

FRUITPORT Area News

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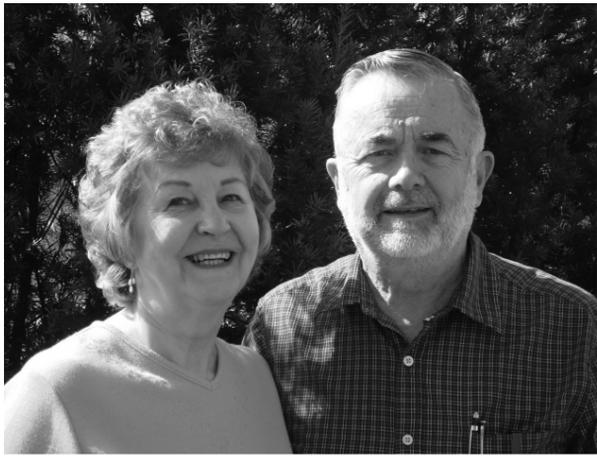
The Hometown Paper Reaching All Homes in
Fruitport and Sullivan Townships

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The purpose of this paper is to be beneficial to the community it serves in every way possible.



2009 King and Queen Live By Old Fashioned Values

By Mary Weimer and the OFD selection committee

We are pleased to announce our 2009 king and queen, Ron and Mariann Cooper, who are lifelong residents of Fruitport Township. But few people know the behind-the-scenes activities of this year's king and queen.

Ron spent several years operating Cooper Lawns in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, traveling between Fruitport and Milwaukee weekly. But Fruitport always drew him "home," where he operated Cooper Farms while publishing and financially supporting the *Fruitport Area News*.

Both are active in the community in a number of ways, and all of their involvement is prompted by their faith, their family, common sense, and their desire to give back to their community. In December, 2005, the couple was given a humanitarian award by their peers recognizing their dedication and service to the community.

Mariann has been self-employed at Copies & More since 1993. She is an active member of the Lioness Club, particularly during Old Fashioned Days. She is on the board of the First Congregational Church, serving as clerk/secretary. She is responsible for the weekly bulletin and works on special programs and projects. Currently, she is helping to establish a church library. She is the legal guardian for the disabled "Beckhorn girls" as they are known throughout the area, and she works closely with social services for them as well as for others in the community.

Ron is best known for publishing the *Fruitport Area News* and for his two terms as Fruitport Township Supervisor, but is involved in many community projects. He has been a member of the Fruitport Lions Club since 1957, and is a past president. He was co-chairperson on the committee responsible for building the bandshell in Pomona Park. He received a distinguished service award in 1981 for "Loyal Service and devotion to the objectives of Lionism."

He is active in Old Fashioned Days, the former Blueberry Festival, and at First Congregational Church, serving as Sunday School Superintendent and as an elder. He also volunteered his services to Word of Hope Church in Fruitport to help create and administer a Sunday school. He is a key person in organizing for the Second Harvest Gleaners trucks to keep bringing food to our community, and serves as a member on the Fruitport District Library Committee.

He was recognized in 1993 by the local business and professional association, and received a certificate of recognition from the Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce for Project Pride in 1982.

Although Mariann is the animal lover in the family, Ron has been supportive of establishing the Critter Café animal rescue program in Fruitport, and is working with others in attempting to set up an inexpensive animal spay and neuter clinic. Ron feeds and cares for two horses and two ponies for his grandchildren, in addition to his son, Sam's dog.

Both are supportive of area youth programs. Ron has established a monthly bowling party which encourages the Christian youth of the area to get to know each other in a fun and informal setting. Over the years, he and Mariann have been supportive of various 4-H programs. Ron worked to establish the soccer field on Sheringer Road, and is working to establish a 4-H oriented equine site; and a skateboard park behind First Congregational Church. He also devotes two issues of the *Fruitport Area News* to 4-H during the annual Muskegon County Youth Fair.

One of the goals in publishing the *Fruitport Area News* is to spread good news as much as possible. Ron senses the need for a true community newspaper, and delights in publishing the names of area residents and their accomplishments. For over 26 years the *Fruitport Area News* has published and helped promote hundreds of fund raisers and projects, free of charge.

Family is a very important thing to our king and queen. Most of their siblings and their six adult children (ages 26 to 49) live in the immediate area. Daughters Lana (Joe) Ahumada, and Kim (Dan) West live in Fruitport; Lorrie (Tony) West lives in Norton Shores and Bekah (Aaron) Bock lives in Kalamazoo, although they have a second home in Fruitport Township. Son Bill (Wendi) Cooper lives in Fruitport; and Sam, who will be getting married in August, lives in Grand Rapids. The couple's 18 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren all live within 15 minutes of their home and add to their busy schedule.

Over the years, the Coopers have opened their hearts and their home to a number of people in addition to their family members. The couple raised two children through high school when their mother went into a nursing home. They took in a student whose father was transferred to another state, and most recently, have an exchange student from Poland (Maksymillian "Max" Prokopiak) living with them. They provided food, services and housing for a single mom with five kids for two years to provide a safe location for her to be with her children. Homeless individuals and foster children have been welcomed into their home.

Their values have benefited our community for years. And we are fortunate to be able to recognize their contributions by honoring them as the 2009 King and Queen of Old Fashioned Days. •



Bye, bye Avon

by Mary Weimer

For several years, Bonnie Smith has been selling Avon products. Her children were in school and the extra income would come in handy; so when Betty Afton left her sales spot, Bonnie took over.

That was over 45 years ago. Now, Bonnie has decided to retire from selling Avon products. Although she liked several aspects of selling the products: Setting her own time schedule, no company minimum requirements, and the opportunity to increase her income, Bonnie admits she won't miss the work, but she will miss the customers, many of whom she grew up with.

One measure of Bonnie's obvious success is her collection of dolls awarded by Avon for achieving sales levels. After 8 campaigns (16 weeks), successful salespeople are awarded a doll dressed in period costume reflecting the times. The dolls were fashioned after the very first general agent of the Avon Company, Mrs. P. J. Albee. Bonnie has a doll for every year but one of all the years she sold the products.

Another aspect of Avon that Bonnie likes is their charitable giving. The Avon Foundation is committed to improving women's lives. Each year, they donate funds to breast cancer research, domestic violence campaigns and emergency relief services around the world.

So Bonnie will retire her Avon case and give the dolls she has earned to female members of her family, but she will maintain the friendships she has built over the years. •

Cruising on Spring Lake during Old Fashioned Days

by Mary Weimer

The Grand Lady Riverboat will once again be one of the featured Old Fashioned Days activities. This year, however, several types of cruises are available.

The riverboat cruises begin on Thursday, May 21 with the popular Polka Towners. Two cruises are offered, at 6:45 p.m. and 9 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person for the two-hour ride. Food will be available for purchase on the early cruise only.

The standard riverboat cruise will be available on Friday, May 22 (beginning at 7 p.m.); Saturday, May 23; and Sunday, May 24. Cruises are \$8 per person and will be offered between 1 and 10 p.m. Check the dock for the schedule.

Please check the dock schedule for the fireworks cruises.

The Fruitport schools' Jazz Band will be providing entertainment on the riverboat cruise on Saturday, May 23 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Desserts will be available for purchase, with proceeds going to the Fruitport Band Parents. Tickets for that cruise are \$10 per person.

A Texas Roadhouse Dinner Cruise is offered on Saturday, May 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. The menu includes sirloin kabobs with vegetables, barbecued chicken breast, baked beans, a house salad, and dinner rolls. Deadline to purchase tickets is May 21. Tickets are available at the restaurant as well as at Copies & More. Tickets are \$25 per person.

Another specialty cruise will depart from the dock at 6 p.m. on Sunday, May 24. The cruise will feature The Joyful Noise Band from Calvary Church. Tickets are \$11 each. (\$2 from each ticket will support food truck deliveries in this area.)

Tickets for all specialty cruises are available at Copies & More, 420 N. Third Street, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or by phone at (231) 865-6370. Credit cards are accepted. •

28th annual OFD road race scheduled

(Submitted by Donald Wood, Fruitport Lions Club committee member)

The 28th annual Fruitport Old Fashioned Days 5K/10K road race will be held Saturday, May 23, 2009. The race begins at the Fruitport High School football field, corner of Sixth and Beech, at 9:30 a.m. Race packets can be picked up between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. on race day at the football field.

The early entry fee (deadline is May 22) is \$15, including a t-shirt. The race day entry fee is \$18, including a t-shirt. Reduced rates are available if no t-shirt is desired.

Ribbons are awarded to all finishers, with trophies awarded to over-all male and female finishers. Medals are awarded in each division based upon the percentage of entries.

For more information, call (231) 865-3573 or (231) 865-3551. Entry forms are available from Lundberg's Storage in Fruitport, the Tri-Cities YMCA in Grand Haven, the Muskegon YFCA, Omni Fitness Center and Norton Pines Fitness Center. •

OFD fireworks scheduled twice!

by Mary Weimer

Attention fireworks lovers! Old Fashioned Days fireworks are scheduled for two nights this May.

Friday, May 22, the fireworks are being provided by Grover Pharmacy and Shelby Concessions.

The Sunday night fireworks on May 24 are sponsored by the Fruitport Lions Club and Lee Manufacturing.

Both events are scheduled for 10:30 p.m. with no rain date. •

Tentative Newspaper Delivery Schedule

July 18, 2009

4-H Youth Fair Issue

(Deadline July 6, 2009)