

Pepin County Historical Society
 OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM
 Washington Square
 315 W. Madison St.
 Durand, WI 54736



THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXVI, No. 1

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

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Find us on the Internet!
www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org



**COLORED DOT HERE IS
 A REMINDER TO RENEW
 YOUR 2012 MEMBERSHIP**

*Pass this newsletter on
 to a friend & encourage
 him/her to join PCHS!*

NAME _____
 STREET _____
 CITY _____
 STATE/ZIP _____

MEMBERSHIPS:

- \$5 Individual
- \$8 Family
- \$25 Friends of Museum
- \$25 Business/Professional
- \$50 Contributing
- \$100 Sponsor
- \$1000 Lifetime

And, here's my extra donation of \$ _____



Geocaching is a high-tech version of a treasure hunt, where adventure seekers use global positioning system (GPS) technology to hide and find physical objects and solve location-based puzzles. Pictured above is the eXplorist GC™, a GPS unit pre-loaded with coordinates for the most popular geocaches around the world. The device is touted to seamlessly connect to www.geocaching.com, the official global GPS cache hunt site.

GREETINGS! from your PCHS president! First, I would like to thank all the volunteers and the PCHS Board members for all your time, help and commitment!

By the time you receive this newsletter, winter will be near its end and we'll all be preparing for spring. The Board has been busy planning for 2012 events, including our Annual Membership meeting April 15, the Spring Fresh Art Tour in mid-May, visits by the 5th graders from area schools, our summer picnic in July, and our Autumn Educational Event in October.

I would like to invite all of you to attend any or all of these events, which have always been interesting and educational. You can read more in the pages of this newsletter.

I also invite each of you to visit the Old Courthouse Museum this year to see what's changed since your last visit. If you haven't been there for a couple years, you will be pleasantly surprised to see all the new displays and the thousands of stories we have to tell. Bring a friend or family member with whom to share our wonderful history.

I personally have been busy with my siblings cleaning out our family home and farm buildings in Barron County following the passing of my parents. We have found a lot of history in many unexpected places. My father, Howard, was a past president of the Barron County Historical Society / Pioneer Village Museum. I remember helping at the Museum as a young boy and recall an elderly gentleman named Andy Helland explaining to me what many of the artifacts were used for and answering my endless questions. I will always be thankful to my dad and Andy for instilling in me my love for history.

Our Old Courthouse Museum in Durand has a similar effect on me today. Come visit and share the memories.

- Kim Wagenbach, PCHS President

PCHS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sunday, April 15 - 2pm

at Durand Jr-Sr High School Cafeteria

Educational event featuring

"Geocaching - A Search for History"

by Tracy Pooler

Geocaching is an outdoor "sporting" activity in which the participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and to seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches". Geocaching is a free activity that has over 5 million registered participants looking for cache containers hidden in very specific locations around the world.

Tracy Pooler, a ten-year resident of Pepin County who works for Wabasha County, Minn. Environmental Services office, will explain the basics of the activity and how we can use geocaching to share the history of our area. Tracy remembers one Geocaching challenge when he found a series of caches with a historical theme that took him to locations related to projects associated with the WPA (Works Projects Administration) of the late 1930's and another to find noted historical founders of the town of Wabasha.

Though the outdoor activity is free, you will need a hand-held global positioning device or iPhone™ that uses million-dollar satellites to help you find a specific location where a weather-proof plastic container filled with interesting artifacts and surprises has been hidden.

Tracy moved to Durand in the winter of 2001 with wife Jacqueline and family. They have 3 children, Cheyenne, Matthew and Isaac. Jacqueline is the librarian at the Plum City Public Library

Prior to Tracy's presentation, PCHS will hold its Annual Membership Meeting to elect three members to its Board of Directors. Board members whose terms expire this year are Galen Radle, Roberta Stuart and Lynn Coulson, who have all indicated they are willing to serve another term. Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

SOCIETY NEWS

PCHS had another successful financial year during 2012. Expenditures totaled \$6,509, more than half of which was for the museum's summer intern's wages, income taxes, social security, unemployment insurance, etc. Revenues from memberships, bequests/memorials, donations, sales of books and cards, interest, and a transfer from savings totaled \$7,134. At the year's end, the society's checking and savings accounts and Certificates of Deposit totaled \$35,256. Anyone interested in seeing budget details can contact PCHS Treasurer Galen Radle.

Volunteers and guest hosts logged more than 500 hours working in the museum last year. Their hard work is greatly appreciated. We had approximately 800 visitors to the museum, an increase of 100 over the year before.

This year is Durand Funfest's 50th anniversary and PCHS has been invited to participate in the festivities. Volunteers at the Museum are planning a special exhibit honoring the milestone and PCHS will likely have an interesting or unique entry in the Funfest Parade.

Unique Gift Ideas from PCHS

Dime Novel Desperadoes - The Notorious Maxwell Brothers, by John Hallwas, 2008, published by University of Illinois Press; winner - "Best Biography from the Midwest" by the Society of Midland Authors, \$32.00

Brothers in Blood, by Les Kruger, 2008 - \$20.00

Durand 1881, compiled by Vera Slabey, published by PCHS, 1987 - \$3.00

Steamboat Navigation on the Chippewa River, by Peter A. Adler, published by PCHS, 2004 - \$10.00

Mary Plummer Clemenceau - Sweetheart of Pepin County, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 1997 - \$10.00

Helen Parkhurst - Educator, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 1999 - \$10.00

Elizabeth Clarke Hardy - Wife, Writer, Farmer, Poet and Editor, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2001 - \$10.00

A Pathway to Pepin County's Stone Age People, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2003 - \$10.00

A Vanished Community - The Waubeek Saw Mill Settlement, by Vern Pinkowski, published by PCHS, 2004 - \$10.00

Phil Scheckel - The Man & The River He Loved, by Don Rahman, published by PCHS, 2006 - \$10.00

A Twisted Pig's Tale, by Vern Pinkowski, 2008 - \$5.00

25th Anniversary T-Shirts - sizes s-m-l-xl, \$5.00

Your purchase will help support the PCHS mission of "preserving the history and traditions of Pepin County."

The Old Courthouse Museum is **open anytime by appointment!** Call 715-672-5423 to set up a time.

Memorials Received:

For:	From:
Richard Slabey	Galen/Bernadine Radle, Carol Krings Bauer, Don/Irma Bauer, Karen Sundstrom, Bernard/Lorraine Brenner, Daniel Langlois, David/Patricia Jan-koski, Bauer Built, Inc., Judy Schwellenbach, Joyce Haigh, Charles/Lois Laehn, Evelyn Holmstadt, Ruth Morey, Lee Grippen, Marjorie Greeley
Julianne Selz	Bernard/Lorraine Brenner
Tony Pittman	Don/Irma Bauer
Carol Weishapple	Bernard/Lorraine Brenner, Thalice Nicklas
Irene A. Bradshaw	Ruth E. Hofland

Museum Notes

The Museum will host the annual "Law Day" event developed and produced by members of the Tri-County Bar Association. On May 2 & 3 fifth graders from Arkansaw, Assumption, Pepin, Mondovi and Plum City schools will participate in a mock trial in the second floor courtroom and tour the Old Courthouse Museum and Jail.

The Museum will host "Fresh Paint", an outdoor painting event during the "Spring Fresh Art Tour" May 15-19. The Old Courthouse Museum and Washington Square will host the participating artists, who will be in Durand and the surrounding area painting and drawing. The resulting works of art will be displayed in the Museum and will be for sale to the public during the annual Fresh Art Tour.

Also, on Friday May 24, Arkansaw Elem. School 3rd graders will get their whirlwind tours of the Museum.

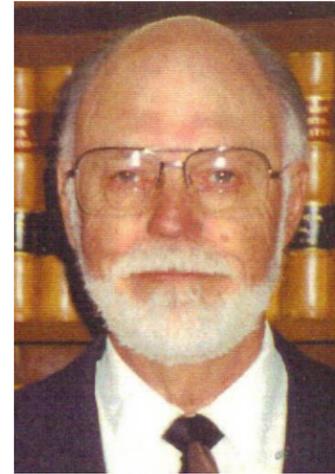
Arrangements are being made to once again to hire a summer intern. This internship in "Museum Operations" provides university students valuable experience making history accessible to the public.

Volunteer staff members put together wonderful holiday displays throughout the building for Durand Dazzle Day last November. Exhibits included old skis, ice skates, a sled, antique lights and ornaments, a model railroad set, vintage clothing and more. Several dozen people visited the Museum.

Pepin County Historical Society

Officers: President: Kim Wagenbach
 Vice-Pres.: Lynn Coulson
 Secretary: Roberta Stuart
 Treasurer: Galen Radle
 Directors: Rita Conlin, John Solie, Lois Laehn, Jean Kannel, Dick Schlosser

"THE COLUMNS" is published three times a year by the Pepin County Historical Society.
 Editor: Terry J. Mesch



Richard F. Slabey, charter member and long-time President of the Pepin County Historical Society passed away September 27, 2012. During the mid-1980s, Dick led the charge to save the Old Courthouse from demolition when Pepin County government moved to its present location.

Richard and his wife Vera were instrumental

in the development of what would become the Old Courthouse Museum. Their tireless efforts to preserve the building itself and the history of Pepin County have resulted in the wonderful museum we have today.

Richard owned and operated the Ben Franklin Store in Durand for more than thirty years, while Vera focused her efforts on music therapy. But both had serious interest in history and jumped fearlessly into this new adventure. In 1984, they secured a formal agreement with the county which allowed the newly organized Pepin County Historical Society to operate a historical museum in the Old Courthouse. The initial lease for ten years with rent of \$1 per year was signed Nov. 13, 1984.

During the next two decades, Richard and Vera attended dozens (if not hundreds) of meetings, seminars, trainings, etc. to educate themselves in the operations of a history museum. They recruited volunteers; solicited help from local craftsmen, plumbers and electricians; and, worked closely with service organizations to transform the building into a suitable space for history displays and exhibits.

Soon artifacts, photographs, family histories, documents, manuscripts, books and other historical materials began arriving. The Slabey duo developed procedures and manuals for cataloguing and archiving these items, and, planned and implemented annual and seasonal events and exhibits. They retired from PCHS duties in 2004.

The Old Courthouse Museum is forever indebted to the dedicated efforts of Richard and Vera.

Original Artwork on Display at Museum

Beautiful artwork by numerous local artists from the past are on display throughout the Museum. Watercolors, oils, acrylics, pastels, replicas, carvings, sculptures, photographs, drawings by Michael Anibas, Midge Bolt, Bernard Brantner, Lorraine Brenner, Roger Britton, Jr., Carol Davis, Michael Flickr, C.H. Gleason, Ed Grippen, Rozan Henning, Floyd Hubbard, Burton Gjefle, Eula Johnson and others can be seen in nearly every room in the building.

2013 Saturday Volunteer Host Schedule

May 25	-	Rita Conlin & Pat Rosenberg
June 1	-	Paul & Lou Simpson
June 8	-	Judy Schwellenbach & Joyce Haigh
June 15	-	Tom Garnevicus & Colleen Forster
June 22	-	Alice & Roger Bauer
June 29	-	Don & Irma Bauer
July 6	-	Dick & Judy Schlosser
July 13	-	Diane Bauer & Carol F. Bauer
July 20	-	John & Linda Solie
July 27	-	Evelyn Holmstad & Carol Danzinger
Aug 3	-	Gerald and Deanna Ripley
Aug 10	-	Kim & Lynette Wagenbach
Aug 17	-	Jane Jafferi & Lee Grippen
Aug 24	-	Lorraine & Bun Brenner
Aug 31	-	Roberta Stuart & Jean Kannel
Sept 7	-	Galen & Bernadine Radle
Sept 14	-	Rosemary Achenbach & Barb Bauer
Sept 21	-	Julie Rinholen & daughter
Sept 28	-	Lynn & Kelly Coulson
Oct 5	-	Chuck & Lois Laehn
Oct 12	-	Don & Jean Kannel

If a conflict arises for the Saturday you are scheduled as a Volunteer Host, please try to make arrangements to trade with another host or contact Lois Laehn at 672-4883 or Terry Mesch at 672-5709. Your help is very important to the success of the Museum. Other volunteer hosts may be needed for special events, if you are interested contact Lois or Terry.

Orientation sessions for Volunteer Hosts can be arranged by contacting Terry Mesch at 672-5709.

"FRESH PAINT" to be Applied During May

Imagination Nation, Inc. and the Old Courthouse Museum will host a new arts event on Washington Square May 15 through 19. "Fresh Paint" is an art event that challenges visual artists to paint and draw outdoor scenes in and around Durand. Their incentive will be cash prizes for the best works and the possibility of selling their creations. Known and unknown artists from the region will be invited to participate.

The first challenge for the artists will be to find and paint one of the many beautiful scenes available here in the Lower Chippewa River Valley. This is a public event and local residents and visitors will be able watch these artists as they work.

Artists will have 2½ days to complete their work(s), and, by Friday, will begin submitting them framed-and-ready-to-be-hung in the Old Courthouse Museum, where they will be on display during the Spring "Fresh Art Tour".

On Saturday, artists will participate in a two hour "Quick Paint" challenge at Washington Square. Again, the public will have the opportunity to watch the artists at work. At 6pm Saturday, winners in both categories will be announced during a reception at Washington Square.

Imagination Nation is looking for Purchase Award sponsors who are willing to promise a minimum amount of money for the purchase of a piece of their choice.