The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover has a marbled pattern in shades of red, pink, and white. A decorative border with a repeating geometric pattern surrounds the central text. The text is centered within a dark rectangular box.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
NEW
EMMAUS
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

*“All that mankind
has done, gained or been,
it is all lying in magic
preservation in the
pages of books.”*

Thomas Carlyle

We owe a debt of gratitude to Tom Stoneback, Chris Gaugler and Meg Baker of Rodale Press for their help in making this publication possible. Melanie DeVault, of the East Penn Press, donated valuable time editing the material for publication. And finally Chris Andrews, Frances Larash and Marion Forrest of the Emmaus Public Library for their help in assembling the material included in this booklet.

William G. Bartholomew

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW EMMAUS PUBLIC LIBRARY



HE HISTORY OF THE EMMAUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

ACTUALLY HAD ITS BEGINNINGS IN THE 1930s, WHEN THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EMMAUS HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR a public library facility. With the firm belief that "the true university of these days is a collection of books," the group focused on a dream, a dream of establishing a library that would be used by children and teens, adults and senior citizens for both educational and recreational purposes.

The first real hope for the association came on December 28, 1938, when John D. Weaver donated a building in downtown Emmaus for use as a public library. The alumni association accepted the bequest with a resolution that thanked this New York City resident who "spontaneously and publicly expressed the kindness of a great heart, the love of his fellow men . . . by giving outright for use as a Public Library the three story building located at 348 Main Street located in the heart of his hometown to the men, women and children of that town . . ."

The association decided the library should be operated by a library board and zealously began planning for its future. The original board met on



March 29, 1939, and consisted of: The Honorable Frank Trexler (vice president), the Honorable Richard Iobst, Dr. Gerald S. Backenstoe (president), Robert Stoneback (treasurer), John D. Weaver (vice president), George Castor, the Rev. Henry Keuhl, Linn Schantz, Frank Schaeffer, Howard Deischer, and Harvey H. Becker (secretary).

Since the Main Street building was not immediately available for occupancy as a library, the board rented the first floor of a building at 435 Chestnut Street to get the library under way. The library operation remained on Chestnut Street from January 10, 1940, to June 1944. And it was a big success in the little borough — boasting an average circulation in 1941 of 1,000 books a month, library reports show. Library shelves held 3,415 books.

The association was looking forward to the added space of the Main Street building, which opened on June 1, 1944. The dedicated core of supporters was eager to serve more residents. They did just that. By 1949, book circulation had increased to an average of 1,900 per month, all catalogued by Mrs. James Hinkle, the high school librarian.

By the mid-1960s, the book collection had expanded to approximately 8,000 volumes and space in the once spacious Main Street building was becoming a problem. During these years, many factors had combined to bring about a tremendous change in the operation and facilities for a new public library program for Emmaus and its environs. The borough itself had more than doubled since the public library had become reality.

After many people devoted countless hours of time and effort, a new facility and library program finally appeared on the horizon. On March 1, 1965, Mayor Clarence Hoffert cast a tie-breaking vote in favor of enacting an ordinance which called for the establishment of a borough library conforming to the Pennsylvania State Library Code. When the ordinance became a reality on April 19, 1965, federal funds became available for construction. These monies, plus generous contributions from the community, made it possible to break ground on October 1, 1965, for a new library building at Main and Ridge streets.



The 1966 Board of Directors: Standing, Theodore Gardner, Attorney; Charles Richards, Ray Erb, Marion Forrest; Seated, Carl Frantz, Jerome Goldstein, Kathryn Stephanoff, Lewis Kratzer.

NEW BUILDING: NEW START

The euphoria of dedicating the "new" Emmaus Public Library on June 3, 1966, had not yet worn off when a special meeting of the board was called on June 7, 1966, to hear and read a resignation from Mrs. Mary Reed, librarian. On the board at that time were Jerome Goldstein, president; Lewis Kratzer, vice president; Carl Frantz, treasurer; Kathryn Stephanoff, secretary; Marion Forrest; Charles Richards; and Ray Erb.

The board was also busy during the 1966 fiscal year developing policy statements, soliciting financial support for the library from the governmental bodies comprising the East Penn School District, and with the general operation of a new facility.

Progress was made that fall, as Mrs. Shelia Hess was chosen in August 1966 to succeed Mrs. Reed, and the Upper Milford Township Board of Supervisors indicated their approval of an annual contract to have library services provided for its citizens during the 1967 calendar year. Volunteers were busy cataloguing books. There were 3,005 registered borrowers, and statistics showed that circulation tripled since the library opened.

As the library operation continued to grow, the board concerned itself more and more with a dependable financial base. Local service clubs were

solicited for contributions, and among the early contributors were the Women's Club, Lions Club, and Rodale Press. Again, volunteers contributed many hours performing tasks which obviated the need for paid personnel.

With Upper Milford already in the fold, some citizens from Lower Macungie Township approached their supervisors regarding a contractual library service for its citizens. A meeting between representatives of the Emmaus Public Library Board and the Lower Macungie supervisors was arranged, and an agreement was reached to provide library services to township residents for the last six months of 1967 at a stipulated amount. The Borough of Macungie contracted for services in 1969.

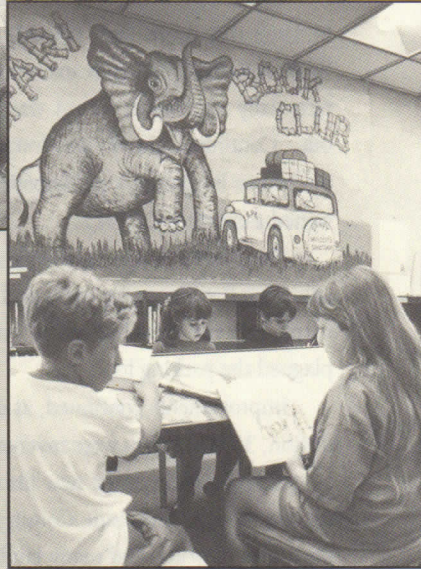
A practice, continued to today, allowing local artists to display samples of their artistic talent on the interior walls of the library was inaugurated. Dr. Edgar Baum, son of the renowned Dr. Walter Baum, was one of the first such artists to display his works.



A NEW LIBRARIAN

The board was again faced with an administrative problem when Mrs. Hess indicated her intention to resign as librarian at the July 1967 meeting. Mrs. Elaine Timbers was named to succeed her. This nomination proved to be a most successful choice as Mrs. Timbers brought the library to new heights in her tenure of 20 years.

Her first several years brought continued success and program innovations. Mrs. Timbers arranged a meeting with the junior and senior high school teachers of English and Social Studies for the purpose of familiarizing them with the library facilities. She urged a liaison when specific research projects were assigned to students, a close relationship which has been maintained to this day.



THE SUMMER READING PROGRAM

In June 1968, a Summer Reading Program for children in grades one through six was initiated. Its theme was big league baseball, and 278 children took part. Since that time, thousands of children have rocketed to the moon, gone scuba diving, worked to clean up the environment, dealt with castles and Indians, pirates and circus performers, Superman and dinosaurs. They have flown into outer space, gone on safaris, and ventured round the world in hot air balloons. They even fed Benjie the Bookworm until his body twice circled the library walls — all catchy programs that enticed children to read.

Parents and teachers alike have vociferously praised the program, claiming its benefits to the participants can be seen in the classroom. As many as 21 schools in seven communities have been represented.

In 1971, club members were given pine seedlings as a reward for reading. Today, many of those 100 evergreens grace the community, having been planted throughout Emmaus and on over to Alburtis.

GROWTH CONTINUES

Circulation of materials continued to grow, and Mrs. Timbers reported in 1968 that more than 100,000 pieces of materials were circulated. The book collection had now exceeded 25,000, and on September 15, 1970, a new daily circulation record was reached when 1,413 pieces were checked out. Continued growth was foretold when the Borough of Alburtis showed interest in becoming a participating member of library services in 1970 and signed a contract for 1971.

Plans were made to install curbing and sidewalks on Ridge Street, adjoining the library, by year's end. This, of course, was a property improvement, but the board was still concerned with the water problem which plagued the parking lot.

Improvements continued, as did growth. Seven years after its 1966 dedication, 35,000 books were inventoried.

In recognition of the new library's 10 glorious years, an anniversary dinner was held at Brookside Country Club on October 8, 1976. It was with a great deal of pride, and many laudatory remarks, that the success of the venture was celebrated.

THE PROBLEMS OF SUCCESS

In 1978, an inventory of the facilities provided an estimated value of books and materials at \$420,000, with \$100,000 in furniture, equipment and other contents. This information made the board realize the need for a

smoke alarm system, and Emmaus Borough Council was approached on the matter. Council agreed to have a system installed at borough expense with a direct hook-up into borough hall.

By 1979, the library shelves were bulging with 48,000 volumes — 13,000 over capacity — Emmaus Public Library Board President Lewis Kratzer appointed a committee comprised of Dr. William Bartholomew, chairman, Mrs. Phyllis Stubbe and Mrs. Kathryn Stephanoff to study the space problem of the library. In March 1980, the Expansion Committee reported that since June 3, 1966:

- The population served by the library tripled.
- Card-carrying membership quintupled.
- Daily circulation quintupled.
- Volumes housed in the library more than tripled.
- But library space remained the same.

The committee made three recommendations: To increase the book shelving area from 1,456 to 2,912 square feet; increase storage space from 414 to 800 square feet, and increase office/staff work area from 742 to 1,484 square feet.

The board requested the original library architect, Robert Frey, to do a preliminary drawing for a proposed addition to the building, incorporating the above recommendations. After reviewing a rough sketch of a proposed addition, it was the unanimous decision of the board to proceed with a plan to hire Mr. Frey as the architect for the addition. The next step was to begin informing the community of the plans and arrange for financing the project. Thus began the second most ambitious project undertaken for the Emmaus Public Library. The first, naturally, was the initial building project completed in 1966.

THE FUND DRIVE

Pierce Randall, an outstanding citizen of Emmaus, was chosen as general chairman of the Building Fund Committee, which was given the responsibility of raising the \$125,000 projected as the cost for the addition.





Photo courtesy of Richard F. Gaal

The ribbon is cut for the addition to the Emmaus Public Library on September 26, 1982, by Dr. Gerald Backenstoe, original board member (right). Assisting are Dr. William G. Bartholomew, board president, and Elaine B. Timbers, librarian at the time.

Subsequently, Howard "Pete" Deischer was named Emmaus Borough chairman of the committee, and Hamilton Carl was selected to be the treasurer. Volunteers were recruited in the participating boroughs and townships, and a vigorous campaign was begun. David Miller, former East Penn art supervisor who has done so much for the library over the years, designed a "bookworm" graph to be placed on the Emmaus Triangle to show the public progress made in the fund drive. By March 1981, \$34,493.97 had been pledged. As the activity of fund-raising quickened, so did circulation in the library. During March 1981, the Emmaus Public Library circulated 1,000 more volumes compared with March 1980.

Contributions continued to roll in, and by May, the Emmaus Public Library fund had reached the \$71,000 figure. Meanwhile, plans for the addi-

tion had reached the bidding stage and after reviewing the general construction, mechanical, and electrical bids at the July meeting, the board was able to recommend that Borough Council accept the low bidders and proceed with the addition. The bids for the addition, including architect's fee, totaled \$145,385.60. Pledges, interest earned on money invested, and revenue sharing money contributed by Emmaus Borough Council were sufficient to meet the costs of the addition to the library.

On September 26, 1982, Dr. William G. Bartholomew, president of the board, presided at the dedication of the addition to the library. Dignitaries from each borough and township participating in the library were present and introduced to the crowd assembled in the library.

Kathryn Stephanoff, board member, spoke on the "Significance and Use of the Emmaus Public Library." Dr. Gerald S. Backenstoe, general chairman of the original Library Fund-Raising Committee, assisted Mrs. Timbers and Dr. Bartholomew in cutting the ribbon to officially open the enlarged library quarters.

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

After study and research, President Bartholomew recommended that the board should establish an Endowment Fund to help create a permanent financial resource to keep the library a vital part of the community. The board gave unanimous approval for the fund at the October 1984 meeting, and the president made the first contribution. Soon thereafter, the Emmaus Garden Club gave \$2,000 to the fund. An anonymous donor later contributed \$2,500, a bequest of \$2,000 by Marjorie B. Ettinger in memory of Charles W. Ettinger, and a bequest of \$2,000 under terms of the last will and testament of Maurice R. Harpster helped it grow. Many other contributions have been made by individuals or groups in honor, or in memory of community members. The board has agreed that all proceeds from the annual Book Sale are to be deposited into the Endowment Fund. As of December 31, 1990, the fund had a total of \$25,932.37.

A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP

Two significant events occurred in 1986: The board was notified that the will of Donald Reinsmith, an Emmaus funeral director, made a bequest of \$25,000 to the library. Then, at the November meeting of the board, Mrs. Elaine Timbers tendered her resignation as head librarian effective June 1, 1987. Mrs. Timbers had served since 1967 in a most capable fashion, during which time tremendous growth was experienced. The Personnel Committee immediately began preparing materials and procedures to be used in interviewing candidates for the head librarian position. Sixteen applications were received, and the committee recommended three for final consideration to the board. Mrs. Frances Larash was elected unanimously at the April meeting of the board to succeed Mrs. Timbers. A testimonial dinner, attended by 77 staff members and guests, was held for Mrs. Timbers on May 1, at the Well House restaurant. The board also feted Mrs. Timbers at a dinner held at the Hamilton Plaza Hotel.

RESTRUCTURING THE BOARD

At the June 1987 meeting, a discussion was held regarding Ordinance 412 (1965) written by the Emmaus Borough Council. In effect, it restricted board membership to seven members appointed by council. A committee was formed to explore the possibility of changing the ordinance to allow for a board of nine persons, with seven from the borough and one each from Upper Milford and Lower Macungie townships. On September 21, 1987, the Emmaus Borough Council passed Ordinance 683, allowing nine members on the library board — seven people appointed by Emmaus Borough Council, one person appointed by the supervisors of Upper Milford Township, and one person appointed by the supervisors of Lower Macungie Township.

The board has encouraged growth, while striving to upgrade library services and facilities. An unofficial appraisal of the hardcover book collection

was estimated to be \$1.5 million in 1988. On the improvement front, after much deliberation by a board committee, it was recommended that new tile and carpeting be installed in the main rooms of the library with the funding to come from the Reinsmith bequest.

Support for the library seemed to only be growing stronger. In a study made by Mrs. Schevets, then the Emmaus Public Library Board treasurer, it was learned that volunteers donated 8,000 hours of work to the operation of the library at an approximate value of \$40,000.

THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

In 1989, under the initiative of Mrs. Larash, head librarian, the Friends of the Emmaus Public Library was organized with its own constitution and by-laws. This group provides a corps of volunteers both on a steady basis and for special projects. The Friends selected the following projects for future action:

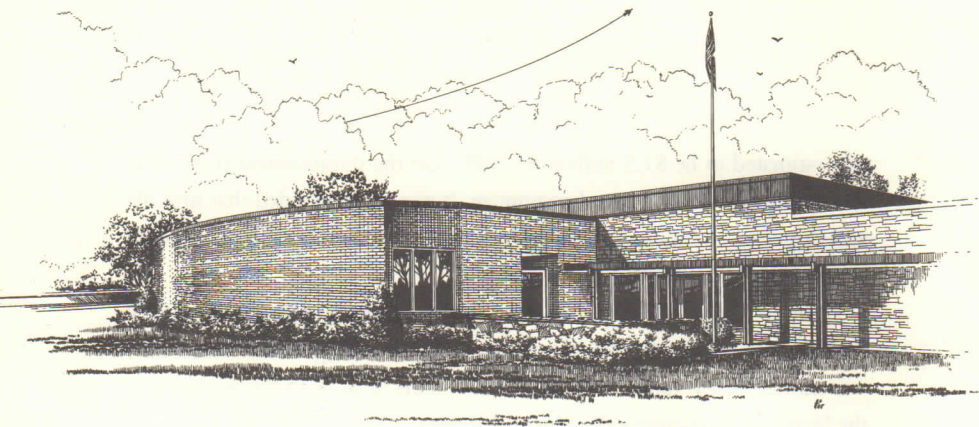
- Sponsor a children's paperback book fair in the summer.
- Sponsor a children's book week poster contest in November.
- Solicit interested patrons to join the new venture.

Looking ahead to 1991, President Forrest appointed a "25th Anniversary Committee" with Phyllis Stubbe as chairperson, to commemorate the opening of the "new" library. In addition to preparing a history of library activities since 1966, the committee decided to ask Emmaus Borough Council to name 1991 "Year of the Emmaus Public Library," and to plan a birthday party for June 15, 1991.

A GREAT GIFT PROPOSAL

The event of the year in 1990 occurred at the April meeting when Board Member Audrey Racines announced that she represented an anonymous donor who wanted to build an addition to the library as a memorial gift. This announcement was greeted with much surprise and delight by the board.





Architect Wilbur Edward Kline's sketch (above) shows the proposed addition to the library — the Margaret Knoll Gardner addition. This 1,066-square-foot of additional space is the gift of a private donor to honor Mrs. Gardner, an Emmaus resident who has been active in community affairs for more than 60 years.

A former schoolteacher, Peg Gardner organized the first Junior Red Cross in Emmaus and was one of the founders of the Emmaus Newcomers Club. She has been president of the Emmaus Woman's Club, the Lehigh County Federation of Woman's Clubs, the Emmaus Republican Club; has served on the Council of the Lehigh County Republican Club, on the boards of the Girl Scouts, YWCA, Allentown Woman's Club, Crippled Children; and is a 40-year member of the Board of the Allentown Symphony Association.

The wife of former Lehigh County Judge Theodore R. Gardner, she is the mother of Theodore R. Gardner II, a writer and owner of a California Real Estate business; the Honorable James Knoll Gardner, a Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas Judge; and Attorney Audrey Gardner Racines, a Library Board member.

The necessary steps for this addition had been put in motion when President Marion Forrest asked Mrs. Racines to chair a committee comprised of William Bartholomew, Holly Hudson, Dick Keim and Frances Larash. After interviewing several architects, the committee and board selected Wilbur Kline. Since the building is owned by the Borough of Emmaus, contacts were made with borough officials to ascertain the feasibility of the project. No objections were raised, providing the project would conform to all

governmental agencies' regulations. Mr. Kline proceeded with sketches for an addition of about 1,000 square feet, extending east from the children's library area. Space was allowed for 60 to 70 folding chairs, suitable for group meetings, audiovisual presentations and similar functions.

President Forrest named a committee comprised of Audrey Racines as chairperson, Jan McNair, Lewis Kratzer, and Marjorie Schevets to develop guidelines for the use of additional space.

LOOKING AHEAD

The library is no longer only a repository for books. The rapid increase in technology, constant population growth in the East Penn School District, new sources of information contained outside books, and availability of library materials beyond the Emmaus Public Library service area have all contributed to changes in the delivery of library materials.

However, the stated purpose of the library is "to provide library service" to the residents of our service area. The purpose will not change, but the manner of providing the service will, no doubt, change. In the short term, the board hopes to expand the children's library program and provide additional large-type material for older patrons. Another thought must be given to improving services to patrons residing outside the Borough of Emmaus, where the population is rapidly growing. Computers will have to be procured to facilitate cataloging and circulating materials. The ACCESS Pennsylvania program, a proven success, has resulted in more patrons being able to obtain a greater variety of materials. The possibility of adding space to the present building opens new opportunities for additional community library services.

As we reflect on the past success of the library, we have confidence that the future looks just as bright. We look ahead with a feeling of optimism that the next decades will bring continued improvements in service to the patrons of the Emmaus Public Library.



HIGHLIGHTS: 1966-1991

- June 3, 1966** Dedication of the "new" library.
- August 1966** Mrs. Shelia Hess chosen librarian.
- January 1967** Upper Milford contracts for library services.
- June 1967** Lower Macungie contracts for library services.
- July 1967** Mrs. Elaine Timbers succeeds Mrs. Hess as librarian.
- June 1968** Summer Reading Program for school students inaugurated.
- January 1969** Borough of Macungie contracts for library services.
- December 1969** Book collection exceeds 25,000.
- January 1971** Alburtis borough contracts for library services.
- January 1973** Book collection reaches 35,000 volumes (capacity shelving).
- October 1976** 10th anniversary dinner held at Brookside Country Club.
- January 1979** Book collection reaches 48,000 volumes, or 13,000 over rated capacity. President Kratzer appoints a committee to study space need.
- March 1980** Space Needs Committee recommends building additional space. Architect recommended to Borough Council. Pierce Randall chosen general chairman of committee to raise \$125,000 for proposed addition.

- Sept. 26, 1982 Addition to building dedicated.
- October 1984 Endowment Fund established.
- September 1986 Donald Reinsmith wills \$25,000 to library.
- November 1986 Mrs. Elaine Timbers, librarian, resigns as of June 1, 1987.
- June 1, 1987 Mrs. Frances Larash succeeds Mrs. Timbers.
- September 1987 Emmaus Borough Council passes Ordinance 683, increasing Library Board from seven members to nine, thus allowing Upper Milford and Lower Macungie to each have a voting board member.
- March 1988 Videos added to library collection.
- September 1988 New carpeting and tile laid in main library rooms with Reinsmith bequest funds.
- January 1989 Friends of the Library organized.
- February 1989 President Forrest appoints 25th Anniversary Committee recognizing the opening of the "new" library.



Photo courtesy of Richard F. Gaal

April 1990

Audrey Racines tells the board that an anonymous donor wishes to build an addition to the library as a memorial.

May 1990

Suzanne McCooley, a resident of Macungie, became the 40,000 person to hold a membership card in the Emmaus Public Library.

Definitely in the right place at the right time, Mrs. Suzanne McCooley (right) of Macungie became Emmaus Public Library patron number 40,000. As such, Mrs. Frances Larash (left) placed two books in the library collection in her honor.

THE LIBRARY: POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

WINTER HOURS:

10 a.m.- 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday

10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Friday

10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Saturday

SUMMER HOURS:

10 a.m.- 8 p.m. Monday-Thursday

10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Friday

Closed Saturday

Services are FREE to residents of the East Penn School District (Alburtis, Emmaus, Macungie, Lower Macungie Township and Upper Milford Township). Non-residents may join the library for a \$15 annual fee.

Books, magazines, pamphlets, books on audio cassettes, foreign language recordings, and video cassettes may be borrowed from the Emmaus Public Library. Best sellers and other current books circulate for 14 days. Books on audio cassettes, magazines, and pamphlets circulate for a period of one week. All other books and foreign language recordings are loaned for three weeks. Video cassettes are rented for 50 cents per title for two days.

A photocopier is available for public use (15 cents per page). Bulletin board notices keep the public aware of community and cultural events. Local artists display their work in the library.

Children's services include a story hour for 3- and 4-year-olds. A summer reading club is offered for school-age children.

The Shelter House collection, which is part of the library's reference section, emphasizes local history and genealogy. The art collection is particularly extensive, having been augmented by several grants and bequests.

ACCESS Pennsylvania provides a means for resident patrons to use other libraries in the area.

Individual, personalized service is given in connection with gift books. These are ordered for the library by the librarian in any field of interest one chooses. Since each book contains a bookplate naming the person honored and the donor, if requested, this is a thoughtful, lasting way to acknowledge a special person or a special occasion.



Photo courtesy of Richard F. Gaal

Emmaus Public Library Board Members, 1990, are (front, from left): Audrey Racines, Jean Nagle, Jan McNair, Marjorie Schevets, Holly Hudson; (back from left): Lewis Kratzer, Bill Schaffer, Gates Stern, Marion Forrest, William Bartholomew.

LIBRARIANS WHO HAVE SERVED SINCE 1966

Mrs. Mary Reed, 1966

Mrs. Elaine Timbers, 1967-1987

Mrs. Shelia Hess, 1966-1967

Mrs. Frances Larash, 1987-present

PRESIDENTS OF THE LIBRARY SINCE 1966

Jerry Goldstein, 1966-1967

Warren Hamscher, 1977

Kathryn Stephanoff, 1967-1969

William G. Bartholomew, 1982-1984, 1988

Lewis Kratzer, 1970-1971, 1978-1981

Phyllis Stubbe, 1985-1987

Hamilton Carl, 1972-1976

Marion Forrest, 1989-present

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD SINCE 1966

Bartholomew, William

Hoffert, Clarence

Richards, Charles

Boyce, Joan

Hudson, Holly

Ryder, Patricia

Carl, Hamilton

*Keim, Richard

*Schadler, Joyce

*Eckert, Oliver

Kratzer, Lewis

Schaffer, William

Erb, Ray

Lampi, Virginia

Shevets, Marjorie

Forrest, Marion

*McAndrews, Jane

Stern, Gates

Frantz, Carl

McNair, Jan

Stoltz, Ralph

Goldstein, Jerry

*Nagle, Jean

Stubbe, Phyllis

Hamscher, Warren

Racines, Audrey

*Unser, Thomas

Randall, Pierce

* non-voting representative