

KALEVA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

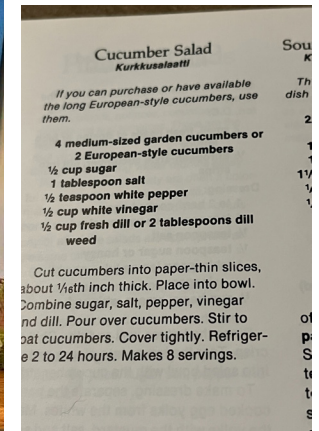
March 2025 | www.kalevamichigan.com

125 Years and Counting

Kaleva celebrates its *quasquicentennial* this year, meaning it has been 125 years since Finnish immigrants moved to the newly formed village called Kaleva, named after the famous epic poem, the Kalevala. As most of us know they were “lured” here by the Siirtolainen newspaper which promised land, described as fertile and cheap. It was actually cut-over stump land which they had purchased sight unseen on their way here. This is where “sisu”, or guts, perserverence and determination kicked in as they strived to make a living however possible.

For those who want to know quasquicentennial is pronounced kwas-kwi-centennial, and in celebration of Kaleva’s 125th birthday we will look into some current practices and customs:

One of the most popular events that the Historical Society celebrates is Christmas. From decorating the Bottle House with the Finnish Heaven, and tree with traditional ornaments to the sauna lit up like a gingerbread house and the old fashioned nativity scene, Christmas season is delightful. At the Taste of Finland, close to 100 people sampled treats from favorite Finnish recipes. At the Kaleva Marketplace event many visitors bought souvenir sweatshirts, mugs, and ornaments for holiday gift giving. On December 21, the longest night, the cemetery is lighted by over 1000 candles in paper bags which glow through the evening hours. This custom has been happening over 25 years and each year brings new and returning individuals and families to help put the luminaries on the graves.





Our long time maintenance person, Robert Ramirez, is instrumental in decorating for the season. This year he strung lights (which are recycles from Bay Area Recycling Center) on the sauna and the log cabin. He has the artist's touch as he can turn the sauna into a delightful gingerbread house and the 125 year old log cabin into an enchanting playhouse. Robert also keeps the Bottle House and grounds in good shape and is in charge of the Depot, open summer Saturdays 12-4. As always we thank the sponsors that help us keep the Depot running: **Cherryland Electric, Northern MI Dragway, Kaleva Telephone, Terwilliger Funeral Home and Fruit Haven Lutz Farms. Thank you so much for your support!**



The Kaleva Beautification team formed in 2008 with the idea of cleaning up Kaleva "one lot at a time". Blighted buildings were torn down, new welcome signs and signage for the historical sites were installed. Sculptures were added to the Centennial Walkway and gardens were updated. Flower barrels are planted in the summer and seasonal decorations are placed in the town throughout the year.



The Log Cabin committee arranges for the Friday night concerts in August each year. Generous individuals and businesses sponsor the musical groups the committee chooses.

This year the line-up is:

August 1-The Nephews

August 8-Ruth and Max

August 15-Mary Sue and Mark

August 22-Truck Driver Bingo

August 29-The Schrock Brothers.

Thank you to last year's sponsors: The Richard Asiala family: Kay, Dave & Ki, Kristen & Paul, Jon & Heather, Laura and 12 grandchildren in memory of Richard and Michael Asiala; Laura Asiala in memory of Richard, Michael, Chuck, John T and Dennis Asiala; Fruit Haven Lutz Farms in memory of Pete and Lorraine Lutz; Blue Water Transportation, Environmental Services, Kaleva Telephone, Terwilliger Funeral Home, Sandra Kingsley, Ken & Ellen Kuuttilla, Melvin & Beverly Fennell, Homestead Timbers, Finan Services, Kaleva Barber Shop, Countryside Restaurant, Kaleva Country Flowers, Mark Quinn, attorney.



Upcoming dates to put on your calendars:

May 24: Bottle House open for the season: 12-4 pm Saturday & Sunday until Christmas

May 24: Depot Railroad Museum open Saturday 12-4 pm through Labor Day

July 19 & 20: Kaleva Heritage Days

Fridays in August: Concerts at the Log Cabin Theater 7 pm

September 20: Cemetery Walk and Bonfire at the Sauna

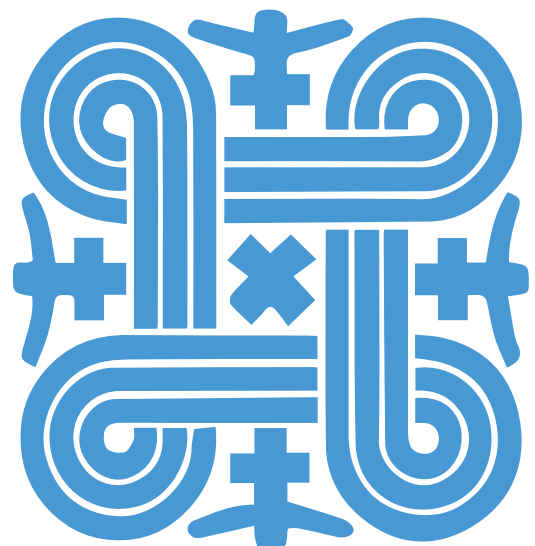
October 31: Halloween at the Bottle House and Community Center

December 13: Kaleva Marketplace

December 20: Taste of Finland at the Bottle House 12-4 pm

December 21: Luminaries in the Cemetery 4 pm

KALEVA



125 Years

