



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*Fred Liimatta*



Dear honorable members of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society: My attitude is gratitude for the pleasurable experience of being part of the Pine Grove family for the last 30 years. I have met

literally hundreds of good people who have given their time, experience and professional resources to museum tours, fundraising, Small Talks, grounds maintenance and special events - including this summer's upcoming Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social ("Thank God for Michigan!") Taking a turn as president is something I am happy and proud to do after being elected such at this year's Annual Meeting. I was just crazy enough to accept, despite the fact that my wife Anne would like to have a recount!

In this short message, I am asking us to focus on five items for the coming year:

- 1) Let's have fun together - it keeps members working hard for OCPHS.
- 2) Let's increase our membership to a thousand in memory of the thousand volunteers who left with Colonel Wisner to fight in the Civil War. If each of us encourages two friends to join OCPHS, that will give us over 900 members right there!
- 3) Let's continue following our Strategic Plan for sustained financial health.

- 4) Let's maintain good stewardship of every penny and man hour donated to our dream.
- 5) And hey, let's give everyone a seat in the boat - and an oar. Working together, we can do great things.

As a veteran and citizen of Oakland County, I continue to learn of the great sacrifices many Americans have freely made and are still making for me and my family. The phrase comes to mind: "All gave some - some gave all." Let's follow their example, and let's give our all to OCPHS!

What is your dream for OCPHS? Give me a call at 248-931-3583.

Fred

## OCPHS Annual Meeting & Election

On May 21, OCPHS welcomed the following new faces to its Board of Directors by unanimous vote:

Bill Grandstaff (Romeo)  
 Ann Johnson (Manistique)  
 Greg Kowalski (Hamtramck)  
 Linda Porter (Pontiac)  
 Kari Vaughan (Clarkston)

Elected officers for 2014-2015 are:

President: Fred Liimatta (Pontiac)  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Rodger Zeller (Waterford)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Mike West (Bloomfield Hills)  
 Secretary: Kathy Davis (Pontiac)  
 Treasurer: Amy Annett (Waterford)

A very special thanks to Dale Kath for a wonderful presentation on his family's experience as caretakers of the Wisner mansion from 1918 to 1957. You can find a copy in our library!

**A WALK TO REMEMBER...**  
*Anne Liimatta (Board Member)*

Memorial Day, May 26, 2014 - The fourth year for OCPHS to walk in the Waterford Memorial Day Parade! It's the 45<sup>th</sup> year running for VFW Post #1008 Heart of the Lakes, located at 1690 Airport Road in Waterford, to organize and host this event and generously serve a picnic-style lunch to participants following the parade - is that nice or what?! At 9:45am on a sunny, warm spring day, Burke Lumber's parking lot was packed to capacity. Vintage cars, robotics clubs, sports teams, Boy Scout groups and more were lined up end to end, not only at Burke Lumber but in several other nearby commercial lots. Wish we could have had a program to identify them all!

Anyway, by 10:30 over 90 entries headed up Dixie Highway toward Williams Lake Road, waving at the crowds and throwing tons of candy all along the way. As for Pine Grove paraders, we were armed with 600 flyers for the annual Summer Ice Cream Social and what we hoped was plenty of sweets, including Mary Janes, Pixie Stix, bubble gum, Lifesavers, Smarties, Dum-Dums, Spiderman candy sticks and assorted others - the Spiderman candy was a favorite, at least with the lacrosse team behind us! Sadly, neither flyers nor treats held out to the end. Final rows of spectators appeared somewhat disappointed, although we did give away our balloons and flag pinwheels in a final effort to produce smiles! Next year we must greatly increase supplies - at least 50 BAGS of candy and 1000 INVITATIONS to the Ice Cream Social - more candy donations, anyone?!

Some of us walking today were regulars for this yearly promotional activity, including Brian Golden (as Colonel Moses Wisner wearing his handsome, pure wool uniform with parade sword!), Larry Hathcock (Union soldier in total period garb carrying a repeating rifle!), Nik and Janey Karaguleff ("The Preacher" and his wife), Fred Liimatta (Green Beret dressed in camo), Adrian Rawls (in homemade costume created by his blue-bonneted grandmother Kathy Davis) and Rodger Zeller (Summer Social Committee Chairman and Union Sympathizer). Kari Vaughan, who was just elected to the OCPHS Board, dressed in pink ladies' garb and assisted in carrying our 12' vinyl banner announcing the July 26th Ice Cream Social,

along with period re-enactor Tim Telisky, husband of Leree Telisky, Pine Grove bobbin lacemaker, who helped distribute flyers. And where would we be without Guy and Nancy Duffield who generously head up our entourage with their classic '75 Chevy convertible - always a smash hit in a parade! Last but not least, high school volunteer Emma Higginbottom and I did a pretty good job of matching up candy with the many sweet little faces who waited patiently along the 3/4 mile stretch ending with memorial services at Drayton Plains Cemetery. As we parted for home our efforts were judged successful, having made a good shot at increasing the number of visitors to our long-standing summer event.

So that's a brief account of the day's experiences. Please come along with us next time as we parade to advance society goals of sharing with ever-increasing numbers the rich pioneer history of Oakland County. Thanks so much to all you great members of OCPHS, the oldest county-based historical society in Michigan!

P.S. - It was great to catch sight of several of our members who belong to the Sashabaw Plains Chapter of the DAR. They walked in honor of beloved family, veterans and troops who have kept our country safe and strong since the days of George Washington and comrades. One for all and all for one!



**The Library is Growing!**  
***Leilani Ward (Library Coordinator)***

Over the past few months our genealogical collection has grown to include 172 microfilms, microfiches, CDs and books all geared toward learning about family histories. This is all thanks to members Larry L. Blackett and Barbara Frye.

Larry Blackett donated a huge microfilm collection in memory of his daughter, Shanna. The Shanna Faye Blackett Collection is now available for use at the library, with records going back centuries. Along with the microfilm, Larry donated books on early Massachusetts marriages, a roster of Ohio soldiers in the War of 1812, vital records of Western New York, genealogical dictionaries of New England and much more.

Barbara Frye has also generously donated some terrific resources. These include microfilms, microfiches and CDs containing genealogical records from the United States, Canada and even some European countries.

Thank you very much to Larry and Barb for their valuable contributions! Join us at the library and see what's new. We could hold the clues to your family history mystery!

**SCHOOLHOUSE PHOTOGRAPHS NEEDED!**



OCPHS is seeking photos of one-room schoolhouses in Oakland County dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our library team will scan photos for inclusion in the archives and a potential future publication on the county's one-room schools. Photos may be emailed to [office@ocphs.org](mailto:office@ocphs.org) or mailed to the attention of Ray Lucas. **If mailing, please indicate whether you would like the photo(s) returned to you.**

**FAMILY CONNECTIONS IN CALIFORNIA**  
***Jo Pate (Library Team)***

*Eleanor Borkenhagen, a dedicated genealogist in Huntington Beach, California, periodically sends newspaper clippings of obituaries of California people who were born in Oakland County. Her latest mailings include the following:*

**HAMIL**, David F., 76, of Huntington Beach, CA, died Oct. 16, 2012. "David grew up in Birmingham, Michigan and graduated from the University of Michigan. He received his Masters degree in Geology from Michigan State and was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi." (*Orange County Register 20 October 2012*)

**DeCLUE**, Sr., Joseph Lynn of Santa Ana, CA, died Dec. 3, 2012. He was born May 17, 1927 in Royal Oak, MI and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He married Marjorie Hennessey. (*Orange County Register 8 December 2012*)

**REHN**, Coleman Lee, died Jan.13, 2013 in Las Vegas, NV. He was born Aug. 3, 1921 in Ferndale, MI. He is survived by his wife Roberta and 4 children. (*Los Angeles Times 20 January 2013*)

**McCANN**, Maureen Frances, born April 26, 1965 in Royal Oak, MI to Beverly Ann (Reid) McCann and Hugh Wray McCann; died Sept. 26, 2013. (*Los Angeles Times 12 October 2013*)

**GROGAN**, Shirley Whitman Aguinaldo, born Jan. 4, 1920 in Lake Orion, MI "during the biggest snowstorm in the history of Lake Orion". She died May 22, 2013 in Port Charlotte, FL. (*This obit was in the Orange County Register, CA, because she had family living there.*)

**BROWN**, William Robert, born Mar. 17, 1962 at Royal Oak, MI to Robert and Beverly Brown. He died Oct. 3, 2013. (*Orange County Register 17 October 2013*)

**SNELL**, Flora Mae, born Feb. 17, 1930 in Pontiac, MI; died Nov. 28, 2012 in the Santa Ana, CA area. (*Orange County Register 4 December 2012*)

The full obituaries may be read at the OCPHS library for anyone interested in these families.

## **NEW PUBLICATION AVAILABLE**

***Jo Pate (Library Team)***

The Harper-Mulligan Funeral Home records for 1954-1956 have been transcribed in book format by Pine Grove Publications at OCPHS. This is Volume V in the series and the first to be published by our organization. The Harper-Mulligan Funeral Home was in Highland Park, but information in the records shows many burials in Oakland County cemeteries. Many, many of the records are for people of English descent, primarily from the Cornwall area. Information in the records includes: Maiden name of wife, names of all children, names of siblings and names and places of birth of parents. There are over 75 records for those born in England, 120 for those born in Canada and about 50 for those born in Scotland. Some of the other countries of origin are: Germany, Norway, Finland, Italy, Sweden, Ireland, Wales, Spain, Iceland, France, Poland, and more!

**Volume V is now for sale for \$15 (add additional \$5.00 for mailing). The book is completely indexed.** Volume VI for years 1957-1960 will be available later this year.

Volumes I and II are housed in our library.

Volumes I through IV are sold through the Oakland County Genealogical Society. You may contact them at [ocgsmi.org](http://ocgsmi.org) for pricing and availability.

**Training For Docents**  
***Anne Liimatta (Board Member)***

**“Be all that you can be” - A familiar phrase which we apply here at OCPHS to our members. Are you a 40-year member or a 4-day member? Regardless, you are a big help to Pine Grove! Yearly dues from all 350 of us add up to over \$5,000 of operating funds! Do you attend a few of the monthly Small Talks? This is an encouragement to OCPHS and at \$5 a person provides monetary support. Perhaps you enjoy reading the *Gazette* and then passing it on to a friend – great work!**

**Take it a step further – consider becoming a guide in the beautiful Wisner mansion! Don't laugh; if you are friendly, that is all we require!**

**We invite both new and current docents to a gathering on Sunday, July 13 from 2:30 – 5:00pm. Docents will be given an informative tour of the mansion and grounds, followed by refreshments in the carriage house. We plan to offer a new, easier method for beginning docents. A set of index cards will be placed in each room with pictures and a brief description of noteworthy artifacts. Cards may be held for easy reference during tours and read from when necessary. This method has been used very successfully by the Waterford Historical Society during Log Cabin Days, and we want to implement it for our Ice Cream Social and all future tours.**

**Sharing room information with each group of guests takes just a few minutes. Visitors make a few comments and move on. There is always another docent nearby if you need assistance or have to leave your station briefly. It is not hard – but it IS exciting!**

**Want to give it a try? Ask questions and sign up by calling Docent Coordinator Kathy Davis at 248-978-7068. Hope to see you on July 13!**



**2014 Summer Ice Cream Social...**  
**We Need You!!!**

Planning is underway for the most anticipated event of the year, and we are expecting it to be our finest to date! We continue to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War with our chosen theme of "Thank God for Michigan!" Once again a variety of presentations and activities for all ages will be offered. Featured speakers include President and Mrs. Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, and Willie Payne, an Underground Railroad historian. Hum along to the music of the Peace Jubilee Brass Band, the Golden Griffon Fiddle/Hammered Dulcimer Stringtet and Men of Grace. Watch a crafts demonstration, converse with local authors and dress up in period garb for a keepsake photo. A hot dog lunch will be available for purchase and free ice cream and cake will be graciously served by the Sashabaw Plains DAR. Veterans can enjoy an ice-cold root beer at our Veterans' Tent commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War. Back by popular demand is Ron Cleveland's vintage cannon fired hourly, and new exhibits will be featured at the Wisner mansion and the Drayton Plains One-Room Schoolhouse.

The event cannot be a roaring success, however, without the participation of our membership. Here are just a few of the ways you can get involved:

- \*Join us for planning sessions on Tuesday mornings. We meet at 10:30am in the carriage house and welcome your ideas!
- \*Assist with setup the day before (starting at noon) or with teardown afterward
- \*Bake or buy a cake for the DAR to serve
- \*Be a docent for two hours in the Wisner mansion. As you've seen, we are developing a new system to make our docents' jobs easier, particularly for our new docents! Hurry, rooms are filling fast!
- \*Donate items sitting around your house to sell at the Curiosity Sale (we especially need tools)
  - \*Ask a business you frequent to consider sponsoring our event, or make a donation in memory of a loved one.

**We encourage day-of-event volunteers to pre-register no later than one week prior so that we can ensure you have an assignment!**



**Summer Social Quilt Raffle**  
***Charlotte Cooper (Board Member)***

This attractive lap-size quilt was hand-made by a dedicated OCPHS member and has a theme of "I Spy" with picture blocks on one side and a map on the other. It is great fun trying to "spy" the objects located in various states.

The quilt will be raffled at the July Ice Cream Social with all proceeds benefiting OCPHS and Pine Grove. Tickets are \$5 each (or 5 for \$20) and are available through the office. Thanks to those who purchased tickets at the Annual Meeting, giving us a great start!

**Curiosities For Sale**

*Our traditional White Elephant sale is getting a facelift! Stop by the Curiosity Sale tent during the Ice Cream Social and browse treasures the likes of which you'll only find in Grandma's attic. If you cannot wait until July 26, join us for a "preview" sale on Thursday, July 24 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at Pine Grove. An admission fee of \$5 will be charged on Thursday.*

*We are currently seeking donations of items to sell. Donations are tax-deductible and arrangements for pickup of large items may be made by calling the office. See you there!*

**From the Growth & Development Team**  
***Bill Clink (Co-Chair)***

**Summer is upon us and this is the latest  
from your society's Growth &  
Development Team!**

**This summer we will be presenting an exhibit developed at the Port Huron Museum and loaned to OCPHS for display in our newly-acquired annex. Due to the generous donation of display space at 7 North Saginaw Street in Downtown Pontiac, we can showcase "Fabulous Failures and Silver Linings." This exhibit will highlight creators and innovators who succeeded in spite of rejections, delays or financial setbacks. With Oakland County on the rebound and the city of Pontiac taking positive steps forward, we hope to foster that "pioneer spirit" that rises above setbacks, that persists when times are tough, that plants seeds for a better future when others see only obstacles. Our goal with this new space and exhibit is to raise our public profile while also providing an alternative location for historical activities. If this is a project you could get excited about, we want to talk to you about how you can be involved! Please contact me at 248-766-2725.**

**Meanwhile, our membership continues to grow and we are working diligently to find a place for ALL members in areas that interest you and help the organization. If you have not yet had an opportunity to complete a Volunteer Survey, please request one from the office. We truly value our volunteers' service and strive to make your experience rewarding.**

**As always, our financial needs are with us and your generous donations and gifts are greatly appreciated. We are hard at work whipping our grounds into shape, growing our print and media department, reaching out to the community and, most important, getting to know you better!**

**Best Regards!**

**Membership and Donation Form**

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Send my *Gazette* via:  U.S. Mail  Email

**Please Make Me a Member!** (indicate level):

- \$15 Student
- \$20 Individual
- \$20 Non-Profit Organization
- \$35 Family (two adults & minor children)
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Benefactor
- \$500 Friends
- \$500 Corporate Sponsor
- \$Gift Membership (provide recipient's name & contact info):

**Please Accept My Donation!** (indicate preference):

- \$ Annual Giving (general operating costs)
- \$ Fill In the Gap (expanding hours & services)
- \$ Preservation (historic buildings & contents)
- \$ Where Needed or Other (specify):
- \$ In Memory of / Honor of (provide name):

**What Prompted Your Support?** (check all that apply):

- Interest in Oakland County History
- Invited/Introduced by Member/Friend
- Received Copy of *Gazette*
- Attended Event or Tour
- Research Library / Archives
- Newspaper / Magazine Article
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Website / Facebook
- Other (specify):

Mail this form with check payable to OCPHS to:

**Oakland County Pioneer & Historical Society**  
**405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue**  
**Pontiac, MI 48342**

For your convenience you may also join or donate online at [www.ocphs.org](http://www.ocphs.org). Thank you for your support!

We are a 501(c)(3) organization  
Donations are tax deductible in accordance with applicable law

OCPHS is pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since our last publication:

Bjorklund, Tom (Pontiac)  
Burton, Orlando (Pontiac)  
Clink, Bill (Rochester Hills)  
Drakos, Anne (Farmington)  
Everett, Owen & Jeanie (Holly)  
Foster, Monetta (Pontiac)  
Gilyard, Karen (Pontiac)  
Grandstaff, Bill (Romeo)  
Gupta, Ashok (Keego Harbor)  
Harvey, Susan & Rhea (Hagerstown, MD)  
Hayes, J. Dyann (Bloomfield)  
Huegli, Jon (Waterford)  
Legge, A. Jo An (Sylvan Lake)  
Locke, Mary (Clarkston)  
Mallonen, Donna (Pontiac)  
Mooney-Evans, Eileen (Orchard Lake)  
Persia House of Michigan (Bloomfield)  
O'Brien, Jim (Waterford)  
Owens, Robin (Clarkston)  
Raby, S. Barbara (West Bloomfield)  
Racicot, Patricia (Clarkston)  
Richards, Pam (Waterford)  
Watson, Whitney (Chicago, IL)

**In Remembrance...**

***OCPHS mourns the loss of our dear friend and longtime supporter Bob Nelson. Bob passed away in June after a valiant battle with pancreatic cancer. Bob is a former director of the organization and devoted countless hours of his time to grounds and building upkeep, in addition to all of his work with the Waterford Historical Society. A memorial service will be held at 11:00am on Friday, July 18 at the Filling Station on the campus of the Waterford Historical Society/Fish Hatchery Park (4490 Hatchery Road, Waterford).***



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events...

**Thursday, July 24 -**

Curiosity Sale Preview  
6:30pm – 8:30pm  
Admission: \$5

**Saturday, July 26 –**

Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social  
11am – 5pm  
Admission: \$5 individual/\$10 family

**Sunday, August 17 -**

Moses Wisner – Courting Letters (Small Talk)  
*Presented by Wisner descendant Ann Johnson*  
2pm  
Admission: \$5

**Sunday, September 21 -**

Angel of the Battlefield (Small Talk)  
*Presented by OCPHS member Annie Hunt*  
2pm  
Admission: \$5

***OCPHS Officers and Board of Directors***

***President***

Fred Liimatta

***1<sup>st</sup> Vice President***

Rodger Zeller

***2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President***

Mike West

***Secretary***

Kathy Davis

***Treasurer***

Amy Annett

***Directors***

Bruce Annett, Jr  
Charlotte Cooper  
Guy Duffield  
Brian Golden  
Bill Grandstaff  
Ann Johnson  
Greg Kowalski  
Anne Liimatta  
Charlie Martinez  
Linda Porter  
Kari Vaughan  
Mike Willis

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 868  
Royal Oak, MI

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The OCPHS Growth & Development Team is making plans for our Fall Auction, and we want it to be a "night to remember" for our members and their guests! The auction will take place the evening of Saturday, October 4 at the Lafayette Grande Banquet Facility in Pontiac. For an admission charge of \$25, attendees may partake of a full meal, bid on many high-quality items and enjoy one another's company. Do you have family members, friends or business associates who enjoy local history and the fast-paced fun of an auction? Consider sponsoring a table for your guests!

More information on the event will be provided later this summer.

**It's Time To Renew!**

For 140 years, OCPHS has sought to preserve and convey the role of Oakland County in the evolution of American history. After all this time, we continue to do just that, thanks to our wonderful membership who shares our passion for this endeavor!

Annual membership renewal letters are now in your hands! Memberships begin on July 1, with dues due by July 31. You may mail your renewal, stop by our office with your payment and say hi, or renew with just a few clicks at our website.

Flip back to this issue's cover page and read again President Liimatta's goal to achieve a membership 1,000 strong; can you help us get there with your prompt renewal?



Find us on Facebook.com/Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society

Follow us on  
[Twitter.com/OCPH](https://twitter.com/OCPH)



Twitter

*Oakland Gazette* is a publication of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. Submissions, content suggestions or comments are welcome.

Volume 47 Number 2 July 2014

Editor: Kari Vaughan

Contributors: Bill Clink, Charlotte Cooper, Anne Liimatta, Fred Liimatta, Jo Pate, Kari Vaughan, Leilani Ward

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Page 1: President's Corner; OCPHS Annual Meeting & Election
- Page 2: A Walk To Remember... (Waterford Memorial Day Parade)
- Page 3: The Library Is Growing; Schoolhouse Photographs Needed; Family Connections In California
- Page 4: New Publication Available; Training for Docents
- Page 5: 2014 Summer Ice Cream Social; Quilt Raffle; Curiosities For Sale
- Page 6: From The Growth & Development Team; Membership & Donation Form
- Page 7: New Members; In Remembrance (Bob Nelson); Mark Your Calendar!
- Page 8: Save the Date (Fall Auction); It's Time To Renew!