

# MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 15, Issue 1: March 2020

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

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **March 14:**

Minnesota City Historical Association Monthly Meeting; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Minnesota City City Hall, 149 Mill Street.

### **March 26:**

Minnesota City Community Readers; Thursday, 6:30 p.m.; Minnesota City City Hall, 149 Mill Street. Selection: *The Girl in the Green Sweater* by Krystyna Chiger

### **May 16:**

Minnesota City Day

### **“Go Green!”**

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

## **A Memory of December 7, 1941 By Howard Volkart**

The old Methodist Church on Minnesota Street in Minnesota City later became the Woodmen’s Lodge. The Woodmen had moved out, probably to Winona. The building was empty and not being used anymore.

Curtis Church contacted the Woodmen and got permission to put up backstops and basketball hoops inside and use it as a basketball court. The building had hardwood floors, but no lights so could only be used in daytime. There was no heat either, it was sometimes pretty cold in there until we got playing.

I was on the Minnesota City Cardinals basketball team and we practiced there once a week. Games were hosted there 2-3 times a season. There were no scoreboards or referees. Two teams I remember we played were Lewiston and the Winona Lutheran School. Our team was together a couple of years.

Team members were Louie McMartin, Curtis Church, Bill Saehler, Arnie Cisewski, Warner Buswell and myself. There were probably some younger guys, too.

That Sunday we had practiced in the afternoon and afterwards went to Sandstedt’s Bar. Mr. Sandstedt was always behind the bar with a cigar in his mouth. When you would go up to the bar he’d ask, “A beer?” It was a warm day, no snow on the ground. The team walked over there because that’s where we had parked. There wasn’t much parking over on that other street.

We walked in and there was a card game going on, probably 500. Roy Buswell said, “Did you hear the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor this morning?”



The Methodist Church on Minnesota Street



Howard Volkart

You fellows know what you’ll be doing.” We had come into the bar in high spirits but when we heard that our mood turned somber. We knew the draft was coming up. We each got a bottle of pop, probably orange crush or grape.

Then we all went home to be with our families.

## December Caroling a Memorable Event

By Rebecca O'Grady Weiss and Kate O'Grady

As we near the spring thaw,  
it's nice to recall  
How back mid-December,  
some locals will remember,  
In the dark of the winter  
with noses a-blowin'  
The First Baptist Church had  
ice lanterns a glowin'



Hot chocolate and coffee, the treats on display  
The friends all gathered on the yearly Saturday  
The Yule log was brought in with jingle bells ringing  
The legend and lore shared with laughter and singing

Previous years there'd been Santa and Frosty, And choosing a skit is kind of exhaust-y  
When skipping the show was within an inch, Some who suggested "What about the Grinch?"



With e-mails and phone calls, solicitations came  
Can we add to the program your talent and name?  
Soon the Whos of the Village were gathered as one  
Readers in front & actors for fun  
For some MCHAers it was show number one

Songs were sung, all were happy they stayed  
As the accordion and violin were merrily played.  
Oh How Lovely was the evening  
Our 3-part round kept repeating

The lights were dimmed low for Silent Night  
Then Brenda and Pastor David introduced a new tradition of light  
Just north of town center a tree was lit to shine through the season  
Perhaps small now, but just wait a bit – a happy reminder of community's reason

With a stamp of a foot (on a pedal not a horse) the carolers embarked  
Singing their songs (the wagon decorated of course), on the streets in the dark  
To the Maus Family we're once again in debt,  
As well to all others who helped make the night a success

The Whos' message came through loud and clear  
Christmas is not about gifts, it's about spreading the cheer  
MCHA looks at the future, the present, the past  
And Christmas is near as long as we have friends' hands to clasp.



Courtesy of GoogleImages

**MCHA extends sympathy to family and friends of:**

- Brenda Eckert, whose father, Raymond Hass, 89, died in Harmony, WI on February 20.
- Robert Malin, 80, who died in Spring Valley on February 20.
- Joyce L (Holmgren) Regan, 93, who died in Winona on November 27, 2019.
- Theresa A. Kronebusch, 88, of Oak Ridge, who died on January 14.
- Martin B. Luehrs, age 94, of Winona, who died on January 11. After a Navy tour, he entered the Trappist Monastery, Our Lady of Gethsemane Abbey, in Trappist, KY.

**ROLLINGSTONE TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Rollingstone Township, County of Winona, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Meeting and Election will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until the third Tuesday, March 17, 2020.

The Election Poll hours will be from 5:00pm to 8:00pm, at which time the voters will elect:

**1 Supervisor  
1 Clerk**

The Board of Canvass will immediately follow the election. The Annual Meeting will commence at approximately 8:15 pm following the Election and Board of Canvass.

The Annual Meeting, Election and Absentee Voting will be held at the Rollingstone Township Town Hall, located at: 24643 Highway 248, Minnesota City, MN 55959

The Town Hall will be open for Absentee Voting on: Saturday, March 7, 2020 from 10:00am to noon.

For more information call 454-3849.

*Marcia Anderson, Clerk*

**Winona Post March 1, 2020**

**Tuesday  
March 10  
2020  
Rollingstone  
Township  
Election!**

**Rollingstone  
Town Hall**

“Rollingstone Township drew a permit to build a new town hall.”

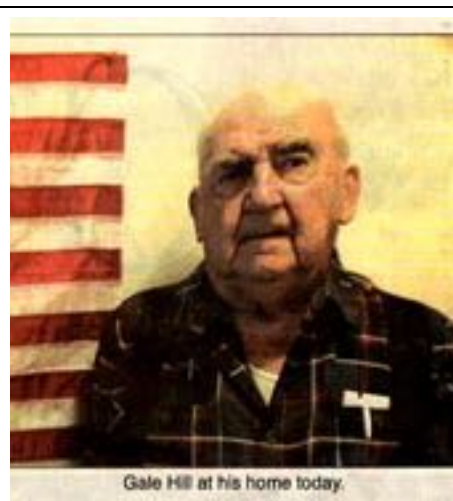
Winona  
Republican  
Herald  
October 25,  
1971.

**Gale Hill Shares His Military Background**

One of the oldest members of MCHA, Gale Hill occasionally shares information about himself for our readers. These information pieces were penned by Wayne Quist, a retired Air Force Colonel and investment banker, a member of the Lake City Historical Society.

“After completing training in 1944, Gale traveled to New York and shipped out to Le Havre. It was the beginning of the coldest European winter on record and just a few days before the Battle of the Bulge...”

“German army penetrated deep into the American lines, creating a 50 mile ‘bulge’.



Gale Hill at his home today.

Gale, along with thousands of other newly arrived riflemen, were rushed from Le Havre directly to the front lines. Fighting was fierce and it turned out to be the biggest battle on the western front during the war in Europe. There were over 80,000 Americans and an even greater number of German casualties. Gale was a survivor. As a combat infantryman in the Battle of the Bulge on Christmas Day, Gale remembers white hot shrapnel ripping and falling almost everywhere from German artillery. Gale was deep into Germany when Eisenhower announced that Hitler had surrendered on May 8, 1945.”



Gale R. Hill before going to war.

This material appeared in the Lake City Graphic on May 24, 2018. Writer B. Wayne Quist concludes it: “To Gale and all 16 million men and women who served during World War II, we say on this Memorial Day, Thank you for your sacrifice, You are not forgotten”.

## Denzer Solar Farm Approved



In a meeting of the Winona County Board held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, a corrected version of the proposed Solar Array by Novel Energy Solutions on the Darwin and Susan Denzer property was discussed and approved. A Conditional Use permit was granted to allow a 1 MW utility scale solar project within the Mississippi River Bluffs overlay on slopes between twelve and eighteen percent. The proposed array will be constructed on a portion of an approximately ninety-nine acre land parcel on the north side off highway 248 between Minnesota City and Rollingstone. Some opinions cite issues with construction noise, aesthetics and sustainable panel manufacturing as cons to solar power while others indicate it's a good way to use non-economical farmland to help ease energy dependence. According to the MPR News, Minnesota solar energy use jumped nearly 50% in 2018 to about 882 megawatts (enough to power about 100,000 homes) and become the second largest electricity source for the state. CBSMinnesota reported that Minnesota's largest solar project for any city in the state was completed in Brooklyn Park in 2019 and houses 6000 panels.

## March

By William Cullen Bryant

*The stormy March is come at last,  
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies,  
I hear the rushing of the blast,  
That through the snowy valley flies.*

*Ah, passing few are they who speak,  
Wild stormy month! in praise of thee;  
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,  
Thou art a welcome month to me.*

*For thou, to northern lands, again  
The glad and glorious sun dost bring,  
And thou hast joined the gentle train  
And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.*

*And, in thy reign of blast and storm,  
Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,  
When the changed winds are soft and warm,  
And heaven puts on the blue of May.*

*Then sing aloud the gushing rills  
And the full springs, from frost set free,  
That, brightly leaping down the hills,  
Are just set out to meet the sea.*

*The year's departing beauty hides  
Of wintry storms the sullen threat;  
But in thy sternest frown abides  
A look of kindly promise yet.*

*Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,  
And that soft time of sunny showers,  
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,  
Seems of a brighter world than ours.*



**MCHA invites readers to submit** dates for the newsletter of family reunions, milestone birthdays, and other events about which readers wish to share information.

Check [www.minnesotacity.org](http://www.minnesotacity.org) or use the QR code.

Submit information to [mgograpy@embarqmail.com](mailto:mgograpy@embarqmail.com)



**Anyone who wishes to donate to or 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.**