

# The Iola Historical Society's Window

Quarterly Member and Activities Newsletter

Volume Five

Number One

Winter 2012



### Third Grade Students Visit Historical Village

Students from the Iola-Scandinavia school's third grade classes visited the Iola Historical Society on October 4 and 6, 2011, a group of whom pause for a photo in front of the old depot. Member docents hosting the youngsters included Howard and Kathy Bestul, Kay Holz, Clifford Mishler, Sharon Peterson and Doug Watson.

## "Thank You" Lyle

Lyle Mork was honored for his dedicated and selfless service as president for the past five years by the 30 members assembled for the annual IHS pot-luck holiday supper hosted on Monday, December 5, 2011, at The Millstone. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a graphic portrait to Lyle representing the passage of time for he and his wife, Nellie, from when they met while both were serving in the U.S. Navy, through their wedding and his recent involvement at the IHS, as Lyle has been enjoying retirement in their return to his roots.

"It wasn't long after Lyle returned to the Iola community in retirement that he became a member of the Iola Historical Society, shortly thereafter finding himself being railroaded into service as president," acting president Clifford Mishler remarked in unveiling the gift. "Since that time he has been at the forefront of virtually all the organization's activities and advancements. In fact, he has been very quietly involved in originating and executing a multitude of tasks that went largely unnoticed by the general membership and board."

These tasks range from almost single-handedly dispatching the task of painting the firehouse building upon completion in 2007, to being ever present during the public opening hours of the historic village complex and museum during the visitor season. And, when he wasn't doing that he was generally found tied to the computer making record of the IHS archive and artifacts, or more recently laboriously organizing the contents of the



Lyle Mork (left) admires his graphic portrait gift, designed and executed by Gordon T. Olson (right), son of long time IHS member Evelyn Danielson, as acting president Mishler looks on during the presentation ceremony at the December 5 holiday supper. Similar graphic portraits of Chet Krause and Lee Nelson, also created by Olson, are displayed in the IHS museum area.

recently published *Humble Hero* book focused on the World War II military exploits of the late Lee Nelson.

"The board struggled with how we might appropriately recognize and reward Lyle for his commitment of untold volunteer hours to the Society over the past five years," Mishler observed. "In the end, the

choice became obvious, as we reflected on his evident admiration for a pair of graphic portraits hung in the IHS museum area over the past couple years, one honoring Chester L. Krause as a leading light of the community and benefactor of the Society, the other honoring Nelson's accomplishments as a quiet aviator."

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued from page 2

tory of the local community and surrounding area as a community attraction through discreet, but generous application of our assets, both fiscal and physical. In large part, we can accomplish our objectives only in the measure of our individual contributions as volunteers.

Towards that end, at our January and February meetings the board and membership will be conducting an exercise of establishing standing committees responsible for maintaining the ongoing quality and growth of our properties and activities. This effort will be spearheaded by vice-president Robert Stamsted. It will require the understanding, cooperation and indulgence of the membership-at-large.

Another change in the offing concerns the historic village complex and museum public visitation schedule. Based on the attendance trends of the past four years, which initially provided access on Saturdays from May through September, during the hours 10 a.m. through 4 p.m., it has been determined that in 2012 we will be open only from the first Saturday of June through the last Saturday of August, with hours of 1-4 p.m. We will, of course, continue endeavoring to accommodate both group and individual requests at other times as well.

Planning is underway to present and publicize three historical education program presentations of local and visitor interest in conjunction with one Saturday opening each month, as an attendance builder, rather than on an alternating month basis during the general membership meetings as in the past. In addition to promotionally publicizing these sessions, we are exploring the concept of advertising our summer visitor hours in the *Picture Post* to build our exposure and visitations.

We are, however, also projecting the presentation of a special educational program in conjunction with our March general membership meeting. The idea of presenting a spring "kick-off" fundraiser open house in the form of a spaghetti dinner is also under consideration.

At our October meetings the

board and membership approved the expenditure of up to \$8890 to install new structural underpinnings beneath the floor of historic depot, in replacement of the deteriorated supporting pads and pillars, which are nearly 120 years old, to level and stabilize the structure prior to restoring the exterior and interior to their original appearance. This work will be conducted under contract in the spring, with volunteer membership labor contributions welcome. Fundraising will be pursued to cover the cost.

This report provides you with an overview of the planning and thinking that has thus far resulted from the organizational assessment exercise undertaken at the October meetings. There's more to come as we work through issues of the past, present and future, so I'd like to encourage each and every member to participate in our future planning process during the January and February meetings.

Clifford Mishler, Acting President

### Events Schedule

- Monday, January 30**  
6:00 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting  
Session I -- Membership Involvement
- Monday, February 27**  
6:00 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting  
Session II -- Membership Involvement
- Monday, March 26**  
6:00 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting  
Including Historical Program
- Monday, April 30**  
6:00 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting

### Donors & Loaners

October -- November -- December

**ARCHIVAL DONATIONS:** Howard Bestul, Joel Edler, Karen Frailing, John Hauke, Dr. N.J. Hollero, Iola Village Library, Gene Knutson, James Rasmussen, Bruce Wolberg.  
**DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF NEIL KACHUR:** Bob and Stella Strand. **LEE NELSON:** Bob and Stella Strand. **ROBERT STRAND:** (All designated to the depot restoration project.) Harold and Carol Becker, Howard and Kathy Bestul, Howard and Roberta Cook, Martha Cook, Lola May Dalland, Donald and Anita Faldet, Ruth and Jack Halverson, James and Martha Helgeson, Leland and Ruth Johnson, Dale and Roberta Louison, Robert Mueller, Leonard and Clare Oppor, Sharon Peterson, Charles and Susan Preuss, Margaret Rued, Dennis and Nancy Sorenson, Bob Stamstad, Carole Wright, Unidentified Cash Donations of \$550.

## President's Corner

For this month's message I'd like to begin by briefly reflecting back on the accomplishments and heritage of the 58 years that have passed since our founding when a small group of citizens met at the home of R.C. Cleaves on October 28, 1953, to begin capturing and perpetuating our community's historical heritage. Through the first 26 years, this dedicated group largely contented itself with the archival assimilation of historical information gleaned from published resources, family records and the recollections of older generations.

The Society began building a physical presence with acquisition of the Iola & Northern Railroad Depot in October, 1979, the genesis of what has become a Historic Village complex, joined nearly ten years later by a vintage log cabin moved in from Harrison Township. Then in 1996 a one room country schoolhouse replica was built in the style of northeastern Farmington Township's 1897 Townsend School. In 2002 the Helvetia Town Hall, built in 1919, was incorporated. More recently, in 2007, a replication of Iola's 1901 firehouse was added.

Then, in early 2008 through the generosity of honorary life member Chet Krause, the IHS came into possession of the adjacent former Lashua Excavating buildings, for development into office, museum and storage areas. Two years later our physical properties were again enhanced when the adjacent Hawke



*Donna Hooker receives a framed certificate recognizing her dedicated service to the IHS as the 2011 "Volunteer of the Year" from acting president Mishler during the annual holiday supper. Phyllis Morris was also recognized as 2011 "Docent of the Year."*

Excavating building came into our possession. Thus, we have a significant historical archive nearly 60 years in the making, a Historic Village civic attraction built up over 32 years, a repository of varied associated historical artifacts . . . and the challenge of developing and maintaining them for the benefit of future generations.

As we move into the new year of 2012, I'd like to also briefly reflect back on the experience of the year 2011 where the welfare of the Iola Historical Society is concerned. We recorded another good, but not great year. Our holdings and exhibiting initiatives advanced notably, but we can't exist on our laurels, as there is much that remains unaccomplished. Our public events, the 27th annual Strawberry Fest & Appraisal Fair in June and second annual Taste of Norway & Lost Arts Fair in October were well received, but Saturday attendance softened somewhat. Financially, our footings are sound, but we need to accomplish more fundraising and grant opportunities to achieve our objectives.

Assessing the matter of membership involvement, to achieve our objectives, the membership must become more engaged than it has been in the recent past. Remember, by definition, we are a volunteer organization focused on recapturing, preserving and perpetuating the his-

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Thank You's

### 2011 Taste of Norway & Lost Arts Fair

The Iola Historical Society would like to extend its appreciation to member **Joanna Rheingans** for having handcrafted and donated "The Pines," a quilt valued at \$600, the fundraising raffle grand prize for our fall event. The quilt was won by Chet Pedersen of Iola, whose support of the fundraiser in purchasing the winning ticket is likewise appreciated, as is that of all those who purchased raffle tickets. The proceeds of nearly \$1,000 are earmarked for the Iola & Northern Railroad Depot historic restoration fund.

#### Other Prize Winners

Dorothy Berg, Pittsville -- 20 Gift Certificate, Iola IGA; Jerry Biederman, Iola -- \$10 Gift Certificate, Silver Lake Lanes; Mary Brehmer, Kenosha -- Two-Some 18 Hole Golf Round With Cart, Glacier Wood Golf Course; Diane Civik, Iola -- \$50 Cash, First National Bank; Martha Cook, Amherst Junction -- \$10 Gift Certificate, Kafe Beans; Emmert, Manawa -- T-Shirt, Firkus Lumber; Mason Faldet, Waupaca -- Two Books, Krause Publications; Sherri Floistad, Iola -- \$10 Gift Certificate, Silver Lake Lanes; Tom Fucik, Iola -- \$25 Gift Certificate, Sweet Medicine Prescriptions Plus; Janet Gunderson, Iola -- Old Car Bank (2011), Iola Old Car Show.

Irene Haroldson, Iola -- Two Books, Krause Publications; Ruth Jones, Iola -- 1/3 Pound Burger, Edgewater Bar & Grill; Jill Knutson, Iola -- \$20 Gift Certificate, The Millstone; Chet Krause, Iola -- Where's the Fire Puzzle, GL Enterprises; Christian Lobemier, West Bend -- \$10 Gift Certificate, Silver Lake Lanes; JoAnn Lytle, Iola -- \$10 Gift Certificate, I-S Chamber of Commerce; Pat Melum, Iola -- 1/3 Pound Burger, Edgewater Bar & Grill; Phyllis Morris, Iola -- \$25 Gift Certificate, Sweet Medicine Prescriptions Plus; Betty Nassen, Iola -- Lunch With Dessert, Crystal Cafe; Johnnie Nassen, Iola -- \$10 Gift Certificate and Road Atlas, Community Insurance.

Donna Nyiri, Iola -- 1/3 Pound Burger, Edgewater Bar & Grill; Roseann Rosin, Plover -- 1/3 Pound Burger, Edgewater Bar & Grill; Donna Schmidt, Westfield -- \$20 Gift Certificate, Main Street BP; Florence Sorensen, Marshfield -- \$10 Gift Certificate and Road Atlas, Community Insurance; Donna Swenson, Iola -- 1/3 Pound Burger, Edgewater Bar & Grill; Chloe Terry, Iola -- Two Books, Krause Publications; Mary Ann Zilz, Iola -- \$25 Gift Certificate, Depot Street Station; Mary Zoroufy, Madison -- \$10 Gift Certificate, J.D.'s Corner Bar.

#### Tent Sponsors and Participating Organizations

The Iola Historical Society also expresses its appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their sponsorship of the tent erected to accommodate the "Hands On" Norwegian pastries and lefse demonstrations:

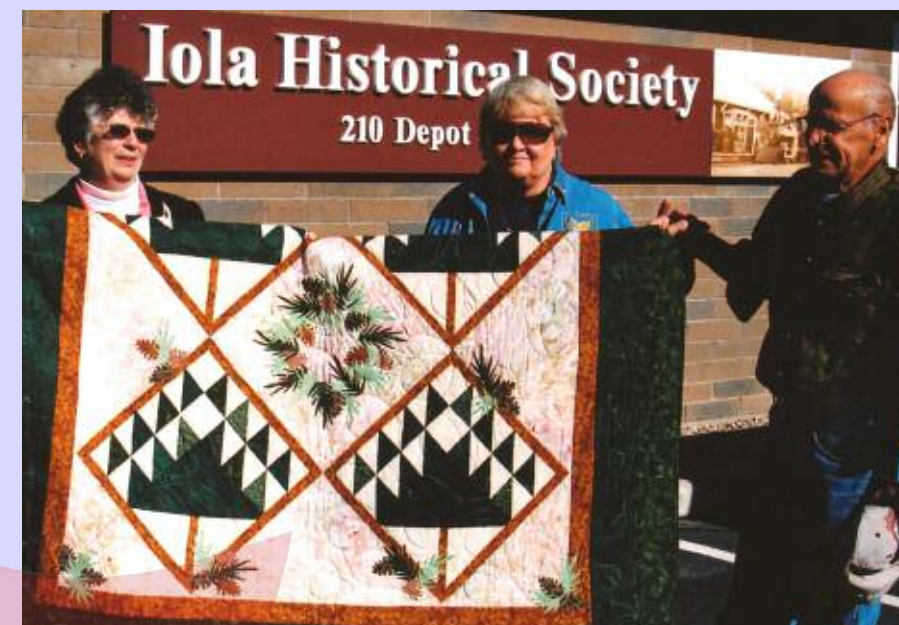
**Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative**  
**David & Kay Holz • Clifford & Sally Mishler**  
**Premier Community Bank, Iola • Keith & Patricia Williams**

The Iola Historical Society is likewise indebted to the following organizations for their involvement in making the day informative and entertaining for our visitors:

**Iola Lions Club, Health Fair**  
**I-S Chamber of Commerce, Craft and Gift Show**  
**Northland Lutheran Church Ladies, Norwegian Goodies**  
**Sons of Norway, Honoring Norwegian Heritage**  
**2-Cylinder Tractor Club, Antique Tractor Display**

Finally, there are the many individual members and friends of the Iola Historical Society, too numerous to name here, who contributed in ways large and small in the planning, setup, presentation and breakdown of the 2011 edition of the Taste of Norway & Lost Arts Fair. Without their interest and commitment the event would have not been the success that it was.

**2012 Taste of Norway and Lost Arts Fair**  
**Saturday, October 6, 2012**



#### Pedersen Winner of "The Pines" Quilt

*Taste of Norway 2011 raffle grand prize winner Chet Pedersen (right) of Iola receives "The Pines" quilt, handcrafted and donated by IHS member Joanna Rheingans (left), with his wife Gennie looking on.*

## "A Taste of Norway"



#### Norwegian Lefse Hot Off The Grill!

*Iola Historical Society members Robert Stamstad (left) and Martha Cook (right), with their backs to the camera, provided demonstrations of the fine art of lefse preparation during last fall's Taste of Norway event, offering visitors free samples of their handiwork.*

**Iola Historical Society**  
210 Depot Street  
P.O. Box 412 • Iola, WI 54945

#### Officers

Clifford Mishler, Acting President  
Robert Stamstad, Vice-President  
Tom Fucik, Treasurer

#### Board of Directors

Greg Loescher, Stella Strand,  
Doug Watson  
e-mail address:  
iolahistoricalociety@tds.net  
Phone: (715) 445-IOLA (4652)