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HarborCountry®

Chamber of Commerce
&
Lodging Association

Connection
the monthly newsletter



COPSMART: Helping our local heroes

When you think of a law enforcement officer, a cop, you picture someone who is smart, strong, tough and in control of the situation. We have set a stage that doesn't allow these public servants to experience a normal range of feelings that "ordinary" people have; we expect them to be superhuman.

Even these dedicated people have begun to believe it. Yet, they do need help from time to time just like everyone else. It's got to be tough for an officer to admit he or she needs counseling. One of the most stressful occupations in America today comes with its fair share of alcoholism, divorce, even suicide. They need counseling.

But how do they get the help they need and deserve without it becoming the talk of the other officers? Is the boss going to find out? What about the clerk who files the insurance papers? These things loom like insurmountable brick walls across the path to proper counseling.

The result is that our local heroes, real people who face the real problems of life and the special problems associated with their job, rarely seek the help they need.

COPSMART is a program directed by Dr. Stan Showalter, a licensed professional with more than 30 years of experience working with law enforcement officers and the criminal justice system. He is also the Director and Chief Administrative Officer of the Swiss Institute of Criminology based in Lakeside, Michigan.

Now in its fifth year of operation, COPSMART is a non-profit counseling program for law enforcement officers and their families.

Since its inception, the program has provided almost 500 counseling sessions. The entire operation is supported by contributions from private individuals, professionals, business and civic organizations. All funds received go directly to pay for counseling. Therapists providing counseling do so at reduced rates as their contribution to the program.

One year after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, locally supported programs are still feeling the impact of the diversion of donations to the greater need of the time. A program such as COPSMART is balancing on the edge of extinction due to the lack of financial support and desperately needs funding to continue its work. That plea for support has been brought to light before the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, as well as presentations to many of the area civic organizations.

COPSMART is supported by most law enforcement administrators and is strongly backed by every Fraternal Order of Police lodge in Berrien County, as well as the Berrien County Deputies' Association.

You can help by sending a donation directly to COPSMART, P.O. Box 500, Lakeside, MI 49116. Let's face it, those who put their life on the line to protect us each and every day are the real heroes of our time. As much as we want to think they're invincible, the reality is they are just as vulnerable, maybe even more so, to the stresses of life. They need and deserve our help.

HCC



Sawyer Fest brings crowds

You would have thought Sawyer Garden Center was having a huge inventory closeout sale. That's the kind of crowds that came to downtown Sawyer on August 31 for the 2nd Annual Sawyer Festival. The downtown businesses were organized by Rose of Ramblin' Rose fame in what looks like the beginning of a tradition to bid farewell to the summer trade. The fest featured live music under a tent, food, a car show, sidewalk sale at Schlipp's, and the grand opening of The Scarlet Macaw Gallery. (More pix on page 4.)



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**Harbor Country® Chamber of
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530 South Whittaker Street, Suite F
New Buffalo, Michigan 49117
269-469-5409; fax 269-469-2257
email: harborcountry@triton.net
website: www.harborcountry.org

Membership Has It's Privileges:

Harbor Country Fast Becoming A Virtual Household Name

Invoking the "luck of the Irish" may or may not boost a football team's ranking, however, over the past 30 days or so, Harbor Country's popularity has seemingly benefitted from "the luck of the Google."

Credited for kicking off this remarkable turn of "e-vents" goes to the United States Patent and Trademark Office in Washington, D.C. for issuing the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Certificate of Registration No. 2,587,669 on July, 2, 2002.

The Harbor Country Service Mark is posted on the USPTO's Principal Register and will run for a period of 10 years from the date of registration. Once armed with this legal ammunition, the Chamber's marketing team huddled together and made the call. It was high time we lit this puppy.

Our Chamber webmaster, Ray Vasquez, who knows that the best defense is a good offense, triggered an online chain reaction by inserting our ® symbol into the field of play. Harbor Country's first big cyberscore came on August 6 when Google, the Internet's undisputed supreme authority among Search Engines, "reindexed" its listing of Harbor Country by adding the Chamber's official Circle-R mark. A more recent Google search for Harbor Country took 0.53 seconds and ranked Harbor Country® -The Official Site—www.harborcountry.org—as the number one listing. An even easier end around move allows searchers who type in Harbor Country to click on Google's "I'm Feeling Lucky" button which takes them directly to Google's top link— www.harborcountry.org.

Magically weaving its way through the World Wide Web, several other major Search Engines such as AOL, MSN and Yahoo!, followed suit by acknowledging Harbor Country's registered mark, each one anointing www.harborcountry.org order of the first rank. This same "spidering" effect continues today, using no performance-based fees and permeating throughout the Internet's estimated 100 million computers, with its more than 300 million users, growing at 40 to 50 percent per year. Undoubtedly, Harbor Country has landed a major coup!

Striving for recognition in any industry does not come without its price in today's cutthroat market economy. Corporate giants such as General Motors, IBM and Coca-Cola all go to great financial lengths to not only guard their products and services but will stop at virtually nothing to maintain their corporation's individuality and essence.

Your Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce took a similar courageous approach towards protecting its members and the Harbor Country name nearly two years ago. That bold move has finally paid off as to how we promote our unique corner of the world but much more than that, it affords all Chamber members the golden opportunity of taking advantage of Harbor Country's symbolic tour de force.

The run and gun commercial pace of summer has been replaced by a more conservative fiscal atmosphere so why not take the ball now and, in the words of one legendary Hall of Fame coach, "Run for daylight."

The game plan is simple. One of the Chamber's best marketing tools, www.harborcountrystore.com, has yet to reach its full potential. All it takes are bright, creative business owners with the desire to

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Harbor Country® Connection

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Artistic Energy Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 6, Three Oaks, MI 49128
Fax: 269-756-9071 • Voice: 269-756-9070
email ~ mhajnacki@triton.net
Michael & Marisue Hojnacki, Editors

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Free Search Engines going extinct?

In the past year we've seen a dramatic shift from "free" to paid online Internet services, most notably the Search Engines. Sites which once offered free listings now want you to pay to be listed. These services need to prop up their shrinking advertising income stream with new ways to make use of their services.

There's still a glimmer of relief for those of us being nicked & dimed to death on such services. Some sites still offer free submissions. But hurry, this may not last long. The following are some free listing sites to make note of: Google.com, SearchIt.com, Travigator.com, Ah-ha.com, Aardvarktravel.net, AltaVista.com (basic submit), SearchKing.com, WhatUSeek.com and WebWorldIndex.com

In addition to these holdouts that offer free service is Traveleze.com. The Chamber Internet committee has recently corresponded with their senior management and worked with them to set up city guides for Harbor Country on the Traveleze site. The layout is impressive, and includes several images of Harbor Country. In this arrangement, any

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promote themselves using today's most reliable and cost-effective sales force, the Internet. In the coming days ahead, the Chamber's Internet Committee will be fielding questions, providing answers and ironing out the details as to how the Chamber and harborcountrystore.com can best serve you, the members.

Harborcountrystore.com is always open and perhaps one of the Chamber site's next heavily trafficked, Harbor Country "Hot Deals," could be yours, especially if your own business hasn't expanded into cyberspace. But never fear. For computer wary Chamber members who still prefer the more traditional ground attack approach to promoting their business, the Chamber still offers the extremely inexpensive flyer insert program for each of the 75,000 printed copies of the Harbor Country Guide. Either way, the Harbor Country® brand provides a winning combination for Chamber members searching for a way to improve their fourth quarter revenues.

E-mail your comments to: president@harborcountry.org

new
members
august
2002

I Love Toy Trains
16 South Smith Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
269-469-6811

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of our area businesses using their free listing service will be grouped within the 8 city guides of Harbor Country. To get guaranteed top listings, they offer a "Sponsored Listing" (for a nominal fee) which always remains at the top of the list. To sign up, go to their web site: www.traveleze.com (click on "Free Listings" link at bottom of page).

If this is all Greek to you, then forward this news to your webmaster who can handle it for you. Remember, the basic listing is free, so question any additional charges added by your webmaster. It should not take more than 1/2 hour of your webmaster's time to set up the free listing. Free Internet services are on the endangered species list, so take every opportunity to make use of what's left.

Michigan B&B's help put finishing touches on Lowe's Promotion

A nationwide campaign in Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse stores called "Celebrating America with American Tradition," promotes the chain's American Tradition line of paints. The focal point of the promotion is a sweepstakes launched on August 28, 2002, in nearly 800 Lowe's stores. Prizes range from Lowe's "Power of Pride" caps for 2,500 Second Prize winners to the Grand Prize of a two-year lease on a 2003 Chevrolet Corvette.

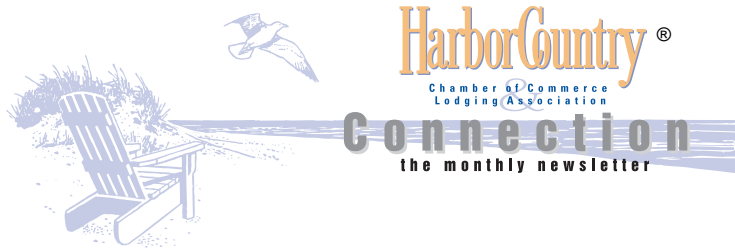
What's the First Prize? 500 lucky people will each win a two-night bed and breakfast stay for two at a participating member inn of Bed and Breakfast Inns ONLINE (www.bbonline.com). A special sweepstakes area of the site (www.bbonline.com/lowes.html) lets web visitors and sweepstakes entrants explore the participating inns. Once the winners are chosen, they'll return to BBOonline to choose a bed and breakfast for their free getaway.

Twenty-two of the participating inns are in Michigan, according to Randy Fought, founder and CEO of Bed & Breakfast Inns ONLINE. "The Celebrating America sweepstakes will bring Michigan inns to the attention of thousands of Lowe's customers," says Fought, whose Nashville-based firm provides a home on the Internet for some 4,000 bed and breakfasts and country inns across the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

A.J. Boggio, owner of locally participating White Rabbit Inn Bed and Breakfast in Lakeside, feels that bed and breakfasts have a very strong appeal right now. "It's a great way to relax, rekindle romance, or just get away from the stress of the big cities without the hassle of airport travel or driving long distances," Boggio says.

To enter the sweepstakes, visit the "Celebrating America with American Tradition" display in the paint departments of any Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse (27 of them in Michigan), or click the link at Bed & Breakfast Inns ONLINE. The entry period runs through September 22, with winners chosen at random.

Source: Bed & Breakfast Inns ONLINE, Local interest



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Ending the summer with a party

The Sawyer Festival presented a little bit of fun for everyone from book signings to sidewalk sales, dancing to fine art viewing.

(At left) One of the Macaws at the Scarlet Macaw Gallery kept a watchful eye on the proceedings and greeted as many visitors as possible with its charismatic squawk.

(Below) Road rallying fans got a first hand look a some finely tuned machines on display across from Ramblin Rose. Hundreds of people attended the day long festival helping to put a finishing touch on strong summer business and setting the tone for a secure future by saying, “We had so much fun; we won’t forget Sawyer!”



d o i t

SEPTEMBER 21 & 22- New Buffalo Sidewalk Sales, Whittaker Street merchants take their wares to the sidewalks for fun outdoor shopping and terrific post-season bargains.

SEPTEMBER 21- White Winemaking Class, at the Heat of the Vineyard Winery in Baroda. Participants will hand harvest grapes, crush, press and vinify five gallons of their own wine under the supervision of a master winemaker. Call 800-716-9463 for details.

SEPTEMBER 28 & 29- The 29th Apple Cider Century Bike Ride, Over 7,000 cyclists will pedal their way along 25, 50, 75 and 100 mile scenic countryside courses during one of the Nation’s largest century rides. Call 269-756-3361 for information.

COMING IN OCTOBER:
Weekends “Hallowscream Fright Fest” at Vickers Theatre, Three Oaks; **Oct. 5-** Red Winemaking Class; RV Gas Engine Show; 45th Annual Greek Night.