

IN MEMORY Howard County Historian Jonathan D. Russell (1947-2023)



Footprints

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Bob Auth



Xenia Cord



John Grant Jr.



Jane Ann Noble Luljak



Angela Martino



Frank Stein

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I hope this quarterly issue of HCHS Footprints magazine finds you all well! I am so happy that you have found this issue and I hope and pray you find it both informative and interesting.

In this issue of Footprints, you will find all the information regarding our Class of 2024 Hall of Legends honorees. If you're thinking to yourself, "Gee, it seems like we just had a Hall of Legends event recently," you would be correct.

In 2024, the staff and the Board of Trustees of the Howard County Historical Society decided to move the event from its August dates up into the first half of the calendar year. There were several compelling reasons to do so and we are excited to kick off our major 2024 events with this year's class! I won't "spoil" the surprise of the members of the class – as you can find them by continuing to read through this edition – but I WILL say that I hope you can join us for the evening of Thursday, April 25, to celebrate and congratulate the honorees of this year's program and their families and friends!

The event will begin in Ivy Tech Kokomo's Hingst Hall with the doors opening at 6 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at our website (howardcountymuseum.org) or at the HCHS office in the Elliott House carriage house at 1200 W. Sycamore St. I look forward to seeing you there!

Another event that you can pencil into your calendar is the 2024 version of the Mr. Kingston's Historic Car Show that is slated to run on Friday, July 26, from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, July 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the grounds of the Seiberling Mansion. The committee is working to make this an awesome event with lots of great educational information and demonstrations. It will once again be an excellent way to learn about Kokomo and Howard County's long history with the automobile. There will be much more information regarding this event forthcoming.

Thank you for reading! If you have any questions regarding any of the upcoming events or if you want to donate OR volunteer to assist us in our work, please call the society at (765) 452-4314. I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Respectfully,

Dave Dubois
HCHS Board President

From the Executive Director

Extra Time

We've had some extra time for this issue, so it feels like so much has happened since our last issue of 2023! Check out this issue for write-ups of the last successful events of the year.

Speaking of the extra time, with the date change for Hall of Legends to the spring, we hope you enjoy this special issue highlighting six amazing individuals with Howard County ties. It's a tough job every year to choose inductees because of all the deserving people and organizations. Thank you to the selection and event committees for making this possible! Speaking from experience, it is almost impossible to condense the inductees' accomplishments into the articles you will read in this issue. Don't forget to visit www.howardcountymuseum.org/hall-of-legends for more information and tickets for our April 25 event.

In very sad news, Howard County lost one of our most important historians, Jon Russell, on Dec. 7, 2023. Jon was a great history ally, knowledgeable researcher and historian, veteran, teacher, artist, husband, father, and friend. He is greatly missed. Please read on for a tribute to Jon.

I am excited to announce that we will have a new exhibit in the mansion this year! Our staff and volunteers are very busy working on the history of the mansion itself, its residents, and unique architecture. Stay tuned for details and dates coming soon for the opening of the exhibit in the Long Gallery on the first floor of the mansion.

I would be greatly remiss if I didn't mention a recent project we collaborated on with Kokomo High School's United States History class taught by Mr. Matt Myers. Perhaps you saw the article about it in the Kokomo Tribune. We were delighted to loan some of our artifacts that the kids then utilized to create their own classroom museum in the high school. I cannot begin to tell you how impressed we have been with all the hard work and results. One of my goals when I stepped into my role as director was to connect with younger audiences, and it's very rewarding to see these projects develop as we move forward. We are in the midst of planning collaborations with several Scout groups, brainstorming programming for children, and possibly even some partnering with other local schools on projects.

I had a chance to attend a talk by Eunice Trotter, Director of the Black Heritage Preservation Program at Indiana Landmarks. Eunice shared an enlightening presentation about Black history in Indiana at the Carver Center in February (thank you to the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library). This history is often overshadowed and complicated, but remains very important. The stories are full of perseverance, trials, hope, setbacks, and victories, leaving a heritage that remains strong today. I highly encourage you to follow along with Indiana Landmark's programming. Check out <https://www.indianalandmarks.org/about/black-heritage-preservation-program/> for more information and past presentations on Youtube.

I hope you enjoy this special issue and you are able to join us on April 25 at 6 p.m. for the 2024 Hall of Legends event at Ivy Tech. I'm absolutely positive you will be impressed with this year's class!

Sincerely, *Anne*

Anne Shaw
HCHS Executive Director

In Memory: Jonathan D. Russell (1947-2023)

True Renaissance Man



By Linda Ferries

HCHS Publications Committee Chair

When cancer and pneumonia claimed Jon Russell on Dec. 7, 2023, at the age of 76, the world lost a true artist, patriot, historian, and consummate storyteller. His family lost a loving husband and father, Howard County lost its official county historian, customers around the United States lost a nationally recognized contractor/artisan/historic preservationist, and I was among the broad array of people who lost a friend.

I've been writing for Footprints and its earlier incarnations for, ummmm, decades and I'm pretty sure I could count on one hand the number of times I've taken a personal approach to a story. You'll have to accept this lapse in journalistic objectivity. For more than 40 years, Jon Russell has been a friend and a "co-conspirator" on a slew of local historical projects. And every day, his handiwork (in the form of custom replications of late 19th Century door frames and window trim) for our 1889 Taylor Street home serves as a reminder of the talent and commitment Jon Russell shared with us. More than anything, I miss the long and winding – and supremely interesting – stories Jon had for every occasion. I never knew when he'd drop in a bit of wisdom gleaned from his many experiences, but I always knew one would come.

In 2016, I wrote a story for the May edition of Footprints announcing the appointment of a new Howard County historian – Jonathan Russell. I'll draw significantly from that story (I can't plagiarize myself, can I?) with this attempt to bookend that service and honor his memory. This version will include updates and additions to the 2016 article.

A true Renaissance man, Jonathan Russell's interests ran from sculpture to painting, from the history of the United States to his family history, from etched glass to pipe organs, from military service to teaching junior high art classes, from restoring historic buildings to creating a thoroughly modern "maker space." Sculptor, painter, sign maker, karate master, preservationist, muralist, teacher, mentor, leader – in 2016, he added a new title to his list of credits, that of Howard County Historian.

In February 2016, the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau had announced that Jon had been appointed Howard County historian. In this role, he was to act as a liaison between statewide agencies and local organizations and answer questions from the public about Howard County's traditions and legacy. It was a natural fit for a man whose love of history went back to his childhood. The owner of Russell Design since 1979, he was nearing the age of 70 then and said he thought he'd slow down, back out of some obligations, take it a little easier. Instead, he took on a variety of new assignments that, for the last almost eight years, saw him busier than ever. Retirement never happened.

One of his earliest memories, he recounted then, went back to when, as a child in Delaware in 1953, he met and talked with one of the state's last surviving participants of the Civil War, a centenarian who had served as a cabin boy. His family later moved in and out of Indiana as his father served a variety of churches; Russell settled here permanently in the early 1970s after graduating from Carroll High School in 1965, serving as an Army medic in Vietnam and completing a bachelor's degree in art education, fine art and art history at Purdue University in 1976. For his first years in Howard County, he was an art instructor in Western Schools.

During his nearly 50 years in Howard County,

Jon racked up an impressive list of experiences. He was a member and former president of the Howard County Historical Society and the Howard County Genealogical Society and also served as president of the Kokomo Historic Review Board. As Howard County historian, Jon was a regular contributor to the HCHS quarterly publication *Footprints*, sharing stories of the county's historic buildings and news of his latest preservation efforts. He was active in the founding of the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood Association and Architectural Heritage of Kokomo-Howard County Inc. in the 1980s and was instrumental in obtaining National Register of Historic Places designation for a number of historic properties. He served on the advisory board of the Russiaville Historical Society, where he was active in the restoration of the interurban station.

As a member of Preserving Wildcat Valley, he helped promote the history of the creek's winding path, hoping to expand that program from his former home in Carroll County east to Howard County. He worked with the Kokomo Early History Learning Center, looking at the area's history before the arrival of Europeans. In addition, Jon was founding member of the Kokomo Designers' Showhome, an annual fundraiser for the YWCA that, in the 1990s, featured updates and redecoration of both the Elliott House and the Seiberling Mansion.

Military service and military history were also subjects dear to this U.S. Army veteran who served as a medic in the Vietnam War. He was a member of the American Legion and active in the Sons of the American Revolution, having, with the aid of Amy, his genealogy-expert wife, traced his family line back to the founding of the United States. As a member of the board of the Howard County Veterans Memorial Committee, he was an integral part of the development of monuments at Darrough Chapel Park and on the courthouse square to honor veterans' service and sacrifice.

He was a leader in the development of the SHAK Makerspace, an association of inventors, tinkers, artisans and builders resurrecting the “Spirit of Haynes and Apperson in Kokomo,” now at 210 W. Monroe St.

In the 1990s, Jon turned his talents to sculpting, creating the lion’s head that serves as the keystone of an arch at “Old City Hall” (now the Hobson) as well as the figure of Jesus Christ that graces the Kokomo Rescue Mission. In 2015, his impressive statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was unveiled as the centerpiece of the MLK memorial park on Apperson Way at Jackson Street.

Indeed, quantity, quality and variety of the work that came out of Jon’s studio, Russell Design, seems almost unbelievable. Just a few examples ...

Pipe organ restoration: Among the pipe organs dismantled and refurbished with replica stenciling and sheets and sheets of gold leaf included those from St. James Lutheran Church in Logansport, Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, and St. James Episcopal Church in Baton Rouge, La.

Signs and murals: Jon’s handiwork decorated the walls of Don Pancho’s in Kokomo, among many others. His award-winning hand-carved sign depicting a traditional German couple welcomed guests to the Bavarian Inn, a bed-and-breakfast on South Dixon Road. Russell signs – carved from stone, created from salvaged vintage materials, or featuring bricks and neon – have graced Las Cabanas, a Mexican restaurant in Rochester; the Chrystal Woods subdivision and the Walnut Creek apartment complex; and Peace Lutheran Church in Kokomo, to name just a few.

Etched glass: The altar in the chapel at Christ Lutheran on South Dixon Road, Jon’s church, features an etched glass cross that he created. Patrons to the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library are treated to the beautiful City of Firsts

project, a wall of glass that bisects the main floor with designs drawn by local artist Tony Budenz and etched by Jon and Jon created festive glass panels featuring clowns and circus tents for the Circus City Inn in Peru.

Historic restorations, faux finishes, re-creations: So many restoration efforts, so many places. The Russiaville interurban station, the Greentown Historical Society buildings, Kokomo’s “Railroad House” on North Buckeye Street that Jon guessed was built around 1850, churches in Elwood and Remington, private homes too numerous to count.

When Jon died, the tributes poured in, attesting to his skills – and how much he will be missed. Here are just a few, along with comments endorsing his talents on his LinkedIn profile:

From Eric Sommers, Star Building Supply: *“I have known Jonathan for nearly 40 years. He is a master craftsman, artist, and man of vast knowledge. We at Star Building Supply enjoy partnering with him on projects. They are always opportunities for our staff to learn from him. He is the go-to if there is a question about historical construction.”*

From HCHS board member and local preservationist Larry Hayes, Hayes Brothers Inc.: *“There is nobody anywhere like Jon. He is willing and fully capable to meet your needs, whatever they are, be it wood or stone carving, faux finishes, historic restoration of any kind. I have worked with Jon on many projects and he has always exceeded my expectations.”*

From Dorwin Starr, on the date of Jon’s funeral: *“Kokomo is thinking today with great respect and sadness at the loss of Jonathan Russell. Historical societies national, state, and Kokomo have lost a friend who shared such rich history with so many. He also has offered words of history so helpful to me.”*

Jonathan Russell, you are missed.

Family Man



Photos Courtesy of the Russell Family

From left, Abigail, Jon, Tyler, Victoria, Amy and Mary at Tyler and Victoria's wedding. Below, grandson Lucas.

While our main focus is on Jon Russell's historical contributions, no tribute would be complete without acknowledging the family he cherished.

The woman behind the man?
Amy Orstadt Russell.

Jon and Amy met at a Taco Bell in Kokomo. He was 27, the assistant manager, trying to figure out his next steps. She was 19, working a summer job between her freshman and sophomore years. "By the end of summer," Amy says, "he followed me back to Purdue." After graduating from Carroll High School in 1965, Jon attended what was then Marion College until the school decided to drop the major he had pursued for three years. He'd taught art at Western Schools, gone to Vietnam, done a semester at Indiana University ... and was back home in Kokomo. After "following Amy to Purdue," he earned a bachelor's degree in Art Education, Art History and Fine Art (painting) in 1976.

Jon officially started putting his skills to work with his company and studio Russell Design in 1979. Amy pursued her own interests, studying library science and earning degrees from Purdue



in 1977 and Indiana University in 1989. She was a librarian at Haynes International for more than 28 years before joining the Kokomo-Howard County Public Library staff. For the last 11 years, she has headed up the library's Genealogy & Local History Department.

Through the years, the Russell family grew and Jon is also survived by three children, all graduates of Northwestern High School: Abigail (Abby) Russell of Kokomo, an Indiana State trooper; Tyler Russell, a General Motors employee who works in IT security and lives in Austin, Texas, with wife Victoria and their son (and Jon and Amy's first grandchild), Lucas; and Mary Russell of Kokomo, an accountant for Chariot Auto Group.

Amy described Jon as "eclectic."

"He didn't turn down any job because he always thought he could do it," she said. "He'd come home and study and learn all he could ... and then he'd get the job done."

With all those life experiences, Jon always had a story for everything, Amy said, adding, "He loved to tell stories and teach at the same time."

And he was still talking about retiring ...

2024 Hall of Legends



Bob Auth



Xenia Cord



John Grant Jr.

SIX INTERESTING, ACCOMPLISHED and notable individuals with Howard County ties who have made contributions on the local, state, and national levels will be inducted into the Howard County Hall of Legends at the annual banquet in Kokomo, Indiana, Thursday, April 25.

Members of the 14th Hall of Legends class, chosen by a volunteer committee of community leaders from a wide range of organizations, are **BOB AUTH** (a Howard County native who, for 20 years, hosted the Koh-Koh-Mah and Foster Living History Encampment on his property west of Kokomo), **XENIA CORD** (a native of Norway who became a pre-eminent collector, scholar and author in the world of quilting and was inducted into the Quilting Hall of Fame in 2018), **JOHN GRANT JR.** (a Kokomo transplant who owns and operates radio station Power104.9 WTSX and was recently inducted into the Hip Hop Hall of Fame), the late **JANE ANN NOBLE LULJAK** (a Kokomo High School graduate who, as a 24-year-old co-ed at DePauw University, was elected in 1948 to serve in the Indiana House of Representatives), **ANGELA MARTINO** (this native of Italy was owner and operator of Martino's Italian Villa for 60 years and was inducted into the Pizza Hall of Fame in 2020), and the late **FRANK STEIN** (a Pennsylvania native who became a brilliant physicist and left his mark on Kokomo culture as well as in the world of solid state electronics and semiconductors).

Several threads run through the Hall of Legends Class of 2024, similarities found in research on their lives. Two (Xenia and Angela) came to America as chil-

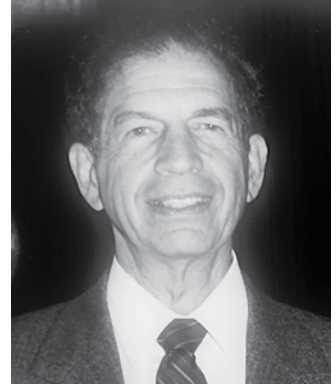
2024 Hall of Legends



Jane Ann Noble Luljak



Angela Martino



Frank Stein

dren, fleeing the chaos of World War II in their European home countries; a third (Jane Ann) married a man who had fled with his family from their Eastern European home. Three (Xenia, John and Angela) have been inducted previously in national “Halls of Fame” for their contributions to three very different fields. Five brought their talents to Kokomo from elsewhere; only one (Bob Auth) was born and raised in Howard County. One, Frank Stein, posthumously joins his wife, Judge Eleanor Stein, in the Howard County Hall of Legends, the first husband and wife to be chosen for this honor.

The 2024 honorees join a list of more than 80 truly exceptional people and organizations with Howard County connections who have been honored in the first 13 years of this program. Some were born in Howard County and have made their mark here or in the broader world. Some came here and made outstanding contributions in their “adopted” home. You can learn more about the program and those who have been honored here: howardcountymuseum.org/programs/hall-of-legends .

The Hall of Legends banquet, a program of the Howard County Historical Society (HCHS), will begin at 6 p.m. at Hingst Hall on the Ivy Tech Kokomo Campus, 1815 E. Morgan St. Tickets are available through the HCHS website at the link above or by calling the office at 765-452-4314.

Read on to learn more about the Legends of 2024 ...

2024 Hall of Legends



Bob Auth

For 20 years **BOB AUTH** hosted the Koh-Koh-Mah and Foster Living History Encampment on his property in western Howard County.

It was such a beloved event that, when it came to a close in 2021, it brought with it an outpouring of emotion from Bob and fellow participants.

Bob is a Howard County native who spent much of his childhood roaming the woods and teaching himself fun hobbies like riding a unicycle and juggling (two things that happened at the same time only sporadically). He attended Western High School, where he was president of the Art Club. Bob enjoyed high school and made the most of it (sometimes maybe too much fun, he said with a wink). After graduating in 1972, Bob held a myriad of jobs over 50 years, including an apprenticeship for mold/tool and die making that he put to use at Delco Electronics and later as sales manager at Lorentson Manufacturing.

As a young man, Bob attended a Civil War reenactment at Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and fell in love. After participating as a reenactor in the Honey Creek Rendezvous in New London, Bob solidified his dream by starting the same type of tradition. When the Honey Creek Rendezvous ended in the 1990s, it was just a few years before Bob took those experiences and created what became an annual event on his own property west of Kokomo.

Working in tandem with friend Brian Wilson, they set their priority on the historical accuracy of the event.

"It was important to do whatever you can to keep the history correct," Bob said, referring to the military reenactment, the people portraying historical

figures, the crafts, and the storytelling that made Koh-Koh-Mah what it was. The first year (2001) saw 150 participants in the reenactment and camps, a number that would eventually grow to more than 1,200 some years.

The yearly event was also a collaboration with the Howard County Historical Society, which provided the manpower for candle making and roasting corn. Over the years, tens of thousands of visitors attended from across the United States. Nearly 30,000 students from Howard County, mostly 4th graders, were able to get up close and personal with living history on a special student day each year.

There were demonstrations on how to make rope and yarn, candle making, 18th century games and a Native drum dance. A bit of local flair was captured by having re-enactors portray Chief Kokomo and David Foster (including Foster's great-great-great-grandson, also named David Foster). Bob would even show off his musical talents by playing fiddle and mouth harp with other musicians on stage, performing 18th century songs.

Bob's other love, Bluegrass music, was an important part of Koh-Koh-Mah and eventually spun off with its own event, Winding Creek Music Festival. Bob and his team ran both events for 14 years. Bob insists that his wife, Robin, is a saint for supporting his dreams.

"I never realized how much I loved doing this kind of stuff until I started doing it," Bob said. It is clear that his love for both events runs fast and deep. Although Koh-Koh-Mah ended in 2021 (with applause and tears), Winding Creek Music Festival continues on, something Bob says he'll keep doing as long as he's feeling good. Join the fun August 15 to 18, 2024, on Bob's property just 10 miles west of Kokomo, a magical place full of good memories and new traditions alike.

2024 Hall of Legends



Xenia Cord

XENIA CORD has been making history and sharing history her entire life – from the age of 14 months when she emigrated to the United States with her mother on the last ship to leave Norway before the Nazis invaded ... to her years of service as a popular folklore instructor at Indiana University

Kokomo, a pre-eminent collector, scholar and author in the world of quilting, and a recognized researcher in the history of free African-Americans in Indiana prior to the Civil War.

Xenia's many contributions were well covered in a biography published in 2018 when she was inducted into The Quilter's Hall of Fame. Described as "a distinguished scholar, caring and generous mentor, prolific author and pioneer quilt historian," Xenia was cited for her devotion "to sharing her love of quilt history and to educating the next generation of quilt historians."

With degrees in English and History as well as Folklore and American studies, Xenia shared her knowledge and expanded her research as a folklore instructor at IUK for more than 20 years. In the early 1980s, Xenia and friend and fellow IUK instructor Sue Ridlen began teaching a graduate elective in quilt history, one of the first of its type offered in the nation. Xenia's interest in quilting grew and so did her impact. Locally, she was involved in several very successful community quilt displays and she served as a member of the Howard County Historical Society board.

In 1990, she helped create "Quilt America!" – a national quilt show and competition in Indianapolis, which also introduced the world's longest running breast health initiative through the "Yes Mam!" Mammogram Quilt Project that raised money to

provide free or low cost mammograms for underinsured women.

Xenia became active in the American Quilt Study Group, serving as its president. She later founded the Midwest Fabric Study Group, welcoming members from 17 states. She has served as a member of the advisory board of the International Quilt Study Center and Museum, on the board of The Quilters Hall of Fame and on the restoration committee for the Marie Webster House in Marion, Ind., and on the Indiana Arts Commission. She has published extensively in both scholarly journals and popular quilting magazines.

With the encouragement of IUK professor Herbert Miller, whose free African-American ancestors settled in Weaver (Grant County), she investigated the establishment of the Weaver community and dozens more founded in Indiana before 1860. Xenia's 1982 publication "Free Rural Communities in Indiana: A Selected Bibliography" is part of the Indiana Historical Society's archive designed to preserve Indiana's African-American heritage.

Her impact has also extended to Kokomo, which became her home nearly 50 years ago. She and her husband Mike, a retired Kokomo attorney, are the parents of four children, grandparents of five, step-grandparents of two, and great grandparents of three. As a parent of a special needs student, she served on the board of Bona Vista programs and was instrumental in expanding special education for Kokomo's children.

Through her company, Legacy Quilts, Xenia has educated scores of quilt owners on the history and value of their fabric treasures and served as a broker to facilitate their sale. It certainly bears an appropriate name. Xenia Elisabeth Blom Cord has created a legacy that will touch generations to come.

2024 Hall of Legends



John Grant Jr.

Kokomo transplant **JOHN “UNCLE BOOGIE” GRANT JR.** has a unique claim to fame. He was inducted into the Hip Hop Hall of Fame with the Hip Hop Legacy Award last year, as well as receiving a Congressional Certificate of Recognition through his work as a pioneering internet radio

Hip Hop DJ in Kokomo since the early 2010s. John’s work as the first hip hop artist to have an FM radio license has earned him some well-deserved recognition.

It was a long road traveled for John to make it to Kokomo. He grew up in the Bronx, New York, soaking up the sounds of hip hop pioneers Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five and the Sugarhill Gang. He imitated their sound and began coming up with his own rhymes, often also inspired by classic jazz sounds and his love of poetry.

John’s interest in music grew throughout his teen years in Bergen County, New Jersey, where he met musical partner Reggie “Rock” Passley in high school. There, in Englewood in the late 1970s, surrounded by a myriad of well-known entertainers, they had many opportunities to collaborate and hone their musical skills.

When his father was injured on the job, John came home from college to help his mother. Around that time, John and Reggie recorded a song for a songwriting competition for a new movie – Wes Craven’s “A Nightmare on Elm Street.” Their 1987 “Freddy Krueger” later became part of the original soundtrack for the film. A record deal ensued with Basement Records for the group known as Rock N’ Gee.

The song’s nationwide success led to other recording deals and travel around the world. Their fame enabled them to open for big names such

as Run DMC and Whodini. Their manager got the band a deal with PolyGram Mercury Records, which resulted in their hit single “Swing Beat.” Now Rock N’ Gee and DJ Shawn, they filmed a music video for the song, which appeared on Yo! MTV Raps.

After his hip hop career waned, John went to school to study automotive mechanics, sparking a career that sent him across the country working in auto shops. But his interest in entertainment remained. In the early 2000s, he began an internet radio station called TableSetter Radio.

In 2011, his automotive career brought him to Kokomo, but he had plans beyond working in the McGonigal shop. The FCC approved John’s Low Power FM license in 2014 and Power 104.9 WTSX began broadcasting, the first radio station in Kokomo fully devoted to hip hop. He’s expanded to the internet and developed an impressive audience of listeners around the country. WTSX streams to as many as 2.1 million people a day and has a 13,000 following on Instagram.

John is affiliated with many other radio stations all over the country, including 103.7 Da Beat in Rockford, Illinois, 100.3 The Blaze in Atlanta, Georgia, Power 108.1 in Cleveland, Ohio, Long Island Power 104.9, and he is an executive producer of the Planet of the Tapes show on XM Channel 43 Rock the Bells Radio along with his cousin “Geechie” Dan.

John notes that you have to be “all in” to make something like this happen. He attributes his successes to what he calls “lily padding,” or meeting people along the way that will help you “jump” to the next experience. Today John uses his radio station and social media to promote Kokomo and hip hop and works to teach kids how to conduct interviews with celebrities. Currently operating from a studio in the Kokomo Literacy Coalition’s basement, John is content in what he’s doing ... and always pushing forward.

2024 Hall of Legends



Jane Luljak

By all accounts wildly popular at Kokomo High School in the early 1940s, **JANE ANN NOBLE** reached new heights when she was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1948 while a senior in college. The story is an incredibly unlikely one and brings several layers of accomplishments and highlights.

Jane was born in 1924 in Lapel, Indiana, and by age 10 was living with her family in Kokomo. Her father, Lee “Deke” Noble, was a sports writer and editor for the Kokomo Tribune for many years and then served as publisher of weekly newspapers in Greentown and Russiaville until 1969.

Involved in a multitude of activities at KHS (including as Sargasso editor and prom queen), Jane graduated in 1942 and headed off to her father’s alma mater, DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. She completed two years of college work before joining the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) in July 1944 in Washington, D.C. As a private first class, Jane spent the majority of her time as a cryptographic code compiler. World War II over, she mustered out on July 1, 1946, heading back to DePauw in August of that year.

On April 2, 1948, at 9 a.m., at the age of 24, Jane officially filed for to run for the office of Joint Representative for Howard and Tipton counties as a Democrat in the primary on May 4, 1948. Nominated, she spent the next six months campaigning with the slogan “Get Indiana politics out of the smoke-filled back rooms.” The slogan worked, and Jane was elected with 14,352 votes to Republican Garrett Gossard’s 9,173. Not just a pretty face (despite what seems like every newspaper description offered at the time), Jane sat on eight House committees including military and veteran’s affairs,

elections, building and loans, enrollment of bills, phraseology, state war memorial, and railroad, and was the ranking member of the labor committee. At the beginning of her term, she stated, “I don’t think I’ll introduce many bills,” but less than a month later joined Representative J.F. Haggerty in introducing a civil rights bill that would prohibit racial discrimination in public places. She would go on to introduce at least four more bills. She noted that she was interested in social welfare, education, labor, and the use of a direct primary to nominate presidential candidates, which was a hot topic at the time.

Her government endeavor was notable enough to be included in a three-page photo spread in the February 28, 1949, issue of Life magazine, which reported that Jane spent her afternoons in Indianapolis serving in the statehouse, and her mornings and weekends feverishly working on schoolwork at DePauw. Maintaining at least a B average, Jane still found time to participate in her sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma, as treasurer; visit Kokomo; and spend time with boyfriend Laddie Luljak, a junior at DePauw.

Speaking of Mr. Luljak, the two were married later that year on August 20, 1949, at St. Patrick Church in Kokomo. Jane had graduated from DePauw merely two months before. According to her son, David, the newlyweds lived on campus in married student housing consisting of Quonset huts until Laddie’s graduation. Jane had announced earlier in the year that she would not run for re-election at the end of her term. After his graduation in 1950, Laddie took a job in Houston, Texas and so ended Jane’s foray into politics. The Luljaks settled into family life with their son and eventually settled permanently in Sugar Land, Texas. Jane passed away in her sleep on June 11, 2011, leaving behind a legacy of what she showed was possible in the post-war era for a young woman from Kokomo, Indiana.

2024 Hall of Legends



Angela Martino

For 60 some years, the Martino family saw to it that their restaurant was a home away from home for their customers, but there was once a handful of strong-willed patrons who refused to leave until they had received a “Mama Slap.”

“Is it across the face? Does it hurt?” One can’t help but wonder.

“No!” laughs **ANGELA (“MAMA”) MARTINO**. It’s like this, and she smacks her daughter Maria on the shoulder. It’s a sign of affection, a way of getting your attention.

The determined group received their “Mama Slap” by asking about the “Ragu sauce” on their entrée. Of course, the sauce did not materialize the cheaper and quicker way, out of jar, and they knew it. Martino sauce has always been homemade, lovingly so, with home-grown herbs and tomatoes, a collaboration of teamwork from Frank, Angela and son Mike. But a mention of Ragu in connection with one of her expertly prepared meals will score you a Mama Slap.

And it is a badge of honor, meaning you have a special place in the Frank and Angela Martino family, which includes six children (John, Jim, Mike, Minnie, Maria and Joseph), nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Angela was born in 1936 in the small mountain town of Gallo Matese, Italy. When she was just 2 years old, her father moved to the United States, with the intent of sending for his family one child at a time. World War II brought a halt to that plan. Back in Italy, Angela, her mom and two siblings escaped to the mountains and lived in a cave for a month. That experience explains Angela’s passion for feeding the poor and for homeless children; she has quietly supported charities around the world for years. “I know what it’s like to be hungry,” Angela said.

Fast-forward from the mountains of Italy to Rhode Island in 1954, where Angela Rocchio, now 18 and having mastered English, caught the eye of her brother’s best friend, one Frank Martino. The two were married in 1956, moved to Kokomo in 1957 and had their first child shortly thereafter.

Frank worked at Continental Steel and he and Angie started side gigs – first a doughnut shop and then a bar on North Street (now The Handlebar). In 1972, he quit his job at the mill and began construction of Martino’s Italian Villa, 1929 N. Washington St. The business thrived, built upon the Martino family recipe for success. In Angela’s words, this means “hard work, passion for cooking, perseverance and a desire to please the customers.”

An expert cook, Angela is so confident in her skills that she does not follow a recipe, measure or even taste. But don’t question her methods because in 2017, the family restaurant was inducted into the Pizza Hall of Fame. In 2020, Mama received an invitation to appear on the television show “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives;” she declined that opportunity because she did not want to leave her customers without quality food or service for a week.

Angela is proud that all six of her children have college educations, something unavailable when she was growing up. She’s also proud that, over 40 years, hundreds of ballplayers at Northside Little League sported baseball uniforms of the Martino’s team.

The hardest part of her journey? Without hesitation, Angela notes Frank’s cancer diagnosis. Her husband and teammate died in 2004. “It was a big adjustment,” admitted Angela, then with her signature smile, “I had no one to pick on!”

Of the Hall of Legends designation, on top of many other awards through the years, she said, “I feel honored and humbled. Without God, family and a great clientele in Kokomo, I would never be in the position I am in now.”

2024 Hall of Legends



Frank Stein

In 1944, when **FRANK STEIN** was a 25-year-old graduate student at Columbia University in New York City, he kept noticing a certain young woman who walked past his laboratory each day to get a cup of coffee.

Frank was a research physicist working for Nobel-Prize winner I.I. Rabi on the Manhattan Project that resulted in the development of the atomic bomb. The woman – Eleanor Bankoff – was a Columbia alumna who worked in the project's patent department. After finally meeting and a two-year courtship, Frank proposed on St. Valentine's Day 1947. The pair were happily married for the next 64 years.

The couple's legacy of memories and milestones is legendary. His expertise in solid state physics and semiconductors made him a leader in national and international engineering associations. She was the first female judge in Howard County, Indiana. (Based on her achievements, she was inducted into the Hall of Legends in 2015.) Together they raised three children in Kokomo, Indiana, and are lovingly remembered by 17 grandchildren and great-grandchildren and a legion of friends.

The son of a Lancaster, Pennsylvania, dentist and his wife, Frank taught physics at the University of Buffalo after World War II, then pivoted from academia to industry to pursue "applied" rather than theoretical physics.

He rose rapidly as a researcher at Westinghouse and General Instrument Corp. In 1963, he and his family moved to the Midwest when Frank was named Chief Engineer of the engineering department at the Delco Radio division of General Motors Corp. in Kokomo.

As the in-house supplier to what at the time was

the world's biggest car company, within 10 years Delco Radio became Delco Electronics and Frank led the engineering effort that resulted in today's vehicle computers.

Cultured and curious and people and places, Frank and Eleanor worked tirelessly in the Kokomo community, most notably as the guiding force of the Kokomo Community Concert series for classical music. Frank was a fixture at high school science fairs and was a devoted Morning Musicales patron. He served as chairman of the Kokomo Fine Arts Association, helped develop the Haynes Apperson Festival, and was a proud member of Temple B'nai Israel.

A true renaissance man, Frank served on the Indiana Humanities Council and consulted for the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Besides classical music and the arts, he reveled in nature and museums, and he loved polar bears (he went to Manitoba with the Smithsonian to see them in the wild). He died in 2014 at the age of 93. Eleanor, later a lawyer and jurist, had died in 2011 at age 88.

At home, family life was vibrant and fulfilling, daughter Joan Stein Jenkins, a California lawyer and mediator, remembered. Family dinners were family time, and Frank was "always our champion" in support of her and brothers Robert, a New York doctor, and William, a translator in Costa Rica.

Her father loved reading to them, Jenkins said. "I can remember him, sitting in the hallway between our rooms with Wordsworth, Lewis Carroll, or Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.'" An all-time favorite poem was Sam Walton Foss' "House by the Side of Road." Perhaps no better words could ever express the memory of Frank Stein, than "let me live in my house by the side of the road and be a friend to man."



From left, Heather Voltz, program director and Dr. Watson, Sara Holloway as H.G. Wells, Brenda Holloway as the maid, David Summers as Dracula, and Shiloh Mussial as Queen Victoria.

By Gabe Franks

HCHS Publications Committee

The Howard County Historical Society's seventh rendition of "From Dark Pages," offered Oct. 20 and 21, 2023, in the Seiberling Mansion was a resounding success. From H.G. Wells to Queen Victoria, the 2023 cast and crew put on an amazing show.

According to Stew Lauterbach, HCHS curator, the show is made up of two distinct themes: Sherlock Holmes on the trail of Jack the Ripper and scenes from Victorian literature. Lauterbach noted that he uses the term "Victorian" loosely as some of the literature referenced in the show falls outside of the 1837-1901 reign of Queen Victoria.

"For the first five years, we only presented three of the script's Victorian literature scenes bookended by the Sherlock/Ripper scenes each year, in order to vary the show," said Lauterbach. "In 2022, for the first time, we did all of the literature scenes, and again in 2023. Doing all of the scenes requires a larger cast."

Lauterbach said the Victorian literature scenes in "Dark Pages" were drawn from The Time Machine (H.G. Wells), Frankenstein (Mary Shelley), Dracula (Bram Stoker), Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde (Robert Louis Stevenson), The Tell-Tale Heart: (Edgar Allen Poe), and The

Turn of the Screw (Henry James).

Heather Voltz, program director for 2023, was responsible for casting choices, costume design, and staging directions.

"The show is done uniquely," Voltz said. "Rather than the audience coming in and sitting down with the show happening in front of them, they go throughout the Seiberling and the show happens around them."

Annual auditions for "From Dark Pages" began in August. In 2023, between 20 and 25 cast and crew were involved.

Lauterbach talked about the creation of the production as well as some of the Victorian cultural references. Originally, the "Dark Pages" script was written to be produced as a fundraiser for Indiana Landmarks by members of the Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis, a club devoted to studying Sherlock Holmes stories. It wasn't an official project of the group, but each author was a member.

"Since the authors were all Sherlockians, the show is filled with myriad details about Victorian culture and Holmesian trivia, from contemporary theories about the identity of Jack the Ripper to the type of martial arts that Sherlock Holmes would use to defend himself – Baritsu," said Lauterbach.

The Victorian-era references don't end there.

"While Holmes is of course a fictional character, the Ripper, Conan Doyle, Dr. Gull, and Queen Victoria were all real historic person-ages," said Lauterbach. "While the identity of the Ripper may never be known conclusively, I think the use of theories that the Queen's grandson Prince Victor Albert, or that her physician, Dr. Gull, may have been the Ripper are quite clever."



In addition to Baritsu, the production includes references to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's belief in spiritualism. At one point, Queen Victoria suggests that Doyle and his literary creation Holmes regularly consult with Robert James Lees, a late Victorian clairvoyant who claimed he knew the true identity of Jack the Ripper. "Great fun," said Lauterbach.

James Holloway: A Passion for Poe

James Holloway has been involved with the production of "Dark Pages" since its third showcase and in 2023, he took on the role of Edgar Allen Poe. Interview by Gabe Franks.

How did you first get involved with "From Dark Pages?"

"My daughter Sara, who has been in every production of 'From Dark Pages' urged me to audition for season 3. She thought that if we were cast in a scene together it would be a real hoot. I did get cast but not in anything that played against her that season. I have been cast in every season since that time and have played against her many times. It has been great fun as we know how to prank each other's performance."

How have you prepared for the role of Edgar Allan Poe?

"Any actor knows the value of research. I located every biography I could, every historical fact of record plus any newspaper articles written about Poe, including his obituary. I was able to paint a clearer portrait of the father of the modern horror genre. As to Poe's appearance, only 7 photographs of him are known exist. A standard image of him is immediately recognizable to all."

Can you describe the role that Poe plays in this year's rendition of "Dark Pages?"

"Our play is set in Victorian England. Specifically, the Whitechapel district of London. Our heroes of the story are Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his literary creation, Mr. Sherlock Holmes. They are on a search for the Whitechapel killer. Their quest for clues leads them to interview many historical figures of whom Edgar Allen



Poe is one of many. Poe gives some advice on the psyche of a murderer."

Do you have a favorite work by Poe?

"The Tell-Tale Heart. I first read it in high school. I loved it. I could recite it from memory. When I would go camping with a youth group I would use it as a ghost story around the campfire. It was great fun."

How has the experience been working with this year's crew for the event?

"It's like having a huge dessert that you can share with everyone. The returning cast members plus the new cast and crew all have a love for the craft. There is a sense of unity and a desire to do the best performance possible. I myself enjoy working with and watching the growth of the new or younger actors as they learn the show. The sparkle in the eye when they have that "Ah Ha!" moment of 'that's how you do it' is priceless."

Is there anything that I did not ask that you wish to share?

"Just some fun facts. We are currently in season 7. Henry Ford of the Ford Motor Co. had dinner in the room used for the scene 'Audience with the Queen.' If the Seiberling Mansion were built today, it would cost in excess of 2 million dollars. Actors are superstitious. I wear the same piece of jewelry somewhere on my costume every performance. This is a family affair. Many of us have our spouse and or children in the play. In conclusion. ...We encourage everyone to come out and support local theater. This is up close and personal ... you can smell the grease paint!"

Christmas at the Seiberling: Magical Memories



Angela Washington, event co-chair, in the Parlor.

It was with an overwhelming number of nutcrackers, plenty of sugar plums, and ballet slippers that HCHS greeted Santa and Mrs. Claus on Nov. 25 for the opening night of Christmas at the Seiberling.

For the 20th year, Paul Wyman welcomed visitors and counted down for the lighting of the mansion. After their porch appearance, the Clauses retired to the third floor, which had been transformed into Santa's Workshop for the first time. Kids this year were delighted to visit Santa on each of the eight sponsored nights this year and tell him of their wishes.

The theme of "The Nutcracker Ballet" was interpreted by our team of veteran and new volunteer decorators. Event co-chairs Judy Brown and Angela Washington kept all the hard work organized as volunteers came and went for over two weeks with beautiful decorations, transforming the mansion into a magical ballet wonderland.

An annual fan favorite, the dining room decorated by Marella Williams and Eunice Jackson once again earned the People's Choice award, followed closely by Angela Washington, who decorated the parlor.

Plenty of musical guests joined us again this year, including the Kokomo Chamber Brass, Harmony Magic, the Hoosier String Players, Men of Note, the Choraliers, the Kokomo Park Band Brass Quintet, and the IUK Flute Choir. The Wyman Group, Financial Builders, First Farmers Bank & Trust, Ivy Tech, Community First Bank, and Duke Energy made sponsor nights possible this year, and we are grateful to them for their participation.

Over 2,000 people were able to enjoy Christmas at the Seiberling in great part thanks to their generosity. The event would also not be possible without the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff. Thank you to all who made 2023 Christmas at the Seiberling so magical!



Symposium Walnut Room; Santa's workshop.



People's Choice Award winning dining room. Eunice Jackson in the dining room.



Alpha Kappa Alpha Butternut Room. The Elf in the Foyer.

Celebrating our Volunteers and Christmas at HCHS

As we bid farewell to the 2023 Christmas season, the Howard County Historical Society is brimming with gratitude for the volunteers who dedicated their efforts to bring cheer to our beloved museum.

Their commitment during regular day shifts, evenings throughout Christmas at the Seiberling, and beyond significantly contributed to the success of the event.

Decorators generously gave their time to create unique displays in each room of the mansion. Families marveled at the creative talents showcased by our group of amazing decorators. The jars in each room alone garnered over \$1,700 in donations from guests voting for their favorite rooms. Visitors expressed that this year's display was bigger and better than anything they had seen in previous years at the museum.

In January, employees were excited to host the Annual Volunteer Luncheon. Thirty volunteers and employees gathered with homemade dishes, enjoying each other's company at the Elliott House. Much time was spent reminiscing about the past year at the mansion and celebrating the success of Christmas.

In February, volunteers were welcomed for the annual Volunteer Training, a very important part of preparing our volunteers for their positions.

For those who aspire to make a lasting difference in sharing our local history, we invite you to consider joining our volunteer team. Whether during regular museum hours or special events, your commitment will play a vital role in the continued success of the Howard County Historical Society.

Decorators generously gave their time to create unique displays in each room of the mansion and families marveled at the creative talents showcased by our amazing decorators.

Please email christina.ralston@howard-countymuseum.org for more information or to express your interest in volunteering or decorating for the 2024 Christmas season.





Above, HCHS Executive Director Anne Shaw. At right, Gil Porter. Below, membership group and the Jeopardy contest.

2023 Annual Meeting

Howard County Historical Society membership came together on Nov. 14, 2023, for the organization's annual meeting. The banquet room at the Elite Event Center in Kokomo was filled with members and friends alike. They enjoyed a wonderful dinner, followed by a short presentation by local historian Gil Porter before transitioning into a 2023 version of Howard County History Jeopardy.

Porter addressed recent research and updates on happenings around Howard County, including the Native American Powwow held in September and a reprise of 2023 Footprints articles on early county history. He has contributed significantly to the under-

standing of Howard County's history

Competing in the comical and educational Jeopardy game for the second year were Tom Tolen and Chad McCarter with newcomer Doug Workinger as the third contestant. Jessica Ausbrook did a fantastic job as host. Unfortunately, Mr. Tolen had such a poor performance that Mayor Tyler Moore was forced to take over in his place. Hopefully everyone had fun AND learned some local history tidbits!

Official annual meeting business included the reelection of board members Dave Dubois and Judy Brown to an additional term. Put Nov. 19, 2024, on your calendar for this year's annual meeting.





Annual Campaign

Donations November to January ...

Judy Brown
Rex and Kara Gingerich

Dr. Pratap and Nirmala Gohil
Craig and Kristi Severns

Linda Stout
Thomas and Judy Sheehan

Membership

Our new and renewed members ...

Sue Beahrs
Don and Gail Beaton
June Beck
Glen Boise, A.I.C.P.
Jeremy and Teri Burke
Sam and Mary Pat Burrous
John Dreyer
Janet Duchateau
Craig Dunham
Rick and Beth Emry
Tom and Lynn Folkers
Diana Goodnight
Harry and Roberta Hanson

Bob and Joan Hoch
Amy Huffman
Larry and Judy Ingle
Gloyd Johnson
Medora Kennedy
Shirley Lee
Thomas and Marsha Maple
Mary Jo McCellan
David and Lisa Olmsted
David and Melody Rayl
Kyle and Lisa Rayl
Thomas and Kathryn Rethlake
Jon Rodgers

Blake and Jennifer Rollins
Randy and Mary Rusch
Darrell and Tonia Sherrod
Charles Short
Ronald and Jean Simpson
Rick and Diane Smith
Greg and Melody Sumpter
Alan J. Teller
Tom Tolen
Dianne Waggaman
Rick and Sandy Warner
Pamela Yohn
Jon and Patty Zeck

2024

EVENTS



APRIL

25

HALL OF LEGENDS

14th annual event

JUNE

15

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Free museum admission

JULY

4

CELEBRATING VETERANS

Free museum admission for veterans

JULY

26-27

MR. KINGSTON'S HISTORIC CAR SHOW

Free event on mansion lawn

NOV

19

ANNUAL MEETING

All Society members welcome

NOV

30

CHRISTMAS AT THE SEIBERLING

Sponsored nights:

Dec. 5-6, Dec. 12-13, Dec. 19-21

**STAY TUNED FOR OTHER EVENTS TO BE
ANNOUNCED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

Open Tuesday-Sunday 1-4 pm

www.hchistory.org

Howard County
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Kokomo, IN 46901



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