

Onondaga Historical Association Museum and Research Center

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Syracuse, N.Y. 13202

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KEY STAFF

Gregg Tripoli	Executive Director
Executive Director's Compensation:	\$76,587
Tom Hunter	Assistant Director/Curator of Collections
Dennis Connors	Curator of History
Karen Cooney	Support Services Administrator
Matt Mac Vittle	Assistant Curator of History/Gift Gallery Manager
Mike Piscitell	Accountant
Scott Peal	Education Associate
Pamela Priest	Archivist/Research Center Manager
Dave Mulligan	Facilities Maintenance/Housekeeping

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SERVICE AREA

Onondaga County

FINANCIAL DATA

Year ending Dec. 31, 2009, via IRS Form 990

Revenue Sources for OHA

Contributions & Grants	\$367,211
Program Services	389,584
Investment Income	39,083
Other	70,786

Total Revenue **\$866,664**

Expenditures for OHA

Salaries & Employee Benefits	\$441,810
Program Services	234,946
Management & General	75,196
Fundraising	38,751

Total Expenses **\$790,703**

Surplus for the year **\$ 75,961**

OHA builds community awareness through renovation project

BY JULIE SHARKEY

JOURNAL STAFF

SYRACUSE — When Gregg Tripoli became executive director of the Onondaga Historical Association Museum and Research Center (OHA) about three years ago, he knew that if the organization was to survive in the Cathedral Square neighborhood, it had to change its ways.

The nonprofit needed to stop being introspective by nature and instead focus on showcasing its exhibits and highlighting the great heritage of the region to the entire community.

Last fall, Tripoli's vision was bolstered when OHA secured grants from New York State, totaling \$150,000, for three capital-improvement projects at its historic building at 321 Montgomery St. New York Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli (D-120th) helped the nonprofit obtain the funding.

The improvements will help attain several economic-development goals, recently set by a number of local and state management plans, which focus on strengthening the region's urban core, and also speak directly to the community's desire to see more retail stores in the downtown area, OHA said in its fall 2010 newsletter.

The largest grant from New York State, at \$125,000, will be used to renovate the building's façade and main

foyer. The project will include restoring the large street-level bricked-in windows to their original glass composition, as they were when the building was first constructed in 1906 for the New York Telephone Company. The money from the grant will also be used to create a new "Heart of New York" exhibit on the first floor summarizing the history of Onondaga County.

"The windows will allow us to open up to the community literally and figuratively," says Tripoli, adding that OHA will be able to showcase its collections, have great window displays, and ultimately enhance the pedestrian experience on Montgomery Street.

Another New York State grant will provide technology equipment, such as a new microfilm-reading machine that also makes copies, for the newly remodeled Richard and Carolyn Wright Research Center and Library, located on the second floor of the building. The research center houses photographs, maps, documents, genealogical material, and many other records related to the history of Syracuse and Onondaga County.

"It's where the meat and heart of OHA is," says Tripoli. The center has provided countless professors, researchers, and authors from around the world with materials from its vast holdings that cannot be found anywhere else.

OHA Facts

- **Year Established:** 1863
- **Full-Time Employees:** 9
- **Volunteers:** 20 regular, 60 occasional
- **Mission:** "Onondaga Historical Association Museum & Research Center exists to inspire people's understanding that the history we share as a community is the foundation for our future together. Our purpose is to encourage a diverse audience from the neighborhoods of Syracuse and the communities of Onondaga County to explore, appreciate and utilize their past. To do so, we offer engaging exhibits and programs, pursue partnerships with other cultural organizations and community groups, and develop and care for a definitive collection related to local history. We operate a museum and research center in Syracuse, New York and are committed to ensuring the vitality of our historic urban location."

The last grant will help create a new museum-related, history-themed retail store. The new store, managed by Matthew MacVittie, assistant curator of history at OHA, will "create a niche not filled by any place in the community," says Tripoli. The store will

See OHA, page 16

Profiling local nonprofit organizations

Nonprofit Corner

COMPILED BY JULIE SHARKEY

OHA: Nonprofit has developed more permanent off-site exhibits for a variety of companies and organizations

Continued from page 13

sell unique products, such as pieces from the Syracuse China collection. It will be located just inside the building's front doors and will help draw people into the museum as well as increase pedestrian traffic on Montgomery Street.

OHA will install new fire-suppression systems throughout the entire building and add an enhanced security system, capable of monitoring all public areas, during the renovation process. The museum will celebrate its grand reopening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration event, on Wednesday, June 22.

Partnerships

Beyond increasing OHA's street presence, Tripoli has been integral in expanding the nonprofit's outreach by collaborating with other organizations around the city. Recently, the museum launched an ongoing partnership with Syracuse Stage to present lobby exhibits with a local perspective during the run of certain plays. These exhibits, often underwritten by local companies, then make their way to Onondaga County Public Library branches to promote reading programs related to the plays and themes that inspired them, the nonprofit says. OHA's newest exhibit is on display through April

23 at Syracuse Stage in conjunction with performances of "The Miracle Worker."

In addition, OHA has developed more permanent off-site exhibits for a variety of companies and organizations wishing to showcase their history. The most recent off-site exhibit, being developed by Onondaga Community College, in collaboration with OHA and the Town of Onondaga Historical Society, will be located in the main entry lobby of the college's new Regional Higher Education Center that is scheduled to open this year. The exhibit will chronicle the historical significance of the "Poor House" property that the college acquired in 2007.

And, OHA was once again the sponsor of

this year's Central New York History Day competition that took place on March 26 at Morgan Road Elementary in Liverpool. The regional contest was open to students in grades six through 12 who reside in Oswego, Onondaga, Cortland, Madison, or Oneida counties. The theme this year was "Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences." Students submitted theme-based projects ranging from documentaries, exhibits, and historical papers to performances and websites. The students with the top two projects in each category will compete in the state contest in Cooperstown on April 29. Those winners will continue on to Washington, D.C. to compete in the National History Day Contest, held June 12 to 16.

Shifting model

In an effort to attract repeat visitors, the museum will also be transitioning from showcasing predominantly permanent exhibits to more of a temporary exhibit-based model. "That way we'll constantly have something new... that's old," says Tripoli, noting that the renovations will also include adding two temporary exhibit galleries to the museum's first floor, allowing OHA to operate two large and two smaller temporary exhibit spaces concurrently.

Last year, OHA began offering self-guided, cell-phone tours of its exhibits and the building's history. After the renovation is completed, many of the exhibits will also have new audio/visual components that Tripoli hopes will be more attractive to the younger generation of museum goers.

"There's not an artifact in this building that can hold a candle to the story behind it," says Tripoli. He says the cell-phone tours and new audio/visual components will allow museum visitors a chance to obtain much more information about an exhibit in the same amount of time as it would normally take to read a traditional written exhibit label.

Some of the upcoming temporary exhibits OHA has scheduled will cover areas such as fashion, sports, the Civil War Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary), as well as hosting the "Landmarks of New York" architectural exhibit from the New York Historical Society. It will also include a section highlighting local architectural landmarks.

The museum also has a number of events taking place this summer, such as its first annual Oakwood Cemetery Ghostwalk in June, and a mansion and garden tour in Solvay's historic Piercefield neighborhood, also scheduled for two weekends in June. And, OHA's 15th annual "Our Glorious Workplaces" signature event, celebrating Syracuse's notable workplaces, will be held at Syracuse University this year on Nov. 19.

Onondaga Historical Association is chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Its programs are supported, in part, by funds provided by Onondaga County, New York State, the city of Syracuse, and OHA members.

In the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2009, OHA generated \$866,664 in revenue, according to its IRS Tax Form 990, with \$160,633 coming from government contributions and grants. The organization allocated almost \$442,000 in salaries and benefits for its nine full-time employees that same year. □

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Congratulations to the 2011
Nonprofit Award Honorees



Above: Attendees listen to JoDee Kenney, mistress of ceremonies.



Left (l-r): Allen Naples, M&T Bank, Christine Steenstra, honoree on behalf of Vera House, Inc., and Anne Ruffer, Mackenzie Hughes Law Firm

Right: Timothy Foley, honoree on behalf of the Center for Family Life and Recovery, Inc. and guest.



Left (l-r): Dr. Michael Kelberman, honoree on behalf of the Kelberman Center, Inc. and guests.

Right (l-r): Allen Naples, M&T Bank, Jeff Crouse, honoree on behalf of Syracuse Behavioral Healthcare, and Jeremy Klemanski, honoree on behalf of Syracuse Behavioral Healthcare.



Right: Allen Naples, M&T Bank, James Hill, honoree on behalf of Human Technologies Corp. (HTC), and James Brockway, M&T Bank

Below: Allen Naples, regional president of M&T Bank.



Below: Allen Naples, M&T Bank, Chuckie Holstein, honoree on behalf of F.O.C.U.S. Greater Syracuse, and Nancy Smith, Nancy H. Smith Consulting.



Above: JoDee Kenney, News Anchor, YNN

Right: Allen Naples, M&T Bank, Rich Pratt, honoree on behalf of the Center for Family Life and Recovery, Inc., and Cassandra Sheets, Center for Family Life and Recovery, Inc.

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