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Olivet Church celebrates one year in a new location

By Craig Cramblet

Olivet Evangelical Free Church is a congregation with a rich 124-year old history that is celebrating its first anniversary of ministry at 6790 Harvey Road (one block south of Pontaluna Road) in Fruitport Township. Ministry began on March 15, 2009 in the renovated building that many in the area remember as the former home of Countryside and Carousel Bowling Lanes. One year later, the church has seen significant growth and is especially excited about the number of new families that have become a part of their ministries.

Olivet Free Church was founded in 1886. The church began as a Bible study and prayer meeting composed of Norwegian immigrants, many who came to America to escape the dead orthodoxy of the "State" church in Norway and wanted to worship in freedom. Eight families met to organize, not a church, but a prayer group. They incorporated themselves into "The Norwegian Christian Free Assembly," and for about a year, met in homes. That new church was (and is to this day) a fellowship committed to discipleship, with a hunger to know God in a personal way, to win people to Christ, and to help each other grow spiritually.

The first building, a small frame structure, was built in Muskegon's "Nims Neighborhood," at the corner of Southern and Franklin in 1889. In 1949 a more substantial brick structure was built, and in 1979 a large addition was built



Harbor Hospice offers grief camp for children

(Submitted by Harbor Hospice)

As adults, it is hard to mourn the loss of a loved one. It's even harder for children who have not yet developed the emotional tools necessary to help them work through the many stages of grief. Children react to grief in a variety of ways. Some reactions can be very destructive such as acting out or fighting, missing school, decreased self-esteem, and/or emotional regression or feelings of isolation.

Harbor Hospice staff and trained volunteers show children that they are not alone in their grief and that feeling sad is a normal part of losing a loved one. Children learn effective coping techniques to help them journey through grief in healthy ways. Children participate in all of the typical camping activities such as swimming, fishing, hiking, and campfires, along with specialized activities designed to address how to handle grief and how to let it go.

Camp Courage, a sleep-away camping experience for children ages six to 12, is held at Pioneer Trails on Big Blue Lake in Muskegon County beginning Friday, June 25, 2010 at 10 a.m. through Sunday, June 27, 2010 at 2 p.m.

Application deadline is May 31, 2010.
For more information or to register, contact Michelle Ganss at 231-728-3442 or info@HarborHospiceMI.org.

Dognapping warning

(Submitted by Christine L. Bishop, Critter Café Rescue)

There is evidence that as many as 400 dogs in and around West Michigan have been stolen over the past two years or more. Please have an adult supervise your furry friends when outside, even if you have a house that is "way back in the woods."

According to several victims, there is a white van involved, driven by two men who are supposedly selling boxed, frozen meats. They are not particular as to the breeds or sizes of the dogs they are taking, but seem to concentrate on pure breeds.

One dog, an English Bulldog, was stolen right from a child's arms in Wyoming, Michigan. The thieves in that case were two Hispanic men driving a white van with one green stripe down the middle and a sales sign for "Midwestern Beef" or "Chef's Choice" on the side. There is a reward for the return of the English Bulldog to its family.

There are reports of stolen dogs and/or the van sightings throughout the area.

If you think your dog has been stolen, call 911 and make a report immediately. Your pet is not safe, even if microchipped. Putting an ad in the local paper with an offer of reward money might bring back your dog, but the reward must be more than a research lab or new owner



with classrooms and a gymnasium. In 1950, the church joined the Evangelical Free Church of America. Olivet's former building is now home to "Ecclesia," a church plant supported by Watermark Church of Grand Haven and Spring Lake Wesleyan Church.

In 2008 the congregation moved ahead with a vision that had been almost 15 years in the making. They purchased the 21,000 square foot building on 10 acres in Fruitport Township and began the process of fund-raising and construction that resulted in the dedication of that building as their new ministry location. This modern, barrier-free building opens doors for new ministries to people who may have never found them in a downtown residential neighborhood. Olivet is excited to be in West Michigan's "growth corridor," where Muskegon and Ottawa counties meet and just south of the Lakes Mall and all the commercial and residential development surrounding it.

Olivet is committed to provide excellent ministry to all generations. It was one of the first congregations in West Michigan to have a full-time children's ministry director. The church has a strong history of ministry to middle and high school students and their families and has employed full-time youth pastors for the past 30 years. At Olivet, you will find caring people, purposeful ministries, authentic worship, and the opportunity to experience God in a personal way. The church is enjoying ministering to the Fruitport area, and visitors are welcome. Programs on Sunday morning begin with Sunday school and Bible studies for all ages at 9 a.m. There is a coffee and refreshment fellowship time at 10 a.m., and Sunday worship is at 10:30 a.m. the church phone is (231) 798-2900. You can also visit the church's website to learn more: www.oliveteff.org.



Welcome to Nena's, the little boutique on the corner!

By Mary Weimer

Nena Pulsifer has just opened Nena's Needle Alterations and Creations at 6582 Airline Highway (on the corner of Airline and Pontaluna). With her desire to spotlight women artisans from the area, she has invited Annette Robidoux, Lisa Johnson, Cynthia (Allison) Horsley and Gloria LeMaire to join her in her latest venture.

Each of the women has her own special niche, from photography to handmade jewelry, soaps, and paintings. Nena's artwork, and 20 years' experience in alterations, costuming and interior design blend well with the theme of the store.

One-of-a-kind items are featured throughout the store. From antiques to bridal creations, leatherwork, and paintings, Nena's offers something for everyone. Fake hair extensions, and a lingerie line (including Spanx) with a full line of support garments, round out the eclectic collection of merchandise.

Annette Robidoux's photographs have consistently won several Hallmark card contests. Her photography is on display in the store, and she is currently offering a special on photos for next year's senior class members.

Cynthia (Allison) Horsley has specialized, all-natural handmade soaps. Her line includes special soaps to get rid of fish odor on your hands, relaxing bath soaps, and even dog soaps.

Gloria LeMaire and Lisa Johnson (Glory B Designs) offer fashionable jewelry items.

And Nena is still in the interior design business as well. Hunter-Douglas blinds are going to be offered only through independent designers like Nena; and will no longer be available through chain stores.

A visit to the "little boutique on the corner" is a great way to get acquainted with local artistic talent. Walk-in hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Nena also accepts appointments by calling 865-3525, and you can fan Nena's Needle on Facebook to see what's new.