

Niles Historical Society

8970 N. Milwaukee Ave., Niles, IL. 60714-1737
Phone /Fax #: (847) 390-0160

Internet Contact: nhs@vniles.com
And on Facebook! Niles Historical Society and Museum

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri., 10:30am.-3:00pm.
Programs monthly, Fourth Sunday @ 2pm.

Happy New Year! ❄️ ❤️ Happy Valentine's Day

Message From Our President, Julia Guarnaccio

Welcome to 2015! The Niles Historical Society, located at the Niles Historical and Cultural Center, has been working hard to present new and exciting programs for the upcoming year.

This issue of the Newsletter deals with the idea of **Volunteering**. In this issue the Society will explore all the different ways that you, our members, your friends, and anyone can contribute to the growth of our Center. Volunteers are the backbone of our Center. Without them we would not be able to do all the wonderful things that we do every year!

We will also have “welcome meetings” for those who might be interested in knowing more. Those dates are as follows:

- ♦ **Wednesday, January 14, 1:00 p.m.**
- ♦ **Wednesday, January 14, 6:30 p.m.**
- ♦ **Saturday, January 24, 1:00 p.m.**
- ♦ **Sunday, February 8, 1:00 p.m.**

Please bring your calendars. If you so desire, you can call ahead informing us that you will be there. Everyone is welcome. Refreshments will be served!

Our New LED Projector

A big “Thank-You” goes out to the Village of Niles and the IT Department for providing us with a new, state-of-the-art LED Projector, a Benq GP20. We have been borrowing one from the Senior Center and the Village of Niles for several years now (many “thank-yous” to both). It will go a long way in enhancing our programs for the upcoming years.

Health is Wealth!

Are you ready for the New Year? Will you just coast into 2015 with no idea of doing any new things to help you enjoy the year or make it memorable?

Come join **Tony Hollenback**, *Director of Niles Family Services*, as he explores the possibilities of a positively reinforced new year!

Sunday, January 25, 2015

Starting at 2:00 p.m.

Program is free.
Free refreshments.

- ♦ A General Overview
- ♦ Get Inspired!
- ♦ Keep it simple and specific
- ♦ Explore your options
- ♦ Track your Goals



The Golden Notes in February!

Brought back by popular demand, the Golden Notes will bring us their own, special heartwarming Valentine's music for February! The Golden Notes, our Senior Center's own choral group under the direction of Ludmila Turkalo, will be on hand to serenade us

Sunday, February 22, 2015

Starting at 2:00 p.m.

Come join us as we gather together, enjoying the songs that we knew best! You are encouraged to join with them in song in a delightful afternoon of musical enjoyment!

How to Volunteer at the Historical Center

One of the biggest needs at the Historical Center is getting VOLUNTEERS. As was mentioned here last month, volunteers were plentiful when the Museum first opened. The Historical Society was having a great couple of years at the Trident Center and in 1985, through the help of the Village and County of Cook, we were able to open the Museum at 8970 N. Milwaukee Avenue, the former home of the Cook County State Police station.

There was a lot to do to prepare our new home. The Society had a lot of help and was off to a great start. Looking back at the records of that time, the Center (then "Museum") had a young group of individuals who had a new dream to preserve the history and the gifts of the people of Niles. Guided by a dedicated Board and many enthusiastic volunteers, they were able to create a fantastic movement to memorialize the Village of Niles.

It is now 30 years later and the Historical Society has made great strides to continue the work that our predecessors started. But times have changed, people have changed, even the make-up of the community is vastly different from years ago. But our mission has not changed: To preserve Niles History while also creating something new. *Rooted in the past and reaching forward to the future.*

It is vital that the Center become a place of wonder. It is not "high-tech" like a Museum such as the Science and Industry Museum of Chicago, even though we do have our presence in the online world through The Village of Niles website, Facebook and soon on Twitter. The Historical Center is first and foremost a building, a place where history is alive and vibrant, and a legacy to our young people and our families. We cannot continue to fulfill that effort unless we begin to incorporate volunteers from all different ages, followers *and* leaders, people who can share the vision of the Historical Society.

In this issue of the Newsletter the Center will show you all the different aspects that you can choose to make a lasting mark on your Village. You can volunteer one day or make it a frequent habit. All we ask is that you donate some of your time in a meaningful way to benefit future generations who will be part of the Village of Niles.

How to Help at The Center

Want to volunteer here? 5-8 hours per week or whatever amount of time possible. School Service hours are also encouraged! Below are areas that need fulfilling:

Memberships

Developing and Working Membership/Email lists.
Entering Memberships in Museum Software.
Prepping letters for mailing.

Programs

Working with creating a Publicity Team for Historical & Cultural outreach.
Developing monthly program flyers for each program held at Center.
Updating our program contacts for future programs.
Looking for future programs.
Develop an Educational Program for tours to schools, Civic Centers, Senior Centers, Mall.
Help create the visual aids for the Educational Programs (slideshow presentation, Powerpoint).
Being available to help out at monthly programs in different volunteer capacities.

Newsletter

Working on articles for the Newsletter.
Helping to create filler articles for Newsletter.
Helping proofread the Newsletter before printing.
Helping assemble the Newsletter for mailing.
Updating and revising Newsletter email list/ mailing labels.

Publicity

Creating flyers for distribution.
Helping develop pages on VNiles Website, Facebook, Twitter, and Social media.
Passing out information and engaging people at different events.
Sending out Birthday Cards and Thank-you notes.
Helping with Office Mailings.
Capturing different media events around Niles.

Docent Work

Being trained to be a Docent or Junior Docent (Tour guides) at the Center.
Cemetery Tours.

Developing a Junior Historical Society

Under the leadership of the Society Members
Guidance and Recruitment
Programs geared towards Youth

***Brief History of Ilgair Park
and the Leaning Tower, Niles***

In 1932, wealthy inventor and industrialist Robert Alexander Ilg (1879 to 1964) established a privately owned resort and recreation area, at 6300 West Touhy Ave.- the current home of the Niles YMCA - to serve as a weekend getaway for his employees and their families. It was called **Ilgair Park**.

Amidst its tree-lined walkways, Ilgair Park featured a windmill and observation tower as well as Lake Caldwell, a small, man-made lake complete with a miniature island and artistic footbridges. There was also an outdoor swimming pool and "diving tower." Ilg claimed that the 40 foot by 75 foot pool was the largest in Illinois.

The pool featured an underground tunnel around its perimeter where spectators could watch swimmers underwater through lighted portholes. There was a Moorish-style pavilion or "Colonnade" at the north end of the pool and a similarly designed field house to the east.

Eventually, Ilg opened the park to outside groups as well. He constructed an exact, half-size reproduction of the **Leaning Tower of Pisa** on the grounds of Ilgair Park, to be used [to cover] a water tower and pumping station. It supplied spring water to Lake Caldwell and a large outdoor swimming pool. When the tower was completed Ilg dedicated it to the memory of Galileo.

Pp. 88—89 of Niles, The Early Years
By Thomas E. Ferraro, © 2012

On their many tours through the Center LaVerne Kozak and Doris Gottschalk, Docents, has commented to visitors about the nature of the construction of the Leaning Tower. Many visitors, locals and some as far away as Europe, India, & Japan, are amazed that the real reason the Niles Leaning Tower exists was as a supporting structure on the grounds for something entirely different than what it has come to represent: it was a covering for a water tower. The Leaning Tower has been featured in many articles and Tour Guides for the United States and the Midwest.

Hello,

My name is Artur Stasiak. I am 19 and a sophomore enrolled at Oakton Community College in Des Plaines. I am pursuing an A.S. in Liberal Arts and hopefully will transfer on to a state university for Spring, 2016.

I am a volunteer here at the Niles Historical Center. I have been a Niles resident since 2004. I can't say that I've always known about it being here. Passing by as a kid, I always thought that building was a spooky and dreary place. As I grew up I learned to appreciate the value of the Museum. After all, the history of Niles is the history of its residents, including you and me. What a history Niles has!

My interest is primarily in military history and I have been helping at the Center by taking pictures and inspecting their military collection. From the Civil War to the currently ongoing operations in Afghanistan, a Niles resident has taken a part of that struggle. Niles residents, like our very own Richard J. Rogala, have even taken a part in lesser known conflicts. He was a POW, captured by the North Korean military on board the U.S.S. Pueblo in 1968.

To preserve our history isn't as easy as people would think it could be. In early September I started by taking photos. Little did I know that it would lead me to solve decades old mysteries.

The museum's building itself is the same since it was constructed in 1923, but the museum world is not. Keeping the Center up to date like modernizing its databases isn't an easy task. The work is very time consuming. There are a lot of tasks to be done at the museum and very little labor force to complete them. One staff member told me that my grandchildren will be picking up where I would leave off.

I honestly believe that volunteering here will continue to be a rewarding experience for me. Regardless of the many motivations one might have in helping here (like my receiving experience in the history field), one fact is certain: more volunteers here are needed. The tiny volunteer staff can do only so much. To donate an hour of time or the two and a half hours I try to put in on Mondays and Wednesdays, can only do good. Hopefully if more volunteers come forth, my grandchildren won't have to continue my work.

Thank you,

Artur Stasiak

Have the Days of Volunteerism Gone?

Upon looking back at a lot of our records we have found that the Historical Museum was very busy during its inception. There were lots of volunteers who did incredible work to get the Museum where it is today. Back then the Museum was coming into its own and people felt a sense of pride donating their time and effort. It was THEIR Museum. It still is YOUR Museum.

Things have changed. People have become busier and schedules are hectic. Even here at the Center there seems to be a reliance on certain, regular volunteers and helpers because they can devote some time. But that can't go on forever. Volunteers here are getting older and are vying for the top honors of *being older than some of our artifacts*, which is never a good thing.

We need more volunteers, *new* volunteers. The Center needs people who can donate some of their time every month to make the Center a place where schools, students, families, and individuals can come and learn about Niles History and what makes the Village of Niles a great city. We are looking for people who take pride in their Village and wish to expand their historical knowledge of Niles.

Could this be you?

In the start of the 2015 new year you might consider a new type of New Year's resolution...

To Join the Center as a Volunteer!

Come to any of our open meetings listed on the front page of this issue of the newsletter.

Notre Dame Prep Service Hours

As the year 2014 ends and 2015 begins, the Historical Society would like to thank all those young men from Notre Dame Prep in Niles for fulfilling their service hours by working diligently at the Historical Center. In every facet you excelled. Many thanks!

If you are a young person who needs to fulfill community service hours, consider completing them here at the Center. It's fun and educational.

Curator's Corner

Hundreds of thousands of people have lived in Niles and many more will live here in the future. Preserving the history of those people and their village takes a lot of care, money, and time.

The mission of the Niles Historical Society is to educate the public through the collection and exhibition of materials that document the history of Niles and its relationship to Illinois and the nation.

You can help accomplish that mission by performing some of the below curatorial and archival tasks. Volunteering a few hours per week or whatever amount of time is possible will help to preserve the history of Niles, Illinois.

Areas of Interest Needing Volunteers

Research

Scanning Photographs

Photographing of artifacts

Creating/changing exhibits

Cleaning/dusting exhibits

Reorganizing clippings in binders/files

Reorganizing Subject files

Clipping/going online for newspaper articles and obituaries

Inventory of exhibits and artifacts

Data entry of obituaries and/or catalog cards

Reorganizing/rehousing artifact and archive storage

Making padded hangers for artifacts

Museum Library – Listing and Organize

Expand our house and business history files

A New Holiday Exhibit in the Lobby

Ever wonder what a retired Educator does with all the Christmas Mugs that his students have given him in his 32 years of teaching? Come see our Administrative Assistant's *partial* collection of holiday mugs and the stories that they tell! They are located in the Lobby of the Center.



Officers and Board of Directors

Julia Guarnaccio, President
Doris Gottschalk

Sandie Friedman, Secretary
Jim Kozak **LaVerne Kozak**

Tony Guarnaccio, Treasurer
Arlene Twardowski

Earning Money for the Center is Easy!



Last month we informed you about an online company called **Goodshop** and **Goodsearch**. By using GoodSearch instead of Google as your search engine and/or shopping through GoodShop and designating a non-profit organization as the recipient of the fruits of your search (like the Niles Historical Society), a penny will be earned into an account for every search you complete. It's easy to sign up. Several of our volunteers have earned over \$20 so far! That's a LOT of pennies!

Now there is another way to help: by shopping with Google Smile. Through Amazon.com you can register the Niles Historical Society. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchases, which is almost ANY Amazon.com product. Sign into your account and make sure you choose: Niles Historical Society, Niles, IL. (**not** Niles, Ohio). If you do *not* choose, Amazon will automatically suggest one for you, but it will not be us! The Society found out about this fundraiser too late for this Christmas shopping time, but this offer is good **all year!**

Rooted in the past ...

Reaching forward to the future ...

In addition to a brand new year, the Historical Society would like to share some of our ideas for this year:

- Health is Wealth!, January 25, at 2:00 p.m.
- The Golden Notes, February 22, at 2:00 p.m.
- Volunteer Training
- Docent and Youth Docent Training
- Artists' Gallery Events through the Year
- Tom Ferraro, Historian events
- Exploring Your Past - Research Online
- An Evening at Culver's Fundraiser
- American and Foreign Military Exhibit
- Genealogy Club, co-sponsored with Niles Library
- The Falconieri Ringers — Ring and Sing-a-long
- *The 1st Michigan Engineers for Civil War Reenacting*
- 2015 Ice Cream Social
- Night at The Museum!
- Niles Drum Circle Group (new)
- Civil War Reenacting Event (off campus, tba)
- Turn-of-the-Century Baseball (off campus, tba)
- Cemetery Walk
- High Tea

November—December, 2014

The Historical Society would like to thank all our new members for joining and our renewed members for your pledges for another year. The Society couldn't function without you.

Thank you!

New Members

Artur Stasiak

Renewed Members

B. Cusimano R. & L. Ellison A. Ericksen
P. Nicholls G & A Warner

Michael Crisci

Interim Membership Chair

YOU Can Be Our Guest Here!

If your hobby has made you into a unique person and you wish to talk about or display your hobby or interests, the Center is inviting you to come give a talk or display about your hobby. We can schedule you to talk about your passion or set up a display for up to two months! Please contact our curator at 847-390-0160 or nhscurator@vniles.com.

	Monthly Hours	Year-to-date Hours
August	395	2,750.50
September	326	3,076.50
October	295.50	3,372.00
November	317.75	3,689.75
December	248	3,937.75

The Society would like to thank all the Volunteers for a fine year!

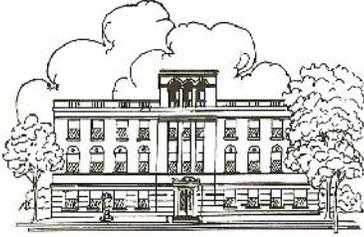
Niles Historical Society Chairpersons and Staff

<i>Accessions</i>	Doris Gottschalk
<i>Bldg. & Grounds</i>	Jim Kozak
<i>Docent</i>	Arlene Twardowski
<i>Membership</i>	Michael Crisci
<i>Social Events</i>	LaVerne Kozak
<i>Curator</i>	Dan Smaczny
<i>Historian</i>	Tom Ferraro
Administrative Assistant, Village of Niles	Michael Crisci

Niles Historical Society

8970 N. Milwaukee Avenue

Niles, Illinois 60714-1737



01—02.2015

Upcoming Events!

programs start at 2pm

Tony Hollenback—Health is Wealth 01/25

The Golden Notes 02-22

Introductory Volunteer Meetings (pick 1)

Wednesday, January 14, 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 14, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 24, 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 8, 1:00 p.m.



MAKE SURE YOU



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

WE INVITE YOU TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NILES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Please indicate your type of membership:

<input type="checkbox"/> Business 2	\$400.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business 1	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Life Member ♦	\$200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron ♦	\$60.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional ♦	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family ♦	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributor ♦	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual ♦	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen, 62 ♦	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student ♦	\$5.00

♦ = Denotes Annual Membership

◆ = Denotes One Time Contribution

Name: _____

(Please PRINT)

Corporation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Date: ____/____/____

New Renewal

Amount: _____ cash chk # _____ date _____

Mail Checks to:

Niles Historical Society
c/o Membership
8970 N. Milwaukee Ave
Niles, IL. 60714

Membership dues & contributions are deductible on Federal Income Taxes to the extent allowable by law (501C—3 status, non-profit org.)

For benefits of each level, please contact the Museum (847) 390-0160, or visit www.vniles.com

We appreciate and thank you for your support to maintain the history of the Village of Niles!