

Impressions

NEWSLETTER WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

There is a lot Happening this Summer at the Corners of Main & Kingsley & Beakes!

Our Civil War exhibit *Behind the Lines* has attracted almost 500 visitors since opening in April. People also tour the house which is a pre-Civil War artifact itself. Kids really enjoy the authentic tent in the front room, the drummer boys, the camp life and the authentic uniforms that were worn during the war by Michigan soldiers. Our summer hours are 12-4 PM on Saturdays and Sundays. **Group and Family Tours** can be scheduled by calling 734-662-9092. We can accommodate up to 30 at one time in cool air-conditioned comfort. There is free parking for up to six vehicles in the museum lot and street parking is near-by.

Help Fence Us In

Our fence creates our first impression and it is the most public view of our museum. Thousands of cars drive past our fence daily and can see what bad shape the fence is in. You can help us change that. *See page 3.*

History Resurfaces

Beakes street was named in 1899 to honor Samuel Beakes. Beakes converges with Kingsley that was named for Attorney James "Honest Jim" Kingsley. Kingsley was originally North Street, because it was the northernmost street in John Allen and Elisha Rumsey's original plat. This Summer's resurfacing project includes reconstructing the road and replacing curb, drive approaches and sidewalks. *See page 6*



Cub Scouts from Pack 160

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WCBS 2011 Board Election Results

Leslie Loomans was re-elected President at the Annual Meeting held Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at the Ann Arbor Community Center. Also re-elected were Karen Jania, Vice President; Judith Chrisman, Recording Secretary; Pauline Walters, Corresponding Secretary; and Patricia Creal, Treasurer. Elected to the Board and fulfilling a term that expires in 2012 was Diana Mankowski. She has volunteered for the Museum and was the writer and one of the researchers for the current Civil War exhibit. Also re-elected to serve on the board until 2014 were Susan Wineberg, Cynthia Yao and Bob Yuhasz. Kay Williams will serve on the Endowment Committee. Special thanks to our guest speaker Matt Adair who talked about the Civil War GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) and the importance of maintaining and honoring the Civil War soldiers memorials and memories.

Our mission is to educate and inspire our community to engage in the preservation and presentation of area history

BOARD OFFICERS

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The President's Letter: Washtenaw County Summer Quest

In theory at least everything slows down a bit over the summer. As a summer project of historical research I thought I might visit all of Washtenaw County's cities, towns and villages and even the sites of former ones.

Of course there are many fine museums throughout the county, but also libraries, churches, cemeteries, one-room school houses, cobblestone and other historic homes and mansions, mills, dams, monuments and historic markers and signs all of which deserve a visit and provide input to our history.

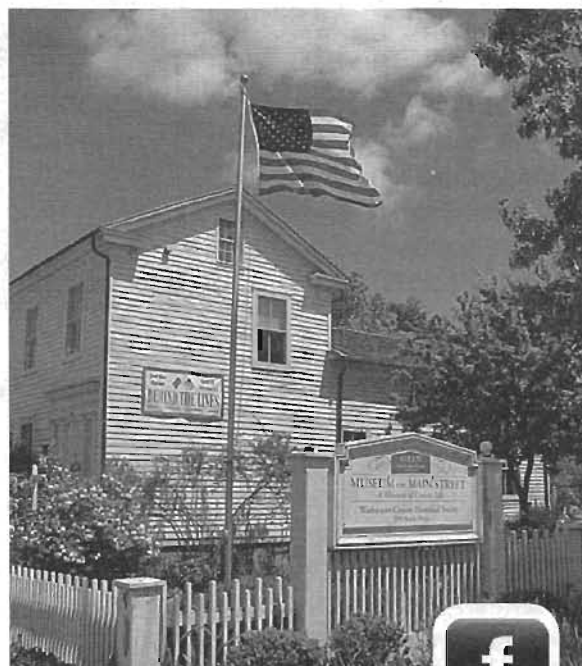
In fact, even the names of streets and roads have a story to add. For example, a street near us (actually not a street, road, avenue or lane) is named Belgrade Notch. Seems the developer's father was raised near Belgrade, Maine where the natural terrain cuts between mountains were called Notches. Our nearby Notch only cuts between a couple of small hills but may be a unique name in our county.

Likely, my project won't be finished by the end of this summer or even the next but I will learn more about our county's history. Perhaps I will bump into many of you as you, too, do a little research around Washtenaw County.

Leslie Loomans

Washtenaw County encompasses over 720 square miles of 28 cities, villages and townships in urban, suburban, rural and natural settings

Cities	Villages	Townships			
Ann Arbor	Barton Hills	Ann Arbor	Lima	Pittsfield	Superior
Chelsea	Dexter	Augusta	Lodi	Salem	Sylvan
Milan	Manchester	Bridgewater	Lyndon	Saline	Webster
Saline		Dexter	Manchester	Scio	York
Ypsilanti		Freedom	Northfield	Sharon	Ypsilanti



Check us out, on the web and www.WashtenawHistory.org

Washtenaw County Historical Society

P.O. Box 3336
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336
Phone: 734-662-9092
email: wchs-500@ameritech.net

Museum on Main Street

500 N. Main Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1027
(at the corner of E. Kingsley & Beakes)

Museum Hours

Saturday & Sunday,
12 Noon – 4:00 PM
and by appointment
for groups or individuals

Current Exhibit

"Behind the Lines"
April 10 - October 23, 2011

Help Fence Us In!

The Museum's original fence was installed in 1993 and has been a feature of our identity. Now weather and snowplow debris have taken their toll and it requires so much repair that the best solution is replacement.

We are working with Fingerle Lumber Company who will supply and install the lumber. The existing large newels will be repaired, not replaced, and wherever possible the existing spindles will be re-used. New cedar rails and skirt will be installed.

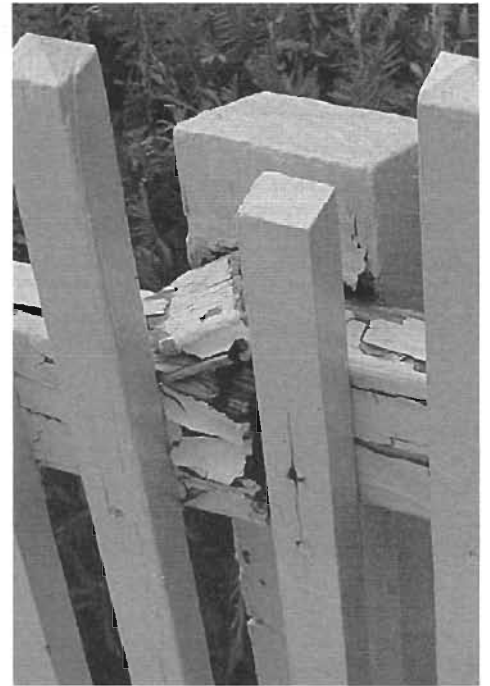
The existing sign will be removed, painted and re-installed. This work will greatly improve our impression in a high visibility location. It will also protect and preserve the historical integrity of the house. The estimated cost is \$10,000.

We invite you to join other members in contributing a tax-deductible donation towards the cost of this necessary project to maintain the Museum.

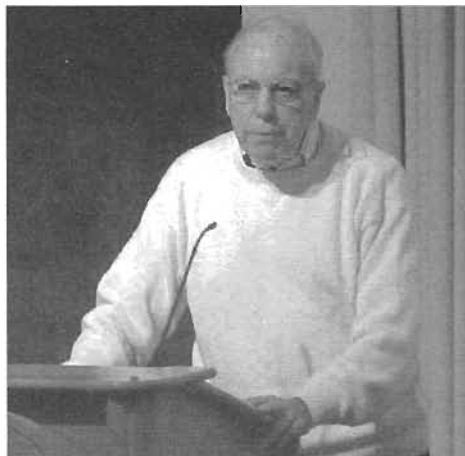
How You Can Help

Fill out the donor information on the enclosed WCHS envelope and send with your check or money order payable to Washtenaw County Historical Society. Donations are gratefully received to help make our new fence a reality. Thank you for being a Friend of History.

*We need
to replace
125' of
fence*



Michigan in the Civil War with Tom Collier



Tom Collier

Our program on Sunday, April 17 was a joint event with the Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County. Tom Collier, a former instructor at West Point and at the University of Michigan, discussed Michigan's role in the Civil War. He presented insights into the war on the home front, and some of the battles Michigan troops were engaged in.

Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County President Marcia McCrary welcomed the enthusiastic crowd in the Education Center Auditorium at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. WCHS Vice President Karen Jania introduced the guest speaker Tom Collier. He began by asking how many people in the auditorium had ancestors who served in the Civil War. Many people had Civil War ancestors on both sides.

Michigan Civil War Chronology

Until the Erie Canal opened in 1825, people couldn't easily get to Michigan. The Canal connected the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean. In 1830 land sales in southern Michigan boomed. Agriculture was the number one industry. In 1837 Michigan became a state and the lumber industry started in northern Michigan. By 1840 copper and iron mining were booming in the Upper Peninsula.

70% of the nation's copper during the Civil War came from Michigan. The Soo Canal opened in 1855 and that connected Michigan mines with foundries and mills in other states. When the War started, Michigan was a leader in the production of wool, produce, wheat and hops. During the War Michigan farmers were mostly women and children and hops was easy to grow. Michigan benefitted from America's growing love of lager beer and a failure of the hops crop in New York. Shortages of labor were common but Michigan shared in the prosperity of the war from 1860-1870.

Slavery

Lewis Cass represented Michigan in the United States Senate from 1845-48 and was a leading spokesman for the Doctrine of Popular Sovereignty. That would have allowed voters in the territories to determine whether to make slavery legal instead of having Congress decide.

In 1854, the Kansas Nebraska Act reopened the debate on the expansion of slavery. The Dred Scott decision in 1854 and John Brown's raid in 1859 further raised tensions. Kansas became Bleeding Kansas. Boxes of Bibles were shipped to Kansas and when opened up, Winchester rifles were inside. At the heart of the conflict was the question of whether Kansas would enter the Union as a free state or slave state.

This conflict led to the founding of the Republican Party in 1855 by anti-slavery activists, modernizers, ex-Whigs and ex-Free Soilers. The first official party convention was held on July 6, 1854 in Jackson, Michigan. Lincoln's victory in the presidential election of 1860 triggered South Carolina's declaration of secession from the Union. By February 1861, six more Southern states left. Lincoln won the election by 91 votes in Ann Arbor.

The War Begins

In his Presidential Inaugural address Abraham Lincoln said he would not re-take the property seized by the southerners but he would hold and occupy those that have not been seized. On April 12, 1861, Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumpter. On April 15, President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 troops. The call went out by telegraph and that same afternoon University of Michigan President Dr. Henry Tappan called a meeting on the Courthouse grounds and the city pledged to support the Union. Michigan's quota was one regiment but four quickly formed. The first Michigan Infantry Regiment had one company each from Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. They are the first western regiment to arrive in Washington, DC. Lincoln was so pleased to see them enter the capital, he was quoted as saying "Thank God for Michigan." Lt. Jeffords advised soldiers to "bring a blanket, an undershirt and more because the war will last six months".

The war started in April and by July Lincoln wanted the Union to march to Manassas, Virginia. The urgency to get the war over with was very strong and the Union Army marched to Bull Run. The battle was very hard fought and all four Michigan units were at the very point of attack. It was a Union defeat. The 1st Regiment had 113 casualties. Bull Run showed that both armies needed more training and that this was not going to be a short war and there were going to be high casualties, killed wounded and captured.

When the draft came in 1863 you had three options, sign up and go, pay \$300 to the treasury and you were excused, or hire a substitute. Officers got in because of their social and political ties and not military

(Continued on page 5)

experience and appointed anyone they wanted in the north. In the south the officers had more military experience and training.

The north's general objective was to get the southern states back into the union. The plan was to attack and destroy the southern army. The strategy of the south was to defend against every attack and strike back attacking the will of the north to fight. The capability of the north was much greater than the south. The north put over two million men in uniform during the war, the south over one million. Six hundred thousand soldiers died, 1/3 killed in battle, 2/3 by disease. Ninety thousand Michigan soldiers went to fight, 15,000 did not come home. African Americans and native Americans also provided fighters, 60 black men from Washtenaw County served in the 102nd US Colored Troops.

Washtenaw County soldiers fought in every major battle. Four thousand men from Washtenaw County went to war, 475 did not return. Seven hundred and eighty were in the cavalry, including Monroe native, General George Armstrong Custer. The Custer Brigade was also known as the Wolverines.

Michigan at Gettysburg

On July 1, 1863, at Gettysburg the 24th Michigan Infantry of the Iron Brigade spent the whole day fighting the Confederates and lost 80% of its men. This regiment was an escort to the Lincoln funeral in honor of their bravery at Gettysburg.

On the second day, the color bearer carried the flag into battle. The color bearer of the 4th Michigan Infantry went down, Col. Jeffords grabbed the flag from a Confederate and killed him, then he was run through the chest with a bayonet and died the next day.



Refreshments, browsing genealogical materials and conversation after the talk

General Custer shouted, "Come on you Wolverines!" as they charged on the third day of battle at Gettysburg against Confederate General Jeb Stuart's cavalry. The Seventh was forced to retire with heavy casualties, 100 out of 461 officers and men, the highest loss of any cavalry regiment engaged in the battle.

Memories & Memorials

Soldiers were anxious to get home. But they quickly realized the people had no idea of what they had been through and stopped talking about it. The Grand Army of the Republic had no appeal to veterans in the first ten years after the war. Many soldiers had been sick and treated with morphine for pain. Drug addiction was a serious problem and medicine often

contained large quantities of alcohol and/or heroin.

As time passed, veterans bought into the home front romanticized version of the war. War memorials started getting built, gravestones were decorated and old wounds began to heal. Ultimately over four million Americans were freed from slavery, and the question of secession was settled. The struggle for civil rights continues as well as the balance of states rights and federal power.

Questions and answers followed the presentation. After the refreshment break, Martha Churchill and another member of the Genealogical Society put a variety of old pictures on the big screen and we had a lot of fun trying to identify them.

Special thanks to the Program Committee, Karen Jania, Ralph Beebe and Pauline Walters for interesting topics and delicious refreshments! The next WCHS Program will be Sunday, September 18. A postcard and newsletter will arrive in late August. ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!

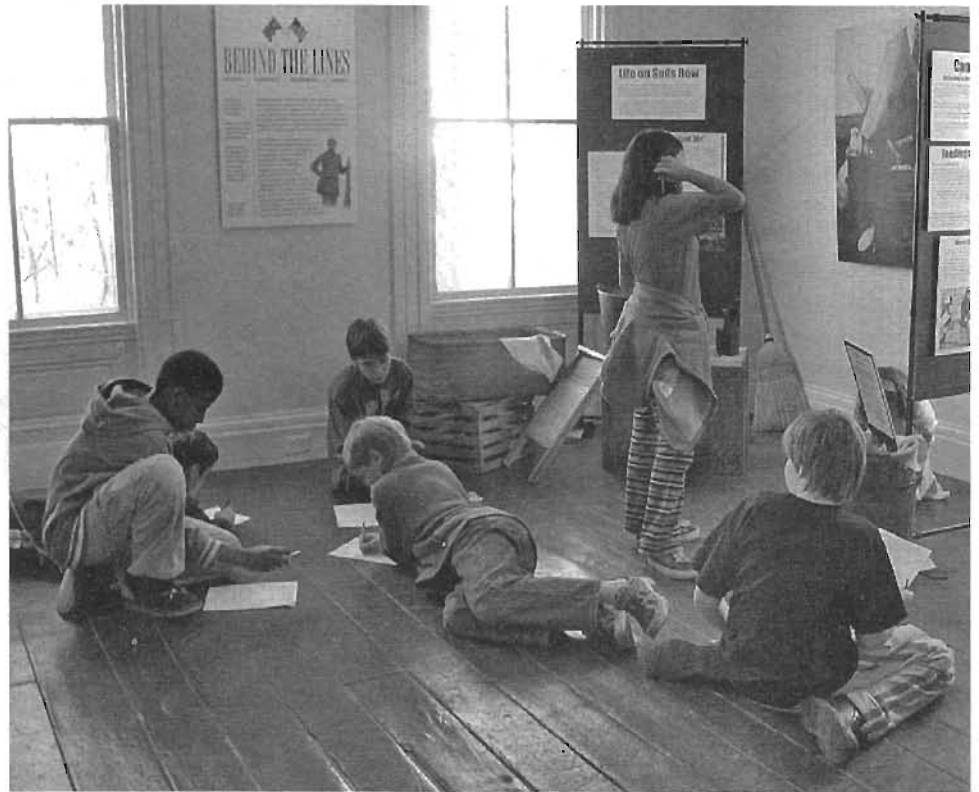
Do YOU Have Civil War Family Artifacts?

The Museum on Main Street is planning a second exhibit that tells the stories of our very own Washtenaw County families in the Civil War. Local families are invited to share the stories of their personal connection to the Civil War. This can be letters, photographs, diaries, articles, clothing, uniforms, military items and other related items. Please call Judy at 734-662-9092 or send an email to wchs-1000@ameritech.net.

Field Trip to the Museum

On Friday, April 30, 70 students, nine parent chaperones and teacher Joe Griffith from Honey Creek Middle School in Ann Arbor arrived at our doorsteps. They toured the museum in two groups, one having lunch while the others were "Behind the Lines."

The students sampled the hardtack, did the photo puzzle, measured themselves against the soldiers uniforms, asked us questions and did their research. They had to choose their subject for a final class project after viewing the exhibit. Once they turned it in to their teacher, they were able to get the (much requested) tour of the basement and second floor of the Museum. We welcome groups of all ages, call 734-662-9092 to schedule yours.



Students worked on every available surface to complete their assignment sheets.

(continued from page 1)

Beakes Street Resurfacing Summer Project

The City of Ann Arbor 2011 Street Resurfacing Project involves the resurfacing of approximately 12 streets located throughout the City. Including Beakes Street this summer. The Museum will maintain normal hours during this time. You will still be able to enter our parking lot from Main Street and exit onto Beakes. All but one lane of westbound traffic on Beakes Street will be stopped from East Summit to North Main. Eastbound traffic will be stopped on Kingsley from North Main to Fourth Avenue. The work will be completed in two phases, to allow construction on one half of the road at a time. Access to driveways will be maintained throughout the construction except for intermittent times when the new concrete is placed or edge drain is installed across the driveway.

June – July Curb, driveway, sidewalk removal and replacement and rebuilding of the road on the south side. No construction during the Art Fair.

August–September: Return to Beakes and conduct work on north side.

For updated information call Elizabeth Rolla, Senior Project Manager at 734-794-6410 ext. 43636 or email erolla@a2gov.org.

"A Step Back in Time"

The Washtenaw County Historical Society offers self-guided walking tours of historical locations. There is a 4K route and a 10K route and they both start and end at the Museum on Main Street. The tours take walkers to Kerrytown, UM Central Campus, Downtown Ann Arbor, the Old West Side, and Lowertown. This walking tour has some hilly terrain on city sidewalks. They were prepared by Susan Nenadic and Grace Shackman. A downloadable podcast tour is available from the WCHS website at www.WashtenawHistory.org

Garden Volunteer Needed!

The rain and sunshine have given us the best of the gardens' beauty this year. The lilacs and quince were extremely fragrant. The scent of the heirloom rose is like none other. If you have 30 minutes to one hour per week this summer to volunteer, and can help with some routine garden maintenance, call 734-662-9092.

OTHER VOLUNTEERS: If you have an area of interest that you would like to volunteer in call and let us know.

Enjoy History and Summer at Washtenaw County Parks!

Washtenaw County residents have access to over 1800 acres of parks, open spaces, trails, rivers and lakes, diverse ecosystems, a golf course, a recreation center, mills, a water park and spray park, and a family aquatic center. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation offer a diverse, entertaining, and educational array of programs for all ages from toddlers to seniors.

County Farm Park

Located at the southwest corner of Washtenaw and Platt, Ann Arbor

In 1836, 141 acres of county land was bought from Claudius Britton for \$1200. This park contains the 18 acre Britton Woods Nature Area, with an interesting mixture of upland and floodplain tree species. Oak, hickory, and cherry species reflect the upland nature of this wooded knoll, while maple, ash, ironwood, and hornbeam occur on the floodplain soils deposited by a glacial water course. Together with trillium and other wild flowers, Britton Woods is a reflection of the Ann Arbor area landscape in pre-settlement times.

County Farm was primarily used as agricultural land, but in this renewed habitat, rabbits, pheasant, woodchucks, and skunks, as well as numerous bird species, are found. There are regular sightings of fox and deer. As with all WCPARC parks, the plants, animals, fruits, and flowers of County Farm Park are protected against picking and collecting.



The Fox Science Preserve

Location: Entrance is on the east side of Peters Road, approximately 0.3 miles north of Miller Road in Scio Township

This former gravel pit offers a rare opportunity to explore the geology of the region. Ancient table-sized glacial boulders of granite, tillite, gneiss, and limestone are scattered around the base of the former pit. Keep your eye out for fossils in the limestone boulders.

Untouched for almost 40 years, the land surface here resembles the landscape that was revealed upon the retreat of the glaciers some 12,000 years ago. In places where plants have started to become established, mosses, prairie grasses, goldenrods, asters, and shingle oaks grow on the developing soils. Preservation of this property was a collaborative effort between the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Program, Scio Township, and the Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation Program (NAPP).



Sharon Mills County Park

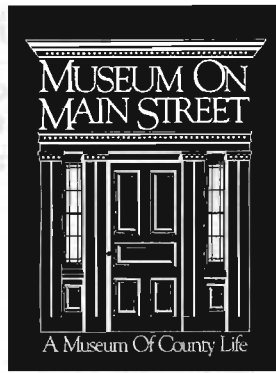
Location: 5701 Sharon Hollow Rd, 1/4 mile south of Pleasant Lake Rd., Sharon Township

Located on the banks of the River Raisin in southwestern Washtenaw County, Sharon Mills County Park has a rich history offered in a beautiful natural setting. A sawmill was first built there about 1834, and 20 years later, a gristmill was erected. In 1928, Henry Ford purchased and rebuilt Sharon Mills, adding a hydroelectric generator and stone addition. As a Ford Village Industries plant, the facility manufactured parts for Ford vehicles, eventually closing in 1946. Sharon Mills is listed on the State of Michigan Register of Historic Places.

Parker Mill County Park

Location: 4650 Geddes, Between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti

Explore this 26 acre tract of mostly wooded land that encompasses the tail end of Fleming Creek, where it joins the Huron River. Parker Grist Mill was built in 1873, and is one of the historic treasures in our Washtenaw County area. The mill (pictured here) is operable and contains original milling machinery, left in the mill when the Parker family ceased operation in 1958.



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Current resident or

***Celebrate the 4th of July Weekend at the
Museum on Main Street, invitation is below!***

Memorial Day 2011 was Special at MoMS

On Saturday May 28, several people came to the Museum to celebrate Memorial Day as it was originally conceived—Decoration Day. The first Decoration Days were celebrated in the years after the Civil War when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers across the country.

Some participants made wreaths while others made a card or two and wrote messages to thank a Veteran. The cards were later delivered to the Ann Arbor VA Hospital. It was a perfect opportunity for people to also view the Civil War exhibit

We are offering another opportunity to create patriotic wreaths and cards on the Independence Day weekend.

Celebrate the 4th of July Weekend at the Museum on Main Street

Independence Day honors the birthday of the United States of America and the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It's a day of patriotic parades and celebrations, a night of concerts and fireworks, and a reason to fly the American flag and honor the armed forces.

Make a Card!

*To thank a Veteran and brighten
someone's day. They will be delivered
to the Ann Arbor VA Hospital*

Make a Grapevine Wreath!

*Use flags, flowers, greenery and
colorful ribbons with stars and stripes
and create a wreath to take home.*

**Saturday & Sunday
July 2 - 3, 2011 • 12 Noon-4 PM**

Everyone is invited to participate in this fun, free and family-friendly event.
All artistic supplies provided. Refreshments served.

Call 734-662-9092 or email wchs-500@ameritech.net