

MICHIGAN MAN NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 3, 2004

My, how the time does fly. Despite all my good intentions of getting the newsletter ready to go the first of the month, a couple of days always slide by and wink as I scramble to get it out at least within the first week. But!!! If I were ever prompt and on time for anything, well, that just wouldn't be me. As my guitar partner used to call nine-thirty or quarter to ten. Jazz nine. Meaning, if we're scheduled to start at nine kinda count t on ten. Jazz nine.

Anyway. Hope you all had a great Thanksgiving. Ours was wonderful as we spent it with my wife's family in Gaylord. Just wonderful. My ten year old niece brought out her first attempt at pumpkin pie and I ate two pieces and awarded her the family blue ribbon for her effort, if not her recipe.

Thanksgiving used to be, when we were young and hungry, a one day focal point of food and familiar faces. As we entered into the school years it became a four day vacation, marked by food with familiar faces and football, either viewed from the couch or played on the frozen ground over the long weekend. Moving into adulthood Thanksgiving became the kickoff point of the holiday season, shopping, decorating, planning, etc. i must be honest and forgive me if I either sound maudlin or a bit evangelical but Thanksgiving has taken up permanent residence in my list of things to do each day. It is neither a day or a season at this point in my life. It is part of my daily mantra.

I am so thankful for all the blessings of this life and I feel compelled to share them with you. Please bear with me.

I am thankful for a healthy family; a wonderful wife and two

strapping sons who like music and or sports. I am thankful for a small town where we know enough about each other to be helpful and know enough not to cross certain lines when it comes to more private matters. I am thankful for teachers and coaches who know my home phone number. I'm thankful for friends that I met when I was a child and that I still see these days. I'm thankful for health that still allows me to run up and down a basketball court or carry my golf bag and walk eighteen holes. I'm thankful for a community of faith that through a combined effort still pull off small miracles that provide spiritual if not material sustenance in hard times.

I'm thankful that I can still enjoy my job. Of course it wouldn't be possible if it weren't for people like you who I have come into contact with over the years and for that I am truly grateful. I appreciate the times you come out to listen or to talk and the comments you send back about the newsletter or articles I write for the Straitsland Resorter. I don't mean to sound too mushy and gushy but I am very thankful for you folks who I have met over the years. It makes what I do seem worthwhile and I suppose there is very little more than a person can ask than to spend his time and effort and feel like somewhere, somehow he or she is making a difference. Thank you.

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Whew!!!!!! Got that out of the way. Sorry if I dripped any of that thick, gooey sentiment on you. How about a little Thanksgiving poem?? Thanks to Barb and Terry for this one.

**'T WAS THE NIGHT OF THANKSGIVING, BUT I JUST
COULDN'T SLEEP
I TRIED COUNTING BACKWARDS, I TRIED COUNTING**

SHEEP.

THE LEFTOVERS BECKONED - THE DARK MEAT AND WHITE.

BUT I FOUGHT THE TEMPTATION WITH ALL OF MY MIGHT.

TOSSING AND TURNING IN ANTICIPATION,

THE THOUGHT OF A SNACK BECAME INFATUATION.

SO I RACED TO THE KITCHEN, FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR.

AND GAZED AT THE FRIDGE FULL OF GOODIES GALORE.

I FELT MYSELF SWELLING SO PLUMP AND SO ROUND,

'TILL ALL OF A SUDDEN I ROSE OFF THE GROUND.

I CRASHED THROUGH THE CEILING FLOATING INTO THE

SKY

WITH A MOUTHFUL OF PUDDING AND A HANDFUL OF PIE.

BUT I MANAGED TO YELL AS I SOARED PAST THE TREES

HAPPY EATING TO ALL, PASS THE CRANBERRIES PLEASE.

MAY YOUR STUFFING BE TASTY, MAY YOUR TURKEY BE

PLUMP

MAY YOUR POTATOES AND GRAVY HAVE NARY A LUMP.

MAY YOUR YAMS BE DELICIOUS, MAY YOUR PIES TAKE THE

PRIZE

& MAY YOUR THANKSGIVING DINNER STAY OFF OF YOUR

THIGHS.

So I'm a little late. Like I said, Thanksgiving is a year 'round affair. I know you've got a lot of Christmas shopping to do so I won't keep you too long. Here is my schedule for what's left of December and all of January. Time to break out the snowshoes!! Pray for snow!!!!

DECEMBER

Wednesdays

12/1 & 12/22 O'Toole's in Novi 9-1

12/29 Nubs Nob in Harbor Springs 3-6

Thursdays

12/2 & 12/23 DIck O'Dow's In
Birmingham 9-1
12/9 & 12/16 Noggin Room in the
Perry Hotel
Petoskey 7-11
12/30 Nubs Nob Harbor Springs 3-6

Fridays

12/3, 12/10, & 12/17 Four Green
Fields in Royal Oak
9-1

Saturdays

12/11 & 12/18 Hoops in Auburn Hills
9-1

Sunday and Monday

12/26 & 12/27 Noggin Room in The
Perry Hotel 7-11

January

Wednesdays

1/5 & 1/19 O'Toole's in Novi 10-2

Thursdays

1/6 & 1/20 Dick O'Dow's in
Birmingham 9-1

1/13 Noggin Room Petoskey 7-11

Fridays

1/7, 1/14, 1/21 Four Green Fields in
Royal Oak

Saturdays

1/1 & 1/15 Nub's Nob in Harbor
Springs 3-6

1/8 & 1/22 Hoops in Auburn Hills 9
-1

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My talented and man-in-a-family-way, web master John Kerr has created a Yahoo readers group. I've mentioned this before but if you would like to go to <http://www.yahogroups.com> then type in MIke Ridley, you can join and access back issues of the Michigan Man Newsletter. Take a look and let me know what you think. Again, Yahoo does not spam you or share your address with anyone.

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Some more E mail humor from my dear sister
Teresa!!!

I planted some bird seed. A bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it.

I had amnesia once -- or twice.

I went to San Francisco. I found someone's heart. Now what?

Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.

All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

If the world was a logical place, men would ride horses side saddle.

What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?

They told me I was gullible ... and I believed them.

Teach a child to be polite and courteous in the home and, when he grows up,
he'll never be able to merge his car on to a freeway.

Two can live as cheaply as one, for half as long.

Experience is the thing you have left when everything else is gone.

What if there were no hypothetical questions?

One nice thing about egotists: They don't talk about other people.

When the only tool you own is a hammer, every problem begins to look like a nail.

A flashlight is a case for holding dead batteries.

What was the greatest thing before sliced bread? Hmmmm?

My weight is perfect for my height -- which varies.

I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.

The cost of living hasn't affected its popularity.

How can there be self-help "groups"?

Is there another word for synonym?

Where do forest rangers go to "get away from it all"?

The speed of time is one-second per second.

Is it possible to be totally partial?

What's another word for thesaurus?

Is Marx's tomb a communist plot?

If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain whales?

Show me a man with both feet firmly on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't get his pants off.

It's not an optical illusion. It just looks like one.

Is it my imagination, or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?

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I don't know too many people that don't enjoy good movies and after being holed up in motel for a week I took in three good ones, two which I had seen before and a third whodunit I had not. The Silence of the Lambs, however appetite spoiling, ranks as one of my favorite all time movies and Slingblade is one of the best low budget sleeper movies of all time. I watched "Storyville" with James Spader and the late, great Jason Robards and was pleasantly surprised. Not a top ten but an enjoyable flick. A top ten list, submitted by Mr. Bruce, the eclectic and eccentric bar keep at Dick Dow's. Come to think of it, all the barkeeps at Dick O'Dow's are eclectic and eccentric. Mr. Craig is even plugged in and electric, as well. Well, enough play on words and let's look at Bruce's top ten movie list.

1. The Big Chill
2. Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
3. Miller's Crossing
4. A Few Good Men
5. In America
6. Field of Dreams
7. The Last of the Mohicans
8. Best of the Best
9. In the Bedroom
10. Fargo

Honestly, I haven't seen two of these flicks so I've got some work to do. If you would like to submit a list of your favorites, we'll have

a few additions next month.

So, no jokes this month but I thought I would leave you with a prayer. If you are called on to do the blessing at the family gathering this holiday season this one seems to hit home every time. Until next month, best holiday wishes to all of you and your families. And please, be safe.

We thank thee for food and remember the hungry
We thank thee for health and remember the sick
We thank thee for friends and remember the friendless
We thank thee for family and remember the homeless
We thank thee for freedom and remember the enslaved
May the remembrance stir us to service and that thy gifts to us
may be used for this.
Amen and may God Bless you all.

This issue brought you by, you guessed it, Santa's Little
Helpers