

# HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Spring 2024

## HAYCOCK SETTLERS AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

### COMMITTEES OF OBSERVATION, COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE, COMMITTEES OF SAFETY, AND NEUTRALISTS

#### A Collaboration between Pat DeWald and Joe Cappella (2024)

**C**ommittees of Observation (also known as Committees of Inspection), Committees of Correspondence, and Committees of Safety are the names of the committees that were created in all thirteen colonies, in every county, city, and town, by the Patriots, to lead the colonial opposition of being forced to live under British policies and taxes. The members of these committees became the governing bodies that opposed Great Britain's control over the colonies and their sole purpose was to create a system of government free from control of King George III. These committees established a structure that would monitor the progress of the revolution as well as creating a system of communication, using newspapers, periodicals, and public speaking gatherings by various committee members throughout the colonies. They provided community forums where personal loyalties were revealed, tested, and punished.

purchase any goods, wares, or merchandise of any kind that were imported from Britain. These sanctions significantly reduced trade between the colonies and Britain but they also solidified the colonies' collective will to act together in their common interests.

The December 25, 1775, minutes of Bucks County's Committee of Observation reads: Members of this committee "are encouraged to use their influence in their respective neighborhoods to discourage the willful violation by all shopkeepers, designing persons prompted by a sordid attachment to private interest, and other retailers of goods from committing the growing evil of extortion for sundry articles of merchandise that are scarce."

**Jacob Strahan** (Haycock Township, 360 acres, stone house, 4 other houses, 5 log barns, 25 white inhabitants, 1778 taxes of 15 pounds) is one of the names listed to oversee that the guidelines of the boycott enacted by the Continental Congress were observed in this location. He was present at the planning meeting on December 15, 1774, of the **Committee of Observation for Bucks County**, held in Newtown. Seven months later, on July 21, 1775, the committee minutes indicates that "Jacob Strahan a member of this Committee for Haycock Township declined acting" and was replaced. Jacob's last name was spelled several different ways: Strahan, Strawn, Strawhan, Strawmen, and Strawn. The 1779 tax records list a total of five families with the last name of Strawn residing in the village area of Strawntown, Haycock Township



In 1776 the 13 original colonies declared their independence from Great Britain. The names of the colonies were Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia. (image from kids.britannica.com)

The **Committees of Observation**, also called Committees of Inspection, enforced the boycott resolutions adopted on October 20, 1774, by the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia. These resolutions called for a trade boycott against all British merchants by all thirteen colonies. The sanctions stipulated that no one in the colonies would



A section of a map of Bucks County created by H.S. Tanner, in 1831, showing Strawntown, founded by **Jacob Strahan (Strawn)**. By 1832 the town had a store, a tavern and 14 houses.

Committee minutes on January 16, 1775, (**Joseph Hart** Esquire, Chairman and **John Chapman**, Clerk) states “we hold it our bounded duty, both as Christians and as Countrymen, to contribute towards the relief and support of the poor Inhabitants of the town of Boston, now suffering in the general cause for all of the Colonies, and we do recommend raising money from every inhabitant in this county for that purpose.”

Other members of the Bucks County Committee of Observation living in Upper Bucks County include: **Jacob Bidleman** (Nockamixon Township, 200 acres, stone house, log barn, 3 horses, 5 cattle) **James Chapman** (Richland Township, 318 acres, 2 story stone house, log barn, 2 horses, 7 cattle), **Thomas Darrach** (Bedminster Township, 180 acres, log house, log barn, 4 horses, 6 cattle), **John Jamison** (Lower Milford, 160 acres, stone house, stone wagon house, round log kitchen, round log barn, 2 horses, 2 cattle), **Thomas Jenks** (Richland Township, 220 acres, fulling mill, 4 horses, 6 cattle), and **Abraham Stout** (Rockhill Township, 250 acres, 2 story stone house, log wash house, stone barn, 3 horses, 7 cattle).

The July 21, 1775, minutes of the **Bucks County Committee of Correspondence** states “The Treasurer, **Henry Wynkoop**, informed the Committee that the sum of fifty-one pounds fifteen shillings and four pence, that had been collected for the relief of the poor sufferers of the town of Boston, had been paid into his hands of Samuel Adams, one of the Delegates at the Continental Congress for the province of Massachusetts Bay, and produced a receipt from him for €51"15"9.” From December 15, 1774, to July 29, 1776, there are several additional entries contained in the minutes of this committee referencing various amounts of money collected in Bucks County that was sent to Boston. Established in the spring of 1772, the main purpose of the Committees of Correspondence was to communicate information about the Patriot’s cause and mobilize opposition to British policies in cities, towns and rural communities throughout the colonies. Members of these committees convinced many fence-sitters to join the patriot cause. Sam Adams and other leading patriots formed the Boston Committee of Correspondence in response to the fact that governors, judges and other high officials in Massachusetts would be paid their salaries by the Crown, rather than by colonial legislatures. Adams argued that this policy threatened colonists’ rights to a fair trial. Minutes of the Bucks County Committee of Correspondence indicate that a meeting was held at the house of **Richard Ledom** on May 8, 1775, because of the “oppressive acts of Parliament executed by military force.” It was “unanimously resolved” that the following advertisement was to be published: “*The alarming situation of public affairs rendering it necessary that something should be done towards warding off the oppressive measures now too manifestly carrying into execution against us. We do earnestly recommend to the people of this County to form themselves into Military Associations, in their respective Townships, to improve themselves in the military art, that they may be rendered capable of affording their Country that aid which its particular necessities may at any time require.*” The July 21, 1775, committee minutes also indicates that **Phillip Pearson** (177 acres, log house, log barn, 2 horses, 7 cattle, 1778 taxes of 2 pounds and 10 shillings, 8 white inhabitants) of Haycock

Township was a member of this committee and the December 26, 1775, minutes contains the name of **Addam Lowdesleger** of Haycock Township as a member of this committee.

Other members of the Bucks County Committee of Correspondence living in Upper Bucks County include: **Benjamin Fell** (Plumstead Township, 150 acres, 3 horses, 4 cattle), **Thomas Jones** (Hilltown Township, 150 acres, 2 story stone house, stone milk house, wagon house, log barn, 6 horses, 13 cattle), **Thomas long** (Esquire, Durham Township, 490 acres, 2 story stone house, stone wash house, stone barn with open shed, 4 horses, 7 cattle), **Robert Patterson** (Tinicum Township), and **Samuel Smith** (Springfield Township, 6 acres, stable).

The **Committees of Safety** consisted of local citizens, who passed laws, handed down regulations, enacted statutes, enforced regulations, and did other fundamental business prior to the Declaration of Independence in July 1776. As they assumed power to govern, they generally chose to observe rough legal procedures, warning and shaming enemies rather than killing them. The Continental Congress often referred people they considered detrimental to their movement to Committees of Safety for investigation and punishment. Examples of the actions utilized were forced public confessions, apologies for slander, and violently roughing up an individual when they believed necessary. Punishments handed out varied, but included fines, property seizure, and imprisonment.

The Committee of Safety members were also involved with organizing local military groups. They were responsible for keeping up the war effort by finding money and supplies to properly equip and arm any man they put into the field.

Minutes of the **Bucks County Committee of Safety** indicates their members also regularly investigated many suspected transgressions, by anyone, which ranged from speaking out in favor of Great Britain, to enlisting colonists to work with the British. The Bucks County Committee of Safety records document a complaint filed on August 21, 1775, by **John Lacey**, **James McMasters** (Upper Makefield, 212 acres, 4 horses, 4 cattle) and **Josiah Daws** against **Thomas Smith** (Upper Makefield, 217 acres, 2 horses, 3 cattle). They accused Thomas Smith of saying the following words: “The measures of Congress had already enslaved America and done more damage than all the acts of Parliament ever intended to lay upon us. The whole thing was nothing but a sham of a parcel of hot-headed Presbyterians and the devil was at the bottom of the whole thing. That taking up arms was the most scandalous thing a man could be guilty of and more heinous than a hundred of the grossest offences against the law.” The Committee decided that because Thomas Smith would not appear before the committee “he was to be considered an enemy to the rights of America and that all persons break off every kind of dealing with him until he appears before the committee to explain his misconduct and ordered the clerk to publish it as such.” Details of fourteen additional similar occurrences of accusations that were made, hearings that were held, apologies that were offered by those accused, and authorizations for publication of the resolutions of these hearings are recorded in the minutes of this committee.



Minutes also reflect that "On September 11, 1775, Thomas Smith appearing before the Committee voluntarily executed the following Declaration: As I have been charged before the Committee for having uttered expressions derogatory to the Continental Congress, invidious to a particular denomination of Christians, and tending to impede the opposition of our countrymen to ministerial oppression, I do hereby declare myself heartily sorry for my imprudent expressions and do sincerely promise for the future to coincide with every measure prosecuted for the redress of American grievances so far as is consistent with the religious principles of the Society to which I belong." That same day the committee "voted that this be considered as a sufficient satisfaction for his misconduct and ordered the clerk to publish it as such."

Members of the Bucks County Committee of Safety also collected gun powder, firearms, ammunition, and various other supplies needed from "non Associators," people that were deemed loyalists or neutral, for the use of the Patriots that were members of the local Military "Associators" units. The July 10, 1776, minutes of the Committee of Safety states that 15 guns were collected from non-associators, 2 of them collected in Haycock, for the use of the Associators units and also stated that **Philip Stever** (Haycock Township, 300 acres, 1 dwelling, 1 outhouse, 4 horses, 5 cattle, 1778 taxes of 3 pounds, 12 white inhabitants) and **Mathias Hartman** (Rockhill Township, 150 acres, 2 story stone home, stone and log barn, stone copper shop, 2 horses, 4 cattle) were appointed as the "Collectors of Arms." The Committee of Safety members also collected a tax from all non-Associators. The amount of the tax collected, determined by local Committee of Safety members, was an amount equal to the expense and loss of time incurred by those that served in the local Military Associators units. The money collected was used for the advancement of the American Revolution.

On January 10, 1776, the Philadelphia Committee of Safety requested that all counties in Pennsylvania send "competent, qualified people" to be trained in the process of producing saltpeter, a product used in the manufacturing of gunpowder. Those trained would "teach that process to other inhabitants of the county." The committee sent **James Wallace**, **Joseph Fenton Jr**, and **Andrew Kichlein** (Haycock Township, 86 acres, log house, log barn) for this training and appointed James Wallace as the "Officer" in charge of all the saltpeter that could be manufactured in Bucks County.

Other members of the **Bucks County Committee of Safety** living in Upper Bucks County include: **Theophilus Foulke** (Richland Township, 120 acres, 2 story log house, log kitchen, round log barn, smith shop, 2 horses, 2 cattle), **John Freese** (Milford Township, 13 acres, log house, log barn), **Jacob Hartzel** (Rockhill Township, 190 acres, stone house, log barn, 3 horses, 7 cattle), **Peter Henry** (Rockhill Township, 120 acres, stone and log house, additional stone house, log stable, log barn, 2 horses, 5 cattle), **John Klyne** (Milford Township, 140 acres, 2 story stone house, log spring house, stone and frame barn, additional log barn, distillery, 3 horses, 4 cattle), **George Phillips** (Rockhill Township), **Peter Sampson** (Milford Township), **Philip Smith** (Richland Township), and **Peter Wykle** (Richland Township).

Timothy H. Breen, professor of American History Emeritus at Northwestern University writes "**serving on**

**committees of safety was certainly not an activity for the faint of heart.** The members of these groups exposed ideological dissenters, usually people well-known in the communities in which they lived. Although the committees attempted as best they could to avoid physical violence, they administered revolutionary justice as they alone defined it. They worked out their own investigative procedures, interrogated people suspected of undermining the American cause, and meted out punishments they deemed appropriate to the crimes. By mid-1775 the committees increasingly busied themselves with identifying, denouncing, and shunning political offenders. By demanding that enemies receive civil excommunication – these groups silenced critics."

**Neutralists**, also called Neutrals, were Colonists who elected not to choose a side. If the Patriots were successful with the revolution all of those that remained neutral would share the benefits of the struggle without suffering losses or making any contributions to the war effort and if the British could prevent the rebellion from being successful, those that remained neutral would be considered innocent of participating in the revolution and would not be subject to punishment.

Some Neutrals did not like paying taxes they believed were unfair and did not like living under the rule of King George, but they feared repercussions for rebelling against one of the most powerful countries in the world. Others wished to remain neutral because they did not support a war that would bring death and destruction to their families, homes, livestock, and properties. Many farmers were self-sufficient and not as dependent on trade as other colonists, so they did not share the Patriots' anger over the taxes levied by King George on the colonies.

Quakers, many living in Pennsylvania, also called Friends, followed the guidelines of pacifism and most refused to take up arms during the war. It was against their religious beliefs to politically or financially support the efforts of the Loyalists or Revolutionaries because of the violence that would result from the conflict, and it was their practice to disown members of the Friends Society who served in the military or occupied political office. Some even considered the use of continental currency would qualify as participation in the conflict. Because of their neutrality, Quakers were often regarded by the Patriots as being against the new government and thus aiding the British. Even though many Quakers provided humanitarian relief, by sending supplies to civilians that needed help because of the hardships war bestowed upon them, they were subject to persecution by both the British Loyalists and the American Patriots.

As is written in Prisoners of Congress, Philadelphia's Quakers in Exile, 1777-1778: "In 1777, Congress labeled Quakers who would not take up arms in support of the war of Independence as the most Dangerous Enemies America knows and ordered Pennsylvania and Delaware to apprehend them. In response, Keystone State officials sent twenty men - seventeen of whom were Quakers - into exile, banishing them into Virginia, where they were held for a year."

Minutes from the Bucks County Committee of Correspondence contains the following entry as related to the fact that Quakers that supported the revolution were in a

precarious situation. “At a meeting at the House of John Bogart, Buckingham Township, July ye 21st 1775 present a large majority, John Wilkinson, Jonathan Ingham, Thomas Foulke, and John Chapman, being of the people called Quakers and alleging scruples of conscience relative to the Business necessarily transacted by the Committee, desired to be released from any further attendance.” (Note: The January 16, 1775, minutes for the Committee of Observation of Bucks County list John Chapman as its clerk).

No one could be certain what the future of a war would hold. Everyday life would be completely disrupted. Homes, buildings, and crops would be destroyed, peoples’ food and livestock would be taken, and neighbor would be set against neighbor. Everyone had to make their own decision knowing there would be serious repercussions for all, no matter what the outcome.

**Additional information about Haycock Settlers and their role as Patriots, Loyalists, Associators, and members of the Militia will be published in the future.**

**Sources:** T.H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011). *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* by Maya Jasanoff. *Wikipedia. Seven Events That Enraged Colonists and Led to the American Revolution*, history.com. American Revolution, Committees of Correspondence, History. Com. June 23, 2023. History of Northampton County (Pennsylvania) and The Grand Valley of the Lehigh, Volume III, American Historical Society, page 310. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (phmc.pa.gov). The Direct Tax of 1798, Upper part of Bucks County, Harry C. Adams, 1994. Proprietary tax list for Bucks County 1779,1781-1786. Prisoners of Congress. Philadelphia’s Quakers in Exile, 1777–1778, by Norman E. Donoghue II, 2023. Haycock Township tax list 1784. The Pennsylvania-German Volume IX, page 196.



## Thatcher Store

### Haycock Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania

#### Charles Wehmeyer

Charles Wehmeyer was born in 1909 in Lawndale, Pennsylvania near Philadelphia.

In 1930 after marrying Violet Sacks he became acquainted with the Upper Bucks, Quakertown area. In 1949 the family moved to the village of Thatcher near Quakertown.

Charles was a skilled carpenter, an avid hunter and fisherman. He enjoyed reading, especially about the Civil War. He also spent time on the High School and Vocational Technical School Authorities for the Upper Bucks Area.

He retired as a home delivery milkman from Gardenville Dairies in 1972. That year he and Violet began taking evening classes at Pennridge High School in art. They enjoyed exhibiting their art work at the Gallery in the Park in Perkasio and other Senior Citizens exhibits in Harrisburg.

In 1997 Charles and Violet moved to Mifflintown, Juniata County where they spent their last years. Here, Charles enjoyed trout fishing the small streams and deer hunting in the Licking Creek area.

## THANK YOU

To **Jane Cope**, for the donation of this drawing by her uncle, Charles Wehmeyer.



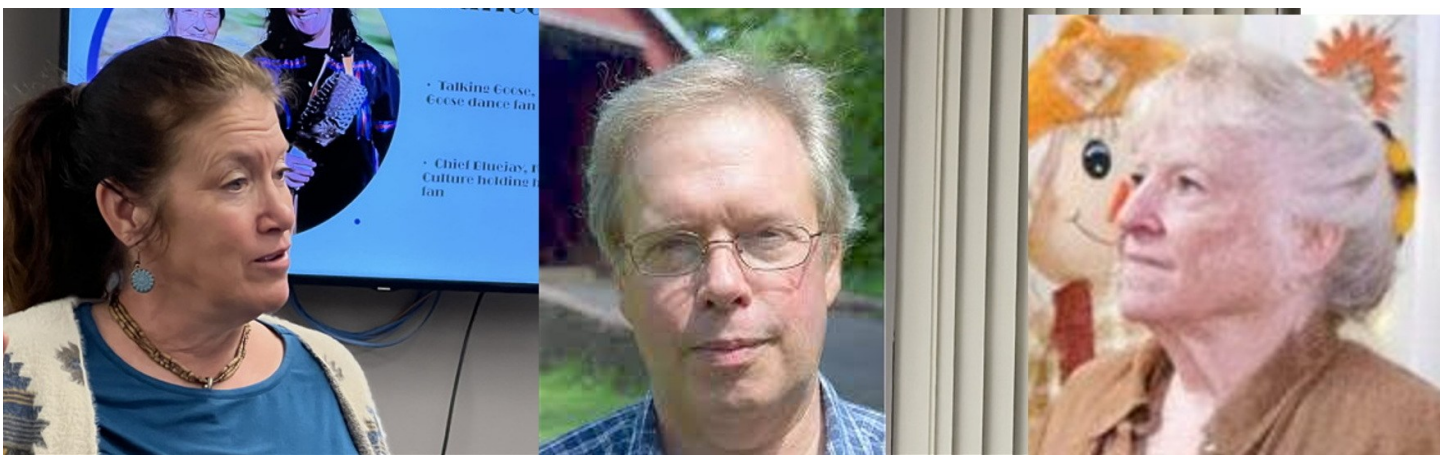


**Pat DeWald and John DeMatteo by our garden shed**

Thanks to Pat, John, Karen Bedics, and Doug Goldthorp for getting the garden in great shape. They would greatly appreciate additional **HELP** with dead heading plants and weeding. Let any of them know if you would like to join them in the gardening fun.



Perhaps by Picnic time we can see what is going on with the ribbon of prepared soil along the back of the yard at the Stokes House.



### **Our Spring Programs**

In April Barbara Michalski, Chief Bluejay, spoke about her Lenape heritage. In March Scott Bomboy gave his presentation on moving the South Perkaspie covered bridge to Lenape Park in Perkaspie. In May Bernie DuBois gave us a fun and interesting presentation on old, local recipes.



**IN MEMORY OF**

**Jerry J. Wieand**

**October 17, 1942-May 19, 2024**



**IN MEMORY OF**

**David C. Rilling M.D.**

**October 10, 1940-April 22, 2024**

**MEMBERSHIP PICNIC**

**June 30, 2024 4:00 p.m.**

**at the Stokes House**

**1299 Apple Rd. Quakertown, PA 18951**

**(Haycock Township)**

**Tables & Chairs are provided!!!!**

**Let's Have Fun With this Covered Dish Event!**

**Only Bring** enough to serve **8**

and *share the recipe, if it's a family favorite!*

If your last name begins with:

**A through C** – Bring some kind of SNACK! Chips, Pretzels, etc.

**D through G** – Bring a Cold Dish, Salad or Raw Veggies

**H through L** – Bring Hot Dish, Hot Side or Casserole

**M through P** – Bring a Dessert

**R through Z** – Bring something using Fruit

**We'll Provide:** Hot dogs & Burger Sliders, Lemonade & Iced Tea, Watermelon and Bottled Water!

**BONUS!!!: Live Music**

**Lynn Hughes with "Good Intentions" 4:30 – 6:30**

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**The Haycock One-room school reunion** August 31, 2024, Noon to 4:00 p.m. At St. Paul's Church in Applebachsville. There is a Pot-Luck dinner at Noon, followed by the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Paper products and utensils will be provided





## Pot-luck Picnic at the Stokes House

**Sunday, June 30, 2024 at 4 p.m.** Hot dogs, barbeque, rolls, water and lemonade will be provided.

See page 6 for more details.

## FRIDAY MORNING COFFEE

Friday coffee at Stokes will continue every Friday through the end of October. Hours are 10 a.m. until Noon.

## FREE ACCESS TO PENNSYLVANIA RECORDS ON ANCESTRY

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Research-Online/Pages/Ancestry-PA.aspx>

Past years' issues of our Newsletter are available on our web site. [www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org)

"Our Lost Tohickon Valley" and "Haycock Township and Eddie Bauer" are available as E-Books on Amazon

### PRINT VERSIONS

"Haycock Township and Eddie Bauer" is available at Stokes Headquarters, Haycock Township Building, and Margie Fulp

"Our Lost Tohickon Valley" is available at Sines 5&10, Stokes Headquarters, Haycock Township Building, The Treasure Trove in Perkasié, and Margie Fulp

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OF  
DOYLESTOWN



## MEETINGS

**September 19, 2024: 7 p.m. To be announced.**

**October 17, 2024: 7 p.m. To be announced.**

**November 21, 2024: 7 p.m. To be announced**

Third Thursday meetings are held at the Haycock Community Center, formerly the Haycock Elementary School, at Old Bethlehem Road and Sawmill Road, in Applebachsville. The meeting room is Community Room West.

## OFFICERS

President:	David Guttman	daveguttman401@gmail.com
V. Pres:	Michael Cuba	michael@transomhpc.com
Secretary:	Nancy Stemler	grandmom42@comcast.net
Treasurer:	Charles Fulp	chasfulp@gmail.com
Ad Hoc:	Joseph Capella	alleppac@verizon.net
Ad Hoc:	Virginia Cuba	virg917@gmail.com
Ad Hoc:	Chris Handschin	chandschin@verizon.net
Ad Hoc	Andrea Silvestri	asilvestri@haycocktownship.com

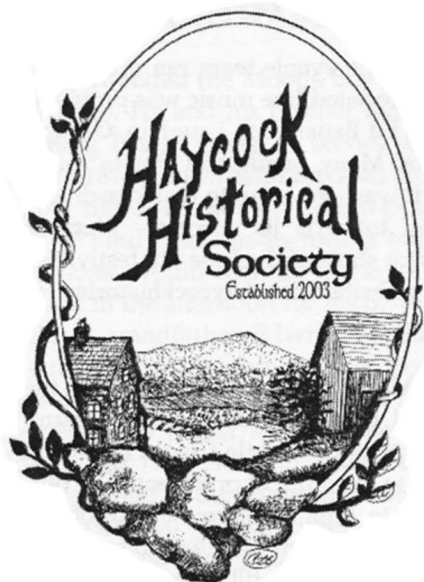
Please submit material for the newsletter or suggestions for interviews to Margie Fulp. (267-772-0711) or [margiefulp@gmail.com](mailto:margiefulp@gmail.com)

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## AN INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

YES, ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

I WANT TO BE PART OF RECLAIMING OUR HISTORY AND PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- ☐ **Individual Membership - \$20/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- ☐ **Family Membership (Parents & Children in household) - \$30/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- ☐ **Corporate Sponsor - \$100/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad size smaller than business card)
- ☐ **Corporate Patron - \$200/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad is full business card size)
- ☐ **Lifetime Individual Membership - \$200**  
Receive honorary lifetime status, receive quarterly newsletters and attend all special functions
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For just \$50 more, join as a household and enjoy all the benefits of lifetime membership

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