

# PONTIUS FAMILY ASSOCIATION

President  
Betty (Bakehouse) Hall  
67 Goldfinch Cir  
Iowa City IA 52245

Senior Vice President  
Denise A. Millard  
184 Valley Rd  
Birdsboro PA 19508

Second Vice President  
Rita Christman  
1399 Old Swede Rd  
Douglassville PA 19518

Vice President  
Mark Wehr  
1060 Buffalo Creek Rd  
Mifflinburg PA 17844

Secretary  
Miriam (Pontius) Brown  
2787 Serene Pl  
Columbus OH 43231

Treasurer  
Roberta Bongorno  
21810 Fairmount Blvd.  
Cleveland OH 44118

## Board of Directors

Keith Bruder  
10520 Willis Rd  
Willis MI 48191

Dawn Currie  
4080 US RT 36  
Fletcher OH 45326

Rachel Currie  
4080 US RT 36  
Fletcher OH 45326

Janice (Pontius) Hamilton  
3226 History Dr  
Oakton VA 22124

Karl Alan Lowe  
67 Goldfinch Circle  
Iowa City IA 52245

Iris (Pontius) Nagel  
Auf Der Ritzwiese 21  
D-66625 Nohfelden-Walhausen Germany

Sheila (Barry) Osterhaus  
3514 N 63rd St.  
Omaha NE 68104

Carol Pontious  
125 Arthur St,  
Kittanning PA 16201

Harry F. Pontious  
165 Red Hill Rd.  
Orange VA 22960

Henry L. Pontious  
3205 N. 3rd St  
Harrisburg PA 17110-1308

Joan Uriel Pontious  
4879 Manor Ln  
Ellicott City MD 21042

Barbara (Pontius) Remy  
7235 Baker Rd.  
Colorado Springs CO 80908

Mitzi Schwertfeger  
631 Riverview Dr  
Plymouth WI 53073

Bonnie Swanson  
4903 Blossom Way  
Grove City OH 43123

Fred Weaver  
2035 McKaig Rd  
Troy OH 45373

Don Williamson  
1088 Milky Way  
Cupertino CA 95014

Number 128

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2025

## Message from the President—Betty Hall



Greetings Pontius cousins,

What a wonderful time in Worcester, Massachusetts. Joan Pontius did an amazing job organizing this reunion with all the obstacles she had to deal with. I split the weekend into two parts: a “fun” part and a “C” part.

The “fun” part was the Reunion and seeing all of the cousins again. We had some new attendees, and they were a great addition. It was so nice to hear all the laughing that weekend. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Speaking of laughing, I admit to being one of those people who only smile politely at “Dad jokes,” but Dave Bongorno had me laughing out loud. I never realized how talented our group was. We ran out of time with people showing their talents and interests to the group. My son and I also loved looking at all the weirdly spelled town names along the way. I wonder if they had some meaning or someone just put a bunch of letters together (such as Sterrettania).

The “C” part was in the 1,166 mile trip from Iowa to Worcester. “C” is for: The Cost of transportation—I lost count on how many toll booths we went thru. (FYI...New York alone took in over a billion dollars in highway tolls last year); Cops—They must have been on overtime as many as we saw; Construction—We could have saved some serious time if we had not been slowed down by all the construction zones; and Clock for change in time zones—The first night, I thought I was getting up in the middle of the night but could not go back to sleep. Unfortunately, I woke my son up. Later, I found out that I turned my clock the wrong direction so I was 2 hours off on what time I thought it was.

In 2026, we will be back closer to home for me. Mitzi Schwertfeger is hosting in Vandalia, Illinois July 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>. I hope to see you all there and meet more new relatives.

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](http://www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org)

PONTIUS FAMILY ASSOCIATION  
General Meeting Minutes  
First Baptist Church– Worcester, MA  
Saturday, July 19, 2025 - 9:00 A.M.

President Betty Hall called the meeting to order at 9 A.M.

The Opening Prayer was given by Mari Stalnecker

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Beth Bongorno

Introduction of attendees who were not at Friday morning's Meet and Greet.

**1. Board of Directors Report**

Betty Hall introduced the Appointees approved by the Board for the year 2025-26:

Archivist – Micheal Pontious

Bridge Builder Editor – Joan Pontius

Bridge Builder Proofreaders – Mitzi Schwertfeger & Mark Wehr

Chaplain – Rita Christman

Corporate Agent – Nancy Budrevich

Facebook Administrator – Karl Lowe

Newsletter Editor – Bobbie Bongorno

Parliamentarian – Harry Pontious

Photographer – David Bongorno

Webmaster – Bobbie Bongorno

Melody Pontious moved to accept the appointments and Harry Pontious seconded the motion.

All were in favor and the motion carried.

**2. Officer Reports**

\* Secretary Report – Joan Pontius – Minutes of July 18, 2024 in Fall Newsletter #125

Melody Pontious moved to accept the Minutes. Henry Pontious seconded the motion. The motion carried.

\* Treasurer Report – Bobbie Bongorno – The costs of postage, newsletter and Bridge Builder are going up, and income is down.

Our website fees are the only expenses that were lower than last year. We came out ahead on last year's reunion due to the generous raffle participation.

We renewed our \$10,000 CD, and we received \$439.60 interest. Our I-Bond is worth \$11,052 as of 6/30/25. The Cemetery Fund balance is \$4,701.72 with no expenditure from July 2024-June 2025. We mailed 3 newsletters, including the revised Bylaws, and one Bridge Builder. We also had an expense this year for printing new checks.

This year we had postcards printed with the Pontius crest to be sent from the Reunion to members who were not able to attend. We paid \$50 for 100 postcards (50 cents each), and it costs \$61 cents each to mail within the USA.

\* Senior Vice President – Denise Millard reported on upcoming meetings:

2026 Host Mitzi Schwertfeger at Vandalia, IL on July 16, 17, 18, 2026

2027 Host & location needed

2028 Host Mark Wehr at Mifflinburg, PA July date TBA

\* Membership Report – Nancy Budrevich & Bobbie Bongorno Ideas for new members:

Each Board Member suggest a new member

We could create a map of the USA with a dot for every member so we can see clusters.

Our Membership Application is being printed in each Newsletter.

When a new member joins, they receive a welcome packet which includes a welcome letter, our recent Newsletter, a complimentary past Bridge Builder, the Bridge Builder Catalog, Ahnentafel Chart and Family Group sheets (to be completed and sent to our Archivist), and a Third Party Contact Form.

Bobbie reviewed memories of members who passed away 2023-2025

\* Cemetery Report – Mark Wehr

A mailbox has been set up at the Mifflinburg Cemetery with information pamphlets about the PFA, so that people can reach out to us if they want to.

The Cemetery Committee will be deciding what kind of monument to have created and where to put the cenotaph for Nicholas Pontius. A “Cenotaph” commemorates a person who may be buried elsewhere or whose burial location is unknown.

Mark is contacting a local stone work company in Pennsylvania for a quote. The Committee will make the decisions: Mark Wehr, Harry Pontious, and Karl Lowe, consulting with our Archivist, Micheal Pontious.

3. Committee Reports

\* Newsletter & Website Administrator – Bobbie Bongorno

We need members to submit articles, interesting and fun to read.

Micheal Pontious, our Archivist, requested that the two genealogy forms that he wants people to complete (The Ahnentafel Chart and the Family Group Sheet) be added to our website and this has been done.

\* Audit Committee – Jan Hamilton and Keith Bruder were both absent. Rachel Currie and Phillip Pontious performed the audit and reported all was in order. David Reno moved to accept the Audit. Denise Millard seconded. The motion carried.

\* Bridge Builder – Joan Pontius

Send Joan ideas as a Word Doc and images as separate files. She needs writers to assist in writing several articles she received from Harry Pontious. Marcelle McMillen and Christine Branson were suggested as possible helpers for writing articles.

\* Archivist – Micheal Pontious is researching Pontius family members. Files have over 29,000 entries. They have increased because of new members and their numbers being researched. Micheal and his sister Melody Pontious are working on an Excel spreadsheet to track the PFA numbers for all the members and ancestors. This will be passed on to the next Archivist when Micheal is no longer doing the Archivist job.

Member Ron Weeks (M\*-11143222) brought up a problem with the “M” numbers. Micheal explained that there are now three lines that begin with “M.”

Mathias (1680) – stayed in Germany. Member Guenter Pontius was from this line.

Mathias (1856-1902) who came to USA in 1882.

Maria (1725-1801) who came to the USA with her brothers Johannes and Nicholas.

Micheal is working on how to give PFA numbers that will keep these “M’s” differentiated.

The book that Rudi Pontius wrote tracks the five lines of Pontius's from the German side and has information on the Mathias's. (See highlights from Rudi's book on our website: [pontiusfamilyassociation.org](http://pontiusfamilyassociation.org))

Micheal and his brother, Harry Pontious, were researching Anna Rosina who was the wife of Johan Peter Pontius, who was the father of Johannes, Nicholas, and Maria. Did she reach the US? Die in Germany? Philadelphia? They would welcome additional information if anyone has any.

\* Facebook Administrator – Karl Lowe

Karl posts German trip pictures. Others can go to Pontius Facebook site and add information. Karl will check to be sure it is appropriate for our site. If Karl receives requests for genealogy information, he forwards them to Micheal Pontious.

Beth Bongorno volunteered to be co-Facebook Administrator.

Carol Pontious suggested that Karl add our website address to our Facebook page. Karl said it is already listed there.

\* Legacy Program – Betty Hall Members will volunteer to share 15 minutes of interesting facts and memories about a family member at our reunion. Last year, Christine Sturgis and Ginger Bruder gave interesting talks. This year, Mitzi Schwertfeger is to present information about George G. Pontius. Legacy Committee is Betty Hall, David Reno, Wendy Wehr.

\* Nominating Committee -

Dawn Currie (temporary chairman for Keith Bruder) and Fred Weaver conducted elections of the Board of Directors:

Board of Directors

Roberta Bongorno	Sheila Osterhaus
Miriam Brown	Carol Pontious
Keith Bruder	Harry Pontious
Rita Christman	Henry Pontious
Dawn Currie	Joan Pontious
Rachel Currie	Barb Remy
Betty Hall	Mitzi Schwertfeger
Janice Hamilton	Bonnie Swanson
Karl Lowe	Fred Weaver
Denise Millard	Mark Wehr
Iris Nagel	Donald Williamson

Denise Millard moved and David Reno seconded to accept the Board of Directors. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Election of Officers

President - Betty Hall

Senior Vice President – Denise Millard

Second Vice President - Rita Christman

Vice President – Mark Wehr

Secretary – Miriam Brown

Treasurer – Bobbie Bongorno

David Reno moved and Fred Weaver seconded to accept the Officers. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Committee Members

Audit – Jan Hamilton and Keith Bruder

Nominating – Keith Bruder, Dawn Currie, and Ellie Kisicki

Membership – Rita Christman, Nancy Budrevich, and Louise Pontius

Cemetery – Mark Wehr, Harry Pontious, and Karl Lowe

Legacy – Betty Hall, David Reno, and Wendy Wehr

Melody Pontious moved and David Reno seconded to accept the Committee Members. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**4. Old Business**

\* Updating of Meeting Guidelines: Betty Hall, Denise Millard, Joan Pontius, Mitzi Schwertfeger and Bobbie Bongorno will be working on during the year.

\* Bylaws Committee: Betty Hall, Dawn Currie, Fred Weaver

Work was completed and updated and a draft mailed to all members with the Newsletter #126 in January 2025. The main changes were as follows:

If a Board member misses three Board of Director meetings, they will be replaced.

Meetings shall be held June or July with Board approval by the previous year.

Officer terms will begin at the annual meeting ending at the next annual meeting.

Attorney position dropped.

Checking Account needs 2 signatures—one is the Treasurer/one a Board member.

(Currently, Bonnie Swanson is the second signer.)

A copy of the PFA Inventory sheet shall be put in the safety deposit box by the Treasurer.

\*\* See Addendum below.

## 5. New Business

- \* Discussion was held at the Board meeting regarding whether we need to raise dues. This will be discussed further at the 2026 Board meeting before any changes are made.
- \* 2028 Germany trip – Karl Lowe volunteered to be in charge of this trip.
- \* Mitzi Schwertfeger gave a 15-minute legacy presentation about “The 3 Georges” and will continue with Part 2 in 2026. Also, in 2026 Carol Pontious will give a talk about her grandmother.

Lynn Gaudette moved the meeting be adjourned, and David Reno seconded it. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Miriam Weber Brown, Secretary PFA

\*\* Addendum: In error, a vote to accept the updated Bylaws was never taken.

The vote will need to be taken at the July 18, 2026, General meeting, in order for these Bylaws to be in effect.

45 were in attendance from 14 states. AZ-1, IA-4, IN-1, MA-8, MD-2, ME-1, MO-1, NE-1, NY-2, OH-8, PA-9, TX-2, VA-4, WI-1.



## Message from the Editor—Bobbie Bongorno:

We want to thank Joan Pontius and David Reno for hosting our wonderful reunion in Worcester, Massachusetts, this summer. Besides getting the opportunity to learn about Worcester and visit Boston, we had a lot of fun with Joan’s idea to have the Saturday evening entertainment be “us”. The PONTIUS GOT TALENT SHOW was a great success. So many wanted to participate that we ran out of time. Hopefully, we will be able to continue with some more special performances at next year’s reunion.

Thank you also to all those willing to serve on our Board or accept committee positions. We need volunteer involvement to continue our great organization.

We love to share information about our members with each other. Please send anything you would like to share to me before January 5, 2026, if you would like it included in the next newsletter which will be mailed in the winter. It makes our newsletter much more interesting.



## 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](mailto:Joanpontius@yahoo.com) or mail to 4879 Manor Lane, Ellicott City MD 21042-6119.

If you have questions, please call Joan at 443-963-4403.



## REGULAR CHANGED TO LIFE MEMBER

**Mari Stalnecker (J-13154\*541) of Palm, PA** Member since July 2024  
Life membership purchased by Christine Sturgis (J-13154\*41) of NJ

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**David Allan Hoadley (J-1439823) of Gillette WY**

Parents Joseph and Frances Hoadley joined in 1985 (both deceased).

**Sherry Ann Hunter J-91631(10)4 of St. Louis MO**

Two-year membership purchased by brother, Steven Michael Pontious of AZ.

## WELCOME NEW AND LIFE MEMBER

**Melody Grace Root (J-2443111\*4) of Colchester, CT**

Daughter of Dorothy June Pontius Sabin. Granddaughter of Vinton Roscoe Pontius.

**Rose Stalnecker (J-13154\*54) of Douglassville PA**

Great Granddaughter of Dr. Andrew Jackson Pontius.

Life membership purchased by Christine Sturgis (J-13154\*41) of NJ

Thank you to all who purchased memberships!

## MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHIVIST by Micheal Pontious:

There are 36 PFA members that have partial or no PFA ID numbers. That is 12 percent of the membership. If you have a PFA ID number, it will be above your name and address on the Newsletter. If those members would like to have a PFA ID number determined, fill out a Family Group sheet and a modified Ahnentafel (Ancestors) sheet and send them to me, either paper or digital. On the Ahnentafel sheet, fill in as much as you can. I may or may not have you in the PFA Family tree database. The forms can be found on the Pontius Family Association web site, [pontiusfamilyassociation.org](http://pontiusfamilyassociation.org), or I can send them to you. Even if you are not related to Johannes, Nicholas, or Marie, I would still like to get you into the database. I will try to have your PFA ID numbers by the next newsletter.



For me to generate PFA ID numbers, I need to have as much information on siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, great aunts, great uncles as far back as possible. I will then search the records for confirming information and additions. Once I am confident, I will then generate the ID number.

The PFA family tree currently has 29,380 people. The increases are due mainly to researching PFA ID numbers and adding a few new members.

Micheal Pontious 402-290-9261 [mspontious@cox.net](mailto:mspontious@cox.net)

## FUTURE REUNION DATES:

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



2027      Host and location needed



2028      **Mifflinburg, PA**  
Hosted by Mark Wehr



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](mailto:denisemillard57@gmail.com).



## FUTURE GERMAN TRIP:

Karl Lowe of Iowa City, Iowa, has offered to host our next German trip.

Please reach out to Karl if you have suggestions for the trip. Details will be in future newsletters.



## Welcome new Board member: **Henry Lloyd Pontius (J-1314552)**

Henry has been a PFA member since 1991 and a Life member since 2000. Henry brought his sister, Sue Flanders, to our July reunion this year in Massachusetts. He has recently retired, and we are glad he is interested in becoming more involved in the PFA. Henry lives in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS:



**Harry F. Pontious (J-9163323)** joined the PFA in 1997 as a Life member. He became a PFA Board Member in 2018 and served as our President from 2020-2023. He ran the 2023 Reunion in Orange County, Virginia, along with his wife, Bernadette, siblings Micheal Pontious, Melody Pontious, Nancy Budrevich, and son, Phillip Pontious.

**Harry and Bernadette celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this year.**  
*Please see photos on the next page.*



Congratulations to  
**Harry and Bernadette Pontious** on  
their 60th Anniversary 6/5/25 !!



May 23, 2025 - Harry, Granddaughter Kiara, Great-granddaughter Myla, and Bernadette.

On June 5, 1965, Marie Bernadette Huberd married Harry F. Pontious, Jr in Haspelschiedt, France. Father Steyer performed the wedding Mass in the Lorraine village's St. Nicholas church. The mandatory French civil ceremony took place earlier on June 1 in the town hall of Longeville-les-Metz. The newlyweds honeymooned in Rulles, Belgium. Bernadette's aunt, Sister Francois, had invited the couple to visit there.



Mother Superior Xavier, Sister Francois, Bernadette - Rulles, Belgium - June 1965 -

## August 30, 2025 Perkins – Vandenbergh Wedding



Effingham IL – On August 30, 2025, Miss Kimberly Perkins married Aaron Vandenbergh in Effingham, Illinois, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in a double ring ceremony.

Kimberly is the daughter of Michele and Keith Perkins of rural Effingham, and Aaron is the son of Jean and Jim Vandenbergh of rural Pana.

The matrimonial ceremony, and reception that followed, was attended and celebrated by many friends and family members of the couple. The bride is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, practicing at the Pet Wellness Center in Effingham, Illinois, and the groom is a full-time grain and cattle farmer in rural Pana, Illinois. The couple will reside in the Pana area.

*Congratulations to Kimberly and Aaron!*

Left to right: Michele Perkins, Kimberly Perkins Vandenbergh, Aaron Vandenbergh, and Keith Perkins

**Michele and Keith Perkins joined the PFA in 2024 and are Life Members.** Michele is the sister of PFA Board Member **Mitzi Schwertfeger (J-73623121\*)** who joined in 2007 and is a Life Member. **Mitzi and Michele** will be our hosts for the July 2026 PFA Reunion in Vandalia, Illinois.

*Michele and Mitzi are the daughters of Myron and Della Pontious (J-7362312) of St. Peter, Illinois (both deceased). Myron and Della joined the PFA in 2001 and were Life members.*

### **Update from Life Member Deb Wadman** N-1222(10)2\*33 of Hustisford, Wisconsin.

Bruce and I continue to be busy volunteering at our local food pantry. We did manage to take time off last fall to cruise the southern Caribbean, and we spent the month of March in Arizona.

Fall of 2024 was an exciting time for another reason. The Slinger High School football team for which our son, Michael is the defensive coordinator, went undefeated for the season and won the state championship. It was so fun watching it all unfold, especially with the grandchildren. They are at practice with the father quite often and, therefore, know the team members and other coaches quite well. The head football coach, and good friend of our son, was later named the state and then the national high school coach of the year by the NFL!

Our grandchildren are growing like weeds and keep us busy with their sports. We have games to watch almost year round as they play football, basketball, lacrosse and baseball. All three are on travel ball teams this summer so we keep busy going to watch games, and sometimes providing rides for one of them when the other two are playing in other places at the same time.

Earlier this spring, we road the train up to the Twin Cities to visit our daughter, who lives up there. It was a really nice way to travel; so much easier than driving! I think we will go by train a lot more often now. If you haven't traveled by train before, I would encourage you to give it a try.

**Debra and Bruce** joined the PFA in 1997. They hosted the 2007 PFA Reunion in Fond du Lac, WI.

## DECEASED MEMBERS

*Remembering their families in sympathy.*



### Virginia "Ginger" Bruder 1946—2025

Virginia "Ginger" Bruder, age 78, of Willis, MI, passed away on April 25, 2025, in Ann Arbor, Michigan with her husband by her side. She was born on November 8, 1946, in Sylvania, Ohio to Conrad and Mildred Olwick (Schudel).

Ginger enjoyed spending time with her husband, Keith. Together they traveled to more than a dozen countries. She was a member of the Moose, Van Buren Eagles, Huron Valley Conservation Club, and the Belleville Area Museum. She helped to start the Belleville Area District Library. She especially enjoyed teaching genealogy at the library. Ginger loved to study the history of the Civil War. Her biggest and most passionate hobby was cooking.

Ginger worked for many years at McGraw Hill Book Company before opening her own store, "Miss Gingers" on Main Street in Downtown Belleville. Later she became the office manager for Keith Bruder Landscape Company.

She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Keith Bruder, of Willis, MI. Also surviving are her brothers, Larry (Pat) Schudel of Texas and George (Pat) Schudel of Metamora, Ohio, as well as several nieces, especially Colleen Bartley of Texas, and her nephews. She is preceded in death by her mother and father, Conrad and Mildred Olwick her sister Constance Schudel, her in laws, Albert and Shirley Straub, sister-in-law Sandra (George) Brown, Kathy (Ralph) Valkenberg, & brother-in-law Butch Pluff & Lloyd Kinsman. Burial -Alban Cemetery in Ypsilanti, MI.

*Ginger and Keith (J-71\*112642) joined the PFA in 2002. They ran the Belleville, Michigan Reunion in 2009. They both serve on the Board of Directors, and they have been in charge of many raffles at the reunions. Currently, Ginger had been Second Vice President in charge of the Membership Committee since 2023.*

Pontius



*Das einzig Wichtige im Leben  
sind die Spuren der Liebe,  
die wir hinterlassen,  
wenn wir gehen.*

Albert Schweitzer

### Günter Pontius

\* 08. 05. 1944      † 06. 04. 2025

In liebevollem Gedenken  
Hildegard  
Michael, Peter, Eva  
und alle Angehörigen

Die Trauerfeier findet am Mittwoch, den 16. April 2025, um 14:30 Uhr in der Pfarrkirche St. Willibord Schmelz-Limbach statt. Im Anschluss ist die Beisetzung auf dem Friedhof.

We were sad to receive this notice of **Günter Pontius**'s passing from Iris and Berno Nagel.

Günter and Hildegard joined the PFA in 1991. He was the chairman of German PFA group for a long time and served on the USA PFA Board from 2003 to 2013. He traveled to the USA in 2004 and attended our reunion in Atlanta, GA.

Günter's grandson, David Pontius, sent a nice note thanking us for condolences that were sent to Hildegard and the family.

David said that Günter enjoyed telling them stories about traveling to the USA. David also said some of his memories of his grandfather were the way he picked him up from school, took walks in nature, and the hours they spent woodworking together in Günter's workshop. He will miss his grandfather's stories and jokes.

Translation: "The only important things in life are the traces of love we leave behind when we go"



## Margaret Ann Punches 1940—2024

Margaret Punches, 84, of Onekama, MI, died December 1, 2024, with her husband George and daughter Ann by her side. Margaret had a brief but courageous battle with cancer. She was Margaret Ann Whalin in Saginaw, Michigan, on April 3, 1940, to Ward and Virginia Whalin.

Margaret graduated from Central Michigan University, earning a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1962. On June 20, 1964 she married George Punches, the love of her life. The couple had three children: Ann, John, and Jeff. Margaret worked as a teacher from the mid-1970's-2000.

Margaret was an avid member of her community and an entrepreneur. Along with her husband, she owned and operated Punches Pharmacy Plus and Hallmark Shop in Clare, Michigan and Fun Stuff under the Tree in Onekama. She was a charter member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Her commitment to education spanned decades. She was also involved in the Portage Lake Association, Garden Club, Junior Clio, Onekama Summer Concert Series, Trinity Lutheran Church in Onekama and Arcadia.

Most of all, Margaret was dedicated as a wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She helped create "Camp Nana & Pops" where her grandchildren and great-grandchildren gathered at her house annually and were profoundly impacted by the love, compassion, laughter, songs and activities that she created in an effort to be constant and active in all their lives.

Margaret is survived by her husband George, children Ann (Married to Jim Reeves of Manistee, Mi), John (Married to Bunny Punches of Holland, Mi) and Jeff (of Midland, Mi). She is also survived by her sisters Barbara Wild (of Cadillac, Mi) and JoAnne (Married to Harry Engel of Cadillac), and 17 grandchildren and great-grandchildren; Darby (Scott Smith of Chesterfield, great-grandchildren Ryhan, Charlotte and Emilia), Zoe (Jordan Greenfield of Cadillac, great-grandchildren Ethan and Carter), Colton (Ana Punches of Bourbannais, IL), Sierra Benchley, Tanner Punches, Chloe Reeves (grandson David), Ross Benchley, Claire Reeves, Jake Punches, Fletcher Punches and Fisher Punches. Burial in Cherry Grove Cemetery in Clare MI.

*George (N-77(10)233) and Margaret joined the PFA in 1985 and have been Life members. They hosted the PFA reunion in 2015 in Frankenmuth, Michigan. George served on the Board of Directors from 2015-2017 and was Senior Vice President from 2016-2017.*



## Sharon L. Rider 1961 - 2024

Sharon Lynn (Davis) Rider was born January 10, 1961, in Kansas City, Missouri and passed away peacefully on November 15, 2024.

Sharon lived her entire life in Kansas City. She received a bachelors degree from Avila University and a masters degree from the University of Kansas. Sharon worked in the healthcare field as a LCSW in both hospitals and private practice.

Sharon loved Jesus, loved music, and was passionate about helping others. Shaon loved to travel. Whether horseback riding in Colorado, touring family history in Germany, or cruising the Caribbean with Jim, she delighted in new adventures and visiting new places.

She was the daughter of the late James (Jim) and Donnis (Padget) Davis, wife of James (Jim) Burchett, mother of Shane Rider (OK) and Justin (Amber) Rider (Liberty, MO), grandmother to Abigail and Jayden Rider, stepmother to Mallory (Kyle) Sanford and daughter Emery, and Marcus (Shannon) Burchett, sister of James (Randy) and Shelly Davis.

*Sharon (J-75121\*542) joined the PFA in 2016 and was a Life member. She was a cousin of Ginger Johnson (former PFA President) and niece of Life member Wanda Baney.*



## **Marilyn Hughes 1940 – 2025**

Marilyn Hughes died June 18, 2025, at the age of 85. Born on May 7, 1940, in Des Moines, IA. Marilyn was preceded in death by her parents Howard and Clara Pontious; son, Lloyd Hughes, Jr.; ex-husband, Lloyd Hughes; and her brother Eli (Bud) Pontious.

She is survived by her daughter, Pamela Hughes; three brothers, two sisters, and their spouses plus Bud's spouse, and extended family that she discovered when she joined the Pontius Association. She enjoyed spending time with family, especially at reunions.

Marilyn was shy as a young girl, yet she had a mischievous streak throughout her life. People are often surprised to discover Marilyn was a biker babe as a young woman with her own motorcycle. She and her husband were members of a motorcycle club, and their young children were often passengers. When her second child, her son, was born; the doctors told her he would never walk or talk and not live very long. As a dedicated mother, she made many trips to University Hospital for treatment and testing. She advocated for services, including education, for her son so he could develop to his highest potential. He walked and talked just fine until an accidental fall caused a head injury that led to his death at age 62, just two years ago.

Friends were always a very important part of Marilyn's life. After retirement, she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and later with Parkinson's. In the last year and a half, Marilyn received assistance from two hospice organizations. The picture on this obituary was taken at the end of a hospice music therapy session just a few weeks before she passed. When she smiled, her whole body shined and sparkled. She also had a way of looking up with a sparkle in her eye when she was being mischievous.

Marilyn spent only a few days in the hospital during her life and never lived in a nursing home. She passed the way she wanted to; peacefully in her own bed at home, in no pain, while listening to country music hymns.

*Marilyn (J-916332) joined the PFA in 1992 and was a Life member.*

## **Velma Irene Pontius 1928—2023**

Velma Pontius passed away October 28, 2023. She was born March 30, 1928. Velma was the wife of Robert John Pontius (N632821) who died 5/27/2001. They lived in Encino, California.

*Robert and Velma joined the National Pontius Association as Life members in 1967.*

## **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. Please direct any questions to Betty Hall at 319-358-6673 or schotziewas1809@gmail.com.

The Application Form and Protocols are available at: [pontiusfamilyassociation.org](http://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](mailto:joanpontius@yahoo.com) or call Joan at 443-963-4403. Past Bridge Builders are available for purchase. Catalog is on our website: [www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org](http://www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org).

Future **Newsletter** articles may be sent to Bobbie Bongorno at [bjbongo@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.

2024 Orange Cty, VA  
2023 Denver, Pennsylvania  
2022 Springfield, Illinois  
2021 Dayton, Ohio  
2019 Hannibal, Missouri  
2018 Iowa City, Iowa  
2017 Mifflinburg, PA  
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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.pontiusfamilyassociation.org) or from Bobbie Bongorno at 216-308-0584. 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](mailto:markwehr@windstream.net) for information or with questions.

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

PFA Website: [Pontiusfamilyassociation.org](http://Pontiusfamilyassociation.org).

***Mark your calendars for Vandalia, Illinois July 16-18, 2026!!!***



## 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](mailto:PontiusTreasurer@gmail.com).

Thank you for your membership!

**Pontius Family Association  
Cemetery Restoration Application**

In keeping with the Pontius Family Association Articles of Incorporation Article III -Purposes: To identify, locate, rehabilitate, and rebuild graves, memorials, markers, and edifices and to finance such work and rehabilitation through voluntary contributions by members of the Association or others desiring to contribute, we have established the Cemetery Restoration Committee. This committee is to help PFA members with the expense of repair or replacement of a stone. The committee will carefully consider all applications and will make the decision on what will be done and the amount that can be spent on the repair and or replacement of a stone. Please note all replacement stones will be small head stones and will only include the name and dates of the deceased.

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ PFA # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Deceased: \_\_\_\_\_ PFA Number if known \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cemetery: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot: \_\_\_\_\_ Row: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Local Monument Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Is deceased a Veteran? Yes No If yes: Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Deceased Social Security Number (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

**Degree of Damage:** Cracked: \_\_\_\_\_ Broken in more than two pieces: \_\_\_\_\_ Laid down but whole: \_\_\_\_\_

Needs re-engraved: \_\_\_\_\_ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_ Footer still usable? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Information on stone if legible: (Please copy all information as it appears on the stone:) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Requirements: Send to: Mark Wehr, 1060 Buffalo Creek Rd, Mifflinburg PA 17844-7708**

Please attach photo(s) of the stone and/or area in which stone will be placed.

Please send copy of cemetery records and obituary (if available) for the deceased.

Are there descendants who are willing to make a donation towards the purchase cost? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please indicate the amount you have been able to collect. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the names of those descendants who have made donations on the back.

After the repair or replacement of a stone we ask that you send a photo of it.

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED