



Lake Villa Historical Society's Vintage Views

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President's Letter

Dear Members:

Hope everyone had a great summer!

As we try to keep social distancing, we still are not able to have our monthly meetings and programs. However, the Historical Society Board Members will be working on some virtual history programs to put on our Facebook page and website. Please visit

www.lakevillahistory.org or see Lake Villa Historical Society on Facebook for periodical updates.



I'm sad to report that after much consideration, the Historical Society Board has voted to cancel Breakfast with Santa 2020. In this COVID

environment, it was decided that it would be too difficult to eliminate the risk of exposure for both the guests and volunteers, therefore we are taking the "better safe than sorry" approach this year. But, as Frosty the Snowman would say, "We will be back again someday."

Please keep an eye out for membership renewal letters to come in the mail in early 2021. The Historical Society will need your support more than ever.

As we look forward to 2021, I wish you all the best of health and a happy holiday season!

Lori Heitman
President

Closed But Still Working

This newsletter marks the third issue of Vintage Views during the COVID-19 pandemic. The museum remains closed to the public, but our Board and volunteers continue the mission of collecting and preserving the history of our community.

Perhaps the most exciting development is the purchase of new technology. Two new laptops, a wireless printer and upgraded software were purchased and are now in use. Having laptops will allow us to work and print from all areas of the museum which is an exciting prospect.

Additionally, the collection cataloging program was changed to a web-based program. The new program, CatalogIt, is very easy to use to accession new items into our collection. Even better, it is easy to search our collection for topics and artifacts, people and resources.

Volunteers Needed

The new cataloging program will allow us to add pictures of all the items in our collection. This will *eventually* allow us to share details of displays and items in our collection with the public. The process will be easy to do, but labor intensive and time consuming. *Volunteers would be greatly appreciated.* If you have time to devote to this project, please contact LVHS via email or phone as indicated above. No experience or long-term commitment is needed.

Breakfast With Santa 2020 Canceled

LVHS is sad to announce that Breakfast with Santa has been canceled for this year. Planning and offering the event is always the highlight of our year. We'll be working to make the 2021 event the best one ever! Until then,

perhaps we'll all need to be like this little guy who mailed his letter to Santa at Ben Franklin in 1970. Sometimes the old-fashioned ways are the best.

Recent Donations

LVHS is grateful to our community members who generously donate artifacts, photographs, books, plaques and so much more.

- *Lake Villa Rescue Squad
- *Village of Lake Villa
- *Anonymous
- *Michael Wolff
- *Kristin Roggy



Pleviak Yearbooks



Rusty milk can from Ben T. Falch farm, Lake Villa. Dug up from a field and saved for future generations.

Thank You

Dave Bogenschutz for the purchase and installation of a new smoke detector for the main museum.

With Sympathy to...

Bob Sobon



William A. Stanley



Joanne Schable

*the family of LVHS member **Bob Sobon**, 66, who died August 3, 2020. Bob and good friends went out digging for bottles just about every Saturday for the past ten years. On May 15, 2018 Bob presented a very interesting and informative program about bottle collection for LVHS. He brought dozens of examples of bottles he had found in the area. Bob was also an avid coin collector.

* LVHS members Bill and Julie Stanley and family on the peaceful passing on September 22, 2020 of Bill's father. **William Arthur Stanley**, 91 years old of Antioch, IL. Bill moved his family to the former Antioch (Bluff Lake) summer home of Curt Teich, the producer of the first color picture postcards. Young Bill and his brother found many of these historic postcards while cleaning a barn on the property. Mr. Stanley began working for American Family Insurance in 1965; was the company's first District Manager and was proud to have hired the very first American Family agent. He sold the first insurance policy in the newly opened site in the state of Illinois. Bill and Julie continue to operate the American Family Insurance Agency in Lake Villa.

*LVHS members Sue and Jay Cribb on the recent death of Sue's Mom, **Joanne Schable**, 92 years of age, who died October 18, 2020 at her rural home near Atwood, Illinois following a brief illness. She was born on Christmas Day in 1927 and spread joy throughout her life. She was active in her church and community, including Habitat for Humanity. She was also known as "Cookie Grandma" for all the goodies she baked and shared freely...a tradition Sue carries on to the delight of her friends.

History on the Table

Food plays an important part in our lives for physical health and for social and emotional health as well. Nowhere was this more evident than at Peacock Camp in Lake Villa. The camp operated in summers from 1939 through 1999 and served children and teens with physical disabilities. Many of the most cherished memories of campers and staff revolve around mealtime and snacks. Naturally there were camp standards of campfires with s'mores, cookouts with tinfoil dinners and banana boats and Casino nights featuring Glen Rock pop. Mealtimes also involved dancing, singing, swinging from the rafters and the occasional food fight. During lunch the sneaky stick made an appearance. It was clipped on to counselors' clothes and the person caught with it at the end of the meal got thrown in the pool fully clothed.

Afternoons brought Interest Groups. Each day campers could sign up for a different activity. The rule was that counselors could plan anything that wasn't lewd, illegal or hazardous to your health. Many days one of the activities would involve cooking. A favorite, especially on rainy days, was Aggression Cookies: the more you pound and poke them, the better they are. They are a fun and delicious activity kids love. What better time than now to make cookies and relieve some stress at the same time!

Aggression Cookies

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix with clean, well-washed hands. The more you mix, pound, mash, squeeze and poke them the better they are!

1 ½ cups butter, softened
3 cups Quaker Oats, uncooked
½ tablespoon baking soda
1 ½ cups flour
1 ½ cups packed brown sugar

Roll into small balls and space widely on a cookie sheet. Bake for 10-12 minutes.

For lunch on the last full day of camp, sack lunches with names on them were prepared and hidden all over the campgrounds. Often a staff



member could be seen eating on the roof or dripping wet on the pool deck

where their lunch was found. That evening, with everyone dressed in their best outfit, was a banquet fit for Thanksgiving dinner. Campers voted on a theme and decorated the rec hall. In addition to the wonderful meal there were awards all around, singing, skits and guest appearances. Turkey with the fixings for Banquet led to another camp favorite meal:

Thanksgiving Leftover Casserole

In a 2-quart casserole dish, layer:
Stuffing (leftover or Stovetop)
Leftover shredded turkey
Fresh broccoli (or any vegetable)
Gravy (or cream of mushroom soup)
More turkey
More stuffing
More gravy

Bake at 350 until hot and bubbly. Top with parmesan if desired and serve.



Banquet Night Photos

Page From the PastHistory of Beck Rd. (and the electric chair)

Having lived on *North Beck Rd.* (not to be confused with *East Beck*, or *South Beck*, or just plain Beck Rd.), Kim McCollum had always wondered how the road got its name. Here is the story her research discovered. Who was **Beck**? And why does he have so many roads?



We begin in 1842, with the birth of Anton Beck. He enlisted in the Illinois Volunteer Cavalry in

1861 at the age of 19. Making his way back to Lake County on foot after the Civil War, he began life as a farmer in rural Antioch Township on Bonner Rd. (present day Beck Rd. in Lindenhurst, Lake Villa Township). The Beck Farm was located where Briar Ln. meets Beck Rd, roughly 3 blocks north of BJ Hooper School. Anton Beck married Anna and they had a son, William, born in 1892. Will attended Sand Lake School and grew up farming. Our story now takes a gruesome turn. It is May 16, 1928 at 8pm. It is cold, dark and pouring rain. On that fateful night, the home is occupied by William Beck, now age 35, his mother Anna, 75, and his invalid father, Anton, age 85. Mrs. Beck is upstairs with her enfeebled husband when a knock comes at the door.

“Open the door, or I’ll kill you!”

Will opens the door a crack, then slams it shut, swinging his body sideways against the door to bar the intruders. There is an explosion of a gun. The slug tears through the thin wooden door and rips through Beck’s abdomen. The robbers entered the house, bound and gagged Will’s mother who had come downstairs to see what the trouble was, and proceeded to rob the place of money and bonds. One of the robbers was wearing a mask and seemed quite familiar with the premises. A total of \$16 cash and \$400

of Liberty bonds was taken before the bandits fled into the night.

Anna Beck managed to slip out of her ropes and run a half mile to the closest neighbor for help. The heavy rain left Beck Rd. so rutted and muddy that the ambulance had great difficulty reaching the Beck farm, but eventually William Beck was taken to Victory Hospital in Waukegan where he died from his injuries. Before William died, he was able to identify his assailants. The leader of the pair was named Dominick Bressette, who claimed to be a Chippewa Indian Chief from Wisconsin. He had worked for the Becks’ the previous summer as a farmhand, which was why he was familiar with the home. He had coerced two other drifters to join him in the robbery.

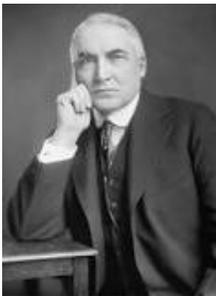
The manhunt began but was short-lived. After the crime, all three men returned to Chicago. Two of the men plied Bressette with bootleg whiskey until he was drunk, then robbed him of his share of the loot. Bressette sought revenge, marching into the Maxwell St. police station and confessing to the crime, also giving the names and whereabouts of his two accomplices. Justice was swift. All three men went to trial on October 22, 1928, and were convicted two days later, with all three receiving the death penalty. What happened next made Illinois state history. Dominick Bressette, John Brown, and Claude Clarke were convicted of murdering William Beck and were the first in Illinois to die in the electric chair on December 15, 1928. They were the first of 97 criminals executed this way until 1962, when lethal injection replaced electrocution.



Now that’s a story to remember next time you’re driving from Beck to Beck to Beck Roads!

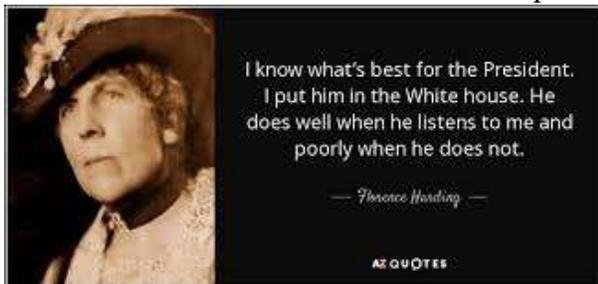
One Hundred Years Ago

Just like 2020, the year 1920 was also a Presidential election year. Republican Warren G. Harding challenged Democrat James Cox to replace President Woodrow Wilson. America was just getting back to 'normal' after the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918-20. The Eighteenth Amendment had introduced Prohibition to the US, and the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote for the first time. The United States sustained the worst terrorist attack in its' history. On September 16, 1920, a horse-drawn cart carrying a massive homemade explosive was detonated on the busiest corner of Wall Street in New York City. Flames soared ten stories killing 38 people and injuring hundreds. The perpetrators were Italian anarchists.



Harding's campaign promised a return to "normalcy". Voters responded to his genial nature, impressive stature and bland message; he won by a landslide. In a notable campaign speech, he said; *"America's present need is not heroics but healing; not nostrums but normalcy; not revolution but restoration...not surgery but serenity."*

President Harding's "normalcy" was short-lived and wrought with scandal. Not even Prohibition could keep the 29th President away from the hard stuff. He held smoke-filled poker



nights twice weekly at the White House where the whiskey flowed like water. Harding was alleged to have as many as seven mistresses, including two that became pregnant. It is therefore no wonder that upon his sudden death

only two years into his Presidency, it was rumored he had been poisoned by his long-suffering wife, Florence, charges never proven.

The saga continues today. In September 2020 as Harding's hometown of Marion Ohio prepared for a centennial celebration of Harding's election, an illegitimate grandson, James Blaesing, sued for the ability to exhume Harding's body. The Harding family objected largely because he planned to have a camera crew along to document the tomb opening. They feared that emphasis would shift to toxicology to determine if Harding was murdered. The matter is still pending.

Closer to home, Lake Villa in 1920 was a wealthy enclave, ringed by the five mansions of the Lehmann heirs. Wealthy Chicago businessmen made their presence felt, especially in the Fox Lake and Deep Lake areas. Al Jolson's "Swanee" was top song, and the country had just been introduced to Oreos, graham crackers and the Hostess CupCake.



Are You Ready for Thanksgiving?



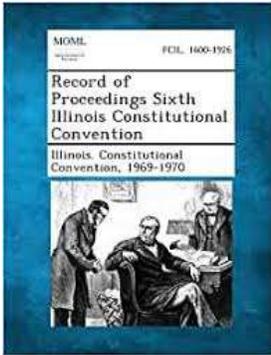
Turkeys — Turkeys
 Why eat a Frozen Turkey this year when you can get a fresh dressed butter ball Turkey from us. We will butcher the same day you wish to pick up.
BUT ORDER NOW
395-4424
Circle "G" Ranch
 We also have:
GEESE, MUSCOVIE DUCKS, ROASTERS & FRYERS
 We are on Highway 173. 3 miles east of Antioch — 1 mile west of Highway 45.

All indications are that this Thanksgiving will be an unusual one. With pandemic cases increasing, health officials are recommending limiting indoor gatherings including big Thanksgiving dinners. Whether in person or visiting family and friends over FaceTime or the phone, LVHS wishes you a safe and well day as we all give thanks for

our many blessings: family, friends, food, shelter, community and all that brings us joy. This add from the Lake Villa Record might have helped you prepare in 1970.

Fifty Years Ago

In 1970 Nixon was President, the war in Vietnam was raging and the Chicago 7 were convicted of inciting a riot, a verdict that was later overturned. In Illinois Richard B. Olgesby was governor while Richard M. Daley was well into his reign over Chicago politics. The big news in the state was the Constitutional Convention, or Con-Con as it was called. There were 116 delegates, two from each Senate district. The



delegates represented a diversity of backgrounds: 56 Protestant, 35 Catholic, 15 women, 13 black and an almost even divide of Republicans and Democrats making it an example of “splendid bipartisan cooperation.” It took just 8 months to deliberate and write the new constitution which is still in effect today. Issues included many that are still impacting us today including taxing rates, home rule and pensions for state employees. Voters ratified the constitution on December 15 by a vote of 1,122,425 to 838,168. There have been 14 amendments since ratification with another, the graduated tax, on the November 2020 ballot.

Below is an excerpt from the 12/3/1970 Lake Villa Record, the week before the vote. By Bill Schroeder

EDITOR'S VIEWPOINT

Not Playboy, But Con-Con Interesting



I did my Con-Con homework the other night—reading the official text of the proposed new Illinois Constitution and explanation which voters will consider at the poll in a state-wide referendum Tuesday, Dec. 15.

Try as I might, I couldn't find where I will be enslaved if the new Constitution is adopted, as Con-Con opponents are claiming. I didn't get the impression that all the delegates were reds or commie dupes engaged in a mass plan to “sell out” the citizens of Illinois. Sure, there are some imperfections, but then there are a lot of good things, too. The good things seem to far outweigh the objectionable.

And as reported on 12/17/70, Illinois has a new Constitution!

New Constitution Gets Approval

Lake County voters approved a new constitution Tuesday which added to the favorable vote throughout the state for the new document.

In the other issues Lake County voters approved the appointment of judges, keeping the multiple-member House districts, not to abolish the death penalty and not to lower the voting age to 18.

STATEWIDE the voters approved the election of judges, the keeping of multiple-member House districts, not to abolish the death penalty and not to lower the voting age to 18.

With 36 of Lake County's 231 precincts missing the vote total in Lake County was 28,178 for the new document and 21,821 against; for appointment of judges 26,984 and for election 21,649; for multiple-

member districts 26,239 and for single-member districts 20,976; to abolish the death penalty 19,426 and against 20,519; and to lower voting age 22,655 and against lowering age 26,640.

THE 36 MISSING precincts were tallied but were missing from the total votes.

About 55,000 Lake County voters turned out Tuesday, less than one-third of the registered voters. Statewide the voter turnout in Chicago was 40 per cent and 33 per cent downstate.

Chicago voters approved the new document by a 2 to 1 margin, while 55 per cent of the voters downstate defeated the new constitution.

Observers credit Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's backing of the new document to be a major reason why it was approved.

The lighter side of newspaper coverage from 50 years ago included Lake Villa Schools PTA drive to plant trees at the schools, a Polka Party at Lindenhurst Men's Club and a play, “Love Hits Wilber”, at Lake Villa Intermediate School. Adds included Christmas club accounts (get a “beautiful silver serving set” for opening account), the 1970 Buick line of cars and a free steak knife with each \$2 gas purchase at J&L Gas in Lake Villa. With the excitement over new technology at LVHS, this photo of the new technology enthralling second grade students at Hooper really caught our eye.



LANGUAGE MASTER — Sandra Mikrut, grader, is fascinated with language machine which plays back her own vs. Mary Garcia, of learning center Hooper School, Lindenhurst, shows her how it works. Sandra read out loud vowels pointed out on machine's automatic carriage. Another second grader, Wendy Gerber, reads at same table. Other students look on.

From Our Collection

In times gone by these might have been some of the toys children whispered in Santa's ear from their Christmas wish lists.

What's In Your Attic?

The Summer 2020 Vintage Views featured this watchband donated by Allene Nelson. It was made by the military in Okinawa from airplane parts. Allene's Navy friend, Robert Lichter, sent it to her in 1948.

*Lake Villa Historical Society
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