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\$15,000 GRANT AWARDED FOR "Greeks of Berrien County"

(BERRIEN SPRINGS)-----Today, the Michigan Humanities Council (MHC) awarded a \$15,000 grant to the Berrien County Historical Association to produce the exhibit, "Greeks of Berrien County." The grant was awarded as a part of MHC's grant program, "*Strengthening Michigan's Communities Through the Humanities*," which supports community collaboration for public humanities programs. The grant award was presented at the Annunciation and St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church in New Buffalo, as part of an event which included the screening of the film, *Greeks and Americans*, and a discussion program. The Annunciation and St. Paraskevi Church is a co-sponsor of the project.

"This program provides an important resource to learn about the immigration of Greeks to Michigan and the personal stories from the Greek community," stated Jan Fedewa, executive director of the Michigan Humanities Council. "The Michigan Humanities Council is pleased to fund this exhibit and its engaging public programs."

The "Greeks of Berrien County" exhibit will explore the history and contributions of Greek immigrants who settled and vacationed in Berrien County. The exhibit will include photographs and artifacts and be displayed at three places:

- the Orchards Mall in Benton Township from November 20, 2006 - January 6, 2007;
- the 1839 Courthouse Museum in Berrien Springs from January 16 - February 9, 2007; and,
- a permanent display at the Annunciation and St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church in New Buffalo, beginning February 15, 2007.

Additional components of the project include a 20-page publication, humanities scholars presenting public discussions about Greek immigration, radio presentations, oral histories, and Internet postings of photos. A complete event schedule will be made available in the near future and published on the Michigan Humanities Council website, www.michiganhumanities.org.

"By exploring the history of the Greeks of Berrien County, we will gain a better understanding of the struggles that immigrants have experienced, no matter where they have come from," stated Elaine Thomopoulos of the Berrien County Historical Association. "Their history is our history. We are very grateful for the support of the Michigan Humanities Council and our community partners, the Annunciation and St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church and Orchards Mall, as well as the libraries, businesses, organizations, scholars, and hard-working volunteers who are contributing to this important project."

"Grants from the Michigan Humanities Council help Michigan communities study and preserve the state's unique culture and heritage," stated U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow. "I am pleased to be able to support funding for the Council and for these important local community projects."

The Michigan Humanities Council, founded in 1974, is the state's independent, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For additional information on the Michigan Humanities Council, please visit: www.michiganhumanities.org or call 517-372-7770.

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