



## ALL THINGS PAW PAW

*A potpourri of information about people, places and things named Paw Paw.'*



*Often called the "Indian Banana" because of its shape and yellowish color.*

### **PAW PAW PLACES**

	<u>Population</u>
Paw Paw Township, Michigan	7,091
Village of Paw Paw, Michigan	3,534
Village of Paw Paw, Illinois	852
Paw Paw, West Virginia	524

*89 miles NW of Washington, DC; home of the Paw Paw Fair and the 2008 West Virginia Open.*

### **How Paw Paw , Michigan Got It's Name**

Paw Paw village is the seat of justice of Van Buren County. The township and Village was called after the river, named by the Indians from the paw paw fruit, growing thickly upon its banks.

History of Paw Paw Village  
<http://history.rays-place.com/mi/vb-paw-paw-v.htm>



**PAW PAW TREE.** The North American native pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a temperate tree fruit in the mostly tropical custard apple family, Annonaceae. Pawpaw is also a common name for papaya (*Carica papaya*), a tropical fruit in the family Caricaceae. The two fruits are very different from each other, but some pawpaws do have a papaya-like flavor. The pawpaw fruit has both fresh market and processing appeal, with a tropical like flavor that resembles a combination of banana, mango, and pineapple. Kentucky State University has the only full-time pawpaw research program in the world. (*More Paw Paw Tree Facts on Page 4.*)

### **ARE THERE PAW PAW's IN PAW PAW, MI?**

Paw Paw trees grow in floodplains and along rivers. They were reported growing throughout the Paw Paw River watershed area, thus the name Paw Paw, Michigan. Today you can easily find Paw Paw trees on the north side of the Post Office, in front of the Michigan Avenue Academy, in front of the Village of Paw Paw Department of Public Services building. If you are interested in getting Paw Paw's it is suggested you Contact Spiech Farms in Lawton as they maintain a grove of Paw Paw trees and process them along with other fruits. More on Spiech Farms follows.

### **Spiech Farms LLC in Lawton, MI,** is a fourth-generation family-owned-and-

operated grower, packer and distributor of Concord grapes and several other fresh produce items. The company has been on the Inc. 5000 list of "America's Fastest Growing Companies" for four consecutive years. (Sept. 2011). In 2010, the company was rated number 1,468 on the list, but in the food and beverage category, it was ranked 31. Tim Spiech and his father, Steve Spiech, own and operate the company. It is among the world's larger grower-shipper-packers of Concord grapes.



*(Steve and son Tim, in one of their vineyards.)*

**THE PAW PAW BAIT COMPANY**, Paw Paw, Michigan. The Paw Paw company evolved from the old Moonlight Bait Company that was created around 1908. It is unclear exactly when the Paw Paw Bait Company was established, but it's likely sometime in the late 1920s. Some of the later lures made by Moonlight appeared early on in the Paw Paw line. This company was around well into the 1960s. Antique lures from the company are now collector items.



*George and Eliza Ampey, parents  
Of Elton Ampey who settled in Paw  
Paw in 1908.*

**PAW PAW AND THE FREEDOM TRAIL** The heritage of the Underground Railroad and the anti-slavery movement in Michigan is as rich and multi-faceted as our state's heritage of the Great Lakes, the automobile and lighthouses. It is interesting to note that two Paw Paw's had a role in the underground railroad which led many former slaves to freedom. Paw Paw, West Virginia's history revolves around the Paw Paw House (Paw Paw Museum). See above entry. For Paw Paw, Michigan, James and Dicey Ampey left Virginia in 1829 and arrived in what is now Fountain City, Indiana in 1830. They secured a land contract for five acres. Together they had 13 children. Four sons, including George, served in the Civil War. After the war, George bought land in 1866 in Lawrence Town-

ship; another son bought 120 acres in Goblesville (now Gobles) and another in Cassopolis, all in Michigan. George and his wife, Eliza, had four children. George and Eliza's son Elton bought the land in Paw Paw in 1908 along the river on Ampey road. The road to the property was named after the Ampey family. More on the [Michigan Freedom Trail](http://www.michigan.gov/freedomtrail) can be found on-line at [www.michigan.gov/freedomtrail](http://www.michigan.gov/freedomtrail). The [Ampey family genealogy](http://smbhs.org/research.html) can be found on-line at <http://smbhs.org/research.html>. They are among the family report pages of the Southwestern Michigan Black Heritage Society's web page.

**PAW PAW'S LANDING**, Kentucky is reportedly a name given to a spot on the Red River Gorge. Today there is an inn by the name.

**THE 'PAW PAW' - a Civil War Union Navy ship** bought known as a "tinclad" that patrolled and fought on the Mississippi River. More history of this boat and its Captain, Norman Carr, are on line at [http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/1995/6/1995\\_6\\_86.shtml](http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/1995/6/1995_6_86.shtml)

**PAW BOSACK**, young Denmark male musician/singer known as Paw Paw.

**PAW PAW PINKERTON** J.G. "Paw Paw" Pinkerton, is a world traveled storyteller.

**PAW PAW PATCH RESTAURANT and BAR**, located in Titikaveka, New Zealand.

**KUBLAI KAHN PAW PAW CHOW CHOW CHOW**, commonly called "Paw Paw" was Martha Stewart's Chow dog which she mentioned on her show and her Blog. Stewart chronicled the dog's demise and death in April 2008.

**Paw Paw Growers Association** There is even an Ohio Paw Paw Growers Association. They are online at: [www.ohiopawpaw.com](http://www.ohiopawpaw.com)

**Dear Edwina** is a musical by Zina Goldrich (music) and Marcy Heisler (book and lyrics). A children's one-hour musical, it concerns a young girl who gives her neighborhood friends and family advice through singing in a musical show. It is set in the town of Paw Paw, Michigan, although the setting is more like Deerfield, Illinois, where Marcy Heisler was born.

**PAW PAW MUSEUM**, known originally as the Paw Paw Building in Port Deposit, Maryland was built in 1821. It was named for two paw-paw bushes which once flanked the entrance, and today one paw paw stands sentinel at the entrance of the old structure. The Paw Paw was the first church structure of any denomination in Port Deposit, serving the Methodist congregation. The building had three entrances for this congregation – "one for men, one for women and one for "coloreds," according to the writings of the pseudonym utilizing historian Guyas Cutas in 1876. All of the congregants, no matter which door they used, attended services together. More information on line at: <http://www.portdeposit.com/History/pawpaw.htm> (Sadly, we do not have a Paw Paw Museum but there is a Time Capsule Museum in Paw Paw.)

**PAW PAW RIDGE** of the Allegheny Mountains, Morgan County, West Virginia. This is the ridge of mountains that the Paw Paw tunnel was cut through. Some information can be found at [www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/wonder/structure/paw\\_paw.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/wonder/structure/paw_paw.html). See next entry.

**PAW PAW TUNNEL** The hand-carved tunnel -- largest man-made structure on the historic C&O Canal -- is open to the public year-round. It is located a quarter-mile along the well-maintained towpath from a small park, just across the Potomac River from the railroad town of Paw Paw, Morgan County's westernmost outpost. The town and the tunnel took their common name from the unique fruit that grows prolifically along nearby ridges. (<http://www.berkeleysprings.com/tunnel.htm>)

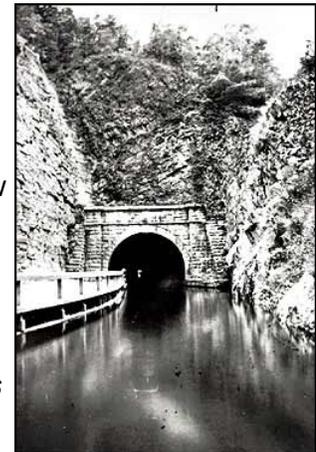
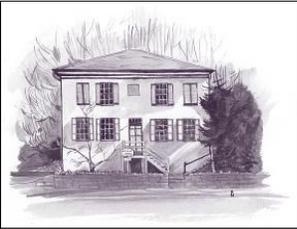
**THE PAW PAW PATCH** is a children's folk song. The song asks where little children (any two-syllable name) went... *Where, oh where is dear little Jimmy? Way down yonder in the paw-paw patch.*" The song invites you to go find them... *Come on girls, let's go find him, Way down yonder in the paw-paw patch.*" The chorus repeats... *Pickin' up paw-paws, put 'em in your pockets, Way down yonder in the paw-patch.*"

**PAW PAW, ILLINOIS schools** are the "Paw Paw Bulldogs." The school has less than 200 students in grades 7-12. ([http://www.leecountyhistory.com/lee\\_county/pawpaw.htm](http://www.leecountyhistory.com/lee_county/pawpaw.htm))

**Paw Paw MIAW**, an on-line video game at Dorks.com. Choose your Paw Paw character and fight your way to the top in story mode in a one on one battle and see who gets the highest score.

**PAW PAW ISLAND**, Madison Parish, Louisiana. An island on the Mississippi River, named after the fruit which grows in the area. Once known as "My Wife's Island." Claimed also by the state of Mississippi.

**PAW PAW PIROGUES** of Delacroix Island, Louisiana are a specially designed personal watercraft that was originally crafted by the old-time market hunters and trappers used in the rivers, lakes and swamps in Louisiana.



**The Paw Paw Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society**, Volusia and Flagler counties. The Paw Paw Chapter came about because the little "Volusia Pawpaw," *Deeringothamnus rugellior*, also known as Yellow Squirrel Banana or Rugel's Pawpaw, is found only in Volusia County. Each month the Chapter hosts a guest speaker with topics ranging from identifying native and invasive plants, water conservation, landscaping, planting for wildlife, and botany.

**PAW PAW BEARS.** Hanna Barbera cartoon from the 1980's. The Paw Paws were Indian bears led by Princess Paw Paw. She wore a magical moonstone which allowed her to call the totem when needed. The totem protected them in their adventures against Dark Paw. The totem was a huge wooden bear standing on a red turtle with a golden eagle resting on its head. Characters were: Wise Paw, Princess Paw Paw, Brave Paw, Trembly Paw, Medicine Paw, PaPooch, Flying Cloud (horse), Golden Thunder (horse), Dark Paw, Bumble Paw, Aunt Prune, Totem Bear, Totem Tortoise, and Totem Eagle.



## **THE PAW PAW TREE FACTS**

**Leaf:** Alternate, simple, obovate to oblong, 5 to 11 inches long, 2 to 3 inches wide, green above and below. Green pepper odor when crushed.

**Flower:** Monoecious; purplish-brown, broad bell shape, 6 petals, 1 to 1 1/2 inch across; appearing with or slightly before the leaves.

**Fruit:** Very unique in that they resemble a short, fat banana, 2 1/2 to 4 inches long, at first green then turning yellowish then brown as they ripen in the fall; very fleshy and tastes much like a banana.



**Twig:** Moderately stout, red-brown; buds purplish brown, fuzzy, naked bud which is flattened and often curved, terminal bud 1/4 to 1/2 inch long.

**Bark:** Smooth, brown, splotted with wart-like lenticels, often with light gray patches.

**Form:** A small tree up to 40 feet tall, 12 inches in diameter, often found in growing in small clusters.

*Left: Growing Range in USA*



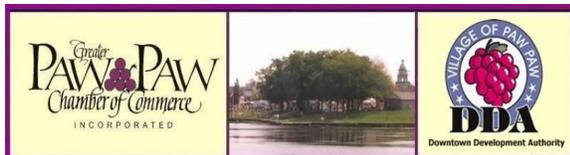
## **Ohio Paw Paw Festival**

Generally the same weekend each year in Lake Snowden/Albany Ohio.

This festival features: growing advice for farmers, judging the best Paw Paw, historical presentation on the Paw Paw, a Paw Paw cook-off, and numerous kids activities including a discovery walk looking for Paw Paw trees and fruits. Online at <http://www.ohiopawpawfest.com>



For a further description of the paw paw, visit [www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/default.htm](http://www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/default.htm) or [www.ohiopawpaw.com](http://www.ohiopawpaw.com)



**Thinking of Visiting Paw Paw, Michigan Area?**  
**Community information and events schedule can be found online at: [uncorkpawpaw.com](http://uncorkpawpaw.com) and [pawpaw.chamber.com](http://pawpaw.chamber.com).**