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## Seneca Museum of Waterways & Industry Summer 2021 Newsletter

*Since our Spring Newsletter, Executive Director Rhonda Destino left us for a new challenge with MRB Group (Rochester NY). Rhonda's tenure has led to many positive changes to the Museum. The Board of Directors is grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, and vision that Rhonda has brought to the Museum. Her tenure has led to many positive changes including the successful negotiation with the Town of Seneca Falls to replace or refinish the floors, implementation of Museum-wide safety requirements in response to COVID-19 requirements, and the on-going collaboration and partnerships with local non-profits. Thank you, Rhonda, for all you have done to promote and improve our Museum. We wish you the best in your new endeavor!*

*Our Tourism Ambassador, Maria Sanfillipo-Mayo, agreed to serve as Interim Executive Director during the search for our next permanent Director. Thank you, Maria!*

Nora Venezky



*The Board Search Committee solicited and received over 20 applications for the Executive Director position. Zoom interviews were conducted, and Nora Venezky was the unanimous choice. She enthusiastically accepted our offer and will begin her new position on July 26, 2021. Nora has served in a number of capacities with other museums, most recently as Executive Director at the Greenbriar Historical Society in Lewisburg, WV. Nora's education includes Bachelors' degrees in History and Studio Art & Design, and a Masters degree in Museum Studies. Interestingly, Nora is no stranger to our canal system, as she previously served as the Director of the Spencerport (her hometown) Depot and Canal Museum. She comes to us highly recommended, and we anticipate an exciting transition!*

*Lt. Governor, Kathleen Hochul, came to Seneca Falls on May 13, 2021 and announced that the Seneca Falls Heritage and Tourism Center's DRI project was approved and awarded \$533,000.00. We are thrilled and excited as this will significantly enhance our footprint on Fall Street! The State will soon assign a team of experts to lead us through the next phase.*

*The Museum has enjoyed increased attendance since the incidence of COVID-19 in our area declined. In our interview with volunteer Kathy Peters, we learned that recently some 60 visitors from all over the country visited within a 2 hour period!*

## **Interim Executive Director's Message**

By Maria Sanfillippo-Mayo

The 2021 Summer season began with a bang! We held the first First Friday in June which featured a Master Gardener from the Seneca County Cooperative Extension, Cornell University. He offered 3 sessions including how to build a terrarium, the use of kitchen scraps to grow a garden & how to make seed balls. Children's activities included making a 'funny face' flower pot. On July 9, the second First Friday, we celebrated 'Christmas in July' with the It's A Wonderful Life Museum & several local vendors who displayed their wares on the Museum's Fall Street level. These vendors showed jewelry, prints of the Finger Lakes & Cayuga-Seneca Canal, and unique creations on scrabble boards. The It's a Wonderful Life Museum's offering also included a display. Children were able to experience "It's A Wonderful Life" through the exhibit of Legos by Jason Middaugh now displayed in our front window. There are now 24 businesses participating in the community's First Fridays.

Finally, the Museum's book club met for a second time in June to discuss Sally Crosair's "Home Place".

## **Board President's Message**

By Sheila Giovaninni

**WE HAVE BEEN BUSY!!**

Our Summer Camp-in-a Box program, in collaboration with the Seneca Falls Historical Society and the Waterloo Library and Historical Museum will take place again this summer. At this writing, we have reached full capacity with 88 children having signed up for this popular program! Our theme this year is "Connecting through the Waterways". We are thankful to our staff and volunteers who assisted with the program again this year!

In addition to having coordinated several successful First Friday events over the past

Players in the golf tournament from L to R: Bobby Smith, Ken Hohwald, Corey Hohwald, and RJ Anderson



several months, we also organized and executed our very first Annual Golf Tournament at the SF Country Club on June 2, 2021. It was a huge success and we are looking forward to bringing this event to the community again in 2022.



On June 19<sup>th</sup>, we held a Chicken Barbecue at the intersection of Rtes. 414 and 5&20. Board members worked tirelessly to presell more than 150 tickets. Ultimately, under the direction of Jim and Cheryl Terryberry, we ended up selling almost twice that number of dinners! We hope that this, too, will become an annual event!

Many thanks to the numerous supporters of both the Golf Tournament and the Chicken BBQ. Net proceeds will be used to expand educational and recreational activities for children in our area. These events were successful due to the enormous support

from our local business sponsors and the members of our community. YOU are responsible for our success and we THANK YOU!!!

We look forward to a full and enjoyable summer! And YES, Music in the Park will return! We have just confirmed that Diana Leigh and the Shorty Georges will entertain us at People's Park on Thursday, August



5, 2021 from 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Please, grab your folding chairs and join us for a wonderful evening of music, food and fun! Other events will be announced as they are confirmed.



The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission partnered with the Town of Seneca Falls to bring renowned sculptor, Jane DeDecker's, *Ripples of Change* sculpture to Seneca Falls. The sculpture, depicting activists Harriet Tubman, Martha Coffin Wright, Sojourner Truth, and Laura Cornelius Kellogg, "...is a commitment to ensuring the visibility of women's stories for the next 100 years...".

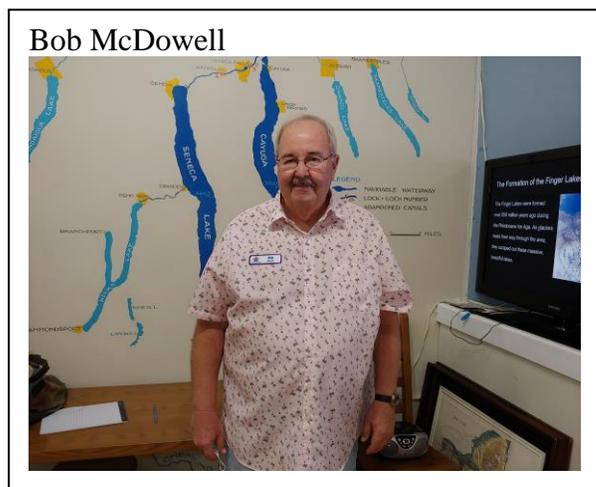
Late this summer, the 8-foot sculpture will be placed along the canal on Bayard St. overlooking Van Cleef Lake. Eventually, the plan is to relocate the sculpture to People's Park once Town revitalization initiatives are complete.

On Friday, July 9, 2021, the *Ripples of Change* statuettes (2-foot) were unveiled at our very own Seneca Falls Heritage and Tourism Center, where they will remain for public view for years to come. We are thrilled to be the recipient of such a Town treasure. Be sure to stop in and see this wonderful, new exhibit!



For additional information, go to <http://www.RipplesofChange.live>

## Meet our Staff



We are now introducing staff members in the Newsletter. Back from Florida for the summer, we welcome back long-time docent, Bob McDowell. From 2015 to 2018 Bob worked full time for the Museum. When he and his wife became snowbirds, he segued to part-time. Summers are always busy at the Museum, so having Bob on board is a real plus. Before Bob came to

Bob at the golf tournament.



us, he was the owner of a Metal Finishing Co. in Indiana for 20 years. His first wife, whom he met online, passed away in 2014, and Bob sold his interest in the business. He met his second wife, Deb Bly, online as well, and they married in 2016. Deb works with her sister Becky at her business 'Women Made Products' when the McDowell family are in residence in Seneca Falls. Bob met former Executive Director of the Museum, Chris Podzuweit, finding a common interest in history, and was inspired to join the Museum staff. He finds it to be an amazing place, enjoys working on exhibits, often suggesting new possibilities. Bob describes himself as an idea person. He enjoys all aspects of the visitor experience, and looks forward to a good summer.

**Meet our Volunteers** As was true last quarter, we are highlighting our volunteers in the Newsletter. This issue we introduce Kathy Peters, who works for a few hours every other Friday. A

former Director of the Seneca Museum (for 2 ½ years from 2003-2006), Kathy has been contributing time to the Museum as a docent for about 2 years now, despite her busy schedule. She is enthusiastic about showing visitors our exhibits and sharing the Seneca Falls and Canal history. As a former educator, she particularly loves working with the children who visit. Because of her long history with the museum, Kathy is interested in bringing back the hands-on exhibits the children love, for example, such as the washing machine and incline plane, and the ever-popular model train. Since Seneca Falls was the "fire engine capital of the world" from the late 1800s to early 1900s, she feels the display of fire engines could be expanded. Kathy graduated with a BS in Education from Buffalo State with a NYS certification to teach nursery school to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. After 24 years of full and part-time teaching, she obtained a Masters in Administration from the University of Rochester. She was a NYS certified K-12 administrator for nine years before retiring. With teaching tools acquired through her education and museum experiences, Kathy is in a unique position to contribute. She cheerfully tackles whatever is needed at the Museum. The photo of Kathy with a red shawl, a trademark of Susan B. Anthony, was recently taken in Adams MA at the unveiling of the SBA statue, showing Anthony as a child and adult. Kathy is a member of the Board of Directors of the SBA Birthplace Museum in Adams.

Kathy Peters



### **Membership Appeal:**

The Seneca Museum of Waterways & Industry annual membership appeal is continuing. Our community activities are partially funded by grants, but we depend on our memberships to help defray increasing costs of operation and activities. Some of the perks of being a member are a 20% discount on items in our gift shop, a quarterly e-newsletter, paid event discounts, member-only events, and advance notice of events. More importantly, your membership supports an important community resource! Please visit our website at <https://sfheritagetourism.com/> for more information. In addition, membership information appears on the last page of the Newsletter, as always.

### **Staying Connected With Us:**

There are several ways to stay connected with us in addition to becoming a member: become a volunteer, donate, like us on Facebook, read our website blog, and join us at our events. You can find out how to do all of these things on our website!

## Membership and Volunteers

*Like all non-profits, SMWI needs YOU - as a volunteer and as a member in order to fulfill our Mission and Vision.*

Memberships may be paid via check or credit card to: **Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry**, PO Box 388 Seneca Falls, NY, 13148. If you prefer, you may also pay via credit card over the phone (315-568-1510) or in-person at 89 Fall St. Seneca Falls. **Please, know that your Membership is greatly appreciated!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Level:

Individual \$35     Family \$50     Junior \$10     Veteran \$25     Veteran Family \$40

### Method of Payment:

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to *Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry*

**Mission Statement:** *The Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry is dedicated to captivating and educating audiences of all ages with the village's rich industrial and waterways industry.*

**Vision Statement:** *The Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry will be the gateway to the community, providing interactive and engaging experiences for all visitors.*