FROM GERMANY TO GENOA, THE CONRAD FAMILY

Just before Christmas, 1836, a boat from Germany docked in New York harbor. Immigrants aboard included the Charles Conrad Family. (His father, Jacob, a shoemaker, stayed in Germany as did a sister.) With wife Maria Catherine, sons Jacob (10), Charles (4), Phillip (1) and daughter Mary Magdelena (8), Charles lived in Albany and Montgomery, New York for three years. During this time daughter Elizabeth was born. His sister had lent him $400.00 which he almost lost due to forgery in a bank in Albany. Other than that they had no funds. Assuming they traveled the Erie Canal a boat was boarded to cross Lake Erie to Detroit in 1839. Travelling by foot, he took up 80 acres in Section 23, Genoa Township; W4 N8, recorded June 8, 1836. In their new home his growing sons were called upon to provide labor in clearing land for farming. Son John was born in Michigan in 1842.

For several years son Jacob worked in Genoa Township for $4.00 per month. When Jacob reached 30 years he "...went to California by water." (Around the tip of South America.) For three years he received $3.00 a day sowin' wheat in the San Jose Valley. For a time he also worked in the Red Woods. His German ancestry and its characteristics attributes of frugality and economy, stood him in good stead. He headed back to Michigan in 1855, with enough cash to get himself started. Neighbor Elizabeth Dorr, born in New York, became his bride in 1856. Two sons, Louis and Henry, and three daughters, Caroline, Maria and Augusta were born to them. Louis and Harry married sisters, Lydia and Eda Gangnuss, respectively. (Daughters of Rev. Henry Gangnuss.) Caroline married William Musch, Maria and Augusta married brothers, Adam and Conrad Weber, respectively. One tended to marry those one met in school, church or who were neighbors. Among the charter members of St. George Lutheran Church of Genoa were Jacob and Elizabeth's fathers. They contributed funds to the construction of the second church on the corner of Crooked Lake and Bauer (Harriet and Hubert) Roads. Many of these folks and descendants are buried at the Lutheran cemetery on Herbst Road. Many still live in the area.

Purchasing land by paying overdue tax assessments Jacob soon acquired 400 acres. Included were about 60 acres on the east side of Crooked Lake. His farming consisted of wheat and stock. The arrival of the railroad ensured a convenient and sure means of getting both to market. Brothers Charles and Phillip also purchased land nearby. Charles and Otto Lahner of Bedford bought the Conrad farm on Crooked Lake and Round Lake in 1917, selling lots. They sold to the Burroughs Adding Machine Company, who also bought around the south end, as a place of recreation for their employees and families. In 1981 Oak Pointe Development purchased the property. (Compiled by Marleanna Blair from 1881 Portrait and Biographical Album, various records; Society archives; St. George Cemetery records; obituaries from the Brighton Argus and Early landowners and settlers of Livingston County compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections? 810/229-6400.)

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION
OF THE 13 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Adopted In Congress 4 July, 1776

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed....

"...And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

The signers to this Declaration were well aware of the danger in which they and their families were placed. Over 20% of the signers were imprisoned or lost their entire fortunes dying, destitute, nor were their families spared. Each of us, reaping the benefits of their bravery, has a responsibility to never let their efforts to have been in vain. Editor

Dates to Remember:
- July 2, 3, 16, 23, 30: 7-9 p.m. Lyon School restoration/maintenance continues. You can help. Welcome, 810/229-6400 to confirm.
- July 10, 8 p.m. Livingston County Genealogical Society meets. Public is welcome.
- July 20, 7 p.m. Society board meets. Tour at 8 p.m. Public is welcome at any or all of the above.
- Lyon School, 11405 Buno Rd., Brighton