

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Brunswick Area Historical Society

Jan. 25, 2024, Goodyear's Big Barn

With a program on the agenda, there were 25 people in attendance at the meeting: Dean Holman, Joyce Petchler, Katie Georgekopoulos, Judy Galo, Linda Scarcella, Jason Niedermeyer, Kristy Piper, Bonnie Beineke, Gary Fuller, Dave Goodyear, Cindy Kintop, Mary Readinger, Carol Foote, Brian and Kim Ousley, John and Karen Cassily, Dennis Wunn, Louee Tyree, Yvonne Gipson, John Welker, Ed Kelly, Ron Wetterman, Patti Wetterman, Brian Feron and Sam Boyer.

President Carl Bilski was unable to attend. Sam started the meeting by reporting the sad news of the death of curator emeritus, Mamie Grunau. As of the meeting, arrangements had not been announced. It was also noted that former police officer and VFW commander, Len Bouman also died the same week.

Brian Feron, president of the Medina County Historical Society was introduced to talk about several items of countywide interest: The April 8 solar eclipse; America's 250th anniversary plans; ongoing activities at the county level.

He first began by noting that he was a great admirer of Mamie Grunau and during the pandemic was able to meet her at her apartment building to present her with the annual Northrop Award presented this award to citizens in the county that have worked to promote history in writings, art and volunteer service.

He also reminded those present about Medina County's historic license plates available as an alternative when one gets his or her license plates. A portion of the proceeds comes to the historical society and the county organization divides it among the 17 members of the Medina County Historical Council. He urges everyone to get one – even renewals mean a share comes to the county.

Feron has been part of a group of community leaders looking ahead to the April 8 total eclipse which is expected to bring hundreds of visitors (or more) to Northeast Ohio. Police and fire departments are preparing for clogged highways and traffic jams; public offices and schools are closing; wireless cell towers may not be able to handle all the traffic; animals will act up; and more. While no one can predict the weather, there will be people here. Cleveland hotels are booked and the overflow is spreading out to other northeast Ohio communities.

The last time we were part of a total eclipse was 1806 and next will be in 2099. He told a story about a Wyandotte woman who predicted a great darkness (and she was hanged as a witch and was still hanging in Hinckley as the eclipse happened.)

Medina is an ambassador City for the eclipse and there will be many programs leading up to and during the time. Barbara Dzur is heading the project. All of the details will be online. Feron also urged everyone to get a pair of special glass to view the eclipse and pick a place without a lot of

trees and without lights that turn on automatically when it gets dark.

County Commissioner Stephen Hambley is the Medina County liaison for the state's 2026 plans to celebrate the 250th anniversary. Feron has been working with him on a grant proposal in which high school and college students are asked to research and write about the lives of Revolutionary War soldiers buried in Medina County. They hope to publish a book with the information once it is gathered. Feron said the first round of grants didn't include the request because coordinators said the final result was too far off, but they were encouraged to apply for the second round.

So far, there hasn't been a big response from high school/college students. At least one Brunswick Girl Scout is already working on the story of John Stearns and Superintendent Neidermeyer was very interested in passing the word along. Beth Petri is the new Brunswick Girl Scout coordinator and she will also pass it along to scout leaders along with more information about the historical society and how they work with the historical society.

Everything about America 250 will be online and easily accessible, Feron said.

He briefly told those present about the McDowell-Phillips House that has undergone major remodeling by the historical society and the amazing finds – including more than 8,000 documents, some 180 years old. “We haven't even gotten to the big attic,” he said.

Judy asked those present to ask local businesses to become sponsors of the historical society as a way to maintain the organization in addition to member dues and proceeds of fundraisers like the annual Sunday at the Farm (which begins again in June).

The next general meeting will be Feb. 29 at the Brunswick Library. Speaker to be announced.

Submitted by: Sam Boyer & Judy Galo