

JULY 9-16, 2020

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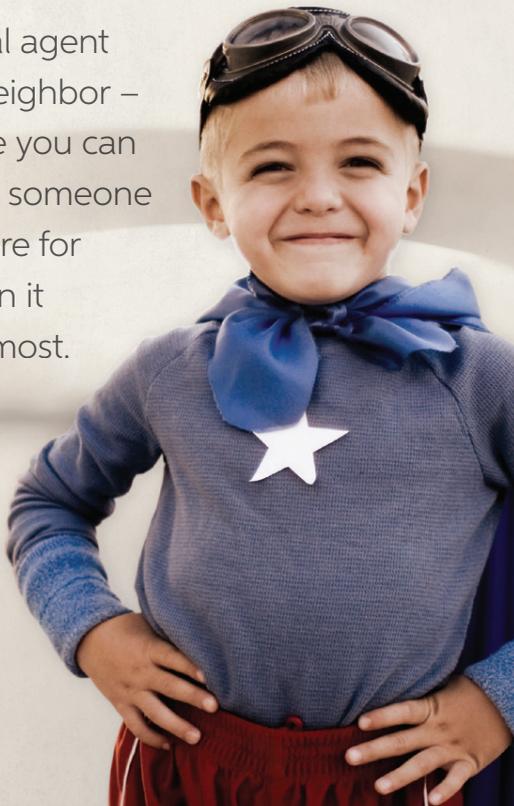
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• PTW photo by Jim Johnson

WELCOME TO PENTWATER

Jack and I have lived near Pentwater since 1956, and are originally from Shelby. Jack had quarter horses that he enjoyed working with, and he wanted to be able to take the horses to shows. He decided, after much discussion with me, to buy four horse trailers to sell, which then became Jack's Trailer Sales at our home north of Pentwater. We eventually progressed into travel trailers, and as the business grew, we needed more land. We purchased the property next to our home where our business is now. More than 50 years later we are still serving RVs.

I want to welcome everyone to the Pentwater area. It has been a pleasure knowing all of the business owners and customers from all over the country. Be sure to visit the many shops in Pentwater, and if you have an RV, stop in and browse in our store.

Norme Brown

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PENTWATER EVENTS UPDATE

Thursday, July 9

• Farmers Market, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Village Green, come see the offerings of the market, which features the best products our local farmers have to offer.

• Don VanZile Memorial Boater Safety course, 8 a.m. to noon, Pentwater Yacht Club, This is a two day training class, held at the Pentwater Yacht Club

For registration or information – contact any Pentwater Sportfishing Director or Oceana County Marine Deputy, Tim Simon, at 231-873-6771.

This annual event started in 1998, and is named in

honor of long-time supporter of the training event, Don VanZile. Officer Simon has instructed this class for years, and notes, "Michigan Law requires individuals born after June 30, 1996 to have this certificate to operate a boat powered by a motor of more than six horsepower and to operate a jet ski. The individual, if born after December 31, 1978, must meet certain other conditions including having the boating safety certificate and to carry it on-board."

Friday, July 10

• Don VanZile Memorial Boater Safety course, 8 a.m. to noon, Pentwater Yacht Club, This is a two day training class, held at the Pentwater Yacht Club

Saturday, July 11

• Teach a Kid Youth Event - CANCELLED

• Pentwater Ensign Sailboat Races, 11:45 a.m.

to 12:45 p.m., Pentwater Yacht Club

• 56th Annual Fine Arts and Crafts Fair - CANCELLED

Sunday, July 12

• Live Blues & Jazz 6-10 p.m., Gull Landing, 438 S. Hancock St.

Enjoy the lake view on the deck while you tap your feet or dance to the Live Music featuring spectacular Jazz and Blues.

Monday, July 13

• Farmers Market, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Village Green, come see the offerings of the market, which features the best products our local farmers have to offer.

• Monday Night Rides, 7 p.m., every week through Monday, August 31. Those interested in joining should meet on the north side of the Village Green at 7 p.m. and masks are required during gathering, but not during riding. Riders are to

meet in groups of ten, separated by a bike length, and when ten riders are present, someone will be asked to form the next group of ten. Ride Night is put on by the Friends of the Pentwater Hart Trail, and welcomes donations.

Tuesday, July 14

• Comedy, Village Pub, 9-11 p.m., 347 S. Hancock St., 231-869-4626.

Wednesday, July 15

• Ensign Sailboat Races, 5 p.m., Pentwater Yacht Club.

• Live Blues & Jazz 6-10 p.m., Gull Landing, 438 S. Hancock St.

Thursday, July 16

• Farmers Market, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Village Green, come see the offerings of the market, which features the best products our local farmers have to offer.

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SERVICE AND REPAIR WITH THE UTMOST CARE

GREG AND BARB BROWN KEEP THE JTS RV FAMILY TRADITION GOING

BY BARBARA GOSSELAR
PTW WRITER

Camping has become the thing to do for summer vacation given COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, and JTS RV, located at 7222 S. Pere Marquette Highway in Pentwater, is primed to make sure that RV owners have everything they need to make it happen. With people not flying and looking for outdoor activities for their vacations, COVID-19 has actually been a shot in the arm for JTS RV's business this summer, even though they didn't open until May. The RV business is treated as essential under the restrictions, because people actually live in their RV's full time, and the propane bottle fill offered is also considered essential.

For those with long memories, JTS RV was originally operated as Jack's Trailer Sales, and has been in business for over 55 years. Current owner Greg Brown, who operates the business with his wife Barb, shares that he was only 2 years old when his dad, Jack Brown, started off with a few horse trailers, pick-up top covers and some smaller trailers in 1964. The business started at the neighboring house, and smaller brands of trailers like Holiday Ramblers, Shasta and Coachman were sold. "My dad was into registered quarter horses," he says, "and that's how he ended up with horse trailers. After that we got into snowmobiles, motorcycles, lawn mowers, snowblowers – selling and repairing all of these."

In 1974, when the oil embargo hit, they had a lot of trailers that they couldn't sell, because the shortage of gasoline adversely affected the business. Jack's wife, Yvonne, went back to work as a registered nurse, and Jack just toughed it out over the next five years, doing anything he could to stay afloat. "He tried everything," Greg recounts. They did a lot of mobile home work during that time – roofs, floors, doors and windows, and then in the early 80s they started manufacturing specialized units for the oil fields.

"We built the trailers from the ground up," Greg recalls. "These were special use trailers for people in the oil fields that either worked on the rigs or tested the rig as it was working. We had trailers that we built that had all the high dollar equipment in them that hooked up to the rig, and they had a specialized guy who got all the information about what happened as they were drilling



the well." That business was called Ja-Tra-Sa (short for Jack's Trailer Sales). While some of these trailers were for people who lived there, most were office-type units or logging units for the guy who ran the drilling operation. There were special devices to hook up to the generators and the water supply, so when they were unhooked from power and water, the units totally drained out so they didn't freeze up and the units didn't require maintenance between moves. According to Greg, "The oil fields were all Michigan-based, with Kalkaska serving as the center for the oil drilling and exploration in Michigan." Then, because there was cheap fuel again and environmental concerns became prominent, oil drilling was scaled back, and this business dried up for Ja-Tra-Sa.

Ever flexible, Jack's Trailer Sales shifted into the mobile home business. "At the time we went into mobile homes, there were just as many mobile home parks as there are now, but there were less people living on parcels of land where they built their own houses. Mobile homes were considered affordable housing at the time," Greg says. "In the 80's and 90's, during the down years, Dad partnered with another guy and let him have a piece

of land out here to put his office on and sell his mobile homes. Jack's Trailer Sales got into the maintenance. We put new roofs on them, and during the years of heavy snow when mobile homes caved in, we would go and completely redo the roof structure and rebuild." Eventually, Mason and Oceana Counties started zoning mobile homes out of the equation, and profitability declined with too many people in the business. JTS RV does very little with mobile homes anymore, though they still sell parts for them, including doors, hard-to-find faucets and tubs -- parts that are different from what you can buy at the big box stores.

Today's business at JTS RV is RV parts and service, and their main thing is being the largest supply store for RV parts in Western Michigan. "We specialize in hard-to-find parts, do some parts ordering, and we have an online catalogue," Barb emphasizes. "We do some mail-order, but we really like to have our customers come and see us." "If you don't have it, you can't sell it," Greg adds. "If you have to order it, people will do that themselves. People like to have stuff in their hand when they walk out." Greg and Barb have been managing the business for the last 20 years, with Barb doing the secretarial and bookkeeping work, as well as running the parts store with Greg's mom, Yvonne, who is still there every day at age 87. His dad, Jack, passed away three years ago.

The name of the business was changed from Jack's Trailer Sales to JTS RV because there were four to five other businesses called Jack's Trailer Sales in the United States, and all of them got their parts and equipment from the same vendors. As a result, mixed up orders

were constant. The local Jack's Trailer Sales knew they had to do something to distinguish themselves from the others, so they changed the name to JTS RV based on the initials of the original business.

Since the RV business started really kicking in, JTS RV gets customers from all over the nation, many of whom wait to get all their work done when they get here to Michigan. With so many campgrounds within a 30-mile radius, Greg notes that the business has grown.

Greg proudly declares that JTS RV is built on its reputation. "I like to think we treat everybody the way I'd want to be treated," he says. "We try to be as fair as we can. If someone has a question, they can come here. We help the DIY fixer who wants to fix their RV themselves. We try to give them good information and then when they need something they come back here and buy it. They know they're going to get a fair shake. A fair deal for a fair price."

The business, like so many others, has had to change with the times. Greg explains that technology in the RV field is moving so fast, but the reliability is not keeping up. "The way of today is to think of something new to sell to the public so they'll sell their old RV and buy a new one," Greg observes. "It used to be that you bought a trailer and kept it for 15 years. Now people buy trailers like they buy automobiles -- keep it for a year or two and sell it, and go from one payment to the next. The pattern is that most folks start small and go all the way up to the big RV's, and then they start going right back on down, because the smaller units are simpler to take care of. The more

• CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Photos: On the cover, Barb and Greg Brown, owners of JTS RV, stand outside the front door of their business. Opposite page, the Browns took over the business, from Greg's parents, Jack and Yvonne Brown, who started it as Jack's Trailer Sales in 1964. This page, Greg sits behind the wheel of his service vehicle, as more than half of their repair business is done at their customers' locations.



This page, Greg Brown is at his desk at JTS RV. His parents started the business when he was only 2 years old. Opposite page, from left, Greg's mother Yvonne, and his wife Barb, stand next to him at the busy front counter. At 87, Yvonne is still at JTS RV every day.

items you have, the more trouble you have. Technology is great until it doesn't work," Greg says.

As an example, he describes a small unit he has on the lot right now, with features that are high tech but low production. It has a refrigerator and maybe only 2,000 of that model were ever sold, so when it doesn't work, you have to figure out what to do. Even calling the manufacturer is not a surefire way to determine how to fix it – the manufacturer is only able to say what will likely work. As Barb explains, "We can only say we'll attempt to fix your problem. Greg has worked on units for so long, from appliances to restructure, and he is very knowledgeable. But everything now is controlled by computer circuitry, so it may take more than one try to figure out a solution."

Greg concurs that the issue is that everything is now automated -- plumbing, roofing, flooring, sidewalls, appliances, steps – everything. Now, he explains, there is touch screen control for everything (and Barb adds remote controls as well), which may be a step in the wrong direction. "While you used to be able to chase a wiring system down, and if you understood how it runs, you could fix it, this is not true with everything touch screen., and finding the issue is more complicated."

Greg has taken some training, but he has learned most of what he knows by doing. "I'm a problem solver my whole life," he reports. "I look at something and figure it out. A lot of our work is simply hands-on, and I learn something new every day." In this regard he bemoans the fact that our educational system does not do enough

to teach kids to work with their hands, making it hard to find good help for the business.

About 40 percent of the repair work done for the business is done on-site, where there are four service bays, including one that is 75 feet long with 16 foot ceilings so any RV can be pulled in there. JTS RV does a lot of roof repair and replacement, sidewall caulking, ("RV's live and die by their caulking and sealants," Greg says), air conditioning and refrigerator replacement and service, water heaters, appliance repair, awning installation and repair and slide repair. Again, Greg and Barb comment on the rise of automation. Awnings are now actually designed to retract during certain wind speeds, so there are more ways the mechanism can go wrong, and if an awning won't retract, a technician is needed to get it back in. In addition to general repair work, JTS RV also does work for insurance companies, repairing wind damage, road damage and water damage.

The remaining 60 percent of repair work is on the road. "Seasonal campers are a big asset to us," Greg notes, "because they're the kind of customer that you can build a relationship with. We do work for people we may never see. They call and say their water heater isn't working, and they leave a key and pay by credit card." But the business is short of workers due to COVID-19, and work does get backed up. "We can only take on what we can keep up with," he says, "though it's nice to have that kind of demand." Barb adds that seasonal campers often require storage, which JTS can provide. In fact, they will deliver, level and lock a stored unit in place.

Further, both Greg and Barb note that many businesses that sell new RV units don't want to take care of them after they're sold and have a hard time keeping up on just the warranty let alone service. "They don't want them back to fix," Barb says. Though Greg admits, "The service aspect of the business is a headache business. It requires being flexible with the schedule changing three or four times a day, because when a call comes in, you have to grasp the business and take what's available, and somehow fill in the other things that need doing as you can." Nevertheless, he adds, "It's not easy, but it is also what keeps us going."

The flexibility to change with the times is one of the reasons JTS RV has successfully stayed in business. Another reason is their relationships with customers. "We are still Jack's Trailer Sales to a lot of people though we changed the name. We are very much a word of mouth business, and we have our JTS Family - our regulars -- that we consider like family, and we've worked with them for many years."





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TACOS FOR THE TRAIL

While the pandemic sweeping the nation has caused the cancellation of many events, work toward the creation of a bicycle and pedestrian trail from Pentwater to Hart has continued behind the scenes.

On Saturday, June 27, the Friends of the Pentwater-Hart Trail hosted a Tacos for the Trail fundraiser on Pentwater's Village Green. With support from the Starting Block in Hart, tacos were available for a minimum suggested donation of \$10.

The guided, short bicycle ride departed from Second Street on the north side of the village green at 1 p.m. and wound through the village. This short ride was open to all ages and abilities. Donations for the ride portion, if not staying for tacos, were accepted.

Social distancing and masks were required while obtaining tacos.

All proceeds from the event went toward construction of the Pentwater-Hart Trail. The proposed trail begins with (already completed) paved shoulders leaving Pentwater to the south and across Longbridge Road. A multi-use trail be constructed in right-of-way along Wayne Road to Harrison, Harrison east to 72nd Avenue and along 72nd Avenue. It will then join with the proposed Safe Routes to School section near Hart Public Schools and will connect to the north end of the William Field



• PTW photos by Jim Johnson

Hart-Montague Trail. The paved trail would be separated from the road's edge by a safety buffer.

The goal of the Pentwater-Hart Trail Committee, founded in fall 2015, is to raise \$4.2 million, most of which will be derived from grants. To preserve and maintain the Pentwater-Hart Trail, the committee has created a "Friends" group whose volunteer members currently work on creation of the trail and in the future, will maintain the trail to the safety standards of the appropriate government agencies. Funds raised in excess of the goal shall be placed in a reserve fund and shall be used solely for trail maintenance.

Anyone interested in becoming a "Friend of the Pentwater-Hart Trail" may find a membership form on Pentwaterharttrail.com



PENTWATER POLITICS

News from the Village:

In the last couple of weeks, a plan for reopening the Pentwater Township Library during the time of COVID-19 restrictions was approved by the Library Board, and the reopening has commenced in phases, with reduced hours.

During Phase 1, the Library staff returned to the building to learn how to deliver Library services during the time of COVID restrictions, in a manner that will keep both staff and patrons safe.

Phase 2 started on June 22, continuing until July 3, to enable patrons to check out Library materials and staff to collect materials that patrons have been using for the last 3 months. During this time, the staff is providing curbside service, by appointment only, during limited hours from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.

On July 6, Phase 3 began, and curbside services continued, but with new days and times: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and then from 3:30-6:30 p.m. This phase will continue indefinitely, with more information provided as it is determined it is safe to reopen in additional ways. The Library staff will be working at other times when

they are not doing curbside services, as all materials must be quarantined and then cleaned, checked in and re-shelved. The goal is to get as many returns back to the Library as possible and enable patrons to check out new materials.

Appointments for curbside service can be made during the curbside service times by calling the Library at 231-869-8581, sending an email to librarian @pentwaterlibrary.org, or by sending a text to Gabbie at 231-244-2881.

Library materials can be selected by going to the website at www.pentwaterlibrary.org and selecting "catalog," where you click and then click again, until you see the catalog page load. Every item is categorized as "in" or "checked out," as indicated on the right side of the screen.

In addition to checking out or returning Library materials, some services are offered by phone. Patrons can update expired cards, have new cards issued, obtain or change account information and get help of the Library's e-resources such as eBooks and audiobooks.

According to Library Director Mary Barker, e-materials are being used a lot more during this time. There are 2 different ways to obtain these materials. Overdrive or UpNorth Digital offers eBooks and audiobooks for all ages and even some movies. In addition, Rbdigital makes over 37,000 recorded books and over 1,000 magazine titles

available through its app, and they are available on demand so patrons do not have to wait for them. Available magazines include crafting, fishing, sailing, hunting, medical and others, and if you are a cook or a knitter, you can print off the site. The app can be loaded onto a smartphone by going to the Library's website at online resources, and it will guide you through the process, or help is also available on the phone or curbside.

Finally, although the drop box on the wall of the Library building has been closed because books drop directly to the area where employees work, a large freestanding drop box will be installed near the bike rack sometime before July 4, and this will allow for collection of books even when the Library is closed.

The Library staff is eager to reconnect with its patrons but, obviously, its first priority is the safety and wellbeing of staff and patrons. With this in mind, protocols from the Centers for Dis-

ease Control and OSHA are being followed, including wearing of masks and social distancing. According to Library Director Mary Barker, the phased reopening has been phenomenal, and the Library has received many materials back that have been checked out for the last three months. In addition, patrons are excited about being able to check out new materials and are cooperating with the plan by wearing masks and gloves and honoring the appointment system.

"I just talked to a woman who saw the 'curbside' sign and stopped to ask how it works," Barker says. "She is a long-time user of the library and was thrilled to be able to get her reading materials. It is reassuring to see services that we've always had continuing on, even though it's a little different than it's been in the past."

*By Barbara Gosselar,
PTW Magazine*

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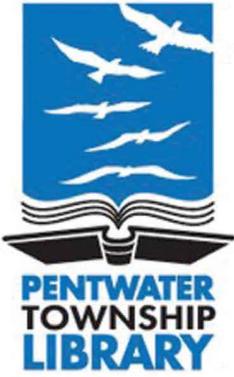
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PETS OF PENTWATER *with Mary Beth Crain*

Featuring: Anna and Jim Mize's cat, Sydney J. Mize

His name is Sydney J. Mize, and he's a rescue cat who's found paradise thanks to the loving hearts of Anna and Jim Mize. Many of you know Anna, the president of L.A.S.S.I.—Local Animal Shelter Support, Inc. As she tells it,

"We had just lost our cat, Tom Thumb—he got his name because he was one of those polydactyls with an extra thumb. We had Tom for 20 years, and he passed away a year ago this April. Of course it was a great loss.

"I was walking dogs at the shelter, and there was this little cat they were keeping in the garage, because the main shelter was full. It had food and a litter box, but it always hid behind the file cabinets. You could just barely see it, hiding back there, and no amount of coaxing could bring it out.

"One day in September, I'd gone into the garage to get kitties for an adoption event and this little guy—the shelter named him Lance—suddenly appeared and started weaving in and out between my legs. 'You're the Garage Kitty!' I said. I picked him up and he purred and purred. He'd finally gotten used to his surroundings and had become socialized."

Anna decided to take Lance home, "for the weekend." Uh huh. "I brought him home and set him down and that was it," she laughs. Of course, Lance had to get the approval of Anna's husband, Jim, but that was hardly a problem. Not only is Jim equally passionate about animals, but Lance took an immediate shine to him. "He's Jim's cat," Anna says. "Oh, he loves me too. But he sleeps with Jim."

So how did Lance become Sydney?



"It's the tradition for Jim to name our cats, so he named him Sydney," Anna explains. "I don't know why. He also gave him a middle initial—J, after his own name."

Sydney is a beautiful boy of two—"all tiger," says Anna, with four white socks and a white dinner napkin. Anna also reports that he has the longest tail of any cat she's ever seen. His favorite spot is on top of the hutch in the dining room, where the first thing he did was to clear his perch of some prized objets d'art, and his favorite thing is being outside from morning until night. He loves everybody, but would you believe it, he has a particular affection for dogs.

"He loves dogs most of all," Anna notes. "It makes sense because we were walking dogs all the time at the shelter and the police kennels were kept in the garage. So I guess Sydney got used to them. He can't wait to meet dogs!"

The Mizes converted one of their guest rooms into Sydney's own private boudoir. "I leave the light on," Anna says, "because the garage where he lived for so long was always dark, and I don't want him ever to be in the dark again."

No wonder Sydney J. Mize is the happiest cat in the world. As Anna observes, "He's living the dream."



• Contributed photo

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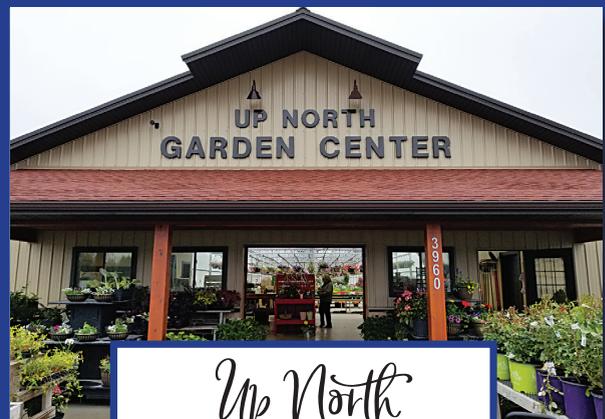
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Hours: Mon.-Sat. 9-6; Sun. 10-4

MASON COUNTY OFFERS BEACH SAFETY NOTIFICATION SERVICE

Mason County Emergency Management is providing an optional text service that provides beach safety alerts to the public.

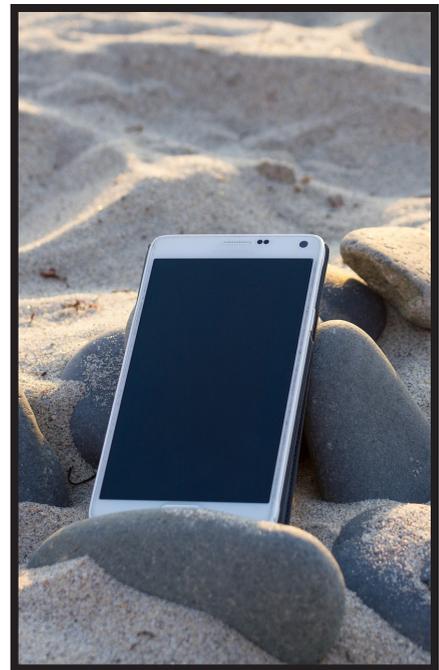
After the drownings in Mason County last year, the emergency management department explored ways to notify and warn the public of beach hazards and other safety information. Through Consumers Energy's continued sponsorship of the CodeRED Notification system, Mason County was able to create a specialized keyword for beach safety notifications.

Residents and visitors can now opt-in to receive text notifications related to Lake Michigan beaches and navigable waterways. Similar to services offered by ocean coastal communities, the public

can opt-in and opt-out of the service during their visit to the community. This service is provided for free to the public, other than the normal messaging rates of the subscriber's cell phone.

Subscribers can expect to see notifications related to Beach Hazard Statements issued by the National Weather Service, breakwater closure notices, on-going emergency operations, and other safety related messages throughout the beach season.

Messages will be sent out for beaches and shoreline from Pentwater to the U.S. Forest Service's campground beach. These notifications will be sent through a collaboration of agencies belonging to the Mason-Oceana Water Safe-



ty Coalition.

To enroll in these text notifications, text MASONBEACHSAFETY to 99411. To stop notifications, text MASONBEACHSAFETY STOP to 99411.

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FOUNDATION'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTINUES TO HELP AREA STUDENTS

With the help of donors, the Community Foundation for Oceana County is offering financial support to assist high school graduates whose senior year was impacted by a global pandemic.

The foundations 2020 scholarship program awarded 139 Oceana County students with 189 scholarships for the fall – a total investment of \$218,850.

This year's graduating seniors represent the highest percentage of students applying to the Community Foundation for Oceana County's scholarship program, with 36 percent of the graduating class applying.

The scholarship funds are made possible by a mix of individuals, couples, families, clubs and schools, held and managed by the foundation.

"Our very first fund in 1989 was a scholarship fund," Tammy Care, CEO of the foundation, stated. "Helping

our kids, our future, is a priority for many of our donors. Maybe it is small-town culture, but this community is very willing to roll up its sleeves and create positive community change. Our donors are making a difference in student potential every day."

New funds are often added to the program, including two so far in 2020. One of these is the Thomas Schaner Memorial Scholarship Fund in memory of Thomas Schaner who passed away earlier this year.

As a member of the Pentwater Civic Band, the West Shore Woodwinds and the Scottville Clown Band, Schaner enjoyed sharing his love of music with Oceana County. He was a life-long resident in the community, first as a graduate of Hart High School and then through his longtime barber shop in Shelby.

The Thomas Schaner Memorial Scholarship Fund was developed

within the foundation in his honor. Scholarships will award learners at any point in their journey, including returning adults who share his passions for music, the skilled trades or emergency response.

Also, the Christopher Schaner Memorial Scholarship Fund was also created in remembrance of Christopher's life. His family and friends established the Fund within the foundation for graduates of Hart High School, encouraging applicants to share essays about how mental health affects their lives and those of their peers.

In honoring Christopher's life, this Scholarship encourages students to think deeply and critically about mental health and how to foster student wellbeing.

For more information about making a gift, now or through an estate plan, creating a named fund at the Foundation, or to learn more about new scholarship programs under consideration, call Carey at (231) 869-3377.

To see the full list of 2020 scholarship recipients visit www.oceanafoundation.org/scholarships/recipient-scholarship-recipients.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPENS JULY 9

The Pentwater Historical Society Museum will reopen Thursday, July 9, according to their Facebook page.

Their summer hours are Thursday through Saturday from 1-4 p.m. The museum has no admission charge.

"Using your cellphone (bring earbuds, too), you can dial (231) 720-0291 and listen to short, recorded 'Guide by Cell' narrations (numbered 1-53) for over 50 of our displays. Choose the topics of interest to you. Each recorded segment is about a minute or less. They include interesting anecdotes about Pentwater, its people and landmarks. It's like having a museum docent whispering in your ear! You don't have to touch anything, but you learn a lot," the page states. "And don't miss our new exhibit for 2020 -- guaranteed to give you a few chuckles!"

Their Facebook page also states that "there will be hand sanitizer available in different areas, masks will be worn by all volunteers, and we will ask that visitors social distance and wear masks as well. Volunteers will also be disinfecting areas during opening hours."

The museum plans to be open from September to October as well.

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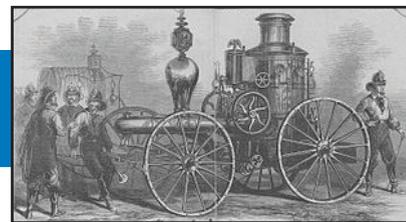
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PENTWATER PAST AND PRESENT



Hooks and Ladders, Hoses and Buckets

In 1872, Pentwater finally got itself a Fire Department. As the Oceana Times reported on February 23, "The Common Council of the village of Pentwater ordain that the fire department of the village of Pentwater shall consist of a Chief Engineer, Assistant Engineer, four fire wardens, Engine men, Hose men, Hook, Ladder and Bucket men, as are or may be from time to time appointed by the Common Council."

The pressing issue of the day was the "Oceana," the department's steam engine of dubious repute. Somewhat condescendingly referred to as "our little pet engine," the Oceana was apparently constantly breaking down or taking too long to put out fires. A week earlier, the Pentwater Times ran a wry little item: "A Steam Fire Engine is kept in the Engine House, ready for use, and our citizens seem to think nothing more is needed. If that engine were to be called out to-day, a stream could not be brought to bear upon a building in less than an hour. Ten dollars a week, besides the interest on our bonds, is being thrown away. Our Common Council are partly to blame for not providing hose carts sooner, but 'where there's a will there's a way,' and this difficulty could easily be got along with, if the citizens of Pentwater had sufficient public spirit."

So what do you do when your engine gives out? Call Car Shield? Heck, no. You organize a "FIRE BUCKET COMPANY!" As the Common Council of the village of Pentwater have furnished the citizens with a steam fire engine, which has been of no avail, and will not be of service at any fire, on account of there being no hose cart, and whereas, some of the Council, 'penny wise and pound foolish,' now intend to build a hose cart, at an expense to the tax-payers of several hundred dollars, it is thought to be expedient to organize a 'Fire Bucket Company,' and a meeting for that purpose will be held at Ratzel's Hall, next Monday evening, Feb. 19, at 7 o'clock. Every citizen who has property at stake is requested to attend. Signed by Numerous Citizens.

On April 12, the Oceana was taken out for a stroll, with disappointing results. "The 'Oceana' was out on Monday afternoon, and made the following record: The engine commenced to work in 9 minutes, and began to throw water in 11 minutes. Greatest distance reached, 125 feet through 500 feet

of hose. The fuel was pronounced very unsatisfactory by the engineer, Mr. Chas. Lamont, who thinks much better time and more effective work can be done in the future. We need a hook and ladder company, to work with our engine and hose company, but we have little hope of seeing such an organization perfected until after we have been visited with another destructive fire. Every building in the village ought also to be examined, and stoves and stove pipes properly secured. By a little carelessness in this regard, our whole village may yet be laid in ashes."

In 1872, fires were too common an occurrence. With so many buildings made of wood, the above dire prediction was not hyperbole. And wood stoves also posed a constant danger, as the following newspaper item attests.

"November 22, 1872. Burned. On Wednesday last Ernest Dresser, aged three years, was severely burned while attempting to kindle a fire in the stove as he had seen others do. His apron caught fire, and before the flames could be extinguished, his chin and the side of his face were badly burned. He is getting along very well, and does not suffer a great deal, but he has made up his mind not to play with fire any more."

*By Mary Beth Crain
from the Pentwater Fire Department Archives
for PTW Magazine*

- Correction -

In the June 25 issue of PTW, Birdland Hardware was featured in this section. The article stated that Alan Decker purchased the business in 1996, however, Birdland Hardware was purchased by a partnership. Pamela Burdick was the primary investor, as well as the one who instigated and put together the deal. Burdick was also the one who divided the property into separate units. PTW Magazine apologizes for the error.

PENTWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

PENTWATER HISTORY IS BROUGHT TO LIFE WITH CELL PHONE AUDIO GUIDE

Museum visitors can now listen to stories about displays and artifacts using their cell phones with our "Guide by Cell" tour guide. We are receiving rave reviews, as both young and old utilize this new system. To quote one visitor, "It's like a private tour having a Pentwater historian whispering in your ear."

Go back in time before cell phones and listen to our past. Just one visit per year for just an hour will take you to a time when Pentwater was a home to many families, a port to many ships and a vacation destination. Come visit us. We want you to...We need you to...It is our hope your visits will become an annual tradition as our museum becomes yours too. Please come listen to our past...

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PENTWATER LAKE ASSOCIATION NEWS

Life Jackets Save Lives – But Only If They are Worn

Important information regarding the importance of having the right size life jacket and wearing one when in and near the water.

- Life jackets must be approved by the U.S. Coast Guard for use in the U.S.

- Each year, an average of 3,880 people drown in the U.S. and over 1,500 of those are children and teens. (source: Centers for Disease Control)

- Eighty percent of fatal boating accident victims drowned and over four-fifths of those were not wearing a life jacket. In addition, 80 percent of those who drowned were in boats less than 21 feet in length. (source: U.S. Coast Guard)

- Providing life jackets and encouraging boaters and swimmers to wear them can easily prevent drowning.

- Adults can drown in less than a minute; children in as few as twenty seconds.

- When accidents happen, life jackets provide time for successful rescues. Accidents happen. They don't have to be fatal.

- Many people who drown never expected to end up in the water. Even experienced swimmers can quickly get into trouble.



- Most boaters do not plan on falling overboard, and when they do, it is too late. Putting on a life jacket when you need it is like trying to put on a seat belt just before a crash.

- Life jackets are essential to safe water recreation.

- Life jackets should be properly sized for the person wearing them. An adult life jacket is not appropriate for a child. The label in the life jacket indicates the size.

- Life jackets must be free of rips and tears with working buckles and zippers to be used.

- "The 'Wear It' campaign" National Safe Boating Council
<http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com>

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