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NEWS FROM THE WABASH & ERIE CANAL • DELPHI, INDIANA
March 2023



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Volunteer Highlight: Pam Luenz

Each month, we want to highlight one of our many volunteers in recognition of

Prepping *The Delphi* for 2023



The dates have been set! Canal Season will officially open on May 20, and that means a full summer of Indiana history fun every Saturday afternoon. But you might not know all the work to be done before we can bring out *The Delphi*, our replica canal

their service and to share ways that you can get involved in our mission of preservation, education, and recreation.

This month, we'll hear from Pamela Luenz.



What is your volunteer role at the Canal?

I'm the school marm or school mistress, and my persona is Miss Franklin because of my relationship with Benjamin Franklin and my family history with him being my great-great-etc-uncle.

How many years have you been volunteering, and how did you get involved?

We initially became involved through a friendship with Dan McCain in the 1990's. We worked for an organization called Banks of the Wabash. My husband and I both got involved from there, in fact. Banks of the Wabash is focused on involvement in communities along the Wabash River, and I got connected about when they were bringing the Schoolhouse over to Canal Park.

boat, for a season full of voyages.

First, we had to tend to some electronics diagnostics, getting into the inner-workings of the control system. Being a battery-operated vessel, it is crucial to make sure all the components are behaving as they should! Above is Dean Smoll, crew volunteer and electrical engineering mastermind, giving the control circuits a once-over. Dean was also in touch with Scarano Boat Building in Albany, New York, who built and delivered *The Delphi* in 2009 and has provided excellent support ever since.



Another delightful part of operating the boat is making sure the ballast tanks and batteries are serviced and fresh for the new season. Filling some of the ballast tanks will help weigh down the boat so it sits at the proper depth during its travels. And topping off the batteries ensures they are ready to handle many dozens of trips! Above you can see John Polles, Admiral of the Delphi Navy, resetting the floor panels over the tanks and batteries.

When they had the Schoolhouse donated, we paid for its foundation, roof, and transportation to the park. So we've been involved with the Schoolhouse from the beginning!

I also have experience teaching in several places. I'm originally from Saint Louis, and when I married my husband we were transferred to Lafayette with Caterpillar. I was a teacher in Saint Louis, Peoria, Lafayette, and I taught as a volunteer when Caterpillar sent us to India.

My husband and I are also very involved as Canal supporters. We are lifetime members, plus we are charter members of the 468 Mile Club. [\[If you would like more information about joining the 468 Mile Club, click here!\]](#)



What is your favorite part of volunteering at the Canal?

My favorite part of volunteering with you all is being able to recreate the historic schoolhouse experience with children. When you can take a child back in time and put them in a historic situation, children enjoy that!



And we would be remiss if we didn't mention that safety is our top priority! Each year, the Department of Natural Resources inspects *The Delphi* to make sure it meets all safety precautions and regulations. We are proud to say that our beloved boat passed the inspection and is ready for another season!

And as a fun fact: DNR requires vessels to have an anchor with a line of at least 100 feet of rope. We do not anticipate the canal's current causing any "runaway boat" situations, but now at least we are prepared for all scenarios!

If you are interested in a group tour or summer boat rides, or if you'd like to enlist on the boat crew, please get in touch by contacting director@canalcenter.org.

A Model Citizen

I just love volunteering and teaching. It's funny when some children ask about my family connections, "Did you know Benjamin Franklin well?" And I have to respond, "No, he was a little before my time."

Do you have a favorite Canal Era fun fact?

The fun thing for all ages is the information about "crooked shoes." In the mid-1800's, crooked shoes were being introduced to our area, and this just means having a left shoe and a right shoe. Until that time, everybody wore straight shoes that could fit both feet. If you look at an antique cobbler's set, there was no left shoe or right shoe! Around the mid-1800's, you would see crooked shoes in the Indiana area, brought in by canal.

We are always on the lookout for volunteers who are excited about recreating historic experiences in the Pioneer Village! We have several building spots available, each with a special focus. No prior experience is needed--we can connect with you with all the info you'd need!

Click the link below for more information about volunteering with us.

VOLUNTEER
TODAY!

HISTORIC
CLASSES



You may have experience building model sets for airplanes, boats, or trains, but we wager that you've never seen models like the ones Terry Bodine has built. Terry is a brilliant craftsman from the Covington area who has an affinity for creating historic models. He also created the model line boat which is in our museum at Canal Park, shown below.

We recently had the privilege to visit Terry at his workshop, and we had to share all about it.



Terry is basing his work on the design of the Gronauer Lock (Lock No. 2). He is meticulously duplicating the details and design so that

SIGNUP!

Have you ever walked through the Pioneer Village at Canal Park and marveled at the skills of the diverse crafters and artisans? This spring, Historic Trades Classes are **back!** It's your chance to learn skills from hearth cooking to coopering to papermaking to basket-making and more!



Last autumn we hosted the inaugural session for historic classes, and we are back with even more classes!



We are also bringing in more teachers to instruct classes like bobbin lace and tating. You can view the full list of classes, along with pricing and other details, at our [Historic Trades Classes page on the website.](#)

every piece of miniature lumber represents part of the original structure. His reproduction is so faithful to the original, there are features that are not even immediately visible from the surface level!



As you may notice, the lock's structure is huge! Lock exhibits generally just look like some walls set into the ground. In reality, there is enormous structural support needed to operate a lock! There is a need for a wide, firm foundation, along with a thick, reinforced wall structure on each side.



It doesn't take long to realize why lock construction and maintenance was so prohibitively expensive! Preserving stories and details like these are essential to who we are and what we do. We are grateful for enthusiasts like Terry who invest their expertise into bringing history to life!

WRHCC Retreat Recap



We have a range of options for all interests! Lunch will be included for the all-day classes, and you'll get to bring home whatever you create, like the woven masterpieces pictured above. With our incredibly talented instructors, you'll be proud of what you make.

If you'd like to get started with your enrollment for one of the classes, please check out [this online form](#) to get the ball rolling! Or you can [print this form](#) and mail it in at your convenience. We hope to see you this spring for some fun, historic learning!

See You in Fort Wayne

If you haven't marked your calendar already for the Canal Society of Indiana's (CSI) event TOMORROW, make sure you stop by if you can!



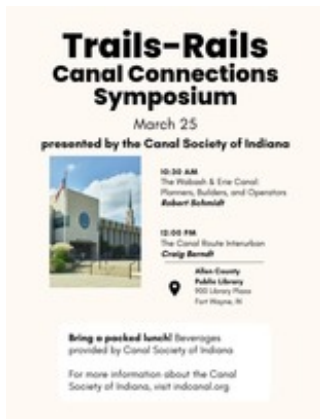
Just as March began, the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission (WRHCC) met at Turkey Run State Park to collaborate and plan for upcoming grants and events.

Dan McCain, president emeritus of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, is the Carroll County delegate on the commission, and Mike Tetrault serves as Dan's alternate. The goal of the WRHCC is to promote awareness and appreciation of the Wabash River throughout the counties where it flows. The WRHCC administers grants and funding for special projects and events that benefit the public as we seek to steward this vital state resource.



There were several wonderful presentations that highlighted DNR conservation programs and efforts, and even an enlightening presentation on the resurgence of bald eagles in Indiana throughout the Wabash River counties.

The WRHCC has been a great friend to the Wabash & Erie Canal over the years, including in the creation of the Interpretive Museum at Canal Park. This year's grant cycle will be focusing on cultural and historic preservation projects, so there could be some opportunities to highlight the intersection



The Canal Society is hosting this **FREE** event, "Trails-Rails: Canal Connections Symposium," and it is open to the public. The program will begin at 10:30AM at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne.



CSI President Bob Schmidt will present "The Wabash & Erie Canal: Planners, Builders & Operators" to start, and at noon Craig Berndt will present "The Canal Route Interurban."

If you love canal history, the Canal Society of Indiana is a wonderful resource with tours and events happening during the year.

Those attending are asked to bring a packed lunch, and beverages will be provided by the Canal Society.

For more information about the Canal Society of Indiana, please visit indcanal.org.

Did you know...?

of history and the Wabash River this year! For more information about the WRHCC, visit: <https://www.in.gov/wrhcc/>.

Indiana's Homemade Money



In the 1840's, Indiana tried financing its infrastructure with the equivalent of Kohl's Cash.

We tend to take for granted that there is a strong centralized authority over currency in the United States, and our cash is just as valuable in every state. During the Canal Era, things were not so standardized!

Whether it's an individual buying a home or a state government financing a building project, any loan requires a source of money to provide the necessary funds. When Indiana passed the Mammoth Internal Improvements Act to build the Wabash & Erie Canal, along with other infrastructure, there was a ready of supply of investors. Between the young Erie Canal raking in profits for New York and an optimistic outlook on the economy, money was easy to find because investors could hope for big returns.

Unfortunately, the years following were marked with economic downturn and uncertainty. Suddenly, the seemingly endless supply of cash disappeared. How would Indiana ever find the money to pay all the canal laborers, contractors, and engineers?



This is where canal scrip comes in, and it wasn't unique to Indiana.



You can hold your wedding, corporate meeting, or birthday celebration at the Canal Center?



We offer a variety of options for each different type of event. We offer free wifi and can accommodate up to 300 guests!

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In short, Indiana simply printed its own currency, but this currency was only "valuable" in canal-adjacent areas. Just like a retailer like Kohl's might print its own "money," that money won't go very far at a restaurant or to pay other bills!



Imagine being a contractor or laborer on the canal and being told, "We can't pay you with regular cash, but trust us, this Indiana money is pretty much the same thing!" Unfortunately, the value of canal scrip dropped to less than 40 cents on the dollar, and many people went bankrupt, stuck with useless paper currency.

This money came to be known as Red Dog, White Dog, and Blue Dog because of its low value and the color of the paper it was printed upon. Its use was abandoned as people realized that it wasn't going to hold its value.

Normally we would conclude with something like, "We learned our lesson and we no longer have to deal with made-up currency," but we also live in an age of cryptocurrency! Sometimes history has a way of repackaging itself in modern contexts.

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