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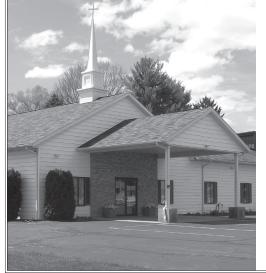
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For more information, please contact us:

Fruitport District Library Update

submitted by Rose Dillon

The original Fruitport Library was formed in the late 1930s as part of the Muskegon County Library system. It was originally housed in a Fruitport School, but around 1963, local businessman, Frank Werschem, began a campaign for a new building. That "new" building is what now stands on the southwest corner of Park and Third Street in front of Pomona Park. Many changes have taken place over the nearly 60 years since, in an effort to improve and upgrade library services to our community. These improvements did not magically or automatically happen. There are three driving forces behind everything that takes place at our library: our fantastic, hardworking staff; our dedicated volunteers and Friends of the Fruitport Library; and our Board of Trustees. There have been frequent articles in the FAN and on the library's website telling of the fantastic job being done by our staff and volunteers. We would not be the organization we are today, without all of them. This article, however, is to help familiarize the public with your Board of Trustees and the challenges they are currently facing.

There are seven trustees on our board: Rose Dillon, Glenn Bo, Junella Rule, and Anna Dudas representing Fruitport Township. Each of these trustees were recommended and approved/ appointed by the Township Board. Ruth Woodward, Laura Oldt, and Bill Overkamp represent the Village of Fruitport - recommended and approved/appointed by the Village Council.

Roughly four years ago, both the Village and Township residents voted to separate from the Muskegon Area District Library, also known as MADL, and become an independent district library: The Fruitport District Library. Your board, with a great deal of help from the community, worked to make this separation possible. Today, the board is responsible for preparing and monitoring a budget, maintaining the building and grounds, hiring appropriate staff, and overseeing much of the operation of this library. At this time, it has become a focus of the Board to find a new location for our library.

The current building is roughly 900 square feet. Over the past several years we have struggled with issues including problems with roofing, airconditioning, water in the basement, septic, and the list goes on and on. We are NOT handicap accessible. We do NOT have adequate parking. We do NOT have the space to expand our collection or to offer more community programs. In short, our needs have far outgrown the space provided as we strive to offer the services and technology necessary for the residents of this community.

While the current location is indeed beautiful, expansion in that same spot may not be feasible, although we continue to explore possible options there. We also are looking at a number of other properties, including vacant churches and businesses, or property on which to build. It is our desire to make the best possible decision as we continue our search. We vow to be fiscally responsible and to not rush into anything. **We welcome community input and involvement**. The board meets at the Township Hall, 5865 Airline Rd. on the third Wednesday of every month at 5:30pm. All are welcome to attend. You may also feel free to contact members of the board at any time with questions or suggestions.

Roger G. Van Opynen 1944 - 2022

Mr. Roger Van Opynen, age 78, of Grand Haven passed away Thursday, November 10, 2022, at home. He was born April 25, 1944, in Grand Haven to Herman and Margaret (Thoman-Tallman) Van Opynen. On June 25, 1965, he married Linda Aker and she preceded him in death on June 9, 2020. Roger was a member of First Congregational Church in Fruitport. He worked in research and development for Eagle Ottawa for 20 years before becoming a police officer for the Grand Haven Public Safety for 23 years before retiring in 2005. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and spending time with his family. Roger will be very missed. He is survived by his two sons: Todd (Wendy Miller) Van Opynen, and Jeffrey (Christine) Van Opynen; four grandchildren: Nichole, Joshua, Kayli and Matthew; fifteen greatgrandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Herman and Margaret; brothers: Alan, Richard, and Robert; and grandson, Schuyler Van Opynen. A memorial service was held 11:00 AM Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at First Congregational Church. Interment took place in Lake Forest Cemetery. Memorial contributions in memory of Roger may be given to the Muskegon Resue Mission. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.sytsemafh.com

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