



Sainte Marie Foundation News

To celebrate our very special hometown's fall season 2013

Volume 6, Issue 4

Applying for Governor's Home Town Award

Because the 175th celebration in 2012 was such a success, a group from the Ste. Marie Community Club and the Sainte Marie Foundation decided last spring to submit a joint nomination to the Governor's Home Town Award state committee for a possible award. Special thanks to **Julie Warfel, Jack and Marge Thompson, Donna Keller, Christina Goss** for help with the application.

Pat Reis and village president Jack Thompson did an oral presentation on Sept. 18, applying for the award in the *heritage tourism* category (which we chose for our event) for towns of population 0 – 1500. We get a plaque and a large outdoor sign if we win. **Annette Lynch** did a video for the presentation and **Jason Warfel** did a Point Point for Jack.

The Governor's Home Town Awards have been presented annually since 1983 by the IL Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. They recognize volunteer activity that produces a positive impact on the community.

Thanks to all who worked on the 175th! This is YOUR award, and we are quite sure we will get it! **Mayor Jack Thompson** will be the one to accept the award at a special reception at the Governor's Mansion, probably in November.

Founding Board Member Retires

Maxine Calvert was just minding her own business when Pat Reis tracked her down in late 2007. "You're a retired CPA," said Pat, "and I am going to start a Foundation for Sainte Marie. Would you help?"



And thus started a partnership that created a very successful new entity for this small village.

Maxine and Maurice Calvert had moved to SM in 1986. They were not from long-standing SM families, like so many others in town. But they liked what they saw and thought this would be a good place to retire from their farm south of Newton. They traded houses with their son and

daughter-in-law, who had lived in SM while Lynn was teaching Special Ed here.

Maxine was invaluable as a founding member of the Foundation Board. She became Vice President and Treasurer (**Gina Mullinax Fox** was the secretary of the founding Board), handled all the mail (since Pat was in Chicago), answered phone calls, and generally did nearly all of the administrative work of the Foundation during the early years. She and her husband Maurice were the major volunteers at the Foundation House when the dilapidated building was first acquired in 2008 – Maurice painted and caulked an untold number of windows. Both scraped, sanded, painted and cleaned – and played the role of caretakers. "The Foundation House would not be as beautiful as it is today were it not for Maurice and Maxine," says Pat Reis, Foundation president.

Since the early years of the Foundation, Maxine made sure the village Christmas tree was decorated with glorious lights every year; she ran the 2008 and 2009 "Come Back Home" events; sold tickets and was the contact person for the two successful concerts we held. Two significant Foundation accomplishments that were totally Maxine's doing: acquiring the abandoned yellow house across from the old church hall through a tax sale (a long, drawn-out process that took years) and creating the flower baskets along Main Street, a much-beloved addition to our pretty little village. Maxine researched the right baskets, recruited sponsors, found the proper greenhouse where she and **Tammy Bailey Frye** planted them every Feb. and then helped water the hanging baskets daily to keep them thriving.

Maurice is now at Holly Brook, the assisted living facility in Newton. Maxine will be joining him there in November. Their lovely home in Sainte Marie has been sold.

"It's been a rewarding experience," says Maxine of her work with the Foundation. "Sainte Marie is an ideal place to live, but life changes." She leaves the Board – and Sainte Marie – with a bushel load of thanks -- for her many years of service, not only to the Foundation but to the Ste. Marie Community Club and also to the village where she served as Zoning Chairman for 16 years. Few people will

match her energy and initiative. Both she and Maurice will be sorely missed.

Two New Foundation Board Members

Ed Reis, Robinson, and **Jason Warfel**, SM, recently joined the Foundation Board.



Ed, a retired CPA, was a partner at Kemper CPA Group in Robinson. While working there for 43 years, he served 20 as manager of the firm. Ed grew up on a farm south of SM, a son of Gene and Zita Reis. He and wife Linda have three children and 8 grandchildren.

Jason Warfel, vice president of Kuhl Trailer Sales, Ingraham, came to SM in 2011 when he married wife

Julie, co-owner of The Gas Station. He was a key member of the 2012 Quarto-septcentennial Committee (which Julie chaired), creating their website and other social media sites. After the event, he worked with the Foundation to meld

their aging website with the celebration website – a feat that has received accolades from viewers. Jason and Julie are parents of **Cora Raelynn**, who was featured in the 175th Book as “Sainte Marie’s Newest Resident.”

Foundation House Update

-Visitors continue to admire the first floor bathroom renovations. Designer **Bonnie Jackson** discussed her work with guests when she visited the House on Sept. 1. Everyone loved the changes.

-We especially thank **Randy Bergbower**, Newton, who sprayed primer on the back porch walls and ceiling, thus saving HOURS of painting time for our volunteers. We bought the paint and Randy supplied the equipment and manpower as a gift to the Foundation. It looks fantastic – and took nine gallons of primer! That room had not been painted in many, many years, so it just soaked up the paint! Thank you for your help, Randy. We know all your Bergbower ancestors, who were active in the early days of Sainte Marie, would applaud you

-Thanks also to **Janyce (Barthelme) and Tom Rubsam** of **Rubsam Paint Store**, Newton, who have helped us so much with our framing of old pictures. In July, they took a huge, old mirror and a frame we had acquired, cut down the mirror to fit the frame,

and made a lovely mirror for our upstairs bathroom – the only mirror in the house where one can see the whole person. Thank you for your donation of time and effort. And thanks to Janyce for all the good advice as we have painted and painted during the last five years of House restoration.

Special thanks to:

-Rhonda Kirts, Jud Cameron, Terry Kirts and Dick Cameron who volunteered at the FH on Sunday, Sept. 1 during our Open House.

Landscaping at the Foundation House

Landscape chairman **Annette Reis Lynch** launched a major summer redo of the landscaping around the Foundation House in recent months. Her report below recognizes the many people who helped to beautify the grounds:

-Loading truckloads of free mulch: Annette Lynch and grandson Kaleb Lynch

-Unloading mulch at Foundation House: A Lynch “family effort” with Annette and sons **Kerry** (FL) and **Shannon** (CA) and grandson **Kaleb** (FL)

-Bringing loads of dirt and removal of concrete: **Bob Helregel**

-Stump Removal: **Bob Frye**

-Tree trimming and removal of refuse: **Kaleb Lynch & Chase Goss**

Materials donated:

-A 5-ton trailer load of mulch: **Bob and Tammy Frye**

-Plants from the gardens of: **Ron and Carolyn Kirts, Liz Valbert, Donna Keller, Sue Wheat, Francis Yager, Annette Lynch**

Monetary donations for plants and benches: From **Donna Hahn Schachmann** and **Chuck Horn** (\$1,000 in memory of Ed/Angela Hahn) and **Sandra Hartrich** (\$2,000 in memory of husband Kenny). Also from the **SM Community Club** -- a bench to honor *volunteer extraordinaire* **Ron Kirts**.



Pix: **Patti Bunten** with daughter Ella and **Annette Lynch** admire the new landscaping in early Sept.

The Landscaping committee includes: chair **Annette Lynch**, **Carolyn Litzelman Kirts, Sue Hunzinger Wheat and Patti Swisher Bunten**. Thanks to all for the lovely new look!

Flower Basket Sponsors 2014

Do you want to sponsor one of those beautiful Flower Basket in 2014? Contact **Donna Keller** for info 618-455-3452. We also need help watering next summer. Thanks to **Marie Wagner** who helped during the 2013 season. It's an every day commitment, but you receive lots of thank you's from appreciative viewers!

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**.

Museum Acquisitions

Our planned museum continues to attract donations. Some items recently acquired for the museum:

-**Georgiana "Toots" Weber**, daughter of Leo and Charlene Bolander, donated a "Sunday" dress, shoulder cape and bonnet, all handmade, worn by her grandmother Caroline Hahn Bolander, in the late 1800's for Sundays or special occasions. Caroline was also a grandmother of **Lucie Hunzinger Hartrich**, and **Judy Hunzinger Walker**. The items are in amazing shape. Toots also included a picture of Caroline and husband Jacob on their 61st anniversary and a story about the dress.

-Two pictures from **Robert and Lois Hartrich Kattau**, Indpls. Supposedly these are Rembrandt copies that hung in the Picquet mansion. Small - about 12 x 15" with beautiful, old ornate frames.

-Scrapbook with info from 1962 - 1987 about SM, residents, etc. Prepared by **Rosemary and Paul Mullinax** after the 1987 150th celebration, the book is priceless. SM resident **Marge Thompson** retrieved it from the Time Capsule and worked to restore it. The Community Club decided NOT to rebury it (*it was deteriorating*) but to give it to the Foundation for safe-keeping. It will be a great addition to the Museum.

- A 1913 quilt from **Eileen Franke**, and her sister **Dorothy Hitt**, St. Louis. . Made by their mother, Margaret Reis Franke when she was about 11, the quilt has many familiar SM names embroidered into the design. Very old and fragile, the quilt will be on display when we open the museum.

Wanted for Next Year's Projects:

Pictures of Sainte Marie area people cooking in their kitchens or outside or on wash day hanging out laundry or washing clothes. Or bath day pictures. Also looking for a razor strop and an old galvanized wash tub. If you have any of these, please contact Donna Keller at 618-455-3452.

Golfers Support the Foundation

SPECIAL THANKS to all the guys who participated in the Sainte Marie Open golf tournament in August. The proceeds from that day, over \$500, were presented to the Foundation as a gift from them. Although the group works together to organize this day, we thank **Tony Hartrich** and **Elmer Ochs** for getting it all together and remembering to support our work.

We Get Mail

From **Gloria Zuber Schwartz**, Belleville, IL on her visit to the Foundation House Sept. 1st: *The flower beds everywhere were so lovely and well done. We walked all around the house, and I know how they all looked before so I know how much time Annette Lynch put into it and all the mulching. The mulch in itself upgraded the outside tremendously. And the bathroom is beautiful. Even though you said it was beautiful in your emails, it was hard to picture until I saw the real thing. You and your volunteers have done amazing work. Editor's note: Gloria often comes in for our workdays and is one of our hardest workers!*

Transitions

Vic Ritz, 81. Survived by wife Dolores and 10 children, numerous grandchildren.

Barbara (Rennier) Miller, 66, survived by husband Frank, nine children and 21 grandchildren.

News Notes

SM now has **solar-powered flashing lights** on the north-south stop signs in town, thanks to the **SM Community Club** who used some of their proceeds from the 175th to purchase these life-saving devices! They are especially noticeable at night, when that intersection is quite dark.

-Sign up for the **E-mail newsletter** and receive BONUS PAGES with more news and pix. E-mail patreisprpr@yahoo.com to sign up.

Sainte Marie Foundation
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Volunteers at Aug. 30 workday: l-r, Madonna and Gene Schachmann, Kevin Parker, Anita Reis Steber

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.



Top, l-r: Brenda and Glenn Picquet; Bottom, l-r: Mike Hartrich, Ross Wolf, Teresa Hartrich on Mon., Sept. 23, at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington, TX.

Another Picquet Helps Sainte Marie

Glenn Picquet remembers Sainte Marie. His father **Gene** grew up here, a son of **Jim and Sylvia Picquet**. Gene settled in TX after WW II, raising cotton. But occasionally he would bring his four sons back to visit their grandparents in the town that Picquet ancestors had founded so many years ago. Glenn remembers playing ball with a really good GIRL player named Becky. (Who else but our own **Becky Sheridan**?) when he visited. And he remembers a very nice, pretty small town.

Glenn is now part-owner of the TX Rangers, and when he noticed that one of the players came from Newton, IL, he made it a point to ask him if he knew anything about SM. Ross Wolf had SM friends and certainly knew about the town. "Well, my ancestors founded that town," said Glenn.

Ross mentioned it to his parents, who mentioned it to their friends **Tony and Janet Hartrich**, who told **Mike Hartrich**, Foundation VP and retired NCHS athletic director.

Mike and the Foundation contacted Glenn – and the result was quite astounding. Mike and his wife Teresa received an invitation to go to TX to see a Rangers' game (see pix above) --- and the Foundation received a \$5,000.00 check from Glenn and his wife Brenda because he was so impressed with what we were doing. "I think it is important that small towns receive help so they survive and thrive," he says. "And I am impressed with what the Foundation is doing for Sainte Marie."

We have not yet decided what to do with this gift (made in memory of Glenn's first cousin, **Rita Logan**). But it will surely be helpful as we acquire full control of the Foundation House in 2014 (our commitment with house-donor DCA to house their construction workers ends Dec. 31, 2013). At that time, we become free to use the House however we choose, and the planned museum is certainly part of the plan.

The Foundation thanks Glenn Picquet for his generous gift and looks forward to having him visit Sainte Marie in the near future.

The Foundation is starting a Planned Giving Program, where we are encouraging our donors to help us with an endowment program that will ensure our future. We will be encouraging people to give large gifts, either in cash, property or as bequests in their wills. So we hope you will join Glenn Picquet and a few others who have already given so generously to our future! More info to come!

BONUS PAGES FOR E-MAIL SUBSCRIBERS

Voices from the Past



Pix l-r: **Mandy Zuber Huber** and **Sandy Bigard Fisher**

September 1st was one of those very hot days again in Sainte Marie. The St. Mary's Church Picnic carried on as usual, but we decided to move the *Voices of the Past* program INSIDE the air-conditioned Foundation House. The "museum room" held 25 folding chairs, and the three performances were standing room only -- but well received by all. Plus, we received the feedback we wanted about expanding the program. (Yes, to continue it; *no* for a program in the cemetery - just not a comfortable place for it.) Thanks again to **Sandra Bigard Fisher** who wrote the script about Dot Huber and to **Mandy Zuber Huber** who performed it. You will be hearing more about *Voices*. The Foundation hopes similar programs will provide a greater understanding of the rich history of our little village.

A Mini-Reunion for Five Former Ste. Marie-ites

By **Mary Huff Rushin, Joliet, IL**

We once attended grammar school in Sainte Marie, travelled by bus to Newton for high school and then went off in many directions. But we have maintained contact in this high-tech world, so on July 24th, we met at the Foundation House – the five remaining “girls” from the 1954 eighth grade class.



*I really have no words to describe the homey feeling I had being with them. It felt like family. Maybe others have had similar experiences, but it was a total surprise to me. Since I have no relatives left in Ste. Marie, I didn't have reason enough to make the trip back until **Judy Alblinger Brangeon** (Paris, FR) (center in pix) emailed me that she would be there and could I come. We also emailed (pix: l-r) **Betty Keller Davison** (Rockton, IL), **Anna Marie Ochs Theis** (Effingham, IL) and **June Keller Zuber** (Assumption, IL). I know that the availability of the Foundation House is what made this gathering possible. What a blessing to have someplace to come back to. I automatically call Ste.*

Marie home even though I've had several homes since leaving there. The five of us visited and caught up – then got pizzas and beer from The Gas Station (hey, their loaded pizza rivals Aurelio's Chicagoland Super Six pizza, which is my favorite) and ate a late lunch at the House.

Knowing I'd have somewhere to stay where I wouldn't feel that I'm intruding on anyone and having actually spent a night in the Foundation House, I wouldn't hesitate to consider doing it again. How convenient it is to have a place for your loved ones to return “home” with their families/friends. It is such a wonderful thing that a handful of people have accomplished, but it's going to take many more Ste. Marie residents in the future to keep the Foundation House a viable option. You all can be so proud of your little village. It is so clean and neat with so many pretty well kept gardens.

Anyway, it was a great visit. And I applaud those who started the Foundation and have continued to work at keeping our hometown viable.

Mary Huff Rushin (Pix – on right)



These folks shoveled lots of mulch to make this beautiful flowerbed at the Foundation House: l-r Annette Lynch, (landscaping chairman, Kerry Lynch (FL) Tammy Frye, Shannon Lynch (CA) and Bob Frye.



1913 Quilt, donated by Eileen Franke (MO), has many signatures with names like Bolander, Spitzer, Yost, etc. Made by Eileen's mother, Margaret Reis Franke, the quilt will be on display in our planned museum. *Picture displays one small corner of the quilt. Note from Eileen: We really enjoyed our day in Ste. Marie. It was a great church picnic, and I didn't mind the heat too much. There was a lot of shade and air conditioning available when you needed it. It was fun getting to meet people, some of them relatives. I thought the Voices*

program was excellent. Mandy Huber and the author did a good job. And the house and gardens are lovely. I know a lot of work has gone into them.

The quilt we brought won't last forever, but I think some people who knew the folks whose names are on it will enjoy it, certainly more than if it was stowed away in my cedar chest. I was telling someone about it today, and she said, "Oh, yes, a signature quilt."

COULD YOU HELP RESTORE THIS?



This grand old barbeque sits in the backyard of the Foundation House. Probably from the 1950's, it is rapidly deteriorating. We are looking for a volunteer who could restore it to its original beauty (you don't have to be a bricklayer, but those skills would come in handy). If you come from far away, we could house you at the Foundation House. Call Donna Keller 618-455-3452 or Ron Kirts 618-455-3153.

Ron Kirts Illinoisan of the Day on Aug. 11

The Illinois State Fair Museum Foundation named **Ron Kirts** one of its ten winners of the Illinoisan of the Day award for 2013. Ron was honored at noon on the Farm Bureau stage on Sunday, August 11.

Yearly, the museum foundation seeks nominations of Prairie State residents who volunteer in their communities, work to brighten lives of their neighbors and represent the best of Illinois citizenship. Ron was a guest at the Fair, where he was publicly introduced and received gifts along with a personal proclamation from Governor Pat Quinn. Ron and his wife Carolyn also rode in a parade on the Fairgrounds that day.

PIX: Ron (on left) with Doug Kamholz from the IL State Fair Museum at the awards announcement. (Photo by Steve Rambach)



A press release from the State Fair Museum stated: "Kirts has spent all his life in Jasper County's Sainte Marie except for some college and Army service in the late 1950s. He's spent about 20 years on the village board, eight as mayor of his 250-strong hometown. A recent book on Sainte Marie is dedicated in part to Kirts's community service, saying,

‘Sometimes we overlook the quiet ones.’ He was chosen Parade Marshall for the town’s 175th anniversary. In addition to volunteering for church and civic groups, Kirts serves on the board of a newly-formed Sainte Marie Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to quality-of-life issues.”

Among those who attended the Fair to cheer for Ron were:



Front Row: l – r: **Bill Hartrich**, SM; **Vincent and June Keller Zuber**, Assumption.
2nd Row: **John Frauli**, Dwight; **Theresa Radke**, Springfield; **Tammy Frye**, SM; **Kristen Kirts**, **Ron and Carolyn Kirts**, **Alex Kirts**; **Judy Litzelman Cunningham**, Springfield’ **Amanda Menke Tarr**, Newton
Back Row: **Bob Frye** (sorry, only half of him!), SM; **Delmar Radke**, **John and Becky Kirts**, Manteno; **Terry Kirts**, Indpls., IN; **Rhonda Kirts** and daughters **Lena and Mary Rachel Burdette**, Champaign; **Joan Litzelman Cunningham**, Springfield.
(Photo by Tom Fitch)

Ron was in good company. Another Illinoisan of the Day during the Fair was **Orion Samuelson**, well-known WGN personality who the CHICAGO TRIBUNE cites as *The #1 Agricultural Broadcaster in the country*.

The Foundatioin nominated Ron for this award because he has done so much for Sainte Marie. The Ste. Marie Community Club agrees – they are placing a bench in the Foundation House garden to honor Ron and his family for all they have done for Sainte Marie.