

THE COUNTY CHRONICLER

Polk County Historical Society

April 2008

How much is your Antique worth?



Bring an antique to have it appraised
by the Phillipson team
7 p.m., Tuesday, April 22
Justice Center Community Room
Board Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Friday, June 13th 2008



The Bus is Getting Full!

Stops at
Woodcarving Museum

Dine Royally
on the Great Northern Railroad



Darrell & Larry Appraising

Help Needed! Urgent!

Furniture was moved to prepare for
addition; it needs to be moved back.

Displays need dusting.

Photocopied documents and pictures
in displays need to be refastened.

Victorian Garden needs
Spring work.

POLK COUNTY MUSEUM HOURS

Memorial Day through Labor Day
12 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Tours available by appointment
(715) 485-9269

REYNOLD P. LARK

Reynold P. Lark, known in his industry as Radio Rey, was born July 31, 1924, in the small house that his carpenter father had built in the wilderness of the east-shore of Bone Lake.

Rey's parents, John and Emma (Broström) Lark, moved to the wooded area around 1918, where John made use of his carpenter skills building his own home and then helping construct many neighbors' homes.

Emma Lark's Swedish Lutheran background influenced the decision for the family's move in 1926 to an 80-acre farm in the Volga area, near the Balsam Lutheran Church. Rey was a normal mischievous boy at the Volga school where he and his friend, Niles Framsted, drove the teacher crazy with their antics including almost burning the school down.

Rey attended Amery High School for one year and then started farming his family's 40 acres and worked for his neighbor, Art Wilberg, on his 200-acre farm. After his father's death in 1944, he continued on the farm with his mother until it was sold in 1952. He worked for Volga creamery for a year before moving to Minneapolis.

While in Minneapolis Rey had a call from his friend, Walter Johnson, (brother of PCHS board member Carl Johnson) suggesting that they should go to trade school and study electronics. Rey didn't know what Walter was talking about but agreed to start evening courses at Northwestern Electronics. Walter soon quit and Rey almost got kicked out after a confrontation with a teacher, but it ended out with the teacher getting fired and Rey getting three months' free tuition. The replacement teacher, a Christian who worked days for WDGY, encouraged Rey to get his federal license and work as a broadcast engineer. Rey followed his advice and then landed a job with KDWB located on highway 12 between St. Paul and Hudson, where he worked for 14 years. KDWB transmitted with a six-tower parallelogram, and it was difficult to stay in tolerance with FCC regulations—a real learning experience for Rey.

During this time a friend of Rey's and her roommates started riding to Minneapolis with him. The last one that he would drop off at her work was a cute Swede named Bernice Johnson who became his wife. While they lived in Lake Elmo, Minnesota, Rey started to service broadcast stations on his days off and after a while incorporated his own full-time service company, but his life really took a change when he received a call asking if he would build a Christian radio station in Alaska. Bernice, Rey, and son John turned down the offer to fly to Alaska to see

the location site and instead cruised over the Alcan Highway in their '71 Chrysler. The station was built on the Bering Sea and Rey, living at Amery at that time, flew to the location 18 times to complete the installation.

The Ozarks of Missouri also benefited from Rey's growing radio expertise with a Christian radio station that he supervised near the small town of Neosho. From this time forth Rey was in great demand in the broadcasting industry with calls coming constantly. He spent his last 10 years of full-time radio work with Sorenson Broadcast Company, setting up stations in Minnesota, South Dakota, and Iowa; the greatest amount of time in Pierre, Watertown, and Brookings, South Dakota where he completely rebuilt the installations. Polk County has directly benefited by his work with WXCE in Amery.

Even though Rey has worked at 90-plus radio stations in the upper Midwest, don't think that his whole life was working. He and Bernice loved to travel and have been in all 50 states and on every train that Amtrak runs in the continental US except one. Rey and Bernice have traveled extensively in Canada, Mexico, Switzerland, England, Wales, and Scotland by rail, bus, boat, and car.

Rey never dreamed his humble beginnings would lead to the far-reaching radio broadcasting business and that his wanderlust would take him to so many far-off places. But he agrees with evangelist Joel Osteen,

"Put your trust in the Lord and he will take you places that you never dreamed of."



Radio Rey

HELEN MCCANN WHITE

Our thoughts go out to the family of **Helen McCann White**, Polk County Historical Society 2007 History Woman of the Year recipient, who passed away April 10, 2008, at the age of 91.

During her long and productive life, Helen aimed to show that “the general public would read and support any amount of scholarly historical writing, if it were written in an interesting manner.” We appreciate the large amount of historical research and writing that she did.

There will be a memorial gathering for her at the Taylors Falls Memorial Community Center, in the old train depot, on Sunday, April 20, at 1 p.m.

DONATIONS

Thank you to Mary Ellefson, Elaine Erickson, and Patricia Ryan for you donations to the elevator fund.

CLEAR LAKE FEATURES “BETWEEN FENCES”

The Clear Lake Area Community Center in collaboration with the Clear Lake Library and the Clear Lake Museum will host the Smithsonian traveling exhibit, “Between Fences.” The exhibition will engage children and adults with physical experience as they walk between fences and through boundaries of place and space. Each fence will be selected to represent a theme and tell a story that illustrates its theme in provocative ways. In addition to objects and images relating to the exhibition stories, fence materials will include tools, photographs, product literature, journals, postcards, and posters.

Between Fences will be displayed in the Center's community room April 12-May 24, 2008. This is a great opportunity for the residents of Polk County. Let's support it by attending and telling others.

POLK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Meetings at the Osceola Public Library - 7:00 p.m.

Date	Topic	Speaker
April 28	DNA Genealogy	Alan Hagstrom
May 19	Using Ancestry.com	Kathy Clark

2008 HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPEAKER SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Speaker
April 22	Know your Antiques	Larry & Linnea Phillipson
May 27	The World of Vaseline Glass	Gordy & Sandi Hibbs
June 24	The Soo Line	Bill Pfannes at Kennedy Park
July 22	Wisconsin in the Civil War	Michael J. Martin
August 26	The Meaning of the Dances	Chief Dan Mosay at Pine Park
September 23	New Garfield Park	JoAnn Hallquist
October 4	Christmas Past	At the Museum

GENEALOGY MONDAY Every Monday from 1-4 p.m. in June, July, and August PCGS members will meet at the Polk County Museum in Balsam Lake, Wisconsin to assist in helping others locate family history data in the records available. Please join us if and when you are able.

POLK COUNTY HISTORICAL BUS TRIP

Friday, June 13th 2008

All Aboard to Wisconsin Great
Northern Railroad and the Museum Of Woodcarving

Meet at Amery Senior Center	8:15 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.
Coffee Juice and Rolls	
Bus Departs	8:50 a.m.
Shell Lake	
Woodcarving Museum	10:15 - 11:40 a.m.
Board Train at Spooner	12:00 noon
Three-course lunch	
Bus departs for Amery	3:00 p.m.
Arrives Amery Senior Center	4:15 p.m.

Bus Tour Features

- Black Hawk Bus Line 47-seat bus with bathroom
- Shell Lake Museum of Woodcarving
- Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad Historic Excursion
- All For \$50
- Make reservation by May 20th, checks payable to Polk County Historical Society, P.O. Box 41, Balsam Lake, WI 54810
- Call Carl Johnson (715) 268 8353 or Rosalie Kittleson (715) 483 3979

POLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Our March 25th meeting was a great success with fifty people in attendance. Muriel Pfeifer was honored as History Woman of the Year. Darrell and Eldred Anderson want to thank everyone who attended the slide show of Alaska wilderness and the highway stories.

EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Larry Phillipson went over the historical place mats, presenting the first draft and answered questions. The board voted to go back to the 5:30 p.m. board meeting and 7:00 p.m. program time.

The following events are scheduled for this year:

- April 22 Know your antiques
- May 12th Turtle Lake Expo Fair
- May 21th Brat sale at Dick Market in Amery
- June 13th Bus Tour
- July 4th Freedom Fest Celebration lawn activities with food sales, flea market, and music.
- July 12th The board voted to have an Author's Fair at the museum
Local authors will be invited to be at the museum to sign and sell their books.
- June 18th Brat sale at Dick Market in Amery
- August 23rd Big Band Dinner Dance at the Tac Lo Bon

The elevator addition is going very well, in fact, our latest walk-through with the contractor and building committee was April 7th. The elevator is installed and nearly finished; we will have state inspections this month. The contractors are looking to be finished with the interior by end of this month. The bricks have been delivered to the site and masonries will begin brick-laying this month. I truly believe all will enjoy the ending results and much thought will need to go into displays and usage of new space. Everyone is invited to get involved to help finish this project that started with \$37,000 in the building fund CD and a \$25.00 checking account in 2005. Look where we are now!

We certainly could use volunteers for all events and meetings.

President, Darrell

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Our winter season has been long with a snowstorm in the forecast which might prevent Judy and me from taking our day-long Vista computer class at New Richmond tomorrow. Windows Vista is the program on the society's new computer purchased with the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation grant. We've also purchased Quickbooks software to organize our accounting and Past Perfect to help document our museum artifacts.

I've kept busy monitoring the museum two or three days a week in order to follow the construction work and following up on the inadvertent alarms set off by workers. The water problems seem to be almost nothing in the basement only some leakage through the coal room roof. I will contact Vern Simon about that as it could be it's the vent opening. We had a severe water problem in the Fine Arts Room because of a clogged drain on the west entrance which we corrected the same day of the problem. Vern Simon came to our rescue and cleared the debris that was plugging the down drain, and Darrell and I did the clean-up.

We have hired a profession cleaner Craig Losielle of LBM Company, St. Croix Falls, for \$2000 to clean walls, outside showroom glass windows, floors, rugs, hall walls all large items. Having a professional cleaner for spring cleaning has been a goal of the board members for almost 20 years, so it is wonderful that this is in the budget.

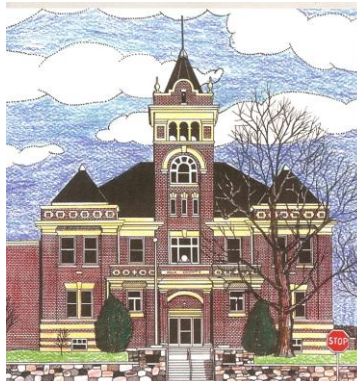
Short Report

Museum school tours run April 28th through May 20th with the following schools participating: Amery, St. Croix Falls, Frederic, and Clayton; we are waiting to hear from Osceola. Ron Anderson, St. Croix Falls, has volunteered to help at the museum—we welcome all volunteers! Four windows were broken at the Lanesdale School that we will need to replace once the snow is gone. We've received a 1901 cloth Polk County map, lard squeezer, and a windmill water pressure point this month.

The following are my goals for this year: repairing wall in Oakey Room, replace paneling in south entrance, revamp hardware store and laundry room, and arrange closet on second floor for display supplies.

Thank you,
Rosalie Kittleson Director

Polk County Historical Society
Box 41
Balsam Lake, WI 54810



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darose@centurytel.net

<http://www.PolkCountyMuseum.com>

I would like to become a member of
the Polk County Historical Society:

Lifetime..... \$100
Yearly \$10
Students..... \$2

Name.....
Street.....
City.....
State & Zip.....
E-mail

Mail to: Rosalie Kittleson
Box 41
Balsam Lake, WI 54810