

LANSING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Photo by Dan Bovino

Paul Schultz is ready to take flight during the annual Good Neighbor Day Parade! This year's theme was "100 Years Above the Rest—Built by Ford, Backed by Lansing & Surrounding Neighbors"

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Paul Schultz

This year as we celebrate our 50th year as a society, we need to look back and remember how we started. From a vision of a few dedicated people in 1976, the idea of a historical society grew into over one hundred members.

There are so many exceptional people that gave their time and talent over the years to make our society what it is today. We need to thank them! We as a society should be proud of our many accomplishments and look forward to the future.

We will continue to support our motto: “to record and to preserve Lansing’s past”, and leave it to the next generation. We are looking forward to our next 50 years!

Although we will not have programs from May to August, that doesn’t mean the museum is closed or that LHS is taking the summer off. The museum remains open on Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Be sure to come and see our Bridal Dress display in June and don’t forget the Library Block Party on June 6 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. and stop by our table to play some old-time games!

Have a great summer!

Barb Dust – Curator

“It is not how these officers died that made them heroes, it is how they lived”. These words are found on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. With our Lansing Fallen Heroes display, it is our goal to do just that: to tell the story of how Officer Ken Novak and LCPL Phil Martini lived. On April 8, 2026, we once again held a vigil all day for the community to come and learn about and honor the sacrifice of these men. Ken was killed on duty on April 8, 1992 and Phil was killed in action in Iraq on April 8, 2006.

Many police officers visited the museum throughout the day as their shifts began or ended. The families of both men either visited or sent words of appreciation. The exhibit also honors Lansing’s men killed in Vietnam and has a display on Gold Star Mothers. Many thanks to all our members who helped put up and take down the exhibit and to those who were guides during the vigil on April 8th.

More work on upgrading the contents of the museum has been done by Dan Centracchio and Dan Bovino. Most recently, they have redone the case that contains the taxidermy mounts of animals. They cleaned and repainted the background and installed lights. The results are amazing! Come and visit the museum to learn about the creatures that lived in this area one hundred years ago.

New is the exhibit of vintage medical equipment which may have been in the black bag carried by Lansing’s first physician, Dr. William Potts, as he made house calls. We, also, have artifacts from Lansing’s early pharmacies, Kovachev’s and Bernard’s.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US- WE'RE 50 YEARS OLD!

By Marlene Cook



Part Two of Four

Part One recap: Julia Gault and Jim Kijewski, both teachers at TF South, founded the Lansing Historical Society. It was chartered on July 9, 1976 with 75 members. But they had no items to show or a place to show them.

Starting from scratch was going to be a mammoth undertaking. Gault and her committee did a lot of negotiating before they convinced the First National Bank of Lansing to get on the bandwagon. The bank finally offered the use of a vacant room during the bicentennial celebration.

Now that they had Room 206 for displays, they had to acquire historical items to display. The 65 members began going door-to-door begging for artifacts either as a donation or a loan. They collected nearly 200 items to make a decent display.

It went so well, the bank allowed them to occupy that second-floor room for another 18 months. But the bank got a paying tenant for the space and the museum had to close. The bank did generously provide them with limited storage space, but the society was forced to return the overflow of artifacts to their rightful owners.

Then the owners of the Fennema-DeYoung Cut Stone Company saw an opportunity to have the 100-year-old Christian Schultz homestead removed from their property. They offered it to the Historical Society with the stipulation they would have to move it. It sounded good at first, but the society was still new to have acquired enough money to take on such a project. But it worked out for the best anyways. The building was found to be structurally unsound and had to be torn down.

By June, 1979, the bank needed their storage space and the society was homeless. Calvin Coolidge School came to the rescue by offering them a vacant room in which to store their bounty. Three years later the society had more than 250 items, but still had no place to display them.

Next: It took a whole lot of ingenuity to raise enough funds to realize their dream to reopen a museum.

See Part Three in the next issue of Lansing Historical Society newsletter.

2026 Board Members

President: Paul Schultz
V-President: Dan Bovino
Secretary: Marlene Cook
Treasurer: Jan Bockel
Directors: Sue Bovino
Mario Bovino
Kalpana Christian
Curator: Barb Dust

Programs 2026

Sept. 28 “The Digital Divide: A Migration Story”
By Kyla Williams Tate

Oct. 26 Revolutionary Activity in the Illi-
Michiana Areas
By Kenneth Schoon

Nov. 30 Opening of “The Festival of Lights”

Lansing Historical Society would like
to welcome our new members:
Cheryl Abbott
Walter W. Schultz Insurance Agency



Lansing Historical Society
expresses their sincere
sympathy on the passing
of Joe Saia.

HATS OFF TO LANSING FOR SUPPORTING LARC

Submitted by Jim Kijewski

Lansing Association for Remarkable Citizens (LARC) is the greatest thing that Lansing ever accomplished. It reflects our community and its values. For 70 years, LARC has served the Lansing area. We should now prepare for the 75th anniversary!

LARC began in 1956 in the basement of Grace Reformed Church led by Irving (Itch) Lange, Herb Tanis, and others. Their goal was to establish a school of special education. At that time, public schools did nothing for challenged individuals. They eventually moved to the Sportsmen Club and used the old club house. It was enhanced by Lansing volunteers. When the public schools established special education programs, Lansing switched to adult programs for the community, giving adults work and education opportunities. Many towns dissolved all of their special programs. We should recognize Lansing by placing a plaque by Grace Reformed Church and the LARC facility on Wentworth Avenue.

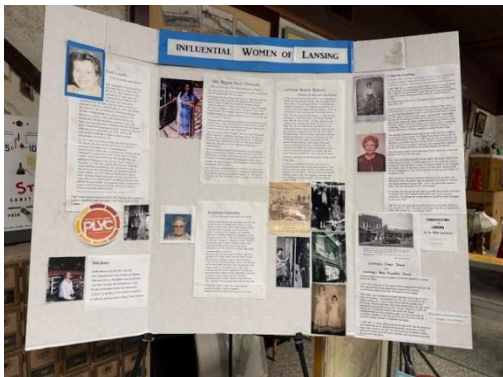
The Lansing Historical Society does more than just collect artifacts from the past to preserve for the future! LHS is an important, vital, active member of Lansing's community. We do our best to respect the past, interact with the present, and prepare for the future! We offer free programs and we are involved in many of the activities and events that goes on in Lansing. Just take a look!



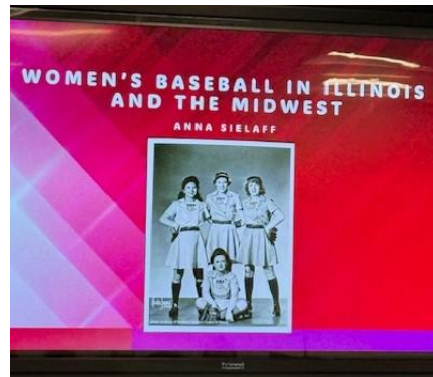
Honor wall for Officer Ken Novak & LCPL Phil Martini – April 8



Women's Suffrage Display



Important Women of Lansing



Program March 23



Program from April 27 with speaker Ken Reynolds



Photo by Dan Bovino
Program: "John Adams, Architect of Democracy"
Presented by Brian "Fox" Ellis
Co-hosted with T.F. South H.S. History Club

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Lansing Historical Society meetings and programs are normally held the fourth Monday of most months.

No meetings are scheduled in June, July and August.

We welcome new members! Invite your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers to come see what we're all about!

New Museum hours:

Thursdays: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Visits at other times can be arranged
by calling Barb Dust at 708-474-7497