

# The Chautauqua Network News

February/April 2011



## Epworth to host 28<sup>th</sup> annual Network meeting on banks of Lake Michigan

Chautauqua Network members will head to the nation's Midwest for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual meeting July 24-27 in Epworth, Michigan. Longtime Networker and Epworthian Larry Snyder will oversee the events. [Please note that July 24-27 is a week earlier than previously announced.]

Epworth Assembly, Inc. began in 1894 as a Methodist training ground for laymen, and as a place for restoration and retreat. Epworth continues to offer opportunities for spiritual renewal through worship services, youth activities, family programs and service. Visit their website at [www.epworthchurch1894.org](http://www.epworthchurch1894.org)

Situated on nearly 300 acres with more than two miles of sandy beaches on Lake Michigan, Epworth was on the traveling chautauqua circuit during its heyday. A summer community of 220 individually named cottages, Epworth is closed from November 1 to April 1 except for a part-time central office.

Arrival and registration for the Chautauqua Network conference at Epworth will be from 1 - 6 p.m., Sunday, July 24. From 6 - 8 p.m., Larry and Julie Snyder will host a barbecue at their summer home known as Topside Cottage. Following the meal, Vespers on the beach have been scheduled. (continued on page two)

## Chautauqua Trail Website voted a goal for 2011; Sibbring reports

During the 2010 annual meeting at Chautauqua Institution, Kevin Sibbring, member of a Network of a Network subcommittee formed in 2009, gave a presentation on the status of the Chautauqua Trail concept that members had been formulating for several years. The subcommittee's deliberations have resulted in a plan for an online Chautauqua Trail that would "connect, inform and educate" visitors to a dedicated website.

Sibbring said that the website would allow visitors to learn more about the history of the North American Chautauqua Movement, use an interactive map to identify remaining independent chautauquas across the United States and Canada, read news about the Chautauqua Network, review a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), as well as inquire about membership in the Network. (continued on page two)



Now known as the Community Center, the Epworth Hotel was built in 1894.

The Chautauqua Network is a group of organizations and individuals committed to the communication and implementation of the chautauqua concept of building community by supporting all persons in the development of their full potential intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. The Chautauqua Network facilitates interaction and communication among its members to further their preservation, growth and development. Mission statement adopted July 12, 1999. Find us on the web at [www.ciweb.org](http://www.ciweb.org)



Representing the Chautauqua Network, four proud 2010 graduates of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle received their diplomas during graduation exercises when the Network annual meeting convened at Chautauqua Institution. Here they pose next to their class banner. Left to right: Boots Schafer, Myra Peterson, Maureen Moore, Kirk Hunter. Photo furnished by Maureen Moore.

(Chautauqua Trail Website - continued) Secondary pages, Sibbring continued, would provide guests with detailed information about individual chautauqua communities, including links to member websites, electronic documents and photos.

Finally, the Network subcommittee outlined the website benefits. They included strategic marketing of the contemporary chautauqua movement; introducing a new audience to the movement; encouraging individuals who may have a relationship with one chautauqua to broaden their experience by visiting other chautauqua communities; further educating North Americans about the value of various chautauqua missions; and generating additional website traffic for each member organization.

The website URL address, [www.chautauquatrail.com](http://www.chautauquatrail.com) has been secured for the purpose of developing and launching this initiative. Following Sibbring's report, the Network moved to support the development and launch of the Chautauqua Trail website before the 2011 annual meeting in Epworth, Michigan. The Chautauqua Network will help fund the project while the Lakeside (Ohio) Association will facilitate development. (continued on page three)

(Epworth - continued from page one) On Monday, July 25, activities will start with a continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m. In addition to morning and afternoon Network meetings, there will be a slide lecture on the history of Epworth at 10:45 a.m. and the first cycle of tours of the Epworth Museum and the Assembly grounds at 3 p.m. A box lunch will be catered by the Dining Room.

Dinner on Monday will be at the nearby Lincoln Hills Golf Club. Expenses incurred by Networkers at Lincoln Hills, says Larry, will be covered in the registration fee. The fee continues to be \$125.00.

After dinner on Monday, a talk titled "Idlewild: The Black Eden," will be given by Bill Anderson, retired founding director of the State of Michigan's Department of History, Arts and Libraries, and a former college president.

Idlewild, which is 45 miles east of Epworth, was founded in 1912 as a black resort for African Americans who were barred from white establishments. Many famous entertainers performed at the Paradise and Flamingo clubs in Idlewild. Among them were Aretha Franklin, Della Reese, Bill Cosby and The Four Tops.

The conference schedule Tuesday will follow Monday's pattern except that the Museum and grounds tours will be from 9 – 10:45 a.m. Free time has been set aside from 3 – 6 p.m.

The Snyders will host a lasagna dinner from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at Topside Cottage. The evening program at 8 p.m. will be "The Belle of Amherst," an historic reenactment of the life of New England 19<sup>th</sup> century poet, Emily Dickinson.

A farewell breakfast has been planned from 8:30 – 10 a.m., Wednesday, July 27.

Mark your calendars! The 2012 Chautauqua Network conference will be July 22-25 in Lakeside, Ohio; the 2013 meeting will be at Chautauqua Institution,

(Chautauqua Website - continued) The Network subcommittee members are Kevin Sibbring, Lakeside, Ohio; Network President Frank Gwalthney, Ocean Park, Maine; Libby Hicks, Bay View, Mich., and Network Secretary Kathy Snavely, Mt. Gretna, Pa.



Sunset at Epworth's shores on Lake Michigan

### Betty Lou Young, historian of Pacific Coast chautauquas, dies at 91

Word has reached us of the death of longtime Networker, Betty Lou Young, on July 1 at the age 91. Betty Lou was author of a history of Pacific Palisades, Calif., her hometown and the last of the independent chautauquas, founded in 1922.

Subsequent to that publication, Chautauqua Historian Alfreda L. Irwin encouraged Betty Lou to write a history of all the West Coast chautauquas. As announced in the February 2007 issue of The Chautauqua Network News, Betty Lou did indeed

(continued from first column) publish that history. It was titled "Frontier Chautauqua: the Chautauqua Movement on the Pacific Coast."

Betty Lou's warmth and graciousness at Network annual meetings will be missed. We extend our sympathies to her family.

### New Jersey town celebrates its Chautauqua roots in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Island Heights, New Jersey, has come to our attention as another Methodist Camp Meeting community that thrives in transformation. Formed in 1878 by the Rev. Jacob Graw and 12 other ministers and 17 businessmen, Island Heights began as both a religious organization and a real estate development.

On a site at the peak of a 60 ft. bluff overlooking the Toms River at the mouth of the Atlantic intracoastal waterway, the new community quickly became a settlement of cottages and a tabernacle. Later, between the 1880s and the 1920s, grand "cottages" sprang up in a variety of architectural styles, many with a Victorian ambiance. Popular because it was on the Jersey Shore and close to Philadelphia, Island Heights became known for its yachting and seashore pleasures. (continued on page four)

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(New Jersey Town - continued) Island Heights appears in the inventories of independent Chautauqua Assemblies compiled by Glick and McClarran. They agree on the year of founding as a Methodist enclave, 1878, but differ on its final year as an Assembly, 1888 or 1889.

Today there is an Island Heights Cultural and Heritage Association dedicated to promoting the rich historic, artistic and architectural heritage of Island Heights. There is a permanent population of about 1700. And although the camp meeting grounds are devoid of any original structures from the Methodist Assembly period, more than 300 buildings comprise the historic district, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Preservation and restoration are central to the Island Heights community today. A generous benefactor has recently underwritten the restoration of the John F. Peto Studio Museum, which will open in the spring of 2011. Peto, a still-life painter whose famous picture, "The Old Violin," hangs in the National Gallery in Washington, lived and painted in Island Heights for most of his life. The museum will host art exhibitions and develop programs in the arts for all ages.

Visit the community's website: [www.islandheightsboro.com](http://www.islandheightsboro.com). Your newsletter editor, Suzon O. Kister, learned of Island Heights through one of its residents, John Lupico, whom she met in the little shop operated by the Thousand Island Park Landmark Society (N.Y.) in the summer of 2010.



### Networkers approve " plan; wish Sullivan well in retirement

Ten chautauquas were represented at the 2010 Network meeting at Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, N.Y. They were Ocean Park, Maine; Bay View, Mich.; Lakeside, Ohio; Mt. Gretna, Pa.; Monteagle, Tenn.; Chautauqua Institution; Waxahachie, Texas; Muskoka, Ontario; Epworth, Mich.; Hi-Y, West Virginia.

The Chautauqua proposal resulted in a unanimous vote during the meeting for continued development of the initiative (see previous article).

A rich exchange of ideas occurred during discussions. Topics ranged from fundraising, use of volunteers and interns, to grants, marketing, and how to appeal to younger generations.

The Muskoka, Ontario Chautauqua was featured in presentations by Network Vice President George McCormick and Gayle Dempsey, chief arts officer of the Muskoka Music Festival.

Mike Sullivan, director of Institution relations, Chautauqua, N.Y., announced his retirement in January 2011. Mike reviewed some history of the Network and thanked his assistant, Myra Peterson, for her tireless work in putting together Network meetings at the Mother Chautauqua, as liaison to the independents and as secretary and treasurer of the Network. (continued on page five)

(left) Chautauqua Bathing Beauties, courtesy of Tim Tomlinson with permission from the Chautauqua Historical Society.

(Networkers - continued) The Network wishes Mike good health and much happiness in his post-Chautauqua life.



Celine Cousteau was the featured speaker at DeFuniak Springs

### DeFuniak Springs Assembly offers diverse sessions; Celine Cousteau speaks

The Florida Chautauqua Assembly 2011 with its theme, “A Journey into Florida,” convened January 27-30 in DeFuniak Springs. The schedule was packed with presentations about numerous aspects of the State of Florida.

The first of two keynote speakers, Celine Cousteau, granddaughter of legendary Jacques Cousteau, discussed the “Underwater World off the Coast of Florida.” The second keynoter, Pamela Landwirth, former Walt Disney World executive, and president of Give Kids the World Village, Kissimmee, spoke about the Village. It is a resort for children with life-threatening illnesses whose dreams are fulfilled through meeting Disney World characters and visiting magical theme parks.

From Midwives of Florida to the impact of Florida’s weather on the rest of the nation, the choices for learning were dynamic and diverse at the Florida Chautauqua Assembly. Even the breaks in the form of Performance Teas added to the mix. Every afternoon over tea, attendees witnessed a historical reenactment, a talk or a musical entertainment.

(DeFuniak - continued) Parallel with the programs was the opening of the Florida Chautauqua History Exhibit, an ever-expanding permanent display. The photographs and artifacts explain what the Assembly is about, its founding in 1885 and its role in local history.

Christopher Mitchell is president of the Florida Chautauqua Center, the sponsor of the annual four-day Florida Chautauqua Assembly. Visit [www.florida-chautauqua-center.org](http://www.florida-chautauqua-center.org) for more information.

### Tomlinson of Illinois publishes history of New Piasa Chautauqua; order now

Longtime Networker Tim Tomlinson has written “The Western Chautauqua,” a history of New Piasa, Illinois, that celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. More than 300 pages in length, the book has over 100 photographs, some never printed before. The publication is a joint project by the Chautauqua Historical Society and the Historic Elsie Foundation.

You can order copies of “The Western Chautauqua” by writing a check payable to Chautauqua Historical Society for \$19.95 (price includes S&H and taxes) and mailing it to CHS, Box 87, Elsie, IL 62028. Be sure to include your post office shipping address. For an online order form and more book information, visit [www.thewesternchautauqua.com](http://www.thewesternchautauqua.com)



The Chautauqua Hotel at New Piasa, courtesy of Tim Tomlinson with permission of the Chautauqua Historical Society

## Epworth Homes on Lake Michigan

## Where is Epworth?



Epworth is adjacent to the town of Ludington on the western side of Michigan on Lake Michigan. One approach would be to fly into Detroit and rent a car. Taking Interstate 96 west for 195 miles puts you in Muskegon. At Muskegon, take U.S. Route 31 north for 58 miles to Ludington.

The closest regional airport is in Grand Rapids; the local airport is at Muskegon. If you are driving from the west, note that at Manitowoc, Wisconsin, you can take the Lake Michigan Car Ferry directly across to Ludington, thus avoiding Chicago.

The Car Ferry Website is [www.ssbadger.com/home.aspx](http://www.ssbadger.com/home.aspx)

### Where can we stay?

Homestays with cottage-owners on the grounds in Epworth will be available. See the request line on the registration form below. If you prefer a motel or a bed and breakfast, there are many choices in Ludington. Visit the Website [www.ludingtonarea.com](http://www.ludingtonarea.com) and click on Places to Stay.

Complete the registration form (below) and write your check payable to Larry Snyder. Mail both to Larry Snyder, c/o Emily Garland, Epworth Church Association, 1161 North Lake Shore Drive, Ludington, MI 49431. If you have questions, you may contact Emily at 231-845-7898.

Network Officers Elected in 2010	
President:	Frank Gwalthney, Ocean Park, Maine, gwalthney11@verizon.net
Vice President:	George McCormick, Lakeside, Ohio, erie-@msn.com
Secretary:	Kathy Snavelly, Mt. Gretna, Pa., info@lightkeeper.net
Treasurer:	Myra Peterson, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, N.Y., mpeterson@ciweb.org
Volunteer Newsletter Editor:	Suzon O. Kister, Thousand Island Park, N.Y. ksuzon@hotmail.com
Newsletter Publisher:	Kathy Snavelly
Mail copy to the editor at 5816 Shannas Way, Durham, NC 27713 or call her at 919.544.2514.	

## CHAUTAUQUA NETWORK 2011 ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION

Epworth, Michigan

\$125.00

(Fee includes meals, parking and programs, July 24-27)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Independent chautauqua affiliation, if any \_\_\_\_\_

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Full organization donation is \$50 and includes option to add photo to Chautauqua Institution website [www.ciweb.org](http://www.ciweb.org) Individual dues are \$10 a year. The dues year starts February 1. You can check your dues status by sending an e-mail to Network Treasurer Myra Peterson, [mpeterson@ciweb.org](mailto:mpeterson@ciweb.org)

Make donation or dues check payable to Chautauqua Institution and put "Network Membership" on the memo line. Mail check and this form or a copy of same to Network Treasurer, Myra Peterson, P.O. Box 28, Chautauqua, NY 14722.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chautauqua \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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