



Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

February 2013

Volume 5

Decision Time

What to do? As many in the area are aware, Lori Pung has bought the old Huhn's grocery store and will gradually be moving in during the coming year. In the meantime Lori & Tom have offered the existing Plannedscapes building to the Westphalia Historical Society for a very favorable price. The big question is...."Does our area have an interest in a museum/archive for the community and is there enough interest to fund this project?"

We envision a place where people of all ages can gather and reflect on the interesting history of Westphalia. It could be a place to showcase family historical artifacts, pictures, crafts, videos and books. It would be an ideal place to research family genealogy information. It could be a place to demonstrate quilt making, candle making, woodcrafts or other interesting skills that have been passed down through the generations. We will try to get grant money. However, as most are aware, that money is tight. We envision that most of the manual labor and time might be donated. The area has many talented retired men and women who would love to get out of the house occasionally, especially on cleaning days. It would involve routine maintenance, painting, building shelves, display cases and display areas. The museum could be an area where we have some tables or benches outside where folks can just sit around and visit, similar to those memorable benches at Wieber's gas station.

Our first concern is the operating costs such as utilities, insurance, routine maintenance, etc. And we are currently looking for fundraising ideas for the project such as selling walk bricks for a donation with the contributors' names engraved or perhaps a memorial wall of donors "in memory of...". In addition to ideas, we are in need of people to assist us if the community wishes this project to go forward. Please get in touch with any member or better yet, start coming to some of our meetings. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday February 12 at 7 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Again, what is the Westphalia Historical Society?

As mentioned in our May 2012 newsletter, The Westphalia Historical Society was formed in 1985. It is a 501 c3 non-profit, corporation licensed by the State of Michigan. It is governed by a set of by-laws and has four officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, & Treasurer as well as a Board of Directors. The purpose of the Society is to preserve our German Heritage for current and future generations, and we believe that making the **Westphalia Area Historical Center** a reality is a step in the right direction.

The newsletter is now available on the Westphalia Village website. Go to www.westphaliامي.com and click on the Westphalia Historical Society logo to pull up the current and all past newsletters. We would like to thank our Village for making these newsletters available and appreciate the support we have received from them.

Do you have a story to tell? We welcome your suggestions. Call Evelyn 587-6839, Leo 587-3843, or email Charlotte, jerchar@4wbi.net.

Donation: from Glenn J. Fink, (Brother of Kathy Keilen) a \$50 donation, in appreciation for some family genealogy information. If you would care to make a donation to the Westphalia Historical Society, it may be sent to Rose Schafer, Treasurer, Westphalia Historical Society, 5131 S. Grange Rd., Westphalia, Michigan, 48894.

Local Song Writers: The next time you run into Bernadette Thelen ask her to sing you a little ditty she and some other young 12-14 year old girls wrote in about 1937 when they used to play by "Platte Bach" (Platte Creek that flows through the park).

*Oh! Beautiful, beautiful Westphalia
The most beautiful place that I know
You may live on a farm, on a highway,
or down where the Platte Bach flows,
But you're still in dear old Westphalia
The most beautiful place that I know.*

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**A second song about Westphalia** was written and is often sung by local singer and song writer, Dan Pung. Many heard him sing it in the park last summer at the town picnic when our German visitors were here. You also might have heard it at one of his barn dances or perhaps during the “Century dinner”. His words really hit home about our Westphalia.

### **Westphalia Song**

I've lived in the city where there's millions of folks,  
But so many seem lonesome and blue.  
I guess you don't need more people to feel less alone  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

And I've been to a place where they make wine out of rice,  
And they sit on the floor with no shoes.  
But just give me a cider, and a chair would be nice  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

*'Cuz in Westphalia, the people have style,  
And in Westphalia there's more deer camps per mile,  
And I'll tell ya, I've been no place where I have not come back  
To Westphalia, Michigan*

I've traveled to Greece where great philosophers wrote,  
And man they sure had a beautiful view.  
But you don't need to worry if you fumble the soap  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

And I visited Venice to watch the gondola boats,  
They say it's romantic to do.  
But I saw no more amore than there is on Jones Road  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

*'Cuz in Westphalia, the people are proud,  
And in Westphalia, there's no mailbox allowed,  
And I'll tell ya, I've been no place where I have not come back  
To Westphalia, Michigan.*

I've seen St. Paul's in London, St. Peter's in Rome,  
And Notre Dame to name a few.  
But there's no church more pretty than the one here at home  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

Now there's one place I have not seen, and I hope to some day,  
It's where family and friends have gone to.  
And I'll find all that I need to show me the way  
In Westphalia, Michigan.

*'Cuz in Westphalia, the people are kind,  
They have a destination in mind,  
And until I get to Heaven, you know you can find me  
In Westphalia, Michigan...*

And I'll bet ya that Heaven's a little bit like  
Westphalia, Michigan.

### **Westphalia**

In the Beginning - Westphalia traces its origin to November 10, 1836 – prior to Michigan's entry into the union – When Fr. Anton Kopp, Joseph Platte, John Hanses, Anton Cordes, William Tillmann, and John Salter purchased 560 acres of government land at approximately \$1.00 per acre in Section 5, Town 6 North, Range 4 West in Clinton County.

The Name – Our Founding Fathers called their new home “Westphalia” in recognition of their homeland, Westfalen, Germany.

Who We Are – Historically, Westphalia is the “first permanent German Catholic Settlement in Central Michigan.”