



# Quarterly Newsletter



## Membership Renewal is Underway

Thank you to everyone who has renewed or rejoined WTHS for 2026. We are thrilled to welcome many former members back to the organization. Our new local discount program is proving to be a well-received perk! You may scan the code to complete the online form or visit [this link](#) to print, complete and return your membership form along with payment. Memberships expire each year on December 31.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

So much has happened since our last newsletter. We have grown in membership and made significant improvements to the village. We are looking forward to 2026 and the work ahead, especially exploring new possibilities with the Dexter Senior Center that could bring more programming to the Historical Society.

## Community Survey Results

Thank you to all who took the time to complete our AAACF Community Survey. Your feedback gives us great insight into your personal experiences and is helping to guide us as we continue to make improvements to what we do moving forward.

Overall, the written comments were overwhelmingly positive. Many people expressed how nice it is to see friends and neighbors at the events held in the Village, especially the Webster Fall Festival. Others shared gratitude that we provide family friendly options while some spoke about enjoying the schoolhouse simulations and blacksmith demonstrations

We received excellent, constructive suggestions regarding marketing and new programs. One common concern had to do with limited communication about events. We heard this loud and clear and will begin sending postcard mailers out this year. New programs were suggested as well, including more activities for kids, traditional homestead crafts and skills workshops, nutrition classes, movie and game nights as well as fitness programs.

Thank to everyone who showed interest in volunteering with WTHS. If you were a person who said yes to volunteering, please send an email to [debi@webstervillage.org](mailto:debi@webstervillage.org) so we can connect. We are looking forward to another exciting year!

## Next Member Meeting: Tuesday, March 10 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Members are invited to join us at Crossroads Community Center for the next Member Meeting. The evening will include the WTHS Strategic Plan report, a summary of the Community Survey results and a guest speaker.

Light refreshments will be served. Come learn how your membership dues and donations are helping to shape the dynamic future of WTHS.

## In Loving Memory of Jack Clark

Jack A. Clark passed away on January 3, 2026 at the age of 92. While well known in our local community as the longtime owners of Cribbley Drilling Company, Jack and his wife Jane also



played vital roles in the expansion and improvement of WTHS and Historic Webster Village.

Jack and Jane joined the WTHS Board of Directors in 1998. From 1999 – 2000, they served as co-vice-presidents, and in 2000, they began serving as co-presidents. They stayed in those roles until Jack stepped down in March of 2016. During those years, Jack helped guide the building of Kleinschmidt General Store, repair work on Podunk School and Wheeler Wheelwright and Blacksmith Shop, as well as the restoration of the Webster Community Hall, now Crossroads Community Center.

Jack will hold a special place in the hearts of all who knew him. His contributions to WTHS will be forever felt by all who visit the Village.



### Eagle Scout Project Completed!

Ty Cottrell of Boy Scout Troop 448 of Dexter successfully completed restoring the historic 3-hole privy near Podunk School, which was falling victim to the elements. The cedar roof and siding were replaced and a fresh coat of paint was applied inside and out. The newly restored outhouse adds even more charm to the village and is for exhibit only.

### Master Gardeners Visit the Gardens at Historic Webster Village

In mid-September, the WTHS hosted a meet-and-greet for members from the MSU Extension Master Gardener Program. The focus of the visit was to take a detailed look at May's Garden, a demonstration garden containing perennial flowers and medicinal herbs from the late 1800's. Following introductions and a tour of the Village, lunch was enjoyed along with a lively discussion of flowers, weeds, bees, and herbs.



Master Gardeners must complete a ten-week course and provide 40 hours of volunteer work within a year to be certified. Maintenance of May's Garden requires more than one person can manage, so help was sought from the Master Gardeners' program. As a result of the visit, May's Garden became a MSU Extension Master Gardener approved project. It is our hope that an eager volunteer will step up to help care for the garden.



### 2025 MORSA Conference

Joanne Westman (WTHS Board Director) and Debi Bailey (Administrative Assistant) ventured out to the 2025 Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Association (MORSA) Annual Conference in September. This year's conference was hosted by the Manchester Historical Society. The morning segment included a fascinating talk about vintage postcards by Keith Howard entitled "Rural Schoolhouses in Real Postcards".

We also toured Mottice Farm located on Pleasant Lake Road. Bob and Sandy Mottice moved and restored the Sharon Township one-room school house onto their property brick by brick. The farm also boasts a blacksmith shop, log cabin, carpenter shop and other 19th century structures.



WTHS is pleased to share that we have been selected to host the 2026 MORSA Annual Conference. This will be the second time for WTHS, the first being in 2012. Visit [www.miorsa.org](http://www.miorsa.org) for more information

### 42nd Webster Fall Festival

This year's Webster Fall Festival was referred to as "The best one yet!" This year swapped out pulled pork dinners and the hotdog stand for a sandwich booth hosted by Raterman's Bread Haus and a few food trucks. We also shifted away from a live auction and held a silent auction instead.



Despite these changes many aspects of the festival remain at the heart of the event. The community gathered together as the festival provided people with the opportunity to see how things were done over 150 years ago. *continued on next page...*

## 42nd Webster Fall Festival, cont'd

Big thanks go out to our sponsors, donors, coordinators, planning committee, volunteers and demonstrators. Shout out to Firesign Family Farm for organizing the petting zoo and the old time games on the Village Green. A lot of laughter and excitement ensued with the tug-of-war, three-legged races, and other competitions from an earlier era.



The 43rd annual Webster Fall Festival will be Saturday, September 26, 2026. We are looking forward to seeing you there! Donate. Bring friends. Volunteer. And enjoy the Webster Fall Festival.

For more information on WFF 2026 please contact [debi@webstervillage.org](mailto:debi@webstervillage.org)  
For more photos of past Webster Fall Festivals, visit our photo gallery on the website!



## Member Meeting Recaps

October's member meeting was held in Podunk Schoolhouse. WTHS was happy to welcome Rochelle Balkham, president of the Michigan One-room Schoolhouse Association (MORSA), as our guest speaker. Rochelle shared an intriguing look into the historic schoolhouses in Michigan, paying special attention to the experiences of the students and teachers. Members enjoyed light refreshments while hearing accounts of school life from the past, including a horse-drawn school bus that operated in the Upper Peninsula in the 1900's.



Our Holiday Potluck was held in early December. A cheerful evening filled with delicious food, good conversation and plenty of laughter was enjoyed by all in attendance.



## THANK YOU DEXTER SENIOR CENTER

Dexter Senior Center generously donated cafeteria tables, a collection of folding chairs and an adjustable stand-up desk for the office at Crossroads. WTHS appreciates these gifts and have put them to use multiple times since we received them!

## RECIPE CORNER

### Ginger Crinkles from Anne Lask

Anne shares that these cookies have been a favorite of friends and family for years.

2/3 cup oil  
1 cup white sugar  
1 egg  
4 Tbsp molasses

2 cups flour  
2 tsp soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp ground ginger

1/4 c sugar for dipping

Heat oven to 350° F.  
Mix oil & sugar thoroughly. Add egg & beat well. Stir in molasses. Sift dry ingredients together in a separate bowl then add. Drop teaspoons into sugar and form into balls coated with sugar. Place on an un-greased cookie sheet. Bake for 15 min.

## Volunteer Appreciation Party

The first annual Volunteer Appreciation Party was held on the afternoon of October 18th. Brad Clark, Rick Kleinschmidt, Jim Kulp, and Dave Polley initiated the plan to host a party for the many volunteers who have offered their time, effort and energy to support the Webster Fall Festival. The idea quickly grew to include all volunteers. Invitations were sent to friends, neighbors, and members of both the Historical Society and Webster Church of Christ.



Brad Clark arrived early in the morning to start the smoker. Delicious aromas filled the air as people arrived with an assortment of food to share. David Swanson celebrated his 91st birthday that same day and enjoyed everyone singing "Happy Birthday".

The weather cooperated and the party was well received. Rick, Brad, Jim and Dave plan to hold this party each year to thank the volunteers who help make so many events a success!



## HALLOWE'EN ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

Historic Webster Village was all decked out in its ghostly best for our 3rd Hallowe'en on the Village Green. Little ghosts and goblins gathered in May's Barn for craft. After decorating treat bags and tiny pumpkins, everyone headed out to the Village for fun.

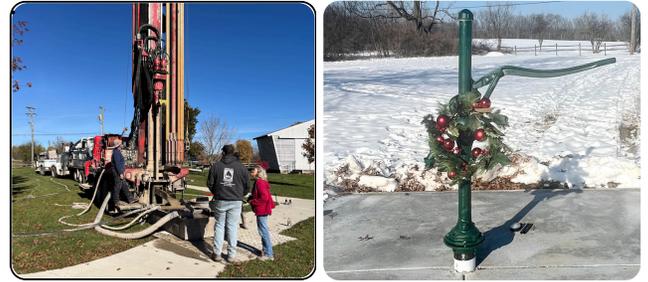
The costumed docents welcomed the children with a treat and a stamp on their passport in each building. The school bell rang to signal for the parade around the path.

Then it was off to the Kleinschmidt General Store for cider and cookies and to draw the winners of the large pumpkins in the village. It was a perfect fall day – warm sun, falling leaves and happy families.

Big thanks go to the Westman Tree Farm for setting up a spooky village and donating tiny pumpkins and gourds. Thanks also to Jenny's Farm Market for donating the large pumpkins!

## WATER PUMP IN THE VILLAGE

Thanks to funds from our AAACF grant, Historic Webster Village has a new addition! You may have noticed it between the Dieterle Corn Crib and the Old Town Hall if you attended "Christmas in the Village". Cribley Drilling Company came to the Village to dig a well, pour a concrete pad and install a hand pump. The Webster community now has a year round source for potable water in case of a power outage.



Should you ever have a need to use the latest addition to the Village, the hand pump is a short walk from the North entrance of the Historic Webster Village grounds, on the south side of the Webster Township Hall parking lot.

## WOODTURNERS HOLIDAY SALE

For the past thirteen years, the Huron Valley Woodturners have held their December Holiday Sale at Crossroads. To show their appreciation this year the artisans donated 20% of sales to Webster Township Historical Society. If you are interested in learning more about woodturning, come to their monthly meeting on the third Sunday of each month from 1-4.



## CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE



It was one of those “in the bleak midwinter” evenings in the Historic Webster Village. Despite the cold, the Village was aglow with holiday cheer and the warm light of candles and luminaires in the snow. A 14’ Christmas tree, filled with colorful lights, stood on the deck of Dieterle Corncrib. Carols sung by the Arbor Consort, in period costume, rang throughout the Village.

Podunk School was filled to capacity for readings of *T’was the Night Before Christmas*. Santa Claus greeted children in the Old Town Hall where a miniature snow-covered village was on display. The Blacksmith Shop featured our village smithy, standing over the forge, making his magic with fire, anvil, hammer and tongs.



At May’s Barn, children made ornaments for the family tree and families sat for pictures in front of May’s old carriage, festooned with greenery and lights. In the General Store, everyone enjoyed homemade hot cocoa and cookies. Some even ventured outside to sit by the nearby firepit.

As the “bleak mid-winter” drew to a close, the Village rested quietly beneath lantern light, with snow reflecting their warm gold tones. The setting reminds us of the people who once lived and worked here, whose efforts helped shape the community’s identity and sense of place.

Heartfelt thanks go to Kate Haywood and Joanne Westman for sponsoring the Arbor Consort carolers and also to Westman Tree Farm for donating the big fir tree, firepit and firewood.



Visit the link below to learn more information about Webster Township’s proposals, agendas and upcoming meeting .

<https://twp.webster.mi.us/>

Photo credits in this issue go to Craig Albert, Dita Albert, Debi Bailey, Mary Clark, Joanne Westman and State Representative Jennifer Conlin’s team.

Thank you to Dita Albert, Dave Polley, Thelma Tucker, Joanne Westman and Martha Zeeb for their written contributions.

Debi Bailey  
Newsletter Editor

# Upcoming Events

**NEED A RIDE?  
RIDE THE  
WAVE!**



The WAVE (Western Washtenaw Area Value Express) bus system provides safe, affordable rides to anyone in the WAVE Coverage Area to anywhere in Washtenaw County for any reason with fixed routes and door-to-door service.

Consider giving them a call if you need transportation to any of our events. Fares are \$1 each way for Seniors!

Click the bus for more info. <https://ridethewavebus.org> (734) 475-9494

We are adding new programs and events throughout the year. Keep an eye on our [website](#) for additional dates and information.

## Spring English Tea\*

Saturday, March 21 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

## Celtic Harp Concert\*

Sunday, May 31 2:00 - 4:00 pm

## Flea Market and Craft Fair

Saturday, June 6 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

## Bluegrass Jamboree\*

Saturday, August 1 2:00 - 7:00 pm

## Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Annual Conference (registration required)

Saturday, September 12 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

## 43rd Annual Webster Fall Festival

Saturday, September 26 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

## Volunteer Appreciation Party

Saturday, October 17 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

## Hallowe'en on the Village Green\*

Saturday, October 24 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

## Woodturners Holiday Craft Sale

December 5 and 6

## Christmas in the Village\*

Saturday, December 12 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**Men's  
Monday**

Coffee, donuts and good conversation!

Mondays, ongoing throughout the year

10 am -12 pm

**Webster  
Women's  
Social Club  
Lunch Meeting**

Last Tuesday of each month

12:00-1:30 pm

**Euchre Nights!**

Tournament style! Hearty refreshments will be served. \$5 suggested donation.

Feb 26, Mar 26 & Apr 23

Check in begins at 6:00 pm

♠ ♥ ♣ ♦

**WTHS Member  
2026 Meetings**

2nd Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 pm

Mar. 10 Guest Speaker at Crossroads

Jun. 9 Family Picnic in the Village

Oct. 13 Guest Speaker in the Village

Dec. 8 Holiday Potluck at Crossroads

\* Denotes Ticketed Event