

Sturgis Journal

'Longest Garage Sale' opens on U.S. 12

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"Michigan's Longest Garage Sale" opens today and continues through Sunday.

By Rosalie Currierrcurrier@sturgisjournal.com

"Michigan's Longest Garage Sale" opens today and continues through Sunday, stretching for 180 miles along U.S. 12.

Some local residents got their sales underway before the official start day.

East of Bronson, U.S. 12 is closed because a bridge is being replaced, and a detour onto Central Road has worked in favor of Cheryl Ludwick, who lives on that route.

"Usually I have to drag just a portion of my stuff (into Bronson)," Ludwick said. "With the highway rerouted, I have the ultimate place for a garage sale."

She invited friends to join — 12 families — who each take a stint waiting on customers.

Multi-family sales seem to be the norm for the highway sales. Michelle McClish on the west side of Bronson has multiple awnings dotting her yard. As family and friends were setting up on Wednesday customers stopped so they started selling early. One booth is for the local Girl Scouts troop, which is working toward a trip to Savannah, Ga.

Parlin's Home Furnishings in Sturgis shares a highway front yard with Animal Rescue Fund. Helen Luegge and Lorelee Knepper were setting up a by-donation sale for ARF, and had to keep their awning down, because people continued to

stop, assuming the sale there had begun.

Farther east near downtown White Pigeon, Carol Hoopes was open for business early, too. Some people don't travel that way on the weekends, Hoopes said, so she's capturing all the traffic she can.

This is the fourth year Hoopes has participated, and that sale site involves about seven families.

At House of Twin Bays in White Pigeon, owner Linda Hostetler opened her garage sale last weekend. Some local vendors on her lawn started early, too.

Suzanne Johansen of White Pigeon was among them. Johansen doesn't have a sale every year, but it's profitable when she chooses to participate, she said.

Hostetler agrees. Sales are profitable for anyone on the U.S. 12 route, businesses included.

"My mom does well at (Tasty) Nut Shop, too," Hostetler said.

Along with enhancing the local economy, Hostetler enjoys chatting with customers. This year, she is offering a sign-in sheet to record names and hometowns of those new acquaintances.

"They come from everywhere," Hostetler said.

Ludwick also likes to learn more about those who come . into her sale.

"Some people make a weekend of it," Ludwick said.