

# LIFESTYLE

## HELLO NEIGHBOR

### Michigan church recalls the birth of ‘Silent Night’

A glance at the calendar, Christmas shows and movies on TV, the beautiful strains of Christmas Music all tell us that Christmas is here.

When a group gathers to sing Christmas songs there are always a few favorites that people almost always include and to which they even know the words to, at least the first verse.

One of those songs is “Silent Night”. Written in 1818, do you realize our founding fathers never had the opportu-



nity to hear this world-wide beloved Christmas Carol? That’s something to put in perspective as we turn our attention to the 250th birth of our country.

Like so many songs, they begin as a poem and Silent night was

no different. Fr. Joseph Mohr actually wrote the poem in 1816 but in 1818 Franz X. Gruber wrote the music to go with it. It was first preformed in a very small church, the replica of which can be seen in Frankenmuth, Michigan. You can actually step inside the little church.

The Silent Night Memorial Chapel in Frankenmuth, Michigan, is a replica of the original chapel in Oberndorf, Austria. The chapel is named after the famous Christmas carol that

was sung for the first time on Christmas Eve in 1818 at St. Nicholas Church. Visitors to Frankenmuth are always intrigued by the interesting octagonal church. As you walk along the sidewalk leading to the chapel, Silent night is playing. Plaques line the walkway with the hymn translated into over 300 languages and dialects. Needless to say, there were many countries and languages I had never heard of. There is even a plaque in brail.

Inside the tiny chapel you will see a replicated chancel which is the part of the church where the clergy and choir will stand. This is near the altar and sometimes separated by steps or a screen.

During your visit, you will learn the story of the first time Silent Night was sung.

The pastor of the St. Nicholas church asked his friend, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose the music for the hymn that could be played on the guitar since the organ

was not working. Gruber composed the melody and the song was played, by guitar, for the first time on Christmas Eve in 1818. Silent Night is now the best known Christmas song in the entire world.

If you are ever traveling in Eastern Michigan and you see this small town pop up on your map, it is worth it to take the time to visit. It is also on the same property as what is claimed to be the world’s largest Christmas store and they made a believer out of me.

Merry Christmas!

## From our HISTORY Sponsored by ‘City to get trash collection bids’



Compiled by  
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*Excerpted stories in Crawford County newspaper archives*

**100 Years Ago**  
December 23, 1925

Girard, Dec. 23. - Arrests made in Crawford County by members of the sheriff's department during 1925 total 856 to date. Offenses during the year fall under many and various classifications, one of the most common in the county being that connected in some way with liquor. The total of arrests as recorded by

Sheriff J. D. Turkington attributed to this cause was 363.

Major improvements in the basement quarters at the City Hall occupied by the police department will be made within two or three weeks, W. C. Wilson, commissioner of parks and public property, announced today. Office quarters, now in a space partitioned off from the police court, will be transferred to the front room, just off the basement entry, and the partition in the Judge's room will be removed.

Coal miners of the Pittsburg mining field will receive or have already received ap-

proximately \$500,000 with which to do their Christmas shopping, according to estimates in mining circles today. This is one of the largest mine payrolls in several years, equaled only by that of two weeks ago. With the arrival of the present cold snap, coal operators and miners are more optimistic than ever at the prospect for the remainder of this month, January, February and March.

**50 years ago**  
December 23, 1975

Bids will be accepted at the Pittsburg City Commission meeting Tuesday for the collection and disposal of

rubbish and trash from the city's trash containers. The contract to be awarded to the lowest and or best bidder is a one-year contract for 1976. The commissioners will either approve or disapprove a request for a public hearing Jan. 23 on the proposed wastewater collection system and treatment plant improvements. The hearing is required by the Environmental Pollution Agency.

**GIRARD-** Father Ken Melaragno, chairman of the Crawford County Council on Alcoholism, was officially appointed to the SEKAN Comprehensive Mental Health

Services Board of Governors by the Crawford County Commissioners at Monday's brief commission meeting. The motion appointing Father Melaragno, assistant pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, to the post still needs to be signed by Commission Chairman D.J. Saia, who was in Wichita on business and did not attend Monday's meeting.

**MANHATTAN (AP)** - The big Christmas turkey is becoming a scarcity in many Kansas supermarkets, according to the weekly Kansas Farm Bureau Shoppers Guide. One Hutchinson store told a buyer it was out of the 20-pound birds and suggested switching to a smaller one. This week's sample of 19 stores found the birds ranging from 39 cents a pound at Kansas City and Hays to 65 cents in Topeka, Salina and Garden City.

**25 years ago**  
December 23, 2000

State Sens. Jim Barone of Frontenac and Sandy Praeger of Law-

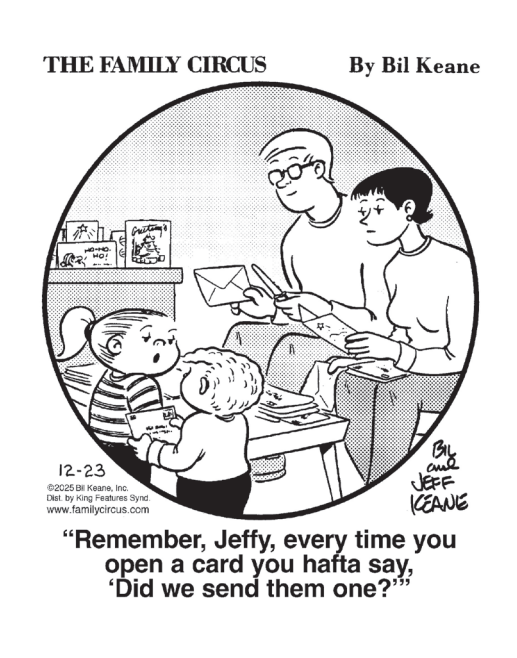
rence recently received the 2000 Outstanding Public Official of the Year award from the Association of Community Mental Health Centers. The association said the awards were presented for their support of and dedication to the issue of mental health parity. Barone and Praeger made insurance parity for mental disorders a high priority for the 2000 Legislature. SB547, introduced in 1999, passed the Senate, but was blocked in the House Insurance Committee.

**GIRARD** - The long-awaited bid-opening for the new Crawford County District Court building in Pittsburg took place as scheduled Friday, but the recommendation for the winning contractor will have to wait until Jan. 2. Although Stu Owsley, project architect, and Crawford County commissioners said the budget would be tight, they added that the bids received were reasonable. "It looks like we will be in budget," Owsley said.

## MODERATELY CONFUSED



## FAMILY CIRCUS



## SUDOKU

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## PREVIOUS ANSWER

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