

PONTIUS FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Number 127

NEWSLETTER

April 2025

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Message from the President—Betty Hall



Greetings Pontius cousins,

I am sure that Iowa City probably had some of the best winter weather this year. Karl only used the snowblower once. Iowa City must be a sweet spot in the nation as bad weather often strikes twenty miles north or south of us. Go Hawkeyes!

Spring has been trying to appear for more than a month. It is a beautiful time of year to show new growth both on the outside world and in our own personal growth. My personal growth is the huge deep clean my house is getting. Many boxes of unused items are going to the local thrift store including more than 500 books. Yes, I still have many, many more.

I finished up going through the books that I received on the history of the PFA, or should I say NPA (National Pontius Association), as it was named originally. It is so interesting to see the changes over the last 50+ years.

I am looking forward to heading east to Massachusetts for our reunion in a few months. It has been a long time since I saw Boston. I know that Joan, David, and Gil have been working extra hard on the reunion.

See you soon,



Betty Hall, President

319-358-6673

schotziewas1809@gmail.com

Directors Emeritus:

Anita DeGraff, Donald Forquer, Virginia Johnson, Edith Swank, and Eileen Pontious Surridge

The Pontius Family Association is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to research, education, and preservation of family history and genealogy.

www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org



**PONTIUS FAMILY ASSOCIATION
REUNION 2025
WORCESTER MASSACHUSETTS
July 17-20, 2025**

Hosts Joan and Gil Pontius and David Reno



We are excited to host Pontius Family Association 2025 in Worcester, Massachusetts!

Our reunion in downtown Worcester will be very walkable, with our meetings and Worcester's tourism destinations within a mile from the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel on Major Taylor Boulevard. The location also allows for an optional day trip into Boston, before or after the reunion. July average temperatures in Worcester range from 65-84.

Options for Getting to Worcester Hilton Garden Inn from Logan Airport in Boston

Limo - Knights Limousine offers door-to-door service between Logan Airport and Worcester. Shared vans hold up to ten passengers and cost \$89 a passenger each way. Depending on the time of day, this will be a 1-2 hour drive. For scheduling, see online at <https://www.knightslimo.com/>

Rental Car - Interstate 90 runs through Logan Airport and driving to the Hilton Garden Inn in Worcester is a 1-2 hour drive with only a few turns. Parking in Worcester is across the street of the hotel for \$14.95 a day.

Train - From Logan airport, take the free MBTA Silver Line (SL1) bus from any terminal at Logan Airport to Boston's South Station. From there, take the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter train to Worcester's Union Station. Train tickets are \$12.25 and the commute to Worcester Union Station takes an hour and a half. From Union Station, the Hilton Garden Inn Worcester is a 12-minute walk (0.7 miles) or plan for a pickup from Joan Pontius. Call Joan in advance at 443-963-4403.

VISITING BOSTON Do you want to combine your reunion with a trip to Boston? Boston is only 4 miles from Logan Airport and luggage storage locations are located throughout the city. The Freedom Trail in Boston is a 2.5-mile marked path that connects 16 historic sites, telling the story of the American Revolution. Options to visit Boston with other PFA members include:

BOSTON THURSDAY at Noon Meet PFA's own history aficionado Dave Reno at the front gates of the Massachusetts Statehouse (24 Beacon St.) for a two hour tour of Boston including the Boston Athenaeum, one of the country's oldest libraries. Use your registration form to sign up, so we know who to expect.

BOSTON SUNDAY TOUR Meet Joan, David, and other PFA members after breakfast for a day trip into Boston.

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

MEETINGS

Thursday evening: Our Board of Directors meeting will be held at Jean McDonough Arts Center JMAC (20 Franklin St). JMAC is a half a mile walk from the hotel and sits alongside the Worcester Commons and City Hall.

Our Friday morning and afternoon genealogy meeting will also be held at JMAC (20 Franklin St). The JMAC is next to several restaurants for lunch.

Our Saturday morning meeting, lunch, and Banquet Dinner will be held at First Baptist Church (111 Park Ave). The church is a walkable mile from our hotel and has free parking for those who choose to drive.

Banquet Dinner: After dinner, along with our traditional raffle, we'll have *Pontius Got Talent!* Sign up for a three minute slot to share your special talent or relay a story from your Pontius family history. Need ideas for a reunion story? How about something related to Boston, smiles, or athletics? Worcester is home of the Smiley Face and the museum of legendary cyclist Major Taylor.

POINTS OF INTEREST IN WORCESTER

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY (AAS) (185 Salisbury St.) Use registration form to sign up for THURSDAY OR FRIDAY tours. Worcester is home to the American Antiquarian Society. Their website reads: *Since its founding in 1812 by Revolutionary War patriot and printer Isaiah Thomas, AAS has assembled what is today the world's largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, children's literature, music, and graphic arts material printed before the twentieth century in what is now the United States.* The AAS offers guided tours for up to 15 participants. **To help us plan groups of 15, use the registration form to indicate any of the time slots that you would be able to attend.**

FRIDAY AFTERNOON - walking distance from our morning meeting place of JMAC are several restaurants for lunch as well as:

WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM (30 Elm St) Worcester's local history museum is an 8 minute walk from JMAC. Worcester is home of the Smiley Face!

SHOPPING AT THE CROMPTON COLLECTIVE (138 Green St) is 0.5 miles from JMAC.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON -After lunch at the First Baptist Church, stroll back to the hotel and stop to see:

MAJOR TAYLOR MUSEUM (In the Courthouse Lofts at 2 Main St) Major Taylor was an American professional cyclist. He has been called "the first Black American global sports superstar." We have arranged for the museum to be open for us after our Saturday lunch.

SALISBURY HOUSE (61 Harvard St) The Greek Revival building was constructed 1836-1838. Open Thursday-Saturday 1-4. Adults \$5, Students \$4. Free to 18 years old and younger.

WORCESTER ART MUSEUM (55 Salisbury St) The museum houses over 38,000 works of art dating from antiquity to the present day and representing cultures from all over the world. Open Wednesday-Sunday 10-4. Adults \$18, Students & Seniors \$14. Free to 17 years old and younger.

General Schedule for Worcester, Massachusetts 2025 Reunion

Thursday, July 17

Noon—Optional—Meet Dave Reno at the front gates of the Massachusetts Statehouse (24 Beacon St)

2:00-5:00 pm Registration in hotel lobby

3:00 pm (timeslot #1) — Tour of American Antiquarian Society

7:00-8:30 pm Board of Directors Meeting — JMAC (20 Franklin St)



Friday, July 18

8:00-9:00 am Registration in the hotel lobby or at JMAC

9:00-11:00 am Meet and Greet Meeting — JMAC (20 Franklin St)

1:00-3:00 pm Genealogy Meeting with Archivist, Micheal Pontious — JMAC (20 Franklin St)

12:30, 2:00, & 3:00 pm — (time slots #2, #3, #4) - Tour of American Antiquarian Society

Saturday, July 19

9:00-12:00 General Meeting & Lunch at First Baptist Church Banquet Room (111 Park Ave)

5:30 pm Gather for group photos at First Baptist Church (111 Park Ave)

6:00-9:00 pm Dinner, **Pontius Got Talent**, Raffle, Closing Remarks by Betty Hall

Sunday, July 20

9:00 am Optional — Meet Joan, David, and other PFA members after breakfast for a day trip into Boston.

FUTURE REUNION DATES:

2025 **Worcester, Massachusetts** July 17-20
Hosted by Joan Pontius and David Reno



2026 **Alton, Illinois**
Hosted by Mitzi Schwertfeger



2027 Host and location needed



Please mark your calendars to join us and think about hosting a reunion in the future. The “Reunion Hosting Guidelines” booklet is being revised and is available.

Please contact Denise Millard if you are interested in discussing hosting a meeting in the future. Denise may be reached at 610-223-1239 or denisemillard57@gmail.com.

REGULAR CHANGED TO LIFE MEMBER

John Lee Bower #J-1(11)33151 of Milton, PA

Member since 2017

WELCOME NEW AND LIFE MEMBER

Rick N. Pontius #J-9187551 of Lancaster, OH

Cousin of Bonnie Swanson and Don Forquer.

MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHIVIST by Micheal Pontious:

We now have four PFA Id numbers tied to Mary Catherine Pontius 1725-1802. And I was wrong about a Mathias Pontius not having a PFA ID number. After the last Newsletter, I was contacted by Ronald Mathias Pontius (1932) M-34 who had just read our newsletter. We had a nice long phone conversation about “M” ID numbers and his family. After the call, I found him on our membership list, and he already had an ID number. His grandfather was Mathias Pontius (1856-1902) who immigrated in 1882. He married Margaretha Kein (1859-1931) in Chicago, Illinois in 1884.

Betty and I were contacted by a Carlina Burcker of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, who just wanted to let us know that she had found our website very helpful in her research of her ancestor Mary Elizabeth Pontius (1725-1781) /John Detrick Aurand (1725-1807). I did some preliminary research on Mary Elizabeth and found some conflicting information. She has Mary Elizabeth as a child of Johannes Pontius, but she would have been born when her father was 8. I am not sure where she ties into the Pontius line.

The Pontius Family Tree has 29,029 individuals listed now. Most of the increase was generated from determining PFA ID numbers.



Micheal Pontious 402-290-9261 mspontious@cox.net

Bylaws of the Pontius Family Association

Our 2024/2025 Bylaws Committee — Betty Hall, Dawn Currie, and Fred Weaver—have reviewed and updated our Bylaws.

A copy of our revised Bylaws was included in our last mailing for review, as required by Article XIV - Amendment of Bylaws. Acceptance requires a two-thirds vote by members of the Association present at our Annual Meeting to be held July 19, 2025. *Changes are in bold and underlined.*

If you have any question or comments, please contact the Committee.

Betty Hall	319-358-6673	schotziewas1809@gmail.com
Dawn Currie	937-522-1198	ganderswamp@ymail.com
Fred Weaver	937-307-3686	fredweaver47@gmail.com

If you need an additional copy, please contact Bobbie at Bjbongo@sbcglobal.net.

Interesting things our Members are involved in across the country...



We've been busy in Pennsylvania. Winters are cold, icy, and often snowy.

I recently went with my daughter-in-law and grandkids to an ice harvest event. It was at the historic Dreibelbis farm near Hamburg, Pennsylvania. It was so informative.

They explained how "back in the day" people had to harvest ice to keep food cold. Dairies especially needed it to keep the milk cold. There were two oxen there pulling the large chunks of ice on a big wooden sleigh. We walked to the pond and watched them cut and saw the ice and load it into the sleigh.

Just another fun thing to do in Pennsylvania.

Denise Millard (J-13154*56)

The Dreibelbis farm in Virginville, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1778 by Jacob B. Dreibelbis, son of the original family immigrant, John Jacob Dreibelbis.

It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the second oldest continuously owned family farm in Berks County.

The ice house is made of stone. During winter months, ice blocks were cut from the frozen pond onsite and were carted 300 yds to the ice house for storage. The large nails protruding from the exterior walls would have enabled dense, leafy grape vines to grow there during summer, helping to lower the temperature of the ice house and keep the ice frozen longer



Ice Box

DECEASED MEMBERS

Remembering their families in sympathy.



James Robin Pontious 1934 - 2025

James was born June 28, 1934, in California, and died February 5, 2025, in Springfield, Oregon.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roland and Ruth, and son, Mark. James is survived by his wife Letha, daughters, Debra Joy and Celestine, grandchildren Shauna, Bonnie, Jenna, Abigail and Adam; and great-grandchildren Isabella, Elizabeth, Mackenzie and William.

James (N-648363) and Letha joined the PFA in 1986 and became Life members in 2004. Their adult grandchild, Jenna Pontious, joined us on the 2019 German trip

Message from the Editor—Bobbie Bongorno:

We're looking forward to another great PFA reunion. Joan has been putting in a lot of time to make plans for us. I'm especially interested in seeing what kind of "**Pontius talents**" are presented after our Saturday dinner.



Please remember to send me interesting things that you are doing so we can make our newsletter more fun and informative—send to Bjbongo@sbcglobal.net. Thanks.

BRIDGE BUILDER Editor—Joan Pontius:

If anyone has interesting stories or genealogy about a family member, send the information to Joan and she can help write the article. She asks that the article be sent in a word document, not to send a PDF file. Please send any photos separately. Send to Joanpontius@yahoo.com or mail to 4879 Manor Lane, Ellicott City MD 21042-6119. If you have questions, please call 443-963-4403.



Legacy Fund Program:

As was documented in the Minutes of our June 2023 meeting, the Legacy Fund has been established and has begun to be funded. Members of the PFA can apply for funds for any activity that would promote the heritage of the Pontius Family. The Legacy Committee will review and accept or deny the Applications.

The Application Form and Protocols are available at: pontiusfamilyassociation.org.

If you would like to make a contribution to this fund, please send your check to: Pontius Family Association, 21810 Fairmount Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44118-4816.

Money available in this Fund will come from donations and bequeaths not from the regular budget.

Bridge Builder Please submit to our Editor, Joan Pontius, 4879 Manor Lane, Ellicott City MD 21042 or joanpontius@yahoo.com or call Joan at 443-963-4403. Past Bridge Builders are available for purchase. Catalog is on our website: pontiusfamilyassociation.org.

Future **Newsletter** articles may be sent to Bobbie Bongorno at bjbongo@sbcglobal.net.

Reunion Photo Books Picture books created by Dave and Bobbie Bongorno are available for past reunions. If you would like a copy, please send \$7.50 each to cover the booklet and postage to: Pontius Family Association, Roberta Bongorno, 21810 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland OH 44118. Be sure to indicate which year(s) you want.

2023 Denver, Pennsylvania

2022 Springfield, Illinois

2021 Dayton, Ohio

2019 Hannibal, Missouri

2018 Iowa City, Iowa

2017 Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania

2016 Richmond, Virginia

2015 Frankenmuth, Michigan

2014 Bryan/College Station, Texas

2013 Denver, Pennsylvania

2012 Circleville, Ohio

2010 St. Louis, Missouri

2009 Belleville, Michigan

2008 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



PDF versions of the Photo Books are available for free. Email request to Bjbongo@sbcglobal.net.

Email List - If you are not already on our "email" list and would like to receive PFA updates if they occur during the year between the published Newsletter mailings, please send your email address to Bobbie at bjbongo@sbcglobal.net. Be sure to edit your settings to allow our group email to be received.

Address Changes - Please remember to send any address changes to Bobbie Bongorno at the address above or Bjbongo@sbcglobal.net or call 216-308-0584. Thank you--this helps us keep our postage costs down. Also, if you know of someone's passing, please forward information and/or obituaries.

Membership Application Form is available at www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org or from Bobbie Bongorno at 216-360-9561. Please use this Membership Application to purchase memberships for your family members or give to those you may be interested. Dues notices are sent to remind those who are already yearly members when renewal is due.

Cemetery Restoration Assistance/Application

If you are interested in applying for assistance with repairing or restoring a cemetery stone for a Pontius ancestor, please contact Mark Wehr, Chairman of the Cemetery Restoration Committee, 1060 Buffalo Creek Rd, Mifflinburg PA 17844-7708 or 570-966-2304 or email markwehr@windstream.net with questions.

Legacy Fund—The Application Form and Protocols are available on our website.

PFA Website: Pontiusfamilyassociation.org.

Mark your calendars for Worcester, Massachusetts July 17-20 2025!!!



Pontius Family Association Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell: (____) _____

E-Mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Name of Spouse: _____

If wife, please include maiden name.

Pontius Number, if known: _____

Second Address Information: If you live in another location part of the year.

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____ When: _____

Name of Pontius Ancestor: _____

Relationship of Ancestor: (i.e. Grandmother) _____

Where did you hear about the PFA? _____

Membership Fees:

_____ 1 year \$12.50 _____ 2 year \$24.00 _____ 3 year \$35.00

_____ Junior \$4.00 (ages 1-21 w/o Bridge Builder)

_____ Life (69 and younger) \$120.00 _____ Life (70 and older) \$100.00

Make checks payable to: Pontius Family Association

Mail to: Pontius Family Association, 21810 Fairmount Blvd., Shaker Heights, OH 44118-4816

If paying by PayPal, please add \$1.00 to cover processing fees.

Sign into PayPal and use PontiusTreasurer@gmail.com.

Thank you for your membership!

Roberta J. Bongorno, Treasurer
PONTIUS FAMILY ASSOCIATION
21810 Fairmount Boulevard
Shaker Heights OH 44118-4816

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED