

## Valentine food for thought

By Jeanne Losey

Cabbage always has a heart,  
Green beans string along.  
You're such a cute tomato,  
Will you peas to me belong?  
You've been the apple of my eye,  
You know how much I care;  
So lettuce get together,  
We'd make a perfect pear.

Now, something's sure to turnip  
To prove you can't be beet;  
So, if you carrot all for me  
Let's let our tulips meet.  
Don't squash my hopes and dreams now,  
Bee my honey, dear;  
Or tears will fill potato's eyes  
While sweet corn lends an ear.

I'll cauliflower shop and say  
Your dreams and parsley mine.  
I'll work and share my celery,  
So be my valentine. •



### Celebrating a new arrival

April Hamm, formerly from Fruitport, and her husband, Ryan, are proud to announce the arrival of their son, Decklan Charlie Hamm.

He was born October 11, 2012. He weighed 7 pounds, 5 ounces, and was 21 inches long.

He is also welcomed by his grandmother, Nancy Flaska and his Uncle Eric Flaska of Fruitport.

### Michigan elections director is president of national association

(Submitted by the Michigan Secretary of State)

Michigan Elections Director Christopher Thomas was sworn in as the new president of the National Association of State Election Directors, a group that shares elections administration know-how among state leaders.

"It's an honor to be selected by my peers as president," said Thomas, who lives in Okemos. "I look forward to working with my fellow state election directors to share what we learned from the 2012 election and find ways to further improve elections in our states."

Then-Secretary of State Richard Austin, a Democrat, appointed Thomas elections director in 1981. He later served under three Republican secretaries of state, most recently under Secretary of State Ruth Johnson. He began his career in elections administration in 1974 by working for the U.S. House of Representatives and later, the Federal Election Commission.

"Michigan voters have been well-served by the experience, knowledge and consistency Chris Thomas has provided as elections director," said Johnson, who previously served as the Oakland County clerk. "Under his leadership, the Bureau of Elections has done an excellent job ensuring that local clerks and precinct workers are well-prepared for election day."

Bureau of Elections staff works closely with the 1,600 clerks of the state's counties, cities, townships and villages to provide training and assist local election officials with their administrative duties. The bureau is responsible for administering the state's Qualified Voter File and Michigan election, campaign-finance and lobbyist disclosure laws.

Formed in 1989, with Thomas as a member, the Election Directors Association promotes accessible, accurate and transparent elections in the United States and U.S. territories. It serves as an exchange of best practices and ideas, which has been particularly important in recent years, as states have implemented the federal Help America Vote Act. The 2002 law required statewide electronic voter lists, created nationwide elections administration standards and mandated the replacement of certain voting systems, such as punch cards and lever-action voting machines. The group reviews and comments on emerging voting system technologies.

Thomas previously served as chair of the board of Advisors to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission from 2006 to 2008, and was awarded the association's Distinguished Service Award in 2012. He previously served as the association's president in 1997. •

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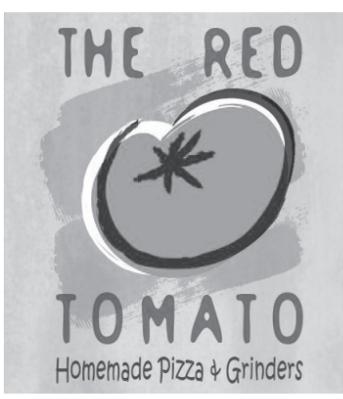
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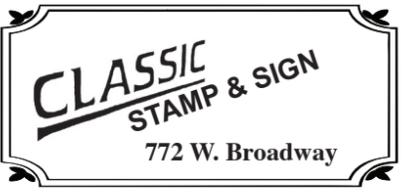
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