



Spring 2019

Timeless Topics

Calendar of Events

Purposeful Pints
Wed., April 10
Copper Trail
Brewing Co.

Annual Meeting
Tues., April 16
5:30 p.m.

Garage Sale
Sat., May 11
8-4

DNA Classes
Wednesdays,
May 1, 8, 15, 22
10 - 11 am
Or
Thursdays,
May 2, 9, 16, 23.
5:30 - 6:30 pm

Spruce Hill
Summerfest
Sunday, June 23

Annual Meeting to be held April 16.

The annual meeting will be held on April 16 at 5:30 p.m. at the Douglas County Historical Society.

Come and meet Brittany Johnson, the new director.

There will be hors d'oeuvres, wine, and Annie Skoglund will give a program dealing with "vintage underwear".

This promises to be a fun meeting.

First annual hot dish bake off

The first-ever Great Hot Dish Bake-Off was held on February 2nd. It also happened to be the date of former Senator Knute Nelson's birthday

The event, sponsored by The Douglas County Historical Society and the Alexandria United Methodist Church, took place at the Broadway Ballroom.

There were seven teams serving up hot dish, as well as a silent auction, and of course, birthday cake. The teams included *Alexandria United Methodist Church, Knute Nelson, Evansville Care Campus, Lake Ida, West Moe Church, First Congregational United Church of Christ and volunteers of the Douglas County Historical Society.*

The People's Choice Award went to Knute Nelson, Grand Arbor, for its chicken bacon ranch hot dish, a favorite of the residents.

The event was the brain child of Carol Meyer, Brittany Johnson, DCHS director, went with it and organized the event. Both were pleased with the turnout and said it will be held again next year the Saturday of Super Bowl weekend.



Hot dish winners, L to R Nikki Toenyan, Laura Kremer, receiving award from Knute Nelson, aka Gary Lund.

(Cont. on page 3)

Purposeful Pint night at Copper Trail

The Douglas County Historical Society will be hosting Purposeful Pint night at Copper Trail Brewing Company on Wednesday, April 10. \$1 of each beer sold during the night from 3 p.m. – 9 p.m. will be donated to the hosting non-profit! Come out to help give back to the DCHS.

The Copper Trail Brewing Co. is located at 410 30th Ave. E., Alexandria, MN



Spring City-Wide Garage Sale

The DCHS will have an additional garage sale this year on May 11 from 8-4. You are invited to either donate sale items, with proceeds going to the DCHS, or set up your own table with proceeds going to you.

This is in addition to the sale we have in August.

Please call the DCHS, 320-762-0382 by May 7 and let them know if you plan to participate.



Spruce Hill Easter Sunrise Service

The Spruce Hill Sunrise service will be held on Easter Sunday, April 21 at 6 a.m.

Pastor Jeff Ross of Garfield will lead the service.

Bill Riggs will play trumpet.

Coffee and rolls will be served following the service.



Spruce Hill Summerfest

Spruce Hill Summerfest will be held on June 23rd at 1 p.m.

Marge VanGorp, Paulette Friday and Patty Kakak will present a program entitled Spruce Hill Anthology at 1:00 p.m.

Gordons Men's Choir will perform at 2:00 p.m.

A picnic lunch will follow at Spruce Hill Park.

All are welcome.

Annual Meeting is April 16, 5:30 p.m. at the Douglas County Historical Society, 1219 Nokomis Street, Alexandria, MN

Our Lives as Museums

by **Brittany Johnson**

Hello! To no one's surprise, I spend a lot of time thinking about museums. I think about what stories they tell, what objects they use, and how effective their message is. It's something I've been thinking about since high school. In high school, I worked basketball concessions for two years in Evansville to go on the Close Up student trip to Washington DC where we were blitzed with information about our nation, its founding, and how our government operates. We had short but valuable forays into the many museums sandwiched between workshops and guided tours.

On our way to lunch at the National Museum of American History, a Smithsonian museum, our program guide told us that it was one of the lowest ranked Smithsonians. She said it was one of the few Smithsonian museums more attended by foreign tourists than domestic ones, and that Americans felt confused by the collection. (I'm not sure where she got this information, but I believed her.) We were instructed to pay close attention to how the museum was laid out and reflect on if we felt our lives as American students were represented in that museum.

I don't know how I would tell the entire story of the American people in one museum. There's a lot of ground to cover. The National Museum of American history tells a fascinating story, a building that simultaneously contains Abraham Lincoln's death mask and one of the original Google servers. There's a hall that traces America's history through war, and another that outlines the way American innovation shaped travel from rail, to early cars, to muscle cars and famous highways. I understand the challenge now.

There are so many parts of our culture that stand out as American, if I were given only one building to arrange them for non-American visitors to understand the United States, I don't know where I'd begin.

So, I started thinking about arranging a smaller American experience: my life. If my life were a museum, how would I arrange it? Would each hall take a visitor through another year of my life, chronologically in order until completion? Would I break my life into themes and important relations, with one hall reserved for family pets and another for friends or family? What object would best explain my relationship with my mother? Would it be a family heirloom, or her apple dumping recipe featuring Mountain Dew?

I'd like to hear your thoughts. How would you arrange the museum of your life? What halls, memories, objects, and events would you include? Please email your responses to brittany.johnson@dchsmn.org or mail them to us at 1219 Nokomis Street, Alexandria, MN 56308 for a chance to be featured in our next newsletter!

Bake off (cont. from page 1)

A huge thank you to donors for the silent auction:

Bryce's Beans, Busy Squirrel Creations – Matthew Bakke, CEC Midway 9, Lake Country Meats, Linda & Tom Akenson – Counselor Realty, Natalie Goodwin – Living Tree Massage & Bodywork, New Life Christian Church, Pike & Pint, Randy Fischer Real Estate, Inc., Rose City Free Church, Tastefully Simple, The Broadway Ballroom.

More Donors: Can-Can Wonderland, Crayola Experience, Hotel 340, Rick Bronsan's House of Comedy, The Bell Museum & Planetarium, The Great Lakes Aquarium, The Guthrie Theatre, The Minnesota Historical Society, The Minnesota Orchestra, The Minnesota Science Museum, The Minnesota State Fair, The Minnesota Timberwolves, The Minnesota Twins, The Minnesota Vikings, The North Shore Scenic Railroad, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Potluck Vintage.

KNUTE'S KORNER

**by Gary Lund,
DCHS Board President**



Today we are starting a new column called "Knute's Korner". I hope you will find it informative and maybe amusing.

The Douglas County Historical Society (DCHS) is really healthy today. In my opinion there is a new vitality. New faces, new ideas and new energy. For instance, a year ago Carol Meyer (Board Member) came up with a new idea—a Hot Dish Bake-Off. Because of scheduling we didn't have time to do it in 2018. Carol headed up the project for 2019 and with Brittany Johnson and staff "taking the ball and running with it", it far exceeded our hope this year. Everyone who attended loved it and want to come back next year. We netted approximately \$2000, which is a great return on a new project.

As your president, I'm so impressed with the vitality Brittany brings to the DCHS. The board feels the same.

Other projects in the works are new gutters and covers going up as soon as spring arrives. Also we are closer financially to installing a new roof. The time line on that is about a year or so from now. If you have any cash laying around we sure could use it for this project. The ballpark figure is \$40,000. It's a high price but to remain on the National Historic Registry, we have to keep Knute's house authentic.

**Annual Meeting
Tues., April 16
5:30 p.m.**

Did you know?

The DCHS has over 1,200 oral history interviews with life stories and business histories. The great advantage of having oral histories is not only the content itself, but being able to hear the person's voice.

Currently these interviews are on cassette tapes, but as we must keep updating with technology, we're in the process of digitalizing each one to make it more accessible to the public. If you would like to make a donation to help defer cost, please contact the society.

We want your history! Whether you're interested in doing an oral history, have a written family or business history, or identified photos, we would love to add them to our Research Department. If you would like to share your history for future generations, give us a call.

We are also looking for people who would like to conduct interviews. They must be comfortable using a digital voice recorder, and enjoy speaking and listening to a wide variety of people.

Yearbooks Needed!!

The DCHS has a collection of yearbooks for Alexandria, Brandon/Evansville and a limited number of Osakis books. Many people use them for research for their class reunions, and family research.

So, if you have old yearbooks and you are downsizing, please do not throw them away, donate them to the DCHS!

If we acquire duplicates, we can sometimes sell them to clients who have lost their original. A special notice to retired teachers, many times you have years of pristine yearbooks you no longer want to store, so donate them! Any time those who donate want to look something up in a yearbook, we have them so please come to the research center at DCHS.

Thank you to all of you who have donated yearbooks in the past as without you, we wouldn't have this resource available.

DNA classes for beginners dates are set

Presented by retired 2nd grade teacher Taryn Nelson Flolid, this 4 session workshop will cover topics to help DNA beginners understand their DNA results, learn new DNA vocabulary, and use visual tools and charts to sort and understand their DNA matches.

Each class session will build on information presented in the previous class. Participants will receive handouts to help them understand the information. This information can be applied to any of the DNA testing companies. \$10 per class, free for members. Each session is limited to ten participants, so please reserve your spot!

The one hour sessions are designed to end before the students' eyes glaze over, so they are able to safely drive home.

Choose from a day or evening session:

Wednesdays, 10 - 11 am, May 1, 8, 15, 22

Or

Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30 pm, May 2, 9, 16, 23.

Session 1: Your DNA results: Understanding centiMorgans and other definitions, a look at Ethnicity Estimates and DNA matches

Session 2: Sorting your DNA matches using the Leeds method. Creating family trees based on your DNA matches.

Session 3: Follow-up on the Leeds method. How are my DNA matches related to me? The DNA "Green Chart"

Session 4: Where DNA and genealogy meet. Building trees up and down to solve mysteries, contacting your DNA matches.

Genealogy Guild Looking for New Members

The recent interest in genealogy with online research and DNA testing has shown a need for sharing of ideas and resources. The Genealogy Guild is all about that! This group could be helpful to you.

We explore various methods to find those lost family members and share some of the successes and frustrations of family tree building. Members give input to each other to make research easier.

The Genealogy Guild meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m in the lower level of the DCHS, located at 1219 Nokomis St, in Alexandria. Coffee and Cookies are provided. Next meeting is April 11.

Research Volunteers Needed

The DCHS has interesting positions available for volunteers to complete family research. Become part of this fun experience helping others in the community with the resources of the DCHS. You can volunteer at your convenience with hours to fit your schedule.

Looking for people interested in our victory garden



DCHS is looking for 4H groups, scouts, FFA groups, and any community partners or individuals who want to be part of our interpretive garden!

Sign up for a session or two to learn how history and horticulture interact. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, please call us right away at 320-762-0382!

You or your group only have to commit to a small portion of garden work (one session!) to be invited to the harvest Victory Picnic at the end of the growing season.

As heritage interpretive center, DCHS is striving to make history a fun and hands-on experience. We look forward to seeing you for research, fun, or gardening!

New and returning members

Ralph & Carol Gaffaney
Susan Laubenheimer
Janith Ness

Mary New
Janet Nelson
Karen Lundholm

Memorials

DiAnn M Ness, given for Joan Larson
Marjorie Larson, given for Joan Larson
Romaine A Strand, given for Joan Larson
Glenn VanAmber, given for Charles Myrin

Barb Grover, given for Paul Arnesen
Edith Kelly, given for Paul Arneson
Glenn VanAmber, given for Joan Larson
Steven & Louise Nesvold for Joan Larson

Levels of Membership Include:

Governor's Table: Single One-Year Membership	\$30
Governor's Family: Family One Year Membership	\$50
Corporate Sponsor	\$250
Patron	\$500
Funder	\$1000
Sustainer	\$100 toward Patron /Funder

Genealogy items of interest

Minnesota Birth and Death Certificates:

If you want a good original genealogy source, a non-certified Minnesota birth or death certificate or index listing for your Minnesota ancestor can be obtained from a variety of sources, depending on the dates. Costs range from \$9 to \$13 per certificate.

Births:

Before 1900, go to the courthouse in the county of birth. Information was recorded in large Birth Books. You can request a certificate, or write down the information from the book.

1900-1934, available online from the Minnesota Historical Society website: <http://www.mnhs.org/search/people>

1935-2002, MN birth records index available at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1949334> which names the child, date and place of birth and parents names.

Note: Minnesota is a closed adoption state, so if you are looking for an original birth certificate in the case of an adoption, you will not be able to obtain it.

Deaths:

Before 1908 - the county courthouse in the county where they died, either in person or fill out a request form.

1904-2001 - order online from the Minnesota Historical Society website, <http://www.mnhs.org/search/people>

1908-2002 - Minnesota death index search to

help you find dates and locations to request the certificate from the county - <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1937234>

1997 - Present - go to any county courthouse in Minnesota to request any Minnesota certificate. They are digitized and can be obtained from the computer system.

This website tells you all of the other ways to obtain a non-certified copy of a MN death certificate: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/vitalrecords/deathnc.html>

New Features from DNA Testing Companies

If you haven't looked at your DNA results for a while, the DNA testing companies have been rolling out new features.

Ancestry continues to update and improve their ethnicity estimates as more people around the world submit their DNA samples. If you've tested with Ancestry and haven't logged in for a while, be sure to update your ethnicity. Ancestry is even starting to hone in on specific areas where your ancestors lived.

Ancestry and MyHeritage have both introduced new features to help you understand how you may be related to your list of DNA matches. Ancestry calls it ThruLines, where it looks at the trees of your DNA matches and finds possible matching ancestors in both your trees. MyHeritage calls their feature Theory of Family Relativity.

Genealogy Guild 2018-2019 Officers:

President: Gwen Foslien
Vice President: Gerald Hanson

Secretary/Treasurer: Glenn VanAmber
Newsletter: Taryn Flolid

**DOUGLAS COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
1219 Nokomis St.
Alexandria, MN 56308

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Receptionist/Visitor Guide: Annie Skoglund
Collections Technician: Mary Isaac

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