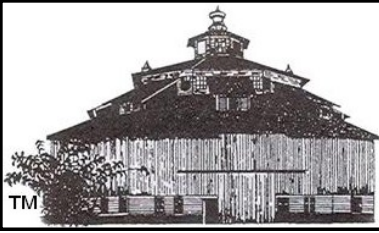


Thumb Octagon Barn News



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.

Spring 2021

Executive Committee

Acting President
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Corresponding
Secretary
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Marilyn Phillips

Museum Chair
Connie Osentoski

Grounds &
Grain Elevator Chair
Louis Wehrman

Barn Co-Chairs
Paul Deo
Norm Parker

Alert Team Chair
Norm Parker

Past President
Rose M. Putnam

Visit our website
thumboctagonbarn.org

Facebook
Thumb Octagon Barn
Agricultural Museum

“Things Turn Out Best for People Who Make the Best of the Way Things Turn Out!”

Acting President’s Message by Dennis Anderson:

As the late great basketball coach, John Wooden said, “Things turn out best for people who make the best of the way things turn out”.

This is the story unfolding with the Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn. We are poised to make the best of the way things turn out in the days ahead. We have things in place. The Reopening Plan has been completed and will be updated as we go forward. Our Tool Box of Covid supplies needed to reopen is ready to go to work. Our Fall Family Days leadership is in good hands. Greg Alexander and Rose Putnam will co-chair the Fall Family Days well aware of the challenges ahead. They have agreed to take on the unprecedented tasks and walk us through the reopening of Fall Family Days. Greg and Rose will lead us forward to make the best of the way things turn out. We cannot ask for anymore from our leadership team and committees. We will take our best shot. John Wooden or any coach would be happy.

We are planning on having Fall Family Days on September 11th, & 12th and the Fish Fry on September 10th well aware that the situation remains very fluid and can change quickly in either direction. We have taken the Pure Michigan Pledge (See related article on page 8) to be safe and follow the necessary protocols. We work closely with our Health Department each year and it will be no different this year. We are licensed by the State of Michigan and have a permit to operate and we are inspected each year by the

Health Department. This is a normal procedure and will continue.

The decision to proceed with Fall Family Days comes down to two questions. First will we have the volunteers to cover the event? Without volunteers willing and comfortable to work the event following stay safe protocols like wearing a mask, we will not be able to hold the event. Our leadership team is in the process of doing an assessment to answer this question.

Second it comes down to capacity limits! How many people will be allowed to attend? We are a large event that draws well over 15,000 people. We have large and small indoor and outdoor venues. How many do we need to consider to stay safe? The numbers in capacity limits will be a major factor in what we do going forward.

As we approach September these two questions have to be satisfied for us to continue and hold the event. We can make adjustments to what we offer but it comes down to volunteers and capacity limits.

This is taking our best shot. We will make the best for the way things turn out. Progress will be posted on our website and Facebook page. If you ask us if we are planning to have Fall Family Days, the answer is yes but it boils down to volunteers and the capacity limits allowed.

Thank you for following us and reading this. We want to have the event and it is our hope that everything falls into place.

Site To Reopen on May 15, 2021

Based on current COVID regulations, we are able to reopen the site this year. Plans are made to follow previous year's schedules **opening on May 15th and closing on September 30th.**

Regular tour schedules will be the same. We will be open on Wednesday through Saturday from 11am to 5pm. Sundays from 12pm to 4pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Ron "Too Tall" and Tammi Hensley will be returning as a host couple. Willow and Lotto (their cats rescued at the Barn.)

(An error was made in identifying Lotto as Burrito in a previous newsletter. We are sorry.) will also be coming back "home". They are always happy to come back to Michigan

where it's a little cooler than Florida and help their "Friends" at the Thumb Octagon Barn.

The Friends are dedicated to accepting the challenge to different things, because we know that we have our dedicated members, volunteers and communities to support us. However, due to the current conditions, we are not planning other activities until further notice.



Spring Clean Up Cancelled

A decision was made to cancel the annual "Spring Clean Up" event usually held on the first Saturday of May.

With the cancellation of the annual School Tours, a new plan was put in place to get the site ready for reopening. Fourteen volunteers signed up to help clean the barn. All volunteers will work in shifts on different days for social distancing purposes.

Much of the clean up is done at this time.

A note from Dennis Anderson: A big "Thank You" to the "Sunshine Boys" **Norm Parker, Jack Hill, Lew Martin, Lee Sowden and Byron Arnold** for their excellent work in the barn. Now I know what they are smiling about all the time. Good Job Sunshine Boys. Very good job."

Most of the yard work has also been done with the help of the wonderfully, warmer Spring weather.

Museum Donations

Johnny Berhaar, Fairgrove, MI-Gear reduction box and Grain/Barn Elevator-Man Lift

Jim Bradley, Saginaw, MI-Pitch in beet loader

Gayre Cardis, Unionville, MI-Wood pulley and bushings

Henry Lance, Pigeon, MI-Corn binder

Norma Rabideau Family-American Woodcock plate

Jerri Sierocki, Saginaw, MI-Portable, handmade toolbox & lawn mower manual

Terry Spencer, Fairgrove, MI-Treated posts

Kim Strunz, Caro, MI-Many, many items for the house and schoolhouse, including vintage toys

Donation received for House Repairs

We are happy to report that a very generous Anonymous Donation has been given for repairs to the Purdy Home. This is perfect timing to spruce up the house as we look forward to celebrating the 100th birthday of the Purdy Home.

We are very grateful and thankful for this very generous donation.

From Cora Purdy’s diaries, we know that on May 19, 1922 the Purdy’s moved from their home in Gagetown to the Mud Lake Estate.

Cora wrote, “First nights lodging in our new home. All rested well.”

An extensive list has been made of all the items in the house that need some attention. We are very fortunate that the Purdy Home is still in great shape for being 100 years old. As with anyone’s home, there are always necessary repairs to be made on a regular basis.

The house will be closed when the repair work begins. Look for updates and photos on our Facebook page and website.

Gagetown Hardware Plates



A recent donation given by the Norma Rabideau family of a beautiful plate with a pair of American Woodcocks (photo on right) led to questions that we hope our readers will help us with. Does anyone recall why the plates were “given” to customers of the Gagetown Hardware and what years this practice took place? The plate on the left is dated 1928 and says Compliments of Gagetown Hardware. The plate on the right has no date.



The plate on the left says Compliments of Gagetown Hardware Co. and the plate on the on the right says Compliments Palmer Bros. We would love to add this story to our historical records.

Please contact Rose Putnam:
989-444-9574



On-Line Puzzles

Are you a Dissectologist? No it's not a person who dissects frogs. It's a person who loves to put puzzles together. Did you know that people in the United States are putting together puzzles in large numbers during the pandemic to improve their mental health? Putting a jigsaw puzzle together has many health benefits and can help reduce stress and improve memory. Working on puzzles involves active brain work, sometimes even strategy. Puzzling is engrossing because it taps into an ambition to challenge oneself and finish a project in order to feel a sense of accomplishment. It can be a solitary activity or a collaborative activity with someone else.

The idea came to us through the Caseville Historical Museum who is posting puzzles of their museum on their Facebook page.

So we decided to try it out, too. We have been posting two puzzles every week since January 25, 2021 and will continue until May 10, 2021 on both our website and our Facebook page. (The majority of the photos were taken by Connie Osentoski. Thank you, Connie!) The traffic on both sites has increased considerably and we hope this activity will generate interest in who we are and what we do.

On March 1st, a Teamwork and Timbers group photo was posted. Participating in the August 2019 event was Ian, Isaac and Owen Sorenson. These are the sons of Jared Sorenson, who was an instructor of the program, and Mom, Kassy Sorenson. In the



photo below is Isaac who is totally focused on putting the puzzle together, and his younger brother, Owen, who is looking at the camera (he photo bombed his brother.) Missing from the photo is brother, Ian. Jared shared that he had not heard of these on-line puzzles prior to a phone call to let him know the puzzle was posted. He said "It's a great way to be connected to the Thumb Octagon

Barn project during this pandemic when we can't be there on site and also recalling and enjoying former activities."

Please take a few minutes to have some fun. There is a timer at the bottom of each puzzle. Challenge your friends to a contest and see who is the first one done.

Stump Puller-Help Wanted

We would like to put out a plea for more help. We received this stump puller, but no one knows how to put it together! Can you help with this puzzle?

Please call our main phone line and leave a message . 989-665-0081.



New Barn Co-Chair

A new partnership has been formed. Paul Deo and Norm Parker will now be the Co-Chairs of the Octagon Barn Committee. Paul took on the role as chair in April of 2018. Caring for the Barn is a huge responsibility. The old saying goes-"Two heads are better than one."

2021 Theme-Farm Family Life

Our theme for 2021 is Farm Family Life. There are so many things that come to mind when you think of a Farm Family. One of the first things is the hard work ethic that is instilled in all members, whether male or female, young or old. They can always be counted on to show up and get

the job done, no matter the weather or the hours to put in. Memories of old are of animals, good hearty food, neighborly visits, caring for and visiting elderly relatives, long hours, worry of weather, insects, price of crops at harvest, going to church every Sunday no matter what, growing a garden and hoeing weeds, picking potatoes, can-

ning vegetables and fruits, picking stones, ignoring the smells, having stronger arms than the other kids, running faster and best of all, driving tractors and driving a truck before your friends.

Our feature tent at FFD will be full of Farm Family "Life".

Fall Family Days is Coming Back

We have heard from many of our volunteers, visitors and vendors who are so pleased to hear the good news.

We would like to welcome, Greg Alexander and Rose Putnam as Co-Chairs of our 25th Annual Event. Greg has been a volunteer in many capacities over the past 20 years. He first came to the Barn with his daughter at School Tours as a parent chaperone and hasn't left since. Most recently, he has co-chaired the theme tent with Tammy Grifka (photo on the right) and is always on site for School Tours. He brings along his leadership skills from

volunteering as a Sanilac Cty. Fair Board Member and also for the



Knights of Columbus in Sandusky. He is very adept at many other things, such as carpentry. This past winter, he spent many hours in his workshop constructing new benches in anticipation of having big crowds at FFD.



Things may look different at FFD this year, but we are moving forward and planning on having most activities return, especially the flea market vendors. There may be changes to scheduling and the need to purchase pre-paid tickets, so please visit our website or Facebook page before you attend.

Something new this year will be a program with "Barnyard Puppet Friends" from Mullin Entertainment.

Look for more updated information in our newsletter in July.

Raffle Prizes

Sherry Kappen, Chair of the Raffle Committee, has been busy getting together prizes for the annual raffle. The raffle will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2021 at the Thumb Octagon Barn during

Fall Family Days. If for some reason, FFD is not held, the drawing will still take place on site in front of the Barn. There are 10 prizes, including the first prize of \$500, two additional cash prizes, an afghan, two

handmade quilts, the ever popular John Deere pedal tractor and I-H stake wagon, a gift basket, and two lawn chairs. All prizes have been donated. Please look for more information by mail in June.

Fall Family Days Sponsorship Opportunity

Enclosed in the newsletter is a Fall Family Days Sponsorship form. We have the same three offers as in previous years.

\$50.00 Bronze Sponsor (Plaque, Listed at site and in Barn Newsletter)

\$150.00 Silver Sponsor (All of above plus Listed

in Fall Family Days Brochures.)

\$250.00 Gold Sponsor (All of the above plus Recognition in Advertising plus two passes to FFD'S and an invitation for 2 to the 2022 Annual Volunteer Banquet.)

Please consider a sponsorship. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Geiger. 989-553-6048.

Benefactors

The following have made a donation of \$10.00 and more since our last newsletter through April 5, 2021. We gratefully appreciate the support of so many Friends of the Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum. Thank you!

Agri Valley Communications,
Pigeon, MI

Patricia Allen, Deford, MI

Raymond & Linda Borowicz,
Alma, MI

Beth Brown, Sebewaing, MI

Robert J. Brundage, Jefferson City,
MO

Buchholz Trucking, Pigeon, MI

Ruby Burk, Cass City, MI

Louise Buehrly/George Kueuzovich,
Palmetto. FL

Caro Rental, Caro, MI

Ray Christie, Freeland, MI

Clemco Printing, Bad Axe, MI

Gerald Deeg, Sebewaing, MI

Robert & Linda Deeg, Sebewaing,
MI

Robert & Charlotte Dennis,
Davison, MI

Helen & John Dombruski,
Clinton Twp., MI

Mary M. Downing, Gagetown, MI

Paul & Linda Elandt, Port Hope, MI

Ken Endersbe, Bay City, MI

Fred & Faith Fahrner, Owendale,
MI

John & Deb Forshee, Caro, MI

Jack & Sandy Fraylick, Washington,
MI

Robert & Elizabeth Garner,
Cadillac, MI

Melvin Gay, Saginaw, MI

Barbara Hatfield, Swartz Creek, MI

Ronald & Tammi Hensley, Lehigh
Acres, FL

Marie Hobart & Bill Kadish,
Worcester, MA

Barbara Hutchinson, Cass City, MI

Orrin (Bud) & Mary Inbody, Snover,
MI

Douglas & Lori Jackson, Midland,
MI

Joe & Debra Jenness, Cass City, MI

Tom M. & Jane S. Johnson,
Williamston, MI

Kelly & Co. Realty, Cass City, MI

Brian Klemmer, Bad Axe, MI

Don & Sharon Kuester, Farwell, MI

Allan & Lorraine Kunderger,
Sebewaing, MI

Ron Laeder, Caro, MI

Liz Lambert, Kingston, MI

Connie Latuszek, Midland, MI

Ronald & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing,
MI

Steve & Cathy Macalpine, Auburn,
MI

James Mackay, Kalamazoo, MI

Susan Madonia, Sterling Hgts., MI

Wally & Chris Marston, Snover, MI

Beth McDonald, Bad Axe, MI

Harvey McIntyre, Ubly, MI

Timothy & Debbie McMurtrie,
Yale, MI

Daniel Mobley, Port Austin, MI

Mortimer Lumber, Brian Lasceski,
Bad Axe, MI

Tom & Sue Muto, Midland, MI

Marie A. Myszkier, Albuquerque,
NM

Robert & Wanda Nelson,
Hale, MI

Chuck & Scharron Patterson,
Lapeer, MI

Anton & Marilyn Peters,
Cass City, MI

George & LaVonne Pettinger,
Snover, MI

Barbara Prime, Fairgrove, MI

Gretchen Rodammer, Coleman,
MI

Robert Rolston, Gagetown, MI

Dick Roth, Caseville, MI

Patricia Sawyer, Lapeer, MI

Evelyn Schadd, Fillion, MI

David & Donna Sting, Unionville,
MI

Gary & Dolores Sutherby,
Leonard, MI

Kenneth Sweeney, Ubly, MI

Allen & Gloria Thorsby,
Colorado Springs, CO

Valley Collision, Ubly, MI

Paul & Michelle Van Horn,
Deford, MI

Bruce & Linda Walz, West
Chicago, IL

Larry & Suzanne Wegner, Pigeon,
MI

Marvin & Mary Wilcox, Clifford,
MI

Tim & Julie Wilczak, Deford, MI

Special Donations

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

Donation in memory of Richard Fleming given by Evelyn Schadd, Fillion, MI

Several donations given by Buchholz Trucking for cutting logs at the Thumb Octagon Barn's sawmill.

Donation in memory of Norma J. Coon given by Luke & Nancy Bierlein, Reese, MI

Donation in memory of Dorothea Garrison given by Ron & Arloia Lutz, Sebewaing, MI

Donation in memory of Marion Walz given by Lloyd Walz, Vassar, MI

Richard & Vera Wrobleski, Sebewaing, MI made a donation in memory of twin sister Gertrude Hilbrandt who enjoyed our musical shows and Bill Brasgalla, Richard's musical buddy with the Lonesome Mountain Boys. They loved bringing their style of entertainment to the Barn. The Barn needs to be OPEN."

Donation in memory of Lowell McDonald given by Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI

Donation in memory of Lorraine Bieri, Caseville given by Nancy Barrios, Cass City, MI

Donation in memory of Dan Toner given by Steve & Brenda Adsmond, Fremont, MI

Donation in memory of Ron & Marge Stange given by Mary Ann Hirn, Cass City, MI

Donation "to help with any expenses to keep the Friends going and hope you can open in the Fall" given by Bonnie Gaeth, Owendale, MI.

Donation in memory of Donna Stock Schember given by Owendale Class of 1953.

Donation in memory of our parents, Rose & Carl Gustafson & June & Harold Weinrich was given by Darlene & Jerry Weinrich, West Branch, MI

Donation given in memory of Lowell McDonald by his wife, Beth, Bad Axe, MI

David & Kathleen Eichler, Pigeon, MI have donated the materials needed to mail our newsletters since our very first letter in January of 1995. Thank you.

Friends of the
THUMB OCTAGON BARN
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GAGETOWN, MI 48735-0145
989-665-0081

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**Why Adopt the
Pure Michigan Pledge?**

**To help keep our communities
and visitors healthy from
COVID-19.**

**We are two mighty peninsulas,
but we are One Pure Michigan.
By coming together, the travel
industry can prevent the spread
of COVID-19.**

Next Meeting :

The Executive Committee meetings will be held the second Tuesday of each month at a location to be determined monthly.
All other regular membership, FFD and School Tours meetings are postponed until further notice.

Newsletter

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

We Have Adopted the Pure Michigan Pledge

We pledge to follow all effective Executive Orders and CDC guidelines,
and provide guidelines for you to practice as well.

WEAR A MASK: We pledge to wear face coverings and ask all visitors to wear masks in appropriate areas.

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING: We pledge to limit capacity and help you respect the six-foot rule.

WASH YOUR HANDS: We pledge to provide soap and sanitizer for employees (volunteers) and customers.

KEEP THINGS CLEAN: We pledge to clean high-touch surfaces and high-traffic areas.

USE CARDS: We pledge to reduce contact and accept credit and debit cards whenever possible.

IF YOU'RE SICK, STAY HOME: We pledge to ensure our staff is healthy and welcome you back when you feel better.