

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 2017

School Tours 2017

Diane Rapson Gabil, Chairwoman

Our first big Event of the year will be our School Tours that have grown considerably since the first year that teachers were invited to bring their students to the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum.

Carol Stoeckle, originator of the concept recently recounted her memories of that first year in 1996, "I remember being at one of our meetings and bringing up having school kids come to the Barn to get more awareness of the Barn and its plight. Some said wait a few years and I said, we can do it now, no use waiting. That first year was a much bigger success than we could have imagined. The response from local schools was great. The weather didn't cooperate. I can still see kids arranged in groups around the leaks in the barn roof, where the rain was coming in. It was almost as wet inside as outside! That first year we had great volunteer support from **Bob Hirn**, **Kathleen Nizzola** & **Norma Wallace**. I brought farm animals, **Jennifer Szubielak** sheared sheep, **Tina Hoard** did wool spinning. **Margaret Sergeant** began her job as the barn history storyteller. She was and still is amazing. As I look back on how it all started, a small group of dedicated people who wouldn't let that barn be torn down, to what it has grown into today, brings tears to my eyes. We were blessed with great leadership in **Rose Putnam** and **Bob Hirn** plus many, many others."

Diane Rapson Gabil, our current chairwoman, became involved with the Thumb Octagon Barn when she brought her very special students for a visit to the Barn. The Friends good fortune was that she retired at the same time that Carol was unable to continue as chairwoman of School Tours. Diane has organized and chaired School Tours since 2002 that has grown to accommodate almost 1500 students over three days in May with 28 stations for teachers to select from to visit. Diane does a beautiful job of organizing, with the scheduling expertise of **Doug Monroe**, the movement of students on site during their visit.

The theme for Schools Tours 2017 is "From Food to Table, Highlighting Grain Processing". Students will learn about the production of food for people and animals in the early 1900's, how it was attained, kept and processed for use. They will learn how the food they eat today gets from being grown on a farm, prepared and processed into other food they eat. The students will also learn about by-products of grains, beans, corn and other crops and how they are used in food for people and animals as well as in other necessary products. This theme ties directly to health, science and social studies curriculum at all grade levels.



Arlen Bannick and his fellow players have been entertaining young students during School Tours since the beginning. How delightful to hear young voices joining in and singing old favorites and even dancing at times. Arlen, 95, loves to participate and see the students having such a good time but he will be monitoring the temperature and weather to determine if it's a good time to play. He has others lined up so that there will always be music. Entertaining from left are: **Bill Slaughter**, Deford, **Craig Sorenson**, Cass City, **Arlen Bannick**, Bad Axe and **Richard Wroblewski**, Sebawaing who have all been playing with the Eastern Michigan Music Makers for years.

Executive Committee

President
Rose Putnam

1st Vice President
Martin Kubacki

2nd Vice President
Gerald Auten

Treasurer
Joan Koch

Recording Secretary
Ardis Monroe

Purdy Home Chairman
Marilyn Phillips

Museum Committee
Connie Osentoski

Grounds Chairman
Louis Wehrman

Special Projects
Richard Stacer

Norm Parker
Chairman of the Alert Team

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



Linda Wehrman is presenting to a group of students about the different grains that are grown locally and the products that are produced from the grains.



Each year the hatching chicks have been a favorite of our students. **Jack Laurie** and **Doug Monroe** have been in charge of this station for many years. Jack Laurie orders the fertilized eggs from Michigan State University's Poultry Department to hatch during the three days of School Tours. Jack and Doug then drive to East Lansing to pick up the eggs and get the brooder all set up. They order three dozen eggs and almost always have that many chicks by Friday afternoon.

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



Dear Friends,

2017 is here and we are busy getting ready for all the activities at the Thumb Octagon Barn. We are looking forward to educating our youth at **School Tours May 10 – 12** on the virtues of a grain elevator and all the products that have evolved into their lives today. School Tours theme is **From Farm to Table, highlighting grain production**. Our theme "Grain Elevators" will be highlighted throughout the year at our activities.

I am proud to announce that **Norm Parker**, Chairman of the Alert Team has been appointed to the Executive Committee. Are you thinking, what does the Alert Team do? Give Norm a call. You might be surprised.

Another exciting announcement is the **Volunteer Picnic** will be combined with **Annual Banquet and Auction on Sunday, June 11, 2017**. We would love everyone to join in the fun, but you must sign up. We want to be sure we have enough food for all those attending. See this page for more details.

On Saturday of that week, **Thumb Electric Cooperative** will hold their Annual Meeting at the Barn site. We are looking forward to their members enjoying the Thumb Octagon Barn site while they handle their business for the day. We hope that first time visitors will enjoy their day and come back for another visit.

I am looking forward to the **Tea in July** that will feature, "Greens & Grains." A red hat group has reserved 20 seats with only 6 seats left. Please call Marilyn Phillips at 989-977-0025 to reserve your seat at the tea.

How would you like to hear some great music and have some dancing fun this summer? Come on out for the **Concert Weekend July 14 through 16**. Two new groups will be performing plus country dancing on Friday, July 14th.

Open House weekend is the last weekend, **July 29 – 30** and the Grain Elevator will be in full operation all weekend, so if you missed all the fun during FFD, now is the time to enjoy the items in the new addition. Don't forget about looking over the new round grain bin.

Then before we know it, **Fall Family Days** will be here. Your favorite activities will be back along with some new fun. FFD is always the weekend after Labor Day.

We could always use some more volunteers. Think about giving an hour or two. How about asking a grandchild, your neighbor, someone at church to help?

In closing, here is a bit of news: The Thumb Octagon Barn was recognized as the Advertiser's 2016 Reader's Choice Award for their favorite "Landmark". We would like to thank all of you that voted for our historic Barn. We are very proud to have this wonderful jewel in the Thumb.

Hope to hear from you or see you on site.

As ever,
Rose M. Putnam

2017 Annual Volunteer Banquet and Auction Executive Committee

The Annual Volunteer Banquet and Auction has been moved to **Sunday, June 11, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at the Octagon Barn site**. The meal will be served at 2 p.m. and the Auction will immediately follow the meal. You may start bringing auction items at 1 p.m. Due to this change, we will not have a silent auction. So please rethink the items that you are donating. We hope that those members or guests will continue to bring all the favorite home-made items. **Marty Osentoski** will be back as auctioneer.

Along with this change, a decision was made to also host the **volunteer appreciation meal along with the annual banquet and auction**. Therefore, there will not be a cost to a volunteer for the dinner. However, with that being said, we do need your reservation in order to prepare enough food. A sign up sheet will be available at our meetings but please sign up only once. If you are unable to sign up you may contact **Joan Koch** by leaving a message on the Octagon Barn phone at **989-665-0081** or you may contact the chairperson of your committee and sign up with them. Please help by spelling your name and leaving a phone number.

We are excited about the possibility of a great turnout for both the Annual Meeting and the new **Annual Volunteer Banquet and Auction**.

2017 Annual Meeting

Rose Putnam, President

The Executive Committee has made some changes based on input from the membership for our Annual Meeting, Banquet & Auction. Therefore our **Annual Meeting will be held on April 11, 2017 at 7 p.m. at the Elmwood Township Hall in downtown Gagetown**. We will go over the 2016 financial report, discuss new and old business and hold the election of officers. If you are interested in helping

out, the position of Recording Secretary is open for a two year term and the Corresponding Secretary position is open for a one year term. **Martin Kubacki** will be running again as First Vice President for a two year term. Nominations will be open on the floor the evening of the meeting for all three positions. Following the Annual Meeting, we will hold the regular membership meeting as usual.

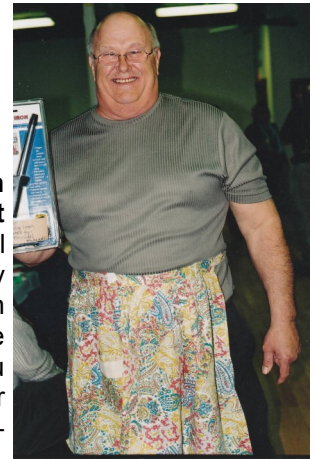
Grounds/Clean up Day

Louie Wehrman, Chairman

Clean up day has been scheduled for **Saturday, May 6 at 9:00 a.m.** when volunteers will be asked to come together to help prepare the site for School Tours the following week and opening to the public for the season. There is much that needs cleaning and fixing up, so we can use all those who are willing to help. Maybe you could bring a friend with you and get them interested in becoming a Friend of our Museum and perhaps then

they might volunteer at some of our Events.

Louie asks that each person who is responsible for an area take charge for getting that area ready for visitors and recommends that they bring the supplies that they will need for clean up. He also reminds folks that they will need to bring their own lunch should they be able to work into the afternoon.



Marty Osentoski, Osentoski Realty Co. & Auctioneering will once again be handling the Auction. It's great fun to watch Marty work to get the most money possible for the auction items to benefit the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum. He is amazing and so entertaining.

Monday Work Crew

The Boys, Chairman

In 2016 **James & Veronica (Stoic) Haines** of Vassar donated their 1920's red-wood tongue and groove granary to our Museum. After being moved from Vassar by the **Anthes Brothers Moving** to our site, it was placed on a platform that left quite a step up from the ground level. Realizing that this presented some safety issues, it was decided that a ramp would be the answer to assure a safe entrance to the granary.



Jane Hool spent many hours working to restore the beautiful Purdy Home that thru the years had been neglected and left in terrible condition. In 2001, Jane is pictured working to mix stain to match the wood-work in the Purdy Home that will be used on the newly installed French doors in the parlor. Jane loved this home and was dedicated to seeing it restored back to the show place that it once was. Jane not only supported our Museum with her efforts in the Purdy Home but also, in the summer of 1995, Jane and her family decorated the float for the Octagon Barn that would be driven down Main Street in Cass City's Fourth of July Parade. Jane died on January 5, 2017.



One sunny, but cold Monday, found the crew on that particular day working to build a ramp for easy access to the interior of the granary. Once the ramp is in place they will work on making improvements to the inside of the granary so that folks will be able to walk into the granary and see static displays and agricultural memorabilia. Working on the project are from the left and around, **Ken Western**, Kingston, **Byron Arnold**, Unionville, **Norm Parker**, Cass City, **Howard Gehrls**, Reese, **Jack Hill**, Marlette, **Jerry Meredith**, Snover, **Louie Wehrman**, Reese and **Paul Deo**, Snover.

In Memoriam



When our very first caretakers, **Ray & Betty Armstead**, were no longer able to continue in that capacity due to health issues, their good friends, **Arnold & Reita Maxfield** assumed those responsibilities for many years. They worked as a team with Arnie cutting the grass and Reita planting and caring for the many flowers that she planted around the site. Reita had a green thumb and kept the site looking beautiful. When visitors came to see and learn about the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum, Arnie would share the stories of the Barn and Reita would walk and talk with visitors in the Purdy Home. Arnie and Reita had been married for 65 years and you would often see them holding hands. Reita died on January 16, 2017 and it seemed that once Arnie was assured that everything was in order he died on January 22, 2017. It was Arnie's wish that there would be a Memorial Service in the arena of the Octagon Barn for Reita this summer. Now a Memorial Service is being planned for this loving couple and wonderful caretakers and hosts of the Thumb Octagon Barn. **The date for the celebration of their lives is June 4th at 1:00 p.m.** Arnie and Reita are pictured by the flag pole garden and marker thanking all the volunteers who worked on the restoration of the Barn spearheaded by the late Bob Hirn. Early on the Maxfields purchased the flowers for this garden and cared for and maintained them throughout the season.

Please note: Ken Western is a new member of the Monday crew thanks to Jack Hill. Jack realizes that we need new volunteers and challenges everyone to bring at least one new person to our Friends group. Jack said, "**WE NEED SOME NEW, YOUNGER VOLUNTEERS.**"



In 2010 **Lawrence Longuski**, Uby, was pleased that his 1930's Russell Steam Engine was chosen for our commemorative button when our theme was Steam Engines. Through the years **Jason Wilder** helped Lawrence get his engine up and running ready for the parade of antique equipment during FFD. After the parade In 2010 Lawrence presented Jason with the steam engine as he felt that the time had come to pass it on. Jason continues to display and participate in the Parade during FFD with "**HIS**" **Russell Steam Engine**. Lawrence was a good Friend of the Octagon Barn. He faithfully cut the grass in the field south of the Barn and was a part of the team that demonstrated the sawmill during School Tours and FFD. He loved restoring vintage steam engines and airplanes, raising orchids and making delicious carrot cake that he delivered to those that he felt needed a bit of cheer. Lawrence died on December 26, 2016.

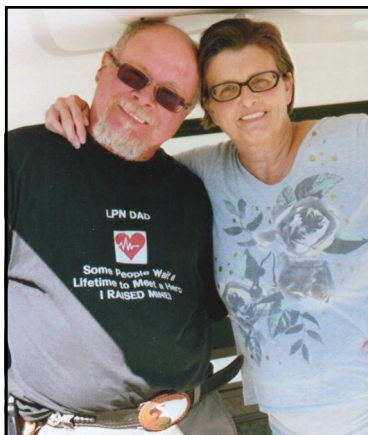
2016 Host Couples

As the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum grew so did our need for our Host Couples who provide a presence on the site, are available to meet and greet visitors, can help with the maintenance of the grounds including watering the flowers and most importantly provide security by their very presence on site.

This is not an easy job and we are extremely grateful to those who bring their RV and stay for several months during the summer providing the previously mentioned needs. We thank them many times over and look forward to some of the couples returning once again. If you know of any others that might be interested in becoming one of our hosts please contact Rose Putnam at Rose.Putnam@chemicalbank.com.



Ron (Too Tall) & Tammi Hensley, Lehigh Acres, Florida are returning for another year of many since they have been Host Couples. They feel that the Friends are their second family. They love coming and there isn't any other place that they would rather be than with all their Friends at the Barn during the summer months. The Hensleys travel with their cat Gypsy. Last year there were several litters of kittens from across the road from the Barn who found their way right to Tammi's heart. She thought that Gypsy might like some company so they adopted Willow who will also be returning. Tammi said "We'll all be back the first of May and that will be here before we know it."



John & Carolyn Longmuir, Box Elder, South Dakota spent four summers with the Friends but because of some family plans the "grandparents" are going to be unable to find their way to the Octagon Barn this year. John said, "Our experience with the Friends has been enjoyable, enlightening and gave us a forever loving feeling for all those involved. They make you feel like family. We will hope to be back but we haven't gotten to planning for 2018 and beyond yet."



Gail & Duane Osbourn, New Baltimore, MI have been involved with the Barn as host couples for many years. Because of health issues they absolutely will be unable to spend any extended time at the Barn this season. In fact, Gail said that they weren't even going to bring their RV up for only a few days because once they got up here they would be tempted to stay. As much as they would love to be here with their summer family away from home, their health will not make that possible. Hopefully they will be able to drive up for a visit during some of our Events as they will miss tremendously being here. Gail loved caring for the flowers, helping in the Purdy Home with Teas and tours and Duane loved sharing the stories of the Friends with visitors. We thank the Osbourns for all the years that they donated their time to the Thumb Agricultural Museum.



Curtis & Mary Bell, Carthage, Missouri have been coming to Michigan and the Agricultural Museum for several years and are returning once again this year. Mary said, "The forecast for weather in their home town this summer is hot and humid so they are anxiously anticipating their trip north to Michigan and our wonderful weather." The Curtis' miss all their good Friends and are looking forward to their return. **Mary added that work continues on the third Octagon Barn Cookbook and noted that they could especially use recipes for main dishes, soups and stews. Mary Bell and Tammi Hensley will be back at the Barn after May 1st so best to mail them to our P. O. Box 145, Gagetown, MI 48735.** Mary ended the conversation with, "Look out, we're a comin'."

The old apple tree behind the Purdy Home is a wonderful place for old friends to visit and remember days gone by. Seated around the table are from the left **Reita Maxfield, Arnie Maxfield, Bill Hollingsworth and Betty Armstead** all who played a big part in caring for, protecting and preserving this historical site for future generations.

Music Weekend in the Barn

David Jaroch, Ron Kuenzli, Rose Putnam & Richard Wrobeski

The committee has planned our **Second Music Week-end in the arena of the Barn** and will include, some dancing, country music and Sunday gospel music. The arena of the Octagon Barn is a wonderful setting for these activities.

The cost for each event will be \$10.00 per person with children 12 and under admitted free. These concerts are another way to raise funds that enable us to continue to fund our many construction projects especially the repairs needed to the Octagon Barn. Refreshments will be served at intermission all three days.

The schedule is as follows :

Friday, July 14th Country Dance Night with DJ Ron Kuenzli. Ron has had twenty years of experience as a DJ with the Thumb Area Dance Club. Ron sets up the sound system for the concerts, so we know that the Barn will be filled with great music. Also, the opportunity for some dance lessons will be offered in round dance and two-step waltz. Ron has hinted at perhaps a surprise guest as well. Music will start at 7 p.m. and will go as long as there are dancers.

Saturday, July 15th Jenni Lynn & the Ruckus will entertain from 7 until 9 p.m. Jenni has opened for a number of major country artists in Mid-Michigan and is popular with festivals in the area.

Sunday, July 16th Skylight Gospel Quartet – four guys out of SW Michigan. The group will present a mix of old favorites & new material.

The concert will start at 2 p.m. and go until 4 p.m.



Ron Kuenzli, Deford, who loves good sound has set up a system for announcing and providing quality sound all over the site during our events, will now add to his talents, "DJ". Who knew that for the past 20 years he has been a DJ providing dance music for his dance club and other groups.

Special Donations

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

The family of Robert Frank Humpert, Fairgrove, MI made a generous donation to the Agricultural Museum. Bob drove a shuttle during FFD and especially enjoyed 'hanging out' at the Grain Elevator Building just as was the practice years ago. Bob was a very special friend to Louie Wehrman. Green-Gro Farms donated a share of the profit from the hay crop grown in the field used for parking during FFD.

Donation in the name of Pat Hester given by her son & daughter-in-law, Brad & Beth Kitchin, Mesa, AI

Donation in memory of Richard Holdwick, given by Evelyn Schadd, Filion, MI

Donations in memory of Paul Linck given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI & Diane Rapson Gabil, Essexville, MI

Donation In memory of Mary Jane Sweeney given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI

Donation in honor of Bob Milligan, Lauderdale, MN who celebrated a special birthday milestone given by Jim & Judy Brown, Cass City.

\$200.00 donation given towards the new barn roof given by Ken & Arlene Musser, Kawkawlin, MI. "We love all the hard work you people do."

Dee Garety, Cass City donated a quilt for the raffle or auction, old books & an appliance.

Donation in memory of her brother-in-law, Jim Nelson, given by Evelyn Schadd, Filion, MI.

Donations in memory of Lawrence Longuski were given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI John & Jo Ann Rutkowski, Ubly, MI, Jill Ogryski, Ubly, MI, Diane Rapson Gabil, Essexville, MI & Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI. Donations in memory of Reita Maxfield, Dade City, FL given by Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, Betty Armstead & Bill Hollingsworth, Zephyrhills, FL, George & Glenda Wilson, Gagetown, MI & Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI. See picture on page 3.

Donation in memory of Arnie Maxfield, Dade City, FL given by Betty Armstead & Bill Hollingsworth, Zephyrhills, FL & Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI, Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI.

Donations in memory of Jane Hool, Cass City, MI given by Ann & Tom Craig, Cass City, MI, Don/Barb Ball, Cass City, MI, Ken/Dorothy Ball, Cass City, MI, Russ & Sharon Kraft, Owendale, MI, Katie Jackson, Cass City, MI, Ed & Dot Knight, Cass City, MI, Dick & Norma Wallace, Cass City, MI, Bob Russell, Bay City, MI, Anton & Marilyn Peters, Cass City, MI, Janice Winter, Cass City, MI, Dave & Kristine Milligan, Cass City, Cass City, MI, Nancy DeBeaubian, Cass City, MI, Carol Hartman, Cass City, MI, Al & Charlie Wallace, Cass City, MI, Bea Wallace, Morrice, MI, Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI & Arn & Sharon Erla, Cass City, MI. See picture and comments on page 3.

Very special thanks to Clemco Printing, Bad Axe, for collating, folding and stapling our fall newsletter at not cost to the Friends.

The Purdy Grain Elevator

Louie & Linda Wehrman, Co-Chairs

Our 2017 Theme is community **Grain Elevators** and will feature The Purdy Elevator in our Village. The sign in front of the building tells the story and significance of the local Elevator to the community.

Beginning in the mid to late 19th century, farmers were able to produce grain crops that exceeded the needs of their families and industries were creating a demand for the excess crops. The first facilities for receiving and storing grain were flat storage warehouses holding grain in sacks or barrels. By the beginning of the 20th century the increase in productivity and demand required new technology to handle and store large amounts of grain quickly. Grain elevators were developed to meet the demand to receive, weigh, store and transfer grain in bulk quantities. This grain elevator, though not original to the site, has been constructed by volunteers of the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn beginning in 2008 and is ongoing, in tribute to the area's grain elevators. The building features working vintage equipment to demonstrate the operation typical of early, small town elevators. Included are vertical bucket conveyors called grain legs that "elevate" the grain in storage bins. Mills are used to remove chaff and foreign materials and clean the grain. Scales are used to determine the quantity of grain for which a farmer would be paid. It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the very valuable role grain elevators and their employees have played in the advancement of agriculture and in the lives of those dedicated farm families who have helped to make this Nation great.

Our Elevator Building has grown to be an amazing museum and wonderful addition to the Thumb Agricultural Museum thanks to all who have donated, helped build but most importantly to **Louie & Linda Wehrman** for their leadership and dedication to this project. It all started with just a small building donated by **Ron & Brenda Brakenberry** of Bad Axe. Through the years additions have been added to accommodate the equipment for demonstrations as well as provide needed display space. Louie said that they are receiving wonderful new pieces of equipment and that they are already running out of room.

Correspondence

When the Hamlins of South Haven, MI renewed their membership they added the following note and a donation too. "Karen is granddaughter of Edith Purdy, sister of James Purdy (original owner). Although we have only been able to visit the Barn once, we are enthused about its success and the expansion of the associations many activities. Your volunteers are remarkable! Good Luck and God's Blessings to all. **Karen & W. Stephen Hamlin.**"



The Purdy grain elevator will be on full display during our 2017 Events. Although Mr. Purdy did not own an elevator in Gagetown to go along with the Purdy Lumberyard he did need grain to feed his beef cattle that he raised. There was a wood stave silo in the northeast corner of the arena for grain storage & several grain bins in the southwest corner of the Octagon Barn in the granary that just had a new floor installed. That's Louie out in front of the Purdy Elevator.



Louie and Linda Wehrman could not be happier that the Grain Elevator is being highlighted for all of our Events as they have been working for many years to create a Museum dedicated to the importance of the local elevator. Louie had just picked up this bean sorter built in Rhodes, Michigan. He had never seen one like this. Instead of a pedal to move the beans along, this piece had a 'treadle'. This is one of many pieces that have recently been donated that will be highlighted in future

Benefactors

The following have made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through March 17, 2017

Bob Ashmore, Owendale, MI
Carolyn Baldwin, Vassar, MI
Tom Barton, St. Clair Shores, MI
Ralph & Theresa Bielawski, Fraser, MI
Bernard & Patty Billingsley, Sanford, MI
R. Scott & Ginny Brundage, Columbia, MO
Ray Christie, Freeland, MI
Gail Cooper, Milford, MI
Bob & Linda Deeg, Sebawaing, MI
Karl & Marilyn DeSimpelare, Unionville, MI
John & Pat DeWyse, Bay City, MI
Dorothy Warner Echlin, Sandusky, MI
Robert O. & Eleanor M. McDonald, Ethier, Milledgeville, GA
Russell & Carol Fisher, Caro, MI
Thomas & Elizabeth Fritz, Gagetown, MI

Harold & Diana Frye, Mayville, MI
John Gallagher, Carsonville, MI
Neal J. Hentschl, Harbor Beach, MI
Duard "Duey" & Karen Holz, Filion, MI
Deloris Jensen, St. Clair Shores, MI
Stanley T. & Rita Knopf, Marlette, MI
Tim & Debbie Kubacki, Sebawaing, MI
Elizabeth Lambert, Kingston, MI
Mike & Drucilla Pisarek, Cass City, MI
Nicholas Posak, St. Clair, MI
Barbara J. Prill, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI
Judy Ann Rau, Reese, MI
Robert & Sharon Rumon, Caro, MI
Dorothy (Dotty) Scollon, Cass City, MI
Tom & Pat Young, Upper Sandusky, OH

Fall Family Days 2017

Martin Kubacki, Chairman

Lisa Geiger, Co-Chair

Hi Everyone. It's hard to believe it's time again to start planning for the 2017 September Event. Our Fall Family Days kick-off meeting took place on March 21st at the Elmwood Township Hall in downtown Gagetown. It was well attended and very productive. I am pleased to announce that **Lisa Geiger** is my new Co-Chair for FFD. With her past experiences at FFD for several years, she is ready and willing to assume this new responsibility. Lisa has taken care of the parking area for FFD, so you know she will be terrific! Thank you Lisa, for taking on this job.

The 2017 theme is Grain Elevators. Our on site elevator will be featured. We hope to get all the local and surrounding cooperative elevators involved to share their history. They would also present information on how our food supply gets from the field to the market and from there to your table. **Linda & Louie Wehrman**, Grain Elevator Chairs, have been involved with the elevator for many years and with the large addition put on last year it continues to get bigger and better.

We will once again have harvesting demonstrations and exhibits that are representative of earlier times on the farm as we have done in the past and also our large flea market. Of course, we will have all the delicious things to eat being prepared on site. As we get closer to September we will give you a run down of the displays and demonstrations that are planned. **The Event dates for this year are Saturday and Sunday September 9th and 10th with a fish fry on September 8th.**

This year's expense budget is set around \$50,000.00. As the budget gets bigger it requires more money to cover the advertising, rental of tents, porta-johns, security, insurance, supplies etc.

Fall Family Days raises over 60% of our annual income and without it we could not accomplish what we have done to date.



How the Grain Elevator Building has grown from the little building donated some years ago. Many are excited about all the activity and attention and will be ready to share the elevator stories of years gone by and remember simpler times.

Each year we ask for sponsorships to help cover the cost of putting on this Event. If we were to have a rainout that weekend, we would not only lose the income from the event that covers expenses for the coming year, but we would be out the cost of putting on Fall Family Days. Therefore we need your help. We have enclosed a sponsor form for your consideration and convenience.

Remember always, we need **volunteers**. If you want to get involved, call me. I am always open to new ideas so put on your thinking caps and share your ideas with me or at one of our meetings. Invite a friend to come along. We would love to welcome them to our group and they will enjoy themselves. **FFD meeting dates for 2017 are all on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at the Munro Building on the following dates. May 23, July 25 and August 29. Any questions, please call me.**

Martin Kubacki
989-551-0526

Fall Family Days Sponsors

Each year, as the event has grown, the cost of advertising, postage, printing, rental of porta-johns, tents, food, etc. has grown as well. A budget is developed to cover the costs for putting on this event. In 2001 our budget was \$6,300 and this year is projected to be \$50,000. The budget covers the cost of putting on the Event. It has been our goal over the years to obtain enough sponsorships so that, if the weather did not cooperate and attendance was down, we would not lose money. Fall Family Days has become a major fundraiser for the Barn project and we could not afford to have it cost us money.

We are including a FFD Sponsor form with this newsletter should you be interested in becoming a 2017 sponsor. Please fill out the included form and return it by May 1st to Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn, P. O. Box 145, Gagetown, MI 48735. We thank you for your continued support of the Thumb Agricultural Museum.

Gas Station Display

In the southwest corner of the sawmill building, **Wayne Lenton** has arranged a gas station display of antique equipment. Once Wayne started to display some of these items others began bringing in their memorabilia that they had in their collections. Come take a look when you visit during our Events. It'll bring back many memories.



Lots to look at here. Many antique wrenches, oil cans and other memorabilia.



Wayne has loaned his Mobil gas pump for the display. The price per gallon is set at 41 cents. Wayne is hoping to get the appropriate globe for the pump that he bought years ago from the county.

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

989-665-0081

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We're on the Web!

<http://www.thumboctagonbarn.org>
George Pettinger,
Web Manager

2017 Upcoming Events

April 11	Annual Mtg. Before General Membership Meeting
May 6	Clean-up Day
May 10 – 12	School Tours by appointment only
June 11	Annual Volunteer Banquet & Auction in Munro Bldg.
July 27	Tea "Greens & Grains"
July 14 – 16	Music Weekend in the Barn
July 29 & 30	Open House Weekend featuring our grain elevator
September 8	Fish Fry 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
September 9 & 10	Fall Family Days 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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.

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.

Max Sherman, Lapeer, MI donated an A. T. Ferrell #2 fanning mill and a Bonanza Fanning mill.

Lila Arroyo, Cass City donated many antique kitchen tools, two prairie dresses, 100 lb. Burlap bean bag, 1930's Carom board with canvas pockets and one with net pockets, an American Beauty electric iron and many other items.

Cindy Sanborn, Caro, MI donated in memory of Ernest Layer, a vintage wood level, wood saw handle, shoe stretcher, vintage sickle, wood molding plane, wood block plane and an 8" wood smoothing plane.

Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI donated a 6 foot wood finish mower.

Ted Morgan Family, Snover, MI donated an 1890's anvil.



During school tours the students have the opportunity to sit in the arena of the Barn and look around. Imagine how this makes them feel as they look up at the enormity and beauty of the Barn.

General 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 the right and opportunity to hold office. A membership form can be obtained from our website at thumboctagonbarn.org. Also, when you receive notice that your membership needs to be renewed, please feel free to renew for more than one year and know that our records will reflect your wishes. It is important that you indicate how the money included is to be distributed and the total matches the amount of your check. **Important notice – 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.**

Newsletter

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