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HarborCountry®

Chamber of Commerce  
&  
Lodging Association

Connection  
the monthly newsletter



## Art Attack sees more business participation

It's time to wash that gray out of our eyes. Spring has sprung. The crust of dirt that was left on our lawns is beginning to wash away. Yet, it's too early to plant flowers. It's too early to do many of the things you're itching to do. So, what's a person to do?

One way to resolve that itch for color might be to immerse yourself in a tub of bright red latex paint. A more civilized approach would be to divert your attention

to an equally colorful event: the 11th Annual Art Attack, April 23 - 24.

It is now a Harbor Country tradition to begin the new "season" with Art Attack. These eight communities located in the most southwesterly part of Michigan have formed a synergistic bond that not only supports and promotes the local economy; it unifies a broad spectrum of artistic endeavors. Art Attack is an exhibition of that creativity in the traditional sense of

painting, drawing, film and photography, performance, jewelry, clay, sculpture and fiber. It is also an opportunity for the Harbor Country business community to express their creativity in the things they do every day— cake decorating, flower arranging, cooking, interior design, and more.

This symbiosis, this melding of business and the business of art, is the key to a decade of success for Art Attack. Rita Cochran, co-owner of Local Color Gallery in Union Pier, still reigns supreme as the dynamic leader of Art Attack. Every year she seems a bit more excited than the previous year. This year she is practically ecstatic.

"We have always been strong on business participation, but this year is one of the best we've ever had," she said. "It's also going to be a great year for art with three new galleries opening on Art Attack weekend. We have a lot of demonstrations. We even had to turn some away."

Cochran feels the diverse offerings during Art Attack are what bring hundreds of people back year after year. "It's not like we just put the art up on the wall and hope somebody comes along and looks at it," she explains. "Art Attack strives to be interactive. It's a chance to see art created, to meet and talk to the artist."

A brochure is available throughout Harbor Country and at the chamber office. You can also visit online at [www.harbor-country.org](http://www.harbor-country.org) and find the complete schedule in three clicks.

Art Attack is sponsored in part by the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce and the Harbor Country Lodging Association. The Art Attack committee is comprised of Rita and Jennifer Cochran, Liz Thomas, Chuck Garasic, Gene Halun and Melissa Stranard. We thank them, along with all the participants, for continuing a Harbor Country tradition.



**ARTISTS PREPARE** for Art Attack on April 23, 24, & 25. (Above) Master watercolorist James McComb reviews the color mixing of Liz Thomas. Thomas is the "mother" of Art Attack. It's beginnings are traced back to her pronouncement over 11 years ago, "Let's give them an Art Attack!" The rest is history. It is significant that she will have her first show at Local Color Gallery this year. McComb will be offering demonstrations at his Union Pier studio.

HCC



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## Strange bedfellows

By Michael Hojnacki, Chamber President

You would think that in this age of “connectivity” that we would all know what the other hand is doing. It seems, however, the more we get connected the farther away we get from staying in tune with what really matters.

We assume too much of our high-tech, stay-in-touch-constantly world. We want to be everything for everybody, but that is hardly the way the world works. The adage goes like this: You can please some of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time.

A recently “proposed” bit of legislation by New Buffalo Township has made many Chamber and Lodging members take notice. A draft of the proposed ordinance was dropped off at the office. Supervisor Agnes Conway thought it was something our boards might want to look at before it became a reality. I thanked her for keeping us connected.

As it turns out, there were two proposed laws that irked us equally. The first sought to control the rental of homes in the township through inspections and permit fees. The second called for the registration of all businesses and more fees, though they were annotated with a statement “...they will be paying personal property taxes.” Duh!

If there was justifiable reasoning for these proposals you could bet that most of us would have patted the government on the back and everyone would have felt good about it. Oh sure, somebody in township hall had a reason, but was it justified?

I can give you some history about the rental licensing ordinance. I have sat at almost every New Buffalo Township

Board meeting for the last two years. It started about a year ago when about three residents (all neighbors) complained to the township board about excessive noise at a home across the street from where they lived. The home was consistently rented based on their report. The renters were rude and noisy. They were seeking a 30 day minimum rental period-- long term.

Meanwhile, local rental agents, members of the chamber, voiced their concern about that time limit saying it would virtually choke off all of their business. The general feeling was that many second homeowners rent their homes to offset the mortgage payments. That certainly makes sense.

Now the township wants to say these rental properties are businesses and must be registered, inspected and assessed fees- \$10 administrative fee, \$35 for the first unit, \$25 for each additional unit were the proposed numbers. And then there were the fines for violations of the ordinance.

The business licensing ordinance has a little more merit, very little. It would require all business to provide information that could assist in police and fire protection, possibly contribute to a demographic database, and provide information for zoning. That's not bad, but making it a law, punishable by a fine of \$500, is totally unnecessary.

So New Buffalo Township, the Chamber Board of Directors has expressed its concern about over-regulating our business community. Rentals are the lifeblood of an economy that goes beyond housing-- restaurants, retail, attractions depend on these visitors. If there are problems with noise,

**See next page**

### Harbor Country® Connection

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## We have been Googled

As a Chamber or Lodging Association member, you might ask yourselves, 'what is the Chamber & HCLA doing for me?'. The answer is - plenty. For example, last month the Harbor Country Lodging Association approved a marketing budget through this fiscal year to advertise on Google, the world's most popular search engine. With so much at stake these days in this economy, the HCLA has placed its trust in the most powerful search engine to get the word out about Harbor Country.

Google uses text ads that appear as 'sponsor' links. Based on a variety of search keywords, our sponsored links appear when anyone types in something like 'Michigan Vacations' or 'Michigan Artists', to name a few. Our sponsored

links are right up there with some of the industry giants like Orbitz, Expedia, and Travelocity. This puts us on the worldwide map when it comes to anyone seeking a destination in Michigan. And it's not just travel related. Anyone seeking to buy a home or find a business will also see Harbor Country in many of these search results.

We are sure you will want to try this out for yourselves and see our ads on Google. The only thing we ask of our members is NOT to click on these sponsor links, because we are paying (per click) for these ads, and would prefer that this money spent is used by outside visitors, many of whom are discovering Harbor Country® for the first time.

The Chamber and Lodging

Association have consistently explored new and successful methods of promoting Harbor Country and its membership. In fact, we were recently complimented by the Travel Michigan marketing team for being well ahead of other CVBs, DMOs and Chambers on this side of the state when it comes to implementing some of the newest Internet marketing tools.

In addition, our Internet strategies are part of the reason Georgia Tech recently awarded Harbor Country as a 'Best Practices' organization. Being Googled is another step in this evolutionary process of expanding member benefits and world wide visibility.

## 2004 Guide surpasses goal

If there's an indicator that the economy is swinging to a better time, then maybe the annual Harbor Country Guide is the barometer. It was assumed that the guide had reached its full potential at 98 pages. It went over 100 pages this year!

We congratulate the guide committee led by Chuck Garasic, Liz Thomas and Trisha Miller and committee members AJ Boggio, Diane Botica, Patty Prino, Janet Hays, Mike and Marisue Hojnacki and Tim Rogers.



*A Lakeside Beach Cottage*  
**Jean-Marc and Pam Reynaud**  
 9087 Leo Lane, Lakeside, MI  
*General Membership Cottage*

*Rita's Cleaning Service*  
**23 Karwick Glen Drive, Michigan City, IN**  
*Out of Area Membership*

*Roger Harvey Gallery*  
**Roger Harvey**  
 33 N. Barton Street, New Buffalo, MI  
*Additional Membership*

*Lakeside Cottages*  
**Tim Covert**  
 P.O. Box 215, Three Oaks, MI  
*Additional Membership*

*R&D Forest Products*  
**611 Michigan Avenue, LaPorte, IN**  
*Associate Membership*

*Vacation Home Finders*  
**Tim O'Neil & Greg Dingens**  
 7650 Warren Woods, Three Oaks, MI  
*Additional membership*

*TLC Vacation Rentals of Harbor Country*  
**Tm Covert**  
 P.O. Box 215, Three Oaks, MI  
*General Membership*

### From previous page

that's a police matter. Oops! You don't have a police department. So, who would actually be enforcing these ordinances? Your zoning administrator? The clerk? A hired hand?

We suggest a strong, but reasonable noise ordinance. Your neighboring communities have these in place. The Village of Three Oaks passed one a little over a year

ago. If the problem stems from trash and litter, why not pass a trash and litter ordinance. It makes more sense than trying to regulate a business sector that, for the most part, has found it beneficial to regulate itself. Our rental agents attest that they have strict rules to follow by all their renters. It services them well; it serves their clients well.

Nobody is saying you're not going to get the occasional bad apple. I don't believe

we should be regulating because of the actions of a few. That's not the democratic way.

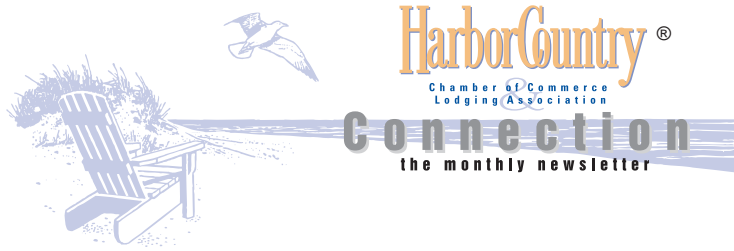
As far as business licensing, why not just ask us for the information you need? Don't make it a law; make it a request. First of all, that's the nice way to do things. Secondly, it makes us feel like you really care. We know you do. Why can't we just talk about these things before they become a spectacle?

**A POLL:** SHOULD GOVERNMENTS IN HARBOR COUNTRY REQUIRE THE REGISTRATION, INSPECTION AND ASSESS FEES FOR RENTAL PROPERTIES?

LET US KNOW! \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NOT SURE  
 FAX THIS PAGE  
 TO  
 269-756-9071

SHOULD ALL BUSINESSES BE LICENSED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NOT SURE



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## Latest marketing model is "Dickless"

Remember Dick and Jane? Do you remember seeing Spot run? These were the ponderings offered to us in that ever so white bread, 1950s suburban reading primer that started most of us on the way to a better understanding of our language.

Fortunately, the image of Dick and Jane was never cast in stone. Most of us realized that life was far more than a dominant male supporting a subservient housewife who raised an adoring group of children.



Author Yvonne DiVita

We are even more fortunate that somebody like Yvonne DiVita has taken it upon herself to demonstrate to the world that we have gone far beyond Dick and Jane. Her view of marketing is Dickless. Jane reigns and for a very good reason. When it comes to buying, she is the queen.

With the continuing development

of the Internet and the World Wide Web, Jane has become its supreme user outsurfing and outspending the Dicks of the world.

DiVita will present her marketing model to Harbor Country on May 12, 7 p.m. at the Harbor Grand in New Buffalo. A guest speaker at the Harbor Country Lodging Association's Annual Meeting, she will talk about her new book *Dickless Marketing™ Smart Marketing to Women Online* that urges businesses to break out of the 20th century mindset and understand that Jane wields the power, the money and the inclination to shop online. She not only buys for herself, but for her family, her business and often for Dick as well.

Author DiVita has many years of experience in developing and writing Web content and business articles for leading edge companies. She writes a monthly column and is a frequent contributor to technology magazines.

Don't miss this. It's free to Lodging members; \$15 for others (includes dinner). Reserve your seat by calling the Office at 269-469-5409.

# APRIL

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

**APRIL 22-** Unveiling of the 2004 Harbor Country Guide at Miller's Country House, Union Pier. 5:30 p.m. Be the first in your neighborhood to distribute the guides. Meet the cover artist and purchase a signed poster.

**APRIL 23, 24, 25-** The 11th Annual Art Attack is a celebration of all that is art. Features many artisans as well as local business people whose craft is their art-form.

**APRIL 27-** Harbor Country Board of Directors Meeting, Noon at Hannah's

Coming **MAY 12-** Yvonne DiVita on Dickless Marketing at the Harbor Grand, 7 p.m.

UPDATES AT [www.harborcountry.org/calendar](http://www.harborcountry.org/calendar)