christmas time to view over 50 exquisitely decorated Christmas trees that are displayed in every room of their log home in Algonac. You may be wondering how there is room for that many trees. This is no small log cabin in the woods. The home is 9,500 square feet of spacious living. Five bedrooms, seven bathrooms, an indoor swimming pool, and a magnificent natural stone fireplace that towers through all three levels in the center of the home are just the beginning. Rustic furniture and décor themed around Michigan wildlife create the perfect balance for a home that seems one with nature.

The Kodet's have lived in the home for approximately nine years. Many years prior to that time, they began a hobby of collecting Christmas



See *CHRISTMAS WALK*, Page 24

Santa Claus will visit the home on December 17, 18 and 23. Bring your camera!



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution says, in part, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...". Currently, the United States has one of the highest levels of diversity in beliefs, partially because of these early documents that established the basis of our government's roll in religion, and largely because of this country's immense multicultural immigrant heritage.

I was thinking about this as I planned my December "Letter from the Editor." My first inclination was to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and expound upon my memories of Christmas' past. But then I thought, am I going to offend those who are not Christians?

In the United States today, 76% percent of the population identify themselves as Christians, 9% identify themselves with non-Christian religions and 15% state that they have no religious belief or no religious affiliation.

I think about my own upbringing and I truly can say that I have had the opportunity to enjoy those rights granted to me in the First Amendment by being able to experience or participate in many facets of my and other person's religious beliefs. I grew up in a family where my mother was Catholic and my father professed no religious affiliation. Yet, because my mother's faith was so important to her, my father always made sure that she had the opportunity to go to church on Sunday – even if it was nearly impossible. I remember tent camping somewhere in the woods of the Upper Peninsula when I was probably nine or ten. We seemed to be miles from anywhere that seemed civilized. My father, however, with quite a bit of difficulty, was able to locate a small Indian church out in the middle of no man's land. I remember standing outside with my sister and mother and not really being able to hear the service,

but my mom was content that she had made it to church.

I also remember getting stung by a bee half way through the service and crying loudly, as most children of my age would have probably done. An old Indian, probably younger than his weathered skin made him look, came to my rescue, relaying to my mom that I should go into the woods and urinate and catch some to pat on the area of the sting. That, he assured us, would remove the stinging sensation. I don't think we followed his advice, but that memory stuck with me to this day!

I also remember traveling out to Wyoming during the 70s to witness my best friend from high school getting married. She had joined a Christian commune. The experience of communal sharing in everything from cooking to child-rearing was something I was not accustomed to. However, my friend seemed happy and at peace and her choices appeared right for her.

Years later when my own two sons were born, they were baptized in a Methodist church, but with religiously diverse godparents – two being Protestant, one being Catholic, and one being Jewish.

Two years ago, a friend and former employee invited us to her wedding. It was far different than most weddings I had been to in the past, with traditional marriage rites of the Buddhist religion being performed by two female monks in traditional garb. Again, knowing my friend and seeing her happiness, I knew her choices were right for her.

I guess then, that I should not be worried about offending anyone if I wish our readers a very merry Christmas. Our country was based on religious freedom and religious tolerance and I feel that it would be inappropriate to ignore a holiday that is important to almost ¾ of this country – even a much higher percentage, if you consider those who celebrate Christmas as a secular, but not necessarily religious, holiday.

Therefore, I am going to share this space today with a special letter I received from Tony Taton of Lexington. It is obviously written from someone whose beliefs are based in Christianity, but it also has a special message for everyone, regardless of their religious persuasion. It resonates of the wishes I, too, have for the readers of *ThumbPrint News* during this holiday season. (I have edited his letter only due to space limitations.)

See FROM THE EDITOR, Page 38



Correction to the November 2010 Edition

In the November 2010 issue of *ThumbPrint News*, we printed an article by Dave Wak called "King of Storms" which dealt with the Great Storm of 1913. A *ThumbPrint News* reader, John Makuch, pointed out a couple of errors in the otherwise very informative article. Here is a portion of Mr. Makuch's email:

"I enjoyed Dave Wak's article regarding the Storm of 1913, but, as an avid shipwreck diver for over 32 years, I would like to correct several errors he made. Gary Binecki was not the diver who identified the Regina –

Wayne Brusate was. Gary was part of the group that made the discovery. Dave also stated that the John McGean still lies beneath Lake Huron somewhere. David Trotter and Undersea Research Associates discovered the McGean in the early 90's. The wreck is upside down in 190 feet of water."

Thank you to Mr. Makuch for pointing out the needed corrections. Thank you also to Dave Wak for the wonderful article. *ThumbPrint News* received many, many positive comments about the article and how much our readers enjoyed it.

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Spotlight on a Small Town: Columbiaville

By Diane L. Kodet
ThumbPrint News Editor

Columbiaville is a small village of less than 900 residents in the northwestern corner of Lapeer County. However, when Levi Cutting arrived in the fall of 1847, that number was significantly less. One lone shanty that had been recently built by a man named Fineout was the only sign of civilization.

Levi's journey to the area that later became Columbiaville was not an easy one. Traveling with him was his wife, Eliza, and their sickly young child. Roads were non-existent and the last twelve miles had to be traveled on foot.



The Levi Cutting home, built in 1848, as it appears today.

Levi carried his child on a pillow and had to keep him held above the water as he waded across the Flint River to their new abode, as bridges were unknown in this region at that time. Fineout remained only for a short time and then left the area. Levi, who also built a shanty and remained thereafter in Columbiaville, became recognized as the first official settler.

Levi was a carpenter and a cabinet maker by trade and his skills served him well. In 1848, he built the first home in Columbiaville at the south corner of present day Water and Lapeer Streets. That same year George and Henry Niver of Columbia County, New York, decided to establish a sawmill on the bank of the Flint River, after they had located a large tract of pine that they planned to manufacture into lumber. They sent their agent, Palmer Niver, to build the mill. The town subsequently became known as Niverville. Primarily because of the mill being built, a small settlement began to grow in that area, including the first blacksmith shop.

An industrious young man, William Peters, came to work for the saw mill in 1850. After two years there he left to open his own business, a two-story

building which housed the first store in the town. It was located at the corner of present day Lapeer and Middle Streets. That store was only the first of his many business ventures. He later built a large steam grist and flouring mill, which helped the village to grow further.

In 1857, when the first post office was established, the town had to come up with a new name, as there was already another town officially named Niverville in Michigan. The Niver family suggested naming the town Columbia after the county of Columbia, New York, which was the town of their origin. However, there was also another town named Columbia in Michigan at that time! Columbiaville was the name the town finally adopted.



A vintage photo of the Columbiaville Depot



The Columbiaville Depot as it appears today.

When the Detroit and Bay City Railroad decided to route through Columbiaville in 1872, the town began a period of great prosperity. The first train depot was made of wood and was located on the east side of the tracks at Pine Street. The townspeople now



The William Peter Mansion

had excellent means of transportation for both themselves and their goods. In 1893, William Peters built the first brick depot, an elegant building with rounded arch, beveled-glass windows. William now had many businesses in the town and wanted to insure that the town continued to grow. He deeded the building to the Detroit and Bay City Railroad for only \$1.00 in exchange for a guarantee that the line would continue stopping in Columbiaville.

Other early businesses included a wagon shop built by Alfred Pettit and a hotel ran by John and Peter Van Dyke. Alexander Johnson established a planning mill in 1882. In addition, there was a jail, a livery barn, a township hall, a furniture store, a dressmaking establishment, several other stores, schools and churches, a millinery and notions store and a milk receiving station. A wooden frame structure that housed the Methodist Church was erected in 1880, but was later destroyed by fire after being struck by lightning. A new church was erected in 1897.

In 1892, William Peters, along with workmen from Toledo, built the sixteen room William Peters Mansion right in the center of the downtown area. William and his wife moved into it in 1896. Eventually, the entire property of Columbiaville belonged to Mr. Peters and his fortune reached into the millions.

Columbiaville High School was dedicated in 1893 and the first class graduated from there in 1900. Around this same time, Fifth Street was used

See COLUMBIAVILLE, Page 32

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During the "History of the Christmas Tree" Walk (see ad on page 21), Dec. 16 - 23, the store will have extended hours until 9:30 p.m. for your last minute holiday shopping needs.



Melanie Duquesnel

Five Ways to Fight Back Against Phone Bill Cramming

Sneaky little charges are making their way onto telephone bills and can go unnoticed for months. Victims of so-called “cramming” often face a tough battle to stop being billed every month and start getting their money back. In order to fight cramming, Better Business Bureau recommends keeping a close eye on every bill and being extremely cautious when giving out personal information such as phone numbers.

“You might think that nothing bad can happen from giving out your telephone number, but you should guard those digits like you would a credit card or social security number,” said Patrick Bennett, Director of Community Relations. “Monitor your monthly statements closely because even if you are very protective of your personal information, cramming can still strike.”

Cramming is on the rise, according to the Chief of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission during an interview with Herb Weisbaum, consumer reporter for MSNBC.com. Cramming can come from any number of sources. Some victims may have inadvertently signed up for a subscription service – such as for “free” ringtones or a daily joke or horoscopes – not realizing they’d be billed every month. The Federal Trade Commission recently cracked down on one company that used telemarketers to convince people into signing up for “free” trial services. Calling a psychic hotline or entering a sweepstakes can also lead to cramming. Unfortunately, in

some cases, the victim is just an unlucky random target.

BBB recommends taking the following five steps to fight cramming:

- Keep a close eye on monthly statements. Anyone can become a victim of cramming, so monitoring your monthly bills is extremely important. The sooner you spot the charges, the sooner you can fight them.
- Know your rights. Contact your telephone provider to see if you can completely restrict third-party billing on your account.
- Know whom you can trust online. Before handing over any personal information online, always research the business with your BBB at www.easternmichiganbbb.org.
- Guard your personal information closely. Be wary when asked to provide personal information to sign up for a free trial or enter a sweepstakes. Always read the fine print on any offer so you understand how your personal information may be used.
- Know where to complain. If you are unable to resolve the issue either through your telephone provider or directly with the business, file a complaint with the FCC for charges related to telephone service and FTC for all other cramming charges on your phone bill. You can also file a complaint with BBB.

For more advice on managing personal finances and protecting your wallet, visit us online at <http://easternmichigan.bbb.org/consumer-tips-finance/>. 🌱

Professional Santas?



With the upcoming busy holiday season now upon us, there probably won't be another chance to see this many Santa Clauses and Mrs. Clauses all together in one place until well after the New Year. But, on a recent trip to Frankenmuth, this jolly group of elves was spotted dining together at the Bavarian Inn. They even joined in for a few lively verses of “Jingle Bells” and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” accompanied by a lovely Bavarian-costumed woman who was playing the accordion. Of course, there were also quite a few belly-shaking “ho, ho, hos!”

The group belongs to MAPS (Michigan Association of Professional Santas) who take their holiday jobs very seriously and attempt to be the very best Santas that they can be. Some have even attended the world famous Charles W. Howard Santa School that is held in Midland, Michigan, each year. The school is the oldest and longest running school dedicated to the art of portraying Santa Claus, and attracts aspiring Santas from around the globe who have to complete a 40-hour curriculum in order to graduate.

Currently there are 75 members of MAPS. If you are interested in learning more about the organization or are interested in hiring a Santa for a business or private event, visit the MAPS website at www.michigansantas.ning.com. 🌱

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Ask the Audiologist

By Lisa Bont

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Potential hearing aid wearers wonder, "What is the process to purchasing hearing aids?"

Well, let's start at the beginning! First, you need a comprehensive hearing test by a licensed audiologist and medical clearance by a physician as necessitated by the FDA. Secondly, your audiologist will explain and discuss your hearing loss, types of hearing aid technology and styles that would be most appropriate for you. It is imperative that she/he ask you about your lifestyle, physical limitations and budget when recommending a particular hearing aid, as a hearing aid purchase is very personalized.

Once you have reached a decision on a particular hearing aid and style, you may be fit immediately or, for a custom hearing aid, within two weeks. Once you are fit you will be given at least a 30 day trial period. Within this period you will meet with your audiologist numerous times for counseling and fine tuning.

This is a critical period in which you may need to try other models or manufacturer's aids and ultimately determine if you want to keep your hearing aids.

Be aware that if you decide to return the hearing aids, it is customary for there to be a restocking fee or return fee that is non-refundable. Be sure that you are aware of these fees before you order the hearing aids. Your new hearing aids will also come with repair and Loss & Damage warranties, batteries and services, so be sure to ask your audiologist what is included in the price of your hearing aids. If you decide to "shop around" and compare hearing aid prices, be sure that you are comparing the same makes, models, warranties and services to get an accurate comparison. It's also important to be sure you are confident and comfortable with your audiologist before purchasing hearing aids. You will be spending a lot of time with your audiologist and, hopefully, develop a relationship that will last for years! 🎧

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The Thrill of the Hunt

By Bryon McClain
ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

All you hear anymore is how lazy we have become as a society, our youth in particular. Well, from where I sit, I see a different side of the story. As an owner of a small outdoor sporting goods store, I see the kids that are full of energy and spirit. I see couples enjoying a passion for the outdoors. I also get the great pleasure of the "old-timers" and their wealth of knowledge and stories for the ages, all true of course! I get a refreshing look at a simpler, slower time every day I step into the shop and turn on the lights. One thing all of these diverse people have in common is a passion for the outdoors and seeking the elusive thrill of the hunt.

As I sit at my desk writing this article, the sun has come up and the shooting has started. It's November 15th and I'm the only place I can and should be, at the shop with a fire going and the door open. Don't feel sorry for me. I get to relive countless hunts all day! All the hunts are special, but I really enjoy the kids' stories. They come in with their mom or dad, smiling ear to ear. They can't wait to tell their first deer hunting story. We go out to the truck, get a couple of pictures for the website and the wall in the store, and it starts. "So there I was . . ." I love it! They tell me the story, recounting every detail down to the way they held their gun. They're proud, maybe for the first time in their young lives, of something they did.

They may have had help from Mom or Dad getting to the stand or blind, but only they made it happen. They outwitted the deer, aimed the gun and pulled the trigger. Taking a deer is a profound moment in anyone's life, especially a young person. The thrill of the accomplishment of the kill can soon be replaced by a bevy of emotions. Excitement and elation can be suddenly

replaced by a sadness and remorse for the animal. You ask yourself, "Is it worth it? Was I right in doing this?" These emotions and feelings can be felt by only those who have been there, and can only be understood by those as well.

When I killed my first deer, I had a rush of emotions all at once, and didn't really know what to do or how to feel. I knew that I had been hunting for years and it all led up to this. I was not disappointed in any way. In fact, I was absolutely thrilled! After finding the deer and looking him over, I tagged him and headed home to wait for my dad, who was also out hunting. I remember clearly the look on his face when I told him.



He was as excited as I was! We have a picture of the back of his truck from that year, my little three point laying next to his wall hanger. I think if you asked him which one he was more proud of though, he'd point to the little rack hanging in his office next to the big 8 he took that day. No doubt in my mind.

To most people, it's not the size of

the rack, nor the distance of the shot. It's the thrill of the hunt that is the most important. Filling the freezer every fall and spending quality time afield with your friends and family making

everyone whom has hunted seriously for years has a garage full of "little" racks and an amazing story to go with each one of them.

Hunting brings us together, it feeds our families and it teaches us some of the most profound lessons in life. It brings friends and families together, gives us a quiet time to reflect on our lives and a sense of accomplishment unrivaled by most anything else. I, for one, see this every day in all types of people. The thrill of the hunt is not the thrill of the kill. It has a much deeper meaning, a meaning that is lost on many people in this world. The people that go about their lives oblivious to the beauty and bounty that is right outside their back door. Our great country has made it possible for every man, woman and child to have the ability to enjoy any and all outdoor pursuits they desire.

So go ahead and take someone out with you. Young, old, woman or man, introduce them to a cold crisp December morning, snow crunching under your boots, a perfect sunrise, and a wildlife scene fit for a famous painter. It is something neither of you will soon forget. Who knows, you may just have a life-long hunting partner in someone you would never have imagined. Introduce them to the calm, the adrenaline, the memories. Introduce them to the thrill of the hunt. 🍀

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Stringer's Restaurant - Thanks for the Memories

By David Gillis

ThumbPrint News Columnist

I already knew what was inside the small brown bag I was carrying, but I still had to look inside. Although the weather was cold, I removed my gloves so I could open the present I had just received. Yes, just as I had remembered from past years, the bag contained a hamburger, a half pint of chocolate milk, a tangerine and a candy cane. This was just part of each Christmas season growing up in Algonac, Michigan.

If you did not attend school in Algonac in the 1950s, you might not understand or even fully appreciate what was so special about a bagged lunch on a cold day. But, if you did, you most certainly remember the annual visit to Stringer's restaurant on the corner of St. Clair River Drive and Clay Street. That was simply something we all looked forward to.

Each December as Christmas approached, Milt and Thelma Stringer would extend a special invitation to all the students at the nearby school. The Stringers owned one of the downtown's favorite cafés where the large sign over the entrance to their small eatery said everything. It read "Good Food."

From those in kindergarten who were making their first trip, to the big kids in the senior class completing its final journey, all would travel the two blocks that separated the three-story brick edifice and the little restaurant on the corner. All of this happened on a single day following a well orchestrated class-by-class plan.

Upon arrival, as we entered the small diner, we could smell the aroma of the best hamburgers in the world. We were first greeted by the always smiling Thelma, who obviously was coordinating the efficiency of the day's operations. Milt would be stationed at the grill behind the lunch counter for the entire day. I wouldn't even venture a guess as to how many meat patties he flipped during that special event.

As we shuffled through the line we were met by Santa Claus, who seemed to look so much like the town's

constable, Henry Lake. But, that didn't matter. After all, everyone looks alike in a red suit and white whiskers.

As the years passed I still looked forward to the short walk to the Stringer's restaurant each holiday season. The wait became longer, however, because the upper classes would be the last to make the trip. Then, as a senior in high school, I made my final journey to accept Milt and Thelma's special gift.

Too many years have flown by since then. I have grown older and, hopefully, a little wiser. One of the many lessons I have learned comes from a realization that it is the small experiences in our lives that help to shape how we think and act.

I have many memories of years past when I was growing up in the small town on the banks of the St. Clair River. I know now that they were some of the best and happiest years of my life and am thankful that I can look back on them.

Unfortunately, many children growing up today don't have the opportunity to visit Milt and Thelma Stringer's restaurant each December. If they could they would have the benefit of some of life's greatest lessons.

They would learn about kindness, sharing and giving. They would discover how great it feels to anticipate a small, but very meaningful gift from someone who really cares.

For the Stringers, I'm confident their lessons centered on showing gratitude to the community and demonstrating the gift of love that represents what Christmas is all about.

I don't remember if I ever really said thank you to Milt and Thelma Stringer in a manner that represents how I now feel. I am truly grateful for their reaching out with their special gift of love and sharing.

I still believe that the best hamburgers ever made could be found at the corner of St. Clair River Drive and Clay Street. And, I still think Santa looked a lot like Henry Lake. Thanks for the memories that make each Christmas season special. 🍀



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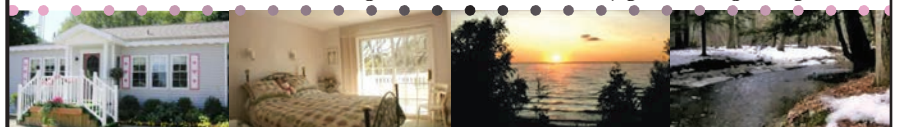
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After 73 Years, Henry's Restaurant is No More

By Ralph McKinch
ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

The famed building that once was Henry's Restaurant in Algonac was torn down after 73 years this past November to make room for a parking lot and mooring location for the Russell Island Ferry. Let's take a look back in time.



The site of the former Henry's Restaurant, November 2010



The boarded up Henry's Restaurant in early 2010



Henry's Restaurant circa 1956



Texaco gas station on the property that would become Henry's (sometime prior to 1937).

Editor's Note: Thanks to Jan Evans for the loan of the two wonderful vintage pictures.



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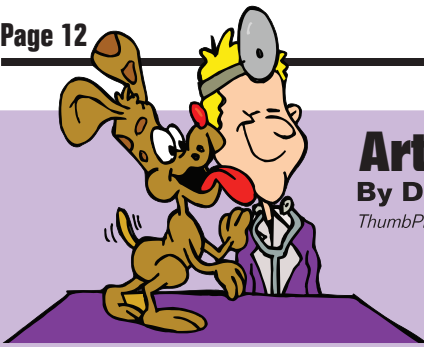
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Arthritis in Pets

By Dr. DiBenedetto

ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

Arthritis (inflammation of a joint) is a disease in which joint cartilage deteriorates. This results in the joint surfaces that are supposed to glide over each other becoming rough and causing a decrease in the amount of joint fluid that is present. This in turn makes movement of the joint more difficult and often painful. The ultimate outcome of these factors is a joint that does not work properly, causing the sensory nerve endings in the supporting joint structures to become irritated. These irritated nerve endings send pain and discomfort signals to the brain. Since there are no blood vessels or sensory nerves in joint cartilage, damage to cartilage can be quite advanced before any signs of a painful and inflamed joint become evident. Watch for the following signs:

- Reluctance to walk, climb stairs, jump or play
- Limping
- Lagging behind on walks
- Difficulty rising
- Yelping in pain when touched
- A personality change

Cold or sudden weather changes or heavy exercise can make the pain worse and the signs more noticeable.

There is no cure for osteoarthritis, but the pain caused by this degenerative disease can be controlled. The quality of your pet's life can be increased with the help of pain medications and supplements. Our veterinarians here at Maple Veterinary Hospital in Troy, Michigan, will develop a comprehensive medical plan for your pet. Both young and old pets can be affected by arthritis. Our medical plans include: pain and inflammation control, joint supplements, proper nutrition and weight management, regular, low-impact exercise and routine examinations to evaluate how the plan is working and to maintain a

good comfort level at the lowest dose of medication as possible.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like Rimadyl, Deramaxx and Metacam, decrease joint inflammation and pain, providing comfort and reducing swelling. As with all pharmaceuticals, long-term use should be monitored with blood work being checked every six months in order to assure that the body is able to process the medication correctly.

Joint supplements, such as glucosamine, act as building blocks for cartilage, keeping its cells healthy and functioning properly. It can also aid in the regeneration of joint tissue. Chondroitin blocks enzymes that break down cartilage. Manganese ascorbate optimizes the production of cartilage components. Perna canaliculus (New Zealand green-lipped mussel) is a source of glycosaminoglycans (GAGs), which are a component of the joint lubrication fluid. Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) has anti-inflammatory properties that slow the progression of arthritis and relieve pain. MicroLactin is a patented special milk protein concentrate (SMPC) from the milk of hyperimmunized cows, which provides anti-inflammatory activity that is effective regardless of the cause of the inflammation. Due to the positive effects of glucosamine products with minimal side effects, almost every major nutraceutical or vitamin company has put out a glucosamine product. However, some companies often put out products with little regard to the quality of the product. These products can be made with medium or low-grade glucosamine to save money and are not regulated by the FDA. Therefore, not all glucosamine products are made the same. Some work well, while others do not seem to help much. Here at Maple Veterinary Hospital, we supply our patients (both cats and dogs) with the best quality joint supplements, like Dasuquin, Duralactin and Glycoflex,

that have the National Animal Supplement Council seal of approval.

Weight management and exercise are crucial in pain management when it comes to arthritis. Lameness and/or stiffness are generally the first signs owners are able to detect. Many times you will notice your pet seems to have less stiffness shortly after getting up and walking around, as this tends to warm up the joints and lubricate them better. Added weight puts more stress on joints and leads to decreased desire to exercise. Low-impact exercise not only helps reduce pain and stiffness but it also aids in keeping up muscle

strength. Many pet diets have also started including supplements like glucosamine, omega 3 and 6 fatty acids and antioxidants to aid in the battle against arthritis. These foods do not have therapeutic levels of these products but can allow for a decrease in the dosage of the supplement being taken. 🐾

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) 585-2622 for other pet related questions.

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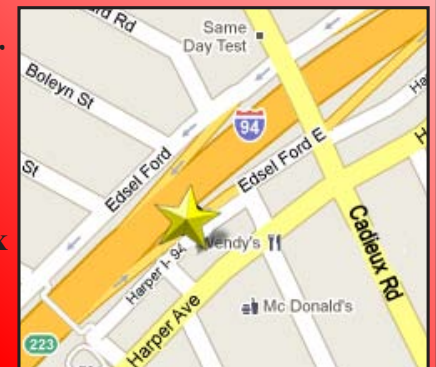
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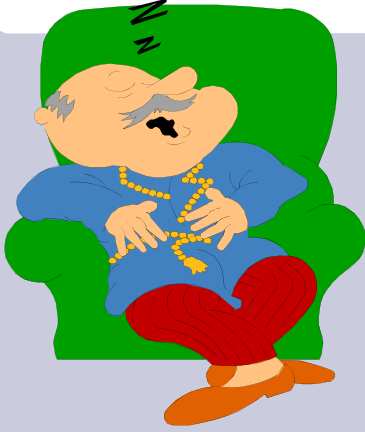
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Memoirs from The Restless Retiree

Christmas Family Gathering Fire in the Bathroom!

By Gabriel Jones
ThumbPrint News Columnist

It was Christmas Eve and there was another family gathering at our house.

We had prepared as many families do when you host the family party. Outside, the Christmas lights were lit. The Christmas reindeer were placed nicely on the front lawn with small Christmas trees around them. Luminaries were placed and lit along the sidewalk leading up to the house. Inside, the Christmas tree had been decorated beautifully. Christmas decorations were placed on various shelves and mantels. The fire was lit in the fireplace. The

dining room table was beautifully decorated with two wood hand-painted antique Swedish candle holders.

Everyone was having a great time and enjoying each other's company.

Suddenly . . .

My brother-in-law got up and ran to the bathroom where the door was closed. He went inside and came out with a *flaming waste basket!* He startled all of us when he yelled "*Where can I put this?*"

"*Throw it out the front door into the snow!*" I yelled back.

We opened the front door and

he ran out and threw the flaming basket into the snow. We then went into the bathroom and threw water on the scorched wooden cabinet.

After some discussion, we found out that one of the six year old twin nephews played with a napkin and the glass enclosed candle in the bathroom. When it flamed up, he then threw the napkin into the waste basket, closed the bathroom door behind him and ran out. His brother saw this and told his grandfather what his brother had done.

Let's see . . . bathroom door closed with a flaming waste basket

inside scorching the bathroom cabinet. Left alone, without anyone going in . . .

Perhaps, smoke was actually going into the rest of the house from under the bathroom door . . . "*Whew!*"

Instead of scolding anyone, we thanked the one grandson for telling us what had happened. He saved us all from a terrible fire.

We all then joined hands, said a prayer of thanks, and the joyous occasion continued as we sang "Jingle Bells" and opened presents.

Another lesson learned by The Restless Retiree. 🌱



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Hobby Corner

Huge Hockey Collection Starts with One Broken Stick

By Laura Irwin
ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

A broken hockey stick was all that was needed to spark Port Huron resident Don Curtis' interest in a life-long hobby. Don's older brother, who had a custodial job at McMorran Arena in 1967, brought home the broken stick. Together Don and his brother glued it back together, beginning a young boy's passion for hockey. The next day the two brothers went to watch the Port Huron Flags play.

Don, who is now over 50 years old, but young at heart, still loves the game. He also has amassed an enormous collection of hockey memorabilia, including hockey sticks, pucks, sweaters, game programs, signed programs and pictures, ticket stubs from every team and every building. He also has hats, buttons, goalie masks and gear, in addition to knowledge, stats, memories and scars of his own.



Game programs, ticket stubs and signed pictures from various hockey teams and players

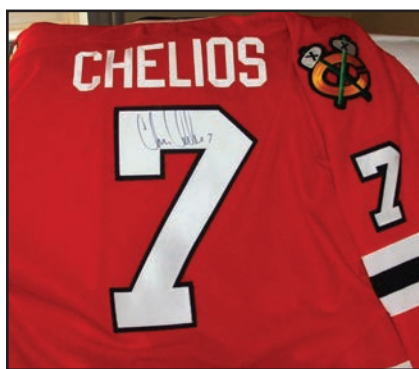
Don is passing this love of the game and collecting to his beautiful five-year-old granddaughter, Emma, who has already started collecting hockey pucks with the help of her adoring "Papa."

To date, Don has collected 700 jerseys, seven closets full, stored on hangers and covered. These were traditionally called "sweaters" because they were originally made like a sweater, often with a grommet and string tie at the neck. (Imagine how hot that would be in an indoor arena!) A lot of his jerseys were actually worn by a player during an actual hockey game and bear the marks of usage – like blood, stick marks, sweat and dirt. Don offers this bit of trivia about the

jerseys used today, "They have what is called a 'fight strap' sewn into them on the inside back. The fight strap triple snaps the back of the jersey to the pants to prevent it from being grabbed and pulled over the players head during a fight."

The oldest item in Don's collection is an early 1950's Denver Mavericks' game jersey. His collection also boasts a rare Des Moines Oak Leafs' jersey and a Cleveland Checkers' puck. He has remakes of the 1930s Toronto Maple Leafs' and Boston Bruins' sweaters, a 1962 game jersey from the Port Huron Flags, a Chris Chelios signed Chicago Blackhawks' jersey, an NHL "Original Six" hat (referring to the NY Rangers, Chicago Blackhawks, Toronto Maple Leafs, Detroit Red Wings, Montreal Canadiens and Boston Bruins), a 1968-69 hockey program with a young Gordy Howe on the cover and a 1965 "Overtime Larry's" heavy wooden, straight stick. Again, Don offered some interesting trivia, "The curved stick came to the game when in the 1960s Stan Mikita of the (1958 to 1980) Chicago Blackhawks accidentally caught his stick blade in one of the doors in the boards, cracking and bending it, but not breaking it all the way off. He continued to play with it and was amazed at the difference in the puck's direction and flight. He and his teammates took unbroken sticks, heated them and bent them under doors to different curvatures, even to the point of the sticks being called 'bananas.' The rest is history. Now the curved stick is widely used throughout the league."

Pinning Don down to a favorite player wasn't easy as he likes and respects all players. However, he did mention Bobby Orr and Gordy Howe as being on his



Chicago Blackhawks jersey signed by Chris Chelios.

their coach.

Don played in three leagues and coached for many years. He has traveled as far as Calgary, Alberta, Canada, not only to watch games, but to play and coach. Although he hasn't coached for about five years, he enjoys teaching his granddaughter in the back yard with a net, tennis ball and a stick that he has modified to accommodate her small stature. During the winter months, he transforms part of his



back yard into an ice rink. He builds a wooden frame lined with plastic for friends, family and neighborhood kids and their parents to while away the winter afternoons zipping around on the four inch thick ice, all the while having fun and perfecting their hockey skills.

Don and his wife are planning an addition to their home to make room for all of the hockey memorabilia. (His wife claims that she really just wants to reclaim closet space!) In actuality, she shares Don's hockey enthusiasm. Both are huge Red Wing fans and never miss a game.

Sharing his knowledge, experience and love of the game with others is a great joy to Don. If there's anything you want to know about hockey, Don is sure to know the answer. 🍀

Editor's Note: If you or someone you know has an interesting hobby that you would like to share with ThumbPrint News readers in a future edition, call us at (810) 794-2300 or email us at thumbprintnews@comcast.net. You may be featured in our Hobby Corner!



Don Curtis with a few of his jerseys

KIDS' KORNERS



MAKE A REINDEER TREAT HOLDER

By Louise Allen
ThumbPrint News Staff Writer



This wonderful Christmas Craft idea comes from the website Amazing Moms, which has a wealth of great ideas for holidays, parties and other events for families, schools and organizations. Visit www.amazingmoms.com for other super craft projects.

Things you will need:

- Scissors
- Craft glue, glue stick or glue dots
- Terracotta clay pots; 2"-5"
- Plastic eyes
- Red pom-poms
- Three shades of brown craft foam, cardstock paper or construction paper

Directions:

- First, with one shade of brown, cut the antlers to match the size of your pot.
- If you are making the larger reindeer, use a child's handprint as pattern.
- Then, cut the ears with the other brown. A lighter shade of brown can be used to add yet another layer to the ears, if desired.
- Attach the ears to the back of the pot. Then add the antlers.
- Glue the eyes and nose the front. Fill the pot with candy, nuts or other Christmas goodies.

(These can also be used to give as gifts, as party favors, or as place markers for a party or family gathering. If you use three different size pots to create three reindeer, you will have a reindeer family!)



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NO-BAKE CHRISTMAS COOKIE RECIPIES

Gathered by Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Yum, Christmas cookies! They are the best part of holiday eating. Whether you want to create treats quickly for your family and friends or whether you are taking part in a cookie exchange, no bake cookies are an easy way to make up a lot of cookies quickly. Here are some of my favorite no-bake cookie recipes:



CHOCOLATE ORANGE BALLS


Ingredients

- 1 9-ounce box of vanilla wafer cookies
- 2 1/4 cups confectioner's sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup orange juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

Directions

In a food processor, combine the vanilla wafers, 2 cups of the confectioner's sugar, cocoa powder, orange juice concentrate and corn syrup. Process until the cookies are ground to crumbs and mixture is evenly blended. Add the pecan pieces and pulse process until the nuts are finely chopped. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and form into 1" balls. Roll balls in 1/4 cup confectioner's sugar to coat. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Variation: Roll in additional colored sprinkles for a holiday look.



BUTTERSCOTCH HAYSTACKS


Ingredients

- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 package or 6 oz. butterscotch morsels
- 1 large can chow mein noodles

Directions

Melt peanut butter and butterscotch together. This can be done on the stove top or in a microwave. Pour over noodles; mix well. Drop by tablespoon on wax paper; freeze for a couple of hours. Cookies may be stored in a loose fitting topped cookie jar.

Variation: Use chocolate morsels instead of butterscotch.



PEANUT BUTTER CORNFLAKE DROPS

Ingredients

- 1 cup white corn syrup
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup crunchy peanut butter
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 to 4 cups cornflake cereal

Directions

Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. In a large saucepan stir together corn syrup, sugar, peanut butter, margarine and vanilla. Bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly. Allow to boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in cornflakes. Drop by tablespoon onto prepared baking sheet. Allow to cool and set.

Variation: Add 1/3 cup shelled peanuts to mixture or drizzle with melted chocolate.



KENTUCKY BOURBON BALLS

Ingredients

- 1 cup vanilla wafers
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1/4 cup bourbon
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- Unsweetened cocoa powder and confectioner's sugar, for coating

Directions

Combine the crumbs, sugar, 1/4 cup cocoa powder, corn syrup and bourbon in a food processor or with an electric mixer. Blend until thoroughly mixed. Then, using a spoon, stir in the pecans. Roll tablespoons of the mixture to form small truffle-sized balls. Roll the bourbon balls in the cocoa to coat them. Just before serving, lightly sprinkle the balls with confectioner's sugar, using a strainer or shaker.

Variation: Roll in sweetened coconut instead of confectioner's sugar.




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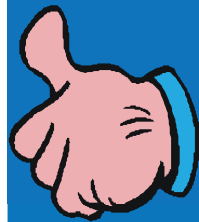


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A Big Thumbs Up to HealthQuest of Bad Axe



ThumbPrint News would like to give a big "Thumbs Up" to Dr. Sami of HealthQuest of Bad Axe. Not only does he pride himself on having a state of the art facility inside, but the appearance of the outside of his building is just as important to him. Dr. Sami carefully attends to the flowers and plants that beautify both the front and the back of his building, making his office a visual treat for visitors to downtown Bad Axe. Great job, Dr. Sami!



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Burma-Shave Sign Contest



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ThumbPrint

News

In our October edition of *ThumbPrint News*, we invited our readers to submit to us a "Burma Shave"-like jingle about *ThumbPrint News* (at the suggestion of one of our readers, Linda Baker). We promised to look over the submissions and choose two lucky winners to print in this edition. It wasn't too hard to choose, as we only received one entry! However, we appreciate and like this entry from Marty Krupa of Sterling Heights, Michigan. Marty will be receiving a \$50.00 gift certificate, redeemable at Foxfire Farm Country Store at 8061 Marsh Road in Clay Township. Congratulations, Marty!

Here is Marty's entry:

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CHRISTMAS WALK: Holiday Trees

Continued from Page 1

ornaments and Christmas decorations representative of all periods in the history of the Christmas tree in America. That collection eventually grew to such a size that now an 800 square foot room is used to store the collection year round.

Starting the beginning of November each year, each carefully labeled tree and box of ornaments is brought out of storage and the six week long labor of love begins, getting the trees placed, decorated and ready to be viewed. The Kodet's have done extensive research into the types of trees, ornaments and decorations that are authentic to each period and will share that knowledge with the public for eight nights only in December. All in one place, a visitor will be able to take a pleasant memory walk through the various times, traditions and decorations of Christmas in eras gone by.

Allen Kodet says that people return year after year to share in this wonderful holiday display. "It has become a



tradition with many people. They come one year and return again and again with family and friends – sometimes even in the same year. We have had two marriage proposals during the Christmas walk. We have people laugh or get misty-eyed when they see a tree that reminds them of one from their childhood. People just have the greatest time. They can sit and relax as long as they want in front of one of the four fireplaces in the home. It is not a guided tour – everyone can take as long as they want to become totally wrapped up in the magical moments of Christmas past and present."

Asked if it isn't an awful lot of work for just eight days of displaying, or if it isn't an inconvenience having people go through a home that is a private residence, Diane Kodet replies, "It is a lot of work, but it is also very rewarding – and fun. As each ornament gets unpacked from its box each year, I remember where it came from. I also look forward to the smiles and joy I see in the faces when they are viewing the trees. It seems like everyone is happy and that joy is something I look forward to each year that we put on the walk." That is a lot of

joy, as there have been up to 1,000 visitors to the home in one season!

The history of Christmas trees in America was almost non-existent until about the 1840s. It most likely began with the immigration of the German and Irish immigrants to this country during that period. They brought their Christmas traditions with them from the old country. Queen Victoria of England popularized the idea of a Christmas tree when she made one a part of her Christmas décor in 1846.

Visitors to the "History of the Christmas Tree" Walking Tour can expect to see trees decorated with authentic ornaments from the 1840s to the present. They will learn (through signage and through guides in the home) how those decorations evolved through the decades. There are also trees decorated around a certain theme. Below are a sampling of the unique trees that will be on display:

Mid-1800s Tree

The German immigrants in Pennsylvania were the first to display Christmas Trees in their homes. Decorations, like their European predecessors, almost always included cookies in their homemade decorations. The cookies on this tree are made from authentic antique German molds. In addition, fruit and nuts were popular adornments. The tree is a real tree, totally devoid of needles. The reason for no needles will be shared with visitors on the walk!

Feather Tree

An artificial tree from the late 1800s, made entirely from goose feathers, is decorated with scrap ornaments that were popular during that era. Scrap ornaments were usually handcrafted from lithographed greeting cards, calling cards and calendar art, and were embellished with wire, ribbon and other add-ons.

Victorian Era Tree

Over 15 feet tall, this tree stands in a prominent place in the living room. Only the 30 foot ceilings and 6 foot wide chandelier made from natural

elk horn sheds can compete with its size. Over 1,000 ornaments decorate this tree alone, from the early heavy German kugels, to the delicate blown glass ornaments that were made in every shape imaginable, from fruits, to people, to animals and household objects. Cardboard Dresden ornaments, resplendent in their gold and silver trim, join the wax angels and other ornaments from this amazing period in the history of Christmas tree decorating.



The Victorian Tree is overshadowed by the 6-foot wide chandelier made from natural elk horn sheds

1930s Tree

The white artificial tree is unique in that it is made of fiberglass! And, yes, it is itchy to put up! Hundreds of milk glass figural light bulbs are displayed on the tree.

1950s Trees

The 1950s was a decade when America enjoyed the world's highest standard of living and, at the same time, lived in fear of nuclear annihilation. The mid-1950s saw the invention of the "aluminum" tree – the ultimate in artificial trees. There are four examples of these trees displayed throughout the home, with uniquely themed trees, including one entirely decorated with ornaments from Poland and another with Russian ornaments.

Celluloid Animal Tree

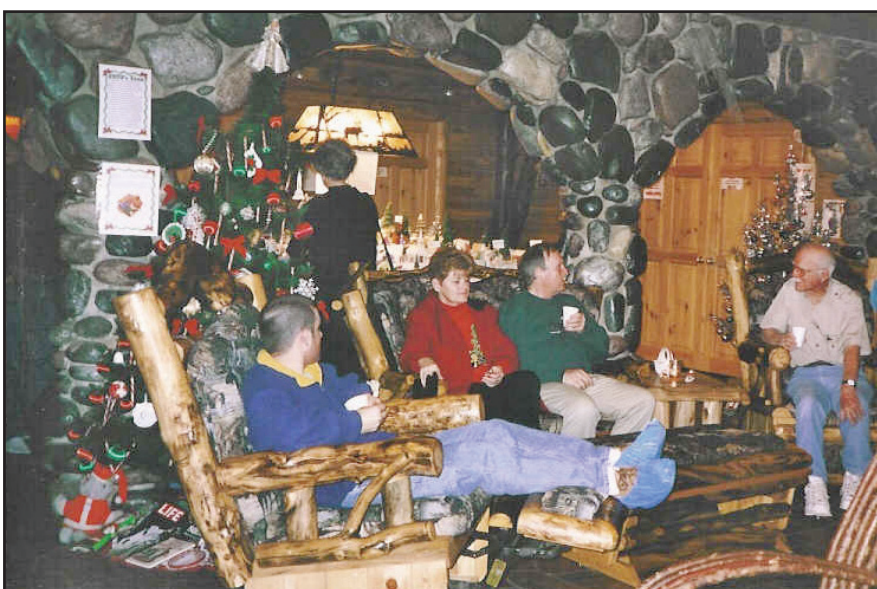
Celluloid ornaments date back to the late 1870s. John W. Hyatt developed the formula for mixing pulp from the cotton plant with solvents and camphor. The 1950s marked the end of the celluloid era. Better quality plastics quickly replaced the more fragile celluloid objects. Celluloid ornaments are very rare today because of their fragility. However, displayed on this tree is an extraordinary collection that survived through the ages.

Beeswax Ornament Tree

Beeswax is the oldest wax in the world. It was first used for creating decorations in the 1600s in Germany. In



Diane and Allen Kodet



Visitors can sit and relax with hot chocolate and cookies around one of four fireplaces in the home.

the late 17th century, the German people brought their art form to Eastern Pennsylvania. Colonial women would gather honey from wild beehives found in the wooded areas. Beeswax ornaments are still being crafted today in the same way.

Deer Tree

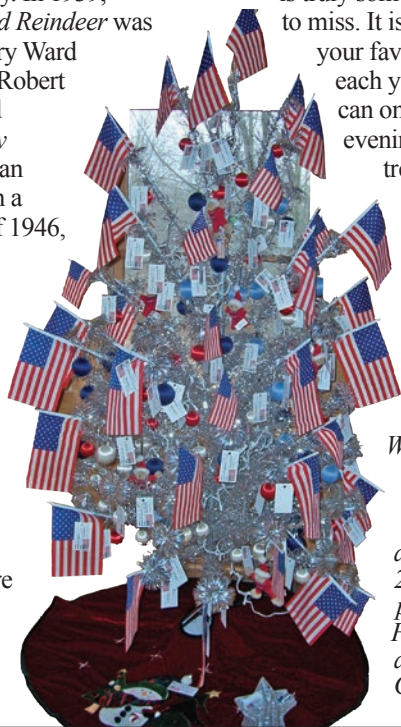
The deer was believed to symbolize grace, beauty and purity. In 1939, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* was created for Montgomery Ward Department Stores by Robert L. May. May patterned his story after *The Ugly Duckling*, deciding on an underdog reindeer with a red nose. By the end of 1946, over six million copies had been handed out to eager shoppers. May, along with his brother-in-law (songwriter Johnny Marks), developed the lyrics and melody for the well-known song. In 1949 Gene Autry recorded it and two million copies were sold, then in 1964 a special TV movie was produced and narrated by Burl Ives. Deer on this tree span the years from the 1930s through the 1960s.

Tree Dedicated to those Men and Women Serving in the Military

One of the more poignant trees on the walk, this red, white and blue tree is decorated with American flags and other patriotic ornaments. Each year since the walk first began, visitors who have a friend or relative in the military are invited to write out a special card with that person's name, branch of military and where they are serving and hang it on the tree. All the years' cards remain on the tree for the next year as a constant reminder of the

sacrifice these young men and women are making and remind everyone to remember them during the holidays.

The list above is only a hint of the huge collection of trees, ornaments and decorations that will be on display during the "History of the Christmas Tree" Walking Tour – over 50 in all! It is truly something you won't want to miss. It is sure to become one of your favorite family traditions each year as well. However, it can only be enjoyed for eight evenings this December. The trees will then be taken down, carefully packed away, with all of their precious decorations, until the following year. 🌲



Editor's Note: The "History of the Christmas Tree" Walking Tour takes place entirely inside the home. The cost for the tour is \$12 per adult and \$6 per child, ages 2-15. Tickets may be purchased at Foxfire Farm Country Store at 8061 Marsh Rd. in Clay Township either in advance or on any of the nights that

the walk is open. The walk is open from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. on December 16 through 23 only. Visitors will park at Foxfire Farm Country Store and will be shuttled approximately two miles to the home. There is no parking available at the home. The shuttle will operate continuously during the open hours. At least an hour should be planned to go through the home. Santa Claus will be at the home on December 17, 18 and 23. Ticket price includes a cup of hot cocoa and cookies as well. For more information call (810) 794-5108 or see the ad on page 21 of this issue.



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When Kimberly was 18 years old, she joined Ross Roy Advertising Agency. Starting as an Invoice Audit Clerk, she worked her way up to Print Media Estimating Supervisor. After eight years in the advertising world, and with two children, she decided that she would follow her life long passion of law-enforcement in some capacity . . . she just wasn't sure what that would be. So, the search began. How could she make a difference and maintain flexibility for her family? Because of her talent for problem solving and her passion for finding the truth, she decided to train and study in the world of investigations.

Kimberly was able to quickly obtain employment with Huffmaster Associates, a large Michigan investigative firm, in the Insurance Fraud Division. She quickly became recognized for her natural talent in the arena of investigative interviewing and within a matter of a few months had been training employees regarding her secret and success of information gathering, interviewing and report writing. She took on numerous responsibilities at Huffmaster, ranging from undercover operations to domestic investigations. She had been entrusted with assignments normally reserved for more seasoned investigators and she thrived on complicated cases such as suspicious death or debilitating injury and accident claims. She was consistently named "Investigator of the Month" and "Investigator of the Year" throughout her ten years of employment there. Her firm chose her to be a special investigator to the United States Postal Service, exclusively conducting investigations and surveillance for them.

Once Kimberly was able to obtain her own license through the State of Michigan, she submitted her application to be a licensed private detective. What a sweet accomplishment for this woman who just had a dream to make a difference and to find the truth. She has maintained the great relationships she had cultivated during her years at Huffmaster, and those mentors and colleagues remain extremely close confidants to this very day.

In 2004, Huffmaster closed their Insurance Fraud Division. Kimberly recognized this as an opportunity to

freelance her services to various investigative firms. She was often referred by clients who personally knew her and the product that she produced.

Kimberly continued to work as an independent contractor in an investigative capacity until she received a job offer from a western Michigan-based firm that wanted to employ her as an operations manager. She accepted the position and worked at this firm from 2005 to early 2009. In following her passion for investigative work, Kimberly resigned her position, Kove Investigations was born.



Kimberly and Michael Kove

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Kimberly Kove is the owner, Chief Operating Officer and primary SIU Investigator of Kove Investigations. Her husband, Michael Kove, is the primary Field Investigator. Kove Investigations employs two experienced Surveillance Investigators. Kimberly and Michael reside in Chesterfield, Michigan and have four wonderful children and six beautiful grandchildren. Kimberly is an Advisory Board Member of The Academy of Court Reporting and a Contributions Manager to the Heartstrings Foundation. You can contact Kimberly at (586) 709-8306 or email her at kkove@koveinvestigations.com.


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What Happened On This Day in History?

By Diane L. Kodet
ThumbPrint News Editor

December

1. On this day in 1913, the first drive-up gasoline station opened (in Pittsburgh). 


2. On this day in 1901, King Camp Gillette began selling safety razor blades. 


3. On this day in 1775, the first official U.S. flag raising took place (aboard the naval vessel *Alfred*).

4. On this day in 1619, America's first Thanksgiving Day took place (in Virginia).


5. On this day in 1766, London auctioneers Christie's held their first sale.

6. On this day in 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified, abolishing slavery.

7. On this day in 1995, the U.S. space probe Galileo began orbiting Jupiter. 


8. On this day in 1952, the first TV acknowledgement of pregnancy took place (*I Love Lucy*). 

9. On this day in 1907, the first Christmas Seals were sold.

10. On this day in 1896, the first intercollegiate basketball game was played (Wesleyan beats Yale 4-3). 


11. On this day in 1620, 103 *Mayflower* pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.


12. On this day in 1822, Mexico was officially recognized as an independent nation by the U.S.

13. On this day in 1913, Italo Marcioni patented the ice cream cone. 

14. On this day in 1793, the first state road was authorized, Frankfort, Kentucky to Cincinnati, Ohio.

15. On this day in 1792, the first life insurance policy was issued in the U.S.

16. On this day in 1997, the San Francisco 49ers retired Joe Montana's #16. 

17. On this day in 1791, New York City traffic regulation created the first one-way street. 

18. On this day in 1892, *Nutcracker Suite*, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's ballet, premiered.

19. On this day in 1732, Benjamin Franklin, under the name of Richard Saunders, began publication of *Poor Richard's Almanack*.


20. On this day in 1995, Queen Elizabeth asked Prince Charles and Diana to divorce.

21. On this day in 1909, the first junior high school was established (Berkeley, California).

22. On this day in 1775, the Continental navy was organized with seven ships.

23. On this day in 1779, Benedict Arnold was court-martialed for improper conduct.

24. On this day in 1851, fire devastated the Library of Congress in Washington and destroyed 35,000 volumes.


25. On this day in 0352, Christmas was celebrated on December 25th for the first definite time. 

26. On this day in 1773, expulsion of tea ships from Philadelphia took place.

27. On this day in 1871, the world's first cat show took place (Crystal Palace, London).

28. On this day in 1945, Congress officially recognized the "Pledge of Allegiance".

29. On this day in 1848, gas lights were first installed at the White House (Polk's administration).

30. On this day in 1936, United Auto Workers staged the first sit-down strike, at the Fisher Body Plant. 

31. On this day in 1991, the USSR ceased to exist.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

October 18, 2010

Dear Diane,

The article about the Prohibition Era in the St. Clair River area has attracted my attention. Up front I want to say that I have enjoyed your publication off and on for several months and I have taken the liberty of addressing you informally because the paper and its staff seem like a very friendly family. Hope that is ok!

I can add some notes of interest to continue with Mr. Gillis' subject. If you find these notes suitable for publication, I would be delighted to see them in print.

My husband, Emery Seestedt, spent every summer of his life here on the river, in Cherry Beach subdivision. He always enjoyed sharing his memories about the "Bootleggers." Cherry Beach was one of the places where the Canadian sellers of liquor came ashore in the United States. In fact, they carried their merchandise right beside the Seestedt home, to the waiting limousines. Their trunks were sagging with the heavy load. M-29 was their route to the nearby Broadbridge Road, which was the first paved road in the area. The neighborhood knew that this road was intended to facilitate the liquor traffic.



Broadbridge Road & Cherry Beach Subdivision

There is a book available at the Marine City Public Library which flushes out the Prohibition stories. Its title is *Special Detail*. The author is Howard Blakemore. This book is very scarce. Its publication date was 1944. Mr. Blakemore was a member of the Immigration Border Patrol and the book is filled with his adventures. There is not a dull page in its 367 pages.

I had the privilege of corresponding with Mr. Blakemore after he retired to California. His replies to my queries are like extra chapters to the original text. When I asked how he happened to write the book, he said, "I told my wife that I could write a better story than the cheap stuff that was being written by other peo-

ple. She dared me to try, and this book is the result." This correspondence is available for the public to read at the Marine City Library on 300 S. Parker Street.

During my life, I have enjoyed writing a variety of short pieces. My book collection includes many old titles about local history, which could become a source of information.

With warm wishes,
Sincerely,
Katheryn Seestedt of Marine City

Editor's note: Katheryn is referring to David Gillis' article, "Blue Water Prohibition", which appeared on page 13 of the October 2010 edition of ThumbPrint News.



Poster calling for repeal of the 18th Amendment

Additional notes:

The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was the beginning of Prohibition. It was ratified on January 16, 1919. It remains one of the most controversial amendments ever enacted and was not repealed until the 21st Amendment of 1933. In over 200 years of the U.S. Constitution, the 18th Amendment remains the only amendment to ever have been repealed.

Text of the 18th Amendment

Section 1: After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2: The Congress and the

several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3: This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Text of the 21st Amendment

Section 1: The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

Section 2: The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

Section 3: This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in

the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress. 🍀



Poster supporting the 18th Amendment

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EXPERIENCED SALESPERSON to sell ads for *ThumbPrint News*. Position requires both days on the road and days in the office. Need reliable transportation as person that is hired will be using own vehicle when on the road. 8061½ Marsh Rd., Clay Township. (810) 794-2300.

WANTED: NEWSPAPER BOYS OR GIRLS, twelve years and older with parent's consent for the cities of Richmond, Capac and St. Clair doing walking routes for monthly publications. Call (810) 794-2300.

EXPERIENCED RETAIL STORE MANAGER with at least 10 years experience in management. Managing 10-12 person staff. Fax resume to: (810) 794-3299.

POND TECHNICIAN: ABC Home & Commercial Services has an opening for a certified pond technician. Must have Aquatic Certification Category 5. Call (810) 794-5678.

LAWN FERTILIZATION TECHNICIAN: Certified in 3A and 3B. Call ABC Home & Commercial Services at (810) 794-5678.

RESTAURANT MANAGER, fast food or traditional. Minimum 10 years experience in management or food prep. Fax resume to: (810) 794-3299.

IMMEDIATE OPENING: SEPTIC TRUCK DRIVER, must have current CDL. (810) 794-8034.

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BELLE RIVER APARTMENTS IN MARINE CITY on the Belle River, modern studio, one and two bedroom apartments. \$335 to \$475. Call (810) 765-8146.

HOUSE FOR RENT, small three bedroom home, Clay Township. No pets, non-smokers only. \$600 per month, plus utilities. One month security deposit and references required. Call (810) 614-8034 for more information.

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ThumbPrint News Business Directory

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ThumbPrint News Business Directory

ThumbPrint News Classified Ads

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2000 HARLEY DAVIDSON SPORTSTER 1200. Pearl white, lots of chrome. \$3500. (586) 946-0085.

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\$3.58 per person

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Thumb Area Activities & Events for December 2010

If you have an event in January that you would like listed in the January issue of *ThumbPrint News*, please email it to ThumbPrintNews@comcast.net by December 12, 2010. 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

Goodrich – December 2

Christmas in the Village, downtown area. The festival includes a tree-lighting ceremony, strolling carolers, visits with Santa and the reading of the Christmas story. The village commons park will host music, vendors and a bonfire. Call (810) 636-3409 or visit www.goodrichchamber.org.

Lapeer – December 3 & 4

Christmas Winter Fest, Courthouse Square. On Friday evening there will be candle luminaries, a tree-lighting ceremony and free carriage rides. On both days visit downtown businesses for holiday values. Don't miss the Farmer's Market at Gallery 194 for Christmas greenery, special foods and crafts. For more information call (810) 272-7202.

Huron County

Caseville – December 4

Christmas in Caseville, downtown area. There will be a full day of family events, including a movie matinee at the Bay Theater at 1:00 p.m., Noel Night in the village park at 5:00 p.m., with a tree lighting ceremony and caroling, and a Living Nativity at the United Methodist Church at 6:00 p.m., with complimentary refreshments provided. Call (989) 856-3818 for more information.

Caseville – December 4

Lunch with Santa, Kiwanis Club/Eagles, 11:30 a.m. All area 4th graders and younger are invited to attend. There will be two bike drawings compliments of Thumb National Bank and Independent Bank. Contact Yvonne Ball at (989) 856-3818 for more information.

Lapeer County

Dryden – December 5

Country Style Breakfast, St. Cornelius Church, 3834 N. Mill St., 8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Menu will include eggs, sausage, biscuits and gravy, pancakes and more. Come and see what's new this month! Adults are \$6, children 4-10 years are \$4. Call (810) 796-2926 for more information.

Almont – December 12

Euchre Night, Almont Lions Hall, 222 Water St., doors open at 6:00 p.m., play

starts at 7:00 p.m. There will be two sets of five games each with a break in between. Refreshments and lunch will be served during the break. Prizes are awarded to the top three points holders. There will be a \$15 donation at the door. For more information call Don at (810) 798-9609.

Macomb County

Chesterfield – December 3

Caroling, Refreshments and Christmas Cheer, Weller Schoolhouse in the Historic Village on Sugarbush, next to the township hall. This event is part of the township's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. For more information, contact macombhistory@yahoo.com.

Mt. Clemens – December 3

Holiday Pot Luck Luncheon, Mt. Clemens Public Library auditorium, 150 Cass Ave., noon. Sponsored by the Macomb County Genealogy Group. For more information visit www.macombhistory.org/historyblog.htm.

Richmond – December 3

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting, Aud Youth Regional Complex, Main St., 6:30 p.m. The evening will begin with Christmas carols sung by the Richmond Community Choir and refreshments. The Santa Parade will begin at the K-Mart Plaza at 6:30 p.m. and will bring Santa to the Aud by fire truck before the lighting of the tree at 7:00 p.m. by Little Miss Richmond. Pictures with Santa are available with your own camera or for \$6 with our picture takers. For more information call (586) 727-3064.

Fraser – December 5

Christmas Open House, Baumgartner Museum, 18577 Masonic, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. The event is sponsored by the Fraser Historical Commission. For more information, contact macombhistory@yahoo.com.

New Baltimore – December 5

Pancake Breakfast with Santa Claus, New Baltimore Fire Department, 36535 Green Street, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Pancakes, sausage, juice and milk are available. Donations will benefit the Anchor Bay Community Giving Tree Holiday Charity Program. Bring your own camera for pictures with Santa. The event is sponsored by the New Baltimore Police Officers' Association and the New Baltimore Firefighters' Association. Call (586) 725-0990 for more information.

Ira Township – December 5

An Afternoon of Christmas Music, Anchor Bay High, 6319 County Line, 3:00 p.m. Event features the Interfaith Choir and guest performers and a free will offering is accepted. Call Bette Carrothers at (586) 725-8051 for more information.

New Baltimore – December 6

Tree Lighting Ceremony, downtown area, 7:00 p.m. Hot chocolate and donuts will be served at the recreation center and Bay Rama is asking for donations of canned goods for the St. Mary's Food Pantry. Santa Claus will be making an appearance later in the evening and the choir will be leading everyone in song. For additional information please contact John Dupray at (586) 725-1387.

Richmond – December 6

Annual Meeting of the Richmond Area Historical and Genealogical Society, Trinity Lutheran Church, 35110 Division Rd., 6:00 p.m. The public is welcome. For more information visit www.richmondhistorical.society.org.

Romeo – December 10

Midnite Madness, downtown area, 6:00 p.m.-midnight. Shop local for the best around – join the madness! Every participating downtown location has different offerings! Sales, savings and fun for the whole family! Wear your PJs for extra discounts. Watch for strolling representatives with free items greeting shoppers on the streets! For more information call (586) 752-1170 or visit www.romeooda.org.

New Baltimore – December 11

Christmas Around the World, MacDonal Public Library, 36535 Green St., 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The Friends of the Library are sponsoring a fundraiser for children and adult programs that are held at the library. There will be arts and crafts, vendors and books for sale. Santa Claus will arrive at 1:00 p.m. Call (586) 725-0273 for more information.

Richmond – December 18

Breakfast with Santa, St. Peters cafeteria, Gratiot and 31 Mile Rd., 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Breakfast will include scrambled eggs, pancakes, French toast, sausage, ham, milk, juice and coffee. There is no charge for children – adults are asked to make a donation. All children will receive a present from Santa. A photographer will be there and will take pictures for a minimal charge. The Lions Club will be offering "Kidsight" eye testing for children from 1-5 years old. Pictures are taken of the child's eyes and they are examined by doctors at Children's Hospital where they can determine whether or not the child should see an eye specialist. There is no charge for this testing. Call (586) 727-1337 for more information.

Oakland County

Rochester – December 1-January 2

The Big, Bright Light Show, downtown area, 6:00 p.m.-midnight. You are invited to brighten your holidays by viewing the buildings in downtown Rochester

which will be covered in more than 1.5 million points of glimmering holiday light. This display is unlike any other in the Midwest and is entering its fifth year.

Royal Oak – December 4, 11 & 18

Breakfast with Santa, Detroit Zoo, 8450 W. 10 Mile Rd., 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Join Old St. Nick as he takes a breather from his busy holiday schedule to enjoy a delicious buffet-style waffle breakfast. The event will take place inside the Wildlife Interpretive Gallery. Photos with Santa are available for purchase. For members, tickets are \$25 for adults (ages 15 and older) and \$20 for children (ages 14 and younger.) For non-members, tickets are \$30 for adults and \$25 for children. For reservations call Customer Service at (248) 541-5717 ext. 3750.

Holly – December 5, 12 & 19

Dickens' Festival, downtown area. Staged every Saturday until Christmas, shopkeepers and craftspeople participate in the festival to create an old-time atmosphere reminiscent of Dickens' England. Attendees are welcome to browse shops in Holly's Historic Downtown district, stroll past historic Victorian buildings, enjoy fish and chips or roasted chestnuts and take a carriage ride. The highlight of the Dickens Festival is the appearance of characters from Dickens' celebrated novel, *A Christmas Carol*. Ebenezer Scrooge, Jacob Marley, the Ghost of Christmas Present and others are brought to life each year by the Festival Singers, who also perform a cappella seasonal music. For information call (248) 634-9571 or visit www.dickensfestivalholly.org.

St. Clair County

St. Clair – December 2 & 9

Bridge Instruction, St. Clair Community Center, 308 S. Fourth St., 6:15 p.m.-8:15 p.m. Sponsored by the St. Clair Recreation Department, the event is open to experienced players as well as those wishing to start. Register by calling Tom Broyles at (810) 326-0121.

St. Clair – December 2

Christmas Ideas Under \$10, St. Clair Library, 310 S. Second St., 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Explore your creative side and make a Christmas gift for under \$10 with Arts & Scraps, a nonprofit organization that recycles industrial materials into learning and fun for all ages and abilities. Registration is required. For more information call (810) 329-3951.

Memphis – December 3

Teddy Bear Toy Shop, Memphis Library, 34830 Potter St., 5:30 p.m. Bring the family and join Rick Morse and his puppets as he kicks off the

Memphis Tree Lighting Ceremony. For more information call (810) 392-2980.

Port Huron – December 3-5

28th Annual Christmas "Pawzaar," Port Huron Factory Shops, former Bass Shoe Store, I-94 and Range Rd., 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Christmas gifts, decorations, white elephant items, knick knacks, household items, logo sweatshirts, t-shirts, toys, jewelry, catnip socks and more – all benefiting the Blue Water Humane Society. Pet Pix with Santa will be taken on Saturday only from 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. for a \$7 donation. For more information or to donate items call Judy at (810) 794-7906.

Smiths Creek – December 3

Fish Fry, Smiths Creek American Legion Post, 7150 Smiths Creek Rd., 4:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Menu includes all you can eat baked or deep fried Alaskan pollack, baked potatoes, rolls, deserts, coffee and tea. The cost is \$6.50 per adult. Soft drinks are available for purchase. Contact Sherwood Frazer at frazersmiths@aol.com.

Algonac – December 4-5

Holiday Open House, Foxfire Farm Country Store and Floral Shop, 8061 Marsh Rd., 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on both days. Come and get your Christmas shopping off to a great start with the best selection of Christmas gifts, ornaments and decorations in the area! Food, fun and great pre-Christmas sales. Preview our holiday floral arrangements and pre-order for great savings! Children come in and decorate a Christmas ornament for FREE while parents shop!

Algonac – December 4

Paint Your Own Christmas Ornament, Algonac-Clay Library, 2011 St. Clair River Dr., 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Stop in and paint a personalized ornament for your tree or to give as a gift. Ornaments were donated by Martha and Bea Sands. Ages 2-12. For more information call (810) 794-4471.

Capac – December 4

Cranberry Christmas, Capac Historical Museum, 401 E. Kempf, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Events include a craft show, museum tours, rustic furniture, fresh greens, horse drawn wagon rides, live Christmas music, a bake sale, handmade chocolates and refreshments. There will also be a blanket collection for the needy. The Council on Aging and the Capac Historical Society are co-hosting this event. Call (810) 987-8811.

Marine City – December 4

Saturday with Santa, Marine City Library, 300 S. Parker, 10:00 a.m.-noon. Join us for a special morning filled with songs, crafts and Santa! Don't forget your camera and wish list! All ages are welcome. Call (810) 765-5233.

Port Huron – December 4

Make, Bake or Buy Holiday Auction, Elks Lodge, 3292 Beach, 11:00 a.m.

Event is sponsored by the American Business Women's Association ViVon Chapter and all profits will benefit the educational fund of the chapter. Reservations must be made in advance for the Hot Lunch Buffet that will be served at 11:30 a.m. at a cost of \$22 paid in advance. A cash bar will be available. Auction items consist of baked goods, handmade items, spirits, sweatshirts, holiday items and more. For more information contact Cathy Alderman at toylady5@sbcbglobal.net.

St. Clair – December 4, 11 & 18

St. Clair Chess Club, Burger King, 200 Clinton Ave., 10:00 a.m.-noon. This is open to all ages and abilities, instruction available, no registration and no cost. For information call (810) 326-0121.

Capac – December 9

Santa Visit, Capac Library, 111 N. Main, 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. A very special visitor from the North Pole will be stopping by the library! Bring your camera and wish list! All ages welcome. For information call (810) 395-7000.

Marine City – December 9

A Christmas Sock Hop, Washington Life Center, 403 N. Mary St., 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.). For your listening and dancing pleasure, impersonator Jerry Connelly from J. C. Productions will take you back to the 1950s and 60s! Refreshments, a hula hoop contest and a prize for the best 50s costume are all included with the ticket price, which is \$15 in advance and \$18 at the door. Everyone is welcome. For more information call (810) 765-3523.

Marysville – December 9

Christmas Card Ornaments, Marysville Library, 1175 Delaware, 6:00 p.m. Join us for holiday fun as we make ornaments out of Christmas cards. Ages 8-12. Registration is required. Call (810) 364-9493 for more information.

Fair Haven – December 11

Santa Visit, Ira Township Library, 7013 Meldrum Rd., 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. A very special visitor from the North Pole will be stopping by the library! Bring your camera and wish list! All ages welcome. For more information call (586) 725-9081.

Lakeport – December 11

Annual Holiday Cookie Sale, Burtchville Township Library, 7093 Second St., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Purchase your holiday cookie selection! Come early for the best selection of these homemade delights! Cookies are sold by the mixed dozen. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Burtchville Township Library and will benefit library programs and projects. For information call (810) 385-8550.

Yale – December 11

Holiday Make It & Take It, Yale Library, 2 Jones St., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Stop in and make a festive craft to take home. All ages are welcome. For more information call (810) 387-2940.

Lakeport – December 13

Christmas Kitten, Burtchville Township Library, 7097 Second St., 4:00 p.m. Local artist Jane Weis will teach you how to paint a fluffy kitten wearing a Santa hat using pastels and other mixed media. Ages 7-13. Registration is required. For more information call (810) 385-8550.

Marine City – December 14

Annual Christmas Dance Program, Washington Life Center, 403 N. Mary St., beginning at 11:45 a.m. Performing will be the WLC Line Dancers and Cloggers, the Port Huron Senior Center Line Dancers and Cloggers and the students from the Head Start Program. Everyone is welcome. For more information call (810) 765-3523.

St. Clair – December 14, 21 & 28

Bridge Club, St. Clair Community Center, 308 S. Fourth St., 12:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m. This is open to all ages and abilities, contract bridge format, no partner needed, no registration required, no cost for the first visit – \$1 per visit afterwards. For information call (810) 326-0121.

Algonac – December 16-23

Seventh Annual "History of the Christmas Tree" Walk, 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. each night. Parking will be at Foxfire Farm Country Store at 8061 Marsh Rd. From there, a complimentary shuttle will transport visitors approximately two miles to the start of the event. Over 50 Christmas trees decorated with ornaments from the 1850s until the present are displayed inside a 9,500 sq. foot log home! Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children ages 2-15. Santa Claus will be at the home on Dec. 17, 18 and 23. Call (810) 794-5108 for more information or visit www.herbsandflowers.net.

Kimball – December 18

Santa Visit, Lynn Campbell Library, 1995 N. Allen Rd., 11:00 a.m.-noon. A very special visitor from the North Pole will be stopping by the library! Bring your camera and wish list! All ages welcome. For more information call (810) 982-9171.

Port Huron – December 20 & 21

Ho-Ho-Holiday Creation Station, Port Huron Library, 210 McMorran Blvd., 9:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. on Monday

and 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Tuesday. Begin your holiday with a stop at the library for crafts, coloring, free play, books and games. Ages 12 and under. For more information call (810) 987-7323.

Casco – December 24

Christmas Eve Worship, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 5322 Palms Rd. A children's program will take place at 7:00 p.m. A candlelight service with Holy Communion will take place at 10:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome. For more information call (810) 765-4808.

Sanilac County

Sandusky - December 4

17th Annual "The Original" Country Christmas Lighted Farm Implement Parade, downtown area, 7:00 p.m. Our parade is designed to capture the spirit of Christmas in Sandusky's rural environment, while paying tribute to the Thumb's agricultural heritage, past, present and future. Activities are taking place all weekend long. For more information call (810) 648-4445 or visit www.miSandusky.mi.us.

Lexington – December 4

Christmas Tree Lighting and Merchant Candle Walk, downtown area. Santa will arrive at 7:00 p.m. There will be a sing along, trolley rides, entertainment and shopping. The event is sponsored by the Lexington Business Association. Call (810) 359-7434 for information or visit www.lexingtonmichigan.org.

Tuscola County

Caro – December 2-8

Gingerbread Village, downtown area. Join our mascots, Fred & Ginger Bread and their two adorable children, Cookie and Snap, for family fun. Activities include shopping, an art walk, entertainment, a gingerbread house competition, a Christmas concert, Taste of Caro, a home tour, children's activities, Santa and more . . . an old-fashioned holiday celebration where true happiness is homemade. Call (989) 673-5211 for more information.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

December Worship Schedule

Everyone Welcome!

Sundays, 8:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion offered each week <i>(followed by fellowship & snacks)</i>
9:15-10:30	Sunday School
10:45 a.m.	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion offered the first and third Sundays of the month
Christmas Eve, 7:00 p.m.	Children's Program
10:00 p.m.	Candlelight with Holy Communion
Christmas Day, 10:00 a.m.	Worship Service with Holy Communion

5322 Palms Road
Casco Twp., MI 48064

Pastor Doug MaGinn
810-765-4808



ThumbPrint News Contest

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 \$25.00 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 will be announced in the January edition as well as information about the object or place. In November's edition, we asked our readers to identify where they could find the object pictured below. The winner was Donald Miller of Smiths Creek who correctly identified the location of the alarm as being on a building at 32 Mile Road and Van Dyke in Romeo, Michigan.

This month we are asking the question, "What is it?" Identify what the object in the photo below is and what it is used for. Send an email to thumbprintnews@comcast.net if you think you know the answer. Be sure to 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!



Front of object



Back of object



SPOTLIGHT: Columbiaville

Continued from Page 4

as a horse race track, beginning at the junction of Marathon and LeValley Roads and continuing to Water Street. On Columbiaville Road, a building called the Pest House was the residence for patients with communicable diseases.

In 1903, when the first automobile came through Columbiaville, it was not initially well received. A large group of residents equated the vehicle with witchcraft. However, soon afterward, the first gas station was established by the Standard Oil Company.

Dr. C. D. Chapin opened a practice on Pine Street in 1904 that remained for over 50 years.

Columbiaville also has the dubious distinction of being one of the towns that were in the path of one of the deadliest tornadoes in U.S. history. On June 8, 1953, an F5 tornado hit the Flint area, traveling a pathway of 18.9 miles of destruction before eventually dissipating near Lapeer. The outskirts of Columbiaville were directly in its path. The village center was only 1.1 miles away. By the time the tornado ended, over 896 persons were injured and 116 people had died. As of April 2009, it was the

last single tornado to kill more than 100 people in the United States. Only three F5 tornadoes have ever hit in Michigan. On that day, seven other tornadoes struck in lower Michigan alone. (An F5 rating for a tornado is based on the Fujita Scale, which measures the destruction of a tornado in terms of property and lives lost after it is over. F5 is the highest rating and is considered to be an extremely violent storm.)




A portion of the Southern Link Trailway in Columbiaville

Today, Columbiaville is an idyllic, scenic town that is one stop on the 10.2 Southern Links Trailway, a non-motorized trailway linking the communities of Columbiaville, Otter Lake and Millington. The trailway is paved with asphalt a minimum of 10' wide for hiking and biking. There is even a separate pathway for those on horseback. Winding through open fields, wetlands, wooded forests and fertile farm lands, travelers will encounter a variety of wildlife and native plants.

In Columbiaville itself, the William Peter Mansion still stands and has been made into a bed and breakfast. Staying there is sure to transport a guest back to the time when William Peter was creating the empire that was to become present day Columbiaville. 🌿



On June 8, 1953, an F5 tornado struck the Flint area including the outskirts of Columbiaville.



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Inspecting Your Home

This month, let's talk about the property that your home sits on. When you buy a house (or any other building), you also buy the property on which it sits. In some cases, the site is more valuable than the house and in many ways impacts the house structure and its value. Before a builder begins construction, he typically does an analysis of the property and then determines how it relates and/or impacts the building. Some of the things he wants to know are:

- How high or low is the property?
- Is any land clearing needed?
- What is the soil type?
- How was the parcel previously used?
- What are the boundaries of the parcel?
- How accessible is the property to roads?
- How much water is in the ground?
- What is the condition of surrounding properties?

Some of the concerns might be:

- **Pedestrian traffic hazards** – trip and fall concerns, heaved or settled walks, hard to see holes in the grass, old stumps, irregular steps, etc.
- **Proper gradient of the property** – an eight foot perimeter around the building that pitches away from the structure, no areas of collecting water, no “nuisance water” discharging on to the neighbor's property (or vice versa).
- **Over growth problems** – trees or shrubs that are touching the house, flower beds that are higher than the established ground level (encouraging basement leaking).
- **The condition of any fencing** – proper location, functionality and safe upkeep (no rusty, loose or sharp edges).
- **Signs of abnormal infestations or pests** – burrow holes in the ground or rotting stumps or firewood stored near the house that may attract insects and critters.
- **Dead trees or large dead limbs**
- **The condition of utilities** – are there any broken sewer covers, wires hanging low



By Mitchell J. Kuffa Jr.
ThumbPrint News Guest Writer

- or touching the house? Are the electric and gas meter in good condition and secure?
- **Swimming pools** – absolutely no overhead power lines allowed near here! Is the equipment run professionally and does it have ground fault interrupter plugs or circuits? Is the water clean? Is there proper fencing, signage and gates to discourage small children and intruders?
- **Wood decks** – are there proper and secure guardrails, do the steps show any hazards, are there any deteriorating boards? What is the condition under the deck (storage, debris, growth, proper supports, etc.)?
- **Soil conditions** – is there any undesirable erosion, washout or settlement?

So you see, there are many facets to the land that your home or building sits on. All the above items, if ignored or left unattended, can affect you, your checkbook and your home. 🌱

Editor's note: Mitchell Kuffa Jr. is a licensed builder who performs private home inspections. All questions or correspondence should be directed to Mitchell at (810) 329-4052 or by email to InspectionsbyMJK@comcast.net. His website is www.Inspectionsbymjkuffa.com.

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Ink & More (formerly Rapid Refill) is founded on the idea that we could turn used, empty inkjet and laser toner cartridges into useable products for our customers, all while saving them money. This was a great idea then and an even better idea today. While our business has certainly grown to many new products, services and stores spanning across the country, our belief in recycling is still put to work every day.

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Recycling is more than a slogan; as part of our mission to promote environmental responsibility our Ink & More store uses recycled materials wherever possible. Our product retail slat wall is made from recycled wood products, the countertops are made from crushed sunflower seed shells, and we use recycled paper whenever possible.

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*Foxfire Farm Country Store is an official recycle station for Ink & More (see ad page 5). Save big dollars on your ink cartridge purchases by buying recycled ink cartridges here! We accept used cartridges for recycling, also. 8061 Marsh Road, Clay Township.

Wordsearch **How to Say "Santa Claus" Around the World**

V	S	I	S	W	K	X	J	A	J	D	U	F	G	C	D	P	P	L	C
E	K	A	P	E	R	E	N	O	E	L	F	I	C	I	L	W	Z	S	K
P	J	Q	M	J	C	Z	R	D	Y	K	T	Q	T	E	P	E	C	A	C
Y	A	L	P	T	D	I	M	O	E	N	M	F	O	C	E	O	J	N	A
D	O	G	E	Z	S	O	N	N	M	J	E	N	D	I	A	O	B	E	Y
J	L	D	N	S	R	I	B	E	N	G	A	S	H	W	U	Z	S	T	K
S	K	S	V	O	A	Y	R	B	Y	P	S	N	S	L	L	C	X	O	Z
I	I	T	Z	Z	I	N	C	H	A	Z	A	V	U	I	I	P	M	M	D
L	M	K	N	F	D	U	T	P	C	C	F	P	Q	Q	N	M	H	O	I
E	Y	X	O	U	R	P	M	A	H	R	U	M	L	G	X	E	E	T	R
N	T	D	K	A	I	I	T	T	C	K	E	W	N	H	U	M	L	L	I
E	E	K	X	H	K	C	S	E	K	L	B	H	V	E	Q	C	W	U	L
S	I	O	T	U	Q	M	A	I	I	B	A	T	T	J	I	G	N	J	J
U	W	F	L	U	A	S	R	R	Q	P	K	U	H	A	U	O	M	E	O
D	S	A	V	N	N	V	P	E	C	N	X	H	S	E	F	N	P	E	A
E	S	C	N	Y	O	R	E	U	C	S	A	P	O	J	E	I	V	L	V
L	U	P	T	Y	E	E	T	A	C	Z	O	G	H	Y	T	L	D	V	Q
A	M	A	G	T	T	N	H	K	B	B	O	M	H	K	P	R	P	X	E
K	A	S	N	E	X	C	R	C	B	Q	R	P	R	Z	D	L	C	O	G
K	Z	V	A	D	E	R	K	E	R	S	F	E	E	S	R	Z	Z	I	M

By Louise Allen

ThumbPrint News Staff Writer

Santa Claus, that legendary bearer of gifts to children during the Christmas season, has been called many different names in the United States, including Saint Nicholas, Saint Nick, Father Christmas, Santa and Kris Kringle. Many different cultures around the world also have a well-known figure who is the primary gift giver of legend and lore during the holiday season. This month's word search focuses on how "Santa Claus" is said in some other countries. (Note: In the word search, if there are more than one word in the name, such as in "Santa Claus," it will not have a space between the words in the puzzle, but rather will appear as one word, such as "SantaClaus." Also, the name of the countries will NOT appear in the wordsearch.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Afghanistan | Baba Chaghaloo |
| Belgium | Pere Noel |
| Chile | Viejo Pascuero |
| Finland | Joulupukki |
| Germany | Weihnachtsmann |
| Hungary | Mikulas |
| Iraq | Vader Kersfees |
| Italy | Babbo Natale |
| Jamaica | Santa Claus |
| Lithuania | Kaledu Senelis |
| Norway | Julenissen |
| Poland | Swiety Mikloaj |
| Romania | Mos Craciun |
| Russia | Ded Moroz |
| Spain | Papa Noel |
| Sweden | Jultomoten |
| United Kingdom | Father Christmas |



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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 520 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 and in Pennsylvania!

This month, Judy Knowlton of the Knowlton Ice Museum in Port Huron took a copy of *ThumbPrint News* with her to North Pole, Alaska, and had her picture taken with *ThumbPrint News*. Judy says, "I guess I didn't have enough ICE at the museum (ha ha)! I had to go see a glacier and some chilly weather. I had a great time."

Judy also shared this information with us about her trip to Alaska:

"Alaska is chilly. It is rainy and it is also very beautiful. I saw so much in a very short amount of time: moose, bear, caribou and birds, such as the bald eagle and puffins. It was fall, so I saw the colors, tasted wild



Judy Knowlton with a copy of *ThumbPrint News* in chilly North Pole, Alaska

blueberries and cranberries, panned for gold – and even got some! I rode on little boats, big boats, little planes, big planes, a big bus, a little bus, trains, jeeps and more. I got home on a Thursday morning, dead tired, as I was awake for over 24 hours – not good for these old bones! Then I had to be at the museum Friday and Saturday. I slept most of Sunday . . .

now I know what 'jet lag' is!"

If you are a reader of *ThumbPrint News* and have taken our newspaper 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.

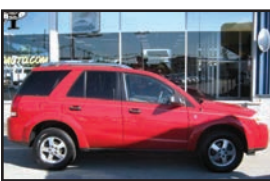
At the end of 2010, our staff will choose the grand prize winner to receive a wonderful prize from *ThumbPrint News*. If you are a business, we will do a feature story on your business for FREE in the January 2011 edition!

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How Expiring Bush and Obama Tax Cuts Will Affect You

By Cindy Redmann
 Tax Consultant

If Congress doesn't act by December 31, 2010, all taxpayers, regardless of income, will face higher IRS tax bills. Every taxpayer will face a tax increase because the current 10% tax rate would disappear. Also, Obama's \$400 (\$800 Married Filing Jointly) "Making Work Pay" credit disappears. That credit gave you \$7-\$8 more take home pay every week per worker. The current individual tax rates will all go up 3%-5%. So, starting in 2011 you will be having more taxes withheld and less take home pay.

Also, the "marriage tax" penalty will again come into play. The standard deduction for Married Filing Jointly will be approximately \$2,800 lower than the current one. Likewise, the end of the 15% tax bracket will be about \$11,200 lower.

The family-favorable child tax credit of \$1,000 per child will be reduced to \$500 per child in 2011. The credit will generally be nonrefundable, thus the additional child tax credit is eliminated.

Remember, these changes will take effect in 2011 if Congress doesn't pass legislation by the end of 2010. They will not affect the 2010 tax return that you file in 2011.

Although your taxes may be going up, our rates at ABC Taxslayers are going down: 1040 EZ - \$59, Dependent Return - \$50, MI Property Tax Credit - \$25, MI Home Heating Credit - \$15. All current year tax services include free E-File! Get your refund fast, within two weeks! Are you sure you got all the money you were entitled to on last year's 2009 tax return? We will doublecheck last year's or prior year's for \$29! In a large percentage of cases, prior years' tax returns often have overlooked tax credits. Who couldn't use some extra money?

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Letter From the Editor

Continued from Page 2

A Christmas Greeting to All

By Tony Taton

Once again this old world celebrates the birthday of the Christ Child. Though born of poor parents in a lowly manger, He has changed the world more than anyone else with His teachings of compassion and love for our fellow man.

Christmas is kept holy and religious by most churches, yet an old gent with his sleigh and reindeer still makes his annual journey to all the people who have been good through the year. It is time for good cheer and a happy time for most families, with homes brightly decorated with lights and a Christmas tree. People are busy shopping in the malls and stores for the perfect gift for each person on their list.

It is also a very sad time for people who have lost a loved one through the year, for a chair will be empty. All of us have lost someone and some have lost recently, so it is good to remember our neighbors as our own.

We have so much to be thankful for in our homeland. We have been free, and have been blessed by the good Lord more than any other nation in the world. We have freedom, food, shelter, good schools, hospitals, choice of religion, and a multitude of other blessings. Our nation is able to grow enough food to feed us and to send more abroad. We help people in other nations with not only food, but also medicine, money and missionaries. Yes, we have truly been blessed until our cup overflows. On any given Sunday, our nation's churches house many millions of people, showing that we are a God loving people.

On Christmas day, as the presents are opened, the television is busy giving greetings from around the world, along with the news, be it good or bad. Mother has prepared her great Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. After prayer, everyone enjoys this bounty until they have eaten their fill. This is a great time of year for clans to gather and enjoy time together as they relate the year's happenings to one another.

Let each of us make each day of the year special by being good both to ourselves and to each other. We need to help the aged, the little people and those who are less fortunate than we are. Let each of us make his or her light shine as we help those in need.

May you enjoy a blessed, healthy and happy Christmas! May the good Lord touch each and every one of you with His continued blessings. May He bless our nation, our President and his Cabinet. May He grant them wisdom, protect them from all harm and guide them in His righteousness.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year to all!

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