

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 4, Issue 6: June, 2010

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

Mark your calendars!

June 12: MCHA Monthly Meeting; 120 Mill Street; 9:30-11:30 a.m.

June 17: Minnesota City Community Readers; 6:30 p.m.; Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street, Mn City; Selection: Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help*

Go “Green”!

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

2010 Minnesota City Day Furthers MCHA Mission

Minnesota City Historical Association (MCHA) was assisted by individuals and groups to organize Minnesota Day events that support Association goals of providing opportunities for area residents to communicate their shared historical interests, promoting public knowledge of community history, displaying historical materials and marking places of historic interest. A number of visits to the archives were by first time visitors; people continue to express surprise with the rooms and their contents, and especially with the list of seldom known Minnesota City “firsts” in Winona County. There was lively visiting at many of the sites—Riverway, St. Paul’s, First Baptist Church and Oakland.

(for additional Minnesota City Day information and photos see page 3)



Choir members of St. Paul’s Catholic Church, accompanied by Mark Roeckers, lead a sing along of religious music.

MCHA extends thanks for archival contributions

- to Jim Tschumper, grandson of Allen and Grace Tschumper, for a bread mixing bowl, a ricer, a wooden musical toy, and two pottery pieces of Gracie Tschumper, his aunt. (Thank you to Clare Denzer for conveying these to us)
- to Fred and Jean Brust, MCHA members, for a May 2010 aerial view of Minnesota City which makes an interesting comparison with an 1888 National Archives photo of the city donated by Andrea and Roger Church. The perspectives of the photos are very similar—a concrete Mill Street is a dramatic change from the dirt road of 1888 in the same location.

Archives Open 2nd and 4th Saturdays of June, July, August

The MCHA archives will be open from 9:30 to 11:30 on two Saturday mornings for the summer months of June, July, and August. The 2nd Saturday hours will coincide with the regular monthly meeting time of MCHA. Persons who wish to visit the archives at other hours are welcome to call 689-2440 to arrange a time. Discussion has been held with Andrea Church regarding possibilities for technology/genealogy work during one of the open hours.

Several individuals visited the archives for the first time on May 15, Minnesota City, and were surprised by the impressive list of Minnesota City Firsts in Winona County and by the large number of archive acquisitions.

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.

MCHA extends sympathy

- to friends and family of **Arnold Cisewski**. Cisewski, who grew up in Minnesota City, died in Richfield, Minnesota in February; he was 84. Arnold is survived by his wife Barbara (Rezab), and a daughter who lives in Omaha. For many Minnesota Citizens, this is the end of widely known connections of the Cisewski family with the Cisewski-Wockenfuss Garage on Mill Street. The Minnesota City Historical Association is indebted to the Cisewski family for some of the most interesting recorded Minnesota City History (hence this extended narrative). Arnold taped his mother's (Celia) scrapbooks which included photos, paper clippings of every Minnesota City activity and individual—land sales, obituaries, weddings, school activities—as well as family photos. The family photos included many of all three sons in military uniform; one of the most interesting historical pieces in the archives is Arnie's handwritten account to his brother Gerald of his own landing in the Battle of the Bulge. (This will be included in a future newsletter). Arnie also taped a walking tour of Minnesota City that included many of the houses, the surrounding areas, and the graves of Oakland which included those of many of his friends. Gerald Cisewski, the youngest of the Cisewski sons, lived in Minnesota City until his death in 2006.

Leaving Minnesota City Day on May 15, I (Gen O'Grady) saw that the historical garage now owned by Delwin Bunke, was open, and sounds of welding or drilling were emanating from some place amidst the several vehicles. I asked the working individual if I could take the photo, which appears here. As I walked out of the building, I



looked in the "office" where the Round Oak stove formerly sat. In the room now were several chairs, a Coke distributing machine, and an old large Coke Sign above it. The "working" garage and the coke machine reminiscent also of the old ice cream holder seemed like fitting continuity of the building's use—different, but comfortable and useful.

- the family and friends of **Marty Speltz**, who died on May 24. Marty was the son of James and Shirley Yarolimek Speltz, Minnesota City.
- the family and friends of Jane Fahrenholtz, who died on May 26. Jane was a member of the Baptist First Ladies of Minnesota City; she will be greatly missed.

MCHA extends best wishes to Leonard Mastenbrook, a long time Minnesota City resident, on his move to the Kensington in Winona. Len recently sold his home on Denzer Drive. Len was raised in Whitman-Deering Valley.

Riverway Celebrates Ten Year Anniversary with Focus on Environmental Education

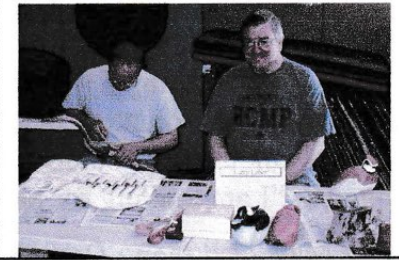
Persons who read the 360 publication, Bravura's Sustainability issue, *Living With Our World*, read about Riverway Learning Community's emphasis on Environmental Education. In the May, 2010 publication, Laurie Krause said "part of the mission at Riverway is to teach the 100 students how to think for the greater good... part of what we want them to understand is that we are a community and what we do affects each other." Riverway's schedule for May 15 included these offerings: Square Foot gardening, The Real Scoop on Soil, Canoeing at LaCanne, Cooking with Rhubarb, One School's Approach to Real, Wholesome Food, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Community Supported Agriculture, What Does Organic Really mean? Visitors to the Community on Saturday observed a number of community experts present on environmental issues.

Thank you to these contributors to the success of Minnesota City Day 2010:



Howard Volkart and Stan Ledebuhr listen to Earl Fakler discuss his woodworking activity.

- five area woodcarvers: Howard Volkart (who arranged the event), Earl Fakler, Steve Speltz, Larry Laber, and Stan Ledebuhr. Visitors were impressed by and interested in the wide range of subjects, styles, and size, among other aspects of the work.

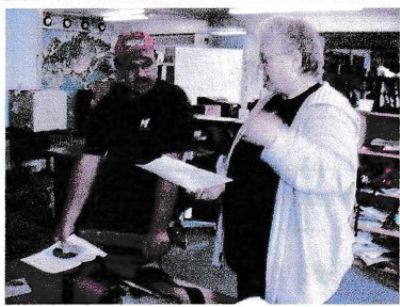


Woodcarvers Steve Speltz and Larry Laber demonstrate their art.

- St. Paul's Catholic Parish for participation in Mn.City Day with refreshments, historical congregation video, a sing-along

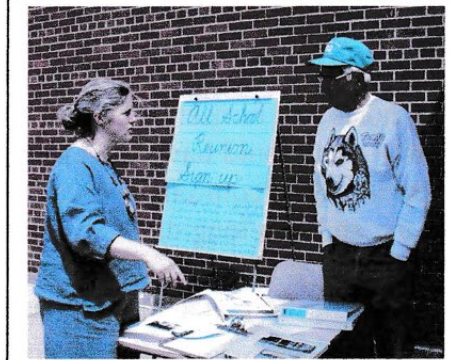
of traditional church music, and display of the heritage quilt. Thank you to Ruthanne Weispenning and Corrine Mullen for arrangement, choir members and pianist Roeckers.

- First Baptist Church Ladies Aid for refreshments (great cookies, Susan Althoff!) for their open house visitors, for church lawn care by the Friesens, Hostesses, Jean Gardner and Gladys Volkart.



Riverway parent Cory Berg listens to Andrea Church discuss aspects of genealogical research.

- Oakland Cemetery hosts, Cliff and Janet Hill Seabern, and Oakland Cemetery Association for a well cared for cemetery.
- The City for mounting of the Swinging Bridge Sign in time for the celebration.
- Andrea Church for genealogy sessions to assist for beginning genealogical research.
- LaVern Fritz for solicitation of names for a possible all Minnesota City School Reunion.



Rebecca O'Grady Weiss visits with LaVern Fritz about a proposed all school reunion.

- Becky O'Grady Weiss and Kate O'Grady for detail assistance before, during and after the celebration.
- The Ferden family for electrical work in time for the busy day.
- To Riverway for providing a site for Saturday's events and for Community Readers' meetings and MCHA meetings during the year.
- All who attended, visited and participated.

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) Continues Community Assistance

The most recent project of GBDRF has been landscaping work in the Gundersen Addition. Reseeding on new black dirt following tilling and dragging involved several GBDRF members and the use of donated equipment. The group has decided to retain its original name which had been appropriate to the flood disaster and remains the vision if other needs arise. Future plans of GBDRF include a Belgian Waffle Breakfast on May 21, Minnesota City Day 2011.



Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund Board members landscape flood damaged lawns in Gundersen

Local Media Features Minnesota Citizens

Winona Daily News has had stories on Minnesota Citizens that may interest newsletter readers. The May 28 edition carried a story on **Tyler Davis**, who is the son of MCHA members Richard and Aloha Denzer Davis. While doing a job search for a teaching position, Tyler has volunteered to help Winona and area residents with volunteer help for anything he is able to do—which seems to be many activities. He will cook, walk the dog, outdoor or indoor work. He will perform requests for up to one day. Tyler is quoted: “I am looking for breadth, here, not depth.” The Davis email is yourtyler@gmail.com.

The May 27 *Winona Daily News* contained a photo and caption on **Alfred Berndt**, who lives on Wenonah Road in Minnesota City. Berndt flew on the Honor Flight on April 3 to Washington, D. C. to see the World War II memorial.

Cross Country Walker Overnites at O’Grady Residence

At about 8:00 p.m. on May 28, Matt Green, who is walking across the US, knocked at the front door and asked if he could tent for the night on the lawn. We had skimmed the *Winona Daily News* May 27 account of his planned trip; he matched the photo. At age 30 and this far in the trip (he started at Rockaway Beach, New York), Matt has acquired some fine people skills that benefit his hosts and himself. He did not come to the house with his cart—that would have been presumptuous—but, permission granted, this required another small hike down the hill and back at the end of a long day. His introduction of himself is brief, and perhaps even briefer for us when we said we had read the newspaper story. After setting up his tent, showering, some technology tasks, he visited for the next couple of hours.



Matt Green ready to leave on May 29.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of his journey is that there is no fixed “goal.” His website it called “I’m Just Walkin.” We continue to think about that. He likes to walk and he likes the new experiences of people and places. His appreciative response to these is evident in his beautiful photos. He knew that from the many eight or ten mile walks he has made with friends to many different New York City neighborhoods. Some of his hosts have given him money—others give food and laundry service and many give conversation. Wisely, I think, he does little self disclosure until it is appropriate to the conversation. When we talked about Marv’s sister living in Jerusalem, we learned that he had been in Jerusalem for a period of time with a woman studying to be a rabbi. We talked about moral agendas of “youth” his age, with, in many cases, declining religious frameworks to address issues of race and militarism. A very strong “We are Really Old” feeling came to us at one point. When he saw the barn with the mural from the Peace Festival in 1972, we mentioned that it occurred on one of the most momentous weekends of the Vietnam War—and then realized, that he was not alive at that time. Matt talks about innate morality with or without religion that leads him to believe that people are trusting of individuals (perhaps not groups), and hence, he feels safe on this trip. Matt is joyful and humorous in many respects—also obvious in his photos-- and his youth was not a separator. Perhaps his urban background was—but we didn’t know that until he had left and mentioned on his blog that it was surreal to see cows wandering in the forest when he and Marv went to the top of the bluff to overlook the river. Matt hopes to be in Rockaway Beach Oregon in September. Coincidentally, we had been to Tillamook, a beach town sixteen miles north of Rockaway in the early eighties when relatives ranched in Oregon. We will long remember Matt’s visit.

Anyone interested in this man’s journey across America can follow his blog . <http://imjustwalkin.com/>. (We are day 64; we have enjoyed that the most comments were about our dog).