



# the CHRONICLE

www.ioniahistory.org

The Chronicle is the official publication of the Ionia County Historical Society. It is written, edited, and published by David McCord, Secretary. Any comments, corrections (of course), or contributions should be directed to the editor c/o the ICHS at P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI, 48846 or via www.ioniahistory.org.

Ionia County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 176  
Ionia, MI 48846



## JOIN TODAY!

If you'd like to help us preserve the area's heritage, please fill in the form below and send it, with check or money order, to the ICHS Treasurer, P.O. Box 176, Ionia, MI 48846.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, St., Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please Check Your Membership Type:

- Regular Membership = \$20 Per Person
- Business Buddy = \$40
- Corporate = \$250
- Life Member = \$1000
- Student (under 18) FREE
- Enclosing an additional Gift = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am a:

- Renewing Member
- New Member
- If you're a new member, how did you hear about us?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Send my newsletter by US Mail.
- Send a link to get my newsletter by email.

## Calendar of Events on Page 3!

*The Historical Society and Museum Staff (volunteers) are gearing up for the 2025 Summer Season. Read more inside...*

### Ionia County Historical Society 2021-22 Board of Directors and Officers

- Kathleen Cook, President — 616-527-2626
- David McCord, Vice President — 616-902-0033
- Bryan Kimble, Director — 616-897-6592
- Stacy Tchorzynski, Director — 517-763-1770
- Dave Cusack, Director — 517-763-1770
- Linda Ciangi, Secretary — 616-527-4945
- Mary Kimble, Treasurer — 616-897-6592
- Barb Ehlert, House Rentals — 616-522-0844

For information on your long-lost relatives in Ionia, please contact the Ionia County Genealogy Society <http://ionia.migenweb.net/ICGS/icgshome.htm>

Visit us at [www.IoniaHistory.org](http://www.IoniaHistory.org) and find us on Facebook, too! **Thanks!**



# the CHRONICLE

The Almost Monthly Publication of the Ionia County Historical Society



## A Message from the ICHS President, Kathleen Cook

Dear ICHS members and friends,

You will notice signs of spring around the Blanchard House as you drive by. Daffodils are popping up and the urn in front has a beautiful arrangement of purple pansies. John Sayers came in and gave our maple tree in the front a "haircut" and Horrocks Nursery planted two new dogwood trees on the front berm.

We opened our first meeting of the season by inviting City employees, appointees and elected officials to our meeting. Many of them have never been inside the Blanchard House and for those who had been, it has been a while. I had a wonderful conversation with Cassie Rice, director of the DDA, and Lynnelle Wilson, executive director for the Chamber of Commerce. Both ladies are relatively new to their positions, and we shared several ideas as how we could partner for a few events.

In May, we will learn about Winsor McCay (see ad, page 3) at our membership meeting. David McCord volunteered to be our guest speaker.

The Tri-River group will sponsor the annual "Spring into the Past" for the northern half of the organization's museums this year. The theme is "Tracing our Roots-Roads, Rivers, Rails and Trails" and only the northern museums will participate, giving the folks at the southern museums a chance to visit. (In the past, our active members were so busy showcasing the Blanchard House that we missed the opportunity to visit other museums!) Next year, ICHS will follow the same theme.



Also in May, Jeff Verduin and Lori Johnson are organizing a "Tea Party" on the Blanchard House lawn (see ad, page 3). I am excited to see a maypole, games, and

other festivities take place at the house.

You may also notice some construction taking place on the back lot. Greg Cook is the contractor for the new "Accessions Building." We could not afford to do this if he wasn't willing to donate his time. To correctly preserve our artifacts (pictures, scrapbooks, etc.), it is essential that we have a climate control system to store these things. That's the objective with this new building. We have all but one year of the Ionia Sentinel Standard publications that have been bound. These alone make the building worth its weight in gold.

Eric Hughes will present the history of Ionia's breweries at the June 4th general membership meeting. I had a chance to reconnect with Eric several years ago and I have been urging him to present for some time. He has various artifacts that he will bring, and he designed a shirt with the Friar Ale logo. We will have some T-shirts available for purchase on the evening of his presentation.



On June 7, be sure to visit us at Ionia's Cruisin' Classic car show. It is always held on the first Saturday in June, and always a great show.

On June 14, the historical society plans to piggyback on the "Cow Pie Classic" event when thousands of bicyclists with their families come to Ionia. We have discussed giving tours and holding a rummage sale that weekend but we have not formalized things yet. Stay tuned. (Maybe a historic bicycle display?)

As tradition has it, our July general membership is, of course, an annual Independence Day potluck. Mark your calendars and join us!

Lastly, we have done quite a bit of grant writing this year. We received \$500 from Ionia County Community Foundation! The funds will support a mobile display. We aim to teach local history in schools. We still have a few grants out there and our fingers are crossed!

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who support the Ionia County Historical Society. Your past and continued support is greatly appreciated.

Warm Regards,  
Kathleen Cook

## At the Construction Site...



Construction of the new Accessions Building is finally providing some building-like progress! Thanks to our crew of professionals (pictured above).



## THERE'S ALWAYS STUFF TO DO AROUND HERE!

There's always something to do around the Blanchard House! A lot of little repairs and polishing up to get ready for the 2025 "museum season." While Annette patches a crack in the front door, David re-glues the broken trim on the hall tree. We're working on doors and furniture repairs for now, plus improvements in the Gift Shop area. **Thanks also to David Cusack and his cleaning crew** for keeping ahead of the dust and grime.

Next challenge: gluing down some peeling wallpaper! If you find yourself with some spare time, call Kathleen to see how you can help!



## Success with a Valentines Day theme!



On February 14th, the ICHS hosted a Valentines Day gathering with a Chocolate theme! The evening was a success, with quite a number of newcomers in the Blanchard House. Thanks to Jeff Verduin and Lori Johnson (pictured right) who organized the even, with help from the "core group." There was plenty of chocolate, love songs performed by Three Husbands on the Loose, and much pleasant socializing.



## Thank You to our "Business Buddies"

- Thomas Classrooms & Modulars LLC
- Wilson's Plumbing & Heating
- Bredice Electric LLC
- Cooks Creamery
- Greg Cook Construction
- Lake Funeral Homes
- Sid's Flowers
- Just Like Home Adult Day Center
- JBM Lawn Care



A May  
Lawn Party  
at the  
Historic  
Blanchard  
House

*Featuring*  
A Selection of Teas  
Treats and Tea Cakes  
Cotton Candy  
Popcorn  
Croquet & Games  
and  
Polite Society



The afternoon of  
Sunday, May 18  
1 to 4 O'clock  
251 East Main St., Ionia

*Please Join Us*



Many area museums will be opening for the season the weekend of May 3 and 4 with FREE first-day admission. The **NEW West-Michigan Museum Directories** are now available at the Blanchard House. Ask for a copy next time stop by.



MEMBER An alliance of over 20 small historical museums across mid-Michigan sharing local history and information.

## COMING UP:

To verify current details, please visit our website or Facebook.

- Wednesday, April 30, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the future home of the Ionia Community Library at 302 West Main.
  - Wednesday, May 7, 7:00 p.m. — **Program Night with David McCord (see details on this page).** *The public is very welcome!*
  - Sunday, May 18, 1 to 4 p.m. — ICHS **Victorian Lawn Party at the Blanchard House** (see details on this page). *EVERYONE'S INVITED! Rain or Shine!*
  - Wednesday, May 28, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House
  - Wednesday, June 4, 7:00 p.m. — **Program Night with Eric Hughes: All About Ionia's Breweries!**
  - Saturday, June 7, 9 am - 3 pm — **Ionia Cruisin' Classics Car Show!** The ICHS will have a table setup on Main Street. If you'd like to help, contact Kathleen at 527-2626.
  - Wednesday, June 25, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
  - Wednesday, July 2, 7:00 p.m. — **Our Annual Independence Day Pot-Luck** at the Blanchard House. Come on out, bring a dish to pass, wave the flag and have some great food!
  - Wednesday, July 30, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
  - Wednesday, August 6, 7:00 p.m. — **Program Night — to be announced.**
  - Wednesday, August 27, 7:00 p.m. — ICHS Business Meeting at the Blanchard House.
- SUMMER SUNDAYS** at the Blanchard House continue through September 1st (Labor Day Weekend) from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. **PLEASE**, if you can spare a few hours, extra volunteers are always welcomed!

NOTE: If you have any ideas or suggestions for programs or presentations of historical subjects, collections, or local information, **PLEASE let us know.**

Meanwhile, be sure to keep in touch (if you are on line) with Facebook!

