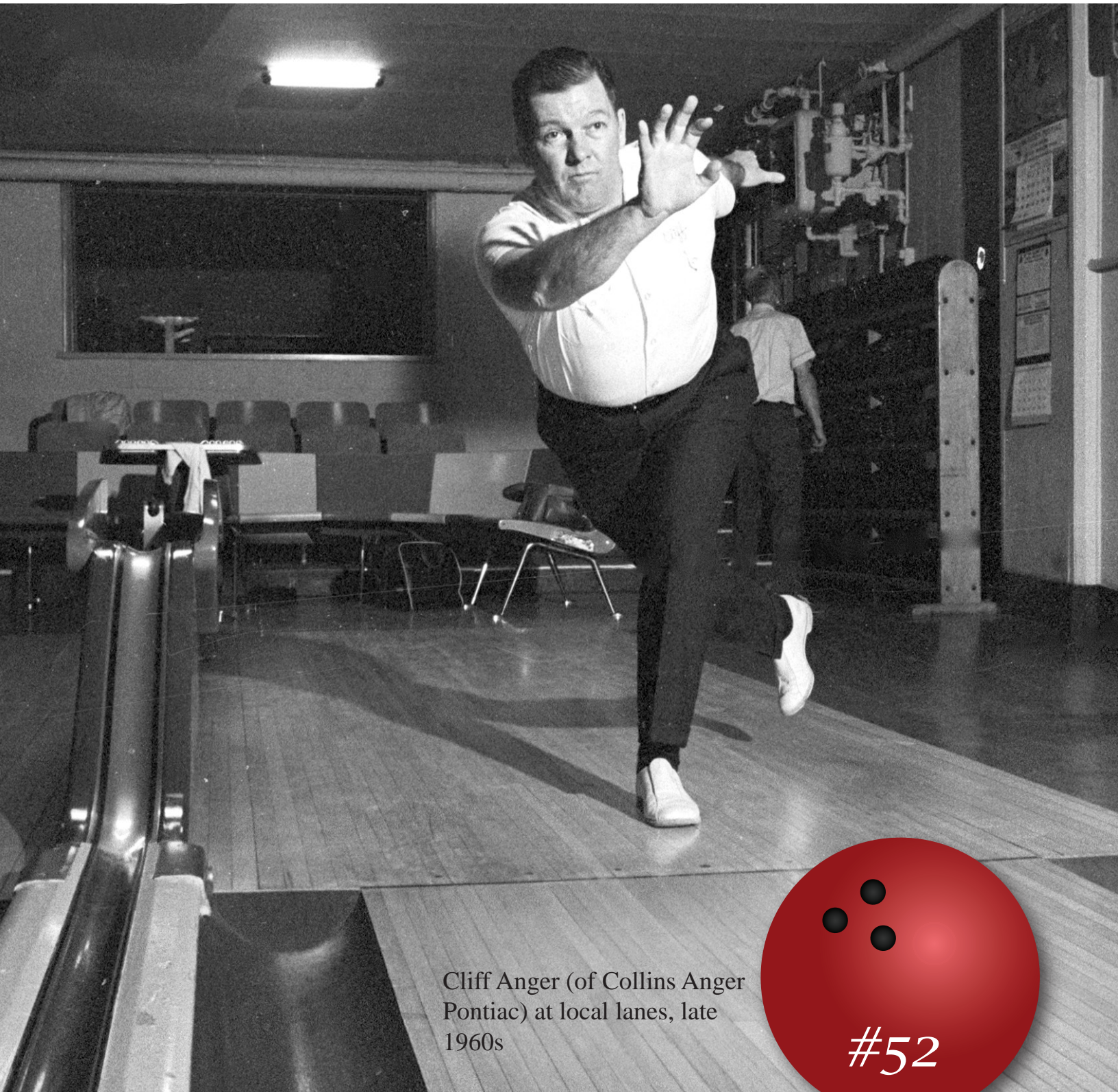


February 2018

Volume II #52

ARTIFACTS



Cliff Anger (of Collins Anger Pontiac) at local lanes, late 1960s

#52

Cover: Can you I.D. the bowling alley?; President's message by Phil Brown, p. 2; *Tribune* by Dave Engel, 3; Corrections, 3; Mystery photo, 4; LHS Pep Band by Lori Brost, 4-5; Labor Temple pix, 6-7; Worst Historian by Uncle Dave, 7; "Vasby" by Angelica Engel, 8-9; Jim Natwick, 10-12; "Mortality," 13; Xmas 1883 by UD, 14; Christmas Tree Walk pix, 15, 18; Empire Bar, 16-17; Chittenden by UD, 19-25; Port Edwards fire by Marshall Buehler, 26-29; Nuhlicek by UD, 30-31; West Grand photo, 32.

Phil Brown
President, SWCHC

No Hibernation at Museum

The fall and winter months at the South Wood County Historical Museum are often even busier than the other seasons. Beginning in mid-October of 2017, preparation began for the now “Annual” Christmas Tree Walk. This was the third.

For once again co-chairing this event, thanks to Sue Wesley and Judy Paul. Jack Wesley, Tom Paul and dozens of other volunteers also deserve recognition for their efforts in making this such a special event in which 23 Christmas trees adorned the first and second floors of the Museum. The front porch, entry way, stairway and sun room were also totally decked out for the holidays.

Over 1,000 visitors joined us during the first two weekends of December. This, by far, is the most popular event the SWCHC sponsors every year.

After all the trees were taken down and the ornaments put away, it was time to spruce up a couple of rooms at the Museum. Repairing cracks in the plaster and painting the walls and ceilings are always on the agenda. The School Room, Doctor’s Office and the J. Marshall Buehler Gallery were in for some repair work this year. Once the paint has dried, it’s time to put the exhibits back together.

These improvements to the building and upgrades to the exhibits would not be possible without the membership renewals and financial contributions of our members. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts.

Carpenter,
Jack Faville,
in Buehler
Gallery.

Among Jack’s
latest projects
is a
rehabilitated
attic storage
room.



Be sure to check our website for blog posts, LHS newsletters and lots of old photos!

From the Vault

Previously unpublished glimpse of the newspaper game
Originally printed by a dot matrix printer, maybe in late 1980s.

Dth B Nt Prd

By (a much younger) Dave Engel
Tribune Correspondent

Artifacts
June 2015 #44
used a
1979 photo of
Bob Des Jarlais,
top at
the *Tribune*



We at the *Tribune* have come to expect occasional inconveniences from a funeral next door. The meters have been brown-bagged and the parking slots taken by the hearse and attendant sedans. As usual, I park on a side street up toward Wal-Mart.

On my way back to the *Tribune* I pass on the sidewalk some of the red-eyed minority who hurt so badly this bright morning. The death-attendants are removing from our sphere the physique of their beloved companion. If any of them ever knew me they do not know me now.

The mourners drive off in a long line as I enter the newsroom, where reporters and editors are busily working toward deadline: Nancy at Community Life arranging the calendar of events; Bob with his weekly "Rapids Pulse"; Tom at the wire waiting for the space launch; Mark on the phone with the mayor; Dave V.W. grouching about bowling scores.

Jimmy calls John R. "Get any decent shots from Assumption last night?" Jamie has in one hand the police reports and in the other the religion page. All along, the muffled click clack click of computer keys; Pearl with the obits. "Was that one 'L' or two?" Click clack. It is a day like any other. The typing goes on.

Someone dying isn't going to change that.

Mean Streets

By the (older, not wiser) editor, (Uncle) Dave Engel

Correction: The last word is missing from the beer bar story by Helen Zimmerman in #51, our previous issue. A few reprints are available for exchange if you need a perfect copy. Or if you want to write it in yourself, the word is: "establishment."

Helen's husband, Zimmy, informs us that the "End of the Road" photo of Wolcott's Garage was taken at a former location, 1551 Lincoln Street, not 4200 8th Street South as identified.

C. Henry Bruse, sharp-eyed SWCHC digital specialist, finds an error in the 1984 *Fat Memoirs* involving the comings and goings of streets along the river. On the page 92-93 spread, 2nd Avenue should be 1st Avenue in both cases. (Note the "Lefebvre house" at the right on the bottom pix of both pages. George Mead I had said it was one building he was going to save. Now its footprint is a small part of the site for the former Consolidated River Block, recently converted to an annex for the Wood County Courthouse.)

All this confession reminds me of a mistake I made in the *Fat Memoirs* era, in which I published a reference to the "Sherman-Williams" paint company. Emily Bell gently urged me in the direction of "Sherwin-Williams."



Several old Artifacts are scattered throughout this issue. Many are available for purchase, \$5 each

Lori Brost

Museum Administrator

You just gotta ask

“In May 2008, issue #17, I made my *Artifacts* debut and almost ten year later...”

I’m struggling with that first good sentence again. I have to admit, my writing has improved over the years, but despite that, the initial challenge remains the same.

Besides contributing to *Artifacts*, one of the main aspects of my job is receiving items and photographs from people, not only those local to us now, but many who were born here and moved on. Unfortunately, not all the photographs include information on the back identifying faces, places and dates.

In May 2011, I wrote about one of our members, Kathleen Daly Cavanaugh and her friend, Carol Brey, assisting me in identifying a group of young people in a photo that was found within the Krohno-graph collection. In August 2013, with the help of the Facebook page, Vanished River Cities, we were able to find the origins of the *fleur de lis* in our shed, tying them to the original River Block building on West Grand Avenue.

What it all comes down to is not being afraid to ask for help. And thankfully the pool in which to ask is getting deeper with the resources of social media.

A few months ago, Civil War re-enactor William Parker brought in some “vinyl” that his mother, Joan, had recently acquired—for *Artifacts* editor [Uncle] Dave to look at. The record album was put together by the 1960–1961 Lincoln High School Pep Band. As luck would have it, Dave owned the same record, because he played cornet in that group.

The discussion focused around the photo that was attached to and part of the cover. Unfortunately, there were no names included.

What do you do when the picture was taken before you were born and you have no idea who anyone is? Current answer: post it online and ask for help.

This time, I used the members of the “YOU KNOW YOU’RE FROM WISCONSIN RAPIDS IF” group. And like before, it didn’t take long before we were filling in the blanks and, within a week, all the faces were identified.

It’s always fun to watch how engaged people become when trying to help, and in a shared effort reconnect with each other to share additional stories and memories.

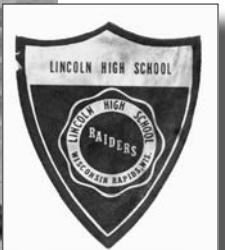
I’m not sure if it’s the title of the album or just a quote added, but the cover’s inscription seems fitting in our line of work: “We Led; Others will Follow.”



Speaking of pep, do you know this distinguished SWCHC board member and singer/songwriter (the one with the sombrero)?



Lincoln High
Pep Band
We Led; Others will Follow



#1 Jim Weisman, #2 Bob Hamelink, #3 Bob Meyer, #4 Craig Carpenter, #5 Vern Steinke, #6 Wayne Dempze, #7 Lawrence Johnson, #8 Jim Wilhorn, #9 Dave Engel, #10 Mark Suckow, #11 Karen Perschke, #12 Gary Ashenberg, #13 Dale Fausch, #14 Marianne Feutz, #15 Christine Marceil, #16 Wilma Amundson, #17 Judy Bach, #18 Ron Plowman, #19 Pam Horning, #20 Don Schill, #21 Jean Kruger, #22 Jack Roller, #23 Helen Pietz, #24 Leslie Johnson

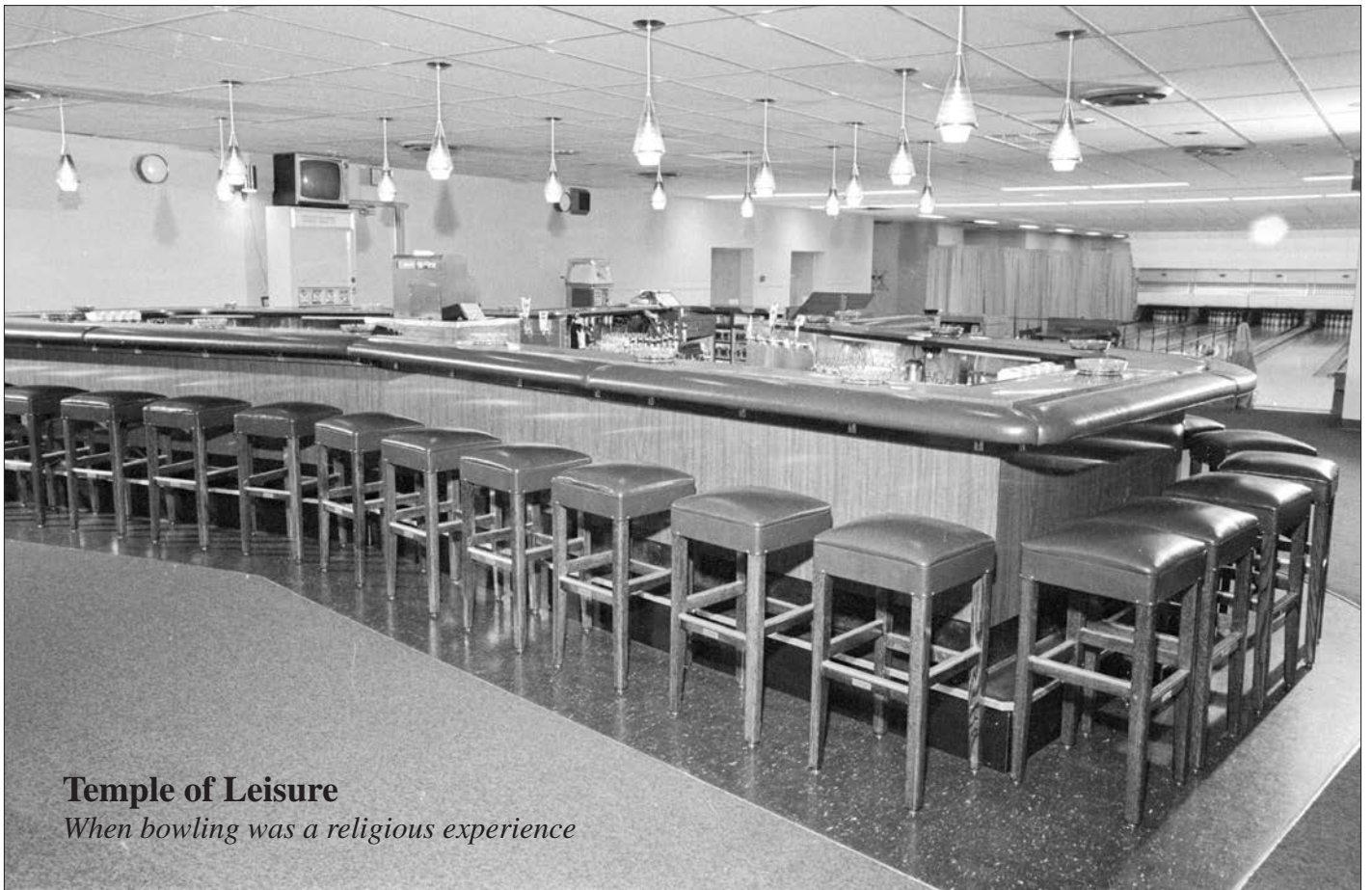
Same drawing as in photo, from a slide copy
Billmeyer collection, SWCHC



Original drawing of exterior
remodeling



'65 photo of Labor Temple bar and bowling alley



Temple of Leisure
When bowling was a religious experience



Worst City Historian Ever

Your avuncular editor began writing about local history in the aftermath of the Rapids Mall project, figuring someone should bring attention to the excess of old buildings demolished in the name of commerce. Shortly after, in response to my suggestion, another personage with a sense of history and humor, then-mayor James Kubisiak (elected in reaction to “redevelopment”) anointed me first City Historian.

If you love historical preservation, that wasn’t the best choice. Unfortunately for our architectural heritage, the City Historian has assiduously avoided public improvement in favor of the mostly-private arranging of black marks, such as these, on paper. As the photo at right demonstrates, a couple thousand stories over 37 years haven’t had much effect.

A local teacher who is an immigrant from Upper Michigan wrote to the City Historian, “I see the connection between the mill and the loss of the vibrant culture, but it is interesting that there is not more of a public outcry to preserve the memory of the ‘glory days.’ I recognize that preservation costs money, but the fact that there were so few people protesting the demolition of these sites surprises me a little.”

The Labor Temple shown in #48 and on these pages wasn’t the most wonderful stack of rubble ever seen. But it was old and historic and had been home to a lot of meeting, drinking, bowling and wedding. How much thought went into its history before it was razed in favor of a purely speculative alternative?

A few other river cities, not so much different than ours, take care of their landmarks. Why them and not us? No doubt they have better City Historians.

Uncle Dave



*Good Time Charlie’s (Labor Temple)
Photo by David Farmbrough, MSPT*

Link to SWCHC-Museum Website:

“Vasby”

Members of the Lincoln High School class of 1965 and others, mostly of that age group, enjoy an email newsletter circulated by Kent Vasby, whose wife, Judy Hanneman, was a member of that class. The stories in the newsletter are often inspired by prompts from Vasby, though respondents contribute additional information. As Website Coordinator, I have been posting his “Lincoln High Newsletter” to the SWCHC website. To see the collection, go to: <http://www.swch-museum.com/collections/digital-library/lincoln-high-newsletter/> or follow the link on the front page of the website.

Angelica Engel, LHS 2008

From Peter Parsons on 4/20/17

Up until I was 10 years old, we lived on 13th Avenue South and Chase Street. The Chase Street railroad crossing was always busy with rail traffic. Being a block away, we could run down to the corner to see the trains. This would have been the early 1950s. There were still a few steam engines operating at that time. I remember that I believed the steam from the locos formed the clouds in the sky. There were four major railroads that ran through Rapids at that time: Green Bay & Western, Chicago & North Western, Soo Line, and Milwaukee Road, the last one being the one that took myself and Larry Johnson to basic training in 1966. I have always been fascinated by trains. I have been on most of the passenger lines throughout the country. My longest trip was Miami to San Francisco in the mid 1970s. My most recent trip was last year, Milwaukee to San Diego.

From Bonnie Weber on 12/22/16

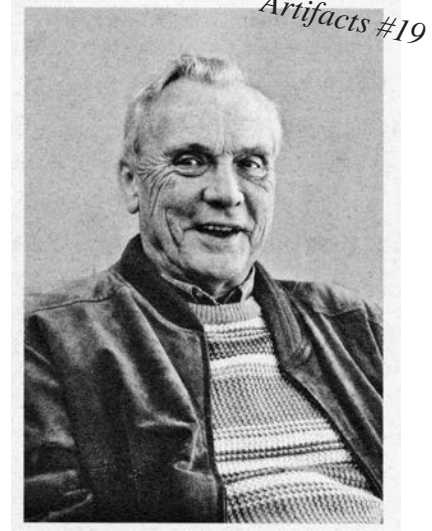
At the Moravian Church’s Christmas Eve service, for the last song, they pass out beeswax candles that are already lit. It’s really beautiful. In 1972, Jim and I were sitting in the pew with Bob and Sharon Manley and Jim’s sister and her boyfriend. Bob and I were sitting next to each other and Bob was misbehaving (as usual) and we were trying not to laugh. Jim’s sister leaned over to see what was going on and her hair caught on fire from her candle (too much Aqua Net). Thanks to quick reactions on Jim’s part, he put her candle out and had her hair out before she even knew it was on fire! She didn’t know why he hit her in the head. Most of the people around us didn’t even know it happened. It could have been a serious situation, but we were able to laugh about it afterward!

From Jim Natwick on 5/19/16 [See tribute in following story, p. 10]

I found my letter jacket last week in a box. I got it when I was a freshman for track. Other than that, I have a cashmere overcoat my mother bought me in high school, which I actually used for years and still have. I got it at ?? (Chuck help out here) Bauer’s [Brauer’s]—next to Anderson Drugs. My son is interested in “inheriting” it...soon.

If anyone is interested, I am still alive and actually feel better than I did months ago, although still on hospice.

LHS Newsletter editor Kent Vasby met with Uncle Dave at the Museum in 2008.



Jim Natwick continued: Last Sunday, 60 Minutes had a segment on injecting viruses in cancer patients to stimulate the “T” genes to kill the cancer cells. Since I had 2 episodes of spinal meningitis after chemo, my daughter hypothesizes that that is what happened to me. I don’t think so, but everyone has to have hope... Although, because I lost 35 pounds, I can now fit into clothes I had in high school. LOL

From Toni Weller Olson on 5/4/17

Toys of our childhood: I remember Tinker Toys, Lincoln Logs, puzzles of all kinds, yo-yos, doll houses made of metal or aluminum, wooden blocks, and balsa wood airplanes. You can still get the balsa wood airplanes. I saw some recently that said “Made in USA,” believe it or not. My husband Larry has a cool “rocket bank” from his childhood. It’s made of cast aluminum and has the name of a Chicago Savings and Loan Association on the side. You place a coin on the rocket, pull back on a spring-loaded little plane, and the coin shoots into the part of the bank that looks like a little world globe. That’s my trip down memory lane for today.

From Jim Nickel on 12/17/15

In another life (1970’s) I was a new Systems Engineer for Motorola in our Cleveland, Ohio, office. After several high profile mine accidents, we thought using new UHF high frequency radio communications could aid the companies operationally and in emergencies. If it would work, miners could use small portable radios to communicate instead of walking to fixed telephones.

As the “new guy”, I got the challenge. A consultant said these frequencies would not work because of mine tunnel geometry. I just felt a different approach might work. I tested some new ideas in the US Bureau of Mines test mine near Pittsburgh and visited dozens of coal mines, salt mines and subway tunnels.

My last mine visit was to a US Steel long-wall coal mine in West Virginia. The mine height was the width of the coal seam, about three feet.

Here the coal on the mine face is removed and then they wait for the roof to fall in before advancing. This is something one has to experience, especially after crawling a hundred feet on hands and knees from the larger tunnel. The experimental radio system worked great, but that trip diminished any further desire to go underground.

With engineering and experimentation, I was able to develop a leaky coax system that is now the standard used in underground radio systems around the world. When the English and French were designing the “Chunnel” under the English Channel in the 90’s, I was asked to lead the final design reviews on the radio systems used for security, operations, maintenance and telemetry. Some ideas withstand the test of time.



With partner Kate Simpson, who provided many of these photos

The Jim Natwick Memorial Everything

When SWCHC president Phil Brown and I visited Jim Natwick, we found copies of *Artifacts* on the coffee table and a Jim Beam bottle on the mantle waiting to be emptied. Natwick had shown his hospice nurse a first bottle, intended to hold his ashes but she thought it inadequate and brought him a second—one that held a few ounces of bourbon, doled out in shots to his friends as they came to call.

Jim had been a prickly sort when he first returned to Rapids but had mellowed steadily until, throughout his years of illness and even more severe treatment, he evidenced a gentle dignity and generous sense of humor. He and his perspicacious companion, Kate, made Phil and I feel welcome while Jim related a few chapters of his own history.

From Jim's self-penned obituary, we learn he graduated from LHS in 1965, where I remember him, two years younger, as a golden boy enveloped in the inevitable "bevy" of females. He lettered in football, wrestling and track and was awarded by Congressman Mel Laird an appointment to the Air Force Academy, but decided on Carroll College, where he majored in economics and political science in 1969 while earning three letters in wrestling. In college, he met his wife of 36 years, Celeste Duckworth, with whom he had two children, Sarah and Tad.



Natwick Memorial Bocce Trophy

Jim was drafted out of the University of Wisconsin Law School into the U.S. Army for two years, achieving the rank of sergeant. After graduating from Law school in 1974, he spent most of his career in Wausau and La Crosse, retiring in 2015 from the Milwaukee firm of Rausch, Sturm, Israel, Enerson and Hornick.

After a 2005 divorce, wrote Jim, "I moved back to Wisconsin Rapids, to take care of my parents (Mae, d. 2008, and John, d. 2012) and to provide statewide legal appearances for my law firm. In the meantime, I was fortunate to meet my new life partner, Kate Simpson. Unfortunately, nine-and-a-half years of fun, planning for retirement, and seeing grandkids was not nearly enough time for us, due to the rare [nasopharyngeal] cancer I developed.

"Generally, I feel I have lived a good and productive life, helping many people along the way in my career, including being president of Wausau Rotary, on the board of Wausau Hospitals, Wausau's United Way Board of Directors and on the Supreme Court's attorney investigation committee. But if nothing else, raising two wonderful and successful children has been the greatest and most satisfactory feat of my life. I pray that they are as fortunate. And maybe there is a wonderful trout stream that needs me to fish it."

Jim added:

Any memorials may be sent to the South Wood County Historical Museum, 540 3rd. St., WI Rapids WI, 54494

From family photo book



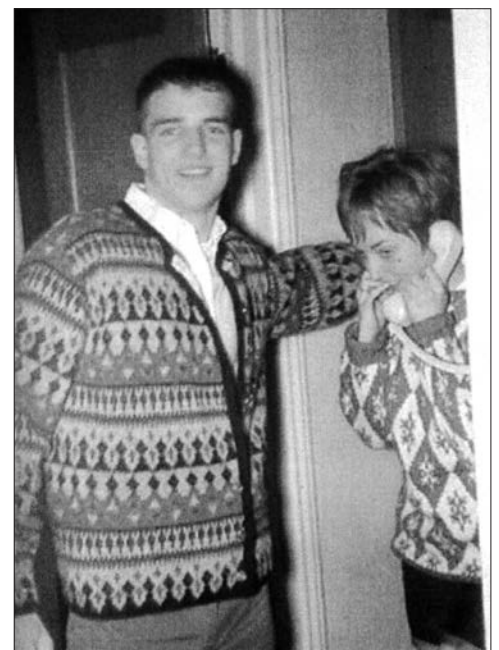
Of course, as these photos foreshadowed, we know you did enjoy a stellar career as an athlete, particularly in high school and college as an outstanding wrestler. You were light (145 pounds!) but you were mighty, as these winning stats attest – Go Jim, Pride of the Wisconsin Rapids Red Raiders!!:

Above: Jim., wearing a Roy Rogers-style shirt identical to one worn on similar photos by the *Artifacts* editor, with his father, John Natwick. John and Mae Natwick were profiled in *Artifacts* #8, February 2006.

At right, in the sweater years, with sister Betty.



Jim with 1951 Nash 4-door sedan



Previously published here

ARTIFACTS

MAY 2010

Talking Grim

SWCHC President Phil Brown and Grim Natwick's cousin Jim Natwick at the Museum to discuss placement of an historical marker featuring the artist and animator.



Natwick family at Grim Natwick marker dedication



Parents John and Mae with Betty, Jim, Jill and Nancy



Winner in May 2013 of trophy that led to Jim Natwick Memorial Bocce fest at Mid-State Poetry Towers, town of Rudolph



In May 2017, Jim at bocce with SWCHC/MSPT member Hugh Midor and SWCHC historical reenactor/military chronicler Billy Parker

William Knox (1789–1825) was a Scottish poet best known for writing Abraham Lincoln's favorite poem, "Mortality," which the President often recited from memory. The table of contents of *Among the Poets* credits "Wm. King."

Mortality.



H, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a fast-flitting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.

The child that a mother attended and loved,
The mother that infant's affection that proved,
The husband that mother and infant that blessed,
Each, all, are away to their dwelling of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure,—her triumphs are by;
And the memory of those that beloved her and praised,
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king that the scepter hath born
The brow of the priest that the miter hath worn,
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap,
The herdsman who climbed with his goats to the steep,
The beggar that wandered in search of his bread,
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

280

By William Knox

From

Among the Poets
(See following story)

MORTALITY.

281

The saint that enjoyed the communion of heaven,
The sinner that dared to remain unforgiven,
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes, like the flower and the weed,
That wither away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that hath often been told.

For we are the same that our fathers have been;
We see the same sights that our fathers have seen,—
We drink the same stream, and we feel the same sun,
And we run the same course that our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers would think;
From the death we are shrinking from, they too would shrink;
To the life we are clinging to, they too would cling;
But it speeds from the earth like a bird on the wing.

They loved, but their story we cannot unfold;
They scorned, but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, but no wail from their slumbers may come;
They joyed, but the voice of their gladness is dumb.

They died,—ay! they died; and we things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
Who make in their dwellings a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea! hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together like sunshine and rain;
And the smile and the tear and the song and the dirge
Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud,—
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?



Message from Xmas 1883

By (Uncle) Dave

Just before Xmas 2017, the Ghost of Christmas Past paid a visit to the town of Rudolph—and dropped off a book. And thereby hangs a tale.

In the story on page 18, Leonard Peltier says he enjoyed the books of his great grandfather, Prof. Thomas W. Chittenden, mostly about the conflict between science and religion. One of those volumes, by Herbert Spencer, philosopher, is now in the Leonard F. Peltier Orthopedic Collection of the University of Kansas Medical Center. It had come from the private library of Mrs. Helen Quinn, Grand Rapids, Wis., inscribed by the same “Thos. W. Chittenden” above.

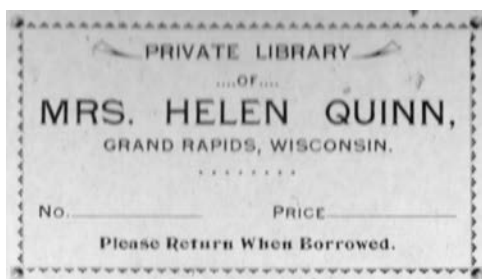
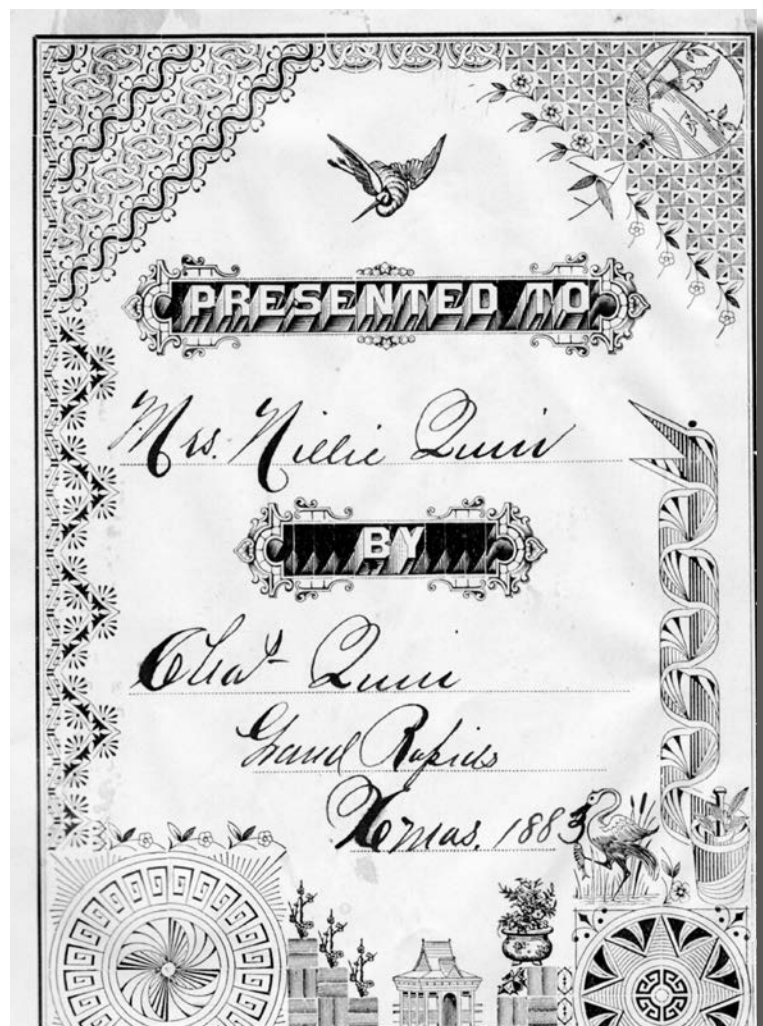
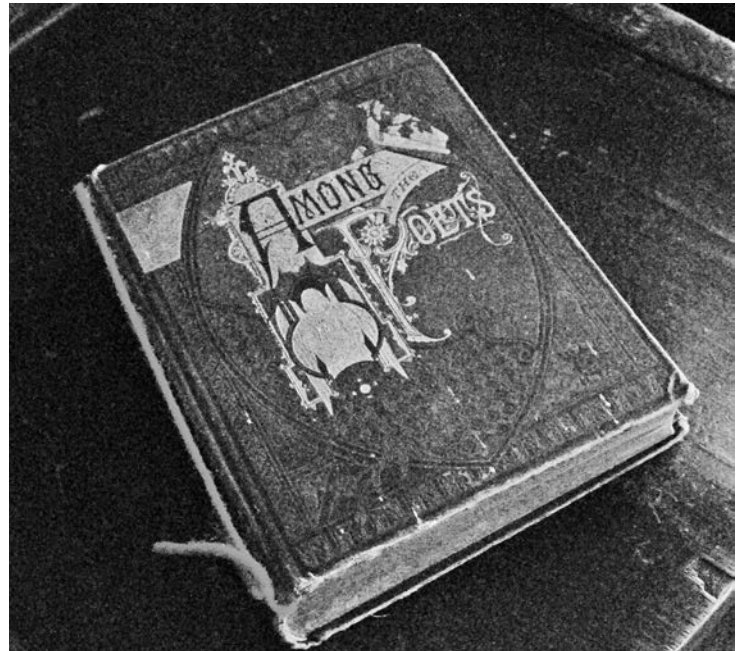
Hours after reading Peltier’s words and while deep into researching Prof. Chittenden, I was assembling holiday decorations in my Poetry Towers when an ancient book fell from a shelf to the floor and was set aside without a look.

The next day, my wife, Kathy Engel, SWCHC librarian, asked why the book, *Among the Poets*, lay on the table.

Why indeed? I did not remember ever seeing it before it fell.

It, like Peltier’s book, was from the “private library” of Helen Quinn, the very same sampled on the Peltier shelf in Kansas! In my book, a full-page dedication followed from “Chas. Quin,” whom she had married that year.

He too would make another appearance in this investigation.



Continued on page 19

2017 Christmas Tree Walk @ the Museum



Above: Sun Room.

Below: Teddy Bear (see Roosevelt) tree in Natwick room. Re-enactor Billy Parker in Buehler Gallery.



Photos by UD







Christmas
Tree
Walk

2017



Pix by UD



The Professor

Thomas W. Chittenden Makes His Mark

By Uncle Dave



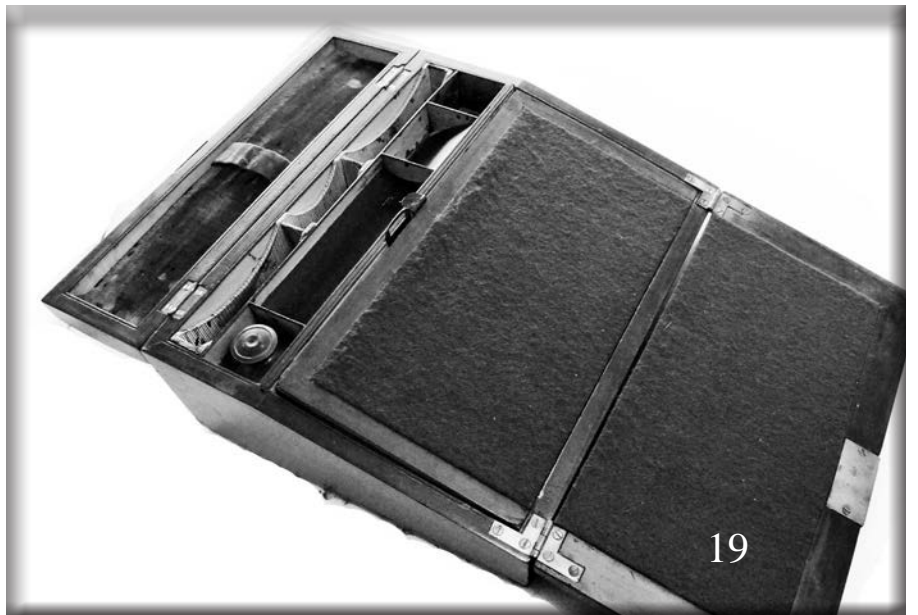
Chittenden. His name has flickered across the screen for 37 years; but until this year, no one here knew who he was. Then came the artifact at left and a couple clues that elevated the professor's historical possibilities to the top tier.

Stories from an Artifact:

"You now have the Thomas W. Chittenden desk," Leonard Peltier wrote to his son, George in 2001.

And now we at the SWCHC Archives have it, thanks to George Peltier, Edina, Minn., who provided it in 2016 via SWCHC board president Phil Brown. Out of that desk have emerged invaluable narratives about local history and maybe even national figures.

The Professor's Lap Desk



The Professor

“Prof. Chittenden,” wrote Dr. Leonard Peltier (1920-03) “has always been rather mysterious and although I read many of the books in his library and still have a few in mine, I never really knew anything about him. While cleaning the garage yesterday I came across a collection of old clippings and letters, some of which dealt with him and give us some biographical information.

“He was important to my family because he adopted Charles Quinn [Quin], my grandfather. I have always thought that Charles Quinn might have been his illegitimate son although there is no support for this.

“When I was a small boy and went with my mother and sister to visit my grandmother Quin in Wisconsin Rapids in the summer time, on a rainy day when there was little to do, my grandmother would bring out [her father-in-law] Grandpa Chittenden’s desk and show us the treasures it contained.”

Leonard Peltier’s Grandmother Nellie Quin

“Grandmother Quin” was born Helen Brazeau (1858) in Illinois, one of ten children of French-Canadian Stephen Brazeau and Irish-American mother Margaret Brady Brazeau. Among “Nellie’s” brothers was Theodore W., grandfather of SWCHC board member, Nicholas J. Brazeau, and of Mary Brazeau Brown, board president Phil Brown’s wife.

In 1883, Nellie married former New Yorker, Charles Quin, adopted son of Thomas W. Chittenden, from whom she inherited the celebrated lap desk.

Leonard Peltier’s Mother Floy Quin Peltier

Charles and Nellie Quin had two daughters: Belle and Florence.

The younger, Florence “Floy” was born in 1886.

Her husband was George Peltier, author of *A History of the Cranberry Industry in Wisconsin* (1970), written after he and Floy moved to Wisconsin Rapids from Lincoln, Neb.

George and Floy were the parents of Leonard Peltier, who had received Chittenden’s lap desk when his aunt, Belle Quin Wolverton, died at age 79, Aug. 17, 1964, in the Wisconsin Rapids hospital.

Leonard Peltier’s Aunt Belle Quin Wolverton

Born in 1884 to the passing of cigars by her father, Charles Quin, she was a “beloved” kindergarten teacher here from 1906-31, the year her mother, Nellie, died—after which Belle married Fred Wolverton of Oshkosh (1932) at her Rapids home. Miss Sally (Marjorie) Peltier, Leonard’s sister, of Lincoln, Neb., was a bridesmaid.

Belle, well-educated like many of her family, attended Milwaukee Normal, the University of Illinois and the University of Nebraska. She was survived by her husband, Fred, nephew Dr. Leonard Peltier, Kansas City, Kan., and a niece, Mrs. Sally Peltier Osborn., Lincoln, Neb.

Leonard’s son, George Peltier II, donor of the Chittenden desk, says Belle was a good-looking redhead and a lot of fun.

Leonard Peltier’s Grandfather Charles Quin

Leonard Peltier said that the adopted son of Prof. Chittenden, Charles Quin, and “Nellie” Brazeau Quin, his grandmother, “were married for a short time but were divorced. None of my relatives would ever speak of him.”

Charles is mentioned in *History of Northern Wisconsin* and the *History of Wood County* as a member of Temple of Honor lodge, Grand Rapids. The 1880 federal census shows him boarding with Otto Schultz, both druggists. That year he was hired as manager of the Wood drug store and elected Grand Rapids alderman for the second ward in 1885.

He and Nellie moved to Merrill, Wis., where, in 1891, he was made American Express agent. In 1893, Nellie was in Merrill, but the 1895 state census shows Belle and Florence, but not Charles, with Nellie in Grand Rapids. By the 1900 census, Nellie Quin had been married 17 years, though Charles was not in the household at that time.

Probably the same Charles Quin according to the Meyer Bros. Druggist trade publication in 1897 as bought out the Norway Co. at Merrill; the Oshkosh *Northwestern*, Feb. 15, 1900, reported that the Norway block, occupied by Quin’s drug store and others, had been destroyed by fire.

**Leonard Peltier's Great Grandfather
Thomas W. Chittenden**

The Professor

The leading character in our narrative is "Prof." Thomas W. Chittenden, adopter father of Charles Quin.

The Professor was born (1833) in New York City. It has been reported that his father and mother had died young. However, the 1850 federal census for New York shows Thomas, 17, living with his sister Elizabeth, 15, half-brother (probably) William, 12, and, presumably their mother, Drusilla Chittenden, 40. Drusilla died in 1896 and is buried in Brooklyn.

The Prof. was a "close student in his youth and became an able teacher, writer, and chemist in the city of his nativity," according to the 1890 *Wisconsin Blue Book*. He registered for the Civil War era draft in 1863 but would have been rejected for infirmity.

Chittenden moved from New York to Grand Rapids around 1874. In his early 40s, he was somewhat disabled and may have been encouraged here and treated by Dr. G.F. Witter, and by Chittenden's younger half-sister, Elizabeth, who had married William Scott in 1862 and moved here a decade before Chittenden's arrival.

William Scott, working as a ship's carpenter, had arrived from Scotland in 1856. The 1870 census for Wood County shows him as a sawyer for his brother, T.B. Scott—for whom the library previously in the Museum building was named. William was Wood County surveyor in 1880.

In July 1876, a Rapids paper pronounced that "Prof. Chittenden delivered a most excellent sermon at the Congregational Church last Sabbath morning, in the absence of Rev. L. M. Foster. The ceremonies were impressive, and all went away feeling that it was good to have been present, and to have been partakers of a feast. We shall undoubtedly have the pleasure of hearing from Prof. Chittenden again."

The Prof. also conducted a "prep" school for college-bound students. "Attention All!—Prof. Chittenden will be prepared on and after Monday, Sep. 11th, to receive pupils of both sexes, in English, French, German, Latin, Book Keeping, Mathematics, Natural Science, &c. He will either organize classes in any of the above named branches, or give attention to individual students as may be desired, and he pledges himself that no effort shall be spared on his part to render advancement at once rapid and thorough."

"Prof. C. has great pleasure in referring to Messrs. Brundage, Worthington, Pariseau, Reeves and other gentlemen who have placed their children in his care during the last school year, as also to Rev. Mr. Foster of the Cong. Church."

One Rapids account had it that "Prof. Chittenden delivered two scholarly and most able discourses at the Congregational church last Sabbath Morning and evening..." adding that "the collection to be taken at the Congregational church next Sabbath morning will be presented to Prof. Chittenden who has kindly volunteered to fill two Sabbaths of Rev. L. M. Foster's vacation. We hope our people will contribute cheerfully."

In May 1877, the Prof. and Rev. "tied loose in a skiff for a 'float' down the beautiful Wisconsin, last Wednesday," according to the *Reporter*.

Unfortunately, the new 1877 Howe Free High School assumed the task of educating future scholars; then it closed in 1878 due to lack of funds. Teachers were allowed use of the building to teach private school for those whose parents could afford to pay.

Chittenden taught a private class in summer 1878 at the Grand Rapids high school building, "formed having reference to the needs of those who intend to present themselves for examination with a view to obtaining grade certificates in September next."

"It may not be generally known that Prof. Chittenden is a thorough master of the science of music. Those desiring to receive instruction upon the organ can do no better than to avail themselves to his services. We hope to see large classes respond to Mr. Chittenden's announcement," said the May 30, 1878, Wood County Reporter.

Along the way, Chittenden managed to spend a year as the second principal of Howe high school between Isaac N. Stewart and J. Rosholt.

Prospects in 1878 were discouraging, according to the *Reporter*. "Prof. Chittenden thinks of going to Wausau, where he has very good prospects for the formation of a fine class. We can cheerfully recommend the Professor to the good people of Wausau."

Instead, in 1879, Chittenden, a 46-year-old "chemist," lived at a boarding house at 658 Oneida St., Appleton. He was working as "chief assistant" for the Secretary of the State Board of Health, J.T. Reeve, M.D. "in the varied duties of this office, the increasing weight of which has been greatly lightened by his efficient services." Reeve was a fellow New Yorker about the same age as Chittenden.

Mortality

Two decades previous, the Prof. had been told that he would not get well and should settle his affairs. A few years later, he landed here.

In October 1889, Chittenden wrote from Appleton on State Board of Health letterhead to his adopted son, “Charlie” Quin, in Grand Rapids. “I don’t believe myself that there is anything worse than a little paralysis of the muscles that move the eyes. I am getting better steadily. If the time comes when I can’t work, which I don’t believe is the case just yet, it won’t be long before the time will come.”

Chittenden wrote to Charlie at the end of the year that he had seen seven or eight doctors but only one who had much to say and what he said wasn’t good. While being treated with strychnine and electricity, more attacks were predicted. Even with some paralysis, he thought he was better off than under “Witter” “although W. is a good man too in a general way.”

Now that he was in Appleton, Chittenden said, he wouldn’t return to “the Rapids” because there would be “no change of income there.” Apparently short of funds, he wouldn’t be able to pay any expenses of Charlie, who apparently was splitting time between Chippewa Falls, Wis., and Rapids.

His obituary, Jan. 22, 1890, in the *Green Bay Weekly Gazette*, said Prof. Thomas W. Chittenden, of Appleton, died Wednesday, of congestion of the lungs.

The *Oshkosh Northwestern* of January 15, dated Appleton, said Chittenden, “a talented man formerly well known in New York but for many years past in broken health, died today, aged fifty-six years.”

A Grand Rapids newspaper declared that “the state of Wisconsin loses one of its most assiduous votaries of science” but a “sufferer from that relentless disease, asthma,” with the result that “a hard cold was more than his lungs could withstand.”

The *Waukesha Journal* said Chittenden had been for many years a chemistry instructor at the “University of New York,” and was a lecturer and writer on medical subjects of considerable reputation. Never married, he was “devoted to books and scientific apparatus.” His only survivors were his sister, “Mrs. Wm. Scott,” of Rapids and his adopted son, Chas. Quinn.

The Prof.’s body was brought here by his nephew, William Scott, Jr., city treasurer of Grand Rapids, at whose home ceremonies were held. Adopted son Quin was not mentioned.

Scott’s wife and Chittenden’s sister, Elizabeth, died a year later, Oct. 26, 1891. Like the Prof., she had been in poor health for many years and was thought to have died of asthma, though it is speculated that their chronic and fatal illnesses may have been tuberculosis.

Brush with Fame

Perhaps the most important part of this story has the least information. Leonard Peltier said Chittenden was a teacher in a New York boys’ school, where he had a boy in his classes, “who we believe was Theodore Roosevelt.” Not impossible!

The 1867 city directory for New York lists Roosevelts named Charles, Clinton, Cornelius, James, Robert, Samuel and Theodore; but the Theodore Roosevelt Sr. family was the most likely to produce a pupil for Chittenden.

Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who become President, was born at 28 E. 20th St., Manhattan, Oct. 27, 1858, when Chittenden was 25.

On page 37 of the 1870 federal census for Manhattan are found Theodore Roosevelt, the father, a glass merchant, and Martha, the mother. The second child and oldest son, Theodore, was 11.

On the adjacent page 36 (with a boarding house between), recorded on the very same day, July 16, 1870, is Thomas W. Chittenden, a 40-year-old professor of chemistry, living with a 13-year-old named Charles Quinn, “at home.” Both were born in New York. The parents of Quinn were foreign-born.

Chittenden was listed in the New York City directory of 1876 as a “teacher” who lived across Manhattan at 167 E. 33rd S., less than a mile from the Roosevelts.

From Chittenden’s class records for October 1865, we find a pupil named “Roosevelt” at a time Theodore would have been six or so. No first names are given.

Classes taught by Chittenden included foreign languages, although “Roosevelt” was not graded in Latin, Greek, German or Spanish. Other subjects recorded were spelling, algebra, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, writing, drawing and conduct.

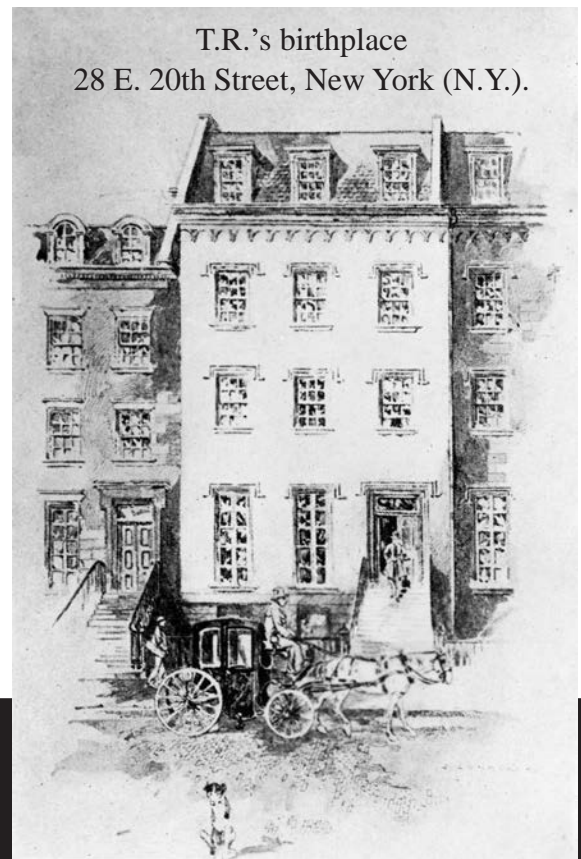
In 1865, “Roosevelt” missed most assignments. He did better in 1866 though he was not graded in several categories, including chemistry, perhaps because it was aimed at older pupils.

“Roosevelt” started the school year late, maybe because the family spent summers outside the city to accommodate Theodore’s asthma, also Chittenden’s stipulated disease.

Like the Prof., Roosevelt cultivated science, with an interest in zoology at age seven, when he and his cousins formed the “Roosevelt Museum of Natural History.” At nine, he wrote a paper, “The Natural History of Insects.”

According to a Wikipedia entry, “He was solid in geography and bright in history, biology, French, and German; however, he struggled in mathematics and the classical languages.”

According to biographer David McCullough, the Roosevelt library never lacked books and there was a private tutor. That tutor may have been our own “Professor,” Thomas W. Chittenden.



Harvard University Library

Below, Theodore at 6 or 7, when he would have been listed in Prof. T.W. Chittenden's class at right



Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard College Library

	Jan. 8, 1866.						Spell			A. Ex.			Mg. Ex.			Anth.			Al.			Sul.			Diast.			Yeasting		
	No	In	H	Th	F	Sa	No	In	H	Th	No	In	H	Th	No	In	H	Th	No	In	H	Th	No	In	H	Th	No	In	H	Th
Blake	9	10	10	7			6	10	10	10 ¹⁰⁴					10	10	10 ¹⁰⁴		5	1	7	5	1	9	4	6	10	10	10	10
Clark	10	10	a	x			4	a	5	9	a	x			6	8	a	x	8	a	10	8	x	7	2	x	8	10	a	10
Collins	x	a	7	x			10	10	10	a	x	9			9	a	x	5	7	1	a	8	x	10	a	x	4	a	x	10
Gonen	9	x	10	a			2	3	10	a	10	a			x	x	x	x	5	1	x	x	2	10	x	a	0	10	1	10
Gregory	a	a	10	9			a	3		a	8	9			a	8	9		1	1	a	8	a	a	a	1	0	a	5	10
Hamilton	a	a	10	x			a	10	a	a	x	x			a	a	x	x	a	a	2	a	a	a	10	30	x	10	9	10
Iving	8	7	10	8			3	6	8	9	9	9			8	8	8	8	3	1	7	5	6	10	6	1	8	10	5	10
Owen	9	9	10	9			7	4	9	9	10	6			10	10	9	8	8	8	1	8	6	10	5	1	10	10	9	10
Purdy	a	9	10	a			a	7	a	a	9	a			a	a	9	a	a	1	a	a	a	a	10	2	a	10	0	
Putnam	10	10	10	10			7	7	x	10	10	10			x	8	10	10	7	1	10	10	x	10	5	5	x	10	5	10
Roosevelt	8	8	10	9			7	4	9	9	9	10			9	10	10	9	7	1	7	8	3	1	9	1	10	5	10	
Tatham	9	x	10	x			6	10	4	5	5	3			8	7	6	8	6	1	7	8	1	10	x	x	5	10	1	10
Whitridge	9	10	10	9			7	4	9	10	9	9			10	10	10	10 ¹⁰⁴	7	1	1	8	2	10	4	5	5	10	5	10

1966 Chittenden class book from New York now at SWCHC



George Peltier II

Belle Quin, second from left, **Floy Quin**, third from right. Also, from left, “Merrill girl,” Luella Jackson, Maud Boorman (from Madison), Katie Corcoran, Lillian Oberbeck, Selma Kruger

George Peltier, Sr.
and
Florence Quin Peltier

The Chittenden desk
was donated
to SWCHC
by George’s grandson,
also named
George Peltier.



Belle and Florence Quin
(above) were the
daughters of Charles and
Helen (Nellie) Quin.

Their father, Charles
Quin was the adopted
son of Prof. Thomas W.
Chittenden, main
character in the stories
surrounding this page.

Flocculent Matter

A journalist wrote that our own Prof. Chittenden was, “stirring up the school-teachers all over the State by sending them a list of questions [about sanitary conditions]; we reckon that he got the worst of it when they began to poke their answers back at him; six hundred and more he owns up to getting and says that ‘still they come.’”

“If, as he tells us, those that he has printed are not the worst, we should like to know what the worst are like; what he has given us are bad enough in all conscience and are not calculated to make us brag much about Wisconsin school-houses, some of which seem to be institutions for the slow suffocation of their occupants. The Professor appears perfectly at home in this important work and in the Secretary’s report we find a very complimentary notice of his work and its value to that officer.”

In “Our School Houses,” Chittenden, then of Appleton, said, “We write the account that follows, in no spirit of hostility to the public schools of Wisconsin, for we believe that one of the first duties of the state to her children, is to insure to them a sound education.”

He described a Grand Rapids school yard where a creek almost covered the lower schoolyard and there was water in the basement. Sawdust filled a swamp that surrounded the knoll the schoolhouse was on.



“Soap Bubbles,” *St. Nicholas* magazine 1889

Chittenden described his own well in Grand Rapids circa 1880. The owner claimed it pure, but, “Upon being pumped from the well, a large quantity of flocculent matter” was seen suspended in the water, and “putrefactive fermentation” commenced. “Putrescible matter” resulted from the “kitchen, laundry slops, etc.” dripping into a well under the summer kitchen which had several years of “accumulation” on the floor.

Another local well was near a cemetery, causing “a strong infusion of death.”

The brown water of the city was not caused by iron!

Water from a hotel “other than the Rablin,” contained lime, magnesia, soda, potash, chlorine, phosphoric, nitrous and sulphuric acids, giving strong reason to suspect contamination by decaying organic matter of animal origin. Not surprising when at the head of a local spring, “junior members of the families concerned were in the habit of using the spring-head as a convenient place for the storage of minnows, frogs &c. intended for live fish-bait.” Not to mention the numerous local privies that ran into wells.

Lightening up his image, in 1889, the Prof. published, in the Scribner’s “St. Nicholas” magazine, a whimsical study of “Soap-Bubbles,” declaring, “in spite of my gray hairs, I will confess a secret: I am still fond of blowing bubbles...”

Gold Fever

In 1877, the *Green Bay Advocate* poked fun at Chittenden, the *Wood County Reporter* and the *Grand Rapids Tribune*.

“Grand Rapids (Wis.) papers claim that gold has been discovered in Wood County, in the town of Wood, and hint that the deposit is being profitably worked. We know that neither [Hart Benton] Philleo nor Jack Brundage, the editors over there, would lie about it. We are told that Prof. Chittenden, who is said to be a mineralogist, has made a chemical analysis and pronounces it gold.

“Will the Prof. enlighten us by publishing the analysis? We have a sample of the ore. It is a compact greenish rock, filled with yellowish, sparkling metallic flashes. The rock seam has a reddish look, indicating oxide of iron. We’ll wager all the interest we have in the Oconto gold mines that the ore is iron pyrites.

“We will only reiterate what we have before stated, that gold is found in Western Wood, and that some new development comes to light every day.

“Prof. Chittenden is a man who is not easily deceived and in matters pertaining to mineralogy he is perfectly at home, but we have further testimony which goes to sustain our statements. Prof. Bode, of Milwaukee, has subjected the gold bearing rock of Wood County to tests which warrant him in saying that the rock will yield a gold metal of \$10, or \$12, per ton. Two other chemists in Milwaukee have examined the ore and pronounce it gold. One in Chicago, however, failed to find any traces of the metal. The ore or rock which Prof. Chittenden examined was very rich; an hundred-fold richer than the specimens sent to Milwaukee.”

Wood County Reporter, Nov. 29, 1877



The Fire that Almost Destroyed Port Edwards

By Marshall Buehler

London, Chicago, Peshtigo and Marshfield. They all have a similar distinction in that they experienced a conflagration that destroyed a major part of the city. Port Edwards almost joined that group on September 1, 1921. The late summer months had been exceptionally dry and the Port mill west log storage yard was a literal tinder box, waiting to be ignited.

That spark of ignition came from the mill's steam locomotive as it shunted cars about the mill yard. Whether it was a spark in the engine's smoke exhaust or a live ash from its fire box is not known. But it made no difference. The dry grass caught fire and, fanned by a strong south west wind, it was only a couple minutes before it reached the base of one of the log piles.

The logs, piled up to forty feet high, were kindling dry. That's the way the mill wanted them for the pulping process. Furthermore, most of it was Hemlock wood which has generous pitch content.

At about 1:45 p.m., the same train crew spotted the fire which was already reaching to the top of

one of the piles. They immediately notified the yard supervisor who turned in the alarm. A coded series of blasts from the mill whistle summoned the firemen and directed them to the west log yard. The first act they performed was to lay hose from the mill's high pressure pumps to the fire scene, a distance of about two blocks. But by this time the fire was out of control. The intense heat prohibited firemen from getting to the heart of the inferno.

A newspaper account reported that thousands of spectators from Port Edwards as well as neighboring communities, watched as some 500 firefighters from Port Edwards village, Nekoosa, Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield did their best to fight the fire.

A fire truck from Stevens Point was ready to make the trip to Port Edwards, but while they were waiting for a rail car to load it on and bring it to Port Edwards, a fire broke out in that city and the apparatus remained in its home town, doing the honors. However, the fire truck from Marshfield came on its own power and made the thirty-eight mile trip in an hour and four minutes.

Consolidated Papers Inc. of Wisconsin Rapids sent their mill fire brigade to assist in the efforts. Meanwhile the Port Edwards mill was shut down so workers could help fight the fire or return to their dwellings and protect them from the flying, wind-driven embers that showered the village.

Fifteen hoses were eventually laid from the mill or river to the fire. Wisconsin Rapids sent their steam driven pump to the event, parking it on the river bank about three blocks from the fire where it performed in a spectacular manner; supplying water, it drew a group of spectators as they watched the engineer feed coal and wood to the boiler, black smoke bellowing from its stack and puffing sounds being emitted from the engine that rocked back and forth on its wheels with each stroke of its piston.

It was well into the night before the site was declared safe. However, a small crew stood by in case some ashes or coals were still alive. The climax came

about mid-afternoon when the burning pile collapsed on itself and sent a shower of sparks into the air where the strong wind caught them and spread them over the village. Several roof tops caught fire.

Remember that wooden shingles were the common cap for a building at that time and they were as dry as the log piles. At least seven homes suffered roof fires. The Port Edwards School, about a half mile away, had to be extinguished twice. It was a common sight to see people sitting on their roofs with a garden hose if they had one long enough or pails of water, waiting to douse any live embers that landed on their roofs. It is a credit to the visiting firemen and trucks that no homes were destroyed but roofing contractors were in big demand the following days.



Timekeeper Harry Whittlesey, pointing



NEPCO Bulletin

A GROUP OF REMARKABLE SNAPSHOTS SHOWING HEROIC WORK DONE BY FIREFIGHTERS

Lewis Alexander, mill president, was at the scene of the fire in his traditional vest, in spite of the heat of the summer day and the heat of the fire. Incidentally, with over a hundred photos of Lewis Alexander on file at the Alexander House archives, there are none of him that captures him without a vest on.

He was quoted as saying, "I felt pretty sick. The sight nauseated me and I couldn't bear the sight of the flames."

People in the village rallied to the cause to help in any way they could. Mrs. Hugh Madden, wife of the mill's yard supervisor, got in her car and drove the street of Port Edwards, shouting and warning people to stay at home and protect their property and not to become one of the spectators that were hindering the efforts of the firemen.

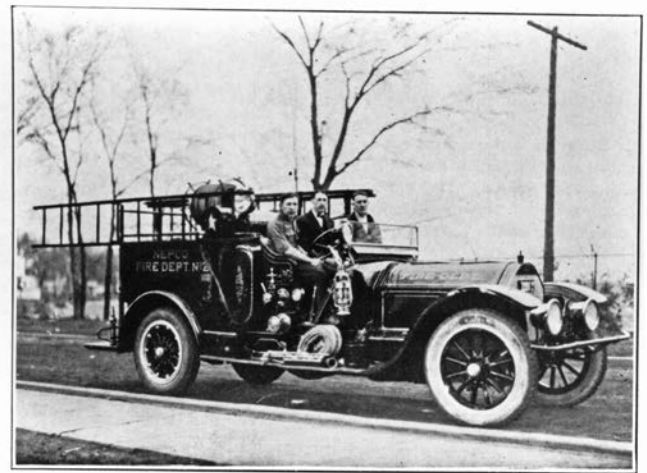
Al Lutjean, manager of the White City Café, located in the Port Edwards Hotel, provided a continuous supply of complimentary coffee and sandwiches for the firefighters, some who stayed on throughout the night.

One successful effort was achieved when the cableway log loading crane was moved out of the way to protect it from the fire. The cableway consist-

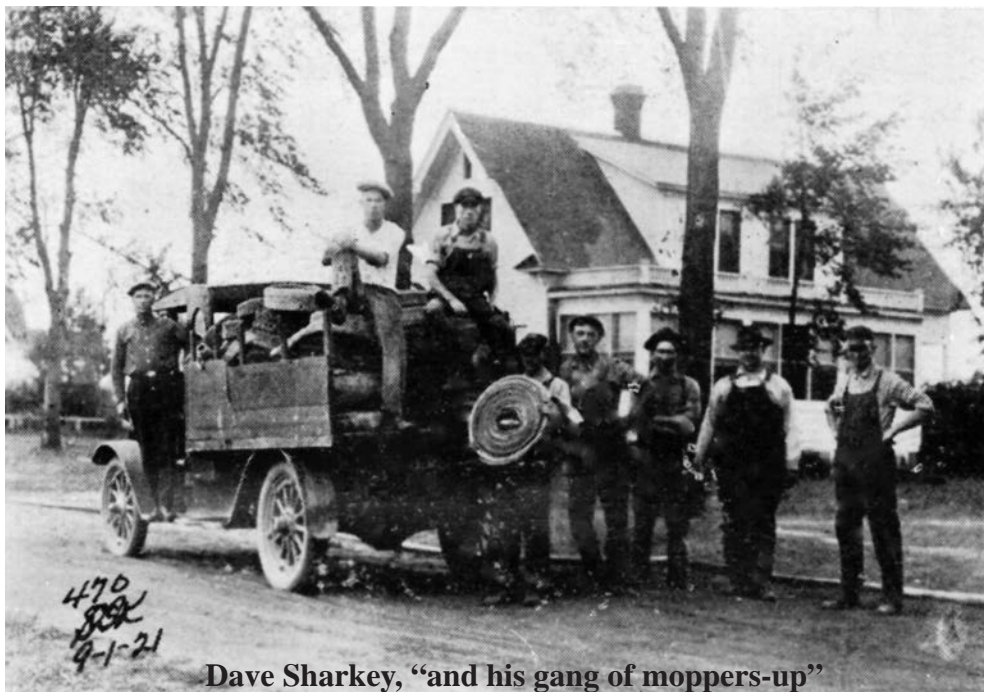
ed of two wooden towers, one on each side of the log yard and a cable that spanned the towers. It loaded or unloaded logs from the rail cars beneath the cable.

The financial loss to the mill was estimated at \$150,000. That's in 1921 currency values. It was the most expensive catastrophe Port Edwards has ever encountered. In spite of this, mill operations resumed the next morning when the 7 a.m. whistle called them back to work. Port Edwards had been saved.

*****Sources of information from *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, *Stevens Point Journal* and *NEPCO Bulletin*.



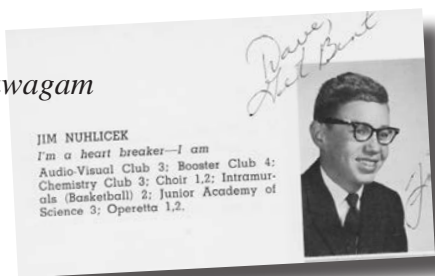
Bob Jensen, E. P. Gleason, Irving Hickey and Fire Truck.



Dave Sharkey, "and his gang of moppers-up"

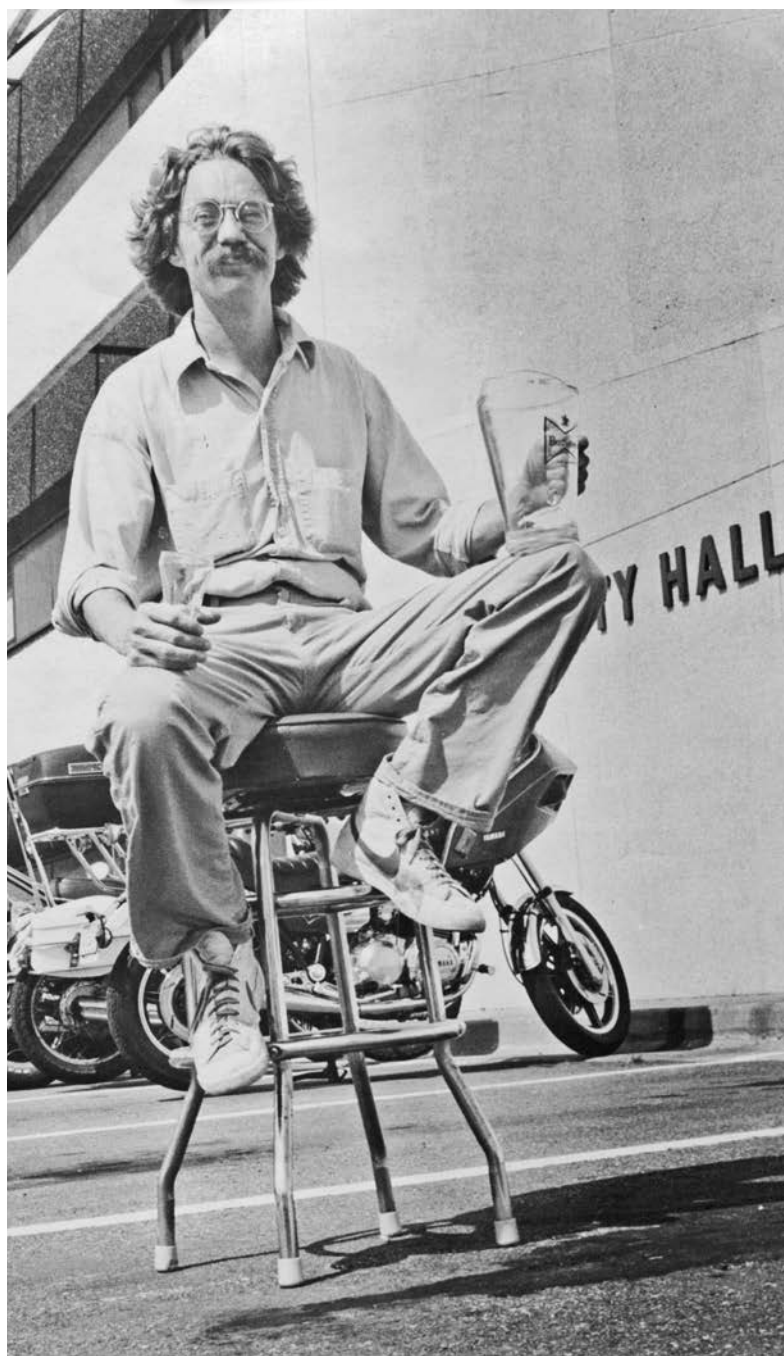


NEPCO president L.M. Alexander, in vest

1963 *Ahdawagam*

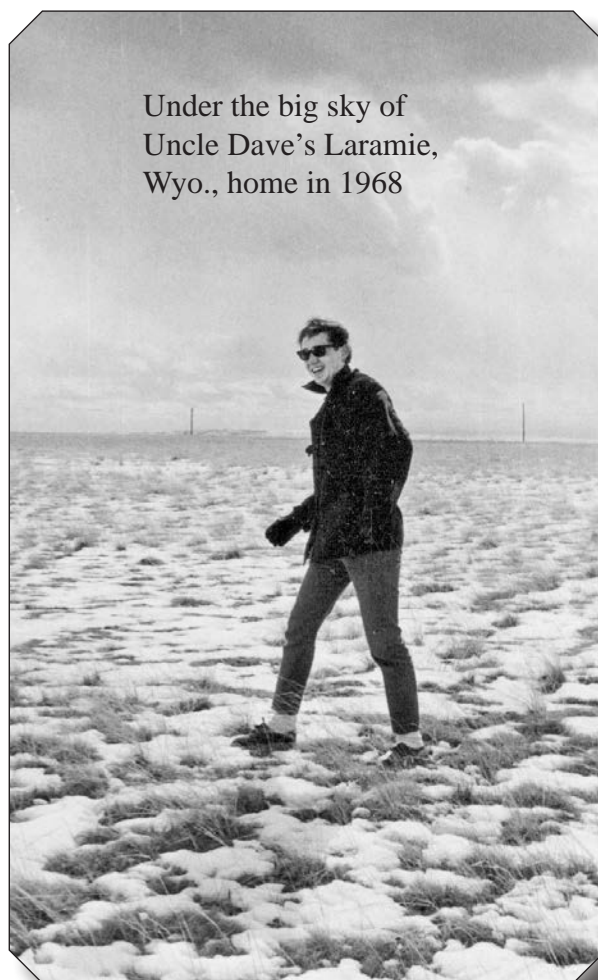
At LHS: Jim Nuhlicek, Richard Mittelsteadt, Alan Grischke and Harold La Chapelle with Physics Lab X-ray machine (*Daily Tribune*)

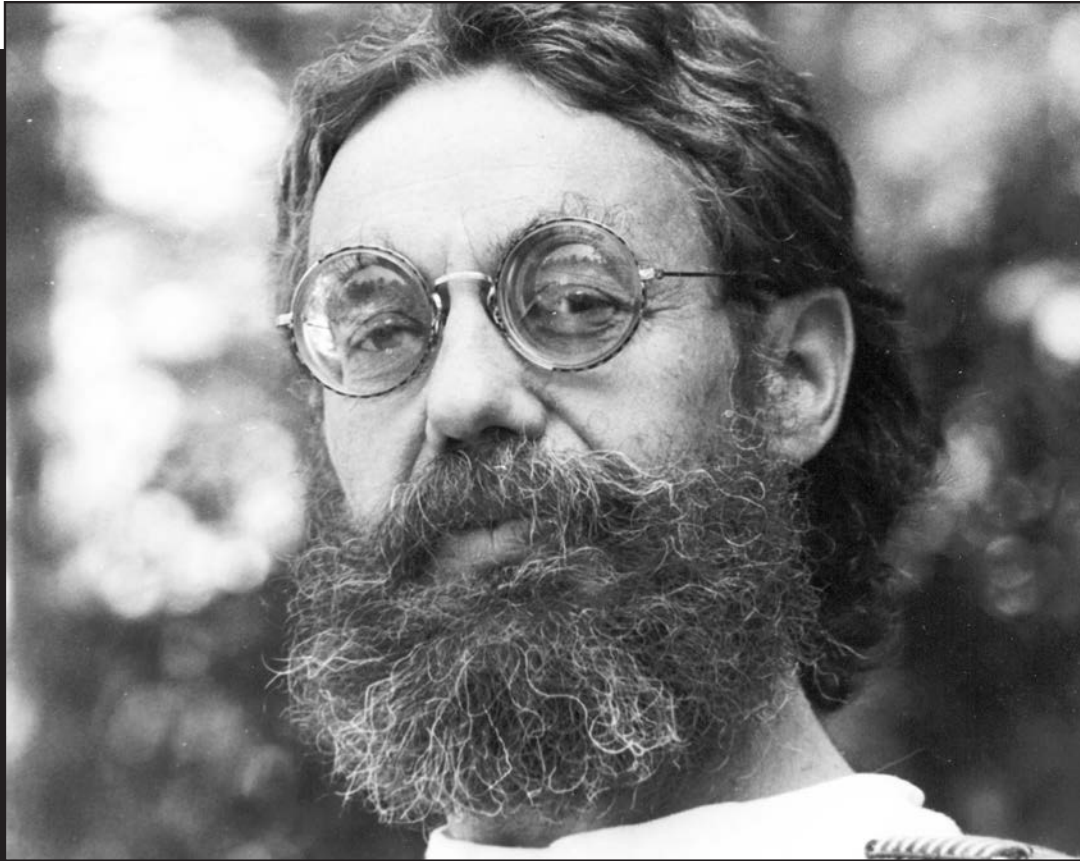
Namaste, Jim
1945-2017



For the *Tribune*, taken on the original site of Buzz's Bar

From Wise Guy to Wise Man





Good Friend Gone

Posted on SWCHC website, September 18, 2017

Written by (Uncle) Dave Engel, Director Emeritus

James C. Nuhlicek, fellow traveler since '59, died Thursday, Sept. 14, from the effects of a brain tumor.

Rapids residents of a certain age will remember “Nuhly” as a Coke-bottle glassed, Maynard G. Krebs-inspired, “tennie”-shod, heartbreaker—found Friday nights at the Rapids theater and, in college years, at Buzz’s and the Brig. Jim was a minor celebrity because his father, Joe, operated the Chatterbox snack shack on West Grand Avenue. To our amusement, his mother, Gatha, gave him a good-night peck even when he came home late and redolent of wickedness.

Jim and I, both English majors, roomed together at Point college. After graduation, Jim joined me at Western Illinois University, where I taught English and he reeled in an M.A., retiring in 2012 as a distinguished English professor at State University of New York-Cobleskill, having developed a specialty in Eastern Philosophy. Along the way, he lived with gentle compassion and playful humor. He said he wasn’t afraid to die, that his main concern was for those left behind.



Jim and wife, Fran Amadeo, near their home

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West Grand Avenue parade, 1950 Ford, probably Wisconsin Rapids police car, motorcycle following. These Fords were popular hot rods in the early 1960s.

Photo courtesy WRPD