

BOURBONNAIS GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING—November 4, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: President Jim Paul called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ATTENDANCE: In addition to Jim Paul, Charles Balesi, Bonnie Bergeron, Daron Kinzinger, Christine and Max Michels, Steve Monts, Ken Ponton, Marcia Rabideau, Laurel Soper, Josue Savoi, Ellen Stringer, and Gary Seiner attended. Two guests also attended: Dr. Kyle Robinson and Hayden Souza of Olivet Nazarene University history department.

PRESENTATION: The membership discussed “Can you identify this local historical person”—from October/November 2021 issue of BGHS News eletter)? After several minutes of discussion among the members, Ellen Stringer correctly identified the person as Joseph Legris. There was discussion about his historic home on South Main Street being up for sale, and hopes that the new owner will appreciate its historic significance—the current kitchen is built around the original log cabin.

MINUTES: The minutes of the October 7, 2021 minutes were approved. The motion was made by Ken and seconded by Max.

TREASURERS REPORT: Steve provided the bank balances as of October 31, 2021: general account \$26,106.09 [\$1,591.01 is part of the *Fleur-de-Lis* Celebration Dinner fund raising from the Pay Pal account, and will be soon transferred into the Log Schoolhouse account]; log schoolhouse account \$62,440.75; and windows account \$430.99. The former CD (\$6,534.23) is still part of the general account. Several bills were paid. Gary made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report and pay the bills. Bonnie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

MEMBERSHIP: No report.

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE: No report.

WAYS AND MEANS:

- Daron has left a phone message with Nicole Smolkovich of the Community Foundation of the Kankakee River Valley in order to learn more information about how to set up the BGHS as a “Designated Fund” on their website “Donate” page. She recommended that an endowment be created as a “pass through fund”.
- Jim announced the French-Canadian partner website in Michigan: (French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan) [www.habitantheritage.org](http://www.habitantheritage.org), and that this society along with the Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society are the only two Midwest French-Canadian societies that he knows of.
- Jim recommended the French Heritage Society’s hybrid event fundraiser (Saturday November 13 from 5-7 pm) “Wine and War”—\$30 for virtual attendance—listen to dynamic authors Don and Petie Kladstrup as they reveal the juicy details of their widely selling book, *Wine & War* – about wine producers who became war heroes against the Nazi pillage for France’s greatest treasure: [Chicago Chapter: Wine and War Author Talk & Wine Tasting – French Heritage Society](#)

- Regarding further collaboration with ONU history professor and students, Jim mentioned Dr. Kyle Robinson's idea about the students becoming involved with Maternity BVM's 175 anniversary celebration in 2022. He suggested that QR codes could be placed on the four buildings at ONU that were formerly in use at St. Viator College. The QR codes would take the people to web pages where they could view original images of the buildings, read articles about their history, and may even listen to oral histories about life in those buildings. The students could help collaborate with writing the articles and finding the images.
- Laurel spoke about the Saturday February 5, 2022 Chocolate Tour (contact at BTPD: Cheri Smolkovich [cherries@btpd.org](mailto:cherries@btpd.org)). She will not organize the tour this time, and asked Jim to request a volunteer in the monthly news eletter. Laurel volunteered to follow up with the organizers to see what Covid-19 mitigations will be in place and other results of the survey regarding number of participants and organizations/businesses.
- American Recovery Act funds—Bonnie made a report about her investigation on state Covid funds by summarizing her phone calls with state officials and her visit with Kelly McCullough of the Bourbonnais Public Library. Apparently all funds have already been awarded. Jim and Steve are in the process of applying for Kankakee County Covid-19 relief for non-profit organizations that could not fund raise in 2020 or 2021.
- Ellen reported that 90 booths are filled for the upcoming December 4, 2021 *Les Artisans* Arts and Crafts Fair. She expects a full show, and has put up 50 publicity posters in Kankakee and Will Counties.

#### BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- Jim stated that the chimney has been repaired at a cost of \$800.04 by Langlois Roofing.
- Laurel is in the process of putting the garden layout on the website.
- Jim stated that in keeping with the fencing design of the 1883 sketch of the Letourneau Home, two types of fencing (one from Lowe's and the other from Menard's) might be appropriate. He said that creating a southwest fence corner with 60 feet of fence along the west sidewalk and another 60 feet extending south (near the apartments) would form a nice visual boundary for our museum and log schoolhouse campus. Christine asked Jim to put the web link for each type of fence in the next news eletter. The issue was tabled until next meeting.
- Ground has now been broken for the restoration of the log schoolhouse (November 2). Jim will keep a photograph record of the restoration process. Jim mentioned that he plans to visit the Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission soon to keep the commission abreast of the restoration and begin the application for the log schoolhouse's historic landmark designation.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- The membership agreed last month that the Letourneau Home/Museum should remain open during November. Gary volunteered to chaperon the open house on November 21. The membership will readdress the open houses for December 5 and the Christmas open house on December 19 at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The next membership meeting will be Zoom only at 7:00 pm on December 2.
- Laurel and Ken volunteered for the Nomination Committee. Several new officers will be recruited to serve in 2022. The open positions are: Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Executive Vice-President, and Curator—although this is not an officer position. The remaining officers are willing to serve another year. The individuals on the board of trustees up for re-election are: Daron Kinzinger, Malette Trudeau-Stevenson, Jim Paul, and Gary Seiner.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Paul