

# Community Calendar

\*Continued from page 4

**Fundraiser at Main Street Cafe**, all day. One-half of the day's proceeds will be donated to Pickford FCCLA to help offset costs of trip to National convention.

•Saturday, May 20: **Pickford High School Alumni Banquet Featuring Classes of 1956 and 2006**, 7 p.m., Pickford Public Schools Multiple Purpose Room. Reservations required by Thursday, May 11, at (906) 647-6571 or (906) 297-6912.

**DeTour**

•Thursday, May 4: **DeTour Union Presbyterian Church Annual Birthday Banquet**, 6 p.m. Family style meal and entertainment. Adult admission \$6, children age 12 and younger \$3.

**Goetzville, Raber**

•Wednesday, May 3: **Bryan Foster Book Signing**, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Gibby's Bar and Grill.  
•Sundays: **Raber AmVets**

**Auxiliary Bingo**, 6 p.m., Raber Township Hall, Goetzville.

**Mackinaw City**

•Monday, May 8: **Mackinaw Area Historical Society Meeting**, 7:30 p.m., Mackinaw Area Public Library. Speakers will be Archie Cosens of Mackinaw City and Jerry Cronan of St. Ignace on Straits ferries. Free of charge.

**Sault Ste. Marie**

•Wednesday, May 24: **Program of "Legends of Light: A Michigan Lighthouse Portfolio"** by author and photographer Ed Wargin, 7 p.m., Bayliss Public Library. Free of charge.

**Cheboygan**

•Saturday, May 13: **"The Queen of Bingo" Comedy Play**, 7:30 p.m., Cheboygan Opera House. Tickets cost \$21 per adult, \$18 per Opera House member, or \$10 per student; available at the door.

## Soldier Andrew Waits Leaves Grieving, But Proud, Family

\*Continued from page 3

the procession route on their motorcycles and carried American flags in protest of anti-war demonstrators, who have taunted the bereaved at other soldier funerals around the country. None of them showed up at this funeral, however. "The Patriot Guard Riders, these guys did such a great job that it really made me proud to be an

American," she said. "We went through a tunnel of flags."

The entire procession, said Ms. Waits, was unbelievable and an honor for her son.

"I've never seen anything like this except in movies, but this was real life," said Ms. Waits. "This was all for a little kid from Waterford Township. I know my son would be so honored."

Andrew Waits was born October 22, 1982, in Pontiac.

He is survived by his mother, two sisters, Laura and Catherine; his grandmother, Therese Mackin-Oja; an aunt and uncle, Patrice "Annie" Mackin and Gene Elmer; two other uncles, Thomas Mackin and Paul Mackin; his fiancée, Sarah Collias, and dear friend, Shannon Ziegler.

He is preceded in death by his father, Fred Waits; his grandparents, Patrick and Bonnie Mackin and George Waits, and a friend Spc. Benjamin Smith of the 101st Airborne Division, who was killed in Iraq.

A memorial service is to be held for Andrew Waits in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Wednesday, May 10.

## U.P. Nursery Provides Tree Seedlings for Michigan Forests

\*Continued from page 2

limits of Manistiquet. The property was part of a city park that was never developed. The city donated the tract to the Forest Service in the 1920s and the first crop of trees was established in 1934, including red and jack pine, with lesser amounts of white pine, white spruce, sugar maple, white ash, and white cedar. Later the city donated another 54 acres to the Forest Service to allow the facility to expand to its present size.

The facility was given its present name in 1936 to honor the memory of the late Thomas B. Wyman, known as the father of forest conservation in the Upper Peninsula. He was the founder of the Wyman School of the Woods, started in Munising in 1908. This school had a strong influence in directing public interest in forest conservation and management. Unfortunately, Wyman was forced to close the doors of the school when the majority of the student body was drafted into service during World War I. His school never reopened. At the time of its dedication in the name of Thomas B. Wyman, the nursery was the largest of its kind in the United States.

When the U.S. entered World War II, there was a shortage of rubber. Automobile and tractor tires were rationed for civilian use. Wyman Nursery played a part in a large experiment to produce natu-

ral rubber domestically. In the spring of 1942, 70 pounds of kok-saghyz (Russian dandelion) was obtained from the Soviet Union and flown to Michigan. Twenty-three acres at the nursery were seeded with the Russian dandelion. The Russians have been growing the plant for some time and claimed two million acres in cultivation, producing 50 to 100 pounds of rubber per acre each year. The rubber latex was an extract of the long, tubular taproot of the plant.

It took only one year for the Forest Service to realize that Wyman was not the right place to grow the plant. While production continued at other locations around the country, the effort at Wyman was halted and the Forest Service made the decision to close the nursery for the remainder of the war years. The Forest Service never reopened it. Rather the Department of Conservation (predecessor of the DNR) expressed a desire to use the nursery to grow tree seedlings for planting on state forest lands and took over the operation in 1949.

Much of the next two years was spent upgrading and fixing the facility, and readying the fields for planting. In May 1951, the first nursery crop under DNR management was seeded with a production goal of five million trees, and with special emphasis on white spruce production, both seedlings and transplants.

Today, Wyman's entire annual production of between five and seven million trees is used for the

reforestation of state-owned forests. Five million tree seedlings are enough to plant more than 5,000 acres of land. Michigan's timberland is the fifth largest in the United States, so Wyman plays a crucial role in assuring the good harvesting plans include reforestation provisions. The economic benefits to Michigan's economy are significant, too. More than \$12 billion of value added and 200,000 jobs are annually supported statewide through forest-based industries and tourism/recreation. Again, a tree nursery that supports forest harvest is a critical component in the overall picture in sustaining forest-based industries.

Mr. Mergener oversees the annual "lift" each spring. Beginning in April, crews begin the process of gently uprooting the young trees, two to three years old, sorting, counting, packing, and distributing them.

"Each day during the five-week lift cycle, we fill a semi truck with seedlings," he added. The seedlings are rushed to the various locations around the state, and planted before a week has passed between the harvest and the replanting work. Mr. Mergener says it is really important to get those little trees back into the soil as soon as possible so they can benefit from healthy roots, spring rains, and a long growing season. Once all the young trees are lifted and gone, Wyman is transformed as beds are prepared, bedding sites are rotated, and the next crop is sown. This entire highly organized and effi-

cient process is completed by the first of June. Then it's time to irrigate, fertilize, weed and watch over the new emerging crop.

All of this takes cooperation from the public, too. The seeds used to plant the fields at Wyman are collected by citizens who pick up cones and sell them to Wyman at \$25 a bushel. Mr. Mergener says he accepts cones from all over Michigan, marks them as to their place of origin, then tries to plant the young trees back into the general areas where the seeds were collected. Looking for a nice way to earn some extra cash in the fall? Contact Wyman Nursery and they can give you the details on how to get involved.

Growing the seedlings in the nursery and out-planting them in properly prepared sites are very important links in establishing a productive stand after a clearcut harvest in the pine forest type. Most of Wyman's production is now jack pine and red pine. Recent research has shown that on an average site, red pine in the Lakes States is up to 25 percent more productive than the pines growing in the southern region of the United States.

More recent efforts toward certifying Michigan's forests have made Wyman an even more important component of the forestry process in Michigan. As increased emphasis focuses on sustainable forests, Wyman will come even further out front and center in its role to help Michigan sustain its already productive and lush forests.

For more information on Wyman Nursery and Michigan's growing and expanding forest resource, visit the DNR Web site, [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), or contact a local DNR forester. The public also can learn a lot by taking part in Forest Management Unit open houses and compartment reviews. Check out the DNR Web site for information on a compartment review to attend.

## Relay for Life To Meet Monday

Mackinac County Relay for Life will host a meeting to kick off this year's fundraiser Monday, May 8, at 6:30 p.m. at the Mackinac County Airport Meeting Room in St. Ignace. The meeting is open to everyone who would like to learn more about the annual Relay for Life, which raises funds for cancer research. This year's St. Ignace Relay for Life is scheduled for July 28 and July 29, said organizer Tammy Massaway.

Those who would like more information may call Ms. Massaway at 643-8164.

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