

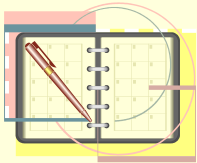
# Heritage Happenings



Woodbury Heritage Society

Woodbury Heritage Society

Volume 27 No. 1 Spring 2010



## Upcoming event!

### Annual Members Meeting

April 22, 2010

6:30 p.m.

Salem Lutheran Church  
7825 Bailey Road

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Woodbury Heritage Society

Click on the WHS website  
for the latest information.

[www.woodburyheritage.org](http://www.woodburyheritage.org)

# Dream or Reality...



*Bielenberg farmstead barn and milk house*

At a recent meeting of the WHS Board, one could almost hear Susan Boyle in the background singing "I Dreamed A Dream" as the members were discussing the proposed Bielenberg Heritage Farm. The purpose of the Bielenberg Heritage Farm would be to preserve and tell the story of twentieth century farming and farm life as it developed in the township of Woodbury, later the City of Woodbury. The Heritage Farm would use exhibits, demonstrations, and involvement of visitors in typical twentieth century farming activities.

The discussion centered on the myriad of activities and uses of the project, should it become a reality. Use of the barn would include a display space for large farm machinery, a facility for the community to use for meetings, concerts, weddings and dances, and on and on.

If you have ever visited the Bruentrup Heritage Farm in Maplewood you know what a jewel it is for that community. If

you have not had the opportunity to visit the site, you are in for a real delight. It is located at 2170 East County Road D (halfway between McKnight Road and White Bear Avenue).

The City of Woodbury and Washington County have a once in a lifetime opportunity to benefit from a similar venue. Board members Wayne Schilling and Bill Schrankler have developed a similar proposal using the buildings on the former Orville Bielenberg farmstead, located in the southwest corner of the Radio Drive/Bailey Road traffic circle. The venue would be named the Bielenberg Heritage Farm. Orville Bielenberg was the first mayor of Woodbury in 1967 and is credited with bringing together the new and current citizens to plan for the city's rapid and harmonious growth that followed. His wife Bernice Rath's Bielenberg was one of the principal founders of the Woodbury Heritage Society and a community activist. They were the first, first family of Woodbury. Schilling and Schrankler met with Mario J. Cocchiarella of the Maplewood Development Corporation on January 15<sup>th</sup> of this year. His company is the current owner of the farmstead. Mr. Cocchiarella, as a result of the meeting, offered to donate the Bielenberg farmstead's barn, milk house and family home to Woodbury Heritage Society and the City of Woodbury at no cost. This is a most generous offer for which he is to be commended.

However, the gift comes with a very small window of opportunity as plans are going forward to commercially

(story continued on page 2)

develop the site. The gift of the structures is good news, while the time constraints are providing a real challenge. The next step is finding the best site for the Bielenberg Heritage Farm. A meeting was held on January 20<sup>th</sup> with Ron Cockriel of the Maplewood Historical Society and Bob Klatt, Woodbury's Parks and Recreation Director. Cockriel provided a road map that was followed by his group in bringing the Bruentrup Heritage Farm to fruition. As a result of that meeting and subsequent discussions, the board felt the ideal location would be on the Bielenberg Sports Center (BSC) campus. The advantages of that location are:

- Adds the historical perspective of the Bielenberg name to the BSC
- Utilizes the infrastructure of the BSC
  - Parking
  - Restroom facilities
  - Concessions
- Provides easy access for school field trips utilizing school buses and for other interested groups
- Close proximity to the original location of the Bielenberg family farm
- With the location of the Woodbury Community Arts Center at the East Ridge High School next door, this corner of Woodbury could become a cultural, historic and athletic hub for the greater Woodbury community
- Visitors to any of the venues (BSC, Arts Center, Farm and East Ridge High School) would become aware of all of the institutions located there
- As the use of the Heritage Farm expands the revenue of the venue would be enhanced
- The close proximity of the BSC to the original farm would reduce the cost of moving the structures
- Recognition that the site of the BSC is on the former Bielenberg farmland
- Would provide architectural diversity between the quaintness of the historic farm buildings and the modernistic appearance of the BSC buildings and East Ridge High School.

A meeting was held on February 3<sup>rd</sup> with Dwight Picha, Community Development Director and Melissa Douglas, Senior Planner. At that meeting two locations were identified as possible locations adjacent to and south of the BSC. At the present time there are no comprehensive plans for the future use of the two locations. Several other possible Woodbury sites were discussed. The matter was brought up a city staff meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>. As an outcome of that meeting the WHS Board was notified that Bob Klatt would be the contact person from the city regarding a site for the project.

Bill Schrankler met with Mr. Klatt on February 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss our site preference. Klatt brought the matter up at a subsequent staff meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Bill was informed that the Bielenberg Sports Center, was in the opinion of the staff, not a viable site for the project. Several alternatives to the Bielenberg Heritage Farm Proposal were suggested:

- The city owned barn located on Valley Creek Road
  - The Radke Barn located at 9380 Bailey Road
  - The Oehlke Barn located at 4116 Woodbury Drive
- The Radke and Oehlke barns were suggested because they are both worthy candidates for preservation, but in the Board's are not very viable options because they are

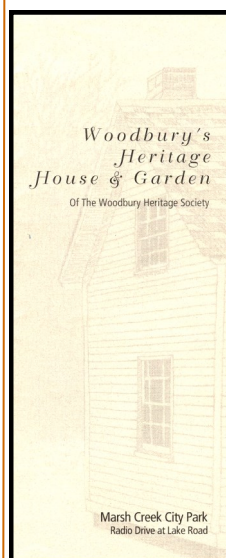


*Bielenberg farmstead home*

privately owned and their donation would be unlikely. Schilling and Schrankler are currently making arrangements to inspect the city-owned barn. Once a site can be determined, a leadership committee will be formed. Many community groups and associations will be invited to become members. The leadership committee would have as its objective securing funding through grants and donations to implement and operate the site. The subsequent progress of the project is very much "site" sensitive.

It is the hope of the board that an agreement on a location can soon be reached with the city. This is a one time only chance for our city, as once these historic structures are razed they are gone forever. The board's profound wish is that we will not hear Susan Boyle singing "Cry Me A River" in the background at any of our future meetings.

*Bill Schrankler*



#### **In memoriam...**

The Rath family has asked us to notify the members of the passing of Terry Rath. Terry was an early member of the Society and contributed the drawing of the Heritage House that is used on its cover. Our sincere condolences to Terry's family.

#### **Board Vacancy**

Vonnie Stutzman, long time member of the Board of Directors, has announced that she will not seek another term.

President John Seemann thanked



*Vonnie*

Vonnie for her many contributions over the years and especially for her work in maintaining the Heritage House.

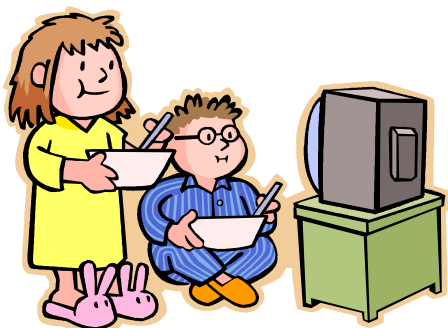
Anyone interested in serving on the board should contact John Seemann by leaving a message at the office—651.714.3564 or email him at: [jseemann@comcast.net](mailto:jseemann@comcast.net)



## Local Cable Television to Air Woodbury History Segments

The Woodbury Heritage Society was approached by the producer of the cable television show *Woodbury Citystyle* to prepare and present short segments about Woodbury's history on the monthly show. It was easy coming up with a list of topics that would be of interest to viewers, harder to find someone in the group willing to go in front of the camera! Kathryn Ho, our volunteer gardener, volunteered to help with the presentations—she considers it just one more “dirty job” she does for us. In all seriousness, though, it is a wonderful outreach opportunity for the Woodbury Heritage Society, one that she hopes leads to more interest from the residents in the valuable work that has gone on for so long by the members who have worked to preserve the history of the early days in Woodbury.

The first segment was taped on February 9<sup>th</sup>, and covers how the city came to be named Woodbury. It was a fairly painless process for Kathryn, who prepared the presentation. She was surprised but not stymied by the producer's last minute changes to her “script.” The segments, titled “A Moment in Time” are on cable channels 16 and 18. You can check their website at [www.swctc.org](http://www.swctc.org) for more information on their programming schedule.

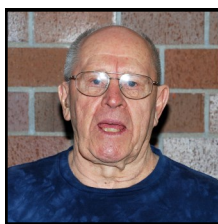


The next segment will be on Woodbury's early schools, and will use information Bill Schrankler has collected. Stay tuned for updates!  
*Kathryn Ho*

## Ken's Korner...



**This is a picture of Ken Wolterstorff**, in 1937, with two of their working horses “Dollie and Lady” and their colts. They were the breeding stock for the future. Their neighbor, Corwin, provided a stallion for breeding. These horses were a necessity for farming, as there wasn't any modern machinery then. This picture was taken on his grandfather, August Kernkamp's farm, located on Afton Road, as Ken's family lived there for a short time. His dad (George Wolterstorff) also farmed the Wolterstorff home farm on Valley Creek Road also (about 160 acres altogether). On the Kernkamp farm they had six horses and about 30 head of young stock. Then on the home farm they had 28 dairy cows. They spent a lot of time going back and forth for chores and milking. Ken didn't mind this because at a young age he was allowed to drive the horses. This was a great honor and thrill for



*Ken Wolterstorff*

morning chores.

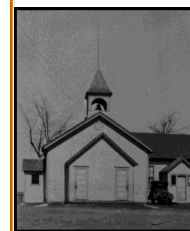
*Editor's note: The WHS Board was asked to share memories that they had growing up in Woodbury. Ken submitted the above story and granted me permission to use it with the proviso that nothing in it could be changed. I was honored to respect his wishes with sincere appreciation.*  
*Editor*

*Heritage Happenings* is distributed quarterly by the Woodbury Heritage Society  
President –John Seemann  
Vice President-Wayne Schilling  
Secretary-Ruth Duncan  
Treasurer-Richard Pribnow

Special thanks to Kathryn Ho for proofreading the *Heritage Happenings*. It is with her help that this issue is minus many errors.

*Heritage Happenings* is edited and published by Bill Schrankler. Contributions from members and other interested parties are welcomed. Contact Bill at 651.738.1836 or email: [bschrankler@comcast.net](mailto:bschrankler@comcast.net). Email or snail mail is preferred in the interest of accuracy.  
6821 Lydia Lane  
Woodbury, MN 55125

## Historic Nugget...



These are the names of the teachers I remember that taught in the District #27 school:

Esther Ziebel Schroeder  
Gertrude Austin  
Bielenberg  
Margaret Olson  
Helen Stromberg  
Betty Morris  
Stella Reed  
Madge Hill  
There was a man teacher with the last name of Robb, but I don't remember his first name.  
Contributed by  
*Richard and Della Pribnow*



Ken Wolterstorff, Kathryn Ho, Wayne Schilling and Bill Schrankler hard at work getting ready for their presentation.

### Woodbury Citizen's Academy to include Woodbury Heritage Society Presentation

The Woodbury Community Foundation is hosting the **Woodbury Citizen's Academy**, a ten-week long course to expand the knowledge of citizens' understanding of how local public, private and nonprofit sectors work to make the City of Woodbury a positive place to reside. Twenty-seven residents have registered for the academy, and meet on Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. to learn about a wide variety of government services and community organizations. The Woodbury Heritage Society is proud to be the presenters of their fifth session on Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, to discuss Woodbury's History. Bill Schrankler and Kathryn Ho are working together to prepare the presentation, which will cover a wide variety of topics connected to Woodbury's development from a sleepy agricultural community to the busy suburban city we enjoy living in today. The presentation will include a PowerPoint presentation, a panel discussion, a craft activity for the participants, and some hands-on time with some of our many artifacts. This is another great opportunity for us to reach interested residents and encourage more participation in the work of the Woodbury Heritage Society.

*Kathryn Ho*

### Out and About...

**Washington County Historical Society**  
**Thursday, March 11, 2010 - 5:30 p.m. Warden's**  
**House Museum - Stillwater, MN**

Join the WCHS for our Annual Membership Meeting, Thursday, March 11, 2010 at Boutwell's Landing Town Hall. Photographer Doug Ohman will speak about his upcoming book, "Prairie, Lake, Forest: Minnesota's State Parks." The event begins with check-in at 5:30, dinner at 6:30, WCHS annual

meeting at 7:30 and the program will begin at 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$20 each for WCHS members and \$25 for non-members. Reservations required. Please call the WCHS office at 651-439-5956 to make your reservation.

### Holiday Party

#### Bud's Bits

Here is a short recap of the Holiday Party of the Woodbury Heritage Society, which was held Sunday Jan 10, 2010 at St John's Lutheran Church. The great attendance was appreciated. These occasions mean so much to everyone, meeting new people and renewing friendships from the past. I guess this is what Our Heritage is all about.



*District 5 County Commissioner Lisa Weik and Emily Wolterstorff*

The "Pot Luck" meal was fantastic, I'm sure there were a few recipes exchanged. The highlight of the gathering was presented by Emily Wolterstorff, The Story of the Woodbury 4-H Club from it Beginning. Emily has done a great job in keeping records of the many accomplishments the Club worked for and enjoyed, not just locally but county, state and national. I am sure a few memories were jogged as she read them off, "Oh Yeah, I remember that!" Many present were recognized. Your record keeping was great, Emily, now you need to get it in a book and get it published.

I, myself, was not in the 4-H Program in my youth, but my family became involved when they were of age. I was an adult leader of a Rival Club, the "Go-Getters" so I do know what leadership is all about. Also a thank you, to Glen Warnke for displaying the 4-H artifacts, his father Alvin, had collected over the years. Thank you everyone who was in attendance to make this a joyous occasion.

Thank you so much, Emily, for all your time-consuming work in preparing your presentation.

*Bud Urtel*

