



# ACHS NEWSLETTER

Arenac County Historical Society

Preserving the Heritage of Arenac County, Michigan

Spring 2026

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Winter sure did seem long and brutal this year. Spring is here and I am looking forward to warmer weather, flowers, and green grass. I don't know about you but, I am grateful we didn't get the snowstorms that the Upper Peninsula and the Northern Lower Peninsula received. Wow!!! Talk about a late season blizzard!!! I can remember from many years ago we use to get snow like that every winter. As kids we loved it. Now that I am older, I don't like it as much. It looks beautiful when the storm is done but digging out of the snow is not so much fun anymore.

We will be participating again on May 5th with "Give Local Bay". This is a great way to donate to a worthy cause and ensure the future of the Arenac County Historical Society and saving the history of our county. Monies received will help with the future needs of our organization like protecting and preserving our buildings and artifacts. We want to show future generations what life was like when people moved into Arenac County. Our county is rich with history starting with the Native Americans to our current time. So many people saw opportunities to make a better life for themselves. Stop in to see us and all we have at the museum. We will be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the months of June, July, and August. You can make appointments at any time all year long too. We are always glad to have visitors.

We will be having programs again at the museum during June, July, and August. We hope you will come and enjoy the programs we have lined up this year. Check out the website and Facebook along with flyers we distribute throughout the communities for dates, times, and speakers.

We have a lot of written history for your reading pleasure. Many local authors have their books and pamphlets available for purchase at the ACHS Museum, Ye' Olde Courthouse, and the Standish Depot. Check out page 4 to see a partial list of titles.

As I have said many times before, Arenac County, the State of Michigan and the United States has lots of wonderful history. On the 250th anniversary of our country I urge you to get out and see Arenac County, Michigan, and possibly different places in our United States. Stand up and be proud to be an American. People before us did so much to make our country what it is today. We don't always have to agree with everything but be kind and agree to disagree. Take time this year to remember our freedoms and be grateful for those who stepped up to secure those freedoms for us. Remembering our past helps us appreciate our present and look to the future. Thank a veteran for their service because many countries don't have the freedoms we enjoy. Military personnel do so many things to keep our country safe. Thank them too. God has blessed our country, let's take care of it so future generations can enjoy the freedoms that were fought over so all can enjoy.

Sandy Proulx  
President of ACHS

### ACHS OFFICERS

President	Sandy Proulx
Vice President	Austin Hazeltine
Secretary	Tammy Wiltse
Treasurer	Greg Dittenber

### ACHS TRUSTEES

Brenda Matt  
Phyllis Klender  
Gaynol Fales  
Mary Lou Bugh  
Mary McLaughlin

### ACCESSION COMMITTEE

Sandy Proulx  
Mary McLaughlin

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Fred Robel

### PUBLICITY COORDINATOR

Phyllis Klender

### ACHS REPRESENTATIVE to the Arenac Heritage Route Authority

Brenda Matt

### YE OLDE COURTHOUSE &

### MASONIC HALL

Brenda Matt	Chair
Regina White	Rec. Secretary
Phyllis Klender	Financial Chair

### ACHS WEBSITE TECHNICIAN

Gaynol Fales

### FACEBOOK COORDINATOR

Phyllis Klender

### NEW ACHS MAIL POLICY

Due the rising costs of Postal Service and our effort to streamline operations and increase efficiency, the Arenac County Historical Society has decided to offer members the option of receiving ACHS correspondence electronically. Please look for our revised membership form or, send your email address to with a note indicating your preference.

All historical news clippings courtesy of *The Arenac County Independent* (unless otherwise noted)

**ACHS WEBSITE: [www.ArenacHistory.org](http://www.ArenacHistory.org)**

**THE ACHS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED COMPLIMENTS OF JIMCO FIRE PROTECTION OF AUGRES**

## Ye Olde Courthouse/Masonic Hall

We started the year off with a Bake Sale and small Junque Sale during the Omer Sucker Days. It was wonderful to see so many of our great friends. Come and visit us when we are open during Memorial Day weekend. Last year we had the exterior of the building cleaned and our windows washed. We completed our clean up in February by having the interior of the building cleaned. Our next repair will be to replace the railings on the front porch steps.

### Christmas Greens Project Report for 2025

On December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> our dedicated Greens Makers drove through a snowstorm to gather at the Ye Olde Courthouse to begin our yearly tradition of making fresh green arrangements for our Christmas Greens Sale. Workers arrived from Whittemore, Au Gres, Standish, Omer, Sterling, Linwood, Bay City and Pinconning.

Even though the weather was terrible our foresters delivered fresh pine, juniper, spruce, balsam, and holly for the beautiful arrangements. We thank Diane and Todd Stodolak, Gail Schmidt, John Stratton, Dick Klender, and Tom Kulek for all the beautiful greens.

We made 118 mug arrangements and delivered them to the residents of Eden Fields, Horizon Senior Living, MyMichigan Standish Skilled Nursing, Medilodge of Sterling, and the AuGres Care Center.

We made 153 beautiful arrangements to sell at our Christmas Greens Sale over the weekend. We sold 102 of them and we donated the remaining arrangements to local shut-ins and hospice patients.

Special thanks to Evan and Robert who carried all the totes of accessories down to be used by our Greens Makers and then back upstairs again to store until next year.

A special THANK YOU to Ricky Rockwell who again this year obtained a grant from Thrivent for our Greens Sale Project. Our sincere THANKS to all involved in this grant funding source. To our dedicated volunteers and customers, we THANK YOU for your continued support—see you ALL in 2026! Our committee and our volunteers continue to believe that this Christmas Greens Project is very worthwhile! If you would like to be a part of this in 2026, please call Phyllis (810-938-6991) to add your name to our list.

Brenda Matt, Committee Chair 989-233-1428  
Phyllis Klender, Financial Chair 810-938-6991

## GIVE LOCAL BAY – MAY 5, 2026

Our “Ye Olde Courthouse Committee” is gearing up for “Give Local Bay-2026”. We send out a huge THANK YOU to the 75 donors we received donations from in 2025 and are now targeting a new goal of “100” donations for 2026. Our committee joined Give Local Bay as a means of sustaining funding for our present and future preservation efforts for “Ye Olde Courthouse in Omer.” Will you consider donating toward our preservation efforts in 2026?

Checks may be sent to: **Phyllis Klender, 423 W. Huron Rd., Omer, MI. 48749.** Please note that if you are sending a check you need to mail it by April 25<sup>th</sup> to assure that we get in prior to the May 5, 2026, deadline! Checks need to be made out to the **BAY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AND DATED ON OR BEFORE MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>.** Please write Give Local Bay in the memo line. You may also donate online at [www.givelocalbay.org](http://www.givelocalbay.org). Find an organization to support and scroll to Ye Olde Courthouse and follow the directions. Master Card and Visa are accepted. Online donations are eligible for prize incentives throughout the day. Our total in donations will be eligible to receive a percentage of the incentive pool.

### Research Center

Our Research Center at the Ye Olde Courthouse is open and ready to assist you with your genealogy search through Ancestry and our historical collections. Contact Brenda at 989-233-1428, or Phyllis at 810-938-6991 to make an appointment or for information. Phyllis has obtained permission to research the Arenac County Independent archives at the Ogemaw Herald Offices in West Branch.

### LENTZ STORE PROJECT

We are still working on completing funding for this historical project. Our goal is to move the Lentz Store from Pine River to the Courthouse property in Omer. Our committee has pledged \$10,000.00, the Lentz Family has pledged \$24,000.00 and we received a grant from the Catherine and John Maser Historical Preservation Fund of the Bay Area Community Foundation for \$45,250.00. The total cost for this project is \$109,250.00. We are exploring other funding options. Ideas and donations are welcome.

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The Courthouse committee meets on the second Friday of the month at 9:30am at the Courthouse in Omer. Volunteers and visitors are always welcome to attend.

# Arenac Heritage Route Authority

## Standish Historical Depot

Spring is here, crocuses are blooming, almost all our Christmas decorations and lights are down and in storage thanks to some great volunteers. This is a six-month long project. Our dedicated lighting crew begins the first week of October to hang lights and we are fortunate to have everything in storage by the end of March. Many hours go into our Christmas display and events that bring a lot of enjoyment to our residents and guests in our community.

### SUMMER EVENTS

Our Summer Concert Series is booked and will begin on June 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Depot. Our first entertainer is a local band, The Rhett Yocom Blues Band. Our concerts continue through August 13 when another popular and local band, The Rivermen, will entertain at the Omer City Park. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy these Thursday evenings with us.

### FARMERS MARKET

Our Farmers Market will begin on June 5<sup>th</sup> and will be open from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. Vendor spaces are still available. Our goal is to offer locally grown vegetables, fruits, flowers, plants, baked goods, meats, dairy items and prepared foods. Homemade crafters are also allowed. Applications and agreements are available at the Depot or by calling our Market Manger, Ray Koraleski at 989-313-7696.

### 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL VINTAGE CAR SHOW

Our Vintage Car Show will be held at the Depot on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. This show is held rain or shine. We invite all vehicles, original/restored 1934 and older. The Car Show is open to cars, trucks and speedsters. A lunch and ice cream social is provided to all pre-registered vehicles. For more info contact Curt Hillman at 989-812-8954 or [VintageCarShow.29@gmail.com](mailto:VintageCarShow.29@gmail.com)

### The Settlement of Arenac by Brenda J. Poole Matt

This history of the early settlement of Arenac is available for purchase at the Depot. It is a history of the early settlers and events in the area known as Arenac beginning in the late 1800's. This area surrounds the Arenac School which is now the Arenac Township Hall on State Road. There are stories about families, churches, organizations, the Arenac District # 2 School, Saginaw Bay and fishing adventures. If you are a local history buff, you will enjoy this book.

### Our Sympathy

We lost two of our original board members recently with the passing of Ardith Fales and Marvin Schwab. Ardith and Marvin contributed their many talents and time for several years to the Depot. In addition to serving on our board, they spent many volunteer hours working on projects and staffing the Depot. We offer our sympathy to their families. They are remembered and missed.

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Watch our Facebook page, website, and digital sign for more information on events and happenings at the Depot. Volunteers are always welcome and needed. Our number is 989-718-3021. The Depot Committee meets on the first Monday of the month at the Depot at 7:00 p.m.

Brenda Matt. Depot Coordinator

## GIVE LOCAL BAY – MAY 5, 2026

The Friends of the Arenac Heritage Route Authority, Standish Depot, is participating in Give Local Bay for our eighth year. This is an online and mail in fundraiser that adds to our endowed fund with the Bay Area Community Foundation to help provide for the needs and future support of the Depot. Every donation made during the 24-hr. period is eligible to receive incentive pool funds. (The more we receive the higher percentage we will receive from the incentive pool)

You may make your donation during the 24 hr. time period, May 5, beginning at 12 a.m. by going to [www.givelocalbay.org](http://www.givelocalbay.org), Under: Find an organization to support, type in Standish Depot, Friends of the Arenac Heritage Route Authority and follow the directions. Master and Visa Cards are accepted. You may also call from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with your donation. (989-893-4438). If you wish to donate by check, make it out to the Bay Area Community Foundation, date it before May 5<sup>th</sup>, (Friends of the AHRA in the memo) and mail it to AHRA, P.O. Box 456, Standish, MI. 48658. This endowed fund is a way to assure the future operations of the Depot. If you have any questions, call Brenda Matt, 989-233-1428, Curtis Hillman, 989-812-8954 or Mark Winslow, 989-846-9979.

## Arenac County Historical Society Balance Sheet As of February 28, 2026

	Feb 28, 26
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
<b>Certificate of Deposit</b>	
CD #1 (7/31/26)	27,787.06
CD #2 (9/24/26)	11,998.81
CD #3 (9/19/26)	71,159.03
<b>Total Certificate of Deposit</b>	110,944.90
<b>Courthouse Checking</b>	10,378.68
<b>General Checking Account</b>	16,172.13
<b>Petty cash</b>	200.00
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	137,695.71
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	137,695.71
<b>Other Assets</b>	
<b>BACF Endowment Fund</b>	
<b>Courthouse Agency Fund</b>	18,750.00
<b>Courthouse Agency Revenue</b>	9,931.09
<b>Courthouse Agency Spendable</b>	-116.00
<b>Total BACF Endowment Fund</b>	28,565.09
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	28,565.09
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>166,260.80</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
<b>Courthouse Fund</b>	
<b>BACF CH Fund Gain/Loss</b>	8,585.90
<b>Courthouse Fund - Other</b>	128,761.52
<b>Total Courthouse Fund</b>	137,347.42
<b>General Fund</b>	28,913.38
<b>Total Equity</b>	166,260.80
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>166,260.80</b>

## Arenac Historical Society Books & Publications – Mail Order Form

The Society has a number of books and publications for sale related to Arenac County history and people.

All of our selections are also for sale at the Museum, the Depot, and Ye Olde Courthouse.

**Mark quantity in left column and add price to subtotal for each item desired. Then add shipping as detailed at bottom.**

	01	Title & Description of Book or Publication	Price
	01	<b>Arenac County Centennial 1883 to 1983</b> - One Hundred Years of Growth, Road tour guide, 12 pages	\$ 3.00
	02	<b>Omer Masonic Lodge #377 F&amp;AM 100th Anniversary</b> - Reprint, includes a history of Omer & Free Masonry	\$ 6.00
	03	<b>Arenac County Fair Premium List 1914</b> - Reprinted, includes ads of the period, showing businesses in the county	\$ 3.00
	04	<b>Arenac County Directory 1947</b> - Reprinted, lots of local information, 90 pages	\$ 8.00
	05	<b>First Arenac County Fair Premium List 1885</b> – Reprint, 4 ½" x 6"	\$ 6.00
	06	<b>Arenac County Pioneer Society Au Gres 1911</b> -	\$ 6.00
	07	<b>Standard Atlas of Arenac County, MI 1906</b> - Including a plat book and index, reprinted by the ACHS in 2012	\$ 12.00
	08	<b>Plat Book of Arenac County, MI c1920</b> – Reprint, shows land ownership and includes index	\$ 10.00
	09	<b>Au Gres Centennial 1865 - 1965</b> - From Timber to Tourists, History of Au Gres Area, reprint	\$ 8.00
	10	<b>The Early Au Gres Area</b> - A series of maps with buildings and landmarks, Edited by Mike Melvin	\$ 5.00
	11	<b>First Families of Standish Township</b> – Reprinted 1974, lots of family names and pictures, 32 pages	\$ 10.00
	12	<b>A History of Arenac County, MI</b> - by Calvin Ennes, edited and compiled by Paul Michalke, 2003, 208 pages	\$ 25.00
	13	<b>A History of Maple Ridge Arenac County, MI</b> - Written & compiled by Marion Poole Maday & Friends, 2008, 282 pages	\$ 28.00
	14	<b>History of the Sterling Area</b> - by Virginia Adams, reprinted 1976, 16 pages	\$ 8.00
	15	<b>History of the Sterling Area Second Generation</b> - by Virginia Adams, reprinted 1977, 15 pages	\$ 8.00
	16	<b>Omer Centennial 1872-1972</b> - Reprinted	\$ 10.00
	17	<b>One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 1</b> - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	18	<b>One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 2</b> - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	19	<b>One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 3</b> - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	20	<b>One Room Country Schools Arenac County Volume 4</b> - edited by Marie Bauer & friends of ACHS, reprinted	\$ 7.00
	21	<b>Point Lookout</b> - The famous summer resort located on the west shore of Saginaw Bay, pictures, time tables & more, 12 pg	\$ 3.00
	22	<b>Program Pioneer Picnic and Homecoming Au Gres 1941</b> - Published for the annual Pioneer Picnic in Au Gres, 20 pages	\$ 3.00
	23	<b>One Room Country Schools Map</b> - Map showing all 42 schools (1 & 2 room) that were in Arenac Co. at one time, 8 ½" x 11"	\$ 2.00
	24	<b>Rifle River Centennial Sucker Festival 1983</b> - Schedule of events, sucker recipes, history on Omer, sucker fishing, & logging	\$ 4.00
	25	<b>A Short History of Arenac County Roads</b> - With 3 different color maps of the county, 2004, 30 pages	\$ 6.00
	26	<b>St. John's United Church of Christ 1912</b> - Old German Church relocated from Tonkey Road to City Park in Au Gres	\$ 5.00
	27	<b>The Story of Standish and its People 1876</b> - by Allan McCready, reprinted 1976, 108 pages plus illustrations	\$ 10.00
	28	<b>The Au Gres Harbor Story</b> - Short story of how Au Gres got the Harbor of Refuge and Marina, 1945-1973, 12 pages	\$ 3.00
	29	<b>The Handy Cook's Book 1915</b> - by the Ladies Aid Society of the M. E. Church of Au Gres, MI	\$ 6.00
	30	<b>This is the Way We Went to School</b> - West and Northwest of Saginaw Bay around the turn of the century	\$ 6.00
	31	<b>Record of Arenac County Soldiers and Sailors</b> – Served in WWI, written and compiled by the ACHS 2010, 300pg	\$ 28.00
	32	<b>Arenac County Normal 1904-1957</b> - Written and compiled by the ACHS, 2013	\$ 30.00
	33	<b>A Point to Remember</b> - A pictorial history of Point Lookout by Val Korth, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition 2014	\$ 30.00
	34	<b>Wah Sash Kah Moqua</b> - by Mary A. Sagatoo 1897, reprinted, 140 pages plus illustrations	\$ 12.00
	35	<b>Standish Telephone Directory 1942</b>	\$ 6.00
	36	<b>Changing Times</b> - by Chris Miller	\$ 15.00
	37	<b>Arenac/Ogemaw Telephone Directory 1928</b>	\$ 6.00
	38	<b>Civil War Veterans of Arenac County</b> - by Joann Gulau and Brenda Matt	\$ 30.00
	39	<b>Turner Manual of Public Schools 1917-18</b>	\$ 3.00
	40	<b>Alla Lizzie</b> – by Helen Eichsteadt	\$ 15.00

**Subtotal**

Mail orders, please include the shipping and handling charges indicated below in addition to the price:

\$5.00 for book #13, #31, #32, #33

\$4.00 for book #12, #38

\$3.50 for book #7

All other items:

\$3.50 for the first item

\$0.50 each additional item

Send form & personal check or money order to:

**Arenac County Historical Society  
PO Box 272  
Au Gres, Michigan 48703-0272**

Name & Shipping Address

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Questions? Call 989-876-6399 or email: [achs@centurytel.net](mailto:achs@centurytel.net)

**+ Calculated Shipping**

**Grand Total Enclosed**

ARENAC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 272

Au Gres, Michigan 48703-0272

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Arenac County Historical Society (ACHS) was incorporated in 1971, and operates the County Museum in Au Gres, Michigan, and Ye Olde Courthouse and Masonic Lodge in Omer, Michigan. Membership is open to anyone. Dues are payable IN ADVANCE of each calendar year. Dues of a NEW member joining after July 1st will be credited through the following fiscal year. Renewals are accepted at any time.

I would like to: \_\_\_\_\_ Join \_\_\_\_\_ Renew

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone (with Area Code) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

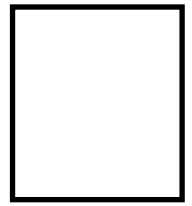
Send ACHS correspondence by email

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the Membership circled below:

Category	Dues	Category	Dues
STUDENT (under 18 years)	\$3	PATRON	\$250
SENIOR (over 55 years)	\$10	BUSINESS	\$50
SENIOR COUPLE (over 55 years)	\$15	LIFE - Over 55 (individual)	\$150
INDIVIDUAL	\$15	LIFE - Over 55 (couple)	\$225
COUPLE/FAMILY	\$20	LIFE - 55 And Under (individual)	\$300
CONTRIBUTING	\$50	LIFE - 55And Under (couple)	\$400
BENEFACTOR	\$100		

MAIL TO:     TREASURER, ACHS  
                  PO BOX 272  
                  AU GRES, MI 48703-0272

Arenac County Historical Society  
PO Box 272  
Au Gres, MI 48703



ACHS Newsletter For:

## COMING EVENTS

**Fridays – June 5 thru Sept 11; 2pm to 6pm:** Farmers Market; in Standish at the Standish Historical Depot  
**Thursdays – June 11 thru Aug 13; 6:30pm:** Summer Concert Series; in Standish at the Standish Historical Depot (except July 16 Fair Week) – Final concert on Aug 13 to be held in Omer City Park  
**July 11; 10am:** Vintage Car Show; in Standish at the Standish Historical Depot

**Standish Depot** is open Monday-Wednesday-Thursday 12pm to 4:30pm, and Saturday's AS ABLE.

**Arenac County Historical Museum** – Summer Hours through Labor Day – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday 1pm to 4pm. Or call for appointment (989-876-6399)

~ACHS meets each month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, at 7:00pm –Au Gres at the Museum (April thru October); at JIMCO (November thru March)~

~The Ye Olde Courthouse Committee meets on 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month, at 9:30am – at the Courthouse in Omer~

~The Depot Committee meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month, at 7pm – at the Depot in Standish.~

# *Arenac County Historical Society*

*304 W. Michigan Avenue • PO Box 272*

*Au Gres, Michigan 48703*

*(989) 876-6399*

To: Friends and Members of the Arenac County Historical Society

From: The Board of the Arenac County Historical Society

Subject: **Give Local Bay – Tuesday, May 5th, 2026**

In the past several years the Arenac County Historical Society has received generous donations through the Give Local Bay event, sponsored by the Bay Area Community Foundation. We hope this year will be no exception.

Every donation made in the 24-hour period will be increased by a share of an incentive pool. The more money raised, the more incentive money received. Donations may also be eligible throughout the day for prizes.. Your donations can help us preserve our buildings and the history of Arenac County. Your generous donations will also make money available for our future projects and to carry on our work for future generations to enjoy.

Make your donation during the 24 hour time period starting at 12:00 AM, Tuesday, May 5th, 2026. Donations can be made online by going to the **Give Local Bay** website at [www.GiveLocalBay.org](http://www.GiveLocalBay.org). There will be a box on the right where you enter the name of the organization you wish to donate to and follow the directions. Type in “*The Mary Jennings Fund*” (this provides funds for the Arenac County Historical Society Museum). Payment may be made by Credit or Debit card with a minimum donation of \$10.00.

If you wish to donate by check, date your check May 5th, 2026, make it out to Bay Area Community Foundation, and include the name of the organization or fund you wish to donate to. Mail the check before April 30th to: Sandy Proulx, 1400 Santiago Rd, Turner, MI 48765.

The money raised on May 5th, 2026 will help assure the future of the Arenac County Historical Society. Your donation is also tax deductible. If you have any questions about the ACHS Museum, you may contact Sandy Proulx at (989) 329-2862. Questions regarding the ACHS Ye’ Olde Courthouse may be directed to Brenda Matt at (989) 846-0501 or Phyllis Klender at (989) 653-2762.

*Thank you for all your support!*

*Board of Directors*

*Arenac County Historical Society*