



**FALL NEWSLETTER: A Special Report
November 2014**



The David Douglas Historical Society is in DIRE

STRAITS.....there is no happy Thanksgiving on the horizon!! The Society is floundering for lack of an active, dedicated, Board of Directors and financial stability. Taken together each of these play a significant role for the current and future function of the Society; the former is most critical for an effective and successful community non-profit organization fulfilling obligations to the community which it serves, the latter provides the means for carrying out the required business operation for such an organization.

The Major Focus of this Newsletter will describe both of these critical issues, how we arrived at this point and the criteria and means for putting the David Douglas Historical Society on solid footing.

The remainder of the Newsletter will describe the activities since our annual meeting in April, those for the coming months and a section about “things to know”.

The Board of Directors has just six members but only four individuals actively participating in Society monthly meetings, community events, on-going and special projects. This is an unduly heavy burden for so few of us to shoulder and is unsustainable! Since January of this year five members left the Board for a variety of reasons. The resignations included death of a spouse, a medical debilitating procedure, an untimely member’s death, a pending move from the metro area, and unethical conduct. Surely there must be an equal number or hopefully more Historical Society members capable and able to share the required work load with others on a Board of Directors. Here is a quick summary defining a member of the Board:

- A Board member is first a general member of the David Douglas Historical Society and,

- is dedicated, committed and passionate about the David Douglas School District and the diverse socio-economic processes which make up the community; he/she
- supports and works actively to insure the Society through its activities accurately represents the past, present and developing history of the community.

Board members should expect to devote the following times conducting the business activities and events of the Society throughout the current calendar year as we push to put the organization on a solid functioning basis.

- The Board of Directors meet monthly at the South Powellhurst District building on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 1:30-5:pm to conduct the official business of the Society,
- members are asked to participate in one or both the 1st or 2nd Thursday of the month from 1-5:pm as necessary and scheduled to work on special one-time or on-going projects for the Society;
- during the spring and summer months the Historical Society participates in 4-8 community events, such as parades and Neighborhood Night Out celebrations devoting about 4-6 hours to each event.

Read the several previous Newsletters and Annual Reports ([click here](#)) to learn about the many tasks needing attention. Some work is underway, a few have been completed, but other tasks have not yet begun.

Before leaving this section, I want to invite all who are not now members of the Society to join, and consider volunteering to serve on the Board of Directors or participate as a member of a work group/committee to assist with the multitude of organizational tasks ahead of us. In the past two years several members have volunteered their time to assist with conducting the Annual Meetings which was extremely helpful. Enlisting the assistance of our general members is essential for an effective and successful organization.

***Financial Disaster* in mid-June of this year we discovered that a trusted Board member apparently violated that trust. Our bank account, according to a monthly financial report showed a balance of a little over \$5,000.00 in May 2014. However, because of alarming and raising doubts together with unanswered fiscal questions, the bank was contacted and all monthly statements beginning with April 2013**

through June 2014 were reviewed. Numerous alleged non-authorized expenditures, some to businesses and others to the individual's possible personal bank account were made reducing our actual bank balance to \$72.00. These bank records have been turned over to the Portland Police Bureau for investigation of alleged misuse of Society funds. Although we suspect the amount of unauthorized withdrawals may exceed the almost \$5,000.00 figure, the law restricts investigation to a three year period, in addition our records are inadequate to review beyond the date April 2013 through June 2014.

Immediately following discover of missing bank funds, the account was closed and a new account opened. Fiscal procedures to prevent such events in the future have been instituted and additional policies along with appropriate methods of accounting will be developed. The Board member suspected of unauthorized expenditures was terminated from the Board of Directors and his membership in the Society canceled.

Since discovery of our loss of funds we have been able to create a balance of just over \$400 through participating in community events such as the Midway Business Alliance Festival this past summer, the Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Night Out and participation in the Over 50 Alumni Association event in September. We have raised funds by raffling our community history books, stemware and Gilbert coloring books. Over the past two years the Alumni annual reunion has been the greatest single resource for supporting our work and raising funds for the Society. I would suggest this as a natural out-come from a gathering attended by only David Douglas High School graduates!

On October 28th I met with the Portland Police detective investigating our case and agreed with her proposal to turn all financial and other pertinent records over to a special Forensic Auditing class at George Fox University in Newberg. The students will examine and prepare a case for presentation to the District Attorney and Grand Jury for possible criminal prosecution. This is a project sponsored by the Portland Police, Portland State University and George Fox University and taught by the detective in charge of our case. It is specially organized to assist community groups such as the Historical Society which is unable to afford a privately prepared financial audit where fraud or theft is suspected. This is a win-win situation for both the students and our organization. The students have the opportunity to review and put together an actual potential criminal case and we are relieved from spending numerous hours pulling the appropriate information together. It is a huge burden lifted off my shoulders!

During the Annual Meeting in April a vote to amend the Society's membership dues was approved, and the effective date of membership was change to fiscal year July 1st to June 30th. This change was recommended in recognition of the Society's movement forward to a more active and participatory role in the community generating expenses not incurred in prior years. We also project increased collection, preservation, and display costs for our artifacts. Collection of dues is now more important given our financial crisis! I ask all members and those desiring to join the David Douglas Historical Society to select the appropriate membership category and submit the associated dues to the Society's mailing address (which is the David Douglas School District office):

**David Douglas Historical Society
1500 SE 130th
Portland, OR. 97233**

The following is the new annual dues structure:

- Adult, age 18 and above, \$9.50**
- Family, \$12.50**
- Students, grades 7-12, \$1.00**
- Students, grades k-6, \$0.50**

Life Membership initial dues:

- Adult, \$35.00**
- Family, \$50.00**

Although the approved amendment eliminated the *Life Membership* category and suggested those individuals consider a donation in place of dues, I am exercising executive authority to restore the *Life Membership* category recto-active to July 1st 2014; leaving the initial cost at \$35.00 for an Adult and \$50.00 for a Family *Life* memberships. However, members in these two categories are asked to submit annual dues associated with the adult individual (\$9.50) and family (\$12.50) memberships. This will increase our financial resource pool and give us more of a predictable solid fiscal base. There is a certain amount of prestige and standing usually associated with Life Membership in any organization, and it is so with the David Douglas Historical Society. In the coming months and future years the Society Board will be able to adopt selected benefits for individuals with this membership recognizing the uniqueness of this special category. The Board of Directors will be

asked to approve this change on November 4th during the monthly business meeting.

Community Activities following April's Annual meeting were reduced to just four compared to eight last year. In 2013 we were entered two parades, attended three Neighborhood Night Outs, three business area sponsored celebrations, and a Christmas Bazaar. This year because of a lack of person-power to plan, set up and man the events we attended only one Neighborhood Night Out, three business celebrations and entered one parade, not an effective way to build the Society's visibility and creditability throughout the David Douglas community.

In 2015 I hope the Historical Society will be able to participate in the four David Douglas Community Neighborhood Associations and the special night out celebrations held by each throughout the spring and summer months. The neighborhoods are:

- Powellhurst- Gilbert
- Mill Park
- Hazelwood
- Pleasant Valley

Additionally, the 82nd Avenue of Roses Business Association annual parade and carnival held at East Port Plaza is another important event for the Society and is held in April; the Gateway Business Association and the "Fun-O-Rama" parade and carnival held in May is critical for our community participation, as is the Midway Business Alliance's two celebrations held in the spring and fall months. The Society needs to take every opportunity to tell the story of the David Douglas Community, it's past, present and future by attending area events as these and others, which could include Lents, Centennial, Parkrose and Glenfair neighborhoods. These celebrations along with special programs presented during our Annual Meetings in April provide the means to inform, enlist, and encourage the David Douglas diverse demographic populations to learn about the community in which they live.

Things to Know about happenings in the world of the David Douglas Historical Society, most here are favorable! The highlights are:

- A shout out to David Douglas class members '57-'63 who attended the annual September "Over 50 Reunion" celebration at the Tyee Yacht Club Social and picnic at Blue Lake Park! Your participation in our raffle of Society merchandize brought \$283.00 to our coffers, a much needed financial boost for us!!

- **A generous thanks to Glenn Albus and his partner-wife Yvonne (who keeps him alert and focused!) for his leadership over these past years as the President of the “Over 50 Alumni Association and the supportive relationship with the Historical Society. The always gregarious Doug and quiet Vicky Freeman now take on that role.**
- **Throughout this past year we have established a strong, effective close working relationship with the David Douglas School District. Of course it helps that Don Grotting, Superintendent and myself are, as he calls us, “Coos County Boys”! We both were born in Coos County and began our respect professional careers there. When we meet together we plan enough time to recall our youthful experiences on the Southern Oregon coast while of course leaving time to conduct official business.**
- **Several outcomes of the above mutual working relationship have been instituted. Most significant is Lois Leonard’s documentary, “*Finding David Douglas*”, which was the featured program for our 2013 Annual Meeting and has now been incorporated into the Districts curriculum. Lois and Brooke O’Neill, Director of Curriculum met together last December to begin planning for this addition to the District’s studies. Less significant, but no less important to the Society’s everyday operation, we were given our own key to the Powellhurst building and parking area!! Now that is a sign of coming up in the world!**
- **As a result of our strong relationship with the District the Society has been able to reserve the South Powellhurst Museum Display Room monthly on the 1st and 2nd Thursdays from 1:pm–5:pm to work on special one-time or on-going tasks. This also allows us to schedule public visit times to the Museum on either of those day times. In the spirit of cooperation we have agreed to release the room to other groups who might need the shared meeting room on those days if we are not planning on occupying it.**
- **With this added reserved time for Historical Society work, we are freed to alter our monthly 2nd Tuesday afternoon Board meetings to another location and time to accommodate**

members who might be more free to participate in times other than during the day hours.

- **Sadly, Barbara Gifford, Board Secretary, and one of the earlier members of the Board of Directors and a long time participant in elementary school PTSA organizations past away following heart surgery in October. Her contribution to the Society will sorely be missed.**
- **This Newsletter along with previous ones and Annual Reports will be posted on our newly created School District web pages sometime within the coming week. Check out next week this link to our pages <http://www.ddouglas.k12.or.us/our-district/david-douglas-historical-society/> eventually all these documents will be posted on our newly created face book page....as soon as I find the time to do so!!**

As I try to conclude this lengthy Newsletter and Special Report, I struggle with conflicting thoughts and emotions. I am please and proud of what the David Douglas Historical Society has accomplished these past two years and the bright future which might lay ahead for us. But at the same time I am saddened and chagrined by the trust misplaced in an individual who I had counted on but who blind sided me by his lack of responsibility. This mistrust and the loss of Board members have indeed created serious questioning for the future of the Society. It is clear, without a dedicated and committed Board of Directors the David Douglas Historical Society is in a precarious and critical state of existence. The Society needs your help to continue its mission. Volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors or to assist with the multitude of tasks waiting to be undertaken.

**Ted Condon, President
David Douglas Historical Society
November 1, 2014**