



**Megan VerMerris**, shown with her cousins (left to right) Jonathan, Nathan, and David Clausing and her brother, Tyler. (Photo submitted by Nancy VerMerris.)

### An unusual birthday request

By Nancy VerMerris and Mary Weimer

For her third birthday, Megan VerMerris wanted a cake that combined two of her favorite things, water towers and smiley faces. Megan lives in Grand Rapids with her parents Mark and Sarah VerMerris. But when she visits her grandparents, Dave and Nancy VerMerris in Fruitport, it is a tough call to determine whether the Fruitport water tower or visiting her grandparents generates the most excitement.

Megan's mother, Sarah, loves to create and decorate cakes for every birthday. Megan's first birthday cake was in the shape of a puppy, and her second birthday cake was in the shape of a butterfly.

When Sarah asked her what she would like for her third birthday, Megan's immediate response was "water tower." Most people wouldn't think of that, but Megan did, and she got her wish. •

### Slide into winter at the Grand Rapids Children's Museum

(Submitted by the Grand Rapids Children's Museum)

Icy fun is back by popular demand! Slide into winter with Penguin Play at the museum through January 17, 2010.

Penguin Play has been a favorite for children and their families since debuting in 2005. The children's museum has experienced record-breaking attendance during this exhibit. What's even more exciting is that the idea for Penguin Play started with a young visitor who recommended a penguin area in the museum. Now hundreds of children are having an icy blast!

"The holiday season can become a very hectic time for families. Visiting the Grand Rapids Children's Museum allows children to do just what children should be doing: Playing!" said Grand Rapids Children's Museum Executive Director Robert Dean. "The Penguin Play exhibit allows families to come together for some invigorating, hands-on fun during the cold winter weather."

Waddle into the museum and explore the icy village, play in the ice castle and slide into a chilly ice pit. Children can put on a penguin costume and imitate their favorite penguin moves as they take part in "cool" penguin games and programs. Guests can also learn about the 17 different kinds of penguins and many special facts about these adorable birds.

Kids ages 2-10 are invited to turn something into everything each time they visit. The museum is located at 11 Sheldon N.E. in downtown Grand Rapids and is open to the public Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sundays, noon to 5 p.m. Family Night is on Thursdays from 5 to 8 p.m. Regular admission is \$6.50 per person. Family Night is \$1.50.

For more information, flock to [www.grcm.org](http://www.grcm.org). •

### Boiled turkey-vegetable and dumpling dinner

by Judy Brandow

1 ready-to-cook turkey (about 6 lbs.)

5 cups water

1 onion, cut up

1 tablespoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

1/4 cup flour

2 packages frozen mixed vegetables

savory dumpling batter

Wash turkey. Simmer with water and next 4 ingredients.

Simmer about 2 1/2 hours or until very tender. Lift out turkey. Remove from bones, strain broth, and thicken with flour mixed with cold water. Add vegetables and bring to boil. Drop in dumpling batter by tablespoons. Simmer, covered, for 15 minutes. Place turkey on a platter with dumplings and vegetables and pour gravy over all.

**Savory dumpling batter**

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

4 egg yolks

2/3 cup milk

1/2 cup chopped parsley

2 tablespoons chopped green onion tops

Sift dry ingredients. Beat egg yolks with milk. Add to dry ingredients together with parsley and onion tops. Mix until lightly blended. •

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## Spaghetti Dinner Benefit

for  
**Jonelle Serra Richmond**  
 daughter of John and Chris Serra

50/50  
Drawings

Raffles

Need not be present to win!



\$5  
a person

This ticket is also an entry into a drawing for 2 season passes to Michigan's Adventure

Jonelle Richmond, the 27 yr. old daughter of John & Chris Serra, longtime residents of Fruitport, has contracted the H1N1 virus, was admitted to Sparrow Hospital on Nov. 13th and has since been transferred to U of M Hospital in Ann Arbor. Jonelle has been on life support since first admission, is in a drug induced coma, is being given 24 hr. dialysis for her kidneys and ECMO for her lungs which oxygenates her blood and by-passes the lungs so they can heal. Any proceeds will enable the family to remain at her side and will help with anything that Jonelle may require.

Please join us for an afternoon of food & fun!

Tickets available in Fruitport at:  
**Grover's Pharmacy**  
**Copies N More**  
**Storage Group**  
**Michigan Township Services**

**Saturday - Jan. 9th, 2010**  
**1 - 5 PM**  
**at Whitlows Banquet Hall**  
**4610 Airline (at Hile)**  
**Muskegon, MI**

Monetary donations may also be made at: **Shelby State Bank**  
**The Jonelle Serra Richmond Benefit**