Annual Heritage Plant Sale at the Cox House

It’s nearly time again! Saturday, May 15 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. is the date for the annual Cox House Heritage Plant Sale. This annual fund raiser for the Cox house and NCHS is a favorite of many local gardeners who come year after year to choose from a wide variety of interesting perennials as well as raspberry canes, rhubarb, small shrubs, and bulbs.

As we rely on plants donated by our community, we would be very happy if you could help by potting up some plants in your own gardens for the sale and bringing them to the Cox House Yard on Thursday, May 13 or Friday, May 14 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. each day. Labeled plants are most appreciated by the volunteers who will be pricing and arranging them for sale. We will have many extra pots available by the Skaro Street gate for anyone who needs them.

Some popular plants in the past have been mums, phlox, primrose, hosta, ferns, bleeding hearts, daisies, iris, lilies, dahlias, lily of the valley, bee balm, sedum, peonies, columbine, and coleus. We count on our NCHS members to spread the word about the sale, donate plants, and volunteer to help with potting and labeling of plants as well as the day of the actual sale. It’s a lot of fun, and you don’t need to be a plant expert to help out!

If you have questions or would like to donate or volunteer, please call: Bev Wetherill 934-4417, Barb Olmanson 934-2828, or Jen Baxa 934-4075.

Event Set for March 23
St. Peter Area “Women Celebrating Women”

The seventh annual “Women Celebrating Women” celebration is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 23 in the banquet rooms of the Jackson Campus Center at Gustavus Adolphus College. The 2010 theme is “Writing Women Back Into History.”

The evening will include a social hour, entertainment, dinner and an award ceremony. Women from St. Peter’s history will be featured in performances.

Held during Women’s History Month, the event is a celebration of all women’s accomplishments and each year honors area women who make a positive difference in the St. Peter area. The event is open to the public, and advance registration is required. To register, contact the office of St. Peter Community Education at 934-3048 or www.stpetercommunityedonline.com, under the Winter General Interest category. Reservations will be accepted until Wednesday, March 17. The cost is $20 per person.

WCW continued on page 6
Memorials
received since the last newsletter:
In Memory of
Doug Ryan
Given by
Carol & Martin Menk
In Memory of
Carol Langsjoen
Given by
Minnehaha Questers
In Memory of
Ray Johnson
Given by
Jackie Feldman
In Memory of
Marian R. Johnson
Given by
Son & Marjorie Halvorson
Eunice Holz
Eileen Holz

Monetary
Donations
received since the last newsletter:
Sally Webster
Neil Stevermer
Bernard & Pam Bidelman
Rolf & Edi Thorstensson
Ellis & Janet Jones
Ken & Patsy Rosow
Willis Lindquist
Elizabeth Russell
Kurt & Mary Leonard
Marlin Peterson
Larry & Joan Zambino

the CROSSING
is a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society. Subscription is free with a society membership.
Contributors for this issue:
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Ruth Grewe
Eileen Holz
Chris Johnson
Ben Leonard
Herb Poncin
Sally Sandeen
Nancy Zempel

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TSHC Museum Assistants, Jessica Becker, Allen McBride, Hannah Skinner
TSHC Maintenance, Wayne Passon
Pt. Ridgely Site Manager, Nancy Zempel
Pt. Ridgely Site Guides, Ashley Hamre, Charlotte Nack, Dorothy Polesky, Melinda Sommer, John Taylor

Treaty Site History Center
1851 N. Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082
TSHC Phone: (507) 934-2160
TSHC Fax: (507) 934-0172
Hours: Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sunday 1–4 p.m.
Archives: Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
General information via e-mail: museum@nchsmn.org or research@nchsmn.org
Website: www.nchsmn.org

E. St. Julien Cox House
500 N. Washington Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082
Cox House Phone: (507) 934-4309
Hours: June, July, August
Fri.–Sun. 1–4 p.m.

Harkin Store
P.O. Box 112, New Ulm, MN 56082
Eight miles northwest of New Ulm,
on County Highway 21
Harkin Store Phone: (507) 354-8666
Hours: June, July, and August
Tues.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
September through October 15
Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Port Ridgely
72404 County Road 30
Fairfax, MN 55332
Fort Ridgely Phone: (507) 426-7888
Website: ridgely@nchsmn.org
Hours: Memorial Day–Labor Day
Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
September–October 15
Sat. & Sun.: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

NCHS began managing the E. St. Julien Cox House in 1971. In 2010 we're focusing on the house and creating a long range plan encompassing preservation, interpretation (tour/exhibits), programs, operation, and facility use. You won't see a lot of changes this summer, but we're hopeful that time and funding will allow us to unveil an improved plan in 2011.

NCHS has been extremely lucky to have a dedicated group of volunteers single-handedly keep the house going. They deserve huge thanks – and some help. We can do that.

We're not starting with a blank slate. The house has been wonderfully cared for and preserved. Programs like Christmas at the Cox House and fundraisers like the Annual Plant Sale are St. Peter institutions. We won't lose that, but we do want to keep that momentum going year-round.

If you have ideas, observations, or would just like to help out, don't hesitate to give me a call.

Thanks!

Ben Leonard, Director
On March 11 at 7 p.m., St. Peter-based filmmakers will host the public premiere of Farming Forward, with conversation to follow, at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter, Minnesota.

When local documentary filmmakers Martin Lang and Ethan Marxhausen consider the prospects for Minnesota agriculture, they see bright things on the horizon. Their new documentary film, Farming Forward, brings together people from a variety of Minnesota farms to shine a light on the role of sustainability in the future of farming.

“We looked at the divergent trends in agriculture today, from the continued growth of industrial megafarms to the local food movement,” says Lang about the motivation for the film, “and we asked ourselves, ‘Who will be tomorrow’s farmers?’” Farming Forward presents several possible answers, revealing the surprising diversity and vitality of Minnesota’s next crop of sustainable growers. From fourth generation farming families to freshly-minted college farmers, these dedicated people offer an inspiring glimpse into their shared passions: community, the planet, and outstanding food.

The premiere event will feature a post-screening conversation with some of the film’s stars, including representatives from the St. Peter Food Cooperative. Several local farmers will also be on hand to share their own ideas and information about sustainable farming in southern Minnesota. Snacks will be provided by the St. Peter Food Co-op; the event is free and open to the public.

Filmmakers Lang and Marxhausen, a professor and a sophomore student at Gustavus Adolphus College, pursued their project with the support of Gustavus’ Presidential Faculty/Student Collaboration Grant. The film and premiere event are made possible with support from the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, the St. Peter Food Cooperative, and the Nicollet County Historical Society. The Treaty Site History Center is located just north of St. Peter on Highway 169.

This dynamic new film features your neighbors, including sustainable farmers Mary Jo and Luverne Forbord, Laura Frerichs, and Willard Kreitlow; as well as Jerry Ford of Sustainable Farming Association (SFA), Glen Hill of the Minnesota Food Association, Margo O’Brien and Erik Larson of the St. Peter Food Co-op, urban farmer Susane Moua, and the student farmers at Gustavus’ Big Hill Farm.
NCHS, the St. Peter Food Co-Op, and St. Peter Community and Family Education have teamed up to bring a documentary film series to the Treaty Site History Center. This diverse group of films will be followed by audience discussion and conversations with special guests. We look forward to not only watching them, but talking and thinking about them as well. Please join us for one, a couple, or all eight. Admission is free. Please contact Jessica at 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org, for details.

Thursday, March 11, 7 p.m. Farming Forward. See article on page 3.

Tuesday, March 30, 7 p.m. Crips and Bloods: Made in America. Chronicles the decades-long cycle of destruction and despair that defines modern gang culture in south Los Angeles, but comparisons can be made to marginalized groups across the globe.

Saturday, April 10, 2 p.m. King Corn and sequel Big River. By growing an acre of corn in Iowa two friends uncover the devastating impact that corn is having on the environment, public health, and family farms (King Corn) and ecological consequences of industrial agriculture (Big River).

Saturday, April 24, 2 p.m. Wolves in Paradise. Ranchers and environmentalists team up to protect open space from developers and to learn how to share with wolves this last wild corner of the West.

Tuesday, May 4, 7 p.m. What’s On Your Plate? A witty and provocative documentary about kids and food politics. Filmed over the course of one year, the film follows two eleven-year-old kids as they explore their place in the food chain.

Tuesday, May 18, 6:30 p.m. Green Animation. A compilation of 11 short, fresh animated films about environmental issues. Animators and musicians combine talents to prompt laughter, anger, indignation, and action for an ecologically sound future.
Excerpt from Emily Stone’s article “Finding Feisty Fungi in Antarctica,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, May 2009.

Since there are 100,000 known fungus species, it might not seem all that remarkable that Robert Blanchette may have discovered three new ones. But he found the fungi where no one believed they existed—Antarctica—and he says they’re feasting on historic treasures—the wooden huts built a century ago by legendary British explorers Ernest Shackleton and Robert Scott.

Blanchette, a 57-year-old plant pathologist at the University of Minnesota, is a leading specialist in the study of how fungi affect archaeological artifacts...Blanchette [has] studied wooden remains from the Atlantic Ocean, from Asian, African and North American deserts and from both poles. Thousands of samples—from millimeter-long slivers of a Turkish tomb that may have belonged to King Midas to a fist-size chunk from a sunken Civil War battleship—are stashed in more than a dozen freezers in his lab on the university’s St. Paul campus. In each instance, his job is to identify fungi that might be damaging the artifacts and recommend ways to stop it.

“He is the best guy in the world to go to,” says Robert J. Koestler, director of the Smithsonian Institution’s Museum Conservation Institute, who enlisted Blanchette’s help in the 1990s when Koestler was a research scientist at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Active Archives
by Bob Sandeen, Collections Manager

January was a busy month in the archives. We had an intern, Justin Hitch, from Gustavus Adolphus College helping us organize our manuscript collection. This involved a considerable amount of moving heavy storage boxes filled mainly with documents or ledgers. We want to thank Justin for the hard work that he did for us during his internship. It is very greatly appreciated!

Justin and I started creating searchable computer records for our manuscripts by using a different section of the same PastPerfect software program that we use to keep track of our photograph and artifact collections. This makes it very easy to know what information can be found in each of the hundreds of manuscript items that have been acquired. The manuscript information entered into the PastPerfect program at this point is rather basic. In time, more detailed descriptions of the contents of each box will be added. Because of the large number of items that need to be described, this will be a very slow process. The completed version will replace an earlier computerized inventory that is not as detailed.

The diversity of our manuscript collection is very interesting to consider. We have a draft copy of the bill to move the capital of Minnesota from St. Paul to St. Peter in 1857, township records, ledgers from various county businesses, school census records from 1926 to 1970, and many other interesting items. The Traverse des Sioux Genealogical Society Meets: The Traverse des Sioux Genealogical Society, an informal gathering of beginner to experienced hobby-genealogists, meets four times a year to share their experiences in this fascinating pastime. The next meeting will be Monday, April 12, 2010 at 7 p.m. If you wish to be added to the TdSGS e-mail list please contact hazelart@hickorytech.net.

At our February meeting we discussed scanning, photo storage, and dating photographs. Below are some online sources for help with that genealogical task.

by photo type:

www.billblanton.com/date.htm
www.genealogy.com/73_taylor.html
www.ajmorris.com/roots/photo/types.php

by photographer:

www.mnhs.org/people/photographers/

by costume type:

www.familychronicle.com/dating.html
www.ajmorris.com/roots/photo/types.php
www.olivetreegenealogy.com/photos/Fashions-Photos.shtml
www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/features/dating/index.html

Class Visits

Come experience history where it happened! Spring is a great time to visit. Bring your school, class, or student group to the Treaty Site, Cox House, Harkin Store, or Fort Ridgely. Special group admission is $2 per student. Teachers, chaperones, and students from Nicollet County schools get in free. Please contact Jessica at 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for more details.

Genealogical Society Meets
by Costume Type

Fort Ridgely school program, 2009

Class Visits

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www.olivetreegenealogy.com/photos/Fashions-Photos.shtml
www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/features/dating/index.html

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www.ajmorris.com/roots/photo/types.php
www.olivetreegenealogy.com/photos/Fashions-Photos.shtml
www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/features/dating/index.html

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www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/features/dating/index.html
Charitable giving: do it with purpose and planning

by Patti Kelly

Financial experts estimate that, in the next 10 years, up to $10 trillion will be transferred through the estates of individuals. Their loved ones, as well as the government, are likely beneficiaries—but not exclusively. In addition, more and more people are bequeathing a portion—and sometimes a very substantial portion—of their assets to charitable organizations and other causes they hold dear.

Why giving takes planning

Whether you are pursuing your short- or long-term giving goals, planning is important. Why?

• **Giving should be a behavior that reflects your values.** What kind of message do you hope to convey through the way you manage and share your financial resources? How do you want to be remembered? Through thoughtful planning, you can make sure such concerns are addressed to your satisfaction.

• **Loved ones can be spared the responsibility of shaping your legacy.** Even though you are known well by your family and friends, they might be unclear about your wishes and goals. Only you can most accurately communicate and put into practice your charitable intentions.

• **Advance notice of gifts can help recipients make the most of the money.** Being aware of their supporters’ intentions can provide some helpful context when setting their organizations’ sights.

• **You and your heirs can experience tax savings while seeing your gifts grow.** Giving is primarily a matter of the heart. Regardless, smart decisions around the financial implications of your giving can ease the tax burden on your heirs and possibly increase the final amount received by your charity of choice.

Get with the program

Many non-profit and financial services organizations sponsor programs that guide philanthropists through the “whys” and “how-tos” of charitable giving. Often, these programs present the benefits of charitable giving in light of tax and other financial implications, introduce innovative methods in gift-giving, and offer workshops to help people prepare their charitable giving strategies.

Good programs also encourage involving the expertise of others (i.e., financial services professionals, accountants, attorneys) in the planning process. If you have not already discussed your charitable intentions with your group of professionals, consider seeking their insight soon.

Patti Kelly, FIC, is a Financial Associate with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in Saint Peter. She can be reached at (507) 934-5304. Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a Fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping nearly 3 million members achieve their financial goals and give back to their communities. This column was prepared by Thrivent Financial for use by this representative.
NCHS Welcomes New Board Members

Alma Forst

Sally Webster, a member of the Board of NCHS, asked if I knew of anyone in the western part of Nicollet County that would be interested in serving on this Board. I considered this for a few days, called her back, and asked “...how about me?”

Jerome and I live and farm in the St. George area. St. George is small village with a beautiful country church of the same name and a thriving farming community, thus earning the nickname of the “Holyland.” St. George as well as most of Nicollet County is blessed with beautiful rich soil.

I was born in Brown County to Robert and Alma Berg in 1941 (yes, I was named after my mother). Schooled in a country school in Sigel Township and Holy Trinity High School. After high school graduation attended the College of Medical Technology for two years and worked at the Union Hospital in New Ulm until the birth of our first child. After that, I stayed home and worked on the farm with my husband. We will be married 49 years this year of 2010. After our son, Jim decided to farm with us, I had extra time on my hands. So I worked at KNUJ Radio for six years and then Heartland Express of Brown County for 14 years.

I have always been interested in history and took quite a few courses at MSU. I am currently on the Board of the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame in New Ulm, chairperson of the St. George parish council, an active member of the Farm City Hub Club in New Ulm and other organizations.

Rachel Larson

Greetings, History Enthusiasts! My name is Rachel Larson and I am a proud member of the St. Peter community and new board member of the Nicollet County Historical Society. I moved to St. Peter three years ago to teach Social Studies at St. Peter High School. I am now the Assistant Principal and am still fortunate to teach Advanced Placement U.S. History.

Prior to moving to St. Peter, I taught in Watonwan County for nine years and was born and raised in Martin County. I have always appreciated the natural beauty of Nicollet County, both past and present. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as a board member for NCHS. I look forward to working with all of you to preserve our local history!

Patti Kelly

Patti moved to the St. Peter area nearly 13 years ago with her husband Kris. Patti is an advisor for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in St. Peter. They have three children: Kelten, Brennan, and Reegan and keep busy with their kids involvement in robotics, soccer, horseback riding, 4H, and church activities. They are members at Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Peter and enjoy the opportunities to serve on a variety of committees and attend family camp at Green Lake Bible Camp each summer. Patti grew up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin and her brother still farms the century old farm her great grandparents settled. Patti and her family live on a hobby farm just outside of Norseland, in a house built in 1875, on a farm site rich with local history and connections. Patti serves as Secretary of the Norseland Preservation Association and believes strongly in helping others understand the richness of our rural history and the value we place in community that so many long to have.
Harkin Happenings
by Ruth Grewe, site manager

When I go to the Harkin in winter I wonder if the snow will be here yet when we open, Saturday, May 1, cleaning the store and putting out the artifacts will be the first things I do. The stove will be on for our first program, “Egg Coffee and Newtons.” Mother’s did a lot of hard physical work but they also did a lot of craftwork as well, which we will have on display for our Mother’s Day Sunday program, May 9. May 16, will be our river program with information about the riverboats—so important for the development of West Newton. Sunday, May 23 will be “Day in the Life of a Pioneer Woman” with displays of what the women of long ago did. Sunday, May 30, Memorial Day will have Bill Cagley with his playing and singing, “Music of all ages for all ages.”

June events will be “4-H and Dairy Day” on June 6th with samplings of dairy products. Kids of all ages will enjoy “Old Tymes Games Day” on June 13. Our fathers did much hard labor to develop the West Newton area but they enjoyed many hobbies as well, with June 20, area men are encouraged to come and show what they can do. June 27, will be an Early 4th of July program with the New Ulm Battery firing their 1870’s canon for us every hour and on the half-hour. We will be serving lemonade and watermelon also. Make sure you also check what special things we will be doing on July 4.

Our programs are on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 and are included with the admission charge. The gift shop will be restocked with many selections of books and souvenirs, unique and hand-crafted items, children’s items and candy.

Many of said that they have driven by but haven’t stopped at the store, hopefully we will hear that from you this season. Come enjoy some time at the 1870’s Harkin Store in West Newton on the Nicollet County Road 21.

Ridgely Report
by Nancy Zempel, site manager

All is white and icy and cold!!

In two months Fort Ridgely will start the 2010 season. Spring-cleaning of the commissary will be completed. New items for the shop will be organized and on the shelves. School groups will join the staff for a day away from school and hopefully, reinforce their Minnesota history lessons.

The days and hours of operation will be the same as previous years. The pattern has been, open from 10–5 p.m. on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We will also be open on Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day Mondays.

A program by Ron Bolduan, a New Ulm photographer will start at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 29. Bolduan will present a journey through the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway. Images representing the three themes of the Scenic Byway—Food for a Nation, Struggles for a Home, A River’s Legacy—have all been captured during Ron’s eleven-year photo study. His photos show us the beauty of the area that is truly out our backdoor.

Plan to visit the Fort Ridgely Historic Site this year and learn more about Minnesota and its local history.

...the value of visiting historic sites is to lead to reflection and make one think, lead to further studies and enrich the mind. …

Fort Worth Mom Blog
Bob Wettergren: Mr. St. Peter

The Society will deeply miss Bob Wettergren. “Mr. St. Peter” passed away February 19, 2010 at the age of 88. A fourth generation resident and local institution, Bob spent a lifetime making St. Peter a better place to live, work, and visit. Thank you Bob for all that you did for our community. We owe you more than we could ever say.

NCHS Welcomes Spring Semester Intern

My name is Becca Hormann and I am a senior at Gustavus. I am majoring in psychology and management, and I am interested in pursuing a career in marketing after graduation. I am doing an internship this spring through the Historical Society and I will be focusing mainly on the E. St. Julien Cox House. I will be doing research on the demographics of St. Peter and the best way to market the Cox House to both individuals in the community and to visitors of St. Peter. I will also be researching other historic houses in the area to compare and contrast them with the Cox House. Some of the activities on campus that I am involved in are, Intramural Broomball, Wednesday Friends on Monday, and Gustavus Women’s Rugby.
History is Your Business

Most of you have seen businesses acknowledged in our newsletter for a while. They have thoughtfully and generously supported the Society through membership. Our business members are critically important in supporting the mission and activities of the Historical Society.

This year NCHS has placed increased importance in partnering with area businesses. We really want to give businesses an incentive to join. We’re asking for their participation and collaboration as much as their tax deductible donation. Is your business or employer interested in history or community minded? Employees get free admission to sites and most events with a business membership. Have program ideas? We’d love to talk with you about special presentations or programs wherever you are in the county.

What if you’re already an individual or family member and your employer joins? We’d love to continue to have you as members. Full members are entitled to receive our newsletters, vote at the annual meeting, and more. Plus you know that you are doing extra to support and save our shared past.

Have any questions? Ben or Jessica are here to help. Give us a call at 507-934-2160 or e-mail ben@nchsmn.org. Thanks so much for your continued friendship and support!

$200 Advocate Business Membership
($180 tax deductible)
• Includes family site/event pass for up to 100 employees.
• Free business card size ad in newsletters
• Free half-day room rental at the Treaty Site History Center or 50% off full-day rental
• 2 annual meeting passes

$500 Benefactor Business Membership
($460 tax deductible)
• Includes family site/event pass for up to 250 employees.
• Free business card size ad in newsletters
• Free full-day room rentals at the Treaty Site History Center or two half-day rentals
• 4 annual meeting passes

$1,000 Champion Business Membership
($920 tax deductible)
• Includes family site/event pass for all employees.
• Free business card size ad in newsletters
• Credit for an NCHS event sponsorship of your choice
• 2 free full-day room rentals at the Treaty Site History Center, four half-day rentals, or combination
• 8 annual meeting passes

Members

Thanks to the following new and renewing members of NCHS since our last newsletter.

Renewed Business Members:
BENCO Electric, $200
Nicollet County Bank, $200

New Business Members:
St. Peter Herald, $200
Schmidt’s Meat Market, $200

Renewed Individual Members:
Verda Beatty
Loren Boutin
Ruth Brandel
Carolyn Brethorst
Eric Carlson
Helen Christianson
Margie Cooney
Opal Dewanz
Michael Frederick
Colleen Freitag
Paula Geblerisch
William Harvey
Scott Hermanson
Renee Jackson
Charles Johnson
Helen Johnson
Victoria Johnson
Marolyn Kleinert
Mary Klingler
Rita Kramer Joerg
Donna Kwai
Lori Lahium
Ruth Larson
Robert Lambert
Maria Lokensgard
Mary Long
Delores Luck
Craig Nelson
Evie Nelson
Rochelle Nord
Judith Penhiter
Janet Prehn
Agnes Stensby
Neil Stevermer
Bernadine Thompson
Bob Vogel
Gertrude Wright

Renewed Family Members:
Frani & Mark Anderson
Bernard & Pam Bidelman
Peggy & Gil Carlson
Richard & Bonnie Compart
Chris & Patty Conlin
Duane & Brenda DeBieck
Garfield & Marjorie Eckberg
Paul & Connie Eckberg
Charles & Carol Eggert
Bernhard & Marilyn Erling
Richard & Joyce Gardner
Don & Beverly Gustafson
Stanley & Marjorie Halvorson
Lisa Isenberg
Ellis & Janet Jones
Tim Lokensgard
Ardis & Earl Lund
John & Sara McKay
Thorold & Arldith Nelson
Arnold Nimps
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Palmer
Marjorie & Earl Renneke
Sue & Lee Schott
Douglas & Judy Schultz
James & Diane Stensson
Marty & Carol Sterner
Howard & Jane Swenson
Owen & Evie Swenson
Buster & Nina West
Larry & Joan Zambino

Renewed Sustaining Members:
Joy Lutzi
Roland & Edi Thorstensson

Renewed Patron Members:
Larry & Judy Biederman
Chris & Jolly Corley
Marie Dranttel
Nicollet Chamber of Commerce
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Palmer
Marlin Peterson
Riverside Dental Care
Bob Sandeen
Loren Sundboom

New Individual Members:
Ruth Estesen Fels
Alma & Jerome Forst
Patti & Kristopher Kelly

New Family Members:
Nita & Paul Aasen
Alma & Jerome Forst

Members

Thanks to the following new and renewing members of NCHS since our last newsletter.

Renewed Business Members:
BENCO Electric, $200
Nicollet County Bank, $200

New Business Members:
St. Peter Herald, $200
Schmidt’s Meat Market, $200

Renewed Individual Members:
Verda Beatty
Loren Boutin
Ruth Brandel
Carolyn Brethorst
Eric Carlson
Helen Christianson
Margie Cooney
Opal Dewanz
Michael Frederick
Colleen Freitag
Paula Geblerisch
William Harvey
Scott Hermanson
Renee Jackson
Charles Johnson
Helen Johnson
Victoria Johnson
Marolyn Kleinert
Mary Klingler
Rita Kramer Joerg
Donna Kwai
Lori Lahium
Ruth Larson
Robert Lambert
Maria Lokensgard
Mary Long
Delores Luck
Craig Nelson
Evie Nelson
Rochelle Nord
Judith Penhiter
Janet Prehn
Agnes Stensby
Neil Stevermer
Bernadine Thompson
Bob Vogel
Gertrude Wright

Renewed Family Members:
Frani & Mark Anderson
Bernard & Pam Bidelman
Peggy & Gil Carlson
Richard & Bonnie Compart
Chris & Patty Conlin
Duane & Brenda DeBieck
Garfield & Marjorie Eckberg
Paul & Connie Eckberg
Charles & Carol Eggert
Bernhard & Marilyn Erling
Richard & Joyce Gardner
Don & Beverly Gustafson
Stanley & Marjorie Halvorson
Lisa Isenberg
Ellis & Janet Jones
Tim Lokensgard
Ardis & Earl Lund
John & Sara McKay
Thorold & Arldith Nelson
Arnold Nimps
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Palmer
Marjorie & Earl Renneke
Sue & Lee Schott
Douglas & Judy Schultz
James & Diane Stensson
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the CROSSING 11
Scholarship Offer

The Nicollet County Historical Society is offering the $1,000 Ted Moline Scholarship for post-secondary education to 2009 graduating High School seniors residing in Nicollet County. The scholarship will be awarded to the student that demonstrates the greatest contribution to the discovery, preservation, and/or dissemination of county history.

Ted Moline was born July 21, 1915 in St. Paul and soon after his family moved to Baldwin Wisconsin. Ted received an amateur radio operator license in 1934 and was an avid operator the rest of his life. Ted moved to St. Peter in 1937 to work for the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad. Ted also served in the United States Army. He retired in 1971 as a Colonel. Ted passed away in August of 2005. He was an extremely generous man who loved local history. This scholarship honors Ted and his commitment to our mission.

Students wishing to compete for this year’s scholarship must create a significant project that contributes to the preservation and/or understanding of Nicollet County history. This could include an oral history project, exhibit, documentary film, research paper, play, or other work. Projects should involve primary source research and add to the historical record. Projects that simply restate historical facts in book report fashion will not be very successful. We would like to see real historical exploration, understanding, and an excitement in conveying that to others. We would encourage students and/or educators to contact the Society before projects begin to avoid confusion.

Projects will be judged by an expert panel at a public reception, held Thursday, May 21st, 6:30pm at the Treaty Site History Center. Students will be asked to attend and present their projects. Final copies of each project will be preserved in the NCHS collections.

For more information please contact Ben Leonard at 507-934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org.

Gustavus Students and St. Peterites Team Up for History

by Chris Johnson and Ben Leonard

The Nicollet County Historical Society, members of the Gustavus class “Changing the World: Justice, Action, and the Meaning of Life,” and several members of the St. Peter community together created a public project on “Story, Place, and Community” during the past January term. Gustavus students were paired with St. Peter residents to conduct oral history/life-review interviews that focused on the power of story and place in shaping a sense of identity and commitment to the common good. Throughout the interview process, the community partners explored their life stories and their sense of purpose or calling, in this community and in the larger world. By month’s end, the students created and presented a keepsake scrapbook for the partners containing the stories and lessons revealed in the interviews.

The interviews also served as the basis for creating a “memory-and-vision map,” depicting the community partner’s favorite memories of St. Peter (how its Places and Spaces have contributed to their life-story and sense of calling in the world) and their hopes and aspirations for its future.

The Treaty Site History Center is pleased to present the project and maps at 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 18th. The public is welcome to meet the students and their partners, as well as see the completed maps. Admission to this special event is free. Please call 507-934-2160 for more details.
St. Peter Reads Announces 2010 Winter Read Selection

Unity in Community-St. Peter Reads has announced that the novel False Mermaid by Erin Hart has been chosen as the 2010 Winter Read. Hart will be in St. Peter Tuesday, March 16 for a writing workshop, book signing, and atmospheric reading.

This will be a return trip to St. Peter for Hart who came to town in January of 2004 after her novel Haunted Ground was chosen as the Winter Read that year. As in 2004, Hart will once again be accompanied by her husband, Paddy O’Brien. O’Brien and his traditional Irish music trio, Chulrua, will also perform on March 16.

The full schedule for March 16 is as follows:

- 1 p.m. / writing workshop with Erin Hart for 5th graders at North Elementary School
- 1:30–3:30 p.m. / workshop and mini concert by Chulrua at the Senior Center at the St. Peter Community Center
- 4–5 p.m. / book signing with Erin Hart at the St. Peter Public Library
- 7 p.m. / atmospheric reading with music and images with Erin Hart and Chulrua at Trinity Lutheran Church

There will also be two book discussions held on Thursday, March 25. One will take place at noon at the St. Peter Public Library and the second will take place at 6:30 p.m. at the St. Peter Food Co-op.

Unity in Community-St. Peter Reads was created in 2003 as a community-wide reading program. Since the late 1990s a phenomena from coast to coast has been the idea of having a city, a county, or even an entire state choosing one book to read and discuss. St. Peter followed in the footsteps of other Minnesota cities such as Duluth, Fergus Falls, Rochester, Owatonna, St. Paul, and Minneapolis.

Since its inception, the program has read and discussed books such as The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien, The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini, Population: 485 by Michael Perry, and Mountains Beyond Mountains by Tracy Kidder.

The appearance by Hart and Chulrua is made possible by a grant provided by the Traverse des Sioux Library System and is funded in part by the Minnesota Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature, with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on Nov. 4, 2008.

Unity in Community-St. Peter Reads is also affiliated with the Friends of the St. Peter Public Library and the Reading in Common program at Gustavus Adolphus College.

False Mermaid will be released on March 2 and copies will be available for purchase at the Book Mark at Gustavus, the St. Peter Public Library, Nutter’s Clothing, Swedish Kontur Imports, Whiskey River, the Nicollet County Treaty Site History Center, the St. Peter Community Education Office, River Rock Coffee, Waldo’s Coffee Company, Patrick’s on Third, the Arts Center of St. Peter, and the St. Peter Herald. For more information contact Judy Schultz at 507-933-6017 or jdschult@gustavus.edu.

Chulrua (cool-ROO-ah) plays old instrumental dance music of Ireland: jigs, reels, hornpipes, polkas, and slides in addition to walking marches, songs, slow airs, set dances, and the harp music. We strive to present these tunes and songs in keeping with the old tradition—as they were handed down from generation to generation in Ireland.

— New York Times Book Review

Erin Hart

Photo credit Joyce Ravid

“Hart writes with a lovely eloquence about how character is shaped by the music, the architecture and the history of this harsh and beautiful land....”

Chulrua featuring Pat Egan, Patrick Durnceau, and Paddy O’Brien

Photo credit Nick Lethert

The St. Peter Reads Committee wishes to thank our Reads Business Supporter, the Nicollet County Historical Society, for this event coverage for our Winter 2010 Read.
In recent years I have been living by Highway 111 and people here have told me some interesting things about the building of this road that I thought could make a story.

Highway 111 is the shortest State Highway in Minnesota and all of it in Nicollet County. It is barely 10 miles long, connecting Highway 14 on the south edge of Nicollet, running due north to the intersection of Highway 22 in New Sweden Township.

It was built about 1920 as automobiles were becoming more common then. Much of the route had not been road before because of so much swampland in the area.

The contractor was Martin Sandeen, who lived in New Sweden Township and had been doing road building. Nicollet County Historical Society has a dirt scraper in the collection that is typical of what was needed in those years. It is a scoop on wheels that is pulled by a team of horses and guided by the driver.

Owen Swenson told me that through the muck and peat soil areas they sometimes had to bring in logs to lay down for a firm base to build the road on.

Alton Menk (now deceased) once showed me a photograph of a car stalled on Highway 111 north of his house in Granby Township where the road runs through low ground. The picture was probably from about 1930 and showed water nearly up to the headlights of the car.

As a small boy I often rode along with Grandpa when he took cream from our farm to the Nicollet Creamery. I remember we were driving on Highway 111 when workmen were improving the road south of the intersection with the Fort Road through the low ground for about 2 mile south. This was in 1938 or 1939. They were hauling ground from a hill off to the east to build up the road. They were using trucks of the 1930s and had taken the doors off the cabs to keep the drivers cool and took the hood off of the engine to keep it cool. The road must have been hard surfaced after that time.

Olive Compart told me the road needed to be rebuilt again in 1958. Governor Orville Freeman had decreed that there shall not be any "No Passing Zones" on that road. The ground is fairly level, but still they cut down the high spots and raised the low ground and there is not a double yellow line on it anywhere.

1958 was a very wet year. Not good for road building. They tried to dig out the peat and muck soil and replace it with firm ground, but whenever they dug a hole rain filled it with water.

To make it easier for the contractor the State changed the specifications to lower the grade by 1 inch. That doesn’t sound like much, but an inch deep, 40 feet wide for 10 miles makes a lot of fill that didn’t have to be moved in.

Nevertheless the contractor couldn’t get the work done because of all the rain, and he went bankrupt, lost his equipment and everything. He even committed suicide.

Since that time the roadway had been well maintained, repaved as needed and carries a lot of traffic.

Visibility is very good at intersections and yet there have been numerous traffic accidents, some resulting in the death of travelers. The worst seems to be at the intersection with the Fort Road with 3 traffic accidents within our memory.

Over the years drainage ditches have been dug through the low lying areas to carry away excess water so probably that road will never flood again.
**2010 Calendar of Events:**

**Event/Program information:**

**Harkin Store:** Time: 1 to 4 p.m. / Fee: $3 adults, $2 seniors and children 6–17. Free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.

**Fort Ridgely:** Time: Programs start at noon each day / Fee: A State Park Vehicle Permit is required unless otherwise noted below.

**TSHC:** Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. unless noted below / Fee: $4 adults, $2 children 6–18, $10 family max. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members.

**Cox House:** Time: 1 to 4 p.m. Friday–Sunday. Fee: $4 adults, $2 children 6–18, $10 family max. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members.

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**Now Open**

**Tales of the Territory Exhibit**

Be sure to visit this exciting new NCHS exhibit.

**March 11**

**Film Series: Farming Forward**

See details on pages 3 & 4 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**March 18**

**Gustavus Students and St. Peterites Team Up for History**

See details on page 12 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**March 30**

**Film Series: Crips and Bloods: Made in America**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**April 10**

**Film Series: King Corn and Big River**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**April 12**

**Traverse des Sioux Genealogical Meeting**

See details on page 6 of this newsletter. 6:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**April 24**

**Film Series: Wolves in Paradise**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**May 2**

**Opening Day Program**

Heating the old stove and making "Egg Coffee and Newtons" is our first program for the season.

**May 4**

**Film Series: What's On Your Plate**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**May 8**

**Feisty Fungi & Shackleton's Antarctic Cabins**

See details on page 5 of this newsletter. Free and open to the public.

**May 9**

**Mother's Day**

Handicrafts that were done in the 1870s on display.

**May 15**

**Cox House Plant Sale**

See details of this annual Cox House fundraising event on page 1 of this newsletter. Plant donations taken: contact Barb Olmanson, 934-2828 or Bev Wetherill, 934-4417.

**May 16**

**Riverboats**

Riverboats were the fastest way to develop the river valley of West Newton.

**May 18**

**Film Series: Green Animation**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. 6:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**May 23**

**Day in the Life of a Pioneer Woman**

Displays of what the pioneer women used in their everyday life.

**May 20**

**Scholarship Project Reception**

See details on page 12 of this newsletter. 6:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**May 29**

**A Journey through the Minnesota River Valley with Ron Bolduan**

New Ulm photographer Ron Bolduan shares his images representing the three themes of the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway—Food for a Nation, Struggles for a Home, A River's Legacy. 2 p.m.

**May 30**

**Memorial Day**

Bill Cagley will perform "Music of all ages for all ages"

**June 6**

**Film Series: Buyer Be Fair**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. 2 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**June 6**

**4-H and Dairy Day**

4-H information and displays and honoring the dairy industry with dairy samples.

**June 13**

**Old Tymes Games Day**

Fun games for all ages.

**June 20**

**Father’s Day**

Area men will have their hobbies on display.

**June 24**

**Film Series: America's Lost Landscape**

See details on page 4 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**June 27**

**Early 4th of July**

New Ulm Battery will be firing their 1870's cannon also serving lemonade and watermelon.
Your membership dollars at work...

new exhibits at TSHC
maintenance of Cox House
staffing at Harkin Store
programming at Ft. Ridgely
partnering with MHS at TdS Townsite

NCHS Membership Application

Name ________________________________
Address __________________________________________
________________________________________________
Phone ( _______ ) _________________________________
E-mail ____________________________________________
My check is enclosed □ Please debit my credit card □
Acct. Number________________________________________
Expiration Date ______________________________________
Authorized Signature ________________________________

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2010 at the following level (please check one).

- Individual $ 30
- Family $ 45
- Sustaining $ 75
- Patron $ 100
- Supporter $ 200
- Benefactor $ 500
- Life Member $ 1,000

Business Memberships

Please make checks payable to:
Nicollet County Historical Society

Membership applications should be mailed to:
Nicollet County Historical Society
1851 North Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082