Fall Family Days 2015

Martin Kubacki, Chairman
Devin Irion, Co-Chairman

Once again, another amazing Fall Family Days was held in September. We had a great turnout for the cold weather but all in all it was a very successful Event. Each year FFD grows in one or the other and the volunteers that spend so much time preparing for and carrying out their duties are to be commended. Truly we have been blessed to have such a great group of people. As this Event grows, so does the demand for help and we are always looking for more people.

There were a lot of positive comments about the many demonstrations that have become a part of this Event. They certainly help us fulfill our goal of offering educational as well as entertaining activities for visitors to see during their visit.

Attendance was down a little because of the weather. The net income will come in around $82,000.00. This money will be used to replace the Barn roof that will be a major expense along with all the maintenance jobs needed.

The 2016 Fall Family Days theme will be “Our Wonderful World of Water”. The Event begins Friday, September 9, 2016 with the Fish Fry and continues Saturday and Sunday, September 10 & 11. Greg Alexander and Tammy Grifka, Theme Co-Chairmen are working on an interesting educational display.

Finally, as you know, our friend and FFD Chair until his retirement, Bob Hirn, passed away in October. I miss him a lot as we ran this great event together for many years. I want to leave you with one of his favorite sayings: GOOD, BETTER, BEST; NEVER LET IT REST; MAKE THE GOOD BETTER AND THE BETTER BEST. We will do our best to carry on your tradition, Bob.

Have a blessed Christmas & Happy New Year
Martin Kubacki, Chairman

(See related pictures and stories about FFD on pages 4 & 5.)

Whenever Smokey Bear appeared during FFD a crowd gathered and it was great fun to see the reactions of the little ones. Martin Kubacki knew how important it was for Smokey Bear to be at FFD but on Friday evening we realized that there was a problem. The Smokey costume was nowhere to be found and Martin kept thinking about the Grandfather who told him, “My grandson can’t wait to see Smokey. That’s why we’re coming.”

So Martin went into action and located the costume in Port Hope at the Fire Station and thanks to Justin Kociba, Lowell McDonald’s grandson in-law the costume was picked up and ready to go on Saturday morning. We had a big assist from Dean Kreh, Owendale on Saturday and Greg Alexander, Carsonville on Sunday who portrayed Smokey Bear beautifully. Thanks also to David Jaroch, Ubly and Tammy Grifka, Peck who were Smokey’s mentors since Smokey does not speak but gives many hugs. Pictured is the late Chuck Dorsch’s grandson receiving a high five from Smokey.
In Memoriam

On October 28, 2015 Robert Joseph Hirn passed away at United Hospice of Marlette Residence Center shortly after midnight and also the arrival of his beloved daughter, Major Lisa Hirn, U. S. Army of Kentucky. Bob was surrounded by his wife, Mary Ann, son Mark, his daughter Lisa and sister Gail.

Several years ago Bob was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) that is occasionally accompanied by frontal lobe dementia. ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. This was a devastating diagnosis to have both ALS and dementia.

The Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn have lost a dear Friend who has made a lasting impression everywhere you look at the Thumb Agricultural Museum and most importantly the magnificent Barn that Bob so loved. His determination to restore this Barn became his passion and dream just as it had been in 1923 when James Purdy, the original owner, had the Octagonal Barn built designed after one he had seen while traveling in Iowa.

Bob was always concerned about, whenever possible, restoring the Barn back to its original state. He was quite surprised that the Barn was already in need of a new roof after only eighteen years. Bob’s wife Mary Ann has received hundreds of expressions of sympathy and many donations. She said, “Maybe these donations could possibly provide a good start on getting some of that roof replaced.” Bob would be so proud that so many appreciated his love of this most unusual octagonal Barn and his desire to maintain the integrity of the Barn.

We tend to think that the Barn was Bob’s only interest, but actually he was involved in many organizations and served on several Boards for many years. Some of these are: St. Pancratius Catholic Church, Cass City/ Gagetown Knights of Columbus, Cass City Gavel Club, Tuscola Medical Care Facility, Rawson Memorial Library, Pinney Foundation, Thumb 2 Cylinder Club, Thumb Antique Auto Club and the Caro Old Engine Club. Bob was greatly appreciated by all of these organizations for his dedication to their project and representing them so well. The family suggested that memorials could be given to these charities as well as to the Octagon Barn.

What a wonderful expression of sympathy and respect was shown when Uri Bender the Amishman that worked with Bob for many days and months repairing and restoring the Barn came from Ohio to attend Bob’s funeral. Bob and Uri had become very good friends thru the years and Uri and his wife Nancy knew when they heard about Bob that they had to come to Cass City to attend Bob’s funeral. Uri said, “I learned so much from Bob while we worked together, so much.” I’m sure that Bob would say the same about Uri. There were many unexpected problems that seemed to occur as they uncovered structural concerns in the Barn but working together they solved the problem. What a great team they were. Uri’a wife Nancy writes, “Bob will always be one of Uri’a “Dads”. He was Uri’a moral support while living in Michigan and away from his parents.”

During our Annual Meeting in April, Dennis Anderson recognized Bob Hirn for his more than twenty years of dedicated service to the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn. Dennis said, “Bob had always reminded him of the Goose Story and Bob was the lead goose. As he watched a flock of geese heading south he saw the lead goose cut the air and land the flock for the rest. Dennis thought, “Nature has given us a good lesson. The flock rested and moved on…”

(Following is one of the letters of support that was received.)

Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn

Enclosed please find a small donation in memory of Mr. Bob Hirn. I suspect that the Friends will establish some permanent recognition for Mr. Bob Hirn. Please apply this small token to that endeavor.

No doubt there have been countless stories shared about Bob, his involvement in the Barn and other projects and what a dedicated and hard worker he was. That is all very true and important to recognize. However, in my humble opinion Bob was indeed a very SPECIAL person. Lots of folks can be involved and dedicate time to a project but Bob was obviously different. He cared about the project for sure but really I think he cared more about the people. Some years ago when the Road Commission assisted Bob with a small project at the Barn, Bob drove to our office in Bad Axe, offered to pay us and was genuinely appreciative of our help and donation. Then we received a follow-up thank you note from him. Then during Fall Family Days, when he was obviously very busy, he stopped when he saw me and again extolled the virtues of the Huron County Road Commission to anyone within ear-shot. Nobody does that….but Bob did. He was special.

Thank you and keep up the good work. You know Bob’s watching.

Best regards,
Neal Hentschl
Secretary/Manager,
Huron County Road Commission

Your Friend and president,
Rose
A bit of history and look back in time from Margaret Sergeant.

I remember all too well in 1994 when Bob Hirn came on board with our organization. At the time we were floundering wondering what we should do next. Bob felt that we needed to demonstrate to the community that we were serious about restoring the Octagon Barn. So in 1997, Bob along with the Amish crew began rebuilding the southeast section of the Barn roof and applying bright, new emerald green shingles. You could see that section from Bay City Forestville Road and the community could see that we were serious. It was a turning point. I felt that there was a reason that Bob came to us. He used to get embarrassed when I introduced him as our guardian angel. Indeed he was and I know he is still guiding & watching over the Friends and most importantly preserving the dream James Purdy had in 1923 of building an “air castle”.

Annual Meeting/Dinner Benefit Auction
Nancy Hrabcak, Chairperson

Our 2016 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 16th at the V.F.W. Hall in Cass City. The evening will begin with a social hour at five and dinner will be served at 5:45 p.m. Prepared by McDonald’s Food & Family Center in Bad Axe, Osentoski Auctioneering will once again handle our Auction. A reservation form will be included with our winter newsletter mailed in late February. Any questions regarding our Annual Meeting can be answered by Nancy Hrabcak, Home Decorating Center, Cass City at 989-551-6495.

Donation Box in the Barn
Ray & Carol Caverly, Chairmen

Ray & Carol Caverly have been collecting and tracking the donations in the Barn by visitors for many years. These donations are important to us and they help to provide the funds to further our Museum goals. They report that this year’s donation total is $3,954.00. A special thank you to the Caverlys who for the past eleven years have checked this donation box daily and deposited the collected donations in our account. The grand total collected through the years is $48,357.53. What an impressive figure!

FFD 2015 Recycling Report

Rose Putnam, President has been an advocate for recycling all that can be during FFD after observing all that was just being discarded. The very first year of recycling resulted in 10 lbs. of cardboard and a truck bed loaded with a mess of stuff. Since then, thanks to Ron Hoffman, Bad Axe, we are doing a much better job assuring that as much as possible we are recycling rather than sending all this stuff to a landfill.

This year’s totals are: 326 lbs. of cardboard, 96 lbs. of plastic, 65 lbs. of metal & aluminum cans and 3 lbs. of glass. Job well done.

The picture at left was taken several years ago at the Tuscola Medical Care Facility where Mildred Spiekerman was a resident. Mildred had presented Margaret Sergeant with her very last afghan that she was able to knit. Bob made arrangements for Margaret to get a picture of Mildred and her last afghan and Mildred insisted that Bob be in the picture. Pictured are Bob Hirn who had a special place in his heart for Mildred, his Mother-in-law, Mary Ann’s mother and Mildred shared that love for her son-in-law, Bob.

2016 Theme for our Events
Greg Alexander, Chairman
Tammy Grifka, Co-Chairman

Our Theme for 2016 will be “Our Wonderful World of Water.” We are very excited to get moving early on making this year’s theme bigger than ever! Contacts have already been made with different organizations and State agencies, who will be partnering with us and assisting in all aspects of this vitally important Theme. If you have an idea, or just want to lend a hand, please contact the Theme Chair, Greg Alexander at 810-404-8506 or Co-Chair, Tammy Grifka at 810-404-0842.

Octagon Barn Cookbook
Mary Bell, & Tammi Hensley, Co-Chairladies

Two of our Host Couple Ladies are putting together the third Octagon Barn Cookbook and they need your help. They know that there are a lot of very good cooks among the Friends because when we have Potluck Dinners during the summer months at the Barn, we have some very delicious food. Please share those recipes with all of us in our 3rd Thumb Octagon Barn Cookbook. Their plan is, with your help, to be able to put together the recipes collected in May and have the Cookbook ready for sale during Fall Family Days. Feel free to enter as many recipes as you would like. Recipes should be sent to either Mary Bell or Tammi Hensley.

Tammi Hensley
P.O. Box 2037
Lehigh Acres, FL 33970-2037

Carolyn Wymore, Mayville Lions Club member is examining the History Book and DVD that tell the story of the Mud Lake Estate and also the quilt trail information. Rose Putnam our president shared information about both projects with interested visitors. The group was pleased with the attendance for a first time Event that promotes tourism in the Thumb.
2015 FFD Stories and Thoughts

The following pictures and stories give you just a glance of some of the activities, things to see and do and a look back at 2015 FFD. We plan our activities to meet our mission, vision and values statements. Our values statement is: As stewards of the Octagon Barn, we embrace the diversity within our organization and celebrate our many individual talents. We are committed to our visitors and have a passion for the Octagon Barn complex as an educational tool to share with the community our rural heritage. We take on big challenges, and pride ourselves in seeing them completed. We have a responsibility to hold ourselves accountable to the legacy of the Octagon Barn as it continues to grow in the future.

There was a new group performing in the One Room Country School this year. We welcomed the Thumb Area Community Theatre performers and hope they will return next year. Katie Jackson,would love to see more new groups participate and if you have any questions or suggestions please email her at jacksonkt30@outlook.com. Performing on Saturday were the Cass City Home School group and Cass City School Students. Pictured in no particular order are the Thumb Area Community Theatre group: Brady and Natalie DeGroat, Emme Kotenko, Allison Southgate, Jake Vanhove, Madison Sparkes, and director, Angie Noah, pianist, Mary Gettel and Karen Southgate, chairperson.

Several months ago, Loren Stein, the Shingle Man, died suddenly in an accident while cutting grass. He had already agreed to do his shingle demonstration at many Events including FFD. The family was determined to fulfill his responsibilities. So Lola & Loren’s family demonstrated the shingle process when they cut the shingles, created the commemorative design for the branding iron that they heat in the forge before brand the shingle. Son Jim Stein said, “I had no idea how hard this job was to prepare for and demonstrate the process.” We thank the Stein family for fulfilling Loren’s tradition of being a part of FFD just as their Dad had for twenty years. We hope they will be back for our 2016 FFD.

We were grateful for Sanilac County Sheriff’s Posse who provided assistance in the parking area with their team of horses. This allowed the members of the sheriff’s patrol greater mobility and because they were elevated they could oversee the parking area. Also, their very presence was significant.

The posses from Huron and Tuscola Counties passed through the Octagon Barn complex as an educational tool to share with the community our rural heritage. We take on big challenges, and pride ourselves in seeing them completed. We have a responsibility to hold ourselves accountable to the legacy of the Octagon Barn as it continues to grow in the future.

Rebecca Herzog and Brendon Garner of Stanwood are attending Linda Bailey’s craft workshop to learn the techniques of creating a “doll” out of ordinary corn husks. Rebecca remembers coming with her family to FFD in 2005 when she was six years old. She made a boy and girl cornhusk doll that she still has. She is also attending FFD with her Mother and Grandmother and all are making cornhusk dolls.

Martin Kubacki, Chairman FFD, was so worried about the parking but his worrying, planning and an excellent group of volunteers paid off. There was one bottleneck early on but they quickly got that resolved and things ran more smoothly. Lisa Geiger, shown at right, and family & many volunteers had the parking area well under control and they are already planning the improvements that need to be made for FFD 2016. It was so well organized that you would think that they were a professional team. We heard very few complaints and Martin was happy with the parking and also that they had built three additional people movers in preparation for FFD.

Cass River Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol Auxiliary, USAF presented the colors and raised the American flag during our Opening Ceremonies. Notice the lovely flowers that are around the flagpole. Modern Woodmen of America donated $500.00 towards beautifying the grounds before FFD. With that gift Dennis Anderson purchased the many lovely mum plants and placed them around the grounds. We thank Modern Woodmen because it indeed did beautify the grounds.

Terry Mason, Greenwood, MI & Dan Nalepa of Yale are delighted with the very special brooms that they bought from the broom man, Harry Tschetter of Rockford, MI. It is such a special treat to watch Henry make his brooms and hear about the art of creating very special brooms. The fellows said, “We’re farm kids and love machinery.”

It takes a family to make those delicious, made right before your eyes, doughnuts. Sharon Cummins, Gagetown brings her whole family and everyone has a job to do. They all know what their job is and they take that responsibility very seriously. Ten year old, Autumn Roy, Midland, MI is putting cinnamon sugar on the warm doughnuts. Ummm they sure are good and you can tell from the long lines that many others feel that way too.

Robert W. Harcourt of Alger remembers when he was 7 or 8 that his Dad drove him by the Octagon Barn during hunting season when they were hunting in Forestville. His father told him, “You’ll never see another Barn like this.” In 1996, when Robert was attending the Tractor Show in Caro, he came over to the Octagon Barn and became a member and has been ever since. He said, “My Dad was right. I haven’t seen another Barn like Mr. Purdy’s.”
Our 2015 theme was Trees Are Our Friends and Greg Alexander, Carsonville & Tammy Grifka, Peck, MI were Co-Chairs for the Event. There were many interesting displays inside and outside the tent. Terry Keinath, from Reese noticed that he had a wide variety of trees in his woods that animals and birds had deposited the seeds on his property. He decided to dig them up, label them and provide additional information in the Theme Tent in a book about Trees.

The Miglio family came from North Branch because they heard through 4-H that the Octagon Barn’s FFD was looking for volunteers to ride on the people movers from the parking area to the grounds. The Friends wanted the young volunteers to ride on the people mover to make sure all were seated before moving and to help folks getting on and off the people mover. The family believes in volunteering and the entire family came to support Jack as he volunteered to ride on the people mover. From the left are Will, Sheri, Jack and Darryl Miglio.

A few years ago Greg Talaski was once again Greg Talaski was once again our 2015 FFD Chairman, is all smiles as he thanks all who have participated in FFD making it once again a big success. Martin made a special note to thank all the many volunteers and their many Knights makes for a very smooth operation. Not only do the Knights handle the Farmer’s Breakfast but they also make apple & pumpkin pies to go with the homemade ice cream. As soon as the word gets out that the Knights of Columbus had once again made their homemade pie to go with the homemade ice cream, they couldn’t sell it fast enough.

Many started their day during FFD with a delicious breakfast prepared by the Caro Knights of Columbus. They are very organized and their many Knights makes for a very smooth operation. Not only do the Knights handle the Farmer’s Breakfast but they also make apple & pumpkin pies to go with the homemade ice cream. As soon as the word gets out that the Knights of Columbus had once again made their homemade pie to go with the homemade ice cream, they couldn’t sell it fast enough.

On display in the theme tent was a table that was made from a slice of a huge white oak tree that had been cut from the property of Glenn Craig, Elkton. Visitors could follow information provided to determine the age of the tree and the events that might have impacted the trees growth. Tammy is showing that her three foot sign is not as wide as the tree cookie that is, at its widest point, 47 inches wide. We wonder if someone could tell us the age of the tree. Jerry Auten to the rescue! The tree was cut by Melvin Schlabach, Amishman and Jerry had him slice off a slab that he sanded and made into a table so folks can count the rings to determine the age of the tree. Jerry has his results were. The cookie will be found in the sawmill museum and when you have some time during FFD 2016, sit a bit and count the rings and let us know the result.

Also, on display in the theme tent was a table that was made from a slice of a huge white oak tree that had been cut from the property of Glenn Craig, Elkton. Visitors could follow information provided to determine the age of the tree and the events that might have impacted the trees growth. Tammy is showing that her three foot sign is not as wide as the tree cookie that is, at its widest point, 47 inches wide. We wonder if someone could tell us the age of the tree. Jerry Auten to the rescue! The tree was cut by Melvin Schlabach, Amishman and Jerry had him slice off a slab that he sanded and made into a table so folks can count the rings to determine the age of the tree. Jerry has his results were. The cookie will be found in the sawmill museum and when you have some time during FFD 2016, sit a bit and count the rings and let us know the result.

Mark Battel, Cass City, above, one of the original creators of the dairy display in the Barn, made the arrangements for a new addition to be on display during our Events. Velvet, a Holstein was very special to the Ron Opperman family of Vassar because she was an exceptional milk producer. In her ten years she produced 18,345 gallons of milk. She was in a herd of over a hundred and lived from 1977 until 1987 when she died of natural causes. Daughter, Sharon Kern of Vassar now owns Velvet and would be willing to loan her to us during our Events. Smer 2015 Fall Family Days.” I have been coming every year. I remember when the Barn & House were for sale and I wanted to buy the property.” James, we are so glad that you didn’t as we don’t think any individual could have afforded the cost of restoration.

Ruth Ann Brown, member and quilt maker for one of our Raffle prizes is asking for your help. She has a collection of our buttons and is missing the 2007 button. Anyone who might have one that they would be willing to part with can call Ruth Ann at 989-683-2637. She would be most appreciative as it would complete her collection.

It’s a little after five on Sunday and Martin Kubacki, FFD Chairman, is all smiles as he thanks all who have participated in FFD making it once again a big success. Martin made a special note to thank all the many volunteers and their many Knights makes for a very smooth operation. Not only do the Knights handle the Farmer’s Breakfast but they also make apple & pumpkin pies to go with the homemade ice cream. As soon as the word gets out that the Knights of Columbus had once again made their homemade pie to go with the homemade ice cream, they couldn’t sell it fast enough.

James Dale LaPratt of Unionville is very proud of his button collection that he has from the first button that we had available and every year since. He said, “The big one is from 1996 the very first Fall Family Days.” I have been coming every year. I remember when the Barn & House were for sale and I wanted to buy the property.” James, we are so glad that you didn’t as we don’t think any individual could have afforded the cost of restoration.

It’s a little after five on Sunday and Martin Kubacki, FFD Chairman, is all smiles as he thanks all who have participated in FFD making it once again a big success. Martin made a special note to thank all the many volunteers and their many Knights makes for a very smooth operation. Not only do the Knights handle the Farmer’s Breakfast but they also make apple & pumpkin pies to go with the homemade ice cream. As soon as the word gets out that the Knights of Columbus had once again made their homemade pie to go with the homemade ice cream, they couldn’t sell it fast enough.

Sue has worked and now Monica is also spinning and demonstrating this wonderful craft. Sue has been demonstrating spinning at the Barn for School Tours and FFD for ten years.

Monica Cronin, Carsonville, MI and Sue Baughman, Deford, MI provided a wonderful demonstration in the arena of the Barn. They were spinning both days and welcomed visitors to ask questions about the process. In fact just a year ago Monica had her own wheel and wanted to learn how to spin. She had been told that the best way to learn was to spend time with someone spinning and watch, observe and ask questions. Monica did that and sat right next to Sue all day Saturday and even returned on Sunday. It worked and now Monica is also spinning and demonstrating this wonderful craft. Sue has been demonstrating spinning at the Barn for School Tours and FFD for ten years.

Congratulations!

A few years ago Greg Talaski was once again a volunteer yet. Consider it if you are a volunteer yet. Consider it if you are a volunteer yet. Consider it if you are a volunteer yet.
**SPECIAL DONATIONS:** Following is a list of memorial donations, acknowledgements and items donated for use on the site through November 30, 2015.

The following donations were made in memory of Mildred Louise Dorothea Spiekerman:

The following donations were received in memory of Bob Hirn and total $4,495.00 at the discretion of the Friends.

School Tours

**Diane Rapspon Gabil, Chairperson**

The dates for School Tours 2016 are Wednesday, May 11th, Thursday, May 12th and Friday, May 13th at the Thumb Octagon Barn in Gagetown, MI. By reservation only. Tours are scheduled to begin each day at 8:30 a.m. with the last tours starting at 1 p.m. There is a donation fee of $2.00 per student and chaperone. There will be at least twenty-five educational stations for the students to visit and educators will choose which areas they wish their students to attend a month before attending. Shorter tours can be scheduled in the areas they wish their students to attend a month before attending. Shorter tours can be scheduled at the discretion of the Friends.

This is a wonderful educational experience and Diane encourages teachers to register soon by signing up on our web site thumboctagonbarn.org or contact Diane directly at drapsongabil@chartermi.net. She already has 672 students signed up and we can only accommodate 400 students a day. Diane would encourage 4th through 8th grade teachers to sign up as this visit will tie in perfectly with their Science and Social Studies curriculum.

Diane has prepared the following information about this year’s theme that she has sent in informational packets to teachers throughout the area. “Our Theme for 2016 is ‘Our Wonderful World of Water’ because we have the luxury to learn about the importance of water in the lives of all people in the early 1900’s, how it was attained, importance of ice for cooling and where it was gotten and how it was kept, plus how it figured into food, industry and recreation. Water displays will also show the importance of water today in terms of wetlands, run off, purification, conservation of water and it’s importance for all living things now and for the future. Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will provide water information, as well as, the Soil Conservation Units in the surrounding counties.

Diane has arranged for the following planning meetings to be held at Rawson Memorial Library in downtown City. Mings begin at 6:00 p.m. and run to 2:30 p.m. all Wednesdays. Those dates are: *February 3rd*, *March 2nd*, *April 6th* and *May 4th*.

Please mark your 2016 calendar as all are invited and we can always use many more volunteers. We’ll have a job for you to do.
The Purdy Home  
Marilyn Phillips, Chairperson

The house committee has wanted to install period appropriate storm doors for all of the doors in the Purdy Home for quite some time. There were several possible contacts in the area but they didn’t materialize. So Jerry Auten spoke with some of the Amish families in the area. Presto! He got the name of a contractor in Middlefield, OH and Weaver Window and Woodcrafts made the storm doors with glass and screen inserts. Also, with the help of networking by the Amish, the doors were delivered to Jerry and he is on his way to deliver them to the Purdy Home. They will be installed in the spring. Thank you, Jerry, for getting this job done.

Chemical Bank Cares Day

On Monday, October 12th twelve Chemical Bank employees volunteered their time to help at the Thumb Agricultural Museum. They were joined by a number of our Boys & Gals Day-out Group. They accomplished much and we were grateful for their help. This was the third year that some have chosen to spend Columbus Day, when the banks are closed, to give of their time to the community performing tasks that need attention.

Some of the tasks that were performed at the Barn were: picked apples, peeled, cored, sliced and bagged the apples for over fifty pies, picked apples for deer feed, raked leaves, cleaned flower beds, cut plaques for FFD Sponsors, prepared items in the house for the winter season and scraped and painted the lower windows on the grain elevator. We thank them for their help with these projects. We really appreciated their help.

Site Committee
Dennis Anderson, chairman

What are we doing concerning the barn roof, you ask ..... A lot is happening! We are in the process of gathering information talking with a large number of folks about all the options. We are inviting contractors, suppliers and manufacturers to present information so the Board can make an informed decision. These meetings are open, announced and you are welcome to attend.

We know the Barn project will involve painting, window repair and a roof so there is much to consider.

With this information the Board will make a decision and set a timetable for completion. Again I want to stress, we are looking at all the options that are presented. Richard Stacer will be the building specialist for this project.

Also the Grain Elevator project is progressing with the plan to complete the project during the winter months. The building materials have been ordered and some of the boards have been cut at our sawmill. Louie Wehrman will over-see this project.

Museum Donations

Gerald Auten, Museum Records

PLEASE NOTE: When donating items for our museum, please be sure to fill out a Museum Donation Form so that we will have the item 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.

Ed Hiser, Caro, MI donated three log scales for the sawmill and the lumber museum in the sawmill building.
Jan Hombacher, Sebewaing donated a bean puller.
Arthur G. Nitz, Frankenmuth, MI donated a 1906 11 row grain drill.
Dick Wikouki donated the “Old Man” drill press for the Blacksmith Shop.
Melvin Gay, Saginaw, MI donated a hand corn shucker.
Peter Martin, Cass City, MI donated Forts Dairy pickup.
Duaine & Marilyn Phillips, Caro, MI donated chenille full size bedspread, handmade full size crocheted bedspread, bed coverlet, oil painting with large antique frame, two antique picture frames and a Kirby vacuum cleaner with attachments and a dozen bags.

2015 FFD Annual Raffle
Sherry Kappen, Joan Koch & Rose Putnam

Our Raffle was a success once again and following are the lucky winners.

÷ Queen size quilt donated by Ruth Ann Brown, Kingston MI won by Toni Ventline, Cass City, MI
÷ $300.00 cash prize donated by FOTOB* won by Helen Domburski, Clinton Township, MI
÷ Samsung tablet donated by FOTOB* won by Linda Treso, Clio, MI
÷ John Deere Pedal Tractor donated by Tri-County Equipment won by Robert Kloc, Freeland, MI
÷ 10” Craftsman Table Saw donated by FOTOB* won by Bonnie Gaeth, Owendale, MI
÷ $150.00 cash prize donated by FOTOB won by Duane & Gail Osbourn, Chesterfield, MI
÷ Case International Pedal Tractor donated by Osentoski Farm Equipment won by Brenda Gainforth, Pigeon, MI
÷ $100.00 Menards Gift Card donated by Green Acres Farms, Akron, MI won by Cora Durga, Bay City, MI
÷ Handmade afghan donated by Dorothy Bills, Cass City won by Travis McKeller, Sebewaing, MI
÷ $75.00 cash prize donated by FOTOB* won by Kyle Will, Caro, MI
÷ Handmade afghan donated by Gwen Poole, Essexville, MI won by Jason McCarty, Ubly, MI
÷ Basket of Books on Texas donated by John & Carolyn Longmuir, Box Elder, SD won by Mari Lowe, Cass City, MI
÷ FOTOB Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn

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Joan was pleased with sales during FFD. Because of the unusually cold weather there was heavy demand for sweatshirts & hoodies in all sizes and colors. Joan wants to THANK all of YOU who purchased our Thumb Octagon Barn apparel, as YOU are the best advertisement that we could possibly have. Keep up the good work and again thank you. Joan still has a good supply of T-shirts, sweatshirts and stocking stuffers for all ages available and you can purchase these by calling Joan at 989-325-0041.

Also, for sale is our historical DVD telling the story of the Octagon Barn featuring Marilyn Phillips touring the Purdy Home, Al Eicher, Program Source International, producer of the DVD telling the history of the Purdy Family and the Friends efforts to Save the Octagon Barn and a wonderful, memorable tour of the Barn by the late Bob Hirn who devoted many years of dedicated hard work and expertise to restoring the Octagon Barn. This is a wonderful keepsake and we especially thank Doug Monroe for making sure that this conversation with Bob took place.

The cost of the DVD is $20.00 plus $3.00 shipping charges. Our History Book is also available for $10.00 plus $2.00 shipping costs. Joan is offering very special pricing on the purchase of the History Book and the DVD for $25.00 plus $3.00 shipping charges. For those folks in the area, you can avoid shipping costs by calling Joan at 989-325-0041 and set a time for purchasing and picking up. You will also be able to thank Joan for taking care of our souvenirs since the very beginning or our organization in 1994. She is always looking for new ideas and would appreciate any input in that regard.

Benefits: The following have made a donation of $10.00 or more

- Edmund & June Armbruster, Sebewaing, MI
- Raymond E. Baur, Unionville, MI
- Curtis and Mary Bell, Carthage, MO
- Carol D. Beythan, Saginaw, MI
- Bruce & Charlotte Bollinger, Oscoda, MI
- Raymond & Linda Borowicz, Alma, MI
- Sally Brauer, Troy, MI
- Sue Collins, Saginaw, MI
- Rich & Lori Corl, Colorado Springs, CO
- Gerald Deeg, Sebewaing, MI
- Robert & Linda Deeg, Sebewaing, MI
- Robert & Charlotte Dennis, Davison, MI
- Jack & Carol DeSimpilare, Unionville, MI
- Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Dittenber, Hope, MI

NOTE: Please be sure to provide a change of address as well as a winter address and the months that you will be gone.

A Very Special Thank you

The following businesses made a special donation for Fall Family Days that enabled the Friends to save considerably on expenses. Many have been donating for years and we appreciate their continued support through the years.

- Michigan Milk Producers, C. Johnson donated a cube of butter that was used at the Farmer’s Breakfast and the Fish Fry.
- Cass City Oil & Gas donated 79 gallons of LP gas used in food preparation.
- Pigeon Cooperative Elevator donated 300 pounds of beans used for the bean soup.
- DJ’s Portable Toilets, Owendale offered a reduction in billing costs.
- McDonald’s Food & Family Center, Bad Axe gave special pricing on purchased items.
- Michigan Sugar donated 50 lbs. of brown sugar and 265 lbs. of white sugar used for the homemade ice cream, donuts and cotton candy.
- Northstar Bank donated 150 lbs. of popcorn, bags and seasoning.
- MMR (Mobile Medical Response) Scott Smeader, Saginaw arranged for their services to be available during FFD for emergencies.

The following businesses donated items to be used in the bags given to Exhibitors and Vendors during FFD: Knight’s Insurance Agency, Thumb National Bank, Hills & Dales General Hospital plus some previously donated items.

Friends of the
THUMB OCTAGON BARN
PO BOX 145
6948 RICHIE RD.
GAGETOWN MI 48735
989-665-0081