**MUSEUM ASSOCIATION OF DOUGLAS COUNTY**

**700 S. Main Street**

**Tuscola, IL 61953**

**217-253-2535**

[March,6 2014]

Dear Museum Supporters:

What are memories worth?

Our identities are shaped by the events of our pasts, and those events live forever in our memories. Yet, how much more vividly these memories are brought into focus when we look at a photograph or a keepsake from those times! The Museum Association of Douglas County has been a memory keeper for this area for thirty years, preserving history for the county and its families. The Museum needs your help to continue doing so.

When someone’s home is destroyed in a fire or natural disaster, the items we miss the most are those that tie us to our families, our community, and our past. Without the Museum continuing its mission, it will be as if a natural disaster has wiped out our collective house of those precious memories.

Throughout the Museum’s history, the organization has existed “from paycheck to paycheck”, relying on the generosity of its membership and the City of Tuscola to cover expenses as crises occurred. If the Museum is to survive, we must break out of that pattern and implement a long-term strategic plan to generate consistent sustaining income. The first step in that plan is to hire a paid full-time Museum director.

Although there is currently an active Board of Trustees, the majority of its members’ time is spent assuring the basics are handled just to keep the doors open. A full-time Museum director will take us to the next step. A full-time person on-site will enable the museum to have a regular schedule of open hours, increase accessibility to the collection, and provide a source of information for the public. A director would manage fundraising, coordinate volunteers, plan exhibits and events, connect with our county schools, and seek out grant opportunities to increase our exposure and service to our membership and county residents.

This letter is an effort to gauge community support for this institution that has maintained the identity of Douglas County for the future generations. Our goal is to raise $80,000 to fund a director’s salary and expense for the next two years. By the end of the two year period, the Trustees hope that other funding sources will have been established to retain the position.

Please send no money today, but do review and complete the enclosed pledge form. To kick off this fundraising campaign, two Trustees, Judy Landeck and Bruce Wood, have each pledged $1,000 per year for two years….$76,000 to go! We hope we can count on your support, too!

Board of Trustees -

Janet Butler Fred Heilich Kim Higgins Sherrie Hoel Donna Kidwell Richard Kidwell Judy Landeck Danny Matthews Bruce Wood