

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.

Fall 2017

Fall Family Days 2017

Martin Kubacki & Lisa Geiger, Co-Chairs

Executive Committee

President
Rose Putnam

1st Vice President
Martin Kubacki

2nd Vice President
Gerald Auten

Treasurer
Joan Koch

**Purdy Home
Chairman**
Marilyn Phillips

Museum Committee
Connie Osentoski

**Grounds Chairman Lou-
is Wehrman**

Special Projects
Richard Stacer

**Chairman of the
Alert Team**
Norm Parker

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

Writing about Fall Family Days in January seems like it just happened yesterday, but the fun and success of the Event was very exciting. This year again, we broke all previous records for attendance and income. We had over 15,000 visitors and cleared a greater dollar amount than in previous years something you always like to achieve. This is amazing as eighteen years ago we raised \$8,000.00. Through the years, the Event continues to be very successful. With the funds from Fall Family Days, the Thumb Octagon Barn has become one of the jewels of the Thumb.

Grain Elevators as the 2017 Theme was a real crowd pleaser. The Theme Tent and Grain Elevator Building were overwhelmed with visitors because of the many interesting exhibits and demonstrations.

Each year as the Event grows we have been fortunate to get a few more people involved. This year we had hundreds of volunteers helping in some capacity. When you consider the number it takes to work the gates, drive tractors for people movers, fish fry help, put on all the demonstrations and the host of the behind the scene issues that have to be attended to it's easy to understand why we are always in need of more help. Lisa and I would like to offer a sincere thank you to each of you for your contribution. By working together we all share in a common goal and become Friends in the process. **"Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn!"**

This year the **24th Annual Fall Family Days will be held September 8 & 9, 2018**. The 2018 Theme will be **THE THUMB: Naturally Sweet**. If you've never volunteered and would like to have some fun, meet some great people and contribute some of your talent, come to our first organizational meeting on **Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at 7:00PM at the Elmwood Township Hall in Gagetown**. Hope to see you there.

Happy New Year,
Lisa & Martin, Co-Chairs FFD



FFD Co-Chairman, Martin Kubacki, is presenting **Sally Brauer, Troy and Mary Brauer**, Clawson, granddaughters of George Munro, builder of the Purdy Home and Octagon Barn, with their 2017 Sponsor plaque. The girls come every year to visit and pick up their plaques.



The Civil Air Patrol Cadets, USAF presented the colors during Opening Ceremonies.

Weddings at the Barn

Tammi Hensley, Wedding Coordinator

We are pleased to let folks know that we are once again scheduling weddings at The Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum. Thanks to **Tammi Hensley** who is handling all details needed to assure a smooth, memorable experience for the happy couple. The site provides a beautiful setting for a wedding and the wedding party can decorate following the guidelines of the contract.



The Bride **Samantha Terry** and her father are walking to the Barn where he will walk her down the aisle in the arena of the Barn. Samantha is marrying **Adam Block** the grandson of **John & Felecia Lelonek** one-time owners of the Mud Lake Estate.



The sorghum press will be demonstrated during School Tours at our Sugar Shack by **Mark Battel**. Sorghum is a tropical grass which has a stalk filled with a sweet, watery juice used for syrup and the stalk for fodder or silage. The press was used to squeeze sugar water out of the sorghum cane and then it was boiled down to make syrup that was used as a sweetener in cooking. A horse or mule can be hitched to the pole and as the horse moves in a circle someone would feed the sorghum cane in one side of the press and sugar water would run out the bottom.

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



Dear Friends,

As you will see as you read through the newsletter, there are a lot of things changing including volunteer positions in 2018. We are very excited about changes to the Barn. The windows look fabulous and we can hardly wait for the new roof. It has only been 17 years since the last roof was replaced. We are hoping that the new shingles will last longer. As you may know, the quality of shingles have changed drastically over the years. We thank all the volunteers and **Emanuel Mullett Construction** for all of their hard work.

It is sad to know that **Margaret Sergeant** has decided to retire as editor of our newsletter. She came forth in the very early stages of the Friend's development to almost single handedly produce a quality newsletter. Over the years, we have anxiously awaited the arrival of the newsletter and laughed and cried at times. The newsletter has also been a very valuable tool as we've had to look back at our accomplishments or looked for dates of an activity or repair project. It has taken a lot of dedication to compile the information and pictures. There are often times some of us have procrastinated and gotten information in at the deadline. Margaret is very thorough and patient. We thank you, Margaret, and will sorely miss your personal touch to the happenings at the Barn.

We will also miss **Katie Jackson** very much. Katie was a wonderful, kind, dedicated volunteer. She, too, gave "Above and Beyond" over the years. She started out as historian and soon became our "School Marm." Her personal touch and kind spirit will be sorely missed.

Speaking of volunteers, we need some help. **Joan Koch** has been doing double duty for nearly a year now as Treasurer and Acting Secretary. We have two open positions on the Executive Committee- **Recording Secretary** and **Corresponding Secretary**. Please read the section relating to the expected duties of these two offices and feel free to contact me if you are interested. PLEASE!

In April, we will be hosting our Annual Meeting and looking for ideas to improve the experience at the Thumb Octagon Barn. Look for more information at a later date.

I am looking forward to working along side you during 2018.

Your Friend and President,
Rose M. Putnam

2018 School Tours

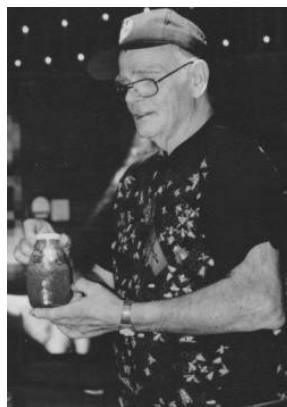
Diane Rapson Gabil, Chairperson

School Tours 2017 will be held on **Wednesday, May 9th, Thursday May 10th and Friday May 11th**. The theme for this year is **THE THUMB: Naturally Sweet** and will feature sugar beets, honeybees, sorghum/maple syrup and apples used for food for animals and people in the early 1900's and today.

Greg Alexander and **Tammy Grifka** are coordinating all activities relating to the Theme. They will be supported by **MSU Extension, Department of Environmental Quality** and the **Department of Natural Resources** plus other organizations who will provide educational material for life long learning.

As of January there are already 678 students and 231 chaperons signed up. Teachers may register and ask questions at drapsongabil@chartermi.net.

All are invited to attend **planning meetings** that are scheduled to be held at **Rawson Memorial Library in Cass City** from **12:30 until 2:30 P.M.** on the following Mondays. **Monday, February 5th, Monday, March 5th, Monday, April 2nd and Monday April 30th**. All are invited and encouraged to attend.



Dean Hutchinson brings his bees secured in honeycomb to share the story of bees and the wonderful, healthy honey they produce.

Thumb Quilt Trail

The Thumb Quilt Trail Committee is excited to report that we now have 86 quilt blocks on barns, businesses and 7 historical museums in the Thumb. Those attending the Michigan State Quilt group meeting were treated to the premier of a documentary on **Donna Sue Graves**, who started the quilt trail movement nationwide. Our quilt trail is unique in that the project has all the partnerships that were formed to bring this wonderful visitor experience to the Thumb. It is exciting to travel around the Thumb and look for the quilt blocks that are on display. What a great project. There are many activities relating to the Quilt Trail project that are ongoing. If interested contact the newly retired Rose Putnam at brputt@hotmail.com.

Annual Raffle

Sherry Kappen, Joan Koch & Rose Putnam, Raffle Committee

The Raffle Committee was very excited with the increased interest in participating in our Annual Raffle because of the generous donation from **Pat Gibbard** and **Green Acres Farms** with a cash prize of **\$750.00**. This was along with their annual donation of a **Menard's \$100.00 Gift Certificate**. Pat has donated the gift certificate for many years and also worked with **Sherry Kappen** selling raffle tickets during FFD. We are sad to report that Pat passed away on September 7, 2017 after a long illness. His obituary read, "Pat will always be remembered for his generosity and caring manner. He gave and did for so many in need and did so anonymously without fanfare." Following is a list of all twelve 2017 prizes and the lucky winners.

- ❖ **\$750.00** donated by **Pat Gibbard and Green Acres Farms**, Akron won by **Verna Glaza**,
- ❖ **Queen Size Quilt** donated by **Ruth Ann Brown and the Thumb Thimble Quilt Guild** won by **Henry Sugden**, Caro, MI
- ❖ **40" Samsung Smart TV** donated by ***FOTOB** and won by **Carol Firestone-Rapson**
- ❖ **300.00** donated by **FOTOB** won by **Mary Fritz**, Cass City.
- ❖ **John Deere Pedal Tractor** donated by **Tri-County Equipment** won by **Henry Tschetter**, Rockford, MI.
- ❖ **Samsung Tablet** donated by ***FOTOB** won by **Paul Begirk**, Bay City, MI.
- ❖ **Case I-H Red Stake Wagon** donated by **Osentoski Farm Equipment**, Bad Axe won by **Jarrett Nash**
- ❖ **Craftsman Mechanics Tool Set** donated by **FOTOB** won by **Leona Hachey, Snover**.
- ❖ **\$100.00 Menard's Gift Certificate** donated by **Green Acres Farms**, Akron won by **Anna Osentoski**.
- ❖ **Handmade Afghan** donated by **Ida Nixon** won by **Dee Sweeney**, Bay City, MI.
- ❖ **\$100.00** donated by ***FOTOB** won by **Paul MacCallum**, Owendale, MI
- ❖ **Handmade Afghan** donated by **Gwen Poole** won by **Melanie Hartwick**, Cass City, MI
- ❖ Additional prize of a Tupperware item donated by **Jennifer Turner** won by **Bernadette Schwalm**, Uby, MI

*Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn

A Big Thank You for Your FFD Donation

The following businesses made a special donation for Fall Family Days that enabled the Friends to save considerably on expenses

Michigan Milk Producers, C. Johnson donated a cube of butter used at the Farmer's Breakfast and Fish Supper.

Cass City Oil & Gas donated 100 gallons of LP gas used in food preparation.

Country Fresh, Bruce Hartman, donated 182 quarts of half & half used for the homemade ice cream.

Hampton Potato Farm donated 3000 lbs. of potatoes used in food preparation.

Cooperative Elevator of Pigeon donated 400 lbs. of beans for the bean soup.

DJ's Portable Toilets offered special pricing.

McDonald's Food & Family Center of Bad Axe offered special pricing on purchased items.

Caro Wal-Mart donated 25 quarts of egg beaters used for the ice cream.

Northstar Bank donated 150 lbs. of popcorn, bags and seasoning

MMR (Mobile Medical Response) Scott Smeader, arranged for their services to be available on the grounds during FFD.

Walther Potato Farm planted and cared for the potato field for demonstrations.

Michigan Sugar donated 50 lbs. of brown sugar & 265 lbs. of white sugar used for ice cream and donuts.

Modern Woodmen of America donated \$300.00 for fall flowers to decorate the grounds for Fall Family Days.

Benefactors

The following made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through January 20, 2018.

Clark S. Alcock, Lambertville, MI
 Patricia Allen, Decker, MI
 Lila Arroyo, Cass City, MI
 Thomas & Karla Bardwell, Caro, MI
 Raymond E. Baur, Unionville, MI
 Philip & Carol Beckman, Chesaning, MI
 Kim & Cindy Brown, Columbiaville, MI
 Louise Buehrly, Palmetto, FL
 Donna Burke, Perrysburg, OH
 Don Carlyon, Bay City, MI
 Thomas & Judy Cline, Cass City, MI
 Rich & Lorie Corl, Colorado Springs, CO
 Dayton Motor Parts, John Blair, Bad Axe, MI
 Bob Deeg, Sebewaing, MI
 Gerald Deeg, Sebewaing, MI
 Gayla Eagle, Sandusky, MI
 Karl Fretz, Ridgeway, ONT, Canada
 Janet M. Garrett, Troy, MI
 Walter & Ann Hagen, Bay City, MI
 Robert W. Harcourt, Alger, MI
 Peggy Hellwig, Owendale, MI
 Patricia Higgins, Yale, MI
 Diane Hoag, Cass City, MI
 Patricia Holland, Sebewaing, MI
 Carolyn Jackson, Dearborn Hgts, MI
 Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI
 Patrick & Nancy Kendall, Bay City, MI
 Russell & Marlene Kraft, Marlette, MI
 Pat Kuxhaus, Longmont, CO
 Ron Laeder, Caro, MI
 Ruth Leen, Carsonville, MI
 Sam & Wendy Leppert, Cass City, MI
 Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing, MI
 Vera Milz, Troy, MI
 David & Jane Morse, Cass City, MI
 Tom & Sue Muto, Midland, MI
 Tom & Denise Patrick, Fostoria, MI
 Bryan M. Phillips & Janet Canler, Dearborn, MI
 William & Deborah Posak, E. China, MI
 Donald R. Ramaut, Harbor Beach, MI
 Betty R. Robinson, Jacksonville Beach, FL
 Gretchen Rodammer, Auburn, MI
 William & Georgeann Rowan, Shelby Twp. MI
 Jerry & Mary Ellen Schley, Dearborn Hgts. MI
 Susan Scott, Saginaw, MI
 Marlene Sieradzki, Deford, MI
 Ronald & Margery Stange, Vassar, MI
 David & Penny Turner, Mayville, MI
 Rosalie Walsh, Uby, MI
 Louis (Louie) & Sharon Wenzlaff, Kingston, MI
 Bill & Mary Lee Wisneski, Kinde, MI

Museum Donations

Gerald Auten, Museum Records

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

Randy Humpert, Fairgrove, MI donated shaft line, shaft with pulleys & pump jack.

Roy & Peg Boom, Minden City, MI donated a saw sharpening machine.

Gloria Stoick, Caro, MI donated in memory of Jerry Stoick and

A. T. Ferrell sample mill.

Francis & Dorothy Cottrell, Caro, MI donated platform bag scales & wheel barrow seeder.

Ellis Gardner, Elkton donated a ¾ HP electric motor.

Joe Dean, Bad Axe, MI donated a fence stretcher.

Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI donated hog pliers & rings and a 6 ft. wood finish mower.

Wanted

In 2010, Bob Good & Bob Mackay donated a loom that is approximately of the Civil War Era made of black walnut and is held together with pegs. This is a treasure and we are so fortunate to have had it donated for our Museum. Some time ago the loom needed some repairs and Doug Monroe got the loom repaired and up and running. The loom now once again needs some attention. Jerry Auten feels that he will be able to make needed repairs and get the loom working by FFD 2018. He has the manual and that should prove to be very helpful. Now Jerry is hoping to find someone to demonstrate the loom during FFD. We are also looking for donations of thread or yarn. If able to help out, please call Jerry Auten at 989-872-2778 or email jdaut-en@outlook.com. The loom is currently stored on the mow/loft of the Barn.

Host Couples

The Friends are pleased that two of our Host Couples will be once again returning and be on site from the first of May until some time in September. These folks are so very important to us as they provide a presence on the site, are available to meet and greet visitors and offer tours of the Barn and Purdy Home as well as the other structures. We thank them for returning for all these years as now they are part of the Barn Family.



Ron (Too Tall) and Tammi Hensley, Lehigh Acres, FL are ready to return on May 1. They will be driving their car accompanied by their two cats, as their motor home is stored during the winter months in the Thumb. They love coming to the Barn and have been for so many years that they are ready to go as soon as they enter the grounds. Tammi got involved with preparing lunch for the hard working Monday Work Crew and are they ever appreciative. Also, Tammi has taken on the responsibility of once again scheduling weddings at the site. She already has four signed up for this year.



Curtis and Mary Bell, Carthage, MO are ready to return by May 1. Curtis has had hip surgery and is so very pleased with the results. He is looking forward to being able to move about with greater ease. Curtis and Mary have been exercising so they feel that they will be in tip-top shape when they "report for tours." Mary said, "We prepare for our tours by reading the history book out loud on the way to the Barn. Mary especially loves giving tours of the Purdy Home and does a thorough job. The Bells said, "The Barn is a wonderful place and we are all lucky to have it."

A Little of This and That about Fall Family Days



Chyntel (Koepp) & John Shields, Caro, MI, saw Fall Family Days advertised on Facebook and John had never been to the Barn and said, "We have to go." Now for Chyntel, this brought back many memories. In 1995-99, Chyntel was a homeschool volunteer along with the Southwells who lived just down the road from the Barn." We would help with tours of the house, show animals, do a dance and plant sunflower seeds with the kids. These are some of my favorite memories as a child."



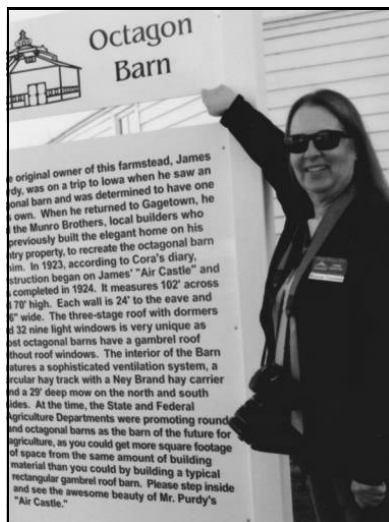
Mark & Kristy Kiehl, of Harbor Beach were another young FAMILY enjoying Fall Family Days at the Octagon Barn. They brought their daughters Ella, 3 and Mary, 10 and their smiles all the way around tell you how much they are enjoying the day.



It wouldn't be FFD without a visit from Merry & Richard Klosowski of Pigeon who could hear the history of the family and Barn over and over. What wonderful supporters of the Barn for all these years they have been.

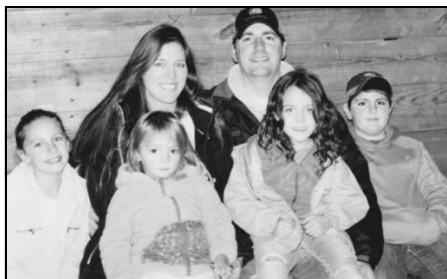


Louis & Linda Wehrman have been taking care of the hundreds of vendors that bring their treasures to sell at FFD for eleven years. The Wehrmans would like to devote their volunteer time to the Grain Elevator Museum that they have worked so hard to develop. They are therefore handing the vendor responsibilities to Ronnie & Dara Irion of Owendale. During 2017 FFD they worked together with the Wehrmans to see how it is all done from registering, assigning and placing the vendors in the north field or the large tent. The Wehrmans have everything beautifully organized taking care of every detail. Welcome Irions and good luck taking care of all those vendors.



Connie Osentoski, Museum Chairwoman, is proudly showing off the new header for one of our informational signs. The header had deteriorated and looked awful. The material that Connie now has will last for a long time and keep our signage looking great. Connie's goal is to always remember that we are the Thumb Agricultural MUSEUM. We have some wonderful museum pieces and Connie is working on show casing them.

More This and That of Fall Family Day



It was so exciting to see so many young families visit during FFD. This young family came from Brown City and were enjoying all the activities for the whole family. Parents in the back row are Heidi & Richard Sutton and their children in the front row are Sylvia, 10, Victoria, 3, Vanessa, 5 and Kyle 8. What a beautiful family!



What an attraction the spinners are for visitors to FFD. There is something very peaceful about spinning and I love sharing the arena of the Barn with them. Many of these spinners have been demonstrating spinning at the Barn for many years. Years ago they were on the front porch of the Purdy Home but moved into the Barn where weather wouldn't be a problem. Pictured from the left are spinners, Monica Cronin, Carsonville, MI who just three years ago spent much of FFD learning about spinning from Sue Baughman, Dorothy Warner, Sandusky, MI, Sue Baughman, Deford, MI & Mary Geer, Kingston, MI.



Sherri Butler and her son **Aaron** came from Applegate to see what FFD is all about because they own the family farm and are interested in preserving and protecting the history that goes with a centennial farm. They have goats and chickens on their farm. They were very interested in the History of the Octagon Barn and the Purdy Family.



Carol Stoeckle, Cass City was one of the original community folks who worked to Save the Octagon Barn. To further that cause she suggested School Tours for area schools and involved her whole family in this effort. Now she has brought her family to see what has happened to this site remembering what it looked like back then. Carol said, "It is truly amazing and beyond anyone's wildest dream. It is truly a real treasure." Carol is quite proud of her part in saving the Barn in the early days. From the left is Carol Stoeckle, daughters Angela (Angie) and Ashleigh and Angie's husband, Joe Lounsbury of Cass City. Ben 2 is in the stroller and Mae, 4 is with Dad.



Tom and Liz Fritz, Galetown, seated on the far right, had folks visiting from out state and decided it would be special to show them this wonderful, unusual Barn and learn how it has been saved. In 1999 Tom who lives down the road from the Octagon Barn volunteered to cut the grass in the north field when needed. Many didn't even know that he did this and that is just the way Tom wanted it. Tom remembers that the Barn had come to look like the way of most barns. He loves the mow/loft and thinks it is wonderful to be able to go up there and see all the museum pieces. Their visitors are from the left, **Pat & Gail Schoonover**, Oklahoma City OK, and **Larry & Linda Schoonover** of Tulsa, OK..



Dennis & Paula Schramm have several centennial farms in Macomb Twp. and are very interested in the preservation and restoration of these treasures of years gone by. They love barns and were very anxious to see this very unique barn. **Irene Couture** of Romeo has a message for the Friends. "Thank you for all your hard work saving and restoring such a beautiful Barn."



A daughter and her parents heard about FFD from Art Levis on WSGW. It sounded so interesting that they decided to drive over from Saginaw. **Henry & Susan Schulz** and their daughter **Sarah Schulz Russell** were impressed with the beauty of the Barn and loved hearing the story of how it came to be.



We have been following the **Blatt Family** of quadruplets from Brown City for many years. We now have an interesting story regarding grandma, **Charlene Laper**. About 24 years ago, **Carmen Blatt's Mom & Dad** and his relatives stopped by the Barn when they were returning from a farm show in Canada. They asked a neighbor down the road if they could stop. The neighbor said they had nothing to do with it. So they stopped and visited as trespassers. **Carmen** had never heard this story before and smiled as she shared it. That's Grandma, **Charlene Laper**, **Collin Blatt** the only Quad visiting and his Mom **Carmen Blatt**.



Lola Stein, is holding the handcrafted shingle made on site. Lola is so pleased that her family is carrying on the tradition of cutting and , branding the shingles just as her husband **Loren** did from the very first FFD until his untimely death. On the left is son **Jim Stein** and his wife **Carol** and in the back row is **Katie Stein & Mike Dyer**. **Loren's** boys often came to help for an hour or so and had no idea how hard their father worked at the shingle mill.

(See more FFD photos on p. 6)

FFD Continued from p. 5

So we had many young families visit during FFD and we had many FRIENDS visit. The almost one hundred year old Barn brings people together of all ages. How lucky we are to have this treasure in the Thumb of Michigan

Barn Restoration

*Dennis Anderson,
Site Committee Chairman
Richard Stacer,
Special Projects Chairman*

We completed the window project last fall. The job focused on the 62 windows in the Octagon Barn. Following the goal of maintaining the historical integrity of the Barn, we either replaced (11 windows) or repaired the frames, sills, glass and glazing of all the windows. We have a group of volunteers led by **Richard Stacer** and we contracted with **Emanuel Mullet Construction** to help us complete the job.

Denny said, "The average age of our volunteers is approximately 70 years young. You see the picture. We do not climb as we did years ago but there is much work we can do and we have lots of fun. Lunch time is my favorite time as we have lots to talk about. The crew refer to me as LT that stands for lunch time as I never miss lunch.

One has to have patience and be willing to do detailed work to repair the windows. When you are finished there is a real sense of accomplishment and appreciation for what it took to build the Barn. You also appreciate your team who provide their time and skill to complete the job.

A large number of people have gone before us. We find their "fingerprints" on the Barn everywhere. We developed a sincere appreciation for all the folks that have worked on the Barn in the past. The barn is a special place.

Now we enter the next phase of renovation. After School Tours we will begin on the roof. Here is some additional information. We will maintain the help of **Emanuel Mullet Construction**. We have the materials on site. We know there will be interruptions to the daily schedule of the Barn. Please work with us. We will put out a detailed schedule of events later. Hope to see you at lunch. (LT). Denny is known as LT (Lunch Time) as he never misses lunch.



Marilyn DeSimpelare, Unionville, suggested three years ago that she knew a Mother & Daughter that she would recommend to sing the National Anthem for our FFD Opening Ceremonies. **Cindy and Tina Beauvais** are perfect and a hush comes over the excitement of the day as they sing a capella of our Anthem. Marilyn is very proud of Tina and all that she is involved in with her community. We thank Marilyn for bringing the ladies to the Thumb Octagon Barn.



Bill and Kitty Sampson, Kinde have been bringing their petting zoo animals to FFD for many years. There were a few years when medical issues prevented them from participating and it was wonderful when the Sampsons could be back in charge. They were determined to fill every stall with a variety of animals. Just around the corner from Kitty are the animals and indeed every stall had interesting animals from goats to bunnies and a donkey too.



Katie Jackson is prepared to teach in the One Room Country School dressed in a starched white blouse and long black skirt. She loved this experience of working with the young students.

In Memoriam

It is with a heavy heart that we inform you of the passing of **Kathleen "Katie" Jackson (87)** of Cass City, following a devastating automobile accident. Because of Katie's love of history and the community she was very interested in the restoration and history of the Thumb Octagon Barn. As often is the case the Friends identify a need and when you step forward to help, you find that soon you are very involved as was the case many years ago for Katie. The Barn had many newspaper clippings that were in need of being organized and preserved. **Bob Hirn** knew of Katie's skills and recruited her help and that was the beginning of a wonderful relationship with the Barn for Katie.

When the **One Room Country School** was moved to the site, Katie stepped forward to become the "Head Marm" demonstrating during School Tours and Fall Family Days what

a classroom looked and felt like many years ago. She always dressed in period appropriate attire and recruited others to step forward to teach as well. She was instrumental in organizing patriotic student performances just as they had been years ago in Country Schools.

Katie felt that folks visiting during Fall Family Days might like a refreshing drink and therefore she decided to recreate an **old-fashioned lemonade stand**. She recruited the help of neighbor **LaVern Rutkoski** to build the replica of a lemonade stand. Indeed it was a big success and the student run lemonade stand was appreciated.

Always looking for authenticity at the Schoolhouse, when in response to a "Wanted List" a "three holer" out-house became available from **Michael Albin** of Caro, Katie made arrangements for it to be brought to our site. The out-house was originally located at the Orr-Moore Schoolhouse on the southeast corner of Deckerville Rd. and Hurds Corner. Leave it to Katie to take care of every detail.

When the need to document the historical developments at the Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum, Katie once again stepped forward to undertake this responsibility. Because of her leadership and organizational abilities, after two years of research and writing, a sixty page history book, **The Story of the Mud Lake Estate** was completed.

Through the years many folks who had experienced the One Room Country Schools classroom came forward with items that they wanted to donate to our Museum. The quantity of memorabilia was quite amazing and soon the need for a building to house all these items was a reality. Once again, Katie stepped forward to become part of the group organizing the **One Room Country School Museum**. So from organizing a few newspaper clippings, Katie has left her mark in oh so many ways while always being cheerful but getting the job done. She'll be missed. (See list of Memorial Donation under Special Donations on P. 8.)

A Bit of History and an Announcement too

Margaret Sergeant, Newsletter Coordinator

In 1994 community interest was growing to SAVE THE OCTAGON BARN. A group was formed known as The Thumb Octagon Barn Committee and their goal was to preserve this unique, historic Barn on its original site. Fundraisers were planned to draw attention to the project and raise money to assist with immediate needed repairs to the Barn. On October 11, 1994 the group changed its name to Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn and became a 501-C3 tax exempt, non profit organization.

In 1995 it was felt that it would be beneficial for this newly formed organization to inform those interested in working to SAVE THE OCTAGON BARN with a quarterly informational newsletter. **Margaret Sergeant**, Gagetown, volunteered to prepare a single page letter using a rudimentary program that she had used with her elementary students. Margaret's neighbor took one look at the letter and said, "I think we can do better." **Brenda Papkey** indeed was amazing in what she was able to do with her computer skills in developing a very professional letter from April 1996 until the Spring of 2003. The letter started out as a single page but eventually became eight pages. When Brenda was no longer able to work on the newsletter, **Bob Hirn** came to the rescue and suggested that **Lois Moslander** who worked at the Rawson Memorial Library in Cass City and produced several newsletters for different organizations might be able to perform the Design Layout for the Barn's newsletter. Lois' first letter was the Spring of 2003 and she continues to work her magic arranging the text into the newsletter format and does a wonderful job.

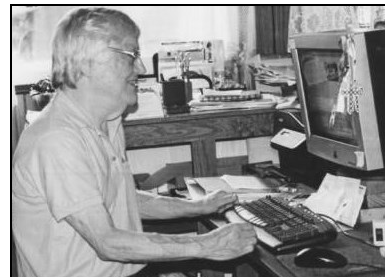
That's the history of the letter that has been published from 1995 until the present. That's a lot of letters. Now it is time for this responsibility to be passed on and are we ever lucky. President, Rose Putnam, retired from Chemical Bank at the end of 2017 and has agreed to take on the responsibility of coordinating our newsletter. Rose has worked closely with the newsletter editing and contributing articles. I know she will be outstanding. It will be terrific. I have enjoyed sharing the story of how the Mud Lake Estate became the Thumb Agricultural Museum and the effort to Save the Octagon Barn. It has been an exciting journey to work with all the super volunteers and to see how this project has grown from a frail Barn to a museum dedicated to rural living and our agricultural heritage. I look forward to being able to spend more time with my kitties and my flowers but most

importantly spending more time with my family and friends.

A final thought. It seems like the last newsletter is taking forever to complete. I apologize for this but many things have happened. Some illness for the whole newsletter team and the bitter cold weather was exhausting. We'll get back on track in the capable hands of Rose. Thank you for understanding. MS



In the Spring of 1997 the Friends initiated a membership drive that would allow interested people to join in the effort to restore and preserve this site and provide needed revenue for our restoration efforts. Committee members, **Crystal Mosack & Margaret Sergeant** appeared in the Cass City Chronicle to promote the membership drive.



Lois Moslander, Cass City, agreed to do the design layout for the Barn's newsletter in the Spring of 2003 and has expertly continued for all these years. It is fascinating to watch her take a bunch of pages of text and lots of pictures and merge them into the newsletter format. Many thanks for all those years of dedicated service.

Newsletter

Database and labels.....David Eichler
Editing.....Rose Putnam
Design Layout.....Lois Moslander

Wanted

- The two positions that need to be filled on the Executive Committee are Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary.
- The duties for these positions are as follows:
- **Corresponding secretary** – conduct the correspondence of the organization and see that a list of member's information be maintained.
- **Recording secretary** – record and transcribe accurate minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the organization and Executive Committee. Distribute to all members attending regular or annual meetings, copies of minutes of the previous meetings.

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

989-665-0081

Non-Profit Org.
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We're on the Web!

<http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org>
Dave Eicher
Web Manager

2018 Upcoming Events

April 10	Annual Meeting 7:00PM Elmwood Township Hall
Saturday, May 5 th	Spring Clean up Day
May 9, 10 & 11	School Tours (by appointment only)
June 10	Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Auction
June 20	Southern Sweet Tea & Desserts Tea Party
July 14 and 15	Concerts in the Barn
July 28 and 29	Open House Weekend
September 7	Fish Supper
September 8 & 9	24 th Annual Fall Family Days

FUTURE MEETINGS

General membership meetings
will be held the second Tuesday,
every other month, at 7 p.m.
at the Elmwood Twp. Hall
Feb., April, Oct. & Dec.
With June & Aug. meetings
in the Munro Bldg.

Special Donations

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

- ◆Pat Coleman, Blackfoot, ID daughter of the late Barb Wilson donated in memory of James Purdy Wilson.
- ◆Donations in memory of the late Barbara Osentoski given by an anonymous donor, Ken & Roselyn Martin, Cass City, MI & Marty & Connie Osentoski, Cass City, MI.
- ◆A \$300.00 cash donation was mailed to the Friends by an anonymous donor. Thank you, thank you!
- ◆Brad & Beth Kitchin, Mesa, AZ donated in honor of Brad's mother, Pat Hester.
- ◆Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing, MI donated in memory of Art Nitz, the button man.
- ◆Anonymous donation was given in memory of Howard Gehrls.
- ◆Donation in memory of Mike Sullivan given by Robert & Edna McLachlan, Cass City, MI
- ◆Donation in memory of Todd Toner given by Willa Vargas, Bellevue, NE
- ◆Donation in honor of Georgia Munro Brauer given by Sally Brauer, Troy, MI
- ◆Donation in memory of Ena Reintjes, I given by Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI, and her daughter Ena Reintjes II, St. Clair Shores, MI
- ◆Donation in memory of Don Kruse given by Edna & Robert McLachlan and Marty & Connie Osentoski.
- ◆Donation in honor of Margaret Sergeant a delightful, wonderful and very resourceful young lady. given by Curtis & Mary Bell, Carthage, MO
- ◆Donation in memory of Ellen Faye Toner, a retired teacher, given by Dan Toner, Cass City.
- ◆D & M Cabinet Shop, Ruth, MI donated their time and labor for one of our cabinets.
- ◆A donation was given in memory of Clyde Leiterman, "THE ONE MAN BAND" by Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI.
- ◆Donations given in memory of Katie Jackson are Mr. & Mrs. Roderick Walsh, Ubly, MI, Donna Sageman & Shelley Corsini, Bad Axe, MI, Louis & Linda Wehrman, Reese, MI, Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI, Mark & Diane Battel, Cass City, MI, Margo & Dick Donahue, Crescent Beach, MI, Jim & Mary Patnaude, Lapeer, MI, Gloria Bartnik, Cass City, MI, Jim & Judy Brown, Cass City, MI, Duane & Nancy Hemp, Cass City, MI, Joan & Jim Ware, Cass City, MI, Beth Brown, Sebewaing, MI, Doug & Ardis Monroe, Gagetown, MI, Don & Pat Holland, Sebewaing, MI, Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI, Diane & Michael Gabil, Essexville, MI, Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI, Dennis, Joyce and Jeff Anderson, Cass City, MI, Jon & Charmaine Fahrner, Cass City, MI, Rose Putnam, Cass City, MI, Joan Merchant, Cass City, MI, Doris Stuever, Lynn, MI & Janet Muntz, Cass City, MI.