

# HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Vol. 1, Issue 11

September, 2007

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## LETTER FROM A BOARD MEMBER

Dear Society members and history buffs,

My name is Bill Nielson and I have been a Board member for several years. I became a Board member because I have a great interest in history. My goal is to inspire the community to enjoy and love history as much as I do.

Now for a little personal background. I was born and raised right here in Grayling and have lived here my entire life. I love to learn about my community and why it is the way it is. Currently, I am enrolled at Spring Arbor University, majoring in elementary education. I should have my teaching degree in 2010.

My interest in history and

teaching has entitled me to set up several tours of the Museum for the school district. The students and teachers really enjoy themselves on the tours and talk about them for days after. During a couple of the tours, the students were tour guides, informing people of the displays at the Museum.

Last year, two third grade girls had their own bake sale in their neighborhood. One young man created a cookbook. Others did chores or played music for their families. The entire third grade class brought in the money they had earned and donated all of it to the Museum.

This all came about because they became interested in the

Museum through school tours. I hope we have a couple more tours this year because the kids usually bring their parents back at a later date.

In closing, please try to come to the Museum and please try to spread your interest in history throughout our and the surrounding communities. I know I will continue to do so. Thank you for reading this and all that is in the newsletter.



## SPECIAL VISITORS

One August day, a couple and their two children came to visit the Museum. Their son was four years old and their daughter was two or three years of age. The family spent a long time taking the tour and the parents explained things to the chil-

dren. When they finished, the boy was asked what he liked best. His reply was, "Everything!"

As the family was getting ready to leave, the little girl began screaming and crying. The parents practically had to drag her out of the Mu-

seum. She said, "I want to see some more." The father told her they would go elsewhere and see other things. The little girl persisted, "I want to see some more here!"

Now those tykes are our kind of visitors!!!

## THE #1225



Spend an autumn weekend in history when trains ran the rails. Experience the thrill of riding a train pulled by the famous steam locomotive, Pere Marquette #1225, built in 1941 and inspiration for the movie, "Polar Express".

The train event, called the Timberliner, will take place October 6th and 7th. It will provide an

exciting and nostalgic weekend as the #1225 arrives in Grayling from Kawkawlin, pulling 21 vintage train cars including the luxurious Algonquin.

You'll be taken back in time as a telegrapher sits in the same area in the Depot as the agent sat in the late 1800s, using the telegraph to know the location

of the train at all times and seeing the band play to welcome the train as it pulls into the station.

Tickets are available for \$109 for adults or \$79 for children by calling (800) 594-5162 and don't forget our colorful side trip, \$20 for adults and \$15 for children (989) 348-4461. See you in October!!

## HATS OFF TO. . . JAY STEPHAN!

*Jay Stephan is a shining example of the adventurous spirit.*

Ted Stephan, Jay's father, was an excellent guide and fisherman who passed his skills on to his son. A day of fishing meant floating down the river for 30 miles and fishing from daybreak until it was dark. Jay recalls, "When you're on the boat for him, you better do it right or else. Dad liked to fish way back in the little corner pockets of the river. When I'd go by, he wanted me to stop so that he could reach in there. Once, he told me to stop the boat but I didn't stop it fast enough for him. He said, 'When I tell you to stop the boat, I want you to stop it!'"

I thought, okay Dad. I was just 11 years old and weighed less than 100 pounds (the riverboat was made of heavy cypress wood). So I tucked my legs in under the seat because, if I tried to stop the boat, I'd get lifted up out of the seat and pushed out of the boat. We then came near Camp Thunderbird above Wakeley Bridge. Dad was standing up in the boat, fishing and said, 'Hold it.' I used the pole and stopped the boat instantly. He walked out of the end of the boat right into the river in knee deep water. I thought, 'I've had it now.' Dad turned around with a big grin on his face and said, 'There, that's how I want you to do it!'"

In 1936, Jay got his first job as a

guide down the South Branch of the Au Sable River when he was 11 years old, getting paid a dollar a day. Jay says, "I got caught in a thunderstorm that day and just about drowned." He always used the pole to guide the riverboat. "I wanted to guide people down the river so that they would let all the pressures of life go and know what it's really like to relax. I wanted them to experience the beauty of the Au Sable." He was a guide until he was 70 years of age in 1995.

To be continued . . .

## CEMETERY TOUR

The Historical Society hosted its first Cemetery tour earlier this month and it was a great success.

Nine well-known citizens of the past who are buried at Elmwood Cemetery were

portrayed by actors standing at the gravesites. The presentations were very well done, the actors speaking in the first person. This made one feel as though he were in a theater, watching mini-plays on stage.

It was quite entertaining. The tour was also very informative. Both the actors and visitors had knowledge to share.

We had requests to host the tour next year, which will be likely.



## HISTORY'S NUGGETS

*The original "History's Nuggets" article described a relationship between the actor William Horatio Powell and the Powell family of Grayling. It was later learned that this relationship did not exist. The actor is not related to the Grayling Powells.*



## EVENTS IN GRAYLING

Many fun-filled events are slated for the October 6th weekend in Grayling. Included are the popular car show, a farmers market selling fresh produce and other products and a great military display. There will also be an arts and craft show filled with talent at the elementary school.

Hay rides around the city will be offered, making stops along the way for passengers to get off to enjoy unique dining experiences and shop. Shuttle busses will also be available to transport passengers to other points in the community.

The courtyard of the Museum

will also be a bevy of activity. A trapper will give a presentation on the art of trapping, answer questions and offer furs for sale.

The food court will be set up in the courtyard where visitors can have a relaxing lunch and tour the buildings. See you there!

*Come enjoy a fall weekend of festivities in Grayling.*

## SPONSOR



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**Grayling Office**

**(989) 348-6511**

The Crawford County Historical Society would like to express its thanks to Chemical Bank for sponsoring this month's newsletter.

**Crawford County  
Historical Society**

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P.O. Box 218  
Grayling, MI 49738

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Help your museum continue to grow. We need your help today and any donation will be accepted. Memberships are good for one year, May through April. Any dues paid now will be good for the museum year of 2007. We look forward to adding new members.

### DUES:

\$5.00 Senior Citizen  
\$10.00 Single  
\$25.00 Family  
\$50.00 Supporting Member  
\$100.00 Memorial Plaque (one or two names inscribed)

Please make checks payable to:

CC Historical Society  
P.O. Box 218  
Grayling, MI 49738

Our telephone number is:  
(989) 348-4461

Our website is:  
[grayling-area.com/museum](http://grayling-area.com/museum)

Our e-mail address is:  
[cchm@voyager.net](mailto:cchm@voyager.net)



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**MUSEUM HOME PAGE**