



A Publication of the Griffith Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 678, Griffith, IN 46319 ♦ www.griffithhistoricalsociety.org

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Good-bye Winter, Hello GHS Activities!

Spring is here, which means robins return, plants pop up out of the ground — and the Historical Society begins scheduling their spring and summer events.

Outdoor Activities

Beginning on May 11th, we again will start running **The Hess Express**, at Griffith's Central Market on Friday nights (weather permitting.)

And we are proud and pleased to announce that a brand new wonderful John Deere tractor will be pulling **The Hess Express**, replacing the one that died at the end of last summer.

Making it possible for us to purchase this much-needed tractor is a donation from Griffith resident **Sarah S. Cundiff**. We cannot begin to express our deep gratitude to Ms Cundiff for this wonderful gift she has given us.

The Hess Express also takes part in the Griffith 4th of July parade, the Rock 'n' Rail Festival over Labor Day weekend, and the Public Safety and Community Day on September 8th, Come Fall, we're at the Griffith Oktoberfest.

Beginning this year, our barrel train will be at the **Griffith Blues and BBQ Festival** in Central Park on June 29th to July 1st.

If you are interested in buying **advertising space** on one of our barrel train cars, contact **Nancy Stout** at the number at the left.

One regret that we have is we must announce we will no longer be putting on **Bands 'n' Brews**. It's been a fun, wonderful event, but a combination of high overhead and not enough people to run the event has made this decision inevitable.

Time to Renew

We need your help to keep on keeping on. We also need your input on what we're doing now and your ideas for new things we might try.

So, it's important you renew your membership! We are enclosing two membership forms — one for you and one for a friend or family member to join.

Enclose the form, along with your check payable to the Griffith Historical Society, in the pre-addressed envelope we have enclosed. Then put a stamp on it and drop it in the mail to us

Note to Life Members: You do NOT need to renew your membership! Please give the two membership forms you receive with this newsletter to someone you think might be interested in joining us.



Join us at noon on Saturday, June 9th at our Griffith Historical Park as we dedicate the placement of the new plaques that state that our Depot and Tower are on the State and National Registers of Historical Places. More info will be available on our website listed at the top of the page.

FAREWELL, DEAR FRIEND

*In December, we lost our dear friend, **Delores Wilcox Smessaert**. Delores was born and raised in Griffith, the daughter of Franklin School teacher and coach, Clyde Wilson, and she was a fount of knowledge about town history and the people who lived here. Music played a big part in Delores' life, and she taught music for many years.*

Delores was also a long-time Griffith Historical Society member. She supported all our activities, served on our Board of Directors, and as Society president. She helped coordinate the saving of the Griffith Interlocking Tower, and worked to raise the funds needed to move the building to our Historical Park in July, 2000. As part of these activities, she wrote the poem at the left and a copy of it hangs proudly in our Depot Museum to this day.

THE POWER OF THE TOWER

Proudly stretching toward he sky
Standing tall,
Heralding all
The trains that traveled by.
Guiding each that it might reach
Its destination safely
While shipping goods across the land.
The tower's role was stately.
Aiding the economy
And helping this land grow
By train and rail, from shore to shore.
Its history all should know.
Respected in its final hour.
Let's not forget
Our nation's debt
To the power of the tower.

Our condolences go out to long-time Griffith Historical Society Board Member **Eileen Janovsky** on the recent death of her daughter-in-law, Vicki Janovsky.

Spotlight on Franklin

Our newest seasonal display put up in the fall spotlighting **Paul Goldsmith** and **Ray Nichels** will continue to be up through the summer.

We also continue our project cataloging and digitizing information on Griffith History. We now have more than 8,000 items in the special computer program created for the Historical Society, with more being added every week.

Our Historical Display Room is open the first and third Saturdays, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

During this time, we have a person on hand who can search for photos or info in the computer program. If you have photos or documents you'd like to share, come in and we can scan the items into the computer and give the originals back to you if you want them back.

Thanks a Heap!

We are so grateful to:

- ☺ **Ray and Rachelle White** for the annual dinner centerpieces.
- ☺ **Jim Marker**, Griffith Town Councilman, for swearing in our officers and board members at the dinner.
- ☺ **Lady's Gourmet Popcorn** for inviting us to take Santa photos in their store as part of Griffith's Kris Kringle Walk.
- ☺ **Mariah Stout** and **Zach Steele** for taking the Santa photos for us; **Craig Hoot**, **Alan Kulinski** and **Logan Kulinski** for printing out Santa photos; **Debby Hoot**, & **Nancy Stout** for selling Santa photos, and to Nancy for counting out and distributing Santa flyers to the schools.
- ☺ **Shawn Graham** for being Santa for us, and to **Judy Young** for being Mrs. Claus.
- ☺ **Steve Kovcesi** for being Santa in our Caboose, and we send our good wishes to Steve for a continued recovery from the medical emergency surgery he recently underwent.
- ☺ **Phil Dembowski** and **Alan Kulinski** for getting the heaters running in the railcars for Santa in the Caboose.
- ☺ **Connie Hess** for running our Holiday Bake Sale with the help of **Maxine Hess**.
- ☺ Members of the **Girl Scout Troop from Beiriger School** and their leader for volunteering at Santa in the Caboose.
- ☺ **The Town of Griffith** who kept our parking lot plowed at the Historical Park all winter.
- ☺ **Karen and Alan Kulinski**, **Ken Krick**, and **Phil Dembowski** for decorating the railcars for Santa in the Caboose.
- ☺ The **Griffith American Legion Auxiliary** and the **Griffith Tri Kappa** for their generous monetary donations they have given us over the years.
- ☺ And a **really, really BIG** thank you to the Griffith Town Council for the help and encouragement they continue to give us.