

**Tontitown Historical Museum (THM) Report
for COW Meeting - 10/20/15**

The THM board met on 10/05/15 for the October meeting.

1. **New Museum Sign** - The Museum board reviewed revised sign bids from Ken's Signs and the Sign Studio. The third bid from McGinnis Signs was not available for the meeting. Both of the revised bids are well over the amount collected in Sunny Hinshaw memorials. Options at this point are to obtain bids for a sign that would include wooden posts instead of metal, as the metal posts are quite expensive. Another option is to obtain a bid to move and refurbish the existing sign. A sign similar to the Police/City sign is what the board has been thinking but the cost of that sign is unknown. Rachel will try to find out how much that sign cost and who made it. The board will continue to explore options for our new sign.
2. **School Library Project** - Rachel has created and mailed an invitation letter and order form to area schools inviting them to include our "So Big" and/or "Memories" books in their libraries. Many schools have our books but we want to make sure that every school in the area has easy access to Tontitown history. The Museum received the first book request from Central Junior High School with a note that the book will fit perfectly with their current curriculum.
3. **Polenta Smear** - Plans are set for the **14th Annual Tontitown Reunion and Old-Fashioned Polenta Smear** on Sunday, November 8. We will be decorating and cooking on Saturday morning, November 7. Stop in and see all the love and work that is put into our community event!
4. **Sister City Program Update** - Riley Tessaro recently visited Italy and was able to visit with the mayor of Valli del Pasubio! They received our letter last year and responded in October 2014 but we never received their letter. Riley's son Mike sent a picture of the letter that we were able to read (see photo below). Their city, like ours, has budget concerns and some of the requirements of the program are not attainable for them. Riley's grandson's wife, Jana Della Rosa, is a state representative and recently attended a state meeting in which the Sister City program was discussed for other reasons. We may look to her for support or guidance in the future as we figure out how to proceed and make the union beneficial and economical for both "sisters."
4. **Curator, Board Members and Volunteers** - Within a month, our Museum Board learned of the planned retirement of Curator Charlotte Piazza, effective at the end of the year, and the resignation of Vice President Jana Mayfield, effective immediately. Both are terrible blows to our board and leave huge voids to fill.

Charlotte lead the development of the museum collection from the very beginning in 1986. She, along with husband Henry Piazza and many other volunteers, created our small but mighty museum which is treasured and respected nationwide. Charlotte knows the most about all our artifacts and museum development. Her thirty years of knowledge and experience, all provided as a volunteer, seem impossible to replace.

Jana has been a most energetic and active board member with many great ideas and contributions which include: leading our first ever temporary exhibit during the 2014 Tontitown Grape Festival ("*Gowns and Crowns*"), chairing our Strategic Plan Committee, and spearheading our Arkansas Humanities Council small museums grant. Jana will be greatly missed, and has offered some availability for special projects.

Thus, we are presently in need of a curator, board members, and volunteers. As you know we are a working board so there are many things to do as a board member. If we could make a wish list, we would look for specific skills such as computer applications and web design, grant writing, finance/bookkeeping, newsletter design and development, and curatorial skills would be most beneficial, too. If you know of anyone who would be interested in serving on our board, please let us know. We currently have 5 open seats and a Strategic Plan that must be maintained!

The next Museum board meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 2.

Board Members:

Heather Ranalli Peachee, President - 479-361-8700
Jana Mayfield, Vice President - 479-361-2358
Annette Pianalto Drake, Secretary - 479-422-7788
Michael Hartman - 479-595-3299
Becky Howard - 479-445-7778
Roger Pianalto - 479-361-2207

Charlotte Piazza, Curator - 479-361-2498
Bev Cortiana-McEuen, Treasurer - 479-361-2609
Carol Walker, Membership - 479-361-2363
Jennifer De Martino - 479-587-1687
Brenda Pianalto - 479-756-5221
Riley Tessaro - 479-361-2607

Valli del Pasubio, 1st October 2014

The Honorable
Jack Beckford
Mayor
The City of Tontitown
AR 72770 Tontitown
United States of America

RE: International Sister Cities Request from the City of Tontitown, Arkansas, USA to the City of Valli del Pasubio, Vicenza, Italy

Dear Mayor Beckford

First of all we want to thank you for your consideration and for your interest in starting a Sister Cities Partnership with our City.

It is actually largely known that Valli del Pasubio has given birth to many migrants that found their new homeland in the City of Tontitown. It would therefore be an honour and a pleasure for us to be able to start this inestimable cooperation with your City.

Unluckily the economical situation we are lately facing is making very difficult for us to comply with the principles of the Sister Cities International protocol arrangement. The economical crisis and the policy of cutting public spending that the Italian Government is undertaking is preventing us from investing resources in activities which are not strictly related to the basic services for our population.

It is therefore with deep regret that we inform you that, at present, we are not able to start this partnership and to receive and welcome your delegation. We apologize for that and we hope that this will not prevent both of us from keeping contacts in order to plan the start of this friendly partnership in the next future.

I look forward to reading from you in the near future.

Kind regards

Armando Cunegato