

# The Negaunee Historical Society

303 East Main Street, P.O. Box 221,  
Negaunee, MI 49866 (906-475-4614)

## JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER

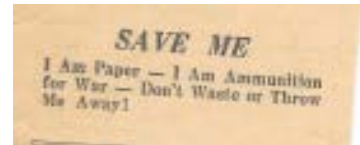
Editor: Roland Koski (negauneehistorical@att.net)

### FROM THE PRESIDENT, Virginia Paulson



The year was 1917 when the United States became involved in World War I. This year, Marquette County has several programs honoring those who lost their lives and those who served their country. John H. Mitchell, at the young age of 21, was the first Negaunee resident to pay the ultimate sacrifice and was killed in action.

After the local soldiers and sailors returned to civilian life, they formed an organization known as the "Negaunee Soldiers and Sailors Club." Soon in every city, hamlet and village those returning from war caught the spirit of organization and united to form "The American Legion."



The Negaunee Museum was formerly the home of Negaunee's American Legion, named the John H. Mitchell Post No. 66 in honor of Mitchell who lost his life serving his country. On the stationery used by the John H. Mitchell Post is written, "***Negaunee is a Good Town but Let's Make it Better***" Good words to live by.....



Please stop by and enjoy your local museum.

VIRGINIA PAULSON

### ***IN MEMORY OF OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS***

***Jean Nelson – 25APR2017***  
***Ron Isaacson – 11JUN2017***



**Welcome to our Negaunee Historical Society  
Website – take a moment and visit us at  
[www.negauneehistory.org](http://www.negauneehistory.org)**

## “PINEAPPLE FACE” BECOMES “PINEAPPLE GIRL” 1987 PEN PAL CREATES CONTROVERSY

Sarah York, as a 10-year old Negaunee school girl, created controversy when she became a pen pal of Manuel Noriega, then the de facto ruler of Panama. In 1987, Sarah began corresponding with Noriega after her father suggested that she should write to him because she liked the general's hat. This developed to the point where Noriega invited Sarah's family to visit him in Panama. Her family agreed to the visit seeing it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The parents were then later criticized for that visit and for encouraging Sarah's friendship with the highly controversial figure.



In October 1988, Sarah (11) and her mother were escorted by a military guard on a tour of Panama. She was interviewed constantly during that visit becoming the main item on the Panamanian news. The mayor of Panama City awarded Sarah an honorary key to the city. Upon her return home she was praised by her school and community. But soon, the story was covered in the national media where she was derided and ridiculed for befriending an enemy of the United States. Nevertheless, Sarah would visit Noriega once again in October 1989 just two months before the United States invasion of Panama.

Sarah now lives on a farm in remote rural Wisconsin and was interviewed by the radio show *This American Life* in 2003. She is a guitarist and is a part of the upper mid-west Old-time music scene. Her story was used as the basis for the song, "Pineapple Girl".



UPDATE: Since I wrote this article, Manuel Noriega died on May 29th at the age of 83. His death announcement indicated that he ruled with an iron fist, ordering the deaths of those who opposed him and maintaining a murky, close and conflicted relationship with the United States. Two years after Sarah's second visit to Panama, Noriega was arrested and spent a 17-year drug sentence in the United States. He was known mockingly as "Pineapple Face" for his pockmarked complexion, thus it must have been the reasoning for Sarah York's trip to be the basis of that above song "Pineapple Girl". It was brought to my attention by Virginia that she was the Mayor of Negaunee in 1987 and was contacted by a Chicago radio station to give her reaction as to the city's feelings on Sarah's visit. Sarah's teachers at the time were Michael Haines and Judy Maki. Judy stated "political cartoons appeared in the papers which she thought depicted her as a teacher".

### 1957 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BOOK ON SALE

I have put together a 66-page book recalling my memories of the 1957 State Basketball Championship season as a 12-year old Miner fan. You may purchase your souvenir copy with a minimum \$5.00 donation and \$5.00 postage. Make your check payable to "Negaunee Public Schools" % P.O. Box 221, Negaunee, MI 49866-0221.





## **FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE**

No meeting has been scheduled for July due to Pioneer Days activities. Our future meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, August 1st and Tuesday, September 5th at 7:00 at the museum. All members and guests are welcome to attend. Refreshments are always served at our meetings.

## **JACY KIRBY 2017 NHS SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**



Virginia Paulson, representing the Matthews' family, presented the \$500.00 Frank Matthews Scholarship to Jacy Kirby during the 2017 Negaunee's Awards ceremony. He is the son of Rodney & Sherry and resides in Negaunee. Congratulations, Jacy!!

*"Thank you so much for awarding me the Frank Matthews Memorial Scholarship. I have been involved in student council, peer coaching and sports. I plan to attend Macomb Community College for physical therapist assistant. I really appreciate your generosity." Jacy Kirby*

## **GIFTS, DONATIONS AND TIME**

(Since our March newsletter)

Judy DeFant – misc medical items  
Mike Ruhanen – misc newspapers, etc  
Mark Carlson – 1871 Lithograph in Frame  
Tom Chevrette – books written by Jim LaJoie  
Robert Maki – "Mining Journals" from 1950's  
Lani Duquette – several books, newspapers, etc  
Anonymous – Negaunee Male Chorus misc items  
Mark/Sharon Soave – combination wood/propane stove  
Betty Ann Schneider – misc 1936 school items from Hilma (Pynnonen) VanEerdon

(Note: If your name was omitted from this list, please notify the museum so we can acknowledge your kindness)

A Memorial Day ceremony was held at the Negaunee Cemetery under the threat of inclement weather. The event still had a very nice turnout by area residents to honor the brave men and women who served in the military to protect our freedom.





## NEGAUNEE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1967

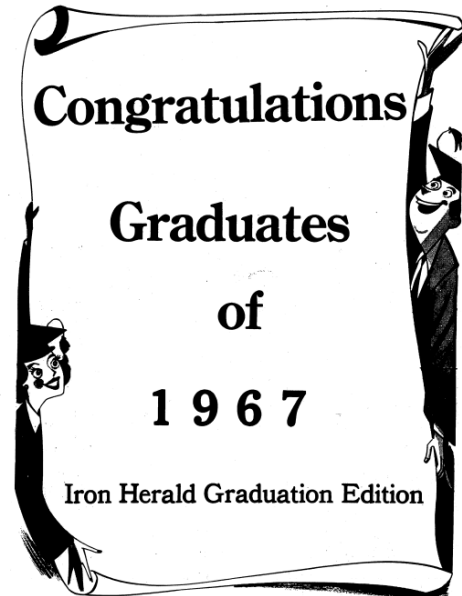
G. Christine Aho  
David Alan Anderson  
Gerald J. Anderson  
Thomas Stephen Anderson  
John Allen Argall  
Ann Carbinas Baas  
Thomas Charles Balzarini  
Carolyn Esther Bazinette  
William M. Bleau  
Arthur F. Bond  
Linda L. Bond  
Christine Lynn Carlson  
Richard Dale Catron  
Bernice Marion Cody  
James D. Cody  
Dennis James Collick  
Sigfrid Arthur Danielson  
Ronald Frederick Erickson  
Michael Alan Etelamaki  
Paul Lawry Evans  
Richard James Field  
Duane Paul Gensheimer  
Cheryl Christine Gleason  
Kerry Jo Goulette  
Donald Roy Grisham  
Barbara Ann Gula  
Alan Thomas Gyles  
Stephen Richard Haight  
Martin John Hanninen  
Paula Arlene Harju  
Susan Marie Heliin  
Arlene Grace Hewitt  
Linda Louise Hewitt  
John Edward Hill  
Deborah Lee Hodge  
Daryl M. Holem  
Susan Marie Holman  
Phillip Wade Hyry  
Annette Marie Hyttinen  
Susan Mae Jarvi  
Susan Maureen Jennings  
Linda Rae Johnson  
Linda Sue Johnson  
Louis Charles Johnson  
Paulette Rene' Johnson  
Rudy Arthur Johnson  
Dale Ralph Juchemich  
Charles Jacob Jurvelin, Jr.  
Jack Louis Kaikkonen  
Daria Kristine Kallioinen  
James Arthur Karki  
Linda Sue Kellan  
Thomas Ross Kemp  
Sandra Mae Kompai  
Linda Ann Koponen  
Mildred Lois Korvela  
Paul Michael Koski  
Lee James LaPreniere  
Tom Tuano Lahti  
Maryanne Laine  
Paul Allen Laine  
Melvin Paul Laitinen  
Rodney Wayne Laituri  
Faye Marie Lammie  
Glenn Gustave Larson

James Arne Larson  
Marvin John Laurila  
Howard Paul Lehto  
Carl Gregory Lenshek  
Frans William Leppanen  
Sharlene Marie Lindstrom  
Nancy Kay Lukkonen  
Stephen Raymond Luoma  
Linda Christine Makela  
Sheryl Ann Maki  
Karen Tenhunen Martin  
Joanne Lynn Matthews  
Daniel Williams Mattson  
Russell Orvil Mattson  
Barbara Ann Mell  
Kathryn Lynn Meloni  
Michael Paul Mingori  
Archibald James Mitchell  
Jack Lester Nicholas  
Sandra J. Ojala  
Patricia R. O'Neil  
Thomas W. Oster  
Steven Frederick Pascoe  
Colleen Kay Peterson  
James Carl Peterson  
Larry Edward Peterson  
Albert C. Pirkola  
Susan Helen Pirkola  
Harold Arthur Polkinghorne  
Jerome Henry Poutanen  
Michael Arnold Prusi  
William Rodney Prusi  
Dennis Francis Robare  
Camma H. Roberts  
Linda Lee Elizabeth Roberts  
William James Roberts  
Linda A. Rombeck  
Marsha Lynn Ronn  
Carolyn Mae Roose  
Michael Paul Roti  
Donald David Ruokola  
Thomas Carl Salmi  
Cynthia Lynn Slik  
Richard Stanley Smith  
Sandra Tossava Smith  
Tom James Stanaway  
Mary M. Steede  
Jeanne Marie Steffensen  
Ralph Hugo Sundquist  
Allen Charles Sunne  
Jean Lynn Sunne  
John Richard Symons  
Kathleen Ann Symons  
Bruce Allen Talus  
Roy Alfred Thurston  
Eileen Faye Turri  
Patricia Ann Vadnais  
Arthur James Vidlund  
Peggy Marie Wangberg  
Earlene Rae Ward  
Darrel Gene Wernholm  
Paul William Wertanen  
Donna Mae White  
Patricia Ann White  
James Clark Wickstrom

## Negaunee Iron Herald

The only Paper in the World that gives a darn about Negaunee

VOLUME LXXXIII NEGAUNEE, MICHIGAN Thursday, June 1, 1967 NUMBER 2



## ST. PAUL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1967

Michael Joseph Balzarini  
Helen Jane Barabe  
Joseph F. Brisson  
Albert A. Carrier  
James Joseph Comensoli  
Timothy William Coyle  
Ilene Elizabeth DeGabriele  
Robert Roy Delongchamp  
Waunita M. Francis  
Denise Giotto  
William Peter Gustitis  
Mary Margaret Harlan  
Raymond D. Jandron

Beatrice H. Juchemich  
Margaret Ann Korpi  
Michael Lee Kratz  
Zita Francine Larson  
David Clay Maurino  
Kerry Anne Miljour  
Bruno Martin Misale  
Mary Jo Russo  
Christine Spelgatti  
Peter Michael Tousignant  
Walter Turino  
Joseph Dale White

This was the final  
graduating class  
from St. Paul's.

**CLOSED**

## VERL WILLS – BIOLOGY TEACHER AND WOOD SCULPTURER



Mr. Verl Wills was well known as our biology teacher at NHS where he began his professional career in 1946. However, how many of us can remember that he had another talent as a wood carver? Verl took up woodcarving while stationed at an Army camp in Texas during World War II. He whittled hundreds of figures which are owned by people in practically every state. The most interesting carving is of the 1951-52 Negaunee Miners basketball team which is on display in the showcase at Lakeview Memorial Gymnasium. More than 100 hours went into carving the figures of the “starting 5” for that district championship team and Coach Bob Carey. Each figure is approximately one foot high and Wills mounted them on a mahogany base and presented it to the team at the school’s awards assembly. Below is a picture of his wood carving of Coach Carey and the starting “5”.



Left to right: Ray Trehwella, Don Anderson, Lowell “Lowie” Johnson, Coach Carey, Donald “Booner” Price and Dave Stromquist

### **EIGHTY YEARS AGO (from Bob Dobson’s notes)**

May 7, 1937 - Alvin R. Koskey has purchased the Heinonen home on West Main St. and will use the home for a funeral home. (First floor for office, chapel, and operating rooms) (2nd floor for living quarters)

### **FIFTY YEARS AGO (from Bob Dobson’s notes)**

May 18, 1967 - Death of Russell Thomas, 204 Iron St. (73) WWI veteran  
May 18, 1967 - The Viga Bowling Alley remains from the fire have been demolished  
May 18, 1967 - Don Ellis is the new Pineview School Principal in Palmer. He had been Assistant Principal at Central.  
May 25, 1967 - Second Phase of Empire Mine completed and public open house on Saturday. First open house had 10,000 attendees. More expected this time.

## EMPIRE MINE CLOSES AFTER 50 YEARS

PALMER, MI-- Operations have officially ended at the Empire Mine in Palmer.



Cliffs Natural Resources says as of Thursday the mine was put into an indefinite idle state. The company says it will not be completely shut down so the Empire will stay compliant with certain maintenance and environmental codes.



1967-2017



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## ST. PAUL'S HIGH SCHOOL CLOSES AFTER 34 YEARS

1<sup>st</sup> Graduating Class June 1938 – Last Graduating Class June 1967



September 5, 1934 marked the opening of St. Paul's new high school department with Father Mathias LaViolette serving as its first principal. The first year of operation showed a freshman class only with a new class added each successive year. There were 19 members in the first graduating class on June 12, 1938. In 1955, Father Robert Cordy became the new pastor of St. Paul's and the superintendent of the school. St. Paul's closed after the 1967 school year with a graduation class of 25 students. The following year, all students transferred to Negaunee High School.



1934-1967



## **VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR MUSEUM**

While our museum has been idle for the winter, volunteers have contributed their time and talent inside and outside. We accept the ladies yearly remodeling of different areas of the museum as normal – because they have done this winter after winter. But, our “hats” off to Virginia Paulson, Laura Jandron, Jeanne Sandstrom, and others who spend countless hours re-doing one room after another and making big changes for our museum. They do get help from Paul Jandron and Dave Dompierre to move heavy items and to enjoy a little coffee with them.



Thank you to John and Marlene Ennett, the owners of Peninsula Janitorial, for cleaning the museum carpets with the help of employee, Dave Hagemeister. Well done!



Art Gischia has joined our governing board but has also been very instrumental in repairing our back porch – a major task. We had a volunteer group from Northern Michigan University who drew up different



plans on replacing the deteriorated back porch with cost estimates. Art and Dave have already volunteered many hours of their time and skills to complete this tedious repair and replace project. Thank you very much.....



Miles Parkkonen did a majority of the snow removal in the winter and has now reseeded the museum yard. Preston Koski and his Grandpa cleaned up the leaves from the museum yard, cut the grass, and the garden had its first touchup. Thanks to the 12 board members for their time and contributions to keep our museum open. Thank you to all of our 264 members, as of this writing, who have continued to renew their memberships or for becoming a member for the first time. The Negaunee Historical Society does not receive any federal, state or local funding.



**PALMER FAST PITCH SOFTBALL TEAM – circa 1949**

(Picture submitted by Fran Nelson of Palmer)



Front L-R: Gordy Swanson, Jerry Nease, Kenny Hewitt, “Bing” Riecki, Jack Nease, Manager; Leo Koski, Roy Rautio, Alan Wakkuri Back L-R: Lowell Liquia, Harold Trehwella, Ted Nelson, Charles Numikoski, Lenny Anderson, Charlie Swanson, George Hewitt, Sr., Joe Newman

**ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP - JUNE 15    264**

**LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS        177**

**2017 MEMBERSHIPS                87**

Thank you to all of our 264 members for their continued support of our society. Now would be a good time for others to help and support the preservation of Negaunee’s history by renewing their membership and seeking new members. The museum displays are being continually updated and improved for our visitors. Thank you for all of the past memberships, donations, gifts, grants and to all of our volunteers.

(Negaunee Historical Society, P O Box 221, Negaunee, MI 49866-0221)

Lifetime - \$100.00    2017 Individual - \$10.00    2017 Student - \$5.00

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

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

City and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

(If you would like your newsletter e-mailed to you – please indicate e-mail address)