# Peppermint pigs 'smashing' tradition

By Michael Hill

Associated Press

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. – A holiday tradition in this upstate New York resort town has a peppermint twist: pig-shaped hard candies are sold with little metal hammers to smash them at Christ-

weigh up to a pound, are considered good luck charms by some. Family members will take turns whacking the piggy tokens of holiday cheer into little candy shards.

"We do find that some people are a little taken aback: 'What's the whole idea of the pig and the hammer? What are you doing? And is someone insulting me by giving me a pig?" said Mike Fitzgerald, owner of Saratoga Sweets, which makes the pigs that can be the size of a big bar of bath soap.

Fitzgerald has pigs on his brain this time of year. A small crew at his shop south of Saratoga Springs in Halfmoon makes the hard candy from dawn to dark in a shop distinguished by boiling red pots of candy and an overwhelming scent of peppermint. Fitzgerald is hurrying to fill thousands of pig orders around the country.

Why pigs?

rewster

OWNSHIPS

ast Hale

SD Co RFD #1

NWKL Library

City of Colby

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It could be related to the marzipan pigs northern European confectioners make at holiday time as good luck symbols. Fitzgerald said it's possible chefs at the old hotels in Saratoga Springs in the late 19th century couldn't easily make marzipan, so they improvised with peppermint hard candy.

In the old days, the pig was table. Father would wrap it in a napkin and crack it with the steel Impressions of Saratoga.

Comparison of Levies

95,910,796

2,184,919

43,170,524

342,156

287,676

198.831

718,434

1,835,917

1,866,618

2,955,296

1,577,568

46.913

12.60

16.92

81.37

31.506

22.45

13.17

19.25

15.03

rod used to sharpen knives so the family could share the sweettasting bits, Fitzgerald said. But by the mid-20th century, the area holiday tradition went the way of lit candles on Christmas trees.

In 1988, Fitzgerald made a first run of 60 peppermint pigs at the request of the local historical society. He was surprised to see peo-The peppermint pigs, which can ple lining up to buy them, many of them older people who fondly recalled smashing pigs when they were young. He sold out his run and never looked back.

"It's been a pig race ever since. This year we'll make about 130,000 pigs," he said.

As Fitzgerald spoke, workers stirred bubbling tea pots filled with a Pepto-pink mix of sugar and corn syrup. The candy mix is hand-poured into cast aluminum molds to make one of three pigs: Holly (3 ounces and 3 1/2-inches long), Noel (a half pound and 5 1/2 inches) or the big man, Clarence (1 pound and 6 inches).

The hardened pigs have a shiny, glassy quality other hard candies with a higher corn syrup content lack. A quick strike by Fitzgerald's hammer shattered a pig.

"It has to break like glass," Fitzgerald said with satisfaction.

It's not as though sales of candy canes – more than 1.8 billion are made a year – are being threatened. But the pigs are a popular item in gift stores in Saratoga Springs and other retailers, dressed in red velvet bags with a shiny, silver hammer. (Once you get the hammer, you can order a refill without

"Thanksgiving sort of kicks it placed on the Christmas dinner off and from here on in, it gets crazy," said Marianne Barker of



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5.795

-0.053

-0.508

-0.322

-12.454

Valuation of Thomas County is: 95,910,796 Levies shown are taxes per \$1000 valuation

Total		1.500
-		
COUNTY LEVIES		
General	79-1946	8.835
Road & Bridge	79-1946	8.082
Noxious Weed	2-1318	0.526
Employee Benefit	12-15, 102	9.936
Ambulance	65-6113	1.147
Svc Program for Elderly	12-1680	0.667
Direct Election	25-2201a	0.314
Historical Society	19-2651	0.690
Extension Council	2-610	1.254
Free Fair	2-132	0.221
Mental Health	19-4011	0.418
	1	1

Thomas County Tax Levies for 2012

\$143.584 USD#315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 \$143.246 USD #314, Fire #5 \$148.027 USD #315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3

\$143.018 USD #314, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 WEST HALE TOWNSHIP

\$155.264 USD #315, Gem Cemetery, Fire #4

\$153.816 USD #316, Gem Cemetery, Fire #4

\$155.326 USD #316, Rexford Cemetery, Fire #4

\$135.956 USD #314, Fire #5 \$150.011 USD #315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 \$145.002 USD #314, Colby, Cemetery, Fire #3

\$131.922 USD #315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 061 \$126.913 USD #314, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3

\$141.044 USD #316, Gem Cemetery, Fire #3 072 \$142.492 USD #315, Gem Cemetery, Fire #3

LACEY TOWNSHIP

\$140.542 USD #316, Rexford Cemetery, Fire #4 MEN TOWNSHIP

\$151.148 USD #316, Fairview Cemetery 091 \$140.000 USD #291, Fairview Cemetery \$145.020 USD #274, Fairview Cemetery 092 \$152.596 USD #315, Fairview Cemetery

NORTH RANDALL TOWNSHIP \$146.849 USD #315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 101 \$139.273 USD #274, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 \$145.716 USD #315, Fire #3 103 \$138.140 USD #274, Fire #3 \$144.268 USD #316, Fire #3 104

105 \$145.401 USD #316, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3 106 \$137.020 USD #274, Fire #1

SUMME	KS IUWN	SHIP
112	\$131.678	USD #274
113	\$133.564	USD #274, Fire #1
114	\$135.817	USD #274, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3
115	\$134.684	USD #274, Fire #3
116	\$134.697	USD #274, Colby Cemetery, Fire #1
120	\$136.587	USD #275
121	\$138.473	USD #275, Fire #1
122	\$139.593	USD #275, Fire #3
123	\$139.254	USD #315
124	\$140.387	USD #315, Colby Cemetery
125	\$142.260	USD #315, Fire #3

\$143.393 USD #315, Colby Cemetery, Fire #3

RY TOWNSHIP \$144.370 USD #275, Fire #5 130 \$145.676 USD #315. Fire #3 131 132 \$142.028 USD #314. Fire #5 133 \$141.889 USD #275, Fire #1 \$144.556 USD #315, Fire #1 134 \$139.547 USD #314, Fire #1 135

\$140.667 USD #314, Fire #3

SOUTH RANDALL TOWNSHIP

126

136

\$132.544 USD #274, Fire #1 \$127.524 USD #291, Fire #1

2012 LEVIES BY TOWNSHIPS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CITIES **BREWSTER** 

> \$34.162 County \$46.913 USD #314 \$41.873 \$1.234 NWKL \$39.641 West Hale Twp General Fund

\$34.162 County \$32.238 USD #315 \$46.882 Colby Cemetery

County

USD #315

Colby Cemetery

City

\$34.162

\$32.238

\$46.882

\$1.133

\$39,641 CCC State \$34.162 County \$12.608 City USD #315 \$46.882 \$1.234 NWKL \$3.006 Fire #3

\$1.033 Gem Cemetery \$39.641 CCC \$140,066 Sub-Total Lacey Township General Fund \$1.500 State \$34.162 County

\$11.725 USD #316 \$45.434 \$1.234 NWKL \$1.600 Fairview Cemetery Sheridan Co. RFD #1 \$5.196 \$39,641

\$2,404 Menlo Twp General Fund State \$34.162 County \$81.377

USD #274 \$39.306 CCC \$2.614 South Randall Twp General Fund \$1.500

\$34.162 County \$31,506 City USD #316 \$45,434 \$1.234 NWKL \$1.380 Fire #4 \$2.543 Rexford Cemetery \$39,641 CCC \$157.400 Sub-Total Smith Twp General Fund \$1.918

\$159.318 Total

The 1997 Legislative session approved Senate Bill #41 which provided an exemption of \$20,000 appraised value or \$2,300 of assessed value for the USD General Fund levied against all residential properties. Your tax statement reflects the reduction if you have a residence on the property.

Menlo	1,760,394	27.577	29.226	-1.649
Morgan	10,589,243	4.364	11.872	-7.508
North Randall	3,942,840	19.291	17.528	1.763
South Randall	6,425,741	14.815	13.327	1.488
Rovohl	2,713,225	16.026	21.180	-5.154
Smith	2,410,060	14.648	18.077	-3.429
Summers	8,879,188	15.835	15.852	-0.017
Wendell	1,483,742	29.432	32.438	-3.006
SCHOOL DISTRICTS				
USD 274-General	9,625,810	13.371	14.937	-1.566
USD 274-Supp General	9,884,203	20.000	20.000	0.000
USD 275-General	3,877,628	16.217	15.998	0.219
USD 275-Supp General	3,919,426	20.000	20.000	0.000
USD 291-General	496,096	12.286	12.367	-0.081
USD 291-Supp General	520,478	20.000	20.000	0.000
USD 314-General	7,434,059	15.873	27.070	-11.197
USD 314-Supp General	7,949,142	20.000	20.000	0.000
USD 315-General	62,334,137	19.392	21.446	-2.054
USD 315-Supp General	67,796,028	20.000	20.000	0.000
USD 316-General	5,455,630	25.434	26.651	-1.217
USD 316-Supp General	5,841,519	20.000	20.000	0.000
C.C.C.	95,910,796	39.641	35.208	4.433
CEMETERY DISTRICTS	3			
Colby Cemetery	65,975,281	1.133	1.615	-0.482
Gem Cemetery	2,821,317	1.033	1.186	-0.153
Fairview Cemetery	2,048,070	1.600	2.366	-0.766
Rexford Cemetery	3,710,643	2.543	2.886	-0.343
FIRE DISTRICTS				
Rural Fire Dist. #1	11,758,722	1.886	2.512	-0.626
Rural Fire Dist. #3	26,534,014	3.006	1.889	1.117
Rural Fire Dist. #4	4,612,236	1.380	1.563	-0.183
Rural Fire Dist. #5	4,212,814	4.367	1.676	2.691

287,676

52,541,441

5.196

1.234

2.913

4.981

2.967

0.215

0.169

-0.054

						Summers	15.835						15.835	140
						Wendell	29.432						29.432	141
		Sheridan			Nox.	Special	Special	Employee	Bond & Int./	Econ Dev	Street	Sub-Total	Twp. Gen.	Total
CITIES	General 12-101a	Co RFD #1	Library 12.12	Rec. 12.19	Weed 2.13	Fire/ Police 12-110b	Liability 75-6110	Benefit 12-16, 102	Debt Svc 10-113	12-1617h	Lighting 15-712	City Levy	Levy 79-1962	City Levy
Brewster	24.887					1.458		9.060	11.508			46.913	1.731	48.644
Colby	4.964		4.854	2.913	0.043	0.749	0.325	11.582	5.723	1.085		32.238		32.238
Gem	7.505										5.103	12.608		12.608
Menlo	11.725	5.196										16.921	2.404	19.325
Oakley	69.828		10.993						0.556			81.377	2.61	83.991
Rexford	31.506	·										31.506	1.918	33.42
I, Shelly A. Harms, Cou	nty Clerk of Tho	mas Cour	nty, Kansas	, hereby cer	rtify the f	foregoing are the			•		•	•		

legal levies of Thomas County for the year 2011 as shown by the records on file in my office.

\* T.I.F. Valuation 1,272,100

Shelly A. Harms, Thomas County Clerk

2012 Thomas County Tax Levies

STATE LEVIES K.S.A. Levy State General 76-6b01 1.000 State Institutions Bldg 76-6b04

General	79-1946	8.835
Road & Bridge	79-1946	8.082
Noxious Weed	2-1318	0.526
Employee Benefit	12-15, 102	9.936
Ambulance	65-6113	1.147
Svc Program for Elderly	12-1680	0.667
Direct Election	25-2201a	0.314
Historical Society	19-2651	0.690
Extension Council	2-610	1.254
Free Fair	2-132	0.221
Mental Health	19-4011	0.418
Mental Retardation	19-4011	0.682
Sanitary Landfill	65-204	0.305
County Health	65-204	0.165
Building Maintenance	19-15, 116	0.920
Total		34.162

NWKL REGIONAL LIBRARY								
General	76-6b01	1.094						
Employee Ben.		0.14						
otal		1.234						

CHOOL	General	Cap. Outlay	Bond & Int.	Recreation	Supp Gen	Total
ISTRICTS	72-6431	72-8801	10-113	19-1927	72-6433	
SD 274	20.000	3.997		1.938	13.37	39.30
SD 275	20.000	7.998			16.22	44.21
ISD 291	20.000	2.000			12.29	34.28
ISD 314	20.000	5.000		1.000	15.87	41.87
ISD 315	20.000	1.742	5.748		19.392	46.88
SD 316	20.000				25.434	45.43

	General	Road &	Nox. Weed	Emp Ben	Debt Svc	Spec Rd.	Total
TOWNSHIPS	79-1962	Bridge 79-1946	2-1318	12-15, 102	10-113	68-518c	
Barrett	20.469						20.469
East Hale	22.453						22.453
West Hale	1.731	11.448					13.179
Kingery	19.251						19.251
Lacey		15.034					15.034
Menlo	2.404	22.452		2.72			27.577
Morgan	0.278	3.688	0.398				4.364
North Randall	19.291						19.291
South Randall	2.614	12.201					14.815
Rovohl	16.026						16.026
Smith	1.918	12.730					14.648
Summers	15.835						15.835
Wendell	29.432						29.432

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