

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 8, Issue 3: March, 2014

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

Mark your Calendars!

March 8: MCHA Monthly Meeting; 115 Iowa Street, former Minnesota City School; 9:30

March 8: Minnesota City Book Shelf Open; 9:30-11:00 a.m.; 115 Iowa Street

March 23: Conversation: Bees and Blooms; Former Minnesota City School, 115 Iowa St; 2:00 p.m.

March 27: Minnesota City Community Readers: Selection: Stephen King's *11/22/63*; 115 Iowa Street, former Minnesota City School; 6:30 p.m.

March 27: Minnesota City Book Shelf Open, 6:30-8:00 p.m. 115 Iowa Street.

May 17: Minnesota City Day

July 13: Goetzman Century Farm Open House: Winona County Historical Society

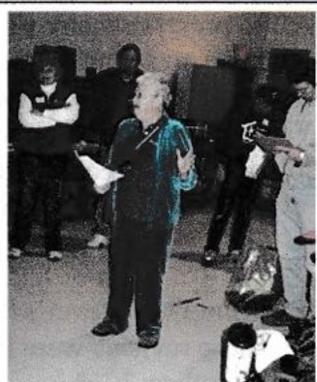
“Go Green!”

If you receive this letter in paper “hardcopy” and would like to receive it electronically, please call 689-2440.

March 23: Bees and Blooms; MCHA Members Share Information

On **March 23 at 2:00 p.m.**, Minnesota City Historical Association Members will share their knowledge and experience with bees and blooms. At this time the conversation is scheduled at the former Minnesota City School, 115 Iowa Street. Alternate site would be the Archives at the First Baptist Church. Hollis Donehower and Howard Volkart will discuss bees, beekeeping, and honey, and Lynda Brzezinski, a master (is that mistress?) gardener, will focus on bird and butterfly gardening - what we can draw in and the things we want to consider, including plants, water, shelter, and nesting. Beekeeping in Minnesota City has an old, if unfamiliar to many, history. A 1933 *Winona Republican Herald* reported on an elaborate Southeastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin Beekeepers Association picnic held at Kellogg with more than an hundred attendees. L. A. Stickney, Minnesota City, was the president of the group. The discussion was on methods of controlling “foul brood,” other diseases of bees, and other insect pests in Minnesota. **Please watch local media for site.**

Jaye Fritz Memorial Gift Utilized for MCHA Media Purchases



Jaye Fritz surrounded by Thrivent personnel and volunteers in Riverway Learning Community's auditorium, makes announcements and gives directions to the work group and flood victims at the December 1 workday (2007)

It is now nearly five years since the death of Jaye Fritz on March 11, 2009. Following Jaye's death, MCHA was given a financial tribute by the Fritz family with no specific use directed, but with the hope it could be used for an object with some permanence. The dollars have been maintained by the Association in a Memorial Fund. When MCHA recently purchased a projector and screen for program use, members recognized an “Object Purchase” that would be a fitting incorporation of the Fritz memorial money. The media pieces make possible “spreading the word” about Minnesota City and many projects and topics that were important in Jaye's life. When Jaye's husband, LaVern, was asked about this use of the money, he agreed.

MCHA is grateful to the Fritz family for this contribution, and for the life of Jaye Fritz which impacted the lives of so many.

At the time of her death, Jaye was the clerk of Rollingstone Township and a founder of the Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund. As her obituary recounted, “Jaye touched the lives of so many in ways that are too numerous to identify.” Thank you for this gift, Jaye Fritz family. We remember.

From newsletter readers: Suggestions, Comments, Information.

Readers missed or were too kind to comment on last month's dating of the material received from Sherry Havener related to William Haddock. The material came to MCHA January 16, 2014, not 1014 as printed. Readers are requested to send all corrections and questions to mgogrady@embarqmail.com.

A newsletter reader, **Bernadette O'Grady DiMauro**, Atlanta, suggested that the story of the death of Richard Bull, Nels Oleson (right), on *Little House on the Prairie* should/could be reported as a local death. Bull was 89 years old. In the series, Nels was the shopkeeper in the Ingalls frontier village, always, it seems, on the side of the right actions and decisions.

Characters on *Little House* as well as on *The Waltons*, another rich value laden series, seemed to be family members. This was perhaps the result of the restriction of TV viewing to "wholesome" shows in many families that left these two shows among the favorites, and the reruns of them remain constant on TV.



"Pa" Deadline.com



"Nels" Getty image

It is this intergenerational appreciation of value laden stories that both Gordon Fredrickson and Jerry Apps have hope for in promoting their own literature. (John Walton, Ralph Waite, 85, photo left, died since this was written). We believe many homes with children who watched these series will be watching reruns.

MCHA member, **Gayle Goetzman**, Winona, sent information on the Goetzman family farm land achieving Century Farm status on July 10, 2014 at Winona County Fairgrounds. The one hundred and sixty acre Big Valley Ranch, where Gayle has worked to preserve many significant aspects of her family's heritage, is on this property. Gayle is a well known area equestrian, a riding instructor, and a person known to many area residents as one committed to horses and the people who care for and about them. On July 13, a Goetzman Open House Farm Chicken Dinner will be held at the Winona County Historical Society. Additional information on Century Farms will be included in future newsletters. The Century Farms in our immediate newsletter connections include Maus, Butenhoff, Evanson and Speltz properties.

Jean Gardner sent book reviews of two books of interest: Kent Otto Stever's "*Growing Up on the Mississippi*" and Keven Fenton's "*Leaving Rollingstone*." These reviews were in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, written by Marian Grossman, and posted in December, 2013 (<http://www.twincities.com>). The Stever book recounts adventures of Stever in Winona and a 100 year history of city transportation, and his thoughts on professional wrestling. The Kevin Fenton review gives readers a flavor of the book, describing his fascination with Spirograph, a pattern making device, still in the homes of area residents. It quotes Fenton: "I was born into stories..." Minnesota City Community Readers have Fenton's book on this year's reading list.

Janet Hill Seabern has had additional communication about the Lloyd families, former residents of the area, and with Geraldine Werner who lived on Lake Street area, attended the Maybury school, and was a classmate of the Leerkamps, including Henry, whom she inquired about.

Marianne Mastenbrook has contributed information on Mary Campbell, Minnesota City early settler and orchardist. This information will be detailed in a future newsletter.

MCHA Informs Visitors at Winona County Historical Society Open House Event



Don Evanson monitors the display at Winona County Historical Society Open House

The MCHA assigned display table for the Winona County Historical Society Open House on February 9 was in a crowded second floor area of the museum which enhanced the impression that many people were interested in the material being presented by MCHA and the three other tables of the area-- Pickwick Mill, the Rollingsstone Luxembourg Museum, and Libby McNeill, a weaver. In addition to



Rebecca O'Grady Weiss and Marvin OGrady arrange items on MCHA display table at Winona County Historical Society Open House

newsletters, Association brochures, a light frame photo display, the table also displayed a number of archival pieces. These included an Oaks platter, the WWI memorial plate from the Church Brothers store (1919), a cat o nine tails (donated by Neil Denzer), the Vill and Fifield Bottles, Sesquicentennial items and others. The table was monitored efficiently by Janet Hill Seabern, Jean Gardner, Don Evanson, David and Brenda Eckert, assisted by others in set up and dismantling. Thank you to these and to all persons all persons who visited the exhibit.

Kupietz Feed Business In Winona Changes Owners

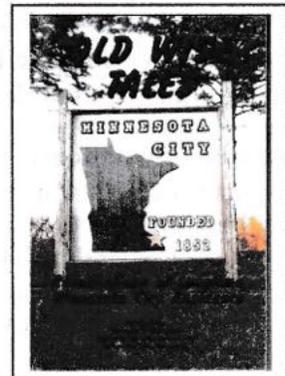
The January 25 issue of *Winona Daily News* carried the story of the change in ownership of the Kupietz Feed Sales and Service Store business in Winona. Kelvin Penrod, Mill Street, Minnesota City resident and City Council member is the son of Sharon Penrod, the business owner. As new owners Thiele, Pronschinske, and Whalen said, "the establishment is known and has a good reputation for its products which include pet food, bird seed and gardening items." Kelvin remembers that his grandfather started Kupietz store in 1973, first selling products from his home (Ernie and Alice Kupietz home, Winona) and then moving to the East Second Street location. Four generations of family, including Kelvin, have worked in the store.

Thank you to Mary Hadley, Rushford, for two "Oaks items" for the archives. One is a shot glass inscribed with "The Oaks," and the second is a decal. (See photo).



Old Wise Tales Available for Purchase

MCHA has purchased from St. Mary's Press, Winona, fifty copies of *Old Wise Tales* written and produced by students at Riverway Learning Community in 2002. A \$10.00 donation for the book is requested; it is available by calling 689-4103 or 689-2440. Persons whose lives in Minnesota City are detailed in the interviews are: Roger Church, Delores Gallagher, Lola Denzer, Jean Gardner, Lydia Singer, Gladys and Howard Volkart, Kateri Mueller, Clare Denzer and deceased individuals, Gerald Cisewski, George and Gloria Denzer, Mildred Jessie, Delwin Tschumper, August Jilk, Ray Denzer, Eleanor Whetstone, Ralph Evanson, Dorothy Brom, Beverly Mastenbrook, Neil Denzer, Margaret Kowalewski, and Ruth Mrozek. MCHA had purchased all remaining copies of the volume when Riverway moved from Minnesota City. With only one copy of that group remaining in the archives, the reprinting by St. Mary's was very much valued.



Language History from *History of Wabasha County, 1884*

"There are two or three instances where the English interpretation has been substituted for the original Dakota (Mdawakanton Sioux). White Water is the name of a river which runs through the northern part of the county. It is the translation of the Dakota "Minne-ska" signifying "White Water." The village at the south of that stream in Wabasha County is called Minneiska. The name of Rolling Stone is another instance. There is an interpretation of the name given by the Dakotas to the Rolling Stone Creek, "eyan-omen-man-met-pah," the literal translation of which is "the stream where the stone rolls." Its true signification is not known. It was called by the French traders of more modern times, "Roche que le Boule." These names were obtained from O.M. Lord, who acquired them from Gen. Sibley."

*Minnesota City historians have "history" of the rolling stone as a location with an actual rolling stone. Information on the French traders would be welcomed for the archives.

Gladys and Howard Volkart are "Old Settlers" Oldest Married Couple

The Winona Daily News (Feb. 16) reported that Howard and Gladys Volkart, Minnesota City, were the longest married couple present at the recent Old Settlers Meeting in Winona. They have been married for 67 years. Additionally, Howard was the oldest man in attendance at age 95. MCHA congratulates them. The couple has lived at their current location since 1934. They both continue to inspire with their choices of and levels of activity, their humor, happy attitudes, overcoming some health challenges, and their support of and interest in their friends and community. From the beginning of MCHA activities in 2002, Howard and Gladys have been present at nearly every programming event of the association. We value their support.

Membership Drive nets \$1535.00 in Memberships and Donations

As we go to press, the January MCHA membership solicitation drive has netted \$1535.00 in donations and memberships. **The Association is very grateful for all contributions.** The newsletter is a useful vehicle to promote the rich history of Minnesota City and the area. All donations are used for Association expenses. Any person who did not receive a membership letter in January and wishes to contribute is invited to send the membership \$15.00 fee to MCHA, Box 21, Minnesota City Mn. 55959. Also, please notify of confusions in addresses, names, or other issues. (689-2440 or 689-4103).

MCHA Expresses sympathy to the family and friends of Irene Merchlewitz, 93, who died on January 15, 2014 in Winona. Irene's family includes her daughter Judy Hohensee, Minnesota City. Irene and her husband Len lived at Bass Camp for 24 years and attended St. Paul's where she sewed and quilted with her daughter and others.

Standing Invitations:

- to attend regular meetings of MCHA. These meetings are held at 140 Mill Street. In cold weather months, generally October to May these are at the former school building.
- to respond to newsletter content. Please send additions, corrections, suggestions, calendar information (meetings, reunions, birthdays, other significant dates) etc. to mgogrady@embarqmail.com.
- **Writers of regular columns would be welcomed.** These might include monthly columns on area businesses, churches, schools, organizations or other relevant topics on the area and/or our history.



Four of eight eagles interrupted while scavenging on County Road 23.