



Water/Ways Kickoff North Viewing Plaza is getting a makeover!



Proposed design for rain garden learning site, created by Seed to Site LLC.

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Like any true Minnesotan, we love our water and are excited to announce the North Viewing Plaza will be getting an (educational) makeover on May 14!

Did you know the Treaty Site History Center and Traverse des Sioux prairie are sitting on what once was prairie pothole wetland? These wet meadows played an integral part in the history of our region. Therefore, we are ideally located to educate people about the importance of this unique ecosystem.

That is why we are excited to announce we are partnering with Great River Greening and Seed to Site LLC to recreate this wetland by installing a rain garden learning site on the North Viewing Plaza, which is adjacent to the prairie and walking trails. This area is visible from the gallery where

the future *Water/Ways* exhibit will be displayed within the Treaty Site History Center. Guests will exit the building to walk through the rain garden and view interpretive signage that describes the purpose of rain gardens, the value of native plants in urban landscaping and their connection to the Traverse des Sioux prairie and Minnesota River. All of these components complement the exhibits within the museum and enhance the appeal of the entire site.

This is the perfect time to start this project. **The Smithsonian *Water/Ways*** exhibit will open in the north gallery on August 13. Wouldn't it be great if our thousands of visitors who come to see this nationally-recognized exhibit could also experience a beautiful and educational rain garden?

I know that like me, many of you love our prairie and walking trails. You recognize that preserving the landscape helps preserve our history. That's why we're asking for your help. Please consider making a financial gift to support this important project. Sponsorship opportunities for the rain garden learning site are available. Your donation will help us make this exciting possibility a reality.

See inset for details.

Rain Garden continued on page 10

Ways to Donate and Support this Project:

- **\$4 per plant** (budgeted 300 plants)
- **Sponsor a plant bed:** includes mulch, compost and labor, divided into the three areas (rain garden, patio west and patio east): \$1,000 each, includes a naming plaque within the bed
- **Sponsor the large blue wild indigo (*Baptisia australis*):** which will be a centerpiece, \$500 donation includes a naming plaque near the plant
- This new educational space would benefit from **tables and chairs** for reading and reflection. Thinking about retiring your used patio furniture? Think about NCHS for a donation.
- **A general donation** to support the rain garden learning site.

Please use the included donation form on page 10 and indicate what you'd like your donation to go towards.

Members

Thank you to the following renewing and new members of NCHS from Jan. 1, 2016 through the end of March.

Renewed Patron Members:

Bernard & Pam Bidelman
Donald & Beverly Gustafson
Paul & Gail Lindfors
Marty & Carol Sterner
Jerry Weldy

Renewed Family Members:

Paul & Nita Aasen
Steve & Jen Baxa
Elsa Cornell
Chuck & Carol Eggert
Jerome & Alma Fors
Lisa Isenberg &
Philip Friedlund
Mike & Maryetta McCarty
Pam & Steve Morson
Thorild & Ardith Nelson
Herb & Louise Poncin
Molly & Joe Reinemann
Owen & Evie Swenson

Renewed

Individual Members:

Eric Annexstad
Lori Ann Lahlum
Donald Lavold
Mary Long

Renewed Senior Members:

Arnie Nimps
Lona Falencykowski
Donna Kowal

New Family Members:

Tim Bartelt & Emily Stark
Thomas & Carol Brown
Elizabeth Peters

New Individual Members:

Robyn Lynn Kramer
Kate Martens
Julie Pollard

Executive Board

Officers:

Joe Urban, President, St. Peter
Scott Hermanson, Vice President, St. Peter
Marie Dranttel, Treasurer, St. Peter
Pam Morson, Secretary, Lafayette

Directors:

Nita Aasen, St. Peter
Tim Bartelt, St. Peter
Tom Brown, St. George
Abbi Carleton, Nicollet
Rhonda Dass, North Mankato
Amanda Frie, St. Peter
JoAnn Gieseke, Nicollet County
Eileen Holz, St. Peter
Maria Lokensgard, Norseland
Bob Schabert, Courtland
Mark Ullman, North Mankato
Alma Forst, Past President, West Newton Twp.

Contact Information:

Executive Director, Alyssa Auten
alyssa@nchsmn.org

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bob@nchsmn.org

Office Manager, Elaine Deschaine
elaine@nchsmn.org

TSHC Site Manager, Jessica Becker
sitemanager@nchsmn.org

**TSHC Museum Assistants, Jack Buser, Bri Dickel,
Cindy Freeman, Marsha Heinze,
Loren Sundboom**

TSHC Maintenance, Wayne Passon

Harkin Store Manager, Ruth Grewe

**Harkin Store Site Guides, Rose Alsleben,
Donna Dose, Justin Grewe, Robin Grewe,
Glenn Stryker**

Ft. Ridgely Manager, Amber Bentler

**Ft. Ridgely Guides, Annaliese Endorf,
Charlotte Nack**

Treaty Site History Center

1851 N Minnesota Ave., St. Peter, MN 56082
Phone: 507-934-2160; Fax: 507-934-0172

Hours: Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.;
Sun. 1–4 p.m. (Mar.–Oct.);
CLOSED: Three weeks around Christmas,
dates TBD

Archives: Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m., by appt.
General info via e-mail: museum@nchsmn.org
or research@nchsmn.org

E. St. Julien Cox House

500 N Washington Ave., St. Peter MN 56082
Phone: 507-934-2160

• Group tours of 10+ available by appointment.
The Cox House is available year-round for a variety
of programs and facility rentals.
Please call (507) 934-2160 for more information.

Harkin Store

PO Box 112, New Ulm MN 56073
Eight miles east of New Ulm on Co. Hwy. 21
Phone: 507-354-8666, harkinstore@mnhs.org
Hours:

• May–Sept. & First 3 Weekends in Oct.: Sat. and Sun.
10 a.m.–5 p.m.
• Memorial Day–Labor Day: Tue.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
and Mon. holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Fort Ridgely

72404 County Road 30, Fairfax MN 55332
Phone: 507-508-2848, ridgely@mnhs.org
Hours:

• Sept. and first three weekends in Oct.: Sat.–Sun.
10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Mon. holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
• Memorial Day weekend–Labor Day: Fri.–Sun.
10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Open Mon. holidays

Director's Column



Alyssa Auten

It's hard to believe that I've already been here at NCHS for two years and have started my third. I've been doing a lot of reflecting lately, some professional and some personal. I've been thinking about the challenges and successes NCHS has had in the last two years. I'm also in the midst of watching my parents prepare my childhood home to be put on the market, and I'm getting married in October. Needless to say, 2016 is going to be a big year, both for me and this organization!

You all have heard (and are continuing to hear) about the opportunity we've been given to host a Smithsonian exhibit in August and September. This has opened many doors for projects we've wanted to tackle for some time; a new exhibit in the North gallery and updating the North Viewing Plaza with a rain garden and native plantings. I think all of this is possible, not only because we're preparing for *Water/Ways*, but because of our terrific staff and their hard work. I am so proud of NCHS and what it is accomplishing this year. I'm also proud that we have plans for the North gallery for the next three years. We want to encourage our visitors to return, and rotating exhibits and installing a new rain garden learning site will give them a reason to keep coming back.

I invite you to get involved with NCHS this summer. Volunteer some time to help install the rain garden learning site on May 14, sit at the County Fair booth and promote *Water/Ways* to visitors, or make a donation toward any of our upcoming exhibits, projects or events. Become part of our team; we are proud of the work we do and I hope you are, too. The year 2016 is going to be a big one, *I invite you to join us for the ride!*

New NCSH Board Members

Election of 2016 Officers

President, Joe Urban
Vice President, Scott Hermanson
Treasurer, Marie Dranttel
Secretary, Pam Morson

Candidates for Second Term

Nita Aasen, St. Peter
Abbi Carleton, Nicollet
JoAnn Gieseke, Brighton Township

Slate of New Candidates

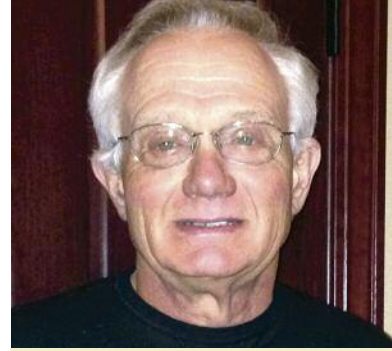
Tim "Minnow" Bartelt, St. Peter, became a co-owner and Director of Profits at Patrick's in St. Peter in 2001, after working there as a bartender, cook, and manager from 1992. He played bass drum for the world champion St. Peter Govenaires Drum and Bugle Corps from 1992 through 2005, and currently works with the Govies as support staff, assisting with their numerous fundraisers and events. Originally hailing from Waseca, Minn., he has lived in St. Peter since 2007.

Tom Brown, St. George, is originally from St. George and has spent his life there. He attending vo-tech school and was employed by 3M for 38 years as a tool and die maker. He also farmed during that time. He retired from 3M in 2007 and is still farming today. Tom is married to his wife Carol and they have three children. He has always been interested in history and gives cemetery tours at Church of St. George West Newton, a parish that started in 1858.

Amanda Frie, St. Peter, grew up in central Minnesota and moved to St. Peter in 2000 to attend Gustavus where she studied geography. After graduation, she volunteered for a year in Washington, D.C. and moved back to St. Peter where she currently lives. She is the Office Manager for Congressman Tim Walz, teaches indoor cycling classes at the YMCA in Mankato and pours wine in the Tasting Room at Chankaska Winery.



Tim Bartelt



Tom Brown



Amanda Frie

New Faces at the Treaty Site

Cindy Freeman, Museum Assistant

Cindy Cardwell Freeman moved to St. Peter with her husband, Tom, and two children in 1993. For 13 years she worked at Scholarship America serving many roles including Senior Director, Community Programs. She currently works as an online college instructor teaching life success courses—academic, personal and career—for Southern New Hampshire University and Heartland Community College in Illinois.

Cindy is also a certified life coach who runs Freeman Training and Consulting together with her husband. Whether working with students or clients, she guides and supports people as they learn more about themselves, explore options for reaching goals, and make choices with the best chance of success. Her passion for learning is why Cindy decided to volunteer for NCHS and the Treaty Site. She believes knowing more about our history enables us to know ourselves better. Greater self-knowledge leads to wiser decisions.

Cindy has a Master's Degree in Education from Concordia University, St. Paul. Her bachelor's degree is in journalism/public relations from Northern Illinois University. Cindy has volunteered for the Nicollet County Relay for Life for many years and served several terms on the St. Peter Library Board.

Cindy and Tom love spending time with their four grandchildren. They also enjoy traveling, ballroom dancing, golfing, and DIY projects.

Marsha Heinze, Museum Assistant

I live in Mankato but my hometown is Lake Crystal. Nine years ago I began my search for my Scott ancestors. What an adventure this has been. My love for genealogy has given me a chance to work in three Historical Societies, Faribault, Blue Earth and the Treaty Site. I have met new friends and learned so much. "I have been bitten by the genealogy bug."

Some other interests are reading, needlework, quilting, knitting, and antiques.

I have three grown children, twelve grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter who all live in the area.



Cindy Freeman, Museum Assistant



Marsha Heinze, Museum Assistant

FILMS ON FIRST THURSDAYS

Culmination of 2015–16 Film Series



"Christine 'Montana' Rasmussen, executive chef at River Rock Coffee, is planning a wholesale kitchen and baking company which will offer expanded service to several regional establishments."

Photo and caption:
Dana Melius/St. Peter Herald

Please join us for the last feature of the 2015–16 documentary film series. A partnership between St. Peter Community and Family Education and the Nicollet County Historical Society, films are screened every month at the Treaty Site History Center, through May. Be watching in the next issue of *The Crossing* for the next season's selections. If you have a documentary film suggestion please contact either Alyssa at alyssa@nchsmn.org or Tami at tskinner@stpeterschools.org for it to be considered as an upcoming film.

***The Trouble with Bread*, May 5, 7 p.m.**

27 min., Rated for Grades 7–Adult. Michael Pollan, author of *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation*, told the filmmaker, Maggie Beidelman, that her gluten intolerance could all be in her head. She half agreed with him, because the number of Americans buying into the \$10.5 billion "gluten-free" industry is disturbing. There is so much more to learn about wheat—and how it has changed in just the last couple of generations—before we completely sign it off.

In this film, Ms. Beidelman journeys from farm to mill to table on a quest for answers about gluten intolerance and a hunt for the perfect loaf, one she can eat without getting sick. Along the way, she makes some unexpected discoveries about crucial changes to the wheat itself and how it is processed and fermented. Let's just say that bread as you know it, is not what you think.

Trailer here: http://www.thetroublewithbread.com/?page_id=31

Following the film, Montana Rasmussen from the new River Rock Kitchen & Bakery Co. in St. Peter will share samples of their breads and talk about the new bakery!

Fort Ridgely is hiring!

If you're looking for a fun and interesting summer job Fort Ridgely is the place for you! We have great visitors and programs. Scheduling is flexible but keep in mind it is a summer job and we are open on the weekends. We are looking for anyone that loves history and likes to enjoy their work.

Please contact
Amber Bentler at
amber@nchsmn.org
for more information!

Artifact & Archival Donations

accepted into our collections since the October 2015 *Crossing*:

Gustavus Adolphus College: 29 Mar. 1930 St. Peter voter proclamation
Christine Feldman & Martin Johnson, representing Marian & Chester Johnson: history of the Valley View, St. Peter, information about Minn. Square Park and environs, 1930 Diamond Jubilee *St. Peter Herald* index, St. Peter Tour of Homes booklets, information about a Traverse des Sioux Commemorative postage stamp, documents of the Nicollet County Historical Society

Tom Hagen: Nicollet County map produced for the *Saint Peter Free Press*

Bruce Gray: postal collectibles (five "covers") featuring stamps, images, cancellations associated with Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, and Minn.

Roger Schoeb: two 2003 Nicollet County maps; Smart Search directories for Mankato area from Jan. and Dec. of 2014; the 2012–'13 yellowbook for Mankato area; the July 2013 to June '14 and the July 2014 to June '15 *Enventis* directories; the June 2012 *dex* Official Directory for Le Sueur and St. Peter; 2009 Nicollet County plat book from County-Wide Directory, LLC; 2008, '09, and '10 Nicollet County plat books from FHP; 1962 & '65 Atlases of Nicollet County

Marlin Peterson: mug from the 1971 Nicollet County Fair; E. A. Swenson & Sons letter opener from the Norseland General Store; July 4, 1919 Service Men's Homecoming button at St. Peter; Traverse Elevator 100th Anniversary mug; and Traverse Elevator beverage holder

St. Peter High School: yearbooks: 1948, '49, '51 (2), '63, '66, '67, '68, '69 (3), '71 (3), '72 (2), '77 (3), '78 (2), '80 (2), '81, '82, '85, '86 (3), '87 (2), '90, '92 (2), '93, '95 (2), '96 (3), '98 (3), 2000 (3), '01 (3), '02 (3), '03, '04 (3), '05, '06, '07 (2), '08 (3), '10 (3), '11 (3), '12 (2), '13, '14, '15

Marian A. Rengstorf: Korean War uniform of her brother Marvin Rengstorf with dress jacket and pants

Carolyn Woller: 1954 U.S. Army uniform of Albert Woller; includes overcoat, Eisenhower jackets, khaki pants, and green pants

Mary Lou Thieman: 1971 Centennial Nicollet County Fair button.

Joseph Farley: bottles from St. Peter druggists found in yards in St. Peter
2016

City of St. Peter: property information concerning St. Peter residents

Kris Manske: genealogy books.

Mark Elijah: photograph of a house at 436 Wheeler in North Mankato; certificate from the State of Minn. honoring Maurice Mather Wheeler, who died while in military service

Gustavus Adolphus College: collection of material from Chester and Marian Johnson concerning the Nicollet County Historical Society and the history of St. Peter

Marlyn Seitzer Miller: photos from St. Peter and Oshawa Township; items from the Class of 1935, St. Peter High School

Donna M. Kowal: stone artifact found by her husband, most likely found in Nicollet County

Robert Isenberg: Olin and Hedren advertising from Lafayette

Fred Danner: photograph of the Consolidated Dist. 43 School in Lafayette Township

Marlin Peterson: Dist. 32 School Souvenir booklet, 1911–'12, teacher Delia Roberts

Jim Rossow: 1971 Nicollet County Fair Centennial yardstick, *Early History of Nicollet County* booklet by Howard Nelson, and genealogy forms

John Hurd: prescriptions by St. Peter physicians in the 1890s.

Trinity Lutheran Church: 325 *Home Tested Recipes* booklet published during Eric J. Gustavson's pastorate, 1938–'41.

See one of the recent collections donations on page 9.

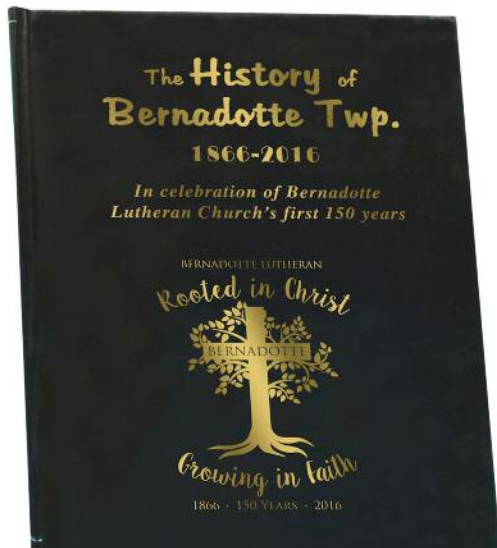
History Center Events...

June 9, 7 p.m.

The History of Bernadotte Twp. 1866–2016

Treaty Site History Center

Ruth Klossner will be at the Treaty Site History Center on **Thursday, June 9, at 7 p.m.** to discuss the book *The History of Bernadotte Twp. 1866–2016*. This event is in celebration of Bernadotte Lutheran Church's first 150 years.



Ruth will talk about the 550-page history book detailing the history of Bernadotte Lutheran Church—as well as all of Bernadotte Township. The first half of the book details the township's organization and history while the second half of the book celebrates the 150-year history of the Bernadotte Lutheran Church and includes chapters on the church's history and legacy.

The book will sell for \$40. Pre-orders can be placed by sending payment to Ruth Klossner, 34085 515th Ave., Lafayette, MN 56054. Copies can be picked up at Bernadotte Lutheran's 150th anniversary event May 1. Those wishing to have books shipped are asked to add \$7 per copy.

Regular site admission will be charged for the event. FREE for NCHS and MNHS members, and Gustavus students and staff.

June 30, 7 p.m.

"Wild about Wildlife" with Scott Kudelka

Treaty Site History Center, Free

Badger, and skunk, and mink! Oh, my! Join us at the Treaty Site History Center for "Wild about Wildlife" to learn about some of the wild mammals that live in Minnesota. Minneopa Area Naturalist, Scott Kudelka, will be here on **Thursday, June 30th at 7 p.m.** to present about Minnesota wildlife.



What are some of the cool animals that can be found throughout the state? Learn how these mammals have adapted to survive in their natural environment and some of the more interesting characteristics. Using furs from 15 different mammals (badger, skunk, mink, coyote, etc.) gives a different perspective on how these animals survive. You will have a chance to test your knowledge by participating in a number of hands-on activities including "Guess the Critter."

Children must be accompanied by an adult.
Admission to the event is FREE.



May 19, 7 p.m.

"Giving the Prairie a Voice" presented by Prairie Enthusiasts

Treaty Site History Center, Free

The Many Rivers Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts will be presenting a program all about prairies! Members will provide a brief history of prairies. They will also be reviewing the five-year plan to establish a better, more dynamic prairie at the Traverse des Sioux Historic Site prairie and will leave time for questions and comments. The talk will conclude by showing a short film on prairies.

Monetary Donations

received from Jan. 1, 2016
through the end of March.

Monetary

Lois Annexstad
Anonymous
ECS Inc.
Carl M. & Susan M. Johnson
Lori Ann Lahlum
Sandy Lerner
Beatrice Martinson
Carolyn & John Meyer
Stephen & Pamela Morson
Lorraine Olson - *Water/Ways*
Agnes Stensby
Loren & Roxane Sundboom
Mark Ulman
Jerry Weldy
David & Linda Witte

Non-Monetary

GP Engineering

Memorials

received from Jan. 1, 2016
through the end of March:

In Memory of

Cletus Franta

Given by

Lorraine Olson

We want your suggestions!

NCHS is here to serve our members and friends. If you have ideas for programs, events or classes you'd like to see offered, give us a call at 507-934-2160 or e-mail us at museum@nchsmn.org.

NCHS Site Information

Ridgely Report...

Fort Ridgely Historic Site

by Amber Bentler



Photo courtesy Amber Bentler

I am looking forward to the 2016 season at Fort Ridgely. The season starts on May 28th and will be open Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Mondays on holiday weekends. The season starts off with John Labatte who will be giving his talk on the Causes of the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. The New Ulm Battery will be joining us a couple of times this year as well author Curtis Dahlin who will be talking about another new book. We will have programs with area naturalist Scott Kudelka as well as Children's Days. If you would like a complete schedule of programs check out the NCHS website or the Minnesota Historical Society website (mnhs.org).

I am also looking for site guides for the 2016 season! This is a seasonal position with flexible hours. Just remember it is a summer job and we are open on the weekends. The position responsibilities include opening and closing the site, greeting visitors, working in the gift shop, selling memberships and taking admission. Also learning the tour so you can teach visitors about the history of the site. It's a wonderful place to be in the summer and our visitors are always enjoyable. It's a great place to work! If you are interested please contact me at amber@nchsmn.org for more information.

Fort Ridgely gets a makeover

In the last few weeks Fort Ridgely's Commissary building has gotten a bit of a makeover! A new exhibit was recently installed, based on research an intern named Jared Schmidt conducted a few years ago. The exhibit was designed by eholz graphix and features 11 panels of various aspects of the Fort; what life there was like for soldiers, the women who worked there, and more. The award-winning Commemorating Controversy exhibit will also be on display this season. Make sure to stop by this summer to view the new exhibits and fresh coats of paint!



Treaty Site Talk...

Treaty Site History Center

by Jessica Becker

What a whirlwind winter we experienced here at the Treaty Site! As many of you know, the building was closed for three weeks starting in late December. What you may not know is Treaty Site staff and volunteers were very busy making some highly anticipated changes to the building. When you walk into our building, the first thing you notice is the lobby has a new look. The furniture in the room was reconfigured, and we even did a little painting. The Treaty Site now sports a new custom-made reception desk from which our volunteers now greet visitors. This desk is made almost entirely from reclaimed and locally sourced materials making it a one-of-a-kind addition to the building. We have also changed our tour experience. The Treaty Site has struggled in the past with foot-traffic flow, and an easy way to solve this problem was to change how we introduce the museum to visitors. Behind newly installed shed doors is the room where museum-goers now begin their tours watching our introductory video, and also explore the early days of Nicollet County and watch it change through various maps on display. Inside the Al and Cathy Annexstad Gallery, staff expanded the exhibit on **St. Peter's Engesser Brewery** to include Minnesota River Valley breweries with fun new bottles and even shipping manifests. Speaking of shipping manifests, our other new exhibit in the Annexstad Gallery is titled **River Valley Railroads** which includes histories of the various railway lines that cut across the county.

Several years ago the Society acquired a retired exhibit from the Minnesota Historical Society called **Tales of the Territory** which explores early Minnesota history and westward expansion. Over our winter break staff reworked this exhibit to include fun new displays on the Red River Trails and Red River Oxcarts, new items from the Society's collection are on display, and an expanded explanation of the Big Woods and the Prairie are all in the Henry and Emilia Schmidt Gallery.

The Treaty Site also houses display cases specifically dedicated to each

Township in Nicollet County. The content of these cases housed in the Irene Miller Dahl Gallery also all received makeovers in February. Each case has new photographs, maps, and descriptions of people, places, things, and events in each township's history.

We've been very busy at the Treaty Site this winter and spring to bring new and exciting changes for our visitors in 2016, and there are still many changes yet to come. If it has been a while since you visited us, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you all back to stroll through the museum and explore your history.

Below:

Top: new front desk, shed doors, and entry renovations;
Center: intro room updates, including a large screen TV for showing introductory films, thanks to a grant from the St. Peter Tourism Bureau;
Bottom: expanded exhibits in the Al and Cathy Annexstad Gallery featuring St. Peter Engesser Brewery and other Minnesota River Valley breweries and a River Valley Railroad exhibit



Cox House Corner...

#1 Top 50 Coolest Houses List

by Jessica Becker



Photo courtesy Bob Sandeen

"1. Julien Cox House – St. Peter, MN – Built in 1871 for St. Peter's first mayor Eugene St. Julien Cox, the most beautiful house in the state isn't especially large. But it's beautiful, a light yellow with red trim. Its unique, built in the Carpenter Gothic Style; and charming and exotic and the very reason lists like this exist. Kudos to you, St. Peter." <http://highwayhighlights.com/2015/12/the-top-50-coolest-houses-in-minnesota/>

Did you hear the Cox House was in the news this winter? Back in February the Society was excited to discover our E. St. Julien Cox House was ranked #1 on *HighwayHighlights*' "Top 50 Coolest Houses in Minnesota" list! The criteria stated the homes on the list be historic and unique. We are thrilled our little house stood out against all the others. Author Seth Hardmeyer called the Cox House "charming and exotic" in his post, and we agree!

HighwayHighlights is a travel website about attractions found in Minnesota. To read the article "Top 50 Coolest Houses in Minnesota" visit our Facebook page. The Cox House is available for large group tours and special event rentals. For more information, call (507) 934-2160 or e-mail cox@nchsmn.org and enter Cox House in the subject line.

To celebrate the Cox House being chosen as the #1 historic house in Minnesota, this year's plant sale on May 14 will include an open house for people to explore the home, donations accepted at the door. Come to the E. St. Julien Cox House at 500 N. Washington Ave. from 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m. to buy a variety of heritage plants and take a look around the house while you're there!

Annual HERITAGE Plant Sale

Proceeds benefit Cox House & Gardens

Saturday, May 14, 2016

8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

E. St. Julien Cox House

500 N. Washington Avenue, St. Peter

*This year with an
Open House.
Explore the inside of the home
during the sale.
Donations accepted at the door.*



Sponsored by the Minnehaha Questers,
Nicollet County Historical Society & Thrivent Financial

Harkin Happenings...

Harkin Prepares for Season

by Ruth Grewe



The 1870's Alexander Harkin general store will open April 30th at 10 a.m. Come and visit the store, you'll see 40% original merchandise on the shelves. Hear the story about Alexander and the village of West Newton and how people lived and dealt with everyday life.

I'm getting really excited, like always, about setting up the store for visitors; cleaning and setting things out again helps with refreshing the memory of the history of the store and village of West Newton. The gift shop is next on the list to get ready. Ordering has been done, soon marking all the merchandise and setting it out. Putting new items is so much fun. The programs have been set up for Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. Our first

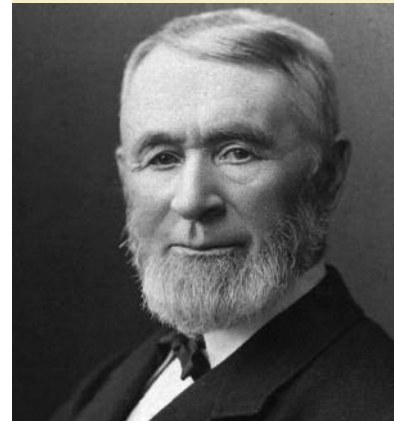
program is Alexander's 188th birthday with cake and coffee on May 1st. Mother's day is our large display of aprons-old and newer. Brought back from years ago is the Heirloom Gardening on May 15th, just in time for planting. The Riverboats program is always interesting with the Minnesota riverboat display on May 22. Memorial Day is music from Bill Cagley, music for all ages. Hopefully he will bring along his daughter to clog for us. Dairy day is on June 5th with samples of cheese from Ireland. The Flag Day program will share the information about the history of our flags. Father's day is leather work and other crafters. Music closes out the June program schedule with the Carver Creek Bluegrass family playing their various music selections; bring along a lawn chair, if you want or use the porch. As you can see the programs are very different so hopefully our programs will bring you out to see the store and enjoy the afternoon. See more Harkin events on the calendar on page 15.



We were honored to have four generations of the Harkin family visit in 2015.



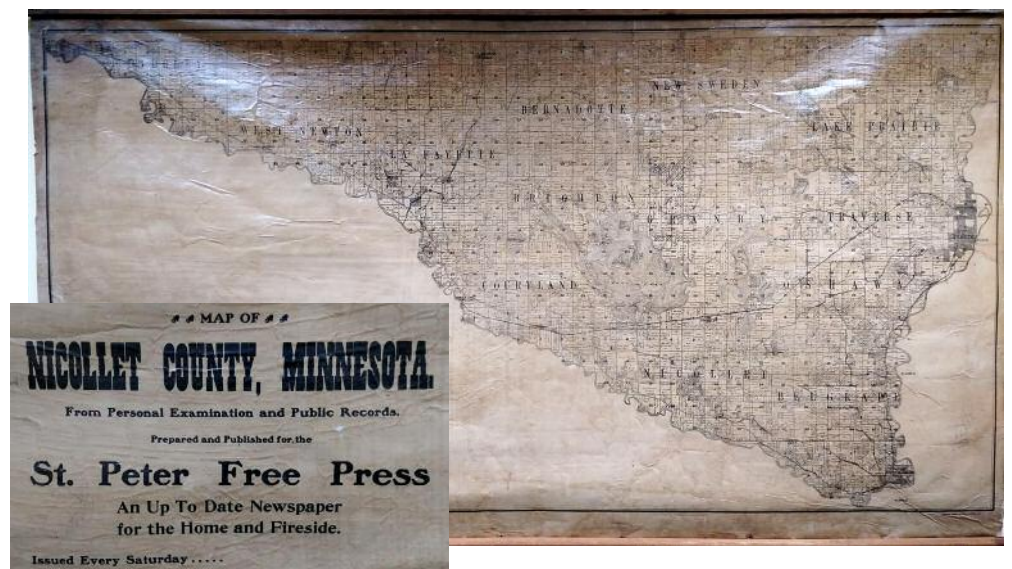
Bill Cagley



Alexander Harkin in his younger years.

Collection Donation

This Nicollet County map was donated to the collections by Thomas Hagen. The map originally belonged to the May Family, who farm in Blue Earth County not far from St. Clair.





Rain Garden and Prairie Improvement!

Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 9:00am-1:00pm
At the Nicollet County Historical Society



BUSH FOUNDATION



Nicollet Soil and Water
Conservation District

About the Event

The Nicollet County Historical Society and Great River Greening are hosting an event at St. Peter's Treaty Site History Center to benefit the local water quality, prairie, and wildlife. Volunteers will plant a rain garden to help store and infiltrate rainwater from the Treaty Site History Center roof and improve the water quality of the nearby Minnesota River. Next to the rain garden, the Traverse des Sioux prairie has been invaded by weedy, invasive, and undesirable species of plants. After an April burn, volunteers will haul and stack buckthorn and other brush that threaten this prairie ecosystem.

Registration is required: www.greatrivergreening.org/events/st-peter-rain-garden/

About Great River Greening & the Seven Mile Creek Watershed Partnership

Great River Greening is a conservation nonprofit working throughout Minnesota to empower and assist local communities in restoring and conserving the land and water that enrich our lives. Statewide, we have worked side-by-side with 37,000 volunteers to improve, restore and care for Minnesota's natural heritage – 15,000 acres and counting.

In the St. Peter area, we are working with Nicollet SWCD to lead the Seven Mile Creek Watershed Partnership. This broad coalition is brought together by the conviction that modern farming methods, a vibrant farm economy, and excellent water quality are all essential and interdependent. Since 2013, the Partnership has worked with landowners to install 45 water quality conservation projects impacting more than 1,000 acres of farmland.

Partners & Funders: Nicollet County Historical Society, Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Health, National Endowment for the Humanities, Seed to Site LLC, Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District, Smithsonian Water/Ways exhibit, and Minnesota Humanities Center.

RESTORING LAND, WATER AND WONDER

Great River Greening inspires, engages and leads local communities in conserving and caring for the land and water that enrich our lives. Our events are fun, educational and rewarding.

Join us and make a difference!

What is a Rain Garden?

In simple terms, a rain garden is a collection of vegetation with naturally deep-reaching roots that's deliberately planted in direct line to some source of storm water or spring melt waters. Instead of losing this water to normal forms of drainage, runoff, and erosion, a rain garden utilizes this water.

Rain Garden benefits

- 💧 Helping keep water clean by filtering rainwater runoff before it reaches local waterways.
- 💧 Helping protect communities from flooding and drainage problems.
- 💧 Replenishing area aquifers by increasing the amount of water filtering into the ground.
- 💧 Enhancing the beauty of yards and communities.
- 💧 Providing habitats for wildlife, from birds to butterflies.

Sources: <http://raingardenalliance.org/what/benefits>
<https://blog.allstate.com/rain-gardens>



Rain Garden *continued from page 1*

Making a donation is easy. Use the form below to make your contribution by mail or visit our website (nchsmn.org) to donate online.

We've said it before and we'll say it again: you make our work happen, through your support, your volunteering, and now—as many of you have done so generously in the past—through your financial contribution. If you donate today, you will help make this dream project a reality! Help us protect and promote our local environmental history.

YES, I/We would like to make a donation to NCHS...

Water/Ways Exhibit ☐

Rain Garden Learning Site ☐

General Donation ☐

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Amount Donated \$ _____

My check is enclosed ☐ Please debit my credit card ☐

Acct. Number _____

CVV Code _____ Expiration Date _____
3 #s on rev—VISA®, MC®, Disc®, 4 #s on rev—AE®

Authorized Signature _____

☐ Please accept my ANONYMOUS Donation

☐ I understand that my donation will be
acknowledged in NCHS publications

Ways to Donate and Support the Rain Garden Learning Site:

- _____ plants at \$4 per plant \$ _____
- Sponsor a plant bed: \$1,000 each \$ _____
- Sponsor the large blue wild indigo: \$500 \$ _____
- Donate toward tables and chairs \$ _____
- A general donation to support
the rain garden learning site. \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:

Nicollet County Historical Society

Mail to:

Nicollet County Historical Society
1851 North Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082

Request for Volunteers and Tour Guides

We love our volunteers and think you should join in on the fun! Are you interested in neat historic artifacts, exhibit design, leading tours or maybe you're handy with a hammer? NCHS has many volunteer opportunities that will fit no matter what your talents and schedule. No experience is needed to start!

Opportunities include:

Visitor Services: These volunteers assist at the Treaty Site History Center by staffing the front desk, greeting visitors, answering phone calls, answering basic questions, and assisting visitors with purchases in the Gift Shop.

Tour Guides: Our guides lead tours for adults and kids alike at the E. St. Julien Cox House, Traverse des Sioux Historic Site, and the Treaty Site History Center. NCHS gives tours to a wide variety of groups including school field trips, scouting troops, and other groups of all ages.

Events & Programming: NCHS strives to provide educational and informative programming for all ages. We are looking for individuals interested in helping plan and execute new educational programming and events at all NCHS sites.

Archives & Collections: Assist NCHS staff with research, digitizing photographs, encapsulating documents, and more! Curatorial volunteers will help with inventory projects, clean exhibits and artifacts, perform basic data entry.

Maintenance & Handymen: Are you handy with a hammer or like working in the garden? NCHS has plenty of opportunities to work inside and outside on various projects. This might include light carpentry work, weeding, snow removal, and general site upkeep at all NCHS sites.

...and many more!

NCHS staff provides training for all volunteers. All positions are unpaid. If you're interested send an e-mail to museum@nchsmn.org, or give us a call at (507) 934-2160 to discuss your interests.

Winston Churchill said "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give back."



Above, volunteer Jeremiah Burnham painting, and left, volunteer Brian Oviatt pressure washing shed doors, and during the remodel of the intro room at the Treaty Site History Center.



Spotlight on NCHS Volunteers

Historical societies appreciate volunteers. We would like to spotlight two of them, **Mike Bidelman** and **Nita Aasen**.

When Mike was still teaching at the local high school, he brought his students to the museum to research the histories of specific properties in the St. Peter business district. They tried to determine the owners of the properties and the natures of their businesses, starting from the 1850s and going up into the 20th century. Since his retirement, Mike has expanded the project by working his way through the microfilmed newspapers from 1855 and onward into the 1890s in order to compile a master business history of St. Peter.

Nita has worked on several projects, including a history of the Nicollet County Poor Farm, which has provided us with a considerable amount of new information about it. Reflecting her medical background, Nita has also assembled information about the hospitals in St. Peter. She has also written a fascinating history of the house in which she and her husband live. However, her main focus has been on searching the area newspapers for obituaries. She has gone through well over 100 years worth of newspapers, and she has created a searchable database in order to locate specific obituaries.

It should be strongly emphasized that both Mike and Nita have undertaken projects that are extremely time consuming. They have the patience and the attention to detail that their projects require. Both also regularly alert us to a variety of items in the newspapers that are of special interest. All of this work has allowed us to provide much better service to our customers. Our knowledge of the county's past has been greatly expanded by their work. We wish to thank Mike and Nita for many, many hours of dedicated effort! It is very greatly appreciated!



Mike Bidelman



Nita Aasen

Left: An example of the obituary resource created by Nita Aasen. If you are searching for Nicollet County obituaries, come in to the NCHS Archives and ask to see the Obit by Decade index.

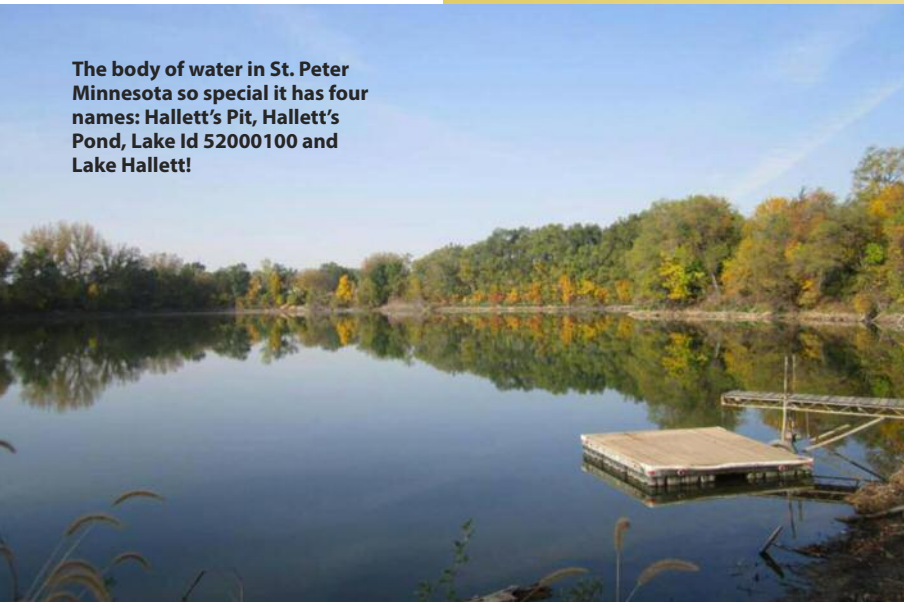
Below: A few lines from the 1856 Business Directory, from just one year of the research being done by Mike Bidelman. This database is an exceptional tool for people searching for any aspect of the business history of Nicollet County.

Herald	Pg	Herald	Pg	Last Name First issue Herald	First Name 10/17/1884
10/30/1885	4			Abrahamson	Caroline?
10/30/1885	4			Abrahamson	Theodore
9/23/1887	4			Ackerman	A. F.
2/22/1889	3	3/1; 3/8	3,3	Amberg	Louisa (Clark) (Mrs. John)
10/11/1889	3			Anderson	Alexander
9/27/1889	3			Anderson	Anders P.
2/12/1886	4			Anderson	Andrie J. (Johnson)
12/23/1887	4			Anderson	Anna Maria (Mrs. Charles)
8/3/1888	3			Anderson	Augusta
1/20/1888	4			Anderson	Child
3/15/1889	2			Anderson	Daughter (M/M A.C.)
5/1/1855	4			Anderson	John
4/2/1886	4	4/16/1886	4	Anderson	Margareta (Mrs Lars)

Date	Source	Name	Business Type	Business Name	Location	Comment A	Comment B
2.19.1856	Courier	Callahan, John F.	Buggies and Wagons	N/A	N/A	Ad	
2.26.1856	Courier	Green, S. J.	Hotel	The Green House	N/A	Converting to temperance hotel	Ad (12.24)
2.26.1856	Courier	Morgan, A. J.	Newspaper	St. Peter Courier	Minnesota Ave. & Broadway		
3.4.1856	Courier	Birdsall, D.	Hotel	Alma House (12.10)	3rd St.	Formerly Wheeler House	Birdsall is new manager
4.22.1856	Courier	Pratt, B. F.	Saw Mill	Pratt's Mill	Front St.	Buys out Ayers' Mill	Renovates Flour/Grist Mill (12.10); Ad (12.24)
5.21.1856	Courier	Pell, W.W. & Wright, T.C.	Hauling	N/A	N/A		
5.21.1856	Courier	Ferguson, James	Plows	N/A	N/A		
6.11.1856	Courier	Morison, P.	Hardware, Stoves, Tinware	Hardware and Stoves Depot	Minnesota Ave. in former Feldman Cabinet Shop	Relative location - "Opposite Winslow House" ???	Fire (12.17) Ad (12.24)
6.25.1856	Courier	Hunter Wm F. and Wright, N.K.	Groceries, Drugs, Toiletries, Paint	N/A	3rd St. - 1 door north of Winslow House	Ad (12.24)	
6.25.1856	Courier	Clark, M.L. & W. H.	Dry Goods and Groceries	Clark's Warehouse	Front St. & Broadway - On Levee (4.28.1872)		
6.25.1856	Courier	Boardman & O'Brien	Architects & Builders	N/A	N/A	Builds and sells hotel (7.30)	
6.25.1856	Courier	Dunning & Turnbull	Dry Goods and Groceries	Pioneer Store - Dunning & Co.	Front St. - Blk 204, Lot 10	Partnership changes to Dunning & Rogers (11.19)	Ad (12.24)
7.9.1856	Courier	Simons & Pierce	Real Estate Brokers	N/A	N/A		
8.13.1856	Courier	Hezlep, George	Commercial Development	N/A	Blk 183	2-story Store 20'X30' (In progress)	
8.13.1856	Courier	Gorman, R.L.	Commercial Development	Gorman Building	Minnesota Ave	3-Story, Business/Office Bldg (In Progress)	Odd Fellows on 3rd Floor
8.27.1856	Courier	Gorman, R.L.	Real Estate Broker and Banker	Gorman, Wilson & Co. (12.25)	N/A	Ad (12.24) - Partners with Wilson	
10.3.1856	Courier	Howes, A.F.	Commercial Development	N/A	N/A	Store 60'X24' (In Progress)	
10.22.1856	Courier	Baker, C.	Clothing	C. Baker & Co.	Minnesota Ave. - Gorman Bldg.		
11.19.1856	Courier	Phipps, E. L. & Smith, N.	Dry Goods and Groceries	N/A	Minnesota Ave. - Stone bldg. south Gorman Bldg.	Ad (12.24)	
11.19.1856	Courier	Feldman, W.H.	Furniture Maker	N/A	Minnesota Ave		
12.10.1856	Courier	Schimmel, W & Baberick, C.	Grocery	First German Store	N/A	Ad (12.24)	

Area Events...

The body of water in St. Peter Minnesota so special it has four names: Hallett's Pit, Hallett's Pond, Lake Id 52000100 and Lake Hallett!



Minnesota River Paddle

DNR-hosted Minnesota River Paddle, June 11 at 10 a.m.: Go for a paddle on the Minnesota River from Mack Lake County Park to Highway 4 for a total of 8 miles. On this stretch of the river we will be paddling through bottomland forest and see Fort Ridgely Creek flowing into the Minnesota. We will stop at least once along the way to stretch our legs and talk about some of the unique features and characteristics of the Minnesota River that flows almost 318 miles from Big Stone Lake to the Twin Cities. Please register by contacting Scott Kudelka at 507-384-8890 or scott.kudelka@state.mn.us.

Paddle the Minnesota River State Water Trail in ONE DAY!

Saturday, June 11, 2016 • Ortonville to St. Paul



Visit the website | mndnr.gov/riverinaday

MinnAqua Fishing Clinic for Families and Youth

In anticipation of the Nicollet County Historical Society hosting the Smithsonian's *Water/Ways* exhibit August 13 to September 25, 2016, NCHS will partner with the Lake Hallett Association to bring this Minnesota Department of Natural Resources event to the community.

Did you know you can catch fish with an empty pop can? MinnAqua staff will show you how! We'll learn about Minnesota fish, water habitat, conservation, fishing safety, and tying and baiting hooks. You'll make your own inexpensive fishing rig and try it out in Lake Hallett! All fishing will be catch and release. Fishing licenses are not required for registered adult and youth participants.

MinnAqua is the statewide fishing and aquatic education program of the Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR). Lake Hallett is located on the north side of St. Peter one block west of McDonald's. The clinics will be held on the south shore of the lake. Se Habla espanol. There will be two clinics:

Saturday June 4, 2016: 9 a.m.–12 p.m. for Families with children who are 11 years old or younger. A parent or guardian must accompany the child. A permission and release form must be signed by and for each youth participant. Limit 10.

Saturday June 4, 2016: 1–4 p.m. for girls and boys who are 12–16 years old.

A permission and release form must be signed by and for each participant. Limit 15.

For more information 507-931-6679.



2016 Calendar of Events:

Event/Program information:

Harkin Store and Fort Ridgely: \$6 adults (18–64), \$5 seniors (65+) and college students, \$4 children (ages 5–17).

Free for age 4 and under, MNHS and NCHS members.

TSHC: \$6 adults (18–64), \$5 seniors (65+), \$4 children (ages 5–17). Free for age 4 and under, MNHS and NCHS members.

May 1	Alexander Harkin's 188th Birthday—"Egg Coffee and Newton" 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
May 5	All School's Day	Fort Ridgely
May 5	Documentary Film Series 7 p.m. (see description on page 4) <i>The Trouble with Bread</i> with River Rock baker "Montana" Rasmussen after the film	Treaty Site
May 8	Mother's Day—Aprons , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store
May 14	Cox House Heritage Plant Sale and Open House 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m. (see description on page 8) purchase heritage garden plants and take a tour of the historic Cox House	Harkin Store
May 14	Rain Garden Planting and Prairie Improvement Day , <i>registration required (see pages 1 & 10 for information)</i> Interested in helping us install this exciting exhibit? Nicollet County Historical Society is excited to partner with Seed to Site LLC and Great River Greening to install a Rain Garden Learning Site at the Treaty Site History Center on May 14, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine. This event is a great opportunity to learn more about rain gardens, their importance in improving water quality, and preventing runoff. Volunteers will work near the banks of the Minnesota River to fill a rain garden learning site with native plants that will help to store and infiltrate rainwater coming from the roof of Saint Peter's Treaty Site History Center and benefit the water quality of the nearby river. Next to the rain garden, the Traverse des Sioux prairie has been invaded by weedy, invasive, and undesirable species. After an early April burn, volunteers will haul and stack buckthorn and other brush and trees that threaten the prairie ecosystem. Volunteer registration is required and spots are limited—so register soon before they're filled! Visit the website below to register yourself & others interested in the project. More details can be found on our Facebook page. http://www.greatrivergreening.org/events/st-peter-rain-garden/	Treaty Site
May 15	Heirloom Gardening , 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
May 19	The Prairie Enthusiasts present "Giving the Prairie a Voice" , 7 p.m. (see description on page 5)	Treaty Site
May 22	Minnesota River and Riverboats , 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
May 28	Fort Ridgely opens for the season , 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
May 29	Memorial Day—Music by Bill Cagley, Music for all Ages , 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
June 4	Christian Indians and the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 with John LaBatte 1–2 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
June 4	MinnAqua Fishing Clinic for Families and Youth (see description on page 14) in partnership with the Lake Hallett Association 9 a.m.–12 p.m. for families with children who are 11 years old or younger. <i>A parent or guardian must accompany the child.</i> <i>A permission and release form must be signed by and for each youth participant. Limit 10.</i> 1–4 p.m. for girls and boys who are 12–16 years old. <i>A permission and release form must be signed by and for each participant. Limit 15.</i>	Lake Hallett
June 5	Dairy Day , cheese samples from Ireland, 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
June 9	Ruth Klossner presents on new book <i>The History of Bernadotte Twp. 1866–2016</i> , 7 p.m. In celebration of Bernadotte Lutheran Church's first 150 years. (see description on page 5)	Treaty Site
June 11	Minnesota River Paddle , 10 a.m., (see description on page 9) Hosted by Minnesota DNR's Minneopa Area Naturalist, Scott Kudelka"	
June 11	Bison! with Scott Kudelka , 2–3 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
June 12	Flag Day , display of flags, 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
June 19	Father's Day, New Ulm Battery , 1–4 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
June 19	Father's Day , crafts, and leather worker Dan Cochran, 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
June 26	Music—Carver Creek Bluegrass , 1 p.m. (see story on page 9)	Harkin Store
June 30	"Wild about Wildlife" with Scott Kudelka , 7 p.m. (see description on page 5)	Treaty Site
July 3	Independence Day, New Ulm Battery , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store
July 4	Independence Day, Flag Program , 2 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
July 10	Christmas in July , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store
July 16	Civilian Conservation Corps Hiking Tour , 1–2 p.m.	Fort Ridgely
July 17	Shopping With Laura Ingalls , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store
July 24	Afternoon of Leisure , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store
July 31	Day In The Life of A Pioneer Woman , 1 p.m.	Harkin Store

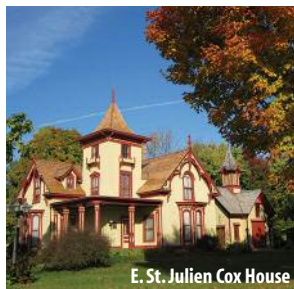


**NICOLLET COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
1851 N. Minnesota Ave. • St. Peter, MN 56082

E. St. Julien Cox House • Fort Ridgely
Harkin Store • Traverse des Sioux
Treaty Site History Center

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
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Permit No. 9
St. Peter, MN

Your membership dollars at work...



E. St. Julien Cox House



Historic Fort Ridgely



Alexander Harkin Store



Traverse des Sioux Townsite



Treaty Site History Center

- NCHS Membership Application -

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

My check is enclosed ☐ Please debit my credit card ☐

Acct. Number _____

CVV Code _____ Expiration Date _____

3 #s on rev-VISA®, MC®, Disc®, 4 #s on rev-AE®

Authorized Signature _____

☐ Please save mailing costs, I will read my newsletter online.

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2016–17 at the following level (please check one).

<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65+)	\$ 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 40
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$ 75
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$ 200
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$ 500
<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member	\$ 1,000
Business Memberships	

call or
e-mail
for info

Please make checks payable to:

Nicollet County Historical Society

Membership applications should be mailed to:

Nicollet County Historical Society
1851 North Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082