



THE COLUMNS

Newsletter of the Pepin County Historical Society

Vol. XXVI, No. 1

Affiliate of the Wisconsin Historical Society

September, 2012

President's Message:

First of all, I would like to once again thank all the volunteers, Saturday hosts, and supporters of PCHS. Without you our wonderful museum and very successful Historical Society would not exist.

I would also like to give special thanks to Charity Moore, our great summer intern. She always greeted everyone with a smile and with helpful information. Charity will be a featured presenter at our Autumn Education Event on October 14. Speaking of which, we will also be fortunate to have present the Durand High School students who traveled to Washington, D.C. to participant in the national competition of National History Day last June.

We had a great turnout at our annual summer potluck picnic in July at the Little Plum School and Little Plum Lutheran Church. The weather was a little hot and humid, but we had the coolness of the church basement where a great meal of summer salads, fruits and desserts were served. Then, we all enjoyed a great impromptu program of reminiscing and story-telling by former students about the history of the Little Plum School. Thanks to everyone who helped to make that happen.

I am also a member of other historical societies; one of my first was Barron County H.S. where I am from, and another is Buffalo County H.S. where I now reside. I am proud of and amazed at all the great volunteers all over Wisconsin who record and preserve the local history of the great Badger State! Keep up the good work!

Thank you, All, and God bless you! I feel I am truly blest.

- Kim Wagenbach, PCHS President

PCHS Autumn Education Event Sunday, October 14

Durand High School Cafeteria

"History of the Old Courthouse and Jail"

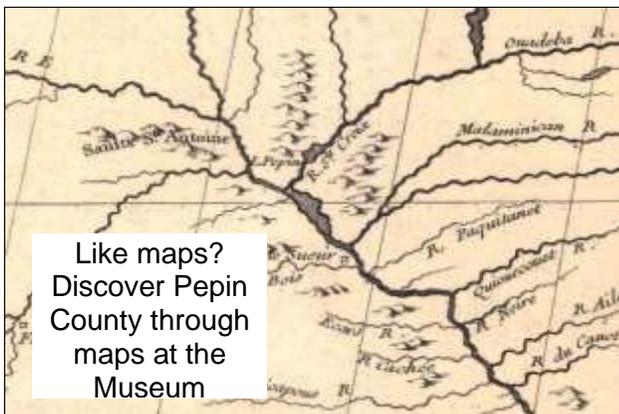
by Charity Moore

&

"National History Day Success Stories"
with Durand High School participants in the NHD
national competition in Washington, D.C. & their
coach/teacher Robert Zika

The PCHS Autumn Education Event, scheduled for Sunday, October 14 in the cafeteria of Durand Jr-Sr High School in Durand, Wis., will feature PCHS 2012 summer intern at the Old Courthouse Museum, Charity Moore, who will present results of her research into the history of the Old Courthouse and Jail. Charity's research of the minutes of the Pepin County Board of Supervisors documents improvements made to and events which affected the old Pepin County Courthouse from the time it was constructed in 1874 to the 1940s. Highlights will include the controversy surrounding the construction of a new jail, the removal of the county seat to Arkansaw during the early 1880s, the 1931 fire that caused considerable damage to the building, and more.

Four students from Durand Jr-Sr High School who went to Washington, D.C. this past June to compete in the national competition of the National History Day (NHD) project, will also be present to talk about their NHD adventures. Desiree Anderson, Kaylee Theismann, Josephine Steller, and Sarah Vetsch, who advanced through local, regional, and state competitions to move on to the nationals, will give brief presentations about their projects. Robert Zika, junior high social studies and civics teacher and co-coordinator of the NHD project, will present an overview about the NHD competition.



Like maps?
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County through
maps at the
Museum

Find us on the Internet!

www.oldpepincountycourthouse.org

MUSEUM / SOCIETY NEWS & NOTES

The PCHS Summer Potluck Picnic was a wonderful experience, despite the hot weather. Summer salads of fresh vegetables were the predominant course of food and the spontaneous program of reminiscing about the Little Plum School held attendees in rapt attention. The subject of country schools is obviously one our members enjoy.

Some of you may have noticed the front of the building was the target of a graffiti artist this summer. The police still have no leads as to who the "artist" might be. Custodians from the county government center quickly covered the offending "art work" and within a couple days PCHS member William D. Hoeser cleaned off the offensive words and primed and repainted the area. Our thanks go to Mr. Hoeser for his quick service.

On a similar note, we now have new signs on the Madison Street side of the building. A large "Museum" sign and a smaller sign advertising open hours and contact information have been installed. These signs were the good work of Wm. D Hoeser, D.B.A. Company One Signs and Surfaces and were installed by the county's building custodians, Andy Holmstadt and Nolan Andre.

From PCHS Gift Shop

25th Anniversary T-Shirts - sizes s-m-l-xl - cheap!

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-hardcopy, \$25-paperback

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 - \$10.00

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 for you and/or your group to visit / tour the museum.

Memorials Received

For	From
Gary G. Bauer	Galen/Bernadine Radle, Karen Sundstrom, the Family of Gary G. Bauer
June Thomas	Lee Grippen
Wilbur Grippen	Lee Grippen
Francis Prissel	Gerald/Vivian Levenski
Robert Carlisle	Judy schwellenbach

IN MEMORIAM – Gary G. Bauer

The Family of Gary G. Bauer made a very generous donation to PCHS honoring the memory of Gary, who was a longtime society member and volunteer guest host at the Old Courthouse Museum. Gary was a generous man, who regularly gave his time and efforts to help make our community and county a better place to live.

We will miss his gentle nature and smiling face.

FATE OF LITTLE PLUM SCHOOL?

The congregation of the Little Plum School has approached the PCHS Board of Directors to acquire the school and manage it as a historical site in Pepin County. The PCHS board is hesitant to take on such a project. The board's stewardship of the Old Courthouse Museum is a big task already and places considerable demands on our limited funds.

The board would be willing to consider ownership of the Little Plum School, but it would demand a major fundraising effort (or an endowment from a generous member or citizen). Once the funding is in place, the project could move forward.

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

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by the Pepin County Historical Society.

Editor: Terry J. Mesch

NEWS FROM BIG ARKANSAW SCHOOL

Among the many registers, scrapbooks, journals, and other documents in the Pepin County Historical Society's archives is a "Teacher's Daily Register for Primary and Graded Schools" for the Big Arkansaw School (formally known as "Waterville District No. 5, Pepin County" and later known as the "Black School") during the years 1895 to 1897.

The winter term began in November after the harvest of farm crops was complete and ended in late February. The summer term was late March to the middle of June. School sessions were obviously geared to the work needed to be done on the farms on which the majority of the students lived.

The teacher for the school year November, 1895 to June, 1896 was J.B. Taylor, who had to teach 47 students between the ages of 5 through 17. The following year, the teacher was Carrie Dunbar, who had 45 students.

During those two school years, students had surnames including: Black, Smith, Hartung, Meehan, Cross, Drier, Schlosser, Moritz, Stebbins, Auth, Radle, Strese, and Herbst. Many of those surnames remain among the residents of Waterville Township today.

Students studied subjects like reading, writing, orthography (spelling), grammar, mental arithmetic, written arithmetic, geography, U.S. history, and physiology. Their school day started at 9am (late enough to allow time for early morning farm chores, breakfast, and the walk to school) and ended at 4pm, which was near dark in mid-winter.

The Register shows visitors to the Big Arkansaw School on November 19, 1895. Among the names is Mrs. Hattie L. Peck, school superintendent and mentor / tutor to the world famous educator and Durand native Helen Parkhurst.

MUSEUM SCAVENGER HUNT

Here's a challenge to even our most frequent visitors and volunteers: Can you find the "Hole in the Wall"? Clue: It's located within another artifact that can be found in the "Uniform Room".

Find it and you'll win a free copy of "1881".

Elizabeth Clark Hardy was a highly regarded poet and journalist who lived in Durand 100 years ago. She and her husband Joseph built a model farm in Red Cedar, a few miles northeast of Durand along the Pepin-Dunn County line. Many people around the state and region came to the farm to learn what the Hardys were doing; and, soon the literary talents of Elizabeth became evident to others. She eventually became the editor of the "Household" column in the "Wisconsin Agriculturalist" magazine. Numerous of her articles and poems were published in many national journals. One poem, "The Lonely Voyage", was read at the national memorial services for both Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Warren G. Harding.

Below is one of her poems proclaiming the attributes of her hometown, Durand:

Durand

All girt about with circling hills
And wooded slopes on every hand-
We pledge allegiance now to thee,
Our little city of Durand.

So many things we all hold dear-
Our placid river sweeping by,
Our ancient landmarks, busy streets,
Our church-spires pointing to the sky.

And all our fine, majestic trees,
Set by the hands of pioneers,
They seem like old familiar friends,
Grown dearer with the passing years.

City of homes where peace abides,
And culture and good cheer abound,
Where friendship ripened with the years,
And hospitality are found.

City where civic enterprise
And progress marches hand in hand,
And every year's advancement shows
The public spirit of Durand.

And so because we like our town,
We'll give the best that in us lies
To help to put it on the map,
To help to boost it to the skies.

And this is why we all agree
To show our love and loyalty,
This shall our slogan ever be,
DURAND FOR ME! DURAND FOR ME!

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



**PCHS Autumn Educational Event
“History of Old Courthouse”
“National History Day Success Stories”
Sunday, October 14 – 2pm
Durand High School Cafeteria**

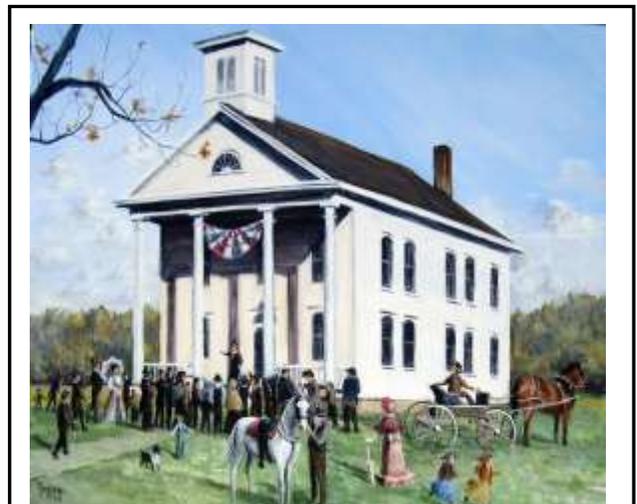
**The Old Courthouse Museum and Jail
Is Open Anytime by Appointment**

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

Name _____
Address _____

MEMBERSHIPS:

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



Summer Intern Charity Moore spent many hours researching county board meeting minutes to discover more history of this remarkable Pepin County landmark. She will present some of the more interesting facts and stories she uncovered in her research at the PCHS Autumn Education Event on October 14.