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HarborCountry<sup>SM</sup>

Chamber of Commerce  
Lodging Association

Connection  
the monthly newsletter



## The need for speed

In this ever-shrinking world it's not a matter of how much information you have, it's all about how fast you can distribute it. It's really the same old distributive marketing scenario that existed since the first trade.

You can almost hear the first cavemonger, "I've got these furs sitting in my warehouse I can let go of today for a small mastadon." The deal is consummated and the buyer asks about delivery. "You want them when!" screams the cavemonger. It's always been about product and timing.

A large commodity these days is "information." Much of the world's data is now warehoused as electronic file-banking, inventories, research files, publications. (Even the Connection is available over the internet.) It wasn't more than a decade ago that information began trickling across telephone lines. Primarily numbers, slow connections didn't make that much of a difference. The best part was that once the numbers were keyboarded and acknowledged as correct they could be used anywhere in the world without the need of the laborious task of re-entering the same data.

On May 30, about 25 chamber members, business and government leaders, and concerned citizens met with five representatives from Berrien County Economic Development Department: Cindy LaGrow, Calli Berg, Colleen Villa, Shabaka Gibson and Brian Dissette. The public forum was part of the Connected Communities initiative in which the county is trying to ensure that each person living and working here has access to the level of internet connectivity they need for high quality work and play.

For many individuals, especially those picking up email and casually surfing the net, current speeds of 28.8 kbs serve their needs just fine. However, when you add pictures, graphs, drawings, video or sound to the transmission that same connection is like having your feet buried in mud.

The alternatives exist-- in the bigger cities. The group asked the county administrators when would the faster ISDN, DSL, Cable, Wireless and T1 lines be available to everyone. In this context, "everyone" means pretty much

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### P.E.T. Scholars honored

The 2002 recipients of P.E.T. (Partners in Education for Tomorrow) scholarships were honored at a luncheon at Hannah's Restaurant in New Buffalo on Thursday, May 23. (At left) Wayne Warner presented each student with their \$750 award: Virginia Dickman, River Valley, hopes to pursue a career in international business; Adam Noveroske, New Buffalo, will study criminal justice in pursuit of his dream of working for the FBI; Lindsey Lozmack, River Valley, will attend St. Mary's College while pursuing her studies in advertising and marketing; and Zackerie East, River Valley, will study communications to help fulfill his dream of becoming a broadcaster. P.E.T., a committee of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce, awards scholarships from available funds generally raised at their annual gold outing.



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**Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce and Lodging Association**  
530 South Whittaker Street, Suite F  
New Buffalo, Michigan 49117  
616-469-5409; fax 616-469-2257  
email: hccc@triton.net  
website: [www.harborcountry.org](http://www.harborcountry.org)

## 50th Flag Day Celebration No Penny Pinching Affair

After honoring Old Glory by hosting the world's largest Flag Day Parade for the past 50 years, the Village of Three Oaks, MI has decided it's time to allow Alivia Scurek to put her two-cents in. But Alivia isn't counting on mere pocket change to get what she's after. She's already raided the penny jar at home and withdrawn a dollar of her own money, hit up Dylan, her 9-year-old cousin, to come up with a buck out of his allowance and reportedly continues to "nag Grandma" to donate to the cause.

Riding atop the River Valley float in last year's Flag Day parade, 7-year-old Alivia of Three Oaks, remembers how she was just happy to be there. This year, she has bigger plans. Alivia and 28 other "little people" from the Harbor Country area are shaking down moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas and any other benevolent next of kin with alarming success, all vying to become the first Flag Day Parade Prince and Princess.

Stephanie Daniels, Director of the Three Oaks Township Library, along with Karen Gear, vice-president of Alliance Banking Company in Three Oaks and Penny Knowlton, owner of Penny's Little People in Three Oaks, are better known as Three Oaks' official "flag bearers." Emulating the esprit de corps of Betsy Ross, since 1996, the trio voluntarily stitches their time and effort, making sure the yearly Stars and Stripes tribute symbolically hangs over downtown Three Oaks. But just like old soldiers, the numbers of five to seven year old children entered in the annual children's Flag Day pageant were recently fading away. Nowadays, the hectic schedule facing a kindergartner or first-grader apparently resembles that of a

Fortune 500 CEO and allows for much less time on their social calendar. Pageant practice gradually gave way to soccer and t-ball practice. Flag Day 2001 witnessed Daniels and her committee having to face canceling the pageant three times due to lack of participation. "Kids have too much going on these days," admits Stephanie.

"Last year we only had one boy."

But this year, the 17 girls and 11 boys smiling and waving from the 2002 Flag Day float are signing up the old-fashioned way. They're earning it. Daniels, Gear and Knowlton literally hit the jackpot when the group announced the first Flag Day Prince and Princess penny-a-vote contest. No two-nights-a-week pageant practice, no suits, ties, and dresses, no placating judges and no stage door parents. Being true to the red, white and blue has suddenly developed an additional loyalty to an underlying shade of green thus creating a renewed, albeit commercial, sense of patriotism for Harbor Country children, their families and their friends. Unveiling the penny tossing campaign theme has engaged several Princes and Princesses in training, plus their relatives, in the kind of political arm twisting that would make our country's founding fathers proud when they declared the first Flag Day observance on June 14, 1777, at America's Continental Congress held in Philadelphia, PA.

Linda Hoffhines, mother of 6-year-old Ian Kirkpatrick, says her son is very sociable. He attends New Buffalo Elementary and was recruited by his soccer coach as a natural born candidate. Ian doesn't seem to be worried and predicts the dollar donation he'll be requesting from his father should be enough to win. In

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### Harbor Country Connection

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### Artistic Energy Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 6, Three Oaks, MI 49128  
Fax: 616-756-9071 • Voice: 616-756-9070  
email ~ mhojnacki@triton.net  
Michael & Marisue Hojnacki, Editors

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## Using good "Netiquette"

You're dressed to the nines for the social event, and mingling with the crowd, you happen to check yourself out in a mirror and discover to your horror that you have a big green piece of broccoli stuck to your teeth. All that time you thought you were making a good impression was in fact time spent making people cringe.

Unwittingly we can make the same kind of not so good "impressions" when communicating by email. Some people find it easier to read their own writing by typing everything ENTIRELY IN UPPERCASE. This is extremely offensive to astute Net users, who regard all uppercase as shouting, or "flam-

ing" them with a scathing remark. The most obvious offenders are Net newbies who are unaware of their offense until someone finally fires off a nasty reprimand.

In the business environment it is not wise to engulf business colleagues with an email that looks more like a dissertation. Respect your business partner's time by being polite, and to the point.

Unless you're being stalked, don't let emails go unanswered if a reply is warranted. You can quickly get a reputation for either being responsive or non-responsive to emails.

Then there's the Word Police. These are people that make it their business correcting everyone's grammar and typos. Unlike precision crafted legal documents, email is intended as a quick 'n dirty way for people to quickly communicate with one another, and typos are often a hurried slip of the keys that should not be viewed as an act of heresy. Yes, we could use a friendly nudge once in a while if we're collaborating on an important document that needs the help of a spell checker, but people that make themselves self appointed Internet guardians of correct spelling will be instead perceived as the Grammar Gestapo, and will find their emails end up quickly in the trash can - unread and unappreciated. Be kind to your Net friends and watch the Netiquette signs.

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between riding his bike and playing his favorite video game, 7-year-old Carter Gilpin from Three Oaks Elementary got drafted by his mother, Leigh Ann, to enter the contest. Carter's strategy is not to peak too early, which is why his family expects he'll gain enough momentum to come on strong at the end. Of course, first things first. Carter says he's "going to ask Mom for 100 pennies when she gets home."

By all indications, the pennies continue to roll in by the hundreds alongside loads of nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars. There's even been alleged sightings of \$20 dollar bills finding their way inside each cash box. Votes are cast by inserting money in numbered envelopes corresponding to the name of each boy and girl. Ballot boxes are located at Alliance Bank in Three Oaks and at the Three Oaks Library with final vote tallies expected at 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 10. Both Daniels and Gear claim this year's Flag Day Parade will be a huge success no matter who ends up wearing the crown and tiara. Most of the contest money raised will be used to defray the costs of hosting the parade with the remainder going towards prizes, such as T-shirts or medals for each individual Prince and Princess contestant.

After all the coins are counted and the last flag is folded for Harbor Country's longest continually running event, these penny-wise progeny of the Three Oaks Golden Anniversary Flag Day Parade will likely be remembered for giving the Pledge of Allegiance a whole new meaning.

*Comments and observations about this or any other topic of interest to chamber members may be addressed to AJ's new e-mail address: president@harborcountry.org*

## An affordable sales rep



Did you ever wonder about the value of a brochure? If you had one right now it could be working for you at numerous tourist-popular locations, you could be sending it out to potential customers, or you could be encouraging your hard-earned customers to come back.

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## SPEED from page 1

all of the Harbor Country members, except the school systems and a select few who might have wireless or satellite connections.

The local group felt that there is so much more potential here than meets the eye of the average bean counter sitting in a telecommunications office a hundred miles away. Often missed in official count is the potential offered by the second home owner-turned-telecommuter if the internet connectivity were there to warrant the commitment. Right now, the service isn't there, and the local leaders realize that it means a substantial dollar loss everyday that a second homeowner doesn't stay. It was a given fact that the second home owner market and tourism were the largest "industries" sustaining Harbor Country.

There was a promise to the county officials that our voice, small as it may be in the state-wide scheme of things, will not be silent. In due time, we might be known as the "mouse that roars."

new  
members  
may  
2002

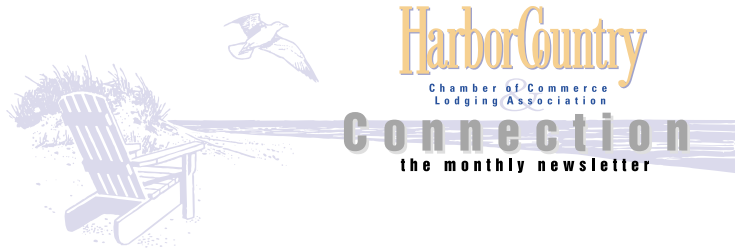
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Jonah Brockman-Owner  
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**Classier location for Classic Imports**

Classic Imports is now open at their new location at 18777 West U.S. 12 in New Buffalo. Formerly located on Red Arrow Highway in Union Pier, they served the needs of Harbor Country classic car owners for the past 11 years. Their new facility includes 4,800 square feet of interior space, and a securely fenced, alarmed and camera-equipped storage area. The reception area features the work of local artists such as Ken Gosh. The Pinette family (above)-- Mikhail, Dina, Renee, and Brandon-- were the hosts of an open house on May 24. For more information about storing your classic car or having it tuned and running to perfection call 616-469-2007.

**do it**

**JUNE 13-16- 50th Annual Three Oaks Flag Day Celebration** Weekend of festivities features a carnival, beer tent and dancing at the American Legion Pavilion, family events on Saturday and Sunday at St. Mary's, and the "World's Largest Flag Day Parade" at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

**JUNE 15- Lakefront SRO 9th Annual Home and Garden Benefit Tour** 11-6 p.m. throughout Harbor Country. Some of the area's most beautiful homes and gardens are selected. Event supports the needs of the homeless in Chicago and beyond. Call 773-561-3800 for more information.

**JUNE 15- Southshore Concert Band** This 61 piece band will play in Dewey Cannon Park, Three Oaks. 7:00 p.m. Bring your own chairs or blankets.

**JUNE 15 & 16- New Buffalo Sidewalk Days** Whittaker Street merchants bring their wares to the street for the weekend.