



Sainte Marie Foundation News

To celebrate our very special hometown's summer season 2013

Volume 6, Issue 3

What's Happening in Sainte Marie?

Last year it was so dry that the grass crunched under our feet at the 175th celebration in late June. This year it is RAIN, RAIN, RAIN. Many farmers have already replanted once, and it appears to be too wet to do so again. The unharvested wheat is rotting in the fields. What a difference a year makes!



Ron Kirts: Illinoisan of the Day

Ron Kirts, one of Sainte Marie's most active volunteers, has been named an **Illinoisan of the Day** for **August 11** at the Illinois State Fair. Ron and his wife Carolyn will receive gifts and be honored at a noon ceremony to be held at the Commodities Pavilion.

Only 10 people are selected each year for this annual award from the Illinois State Fair Museum Foundation. It is given to individuals who make a difference in their community through hard work and dedication to helping others. We are pleased that one of our own is being honored. It's Veterans Day at the Fair, and vets and their families get in free. See more on the award at www.illinoisstatefairmuseum.org.

Ron's volunteer activities include: treasurer and House caretaker of the Foundation, Sacristan at St. Mary's, daily maintenance of the swimming pool (he has kept it going for years!!), electrician for the church picnic for over 50 years, 20 years on the Village Board (8 as village president) and other tasks which would fill this newsletter. He and Carolyn have four children and seven grandchildren.

New Mayor Takes Over

Jack Thompson was elected Village President in April, taking over for **Bill Hartrich** who retired (after 16 years). In June, we interviewed Thompson, the co-owner of The Gas Station with wife **Marge (Bigard)** and daughter **Julie Warfel**:



What are your goals? Sainte Marie has many new residents. I hope to

contact each of them and get them involved in our village, just as our former residents have been. I believe that is the secret of SM's success in the past – community involvement.

What kind of projects could new residents be involved in? *There are many – just helping keep the village clean is one. Another that I hope to address is raising the center of the ball diamond, which has eroded over the years so that the pitcher's mound is no longer as high as it should be. We can do that with volunteer help, and the field will drain better. Right now it is a pool of water from all the rain.*

Any civic projects on the table? *The Community Club has purchased LED Stop Signs for the north/south stops at the intersection, with \$\$ they raised at the 175th. The signs are solar powered and will be life-savers, as we have noticed that more and more people simply do not stop at the intersection.*

What about faster Internet for SM – and better cell phone service? *We have been told that there will be faster service from Frontier Communications by mid-July. As a former IT guy (now retired), I promise to pursue this, because we all need to stay connected to the world. Same for cell phone service.*

A Voices of the Past Sampler

Sunday, September 1 (during the Church Picnic)

1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Come to the backyard of the Foundation House and see a live performance of a program that the Foundation hopes to expand. Our *Voice from the Past* will be **Dot Huber**, played by **Mandy Zuber Huber**, (pictured) with script and direction by **Sandy Bigard Fisher**. Program lasts only 15 minutes with five minutes of feedback. Don't miss it! Children invited too. Free program.



Flower Baskets: Need Help!

The flower baskets are looking gorgeous again this year. Thanks to **Bob and Tammy Frye, Maxine Calvert and Ron Kirts** who take daily watering responsibilities – one week at a time. We could use one more team of "waterers", if anyone is interested.

You will need a golf cart. We supply water and wagon. A **Special Thank You to Don Geier:** We had to have our water wagon specially reinforced this year, and we thank Don Geier for the \$250 donation he made to help us pay the hefty bill. He too loves those flower baskets!

Foundation House Update



Bathroom before (l) and after renovation (below)



The bathroom renovation is finished – and it looks fabulous (see before and after pictures above). Not only do we have a beautiful bathroom, but we also improved the utility room next to it and made a “water closet” (sink and toilet) out of the bath closet – so three rooms have been improved in the last few months.

Our special thanks to these contributors who came forward and paid for ALL of the renovations in the three rooms:

- Judy Alblinger Brangeon \$2,500** (coming to SM July 20-27 from Paris, France. Stop by to see her.)
- Anonymous \$3,000**
- The Art and Alice Keller Family \$6,500**

This was a remarkable project, led by Foundation board member **Donna Keller** and interior designer **Bonnie Jackson**. The Anonymous donor said the gift was in gratitude for all the help that SM residents gave to him as he grew up. Thanks to all three for making these improvements possible. Also, thanks to **Diane Stone Houdasheldt** for making and donating the beautiful shelf/towel rack from her Oblong shop, [Henpeck Merchantile Company](#).

Volunteers at the April 27 workday did many of the finishing touches on the bathroom and also cleaned the house after the long winter:

- Vinnie Zuber** – installed handles on over 20 cabinets!
- Donna Keller, Bob Helregel, Kevin Parker and Ron Kirts** painted (and helped Vinnie!).

-**Carolyn Kirts, Anita Reis Steber and Glenda Reis Swartz** cleaned plaster dust from nearly every room in the house and changed smoke detector batteries while **Don Perille** prepared envelopes for our next mailing.

-Outside, **Annette Reis Lynch, Patti Swisher Buntun and Anna Lou Stone** tidied up the landscaping.

-**Hartrich Meats** supplied us with a lovely lunch! We had a lot of laughs as we worked – and I forgot to take a picture of all the lovely people who came and helped during that busy day! Sorry about that!

To Book the Foundation House

Plan ahead, if you and your family wish to stay at the Foundation House. Make reservations with **Ron or Carolyn Kirts 618-455-3153**.



Our Lawnmower Heroes

Since we acquired the Foundation House in 2008, our lawn has been mowed by a group of loyal volunteers. People in the know tell me that their contribution for each summer’s mowing is well over \$1500 per year! That’s a considerable sum for our little Foundation, and we thank each and every one of them. If you see any one of these folks, please **tell them THANK YOU** from all of us:

- George Kirts, organizer**
- Bill Hartrich (new this year)**
- Robert Rumpp (pictured)**
- John Michl (from 2008-2012)**

- Jack Thompson**
- Bob Helregel**

We Get Mail

-From **Karen Keilman, TN**
My grandparents, Marie and Mark E. Pictor, were born and raised in Sainte Marie. Their oldest daughter Edna (who also was born and lived in Sainte Marie) is my mother. I live in Tennessee and make occasional trips to Sainte Marie. I would love to hear from anyone there who may be related or have family information or from anyone who simply shares my interest in the history and preservation of your village. karenkeilman@hotmail.com.

-From **Jim Hahn** (Dorothy's son), Mattoon.
*Recently, while metal detecting at mom's, I found a small plaque (may have been on luggage) and a lock in her yard. The plaque had **M Shifferstein** engraved on it. My sister, **Kathy Slankard**, found that a Mary Cleopha Shifferstein married James Joseph Picquet, a surgeon in the Civil War. Mary was born in 1798 in France, died in 1864, and is buried in St. Mary's cemetery. We also looked at mom's abstract; which showed that James Picquet and Mary Shifferstein owned mom's property. in the 1800s. Kinda neat to track history. I think the lock may have been a railroad lock. Should anyone like their yard detected, I have two machines and would love the opportunity to look for items. All I would ask is to be able to take pictures of any finds. Contact me at: jahahn@yahoo.com or 217-235-3785.*

-From **Rose Gangloff**, the Bend
I have a small window that I would like to donate to the Foundation. It is from the old St. Valentine Church. I bought 2 of the original windows and have had them cut down to about 1/4 the original size. It has a pane of all four of the colors in it. Thanks so much for what you are doing. Our history is a gift as we look forward to the future.
 Editor's note: We called Rose and told her we would LOVE to have this memento from St. Valentine's.

Transitions

-**Scott Hartrich**, 43. Son of Foundation VP **Mike (and Teresa) Hartrich**. Survived by wife **Joyce** and two young children.

-**Sophia Michl**, 99. Survived by 8 children, numerous grandchildren. Husband **Lawrence**, who ran an auto repair shop in SM for many years, died last Oct.



-**Kenny Hartrich**, 73. Survived by wife **Sandy** and 3 children, and mother **Marge** (now in Decatur). Kenny helped run the Hartrich Grocery store. He loved SM history, and we will miss having him as a resource.

-**Angela Hahn**, 99. Survived by daughters **Madonna Schachman** and **Mary Lou Kessler**, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

50th Wedding Anniversary

Ron and Carolyn (Litzelman) Kirts celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, May 4 with a reception and Mass, followed by a dinner for family



and friends. All their children and three of their 7 grandchildren were in town for the happy event.
Pix: Ron with elementary school classmates, (l-r) Vinnie Zuber, Assumption, IL, and Judd Cameron, Sullivan, IL, at the reception.

Lynch Award Winner

On May 17, **Annette Reis Lynch** received the *Distinguished Service Award* at the Lake Land College (Mattoon) Commencement.. The annual



award is designed to acknowledge an individual who has rendered outstanding service to Lake Land College. Annette was honored for volunteering to make videos for various departments and working with IT students and clubs.

Annette also volunteers for the Sainte Marie Foundation, supervising the landscaping at the House, among much other varied work. She made the outstanding videos of the 175th celebration, which are still available through the Community Club.

How Is the Foundation Funded?

We depend on donations – from people like you! Sometimes we have fundraisers, such as the concerts by **Jim Litzelman** and **Dorothy Helregel Mathious**. We sell the book we created for the 175th anniversary last year. *But really, we just depend on people to send us a donation each year.*

Our fiscal year is Oct. 1 to Sept. 30, and we send out an Annual Report listing all the donations and volunteer help (which is worth a lot of \$\$ to us). Donations are tax deductible. You can remember us in your will too. If you make a donation *in honor of* or *in memory of* someone, we make sure the family knows about it. So don't forget us, please!! We need to hear from you. Send your donation to **SMF, P.O. Box 186, Sainte Marie, IL 62459.**

Sainte Marie Foundation
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Amy Wheat Bariby and daughter **Joslyn** visited SM in mid-June from their home in Kansas City. Amy is **Roger and Sue Wheat's** daughter and a granddaughter of **Romonna Hunzinger Ochs**.

The Sainte Marie Foundation newsletter is published quarterly. Send comments to writer/editor Pat Reis, patreisprpr@yahoo.com. The Foundation is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization, duly recognized as an Illinois charitable corporation. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Do you have a Sainte Marie story you would like to share? Write your own and/or contact Pat Reis patreisprpr@yahoo.com. We reserve the right to edit. Check out our website at www.saintemariefoundation.org

Put on your 2013 calendar:

Saturday, August 31, 9 – 3 Workday at the House

Join us as we work on some projects and get the House ready for the Sunday event (*Voices of the Past*). Wear old clothes and prepare to have a good time as we tackle some projects that keep the House in such pristine condition.

Sunday, September 1 – St. Mary's Picnic

This is an event we all look forward to each year, as it's really a "homecoming" for many of us. You can at least buy some quilt or Big Ticket chances, as this is St. Mary's major fundraiser for the year. Contact: **Judy Wagner** at stmaryschurch@psbnewton.com or 618-455-3155.

Sunday, September 1 – Sampler *Voices of the Past*

Don't forget to stop by the Foundation House (backyard) at 1, 3, or 5 p.m. for a 15-minute sample of a program we want to expand in the future. Try it out as **Mandy Zuber Huber** depicts a lively "Dot Huber in her prime." Script by **Sandra Bigard Fisher**.

A Gala Helregel Reunion



Dorothy Helregel Mathious wrote: *We had a happy, joyful time in Ste. Marie with family, cousins and new nieces and nephews. Grandson Isaac rode the tractor and climbed up on the combine at Bob's (Helregel). He was so thrilled and sang for us all at the reunion.. We visited the Foundation House on Sunday and were amazed at how much you have done. It is so interesting and very homey. The yard and growing trees are wonderful also.*

Sainte Marie looks great. I can see that all of the homes have such pride of ownership. Everything seems more upbeat, and I am overjoyed that the Stone home is being restored. I used to visit Shirley there a lot when we were in grade school. Such memories. (See more on the Helregel reunion on e-mail bonus pages)

Left: Dorothy's grandson Isaac Stone, 4, from Studio City CA.

BONUS PAGES FOR OUR E-MAIL SUBSCRIBERS

HELREGEL REUNION HELD

By Judy Helregel Millsap

The 27th reunion of the descendants of the Charles and Margaret (Burgund) Helregel family was held on Sunday, June 2, 2013, at noon in St. Mary's parish center, Sainte Marie, IL, with approximately 55 persons attending.

Bob Helregel led everyone in the meal prayer. After dinner, Judy (Helregel) Millsap thanked everyone for coming. "Happy Birthday" was sung to all those celebrating June birthdays, congratulations were given to those celebrating June wedding anniversaries, couples with weddings in the near future announced their "special date", and those attending the reunion for the first time were given a big welcome. All were reminded to update their family tree (births, weddings, deaths since last reunion) with Marcella Strutner.

Next, everyone participated in the "Find Someone Who.....? Blackout Game." The winner was Janyce (Barthelme) Rubsam with 20/25 spaces filled on her game board.

Attendance prizes were given to:

- The youngest boy—Grayson Huss of New Berlin, IL (2 years, 3 months old)
- The youngest girl—Aliyah Millsap of Auburn, IL (5 months old)
- The oldest, wisest man—Oscar Strutner of rural West Liberty, IL (92 years young)
- The oldest, wisest woman—Marge (Strutner) Barthelme of Sainte Marie, IL (90 years young)
- The most newly-married couple—Joey & Krista (Millsap) Barber of rural Ste. Marie, IL (1 year, 7 months)
- Couple married the longest—Oscar & Marcella (Menke) Strutner of rural West Liberty, IL (64 ½ years)
- Youngest grandparents: Chuck & Stacey (Helregel) Nettleton of rural Olney, IL
- Couple/Individual with the most children/grandchildren present (including spouses): Bob Helregel family (8 present)

Congratulations were given to Linda Mathious of Studio City, CA, for recently receiving an "Emmy" nomination for her work as a Writer/Producer of Nickelodeon's *The Fresh Beat Band*. Linda is the daughter of Nick & Dorothy (Helregel) Mathious.



(l – r) Judy (Helregel) Millsap, Dorothy (Helregel) Mathious, Jenny Mathious, sang "The Irish Blessing" as a blessing/farewell song (until we meet again at the next reunion to be held the first Sunday in June, 2015, at St. Mary's Parish Center).

Those traveling the farthest—Eric, Linda (Mathious), & Isaac Stone of Studio City, CA



Those attending the reunion were: Dan & Mary Ann (Helregel) Kuenstler of Claremont, IL; Ed, Michele (Helregel), Macy, and Brock Vogt, Barb (Strutner) Thoele, all of Teutopolis, IL; Louis & Anna Marie (Ochs) Thies, & Brian Helregel of Effingham, IL; Marilyn (Helregel) Huss and Linda (Huss) Crowder of Chatham, IL; Dennis, Lori, and Grayson Huss of New Berlin, IL; Kate (Huss) Baker, Jeff, Jennifer, Asher, and Aliyah Millsap, all of Auburn, IL; Dorothy (Helregel) Mathious and Jenny Mathious of Burbank, CA; Eric, Linda (Mathious), & Isaac Stone of Studio City, CA; Chuck & Stacey (Helregel) Nettleton, Kyle Nettleton & Holly Buerster, all of rural Olney; Marjorie (Strutner) Barthelme, Bob Helregel, Jane (Strutner) Geltz, Carrie (Ochs) Frichtl & Ralph Weiss, Sam Zuber, Edie (Zuber) Hice, Samantha, Zoey, and Hilary Hice, Tony & Martha (Ochs) Strutner, Joey & Krista (Millsap) Barber, Gordon & Judy (Helregel) Millsap, Ryan Millsap, all of Ste. Marie, Kelsey Bloomberg, Janyce (Barthelme) Rubsam, & Suzy (Strutner) Lawler, all of Newton, IL, Oscar & Marcella (Menke) Strutner, Dick & Kay (Kapper) Helregel, all of rural West Liberty, IL.

Thanks to Judy Helregel Millsap, Michelle Helregel Vogt and Dorothy Helregel Mathious for reporting and pictures of this family reunion.

Watch for the grand opening of our museum at the Foundation House – to be announced in 2014. If you have items you wish to have displayed, please contact Mike Hartrich 618-783-8678 or Donna Keller 618-455-3452. Donna is looking for old pictures of Sainte Marie-area people cooking in their kitchens or outside or on wash day hanging out laundry or washing clothes or even bath day. Also looking for a razor strop and some straight razors and an old galvanized wash tub -- all for next year's projects! We will copy pictures and return them to you.