

## NEARBY TOWNS

# Three Oaks, New Buffalo good for weekend pursuits

By Jane Ammeson  
Citizen Patriot News Service

**NEW BUFFALO** — Two towns tucked into the southwestern corner of Michigan, just seven miles apart, are perfect for autumn wanderers. New Buffalo and Three Oaks offer distinctive shopping, outdoor pursuits, family-run stores and even a spectacular casino.

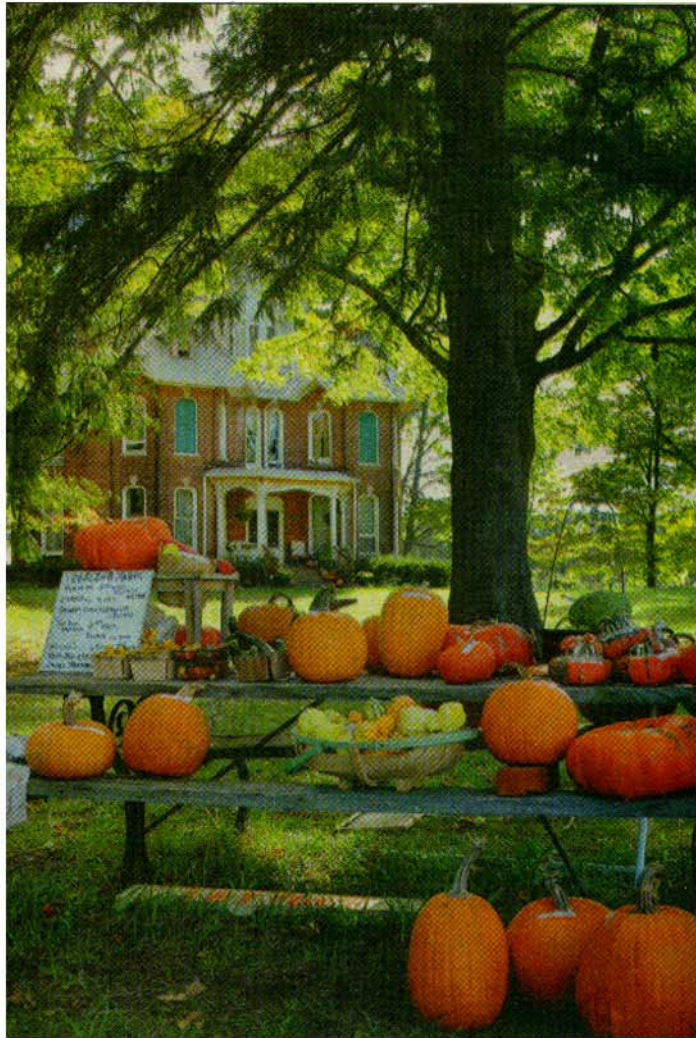
## New Buffalo

In the fall, the beaches of New Buffalo, edged with tree-topped sand dunes, turn a blaze of jewel colors. It is the perfect time to visit this once-sleepy town where the Galien River flows into Lake Michigan just north of the Indiana border. It's now a mecca for visitors from Chicago, about an hour's drive away.

The town, whose main street overlooks the harbor and the shoreline of Lake Michigan, blends the old and the new. It is still, in some ways, a sleepy beach resort but one that now also has a trendy, urbanscape veneer. There is something for outdoor enthusiasts, beach lovers, power shoppers intrigued by the eclectic boutiques, artistic types who like to peek into the numerous galleries and those who love the nuances of small towns.

It's not unusual to spot a Chicago celebrity walking the streets, shopping or dining at one of the many restaurants and cafes. Film critic Roger Ebert has a weekend place in the area, actor Dennis Farina visits family and Oprah Winfrey used to have a home nearby.

Despite the allure of the new, old-town stalwarts remain. Redamak's, a road house that opened in 1947, still serves great burgers and was recently included as one of the 100 best burger places in "Hamburger America: One



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**Pumpkins are for sale in front of a historic home just north of Three Oaks.**

Man's Cross Country Odyssey to Find the Best Burgers in the Nation" (Running Press 2008) by George Motz. Locals and visitors alike flock to Rosie's Restaurant to eat bacon and eggs and drink endless cups of coffee in a place that hasn't changed much in the past 30 years.

For those who want glitz, the shops on Whitaker Street, the main street that leads from the top of a ridge down to the harbor and beach and several of the side streets, offer plenty of options, or try your luck at the Four Winds

Casino Resort west of the downtown.

## Three Oaks

The Civil War had just ended when a butcher shop opened at 14 S. Elm St. in downtown Three Oaks, east of New Buffalo on U.S. 12. In 1913, Ed Drier Sr., bought the store and changed its name. Now owned by his granddaughter and her son, the old brick smokehouse in back still produces richly flavored sausages and hams.

In keeping with its Na-

## If you go ...

**Information:** Call the Harbor Country Convention & Visitors Bureau, 800-362-7251 or 269-469-2400 or [www.visitharborcountry.org](http://www.visitharborcountry.org).

tional Registry of Historic Places designation, Drier's Meat Market has done little to update its image, preferring the charm of the early 1900s. There is sawdust on the wood-planked floor and an old-fashioned screen door with a bell attached that announces visitors.

Nearby is Froehlich's, the glass-fronted grocery and deli owned by Colleen Froehlich, creates scrumptious homemade breads, soups (including her best-selling borscht made, in the summer, from locally grown beets), chutneys, preserves, candies, cookies, cakes and even dog biscuits.

Other nearby attractions are the Featherbone manufacturing buildings. More than a century ago, E.K. Warren invented featherbone, a type of corset made of flexible turkey feathers (Don't laugh: Before that, they were made of extremely uncomfortable whalebone!). The old vine-covered buildings now house galleries, shops and the Acorn Theatre, which offers a year-round selection of stage theater, performance art and live music.