

# 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.*

WINTER 2014

## Annual Meeting, Banquet & Benefit Auction

*Nancy Hrabcak, Chairperson*

### Executive Committee

**President**  
**Rose Putnam**

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

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**  
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**Treasurer**  
**Joan Koch**

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**Marilyn DeSimpelare**

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

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

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

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

Each year we kick off our 2014 calendar of Events with our Banquet and Annual Meeting followed by our Benefit Auction. This is a great beginning as it is a fun-filled evening of fellowship and an opportunity to emphasize and remember our mission as an organization: *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 heritage for the benefit of our visitors.*

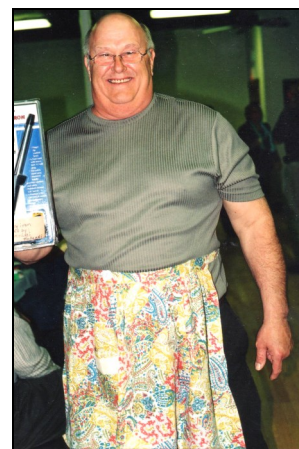
Nancy is pleased to be Chairperson of the Annual Meeting for the second year and says, "Come join us for an Evening of Fun, Food & Fund Raising!!! At just \$13.00 per person, you won't find a better deal for a very delicious meal....plus you will be helping support the Efforts to Maintain and Expand our local "Round Barn" and Farm Grounds. So come join in on the Fun, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at the Cass City's VFW Hall!!!! P. S. (This year's theme is MICHIGAN APPLES.) See you there!!" *(The specifics for our Annual Meeting are at the bottom of this page.)*

**Dave and Marty Osentoski, of Osentoski Realty Co. and Auctioneering** have been volunteering their time and enthusiasm to expertly conduct our Auction for many years and we thank them for their generosity. There will be both a Silent Auction and the Live Auction. The success of the auction depends on dinner guests bringing a very special treasure or two with them the night of the Annual Meeting that they think others would be interested in bidding on. Items should be in good saleable condition, new or used, and can include antiques, humorous items, mystery boxes, craft items, baked goods, tools and items for everyday use.

**Hedlun Walton**, Lansing, MI has already selected his auction item. In 1997 Ertl Collectibles started a barn collection series and selected our Barn as part of this collection. Hedlun won the Octagon Barn replica at a Michigan Barn Preservation Meeting. He said, "While I have enjoyed having the Barn, I have to believe someone among your group may take greater pleasure in it." The Ertl replica will be available to the highest bidder at our Annual Meeting. It's very special.

A **reservation form** is included with this newsletter and we hope you will join us for our first Event of the year. All the specifics are on the form, but should you have any questions you may contact **Nancy Hrabcak** at 989-551-6495 or email her at [njbraun15@yahoo.com](mailto:njbraun15@yahoo.com).

**We hope to see you on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at the VFW Hall in Cass City at 5:00 p.m.**



When some aprons were the next items to be auctioned, **Marty Osentoski**, auctioneer, had great fun wearing one of them while continuing to auction. You can see that he is enjoying providing us all a good laugh. Doesn't he look spiffy.

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)

**When:** Saturday, April 12, 2014 beginning at 5 p.m.  
**Where:** V.F.W. Hall in Cass City, MI  
**Who:** Dinner prepared by McDonald's Food & Family Center, Bad Axe, MI served at 5:45  
**What:** Following dinner, there will be a short business meeting, election of officers, and recognition of the 2014 Barn Friend of the Year and then.....  
**Why:** .....Our Benefit Auction that helps to raise needed funds to complete projects on site and maintain all the buildings.

### *Letter From the President* FRIENDS of the THUMB OCTAGON BARN **Rose M. Putnam**



It seems that everywhere I go a comment is made about our winter weather. Yes, it has been a *long*, cold winter. The snow and below zero temperatures have brought many challenges to our everyday lives and have also affected things at the Thumb Octagon Barn.

I'm sure that many of you have heard about the incident at the Purdy home on Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. It's a good news, bad news story as I've come to label it. The good news is that our security system works and we learned it was money well spent. The bad news is that it had to take a small fire to test it.

Due to several unforeseen circumstances, our furnace quit working and the water pipes froze in the kitchen, which caused a faucet to break. Water ran from the kitchen floor to the basement and caused a short in the electrical circuits near the washer and dryer used by our host couples. We were so very fortunate that the smoke alarms sent a signal to the security system company, who then contacted our barn members. The fire departments from Elmwood and Elkland Townships responded along with Doug Monroe, Museum Committee Chairman. It was 3:30 a.m. and very cold out. Unfortunately, the site had not been plowed yet following the big storm on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. The firemen and Doug had to park their trucks on the road and walk in. They quickly shut off the power and water sources to stem any further damage. The kitchen floor was flooded, the washer and dryer are a little worse for wear, and a little smoke and fire damage is on the south basement wall. We are very fortunate that we had so little damage.

I can't even begin to dwell on what I would be saying now if we had lost the Purdy home. The furnace is up and running and the floor dried. Plans are underway to make repairs once the weather gets much nicer. We also have a better snowplowing plan for emergencies and other precautions put in place.

I would like to thank all those volunteers who have spent their time and efforts to help repair and resolve the problems we learned about because of this incident.

I am certainly looking forward to our many events coming in 2014. Think "Michigan Apples".

*Your Friend and President,  
Rose*

## School Tours 2014

*Diane Rapson Gabil, Chairperson*

School Tours 2014 are scheduled for **Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>** by reservation only. Guided tours begin at 8:30 a.m. each day with the last tours starting at 1:00 p.m. during the school day. There will be twenty-three educational areas for the students to visit. This is an exceptional, educational experience for Pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Educators will decide which areas they wish to have their students attend a month prior to attending in May. Most guided tours are four hours, but shorter tours can be scheduled to meet the students' and transportation needs. Tours are limited to 400 students per day.

It is requested that groups attending have 1 chaperone for every 8 students but more are welcomed. Cost is a \$2.00 donation for each student and each chaperone attending. There is no food for sale on site so visitors are encouraged to bring their own sack lunch and we have designated picnic areas. Also, there are port-a-johns on site. All visitors to School Tours are asked to dress appropriately for the weather as we continue with our schedule regardless of inclement weather.

To sign up on the website [thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org) select Events, scroll down to School Tours 2014 and click on **To Register for a school tour** or contact Diane Rapson Gabil at [drapsongabil@chartermi.net](mailto:drapsongabil@chartermi.net). Last year, 1,100 students from six counties attended the educational guided tours.

**School Tours 2014 meetings are held 12:30 until 2:30 p.m. at Rawson Memorial Library in Cass City on the following Wednesdays, March 5<sup>th</sup>, April**

**2<sup>nd</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>. All are welcomed and encouraged to attend School Tours 2014 meetings.**



**Diane Rapson Gabil**, School Tours Chairperson, is carrying a promotional picture board that she had on display during FFD. Diane is always encouraging teachers, with their students, to participate in this wonderful experience at the Thumb Octagon Barn. She beautifully organizes this Event to provide a memorable experience for groups attending School Tours.

### 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).**

## Teas in the Purdy Home

As new chairperson, I'm excited to introduce "Dessert Teas" to the Purdy Home. Enjoy different delectable desserts with assorted flavored teas while experiencing the unique atmosphere of the early 1900's. If you would like to attend a Tea, call the hostess. If you would like to host a tea, call me at 989-665-2254. The month of July is presently open for a tea. We recommend that you make your reservations early as there are limited spaces available and they fill up quickly. If you have any questions, call me or e-mail at [petitepine@yahoo.com](mailto:petitepine@yahoo.com).

❖ June 21<sup>st</sup> – Themed Dessert Tea featuring "**Dig Summer**"

2:00 p.m. \$12.00 pre-paid per person two weeks before the Tea.

Contact Hostess **Tori Pine** for information & to make a reservation 989-665-2254

❖ August 16<sup>th</sup> – Themed Dessert Tea featuring "**Sweet Treats & Antiques**"

2:00 p.m. \$12.00 pre-paid per person two weeks before the Tea. Please bring porcelain or glassware items for Appraisal.

Contact Hostess **Chris Allen** for information & to make a reservation 989-670-6137



# The Purdy Home

*Marilyn Phillips, Chairperson*

The Purdy Home is a gem that the Friends love showing off by filling the house with visitors. In 2013 there were two Teas/Luncheons, School Tours, Fall Family Days and the Christmas Open House that brought many into this beautifully restored home. However, like any home Spring cleaning has to take place. Marilyn is once again looking for volunteers to consider helping in the home with routine cleaning by joining Cora's Cleaning Crew. To prepare for School Tours in early May, Marilyn has set the following days for "**Cleaning Bees**" to take place: **Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>** at 9:00 a.m. Please bring a lunch if you can stay on into the afternoon. If you have questions or want to volunteer, please call Marilyn at 989-665-0210 or 989-977-0025.

Volunteers will be needed during School Tours and Fall Family Days to be positioned at the various stations throughout the Purdy Home. Again contact Marilyn if available. Also, the dates for the **Christmas Open House are November 7, 8, 9 & 11 from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. each day.** Marilyn reports that there are still some rooms available to be decorated for our 2014 Open House.

The 2013 Christmas Open House volunteers welcomed visitors to the beautifully decorated Purdy Home on December 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. The ladies who decorated a room were: **Katie's Florist, Chris Allen & Marie Clincke, Patti Faist, Marilyn Phillips, Tina Main, Colleen Scott & Estee Woods, Laura LaJoie & Juliet Paterson, Sue Dawson, Michele Szostak & Rosie Quinn, Betty Woehlert, Tori Pine & Jean Tobias.**

Marilyn gives a big thank you to all those who decorated a room and spent many, many hours taking care of every detail. The volunteers that helped Marilyn each day of the Open House were: **Betty Woehlert, Pat Hester, Patti Faist, Laura LaJoie, Norma & Ray Baur, Norma Wallace, Sue Dawson and Marilyn Phillips.** Every room was decorated and visitors were able to tour the entire home and then enjoy refreshments. Marilyn thanks the following who brought homemade Christmas cookies: **Cheryl Lester, Linda Roe, Pat Hester, Marilyn Phillips, Mary Ann Hirn, Janice Winter, Norma Wallace & Margaret Sergeant.** The pictures on this page give you a flavor of the occasion.



**Marilyn Phillips**, Chairperson of the Purdy Home decorated the kitchen and looked very festive as she welcomed visitors to the beautifully decorated Home. She also took care of the refreshments located in the kitchen.



**Jim & Linda Roe**, Owendale are in the kitchen with volunteer **Norma Baur**, Unionville after touring the Home, and are now enjoying refreshments.



Visitors voted for the room they felt was the most appropriately decorated for the occasion. The first place winner was the boys bedroom decorated by **Laura LaJoie & Juliet Paterson** who won two tickets to the Annual Meeting, Banquet and Benefit Auction.



**Patti Faist**, Frankenmuth, decorated the downstairs bathroom. She loved the room especially the raised area that was created by the entrance to the basement from the north side of the Home. She decorated with old fashioned ornaments that had belonged to her family through the years. Her efforts won her third place and a gift certificate for Barn souvenirs.



**Katie's Florist**, Sebawaing decorated the Parlor and beautifully used the existing pieces in the room and enhanced them with festive decorations.



**Betty Woehlert** decorated the striped bedroom and is also a volunteer with Cora's Cleaning Crew who has spent considerable time working with Marilyn and others.

## Souvenirs

*Joan Koch, Chairperson*

Joan has a complete stock of our shirts, caps and other souvenir items. They make wonderful gifts and Joan has Gift Certificates so that the person being gifted can make their own selection. Mail your request to our P.O. Box 145 or you can call Joan at 989-325-0041.



# 2013 Host Couples

*Rose Putnam, Chairperson*

The host couples are a very important part of our Barn family. We realized in 1999 that it was very important to have folks on the site during the summer months to greet visitors, conduct tours, but most importantly to provide added security by their very presence. We are very grateful for the couples that volunteered for these responsibilities from May through October. We still have some openings for folks interested in being Host Couples for the 2014 season. Please contact Rose Putnam by email at [Rose.Putnam@chemicalbankmi.com](mailto:Rose.Putnam@chemicalbankmi.com).

Featured on this page are pictures of our 2013 host couples and some quotable quotes about their experience while serving.



**Curtis & Mary Bell**, Carthage, MO were back for a second tour as a Host Couple and will be back again this year. Mary said, "It's the best of the best. We were just talking about you all. We'll see you in July."



**Doug & Jan Traverson**, Davenport, FL had their granddaughter, **Abigail Traverson** with them while they were Hosts. Abigail was very excited about being in the Fashion Show that **Lila Arroyo** plans during Fall Family Days. Abigail practiced walking and turning and performed very well and that was very important to her. The picture is of Abigail preparing her dress for the Fashion Show. Picture provided by **Patty Parker**, Cass City.



**Ron (Too Tall) & Tammi Hensley**, Lehigh Acres, FL were back for a second visit and plan to return this year for three months. Tammi said, "Superfabulous! Met so many wonderful friends. Several even called to wish us a Merry Christmas. Now that's special."

**Bob & Patsy Gilman**, Ocala, FL returned for a second period as a Host Couple and were pleased to see the additions. Bob said, "Very enjoyable experience and we got to meet so many nice people. Patsy said, "The new system of paying was a bit challenging. She felt that donations worked very well. If you took time to talk to the visitors, they would go back into the Barn and would leave a donation and were happy to do so."



Greeting our visitors is this sign that welcomes them to the Thumb Agricultural Museum and explains the tour procedures.



**Betty Armstead and Bill Hollingsworth**, Zephyrhills, FL are a very experienced host couple. In fact Betty and her late husband Ray Armstead were our very first Host Couple. Bill and Betty spent several months on site this past summer. Betty said, "I remember our first year. Ray and I wondered what they were saving it for. We stayed for a month and then told the Friends that it wasn't worth the cost of electricity for us to be here. Can't believe how it has been restored. It's amazing." Bill said, "The Friends are like family. Some wonder why we go up north and work for nothing. I feel very proud to be a part of it."



**Gail & Duane Osbourn**, New Baltimore, MI have been a host couple for several years but their health will not make it possible for them to serve this year. They may perhaps come up for a shortened visit because they love seeing all of the Barn people. Duane said, "It's a very nice experience. We've been here for five or six years. We've met a lot of very nice people, who are the Friends, and the other Host Couples too."

## Newsletter

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



**Al & Lois Hollister**, Madison, SD were a first time host couple. They arrived in May and stayed through Fall Family Days. Lois said about their experience, "This is a place like I've never seen. When you walk into the Barn you feel like you are in a Cathedral. We made so many wonderful friends. Loved it and hope to be able to come back in 2015."



**Ron & Sally Kart**, Orange Park, FL were a host couple in July of 2007 and returned in 2013. They were pleased to see all of the additions and really noticed the difference in the site. Ron said, "We had a great time. Very impressed with the number of volunteers and I don't mean the Host Couples but the Barn Association Volunteers. So many give their continuous time and support of this project for so many years. Really like the Barn heritage and history."



**Tom & Carmen Colburn**, here, there and everywhere is Home. This was their first visit. When they were coming they researched the Site. Tom said, "This is a place that you have to experience. Need to actually walk into the Barn to experience its totality. Magnificent! It's a totally different experience to walk into the Barn than viewing it on the website." Tom & Carmen were very passionate about the awesome beauty of Mr. Purdy's air castle. Tom also added, "Almost immediately we were embraced by one and all as if we were from Gagetown. We learned a great deal from everyone. We want to come back in September."

# 19<sup>th</sup> Fall Family Days 2014 - Featuring Michigan Apples

*Martin Kubacki, Chairman*

## Letter from Martin to the Membership

This year at Fall Family Days we will be celebrating our 19<sup>th</sup> year on September 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>. It will feature **Michigan Apples**. I am very excited about this theme because of all the exhibits it brings to the table. But to pull this off we need your ideas and help. We need an apple theme chairman. This chairman would look over our theme tent activities and help make contacts related to the apple industry. Apples can be used for a variety of things such as apple cider, apple sauce, apple butter, apple pies and more. Wouldn't it be nice if you could have a slice of apple pie with your homemade ice cream?

So think about it, I know there are some excellent apple pie bakers and we need your help. We are always looking for more volunteers. **If you can help volunteer for any length of time, please, please do so. Call Martin at 989-551-0526.**

**Louie & Linda Wehrman**, who register the crafters & vendors, report that they are already 80% full. If you would like to reserve a spot for 2014, please call them at **989-948-3429**.

**Our first meeting for our 19<sup>th</sup> Annual FFD will be March 25 at Gagetown's Fire Hall, Gagetown, MI. I hope to see some new faces.**

This show needs you, as a member, to volunteer to make this Thumb Agricultural Museum a success. I have a few new ideas and changes I would like to share with all of you that could make this show better. So please join me **Tuesday night, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gagetown Fire Hall, Gagetown, MI.**

Thank you,  
Martin Kubacki  
Chairman, Fall Family Days.

Throughout the years, our **FFD Sponsors** are essential as they provide part of the funds to cover the cost of putting on the Event. This is especially true if we should have inclement weather and our attendance would be down. FFD 2013 had this very thing happen when the sky opened up and it poured and poured on Saturday around the noon hour. It did affect our attendance. Also, our expenses have increased dramatically through the years. We are most appreciative of those who are willing to be a 2014 Fall Family Days Sponsor. Therefore, **we are including a FFD Sponsor Form** with this Newsletter. It seems early and that September is a long time from now but we need this information for our advertising by May 1<sup>st</sup>. The profits from Fall Family Days are what enable us to move forward with the development of our Thumb Agricultural Museum.

## Sound System

*Ron Kuenzli, Chairman*

Ron has installed a sound system that is used during our Events. He has worked very hard on this installation and it gets better and better. He is pleased with the performance of sound throughout the site but still has a few things to work out. Ron also provided sound during the Lonesome Mountain Boys Concert and they were very happy. During FFD Ron also arranges for the folks speaking in the arena of the Barn to be outfitted with a cordless microphone so they can be heard amidst all the hustle and bustle of so many people moving through the Barn. We thank him for working to always improve the sound system on our site.



Ron is shown above in the command center located in the SW corner of the Barn. From this location he can monitor all areas and the quality of the sound being broadcast over the Grounds and solve problems as they happen.

## Christmas Parade



Friends once again participated in Cass City's Lighted Christmas parade. **Bob Hirn** provided a heated area to assemble the float, **Martin Kubacki** designed the float and **Rose Putnam** joined in to help decorate the float. Normally Martin would have used his decorated tractor to pull the float, but it was bitter cold the evening of the parade so Bob and Martin pulled the float with Bob's pick-up. They took a moment to step out before the parade moved down Main Street for a picture. The float was used to advertise the upcoming Christmas Open House at the Purdy Home on December 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. We thank those folks who worked to complete this project.

## Grafting Ideas and Trees

*Johnny Appleseed, Chairman*



Winter is a great time to begin planning for this year's theme "Michigan Apples". With your help we can educate our guests and ourselves about this amazing fruit. We can all walk in the footsteps of Johnny "Appleseed" Chapman and spread the seeds far and wide. Share your ideas with others so the ideas grow into a great theme beginning at school tours in May.

## MEMBERSHIP

Newsletters that have a membership form with RENEWAL written in RED are either past due or will be due before our next newsletter. If FINAL NOTICE is stamped on the form this means that this will be your LAST REMINDER to renew your membership before being removed from our mailing list. The levels of membership are: ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - \$5.00 and brings you our quarterly newsletter. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP - \$10.00 for an individual and \$15.00 for a family, which along with receipt of the newsletter gives you voting rights and the opportunity to hold office. A membership form can be obtained from our website at [thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org).

**IMPORTANT REMINDER** - If you have a new address or a seasonal change of address, it is important that you let us know as bulk mail is NOT forwarded.



## Boys and Gals Day Out

*The Boys, Chairmen*

The Boys have been trying to get a few things accomplished during the Winter months but the weather hasn't really cooperated. They're such a dedicated group of guys that they make the effort in spite of the bitter cold and heavy snows. They are very pleased with the new storage building and have been storing some things away and find that the easy access is wonderful. On a recent Monday a group was ready to assist with the arrival of the Cider Press for our Cider Mill.

Our 2014 Theme of the Year is **Michigan Apples** and one of the reasons that theme was selected was because we hope to have the donated Cider Press operational in the Cider Mill Building. In 2012 the **Beecher Family** donated an 18' x 30' timber framed building that was moved on site to be used for our Cider Mill Building. The Boys have put on a new roof and siding on the building and there is a new cement floor required by law since we will be making cider. In the middle of a forecasted snowstorm the commercial cider press donated by **Jim Hunter & Roy Reinke** from Port Hope was moved into the Cider Mill Building. **Louie Wehrman** had to move deep drifts of snow to gain access to the Building so the press could be put inside. This was not an easy project not only because of the weather but because of the weight of the press. One part alone weighs close to 1500 lbs. Those who helped move this press on site are: **Roy Reinke**, Port Hope, **Louie Wehrman**, Reese **Dave Babcock**, Cass City, **Ron Coltson**, **Howard Gehrls** and **Brian (Cash) Tosch**, Caseville.

**Dave Babcock** will be working on the press and hopes to have it up and running by FFD but realizes that time will tell. It is a hydraulic press probably used at orchards and runs off line shafts to some kind of an engine. The press is from the period of 1910 to the 30's. Dave has been making cider during Fall Family Days since the very first Event. When asked how he came to be known as the "Apple Cider Man", Dave said, "Probably by default. I bought the press I have always used at the Barn in 1989. I planned a little gathering at my home when I would make apple cider and **Bob Hirn** came to one of these outings and the rest is history." Dave also began collecting old engines in 1965 and has an outstanding collection of hit and miss engines, antique engines. He loves farm history before the 1920's.



Byron Arnold, Unionville, MI is installing the oak flooring in the One Room Country School Museum. Others that worked on the flooring are **Bob Hirn & Jim Ware** of Cass City, MI.



**Dave Babcock**, Cass City is shown in his usual cider making spot during FFD under the trees in the area just west of the Octagon Barn. The very first year it rained most of the time but he was able to have a couple of demonstrations. Dave also said, "We really didn't have any apples so we picked some from the orchard by the Powerhouse and had enough to use for several demonstrations." He is quite excited about being in a building and looks forward to the repair process and then making cider using this restored piece of equipment.

## Weekly Updates

*David Jaroch, Update Messenger*

For several years, David has been sending out an email message with information about activities that are happening with the Friends as well as discussing projects that need attention at the Barn. He highlights all of the many things that the Boys Day Out Crew will be working on when they gather on Mondays. Folks are very much enjoying these updates and he is now sending emails to almost ninety folks. I recently talked with the Colburns one of our Host Couples, who were in El Salvador to celebrate Carmen's mother's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. They knew all the news of the Barn because of David's email messages. If you would like to be included and receive these weekly emails, send an email to David at [tdjaroch@yahoo.com](mailto:tdjaroch@yahoo.com) and he will add you to the list. David, we thank you for keeping folks, no matter where they might be, updated about what's happening at the Thumb Agricultural Museum.

## Museum Committee

*Doug Monroe, Chairman*

In 2010 it was felt that as we were developing our Agricultural Museum, a new committee should be created to guide that development. So a committee was formed under the direction of **Doug Monroe** who accepted the Chairman's responsibilities. One of the very first tasks was to identify and prioritize the areas that needed to be addressed. At that time one of the major areas of concern was security for our restored treasures on the site. So the committee began inviting a number of security companies to present their plan to the group. After several different proposals, the committee settled on **ACE American Alarm** to install a security alarm system beginning in the Octagon Barn and the Purdy Home. This

was quite a costly venture but after the experience in early January (See *President's Letter on Page 2.*) we are grateful that the Committee pursued Security on our site and had the system installed in 2012.

Another area that the committee is now addressing is the draining of rain water away from the west entrance to the Barn. This work will be completed when the weather warms up and before School Tours. Also, we are still looking for someone to manage the Orientation Theater and coordinate the presentations of the Host Couples using technology. Please contact Doug if interested or for more information at 989-665-9948.



The **ACE American Alarm** installation team spent many hours putting the alarm system in place in the Octagon Barn and the Purdy Home. The system performed beautifully and we were grateful that it did everything we had been told it would do and certainly passed the test.

## Concert at the Barn

*David Jaroch & Richard Wroblewski, Co-chairmen*

The **Lonesome Mountain Boys** will again be filling the Barn with their exciting brand of bluegrass, old-time and gospel sounds next summer. **Circle Sunday, July 13, 2014** on your calendar of must-do items. The concert will run from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. A donation of \$5.00 per person is suggested with children under 12 admitted free. Gate receipts will be supplemented with funds from the Huron County Chapter of Thrivent Financial. Proceeds will go toward on-going improvements at the Barn complex. During intermission, complimentary finger foods and refreshing drinks will be served.

The Band has drawn "full barns" at Concerts the past three years. Why not come early and tour the facility and then settle in for a rollicking hand-clapping good time. The Band will have CDs available that they have recorded.



The Lonesome Mountain Boys Band is made up of, from the left **Bill Brasgalla** and **Ron Smolka** of Livonia, **Richard Wroblewski** of Sebawaing and **Mark Kemner** of Eastpointe.

## MUSEUM DONATIONS

*Gerald Auten, Museum Records*

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.

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

- Henry & Ann Tschetter, Rockford, MI donated a bull blind that goes over the bulls eyes to keep them calm.
- Duaine & Marilyn Phillips, Galetown, MI donated a Gleaner's Insurance Certificate in an antique frame, a school graduation certificate also in an antique frame and an overstuffed, brown claw foot chair.
- Patricia Tanton, Sandusky, MI donated a hand crank, corn sheller in a blue box.
- Wayne & Karen Lenton, Ubly, MI loaned a gang saw to be used in the saw mill.
- Randy Perry, Cass City, MI donated a hand, potato planter.
- Gordon & Jeanne Bigham, Fairgrove, MI donated a wool & suit material quilt.
- Ron & Margery Stange, Vassar, MI donated a quilt made from grain bags with flowers on them.
- Lawrence Longuski, Ubly, MI donated a wagon gear with steel wheels.
- David & Marie Jaroch, Ubly, MI donated an American Beauty electric iron.

## Tribute to Our Volunteers

At our General Membership Meeting in February **Ed Nicholson**, a member who has volunteered for several years to cut the fields of grass using his own equipment, asked to speak to the Group. He said, "This is an amazing organization. I don't think that there is another organization like this anywhere. I have never seen so many volunteers give of their time week after week and have been volunteering for a long, long time. The Friends should be recognized everywhere because the organization is so very special." Everyone was touched by his comments and the thought occurred to me as how to demonstrate what we as an organization have accomplished. Take a look at these pictures of the buildings as we found them in 1993 and compare them to what the buildings look like today.

Amazing, indeed! Thanks you to all our volunteers.



**The Barn & House in 1993**

**Friends of the  
THUMB OCTAGON BARN  
PO BOX 145  
6948 RICHIE RD.  
GAGETOWN MI 48735**

**989-665-0081**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Gagetown, MI  
Permit No. 3

### We're on the Web!

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

## FUTURE MEETINGS

General membership meetings  
will be held the second Tues.,  
every other month, at 7 p.m.  
at the Gagetown Fire Hall.  
Feb., April, Oct. & Dec.

**The June & August meetings will be  
held in the Munro Building on site.**

## Upcoming Events

*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)*

April 12	<b>Annual Meeting, Dinner &amp; Benefit Auction 5 p.m.</b> at the V.F.W. Hall, Cass City
May 3	<b>Spring Clean-up Day</b>
May 7, 8, & 9	<b>School Tours</b> , by appointment only
June 21	<b>Dessert Tea Party, 2 p.m.</b> , by reservation only
June 21 & 22	<b>Tuscola County Historical Consortium Open House Weekend</b>
July 13	<b>Lonesome Mountain Boys Concert in the Barn, 2 p.m.</b>
August 16	<b>Dessert Tea Party, 2 p.m.</b> , by reservation only
September 5	<b>Annual Fish Dinner, 4 - 7 p.m.</b> at the Munro Building
September 6 & 7	<b>19<sup>th</sup> Fall Family Days, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.</b> each day
November 7, 8, 9 & 11 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Christmas Open House, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.</b>

## Grounds

*Louie Wehrman, Chairman*

Clean up day has been scheduled  
for **Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m.**  
when the Friends will be preparing the  
site for School Tours the following week  
and opening to the public for the sea-  
son. There is much that needs cleaning  
and fixing up so we can use all those  
who are willing to help. Perhaps it would  
be a good time to bring a Friend with  
you to get them interested in volunteer-  
ing at the Thumb Octagon Barn. Louie  
asks that each person who is responsi-  
ble for an area make a list of what  
needs to be accomplished and then  
mark them off the list when accom-  
plished. We welcome all who are willing  
to help and we will find a job for every-  
one. Louie also reminds folks that they  
need to bring their own lunch if they are  
able to extend their volunteer time into  
the afternoon.

## SPECIAL DONATIONS:

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

Donation is memory of Joan Sageman, Shelley Corsini's Mom, given by Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI  
Mrs. Reta Wehner, Harbor Beach, MI donated in memory of Marion Rutkowski.  
Doug & Ardis Monroe, Gagetown, MI donated three showcases for the Thumb Agricultural Museum.  
Donation is memory of Phil Hund, Luci Kubacki's uncle, given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI  
Donation in the name of Pat Hester, Cass City given by her son and daughter-in-law, Brad & Beth Kitchen, Mesa, AZ  
Dora & Maynard Haubenstricker, Frankenmuth, MI donated in honor of Ray Baur's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and  
Ray & Norma Baur's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.  
Gleaner's Life Insurance Society, Caro Arbor #106, donated as a 2014 FFD Sponsor at the Gold Level.  
Hedlun Walton, Lansing, MI donated the Ertl collectible replica of the Octagon Barn that he had won at a Michigan Barn  
Preservation Meeting for the Friends to use for fund raising. (See the Annual Meeting article for information on  
where it will be available.) Mr. Walton said, "He appreciates the work your group does for this building and our  
agricultural heritage."  
Bonnie Gaeth, Owendale, MI donated in memory of Robert Guilett, Creson, TX, Owendale class of 1953.  
Evelyn Schadd, Filion, MI donated in memory of Rita Shaw.  
Ron & Mae Hoffman, Bad Axe, MI donated a wood yard trailer that is pulled behind a garden tractor.  
Jim Osentoski Trucking, Ubly, MI donated processed gravel and Atwater Farms helped truck the gravel  
for the floor of the new storage shed.

**BENEFACTORS:** *The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through Feb. 20, 2014*

Anonymous Donor  
Tom Barton, St. Clair Shores, MI  
Bernard & Patty Billingsley, Sanford, MI  
Ray Christie, Freeland, MI  
George & Carol Cumper, North Branch, MI  
Karl & Marilyn DeSimpelare, Unionville, MI  
Bonnie Gaeth, Owendale, MI  
Gleaner's Caro Arbor #106  
Steve & Karen Hamlin, South Haven, MI

Neal J. Hentschl, Harbor Beach, MI  
Alvin & Barbara Hutchinson, Cass City, MI  
Tom M. Johnson, Williamston, MI  
Walter Kloc, Deford, MI  
Tim & Debbie Kubacki, Sebewaing, MI  
Joan Kuhne, Frankenmuth, MI  
Randy Kursinsky, Midland, MI  
Fran Lovejoy, Cass City, MI  
Mark & Betsy McKelvey, Morton Grove, IL

Karalee McKinstry, Saginaw, MI  
Dolores Merchant, Ocqueoc, MI  
Michigan Blood Drive, Grand Rapids, MI  
Ken & Theresa Micklash, Cass City, MI  
Eileen Partlo, Bay City, MI  
John R. & Beverly Perry, Cass City, MI  
Mike & Drucilla Pisarek, Cass City, MI  
Nicholas Posak, St. Clair, MI  
Jim & Barbara Prill, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

Richard & Barbara Prime, Fairgrove, MI  
Judy Ann Rau, Reese, MI  
Gretchen Rodammer, Auburn, MI  
Dick & Pam Roth, Caseville, MI  
Joel Schmidt, Owendale, MI  
Susan Scott, Saginaw, MI  
John & Janet Blondell Stahl, Tillamook, OR  
Tom & Pat Young, Upper Sandusky, OH  
Evelyn Ziehm, Gagetown, MI