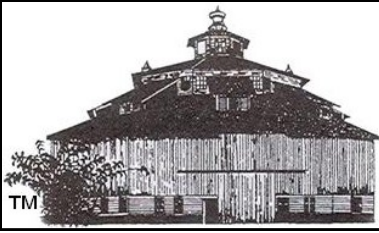


# Thumb Octagon Barn



## 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.*

Summer 2019

### Executive Committee

**President**  
**Martin Kubacki**

**1st Vice President**  
**Dennis Anderson**

**2nd Vice President**  
**Gerald Auten**

**Treasurer**  
**Joan Koch**

**Recording Secretary**  
**Michelle VanHorn**

**Corresponding Secretary**  
**Patti Parker**

**Purdy Home Chair**  
**Marilyn Phillips**

**Museum Chair**  
**Connie Osentoski**

**Grounds & Grain Elevator Chair**  
**Louis Wehrman**

**Barn/Float Chair**  
**Paul Deo**

**Alert Team Chair**  
**Norm Parker**

**Past President**  
**Rose M. Putnam**

**Visit our website**  
**[thumboctagonbarn.org](http://thumboctagonbarn.org)**  
**Facebook**  
**[thumboctagonbarn](https://www.facebook.com/thumboctagonbarn)**

## School Tours 2019

Our mission statement above details that the Barn complex is an educational tool. Well it sure was for the 1,068 students who came through the site on May 8, 9, and 10. The attendance was down a little this year due to the uncertainty of schools making up snow days. However, that did not deter all the fun for those who came. There were 348 chaperons attending along with students and 175 volunteers on site over the 3 day period. Of those, 45 had never volunteered at school tours before. Our volunteers appreciated the lunches provided by **Karen Lenton** and her crew of volunteers.

There were over 25 stations offered to the schools. One of the most popular is the farm animals. This year for the first time **Sierra Schumacher** brought her farm animals. Sierra is the niece of **Bill and Kitty Sampson** who had previously brought their petting zoo for many



years. Sierra helped Bill and Kitty for the past two years and was happy to return on her own. The students enjoyed the wooly goats, the mini-

donkey and horse, "Fat Boy" her steer and a pot belly pig. She had help from **Kaylynn Stanton** (to the left) shown with "Fat Boy." Kaylynn brought her rabbits, which are always a favorite for students to handle and pet.

Sierra (below) commented "I loved to watch the students reactions when they came up to the animals. Some were so open and couldn't wait to pet the



animal where others were very timid or even scared."

## Thumb Octagon Barn Wins Award

The 17th Annual Celebrating Tuscola's Stars award program was held at the Tuscola Technology Center in Caro on April 18, 2019. Over 125 people were in attendance at the event.

Awards are presented in four categories:

Individual, Group, Business and



Above and Beyond. The Thumb Octagon Barn was chosen as the award winner in the Group Category in a field with four other groups. Accepting the award on the far right is **Diane Rapson-Gabil** and **Rose Putnam**. We would like to thank **Nancy Barrios** from Cass City for the nomination.

## Letter from the President

Hi Friends:

Well summer is finally here, we hope. It has been a tough Spring trying to get projects done at the barn. There have been times the Monday crew would have to come back and cut the grass on Tuesday or Wednesday instead. We have been trying to repaint the Schoolhouse and School Museum, but the weather has not been cooperating. Mother Nature always dictates what can be done.

School Tours 2019 was another success. Our thanks

goes out to **Diane Rapson-Gabil** and all the volunteers who helped. A job well done! The 2020 theme will be "Farm Livestock." If you have any thoughts on this theme, please feel free to contact Diane.

The Volunteer/Sponsor Auction/Picnic was a great success. It was the largest with 240 in attendance. The auction was a lot of fun and a nice fundraiser. Thanks again to **Marty** and **David Osentoski** for donating their auctioning services.

A project that was just finished was the landscaping done around

the flag pole, at the sign by the road and on the north side of the garage. **Connie Osentoski** headed up this project with the crew from the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department. They used field stone which was donated by **Jim and Rita Osentoski** of Ubly. Looks great!

Our next regular meeting will be August 27, 2019. It will be held the same night as the last FFD meeting prior to the big event.

Enjoy your summer.

God Bless, Martin Kubacki,  
President

## Spring Clean Up



It takes many hands to get the work done at the One Room School. No job is too big or too small. To the left is **Barb Kirn** writing in



cursive getting ready for School Tours. To the right is **Connie Iwankovitsch** busy at work dusting.

**Beth Brown** on the left and **Connie Klinkman** on the right are also lending a hand to cleaning. **Jack Hill** in the center came to their aid to install the school bell.



Who said men don't do windows! **Dennis Anderson** on the left and **Bill Learman** on the right are proving us wrong, but don't tell their wives.



There is much to do in the Barn. **Bill Thomas** from Silverwood is vacuuming the loft display area.



**Ron & Mae Hoffman** cleaned and prepared the garage that will be used for presentation during School Tours and FFD.



**Betty Woehlert** is ironing vintage clothing on display in the Purdy Home.

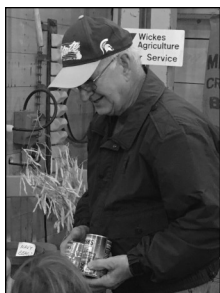


## More School Tours



The hatching of chicken eggs is always a draw. The students could spend hours watching the process. It's truly an amazing experience even for an adult. Above is **Shane Auten** overseeing the eggs.

**Coulson Blair**



has spent many years as an elevator manager and was only too happy to share his experience at the Grain Elevator with students. Coulson on the bottom left is sharing types of beans, which was one of the many examples of the "Food Industry Past and Present" products in the Grain Elevator.

**Dreyden Fletcher**, Sebewaing, is trying out the yoke in the Sugar Shack used to haul maple sap from the woods to be processed.



Dressed as Cora Purdy, **Addy Battel** stepped forward to tell the story of the Octagon Barn with students in the arena of the Barn.



The following donated items that were included in the special bags given to each child attending School Tours at the Octagon Barn.

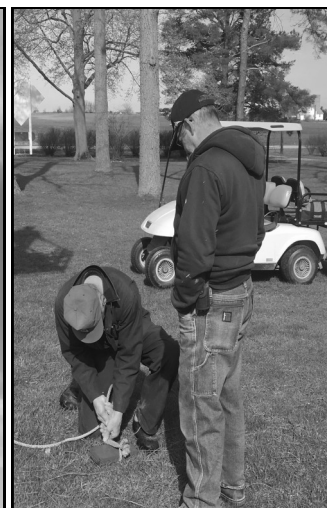
**Tuscola County Extension Office**  
**Dan Lauwers State Senator**  
**Phil Green, State Rep.**  
**Ed Canfield, State Rep.**  
**Laura Cox, State Rep.**  
**Shane Hernandez, State Rep.**  
**Ice Museum of North America**  
**Walthers Farms**



## New Window & Yard Light

**Byron Arnold** (left) chair of the Powerhouse, is showing off the new replacement window on the east side of the Powerhouse.

**Byron** is also on the lift to the immediate right installing a new yard light near the flag pole. Assisting is **Louis Wehrman** with **Paul Deo** looking on pictured to the far right.



## New Kitchen Floor & Lights

Wow, Let There Be Light!

When I walked into the kitchen area of the Munro Building, I was so very pleased by the new look. The new flooring installed by Franco Flooring in Harbor Beach looks great and that's because the new LED lights have been installed by Maurer Electric, Inc. in Bad Axe. The job was completed just before the 4th of July. It's truly amazing what a facelift this gave to the kitchen.



The supplies from the storage rooms were removed during the remodel, which cluttered the Munro Building for a bit. However, due to the efforts of **Tammi Hensley** all is back in place.

## This & That

Only in Michigan can you find someone wearing earmuffs in May! **Tammi Hensley**, our host couple who is from Tennessee, seemed to think it was a little chilly during Spring Clean Up.



## Fall Family Days

Our committee is once again, for the 24th year, hard at work putting the finishing touches on this year's Fall Family Days. Many of the demonstrations from previous years are looking for ways to enhance or change their presentations to make them even better.

With the theme being "The Food Industry-Past and Present", we have something new this year in our demo plot. Pickles are planted and will be picked and run through a pickle sorter by **Terry Keinath** of Reese as they would have been when they came from the field. Our hope is for the potatoes to make it in time to pick during FFD. It has been so wet we just got them planted in late June. We will have returning steam engines, sawing demonstrations, shingle mill with branded commemorative shingles, old engines and tractors, cider pressing, working grain elevator and grist mill. The Blacksmith Shop, Sugar Shack, One

Room School House and Museum will be open for all to see. There will be live animals, spinning and weaving and many exhibits on display in the Barn. The Purdy Home and Garage will be shined up and looking beautiful for all visitors. Happenings and food on the front lawn include Live Music, Fried Donuts, Apple Cider, Homemade Pies and Fresh Churned Ice Cream, Hog Kettle Popcorn and delicious Soft Pretzels.

In the Munro Building on Friday, is the delicious Fish Fry put on by our volunteers. Following this, there will be a Farmer's Breakfast both Saturday and Sunday morning prepared by the **Caro Knights of Columbus** and tasty lunches served throughout both days. Also in front of the Munro Building, bean soup will be served. The best in the Thumb.

The Theme of Food is so fitting in our agricultural setting. The theme tent will feature displays of farm and garden crops

made into food for our tables.

We have always stressed the Family when putting together ideas for this event and we endeavor to have something for all ages. It is the committee's purpose to make this a fun weekend and educational as well. Also, on a final note all FFD chairs have to let **Tori Pine (989-665-2254)** know how many student volunteers they need for their areas. Tori needs to be notified by August 1st so arrangements can be made with the schools.

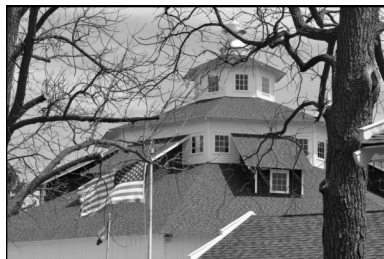
Hope to see all of you July 23, 2019 at 7:00PM in the Munro Building. If you cannot attend the meeting, please volunteer. We Need You All!

**Lisa Geiger and Martin Kubacki**, Co-chairs FFD.

Final meeting before FFDs is August 27, 2019 at 7:00 PM at the Munro Building.

## Site is Open for the Season

**Too Tall (Ron) and Tammi Hensley** are back on site as host couples this summer. **Gayle and Duane Osbourn** stayed on site for a few days and Gayle was busy weeding the flower beds. Mother Nature has provided a wonderful view when the spiera bushes were in full bloom.



The new United States and Michigan flags look spectacular flying against the backdrop of the Barn.

## More Fun at the TEC Meeting

Face Painting isn't just for the kids as evidenced by our neighbor on Richie Road, Mike Mandich (below left)



## Thumb Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting

It was a beautiful day for the 82nd annual Thumb Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting held on site at the Thumb Octagon Barn. Over 500 members were in attendance. President, Louis Wenzlaff, opened the meeting and recognized employees for their role in achieving a safe and successful year. Dallas Braun, Manager, gave highlights of projects for the past year including the new Automated Metering Structure (AMI) system.

The event was well covered in the July/August edition of the Michigan Country Lines magazine that goes out to all 12,255 members.

Activities for all family members on the grounds included lunch, bucket truck rides, barrel train rides, a candy drop, face painting and other family activities. And, of course, tours of the Octagon Barn and buildings on site.

Jewls the Clown, from Midland, is teaching a crowd of family members and a young lady below how to use a "Diablo", a Greek word meaning a cross throw.



### Benefactors

The following made a donation of \$10.00 or more since our last newsletter through June 25, 2019.

Carolyn Baldwin, Vassar, MI

Tom Barton, St. Clair Shores, MI

Ralph & Theresa Bielawski, Fraser, MI

Bernard & Patty Billingsley, Sanford, MI

R. Scott & Ginny Ann Brundage, Columbia, MO

Russell & Carol Fisher, Caro, MI

Harold & Diana Frye, Mayville, MI

Janet Garrett, Troy, MI

Neal J. Hentschl, Harbor Beach, MI

Timothy & Debbie Kubacki, Sebewaing, MI

J. Randy Kursinsky, Midland, MI

Elizabeth Lambert, Kingston, MI

Connie Latuszek, Midland, MI

Ronald & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing, MI

Donald Mosher, Burton, MI

Mike & Drucilla Pisarek, Cass City, MI

Nicholas Posak, Saint Clair, MI

James & Barbara Prill, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

Barbara Prime, Fairgrove, MI

LeRoy Schluckebier, Frankenmuth, MI

Marlene Sieradzki, Deford, MI

Janet Blondell Stahl, Tillomook, OR

Tom Thompson, Caro, MI

Dorothy Warner, Sandusky, MI

Jerry & Barbara Weber, Winter Park, FL

Rose Wunderlich, Leesburg, FL

A Member included the following note with her renewal. Thank you for keeping up the property. I grew up one mile away and lived there for 18 years. Janet Blondell Stahl, Tillomook, OR

### In Memoriam



#### Lyle Krohn, Bad Axe

Lyle and his wife, Phyllis, were original volunteers working to SAVE the OCTAGON BARN.

Excerpt from Spring 1997 Newsletter:

A special thank you for their contribution to the recent barn restoration project.

**Lyle Krohn**, Maurice Evans And Bob Hirn for making additional cuttings and hauling the lumber to the barn site.

Donations in memory of Lyle Krohn were given by Bill & Rose Putnam, Cass City, MI and Margaret Sergeant, Gagetown, MI

### Special Donations

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

Donation in memory of Don Wrobel given by Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI

Owendale Class of 1953 donated in memory of Charles Ricker, a classmate.

Donation in memory of Suzanne Wehrman given by

Terry & Sandra Keinath, Reese, MI

Donation in memory of Richard Armstrong given by Martin & Luci Kubacki, Ubly, MI

Donation in memory of Betty Koch was given by Duey & Karen Holz, Filion, MI

Donation of Hosta for the west side of the garage flowerbed by Roseana Shue, Sebewaing, MI

Donation of John Deere Pedal Tractor for Annual Auction by Steve Gracey, Ulby, MI

### Sylvester Farms Donates Equipment

It took more than Two Men and A Truck to move the generous donation given by the **Sylvester Farms Family** of Fairgrove. Standing in the center of the photo is **Mark Sylvester**. With the help of six volunteers (from left: **Wayne Lenton, Ron Hoffman, Louis Wehrman, Marty Osentoski, Martin Kubacki and Gerald Auten**) and eight trailers, the Friends gained many interesting historical pieces of



equipment from walking plows to horse drawn cultivators, beet pullers and lifters to a reaper, grain binders, a corn binder, a manure spreader, and many, many more items too numerous to mention.

The Sylvesters were recognized at our Volunteer Picnic and Annual Auction. This was their first visit to this event, which they enjoyed very much.



# Volunteer Picnic and Annual Auction

The Volunteer Picnic and Annual Auction was held on Sunday, June 9, 2019. There were 242 people in attendance. **Martin Kubacki** started the event with



a few announcements and then we had a wonderful meal prepared once again by K&K Catering from Unionville.

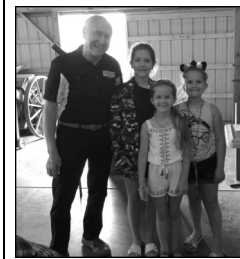
The **Sylvester Farms Family** were recognized for their donation of vintage farm equipment. (see related article on page 5).



**Bryan Hemerline** from the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department was on hand to accept the donation of a power pack leaf blower for the work crew that has been coming out to help set up for School Tours and Fall Family Days. Their assistance has been invaluable for the past few years.



We cannot thank **Dave and Marty Osentoski** enough for their auctioneering services.



They always find a way to make the day entertaining. Assisting at the auction are sisters, **Lauren, Jenna & Jo-sylyn Bartnik**.



**Joan Koch** and **Lisa Britt** above along with **Rose Putnam** (not

pictured) helped to clerk the auction.

**Jack Hill** and **Wayne Lenton** are always



on board to help with the 50-50 raffle. Congratulations to all the winners.

Pictured below is **Dennis Anderson** with the cookie jar raffle. This year the jars were filled with Thumb Octagon



Barn souvenirs.

There were many, many great items up for auction starting with **Gerald Auten's** famous peanut clusters, **Battel's** maple syrup, several cookies, cakes, and pies. Quilts, pictures, outdoor feeders, birds houses, flowers, gift baskets hand-made items by **Bob Wood, Bud Inbody, Ray Caverly, Tammi Hensley and Terry Keinath**. Wow! Don't miss out next year.

We would also like to thank all those that helped the day of the auction and all those members that brought items to auction off and those that purchased items.

## More About the Auction

Pictured below is **Dennis Anderson** with a beautiful quilt donated for the auction.



The cute frog lawn ornament made by **Terry Keinath** out of horseshoes purchased by **Rose Putnam** at the auction found a new friend on a recent rainy day.



## Wanted:

**Boys and girls** from the ages of 9 and up to participate in the Teamwork and Timbers project on Saturday, August 24, 2019.

Learn all about the techniques of timber framing with a hands-on experience.

Cost is \$10.00 per student that covers a sack lunch and materials. Parents are invited to attend and help.

Please call Rose Putnam 989-444-9574

## Flower Beds Renovated on Site



It was quite a job to get this project done. **Martin Ku-backi** is using the backhoe to move the fieldstones donated by **Jim**

& **Rita Osentoski** of Ubly. With the help of the Tuscola County Sheriff's work crew, the stones were put in place. The



idea for this project was spearheaded by **Connie Osentoski**. These flower beds with fieldstones represent the 1920's era flower beds normally

seen on a farm. Don't they look great! There is more to do yet. A new sign is being designed for the front flower bed by the road that now showcases the quilt block.



Look for the new sign soon.



## 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebrated



Friends and relatives of **Wayne and Karen Lenton** gathered Sunday, May

5, 2019, at the Munro Building to help celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary. It was a surprise party. We don't know how Karen did it, but Wayne showed up not dressed to work. Wayne can usually be found most every Monday at the sawmill working on the repair of anything that needs fixing at the Barn. Wayne can fix most anything and most of the time his hands and clothes tell the tale of his efforts. Karen is usually found in the kitchen preparing volunteer lunches. She also manages the care of the kitchen and supplies.

Their daughter, **Diane Michalski**, who is very talented, made their anniversary cake, which



not only looked great, but tasted great, too.

Congratulations Wayne and Karen from your "Friends" at the Thumb Octagon Barn.

## Barn Collections Donated

The Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn were delighted to receive two replica barn collections. **Kay Tuckey** from Frankenmuth wanted to find a good home for these barns.

The Ertl Barn Collection has 13 models which includes the Thumb Octagon Barn. We were included in this collection around 1999.



Please stop in the loft of the Barn to view the collection.



The second collection is "America's Country Barns", which has some very interesting barns.

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

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**Upcoming Events:**  
**Open House Weekend**  
**July 27th & 28th**  
**Teamwork And Timbers**  
**August 24th**  
**Fish Fry-September 6th**  
**Fall Family Days**  
**September 7th and 8th**

**Next Meeting :**

The general membership meeting will be held on August 27, 2019 at the Munro Building on site starting at 7:00 PM  
FFD Meeting will immediately follow the general membership meeting.

**Newsletter**

Database and Labels.....Dave Eichler  
Editing & Mailing.....Margaret Sergeant  
Newsletter Coordinator & Layout.....Rose Putnam  
Photos.....Connie Osentoski & Rose Putnam

**Fall Family Days Raffle 2019**

Members, please look for the annual raffle tickets to arrive by mail soon. We appreciate your continued support of this fundraiser. If you need more tickets, please contact **Joan Koch at 989-325-0041.**

1. **\$500.00 -Donated in Memory of Pat Gibbard and Green Acres Farms, Akron**
2. **Handmade Queen Size Quilt-Donated by Rosemary Quinn**
3. **40" Samsung Smart TV-Donated by \*FOTOB**
4. **\$300.00 –Donated by \* FOTOB**
5. **John Deere Pedal Tractor-Donated by Tri-County Equipment, Sandusky**
6. **\$200.00-Donated in Memory of Pat Gibbard and Green Acres Farms, Akron**
7. **Samsung Tablet-Donated by \*FOTOB**
8. **Case I-H Red Stake Wagon–Donated by Osentoski Farm Equipment-Pigeon and Bad Axe**
9. **Craftsman 6 gal. Air Compressor-Donated by \*FOTOB**
10. **\$150.00 Gift Basket-Donated by Tammy Bliss**
11. **\$100-Menard's Gift Certificate-Donated in Memory of Pat Gibbard and Green Acres Farms, Akron**
12. **\$100.00 – Donated by \*FOTOB (\*Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn)**