



Fruitport Area News

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FAN is now celebrating 40 years! The masthead above is our original mast that was hand-drawn by someone who lived in this area. Many people have helped this paper survive over the years as we have tried to be a benefit to our community. A big thanks to everyone who has been part of the effort.
--Ron Cooper, Editor

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2023 Fruitport Old Fashioned King and Queen



by Rose Dillon, Fruitport Lioness

We are honored to announce Fred and Elaine Baxter as our 2023 King and Queen.

Fred and Elaine have been married for 65 years and have 2 children, Larry and Laurie.

There are blessed with 15 grands and 38 great grandchildren. Many of them live in and around the Fruitport area.

Fred and Elaine both graduated from Muskegon Heights High School. Fred remembers back in that day you could bring your rifle to school and place it on a coat rack. Then, when school was dismissed you would pick up your rifle and head out to the woods to hunt.

Fred started his own business at 17 years old and Elaine began bookkeeping for Buel Shoes at 16. When they married, Elaine was 19 years old and began bookkeeping for Fred's businesses, which included a gas station, grocery store, towing, garage repair and body shop at the corner

of Sternberg and Airline, where the towing garage is still in operation today. Through their working years, the Baxter's have had a very strong work ethic. Larry and Laurie have taken over the family towing business now; however, Dad still continues to put in his two cents.

Fred and Elaine have a strong passion towards community and working with youth. They were both Sunday School teachers and involved with youth ministries nearly their entire life. Fred drove Sunday school bus for 40 years, which he calls a labor of love. Any church that brought a bus with mechanical problems to the Baxters' garage was fixed at no charge.

Fred was a deacon in their local church. They have worked in youth programs with Little Black Lake, Emanuel Baptist and Broadway Baptist Churches. They have also volunteered for mission work in Mexico. On a trip to Mexico, Fred learned that the town they were working in did not have any fire emergency trucks. Upon returning home, Fred heard that Fruitport Township Fire Department was getting rid of an older fire truck. Fred worked with the township to buy the fire truck and he and Elaine drove it to Mexico and donated it to them.

Fred has worked with the Fruitport Lions Club to help with different projects and by donating funds. The Baxter's have worked with many over the years to provide financial support to those who are down and out. Their philosophy is "to whom much is given, much is required." They feel they have been blessed and it's their responsibility to help others. We will never know all the Baxters have given back to this community as they are not willing to talk about it.

Fruitport is proud to have Fred and Elaine Baxter as our 2023 OFD King and Queen. Give them a shout out when you see them leading the Memorial Day Parade.



Commander Whitman introduced the ceremony by briefly explaining the symbolism of the American flag. "The flag of the United States reflects what we are and what we hope to be," he said. "The white stripes symbolize purity of purpose in our freedom of thought, expression, and worship. These are the privileges guaranteed to all who live in our land. They are rights defended against all enemies who seek to crush the way of life that you and I so cherish. Also, in that flag, we see the red stripes of courage, our willingness to die, if necessary, for the preservation of American ideals. Then there's the blue of tranquility, upon which the stars of our states are united to hold intact all that is truly ours—the desires for peace, prosperity, and happiness throughout our great nation."

After the raising of the flag, the veterans present saluted the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Then Pastor Scott told about the history of the flag's symbolism, the importance of prayer in the birthing of our Constitution, and the development of the Pledge of Allegiance. He then prayed that God would protect our flag, our nation, and all those who serve to defend them.

Next, Commander Whitman presented to Mike Sipe a booklet of flag etiquette, explaining that although the law-enforceable part of the United States Flag Code no longer exists, we should still always appreciate people's patriotism, even when they get the etiquette wrong, and should teach them whenever possible how to get it right. "I hope that you guys will take those to your heart and understand what the flag means to each and every American." Commander Whitman gave flag pins to all the veterans present, and thanked each one for his service.

"I appreciate all of your community support," said Commander Whitman, "and I appreciate you having me here. And I appreciate Pastor Scott and his involvement." He then added to Mike Sipe, "I appreciate your coordinating this effort."

Mr. Sipe said that the future plans of Darley Village include planting a garden around the flagpole, with a stone and plaque in the garden. He also said that the resident veterans want to become an active group that can work with the VFW.

PINCREST BAR & LANES CORNER UPDATE

Congratulations to Steve Paul of Fruitport, on his first 300 game at Pincrest Bar & Lanes on November 22nd, 2022! Each week we host 120 league bowlers hoping for that one perfect game, and it's a badge of honor to roll a high score at the HOUSE-of-PAIN on our old school set up. Steve started bowling at Pincrest with his parents, Charlie and Marva Paul, when he was 18 years old and has been bowling league on Tuesday nights here for the past 39 years. Steve is the captain of the Paul Brothers team, which also happens to be the longest running league team to continuously play at Pincrest. Steve always joked that when he got his 300 game he was going to quit bowling, so now we've upped the ante a bit and he'll have to roll an 800 series before he's allowed to retire. If you see Steve around town please give him a high-five; he was the only player to throw a 300 game at our place this season!

We've got a variety of events lined up on the corner for this summer, including live music every Saturday at 6 pm and Sundays at 5 pm, craft



Steve Paul's 300 game



Steve Paul & Aimee

shows, bike nights, comedy shows, trivia nights, and a few fun workshops. Check out our Facebook page for event listings and details.

As always, we hope to see you at the corner!

Aimee & Tom
Johnson

Darley Village Puts Up New Flagpole and Dedicates It To God and Country

by Kate, Calvin, and Kim Holtrop

Not long ago, the main entrance to Darley Village, a retirement village in Fruitport, was moved from Sternberg Road closer to the back of the property, near the Village Cafe. Darley village had a flag out front on the side of the cafe at that time. A veteran and resident of the village thought it would be good to erect a flagpole near the new entrance. Another resident, Vietnam veteran Mike Sipe, said that a collection taken up by the residents for the flagpole project received enough money within the first couple days to cover the expense. Darley's owner had the pole put up just outside the cafe entrance.

On Thursday, May 26th, Darley Village residents attended the dedication of the new flagpole. The ceremony was led by Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Commander, Jason Whitman, and Pastor Michael Scott of First Congregational Church of Fruitport. Mike Sipe coordinated the event.

Following a hearty greeting from the VFW,