



19th Annual Holiday Tea A Very Vintage Christmas



November 2025
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Mission Statement

The General Lew Wallace Study & Museum is deeply committed to the protection and preservation of Lew Wallace's legacy now and for generations to come.

On December 5, the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum will be celebrating the 19th annual Holiday Tea & Fashion Show. It is a lovely way to welcome the Holiday Season.

This event, *A Very Vintage Christmas*, will offer a twist this year. After long-time participant, Heathcliffs, closed earlier this year, we will be offering unique fashions by local, family-owned store Denhart's Mercantile. We will also be introducing our guests to holiday décor by A Sprig of Lime!

With models showcasing beautiful ensembles, experience the creativity of Denhart's Mercantile as they offer the latest in fashion—clothing for women, men, children,



Tea Goers Enjoy the Smorgasbord.

and grandchildren, jewelry & accessories, shoes, boots, gifts, & home décor! Their curated looks are fresh, on-trend, and beautifully accessorized.

Denhart's showcase will be complemented by a beautifully decorated Elston Homestead. Kellie Maxwell Algate, owner of A Sprig of Lime, together with Susan Rosen, formerly of Milligan's Flowers & Gifts will decorate with a vintage vibe designed to delight and inspire.

A Sprig of Lime, formerly Milligan's flowers & Gifts, is starting a fresh new tradition in Crawfordsville shopping; they offer fresh flowers and gifts for every occasion. The store carries unique lines of holiday

ornaments, special occasion gifts, artwork by local artists, jewelry, and even sweet treats!

To further the Holiday Spirit, the Wabash College T-Tones, under the direction of Juan Hernandez and backed by Cheryl Everett's piano, will be performing both holiday classics and some delightful, unexpected songs.

Finally, there is the food! Extraordinary

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tmeeks@ben-hur.com

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Deb King
dking@ben-hur.com

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study@ben-hur.com



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Notes From The Director



There is an old saying, the days can be long, but the years go quickly. This adage has proven to be true for 2025. While it is a distant memory now, we started the year with a bit of upheaval. For several years staff had noticed that our offices on the second floor of the Carriage House just didn't feel right. In 2022, we received a grant from the Montgomery County Community Foundation and Indiana Landmarks to conduct a structural investigation, and we discovered that all was not right with the old building. At that point we began to develop plans to rehabilitate the structure of the Carriage House and to raise funds to do the work. To do the project, the Community Foundation again helped, as did several private donors. We also used money that had been raised through our fund-raising events.

Over the years, the successes of the TASTE of Montgomery County and the Holiday Tea & Fashion Show generated funds that allowed us to do many projects and public programs. Thanks to the financial support we received over the years, we were able to start the Carriage House rehabilitation project in January of 2025, and it was completed in a

very short (but noisy) three months. By early April we were resuming operations and welcoming visitors from around the country and world. The building not only looks great, but it also feels great! The floors upstairs no longer bounce when we walk on them, the doors all close properly, and desk drawers no longer fall open because of a floor sloping in several directions.

The TASTE this past August was one of the most successful on record and it will allow us to begin planning for future projects and programs. The projects we undertake assure the continued preservation of the Lew Wallace Study & Museum while the programs we offer ensure that this facility will continue to play an important role in the life of our community. This museum has been and will continue to be a touchstone for Montgomery County and Crawfordsville as growth and change occurs.

Music at the TASTE 2025 was provided by three outstanding bands: The Golden Oldies Jazz Band, Midtown Madmen, and 45 RPM. I think it is safe to say that the performers enjoyed their time at the TASTE as much as we enjoyed their music. For all of us a big part of the enjoyment this year came from the delicious food served by our local vendors. This year we were so pleased to welcome Acai Bowls, China Inn, Four

cont. on page 3

Seasons Local Market, Gordo's, Greeks Pizzeria, Jesus Kettle Corn, The Juniper Spoon, Klooz Brewz, Lew Wallace Society, Messer's Bar & Grill, Sabores de Veracruz Bakery, Smokin' Melts & Rollin' Dough, Swick's Kitchen & Emporium, and Wildfire 348! Truly there was something for everyone at the TASTE and we hope you

will continue to thank these food vendors by patronizing their businesses throughout the year.

To everyone who contributed as a sponsor to the TASTE or Holiday Tea, attended, or volunteered over the years—THANK YOU! So much has been accomplished thanks to

your financial support and your gifts of time and talent. We hope that the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum will always be a source of pleasure and pride for you.

Larry Foulke

Holiday Tea Continued...

sweets and savories, tea and coffee served on fine china and the Elston silver make this a unique event in Crawfordsville. In a very real sense this afternoon of hospitality continues traditions started by Maria Elston, mother of Susan

Wallace and Joanna Lane, 190 years ago.

Our thanks to Wabash College for helping us host this event. Proceeds from the event support both the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum and the

Montgomery County Historical Society/Lane Place. We hope that you can join us!



Sweet & Savory Snacks at the Holiday Tea



Tea Goers Enjoy the Company



Elston Homestead Decorated Doorway

Proving the Doubters Wrong

Thomas R. Meeks Jr.
Associate Director

On April 26, 1856, the *Crawfordsville Review* reported on the first meeting of Lew Wallace's new local militia company stating, "The organization of this fine company of infantry is now fully perfected... From the spirit manifested by the members of the company to acquire a thorough knowledge of military tactics, we have no doubt but they will acquit themselves with the highest credit on the occasion of their first dress parade." The company, known as the Crawfordsville Guards, quickly became a spectacle in town. Residents watched with excitement as some sixty men, muskets in hand, marched in formation up and down the streets of downtown.

The mounting political turmoil of the 1850s motivated Wallace to form the company. He watched as divisive national policies tore the country apart. The Kansas-Nebraska Act, for instance, transformed political conflict into bloodshed, sparking the violent border disputes now known as "Bleeding Kansas." By 1856, Wallace was convinced that a

serious conflict was looming. War seemed inevitable. The country was a tinderbox, and he needed to prepare for when a spark lit the fuse.

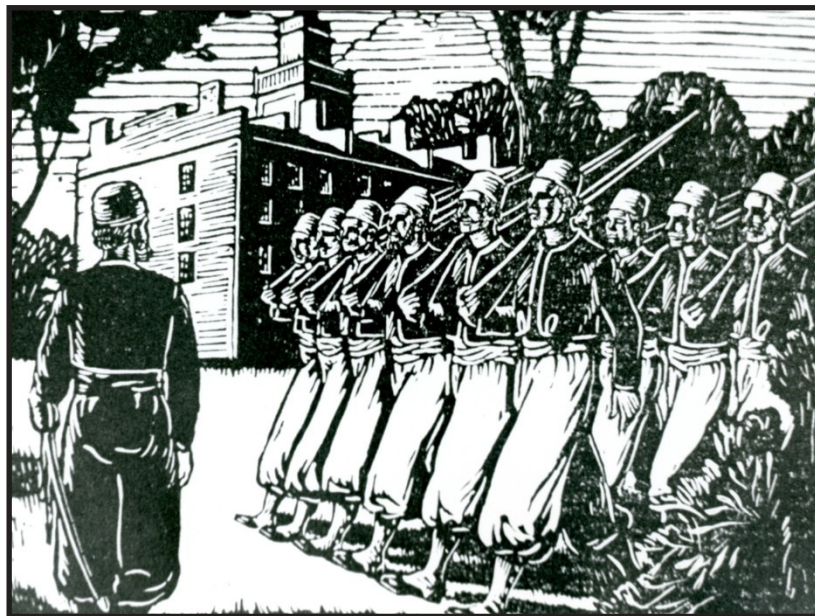
Though many were supporters of the new company, some in the community found them to be a wicked waste of time and money from the very start. In particular, the editor of the *Crawfordsville Weekly Journal* was not impressed. Following the first dress parade of the company, the editor published a sarcastic piece titled "Honor to whom honor is due." It stated, "That splendidly and uniformly uniformed military company which met for drill on Saturday last, and which attracted so much attention for the irregularity of their marching, was not the 'Crawfordsville Guards,' but the 'Bristle Ridge Rangers.'"

The jab aimed to not only criticize their homespun uniforms, but also at their inexperience. As a newly formed unit, some irregularity in their marching was to be expected. The harshest insult, however, came in dubbing them the "Bristle Ridge Rangers"—an inside joke in his paper referring to men who played soldier in peacetime but would be the first to shed their uniforms and retreat to civilian life if a real war ever started.

Despite the early criticism, the Guards pressed forward. They quickly filled their calendar with fundraising events to improve their equipment, maintain an armory, and purchase instruments for a drum and fife corps. Parades, balls, and military encampments became regular fixtures, each designed to raise not only money, but morale. The effort and

dedication led to an impressive level of proficiency, which in turn led to increased popularity among the citizenry.

Shortly after their founding, the Crawfordsville Guards changed their name to the Montgomery Guards. The change was likely an attempt to attract new recruits from the surrounding communities of the county. Regardless



Sketch of Montgomery Guards Drilling at Wabash College.

of the rebrand, now the editor of Crawfordsville's other newspaper, the *Crawfordsville Review*, was also becoming annoyed with the company.

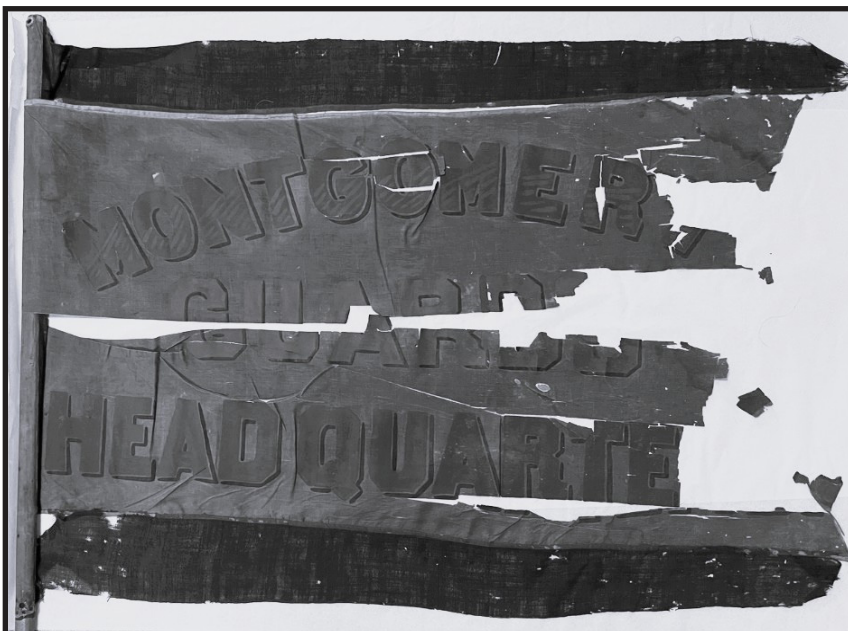
On January 2, 1860, he published an article titled "A Nuisance," stating, "A military company under the command of Captain Wallace, have a room rented in Commercial Block, which they use as an armory and drill room. The military enthusiasm of these sons of Mars out Herods Herod. From early dawn until the late crowing of the cock at midnight, a constant beating of drums is heard, disturbing and annoying the whole neighborhood. Every hand in our office... belongs to this indefatigable corps of rustic veterans... we find it a matter of extreme difficulty in issuing our paper regularly. We sincerely hope that the War Department will draft these chaps into the regular service and send them to Utah."

Six months later, on June 16, the *Crawfordsville Review* described the dummer of the Montgomery Guards as 'the most industrious man in town.' According to the paper, he "commences in the morning at daylight and continues with unremitting exertion until a late hour at night." Local disdain for the unit had clearly reached a fever pitch.

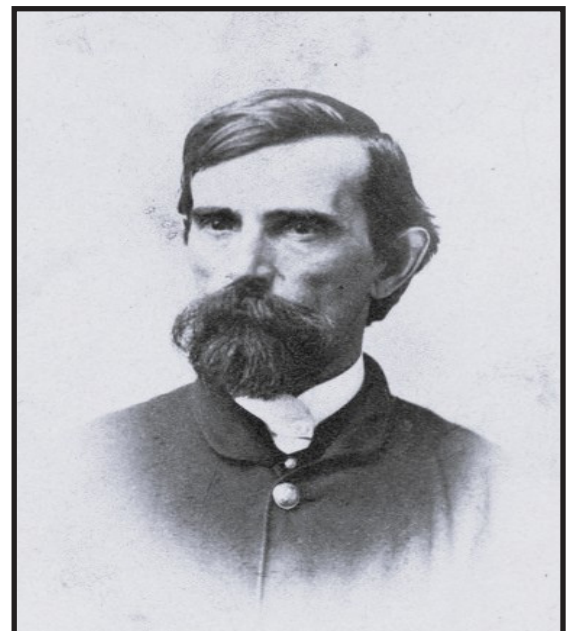
In his autobiography, Lew Wallace recalled some of the doubts cast by Crawfordsville locals regarding the Guards. Lew did his best to keep the enthusiasm alive, stating, "The old fellows don't know what they are talking about. Stick to this, boys; master all its details. A big war is making ready, and when it comes these carpers will be ashamed of themselves and proud of you...you will have command positions to satisfy you for all you are doing now. Commissions will then come hunting you."

When the war finally erupted, Wallace's prediction proved true. Of the sixty-four Montgomery Guards at the outbreak, sixty-two enlisted in the Union cause. By war's end, many had risen through the ranks, earning commissions ranging from Second Lieutenant to Major General. The Guards returned to civilian life as heroes, their early training far from the waste of time and money that some had once believed.

The local newspapers never again disparaged the company. Life after the war was different. What once had seemed distant, almost unreal, was now a sobering memory marked by staggering loss. In hindsight, the community came to understand the value of Wallace's efforts in the years before the conflict. Ever since, the Montgomery Guards have been remembered and celebrated by locals as the true 'flower of Montgomery County gallants.'



Original Montgomery Guards Headquarters Flag.



Lew Wallace circa 1859.

2025 Hoosier Author Fair

Each year, the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum hosts a gathering of regional authors for the Lew Wallace Hoosier Author Fair. The event is free and open to the public. Authors will have their books and related merchandise for sale and are happy to sign copies and chat with readers.

This year's Lew Wallace Hoosier Author Fair will be held in conjunction with Crawfordsville Main Street's Downtown Party Night Saturday, November 29, from 5 - 8 p.m. on the third floor of Fusion54, located at 101 W. Main Street.

2025 Authors (as of Nov. 1) Attending authors represent several genres of writing, including science fiction, fantasy, romance, Indiana history, nonfiction, poetry, mystery, politics, and Christian living.

Laura VanArendonk Baugh is an award-winning writer of fiction, mystery, and non-fiction. Her works have earned numerous accolades including praise from *Publishers Weekly*.

Robert Bowling is a retired police officer and local historian. He is the author of *Wicked Fishers* and a contributing author to *Celebrating Hamilton County, Indiana: 200 Years of Change*. He serves as a historical researcher for the Officer Down Memorial Page and an ambassador to the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund.

Josh A. Brewer teaches creative writing and literature at Purdue University. His work appears in *Harvard Review*, *Southeast Review*, *Bluestem*, *Existere*, and *Poets Against War*. His books include *Writers Resist: Hoosier Writers Unite* (2017) and *When is a Will* (2022). He has taught English at the University of Miami, University of South Carolina, and Tennessee State University.

Agata Izabela Brewer was born and raised in Poland. A teacher, mother, and activist for immigrant rights, she is Professor of English at Wabash College. Her creative writing has appeared in *Guernica* and *Entropy*. *The Hunger Book* is her first book of creative nonfiction set in communist Poland and contemporary Montgomery County, Indiana.

Stephanie A. Cain writes epic & urban fantasy novels. She grew up in Indiana, where much of her urban fantasy is set. She works at a small liberal arts college and dreams of living somewhere without winter.

Christopher Clouser is an accountant by day, and a prolific author by night. He has written eighteen books, novels, and novellas and one play in the fantasy, science-fiction, mystery, and sports history genres while contributing to several compilations, along with multiple articles in national publications.

Ryan L. Cole is a historian and journalist who has written extensively on American history. His work has appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *American Heritage*, *Civil War Journal*, *Indy Star*, among other publications. His newest publication *The Last Adieu: Lafayette's Triumphant Return, the Echoes of the Revolution, and the Gratitude of the Republic* looks at the life of Marquis de Lafayette and his final tour of America in 1824.

Quentin Dodd is the award-winning author of supernatural adventure novels such as *The Blue Bear*, *The Leningen Bookplate*, and other books for adults and young readers. A fan of ghost stories, monster movies and mysterious old buildings, Quentin tries to write the books he always wanted to read but could never find.

Erin Hayden writes fiction with heart, humor, and a hint of advocacy. With mystery-savvy service dogs and inclusive, relatable characters, Erin's stories celebrate everyday courage in the face of life's messier moments.

Juan Manuel Cuevas Herrera was born and raised in the historic Andalusian city of Córdoba. Multifaceted in his own self-discovery as a human being, he has experimented with the photographic arts and a sense of justice. Awarded a decoration for a courageous intervention, he left everything

amid the orange blossoms of the Jewish quarter to travel to the other side of the Atlantic.

Wendy Gorton Hill writes book reviews on her blog at www.ofbooksandboys.blogspot.com. Her first book, *Watching the Wayward: Psalms for Parents of Prodigals*, puts words to the many emotions experienced while watching teen and adult children choose harmful paths.

Katelyn Hook writes clean contemporary romances with heart. She loves stories with redemption, love, and hope. *Button Mashers* is her debut novel.

Todd Hosea is an award-winning author and veteran of the United States Air Force. He served at the headquarters for NORAD, USAF Space Command, and NAS Keflavik, Iceland. Tom Clancy and Michael Crichton were big influences. Combining his military experience with a love of science fiction and technothrillers, Todd has found his niche creating high octane action adventures. His debut novel, *Steal the Reaper*, was recognized in 2024 by the Military Writers Society of America.

Garrett Hutson writes historical fiction featuring realistic LGBT characters. You can usually find him reading about history, and day-dreaming about being there. This is where his stories are born, and he hopes they transport you the way his

imagination transports him.

Krystina K. Leganza has B.S. and Ph.D. degrees in mathematics from Miami University (Ohio) and the University of Notre Dame, respectively. She has taught at the university level in Indiana for more than thirty years. Her childrens books include *M is for Math*.

Kate Nixon, a lifelong Hoosier, has been writing for over a decade. Her latest book, *In the Company of Pets*, features stories from her childhood and her mother's writings. After inheriting a garnet brooch that had been passed down through generations, Kate discovered it was fake. This inspired her to write *The Heirloom Brooch*, discovering a passion as deep as her love of genealogy. This story became the foundation for her *Heirloom Series*, written with book club readers in mind.

James Pauley, Jr. spent a college semester in each Guadalajara, Mexico, and Heidelberg, Germany. The experience piqued his interest and lifelong love of international travel. A flight attendant for forty-four years, he is the award-winning author of *Bumpy Rides and Soft Landings* and the coauthor of *An Unconditional Friendship* with best-selling author Charlene Potterbaum.

Joseph S. Pete is an award-winning journalist and columnist for *The Times of Northwest Indiana* who has written three books about the

Hoosier State. He is an Indiana University graduate, an Iraq War veteran, the *Northwest Indiana Literary Journal* editor-in-chief, a frequent contributor to Lakeshore Public Radio, and an executive board member of the Indiana Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and Chicago Headline Club.

Stevie Rector is a supernatural storyteller with a deep fascination for mythology, emotional transformation, and the eerie tension of the human psyche. She crafts immersive narratives exploring resilience, justice, and the shadowed places where monsters—both real and imagined—lurk. Her debut novel, *Loki's Lost Memory*, conjures a world of forgotten gods and fractured souls, while her forthcoming book, *Anja's Awakening*, sharpens vengeance into poetry. She brings her stories to life through layered dialogue, vivid imagery, and a haunting emotional undercurrent that leaves readers breathless.

Jennifer Huston Schaeffer is an author, editor, and the owner of White Dog Editorial Services. As a youth, she developed a love for reading, writing, and dogs. She is a member of the Independent Authors Network, the Indie Authors Association, the Midwest Independent Publishers Association, the Central Indiana Writers Association, and the Editorial Freelancers Association.

Kelly Shea found a way to break through the pain, frustration, and isolation following a traumatic brain injury through raw and evocative drawings. She begins to express her pain, but it's only after she dares to join a writing workshop that she finds language and her voice again. What begins as halting expression becomes a journey of healing and a powerful, insightful, and even joyful rediscovery of self. *Here, My Voice* is personal lyric poetry born from loss, resilience, and an indomitable spirit. With a voice sharpened by struggle and softened by healing, these poems are both confession and bridge, connecting Shea's inner world to all those who struggle to find the words.

Kelly O'Dell Stanley is a graphic designer and writer. Author of four traditionally published books on faith and creativity, Kelly's latest book is a memoir. *The Artist, Ladoga, Indiana*, is the story of moving into the studio of her dad, watercolorist Rob O'Dell, after he passed, and discovering what art can teach us about a life well lived. Her awards include first place in the Writer's Digest Inspirational Writing contest.

Carrie Steinweg is a freelance writer, food blogger, travel columnist, and author of nine books, including 4 children's books, three local pictorial histories and one on restaurants in the state of Indiana. She lives in Northwest Indiana with her husband, a retired firefighter

and five sons. She also manages a seasonal farmers market.

Sarah Styf is a high school English teacher. When she isn't working or chasing after busy teenagers, she enjoys writing, running, hiking, and camping with her family.

Three Scribes is a mother/daughters writing team consisting of **Sandra Mead Miller**, **Abigail Bender**, and **Victoria Hungria**. Sandra, in addition to writing about dragons, is an avid supporter of Liverpool F.C., a keeper of hens, and a smiter of non-native flora in her two-acre wood. Abigail and Victoria began building the secondary world of Eolemar in elementary school, a hobby they've continued for over two decades. Abigail is also a tea connoisseur, an artist, and an admirer of mycorrhiza. Victoria is a hometown festival-goer and bookshop enthusiast for whom cozy isn't just a favorite genre, it's a lifestyle.

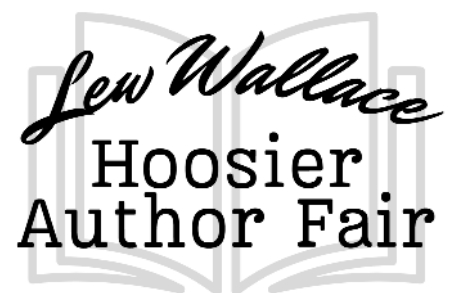
Grace Tilney is a romance author that writes sweet stories centered around sports. Her favorite sport is baseball, and she is a huge St. Louis Cardinals fan! She also loves hockey, gymnastics, and the Indiana Fever Women's Basketball team.

Jamie Ward is the author of *Secret Indiana: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*, *100 Things To Do In Indiana Before You Die* and co-authored *Midwest Road Trip Adventures* and *Midwest State Park Adventures*. She

is a writer, travel and food connoisseur, content creator, and CEO of her blog, Cornfields & High Heels.

Ashley Watson writes about haunted history, commonplace books and spooky folklore on her blog NotebookofGhosts.com. In addition, she maintains a newspaper archive of ghost stories proven to be false (sometimes humorously so) at ItWasNotaGhost.com. Ashley shares her passions of photographing cemeteries, making zines, collecting ghosts and Halloween decorations and reading spooky short stories on her popular Instagram account @notebookofghosts.

Dr. Ronda Wells is an award-winning author who writes "Heartfelt Stories from the Heartland." An avid reader from a young age, her first dream job was a librarian. A *Guideposts* and *Heart of Hospitality* magazine contributor, she publishes devotions for *Crossmap* and *Arise Daily*. Her debut WW2 romance novella, *The Christmas Cherub*, released in July, 2025. A sweet nostalgic tale of lovers separated by war, they're linked by a special cherub which might hold the key for a Christmas miracle.





The Taste of Montgomery County Committee thanks the following sponsors, vendors, and volunteers for a memorable Taste 2025!

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Taste Committee: Jessica Bokhart (Chair), Rusty Carter, Elaine & Rick Chase, Erin Gobel, Heather Shirk, Deb King, Larry Paarlberg, Dale Petrie, & Thomas Meeks.

**Get ready for the 19th Annual
Taste of Montgomery County on August 22, 2026!
www.tasteofmontgomerycounty.com**



General Lew Wallace Study & Museum Contributions

Received July 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025

Every member and donor matters a great deal to us and we appreciate your support. We have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this list. If we have made an error in your listing, please contact us immediately.

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**General Lew Wallace deserves his place in history.
Help us preserve that place.**

Membership to the **Lew Wallace Study Preservation Society** begins with your annual contribution of \$25 or more. Membership offers discounts and complimentary admission and event tickets.

Lieutenant Level—\$25 (Individual)

- Complimentary admission for 1
- Subscription to newsletter

Major General Level—\$50 (Family)

- Complimentary admission for family
- Subscription to newsletter

Governor Level—\$100 (Sustainer)

- Major General-level benefits, plus
- 10% discount in museum shop



Ambassador Level—\$250 (Benefactor)

- Governor-level benefits, plus
- 2 tickets to the annual Taste of Montgomery County

Ben-Hur Level—\$500+ (Patron)

- Ambassador Level benefits, plus
- 1 ticket to the annual Holiday Tea

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Please clip & mail your membership information to LWSPS, PO Box 662, Crawfordsville, IN 47933

☐ Enclosed is my check payable to the Lew Wallace Study Preservation Society

☐ I will pay with credit card online

Please visit www.ben-hur.com/join-support to pay for your membership with a credit card via Paypal

☐ I wish to remain anonymous

☐ I'm declining benefits, making my contribution deductible to the full extent of IRS regulations.



Study Scrapbook



Squirrel Enjoying the Study Grounds



Dr. Tom Slater Presents on June Mathis



Wabash College Students Help Clean Up the Taste



Kerosene Lamp Owned by Lew Wallace



Longtime Volunteers Joyce & Jim



Associate Director Thomas Meeks Presentation



GENERAL LEW WALLACE STUDY & MUSEUM

200 Wallace Avenue / PO Box 662

Crawfordsville, Indiana 47933

Phone: 765-362-5769

Email: study@ben-hur.com

www.ben-hur.com

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2025 Fall & Winter Events Calendar

Sunday, October 26, 3 - 5 pm: **Montgomery County Historical Society**
Trunk or Treat at the Historic Lane Place

Thursday & Friday, November 27 & 28: **Museum Closed for Thanksgiving**

Saturday, November 29, 5 - 8 pm: **Hoosier Author Fair:**
Downtown Party Night at Fusion 54

Friday, December 5, 3 - 6 pm: **Holiday Tea & Fashion Show:**
Tea & Savory Sweets at the Historic Elston Homestead

Friday, December 12: **Last Day of the Season**
Museum reopens February 3rd, 2026