

NOTICE: ROAD CLOSURES

Temporary road closure due to Old Fashioned Days road race on **Saturday, 5/27/17**, from 8:30 am to 10:00 am.

Fruitport Village portion of Park St; Fruitport Twp complete W Fruitport Rd; Spring Lake Twp Hemlock Dr to 168th and Hickory, Hickory from 168th to W Spring Lake Rd, northbound on W Spring Lake Rd.

Please use an alternate route. Sorry for the inconvenience. – Fruitport Lions Club

Fruitport HISTORICAL SOCIETY

meetings are held at **Fruitport Library**

Last Tuesday of each month at 6pm

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NanaBE

Christian Author of Children's Books

Presentations:

Storyteller – reader – book signings
(Churches – Schools – Libraries – Special events)

Contact Email:

judy@nanabestories.com

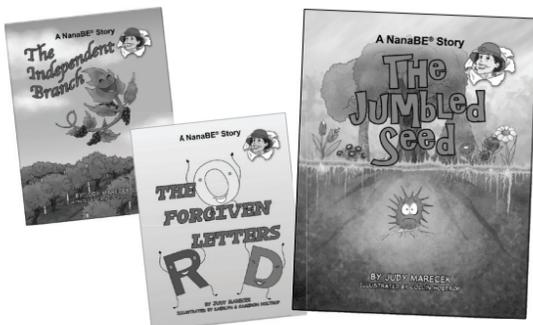
Who is NanaBE ?

Judy Marecek, a local Christian author of children's books and Sunday school presenter, characterizes NanaBE.

Her stories, which she feels are divinely inspired, convey to youth how to live Christian centered lives.

She has three books in print that are available from many sources including Amazon, Westbow Press, BN, (etc.):

The Independent Branch, The Forgiven Letters, & her newest book: The Jumbled Seed



For more information, please visit:
www.nanabestories.com

Ruth, 106 Years Old, Helps Bring Schoolhouse Back to Life

by Lin and Kaerlyn Holtrop

Ruth Brifling, the oldest surviving student of South Evergreen Schoolhouse celebrated her 106th birthday on December 12, 2016. She was one of the first donors and is very active in the renovation project to bring South Evergreen Schoolhouse back to life as a community gathering place, so people now, and in future generations, can experience an authentic one-room schoolhouse.

Renovations for this post-Civil War era schoolhouse began in early 2015, with Jim Fitzpatrick and Jim Key spearheading the project. They are hoping to have it done soon so Ruth can see it in her lifetime. "I would love to see South Evergreen School come so I can go over there, sit and reminisce and think about all the teachers we used to have," she said in an interview with Fox 17's Brody Carter. One memorable teacher was Miss Rankins, whose father had a music store on Main Street in Coopersville, and sold Victrolas.

After the Civil War, local area families knew the community needed some improvements; one of those improvements had to be a school. Four families in Polkon Township got together and talked with neighbors about starting a school. About two years later, a one-room schoolhouse opened on the corner of 88th Avenue, and what was then River Road (now Leonard Road). The first teacher was Fanny M. Wilson, a resident of Spring Lake, whose brother was son-in-law to one of the school's founders. When the school finally closed in 1958 or 1959, all its students were sent to the Eastmanville Schoolhouse.

Some of Ruth's best memories were at South



106 year old Ruth Brifling talks with two homeschooled girls at a pancake breakfast fundraiser in March 2017

Evergreen. She was 7 years old when she started school and went there through 8th grade, the highest grade taught in most one-room schoolhouses. "Even when I go by there, I think, 'That's my home.' I'm glad they're fixing it up," she also told Carter. Ruth and her seven siblings all attended South Evergreen. "They took real good care of us."

The South Evergreen Schoolhouse Committee worked for over a year to raise the \$20,000 necessary for Polkton Township to buy the property. After the purchase in early 2015, they began the work by repairing the roof, which included removing the belfry and replacing the old shingling. The following summer, the work continued with replacing broken siding, repair-

ing the bell tower and flagpole, and scraping and repainting the exterior, which took through the end of the year. In early 2017, they received one of the school's original outhouses from a local couple who had used it as a garden shed. The interior work is still in process.

Fitzpatrick and Key have high hopes for the future of the schoolhouse. Once finished, the schoolhouse property will function as a bicyclist waypoint for rest and exploration, with bike racks, water stations, picnic tables, and restrooms. Tours of the schoolhouse will be available for visitors, and the Committee will work with school districts to provide students with an authentic one-room schoolhouse experience. These Living History classes will include genuine antique desks, chairs, tables, a piano, and a pot-bellied stove, just like "a day in 1867." The schoolhouse will also be a site for festivals, reunions, and other events.

A 150th Anniversary party is planned for this fall. There will be live music, arts and crafts vendors, and food. The Committee hopes that Ruth will be able to attend as well.

To learn more about the restoration project, visit the South Evergreen website at <http://www.nunica.com/schoolhouse/>. The website also includes more information on the history of the school, updates on the renovation progress, and stories from past students and teachers. There is also a GoFundMe campaign where interested parties can help the project reach the goal of \$50,000 toward renovation.

In the words of Ann Spinner Sabo-Jonick, a former student of South Evergreen School, "It was just a one-room school, but it was a place where a lot of us learned how to become outstanding, good citizens. We learned how to respect one another, and we learned how to make just a little positive difference in this great country of ours."

36th annual Fruitport Old Fashioned Days 5K-10K Race

Entry forms are available at the following Fruitport businesses: McDonald's, Orchard Market, the Post Office, Shelby and Fifth Third banks, Dairy Twist, and the Fruitport High School Athletic Dept. They are also available at Norton Pines Fitness Center, Muskegon YFCA, and Fruitport Township Hall or at www.GoRaceGo.com. Or call 616-842-4162 for additional information.

The race has always been geared toward a family run, with an emphasis on recreational runners, joggers, and walkers. The race course takes advantage of Fruitport's natural surrounding beauty. There are a few hills, water available on the course, and refreshments afterward.

Showers and plenty of parking are available. Medals and trophies will be given out at the finish line at approximately 10 AM.

Plan to make the road race part of your weekend activities as you celebrate Fruitport's 2017 Old Fashioned Days.



ATTENTION FRUITPORT VOTERS IN PRECINCT #2

Kainay Community Church, 3387 Heights Ravenna Rd, has changed its name to Port City Church. The polling location has not changed. Those who vote at Kainay Community Church will continue to vote at the same location.

Should you have any questions, please contact Fruitport Township Clerk, Andrea Anderson. Phone: (231)865-3151 or e-mail clerk@fruitporttownship.com