

Table of Contents

Page 2

From the Director
From the (former) President

Page 3

Board of Directors
Focus on Volunteers

Page 4

Railroad News
Cafe Updates

Page 5

Antique Shop
Volunteer at PCHS

Page 6

Basket Weaving Class
Mural Upgrade
Hiring

Page 7

Skally Line Concert
Saga of the Side Rake

Dean Hovey is an award-winning mystery author. His books include three series: "Pine County Mysteries," "Whistling Pines Cozy Mysteries," and "Doug Fletcher Park Ranger Mysteries." Hovey's *Family Trees* won the 2018 Northeastern Minnesota Book Award for best fiction.



Dean Hovey Book Signing

**Saturday 10:00 a.m.
September 7th
PCHS Banquet Room**

Pine County's favorite mystery writer, Dean Hovey, will make a return visit to The Pine County History Museum in September. His new book, *Whistling Wedding*, will be out just that month, and is set in Two Harbors. It is part of the "Whistling Pines" series: . Mr. Hovey will come and tell you all about it, without giving it all away. Mark your calendars and have your questions ready.

Welcome, to Kathleen Bennett: Our Bookkeeper - Elinor Auge

In February of this year, Cindy Winkler gave notice that she would be leaving her position as Bookkeeper for Pine County Historical Society (PCHS), for she had received an offer she couldn't refuse. We hated to see her go, and were ever-so-grateful that she was willing to stick around long enough for us to find a new bookkeeper and then also to train her in.



In Cindy's year and a half at PCHS, which she says she enjoyed, she took the bookkeeping process essentially from ledger to Quickbooks. Her new job offers her the opportunity to streamline another organizations' books in a similar way, which is what she most enjoys doing.

Through various connections, we were led fairly quickly to Kathi Bennett. It must have been meant-to-be, as she fits right in and also says that she enjoys her job here! Kathi is continuing the streamlining process on the computer as well as in rearranging the files in such a way as to be easily accessible and legible for anyone who would need to use them.

I asked Kathi to tell us a little bit about herself.

"I live in Willow River with my husband, Gerard, and our two college-age kids, Marisa and Model. Let's not forget, my spoiled-rotten golden retriever and two cats. I continue to work part time for the City of Willow River, as the Utility Billing Clerk. I am a member of Willow River Community Club and St. Mary's Church. I have also written the Willow River news Article since 2012. Gardening and canning, as well as knitting and crocheting are my hobbies. I have to say, I am obsessed with fermenting peppers, cabbage and other vegetables. And every year I say I'm not planting as many vegetables, but the garden somehow gets bigger every year. I look forward to meeting more people from the Askov Area."

From Our Director Elinor Auge

It seems like so much longer, yet it has been just over five months since I officially took the title of Interim Executive Director of Pine County Historical Society. I was inspired to do so by the same things that inspire so many people to become members and to maintain their memberships, even if they live hundreds or thousands of miles away. That is because of the amazing museum, born almost entirely of volunteer effort over the past twelve years. The result is a thoroughly curated, catalogued and well-maintained repository of Pine County artifacts and histories which is inviting and engaging for anyone who visits, no matter their age.

I, of course, had many visions and ideas, coming in to this position, as to events and strategies to draw more people to this incredible, historical treasure. Those visions shift and change, as I get to know better, the long-time volunteers, the members and community, as well as the history of the museum itself.

It is clear to me, that interest in the Museum and all that it has to offer, remains strong and it is my great hope to be able to shepherd Pine County History Museum through continued growth and fortification for the enjoyment of future generations.

We are currently working on up-grading electronic aspects of the Museum's capabilities, making it easier to locate us on the web, easier to make credit-card purchases in the Antique Shop and to streamline the Bookkeeper's many tasks.

We anticipate an all-new web page, shared with the Pine County Genealogy group within weeks. The new address for both will be: www.PineCountyHistory.org

From Our President* Todd Liljedahl

I want to spend some time here thanking the people who have helped us make major improvements to the building that is our Museum and Event Center.

This first quarter has seen electrical improvements made in the Little Mermaid Cafe, the Research Library and the Antique and Gift Shop. The old boiler room area has new LED lighting now in place. Two fans needed replacement in the office area rest rooms and a ceiling fixture was replaced in the Cities Room.

Our costs for these electrical upgrades were completely covered by the **Denham-Sturgeon Lake-Willow River American Legion Post #361**.

Then there's **Sturgeon Lake Area Lions Club** and their very generous donation to the Train Room and our Museum in March.

There have been many upgrades made in the Train Room over the last several quarters. Spencer mentions some of the electrical upgrades to make things run better in his column. We also needed a somewhat expensive light fixture replaced. The appearance of the room has been worked on quite a bit lately too. Fresh paint and new baseboards have been installed. There is always something happening in the Train Room which is why it is one of our most popular spots to visit, especially for the kids.

Our local **American Legion Post #243** continually helps out our Museum in many many ways. In February I asked them for a little extra help when it was time to replace our 4' x 6' United States and Minnesota flags we proudly fly out front. They were right there for us to help keep our flags looking bright and new.



Curt Rossow (L) hands President Todd (R) a very nice check to cover our electrical repairs. Thanks Denham-Sturgeon Lake-Willow River American Legion Post #243

I also want to mention a business we love. The people at **D & E Heating** have been great to us! Very dependable, knowledgeable and friendly. We very much depend on and appreciate their service.

**This article was written for our first-quarter newsletter, prior to Todd Liljedahl's resignation from the role of President at PCHS. We would like to thank Todd for all of the hard work he put into keeping things going since the transition in July 2023 until his departure in April of this year.*

Board Officer Changes Elinor Auge

There have been several changes to the make-up of the Museum's Board of Directors in these first two quarters of 2024. Jan Ashmore (Duluth) maintained her seat on the Board, but resigned as Vice President in February and the Board voted Gary Frehse (Finlayson) into that position. Kathy Bade (Askov) moved from the position of Treasurer and became Secretary. Paul Olesen (Askov) was chosen and agreed to replace Kathy as the Board Treasurer. These moves were confirmed by the Board at the March meeting. Todd Liljedahl resigned his role as President at the April Board Meeting and John Klar (Hinckley) was subsequently voted in to that position at a Special meeting, also held in April. Roger Wallace (Finlayson) assumed the role of Vice President at the Special meeting, as Gary Frehse had given his letter-of-resignation on the day prior. In May, we welcomed a new Board Member, Pam Wiener, who joins us from Pine City. I'd like to say that we're set for a while, but in fact, we are still short two Board members.

The Board of Directors meets every month on the third Tuesday at 10:00 am in the Conference Room at the Museum. All are welcome to join us.

Focus on Volunteers Elinor Auge



Russell Jorgensen



Russell Jorgensen

If you've spent any time in or around the Museum, likely you have seen Russell Jorgensen. He has been volunteering at PCHS for over ten years, recruited by Arla Budd when she was Director. Russell was born in Duluth and joined the Army as a young man. He was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Benning, and also in Germany. Russell spent much of his career as a truck driver, before getting a job at the Grand Casino in Hinckley, where he worked until his retirement.

Roger Wallace

As a retired dairy farmer and an auctioneer, Roger has been volunteering at PCHS for over three years. He has served on the Board of Directors for most of that time and recently took the position of Vice President. Roger is always full of great ideas, and he's also got the energy to carry them out. You won't find him sitting on his hands...though you may see him sitting at the Welcome Desk.

Roger has been doing the jobs no one else is willing to do.

Roger has been doing the jobs no one else is willing to do, and he shows up, no matter what else is going on. If the job's got to be done, he will be there to do it. He's also currently working on getting bids for all sorts of critical building upgrades.

I need to offer my personal appreciation to Roger for having stepped up big-time since the abrupt departure of our former president in April. The Museum would be in quite the pickle without his serious dedication. Thank you, Roger!



Roger Wallace

Current Board of Directors

- President:* John Klar (Hinckley)
- Vice President:* Roger Wallace (Sandstone)
- Secretary:* Kathy Bade (Askov)
- Treasurer:* Paul Olesen (Askov)
- Director:* Jan Ashmore (Duluth)
- Director:* Joann Bernard (Askov)
- Director:* Blaine Jensen (Bruno)
- Director:* Harvey Klar (Sandstone)
- Director:* Jan Matthew (Askov)
- Director:* Pam Wiener (Pine City)

We are in need of two more Board Members. If you are interested in helping to preserve Pine County history through this dynamic organization, please call us at: (320) 838-1607
Elections take place in October

PCHS Railroad News Spencer Stone

Railroads historically provide goods and services directly to the towns throughout Pine County and many community members were directly employed by the railroads. Times have changed on the big Railroads but many activities are continually in progress at the PCHS RR. Rolly Johnson is not only our longest active member but he brings many experiences having been station master for the Northern Pacific [NP] in towns from Cloquet to Hinckley and more. Rolly recognized the need for RR stations on the PCHS RR. With thin plywood and computer generated windows, doors, siding and more he built scale model stations for all the towns as well as many other buildings. Rich Wahlquist, has taken an active role in Maintenance of Way [MOW]. Rich continually searches through the many boxes of donated



Rolly's depot construction, Rich's detailing with cars and people and Dave's Northern Pacific locomotive find are all featured in this photo by Spencer Stone.

HO scale stuff for track-side embellishments. Signs, people, telegraph poles, vehicles, trees; all get planted, improving realism on the PCHS RR. Dave Pemberton has helped enhance our scale version of railroads in Pine county. Dave was key to installation of a power system allowing for improved control of trains around the entire layout. Dave also has located several authentic scale models of RR equipment that used to operate through our county, bringing further realism to the PCHS RR. Like the railroad-workers of the past these volunteers are crucial to the continued success of the PCHS RR. Also crucial are photos and copies of photos showing communities along the railroads, during and earlier than the 1960's. They will be greatly appreciated by PCHS RR. Volunteers are also needed to help reconstruct buildings and other structures that were part of those towns.

Big Generosity Given to the Little Mermaid Elinor Auge

The Little Mermaid Cafe is a very important asset at PCHS. Michelle and her staff prepare breakfast and lunch for hundreds of people, six days a week as well as catering events for small groups to large parties. They could not provide the quality meals that they do without properly functioning equipment. Early this year, when it became apparent to the Board that the oven pilot-light was malfunctioning and had become a potential hazard, we went to our local appliance dealership to see if they could help. **Quality Home and Sports Center in Sandstone** came through in a big way, ordering the range we had requested and providing us with a very helpful discount, as well as free delivery and set up.

A few months later, when the small cooler stopped working, they came through again, when they ordered, discounted and installed the prep-table/cooler that Michelle had requested to replace it.

We send a big thank you to John and Clint of **Quality Home** for their generous support in keeping our cafe customers happy and well-fed. We love buying locally and working with great people like these guys.

In the middle of April, Steve Harrison, owner of **Blackhawk Professional Construction Services, Inc.** gifted PCHS with twelve light fixtures and two crew members from his electrical division, to completely replace the lights in the Cafe dining area. It was a project that we had been wanting to take care of for some time: to replace the old fluorescent bulbs with long-lasting, energy-efficient, LED fixtures and bulbs. We were so impressed with how quickly they completed the job and how thorough and clean they were: from removing and replacing the door jamb to get the lift in and out of the building, to disposing of every bit of trash that had been generated throughout the day. What an incredible gift this was! I don't know that there are words adequate to express our gratitude, other than Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!!

All profits from The Little Mermaid Cafe go directly back to supporting the Pine County History Museum. As a non-profit organization, helpful businesses such as those mentioned here, make all the difference in helping us to carry out our mission of protecting and preserving Pine County History.

Antiques Crafts Gifts

The Antique Shop is open:

10:00 to 3:00, Tue-Sat
12:00 to 3:00, Sunday
Closed Monday

The Antique Shop Gals keep everything fresh and inviting in the store. There are always recent additions to the offerings there.

With a new Square™ sales and bookkeeping system in place, we are now better able to take credit cards for improved customer service. This has also helped to increase sales.

The Gals often receive compliments on how well-displayed and fun the store is and how reasonable the prices are.

With the soon-anticipated improvements in the Museum's on-line presence, they envision a growing business. All the vendors take great pride in helping to support the Museum through their volunteer efforts.



Volunteering provides a sense of purpose, friendships, community connections, social skills, self-esteem.



Call (320) 838-1607

Basket Making Workshop

Make Your Own Butt Basket in a Day



September 28
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Limit 8 Students

\$170.00

All supplies included.

Call to Register
 (320) 838-1607

Basket by Zac Fittipaldi

Instructor, **Zac Fittipaldi**, has been weaving baskets since 2006, using a variety of materials and basket styles. In this full-day class, he will teach you how to make this ribbed basket, also known as a "butt basket" from Western Europe. It is a simple under-over weave and is made entirely of willow. At the end of the workshop, you will take home a completed basket, as well as the knowledge to continue your basket weaving journey.



Basket weaving is a craft with a rich cultural history. Woven baskets have been around for tens of thousands of years, with traces found in the Egyptian Pyramids, as well as in many other archaeological sites around the world. It is one of the oldest crafts in Native American history. Baskets have traditionally been made using materials found in the environment; grasses, bark, roots, and other plant materials. They have been used to gather food and to cradle babies, and they have been worn on the head to shade the face from the sun.

The Butt or Buttocks Basket, so named due to the double-lobed shape, is commonly used for collecting eggs, fruits and vegetables. The design provides easy carrying and efficient storage. Antique Butt Baskets originated from Western Europe and date back to the 1800's and possibly earlier.

Mural Upgrade



Ten years after **Lucas Campbell** completed the marvelous train mural on the back of the Museum, he has returned to freshen up the faded and chipping paint. The Museum is covering the cost of paint and rental of the lift, but Lucas is donating his time and effort.

A very generous gift from from the **Rock Creek Lion's Club** has helped to defray those costs.

MJC Equipment Rental in Sandstone, provided a discount on, and free delivery of, the lift.

WANTED: Reliable Janitor

If there's one thing every business and organization needs, it's a good janitor. Though most positions at the Museum are volunteer positions, we understand the importance of keeping our public areas clean and germ-free and are willing to pay to make sure that happens. Whether you are just starting out or are an experienced janitor, we're interested in talking to you.

It's important that you take your work seriously and are able to work independently, once we've shown you what we need. Yes, there are toilets to be cleaned, floors to be mopped, trash to be dumped, just a bit of vacuuming, and glass to be polished.

We are looking for someone who can come in for twelve to twenty hours a week, spread over three days per week. Mondays are the longest days, as the Museum is closed then and the cafe floors need thorough cleaning with the floor cleaning machine. Two other days a week would be focused on bathrooms and trash.

Compensation would be commensurate with experience. Willing to put a little effort into earning spare change? **Give us a call at (320) 838-1607**



Fred Keller

Bill Cagley

Skally Line Concert at PCHS Elinor Auge

On Saturday, April 6th, an audience of about eighty people, was treated to a special musical event by Fred Keller and Bill Cagley. The free concert, held in the Small Event Center at the Pine County History Museum, was Keller's fulfillment of a grant that he had received through the East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC). All of the songs that the duo, known as The Skally Line, performed during the highly entertaining hour, were written by Keller and, except for one, were based on artifacts and stories that he had discovered and researched at the Museum. It was a pleasant hour of old-time string music with songs and tales about logging, bootlegging, farming and other historical Pine County activities. Prior to the concert, a nice cover story was written up about Keller in the March 28th edition of North Pine County News; and more information about The Skally Line can be found at www.deepnorth.com.

The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.
We are nothing without our volunteers.

The Saga of the Side Rake Kathy Bade

Recently I had the pleasure of watching Fred Keller and his friend, Bill Cagley perform songs he had created based on stories he had obtained from the Pine County History Museum. As the lead for the Accessions Team, I was able to recognize all these stories, and enjoyed the songs immensely. They brought to mind this story that I recently entered into the museum's database, which I call "The Saga of the Side Rake", and is as recalled by Ed Stoffel. Henry and Rose Stoffel began their married life in 1922 as tenant dairy and crop farmers. Farm prices were fairly good at this time along with potato cash crop. They were able to save up enough money to start buying their own machinery, which consisted of a hay mower, loader and side delivery windrow rake. In the mid 1930's they had share-crop rented a farm on the west side of Pokegama Lake. This outstanding farm was owned by P. W. McAllen, a banker in Pine City. The farm included a horse racing track as well as a golf course. One day Henry needed to spend a few hours in Pine City. While he was gone, Mr. McAllen and his partner in banking, Mr. Hodge, decided to rake up pine cones off the golf course using Henry's new side delivery rake. Being bankers and not farmers, they misused the rake and nearly ruined it. Henry was quite furious when he returned and saw what they were doing. The two bankers had to pay a substantial repair bill. In the mid 1940's, Henry was using this same rake with a young team of horses he had raised from colts. Something frightened one of the horses and they began to run away. Henry managed to get off the machine, but the horses continued on until they came to a fence line and then turned parallel to the fence, taking out 13 fence posts and wrapping the wire around the drum of the wheel until it could not turn. Evidence of the bent wheel is still visible to this day, and can be seen here at the Pine County History Museum. Ed Stoffel donated a lot of his farm machinery, which he had in a museum on his property just west of Pine City, back in 2022. Most of it is on display outdoors at the museum, on the former tennis court area that is leased from the City of Askov. Take a stroll through that area when you visit the museum. Maybe it will bring back memories of the days you, or your parents/grandparents used those machines to make their living. I remember well bouncing across the hay field on our little Ford 8N tractor, pulling the side rake to make nice, even windrows for the hay loader to pick up and drop into the hay rack. I raked hay as an adult, too, but fortunately we had a baler by then!



PO BOX 123
ASKOV, MN 55704-0123

"Preserving, Protecting
and Disseminating the
History of Pine County"

6333 H C Andersen Alle
Askov, Minnesota 55704

(320) 838-1607

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SANDSTONE MN
PERMIT NO. 5



The Little Mermaid Cafe
6333 H C Andersen Alle
Askov MN

Tuesday - Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Antique and Gift Shop
Located within the Museum
Open @ Museum Hours
Tue.-Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Ye Olde Museum Thrift Shoppe
Located Across from the Museum

Saturdays through October
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.