



the CROSSING

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society

July 2011 • Volume 16 / Issue 2

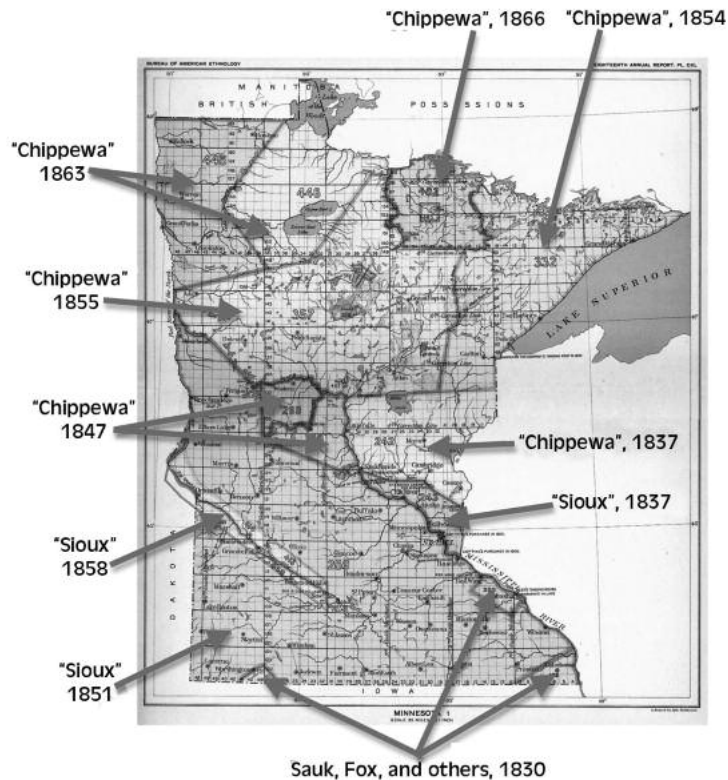
Smithsonian Returns to St. Peter

The Society is proud to announce that The Treaty Site History Center will host a traveling Smithsonian exhibit. *Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations!* will run January 2–31, 2012.

The Minnesota Humanities Center and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council are collaborating with the National Museum of the American Indian on an exhibit exploring American Indian treaties in Minnesota. This traveling exhibition, which recounts the history of treaties between the Indian nations of this area and the United States from the

Smithsonian continued on page 3

Major Land Cessions in Minnesota



Sources:
 • Indian Land Cessions in the United States, compiled by Charles C. Royce and presented as Part 2 of the Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1896–97. Printed by the Government Printing Office in 1899.
 • Indian Land Cessions. U.S. Serial Set, Number 4015, 56th Congress, 1st Session.

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Gustavus and Society Partnership to Focus on 1862

In January 2012, the sesquicentennial of the 1862 war, Dr. Elizabeth Baer, a Professor of English at Gustavus Adolphus, and Society Director Ben Leonard will offer a one-month intensive course at Gustavus Adolphus College on that conflict. The course will meet daily and will include readings, discussion, field trips to important sites, and a lecture series.

Student work will culminate in the creation of a traveling exhibit that will be available at no cost to libraries, schools, and non-profits across the Minnesota River Valley. The exhibit is expected to travel throughout 2012 and into 2013.

Perhaps the most exciting component of the partnership is a lecture series that's free and open to the public. "We are very lucky to have the opportunity to have speakers of this high quality and stature come together in St. Peter," says Leonard. Funds are still being sought, but Gustavus Adolphus College, through their special

Partnership continued on page 3

Memorials

received since the last newsletter:

In Memory of
Lavada Fredrickson

Given by
Judy Scholl
John & Judy Malmberg
Bill & Marjorie Boys
Bob & Leona Isenberg
Herb & Louise Poncin
Duane & Brenda DeBlick
Ed & Bev Wetherill
Bill & Marilyn Robertz
Doug & ReVae Nygard
Janet Hoffmann
Eileen Holz
Eunice Holz

In Memory of
Olive Peterson

Given by
Dale & Barbara Haack
Donald & Beverly Gustafson
Judy Scholl
Jane & Thomas Lalim
Eunice Amos
Marion & Clarence Veith
Val Youngblom
Verona & Paul Johnson
Carrol & Elaine Hermanson
James & Ann Frederichs
Cora Sjostrom

In Memory of
Blanche Pergol

Given by
Donley Johnson

Monetary Donations

received since the last newsletter:

Herb Poncin

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free with a Society
membership.

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Eileen Holz
John LaBette
Ben Leonard
Bob Sandeen
Nancy Zempel

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President, Gary Schmidt, North Mankato
Vice President, Jeremy Freeman, St. Peter
Secretary, Tami Skinner, St. Peter
Treasurer, Herb Poncin, Nicollet
Historian, Diane Stenson, St. Peter

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Alma Forst, St. George
Patti Kelly, Norseland
Dr. Lori Lahlum, North Mankato
Emilie Lokensgard, Norseland
Pam Morson, Lafayette
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Allen McBride, Joyce Gillen,
Loren Sundboom, Bill Dohoney

TSHC Maintenance, Wayne Passon

Harkin Store Site Manager, Ruth Grewe

Harkin Store Site Guides, Ann Koch,
Karen Rogetske, Rose Alsleben

Ft. Ridgely Site Manager, Nancy Zempel

Ft. Ridgely Site Guides, Charlotte Nack,
Dorothy Polesky, Karen Rogetske

Treaty Site History Center

1851 N. Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082

TSHC Phone: (507) 934-2160

TSHC Fax: (507) 934-0172

Hours: Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sunday 1–4 p.m.

Archives: Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

General information via e-mail:
museum@nchsmn.org or
research@nchsmn.org

Website: www.nchsmn.org

E. St. Julien Cox House

500 N. Washington Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082

Cox House Phone: (507) 934-4309

The Cox House is available year-round
for a variety of special programs,
facility rentals, and tours by appointment.
Please contact 507-934-2160 for details.

Harkin Store

P.O. Box 112, New Ulm, MN 56082
Eight miles northwest of New Ulm,
on County Highway 21

Harkin Store Phone: (507) 354-8666

Hours: May, Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

June, July, and August

Tues.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sept. Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Oct. 1–23: Sat.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Fort Ridgely

72404 County Road 30
Fairfax, MN 55332

Fort Ridgely Phone: (507) 426-7888

Website: ridgely@nchsmn.org

Hours: May, Fri. & Sat. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Memorial Day–Labor Day

Fri.–Sun.: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

September–October 23

Sat. & Sun.: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Director's Column

I think you can tell by reading our newsletter, and this one is no exception, that partnerships are pretty important to the Society. They come in all forms, shapes, and sizes—but they're all vital in allowing us to offer the breadth and depth of service that we do.



Ben Leonard

We really appreciate the partnership we have with our donors and members; volunteers and Minnesota Valley Action Council; program partnerships with the Arts Center, Gustavus, public libraries, and more; Nicollet County, the City of St. Peter, and our townships; the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation and other funders; with the Minnesota Historical Society and state historic sites; and a long list of others like the St. Peter Public Schools, Women Celebrating Women, and Connecting Nicollet County. Thank you so much.

A sports columnist once compared the National Hockey League to RC Cola. He said RC Cola makes a fine beverage. They'll never be Pepsi or Coke, but that's okay, because they make a great drink. In his mind the NHL will never be the NFL, NBA or Major League Baseball—and that's okay.

I think the Nicollet County Historical Society is a lot like RC Cola too. We do a fine job. We'll never have the budget of larger museums, but that's okay. It's our job to make the best product we can, and provide our customers with a great experience.

While there's always more to do, and always things that slip through the cracks, I think we've been pulling our weight. I like our beverage. I'm proud of it.

We couldn't do it without our partners. We couldn't do it without you. And for Nicollet County, there is no Pepsi or Coke. Without partnering to preserve our shared heritage and history, no one else will do it. If you have ideas or suggestions for things that need doing, fixing, changing, or preserving, please let us know. We count on you more ways than you know.

Thanks!



Ben Leonard, Director

Partnership continued from page 1

sesquicentennial grant program, has agreed to fund a large portion of the project.

More details will follow in the coming months, but this is the tentative series schedule.

January 4 Dr. John Peacock

John Peacock (Harvard B.A., Columbia Ph.D.) is Rinehart Critic-in-Residence and Professor of Language, Literature, and Culture at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore. He is a former Wesleyan University Mellon Fellow, University of Antwerp Fulbright Lecturer, and grantee of the American Philosophical Society and the Montgomery Council Maryland Arts and Humanities Council. His essays have appeared in *New Art Examiner*, *Literature/Film Quarterly*, and *Ethnohistory*. His fiction has appeared in *Gulf Stream Magazine*, and his poetry in *Fourteen by Four* and the *Takoma* and *Silver Spring Voice* newspapers in Montgomery County, MD. An enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation in Fort Totten, North Dakota, his writing in English and the endangered Dakota language has been exhibited at the Minnesota History Center and published in *American Indian Quarterly* and in *Studies in American Indian Literatures*.

January 5 Glen Wasicuna

Glen Wasicuna is a Dakota Language Instructor with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community.

January 12 Thomas Maltman

Thomas Maltman's essays, poetry, and fiction have recently been published in *Georgetown Review*, *Great River Review*, and *Main Channel Voices*, among other journals. He has a B.A. from Eastern Washington University and an M.F.A. from Minnesota State University. His debut novel, *The Night Birds*, was released by Soho Press in August of 2008 and won an Alex Award from the American Library Association. He is currently the Visiting Artist in Creative Writing at Normandale Community College. Thomas Maltman's second novel, *Little Wolves*, is a contemporary mystery that takes place in the same prairie country as *The Night Birds*.

January 18 Dr. Gary Clayton Anderson

Gary Clayton Anderson is George Lynn Cross Research Professor at the University of Oklahoma. His recent books include *Will Rogers and "His" America*; *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1830-1875*; and *The Indian Southwest 1580-1830: Ethnogenesis and Cultural Reinvention*. Other publications include *Sitting Bull and the Paradox of Lakota Nationhood* and *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862*. He has also co-authored a new textbook on the history of the American West titled *Power and Promise: The Changing American West*. Professor Anderson is currently working a book on Indians and the Great Plains Wars, 1830-1890. He regularly teaches the U.S. Survey as well as courses on Native American history at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Toledo.

January 24 Corinne Marz

Researcher and author Corinne Monjeau-Marz has devoted her latest efforts to exploring the extraordinarily challenging and culturally catastrophic transition the Dakota people experienced during the time of early European settlement in Minnesota. Marz will share her recent research and discuss her work on "Alexander Ramsey's Words of War" from the first issue of *Minnesota's Heritage* magazine. She will also discuss her book, *The Dakota Indian Internment at Fort Snelling, 1862-1864*, as well as her contributions to *Trail of Tears: Minnesota's Dakota Indian Exile Begins*.

January 26

Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna

Gwen Westerman-Wasicuna is an English professor at Minnesota State University-Mankato specializing in multicultural and Native American literature.

Smithsonian continued from page 1

early nineteenth century to the present, is meant to share important cultural information with all Minnesotans, that they may better understand the true circumstances surrounding this area's land, its use, and even the treatment of the land's indigenous peoples today. This exhibit begs discourse on ethics, stewardship, equal rights, and a host of other highly relevant cultural and social issues affecting all people of the United States in the 21st Century.

The exhibit, which consists of twenty banners featuring text, images, and a video presentation, reveals how treaties affected the lands and lifeways of the indigenous peoples of the place we now call Minnesota, and explains why these binding agreements between nations still matter today.

Smithsonian
Institution



MINNESOTA
Humanities Center

NATIONAL
MUSEUM
OF THE
AMERICAN
INDIAN

Minnesota Indian
Affairs Council

"Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations" is a collaboration of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. The project is funded in part with money from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund that was created with a vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008, and The Patrick and Aimee Butler Family Foundation.

Smithsonian's New Harmonies Makes Successful Run in St. Peter

The Society would like to especially thank the Arts Center of Saint Peter and the Minnesota Humanities Center for making it possible to bring *New Harmonies* to Nicollet County. We hope all of you had a chance to see the exhibit that left on a truck for Evansville, Minnesota on June 14th.

NCHS Director Ben Leonard said, "This was a first for us, but a huge success. It was a real pleasure to bring a high-caliber national exhibit to St. Peter. I really feel like the partnerships and community connections we forged during those eight weeks will have an impact that lasts for years to come."

The Arts Center and society collaborated on many diverse programs during the exhibit—from a traditional Somali musical performance, to a bluegrass concert, to a film documentary series.

The exhibit concluded with the St. Peter Ambassador's Blues Fest in Minnesota Square Park on June 11th. In all, the exhibit and programs served over 2,025 people!

New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and state humanities councils nationwide. Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress, with additional support provided by a Minnesota Historical Society Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Partnership Grant.

Vogelpohl and Spaeth Organs in Nicollet County

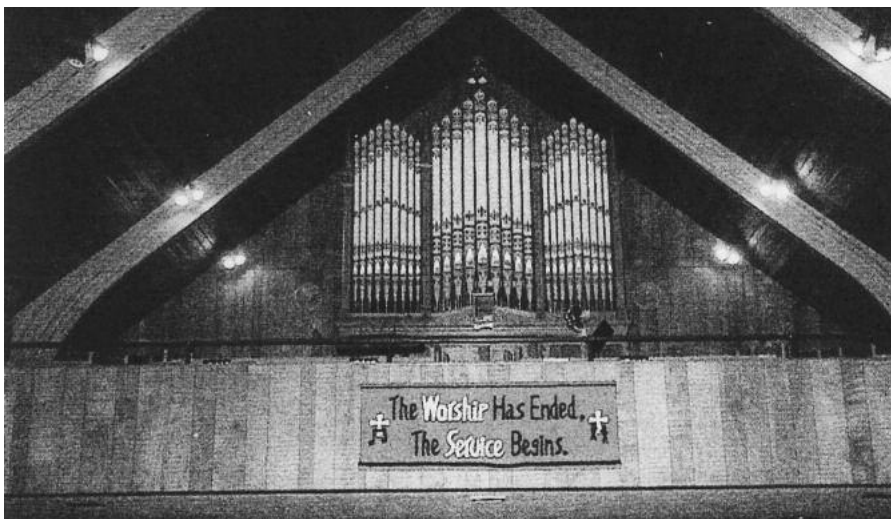
New Ulm, Minnesota residents Hermann Vogelpohl and Jacob Spaeth formed a partnership that would produce over 100 organs from 1890 until Hermann's death in 1919. The organs were built for schools and churches all over the Midwest. The firm, which was never incorporated into a formal business, became one of the industry's most respected and renowned.

About 30 of the Vogelpohl and Spaeth organs are known to remain. Nicollet County has five of them: Immanuel Lutheran Church near Courtland, Trinity Lutheran in Nicollet, Bernadotte Lutheran Church, and Saint George Catholic Church.

Organs represented a large investment for a church and its parishioners. One Vogelpohl and Spaeth organ installed in 1906 cost \$1,000—over \$160,000 today using current wage and labor statistics.

Rural Minnesota churches were a melting pot of musical and cultural traditions. Immigrants brought with them songs and hymns from the old country, but the music continued to change and evolve, to celebrate the growing community and family ties here in Nicollet County.

The Vogelpohl and Spaeth organ at the Immanuel Lutheran Church near Courtland, Minn.



Minnesota Disasters to Wreak Havoc on Treaty Site

We're excited to announce that the traveling Minnesota Historical Society exhibit, Minnesota Disasters, will be on display at the Treaty Site March 31st 2012 through May 28th 2012. The exhibit will feature the 1998 St. Peter tornado as well as many other disasters, and how those events continue to shape our lives.



Funded by the 2008 Legacy Amendment and made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, the Minnesota Historical Society Traveling Exhibits Program provides an opportunity to visit your place in history without leaving home. Exhibits developed by the Minnesota Historical Society and partnering organizations feature free-standing displays, audiovisual and interactive components, and onsite and online educational programming.

Join Us at the Fair!

The Nicollet County Historical Society was organized August 22, 1928, when 96 members of the Old Settlers' Association gathered for a picnic dinner in Floral Hall of the fairgrounds during the 1928 county fair. Help us celebrate at this year's Fair August 10th through the 14th.

As usual, we'll have an exhibit and friendly representatives to talk about local history, Society memberships, upcoming events, and more. If you're interested in volunteering at our booth, please contact the Society at 507-934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org. One- or two-hour shifts are available throughout the fair and we are flexible.

Member Discount at Lagers in St. Peter

In an effort to support our local history, I would like to pass on a program that I hope you will take advantage. If you visit Jeff Brand at the Lagers St. Peter store and make a new or used vehicle purchase, Brand will make a \$100 contribution per unit in your honor to NCHS. Bargain vehicles and dealer trades from another store are exempt from this program. Please contact him for program details and to schedule an appointment.

Society Welcomes Madison Brockberg

NCHS Office Manager Jessica Brockberg and her husband Rick welcomed daughter Madison to the world May 14th at 12:02 p.m. She weighed 7 pounds 13.9 ounces and 20½ inches long. *Congratulations Jessica and Rick!*

Members

Thanks to the following new and renewing members of NCHS since our last newsletter.

Renewed Business Members:
Citizen's Bank Lafayette, \$200

Renewed Patron Members:
Lois Annexstad
Bruce & Sue Gray
Steve & Betsy Hogberg

Renewed Family Members:
Marilyn & Bill Bessler
Dale & Kay Mowbray
Carolyn O'Grady & Jim Bonilla
Tami & Jeff Skinner

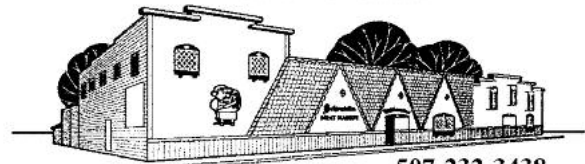
Renewed Individual Members:
Marjorie Johnson
Elgene Lund
Roger Norland
Dorothy Schultz

New Family Members:
Katha & John Chamberlain
Dave Dworshak
Jeff & Vanessa Jaster
Pam & Steve Morson
Michael & Bonnie Webster

New Individual Members:
Bruce Osborn

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United Way



NCHS especially thanks the St. Peter United Way for 2011 general operating support.

Donations

accepted into our collections since the September 2010 *Crossing*.

Shirley Swenson: K & K Liniment bottle from Keith's Drug Store in Lafayette

Mary and Andrew Nelson: Natalie Nelson honeymoon clothes; Hamilton Nelson's W.G. Skelly Superior Achievement in

Agriculture award dated Mar. 1950; dedication booklet for stained glass windows at Lafayette on Sept. 16, 1979; *Diamond Jubilee* booklet from the Bernadotte Ev. Lutheran Church, June 1941; a New Ulm directory 1966-'67; *Places to Go and Things to See Within 50 Miles of Gaylord* by Ruth Klossner; Nic. Co. Farm Directories from 1964, '66, and '67; plat books of Nic. Co., circa 1948, 1953, 1956, 1957, 1962; Atlas and Plat Books of Nic. Co. 1927, 1962, 1975

Chris Harris: Plat Book of Nicollet County, possibly 1945 to 1947; publication "The Great Flood of 1965" by New Ulm Journal

Byron Nordstrom: drawing of the Scandian Grove Lutheran Church

Emilie Lokensgard: three postcards of the Harkin Store approx. 1960

Martin Larson: *Guess What Happened Today*

Dennis C. Henry: piece of original Winona & St. Peter railroad track; *Gustavus Athletics* by L. Hollingsworth

Corrine Heiberg: Dakota beaded bag

Roger Swenson family: Allen-A brand underwear in original box; from Norseland General Store

Olive Peterson: small wooden chest with St. Peter merchant marking

2011 Donation record:

Larry E. Skramstad: necktie from 1971 Centennial Nicollet County Fair

Pat Bartels: three ink blotters advertising Bonded Service Station and Garage operated by Charles Bartels

Kenneth B. Anderson: cabinet-style Victrola record player and records

Janet Hoffmann: 20 color photographs of St. Peter March of 1998 tornado damage

Fred Danner: 1911 invoice from Chas. E. Swenson, electrician; postcard, circa 1906, showing the Union Presbyterian Church

MaryAnn Zins: family histories—Bergstrom, Gieseke, Quist, and Ulrich families

Robert J. Sandeen: map of North Mankato, circa 1910

Gladys Stuntebeck: one Oct. 1930 *Diamond Jubilee* issue of *Herald*; 1927 Atlas of Nicollet County

St. Peter Tourism Bureau: 2011 Winterfest Medallion

Dorothy (Lueth) Grunst, represented by Joy Hanel: scrapbooks of Nicollet County history

Richard Muesing: 1970 Nic. Co. Fair booklet

Julie Schrader: *Heritage of Blue Earth County, History of the Red Jacket Valley*, Maud Hart Lovelace's *Deep Valley*, and *Black Angels*

Pell Johnson: booklet, "1st Cavalry Division 5th Regiment 1951 through 1954 St. Peter, Minnesota Korea," descent chart of Samuel Pell

Rachel Anthony: 2008 and '09 Farm & Home Plat & Directory books on Nicollet County

Corinne Marz: "The Genesis & Construction of the Winona & St. Peter Railroad, 1858-1873" by Alan R. Woolworth; "Adrian Ebell's Recollections of the Dakota War."

Gustavus Adolphus College: 2006 Alumni book, Holiday House postcard, Holiday House "V.I.P. Gift Dinner" publication, "Inquiry Element 5" SPHS improvement evaluation plan for the 1996-97 school year.

Hildur Swenson estate, represented by Burton Johnson: 80th Ann. booklet from First Evangelical Lutheran Church; booklet GAC's "Victory Training Program" during WWII; 1954 calendar from Trinity Lutheran Church including interior photos; 1957 calendar from First Lutheran Church including exterior

photos; document from Hildur's 80th birthday in 1987; items about Pastor Herbert Gustafson from Trinity Lutheran Church, postcard of GAC gymnasium; 1916 District 27 School booklet; 1920 District School booklet

Jim Kagermeier: architectural drawings and documents from Kagermeier architectural firm of his father in Mankato

Bergliot M. Schevenius: *Three Peterson Brothers and A Mother-in-Law* Norwegian Pioneers in Nicollet County, Minnesota From 1856.

CalVerna B. Wilfahrt: Volk family documents; school items; WWII draft classification forms; small pipe-stone carved pipe found by one of CalVerna's brothers, likely in West Newton Twp.

Marlin Peterson: *New York Daily Tribune* from August 16, 1851, describing the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux.

Pat Hoehn: District 24 Treasurer's Book, 1869-1876; photos from the Hebron area in Nicollet Twp., Drake and Clark family info, hand-drawn map of Hebron and Judson areas with farms and buildings

Ruth Johnson: various legislative documents and Minn. Legislative Manuals

Theodore and Violet Moline estate: photos & signs of Theodore Moline; letter, from Theodore Moline to "Mother and Linda Lou," dated 13 May 1945 from Brussels, Belgium

Michael Frederick: Dt. Peter area postcards, reproduction of an 1875 Coffin Gallery photograph of the Dist. 22 students

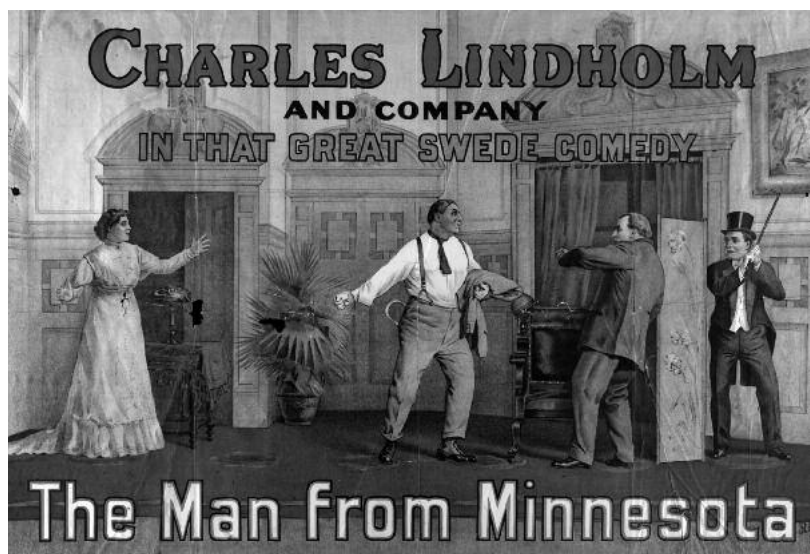
Arts Center of Saint Peter: St. Peter, Minn. August 18th and 19th, 1921 Historical Pageant and Homecoming booklet; *Discovering the Local Landscape: Pioneer Log Buildings* by Bob Douglas, Kristin Nelson, and Greg Seamon

Rhoda Zucker: *Seitzer, Oker, Borsch, and Wintheiser Families* by Francis A. Seitzer, Marguerite Osborne Seitzer, and Josephine Oscome

Sharilyn Nydam: *Descendants of Henrietta Breitkrutz and Joachim George Bluhm*

Collection Corner

Between 1850 and 1930 nearly 1.3 million Swedes came to America. By 1910 54 percent of Swedish immigrants and their children lived in the Midwest. That made places like Minnesota fertile ground for Swedish-dialect theater companies. One of those was run by Charles A. Lindholm. His production, "The Man from Minnesota" came to St. Peter in 1911 in association with the locally-based Engesser Circus. This poster is a remnant of the advertising campaign for that show 100 years ago. It can be viewed, along with over a 1,200 other images, online at <http://reflections.mndigital.org>.



Minnesota Reflections is an online consortium of over 64,000 images from more than 120 Minnesota cultural institutions. Reflections is a project of the Minnesota Digital Library, a service of Minitex, with help from the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Cloud State University, and the University of Minnesota. It is funded through the Library Services and Technology Act and the Minnesota Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. NCHS Director Ben Leonard has served on the MDL's management committee since 2005.



Charles Lindholm as Charlie Lutefisk in "The Man from Minnesota."

from the MHS collections



Cox House Re-Visioning

by Nancy O'Brien Wagner, Bluestem Heritage Group

In early June, a group of dedicated history buffs, educators, community leaders, and Cox House volunteers gathered to review and polish the final version of the 2011 Cox House Interpretive Plan. After seven months of research, analysis, and debate, the Interpretive Committee was ready to approve of the document that outlines the new vision for the Cox House.

“‘Interpretive Planning’ sounds wonkish and boring, but it is really a critical step for historic homes and museums,” says Nancy O’Brien Wagner, a principal at Bluestem Heritage Group in St. Paul, and a consultant for the project. The process allows the decision-makers to pause in order to review what the local audience wants, what the historic resource can offer, and what the best, most compelling, and most attractive message for the site can be. Interpretive Plans can be time-consuming and costly, especially for smaller organizations, but thanks to a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grant funded by the Minnesota Land and Legacy Tax Act, the Nicollet County Historical Society was able to secure funding for the project.

During the process, the committee looked at ten different historic houses in the area that focused on a similar time frame and topics. For historic homes like the Cox house, the message often boils down to ‘someone who once lived here did something you should know about.’ Making your site stand out in such a market can be hard. In the case of the Cox House, the story has been focused on the problematic life of the father, E. St. Julien Cox. “He was most famous for the distinction of being an impeached district court judge, but that message isn’t the most compelling story,” says Wagner. Luckily, research uncovered other stories that are truly significant and compelling: daughter Irene was one of the first women to pass the bar, and daughter Lillian was also well-known for being the first female mayor in Minnesota, elected in St. Peter in 1921.

“Sometimes, the history that one generation hides is the the history that another generation is drawn to most,” explains Wagner. In the case of the Cox family, daughter Irene was actually abandoned by her husband when her son was just one year old. “Though that information was hidden—and even unknown by the family for genera-

tions—it actually makes her accomplishments even more impressive. She was studying law, passing the bar, and working at the legislature while raising her son on her own. That’s the sort of detail that makes this family’s history come to life.”

“We’re very happy with the outcome,” says Benjamin Leonard, Director of the Nicollet County Historical Society. “The Cox House was home to a family. An important family, but individuals just like us—with talents, happy moments, victories, sad times, and personal failures. This project helped remind us that what makes the Cox family, and their house, a compelling place to visit—are those stories.”



Irene Cox



Lillian Cox

Plant Sale Success Continues

The Society would like to especially thank the Cox House Committee, volunteers, Site Manager Richard Tostenson, donors, and patrons for another successful Cox House Plant Sale. We have not been blessed with the best weather so far in 2011. Many plants that are usually well out of the ground by May decided to sleep in this year.

That meant many hours of digging, separating, and repotting plants for our annual fundraiser were crammed into a couple of very long days for our extremely dedicated volunteers. It didn’t snow on the day of the plant sale, like it has in the not-so-distant past, but it would not be out of line to call

Plants continued on page 13

Harkin Happenings by Ruth Grewe, site manager

The Harkin Store is excited about the programs coming up for the rest of the season. The weather has not been the nicest on Sundays, but we still have the programs. We just change it up, sometimes we have it on the driveway or the porch or inside. We think that our programs are interesting and informative and just plain fun.



With the 4th of July coming, we are hoping that, that program will be happening. The New Ulm Battery will be firing the 1862 cannon very hour and half hour from 1 to 4 p.m. Also we will be serving watermelon and lemonade throughout the afternoon.

Our July 10th program is a combination of several things. The title is Wheat-Flour-Grasshoppers. Come see how they are connected. The program will be from 1 to 4.

Arnie and Marilyn Anderson will be performing their old time music for us on July 17th. We have lots of people come and enjoy the whole afternoon of music, some bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

The Monsen Family Bluegrass are five children from Chaska that play a variety of instruments and also perform a variety of music. They will be at Harkin on July 24th from 1 to 4 p.m.

Christmas in July will be on July 31st. We decorate the store with greenery and the gift shop will have many gift ideas.

August 7th we are having the 32nd West Newton Day. Inviting descendents of settlers of West Newton to come and bring stories, pic-

tures, or other information about their relatives. There is a list of relatives trying to find other relatives.

August 14th – TBA

August 21, the “Misfits” will be playing their variety of music from 1 to 4 p.m.

Old School Houses of Nicollet County will be on display including the private school that was in West Newton. The program is on August 28th.

The West Arrives at West Newton with John Koblas, author of Jesse James books and Lonesome Ron, singing and playing western music on September 4th.

September 11, we have activities to do with Grandparents or (parents). They are easy and fun.

Snakes, Snakes, Snakes arrive on September 18th. Tom Jessen brings his snakes for the afternoon. He answers any questions also.

Gail Ann Wood will be signing her book, *Lizzie and the Prairie Fire* from 1 to 4 p.m. on September 25th. She wrote about her grandmother who lived in Ivanhoe the same time as Laura Ingalls.

We will be glad to give you any information about West Newton and the Harkin Store if you come to visit us.

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Ridgely Report

by Nancy Zempel, site manager

The 2011 summer season is off to a great start.

The May School Day event sponsored by the Friends of Fort Ridgely was attended by 265 students plus chaperones. Having good weather always helps to make the day more enjoyable for attendees and the presenters.

The programs at the commissary building have been well attended. The Minnesota State Park Open House day had a record number of visitors to the commissary. Ron Bolduan's nature and history program had the classroom area full to capacity. Plans are to have Ron present another of his nature programs in September.

I hope that you have had a chance to see the insert from *The Eagle Extra* that chronicles the 100 years of Fort Ridgely State Park. Included in the insert besides the park history, is the programs listed for the rest of the 2011 season. NCHS and the Friends of Fort Ridgely have spent time and energy to prepare what we feel is a great list of events for the summer season. There is something of interest for all ages. The goal is to have wholesome family programs that entertain and also tell visitors about area history. The insert is available at the Treaty Site or more information about the programs is available on the NCHS website and the Minnesota DNR website (www.dnr.state.mn.us).

Drive over to west Nicollet County and enjoy nature and history at Fort Ridgely State Park and Historic Site during the lazy days of summer!

Fort Ridgely Historic Site Staff:

Char Nack
Dorothy Polesky
Karen Rogotzke
Mindy Sommer
Nancy Zempel

Board Member to Speak About New Book at Fort Ridgely

Nicollet County Historical Society Board Member Lori Ann Lahlum, an associate professor of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato, has edited a book on Norwegian settlement with Betty A. Bergland, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Dr. Lahlum will speak at the Fort Ridgely Commissary on July 16th. The event starts at 1:30 p.m. Admission required for non-members. For more info call (507) 426-7888, (507) 934-2160 or e-mail ben@nchsmn.org.

The history of Norwegian settlement in the United States has often been told through the eyes of prominent men, while the women are imagined in the form of O.E. Rølvaag's fictionalized heroine Beret Holm, who made the best of life on the frontier but whose gaze seemed ever fixed on her long-lost home. The true picture is more complex. In an area spanning the Midwest and rural West and urban areas such as Seattle, Chicago, and Brooklyn,



Lahlum continued on page 13


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A Fort is Needed

by John LaBatte

John LaBatte is an independent historian with relatives on both sides of the Dakota conflict. John has researched the Dakota War and surrounding events extensively, and has written a series of articles for the Fairfax Eagle Extra and five other area newspapers. This is one of those articles.

In 1851, Dakota Indian leaders signed 2 treaties with the United States, selling some 24,000,000 acres mostly in Minnesota. They agreed to move to 2 reservations along the Minnesota River. The treaties were ratified in June 1852.

Future governor, Henry Sibley arrived at Mendota near Fort Snelling in 1834, as an employee of the American Fur Company. In his associations with the Dakota Indians, he gained experience in their culture and language.

In 1852, Sibley was a delegate to Congress from Minnesota Territory. On July 12, 1852, he wrote a letter to Major General Winfield Scott, General in Chief, USA, that a fort was needed on the Upper Minnesota River. Following are excerpts from Sibley's letter:

"The concentration of these powerful bands, and their removal from the region now occupied by them, require a corresponding change in the disposition of the military forces in that quarter."

"...the Sioux or Dakotas are the most powerful and warlike tribe on the continent. They are stretched over a thousand miles of country and wage

interminable war with almost every other band with whom they are brought in contact. It is a fortunate circumstance, that no event has hitherto occurred to disturb the friendly feeling which exists between the whites and these Indians, and a continuance of this harmony may be anticipated, if a wise policy is pursued by the government."

"Still it is highly expedient, and fact indispensable, that a respectable force would be preserved in the country for the protection of the settlers and of those officers entrusted with the charge of our Indian relations in that quarter, if, unhappily, any exigency should occur, or a spirit of disaffection spring up, to threaten the peace of the frontier."

"At no point could such a force be stationed with so much advantage as at some spot near the lower line of the reservation made by the treaties, upon the Minnesota River..."

General Scott agreed. In the fall of 1852, Captain Dana and Colonel Lee were ordered to select a site for the new fort. They selected the present site located about 5 miles inside the eastern border of the Dakota Reservations and on the western edge of present day Nicollet County. It was rich in wood, grass and hay. It had a large spring of pure water nearby. Granite was found one-half mile to the west. It had a good steamboat landing on the river about one-half mile away. It was situated on a bluff about 200 feet about the river level.

But, their water supply was a half-mile away. They thought they were too high to dig for water. However, in 1896, water was found at 24 feet. Another serious problem was the site was surrounded on 2 sides by ravines within musket range of the fort. Post Sutler Benjamin Randall wrote, "It was such a place the Indians would have selected if they had contemplated its capture."

Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War, named the new post Fort Ridgely in honor of Major Randolph Ridgely, a hero of the Mexican War who fell at the Battle of Monterey. It was Minnesota's third military post. Fort Snelling and Fort Ripley were the other posts.

Construction on Fort Ridgely started in 1853. The site was about 330 miles from Fort Snelling by river; and by land, 120 miles. Fort Ripley was 140 miles to the north. The nearest towns, Traverse des Sioux and St. Peter were 40 miles away. The Lower Sioux Agency was 13 miles upriver. The Upper Sioux Agency was 40 miles upriver.



For more information on Fort Ridgely Historic Site and State Park visit the websites of Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota DNR, and Nicollet County Historical Society.

Nicollet County Destinations by Kristine Johnson

Excerpts from the forthcoming NCHS book titled *Nicollet County Destinations*, a updated version of Fred Wetherill's *Nicollet County Bicentennial historical markers and other historical places*.

Bernadotte Lutheran Church

At a Glance...

Historical Marker Location: On County Road 10, about four miles east of Lafayette, Minnesota.

Little Known Fact: Between 1866 and 1870, Bernadotte Lutheran's congregation grew from 21 to 104 families.

Origins of

Bernadotte Lutheran Church

Swedish Lutheran immigrant families, under the guidance of Rev. John Pehrson of Scandian Grove, founded New Sweden Church in 1866. Initially, the congregation met in local homes and a school house before building a wooden structure in 1872 for a cost of \$1,000. In 1890, the congregation renamed the church Bernadotte Lutheran. Members dedicated the present Bernadotte Lutheran Church in 1897. The current brick building stands just east of where the original church structure stood. The stone foundation is comprised of local field rock.

Vogelpohl and Spaeth Pipe Organ When construction of the brick church ended in 1897, the church contained no pipe organ within the sanctuary. In the meantime, the Bernadotte Band led worship services. By February 1898, the Vogelpohl and Spaeth Organ Company of New Ulm completed and installed a 16-rank, 866-pipe tracker organ at a cost of \$1,500. Craftsman Herman Henry Vogelpohl III guaranteed the 16'4" high, 12'1" wide and 10'5" deep organ to be first class and of the highest standard of excellence. The large pipes are made of ungalvanized zinc while the smaller ones are a combination of lead and tin. The wood pipes are made of pine. The ornate casework around the organ is solid oak.

For decades, the organ remained in nearly authentic condition. Vogelpohl and Spaeth cre-

ated organs that relied on a hand-pumped bellow system to maintain the air pressure required to produce sound from the pipes. Although the church installed an electric blower to help maintain air pressure some years ago, the organist still required an attentive hand-pumper during services for much of the organ's history. Recently, however, Bernadotte Lutheran installed an entirely electrical air pressure system and the organ is no longer manually pumped.



Interior Adornments

A large oil painting of Christ's Resurrection hangs over the altar. It was revealed and dedicated in September 1898. Another smaller painting of *The Institution of Holy Communion* (more commonly known as *The Last Supper*) hangs below. Both were painted by Professor O. Grafstrom of Augustana College.

Interior of the Bernadotte Lutheran Church. Photo from the archives of the Nicollet County Historical Society.

See additional information about Vogelpohl and Spaeth Pipe Organs in Nicollet County on page 4 of this newsletter and also online at home.comcast.net/~flcorg/vogelpohl/vogelpohl&spaeth.htm

Connecting Nicollet County Graduates First Class



The first class of Connecting Nicollet County graduates gathered in front of the Harkin Store during their tour of historic places in western Nicollet County.

On May 5, the Connecting Nicollet County Local Leadership Program graduated its first class. Twenty-two participants from around Nicollet County were recognized at a ceremony and celebration at the Klossner House along with steering committee members and key sponsors of the program.

The goal of the county-wide leadership program is to help both current and emerging leaders better understand the dynamics of the community and the role of shared leadership in building healthy communities. Class members met for one full day each month, September through May, visiting each of the communities in Nicollet County. The nine session program offered individuals the opportunity to network, develop their leadership and facilitation skills, and gain an increased awareness of the resources in the county.

Participants learned about local issues such as green industries, health care, higher education, agriculture, media, county social services and law enforcement. They participated in leadership trainings on the topics of Understanding Your Personal Leadership Style, Developing Effective Committees and Boards, Navigating Conflict More Successfully, E-Communication, Non-verbal Communication Skills, Wellness and Stress Relief, Visionary Leadership, and Authentic Leadership.

Participants shared what they will take away from their experience in the program and how it will help them in their work and community life. Following is a sampling of responses:

“Views of leadership! New ways to move forward with my own leadership and ways to help others as well. Great networking connections for work and personal life.”
~ Sara Sletten, Administrative Assistant, Gustavus

“This program has renewed a confidence in me as a group member and leader. The leadership skill sessions have sharpened my ability to be a pivotal and efficient leader.”
~ Karl Struck, Traverse des Sioux Garden Center

“The program was very exciting in learning about all the different aspects of the local area including government, business, agriculture, recycling and history that drives our local community!”
~ Chad Salzwedel, Financial Advisor

Connecting Nicollet County was developed through a partnership of Nicollet County and University of Minnesota Extension’s Center for Community Vitality. It was funded in part by a grant from the Blandin Foundation along with support and in-kind contributions from over 60 local businesses, organizations, municipalities and individuals from throughout Nicollet County.

NCHS Director Ben Leonard served on the steering committee with NCHS Board member Bob Schabert. NCHS Board member Pam Morson was a graduate, along with several historical society members.

For information on applying for the 2011-2012 CNC program, contact Bob Schabert at 507-276-7919 or e-mail bbschabert@newulmtel.net, or Catherine Rasmussen, U of M Extension, at 320-234-0437 or rasmu035@umn.edu.

What Happens if the State Shuts Down?

If the legislature and governor do not agree on a budget by June 30th, the Society will be forced to close its state-owned sites. That means Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, and the walking trails at Traverse des Sioux will be closed indefinitely until a budget agreement is reached. The Treaty Site History Center will remain open and administrative staff will continue to work. Unfortunately staff at Harkin and Ridgely would be furloughed until sites re-open. Any programs at Harkin or Ridgely scheduled during a closure will be cancelled.

While closing sites is not something we choose, we are optimistic that any closure will be brief, and any disruption would be minimal. At the time of this printing we have no idea what will happen. Like the spring flooding, we should be prepared for the worst in case it happens, but hope for the best.

Please feel free to direct any questions to NCHS Director Ben Leonard at 507-934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org. Thanks for your understanding and support.

Lahlum continued from page 9

Norwegian American women found themselves in varied circumstances, ranging from factory worker to domestic, impoverished to leisured. Offering a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach, *Norwegian American Women: Migration, Communities, and Identities* considers the stories of this immigrant group through a gendered lens.

Nine noted scholars situate these women in the history, literature, politics, and culture of both their ancestral home and the new land, interpreting their multifarious lives and the communities they helped build. pieces on wide-ranging topics by Betty A. Bergland, Laurann Gilbertson, Karen v. Hansen, Lori Ann Lahlum, Ann M. Legreid, Odd S. Lovoll, Elisabeth Lønnå, David C. Mauk, and Ingrid K. Urberg are book-ended by Elizabeth Jameson's lively foreword and Dina Toflsby's detailed bibliography, comprising a collection that enlightens at the same time that it inspires further investigations into the lives of women in Norwegian America.

The book, published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press, is available at the Treaty Site History Center, Fort Ridgely, and Harkin Store gift shops. The e-book is also available online at Amazon.com and other vendors.

Plants continued from page 7

May 14th lousy. Luckily the cold and rain didn't dampen everyone's spirits. The Cox House Committee and dedicated helpers still raised \$1,300 to help preserve, promote, and interpret the E. St. Julien Cox House.

Thanks to all those that donated plants towards the sale. Without you, well, it wouldn't happen. Thank you to Jesus Assembly of God Church for lending us one of their large tents used for Royal Family Kids' Camp. We would have been much colder and wetter without it. Thanks to everyone who purchased plants at this year's plant sale. We appreciate it more than we can say.



Iris (*I. versicolor*), or Blue Flag. — 1, inflorescence; 2, rootstock with leaves; a, stamen; b, stigma; c, fruit.



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2011 Moline Scholarship Winners Announced



Sarah Miller

We are pleased to announce that NCHS has awarded Ted Moline Scholarships to two deserving Nicollet County High School Seniors. Mankato West student Sarah Miller and St. Peter High School's Magdalena Morrow have each won a \$500 award.

Ms. Morrow's project traced the history of St. Peter's Konsbruck Hotel building. She gathered photographs, researched primary sources, and conducted interviews. Ms. Miller produced an exhibit on the failed diplomacy of the U.S. Dakota War. She also competed in state history day where she received an honorable mention.

Ms. Morrow will be attending Tufts University in the fall and plans to major in History. Ms. Miller will attend Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri and major in accounting.

Ted Moline was born July 21, 1915 in St. Paul and soon after his family moved to Baldwin, Wisconsin. He received his amateur radio operator license in 1934 and was an avid operator the rest of his life. After moving to St. Peter in 1937, Ted went to work for the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad. Ted also

served in the United States Army, retiring in 1971 as a Colonel. Ted passed away in August of 2005. He was an extremely generous man who loved local history. This scholarship honors Ted and his commitment to our mission.

The 2011 Ted Moline Scholarships are made possible by generous donations from retired St. Peter teacher William Harvey and an anonymous donor. We are extremely grateful for their leadership and support.



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2011 Calendar of Events:

Event/Program information:

- Harkin Store: Program Time: 1 to 4 p.m. on Sundays / Fee: \$4 adults, \$2 seniors (65+) and children 6–17. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members.
- Fort Ridgely: Time: Please check NCHS and MHS websites for program times / Fee: A State Park Vehicle Permit is required unless otherwise noted below. Fee: \$4 adults, \$2 seniors (65+) and children 6–17. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members. Programs and events are sponsored by NCHS, Friends of Fort Ridgely, GFW Community Ed. And MNDNR. Continue to watch area papers and NCHS and DNR websites for more information and events to be added in Sept. and Oct. State Park Contact Station: 507-426-7840; Historic Site: 507-426-7888
- TSHC: See program times below / Fee: \$5 adults, \$4 seniors (65+), \$3 children 6–17, free for children under age 5, and NCHS members. \$7 combo-pass to TSHC & Cox House.

- | | | |
|------------|---|------------------------------|
| June 18 | Military event **
<i>with 19th century visitors Abe & Mary Lincoln, 1:30–3:30 p.m.</i> | Fort Ridgely |
| June 26 | Fairfax Honor Guard Flag program at 1:30 p.m.
Minnesota and the Civil War by Stephen Osman at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| July 2 | Building of Fort Ridgely Military Post program by Roger Breckenridge at 2 p.m.
Music at Park amphitheater by Brandon Sellner at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| July 4 | New Ulm Battery **
<i>Firing the 1862 cannon every hour and half hour from 1 to 4 p.m. and watermelon and lemonade throughout the afternoon.</i> | Harkin Store |
| July 9 | History of Minnesota River Steamboats program by William Lass at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| July 10 | Wheat-Flour-Grasshoppers. Come see how they are connected. 1 to 4 p.m. | Harkin Store |
| July 16 | Norwegian American Women program by Lori Lahlum at 1:30 p.m.
Vintage Baseball at 2:30 p.m.
Larry Mages Band at amphitheater at 3:30 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| July 17 | Old Time Music
<i>Arnie and Marilyn Anderson. Bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.</i> | Harkin Store |
| July 23 | Battlefield Tour by John LaBatte at 1 p.m.
Battlefield Tour repeated at 2:30 p.m. | Fort Ridgely
Fort Ridgely |
| July 24 | The Monsen Family Bluegrass
<i>Five children from Chaska with their variety of instruments. 1 to 4 p.m.</i> | Harkin Store |
| July 29 | Sleeping Beauty at amphitheater at 7 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| July 30 | Sleeping Beauty at amphitheater at 10 a.m.
B is for Battle Cry by Dave & Pat Geister at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely
Fort Ridgely |
| July 31 | Christmas in July
<i>We decorate the store with greenery and the gift shop will have many gift ideas.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Aug. 7 | Tenting on the Old Campground by Barb Schmidt family at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| Aug. 7 | 32nd West Newton Day
<i>Descendants of settlers of West Newton to come and bring stories, pictures, or other information about their relatives.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Aug. 10–14 | Nicollet County Fair | Nicollet County Fairgrounds |
| Aug. 13 | Equestrian Demonstration at Upper Shelter at 1:30 p.m.
Minnesota Aqua Program at 2 p.m. | Fort Ridgely
Fort Ridgely |
| Aug. 14 | TBA | Harkin Store |
| Aug. 18 | Black Powder, Gray Hope–Book I: Vengeance (A Novel of Civil War Heroes) by Marty Duncan Program and Book Signing at 2:30 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center |
| Aug. 20 | Causes of the Dakota War by John LaBatte at 1 p.m.
Battlefield Tour by John LaBatte at 2:30 p.m. | Fort Ridgely
Fort Ridgely |
| Aug. 21 | Misfits. Variety of music from 1 to 4 p.m. | Harkin Store |
| Aug. 27 | Dakota Family Caravan to Fort Snelling by Mary Bakeman at 1:30 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |
| Aug. 28 | Old School Houses of Nicollet County
<i>Display including the private school that was in West Newton. 1 to 4 p.m.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Sept. 3 | Cemetery Walk at Fort Ridgely Cemetery at 5 p.m.
Perpetual Vaudeville by Pete Bloedel at 7 p.m. | Fort Ridgely
Fort Ridgely |
| Sept. 4 | The West Arrives at West Newton
<i>with John Koblas, author of Jesse James books and Lonesome Ron, singing & playing western music</i> | Harkin Store |
| Sept. 11 | Grandparent's Day at the Harkin Store
<i>Activities to do with Grandparents or (parents). They are easy and fun.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Sept. 18 | Snakes, Snakes, and Snakes
<i>Tom Jessen brings his snakes for the afternoon. He answers any questions also. 1 p.m.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Sept. 25 | Lizzie and the Prairie Fire
<i>Gail Ann Wood will be signing her book from 1 to 4 p.m.</i> | Harkin Store |
| Oct. 1 | Mike Lynch and Star Watch at 7 p.m. | Fort Ridgely |

** NOTE: Ridgely and Harkin events may be cancelled if closed due to state shut down. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Fort Ridgely
Harkin Store
Traverse des Sioux
E. St. Julien Cox House



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