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Retirement May Be Far Off, But the April 18 Deadline for IRA Contributions Isn't.

You have only so many years to prepare for retirement. That's why contributing to your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is so important. Fortunately, you still have time to maximize your 2010 IRA contribution before the April 18 deadline.

By contributing now, your retirement savings can have more opportunity to grow. Even if you already have an IRA elsewhere, it's easy to transfer it to an Edward Jones IRA and begin receiving the face-to-face guidance you deserve.

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FHS students shovel out snowbound citizen

By Elizabeth Grimm

Putting aside their research papers on January 27, Fruitport High School AP English Literature students took time out of their busy schedules to take up the shovel instead of the pen and assist a Fruitport woman in finding a path to her door hidden under several treacherous inches of snow and ice. Along with unearthing a safe walking lane, students Katie Samlow, Jennie Pageot, Karl Schmidt, Kyle Meisch, Garin Heil, Bethany Bo, Danielle Gilleo, Chris Foster, Kendra Bringedahl, Kristian Bringedahl, Jonathon Lutz, Rachel Mumby, Michael Leindecker and Jonathan Parker also donated a sled-full of food to help ease some of the burden this heavy winter has caused for someone who has a difficult time getting out in inclement weather.

All FHS seniors are required to complete community service hours through their senior English classes. Both sociology class and National Honor Society also require community service. If you know a local resident who is in need, please feel free to call the high school at (231) 865-3101 and leave a message for Steve Dzwonkowski, Al Burton, or Elizabeth Grimm, who can share the information with willing students. •



Volunteer hosts needed at Michigan state parks

(Submitted by Michigan State Department of Natural Resources and Environment)

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment is offering free camping in the summer of 2011 for outdoor lovers who volunteer as campground hosts at Michigan state parks or state forest campgrounds. The Campground Host Program, established by the DNRE, allows individuals to camp in a state park or state forest campground at no charge in return for providing visitor assistance in the campground.

"Being a campground host combines the fun of camping with the satisfaction of helping fellow campers," said Ron Olson, DNRE Recreation Division chief. "Hosts stay as our guests and, in return, help welcome other campers to our beautiful state parks, recreation areas and state forest campgrounds."

Hosts direct visitors to their campsites, answer questions about the park or state forest, arrange campground activities and perform light maintenance and other services, depending on the host's talents and interests. Retired couples, teachers and students, as well as families, are just some of the people who have enjoyed volunteering as campground hosts.

Campground hosts can be individuals or teams. Hosts must be at least 18 years old, provide services five days/30 hours per week (including weekends and holidays), serve a minimum of four consecutive weeks and furnish their own camping unit, equipment and personal items. State park hosts must attend a two-day training session the end of April, 2011 at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon. This

training is not required of state forest campground hosts.

Campground hosts are chosen by park and forest managers who may require an interview or request additional information. Selection is based on the individual's familiarity with the state park or state forest system, their camping experience, special skills, availability, knowledge of the area and the needs of the specific park or forest campground.

Hosts especially are needed during the busy camping season, which can begin as early as April in state parks located in southern Michigan. Many of last year's campground hosts will be returning this year; however, vacancies still exist at park and forest campground locations throughout the state.

Many rustic campgrounds found throughout Michigan's six state forests located in the Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower Peninsula are in need of hosts. Information and applications are available from the DNRE's website at www.michigan.gov/dnvolunteers. Persons interested in being a campground host at a state park should apply directly to the park of their choice. For more information on campground host positions in state parks and recreation areas, contact Pam Ames at (517) 467-7401; for state forest campgrounds, please contact Ada Takacs at (989) 275-5151, extension 2049.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment is committed to the conservation, protection, management and accessible use and enjoyment of the state's environment, natural resources, and related economic interests for current and future generations. Learn more at www.michigan.gov/dnre.