

# PEOPLE

## Columns By Randy Bishop

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# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## Dreams fulfilled in Calumet County

Someone once said that every child born wants a horse. Jane Niedfeldt agrees with that. "Most kids make a snowman. Not me. I made snow horses. Even with a saddle."

Living in Milwaukee didn't stop her from riding the range in her mind. The dreams of horseback riding didn't stop with the melting of snow. They increased, year after year. At high school age, her friend, Darcy, felt the same, so they shared their dreams together.

"Every chance we could, we rented horses at the riding park in Milwaukee. Darcy got a summer job at Winneconne. She drove lead on the trail with novice riders. I went there a few times. The stable owned a large mare called My Lady Sadarta. Eventually, Darcy bought her and helped me locate a half Arabian bay mare named Brandi. We kept them in Milwaukee and rode them at the park every chance we got. Finally we were fulfilling our dreams."

"When Darcy finished college, she did a statewide job search to do police work. We looked at all the areas possible and picked the Brillion area because of its rural qualities. A quick check and she located a job at the Brillion Police Department and rented a place where she could keep animals. Soon she bought her quarter horse and named him Sadarta Spirit—Spirit for short. Both her horses were unique. Spirit especially seemed to have fun doing its routines at shows."

"I moved in with Darcy in 1988. By that time I was a waitress and then started part-time as an aide at Chilton Village. Then I had another dream. I enjoyed working with people so much that I decided to become a nurse. It took 3 1/2 years to complete my course. I worked at Chilton Village, Wink Mart, Plymouth Hospital, and Calumet Medical Center, where I am now full time."

When asked about all the labor involved, Jane relates, "I got help. Keith Bishop built my first corral for me and did a lot of carpentry work on the box stalls at a barn I rented outside of Chilton. He cares for the animals a lot. When I was going to school and working all those jobs, he did everything I couldn't do. In fact, Keith named Larabee. At first I protested, but I gave in. He got that name from the TV show, 'Get Smart' He was there shortly after Brandi gave birth to Larabee and helped raise him for me. Soon after, I bought Fliesha, an Arabian. I had special training for Fliesha, Larabee, and of course myself. These horses love to dance and show off, but it takes a lot of training."

In June of 1995, Jane bought a hobby farm just off Irish Road, about 3 miles

north of Chilton. Soon it was stocked with cats, dogs, and a goat, all which mix freely in the barn and pasture.

Meanwhile, Darcy was winning ribbons with Spirit. All was going well, better than they hoped for until now. Then Jane and Darcy noticed Lady was different. A test showed she had a brain and spine tumor. But a bigger nightmare was soon to follow. Darcy's recent headaches turned out to be a tumor of the brain and spread to the spine.

Jane relates, "How ironic—both horse and rider have the same horrible disease. Even though there was no connection between the two, Darcy often said, 'Lady and I must have ridden under the same clouds.'"

"Her son, Dalton, was born only a few months before she became ill. They only had 2 years together. Everybody took it hard, very hard. They asked me to raise Spirit after Darcy passed away in 1995. Having Spirit with me has eased the pain. Chuck and Dalton come out and visit me and, of course, they spend time with Spirit and my five horses. Four years have passed. I feel so fortunate to have been a part of somebody's dream. I am Dalton's grandmother and I had special stirrups made for his first ride. Any day now," she smiles.

When Jane talks, the words, 'dreams and goals' come up often. What are those dreams? She tells us.

"More horses, an enclosed arena. Whatever time and money allow. But this year I'll be showing Spirit, along with my horses, just as soon as I get my trailer. Keith is almost done building a new barn." Heavy winds almost destroyed it last year, so it had to be pulled down. Fortunately, no animals were hurt.

"I plan on continuing my education in nursing. That's very important to me. You have to keep advancing to make things happen. It requires a lot of effort on my part."

"When I lived at home, our family was close. Mom and Dad always made sure each vacation allowed for horseback riding for all of us kids. We were in every state, (some I don't remember anymore, I was so young.) I believe I rode a horse in each one of them. My favorite memories are of Yellowstone, Colorado, Wyoming, and Arizona.

She paused to reflect on her lost friend, Darcy. "We made a trip to Mexico after I graduated from nursing school. That was special. This area, Calumet County, is the place I belong. Milwaukee was home, but I have everything I want right here. It's been worth the effort."

Twenty years ago a giggling girl rides a horse made of snow.  
And she dreams...and she dreams...and she dreams.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
*Writer/Photographer*

## Racing has become enjoyable for the entire Emmer family

Your heart is pounding, throbbing in your ears as loud as your roaring engine, your mouth is dry, your eyes strain at the lights. Red-yellow-green. Va-r-o-o-m! In 9 seconds Dale Emmer will be going 149 miles per hour and beat the dragster next to him. So goes the excitement of bracket drag racing!

Again the lights come down - Barb Emmer will be going down the one-fourth mile at 135 mph in 10.8 seconds. Then Clayt will rocket to 152 mph in 9 seconds. Then Nickie hits 116 mph in 11.9 seconds.

It's a thrill! A big thrill, but there is a lot more to it than that. "It's a family thing," Dale Emmer of Malone says. "It's a family of families actually. Almost everyone at Wisconsin International Raceway (WIR) is family to us. Most drivers bring their families and we spend every moment we can from Friday night until Sunday night during the race season."

"I started drag racing in 1967 with my 1965 Chev Impala," Dale said. "My motto became 'be the best you can be' and that soon got me upgrading my vehicles."

In 1984, I built a dragster, and of course, Barb wanted one too, he said. By now, Clayt and Nickie were crawling into these things and in no time it was evident this was a family affair.

Their family room is filled with trophies and wall plaques - all sizes. Some are for Dale's 1986 hot rod championship and Barb's 1984 and 1985 championships.

Clayt was 16 in 1992, and his sister Nickie was 16 in 1994. These two added more trophies, not only for winning, but Clayt was Rookie of the Year and both won trophies for Most Improved Drivers.

"Trophies make us proud," the family agreed. "But it's being there, helping others, our competitors, when they break down. Of course, they help us when we need them."

Each member of the family has almost always been in the top 10 in point standings. That puts them in the honorable position of representing WIR at dragstrips in Norwalk, Ohio and Cordova, Ill. Clayt was runner-up for World Championships, Top Eliminator and Bracket Race in 1995. His winnings there were about \$4,500.

At WIR on Friday night, we have the Beat the Heat (cops are the heat). The program is designed to mix kids with police at the race track when they are encouraged to associate with adults and race cars on the track instead of the streets. The kids won prizes for racing the high-powered squad car. (It's a successful program and more will be brought out about it in a future people article).

"Barb and I don't have to worry where our kids are," Dale said. "The teen years are tough for most parents. Not us. Our kids want to be with us, winning trophies and cash, but mostly winning our admiration and respect."

"We will all be there again this year," the family said.

I took off driving for 2 years and worked at the track and helped to improve the rules and regulations, Dale added.

Dale nods his head toward the family dog, a 10-year-old mixed breed. "We're trying to get Bud into racing with the greyhounds, but so far no such luck." Old Bud lifts up his head, and yawns, lays it back down and listens to more race stories and lots of laughter.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP

## Love of labor is remembered

The new millennium draws near and with it, expectations of new gizmos and gadgets to make life easier. That's a good hope. Not too many years ago, all things were done by hand.

During the 1940s, the family of Adolph Moll moved to Chilton. He became Chilton's street commissioner and was dedicated to our community. He and his son, Elmore, had the garbage route and mail pick-up at the Railroad Depot and the Post Office.

Elmore had a physical problem. Most local people don't really know if it was polio or cerebral palsy. Charles Hein, an old friend of theirs, said, "We never really knew. Elmore had a speech problem and some difficulty with his arm, but that didn't slow him down. They both worked on their city garbage route and alternated on mail pick-up."

Sonny Kasper reflected, "I can see him now. Elmore pushed that big iron wheeled wagon on the depot platform. The Chippewa stopped. He loaded and unloaded huge sacks of mail. This was fast work. He had more than one train to worry about. I recall trains heading toward Milwaukee and later to Green Bay. Those were the days of steam engines and later, diesels."

Those days of steam engines were most exciting. Each passenger train dropped off and picked up local residents. Adolph and Elmore usually took a few minutes to greet old friends. They really enjoyed their work. Sometimes they gave kids ice cream money to sweep cinders off the brick platform. Adolph, on occasion, hired a young school boy to pick mustard. A penny a spear, plus a good tip, and a bowl of ice cream

and cookies. He sure loved kids.

Elmore hired kids to shovel coal for the post office so he could keep up his schedule. I made more money that occasional day than my dad.

Leona Bishop added, "They always inquired on what our boys were doing. Ever after they joined the military and later got married. 'Where are my boys now?' They were concerned, always."

Red Gruett says, "Everybody like them. They were good church members and supporters of St. Martin's Church."

Most everyone marveled at their love of work. Duane Kandler recalls, "Elmore loved trucks. He hauled gravel and stuff in his spare time. I watched many times. He could back off the street into these alleys, inches to spare, really quick, with no problem at all. I saw a lot of others that couldn't."

When asked about Elmore's physical problem, Kandler replied, "I don't think he thought he had one. He could do anything he wanted to do."

That brings a new meaning to the word disability. It wasn't used back then; it wasn't emphasized. Adolph and Elmore were a team. Father and son, surely, but friendly by nature. They outlived the steam engine that they loved. New gadgets and gizmos sort the mail at huge postal centers and the U.S. mail has their own trucking system. There are modern one man garbage trucks that do the work of them and their employee friends. But they will be missed and talked about when the old days are remembered in Chilton.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Correspondent

## Habitat for Humanity volunteers enjoy the friends they make 'on the job'

There is great satisfaction going to work each day to a job you love. Yet, when Lloyd Broker reached the age of 62, he opted for early retirement from Wisconsin Public Service. Three years ago, there was an ad in the St. Martin Lutheran Church bulletin requesting volunteers to work for Habitat for Humanity for one day. Lloyd relates, "Norm Krueger and I worked together that day. We were amazed by what had to be done. We were talking about almost all volunteers completing a project...start to finish." Three years later and Lloyd is still working with these projects.

In last week's Chilton Times-Journal, there was an article on how Habitat for Humanity operates. Briefly, it is a non-denominational Christian operation to provide housing for lower-income people who are retired to work 500 hours on their house and other projects. After property is purchased, a family is selected from that area. Sometimes this takes time to process. Habitat feels that the house should be built for the family, with the family putting in as many of their 500 "sweat equity" hours as possible on their own home. Later, they will help others with their remaining hours. They usually go beyond their 500 hours. Habitat for Humanity is not interested in building houses and then searching for recipients - it is interested in building homes for people.

The organization also considers and does buy housing and relocates it to another area. The cost of moving does not always permit this. It is important to note that this is done in the name of the brotherhood of mankind and is not affiliated or controlled by the government in which the home is built.

Lloyd said, "The second project I worked on, on Cedar street in Appleton, was what we call a blitz. Several volunteers, under the direction of a contractor, completely built a house conventional style in one week. The goal is to have it up, weather proofed, with a roof and locked and keyed doors. The rest of the project goes at a slower pace to accommodate the schedules of the electrician, drywaller, cabinetmaker, detail woodworker, carpet layer and painters.

Lloyd explained, "Some of us work at our chosen profession. Usually not, though. I did all kinds of electric work on these projects that I never did as an employee at WPS. Some volunteers train others in their field, with top quality work being done." A prime example is former president Jimmy Carter who works on Habitat projects all over the United States.

Lloyd explained that safety is emphasized and each worker must feel confident about what he or she is doing. "The result is harmony," he said. "Volunteers get so caught up in the teamwork that they travel at their own expense to be with one another on these projects. Some travel all over the states and a friend from Brillion just got back from overseas. One time we needed funding to start a building. Four local corporations donated \$45,000. We were off to a great start. Other local groups raised money through brat frys and bake sales. Sometimes these amounts are matched by smaller businesses. Then we needed a truck. An Appleton dealer furnished it cost free for one year except for regular maintenance. Tools are furnished from stores in the surrounding area, in and out of Calumet County. It is totally amazing to see the generosity of people once they become aware of a responsibility. They reach out and grab it."

"On a project recently, a roofing contractor was needed. A local contractor was hired to do the job," Lloyd relates. "Most of the workers were retired volunteers that the contractor located. That was a tremendous savings. Things like this make housing affordable. The greatest feeling, though, is when the house is completed. No amount of money can buy that feeling. When I drive by a project that I worked on, I get good feelings. I'm grateful for all my friends from all over, even beyond Calumet County. This gives me the strength to do it again and again. Sometimes a weekend. Sometimes all week long. I'm grateful for my house and the ability to build a house for others. It's contagious."

Lloyd then smiled and said, "By the way, I haven't met Jimmy Carter yet!"

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## John Bosch was independent and deeply concerned about others

To meet John Bosch was to meet the personification of independence. He could leave an indelible impression that could make you envy him. He wore his trademark suit with the left arm neatly tucked and pinned in it's pocket. He tilted his hat aside in a business fashion. He'd pull out a cigarette and in one swift motion, he'd thumb through the book of matches, close before striking, light his cigarette and pocket his matches. When asked why he didn't use a lighter, he'd reply in his loud laugh, "No sir...ee. That would be too easy. I have to stay sharp. That's why I drive a stick shift Plymouth. Nothing automatic for me."

John was raised on a cattle ranch in South Dakota and led the cowboy life until his dad moved to North Dakota to a lucrative wheat farm. A severe drought cost the family everything. John worked for a railroad company in North Dakota and was also a cook in a restaurant in Fargo, when he met his wife-to-be at a dance. Dorothy relates, "We became engaged in 1940, but John realized a war was brewing in Europe. He decided to join the Army, as he was guaranteed a cook position, a job he loved. Right before he was due to leave, a friend asked him to saw railroad ties with this huge circle saw. John never said no to anybody that needed him. It was cold and icy, John slipped, the saw had no guard. He lost his left arm."

Dorothy continues, "John went to school for accounting in Fargo while I was teaching school in Morgen, Minn. The cities are separated by the Red River. We married in 1943. At first, John worked in Kansas, but then moved to St. Nazianz, as an accountant for the Salvatorian Center. At that time, he was also selling insurance on a part-time basis for National Guardian Life (N.G.L.). Frank Nue persuaded John to go fulltime for N.G.L. Frank saw John's potential immediately, especially his concern for his clients.

"John went on to win many awards. How many? I don't recall. He won several trips and vacations - our favorite was 2 weeks in the Bahamas. Another was to Quebec, Canada," she said.

John never let his loss get him down. "He could tie his shoes quickly and had no

problem doing his own necktie. He teased me, saying 'Your knots aren't as nice as mine,'" Dorothy said.

Dorothy tells us what others thought about John. "An artist, Ward Gage, was amazed at John's accuracy with a shotgun. He painted a picture of John shooting pheasants in the plains of South Dakota. Ward said John got birds first shot, and Ward captured this on his canvas in oils."

"Besides the hunting, fishing and card playing, he loved traveling. Our family went on a 5-week trip out West to the Teton Mountain Range in Wyoming, then to Utah and the Grand Canyon in Arizona. We stayed mostly with friends and relatives we hadn't seen for a long time. But it was the mingling with people that was enjoyed the most by our whole family," she said.

"John has a cousin in Milwaukee whose child has a birth defect. They expressed their gratitude to me for what John has done. He showed and helped them with whatever was necessary to get proper treatment at the right place, at the right time," Dorothy said. "But I didn't always know about these nice things he was doing all the time. One man told me that he was grateful because John converted him to Catholicism. John talked about religion very often to many people. He thought that's what should be done."

It's true that John was independent and sociable. And he wanted others to be that way too. That's why he was successful. He was willing to sit down with youth and prepare, not only insurance, but a savings plan. That was new in his day. His concern was proven in his follow-up work and the friendship remained even if a person chose not to follow his guidance. He wanted everyone to be as happy and secure as he was.

In 1968, John Bosch died from a brain aneurism. He was only 53 years old. Dorothy went back to teaching until 1977. She taught third grade at Holy Rosary School in New Holstein.

Dorothy says, "It's a long time since John's been gone. I still miss him." To which many people in many states will add, "So do I."

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## Bob Mand: A man of many hats

Just about the time you think you really know somebody, you take a pen and pad, start talking and realize, WOW! You did all this? Bob Mand's smile got broader than his perpetual smile and his soft voice replied with words similar to the famous quote, "You gotta do what you gotta do."

Born in Chilton in 1923, Mand graduated in 1940 and managed the Shell Gas Station on Madison Street. Doing that and other jobs, he realized management was his forte. But World War II needed the young, the cream of the crop, and 1943 had its grip on him where he served in the 290th Combat Engineers of the Army.

His first combat assignment was in North California where the Japanese were located shortly off the coast. "They actually succeeded in destroying one oil derrick," he said. "This is probably news to some people."

It probably is news because it wasn't taught in school. Bob and his wife, Alice, noted all "old military secrets are now being shown on the History Channel."

But Mand was sent to Europe where the Germans were raging war. There he served in communications and was in charge of bridge building. Mand explains, "The 290th Combat Engineers served the entire 7th Army - so we moved about a lot, 70-80 miles a day, building bridges for access for tank and infantry to get to the front line." He has many stories for close friends about his close calls and even some good times after D-Day.

Back to Chilton in 1946, Bob did other jobs, got married to Thelma in 1948, and completed his University of Wisconsin-Madison business management course. Curtiss Candy Farms required him to move to Illinois, where he did business for seven counties. After 3 years, he moved back to Chilton; purchased Salm's Dairy, located on downtown Main Street, and then operated his home delivery business from Water Street until 1966. "Times changed," he grins. "People didn't need home delivery anymore. The stores took our market away."

He sold insurance until 1976, then his wife passed away. It was a bittersweet year, as he also was voted Man of the Year. Two years later, in 1978, Bob married Alice Kilroy. At this time, Alice had three girls and he had seven boys and five girls. They started their new family with six kids, as the others were off on their own. They now have 23 grandchildren.

But Mand was using his management capabilities in his private life as well. He

was active in Kiwanis from 1955 until he tapered off in just recent years.

Bob Cullen says, "Bob was great to work with on our many projects. He dug right in frying brats, steaks or whatever when we had our functions. We spent many hours playing cards and we shared tender, exciting stories."

Charles Zarnoth relates, "I went to Kiwanis State Bowling Tournaments with Bob for at least 10 years. We had good times. Put quotation marks on 'good times.' Bob has lots to say about lots of things. I especially remember in my 20's 'wait till you're 40'; then it was 'wait till you're 50'. Now I wait. I'm hoping to enjoy myself in later years as he does." Charles and Judy shared many evenings and dinners with Bob and Alice since 1965. Charles continues, "Bob needs to be helping; to be involved with people."

He worked for Job Service in Chilton, then in Manitowoc from 1976 to 1982 until that was discontinued. He then became register of deeds from 1982 to 1988 when he retired.

Through the years, he served as post and county commander of the American Legion, a leader of the Holy Name Society, and the Knights of Columbus at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Chilton. Mike Ariens, of Brillion got the couple involved in the Curisillo Movement. This group helped teach and promote leadership to lay people. He was diocesan director.

He couldn't label what he liked doing the best. He put no group above the other. Being with the Cub Scouts, which he helped restructure, was as important as teaching high school religion or chaperoning the youth center, which he did from 1956 to 1978, mostly Wednesday and Friday evenings.

But the couple concluded with this, "There was a special bonding while Bob was in the 290th Combat Engineers. We never lost touch. We have gone to ten reunions and get a newsletter four times a year. We got closer, there are few veterans left, but the families of us all are in the third generation. Some of the veteran's grandchildren are marrying each other. This group will continue after all the veterans are gone. We really feel blessed for this and everything."

"Wow" again. And may we thank you, Bob Mand, for all you have done with us and for us.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## 'Pure curiosity' is the beginning of all things

Eugene Ninedorf, known by friends as Tony, says it began in Red Arrow Park in Milwaukee. "I was 8 years old when I saw this ancient man carving wood and I wanted lessons. I hounded my mom for a set of wood chisels, which was all I needed. By the time I got them, we moved to Madison. I lent them to a friend for a while, but actually they remained unused by me for 55 years." He paused and laughed, "I even had them with me in the Navy from 1943 to 1946. In Hawaii, I bought a set of X-acto knives and never used them, but the desire never left."

In 1948, Tony and Bernice Schaefer got married and built their first home in Gravesville, which was a project his dad started as a garage. They had five children and now have 12 grandchildren. Tony worked for Emil, his dad, building curved cement block silos for 3 years and then worked for Hedrich-Seehawer Construction Company. "After 28 years, Lunda bought that, so I never lost any work during the construction season," he said.

But Tony's "pure curiosity" led him to other things. "We had four boys and one girl, and soon the whole family became 'rock hounds'." This hobby is really adventurous. John Bosch really got us involved in that," he said. They proudly display an agate stone set in a silver carving that John made. Tony then displays a ring he carved of silver with a black Jade stone he cut to size. He found this Jade stone in Abrams, Wis. A very rare find.

"We bought a school bus and the kids helped us quickly convert it to a camper. John Bosch couldn't go along, but he put us in touch with people in the Dakotas and Montana who knew where the best sites are," he said. Some findings included petrified wood, arrow heads, and tomahawks. "We still can find these Indian relics near Gravesville, but they require a sharp eye. Very hard to spot," he added.

In 1976, the couple built their second home. A bi-level, on-rolling hills, with several acres of trees, on Weeks Road, rural Chilton. At the entrance of the property is a garage where Tony rebuilds vehicles and trailers. There he does his welding and cutting of steel for his heavy, mechanical projects. Set further back, is the house where Tony and Bernice live.

"In 1992, I retired and did part-time maintenance work in Plymouth, and started hand-painting landscapes on old circle saw blades. Bernice retired in 1994 and soon she started painting, too," he said.

The kitchen and dining room are lined with circle saw blades with winter scenes and flowing rivers. "Water is the hardest to paint. It gets the floor wet." Tony laughed and explained a technique that must be used when water is painted so it "fits the picture".

"About 6 years ago, I was at Menards and saw this elderly gentleman, Wally Neubeck, examining some disposable, break-off razor knives. 'I use these for wood carving,' he told me. Wally invited us to the Kettle Carvers Klub in Plymouth for a

Their living room is adorned with wood relief carvings of Abe Lincoln, Indian heads, waterfowl, and wildlife. Also displayed are carvings in the round (3-D) of bears, delicate birds, and turtles. Bernice is not to be out done. She carves figurines, 1920s women's high-laced boots, plant life, and border designs.

Their downstairs workshop includes carvings at various stages of completion. The Ninedorfs explained they do many of them in the rough, then half completed, then finished. Whenever they want, they can choose to start on rough or finish - whatever the mood dictates. Bernice likes to paint or stain hers. One carving looks like a live-painted turtle.

Tony won an honorable mention on one carving of waterfowl and cartails. He would have won a blue ribbon, but the paint concealed the grain of the wood.

Both are carving Moses and the difference of the artist's temperaments is readily apparent. Bernice has a collection of cottonwood bark carvings. These strips of bark have little faces carved and stained on them.

Tony also makes knives from files and surgical scalpels for their more delicate and intricate carvings. That's an art in itself. He uses auto-body putty to make the handles which resemble animal horns or whatever he chooses them to look like.

"Pure curiosity" got Ninedorf involved in leather craft in the 1950s and 1960s with Orin Meyer and 4-H. "My reward for that is Marshall Hephner Jr.'s daughter has a shop in Canada, and it pleased me to know I played a part in helping that interest develop into a career for her," he said.

Tony and Bernice belong to two carving clubs and the National Wood Carver.

"Our club was invited to submit carvings for the Millennium Tree in Washington D.C. Tony carved a 14-inch Santa Claus sitting in the quarter moon crescent. The tree was 7,000 decorations and our club donated 12. It's an honor we're proud of. These carvings then ended up in a museum. We received a thank-you note from Governor Thompson for that," he said.

Tony's love for wood includes a Model T delivery sedan. It's about one-half completed now. The entire body is of oak. Tony has no instructions for it - just an 8x11 magazine picture of an original and a pile of oak boards on the floor. "Pure curiosity" can do what it wants.

After 3 hours of looking at arrow heads, rare stones, rings, paintings, and carvings by Bernice and Tony, and his made-from-scratch Model T sedan body, the big question was put to him, "What's next?" Tony smiles and does not hesitate, "I always wanted to make a hot rod with a 6-inch dropped front axle. The ultimate of hot rod beauty," he said.

He's probably been tossing that idea in his head for 50 years. His "pure curiosity" of what he might do, can do, will do and has done tells us that someday, parked outside of a wood carving show, will be a 1928 Ford hot rod. Maybe it will have a clo-

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RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

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In 1948, Tony and Bernice Schaefer got married and built their first home in Gravesville, which was a project his dad started as a garage. They had five children and now have 12 grandchildren. Tony worked for Emil, his dad, building curved cement block silos for 3 years and then worked for Hedrich-Seehawer Construction Company. "After 28 years, Lunda bought that, so I never lost any work during the construction season," he said.

But Tony's "pure curiosity" led him to other things. "We had four boys and one girl, and soon the whole family became 'rock hounds'." This hobby is really adventurous. John Bosch really got us involved in that," he said. They proudly display an agate stone set in a silver carving that John made. Tony then displays a ring he carved of silver with a black Jade stone he cut to size. He found this Jade stone in Abrams, Wis. A very rare find.

"We bought a school bus and the kids helped us quickly convert it to a camper. John Bosch couldn't go along, but he put us in touch with people in the Dakotas and Montana who knew where the best sites are," he said. Some findings included petrified wood, arrow heads, and tomahawks. "We still can find these Indian relics near Gravesville, but they require a sharp eye. Very hard to spot," he added.

In 1976, the couple built their second home. A bi-level, on rolling hills, with several acres of trees, on Weeks Road, rural Chilton. At the entrance of the property is a garage where Tony rebuilds vehicles and trailers. There he does his welding and cutting of steel for his heavy, mechanical projects. Set further back, is the house where Tony and Bernice live.

"In 1992, I retired and did part-time maintenance work in Plymouth, and started hand-painting landscapes on old circle saw blades. Bernice retired in 1994 and soon she started painting, too," he said.

The kitchen and dining room are lined with circle saw blades with winter scenes and flowing rivers. "Water is the hardest to paint. It gets the floor wet," Tony laughed and explained a technique that must be used when water is painted so it "fits the picture."

"About 6 years ago, I was at Menards and saw this elderly gentleman, Wally Neubeck, examining some disposable, break-off razor knives. 'I use these for wood carving,' he told me. Wally invited us to the Kettle Carvers Klub in Plymouth for a show and demonstration," Tony said. "We've been hooked since. Now my tools, after 55 years, are being used."

Their living room is adorned with wood relief carvings of Abe Lincoln, Indian heads, waterfowl, and wildlife. Also displayed are carvings in the round (3-D) of bears, delicate birds, and turtles. Bernice is not to be out done. She carves figurines, 1920s women's high-laced boots, plant life, and border designs.

Their downstairs workshop includes carvings at various stages of completion. The Ninedorfs explained they do many of them in the rough, then half completed, then finished. Whenever they want, they can choose to start on rough or finish - whatever the mood dictates. Bernice likes to paint or stain hers. One carving looks like a live-painted turtle.

Tony won an honorable mention on one carving of waterfowls and cattails. He would have won a blue ribbon, but the paint concealed the grain of the wood.

Both are carving Moses and the difference of the artists' temperaments is readily apparent. Bernice has a collection of cottonwood bark carvings. These strips of bark have little faces carved and stained on them.

Tony also makes knives from files and surgical scalpels for their more delicate and intricate carvings. That's an art in itself. He uses auto-body putty to make the handles which resemble animal horns or whatever he chooses them to look like.

"Pure curiosity" got Ninedorf involved in leather craft in the 1950s and 1960s with Orin Meyer and 4-H. "My reward for that is Marshall Hephner Jr.'s daughter has a shop in Canada, and it pleased me to know I played a part in helping that interest develop into a career for her," he said.

Tony and Bernice belong to two carving clubs and the National Wood Carver.

"Our club was invited to submit carvings for the Millennium Tree in Washington D.C. Tony carved a 14-inch Santa Claus sitting in the quarter moon crescent. The tree was 7,000 decorations and our club donated 12. It's an honor we're proud of. These carvings then ended up in a museum. We received a thank-you note from Governor Thompson for that," he said.

Tony's love for wood includes a Model T delivery sedan. It's about one-half completed now. The entire body is of oak. Tony has no instructions for it - just an 8x11 magazine picture of an original and a pile of oak boards on the floor. "Pure curiosity" can do what it wants.

After 3 hours of looking at arrow heads, rare stones, rings, paintings, and carvings by Bernice and Tony, and his made-from-scratch Model T sedan body, the big question was put to him. "What's next?" Tony smiles and does not hesitate, "I always wanted to make a hot rod with a 6-inch dropped front axle. The ultimate of hot rod beauty," he said.

He's probably been tossing that idea in his head for 50 years. His "pure curiosity" of what he might do, can do, will do and has done tells us that someday, parked outside of a wood carving show, will be a 1928 Ford hot rod. Maybe it will have a slogan painted on it. "Pure Curiosity"

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## Poets - Their love for words

CTS. APRIL 13, 2000

Long ago, before we had TV, running water, and indoor toilets, I spotted an old man climbing up the river bank at the railroad track bridge near Hickory Hills Road. I called my older sister, Roz, 8 years old, and younger sister, Patsy, 4, to watch with me. We heard stories about hobos, winos, and trolls, but we didn't understand who this could be. Hours later, our dad explained that the man was Fred Goff, who was 75 years old. No need to worry. Yes, we could help him, but listen and look out for trains.

In the late 1940s, there were many trains, often 100 cars at a time, which could make our pennies and nickels thin and wide. The whistles from them could pierce an eardrum before turning into a long soothing wail. Even Fred Goff, who was almost deaf, could hear the trains.

We finally got enough nerve to help Fred while he was at the spring beneath the bridge. Fred was unique in every way. He was very short (even to 4, 6, and 8-year olds) and wore a brown or gray suit with a floppy Depression-style cap. He fit the stereotype image of a hermit. His neck was twisted as if it was broken, causing his jaw to stick out. He never shaved, but he didn't have a full beard. Long stubble, we called it. When we talked, we had to yell into his cupped hand which circled his ear. "I'm almost deaf," he yelled, but his voice was soft as he spoke in short, gasping sentences.

We struggled up the steep, gravel slope, spilling much of the two buckets of water. On top of the bridge was his yoke which fit across his shoulders with a bucket of water hanging from either end. He let us take turns carrying this yoke. We pretended we were oxen and moaned and bellowed all the way to his cabin which was on the Joe Juckem Farm at Peik Road and Highway 57. Inside the cabin, we set the buckets down, barely enough room to walk, just a trail. It was filled with wood and paper to keep his fire burning.

Joe Juckem recalls the times. "It took all his energy just to do the ordinary things, like cooking and chopping wood for fuel," he said. He seldom asked us for anything, but we did offer and gave him food on occasion."

"I'm a poet," he told us. Roz, Pat and I were pleased. We saw pictures of Longfellow and Shakespeare, but, wow, we thought, eating apples and cookies with a poet was special. "I'll read you some." Which he did.

As the years went by, we chopped his wood in the autumn, and hauled water for him, but really not as often as we should have or would have liked to.

Joe Juckem says, "I don't know why, but he didn't like to use well water. But he liked doing things his way. He used to write poems and stories many years ago. He had a typewriter, but everything I saw was handwritten."

The publication, "Tales of Old Chilton", which was dedicated for its 1977 Centennial, contains the poem "The Old Grave." It's on page 14, along with the

"History of the Calumet County Fair", both written by Frederick M. Goff.

### The Old Grave

*'Tis an old, old grave; the snows and rains  
Of a hundred years have left their stains  
on the broken slab, which some kind hand  
Has pieced with an iron bolt and band.  
Long since - for the headstone leans awry,  
Like a wheat - sheaf when the wind sweeps by.*

*'Tis an old, old grave; the once trim mound  
Is level now with the sloping ground;  
From the tangled grass the buttercup  
With a startled, wild fawn air looks up.  
And the coarse - leaved burdocks make their home  
Where the mower's scythe has ceased to come.*

*'Tis an old, old grave - how come I'm here?  
I-I don't know. It is many a year  
Since I went from home, and yet to-day  
It seems I've been but an hour-away  
How odd that I'm standing here alone  
With the Past so blotted out and gone!*

*I know the place - as a boy have played  
With my mates beneath that walnut's shade;  
It was smaller than - no! I declare  
'Twas a chestnut tree that once stood there!  
How all is changed in the spot I knew -  
How thick are the graves that once were few!*

*How the moss has spread, how the wall sags down...  
I saw it built! Why think the town  
Is nearer now than it used to be  
When I was a boy... What's this I see,  
As I scrape the lichen from the stone?  
What name do I read? Good God, my own!!!*

Fred M. Goff died in 1960 at the age of 92.

After reading that, perhaps a person can wonder, will my grave be taken care of when I am gone? A better question I ask is, will I be remembered? Fred and the kids he played with beneath the shade of walnut and chestnut trees, are still remembered by

the words they spoke and the words they wrote.

It's a simple thing, closing the eyes and remembering... carrying a yoke of water, chopping wood, and eating apples and cookies with a poet. Remembering can be done every day, anytime a person wants to.

## People

by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
Writer/Photographer

# Happy Mother's Day, Ma

May 14 is the traditional observance of Mother's Day. A day set aside to celebrate the greatest woman of our life. That woman who gave us birth, nurtured us through the thick and thin of growing up, and with her gentle wings, pushed us from the nest that is perched so high on the branch of the tree of life. Actually, mothers made us think we left the nest on our own. Thus, we proclaimed our freedom. "I flew the coop."

Before we left that proverbial nest (or the coop), we became aware of other mothers, mothers of friends and classmates, and mothers that operated business establishments.

In 1955, there was a cozy little "sweet shop" called "The Melody." It was tucked in the corner of the Ed Markgraf Drug Store. Art and Eunice Nennig leased The Melody, but Eunice ran it. Though she was the mother of eight, she became the proxy mother of almost everyone in Chilton High School and other area schools. Quickly, she became known to us as "Ma." A lot of us never knew her first name and it was getting more common not to call people Mr. and Mrs. anymore.

Ma Nennig had a perpetual smile and was deeply interested in kids. She passed this trait on to her two oldest girls, Mary Ann and Arlene, who also worked the counter. Those were the days of jerking soda from a machine, when the syrup mixed with fizz water. Five-cent Cokes, 7 cents for a flavored Coke, malted milks or shakes with Melody Ice Cream for 20 cents and 35-cent banana splits.

Mary Ann Freund fondly remembers her mother and The Melody. "Ma was glad to have us working there instead of another place," she said. "That way my sister, Arlene, and I could still mix with our friends and do a job at the same time. It was important to her that kids mix together - to have a place to meet - mingle freely and that she would know where we were."

Ma let us get a little rowdy at certain hours. The jukebox played on and on, louder and louder, when adults weren't there. The mid-50's gave birth to rock 'n roll and it was in The Melody where we played the first hits of Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, and the list goes on. Rock 'n roll lives! Ma preferred instrumental music as her favorite tune was The Italian Theme.

One day, the Schmitz Brothers put in a new jukebox and prices had to be increased - 10 cents per song and four songs for a quarter, instead of the 5 cents for a single and

six songs for a quarter. Ma joined our ranks and said, "These kids can't afford that!" Elmer and Ray Schmitz agreed to five songs for a quarter. Wow! Rock 'n' roll will live forever!

The Melody was as immaculate as it was cozy. Ma used to give us soda and jukebox money to clean the areas beyond her reach. Ceilings and mop boards shined like the countertops. She had this likeable quality that made kids want to help her even though she was doing them the favor.

The cozy little Melody was a place for romance. High school sweethearts met there. Double dates started there and left for parts unknown.

Mary Ann says, "I remember lots of my classmates met there, spent a lot of time there. We danced and listened to music. Some of us got married soon after we graduated. Margaret Kopf to Bill Schierl. Tom to Marilyn Schaff. My sister, Arlene to Don Jensen. Wow! It's great to think about!"

One of Ma's other daughters, Barb Wieting recalls those days. "We begged Ma to let us go there. On occasion she did and made us a treat. We were young, but I remember she was so happy there because everybody had a good time."

When asked about Ma's good nature, Barb replied, "She liked being called Ma by other kids." Did she ever get mad? "No, never, but she would scold us. No, she never yelled. I never heard her yell." Neither did the kids, even when they got too rowdy.

Dennis Pritschka had this to say about the 50s. "We lived in good times. We had a great childhood because of places like The Melody. That's where we met to go ice-skating or to go swimming at the dam or raft the river. That's where we would end up when it was over. We didn't have television, so we spent a lot of time there. That goes back a long way - great hamburgers and 35-cent banana splits. Ma... Yeah, I remember Ma. She sure was nice."

The Melody closed in 1957 for expansion in the Markgraf Drug Store. In later years, Ma was head cook at Chilton High School. Barb and Mary Ann said, "She had to be near young people. She needed that."

The second Sunday of May will find us cozy in our nest in the tree of life. Then we can toast our mother, Ma Nennig, and all the other mothers who made life easier, pleasant, and memorable for us.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## Irish Road, busy as a bee

Already in the 1950s, school text books presented us with stories of bees - quilting bees, building bees, and harvest bees, as if it were a thing of the past, a history.

In 1954, on the Irish Road, a threshing bee was in progress. On the dusty, gravel road north of Chilton, lined with magnificent elm trees, wild russet apple trees, and wild berries of every kind, were the farms of the Hephner clan. Brothers, Marshall Sr., Gilbert, Jay, George, and Raymond. Their sons and sons-in-law were also part of the bee - Marshall Jr., Don Bowe, Chee Chee Kramarczyk, and friends with farms - Ed and Myrtle Harlow, John and George Karls, and Dan Skaben.

Eldred Beidenbender and Curly Krueger of Potter setup the threshing machine at Marshall Sr.'s farm. It was a hot, dry August and the amber waves of grain were cut, shucked, and curled in neat rows in the field, leaving room for wagons drawn by a team of draft horses. The teamsters were the sons and daughters of the Hephner brothers. I was there that summer, as one of the six teamsters, and at 12 years old, I felt like a man, knowing this was the end of an era. Almost dusk, and the last wagon was being loaded in the field. Everyone was thirsty and eager to tap the keg of beer. But suddenly something went wrong. A voice yelled out, "fire! fire!"

It was Harvey Hephner, who was inside the mow, leveling straw to the far corners. In his own words, "I looked up, saw a little red ball, then it got bigger and bigger. I jumped to the opening where the blower stack was. How I fit through that opening and got out, a 20-foot drop, I can't really say. As I got out, the inside of the barn was ablaze." Harvey adds, "What a close call."

Bobby Hephner adds to the moment, "George Karls' wagon was pulled by a high-spirited team of sorrels. Fortunately, his wagon was empty when the team reared and bucked. George grabbed the reins and raced the team down the Irish Road to E and back again. The team just kept going north toward home. Wow! Nobody got hurt. Within seconds, Eldred and Curly yanked the 'separator' away from the inferno."

I raced into the house. "Fire, fire!" Hazel scolded me. "That's not funny, Randy." Then she heard the commotion and called the fire department.

Bobby recalls Norb Sturm, chief of the Chilton Fire Department, as well as the Hilbert and Potter fire departments being there. In those days, the firemen were usually too late to save everything but they tried.

The threshing bee continued at Marshall Jr.'s farm, then proceeded to the Karls Brothers, and ended at Dan Skaben's. As soon as the threshing bee was over, the building bee began.

Gib Hephner's son-in-law, Chee Chee Kramarczyk, recalls, "A crew of us went to

Menasha everyday and removed an old barn and hauled it to Marsh's on hay wagons and trucks. Whoever could help, did. Some neighbors came very often." Trucks were donated by Don Schaefer and Larry Zitzelsberger.

Harvey and Russell, sons of Jay, said, "We don't think Marshall had to buy any new wood. That was a big barn in Menasha."

While one crew tore down, another started to build, being led by Wilmer Paul of Potter. Bobby Hephner explains, "When the bee at Menasha tore down the barn, they marked the timber and planks so it could be assembled the same way. Just like a puzzle. This way, Wilmer could keep the volunteers busy."

Busy it was. Like a beehive! Some volunteers worked everyday. Only a few were paid, as this was their field of work. The Hephner cousins remarked, "If this would happen again, it makes you wonder if everyone would help out like they did back then."

The bee always ended with a party. In this case, it was a barn dance. The general public was invited and the ticket profits were given to the owner of the barn. One of the Hephner cousins said that "Marshall and Hazel were so appreciative of the fire department that they gave it to them."

Berdella McGrath has these comments about her parents. "They appreciated what was done for them. They helped others whenever they could, too." Hazel was active with the Christian Mothers at St. Augustine's in Chilton, where they prepared meals for funerals and were responsible for holding yearly rummage sales, which Hazel coordinated.

Art Pagel recently commented on the Hephners. "I believe they would give you the shirt off of their back." Art still keeps in touch with them and enjoys the memories of the barn dance and other things done with the relatives.

"Those were the good days, even during tragedy. But what I remember the best was the food. Couldn't those women cook?" Bobby said, patting his belly.

I agreed with that. Bobby dug out photos of the wives of the Hephner brothers. There were the women that made the bees what they should be. A pleasant memory. A memory of work, laughter, and the spirit of getting things done. The spirit of progress. The irony to me is this - progress has no more bees, not even modern bees. However, during the recent storm, many people did help their neighbors and friends, but still not on the scale of a "bee".

And the history book closes...

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Correspondent

## Zarnoth Brush - A family affair

When you ask a young kid what he wants to be when he grows up, most have the pat answer - fireman, doctor, farmer, president. Charles Zarnoth didn't need to be asked. His friends remember him bringing little strands of metal to school and saying "This is from a brush of a street cleaner. My dad makes brushes in his garage. When I am old enough, that's what I'm gonna do. And I'm gonna be president of Zarnoth Brush Company." And president he is, but it wasn't given to him.

Clarence started the business in his garage in 1949. Charlie says, "As a young kid, I helped him and that's what I wanted to do. Dad added onto the garage and business kept growing. I graduated from St. Norbert College in De Pere in 1960 - then I was on fulltime."

In the late 60s, major expansion took place. Mike Thurwachter became the first full-time employee and Ginny Schneider became the first secretary that was not a family member. Charlie married Judy in 1963 and she immediately became involved in the business.

When Clarence retired at the age of 69 in 1974, Charlie became president. "Dad stopped in with the mail everyday. He never once told me what to do. I often asked for his advice and got it, but never did he try to hold the reins. I really appreciated that. Then Dad got into local politics. He was town chairman for 10 years for the Town of Charlestown. He passed away in 1985. He had a great retirement. We did a lot of hunting and fishing. He spent a lot of time doing that and other things with our children."

Almost immediately, Zarnoth got involved in city projects. He speaks fondly of the Kiwanis Club and its team efforts. "What impresses me was a Christmas gift giving for needy children. I saw their sincerity and wanted to be part of that. The Kiwanis kept growing and improving. At first it was only businessmen, but now others can join. It's great to be part of that for 36 years." Last week, the *Chilton Times-Journal* had an article honoring Charlie for a special award he received from the Kiwanis Club.

Charlie and Judy have five children. Alan is vice-president of the company and Kathy is personnel manager. "When friends asked Paul, 'Are you gonna be president of Zarnoth Brush Company when you get big?', Paul would say, 'No. Alan's gonna be'. Paul is a college psychology teacher in New York. Our daughter Chris is a kindergarten teacher in Green Bay and Eric is a fine arts painter in Minneapolis. He's waiting to 'get discovered'." Charlie added with a chuckle.

But the family affair and Kiwanis is not all the Zarnoths do. "We got our habit of going to flea markets and auctions from my parents. We like antiques and other col-

lectibles. It's fun and relaxing," he said.

They also enjoy birdwatching. They have gone on cross country trips with their friends, Jerry and Sharon Woelfel. In search of the 'rare ones', they have gone to the Florida Everglades, to Texas, Arizona, and Colorado. "Judy and I also went to the Caribbean Seas. We've spotted over 500 species of birds. We occasionally go to the zoo and aviaries, but with a strong sense of nature, we prefer their natural habitat," he said.

Between 1987 and 1994, the last two major constructions took place at the brush company. Growth was at a pleasant rate. The company now employs four full-time people on the floor, four in sales, 20 or more students on a part-time basis and some employees from the New Hope Center.

"Our products, brooms and parts for street sweepers, are sold worldwide, but we basically supply four distributors. These people have commented about our local employees. They are impressed by our work ethic when they visit our site. It shows. We have a very low turnover rate. We have harmony. We feel so fortunate. We are blessed," he said.

Call it luck, call it blessed, call it fortunate. There is a thing called karma. What goes around, comes around. It's more than 60 hours a week that makes business grow. It's the rapport of the people inside a cold steel building that creates the atmosphere of warmth and loyalty. That's why Jerry Schwobe, shop foreman, has remained working there since high school for 25 years. Jerry has this to say, "This company really works with its people. We have students that start at 16 years old. They return during summer break while attending college or vocational school. High school kids are let off for school activities and return for a couple more hours. I don't know of any other company that flexible. This isn't always easy, but we think it's worth it. The good ones keep coming back. That's important to a company that keeps growing."

When Charlie talks about the company, his friends notice he seldom says, "I". It's always, "we." They notice his employees are relationships and not cold production statistics.

"Business is like a tree," Charlie says. "To stay healthy, the tree has to grow. It takes time. This is the way we did it."

Charlie and Judy aren't specific about retirement, but one can visualize them stopping in, just like Clarence did years ago and giving up the reins of control, but still close by if ever needed.

# People

by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
*Writer/Photographer*

## The times definitely have changed

I was doing research at the library a while back and found something interesting. In the 1945 microfilm of the Chilton-Times Journal, I saw a picture of the "Little Admiral", Beverly Jaeger, then 7 years old. The Little Admiral was an award given to children who have contributed to the war effort.

As you know, the United States was involved in the war Dec. 7, 1941 with the attack of Pearl Harbor. But England was at war against Hitler in Europe for sometime already. In 1943, a future president of the U.S., John Kennedy was injured and his P.T. boat was destroyed. Bob Hope was visiting troops, and every movie star and singer was touring in behalf of U.S. Savings Bonds. They toured America and Europe.

The war was driving every country to near bankruptcy. Unusual things took place during World War II. Women went to work in factories that were transformed into military production centers. Women built buildings and the famous song, "Rosie the Riveter", was a hit. Everyone got involved.

Beverly Jaeger, who is now married to Chip (Christian) Glasow, says she doesn't remember the picture or the award 'Little Admiral', but she remembers the war effort.

"We collected newspaper, lots of them, and took them to St. Augustine Church in Chilton," she said. Dad brought paper home from Appleton. I remember all us kids being involved in that."

Chip remembers, "Collecting milkweed pods in pastures and along railroad tracks. We got paid for them too. The pods were used in manufacturing life preservers and parachutes. We also collected rubber, tires, tin cans, and discarded household items to be reclaimed. (The word recycling did not come into usage until 1960). All us kids in Hilbert did this and took the items to the schools."

In 1946 the war was over. Won by every man, woman, and child. Then things changed. More wars, but no one at home helped. War was more controlled by the likes of Wall Street.

Then the president in 1960 said, "Ask not what the country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

We already proved what we can do. Then the country provided for us for quite

some time. But the next war, Vietnam, even had us against our own soldiers going there. Bob Hope and the stars did what they could do. They toured again.

John F Kennedy was gone. Too soon. During times of peace, in his home country. "...What you can do for your country." The words still echo aloud, don't they?

Berdella Hephner McGrath remembers the war effort, the collecting of milkweeds, newspapers, old rags, and good used clothes for refugees.

"I remember that, but mostly I remember the savings bonds," McGrath said. "My brothers and I took a quarter a week to school. When we had enough for a bond, the teachers at school bought the bond for us. About 5 years ago, I talked to the kids that rode the school bus I drove; they thought that was a great idea. Actually these kids are willing to do that again."

"My granddaughter (Berdella Ruh) and I tried to develop this into a program of 'bonds for education,' she said. I talked with Mr. Garfield who was receptive to our idea, but nothing further developed. Berdella is now a senior at UW-Whitewater. She has some grants and scholarships, but she's under a heavy enough burden without working parttime."

"So my idea of savings bonds for education, starting while in grade school, would be an advantage to every family, even those that didn't go to college. They would have 12 years of bonds for whatever their choice after graduation. Like I said before, these kids are eager, they say, 'Let's do it. Now's the time. I'm ready,'" McGrath said.

The greatest way to help your country is to help yourself. Leave the guidance of education to the government but have financial control at home. The irony of the situation is posed in the form of a question. Should we ask our government to help us start an educational savings bond program?

"We helped our country in the past, now we would like to help ourselves," McGrath said.

There is no bandwagon to hop on. The bandwagon has to be built! The program is at stage one. Do you want to help?

It could be a nice ride.

# People

by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
*Writer/Photographer*

## There is long history behind 'Biggest Little Fair in Wisconsin'

*(A tribute to the Calumet County Agricultural (Fair) Association)...*

When we think of the Calumet County Fair, memories come flooding back. We recall Ferris wheels, tilt-a-whirls, pony rides, and cotton candy, caramel apples and homemade apple pie. Or race cars, daredevils, and brats and beer. Something for young and old.

The first Calumet County Fair was in 1856, the same year that the *Chilton Times-Journal* began publishing. The Times always backed and promoted the fair.

During the first years the fair was held at Stockbridge, Gravesville, once each at New Holstein and Brothertown, and in 1891, it moved permanently to the Calumet County Fairgrounds.

According to the book "The Calumet County Fair," by Russell Gasch, the goals of the fair association, set up in 1891 were: "the education of agriculture, mechanical and household arts, to further enhance the needed educational programs for the benefit of the people of Calumet County, and to conduct such exhibitions, fairs, and events consistent with the educational interests and needs of people in Calumet County and the members of this Association."

And may we add, entertainment for all. The main goal was "for all people...to get together." These goals are still followed today.

With education as its primary goal, exhibits were abundant and displayed the inventions of the day. Different breeds of cattle were shown along with swine, fowl, and other animals. Most booths were open not by individuals, but by companies, corporations, and cattle breeders. Competition was fierce and the public saw things it never would have seen if not for the fair.

But it had its problems, too. The fair was getting expensive and time consuming. The discussion of where it was held was controlled by the party with the money. Then it was dropped for several years.

The *Chilton Times-Journal* urged it on. It caught on again. A one-mile race track was built. Sulky Races were popular and huge crowds brought the racing purse to \$3,000 in 1893. That was an all-time high. Times were good again!

To make things attractive, a steam stern paddle-wheel boat gave rides to the fair from the State Street mill, which is now the dam site. Rides were only 10 cents, but this novelty only lasted a few years. With the passing of time the fair kept improving, even though it was a constant financial effort.

executive board. They currently are: President Paul Juckem, 1st Vice President Jeff Wunrow, 2nd Vice-President Deb Stehane, Treasurer Sharon Ott, and Secretary, which is myself. Each year, 7 members are up for election."

Harder explained some of their functions. "Last week we judged the school projects. This week we will be judging all 4-H non-perishable items. During the fair, on Friday, we will judge beef, hog, and sheep. On Saturday, the dairy cattle and other animals. We also judge open-class projects, such as culinary arts on Saturday. Sunday is antiques, which are 50 years or more in age."

Harder and the board have a strategy to get the youth to participate in their Sunday market auction.

"We leave it up to the kids to hustle the buyer. We make the auction available to them, we don't push or advertise it. They do a real good job of bringing interested buyers here. They always get good prices, usually higher than the stock market, and sometimes higher than the champions."

When the fair is over, is it really over? Not according to Harder.

"In October we turn in our tabulated sheets of entries (a big thick ream) to the state. These monies (entry fees) are divided into 72 state fairs. Last year's was \$570,000. We get back 50 to 70 percent of that. We used to get back 90 percent, but that changed when the dog tracks shut down. In January we attend the Annual Fair Convention for three days. While we're there, we watch auditions of bands and entertainment acts for next year's fair. If we want, we can book them there. Otherwise, our promoter who is from La Crosse, keeps us informed on who is who and when they're available. It was in May when we put our bid in on STYX and July 16th was the day of our decision. By the way, STYX is the hottest touring band this year according to USA. But Vic Ferrari has been the fair's biggest money maker for the last 5 years, which means that's who the people want to see."

Harder explained the frustrations that are behind the scenes. Changes at the last minute, postponing local schedules so the bands can be set up for the concert and then be gone by Friday morning, usually the first day of the fair. And then hoping all goes well with the weather.

"This is our biggest star attraction ever," Harder said. The public is excited. We get calls from central Wisconsin for reservations, which we are holding. We had good acts in the past that got famous later on, like John Barry. This year we couldn't even touch

homemade apple pie. Or race cars, daredevils, and brats and beer. Something for young and old.

The first Calumet County Fair was in 1856, the same year that the *Chilton Times-Journal* began publishing. The Times always backed and promoted the fair.

During the first years the fair was held at Stockbridge, Gravesville, once each at New Holstein and Brodertown, and in 1891, it moved permanently to the Calumet County Fairgrounds.

According to the book "The Calumet County Fair," by Russell Gasch, the goals of the fair association, set up in 1891 were: "the education of agriculture, mechanical and household arts, to further enhance the needed educational programs for the benefit of the people of Calumet County, and to conduct such exhibitions, fairs, and events consistent with the educational interests and needs of people in Calumet County and the members of this Association."

And may we add, entertainment for all. The main goal was "for all people...to get together." These goals are still followed today.

With education as its primary goal, exhibits were abundant and displayed the inventions of the day. Different breeds of cattle were shown along with swine, fowl, and other animals. Most booths were open not by individuals, but by companies, corporations, and cattle breeders. Competition was fierce and the public saw things it never would have seen if not for the fair.

But it had its problems, too. The fair was getting expensive and time consuming. The discussion of where it was held was controlled by the party with the money. Then it was dropped for several years.

The *Chilton Times-Journal* urged it on. It caught on again. A one-mile race track was built. Sulky Races were popular and huge crowds brought the racing purse to \$3,000 in 1893. That was an all-time high. Times were good again!

To make things attractive, a steam stern paddle-wheel boat gave rides to the fair from the State Street mill, which is now the dam site. Rides were only 10 cents, but this novelty only lasted a few years. With the passing of time the fair kept improving, even though it was a constant financial effort.

In 1906 an admission price at the gate was started. It was necessary and is still held down to a minimum so large families can afford.

The biggest change in the fair system came in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Gone was the competition of the bigger companies, seed growers, breeders, and merchants. It evolved into a local ensemble of youth projects and local businesses. It now includes 4-H with its market and championship judging. There are crafts, clothes, fruits and vegetables, flowers, canned and baked goods, school projects and other categories.

When Herb Harder is asked "What's it like to be involved with the fair?" he grins, then sighs, and replies, "It's an all-year project, and we're busy almost everyday. I've been involved all my life. My dad (Herb Sr.) was secretary for 50 years and was treasurer before that. My mother took dad's place for a few years. I was, of course, always near and helped them."

Secretary Harder supplied some information about "how it works."

"We are called the Calumet County Agriculture Association. We have 350 stockholders, each with a right to vote at our annual December meeting. The board has 21 members who serve for three years. These 21 members vote for five persons to the

Harder explained some of their functions. "Last week we judged the school projects. This week we will be judging all 4-H non-perishable items. During the fair, on Friday, we will judge beef, hog, and sheep. On Saturday, the dairy cattle and other animals. We also judge open-class projects, such as culinary arts on Saturday. Sunday is antiques, which are 50 years or more in age."

Harder and the board have a strategy to get the youth to participate in their Sunday market auction.

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"This is our biggest star attraction ever," Harder said. The public is excited. We get calls from central Wisconsin for reservations, which we are holding. We had good acts in the past that got famous later on, like John Barry. This year we couldn't even touch country music. We're excited about who we have."

Some of the other functions the fair board has in order to raise money are the premium coupon books and rental of buildings for storage during the winter months.

"The rental money covers about one-third of our profits," Harder said.

As we walk about the fairgrounds it's apparent it was rejuvenated.

"We got hit by hail, too," Harder said. We had a new roof on one building 10 days before the storm, but that is now redone. Almost all of our buildings are repaired."

As you walk among the crowd, (yes, already a crowd) at the fairgrounds this week before the fair, you can witness a radiance of joy on their faces and hear the excitement of the young as they anticipate blue ribbons, or maybe even a red or white one. And then you look at the faces of the board members and other volunteers, and you see contentment and pride. They know they are doing the best that they can, and a good job at that, at making the Calumet County Fair the "Biggest Little Fair in Wisconsin."

The *Chilton Times-Journal* has always been behind the fair and proud of it. We salute the Calumet County Agriculture Association for their fruitful efforts for producing and improving our "Biggest Little Fair in Wisconsin"!!

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## The Smiths: Parents in a village

The African proverb reads: "It takes a village to raise a child." It echoes with truth when citizens of Chilton reminisce about their childhood during the 1950's. The names that keep coming up are Chuck and Lil Smith.

Chuck and Lil owned and operated Smith's Super Services on 430 Main Street, and Chuck was a new and used car dealer. His spotless showroom usually displayed a Dodge, but he also sold Plymouths.

Chuck was known to 'check the town' with a demonstrator, a Dodge convertible, loaded down with kids of all ages. They had one daughter Joyce, who was living in Michigan at that time, so the Smiths kept themselves surrounded by neighborhood kids.

At the age of 12 or so, we often found ourselves washing and waxing cars. It was no soft job then because Chuck was quite fussy. Actually, he was a teacher and a father in many respects. He had his ways and passed them down to us. We had to charcoal dry the car, no drip dry in those days. We then wrung the chassis out in a wringer and dried the car streak free. We painted the tires so they looked like new. We pumped gas, washed windshields, and checked the air in tires. Everything but a kiss. We got paid very well and were treated to rides to sporting events or to the root beer stand.

Kurt Hofmeister remembers Chuck when he was young. "We used to play softball in the backlot. Chuck liked to pitch. We played a lot. But Chuck had a firm side, too. One time he caught me putting slugs in his soda machine. He scolded me. I was afraid to go back for a couple of weeks." Kurt laughed about that. "I don't think he made any money on that pop machine."

Another trick we played was to pop the cap off the soda bottle while it was in the machine and drink it out with a straw. Chuck caught us doing that. He scolded us for stealing, but said the dumb thing about it was that we should have drank from the end of the bottles so that honest people would've had to buy the empties. We had to pay him back, but he offered us a chance to earn money and self-respect.

Chuck was often asked why he 'put up with those kids'. His reply was, "Kids will be kids."

One sub-zero December morning in 1953, Chuck had some young friends—Shorty (John) and Dennis Fritschka, and Obe (Earl) Fluhr—cleaning the basement area of his garage. He turned off all the power to prevent a fire because he needed to use a flammable chemical solution to clean the greasy floor. Dennis recalls, "I was at the top of the stairs when I heard a loud explosion and saw a great ball of fire. It singed my hair. All of a sudden, Chuck came running up the stairs, he was on fire and yelling, 'Help me!' He was running between the cars when Obe caught him and knocked him down and tore his clothes off."

Lil was in the house and called the fire department but only some contents of the cement building were burned. Chuck was treated at the Humke Office, above the

Thiel Drug Store, and then was taken home. There was no hospital or ambulance until 1957. Chuck looked like a 'mummy', having severely burned his face, hands and arms.

"He was burned all over and he was laid up a few months as I recall" said Fluhr. "But when he was back at work, he was his usual self. Never complaining and always good natured. You know Chuck—a joke a minute."

As the kids reached working age, he hired them full time.

"Chuck was patient," Fluhr said. "He taught me everything I know about cars. We were trusted when he knew we could do the job. What impressed us was the finicky way we had to do things. We taped covers on the fenders so the cars wouldn't get scratched. We placed floor mats on newly painted floors. No carpets in those days. When a car was brought in for major work, like an overhaul or a 4-wheel brake change, that car left almost completely detailed, looking as good as any car for sale."

Smith's Super Services was the hang-out of all hang-outs. As the boys in the village reached driving age, Chuck let us work on our own cars on occasion. He got a kick out of taking a back seat ride while we 'checked the town'. It was a reversal from what we were used to doing.

One teen-age boy learned that Chuck was not a softie. He was caught squealing tires with one of Chuck's loaners. "You'll never drive one of my cars again," Smith told him. That boy learned the hard way.

Time flies by so quickly. The boys in the village became men. The father of the village got older and wiser. Yes, in 1984 there were many reunions. Old times were discussed over a game of pool. Chuck was still Chuck, a joke a minute. Lil passed away in November of 1984. Obe recalls her as, "The greatest lady I ever knew." We all agree on that.

Chuck moved to Michigan to be near his daughter Joyce, in 1985. He visited Chilton many times before his death shortly thereafter.

Bob Mand has pleasant memories of Chuck. "I worked for Chuck as I finished high school, mostly washing cars," Mand said. "When things slowed down a bit, we'd play football on Lehner Street. He and Lil were great to work for. Little did I realize that in later years we'd be friends and serve in the Kiwanis together. They both loved kids a lot."

Vita Cullen also has fond memories of Chuck. "He was full of humor, full of life and energy, but still he was 'laid back'. That rubbed off. He put me at ease. I never heard him complain about anything. I knew him from our restaurant days in the 1960's till the Hotel days in '85. He was one that could admit his mistakes, too. That is rare. But I remember his cheerfulness and he was never negative."

Never negative. So true. A man that saw good and took pleasure in everything he did. It rubbed off. A part of him and the spirit of Chuck and Lil are in the hearts of the children of the village to this very day.

# People

by  
BILL BRAKSICK  
Editor

## Guests at hotel in Pipe checked out, but never left

Every haunted house has its cynics, and the bartender at Pete's Fisherman's Inn, in Brothertown, is just that. She was asked about the Club Harbor, in Pipe, and the current owner's assertion that the building is haunted. She's heard the stories that owner Chris Bray has told about the several ghosts that haunt the building, and she's obviously not buying it.

"The former owner stopped by here awhile back and said the only thing they ever experienced was when his wife saw a figure run toward a window and jump out," she says. "Something about a fire that happened there." So it seems that even the naysayers will allow for the presence of a ghost or two. The skepticism is only over the number of spirits that dwell in the building.

Club Harbor was built in 1846 as a stagecoach hotel, and weary passengers would stop in to spend the evening imbibing spirits of a different sort. Named Fuhrmann's Hotel at the time, the bar stood along the south wall of the first floor, and in the center of the room was a staircase that led upstairs to a large ballroom. Also on the second floor were four hotel rooms, and ten more rooms were on the third floor.

Bray, a Dotyville native, purchased the building last February, but has been living there since August of 1999. He talks quickly and often, and his enthusiasm is infectious. A more pragmatic man would never consider undertaking such an enormous project. He is a romantic, that much is clear.

In February he began the process of gutting the entire building, but he also finds time to tend to the smaller details, like repairing the old Smith & Barnes player piano that he reacquired for the building after it was moved out many years ago. As he pumps away at the foot pedals, the keys begin to play a classical piece.

"I listen to this music and imagine some surly old sailor sitting at the bar, and a woman with a parasol trying to be as prim and proper as can be," he said. "The old, familiar musty smell of this house kind of got to me."

Bray said that when he first looked at the place the power was shut off, but he noticed that three of the eight switches behind the bar were turned on. He is an electrician by trade, so he knows about electrical switches. He turned all of them off, but when he returned days later for a second look he found the same three switched to the on position. Once again he turned them off, and once again they were back on when he returned a few days later. After he moved in and had the power turned back on, he never found them to be messed with again.

Except for last New Year's Eve, Bray had made an early night of it, and the next morning he took his usual walk to Pipe Express for breakfast. When he got back he discovered that all of the light switches in the house were turned on.

"Somebody wanted to party," he said. "Some people have stayed here that don't really recall what the checkout time is."

Bray said that he did not become familiar with his house guests until he began to tear into the walls six months after moving in. After spending an afternoon tearing out

within the walls of the room. A cold rush would sweep past, his hair would stand on end and he'd get the 'heebie-jeebies'. I finally said, 'What? What do you want?'. The more I crabbed about it, the worse it got," he said. "Obviously, somebody's not happy with my being here."

Bray has since chosen one of the other rooms to sleep in. He says that room is also haunted, and a local person once told him of seeing the shades in that room open one day and closed the next when no one was living there. He has felt sensations in the room as if something was right beside him, but it was not a frightening experience like in the other room. He speculates that this might be the spirit of a prostitute who was murdered in the building during the time it was a brothel in 1925 through 1927.

"Whoever's in there is kind of friendly," he said.

He has also heard stories of former residents seeing a young dark-haired girl with pigtails running through the hallways slamming doors. Bray describes her as "a mischievous little thing," and said a friend of his once saw her and asked who the girl was. "She came with the place," he responded.

Legend has it that a family staying at the hotel all drowned many years ago when their boat capsized on Lake Winnebago. Bray believes the family extended their stay indefinitely.

On another occasion a friend picked up the phone and was greeted by someone named Mary. There was no further response, and when the friend asked Bray who Mary was, he pointed out that the phone was not connected. Mary was the name of the person who owned the brothel.

Bray also has several pictures of the interior of the house that contain light circular orbs, another supposed indication of a ghostly presence. In yet another picture, taken of the third floor window, Bray has been able to pick out 11 different faces in the window panes, including the face of the mischievous little girl.

Charred boards on the third floor near the chimney provide concrete evidence of the fire that happened around 1918. The chimney is next to the stairway, and anyone on the third floor when it started would have been hard pressed to escape by the stairs, which may explain the previous owner's sighting of a figure jumping out the window.

Another person told Bray about the time when Al Capone was nearly gunned down in the building. After hearing the details, he removed the plywood that had been nailed over the original door, and found 11 bullet holes near the door handle.

Bray now thinks that it took awhile for the ghosts to come around to him when he first moved in.

"I think they were still a little shy," he said. "They didn't know who I was, why I was here, or what I was going to do. I thought, Aw, man, these guys don't like me."

He has since learned the importance of patience.

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Bray said that he did not become familiar with his house guests until he began to tear into the walls six months after moving in. After spending an afternoon tearing out plaster and boards on the third floor ("That's where most of the activity is," he says), he went downstairs to clean up. That's when he heard a hard pounding on the ceiling above him. The next day it happened again.

"I said, 'Relax. I'm not tearing it down, I'm fixing it up, okay?' Then it went away. They're definitely protective of the place," he said. "They're actually playful, and kind of fun," he added. "Except for one who's a little iffy."

That one, Bray believes, is the spirit of a large oriental man that once served as either a cook or groundskeeper at the hotel during the gangster era. As Bray explains this, he finds a picture that was taken of one of the rooms. The bottom of the picture is black, as if a thumb was over the lens. But there is no clear cutoff point to it, and the blackness looks more like a fog. Bray's research into the paranormal has told him that spirits sometimes manifest themselves in the form of a mist, either white or black.

In the center of the picture is a medicine cabinet and he says to look into the upper half of cabinet mirror. Nothing is there at first, but after a few seconds a figure begins to emerge. Before long, the large, round face of an oriental man with a Fu Manchu stands out very clearly.

It was after Bray discovered the face in the mirror that he heard the story about an Oriental worker at the hotel who had been shot and killed there during the gangster days.

"He's the one that was basically causing the trouble," Bray said.

The trouble was that the spirit would not let Bray sleep in the room he had picked

murdered in the building during the time it was a brothel in 1925 through 1927.

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He has also heard stories of former residents seeing a young dark-haired girl with pigtails running through the hallways slamming doors. Bray describes her as "a mischievous little thing," and said a friend of his once saw her and asked who the girl was.

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"I think they were still a little shy," he said. "They didn't know who I was, why I was here, or what I was going to do. I thought, Aw, man, these guys don't like me."

He has since learned the importance of patience.

"It's like deer hunting," he said. "You have to sit still and be like that for a long time before you hear something."

He's also learned to abide by some rules that he set for himself and others.

"One, don't make fun of the ghosts," he said. "Two, you definitely don't snap at them. That's not the way to handle it. And three, keep people out of here who don't appreciate them."

"When I antagonized them, the less they would let me sleep," Bray said. "I heard noises and sensed movement and finally said, 'Knock it off. I've got to get up for work tomorrow'. It's almost like sending kids to bed when they're up too late."

Bray's plans for the place are extensive and will take time. Besides restoring the downstairs dining room and bar, he wants to put the central staircase back in, restore the ballroom to its original splendor, and make a bed and breakfast out of the third floor rooms.

"Dreams don't cost anything," he said. "It's putting them into wood and plaster that will cost the bucks."

He clearly does not want to hide the fact that the house is haunted from his future guests.

"The ghosts just keep going about their normal, daily routines," he said. "Maybe they see the place as it was then."

Bray believes the ghosts may even appreciate the old place being restored and active again.

"I think it will be kind of fun," he said. "But if anybody comes here and wants to make fun of the ghosts, they're on their own."

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## The difference between then and now

Casual conversation often drifts into topics like the Internet, computers, cell phones, electronic dictionaries, and electronic this and that. Over coffee we talk about the difficulties of learning to use those gizmos, and the ease with which young children learn them. Then the big question is asked, "Would you want to be born into this high tech generation, or would you want to do it all over again?" That question has been asked since the wheel was invented.

I say, "No," to high tech generation. I would rather do it over again the way it was. I'm afraid of the future, or of high technology. To me it lacks personality. Sure, we can do 10 days of work in 40 hours, but 40 hours of stress without personality doesn't appeal to me, nor to most of my coffee drinking friends.

Where is the action—the reaction or the interaction—in the business world as compared to, say 1950?

Let's visit downtown Chilton area 1959, known as Smoky Valley, as Bill Minahan coined it, or The Loop, as Hot Dog Waiters of the El Toro Bar called it. It was always busy at the train depot. People lined up waiting for the Chippy or Hiawatha. An old gentleman with a cane, dressed daily in his Sunday best, greeted everyone. Hank Roach pulled out his pocket watch which was held by a long chain, "Two more minutes folks." He chatted with us kids about being engineers, conductors, or railroad section laborers. Old Hank often accompanied us into the depot where Ed Kranz, or a guy named Spike, was typing or telegraphing a message. "Sure you can try it." We tried the dot-dash-dot and learned to send an SOS. We tried the rat-a-tat rat-a-tat of an old Underwood typewriter. "Maybe you kids want to do this someday," said Kranz.

That was Action and Interaction. That was the way it was in 1950. That is the way people were back then.

The old trains vanished like steam in the air and were replaced by the diesel. Often, we watched as they unhitched at the Chilton Canning Company. By the middle of June the aroma of cooked peas filled the air. The ting-a-ling of empty cans, gliding and wobbling down the twisting and turning chutes and conveyors, was heard throughout the day and night. At the entrance of the cannery, on Main Street, Bill Bechlem weighted and tallied

trucks, which then needed side racks. Poof—another job eliminated.

The drivers and reapers loved it when Hazel Hephner would prepare a feast at noon or late evening. Most other farmer's wives did it too, because that is the way people were back then.

Back at the cannery, Don Bonk, Blackie (Harold) Buhl, and Leo Katheiser mingled with the crews and visitors. They shared their news about the quality of the crop, as well as their fears of the weather. An atmosphere of friendship and cooperation was always visible.

Next to the factory were barracks and a dining hall for migrant workers. In the early years, these laborers were mostly from Jamaica. By the early 1960's, the migrant workers were exclusively Mexican. Their labor contract was negotiated with Cornelie Elies of San Antonio, Texas. Elies, known as Corny, and his wife, Maria, were easy to get along with. John Keuler reminisced about Corny, Maria, and their boys, Tony and Michael.

"I was a police officer at that time. I made my usual stops at the cannery and got to meet them and the crew. The workers didn't speak English, but that posed no problems. I never had any trouble with them, anyway. Jeanne and I went to several parties and gatherings at the Elies' trailer by the cannery. On their birthdays, the boys would be blindfolded and break the Pinata. Corny and Maria invited us to Mexico in 1968 for a weeks vacation. I had to call back and extend my vacation. We stayed 3 weeks," Keuler laughed. "They were great friends."

"I met the Elies family through my ex-wife, Mary Lynn, and our other friends, Norb and Gertie Loose, in the 60's," said former Chilton resident, Bob Bishop. "We had the Mexican style parties too, with Pinata and all. Sometimes we went to the County Park or High Cliff. Years later, in 1975, while we were living in Eau Claire, Corny invited us to Mexico for a week. We gladly accepted and enjoyed their hospitality. They were religious and lived by their principles. Everybody liked them. I keep in touch every year with cards and letters."

That's the way people were then. No, actually, that's the way people were in Calumet County. It was at this time that the civil rights movement was getting its second wind. It was a time of riots in other parts of the country, but not here. The social climate of this area never was filled with prejudice.

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Let's visit downtown Chilton area 1950, known as Smoky Valley, as Bill Minahan coined it, or The Loop, as Hot Dog Walkers of the El Toro Bar called it. It was always busy at the train depot. People lined up waiting for the Chippy or Hinawatha. An old gentleman with a cane, dressed daily in his Sunday best, greeted everyone. Hank Roach pulled out his pocket watch which was held by a long chain, "Two more minutes folks." He chatted with us kids about being engineers, conductors, or railroad section laborers. Old Hank often accompanied us into the depot where Ed Kranz, or a guy named Spike, was typing or telegraphing a message. "Sure you can try it." We tried the dot-dash-dot and learned to send an SOS. We tried the rat-a-tat rat-a-tat of an old Underwood typewriter. "Maybe you kids want to do this someday," said Kranz.

That was Action and Interaction. That was the way it was in 1950. That is the way people were back then.

The old trains vanished like steam in the air and were replaced by the diesel. Often, we watched as they unhitched at the Chilton Canning Company. By the middle of June the aroma of cooked peas filled the air. The ting-a-ling of empty cans, gliding and wobbling down the twisting and turning chutes and conveyors, was heard throughout the day and night. At the entrance of the cannery, on Main Street, Bill Bechlem weighted and tallied the truckloads of peas. These flatbed trucks, owned by Don Schaefer, backed in and dumped the freshly cut vines, which were then hand fed onto conveyors. We always turned down offers to pitch vines, but we really got along with the workers.

Bechlem said, "Sure you can look around, be careful, and you can take a couple of dented cans home." We walked in and saw mostly 16 year old high school kids that worked 8 to 16 hours a day. Donny Bowe showed us how the cookers operated. In the warehouse, Henry Rollman was breaking open new boxes and stapling the flaps. "Give her a try." We did a few and Henry said, "This is nice part-time, seasonal work. Maybe I'll see you here in a couple of years." Two of my brothers, Bob and Marv, did work there.

We asked Don Schaefer if we could ride in his truck in the field. "Sure," he said. Bill Minahan said, "Ride with me." Bill, the 'mayor of Smoky Valley', worked part-time as a truck driver for the cannery. In the field, we would try building bigger loads, but that was a tough job, and was soon eliminated by new reapers that cut peas side by side along the flatbed

tracks, which then needed side racks. Poof—another job eliminated.

The drivers and reapers loved it when Hazel Hepfner would prepare a feast at noon or late evening. Most other farmer's wives did it too, because that is the way people were back then.

Back at the cannery, Don Bonk, Blackie (Harold) Buhl, and Leo Kothaiser mingled with the crews and visitors. They shared their news about the quality of the crop, as well as their fears of the weather. An atmosphere of friendship and cooperation was always visible.

Next to the factory were barracks and a dining hall for migrant workers. In the early years, these laborers were mostly from Jamaica. By the early 1960's, the migrant workers were exclusively Mexican. Their labor contract was negotiated with Cornelie Elies of San Antonio, Texas. Elies, known as Corny, and his wife, Maria, were easy to get along with. John Keuler reminisced about Corny, Maria, and their boys, Tony and Michael.

"I was a police officer at that time. I made my usual stops at the cannery and got to meet them and the crew. The workers didn't speak English, but that posed no problems. I never had any trouble with them, anyway. Jeanne and I went to several parties and gatherings at the Elies' trailer by the cannery. On their birthdays, the boys would be blindfolded and break the Pinata. Corny and Maria invited us to Mexico in 1968 for a weeks vacation. I had to call back and extend my vacation. We stayed 3 weeks." Keuler laughed. "They were great friends."

"I met the Elies family through my ex-wife, Mary Lynn, and our other friends, Nurb and Gertie Loose, in the 60's," said former Chilton resident, Bob Bishop. "We had the Mexican style parties too, with Pinata and all. Sometimes we went to the County Park or High Cliff. Years later, in 1975, while we were living in Eau Claire, Corny invited us to Mexico for a week. We gladly accepted and enjoyed their hospitality. They were religious and lived by their principles. Everybody liked them. I keep in touch every year with cards and letters."

That's the way people were then. No, actually, that's the way people were in Calumet County. It was at this time that the civil rights movement was getting its second wind. It was a time of riots in other parts of the country, but not here. The social climate of this area never was filled with prejudice. Oh sure, a few crude jokes or maybe a few cold shoulders were shown on both sides, but the atmosphere was peaceful.

Multi-culture was not only accepted, it was desired. Integration works because the Christian principles are in use at home already and then put to practice at the workplace. That's the way it was back then. That's the way it still is—here. Here, but not everywhere.

Now back to 2000, to the cafe counter, over another cup of coffee. "Would you rather do it over again—or would you like to start out in a high tech generation?"

Lots to think about. Doing it over again assures no regrets. How can you improve the past? The future is anybody's guess. I foresee some action—but not much inter-action. Do you see empty streets? Do you see buildings with cubicles? Do you see houses with people working at home, where the promise is, "Work for us in your PJs and slippers."

Me—I like the old way.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Writer/Photographer

## A Hallmark Thanksgiving

When the holiday of Thanksgiving is mentioned, many people share the same memories of a Hallmark card or perhaps a Currier and Ives print of a horse pulling a cutter or an open sleigh. The landscape is covered with freshly fallen snow, smoke ascending from the stone chimney of a log cabin or an old farm house.

Fred Mayer, a resident of Chilton Health and Rehabilitation Center, has such fond memories. "My earliest and most memorable Thanksgiving was in 1928. I was 8 years old then, and I still can see my Grandma pulling up the driveway in her horse and cutter. It was a special day because I didn't get to see her real often. It's in my memory as clear as a picture post card or greeting card. That was the year before she passed away so that day was special. After I married Marie Goesser in 1940, we would celebrate Thanksgiving at our house in Kloten. My parents would come to our place. We celebrated it at the house until four years ago, when Marie passed away. Now I'm here, it's my home and I love it 100 percent. My family and friends will visit me, but I will stay here. They have their family and my kids have their own traditions to keep. I'm in good health and thankful for that! By the way, my family sold my old cutter last month for \$400."

Fred paused and smiled. His memories rekindled about all of his one-horse open-sleigh rides during the holiday season.

Betty Jane Hackbarth remembers Thanksgiving in Milwaukee, where she spent most of her life. "Lots of company, young people, but mostly I remember my dad helping my mother in the kitchen. After Ted and I married, we went to mother's house each year. Last year I visited friends in Hilbert. My sister-in-law, Ovella Lau, is taking me to her place in Brillion for Thanksgiving this year."

Christmas may be the favorite holiday of most people, but everyone agrees Thanksgiving is special. Faces smile and eyes moisten when older people remember their grandparents. Thanksgiving is not a gift giving day, it is a day to give of yourself, when reunions are held while eating turkey and cranberries. It's a day of relatives mixing, and "my how you

have grown", aunts and uncles gathered around Grandma and Grandpa's big ol' banquet table. It is a day of reflections - when you get home again and sit down at the end of the beehive activity. It's a spiritual day. Maybe a day when we talk personally with God even more than on Sundays.

Kay Schneider has been a housekeeper at the Chilton Health and Rehabilitation Center for 12 years. "The residents are happy here. We have plenty of space for special parties and get together here. On Thanksgiving Day many residents go home, but some don't want to or can't. Their family and friends can have dinner with them in their own room or in the dining room or downstairs if the group is large. We even put up decorations for them, or the family can if they choose to." Kay added, "These people are happy here, especially now. From Thanksgiving Day till well after New Year's. It seems the time when most relatives can be together the longest. Actually, all holidays bring in a lot of company and that's good. We make sure nobody gets left out here."

But not all are as fortunate as Fred and Betty Jane. One resident was excited while talking about family and all the great times they had when they were young. Her face was elated as she talked about "all those people, and the fun we had..." Then her eyes clouded over. When asked "what are you thinking of?" she said, "I don't remember." But in a few hours she will, then she can be thankful again because she's had a good life.

Now here we are again, about to celebrate another Thanksgiving. For some it will be the first Thanksgiving Day they will remember the rest of their lives. For others it will be the last one to celebrate. But each one of us is held fondly and dearly in the memories of others. By many? Does it matter? To be remembered fondly, be it even one person is something to be thankful for every day.

It's snowing outside. The horse and cutter and open-sleigh are gone. New cars and snowmobiles are plentiful. Thursday, Nov. 23, is going to be another picture perfect Thanksgiving. Let's all be thankful for what we have every day of the year.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Correspondent

## Still cookin'

September 23 was a special day for Vita Cullen. Her granddaughter, Leslie Bruckner, daughter of John and Pat Bruckner, got married. Special days are hectic with reunions of close friends and relatives. So good ole' husband, Bob, says the next morning, "Let's go for brunch at the Altona." Vita and Bob arrived and a bunch of friends were there, and more and more kept popping in. "Then, just as someone handed me a gift," said Vita, "the crowd yelled out, 'Happy Retirement, Vita!' I was shocked. A total surprise. The way surprise parties are supposed to be."

That surprise party was the first Sunday Vita has had off in years. Except for an occasional trip or vacation, Sunday was a normal work day for Bob and Vita Cullen since they opened the Uptown Cafe in Chilton in 1989. But retirement is just a formal word. "We sold our business to Julie Cullen (Bob's daughter-in-law). I'm still busy, I want to be. I help out Julie some days and help my daughter Sharen at the Altona. I'm pleased the way things are going. It couldn't be better."

Where did it all start? What made a couple like Bob and Vita cook? (pun intended)

Vita started as a waitress in Monterey, California in 1950 and started cooking shortly after in various California restaurants. In 1967, she and husband, Ralph Hertel, bought the Uptown Cafe on East Main Street from Bill Mollen and then they bought the Chilton Hotel from Richard Ruh in 1970.

"Actually, I was in competition with myself, so we sold the Uptown Cafe in 1971," Vita said. After their divorce in 1973, the Hotel was sold to Peterson. "I worked there and cooked for them as I did for Ed Casper and Louie Endries. Later, I cooked for Rich and Linda Hoerth and still later for Cornelison's. In 1983, my daughter, Rochelle and husband, Digger Ratz, bought the Hotel. I stayed on then, too, until it was torn down in 1988."

That historic building had a number of owners over the years. It housed the Commercial Bank of Chilton with its Madison Street entrance from 1940 to 1957. People hated to see the hotel come down. Digger and Rochelle were remodeling it at the time and were trying to get help from the state historical society to preserve it.

Bob and Vita knew each other through Kiwanis events and dinners held at the Chilton Hotel. Bob has been a Kiwanis member for 29 years. In 1964 they began dating and then married in 1986. The couple lived in Michigan a year and a half, where Bob managed a chain of gas stations. Both missed



Earlier this year Bob and Vita Cullen turned over the ownership of the Uptown Cafe to daughter-in-law Julie Cullen.

Bob laughs. "Well, let's figure it out." Bob Cullen has a head for math like his brother, Tom. Some people love numbers. Bob closes his eyes, "20,000 eggs a year, 3,000 hamburgers, 3,000 plate lunches, 4,000 club sandwiches, 1 ton of french fries." He concluded with, "30 pots of coffee a day."

His calculator tells the story. If the Cullens would have made one omelette right down the center of Highway 57, it would easily go through Hilbert. Seven miles. Then line up all those hamburgers they grilled and they would go to Hayton. All those plate lunches would take you to New Holstein. Another seven miles. And those delicious club sandwiches would easily reach Charlesburg. A ton of French Fries would fill up a decent size truck bed.

What does 30 to 40 pots of coffee come to? A lot of conversation with old friends. Coffee is where plans are made. Dreams float on the surface of a cup of coffee. Dreams of Italy. Dreams of Ireland.

"My father was from Italy, so Bob and I went there in 1997, to San Vito Copo," Vita said. "My dad left Italy during the war. His town was destroyed right after he left. Dad had two brothers, who had 16 children each. My aunt is 88 years old. This was the first time in 58 years that the cousins met each

arrived and a bunch of friends were there, and more and more kept popping in. "Then, just as someone handed me a gift," said Vita, "the crowd yelled out, 'Happy Retirement, Vita!' I was shocked. A total surprise. The way surprise parties are supposed to be."

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"I lived in California, then Chilton, then other places and I made up my mind in 1960 that this is where I wanted to be," Vita said. "This is where I can raise my family in safety. Big cities can be nice, but there is comfort in knowing that everyone in a small town knows who your children are. We're only minutes from an emergency room, hospital, and minutes from schools. You can't beat a small town."

"We thought long and carefully about starting the new Uptown Cafe on the west side," Bob said. "We could have gotten the old Uptown Cafe building back, but selected the present location because it was in the middle of the block with lots of parking space. One of their first customers parked his semi-truck and said, 'Just the place I'm looking for. A mam and pop restaurant.' We laughed because we were open only 10 days or so. The truck driver commented, 'Our omelettes in Texas are bigger, but your Western Omelette tastes better than ours.' By the way," Bob added, "That proved word of mouth advertising is best because he told other drivers about our place on his C.B."

Did Vita ever get tired of cooking? She laughs. "Some days, like anybody else, I just didn't want to be there. Then I wonder, how many eggs did I fry. How many burgers did I flip? How much coffee did I serve?"



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This year the couple went to Ireland with Tom and Linda Cullen. The Cullen family originated in Ireland, so it is fitting to go back to where it all began.

"You have never seen green until you've been to Ireland," Bob said. He describes the southern part with palm trees as being sub-tropical, because of the mist and fog. "We toured old castles and I kissed the Blarney Stone. The stone is cast in the ceiling of the castle on the outside. Two people hold your legs while you lean back and maneuver your head to kiss the famous stone." Bob laughed and said, "If Herb Bruckner can kiss the stone (5 years ago), then I can, too!"

"All people, everybody treated us really good," he said. "We had great help in the kitchen and the dining room. We had strangers stop in from all the surrounding cities when they heard our advertising with Jerry Schneider on WMBE. They stopped to check out Chilton. This community has been good to us."

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Staff Writer

## Let it snow. Let it snow. Let it snow.

Snow. It means different things to different people. To kids it's 'Frosty the Snowman.' To others it's skiing down a Colorado Mountain, or maybe snow-boarding down Chilton High School hill or tobogganing down Calumet County Park. Maybe it is sitting in a truck inner tube being pulled by a snowmobile across a rural farm pasture. To others, as pretty as the white stuff gets, it means hard labor, or to say the least, a great inconvenience.

February 14, 1923, was not a happy Valentine's Day for the 'ice crew' pictured here. This train was stuck between Chilton and New Holstein. Until the 1960's, the railroad employed a maintenance worker on the average of one person per mile of track. When this double engine plow got stuck, the extra crew would dig it out so it could back up and try again. On many occasions the regular 'section crew' would be called out for assistance.

One night in 1956, a train was en route to Green Bay. It was 20 below zero and windy. At those extreme temperatures, metal gets very fragile. It can chip or break. That Christmas night when the engine wheel chipped, each revolution of the big iron wheel caused the rail to crack or break, all the way from Greenleaf to Green Bay. All section workers were called to splice cracked rails with joint plates and replace broken rails.

Janice Sturtz recalls, "On many occasions my father, Otto Johnson, and his crew, would get called up in the middle of the night, during a howling blizzard, to repair tracks. Sometimes we didn't see dad and the crew for two days."

Names like Otto Johnson, Bill Hillmann, Herman Jacobs, Tom Connors, Russ Bishop, Buck Parkins, Erv Schomisch and Adolph Schroeder are synonymous with the railroad and cold winter weather.

But on the pleasant side, there is not a prettier picture than a freight train on the snowscape, as it looks like a 50 mile per hour avalanche, hurling snow over 30 feet in the air, causing its own blizzard. A train looking like a frosty dragon-snake—huffing and puffing and blowing a veil of snow up and beyond its big, black V-winged plow.

On snowy winter nights, babies often decide to be born. About the year 1925, Dr. Fred Dohne, of Hilbert, was always prepared. He owned a Model T Ford that was converted with caterpillar-type tracks and two skis in place of the front wheels. (Probably made by Arps Corp. in New Holstein and sold by Sears.) He hired his brother-in-law, Tom Connors, to drive for him.

Dean Connors, of Chilton, remembers stories about his dad and Dr. Dohne. "They would get calls during the worst of storms. Sometimes roads were impassable. Dad would have to cut barbed wire fences and go through the fields to get to families that needed medical attention. I have seen photographs of machines like this that were on snowdrifts as high as street lights and telephone wires."

Tom Connors later worked for the railroad, owned a milk route, and then



This photo, taken February 14, 1923, shows a train that got stuck while plowing snow off a railroad track near Hayton.

Blatz beer route. Tom certainly had stories of snow in his day.

Let it snow. Let it snow. Let it snow. There are many tales that will forever be told about snow 'in the olden days.' Tales of kids swinging from telegraph or telephone wires. They're true. Tales of old-timers that walked five miles to school through 10 feet of snow? Well, as one kid said, "Grandpa, there was a schoolhouse every two miles, why didn't you go to the closest one?"

The point is this: memories make the snow fall deeper. The real truth is that the landscape was changed. Trees were cut down, hills were carved and valleys filled to make roads more level. Snow fences are more common now and placed in better positions. A ride in the countryside will reveal the original site of most roads. You can see where most roads and ditches were shaved about 1950-1951, (Highway 57) and again in the 70's and the 90's from Chilton to New Holstein. Today our city streets, country roads, and state highways are plowed more quickly and salted the same day before they drift shut.

It would be nice to furnish you readers with records of snowfall. It would be even nicer to have pictures of these epic scenes. But for now, many of us still have clear memories of those snow-filled winters. Even though many people endured hardships, the passing of time erases the pain and turns old age into the pleasure of youth.

So kick back and sing the refrain, 'Let it snow. Let it snow. Let it snow!'

# People

by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
*Staff Writer*

## Pride runs deep in downtown Chilton

In 1955, John Meyer, of Hilbert, welcomed the St. Patrick's Day Parade much more than usual. He had just been discharged from the Navy after surviving an artillery attack off the coast of Korea. The USS Owen DD 536 was reported sunk or missing for several days.

"It was scary," said Meyer. "We got hit. I was glad to be home."

The next day, Jack saw a Help Wanted sign on the Chilton Manorette Trailer Factory. The huge building was located at 311 E. Main Street, next to the Rollie Woelfel's Chilton Creamery on the west side and Schmidt Brothers' butcher, later Paul Weber, on the east side.

Norman Lunde, president of Manorette, was a short, frail man. His right arm was somewhat deformed, and he always kept his hand in his pants pocket.

"He was a gentleman; full of energy," Meyer said of Lunde. "When he talked, you listened. When you talked, he listened. I gave him my Naval history resumé on accounting and bookkeeping. I was hired and my office was at his large, impressive, white brick house on Park Street. Later we built an office at the factory. At that time, the payroll was about 85 people. George Schroeder, of Hilbert, was a foreman as well as Harry Bancroft of Chilton. Lon Keuler was in charge of all plumbing."

Bill Rogahn was vice-president and general manager. He was known to work from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. When the shift ended, he would go get lumber from Oshkosh and have it ready so the crew would never run out of work.

"Both men were great to work for, but Lunde could get irritable," Meyer said. "Gene Schneider was a big man with a fist the size of a catcher's mitt. Gene needed to choke up on his hammer because of his strength. Lunde said, 'Give me that hammer.' Then he sawed three inches off the handle and gave it back to Gene and walked away."

But the team of Lunde and Rogahn was generous, and full of fun, too. When the company sold its 1,000th Manorette trailer, they threw a party at Hickory Hills Country Club. "I remember it as a great time the whole evening," Meyer said. The firm invited Art Connell, president of the State Bank of Chilton. Art was a funny man, full of jokes and brought out the best of humor in everyone in attendance. (The trailer firm did most of their business with the State Bank.)

Lunde had four salesman and dealerships in 36 states. Each dealer had an Entertainment Bar Trailer, and each customer that bought a trailer got a courtesy case of Gettleman's Beer. It was a clever advertising gimmick.

"We bought beer by the pallet load," Meyer said, "and often shipped on the railroad, which went behind the factory."

Lunde had stock in the Gettleman Brewing Company. Remember the commercial "Get...Get...Gettleman. The thousand dollar beer! One...Grand...Beer!" When Lunde bought a round of drinks at a local business, if they didn't have Gettlemans, he wouldn't drink.

By the late 50's, business was so great that the firm could hardly meet schedules. Some of the workers were Cecil Arenz, Serve Darban, Andy Hopfensperger, John Herrick, and others, like Puetz, Lisowe and Zierer. It was great! Then bad news came. The frame for the trailers were found to be defective. The trailers were no good and had to be rebuilt. Rogahn and Lunde were devastated.

Meyer recalls that Lunde was "not a quitter." "He made arrangements to keep going. He hated the thought of bankruptcy. He did real well for quite some time, but he finally was forced into bankruptcy. It nearly destroyed him. But that was only the beginning of his bad luck. His wife, Ruth, was also dying of cancer."

Bob Boll, of Hayton, started working for Bill Rogahn in 1959, after graduating from Chilton High School. By this time, Lunde was tying up loose ends, trying to make good on his products. Rogahn renamed the firm the Chilton Trailer Company. His trailers were the travel type, while Lunde's were exclusively the type that could be pulled by special vehicles to locations to be lived in.

Boll remembers that time. "We built travel trailers across the street in a building owned by Kaytee. We worked there for one year until the original factory was reorganized for our smaller trailers. Norman Lunde often came in to visit and watch us work. By this time, only 20 of us worked there. I used to deliver trailers to Minnesota at night. Bill Rogahn got caught in a windstorm in Texas and lost that one. John Herrick use to deliver them, also."

"About 1960," Boll continued. "I was asked by Norman to move his brother, Howard, to Chilton from Minnesota. I did, and Howard and Norman formed a partnership. They were about to start the 'Norseman Ice Machine' business." But that's another story.

Boll stayed on building trailers with Rogahn. Jim Bloomer bought the business in about 1975 and renamed it Manorette. It was about 1985 when Bloomer sold it to another company and they went bankrupt in 1987. An auction took place. Bloomer got his building back, but the trailer business—neither mobile home nor travel trailer—was never to be again.

But Lunde held his head up high. Pride runs deep in downtown Chilton. Everyone worked together and Norman Lunde knew he had one more chance.

To be continued.....The pride of the Norseman

# People

by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
Staff Writer

## Pride of the Norseman

*(This is a continuation of last week's column entitled "Pride runs deep in downtown Chilton.")*

Manurette Trailer was now history. Norman Lunde did what he could do. He made good on his claim as far as rebuilding and repairs. It was at this time that Lunde's friend, inventor Milton Lindenberg, approached him with plans for a partnership which included Norman's brother, Howard. Lindenberg had invented an ice cube machine. The machine consisted of square tubing, cut, bent, and brazed or silver soldered, into which gases froze the water to make ice cubes. The bonus to these cubes was that they were hollow, which gave them eight sides for rapid cooling of beverages.

In 1961 ice was at a premium. It was almost impossible to buy ice cubes as compared to today. The three men knew they were on to something. They purchased the old Bond Pickle Factory, which was located behind the Coop Mill on Grand Street, right on the Manitowoc River. It was then that Howard Lunde built the first metal cabinet, while Norman Lunde and Lindenberg built up refrigeration and assembly systems for the mechanics of the machine.

They named the ice machine the Norseman and with the pride of Lindenberg and both Norman and Howard Lunde, they named the business Quality Manufacturing Company.

It is unknown who did most of the work for Quality Manufacturing during the setup, but the first employees were Cecil Arenz, Ann Schurette, Esther Lefebber, and Lorraine Ammerman. These people did the cutting, brazing, and silver soldering, which was a very intricate part of the job. Their work had to be flawless so that these delicate machines could run maintenance free. When this set up was done, Cecil Arenz returned to Italy. Ruth Schmal Ziegelbauer was office and personnel manager after John Meyer went to California. Marv Kandler, of Hilbert, was one of the first to be hired in the sheet metal cabinet department.

Kandler recalls that time period. "I started in the spring of 1961. I worked with Howard at first and we made some changes and improvements with the cabinet. We also made different sizes. We made templates to eliminate errors and to increase production. Vernon Anderson, of Reedsville, and I wound up doing all the cabinet building and Chuck Meyer did the painting, crating, and shipping."

The business quickly started to take off. Quality Manufacturing had a military contract and was building up a sales force to sell to private enterprises. On Aug. 10, 1961, Norman Lunde signed a contract with top exporter Sabal-Kielman, Inc. This worldwide arrangement instantly boosted sales over half a million dollars. The goal at the time was a million dollars in sales in one year.

Business was great, the crew was fantastic—like family. The Lundes' were great.

Kandler and Meyer remember testing and tasting soda from their new machines. "We told Howard that we should test them with booze so we would know if mixed drinks tasted the way they should." Lunde laughed and came back with a bottle of brandy. "We tested them on occasion. Usually late Friday afternoons."

Was Norman Lunde hard to work for? Let Marv Handler answer that. "Norman was on his way to the bank in New Holstein. I said, 'Norman, get me two thousand, will you?' Of course, I was joking. Norman came back and said, 'Go to the bank, your money is waiting.'" Kandler added, "I was getting married and wanted a loan. I got it. That was nice."

As their government contract was expiring, the first sale to private individuals took place. The buyer was actress Debbie Reynolds. Kandler remembers all the employees signing their names on the inside of the machine before it was welded together. "It was fun. We knew she would never take it apart and read what we wrote."

With both buildings going full speed, a second shift was tried for a time. Meyer and Kandler recall that offers were being made for mergers.

"Some companies wanted to build our cabinet," Kandler said. "Liquid Carbide was interested in buying us out. Weynhauser was there one day measuring the building and dictating do's and don't's."

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The Lunde brothers wasted no time. They found a place in Oconto to build the ice making machine. Lunde paid Lorraine Ammerman, Esther Lefebber and Ann Schurette mileage and wages to drive each day to train a crew in Oconto. Kandler was foreman of the shop in the Kaytee building next to the bowling alley. Harvey Sweere, Jerry Krupp, and Bob Kintchen joined the cabinet mak-

*(This is a continuation of last week's column entitled "Pride runs deep in downtown Chilton.")*

Manorlette Trailer was now history. Norman Lunde did what he could do. He made good on his claim as far as rebuilding and repairs. It was at this time that Lunde's friend, inventor Milton Lindenberg, approached him with plans for a partnership which included Norman's brother, Howard. Lindenberg had invented an ice cube machine. The machine consisted of square tubing, cut, bent, and brazed or silver soldered, into which gases froze the water to make ice cubes. The bonus to these cubes was that they were hollow, which gave them eight sides for rapid cooling of beverages.

In 1961 ice was at a premium. It was almost impossible to buy ice cubes as compared to today. The three men knew they were on to something. They purchased the old Bond Pickle Factory, which was located behind the Coop Mill on Grand Street, right on the Manitowoc River. It was then that Howard Lunde built the first metal cabinet, while Norman Lunde and Lindenberg built up refrigeration and assembly systems for the mechanics of the machine.

They named the ice machine the Norseman and with the pride of Lindenberg and both Norman and Howard Lunde, they named the business Quality Manufacturing Company.

It is unknown who did most of the work for Quality Manufacturing during the setup, but the first employees were Cecil Arenz, Ann Schurette, Esther Lefeber, and Lorraine Ammerman. These people did the cutting, brazing, and silver soldering, which was a very intricate part of the job. Their work had to be flawless so that these delicate machines could run maintenance free. When this set up was done, Cecil Arenz returned to Italy. Ruth Schmal Ziegelbauer was office and personnel manager after John Meyer went to California. Mary Kandler, of Hilbert, was one of the first to be hired in the sheet metal cabinet department.

Kandler recalls that time period. "I started in the spring of 1961. I worked with Howard at first and we made some changes and improvements with the cabinet. We also made different sizes. We made templates to eliminate errors and to increase production. Vernon Anderson, of Reedsville, and I wound up doing all the cabinet building and Chuck Meyer did the painting, crating, and shipping."

The business quickly started to take off. Quality Manufacturing had a military contract and was building up a sales force to sell to private enterprises. On Aug. 10, 1961, Norman Lunde signed a contract with top exporter Sabal-Kielman, Inc. This worldwide arrangement instantly boosted sales over half a million dollars. The goal at the time was a million dollars in sales in one year. At that time Quality Manufacturing had 16 employees. Lunde credited the firm's success to Lindenberg's engineering capabilities.

Chuck Meyer remembers the infancy of the new company. "The old pickle factory had no basement and it was off the ground so big rats visited us. We called them Schnauzers because they were as big as a Schnauzer dog. But once we got organized they were a thing of the past."

With such a fast growth, Quality Manufacturing needed more room. Bill Rogahn was now out of the Kaytee building and the Chilton Laundromat occupied the only Main Street entrance. The Quality crew moved the sheet metal cabinet and painting departments into the rear of that building. The office and mechanics remained at the Bond Factory building.

Business was great, the crew was fantastic—like family. The Lundes' were great.

Kandler and Meyer remember testing and tasting sodas from their new machines. "We told Howard that we should test them with booze so we would know if mixed drinks tasted the way they should." Lunde laughed and came back with a bottle of brandy. "We tested them on occasion. Usually late Friday afternoons."

Was Norman Lunde hard to work for? Let Mary Handler answer that. "Norman was on his way to the bank in New Holstein. I said, 'Norman, get me two thousand, will you?' Of course, I was joking. Norman came back and said, 'Go to the bank, your money is waiting.'" Kandler added, "I was getting married and wanted a loan. I got it. That was nice."

As their government contract was expiring, the first sale to private individuals took place. The buyer was actress Debbie Reynolds. Kandler remembers all the employees signing their names on the inside of the machine before it was welded together. "It was fun. We know she would never take it apart and read what we wrote."

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Lunde pressed forward, trying new things and improving as they went along. "The whole crew, every one of us, was glad to work there," Kandler said. "It's to bad it had to leave Chilton."

By the end of 1963 Quality Manufacturing Company was moved to Oconto. The last anybody heard was that Liquid Carbide bought interest into the company.

The Norseman inventor, Milton Lindenberg, remained in New Holstein until his death. Known to the employees as uncle Miltie, he and the Lundes' are remembered with great fondness. They are remembered as a family with pride.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Staff Writer

## The bread of life is near

It seems like only weeks ago that Christmas spirit filled the air. While shopping in a mall or a small gift shop, the ding-a-ling of the bells could be heard. Sometimes a Santa look-a-like or some other bundled-up person would sing a song or wish you a Merry Christmas as they rang the bell, standing next to a big, black kettle that read "The Salvation Army."

Sometimes people throw in change or took time to dig for folding money. Kids asked their parents, "Who are they, Mommy? (asking about the Salvation Army) Where do they come from, Daddy?" A good question. It deserves an answer.

In 1865, William Booth left the Methodist ministry to establish an organization to aid the afflicted in the London slums. By 1878, he saw the need to establish a church because the people he helped were not comfortable in their own churches. He called the new organization the Salvation Army. He became the General, and ministers became officers, and the members became soldiers. They had military uniforms, a flag, and a brass band. They met in tents, theaters, and dance halls. Despite persecution, they fought the social ills of the day—hunger, homelessness, and poverty. His goal set the pattern for social reform using private resources.

In 1880, the movement came to New York, and by 1900 it had spread to 36 countries.

Because of the Salvation Army, many other programs were started: women's social work, 1884; the first food depot, 1888; the first day nursery, 1890; the first army missionary hospital, 1901. Today the Salvation Army is serving 102 countries.

In 1940, G.G. Bloomer of the State Bank of Chilton, became involved with the Salvation Army. Bloomer worked with various other organizations throughout Calumet County in conjunction with the Salvation Army until his death in 1983. Jerry Propson took it from there.

In 1998, the Salvation Army Bread of Life Assistance Center was started at 16 East Main Street in Chilton. Debra Propson, who is the Director of the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Division, explained its beginning. "I volunteered to accept the position because I was so involved with the Salvation Army with Jerry," she said. "The secretary's duties are suppose to fill only 24 hours per week."

Debbie laughed. Anyone that knows Debbie Propson knows how jovial and energetic she is. It takes the kind of spirit and personality to endure the many volunteer hours that go way beyond the 24 hours that she gets paid for.

"Three people bequeathed substantial amounts of money for this program and its beginning," Propson said. Their names are honored on three plaques

ting more from private donors. Anybody can donate, but we can buy food a lot cheaper because of volume and the people we know. Some money that is donated can actually benefit more people than the actual food you bring in."

How do people know about the Salvation Army? "Mostly word of mouth," she said. "Many are shy about coming here at first, but they learn from others that we keep strict privacy and anonymity. Some are referred to us by Human Services at the Calumet County courthouse. Sometimes nurses convince the elderly to seek us out."

We had a 34 percent increase in applicants this year already, with utility rates that are over 100 percent of last year. It didn't take long for people to use up their energy assistance program money. We helped 25 families that would have had their utilities shut off. Last year we provided 128 nights of lodging or assisted motel rentals. Yes, we have homeless people in Calumet County. Many families give us a call and say "We can help." That's great, but it doesn't always work out that easily. Remember, we keep things confidential and it's hard to find a matching home for a stranger, even if they live here."

When you need help, who do you call? Propson laughed. "My best friend, my husband, Jerry, is usually the first to know when I need help," she said. "I have about ten people I can call that are ready in a minute. I get on the phone to call Jim and Delores Kleinhaus. Jim is president of St. Vincent de Paul. I call Dick and Shirley Roehrig, Mel and Gwen Davis, and just recently, Leo Steiner. We all work together. The Salvation Army works in harmony with all organizations."

Dusty Meyer, a Chilton fireman, said, "It is great to have the Salvation Army, Debbie, and all her helpers out to serve us coffee and food while we are fighting a fire. All the firemen also appreciate the times that Dave Borth and Bob Rowland have brought coffee and cheeseburgers out to us. It is great to have these people help us."

What are some events the Salvation Army has helped with recently? "When the fire started in downtown Chilton recently, by 4:30 a.m. we had coffee and sandwiches for the firemen," Propson said. "One occupant lost everything. She was set up in a motel immediately. When a hunter got lost in a swamp near Brillion, we had food and coffee all night until he was found. We got calls for help during the May 12 hail storm, too."

Where does your money come from? "The bell ringers at Christmas really helped," she said. "Eugene Totzke won the Golden Kettle Award from the Salvation Army. Eugene is able to pack in a 40-hour week on a weekend. He collected \$3,000 at Wal-Mart. Mike Fitzpatrick is known as the whistler by some at Farm and Home and Al Bolz is bell-ringer at the Economart. Al



# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Staff Correspondent

## Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?

Life is just a fairytale to most kids. Tabitha Reichwald thinks so, too. She started out living in an apartment in Kiel, where she heard the dreams of her parents, Ann and Chuck Reichwald. They would have lots of kids just as soon as they could buy Cookie Grenzer's farm. Chuck lived with the elderly bachelor most of his life, and so did his brothers Dan and Alan. Tabitha, now 12 years old, soon had a sister, Jenny, now 11. Chuck and Ann bought a mobile home and set it on the farm next to the old house where Chuck spent his youth. Along came Teresa, 10, Joey, 8, and finally Jamie, who is now 3 years old.

Tabitha shared the plans and dreams of rebuilding that old house, or maybe building a new one. In the meantime there was growing up to do. Paradise had to be explored. They watched and helped Erban, Cookie's roommate, do chores on the farm. There were only a couple of cows to milk, but lots of chickens, and every kid needs a dog. Just like the olden days, Tabitha saw how maple trees were tapped and how the syrup was boiled down on a huge bonfire. The fields and pastures grew bouquets of flowers for her mom and dad. There were bunny rabbits, squirrels, and birds to watch and chase through the fields. The woods and swamp were full of imaginary characters for Tabitha, her sisters, and her brother. She took special delight in the construction of their brand new house. Things got better and better.

All the Reichwald children excel in literature. They are involved in the reading program at school and at the Chilton Public Library. One time Chuck said, "Seems like every time I read the paper, our kids are in it, doing one thing or another." Chuck and Ann are happy and proud of their children and its shows on their faces. Not many kids like school, much less love it like Tabitha and her siblings.

But one day in September, while riding in the country, Tabitha felt a pain in her side. She also felt a lump. "Tabitha is not a complainer, so we knew this was serious," Ann remarked. Tabitha was examined at the Sheboygan Clinic. Doctor Ganju was very concerned and recommended transferring her to Children's Hospital in Milwaukee. After a CAT scan and many other tests, the tumor, which was the size of an orange, was removed. Just as they feared, it was cancerous. The diagnosis was synovial bone cell cancer. Usually it is a tumor that grows to a leg or arm bone or to a joint. Tabitha's did not. It grew in a muscle wall between her left hip and rib cage. A second surgery was scheduled and then radiation. Tabitha underwent radiation treatments every day for six weeks, from November 2 to December 18.

By this time, Chuck and Ann were really scared. Not only could they lose their daughter, they could lose their own home, something they had

"That place is amazing," said Ann. "They had social workers talking to Tabitha. They arranged for a priest for her anointing. She had visitors immediately. She was old enough to know what was going on, and that is why she didn't get scared. The Tumor Board at the hospital has 20 doctors on it. They make group decisions. Tabitha felt secure knowing how the arrangements work."

"I was more scared when I had my tonsils out two years ago," Tabitha said. "That was scary because I didn't know what they were going to do to me."

Chuck works in sales for Nigrelli Systems, located in School Hill. Sometimes his job takes him all over the United States and to many other countries. "Nigrelli is great to work for. They let me have off work anytime that I needed to and that was a lot at times. Not only that, I found out that I have terrific insurance that paid for most of our health bills."

During the time of not knowing what would happen next, cards and letters started pouring in. "Hundreds of them," Tabitha said with excitement. "Some had money in them."

One source of generosity was from the Chilton Catholic Home and School Association. The kids made up posters for a brat fry, which was held at Economart. The posters were spread all over the community. The results were amazing. The love and generosity showed in the form of strangers paying \$20 for one brat. Some just put in cash without a purchase. "We were overwhelmed," said Ann, "when we were told of the results."

"But soon we had enough of everything," said Chuck. "A man wanted to sponsor our family for Christmas. He was more than generous. I had a hard time convincing him that we didn't need any more help."

"But even more than the money," Ann said, "is the wonderful attitude everyone had. I had been working at Economart when this happened. They let me take a leave until I felt I could come back. The next day, Suttner Accounting called me for a job which I had applied for earlier. I explained to them what was happening and they said, 'Don't worry, Ann. We'll hold your job for you until this is over.' Economart donated food and everything. I am really pleased with the way people treated me."

Both Chuck and Ann and Tabitha wish to thank everyone for all the cards, calls, gifts of money, cooked meals, and everything else that was done for them. Their appreciation is apparent in their faces.

But now, what about Tabitha? The little lady who is not afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?

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By this time, Chuck and Ann were really scared. Not only could they lose their daughter, they could lose their new home—everything. The fear showed in their children, too, but it was short lived.

Was Tabitha scared? No, not really. Chuck explained why. "The doctors at the Children's Hospital put the child at the center of attention, not the parent. We actually witnessed what the doctors said to Tabitha. They explained to her how their system works. Children's Hospital of Milwaukee is one of the three best hospitals in the United States. They believe in the full truth up front."

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But now, what about Tabitha? The little lady who is not afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?

"She is doing great. The best evidence of this is that her next appointment is in six months, not two months as is often the case," said Ann.

"I only missed about two and a half weeks of school," said Tabitha. "And guess what? I got 98% on my math test! It's good to be back home."

Soon she will be skipping about the meadows on the farm, picking flowers for mom and dad. The fairytale isn't over yet, and we know Tabitha is not afraid of the Big Bad Wolf.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Staff Writer

## Standing in the past, looking into the future

Some people seem to know their destiny at a very young age. Jeff Gumieny is that kind of person. "I remember my grandpa butchering leghorn chickens, sheep, pigs, and beef when I was 7 or 8 years old. At age 9 or so, Grandpa trusted me to use a knife without getting hurt. I didn't like doing chickens, but pork and beef were my favorites."

After years of watching and helping his grandpa and uncles, Jeff was soon doing it by himself. By 1982 Gumieny was a graduate of Southwest Wisconsin Vocational Technical Institute in Fenimore. He was hired at Howards Grove Meat Market by owner Ted Toepel. Jeff was the last of many workers that Ted had hired through the years. The meat market had history behind it and Jeff wanted to be part of that.

Howards Grove Meat Market was built in 1891 by Diedrich Nordholz, a second generation German, who still had and used all the old recipes and techniques of Germany in his meat butchering, curing, cooking, and smoking processes.

The 20x60 foot frame was built on a tall, stone and mortar foundation on historic Green Bay road, now known as 211 South Wisconsin Drive (Hwy 32), just two blocks south of Calumet Plank Road (intersection of 32 and 42).

In about 1900, Henry and Gustave Eckardt purchased the meat market and Theodore (Ted) and Roma Toepel bought it from Henry's widow, Emily, in 1937.

Ted had master butcher and sausage maker Nelson Kuhn with him during his entire stay at the meat market.

But Jeff Gumieny was in for quite a surprise. "I went to school to learn all about processing and here those two guys, Ted and Nelson, were doing everything the old way and I loved it," Jeff recalls. "At school we learned to make sausage in one day. Imagine making sausage on Monday and it's in the supermarket on Tuesday. We were taught how to use preservatives and liquid smoke for flavor. I was prepared in school for the modern way and that is O.K. It works. I don't condemn it. There's no proof that it is harmful. But that's not my point. After I started working with Ted and Nelson, I knew the old way was best. For example: the first day our meat is ground and put in vats. The second day it is weighed, seasoned, and cooled for 48 hours. Then it is stuffed into a casing with an old-fashioned hand stuffer. Then they drip dry. The curing and smoking take place in the smokehouse which takes 4 days. I only use hard woods like beechwood or hickory and fruitwood like apple, cherry and pear. After the four days in the smokehouse, it is hung on racks. The longer it hangs, the firmer and drier it gets.

ing up.

Another customer pops in. It is a lady with 9- and 10 year-old boys. "I would like some summer sausage and the boys would like to see the smokehouse if they could." They follow Jeff outside to a two-story, brick smokehouse.

"It's O.K. today, boys," Jeff says. "The fire is out." The boys climb up the steps and peek inside the shiny, jet black building. Jeff pulls off a stick of summer sausage right from the rack. The boys are excited and like the mixture of the odor of firewood ashes, smoke, and sausage. "This building is 110 years old, boys," Jeff added. "Wow! God!" the boys said excitedly, as if they understood what history really is about.

By an astonishing coincidence, Carl Toepel, of Sheboygan, son of Ted, happened to stop in for an order of beef. His eyes gazed around and he said, "you know, this was my second home. I spent many hours here helping out. I lived two houses down the street but this place is the place I remember the most."

Later, Jeff explained what a landmark is. "As time went on, people asked me why I didn't apply for a 'historic landmark.' I wasn't aware that people were so interested in the way I ran my business. Soon more and more interest was shown. I checked into it. This building is the original. In the 1950's slate siding was added, but the old smokehouse is the same. But I also had to operate it in the 'old way', which I do. Just like Ted and Nelson did. But structure-wise everything is the same, except the old shingle canopy was removed."

The big day came on Saturday, October 4, 1987. A crowd participated in the presentation of a Historic Landmark Plaque by the Sheboygan County Landmarks LTD.

"Things went fast after that," Jeff said. "The crew from 'The Daily Show' came and filmed me. That was great. Once the show was televised, I was recognized several times. A lady recognized me at the Daytona 500 races. 'I saw you on TV on the Daily Show'. Rusty Wallace overheard that and the next thing I knew I was getting my picture taken with him. Siebken's Resort of Elkhart Lake sent people over that saw the show. It is great for business and it's nice to be known as a craftsman."

"My friend, Shane, called me up one night," Jeff continued. "He said, 'Neil Young is here at the resort and wants a stick of regular and a stick of garlic summer sausage.' I didn't know who Neil Young was until he mentioned his band Crazy Horse. By the time I got there, Young was in his room. A few days later, a guy picked up some summer sausage and left. Another cus-

meat market by owner Ted Toepel. Jeff was the last of many workers that Ted had hired through the years. The meat market had history behind it and Jeff wanted to be part of that.

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Jeff bought the meat market from Ted Toepel in 1982 on the condition that the business remained the same. Nelson Kuhn remained with Jeff until 1984 to help in the old world way.

"I felt like I was living in the year 1900," Jeff said. "We cured our meat in crocks of salt brine. We hand weighed the old German recipes, used old original tools and operated a smokehouse."

"I'm carrying on the tradition, just as Ted and Nelson taught me. I make eight varieties of sausage, and smoked bacon, bratwurst, hams, wieners, ring bologna, liver sausage, and dried beef. I don't use artificial casings for my sausage. I use sheep intestines for wieners and pork intestines for bratwurst, beef bung, head cheese, blood and tongue, bologna, rindawurst, metwurst, and liver sausage," Jeff said.

Customers arrive at a steady pace. Steady enough that Jeff's mother, Joyce, gives him a hand on occasions. She is a cheerful, retired nurse. "I'm doing this less and less," she smiles. "I help Jeff during the deer season and now during the Holiday rush. It is a nice place to be because the customers are so cheerful and they are mostly friends. They know what they want and get it here." Her pride in Jeff shows as she talks about how her brother, who was a master butcher in Milwaukee, taught Jeff so much while he was grow-

years old, boys," Jeff added. "Wow! God!" the boys said excitedly, as if they understood what history really is about.

By an astonishing coincidence, Carl Toepel, of Sheboygan, son of Ted, happened to stop in for an order of beef. His eyes gazed around and he said, "you know, this was my second home. I spent many hours here helping out. I lived two houses down the street but this place is the place I remember the most."

Later, Jeff explained what a landmark is. "As time went on, people asked me why I didn't apply for a 'historic landmark.' I wasn't aware that people were so interested in the way I ran my business. Soon more and more interest was shown. I checked into it. This building is the original. In the 1950's slate siding was added, but the old smokehouse is the same. But I also had to operate it in the 'old way', which I do. Just like Ted and Nelson did. But structure-wise everything is the same, except the old shingle canopy was removed."

The big day came on Saturday, October 4, 1987. A crowd participated in the presentation of a Historic Landmark Plaque by the Sheboygan County Landmarks LTD.

"Things went fast after that," Jeff said. "The crew from 'The Daily Show' came and filmed me. That was great. Once the show was televised, I was recognized several times. A lady recognized me at the Daytona 500 races. 'I saw you on TV on the Daily Show'. Rusty Wallace overheard that and the next thing I know I was getting my picture taken with him. Siebken's Resort on Elkhart Lake sent people over that saw the show. It is great for business and it's nice to be known as a craftaman."

"My friend, Shane, called me up one night," Jeff continued. "He said, 'Neil Young is here at the resort and wants a stick of regular and a stick of garlic summer sausage.' I didn't know who Neil Young was until he mentioned his band Crazy Horse. By the time I got there, Young was in his room. A few days later, a guy picked up some summer sausage and left. Another customer said, 'Jeff, that was Neil Young'. Well, that proves he is interested in my product, not me," Jeff laughed.

"Now, I have friends saying 'Jeff, call Martha Stewart'. Well, that would be something, but I'm not seeking publicity. I loved this place from day one. This is where I belong. I lost a good friend last year, Walter Brand. He was a very spiritual person. He said, 'Jeff, God has a purpose for every human born. This is where you belong. I believe that.' Jeff said.

"Ted Toepel and Nelson Kuhn helped me to be what I am today. They cautioned me. 'Don't change a thing. If you do, you will be like everyone else and people will go to the mall. Keep what you have, don't modernize, and your customers will be loyal and be your friend. And stay closed on Sunday. That is your day of rest and to be with your family.' Jeff reflected on these words. "And that is the way it will be. The old way."

"I do have hopes that one of my kids will take over. I'm looking forward to that. Ross is 14, Casey is 12, and Austin's 11. The two boys show interest, but it's too early to tell. I visualize myself teaching them the old German ways, like I was taught. That would be nice. I won't push them. It will be their own decision," Jeff concludes.

Somehow you know that Jeff is hoping that God has a purpose for his children that would include Jeff as their teacher. They would be students of the Old German World Ways.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Frier

## 'This is where my heart is'

There is no colder word than "institution." Cold as ice. A place where no one wants to go. A place that is as necessary as taxes, but a place you may never want to be in and would rather not visit.

But that feeling quickly leaves you when you enter the lobby of the Chilton Health and Rehabilitation Center. Almost always there is an old familiar face that says hello. Or even a stranger in a wheelchair that says, 'Hi. I'm Ralph.' The hallways are busy with elderly people slowly pulling themselves with their feet in their wheelchairs. They visit each other in their room, the dining hall, or in the lobby. Some eat in the dining hall, while others eat in their room. Some rely on help from a licensed practical nurse (LPN), a certified nurse's assistant (CNA), or one of the many volunteers that do odd jobs and help with the residents.

Esther Lorenz, LPN, has been working at the Chilton Health and Rehab Center since 1981 and has special feelings for older people. "Sometimes I can lightly sit on their lap and say 'Good morning, Grandpa or Grandma', whatever the case may be." Lorenz said. "I have a special feeling for these residents, some of whom I've known way back, but most of them are new to me. We quickly get these people to feel right at home. Some take longer than others, though."

When visiting a nursing home, you may wonder what makes a person want to become a nurse? How do you then go about becoming one?

Those questions were asked of Esther Lorenz of Hayton.

"I always wanted to be a nurse, as long as I can remember. But I didn't go to nursing school after high school graduation in 1961. I worked at other places, you know how it goes. I worked at Chilton Products, got laid off, then at Arps, and then Tecumseh. Then, of course, raising four kids slowed things down a bit. Then I took CNA training and worked at Calumet Medical from 1975 to 1978. I worked other places too, but finally in 1983 I became a LPN from Lakeshore Technical College."

During her schooling, Esther worked at both Calumet Medical and Chilton Health and Rehab. Upon completion of her LPN course, she made an important decision.

"I decided that my preference and capabilities were here at Chilton Health and Rehab. I love older people. I love kids, too, but I love what I can do for these people. My heart is here. I love this place. Everyone here

volunteers and others who heard about the project. We put bedding screen down before we put decorator mulch on to make weeding easier. I hope we can get volunteers to help with the weeding," Esther said. "This place is as nice as any that I have seen. We're all proud of this place. You know my Dad lives here. I wouldn't let him be here if I thought there was a better place."

But Lorenz was not always as happy and cheerful as she appears now.

"I was going through the most difficult time of my life in 1985. I scribbled some notes to myself and cried myself to sleep. The next morning I reread my notes. It was a poem that I call 'My Yellow Rose of Peace'. Later, I did another poem and a friend encouraged me to sell them. I asked the operator to connect me to a printer, any printer. I had a picture of two kids to illustrate my poem 'God Don't Make Junk'. When the printer said, 'I drew those pictures, you can use them,' I almost fainted. Imagine the odds of the operator connecting me to him." Lorenz still gets a special feeling when discussing her poetry.

"I sold 'My Yellow Rose of Peace' for \$100. No royalties. That's just the way it goes," Esther said. "I tried to renegotiate but they refused. Anyway, 'My Yellow Rose of Peace' has been reproduced at least 600 million times, worldwide. Three other poems are also published worldwide. They are 'When I Drift', 'Seasons of Life,' and 'Questions of Love.'"

Those poems are printed on bookmarks, cards, refrigerator magnets, coffee cups, glasses, wall plaques, and lucite plaques. A lucite plaque is crystal clear in the shape of a book. On the bottom it reads, 'Made in Taiwan' for Russ Berrie and Company.

When asked if she ever thought that she would read 'Made in Taiwan' on any of her creations, Lorenz burst out laughing. "I never thought of it that way before. I just felt good knowing that my poems were shared with others."

And shared with others they are. Esther has seen her reproductions in gift shops all over the United States and in England. Her friends and children have seen them in Europe and Canada. Esther has an interesting story. "My son noticed a girl that had a laminated poem, 'My Yellow Rose of Peace'. He said, 'My mother wrote that.' The girl was shocked. "We read this poem at my mother's funeral last month." Lorenz says, "Hearing sto-

Hi. I'm Ralph.' The hallways are busy with elderly people slowly pulling themselves with their feet in their wheelchairs. They visit each other in their room, the dining hall, or in the lobby. Some eat in the dining hall, while others eat in their room. Some rely on help from a licensed practical nurse (LPN), a certified nurse's assistant (CNA), or one of the many volunteers that do odd jobs and help with the residents.

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"I decided that my preference and capabilities were here at Chilton Health and Rehab. I love older people. I love kids, too, but I love what I can do for these people. My heart is here. I love this place. Everyone here works as a team. The RN's, LPN's, CNA's, and the volunteers all work together. It's the only way to do it. We're always working directly with the residents. We are not desk nurses here. RN's can do more in the way of starting an IV and giving shots, but they work with us on the floor, too. The CNA's do more of the heavier work than nurses do, but to the residents they are the same as us," Lorenz said. "Actually, most people don't see the difference in us."

"A place like this is home. Our volunteers play piano and encourage singing along. We have great sing-a-longs. We also have card games, bingo and other activities.

Lorenz is known among her friends at the Home for being a go-getter. In 1991, she spearheaded a raffle ticket program to raise \$5,000 for a deck on the northeast wing of the home. Lorenz said, "I'm so grateful to all the business owners for the money and gifts that they donated. Their donations made it easier for the staff to sell the raffle tickets." Lorenz also organized a raffle for a new van. "We collected over \$3,000 in bake sales, car washes, and the selling of tickets." She proudly points to the blue van parked outside.

Last year, Esther thought a few flower beds would decorate the outside nicely. "Elaine Raddatz and I hauled three tons of stone from the Plymouth Fleet Farm. We planted about 250 perennials which were donated by our

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When Lorenz read a story in Readers Digest called 'God Don't Make No Junk', she mailed her poem to the writer of that story. He published it in his regular magazine that he publishes.

"Things like this are priceless," Esther comments.

Where did the interest in poetry start? Esther gives a short laugh. "Not in high school. I hated it then. But I dabbled at it during my Psychology classes at Lakeland. I write it only to feel better. Mostly for myself. I've written and dedicated lots of it for the residents at Chilton Health and Rehab."

Lorenz also self-published a booklet in 1986. It is called 'Gentle Touches of Friendship and Love'. It contains some of her best poems. Of the 500 copies, a lot were given as gifts but some were sold at local gift shops. She may re-print it, but is also considering expanding it or writing a new one.

Esther's friends and co-workers at Chilton Health and Rehab have many nice things to say about her. Just a short time ago she was voted Employee of the Month for the third time. When Esther says, "This is where my heart is," we believe her. An attitude like that melts the ice of an institution and transforms it into a warm home for the elderly.

# People

by  
RANDY BISHOP  
Staff Writer

## Loyalty gets a bad rap

On Friday, May 25, Mirro-Foley Company plant manager Bill Tackett said to Skip Martins, "Skip, lock the door on your way out and don't look back." It was over. It finally closed. But in his mind, Skip looks back and says, "I am one of the lucky ones. I'm 65 and I retired. My friends are not so lucky." Martins started working at Aluminum Specialty Company (now Mirro-Foley) in 1954. "I started at Specialty because I was an electrician, which I learned in the military. What I liked about the place is that it was like family."

The plant history began about 1919. Mr. Spindler opened Aluminum Specialty Company in Manitowoc as Plant 1 and Walter Krug opened Plant 2 in Chilton. Both plants made aluminum cookware and worked hand in hand with each other. One of its first employees was Bill Kubale, who started at the age of 17. Later his wife, Lucille, worked there with him, making a combined total of over 100 years of service. Bill now lives at the Chilton Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Don Michael, of Chilton, joined the team at Aluminum Specialty full-time in 1950. Before that, from 1946-49, he worked back and forth from the Carnation Plant and Aluminum Specialty as both places had slack periods. "I couldn't pass up their tool and die program, so I stayed at Specialty. My dad, Bruno, had been there since 1940. At that time there were many fathers, sons, and brothers working there as well as husbands and wives. It made a nice friendly, family atmosphere as we all knew each other very well."

Don remembers some of them. "Pete Jensen was a foreman, his wife, Hattie, worked in the office with Frank Moss, the plant supervisor. They retired in the 60's. There also was Clem Kasper and his dad, Simon. Howard "Red" Gruett and his dad, Gus. Wilmer Lemke and his dad, Art, and the brothers, John and Myron Lemke." The list goes on and on with most staying 30 years or more. The Zastrow brothers won many perfect attendance certificates as did many others. Martens was known for always being early and doing more than he needed to do. Others were that way, too. Loyalty ran thick there. That seems to be the key to loyalty—communication and friendship. Skip Martin's words ring true — "Like family."

Michael recalls World War II. "My dad saved a few stampings of brass 20mm shells. They were for machine guns on ships and airplanes. Specialty made them until about 1945. The first shells were made of steel. But they cracked during cold temperatures at high altitudes, so brass was necessary. It takes several operations and heat treatments to make the finished product. Army canteens and collapsible cups were also made there."

During the 1950's business picked up. The building expanded. More people were hired. Many that started right out of high school retired just this year.

system. "You can double your pay on some jobs if you drive yourself hard enough. You don't need a boss with a whip on the piecework system," says 30-year employee, Betty Blatz. "You learn to push or drive yourself."

The beginning of the end was announced in January of 2001. Plant 10 of Manitowoc (the original Aluminum Specialty Plant) and Plant 20 in Chilton would close its doors by July 1. Total shock to most people, but to others it was not a big surprise. Many saw the changes and didn't like them. Don Michael said, "There always were rumors that we would close, but that in itself meant nothing. Just in Time (J.I.T.) programs started nationwide. No more warehousing. Your material would arrive just in time to run that order and then schedule another order. The problem was that if our contract was based on a 40,000 run, a company like Wal-Mart would say, "send us 500 or 1,000 pans." We had to set up for too many short runs because there were none in our warehouse. That's a lot of unplanned setup. A lot of extra cost."

Newell handed down another cost-cutting procedure, eliminating Quality Control (Q.C.) on second shift. Rosie Daun said, "In 1996 our Q.C. program was cut. I had been an inspector for years. It is a very important job. I was offered early retirement or work in Manitowoc. I don't believe cutting Q.C. is the way to save money. It didn't make sense to me. I retired in 1996 after six weeks in Manitowoc. The change was just too much for me."

"The import market hurt us," said Don Zastrow. "Some pans cost us \$1 to make. They could be bought in a store for 50 cents. You can't compete effectively like that. It would be hard but possible for the plant to continue operating."

John Lemke thinks Newell gave up too early. "We always made a superior product. Their import products are junk. I believe many people still want an American-made product of superior quality and will pay the price. They should never have closed. I'm one of the lucky ones to retire. I feel badly for my friends that are out of work. It will be hard for them to find another job."

With the announcement of the shutdown, Newell offered \$100 separation pay. Betty Blatz, president of the PACE Local Union 7-0461, said, "Our Local's committee and the committee from Manitowoc negotiated for a week with great results. We got all our vacation pay for this year plus 20 hours pay for every year up to 320 hours. They also allowed us to keep our insurance for three months." That settlement turned a bitter end into a bittersweet ending.

The closing of Mirro-Foley affected 130 employees in Chilton and another 210 in Manitowoc. During the last months some workers quit and got great jobs with good pay. They're happy. They are young yet. But many of these employees are in their 50's and applied for those same jobs and were not hired. How

age of 17. Later his wife, Lucille, worked there with him, making a combined total of over 100 years of service. Bill now lives at the Chilton Health and Rehabilitation Center.

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During the 1950's business picked up. The building expanded. More people were hired. Many that started right out of high school retired just this year. Don Zastrow remarked, "I started in 1961. My brother, Armond, already had five years in, so I took advantage of working where I lived. I liked the opportunity of working up the ladder, to pressroom foreman and then foreman over three departments. It was a great place to work."

Eileen Keuler also started in 1961. She, too, spoke fondly of the place even while it was going through changes. "About 1980 Foley Food bought Aluminum Specialty Company and the name changed to Foley. It was owned by Kraft Cheese for a time before that, but nothing significant happened. Business picked up with Foley and we made their food mills right to the end. Then we became Mirro-Foley about 1988. Newell bought it about 1993." During these changes, things went smoothly. Keuler continued, "We always had great communication between Manitowoc and Chilton. We negotiated with three different unions and never had a strike. Everybody got along."

The factory itself doesn't deserve the credit. It was extremely hot, with temperatures reaching more than 100 degrees in the summer. The air was dusty and downright filthy for many years, but loyalty persevered. Many recall that by noon you could only see the "whites of their eyes." The aluminum and buffing dust didn't wash out until a long weekend if you worked in the buffing department. By noon employees looked like coal miners. But that improved with automation. The old saying was, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." Many people worked only a few days.

One key to worker loyalty was the incentive program, commonly known as "piecework." The Chilton plant had a 30 percent higher production rate than Manitowoc. It was never understood why Manitowoc never tried the incentive

40,000 run, a company like Wal-Mart would say, "send us 500 or 1,000 pans." We had to set up for too many short runs because there were none in our warehouse. That's a lot of unplanned setup. A lot of extra cost."

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One company executive said, "Why are you worried? There are lots of jobs out there." But three weeks ago Newell cut 107 of its office employees and executives. They are moving their main office to Toledo, Ohio. Some of these people only had 30 minutes to clean their desks and then were escorted from the building. Suddenly this company executive was worried. He got his notice, too.

Betty Blatz echoed the words of many when she said, "Yes, we're upset. We are angry and why not! We knew it was getting worse when Newell merged with Rubbermaid, which was in trouble, too. We saw the imports coming, everyone did. We believe that if Newell would never have bought us, if we were still independent, we would go on forever."

"Why didn't the government stop this?" she added. "Why don't they step in and end this import mess before it's too late for everyone?"

When Betty was asked what the Manitowoc people think about this mess, she replied, "They are guessing, only guessing, but they think one year to 18 months and it's over for them, too. I have no hard feelings toward anyone down there. I'm not jealous. I only wish them well."

Another episode in the interesting Chapter of Chilton history comes to an end. But more than the doors of a factory closed. A piece of Americana died. And the closing of the factory takes away a little more of the soul of the survivors.

# People

by  
**HANDY BISHOP**  
*Staff Writer*

## 'My art reflects my interests'

When Lute Allison worked at Chilton Cremations, from 1955 to 1979, his duties were many. He worked in the machine shop and did maintenance work, such as welding, plumbing, electrical work, and pipe-fitting. One of Lute's favorite pastimes was shooting pool. In 1974 he won an award for the most points in his league. When he received his trophy, he had an inspiration to make something just a little bit nicer than the one he had won. He made his first frog out of welding rods — one that he still treasures.

Since that time, Lute has made 54 frog designs. Frogs that are shooting pool, fly fishing, playing the violin, or whatever things real frogs don't do. To make his objects of art, Lute roughly shapes the mold out with copper painted acetylene welding rods. He tack welds them together for a general shape, then he welds them with his gas-coupled torch. He flows the metal together in some spots for smooth skin and adds metal for a rough texture in other areas. The finished product is truly a work of art. Lute sprays clear lacquer on the finished product to protect it from rust. Some of them are polished more than others and so they look shiny.

Lute and his wife Eleanor of Chilton, have always been avid sportsmen. They owned a cabin on one acre near Taylor, Wis. Three acres were surrounded by a national forest. The couple could observe up to 17 deer at one time. Both enjoy rifle and bow and arrow hunting. One year both shot a deer with rifle and with bow. Lute also allowed a buntus deer, so that made five deer in one session. Lute also shot a 385-pound black bear that year. Fencing is also a favorite pastime of the couple.

"I guess my art reflects my interests and hobbies," Lute said. "All of my pieces are either about shooting pool, animals, fishing, or nature in one way or another." His walls and shelves are filled with sculptures of trees. Some trees are rough bark textured; some smooth some are evergreens. Some trees are on rocks with roots growing into the stems. To do this, Lute drills a hole in the stone, makes my tree, and then set it on the stone. But, "Lute added with emphasis, "I must take it off the stone to weld the roots on or the stone will break. I set it back on the stone and bend the hot metal to form the roots to the stone."

It wasn't long after Lute started his new hobby that a friend encouraged Lute to exhibit his sculpture. "I went out for information and a jury liked my work, so we traveled all over Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. I sold a lot of my pieces on that first tour."

How long does it take to make a tree? "I kept track of this one real close. 60 hours altogether," Lute replied on his points to a hollow base will hang with two

being in the same show twice. I had sculpture in the American Club Gift Shop at Kohler for over a year. I sold several pieces a month there."

What are some of the ups and downs of an exhibit? Lute replied, "One time, we went to Sister Bay in October. It was cold. That Saturday, I sold one frog. We wondered if we should stay. Sunday it snowed! But all the people came back that were there on Saturday, with money in hand." The Allison reacted with pride. "Can you believe that I averaged \$300 an hour for a ten hour Saturday and an eight hour Sunday? We were glad we stayed but sometimes we don't sell hardly anything and it's a lot of work to set-up. We only sold one frog at Eagle River. That didn't pay for gas."

The Allison have a sense of humor and Lute had a few funny tales to tell. "We were at Mosquito Hill and I overheard this woman talking about getting a cheap price for a turn of the century style big front wheel bicycle. Even the wheels turned and the price was \$65. "Do you disbar with prices?" she asked. "I'll give you \$50.00 for that bicycle." "No," I said. "I want \$80.00 now."

"Why", she asked, I said, "would you accept a pay cut from your boss or tell him to take a hike?" Lute laughed, "She gave me \$80, too."

"Another time, a Kurby Vacuum salesman tried to sell me a vacuum cleaner. I told him that I didn't need one and he was wasting his time. By the time we were done, he owned two pieces of art and I got a nice new Kirby and he had to buy my old Kirby. So for \$40 sales tax, I got a new Kirby and he was happy, too."

Living in Chilton since 1966, the Allison have been busy people. Besides raising three children, they have been busy doing other things. Eleanor was active as the pianist/organist at Ebenezer United Church of Christ for 30 years. She also worked for 10 years as librarian at the City Hall Library. Lute also worked at the New Hope



Continued

were many. He worked in the machine shop and did maintenance work, such as welding, painting, electrical work, and pipe-fitting. One of Lute's favorite pastimes was shooting pool. In 1934 he won an award for the most points in his league. When he received his trophy, he had an inscription to make something just a little bit ruder than the one he had won. He made his first frog out of welding rods — one that he still treasures.

Since that time, Lute has made 64 frog designs. Frogs that are shooting pool, fly fishing, playing the violin, or whatever things real frogs don't do. To make his objects of art, Lute roughly shapes the metal out with copper plated scotchbrite work-bag rods. He sand-wheels them together for a general shape, then he welds them with his gas-oxygen torch. He flows the metal together in some spots for smooth skin and adds metal for a rough texture in other areas. The finished product is truly a work of art. Lute spends about a year on the finished product to protect it from rust. Some of them are gold-plated more than others and he has two look alike.

Lute and his wife Glenore of Clinton, have always been avid sportsmen. They owned a cabin on one acre near Tipton, Wis. Three rods were surrounded by a national forest. The couple could observe up to 17 deer at one time. Both enjoy rifle and bow and arrow hunting. One year both shot a deer with rifle and with bow. Lute also allowed a bonus deer, so that made five deer in one season. Lute also shot a 389-pound black bear that year. Fishing is also a favorite pastime if the couple.

"I guess my art reflects my interests and hobbies," Lute said. "All of my pieces are either about shooting pool, animals, fishing, or sports in one way or another." His walls and shelves are filled with sculptures of trees. Some trees are rough bark textured; some smooth; some are evergreens. Some trees are on rocks with roots growing into the stone. "To do this, I drill a hole in the stone, make my tree, and then set it on the stone block," Lute added with emphasis, "I must take it off the stone to weld the rods on or the stone will break. I see it look on the stone and bend the hot metal to form the rods in the stone."

It wasn't long after Lute started his new hobby that a friend encouraged Lute to exhibit his sculptures. "I sent off for information and a jury liked my work, so we toured all over Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. I sold a lot of my pieces on that first tour."

How long does it take to make a tree? "I kept track of this one real close. 40 hours altogether," Lute replied as he points to a hollow base with hanging with two trees about 36 inches high and one 35 inches high with the fourth tree in the background which is about 5 inches high. The branches are bare and twisted. "The statue that all my trees are brass plated. I sand it just that dense enough to make it stand firm in Mexico because of pollution. I've passed six years ago," Lute added. "I could get them gold plated here, but that's a little more expensive."

How long does it take to get ready for a show? "Well, other than that, I make frogs. Minutes later. Eleventh says, it's dinner time." Then I make more frogs, and minutes later it's supper time, then I go back downstairs and minutes later it's, "Honey, it's midnight." Lute laughs as he says, "Minutes later. Three from I can come by work 12 to 14 hours a day on these for three and a half months to make 22 dozen frogs. And I still call them all before the hour is over."

Over the years, Lute has won many ribbons and awards. "I won best of show in Oshkosh a couple of years back." Lute does not display his awards, only some of his sculptures.

The Allisons visited family in Oregon and California a few years back. "My work paid for our trip," Lute said. "That I could exhibit in Wisconsin for years without

had sculpture in the American Club Gift Shop at Ebbler for over a year. I sold several pieces a month there."

What are some of the ups and downs of an exhibit? Lute replied, "One time, we went to State Day in October. It was cold. That Saturday, I sold one frog. We wondered if we should stay. Sunday it snowed! But all the people came back that were there on Saturday, with money in hand." The Allisons beamed with pride. "Can you believe that I averaged \$930 an hour for a ten hour Saturday and an eight hour Sunday? We were glad we stayed but sometimes we don't sell hardly anything and it's a bit of work to set up. We only sold one frog at Eagle River. That didn't pay for gas."

The Allisons have a sense of humor and Lute had a few funny tales to tell. "We were at Moosejaw Hill and I overheard this woman talking about getting a cheap price for a pair of tan cowboy chaps that were without bicycle. Even the wheels turned and the price was 99¢. Do you dealer with prices?" she asked. "I'll give you \$69.00 for that bicycle." "No," I said. "I want \$80.00 now."

"Why?" she asked. I said, "Would you accept a pig cut from your boss or tell him to take a hike?" Lute laughed. "She gave me \$80, too."

Another time, a Kirby Vacuum salesman tried to sell me a vacuum cleaner. I told him that I didn't need one and he was wasting his time. By the time we were done, he owned two pieces of art and I got a nice new Kirby and he had to buy my old Kirby. So he \$40 sales tax, I got a new Kirby and he was happy, too."

Living in Clinton since 1995, the Allisons have been busy people. Besides raising three children, they have been busy doing other things. Eleonor was active in the piano/organist at Ebenezer United Church of Christ for 30 years. She also worked for 10 years as librarian at the City Hall Library. Lute also worked at the New Hope Center.

"We do everything together," Lute says proudly. "Hunting, fishing, whatever. She's my best art critic. I need that. I mean it."

But time has one more surprise. "While I was recovering from rotator cuff surgery, my right arm was straight out and bent at the elbow for about two months. I got bored and made this with my left hand." Eleonor smiles, pleased, and says, "Lute is a very patient man." Lute proudly displayed an Indian canoe made with 1/8 inch strips of wood. Inside are two web seats and two oars. It is coated with two coats of fiberglass. The canoe is 3 1/2 inches wide and 16 inches long. Each layer of wood is visible through the fiberglass. "I took this to the post office to weigh it. It weighs only 9/10 of an ounce," Lute said proudly.

"I'm slowing down somewhat," Lute says. "I plan myself, but I plan on doing more, a lot more." Lute is an organist 24 hours a day (except when he works) but like he says, "With a 150 foot boom, I can do anything I want to do. I should have my new porch finished in a couple of days."

And so it goes. A guy that did more in his 29 plus years of retirement than many people do in a lifetime. With perfection.



**People**  
by  
**RANDY BISHOP**  
Staff Writer

# Laughter...the best medicine

They say laughter is the best medicine. That means that Inaugene Martinar was a living pharmacy. The good results of laughter are remembered by the many friends that Inaugene left behind. Bossie Dean grew up with Inaugene Bury near Pipe. "We got together every chance we could, being only one mile away from each other. She sure was fun to be with. Inaugene could drive a car at 20 years old. One day, when I was 14, and she was 15, she taught me how to drive her dad's old car, a Model A. I believe, and I don't think she had permission either. I let the clutch out too fast and that got starting bucking. Then Inaugene started laughing and, of course, I couldn't stop laughing either. I hit every pedal in the road."

Dean said, "My daughter, Sheri, described Inaugene's laughter better than anyone as a deep, down belly laugh. That laugh got us in trouble in high school, too. In study hall we would raze for the Saturday Evening Post for the cartoons. We couldn't stop laughing and she got started."

In 1963, Bossie stood up for Inaugene's wedding to Eugene Mueller and remained close until his death in 1964. "We even became closer after that and comforted each other through the hard times ... but mostly we had great times with lots of laughter."

Viva Callen had much to say about her close friend. "When we were new to the Hotel Callahan, Inaugene started to work for us. We ran the Supper Club from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m., and Inaugene was great for that job. One night, four sophisticated couples came in and ordered 5 ounces tenderloin steak. Inaugene loaded her large, silver tray and quickly took off to serve them. She moved so fast that the steaks stayed in the air and landed in the floor. Freda Tushnet said I gazed in amazement at her speed. When Inaugene realized what happened, she threw it up in the air and it landed at each other and gaped. Then we broke out in uncontrollable laughter. Then quickly we went back to the kitchen and started all over. What a memory!"

Bob Callen said that Inaugene was more than laughter. "She had a serious side and she was brilliant. She wrote for the Manitowish Herald-Times for 5 or 6 years. Maybe it was there where she got her interest in politics and civic issues. She researched what she talked about. She got a lot of us interested in city projects and we started attending city meetings. She always said what she felt and shared her viewpoint and listened to ours. I respect that."

Bessie Dean shared the years of raising her own four children and Inaugene's two children together and this is well remembered by Inaugene's son, Buck Mueller. Bessie's husband, Ken, died about a year before my son. From then on, everything we did, we did together, like our big family. Six kids and two mothers. They both took us fishing and took us to orchards to pick apples. We had many happy times filled with laughter. We even went along to flea markets together.

Rick said he is often asked what Inaugene was like. "She was a serious person. Many people told me she was the most ethical person they ever did business with. She was honest and straight forward. As a reporter for the Herald, she was respected, but she mostly liked to write human interest stories. At home, we always had our own

When mom used her manual typewriter, the cat would sit in the unfolded case and watch her type. She took a picture of it watching her and wrote a prose-worthy story about it."

Bossie Dean had never been to an auction. Here is how it's done. "Inaugene said, 'You stand there and hide and I'll read my card, then you stick up your hand when I tell you. I couldn't see what I was bidding on. Suddenly I heard, 'Sold!' So for \$17, I found out that I bid on and got a table with seven chairs. Little did I know that's what I was bidding on at the time. Inaugene knew I wanted to find a table and chairs for my daughter, Sheri. But, how do we get this home? Can you imagine a table hanging out the trunk of a car with three chairs hanging from its legs, another chair holding the table down and some jammed in the back seat? Then, as we drove off, we saw a guy trying to stuff a gipsy-side box in his car trunk. We looked over him and got some funny looks as we drove off."

On days when Bob Callen didn't want to be at work, he said, "Inaugene knew when I was not in the best of spirits. She could read and understand people. She knew when to talk or not to talk. When to laugh or not to laugh. When I was uptight, she would say, 'Just calm down.' She never missed work, even during a snowstorm. We offered her a ride, but she preferred my own two legs. She knew business and looked at her job as part of the business. She avoided gossip, part of her work ethics."

"I called her 'Ma,' Vito said. "When Bob called her 'Ma' she said, 'You can call me anything you're my boss.' Inaugene was like a sister to me, but she was like a mother to me, too, even though she was younger than me. She was so full of wonder. Inaugene's daughter, Sheri Fering, said, "My mother loved seeing people in order to get them in a good mood. When she and Dave Martinar owned the Friendly Farmer's Bar, she would donut out when she heard the train. If it's going north, I'll buy a donut and if it's going south, you buy a donut. That always got a laugh. Mom loved being with people. She went to antique shows, swap meets, and flea markets in Pin du Lac, Oaklawn, Cedarburg, Green Bay, Princeton, and many other places all over Door County. She often went alone to add her antiques, mostly jewelry and glassware. She would leave at 3 a.m. and probably wouldn't be back until the next 3 a.m." Sheri also stated, "She was a great Mom. We did a lot of things together."

The financial part of the hobby or vocation was usually not discussed. Most of Inaugene's friends knew she had an honest passion for it. It was more than a means of support.

Inaugene left the earthy scene on August 8, 1995. But she left behind photographs of happy moments hanging on the walls in the homes of her friends and family. Some have keepsakes or jewelry that remind them of a friend that smiled them when they were down. But all have memories of that hearty, deep down inside 'belly laugh' that was like a sweet tonic that leads the soul.

# People

by  
**RANDY BISBOP**  
Writes

## Dog Days at the dam

Dog Days is the hot, sultry season of summer in July and August when the Dog Star (Sirius) rises to the sun, in the Canis Major Constellation. In Greek it means scorching.

In Chilton, during its heat waves, it also means sizzling, steamy, sweltering, and suffocating. There is only one relief—Water! No, not to drink. Water to be in, preferably over your head.

This recent heat wave brings back many memories of the early 1950's, when the favorite swimming hole was the State Street dam. The dam beckoned to all back then, but mostly to us boys.

Beginners learned to swim upstream at Grimm's Pier, where the brown water was only two to three feet deep. We could get a good running start, do a shallow dive — better be a shallow dive to clear that log that stuck out from under the pier — then circle back to shore. If you could dog-paddle, the big boys would let you swim with them by the dam. To swim at the dam was a big deal to all of us; it was a rite of passage, in a way a part of growing up.

Back then, the dam had a straight dropoff, like a waterfall, but in about 1953 a quarterround abutment was added just as it appears today. Many daredevils drove their bikes across the slimy dam, and having the fear of the 8-foot deep water, strayed too far to the east and had a delightful spill into the river below. Only a scrape or two, but it was fun.

Many games were played, like bugaboo and tag, but mostly we were spellbound by the kids that dove off the very top of the bridge. It wasn't easy getting their feet. The divers hooked their toes on the rivets that were the size of half a golf ball. They missed their heads



This photo shows "the old swimming hole" in 1911. Years ago young people used to pass the time on long summer days by diving off the State Street bridge into the river below.

water like a knife. Pat still swims every morning from 6 to 7 a.m. at the Chilton High School Pool. Skip, Al, and Joe Schmidkofer were all excellent. All the brothers learned to swim as babies, and in later years, dove off both sides of the top of the dam.

During those Dog Days, the dam was packed with kids. We watched bronchies dive into the water and moments later saw a white "behind" pop up as the diver dove back under to locate his swim trunks. That always brought

prayed for a while to the east side and a diver would appear and see the dam. Only a scrape or two, but it was fun.

Many games were played, like bugaboo and tag, but mostly we were spell-bound by the kids that dove off the very top of the bridge. It wasn't easy getting up the bridge either. The iron was hot the girder was barely as wide as their feet. The divers hooked their toes on the rivets that were the size of half a golf ball. They grasped their hands on the hot metal just ahead of their knees. The angle of incline was 45 degrees and then they sat down and rested when they got on top, being smart enough to have a wet swimming suit so they didn't bake their buns.

When they stood up, they saw the water about 30 feet below them. The water from the side of the bridge to the dam was about 30 feet, too, which gave the diver the sensation that he would hit the dam. Then the diver put both hands above his head in the praying position (some actually prayed).

While keeping his toes hooked on the beam, he let himself fall forward. When his head was lower than his feet, he pushed his toes forward and left at an angle a little less than straight down. The diver had to quickly arch his body under the water so as not to hit the bottom.

A couple of times we heard a splat, as the divers' thighs hit the water when he arched his back too soon. But mostly, they were all perfect divers, as only the best swimmers tried it. Most of us weren't cowards, we just didn't like pain. We had experienced our gut-flops off the road level, which was about 10 feet down.

We would climb over the three bars of the handrail, then, like monkeys, we climbed the crossbars, called the 'X' or crotch, which was about 20 feet above water. There we played Tarzan, swinging out from our iron vines to the water below. All we cared about was that the water was cooler than the air. The water was brown with floating manure and silt, but whoever saw the proverbial blue ocean? Sometimes, by the end of Dog Days, the water was green with algae and floating willow blossoms. We had 'the Fungus Amongus' many times.

Recently, several of us were talking about the days at the dam. Who were the best divers?

John Rozman, of the Madison area, says, "No doubt about it. The whole Norb Sturm family. I swam with them a lot and I enjoyed watching them dive. One time, Bob and his late brother, John, both dove off the top of the west side at the same time, over the sidewalk, where the water was only five to six feet deep. They barely splashed, and then swam to their home up the river. What a sight! Years later, I owned the Montgomery-Ward catalog store on the corner. I watched Jeanne Sturm when she must have been barely 10 or 12 years old. She swam awhile, then climbed the sidewalk railing. Man! Such a graceful dive, and then swam home. But the whole family was the best, no splashing, real graceful."

Obe Fluhr was another great performer, but doesn't really think of himself that way. He admired Shorty Fritschka's grace and endurance.

Personally, I can't say who was the best either. On one occasion, I asked Patricia (Sturm) Stadtmueller if she would dive off the top of the dam for me. She did. I remember the grace and barely no splash as she cut through the

brothers learned to swim as babies, and in later years, dove off both sides of the top of the dam.

During those Dog Days, the dam was packed with kids. We watched bronze bodies dive into the water and moments later saw a white "behind" pop up as the diver dove back under to locate his swim trunks. That always brought laughter. Sometimes someone else would find the suit first and run away with it for awhile.

Having too many swimmers at one time could be dangerous. In fact, more dangerous than the daredevil tactics.

John Rozman said recently, "I ran from the grassy area on the south side and somehow lost my balance during my dive," said Rozman. "I hit the water very hard and it knocked the wind out of me. I was choking when I came up. I knew I wasn't going to make it. I yelled out as loud as I could. No words came out. Lucky for me Ed Millay saw me, dove in and pulled me out. Now Ed was a very strong swimmer and that wasn't easy what he did. But here is the irony of it all. About 1961, Ed was swimming out in the bay here in Madison. I see the place every day. He was overcome, probably with cramps, and couldn't swim. He drowned. His partner couldn't save him. I think of that often, that he saw me and was strong enough to save me."

Another powerful swimmer was Pat Carmody. His love for water led him to join the Navy. Pat volunteered for submarine duty and died when the USS Thresher sank in the 1960's.

But mostly it was just noise and splashing, who could make the biggest splash! Suddenly we would hear the war cry 'Geronimo!' and somebody would jump off the top and drench everyone that was watching him. Some did the cannonball (crouch in mid-air with arms wrapped around his legs to be as small as possible). We would wait as the churned water revealed mud and debris from the bottom where the poor guy almost got stuck. Sometimes we jumped in to unstuck him, just in case he was really stuck, when he did a straight down 'depth charge.'

Our locker room was the old blacksmith shop. There, in the half basement we learned that storks don't bring babies. We learned that the birds and bees are different than we are. This was where the facts of life were learned and taught from generation to generation. That was where many boys smoked that first cigarette. That's where money was borrowed and loaned for a Torpedo push-up or an ice cream cone. That's where friendships were sealed with sacred memories.

That's the way it was for one hundred years. Older gentlemen still talk about the dam from the later 1920's, 30's, and 40's. How they hung from the top bars and dropped in the hay wagons passing below. Closer to nature one could never get.

But now the buildings are gone, and the dam has been remodeled. The sign says "No Swimming." We still have Dog Days. We still have the memories and history we've experienced. Our grandkids can swim in genuine swimming pools - chlorine rich and no 'Fungus Amongus.' Then they can go home and read about the brown water and Dog Days.