



EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Save the Date

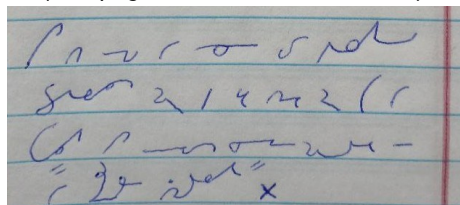
by Gina Neist

Join us on **Thursday, April 16, at 6:30 pm** at the **Eagle Municipal Building** for an evening of American music we call **"American Songbook; 250 Years, a Good Start!"**

Music historian, Ed Pierce, and the musicians of the Kettle Moraine Blues will take a light-hearted, yet informative look at some of our greatest musical treasures. The program will include a sing a long, a fun-filled audience "quiz" on American music, and a discussion on how people from Wisconsin came to influence some of our greatest national musical treasures. The melodies range from "hits" of 1776 through popular compositions from the late 20th century. Historical, musical, and fun! Bring the kids and grandkids!

Shorthand Question

(See page 7 for translation/answer.)



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Mystery Artifact

Can you identify this item?
(See page 4 for answer.)



EHS Museum

262-594-8961

Open Hours

Wednesdays: 9 am-Noon

Fridays: 9 am-Noon

Saturdays: 9 am-Noon

Website

www.eaglehistoricalsociety.org

Facebook

Like us at Eagle Historical Society

If you have questions about membership, please contact Gina Neist at: curator@eaglehistoricalsociety.org
Thank you.

Artifact Donations

Thanks to the following donors:

Mary Claire Kastenholz
Wayne Ray
Heidi Thessin Estate
Ellie Winzenried



Erikson Farm

This 377-acre farm has been in the Erikson family since 1915. Peter and Amanda Erikson owned the farm until the 1950s. It was then passed on to their son, Leo Erikson (b. 1897), and his wife, Mary (1897-2001). Gordon Erikson purchased the farm from Mary (his mother) around 1972. He and his wife, Karen, continued to own and operate the farm as of 2013. The Erikson farm has produced dairy, beef, corn, and other crops.

**information by Carolyn Rosprim*



Photo above: Peter and Amanda Erikson Farm in the 1920s from EHS Archives.

Annual Pumpkin Party on a Deliciously Damp Day

by Janet Evans

Rain may have tried to put a damper on the activities planned for our party, but our creative cast of costumed characters persevered and managed to put smiles on the faces of those dozens of brave souls who ventured out for this community event.



Our resident dinosaur lured unsuspecting kids and parents alike to enter the patio to play games and visit the creepy display of costumes, bones, and body parts. Those fearless fiends who ventured into the museum chatted with the witch and had fun participating in the paper plate pumpkin face Halloween craft.



Before they left the grounds, participants would have to stop to see the witch and the cowboy and choose door prizes with cool stuff like spider rings, eyeballs, stickers, and



plastic bugs, all designed to freak out the parents! We are so very thankful to those who stopped by and for the inventions of tents and umbrellas that came in handy!

Photos by Elaine Ledrowski.

EHS is Proud to Participate in:

2026 PASSPORT

WALWORTH COUNTY

Area
Historical
Societies



CONSORTIUM

From Jan 1 - Aug 10, 2026, stop by each participating Historical Society's museum during open hours and get a stamp or sticker at each location. Check each website first for changes in hours listed herein.

Completed Passports will get a gold foil seal placed below and be entered into one of two prize drawings. See the back page for prize drawing details.

LETTERBOXING:

Hunt for all Historical Societies' Letterboxes! Visit www.LETTERBOXING.org & search using "Wisconsin's 250 Years of History" for a list of all museums' clues!

FLAG DAY WEEKEND 2026

Participating museums will be open Sat-Sun, June 13-14, 2026. Check websites for hours. Free Admission!

Passport Holder: _____



Erikson Building Donors



Barred Owl, \$1,000 - \$9,999

IBEW LU 494
 Anne Ledrowski Jung
 Elaine B. Ledrowski
 Jeff Nowicki
 Barbara Pinekenstein Family
 Sprague Farm on Sprague Road
 Tom Steinke Jim Steinke
 John Steinke Robert Steinke
 Mary Pfeiffer
 Diane M. Wilkinson



Sparrow, \$100 - \$499

William Adams
 Anonymous Donor
 Annette Baker
 Mike & Mary Beitz
 Scott A. Bovee
 Carol Calkins
 Jessica & Arn Chamberlain
 Citizens Bank
 Janine Coley
 Barb & Jim Conley
 Tom Day
 Ryan Duide-Eagle Dental
 Eagle Lioness Lions
 Eagle Spring Yacht Club
 Jean P. Evans
 John & Pamela Feltes
 Steve Feyer
 Roseanne Frame (Carter)
 Gertrude Fredenbert
 Roy A. Gregg
 James & Michele Grotjan
 Richard Harthun
 Donald Hawes Family
 Ellie & Jeff Hawes
 Heckel Tool & Mfg. Corp.
 Roger & Dana Houk
 Dick & Gretchen Jones
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 IMO Arndorfer Family
 Dorothy Kau
 Michael & Karen Kennedy
 Julie D. Mann
 Karen K. Matters
 Bruce & Patricia Moffatt
 Jim & Gina Neist
 Katherine T. (Mich) Oswald



Eagle, \$42,000

Gordon Erikson
 Karen Erikson

Gary & Nancy Payne
 Jim & Cathy Piala
 Mary & Jerry Pratt
 Mike Rice
 Terry & Barb Rupp
 Shari Sasso
 Bonnie & Glen Schaefer
 Claire Schmidt
 Steve & Linda Steinhoff
 Cynthia Steinke
 Jim & Phyllis Steinke
 Judy Walters
 Al & Martina Wegner
 Dan & Deb West
 Vonda Williams
 Robert & Ellie Winzenried



Robin, \$500 - \$999

Anonymous Donor
 Eloise & Diana Hall
 Dick & Nada Moeller

Contractors & Volunteers

Scott Bovee, EHS Board
 Nat Cobb
 Steve Gulgowski, EHS Board
 Stephanie Kalnes, Great Lakes Design
 Jim Neist, EHS Board
 Jeff Nowicki, EHS President
 Art Peavy, EHS Board
 Wayne Pett, Pett Construction



Hummingbird, \$25 - \$99

Tim & Debra Angers
 Marlys Badinger
 Gerry Bergmann
 Marsha Bronson
 Cheryl Chapman
 James Day & Joseph Cibula
 Jane Marty Henze
 Cris Hughes
 Eunice Kelso
 Barbara Kruse
 Peggy Moots
 Karen Nordby
 Wayne & Jan Radabaugh
 Tom & Bonnie Sherman
 Mary Jo Walbrand
 Bob & Pat Walters
 Nancy Wilhelm

Rainbow Springs

by Janet Evans



Photo by Elaine Ledrowski.

At our November Board Meeting, we enjoyed hearing a presentation on Rainbow Springs by Joe Jurkowski, a member of the Mukwonago Historical Society. Mr. Jurkowski has done much thorough research on the old Rainbow Springs Country Club, located just five miles west of Mukwonago on Hwy. LO.

Francis Schroedel purchased the nearly 1,000-acre property in the 1950s with high hopes to develop a convention and resort destination that would attract visitors from Milwaukee and Chicago. Plans for a convention center, 700-room hotel, airstrip, hunting preserve, shops, horseback riding,

and more were underway when Mr. Schroedel ran into financial difficulties. Although the 18-hole golf course opened, the hotel and other planned amenities never did. The property was under bank foreclosure in the early 1970s and Schroedel's ambitious vision evaporated. Francis Schroedel died in 1976.

The ensuing years brought several changes of ownership and plans for various enterprises including a spa, resort, condos, etc., but none were able to make it happen. The buildings sat unused and empty for years and spawned rumors that the old property was cursed and haunted. In 2000, most of the main structure was destroyed in a fire deemed suspicious at the time.

Today, Rainbow Springs is owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Visitors can enjoy the hiking trails through ecologically diverse terrain and the beautiful clear lakes which are open for fishing, canoeing or kayaking.

(continued from page 1)

Mystery Artifact Answer: Cast iron Star nail cup and rotating base used by blacksmiths and cobblers to organize sizes of nail tack fasteners.

Meet EHS Board Member Pat Hawes

by Carrie Peavy



Photo by Art Peavy.

Pat was born and raised in Eagle, WI, in a very musical, industrious family. She worked as a clerk-typist at Waukesha Foundry, a part-time clerk and later as Postmaster of Eagle until her retirement.

Pat and her husband Rob were blessed with 65+ happy years of marriage, three children, and many grandchildren. They enjoyed many vacations together travelling by motorcycle, camper, and cruise ships.

As a gifted singer, she sang with the local Methodist Church Choir for decades and performed around the country with the Crosstown Harmony Chorus for 50 years. As a talented cook, she contributed delicious meals, pies, and cakes to church fellowship and other local events and continues to participate in election day bake sales and ice cream socials. She also enjoys lovingly creating beautiful cross-stitched heirlooms for her family and is an avid reader.

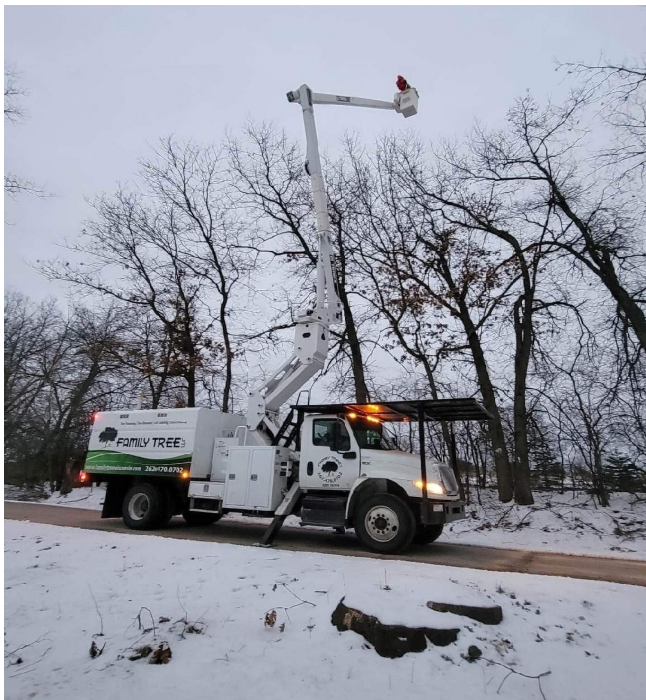
Pat currently serves as our treasurer, a member of the food and hospitality committee, and an important resource person when questions about Eagle arise. Thank you, Pat, for 25 years of dedication to EHS.

Family Tree, LLC

by Art Peavy

About a hundred years ago, my grandfather spent a few winters in the woods of northeastern Wisconsin chopping down trees. The process seemed simple using axes, large hand saws, horse-drawn sleds, and, of course, young men's strength. Logs were brought out of the woods and floated down the river to the sawmill.

Today, the process is a little different—actually, a lot different. Axes are mostly nonexistent, large hand saws have been replaced by gas or electric chainsaws, and the horse-drawn sleds are in museums having been relieved of their duties by trailers or dump trucks. Strength is still needed in this labor-intensive line of forestry work but can now be accomplished by men or women, young or youngish.



My wife and I recently visited Adam and Jenny Benjamin to learn about their Eagle-based tree trimming business. Their home sits at Hwy. LO and South Road, a property many will remember as the former Royal Angus, Casey, or Mean Green Farms.

Although it was a crisp January day, Adam explained why winter is one of their busiest seasons: leafless branches are lighter, dormant trees spread fewer diseases, frozen ground protects lawns from machinery, and insects and wildlife pose fewer challenges.



Jenny handles the office work while Adam and three employees prune trees, remove them when necessary, clear construction lots, cut back overgrowth, and clean up storm damage. Most trees are taken down in sections, not dropped whole. With hazards from equipment, weather, and the trees themselves, safety always comes before speed.

Most of their work is residential, though they serve some commercial clients. While Adam occasionally travels outside the area code, most customers live within an hour of Eagle. Word of mouth and social media keep the schedule full, and Adam takes pride in leaving every property looking better than he found it.

Adam brings more than 20 years of experience, including 11 with Asplundh, the nation's largest tree company. For the past nine years, he has focused on serving local customers through Family Tree, LLC. He loves the work and the people he meets along the way.

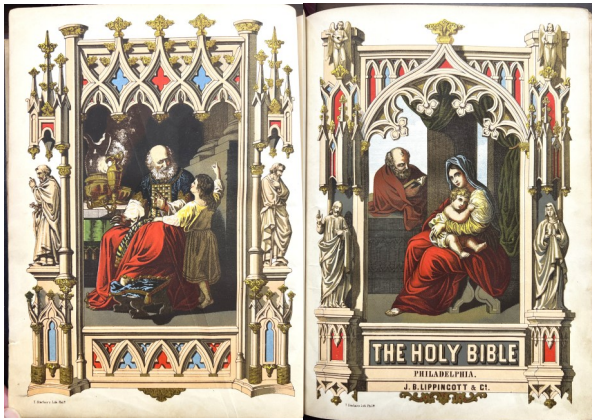
The Benjamins continue to invest in new equipment and industry knowledge, and Adam

(Continued on page 7)

Old 1863 Bible

by Mike Rice

Among the notable artifacts donated to the Eagle Historical Society is a Bible presented to the Eagle Methodist Church in 1863. This substantial, hard-bound volume, weighing several pounds, was published in 1862 by J. B. Lippincott & Company. It contains the Old and New Testaments in The Authorized Version, complemented by marginal notes, various readings, and an extensive introduction. Each chapter includes introductory remarks and a concluding commentary, along with parallel passages, making this Bible a comprehensive resource for in-depth study.

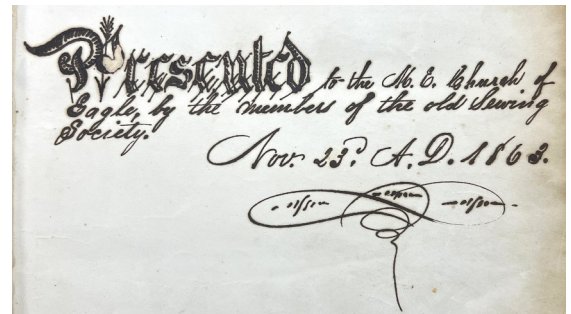


Despite minor binding issues, the book remains in excellent condition, with its pages well-preserved. The two color illustrations at the front remain vibrant, retaining their original detail.

It was likely used for show as an “Altar Bible,” left open to the beginning of Proverbs—the approximate midpoint of the text—where the inner binding shows signs of wear, and a page has come loose. Judging

by its condition, the Bible was likely placed in storage at that point, as the rest of its pages remain crisp and intact.

The inside page of the Bible reads “*Presented to the M.E. Church of Eagle, by the members of the old Sewing Society November 23, A.D. 1863.*” This is a real treasure for our Eagle community.



The Old Sewing Society



Photos by Mike Rice

In the mid-19th century, sewing societies were a vital part of community life, especially during the Civil War. These groups played a vital role in supporting soldiers and struggling families by crafting quilts, clothing, and other necessities. Women gathered in homes and churches, working tirelessly to provide comfort to those in need. Many societies also hosted church bazaars, selling handmade goods to raise funds for charitable efforts.

Beyond their practical contributions, sewing societies became a powerful testament to the growing influence of women in society. Through organization and action, they demonstrated their ability to mobilize for social and political causes, laying the groundwork for future movements in activism and community engagement.

Obituary

Janet M. Grotjan

May 1, 1932—Oct. 12, 2025



Janet Marian (Carlson) Grotjan, 93, of Eagle, Wisconsin passed away October 12th, 2025 at Three Pillars in Dousman, Wisconsin.

Jan was born in Chicago on May 1, 1932 to Carl I. and Wilhelmina M. (Brandt) Carlson. She married the love of her life, William

Verle Grotjan (Botany Bill), on June 4, 1955. They raised five children together on their beloved farm in Eagle.

After graduating from Wausau Senior High School, Jan attended the University of Wisconsin Extension for 1 year and then graduated with a bachelor's degree in Zoology from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. After graduating, she worked as a librarian in Rockford, IL.

Jan was preceded in death by her husband and best friend, Bill. She is survived and joyfully remembered by her children, William (Sarah) Grotjan of Neenah, Jessica (Arnold) Chamberlain of Eagle, James (Michele) Grotjan of Eagle, Jill (Anthony) Blaedow of Palmyra, and Jennifer (John) Zach of Stevens Point; her eight grandchildren, Laura (Gideon) Hoekstra, William (Angela) Grotjan, Arnold (Jennifer) Chamberlain, Elizabeth Chamberlain, Julia (Taylor) Dane, Emily (Michaelis) Gabbey, Shane (Melissa Haack) Zach, Rachel (Zack) Schoppen, and five great-grandchildren, Frederick Chamberlain Cooper, William and Grant Grotjan and Jacob and Benjamin Gabbey.

Jan's family is incredibly grateful for the kind, gentle, respectful and loving care given by the staff at Riverside Lodge Memory Care in Dousman and Brighton Hospice.

In lieu of flowers, donations were made to Wisconsin Public Radio or The Nature Conservancy.

A private celebration of life will be held at a later date.

A full obituary can be found on Eagle Historical Society website.

Family Tree, LLC

(Continued from page 5)

hopes to add more employees and a skilled foreman as the business grows. They also give back to the community—placing American flags on Main Street, decorating the Christmas tree in the Gazebo, and helping maintain the EHS grounds.

Before we left, they shared photos and stories



with a common theme: big jobs completed safely and customers left happy. One involved a 110-foot tree in Dodge County that required Adam to climb the final 30 feet beyond his

boom truck's reach; another described removing a 100-foot pine beside a cemetery without disturbing a single headstone.

Learn more about Family Tree, LLC by visiting:

Facebook: Family Tree LLC

Website: <https://familytreewisconsin.com>

Photos were provided by Adam Benjamin.

(Continued from page 1)

Shorthand Translation: Do you know the name of the traditional patriotic song which was once sung by the British to mock American soldiers in the 1700s?

Shorthand Answer: "Yankee Doodle" originated prior to the Revolutionary War. American troops added verses later that mocked the British and played their version during the British surrender at Saratoga in 1777.

Eagle Historical Society, Inc.
217 Main Street
P.O. Box 454
Eagle, WI 53119-0454

Stamp



Label

Visit our website



Upcoming Events

2026

Apr 16	General Meeting & 250th Program Ed Pierce & KM Blues Food – coffee and desserts
May 7, 8, 9	Brat Sale 10 am – 3 pm
Jun 13-14	Flag Day Weekend 2026 Open House: 10 am – 3 pm
Jul 12	Ice Cream Social PECB Concert
Oct 31	Pumpkin Party

*Our sincere thanks go out to
our members,
our Erikson Building donors,
our volunteers,
and our hardworking
board members.
Together, you make
EHS a success.*