

Magic, music and more at Palermo Library

by Ellie Budzko

Thanks to the generosity of the STK Foundation our addition, the Community Room, is ready. While it does house some of our lending materials, it's primary function is to offer a public meeting place for as many venues as possible. We are already planning an impressive array of events beginning this month. The following list is just a sample of these events - something for almost everyone.

Saturday, May 22, kicks off our annual book sale fundraiser. Doors will open at 8 a.m., and deals will abound. Along with the usual \$0.25 to \$1 children's and adult fiction and non-fiction there will be amazing collectibles - books for everyone, prices for every pocketbook, and some rare and unusual titles, plus buck a bag deals on paperbacks. Yard sale and craft vendors will help fill up the room.

Friday, June 11, at 7 p.m., will

Third graders relive history in Palermo

On May 4, the third graders of Palermo Consolidated School visited the Palermo Historical Society as part of their "My Community" studies. The sixteen students listened to a brief history of the Worthing House and the

historical society and then split into groups for hands on activities.

Noreen Golden explained the need for grist mills and how they worked, let the children grind corn, and then taste corn bread

made from hand ground corn. Peter Golden provided an insight into the early one room schools and gave the students lessons that they wrote on the slate boards with slate pencils.

Patricia Clark explained home life without the technology of today and the children viewed scenes with a stereoscope and listened to music from an Edison gramophone. Caroline Caswell gave a lesson in home weaving allowing each of the students to weave and explained how wool and flax were processed and used.

Miriam Keller, in period clothing, gave each of the students a tour of the Worthing House, pointing out the library, archives, and historical items. Each of the sessions emphasized the role of children in the early rural home with chores often taking a precedence over school.

John and Jeannette Scates, of the Palermo Historical Society were on hand to provide assistance and share Palermo history. Thanks to all who participated.



Miriam Keller, in period clothing, explained to Palermo third graders, the history of the Worthing House. Contributed photo

be the kick-off of our summer concert fundraiser project. The first musician will be Shawn Mercer, Maine songwriter, rhythm guitarist, Americana, folk and blues artist. Join Shawn and his fans as he offers music from his CD and more. Suggested donation is \$5 to support the library and local talent.

Dates will be announced for other book/yard/craft sales and concerts as soon as possible. In July, the library will host it's first craft sale. Contact Fred Davis for more details on this project.

Our dream of becoming a focal point in our community is coming true. We hope other organizations will select the Community Room as a venue for their events. We offer a big screen, really big screen TV with computer interaction for classes, movie nights, etc. So, if you have been considering starting a book club, quilting class, yoga class, etc., we have your space. And, we are here for you. Check us out!

Senior Corner

Declining Social Security benefits keeping men in the workforce longer

A new study confirms the strong trend - since 1992 - of more senior men delaying their retirement. And, the researcher finds, the reason older men are remaining in the workforce is the decline in the generosity of the Social Security benefits.

There was a 4.7 percent increase in the number of men aged 55 to 69 in the workforce between the periods of 1988-1992 and 2001-2005.

The new study found that between 25 and 50 percent of that increase can be explained by declining Social Security benefits, said David Blau, co-author of the study and professor of economics at Ohio State University.

"Older individuals don't get the same level of Social Security benefits when they retire as they once did, and that has been one reason why a significant number of men continue to work longer than they otherwise might have," Blau said.

These results give a glimpse of what may happen if the federal government opts to further decrease benefits to shore up Social Security's bottom line, as many experts expect.

"This issue is very important because Social Security is in financial imbalance, and one way to correct that imbalance is for people to work longer and delay receiving their benefits," Blau said.

One contribution of this study is that it looks at labor force participation rates for more than 40 years, so that long-term trends can be identified and explained, according to Blau.

The average age of retirement declined during most of the period of the study, from the early '60s to the late '80s.

This research, like many previous studies, could not identify the major reasons for this decline, Blau said. Results suggest that rising generosity of Social Security benefits offered during this time played a role in men retiring early, but it was not the main story.

However, experts speculate that a general rise in living standards and well-being led people to value leisure more and gave them the opportunity to retire earlier, he said.

While the main reasons for the declining retirement age from the 60s to the 80s remain unknown, Blau said the results are clear that new Social Security rules put in place in the 1980s have pushed men to stay in the workforce longer - even after changes in workplace pensions, retiree health benefits and other factors are taken into account.

Between the periods of 1988-1992 and 2001-2005, the share of men aged 55 to 69 in the workforce rose from 54.6 percent to 59.2 percent, an increase of 4.7 percentage points.

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