



John Sprunger Lived by the Golden Rule

John Sprunger was a cornerstone in the Kidron community and beyond for his business acumen and servant heart. John lived his life guided by the biblical Golden Rule: “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12).

Most days John could be seen on the Kidron Auction grounds tending to the business he and his wife Janet owned and operated since 1973. John developed the auction into a well-known cattle auction in Ohio and beyond, adding hay and straw sales, providing opportunities for farmers to buy and sell their baled crops. Flea market vendors set up on the auction grounds on Thursdays and often Saturdays too, providing a market space in Kidron to sell their wares.

A lifelong resident of Kidron, John was a 1955 graduate of Dalton High School, and subsequently served four years with the U.S. Coast Guard, mostly at Marblehead, Ohio. Beyond the sea, John could also be found in the air as an avid pilot with long-standing involvement with the Wayne County Airport Authority.

John began his career with the Kidron Volunteer Fire Department in 1959 and became Chief in 1960, a position which he held for 45 years. He was instrumental in leading the department’s growth with inspiration and involvement. He retired from the KVF D in 2014 with 55 years of service.



John was involved in many other community activities, including leadership roles on the former Dunlap Memorial Hospital’s Board of Directors and as a director of the board of the former First National Bank of Orrville. In 2004 he was named Kidron’s first Citizen of the Year. For many years, following the tradition of his parents Cy and Helen, John and Janet invited the community to enjoy a substantial Christmas display set up along the circular driveway of their home.

In 1993, John and Janet generously donated land and the former Lehman Auto Service structure along Emerson Road to the Kidron Community Historical Society, where the Heritage Center Museum and Roger N. Geiser Family History Library are located.



John was actively involved in the Salem Mennonite Church, where he sang in the choir and served in various leadership roles.

On January 19, 2026, John passed away. John was born June 5, 1937, to the late Cy and Helen (Stockham) Sprunger. He married Janet Boss in 1958. Together they were involved in many community and church-related activities. They have three children: Jedd (Nanette) Sprunger of Kidron, Janell (Mark) Greenwood of Chicago, IL, and Janeen Sprunger of Sidney; four grandchildren, Grant, Ryan (Colleen), Clay (Staci), and Aubree (Kaleb); four great-grandchildren, Haydn, Landon, Easton, and Ellie; a step-granddaughter, Lauren (Patrick); and step-great-granddaughter, Katherine; siblings: Fritz (Ellen) Sprunger of Orrville and Donna Demian of New York.

A memorial service was held January 23 at Kidron Mennonite Church with Salem Mennonite Church’s pastor Kevin Himes officiating. Burial was at Salem Mennonite Church Cemetery.

Gift Shop Volunteers Needed

Gift Shop volunteers commit to four hours (11:00 am-3:00 pm) on Saturdays from April through October. The goal is to meet and greet visitors, smile and be friendly, and share memories of Kidron life and answer questions to the best of your knowledge when asked.

Teams of two (wives and husbands, sisters, brothers, or brothers and sisters, or friends) make the time together enjoyable, and your shared memories are very interesting to visitors. It is not hard work and requires a minimal time commitment. Max will schedule your assignment in consideration of your availability.

To pursue this opportunity, contact Max at the Heritage Center: 330-857-9111. Leave a message if he is not available, and he will return your call.



Local History Fair

The Wayne County Library will host their second annual Local History Fair on Saturday, March 7, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Library Conference Room at 220 W. Liberty St., Wooster. This event provides local historical societies and individuals with notable personal historical collections an opportunity to host a display table, highlight their organization or collection, and engage with members of the community.



The Kidron Community Historical Society will participate in the Local History Fair, where participants are invited to share information about their mission, hours of operation, upcoming 2026 programs, and any opportunities for community involvement. We hope to see you at this celebration of local history.

2025 Kidron Community Historical Society Donors

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Janet A & Steve Allison-Hager, Dalton | Mike & Donna Gerber, Wooster | Arianna Liggett, Wooster | John Slater, Apple Creek |
| John L Amstutz, Kidron | Rachel F Gerber, Beaverton OR | Donna Linden, Kearney KY | Ralph & Lila Smucker, Smithville |
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| J & Liz Augspurger, Dalton | Rick & Annette Harnish, Flanagan IL | Keith & Carol Martin, Dalton | Keith & Shirley Sommer, Pandora |
| Craig Baumgartner, Versailles MO | David M Hershberger, Spartansburg SC | Lucretia Mattson, Eau Claire WI | Lynn Sommer, New Holland PA |
| Russel & Dorothy Beals Memorial, Wooster | Herb & Debra Himes, Dalton | Glenn & Diane Miller, Apple Creek | Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron |
| Wilbur & Connie Bergen, Porterville CA | Himes, Slater & Hershberger LLC, Kidron | Jim & Doris Miller, Kidron | Fritz & Ellen Sprunger, Kidron |
| David & Penny Bixler, Lakewood | Vern & Shirley Hochstetter, Linville VA | William Mishler, Dalton | John & Janet Sprunger, Kidron |
| Suzanne Boegli, Milan | Clinton & Helen Hofstetter, Apple Creek | Bill & Alfie Moser, Kidron | Virgene Steffen, Dalton |
| Fred & Carol Brubaker, Orrville | Dennis Hofstetter, Kidron | Mike Moser, Canton | Clayton H Steiner, Bakersfield CA |
| Don & Sandy Bunker, Apple Creek | Kerry Hofstetter Hayes, Seattle WA | Randy & Amy Murray, Orrville | Dean & Prudy Steiner, Dalton |
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| Richard Carroll, Elizabethtown PA | Amos Hoover, Ephrata PA | Jim & Ruby Neuenschwander, Dalton | Grayden Tschantz, Louisville |
| Coblentz Bros Inc, Apple Creek | Lowell Hostetler, Bluffton | Ken & Connie Neuenschwander, Kidron | Wayne Co Community Foundation |
| Peter & LeAnna Dunn, Dalton | Charles & Wanda Hostetler, Smithville | Dale & Arlene Nussbaum, Dalton | Venkataraman Fund, Wooster |
| Eastwood Mfg LTD, Orrville | Hummel Group, Orrville | Dee Nussbaum, Kidron | Village Printing, Kidron |
| Rose Emery, Tuscon AZ | K&M Builders, Kidron | David & Eldina Nussbaum, Orrville | Larry & Karen Wald, Dalton |
| Everence, Goshen IN | Kaufman Realty & Auction Kidron | Gloria Nussbaum, Orrville | Wenger Excavating Inc, Dalton |
| Nancy Ernest, Tampa FL | Kidron Auction, Kidron | Ray & Joan Nussbaum, Orrville | Wayne Wengerd, Dalton |
| Farmers National Bank, Kidron | Kidron Electric Art, Kidron | Tom Olson, Plain City | Weyrauch's Pharmacy, Kidron |
| G&G Gerber Farms, Apple Creek | Kidron Electric Chad, Kidron | Rebecca Oyer, Dalton | Harry & Meg Wilkins, Dalton |
| Amos & Erma Geiser, Dalton | Kidron Pizza Company, Fredericksburg | Steve & Colleen Parker, Canton | Roy & Clara Yoder, Kidron |
| Gladys Geiser, Dalton | Kidron Sports Center, Apple Creek | William & Eunice Paul, Charlotte NC | Polly Zimmermann, Chicago IL |
| Karen D Geiser, N Canton | Kidron Town & Country Store, Kidron | Rosa Peter, Kidron | |
| Pearl Geiser, Mt Gilead | Killbuck Savings Bank, Kidron | Barbara Phuyac, Huntsville AL | |
| Ron Geiser, Kidron | James & Damaris Kirchofer, Honolulu HI | R & C Calf Farms LLC, Kidron | |
| Ron Geiser (GBU match), Kidron | Robert & Ellen Krabill, Uniontown OH | Sandra Reinhard, Stevensville MD | |
| Ron & Janice Geiser, Dalton | Laurine Kratzer, Orrville | Kent & Rita Richard, Talmage PA | |
| Tyson S Geiser, Upper Sandusky | Robbin & Valerie Kratzer, Wichita KS | Shirley Ross, Apple Creek | |
| Gerber Feed Service, Dalton | Veryl Kratzer, Dalton | Mary Ann Schantz, Canton | |
| Harley & Fae Gerber, Dalton | L E Sommer Kidron, Kidron | Victor Schantz, Orrville | |
| Joanne Gerber, Dalton | Phyllis A Lehman, Dalton | Schantz Organ Co, Orrville | |
| Gerber Lumber & Hardware, Kidron | Lehman Hardware/HRM Enterprises, Dalton | Kay Schlabach, Sarasota FL | |
| | Ray & Allison Leisy, Wooster | Marilyn Scotti, Parma | |
| | | Carolyn Shoup, Wooster | |

Sonnenberg Village

Upgrades to the Gerber-Nussbaum Barn

The Gerber-Nussbaum Barn addition that will provide facilities for a kitchen and restrooms has progressed significantly.



Looking north, we see the addition located on the southeast corner of the barn.

Looking south inside the new addition, the opening on the left accesses the restrooms, and the door on the right accesses the kitchen.

The inside of the new addition is ready for plumbing, heating, A/C, and electrical work.



2025 KCHS Volunteers

Heritage Center

Ken Amstutz
Clair Bixler
Marianne Cameron
LaVera Geiser
Ron Geiser
Amos Geiser
Erma Geiser
Leora Gerber
Glenn Kaufmann
Gloria Kaufmann
Veryl Kratzer
Ruby Kuhns
Steve Lehman

Elaine Lehman
Ray Leisy
Wayne Liechty
Diane Miller
Glenn Miller
Steve Miller
Daniel Moeller
Mary Lou Moeller
Art Neuenschwander
Clarence Neuenschwander
Esther Neuenschwander
Joan Nussbaum
Vic Schantz

Carolyn Shoup
Lori Showalter
Diane Sommer
Fritz Sprunger
Prudy Steiner
Sherri Steiner
Ann Troyer
Larry Wald
Meg Wilkins
Dick Wolf
Sharon Wolf
Carol Yoder

Sonnenberg Village

Molly Bowman
Julie Kerby
Clifford Lehman
Allyson Leisy
Ray Leisy
Nancy Lilburn
Dan Miller
Walter Mullett
Jim Swartzentruber
Rachel Swartzentruber
Lorie Troyer
Marvin Troyer

Jeff Waybright
Joe Wolf
Wooster Church of the Nazarene

Central Christian Service Day
Bob Troyer, teacher
Lyle Endsley
Stefano McCurdy-Agnero
Quinn Steiner

East Union Mennonite Church
Terry Wenger, leader

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wayne County Public Library's Local History Fair
Saturday, March 7, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Annual Business Meeting and Members Banquet
Tuesday, June 2, 7:00 pm | Sonnenberg Village Gerber-Nussbaum Barn
Volunteers Will Be Honored

Kidron Community Historical Society
P.O. Box 234
Kidron, Ohio 44636

330-857-9111

kidronheritagecenter@gmail.com

www.kidronhistoricalsociety.org

Nonprofit Organization Postage Paid Wooster, Ohio 44691 Permit No. 228

Address Service Requested

WINTER 2026



Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center

13153 Emerson Road • Kidron, Ohio

OPEN APRIL through OCTOBER • SATURDAYS • 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

CLOSED NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, and MARCH

The Heritage Center is closed November through March, but welcomes appointments to visit the museum and Sonnenberg Village.

Call and leave a message at 330-857-9111 for information or to schedule an appointment.

The Kidron Community Historical Society of Kidron, Ohio, founded in 1977, operates under the nonprofit charter granted by the State of Ohio. Your tax deductible gifts will help secure the future of the Historical Society and give you a part in preserving the heritage of this unique community.

Administration

Board President	Art Neuenschwander	Board Member	Sherri Steiner
Board Vice President	Veryl Kratzer	Board Member	Diane Sommer
Board Treasurer.....	John Slater	Heritage Center Director	Max Gerber
Board Secretary	Gloria Kaufmann	Sonnenberg Village Event Manager.....	Lorie Troyer
Board Member	Steven Miller	Sonnenberg Village Project Manager.....	Jim Swartzentruber
		<i>Bit o' Vit</i> Editor.....	Judie Nussbaum

Kidron Community Historical Society Membership

Annual memberships are due in January and expire on December 31. Contact the Heritage Center if uncertain of your membership status.

Name _____

Address _____

Type of Membership _____ New Renewal

Membership Fee \$ _____ General Donation \$ _____

Would you like a receipt? Yes No *Thank you!*

Individual Annual Member \$30

Husband and Wife Annual Member..... \$45

Organization Annual Member..... \$50

Individual Life Member \$300

Heritage Club Member \$1000 or more

Send checks to Kidron Community Historical Society • Box 234 • Kidron, OH 44636