

## RELIVING

# The Rochester Era

November/December The Rochester-Avon Historical Society Newsletter

2010

### Leader Dog Puppy Raisers To Speak

Longtime Leader Dog Puppy Raisers Marilee and Phil Townsend will be the featured speakers for the November 4 general meeting.

The Townsends will share their experiences with the program as well as the history of the Leader Dogs in Rochester. They will also bring a puppy with them as a “live demonstration” of teaching techniques.

Puppies are placed in host homes for approximately one year in preparation for their lives as dog guides. Raisers teach puppies house manners and basic obedience, and they socialize the dog by taking it into the community on a regular basis.



The general meetings are held at the Rochester Hills Public Library in downtown Rochester, beginning at 7:00 pm.

### Famous Area People Subject of December Meeting

Patrick McKay, Director of the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, will be the speaker at our meeting on December 2. Pat will introduce us to the “Community Hall of Fame” - famous, and perhaps not so well known, names from the history of the Rochester area. After Madonna, there are many more names with which to become acquainted.

There will be no *Brown Bag Lunch* meeting in November because of the election.

Instead, VOTE. Non-partisan candidate information is available from the League of Women Voters at:  
[Lwvoa.org](http://Lwvoa.org)

December's *Brown Bag Lunch* speaker is Bea Catherino

**Find Ways to be Involved.  
Page 4!**



**From the  
President ...  
Rod Wilson**

Thank you to my wife for putting up with me. I keep telling her I am not going to be involved to the degree I have been and will spend more time with her. It seems just the opposite has happened. We are busier then we have ever been.

Susan and I have completed displaying our Rochester area items in our home and we are back open for tours. If you want to come over and see our collection, please give us a call, 248-651-6178.

Thank you to Debbie Larsen for all her work in getting the Rochester Elevator nomination for the National Register of Historic Places approved at the state level. She spent an enormous amount of hours researching and writing.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays. Enjoy the season, your friends and be safe.

**Woodward House Update**

Again, thank you for all of your support as we move forward with our "Preserving the Woodward House" project. Prior to the Planning Commission meeting on October 4, Singh Development notified the City of Rochester Administration that it was withdrawing their application for rezoning of the property adjacent to the Woodward House prop-

erty. Singh had been in negotiation with the Congregational Church regarding lots that are owned by the Church on the east side of Pine Street. An agreement could not be reached and Singh Development has ceased any further negotiations. So we are back at square one. What will happen next? Only time will tell. If Singh Development wants to revert back to their original plan or another plan, they would have to resubmit an application for rezoning. Singh Development had an option to buy on the two pieces of property not including the Church property. Whether they will continue to hold those options or back away, it is unclear at this time. We are not part of their negotiations so we must wait and see. Thank you to Singh Development for all their effort in trying to make this work and saving the Woodward House. I will let everyone know if and when we have more information to share.

**Welcome to new Board of Director Members**

RAHS has two new Board of Director members: Cary Downer and Beatrice Catherino. Cary will be our Programs Chairperson taking over from JoAnn Bourez. Cary is a new member who has attended

most of our programs over the past two years. He had read about our needing a program chairperson and volunteered to be that person. Beatrice Catherino will be our Associate Publicity Chairperson prior to being named the Publicity Chairperson. Liz Golding has been our Publicity Chairperson for the past 10+ years. She has tried to resign for the past three years but I have talked her into staying. This year I told her I would try to find someone to work with her for a

**President** continued on Pg. 6

<b>OFFICERS</b>	
President.....	Rod Wilson 248.651.6178
Vice-President.....	Brian Dunphy 248.656.5968
Treasurer.....	Mary Howarth 248.375.0206
Recording Secretary.....	June Hopaluk 248-652-9242
Corresponding Secretary.....	Janet Potton 248.652.7296
Member-at-Large.....	Susan Hohf 248.852.9015
Member-at-Large.....	James Hopkins 248.342.6782
Past President.....	Greg Doyle 248.651.6076
<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS</b>	
Historian.....	Gail Kemler 248.651.0907
Membership.....	Carole Fischer 248.853.0118
ERA.....	Mary Howarth 248.375.0206
Program.....	Cary Downer 248-652-1854
Publicity.....	Liz Golding 248.656.1125
Publicity Assistant.....	Bea Catherino 248-375-0808

## Research Committee Update

Deborah Larsen

On September 24, four members of the Research Committee traveled to Lansing to attend the meeting of the State Historic Preservation Review



Board. Deborah Larsen formally presented the nomination of the Rochester Elevator to the National Register of Historic Places, and the nomination was unanimously approved by the review board. The nomination has now been sent, with state government endorsement, to the U.S. Department of the In-

terior in Washington, D.C., where it is under review by the Office of the Keeper of the National Register, which will make the final decision about listing the property. We expect to receive notification of the final decision from the federal government by the end of this year.

In the meantime, committee members are hard at work on other projects. The Research Committee is just one year old, but we have already submitted one National Register nomination, done the research for two others which will soon begin the formal nomination process, and we are continuing to research the Bunker Park/McAleer property in preparation for a nomination of that area. The committee is still seeking contact with anyone who worked for McAleer during the WWII era, or anyone who might have photos, documents or other memorabilia related to McAleer's wartime work that may assist our research.

### Join the Rochester Avon Historical Society today!

**Help to keep what is significant...**

**Refurbish what is historic ...**

**Maintain what is well-known.**

- **Bi-monthly newsletters**
- **Monthly meetings with guest speakers**
- **Downtown Rochester historical walking tours**
- **Monthly lunchtime talks by long-time area residents**

Dues: Individual \$18, Family \$25, Contributor \$35. Mail your check made payable to the Society with your name, address, telephone and email address to:

Rochester Avon Historical Society, P O Box 80783, Rochester, MI 48308-0783.

**KRIS KRINGLE MARKET**

**It's that time of year to spread good cheer!**

RAHS will be part of the Kris Kringle Market that is being planned for December 3rd, 4th, & 5th.

After a one year hiatus this popular part of the Christmas season in Rochester is back. We will have a booth set up and we will need volunteers to help out. There is a new location too. Booths will be on 4th street between Main and Walnut streets right in the heart of the action of the Bright Lights and the Parade. We will have a sign-up sheet at the Brown Bag and the monthly meetings. You can call me (James Hopkins) direct at 248-342-6782 to add your name to the list of those brave souls who will help us.

This year we will be adding some extra creature comfort: **HEAT** That's right heat! We will have an electric heater for those chilly toeses and noses. This should help to keep everyone in the holiday mood.

We will be open. Friday Dec. 3rd. 6 - 9 P.M., Saturday Dec. 4th. 12 P.M. - 9 P.M. and Sunday Dec. 5th. 11 A.M. - 5 P.M. I will need two people per three hour shift. You do the math. Call me so you don't miss out on the fun that we always have at our sales booths and to put your name on the list. See you there!

James Hopkins

**Lysander Woodward**

Deborah Larsen  
*Remember Rochester*

Lysander Woodward was a strong advocate of modern farming methods, and made his own farm and home a show-place to promote them. He was active in the Oakland County Agricultural Society

and served for a time as its president. In 1867, his farm was one of three "model farms" awarded monetary prizes by the society, and a lengthy description of the Woodward operation, including the house, was published in the report of the secretary of the state board of agriculture in that year. Interestingly, the judges of the contest agreed that the farm was modern and prosperous and they also liked the house, but they felt that the yard was too small for such a grand mansion and recommended that it be expanded.

Local politics attracted Lysander Woodward in 1856 when he was elected Supervisor of Avon Township. He would go on to hold a number of public offices in his career, including justice of the peace, Oakland County Treasurer, member of the Michigan House of Representatives, and chairman of the Michigan constitutional convention of 1873. He also made an unsuccessful bid for lieutenant governor of Michigan on the Greenback ticket in 1878.

His greatest legacy for Rochester, however, was Lysander Woodward's role in bringing the first railroad line through the village. He worked tirelessly to secure local funding and right-of-way for the Detroit & Bay City Railroad, which laid its track through Rochester in 1872. The railroad brought rapid transportation and communication to a sleepy village, and with it the economic prosperity that arose from a reliable connection to the outside world. Soon after the rails arrived, Rochester had a successful newspaper, a grain elevator, ready access to Detroit markets, and booming business. Lysander Woodward was named the first president of the Detroit & Bay City Railroad, which soon became part of the larger Michigan Central Railroad system.

When Lysander Woodward died in January 1880, his funeral was probably unlike any that had been seen in Rochester to that point - or possibly since.



LaVere Webster working on the mural for the Rochester Community Schools Building.

### Internet Genealogy Group

Internet Genealogy Group (IGG) will meet Tuesday, October 19th, at 1:00 pm in the 2nd floor conference room. Our presenter will be Kim Smith, member of the Waterford Genealogy Society, and she will demonstrate the latest version of Family Tree Maker 2011. Our second speaker will be Phil Degrof, one of our members, who will tell us about the Family History Center at the LDS Church on Brewster. Come and join us! It's FREE! Carole Fischer, RAHS member and IGG facilitator

### Find us on Facebook!

Your historical society may focus on the past, but we're using 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology to connect with members and others interested in local history.

In May, the RAHS Board created a page on Facebook, the social networking website. The page shares information about historical issues in the greater Rochester area, as well as news about RAHS events, such as the Brown Bag lunches and downtown walking tours. It also links to other local history pages, such as the Remembering Rochester blog.

To visit the page, go to [http://www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/RochesterAvonHistorical)

**RochesterAvonHistorical**. You don't even need to be a Facebook member to view the page. If you are already on Facebook, we urge you to "Like" the page using the button at the top and to share the page with all your Facebook friends.

The page was created by and is maintained by Brian Dunphy, with help from James Hopkins.

*Many thanks to Harold Golding for doing the mailing of this edition of the ERA while the editor attended a wedding in England.*



St. James Hotel

New Cat's Meow<sup>™</sup> buildings will soon be available.



Woodward House

**President** continued from Page 2.  
Short period of time and then she could retire.

Thank you to JoAnn and Liz for all their work in the past and a warm welcome to Cary and Beatrice.

**Update on the Mural**

The restoration project of the mural at the Rochester Community Schools Administration Office is in its final stages. LaVere Webster has been working daily in an attempt to get the mural remounted and ready to hang in the Harrison Room. The Mural Unveiling committee is readying plans for a ticketed wine tasting event on the evening of November 12. Look for your invitation in the mail in the next couple of weeks. This should be a fun evening and we hope to see you there. (See photo on page 5)

**Our new Cat's Meows™ will soon be here!**

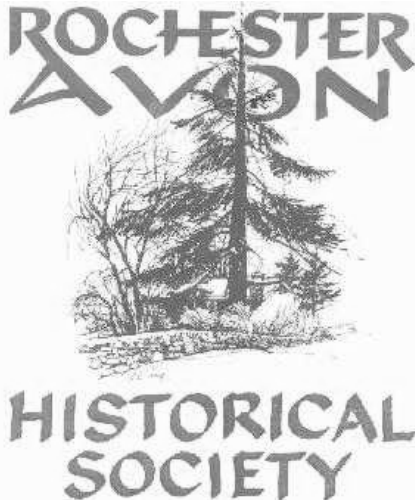
Cathy Pouls

The committee has worked very hard putting together this year's selection. For 2010, we are presenting the Lysander Woodward House and the St. James Hotel. These new Meows will be available in December. (See Page 5)

The cost of each Meow is \$20. They will be available through Dillman & Upton, Holland's Florist, Lytle's Pharmacy, Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Rod and Sue Wilson or through a member of the committee: Sue Hof, Penny Reddish, Sue Wilson, Gail Kemler and Cathy Pouls. For further information, please call (248) 651-6178 or (248) 651-4036.

**Welcome to the new RAHS members!**

Margaret Baker, Larry & Judy Benscoter, Eric & Gail Bothwell, Shelley DeGripp, Cary Downer, James & Susan Dutchik, Kathleen Hurst, Raymond Lucas, Mitch Mitchell, Jan Morgens-tern, Andrew Newhouse, William & Leah Potere, Gail Tucker, and John Tucker.



Rochester Avon Historical Society  
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*Pride in  
Preserving  
the Past*