

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
Ozaukee County , Wisconsin

Dear Supervisors:

Despite the economic stress of 2009 the Ozaukee County Historical Society marched ahead with its events and open tour season. The leadership of the Society added Robin Kent – Paradis as Volunteer Coordinator but other positions remained the same: Mary Sayner, President; Curt Gruenwald and Allen Buchholz as 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-presidents, Dr. Nina Look , Secretary; Tom Hogan, Treasurer; Don Engelbert, Membership; Ruth Renz, Archivist and Historian; and Carole Fairweather, Tour Coordinator.

The events at Stony Hill School and Ozaukee Pioneer Village were well attended with county residents rediscovering the tour attractions at home.

The growth of our free Open Weekend scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in June saw tremendous growth. Visitors to the Village thanked the Society for making this historic jewel available for their enjoyment and edification at no cost in this depressed time. Over 700 people came through the Village on that weekend, many for the first time. The Board decided to keep this 2 day event on the schedule in 2010.

OCHS's two musical events The Fiddlers' Contest in July and Bluegrass at the Village in August each drew about 300 guests, but the cost of staging the events makes realizing a profit unreachable. Two decisions were made to remedy this situation. First, a committee was set up to solicit sponsorships for the events; second, it was decided that in 2011 the two one-day events would be combined into a weekend event, cutting costs for tent and chair rental as well as advertising and promotion.

The Wisconsin Antique Power Reunion Tractor and Machinery Show and the Revolutionary War Encampment and Reenactment are well organized and attracted a niche of the population state wide. A five year agreement was signed with the Wisconsin Antique Power Reunion group to ensure stability to that event. Weather conditions and the price of gas usually play a big role in determining attendance at these events. Having an adequate supply of safe water was an issue with the Revolutionary War Encampment .

One aim of the Society is to work with other organizations in Ozaukee County and surrounding counties to achieve our mission to educate the public about the history of our county. OCHS was invited to have an exhibit at the Milwaukee Realtors Home Show in at the State Fair Grounds Exhibition Building in the winter of 2009. Board members and other volunteers were on hand during most of the 10 day show to talk about the artifacts on display and promote the Society and county events.

The Master Gardeners came to the Village, researched our garden areas and updated them with plants, shrubs, and flowers that were typical to the era of the buildings. Concordia University brought 30 students as part of their orientation to the Village to help spruce up the Village before the fall school tours. The students then enjoyed a tour of the Village by Ruth Renz the Society archivist. OCHS later went to Concordia University having a booth during its push to further volunteering among its student body.

Other organizations that OCHS collaborates with through the year include: the Girl & Boy Scouts with tours, jamborees, and Eagle Scout projects; the Chambers of Commerce; the Cedarburg Business Fair; the Cedarburg Cultural Center loaning artifacts for their historic displays; Ozaukee Volunteer Center making projects available for volunteers; Milwaukee Amateur Radio Club giving them an area for 2 days of demonstrations emergency radio practices; the Riveredge Nature Center helping with rest stops for their fund raising bike ride, the Grafton Senior Center, the Grafton Library setting up a 2 month exhibit in the main library, and aiding Sea Patrol Scouts in amassing volunteer hours for badges. OCHS also had a large contingent in the Ozaukee County Fair Celebration Parade and a booth at the 2009 County Fair. Volunteers also served in the information booths at the Cedarburg Strawberry and Wine & Harvest Festivals. We try to promote non-profit organizations through the exchange and display of brochures and event promotions.

Generous people stepped forward in 2009 donating numerous artifacts that were catalogued, put on display at the Hazel Wirth Center or the Village, or were stored for future use. One family brought in bags and bags of newspapers, some of which dated back to the 1940. Another donated an antique kitchen stove while another family donated several pieces of antique equipment related to harvesting honey for human consumption.

Restoration of the buildings at Ozaukee County Pioneer Village is a major concentration of the Society each year. In 2008 the concentration was on the Helpin Cottage. A new floor was put in the parlor of this home and with the hallway was sanded, stained, and varnished. Windows were repaired inside and out with a fresh coat of paint applied. The exterior of the building was washed, repaired, primed, and repainted with the shutters likewise repaired and painted. Measurements of all the windows were taken so that storms could be built and installed in 2010. In addition, the Sinnon House was reroofed and the Milwaukee Road Depot overhang was repaired where necessary with paint applied.

Al Rimmel with his wife Karen care for the Village, living in the house provided by the Society. Being across the road from the Village, they keep daily watch on the grounds and buildings keeping trespassers out, removing storm damage in a timely manner, repairing minor problems with the buildings and grounds, accepting artifact donations, and overseeing the projects and events.

The Board of the Ozaukee County Historical Society is proud of its leadership in carrying out the mission of the Society to preserve the history of the County and make it available for the present and future generations. We are grateful for the continued support of the County for general operational funds as well as funds that contribute to restoration projects at the Village. In addition to dues, event receipts, and grants, generous members also donate small and large amounts that help keep OCHS solvent.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

OCHS looks forward to 2010 as the year the Lease with the County for the land on which the Ozaukee County Pioneer Village sets is finalized. A new well should be drilled providing a safe water source for the Village and the caretaker's home. Hopefully, plans move ahead for an Admissions building with "modern" restroom facilities for the Village.

The Hazel Wirth Research Center hopes to be open more days. Located on the Ozaukee County Bike Trail and only a block off the main street in Cedarburg, the research center can be a focal point for people who visit Cedarburg. The Hazel Worth Center is a building devoted to the preservation of the history of the county; artifacts are of the Interurban Railroad System, historic pictures of buildings and families from throughout the county, collections of family histories and numerous other documents for research purposes. Artifacts of the events and families of the 20<sup>th</sup> century continue to arrive weekly.

An Eagle Scout project planned for the Village in 2010 will redo a room in the Working Home (known as the Professional Building). It will be redone as a display room of vintage toys of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The year 2010 is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Ozaukee County Historical Society. Activities marking this event will occur throughout the year. A book written by Don Henning and Ruth Renz, The History of Ozaukee County Pioneer Village, will be published this anniversary year.

Ozaukee County Historical will continue to work with the people and organizations of the county to grow its collections relating to the history of the county. Through its historic sites, tours, website, newsletter, events, quarterly programs, and research facility, Ochs pledges to disseminate this information to today's and future generations.

Respectively submitted,

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