



**Marcia Wilson (second from right) has been hired by the Joseph F. Glidden Homestead & Historical Center as its first executive director. At the Annual Meeting Jan. 25, she was welcomed by Jim Morel, past president; Svetlana Henrikson, vice president; and Kathy Siebrasse, president.**

## **Glidden Homestead hires part-time director**

A part-time executive director has been hired by DeKalb's Joseph F. Glidden Homestead and Historical Center.

Marcia Wilson began her job at the historic site the first week of January. Her hiring was formally announced by board president, Kathy Siebrasse, at the Glidden Homestead's annual meeting Jan. 25.

"We're delighted that Marcia has become the first-ever paid executive director at the museum. She brings a wealth of experience and a dedication to the preservation of history that is critical to accomplishing our goals for the Homestead," said Siebrasse.

The not-for-profit organization was established in 1998, to preserve the site where Joseph Glidden invented and manufactured "The Winner" barbed wire, for which he received a patent on Nov. 24, 1874. The house and barn built in the 1860s still stand on their original site at 921 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb (between Copy Service and Burger King).

Wilson most recently served as coordinator of marketing and guest relations for Sycamore's Midwest Museum of Natural History. She also runs a home-based desktop publishing business and is editor of *Corn silk*, the quarterly magazine of the DeKalb County Historical-Genealogical Society.

"I am very pleased to be working with the hard-working Homestead board and look forward to providing extended hours for the public during our open season, May- November," said Wilson.

"The board and I will be working on educational exhibits, programs and operational enhancements, as well as fund-raising and volunteer recruitment to help reach those goals."

Wilson, originally from Leland, is a long-time Sycamore resident. She serves on the board of the North Grove School Association and is a volunteer at the Joiner History Room and Sycamore History Museum.

Siebrasse said Wilson will work with the Glidden board of directors to take the Homestead museum to the next level; while continuing to restore and preserve one of DeKalb's true historic gems.

“Marcia will be able to help us secure grants and other funding vital to continuing our work, as well as focus on expanding our membership base and improving educational displays at the site,” said Siebrasse.

Wilson and the board are already working hard on the Second Annual “Divas Dish Grandma’s Secret Recipes,” a culinary event where “celebrity” women chefs offer samples of long-held family recipes. This year’s Divas Dish is Saturday, April 17, 6-9 p.m., at NIU’s Barsema Alumni & Visitors Center. For ticket information, visit [www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org).

“We have a unique opportunity to develop the property as a center for education and innovation that secures its place in history and also enriches our area as a cultural destination point,” Siebrasse said.

She added that Glidden’s invention of The Winner is “a great American story. His innovation not only affected DeKalb County, but it had far-reaching impact on the development of the American West and ultimately the world beyond. Glidden’s barbed wire is still in use today.”

The Glidden Homestead is conducting an ongoing fund drive to help expand the museum campus on West Lincoln Highway, and to complete renovations of the house and barn.

The Glidden Family has offered the Homestead board an option to purchase property next to the house which includes a building. The goal is to develop that building into the museum’s Welcome Center. Other funds will help restore the historic brick barn where Glidden first manufactured his barbed wire invention. The barn will then become additional museum space for the Homestead.

As a not-for-profit [501(c)3] corporation, the Glidden Homestead is run by a 15-member board, including two Glidden family members. Support for work at the Homestead has come primarily from a membership base, local and regional donations, along with some state and regional grants. The house and barn at the Homestead are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

For more information about the Homestead, visit [www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org) or call (815) 756-7904.