



Goals and Objectives

President's Comments

By Rick Messerschmidt

Dear Members of the West Des Moines Historical Society,
Spring is here and it is time to touch base with our members as to the progress we have made this past year and what we are looking forward to in the upcoming year. Just as a reminder, the date of the annual 2012 membership meeting is rapidly approaching and is scheduled for Thursday, April 26th at 7:00 PM at the Jordan House. At that time we will discuss the progress we have made this past year, discuss our upcoming year, and elect directors and officers. Currently on the ballot for directors are Diana Morman and Joe Crisp, both up for reelection to their second three year term and as new board member, Julia McGuire. We are excited to have Julia as a potential new board member due to her past involvement in so many worthwhile community activities. Her community involvement meant helped to save the Maplenol Barn formerly located at Valley High School. Board members who are departing include Todd Osterhaus who is concluding his second three year term and Abby Crisp, who has tendered her resignation due to job and home responsibilities. We greatly appreciate the dedication of both Todd and Abby while serving as board members. The ballot for election of officers includes Diana Morman as Secretary, Trevor Huisman as Treasurer, John Norwood as Vice President and yours truly as President. Your Board of Directors would welcome your attendance and participation.

I feel we have made some great accomplishments through this past year. One notable accomplishment was providing assistance to save the Maplenol Barn that was successfully relocated to a site owned by the Evangelical Free Church directly north of the Valley High School football stadium. We have also utilized our grant resources to address our continued problems with water damage to both the Bennett School and the Jordan House. We now believe we have the problem resolved and with anticipated future grant funds we can repair the damage to ceilings and walls. Last May we were fortunate to have a student from Drake University, Lewis Baustian,

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Greetings Friends

As one of the newest members of the Board, I thought it would be helpful to share a few thoughts about goals and objectives for 2012 and at the same time ask for your help in contributing your thoughts and ideas to how we might grow our organization. This is an important time for the Society. We have two stellar properties with the Jordan House, it's historic role as a cog in the Underground Railroad, and of course our 19th century the Bennett School. You are likely very familiar with both.

But no doubt, these properties are expensive to maintain and the Board is struggling to raise the funds necessary to keep them in good working order while providing meaningful outreach and programming to the community. Our members are wise and have played an important role in preserving and protecting elements of our local history, but we feel we need to expand our membership. Can we expand our base by expanding our vision to go beyond a property focus, to a focus on history, stories, and larger than life personalities who have made West Des Moines and Iowa what it is?

I am hopeful a new, more expansive vision will entail attracting new younger members, children, and families and those who are interested in connecting stories from our past that can inspire and shape our future! But we can't limit our efforts to individuals. We want to attract the interest of corporations, businesses, trade groups and others who may share a passion and an interest in historic preservation and carrying forward the human values of those like abolitionist James Jordan, an early civic and business leader, who have made West Des Moines and Iowa the wonderful place it is today.

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So, this year, we are embarking on a strategic planning process to help redefine the vision for our organization. Our mission, "to educate, to preserve, and to promote the heritage and history of West Des Moines" is broad and meaningful. But the vision needs updating. How should we grow our membership base? Incorporate new programming? We would like to hear from you as we move ahead!

Thank you,
John Norwood

VOLUNTEERING IS GOOD FOR THE HEART AND SOUL.

----- Unknown

It's spring and everything is fresh and new again. The WDMHS Board is looking forward to the coming year and has some new and exciting ideas to expand the vision and support of the Society. But we need help, as we don't want to limit our programming due to a lack of volunteers.

First and foremost, we want to thank our member volunteers who have worked tirelessly over the years. We need a lot more of you! We are committed to growing our volunteer base, and you can help us do that. Start by spreading the word. ***Tell everyone you know....friends, family, neighbors, students, co-workers, etc. that the WDMHS is a great organization in which to volunteer.*** All one has to do is to contact the Society and give their contact information and availability. We are always looking for people to help us plan and work events, cover summer open hours, be tour guides, work on the grounds, etc. The possibilities are endless.

Do your heart a little good today... spread the word about volunteering.

CLG Certified Local Government Program

The City of West Des Moines is considering adopting a new program, CLG. This program was created by the National Historic Preservation Act to encourage preservation and wise use of historic resources through local government. The program is based on the concept that people who work and live in the community are really in the best position to decide what's important to their history and how to go about preserving this history. In order to become eligible for grants and tax incentives through CLG, The City of West Des Moines needs to pass a preservation ordinance, establish a preservation commission and submit an inventory of historic properties. If accepted the WDM commission would encourage, not mandate, preservation. As members of the WDMHS, we need to show our support as the city embraces this new program.

Challenge *To Our Readers*

West Des Moines is steeped in history and that history desperately needs to be told and recorded. What are the stories? Who were the people who grew-up, went to school, and worked as the small town of Valley Junction grew into the City of West Des Moines? Your help is needed. Share your memories, your knowledge, and your stories. Help us identify and preserve our rich history by contacting us at West Des Moines Historical Society office: 515-225-1286 or email us at:

jordanhouse@dwx.com

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choose to do his internship with the West Des Moines Historical Society. He was able to help launch us into social networking. Be sure to check us out on facebook.

As we look at the upcoming year we are looking to formally address the challenges that threaten the future of the West Des Moines Historical Society. As you will note with the articles included in our newsletter, strategic planning is a major event that will take place shortly after our annual meeting. Any member wishing to participate in this process is welcome to join the board during the strategic planning process, as your input would be appreciated. If you are interested, please contact Penny at the WDM Historical office so we can keep you posted of our scheduled meetings. We realize how important it is to formulate a detailed plan to increase membership, fund raising and volunteers. All of these are absolutely essential to our future.

We look forward and appreciate your help, financially and as a volunteer, in the upcoming year.

Rick Messerschmidt,
President

FYI ***Veterans Memories***

For the past three years, AIB College of Business has sponsored the Veterans History Project created by the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. The Veterans History Project collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war. AIB volunteer interviewers questioned 80 veterans while volunteer court reporters wrote their responses on steno machines. Volunteer videographers also record the interviews. The stories will be archived at the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum at Camp Dodge and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Information for a Veterans History Project event can be obtained at www.loc.gov/vets. Photos of AIB's event are available on the AIB Facebook page.

ANNUAL MEETING

April 26th 7:00 PM at the Jordan House

Jordan House will be hosting the West Des Moines Historical Society's Annual Meeting on April 26th at 7:00 PM. The President, Rick Messerschmidt, will present the Year in Review and the Outlook for the Future. Board nominees will be presented for the vote of the membership.

This is an excellent time for you to meet the men and women who volunteer their time to make the Society a success. Please come and share your ideas and thoughts

Board Directors up for re-election:

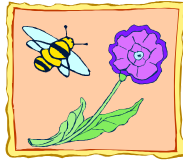
Diana Morman and Joseph Crisp – Has served on the Board of Directors of West Des Moines Historical Society since the spring of 2009.

New Board Director Nominee:

Julia McGuire – Julia grew up in the family antique business in north Polk County and moved to West Des Moines in 1999. Her first contact with the WDM Historical Society was in 2000 to schedule a field trip for home school families to the Bennett School. Her most recent contact with the WDM Historical Society was in her role as President of Friends of the Maplenol Barn. Previous leadership positions include the Vice-Presidency of Iowa Dance Theatre and coordinator of a home school support group; she is the founder of the Disabilities Ministry and St. Clare Women's Group at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. She is also the founder of Three Sisters, a home school event production company.



Julia McGuire



Spring Clean-Up
at the Jordan House
April 21st 9:00-2:00



We at Jordan House take great pride in this beautiful Victorian home. It's a treasure for the past, present, and future. Please visit us if you haven't been here for a while and for those of you who might be unfamiliar please come and enjoy this wonderful historical landmark.

We are scheduling a "service day" to tidy up the grounds surrounding the House which will call for many hands to make light work. If you can volunteer any time April 21 between 9:00-2:00 we would greatly appreciate your assistance. No amount of time is too little. Meet your neighbors and friends while feeling a sense of community pride.

This will involve the following:

- general yard clean-up (lawn rakes are welcome)
- repairing, scraping, and painting some fence
- edging sidewalks (weed whackers are welcome)
- cleaning off flower beds and laying mulch
- gutter and downspout maintenance
- lower level window washing

We encourage everyone to bring a "sack lunch" if you choose. Dessert, coffee, and water will be provided.

Please come out and help keep West Des Moines' oldest and most beautiful Victorian Home the stately museum that it is.

Please RSVP to Penny Schiltz at:
515-225-1286 or email jordanhouse@dwx.com



WEST DES MOINES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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