

**THE BEDFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TO PRESENT “THE 1918 INFLUENZA PANDEMIC” AT QUARTERLY MEETING**

Bedford, Pa: January 20, 2018...The Bedford County Historical Society will hold its quarterly meeting on Saturday, January 20, 2018, at 2:00 pm at the Hall at Kinton’s Knob (BCHS, 2nd Floor), 6441 Lincoln Hwy, Bedford. We will also hold a brief membership meeting. The program is free and open to the public.

We are pleased to announce this great educational opportunity!

Westmoreland County Community College, in association with its community partners: Excelsa Health, the Westmoreland County Historical Society, and the Westmoreland County Federated Library System, has designed a program to commemorate the coming 100th Anniversary of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic.

The program title is **THE 1918 INFLUENZA PANDEMIC INVADES OUR AREA**

The 1918 Influenza Pandemic affected the entire world. While the true number of deaths is unknowable, the most commonly accepted estimates range between 20-40 million victims. This presentation will summarize the arrival, spread, and impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in our local area. Beginning with the spring of 1918 there were some local soldiers dying at military bases around the US and by the autumn of 1918 the disease arrived in Pennsylvania with a vengeance. Of the 231,000 residents of Westmoreland County at that time, over 41,000 residents infected with approximately 1,700 estimated deaths. Additionally, there many infections and deaths reported in all surrounding Counties.

The WCCC Team is also seeking any personal stories from local residents regarding the impact of the epidemic on local families. If you remember hearing your relatives talking about the 1918 Influenza and wish to share their story, please contact Dr. Thomas Soltis (WCCC) at 724-925-4239 or via email at soltist@westmoreland.edu. You may also contact WCCC Librarian Raeanna Paterson at 714-925-4102 or at patersonr@westmoreland.edu. The local impact memories will be collected and preserved by the WCCC Team for a future commemorative publication.

About the speaker: Dr. Thomas Soltis has been employed by Westmoreland County Community College since 1990. He teaches courses in Sociology and Anthropology. He won the Westmoreland County Community College “Outstanding Teacher Award” in 2001 and again in 2016. He has served on numerous governance committees at the College, is active in New Student Orientation, and as a student advocate.

Through Westmoreland County Community College, and in cooperation with Community Partners Excelsa Health, the Westmoreland County Historical Society, and the Westmoreland County Federated Library System, Dr. Soltis has designed yearlong series of events commemorating the impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Westmoreland County and surrounding areas.

For more information, contact the BCHS at (814)623-2011 or email bedfordhistory@embarqmail.com.