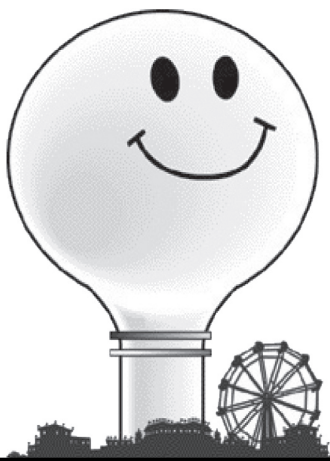




Graduation / Old Fashioned Days / Memorial Issue

FRUITPORT Area News

The Hometown Paper Reaching All Homes in
Fruitport and Sullivan Townships

Online: **www.fruitportareanews.com**

Email: mail@fruitportareanews.com



To subscribe or advertise
call 865-3134

\$1.00

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 18
FRUITPORT, MI

Carrier Route

May, 2025 • Volume 43 • Number 1

The purpose of this paper is to be beneficial to the community it serves in every way possible.

2025 Old Fashioned Days King & Queen

by Heidi Tice



Each year the Fruitport Lionesses and Fruitport Lions Clubs honor a Fruitport resident as King & Queen for their Fruitport Old Fashions Day celebration. The Fruitport Lionesses receive written nominations for the yearly honor. This year 2025 was a little different for the Lionesses. The request came to them as a dying wish from a long-standing member. Lionesses Pat Stressman expressed to her daughter she would like to have a prominent Lion who has coordinated the parade for many years to be King. Pat and our 2025 King grew up together. They spent time together as children since their parents played cards often. They didn't always agree with each other throughout the years however they were genuine friends and had enormous respect for each other. Pat knew her friend was passing the parade torch to another Lion and after many years he would finally have free time during the parade. Pat made the request and was very pleased when the Lionesses accepted naming

Fred & Patricia Yonkers as King & Queen of Fruitport Old Fashioned Days for 2025.

Lion Fred has been a member of the Grand Haven Lions and the Fruitport Lions clubs. Through his years in Lionism he has served at the club level and the district level, always stepping up to lend a hand. Fred has chaired multiple events and held several positions in the Fruitport Lions Club from membership chair to club President. At the district level Fred has been a zone chair & region chair. He is proud to be a Lion and passionate about always increasing membership. Fred was instrumental in helping Lion Heidi Tice form the Fruitport Leo Club in 2014. He understands that our future lies in the hands of a younger group, and we need to plant the seeds to serve their community, in our youth. Lion Fred comes to every Leo orientation day and welcomes returning members and new members into the Fruitport Leo Club. He stresses how important the Leo Club is for the Lions family and makes them feel welcomed.

For the Fruitport Lions, Fred has coordinated the Memorial Day parade and Lions Old Fashioned Christmas for many years. He handles all the Fruitport Lions assets as Lion Tamer and was membership chair for numerous years. He is always at meetings to welcome visitors, give encouragement to existing members and help the comradery in the club grow. Along with other club members, respected and admiration, are two descriptions Lion Pat Stressman spoke many times about Lion Fred.

Fred is happily married to Pat Yonkers. Even though Pat is not a Lion she attends many of the functions and volunteers in several other ways in their community. They are both active in their church and have a passion for the Hackley Historic House, volunteering there during Christmas to show the decorated home to community groups.

The Fruitport Lions family of Lions are proud to honor Lion Fred Yonkers and his wife Pat Yonkers for this year's Fruitport Old Fashioned days King & Queen.

can make everyday life difficult.

West Michigan and Fruitport in particular, sent many young men overseas to Vietnam. While most of them returned home after their service, Muskegon has 40 veterans listed on the Virtual Vietnam Memorial Wall as having given the ultimate sacrifice; Fruitport has 4 listed.

They are: LCPL JAMES WILLARD KOOL, HN BRUCE STEPHEN LA PORTE, CPL DANNY PAUL RIESBERG, CPL GERALD WAYNE VAN DONKELAAR. Three of the men were Marines, and the fourth, Bruce LaPorte, was a Navy Corpsman serving with a Marine Corps unit.

War is a terrible thing. One famous quote states, "Only the dead have seen the end of war." War also can bring the best out of people. During Vietnam, the Medal of Honor was awarded 235 times, and several veterans have received the honor long after the war had ended. One area veteran that served with distinction is a lifelong Muskegon native who was inducted into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame. Larry Bush is the only Warrant Officer and helicopter pilot to be inducted and given the honor. I was very proud of my Uncle Larry, and along with the rest of our family to attend his induction ceremony at the Air Zoo Museum in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Here is the official summary from the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame induction:

Lawrence "Larry" Orie Bush was born on November 3rd, 1947 in Muskegon, Michigan. Larry graduated from Reeths-Puffer High School in 1966 and attended the Illinois Institute of Technology on a Navy ROTC scholarship. After two years of study, Larry left college and enlisted in the United States Army. He entered the Army Warrant Officer Candidate program in 1969. In August of 1970, Larry graduated from flight school near the top of his class and was appointed a Warrant Office and Army Aviator.

Larry qualified in the UH-1 "Huey" helicopter, but due to his class ranking, was selected for additional training in the OH-58 "Kiowa" light observation helicopter.

Larry received orders for assignment to the Republic of Vietnam and arrived "in country" in the fall of 1970 then was transferred to Laos where he participated in Lam Son 719. Larry accumulated 1,040 combat flight hours in Vietnam and was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Army Commendation Medal, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm, and Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster.

Larry joined the Michigan Army National Guard and flew UH-1 "Huey" and OH-58 "Kiowa" scout aircraft for the next 20 years. While an Army Aviator, Larry logged 3,534 hours of accident and incident free pilot time and retired in 1993 as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 and a Master Army Aviator.

For his service to our nation and for his dedication and contributions to US Army Aviation, Lawrence O. Bush is inducted into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame on October 9, 2021.

Thank you to all the veterans who served our nation, past, present and future. Memorial Day is a time to honor and reflect on the lives lost during our nation's many wars and conflicts but remember to take the time to honor the veterans in your life. God Bless America!

The 50th anniversary of the End of the Vietnam War

By Brian Zwart

This year marks a significant milestone in American history. On March 29, 2025, we commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of the conflict in Vietnam. The Vietnam War remains to this day, one of the most controversial and hotly debated eras in American history. While the politics of the conflict have often taken precedence when this war is discussed, we as American citizens should take the time to reflect on the veterans that bravely answered their nations call. Whether they were drafted or enlisted, every man and woman who served should be honored.

Today, many Vietnam Veterans are still facing obstacles. These are physical infirmities from being wounded in combat, or from contact with some truly horrible chemical agents such as Agent Orange. They are also still facing mental wounds, some of which will never heal. Most commonly referred to as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD, even more than 50 years later, the struggle to cope and understand all the events and situations they went through



Lawrence "Larry" Orie Bush