

**OBITUARIES**

**Charles Hills Jr.**

Charles Willis Hills Jr. of Hessel enjoyed cooking, and worked as a cook at several area restaurants over the years. His "cheeseburger soup" was a favorite dish of his patrons. For many years, he owned and operated The Ponderosa Restaurant at Nunn's Creek, and he also sold smoked whitefish.



**Charles Willis Hills Jr.**

Mr. Hills was 81 when he died Wednesday, June 25, 2008, at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City.

He was born December 14, 1926, in Pellston, to Charles Willis and Maud (nee Duncan) Hills.

Friends recall that Mr. Hills was good with animals, and nursed many animals back to health, including a raccoon, skunk, bobcat, and monkey. Most recently, Mr. Hills enjoyed the company of a hawk that stayed near him most of one summer.

Mr. Hills also enjoyed gardening and keeping his yard maintained. He enjoyed hunting and fishing, as well.

Mr. Hills is survived by his life partner of 29 years, Dorothy Jean McKerchie, and her four children and their families, Phyllis and Robert Gilray of Temperance, Carol and Robert Holland of Cedarville, Robert McKerchie of Appleton, Wisconsin, and Michael and Val McKerchie of Forest Junction, Wisconsin; nine grandchildren and their families, Ben Gilray, Aaron and Sarah Gilray,

Heather and David Veth, Cory Holland, Miranda McKerchie, Brent McKerchie, Jennifer and Joshua Webb, Jessica Shaurette, and Tommy Bunnell, and seven great-grandchildren, Isabella Holland, Merritt Veth, Delia Veth, Gunner Veth, Hunter Gilray, Natalie Kohl, and Kendra Wilby.

Mr. Hills was preceded in death by his parents, several other family members, and by his grandson, Brent Gilray.

A memorial service will be Saturday, July 12, at 11 a.m. at Cedar Cemetery in Cedarville. A luncheon will follow at Bethel Lutheran Church in Cedarville.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Les Cheneaux Ambulance Auxiliary, P.O. Box 453, Hessel, 49745.

Reamer Galer Funeral Home of Pickford assisted the family with arrangements.

**Les Cheneaux**

The Fourth of July is upon us once more and it's nice to see red, white, and blue decorations everywhere. A parade and evening fireworks will be part of the local celebration Friday.

John and Janey Montgomery of North LaSalle Island entertained some interesting guests recently. Colonel Louie A. Babbitt United States Air Force Res. and his wife, Gloria, from Placerville, California, were visitors at the Montgomery cottage to celebrate their 43rd wedding anniversary. Colonel Babbitt and Mr. Montgomery flew together more than 50 years ago in Spangdahlem, Germany. Colonel Babbitt subsequently flew in the B-58 Hustler which was capable of flying at mach 2 plus. The Babbitts

have traveled extensively, owing to military assignments that spanned 34 years, and lived overseas for 10 years. They have also been master gardeners for many years.

Originally from Northville, this was their first trip over the Mackinac Bridge and into the Upper Peninsula. Colonel Babbitt took part in three wars, World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War.

The Historical Museum in Cedarville has taken on a new look. The interior has been rearranged this year and it is almost like walking through a village. Hotel memorabilia is in one area, Indian artifacts in a special corner, an old-fashioned laundry, a living room; all have their own displays. Mary Hill and Cynthia Smith put in long hours to

establish this depiction of early Cedarville and Hessel.

A trip to Cheboygan last week took place during the town's "Wanigan Race." Rafts made from wooden planks or logs were hand-poled down the Cheboygan River, ending in a chili cook-off. Each raft had a little house with smoke rolling out of a chimney where, inside, chili was apparently being cooked. As we were visiting a grandson and his wife, Mark and Taylor Oberman who live on the river, we watched this event and it was an interesting spectacle. It was also nice last week to have a visit from a nephew, Bob Tidey and his wife, Mary Jo, from Rockford.

The Les Cheneaux Community Library will host a book sale

Tuesday, July 1, Wednesday, July 2, and Thursday, July 3. Also at that time, the benches decorated by local artists will be on display for the silent auction, sponsored by the Les Cheneaux Education Foundation. Bids may be placed through the month of July, when the final, lucky bidders will be announced.

A reminder to sailors that the Ensign Class 31 of Les Cheneaux will host the 2008 Ensign Class Region V Championship Regatta Thursday, July 10, through Saturday, July 12, in Wilderness Bay. The races will begin at 10:30 a.m. Friday and Saturday of that week.



By Helen Shoberg  
484-2626 · helenshoberg@centurytel.net

**Pickford**

By Audrey Hutchison  
484-7825



Seven-month-old Levi Robert Van Luven was baptized Sunday, June 29, at the Methodist Church in Pickford. His parents are Kaye Marie and Kenneth Van Luven of Pickford. Pastor Paul Gruenberg officiated. Levi's grandparents, Sharon Shaw and Dan Fick, were present, as well as Levi's great-grandparents, Melvin and Cathy Thorne and Bobby Joe and Audrey Hutchison.

A picnic celebration gathering followed at the home of Ronald

Van Luven, Levi's grandfather, who stayed home and barbecued corn for the celebration. There were approximately 45 family members and friends at the picnic.

Brandy Clawson drove at the Kinross International Speedway Friday evening for the first time this year, and won her first race, driving the white #35 Honda. Her mom, Jodi Kuczynski, said they were glad to see her racing and proud that she won her first race this year.

Pickford Historical Society will have a Hamburger Bash in the lower level of the Pickford Township Hall Saturday, July 12, from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. Stanley Schmitgal, president of the Historical Society, reported the Pickin' and Grinnin' Band will play music, and everyone is welcome. Admission is by donation only and the proceeds will go toward operation expenses at the museum.



Levi Van Luven is baptized, pictured here (from left) with Pastor Paul Gruenberg and his parents, Kaye Marie and Kenneth Van Luven of Pickford.

**ESPN Will Film Documentary on Mackinac Race**

The sports channel, ESPN Classic, is producing a documentary on the 100th sailing of the Chicago Yacht Club's Race to Mackinac.

More than 4,500 sailors aboard 460 sailboats will participate in the world's longest annual freshwater sailing race. The 333-nautical-mile event begins Saturday, July 19, off Chicago's lakefront near Navy Pier. The finish line is a line between Mackinac Island and the Round Island Lighthouse.

The program will be broadcast worldwide on ESPN Classic twice in late 2008, with the first airing scheduled for Sunday, November 9, at noon Eastern Standard Time.

"The Race to Mackinac is an eagerly anticipated event by thousands of sailors each year," said Greg Miarecki, race chairman. "The history, the adventure, and the competition are all reasons we come back to Mackinac Island each year, and our ability to share this experience with our families and friends makes it all the more special. We look forward to sharing this terrific event with millions of people around the globe."

Gary Jobson of ESPN, also a decorated racing sailor, will produce the documentary. The program will feature highlights of the race history, with special emphasis on the technological sailing advancements over the decades.

"The Race to Mackinac is one of America's icons of yacht racing," said Mr. Jobson. "We are proud to document the 100th running of the Mac for ESPN. It is the highlight of the racing season in 2008."

The Chicago Yacht Club, which organizes the event, has about 1,500 members.

**U.P. State Retirees Will Meet July 7**

Upper Peninsula Chapter 16 of the State Employee Retirees Association will host its spring luncheon Monday, July 7, at 1:30 p.m. in the conference room at the State Office Building in Escanaba.

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