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Food, storytelling and family history fill Carnegie



Alphonso Amos (right), standing next to Valerie Scott-Price, helps volunteers prepare to serve guests during the 4th Annual Taste of Soul on Feb. 28 at the Port Huron Museum's Carnegie Center in Port Huron. ANDY JEFFREY/TIMES HERALD

Taste of Soul wrapped up Black History Month events

Andy Jeffrey
Port Huron Times Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

PORT HURON — The Port Huron Museum's Carnegie Center was filled with food, music and storytelling as the fourth annual Taste of Soul brought Black History Month programming to a close Saturday, Feb. 28.

Part of the "A Seat at My Table" series, the event blended culinary tradition with personal history, inviting guests to experience African American heritage through food and conversation.

Visitors entered the museum, at 1115 Sixth St., watched a short introductory presentation and then made their way to a food line featuring African, Jamaican and soul food dishes.

From there, guests wandered the

floor, stopping at themed tables hosted by community members who shared family stories, heritage and aspects of Black history tied to their own lives.

Regina "Gina" Schreck, executive director of Port Huron Museums, said she was thrilled to see the community fill the space.

"I'm very excited about this Taste of Soul ... and especially inviting our community into the Port Huron Museum Carnegie," Schreck said.

Although the event was capped at 155 attendees, the turnout exceeded that number. Alphonso Amos, lead organizer, said the final count surpassed expectations.

"We stopped counting after 200 but still saw more come through until the very last minute of the exhibit being open," Amos said.

He described the event as a reflection of community pride and unity.

"Today's Taste of Soul event was a powerful reminder of what happens when community comes together with purpose and pride," Amos said.

The Taste of Soul event marked the final weekend of the museum's month-long "A Seat at My Table" series, which featured multiple table exhibits centered on storytelling and cultural reflection.

"It was wonderful," Schreck said. "It was busy for every single program."

As someone new to the community, she said the series offered both a learning experience and an impression of strong local engagement.

"I was so impressed with just the

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Jeffery Smerer hearing delayed

Johnathan Hogan
Port Huron Times Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A hearing for a man accused of shooting three of his children and killing one has been delayed until April.

Jeffery Smerer was set to appear in court on Feb. 27 to consider a report from the Forensic Center of Psychiatry. The hearing was postponed until April 16 because the court had not yet received the report.

Smerer was arrested on Sept. 11, 2025, after he reportedly shot three of his children at their home at Glenview Court, killing one of them and severely injuring the other two. Smerer was scheduled to be sentenced that same day for misdemeanor indecent exposure.

In November, Smerer's attorney filed a notice of intent to use insanity as a defense. As a result of that notice, Smerer was required to undergo an examination to determine his mental condition at the time of the shooting and whether his mental state may have effected his actions. Smerer's court case has been on pause pending the results of that review.

The filing does not guarantee the defense will use insanity as a defense, though it is necessary if it decides to do so. Both the defense and the prosecution can have Smerer undergo an evaluation by an independent psychiatrist if they wish to challenge the Center for Forensic Psychiatry's conclusions.

If an insanity plea is used, a jury

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Fort Gratiot woman turns 100, celebrates with family

Andy Jeffrey
Port Huron Times Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

When Fort Gratiot Township resident Edith Cyplik turns 100 on Wednesday, March 4, she will mark the milestone with fellow residents and staff at Medilodge nursing facility.

Just over 100,000 Americans are age 100 or older as of 2024. On Wednesday, Cyplik will join their ranks as a member of the centenarian club.

Her birthday has already been celebrated once. On Sunday, Feb. 28, more than 30 relatives gathered at Medilodge, 5635 Lakeshore Road, Fort Gra-

tiot, for an early celebration. Family members traveled from Arizona, Oregon and South Korea to honor the woman they affectionately call Ede.

Born March 4, 1926, in Detroit, Cyplik has spent her life in Michigan. She married Donald Cyplik on Feb. 17, 1945, and the couple shared 61 years together before his passing in 2006.

For 26 years, they divided their time between Michigan and Florida, spending about eight months each year as snowbirds. Cyplik moved to Medilodge in October 2024.

"They knew they had lots of friends

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Edith Cyplik sits with her daughters, Sherry Nelson and Kathy Scheid during her 100th birthday celebration Feb. 28 at MediLodge, 5635 Lakeshore Road, Fort Gratiot Twp. ANDY JEFFREY/TIMES HERALD

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