

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 5, Issue 10: October, 2011

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

Mark your calendars!

October 4: City Council Hearings, 149 Mill Street, Sewer Ordinance. 6:00 p.m.

October 15: Regular MCHA Meeting, 140 Mill Street, 9:30 a.m.

October 16: “Preserving Farm Heritage” MCHA sponsored presentation at First Baptist Church 140 Mill Street; 2:00 p.m.

October 20: Minnesota City Community Readers; Selection: *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street, 6:30 p.m.

Go “Green”!

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

Gordon W. Fredrickson, Author, Teacher, Farmer Presents “Preserving Farm Heritage” October 16

A Don't Miss Event!!! Invite family and friends, anyone who is interested in our rural heritage. Historic First Baptist Church, 140 Mill Street, Minnesota City, October 16, 2:00 p.m.

(From Fredrickson’s media resources) On Sunday, October 16, at 2:00 p.m., former teacher, farmer, and farm boy, Gordon W. Fredrickson, will be presenting a program on his book, *A Farm Country Picnic*. For the past eleven years, Gordon has been performing his stories for adults and children (ages ranging from 1-101) at county museums, senior centers, elementary schools, farm shows, and libraries. During his presentation, pictures of the past and colorful illustrations from the book are shown on a large screen as Gordon performs an introduction, a Prologue, a story, and an explanation of why he writes about farms.

Before and after the performance Fredrickson’s books will be for sale at discounted prices. The author will answer questions and autograph books. Several of these relate to rural upcoming holidays -- Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, -- and would be meaningful gift purchases. Everyone is invited to recall farm stories of his or her own. Members of MCHA who have attended Fredrickson presentations have found them entertaining and informative. Some materials related to Agriculture in Rollingstone Township will be displayed at the Archives.

Experimental Aircraft Association Sponsors Winona Airport

Winona Daily News (9-25-2011) recently carried news of the “adoption” of the Winona Airport by the local chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association, a Minnesota Department of Aeronautics program. MCHA member, Walt Kelly presented the signage to the chapter. Goals of the group are getting residents interested in aviation through airplane rides, work at the airport (Max Conrad), and developing positive relationships with the community. Kelly has long been identified with these activities and goals.

Minnesota City City Council Holds Hearings on Sewer Ordinance October 4

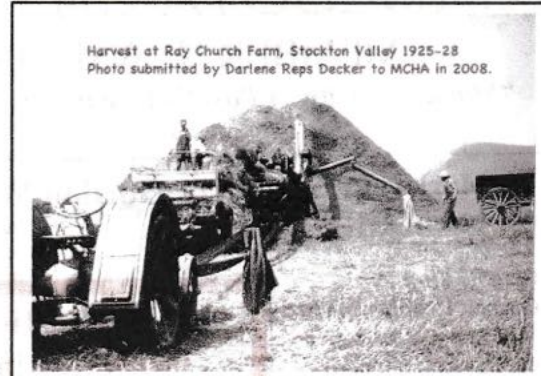
Hearings will be held at the City Council Building, 149 Mill Street at 6:00 p.m. on October 4 to consider the revised sewer ordinance for Minnesota City and on assessments for installation on the sewer system. The ordinance addresses Use of the Public Sewer, Connection and Sewer Systems, and Private Sewage Systems. The Hearing on Proposed assessment and possible adoption includes consideration of the nature of improvements, the area to be assessed, and the estimated cost. Questions may be addressed to Lori Donehower, City Clerk, 689-4344. Additional information is posted on the website:

www.minnesotacity.org.

Archives display Decker Church Farm Harvest Photos

One of the earliest and continuous financial supporters of MCHA has been Darlene Reps Decker, Flint, Michigan. In 2008 Darlene sent us a collection of photos, several of harvest time on the Ray Church farm in Stockton Valley. Three of these have been framed and permanently displayed in the Mill Street Archives. In view of the October MCHA presentation and the school reunion in July, this earlier communication from Darlene to MCHA is timely.

“Reading about the Church family brought back many memories. My mother was Gladys and Russell’s sister, and after she died I lived for a few years with Elmer and Ella Church. I also worked in the store when I was very young. I even worked in the Post Office. I don’t know if there were that many regulations then! Curtis Church and I were great friends, even though I was younger. We did a few inventories in the store. It was so much fun because we had everything from buttons, material and celluloid collars (which were out of date) to harnesses and some small farm equipment. I went to the two room school house and watched with great anticipation the building of a new school. It was so modern and wonderful to us. May God continue to bless you and all your efforts to keep these memories fresh. Darlene Decker.”



September First Baptist Church Service Includes Religion, History and Community

Attendees at the annual Baptist Service at the First Baptist Church Service on September 11 at Minnesota City listened to Jean Gardner’s report on the past year’s activities and current status of the First Baptist Ladies Aid, the women who have faithfully cared for the historic structure where friends and family gathered. Rev. Dennis Hudson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Winona preached on righteousness and sin—“sin,” he said, “our history,” and righteousness, “our choice.” Jean Gardner spoke of the loss of four members of their group in the past year and the health issues of two members, Gladys Volkart and Dorothy Brom. She also announced the marriage of Angela Zierfus (Denzer descendent); this wedding will be in the historic church in November. Gen O’Grady expressed the continuing appreciation of the Minnesota City Historical Association for their use of the rooms of the church for the Association Archives and the increased community



Attendees at September 11 service at
First Baptist Church

awareness of their presence in the building. At the suggestion of Susan Althoff, all participants in Sunday’s service gathered on the front steps of the church for a group photograph. Refreshments were served, prepared by Ladies Aid members. The golden glow that permeates the building through the amber glassed windows matches the comfortable, relaxed atmosphere of these gatherings and the sentiments of the selection of familiar music from the original church hymnals. Dallas Denzer led the group in song as Jean Gardner accompanied on the historic organ.

Notes:

- Please watch for discussion in the November newsletter related to membership donations.
- Persons with additional information on any topics of the newsletter or any corrections are invited to send them to mgogrady@embarqmail.com.

Valued Agricultural Heritage Evidenced by Century Farms

To qualify as a century farm, land must have had continuous family ownership for at least 100 years, and have fifty or more acres of land. The large number of farms listed as Minnesota City or Rollingstone which have been recognized as century farms (there are others) are testimony to the value of preserving farm heritage. This list is organized by residence of owner, not necessarily of the land; deaths and living relocations because of age or children's "taking over" on farms accounts for incompleteness of the list. Recognition as a century farm is not automatic; many other farms in the area are unrecognized, but equally valued through continuing family ownership.

Russell T. (deceased) and Reid Church

Adelaide Haxton

Roy and Dixie Loken

Eugene and Lois Marxhausen

Roman and Mary Walch

Ardella Nilles (deceased)

Edwin and Judith Maus

William Hoffman

Henry and Alice Neuman

William Michaelis

Ray Faber

Elmer and Henrietta Matzke

Duane and Cindy Herber

Edward Lehnertz

LeRoy Tibesar

Mrs. Arnold Kalmes

Edwin Jr. and Nora Butenhoff

Agnes Evanson

James and Shirley Speltz

Facts You Might Want to Know About Bats

About a year ago at this time, the Baptist First Ladies Aid contracted for the removal of bats from the historic Mill Street First Baptist Church. Since then interesting facts have emerged/been confirmed about Minnesota bats. Preceding the removal contract, Brian Campbell, Minnesota City, had constructed and donated bat houses which were installed on the back of the church (Because most of us knew or believed that bats do more good than harm by their consumption of mosquitoes). This is confirmed in a University of Minnesota Extension Article, "Bats in Houses" authored by Jennifer Menken. According to Menken, "Minnesota has seven species of bats. Two of the most common, the big brown bat and the little brown bat, will commonly roost in people's houses. Bats do much more good than harm eating tons of insects, including mosquitoes, each year. But when they move in with people they can cause problems. Of greatest concern is the potential for diseases such as histoplasmosis found in bat droppings and the rare occurrence of rabies in a bat that might fall sick and be found by a pet or child." Further important information from Menken is related to identification of presence of bats. "Bats usually keep a low profile inside a house staying up in the eaves and attic. Some signs that you might have bats include high-pitched squeaks and scratching at night. These sounds come from high inside the walls or ceiling. Wear a dust mask, and look for droppings in attics and under eaves. The droppings will be dark in color, and greasy and may have insect body parts inside (*More than some of us want to know*). Bats will often stain the sides of a building with these droppings as they are flying in and out at night. Rounded or cylindrical droppings are usually signs of rodents. A strong, pungent odor is often associated with droppings. Of course a bat flying around inside the house or bats leaving at dusk through attic windows are also good signs that bats are around (*most of us would recognize this sign!!*) Exclusion is the only remedy for bat presence, but many, because of the bats insatiable consumption of mosquitoes, prefer construction of bat houses as opposed to destruction. Bat removal efforts of the Baptist First Ladies have utilized information available; their efforts have benefited the church and archives areas. The "removers" at the church confirmed bat use of the Campbell bat houses. Menken's article had additional information for interested persons; recent media releases have included discussion of declining bat populations primarily due to the spread of White-Nose Syndrome, including the July/August issue of Minnesota Conservation Volunteer, "A Coming Crisis for Our Bats" (available at the Archives).

Buried In Oakland: Merle Martin; 12/25/1927 to 10/23/1984

Merle was the son of John and Ella Martin. Newspaper accounts report some of Martin's early school activities, which included helping to organize a Boy Scout Troop in Minnesota City and planting trees for a windbreak around the schoolyard. On February 10, 1937, he is listed as having perfect attendance in the primary grades. Merle, along with Jay Alleman was a Patrol leader for the Boy Scouts in March 1937. He is listed as a member of Troop 15 at a program for Boy Scout Charter Night. In 1939, Merle played the role of Mr. Haskins in a play entitled "Christmas Disappointment" at the school. Merle was confirmed at the Lutheran Church in Minnesota City on May 29, 1941. Other names in that class included James Stewart, Vernelle Richter, Lorraine Sandstede, Phyllis Maxham and Clayton Maxham. Merle's father was also a member of the Lutheran church of Minnesota City and is also buried in Oakland. Newspaper items include mention of Merle with the Minnesota City Boat Club and other outdoor recreations. He was in the US Army in WWII. He married Harriet Prudoehl, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Phillips, Minnesota City, at the Evangelical Lutheran parsonage at Onamia, Minnesota in 1950. The couple then moved to Minnesota City.



(In an obituary displayed at an Oakland Cemetery Minnesota City Day function, the information about Merle Martin was inadvertently confused with biography of Adolph Martin. Information on Merle is incomplete. Readers with corrections of newsletter information are always invited to send them to mgogrady@rconnect.com, and additions to existing information are always welcomed.)

MCHA invites thoughtful consideration

of all the persons and events affected by the death of Chase Kolstad at the Minnesota City Bridge on September 14.

MCHA acknowledges:

Jamie Harper, longtime Riverway Learning Community employee, for Winona Daily News' examination of his artistic work that includes reuse of materials, mostly doors, for painting canvas.

MCHA extends sympathy:

-to the family of M. Judith Schmidt who died on September 6 at the age of 68. Judy was the sister of Laurie Krause, Director of Riverway Learning Community. Judy was an early important supporter of the Charter School.

-to the family of LeRoy Burt. LeRoy died on Sept 18, at the age of 84. The parents of LeRoy, Ernest and Helen Burt were residents of the area on Highway 248. Some of the children attended Minnesota City School.

-to the family of Gordon Kimber, Preston, who died on September 24, father of Thomas Kimber, Whitman Deering Road. Gordon's wife Doris died on June 29, 2011.

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.

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.