



# Kandi Express

County News . . .  
With a Historical Train of Thought

Kandiyohi County Historical Society  
Willmar, Minnesota  
December 2013



## Serving the Communities:

Atwater

Blomkest

Hawick

Kandiyohi

Lake Lillian

New London

Pennock

Prinsburg

Raymond

Regal

Roseland

Spicer

Sunburg

Svea

Willmar



## Christmas at the Sperry House

December 1-29  
Sundays: 2-5 pm.

The Sperry House is decorated for Christmas and the Christmas Tree displays a variety of late 1800s (Victorian) ornaments. Cider and cookies will be available.

## Engine #2523

Lit each evening until 11pm  
The "Thursday Crew," continues the tradition of lighting Engine #2523 and the depot.

## Festive Forest is Back!

After a one year absence due to the construction of our new community room, the Festive Forest is back. We are excited to have this holiday program again. The KCHS holiday programs, in partnership with many other local groups, have become long-time traditions in the county.

**December 1-December 31**

**M-F: 9am-5pm & Sundays: 2-5 pm.**

The Festive Forest is clubs and organizations creating unique trees and exhibits, promoting their groups while sharing the spirit of the holidays with the public. We would like to thank:

*American Association of University Women  
Bethesda Day Break  
The Compassionate Friends  
Daughters of American Revolution  
Lake Elizabeth Garden Club  
Humane Society of Kandiyohi/Meeker County  
Kandi Railers Model Railroad Club  
Minne Sunbonnet Dollers  
Raymond Legion Auxiliary Unit 420  
Sons of Norway  
St. John's Roadrunners 4-H  
Willmar Area Food Shelf  
Willmar Car Club  
Willmar Kiwanis  
Willmar Noon Lions  
Willmar Public Library  
VFW Auxiliary*



# Kandiyohi County Historical Society

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Willmar, MN 56201

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E-Mail: kandhist@msn.com

Website:

www.kandiyohicountyhistory.com

## Board of Directors

2012-2013

President - Richard Falk

Vice President - Dennis Peterson

Secretary - Marilyn Johnson

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## Kandi Express

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*Discovering, Preserving,  
and Sharing the Story of*

*Kandiyohi County and Its People.*

## Volunteers

**Archives/Office:** Molly Larson, Dorothy Olson, Terry Stein, Marilyn Johnson, Linda Maurer

**Building/Painting/Thursday Crew:** Elmond Ekblad, Elroy Gast, Dale Johnson, Jerry Johnson, Don Niece, Loren Luschen, Rollie Boll, Gayle Larson, Harley Aalfs, Larry Scholla and Loretta Fenske.

## Christmas Weekend Volunteers:

Dick & Delores Hoglund, Ken & Dorothy Peterson, Carol & Allen Rambow, Hilsida Tersteeg, Terry Stein, Lou Thoma, Marilyn Johnson, Wanda & Allen Zaske, Carol Nielson, Marlene Brown, Dennis & Karen Peterson, Harold & Mary Jo Larson.

## In-Kind Donations

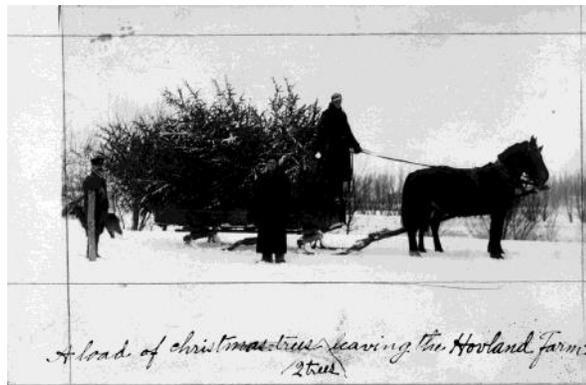
*Kandiyohi Co. Community Service* - Grounds Work/Snow Removal

*Engan Associates P.A.* - Architectural Services

## Kandiyohi County Historical Society's Wish List

- 8 1/2" x 11" white office copy paper
- Stamps -regular and post card
- Flat computer screens

**Newsletter Email List**  
Please let us know if you would like to receive your newsletter over email by sending your request to kandhist@msn.com. Remember if you want to be included on our email list for upcoming news and programs, please let us know.



*Happy Holidays*



# *Thank you*

*Your gifts help preserve our heritage for future generations!*

## ***New and Renewal Members:***

### **Benefactor:**

Gail Nygaard Anderson

### **Supporter:**

Allen & Wanda Zaske  
Louise Thoma  
Gerri Ekblad  
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Pete & Carla Fostervold  
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Betty Kyker  
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Robert & Irene Friedrich  
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Larry Lohn  
Steven Rambow  
Nancy Salmi  
Margherita Larmon  
Mary Moehring  
Sandy Pierce  
Carolyn Kneisl  
Gary Nielsen

## ***Special Donations:***

### ***Member Contributions:***

**For Operating Support**  
Margherita Larmon  
William & LaDonna Hallberg Sook  
Arlene Mrzena  
Don & Judy Week  
Steve Lehman

### ***Engine #2523***

Howard McAdams

### ***Mona Nelson Fund***

Cleve & Jackie Powell

### ***Sperry House***

Diane Ahlquist



## ***Donations to the Multi-Purpose Room:***

Thanks to all of the donors who have given a donation to the KCHS Building Fund. With your support, we were able to build a room for the entire community. We are looking to facilitate a place for young and old to gather and share the stories of Kandiyohi County.



## ***Individuals:***

In Memory of David Danroth

Louise Thoma

Ardell & Marilyn Johnson

Larry & Diane Macht

Myron & Carolie Carlson

Robert Moller

Karen & Barry Welch

Ruth & LeRoy Sanders

Kandiyohi County Family Services Employees

In Memory of Roscoe Berg

Dale & Judy Johnson

## ***Multi-Purpose Room Update***

The final step in the multi-purpose room is now complete. Our parking lot has a new overlay and is striped! It is so enjoyable to drive up to our facility and see all that has been accomplished in one year! Thanks again to all of you who helped with the project. We appreciate it! The wonderful use of the room we have now is definitely a testament to something was needed at the Society and in the community! If you haven't seen our new room yet, be sure to stop by and check it out!

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## **Traveling Exhibit Coming to Kandiyohi County Historical Society**

**New Exhibit, 'Uncle Sam's New Deal,' Puts Today's Headlines in Perspective**

During the Great Depression, New Deal programs brought relief to America's poor and helped stabilize its economy. Find out how at "Uncle Sam's New Deal," a new exhibit at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, June 7, 2014-September 28, 2014.

"Uncle Sam's New Deal" illuminates the federal government's role in reviving Minnesota communities 70 years ago. Photography, interviews and New Deal film footage allow us to see how "Uncle Sam" has lead efforts to simulate Minnesota's communities in the past.

This exhibit was created by Minnesota Landmarks in partnership with the Minnesota History Center. It is on temporary loan from the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul and will be traveling to venues throughout Minnesota.

The Minnesota Historical Society Traveling Exhibits Program has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008.

The Minnesota History Center is part of the Minnesota Historical Society, a non-profit educational and cultural institution established in 1849. Its essence is to help illuminate the past as a way to shed light on the future. The Society collects, preserves and tells the story of Minnesota's past through museum exhibits, libraries and collections, historic sites, educational programs and book publishing.

The Kandiyohi County Historical Society will be complimenting this exhibit with a new exhibit focusing on Kandiyohi County and the New Deal. KCHS will also offer programs and articles to learn more about the New Deal in Kandiyohi County.

Look in your next newsletter for more details!



# Willmar City Auditorium

By Dale Johnson

Surprise!!! What's 75 years old and still one of the best-kept secrets in Willmar? What secret, you ask? None other than the Willmar War Memorial Auditorium located on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown Willmar, Minn. The building anniversary came and went without a lot of fan fare and now that we are in its 76<sup>th</sup> year, there are still many unanswered questions. About fourteen years ago the KCHS newsletter contained an article about the auditorium. It did bring out lots of questions but still to this date relatively few answers. As such it may be time to renew our efforts and relook at this fine facility, bring up some new information, again ask the questions, and look for area input.



The starting date is late in 1934. A committee from the Chamber of Commerce approached city leaders to inquire about a long desired goal of hosting conventions in Willmar. What this city needed was an auditorium. The Chamber committee was composed of Ed Elkjer, William Rask, Irwin Peterson, William Chard and Dr. B. Branton. City leaders at this time were Mayor Selvig and Aldermen Larson, Jensen, Lundquist, Peterson, Lein, Birkeland, and Parsons. The thinking was that with some city funds and funds from the state and federal relief projects, the auditorium could be a possibility. Talk about things moving fast compared to today's politics. Follow this scenario:

- October 22, 1934—Committee from the Council formed
  - December 1934—three votes taken on funding proposals
  - December 1934—citywide election
  - December 1934—Architect/Engineer selected and hired
  - January and February 1935—all of the items finalized for funding with Minnesota Emergency Relief Act
  - March 1935—Funds obtained and construction begins
- Could anyone perceive any project going that fast today?

In consideration of moving the project along about fifteen Architectural firms were interviewed in January of 1935. The firm of William M. Ingemann was selected (Mr. Ingemann's firm was also doing the Rice Memorial project). Auditorium construction started in March 1935 with 50 men employed. Also at this time area farmers were allowed to bring in fieldstone or rock to be used in the building exterior. Work progressed well until it was suspended in June. No exact reason was given for the work stoppage, but two answers may be available. One being this gave time to switch over from a SERA funding project to the Federal WPA project (Works Program Administration) from which more funds were available. The second answer could be the concern about the quality of steel for the beams and interior work. Either way not much was said in Council minutes or press.

The construction resumed in September 1935 now under WPA criteria. It was at this time a request was made to WPA to suspend using prairie rock and change over to brick construction. The reason for the request was they misjudged the ability and number of rock cutters in the area and felt they could not carve and reshape all of the fieldstone. How does one then dispose of piles and piles of rocks? None other than bury them all in the back wall in the cement. Now with the rock problem resolved the City interviewed 7 brick and tile firms in October 1935. The two winning firms



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Harvey Anderson  
& Johnson

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FUNERAL HOMES  
& West Central Cremation Service

were Twin City Brick Co. of St Paul and Mason City Brick and Tile of Mason City, Iowa. In February 1936 Architect Ingemann presented to the Council the matter of ornamental panels for the front of the Auditorium. How many people have never noticed these panels? These were to be designed by WPA Artists and crafted by WPA workmen. The panel forms were then to be built and a special white sand and cement mixture be carved and installed at a cost of \$125.00 per panel.

The Memorial Room Stone project surfaced in late 1935 by the American Legion. The project created some controversy and culminated in a meeting with the City Council in November 1936 when delegates from G.A.R. Post, Spanish War veterans, and VFW post appeared before the Council to protest the American Legion proposal as originally presented. The Legion wished to include stones from all of the states as well as France, China, Porto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, and Canada. The thought behind this was that this was where American Legion Posts existed. The alternative proposal from Delegation of War Vets was strictly have a large bronze plaque or Memorial Cabinet. A closed meeting was held with the Council and delegates and resulted in the Council accepting the American Legion concept of United States stones and also a large plaque. This proposal received Council approval on December 14, 1936.

Possibly the least controversial part of the entire project was the Memorial Room mural. Richard Hanes and his fellow WPA artists painted the mural on four walls of the Memorial Room. Lost in the records is the information of names of the other artists, times spent on the projects, who created the mural stories and were these artists involved in other parts of the Auditorium painting. It is noted that the mural was not completed until 1938 and thus it is now officially 75 years old. The facility to this day still has many unanswered questions. This writer and the KCHS staff welcome any new data, pictures, and/or information about the facility from 1935 to present.

Some of the easiest questions are:

What do all the symbols on the doors in the Auditorium and Memorial Room signify?

Who were the mural artists?

Where exactly did all the stones come from? Present information accounts for about 20.

Do any pictures exist of early construction and especially the piles of fieldstone?

When and why did the original parquet floor become damaged and need repair?

How many of the original wooden chairs still exist? KCHS has several.

The City Council on April 8, 1937 purchased a Grand Piano for a cost of \$1185.00 for the Auditorium, one wonders if it still plays. It should be noted that through the staff of KCHS, staff from Willmar Senior Center and volunteers from KCHS the history and information is being preserved and reassembled into a power point format. Several on site presentations have been offered and its hopeful that new pictures and information will come forward to allow for more exposure for the grand building.

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## **Walk down Memory Lane and Share your Story with us! Oral History of the Willmar Auditorium & War Memorial Room**

We all have stories to tell. Your stories of the Willmar Auditorium are unique & valuable treasures for the community. Come to the museum on the days listed below and share your stories and memorabilia. We would love to hear your stories. For more information contact LeAnne at the Willmar Community & Activity Center, 231-9797 or Jill Wohnoutka at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, 235-1881.

**Monday, February 10, at 2pm**

**Tuesday, February 11, at 10am**

**Wednesday, February 19 at 2pm**

**All meeting times will be at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society**





## *A Lifetime in Kandiyohi County*

By Wayne "Pinky" Fostervold as told to Jill Wohnoutka

*This interview took place on November 7, 2013. Pinky passed away on November 22, 2013 at the age of 86. He was a lifetime member of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society since 1979. He was elected onto the Board of Directors in 1979 and served on the board until 2003. He was a founding member of the KCHS's Thursday Crew which began in 1981. Pinky leaves a wonderful legacy here at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society. He will be missed greatly.*

I was born on July 29, 1927 just outside of Litchville, North Dakota to my parents, Ole & Inga Fostervold. I had 3 brothers and 7 sisters. Our family came to Kandiyohi County in 1928 when I was about 8 months old. We lived on a farm that is located in what is now the Hanson addition. The farm was called Blue Ribbon right along what is now 15<sup>th</sup> St. SW in Willmar Township. We moved north of town in 1932 to section 34 of Dovre Township.

### *Life on the Farm*

We never had a milking machine, so we milked cows by hand. There were hogs to feed, sheep to feed, chickens, and horses to take care of. We had 8 or 10 cows. We usually sold the cream that we had separated which was most of our income. The crops we raised were a lot of small grains. There was wheat, barley, oats, sometimes flax and some corn. Soybeans weren't in much at that time. My mother always had a big garden.

The equipment we used for farming was pulled by horses until my oldest brother got a tractor in 1938 or so. It was a Farmall F20, everyone remembers their first tractor. The first I drove it was when we graded a mud road. I was driving the tractor and with those tractors if you hit a rock the stirring wheel would fly out of your hands. I was small enough I couldn't push the clutch in. We still had horses for quite a while until 1943-44. Even after the war my brother James had a team of horses. In 1949 he got rid of them. The one benefit of a tractor was you didn't have to take care of the horses. My whole family helped on the farm and worked together.



**Pinky in 1939 with Nick & Dick**

### *School District 18*

I went to school at District 18 which is the school on the museum grounds. I remember my first teachers. The first two years I had four teachers. One was Stella Eliason. Her brother married one of my sisters so she was kind of a family member. There were never too many kids at school.

School started in September. I had to do chores in the morning before school and in the evening after school. I stayed home in Fourth grade to help on the farm. I helped with disking with the horses. I went to District 18 through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I had a brother and two sisters go there at the same time as I was there. There was one boy that went there until he was 16, then they let him out of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade!

We walked to school every day. It was about a half mile walk. To help the teacher, we had to carry in a pail of water until we got the well outside. Most of the days we couldn't keep the schoolhouse warm enough. The wind ran right through it. We would burn wood for a while to keep the schoolhouse warm. One of the school board members would go to the school on Sunday afternoon and start a fire.

The schoolhouse was located just in Willmar Township currently one mile north of the Lakeland Radio Station. The subjects we had were arithmetic, English, penmanship and geography. The older students helped the younger kids some. The teacher would teach one grade at a time, she usually had them come up to the front of the room. For lunch, we had a lot of jelly sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly. We carried our lunch in a half gallon syrup pail. We maybe had some fruit, like apples. We had morning and afternoon recess that was our physical education. We played behind the schoolhouse and sometimes played softball. Everyone had to play there were only 8 kids. We had a county wide 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation at the Willmar City Auditorium.

## *Willmar High School*

I went to Willmar High after graduating from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I went to high school in what is now called the Willmar Central Building -The WEAC. There were over 100 kids in our class. Going to school in Willmar was a big change for us country people. We never got to town, especially in our family. It was only three or four miles into town. My first year we had to walk a little further than grade school to get on the bus to take us to Willmar. The second year I think I stayed in town with my sister on the south end of town on South 11<sup>th</sup> St.

I started high school in 1941, that's when they attacked Pearl Harbor. We were in manual training class when that happened. It happened on a Sunday, but on Monday they declared war. We heard that over the loud speaker. The first time I heard about it was on Sunday. We had a battery operated radio running off of an old car battery. It was always dead. The radio was for my dad to hear the news. He was more about the Norwegian part of it because that was where he was born and raised.

I did graduate from High School. I got a diploma. Most of the class had joined the Navy and or joined the service before graduation. If you finished the first half of the year you got marked for the second half of the year on the same grades and got a diploma.

## *In the Navy*

I enlisted in the Navy. Most of the boys out of the class did. Older boys joined other branches like the Army, Navy and Marines. I enlisted in January 1945. Basic training was at Great Lakes somewhere between Milwaukee and Chicago, it was along Lake Michigan. I don't remember how long I was in basic training. They kept moving us up a week or two to get us out of there. We started out in a permanent camp then they switched us over. Next we went out to California at San Jose and the receiving camp there. Then they shipped us out of San Francisco. We ended up in the Philippines Islands at a receiving camp there and I got assigned to a ship.

I was assigned to the USS Dixie. My job was the deck crew and then I got into boat crews. We had a lot of small boats. They were used to haul supplies to destroyers and other things. It started out with a 26 motor rail board ended up with a 50 motor launch. The deck crew just took care of the deck and maintenance of the ship. It was a real good life living on a ship. It was a good ship to be on. There were two other people from Willmar. I can't think of anyone else. These guys were both older than me. One must have been quite old to get drafted. I never came under fire. We got to the Philippine Islands just after they had cleaned the Japanese out. Our ship wasn't a fighting ship, it was a repair ship. We were headed to Shainghai, China when the Japanese surrendered and then came home in July 1946.

I served a year and a half. I got discharged 10 days before my 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. I enlisted when I was 17 and half years old. Most of the guys were the same age as me.



1945-1946

## *Back to Willmar after the War*

When I came back to Willmar, I guess I bummed around for a year. There weren't hardly any jobs to go. I moved back with my parents when I returned. They now lived in town. They left farming in 1943. My brother-in-law was staying on the farm. My brother James bought the farm but then he went in the army that fall of 1943. He was gone the same time I was. Our mother had two sons in the war. We both came back safely. My other brothers did not serve they were older and were exempt for farming.

So after the year of bumming, I went into farming. In 1948 I rented some land and farmed with my brother. Then in the fall of 1948 I got hired on the railroad as a Locomotive fireman. It was an engine just like #2523 we have at the museum. It was a 2500 class. I worked some student trips in the fall of 1948 and about six or eight runs in 1949. A student trip was when you had to take trips in all different engines to learn and I thought I was going to starve to death. You had to try to get all these trips in and had to have a couple trips on each engine. Sometimes you didn't have any money in your pockets. I got laid off in 1949. I could have gone down to the cities and worked switch engines but that wasn't in my category.

## *Gilbertson Oil*

I got a job with Gilbertson Oil, it was a Texaco distributor. I took that job for a year. I delivered fuel and gas. I also sold motor oils. We delivered to all the stations at that time with small trucks. Gilbertson Oil is located on Second Street West. After my one year there, I stayed for 50 more years. I started in 1950 and the last time I was down there was 2006. It was part time in the last years. I



was retired but doing some part time work. There must have been about a dozen trucks delivering products around and now we got two oil companies left. Gilbertson's has always been Gilbertson Oil. It was a Texaco distributor. It was partnership with George Gilbertson and Art Malvi. They separated their partnership. When I retired it was Gilbertson Oil and it was the second generation I worked for.

I would drive and deliver fuel as far as Morris, Grove City, Litchfield, Spicer and New London. We also went to Olivia and Bird Island. The last years I was more or less collecting.

## *Home Life in Willmar*

I have lived on Russell Street for 54 years this November. We built the house. I married Wanda Haugen in July 1949. I just saw her one day out on the street. She was working for the telephone company and she caught my eye. We moved into our house on Russell in the fall of 1959. We had four children; Susan, Karna, Peter and Paul. The neighborhood has changed completely. Russell Street got its name from the railroad. Russell was one of the Spicers.

When we first came here, we belonged to Calvary then my Dad just got the idea we should go out to Eagle Lake Church. We were there for many years. We came back to Calvary. The two girls were confirmed at Eagle Lake. I thought that was enough of tracing back and forth so the boys went to Calvary for confirmation.

Eagle Lake was three or four miles from our family farm. Eagle Lake had a Norwegian service once a month growing up. My dad understood most of it. My mom and dad spoke Norwegian at home and I kind of understood it. I got my own version of Norwegian.



## *The Nickname "Pinky"*

I got my nickname in Social Studies class as a freshman in high school. Mr. Rohweder was the instructor. He was quite the character so he moved me from the back of the room to the front. He would be there talking and he would take a swing at me. He had long arms and I was afraid he was going to hit me one of these days. Then he got everybody's attention and would quiet down. I got as red as a beat and he said we will call you Pinky. And over 70 years later I am still called Pinky. Even in the service I was known as Pinky.

## *Willmar through the Years*

In the 1950's, there weren't any vacant stores in the downtown. You had the grocery store downtown, JCPenney's and clothing stores. The Coffee Fest started in 1948 I think. I remember it was there in 1948. It was a pretty big celebration. Everybody would come for the parade it seemed like. It was pretty good size. All the coffee you could drink. They had a coffee drinking contest. The coffee drinking they quit because guys would drink too much coffee then they would throw it up and keep drinking. I never participated in the contest.

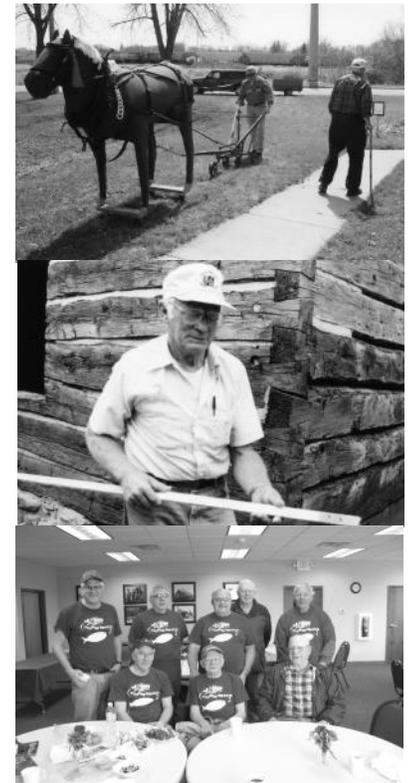
My first car was a Blue 1937 Chevrolet and I got it after I came out of the Navy. We would cruise around Willmar. For fun, we didn't do much on Saturday nights. On Sunday nights they had roller skating in Spicer. They had dances a couple nights a week besides that. We probably would drive by it. I didn't dance so we didn't go in. Roller skating was a big thing. We also went to movies. There was a drive in that started up. There were two theaters downtown- the old and the new we called them. The first movie I saw was a western I guess. They usually showed the westerns in the old one, it was over on Fifth Street. The new one was on Fourth Street between Litchfield and Becker Avenue.

## *Kandiyohi County Historical Society Legacy*

In 1980, my neighbor said come on and we will get you on the board and that was it. Mona was the director and that was about the time OBA sold the newspaper. The meetings were boring. I worked on the remodel when the roof caved-in in 1997. It was a mess for a while, but it turned out good afterwards.

The Thursday Crew started in the 1980's. I was on the board and I was on the grounds committee so one of the original members. Bob Lehman more or less started it. There were projects to be done and Bob saw that. It was that way to start and then pretty soon more was wanted and I was on the board so I helped them out a little. The biggest crew was about 10 to 12 guys at one time. We did a lot of work out at Guri Endreson Cabin. The restoration project in 1993-1994 and we were working on the Sperry House at the same time. We did the porch and sidewalks. At the Endreson cabin, we had to put a new bottom log in. The first job out there was the roof leaked. I don't understand why someone hadn't done something about that roof before that time.

The Thursday crew does a lot with the Agriculture Building. It sat there with just a roof and the sides and a tractor sat there. It was enclosed sometime in the 1980s. It was some kind of work program, a bunch of young people. We met Thursday afternoons because it was the afternoon I had off. It has been a good bunch of guys. My brother and I did a demonstration of farming with horses. We tried oats one year and that was a failure. We must have plowed it 2 or 3 years, at least one year we plowed it with the little tractor. We even had a guy bring oats and thresh it on Sunday.



### *The Old Buildings of Willmar*

It was sad to see the old courthouse go down that had a design to it and what they put up is ugly compared to what the old courthouse looked like. In the old courthouse when you walked across the second floor it creak all over through the whole building. I visited the Carnegie Library maybe once or twice. I remember the neighbor hauling rocks for the building of the War Memorial Auditorium. I kind of remember the building of Rice Hospital.

### *Bums Alley*

It was right by the railroad tracks on Second street and the north side that used to be bums alley. That was where the hobos hung out. It was in the 1950's and even later. I suppose the last ones were in the 1960's and 1970's. They don't have so many box cars to ride now a day. They were usually pretty good. They were down on their luck and traveling through. I came one morning to get my tank car. I was hooking up my tank car and I heard someone talking. I turn around the corner and there were about 10 of them sitting there. I took one look and didn't know if I want to turn my back on this bunch. There was one fellow there he had on striped overalls and he said hey, how are you?. He had gone through a couple times a year and recognized me. Another time, one big guy comes and wanted a couple dollars. I think I had three dollars in my billfold and I gave it to him. He wanted to get home and I could tell he didn't feel good. He had tears in his eyes because I gave him three dollars. He was down and out.

### **KCHS loses Board Member**

**David H. Danroth**  
Dec. 30, 1942 - Oct. 16, 2013

David Henry "Boomer" Danroth 70, passed away on October 16th in St. Cloud, MN, after a long illness. David was born and raised in Bismarck, ND, earned a college degree in History and served in the U.S. Navy. He lived in Spicer Minnesota where he was a board member of the Kandiyohi Historical Society for three years and was a social worker for over 30 yrs. He will be missed at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

### **KCHS loses longtime volunteer**

Carolyn Ann Kneisl was born on June 13, 1935 in Durand, Wisconsin, the daughter of William and Florence (Liefkring) Drier. She grew up in the Durand area where she graduated from high school. She was united in marriage to Charles Kneisl on October 5, 1957 in Plum City, Wisconsin. The couple lived in Ellsworth, WI, Zumbrota, MN, Waldport, OR, and Long Lake, MN before settling in Kerkhoven. Carolyn worked as a bookkeeper and was city clerk for Long Lake, cashier at K-Mart in Willmar and packed eggs at Simmonds Produce in Kerkhoven. She volunteered at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society for many years. She was also active with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts serving as an Adult Leader. She was a member of a bowling league. She studied genealogy and was the family historian. She was very artistic and loved to paint and draw. She enjoyed spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren attending many of their activities. She was excited to see her youngest great-grandson in Virginia Beach just prior to her passing. Carolyn leaves a long legacy at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.



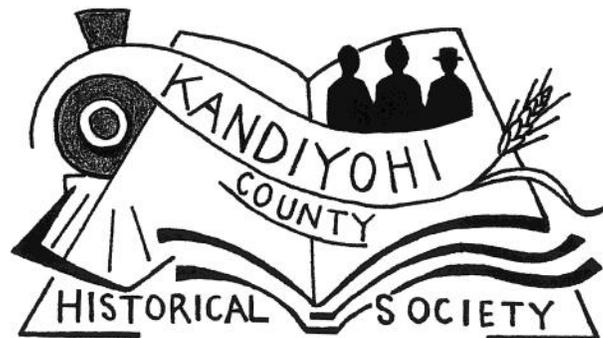
## Historical Society holds Annual Meeting & New Logo Chosen

The Kandiyohi County Historical Society held its annual meeting at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society in Willmar, MN with 60 people in attendance. A meal catered by Heglund Catering and program by Pastor Tim Larson of Willmar, MN were held in conjunction with the annual business meeting.

Sam Modderman of Willmar, MN was elected to his first term on the KCHS Board of Directors. The re-elected board members are Richard Falk of Willmar, MN, Jerry Johnson of New London, MN and Greg Harp of New London, MN. Retiring from the board was Larry Macht of Raymond, MN. Elected Officers include: Richard Falk, President; Dennis Peterson, Vice President; Sam Modderman, Treasurer, and Marilyn Johnson, Secretary.

After the business meeting, winners of "Dinner at the Sperry House" were drawn. Winners were Larry Macht of Raymond, MN, Mona Berning of Willmar, MN, Carolyn Swenson of Spicer, MN, and Wanda Nelson of New London, MN.

A new logo was approved by the membership. The KCHS held a contest for a new logo. LeAnn Atchison's design was chosen out of the seven logo designs submitted. Thanks to everyone who participated in the contest.



New Logo for KCHS

The advertisement is a rectangular box containing a portrait of Lisa J. Nord on the left. To the right of the portrait are several logos: the MLS logo, a house icon with "REALTY" below it, and the "All-Star Realty, Inc." logo which features a star and stripes. Below these logos is the address "117 SE Litchfield Ave., Willmar, MN", office phone "(320) 235-3633", office fax "(320) 235-3879", cell phone "(320) 212-3810", website "www.FineHomesByLisa.com", and email "SOLD@lts.net". At the bottom left of the box, the name "Lisa J. Nord" is written in a cursive font, with "BROKER/Owner/CEO" in a smaller, sans-serif font below it.



### **WANTED: BARN WOOD**

We are currently redoing the display in our agriculture building. We would like to use barn wood as the backdrop for this display. Please contact Jill at 235-1881 if you have any to donate. Thanks!!!



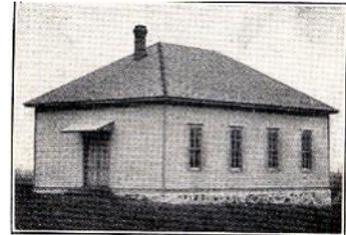
# RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF KANDIYOHI COUNTY

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## GENNESSEE TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICTS Written by Carolyn Kneisl

### DISTRICT 41

This district was established on April 15, 1868, by the commissioners of Kandiyohi County as District #5. The territory included in the district was as follows: Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 17 and 18, township of Gennessee; sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13 and 14, township of Kandiyohi. On Feb. 11, 1871, the number of the district was changed to 41.



**District 41**

The district was organized at a special school meeting held at the residence of G. W. Olney on March 26, 1870. John P. Gibbs acted as moderator of the meeting. The following officers were elected: Edwin Applegarth, director; John H. Suydam, clerk; Dudley L. Chase, treasurer. It was voted to build the schoolhouse "near the southwest corner of section 8, on Andrew Peterson's farm, where the town road crosses the county road." Bonds for \$300 were voted. The schoolhouse was built in the spring of 1871, on section 7, Gennessee Township, near the original place selected as site. The clerk's report of 1872 gives the value of the schoolhouse at \$50. In 1873 the house was rebuilt at a cost of about \$250.

The first school in the district was taught by Edwina Libby. The term commenced the first part of May 1871, and was to last for three months, but ended July 11<sup>th</sup> by the death of the teacher.

In 1882 the schoolhouse was moved to the southwest corner of E ½ SW ¼ section 8. The work was done by J. H. Suydam for \$26.25. In 1886 an addition of fourteen feet was built. At a special meeting held March 2, 1891, it was unanimously decided to build a new schoolhouse, 26 x 40, 12 feet high. To see the site go south of Highway 12 on 135<sup>th</sup> Street SE for 1 mile, then turn left on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue E for 1/3 of mile on North side. A. Flygare, Peter Norman and Andrew Nelson were building committee. The old schoolhouse was torn down. While the work of tearing down was going on, June 15, 1891, one of the workmen, Solomon Peterson, was killed by lightning.

The new schoolhouse cost when finished about \$900. In 1892 a library was purchased. In 1895 the free text book system was adopted. The reading library contained 181 volumes. The district has maintained eight months of school each year since 1893. After the 1953-54 school year the school closed through consolidation.

### DISTRICT 42

Acting on a petition by A. M. Eklund and others, the county commissioners of Kandiyohi County in 1868 established a new school district out of sections 19 to 36, inclusive, township of Gennessee, and north half of sections 1 and 2, township of Lake Elizabeth. The district was designated as #6. In 1871 the number was changed to 42.

In 1871, Miss Ingrid Lund (later Mrs. P. Dillner) taught a term of school in E. J. Barker's house. The following year a schoolhouse, 16 x 20, was built on the southeast corner of section 22. This building was used as a schoolhouse until 1885. On March 7<sup>th</sup> of that year a special school meeting decided to build a new schoolhouse, 22 x 32, half a mile east of the old site. The work was done by Erik Anderson for \$135. The old schoolhouse was sold to Charley Swan for \$33. F. C. Peterson took the contract for digging a well. To find District 42 go south of Atwater on County Road 2 (same as 195<sup>th</sup> St. SE), go 3 miles to 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, then ½ mile west on the North side.



District 42

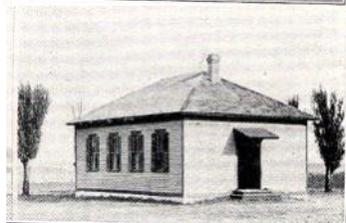
The records up to 1877 are missing. During the missing period Miss Lund taught one or more terms, and Chris Olson taught two terms. Since 1887 the district has maintained six months of school each year. A school library was purchased in 1898. The clerk's report of 1901 gives the value of the schoolhouse at \$600; furniture, \$100; apparatus, \$75; number of volumes in the library, 57. The school closed in 1943. This school was not in session during the school year 1920-21.

## DISTRICT 58

A petition dated at Genessee, Dec. 4, 1871, asked for a new school district out of the following territory: Sections 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and west half section 34, township of Genessee. The petition was signed by Anders Weberg, Abel Thompson, P. Anderson, M. Matson, Anders Anderson, Wm. Anderson, H. Reiersen, P. M. Peterson, P. Anderson, A. R.

Peterson, Lars Olson, Jonas Peterson, A. Hedberg, J. E. Peterson, L. Engberg, Ole Erickson, Charles Glader, Nels Johnson, H. H. Johnson, H. Holland, E. Peterson, O. Peterson, Ch. Anderson, C. J. Peterson, A. Anderson, Charley Peterson, J. O. Peterson and L. Peterson. The petition was granted May 15, 1872, and the new district established as #58.

The district was organized in 1872 and the first term of school was taught in 1873 in a log cabin rented for the purpose. The same year the district bought a log house, 16 x 20, and moved it to the site occupied by the present schoolhouse. This building was used as a schoolhouse until 1885, when it was sold for \$32.50, and a new building erected on the site. The new building was a frame structure, 24 x 36 feet. The site contains one-half acre, and there are about 100 trees planted and growing. The clerk's report of 1901 gives the value of the schoolhouse at \$600; furniture, \$100; apparatus, \$200; text book library, \$122.50. The free text book system was adopted in 1894. The district has maintained seven months of school each year since 1888. District 58 is located south of Highway 12 on County Road 4, 3 ½ miles on East side.



District 58

The first teacher of record was Ann E. Bright who taught the term of 1874. The teacher of the school's first term is not known. In the first year of 1872 the clerk was Anders Anderson, the treasurer was Carl Glader and the director was William Anderson. The school was closed in 1954 through consolidation.

# West Central Area Baseball Hall of Fame



The Kandiyohi County Historical Society have partnered with the Willmar Stingers to begin a West Central Baseball Hall of Fame. The Historical Society strives to “discover, preserve, and share” our local heritage and hopes that the inaugural West Central Baseball Hall of Fame can be a lasting part of those efforts.

Baseball has a deep tradition in West Central Minnesota and the Stingers are proud to be a part of celebrating the game of baseball. “The West Central Baseball Hall of Fame is a tremendous way to honor those individuals who have given so much to the game and celebrate the history of baseball in the area. We are very proud to partner with the historical society and their efforts to highlight baseball in West Central Minnesota,” said Stingers Co-Owner Ryan Voz.

The West Central Baseball Hall of Fame will cover a 45-mile radius of Willmar which will include communities such as Glenwood, Montevideo, Redwood Falls and Dassel-Cokato (see attached map). The Historical Society has begun forming a selection committee to vote on the inaugural members of the West Central Baseball Hall of Fame. In order to be considered for the West Central Baseball Hall of Fame, nominees must fall within the 45-mile radius of Willmar and be featured in one of the following categories:

### *Professional*

*Player or manager who resided in West Central Minnesota and went on to success in high levels of professional baseball as a player, coach, or manager.*

### *Amateur*

*An amateur player, coach, or manager who was successful as a player in youth, high school, and/or adult amateur baseball.*

### *Community Involvement*

*A longtime resident of West Central Minnesota who has achieved great success as a supporter of baseball and has made significant contributions to baseball.*

The Historical Society will begin accepting nominations immediately to be reviewed by the selection committee. If you wish to submit a nomination, a form has been created to submit potential candidates to the Historical Society. The form can be found on the Stingers website, [www.willmarstingers.com](http://www.willmarstingers.com), or can be obtained by calling Jill Wohnoutka at the Historical Society at 320-235-1881.

**Nominations must be submitted to the Historical Society by Monday, December 16, 2013 in order to be considered for the inaugural class.**

The inaugural inductions to the West Central Baseball Hall of Fame will be held on to-be determined date in January in conjunction with the Stingers Winter Barbeque event located at the Willmar Conference Center. The annual Hall of Fame Banquet & Winter Barbeque will feature a keynote speaker, formal inductions of inaugural candidates, a barbeque style meal and a sports memorabilia silent auction to benefit youth baseball and softball in West Central Minnesota. For tickets for the event or more information visit [Willmarstingers.com](http://Willmarstingers.com) or call 320-222-2010.

### ***Our Sympathy To Family and Friends-***

- **Jacqueline Rust Crowell**, 69, KCHS lifetime member since 1981, passed away on September 4, 2013. She is survived by son, Michael and three grandchildren.
- **Harris “Bill” Linder**, 92, KCHS member since 2001, passed away on October 1, 2013. He is survived by four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Kandiyohi County would like to thank these local businesses  
for their continued support of the preservation and sharing of  
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**MEMBER CONTRIBUTION FORM** - Send to KCHS, 610 NE Hwy 71, Willmar MN 56201

*As a lifetime or long-term member of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, I appreciate the membership benefits I've (we've) received through the years, and the enclosed donation is an expression of my appreciation.*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_  
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Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP FORM** - Send to Kandiyohi County Historical Society, 610 NE Hwy 71, Willmar, MN 56201

INDIVIDUAL - \$15                      FAMILY - \$25                      FRIEND—\$50                      SUPPORTER—\$100  
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*Thank you for joining our venture, "discovering, preserving, and sharing" the story of Kandiyohi County and Minnesota.*