

Memorial garden added to Fruitport church

(Submitted by Fruitport Congregational UCC)

Fruitport Congregational United Church of Christ has made a memorial garden out of the area that was devastated by the wind storm we had in August, 2009.

After the clean up of the large trees, Russ Stressman presented an idea to the congregation to build a memorial garden. Included in the plans was a retaining wall that would hold 40 memorial plaques. Behind the wall is an area with three large crosses, a fountain coming out of a rock, and a pool surrounded by a picket fence. There are family names on the picket fence; and a bridge has been constructed over the waterfalls, which contains the names of children of the church printed in various colors – "A Rainbow Bridge."

Plaques are sold for \$250 with the monies used to pay for the construction; the extra monies cover the cost of maintenance. Donations of about \$10 each were taken for the family names to cover the cost of the slats in the fence. A gate contains Bible verses in English, Thai, Chinese, Korean and German. The gate itself was constructed by Wes Owen. Foreign exchange students during the school year 2010-2011 wrote the verses in their own language on the slats of the gate.

A bench has been added by Dennis Noren on the bridge so that people could sit and watch the water flow down the hill or look at the crosses.

With help from RV Tree Service with the cutting and removal of the trees that were blown down, community members taking away the firewood, equipment from Ron Stroup to help with the clearing and digging of the pond, electrical work by Tandem Electric, and countless hours of work by Russ and his family members, this memorial garden is almost completed. Still to come is the laying of black dirt and seeding of grass along with some benches and stone for a pathway that will come next spring.

The plaques can be purchased by any community member who would like to honor a loved one. Just stop by the church and take a look at the memorial garden. It's something that can be shared throughout the community. •



The Memorial Garden retaining wall with family name plaques at the Fruitport Congregational UCC. Behind the wall you will see the fenced-in pond with the three crosses standing tall.

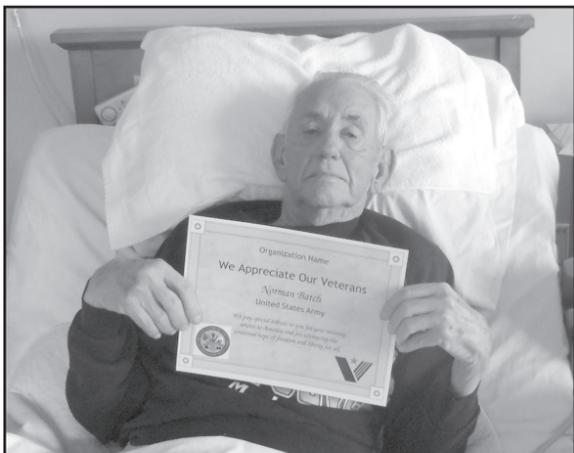
Garden Club to host tea

By Alice Pasarela

The Muskegon County Garden Club's "Annual Christmas Tea" will be held Monday, December 12, 2011 beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the Greater Muskegon Woman's Club, 280 West Webster Avenue. There will be a silent auction.

For more information, call (231) 755-4409 or (231) 798-7622 or visit muskegoncountygardenclub.net.

The Muskegon County Garden Club is a member of the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. and the National Garden Clubs, Inc. •



Fruitport resident honored

By Linda Meeuwenberg

Eighty-six-year-old Norman Batch, long time Fruitport resident, was recently honored by the Harbor Hospice Poppen House for his service to his country. As a decorated veteran from World War II, he was awarded a certificate and a pin to acknowledge his service. He was surrounded by his family as he received this honor.

His family includes a "bunch of Batches:" Linda Batch Meeuwenberg, Wayne and Vall Batch, Terry and Nancy Batch, Jim and Kelly Batch, and Jon and Shirley Batch. All his children are Fruitport High School graduates. •

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