



# Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

April 2014

Volume 12

## Election of Officers

During our February meeting an election of new officers was held with Maggie Upson, President; Leo Pohl, Vice-President; Margie Wirth, Secretary; and Chris Piggott, Treasurer. And, a very big THANK YOU is in order for the former officers: Evelyn Weiland, Barb Thelen, Theresa Quartermus and Rose Schafer for the many years of service they contributed to our Historical Society.

Also at the February meeting, Walt and Bernie Thelen gave us an overview drawing of possible things we can do with the inside of the building for meetings and demonstrations. They also gave some ideas for display areas. As always it comes down to cost. But we think with some new paint, a door replacement, and lots of elbow grease we can make it look good.

## The Dream Becomes a Reality

**This past month we obtained ownership of the building and now the fun begins. Lori still has some things to move from the outside; then we'll get started there. In the meantime we hope to start doing some painting and other work on the inside.**

**Once the site of a furniture store, the current building has served as a gas station, apartment building and lastly as a bakery-landscape business. Needless to say it's old and has been remodeled many times so it has a lot of character.**

~ ~ ~

## Jan-Feb issue of Senior Lifestyles

*Published by the Ionia Sentinel-Standard*

Did you read about Ed and Carolyn Weber? They tell their story about Ed's great-grandfather, Mathias Weber – an early settler in Westphalia and a soldier in the Civil War, who survived imprisonment in Andersonville. After enduring many hardships, Mathias walked from Ohio to his home on Hinman Road to successfully raise his family. More than 300 of his descendants reunite every August to celebrate their Weber history.

**A belated Happy Birthday March 23<sup>rd</sup> to Joe Spitzley on his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday & Bernie Bengel on his 90<sup>th</sup>!!!**

## Membership Fee

We decided it was time to formalize membership in the Society and established a \$5.00 annual fee which can be paid at our next meeting (7 p.m. April 15<sup>th</sup>) or by sending it to the address below.

## Our Recent Donors

Keith & Rosemary Neller  
Henry & Donelyn Knoop  
Steven & Karen Hanses  
Dale & Carol Simon  
Anthony Fedewa  
Joseph Pohl family  
Diane (Bonnie) Rademacher  
Trierweiler Dairy Inc.  
Evelyn Hengesbach  
John Luttig  
Tom & Ann Nurenberg  
Christine Piggott  
Karen McGraner  
Randy & Cheryl Thelen

If you would like to make a donation, please send it to Westphalia Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Westphalia, Michigan 48894-0163.



## The American Indian in the Westphalia Area

On Monday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, Ed Baldwin, a local historian told 33 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from St. Mary's School about the American Indians in our area. The students saw his large collection of arrowheads and hand tools used by the Potawatomi Indians – members of the Ojibwa tribe. Ed said that most of the Indians had left our area when the early settlers arrived in 1836, but a large encampment was still located on the Stony Creek near Hauck's Bridge. Their homes were called wicki-ups – a domed shape hut. They taught our settlers how to plant (raise) corn, beans and squash. And maple syrup was a part of the Indians' diet. The tribal leaders were Chief Pewamo & Chief Okemos.

This was the first "event" sponsored by the Historical Society in the new center in Westphalia. Stay tuned. There's more to come!

**Bake Sale:** On Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup> the Historical Society will be holding a bake sale at the Portland Federal Credit Union as our building is undergoing renovation at this time. If you would care to donate baked goods, they will be very much appreciated. Also, a big THANK YOU to the Credit Union for their continued support.

**Letters to Germany:** This letter was taken from Joseph Scheben's book "Untersuchungen Zur Deutschamerikan, Wanderungsforschung". The letter writer is John B. Spitzley to his cousin Mathias Spitzley of Arft, Germany, 3 February 1927. John B. Spitzley "seems to be a grandson of Johann Jakob Spitzlei/Spitzley, emigrant rom Arft in 1846". (Translation by Marie Bengel.)

1927 *Land of My Father*  
Mr. Mathias Spitzley  
Municipality Arft

Dear Cousin,

Several months have passed since we met and got to know each other. We are very happy about it and so are my brothers and sisters when I told them I found some relatives and our father's birthplace, I tried to get pictures of you and the home of our grandfather, where our father was born, but it had gotten too dark and the pictures did not turn out.

We hope you are well and healthy and we hop you can manage to send snapshots of your family and the house No. 11, where father was born.

Greetings from all of us in America. We hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,  
John B. Spitzley  
Westphalia, Michigan America  
~~~~~

**What's in a name?** Over the years our community has had a number of individuals with colorful nicknames. We have put together a list of them. *Can you put the last name to them?* If you recognize anyone as a family member and would like to share their identity with "the world" let us know & we will "tell all" from time to time in future newsletters.

We could have added names like Pemo or Spanky from other communities, but for now we will stick with Westphalia names. We are just going to guess on how to spell many of the names. You may have to use your imagination, here goes....

|               |               |           |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Knieps        | Buffalo Bill  | Packy     |
| Pickles       | Knobby        | Side rake |
| Müff          | Jip           | Gitch     |
| Humpy         | Ditty         | Deeps     |
| Goosey        | Turk          | Flick     |
| Iggy          | Ducky         | Pard      |
| Mooshie       | Tex           | Izzy      |
| GeekyHans     | Hubby         | Detta     |
| Vier Foose    | Toots         | Corky     |
| Kutch         | Chick         | Pro       |
| Fipps         | Johnny Büpp   | Tinner    |
| Sorgy         | Pidge         | Dork      |
| Yogi          | Fronie        | Red       |
| Reamer        | Bubby         | Kingfish  |
| Hinishta Aton | Sully         | Peck      |
| Schimal       | Yüticks       | Hulio     |
| Piff          | Stafla        | Chip      |
| Dick Norm     | Lema Schwantz | Pencil    |
| Deina Norm    | Skip          | Lerch     |
| Meezie Grine  | Butch (many)  | Perch     |