

THE NITTY GRITTY

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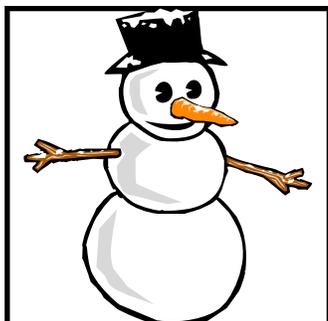
Portage Yesteryear

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FOOD PANTRY
at Christ UMC
every Saturday

Events

- Sunday Worship, Christ UMC, 9:30 am; Sunday School, 11:00 am
- Council meetings, 1st & 3rd Mondays, Village Hall, 7 pm
- Portage Lions, 2nd & 4th Mondays, Christ UMC, 7 pm
- Food Pantry, Saturdays, Christ UMC
- Feb 15, 9-noon, recycling trailer



The Nitty Gritty is sponsored by the Portage Lions Club. Send comments and suggestions to portagelions@dacor.net.

INCOME TAXES DUE JAN 31

Residents of Portage Village are subject to a 1% income tax. This is due by January 31, 2014 for the current taxable year, 2013. This ordinance was written and put in place in 2009. It is recommended to use the website at R.I.T.A. (Regional Income Tax Agency) www.ritaohio.com to make payments. Starting last year, a \$50 penalty will be assessed on the income tax bill due by any resident who earned income and did not file and pay their due taxes by that date.

First-time tax payers must also make an initial estimate of earnings for the new tax year and submit the first quarter of estimated taxes. This estimate should be fairly close (about 90%) to the actual earnings of the individual. All tax payers are required to make estimates for the new tax year. By Jan 31, pay any due amount remaining from 2013 and one quarter of 2014 according to your estimated earnings in the new year. Every 3 months make a 25% payment when you receive your statement.

If anyone has any questions, they should contact R.I.T.A. through www.ritaohio.com or 1-800-860-7482.

In other council news, recently hired village solicitor Anthony Hunter resigned to take a different job. Paul Schaff will continue on as solicitor. Changes in O.P.E.R.S regulations require monthly contributions from their members. As a result, council members will be paid monthly instead of quarterly. Zoning maps have been completed by the county, showing the annexation of the STONECO properties.

MISSION MOMENT

The United Methodist Women is an organization of Christ United Methodist Church with a focus on missions. Several missions, local, national and international, are supported each year by the group. One mission activity is participating in the gathering of kits for use by Church World Service. There are several types of kits that can be assembled, including health, school, clean up and baby kits. In late fall, kits are taken to the Festival of Sharing in Westerville for distribution by the Church World Service. Kits are distributed world wide wherever there is need, frequently after a disaster.

This year, our local group will be assembling health kits. Needed for each health kit: 1 washcloth, 1 hand towel (16"x28"), 1 wide tooth comb, 1 nail clipper, 1 bar of bath sized soap (in wrapper), 1 toothbrush (in original packaging), and 6 standard sized band-aids. If you would like to help with this mission project, please drop off items at the church.

President Anne Deutschman

IN PORTAGE YESTERYEAR . . .

Article taken from *The Daily Sentinel-Tribune*, September 28, 1977

Indian Trade aids Portage at Beginning—by Elizabeth Plummer

Portage was once an important center of Indian trade in northwest Ohio. In fact, it was considered to be the peer of Perrysburg, a prominent collection point for the furs demanded by the Eastern markets.

To purchase these valuable animal skins, Collister Haskins built a log cabin trading post just west of present Main Street in 1824 or 1829. It was an ideal location, being located on the south bank of the Portage River. Indians who traveled the region by canoe could dock their canoes and trade pelts with Collister. The principal furs offered were bear, wolf, muskrat, raccoon, fisher, the red cross and the silver-gray fox.

In exchange, he offered such novelties as Turkey red and Merrimac blue calicoes, red and green blankets, large cotton handkerchiefs, shawls (used as turbans), guns, tomahawks, butcher knives, powder, lead shot, lead balls, brass trinkets, rings, beads, small bells to ornament the sides of leggings, silver brooches, rings for the nose and the ears and Turkish vermilion to paint the face. Especially great items of trade were fine saddles and highly ornamented bridles trimmed with silver-plated bits, tinsel, and colored leathers.

Collister Haskins had not much previous mercantile experience before establishing his trading post. He was born in North Prescott, Massachusetts on Aug 25, 1799. During his childhood, the family moved to New Salem, Massachusetts.

Evidently, he must have learned how to survive in the wilderness while there, for in 1817 he emigrated to Waterville, Ohio, which bordered the frontier. On June 16, 1818 at the age of 18, he married Fanny Gunn of Waterville. The couple soon entered the wild, building a log cabin on Granger's Island in the Maumee River, where they lived from 1821 to 1824. In July of 1824, Collister Haskins bought a plot of land on the eastern border of Liberty Township, close to present-day Portage. His friends from Waterville, 12 miles distant, helped him to construct a log cabin on the site in September 1824.

Collister and Fanny Haskins moved to this land of dense forest, prairies, swamps and streams. For their seven children, it must have been fun to play in the woods and in the creek situated near the cabin, but for their parents, it must have been a time of excitement and loneliness.

It was exciting to carve out a home in the wilderness, but lonely, too, for the nearest neighbors were 12 miles away. Besides the Indians, the only other human contact was the mailman who passed through Portage once every two weeks. He had petitioned for a post office to be established at Portage in 1828; the petition was granted Jan 29, 1829, and he was appointed postmaster, a position he held for 18 years.

In 1833, Collister Haskins built a log cabin on the village site for his hired man, English. Quickly, his log cabin in Liberty Township and English's cabins became centers of hospitality for weary travelers and surrounding neighbors. The Lee Moore family, the second family to settle in Bowling Green, found refuge in English' cabin during the fall of 1833 as they built their house on Sand Ridge Road. Haskins often opened his home to ministers of various denominations to hold services; it was reported the Methodist and the members of the United Brethren Church worshipped there.

By 1835, the Haskins' solitude was broken by the arrival of white families who settled north of the Portage River. Adam Ross founded a town amount them, but his site was inferior to the site later selected by Haskins.

For their children, classes were begun in English's cabin in 1835. Thirty-six pupils attended with William North as their teacher. The following year, Collister Haskins had the east half of Portage surveyed by Neptune Nearing into lots. He built a house and resided there until his death on May 7, 1872.



By 1842, the village was still very primitive. There were no mercantile accommodations beyond the little stock of goods Ephraim Simmons kept in his tavern. Settlers often had to go to Bowling Green and often to Perrysburg for their groceries and dry goods. Such a trip was quite arduous, for the traveler was forced to use barely passable wagon trails, to make his way around the timber, climb over fallen trees and wade through water, while all the time fighting mosquitoes.

As the surrounding swamp land was drained, Portage began to grow as farming became prosperous. In 1855, Henry Haskins, Collister's son, built a mercantile building, and Captain Knaggs built The Pioneer Hotel. By 1857, Portage had grown to such an extent that 30 citizens petitioned the state legislature for it to be incorporated. The petition was granted Dec 12, 1857, and the mayor-council form of government was established.

During this period, Portage was an important center of trade for the outlying agricultural area. It provided social outlets as well. Fairs of the Wood County Agricultural Society were held, while political meetings were fairly common. The Methodist Episcopal Church and the United Brethren Church had activities as well.

In 1890, Portage became well-known throughout oildom for its richly producing oil well. The Palmer Oil Co. well yielded 250,000 barrels prior to the close of 1890; this was a flow of a 150 barrels a day. This temporarily brought many people and prosperity to Portage but, as the oil boom dissipated, the people left.

Still, Portage had grown in 50 years from a trading post to a sizeable town. Population statistics indicate that 199 lived there in 1840, 403 in 1850, 833 in 1860, 1069 in 1870, 1434 in 1880 and 2328 in 1890.