



PO Box 68
Rockwood, Michigan 48173
Newsletter Winter 2023

Greetings!!! Our next regular General Membership meeting will be held on **Tuesday, February 21**. It will be held at the **Rockwood First Congregational Church**, just down the road from the Museum. We will be on our evening schedule, starting at **7 pm**. Please mark your calendars.

This is our anniversary meeting, celebrating 39 years. (This is not a Jack Benny joke either, for those who remember the entertainer.) It will also be election night. Finally, our special guests will be honored on the same night. Who is it? You must attend to find out. We start at 7 pm.



Museum hours—the Museum is now OPEN on **Saturday AND Sunday afternoons between 1 pm and 3 pm**. That's right. We are NOW OPEN TWO DAYS. Stop by and see us! Bring the family, too! We have so much to show you. Our phone number is (734) 379-0674.

Officer's Reports



President's Report—Carol Tilley

Carol is still recovering, now having difficulty with her right foot.

Because of it, she cannot drive—well, not just yet. Where there is a will, there is always a way and Carol has that spirit. Never give up!

Currently, she looks and sounds great. She is out and about around town but only with the assistance of family and friends. We can't wait to see you back with us.

Go, Carol, go! Go, Carol, go! Go, Carol, go!

Barb

Vice President's Report—Barb McCoy

Well, It's a new year. We all have some challenges, be it a chronic illness or financial uncertainty. However, our enthusiasm and positive outlook will carry us through, as it always has. So, let's have some light-hearted fun along the way.

Our Book Committee is still working on the historical rendering of the area. We have our pictures assembled but I've heard that there may be a few more photographs out there held by our members. We meet on Saturday afternoons when the Museum is open to the public. If you're interested in our project, please stop by. We'd love to have you, and bring your "old stories" with you if you have any.

In December, we had our 2nd Annual **Santa's Sweets and Treats** event, combined with our annual **Virginia's Cookie and Candy Sale**. What a great event! Many thanks to everyone who donated cookies and treats to our sale, too! Because of your efforts, we surpassed \$1,000 in collections! We really appreciate all of you who participated.

Also, thanks to those who helped decorate the Museum for Christmas, especially Shayla Johnson. You are a trooper going up and down those basement steps.

For the new year, we are planning a Victorian (oops, I mean) Spring Tea, to be held on April 23rd at the Rockwood Community Center. Our committee is diligently working to make this an annual event (keeping our fingers crossed). Tickets will go on sale, starting March 5th. You can pick them up at the Museum or contact any one of our board members. The cost is \$____. Hope to see you there.

See you at the meeting on Tuesday, February 21st.

Barb

Secretary's Report—Juanita Yorks

In the absence of Juanita, I want to thank Theresa Walker for jotting down some notes for the meeting.



The Rockwood Area Historical Society General Membership meeting was held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, at the Rockwood First Congregational Church. The meeting began at 2:00 pm.

Secretary minutes of September 22, 2022—Motion by Shayla Johnson and seconded by June Julian to accept the minutes as recorded. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report—Judy Ford provided a statement as of September 30, 2022 that showed a balance of \$13,892.08. Motion to approve Treasurer's Report was made by Jeanette Herzog and seconded by Jesse Robertson. Motion carried.

Dues/Membership—Shayla Johnson stated that there were two new members added to the roster, who are related to Pat Quick. It was also announced that dues for the coming year can be paid at the end of this meeting.

Fundraising—there was discussion regarding the coming three events:

1. **Santa's Sweets and Treats** will be held on December 10th between 10 am and 2 pm. Volunteers are needed to bake cookies and make other treats. A basket raffle was discussed briefly.
2. **Victorian Tea**—Chairperson Jeanette Herzog announced that a Spring Tea is tentatively planned for March 5, 2023. She will need volunteers to work on the committee to provide sandwiches and scones. The subcommittee includes Marg Cramer, Dannielle Laura, Theresa Walker, and Juanita Yorks. The first meeting will be held in January.
3. **Any other fundraisers?**—Barb McCoy asked if anyone has an idea for a fundraiser in June. None were discussed.

Research—Barb McCoy is still working on the historical book for the Society. The book committee meets on Saturdays at the museum. Also, she received notification from the Monroe News on an article to be published on the basket factories.

Meetings—next meeting will be on February 21, 2023 at the Rockwood First Congregational Church, beginning at 2 pm. It will be our anniversary meeting and election day for board members. The spotlight will be on the fire departments in the area.

Old Business—Tree for Pat Quick

Two trees have been planted, across the parking lot from the Museum. A dedication is scheduled for May, 2023.

New Business—there was no new business to discuss.

Motion to adjourn—a motion was made by Shayla Johnson and seconded by Bob McCoy. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Theresa Walker

Treasurer’s Report-Judy Ford

We continue to cover the bills. Thank you, Santa, for your help in December.



Assets:

December 31, 2022

Cash and Cash Equivalents:

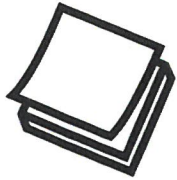
Building Maintenance Fund.....	\$619.79
Caboose Maintenance Fund.....	2,198.50
Memorial Fund.....	9,130.51
Merchant’s Bank Checking.....	<u>2,711.97</u>
Balance	\$14,660.77

Announcement!!!



Beginning in 2023, we will be asking for email addresses from our membership. Unfortunately, it is getting very expensive to send paper copies due to the price of stamps and the cost of printing. So, when you renew your membership in February, **please provide your email address**. If you don’t have one, we will continue to send it through the mail. However, we hope that we can cut down on the expense by sending out most of our communications electronically.

Committee Reports

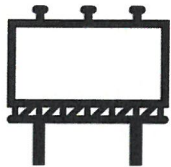


Membership—Sharon DuChene and Shayla Johnson

We have no new members at this time.

Renewal time for membership is just around the corner. To renew your membership, dues are just \$10 for single adults and \$15 for married couples. There are discounts available for seniors and for students. You can pay your dues and return your check in the attached envelope or at the next general membership meeting on February 21st!

Sharon and Shayla



Fundraising—Upcoming events

Victorian Tea (Spring Tea Party)—our newest fundraiser is scheduled for Sunday, April 23, 2023 at the Rockwood Community Center. We will begin at 2 pm. Ticket prices have not been set yet.

Once we know the amount, they can be purchased at the Museum or from one of our board members. This sounds like a fun event so dress up and make sure you wear your most beautiful hat to the Tea.

Shout-out!



Many thanks to the volunteers that open and close the Museum on the weekends.



Family Legacy Corner

Connie Kormos of Gibraltar passed away on January 12th at the age of 79. She is survived by her husband, Leo, of 56 years; one son and one daughter; four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. She also is survived by a sister. We extend our condolences to the family for their loss.

If we missed anyone in this **Corner**, please let us know so we can recognize him or her next time.



Research corner

by Barb McCoy

The People Who Keep Us Safe Part I

This is a series of stories to honor those individuals who keep us safe from harm. Our first recognition is that of the fire departments that operate in the local area.

It was a warm summer day in 2020, right at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was July 29th around 1:45 pm when the call came into Dispatch. A fire had broken out at the RJ Marshall facility on Huron River Drive in Rockwood. The fire started in the back of the building and was burning fast. More disturbing, it wasn't just a fire. It was a chemical fire, the worst kind to battle and contain.

The Rockwood Fire Department was the first to answer the call. They assessed the situation and assembled their equipment quickly. The Monroe County Emergency Management was right on the scene within minutes, monitoring air quality. They made recommendations that residents living within a one-mile radius either to shelter in place or evacuate immediately. The Rockwood Community Center opened the facility to provide shelter from those residents who needed it. Berlin Township joined Rockwood firefighters, as well as Brownstown Township #2, Flat Rock, Gibraltar, and Woodhaven.



The fire raged on until 11 pm that same night. Those who were displaced could return to their homes by 8 am the next morning, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency. Of the 11 employees in the building at the time, no one was hurt and escaped unharmed. Three firefighters went to the hospital for heat exhaustion and skin irritation. The danger was finally over.

The town survived. And all is well again.

Firefighters are heroes. They truly are. They face danger that many of us will never encounter. As a result, we recognize them for keeping all of us and our community safe from harm.

So how did it all begin? These heroes don't make a habit of writing things down. They just react but let's look at the history anyway.

In 1890, there was a devastating fire that burned down the center of the little settlement of Rockwood. Only one house was saved. The fire started near the railroad tracks, probably by a spark from a passing train. There was no formal fire department at the time but that soon changed. Because Rockwood was not a village at the time, the newly organized group of volunteer fire fighters serviced the southern part of Brownstown Township, all the way to Gibraltar. It was said that Rockwood was on call to battle fires all the way to Sibley Road, which most was open country at that time. When Rockwood became a village in 1927, the Rockwood Fire Department was established.

South Rockwood began its formal fire department in 1945. The South Rockwood Improvement Association held a dance at the IOOF Hall in Flat Rock to raise money to purchase a fire truck. FW Ritter and Sons allowed the new firefighters to train outside one of their buildings on weekends after the used fire engine was purchased. One of the most devastating fires was that of the burning of Strong's Hardware and Val's Market, located where the old First Merchants bank branch was and Peggy's Restaurant. That was in 1962.

Finally, the Brownstown Township Fire Department began in 1961 when the first fire station was built on Sibley Road. The station on West Jefferson was built in 1971, on the corner of Pleasant Road and West Jefferson. A new building was erected in 1984, where it stands today. It is near the entrance of Lake Erie Metropark.

All of these fire fighters work together when the need arises. So we salute our fire fire fighters for their heroic deeds. Many thanks for your service. And if you see someone in uniform, make sure you thank him (or her) in person.

References:

Personal conversation with Dan Mercure, former fire chief for the Rockwood Fire Department, 2023.
Rockwood Area Quasquicentennial 1861-1986, *Rockwood Fire Department*
Rockwood Area Centennial Book, 1861-1961; *Volunteer Fire Departments—South Rockwood*

The Rockwood Area Historical Society

Vol. 151

Brownstown Township Fire Department—to protect and serve. <https://www.brownstownfire-mi.org/about.html#:~:text=The%20Brownstown%20Fire%20Department%20has%20been%20in%20existence, Buffalo%20pumpers%20located%20in%20Rockwood%20and%20Flat%20Rock>.

<<<<<>>>>

We are in need of advertisers. So, please support our local organizations and businesses who help make our newsletter possible: Rockwood First Congregational Church, Mercure Insurance, River Kayak & Canoe, and Art Harold Contractor in East Rockwood.



DANIEL M. MERCURE

Office: (734) 379-9611

Cell: (734) 231-7861

Fax: (734) 379-4416

22200 Huron River Drive, P.O. Box 250

Rockwood, MI 48173-0250

E-mail: dan@mercureagency.com

LOCATED BEHIND RIVER VILLAGE RESTAURANT

RIVER VILLAGE

f KAYAK & CANOE i

734.236.4033 | 22825 HURON RIVER DR, ROCKWOOD, MI 48173

FOUNDATION WORK • POURED WALLS • BLOCK WORK
CEMENT • DRIVE-WAY STONE • BACKHOE WORK
DUMP TRUCK HAULING



ART HAROLD
LICENSED CONTRACTOR
INSURED AND BONDED

15524 HEIDE EAST ROCKWOOD, MICHIGAN

(734) 379-3430 HOME (734) 216-6850 CELL



ROCKWOOD
First Congregational Church

22600 Mather Street
Rockwood, MI 48173

Rockwood Pantry—part of the Rockwood First Congregational Church—provides food and toiletries to individuals and families who are in need of assistance.

Distribution is the 1st Monday of every month from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Stop by to get a helping hand.