

The Villages Michigan Club Newsletter

January 2012

Meetings and Events:

January Meeting

- The January meeting will be on January 17th at 7:00pm. Arrive early because the meeting starts promptly at 7 and you will want to check in, get your seats, 50/50 tickets and Tiger Game tickets before the meeting starts. Also, dues \$6 per member, are payable for any who have not paid yet. The entertainment will be "B&B" (not the cognac) a vocal and instrumental duo, Bonnie and Barry. Bring snacks and BYOB. Ice cream will be served.
- Note: The full year meeting schedule is being finalized. Several entertainment groups are being considered including Mary Vitale of Katie Belle fame and Last Tyme Out, a variety band and sing along group. Some good stuff coming! Some information on the year's events will be found and expanded as available on the Michigan Club Website available at <http://www.thevillagesmichiganclub.org/>. Next month, February, a spaghetti dinner and horse racing are planned.

Survey 2012 Christmas Party:

- The club provided Hors d'Oeuvres and refreshments at the Christmas Party this past year and the attendees brought some additional items to share with their table. Cost was only \$5 per person. Several Non-members attended.
 - Entertainment was by Tomaura. Tom and Maura, known as Tomaura, are a premiere music duo receiving acclaim from coast to coast. Tom is from New York City and Maura is from Dublin, Ireland.



- Bill Nims took photos at the Christmas Party again this year.



- This photo of Jake Methner and Chris Andrasko was not taken by Bill Nims. An anonymous blackmailer sent it with very unreasonable demands which Jake will probably pay.
- *Planning for the Christmas Party in 2012 has already started.* Arrangements for rooms and entertainment need to be done early or choices will be poor. *The board will be taking a survey at this month's meeting and all are encouraged to participate so that your feelings will be considered for the 2012 Christmas Party.* A copy of this survey will be available on the Michigan Club Website available at <http://www.thevillagesmichiganclub.org/> for anyone who is not at the meeting and would like to send in a copy to the board.

Tiger Spring Training Outing:

The Tiger spring training game outing is planned. The game, as usual, will be a home game at Joker Marchant Stadium in Lakeland. The opponents are the champion St. Louis Cardinals and the date is Saturday March 17 (St Pat's Day). The demand is expected to be significant and there are only about 53 spots available so *make sure to bring your checkbook to the January meeting* when the tickets will be sold. The cost is \$42 including bus fare and the *checks are to be made out to The Michigan Club.* We will leave about 9:30 AM to arrive in Lakeland around 11:00 in order to grab a bite to eat and see some batting practice. *Note: Departure this year will be from the Hacienda Hills CC parking lot.* After the game we will be eating, on our own, at the Outback Steakhouse, about three miles from the Stadium. We will then board the bus for our trip back to the villages, arriving about 7:30 PM.



Thanks to Norm George for making arrangements again this year.

Michigan Club Badges

Many members have suggested permanent badges to replace the paper ones given out by the group. Several members have the permanent ones from prior years. The board has selected a design and will make badges available although there is no requirement to buy them. The paper badges will continue to be available. Also, anyone who has one of the older "permanent" badges can continue to use them. The cost of a new badge will be \$6.

MICHIGAN CLUB BUS TRIP - : FLORIDA ADVENTURES TRAVEL

The minimum number of tickets have been sold but there is still some room on the bus. Call: Florida Adventures Travel Linda Kohl at 352-633-5470 if you are interested in attending.

Contact Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Show FRIDAY – JANUARY 27TH 2012 \$ 63.00 PP Orlando, FL

Price includes Transportation and Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Show, Tax and Partial Dinner Gratuity.

- Fun and mysterious dinner show where the audience gets to become detectives!
 - Exciting dinner theater as the audience gets to mingle with outrageous characters, interrogate the suspects, and even solve the crime!
 - All guests receive appetizers containing: fresh greens salad, assorted crackers with special cheese spread, and dinner rolls.
 - All guests choose from the following main course options: honey Cornish hen, lasagna, and prime rib. (Prime rib selection has an additional charge of \$3.20.)
 - Unlimited beer, wine, and sodas are all included with the price of the show.
- 5:30 PM Depart Spanish Springs Station – The Villages
7:00 PM Arrive Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Theater Orlando, FL
7:30 PM Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Theater Begins
9:30 PM Depart for home
11:00 PM Arrive back Spanish Springs Station – The Villages



Michigan Briefs

Snowy Owls Invade Michigan

Snowy owls have arrived in Michigan in far greater numbers than usual this winter, but the dramatic presence of a bird made famous in the Harry Potter movies has nothing to do with magic and everything to do with finding a good meal. "The owls are here for only one reason: food," said Paul Kerlinger, a New Jersey-based expert who has studied the species throughout the country.

Along the northern tier of the United States, including the Upper Peninsula, the country is being invaded from across the international border. Hundreds of snowy owls are winging south from the Arctic looking for food, many of them dying of exhaustion, starvation and dehydration soon after they arrive.

Snowy owls — which measure about two feet from head to tail tip — eat rodents, fish and birds and feed primarily on lemmings in the Arctic tundra during the breeding season. When those rodent populations falter — usually about every four years — the owls can be forced to look elsewhere for food. Snowy owls are the largest North American owls, and among the largest owls in the world; their wings can span 5-and-a-half feet. Their colors range from white flecked with dark to pure snow white, Keith said. The bird is very large and equipped with massive claws.

Having flown across Lake Superior, and an unknown distance before that, many of the owls arriving in the area are tired, stressed and potentially starving. Several owls have been found dead before reaching feeding areas. Some that got there had breastbones protruding because of starvation.

The first bird reported in the area was at Sault Ste. Marie on Nov. 11. Since then, owls have been seen across the region from Escanaba and Copper Harbor to Hancock, Grand Marais and Whitefish Point. Several have been reported in Marquette. The birds are not used to seeing humans and often perch low to the ground on posts and rocks or tower spires and other promontories. Three owls were reported on the Lower Harbor



breakwater. In recent winters, snowy owls have been seen at Picnic Rocks and in trees outside the Berry Events Center.

In the lower Peninsula, at the Kalamazoo airport, an early Comair flight was briefly delayed recently when a snowy owl stubbornly held its ground on the taxiway before some aggressive shooing by airport workers prompted it to move far enough to allow a safe takeoff. "They're beautiful to see," said Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport Director Cliff Moshoginis. "But we have to keep it out of the way." The massive snowy owl has taken up residence at the airport, delighting area birders and nonbirders alike by its rare presence this far south.

Old-Line Michigan Retailers – Where Did They Go?

Arbor Drugs

Arbor Drugs opened its doors in Troy in 1974, when founder Eugene Applebaum combined several drug stores under the name. At the time, he owned a handful of pharmacies, including one in Ann Arbor. Because the Ann Arbor store was the best of the bunch, he decided to use the second half of the city's name for his business.

Atlas Beverage Company

For more than 60 years, Atlas Beverage Company produced carbonated beverages with names like Brownie Root Beer, Bulldog Ginger Beer, Cheer-Up, V-Mix, and Golden & Pale Dry Ginger Ale. A Polish immigrant in Hamtramck founded the company in 1929, and it closed in 1996.

Barthwell Drugs

When the pharmacy where Sidney Barthwell was employed failed during the Great Depression, Barthwell borrowed \$500 from friends to open Barthwell Drugs in 1933. Barthwell Drugs grew to become the largest chain of black-owned drugstores in the United States, with a total of nine stores and three ice-cream parlors. Although the chain no longer exists, the Barthwell legacy remains in Detroit with the establishment the Sidney Barthwell Endowed Scholarship at Wayne State University's College of Pharmacy.

Burroughs (I spent 33 years with this company)

The Burroughs Adding Machine Company moved to Detroit in 1904 and was once the largest adding-machine company in the United States. William Seward Burroughs founded the company when he invented the Burroughs Registering Accountant in the 1880s; it was the first practical adding-listing machine that printed calculations on paper tapes. The company partnered with the Sperry Corporation in the 80s and is now called Unisys. Although the company is now headquartered in Blue Bell, N.Y. in recent years it sold off part of its business which currently still occupies the old Burroughs factory and office space in Plymouth, Mich.

B. Siegel Company

B. Siegel Company's fine-clothing store in Detroit was originally Heyns Bazaar, until Benjamin Siegel purchased it in the late 1800s and changed the store's name. The Woodward Avenue shop was reputed to be the finest and most complete suit and cloak store in America, until the company filed for bankruptcy in 1981.

Crowley Milner and Company (Crowleys) (worked my way through 2 years of college with this one)

When Detroit department store Partridge and Blackwell was struggling to stay in business, the Crowley brothers stepped in and took over. In the early 1900s, the store flourished by catering to the city's affluent clientele, but by the end of the century, Crowleys had bowed out of the market!

Cunninghams

Andrew Cunningham opened Cunninghams Drugs in 1889 and had 11 stores in downtown Detroit when the company was purchased by Economical Drugs owner Nate Shapero in 1931. Cunninghams was famous for its special promotions and used an elephant symbol to represent their jumbo sodas, sundaes, and photo-print services. The chain's slogans included: Don't say drug store "Just say Cunninghams and We're a drug store and a whole lot more."

Farmer Jack

The story of Farmer Jack stores can be traced to 1924, when Russian immigrant Tom Borman opened Tom's Quality Meats in Detroit. Tom and his brother, Al, ran grocery stores that were a metro Detroit staple, becoming Farmer Jack in 1966. The last remaining Farmer Jack stores closed in 2007 (some were converted to A&P's), others are just empty shells of abandoned buildings.

Federals

Steven West's spans a range of endeavors, from writing five self-help books to committing some major tax evasion. He's perhaps best-known in the Detroit area for (BURNING), taking over Federals department store in the late 70s. In 1980, Federals dissolved.

F&M

Phar-Mor, Drug Emporium, and F&M were once the most powerful bargain drugstore chains in America. The industry was pioneered in Ferndale when Fred and Margaret Cohen opened the first F&M in 1955. The Cohen's business strategy was selling brand-name products at bargain prices, relying on word-of-mouth advertising, and banking on stock-up shopping popular in more affluent areas. When the Cohen's sold the business in 1977, their 9,000-square-foot store was grossing \$13 million per year.

Fretters

Ollie Fretter opened his first self-titled electronics store in Livonia in the 1950s. He may best be remembered for his commercials, in which he promised, "I'll give you five pounds of coffee if I can't beat your best deal."

Gantos

Lebanese immigrant Theodore Gantos long dreamed of opening his own linen store, and when the devastation of the Great Depression ended, he did just that. With his wife, Haseebie, he opened the first Gantos store in Grand Rapids in 1932. Over the next few decades, the store shifted gears to become a successful women's-wear boutique before going out of business in 2000.

Grinnell's Pianos

Once known as the largest piano factory on the earth, Grinnell's Pianos opened its doors in Holly, Mich., in 1913. The company lasted for nearly a century, thanks in part to its quality pianos and to its consistent community involvement hosting annual statewide music festivals.

Harmony House

Carl Thom opened the first Harmony House music store in Hazel Park in 1947. Known for its superb selection of Detroit music, the chain grew to 38 stores before finally closing in 2002.

Highland Superstores

In 1933, Harry Mondry founded the first Highland Appliance Store, named for its location in Highland Park. The company had a dramatic rise and fall in its time, expanding to three states before finally liquidating in 1993.

Himelhochs

The first Himelhoch's clothing store opened on Washington Boulevard in downtown Detroit in 1907. Fifty years later, the chain had stretched across the country, and even to Paris. But in 1977, the company filed for bankruptcy and closed. Its original location on Washington has been preserved as a historic landmark.

Hudsons

The J.L. Hudson Company was founded in 1881 by Joseph L. Hudson. The 29-story flagship store, located at 1206 Woodward in downtown Detroit, was the world's tallest department store throughout most of the 20th century, with 706 fitting rooms, 68 elevators, 51 display windows, five restaurants, a fine-art gallery, and a wine department. After many changes in the retail sector, the chain was eventually folded into Macys.

Hughes & Hatcher

In 1910, Fred Hughes and Leslie Hatcher opened their clothing store in downtown Detroit, and it soon became the top name in gentle men's fine apparel. Aside from its stupendously stylish suits, Hughes & Hatcher was known for having the largest display windows in town.

Jacobson's

In 1838, the first Jacobson's store opened in Reed City, Mich. The store catered to the fashion needs of upscale Michigan clientele, and eventually expanded to Florida and other states. The store is still profitable in Florida, but the Michigan stores, after more than 150 years, remain closed.

Joshua Doore Furniture

In 1973, Harvey Leach opened the doors to Joshua Doore and, for years, drew in customers with the charming slogan "You've got an uncle in the furniture business." A few years later, amid the company's transformation into Uncle Robinson Furniture, Leach was found dead in the trunk of his car, allegedly as a result of financial challenges.

Kern's

Where the Compuware building stands in downtown Detroit today once stood another grand retailer of the city's golden era, Kern's Department Store. Kern's opened in 1900 and competed with J.L. Hudsons until closing in 1959. After much restoration, the famous Kern's clock was rededicated by Compuware in 2003.

Kinsel Drug Store

The next time you need a remedy for a late-night cough, you can thank Edward C. Kinsel, who opened Detroit's first 24-hour drugstore. Kinsel's opened in 1894 and offered patrons everything from cold remedies to cold cuts.

Klines

Eugene B. Kline founded Kline's women's fashion store in 1911. The chic-looking store on Woodward Avenue was called the most modern store in the country in 1940.

Merchant of Vino

Founded in 1974, Merchant of Vino was well known for its fine wine and gourmet foods. Although Eddie Jonna eventually sold his popular chain to Whole Foods Co., his sons Marc and Matthew picked up where their father left off, opening the state-of-the-art Plum Markets now seen around metro Detroit.

New York Carpet World

Marvin Berlin opened New York Carpet World in 1967. Along with his partner, Irving Nusbaum, Berlin grew the chain to an impressive 250 stores in 17 states, including Michigan, making it the top source for household flooring.

Perrys Drug Store

Jack A. Robinson founded the hugely successful Perry's Drug Store chain, which was taken over by Rite-Aid in the mid-90s. The first Perry's store opened in Pontiac in 1957, named for its location on Perry Street.

Pfeiffer Brewing Company

Conrad Pfeiffer began brewing his own beer in 1882. His Art Deco red-brick brewery was built between Beaufait and Bellevue avenues on the east side of Detroit, complete with a stable and hospitality area that offered tours, products for sale, and a beer garden. Pfeiffer Brewing Company began producing its olive-drab cans with black lettering for the government during World War II, soon after it began selling its yellow Johnny Fifer cans to the public.

R.H. Fyfe and Company

Detroit was once home to the largest shoe store in the world. Fyfe's opened in 1865 and, by 1919, it had expanded to include 10 floors of shoes and service areas, as well as a miniature-golf course. After closing, the headquarters at Woodward and Adams was converted into residential lofts.

Sams Jams

Opened in 1979, Sam's Jams was a hip Ferndale record shop where customers could always find rare and vintage tunes. Sam's frequently hosted album signings with popular and alternative bands of the day. But much to the dismay of the local underground music community, Sam's closed its doors in 1993.

Sanders

Frederick Sanders opened his first retail shop in downtown Detroit on June 17, 1875. At one time, Sanders had over 57 stores around town selling an assortment of candy, fudge toppings, and baked goods. Sanders sold his first Ice Cream Soda in 1876, when he substituted ice cream for the sweet cream used in his Sweet Cream Soda.

Sebastian S. Kresge/Kmart

With his humble beginnings, historic philanthropist Sebastian S. Kresge likely couldn't have imagined that the city of Detroit would turn his modest five-and-dime store into the gargantuan enterprise it became. S.S. Kresge Co. opened in Detroit in 1899, and later expanded into Kmart Corporation, before merging with Sears, Roebuck & Co.

Sibleys Shoes

Aaron Ross and Norm Rosenfeld opened the first Sibley's shoe store in Detroit in 1920 and soon expanded to various locations throughout Michigan and Ohio. Headquartered in the Fox Building and, for a time, the Renaissance Center, the chain was finally dismantled in 2003.

Strohs

In 1850, Bernhard Stroh established what would become a Detroit institution, then referred to as Lions Head brewery. During Prohibition, the company stayed afloat by producing ice cream and near beer and selling it in grocery stores and ice-cream parlors (Stroh's Ice Cream can still be found today). With its headquarters at Grand Park Center near Grand Circus Park, Strohs was family-owned and -operated for more than 145 years.

Thorn Apple Valley

After miraculously escaping from a Polish concentration camp during World War II, Henry Dorfman immigrated into the United States and opened his own butcher shop in Detroit in 1949. The small company, originally called Frederick Packing Company, expanded nationwide and was renamed Thorn Apple Valley in 1984.

Towne Club

In the mid 1960s, Harold Samhat began selling Towne Club soda at various pop center around Detroit. Towne Club, sold in wooden crates with 24 glass bottles in each, was more affordable than Coke or Pepsi and was famous for its wide variety of flavors.

Twin Pines Dairy Farm

It's been a long time since fresh milk, cream, and cottage cheese were delivered right to your milk chute, but for almost 20 years, Twin Pines was perhaps Detroit's finest creamery. Before the emergence of convenience stores, Twin Pines was such a success that it even had its own children's television show, Milky's Party Time, from 1950 to 1967.

Vernors

Legend has it that Vernor's ginger ale was created in 1866 when Detroit pharmacist James Vernor returned home from the Civil War and found that the syrup he'd created and stored for four years had transformed into a deliciously different drink. Combined with a scoop of vanilla ice cream (preferably Strohs), the distinctly Detroit soda created a Midwest delicacy: the Boston cooler, believed to be named after Detroit's Boston Boulevard.

Winkelmans

The first Winkelman's store was built in Detroit in 1928. The founders, brothers Isadore and Leon Winkelman, were born and raised in the Upper Peninsula, but fell in love with the city and stayed to open their successful clothing stores.

Woolworths

Perhaps the best-known of the old five-and-dimes was Woolworth's, which expanded into a larger discount store chain and thrived for most of the 20th century. After the stores demise in the 80s, the company broke off into several parts, including a sportswear division now known as Foot Locker.

Michigan Spring - Installation Status

INSTALLING SPRING...

 44%

DONE.

Install delayed....please wait.

Installation failed. Please try again.

404 error: Season not found. Season "Spring" cannot be located.

The season you are looking for might have been removed, had its name changed, or is temporarily unavailable.

Please try again later.....



Federal government may not uphold commitment to \$550 million Facility for Rare Isotope Beams at MSU



A \$550 million federal project that would establish a prized nuclear research facility at Michigan State University may not come to fruition. The U.S. Department of Energy chose MSU to house the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB) in 2008. It would allow nuclear scientists to study rare isotopes, unstable atoms that offer clues as to how the universe evolved. Additional applications for such research include medicine, national security, manufacturing and environmental science. Now, though, the funding may not be available, and the federal government is not committing. Funding for the FRIB is under review as the federal budget deficit looms.

MSU spokesman Kent Cassella said the university understands the challenges of the current economic climate but remains confident in the FRIB project. "We here at MSU recognize that these are difficult financial times, but remain optimistic in part because of the congressional support for the (FRIB), as was expressed in the fiscal 2012 spending bill agreed to in December," Cassella said. "Everything MSU has done so far on the FRIB project, including our project reviews with the Department of Energy and Office of Science, has indicated to us that the project is on track."

East Lansing-based Anderson Economic Group estimated the project could generate more than \$1 billion in economic activity for the Greater Lansing region over 20 years, creating 400 permanent jobs, not including construction.

The FRIB would be an extension of the research being done at MSU's National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory on the East Lansing campus.

The university plans to break ground on the FRIB this summer.

Famous Michiganders - The Four Tops



The Four Tops are an American vocal quartet, founded in Detroit, Michigan as The Four Aims. Lead singer Levi Stubbs and groupmates Abdul "Duke" Fakir, Renaldo "Obie" Benson and Lawrence Payton remained together for over four decades, going from 1953 until 1997 without a single change in personnel. Their repertoire has included doo-wop, jazz, soul music, R&B, disco, adult contemporary, hard rock, and showtunes. The Four Tops were notable for having Stubbs, a baritone, as their lead singer; most groups of the time were fronted by a tenor.

A change of line-up was finally forced upon the group when Lawrence Payton died on June 20, 1997. The band initially continued as a three-piece under the name The Tops, before Theo Peoples (formerly of The Temptations) was recruited as the new fourth member. Peoples eventually took over the role of lead singer when Stubbs suffered a stroke in 2000 with his position assumed by Ronnie McNeir. On July 1, 2005, Benson died of lung cancer with Payton's son Roquel Payton replacing him. Levi Stubbs died on October 17, 2008. Fakir, McNeir, Payton, and Harold "Spike" Bonhart, who replaced Peoples in 2011, are still performing together as the Four Tops. Fakir is now the only surviving founding member of the original group.

All four members of the group began their careers together while they were high school students in Detroit. At the insistence of their friends, Pershing High students Levi Stubbs and Abdul "Duke" Fakir performed with Renaldo "Obie" Benson and Lawrence Payton from Northern High at a local birthday party. The quartet decided to remain together, and christened themselves The Four Aims. With the help of Payton's songwriter cousin Roquel Davis, The Aims signed to Chess Records in 1956, changing their name to Four Tops to avoid confusion with The Ames Brothers. Over the next seven years, The Tops endured unsuccessful tenures at Chess, Red Top, Riverside Records and Columbia Records. Without any hit records to their name, The Tops toured frequently, developing a polished stage presence and an experienced supper club act. In 1963, Berry Gordy, Jr., who had worked with Roquel Davis as a songwriter in the late-1950s, convinced The Tops to join the roster of his growing Motown record company.

During their early Motown years, the Four Tops recorded jazz standards for the company's Workshop label. In addition, they filled in time by singing backup on Motown singles such as The Supremes' "Run, Run, Run." The Tops also did backing vocals for Martha Reeves & The Vandellas on their 1966 hit "My Baby Loves Me".

In 1964, Motown's main songwriting/production team of Holland-Dozier-Holland created a complete instrumental track without any idea of what to do with it. They decided to craft the song as a more mainstream pop song for the Four Tops, and proceeded to create "Baby I Need Your Loving" from the lyric-less instrumental track. Upon its mid-1964 release, "Baby I Need Your Loving" made it to #11 on the United States Billboard pop charts. Baby I Need Your Loving was a strong top 10 hit on both WMCA in New York, and WKNR. After the single's success The Tops were pulled away from their jazz material and began recording more material in the vein of "Baby I Need Your Loving."

After scoring their first #1 hit, the often-recorded and revived "I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)" in June 1965, the Four Tops began a long series of successful hit singles. Among the first wave of these hits were the Top 10 "It's the Same Old Song", "Something About You", "Shake Me, Wake Me (When It's Over)", and "Loving You is Sweeter Than Ever". Four Tops records often represented the epitome of the Motown Sound: simple distinctive melodies and rhymes, call-and-response lyrics, and the musical contributions of The Funk Brothers. Holland-Dozier-Holland wrote most of Levi Stubbs' vocals in a tenor range, near the top of his range, in order to get a sense of strained urgency in his gospel preacher-inspired leads. In addition, H-D-H used additional background vocals from female background

vocalists The Andantes on many of these songs, to add a high end to the low-voiced harmony of The Tops.

August 1966 brought the release of the Four Tops' all-time biggest hit, and one of the most popular Motown songs ever: "Reach Out I'll Be There", which hit #1 on the U.S. pop charts and soon became The Tops' signature song. It was almost immediately followed by the similar sounding "Standing in the Shadows of Love". It was another Top 10 hit for the Tops.

The Top 10 U.S. hit "Bernadette" continued the Four Tops' successful run into April 1967, followed by the Top 20 hits "7-Rooms of Gloom", and "You Keep Running Away". By now, The Tops were the most successful male Motown act in the United Kingdom (in the United States, they were second to The Temptations), and began experimenting with more mainstream pop hits. They scored hits with their versions of Tim Hardin's "If I Were A Carpenter" in late 1967 and the Left Banke's "Walk Away Renée" in early 1968. These singles and the original "I'm In a Different World" were their last hits produced by Holland-Dozier-Holland, who left Motown in 1967 after disputes with Berry Gordy over royalties and ownership of company shares.

Without H-D-H, the quality of the Four Tops' output, like that of most of Motown, began to decline, and hits became less frequent. The group worked with a wide array of Motown producers during the late-1960s without significant chart success. Their first major hit in a long time came in the form of 1970's "It's All in the Game".

The Motown company began to change in a number of ways during the early 1970s. Older acts such as Martha and the Vandellas and The Marvelettes were being slowly shoved aside to focus on newer acts such as Michael Jackson and The Jackson 5, Rare Earth, and the now-solo Diana Ross. In addition, the company was slowly moving many of its operations from Detroit to Los Angeles, California, where Berry Gordy planned to break into the motion picture and television industries. In 1972, it was announced that the entire company would move to Los Angeles, and that all its artists had to move as well. Many of the older Motown acts, already neglected by the label, opted to stay in Detroit, including The Funk Brothers backing band, Martha Reeves, and the Four Tops.

The Tops departed Motown for ABC-Dunhill. "Keeper of the Castle" was their first pop Top 10 hit since "Bernadette" in 1967; follow-ups such as "Ain't No Woman (Like the One I've Got)", "Are You Man Enough", "Sweet Understanding Love," "Midnight Flower," and "One Chain Don't Make No Prison" all hit the R&B Top 10 between 1972 and 1974. By the release of "Catfish" in 1976, the hits had dried up again, and the group disappeared into obscurity in the late-1970s. Scoring a deal with Casablanca Records in 1980, the Four Tops made a comeback in 1981 with the #1 R&B hit "When She Was My Girl", which just missed the Billboard Pop Top 10, peaking at # 11.

By 1983, The Tops had rejoined Motown, and were featured on the company's television special Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever. One of the highlights of the show was a battle-of-the-bands between The Tops and The Temptations, patterned after similar competitions Berry Gordy had staged during the 1960s. Levi Stubbs and Temptation Otis Williams decided the Temptations/Tops battle would be a good one to take on the road, and both groups began a semi-regular joint tour; as of 2007, the two groups continued to play dates together.

The first of The Tops' albums under their new Motown contract was Back Where I Belong. A whole side of the album was produced by Holland-Dozier-Holland, including the R&B Top 40 single "I Just Can't Walk Away." Only one more Top album would be released by Motown, 1985's Magic. 1986's Hot Nights was canceled, as the group and the label began to quarrel on matters of marketing and musical direction. In 1987, the Four Tops decided to leave Motown again, this time for Arista Records, buying back several masters they had recorded for Hot Nights.

The title track of 1988's Indestructible was the group's final Top 40 hit, reaching No. 35. It was also featured in the 1988 science-fiction cop film, Alien Nation.. The Arista contract provided a unique opportunity to pair the group's popular lead singer Levi Stubbs with fellow Arista artist, legendary R&B vocalist Aretha Franklin, who was at the height of her own 1980s hit streak. This pairing resulted in the song "If Ever A Love There Was," which became a popular R&B and Adult Contemporary hit.

In December 1988, The Tops had been scheduled to board Pan Am Flight 103 to return to the U.S. for Christmas after completing their European tour. However, they were late getting out of a recording

session and overslept, causing them to miss the ill-fated flight which crashed in Lockerbie, Scotland, after a terrorist bomb was detonated onboard.[3][4]

Since the late-1980s, the Four Tops have focused on touring and live performances, only recording one album, 1995's Christmas Here With You, released on Motown. On June 20, 1997, 59-year-old Lawrence Payton died as a result of liver cancer, after singing for 44 years with the Four Tops who, unlike many Motown groups, never had a single lineup change until then. At first, Levi Stubbs, Obie Benson, and Duke Fakir toured as a trio called The Tops. In 1998 they recruited former Temptation Theo Peoples to join the act to restore the group to a quartet. By the turn of the century, Stubbs had become ill from cancer; Ronnie McNair was recruited to fill in the Lawrence Payton position, and Peoples stepped into Stubbs' shoes as lead singer (Stubbs died on October 17, 2008, at his home in Detroit).

The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990, and into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame in 1999. In 2005, The Four Tops were inducted into the Michigan Rock and Roll Legends Hall of Fame. In 2009, the group's first big hit, "Baby I Need Your Loving", was voted a Legendary Michigan Song. The group's first # 1 hit, "I Can't Help Myself", was voted a Legendary Michigan Song in 2011.[6]

The Four Tops sang the National Anthem before the start of game 5 for the 2011 ALCS between the Texas Rangers & Detroit Tigers on October 13, 2011 in Detroit, MI. When singing the last line of "The Star Spangled Banner", "...and the home of the brave", they quickly sang the words "Ain't No country Like the One I Got", before singing the last word, "brave".

Sunshine:



If you know of a club member who is ill, had a recent operation or has experienced a death in the family please contact Nancy Pasko, 259-8696

Michigan Club Officers and Key Members:

President: Jim Godfrey (Jane)	408-2256	jim2jane@msn.com
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You might be a Michigander if.. you point at the palm of your right hand when telling people where you grew up....