History Center Executive Director Nathan Nietering moves on to a new adventure

After three years as the first Executive Director at the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, Nathan Nietering is moving on to a new career working for the State of Michigan. The Board of Directors has already begun the search process for the next Executive Director. Read Nathan's thoughts in a brief interview here.

That smile is authentic - I can't thank YOU enough for your interest and support of local history! -Nathan (Photo credit: Bri Luginbill of Bird+Bird Photography)

Sign's Up at the Barrel

In early June, a new interpretive sign was installed at the corner of West Center and Ferry Streets beside the beloved Douglas Root Beer Barrel. This sign describes the history of the Barrel, the process of its restoration, and thanks the over 100 community members and organizations who were "Stave Sponsors" and gave funding to restore this visible piece of highway roadside architecture. Since then, hundreds if not thousands of people have learned the story of its past and how it came to survive to today. Thank you to all the individuals who have helped make a restored Barrel and its signage a reality!

The creation and installation of this sign marks the

B&C Directory

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History Harvest and Oral History Collection
July 21, 9AM-4PM

Stories of Summer will continue this month with a community History Harvest Day at the Old School House, on Saturday, July 21, from 9AM-4PM.

Members of the community are invited to bring their original materials for digitization and/or to sit down for an interview about their memories. This isn't just an invite to History Center members -- we hope to see people who we've never connected with before who have pieces of local history to share. Tell your neighbors and friends, and stop by to see what we've collected!

An advance appointment is needed to schedule an oral history interview. To make your appointment, contact Nathan at info@sdhistoricalociety.org or call 269-857-5751.

The Stories of Summer project launched in June with the first History Harvest day and the recording of new oral histories focused around the decades of the 1950s-60s-70s in Saugatuck-Douglas. Thirteen interviews have now been recorded and another 10+ are in the works. Our goal is to capture a total of 40 new oral histories as part of this project - so we have a ways to go...and we need your help to get there.

Digital scanning of your pieces of history, such as a scrapbooks, photo albums, slides, posters, ephemera, and more continues. Bring them to the Old School House to be scanned or digitally photographed "while you wait" between 9am and 4pm on Saturday, July 21. Or contact the History Center to drop your items off for digitization, and they will be returned to you along with a digital copy.

History Center's final obligation to the Barrel project. As per the transfer agreement signed with the City of the Village of Douglas in 2015, the Barrel is now the City's responsibility. What will it become, other than a stunning if not eye-catching landmark? Follow up with the City to find out what plans they have in store!

If you want to take (or send) home your own Barrel souvenir, we have you covered. Purchase an "I saw the Barrel" postcard at the History Museum or Old School House and send it to a friend!

The new educational sign installed beside the Barrel.

The City of Douglas has been landscaping the Barrel site throughout the spring and summer.

Emerging Museum Professionals Explore Saugatuck-Douglas
The Saugatuck-Douglas History Center recently
We are so pleased that *Stories of Summer* was featured in the June edition of *Grand Rapids Magazine*. Read the article and see the photos at this [link](#).

To learn more about the project and print out a flier about the History Harvest event, [click here](#).

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**Summer Program Lineup!**

Our *Tuesday Talk* presentations begin at 11:00am at the Old School House at 130 Center Street in Douglas. Current SDHC members are admitted for free; non-members are encouraged to make a $5 donation or join as members. Seating is first-come, first-serve, and some programs do fill to capacity.

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While some MEMP gatherings are about business and skill-building, the Saugatuck visit was more about networking in a relaxed, beach-town atmosphere. Their visit began at the Old School House where they toured the exhibits, shipwreck barn and garden, including a lengthy examination of the items in the School House lockers both for authenticity and amusement. After lunch at Wild Dog, the group moved on to visit the Barrel before touring *Cold War | Hot Towns* at the Museum, then hiking out into the 98 degree heat up to the top of Mt. Baldhead and down to the Oval on the other side, where a toe-dip in the lake was the most refreshing thing possible. Subsequent events included a sunset cruise on the *Star of Saugatuck* and a return visit to the Oval on another day.

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*An enthusiastic group of emerging museum professionals in the Back-in-Time Garden. Click for full-size!*

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**What you missed**

July's Monthly Meeting adventure was a field trip to the nearby Fenn Valley Vineyard. No ordinary wine tasting (yes, we did taste a dozen wines), tour guide Aaron Harr shared the history of the vineyard and wine growing in Michigan along with details about
Tuesday, August 14, Annual History Center Picnic. Note the Tuesday date, evening time TBA for our annual membership gathering at the Old School House. Mark your calendar!

Thank You to those folks listed above who have sponsored one of our programs!

Welcome New Members!
We would like to welcome the following new members who have joined the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center since the last newsletter!

- Bill and Kathy Corbett, Lansing, IL
- Jane Esenwein, Marietta, GA and Saugatuck
- Edward Gilpin, Douglas, MI

In the absence of an Executive Director, we are looking for volunteers to help us with various tasks, at least on an interim basis. We are presently looking for assistance with membership management, and for more docents for the Old School House (open Weds-Sat 11am-3pm in 2 hour shifts). Contact board president Steve Hutchins at admin@sdhistoricalsociety.org if you are interested. If you have financial experience, we are looking for someone to assist with financial data entry in our Quickbooks system. Contact treasurer Leslie Thompson at caitsmom90@aol.com if you are interested to help out.
"Keeping an Eye on History"
now open at the Old School House

Late last year, longtime SDHC volunteers and former board members Ken Carls and Jim Schmiechen donated a sizable collection of artwork from their private collection to the History Center, 27 pieces in all. The collection represents a broad cross-section of the Saugatuck-Douglas artistic community, including works by well-known professionals and lesser known "Sunday-afternoon" amateurs alike, which each capture a local scene or setting. The goal of the gift was to preserve these works in the community where they can be studied and shared. The goal of the exhibit is to share them immediately with the public at large and challenge others to make a gift of significant artwork(s) or funds of their own to properly care for the growing SDHC art collection such that it can be maintained long into the future.

The exhibit opened with a special reception and ribbon cutting ceremony on June 23 and will be open during regularly-scheduled Old School House hours through November 11, 2018. To enhance the meaning of the artworks, two video presentations were created and are also shown in the exhibit - a behind the scenes look at the installation of Keeping an Eye on History, and an interview sequence with Ken and Jim about their interest in local art and the meaning of their gift.

Among the pieces, which will include many recognizable scenes of local landmarks and viewsheds, are four works which are on loan from Ken and Jim for this exhibit, including a very recently-restored large Carl Hoerman autumn dune scene. The History Center has set an ambitious goal to raise $30,000 in new gifts to support the maintenance, conservation, and exhibition of the art collection so that it will grow and flourish long into the future. The History Center is also interested to accept the donation of other works of art if they fall within our mission. If our goal for newly-gifted art and restricted art collection funds is met, these four larger works will also be gifted to SDHC. We can do it, with your help for this special project.

Over 500 people have already toured the exhibit in the few weeks it has been open. We invite you to come and bring your friends to the Old School House this summer to explore an artist's perception of our special communities! Open Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-3pm.

Thank you for touring Keeping an Eye on History. The History Center’s growing art collection celebrates the long and rich history of creativity in the community, an ingredient which makes Saugatuck and Douglas someplace truly special.

A Project with a Purpose

Keeping an Eye on History is about more than sharing and appreciating local art. It showcases the relevance of art to community life and stands as part of an investment to ensure the long-term vitality, preservation, and public exhibition of this important and growing part of the History Center collection.

You can keep your eye on history, too

Our challenge: SDHC would like to raise at least $30,000 in 2018 for the conservation, maintenance and exhibition of the Art Collection. Gifts may be made in any amount to support this important initiative. At specific thresholds, Ken and Jim will give additional pieces which are on temporary loan for this exhibit, thereby ensuring that they too become part of the permanent collection.

Your gift today to the SDHC Art Fund will ensure that SDHC will have the resources to preserve and interpret this community’s creative, artistic past far into the future.
Welcome Katelyn and Meghann!

[The History Center is so pleased this year to have the expertise of two young women pursuing their careers in the field of museums. Katelyn Bosch and Meghann Stevens are both recent Master's degree graduates who are working to bolster their resumes and help grow SDHC's capacity this summer. They introduce themselves below and are on the lookout for full-time history careers. Both have already demonstrated their capable skills and are tremendous assets to the History Center. Please welcome them when you see them!]

By Katelyn Bosch
My name is Katelyn Bosch and I just graduated with a Master of Arts in Public History and a Cultural Resource Management Certificate from West Virginia University (WVU). I moved back to Allendale where my family lives and will be getting married in August! I enjoy creative storytelling, dark coffee, and hiking deep into the woods.

For more on my professional background, I was the public relations graduate assistant for the WVU History Department for two years. I have a Bachelor of Arts from Calvin College in strategic communications and history. While at Calvin, I worked with the student newspaper, Chimes, as the Religion Section Editor and the Executive Online Editor. I have also interned with the West Virginia State Museum, Lowell Historical Museum/Fallasburg Village, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, and Baker Publishing Co.

I am passionate about the importance of the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center in facilitating cultural engagement in this community and excited to learn from all the excellent volunteers and members here. During my first few weeks, I have enjoyed learning more about non-profit operations, the exhibit process, and community events sponsored by the SDHC. I look forward to being an active part of SDHC for this season! Thank you!

By Meghann Stevens
Originally, I come from Washington - the state, not the capitol - from a city called Pasco, which is located on the eastern side of the state. The area has an interesting history, mainly centered around the Hanford Nuclear Facility, which was responsible for establishing my own interest in history. Eventually, this interest lead to me going to Washington State University in pursuit of a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology with a focus in Archaeology. I attended Arizona State University, after that, and earned my Master's degree in
Museum Studies. And that lead me here, to the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center!

During my time here, I would like to expand on my experience in museums, with the implementation of exhibits, as well as some projects in administration. Primarily, however, I would love to work with the unique collection that the History Center showcases.

With some hard work (and a little luck), my time here will help me find my way into becoming a museum registrar, or even a collections manager. I have always enjoyed working with artifacts, and as a collections manager, I would be able to care for the objects that make up a museum's collections. And, while that would be my ideal position, I wouldn't be averse to working as a museum educator or exhibit designer either. No matter where I end up, though, I am very excited to be here now and spend some time in this wonderful town.

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By Chris Yoder

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Saugatuck has long been quite a cosmopolitan place with folks interested in learning new things and broadening their horizons. The 10 Sept 1880 issue of The LakeShore Commercial reported that earlier that week:

*The lecture by Motto Oghimi on Japan and the Japanese, was listened to by a small but appreciative audience at the Congregational church last Tuesday evening. Motto Oghimi is a native Jap, and a student of Princeton College, New York.*

We are thankful to Hope College language professor Andy Nakajima for a Feb. 2018 blog post which gives us some details about Oghimi-san. It seems that the Hope College graduating class of 1879 was one-third Japanese!

He writes (quoted with his permission):

*Hope College has a long history with Japan. Hope's religious affiliation, the RCA (Reformed Church in America) was the first Protestant denomination which sent missionaries to Japan. Because of the long-standing relationship, Hope has been blessed with many presences of Japanese students since the 1800's. At one point in the 1800's, Hope had 12 Japanese students. Historically speaking, that...*
means that Hope College had the highest numbers of Japanese students among liberal arts colleges in the States at that time.

Quoting from the booklet Portraits of Early Graduates, Prof. Nakajima provides details about the first two Japanese students, 1879 graduates Motoichiro Oghimi (our Saugatuck speaker) and his cohort Kumaji Kimura.

"Kumaji Kimura was born in 1845 in Kyoto, Japan, and came to the United States to pursue his education after the fall of Tokugawa Shogunate. He arrived in San Francisco in late 1870 and made his way to New York, where he was introduced to Hope's first president, Dr. Philip Phelps, who was on the East Coast to raise funds. Upon learning that Kimura had no sponsors or means of staying in the United States, Phelps offered to take responsibility for him.

"Motoichiro Oghimi, born in Tokyo, Japan, also sought to acquire an education with Kimura, traveling in the same boat as Kimura from Yokohama. Like Kimura, he had no firm plans or funding. Phelps, Kimura, and Oghimi took the train to Albany, and from there, the two Japanese students traveled to Holland. The two Japanese men lived with Phelps and his family in Van Vleck Hall while polishing their English skills. By the fall of that year, their language acquisition was sufficient enough that both were enrolled in the preparatory school and were later promoted to the college.

"The influence of Dr. Phelps and his family went beyond providing a home and securing an education for the students. In a letter to Phelps' daughter some years later, Oghimi wrote, "My sole object of going to America was to study something that would give me distinction and honor in my future career. This worldly ambition made me decidedly disinclined towards religion, but, since I came to Holland, I was struck with the happy state of the Christian homes, something I had never found in Japan. At last, I came to the conclusion that Christianity was what made them so different from others. I began to study the Bible more earnestly."

On June 1, 1872, both Oghimi and Kimura were baptized at Hope Church by the Rev. Abel Scott. The conversion to Christianity and the influence of a Christian education impacted the work of both men. Following their 1879 graduation from Hope (both delivered addresses during the graduation ceremony), they went to New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey and graduated in 1882 (Note- New Brunswick is still an RCA seminary today). Following ordination to the ministry, both returned to Japan to serve the church there, first as missionaries, and later as pastors of the indigenous church.

Kimura served local congregations, including the church in Nagano. He and his wife and brother founded Meiji Women's School, a school for women in Tokyo, with funds raised among Japanese Christians. Kimura also founded Komoro Gijuku School in Nagano. He died in 1927.

Oghimi served as a pastor and teacher, as well as a lecturer at Union Seminary and the principal of Steele Academy in Nagasaki. He taught at the Methodist Protestant Theological Seminary in Nagoya and was the author of the first Greek-Japanese lexicon. He died in December of 1941 at the age of 97."
Local residents who had not benefited from the educational lecture on Japan could gain self-improvement from the same *LakeShore Commercial* issue in which this bit of scientific dietary advice appeared: "Eat oysters in months that boast an R, and drink whiskey in the months that hold a Q."

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*By Jack Sheridan*

Greetings from myself and Chris Yoder, leaders of the History Center Family History Group. Please come to a Family History meeting to see what we are all about and join the group discussion. We share "lessons learned" and a whole lot more about the many tools available for family history research.

Got questions? Questions/comments/advice/needs: Mayflower ancestor, Revolutionary War vet, famous cousins, great grand parents, ... Where did you come from? Thinking about a DNA test? Answering questions is what we are best at ...

Note the Family History Group's upcoming meeting schedule below:

**Thursday July 19 (Just one meeting this month)**
**Thursday August 2**
**Thursday August 16**

These meetings are in the Old School House (use the back door) and begin at 3:30pm. Note that your family history does not have to have any connection to the Saugatuck-Douglas area! If you can't attend a meeting, we can still provide by email or phone assistance. The only requirement to participate in Family History is a current membership in the SDHC. Join the group and get some answers!

Family History questions/comments/advice/needs - contact:
Jack Sheridan: 269 857-7144, jack.sheridan@gmail.com
Chris Yoder: 269 857-4327, cyoder@tds.net

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**Garden Happenings**

*This month we highlight just a few of the photos taken of our wonderful week of Root Camp! We had 34 children this summer - booked fully past capacity - who enjoyed topics such as lighthouses & shipwrecks, science experiments, basket weaving, and a visit from the Sarett Nature Center.*
A barred owl was just one of the live visitors from the Sarett Nature Center.

Lots of colorful excitement on Basket Weaving Day.
We learned about lighthouses and shipwrecks and everyone colored their own lighthouse drawing!

Until next month,

The Landscape and Root Camp Committees

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By Jack Sheridan

This month's question comes from my friend Sylvia who has a cottage in Shorewood. While on my daily bike ride, I often chat with her and her friend Jan who walk between the washout and the Chapel on Lakeshore Drive.

She asked me, just the other day, "What year was the Chapel built? How does it fit in the Shorewood history?"

Just so happens that I did a piece on the subject twelve years ago. For those of you who don't remember the details. Here it is again:

After Wiley Road, heading north on Lakeshore Drive, trees shadow the roadway and the lake is close. Just past the Douglas public beach comes a change.

Now there is a place between the road and the lake. Wooden bridges and walkways lead to cottages set among the trees and dunes. In a minute the road curls around a dune-hill and there is the Lakeshore Chapel on the corner. A sharp right turn heads one back toward town. A left turn enters a narrow and private lane over a rise and into a marvelous glen of cottages, trees and sandy beach. This is Shorewood.

At the end of the 19th century the setting was discovered by pioneer summer residents with the energy and the means to create a haven on Lake Michigan. They sought to create a summer place for their families away from the heat and the urban turmoil of St. Louis and Chicago. One of the group wrote:

"Here is a spot where all neighbors are good neighbors, where you can turn the children loose above the age of five, and with a minimum of supervision down to the age of one, with reasonable assurance that
John Alvord was a Chicago engineer who specialized in planning and designing public improvements. He first found the land and then convinced others to join him in creating the Shorewood Association, a corporation organized under the Michigan Summer Resort Act. There were eight incorporators who bought stock creating the initial capital of $10,000. The land was purchased from Grace Reid in 1901 and deeded to the association in 1902. Alvord surveyed and platted the area, creating the lots, private roads and parks. The association retained title to the land and sold shares of stock to the incorporators and others which allowed them to build cottages on their selected lot. Today there are some 25 cottages on the Association land.

In 1904 the Douglas Lakeshore residents - who had been holding church and Sunday school in their cottages - raised $1600 through donations and built the wonderful Lakeshore Chapel - truly a historic "Little Church in the Woods." The building sits partially in Douglas and partially in Saugatuck.
An interview with outgoing Executive Director
Nathan Nietering

1. What are you most thankful for during your time at SDHC?

It's been a wonderful opportunity to grow both professionally and personally. There are some incredible people in this town with amazing talents, who are eager to share what they know and want to learn more about this area's unique past. Each of these individuals has taught me something along the way. Thank you. The communities' interest in their own history is awesome, and one of the true things that tie everyone here together, whether you've been in town for 5 months or 500 months.

2. How have you grown professionally as the Director of the SDHC?

I've honed my fundraising and development skills from professionals in that field. I've had a chance to give some leadership and flex my historian muscles as an exhibit researcher and creator. I've had a chance to practice the art of diplomacy, because sometimes, we all do need to agree in order to move forward. Most of all, I've had innumerable opportunities to think outside the box, listen to creative, collaborative ideas, and take the organization in new directions, expanding its outreach.

3. What are you most proud of during your time here?

One of the first challenges the Board gave me when I
started here three years ago was "to have the Old School House open to the public more often." Much easier said than done, since the building was empty most of the time beyond the 20 or so hours a year when Tuesday Talks or Monthly Meetings were scheduled. As someone working in the OSH 40 hours each week, the silence was....noticeable.

Through the help of many interested people, the building has since been transformed. It has become a resource to the community, much as the History Center organization has tried harder to be a valuable community asset. Several new exhibits have been installed, helping visitors and tourists alike gain more knowledge and understanding about their surroundings. The growing art collection isn't just rearranged from time to time, but thoughtful, educational exhibits now showcase the art as artifacts portraying days gone by, as an intrinsic part of S-D history. Our cramped basement archive has been re-housed and transformed into a professional Archive and Research Center, where members of the community both near and far can do their own research on local history topics. Most importantly of all, we have proven that the OSH can be used as a totally-flexible space, used one week for a kids camp, the next for an exhibition space, the next for a community meeting, and so on. If you haven't been inside the Old School House recently....you're missing out.

I'm also tremendously pleased and proud of the partnership we have developed with the Kutsche Office of Local History at Grand Valley State University. Through our on-going partnership project "Stories of Summer," we have trained over 20 of our own volunteers in conducting oral histories, have begun to digitize community history ephemera, and are gaining a clearer picture of what life was like in Saugatuck-Douglas in the mid 20th Century. There is still time to get involved in the program if you are interested to contribute!

4. What is your hope for the SDHC going forward?

We could have a wonderful series of the best professional directors in years to come, but that will not substitute for the interest and dedication of our corps of volunteers. SDHC will continue to remain a volunteer-driven organization, and that is a big part of its recipe of success. But that won't thrive without new members, volunteers, and ideas. Nothing here happens by magic. If it's going to happen, someone needs to do it. If you volunteer in some capacity for SDHC now, thank you. Bring a friend the next time you participate in an SDHC activity and be an ambassador to get them involved. Without volunteers....there's not much (of far too much) for a director to do here.

5. What are your next steps?

I'm taking a week off to hang out with my cats and catch up on house projects, then I'm moving on to work for the State Historic Preservation Office of Michigan, in Lansing. I will be heavily involved in a new GIS project to digitally map every historic site and district within the state. I will join the team of reviewers who scrutinize the potential impacts of Federally-funded projects in the state on nearby historic resources. I will also be coordinating updates to the SHPO's websites and social media pages to keep the public better informed about historic preservation activities around the state. In fact, go ahead and "like" the SHPO's Facebook page now to keep up with the latest!

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ABOUT THE SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

The Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society was founded in 1986 by a group of charter members interested in preserving and sharing the unique history of Saugatuck, Douglas and the surrounding area. In 2016, the Society was renamed the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center to celebrate its growth and to recognize the development of the History Museum and Old School House sites. We are a vibrant organization with nearly 700 members residing in nearby communities, around Lake Michigan, and across the country. Members are the lifeblood our largely volunteer organization. To join as a member, select from the
following categories:

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Join as a 2018 member today! Send check payable to the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center to: PO Box 617, Douglas, Michigan 49406. Click HERE for a printable Membership Application.

Send items for the newsletter to: SDHC Attn: Newsletter, PO Box 617, Douglas, MI 49406 or email info@sdhistoricalsociety.org

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER FACILITIES

The Saugatuck-Douglas History Museum is located at 735 Park Street in Saugatuck, in the historic Saugatuck Pump House building. The History Museum is open 7 days a week through Sept. 3 from 12noon-4pm daily, featuring signature exhibit Cold War | Hot Towns. Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted. If you can't travel to Saugatuck or want to revisit this landmark exhibit, view the virtual Cold War | Hot Towns exhibit on the SDHC mobile app!

Click HERE to learn more about the Museum and recent past exhibits.

The Old School House and Francis Surfboat Exhibit is located at 130 Center Street in Douglas. For group tours of the School House, please contact Nathan Nietering at 269-857-5751 or by email at director@sdhistoricalsociety.org. The Old School House exhibits are open for summer hours Wednesdays-Saturdays from 11am-3pm. The adjoining Back-in-Time Garden and Surfboat Exhibit are open as daily. Admission is free but donations gratefully accepted. Visit the newly opened art exhibition Keeping an Eye on History, showcasing 31 unique artworks of local scenes recently given to the History Center by members Kenneth Carls and James Schmiechen.

The History Center Archives office is on the move! In our period of transition, we ask everyone to make a research appointment in advance while we relocate our collections to new storage. To reach the archives, call 269-857-7901 or e-mail the archives directly: archives@sdhistoricalsociety.org

History Center main phone: 269-857-5751
Museum phone: 269-857-7900
Tech Center/Archives direct phone: 269-857-7901
www.MySDHistory.org
Follow us and learn more history on Social Media! Click the logos below.
Again this year, the SDHC newsletter is being underwritten by a generous donation from the late Life Member, Frances Vorys.