

Pincombe Family Opens Store in Downtown St. Ignace

By Mark Tower

The Pincombe family, hailing from Lenox Township in northern Macomb County, decided earlier this year to make a major life change when they opened a convenience store on State Street in St. Ignace.

"We had thought about moving up here for a long time," said owner Ernest Pincombe. "We love it up here."

Mr. Pincombe, who has family in the Cheboygan and Onaway areas, said his immediate family has been visiting northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula for a long time and recently saw an opportunity to operate a store in St. Ignace.

Bargains by the Shore became the city's newest start-up business and the Pincombe family was introduced to a new life in the small waterfront community.

The family business, which also includes his wife, Laura Pincombe, and son, Sean Pincombe, who manages the store, is an attempt to bring low prices and a wide selection of products to an area lacking a diverse retail mix, Mr. Pincombe said.

"We wanted to bring different kinds of stuff for tourists to shop for," he said. "Now, it has kind of become that we are here to give locals what they want."

The store, which sells toiletries, snack foods, children's toys, clothing, and gifts, opened August 23 and expanded into the adjacent storefront about one month ago. Like some other businesses in town, Bargains by the Shore also offers a bill pay service in which customers can pay utility bills at the counter.



From left, Sean, Laura, and Ernest Pincombe pose in front of their new family-run convenience store, Bargains by the Shore, on State Street between the Secretary of State office and St. Ignace City Hall. The Pincombe family, originally from Lenox Township in northern Macomb County, said they have enjoyed getting to know the community in St. Ignace.

"The idea for this store is all about the services and the convenience," Mr. Pincombe said. "We wanted to provide something here year-around for the residents."

Mr. and Mrs. Pincombe are

behind the counter running the business.

Mr. Pincombe said the variety of products has caused many customers to take wild guesses at the type of shop the family is running, responses running the gamut from "grocery store" to "dollar store."

"We have been called everything," he said. The products and services they hope to offer the community, he said, depend entirely on what local customers want.

"What helps us is we get whatever people ask for, as long as we can," Sean Pincombe said. He said although most businesses are scaling down for the winter, they have seen more and more people come through their doors as the store becomes better known in the community.

The family said it understands the financial hardships of living in an economically depressed state and region.

"We really try to do it all as cheap as we can," Mr. Pincombe said.

Some of the store's products and services, he said, have a small profit margin, which he hopes his customers will appreciate.

The family said they would like to be in business in St. Ignace for the long haul, and purposely opened the store before winter to see if they could make it through the off-season.

The store, between the Secretary of State and City Hall on State Street, has winter hours of 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 8 p.m. Sundays.

Baptist Church Presents Christmas Cantata in Hessel and Rudyard

The Fundamental Baptist Church in Hessel, and again Sunday, December 20, at 6 p.m. at Fundamental Baptist Church in Rudyard. The public is invited to attend.

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Chippewa Theater Guild Presents 'Snow Child' December 18, 19, 20

The Chippewa Theater Guild, formerly known as the Sault Community Theater, will present the Holiday play "Snow Child" Friday, December 18, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, December 19, and Sunday, December 20, at 2 p.m. at the Guild Theater in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Chippewa Theater Guild, formerly known as the Sault Community Theater, will present the Holiday play "Snow Child" Friday, December 18, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, December 19, and Sunday, December 20, at 2 p.m. at the Guild Theater in Sault Ste. Marie.

Rep. McDowell Holds Office Hours

State Representative Gary McDowell will have office hours Monday, December 14, in Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, and Petoskey.

County Courthouse Annex Meeting Room, third floor, in Sault Ste. Marie; noon to 1 p.m. at the Mackinac County Courthouse Annex in St. Ignace; 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Petoskey City Hall Community Room in Petoskey.

Powell Will Visit St. Ignace Library

Jennifer Powell of St. Ignace, author of "What I Saw on Mackinac," a book for toddlers, will visit St. Ignace Public Library from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, December 10, for a book release open house and signing.

elementary schoolteacher, wrote and produced her own artwork for the book.

All are welcome to attend the open house and talk with Mrs. Powell about her first published book and the experience she gained during the project.

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