

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 4, Issue 3: March, 2010

“Minnesota City: A Past that we honor; a Present that we give meaning; a Future that we build together”

Mark your calendars!

March 13: Organizational Meeting for Minnesota City Day: Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street, 9:30 a.m. MCHA monthly meeting following Minnesota City Day Organizational Meeting

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 18: Minnesota City Community Readers: Riverway Learning Community, 6:30 p.m., Discussion of Nikolai Gogol's *The Dead Souls*

April: Denzer Presentation (details TBA)

May 2: Minnesota City Youth Baseball League Benefit: Elks Club, 4540 North Service Drive, Goodview

May 15, 2010:
Minnesota City Day

Go “Green”!

If you receive this newsletter in paper form and would prefer to receive it electronically, please call 689-2440.

MCHA Announces March 13 Organizational Planning Meeting for 2010 Minnesota City Day

Members attending the February 13 MCHA meeting set a 9:30 a.m. March 13, 2010 meeting at Riverway Learning Community to plan for Minnesota City Day 2010.

Last year (2009) Minnesota City Historical Association invited representatives of Minnesota City and area groups to attend a planning meeting for the celebration of Minnesota City Day. Several groups responded and organized a very successful day of information, fundraising, and community building events. All groups profit from increased numbers in the city on that day.

The Minnesota City Historical Association invites all persons or groups interested in organization of this day to send one or more representatives to this meeting on March 13 at 9:30 a.m. at Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street. The meeting will be a discussion of Minnesota City Day (May 15) activities, food, and possible presentations. **Please come to the meeting with ideas of yours and your group that can be coordinated with relationship to time and spaces, and ready to talk about how we can help each other to make this a successful day.**

On May 15, MCHA will be hosting open hours and tours at its archival site at the historic First Baptist Church at 140 Mill Street. First Baptist Ladies Aid will host open house at the Church, 140 Mill Street. A number of organizations have indicated their intention to attend this meeting. (For more information: 689-4103; 689-2440)

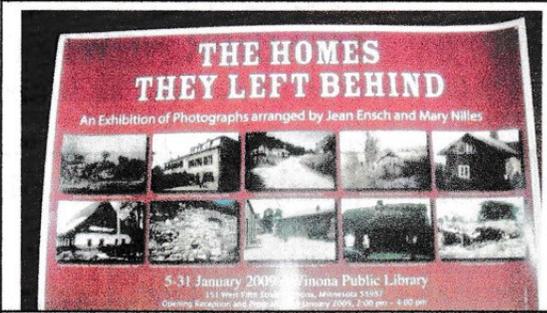
Denzer Family Members Offer April presentation

In keeping with the interest of MCHA in presenting programs of interest that feature families of Minnesota City and area, members learned that direct descendents of the John Denzer and other Denzer families have a substantial amount of information about eleven Denzer generations, many photos, and artifacts. At the Feb. 13 MCHA meeting, Kay Denzer Vanderzee, Dakota, MN., granddaughter of John and Esther Denzer and daughter of George and Gloria Denzer gave the MCHA members names, numbers, and places that will clearly intrigue a presentation audience. The potential date for this presentation is April 18, 2010. Watch future newsletters for details.

In March, 2007, Pamela Aune, a descendent of D. Q. Burley, a Western Farm and Village Association member, presented to MCHA, the history of the Burley family in Minnesota City, including the sale of the land to the Denzer Family. The Denzer family will now expand the story.

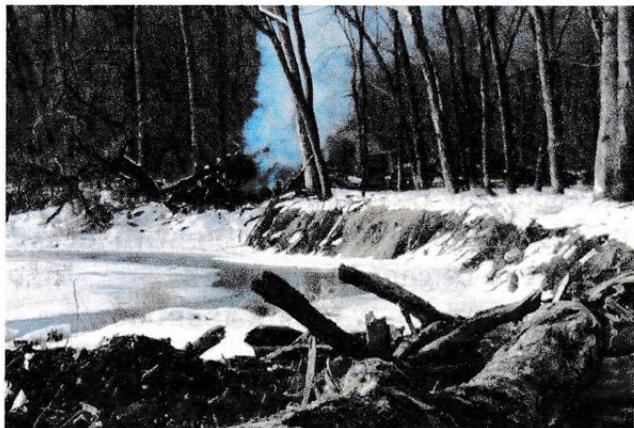
Minnesota Citians Credited in Frozen River Film Festival Friday Fringe Event Showing of *The Homes They Left Behind*

The January 29 Frozen Film Festival Fringe Friday included continuous showings of the film *The Homes They Left Behind* and included Donald and Sandra Evanson and Marvin and Genevieve Jilk O'Grady in the film credits. According to the January 27 Winona Post, the film contains "compelling and moving accounts through the eyes of recent Winona area residents about the lives they left and their experiences creating new lives here." Photos of the Evanson home in Norway and the Maracova (Jilk great grandmother) home in Czechoslovakia were contributed for the earlier display of the materials at the Winona Public Library. Both homes were featured on the poster advertising the exhibit. Rollingsstone native, Mary Nilles, worked with Luxembourg historian Jim Ensich, to organize the exhibit. Paperback Exchange, Mankato Avenue, was the venue for this Frozen Film Festival showing.



Lower left: Moravcova (Jilk) home, Dolni Dobrouc, Czech Republic;
Upper right: Evanson Home, Okesveen, Biri, Norway

Burning Debris of 2007 Flood Removes Persistent Flood Reminders



Burning debris at Garvin Brook, January, 2010
(O'Grady photo)

According to a January 30 *Winona Daily News* story, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife employees burned eight stacks of debris at Garvin Brook --each 30 feet high and 80 feet wide and 100 feet long. MCHA members Rob and Lynda Brzezinski and Marv O'Grady had participated in a first cleanup in this area in August of 2007 which included refuse of all kinds—children's toys, a car, household articles, among others. The smoke haze disappearance from the city following this last removal will mark for some residents, the disappearance of last reminders of the 2007 flood. For many, the changes in Minnesota City and surrounding landscape that came with repairs following the flood, as well as missing homes and

memories of the flood experience will always remain.



May 2, 2010 Minnesota City Youth Baseball Annual Chicken-Q



The annual Chicken Q to benefit the local baseball program will be held on May 2 at the Winona Elks, 4540 North Service Drive. Serving time will be 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Walk ups are welcome. Tickets can also be purchased from any participating player and are \$7.50 for 1/2 outdoor barbequed chicken and fixings. Newsletter readers will find photos and information about the program at the MCHA website (www.minnesotacity.org) under the Youth Baseball link.



Anyone who wishes to be a member of the Association is invited to send \$15.00 to MCHA, P.O. Box 21, Minnesota City, MN, 55959. All monies will be used to support Association goals. Separate or additional donations may also be sent to the above address.

Buried in Oakland - Frank Frame

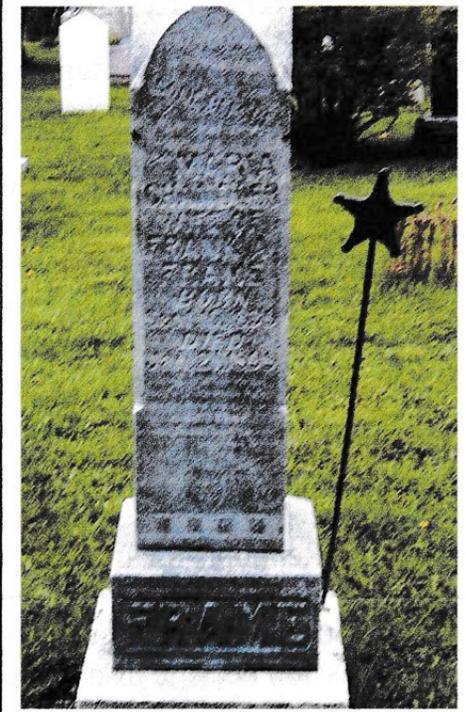
Frank A. Frame was born January 1, 1839 at Swanton Falls, Vermont. He married Maria Weaver of Portland, Maine, in 1860; Maria died in 1900, and he married Hannah Krier of Winona in 1903. She died in 1915. Mr. Frame enlisted in Company A. 35th Regiment, 9th Corp. He figured in several important battles. They included that of Antietam, Shiloh, the siege of Vicksburg, Gettysburg and numerous others. He was mustered out in July 1865, came to Pepin and then in 1872 moved to Minnesota City. He died on March 26 1920 at the age of 81. He was a Civil War Veteran who came west soon after the war ended and a member of the Old Settlers Association who with D.Q. Burley and J.D. Prescott had attended a G.A.R. Encampment in Boston in 1890. It was expected that the G.A.R. would assist at the Frame funeral (see separate information). Mr. Frame was survived by an aged brother in the East. He was also the father of four daughters: Mrs. David Whetstone of Winona, Mrs. F.E. Wright of Mn. City, Mrs. J. B Van Pelt of Winona and Mrs. Fred Hugh of Chicago.

For many years, Frame operated a fruit farm at Minnesota City, and prior to that time, he lived in Pepin County, WI. Mr. Frame's early work in Winona county is revealed in many of the oldest frame houses at the west end of the city. He worked at his trade with contractor J.S. Sweazy for several years building houses on the outskirts of Winona.

On December 6, 1919 Frank Frame was reported to be seriously ill at the home of his daughter, Mrs. David Whetstone, 1051 West King Street. He was suffering from chronic troubles and had been unconscious for the past two days. His health had been impaired for about a year and a half. He had been long noted for unusual activity and was remarkably well preserved in spite of his four score years.

A May 9, 1900 edition of the *Winona Daily Republican* recounts County Convention Activities that included Frank Frame, Minnesota City as well as Thos. Chopin and D.Q. Burley representing Rollingsstone Township and William Calbick (grocery store owner) and Jacob Stehn from Minnesota City Village. The rhetoric of the convention was dynamic. The chairman of the convention, Hon. Thos Simpson, predicted a Republican victory. "Two years ago when we last met, war was being waged between this country and the ancient kingdom of Spain. This great nation had unsheathed the sword in the interest of humanity and Christian civilization. At that time a great cry was being raised by this nation to heaven for righteous vengeance to be visited upon the murderers of the 300 gallant brave men on the Maine in the Harbor of Havana." Simpson asks for solid support for the current administration, and then chides the Republicans: "And that reminds me to say here, the danger has always been imminent in the Republican party, the tendency to factionalize. It is a party of ideas, of intelligence, of press, of individual independent thought and action, political and otherwise, and hence its voters are not bound by party action and control as our opponents are. The members of the opposition party; varied as their ideas may be, never break lines in action, they vote solidly. I trust and hope this campaign may be so conducted that in the nation, the state, the district, or the county, there be not factional spirit arise. (*Winona Daily Republican*; May 9, 1900).

Material for this item contributed by Marianne Mastenbrook and various articles in the early Winona County newspapers. For additional information on G.A.R. see page 4.



The Grand Army Republic *(Information from Wikipedia)*

The **Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)**, of which Frank Frame and other Minnesota Citizens were members was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army who had served in the American Civil War. The GAR was among the first organized interest groups in American politics. After the end of American Civil War; organizations were formed for veterans to network and maintain connections with each other. Many of the veterans wished to keep in contact with each other, using their shared experiences as a basis for fellowship. Groups of men began joining together, first for camaraderie and later for political power. Emerging most powerful among the various organizations was the Grand Army of the Republic, founded on the principles of "Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty", in Decatur, Illinois on April 6, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson.

The league promoted voting rights for black veterans by extolling their demonstrated patriotism. Black veterans, who enthusiastically embraced the message of equality, shunned black veterans' organizations in preference for racially inclusive groups. The GAR initially grew and prospered as a de facto political arm of the Republican Party during the heated political contests of the Reconstruction. The commemoration of Union veterans, black and white, immediately became entwined with partisan politics. But when the Republican Party's commitment to reform in the South gradually decreased, the GAR's mission became ill-defined and the organization floundered. The GAR almost disappeared in the early 1870s, and many departments ceased to exist.

Only in the 1880s did the organization revive under new leadership that provided the platform for renewed growth by advocating federal pensions for veterans. As the organization reestablished itself in the South, black veterans there, for the first time, joined in significant numbers and organized local posts. The GAR was organized into "Departments" at the state level and "Posts" at the community level, and military-style uniforms were worn by its members. There were posts in every state in the U.S., and several posts overseas.

The GAR reached its largest enrollment in 1890, with 490,000 members. It held an annual "National Encampment" every year from 1866 to 1949. At that final encampment in Indianapolis, Indiana, the few surviving members voted to retain the existing officers in place until the organization's dissolution; Theodore Penland of Oregon, the GAR's Commander at the time, was therefore its last. In 1956, after the death of the last member, Albert Woolson, the GAR was formally dissolved.

Standing Invitations:

- to attend meetings of Minnesota City Community Readers. All individuals are invited whether or not they have read the monthly selection. The website (www.minnesotacity.org) includes a brief review of each month's choice, usually posted by mid month.
- to attend regular meetings of MCHA. These are held at Riverway in cold weather months, generally October to May. Other meetings are held at 140 Mill Street. There is some correspondence between interesting meetings and the number of persons attending.
- to respond to newsletter content. This month we learned that Louis Stephan (last month's Buried in Oakland individual) had worked at one time for Blanchard Gardner in Stockton Valley. Please send additions, corrections, suggestions, etc. to mgogrady@embarqmail.com. **Writers of regular columns would be welcomed.** These might include monthly columns on area businesses, churches, schools, organizations.

Check Out The Website: www.minnesotacity.org

Continue to check the website periodically. New information is constantly being added. Remind family and friends and former Minnesota City residents to check it out! Thank you to Susan Althoff, Marv O'Grady and David Eckert for keeping the website updated.