

Dear Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society members and friends,

*Bonne et Heureuse Annee!* I am looking forward to our activities for 2024. Our first membership meeting of the New Year will be on Thursday March 7, 2024, at 7 pm via Zoom. We will vote at that meeting whether or not to resume in-person (as well as Zoom) meetings

### **BGHS Officers and Board of Directors elected for 2024**

At the December 12, 2023, BGHS membership meeting, these individuals were elected to office for 2024: Jim Paul (president), Gary Seiner (vice-president), Ken Ponton (executive vice-president), Christine Michels (corresponding vice-president), Steve Monts (treasurer); and board of directors Daron Kinzinger, Jim Paul, Gary Seiner, Josue Savoie, Malette Trudeau-Stevenson, and Ken Ponton. Incumbent Charles Balesi also serves on the board of directors.

### ***Joyeux Noel* Celebrated at December 17 Christmas Open House**



Clockwise from upper left: Christine and Max Michels (aka St. Nicholas); Elmira Wilkey and Kathleen Boucher; Jack Schelling, me, and Andrew Mann; Kathleen Boucher and Mary Ann Lambert—Kathleen is holding an 1800s Lambert-Boucher Farms kerosene lantern; and (l-r) Doris O'Connor, Gary Seiner, Mary Ann, Jack, Christine, and Max.

## Two Successful Fundraisers were held on November 15 and December 2



A successful BGHS fundraiser, held at Culver’s on November 15, was organized by Daron Kinzinger (far left). Other members who volunteered to help serve and bus tables from 5-8 pm in addition to yours truly were (l-r) Frank Koehler, Maureen Antognoli, Steve Monts, Judy Smead, and Ken Lewellen. At the December 2 Les Artisans Arts and Craft Fair, St. Nicholas and Patrick McGinnis greeted guests at the holiday craft show organized by Ellen Stringer.

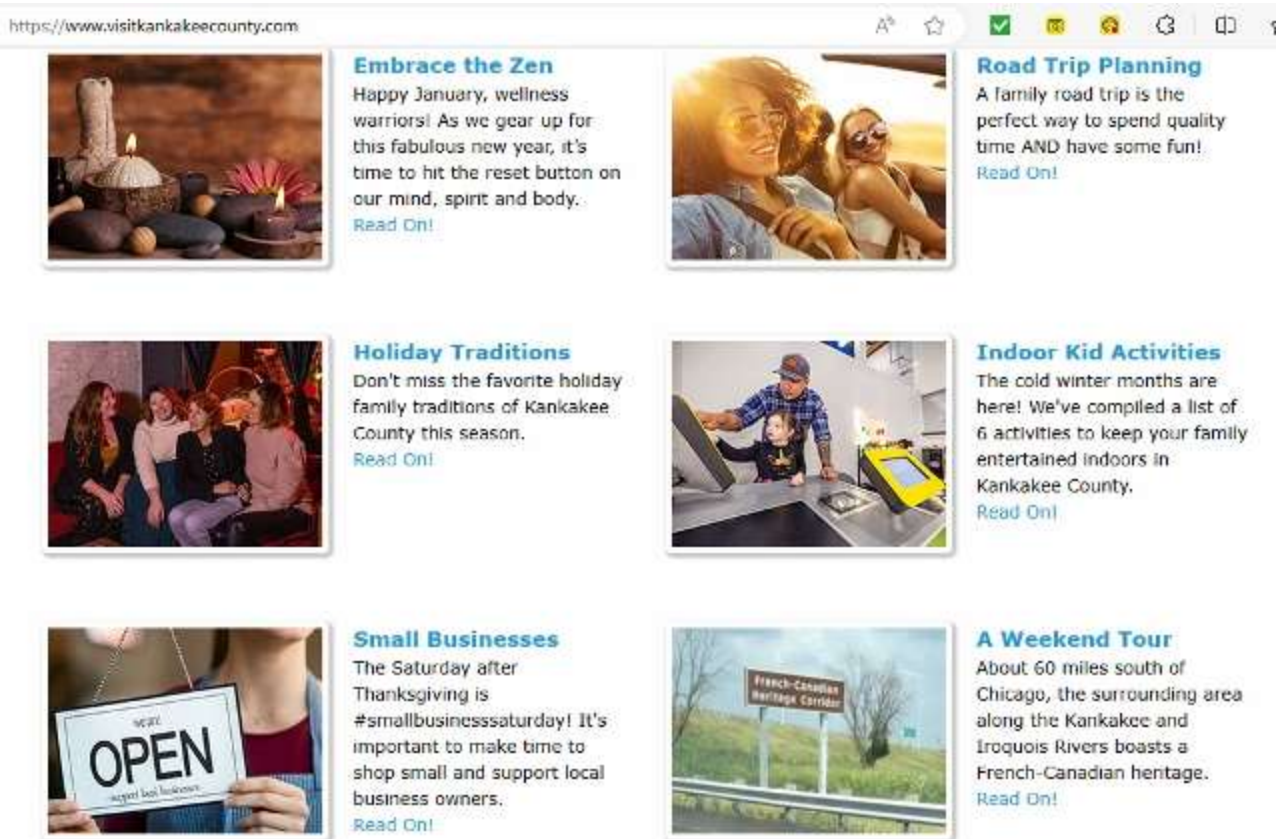
Daron Kinzinger reported that the Culver’s fundraiser on November 15 netted the BGHS **\$455**. Thank you, Daron, for organizing this successful event. Ellen Stringer organized another great holiday craft show on December 2 at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds. She reported that the net income to the BGHS was \$2688.29 from the booth rentals plus \$900.03 in suggested donations at the door. **That brings the total income for the December 2 Les Artisans Arts and Craft Fair to \$3,588.32**. Thank you so much, Ellen, for your dedicated service to the BGHS!

### Who are We?

After our wedding on January 1, 1845, we moved into a log cabin northeast of the Bourbonnais Trace and Danville to Chicago road juncture (where the Midland States Bank is today), just east of the Durham farm house. Who are we?

### French-Canadian Heritage Corridor Tour Now on “Visit Kankakee County” Home Page

Thanks to Nicole Galvin and Meegan Massey of the Kankakee County Convention and Visitors Bureau, “A Weekend Tour” is one of six options on the home page of [Welcome to Kankakee County, Illinois \(visitkankakeecounty.com\)](#)—see photograph of the home page options below. When clicked, “A Weekend Tour” will take you to my article “A Weekend in Illinois’s French-Canadian Heritage Corridor”. Nicole and Meegen are also working on adding the weekend tour to the *Enjoy Illinois* website. A great benefit for the tour being on the Visit Kankakee County website is that all the links within the tour article narrative—which publicize specific sites within our local French-Canadian Heritage Corridor—are “alive” and provide historical details. Thank you Nicole and Meegen for helping us publicize the rich heritage of our county.



**Perry Farm Living History Advisory Zoom Meeting Set for Thursday January 18, 2024—All are Invited**

The Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee met for the first time since the pandemic, on November 16, 2023 via Zoom. At that meeting, there was general discussion and approval of various issues. The committee will revisit these issues when the six member committee minimum is achieved. The committee discussed possible walking tours to include the Durham-Perry Farmstead and Perry Farm Park. This would be a great way to publicize the history and beauty of the farm. If you would like to join the committee for the Zoom meeting at 7 pm on Thursday January 18, 2024, please use the following link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89887144313?pwd=Z2NWNnR0RXd5ald2WTlVt1pVUWRHdz09> with Pass Code 618581 and Meeting ID 898 8714 4313.

**Next BGHS membership meeting is Thursday March 7 at 7 pm**

Our next membership meeting will be on Thursday March 7 at 7 pm via Zoom only (no in-person gathering). Here is the zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85084832789?pwd=SVA1eThCNlFFU0R3YWNqeDVKMVQwUT09> with zoom meeting ID 850 8483 2789 and Passcode 197658. The agenda is below.

**Thursday March 7 Zoom Meeting at 7 pm Agenda**

- 7pm—Pledge of allegiance;

- Presentation based on January/February/March 2024 news eletter item “Who are We?”
- Approval of December 12, 2023 membership minutes (*attached*);
- Treasurer’s report;
- Corresponding Secretary report;
- Executive Vice-President report;
- Curator report;
- Membership report;
- Ways and Means:
  - Remnant log pieces; and
  - Sign up for volunteering—open houses and December 2 craft show
- Building and Grounds:
  - Small repairs—Angi; and
  - Levi Lawson’s Eagle Scout garden structure plan;
- Old Business
  - Restructuring of BGHS update; and
  - Evening Zoom meetings for the Perry Farm Living History Advisory Committee;
- New Business
  - Next meeting April 4 at 7 pm—Zoom or in person or both?
  - Special BGHS 2024 dates; and
  - Chaperons needed for open houses of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse and craft show.

**Mark your calendars for these BGHS 2024 events**

- Tuesday January 16 at 3:30 pm-- Log Schoolhouse Advisory **Education Committee** meeting in the Village of Bourbonnais Administration Building;
- Tuesday February 6 at 3:30 pm—Log Schoolhouse Advisory Committee meeting in the Village of Bourbonnais Administration Building;
- Sunday March 3 from 1-4 pm—open house at Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse; and
- Thursday March 7 at 7pm—first BGH meeting of 2024.

**Kudos to our volunteers**

The BGHS thanks all our volunteers for their continuous service to the society:

- Laurel Soper for her updating of the BGHS website/Facebook postings and mentoring Josue Savoie to take over her duties;
- Daron Kinzinger for picking up our mail, chairing our Board of Directors, organizing the Culver’s November 15 fundraiser, and supervising the privet hedge plantings;
- Christine Michels for her ongoing Corresponding Secretary work;
- Steve Monts for his ongoing detailed treasurer’s work;
- Gary Seiner and Mary Ann Lambert for their work as curator and assistant curator respectively;
- Gary for his wonderful decorating of the Letourneau Home/Museum and log schoolhouse for Christmas;
- Mary Ann for taking photographs at the December 17<sup>th</sup> Christmas Open Houses;
- Ken Ponton for his oversight as executive vice-president;
- Gary, Christine and Max Michels, Steve Monts, and Doris O’Connor for representing the BGHS at the craft show on December 2;

- Gary and Ken Lewellen for chaperoning the log schoolhouse and Letourneau Home/Museum open house on December 3;
- Doris O'Connor, Gary, and others for chaperoning the December 17 Christmas Open Houses;
- Ellen Stringer for all her hard work in organizing the December 2 craft show fundraiser;
- Laurie Cyr for overseeing the log schoolhouse thermostat tune up and installation of the pot belly stove's exhaust pipe;
- Cindy McBarnes for chairing the log schoolhouse Education Committee; and
- Bonnie Bergeron for chairing the Membership Committee so well for many years and mentoring Doris O'Connor who will assume those duties this year.

### What's Going on in the French Heritage Corridor?



[French Heritage Corridor - Initiatives - French Heritage Society](#)



This is Father Marquette's stole which Bishop Tylka wore during his Diocese of Peoria investiture.

- **Father Marquette's Vestments—currently on display (until end of January 2024) at Peoria Riverfront Museum, 222 SW Washington St., Peoria; go to the museum's Facebook page on December 21, 2023 (11:32 am) for the video dedication** led by the museum's Chief Curator Bill Conger with President and CEO John Morris, and Diocese of Peoria Bishop Louis Tylka [\(10\) Facebook](#).
- **Saturday January 20 from 12-4 pm--Winter Frolic** at Snake River Fur Post, 12551 Voyageur Lane Pine City, MN—<https://www.mnhs.org/events/1355>.
- **February 3—King's Ball**, Foundation for the Preservation of Ste. Genevieve, VFW Hall, Ste. Genevieve, MO [King's Ball | ffrsg2 \(historicstegen.org\)](#).
- **March 3 Annual DuSable Day & Gala** at Palmer House, Chicago—new link [You're Invited to "Kanaval in Chicago", Annual DHA Gala \(mailchi.mp\)](#).
- **May 18—Fourth Annual French Heritage Corridor Conference**, Monroe County, MI, link TBD.

- Carol Kuntz of *Les Amis du Fort de Chartre*, who cares for the heirloom gardens at *Fort de Chartre*, has written an article entitled *Fort de Chartre Heritage Garden Project* on pages 40-41 in the *National Gardener* publication <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/tng-winter-2024.pdf>?
- **June 1**—FHS Chicago-Midwest will present *Fort de Chartre* a plaque at the Rendezvous Opening Ceremonies for their completed restoration work on the Land Gate, an FHS grant.

**My next BGHS news eletter will be the March/April 2024 issue.**

Have a wonderful winter. I invite you to join the BGHS Facebook public group page Bourbonnais History Dossier to learn more about our local and regional French history [Bourbonnais History Dossier | Facebook](#). Best wishes,  
Jim Paul, President of the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society