

# Thumb Octagon Barn News



## Home of the Thumb Agricultural Museum

*Our mission is to maintain a volunteer group of Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn involved in the restoration and preservation of the Barn Complex as an educational tool preserving our rural and agricultural history for the benefit of our visitors.*

SPRING 2013

## Annual Meeting, Banquet & Benefit Auction

*Nancy Braun, Chairperson*

### Executive Committee

**President**  
**Rose Putnam**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**  
**Martin Kubacki**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**  
**Gerald Auten**

**Treasurer**  
**Joan Koch**

**Recording Secretary**  
**Ardis Monroe**

**Corresponding Secretary**  
**Marilyn DeSimpelare**

**Past President**  
**Bob Hirn**

**Grant Writing Chairman**  
**Dennis Anderson**

**One Room Country School Chairman**  
**Katie Jackson**

**Museum Committee**  
**Douglas Monroe**

**Grounds Chairman**  
**Louis Wehrman**

Contributions to the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn, a 501 ( c ) 3 non-profit organization, are tax deductible according to the IRS guidelines.

**Web Site**  
[www.thumboctagonbarn.org](http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org)

Almost 150 folks gathered on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> for an evening of fun and fellowship. We enjoyed visiting, checking out the auction items for both the regular and silent auction and making plans to bid on that special item that we just had to have. We then enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner prepared by McDonald's Food & Family Center. The buffet table was tended to by several McDonald gals who did a fine job and their efforts were appreciated by all.

This was Nancy's first Annual Meeting and she especially wants to thank those that helped set up the hall for the dinner as well as cleaning up after the Auction. Nancy would also like to thank Lila Arroyo, chairperson of the event for the past several years, who was a tremendous help to her. She hopes that Lila will once again help her next year as she will continue to need her support. Also, Nancy gives a great big thank you to Terry Muntz who volunteered to approach local businesses to donate dozens of items and gift certificates for our Auction. Many of the businesses were new to donating for the Octagon Barn so this was a very nice addition to our Auction. They added a great deal to the overall tally for the evening. Martin Kubacki handled the 50/50 raffle and was delighted that \$528.00 was raised as all of the lucky winning ticket holders graciously gave their dollars back to the Barn.

Following dinner, our President, Rose Putnam conducted a short business meeting and recognized several individuals for their contributions to the Friends. Rose presented David Jaroch with a certificate recognizing his service as First Vice President and thanked him for taking over the scheduling of our Host Couples and assisting them with training, organizing

the first Summer Concert in the Barn and volunteering on Mondays with the Boys Day Out group and much more. He will continue to take charge of all of these tasks. Thank you, David, for serving on the Executive Board and for taking charge of all of these activities.



Rose Putnam, President, presented David Jaroch with a certificate of appreciation at our General Membership Meeting in April since he was unable to attend our Annual meeting. He and his wife left for California the morning of our Annual Meeting.

Rose also recognized Walther's Potato Farms. See picture & explanation on page 2.

The next order of business was to conduct the election of officers. The slate of officers that was unanimously accepted include: Martin Kubacki, First Vice President for a two year term, Ardis Monroe, Recording Secretary for a two year term, Joan Koch, Treasurer for a two year term and Marilyn DeSimpelare, Corresponding Secretary for a one year term.

The next item on the agenda was to recognize our 2013 Barn Friend of the Year. Since 2002 we have been honoring a member for their outstanding commitment to our organization. Choosing this person is a difficult task as we are fortunate to have so many dedicated volunteers. After reviewing

those suggested for this recognition, the committee, Katie Jackson, Martin Kubacki and Margaret Sergeant, concluded that Ardis Monroe should be selected as our 2013 Barn Friend of the year. She is known for seeing a need and stepping forward with a solution or to



Rose Putnam is pictured presenting Ardis Monroe with a plaque recognizing her as our 2013 Barn Friend of the Year at our General Membership Meeting. Ardis was unable to be with us for the Annual Meeting because some friends were celebrating a very special anniversary and Ardis had been in the wedding party some years ago.

Volunteer. Ardis' many accomplishments include:

Working with the Grounds Chairman Doug Monroe to plant spirea bushes along the front of the property to replicate the look when the Purdys resided there

Serving as our Recording Secretary for ten years and agreeing to serve for another two years. As recording secretary she has to attend all of the Board and General Membership Meetings and basically any time there's a meeting, Ardis is there taking minutes.

During School Tours she accepted the responsibility of sharing Cora's diaries or the story of Squeaky the Mouse, A Home for the Winter with school groups.

When a cotton candy machine was donated Ardis agreed to make cotton candy having never made it before and now is quite the sticky expert.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Letter From the President

FRIENDS of the THUMB OCTAGON BARN  
Rose M. Putnam



### Dear Friends,

Another School Tours has come and gone. Mother Nature was in control as always. We were blessed with perfect weather on Wednesday and Thursday. I was getting reports on how well things went and everyone was having a great time including the volunteers. Facebook is a great tool. I took Friday off from work to volunteer along with many other brave souls. The weather was miserable.

I have to tell you that the children, along with their parents or grandparents, were real troopers. Our group started in a tent with the wind blowing in rain on all sides. We did enjoy the rope making demonstration and learned the name of two knots. We then moved into the garage for a quick stop to learn about transportation in the country and also to warm up. Our next stop was to visit the animals in the barn, getting wet along the way. Then on to the one room school museum to visit the nurse and learn about some old home remedies that can still be used today. Back to the barn and learning the history of the octagon barn from Mrs. Sergeant.

We were able to stay in the barn and eat our lunch. We were still trying to warm up our wet feet. We were very happy to visit the warm house and learn about Jim and Cora Purdy, but I think everyone enjoyed Mr. Paladi's demonstration on phonographs the best. We were very fortunate to move to the schoolhouse that had a warm fire burning in the furnace. We were very comfortable in the school and paid close attention to our teachers. One young man did misbehave and suffered the penalty of the "dreaded paddle" - all in good fun, of course.

We then had a chance to shell some corn and watch how the corn grinder ground the corn for corn meal and feed for the animals. Mr. Auten assigned the teacher some homework to make corn muffins for her class. We then finished up our day at the Grain Elevator and were fascinated by the operating legs moving the navy beans. We also learned a lot about soybeans. Everyone wanted to try the Tootsie Rolls made with soy. Then back to the warm bus to take a nap on the way back to school after a miserable day in the cold and rain, but they all promised to come back during Fall Family Days. We'll have to pray that Mother Nature is more kind in the fall.

I was never more proud and thankful for our improvements on site as I remember back to the beginning when there were holes in all the roofs and no heat in any building. We've come a long way. I would also like to thank all our volunteers who made our school tours a pleasurable experience for everyone. A special thank you to **Diane Rapson Gabil**, chairperson of School Tours, who had beautifully organized every detail of the three day Event.

Don't forget to check the calendar of events on our website for our summer activities.

Your Friend and President,  
Rose

## Annual Meeting, Banquet & Benefit Auction

(Continued from page 1)

When it was determined that we had a storage problem she organized the First Barnyard Sale to sell some of the duplicate items that had been donated.

And, finally when our bylaws needed updating she served on a committee to accomplish that task.

Actually, Ardis began her volunteer days with the Friends on November 3, 2001 when she married Doug and had, at that time, never heard of the Octagon Barn.

Ardis is a quality person, a great representative of the Thumb Octagon Barn and is willing to help wherever she is needed. Congratulations, Ardis. Job well done.

After this presentation it was time to turn the evening over to Auctioneers Dave and Marty Osentoski who donate their time to conduct our auction. All in all it was a most successful annual meeting.

## Other Photos from the Annual Meeting



**Ray Caverly**, left, is pictured with the item that he had crafted for our Auction. Ray is a fine woodworker and always has something interesting that he creates for our Auction. When the Bridgeport Post Office remodeled their facility they removed the covers from the P.O. mailboxes. **Sherry**

**Kappen**, Akron postmaster, donated ten of these covers to the Friends. Ray beautifully made a bank out of the P.O. box cover and enclosed it using red oak wood. Ray made two and they were very popular and brought a good bid from those attending our Auction. Perhaps he'll have two more at next year's Auction.



**Jim & Sheryl Beyer** of Saginaw, MI are pictured with the item that they bid on and won. Sheryl said, "As soon as I saw the donkey made out of barn wood and filled with flowers, I knew that was something that I wanted. Several weeks ago I found a garden wagon and the donkey will be perfect to complete the display by appearing to pull the wagon."



In 2012 **Walther Potato Farms** partnered with the Friends for our Theme of Potatoes by planting a demonstration plot with potatoes, caring for them throughout the growing season and then harvesting the potatoes at our FFD Event. President, **Rose Putnam**, presented a collage showing the process of planting and harvesting the potatoes at the Octagon Barn site to several representatives from Walther Potato Farms. Pictured are **Kevin Storm**, **Rose** and **Guthry Laurie**. Kevin thanked the Friends for their recognition but also expressed the thanks of Walther Potato Farms for partnering with them and expressed how much they had enjoyed the experience.



**Bob Hirn** is pictured, at left, with **Jerry Bartnik**, of Bartnik Service of Cass City. Bob recognized Jerry for his many years of volunteering for various jobs that need doing at the Thumb Agricultural Museum. Jerry loans needed equipment for a project, a semi-trailer truck used for storage, picks up Steam Engines which are on display during FFD and hauls, willingly, whatever we need to have hauled.

## Souvenirs

Joan Koch, Chairperson

Joan was very pleased with the souvenirs sold during School Tours. Most were items that could be purchased for under one dollar. She carefully selects things that first will be of interest to the students and will be affordable. Because the weather was so cold and rainy on Friday it was suggested that Joan explore purchasing ponchos with the Barn Logo as well as umbrellas. We did outfit some of our visitors with garbage bags (a make-shift poncho) which kind of worked to keep the rain off as one went from station to station.

**Betty Armstead & Bill Hollingsworth**, one of our Host Couples at the Barn, have set up a souvenir store in the Garage for visitors to the Thumb Agricultural Museum. It is open for business during our regular hours.

### Newsletter

Database and labels.....David Eichler  
Editing.....Bob Hirn  
Design Layout.....Lois Moslander  
Newsletter Coordinator.....Margaret Sergeant

## Gage Comes to Gagetown

**Gage** is a third grade student from Pinckney, MI. His class was given an assignment to study a city in Michigan and for obvious reasons Gage chose Gagetown. He wrote a letter to Gagetown's Chamber of Commerce requesting some information. The letter was received by **Joan Koch** who is the Village of Gagetown's Clerk/Treasurer and takes care of any requests for information. She responded to Gage's request and sent him information and history about Gagetown, the Octagon Barn Brochure and included a T-shirt and a whoopee cushion. He was the envy of his class because he received these gifts.

Joan shared the following facts about Gagetown that perhaps many didn't know

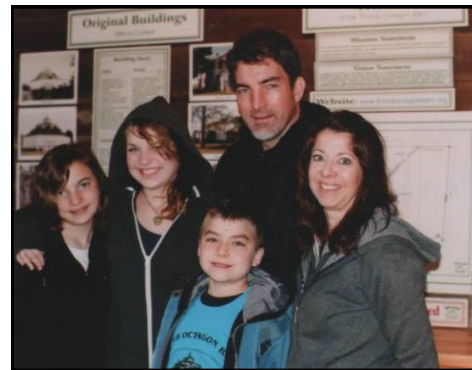
but will know now because of Gage and his project. Gagetown is known for having two Churches that are over one hundred years old. They are the Methodist Church that James & Cora Purdy attended and St. Agatha's Catholic Church known as "The Church in the Cornfield". Gagetown was home to Matt Benetiz who tried out to play with the Detroit Tigers, loved baseball and coached Little League Teams in the area as long as he was able. Of course, Gagetown is best known for the gentleman that owned the Gagetown State Savings Bank, James Purdy, who also had the very unique Octagon Barn built in 1923.

Gage and his family decided to travel to Gagetown for a firsthand

look. They planned their visit so they could also attend School Tours at the most important landmark in Gagetown, the Thumb Octagon Barn. They took pictures of the water tower, Catholic Church and the Funeral Home in The Village of Gagetown as well as pictures at the Octagon Barn.

Gage is completing his final report that is due before school is dismissed for the summer. We've been promised a copy and will pass it on in our next newsletter. We think he's going to get a good grade.

The family loved their visit to Gagetown and the Thumb Octagon Barn. They especially thanked the Friends for making Gage feel so special.



Gage's family is pictured in the Welcome Center in the Barn. They are from the left, Gage's sisters, **Sierra & Wynter**, his Dad, **John** and his Mom, **Renee**. Gage is in the center proudly wearing his Octagon Barn T-shirt.



Gage found out what happens when you misbehave in the One Room Country School. Supposedly, he dipped the pigtail of the student who was sitting in front of him, in the ink well in his desk. **Marilyn Peters**, teacher in the Country School, is pictured giving Gage a gentle paddling for misbehaving.

### Steam Power School

*Paul Deo, Chairman*

If you have ever wanted to operate a steam engine then you should be contacting **Paul Deo at 989-658-2206 or 989-550-0077**. Paul is planning our second steam power school for **Saturday, August 31, 2013 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.** at the Thumb Agricultural Museum. Half of the day will be in a classroom setting with the other half of the day devoted to hands-on involvement with steam engines focusing on safety, operation and maintenance. The instructors will be **Paul Deo and Dave Kemler** and each participant will receive a copy of The Steam Engine Guide by Prof. P. S. Rose as well as other handouts and information.

The class is limited to 25 and pre-registration is required. The cost is \$25.00 and includes lunch. The Steam School is available to students 14 and older but they must be accompanied by an adult. Those who attend the Steam School, can get additional training when they come to FFD the following weekend and that will be free.

**This is the only Steam School scheduled in the State of Michigan this year. Everyone is welcome!**



### Teas in the Purdy Home

*Judy Wallace, Chairperson*

Judy has arranged for the following Teas to occur during the summer months in the Purdy Home. We recommend that you make your reservation early as there are limited spaces available and they fill up quickly. Following is the information for each of the Teas, the Theme, Hostess and Phone Number. Several of the teas are **SOLD OUT** and are not accepting additional reservations.

**July 27<sup>th</sup> - Themed Tea featuring "Christmas in July"**

6:00 p.m. \$15.00 pre-paid per person.

Contact Hostess Gail McCreedy for information and to make a reservation 989-665-0127 **SOLD OUT**

**August 10<sup>th</sup> - Themed Tea/Luncheon featuring "Mad Hatter Tea Party"**

12:30 p.m. \$15.00 pre-paid per person.

Please wear your favorite hat. Contact Hostess Chris Allen for information and to make a reservation 989-672-0289.

### The Purdy Home

*Marilyn Phillips, Chairperson*

The Committee is working in the basement to get that area cleaned and presentable for FFD. There is a lot of scrubbing to do. **Ray Caverly** and **Duaine Phillips** are putting up shelving and Marilyn has decorating plans to brighten things up. If you can help and would like to join the group contact Marilyn at 989-665-0210 or 989-977-0025.

Marilyn was delighted with all the help she had in the House during School Tours and thanks all those that volunteered. She figures that she had fourteen different helpers during the three day period.

Soon the Purdy Home will be hosting the Teas that are scheduled throughout the summer months. Most of them are already sold out as they have become very popular and understandably so because the Purdy Home is a lovely place to have a Tea.

## 2013 School Tours

*Diane Rapson Gabil*

Almost 1100 students, preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, including children with special needs and 400 chaperones, attended School Tours and were guided by 164 Volunteers. 2013 School Tours was a terrific educational field trip. There were 27 stations for the students to visit dealing with rural Michigan in the early 1900's. Educators had chosen, prior to attending, which of the 10-12 stations best fit their students' age and learning levels. The weather was perfect on Wednesday and Thursday but a "little" wet on Friday.

Most of the educators evaluations returned stated the information and learning the children received at the Thumb Octagon Barn School Tours was so great that they already plan on attending in 2014 with their next year's class.

Most of the chaperones had never been to the Thumb Octagon Barn before. Some said that they were going to bring their family and friends to Fall Family Days 2013 which will be held Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> and Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>.

**School Tours 2014** will be held **Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>** during the school day. Groups should plan on spending the entire school day enjoying all of the planned activities. We have several picnic areas for students and chaperones to enjoy their sack lunches. The fee is \$2.00 per student and chaperone. Educators may sign up for School Tours 2014 beginning in September 2013 through April 15, 2014 on the website under "Events" at [thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org) or they may contact Diane Rapson Gabil at 989-892-3105.

A great big thank you to **Diane Rapson Gabil** for beautifully organizing this Event that is so successful and positively represents the Thumb Agricultural Museum to the community.

Following are pictures that highlight some of the activities and a few of the 27 stations available to the students during School Tours.



Our theme this year is soybeans and related products. **Lila Arroyo**, Cass City, was in the Theme Tent sharing information about soybeans and some products that use soy that might surprise you. She had containers of soybeans, plants that she had started growing and products that use soybeans. The students were then able to plant a few soybeans by digging the row marked off with string, then plant the beans and cover them with dirt. They were encouraged to come back for FFD to see their crop ready for harvesting. More information about soybeans can be found on Page 7. Our demonstration plot has

been planted by **Chris & Tonya Ziehm, Ziehm Farms, Gagetown, MI** who will care for the beans and harvest the crop during FFD.



**Connie Osentoski** volunteered to be our photographer during School Tours using her digital camera to get new updated pictures for our web site. Pictured are **Diane Rapson Gabil, School Tours Chairperson, Connie Osentoski and Aaron Davis one of our Web Managers** looking over the pictures and deciding what is still needed. Check out our website to see some of these new photos at [www.thumboctagonbarn.org](http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org). Thank you, Connie, for volunteering to do this for the website.



**Raymond & Carol Caverly**, co-chairpersons of the Tractor Shuttle Rides, arrange for tractor drivers to taxi groups of students from station to station using our shuttles. Our School Tour Evaluations indicated that teachers, chaperones and students had high praise for the tractor drivers of the people movers. This was especially true on Friday when the weather was rainy and cold. It felt real good to have a cover over you as you went from one activity to another. However, the tractor drivers deserve a tremendous thank you for their efforts on Friday as there's no cover protecting them from the elements. The tractor drivers were: **Earl Schember, Louise Buehly, Bob Ashmore, Jack Hill, Dan Ondrajka, Norm Parker, Duaine Phillips, Wayne Rhode and Ron Scott.**



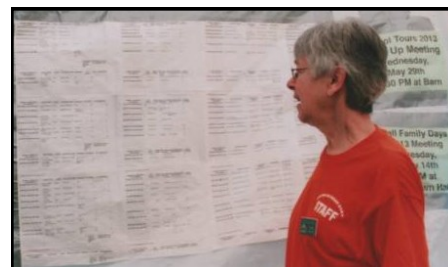
Pictured are **Doug Monroe and Joan Koch** who have just come into the Barn, out of the rain, from greeting groups that were coming for School Tours on Friday. They are cold and wet but they have all groups onsite now and they are cold but happy. Doug does all of the scheduling for each group that visits using the teacher's input as to the stations they want to visit. Joan meets each class and collects the fee of \$2.00 for each student and chaperone visiting. She also presents each class with a bag for each student with some commemorative items in them. Then she comes in the Barn and takes care of the Souvenir Store in the Barn.



**Linda & Louie Wehrman** are in the Grain Elevator ready to greet students and explain what an elevator is and what it does. They answer the question "How does our food get from the farm field to our dinner table?" They turn on the various pieces of equipment to demonstrate this process. Things will be turning, shaking and moving up and down on the legs all working to prepare grains and beans for us to eat.



**Nicole Peterson**, Port Austin with **Maplewood Petting Zoo** who bring the animals that are on display on the North side of the Barn, is pictured with a first time visitor to the Barn. Nicole is scratching the hump of Lucy, a miniature Zebu, who frequently made her presence known with a rather loud mooing sound. Never heard of a Zebu? Well, you aren't alone. A Zebu is a domesticated ox native to Asia & parts of Africa. They have a large hump over the shoulders, short legs, droopy ears and are resistant to heat and insect borne diseases.



**Norma Wallace** is in the Volunteer tent where all the folks who are volunteering gather to check in and get their assignments. Norma makes many phone calls lining up folks to be guides taking the various groups to their assigned stations. Most are delighted to get her call and have been expecting it. All together Norma needed 47 guide volunteers. Most of them have been volunteering for many years and are glad to do it. She also, lined up the gentlemen who take care of the tractors that our young visitors can sit on and pretend to be driving.

## More School Tours



The **Eastern Michigan Music Makers** have been performing at our School Tours since the beginning almost twenty years ago. Their goal is to entertain and educate the students about music played years ago. They play old-time country, party and kiddie songs using keyboards, guitars, banjo, mandolin, fiddles and a tub bass. The audience is encouraged to join in singing and even doing the Hokey Pokey. Also, **Richard Wroblewski** composed songs reflecting our Theme of Soybeans to familiar tunes. Pictured are from the left: **Bill Slaughter**, **Craig Sorenson**, **Arlen Bannick**, Chairperson, & **Richard Wroblewski**.



The House Committee had Volunteers stationed throughout the Purdy Home to share information and stories about this beautifully restored Home. In the Parlor on Friday during School Tours, **Pauline Kelly** was playing her dulcimer just as she has on Fridays for the past ten years. **Alex Paladi** from Deford treated visitors to a demonstration of Edison's early cylinder phonograph that was used to teach immigrants English and for entertainment. In 1892, the cost of the phonograph was \$150.00 until a competitor caused the cost to fall to \$20.00. Pictured are some of the Volunteers in the Sitting Room. In the front row from the left are: **Marilyn Phillips**, Gagetown, House Committee Chairperson, **Dorothy Stahlman**, Cass City and **Norma Baur**, Unionville and in the back row are **Dale Churchill**, Deford, **Tori Pine**, Unionville, **Pauline Kelly**, Bay Port and **Alex Paladi**, Deford. Also, volunteering but not pictured are **Gail McCreedy**, **Victor & Betty Woehlert**, **Janet Cooper**, **Marilyn Brownrigg**, **Rosalie Walsh**, **Chris Allen** & **Janet Lasko**.



**Pam Maxwell Fry**, Special Needs Teacher from the Huron Intermediate School District, brought a group of students to visit during School Tours. One of the students, **Trent**, was in a

specialized stroller and all he wanted to do was to get to the tractors so that he could sit on one and pretend to drive. When he saw all of the tractors he wanted to get on each one. The gentlemen monitoring that area did the most amazing thing. They picked up Trent and handed him from person to person so that he could sit on each tractor. His classmates were cheering as he went from tractor to tractor. A big "Pat on the Back" to all the Volunteers in the tractor station for making this happen. You can see how happy Trent is and definitely enjoying this memorable experience.



The One Room Country School provides students with an opportunity to see what education looked like many years ago. Teachers, dressed in period appropriate attire, explained some of the differences in classrooms today as compared to those of years ago. The Schoolhouse Staff needed during School Tours is sizeable as Katie has two outside greeters, two teachers in the Schoolhouse and one person in the Museum. She plans two shifts each day and many are available for more than one shift. Pictured from the left are **Marilyn Peters**, Cass City, **Rhonda Peters**, Gagetown, & **Katie Jackson**, Cass City, Chairperson of the Country School. Not pictured but volunteering were: **Linda Gray**, **Marilyn Mastie**, **Jaquie Zawilinski**, **Nancy Folk**, **Wayne & Sherry Dillon**, **Lori Seuryneck**, **Dennis Meck**, **Cathy Muter**, **Grace Janowski**, **Michelle Leeson**, **Kathy Nicol**, **Judy Hoelzle**, **Janet Retford**, **Lori Mazure**, **Barb Stickle**, **Dotty Scollon**, **Jim Ware** and **Bob Gengler**.



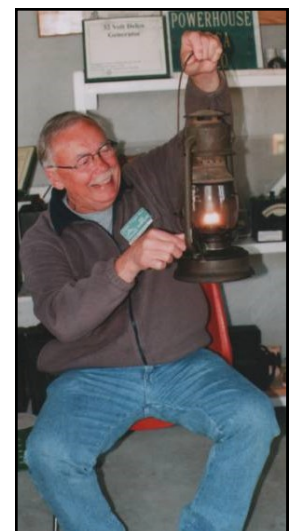
**Jerry Auten & Ed Nicholson** are waiting for the next group of students to visit the Grist Mill so they can demonstrate the process of how an ear of corn becomes something that animals and humans can eat. Each child will put an ear of corn through the corn sheller. Then for animals the shelled corn goes through a feed mill. For humans, the shelled corn goes through the grist mill to grind it finer ready to use for making corn muffins. So they put the shelled corn through the grist mill. For Jerry the best part is giving each teacher some homework. The students love it! The teacher receives a bag of corn meal to make corn muffins for the class.



**Lew Martin**, our blacksmith, is pictured in the Blacksmith Shop where students saw how metal is transformed into decorative pieces. Lew demonstrated how metal is heated in a forge, fueled by coal, until it turns red hot. Then it is hammered out into useful shapes for making shelf brackets, candle holders, hooks or even the tools that the blacksmith uses. Students could see and learn how things were made and done before electricity.



**Aaron Davis**, Chairman of the Rope Making station, demonstrates for students how you can produce a rope by first twisting fiber into twine and in that process they become stronger. Even greater strength occurs when the twine is twisted into strands. The final strength is reached when three strands are twisted together to make a rope. Aaron, throughout his presentation, is 'tying' the whole process together by demonstrating that, like the rope, we become stronger when we work together.



**Byron Arnold & Karl DeSimpelare**, co-chairmen of the Power House, had to bring light into the building on Friday when it was so dark and dreary. Karl is pictured lighting one of the lanterns that has not yet been converted to electric by Byron. The powerhouse is one of the original buildings on site and contains many of the items and different approaches that Mr. Purdy tried to bring electricity to his farmstead before commercial electricity was available.

# Our 18th Fall Family Days

*Bob Hirn & Martin Kubacki, Co-Chairmen*

It's hard to believe that this is our 18<sup>th</sup> Fall Family Days. There have already been two planning meetings and a lot of preparation. The Theme this year is Soybeans and related by-products. A lot of research has been done in the related by-products and it is overwhelming all of the products that are related to soybeans. It will be an interesting theme this year. At the May meeting we discussed themes for 2014 and came up with five ideas. At the July meeting we will make a decision about what the 2014 Theme will be.

All of the previous activities, demonstrations and displays are geared up for this year. However, because the Event is growing so much, we will have to lay out the grounds a little differently than last year. Not that it will be harder to get around, but easier to see related displays all in the same area.

This year our Farmer's Breakfast is going to be handled by the **Knights of Columbus** from Caro. The Auten Family has been taking care of the Breakfast almost from the very beginning of FFD but because of family health issues they had to step down. A heartfelt thanks to the entire Auten Family for their many years of preparing Breakfast for thousands. We welcome the Knights of Columbus and thank them for coming forward to take charge of this very popular event.

Also, **Lisa Geiger** is going to be taking over the **Admission Collection** responsibilities at the Gate from **Luci Kubacki** who is "retiring from that job". Lisa has worked with Luci for 5 or 6 years so she has an idea of how to handle this area. Lisa was greatly relieved when Luci agreed to work with her this year. **Lisa is looking for helpers and would appreciate Volunteers coming forward to help with collecting the gate fees. She can be reached at 989-479-9783 or her cell at 989-553-6048.**

## Boys and Gals Day Out

*The Boys Co-Chairmen*

Ever wonder what happens at the Barn after Fall Family Days. For many of our volunteers the answer may be paying the bills, organizing the Christmas Open House, working on the Newsletter or putting everything away for the winter. For the hearty group of Monday workers, time does not stop when the snow flies.

Throughout the winter a group met to work on the new school museum. The house group met on Thursdays to clean up the basement, and the barn group worked on the loft museum. As you can imagine, cold winds and snow also had to be dealt with.

Once spring broke, the volunteers were back at it getting set up for school tours. This involved being sure all the equipment worked, grass was cut, and all the venues were set up according to the wishes of each area supervisor. Once school tours were over it was time to tear down and prepare the grounds for our host couples and the guests they welcome every day.

Now that it is summer, it is time to cut grass, plant flowers and repair buildings, construct new buildings, keep the equipment working, set up displays and clean up always. If these activities sound like fun, please plan on joining the gang on Mondays (the everything-gets-done day) or on Thursdays to work in the house. Contact any of the chairpersons to find out about special projects. There is always room for one more and that one is you.

If you have anything relating to soybeans that you would be willing to loan for display in our feature tent, please contact **Bob Hirn at 989-872-3761 or Martin Kubacki at 989-551-0526. Also, if you can volunteer to help especially with parking, Martin would be so happy to hear from you.** When you have 15,000 folks coming to an Event, parking is a big concern and requires many Volunteers.

Our next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 9, 2013 at 7 p.m. at the Munro Building on the grounds.** If you are interested in being a volunteer for the Event, please attend this meeting. It will give you some idea about what will be going on this year. We would be thrilled to see some new volunteers.

## Annual Raffle

*Sherry Kappen, Rose Putnam and Joan Koch, Raffle Committee*

Again this year we will be holding our Annual Raffle that has proven to be a great fund-raiser for our organization. The committee has filed for the license, secured the prizes and will print the tickets as soon as we receive our license.

Tickets will be sent to **MEMBERS ONLY** in the next few weeks. We appreciate your assistance selling our tickets but you always have the option to return them if you do not care to participate. Once you make that decision, Joan who mails the tickets, honors your request each year. If you would like additional tickets or didn't receive any, contact Joan Koch at 989-665-0081.

### Raffle Prizes 2013

- ❖ Queen Size Quilt - Donated by Ruth Ann Brown
- ❖ \$300.00 - Donated by \*FOTOB
- ❖ John Deere Pedal Tractor - Donated by Tri-County Equipment
- ❖ \$150.00 - Donated by \*FOTOB
- ❖ \$100 Menard's Gift Certificate - Donated by McAlpine Insurance Co.
- ❖ Handmade Afghan - Donated by Gwen Poole
- ❖ Craftsman Mechanics Tool Set - Donated by \*FOTOB
- ❖ Case Intl. 4WD Steiger Pedal Tractor - Donated by Osentoski Farm Equipment, Pigeon & Bad Axe
- ❖ \$100.00 Menard's Gift Certificate - Donated by Green Acres Farm of Akron
- ❖ Handmade Afghan - Donated by Pat Hester
- ❖ \$50 - Gift Certificate donated by Plain and Fancy in Cass City.
- ❖ \$75.00 - Donated by \*FOTOB

*\*FOTOB stands for Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn*

**Ron Hoffman**, Bad Axe, is moving one of our people movers that was all decorated and ready for our students and chaperones during School Tours. The covered people movers were invaluable all three days but especially on Friday when a steady rain persisted for the entire day and the temperatures had dropped into the forties.



# Clean up Day

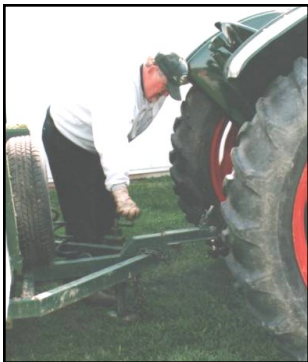
## Preparing to open for the Season

Louie Wehrman, Grounds Chairman

Louie, Grounds Chairman, requested that each Chairperson be responsible for cleaning and preparing their specific location for opening to the public and for School Tours. Louie felt that this worked out very well as Volunteers worked to clean, straighten, vacuum, wash,

where necessary, and prepare seating for the students using straw bales or benches. We were delighted that we had several new volunteers show up to help spiffy things up so that the Thumb Agricultural Museum would look great.

**Martin Kubacki**, Ubyly, was busy moving the six people movers out from where they had been stored over the winter month. Another crew worked to clean them so they would be ready for passengers. He is pictured unhitching one unit and getting ready to move



another wagon. Our evaluations for School Tours indicated that teachers, chaperones and students had great praise for the tractor drivers of the people movers. They took the youngsters from one station to another especially when it was cold and rainy. They picked them up at the Barn and took them to their next scheduled activity and were right there to pick them up when the presentation was finished. They loved the door to door service.



**Ena Reintjes** from Gagetown and St. Clair Shores worked to clean the Welcome Center area in the Barn. She dusted, vacuumed and wiped away all of the dirt and grime that had accumulated over the winter months. It looked great and was ready to showcase the important features of the Thumb Agricultural Museum for visitors.



**Tori Pine** of Unionville recently retired and heard that the Friends were a good group to work with and Volunteer your time. She was a big help working to clean things up in the Barn and was willing to work wherever she was needed. During School Tours she volunteered to be in the Purdy Home and share information about the beautiful home and the Purdy Family with students.



**Coulson Blair**, Lexington, is working to get the stalls ready for the animals that will be on display during School Tours. He didn't have a specific area that he was assigned to but he performed a variety of tasks and was happy to do them. He later helped out at the Grain Elevator Building as well.

## National Volunteer Week

The Executive Committee would like to acknowledge National Volunteer Week with a message to **all** of our many Volunteers who have given of their time and talent since 1993 and continuing on.

The all-volunteer workforce is the life blood of the Octagon Barn. We have seen much success in our efforts to obtain volunteers. Let us not forget that there are many positive examples of volunteers working together to maintain the Octagon Barn. We are a broad mix of people coming together with a variety of talents and skills that when bonded together form a strong organization.

As we continue to grow there will certainly be the need to maintain and grow our all volunteer support group. There will be challenges and planning for the future will be important. Let us begin this challenge with a big thank you to all our volunteers. April 21 - 27, 2013 is National Volunteer Week and we want to salute those that make the Octagon Barn a special place for our visitors. Our message of celebration for this week, and the weeks to come, will be that everyone is important. All are essential to the success of the Octagon Barn. Without your commitment the Octagon Barn would not have a future. Thank you.

Executive Committee  
Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn

## Weekly Updates Available for Email Delivery

David Jaroch, Update messenger.

Many of us started out as casual subscribers to the Thumb Octagon Barn newsletter to know what was happening at the barn. As the years have gone by, many of us have taken a more active roll in the everyday operations of the Barn. If you would like to be kept up to date on the day to day operation, there is a weekly update sent to the Board, the Monday work group and the host couples.

For those who may wish to become more involved, please send David an Email message [tjaroch@yahoo.com](mailto:tjaroch@yahoo.com) and he will add your name to the weekly updates. Every year the needs of the barn seem to be expanding and every one is invited to participate no matter what their contribution.

## MUSEUM DONATIONS

### Jerry Auten, Museum Records

The following donations have been made to the Thumb Agricultural Museum since our last newsletter.

- Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI donated a Richville Elevator dustpan.
- Jerry & Donna Auten, Cass City, MI donated a grain wagon and running gear, 251 cu. inch Model L Case gasoline engine and a wagon with a flat rack.
- Charles & Edward Leik, Great Falls, VA donated an 8" long splitting wedge and a variety of tongs for the Blacksmith Shop.
- Rick & Suzee Havercroft, Saginaw, MI donated a leather saddle and a saddle holder.
- Bud McDonald donated a men's toiletries bag, electric hair dryer, pig ear punch and a Veterinarians thermometer.
- Jack Leusing donated a horse collar, hay sling with wood slats, cream separator and a corn sheller.
- Scott B. Kramer, Ruth, MI donated a 5'6" by 3' slate chalkboard.
- Ron Cybulski, Caro, MI donated four barn door rollers, two five foot covered barn door track and two four foot square door track.
- Lew & Mary Martin, Decker, MI donated a 250 AMP Lincoln arc welder.
- Gary & Kelly Zurek, Harbor Beach, MI donated a flat belt driven metal grinder.

**When donating items for our museum, please be sure to fill out a Museum Donation form so that we will have it in our records and can acknowledge your gift in our newsletter.**

## Soybean .....The Golden Bean for a Greener Environment



The Theme for our 2013 Events is Soybeans and Related Products. Here is a little Soybean information taken from [www.michigansoybean.org](http://www.michigansoybean.org). Soy ink has been on the market since 1989. It is used by one-third of America's nearly 10,000 newspapers, specifically, more than 90% of the nation's 1,500+ daily newspapers. Most newspapers choose soy ink for color printing because the price of color soy ink for newsprint is competitive to that of petroleum-based color ink. Newspapers favor it because of its superior performance, environmental friendliness and vibrant color. Look for the printed with soy ink symbol on printed information.

**Friends of the  
THUMB OCTAGON BARN  
PO BOX 145  
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GAGETOWN MI 48735**

**989-665-0081**

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### We're on the Web!

<http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org>  
**Aaron Davis & George Pettinger**  
Web Managers

### FUTURE MEETINGS

General membership meetings  
will be held at the Octagon  
Barn Aug. 13, 7 p.m.  
and at Gagetown Village Hall  
Oct. 8 & Dec. 10, 7 p.m.

### SPECIAL DONATIONS:

*Following is a list of memorial donations, acknowledgements and items donated for use on the site.*

Ray & Carol Caverly, Gagetown, MI donated an American flag and a Michigan flag or the Thumb Agricultural Museum.  
Donation in memory of her husband, James Purdy Wilson, given by Barbara L. Wilson, Cass City, MI.  
Donation in memory of Hilda Baur given by Evelyn Schadd, Filion, MI  
Donation given by Robert & Susan Darmofal, Toledo, OH in memory of Vince Darmofal brother of the late Stella Pisarek. Stella & Mike Pisarek were former owners of the "Thumb Octagon Barn Farm".  
Donation in memory of Mike Zagata, Sebawaing, given by Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebawaing and Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown.  
Donation in memory of Stanley Pobanz given by Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebawaing, MI  
Donation in memory of Doroetha Kautz given by Lorraine Craig Trust, Bad Axe, MI  
Star of the West Milling Co., Fairgrove, MI donated several bags of soy beans to be used during School Tours.  
Family Farm Store donated 200 lbs. of shelled corn to be used at the Grist Mill demonstration during School Tours.  
Walther Farms donated individual bags of potato chips for the volunteer lunches during School Tours.  
Donation in memory of Dale Buehrly given by Marilyn Peters, Cass City, MI  
Donations in memory of Richard Kottke, Port Austin, MI were made to the Family and Bob & Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI & Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI made a donation to the Barn. Richard was active in the Thumb Two Cylinder Club and the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn. Two of Richard & Marilyn Kottke's John Deere tractors are pictured on the mural in the Thumb two Cylinder Club's display area in the Barn. In 2006, Richard volunteered many hours welding the framework to hold the hay track so we could demonstrate a hay carrier in operation during FFD when our theme was Hay. The carrier is located east of the Munro Building.

**BENEFACTORS:** *The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through June 1, 2013*

Anonymous Donor  
Paul Begick, Bay City, MI  
Jim & Sandra Bolton, Cass City, MI  
Michael Colburn, Caro, MI  
Robert & Charlotte Dennis, Davison, MI  
Tony & Diane Eisele, Vassar, MI  
David & Marie Jaroch, Ubly, MI  
Kitten Little Smith, Cass City, MI  
Edward W. Knight, Cass City, MI

Charles & Louise Mackay, Oceanport, N.J.  
Mary Lou MacNeil, Kawkawlin, MI  
Don & Carla McKimmy, Bad Axe, MI  
Charles & Sharron Patterson, Lapeer, MI  
Donald R. Ramaut, Harbor Beach, MI  
Marion Rutkowski, Ubly, MI  
Richard & Mary Stavenhagen, Geneva, IL  
Dan Toner, Cass City, MI  
VFW Cass City Post #3644

### Newsletter Editor Needed

The Friends are looking for a person or team to take over the duties of composing, editing and mailing the quarterly newsletter. If interested contact Rose Putnam at [rose.putnam@chemicalbankmi.com](mailto:rose.putnam@chemicalbankmi.com).

### 2013 Upcoming Events

June 29	Tuscola County Museum Tours 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.
June 30	Tuscola County Museum Tours 1 p.m. until 5 p.m.
July 27	Themed Tea Party 6 p.m.
July 28	Lonesome Mountain Boys Concert 2 p.m.
August 10	Themed Tea Party 12:30 p.m.
August 31	Live Steam Power School
September 6	Annual Fish Supper 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
September 7 & 8	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Family Days 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
December 14 & 15	Christmas Open House 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
May 7, 8, 9, 2014	School Tours by reservation only

*Additional information about all of these events and reservation deadlines can be found throughout the newsletter or can be obtained from our web site at [www.thumboctagonbarn.org](http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org)*

### Special Events Weekends

*David Jaroch, Chairperson*

*Following is information about some Special Events that will be occurring at the Thumb Agricultural Museum during the summer months.*

#### Tuscola County Museums Tours

**Saturday, June 29, 2013 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

**Sunday June 30, 2013 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

Six Museums in Tuscola County will be open for visitors to visit and admission will be free.

#### The Museums and their featured displays are listed below:

- ◆Mayville Area Museums – Yesterday's Kitchens
- ◆Millington - Arbela History Society – Communications
- ◆Kingston Depot – Old Farm Equipment & Machinery
- ◆Caro Roadhouse – Hometown Heroes
- ◆Vassar Historical Society & Museum – Advertising
- ◆Thumb Octagon Barn – Soybeans & Related Products

So far we have commitments from **Lew Martin**, our blacksmith and **Richard Wroblewski** from the Lonesome Mountain Boys to be playing one of the days and we are hopeful that others will step forward to conduct demonstrations and tours during the Museum Tour weekend. If available, contact David Jaroch at [tdjaroch@yahoo.com](mailto:tdjaroch@yahoo.com).

#### Concert in the Barn

The third annual Concert in the Barn is planned for **Sunday, July 28, 2013 at 2 p.m.** The **Lonesome Mountain Boys** will be performing bluegrass, old-time and gospel music at 2 p.m. in the Barn. They will be playing two sets of traditional music with an intermission when finger foods and cool, refreshing drinks will be served. Your generous donations at the gate will be appreciated with the bulk of the donations going to the Barn to further their ongoing projects at the Museum complex.

**Richard Wroblewski** from Sebawaing volunteers his time and talent to organize as well as perform at the Concert at the Thumb Octagon Barn. **David Jaroch**, from Ubly, coordinates all the details for the weekend activities at the Barn.

If you would like to volunteer to help out during the weekend special activities showing guests our museum, please contact David Jaroch at [tdjaroch@yahoo.com](mailto:tdjaroch@yahoo.com) or call at 989-658-2133.